



## Itinerary and Overview

### Snowshoeing & Rock Climbing in Colorado – 15 Days



Welcome! You're in for an experience of a lifetime! Imagine snowshoeing through pristine snow and climbing windswept peaks in the Rocky Mountains. Imagine Nordic skiing through the Colorado Rockies and days later rock climbing in the sun of a high desert. Each day you will be getting to know your expedition team better, learning about the area and yourself, laughing with your crew mates, and exploring some of North America's most mesmerizing and famous landscapes. You don't need to have previous snowshoeing or climbing experience to fully embrace this extraordinary expedition, which combines beautiful environments and exciting activities with an emphasis on individual growth and community. In the mountains, you will learn the basics and finer points of backcountry snow travel and winter camping, as well as working in a team to achieve your goals. You will scale peaks high above tree line and stop often to admire awe-inspiring vistas.

Your Instructors are highly qualified and dedicated outdoor educators. They will serve as teachers, trainers, and mentors as you learn the skills required for wilderness travel. Through daily discussions, they will also help you and your group to discover the larger meaning in these activities. You will discover new things about yourself: how you deal with uncertainty, stress and challenge; how you can better work with others; and your potential as a leader.

Wilderness travel is demanding. This course may be the hardest thing you have ever done. You should be aware of what you're getting into and be excited about tackling new challenges. It can literally take every waking moment to get from point A to point B. From steep mountain hiking with a heavy pack to waking up well before the sun rises, traveling in the wilderness can be hard. Past students agree that arriving physically fit and mentally prepared to take on challenges will enhance your experience and ability to do well on your course, which ultimately allows you to take full advantage of your expedition.



## Course Activities



**Rockies Snowshoeing Expedition** – Spring in the Rockies is very winter like - deep snow covers the mountains, and temperature dip below freezing every night. Even daytime temps can be single digits. This section begins at our premier mountain basecamp in Leadville, Colorado, with a few days of dormitory and dining hall-supported outings. After mastering the basics of winter living, you'll embark on a multi-day backcountry snowshoe expedition. You'll camp in tents, melt snow for water, and develop resilience while enjoying gorgeous views of snow-capped peaks.

**Peak Attempt** – Your expedition will include at least one peak attempt. Peak attempts are major enterprises and typically require early morning starts and take all day to complete. Weather, or other factors including group dynamics and physical ability, may preclude even an attempt to ascend a peak

**Rock Climbing** - Next, you will travel to rock camp in Buena Vista, CO about 45 minutes south of Leadville in the Arkansas River Valley. Here, where the granite domes are scattered across the high desert like a playground for climbers, you and your patrol will learn the techniques to safely climb a variety of rock features, from steep cracks to sparsely featured faces. Your instructors will introduce you to the more advanced aspects of rock climbing systems such as anchor building and rappel self-rescues. Factors such as the educational aims of your staff, weather, and the group's learning progression will determine the skills you cover in this section.

**Guided Reflection and Transference** – At Outward Bound we believe there is no learning without reflection. Throughout course, you will be prompted to reflect on what you're experiencing on course, and what it means in the greater context of your life. Sometimes this is a journaling exercise, sometimes a group sharing experience, and sometimes a moment of solitude to think for yourself. You spend focused time towards course end exploring how your new knowledge, skills and attributes can apply to your life after course.



## Course Areas

### Rocky Mountains, Colorado

The Rocky Mountains, one of the most famous mountain ranges in the world, stretch 3,000 miles from Alaska to New Mexico. These legendary peaks have had a profound influence on the development of the continental United States. The Colorado Rocky Mountains has the greatest concentration of high peaks in the lower 48 states, with hundreds of 'Thirteeners' (13,000 plus foot tall mountains) and 54 'Fourteeners.' The state is famous for its abundant wilderness adventure possibilities, from skiing to rock climbing to mountaineering. Colorado courses may take place in The Gore, The Holy Cross, The Sawatch, The Elks, The Sangre de Cristos, the Rawah, or the San Juan mountains. Each of these Colorado ranges present unique challenges, but they are all beautiful, wild and rugged. These regions are within the [ancestral lands](#) of of the Núu-agma-tʼv̥v̥-p̥ (Ute), Cheyenne, Arapaho, Očeti Šakówiŋ (Sioux), Eastern Shoshone, Jicarilla Apache, and Pueblos nations.



## Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your itinerary may look like. Your actual course plan will vary according to weather, your group's skills and abilities, and your Instructors' preferences.

**Days 1-3** - Course start and basecamp training in Leadville, CO – day outings from our campus, sleeping in dormitories, and preparing for your snowshoeing winter expedition.

Curriculum includes:

- Basic navigation
- Basic first aid
- Snowshoeing and Winter Expedition Skills
- Avalanche Awareness Theory and Rescue Techniques
- Self-awareness
- Awareness of others
- Developing inclusive group culture
- Basic team decision making
- Outward Bound philosophy and history

**Days 4-9** - Rocky Mountain Winter Expedition

- Applied leadership practice
- Applied avalanche awareness
- Conflict resolution
- Personal resilience
- Winter backcountry travel on snowshoes
- Winter backcountry camping

**Days 10-13** – Rock Climbing

Curriculum includes:

- Climbing Techniques
- Anchor Building
- Rappelling
- Peer leadership
- Self-Awareness
- Transference to home life

**Day 14** - Personal challenge event, course end celebration

**Day 15** - Departure home



## Expedition Life

**Group Living** – Living and working with a small group is an opportunity to make lifelong friends and enjoy memories that will last a lifetime. For some, it can also be a source of friction and challenge. You may feel frustration or annoyance with your teammates at times as you and your group attempt to meet your goals and make decisions big and small. Students step off the bus with varying levels of motivation, fear, and doubt. Once the trip starts even the most eager students may become reluctant to take a certain risk or try their best. Investing in working out differences in your group, sharing insights from your challenges and laughing your heads off over the most delicious dinner you’ve ever tasted (hunger is the best spice) are all part of why students walk away from their Outward Bound course with a deeper understanding of life, living, themselves, and each other.

**Food** – You and the other members of your group will learn to cook tasty and nutritious meals over portable gas stoves. Our meals are sometimes meat-free (meat is heavy and spoils quickly) and consist of grains, pasta, nuts, beans, cereals, and other light, dehydrated foods. The food may seem unfamiliar at first—we don’t pack many processed foods or “junk food”—but you will find that it tastes good and gives you energy at the end of a long day. A typical breakfast might be granola or oatmeal; lunch would include tortillas, cheese, and summer sausage or peanut butter and jelly; dinner might be macaroni and cheese or bean, rice, and cheese burritos. We can accommodate some special food needs, but only if we know well in advance. If you have a particularly unusual diet, we may ask you to bring some of your own foods.

**Camp** – As this is not a guided trip, all group members will work together to do camp chores, including cooking, washing pots, setting up tarps, and cleaning boats. You’ll find that as the expedition progresses, your mastery of these camp craft skills will enable you to operate more efficiently and effectively around camp and on the trail.

**Hygiene** – A common misconception about the backcountry is that you have to be dirty all of the time. Not true—it is entirely possible to stay clean and semi-fresh smelling while in the field, as long as you are willing to take the time to get clean. Your instructors will demonstrate clean-up options and explain more about backcountry hygiene when you arrive.

**Typical Day** – A typical day involves rising with the sun, starting the day with stretching, making breakfast, packing up camp, and hitting the trail. You will be busy all day. Once you stop for the day, group members will divide and conquer to get food cooked and camp set up. After dinner, you may meet to address the next day’s plans, or to discuss leadership and teamwork methods, before crawling into your sleeping bag for a well-deserved rest.