

Recreational Level Avalanche Safety Training December & January

Two Dates: December 16 - 20, 2019 or January 13 - 17, 2020

AST Level 2 - \$2095 + Tax

- Rate includes course instructor, round trip helicopter transportation, four night private room, three meals and all lodge amenities;
- Upon successful completion of AST 2 course a certificate will be issued;
- Participants must arrive at Alpine Helicopters hangar by 8:15 a.m.;
- Return flight departing Lodge to Golden will arrive at approximately 9:30 a.m.;
- All helicopter flights are weather pending;

Minimum eight participants.

In addition to our avalanche training offerings we take our AST 2 program to the next level. Students gain invaluable field experience at the spectacular Purcell Mountain Lodge west of Golden, BC. This location will have you fully immersed in the backcountry experience by flying you to a remote setting and luxurious lodge. The snow is shared by only the few people at the lodge allowing for untracked powder around every corner. The learning environment is primed for students to gain the advanced skills they are looking for through the AST 2 course.



As with all our AST 2 programs, Purcell Mountain Lodge AST 2 will build on your previous avalanche training and push your knowledge to the next level. This is a hands-on course involving extensive practical field experience augmented with classroom theory. The curriculum is designed to give a solid grounding in the essentials of avalanche knowledge based on the requirements set out by Avalanche Canada. Your instructors are guides seasoned in ski touring, heli skiing and avalanche forecasting. This course is suitable for those who have taken the AST 1 program (or have equivalent experience) in the past and are intermediate or advanced backcountry skiers or splitboarders.

Itinerary

Day 1: Golden, BC Airport at 745am

We meet at Alpine Helicopters, Golden, BC airport to check equipment and have a preflight safety briefing before flying into Purcell Mountain Lodge. After settling

into the lodge we will complete a classroom session to give us the base theory needed for our field days.

Topics for the day include:

- Avalanche phenomena, formation and characteristics of avalanches
- Avalanche Terrain Recognition, introduction to the detailed Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale
- Changes in mountain snowpack and snow metamorphism
- Accessing and utilizing the Avalanche Danger Scale and Public Avalanche Bulletins
- Understanding snow stability and slab propagation tests
- Using the Avaluator™
- Back country travel preparation and planning



Day 2 - 4: Field days right at the doorstep of Purcell Mountain Lodge and sessions each evening in the comforts of the lodge to cover additional advanced theory.



There are countless options for ski touring and skill development on our field days. We will use the area to get the best value for learning avalanche skills and finding the best skiing and riding. You will be a part in the trip planning and decision making for the route choices as well as the danger assessments for the day as this is a critical part of your avalanche education.

Topics for the days include:

- Proper back country travel preparation for avalanche terrain
- Practical use of avalanche 'danger scale' and other observations
- Avalanche terrain recognition
- Route finding in avalanche terrain
- Practical use of the Avaluator 2™
- Weather, snow pack and avalanche activity observations
- Snow profiles and stability tests such as the Compression and Extended Column tests
- Snow stability and avalanche danger analysis
- Decision making in avalanche terrain
- Group management and safety in the backcountry
- Human Factors in decision making
- Companion rescue and group rescue skills including: avalanche transceiver use, single burials and multiple burials, shoveling and probing techniques
- Evening sessions will be used to introduce additional topics and review the days learning

Day 5: Flight day - Purcell Mountain Lodge to Golden.

Our flight time of 930 am will land us back in Golden, BC and finish an excellent learning experience in the mountains.

Instructors and Group Size

Yamnuska AST 2 instructors are ACMG guides and professional members of the Canadian Avalanche Association. They are true practitioners with many years of experience in the backcountry. We have been instrumental in the curriculum development of the AST 2 course and are proud sponsors of Avalanche Canada.

The Purcell Mountain Lodge AST 2 has a maximum of 8 participants per instructor with a minimum of 6.

Program Logistics

We will meet at the Golden, BC airport at 745am on day 1.

After introductions and a equipment check, we will be briefed on helicopter safety and have a scenic 15 minute flight from Golden to Purcell Mountain Lodge. In the afternoon we will cover avalanche theory in the classroom to give us the required foundation for our field learning sessions.

The next three days will be spent in the backcountry areas around the lodge.

Transportation

Participants are responsible for their own transport to Golden, BC. Golden is a 2 hour (165km) drive west from Canmore. Helicopter transport to and from Purcell Mountain Lodge is included.

If you are flying from afar for the program, we suggest that you rent a car for your visit.

Accommodation and Meals

Purcell Mountain Lodge has been in operation for 27 years and is located in the Northern Purcell Mountains at 2200 meters. The luxury backcountry lodge is situated at treeline with stunning views into the Selkirk Mountains to the West and North. They take pride in offering guests a truly unique and unforgettable mountain experience. After a day of adventure, guests can relax and unwind in their three-story, timber-framed lodge. Rooms are located on the upper floor and all come with mountain views that are guaranteed to inspire and refresh. Each room has its own sink and vanity and across the hallway you will find three private hot showers and three private bathrooms. Luxury in the backcountry is complete with an open dining area, cozy living room, cedar wood-burning sauna, quiet library, entertaining traditional board games and puzzles and wood burning fireplace.

Private four night accommodations at Purcell Mountain Lodge is included. Choose from single or double occupancy.



We recommend that you book your own pre and post-trip accommodations in Golden, BC if needed.

All meals are included from buffet lunch on day 1 to departure breakfast on day 5. Purcell Mountain Lodge's gourmet chef will prepare fresh, wholesome

mountain-inspired meals. The Lodge can cater to each guest by accommodating any special dietary restrictions or allergy concerns. Delicious appetizers are served each day after skiing with a cold beer, or a glass of signature BC wine from their bar selection. Alcoholic beverages are not included.

Gear

Due to helicopter capacity guests are permitted 25lbs of personal luggage, plus a day pack with extra ski clothing and their ski equipment. Luggage should be packed in a small to medium sized duffle bag (traditional suit cases are not appropriate).

Equipment and Clothing

Yamnuska supplies classroom materials: course manual (Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain), Companion Rescue Card, Decision Making in Avalanche Terrain field book and Backcountry Terrain Rating sheets. Please bring a notebook and pen as well as your Avaluator™ from the AST 1 course. On the field days Yamnuska will supply, upon request, avalanche transceiver with batteries, avalanche probe and avalanche shovel. We also supply group snow study kits and snow saw.

You will need to bring:

Skis or Splitboard

There are two ski systems you can use:

System 1 - `Alpine Touring skis are essentially downhill skis with a special touring binding which allows the heel to lift whilst going uphill or across the flats and then locks down to become like a regular downhill binding. We recommend this system to anyone with a background of downhill skiing.

System 2 - Telemark skis. These should only be used for this program if you are at least an advanced-intermediate telemark skier with some backcountry experience.

Splitboards - If boarding you need to be an advanced boarder and you must use a 'splitboard'. A snowboard and snow shoe combination is not acceptable. Please don't bring a board if you've never boarded in the backcountry before. Poles are essential for boarders.

Equipment List

- Skis/Splitboards: if skis, either Alpine Touring or Telemark. We recommend a short (160 – 185cm) wide ski designed for powder.

Snowboards must be splitboards. *Please see note under rental information if you are renting ski equipment.*

- Ski poles (for splitboarders as well)
- Climbing skins
- Daypack (large enough for spare clothes, lunch & equipment, 35L minimum recommended)
- Avalanche transceiver – a triple antennae digital transceiver. If you have an older style, single or double antennae, we will loan you a transceiver for the program.
- Avalanche shovel (collapsible metal shovel designed for companion rescue, loaners available on request).
- Avalanche probe (loaners available on request).
- Avaluator™
- Sunglasses and/or ski goggles
- Thermos flask and/or water bottle (1 – 2 Liters)
- Sun screen
- Small Blister and Personal 1st-Aid Kit
- Head light with extra batteries

Optional Equipment

- Camera
- Compass with clinometer
- Snow thermometer

Yamnuska supplies but feel free to bring if you have:

- Snow saw
- Snow Study Kit

On the field days, there can be prolonged periods of inactivity in very cold temperatures. We recommend bringing extra layers. Light clothing of varying thicknesses that can be 'layered' to achieve comfort and versatility. The most important consideration for clothing is the ability to regulate temperature as you change from periods of activity to periods of rest. Cotton clothing is not appropriate as it causes rapid heat loss when wet.

Clothing List:

- Long Underwear (top and bottom). They should be synthetic such as Capilene or Merino Wool. Patagonia Capilene and Merino base layers are good options.
- Warm pants (softshell, insulated, or fleece)
- Warm shirt (not cotton)
- Sweater or fleece jacket

- Insulated jacket or vest. This is essential for staying warm while taking breaks or when the weather gets really cold. The Patagonia Down Fitz Roy jacket is a good example of a warm insulated jacket.
- Waterproof jacket with hood and pants (Gore-Tex or nylon) Hardshell set up is essential when the weather turns really wet. Gore-Tex, H2NO or similar material works great. The Patagonia Torrent shell is a good example of a waterproof hardshell jacket.
- Socks (wool outer, synthetic blend liner). A good pair of socks goes a long way to preventing blisters. (3 pairs)
- Wool or fleece hat that covers the ears
- Warm gloves and light glove liner
- Gaiters, only needed if your ski pants are not elasticized at the ankle
- Casual clothing for inside the lodge. Keep this to a minimum. Towels and linens are provided by Purcell Lodge.
- Bathing suit for the sauna

Rental Information

Skis, Boots, Boards, Skins & Poles can be rented from:

- Calgary: Mountain Equipment Co-op. – 830-10 Ave. S.W. Calgary (Tel: 403 269-2420)
- Canmore: Gear Up – 1302 Bow Valley Trail (403 678-1636)

**Please note that your 'DIN' or 'Release Value' settings on your ski bindings are critical to your safety while skiing. Our expectation is that everyone arrives on programs with their ski binding's release value correctly set. We have noted that some ski rental shops will not set release values on touring bindings. We advise you to rent from a shop that will set release values on your ski touring bindings unless you are proficient and comfortable setting your own DIN / release value. Failure to have Release Values correctly set could result in a serious injury.*

Please call our office if you have any questions.

PRICE:

\$2095 CDN includes return flight from Golden, BC to Purcell Mountain Lodge, single or double private accommodation at Purcell Lodge, food from Lunch on day 1 to breakfast on day 5, instruction, materials and use of avalanche safety and snow study equipment. GST is extra.

Not included: Transport to and from Golden, BC, food or accommodation before and after the course, alcoholic beverages (can be purchased at Purcell Lodge), and gratuities.

Is it for you?

Guests should be intermediate to advanced downhill skiers or splitboarders and should have had backcountry skiing/riding experience before the course. 'Intermediate to Advanced' means that you are comfortable making parallel turns on most un-groomed blue to black diamond terrain at a ski hill and that you have the ski skills to deal safely with all but the most extreme terrain. This should not be your first backcountry skiing trip and you will need to be efficient in using your ski touring or splitboarding equipment. In the Yamnuska context, a minimum would be prior participation on our [Intro to Backcountry Skiing](#), [Wapta Traverse](#), [Intro to Ski Mountaineering](#) or trips with additional personal days of touring totaling approximately 5-7 days.

You also need to be in good aerobic shape, as you must 'skin' up everything you ski down. On the field days, you should expect full days of touring up to 10km return and 500-900m of elevation gain. This will be with a daypack containing your lunch, water, avalanche gear, and spare clothing. We also offer this program based out of our office in Canmore, Alberta. See [here](#) for details.

This program is limited to participants 19 years and older unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian and in which case approval must be given by Yamnuska Mountain Adventures.

Previous avalanche training is not required, however to receive your AST 2 certificate you must have taken an [AST 1](#) with Yamnuska or another approved Avalanche Canada AST provider in the past.

