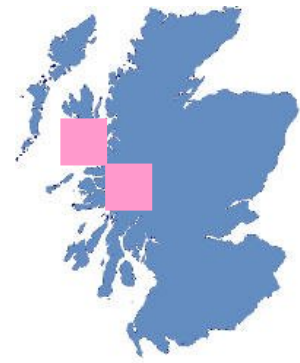


Ian Stephenson's Mountain Freedom Guiding

Classic Ridges and Scrambles – Glencoe + Skye

3-10 July 2010



This is an itinerary for those with some hillwalking experience who wish to take things a little further and enjoy some of the classic Scottish mountain days out. Throughout the week we'll be moving over rough and rocky terrain, and reaching the peaks by some of the most dramatic routes on offer- often using rock scrambling techniques. This calls for some previous experience in mountain walking and although no previous scrambling experience is necessary, you should be confident of your sure-footedness and be happy in exposed situations on steep ground. Depending on the routes chosen, sometimes a rope may be used to enhance safety.

Sample Itinerary

Day1 – Arrival (Sat)

We meet up in the morning and have an introductory day out on the Glencoe mountains. This is a chance to “find your feet” and get to know the rest of the group. During the course of the day we'll look at ways to ensure you can move confidently over rough and steep ground, and there will be a chance to practice some ropework skills that may come in handy later in the week. Typical routes for today could be an ascent in the Bidean nam Bian range or a round of the Garbh Bheinn massif across the water in Ardour.

Day 2 (Sun) – Curved Ridge

This is one of Scotland's classic scrambling routes which leads to the summit of one of it's most iconic mountains – Buachaille Etive Mor, standing at the entrance to Glen Coe. The route is steep and has scrambling up to grade 2 standard. However the steepest and most committing sections are short and can be easily safeguarded with a rope if needed. After attaining the principal summit, Stob Dearg, we may have an opportunity to continue walking and traverse the Buachaille's long summit ridge if time and conditions allow



Day 3 (Mon) – Aonach Eagach

This route is a contender for the Scottish mainland's finest ridge traverse, a grade 1-2 scramble taking the crest along the North side of Glen Coe. Very narrow in places, the route twists up, over and down a succession of remarkable pinnacles, calling for sure-footedness and a head for heights. On a fine day this is a high level promenade with astounding views in all directions. Our descent ends up near the Clachaig Inn, one of the Highlands' most famous hostelries, and an ideal place to rest the legs and re-hydrate.



Day 4 (Tues) – Transfer to Skye

The journey up to Carbost on Skye takes about 3 hours and is very scenic, passing through Glen Shiel and along the shores of Loch Duich, site of the famed Eilean Donan Castle. We have the option take in an ascent of Bla Bheinn, arguably Skye's finest viewpoint and in itself a challenging (grade 1-2 scrambling), if somewhat shorter, day.



Day 5 (Wed) – Coire Grundha and the South Cuillin Ridge

This route takes us into the heart of one of Cuillin's wildest corries, past the high lying lochan in the upper coire, and up on to the crest of the ridge towards the south end of the main ridge. From here we have the option to head south over Sgurr nan Eag out to Garsbheinn at the end of the ridge, giving a good section of grade 1 scrambling and superb sea views. Alternatively we could head north towards Sgurr Dubh and the Islands crowning peak, Sgurr Alasdair. This gives plenty of excitement at scrambling grade 2.

Day 6 (Thur) – Coire Bhasteir Peaks

Starting from Sligachan at the north end of the range, this route visits some very dramatic terrain. Our route on to the crest is by the NE ridge of Sgurr a'Bhasteir, a long and continuously interesting grade 1 route finishing with a fine knife-edge crest. Sgurr nan Gillean lies to the east and offers a demanding route (graded "moderate" rock climbing, 3+ scrambling) along its west ridge. Westward lies an equally fine crest taking in Sgurr a'Fionn Coire (grade 2) and Bruach na Frithe, one of the Cuillin's highest and most scenic viewpoints.



Day 7 (Fri) – Round of Coire na Banachdich

Starting from Glen Brittle the Banachdich round takes in Sgurr Dearg by an enjoyable easy scramble up the nose of Sron Dearg. There are fine views of climbers on the famous Inaccessible Pinnacle from its summit. Heading on towards Sgurr na Banachdich gives continuous scrambling in the grade 1-2 category along a narrow crest. We complete the circuit by heading out onto the lateral ridge of Sgurr nan Gobhar which is narrow and entertaining before descending rapidly down steep scree back to the glen.



Day 8 (Sat) - Coire Lagan Scrambles – Collie's routes

Our final day allows us to follow in the footsteps of the Cuillin's foremost pioneer, the Victorian scientist and eminent mountaineer Norman Collie who was among the first to explore these peaks around the end of the nineteenth century. There are numerous options. Among them could be a visit via "Collie's Route" to the Cioch - a remarkable pinnacle of rock on the face of the huge cliffs of Sron na Ciche, and location for a famous swordfight in the film "Highlander"! Alternatively we could follow "Collie's Ledge" across the face of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich and on to its summit.

Day 9 (Sun) - Departure

Physical and Experience Requirements

To enjoy this trip you should be prepared for reasonably long (around 7 hour) days in the hills with up to 1200m of ascent. You should be happy on rough trackless terrain and expect to use your hands on occasions - there will be scrambling of up to "grade 2" standard. If you are new to scrambling this is not a problem as long as you can move confidently and do not suffer unduly from vertigo. If you can do big-ish days out in the Lakes or Snowdonia, you should have no problem here.

You should be adequately shod (good quality comfortable and supportive boots) and have outdoor clothing and equipment for a range of conditions including blazing sunshine! You will receive a suggested kit list when you book.

Meals and Accommodation

The week is split between 2 bases, Glencoe and Skye. In order to provide the maximum flexibility the bases chosen offer a range of accommodation within walking distance, and a range of options for meals. You should make your own accommodation arrangements, although we can help out if needed. This enables costs to be kept down, and ensures you get the type of accommodation that suits you. Early booking is recommended as both are popular spots!

Both venues offer meals and also have self-catering facilities for those who are staying in their accommodation. Although it's fun and sociable for our group to eat together in the evenings, you have the choice! There will be ample opportunities during the week to stock up on supplies for packed lunches, and to do some shopping for those who wish to self-cater.

Glencoe

The Inchree Centre, Onich. <http://www.inchreecentre.co.uk/> T. 01855 821287

Inchree is a well appointed complex offering bunkhouse style dormitory accommodation, private en-suite rooms, and chalets. There are self-catering facilities as well as a very friendly pub restaurant on-site. Inchree is geared up for hill goers with a full range of drying and laundry facilities. There are also other accommodation choices within walking distance. These range from the Corran Inn, which also has a bunkhouse, B+B accommodation in Inchree, and chalets, camping, and caravans at Bunree.

Skye

The Old Inn, Carbost. <http://www.carbost.f9.co.uk/> T. 01478 640205

Again the base on Skye is chosen to maximise flexibility, as well as being a thoroughly nice place! The Old Inn has a choice of bunkhouse or private accommodations and there are self-catering facilities as well as hearty meals in the Pub. The lochside location is simply stunning and Carbost is ideally placed for forays into the Cuillin. There is also B+B accommodation in the village and other bunkhouses/ hostels in nearby Portnalong. Camping is available in Glenbrittle, a 15 minute drive away.

Prices and Bookings

Please note that the itinerary given above is an outline to indicate the character of the trip and is subject to change due to weather conditions or other safety factors. The itinerary may also be changed to enhance the enjoyment of the group.

The price per person for this tour is £280. A 50% deposit is required to confirm a booking with the balance payable 4 weeks before departure. Booking forms are available on request. Discounts may be available for multiple bookings.

What's included in the price?

- All guiding and instruction.
- Transport locally to and from the day's activities, and transfer to Skye. We welcome car sharing when applicable to minimise environmental impacts, or to allow the party to complete a linear route where vehicles at the start and end of the route would be an advantage.
- Any specialist equipment needed, such as helmets, ropes, etc.

What's not included?

- Travel to the start of the itinerary in Glencoe (easily accessible by train or bus from Inverness and Glasgow). A pick-up from some other point such as Fort William or Inverness may be possible. Ask for details.
- Accommodation. See above.
- Meals. See above.
- Onward travel from Skye. However a transfer to some other point such as Fort William or Inverness may be possible. Ask for details.
- Personal Accident insurance. Mountain Activities always incur some degree of personal risk. If you require assistance in organising insurance, just ask.
- Personal outdoor clothing and equipment. A suggested kit list is sent to you at time of booking.

Further information

Is available by sending an Email to info@mountainfreedom.co.uk