



Icicle Winter 2006/7 Newsletter | [www.icicleUK.com](http://www.icicleUK.com) | 0845 058 98 78 | [climb@icicleUK.com](mailto:climb@icicleUK.com) | Page 1 of 2

Welcome to the new format quarterly newsletter. We have copied the look of our revamped website, with the course selectors above. In this edition you will find the usual mixture of events, courses and equipment reviews.



**Winter 2006 / 2007:** The winter was initially quite dry after a warm autumn season. At altitude there was a huge amount of snow, and conditions in the gullies and on the snow routes were great throughout. Down in the valley it remained too warm for many of the ice routes to form, so all our ice courses spent more time up high than usual. The off piste and ski touring have seen excellent conditions all season. We saw growth in the range of ski courses that we offered, and there were a lot more clients on major routes on our 1:1 ratio Advanced level courses.

**Snowshoeing courses:** This winter also saw the launch of a wide range of snowshoeing days and courses. The most popular were the weekends with nights in mountain huts or snowholes. We are already planning some new snowshoe adventures for next season. See the website for details...



**Swiss 4000m peak bagging:** If you fancy a week of peak bagging in the Monte Rosa or Oberland regions, then this course will really appeal. Even better still we have reduced the brochure price by £100 for Summer 2007.

**Kilimanjaro:** Last year 100% summited on all of our Kili trips, & our first trip of '07 saw this record upheld. This year we are offering dates in August, September and October. We are currently forging closer links with the Kili Porters Protection Project to ensure that the porters are clothed, sheltered, and paid properly. We ensure these standards by using the same team of local guides and porters each time. See the website for photos & details.



**Chamonix:** The Sanglard equipment shop has moved after 200 years, and the old premises is now a North Face store. The Hotel Le Stade has finally closed to become converted into apartments. In Chamonix Sud an Irish bar called Munsters has opened where Bar 74 was. It has Guinness! In January the Kandahar Alpine Ski world cup event was cancelled due to a lack of snow on the pistes, but the event was rescheduled elsewhere.

## Latest News

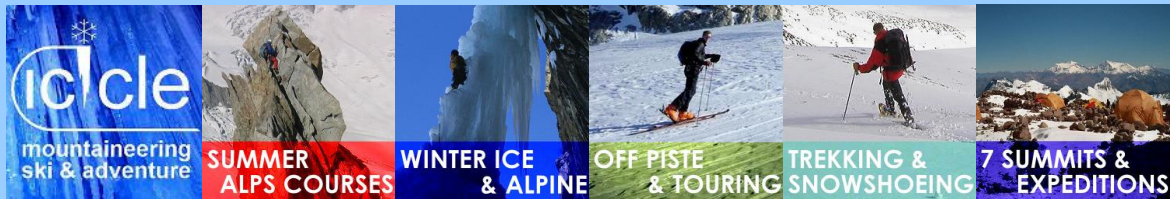
We have teamed up with Snowcard for our recommended client insurance. If you need to arrange a policy for a forthcoming trip, all you have to do is click on the Snowcard logo on the front page of the Icicle website.



Icicle exhibited at the Adventure Travel and Outdoors shows, and we gave talks about acclimatisation & the effects of altitude, and about climbing Mont Blanc, Matterhorn and the Eiger. To come to one of the lectures in 2007, see the website for the full details.

We now have online booking for courses & expeditions as well as for accommodation.

If you arrive early for a course we launched a speedy check in, so you can get settled in to the accommodation from midday, without waiting for the normal 17:00 check in. This service only costs 10 euros. Late check out is also now available.



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**Training and Acclimatisation weekends:** To assist clients in their final preparations for a course we operate UK Alpine Preparation training weekends in Snowdonia or the Lakes. In the Alps we offer an acclimatisation weekend on the Saturday and Sunday before courses start. This involves a night in a mountain hut to sleep at altitude, and a peak around the 3000m mark to prepare you for your climbs the next week. You descend in time for the Sunday 17:00 course briefing.



**Kit Review:** Sportiva Nepal Extreme's are the workhorse boot for the Alps, equally at home on the top of the Matterhorn or on a waterfall ice climb during winter. They have a B3 rating so will accept any kind of crampon. Be careful when fitting crampons, as the toe is narrow so some crampons don't have enough front point advancement for steep snow or ice climbs.



**Ski Touring:** This winter saw the largest number of clients ever on ski touring courses. The most popular is the Haute Route from Chamonix to Zermatt, but a close second were the Gran Paradiso and Bernese Oberland tours. Our 2007/8 winter dates have already been released and you will notice that many of the easier tours can be preceded by the two day Intro Ski Touring weekend. See our website for details.

**Equipment Advice:** If you are planning an Alpine trip this summer, look at the website equipment section for details on what to avoid or to grab. We have large amounts of equipment for hire in our Chamonix office

ranging from boots to jackets, tents to crampons. We guarantee that our rental prices are the lowest in Chamonix, so this is a great way for you to save money before your course. Our website also has a lot of information on brands to consider. Upon booking all clients receive a discount voucher for purchasing kit in a wide range of UK stores.



## Pic of the month

Each month we pick one of the photos entered into our annual photo prize draw and tell you about it.



The photo was taken on a Summer Intro course, and it shows a group on the Demi Lune (Half Moon) of the Petite Aiguille Verte. The view is of the top of the Couloir Chevallier and the final traverse up to the summit. Photo S. Ingham.

## The Competition

We have three copies of an interactive CD Rom that lets you explore the Mont Blanc massif in 3D via a virtual flight. In order to win a copy, we invite you to send in a copy of your best course photos for possible use on the website or our brochure. You can send them on CD to our UK office, or by e-mail / Skype. The close date for entries is the end of April. The first three people to submit their photos will win the CD's. Good luck to you all.