

WINTER FUN IN GLEN AFFRIC

WinterFest 09 6-9 February

Widen your horizon's this winter by taking part in the inaugural Glen Affric WinterFest in February, run in partnership with Tiso Inverness Outdoor Experience and Forestry Commission Scotland. What better way to shed those winter blues (not to mention those extra post-Christmas pounds), than by learning a new skill; bagging your first winter Munro or simply having a great day out in the snow.

The aim of the WinterFest is to get people out into the Scottish hills, enjoying the exhilarating experience of a winter hill-walking day. During the high level walks, you have the opportunity to learn or refresh those skills required when walking over snow and ice. If you want to progress from summer mountain walking; maybe you have always wanted to try using crampons and ice axes or if you simply just want to join a group for a day out, then this is the Winter Festival for you. With prices starting from as little as £30 or by joining with a 2 or 3 day WinterFest Pass, you can pick and mix your very own WinterFest experience.

Families with young children will love the free enchanted Night Walk around Dog Falls run in partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland, following the twinkling glo-sticks around on a nocturnal voyage of discovery (self-guided). A free evening talk - *'An Eagle's Eye View of Scotland'* - presents stunning aerial photos taken above the Scottish Highlands from a para-motor. With kit hire and your very own personal shopper at Tiso Inverness to guide you in your kit choices, followed by welcome drinks and kit checks, the WinterFest is sure to kick off with a cheery start.

Glen Affric provides a stunning backdrop for the WinterFest, boasting the highest mountains north of the Great Glen; ancient Caledonian Forest; a National Nature Reserve and some of the most breathtaking winter scenery in the world. Being landlocked and surrounded by high mountains on 3 sides, the unique location of Glen Affric offers superb winter walking for several months of the year.

All high and medium level walks are guided by professional qualified mountain guides with Winter Mountain Leader (WML) certificates. They all share a love of the outdoors and an indepth knowledge of the winter mountain environment - it's wildlife, history and geology. Low level walks are guided by rangers with particular knowledge of the local environment, wildlife and flora. If you choose to stay on in the area and want to discover more, then remember that you are not far from the mountains of Kintail, Torridon, Cairngorms or Lochaber. Guides will be available both before and after the WinterFest to hire on a private basis.

For a full programme of events visit

<http://www.naturalhighguiding.co.uk/winterfest.htm> or email Natural High on escape@naturalhighguiding.co.uk Tel: 01456 415379

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Friday 6th February

GET KITTED noon - 4pm Tiso Inverness Outdoor Experience For all people hiring winter gear for the WinterFest walks. Tiso's personal shopper will be on hand to ensure that you have the best advice and equipment to suit your needs.

WELCOME DRINKS 6.30-7.30pm Bog Cotton Cafe, Cannich WinterFest Introduction with mulled wine tipples provides a relaxed environment to discuss the schedule for the weekend and undertake a Pre-festival Kit Check.

Saturday 7th February

WS1 Tom a' Choinich (1112m) Winter Skills. £40 A fantastic introduction to the Affric Munros. We ascend Tom a' Choinich (1112m) from the wild Gleann nam Fiadh with the Creag na h-Inghinn ridge rising in front of us. During the course of this walk we will discuss and practice skills that are essential for the winter walker. The views from the summit cairn along each direction of the Affric ridge are wild and memorable.

HL1 Sgurr na Lapaich (1036m) & **Mam Sodhail** (1181m) High Level Munro. £40 This is the classic Glen Affric walk. A beautiful mountain expedition within the Glen Affric NNR, climbing Sgurr na Lapaich (1036m) and Mam Sodhail (1181m). We traverse steep sided ridges and bag a couple of tops, whilst enjoying spectacular views and remote countryside from the highest mountains between the Great Glen and Iceland!

LL1 Corrimony - Tomich Low level walk. £30 It's not all about high places. Starting at the Corrimony chambered cairn the walk follows the river Enrick up into the unique Corrimony RSPB Reserve before gaining the old hill path leading through the forest to the hill lochs above Tomich. The view of Glen Affric from the Lady Tweedmouth monument provides a lasting memory complemented by a pretty descent via a hidden gorge into Tomich. Guided by RSPB Reserve Manager.

Evening Talk An Eagle's Eye View of Scotland. £Free - *donations on the door* Gary Williamson spellbinds us with amazing images taken during his adventures above the mountains and glens of the Scottish Highlands in his para motor.

Sunday 8th February

WS2 **Mam Sodhail** (1181m) & **Sgurr na Lapaich** (1036m) Winter Skills. £40 Sgurr na Lapaich is the commanding mountain that dominates the view from the Glen Affric car park - it just looks big from there! The routes to the tops are strenuous but the reward more than makes up for it. We use this day to put into practice and refresh those winter hill walking skills gained from the previous day whilst getting to some of the highest peaks in the north of Scotland.

HL1 **Tom a' Choinich** (1112m) High Level Munro. £40 We ascend Tom a Choinich (1112m) from the wild Gleann nam Fiadh via the Creag na h-Inghinn ridge which leads us to the large summit cairn. Descending to the Bealach Toll Easa we journey on to the summit trig point a-top Toll Creagach (1053m). Our reward is a 360° view of the Scottish Mountains looking at both coasts from the same spot!

LL2 **NIGHT WALK** lit with Glo Sticks. Family Walk (*non guided*) in partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland £Free Follow the Glo Sticks on a circular walk around Dog Falls to experience the NNR in a different way. Listen out for fairies and gaze at the stars before returning back to the start. This walk is non guided and all participants must carry torches and wear suitable clothing. Ideal for families.

Monday 9th February

ML1 **Carn a' Choire Ghairbh** (865m) Medium Level Corbett. £40 The Affric Corbetts may not be as high as the Munros but they more than make up for this in terms of wild scenery. The route to Carn a' Choire Ghairbh leads through pristine Caledonian Forest alongside a tumbling burn before rising on feint deer trodden tracks to provide glimpses of glens only seen by the willing few and presenting us with Glen Affric - from a different aspect.

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