



# ACONCAGUA

RAPID ASCENT™

DURATION: 14 DAYS

LOCATION: ARGENTINA

SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE

ALPENGLOW



## Expedition Details

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**DURATION:** 14 DAYS

**LOCATION:** ARGENTINA

**SKILL LEVEL:** INTERMEDIATE

**SEASON:** NOVEMBER-FEBRUARY

**COST:** \$12,450

### DIFFICULTY LEVEL DESCRIPTION:

Intermediate – No technical climbing experience is necessary although Aconcagua is notorious for being physically challenging. The weather is cold and the mountain is tall. It is imperative that you are in excellent physical shape, and able to hike in rugged terrain for long days.

### PREREQUISITES:

Participants should have prior experience climbing or trekking at altitude over 18,000 feet/5,500 meters. Prior roped climbing and cramponing skills are strongly recommended.



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# Expedition Introduction

## Why Climb Aconcagua

*Standing out as the highest point in the western hemisphere, Aconcagua draws climbers in with the allure of altitude as well as the relatively low technical nature the climbing presents. For many, Aconcagua serves as a necessary stepping stone to the larger and more remote peaks of the Himalaya.*

At nearly 7000m tall, climbers who attempt Aconcagua get a great test in their bodies ability to acclimatize to extreme altitudes. A positive indication on Aconcagua bodes well for peaks that are higher still.

Lastly, the support on Aconcagua provides a real expedition experience with porters assisting with camps, cooking and carrying along the way. We utilize this support to increase our chances at success on this behemoth of a mountain.



## ROUTE CHOICE

We climb a route called the 360 route. This route mitigates the issue of crowds, trash, and overuse encountered on the normal route, while enabling us to summit without any technical climbing. True to its name, this exciting route combines parts of four different routes (The Polish Glacier, Normal, Guanacos, and Ameghino) and traverses all the varied elements on Aconcagua.



## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Aconcagua's first summit climb was attempted in 1883 by Paul Gussfeldt. He unfortunately had to stop 500 meters from the top due to the notoriously severe winds. The summit was not reached until 1897 when a team of 8 led by British climber Edward Fitzgerald established the normal route. Unfortunately only one member of the team made the summit, Swiss Guide Mathias Zurbriggen.



## 14 Day Itinerary

***Our goal with a 14-day itinerary is to keep all the necessary acclimatization, training, and mountain preparation while minimizing the unnecessary waiting and downtime of traditional expeditions.***

Normally, an Aconcagua itinerary will stretch 21 days from start to finish. With our Rapid Ascent™ approach, we're able to reduce the overall expedition time down to 14 days, shortening down time and increasing success.

Within our approach, there are 3 ways we're able to be efficient during our climb:

- All guides and clients are pre-acclimatized by training at home for 4-weeks in simulated altitudes up to 16,400'/5000m.
- Once on the ground, our approach to the mountain is drastically reduced with a helicopter flight from the town of Penitentes directly to base camp.
- During the ascent, we utilize the assistance of porters, helping to keep us efficient as we move higher on the mountain.



Following a successful expedition to Aconcagua, most climbers will begin to set their sights on the Himalaya. Cho Oyu is a great next step for those on the Road to Everest, or for those who are interested in more technical peaks, something like Ama Dablam will fit the bill.

See more trips at [ALPENGLOWEXPEDITIONS.COM](https://ALPENGLOWEXPEDITIONS.COM)



## About Alpenglow Expeditions

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*Alpenglow creates and fosters a community of climbers prepared to achieve their dreams in the world's greatest mountain ranges.*



### About the Company

Alpenglow Expeditions is an AMGA accredited business, and prides itself on working with guides who uphold and exemplify the highest standard in the profession of mountain guiding.

Led by IFMGA mountain guide Adrian Ballinger, Alpenglow focuses on creating expeditions that reflect our high standards in mountain guiding by providing precision logistics, cutting edge technology, and thoughtful itineraries that combine for successful climbs.

### History of Alpenglow Expeditions

Founded in 2004 by IFGMA mountain guide Adrian Ballinger, Alpenglow Expeditions began as a boutique guide service that focused on high altitude climbing. In those 15 years we've expanded our offerings, both internationally and in the United States. We are now proud to offer courses and expeditions ranging from a climbers first experience on the Tahoe Via Ferrata, to basic backcountry education for those interested in exploring winter landscapes, to climbing the world's highest mountain for those on the Road to Everest.

# About Alpenglow Expeditions

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## Founder — Adrian Ballinger

Adrian Ballinger founded Alpenglow Expeditions in 2004 envisioning a more holistic climbing experience for his clients than the status quo.

Adrian is the only American who has skied two 8,000 meter peaks, was the first person to ski Manaslu, the 8th tallest mountain in the world, and in 2011 became the first person to summit three 8,000 meter peaks in only 3 weeks (Everest twice and Lhotse once).

Adrian holds both an AMGA and IFMGA guide's certifications and has achieved more than 10 summits of 8,000 meter peaks (including 6 summits of Mt. Everest).



## Partner / Chief Guide — Logan Talbott

Logan has been guiding professionally for over a decade in the disciplines of Rock, Alpine and Ski Mountaineering. When not out guiding, Logan spends time in the office helping the team with the day-to-day operations of the business. From one day ascents of El Capitan to big Alpine climbs in the Himalaya, or from ski descents on Denali to backyard ski tours in Lake Tahoe, he can't help but smile when out running around the hills.

Logan is an AMGA/IFMGA mountain guide, an Avalanche course leader with AIARE, as well as a wilderness EMT. In addition to guiding, Logan has extensive experience in mountain rescue, having worked for rescue teams in both Yosemite and Denali National Parks, and volunteering locally for Tahoe Nordic SAR.

## LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, LOCAL PARTNERS

We partner with local logistics companies in each country and region that we operate in. Often we have partnerships that have been with us since the beginning of Alpenglow. Whenever we bring on a new operator we have vetted them thoroughly to insure their reliability and quality. Our local and regional logistics partners are the backbone of our in-country logistics and help us achieve the success that we're known for.



*After 15 years of guiding expeditions all over the world, including more than a dozen 8,000-meter peak expeditions, we have refined and distilled the acclimatization and climbing process to maximize safety, health, success, and enjoyment.*



## The Alpenglow Difference

*Alpenglow Expeditions' Rapid Ascent™ climbs are an entirely new way to approach big-mountain expeditions.*

### Rapid Ascent™ Strategy

***First developed by Adrian Ballinger, Rapid Ascent™ is a unique approach to climbing big mountains across the world.***

This innovative program combines hypoxic training at home with precise logistics and small team sizes to reduce the overall time spent away from home, all while greatly increasing the chance of success on your international climbing expedition.

By pre-acclimatizing for 4 weeks at home, we're able to reduce the overall expedition time to 14 days. It is due to this pre-acclimatization that we are able to move quickly from Mendoza to base camp with no ill effects.



# The Alpenglow Difference

## Helicopter Costs Included

A crucial element of our entrance and exit to the mountain is a helicopter lift from the town of Penitentes and the reverse on the way out. Many companies offer this amenity, but few include it in their cost.

## Best Food On the Mountain

Every year our climbers are blown away by the food quality on Aconcagua. Our logistics operator has been known to send steaks up to Camp 1, and in base camp we enjoy healthy food options providing us with the energy needed to move up the mountain.

## Porter Support Included

We provide strong porter support on our expedition, allowing each climber to offload 22lbs (10kg) of weight from their pack.

## Route Choice

We climb a less popular route than most operators, choosing to climb what is called the 360 route in an effort to avoid crowds.







## The Alpenglow Expeditions Team

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*Team Member Requirements: Alpenglow requires that climbers have prior experience at altitudes of 18,000'/5500 meters with rope team and cramponing skills. We offer many great options for gaining this experience, including opportunities in Ecuador, Peru, Kilimanjaro, and Elbrus in Russia.*

### Alpenglow's Guides

Our Aconcagua guides are some of the best in the business, and have a long history of experience in the high mountains across the world. Most are IFMGA certified, with all others working towards their final certification. These guides are deeply familiar with the Rapid Ascent approach and can take advantage of the advantages this creates while on the mountain.

### Local Logistics Team

Our logistics provider in Argentina is a fine tuned machine, proven through years of successfully executing the detailed and well timed logistics that our Rapid Ascent™ expedition requires. The food they provide in base camp is second to none, and the infrastructure all the way to high camp is clean and comfortable (if you can call sleeping at 19,700' comfortable). This team of drivers, cooks, porters and assistants is the backbone of each and every one of our expeditions to Aconcagua.



## Route Description + Itinerary

Our journey begins in Mendoza with a formal meet and greet with guides and fellow climbers. We stay in comfortable lodging and enjoy a steak dinner before leaving town for the mountain.

The following day we will take a private van to the town of Penitentes. After organizing our gear and food, a helicopter will carry us to our 13,800 foot (4,206 meter) base camp. Here we will spend the next two or three days resting, eating delicious food and enjoying one or two acclimatization hikes.

From base camp, we move to Camp 1 climbing over a moraine before making our way through a section adorned with beautiful ice sculptures called “penitentes”. At Camp 1 we’ll spend 2 nights, with an acclimatization move to Camp 2 and back.

Moving up to Camp 2 we’ll spend 2 nights with one day of rest. From here we’ll get our first views of the Polish Glacier as we lounge below. The much needed day of rest will allow us to hydrate and take in some calories and will be crucial to our next two days of climbing.

***Leaving Camp 2, we’ll traverse below the Polish Glacier before joining the normal route at Camp 3.***

The day is not difficult, but can provide fantastic climbing on 30 degree slopes. Reaching Camp 3 we begin resting, hydrating and preparing for the summit bid.

***The summit day is extremely challenging, but entirely attainable. We will climb over 3,200 vertical feet (975 meters) across sand, scree, and -- during some seasons -- snowfields. When you reach the summit, you will be standing on the highest point in the Americas. Exceptionally stunning views of the encompassing snow-capped Andes serve as your ultimate reward.***

After summit photos and celebration, we will descend back down to our high camp to rest and rehydrate and then continue on to Plaza des Mulas basecamp. The following morning, a helicopter will whisk us back to Mendoza, where we will enjoy a well-deserved celebration over delectable steaks and flavorful red wine.



Santiago

Aconcagua

Penitentes

Mendoza

## Map Overview



# Aconcagua

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Summit

22,841' / 6,962m

Camp 3

19,700' / 6,005m

Camp 2

18,000' / 5,486m

Camp 1

16,500' / 5,029m

Base Camp

13,800' / 4,206m



## Daily Itinerary Overview

**DAY 1** — Arrive into Mendoza, Argentina by early afternoon. This small city is famous for its wineries and traditional barbeque and steaks. You'll spend the afternoon exploring the town, applying for your climbing permit and preparing for the climb.

**Activity.** Arrive in Mendoza, Argentina  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 2,300'  
**Lodging.** Diplomatic Hotel  
**Meals.** None

**DAY 2** — After obtaining permits, you will leave Mendoza by private van, for the town of Penitentes (8,900'/2,710m). Penitentes sits at the entrance to the valleys leading into Aconcagua. You will spend a couple of hours organizing equipment and food for your climb and then helicopter to base camp as soon as weather and timing allow (either this evening or tomorrow).

**Activity.** Drive to Penitentes  
**Distance Covered.** 115 mile drive  
**Moving Hours.** 3 hour drive  
**Elevation Gain/Loss** +5,900'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 8,900' or 13,800'  
**Lodging.** Hotel Ayalen or BC  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Dinner

**DAY 3** — Today we might helicopter into base camp if we did not last night, or simply have a rest day in base camp, getting used to life at this new altitude. 13,800 feet (4,206 meters). The flight in to base camp offers an unbelievable view of the mighty eight thousand foot south face of Aconcagua, quite the start to your climb!

**Activity.** Rest Day  
**Distance Covered.** N/A  
**Moving Hours.** N/A  
**Elevation Gain/Loss.** +5,000'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 13,800"  
**Lodging.** Base Camp  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**DAY 4** — You will spend the day acclimatizing and exploring the valley surrounding the "Plaza de Argentina" base camp. The base camp scene is amazingly luxurious, and the food that comes out of the incredible kitchen will blow you away. Sitting in the common area dome tent, you can inspect the route ahead through the large window as you enjoy a hot drink.

**Activity.** Move to C1  
**Distance Covered.** 3 miles  
**Moving Hours.** 4-6 hours  
**Elevation Gain/Loss.** +2,700'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 16,500'  
**Lodging.** Camp 1  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

# Daily Itinerary Overview

**DAY 5** — The climb up to camp 1 is truly unique. We move over the moraine and then through a field of tall penitentes (fins of ice that can be over 3 meters tall, formed by the intense sun) on our way to our campsite at 16,500 feet (5,030 meters). We utilize porters to assist in moving our equipment to Camp 1 in a single push.

**Activity.** Move to C1  
**Distance Covered.** 3 miles  
**Moving Hours.** 4-6 hours  
**Elevation Gain/Loss.** +2,700'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 16,500'  
**Lodging.** Camp 1  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

**DAY 6** — Approximately four hours of hiking takes us through the Amegheni Col and under the Polish Glacier to our camp on the Guanacos Route at 18,000 feet (5,487 meters). After spending some time up high breathing the thin air you will return back down to C1 for the night.

**Activity.** Acclimatize and touch Col or C2  
**Distance Covered.** 1-2 miles  
**Moving Hours.** 3-4 hours  
**Elevation Gain/Loss.** +/- 1,500'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 16,500'  
**Lodging.** Camp 1  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

**DAY 7** — Camp 2 gives you your first look to the North, where vast mountains and glaciers stretch out as far as the eye can see. Today you will make the move to C2 and spend the afternoon taking in the view.

**Activity.** Move to C2  
**Distance Covered.** 1 mile  
**Moving Hours.** 2-3 hours  
**Elevation Gain/Loss.** +1,500'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 18,000'  
**Lodging.** Camp 2  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

**DAY 8** — After a few days of moving, it's time to take a rest day. This also gives you body a chance to get accustomed to the increasingly higher altitudes.

**Activity.** Rest Day  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 18,000'  
**Lodging.** Camp 2  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

**DAY 9** — Today you move to your final camp, at nearly 19,700 feet (6,000 meters). This is where you join the Normal route. The day is not difficult, but can provide fantastic climbing on 30 degree slopes as we traverse below the Polish glacier. Reaching Camp 3 you begin resting, hydrating and preparing for your summit bid.

**Activity.** Move to C3  
**Distance Covered.** 1.5 miles  
**Moving Hours.** 4-6 hours  
**Elevation Gain/Loss.** +1,700'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 19,700'  
**Lodging.** C3  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

# Daily Itinerary Overview

**DAY 10** — Today is the day you've been training for. Waking in the middle of the night, your route takes you ever higher. Past the old "refugio Independencia", across the "Gran Acarreo", and finally up "La Canaleta". The climb is long and demanding, but soon you will start to see the very top of the great south face. The summit of Aconcagua rises above all other mountains around it, delivering memorable views that stretch to the horizon in every direction. Returning down to C3, its time to rest and pack and continue the descent. When ready, you'll make your way down the "normal route" to Plaza de Mulas Base Camp, where hot food and showers await!

**Activity.** Summit Day  
**Distance Covered.**  
**Moving Hours.** 12-15 hours  
**Elevation Gain/Loss.** +3,141' / -8,400'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 14,300'  
**Lodging.** Base Camp  
**Meals.** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

**DAY 11** — It's always prudent to have a couple extra days to allow flexibility with the team, the altitude and the weather.

**Activity.** N/A

**DAY 12** — Extra day

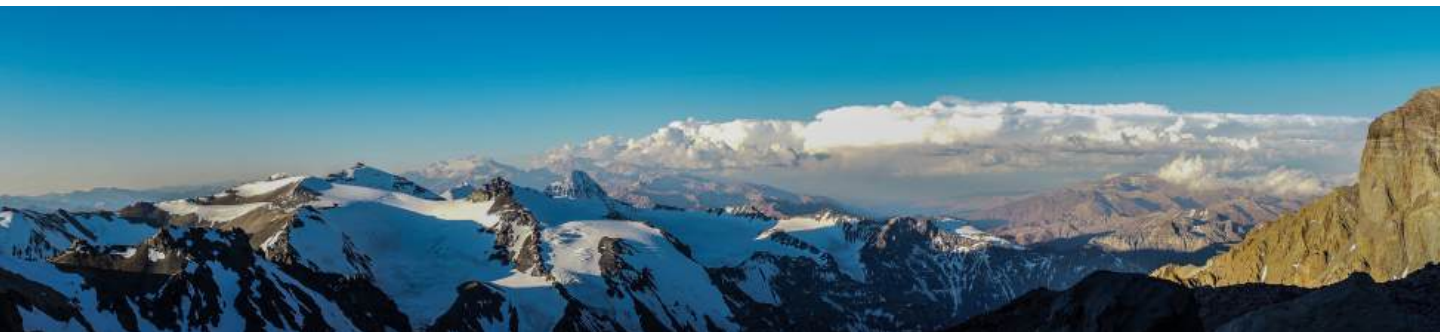
**Activity.** N/A

**DAY 13** — Today you leave the mountain in style, with one of the most beautiful helicopter flights in the world. The heli takes you directly from base camp to the road, in about a 15-minute flight. After a quick lunch, you jump in our van for the three-hour drive back to Mendoza. By dinnertime you'll be enjoying a celebration dinner of traditional asada (barbecue) at one of Mendoza's best restaurants. You spend the night in our hotel in Mendoza.

**Activity.** Fly out and drive to Mendoza  
**Distance Covered.** 1.5 miles  
**Moving Hours.** 2 hours  
**Elevation Gain/Loss.** -11,800'  
**Sleeping Elevation.** 2,500'  
**Lodging.** Hotel Diplomatic  
**Meals.** Breakfast & Lunch

**DAY 14** — Today it's time for goodbyes. After breakfast you'll head to the airport and your flight home.

**Activity.** Fly home



# Travel Details

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## INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

Climbers should schedule flights to land in Mendoza, Argentina on day 1 of the itinerary. Most flights will arrive midday or in the evening. Climbers will meet their guides and transport to our first hotel will be arranged.

If you do not have a travel agent, we recommend using kayak.com as a primary source for finding low-fare airfares.

## VISAS

Visas are available on arrival for most passport holders. Check with your country's embassy for further information.

## HELICOPTER TO AND FROM BASE CAMP

From the town of Penitentes, we'll board a private helicopter that will carry our team and gear all the way to Base Camp. We'll reverse this process on our way out.

*Please confirm your itinerary with Alpenglow Expeditions before purchasing.*





## Accommodations

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*All expeditions include double occupancy lodging in town and double occupancy tents on the mountain. No matter where we travel, Alpenglow strives to stay in safe, clean and comfortable accommodations. Our tents are always in good shape and are replaced regularly.*

### IN-TOWN

For our nights in Mendoza, we stay in a beautiful hotel named the Diplomatic. Comfortable lodging on night 1 allows us to get some rest after a long day of international travel. There is a possibility that we may spend a night in Penitentes if weather does not allow us to fly, and in that case we stay in Aelen Hotel de Montana.

### SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

If you prefer a single room while we are in hotels, please let us know as soon as possible. There will be an additional cost associated for this. Single supplement tents are available in base camp, however double occupancy tents are required for all camps on the mountain.

### ON-MOUNTAIN ACCOMMODATIONS

Base camp life includes a 3 person personal tent for you and another team member. Alpenglow's base camp infrastructure includes a dining tent complete with a lounge area that is made as comfortable as possible with heaters, plush chairs, and cushy rugs.

Above base camp, we move to the traditional style mountain camps. These will all be pre-built by our porter team ready to go for your arrival each afternoon. Camp 1 features a group tent allowing us to get out of the wind as a team while we prepare to move higher.





## General Trip Information

### FOOD

Food in Argentina is a source of cultural pride and truly something to look forward to. The food continues to impress at base camp and up to Camp 1 as we enjoy hearty breakfasts and filling dinners. Above Camp 1 meals get a bit more rudimentary as they do on mountain camps across the world.

### MOUNTAIN TRAINING

Aconcagua is obviously a large physical undertaking, and climbers who are joining our teams will have devoted at least 12 weeks to gaining mountain fitness, motivated by the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere. For a personalized training schedule, please reach out to Lynette at Billy Goat Swift: [lynette@billygoatswift.com](mailto:lynette@billygoatswift.com).

### ACCLIMATIZATION FOR NON-RAPID ASCENT CLIMBERS

While our daily itinerary doesn't change, there is an option for climbers who wish to acclimatize in-country prior to day 1 of the itinerary. Please contact the office to discuss options.

### MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

All of our expeditions and treks are physically demanding. Regardless of the skill level or experience needed, it is essential that you arrive in good physical shape, and prepared to handle extreme conditions, including cold, heat, and long tiring days. Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC and its guides reserve the right to remove any member of our trips at any time if we do not believe they are ready for the rigors of the trip.

You are responsible for your own medications, inoculations, and deciding whether you are physically able to participate in an Alpenglow Expeditions trip. You should discuss your participation in this trip, and the dangers involved, with your physician.

### On Mountain Medicine

Our guides are certified in wilderness medicine, CPR, and are experienced in client care in remote high altitude locations. However, Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC is not a medical provider and Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC assumes no liability regarding medical care.

## INCLUSIONS

**The cost of your trip includes** your land costs (*excluding in-town meals*). This includes:

- Double occupancy lodging while in town, according to itinerary.
- Meals on the mountain
- Group camping and climbing equipment
- Base camp and mountain infrastructure
- Scheduled transportation while in the countries we are visiting
- Certified guides
- Covid testing arrangements for re-entry into home country (does not include cost of test)

## CANCELLATION POLICY

View our cancellation policy online at [alpenglowexpeditions.com](http://alpenglowexpeditions.com).

## INSURANCE

We require that all participants carry rescue insurance and health insurance. Travel insurance is strongly recommended. Your policy numbers must be provided to us prior to leaving the USA.

## EXCLUSIONS

**The cost of your trip does not include:**

- Flights to/from the city where the expedition begins
- Additional nights in hotel outside of the itinerary, this includes but is not limited to extra hotel nights due to an early summit bid and early departure from the mountain.
- Airport taxes
- Climb Permits (\$1,050)
- Visas
- In-town meals
- Immunizations
- Tips for guides or local staff
- Travel, rescue, or any other type of insurance
- Hospitalization or evacuation costs
- Single supplement room charges
- Excess baggage charges
- Alcohol
- Antigen/PCR Covid test cost
- Other personal expenses
- Airport transportation for early arrival/late departures outside of scheduled itinerary

*\*\* The costs of delays or changes to itinerary that are beyond the control of Alpenglow Expeditions or its agents are not included.*





## Expedition of a Lifetime

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*Summit success is only achievable with your hard work and perseverance, and of course the right team of people around you.*

We think of ourselves as your partner in dreaming, planning, climbing and celebrating. Our entire team from Adrian, guides, support personnel and logistics partners are excited to have you along for the expedition of a lifetime.

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expeditions

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**BOOKING +  
INQUIRES**

For booking details, questions, or more information please call or email us:

**1 (877) 873-5376**

**[info@alpenglowexpeditions.com](mailto:info@alpenglowexpeditions.com)**



# ALPENGLOW

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This expedition is operated by Adrian Ballinger, IFMGA Mountain Guide.

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