



Vinson Massif

7 SUMMITS EXPEDITION

DURATION: 15 DAYS LOCATION: ANTARCTICA SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE

 ALPENGLOW



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Expedition Details

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LOCATION: ANTARCTICA

SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE

DATES: 2024/2025 DATES TBD

COST: \$56,000

DIFFICULTY LEVEL DESCRIPTION:

Intermediate - must be able to climb glaciated terrain with an alpine pack on your back. You should be comfortable with winter camp craft and be able to perform at a high level for multiple days in a row at altitude.

PREREQUISITES:

Team members must have made several ascents of glaciated peaks and be well versed in mountaineering techniques.



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Expedition Introduction

Why Climb in Antarctica?

Antarctica is known to be the driest, windiest, and coldest continent on the earth; In other words, the prime place for an epic adventure.

Antarctica is technically considered a desert and its vast ice sheet holds 60-90% of the world's freshwater. The continent is home to extinct and active volcanoes and the Trans-antarctic Mountain Range, which extends across the entire continent. Among the ranges is the Vinson Massif, it is here where one will find the continent's largest peak, Mt. Vinson at 16,050 ft/ 4892 m.

The allure and the mystery in Antarctica combined with the raw wilderness make it one of the most isolated places in the world. A trip to the highest peak of this magical continent is bound to be an extraordinary journey that is unparalleled and is not to be missed.



ROUTE CHOICE

Our team ascends the Branscomb Glacier route (also known as the standard route). From Vinson Base Camp our team works our way to low camp before continuing upwards a little over 3,000 ft to High Camp. The teams push from High Camp to the Summit ascends just over 3,500 ft leading us along the rocky summit to the top of Vinson at 16,050 ft/4892 m.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The continent of Antarctica was first spotted in 1820. While accounts of when the first humans to set foot vary it was the daring expeditions of the early 20th century that began to truly explore this mystical and vast ice sheet.

The Vinson Massif was discovered in 1958 by US Navy aircraft and named after a United States congressman of Georgia named Carl G. Vinson. The peak of Mount Vinson was first climbed in 1966 by an American team led by Nicholas Clinch.





About Alpenglow Expeditions

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 IFMGA 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



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

4:1 Maximum Guide to Climber Ratio

All of our guides are AMGA certified or trained mountain guides and are among the best in the business, drawing upon years spent guiding on Denali to give you the best experience possible.

Expedition Doctor on Call

Dr. Monica Piris, has been on fourteen 8,000-meter peak expeditions and is a huge asset to our team. She is in daily communication with our teams during the entirety of the expedition and is available for client consultation at any time.

Premium Logistics

Working with a local team to organize quality logistics for the trip, our climb provides a higher level of service above any other. From our guides, to our camp infrastructure and mountain amenities, our expedition logistics are unrivaled and will leave you wishing for nothing.

We work with Antarctic Logistics and Expeditions to help organize the intricate logistics involved with climbing Vinson and traveling in Antarctica. They are awesome and we're glad to be working in partnership with them.



Alpenglow's Vinson Team

Alpenglow's Guides

Alpenglow Expeditions' guides for this expedition are AMGA/IFMGA licensed or working to finish their certification. The guides that we will be working with on Vinson are incredibly experienced, having spent years of their lives honing the craft of mountain guiding.

Local Logistics Team

Our logistics for this expedition are run in conjunction with Antarctic Logistics and Expeditions. ALE has been a great partner to Alpenglow and has been running expeditions to Antarctica since 1985. Together we provide the highest quality logistics and mountain infrastructure possible.

TEAM MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

We build strong teams of qualified climbers. All climbers must have be proficient in basic mountaineering skills such as: Cramponing, walking on snow, crevasse rescue, self-arrest, glacier travel and rope skills, and winter camping experience. Team members will have completed an introductory mountaineering course, and completed 1-2 glaciated climbs within the past few years prior to climbing Vinson. Having a firm understanding of mountain travel and expedition living in crucial to success. Vinson is a demanding mountain; the more experience that you bring to the mountain, the greater the chance you'll reach it's summit. The Alpenglow Office will be vetting all expedition team members.



Route Description + Itinerary

Our team ascends the Branscomb Glacier route (also known as the standard route), which will typically take groups 5-9 days depending on the groups abilities and the weather conditions on route. Whilst the weather in Antarctica can pose some unpredictably cold and weatherly challenges, the route itself is built for the intermediate climber with ample opportunities included in the itinerary for time to acclimatize.

From drop-off at the Union Glacier our team is transported to Vinson Base Camp (7021 ft/ 2140m) where our climb starts. At Base Camp we allow our team to settle in spending the first day getting to know our mountain guide team and other members. On Day two we continue to acclimatize and become familiar with the lay of the land, clothing choices, and equipment while also taking a short hike in the nearby area and a way to further our comfortability.

After two days at Vinson Base Camp we ascend to Low Camp at 9121 ft/ 2780 m and stay the night there. The 2100 ft (640 m) climb typically takes around 4 to 6 hours and is a perfect introduction to the start of our Vinson climb as it is predominantly low angle and gradual. We also weave in time for an extra day at Low Camp and add in some additional training with a short hike to a nearby viewpoint or for strong and ambitious groups there is the opportunity to make an ascent on Knutzen Peak (11,066 ft/3373m), a 5-6 hour round trip from Low Camp.

From the Low to High Camp (12,402 ft/3780 m) we experience a little over 3,000 ft of climbing and begin our fixed rope climb that tends to take 4 to 5 hours, we also begin to face new exposure to the elements as we continue higher on the route. It is also at these higher elevations where we begin to catch some excellent views of nearby Mount Shinn and the glacier lying far below.

The team's push from High Camp to the Summit ascends just over 3,500 ft and takes around 9-12 hours leading us along the rocky summit where we encounter two route options; the easier and less steep left-hand (eastern) ridge route or the more direct right-hand (western) ridge route. Most teams elect to ascend via the right ridge with a descent of the eastern ridge route, however much of this depends on the weather conditions and the team's ability - ultimately coming down to the selection from the guide. Our final push takes up to the top of Mount Vinson at 16,050 ft/4892 m. where we catch magnificent views of the Vinson Massif and the glaciers below before continuing back down the mountain.

Summiting Mount Vinson is a remarkable experience that is extremely unique in its own right. Standing a top of Antarctica in a climate and landscape unlike any other is a memory to cherish and will leave you captivated



Daily Itinerary Overview

DAY 0 — Arrive into Punta Arenas, Chile. Our team will pick you up at the airport and take you to our hotel where you will rest from the long travel day.

Activity. Arrive in Punta Arenas, Chile

Sleeping Elevation. 112'

Lodging. Hotel TBD

Meals. None

DAY 1 — We'll spend the day prepping and checking gear. After an expedition brief and a final double check of our equipment, we'll be ready to head to Antarctica the tomorrow morning

Activity. Gear prep/Expedition brief

Sleeping Elevation. 112'

Lodging. Hotel

Meals. Breakfast

DAY 2 — Welcome to Antarctica! The southern-most continent in the world awaits you! The morning of day one our team will call your hotel to inform you of the current flying conditions, if everything looks like a go, we will pick you up in the lobby within the hour. From there we head to Punta Arenas airport where we will board our four and a half hour (depending on winds) chartered plane to Antarctica. Take in the spectacular views as we cross the Drake Passage and curve our way along the westside of the Antarctic Peninsula catching picturesque views of the Ellsworth Mountains before landing on our runway carved of blue ice on the Union Glacier. From here we climb aboard our specially adapted vans and drive 5 miles to camp, where you will be shown your quarters and rest up.

Activity. Fly to Union Glacier

Elevation Gain/Loss. +2,200'

Sleeping Elevation. 2,300'

Lodging. Union Glacier Camp

Meals. Breakfast

Daily Itinerary Overview

DAY 3 & 4 — A short flight from the Union Glacier camp will see us arrive at the Vinson base camp situated on the Branscomb Glacier. The Vinson Base Camp is a remarkable setting that gives us our first look at the mountain that we will be questing up. After arriving at base camp we'll make a short acclimatization hike to help us get acquainted with the Antarctic environment. The following day we'll pack and prepare our gear to start our push to the summit of Mount Vinson.

Activity. Fly to Vinson Base Camp
Distance Covered. Varies
Moving Hours. Varies
Elevation Gain/Loss. +4,700'
Sleeping Elevation. 7,021'
Lodging. Base Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 5 — Today we leave the comfortable confines of Vinson Base Camp and begin the gradual climb up the Branscomb Glacier to Low Camp. We travel together as a roped team due to crevasse hazard and pull sleds to help to lighten the load on our backs. This easy moving day will help familiarize our team with glacier travel techniques and get us back into the swing of mountaineering.

Activity. Climb to Low Camp
Distance Covered. 3.5 miles
Moving Hours. 4-6 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +2,100'
Sleeping Elevation. 9,121'
Lodging. Low Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 6 — After our climb to Low camp, we'll spend the day making another short acclimatization hike to the lower section of the fixed lines to do some skills work and familiarization before we continue onto the upper mountain tomorrow. If the team is strong and stoked, we might make an ascent of Knutzen Peak, a 11,066', 3,373m sub-peak that takes 5-6 hours round trip.

Activity. Acclimatization Hike
Distance Covered. Varies
Moving Hours. Varies
Elevation Gain/Loss. Varies
Sleeping Elevation. 9,121'
Lodging. Low Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 7 — If the weather conditions are predicting stable patterns into the near future we will begin our ascent to High Camp (12,402 ft/3780 m). A little over 3,000 ft in elevation gain the climb takes anywhere from 6-8 hours. This section introduces the team to steep slopes, 4-5 hours of fixed line climbing, potential variable conditions, and new elements of exposure to wind that we may have yet to encounter. The climb also greets us with excellent views of nearby Mount Shinn and a birds eye view of the glaciers below. As we approach high camp, we find ourselves on the gentle slopes of the summit glacier. While the accommodation and meals are a little more simple than at the lower camps the opportunity of getting up higher and having a day at high camp acclimatizing affords us the opportunity at having every team member the potential of a summit bid.

Activity. Fixed Rope Practice
Distance Covered. 4 miles
Moving Hours. 6-8 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +3,200'
Sleeping Elevation. 12,400'
Lodging. High Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Daily Itinerary Overview

DAY 8 — We'll spend the day resting and acclimatizing as we prepare for our summit bid on the tallest mountain in Antarctica.

Activity. Rest Day/acclimatization
Sleeping Elevation. 12,400'
Lodging. High Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 9 - Summit Bid — The summit pyramid sits 3,648 ft (1112 m) above high camp and typically takes teams about 9-12 hours round-trip with good visibility and conditions. The approach to the pinnacle is relatively gradual with a short steep icy pitch leading to the rocky summit ridge. It is here where we will start up the exposed Western Ridge to the summit up Vinson. Standing on top of Antarctica the summit provides sweeping views of the rest of the of the Vinson Massif - Mount Gardner, Tyree, Epperly, and Shinn. Take in this uniquely wonderful experience as the stunning feature of the glaciers, peaks, and ridges of Antarctica glow in magic all around you. After a short celebration atop the tallest peak in Antarctica and achieving on of the famed 7-summits, we'll start our descent to High Camp

Activity. Summit Bid
Distance Covered. 6 miles
Moving Hours. 9-12 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +/-3,648'
Sleeping Elevation. 12,400'
Lodging. High Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 10 — Our team descent from High Camp to Vinson Base Camp retraces our ascending route along the Branscomb Glacier and usually takes about a day to complete. Upon arrival at camp be prepared for a hearty meal, good rest, and a celebration that highlights the teams great success!

Activity. Descend to Base Camp
Distance Covered. 7 miles
Moving Hours. 4-6 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. -5,400'
Sleeping Elevation. 7,021'
Lodging. Base Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAYS 11-12 — Extra days to use for weather delays, acclimatization, etc

Activity. Extra Days

DAY 13 — After a successful summit of the Vinson Massif, we'll take a ski-plane back to the Union Glacier Camp.

Activity. Fly to Union Glacier
Sleeping Elevation. 2,300'
Lodging. Union Glacier Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 14 — Weather permitting, we'll once again fly across the Drake Passage on our way back to Chile, marking the end of our Antarctic adventure.

Activity. Fly to Punta Arenas
Sleeping Elevation. 112'
Lodging. Hotel
Meals. Breakfast

DAY 15 — Today we'll depart Chile for home.

Activity. Fly home

Travel Details

FLIGHTS

Climbers should schedule flights to land in Punta Arena, Chile on day 0 of the itinerary. Climbers will meet their guides and transport to our hotel will be arranged. Flights into Antarctica are handled by the Alpenglow logistics team and are included in pricing to ensure a smooth transition into Base Camp.

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

VISAS

Chilean visas are not required. Antarctic permits etc will be handled by the Alpenglow and our Logistics Teams.

Please confirm your itinerary with Alpenglow Expeditions before purchasing.





Accommodations

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 Punta Arenas, we stay in a luxury hotel that will allow for our bodies to get great rest a recovery from the long travel down to the southern most point of Chile and from our successful summit of Mount Vinson.

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 at base camp and Low Camp

Above base camp, we move to the traditional style mountain camps. We will be sleeping two people per one 3-person tent and be carrying our gear and setting up camps as we move higher up the mountain.





General Trip Information

FOOD

Fresh, healthy and nutritious food is both imported from the U.S. and purchased from local markets in Punta Arenas to provide the best options to our team. Our guides are incredible cooks, and will be working hard after our climbing days to provide food and calories to replenish our depleted bodies.

MOUNTAIN TRAINING

Vinson is obviously a large physical undertaking, and climbers who are joining our teams should have a deep understanding of what it takes to train for a mountain like this. For a personalized training schedule, please reach out to our in-house trainer:

lynette@alpenglowexpeditions.com.

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 facility 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

CANCELLATION POLICY

View our cancellation policy online at 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 early summit bids and early departure from the mountains.
- airport taxes
- in-town meals
- immunizations
- tips for guides or local staff
- travel, rescue, or any other type of insurance
- hospitalization or evacuation costs
- single supplement charges
- excess baggage charges,
- alcohol
- Airport transportation for early arrival/late departures outside of scheduled itinerary.
- other personal expenses.

*** 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

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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[ALPENGLLOWEXPEDITIONS.COM](https://alpenglowexpeditions.com)

BOOKING + INQUIRES

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

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

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