



Classic Wapta Traverse

Bow to Scott Duncan Info Package

Welcome to the Wapta Traverse, with Kootenay Backcountry Guides. Please ensure you read through the entire document as it contains essential information. If you have any questions, please contact us at info@kootenaybackcountryguides.com. Please fill out our [Google Form](#) to apply if this seems like a trip for you.

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Trip Dates

- April 12th-16th, 2023

Price

- \$1850 plus GST/person.

Included:

- Hut fees.
- Guiding.
- National park overnight fees.
- Dinners and breakfasts
- Dinners and breakfasts from dinner on April 14th to breakfast on April 18th
- Pre-trip planning and support

Not included:

- Travel to and from Lake Louise.
- Pre and Post-trip accommodation in Lake Louise.
- National Park passes for vehicles.
- Meals not included: All lunches and snacks. Breakfast on April 14th, dinner on April 18th.
- Equipment (safety, touring, crevasse, glacier) *see equipment list*
- Gratuities

The Huts

The Wapta huts are remote and minimally equipped. People should be prepared to spend four nights without connection to the outside world. KBG will bring an Inreach Device capable of text messaging. We reserve this device for emergency communication. We recommend getting your satellite communication device if you need to connect to family or friends.

- **Hut Info:**

- [Bow Hut](#)
- [Balfour Hut](#)
- [Scott Duncan Hut](#)



Itinerary

April 11, 2023

- 15:00-18:00 Meet at [Lake Louise Hostel](#). Go over group gear, sort out food and go over plans for the following day.
- Please ensure when booking your travel to Lake Louise that you have arrived in time for this meeting as it is very important.

April 12, 2022

- 06:00-0700 breakfast
- 07:00 depart and organize vehicle drop
- 10:00 depart Bow Lake for Bow Hut, arrive and do crevasse rescue practice. Attempt to get some turns.

April 13, 2022

- 07:00-08:00 breakfast
- 08:30-17:00 Traverse to Balfour hut. Attempt to get some skiing in if possible. Summit Mount Olive along the way if possible.

April 14, 2022

- 07:00-08:00 breakfast
- 08:30-17:00 Go skiing and mountaineering around the Balfour Hut

April 15, 2022

- 07:00-08:00 breakfast
- 08:30-1700 Traverse to Scott Duncan Hut over Balfour high col.

April 16, 2022

- 07:00-08:00 breakfast
- 08:30-14:00 Traverse to Sherbrook Lake and West Louise Lodge.



Equipment Lists

YOUR PREFERRED METHODS OF TRAVEL

SKI TOURING

1. **Alpine Touring Bindings:** These are downhill skis with a touring binding.
2. **Tech Bindings:** This binding has pins that connect with holes in the toe of your boots. You need to have Tech Toe boots for these bindings to work. See [this image](#) for an idea of what we are describing. If you want a lightweight tech binding, the [Dynafit Radical](#) is a great example. The [Marker Kingpin](#) is a decent choice that combines a regular releasable heel with a tech-style toe piece. There are many options available for different tech bindings and boot combinations. One challenge with tech bindings is that they do not adhere to the DIN system and can be hard to operate. The [Solomon Shift](#) binding has tried to deal with the DIN issue by making a regular binding that turns into a tech binding for the climb. Many new models are being released that do the same.
3. **Frame Bindings:** Frame bindings have a regular toe and heel piece, but the heel can unlock. See [this image](#) for details. Frame bindings are heavy; they walk awkwardly, thus reducing your efficiency in the mountains; they are also NOT stronger than tech bindings and often break.
4. **Telemark skis:** These are becoming less and less popular as the world of alpine ski touring grew as equipment has changed with innovation. This system can be challenging. Releasable bindings are highly recommended as this is a significant safety advantage.

SPLITBOARDING

Splitboarding is the most effective and lightweight way to snowboard in the backcountry. As technology has improved over the last five years, split-boarding has been the go-to for all snowboarders in the backcountry. First, you need to purchase splitboard bindings. The [Spark Binding](#) set up, or the [Burton Hitchhiker](#) is the most popular. Check out [Tribute Board Shop](#) in Nelson for your splitboarding needs. More and more people are using hard boot and Tech Bindings for splitboarding. Check out the [Phantom](#) setup for more info.

Boots: Those who choose Alpine Touring will want to have Alpine Touring Boots with Vibram Soles. Please ensure that you buy boots with a tech toe if you have a tech binding. See the (Alpine Touring skis/bindings section for details). Alpine Touring Boots are designed for walking



and skiing. They have a walk mode that allows your ankle to flex and a rockered sole for easy walking. Downhill alpine boots are not recommended, even ones with a walk mode; they are significantly heavier and less comfortable than an Alpine Touring boot.

Splitboarding Boots: Pretty much all snowboarding boots work with Splitboard bindings. Make sure you get boots designed for long walks. If you want a hard boot setup go to the [Phantom](#) page to find out what boots they recommend.

AVALANCHE SAFETY GEAR

Show up with all the necessary avalanche safety equipment. Please ensure you that all of the above equipment is modern and in good working order. Trying out brand new boots on this trip is not a good idea as you might end up with blisters from uncomfortable boots that make it challenging to complete the tours. Test and assemble your gear before coming on the journey to ensure it is all working correctly and you know how to use it.

1. **Transceivers:** You need a modern triple antenna digital transceiver; we do not allow analog or dual antenna transceivers on our trips or courses. All new modern triple antenna transceivers are suitable. Select one that you think fits your needs. You should be very suspicious of purchasing transceivers on Facebook Marketplace or from other used gear sources. You do not know if used transceivers are damaged or how old they are.
 - a. See [this video](#) for an overview of what to look for in transceivers.
 - b. If you are looking for an excellent site to check out all the different transceivers and what features are available, visit: <https://beaconreviews.com/>

PIEPS DSP SPORT OR PRO

Please note that these transceivers have issues with their lock buttons if you have a Pieps DSP Sport or Pro so please take them to your local gear shop to get them checked out.

What model is your beacon?

Your beacon should have the model name printed somewhere on the body.

Below are examples of the most common PIEPS and Black Diamond Equipment beacon models on the market today:



2. **Shovel:** Shops offer a wide range of excellent shovels. Do not buy plastic or super lightweight shovels. Check out [this video](#) for what to look for in a shovel.
3. **Probe:** Make sure you are buying a high-quality probe that is easy to put together. See [this video](#) for what to look for in a probe. Although all new models have a quick snap to lock the probe in place, we do not recommend screw-in tops for avalanche probes. BCA makes excellent probes at a reasonable price. We recommend that your probe is 300cm or longer. We do not allow probes shorter than 270cm on our courses.
4. **Skins:** Choose a skin that is appropriate for your skis or splitboard. Make sure to follow the instructions carefully when setting them up. G3 Alpinist Skins are a great easy skin to set up; they are available for Skis and Splitboards.
5. **Backpack:** A properly fitting backpack is crucial to having a comfortable day in the backcountry. We recommend a pack between 45 and 55L. The best packs have compartments for avalanche safety gear. Please make sure your pack has attachments to carry skis or snowboards and a helmet holder.

Airbag Packs: Avalanche airbags are not mandatory on our courses or trips. European studies show they significantly reduce your chances of being buried in an avalanche. There are many different makes and models to choose from and range from \$700 to \$1800.

Other Items

- Sunglasses (with very good UV protection, an extra pair is a good idea)
- Sunscreen
- Two-1 litre Water bottles, preferably insulated



- Multi-Tool (optional but recommended)
- Ski or Splitboard crampons
- Repair kit / spare parts for your bindings
- Ice Axe (lightweight)
- Maps and compasses are recommended but optional.
 - [Map: Summits & Icefields Map Wapata Ice fields and bow summit](#)

Crevasse Rescue Equipment

- Climbing harness for glacier travel (These are lightweight and prioritize movement over comfort)
- 2 locking carabiners
- 2 non-locking carabiners
- Prusik Cords (2, 5m length of 6mm cord)
- 1.5m section of 6mm cord
- 120cm Dyneema Sling
- *The following are optional but highly recommended if you plan on making any future glacier trips*
 - *Petzl Micro Traxion Pulley*
 - *Petzl Tibloc*

Glacier Travel Gear For Rent:

\$50 for the whole trip:

- 2 locking carabiners
- 2 non-locking carabiners
- Prusik Cords (2, 5m length of 6mm cord)
- 1.5m section of 6mm cord
- 120cm Dyneema Sling

Not Available For Rent:

- Lightweight Ice Axe
- Ski or splitboard crampons.
- Climbing harness for glacier travel (These are lightweight and prioritize movement over comfort)
- *The following are optional but highly recommended if you plan on doing any future glacier trips:*
 - *Petzl Micro Traxion Pulley*
 - *Petzl Tibloc*



Clothing

- Wind and waterproof shell jacket with hood (Gore-Tex or similar)
- Wind and waterproof pants (Gore-Tex or similar)
- Down or Primaloft insulated jacket
- Fleece or wool underwear, top and bottoms can be changed every second day.
- 2 Pairs of gloves (lightweight and heavier weight)
- Scarf, neck gaiter or bandanna (Buffs are great for this)
- Socks, one for each day of the trip
- Toque
- Sun hat, preferably with a wide brim

For The Hut

- Spare underwear
- Socks
- Hut Booties. These are small lightweight booties that are insulated.
- Toiletries (minimum supply, Baby wipes and vaseline are helpful)
- Light stuff sack or zip lock bags to keep your backpack organised (optional)
- Sleeping bag (rated to -10C)
- Lightweight hut slippers or down booties
- Ear Plugs
- A small book and/or writing material
- Headlamp with a spare battery
- Skin wax (a small amount)
- Blister kit

Personal Items

- (Prescription medicine, extra contact lenses and maintenance equipment, prescription glasses etc.)
- Health/Travel insurance documents/numbers
- Zip-lock bag for wallet and other documents to keep them dry (recommended)
- Camera (optional) Most people use their phones.
- Power Bank to charge your phone (optional) The lodges do not have electricity.

Meals & Food

- KBG will be supplying dinner and breakfasts, starting with dinner on April 14th and ending with breakfast on April 18th.



- Depending on the issue's complexity, there may be an extra charge if you have special dietary restrictions.
- Meals will be dehydrated and pre-packed.
- We will collect information about your food preferences at the time of booking.

Covid Policies

- We will be following all provincial health orders regarding Covid. We will also be following all Alpine Club of Canada policies.
- The Wapta huts sleep up to 18 people but they are smaller than most fully equipped huts. We may have up to 18 people for this trip. Participants must be ok with spending time in close quarters with people outside their current bubbles.
- It is up to you to maintain good health pre-trip. If you test positive for Covid pre-trip, you will not join us, and there will be no refund.
- Note that our cancellation insurance provider offers trip cancellation insurance covering Covid and other illnesses.

Cancellation Policies:

- Review our [cancellation policy here](#)

Trip Cancellation and Rescue Insurance

In light of the refund and cancellation policies set out above, trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended to cover you for unforeseen circumstances that may interrupt or cancel your trip or course with us. We do not provide such insurance but have provided you with a recommended provider. Follow this link for a quote

<https://lifestylefinancial.ca/get-a-quote/kootenay-backcountry-guides/>

1. Medical and rescue costs may not be covered by the BC or Alberta government. We recommend that all participants from out of province or country purchase their own medical travel, and rescue insurance to ensure complete coverage during your trip. Lifestyle Financial also provides this coverage.
2. Kootenay Backcountry Guides will not be responsible for any personal costs associated with an accident on any of our courses or tours.



Fitness & Skills

- This trip is rated as [Flying Squirrel for Fitness and Skills](#). You should consider that these ratings need to be applied with a large pack. If you are unsure of your fitness or skill level, contact us.
- We will be spending long days in the mountains with up to 10km travel and 1000m vertical possible.
- Please consider that your fitness and ski skills are essential for your and the group's safety.

Splitboarding Considerations

- It is possible to complete this traverse on a splitboard. Due to the final day being a long travel day with a slight downhill, it is recommended that you are able to travel in ski mode. The route is on a road with grades in the 5-15 degree steepness range. Most people with minimal ski skills should be able to do this.
- Traversing can be more challenging on a splitboard in soft boots. Therefore, hard boots are recommended but not mandatory.
- You need a slightly higher fitness level to complete this trip on a splitboard.