



# MOUNT VINSON

4,892M / 16,050FT



**2026/27 EXPEDITION TRIP NOTES**





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## 2026/27 EXPEDITION DETAILS

**Dates:** Trip 1: December 4–19, 2026\*  
Trip 2: December 15–31, 2026\*  
Trip 3: December 27, 2026 to January 11, 2027  
Trip 4: January 7–22, 2027  
\* *Combo with South Pole Last Degree available*

**Duration:** 16 or 17 days  
**Departure:** ex Punta Arenas, Chile  
**Price:** US\$57,600



▲ Traversing the summit ridge. Photo: Lydia Bradley

During the southern summer of 2026/2027, Adventure Consultants will operate its twenty-ninth year of expeditions to Mount Vinson, Antarctica's highest summit. If you have a desire to discover the Antarctic interior and stand on the summit of Mount Vinson, then this is an exciting opportunity and very likely your best chance of achieving that goal.

Mount Vinson is situated in the heart of the Ellsworth Mountains, 700 nautical miles from the South Pole. The mountain was first climbed by an American expedition during the summer of 1966/67 but was not ascended a second time until 1979. Both expeditions were supported by government programmes.

The Canadian company Adventure Network International (ANI) opened up this area to private expeditions and operated regular flights to its summer camp at Patriot Hills from 1985. In 2003/2004 they withdrew their Antarctic operations and Antarctica Logistics & Expeditions (ALE) stepped in. ALE is run by some of the same people that initially started ANI back in the 1980s and they now use a new camp at Union Glacier as their base to operate from in Antarctica.

Mount Vinson is 4,897m/16,067ft high but is not a technically difficult climb although it is an extremely cold ascent with temperatures dropping to minus 40°C near the summit.

Under the leadership of experienced Antarctic guides, climbers of moderate experience can safely undertake the expedition.

While ALE will supply our transport to and from Antarctica, Adventure Consultants will provide all the leadership, guiding staff and team equipment necessary for the expedition.

## MEETING POINT

We will gather in Punta Arenas, Chile. Regular flights on LAN Chile and Ladeco Airlines connect with Santiago and other points north. As the group gear must be weighed and loaded at least one day prior to departure to Union Glacier, you must schedule your arrival accordingly. Thus, we recommend arriving the day before the official start date of the expedition or at the very least, arriving on the morning of Day 1.





▲ An Ilyushin 76 on the blue ice runway at Union Glacier. Photo: Guy Cotter

## ACCESS TO THE MOUNTAIN

From Punta Arenas at the tip of Chile, we fly by Boeing 757 commercial jet aircraft to the ALE base at Union Glacier. Here the aircraft makes a wheeled landing on a natural blue ice runway.

Union Glacier Camp, situated at 80 degrees South, consists of a small collection of tents. The dining and kitchen tent has a wooden floor and is heated with a kerosene stove. We sleep here overnight in our own mountain tents but gather for meals in the warmth of the dining tent.

From Union Glacier, we transfer to a smaller ski equipped aircraft (Twin Otter or Cessna) for a one hour flight north to the base of the Mount Vinson in the heart of the Ellsworth Mountains.

## THE ROUTE

The climb involves interesting glacier travel on the wide and gently sloping lower reaches of the Branscomb Glacier. We pull our sleds up the glacier far below the impressive ice falls that cascade from the main Vinson plateau, 1,500m/5,000ft above.

The Base Camp is situated on the Branscomb Glacier at approximately 2,100m/6,900ft and we use two higher camps at approximately 2,700m/8,850ft and 3,850m/12,600ft. The Low Camp is situated further up

the glacier just beyond the second icefall, below an ice-wall, which drops directly from the main summit which is about a 7-hour walk from Base Camp punctuated by regular breaks to take in the scenery. We carry half of our equipment in a rucksack and the other half we tow behind on a small plastic sledge.

From Low Camp, we climb a 1,200m/4,000ft snow arête (up to 40 degrees steep) on fixed rope for approximately 800m/2,600ft. Fixed rope techniques will be taught during the expedition. The snow arête leads us to High Camp which takes about 6–9 hours. High Camp is nestled beside a rocky ridge adjacent to the main summit plateau.

The climb from High Camp to the summit normally takes between 7 and 10 hours, depending on the speed of the party. The descent back to the top camp takes around 2½ hours. On summit day as you climb the glacial plateau, you will first pass Branscomb Peak on the left and the final Vinson summit pyramid then lies directly ahead. From here we climb the picturesque East Ridge, weaving in and out of small rock steps until we arrive at the stunningly beautiful summit and the highest point on the Antarctic continent.

There is a Sierra Club book in a metal tin on the summit of the peak for those wishing to record their ascent. The descent from High Camp down to Base Camp can be achieved reasonably comfortably in one day. We collect the toilet bags and other waste on the way down the mountain.



▲ Sled hauling up to Low Camp. Photo: Steve Moffat

## PREREQUISITE SKILLS

Climbing Mount Vinson involves snow camping for several day's duration, glacier travel, sled hauling and moderate snow and ice climbing including the use of fixed lines. In technical terms, the climb is considered moderate, but extremely cold temperatures (-29F/-35C to -20F/-29C are not uncommon) and strong winds often increase the challenge.

Team members need to be physically fit, have strong mental stamina and be capable of strenuous exercise in a cold environment for several days. You must be capable of carrying a 25kg/55lb pack. The expedition is unsupported, meaning that there is no porter support. All team members will also be expected to assist in putting up and breaking camps, and help out with meal-making while on the mountain.

Prerequisite skills include basic mountaineering skills, glacier travel as part of a roped team, crevasse rescue training, snow camping experience and sufficient 'pack' fitness to do long days on steep terrain carrying big loads. Previous mountaineering experience on glaciated peaks such as Mont Blanc, Mount Aspiring, Island Peak or Mount Rainier is required.

## TEAM SIZE

The team will have a minimum size of 4 members and 1 guide and a maximum size of 10 members and 2 guides.

You will find the Adventure Consultants Mountain Guides companionable and strong expedition leaders with considerable power and willingness to see you achieve your goals. The number of guides is determined by the team size but the normal ratio of guides to climbers is 1:5.

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## ITINERARY

Following is an ideal itinerary for Mt Vinson Expeditions:

|       |                              |
|-------|------------------------------|
| Day 1 | Meet in Punta Arenas, Chile  |
| Day 2 | Weighing and loading of gear |
| Day 3 | Expedition briefing          |

|          |                                  |
|----------|----------------------------------|
| Day 4    | Fly to Union Glacier, Antarctica |
| Day 5    | Fly to Mount Vinson Base Camp    |
| Day 6–13 | Climb Mount Vinson               |
| Day 14   | Return to Union Glacier          |
| Day 15   | Depart for Punta Arenas          |
| Day 16   | Depart for home                  |

**NOTE:** For our 17 day itinerary the climb period is extended. Antarctic flights are subject to weather; delays can and often do occur. It is important to allow flexibility with airline travel arrangements.

## THE ADVANTAGES OF CLIMBING WITH ADVENTURE CONSULTANTS

Adventure Consultants is renowned for the quality of its service and strategy applied to high altitude expedition climbing. Our reputation is attributed to meticulous planning and experienced logistics coordination. We have a philosophy of investing in every expedition to offer our climbers the best possible chance of success.

We employ strong and specialised Expedition leaders and support staff, who are some of the most pre-

eminent in the industry. We pride ourselves on operating with small teams, the best back-up and support available.

This includes nutritious and ample quantities of food, comfortable Base Camp facilities, reliable communications systems and the necessary medical back up.

Many of our expedition members come to us because they have seen us in action on a previous trip and decide to opt for our level of service and proven experience. Others return because they know we do our very best to make expeditions safe and successful.

## VISAS

Expedition members must secure their own visa for multiple-entry into Chile. While Chile claims part of the Antarctic Continent as its sovereignty, it requires that we check through immigration when leaving for and returning from Antarctica; thus a multi-entry visa is required.

## HOTELS

Adventure Consultants can book your hotel in Punta Arenas or you can take care of this yourself. Please advise us at the time of booking.



▲ Another successful AC Team summits. Photo: Suze Kelly



Cooking up a storm at Base Camp. Photo: Guy Cotter



▲ Climbing fixed ropes to High Camp with a heavy pack. Photo: Guy Cotter



## COMMUNICATIONS

The expedition will be equipped with portable Iridium satellite phone systems for the duration of the expedition in order to provide reliable voice communication for weather forecasting and limited personal use. Limited satellite phone time can be purchased at the rate of US\$4.00 per minute. If you anticipate high satellite phone usage please contact our office to discuss options for hiring a phone for your personal use.

## EQUIPMENT LIST & REFERENCE NOTES

Expedition members will be sent a list detailing all the necessary clothing and equipment to be individually provided, contained within a set of Expedition Reference Notes with all the details for the trip. These notes provide extensive information on everything from suggestions of what type of camera to bring to training advice for your expedition preparation.

## MEDICAL EXAMINATION & INSURANCE

Expedition members will be provided with a medical questionnaire by the expedition doctor and asked to visit their family physician to receive a full medical examination. This information will be sighted only by our Medical Advisor and treated with full confidentiality. We also require members to have rescue insurance and we will consult with individual team members as to your insurance needs and solutions for coverage.

## PASSPORT PHOTOGRAPHS

Expedition members will be requested to provide 2 passport photographs and their climbing résumé.

## ADD ON OPTIONS

For those expedition members that wish to extend their time in Antarctica we have a number of options available. Trek to the South Pole with our South Pole Ski the Last Degree option, climb unclimbed peaks on the frozen continent on our Climb Antarctica program, spend some time ski touring on Ski Antarctica, stay at our luxury Three Glaciers Camp or simply take a scenic flight to the South Pole.

Whether your interest is towards the technically challenging or you simply want to see more of Antarctica then contact our office—there is endless scope for adventure!



▲ A climber negotiating the summit ridge of Vinson. Photo: Guy Cotter



▲ High Camp. Photo: Suze Kelly



▲ Rapelling down fixed line between High and Low Camps. Photo: Suze Kelly



▲ Celebrating summit success and endless views. Photo: Lydia Bradley



▲ Almost at High Camp, in front of Mount Shinn. Photo: Steve Moffat

## THE EXPEDITION FEE

The cost of the expedition, ex Punta Arenas, Chile, is US\$57,600.

This is an inclusive cost and covers the following:

- Flights to and from Union Glacier in Antarctica
- Flights from Union Glacier to Mount Vinson Base Camp and return
- All group climbing equipment
- All expedition organisational requirements
- Tents and food while in Antarctica
- Mountain guides
- Use of the expedition satellite telephone for outgoing calls
- Dispatch web page updated throughout the trip for friends & family to follow
- Transport of 25kg of personal equipment

The expedition fee **does not** include the following:

- Air travel to and from Punta Arenas, Chile
- Hotel accommodation and meals in Punta Arenas
- Chilean visa and airport fees
- Personal insurance—full travel, medical and rescue insurance is required as well as personal trip

cancellation insurance (medical evacuation insurance cover of US\$150,000 is required)

- Personal clothing and equipment
- Excess baggage transportation charges of US\$77 per kg for any baggage exceeding the personal equipment weight limit
- Cost of satellite telephone calls whilst on expedition

**NOTE:** Pricing may change due to increases in airfares and other costs outside the control of Adventure Consultants.

## PAYMENTS

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following bank and account:

Bank of New Zealand  
Offshore Branch  
42 Willis Street  
Spark Central  
Wellington  
New Zealand

for the account of Adventure Consultants Limited



**Account Number:** 1000-594771-0000

**Account Type:** US Dollars

**Swift Address:** BKNZ22

**NOTE:** Bank transfer charges are for the remitter's account.

We can also accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard and Amex) plus a 3% card charge.

## DEPOSIT

A non-refundable deposit of US\$5,000 is payable to secure a place on the expedition.

## BALANCE

The balance is payable 120 days before the trip departure date.

## CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

An expedition member may cancel their participation on the following basis:

- Cancellations outside of 120 days will result in the loss of trip deposit.
- For cancellations made within 120 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 50% of the balance payment fee.
- For cancellations within 90 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

- If cancellation occurs within the 90 day period and full payment has not been received, the full payment will still apply and unpaid monies are due immediately.

We **strongly recommend** you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent if you wish to be covered against cancellation due to medical or personal reasons.

## HOW TO JOIN THIS EXPEDITION

If you would like to join one of our Mount Vinson expeditions, please complete our online booking form and forward your deposit payment at <https://adventureconsultants.com/expeditions/seven-summits/vinson#DepartureBookingBlock>.

## CONTACT US

If you require more information, please contact us at:

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▲ Climbers at Low Camp. Photo: Guy Cotter



Adventure Consultants is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and a corporate member of the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants is a supporter of the dZi Foundation in Nepal for their 'Revitalise a Village' programmes.

Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA/UIAGM standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.



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