

Edinburgh Indoor Climbing Arena unveils plans for its Winter Skills courses



Mountain lovers who are considering facing the elements this winter are being encouraged to boost their skills with the world's largest indoor climbing arena.

Edinburgh Indoor Climbing Arena (EICA) at Ratho, part of not-for-profit company Edinburgh Leisure, has unveiled plans for its Winter Skills courses in light of heightened awareness of mountain safety.

A choice of one and two day courses will start on 15th December, providing vital, potentially life saving skills to anyone eager to enjoy Scotland's majestic mountain scenery this winter.

The one day courses will cover key skills including ice axe and crampon use, navigation and avalanche awareness.

The two day courses will show participants how to build emergency shelters, negotiate steeper terrain and even spend a night in the Highlands.

Participants will travel to iconic beauty spots such as Ben Lawers or Glen Coe with expert instructors so they can learn skills, apply them in practise and have a fantastic experience.

Nic Crawshaw, Technical Advisor at EICA, said: "Scotland's incredible scenery has long been much loved by mountain enthusiasts, and winter is when the hills are at their harshest, but arguably most beautiful.

“Every year accidents and fatalities occur in Scotland’s mountains and we aim through these courses to equip people with the skills to enjoy winter hillwalking and climbing with increased safety and confidence.

“Just as you need the right equipment to make best use of Scotland’s landscape, you also need the right skills. For example, navigation skills and the ability to understand the relationship between terrain, wind and snowfall are important for hill-walkers in winter in order to choose safe routes to summits– relying on a GPS is not enough.

“We can also teach you other outdoor climbing skills – multi-pitch ropework; advanced ice axe and crampon use; and the safety skills that you will need in different weathers and terrains.

“Anyone who has previously stuck to summer walking and would like to try getting out in winter, or seasoned winter climbers who just want to brush up on these vital skills, can join us for what promises to be a thrilling course in some of Scotland’s most breath taking sites.”

From the novice to the seasoned climber, EICA offers something for everyone, with climbing walls, a bouldering area and the adrenalin-pumping aerial assault course.

There’s also the fitness studio, gym and Rock Tots playroom and Scrambles soft play for mini mountaineers.

The renowned climbing centre also boasts a steam room, sauna and spa pool perfect for unwinding and soothing tired muscles.

For further information about dates and prices and to book contact 0131 333 6333 or info.eica@edinburghleisure.co.uk or visit www.eica-ratho.co.uk