



# TUPUNGATO EXPEDITION

AVENTURAS PATAGONICAS - MOUNTAIN GUIDES

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## YOUR TUPUNGATO EXPEDITION --- By Rodrigo Mujica

Our expedition starts in the City of Santiago, Chile. Santiago is a charming town with pleasant wide avenues, boulevards and parks. Our first step will be to check your gear in your hotel room, ideally, after you have rested from crossing the Globe. Gear check is a critical step. It is important to pare down to the essential items you will need to climb to one of the Top of the Americas. Often at gear check we discover someone has brought gear that is not warm enough. More than one experienced Alaskan has forgotten the essential Expedition Parka! It is difficult to procure gear in South America, though times are changing. Do not count on being able to find what you need once you get down to South America. Santiago is your best bet to buy or rent gear, though not always easy to find at the last minute. Make sure you leave home with everything on your equipment list. If you are having serious difficulty finding a particular item please let us know before you leave for South America!

A group meeting will follow gear check. We will introduce your guides and team members and talk about several aspects of your Expedition. We will discuss the philosophy and style of the Expedition, the effects of Diamox and prescription medications at altitude, sanitation, water treatment, teamwork, and the art of climbing big mountains. Dinner will take place immediately after the meeting at a nice Santiago restaurant reached via a pleasant walk from the hotel. We will have a chance to taste gourmet Santiago cuisine, fresh beef, delicious wines, (there are plenty of alternatives for non-drinkers and vegetarians in the group as well). Be prepared for a late dinner since dinnertime in Santiago begins at 9:00PM!

First thing the next morning our van will take us toward Cajon del Maipo, to a valley named The Rio Colorado Valley, which follows the Colorado River. The drive is spectacular, we head to a small place called El Alfalfal, where our climbing permits will be checked. We keep on following the Colorado River, with impressive views of some unusual granite walls cutting through the jagged Andes. Imposing peaks and profound valleys line our route until we reach the end of the road, where we do our last minute packing to arrange mule loads and then start hiking, this is the beginning of our acclimatization process.

The next three days will be spent on our approach to Base Camp at 13,800'. Mules and their muleteers will carry all of our gear to Base Camp except for our day packs which we carry daily with food, water and a change of warm clothes.

We have access to our mules and gear every night on the approach. This makes our hike in very enjoyable. Our approach will involve 35 miles of spectacular colorful high desert scenery. Normally it gets very hot and dry during the day. Occasionally a thundershower will pass by and have us quickly changing from shorts to our warm clothes. After a 4-5 hour hike the first day, we will camp at Baños Azules at about at 8,500' (meaning Blue baths), unload the mules, set up camp, drink some matte (a caffeinated tea served in a gourd and drank with a metal straw) with the local gauchos. Early morning we start the day with an amazing river crossing of Rio Colorado, through some perfect giant boulders jammed in a way that you can just walk across them, and then slowly gain altitude up the Colorado Valley heading north.

The Valley opens up revealing geography of high mountains, possible sightings of condors, and incredible geological features- a perfect setting for a western movie. At the end of our hike for the day, after 5-6 hours walk, we reach Las Vegas del Flojo at about 10,000' (meaning lazy man meadow) and we get our first view of the mountain since we began our approach. From this camp Tupungato, appears more magnificent than ever, a giant Volcano of Himalayan proportions. We can see the entire majestic South Face. This is one of the nicest camps of the expedition with a nice green meadow, running water and breathtaking views of the surrounding alpine peaks. In the morning we continue up the Colorado River valley, spectacular glaciers contrasting with a desert backdrop make this approach both surreal and unforgettable. The next morning after a 5-6 hr hike we reach our Base camp at 13,800', where we will spend a few days.

We will spend a minimum of 3 nights in Base Camp. We want everyone to have the best possible chance to acclimatize and make the Summit. The most effective way to do this is to take the time to acclimatize to the low oxygen environment. Occasionally a person does not acclimatize properly and is susceptible to pulmonary and/or cerebral edema. These are serious conditions that require immediate descent. All precautions will be taken to ensure your safety. We will incorporate rest days into our schedule and climb in traditional expedition style. We will be carrying loads up to the next camp and returning to sleep below, at the previous camp. Carry high and sleep low. The next day we will move to the higher camp.

The first day in Base Camp is always a rest day and a good occasion to take a bath and go for a short walk. We will divide expedition loads to carry to the next camp; community gear, fuel, food and individual lunches. Often our loads aren't heavier than 50 lbs. Although this may not seem very heavy to you, with the combination of high altitude it can be a considerable challenge to anyone.

After our rest in Base Camp we will do a carry to Camp I, at 15,500' approx. This is a great day where we gain 1,800' with a heavy load, up some easy but sometimes tricky, loose terrain. We will emphasize breathing in rhythm with our pace using power breathing, rest step, and other techniques that will help save energy at these elevations. We will incorporate a rest about every hour, and a breather (a short standing break) every 20 minutes or so. As we go higher, this simple breather will become our best friend. Breathers will also be taken more often as we get higher especially on Summit Day. Breathers are an essential part of high altitude climbing allowing you to keep going for long periods of time.

At Camp I we will cache our loads and descend down to Base Camp with empty packs to spend the night. The following morning could be a possible rest day or a definite move to Camp I; this will depend on how the group did the previous day, how the group is doing now, and on the weather. On most expeditions we do stay an extra day in Base Camp. This has proven to be a great idea. Base Camp is one of the last comfortable places we will be at for a while. If you don't take the opportunity to get acclimatized at Base Camp you may end up taking another rest day (or days) in a more uncomfortable camp somewhere high up on the mountain and jeopardize your chance to summit. More than a needed rest this time in Base Camp is an essential acclimatization time before tackling the peak!

The move to Camp I is always exciting, leaving behind the comfort of Base Camp we begin our climb of the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere. At Camp I, teamwork is key, from building rock walls to protect our tents from the wind, making level platforms to place our tents on, fetching snow or water for cooking, organizing our gear, etc, it is endless work camp crafting at high altitude.

Our next step is to establish our Camp II, at 16,500' approx, with first a carry then a move. We will have fantastic views of the Mountain and the Central Andes from this camp. The route is straight forward non-technical hiking to reach this camp, our main challenge is altitude. The load seems to get heavier and heavier at these elevations. If needed, we can take rest days or weather days. We have planned for this in our schedule and extra food and fuel will be carried for this purpose. The next step will follow a carry to camp III, at about 17,600', and then a move to Camp III hopefully the next day.

Our High Camp, at 18,200' follows same procedure of carry to High Camp, return to sleep at Camp III, and then move to High Camp. There will be more scree, patches of snow and thinner air in our daily menu with incredible vistas of the Central Andes. 20,000' foot giants will surround us. At 18,200' building camp is laborious and takes a group effort.

After an early start it is not unusual to spend 12 hrs climbing up to the summit, leaving camp with headlamps from High camp at 18,200'. Often a cold morning with a light breeze, where -10 °F is not unusual for Summit Day before the sun is up. Gentle slopes will take us to a snow patch on the right flank of Tupungato Normally the sun shines here for the first time that day. It is pleasant but still very cold. The next section is fun and steeper, nice steep hard pack snow will take us to the main col between the Tupungato summit and the false summit, we will be roped for this section until we reach the col. From the col up the summit seem pretty close, this last section takes normally up to 1 hour. After summiting we return to high camp, get a well-deserved rest, and the next day descend to Base Camp, from where it takes us two more days to get to Santiago for a well-deserved rest and a nice dinner.



## TUPUNGATO GENERAL INFORMATION SUCCESS AND IDEAS

As Chief Guide and founder of Aventuras Patagonicas, I have personally guided 28 Aconcagua Expeditions, summiting on 24 of these expeditions, and getting most, if not all, of my clients to the summit on each of these expeditions. I have lead most of Aventuras Patagonicas Aconcagua Expeditions. I have also guided 22 Denali (Mt McKinley) Expeditions, summiting on 19 of those expeditions, again getting most of my clients to the summit. Altogether I have guided over 65 high altitude-climbing expeditions all over the world. One of the main reasons for our high success rate has been due to excellent leadership, careful and consistent acclimatization methods, experience on the mountain, and timing with the weather. Next, we attribute our success to our terrific clientele; people that have taken the task seriously from day one, preparing as much as possible physically, and mentally, before the trip and during the trip, having a positive attitude, proper fitness, and plenty of determination.

I have been guiding Expeditions in the Andes since the early '80's when there were very few people guiding on the Andes and there was only one other American guiding company. I truly feel that Aventuras Patagonicas is uniquely qualified to offer Expeditions to the Andes. Growing up 150 miles from this Andean giant I spent my early mountaineering career climbing throughout the Andes, exposed to high altitude guiding before I was 20 years old. Then I traveled to Europe to explore my career as a mountain guide in the French Alps, studying guiding as a profession. Since the mid 80's I have been dedicated to guiding on Denali (Mt McKinley), living in Alaska where I make my home, and returning to the Andes to guide in winter.

Aventuras Patagonicas is a culmination of my years of Mountain Guiding experience in the Andes, the Alps, and Alaska and the desire to provide a mountain guiding business with superb standards in a competitive field. I bring genuine experience to Aconcagua unequalled by other guiding companies. With Aventuras Patagonicas you'll have one of the best chances of summiting combined with one of the most genuine experiences of the region available. We are a small business and we wish to stay that way to provide you the best-personalized guiding service possible.

**I urge you to check references**, particularly in the new millennium when there are so many new guiding companies out there. We have the most Aconcagua and Andes experience. Call the American Mountain Guides Association (303) 271-0984, the finest organization in the country dedicated to high standards in Mountain Guiding, and an excellent source of information. Ask them about who specializes in the Andes, and whom they would recommend. I have attached a list of previous Aventuras Patagonicas Clients' addresses and phone#s for references. We have also printed addresses for references on the back of our introduction letter. Take this aspect of choosing the guiding company you will climb with seriously. **The success and quality of your expedition experience depends upon your choice.** - Rodrigo Mujica

### TUPUNGATO HISTORY AND ROUTES

#### **First Ascent: 1896**

Matías Zurbriggen y Stuart Vines

#### **Geographic Position:**

Latitude: 33° 22' 0" S

Longitude: 69° 47' 0" O

#### **Volcán Tupungato Firsr Ascent from Chile: 1937**

Lance y Anselmi



# TUPUNGATO (21,681') EXPEDITION

## ITINERARY

### DATES OF TRIP 2009 / 2010

NOV / DEC	DEC	JAN	JAN / FEB
Nov 21 - Dec 8	Dec 5 - 22	Jan 3 - 20	Jan 16 - Feb 2
Nov 28 - Dec 15	Dec 12 - Dec 29	Jan 9 - 26	Jan 23 - Feb 9 Jan 30 - Feb 16

**COST OF TRIP:** \$ 3700

**DEPOSIT DUE TO RESERVE A POSITION:** \$ 700

**BALANCE AMOUNT:** \$ 3000

**DATE BALANCE DUE:** 75 Days before departure

### COST INCLUDES:

Professional Mountain Guides, 2 nights hotel accommodation in Santiago, (four star hotel), all land transportation, mules, all expedition food, all community gear such as tents, stoves, state of the art Base Camp, cooking gear, medical kits, satellite phones, radios, gamow bag, pulse-oximeters, etc, and Tupungato Climbing Permit (hard to get).

### YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

Professional Mountain Guides, 2 nights hotel accommodation in Santiago, (four star hotel), all land transportation, mules, all expedition food, all community gear such as tents, stoves, state of the art Base Camp, cooking gear, medical kits, satellite phones, radios, gamow bag, pulse-oximeters, etc, and Flights to Santiago, meals in Santiago. Personal equipment: passport, personal items and services (laundry, drinks, tips, etc.), and expenses incurred in the case of a rescue.

### TUPUNGATO EXPEDITION DESCRIPTION

Tupungato is a giant among giants and the third highest peak in the Chilean -Argentinean Central Andes, at 21,681 / 6,570 mts. This is a great expedition if you have never experienced the Andes before or if you feel like you want another Andean experience after you have climbed Aconcagua or any mountain in the Andes.

Tupungato can be described as the best well kept secret in the Andes, a beautiful peak with a remote, uncrowded, pleasant approach to base camp, with perfect gain in between camps, which making it perfect for acclimatization. This unspoiled mountain it is only a few hrs from the Cosmopolitan city of Santiago, Chile. At 21,681 feet, this massive volcano imposed itself with its snowy slopes of giant magnitudes, coned shape, pristine and surrounded by 20,000-foot alpine glaciated peaks, making Tupungato a very desirable climb and a lifetime adventure.

## ITINERARY

**DAY 1:** Group meets in Santiago, Chile. The equipment check and afternoon briefing at the hotel. For dinner we will have a chance to taste fine Chilean cuisine and wine.

**DAY 2:** Drive south from Santiago to Cajon del Maipo where we enter the Colorado River valley. We drive to the end of the road to a place called Chacayar at about 8,250' where mules and cowboys will be awaiting for us to load our equipment. We hike for about 4 hrs until we reach Baños Azules at 9,000'.

**DAY 3-4:** Approach to Base Camp. Mules carry our gear. This approximately 30-mile approach is essential to our acclimatization. The next two days we follow the Colorado River all the way to our Base Camp at 13,800 feet. The chances of seeing other expeditions on this route are remote. We may see Condors soaring in the afternoons.

**DAY 5:** Base Camp at 13,800'. Rest and acclimatization day at base camp. We want everyone to have the best possible chance to make the summit. The most effective way to do this is to take the time to acclimatize to the low oxygen environment. We will incorporate rest days into our schedule and climb in traditional expedition style. We will be carrying loads up to the next camp and returning to sleep below at the previous camp. The next day we will move to the higher camp.

**DAY 6:** Carry a load to Camp I at 15,500' approx. An easy day, not too long and too short, and truly a perfect way to start the first carry of gear to Camp I. Here we will be able to see Nieve Penitentes, unique snow and ice formations created by the direct sun. Return to Base Camp.

**DAY 7:** Leave Base Camp. Move to Camp I.

**DAY 8:** Carry a load to Camp II at 16,500', a pleasant large flat area with tremendous views of Cerro Polleras, Chimbote and many other imposing, glaciated Andean giants. Return to Base Camp.

**DAY 9:** Move to Camp II.

**DAY 10:** Carry a load to Camp III, at 17,600'.

**DAY 11:** Move to Camp III. Depending on how the group is doing.

**DAY 12:** Move to High Camp at 18,200.

**DAY 13-14-15:** Summit! Weather permitting. We leave several days for our summit day in case of poor weather.

**DAY 16:** Descend down to Base Camp.

**DAY 17-18:** Descend the Colorado Valley in 2 days, as always with the helps of mules for our gear, that same day we drive back to Santiago. Celebration Dinner!

Next day fly home or continue traveling in South America.

**Note:**

*This itinerary is intended to be a guideline only, weather days and rest days are always a possibility while on a climbing expedition.*

## TUPUNGATO EQUIPMENT LIST

### FEET

- Socks, thick wool or polypropylene - 3 pair (outer socks) thin silk or polypropylene - 3 pair (inner socks)
- Cotton socks - 2 pair
- Plastic double mountaineering boots
- Lightweight hiking boots or sturdy tennis shoes
- Booties, down or polarguard
- Gaitors

### UPPER BODY

- Lightweight polypropylene or capilene turtleneck - 2
- Expedition weight polypropylene or capilene shirt - 1
- Fleece jacket
- Breathable windproof outer jacket, such as goretex, with hood
- Heavy weight down or Polarguard Expedition Parka with hood (-10 oF)
- Cotton T-shirts - 2

### LOWER BODY

- Polypropylene or nylon briefs or underpants - 3 pair
- Lightweight polypropylene or capilene long underwear bottoms - 1 pair
- Expedition weight polypropylene or capilene long underwear bottoms- 1 pair
- Fleece pants (full length side zippers recommended)
- Breathable windproof pants or bibs such as Goretex (full length side Zippers recommended)
- Shorts - 1 pair
- Lightweight cotton pants (hike in, base camp - optional)

### HANDS

- Mittens, fleece, or wool Dachstein - 2 pair (to fit inside one another with finger room to spare)
- Gloves, polypropylene or capilene - 1 pair
- Goretex wind shells for mittens- 1 pair

### HEAD

- Ski hat, wool or fleece
- Balaclava, wool, polypropylene or capilene
- Baseball cap

### SLEEPING GEAR

- Down or polarguard sleeping bag comfortable to -15oF
- 1 foam pad or 1 thermarest pad (full length recommended)

### PACK

- Pack with 5500 cubic inches capacity
- Day and a half pack for approach
- Extra Large strong duffel bag (at least 6000 cubic inches) w/strong zipper and a lock, large enough for pack to fit in, for mules to carry and for storage of gear.

### TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

- Ice axe 70 cm. approx. Standing with your arm relaxed at your side, the ice axe should reach from the palm of your hand to the ground.
- Crampons, 12 points non-rigid recommended.
- Ski poles - adjustable preferred.
- Climbing harness, to fit comfortably over bulky clothing.
- Carabiners, 2 regular, 1 locking
- 30 feet of 6mm perlon rope

**PERSONALS**

- Headlamp and extra batteries
- Sunglasses - two pair (one as a spare)
- Ski goggles
- Sunscreen lotion SPF 29 - 1 large or 2 small tubes
- Sun screen lip protection - 1 stick
- Skin moisturizer - 3 oz.
- Mole skin, bandaids, tape, throat lozenges
- Pocket knife
- Plastic bowl, large cup (insulated), spoon
- 1 water bottle -1 quart capacity wide mouth (nalgene recommended) w/ water bottle insulator
- 1 Thermos 1 quart capacity
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Toilet paper- 1 or 2 rolls
- Antibiotics - 1 cycle broad spectrum
- Aspirin or Ibuprofen - 30
- Disposable lighter
- Stuff sacks 2-3, assorted sizes
- Iodine pills - 2 new small bottles (for water purification)
- \$100 US dollars in small bills (\$1's, \$5's, & \$10's) for meals, drinks, etc. in Penitentes

**OPTIONALS** (take most of these items to Base Camp only):

- Camera and film
- Journal, pen/pencil, book, games, walkman
- Small towel and soap, baby wipes, foot powder
- Swimsuit
- Teva sandals
- Cotton bandana
- Earplugs (for windy nights)
- Pee bottle - 1 qt. capacity, wide mouth
- 2 lbs. of your favorite lunch treat or energy bar (we provide full lunches)
- 1 oz. of your favorite spice
- Hydrating system, 2-quart capacity, (i.e. camel bags). Do not count on this as a replacement for water bottles, since they do freeze up high
- Disposable handwarmers (for summit day)

## REFERENCES

Please feel free to contact any of these previous Aventuras Patagonicas clients:

- Eileen Nobles and Robert Odien, Colorado Springs, CO Rocpath@aol.com
- Mike O'Brochta, Leesburg, VA (703) 779-8682 grits@obrochta.net
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### Professional References

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#### Exum Mountain Guides

Al Read, President (307) 733-2297  
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## CLIENT COMMENTS AVENTURAS PATAGONICAS

To contact past AP clients directly refer to:  
<http://www.patagonicas.com/clientcontacts.html>  
We hope that the experiences and comments of our past clients will help you better to understand the dedication of Aventuras Patagonicas.

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Executive Director  
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**Re: Aventuras Patagonicas**

Gentlemen,

For the past five years have I known Mr. Mujica and Bonnie Schwahn as Guides both on Denali and Aconcagua. I personally have been twice on expeditions with his company, Aventuras Patagonicas, on Aconcagua. I also feel I have a fair assessment of guide companies and their quality of guides. I am very pleased to inform you that Aventuras Patagonicas scores a solid A+ in virtually all areas:

-The cost of the Aconcagua expedition is less than others I was aware of.

-Their information and communication before the climb are thorough, helpful and geared toward your individual needs. Someone is always available.

-Once in South America you find yourself in the top hotels available. You feel safe, looked after and entertained in a tasteful first class manner. Everyone goes out of their way to show you the interesting parts of the Chilean culture, which of course as locals only they can do.

-The arrangements for the hike-in and climb are flawless and professional. Nothing is left to chance. You begin to feel in competent and safe hands. The equipment is state of the art. On both of my expeditions the tents were brand new, a trademark of the Company.

-Once on the mountain you begin to realize what a superb guide Rodrigo Mujica really is. He is very sensitive to his clients, anticipates their strengths, their weaknesses and uniquenesses. The food is good and plenty as I have ever had on a mountain. Most important he is a safe topnotch climber and knows Aconcagua better than any person I know, to the point that guides of other companies rely on his input, decisions and judgment, especially in tight spots. Truly, cowboys, rangers, guides, and climbers alike consider Rodrigo as Mr. Aconcagua. You feel he owns the mountain. His summit success ratio speaks by itself and you know if anyone can get you to the summit, Rodrigo will.

-On the way down, you get surprised with all kind of niceties. While other companies camp at Plaza de Mulas, we stayed at the hotel, showered, ate quasi restaurant food and slept in beds. What a treat, and all part of the package fee. At the trailhead watermelon and beer was waiting for us, followed by an incredible feast of a meal, followed by another first class hotel in Santiago, which again is part of the fee. An evening of dinner and top entertainment are followed by a sad good bye.

If you don't already know by now, in my opinion Aventuras Patagonicas is a first class act. I recommend them highly and you are welcome to give out my name for future references. As busy as our lives are, one does not want to go wrong and expose oneself to three weeks of misery or possibly danger. Both of my trips with this company were marvelous, safe and extremely enjoyable.

Sincerely,

**-Hubertus Guenther, Spokane, WA (509) 838-1543**  
**hpguenther@aol.com**

Dear Rodrigo

Thanks for your kind note on the recent Aconcagua climb. I also hope we can climb together again. I have filled out the evaluation sheet, and you'll see that I've given you and your Aventuras Patagonicas colleagues top marks in every category. However, I would like to briefly record my assessment in words.

In all respects, your management and leadership of the Aconcagua climb was outstanding. I say this not merely because your support enable me to reach the summit, although that was certainly a key goal of mine.

Your concern for the health and safety of all the group was exemplary. The well-paced itinerary gave us the conditioning and acclimatizing to altitude that we all needed to give us the best opportunity to summit. You showed great skill and organizational ability in managing the difficult job of assuring that all the necessary gear for the climb was where it needed to be, when it needed to be there. In the Andean world, this is no small feat!

Third, the food and equipment were all first class. Nobody expected a gourmet experience on the mountain, but we had excellent food, which fueled our effort. Also, your professionalism and friendliness brought a group of strangers together into a real team, which not only succeeded in the climb, but enjoyed this demanding experience. I know that i will be keeping up whit these new friends in the future. All the information you provided on equipment, conditioning, preparation and travel was concise, accurate and helpful. Our accommodations in Santiago and Penitentes were quite well chosen. And finally, the cost of the trip was reasonable and fair, considering everything included in the package.

In short, I would enthusiastically recommend that anyone wanting to climb Aconcagua (or any other mountain, for that matter) strongly consider doing so with you.

Best regards, and keep in touch

**Carlton Stoiber**  
**Washington, DC.**

## TRAINING

It is imperative that everyone joining a mountaineering expedition be in a high standard of physical fitness when the expedition begins. The amount of time needed for training is completely dependent on the general level of fitness a person is in prior to the expedition.

For the person that has spent the last ten years behind a desk with no emphasis on keeping in shape, it may take two years to regain top physical ability. The person that has always prioritized conditioning and a rigorous workout as a part of their daily routine may only take a few months to fine tune for the demands of mountaineering.

Consider, when setting up your program, that you will need to develop the endurance to carry a 15 lb. pack, wearing climbing boots, for 6-8 hours per day. Though it is impossible to “train” for altitude you can put yourself on a conditioning program that will best prepare you for this type of physical stress. How to do this? It is impossible to be specific and say if you do this and that you will be ready for a physically demanding expedition. Each person is different and everyone has different terrain and time at their disposal. After many years of observing climbers there are some reoccurring training schemes that seem to help some people be better prepared than others.

**1- Train for developing stamina.** Run, bike, ski, fast walk. Vary your routine to prevent overuse injuries and push yourself without injuring yourself. Do warm up and cool down stretches.

**2- Progressive resistance weight training.** This type of training improves anaerobic metabolism that feeds much of muscular work. This type of human energy production is fed by stored carbohydrates that require no additional oxygen to metabolize.

**3- Train on hills or stairs with a pack on.** You must be prepared for several thousand feet uphill and downhill, ideally wearing a 15lb pack. Never run with a pack on.

**4- Wear 2 lb. ankle weights to help condition for the extra weight of climbing boots, soft snow and loose scree.** (Don't wear these while running).

**5- Train as often as possible by skiing or hiking for all day, weekend or longer trips.** Train for what you are going to do! If you want to be good at climbing big mountains with a big pack on, start on little mountains with a small pack on and work your way up. Conditioning by climbing is the best thing you can do. Get comfortable moving in mountainous terrain all day long!! Heavy packs tend to tire climbers the most. Be prepared by training ahead of time and you will do fine. Don't expect to get used to wearing a pack while you are on the expedition.

**6 - A good diet cannot be underestimated.** Research out a diet that will help develop stamina and strength and that you can live with. There are lots of books and articles that will get you started or consult a professional nutritionist that has worked with athletes.

**7 - Be mentally prepared for the expedition.** Know before you start the climb and accept the fact that at times you will be uncomfortable and that your body is going to be uncooperative. You are going to have to push yourself (unless you are superhuman). If you don't have the ability to do this you won't be successful. You may be in a cramped tent for many storm days. You are leaving the comforts of home in order to experience a unique challenge and a remarkable mountain. It is worth it! You must also be well enough "in tune" with yourself to know the difference between pushing yourself and acute mountain sickness, pulmonary or cerebral edema. These are all serious altitude related problems, which must be acknowledged. It is possible to "push yourself" too far. For the safety of the team, the chief guide will make a final decision on who needs a rest day, who continues to ascend, or who descends.

We hope this gives you ideas on which to base your training schedule. We recommend talking to a professional exercise trainer and setting up a conditioning program that you can incorporate into your daily routine, which will meet these goals. This type of training can easily take two hours per day, 5 days a week. Be committed to it and be consistent. It will pay off many times over! Start today with your training and keep it up. Good luck and please call or email us, if you have any questions.

