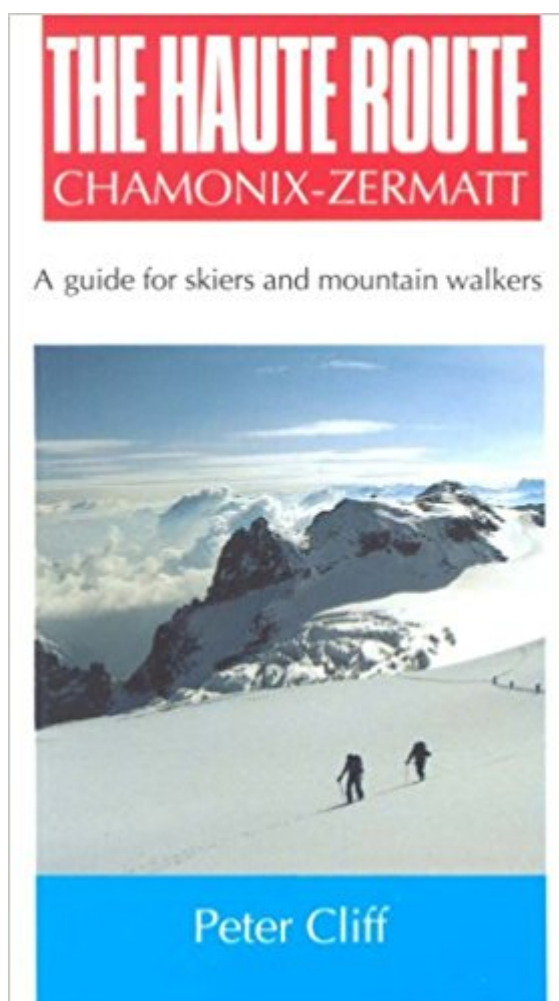




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Haute Route Chamonix-Zermatt: Guide For Skiers And Mountain Walkers



Synopsis

book

Book Information

Paperback: 136 pages

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Customer Reviews

book

It doesn't have a ton of information the book is only about 50 pages long and it's not just on the Chamonix - zermatt route.

Based on the route-descriptions, the previous reviewer appears to refer only to the summer walker's section of this book (you certainly won't be taking the avalanche-prone summer route from the La Breya lift in the course of a ski-mountaineering Haute-Route). However, the positive assessment extends to the ski section, as well. This is a wonderful guide to one of the great alpine ski tours, including details critical to route-finding over complex, glaciated terrain in possibly poor visibility. Recognizing that choice of ski-mountaineering routes is extremely conditions & skills dependent, the book includes information on the true classic route--including the brilliant but technical Plateau du Couloir & the tiresome, plodding Otemma glacier--as well as several typical &/or desirable variations like Verbier & Grand Lui. Cliff's guide contains some route photos & stylized maps that are useful for generalized visualization of route segments. I would have preferred that he include a map of the complete route, but it isn't really necessary because you absolutely will need to purchase at least some of the recommended topo maps. Pick the 1:50,000 ski topos; they include

major ski route lines & are frequently updated by the efficient Swiss government. The smaller-scale 1:25,000 maps are beautiful, but do not show routes; also, you would have to purchase so many of them that they are not practical. The author includes interesting asides about the history of the route & adjacent areas. The accomplishments of early Haute Route ski-pioneers are truly astounding, given the rudimentary nature of their gear & clothing. The book's information regarding hut contacts is somewhat limited (although newer editions may address this); many of the huts recently acquired web sites & e-mail addresses that greatly simplify reservations for language-challenged Americans. On this point, Cliff--with classic British reserve--perhaps under-emphasizes the utility of rudimentary French &/or German skills in accomplishing the Haute Route; it is difficult to make reservations or take advantage of the hut-keeper's local knowledge with only English in your quiver. He also doesn't address telemark equipment in much depth. For better or worse, to Americans ski touring usually means at least one telemarker in the group, so talk to a knowledgeable guide before showing up on pins. You need to make some adjustments, most notably: finding a pair of harscheisen. The book does not include any coverage beyond the Haute Route, so if you intend to do day tours in Chamonix to warm up or in Zermatt before continuing on to Saas Fee, then look elsewhere: *Mont-Blanc Ski Tours* & *Mont Blanc and the Aiguilles Rouges: A Guide for Skiers* are excellent. For off-piste skiing, try the Vamos guides like *Mont-Blanc Off-Piste: Chamonix-Courmayeur-Les Contamines* Cicerone guides like *Alpine Ski Mountaineering: Western Alps (Cicerone Winter and Ski Mountaineering)* are more current & quite useful for planning long alpine ski tours. *High Level Route* by Eric Roberts is another good--if dated--guide to the Haute Route if you can find it.

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