



SEA GIRDLED RIDGE DREAMS

-10 TOP TIPS FOR THE CUILLIN RIDGE TRAVERSE-

IF YOUR DREAMS INCLUDE DOING THE CUILLIN RIDGE TRAVERSE THEN WE HAVE SOME TOP TIPS FOR MAKING YOUR DREAM BECOME A REALITY. PREPARATION IS EVERYTHING, WHEN YOU START YOUR WALK IN FOR THE RIDGE TRAVERSE YOU WILL ALREADY HAVE ENSURED YOUR SUCCESS BY ALL YOUR TRAINING, PLANNING AND PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE. SO FOR THE BEST TIPS FOR CUILLIN SUCCESS CHECK OUT THE IDEAS BELOW!

- 1. BE FIT**
This is easy to say but how fit do you need to be? The ridge involves 2500m uphill over two days, all to be undertaken while carrying a rucksack; scrambling, climbing and probably a poor nights sleep too. Obviously the ideal training is to have a mountain range close by and be able to nip up 1000m of ascent and down with a rucksack on anytime you feel like it. If you are not so lucky then doing as much cardio training-long walks, runs etc as possible is great. Any gym based training works well too - just do as much as you possibly can of your chosen activity.
- 2. PRACTICE BEING IN THE HILLS**
Go for a 2 day expedition carrying all your food and camping gear. Make sure you spend at least 8 hours per day walking with a heavy load and have a camp overnight, this will get you used to the physical demands of a ridge traverse and give you the chance to test your kit out.
- 3. SCRAMBLE**
Do as much as you can, the Aonach Eagach, Liathach and An Tellach are ideal mountains to practice on. If you only have access to English or Welsh mountains then try going up and down the same scrambles so you can spend a few hours on technical terrain where you need to concentrate.



"BIVVYING ON THE RIDGE IS A GREAT EXPERIENCE"

4. CLIMB
Can be indoors or outdoors , this will obviously allow you to become familiar with the movement involved in rock climbing , familiarising yourself with ropes, harnesses and all the technical gear. If you are a climber then you have a big advantage already, but remember that you will be climbing in boots/approach shoes with a rucksack on. There are several abseils along the ridge traverse so it's great to practice abseiling too and have your systems dialled in so as to be as efficient as possible.

5. GET IN THE CUILLIN
Previous Cuillin experience counts for a lot, the more you've done on the ridge, the better your traverse experience will be. It's a dramatic place and can be overwhelming on a first visit so try and prepare for this.

6. FOOTWORK
When you're out scrambling and walking , concentrate on being precise, placing your feet exactly where you want them to go. An important skill is actually looking at your feet constantly and planning ahead a few moves. The climbing practice will also help here by familiarising yourself with which part of your foot is the best for standing on particular holds. Footwear: Boots or approach shoes? Mountain boots with a rigid sole are great for standing on edges but are obviously a bit heavier. Approach shoe are lighter and more supple for climbing in but are generally less rigid. Whichever footwear you choose, try and make sure that it has the grippiest sole possible. The 5.10 stealth rubber is anti gravity good!

7. DONT BE A PURIST
Take the boat in from Elgol, this leaves you with the shortest approach and it a great start to your traverse. Be flexible over your route choice , for example if you love scrambling and you're not bothered about ticking Munros then the Dubh ridge makes a brilliant start.

8. BIVVY STRATEGY
Bivvying on the ridge is a great experience, our preferred strategy is to have a fixed bivvy location to make for, this means we don't have to lug extra kit around unnecessarily.

9. WEATHER
A ridge traverse in the dry should be a fun experience with plenty of time for selfies, if that's what floats your boat, the ridge is still do-able in the wet but expect a different, more intense experience. A wet travers also necessitates a cave bivvy and carrying bivvy kit.

10. EMBRACE THE ADVENTURE!
Adventures are unusual, exciting possibly dangerous and often unpredictable. This definitely applies to the Cuillin ridge enjoy your ridge experience whatever that is or becomes. Skye's mountains are the most beautiful and challenging the UK has to offer.



HAVE AN ADVENTURE!