

Winter Camp

LEADER GUIDE

DECEMBER 28 - 31, 2025

RHODES FRANCE SCOUT RESERVATION



GREATER ST. LOUIS AREA COUNCIL
SCOUTING

Scouts BSA Winter Camp

What is Winter Camp?

Winter Camp is a short-term camp experience for Scouts BSA members. Scouts will be able to work on advancement and merit badges similar to Summer Camp. Scouts also get to enjoy one of the GSLAC Camp Properties in the winter! Scouts may participate with their Troop or as a provisional attendee (individually with camp-provided adult leadership).

Where and When is Winter Camp?

Winter Camp 2025 will be held at Rhodes France Scout Reservation from December 28 – 31. Rhodes France is located just outside of Pana, Illinois.

Arrival and Departure

Units and provisional participants should plan to arrive at Rhodes France between 2:00pm and 4:00pm on December 28th. Departure will be by 9:30am on December 31st. Upon arrival unit leaders and provisional Scouts must check-in at the Registration Building.

Food and Food Service

Units have the option of choosing to eat in the dining hall with meals provided, or they can bring their own meals and cook in their campsites. Provisional Scouts will eat in the dining hall. If eating in the Dining Hall, please be sure to indicate any special dietary restrictions as part of your registration.

Housing

All participants must provide their own camping gear. This includes tents, cots, and bedding. Make sure to bring warm sleeping gear!

Facilities & Showers

Some portions of the camp are already winterized, but participants will have access to everything they need. The camp showerhouse will be open for showers* and restrooms. Latrines and campsites will not have water – but the central area of camp will.

**Showers will be available unless weather is consistently below freezing.*



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Winter Camp Fees

Youth with Meals	\$150.00
Adult with Meals	\$80.00
Youth without Meals	\$120.00
Adult without Meals	\$50.00
Provisional Scout	\$150.00

Registration

Units or individual participants can register online at <https://scoutingevent.com/312-wintercamp25>.

Pre-Camp Leader Meeting

All unit leaders are encouraged to participate in the Pre-Camp Leader Meeting on Tuesday, December 9th at 7:00pm. This meeting will be held via Zoom. This is a great opportunity for leaders to ask questions and get any additional information necessary for a fantastic experience.

Health & Safety

All participants MUST have parts A & B of the BSA Annual Health and Medical Record at camp for Winter Camp. The Rhodes France health office will be staffed during the camp and participants will have access to medical assistance 24 hours a day. Units must have a locking container for any prescription medications. Be sure Scouts and Leaders are prepared for cold temperatures. Scouts will also be expected to utilize the buddy system at all times at camp. If you have any specific health and safety concerns, please contact Camp Director Matt Kaufman at matt.kaufman@scouting.org.

Trading Post

The Rhodes France Trading Post will be open during Winter Camp and is stocked with Scouting items, snacks, and other souvenirs. Cash, checks, and credit cards are accepted.



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Winter Camp Environment

At Winter Camp, all attendees bring their own tent and bedding. Some campsites have wooden platforms that campers can set up on. Only Spinner and Ambucs Campsites have electricity available, so leaders who use a CPAP machine should plan to bring a battery. Water will not be on in the campsites, but the pit latrines can be used. Water is available at the Food Service Building. A suggested packing list is included in this guide.

Vehicles at Camp

All vehicles must remain in the parking lot with the exception of the unit trailer and the vehicle pulling it. Scouts and leaders should plan to walk to all activities.

Campsite Assignments

Units can list their campsite preference during their online registration. The Camp Administration will do their best to accommodate these requests, but they are not guaranteed.

Uniforms at Winter Camp

Warmth and safety are the priority at Winter Camp. Scouts and leaders should dress for warmth and comfort. Uniforms are NOT required at Winter Camp.

Volunteers Needed

Winter Camp is a volunteer-led program. Some members from our Summer Camp Staff will return to help lead program and merit badge sessions, work in the kitchen, and ensure things run smoothly, but we need other adults to volunteer! If you are interested in serving on the Winter Camp Staff, please contact Camp Director Matt Kaufman at matt.kaufman@scouting.org. Thank you in advance for sharing your expertise!



Winter Camp Program

Check-In Process

Units should plan to arrive at Rhodes France Scout Reservation between 2:00pm and 4:00pm on December 28. An adult leader must check-in at the Registration Building near the parking lot. Groups will then be guided through the remainder of check-in and taken to their campsites. At least one adult and youth leader should plan to attend the opening Leader Meeting at 4:30pm in the Dining Hall.

December 28

2:00pm - 4:00pm	Arrival & Check-in
4:30pm	Leader Meeting at Dining Hall
6:10pm	Flag Lowering at Flag Poles
6:15pm	Dinner at Dining Hall
7:20pm	Gather for Opening Campfire at Flag Poles
10:00pm	Quiet Time

December 29 & 30

7:55am	Flag Raising at Flag Poles
8:00am	Breakfast at Dining Hall
9:00am	Session 1
12:15pm	Gather for Lunch at Flag Poles
2:00pm	Session 2
5:00pm	Free Time
6:10pm	Flag Lowering at Flag Poles
6:15pm	Dinner in Dining Hall
7:15pm	Evening Programs
10:00pm	Quiet Time

December 31

8:00am	Breakfast (delivered to campsites)
9:00am	Check-Out and Departure*

*A Staff member will be at your campsite to help with check-out. They will also deliver your check-out packet.



Winter Camp Program

Winter Camp Theme Days

Certain days at Winter Camp will have a special theme. Each Scout and adult is encouraged to participate in these special days! All we ask is that the costumes/props/etc remain Scout appropriate.

- **Monday, December 29th - Ugly Holiday Sweater Day!** Wear your ugliest holiday sweater!
- **Tuesday, December 30th - Crazy Hat Day!** Wear your silliest hat for the day!

Campfire Programs

All units will gather with the Winter Camp Staff on Sunday evening for our Opening Campfire program. Units will meet at the Flag Poles at 8:00pm and will be guided to the Firebowl for a fun program put on by the Camp Staff. On Tuesday night, the Scouts in attendance will take the stage for the closing campfire program. Units should plan to present a song, skit, or other special talent with the crowd!

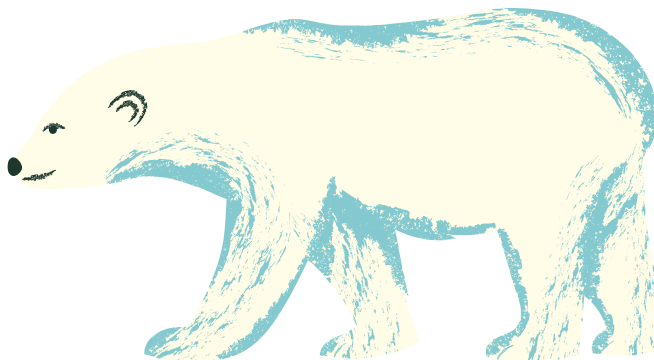
Evening Programs

Special evening programs will take place at Winter Camp. These are open to all in attendance.

- **Monday - GAME NIGHT & KARAOKE!** All are invited to play games and sing karaoke! Bring your own or use some of ours. Magic, DND, etc...
- **Tuesday - MOVIE NIGHT!** Join us after the Closing Campfire in the dining hall for a movie presentation and snacks!

Winter Camp Polar Plunge

Join us for the Scout Polar Bear Plunge! Brave the icy waters with fellow Scouts and Scouters for an unforgettable adventure. Whether plunging or cheering, embrace the chill and make lasting memories!



Winter Camp Program

Merit Badge Schedule

The following pages give the details of the Winter Camp Merit Badge and Activity Program.

Badges will take place in one of 3 sessions.

Morning Session - Monday & Tuesday, 9am - Noon

Afternoon Session - Monday & Tuesday, 2:00pm - 5:00pm

Scouts are strongly encouraged to have the merit badge pamphlet and have read it for any class they are taking.

Adult Leader Trainings

The following trainings will be available for adults attending Winter Camp (Looking to add more!).

- **Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills** - This is one of the required trainings to be considered fully-trained as a Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster. This course will take place Monday (9am - 5pm) and Tuesday (9:00am - Noon).
- **NRA Basic Rifle Shooting Course** - This is a basic NRA Course that is a required prerequisite for other courses. This course will take place Monday and Tuesday from 1:00pm - 5:00pm. There is a \$40 class fee for this course.

Session 1 (9:00am - 12:00pm)	Session 2 (2:00pm - 5:00pm)
Merit Badge/Program	Merit Badge/Program
Archery	Archery
Chess	Camping (28th Only)
Citizenship in the Nation	Citizenship in Society (27th Only)
Cooking	Citizenship in the World
Environmental Science	Crate Stacking (Pick One Day)
Fire Safety	First Aid
Model Design & Building	Geocaching
Rifle Shooting	Law
Scouting Heritage	Photography
Search & Rescue	Radio
Shotgun Shooting	Signs, Signals & Codes
Wayfinder - 2nd Class	Wayfinder - 1st Class
	Wood Carving



Winter Camp Packing Lists

Suggested Individual Packing List

- T-Shirts (1-2)
- Underwear (fresh pair each day)
- Socks (fresh pair for each day & extras)
- Long Thermal underwear (1-2)
- Long Pants (2-3)
- Long-sleeve shirt (2-3) or Jacket
- Hiking Boots or Sturdy Shoes
- Lightweight Shoes (Closed-toed)
- Shower Shoes
- Warm Coat or Jacket
- Stocking Cap or Beanie
- Gloves/Mittens
- Poncho/Rain Coat
- Towel
- Soap/Shampoo
- Lip Balm
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste & Toothbrush
- Other personal toiletries
- Comb or Hairbrush
- Laundry Bag
- Refillable Water Bottle
- Small pocketknife
- Backpack/Daypack
- Pencil/Pen
- Notebook/writing paper
- Merit Badge Pamphlets
- Tent
- Sleeping Bag
- Pillow
- Old Blankets (for insulation)
- Camp Mattress or Foam pad/cot
- Personal First Aid Kit
- Footlocker (for gear)
- Watch
- Flashlight
- Extra Batteries
- Spending Money (at least \$40)

Suggested Unit Packing List

- Tents
- Water Cooler(s)
- US Flag
- Troop Flag
- Cooking Equipment (if cooking)
- First Aid Kit
- Brooms/Rake
- Tools (saws, axes, etc.)
- Lanterns
- Rope
- Tarps
- Dining Fly (most sites have pavilions)

Items to Leave at Home

No personal firearms or ammunition are allowed at Scouting events. Personal bows are also not allowed. Alcoholic beverages and non-prescribed drugs are prohibited. Tobacco use and vaping are only allowed in designated areas. No fireworks are allowed. No pets are allowed.



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