

# Hiking the Haute Route

HIGH ALPS TRAVERSE FROM CHAMONIX TO ZERMATT



Wilderness Travel





## Hiking the Haute Route

### TRIP DATES

#### 2024

July 16-23, 2024  
July 26-August 2, 2024  
August 5-12, 2024  
August 15-22, 2024  
August 28-September 4, 2024

#### 2025

July 8-15, 2025  
July 25-August 1, 2025  
August 14-21, 2025  
August 27-September 3, 2025  
September 9-16, 2025

The celebrated Haute Route, a high-level hike from Chamonix, France, to Zermatt, Switzerland, is immersed in alpine lore. This is where the sport of mountaineering was born in the 19th century, and just a glance at the 360-degree panorama explains why: 10 of the 12 most famous peaks in the Alps, including Mont Blanc and the Matterhorn, rise along this magnificent “high route.” With seven hiking days, our journey brings nonstop alpine vistas and a crossing of seven dramatic passes—including the Col de Torrent (9,567'), with its stunning views. Our team of expert Trip Leaders makes this a wonderfully fun mountain adventure.



# Itinerary

Note: We suggest you arrive in Chamonix at least one day in advance of the trip. We can book extra hotel nights for you. Most people fly to Geneva, Switzerland, and then transfer to Chamonix. We offer a complimentary van transfer from the Geneva airport directly to our chosen hotel in the center of Chamonix; a booking form for the transfer is enclosed with your confirmation packet.

## DAY 1

### CHAMONIX / COL DU BALME

Chamonix sits right at the foot of Mont Blanc (15,770'), the highest mountain in western Europe. A climbing and skiing center for over a hundred years and the mountaineering "capital" of Europe, Chamonix has a wonderful atmosphere and a well preserved Old Town with cobbled streets full of lively sidewalk cafes. From near the center of town, the famous Aiguille du Midi cable car whisks visitors to 12,000 feet for stunning views of the Mont Blanc range. (This is a must-do if you are arriving early!) After meeting early at the hotel in Chamonix for our trip orientation, we head out, driving past Argentiere, with superb views of Mont Blanc, the Aiguille Verte, and the Chamonix granite needles, to our trailhead to begin the Haute Route hike. Ascending through meadows where dairy cows graze, we hike up through woodlands to cross the Col de Balme (7,201'), which marks the French-Swiss frontier. With wonderful vistas of Mont Blanc along the way, we descend into Col de la Forclaz, located right on the mountain pass where the road leads west to France or east to Switzerland. We overnight at a hotel in the Trient/Martigny region...BLD

Hiking Details: 9 miles, 6-8 hours, 3,000 feet ascent, 3,050 feet descent

The Haute Route: The magnificent high traverse from Chamonix, France, to Zermatt, Switzerland, explores the terrain where alpinism and the sport of mountaineering were born in the 19th century. The original High Level Route was developed more than 100 years ago, primarily for ski-mountaineering expeditions. Over the years, another Haute Route evolved, a walking route that has become the quintessential walking experience across the European Alps—it ascends to nearly 10,000 feet yet requires no technical mountaineering skills, and rewards the hiker with some of the most spectacular high mountain views in the Alps. There are constantly changing panoramas of high peaks, alpine meadows alive with wildflowers, picturesque old farms, and beautiful lakes.

## DAY 2

### COL DE LA FORCLAZ/ CHAMPEX

From Col de la Forclaz (5,010'), a wonderful forested trail used by shepherds for centuries to bring their cattle to mountain pastures leads up the mountain and opens to an alpine meadow at 6,690 feet. We'll stop at a charming refuge and farm that's still in use today. From here, we'll descend through a forest and take in sweeping views of the Rhone Valley with the river slicing through valley pastures and villages and distant views of the peaks of the Bernese Oberland. The trail then descends steeply into the Swiss hamlets of Champex-d'en Haut and Champex d'en Bas. A five-minute drive brings us to Champex (or you can walk the additional distance). Overnight at a hotel at the charming lakeside



## TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

<b>Length:</b>	8 days
<b>Arrive:</b>	Chamonix, France
<b>Depart:</b>	Zermatt, Switzerland
<b>Lodging:</b>	4 nights in 4-star hotels, 3 nights in rustic mountain inns
<b>Meals:</b>	All meals included (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
<b>Activity:</b>	Hiking / Trekking

## Trip Level: 1 2 3 4 ⑤ 6

7 hiking days on moderate to steep trails, 5-8 hours a day, altitudes between 6,000-9,600 feet, van support (for luggage or if you wish to skip a day's hike). This is a strenuous hiking trip, read "What the Trip is Like" for more details.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience one of the Europe's great long-distance hikes—done right!
- Hike to remote alpine hamlets and verdant meadows amid the highest peaks in the Alps
- Savor classic views of Mont Blanc, the Matterhorn, and other giants of the Alps
- Enjoy a team of Trip Leaders who bring camaraderie and fun to each hiking day

# Itinerary (cont'd)



resort of Champex (private rooms with attached bath)...BLD  
Hiking Details: 8.5 miles, 5-6 hours, 1,700 feet ascent, 2,300 feet descent

## DAY 3 GRAND DIXENCE

A drive of about 1.5 hours brings us to the Val d'Hérens and our hotel, located near the Grande Dixence Barrage (7,759'). This dam, one of the highest gravity dams in the world, blocks the waters of the Dixence River, forming the Lac des Dix reservoir. After dropping off our luggage, we'll set out on a loop hike that climbs to the top of the dam, then across rocky terrain that leads to the Cabane de Prafleuri (8,733'), a mountain refuge strategically located on the Haute Route and set in an isolated spot between Verbier and Arolla. Ibex and chamois are often seen near this remote refuge. After a lunch of traditional specialties, we climb the short but steep Col des Roux (9,197'), with its breathtaking views over many legendary alpine summits and glaciers of the Valais Alps. From the pass, we descend to the Lac des Dix and walk along the lakeshore to the top of the dam, then take the cable car down to our hotel. Overnight at hotel (private rooms with attached bath)...BLD

Hiking Details: 7 miles, 5-6 hours, 2,500 feet ascent, 2,200 feet loss

## DAY 4 AROLLA

Starting right from our hotel, we hike to the top of the dam, then along the still waters of Lac des Dix near a labyrinth of marmot dens. From the head of the lake, we hike up rocky terrain to the Col de Riedmatten (9,577'), following alongside the Pigne d'Arolla Glacier. This pass is on the route of the famous ski-mountaineering race "La Patrouille des Glaciers." At the pass we have stunning views across the Arolla Valley to Pigne D'Arolla, Mont Collon, and the massive west face of Mont Blanc de Cheilon, mountains with remarkable glaciers dominating our route. We may also get a peek at the Matterhorn. As an alternative, we may hike via the Pas de Chevres (9,368'), which has a ladder section, but is actually easier to negotiate than the loose scree of the trail over the Reidmatten. Descend to Arolla (6,581'), a tiny village in the Val d'Arolla at the foot of several glaciers. Overnight at our historic hotel, charmingly situated in its own forest of beautiful Arolla pines (private rooms with attached bath)...BLD

Hiking Details: 10 miles, 7-8 hours, 2,700 feet ascent, 3,000 feet descent

## DAY 5 COL DU TORRENT / LAC DE MOIRY / ST. LUC

The drive to our trailhead brings us through a very traditional region of the Valais Canton, where some locals still wear traditional Valais dress while working in the hay meadows. From just above Villa, a steady ascent over grassy flower-filled pastures—a living working landscape, with magnificent views over the Val d'Hérens and the snow-capped mountains—brings us to the Col de Torrent (9,567'), which straddles the Val d'Anniviers and Val d'Hérens, a wonderfully wild area with stunning views over all the most impressive summits and glaciers in the Valais. It's a grand panorama, equal to almost anything seen





so far, and includes one of the most outstanding vistas in the Alps, the Dent Blanche, the emblematic peak of the Val d'Hérens, towering at 14,295 feet. We picnic by the Lac des Autannes and descend to the Lac de Moiry for a shuttle to our wonderful hotel...BLD

Hiking Details: 6 miles, 4-5 hours, 2,800 feet ascent, 2,200 feet descent

Driving Time: 1.5 hours

## DAY 6

### MEIDPASS / GRUBEN

From St. Luc we take a funicular to Tignousa (7,152') to start our ascent toward the Meidpass (9,154'). As we start our hike we'll come across a number of modern sculptures that make up a 3.5-mile-long sculpture park called the "Path of the Planets" (Le Sentier Planétaire), which has our solar system's planets represented in scale, size, and distance. It starts at Tignousa with the Sun, followed by Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. Jupiter and Saturn are nearby, and at Uranus we turn left away from the Sentier Planétaire to start our gradual ascent to the pass. From the summit, we enjoy impressive views of the Brunegghorn, Weisshorn, and even the distant massif of Mont Blanc. Crossing this pass we enter German-speaking Switzerland, and a long descent past the lovely alpine Meidsee Lake brings us to the remote hamlet of Gruben in the peaceful, unspoiled, Turtmanntal valley and our comfortable inn with a great beer garden and café (private rooms with shared baths)...BLD

Hiking Details: 7 miles, 4-5 hours, 2,050 gain, 3,200 loss





## DAY 7

### AUGSTBORDPASS / ST. NIKLAUS / ZERMATT

A long but gradual ascent through spacious woodlands and over high pastures leads to the Augstbordpass (9,495'). We descend on a contouring trail across large stone slabs to a prominent viewpoint where the trail turns into the narrow green Mattertal valley, 3,300 feet below us. The Mischabel range, the Nadethorn, Lenzspitze, and the Dom are directly opposite, to the north are the Bernese Oberland peaks, while Monte Rosa, Castor, Pollux, Breithorn, and Klein Matterhorn crown the top of the Mattertal valley (we won't see the Matterhorn until we get to Zermatt). Descend to Jungu, a hamlet that resembles a toy village, and from here we take a small cable car down to St. Niklaus in the Mattertal valley and then head by local train to Zermatt, with its spectacular views of the Matterhorn. The most famous of all alpine centers, Zermatt is the terminus for the Haute Route from Chamonix. This unique mountain village, surrounded by glaciers and a dozen 13,000-foot peaks, is steeped in the lore of alpinism and dominated by the crooked pyramid of the Matterhorn. Automobiles are not allowed in this hiking and skiing town; access is only by train and on foot. We'll explore Zermatt's charming streets, then gather for a festive Farewell Dinner. Overnight at hotel...BLD

Hiking Details: 8 miles, 6-7 hours, 3,500 ascent, 3,000 feet descent

## DAY 8

### ZERMATT / DEPART

Our trip ends after breakfast in our Zermatt hotel. Trip members transfer to Geneva on their own by train, or depart for other destinations in Europe...B

We strongly suggest spending an extra day or two in Zermatt so you can hike around and see the Matterhorn up close. We'd be happy to recommend some great local hikes.

# Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

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## TRIP COST

**Prices are per person, valid through 2024**

\$5595 (10-14 members)

\$5995 (4-9 members)

Single supplement: \$580

*2025 Trip Costs: Please call for details*

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

## CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Due to the volatility of currency markets, we can only offer the most competitive pricing on our trips in Switzerland by partially tying the trip cost directly to the value of the Swiss Franc. In the late spring of 2023, when we set the rates for our 2024 program, the US Dollar equaled 0.93 Swiss Francs. While in most years, no price changes are ever necessary, if there were to be a significant change in exchange rates, we may be forced to raise or able to lower our trip cost; if so, your final invoice, sent two weeks before your final payment is due, will reflect the difference. Please note that the calculation will not be a straight proration. While most of the trip cost is paid in Swiss Francs, the remainder of our expenses are paid in US Dollars. The overall effect is to moderate any change; thus, if the Swiss Franc were to rise in value, the trip cost would rise less than might be expected, and if the Swiss Franc were to fall, the drop in land price would also be less than might be expected.

## TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of at least two Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders (and sometimes three, depending on group size)
- Accommodations in hotels and mountain inns
- All meals included as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- A glass of wine or beer with dinner
- Van support and luggage transfer
- Land transportation, transfers between overnight stops
- Cable cars, funiculars, and cog rails to and from trailheads for scheduled hikes

## TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, airport transfers, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors, pre-trip expenses such as immunizations (if any), travel insurance, or passports and visas; and other expenses of a personal nature (laundry, etc.).

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$600

90 days prior to departure: Balance

## CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No charge!

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: [www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance)



# Accommodations



## HOTELS IN THE TRIENT-MARTIGNY AREA

*Trient-Martigny, Switzerland, Day 1 (1 night)*

**Hotel du Col de la Forclaz** This basic, unpretentious 34-room hotel is conveniently located in the center of town. Guest rooms are on the small size, but are clean and tidy, and the staff is friendly and welcoming.

**Martigny Boutique Hotel** Situated in the small town of Martigny in the Lower Valais, this uniquely artistic hotel has 52 guest rooms and suites—each named after an artist and decorated with pieces from one of Switzerland's prestigious cultural foundations. The locally renowned restaurant serves regional specialties and Peruvian cuisine, available in the dining room or outside on the terrace. The hotel also has a good wine bar, and is part of an innovative project that gives employment to people with disabilities, adding to the friendly, welcoming atmosphere.



## HOTEL DU GLACIER

*Champex, Switzerland, Day 2 (1 night)*

The comfortable Hotel du Glacier sits on the main and only street of the pretty little village of Champex. The same lovely couple has owned it for many years and they also run the restaurant, which has great food and a relaxed atmosphere. The hotel is steps away from a picturesque mountain lake.



## HOTEL DU BARRAGE

*Heremence, Switzerland, Day 3 (1 night)*

Located in the heart of the Valais in the Val d'Herens, this 72-room hotel offers simple but comfortable rooms and stunning views of the Val d'Herens, with its charming villages.



## GRAND HOTEL KURHAUS

*Arolla, Switzerland, Day 4 (1 night)*

This historic Victorian stone hotel at 6,000 feet on the Haute Route trail sits apart from the little village of Arolla in a forest clearing. Built in 1896 and loaded with charm and character, it has been beautifully renovated with all the modern comforts. There's a great downstairs bar with a crackling fireplace, an ancient wood-paneled salon, antique skis on the wall, and a wonderful terrace garden in front for enjoying a beer and views of Mont-Collon, Pigne d'Arolla, and other peaks we've been viewing from the trail.

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Hiking the Haute Route* webpage and click on "Accommodations."





## HOTELS IN THE ST. LUC-GRIMENTZ AREA

*St. Luc-Grimentz, Switzerland, Day 5 (1 night)*

**Hotel Bella Tola** This family-run Belle Epoque hotel dating to 1859 is located near the village of St. Luc and offers the atmosphere of a country estate along with amazing mountain views. Guest rooms are beautifully appointed and there is a good restaurant with an outdoor terrace and cozy bar area. Its spa facilities include an indoor pool, sauna, steambath, and massage rooms. The hotel is a member of The Historic Hotels of Europe.

**Grand Chalet Favre** This historic chalet-style hotel dates from the 1930s and is set right in the heart of the village of St. Luc. Guest rooms are cozy but comfortable and tastefully decorated in alpine style. Spectacular views include the Val d'Anniviers and the mighty 4,000-meter peaks looming just above the end of the valley.



## HOTEL SCHWARZHORN

*Gruben, Switzerland, Day 6 (1 night)*

In Gruben, a classic stop on the hikers' Haute Route, the stone-built Hotel Schwarzhorn is the only accommodation in this tiny mountain hamlet. Nestled in the remote Turtmanntal Valley, it has basic rooms with in-room sinks and shared toilets/showers across the hall. We hike the Haute Route trail right to this hotel in the afternoon, and hike out the next morning, no van transfer required!



## BEAUSITE ZERMATT

*Zermatt, Switzerland. Day 7 (1 night)*

We enjoy famous Swiss hospitality at this traditional century-old hotel, with its understated Old World elegance and wonderful views of the Matterhorn. Cozy guest rooms are modern, clean, and spacious. The large pool area has fantastic windows looking out to the Matterhorn, and there are also Jacuzzis, saunas, steam room, and massage treatments available. The hotel is just a 5-minute walk from the main shopping area.

# Trip Leaders

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit our webpage and click on “Trip Leaders”: [www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/haute-route-guided-hiking-tour/](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/haute-route-guided-hiking-tour/)



## KILLIAN BUCKLEY

Killian Buckley grew up in Killarney, Ireland. His parents, a harpist and a poet, instilled in him a great appreciation for the beautiful things in life, and once he found the mountains, it didn't take long for him to become addicted to the wild beauty he found there. He began hiking and climbing regularly, and what began as a hobby soon became a way of life that led him on extraordinary adventures, including climbing some of the Alps' famous north faces and an ascent, with fellow WT guide Naoise O Muirheartaigh, of Yosemite's El Capitan. In 2021, on his birthday, Killian and his partner Maggie welcomed their first daughter Henia into the world. The three of them live in Chamonix, France. Currently, he is adjusting to fatherhood and figuring out how much risk he is willing to take in the high mountains, but still enormously passionate about sharing his love and knowledge of the Earth's wildest reaches.



## HEATHER FLORENCE

Heather Florence was raised in the north of England and developed her love of the mountains early while on family hiking trips in North Wales and the Lake District. The lure of the mountains eventually led her to Chamonix, France, where she has lived for the last 10 years. When not leading trips, Heather travels around the world visiting the most spectacular places to go rock climbing. She's climbed El Capitan in Yosemite, the Totem pole in Tasmania, and desert towers in Jordan. Closer to home she has climbed many local mountains and is currently pursuing an undergraduate degree in psychology.



## JONNY KAYE

From the peaks of the French Alps to Italy's Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales in England, Jonny Kaye has crossed countless mountain ranges, guiding groups of intrepid hikers along the way with his wealth of experience as a mountaineer and his easygoing way. His climbing adventures have taken him from Scotland to the Caucasus Mountains and the Arctic. Originally from Yorkshire in England, he lives in France's Tarentaise Valley with his wife and two children. When not leading trips, Jonny enjoys time with his family, cycling and birding, and in winter, he runs a ski chalet near his home.



## TOMAS O'DONOGHUE

Originally from Kerry, Ireland, Tomas O'Donoghue split his childhood between rugged Killarney National Park and the seaside town of Dingle, where his family would spend the summer in their caravan. His parents gave him a love of the outdoors, which inspired him to travel the world from a young age. He holds a degree in civil engineering and during his 20s, he mixed guiding with engineering. The outdoor life eventually prevailed and he moved from Ireland to the French mountaineering center of Chamonix to pursue his passions in the Alps. Today he lives in the quaint hamlet of Seroz, just 10 minutes from Chamonix. Tomas enjoys most outdoors sports, with the goal now shifting to spending quality time with friends rather than scaling the highest peaks.





### MARK TENNENT

A native of Bath, England, Mark Tennent quickly learned his calling was in the mountains. He completed a specialist Outdoor Education degree at Bangor Normal College in North Wales, subsequently instructed at various outdoor centers in the UK, then graduated from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and was commissioned into the British Army, which he left as a Captain. A recipient of several mountaineering and leadership certificates, Mark has worked in various parts of the world including Afghanistan, Macedonia, Kosovo, Kenya, Sudan, and India. Since 2005, he has lived in the Savoie department of the French Alps, near Albertville, where he shares his passion for the outdoors, French food, and the local culture. He's a member of the French Syndicat Interprofessionnel de la Montagne, bringing together mountain guides, climbing instructors, and mountain leaders. When not guiding, he can be found ski-mountaineering, rock climbing, and cycling.



### KATIE-JANE L'HERPINIERE

Katie-Jane L'Herpinier, from Devon, England, has been an adventurer for 18 years, completing her own human-powered expeditions from the Sahara to the Himalayas, the Andes, and places in between. She holds an International Mountain Leader guiding qualification as well as a Masters Degree in Rural Tourism. When not guiding, Katie is an avid cyclist, competing around the world in Unsupported Ultra-Distance bike races, both on-road and off-road. She's a strong advocate for getting outdoors to watch the sunrise, breathe the mountain air, and notice the natural wonders around us. Katie says "It's a tremendous privilege to be able to lead guests through some of the world's most beautiful places."



### PETER HALLEWELL

Peter Hallewell loves to explore the great outdoors: walking, hiking, climbing mountains on skis or on foot, and snowshoeing. His passion for the outdoors first developed on family holidays to the English Lake District, and he has lived part-time for the last 30 years in Les Gets in the French Alps, progressively scaling almost all the peaks in the area. Qualified as an International Mountain Leader, he knows the mountains of Europe well and loves to introduce fellow hikers to the joys of the trail.



### SIMON HALE

Simon Hale, with homes in the French Alps and North Wales, is a professional mountain guide with over 30 years experience in climbing and skiing in mountain ranges all over the world. He holds a degree in outdoor education and environmental science and has extensive knowledge of mountain ecology. Simon has worked at Plas y Brenin, the UK National Mountain Centre in Wales, for over 15 years, the last 12 of which he was a senior instructor. In winter, Simon teaches skiing, with backcountry skiing and ski touring a specialty. He loves being in the mountains and the challenge they always provide. At home, he is a keen gardener and lover of fine wines and also enjoys mountain biking.

# Arrival & Departure

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Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

If you have booked extra services before or after the trip, an Extra Services Confirmation will be sent with your Final Documents.

## ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Chamonix, France

**Suggested Airport:** Geneva Airport (GVA)

**Suggested Date & Time:** Anytime prior to Day 1

**Meeting Place:** You will meet your Trip Leader in the lobby of Grand Hotel des Alpes in Chamonix at 8:30 am on Day 1.

The transfer from Geneva Airport to our hotel in Chamonix is included in the cost of the trip. It is a van service that will meet you at your requested flight—even if you arrive a few days ahead of the actual trip start date. Please note this is a public van transfer service and it is likely that other passengers may join the same transfer. The journey from the Geneva Airport to Chamonix is roughly 1.5 hours with this service. Please let us know if you would like to reserve this transfer by filling out our Extra Services Request Form.

## DEPARTURE

Zermatt, Switzerland

**Suggested Airport:** Geneva Airport (GVA)

**Suggested Date & Time:** Day 8, after 12:00 pm

The trip ends in Zermatt after breakfast on Day 8. If you are returning to the Geneva Airport, this requires a 4-hour train ride. Your Trip Leaders will assist you with information on return transportation to Geneva. Zermatt has excellent transportation services to Geneva City and Geneva Airport by train, with one connection in Visp. The first train to depart Zermatt arrives in Geneva at approximately 9:45 am. Reservations are not needed and tickets can be purchased on the day of departure. You can check online at [www.sbb.ch/en](http://www.sbb.ch/en) or [www.raileurope.com](http://www.raileurope.com) for the most current information on fares and train schedules.

## INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Europe.

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at [www.exitotravel.com](http://www.exitotravel.com).

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

**Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip.** Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule so we can reserve your airport transfers. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.



# Trip Details

## WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated a Level 5 (Strenuous) according to our trip grading system. You will need to be comfortable hiking 10 miles a day, being on your feet for up to 8 hours a day for several days in a row, and hiking on uneven surfaces with long descents that can be hard on the knees. While no climbing or mountaineering experience is necessary, all trip members should have ample hiking experience and be able to keep up with the group as there are no alternative hiking options available. Trail conditions, weather, and the group's level of fitness can affect hiking times and pacing.

### Average Hiking Day

- 8 miles
- 6 hours
- 2,500-3,000 feet gain/loss
- Altitudes range from 6,000 to 9,000 feet

### Challenge Days

- Day 4: 10 miles, 7-8 hours, 2,700 feet gain, and 3,000 feet loss; includes ladders needed to get over a pass

## TERRAIN

At lower elevations, the trails are usually packed dirt, but at higher elevations they are often much rockier, with occasional sections of glacial snow, loose scree, and large boulders. On some days, you will encounter sections of narrow, exposed trails. You will also occasionally need to use your hands to scramble over and between a jumble of boulders. Your experienced mountain guides are there to assist you if needed.

## GETTING IN SHAPE

We strongly urge you to train for your trip, as your enjoyment will be highly dependent on your level of fitness.

The best training for a hike is to hike, especially over hills or rough terrain. Next best are running, swimming, bicycling, or other cardiovascular exercises. Stair-climbing machines are excellent preparation for hiking uphill. Your feet should also be well prepared—make sure your hiking boots are sturdy, comfortable, and thoroughly broken-in. Altitude is generally not a problem on this trip. However, some people still experience a few problems when they first reach high altitude. Slight headache and sleeplessness are the most common symptoms. Most accommodations are between 3,500-7,000 feet. Each day, we hike over passes located between 7,000-9,600 feet.

## WEATHER

Temperatures are likely to reach the 60s°F and 70s°F during the day, with cool breezes and occasional rain. At night the temperature will drop quite a bit, depending on the altitude. The months we run these trips have the optimal weather conditions, but still can be fickle. It can range from blue skies to cloudy, wet, and cold conditions, making rain gear and warm garments necessary items to carry with you on every hike. The early-season departures may encounter snow on the trails.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Our accommodations are in small, comfortable hotels and inns. While they are clean and well located, they are not always of uniform size or amenities. Our leaders do their best to assign rooms in a fair way so that all participants experience an equal advantage throughout the trip as a whole. In two of the hotels, there are shared bathrooms (no private baths). Single rooms are offered when possible, but those who pay the Single Supplement may have to share a room for up to two nights during the trip.

HIKING DETAILS BY DAY				DRIVING DETAILS
DAY	HOURS	MILES	ELEV. GAIN/LOSS	HOURS
1	6-8 hours	9 miles	+3,000'/-3,050'	30 mins
2	5-6 hours	8.5 miles	+1,700'/-2,300'	10 minutes
3	5-6 hours	7 miles	+2,500'/-2,200'	1h 20m
4	7-8 hours	10 miles	+2,700'/-3,000'	none
5	4-5 hours	6 miles	+2,800'/-2,200'	1h 20m
6	4-5 hours	7 miles	+2,050'/-3,200'	15 mins
7	6-7 hours	8 miles	+3,500'/-3,000'	40 mins train
8				depart Zermatt on own

AVERAGE DAILY MAX/MIN °F												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Chamonix	38/22	42/25	52/32	60/38	68/45	71/50	78/50	75/50	70/45	58/37	45/30	38/28
Zermatt	29/17	34/19	40/24	47/32	55/41	63/48	66/51	65/47	60/42	51/35	40/27	31/20
RAINFALL - INCHES												
Chamonix	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.8	2.4	1.8	1.8	2.0	2.3
Zermatt	1.6	1.7	2.1	2.1	2.7	2.3	2.2	2.7	2.3	2.5	1.9	1.9

## CUISINE

Lunch will usually be in a mountain lodge or at a picnic spot amidst the beauty of the surrounding mountains. Most evening meals will be taken at our hotels and will be hearty, nourishing mountain fare, often with the cuisine the region is known for. Please note that in Europe, the dinner hour is considerably later than what it is in the US. We do our best to secure early reservations for our groups, but most often the evening meals will be at 7:30 pm.

## TRANSPORTATION

Our support vehicle will transport the group's luggage, so you only need to carry a daypack (rain gear, sweater, camera, water bottle, etc.). Trip members are always free to skip a day's hike and travel to the next destination in the support vehicle (or remain at the hotel if we are not transferring that day).

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Europe Manager or email us at [europa@wildernesstravel.com](mailto:europa@wildernesstravel.com).

## REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

## TOUCAN CLUB

We're proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business! The Wilderness Travel Toucan Club was established to reward our travelers for their loyalty. For details, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at [www.wildernesstravel.com/resources/toucan-club](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/resources/toucan-club).

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At [www.wildernesstravel.com](http://www.wildernesstravel.com), you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.



# Toucan Club Rewards & Discounts

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at [www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan).

Here's how it works:

## YOUR FIRST TRIP

As a first-time traveler, you receive a lightweight Wilderness Travel T-shirt and set of durable WT Luggage Tags. On subsequent trips, we're happy to send you a new WT T-shirt and set of Luggage Tags by request.

## YOUR SECOND TRIP

A top quality Wilderness Travel insulated stainless steel water bottle by CamelBak and a cozy Wilderness Travel fleece vest by Patagonia (\$130 value).

## YOUR THIRD TRIP

A versatile Wilderness Travel R-1 pullover by Patagonia (\$140 value).

## YOUR FOURTH TRIP

Discounts on the cost of your trip begin! You receive a 4% discount on the tour cost.

## FIVE AND MORE TRIPS

You receive a 5% discount on the base trip cost. On your sixth trip, you receive a 6% discount, and so on up to your 10th trip. The maximum discount is 10%, with a ceiling of \$500.

*Note: Due to special pricing considerations, Toucan Club discounts do not apply to our Private Journeys or Special Events. However, your participation on these trips does count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular adventures.*

## TERMS & CONDITIONS

Toucan Club travel discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount, unless otherwise specified. Discounts are deducted from the base trip cost and shown on the final invoice. The base trip cost is the main land/tier cost and does not include single supplement fees, extensions, internal airfare, or other additional charges. Bonus gifts (T-shirts, luggage tags, vests, water bottles, and pullovers) will be mailed approximately three weeks prior to trip departure. Terms and conditions of Toucan Club bonuses are subject to change or cancellation at the discretion of Wilderness Travel, Inc.



MEN'S T-SHIRT



WOMEN'S T-SHIRT



PATAGONIA SYNCHILLA FLEECE VEST  
PLUS INSULATED CAMELBAK WATER BOTTLE



PATAGONIA R1 PULLOVER



## WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

**World's Best Tour Operators:** *Travel + Leisure*, 2022, 11-time winner

**Best Travel Specialists in the World:** *Condé Nast Traveller*, 2022, 3 years in a row

**Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips:** *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

**Best Adventure Travel Companies:** *USA Today*

**Trip of the Year:** *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

**50 Tours of a Lifetime:** *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

**Best Adventure Travel Companies:** *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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