

Tour du Mont Blanc

ON FOOT FROM FRANCE TO ITALY TO SWITZERLAND



Wilderness Travel



TRIP DATES

2024

June 24-July 2, 2024
June 28-July 6, 2024
July 7-15, 2024
July 13-21, 2024
July 17-25, 2024
July 23-31, 2024
July 27-August 4, 2024
August 6-14, 2024
August 16-24, 2024
August 25-September 2, 2024
September 3-11, 2024
September 7-15, 2024

2025

June 23-July 1, 2025
June 28-July 6, 2025
July 6-14, 2025
July 12-20, 2025
July 16-24, 2025
July 22-30, 2025
July 26-August 3, 2025
August 5-13, 2025
August 15-23, 2025
August 24-September 1, 2025
September 2-10, 2025
September 6-14, 2025

Tour du Mont Blanc

Glacier-clad Mont Blanc is the highest mountain in the Alps, with seven gorgeous valleys radiating into France, Italy, and Switzerland. Our journey circles this famed massif, crossing from one country to the next—on foot! The TMB is one of the “Great Hikes of the World,” and we’ve honed this classic to perfection with impeccably designed hiking days as we explore each country’s cultural and culinary delights. Overnights are in cozy mountain hotels and inns, and our expert Trip Leaders (up to three on each trip) bring wonderful esprit to the adventure.

Itinerary

DAY 1

CHAMONIX, FRANCE, VIA GENEVA, SWITZERLAND / WARM-UP HIKE / LAC BLANC

We meet in Chamonix this morning and head out for a warm-up hike up to the granite massif called the Aiguilles Rouges, with remarkable Lac Blanc as our destination. From this spectacular mountain lake, we have our first views over the entire Chamonix Valley. Another option today is a hike to the Grand Balcon for views across the Arve Valley to Mont Blanc, with fantastic photo opportunities. This evening we gather for a trip orientation, then walk into town for our Welcome Dinner. Overnight at the Grand Hotel des Alpes in Chamonix...LD

Hiking Details: 6 miles, 4-5 hours, 1,700 feet ascent/descent

Chamonix: This charming old mountain town sits right at the foot of Mont Blanc (15,770'), the highest mountain in western Europe. Chamonix has been a climbing and skiing center for over 100 years and is the mountaineering "capital" of Europe. It 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.

DAY 2

VAL MONTJOIE / LES CONTAMINES (FRANCE)

The Tour du Mont Blanc hike starts a few miles outside of Chamonix at the village of Les Houches, where we take the Bellevue cable car up to La Chalette (5,909'). The hiking begins here, with fantastic views of the peaks of the Chamonix Valley and surroundings. From the col, we drop into the forest and make a traverse below the vast Bionnassay Glacier, then make our first climb up to the Col de Tricot (6,955'), with fine views of the long, snow-covered ridge of the Dômes de Miage, one of the most spectacular ridges on the Mont Blanc massif. We enjoy our picnic lunch here, with the beauty of the Alps all around us, then steeply descend to the Chalets de Miage for a refreshing drink. Afterwards, we climb up the hill known as Truc, then descend through a lovely forest into the valley called the Val Montjoie, and from there to the resort village of Les Contamines, once a town of chamois hunters and smugglers. Overnight at hotel...BLD

Hiking Details: 8 miles, 5-6 hours, 2,400 feet ascent, 4,400 feet descent

DAY 3

NOTRE DAME DE LA GORGE / COL DU BONHOMME / LES CHAPIEUX

In the morning, we drive to the trailhead along the floor of the beautiful Val Montjoie to the chapel of Notre Dame de la Gorge, a church of unusual Baroque architecture with Renaissance frescoes and an ancient pilgrimage site. From the church, we hike steadily upward through gentle glades and forests and then through the superb gorge called the Nant Borrant to the top of the Col du Bonhomme, our first pass. After lunch at the Col du Bonhomme, a short, gradual uphill traverse takes us across Col de la Croix du Bonhomme



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

Length:	9 days
Arrive:	Chamonix, France
Depart:	Chamonix, France
Lodging:	6 nights hotels, 2 nights small inns with semi-private rooms
Meals:	All meals included except 1 lunch and 1 dinner (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity:	Hiking / Trekking
Trip Level:	1 2 3 4 5 6 8 hiking days on moderate to steep trails, 6-8 hours a day, altitudes between 4,000-8,800 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

- One of the world's classic hikes—and we do it right!
- Hike across three international borders on foot and enjoy magnificent mountain and glacier views
- Delicious mountain cuisines in each country, expert Trip Leaders
- Overnights in mountain villages with great charm and character

Itinerary (cont'd)

(8,180'), with superb vistas over the Tarantaise region. After a brief rest at the Croix du Bonhomme Refuge, we have a long, sometimes steep descent through

rich, open pastures to the remote summer village of Les Chapieux (5,128'). Overnight in Les Chapieux, superbly sited at the southern limit of the Massif du Mont Blanc...BLD
Hiking Details: 10 miles, 7-8 hours, 4,400 feet ascent, 3,200 feet descent



Note: Today is one of the most strenuous days of the Tour du Mont Blanc, as we cross two mountain passes, the Col du Bonhomme and Col de la Croix-du-Bonhomme. The biggest climb comes at the end of the morning, and some people find it quite lengthy and demanding. The second pass is a gentle rising traverse, but done after the first ascent, this one can feel quite difficult as well. This is the longest hiking day on the trip.

DAY 4

VAL VENI / COURMAYEUR (ITALY)

Today we leave France and enter the Aosta region of Italy along a route used by countless Roman legionnaires. From the trailhead at the end of the remote Vallee des Glaciers, we climb eastward to the Col de la Seigne (8,255'). This mountain pass is the hydrologic divide between the Atlantic and Mediterranean Seas. Weather permitting, the views are fabulous of the Aiguille Noir and the Italian (south) face of Mont Blanc dominating the Val Veni. An easy descent beneath the Aiguille Blanche brings us great views of nearby glaciers, moraines, and the Lac de Combal. In the late afternoon, we make our way down to Courmayeur, at the south end of the Mont Blanc tunnel. Courmayeur, the Italian counterpart of Chamonix, is a bustling mountain resort situated below the Mont Blanc massif. Overnight at hotel...BLD

Hiking Details: 10.5 miles, 7-8 hours, 2,600 feet ascent, 3,600 feet descent

DAY 5

AROUND COURMAYEUR

Today we have three options. If you'd like to have a more leisurely day, you can take the "Skyway Monte Bianco" cable car, with its gently rotating panoramic cabins, to Pointe Helbronner (11,371'), which marks the border between Italy and France. Here you'll be rewarded by absolutely spectacular bird's-eye views of the Alps. Up for another hike? There are many options in the Courmayeur area, and the Trip Leader will choose one according to weather conditions and the group's interests. Feel like a rest? Take it easy: explore Courmayeur on your own or relax at the hotel. Lunch and dinner are on your own today. Overnight at hotel...B

"From the surprise picnics to tasting grolla in the mountain hut, it was all wonderfully organized."

B. Scott, Chapmore Ends England

DAY 6

LA VACHEY / VAL FERRET (ITALY INTO SWITZERLAND)

After a short drive from Courmayeur to La Vachey, we hike up the Val Ferret, passing beneath the massive granite peaks of Mont Dolent (12,543'), the Dent du Geant, and the Grandes Jorasses. We hike amid alpine meadows and fast-flowing streams on our moderate and spectacular ascent toward the Grand Col Ferret (8,324'), with its stunning views of the icy southern flanks of the Mont Blanc massif and in the far distance, the Grand Combin and Monte Rosa. The Grand Col Ferret marks Italy's border with Switzerland, and in the Swiss Val Ferret (the canton of Valais), there is a change in the color and breed of cows, as well as a less alpine and more gentle landscape with enticing streams and woodlands. After enjoying our lunch not far below the pass, we descend through a proliferation of wildflowers to the village of Ferret (5,592'), where we are picked up for a ride to the lakeside mountain resort of Champex (4,808'), set high up on a shelf above the Val Ferret. Overnight in hotel...BLD
Hiking Details: 10.5 miles, 6-7 hours, 2,950 feet ascent, 2,750 feet descent

DAY 7

CHAMPEX / COL DE LA FORCLAZ

Our hike follows a classic cattle trail used by shepherds for centuries to bring their cattle to mountain pastures. It ascends gently out of the village of Champex past the hamlets of Champex-d'en Haut and Champex-d'en Bas before winding along a forested trail. We'll stop at a refuge for mid-morning coffee and soak in the views of the Rhone Valley—its mountain folds tucking into the river and hamlets below. The trail contours the mountains and opens up to an alpine meadow at 6,690 feet and a charming refuge and farm that's still in use today, then drops through the forest to arrive at Col de la Forclaz (5,010'). Overnight at hotel...BLD
Hiking Details: 8.5 miles, 6-7 hours, 2,300 feet ascent, 1,700 feet descent

DAY 8

COL DU BALME / CHAMONIX, FRANCE

In the morning, our trail climbs through a serene larch forest to the Col du Balme (7,201'), the border between Switzerland and France. Now we once again overlook the beautiful Chamonix Valley, with the glory of the Mont Blanc massif before us. We have lunch at the pass, enjoying sweeping views, then begin our long, gentle hike down to the village of Argentière, from which we head back to Chamonix. We gather for our farewell dinner tonight. Overnight at hotel in Chamonix...BLD
Hiking Details: 9 miles, 6-8 hours, 3,050 feet ascent, 3,000 feet descent

DAY 9

DEPART

Depart Chamonix after breakfast. We offer a complimentary van transfer to the Geneva airport. Chamonix has excellent train and bus connections throughout Europe...B



"A great trip. I was ready to go back as soon as I got home."

David W., Centennial, CO



Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024

\$5,795 (10-14 members)

\$6,195 (4-9 members)

Single supplement: \$875

Single and double rooms are offered when possible, but both couples and those who pay the Single Supplement may have to share a room for up to two nights at the alpine lodges.

2025 Trip Cost: 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 Europe by partially tying the trip cost directly to the value of the Euro and Swiss Franc. In the late spring of 2022, when we set the rates for our 2024 program, the US Dollar equaled 0.94 Euros and 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 Euros and Swiss Francs, the remainder of our expenses are paid in US Dollars. The overall effect is to moderate any change; thus, if the Euro and Swiss Franc were to rise in value, the trip cost would rise less than might be expected, and if the Euro and 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 small inns
- All meals included except 1 lunch and 1 dinner 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
- Cable cars and chairlifts to trailheads for scheduled hikes
- Land transportation during the trip, transfers between overnight stops, airport transfers

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessary due to airline schedule changes or other factors; pre-trip expenses of medical 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

Accommodations



GRAND HOTEL DES ALPES

Chamonix, France

Day 1 (1 night) Day 8 (1 night)

A truly wonderful hotel that WT groups have enjoyed for years, the elegant Grand Hotel des Alpes is right in the center of Chamonix, set back on a lovely plaza facing a pedestrians-only street. A historic property newly rebuilt from stem to stern, it is Italian-owned and run with superb taste and great service. The quiet garden terrace along the river is a great place for a drink in the evening or a breakfast buffet in the morning. There's also a pool, steam room, and Jacuzzi. Without a doubt, this is the best place to stay in Chamonix!



HOTEL LA CHEMENAZ

Les Contamines, France

Day 2 (1 night)

Right on the TMB trail just outside the village of Les Contamines, this is a comfortable, modern hotel with spacious rooms, a cozy bar with a log fire, a great breakfast buffet, and an exceptionally helpful and friendly staff. The sauna and jacuzzi are great for a soak after a day's hike.



HOTELS IN THE BOURG-SAINT-MAURICE AREA

Bourg-Saint-Maurice, France

Day 3 (1 night)

In Bourg-Saint-Maurice, we stay at one of the following properties:

HOTEL AUTANTIC

With a tranquil countryside location outside Bourg-Saint-Maurice, this modern hotel has traditional Savoyard stone-and-wood architecture and comfortable rooms. Breakfasts are simple but good (with fresh eggs from the hotel's own chickens!).

LES CHAMBRES DU SOLEIL

With just 10 guest rooms, Les Chambres du Soleil is a peaceful place to unwind after a day of hiking. Originally built in 1856, this charming accommodation named each of its guest rooms after a different flower found in the region. The rooms are simple but comfortable, with en suite bathrooms, and there is a dining room and library/lounge.



HOTELS IN COURMAYEUR

Courmayeur, Italy

Days 4 to 5 (2 nights)

In Courmayeur, we stay at one of the following properties:

HOTEL LO SCOIATTOLO: COURMAYEUR

Set at the foot of Mont Blanc in the center of Courmayeur, this family-run, 22-room alpine-style hotel offers magical views of both the Mont Blanc and Mont Chetif mountain ranges. Some guestrooms may be on the small size, but they are clean, comfortable, and well appointed. Sore muscles? Spend a little time in the Finnish sauna at the hotel's Wellness Center!

GRAND HOTEL COURMAYEUR MONT BLANC

The 72-room Grand Hotel Courmayeur Mont Blanc, right at the foot of Mont Blanc, is a five-minute walk to the pedestrianized area of Courmayeur. The lobby bar on the first floor has a stunning view of Mont Blanc and the restaurant has a fine selection of regional wines. There is a pool, spa, and sauna.



HOTEL DU GLACIER

Champex, Switzerland

Day 6 (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 COL DE LA FORCLAZ

Trient, Switzerland

Day 7 (1 night)

Sitting right on the mountain pass where the road leads west to France or east to Switzerland, this is a mountain accommodation with simple rooms and shared toilets/showers. The food is hearty and home-cooked and there's a nice patio where we can relax and enjoy the views. Depending on availability, trip members may have to share rooms on this night.

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 *Tour du Mont Blanc* webpage and click on "Accommodations."

Arrival & Departure

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.

You **must** arrive in Chamonix the day before the trip begins, as the group meets at 8:30 am on the first day. We are happy to book you into our group hotel in Chamonix (depending on availability) or help with booking a nearby hotel for any extra nights you may need in Chamonix.

It is also possible to reach Chamonix on public transportation using trains or buses, but this can be complicated and considerably longer (three to four hours, depending on the route), involving two or three connections along the way. We strongly suggest booking the van transfer for your convenience.

DEPARTURE

Chamonix, France

Suggested Airport: Geneva Airport (GVA)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 9, after 9:00 am

As with your arrival transfer, we will provide an airport transfer service on any day to take you back to the Geneva Airport from Grand Hotel Des Alpes in Chamonix, even if you stay extra nights in Chamonix after the trip ends.

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.

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 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/tour-du-mont-blanc-hiking



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.



LAURENCE FRISON

Traveler, hiker, skier, and guide by passion, and graphic designer by trade, Laurence (“Lolo”) Frison embodies the life of an adventurer. She spent a decade exploring the world from Africa to Australia, including a three-month road trip from Vancouver to Los Angeles, and has specialized in guiding groups in the French Alps, gaining her French national credential in mountain leadership. When not leading hiking adventures with WT, she enjoys biking and beekeeping in Thonon-les-Bains in the French Alps, where she lives.



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.

Trip Leaders (cont'd)



PETER HALLEWELL

Peter Hallowell 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.



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.



KATIE 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 Master's 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."



SIMONE SIMPSON

An avid wilderness and backcountry explorer, Simone Simpson taught outdoor education in the Snowdonian mountains of Wales for 13 years before moving to the southern French Alps, where she leads treks in the Alpes Maritimes in southeast France. Her leadership stints have taken her far beyond Europe—she has guided in Costa Rica, Borneo, and one year she led a month-long expedition to Botswana and Zambia with a team of 11 school girls! Alongside her adventurous career as a guide, she is also an advanced paraglider pilot and once competed at a national level. When not leading trips, Simone lives off the grid with her husband in the Alpes Maritimes in a solar-powered house that she and her husband built.



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.

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 10-11 miles a day, being on your feet for up to 8 hours a day, 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

- 9 miles
- 6-7 hours
- 2,700-3,000 feet gain/loss
- Altitudes range from 4,000-8,800 feet

Challenge Day

- Day 3: 10 miles, 7-8 hours, 4,400 feet gain, and 3,200 loss; includes two passes

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 and occasionally, you will 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.

WEATHER

Temperatures during the day will likely be in the high 60s°F. At night, they will drop quite a bit, depending on the altitude. Mountain weather can be fickle, and it can range from blue skies with temperatures in the 70s°F to cloudy, wet, and cold days on which rain gear and warm garments are necessary. The early-season departures may encounter snow on the trails. There is a chance that we will need to choose alternate routes if weather conditions are poor.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Overnights are in mountain villages with great charm and character. In Chamonix, we stay in the wonderful Grand Hotel des Alpes. Outside of Chamonix, we stay in small, comfortable hotels that can be busy during the hiking season. Please note that these are hikers' hotels, not five-star resorts. The rooms are clean and comfortable, but 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

HIKING DETAILS BY DAY				DRIVING DETAILS
DAY	HOURS	MILES	ELEV. GAIN/LOSS	HOURS
1	4-5 hours	6 miles	+1,700'/-1,700'	30 minutes
2	5-6 hours	8 miles	+2,400'/-4,400'	20 minutes
3	7-8 hours	10 miles	+4,400'/-3,200'	10 minutes
4	7-8 hours	10.5 miles	+2,600'/-3,600'	20 minutes
5	rest day, optional hikes			
6	6-7 hours	10.5 miles	+2,950'/-2,750'	40 minutes
7	6-7 hours	8.5 miles	+2,300'/-1,700'	5 minutes
8	6-8 hours	9 miles	+3,050'/-3,000'	30 minutes
9				
				1 hr 15 mins to GVA

AVERAGE DAILY MAX/MIN °F												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Chamonix	43/25	46/27	55/32	59/37	69/46	75/51	79/54	79/54	70/48	62/41	49/32	42/27
RAINFALL - INCHES												
Chamonix	3.5	3.3	2.9	2.2	2.7	3.2	2.8	2.7	2.7	3.1	3.1	3.6

whole. 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. In Les Chapieux, couples may also have to share a room.

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 include hearty, nourishing mountain fare, often featuring 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 meal will be at 7:30 pm.

TRANSPORTATION

Our van will transport the group's luggage, so you only need to carry a daypack for items you need during the day (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.

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.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At 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.

Travel Notes



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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