



# Tour du Mont Blanc

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION



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# Travel Information

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## PASSPORT

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### Passport requirements:

- Valid for at least six months beyond your departure from Europe.
- Have at least two blank pages in your passport for entry/exit stamps.

**Renewal:** If needed, apply through the [US State Department](#) or use [Passport Visas Express](#) for expedited service.

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## VISAS & ENTRY NOTES

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**For US citizens, no visas are required** for stays less than 90 days. Non-US citizens should confirm requirements with their consulate.

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## MONEY

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**Currency:** The Euro (€) is the official currency of France and Italy. The Swiss franc (CHF) is the official currency of Switzerland. In many large towns and cities in Switzerland, and often in smaller villages close to an international border, hotels and restaurants accept Euros, and will give you change in Swiss francs.

**ATMs and Credit Cards:** ATMs are the easiest way to obtain either currency. Major credit cards are accepted in most shops in cities and larger towns.

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## TIPPING

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Tipping is completely discretionary, but over the years, clients have asked us for tipping guidelines to reward guides for outstanding service. As a reference, a **tip starting at \$155 per trip member for each Trip Leader** is suggested, preferably in local currency. The Trip Leaders take care of gratuities for hotel and restaurant staff, and for local guides and drivers.

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## FOOD

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We can accommodate most dietary needs. Please complete all trip forms in your Guest Portal to let us know of any dietary restrictions, preferences, and/or food allergies. Please keep in mind that certain cultural differences or logistical limitations mean that not all requests may be possible.

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## TECHNOLOGY

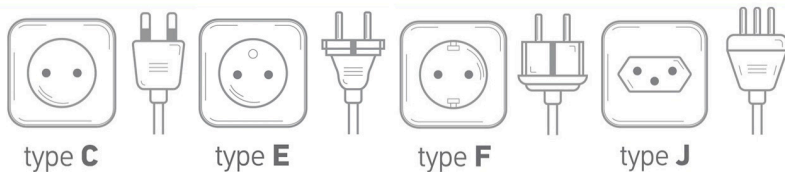
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**Internet:** Available at most of our hotels and lodges, but service can be spotty and unreliable.

### Plugs:

- **France:** Type C and Type E
- **Italy:** Type C and Type F
- **Switzerland:** Type C and Type J

Electricity is 230 volts. We suggest bringing a universal travel adapter, which will work in all three countries.



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## RECOMMENDED READING

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Elevate your travel experience by delving into this curated collection of books tailored to your upcoming adventure. They will not only entertain but also provide invaluable insights into the history, culture, cuisine, wildlife, mountain trails, or even folklore of the places you're about to explore. Discover the perfect companions for your journey ahead by [following the link](#) or scanning the QR code.

# Medical Information

It is vital that you let Wilderness Travel know of any medical problems, allergies, or physical limitations you may have. Please complete the Medical Form in your Guest Portal, and feel free to consult us if you have any questions about your ability to undertake this particular trip.

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## INOCULATIONS

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**No inoculations are required.** However, we recommend that you are up-to-date with all routine vaccines before you travel. Please consult with your physician or Travel Clinic for up-to-date and personalized recommendations. Destination-specific travelers' health information is also available from the Centers of Disease Control ([wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel)).

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## GETTING IN SHAPE

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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.

# Packing List

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## ESSENTIALS

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- Air tickets (or E-tickets)
- Passport
- One other picture ID, such as a driver's license
- Expense money

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## LUGGAGE

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We use many forms of transportation on the trip, so we ask that you restrict your luggage to one piece plus your daypack/rucksack. Additional luggage can be checked at the airport if you plan to return to the same airport for departure. A bag can also be left at the Grand Hotel des Alpes for the duration of your trip.

- Soft-sided suitcase
- Medium-sized daypack or backpack (20-30 liters), large enough for a fleece jacket, rain gear, water bottle, camera, and other items you want on the trail. A padded hip belt and padded shoulder straps add greatly to the comfort. Our luggage is brought to our lodging in the evening, and during the day, we carry just our daypack or backpack.

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## CLOTHING

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Warmth and comfort are the main priorities. Weather conditions will vary greatly. On a hot and sunny day, you might want to hike in shorts and a t-shirt, but remember that in the Alps, rain and cold weather can occur at any time. Dressing in layers is the best way to stay comfortable. The single two most important and essential items for this trip are waterproof, breathable, good quality rain jacket with a hood, and medium to heavyweight, broken in, good quality hiking boots. We are likely to experience a full range of weather conditions. Be prepared!

### Layers

An insulating base layer (top and bottom) beneath your hiking clothes will keep you warm and comfortable. Capilene, fleece, and other synthetic fabrics are excellent, as are lightweight wool insulating layers by Patagonia, Icebreakers, and SmartWool. Cotton is not a good insulator, especially as the first layer next to the skin. Once it gets wet from perspiration, it stays wet and keeps you cold. (Cotton is fine for city wear and touring.) As your insulating layer, we suggest a fleece jacket and pants, which are lightweight, warm, and breathable, or wool, which also keeps you warm even when wet. Finally, a good outer layer is necessary to block the wind and keep you dry in case of rain. Gore-Tex and equivalent fabrics are waterproof and breathable and are a practical choice. Your outer layer should be roomy enough to fit over other layers of clothing.

The clothing list below is provided as a guideline only:

- Gore-Tex rain/wind shell jacket with hood, and Gore-Tex rain/wind pants (preferably with leg zippers so that they can be taken off without removing your boots). Important: Whether you choose Gore-Tex, Supplex, or a similar fabric, make sure your jacket has a hood and sealed seams to prevent leaking.
- Waterproof rain pants. Pants with leg zippers are practical because you can take them off without removing your boots.
- Thick fleece jacket or heavy wool sweater
- Fleece vest. Optional, but great for layering
- Fleece sweater or sweatshirt
- Polypropylene, Capilene, or wool long underwear (bottoms and tops)
- Long-sleeved shirt. Wool, fleece, or quick-drying "travel" fabrics like nylon.
- T-shirts

- Hiking pants, one or two pairs. Jeans are not suitable because they are made of dense cotton, and once wet, will stay wet. Fleece pants or synthetic hiking pants are a practical choice.
- Hiking shorts, two pairs. Quick-drying nylon shorts are great.
- Shade hat with a wide brim
- Fleece hat for warmth
- Waterproof gloves - You'll be very glad you have them if we encounter cold rain or snow while hiking
- Medium to heavyweight hiking boots with Vibram-type rubber lug soles and good ankle support.
- Comfortable walking shoes.
- Hiking socks. Thick pairs (Thorlo-type) as well as synthetic liner socks.
- Underwear- Synthetics dry faster.
- Bathing suit (for hotel pools)
- Sleepwear (long underwear can double)
- Casual city/hotel attire (for certain evenings when we dine in some quite fine restaurants, you might feel more comfortable wearing dressier, non-hiking clothes. Khakis and a nice shirt will suffice for men; coat and tie not necessary).

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## HIKING BOOTS

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**Your boots must be waterproof, warm, comfortable, and broken in, with an excellent tread!** If you are uncertain about the tread quality of your boots, buy a new pair rather than risk slipping on rocky trails and scree. Please choose your boots carefully. It is a sensible precaution to wear or hand-carry your hiking boots on the plane. Nearly everything else can be replaced in case of baggage loss, but not a pair of well-fitted, fully broken-in hiking boots.

For this trip, you need medium- to heavyweight hiking boots designed for on- and off-trail hiking with multi-day hikes in mind. Lightweight boots don't offer the high degree of ankle support and foot protection you need. Full-grain leather is extremely water-resistant and durable and is preferable to split-grain leather or nylon. Remember that full-grain leather boots tend to be stiffer and will need a break-in period. If you are shopping for new boots, ask your store about boots with built-in Gore-Tex-type waterproof barriers that enhance water-resistance. If you have old full-grain leather boots, coat them with silicon waterproofing material to increase their water resistance. Waterproofing materials wear off over time and need to be re-applied. Gore-Tex boots are considered waterproof for one year unless the membrane is punctured.

If you're buying a new pair of boots, make sure a qualified salesperson gives you proper guidance in determining fit. Don't buy any boots that you are not permitted to return after wearing for several hours around the house. Blisters caused by improperly fitted or insufficiently broken-in boots are the most common and painful problem normally encountered on hiking trips. Before you depart, you should be able to wear your boots for a full, active day with no discomfort. Even boots you have owned for years can sometimes produce blisters when you are doing this amount of hiking. Limber up feet and boots before departure, and bring a good supply of Second Skin.

Running shoes are not sufficient for the hiking conditions you'll encounter, although they are comfortable to change into at night.

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## EQUIPMENT

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- Hiking poles. Hiking with a collapsible hiking pole, such as those by Leki and REI, helps to distribute your body weight, takes pressure off your knees, and improves your balance. Some hikers like using one pole and others prefer hiking with two poles.
- Two reusable water bottles, 1 liter (32 oz) each. Clean drinking water will be available for refills. Please avoid single-use plastics to help reduce waste and minimize our environmental impact.
- Good quality sunglasses with case. A spare pair of sunglasses is a good idea should your first pair be broken or lost.
- Small amount of laundry detergent to hand-wash clothes during the trip
- Stuff sacks or plastic bags to compartmentalize items in your duffel

- Money belt or neck pouch. Always carry your passport, credit cards, and cash with you in a money belt or neck pouch tucked down inside your shirt or blouse.

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## PERSONAL FIRST AID

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Every trip member should bring a small kit for personal use. Your own experience will influence your choices.

- Sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher. We recommend mineral-based sunscreens because they do not contain harsh chemicals that are known to be harmful to the environment.
- Lip balm with sunscreen
- Aspirin, ibuprofen, or Tylenol for muscle pain or headaches, Tylenol PM for sleep
- Blister kit. Look for long-lasting gel-type bandages that you can apply directly on blisters, such as Band-Aid Advanced Healing Bandages or Curad Gel Multi-Day Bandages. “Liquid band-aids,” such as New-Skin, are useful because they dry rapidly to form a tough protective cover over a blister.
- Prescription medications properly labeled
- Spare contact lenses or spare prescription glasses

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## OPTIONAL ITEMS

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- Earplugs
- Voltage converter and plug adapter for appliance use in hotels. Europe has 220-volt current. Plugs usually have two or three prongs.
- Fleece neck gaiter
- Camera, spare batteries
- Reading/writing material
- Bandanas (many uses)
- Small umbrella
- Binoculars
- Washcloth, if you like to use one (most European hotels do not provide them)

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## GEAR STORE

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To help you prepare for your next WT adventure, we've put together a great collection of top brands including Patagonia, Outdoor Research, Eagle Creek, and more at our WT Gear Store ([wildernesstravel.newheadings.com](http://wildernesstravel.newheadings.com)).