

7-DAY ADVENTURE

BEST OF THE TOUR DU MONT BLANC – LITE

France

The iconic Tour du Mont Blanc is world-famous for good reason. Circuiting the rooftop of Europe allows you to uncover an incomparable land of high mountains and glistening glaciers, with mighty Mont Blanc dominating the scene at 4807m. With seven valleys, 71 glaciers and 400 peaks, the Mont Blanc massif is extraordinary. From the Chamonix valley to Courmayeur, from the Fenetre d'Arpète to the wild Val Ferret, along the Swiss, Italian and French slopes, the path winds its way between pastures, glaciers and peaks, over passes and through valleys. You'll begin with an exceptional trek in the reserve of Aiguilles Rouges, where Lac Blanc reflects the magnificent panorama of the peaks and glaciers of the massif and finish traversing the beautiful Col du Bonhomme where glorious alpine meadows sprawl below snow-capped peaks. On our 'Kandoo Lite' trips your service will end once you leave the group at the end of your trek.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- One of the world's most iconic trekking routes
- Comfortable hotel accommodation to relax in at the end of the day's trek
- Trekking through France, Switzerland and Italy



ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVAL

The Kandoo team will meet you at your pre-trek hotel in Chamonix for a pre-trek briefing with your Guide to prepare you for your tour. There are many typical Savoyard restaurants close to your hotel where you can sample some alpine specialities.

Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

CHAMONIX TO ARGENTIÈRE

We will transfer to Les Praz village by either bus or train, and from here we will ride the cable car to La Flégère (1813m). The view of the Chamonix Valley and the Mer de Glace is breathtaking. We start our hike on a balcony path, climbing gently up and leading us to Lac Blanc (2352m) and its spectacular view of the Mont Blanc massif: the Drus, the Vert, the Aiguille du Midi and, of course, Mont Blanc itself. We head down through one of the most beautiful trails in France, bordering the Cheserys lakes, to Argentière where we will spend the night in a hotel in a peaceful, wooded setting.

Hiking time: **5 - 6 hours**

Ascent: **250 m**

Descent: **1240 m**

Max. altitude: **2352 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

ARGENTIÈRE TO CHAMPEX

After breakfast, we will take a short private transfer to cross the Swiss border via the villages of Châtelard and Trient to the Col de la Forclaz (1527m). From here, we start our trek through a pine and larch forest to reach the grazing pastures at Bovine. We will enjoy views of the valley and the impressive Coude du Rhône below us, as well as the northern foothills of Mont Blanc. On the eastern side, the impressive Combins massif stays in our sight all day long and leads us to Champex, a charming lakeside village.

Hiking time: **5 - 6 hours**

Ascent: **790 m**

Descent: **740 m**

Max. altitude: **1527 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

CHAMPEX TO COURMAYEUR

Today we transfer from Champex to La Fouly in a private minibus and begin our hike from the village of Ferret. We will cross the Grand Col de Ferret (2537m) from where we can enjoy an exceptional view of the Val Ferret and the Glacier de Pre de Bard. Italy opens its doors to us as we descend from the pass to Arnouva, where we will take a bus to our hotel in Courmayeur.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Ascent: **810 m**

Descent: **970 m**

Max. altitude: **2537 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 5

COURMAYEUR

This morning we will take the Skyway Monte Bianco, which lifts us effortlessly to the Punta Helbronner (3466m). In just 10 minutes, we will find ourselves facing Mont Blanc and the highest peaks in Europe. Returning for lunch in Courmayeur, you will have chance to savour some famous Italian specialities. Taking a break from walking, you will have the afternoon free to explore this lively town. If you prefer, you can have fun rafting in the Aosta Valley or spend a relaxing afternoon at the thermal baths of Pré-Saint-Didier (additional charges apply).

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 6

COURMAYEUR TO BOURG ST MAURICE

Climb aboard the bus and enjoy the ride to Visailles, at the foot of the Glacier du Miage. We will then stretch our legs, climbing up to the Lée Blanche Valley, where sheep graze during the summer. We will reach the Col de la Seigne (2516m) and cross the border to return to France once more. The south face of Mont Blanc is now behind us as we head down to Les Mottets. We will then transfer down the mountain to Bourg St Maurice where we will spend the night.

Hiking time: **7 - 8 hours**

Ascent: **1292 m**

Descent: **967 m**

Max. altitude: **2516 m**

Accommodation: **Hostel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 7

LES CHAPIEUX TO CHAMONIX

Our final day on the trek begins by heading up to the Chalet de la Raja, which marks the beginning of the slopes to reach the Col de la Croix du Bonhomme refuge (2443m). The refuge is located right before the Col de Bonhomme (2329m). From the pass we will descend into a valley that will lead us to La Balme refuge and the Nant Borrant refuge. We continue our descent to Notre Dame de la Gorge and its small chapel before reaching Les Contamines. We will transfer by private bus to Chamonix where we say goodbye to the group and head off on our onwards travels.

Hiking time: **7 - 8 hours**

Ascent: **894 m**

Descent: **1408 m**

Max. altitude: **2443 m**

Meals included: **Breakfast / Lunch**

PLEASE NOTE

This programme may be modified by the guide or tour organiser, according to mountain and weather conditions, required physical condition of participants and, above all, your safety. For safety reasons and to ensure the programme operates smoothly, we need to ensure that all participants have the required level of mental and physical ability. We reserve the right to end your participation if your ability does not match the minimum required level. In this eventuality, there will be no reimbursement or payment of compensation.

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

The Tour du Mont Blanc is not to be underestimated, there is a lot of steep ascent and descent on this trek, so your legs will be getting a good workout. Yet, whilst a high level of fitness will make the days a lot easier it by no means requires super human fitness. We have reduced the amount of trekking days on this trip and you will have a rest day in the middle of the trip to allow your legs a bit of recovery time. Having a solid training plan in the months prior to departure will allow you to better prepare for the hikes and enjoy yourself when you're on the trail. You will need to reach particular points on the trail each night so you may find the pace of walking to be a little faster than on Kilimanjaro, for example. This is by no means a sprint, and your comfortable accommodation will allow for a good night's sleep at the end of each day, however a good level of fitness will ensure you have a positive experience all round.

Trekking poles are also a lifesaver, especially on the steep Alpine passes! If you are comfortable walking for 6-7 hours with an ascent of 1000m over consecutive days then you are certainly fit enough to succeed on the Tour. Think of it as climbing Snowdon or Ben Nevis three days in a row! If you can do this then there is no reason why you can't complete the trek. We find that all successful hikers share a real *Kandoo* attitude and that means high levels of grit and determination.

FOOD & DRINK

This trip is on a full board basis (except for your night in Chamonix). For your evening meal in Chamonix there is a wide range of local restaurants for you to sample. If you have a dietary requirement or are a vegetarian then just let us know when you book so that your guide can help you to source a suitable menu at the hotels and get appropriate foods for your packed lunch.

The hotels provide hearty, traditional and generous meals. Drinks are not included with dinner, so please make sure you have some Euros and Swiss Francs with you. Hotels in small villages and town may not accept card payments.

Packed lunches will be produced by your guide and include local meats and cheeses, crusty bread and fresh seasonal vegetables. The lunch items will be shared between all of the group for carrying each day. Remember to bring your favourite snacks (cereal or energy bars, dried fruits, chocolate) with you to keep you going through the day.

Tap water is typically safe to drink in France so you can fill up your water bottle each morning at the hotel. On the trek itself, you will be passing many refuges where you will also be able to top up your water if needed.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation in Chamonix is in a 3-star hotel in twin rooms. You will stay in Chamonix on the first night of the trip. Please note that your evening meal is not included when you are in Chamonix.

You will spend four nights on the trek in 3-star hotels in twin rooms, with evening meal included. Accommodation will differ on day 6 when we spend the night in the Chapieux Valley. Here you will stay in a traditional gite/hostel and you should expect to share a dormitory room with other trekkers.

LUGGAGE

You will need two bags for this trip. One travel bag for your replacement clothes which will be transferred between locations by vehicle (max 10kg). Please do not lock your bag as it may need to be checked by Swiss customs. Please note: Do not leave computers, tablets, cameras and valuable objects in your travel bag. One 30-40L rucksack with a large chest strap that you will carry during the day. You will carry your own personal equipment (spare warm clothes, waterproofs, water bottle, camera and sun screen) and valuables, as well as your packed lunch in your rucksack.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

For travellers based in the UK or the US, it is best to fly to Geneva International Airport (GVA). Lots of airlines fly to Geneva from all of the major UK airports, and many of the larger US international airports as well. There are lots of companies offering transfers from Geneva to Chamonix. The cheapest options tend to be with [Alpybus](#) or [Chamexpress](#) who provide regular shared bus transfers allocated by arrival time. These are usually around 40 Euros each way for a shared transfer. Another option is to book through [Mountain Dropoffs](#), they offer smaller minibus style shared transfers for around 50 Euros each way. With Mountain Dropoffs, it is also possible to pay an additional fee for a private transfer.

You will meet the rest of the group at the pre-trek hotel in Chamonix.

Travelling Responsibly

Alternatively if you wish to travel more responsibly, then there are other ways to reach Chamonix. [Flixbus](#) and [BlablaCar](#) offer routes from London to Chamonix with a change in Paris. These take around 22 hours and tend to cost between £75-120 each way. The other option is to travel by train. This is a much quicker option taking between 10-12hrs London - Chamonix, with changes at Paris and Chambéry, however this does come at an increased cost. Expect to pay around £250-300 each way on an advance ticket. Tickets can be found at [Rail Europe](#).

If you choose to travel via train or bus, get in touch and let us know because we like to reward our responsible travellers!

BUDGET & CHANGE

The currency in France and Italy is the Euro (EUR) and in Switzerland the Swiss Franc (CHF). For the latest exchange rates please see www.xe.com.

Euros are accepted in Switzerland although the exchange rate will not be very good. However, if you are only likely to be buying the odd drink or snack while you are in Switzerland, this would probably be easier than exchanging money into Francs. Foreign money can be exchanged at the Global Exchange in Geneva airport on arrival or you can bring money already exchanged with you, as both these are open currencies. We would recommend the latter as it is no longer possible to exchange foreign currency notes in banks in France, so you may find it difficult to exchange your money after leaving the airport. The only places that exchange foreign banknotes are bureau-de-change which can be found in large cities. You will, however, be able to withdraw money from ATMs in Chamonix on Day 1 of your trip.

The simplest way to pay for things in the Alps is to use an international credit card or debit card. Visa and Mastercard are accepted everywhere alongside standard travel cards such as Monzo and Revolut. You may wish to have some Euros to hand, to pay for smaller items or souvenirs in case the trader does not accept cards. Credit and debit cards are also not accepted at the mountain refuges so you will need to carry enough cash for snacks, drinks and any personal expenses.

The average cost of a meal for 2 in Chamonix is around €50 (\$55). It's not a cheap place to eat out, however it makes up for this by offering free public transport all around the town. If you are wanting to buy some souvenirs to take home then these generally cost anywhere between €5 (\$6) for small items to €500 (\$550) for larger more bespoke gifts. Don't forget you will also need to budget for drinks whilst in the hotels too. Therefore, our recommended guidance for spending budget in the Alps would be roughly €220 on top of any tips, to give you ample souvenir spending money.

TIPS

Tipping customs vary all over the world and can be very confusing when travelling to a new country. There is not a strong culture for tipping in France, but that said, anything you wish to give your guide in appreciation of their services will be welcome. You may wish to buy them a drink in the hotel.

Tips are not a substitute for good wages: our guides are all well paid and well looked after. Tipping is completely voluntary, and at your discretion. If you are unsure of how much to tip, a general guide of €10 per person for the entire trip should suffice. On the other hand, if you receive bad service or have not been treated well, you would not be expected to tip at all.

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

PASSPORT

Most travellers will require a passport valid for at least 6 months after your return date. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific requirements and please be aware that proof of onward travel may be required.

VISA

Travelling to France is visa free for up to 90 days, for UK and US citizens

VACCINATIONS

There are no specific health risks in the Mont Blanc region. However, you should ensure that your routine vaccinations and boosters are up to date, such as tetanus and MMR.

INSURANCE

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses. Many insurance policies will have a maximum altitude limit, if you are climbing Gran Paradiso you should ensure you are covered for climbing up to 4100m.

We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf.

MEDICATION

Your guide carries a first aid kit at all times but we recommend you carry the following items: - Painkillers - Anti-inflammatory tablets/gel - Second Skin Elastoplast (to prevent blisters)/ bandages - Sunscreen and after sun cream (for sunburn) - Personal medication

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

CLOTHING TO BRING

HEADGEAR

- Sun hat – preferably wide-brimmed for protection
- Sunglasses – high UV protection
- Neck gaiter or scarf
- Warm beanie style hat – fleece or wool

UPPER BODY

- Gloves – warm fleece or wool gloves
- Short sleeve shirt/t-shirt – lightweight, moisture wicking (x2)
- Long-sleeve shirt/t-shirt – light/medium weight, moisture wicking (x2)
- Fleece or soft shell jacket
- Insulated jacket – down or primaloft
- Water/windproof hard shell outer jacket

LEGS

- Trekking shorts
- Trekking trousers – lightweight – convertible trousers work well
- Wind and waterproof over trousers (Gore-Tex or similar)
- Gaiters

FEET

- Trekking boots – with good ankle support
- Training shoes or sandals – to wear in the hotels in the evening
- Light-weight trekking socks (x3 pairs)
- Breathable, high-wicking liner socks (x2 pairs)

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Travel bag for your replacement clothes – avoid suitcases
- 30-40L rucksack with chest strap and waterproof cover – to carry water, packed lunch and personal items each day
- Trekking poles
- Water bottle or hydration bag – must be able to carry 2.0L of water
- Drybags or heavy duty plastic bags – provide additional waterproofing for the kit in your rucksack and travel bag
- Individual plastic tub and cutlery – for your picnic lunch
- Headlamp (plus extra batteries)

OTHER ACCESSORIES

- Sunscreen and lip balm (high SPF)
- Toiletries, including wet wipes, after sun and hand sanitiser
- Camera and spare batteries
- Thermos flask (optional)
- Personal medication and first aid kit
- Personal snacks and energy bars – dried fruit and nuts are also good
- Microfibre towel
- Ear plugs, if you are a light sleeper
- Toilet paper and lighter

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

1

CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

2

CONTACT US

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

3

COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.

