

5-DAY ADVENTURE

CLIMB GRAN PARADISO

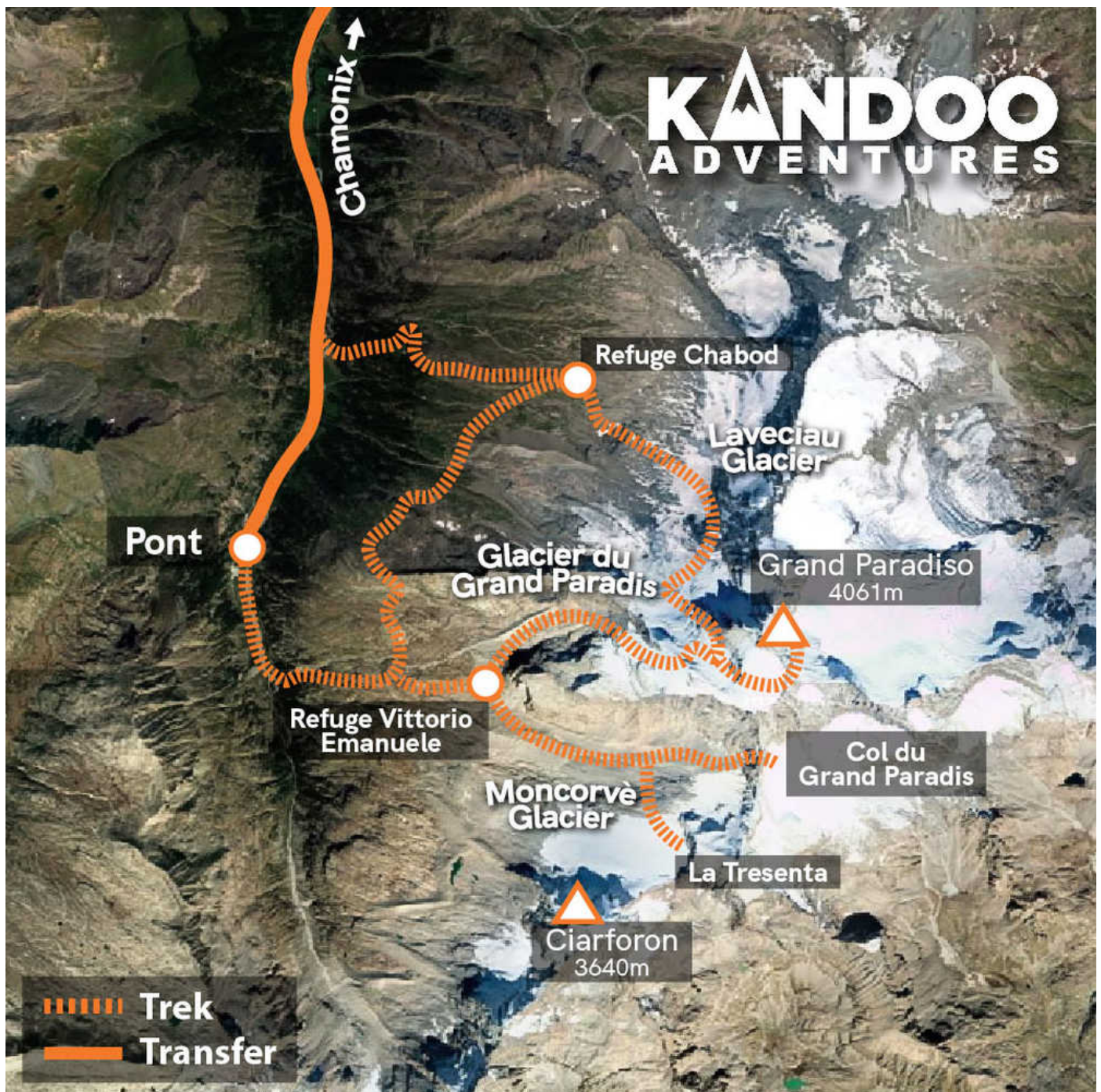
Italy

An incredible adventure trekking and glacier walking in stunning scenery with an easy climb to conquer the highest peak in Italy. From your hut in the Valsavarenche Valley surrounded by high peaks, you will learn mountaineering and ice climbing skills before ascending Gran Paradiso where you can take in the amazing views across to the Mt Blanc Massif. This is one of the region's most straight forward 4000m summits and a perfect introduction to alpine mountaineering. The beautiful Gran Paradiso National Park is a breathtaking location where you may catch a glimpse of alpine ibex, golden eagles or bearded vultures.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Reach the summit of Gran Paradiso - the highest peak in Italy
- Learn mountaineering and ice climbing skills
- The perfect introduction to alpine climbing

KANDOO ADVENTURES



ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN CHAMONIX

The Kandoo team will meet you at Geneva airport and transfer you to your pre-climb hotel in Chamonix. Later you will attend a pre-climb briefing with your Guide to prepare you for your climb. There are many typical Savoyard restaurants close to your hotel where you can sample some alpine specialities.

Transport: **Private transfer**
(1.2 hours, 100 km)

Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

CHAMONIX TO CHABOD REFUGE

We will spend the morning in Chamonix with our guide, reviewing the itinerary, checking kit and assisting with any equipment rental that may be required. We will then depart for the Valsavarenche Valley in Italy, a 70km drive from Chamonix. We will arrive at Pravieux and begin our trek to Chabod refuge (2750m) using a well-marked path.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**

Ascent: **1715 m**

Max. altitude: **2750 m**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

GRAN PARADISO

An early departure is required this morning for the Gran Paradiso ascent. This is one of the highest vantage points in the Alps with views of Mont Viso, Monte Rosa, the Mont Blanc massif and many other peaks. You won't be disappointed by the spectacular panoramas! On the trail we will follow varied glacial slopes, the beautiful ice ridge and finally the craggy finale, which takes us to the Virgin's peak. We'll take time for a photo stop to capture this magic moment before descending on an easy and quiet path to the Vittorio Emanuele II refuge.

Hiking time: **10 - 12 hours**

Ascent: **1311 m**

Descent: **1326 m**

Max. altitude: **4061 m**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

LA TRESENTA TO CHAMONIX

Today we can ice climb on the Moncorvé Glacier's gentle slopes, with a wonderful view from La Tresenta (3609m) across to the Gran Paradiso massif. At the end of the afternoon, we return to the Vittorio Emanuele II refuge and descend to the Valsavarenche Valley. We will return to Chamonix where we'll spend our last night at the hotel and you can enjoy a leisurely evening in town.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Ascent: **874 m**

Descent: **2574 m**

Max. altitude: **3609 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast / Lunch**

DAY 5

DEPARTURE

Farewell Chamonix. After breakfast we will transfer to you to Geneva airport for your flight home.

Transport: **Private transfer**
(1.2 hours, 100 km)

Meals included: **Breakfast**

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

One question we often get asked is, 'How fit do I need to be to climb Gran Paradiso?'

There is **no technical climbing** on the route up Gran Paradiso, however on the summit ridge you will be attached to fixed lines and you will make a short, exposed step up to the summit. You need experience **walking in crampons** and with the use of an **ice axe** but nothing more. While a high level of fitness will make the climb a lot easier, it by no means requires you to be a super-human. That being said, a solid training plan will help you to better prepare for the climb and will make your time on the mountain far more enjoyable. What all successful climbers share is a real Kandoo attitude and that means **high levels of grit and determination**.

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 Gran Paradiso. It is worth being aware of how to use a mountaineering axe and be able to walk in crampons, although you will undergo basic training in the first few days. For UK guests, mountain centres in the Cairngorms or Lake District offer winter skills courses that are the perfect introduction to winter climbing. If there aren't any of these centres near to you then some climbing walls in London, Glasgow and Manchester have indoor ice walls where you can hone in your skills. Otherwise something as simple as walking up and down the stairs at home kitted up in all your gear, can make the world of difference.

Looking for training advice or a training plan in preparation for this trip? We'd recommend checking out [Kate Sielmann](#) and her coaching programs that are specific to mountaineering and trekking training. [Find more details here.](#)

FOOD & DRINK

This trip is on a **full board basis** (except for nights in Chamonix). For your evening meals 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 we can plan a suitable menu.

The refuges provide hearty traditional and generous meals prepared by the refuge keepers. Drinks are not included with dinner, so please make sure you have some Euros with you. Refuges do not generally accept credit cards.

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. If you are vegan, we often find that the refuges will be able to provide hearty evening meals, however their lunch and breakfast options are often restricted as food supply is limited due to the location of the huts, so we would recommend bringing some accompaniments to go with bread for your daytime meals.

Tap water is typically safe to drink in France so you can fill up your water bottle in Chamonix. Unfortunately not all of the refuges have running water, and where water is available it is not drinkable. You will need to bring purification tablets to treat the water, and when running water is not available you will need to buy bottled water which is very expensive (5 to 10 euros per bottle).

ACCOMMODATION

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

The mountain refuges we use are authentic huts with catering facilities and shared mixed-sex dormitory rooms: blankets, pillows and mattresses are provided but you will need to bring a sleeping bag liner. Please only bring very basic toiletries as sometimes there is no running water available at the huts. On arrival at the huts, you will be expected to take off your boots and use indoor shoes.

LUGGAGE

In your daily rucksack, you will carry your food (snacks and picnic), your personal belongings and your climbing equipment. It has to have a 40 to 50L capacity and should not weigh more than 10 to 12kg. Your rucksack should be pretty comfortable to carry all day. Your guide will help you arrange your rucksack on the first day of your trip.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

For travelers 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.

We will collect you from Geneva airport and transfer you to your hotel in Chamonix. Airport transfers are included in the cost of your trip on arrival and departure days only. If you decide to arrive in the Alps early or stay on a little longer after your trip, please call us to arrange a private transfer. The drive to Chamonix takes roughly one and a half hours. Please be aware that we may ask you to wait at the airport for up to 90 mins if there is other Kandoo Adventures guests arriving shortly after you. Transfers back to Geneva after your trip depart at 9am from your hotel in Chamonix.

When you arrive in Geneva, please look out for our driver in the arrivals area, they will be holding a large "KANDOO ADVENTURES" sign.

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). 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 refuges 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 his services will be welcome. You may wish to buy him a drink in the refuge or 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 Italy is visa free for up to 90 days, for UK and US citizens

VACCINATIONS

No vaccinations are required.

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 daypack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

CLOTHING TO BRING

HEADGEAR

- Warm beanie style hat – fleece or knitted
- Neck gaiter or scarf – useful for keeping out dust and can double as a warm layer for your neck/face
- Sun hat – preferably wide-brimmed for protection
- Sun glasses – high UV protection (category 4)
- Snow Goggles (category 4+)
- Headlamp (plus extra batteries)

UPPER BODY

- Gloves – silk or merino liners
- Gloves – warm fleece or wool gloves
- Gloves or mittens – insulated, must be weather-proof
- Thermal base layer
- Lightweight fleece or windshirt
- Fleece jacket
- Wind and waterproof shell jacket with hood (Gore-tex or similar)

LEGS

- Leggings – thermal or fleece base layer (x1)
- Mountaineering trousers
- Wind and waterproof over-trousers (Gore-tex or similar)

FEET

- Gaiters
- Breathable, high-wicking liner socks (x2 pairs)
- Thermal trekking socks (x2 pairs)
- Mountaineering boots – must be able to fit a crampon and be a rigid boot
- Crampons

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- 40-50 litre rucksack and waterproof cover – with locks for crampons, ice axe and helmet
- Ice axe, helmet, harness, 2 x locking carabiners (you cannot rent locking carabiners, you must bring your own)
- Trekking poles
- Water bottles – must be able to carry 2.0L of water.
- Thermos flask
- Lightweight sleeping bag liner – preferably silk
- Eating utensils – for your picnic lunch
- Pocketknife
- Drybags or heavy duty plastic bags – provide additional waterproofing for the kit in your rucksack

OTHER ACCESSORIES

- Sunscreen and lip balm – high SPF
- Toiletries – only toothbrush and toothpaste. There is not usually running water in the refuges so bring some wipes
- Earplugs – if you are a light sleeper
- Camera and spare batteries
- Plug adapter for charging devices
- Personal medication and first aid kit
- Personal snacks and energy bars – dried fruit and nuts are a good option

GEAR RENTAL

We recommend that wherever possible you use your own gear for your climb as this is the best way to ensure your comfort and enjoyment. We recognise though that the cost of some items is very high, and this may not be possible. We work with a partner called Concept Pro Shop in Chamonix who have climbing packs available to hire for 3 days. They offer our guests a 10% discount. The climbing packs contain:

- Helmet
- Harness
- Crampons
- Ice axe

Your guide will take you to the shop after your pre trek briefing or the following morning. There are also many other places offering gear rental in Chamonix if you wish to organise this off your own back. It is your responsibility to check carefully the condition of any item you rent. We accept no responsibility for the quality of equipment hired. All the items listed below are available to rent in Chamonix:

- High altitude B3 mountaineering boots
- Crampons
- Ice Axe
- Helmet
- Harness
- Waterproof jacket and trousers
- Rucksack

Please note that you will require two locking carabiners and these cannot be rented. You must bring your own.

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.

