



8-DAY ADVENTURE

CLIMB MONT BLANC

France

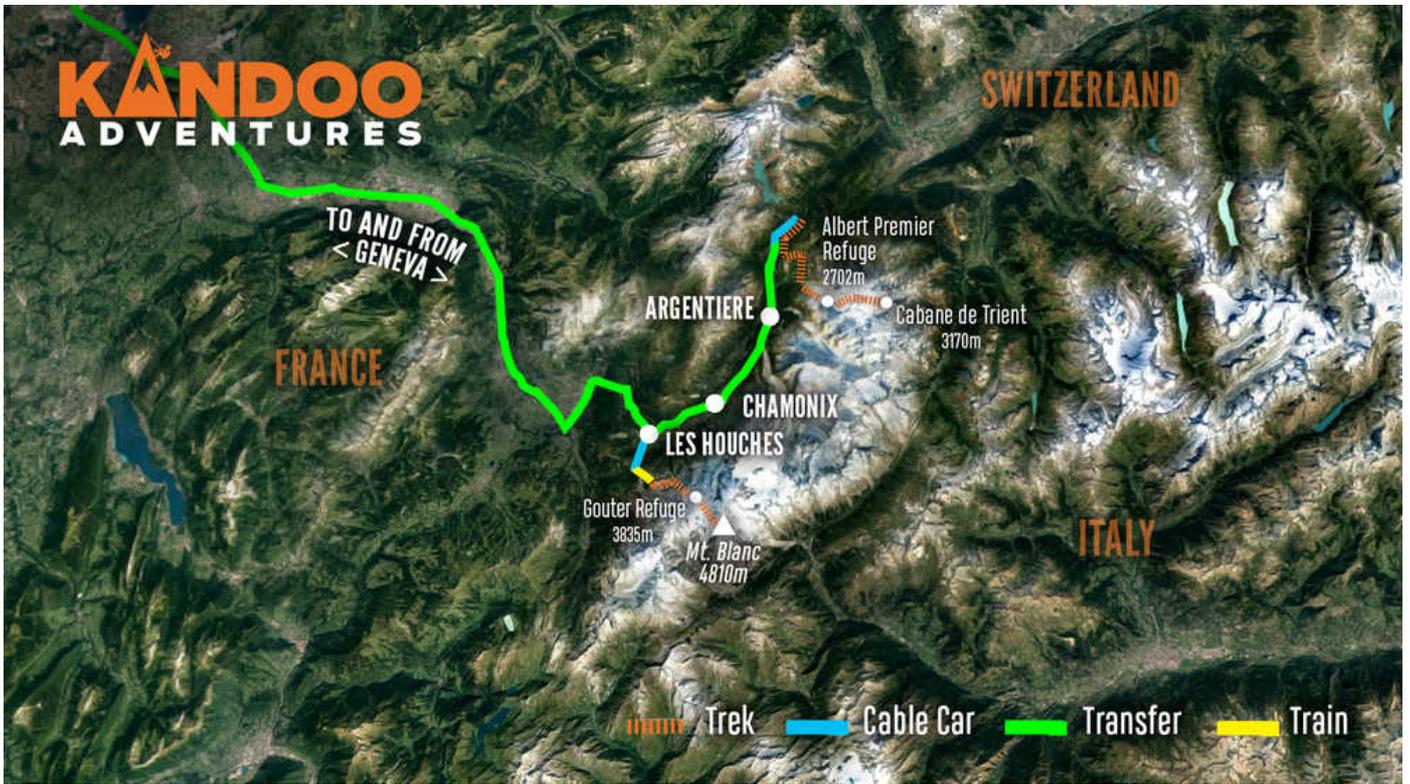
On this 8 day adventure in the western Alps you will master all the basic climbing techniques required to reach the summit of Mont Blanc at 4810m. Training starts on the Glacier du Tour before a warm up climb to the summit of La Tete Blanche at 3429m. Once you are accustomed to the altitude and the terrain, our ascent of the highest peak in western Europe begins!

Every year the summit of Mont Blanc becomes the ultimate objective for mountaineers from all over the world. Standing on the summit of this iconic peak is a massive achievement. The steep ground and high altitude make for a challenging ascent but standing at the summit and gazing down at all the famous peaks of the Alps that surround you is simply incredible.

Our 2022 climbs are now fully booked, however, we are operating a waitlist system for anybody who would still like to make the ascent with us this year. Please contact us for more information.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Ascend Mont Blanc via the Gouter route
- Trek through spectacular alpine scenery
- Learn mountaineering and ice climbing skills



ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVAL

Arrive at Geneva airport and transfer to the beautiful mountain town of Chamonix. We provide a private transfer vehicle at 2pm so if you would like to make use of our transfer service, please select a flight arriving before midday. The drive from the airport is roughly 90 mins and on arrival, you can check in at your hotel and spend some time exploring the town. 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, such as cheese fondue, tartiflette or raclette.

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

Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

TRAINING ON THE GLACIER DU TOUR

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 village of Le Tour, where we will take a small two-stage cable car to the Col de Balme (2204m). From here we will begin our trek to the Albert Premier refuge on the Glacier du Tour (2702m). Here we will spend the afternoon training in the snow and ice climbing on the glacier.

Ascent: **1667 m**

Max. altitude: **2702 m**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

ASCENT OF LA TÊTE BLANCHE

Today we will climb the glacier from the refuge to La Tête Blanche (3429m). We will then cross the Col Supérieur du Tour to reach the Trient refuge.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Ascent: **727 m**

Descent: **259 m**

Max. altitude: **3429 m**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

TRIENT REFUGE TO CHAMONIX

From the Trient refuge, we will climb back over the Col Supérieur du Tour and head down the slope, passing the Albert Premier refuge (where we can have a short but well-deserved break). Once we are back in the village of Le Tour, the guide will brief us on the following days' programme. Details will include weather conditions in the mountains and he will pair you up for the ascent of the Mont Blanc (depending on who you are travelling with and your ability level). We will return to Chamonix to rest for the night.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Descent: **2135 m**

Max. altitude: **3170 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast / Lunch**

DAY 5

CHAMONIX TO TÊTE ROUSSE REFUGE

Our ascent of Mont Blanc begins fairly easily. We take a minibus to Les Houches and then the cable car to Bellevue train station. From here, we catch the Victorian rack railway – “Tramway du Mont Blanc” – to Nid d’Aigle (2372m). We then walk up a winding track, offering stunning views over the Chamonix valley. After a short walk we arrive on a snow-covered area leading to the brand new Tête Rousse refuge (3167m). We can spend the afternoon relaxing and acclimatising, and admire the view of the north face of the Aiguille de Bionnassay.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**
Ascent: **2132 m**
Max. altitude: **3167 m**
Accommodation: **Refuge**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 6

MONT BLANC ASCENT

Setting off in the early hours, we start climbing the rocky tracks of the Aiguille du Goûter. A wide passage in the lower slopes is prone to rock fall, so it is very important to follow the guide’s instructions through this section. The rest of the ascent has sections equipped with cables or ropes, and requires some scrambling. Trekking in the darkness we will soon reach the Dôme du Goûter (4304m). As we continue towards the summit, we will reach the Vallot Bivouac, an unmanned refuge usually used for emergency protection for mountain climbers. By now the sun will be coming up, providing us with a much-needed boost as we begin to climb the Bosses Ridge. For 2-3 hours, we climb the ridge to the summit, which can be narrow and exposed, but we are rewarded with spectacular views in all directions. From the highest point in Western Europe at 4810m, we can see deep into the French, Italian and Swiss alps. After celebrating our achievement, we begin the descent. We retrace our footsteps down the Bosses Ridge and overnight at the futuristic-looking Goûter refuge, perched on a cliff on the Aiguille du Goûter (3835m).

Hiking time: **10 - 12 hours**
Ascent: **1643 m**
Descent: **966 m**
Max. altitude: **4801 m**
Accommodation: **Refuge**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 7

GOUTER REFUGE TO CHAMONIX

We continue our descent on the same route back to the Nid d’Aigle where we will catch the Tramway du Mont Blanc once more. A final cable car journey will take us back to Les Houches for a celebratory lunch. We will then return to our hotel in Chamonix.

Hiking time: **5 - 6 hours**
Descent: **2800 m**
Max. altitude: **3835 m**
Accommodation: **Hotel**
Meals included: **Breakfast / Lunch**

DAY 8

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**

Please note: there is only one transfer to Geneva which departs at 9am.

PLEASE NOTE

This program may be modified by the guide according to mountain and weather conditions, required physical

condition of participants and, above all, your safety. For safety reasons, we need to ensure that all participants have the required level of mental and physical conditions demanded by the itinerary. We reserve the right to end your participation if your technical and/or physical form does not match the minimum required level. The interruption cannot result in a reimbursement or payment compensation.

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

One question we often get asked is 'how fit do I need to be to climb Mont Blanc?' 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 though 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 then you are certainly fit enough to succeed on Mont Blanc. Similarly if you can do a full hour spinning, a vigorous aerobics class or can jog at a decent pace for 45 minutes then there is no reason why you cannot make the climb.

Previous experience of alpine climbing using crampons and ice axe would certainly be beneficial but is not required. Your trip begins with 3 days of training and acclimatization during which time your guide will provide all the training you need to move safely on the terrain.

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 and Swiss Francs (Trient refuge on day 2) with you.

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 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, the 4th and the last night of the trip. Please note that your evening meal is not included when you are in Chamonix.

You will spend four nights in mountain refuges in shared mixed-sex dormitory rooms: blankets are provided but you will need to bring a sleeping bag liner. Please only bring very basic toiletries as there is often no running water.

LUGGAGE

During the training and climb, you will carry your own personal equipment in your rucksack. You will go out twice for three days of hiking, with a return to Chamonix in between. Plan to bring a 40-50 litre rucksack to carry everything you need for three days of hiking, including all your climbing equipment and your packed lunch.

A second bag containing spare clothing can be left at the hotel in Chamonix; you will be able to access this bag when you return to Chamonix at the end of the fourth day and then store it again while you climb Mont Blanc.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

For hikers 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.

All of our tours begin at Chamonix , known as the capital of Alpinism, at an altitude of just over 1000 metres above sea level. Chamonix is only 53 miles from Geneva International Airport by car, and we will arrange transport from the airport to your hotel as part of your trek. Transport is generally available at 2 pm, and takes approximately an hour and a half.

Chamonix is an excellent choice for hotel accommodation during your stay, but it does fill up quickly during the peak season, so be sure to reserve your booking with us as early as possible.

BUDGET & CHANGE

The currency in France is the Euro (EUR). For the latest exchange rates please visit www.xe.com

Credit and debit cards are not accepted in the mountain refuges so you will need to carry a small amount of cash for drinks, snacks and any personal expenses. You can withdraw currency from ATMs in Chamonix.

TIPS

Although the custom is practiced here it is not mandatory and should be left to the discretion of each individual. If you are satisfied with the services of your guide then a tip is always appreciated.

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 Mont Blanc or Gran Paradiso you should ensure you are covered for climbing up to 5000m. 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.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

CLOTHING TO BRING

HEADGEAR

- Warm beanie style hat - knitted or fleece
- Neck gaiter or scarf - useful for keeping dust out 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
- Summit mittens - insulated heavyweight mittens. Have to be extremely weather-proof
- Thermal base layer
- Lightweight fleece or windshirt
- Fleece or heavy jacket
- Down jacket (optional but highly appreciated during the summit day if the weather is very cold)
- 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
- 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

RENTAL GEAR

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 do not have our own gear available for rental but there are many places offering gear for rental in Chamonix. It is your responsibility to check carefully the condition of any item you rent. We accept no responsibility for the quality of equipment hired.

- High altitude 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.

