

MONT BLANC CIRCUIT TREK

ITINERARY: 13 DAYS

GUIDED TRIP

Tour du Mont Blanc is a very popular walk and refuges are sometimes overbooked. Details may change and the actual refuges booked may vary from what is written here, depending on client numbers, wishes and availability. This adjustment with refuges may alter the exact distance walked in a day so the itinerary should be used as a guide only for overnight stops/ distances.

We use long-established family run 2-star (equivalent) rustic hotels and refuges that are chosen for their stunning location. Most offer spectacular mountain views. While representative of the country, culture and environment in which they are located, all are clean, well run and set up with the trekker in mind. The atmosphere is friendly and jovial as hikers from many nationalities gather to spend the night. Please be aware that room sizes (twin, double or very occasionally triple or quadruple rooms) and facilities will vary from hotel to hotel and sometimes from room to room in the same hotel. On some nights, facilities are ensuite while others have the possibility, depending on availability and group size, of shared bathroom and toilet facilities. Some nights you may be in triple or quad share depending on the tour selected.

Day 1

ARRIVE IN CHAMONIX

The afternoon is free for you to explore the town and its amazing mountain surroundings. Take a cable car up the famous Aiguille de Midi for spectacular views over the Alps or relax in one of the many street cafes. You will meet your leader at 5pm in the hotel for a briefing. Tonight we will eat dinner at the hotel.

Meals: D



Day 2

TREK CHAMONIX TO LES HOUGHES (13KM)

To start the tour, what better viewpoint than the Brevent. We get there via the Col du Brevent having taken the cable car to Planpraz. From the summit (2525 m), the view of the Mont Blanc is incomparable. However, we have to descend and we hike via Bel Lachat and Merlet.

5 hours walking – Ascent 525m / Descent 1400m

Meals: B L D

Day 3

TREK LES HOUGHES TO LES CONTAMINES (18KM)

Starting by the Col de Bellevue, from where there are great views of the Aiguille du Gouter. A charming traverse passes right at the foot of the Bionnassay Glacier. A bridge across a river and we then ascend up to the Col du Tricot (2120m). From where a zigzagging path leads us down to the Chalets de Miage before descending down to the Val Montjoie. In poor weather, your guide may decide to use another route via Bionassay instead. Overnight in Les Contamines.

7 hours walking – Ascent 1478m / Descent 1318m

Meals: B L D

Day 4

TREK LES CONTAMINES TO LES CHAPIEUX (19KM)

From the village of Les Contamines, we will walk up to the Col du Bonhomme. The path at this stage leads gently up the valley to the beautiful church of Notre Dame de la Gorge, which will be a picturesque rest stop. The track that was originally constructed by the Romans is roughly paved with large slabs and flagstones. Once past the church, the path winds steeply through pines beside a narrow gorge, where the blue-tinged waters of the Torrent de Tré la Tête boil and thunder between smooth rock walls. We leave the Val Montjoie to cross over to the Beaufortain Valley via the high Col de la Croix du Bonhomme. We arrive at Les Chapieux via the Petit Mont Blanc pasture.

Accommodation this evening is in a remote location. Bathroom facilities are shared.

7 hours walking – Ascent 1316m / Descent 929m

Meals: B L D



Day 5

TREK LES CHAPIEUX TO VAL VENY (14KM)

A short shuttle bus transfer brings us to Ville des Glaciers (1789 m). We reach the Val d'Aosta via the Col de la Seigne (2516m) and from there we see a most imposing view of the south face of the Mont Blanc. A path leads us around the Limestone Pyramids to reach the moraine of the Estelette Glacier and the nearby Refugio Elizabetta. From here we continue onwards down the valley to our overnight stop, by the glacial Lacs de Miage (a well-known local beauty spot).

Today, there is no luggage transfer possible. You will be self-supporting for this night and will be reunited with your baggage in Courmayeur tomorrow. We recommend travelling as light as possible – just a change of clothes and a toothbrush!

Accommodation this evening is in a remote location; bathroom facilities are shared. Basic dorm style rooms will be single sex and offered on a triple or quad share basis.

5-6 hours walking – Ascent 850m / Descent 600m

Meals: B L D

Day 6

VAL VENY TO COURMAYEUR (12KM)

Today is a slightly shorter day to Courmayeur and a chance to relax and take in the views from the terrace in the morning. We start with an ascent to the Arp Vielle and then on to Col Chercrouit (1956m) and descend from there to the village of Dolonne and then Courmayeur.

5 hours walking – ascent 450m / descent 1300m

Meals: B L

Dinner is not included this evening

Day 7

REST DAY IN COURMAYEUR

Today you have a full day to explore this Italian Alpine town, enjoy an espresso in one of the street cafes or take the incredible cable car ride from Le Palud to the point Helbronner at 3470m. There is also an excellent thermal bath and spa at Pre St Didier, just 5km away (regular buses). Or you could take a trip to the



provincial capital of Aosta (1hr by bus) with its Roman remains and medieval streets. Your leader will be able to offer some suggestions.

Meals: B

Day 8

TREK COURMAYEUR TO ITALIAN VAL FERRET (12KM)

Leaving from the hamlet of Villair (1340m) is a charming forested ascent to the Bertone refuge, then over a crest dominating the Val Ferret we get to Tete Bernada (2534m), we are at the summit of one of the most beautiful lookouts on the whole Tout du Mont Blanc. There is also an alternative path which runs on the flank of the mountain to Refuge Bonatti on a glorious contouring trail with flower meadows, milky streams and clanging cowbells while descending into the Italian Val Ferret.

Accommodation this evening is in a remote location; bathroom facilities are shared.

6-8 hours walking – ascent 900m or 1300m / descent 550m or 950m

Meals: B L D

Day 9

TREK ITALIAN VAL FERRET TO LA FOULY (20KM)

This day starts with an easy walk up the valley to Refugio Elena where the most demanding climb to the pass begins. The ascent to the Col Ferret (2537m) is steep but enjoyable. Crossing the Grand Col Ferret takes you out of Italy and into Switzerland along the eastern edge of the Mont Blanc Range. There are a few streams to cross today. The walk down into the Swiss Val Ferret is through pastureland and on a mixture of paths, tracks and through valaisan pastures to the charming village of La Fouly (1595m) where we will stay overnight.

Accommodation this evening is in a remote location; bathroom facilities are shared. Luggage transfers are also not included on this day so you will need to carry a spare set of base layer clothes and basic toiletries for the night.

8 hours walking – Ascent 895m / Descent 1410m

Meals: B L D



Day 10

TRANSFER LA FOULY TO CHAMPEX, TREK TO TRIENT (16KM)

The classic Tour du Mont Blanc takes the Bovine route. This part of the trail passes near meadows, forests and high alpine pastures up to the simple alp building of the working dairy farm Bovine that overlooks the Rhône Valley. An hour and a half of easy walking followed by a rapid ascent in the forest and we are hanging over the Rhone valley and the town of Martigny. You will not be disappointed with this fabulous balcony and views of far-ranging mountains.

Take a moment to enjoy spectacular views across to the Bernese Alps before a very pleasant and mostly downhill woodland walk that will take you to Col de La Forclaz. Then it's 45 minutes of steep downhill into Trient.

There is a possible variation via the Fenêtre d'Arpette d'Arpette (2671 m). This is the highest pass of the Tour du Mont Blanc at (2665m) and a tough climb up a valley and rocky slopes to reach the pass – reckoned by many to be the hardest part of the Tour du Mont Blanc.

Accommodation this evening is in a remote location' bathroom facilities are shared.

6 hours walking – Ascent 800m / Descent 950m or 6.5 hours walking 14km –
Ascent 1199m / Descent 1139m
Meals: B L D

Day 11

TREK TRIENT TO ARGENTIERE (13KM)

The walk up to the Col de Balme (2131m) via les Herbageres brings us back into France. A long but gradual ascent up to the Col De Balme with its picturesque refuge on the pass that marks the border with France. Superb Views of Mont Blanc and the Chamonix Valley stretched before you. Returning to the Chamonix Valley from here is a very pleasant walk. Col de La Balme is the furthest point from the summit of Mont Blanc. Enjoy panoramic views of lovely snow domes that will remain in sight for most of the descent into Argentiere.

6 hours walking – Ascent 1069m / Descent 900m
Meals: B L D



Day 12

ARGENTIERE TO CHAMONIX (13KM)

From Argentiere we climb up to Cheserys, a balcony offering grandiose views; the glaciers of le Tour, Argentiere, the Mer de Glace, the Aiguille verte, the Drus , the Aiguilles de Chamonix and of course Mont Blanc dominating all these mountain marvels. We expect to add a slice of wildlife to this day as a reward for our efforts, as ibex are common here. The trek ends at Flegere, where we return to Chamonix by cable car in the afternoon. The guide or mountain leader may modify the itinerary if conditions necessitate. Please note that dinner is not included this evening.

5-8 hours walking – Ascent 850m or 1100m / Descent 400 or 500m

Meals: B L

Day 13

DEPART CHAMONIX

The trip finishes today and you are free to stay on or you can transfer by private vehicle or shared transfer this morning from Chamonix to Geneva airport (not included in trip price).

Meals: B

