








SUMMER WALKING

type :	Self-Guided Hiking Tours
level :	    
duration :	11 days
period:	May Jun Jul Aug Sep
code:	FRSW403

Tour du Mont Blanc - France - Italy - Switzerland

Tour du Mont Blanc

11 days, price from € 1400



The Roof of Europe, our continent's towering pinnacle, one of the world's magnificent seven summits. **Mont Blanc is not just a destination; it's a legendary calling for mountain aficionados.** This epic tour is a dream come true, an exhilarating journey through **protected areas of awe-inspiring beauty, where wildflowers carpet the trails and glaciers shimmer brilliantly in the sun.** And that's just the beginning!

As you venture forth, you'll encounter **verdant pastures so lush they seem to belong in a fairy tale**, quaint mountain villages exuding charm, snow-draped peaks that touch the sky, and a remarkable array of wildlife sharing your path.

What's even more captivating is that **this tour spans three nations – France, Italy, and Switzerland** – each with its own unique culture and approach to mountain life. It's an **enchanted adventure, tailor-made for those who have surrendered their hearts to the mountains and are ready to embrace their challenges head-on.**

The effort you invest will yield abundant rewards, as you soak in breathtaking vistas that will etch themselves into your heart and mind, forever providing a **wellspring of beauty whenever you yearn for it.**

Route

Day 1 Arrive in Chamonix

The trek starts in **Chamonix**: on your first day you can spend your day wandering through the streets of this lively city, do a little shopping in the many shops of the city centre or maybe spoil yourself with a visit to the spa.

Day 2 From Chamonix to Les Contamines, 20,5-18 km

Today's walk starts with a bus from Chamonix to Les Houches, followed by the **Bellevue cable car**, up to 1800m. From here, instead of going up the "French normal route" of Mont Blanc (up to the Gouter hut at 3800m and to the summit at 4810m) you follow the edge of the mountain to Col de Voza and then start descending to the valley.

Here you can see the typical mountain's way to make the roof of the houses, with large flat stones. Later you go through several small villages on the valley floor with Mont Blanc peeking out again from the sky. The last part of the trail is along the Bon Nant river, to **Les Contamines**. You then continue along an ancient Roman path and one of Europe's most famous trails, across blooming meadows and striking woodland to the refuge, a typical mountain chalet with a breathtaking view. Walkers are accommodated in small dormitories for between six to nine people and a hearty evening meal is served in the chalet's cosy dining room.

Distance: 20,5-18 km km

Elevation gain: +990/-1095 m

Day 3 From Les Contamines to Les Chapieux, 15 km

Today's walk takes you through the **Plan des Dames up to the Col du Bonhomme (2329m)** then still a bit further up to the **Col de la Croix du Bonhomme (2479m)**. You'll see a peculiar combination of stones marking the top of the pass from where you can admire the valleys stretching out for miles around you. From the pass you make a long descent through the open meadows of the **Vallee des Chapieux**, criss-crossing small brooks and passing mountain huts. At the bottom of the descent you reach the tiny village of **Les Chapieux**. Your accommodation tonight is a simple mountain hotel.

Distance: 15 km

Elevation gain: +900/-900 m

Day 4 From Les Chapieux to Val Veny/Courmayeur, 14-19 km

Today is the longest and most demanding day of the holiday but definitely very scenic, with surprising landscapes all the way. After two days spent walking in France, today you go over the **Col de la Seigne (2516m)** and enter into **Italy** through the **Val Veny**. The day starts off with a climb through a deep gorge surrounded by vast pastures with lunar-like scenery as backdrop.

The Col de la Seigne and the Aiguille des Glaciers mountains loom large in the distance on the border between Switzerland and Italy. Once over the top of the pass you descend into the Val Veny Valley on the opposite side of Mont Blanc, from where you can enjoy magnificent views of the snow-capped peaks.

Depending on availability, today you may be booked at a nice **Rifugio in La Lex Blanche or at Courmayeur**: if you are booked here, you will walk 5,5 kilometres to reach a bus stop in La Visaille where you will take a bus to Courmayeur.

Distance: 14-19 km

Elevation gain: +1180/-1380 m

Day 5 From Val Veny/Courmayeur to Val Ferret, 5,5-12 km

Today's walk is divided into 2 parts; if you have slept in Rifugio Elisabetta, in the morning you will walk 5,5 km to the bus stop and descend towards the famous city of **Courmayeur** by bus. Courmayeur is a renowned ski resort where you can have a well-deserved rest before starting off again with a steep ascent followed by a level walk through meadows and conifer woods to Val Ferret, passing many small brooks, with the wonderful, awe-inspiring silhouette of the Grand Jorasses standing out. If you feel tired, or if you prefer to stroll through the streets of the centre, you can stop in Courmayeur and then take a bus directly to **Val Ferret**.

Distance: 5,5-12 km

Elevation gain: +800/-400 m

Day 6 From Val Ferret to La Fouly, 18 km

This morning's walk will take you up a steep ascent and past ruined farmhouses. This marks the start of your journey into **Switzerland**.

The first 4 or so kilometres are a gradual 150m ascent along a surfaced road. If you wish, you can avoid this section by taking the SAVDA bus that stops in front of the hotel.

From Waypoint 4 a steep and rewarding climb takes you to Rifugio Elena then on to the border crossing with Switzerland, at the top of the **Col du Gran Ferret (2537m)**. The views of the receding Glacier and the perennial snow of Triolet and Pre de Bar are imposing. The descent is through vast open meadows with very few traces of human settlement. You pass a couple of mountain huts then nearing the small hamlet of Ferret and on to La Fouly, the trail passes through idyllic scenery of forests, creeks and picturesque wooden bridges. You spend the night in the village of **La Fouly**.

Distance: 18 km

Elevation gain: +870/-920 m

Day 7 From La Fouly to Champex-Lac, 18 km

After the efforts of the last few days, today offers you an easier walk. This section is quite long, but the elevation gains and losses are not so pronounced. Starting off from La Fouly, you follow the river encountering a succession of woods, interrupted by cliff walls and small streams. You then walk through meadows to reach **Les Arlaches**, a beautiful hamlet with many traditional wood and stone houses. The last stretch is up a long winding climb, it's not too steep and there are interesting wood sculptures along the way to look at. At Orsieres the trail descends to **Champex-Lac**, a pretty mountain village situated on the lake. You continue past the lake and up the ski area of Arpette where you spend the night. From La mm Brea ski area you follow the trail to **Relais d'Arpette**.

Distance: 18 km

Elevation gain: +700/-715 m

Day 8 From Champex-Lac to Trient, 15,7 km

From Arpette to Trient via Fenêtre d'Arpette a spectacular walk over the **Fenêtre d'Arpette (2665m)** from where you descend along the Glacier du Trient. **Trient (1300m)** is a village on the pass road from Martigny to Chamonix.

In bad weather, there is an alternative route, From Arpette to Trient via Champex-d'en Haut, through cool forests and beautiful alpine meadows that take you to **Col de la Forclaz**, which is an important link between Switzerland and France. This walk enjoys breathtaking panoramas and reaches 2050m.

Distance: 15,7 km

Elevation gain: +710/-1125 m

Day 9 From Trient to Argentière, 14,5 km

Today you'll get to have your last views of Mont Blanc and enjoy your final walk to Argentiere. You are above the ski resort of **Le Tour** from where you hike towards **Lake Charamillon (2271 metres)**. You then continue on to the immense Glacier du Tour and back into France. An exhilarating rocky trail along the mountain crest allows you to enjoy astounding views of the glacier and the surrounding valleys. As you reach the border between Switzerland and France, you can see Mont Blanc shining white, especially on sunny and bright days. You descend among pastures for the last section of the walk until you arrive at **Argentiere**.

Distance: 14,5 km

Elevation gain: +985/-905 m

Day 10 From Argentière to Chamonix, 19,5-17,5 km

The walk today is quite long so start early! You begin walking through the pretty little village **Les Frasserands**, with the typical wooden houses of the French alps. After going through the botanic path you start climbing uphill, into the **Aiguilles Rouges Natural Park**. You can decide if you want to continue to climb up to **Lac Blanc** (it involves the climb of an iron ladder, so if you suffer from vertigo you better not do that) or start descending to La Flegere. The route is very panoramic, in front of you the Mont Blanc massif, with the Aiguille Verte, the Drus, the Aiguille du Midi, Mont Blanc du Tacul and Mont Blanc, until you arrive at Planpraz, where the cable car will take you down to **Chamonix** (last one is at 5 pm). If you are tired or in short of time you can also take the cable car at **La Flegere**.

There are 2 Options for today's walking

Option 1 is slightly shorter. The 17,5 kilometre walk is expected to take around eight hours to complete and you will ascend a total of 1443 metres and descend 789 metres.

Option 2 is longer. The 19,5 kilometre walk is expected to take around around nine hours to complete and you will ascend a total of 1500 metres and descend 1380 metres.

Distance: 19,5-17,5 km

Elevation gain: +1620/-1440 m

Day 11 Arrivederci Chamonix!

The trip and our services end after breakfast unless you have booked extra services or extra nights.

Accommodation

8 Nights in mountains huts on HB basis



Hotel La Vallée Blanche - Chamonix

Hotel La Vallée Blanche is a family run hotel situated in Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, on the Arve river shores, housed in a 17th century building. Rooms are comfortable and welcoming with private bathroom, free Wifi, mini-bar, air conditioning/heating and some of these have a private balcony. Staff is kind and helpful. Hotel also have a pub with live music and a large terrace.

www.vallee-blanche.com



Refuge Nant Borrant - Les Contamines-Montjoie

This refuge is surrounded by green and the beautiful landscape of Dolomites. It has 5 little dormitories with 5 or 9 beds, very simple. The restaurant offers homemade dishes. Owners are welcoming and courteous.

www.refuge-nantborrant.com

Hotel Les Chambres du Soleil - Bourg Saint Maurice

This Hotel is situated in Les Chapieux, a little hamlet located at 1554 m on the Route of the Great Alps which connects the Geneva Lake to the Mediterranean. Rooms are basic, but clean and well-finished with private bathroom. Homemade breakfast is very good. The restaurant is very good and proposes typical dishes.

www.leschambresdusoleil-montblanc.com

Rifugio Monte Bianco - Courmayeur

The hut is located in the Aosta Valley at the foot of Mont Blanc a few kilometers from Courmayeur. It has 56 beds in rooms for 2-4 people and a dormitory with 14 beds. The restaurant proposes typical dishes and drinks of the Aosta Valley cuisine.

www.rifugiomontebianco.com

Albergo Lavachey - Courmayeur

Hotel is located in the heart of Val Ferret at 1642 m above the sea level and 11 km from Courmayeur Mont Blanc city center. Rooms are basic, but spacious and well-finished with rustic style and running hot and cold water. There are 5 shared bathrooms. The restaurant is very good and proposes regional and Italian products and dishes.

www.lavachey.com

Hotel Edelweiss - La Fouly

Hotel Edelweiss*** is centrally located in the alpine hamlet of La Fouly. Rooms are basic with TV, free Wifi, telephone, private bathroom and a little balcony. The restaurant offers typical local dishes.

fouly.ch/Lafouly

Relais d'Arpette - Orsières

Relais d'Arpette is strategically located and it offers spacious and clean dormitories with common bathroom. The restaurant offers local dishes. Breakfast is normal.

www.arpette.ch

Hotel La Grande Ourse - Trient

Hotel La Grande Ourse is completely renovated located at 1300 m above the sea level at the foot of two different glaciers and Col de la Forclaz. Rooms are basic with wooden furniture. There are common bathrooms and changing rooms. Breakfast and restaurant are normal.

www.la-grande-ourse.ch

Hotel L'Olympique - Argentiere

Hotel L'Olympique overlooking the beautiful views of Chamonix Valley and offers well-furnished rooms, clean and well-finished with mountain style and TV, free Wifi. Highly recommended the restaurant that proposes a simple and varied menu with fresh, quality products prepared with traditional methods. Owners are welcoming and helpful.

www.hotel-olympique-chamonix.com

Practical info



On arrival there is a regular bus service from Genève airport to Les Contamines (www.sat-montblanc.com), trip can last from 1 hour 45 minutes to 2 hours 30 minutes, price for a one way ticket is 35 euros per person; also possible is to prebook a private transfer (www.alpybus.com), price is 230 euros up to 4 people.

We suggest you to arrives in Les Contamines or at La Fayet train station before 1.30 pm, so you can also decide to make the long walk.

If you travel by train, the closest train station is La Fayet d'en Haut (for train timetables <http://en.voyages-sncf.com/en/>): from there you can decide to do the longer walk starting in Col de Voza, by taking the tramway of Mont Blanc (www.compagniedumontblanc.fr) or the shorter walk, by taking the bus to Les Contamines-Montjoie, which runs several times a day, except on Sundays.

If you travel by car, you can park in a public car park at the start of the walk in Les Contamines-Montjoie.

On departure day from Argentière, you can walk to Montroc (3 km far) and take the train from Montroc – Le Planet to Martigny and from there a train to Genève (If you travel by plane) or to Le Fayet and from there the bus to Les Contamines-Montjoie (if you travel by car).



GPS tracks are available on request.

Included

What is included

- 8 Nights in mountain huts in dormitory with shared bathroom and 4 nights in hotel room with private bathroom and with breakfast
- 8 dinners (in the huts)
- maps and detailed description of the itinerary
- Medical and luggage travel insurance
- 24h phone assistance

What is not included

- Transfers to the starting location and from the arriving location of the tour
- lunches and dinners, if not otherwise stated
- luggage transfer
- visits and entrance fees - tips
- personal expense
- possible sojourn taxes
- everything that is not mentioned in the "What is included" section.

Optional Services

These services can be added to the ones included in the base price of the tour:

- Single room supplement
- luggage transfer
- cancellation insurance
- Transfers to reach the starting location or to leave the arriving location of the tour, which will be quoted on request.