



Mont Blanc Guided Ascent

15,771ft / 4,807m

5 days / 6 nights

Trip Notes

All material Copyright © Adventure Consultants Ltd 2012

Our Mont Blanc Guided Ascent is aimed at mountaineers who have previous snow and ice experience. The ascent is programmed to run over 5 days as this gives you time to make a warm-up ascent of another peak to allow you to acclimatise appropriately before you climb Mt Blanc. You choose the dates that best suit your travel plans and we will make the accommodation and transport arrangements for you.

We approach Mt Blanc from either the North West via the Goûter Route or the North via the Cosmiques route. The Cosmiques route traverses the lesser peaks of Mt Blanc du Tacul and Mt Maudit on the way to the summit. The choice of route taken will depend on snow and weather conditions at the time and your guide will discuss this with you on your arrival into Chamonix.

On the Goûter Route we begin the approach by tram and railway then walk up to either the Goûter hut or the Tête Rousse hut in 3-5 hours. The summit day begins early and the climb takes around 5-8 hours over snow domes and a superb snow ridge to the summit.

The Cosmiques Route is slightly more difficult taking around 6-7 hours to the summit from the Cosmiques hut. This route features snow basins followed by some short steeper sections as you ascend the peaks of the Tacul and the Maudit. After the Maudit is passed you climb a large snow dome to Mt Blanc's summit, the highest point in the Alps.

As a warm up for Mt Blanc, we climb Italy's highest (non-frontier) peak, Gran Paradiso at 13,323ft/4,061m. Gran Paradiso is a very good climb in its own right and is very valuable as an acclimatisation ascent before you move on to climb Mt Blanc. While Gran Paradiso is often an expedition in itself, we combine the two peaks on the same trip so you get twice the value on the same trip!

During the acclimatisation phase on Gran Paradiso you will sleep in a high-mountain hut at sufficient elevations to promote acclimatisation. We then return to Chamonix to complete the ascent Mont Blanc.

You will have the undivided attention of your guide throughout the duration of your trip who will be willing to help you revise technical skills throughout the program.

Most other guide companies will amalgamate you into large groups through the

acclimatisation stage of the trip then put you with a single guide (or two people with a guide) on summit day as a cost cutting measure. We do not believe this is in your best interest so we adhere to the same guide policy throughout the time you are with us.

About the Ascent

You start the trip in Chamonix where you will be taken by your shuttle driver to your accommodation on arrival. You will be met in the evening by your guide who will brief you on the upcoming journey and help you sort equipment for the trip.

The following morning you will make the short trip by road through to Italy and hike the 3 hour trail up to a high hut on the flanks of Gran Paradiso. Gran Paradiso is a short drive from Chamonix and is situated above the Aosta valley in Italy with fabulous views across to the Mt Blanc Massif.

You will stay in either the hut known as Rifugio Vittorio Emanuele at 2,735m or the Rifugio Chabod at 2,750m. We ascend well-formed trails to get to these huts and the hike serves as a good warm-up hike of 800-900 m depending on which trail we use. The ascent route from both huts converge after a short while as you follow easy-angled moraines then glaciers to finish on an exposed but reasonably low angled rock ridge to the summit.

An ascent to altitude is vital as preparation for attempting Mt Blanc as it gives us a decent level of acclimatisation. Technically speaking, Mont Blanc is not especially difficult but it is physically demanding and requires a good level of fitness.

We operate the Mt Blanc Guided Ascent on a ratio of one guide to one or two climbers. This means you can come by yourself or with a friend.

You benefit from the higher degree of personal tuition from your guide and your skills will be accelerated because of this. If you are a seasoned climber and want to attempt a more technical training climb prior to the Mt Blanc ascent then please enquire at the booking stage for other options.

NOTE: Program can change due to weather and climbing conditions.

Itinerary

Day 0: Your guide will meet you at 6:30pm in our hotel for a briefing and gear check. The guide will go over the activities for the week and answer last minute questions before dinner. Hotel night.

Note; on occasion the guide will meet you the following morning if you have arrived late or the guide is finishing another program.

Day one: Drive to Gran Paradiso National Park (1 1/2 hrs), trek up to Chabod Hut 2715m, (3 hrs). Prepare for climb next day.

Day two: Glacier skills re-fresh in the morning then climb Gran Paradiso 4061m by

west flank (5 to 6 hrs) in the afternoon, descend to Chabod hut for 2nd night.

Day three: Return to Chamonix and freshen up, then Aiguille de Midi lift to Cosmiques / or to Tete Rouse hut

Day four: Very early start for ascent of Mont Blanc (5-8hrs) and descend either via Gouter to Tete Rouse hut 3170m (4 to 5 hrs) or via the traverse back to the Cosmiques. Hut night.

Day five: Descend to Les Houches (or Chamonix if descending the Cosmiques route). Debrief. Hotel night.

Depart day: Breakfast and departure. Airport transfers are not included but we can arrange this for you.

Mont Blanc Guided Ascent season:

The best season for climbing Mt Blanc is over the summer months from early July to mid - September. In the early part of the season there is more snow around thereby making access to the routes easier as the glaciers are filled in.

You can book dates that suit your own travel plan.

Ratio : 1 guide to 1 or 2 climbers

Please note: You can also book 1:1 or 1:2 Mont Blanc Course & Ascent over 6 days / 7 nights that provides an additional day to this program for instruction on snow and ice techniques. This is recommended for introductory mountaineers or those who would like revision of techniques prior to the ascent.

Our Guides

Adventure Consultants guides are BMG/NZMGA and / or IFMGA-UIAGM qualified mountain guides. They are professional mountaineers and operate to the highest industry standards.



Being a technically proficient climber alone is not enough to work with us; our standards demand that trip leaders are great guides as well. You will find your guide friendly, approachable and focused on providing a safe and enjoyable trip in line with your objectives and comfort level.



Success with the highest margin of care is always a hallmark of our approach; promoting the realisation that even extreme pursuits such as high altitude mountaineering can be undertaken safely.

Adventure Consultants only employs IFMGA qualified guides for European ascents and

courses and this is the only certification that is recognised in the French Alps. In order to gain these qualifications guides must undergo rigorous training and assessment on climbing skills, instructional skills, avalanche training and assessment, wilderness first aid, rescue training and much more. The qualification takes many years to attain and ensures you are getting a world class professional service.

Communications & messages

Our guides are in cell phone communication with our operations base throughout the trip. This assists us with schedule and weather forecast updates, lift and accommodation co-ordination and safety back up. Your own mobile phone should work in the region though you may want to check with your own service provider first. Local mobile phones can be rented at the international airports.

Climbing season

We operate on Mont Blanc in the summer months mid-June to mid-September and other times as conditions allow. In June and early July we can expect more snow cover on the routes, and as temperatures warm up into the summer months from mid-July we traditionally experience more settled weather and warmer temperatures.

Weather

Europe has a continental climate which in general encourages more stable weather. However, the weather in the high mountains can be changeable and at times very severe. It is possible weather conditions may thwart an attempt on the summit of Mont Blanc in the time allotted. However, due to the length of the course and our focus on the forecasts we can often change our itinerary to work around frontal systems. Should the weather not allow a summit attempt within the time frame, it is sometimes possible to engage the guide for additional days depending on their availability.

Equipment

Climbing in the European Alps requires you have high quality clothing and equipment due to the extremes of weather conditions. Our focus is on having the essential clothing and equipment to keep you warm and comfortable during the climb.

You will be sent an equipment checklist on confirmation of your booking. Your Guide will go through an equipment checklist with you at the beginning of your trip. You can rent technical equipment for the climb but you must provide your own clothing appropriate to mountaineering as per the equipment list. Actual equipment taken may vary subject to seasonal weather and route conditions. Group equipment including ropes and technical hardware will be provided by your Guide.

Fitness and health

To make the most of your climbing experience we encourage you to work on your fitness prior to the trip. You will find that training on hills with a 10kg + pack is the best preparation for the mountains. The primary aim is to develop your endurance as climbing requires extended periods of only moderate level output. Your guide will be attuned to your fitness levels and will regulate the pace accordingly.

Our registration form requests that you advise us of any medical problems you may have and if you are on any medication. Any information you supply will be treated as confidential.

Food

We provide breakfasts and lunches for the duration of the course and evening meals on the three hut nights while the trip is running. This is from breakfast on Day 1 until breakfast on your departure day. You will be responsible for your own evening meals on the three non-mountain nights in Chamonix. This allows you to experience the exciting culinary options available in Chamonix as there are many restaurants and bars within close walking distance that provide a variety of foods to suit your tastes. Any additional food, bottled water, beverages or meals you purchase that are not mentioned in the inclusions will be at your own expense.

We provide nutritious meals and a small supply of snack food throughout the trip according to the program. It is a good idea to bring a small selection of your favourite snack food and hydration drinks with you to ensure you are fueled by your preferred brands. Actual amounts depend on your consumption but 2 per day in addition to the lunches we provide would seem reasonable.

If you have any special dietary requirements, please advise us at the time of registration. If your dietary requirements are especially strict you are advised to bring a sufficient supply of your required food types with you to ensure you are provided for.

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out trip cancellation and travel insurance to protect yourself in case of injury or mishap prior to/and whilst on our trips.

While our focus is on safety and our track record supports this, the mountains do have hazards and there is the potential for mishap. If you were injured whilst on the trip there is a very efficient rescue service nearby. We also advise getting trip cancellation insurance to cover you should you be forced to cancel your participation prior to the trip starting.

Travel to Chamonix

We commence our Mont Blanc Guided Ascent from Chamonix in France. The closest international airport is at Geneva, just over the border in Switzerland. Regular shuttles

operate through to Chamonix and the trip takes about 1.5 hours. Your shuttle driver will drop you at your accommodation. At the completion of the trip the shuttle can take you back to the airport. The shuttle transfers are at your own cost but we can help arrange this for you.

Accommodation

Accommodation is provided on a twin share B&B basis from the arrival evening on day 0 through to and including the night of day 5 and breakfast the following morning. Accommodation in the mountains is in alpine huts in shared bunk rooms or dormitory rooms. Blankets are provided and no sleeping bag will be required although you will require a 'sleeping sheet' for personal hygiene under the provided blankets. There are no single supplement or private rooms available in the mountain huts but we can arrange this for you in Chamonix. We can also arrange an upgrade to four or five star hotel accommodation – ask about the hotel options if interested.

Price

The Mont Blanc Guided Ascent operates ex Chamonix, France for 5 days/6 nights

Price: EUR€ 2,995 1:1 guide to climber ratio

EUR€ 1,850 1:2 guide to climber ratio

NOTE: The 1:2 pricing is for groups of two people booking together as a pair.

The cost includes:

- Qualified Mountain Guide
- Group technical equipment – ropes, ice screws, snow stakes
- Lifts
- Huts
- Local ground Transport
- Hotel B&B (3 star) during course dates as per schedule including first night and last night of course
- Breakfast, lunch & dinner during mountain component of course

The cost does not include:

- Any costs that are additional to the program that come about due to changes to program caused by weather or organisational changes. (Any changes will generally be due to factors outside our control such as weather, lift failure (etc) and actioned only after you have been consulted by your guide)
- Personal mountaineering clothing and equipment as per lists supplied
- Evening meals during hotel nights in Chamonix
- Extra additional meals or snacks/drinks purchased from huts/hotel
- Insurance
- Transport to and from Chamonix (although we can arrange it for you)
- Gratuity

** We strongly suggest you purchase trip cancellation insurance from your normal travel agent.*

** All prices are subject to change without notice.*

Trip registration and payment

In order to confirm a guide and your trip, we require a completed Booking Form and a deposit of EUR €500. The balance of payment is then due 90 days prior to the start date.

Use our online booking form at: www.adventureconsultants.com/adventure/BookingForm/

Note: You can send us your credit card details to pay via credit card through a secure link on this page as part of the online form booking process. We can accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card – **Visa, Mastercard** or **AMEX**.

Or we can send you a booking form to print, fill out and post / fax / email back to us.

You can pay by telegraphic transfer as follows: Payments should be made by bank transfer to the following **EUR€** bank and account:

**Bank of New Zealand
Offshore Branch
Wellington
New Zealand**

for the account of **Adventure Consultants Limited**

Account # **1000-594771-0002**

Account Type: Euro Dollars

Swift Address: BKNZNZ22

**Please note: In order to reserve a guide we recommend that you book well in advance. This especially applies to the high season period (mid-July to end of August).*

Cancellation & Refund Policy

Once you have paid your deposit your trip is confirmed, subject to payment of the balance of fees owing 90 days prior to your trip commencement date. A climber may then cancel his/her participation on the following basis:

- Cancellations outside of 90 days will result in the loss of the trip deposit.
- For cancellations made within 89-60 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 50% of the full fee.
- For cancellations within 59 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

- We strongly recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent.

We look forward to climbing continental Europe's highest peak with you!

If you would like to book a Guided Ascent of Mont Blanc please request an Application Form and forward it along with your climbing résumé and the deposit for the trip. You can also use our online booking form at

<http://www.adventureconsultants.com/adventure/BookingForm/>

If you require more information please contact us at;

Adventure Consultants Ltd

PO Box 739
58 McDougall St
Wanaka, 9343
New Zealand

Ph + 64 3 443 8711 Fax + 64 3 443 8733

Email: info@adventure.co.nz

Web: www.adventureconsultants.com



Adventure Consultants – is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and a corporate member of the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.

All material Copyright © 2012 Adventure Consultants Ltd