



Ville des Glaciers

Mont Blanc hiking tour - Part Two

The more challenging southern half made simple

Tour Highlights

- ☞ Challenging, 6-night, TMB mini-tour: southern half
- ☞ Enjoy three days walking in France and two in Italy.
- ☞ Experience a night in a private room in refuge Elisabetta.
- ☞ Hike anti-clockwise for an enhanced experience.
- ☞ We carry your luggage onto the next hotel.
- ☞ Start in vibrant Chamonix and finish in idyllic Courmayeur.
- ☞ Walk the Balcon du Sud and the remoter southern section.
- ☞ **See the videos for each day's walking on our website page.**



Fact File

- ✓ Self-guided, inn-to-inn tour round the bottom half of the Mont Blanc Massif.
- ✓ Average 6 to 6½ hours and 10½ miles/17 kms a day.
- ✓ Convenient access from France, Italy or Switzerland.
- ✓ Departures any day from 25th June to 9th September.
- ✓ Luggage transfers - up to 15 kgs per person.
- ✓ Good accommodation: three nights in 3-star hotels, one superior 2-star hotel, one auberge and a refuge with private rooms - no dorms!



Theme

Mont Blanc hiking tour - Part Two is the second half of our TMB extravaganza. Equipped with our unique walking notes, you set off from Chamonix [where you left off last year?] and continue your anti-clockwise tour around the Mont Blanc Massif, closing the spiritual circle at Courmayeur, Italy, six days later.

Can I do it? Yes, you can! The TMB attracts all sorts of people and some have never been on a walking holiday in their lives. However, this half is more difficult than the northern half ['challenging' as opposed to 'quite challenging'] and it takes you into more remote and rugged areas.

We have dissected this half of Le Tour into the most practicable stages possible, helping you escape 'Les Crowds' by not starting in Les Houches and cutting out avoidable climbs by replacing them with cable car. You get to hike either the all-weather Lower Route or the fine weather, Higher Route to Les Contamines. The choice is yours!

The Les Contamines to Les Chapieux section is long and challenging, but never boring, always exhilarating. Just take your time and delight in the alpine ambiance.



*Lex Blanche, en
route to
Elisabetta*



You walk the very best sections of the southern half of the TMB and enjoy a hike that showcases walking in the French and Italian Alps. Our recommended tour sees you averaging six to six-and-a-half hours of moderately-challenging to challenging walking per day. Once you get to Chapieux you are more than half-way to Courmayeur; and thereafter, get the walking done in the morning and enjoy your overnight destinations to the full.

The tour commences in Chamonix, the cradle of alpinism with easy access from France, Italy [via the Mont Blanc tunnel] or Switzerland [frequent shuttles from Geneva airport or train from Martigny]. Finishing in Courmayeur means you are only 40 minutes through the tunnel from where you started your journey, which should be convenient for your departure.



Balcon du Sud, with Mont Blanc behind

Snow normally clears from the higher passes from mid-June and returns at any time after mid-October.

More than ever with this world-famous hike, you need to **book early to reserve your tour in general, but in particular if you seek the most comfortable accommodation possible.**

Mont Blanc hiking tour - Part Two comes with luggage transfers as standard and requires no guide or particular map-reading skills. In fact, two customers recently gave away their maps to lesser-prepared and empowered hikers, so confident were they that the concise notes would get them to their destinations. We do not recommend you do the same, but the message is clear: meet friends en route, share experiences and live for the moment as you enjoy arguably Europe's finest alpine trail in the company of your own choosing.



*The climb towards
Bonhomme*



6-night Itinerary²

Day 1 **Arrival Day in Chamonix and Les Praz.**

Day 2 **Les Praz de Chamonix to Les Houches**
[10 miles-16 kms, +650ms/-1525ms, approx. 8 hrs -
option to cut out the descent via Brevent cable car]

Leave the hotel, take the cable car to La Flagere
And get straight into the TMB action: le Balcon du
Sud, the splendid Col du Brevent, the magnificent
panorama from Brevent itself and the descent to
Les Houches via Le Merlet.

Night in Les Houches.

Day 3 **Les Houches to Les Contamines**

Low or all-weather Route via Bionnassay
[10 miles/16 kms, +90 ms - 640 ms, approx.4 hrs]

Or

High Route via Refuge de Miage
[11 miles/18 kms, +840 ms - 580 ms, approx.5¾ hrs]

Avoid the knee-crunching and monotonous climb, take the cable car to Bellevue and,
depending on you and the weather, opt for the trail that suits you to Les Contamines.
The High Route is the more challenging of the two.

Night in Les Contamines.

Day 4 **Les Contamines to Les Chapieux**
[11 miles/18 kms, +1320 ms - 930 ms, approx.7 hrs]

Follow the Bon Nant Torr past Notre Dames de la Gorge and two refuges en route to
the Col du Bonhomme and Col de la Croix. Lunch in the refuge du Bonhomme is
followed by the descent to Les Chapieux and your welcoming auberge.



Day 5 Les Chapieux to Ref Elizabetta

[9½ miles 15 kms, +1000 ms - 260 ms, approx.5 hrs]

The Vallee des Glaciers is a joy to behold. Enjoy a quick drink at Les Mottets before climbing up to the Col de la Seigne and into Italy. The views are delightful as too is the descent into Lex Blanche.

Day 6 Ref Elizabetta to Courmayer

[11 miles/18 kms, +460 ms - 1580 ms, approx.5.00 hrs]

Your final day takes you further down the Lex Blanche before you climb up past abandoned farmsteads overlooking the remains of the Miage Glacier. The balcony trail to the Col Checrouit makes for a fine end to this superb hiking trip.

Day 7 End of Tour. Buffet breakfast, au revoir et bonne route - [back] through the Mont Blanc tunnel to Chamonix or by bus to Milan or Turin? Bon retour et à bientôt!

What's Included

- ✓ 6 nights in carefully-selected three star hotels, one superior '2-star-standard' hotel, a welcoming auberge and a fine refuge with private rooms - no dormitories - see below.
- ✓ 6 breakfasts and 4 evening meals
- ✓ Industry-leading hiking notes, 1:25,000 maps and themed dossier
- ✓ Luggage transfers throughout - one suitcase up to 15 kgs per person³
- ✓ Telephone help-line service with 7/7 and 8 till late, via native English and French-based support.



Not included

- ⊗ Remaining meals, drinks and extras - Chamonix, and Courmayeur boast an abundance of restaurants from which you can choose according to budget and taste. Lunch and dinner options are listed in your dossier and notes.
- ⊗ Personal expenses
- ⊗ Entrances into any optional cultural visits and venues
- ⊗ Hiking, personal and travel insurances
- ⊗ Single rooms - unless booked at the single-person rate
- ⊗ Cable cars
- ⊗ Travel to and from the tour start and finish points.



Four Hotels, an Auberge & a Refuge

“Carefully-selected accommodation based on knowing our partners well.”

As always, and subject to availability, our commitment to our customers is to offer the best accommodation in every stage along the trail. You stay in comfortable accommodation of a good standard, with private rooms throughout [no 'dortoirs'/dormitories] that has been carefully selected on the basis of a mix of facilities, location, service and welcome. Early booking is advised and en suite facilities the norm and our aim. However, this is arguably the world's most popular hiking trip and such facilities may not always be available and so cannot be a precondition for your booking.

Where you stay:

Praz de Chamonix, 3-star hotel - bed and breakfast;
Les Houches, 3-star hotel - dinner, bed and breakfast;
Les Contamines, superior 2-star hotel - dinner, bed and breakfast;
Chapieux, auberge - dinner, bed and breakfast, but no en-suite facilities;
Val Veni, Refuge Elisabetta [private room without WC & bathroom] - dinner, bed and breakfast; and
Courmayeur, 3-star hotel - bed and breakfast.

Chamonix and Courmayeur boast an abundance of restaurants from which you can choose according to budget and taste.

Awarding an average star rating across two different countries and three different forms of accommodation [auberge, hotel and the one refuge] is not easy to do. However, the standard is obviously higher in the four nights of hotels, with the more remote locations providing walkers' inn-style comfort supplemented via a superior mountain ambiance. You stay in private rooms [not dormitories] in the one refuge. The auberge in Chapieux is simple and rustic, but very well run, by a young couple who enjoy what they do and are very well organized and customer-oriented. WCs & bathrooms are in the corridor in both Les Chapieux and Elisabetta.

All French hotel star ratings underwent a major review by the relevant authorities in 2012/2013, as ratings had lost touch with reality. Such reviews were long overdue, but expensive and individual hotels are expected to pay. Many have chosen to remain 'starless'. This does not mean that these hotels have suddenly become inferior, and ultimately badly-run and poorly-maintained accommodation goes out of business. Knowing one's accommodation suppliers intimately is now more important than ever!



Les Mottets with Col de la Seigne behind

Access & Departure

How to get to Chamonix - introduction...

Due to the popularity of Chamonix, the options for getting to the resort are plentiful.

You spend your first night in Les Praz de Chamonix, one stop [5 minutes] on the train from Chamonix, so that you wake up right next to the cable car for the start of your hiking the next day. Spend your arrival day in Chamonix and sleep with the peace of mind that you are exactly where you want to be on the morning you commence walking.

By Air

Getting to Chamonix is relatively straightforward from the following major airports:

1. Geneva International Airport, with onward connections by train [hourly via Martigny] or bus [via the SAT bus company] or via airport transfer.
2. Lyon International Airport, with onward connections by train [via Annecy].
3. Charles de Gaulle with onward connections by train.

By Rail

Our customers recommend RailEurope.com for research and ticketing.

The Mont Blanc Express: This SNCF railway line serves all villages from St Gervais-le Fayet to Martigny (Switzerland) via Servoz, Les Houches, Chamonix, Chamonix Les Praz, Argentière and Vallorcine.

See website for further details and relevant links.



The Upper Val Montjoie



Ten reasons to book with The Enlightened Traveller®



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- ❸ Buy direct from us, the tour provider, and get great value for money
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- ❺ Industry-leading walking notes make orientation easy
- ❻ 1:25 000 full scale maps & insightful dossier
- ❼ 7/7 and 8 till 8 telephone support in native English
- ❽ We transport one suitcase up to 20 kgs from hotel to hotel.
- ❾ Travel along with your luggage if you need a rest day - subject to conditions, payment and places are limited³.
- ❿ Anglo-French family business that tries harder:
We'll look after you like one of the family!



Le Col de la Seigne





Alpage near Le Truc - High Route

Delighting Mind, Body and Sole!

2024 prices:

Per person in double-, twin-
or triple bedded room:

**£1075.00 Pounds Sterling or
€1295.00 Euros**



Booking

Email, phone or Skype us and we will email you everything you need to reserve your tour.

Notes

² We reserve the right to alter parts of the above programme for the benefit of safety and the quality of the overall experience.

³ This covers one piece of luggage per person up to 15 kgs in weight. Supplements apply for overweight luggage and we accept no responsibility for lost valuables. We advise you not to bring computers and business-related equipment.

Travelling with your luggage must be booked the night before and is subject to a fee of approx. €45.00 Euros per person.

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