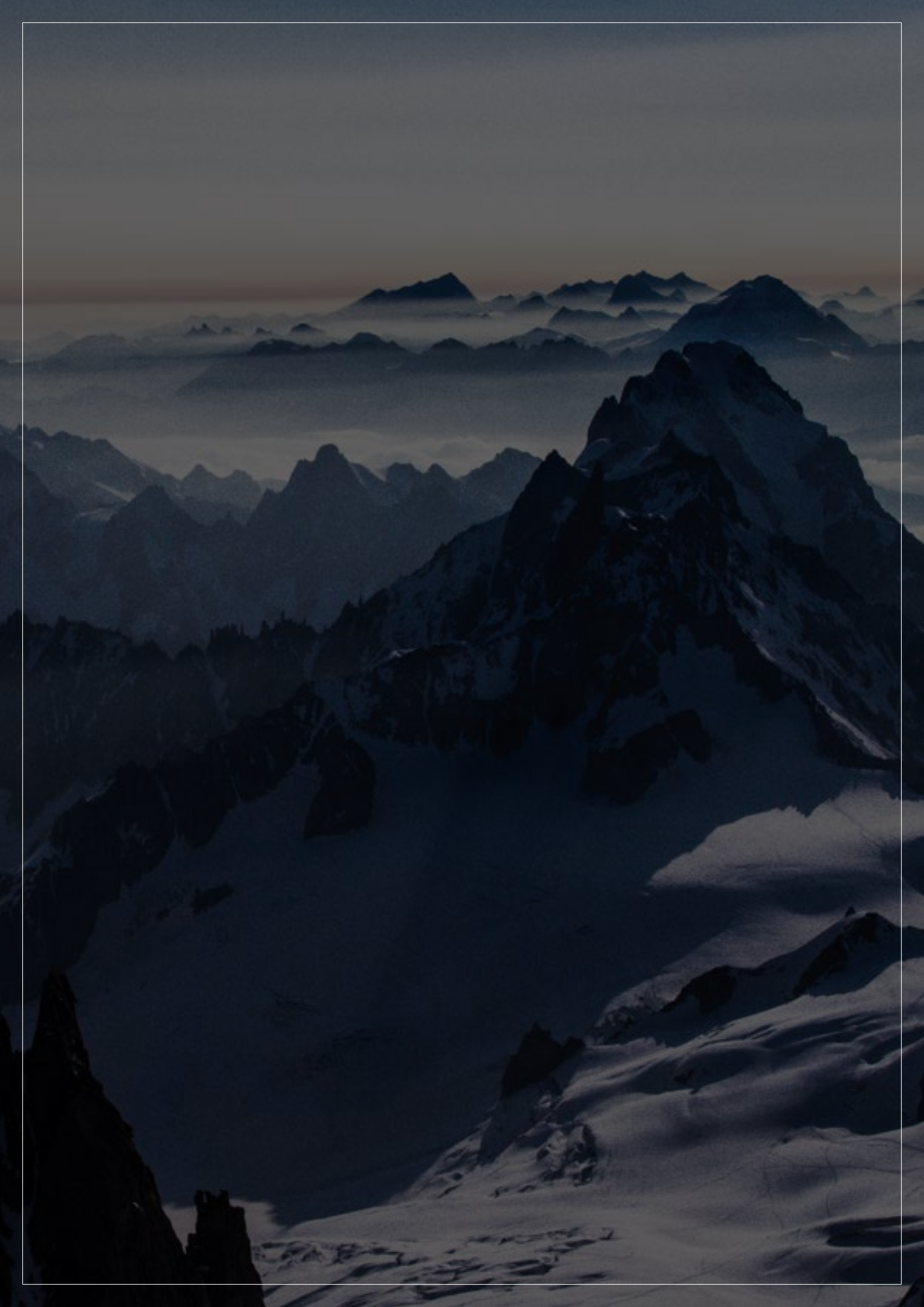




MONT BLANC COURSE & ASCENT



2024 COURSE NOTES





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2024 COURSE DETAILS

Dates: Available on demand
June to September

Duration: 6 days

Departure: ex Chamonix, France

Price: €5,650 for 1:1 guide to climber ratio
€3,400 each for 1:2 guide to climber ratio

▲ Climbers approaching the summit of Mont Blanc. Photo: Olivier Baron

Adventure Consultants 6-day Mont Blanc Course & Ascent is an excellent introduction to mountaineering that enables you to develop a sound set of skills before finishing the week by climbing to the summit of the highest peak in Central Europe: the 4,807m/15,781ft Mont Blanc.

We have scheduled the training period to ensure you gain adequate acclimatisation, which is vital prior to an attempt on Mont Blanc itself. During the initial phase of the course, your guide will deliver instruction in the mountaineering techniques required to scale Mont Blanc. This includes a training day and an ascent on the Italian side of the Mont Blanc range, where we sleep in mountain huts at sufficient elevations to promote acclimatisation. We then approach the mountain from the French side to complete the ascent of Mont Blanc.

The duration of this programme provides the most achievable schedule to ensure the correct level of acclimatisation for the final summit climb. 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 costcutting 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 COURSE

Our 6-day Course and Ascent is designed to enable you to climb to the summit of Mont Blanc after spending the initial days learning the necessary climbing skills. During training, we make the short trip through to Italy to make ascents of the Aiguille de Toule, the Aiguilles Marbrées and the Aiguille d'Entrèves, which provide fabulous views of the Mont Blanc Massif. This ascent is imperative to encourage acclimatisation for the final ascent to the summit of Mont Blanc. Mont Blanc is not technically difficult but is very physically demanding and requires a high level of fitness.

During the training programme, you develop a thorough grounding in crampon and ice axe use which are the primary skills required for the ascent of Mont Blanc. We operate the Mont Blanc Course & Ascent on a maximum ratio of one guide to two climbers. You benefit from the higher degree of personal tuition from your guide and your skills will be accelerated.



▲ Climbing parties on Dôme du Goûter after climbing Mont Blanc. Photo: Olivier Baron

Even if you are a seasoned climber, your guide can adjust the programme to cater to your existing skill set. Whatever your existing climbing standard, the training will get you back on your feet and you will benefit from the acclimatisation of sleeping up high, as well as enjoying the spectacular surrounds.

We will make the final ascent of Mont Blanc from either the North West via the Goûter Route or the North via the Cosmiques Route, depending on group size and snow and weather conditions.

On the Goûter Route we begin the approach by tram and railway before walking up to the Tête Rousse Hut, which takes 3–5 hours. Summit day begins early and takes around 7–8 hours over snow domes and a superb snow ridge to the summit.

The Cosmiques Route is slightly more difficult and therefore guided only as a 1:1 option. It traverses the lesser peaks of Mont Blanc du Tacul and Mont Maudit on the way to the summit. This route takes around 6–7 hours to the summit from the Cosmiques Hut and 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 Mont Blanc's summit, the highest point in the Alps.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The course objective is to develop sufficient skills to ascend Mont Blanc, Europe's highest peak, including:

- Development of crampon and snow climbing skills
- Undertaking a training climb
- Learning rope techniques applicable to the ascent
- An ascent of Mont Blanc

SKILLS COVERED

You will be taught basic snow climbing techniques that will prepare you for the ascent of Mont Blanc. The training will focus on teaching good footwork by spending as much time as possible on snow and ice on similar slopes to those you will find on the climbing route on Mont Blanc.

- Basic snow climbing using crampons and ice axe
- Rope skills applicable to basic alpine climbing
- Glacier travel techniques

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 with good people skills 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, Guides must undergo rigorous training and assessment on climbing skills, instructional skills, avalanche training and assessment, wilderness first aid, rescue training and much more to gain these qualifications.



▲ Climber approaching the top of Dôme du Goûter. Photo: Paolo Pieroni



▲ Learn ice axe, crampon and self arrest techniques. Photo: Olivier Baron



▲ Instruction continues once you reach the hut. Photo: Paolo Pieroni

It takes many years to attain IFMGA status, which ensures you get a world-class professional service.

ITINERARY

DAY 0

Arrive in Chamonix, check into your hotel.

DAY 1

Meet your guide for an early morning briefing and gear check. Either take the Aiguille du Midi lift and Le Panoramique or travel through the Mont Blanc tunnel and ascend via the Skyway Monte Bianco to Point Hellbronner (3,462m/11,358ft). Climb the Aiguille de Toule (3,534m/11,594ft) and then spend the afternoon going over crampon and rope skills and travelling over glaciated terrain. Overnight at the Torino Hut (3,375m/11,073ft).

DAY 2

Traverse of the Aiguilles Marbrées (3,535m/11,598ft). Go over easy rock climbing and scrambling skills with and without crampons, with crevasse rescue training in the afternoon. Overnight at Torino Hut.

DAY 3

Climb the Traverse of the Aiguille d'Entrèves (3,604m/11,824ft) then either return via the Panoramique lift or head back down the Skyway Monte Bianco and descend to Chamonix for the night.

DAY 4

Take the lift to Bellevue and the Mont Blanc Tramway (2,380m/7,800ft) and trek to Tête Rousse Hut (3,187m/10,377ft, 4 hours) or take the Aiguille du Midi Lift and trek to Cosmiques Hut (3,613m/11,854ft). Enjoy an early night.

DAY 5

Very early start for the ascent of Mont Blanc (4,807m/15,771ft)—8 hours from Tête Rousse, 7 hours from Cosmiques—and descend to either Goûter or Tête Rousse Huts (5 hours). On both the Goûter Route and the Cosmiques Route, it will sometimes be possible to descend to Chamonix the same day.



▲ Climbers approach Goûter Hut. Photo: Olivier Baron

DAY 6

Descend to Les Houches, transfer to Chamonix. Debrief and hotel night.

DAY 7

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

COURSE DATES

You can book a Mont Blanc Course & Ascent to suit your own dates during the climbing season—dependent on guide and hut booking availability. Please contact our office for further information.

CLASS SIZE

We run these trips at a maximum ratio of one guide to two climbers. This is a more personal ratio than the one guide to four climber ratio other guiding companies utilise and allows your guide to give you more attention.

As these trips are run on a private basis, you can either book alone on a 1:1 guide ratio trip or as a pair on a 1:2 guide ratio trip. We do not pair strangers together on this course.

ACCESS TO THE MOUNTAINS

At the start of the trip, we drive from Chamonix to the Italian side of the Mont Blanc range and use ski lifts or the téléphérique (cable car) to access the high mountains.

When we approach Mont Blanc, we will take a téléphérique to the base of the climb. Precisely which approach we will use depends on conditions at the time.

CLIMBING SEASON

We operate on Mont Blanc in the summer months, June to September, and other times as conditions allow. In June and early July, you 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 that 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 6-day timeframe, it is sometimes possible to engage the guide for additional days depending on their availability.

EQUIPMENT

Climbing in the European Alps requires 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.



▲ Climbers pass Aiguille du Goûter at sunrise. Photo: Andrew Wexler

You will be sent an equipment checklist on confirmation of your booking. Your guide will go through this with you at the beginning of your trip. You can rent technical equipment for the climb, but you must provide your own mountaineering clothing 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.

COMMUNICATION & 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 coordination and safety backup. Your own mobile phone should work in the region though you may want to check with your own service provider first.

FITNESS & HEALTH

To make the most of your climbing experience you must train in the months leading up to your trip.

Summit day on Mont Blanc is 10–12 hours long and gains over 1,500m/5,000ft in elevation. Combine these factors with an altitude of over 4,000m/13,100ft and the need to arrive with a good level of cardiovascular fitness is even more vital.

By adopting a programme of running, cycling and/or hill walking in the months leading up to your climb you will greatly increase your chance of success. Build up your training until you can hike on consecutive days for at least 8 hours whilst carrying a 10kg/22lb pack, incorporating the elevation gain which is required on summit day. Your guide will be attuned to your fitness levels and will regulate the pace accordingly; however, it is essential that you arrive physically prepared to succeed on this mountain.

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

FOOD

Adventure Consultants will provide breakfasts for the duration of the trip and evening meals on the hut nights while the trip is running.



The summit of Mont Blanc! Photo: Olivier Baron

This is from breakfast on Day 1 until breakfast on your departure day. You will be responsible for your own lunch and snacks each day, plus evening meals on the 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.

You should bring a selection of your favourite snack food and hydration drinks with you to ensure you are fuelled by your preferred brands, as well as money for lunches and snacks whilst in the mountains. Amounts required depend on your consumption but while you are climbing it's generally not possible to have a normal sized lunch, so you rely on snacks during the day and are able to take a late lunch once you arrive back at the hut.

If you have 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.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is provided on a twin share B&B basis from the evening of Day 0 to the morning of Day 7, after breakfast. 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.

There are no single or private rooms available in the mountain huts, but we can arrange this for you in Chamonix should you prefer your own room. Please advise us at the time of booking.

TRAVEL TO CHAMONIX

We commence our Mont Blanc Course and Ascent from Chamonix in France. The closest international airport is in Geneva, just over the border in Switzerland. Regular shuttles operate through to Chamonix and the trip takes about 1½ hours. Your shuttle driver will drop you at your accommodation. At the completion of the course, the shuttle can take you from your hotel back to the airport. The shuttle transfers are at your own cost, but we can help arrange this for you.



▲ Learn ice axe, crampon and self arrest techniques. Photo: Olivier Baron



Tête Rousse Hut. Photo: Paolo Pieroni



▲ Climbers crossing the Couloir du Goûter. Photo: Paolo Pieroni

INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that you take out Trip Cancellation Insurance and Travel Insurance, as well as Medical and Rescue Insurance to protect yourself in the event of injury or mishap prior to or during your trip.

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.

PRE-COURSE ACCLIMATISATION PROGRAMME

It is preferable to spend a few days at altitude prior to your scheduled climb to assist with your acclimatisation. Climbers regularly attend our Pre-Course Acclimatisation Programme in Chamonix prior to partaking in the ascent. This 2-day acclimatisation and refamiliarisation programme takes you on day climbs to high elevations on peaks that are easily accessible from Chamonix to kickstart your acclimatisation and get you out climbing

before the main programme begins. By enhancing your acclimatisation and fine-tuning your skills before the Mont Blanc programme begins, you experience more enjoyment from the climb and enjoy a greater success rate.

PRICES

€5,650 1:1 guide to climber ratio
€3,400 1:2 guide to climber ratio

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

If you are novice mountaineers, we highly recommend the 1:1 guide to climber ratio to give you a better chance of a successful summit on Mont Blanc.

All prices are subject to change without notice.

The cost includes:

- Qualified mountain guide
- Group technical equipment
- Lifts as per the scheduled itinerary
- Huts as per the scheduled itinerary
- Transport as per the scheduled itinerary



▲ Climbers make their way above the cloud on Mont Blanc. Photo: Andrew Wexler

- Hotel B&B during course dates as per schedule, including first night and last night of course
- Breakfast and dinner during mountain component of the course

The cost **does not** include:

- Any lift, hut, hotel or transport costs additional to the programme due to weather or logistics (any changes will be 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
- Lunches
- Extra additional meals, snacks or drinks purchased from huts or hotels
- Insurance for travel and climbing in Europe
- Transport to and from Chamonix (although we can arrange it for you)
- Gratuity

PRE-COURSE ACCLIMATISATION PROGRAMME PRICING

€890 per person at a 1:2 guide to climber ratio
€1,500 per person at a 1:1 guide to climber ratio

The trip price includes the hotel on arrival day and first night. The hotel on the second night would be included as Day 0 on the Mont Blanc Course & Ascent programme to follow. Please note this programme is to immediately precede the Mont Blanc Course & Ascent with no rest day in between.

PAYMENT

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following Euro bank account:

Bank of New Zealand
Offshore Branch
42 Willis Street
Spark Central
Wellington
New Zealand

for the account of Adventure Consultants Limited

Account Number: 1000-594771-0002
Account Type: Euros
Swift Address: BKNZ NZ22

NOTE: All bank transfer charges are for the remitter's account.

We can also accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard and Amex), plus a 3% transaction fee.

DEPOSIT

To confirm place on one of our Mont Blanc Course & Ascents, we require a completed registration form with a deposit of €500 per person.

BALANCE

The balance payment is due 60 days prior to the course start date.



▲ Climbers surrounded by moody skies on Mont Blanc. Photo: Olivier Baron

CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

Once you have paid your deposit your trip is confirmed, subject to payment of the balance of fees owing 60 days prior to your trip commencement date. A climber may then cancel their participation on the following basis:

- Cancellations outside of 60 days will result in the loss of the trip deposit.
- For cancellations made within 60 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 50% of the full fee.
- For cancellations made within 30 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 75% of the full fee.
- For cancellations within 15 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

We recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent if you wish to be covered against cancellation due to medical or personal reasons.

HOW TO JOIN THIS TRIP

If you would like to join one of our Mont Blanc Course & Ascents, please complete our online booking form and forward your deposit payment at <https://www.adventureconsultants.com/climbing-schools/climbing-school-europe/mont-blanc-course-and-ascent/book-now>.

CONTACT US

If you require more information, please contact us at:

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Phone: + 64 3 443 8711
Email: info@adventure.co.nz
Web: www.adventureconsultants.com



• Achieve a summit of Mont Blanc as part of your mountaineering course. *Photo: Andrew Wexler*



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 is a supporter of the dZi Foundation in Nepal for their 'Revitalise a Village' programmes.

Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA/UIAGM standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.

