

Tour du Mont Blanc

France | 2,758m



360 
EXPEDITIONS

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Join us on this challenging 6-day high altitude **trek** crossing 3 countries: **Switzerland, Italy** and **France**. This unmissable challenge covers half of the world-famous trek **Tour du Mont Blanc**; a trek that loops around the highest mountain in the **Alps** : Mont Blanc. Trekking well over 100kms, at heights over 2,500m, you will experience a tough challenge with spectacular views. To raise the bar further, and get even better views, each day we will conquer a nearby summit in the Mont Blanc massif as part of our journey: **6 peaks in 6 days**.

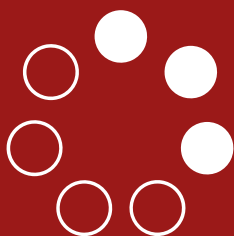
We'll be trekking on twisting paths through pine woodland and snow, crossing over rivers, climbing huge boulders and passing massive glaciers whilst taking in incredible views down and across some of the most beautiful valleys there are in Western Europe. We'll be staying

in remote mountain huts in spectacular locations where you'll have the chance to witness some of the most impressive sunsets there are. Throughout this trek, you'll also have superb opportunities for watching wildlife including alpine goats' marmots and many lizards.

This is a fantastic Alps trek where you'll be accompanied by a knowledgeable and experienced guide who will make sure you immerse yourself fully into the experience knowing that the day-to-day logistics are taken care off.

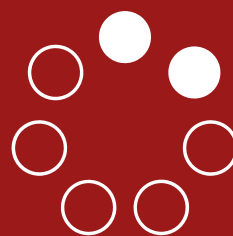
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Physical – P3

This trip is physically tough. Frequent exercise is necessary to prepare properly for this expedition. Regular walking mixed with training at the gym to build up endurance and cardiovascular fitness is key. Expect to be able to do 8 hour days in hilly and often steep terrain, carrying a pack of 6-10kg in weight with the occasional extra long day.



Technical – T2

Consider this a trek, although there may be occasion to use hands for short sections of easy scrambling. No previous climbing or trekking experience is necessary.

Please note that the grading system used is a rough guide only.



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ITINERARY

DAY 1 : Arrive Chamonix

Today we will arrive in Chamonix and check in at a hotel.

The evening will be spent with a welcome briefing covering all the essential information for the days ahead. Followed by a relaxing dinner with the group.

(D)

DAY 2 : Mt Chetif (2,343m)

After breakfast, we'll travel by bus to Courmayeur in Italy. A steep climb out of Courmayeur takes us up through the winter ski area, and then to the top of Mt Chetif, the iconic conical peak that overlooks the town.

We'll then trek up the beautiful Val Veny under the imposing south face of Mt Blanc, with its intimidating jagged spires, and hanging glaciers.

We'll spend the night in a mountain hut in an awesome location in the upper reaches of Val Veny.

(BLD)

DAY 3 : Mt Fortin (2,758m)

The hut is our springboard to today's peak, Mt Fortin, on the south ridge of Val Veny. After enjoying the very special views of the Italian side of the Mt Blanc Massif afforded from this vantage point, we traverse out to the head of the valley at the Col de la Seigne, which is also the French frontier. A final lingering gaze into Italy, then it's time for a long descent into France, which brings us to the tiny isolated hamlet of Les Chapieux, where we will spend the night in a gite.

(BLD)

DAY 4 : Tete Nord des Fours (2,756m)

A long climb this morning leads to the Col de la Croix de Bonhomme. A side excursion from here is an up-and-down ridge route to the 3rd summit of the tour, the Tete Nord des Fours.

Next is a rocky traverse to another col, from where a new vista opens up and reveals the sweeping descent route to tonight's remote hut, nestling in a picturesque alpine pasture.

(BLD)

DAY 5 : Mt Truc (1,811m)

We walk out of the valley along an ancient Roman road, over a stone arched bridge over a gorge, past a natural limestone arch over the river, to the small alpine town of Les Contamines. A climb through woods at the other side of town brings us to another 'alpage' (Alpine pasture) at the foot of Mt Truc, a small conical summit that we should climb quite easily for more great views.

Our final descent of the day leads to another mountain hut in a picture perfect location, where we can marvel at an amphitheatre of rock and ice above us, and drift off to sleep to the sound of cowbells.

(BLD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 6 : Mt Vorassay (2,299m)

Today's summit is visible from the off, above and to the left of the prominent Col de Tricot (2,100m), which we climb first via a series of zig zags. The peak of Mt Vorassay is then gained via a side trip from the col.

The village of Les Houches, most famous for its world cup downhill ski run, is our destination for the day, but to reach it we must first cross the rushing meltwater river from the Bionassay glacier, via an entertaining and photogenic metal suspension bridge. From here we gain the top of the Les Houches winter ski area, where a long descent takes us into the village. We will spend the night in a gite or hotel.

(BLD)

DAY 7 : Le Brevent (2,525m) and return to Chamonix town

A fitting finale! An epic climb takes us through forest and then classic alpine terrain towards the summit of Le Brevent, one of Chamonix's prominent landmarks, overlooking the town, the valley, and with commanding views of the North side of the Mt Blanc massif.

It is tempting to dwell here, mesmerised by the view, and reflect on the achievement, but we are not done yet! What goes up must come down, and a seemingly never-ending, steep descent stands between us and a well earned celebratory dinner in Chamonix town to mark our accomplishment. We'll spend the night in Chamonix in a hotel.

(BLD)

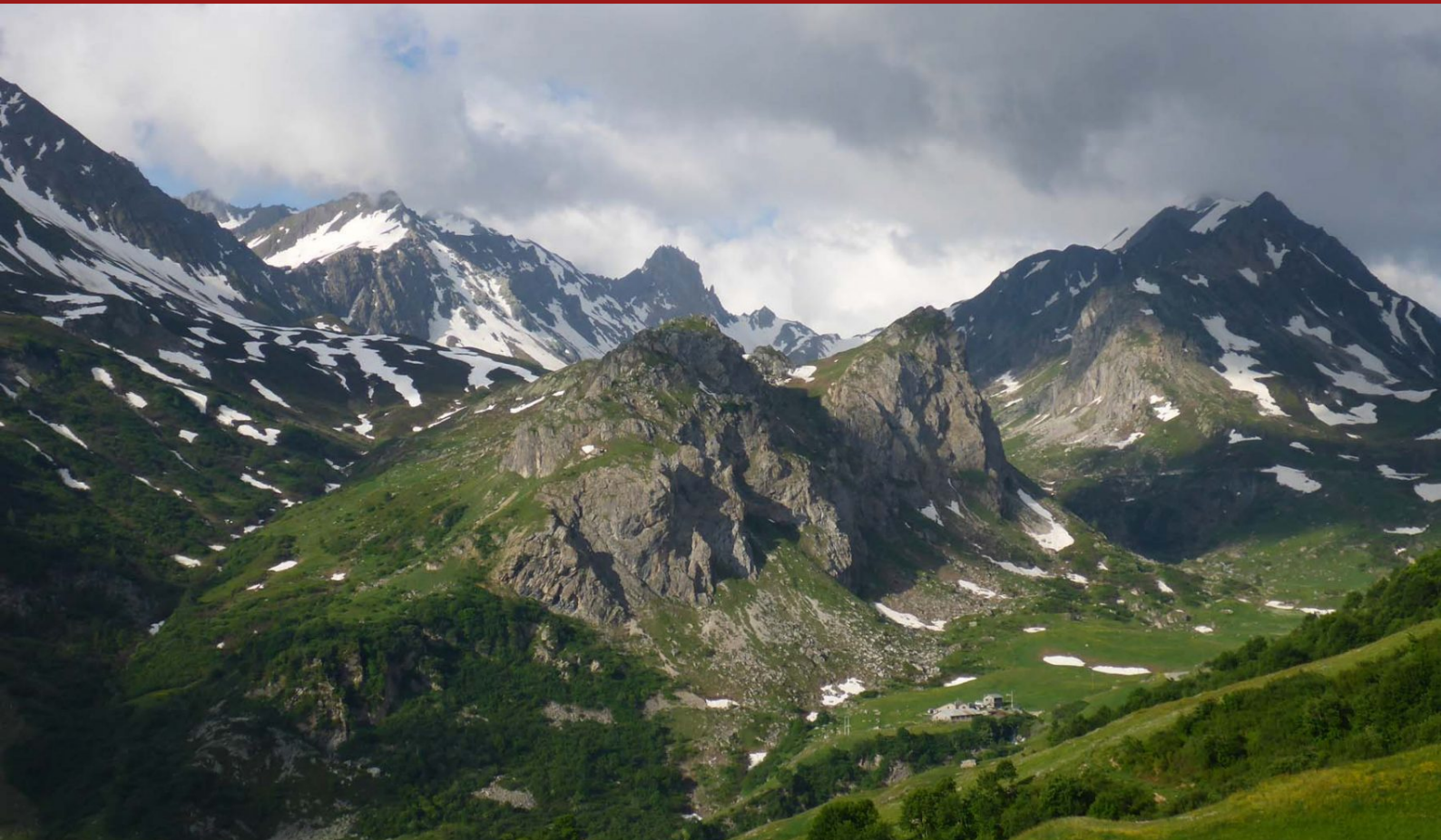
DAY 8 : Return home

Today our expedition comes to an end and we will take our return flights back home.

(B)

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KIT LIST

Bags & Packs

Rucksack

We would suggest a 40 to 50 litre capacity rucksack fitted with shoulder straps and, importantly, a waist belt. We would recommend your rucksack weighs no more than 8-10kg when fully packed (including your water bottles).

Waterproof rucksack cover

To protect rucksack from rain

Drybags

Nylon rolltop bags that keep fresh clothing and other important items like passports and iPods dry in the event of a total downpour that seeps into your kitbag. Good for quarantining old socks. Please note that many countries are now banning plastic bags. We would always advise buying re-usable nylon rolltop bags for keeping your kit dry (and sustainability).

Sleeping Gear

Silk liner/sheet sleeping bag

For use in the mountain huts. Blankets, duvets and pillows will be provided.

Headwear

Warm headgear

This can be a warm hat, beanie, balaclava, anything to reduce the heat loss from your head

Wide brimmed hat

Keeps the sun off exposed areas like ears and the nape of the neck

Neck gaiter (turtle scarf)

Sunglasses

Category 4 minimum. Worth spending money on good UV filters. Julbo is our preferred supplier

Sunblock

The higher the factor the better – for both UVA & UVB protection

Lip salve

Sun cream will not work on your lips and they are very susceptible to burn without proper protection

Upper Body

Trekking tops (one should be long sleeved) x 2

Quick-wicking moisture tops such as polypropylene/polyester recommended rather than cotton). One should be long sleeved

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KIT LIST

Mid layer

These are typically lightweight microfleece or similar technology that provide varying degrees of warmth and insulation without being overly bulky or heavy to pack

Fleece top/jacket or Softshell

Waterproof jacket (Outer layer)

Gore-Tex or even seam sealed are recommended and big enough to fit over a couple of layers. This jacket will also serve as a great windproof too

Lower Body

Trekking trousers x 2

These tend to be polyester so they dry quickly after a shower and weigh little in your pack. Consider perhaps a pair with detachable lower legs as an alternative to shorts

Waterproof trousers

Like the jacket, an essential piece of kit to stay dry and should also be Goretex

Underwear

How many pairs you take is entirely up to you

Feet

3-4 season walking boots

Well worn in 3-4 season waterproof boots with mid to high ankle support

Spare boot laces

Just in case!

Trekking socks

Hydration

Water bottles

2x 1L water bottles

Water purification

Although generally all water is boiled some prefer to double up and add purification tabs as well. Always good to have in your bag

Toiletries

Wash kit

Keep it simple on the mountain. Essentials are toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant and sunscreen. Moisturiser is advisable, everything else is a luxury!

Travel towel

Travel towels from the likes of Lifesystems are perfect

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KIT LIST

Wet wipes

Preferably biodegradable, these are great for washing when modern shower facilities become a thing of the past

Alcohol gel

A must have for good camp hygiene

Medications

Personal first aid kit

The 360 med kits are designed to be used in emergencies and akin to an A&E rather than a pharmacy on Expeditions so please come prepared with useful meds for yourself such as painkillers (Ibuprofen if you can take it and a Paracetamol) plus blister plasters, plasters, antiseptic, rehydration sachets and any muscle rubs you wish to use.

Personal medication

Keep this in your daysack

Miscellaneous

Trekking poles

These tend to be a personal preference but help with your stability and can dampen the pressure on the knees coming down hill

Camera

Bring plenty of spare batteries and memory cards

Ear plugs

For protection against the inevitable snorers!

Head torch

We recommend Petzl head torches. Bring spare batteries.

Snacks

Although you will be fed well we do advise bringing a small selection of energy bars. Have a couple per trekking day

Travel wash

To wash socks and such – these will dry on the back of your pack as you walk!!

Sewing kit (optional)

Documentation

Passport

Don't forget this! Your passport should have at least 6 months validity. With your passport expiry date at least six months after the final day of travel.

Copy of passport

Just in case

Passport photos x 4

Just in case!

Money

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KIT LIST

Travel insurance

Copy of own travel insurance details. And relevant contact numbers. We have a partnership with True Traveller and would recommend that you contact them when looking for travel insurance for your trip with 360. However, it is vital that you ensure that the insurance cover they offer is suitable for you, taking your personal circumstances (items to be insured, cancellation cover, medical history) into account. Many other insurance providers are available and we do recommend that you shop around to get the best cover for you on the expedition you are undertaking. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

EH1C (formerly E111)

While you do have travel insurance, this can save you paperwork and reduce upfront costs should you have a minor ailment or need to see a local GP if you already have one

Dental check up

We recommend you have a dental check-up before your trip. New fillings can be an issue at altitude if there is an air pocket left in the gap

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FAQ'S

Food and Water

What is the food like while on the trek?

During the trek we'll have a continental breakfast, packed lunch and a hearty French/Italian meal in the evening. We'll have the opportunity to stop at mountain huts for a snack.

I'm a vegetarian, will this be a problem?

Although France traditionally looks down upon vegetarians, they tend to be slightly more enlightened in the huts. While choice won't be spectacular, you won't go hungry.

Can allergies be catered for?

Absolutely, please inform the office of any allergies or intolerances and we will ensure that these are taken into account on the trek.

Accommodation

Where will we stay?

Throughout the trek, we'll be welcomed at mixed and often busy gites and mountain huts to shelter us from any cold weather in rural villages along our route.

For the two nights we spend in Chamonix, we will stay in a hotel .

Can you get a hot shower there?

Hot showers will be available but limited.

The Trek

How difficult is the trek?

The trek will be tough with all participants required to carry their own kit as they trek. However you are not expected to have and won't need any technical climbing experience, and altitude levels will remain low throughout. Routine training in preparation is vital and all participants will receive a training program. Average trekking time for each day is 6 hours.

Do I have to carry my own kit?

During the trek, you will be required to carry your own kit so pack light (no more than 10kgs)! You will be able to store what you don't need for the trek itself – spare clothes for Chamonix and travelling for instance.

How big is the group?

The group size will be between 10-20 people.

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FAQ'S

Health and Safety

Are there any medical requirements?

You need to be reasonably fit to undertake this but we won't be asking you to undertake any medicals.

Is there any risk of altitude sickness?

There is no risk of altitude sickness on this trek.

What happens if there is an issue on the trek with a client – a fall or an illness?

360 Expeditions have conducted detailed risk assessments and put the necessary plans in place to cope with any accidents or illness whilst out on the trek. Our expedition leaders are highly qualified and experienced mountain leaders who hold expedition first aid qualifications and are used to working in remote environments. Their training, allows them to deal with situations quickly and safely. Should someone find themselves requiring further medical attention, the leader will organise for that individual to be taken from the trail and transferred to the nearest hospital. The leader and the 360 office team will also be on hand to offer guidance and support for insurance claims and contacting next-of-kin.

Kit

What do I need to wear?

A good pair of boots is a good place to start, buy them early so they are well broken in by the time you get to the trek. There are many goretex / leather combinations and each have their merits. The most important thing is that they should be comfortable. When you are selecting them, try on lots of pairs, use the ramps in the shops to test their traction, run up and down stairs to see how heavy they are. If you're confident you'll be comfortable walking in uneven terrain for several hours at a time then go ahead and buy them.

Clothes-wise, you'll find a kit list in your pack, but the weather could vary considerably and you need to be ready for whatever comes. Lightweight trek trousers that dry quickly, better still with legs that unzip into shorts. Tops that wick away sweat, so not cotton. A fleece to ward off chilly air and for the evenings. And full waterproofs. Your waterproof jacket or hard shell will also be an effective windstopper. As it's the summer and hopefully we'll get some decent sunshine, so remember to bring sunnies and a wide-brimmed hat. Worth throwing in a beanie in case it gets cold though.

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FAQ'S

Are all rucksacks the same?

No, they vary in size and fit, so like boots, make sure you have something that will be comfortable. Look for rucksacks with venting – they either have air channels against your back or a device to lift the main body of the rucksack away from your back so you sweat less. Once you have decided on something, ask the shop to fit it for you – decent rucksacks have lots of adjustment points depending on your size and build. We can't prevent it raining, so a rain cover is worth having, as well as some waterproof stuff sacs for you're your clothes in the event of an afternoon storm.

Travel

Where do I meet my guide?

Your guide will meet you at Geneva airport.

Insurance

Do I need special insurance for this trip?

You must carry individual travel insurance to take part in the expedition. We cannot take you on the mountain without proof of insurance.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

Your insurance details are requested on the booking form, however this can be arranged at a later date. 360 Expeditions will be requesting your insurance details 8 weeks before your departure.

Training

Any tips on how a trekker can maximise their chances of success?

The 360 training programs have been devised to be expedition specific. Use these as a guide but also feel free to contact us for individual advice on how to best incorporate the best suitable fitness program with your own lifestyle.

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FAQ'S

Finance

How much spending money will I need during the trek?

We advise you bring between 100 and 150 euros additional spending money for the trek.

Electronics

Will there be phone reception?

Phone reception will be available but intermittent.

Will I able to charge my phone and camera?

Yes, during the evenings. Please bear in mind, however, that plug sockets will be limited with quite a few people vying for them and you will need to bring the appropriate adaptor(s).

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TRAINING PROGRAM

To begin 6 months prior to the expedition where possible.

1. CVS: Cardiovascular exercise which is low impact such as swimming, cycling, cross trainer, rowing.

2. Weekend walk should be done over undulating terrain. Only a light rucksack needs to be carried.

3. For specific exercises it is worth doing static squats and heel raises on a regular basis to improve leg muscles prior to the trip. Static squats are especially useful to help protect the knees. Please remember that it is still important to have a well balanced workout using a variety of muscle groups.

4. It is worth winding down and resting in the week leading up to the trip, doing several light walks to keep things going.

5. When walking going at a pace of a brisk walk with a light sweat and enough to feel breathless is recommended

6. During the program, rather than step up suddenly each month (example, going for 3 one hour walks each week during the weekdays in April to 3 one and half hour walks suddenly in May) it is better to build up gradually each week so there isn't a large transition (example, going for 3 one hour walks during week 1 in April, going for 3 one hour and ten minute walks during week 2 in April, going for 3 one hour and fifteen minute walks during week 3 in April, going for 3 one hour and twenty minute walks during week 4 in April)

6. It is important you seek medical advice prior to starting any training program, especially if you are not used to regular physical exertion

All the best with your training!

MONTH 1

OPT 1

2 x 30 mins weekday walk
1 x 1 hour weekend walk
1 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 30 mins weekday walk
2 x 1 hour weekend walk
1 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 2

OPT 1

2 x 45 mins weekday walk
1 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 45 mins weekday walk
2 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 3

OPT 1

2 x 45 mins weekday walk
1 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 45 mins weekday walk
2 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 4

OPT 1

3 x 1 hour weekday walk
1 x 4 hours weekend walk
3 x 15 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 1 hour weekday walk
2 x 4 hours weekend walk
3 x 15 mins CVS

MONTH 5

OPT 1

3 x 1.5 hours weekday walk
1 x 5 hours weekend walk
3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 1.5 hours weekday walk
2 x 5 hours weekend walk
3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

MONTH 6

OPT 1

3 x 2 hours weekday walk
1 x 6 hours weekend walk
3 x 30 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 3 hours weekday walk
2 x 6 hours weekend walk
3 x 30 mins CVS

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"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty & well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out & loudly proclaiming 'Wow! What a Ride!' "

Dream it. Plan it. Live it.