

Classic Haute Route Chamonix - Zermatt



THE MOST SCENIC TREK IN EUROPE

The ultimate 12-day classic Alpine trek.

Activity Level

Alpenwild trips are designed for people who are energetic, active, and filled with a spirit of adventure. We rate this trip as strenuous. You should be an experienced hiker in good physical condition. You should be capable of walking 5 to 7 hours per day on good trails with some steep ascents and descents (averaging 3,000 to 4,000 vertical feet per day) at an elevation up to 10,000 feet above sea level.

Overview

Plan your Summer adventure now on the Chamonix-Zermatt Haute Route. Our route follows the classic trek across the Swiss Alps starting in Chamonix at the base of Mont Blanc, Western Europe's Highest Peak, and concluding in Zermatt at the base of the Matterhorn, the world's most recognizable and stunningly beautiful peak.

A challenging trek with spectacular scenery in every step

Each day is defined by ascending historic and formidable mountain passes. You'll walk in flowered meadows, hike near massive glaciers, gaze at icefalls, and ring glistening lakes. You'll hike the Haute Route through fir forests into picturesque villages where traditional inns await with delicious meals and cozy comforts.

Luggage transfers so you can hike light and enjoy the route

We shuttle your luggage, so all you need to carry is a lightweight daypack with water, snacks, and of course, your camera. The Haute Route is widely regarded as the most scenic trek in the Alps. It's an Alps hiking tour like no other.

Why an Alpenwild Haute Route trek is the only logical choice

Since we offer the Haute Route throughout the summer and have departures every week, you'll have more options and guaranteed departures than with other less-experienced operators. Our guides have more experience and an intimate knowledge of the route along with its natural history and language and culture. We stay in superb accommodations—a notch above those used by most other operators, and then we always request superior and view rooms for our guests. We include all meals and trail snacks then feature a la carte dining most evenings. We include premium excursions such as the Aiguille du Midi and the Gornergrat cogwheel railway as part of the trip. In short, there is not better choice for the Haute Route than Alpenwild.

Trip Highlights

- Ascend the Aiguille du Midi on the Mont Blanc via the highest vertical ascent cable car in the world
- Enjoy the trek to its fullest as you hike with just a light daypack while your luggage is transferred to the inn each evening
- Cross ten historic passes in ten days with commanding views, including daily glaciers, waterfalls, views of the ten highest peaks in the Alps
- Explore mountain trails around Zermatt with stunning views of the Matterhorn

Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrive Chamonix

Arrive in the beautiful Chamonix Valley and enjoy an afternoon excursion to the Aiguille du Midi on the world's highest vertical ascent cable car. Group orientation and dinner.

Ascent: 200 feet | Descent: 200 feet | Distance: 2 miles

Day 2 – Trient to Champex

Our first day on the trail instantly captures the sweeping views, forests, and alpine meadows which you'll find throughout the Haute Route. We ascend Alp Bovine and enjoy a picnic lunch beside a stream flowing from the eastern flanks of the Mont Blanc range. Evening at our lakeside hotel in Champex-Lac. BSD

Ascent: 3047 feet | Descent: 2328 feet | Distance: 12 miles

Day 3 – Champex to Verbier

A gentle descent through valley farms, orchards, vineyards and traditional Swiss farming villages before arriving at the exclusive alpine resort of Verbier on the sunny eastern side of Mont Blanc. BSD

Ascent: 350 feet | Descent: 2457 feet | Distance: 9 miles

Day 4 – Verbier to Cabane de Louvie

Today's route ascends steeply above the Val de Bagnes along the Sentier des Chamois with commanding views of the Bagnes valley below. You'll arrive at the Cabane de Louvie on the shore of the beautiful Lac de Louvie with dramatic views of the Grand Combin. Excellent wildlife viewing is expected. BSD

Ascent: 1290 feet | Descent: 1390 feet | Distance: 9 miles

Day 5 – Cabane de Louvie to Prafleuri

Today the terrain becomes rugged and we cross two challenging passes, Louvie and Prafleuri, the highest pass on the Hiker's Haute Route. You'll dip into a rocky glacial section and ford a runoff stream—a perfect setting to study glacial retreat. This evening we stay at the lively Cabane de Prafleuri. BSD

Ascent: 3609 feet | Descent: 2247 feet | Distance: 10 miles

Day 6 – Prafleuri to Arolla

After cresting a small pass, you'll follow the lakeshore to the moraine of the Chelion Glacier where edelweiss dot the rocky slopes. Crossing the dramatic Pas de Chevres on newly-installed ladders and platforms, you'll have your first view of the Matterhorn, before descending into Arolla, one of the most charming alpine villages along the route and a popular base for day hikes in the Swiss Alps. BSD

Ascent: 2410 feet | Descent: 4438 feet | Distance: 14 miles

Day 7 – Arolla to Grimentz

After two strenuous days, you'll enjoy a gradual and relaxing ascent over the Col de Torrent. We start at Mayens de Cotter, a May pasture just above treeline. The views are spectacular. Snowcapped peaks like Dent Blanche (14,380) are nearby as you descend into meadows of wildflowers before arriving at Lac de Moiry. You'll stay in the ancient village of Grimentz one of the most picturesque and historic villages in the Alps and a favorite of hikers on the Haute Route, where you'll stroll the cobblestone paths and visit the mill on the Marais. BSD

Ascent: 2800 feet | Descent: 2198 feet | Distance: 6 miles

Day 8 – Grimentz to St-Luc

A forest ascent leads above treeline to offer views of the Val d'Anniviers and then a crown of four 4,000 meter peaks, including the Matterhorn. Lunch at the historic Hotel Weisshorn and evening in St-Luc at the exquisite Hotel Bella Tola. BSD

Ascent: 2378 feet | Descent: 2236 feet | Distance: 9 miles

Day 9 – St-Luc to Gruben

A funicular speeds our ascent to a point above the treeline. Today you'll leave the French-speaking region of Valais, cross the Meidpass and enter the German-speaking region of the Haute Route trail. Hiking along sparkling mountain streams you arrive in the quiet seasonal hamlet of Gruben where you'll spend the evening. BSD

Ascent: 1981 feet | Descent 3175 feet | Distance: 6 miles

Day 10 – Gruben to Zermatt

Crossing the final pass of the trip, the legendary Augstbordpass, you'll have sweeping views of Dom, the highest peak entirely within Switzerland, Weisshorn, and the curves of the Aletschgletscher. As you descend into Jungen, an exciting gondola ride takes you to the valley floor, where the train to Zermatt awaits. BSD

Ascent: 3517 feet | Descent: 3079 feet | Distance: 8 miles

Day 11 – Zermatt

After completing the Haute Route, you'll enjoy a rest, but you won't want to miss a chance at some of the best dayhikes Zermatt has to offer including walks to quaint villages like Zmutt and Findeln, or panoramic hikes along the Höhbalmen overlooking the north face of the Matterhorn. BSD

Ascent: ~1900 feet | Descent: ~1900 feet | Distance: ~6 miles

Day 12 – Zermatt to Geneva or Zurich

We'll have the morning available for hikes in the area, including an ascent to the Riffelsee where the Matterhorn is perfectly reflected in still waters. B

Ascent: 700 feet | Descent: 1100 feet | Distance: 6 miles

Included

The services of an expert trip leader, all accommodations (9 nights hotel and 2 nights in mountain huts), all meals as shown (B=breakfast, S=snack, D=dinner), ground transportation including trams and mountain railways, admissions, and luggage transfer.

Not Included

Beverages (beer, wine) with meals, items of a personal nature (laundry, phone calls, room service).

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