Classic Haute Route

Trip Code: CHR

Version:

MOUNTAINEER	GUIDED GROUP	11 TOUGH



HIGHLIGHTS

- Take on a challenge and complete an iconic Alpine traverse from Chamonix to Zermatt
- Reach high summits, including the Tete Blanche (3724m)
- Trek hut-to-hut and overnight in atmospheric high mountain refuges
- Hone skills with our experienced IFMGA guides

AT A GLANCE

- 11 days trekking and climbing
- Max altitude - 3796m
- Join at Chamonix

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

This is the ultimate high Alpine trekking adventure, following the iconic Haute Route from Chamonix to Zermatt. Taking a dramatic and uncompromising line, the classic Haute Route traverses the heart of the European Alps, linking Mont Blanc to the Matterhorn by a series of high cols and impressive glaciers. Expert guidance is essential on this challenging walking route and during the course of the traverse, there is plenty of opportunity to hone mountaineering skills.

From the start point at our comfortable hotel base in the Chamonix Valley of the French Alps, to the end point in the famously picturesque ski-town of Zermatt in the Swiss Alps, we will have walked 120km and accumulated around 10,000 metres of ascent and descent. Offering the most breathtaking scenery in the Alps and overnight stops at some of the very best Alpine refuges, the Classic Haute Route from Mont Blanc to the Matterhorn, ranks among the world's greatest mountain walking adventures.

Is this holiday for you?

This is real mountain travel, following good trails to the snowline and also involving sections of scrambling on exposed ridges, snow slope climbing and glacier travel, where ropes, crampons and an ice-axe will be used. We average 6 to 8 hours walking each day, with some longer days and tough climbs. On route, we will stay in mountain huts which are inaccessible by vehicle and this means that group members will carry all of their personal equipment throughout the trip. With careful planning, and given the fact that sleeping bags and camping mats are not carried, the total weight of your rucksack can be pared down to around 10 kilograms including water.

Previous alpine mountaineering experience is not a pre-requisite and time permitting; full instruction in the various techniques required will be given by the guides, however participants must have a very good level of fitness and previous experience of walking with crampons is useful - being well coordinated and capable over steep rocky ground are essential. The group will be led by an IFMGA guide at a ratio of 1:4.

Please be aware that routes in the high glaciated mountain regions are subject to changing conditions and difficulties. The Alpine Guides may need to make changes to your planned route at very short notice.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- Professional guide or guides on a 1:4 ratio
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- Accommodation as detailed
- All cable car fees

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers
- Some meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

TRAVEL TO YOUR DESTINATION

In some cases you may choose to take a ferry and/or train to your holiday start and end destination. Please see further information on Travelling by Train.

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive than low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

The group will rendezvous at our hotel in the Chamonix Valley on the evening of day 1 of the trip itinerary. For clients arriving by air, the easiest way to get here is to fly to Geneva Airport and make use of an airport transfer service. We recommend mountaindropoffs.com. Transfers from €40 each way. Please note that transfers are subject to availability and your flight details are required a minimum of 72 hours before your arrival in Geneva. Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Returning from Zermatt
This trek ends in Zermatt. KE services end after breakfast on Day 13 of the trip. The most convenient way of returning from Zermatt to Geneva is by train. Tickets can be purchased at the railway station in Zermatt or online at http://www.sbb.ch/en/index.htm. If buying your ticket online use Zermatt Bahnhoff at the selected station. There is a station in Geneva Airport and there are several connections throughout the day. The journey takes approximately 4 hours from Zermatt and costs approximately CHF 100.

Meal Plan

All breakfasts and 11 dinners are included in the trip price. Packed lunches or hill-food can be bought in the huts. On most days there will also be the possibility of having a hot lunch either at a hut encountered on route or a late lunch taken at our overnight halt. Depending on your choice you should allow (€15 - 25 or CHF 25 - 35) per lunch. Dinner on the last evening in Zermatt is also not included in the holiday price in order to give the widest possible range of options to the group for this meal.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

When in the towns and villages all tap water is drinkable. In mountain huts there is usually not a sustainable drinking water supply. Water in plastic bottles is brought in to the hut. All huts have a recycling point. If you have to purchase water in plastic bottles please buy the largest bottle you can so as to use less plastic. Please take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a Water-To-Go bottle) to treat your water if you can fill from a local stream. Bottled water is not provided. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles. Local authorities are working to find solutions to using plastic water bottles in huts. We monitor the situation carefully for updates.

Breakfasts and all dinners (with the exception of the last night in Zermatt) are included in the trip price. Packed lunches and some snack items can be purchased along the way and in the mountain huts. Hot lunches, if you prefer, can usually be purchased on arrival at the hut.

Accommodation

During this trip the group will spend 1 night in a hotel in the Chamonix Valley and 1 night in a hotel in Zermatt. Whilst in the mountains, there are 10 nights spent in mountain huts or similar accommodation (gites). Accommodation throughout the trip is on a non-segregated, dormitory-style basis. In the high mountain huts washing facilities are very limited. Single rooms are not available.

Note: The accommodations mentioned in the itinerary are given as examples of the type of accommodation used for this trip. The actual accommodations may vary between departures depending on availability.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by an IFMGA guide. Guiding is at a ratio of 1:4 during the trip.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 3500 metres. This is not something that you should worry about; the human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of altitudes, but it is important that we follow some simple rules in order to acclimatise successfully. Before coming on this holiday you should read the advice on trekking at high altitude. You can also talk to one of our trekking experts if you have any concerns about altitude.

Spending Money

The package price includes valley transport, cable cars and mountain railway tickets, all accommodation, all meals except lunches and the last dinner, and guiding. You should make an allowance for drinks, including bottled water. Note: bottled water, when bought in the huts, is very expensive. Beer, wine and soft drinks are available every night. About €60 plus about 430CHF (Swiss Francs) should be sufficient to cover all personal expenses including lunches. Please note that almost all of the route is in Switzerland and you should take most of your money in the form of Swiss Francs. You will need some Euros for the time that you spend in France. There are cash point facilities in Chamonix, La Fouly and in Zermatt. If you are intending to hire or purchase items of equipment, you should budget accordingly.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack (of around 30 - 40 litres). For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline. Since group members will carry all personal equipment during the trek, it is important to keep the overall weight of this equipment to a minimum. Neither a sleeping bag nor a camping mattress is needed and it should be possible to keep the weight of your pack to under 10 kg.

At the start of the holiday you will leave your main bag and travel clothes in the group's hotel/chalet in Chamonix and this will be transferred to Zermatt. You will have brief access to your main bag on day 4 and (and possibly one other day depending on several conditions) to allow a change of clothes and offload any unnecessary items. Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on a trekking or climbing trip getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. Regular walks in hill country is the best way to build up stamina and fitness, but if this is not easily possible than you should start a programme of regular excercise designed to raise your heart and breathing rate for an extended period and gradually build up the time spent excercising as you get nearer to departure day.

Climate

The temperatures that we can expect to encounter during the day will be reasonably warm, ranging from 10°C to 25°C. It can be cool in the evenings at our highest overnight stopping places, falling close to freezing point at night. The weather is usually stable during July and August, but mountainous areas do generate their own weather systems and occasional rain and even stormy weather cannot be ruled out. You should be prepared for all eventualities!

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- The Haute Route, Chamonix - Zermatt. Peter Cliff.

Maps

282T Martigny. Swiss topo online. Hiking Map 1:50 000. ISBN: 978-3-302-30282-9. Edition: 2019.

283T Arolla. Swiss topo online. Hiking Map 1:50 000. ISBN: 978-3-302-30283-6. Edition: 2019.

Swiss Topo 1:50,000 Special Edition Hiking Maps

Swiss survey maps are highly regarded for their superb use of graphic relief and hill shading, presenting an almost 3-D picture of Switzerland's mountainous terrain. These are 'special edition' maps from the Switzerland Topographic Survey at 1:50,000 have the same excellent cartography as the general network which covers the entire country in 78 sheets, but are specifically designed for hikers and are centered on particular tourist regions. They also cover a larger area than the normal sheets. For this holiday you will need the following sheets: 5027T. Grand St-Bernard - Combins - Arolla and 5028T - Monterosa-Matterhorn 1:50 000

Private Groups Information

Make this KE Adventure holiday your own!

- Do our normal group departure dates not fit?
- Would you prefer to travel with just friends and/or family?
- Are you looking to organise a trip for your local walking, biking or mountaineering club?

It's really easy to make a trip your own. Simply select from our full range of adventure holidays and choose the dates that work for you and your group.

We are experts in creating holidays for groups of friends, families, charities and clubs. Our personal service means you'll be fully involved as we make the arrangements for your perfect adventure holiday.

Independence with Security

Travelling as a KE Private Group allows you more flexibility and choice, but still with the peace of mind that everything is pre-planned and arranged for your group by a reputable adventure travel company.

To take your first step to an amazing adventure with your friends and family complete the private group enquiry form, or call our **Sales Experts on: 017687 73966**

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your pack to a minimum.

You must bring the following items:

- Mountain Boots (see notes below)
- Crampons - MUST be fitted with anti-balling plates*
- Crampon bag* (when hiring crampons a bag is automatically included / can not be hired separately)
- Ice Axe*
- Mountaineering harness*
- Screw gate karabiner x 1*
- Helmet*
- Trekking poles x 2 (with baskets)
- Gaiters
- Socks - walking socks are best (2/3 pairs)
- Trekking Trousers (i.e. not cotton)
- Waterproof overtrousers - with long leg zip designed to put on whilst wearing boots
- Underwear
- Thermal Base Layer x 2 (one long sleeved for glacier travel)
- Fleece jacket or pullover
- Waterproof jacket (with hood)
- Extra warm layer - (primaloft or lightweight down)
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses - category 3 or 4.
- Thin thermal or leather gloves
- Very warm winter type gloves or mittens
- Sleeping bag liner/sheet sleeping bag (silk is lightest)
- Rucksack (30 - 40 litres should be sufficient)
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun Protection (high factor for skin)
- Lip salve - with sunscreen
- Water bottle 1 litre x2 (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Small, lightweight wash kit and pack towel
- Dry bags(s) for daypack/kitbag contents (to ensure they keep dry)
- Small hand sanitizer gel
  Basic First Aid Kit including: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium),
- painkillers, plasters, blister treatment (zinc oxide tape and 'Compeed'), insect repellent, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

The following items are optional:

- Change of shirt and trousers

- Thermal baselayer - leggings

- Shorts (for non-glacial travel)

- Rain cover for Rucksack
- Earplugs (particularly if you are not the one snoring!)
- Repair kit - (eg. Pocket knife, needle, thread, duct tape etc.)
- Camera
- Travel Clothes (can be left at your hotel)
- Travel Shoes (can be left at your hotel)
- Small Padlock (for trek bag)
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Notes

Mountaineering Boots - Recommended boots for this trip are comfortable, warm and sufficiently stiff to take a crampon securely (a sturdy B1 or a 'worn in' B2 boot is ideal). Rigid B3 boots are NOT suitable for this trek.

Crampons: Modern strap on crampons are perfectly acceptable for this trek and will fit any boot. All crampons MUST be fitted with anti-balling plates. Grivel Crampons - G10 or G12 with a strap system are excellent and they come fitted with anti-balling plates. We do not recommend semi-automatic crampons for use with softer boots since with this system, the pull on the heel can lead to blisters. Aluminium crampons are not suitable for this trip (they are not strong enough over mixed terrain).

Equipment hire: : Equipment marked with a *can be hired from KE. This can be reserved when you book your trip or closer to your departure but we advise booking hire equipment as soon as possible to ensure availability - equipment hire must be booked through the KE office prior to your departure. Any hired equipment will be collected on arrival from your guide, we do not hire mountaineering boots, but there are several shops in Chamonix renting boots that are suitable for this trip.

Sleeping bags are NOT required as bedding and hut shoes/slippers are provided at mountain refuges. However, you should bring a sheet sleeping bag.

Needle Sports (specialist mountaineering equipment shop)

Needle Sports is the English Lake District's foremost specialist climbing shop supplying mountaineering, rock, ice, alpine and expedition equipment worldwide. Internationally recognised as among the very best of the UK's top technical climbing gear retailers. They have a good range of equipment appropriate for this trip and offer knowledgeable advice both on their website and in store. View >>http://www.needlesports.com/

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

We sell this holiday on a Land Only basis and recommend that you book your flights to Geneva Airport which is approximately an hour's drive from Chamonix and three hours by train from Zermatt. Please refer to the 'Joining arrangements and transfers' for further details.

Flights SHOULD NOT be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

If flying from the UK there are a number of low cost airlines offering flights to Geneva. These include Easyjet who have flights from London, Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Edinburgh & Glasgow. Other airports may be available.

If you would prefer to book a 'flight inclusive package' using scheduled airlines from the UK please contact our flights department for a quote. Whilst flight prices are likely to be more expensive you will benefit from full financial protection.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Our itinerary includes 11 full days trekking, our expert IFMGA guides will be with you every step of the way and are incredibly passionate about what they do and receive rave reviews - the perfect people to help you complete this superb Alpine challenge.According to our expert Guide, Mark Charlton 'this is the best alpine trek adventure in the Alps!'

Please Note This document was downloaded on 12/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change