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Windermere | Lake District | LA23 1AQ
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Website: www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk
Online: shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk



2024 trip dossier | **3 Countries Summits £1499**

Website link | <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/alpine%2Bsummits.html>

Key features

- **Climb three Alpine peaks, in three countries, in a Chamonix based climbing week**
- **5 days guiding (Monday - Friday), and Chamonix B&B accommodation (Sunday - Saturday)**
- **NO previous experience is required, as you are taught everything during the course**
- **Led by top qualified guides (IFMGA), 1:3 ratio maximum**
- **All technical equipment (e.g. B3 boots, crampons, ice axe etc.) can be hired from Icicle**
- **2024 dates; 14 -20 Jul, 11 - 17 Aug 2024. Extra dates on demand for groups of 3**



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UK registered company 413 6635. VAT 770 137 933

'inspirational mountain adventure holidays'

24 years
established in 2000





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Course overview

- This is a week of summit bagging, designed for those who want to progress from an Alpine Intro style course, with more nights in mountain huts, and a full week of Alpine mountaineering routes on glaciated terrain. The course is based in Chamonix, and you have a couple of two-day mini expeditions with nights in mountain huts, and an extra day for acclimatisation / flexibility / training / contingency, as required.
- During the week, you frequently get the opportunity to climb in three different Alpine countries, as a couple of the routes in the itinerary straddle the borders. It's typical to climb in France, Italy and Switzerland. There are many choices of which peaks you can ascend, so this course provides real flexibility for you to tackle good routes in condition.
- In between the summits you stay comfortable mountain refuges, and can indulge in great mountain food. You stay in huts on a half board basis (included) for two nights during the week.

This course is designed for either those with a little previous climbing experience, or those keen on developing their crampon skills and gain acclimatisation, as Mont Blanc can be attempted after the course on an extension (see: Mont Blanc Extension). For those who do not want a 'climbing' course, yet want to experience remote and easy Alpine summits, this is the holiday for you. If you are looking at more of a 'climbing' course, consider the Alpine Intro 4000m Course.

Sample itinerary

- **Sunday** - Travel to Chamonix to arrive for the 17:00 check-in followed by our course safety and itinerary briefings. There is time for kit checks or rental of equipment. Chamonix hosts accompany the group to pre-dinner drinks. Night in Chamonix
- **Monday** - Meet your guide in the morning, and drive up to the village of Le Tour at the head of the Chamonix valley. Here you take the cable car, then chair lift, to access the trail that leads you up to the Albert Premier hut. After a break for lunch, you spend the afternoon on the glacier / snowfields close to the hut, to refresh your crampon skills, and practice walking roped up with Alpine coils. Night spent in the Albert Premier hut, which has been recently refurbished to a high standard. Guiding ratio 1:3 (max). Night in hut.

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- **Tuesday** - A very early start to cross the boulder field behind the hut, to reach the glacier, then it's crampons and harnesses on for the ascent to the Aiguille du Tour 3544m, which straddles the Franco-Swiss border. On the glacier you are roped up for safety, and it is a long but gradual ascent to Col Superior du Tour, where you cross into Switzerland, then turn left to just below the summit, where you scramble up to the top. The descent is made by the same route, to Le Tour. Guiding ratio 1:3 (max). Night in Chamonix.
- **Wednesday** - Typically a day route, and you drive to Argentiere and ascend the Grands Montets cable car. Descend the stairs onto the glacier surface, where you rope up, and start ascending towards the rimaye / bergschrund on the Petite Aiguille Verte. Once this is crossed you soon reach the summit ridge, where you turn left and head upwards to the rocky summit block. On the top you are rewarded by the view onto the North Face of Les Drus, and down into the Chamonix valley. Guiding ratio 1:3 (max). Night in Chamonix.
- **Thursday** - Today you take the cable car to the Aiguille du Midi 3842m, and descend the ridge onto the Col du Midi, before crossing it to then climb Pointe Lachenal 3613m. Descend to the glacier again, and traverse the whole Vallee Blanche to reach Punta Helbronner in Italy. This traverse crosses complex glaciers, in spectacular scenery. You reach the Rifugio Torino, which looks down to Courmayeur, and spend the night in this mountain hut. Guiding ratio 1:3 (max). Night in hut.
- **Friday** - An early start to ascend the Aiguille du Toulou 3538m (3 clients), or possibly the Aiguilles Marbrées 3535m (if 2 clients). Both these routes are situated on the Franco-Italian border, offering you the opportunity to finish week of summits in a trilogy of Alpine countries. Return to Punta Helbronner, and take the cable car back across the Vallee Blanche to Aiguille du Midi, and down to Chamonix. In the evening all the different course clients meet up to celebrate. Guiding ratio 1:3 (max). Night in Chamonix.
- **Saturday** – Breakfast, then accommodation check out at 10:00, then depart for home

ITINERARY NOTES: Where possible we follow itineraries. Mountain adventures are weather and conditions dependant, so occasionally we are forced to alter the plans. If this is the case, suitable alternatives are offered. Please use this itinerary as a guide to the types of route / activity you attempt.

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Course Inclusions

1) IFMGA Mountain Guide for five days, 2) Chamonix course hosts for logistics & briefings, 3) B&B accommodation in Chamonix (inc. beddings & towels), 4) Up to two nights half board in mountain huts (inc. costs for guides), 5) Pre course information booklet, 6) Equipment discount voucher for UK shops, 7) Free 36 page technical Course Instruction Booklet, 8) Road transport in Chamonix valley, 9) Evening technical instruction when in Chamonix.

Course Exclusions

1) Travel to and from Chamonix, 2) Equipment hire, 3) Personal laundry, telephone calls, lunches, evening meals in valley, & any purchases in mountain huts / hotels / restaurants, 4) Cable cars and uplift as required (budget on about £80 for the week), 5) Transport / tunnel ticket outside the Chamonix valley, 6) Sunday pre-dinner drinks & Friday celebratory meal & drinks, 7) Activities insurance, & excess baggage charges.

Notes

This trip is guaranteed as soon as two people book. In the highly unlikely event that just one person books on a course, less guided days can be offered, however accommodation will be provided for the week, and guiding options / locations will be discussed with you within the budget paid.

Pre-requisite skills

These are outlined on this page; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/courses.html>, and this course is;

Mountaineering: no experience necessary.

Ice & Rock: no previous experience is needed.

Fitness: good general fitness and stamina.

Fitness & stamina

The ideal fitness levels are detailed at; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/trainingpreparation.html>, and there are links to general training advice and planners that you can adapt to suit and follow.

This trip is graded: **Level 2** - We suggest that people on courses of this grade can run 10km without a problem, but we stress that for courses of this level you do not need to be any fitter than this minimum level, though it is there to ensure a good basic level of aerobic fitness and training.

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How to book

- All bookings are made securely online, and deposit of £250 is payable (with secure payments handled via our travel bonding by SinGS / Felloh). Ensure that when completing the form, you fill in all the required fields, in order for the 'SUBMIT' button to appear.
- All payments are protected by our Tour Operator travel bonding with ATOL and TTA, and your monies are held in trust until after you have travelled home. You are fully financially protected, in accordance with UK and EU laws.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/booking.html>

Before your trip

- As soon as you book online, you are sent confirmation of this, and attachments including joining instructions, course specific kit lists. If you haven't received this e-mail within half an hour of booking online, please check your junk / spam folder.
- At the office, we manually check all bookings, and you'll also receive a personalised e-mail from us formally confirming your course space, and sending you a deposit payment link. Once you have this office confirmation and paid the deposit, it's fine to go ahead and book your travel arrangements, and to arrange your activities insurance.
- Activities insurance is a requirement for all trip participants. Organise it as soon as you are booked, and ensure that it covers you for cancellation or curtailment, in case you injure yourself or get ill before your trip. This ensures you'd be fully reimbursed for the trip, and all travel costs.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/insurance.html>

Travel to the Alps

- The closest international airport to Chamonix, is Geneva (airport code GVA). There are many direct flights from the UK every day, and it's well served by the budget airlines e.g. EasyJet.
- Geneva is a small but busy airport, and it's only a very short walk from baggage reclaim into the arrivals area, where all the airport transfer companies meet. In the Course Information Booklet is a code for preferential rates from our reliable transfer partner Mountain Dropoffs.
- Chamonix is also very easy to travel to by rail, from the UK to Paris via Eurostar, then from Paris Gare du Lyon (or Austerlitz) to Saint Gervais by high speed TGV, then the local train up the valley to the Chamonix Aiguille du Midi (or Chamonix central) stop.

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- Driving can work out cheaper, if you're with others, and there's free parking close to the accommodation, on a first come first served basis. Generally a couple of laps, and a space will be freed up for you. See the Course Information Booklet map for the locations of this free parking.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/travel.html>

Meeting point

- Once you've booked, you'll receive the Course Information Booklet, which details the meeting point for Chamonix course clients.
- If you want an address for your airport transfer, provide the Aiguille du Midi cable car, on Rue Lyret, 74400 Chamonix. The accommodation is situated in a pedestrianized area, so you cannot be dropped off at the door, and the cable car station, or Chamonix Sud bus station are the closest access points. If arriving on EasyBus, Ouibus, or Flixbus, these all arrive at the bus station.

Course accommodation

- Most course clients stay in Chamonix in en-suite rooms, in a purpose built ski village in Chamonix Sud. These have a small kitchenette, for those wishing to self-cater.
- Check in time is from 16:00 (4pm) on the Sunday, and the meeting point to be shown into your accommodation is detailed in your Course Information Booklet, that is sent upon booking.
- The flats are normally twin rooms for two people sharing. If you are travelling as a couple (or named friends), you will share. If travelling on your own, you will be matched with another course client of the same sex.
- This accommodation is small and basic, to provide you low cost accommodation in Chamonix, but it is functional and really well located. If you wish to upgrade to higher quality accommodation, there is a £100 discount available for sourcing your own accommodation, which is applied to your invoice.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

Course briefing

- The course briefing for this trip is at 17:00 on the Sunday evening. The Course Information Booklet will confirm the exact location for this briefing. When you attend the briefing, take your passport and activities insurance details, for these to be noted.
- The briefing takes about 45 minutes, and it aims to answer all your queries about the course.

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- Attendance at the course briefing is obligatory, and you are asked to sign a copy of the Terms & Conditions. These are the same as those you accepted online when you booked, but it's for us to have a signed paper copy on record.

Equipment checks

- Take any equipment to the briefing that you would like one of our guiding team to advise you about. For some people that may be very little, whilst others want to double-check a few bits of kit. It's always a good idea to take your boots and crampons, so we can check the fit for you.
- If you've your own safety equipment, it's worth having one of the team check this over for you.
- Note that if you require any hire equipment, or any kit that is loaned on a course, you need to attend the course briefing, as it's straight after this that is when it is allocated.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/hire.html>

Late arrivals

- If they are pre-booked days ahead, we can accommodate late arrivals. We will organise for you to be able to check into your course accommodation at any time that you arrive. We do however ask you to assess how necessary a late arrival is, and for you to consider the disruption to your flatmate.
- You will require a separate Course Briefing, which involves an early start for our team, to fit this in before your guiding. It's not an ideal start to schedule a late arrival, followed by an early start, and sets you on the back foot. Please select suitable flight times to fit the advertised course timings.

Cable cars

- For the days you are climbing in Chamonix, the most cost effective cable car pass is called the Mont Blanc multi-pass. For this course you require a 5 day pass, from Monday to Friday (plus extra days if you arrive earlier). A 5 day pass costs 99.20€ (*2021 prices).
- Website link: <https://www.montblancnaturalresort.com/en/montblanc-multipass>

Breakfasts

- When you are in town and accommodation is included on a self-catering basis. There are a great range of cafes, bakeries, and coffee shops in town, where you can get breakfast, and there are a few offering cooked breakfasts too. Alternatively you can self-cater in your accommodation.

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- As the room is self-catering, it's yours for the week, so no need to check out when you are away in mountain huts. Should you use up any items from your breakfast or room supplies, there's a supermarket located just across the pedestrian square from the course accommodation.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

Lunches & drinks

- Everyone has their own idea of what they would like for lunch whilst in the mountains, varying from a stack of Mars bars to a large ham sandwich. For this reason we let you choose your own lunches, which may be easily purchased locally from shops and supermarkets.
- You will be advised in the briefings as to how many days lunches you should plan ahead and purchase. There is never time to cook hot lunches while on a course, but you could take a thermos.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

Evening meals

- In town clients normally take advantage of the excellent variety of local restaurants, and also the town's bars to celebrate week's achievements. We are also happy to book places in restaurants for you, should you wish an evening on your own.
- Some clients want an early night or to budget, so opt to cook for themselves in the self-catering flats. In guardianned huts, the cooked evening meal is normally three courses.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamonix.html>

Mountain huts

- Mountain Huts are run by a 'Guardian' who cooks, cleans and is on hand for your assistance. On most courses, the itineraries detail a specific number of nights in mountain huts.
- Clients share rooms, which often are on tiered bunks. Each person is allocated a mattress with its own pillow and blankets, but you should take a sleeping bag liner for comfort.
- There are normally storage / drying rooms. Meals are on a half board basis, with a basic continental breakfast and a three course cooked evening meal. Any extras you order, such as bottled water, beer or wine, packed lunch, or chocolate, must be paid for by you.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

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Weather & conditions

- It's natural for you to be avidly checking the weather on the weeks and days preceding your course, and we try and keep our social media channels updated daily, so you can see what's going on, and how the conditions are evolving. The website links below give you trustworthy weather forecasts.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/webcams.html> and http://chamonix-meteo.com/chamonix-mont-blanc/weather/forecast/morning/5_days_weather_forecast.php

Maps & guidebooks

- You don't need to take any maps and guidebooks for your trip, as you are being guided, but it's always a good idea from a safety perspective to have a map with you. Here are the key links;
- Chamonix map; <https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/79/BooksMaps/Maps/Alpinemaps/IGNChamonix36300Tmap.html>
- Pays du Mont Blanc map; <https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/81/BooksMaps/Maps/Alpinemaps/PaysduMontBlanc1:50000map.html>
- Instructional book; <https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/165/BooksMaps/Books/Instructional/AlpineClimbing:TechniquetoTakeYouHigher.html>

Equipment lists

- You will be sent a precise course specific kit list upon booking, but we have a huge amount of kit advice on our website; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/boots.html>
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BMTR.html>

Any questions?

Even if you've read all the detail here and in your Course Information Booklet, and on the website, you may still have some queries about your trip, so don't hesitate to get in touch.

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- Facebook message <http://m.me/iciclemountaineering>
- Here's our office hours, and online chat <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/contact.html>
- When you're on a trip, you'll also be provided an in resort WhatsApp number for our team, so if you haven't already, please ensure that you download this free app to your phone.



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