



## Adventure Travel Trip Itinerary

Name of trip: Switzerland—Tour du Mont Blanc

Dates of trip: August 20 - September 4, 2019

Leader: Debbie Markham

	Day	Date Day	Activity (distances are approximate)	Accommodation, Notes	Meals included
		Aug 20 (Tues)	<b>Travel to Geneva, Switzerland</b>		
	1	Aug 21 (Wed)	<p><b>Arrival in Geneva</b></p> <p>Please plan to arrive before 2 p.m. local time, to allow enough time to get through customs, arrive at the hotel and soak up some much deserved down time prior to dinner.</p> <p><i>Transportation to the hotel from the airport is on your own.</i> Trip leaders will provide suggestions for available transportation options. <i>After checking in to the hotel, you are free to explore the city on your own.</i> We will meet at 5 p.m. in the lobby of the hotel for a group meeting followed by a welcome dinner.</p>	Overnight in Geneva at <a href="#">Hotel Tiffany</a> . Double occupancy.	D
	2	Aug 22 (Thurs)	<p><b>Shuttle to Chamonix</b></p> <p>After breakfast at the hotel, we will shuttle to Chamonix. <i>Lunch and afternoon activities are on your own.</i> You can explore the charming ski town of Chamonix and gaze at the massive Mont Blanc as you savor gelato or take the cable car to Aiguille du Midi for a 360-degree view of the French, Swiss, and Italian Alps. The summit terrace is at 12,605 feet with a spectacular view of Mont Blanc on a clear day. We will meet up for a group dinner.</p>	Overnight in Chamonix at <a href="#">Hotel Le Morgane</a> , a 4-star boutique hotel with on-site pool and spa. Double occupancy.	B, D

	3	Aug 23 (Fri)	<p><b>Chamonix Valley to Les Houches</b>  <b>[3300' elevation loss; 5 hours hiking]</b></p> <p>A gondola ride will take us from the Chamonix Valley to the top of Le Brévent at 8,284 feet. Weather permitting, we will have a clear view of Mont Blanc. Hike mostly downhill to Les Houches.</p>	<p>Overnight in Les Houches at <a href="#">Hotel Du Bois</a>, a 3-star hotel offering a restaurant and pool. Double occupancy.</p>	B, L, D
	4	Aug 24 (Sat)	<p><b>Les Houches to Les Contamines</b>  <b>[3369' elevation gain, 2769' elevation loss; 5-6 hours hiking]</b></p> <p>The hike via Bionnassay will take us over our first Col (saddle) at Col de Voza (5,423 ft). Although there are some stretches of road walking today, we will be rewarded with views of the spiky Aiguilles (meaning “needles”), the jagged peaks that guard Mont Blanc, and a view of Dome du Gouter, another mountain within the Mont Blanc massif that has an impressive glacier ripping down its side. An alternative route (weather and physical effort dependent) via Refuge de Miage offers even more breathtaking high mountain views.</p>	<p>Overnight in Les Contamines at <a href="#">Hotel Gai Soleil</a>, a 3-star accommodation facing the Mont Blanc range. Double occupancy.</p>	B, L, D
	5	Aug 25 (Sun)	<p><b>Les Contamines to Refuge des Mottets</b>  <b>[5170' elevation gain, 2874' elevation loss; 8 hours hiking]</b></p> <p>We will cross over Col des Fours for spectacular views and to avoid a long stretch of road in the Ville des Glaciers. If weather is bad or there is snow on the pass, the main route to Les Chapieux is the better option. We will want to start early.</p>	<p>Overnight at <a href="#">Refuge des Mottets</a> in four-person shared rooms. This refuge sits serenely at the bottom of Col de la Seigne.  <i>We'll need to pack carefully as there is no luggage transfer to tomorrow night's accommodation.</i></p>	B, L, D
	6	Aug 26 (Mon)	<p><b>Refuge Les Mottets to Cabane du Combal</b>  <b>[2116' elevation gain, 1,765' elevation loss; 4 hours hiking]</b></p> <p>Today we hike over Col de la Seigne and step over the border from France into Italy. Cabane du Combal, located between Lac Combal and Lac du Miage, is located at the southwest end of the Mont Blanc massif providing great views of Mont Blanc and the Aiguille Noire de Peuterey.  <i>No luggage transfer to Cabane du Combal.</i></p>	<p>Overnight at <a href="#">Cabane du Combal</a> in small 4-person shared rooms, located near the shores of Lake Combal.</p>	B, L, D

	7	Aug 27 (Tues)	<p><b>Cabane du Combal to Courmayeur</b>  <b>[1624' elevation gain, 4117' elevation loss; 5 hours hiking]</b>  Today's hike begins with undulating terrain and ends with a downhill section to reach Courmayeur in the valley. A stunning day of scenery lies before us with views of Glacier de Miage, Lac Combal and Mont Blanc itself. Courmayeur is the Italian equivalent of Chamonix, enjoying a rich history of alpine climbers, as evidenced by the varied sculptures on display by the central cathedral. We will have a group dinner upon reaching the hotel in Courmayeur.</p>	Overnight in Courmayeur at <a href="#">Hotel Bouton d'Or</a> . Double occupancy.	B, L, D
	8	Aug 28 (Wed)	<p><b>Rest day in Courmayeur</b>  The hotel will provide breakfast and then the day is yours to spend as you wish. You can choose to relax, explore this once medieval town, or take the Skyway Monte Bianco, a 360-degree panoramic gondola that offers breathtaking views of Mont Blanc and its surrounding peaks, including the Matterhorn, Monte Rosa, and the Gran Paradiso (at your own cost). <i>Lunch and dinner are on your own.</i>  <i>A race will be starting in Courmayeur in the morning.</i></p>	Overnight in Courmayeur at <a href="#">Hotel Bouton d'Or</a> . Double occupancy.  <i>Verifying if we have luggage service to the Chalet tomorrow night..</i>	B
	9	Aug 29 (Thurs)	<p><b>Courmayeur to Chalet Val Ferret</b>  <b>[2821' elevation gain, 2290' elevation loss; 5 hours hiking]</b>  Today's views of "Monte Bianco" from the Italian side may just be the best of the tour. After an initial climb out of Courmayeur, which is most of our elevation for the day, the trail follows an easy route along Mont de la Saxe with views of Mont Blanc and the Val Ferret below.  <i>Verifying luggage transfer to Chalet Val Ferret.</i></p>	Overnight at <a href="#">Chalet Val Ferret</a> . Double occupancy; if we are 12 total, we will have the entire Chalet.	B, L, D
	10	Aug 30 (Fri)	<p><b>Chalet Val Ferret to La Fouly</b>  <b>[2936' elevation gain, 4625' elevation loss; 6-7 hours hiking]</b>  The high point of today's hike is the Grand Col Ferret (8,356 ft.) and is a taxing climb that separates Italy from Switzerland. We'll want to start early. The idyllic landscape along with the tinkling of cowbells as we enter Switzerland is a special treat for this part of the TMB. We will hike through bygone hamlets of the Val Ferret.  <i>By lunchtime we should encounter the UTMB runners catching up with us. ~ 2-6 hours overlap with the runners.</i></p>	Overnight in La Fouly at <a href="#">Hotel Edelweiss</a> , a 3-star bed and breakfast hotel located directly on the TMB. Double occupancy.	B, L, D

	11	Aug 31 (Sat)	<p><b>La Fouly to Champex</b>  <b>[1394' elevation gain, 1852' elevation loss; 5 hours hiking]</b>          After a long hike up the Grand Col Ferret, we are rewarded with perhaps the easiest stage of the trek as we hike through a valley dotted with farms, cows and pastoral life. It's a throwback to different times and a slower way of life.  <i>Once again, we will have some overlap with the UTMB race.</i></p>	Overnight in Champex at <a href="#">Hotel Splendide</a> , a 3-star hotel located next to a beautiful alpine lake. Double occupancy.	B, L, D
	12	Sept 1 (Sun)	<p><b>Champex to Col de la Forclaz</b>  <b>[2549' elevation gain, 2283' elevation loss; main route 5-6 hours hiking; alternate route 7-8 hours hiking]</b>          The main route snakes its way up the slopes for views of the Martigny Valley below. An alternative route to Fenette de Arpette will be considered in clear weather and is one of the highest points reached on the TMB at 8743 feet.</p>	Overnight at <a href="#">Hotel de la Forclaz</a> . Double occupancy with shared bathrooms.	B, L, D
	13	Sept 2 (Mon)	<p><b>Col de La Forclaz to Argentière</b>  <b>[3507' elevation gain, 3864' elevation loss; 6-7 hours hiking]</b>          We hike back into France today on a fairly easy route in which we may catch the first glimpse of Mont Blanc since leaving Italy and before descending into the Vallee de l'Arve.</p>	Overnight in Argentière at <a href="#">Hotel de La Couronne</a> , with a cozy library and attached restaurant featuring home style cooking that receives praise from many TMB hikers. Double occupancy.	B, L, D
	14	Sept 3 (Tues)	<p><b>Argentière to Chamonix</b>  <b>[4239' elevation gain, 1749' elevation loss; 8 hours hiking]</b>          Although the last hiking day, we have many spectacular views today. The main route uses a number of ladder and chain systems to ascend to Tete aux Vents. For those who have vertigo or are jittery with heights, there is an alternative route via Col des Montets that avoids the ladder section. After reaching Tete aux Vents, the route levels out to a more downward sloping walk to Refuge La Flégère. The refuge is a nice spot to sit for lunch before the final push to Le Brévent, where we started our hike. Le Brévent (8,287 ft.) has long been considered the best viewpoint for Mont Blanc and is where many people stood to witness the historic first climb of the mountain. The final ascent to Le Brévent includes two ladders near the top, so for those wishing to avoid these or simply would like to avoid the final push, an option exists to take the cable car down at Plan Praz and avoid approximately 1,700 feet of elevation gain.</p>	Overnight in Chamonix at <a href="#">Le Morgane Hotel</a> . Double occupancy.	B, L, D

	15	Sept 4 (Wed)	<b>Home or onward travel</b> A shuttle is available for transport to the Geneva airport.		B
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*Images:* [chamonix.com](http://chamonix.com), [barnes-suisse.com](http://barnes-suisse.com), [chamonix.net](http://chamonix.net), [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org), [winter.champagne.com](http://winter.champagne.com), [summitpost.com](http://summitpost.com), [pygmy-elephant.com](http://pygmy-elephant.com), [mycourmayeur.com](http://mycourmayeur.com), [TripAdvisor.com](http://TripAdvisor.com), [pygmy-elephant.com](http://pygmy-elephant.com), [champex.info](http://champex.info), [coldelaforclaz.ch](http://coldelaforclaz.ch), [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org), [facebook.com/RefugeDeLaFlegere/](http://facebook.com/RefugeDeLaFlegere/)