

Gran Paradiso Weekend

Trip Code: GPW

Version: GPW Gran Paradiso Weekend



MOUNTAINEER



GUIDED GROUP



CHALLENGING



HIGHLIGHTS

- Traverse Gran Paradiso, the only 4000m peak entirely in Italy
- Trek across the stunning Vallee Blanche to the Aiguille du Midi
- Guiding ratio of 1:4 for the whole weekend
- [FREE Equipment hire worth £100 is available for this holiday](#)

AT A GLANCE

- 4 days trekking and climbing
- Max altitude - 4061metres
- Join at Chamonix Valley

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 4 Breakfasts
- 4 Dinners
- 2 nights Hotel
- 2 nights Mountain Hut / Refuge

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Our 5 day adventure holiday begins in the Chamonix Valley. From here we transfer over the border to Italy and begin our trek up to the Rifugio Vittorio Emanuele, where there is the opportunity to do some crampon skills training after lunch. A true alpine start is a rude but amazing awakening the following morning as we make our way to the top of Italy. From the Rifugio Vittorio Emanuele, we make the classic, easy ascent across the snow face and via a rocky ridge to the summit of Gran Paradiso (4061m), where the views extend over the Alps to the prominent peaks of Mont Blanc and the Matterhorn.

The aim is a traverse of Gran Paradiso and so we descend to the Rifugio Chabod on the northern side of the mountain. Our final day in the mountains is another alpine classic, the trek across the Vallee Blanche; a stunning warm down from yesterday's high - finally stepping off the snow via the famous alpinist's tunnel at the Aiguille du Midi. This final day can also be used as a contingency day if we were not able to attempt the summit the previous day. Are you short on time, but still want a big adventure? Then look no further...

Is this holiday for you?

This is real mountain travel, following good trails to the snowline and also involving sections of scrambling, snowslope climbing and glacier travel, where ropes, crampons and an ice-axe will be used. Given the non-technical nature of this mountaineering holiday and the fact that the group will be led by IFMGA guides, this trip should be feasible for novice alpinists, providing they have a very good level of fitness. Guiding is at a ratio of 1:4 during the trip.

It is not practicable to provide vehicle support for this holiday, with two nights being spent in inaccessible mountain refuges. So, the trekking section of this trip is unsupported. You will have to carry all of your own equipment whilst trekking. In practice, especially considering that neither sleeping bag nor camping mattress are needed for this trip, you should be able to keep the packed weight of your rucksack to as little as 10kg. The first and forth nights are spent at a hotel in the Chamonix valley, where you can leave any travel clothes etc that you don't want to take up the mountain with you.

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

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DAY 1

Meet at the group's accommodation in the Chamonix Valley.

Meet the group at our hotel in the Chamonix Valley. If you arrive early there is the option to take a bus or to walk into Chamonix, where there is plenty of choice here for any last minute shopping or simply relax with a coffee and soak up the atmosphere. Our guide will meet us at the hotel in the evening for an informal chat about the next 3 days. KE Land Only package services begin with dinner at the hotel.

Meals: **D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Drive through the Mont Blanc Tunnel. Walk to Rifugio Vittorio Emanuele (2735m). Skills briefing.

After making final preparations and sorting out any equipment hire, we will drive through the Mont Blanc Tunnel to Italy and the Gran Paradiso National Park, this journey will take about 2 hours. A 2-3 hour walk through forests and over moorland takes us to the Rifugio Vittorio Emanuele (2775m) situated at the foot of the Gran Paradiso, where we spend the night. The newest part of the Rifugio Vittorio Emanuele was opened in 1961 and now has 120 beds in total, the facilities here are basic, but the location is simply perfect. After checking in, the guides will brief us on the technical skills required for the climb. We can then relax and enjoy the scenery from the hut terrace

Meals: **B D**



Accommodation
Mountain Hut / Refuge



Time
2 - 3 hours walking

DAY 3






Climb Gran Paradiso (4061m) and descend to the Rifugio Chabod (2710m).

A pre-dawn start from the hut to climb this isolated peak, crossing boulders and snow fields which lead

us onto the Glacier du Mont Gran Paradiso and towards the Becca de Montcorve. We cross snow slopes to reach the Fenetre du Mont Roc, crossing a rimaye (a large crevasse separating the glacier from the permanent snow field above) and ascending a steep slope to give access to the final rocky summit ridge. The final 100 metres is an exciting exposed scramble though we are well protected. The summit supports a recently renovated 'Madonna' which is fortunately well attached to the rocks. This is a fantastic viewpoint particularly of the Mont Blanc Massif. The return journey is made via the same route for a short distance, then down the Glacier de Laveciau. This is usually a fairly intricate maze of crevasses which we wind our way through, eventually exiting onto the moraines through which a trail leads down to the Rifugio Chabod (2710m).

If it is not possible for a summit attempt today, we will walk around a lower traverse path, below the snowline to the Rifugio Chabod.

Meals: **B D**

	Accommodation Mountain Hut / Refuge		Ascent 1340M		Descent 1340M		Time 7 - 8 hours walking
	Distance 12KM						

DAY 4

A contingency day for another chance to summit if needed. Or another fantastic day in the mountains, e.g. Cable car up to Helbronner (3462m). Walk across the Vallee Blanche. Cable car back to Chamonix.

We have another early breakfast before walking back down to the valley. From here we have several options, our guide will be able to explain these in full. One option is to transferring to Courmayeur catch the early morning cable car (known as the Skyway) up to Helbronner Gondola Station (3462m) and traverse the glacier and ascend the spectacular and exposed ridge up to the Aiguille du Midi, catch the cable car down to Chamonix, where we make our way back to our accommodation and relax with a beer on the terrace.

If we were not able to make a summit attempt yesterday, today can be used instead as a second opportunity to climb Gran Paradiso. If this is the case, we will do the reverse of yesterday's itinerary with the addition of walking all the way down to the valley after refuelling at the Rifugio Vittorio Emmanuelle (2775m) on the way. We would then transfer all the way back to the Chamonix Valley.

Please note that today's itinerary is flexible and will depend on several factors, including what has been done in the last two days, weather and snow conditions. Your guide will use their expertise and local knowledge to make this decision.

Meals: **B D**



Accommodation
Hotel



Time
5 - 6 hours walking

DAY 5

Departure day.

KE Land Only package services end after breakfast.

Meals: **B**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- Professional qualified IFMGA guide(s)
- Accommodation as described
- All land transport involved in the itinerary (not including airport transfers or cable cars)
- Meals as detailed in the meal plan

What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Airport transfers
- Meals as described in the meal plan
- Cable car fees
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

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](#).

You should arrange to meet the group at The Hotel du Bois, Les Houches, Chamonix Valley, on the afternoon of your arrival day. Check in is from 16.00 but should you arrive early you can leave bags at reception. A briefing with the guide followed by dinner will be at 18:00, please meet in the reception area. If you plan to arrive later than this, please let the KE office know in good time.

For clients arriving by air, the easiest way to get to Argentière is to fly to Geneva Airport and make use of an airport transfer service. We recommend MountainDropoffs.com. <http://www.mountaindropoffs.com>.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals except lunches are included in the trip price. Packed lunches or hill-food can be bought in the huts, or of course for a short trip such as this snack food can also be brought with you from home. On day 2 there might also be the possibility of having a hot lunch at the hut. You should allow €15 - 25 per lunch.

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.

The food in Yeti Lodge is varied and plentiful. Continental breakfasts and full 3-course evening meals are included and there is an 'honesty bar' for wine and drinks with your meals. At the huts there will be set 3 course meals and breakfasts will consist of cereal, bread, jam and tea or coffee. Packed lunches or hill-food can be bought in the huts. You should allow €10 - 20 per lunch.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide 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 diet 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.

Accommodation

During this trip, the group will spend 2 nights in a hotel in the Chamonix Valley.. Accommodation here is in either twin or 3-person rooms, if you are travelling on your own you will be paired up with someone of the same sex. Whilst in the mountains, there are 2 nights spent in mountain huts, where the accommodation is on a non-segregated, dormitory-style basis.

Group Leader & Support Staff

There will be one IFMGA guide. Guiding is at a ratio of 1:4.

Spending Money

A total of €125 should be sufficient to cover all personal expenses, including your hill-food and lunches, drinks and other incidental expenditure. Beer, wine and soft drinks are available every night. There are cash point facilities in Chamonix. If you are intending to hire or purchase items of equipment, you should budget accordingly (credit cards can be useful in this respect). Please note that you can only withdraw Swiss Francs at the cash machines at Geneva Airport.

Approximately €85 should be budgeted for cable cars - this is in addition to the above amount.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack. 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 10kg.

At the start of the holiday you will leave your main bag and travel clothes in the group's chalet in Argentiere. Luggage with wheels can be 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 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and 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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Health & Vaccinations

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. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

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. We would suggest that you adopt a weekly exercise regime leading up to your trip. Running, cycling and swimming are good for developing better stamina. Before departure, we suggest that you try to fit in a number of long walks in hilly country.

Climate

The temperatures that we can expect to encounter during the day will be reasonably warm, ranging from 10°C / 50°F to 25°C / 77°F. 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 June, July, August and early September, 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](https://www.gov.uk/travelaware)' 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 prior to 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. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

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 direct 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 Alpine 4000 Metre Peaks, Classic Routes, Richard Goedeke, Diadem

Maps

Kompass Maps - Gran Paradiso and Val d'Aosta. 1:50,000

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 pairs)
- Trekking Trousers (i.e. not cotton)
- Waterproof overtrousers (with full leg zips)
- Underwear
- Thermal Base Layer x 2 (one long sleeved for glacier travel)
- Fleece jacket or pullover
- Waterproof jacket (with hood)
- Extra warm layer - (lightweight 'primaloft' or down jacket)
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses - category 3 or 4
- Thin gloves - leather or thermal
- Warm and waterproof gloves or mittens
- Sleeping bag liner/sheet sleeping bag (silk is lightest)
- Rucksack (30 - 40 litres should be sufficient)
- Rain cover for Rucksack
- Head torch with new battery in it
- Sun Protection (high factor for skin)

- Lip salve - with sunscreen
- Water bottle - minimum 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)
- Basic First Aid Kit including: Painkillers for headaches and blister treatment (zinc oxide tape and 'Compeed'). Plus an personal medication.

The following items are optional:

- Thermal baselayer - leggings
- Shorts (for non-glacial travel)
- Earplugs (particularly if you are not the one snoring!)
- Camera
- Travel Clothes (can be left at your hotel)
- Travel Shoes (can be left at your hotel)
- 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 necessary for this trek - however if you already have B3 boots and are comfortable in them, they can be used on this trek (GPW).

Crampons: Modern strap on crampons (often referred to as 'New-Matic') 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/>

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers.

[-> Find out more](#)

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

By having 3 days in the mountains, we give you two chances to reach the summit of Gran Paradiso, all in just one long weekend. It is very easy for us to arrange private groups on your preferred dates for this holiday (from 2 people upwards) - contact the KE office for a quote.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 20/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change