

# Mont Blanc to the Matterhorn

Trip Code: MBM

Version: MBM Mont Blanc to the Matterhorn Trek



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



CHALLENGING



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Take on a challenge and complete the summer version of the famous Haute Route
- Cross from France to Switzerland on one of Europe's most spectacular treks
- A linear route from Chamonix to Zermatt through 10 of the 12 highest peaks in the Alps
- Stay in family-run hotels and cosy gites, and experience 2 Alpine mountain huts

**AT A GLANCE**

- 10 days trekking
- Max altitude - 3000 metres
- Join at Chamonix, End in Zermatt

**ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS**

- 11 Breakfasts
- 11 Dinners
- 8 nights Hotel
- 2 nights Mountain Hut / Refuge
- 1 nights Gite / Hostel

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

## Introduction

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An iconic Alpine walking adventure from Chamonix in France to Zermatt in Switzerland. Considered to be the 'Walker's' Haute Route, this superb Alpine trekking holiday is completed in the summer, as opposed to the classic winter ski tour. It takes a parallel, linear route across the spine of the European Alps and links together the famous small mountaineering towns of Chamonix, Arolla and Zermatt. As it is also generally much lower than the Classic Haute Route, this journey is a fantastic challenge for travellers who wish to explore the Alps and enjoy incredibly beautiful mountain scenery, without any technical experience required. Trekking from France into the beautiful Swiss canton of Valais, passing spectacularly beneath 10 of the 12 highest peaks in the Alps, we are treated to amazing views of Mont Blanc itself. Traversing several high and challenging passes we enjoy mountain walking in the Alps at its most delightful.

Lower down, the walking leads through verdant Alpine valleys with cascading streams, pretty hamlets and flower-strewn meadows. For the last day of trekking we have a wonderful valley-side walking trail which provides stunning views of the Matterhorn. Overnight accommodation on this great trekking holiday adventure in the Alps is provided in a variety of small hotels, atmospheric gites and spectacularly located alpine mountain refuges. Led by English speaking IML qualified guides and fully supported with access to luggage on all but two nights, our holiday offers the best chance of completing this challenging walking traverse.

### Is this holiday for you?

This is a classic Alpine walking route on good trails. The average distance covered each day is around 16 kilometres (10 miles) and there is a considerable amount of ascent and descent, with several passes close to 3000 metres. Regular hillwalkers will find this trek to be well within their capabilities but it is not really for first time trekkers. This holiday is fully supported and clients will not be required to carry sleeping bags or significant amounts of personal gear other than what is required for the day's hike. There are a total of two nights spent in mountain huts where there is no access to trek bags. Otherwise group members will have access to their main luggage on each evening.

# Itinerary

Version: MBM Mont Blanc to the Matterhorn Trek

## DAY 1

### Meet at the group hotel in the Chamonix Valley.

Meet at the group hotel in the Chamonix Valley. Lying beneath the stunning north face of Mont Blanc, the views are awesome from the start!. Before dinner, you will meet your trip leader to have an informal chat about the days ahead and have the chance to check out your clothing and gear and to decide if you will need to pick up any further items of equipment, before setting out in the morning. KE Land Only package services begin with the evening meal.

Meals: D



Accommodation  
Hotel

## DAY 2

### Walk via Le Tour and cross the Col du Balme (2186m) to Trient in Switzerland.

After a filling breakfast, our trek starts straight from the front door with a walk along the Petit Balcon Nord, to Le Tour at the top end of the valley. From here, we start our ascent to the Col du Balme (2186m) before heading down through the meadows of Tseppes into Switzerland and the Trient Valley where we spend our first night of the trek in a simple hotel.

Meals: B D



Accommodation  
Hotel



Ascent  
1350M



Descent  
1400M



Time  
6 - 7 hours walking



Distance  
15KM

## DAY 3

### Cross the Col de Forclaz and the Fenetre d'Arpette (2670m) and descend to Champex.

We start the day with a short (30 minute) climb to the Col de Forclaz followed by an easy stroll to the Chalet des Glaciers, a small café next to the impressive Trient Glacier. From here we begin a long and sometimes steep ascent through continuously interesting scenery up to the high pass known as the

Fenetre d'Arpette, which provides spectacular views across the Trient Plateau, one of the area's largest glacier systems. An equally steep descent then takes us down through the Val d'Arpette to our accommodation in Champex.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 2000M		<b>Descent</b> 1900M		<b>Time</b> 8 hours walking		<b>Distance</b> 18KM
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#### DAY 4

### Walk into the Val des Bagnes, cable-car to Verbier and walk to the Mont Fort Refuge (2457m).

A relatively late start by Alpine standards, as we leave the picturesque village of Champex, to meander through summer meadows into the Val des Bagnes, via Sambrancher and Les Chables. By taking the telepherique from Les Chables to Verbier, we avoid the long haul and have the opportunity to take a breather and enjoy the spectacular views from the cable car. Should the cable car be closed (occasionally it is during the summer), we will take a taxi to Verbier. From Verbier it is just over an hour's walk to the spectacularly situated Cabane du Mont Fort, our destination for the evening. Superb views across to the Mont Blanc Massif and to the Grand Combin.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Mountain Hut / Refuge		<b>Ascent</b> 600M		<b>Descent</b> 1200M		<b>Time</b> 5 - 6 hours walking
	<b>Distance</b> 15KM						

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#### DAY 5

### Walk across 3 high cols including the Col de Prafleuri (2987m). Overnight at the Cabane de Prafleuri.

This is one of the most spectacular days of the trek, traversing 3 high cols, with dramatic views throughout. At the start, the path descends and then winds along under dwarfing cliffs, before ascending again (with views of the Grand Combin), en route to Col Termin, the first col of the day. A dramatic path then takes us to the Col de Louvie (2921m), before we make the steep descent onto the edge of the Grand Desert Glacier. Finally, we cross the Col de Prafleuri (2987m) and descend to the Cabane de Prafleuri (2624m) for the evening.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Mountain Hut / Refuge		<b>Ascent</b> 1200M		<b>Descent</b> 1000M		<b>Time</b> 8 hours walking
	<b>Distance</b> 12KM						

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## DAY 6

### Walk via the Lac de Dix and the Col de Riedmatten (2919m), then descend to Arolla.

A short and very steep climb greets us today as we quickly gain the Col de Roux, overlooking the milky waters of the Lac de Dix. A gentle descent then takes us to the lakeshore which we follow to its end, admiring the great views of Mont Blanc de Cheilon and the Pigne D'Arolla. We make a steep ascent to the base of the Col de Riedmatten where we have the option of climbing the col or taking the spectacular Pas de Chevres ladders to an alternative col. There are more spectacular views of the Glacier de Dix and the imposing pyramids of Mont Blanc de Chelion and the Pigne D'Arolla, then it is all descent to Arolla and our bed for the night.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 1000M		<b>Descent</b> 1600M		<b>Time</b> 7 - 8 hours walking		<b>Distance</b> 18KM
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## DAY 7

### Walking beside Lac Bleu, we descend to Les Hauderes and make a final climb to La Sage.

We are now approaching the half-way point of the trek and today is something of a recuperation day, involving a leisurely walking through woodland to Lac Bleu, a favourite local beauty spot. From here, there is an easy descent through a beautiful gorge to Les Hauderes where we take lunch. A final short climb completes this stage at the small farming hamlet of La Sage.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Gite / Hostel		<b>Ascent</b> 650M		<b>Descent</b> 1000M		<b>Time</b> 4 - 5 hours walking		<b>Distance</b> 12KM
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## DAY 8

## Cross the Col de Torrent (2912m) and the Col de Sorebois and make the steep descent to Zinal.

No rest day today! We have an early start as today's walk involves crossing two high cols. The first ascent to the higher of the two, the Col de Torrent (2912m), is long but not difficult due to the good underfoot conditions. We descend to the milky waters of Lac Moiry, that makes a good lunch stop. Ahead we can see some of the giant peaks of the Pennine Alps, including the Dent Blanche. Of more concern will be the imposing Col de Sorebois, a climb which is shorter but steeper than the ascent to the Torrent, but again presents no real problems. From here, we have spectacular views of the Weisshorn, Dent Blanche and Zinal Rothorn. Although it's steeply downhill from here, the hotel at Zinal is at least a further 2 hours away and makes a welcome sight after the hardest day of the trip so far.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 2000M		<b>Descent</b> 2000M		<b>Time</b> 9 hours walking		<b>Distance</b> 23KM
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### DAY 9

## Walk via the Col de la Forcletta (2874m) or the Meidpass (2790m) and descend to Gruben.

A steep but pleasant ascent on forest trails through the larch woods for around 1 hour leads to a more gentle rising traverse which emerges on a grassy plateau and then proceeds through Alpine pastures with excellent views out over the valley. This traversing trail is really enjoyable as it meanders up and down along the mountainside, until eventually we reach a junction of paths where we have the choice to cross the Col de la Forcletta (2874m), or the Meidpass (2790m). Depending on weather, and conditions your guide will decide which route offers the best experience for the group. Both routes are absolutely stunning with excellent views of the glaciers and peaks of the Turtmann valley with descents through summer cattle meadows, and ancient alpine farms. Eventually, both descents are through larch forests and on pleasant woodland trails to the valley of the Turtmantal and on to the pretty village of Gruben. We stay overnight in a hotel here.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 1450M		<b>Descent</b> 1300M		<b>Time</b> 9 hours walking		<b>Distance</b> 18KM
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### DAY 10

## Cross the Augstbordpass (2894m) and descend via Jungu to St. Niklaus.

A superb trek today, as we start out through open woodland, then high pastures and rocky upland wilderness. The trek soon opens up to some of the most spectacular views in the Swiss Alps. Our final

pass is the Augstbordpass (2894m), beyond which we descend steeply to the pretty hamlet of Jungu and on again into the Mattertal and the town of St. Niklaus.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 1450M		<b>Descent</b> 2200M		<b>Time</b> 7 - 8 hours walking		<b>Distance</b> 18KM
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## DAY 11

### Transfer to Taschalp. Walk along a high level footpath to Zermatt.

We take a vehicle transfer to the beautiful high mountain summer settlement of Ottavan (2214m) in the Taschalp valley. From here we set off walking on a fantastic high level footpath that contours high above the valley towards Zermatt. This high level path affords us incredible views of the Matterhorn which dominates the head of the valley. It's a sight that has lured mountaineers to Zermatt for centuries and it does not disappoint. The glorious Matterhorn is what a mountain should look like, wild, jagged and impenetrable! However, Whymper found a way, and now on an almost daily basis mountaineers follow in his footsteps. We descend into Zermatt, where after checking into our hotel there is time to look around and explore before we go out for a celebratory meal.

Meals: **B D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 500M		<b>Descent</b> 1100M		<b>Time</b> 4 - 5 hours walking		<b>Distance</b> 12KM
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## DAY 12

### Departure day.

KE Land Only package services ends after breakfast.

Meals: **B**

# Holiday Information

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## What's Included

- A professional guide
- All accommodation as described in the trip dossier
- Transfer of luggage between overnight accommodation (except for 2 nights spent in mountain huts)
- Meals as detailed in the meal plan
- All necessary vehicle transfers

## What's not Included

- Airport transfers
- Meals as detailed in the meal plan
- Travel Insurance
- Miscellaneous personal expenses

## Joining Arrangements & Transfers

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### 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 the 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 to Chamonix is to fly to Geneva Airport and make use of an airport transfer service. We recommend [mountaindropoffs.com](#). KE clients can get transfers from around €40 each way by entering the promo code KEADCHX. Please note that transfers are subject to availability and your flight details are required a minimum of 72 hours before your arrival in Geneva.

#### Returning from Zermatt

This trek ends in Zermatt. KE services end after breakfast on Day 12 of the trip. The most convenient way of returning from Zermatt to Geneva is by train. To make a booking with Swiss Federal Railways, go to their website at [www.sbb.ch](#). If you intend to book your ticket in advance, note that the Swiss Rail website defaults to the concessionary fare which is half the normal fare. You must untick the 'Reduced fare' tick box before making your purchase. There is a station in Geneva Airport and there are several connections throughout the day. The journey takes approximately 3.5 hours from Zermatt and costs approximately CHF 95.



## Meal Plan

All meals are included except for lunches. Lunches can be easily purchased from supermarkets, bakeries or your accommodation along the way.

We do recommend you bring a few additional trail bars and snacks with you (not chocolate as it can melt) - these can of course also be purchased along the way, but it is sometimes nice to have your favourite hill food with you.

## 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.

As to be expected, the food available in restaurants and hotels in France and Switzerland is excellent. Continental breakfasts and evening meals are provided by our accommodation.

## 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 9 nights in comfortable hotels or gites and 2 nights in mountain huts with bedding provided. Where we can, we will book couples in twin rooms. Other travellers will be accommodated in same sex twin or triple rooms, which may be with shared bathrooms. Single rooms are not available.

In the mountain huts the accommodation will be in non-segregated, dormitories. In most mountain huts, washing facilities are very limited - there are sometimes showers available for an additional cost. This type of shared accommodation is all part of the Alpine mountain experience.

## Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by an IML qualified leader.

## Altitude

This holiday involves going to moderately high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 2500 metres. Most people will have no difficulty with this level of altitude but before coming on the holiday, we recommend you 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.

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## Spending Money

The package price includes all accommodation, guiding and all cable cars. You should make an allowance for lunches, additional snacks, drinks etc. Note: bottled water, if bought in the huts, is very expensive. Beer, wine and soft drinks are available every night. Please note that almost all of the route is in Switzerland and you should take most of your money in Swiss francs. Approximately CHF300 plus around 100 Euros should adequately cover typical personal spending requirements. There are ATM's in Geneva airport where you can withdraw cash in Swiss francs only. There are also cash point facilities in Argentiere and in Zermatt.

## Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage (maximum weight 15kg) and a daypack (of around 30 - 40 litres). Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline. Your main bag will be transferred between overnight stops and you should have this ready for collection by 8.30 each morning. The bag will normally be delivered to your hotel by 4.00pm. There are two nights when you will not have access to your main bag. It is not possible to ride with the baggage transfer vehicle.

## 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

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## 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.

The unit of currency in Switzerland is the Swiss Franc.

## 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. The best exercise for a trip like this is regular hiking but jogging, squash and swimming are also 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 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](https://www.travelaware.gov.uk)' 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](https://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](https://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

- Chamonix - Zermatt. Cicerone Press

## Maps

### Swiss Survey Hiking Maps. 1: 50,000

Two sheets are required to cover the route, namely: 5027T Grand St.Bernard - Combins - Arolla, and 5028T Monte Rosa - Matterhorn.

## 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.

Please note that a paper copy of your travel insurance is required if you are travelling to Huaraz and the Huayhuash region.

# 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 equipment to a minimum.

### You must bring the following items:

- Daypack 30 - 40 litres should be sufficient
- Dry bag for lining daypack
- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Underwear
- Hiking trousers

- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof over-trousers
- Thermal baselayer shirts (1 short sleeve, 1 long sleeve)
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Warm and waterproof gloves or mittens
- Thermal gloves
- Warm hat
- Sunhat
- Sunglasses
- Small wash-bag and toiletries
- Sheet sleeping bag (for use in the huts)
- Small trekking towel (for use in the huts)
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottle (1 litre) x2 (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment.

**The following items are optional:**

- Trekking poles (highly recommended)

- Gaiters
- Shorts
- T-shirts/casual shirts
- Thermal baselayer - legging
- Antibacterial hand wash
- Camera
- Change of clothes
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

**Notes:**

- We request that you keep the weight of your main baggage to less than 15kgs for the baggage transfers.  
There are a total of two nights spent in mountain huts where there is no access to main bag. Otherwise group members will have access to their main luggage on each evening. Sleeping bags are not
- required, as bedding is provided. However you must bring a sheet sleeping bag for use in the mountain huts.

**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, joining Chamonix and departing from Zermatt. The nearest airport is Geneva, approximately an hour's drive away from Chamonix and three hours by train from Zermatt. Please refer to the 'Joining arrangements & transfers' and 'Flights' 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

With a small group size of 5 - 10, a fantastic range of Alpine accommodation, baggage transfers most days and expert IML leaders with rave reviews, everything is in place on this itinerary to ensure you'll love hiking one of Europe's most scenic treks.

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