Italian High Level Route

Trip Code: IHL

Version:

MOUNTAINEER	GUIDED GROUP	CHALLENGING
		8



HIGHLIGHTS

- Hut-to-hut from Italy to Switzerland across the stunning Lisjoch pass (4151m)
- Stay in the iconic Gnifetti Refuge (3647m) high on Monte Rosa
- Climb several 4000 metre Alpine summits, including Breithorn (4164m)
- Expert Alpine Mountaineering skills tuition (1:5 guide to client ratio) with an IFMGA guide
- Perfect for hikers with a good level of fitness looking to get more from the mountains

AT A GLANCE

- 6 days trekking and climbing
- Max altitude - 4256m
- Join at St Niklaus

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

A simply unbeatable walking holiday, adventure trekking high in the Swiss-Italian Alps with easy climbing to Alpine summits. This fantastic walking and climbing holiday begins with an afternoon of Alpine glacier skills training at the Gandegg Hut above Zermatt, in the shadow of the iconic Matterhorn. The Breithorn (4164m) is our first climbing objective, before trekking the long descent into Italy's picturesque Valle di Gressoney. Walking back up to the lively Gnifetti Refuge, high on the south side of Monte Rosa, sets us up for one of the finest of all trekking days in the Italian Alps, traversing the Lisjoch/Colle del Lys into Switzerland.

Depending on conditions, we will also make the straightforward ascent Ludwigshohe (4342m) before bringing this fantastic high level route to a conclusion with a descent into Zermatt. With an overnight at the Monte Rosa Alpine Hut, a little oasis of green amongst the towering giants of the Swiss-Italian frontier ridge. Alpine walking and straightforward climbing doesn't get any better than this!

Is this holiday for you?

This is real high mountain travel. The peaks on this trip are technically straightforward snow climbs. However, most of the trip is spent at a high altitude (above 3000m.) and is a physically demanding trip offering Alpine trekking both on and off glaciers. On route, we will stay in mountain huts, all of which are inaccessible by regular vehicles so this means that group members will need to 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.

Led by professional IFMGA guides, it is aimed at beginner mountaineers and experienced trekkers. Instruction in roped glacier travel and guided climbing, using crampons and a single ice axe is part of the package. The ascent of the Breithorn and the crossing of the Lisjoch will be strenuous on account of the altitude but is technically easy, involving glacial travel, snow-slope climbing and some slightly exposed ridges. Ropes, crampons and an ice axe will be used. Given the guide to client ratio of 1:5 and the non-technical nature of the climbing, this trip should be feasible for novice alpinists, but a high level of fitness is a prerequisite.

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 IFMGA Guide(s)
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- All transfers required by the itinerary (except airport transfers)

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers
- Some meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- Cable cars and mountain railway 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.

Please join the group at the hotel in Zermatt in the evening of day 1 of the trip itinerary. The guide will hold a trek briefing at the hotel before the evening meal, this is in the bar area at 18.30.

The most convenient international airport is Geneva and the easiest way to get to Zermatt from Geneva Airport is by train. Train tickets can be booked online with Swiss Federal Railways on https://www.sbb.ch/en/timetable.html or by telephone on 00 41 900 300 300. The SWISS TRANSFER TICKET or the SUPERSAVER TICKET may provide the cheapest way of getting from the airport to your holiday destination - https://www.sbb.ch/en
Train tickets can be booked in advance through the above website however it is also very easy to purchase your tickets on arrival at the train station - you can either purchase a return ticket at Geneva train station or a single at both Geneva and Zermatt (to give you more flexibility).

The railway station is actually in the airport at Geneva and there is an hourly service (throughout most of the day) to Zermatt connecting in Visp.

From the train station - The hotel is about a 7 minute walk (cars are not permitted in Zermatt).
Walk down Bahnhofstrasse for about 3 minutes and then turn left onto Hofmattstrasse until you reach the river, cross the river and turn left onto Vispastrasse. The hotel is on the right hand side after about 1 minute.

By car - You can park at Tasch as no cars are permitted into Zermatt. The parking here is not free.

Meal Plan

All breakfasts and 6 dinners are included in the trip price. Packed lunches and snacks can be bought in the huts. On some days there may be the possibility of having a hot lunch either at a hut encountered on route or a late lunch taken at our overnight halt. You should allow around CHF15 / 10 Euros for a packed lunch from the hut or CHF 20 -30 / 15 - 20 Euros for a hot lunch. Most groups prefer to choose a restaurant for the final evening meal in Zermatt and we have therefore not included this meal in the price of your holiday. We suggest 30 - 40 Swiss Francs should be sufficient to cover this meal. During the trek there are 2 huts where you will use Swiss Francs and 3 where you will use Euros.

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.

The food provided in most huts is of a high standard considering the difficulties of supply inherent in their locations. Evening meals tend to be simple but wholesome and there will usually be a limited menu choice including a vegetarian option. Beer and wine as well as soft drinks and bottled water is available to purchase at most huts. Hut breakfasts in Italy consist of bread and jam, In Switzerland they are usually 'continental' style based on bread and jam, cheese or meat and sometimes boiled eggs. This is sometimes supplemented with cereals, yoghurt and fruit.

Accommodation

During this trip the group will spend 2 nights in hotel accommodation, where the rooms will be either twin or triple sharing. Whilst in the mountains, there are 5 nights spent in mountain huts, where the accommodation provided is on a non-segregated, dormitory-style basis. In some high mountain huts, washing facilities are 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 English-speaking IFMGA guides and guiding is at a ratio of 1:5.

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

On this holiday we spend 2 hotel nights and two hut nights in Switzerland and 3 hut nights in Italy. Ideally you should take a mix of Euros and Swiss francs. Approximately 50 - 80 Euros and 100 - 120 Swiss Francs should adequately cover typical personal spending requirements including lunches and the final dinner plus drinks etc. There are cashpoint facilities at the airports and in Zermatt (you will get Swiss francs only in Zermatt) and in Stafal in Italy (for Euros). If you are intending to hire or purchase items of equipment, or if you intend to drink wine or beer in the huts, you should budget accordingly (credit cards can be useful in this respect).

Approximately CHF 120 and €65 should be budgeted for cable cars and mountain railways - this is in addition to the above amount.

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 10kg.

Whilst in the mountains you will leave your main bag and travel clothes in the group's hotel in St Niklaus and these will be transported to your final hotel in Zermatt. 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 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.

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. Jogging, squash 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. Whilst it would be useful to have some previous experience of using crampons and an ice-axe, no previous winter climbing experience is required.

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'** 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

- Walking In The Alps. Kev Reynolds.
- The Mountains of Europe. Kev Reynolds.
- The Alpine 4000m Peaks. Richard Goedeke

Maps

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 the terrain. These are 'special edition' maps from the Switzerland Topographic Survey at 1:50,000 which 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 sheet: 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 gloves - leather or thermal
- Very warm winter type gloves
- Sleeping bag liner/sheet sleeping bag (silk is lightest)
- Rucksack (30 - 40 litres should be sufficient)
- Head torch and spare battery
- 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)
- 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 three and half hour's from St Niklaus by train. Please refer to the 'Joining arrangements & 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.

Flight Inclusive Information

Why Choose KE

Why KE

With expert mountaineering skills tuition with and an IFMGA guide, a fantastic guiding ratio of 1:5 and several 4000m peaks, this is the perfect way to move from hiking to mountaineering. This trip is also perfect for Private Groups - if your preferred departure date is sold out or not shown, do just let us know. We will do our best to get your preferred date sorted for you. FREE equipment hire worth £100 available for this holiday.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 01/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change