

## FRANCE, SWITZERLAND & ITALY

### Mont Blanc Massif Trek : 3 Countries, 3 Days

*This is an Open Challenge itinerary; you can take part on the dates shown and raise money for a charity of your choice. Itineraries for bespoke trips (run for sole charities) may differ slightly, and will have different dates and pricing schedules.*

**Duration:** 5 days / 4 nights

**Trip Grade:** Tough

**Dates:**

**9 Jun – 13 Jun 2012      8 Jun – 12 Jun 2013**  
**8 Sep – 12 Sep 2012      7 Sep – 11 Sep 2013**

Payment Options:	2012	2013
<b>Fundraising:</b>		
Registration Fee	£149	£149
	+	+
Fundraising Target	£2000	£2100
<b>Self Payment:</b>		
Registration Fee	£149	£149
	+	+
Trip Cost	£800	£840

*Please note Registration Fee is in addition to Trip Cost / Fundraising Target*

The Mont Blanc region boasts one of the world's most renowned trekking circuits, with some of the most awe-inspiring scenery imaginable – all within a short hop from the UK! Our three-day trek takes in three countries as we circle the highest peaks in Western Europe.



**Our challenge is physically demanding and will test your stamina and determination, but the rewards are**



some of the most spectacular views Europe has to offer – an array of towering cliffs, waterfalls spilling from glaciers, forested tracks, open meadows and crystal clear lakes. The Mont Blanc Massif is our constant companion throughout the trek.



#### ITINERARY

##### Day 1: Depart London

We fly to Geneva and transfer to Chamonix. Night hotel.

*(Lunch not included)*

##### Day 2: Val Ferret – La Fouly

We transfer to the head of the Val Ferret and our start point at 1770m. The path quickly rises above the tree line and becomes steeper again as we climb the back wall of the valley to the high point of the day, the Grand Col Ferret (2537m). The Val Ferret is lined by steep vertical cliffs

sliced in sections by fingers of crevassed glacier spilling with waterfalls to the valley bottom. From the Col we have wonderful views back down the valley to Courmayeur and onwards to the French border at Col de la Seigne, 25km away. We are now on the Swiss / Italian border and we descend over the other side to the pretty Swiss village of La Fouly (1600m). Night pension.

### Trek approx 7 hrs

#### Day 3: La Fouly – Champex

A less taxing day today, as we follow the scenic Swiss part of the Val Ferret to Champex (1450m). Our route takes us along forested tracks and through open meadows and traditional Swiss villages. Many farmers here still tend the land and their dairy herds using long-established traditional methods. The views are as spectacular as we'd expect from the heart of the Swiss Alps – you'll be resting your legs with lots of photo stops! Champex is a picture-perfect village nestled around a crystal clear lake. Night pension.

### Trek approx 6.5 hrs



#### Day 4: Champex – Col de la Forclaz

A tough day to finish, we climb directly up out of Champex before contouring round the Fenêtre d'Arpette (2665m). The Val d'Arpette was not so long ago buried under hundreds of metres of glacier, and the sharp rocky moraine is evidence of the glacier's destructive, eroding power. This is a non-technical walk but nonetheless a challenging day in the mountains. We descend to the Col de la Forclaz at 1526m where we meet our awaiting transport to return to Chamonix and a night of celebration. Night in Hotel.

*(Dinner not included)*

### Trek approx 7 - 8 hrs

#### Day 5: Depart Geneva

We transfer to Geneva Airport and fly home.

*(Lunch not included)*

***Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.***

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### TOUR COST

All accommodation is included as well as all flights and transport; internal air tax; camping equipment (except sleeping bag and sleeping mat); all



meals except three as specified in the itinerary, and entrance to any sites visited as part of the itinerary.

Experienced Discover Adventure leaders and doctor (depending on final group size) are also included, along with a local support crew of porters, guides, cooks and drivers.

It does not include personal travel insurance, airline fuel supplement if charged by the airline, three meals as specified, tip for local crew, or international departure tax. It also does not include any entrance fees to any optional sites or attractions.



## Costs on trip

We recommend you budget for the following costs in-country:

- Tips for Local Crew (see below) £20 - £30
- Meals not included: £35 - £45

Remember to allow extra for drinks, souvenirs & other personal expenses.

This recommendation is a guideline only. Please note that costs may fluctuate and we have no control over any changes.

**We strongly recommend you carry a credit card in case of personal emergency.**

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

Group flights leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick and are booked through Discover Adventure Ltd under ATOL licence 5636. By travelling with Discover Adventure you are protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

We are most likely to fly with British Airlines.

However, we don't always fly with the same airline so this is a guideline only. You will usually receive confirmed flight details several months before departure.

**Our itineraries are always based on current flight schedules and are therefore subject to change by the airline.**



## Flying Separately

If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost. You will be responsible for making your own arrangements for meeting the rest of the group, though we can advise you. We need to know if you do not require our group flight as early possible - please complete the form you'll have been sent by your charity, or request one from us.

## ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is in a mix of family-run hotels, pensions and mountain huts which are all clean and comfortable; rooms in hotels are usually twin-share. Sleeping arrangements in pensions and mountain huts are dormitory-style. We endeavour to use smaller rooms and keep them single-sex, but please be aware this may not always be possible, especially at busy times.

## ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE!

For most people, the main attraction of travelling to a different country is to see new sights and enjoy new experiences. Sometimes those new experiences can make life harder or more inconvenient than you may like, such as toilet hygiene or different food, or simply a different attitude to solving problems. This is all part of the challenge you are signing up for!

Travelling exposes us to different challenges – all of which help broaden our horizons. We can guarantee that coming face-to-face with experiences outside your normal 'comfort zone' will help you bond with your fellow trekkers and provide you with plenty of things to laugh about! A sense of humour and sense of adventure are two of the most important things to bring with you!

## FOOD

All food is included except for three meals as specified. Generous packed lunches are provided when trekking and given to you each morning. The three-course dinners in the refuge are wonderful!

## Dietary Requirements

Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Bear in mind that being vegetarian is not generally well-understood in Europe, so meals may not be



## Connecting Flights

If you book flights to Heathrow or Gatwick, it is your responsibility to allow plenty of time to connect to the group flight and to cope with any flight schedule changes. Please be aware that the best deals allow little flexibility if you need to change them. We regret that we are unable to book connecting flights for you.

as varied as you are used to. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

### Other Meals

Any meals not included are listed in the itinerary and are generally when we are in towns or cities and you are free to explore and try other culinary experiences! There is always something to suit every budget.

### PASSPORT, VISA & VACCINATIONS

A valid ten-year passport is essential for travel in France, Italy and Switzerland and must be valid for at least 6 months from entry. Your passport must be carried with you at all times in the mountains. There is no visa requirement for UK citizens or other EU members. Other nationalities should check entry requirements. We insist that you have had a Tetanus injection in the last ten years, and highly recommend protection against Polio.

**You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.**

### FITNESS WARNING: DESIGNED TO BE CHALLENGING!

This trek is designed to be challenging for those of good health and fitness, and is achievable for most people provided they train well in advance. We will supply you with a thorough training guide when you have registered. Training for the challenge is all part of the preparation and requires commitment! Without it, you will find the trek less enjoyable – and we want you to have the time of your life!

## TREKKING INFORMATION

### Terrain

Walking terrain is varied, with valley paths and high ridge-climbs. The trek is very hilly, with some steep rocky areas and rivers to cross. The highest altitude reached is 2665m.

Several days are particularly demanding, and you will need to have trained hard or be a regular, fit walker of long distances and tough terrain to complete this challenge.

### Trekking Distances

Because of the twisting, undulating terrain, it's impossible to give accurate daily distances. It's also much more useful when training to think about the hours you need to walk, and the type of terrain you will be trekking over!

**We are always happy to talk through the trip in more detail with you if you are worried about your fitness at any stage.**



### Clothing & Equipment

We are travelling through remote mountains where we could be exposed to bad weather at any time. The information below gives you an idea of the climate, but be prepared for all weathers and temperatures. Weather conditions can change quickly in the mountains. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, as well as details on useful discounts you are entitled to as a Discover Adventure customer. We are always available if you need advice.

### TRAINING WEEKENDS: £129 SPECIAL OFFER!

**Only when you book online at the same time as registering for your main challenge**

Discover Adventure Training Weekends in Snowdonia National Park are designed help you prepare for your challenge. Whether you use the weekend to gauge your fitness, get your training back on track, boost your confidence, get advice or meet other trekkers, you're bound to find it incredibly useful!

*For dates and further information see our brochure or website.*

## Weather

Temperatures can vary widely, though generally it should be warm and sunny; rain is always a possibility and it may be blustery. Cold winds are common when high up on the mountains.

Average min/max temps & rainfall (mm) for the region:

June / July	12 - 26°C	50mm
Aug / Sept	11 - 25°C	55mm

## Fitness Levels

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience and fitness, all ages and backgrounds. We expect all participants to train hard in advance to achieve this challenge, but we respect everyone's limits. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners will find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

## TRIP SUPPORT

### Discover Adventure Crew

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure leaders. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. They are also trained in expedition first-aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader.

All our leaders are from the UK or other English-speaking countries. Most work for us on an ad-hoc basis and have 'real' jobs in-between trips! We never send our leaders to the same destination for months



on end – we want them to be as enthusiastic about your trip as you are.

The number of crew looking after you will depend on the final size of your group, but at Discover Adventure we pride ourselves on our high leader: trekker ratio and believe it leads to greater trip enjoyment as well as excellent trip safety.

### Luggage

Space is limited and hard-sided luggage is not recommended, so we suggest your kit is packed in a soft rucksack or expedition kitbag. Ask us about our specially-designed low-cost kitbags if you don't have one already.

You should bring a small daypack to carry for items needed during the day as you will not have access to your main luggage until the evening.



### TRIP SAFETY

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority.

Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with radios and emergency mobile phones, medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. They always have access to our 24-hour emergency back-up in the UK. Our leaders are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary should local conditions dictate.

Pre-trip administration – such as compulsory medical questionnaires and travel insurance – is all done with your safety in mind.

## WORLDWIDE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Long before 'Responsible Tourism' became a recognised phrase, we designed and ran our trips to ensure they made minimum impact on the environment and a positive impact on the local communities we pass through. AITO, our Trade Association, has recognised the work we do in this area and has awarded us 5 stars as a Responsible Tour Operator.

### Discover Adventure Projects

We are supporting a tree-planting project in Peru and a children's home in Tanzania on a long-term basis. If you

would like to 'give something back' please consider donating £5 to our projects when you sign up. Please see our website for more details.

## Carbon Offsetting

We encourage all our customers to offset emissions connected with their trip. You can offset at any time in the lead-up to departure by visiting Climate Care via our website and making a donation to a worthwhile project supported by them. Alternatively, if you wish to take more practical action in the UK you can volunteer for a day with BTCV and work on an environmental project local to you. Work may include construction footpaths, dry stone walling, creating wildlife habitats or planting trees in your community. Make your volunteer pledge by going to [www.btcv.org/dapledge](http://www.btcv.org/dapledge)



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