



**Icicle Mountaineering Ltd** | 11a Church Street  
Windermere | Lake District | LA23 1AQ | UK

**Tel +44 (0)1539 44 22 17 | info@icicle.co.uk**

Website: [www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk](http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk)  
Online: [shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk](http://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk)



# 2020 trip dossier | **Alpine Introduction £899**

Website link | <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/alpine%2Bintroduction%2Bcourse.htm>

## Key features

- **Climb your first Alpine 4000m peak, Gran Paradiso 4061m, in a Chamonix based climbing week**
- **5 days guiding (Monday - Friday), and Chamonix B&B accommodation (Sunday - Saturday)**
- **NO previous experience is required, as you are taught everything during the course**
- **Led by top qualified guides (UIMLA & IFMGA), to really launch your Alpine climbing career**
- **All technical equipment (e.g. B3 boots, crampons, ice axe etc.) can be hired from Icicle**
- **2020 dates; 21 - 27 Jun, 5 - 11 Jul, 19 - 25 Jul, 2 - 8 Aug, 16 - 22 Aug, 30 Aug - 5 Sep 2020**



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UK registered company 413 6635. VAT 770 137 933

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## Course overview

- Your first trip to the Alps is your most important and most rewarding, as you begin your Alpine climbing career, and learn safety skills that you will use for the rest of your life in the mountains.
- To join our Alpine Intro course you need no previous experience of climbing or mountaineering. This course is suitable for keen hill walkers, indoor wall climbers, or ramblers, to introduce you to the key technical aspects necessary for mountaineering.
- A key feature of the Intro course is that you attempt a 4000m peak, such as Gran Paradiso, at the end of the week. This involves a day ascending to a mountain hut for the night, and an Alpine start the next morning to ascend the peak. A great experience, and this will confirm how much you have already learned.
- Alpine Introduction courses focus on the skills that you will require for ascents on Alpine rock, ice and snow; including ropework, glacier travel, navigation, crampon & ice axe use, and equipment selection.
- Even if you have had no previous contact with ropes, or any experience of ice or rock climbing, by the end of the week you will have climbed vertical pitches of ice, a rock route and climbed an Alpine 4000m mountain.
- A principal feature of this course are the evening theory sessions, where you learn the background theory, so that the daylight hours are optimised for your climbing time. You can read more about these instruction sessions, which cover ropework, Alpine weather, and crevasse rescue, by [clicking here](#).

## Sample itinerary

- **Sunday** - Travel to Chamonix to arrive for the 17:00 check-in followed by and course safety and itinerary briefings. There is time for kit checks or rental of equipment. Briefings are over by 19:00 and the team accompany the group to pre-dinner drinks. Many clients opt to travel out a day or two early to do an acclimatisation weekend course to provide
- **Monday** - Alpine skills, navigation, route planning and snow techniques day. There are a huge range of options and skills that can be covered today including climbing to an Alpine summit via a steep ground, practice of hazard awareness, use of GPS & altimeters, moving on snow and emergency procedures . Guiding ratio 1:6 (max). Evening theory session / meeting with course hosts: [click for info](#). Night in Chamonix.

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- **Tuesday** - Day to learn and practice using crampons and ice axes on the Mer de Glace glacier (2000m). You also climb vertical ice, create ice anchors, and learn glacier travel skills. This is one of your most important days of the course in terms of skills development as it is essential to have good footwork on Mont Blanc. Guiding ratio 1:6 (max). Evening theory session / meeting with course hosts: [click for info](#). Night in Chamonix.
- **Wednesday** - Glacier travel skills, practicing building snow anchors, crevasse rescue, and probing for crevasses, spent on a journey across either the Vallée Blanche, Pointe Lachenal and the Col du Midi, or the massive Argentiere glacier basin. The day is essential for your acclimatisation before Gran Paradiso. Guiding ratio 1:6 (max). Evening theory session / meeting with course hosts: [click for info](#). Night in Chamonix.
- **Thursday** - A morning of rock climbing skills, to learn / practice belaying safely and how to lead / set up safe anchors on rock climbs. You climb either in the Chamonix or Aosta valleys, depending on where the weather is better. The drive to Pont below Gran Paradiso takes just over an hour, and after lunch you trek up to either the Chabod or Victor Emmanuel hut on Gran Paradiso itself. Guiding ratio 1:3 (max). Night in mountain hut.
- **Friday** - Summit Gran Paradiso 4061m after an Alpine start from the high hut, then after you have reached the summit, you descend to the refuge for lunchtime. After this you trek back down to the valley in Pont, and make the return drive to Chamonix. Celebrations in Chamonix in the evening. Guiding ratio 1:3 (max). In the evening there are optional drinks and then a celebratory meal. Final night is spent in Chamonix.
- **Saturday** - Breakfast then the accommodation check out is by 10:00. Most arrange their transfers for around this time for a flight from Geneva about midday. Some people opt to book a tandem paraglider flight in the morning to celebrate the weeks efforts, and prices for this are from 100€ for a c.30 minute flight. These flights can be booked in resort up to the day before you wish to fly. Depart for home.

ITINERARY NOTES: Where possible we follow itineraries. Mountain adventures are weather and conditions dependant, so occasionally we are forced to alter the plans. If this is the case, suitable alternatives are offered. Please use this itinerary as a guide to the types of route / activity you attempt.

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## Course Inclusions

1) UIMLA guide for 1 day and IFMGA guide for 4 days, 2) Chamonix course hosts for logistics & briefings, 3) Evening technical instruction / briefing sessions, 4) B&B accommodation in Chamonix (inc. linen, bedding & towels) for the whole week, so you don't need to move out when in huts, 5) One night half board in mountain hut (inc. costs for guides), 6) Pre course information booklet, 7) Equipment discount voucher for UK shops, 8) Free 36 page technical Course Instruction Booklet, 9) Road transport in Chamonix valley including tunnel ticket and road transport to / from Gran Paradiso, 10) Icicle discounts privilege card for reductions in local shops and restaurants in Chamonix.

## Course Exclusions

1) Travel to and from Chamonix, 2) Equipment hire, 3) Cable cars & uplift (c. 60 euros depending on itinerary), 4) Personal laundry, telephone calls, lunches, evening meals in valley, & any purchases in mountain huts / hotels / restaurants, 5) Sunday pre-dinner drinks, 6) Friday celebratory meal & drinks, 7) Activities insurance, & excess baggage charges.

## Notes

This trip is guaranteed as soon as two people book. In the highly unlikely event that just one person books on a course, less guided days can be offered, however accommodation will be provided for the week, and guiding options / locations will be discussed with you within the budget paid.

## Climbing skill

These are outlined on this page; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/courses.html>, and this course is;

Course level: **Beginner**  
Mountaineering: **No experience necessary**  
Ice & Rock: **No previous experience is needed**  
Fitness: **Good general fitness and stamina**

## Fitness & stamina

The ideal fitness levels are detailed at; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/trainingpreparation.html>, and there are links to general training advice and planners that you can adapt to suit and follow.

This trip is graded: **Level 2** - We suggest that people on courses of this grade can run 10km without a problem, but we stress that for courses of this level you do not need to be any fitter than this minimum level, though it is there to ensure a good basic level of aerobic fitness and training.

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## How to book

- All bookings are made securely online, and deposit of £250 is payable (with secure payments handled via WorldPay). Ensure that when completing the form, you fill in all the required fields, in order for the 'SUBMIT' button to appear.
- All payments are protected by our Tour Operator travel bonding with ATOL and TTA, and your monies are held in trust until after you have travelled home. You are fully financially protected, in accordance with UK and EU laws.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/booking.html>

## Before your trip

- As soon as you book online, you are sent confirmation of this, and attachments including joining instructions, course specific kit lists, and a separate WorldPay receipt. If you haven't received these two e-mails within half an hour of booking online, check your junk / spam folder.
- At the office, we manually check all bookings, and you'll also receive a personalised e-mail from us formally confirming your course space. Once you have this office confirmation, it's fine to go ahead and book your travel arrangements, and to arrange your activities insurance.
- Activities insurance is a requirement for all trip participants. Organise it as soon as you are booked, and ensure that it covers you for cancellation or curtailment, in case you injure yourself or get ill before your trip. This ensures you'd be fully reimbursed for the trip, and all travel costs.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/insurance.html>

## Travel to the Alps

- The closest international airport to Chamonix, is Geneva (airport code GVA). There are many direct flights from the UK every day, and it's well served by the budget airlines e.g. EasyJet.
- Geneva is a small but busy airport, and it's only a very short walk from baggage reclaim into the arrivals area, where all the airport transfer companies meet. In the Course Information Booklet is a code for preferential rates from our reliable transfer partner Mountain Dropoffs.
- Chamonix is also very easy to travel to by rail, from the UK to Paris via Eurostar, then from Paris Gare du Lyon (or Austerlitz) to Saint Gervais by high speed TGV, then the local train up the valley to the Chamonix Aiguille du Midi (or Chamonix central) stop.

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- Driving can work out cheaper, if you're with others, and there's free parking close to the accommodation, on a first come first served basis. Generally a couple of laps, and a space will be freed up for you. See the Course Information Booklet map for the locations of this free parking.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/travel.html>

## Meeting point

- Once you've booked, you'll receive the Course Information Booklet, which details the meeting point for Chamonix course clients.
- If you want an address for your airport transfer, provide the Aiguille du Midi cable car, on Rue Lyret, 74400 Chamonix. The accommodation is situated in a pedestrianized area, so you cannot be dropped off at the door, and the cable car station, or Chamonix Sud bus station are the closest access points. If arriving on EasyBus, Ouibus, or Flixbus, these all arrive at the bus station.

## Course accommodation

- Most course clients stay in Chamonix in en-suite rooms, in a purpose built ski village in Chamonix Sud. These have a small kitchenette, for those wishing to self-cater.
- Check in time is from 16:00 (4pm) on the Sunday, and the meeting point to be shown into your accommodation is detailed in your Course Information Booklet, that is sent upon booking.
- The flats are normally twin rooms for two people sharing. If you are travelling as a couple (or named friends), you will share. If travelling on your own, you will be matched with another course client of the same sex.
- This accommodation is small and basic, to provide you low cost accommodation in Chamonix, but it is functional and really well located. If you wish to upgrade to higher quality accommodation, there is a £100 discount available for sourcing your own accommodation, which is applied to your invoice.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

## Course briefing

- The course briefing for this trip is at 17:00 on the Sunday evening. The Course Information Booklet will confirm the exact location for this briefing. When you attend the briefing, take your passport and activities insurance details, for these to be noted.
- The briefing takes about 45 minutes, and it aims to answer all your queries about the course.

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- Attendance at the course briefing is obligatory, and you are asked to sign a copy of the Terms & Conditions. These are the same as those you accepted online when you booked, but it's for us to have a signed paper copy on record.

## Equipment checks

- Take any equipment to the briefing that you would like one of our guiding team to advise you about. For some people that may be very little, whilst others want to double-check a few bits of kit. It's always a good idea to take your boots and crampons, so we can check the fit for you.
- If you've your own safety equipment, it's worth having one of the team check this over for you.
- Note that if you require any hire equipment, or any kit that is loaned on a course, you need to attend the course briefing, as it's straight after this that is when it is allocated.
- Website link; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/hire.html>

## Late arrivals

- If they are pre-booked days ahead, we can accommodate late arrivals. We will organise for you to be able to check into your course accommodation at any time that you arrive. We do however ask you to assess how necessary a late arrival is, and for you to consider the disruption to your flatmate.
- You will require a separate Course Briefing, which involves an early start for our team, to fit this in before your guiding. It's not an ideal start to schedule a late arrival, followed by an early start, and sets you on the back foot. If an early Course Briefing is required, this is billed at £20 for time involved.

## Cable cars

- For the days you are climbing in Chamonix, the most cost effective cable car pass is called the Mont Blanc multi-pass. For this course you require a 3 day pass, from Monday to Wednesday (plus extra days if you arrive earlier). The 3 day pass costs 89.50€ (\*2020 prices).
- Website link: <https://www.montblancnaturalresort.com/en/montblanc-multipass>

## Breakfasts

- When you are in town and accommodation is included on a B&B basis, a starter pack of continental breakfast supplies is provided; fruit juice, milk, cornflakes, muesli, marg, jam, biscuit toasts. Tea and coffee is also provided. In a mountain hut, you get a similar type of light breakfast.

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- As the room is self-catering, it's yours for the week, so no need to check out when you are away in mountain huts. Should you use up any items from your breakfast or room supplies, there's a supermarket located just across the pedestrian square from the course accommodation.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

## Lunches & drinks

- Everyone has their own idea of what they would like for lunch whilst in the mountains, varying from a stack of Mars bars to a large ham sandwich. For this reason we let you choose your own lunches, which may be easily purchased locally from shops and supermarkets.
- You will be advised in the briefings as to how many days lunches you should plan ahead and purchase. There is never time to cook hot lunches while on a course, but you could take a thermos.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

## Evening meals

- In town clients normally take advantage of the excellent variety of local restaurants, and also the town's bars to celebrate week's achievements. We are also happy to book places in restaurants for you, should you wish an evening on your own.
- Some clients want an early night or to budget, so opt to cook for themselves in the self-catering flats. In guardianned huts, the cooked evening meal is normally three courses.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamonix.html>

## Mountain huts

- Mountain Huts are run by a 'Guardian' who cooks, cleans and is on hand for your assistance. On most courses, the itineraries detail a specific number of nights in mountain huts.
- Clients share rooms, which often are on tiered bunks. Each person is allocated a mattress with its own pillow and blankets, but you should take a sleeping bag liner for comfort.
- There are normally storage / drying rooms. Meals are on a half board basis, with a basic continental breakfast and a three course cooked evening meal. Any extras you order, such as bottled water, beer or wine, packed lunch, or chocolate, must be paid for by you.
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## Weather & conditions

- It's natural for you to be avidly checking the weather on the weeks and days preceding your course, and we try and keep our social media channels updated daily, so you can see what's going on, and how the conditions are evolving. The website links below give you trustworthy weather forecasts.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/webcams.html> and [http://chamonix-meteo.com/chamonix-mont-blanc/weather/forecast/morning/5\\_days\\_weather\\_forecast.php](http://chamonix-meteo.com/chamonix-mont-blanc/weather/forecast/morning/5_days_weather_forecast.php)

## Maps & guidebooks

- You don't need to take any maps and guidebooks for your trip, as you are being guided, but it's always a good idea from a safety perspective to have a map with you. Here are the key links;
- Chamonix map; <https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/79/BooksMaps/Maps/Alpinemaps/IGNChamonix36300Tmap.html>
- Gran Paradiso map; [https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/149/BooksMaps/Maps/Alpinemaps/09-Valsavarenche\\_GranParadisomap.html](https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/149/BooksMaps/Maps/Alpinemaps/09-Valsavarenche_GranParadisomap.html)
- Instructional book; <https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/165/BooksMaps/Books/Instructional/AlpineClimbing;TechniquetoTakeYouHigher.html>

## Equipment lists

- You will be sent a precise course specific kit list upon booking, but we have a huge amount of kit advice on our website; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/boots.html>
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BMTR.html>

## Any questions?

Even if you've read all the detail here and in your Course Information Booklet, and on the website, you may still have some queries about your trip, so don't hesitate to get in touch.

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- Facebook message <http://m.me/iciclemountaineering>
- Here's our office hours, and online chat <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/contact.html>
- When you're on a trip, you'll also be provided an in resort WhatsApp number for our team, so if you haven't already, please ensure that you download this free app to your phone.



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