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Website: www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk
Online: shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk



2023 trip dossier | **Glacier Haute Route £1599**

Website link | <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/glacierhauteroute.html>

Key features

- The classic route between Chamonix and Zermatt.
- 6 days guiding (Monday to Saturday), and 2 nights Chamonix B&B accommodation.
- A challenging trek with some mountaineering skills, though these can be taught.
- Led by top qualified guides (IFMGA), 3 – 6 clients maximum per guide.
- All technical equipment (e.g. B3 boots, crampons, ice axe etc.) can be hired from Icicle.
- 2023 dates; 18 - 25 June, 25 June - 2 July 2023. Extra dates on demand for groups of 6.



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22 years
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Course overview

- The Haute Route which runs between the two historic mountain centres of Chamonix and Zermatt stretches for 114 miles and there is between 13,000m to 14,000m of ascent and descent taking you through some of the most famous landscapes in the Alps.
- During the summer months, this glacier trek can be undertaken, led by qualified IFMGA mountain guides, staying in several high mountain huts, such as the stunningly located Bertol hut.
- Starting in Chamonix, France, you traverse by ski the spectacular high mountain route to Zermatt, Switzerland. The accommodation in the mountain huts is half-board throughout, with plentiful three course cooked evening meals and breakfasts each morning.
- Throughout the week you are surrounded by stunning 4000m peaks, and this glacier trek provides a tough challenge. It will appeal to those wishing to escape the hustle of the Alpine valley towns.
- This course is ideal for those seeking a challenging glacier trek, with the opportunity to use some mountaineering techniques, such as an ascent on crampons or an abseil. All roped techniques will be taught during the week, so don't worry if you are a ropework virgin!
- The trek involves 7 days of guiding on a 1:6 ratio, and is a 9 day holiday in total. Some opt to extend their trip by a day in order to climb a 4000m peak such as Breithorn above Zermatt, or Mont Blanc du Tacul above Chamonix. Either of these options are day routes, with a 1:2 guiding ratio.

Sample itinerary

Sunday - Travel to Chamonix for course briefing

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, and the guide who is leading you normally comes to say hello and to talk you through the route on the map. Briefings are over by 19:00 and the Chamonix hosts accompany the group to pre-dinner drinks. Some clients opt to travel out a day or two early to get their hill legs back. Before you go to bed, pack your bag for the week ahead. Night in Chamonix.

Monday - Briefing, then Le Tour (Chamonix valley) to Albert Premier Hut

Meet with your guide, and after bag checks, you travel up the valley to Le Tour 1453m, and take the cable car to Col de Balme 2180m. Here you start the hike up to reach the Albert Premier hut 2705m, situated on the moraines above the Le Tour glacier. After stopping at the hut, to allow you time for lunch, you descend

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onto the glacier for some crampon training. The glacier training takes a few hours, and then return to the Albert Premier, where you stay the night, for an early start the next day. Height: +525 m, -0m.

Tuesday - Glacier trek from Albert 1er Hut to Champex

Early start to ascend the Le Tour glacier and to traverse over the Col du Tour 3289m. Here you cross the border into Switzerland. As you cross the Trient Glacier, you are rewarded with amazing views across to the Aiguille du Tour and Aiguilles Dorées. On the far side of the high glacier plateau, you start descending the Orny Glacier past two mountain huts. Leaving the glaciers behind, you reach the path to the Brea chairlift, where you descend to Champex. The night is spent in a mountain gîte. Height: +584m, -1101m.

Wednesday - Glacier trek from Champex to Cabane des Dix

Another early start to take a transfer to the Chanrion hut 2462m. Here starts a tough day crossing four high passes; Col du Tuofeiret 2642m, Col de la Lire Rose 3115m, Col du Mont Rouge 3395m, and the Col de Cheilon 3243m. The trails between the glaciers are remote and rarely trekked, so you are likely to see Edelweiss flowers and the Ibex mountain goats today. After crossing the Giétroz and Cheilon glaciers, you finally arrive at the Cabane des Dix 2928m, where you stay for the night. Height: +933m, -467m.

Thursday - Glacier trek from Cabane des Dix to Cabane des Vignettes

Alpine start from the Cabane des Dix to ascend the Tsena Réfien Glacier, which eventually leads you to the highest peak you ascend on the glacier trek; the Pigne d'Arolla 3796 m. The summit vista is unrivalled, and you see down the length of the Dix lake. After taking in the views, you descend onto the Vuibe Glacier, and continue onwards to reach the Cabane des Vignettes 3157m. The hut is the highest you will have stayed in so far, so the ascent today will have acclimatised you well for this. Height: +868m, -639m.

Friday - Glacier trek from Cabane des Vignettes to Cabane Bertol

Today involves two steady climbs, and one descent. You start ascending to the high Evêque pass 3392m, then descend down to the Arolla Glacier, where you ascend first to the Plan Bertol 2665m, then upwards until you finally reach the Bertol hut 3311m. Upon arriving beneath the hut, you are faced with a series of ladders and cables to ascend to reach the hut that is perched on the top of the ridge, in an amazing location. Night is spent in the Bertol Hut, and is your last night in the mountains. Height: +881m, -727m.

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Saturday - Glacier trek from the Cabane Bertol to Zermatt

Today is the longest day of the whole trek. A final Alpine start is required to set off early to reach the summit of the Tête Blanche 3707m, and the North Face of the Matterhorn is right in front of you. Needless to say, this stunning backdrop is featured in many photos from groups on the Tête Blanche. From here you make the long descent of the Stockji glacier to reach the Schonbiel hut. The trek follows the moraine then scenic paths to Zermatt 1620m. Walk across town and take the train to Tasch, then transfer back to Chamonix, where you spend the final night. Height: +413m, -2087m.

Sunday

Breakfast then the accommodation check out is by 10:00. Most arrange their airport transfers to leave around this time, to catch a flight from Geneva about midday. Depart for home. Some people opt to book a tandem paraglider flight in the morning c.100€.

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 outline as a guide to the types of activity that you will attempt

Course Inclusions

Standard Course Inclusions: 1) IFMGA Mountain Guides for seven days, 2) Chamonix course hosts for logistics & briefings, 3) Pre course information booklet, 4) Equipment discount voucher for UK shops, 5) Two nights self-catered accommodation in Chamonix (inc. bedding & towels), 6) Five nights half-board accommodation in mountain huts / lodges, 7) Preferential rates on kit hire, 8) Free 36 page technical Course Instruction Booklet, 9) Transport in Chamonix valley on the guided days.

Course Exclusions

Exclusions: 1) Travel to and from Chamonix, 2) Cable cars for you and guide (c.60€pp), 3) Equipment hire, 4) Personal laundry, telephone calls, lunches, & any purchases in mountain huts / hotels / restaurants, 5) Road transport outside Chamonix valley (Champex-Chanrion c.30€pp based on six) and Zermatt / Tasch - Chamonix (c.60€pp based on six), 6) Last night celebratory meal & drinks, 7) Activities insurance, & excess baggage charges.

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Group sizes

3 - 6 people per IFMGA mountain guide. For group sizes of over 6 people, there are multiple guides, and the teams travel independently of each other

Extension

Ascent of Breithorn 4164m. You can extend and upgrade your trip with this ascent. On the last day of guiding, you and your guide could stay the night in Zermatt, then the next day catch the cable car to the Klein Matterhorn 3883m. Ahead of you is the summit of the Breithorn 4164m. The ascent to the summit provides you the opportunity to reach your first 4000m peak, and is graded PD. From the summit ridge, there is a stunning view back to the Matterhorn. Return by the same route, and descend to Zermatt 1620m in the cable car. Transfer back to Chamonix. Height: +281m, -281m. Contact us for prices.

Pre-requisite skills

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

Course level: **Beginner**
Mountaineering: **No but some experience preferred**
Ice & Rock: **No but use of ice axe and crampons preferred.**
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 our travel bonding by SinGS / Felloh). 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. If you haven't received this e-mail within half an hour of booking online, please 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, and sending you a deposit payment link. Once you have this office confirmation and paid the deposit, 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. Please select suitable flight times to fit the advertised course timings.

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 5 day pass, from Monday to Friday (plus extra days if you arrive earlier). A 5 day pass costs 99.20€ (*2021 prices).
- Website link: <https://www.montblancnaturalresort.com/en/montblanc-multipass>

Breakfasts

- When you are in town and accommodation is included on a self-catering basis. There are a great range of cafes, bakeries, and coffee shops in town, where you can get breakfast, and there are a few offering cooked breakfasts too. Alternatively you can self-cater in your accommodation.

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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.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

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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

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/IGNChamonix36300Imap.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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