



Icicle Mountaineering Ltd | Church Street
Windermere | Lake District | LA23 1AQ

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

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



2023 trip dossier | **Matterhorn 4478m £2399**

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

Key features

- **Climb The Matterhorn 4478m, via Hornli or Lion ridges.**
- **5 days guiding (Monday - Friday), in Chamonix based accommodation.**
- **Led by top qualified guides (IFMGA), 1:2 ratio whilst training and 1:1 for the climb.**
- **All technical equipment (e.g. B3 boots, crampons, ice axe etc.) can be hired from Icicle**
- **2023 dates; 2 - 8 Jul, 9 - 15 Jul, 16 - 22 Jul, 23 - 29 Jul, 30 Jul - 5 Aug, 6 - 12 Aug, 13 - 19 Aug, 20 - 26 Aug, 27 Aug - 2 Sep, 3 - 9 Sep 2023. Other dates on demand.**



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UK registered company 413 6635. VAT 770 137 933

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22 years
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Course overview

- The Matterhorn is probably the most recognised mountain in the world, due to its unique triangular shape. The mountain is fairly difficult to ascend by any route, and was one of the last Alpine 4000ers to be climbed. The classic routes up the mountain are the Hörnli Arête from Zermatt, and Lion Ridge from Cervinia.
- To book this course, you should be very fit, have good footwork on steep ground, be good with exposure and have good ropework skills (previous skills: Alpine PD / Grade II Ice / UK Severe / US 5.9).
- Many Alpine 4000ers can be climbed with a low amount of skill or talent. Not so for the Matterhorn, and, due to the exposure, inexperienced peak baggers should beware that their chances of success will be low.
- To keep the price as low as possible, the first three days are at 1:2 guiding ratio for training and acclimatisation. The two summit days are at 1:1 so you can move at your speed and to maximise safety and summiting success.
- If you have significant previous rock climbing experience, but not much crampon or alpine experience, this can be developed over the week of the course as only the summit block usually needs to be climbed in crampons.

Key Factors

- For clients who have climbed in Chamonix before, there are over 4000 routes so you are guaranteed not to repeat anything during the training days. You are guaranteed new, challenging objectives at altitude.
- We will not accept clients on this course unless we believe they have (or can gain) the necessary experience and fitness for success.
- You will see from the itinerary that you climb many routes before the Matterhorn, to fully prepare you in terms of ropework, speed on exposed rock / ice ridges and your acclimatisation.
- An ascent of the Matterhorn should not be underestimated, and you should arrive for this course in good physical condition as the climb will probably be the greatest physical exertion of your life. Please don't ignore this issue and use the Icicle 8 week training planner to help.
- As the Matterhorn is a rock climb you usually only need crampons for the summit ridge (or above the Solvay / Carrel hut) and definitely only need a mountaineering (not a technical) ice axe.

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- People always ask the reason for why people fail on the Matterhorn. The reason is usually people not moving quickly enough on the rough rocky ground, or getting worried by the exposure as you can see all the way to Zermatt from the summit ridge. There is a big time pressure to ascend quickly to beat slower parties that can knock down rocks and to be able to descend before the likelihood of afternoon storm risks.

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. Chamonix hosts accompany the group to pre-dinner drinks. Night in Chamonix.
- **Monday** - Climbing on the sunny side of the valley: the Aiguilles Rouges. Popular routes include the Chapelle de la Gliere with its knife edge traverse or the L'Index. Guiding ratio 1:2 (max). Climbing training to improve speed. Night in Chamonix
- **Tuesday** - A technical day route, e.g. Aiguillette d'Argentiere or a shorter route followed by a night in a mountain hut, e.g. Traverse d'Entreves. This provides important acclimatisation. Guiding ratio 1:2 (max). Night in mountain hut or in Chamonix.
- **Wednesday** - A day on the fantastic granite with great exposure that Chamonix is famous for, such as South Ridge of Aiguille du Moine, or the Dent du Geant. Both are very exposed steep rock ascents. Guiding ratio 1:2 (max). Night in Chamonix.
- **Thursday** - Drive to Tasch (c. 2hrs) then train to Zermatt and cable car to Schwartzee, followed by the trek to the Hornli hut for the night. If climbing via the Lion Ridge, you drive to Cervinia (c. 2.5hrs), then take 4x4 to the Abruzzi hut, and climb to the Carrell hut. Guiding ratio 1:1 (max). Night spent in mountain hut.
- **Friday** - Alpine start to ascend the Matterhorn, starting around 4am from the hut. After the climb you descend to the hut and return to Chamonix. Evening social drinks, then a celebratory meal, with the final night spent in Chamonix.
- **Saturday** – Breakfast, then accommodation check out at 10:00, then 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) IFMGA Mountain Guide for five days, 2) Chamonix course hosts for logistics & briefings, 3) Self-catered accommodation in Chamonix (inc. beddings & towels), 4) Pre course information booklet, 5) Equipment discount voucher for UK shops, 6) Free 36 page technical Course Instruction Booklet, 7) Road transport in Chamonix valley and to / from Tasch / Cervinia, 8) Car parking fees in Tasch / Cervinia, 9) One night half board in mountain hut on Matterhorn (inc. costs for guides) in the Carrel / equivalent budget applied to Hornli booking, 10) Evening technical instruction / briefing sessions in Chamonix.

Course Exclusions

1) Travel to and from Chamonix, 2) Equipment hire, 3) Personal laundry, telephone calls, lunches, evening meals in valley, & any purchases in mountain huts / hotels / restaurants, 4) Cable cars and uplift (train, 4x4 etc) for you and your guide (cable cars for guide included in Chamonix) in both Zermatt / Cervinia and Chamonix, 5) Optional second night in a mountain hut on the training days, on a half board basis for you and your guide, 6) If you / guide opt to climb via the Hornli, there is a £190 supplement paid at the hut, 7) Sunday pre-dinner drinks & Friday celebratory meal & drinks, 8) 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.

Pre-requisite skills

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

Course level: **Improver**
Mountaineering: **climbs around AD grade.**
Ice & Rock: **grades around III ice, and VS rock.**
Fitness: **very good to high 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 4** - As an absolute minimum you should be capable of running a half marathon in a good time (under 1hr 45mins), but realistically you should be looking at marathon fitness for all courses of this fitness and stamina level to ensure your endurance is up to standard.

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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 3 day pass, from Monday to Wednesday (plus extra days if you arrive earlier). The 3 day pass costs 78.40€ (*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> , http://chamonix-meteo.com/chamonix-mont-blanc/weather/forecast/morning/5_days_weather_forecast.php and https://www.meteoblue.com/en/weather/week/zermatt_switzerland_2657928

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/IGNChamonix3630OImap.html>
- Matterhorn Swiss map; <https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/151/BooksMaps/Maps/Alpinemaps/MatterhornSwiss1347Map.html#ins>
- 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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