



Icicle Mountaineering Ltd | Church Street
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Website: www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk
Online: shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk



2026 trip dossier | **Mont Blanc 4810m £2495**

Early bird £50 voucher for Icicle shop purchases, for all bookings with deposits paid by 01/11/2025

Website link | <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/mont%2Bblanc%2Bguide%2Bcourse.html>

Key features

- **Climb Mont Blanc 4810m, in a Chamonix based climbing week, and also Gran Paradiso 4061m**
- **5 days guiding (Sunday - Thursday), & Chamonix self-catering accommodation (Saturday - Friday)**
- **Pre-requisites; 2+ days crampons, graded scrambles, high fitness, efficient on steep ridges & broken ground**
- **Led by top qualified mountain guides (IFMGA), with a 1:2 ratio for the summit climb**
- **All technical equipment (e.g. B3 boots, crampons, ice axe etc.) can be hired from Icicle**
- **2026 dates - each week late June to early September; 20 - 26 Jun, 27 Jun - 3 Jul, 4 - 10 Jul, 11 - 17 Jul, 18 - 24 Jul, 25 - 31 Jul, 1 - 7 Aug, 8 - 14 Aug, 15 - 21 Aug, 22 - 28 Aug, 29 Aug - 4 Sep, & 5-11 Sep.**



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26 years
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Course overview

- **Summit:** Mont Blanc 4810m is the highest summit in Western Europe. To get to the 'roof of the Alps', we normally ascend via the classic Gouter route on the French / NW aspect, starting from Les Houches in the Chamonix valley. The week starts with a 2 day acclimatisation & training ascent of Gran Paradiso 4061m.
- **USP:** Our primary focus is on getting you to the summit, no faffing, no discussion, no fuss. If you train hard, are focused, and the weather plays ball, we'll get you up there. If you want us to wave a magic wand, and not put in the training before, this really isn't the mountain for you! We are doers, not dreamers.
- **Skills:** Pre-requisites: 2+ days of crampon use, graded rock scrambles, and ideally a 4000m Alpine peak. Great balance, and the ability to move quickly and efficiently over broken mountain terrain, is essential. You should be confident on steep ridges. You are taught any necessary ropework skills during the week.
- **Effort:** Due to the altitude and the length of the climb, we never declare the ascent to be easy. It is an unforgettable experience to reach the summit, and you will test the skills you have learnt along the way. You need excellent fitness, aerobic endurance, stamina and determination.
- **Acclimatisation:** Our itinerary starts with an ascent of Gran Paradiso 4061m, to help you to acclimatise, with the night spent in a mountain hut at altitude. You are then ideally prepared for your main ascent of Mont Blanc, climbed over three days, with two more nights spent in mountain huts on the mountain.
- **Briefings:** A principal feature of this course are the course specific route / weather briefings and kit checks for your climbs. The principle sessions are the welcome briefing on Saturday, a Gran Paradiso briefing and kit checks on Sunday before you set off, & a Mont Blanc briefing on Monday evening before your ascent.
- **Fitness:** Don't underestimate an ascent of Mont Blanc - arrive for this course in good physical condition as the climb will probably be the greatest physical exertion of your life. You should be at least half marathon fitness, and hill fit too. We highly recommend that you read our training pages for details.
- **Weather:** We maximise your summit chances with up to 3 days and 2 nights on Mont Blanc for maximum flexibility. We only offer ascents in the key season where the weather is typically stable, not pushing too early (start of June) or late season (mid Sept) where weather can be more unsettled with fresh snow.
- **Experience:** Icicle has been offering guided ascents on Mont Blanc for nearly three decades, so we have excellent local contacts and detailed knowledge of conditions to optimise your summitting chances, not to mention being highly aware of the localised objective risks, and how best to keep you safe too.
- **Flexibility:** After climbing Gran Paradiso (1:3 on summit day, compared to 1:4 by most competitors), the rest of the week at a 1:2 guiding ratio. This gives flexibility on the mountain for your summit attempt, or to adapt to suit your training needs / weather / conditions, to help maximise your summit chances.

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Sample itinerary

- **Saturday** - Travel to Chamonix. Accommodation check in at 17:00. Mont Blanc specific course safety and itinerary briefing at 17:30. There is time for kit checks or fitting rental equipment after. Briefings are over by 18:30 and then you are free to go out for dinner / drinks. Many clients opt to travel out a day or two early to start their acclimatisation at Aiguille du Midi or with a night in a mountain hut (e.g. Cosmiques or Albert 1er). Night in Chamonix.
- **Sunday** - After breakfast you meet our resort team, and guide, for a weather briefing and final kit checks for Gran Paradiso. You are driven by private minibus shuttle through the Mont Blanc tunnel to Pont in Val Savaranches in Italy, then ascend to the Rifugio Vittorio Emanuele II or Chabod mountain hut, where you spend the night on a half board basis. Guiding ratio 1:3 (max) in hut, or 1:6 (max) for approach. Night in mountain hut in Italy.
- **Monday** - Alpine start (c.4 am) to climb Gran Paradiso 4061, the highest peak completely in Italy. There are 4 possible normal routes to the summit, to cater for conditions / experience, all of which converge on the Col Montcorve. The route steepens to the final summit ridge, which although short is quite exposed, but well protected. The summit views are stupendous in all directions! Descend to Pont for return transfer to Chamonix. Night in Chamonix.
- **Tuesday** - The next 3 days are geared to your Mont Blanc ascent. There are several route and hut choices, depending on conditions / weather / spaces, but the most popular is to ascend to the Tête Rousse hut today. This is reached by a 2 - 3 hour hike up from the Nid d'Aigle terminus of the Tramway du Mont Blanc, accessed from the Bellevue cable car. Guiding ratio 1:2 (max). Night in mountain hut on Mont Blanc.
- **Wednesday** - Typically summit day starts soon after midnight, to cross the Gouter couloir in the coldest part of the night. You scramble up past the Gouter hut after c.3 hours, and after a quick rest you start the final push for the summit over Dome du Gouter and the Bosses Arete, taking another c.4 hours. After the summit celebrations, you descend to Gouter hut, to sleep for the night, as it might be too late to cross the couloir. Night in hut on Mont Blanc.
- **Thursday** - After breakfast in the Gouter hut, you quickly descend to cross the couloir while it is still cold, and rockfall risks are minimised. You soon reach the Tête Rousse hut, and then the dangers are over, and you hike down the trail back to the Nid d'Aigle, to catch the tramway and cable car down to Les Houches. Guiding ratio 1:2 (max). Return and hire equipment at 17:30. Most teams opt to go out later to celebrate. Final night in Chamonix.

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Friday - Breakfast then the accommodation check out by 10:00. Most arrange transfers for around this time for a flight from Geneva about midday. Some opt to book a tandem paraglider flight in the morning, or to go rafting, mountain biking, or trail running, if you still have the energy! Our resort team can advise you on where to arrange any of this, or routes. For those departing late, bags can be stored during the day. 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.

Course Inclusions

- 1) Hand picked IFMGA Mountain Guide for 5 days (2x days 1:3, 3x days 1:2)
- 2) Chamonix course hosts for briefings, logistics, expert advice, and support
- 3) Pre course information dossier, with training plans and specific kit lists
- 4) Safety briefing on the first evening, with latest updates and weather reports
- 5) Equipment discount voucher for our Windermere mountain shop / online
- 6) Self-catered flat in Chamonix for the whole week, no moving out when in huts
- 7) Mountain huts up to 3 nights half board (Gran Paradiso x1, Mont Blanc x2)
- 8) Private return minibus transfer to / from Chamonix to Italy for Gran Paradiso
- 9) Evening drop-in sessions for instruction / route briefings / equipment advice
- 10) Free 36 page technical Course Instruction Booklet of Alpine safety skills

Course Exclusions

1) Travel to and from Chamonix, 2) Equipment hire, 3) Cable cars & uplift for last 3 days (c.40€ total return for Bellevue cable car and Mont Blanc tramway) for you and your guide, 4) Lunches & snacks for during the days, 5) Evening meals in Chamonix, & any purchases in mountain huts, 6) Activities insurance.

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 apartments close to the centre of Chamonix. These are all equipped with a kitchen, bathroom, washing machine, and WiFi. The apartment is your base for the week, and you don't have to pack up and check out for the nights you are in mountain huts.
- Check in time is from 17:00 (5pm) on the Saturday, and the meeting point to collect keys (if there is no key safe for that apartment) and be given directions to get into your accommodation is detailed in your Course Information Booklet, that is sent upon booking.
- The apartments typically have 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. A £200 discount is offered to those who source their own accommodation.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/chamflat.html>

Course briefing

- The course briefing for this trip is at 17:30 on the Sunday evening. The Course Information Booklet will confirm the exact location for this briefing. Take your passport and activities insurance details.
- Also take along any clothing or equipment that you want checking. It's the perfect chance to have the fit of crampons assessed, and to geek out about what layers to pack for the next day.
- The briefing takes about 45-60 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, as well as noting your passport & insurance details.

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 first two days of this itinerary, you climb Gran Paradiso, where there are no cable cars at all.
- The uplift for an ascent of Mont Blanc via the Gouter route, is relatively cheap at c.30€ for a return ticket to Nid d'Aigle (Bellevue cable car and Mont Blanc tramway). The only possible other cable car is Wednesday, where Index return costs c.40€ or the Midi return is c.78€.

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. For shopping for supplies, there are many supermarkets both close to the course accommodation, in the town centre, and a larger Carrefour on the edge of town.
- 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 always happy to help advise you on which restaurants to consider, on any evening of your course.
- 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/IGNChamonix3630OTmap.html>
- St Gervais map; <https://shop.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/80/BooksMaps/Maps/Alpinemaps/IGNStGervais3531ETmap.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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