Last Updated: August 28, 2013

Trekking Mont Blanc - EFMB

10 days: Chamonix to Chamonix

What's Included

Escorted (demanding) mountain hikes with your CEO (7 days).

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2013

Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive Chamonix

Our circuit begins and ends in France, in Chamonix. Today is an arrival day so there are no planned activities until the important welcome meeting at 5pm. You may arrive at any time throughout the day (please note that check-in at the hotel is usually around 2-3pm). Look out for a message from your CEO at the hotel reception regarding this important meeting, during which you will meet your CEO and fellow group members, as well as complete some admin, and learn more about the trip. As this is a challenging active trek, demanding good fitness and equipment, it is very important that you arrive on time for this briefing to learn more about the route and to hear your leader's recommendations on equipment. Please make every effort to arrive on time.
If you are delayed, your CEO will leave you a message detailing where they can be contacted and when to meet later in the evening or early the following morning.

The Mont Blanc mountain range is one of the most spectacular regions in the Alps. Marked trails on the Tour du Mont Blanc (TMB) circuit straddle three countries (France, Italy and Switzerland) and cross over mountain passes allowing hikers to enjoy the magnificent scenery on this long loop. The majesty of Mont Blanc with the summer flora of wildflowers and alpine meadows has inspired generations of alpine visitors, attracting mountaineers and hikers from around the world for over two hundred years. Late spring to summer is the best time for hiking in this area.

The town of Chamonix is an authentic French mountain town, located at the foot of Mont Blanc. It lies in one of the most picturesque valleys of the French Alps, with innumerable alpine peaks towering around you, pine forests, alpine valleys to explore, and beautiful glaciers spilling from the high massif. The town is home to 10,000 inhabitants, swelling to 100,000 during peak season.

This evening is our first opportunity to try out some of the best Alpine specialities in a typical restuarant, such as "Savoyard", Cheese fondue, Tartiflette or Raclette accompanied with some famous "Vin de Savoie" wine.

Overnight in Chamonix: Please note that the Hotel Chamonix is affiliated with the nearby Hotel Crete Blanche and that in some

cases the group could be divided between the two hotels. These two lovely hotels in the centre of Chamonix have everything we need to enjoy the area and get a good rest before and after our trek. The interior of the hotels are all in wood, giving them a very typical Alpine atmosphere.

Day 2 Les Houches to Les Contamines (1D)

We set off this morning after breakfast for our first day's hiking. We'll take the bus or train to the village of Les Houches, where we begin with a cable car ride to Bellevue. From here on a clear day you'll enjoy great views of the Chamonix Valley and the Mont Blanc Range. Today's hike takes us past the Bioniassay glacier and the Col du Tricot, if weather conditions permit, after which a steep descent brings us to the Valley of Les Contamines-Montjoie. Then we we climb up along an old Roman road, past an original Roman bridge to the Gîte which is our stop for the night, in the valley leading to the Col du Bonhomme

Overnight in the Les Contamines valley: Tonight's "gite" is one of the most authentic of the mountain refuges that we will stay at. The idea behind the establishment of these "gites" or refuges, is that local shepherds would provide food and shelter to anyone in need in the mountains. In use for three generations, this cosy place offers accommodation in large unisex rooms equipped with long multi-share bunk beds, inside an authentic renovated “bergerie” (barn). This is one of the most basic of the overnight accommodations we use on this trip with everyone sharing in the same room in true authentic mountain refuge style. The family who run the gite will cook a basic but delicious local dinner for us on arrival.

Estimated Hiking Time: 6hrs30mins
Approximate Distance Hiked: 20 kms
Elevation: Start 1801m; Highest 2500m; Finish 1450m

Day 3 Les Contamines to Les Chapieux (1B,1D)

Estimated Hiking Time: 7hrs30mins
Approximate Distance Hiked: 18 kms
Elevation: Start 1450m; Highest 2483m; Finish 1554m

Today we have a steep ascent to the Col Du Bonhomme (2329m), from where we make the traverse to the Croix du Bonhomme (2483m,) where we can stop for lunch, and are rewarded with awesome views down into the Vallee des Chapieux. We then descend to Les Chapieux, our home for the evening. Today we test ourselves with the first up and downhill difficult stretches, but the fantastic views and the satisfaction of coming over the Col du Bonhomme make it all worthwhile! Please note that the terrain on todays walk is rough and the ascents and descents both steep and unremitting.

Overnight in Les Chapieux: Owned by a lovely French couple, tonight we stay in the most accurate version of the local "auberge" on our trip, where you can sleep and eat well after a long hard day's walking. We sleep in dorms, the facilities are shared but modern, and the restaurant serving up delicious local specialities is very lively - a favourite with many fellow campers, hikers and bikers visiting the region.

Day 4 Les Chapieux to Courmayeur (1B)

Estimated Hiking Time: 8hrs
Approximate Distance Hiked: 28 kms
Elevation: Start 1789m; Highest 2516m; Finish 1240m

Today we continue climbing through open pastures and snowfields, arriving at the Col de la Seigne (2,516m) and the border with Italy, before descending into the beautiful Val Veny, passing picturesque glacier lakes en route. There then follows a descent of about 45 minutes to the hamlet of La Visaille. We finish by way of bus or taxi downhill to the picturesque Italian town of Courmayeur, the biggest town in the Italian Mont Blanc circuit, where we’ll have a free evening to explore the town’s restaurants and bistros.

Today is the hardest and longest day of our trip.
Please note that on some trips (midsummer only and depending on opening hours) there may be the option of catching a cable car to avoid some of the descent, at your own expense, if you wish.

Overnight in Courmayeur: For the next two nights we have two possible accommodations (where each group stays will depend on availability). One is the family home of the famous mountain guide Emile Rey, renovated into a very nice hotel, with very friendly and helpful owners. This hotel is in the village of La Saxe, a very typical old village from the Middle Ages, with tiny streets (cars cannot pass sometimes) and plenty of hidden alleyways to explore, located 10mins on foot from the centre of Courmayeur. The other is a beautifully cosy, typical wooden Aosta structure of a hotel in Courmayeur, furnished in the traditional Alpine manner, with a lovely garden and terrace for relaxing in after your hard day's walk.
We use multishare accommodation at our Courmayeur hotels so you may be in rooms with three, four or five people or even on rare occasions dormitories.

Day 5 Courmayeur - Rest Day (1B)

Today we have a scheduled rest day to put up our weary feet or take the opportunity to enjoy the lovely town of Courmayeur and La Saxe. Why not indulge yourself (you deserve it by now!) at the amazing Spa Centre of Pré St Didier with its thermal baths and massage treatments. Another great option is to take the spectacular cable car ride from La Palud to Pointe Helbronner on the Mont Blanc Range, and either return from there or continue on another cable car for a stunning transglacial crossing from Italy into France (weather permitting).

Enjoy an optional dinner with the group and our leader to taste some of the Italian Alpine specialities on offer in Courmayeur's many atmospheric restaurants.

Overnight in Courmayeur.

Day 6 Courmayeur to Val Ferret (1B,1D)

Estimated Hiking Time: 5-7hrs
Approximate Distance Hiked: 14 kms - 20 kms
Elevation: Start 1240m ; Highest 2125m or 2500m (route dependent) Finish 2025m

Time to get those hiking boots back on! We start the day with a steep climb up to Rifugio Bertone (1970m) but with the great reward of one of the best views on the Mont Blanc Massif. We continue along the Mont de la Saxe, taking the balcony path facing the ridge of the Grandes Jorasses, where we stop for our picnic lunch, enjoying fabulous panoramas as we eat our picnics. We finish our day with a descent to Rifugio Bonatti, overlooking the Italian Val Ferret.

Overnight in Val Ferret: Tonight's accommodation is the most modern version of a mountain refuge, where we sleep in big dorms but the beds are large and we have plenty of space for luggage. The shared bathroom may be a little bit small and the hot water for showers is restricted by tokens allowing only 12 litres per person. Aside from that, this is the best refuge we will use, very comfy and modern, and the food is great!

Day 7 Val Ferret to La Fouly (1B,1D)

Estimated Hiking Time: 8hrs
Approximate Distance Hiked: 20 kms
Elevation: Start 2025m; Highest 2537m; Finish 1456m

Another long day as we set off down to Arp Nouva and then take a steep climb up cross the Grand Col Ferret (2537m), dropping down afterwards into Switzerland, to the hamlet of Ferret (1705m). A short bus ride takes us down the pretty Swiss Val Ferret, through charming towns and beautiful countryside. The scenery, now forestry and pastoral scenes, will not disappoint. We get off at Praz de Fort (1151m), famous for its very old wooden buildings and we'll pass through some small villages, the most charming of which is Les Arlaches. Notice how the woodpiles are stacked meticulously, like perfect building blocks. Here it's an art. We finish the day with a final climb up to the lovely lakeside town of Champex.

Overnight in Champex: Even if our accommodation tonight calls itself a hotel, rooms are multi-share, with plenty of beds in each room, and there are only two showers for everyone to fight over (expect lines!!), so it is more like a mountain refuge in style. A third shower is under construction, so you might be lucky! This is a very typical Swiss place with a great restaurant and friendly owners. The lake is really and truly right in the backyard of the hotel!

Day 8 La Fouly to Trient (1B,1D)

Estimated Hiking Time: 8hrs
Approximate Distance Hiked: 16 kms
Elevation: Start 1466m; Highest 1987m; Finish 1297m

Taking the Bovine Way, an old trail used to access the flower-filled summer cow pastures high above the valley, we continue along our circuit today, passing the Col de la Forclaz (1526m) and then heading downhill to Trient (1297m). Weather and group ability permitting, we have the option of taking the Fenêtre d’Arpette route, a “window” through the mountains offering spectacular views, but only after a very long, technical and steep up and downhill (8hrs, 1210m up and 1360m down).

Overnight in Trient: Tonight (availability and group size permitting) we may have the fantastic and unique opportunity of a homestay in a gaite converted from one floor of a family home. The accommodation is basic and can be tight depending on group size, and there is only one shower for the group. The family will cook some homemade delicacies for dinner and we will have the pleasure of being invited to eat with them. This is the place where you can really discover all about the way of life in the Swiss Alps as you get to know our lovely hosts.

Day 9 Trient to Chamonix (1B)

Estimated Hiking Time: 6hrs
Approximate Distance Hiked: 14 kms
Elevation: Start 1297m; Highest 2201m; Finish 1471m

Saying goodbye to Switzerland, we head back to the Chamonix Valley walking uphill through a larch forest and then open alpine slopes to the Col de Balme (2201m). Then a last steep downhill leads us to Tré le Champ or Montroc in the Chamonix valley, where we take the bus or train back to Chamonix for a final night on the town to celebrate our incredible journey.

Overnight in Chamonix.

Day 10 Chamonix

Departure day, feel free to leave any time.

What's Included

Escorted (demanding) mountain hikes with your CEO (7 days).

Highlights

Hiking the soul-stirring Mont Blanc massif, witnessing alpine meadows and rocky peaks, conquering windswept cols and steep trails, earning that hearty Savoyard supper

Dossier Disclaimer

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Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Important Notes

1. Please note that this trip is rated Physical Grade 5 and is a backpacking trekking trip from start to finish. Passengers are required to carry their own packs and there are no support vehicles. It is possible to leave some gear at the hotel in Chamonix as the trip begins and ends here. Night stops and routes may vary depending on weather conditions, daily group progress and availability. Flexibility is very important. Please see the equipment list for essential information on what to take

2. Please note that this trip travels through remote and rugged Alpine terrain. Extremes of heat and cold may be encountered and the route involves some long and demanding trekking days carrying all your own gear. The CEO will accompany you on the treks; however, there are up to 12 people in a group and the trip is self-supported. There will be no luggage transport, porters or guides. Therefore it is important that you are a fit and confident walker over mountain terrain, able to manage ascents and descents and cross streams by yourself. Please realistically self-assess your fitness and suitability for this trip.
Please note that on most days there is no possibility of continuing by public transport; taxis may sometimes be possible if you are not

able to continue walking but these cannot be guaranteed and will be at your own expense

2. Please note that the Hotel Chamonix is affiliated with the nearby Hotel Crete Blanche and that in some cases the group could be divided between the two hotels.

Group Leader Description

This G Adventures group trip is accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEOs). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. The CEO will accompany you on the treks; however, there are up to 12 people in a group and the trip is self-supported, there are no luggage transport, porters or guides. Therefore it is important that you are a fit and confident walker over mountain terrain, able to manage ascents and descents and cross streams by yourself.

On Mont Blanc, we employ the services of fully-trained International Mountain Leaders (IML). The IML qualification requires significant international trekking experience followed by 3 weeks of training and assessment in the Alps in both summer and winter conditions. The training includes avalanche awareness, dealing with altitude sickness, being aware of the surrounding elements and an understanding of physiology. With experienced IMLs guiding you on your trek, you are guaranteed the best possible experience whilst in the mountains.

Group Size Notes

Max 12, avg 10

Meals Included

7 breakfasts, 5 dinners.

Meals

Eating is a big part of traveling. Travelling with G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world. Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. The above information applies to G Adventures group trips. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

Meal Budget

Allow EUR240-315 for meals not included.

Transport

Local bus, walking, cable car

About our Transportation

Transport on this trip will mainly be on foot, but there will be some short journeys by public bus or train to get to the start/finish points of walks.

Local Flights

All local flights are included in the cost of your tour unless otherwise noted. It is important that we have your passport information at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal flight tickets are issued locally and will be given to you prior to the flight departure.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Hotels (2 nts), basic hotels (2 nts, possibly multi-share), mountain refuges (5 nts, multi-share).

My Own Room

Not available on this trip

About Accommodation

As this trip has a "Basic" Service Level grading, and uses mountain refuges,some accommodation on this tour is multi-share. This may involve 3-4 group members sharing and often in the mountain gites dormitory style rooms for the whole group. Rooms will not be en-suite and will have shared bathroom facilities.

Please note that the Hotel Chamonix is affiliated with the nearby Hotel Crete Blanche and that in some cases the group could be divided between the two hotels. These two lovely hotels in the centre of Chamonix have everything we need to enjoy the area and get a good rest before and after our trek. The interior of the hotels are all in wood, giving them a very typical Alpine atmosphere.

We will be staying at a mixture of mountain refuges and small local hotels on this trip. Most nights will be multi-share and with basic, shared facilities.

Joining Hotel

Except for the exceptions listed below, the joining hotel will be:

Hôtel Le Chamonix
58, Place de l'église
Chamonix
(+33) 04-50531107
(+33) 04-50536478
www.hotel-le-chamonix.com
hotel-le-chamonix@wanadoo.fr

Please note that Hotel Chamonix is affiliated with the nearby Hotel Crete Blanche and that in some cases the group could be divided between the two hotels.

For departures on August 22, 24, 29 and 31, the joining hotel will be:

Chalet Chantel
391 Route des Pecles
Chamonix 74400
Tel + 33 4 50 53 06 69
email: chaletchantel@wanadoo.fr

Joining Instructions

Chamonix is most easily accessible from Geneva Airport, to which you can find international flights from virtually any major world city.

AIRPORT TRANSFERS
We recommend that you use the following company for all your travel enquiries.
www.chamonix-valley-transfers.com
0033633634241

Scheduled (Saver) Transfer - Every Seat €25 (Peak Times Only - 08.00am - 20.00pm). Transfers Depart Approx 90 - 120 minutes Daily
Shared (Flexi Saver) Transfer - Every Seat €30 (Peak Times Only - 08.00am - 20.00pm). €40 (04.00 - 08.00am & 20.00 - 23.00pm) Transfers Depart Approx 45 - 60 minutes Daily
(Please note that if your flight is delayed, especially if you are arriving early or late, it is better to book a flexi saver service as this will allow you to move your transfer to a later time. Please enquire with Chamonix Valley Transfers if you would like more information.)

Private Transfer - One Way €160 (Available 24 Hours)
VIP Transfer - One Way €220 (Available 24 Hours)

Please note these rates are guaranteed only for booking before departure - rates for transfers booked at short notice may be higher. We recommend you book both your arrival and departure transfers in advance, to guarantee the best rate and most convenient timing.

NOTE: Please make sure you have the following TRAVEL DETAILS before booking.
- Flight number
- Flight Arrival Time
- Flight Departure Time
- Passenger's Name
- Number of Passengers
- Email
- Valid Mobile Telephone Number ((00+) contactable whilst in Europe)
- Drop off and/or Pick Up Address

*Directions to the Chalet Chantel: If catching an airport shuttle from Geneva, all you need do is give the shuttle company your accommodation details and they will take you there.

If arriving by train, get off at Chamonix Aiguille du Midi (this is one stop before the terminus at Chamonix-Mont-Blanc). When you exit the station and reach the main road, turn left, crossing the level crossing. At the T-Junction turn left again onto Ave Ravanel du Rouge. At the traffic island take Route des Pecles, which is the second exit, it's the smaller road leading slightly uphill. You will find Chalet Chantel on the left after 5 minutes' walking.

If travelling with a lot of luggage, you can also get off at the last stop Chamonix-Mont-Blanc and catch a taxi from here, there is a taxi rank outside the station. This will cost approx EUR 15.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO. If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS
G Adventures UK office (manned UK 8am - 8pm)
+44 (0) 2072439878

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, from calls within North America only: 1 888 800 4100
Calls from within UK: 0844 272 0000
Calls from within Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00
Calls from within Australia: 1 300 796 618
Calls from within New Zealand: 0800 333 307
Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

For absolute emergencies after office hours please contact +44 7817 262559
If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Finishing Point Hotel

Except for the exceptions listed below, the finishing point hotel will be:

Hôtel Le Chamonix
58, Place de l'église
Chamonix
(+33) 04-50531107
(+33) 04-50536478
www.hotel-le-chamonix.com
hotel-le-chamonix@wanadoo.fr

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Chalet Chantel
391 Route des Pecles
Chamonix 74400
Tel + 33 4 50 53 06 69
email: chaletchantel@wanadoo.fr

Finishing Point Instructions

We recommend you book your departure shuttle to Geneva airport, as per the joining point instructions, in advance. See details above.

What to Take

We strongly recommend the use of a small backpack. It is essential that you travel as light as possible as you will be carrying all your own gear during this trip. You should be able to fit everything you will need into a 30-35litre rucksack.
You may leave some extra gear or a piece of luggage at the start hotel and get it back on Day 10 at the end of the trip (check with your CEO or hotel front desk about the luggage storage policy).

Checklist

Rucksack of max 40 lites capacity, containing suggested Items:
•Hiking boots (well worn in & waterproof)
•Sleep sheet (cotton or silk)
•Extra pair of shoes like flip-flops,very light sneakers or sport sandals;for wearing in the refuges
•Hiking poles (optional but recommended, especially for departures in June and early in the season)
•Wind and waterproof jacket
•1 or 2 lightweight shirts or T-shirts - wicking material rather than cotton is recommended for T-shirts
•Something to sleep in- suitable for multi sex dorm rooms
•Sun hat
•1 pair hiking pants/track pants (convertible pants/shorts are useful)and 1 pair trousers to wear in the evenings
•2-3 pairs socks and underwear
•Waterproof trousers
•1 thermal baselayer
•1 fleece/jacket
•Warm hat
•Gloves
•Small towel(pack towels are good)
•Sunblock
•Sunglasses
•Toiletries (just the essentials in small/light bottles)

•Flashlight/Headlamp
•Watch or alarm clock
•Water bottle - at least 2litres capacity
•First-aid kit (should contain lip salve, Aspirin, bandaids, anti-histamine, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
•Waterproof pants (optional but recommended in case of rain/snow)

Optional Items:
•Camera
•Gaiters (esp early or late season) may be useful if there is snow on higher ground

Documents:
•Passport (with photocopies)
•Travel insurance (with photocopies)
•Airline tickets (with photocopies)
•EUR cash
•Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)
•G Adventures vouchers, pre-departure information and dossier
•Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

Please note it is ESSENTIAL you travel light as you will be carrying all your own gear

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge or ask your CEO where the closest laundromat is. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

Visas

Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

All visitors to the EU (European Union) and EEC (European Economic Community) countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand passport holders do not need a visa to visit the Schengen area (see below), however they may not stay longer than three months in any 6-month period.

For other nationalities, travelling in Europe has been simplified with the introduction of the Schengen visa. As a visitor to the Schengen area (Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal, Finland, Italy, Spain, France, Luxembourg, Sweden, Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland) you will enjoy the many advantages of this unified visa system. Generally speaking with a Schengen visa, you may enter one Schengen country and travel freely throughout the Schengen region during the validity of your visa. There are limited border controls at Schengen borders, if any at all.

Please note that the UK and Ireland are NOT part of the Schengen agreement.

A Schengen visa is applied for at the Embassy or Consulate of the Schengen country in which you will be spending the most nights on your trip to the Schengen space. If you are only visiting one country on your trip then you apply for your visa at the Consulate of this Schengen country.

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

France and Italy are in the Eurozone and the unit of the currency is the Euro. Switzerland uses the Swiss Franc (CHF) however euros are very widely accepted and you should have no problem making any cash purchases in Euros.

Credit cards and debit cards are very useful for cash advances but you must remember to bring your PIN number (be aware that many ATM machines only accept 4-digit PINs). Both Cirrus and Plus system cards are the most widely accepted debit cards. Visa cards are the most widely accepted credit cards. While ATMs are commonly available, there are no guarantees that your credit or debit cards will actually work in France, Italy or Switzerland. You should be aware when purchasing products or services on a credit card, that a fee usually applies.

Do not rely on credit or debit cards as your only source of money. A combination of Euros, traveller's cheques and cards is best. Avoid relying on traveller's cheques alone as these are less and less readily cashed as clients use them very little.

Always take more rather than less, as you don't want to spoil the trip by constantly feeling short of funds.

As currency exchange rates can fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: www.xe.com

Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD $200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Departure Tax

Usually included in international air ticket

Tipping

It is customary in Europe to leave a small tip for service providers, such as waiters, if you are pleased with the service (€1-2). Tipping is an expected - though not compulsory - component of your tour program and an expression of satisfaction with the persons who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping local guides would range from €3-5 per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO or skipper did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline €20-25 per person, per week can be used.

Optional Activities

All prices are per person, in Euro amounts.

Chamonix :
- Aiguille du Midi (cable car + summit lift) - 40 EUR + 3 EUR
- Mer de Glace (alpine train and visit ice cave) - 23 EUR
- Transglacial crossing Aiguille du Midi to Pointe Helbronner (return) - 17 EUR
- Trans Mont Blanc from Chamonix to Courmayeur with cable cars and back by bus through the tunnel - 89 EUR
- Tramway du Mont Blanc - 25 EUR

Courmayeur:
- Pointe Helbronner (bus + cable car) - 6 EUR + 36 EUR
- Transglacial crossing Pointe Helbronner to Aiguille du Midi (return) - 17 EUR
- Trans Mont Blanc from Courmayeur to Chamonix with cable cars and back by bus through the tunnel - 89 EUR
- Spa Centre in Pré St Didier - 35 EUR to 48 EUR
- Quads - 90 EUR (2 people per quad, full day)

Champex:
- Fondation Pierre Giannada, Martigny - 15 EUR

All prices are per person (unless stated otherwise), and are subject to change as services are provided by third party operators.

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that quite often we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

Please note your Adventure travels to high altitude. This is medically defined as anything over 8,000 feet (2,440 meters). Most people can travel to 8,000 feet with minimal effects. However, everyone reacts to altitude differently and altitude sickness can on set with some people irrespective of fitness and age. For details on how to best prepare and what to do in the unlikely event you are effected on your Adventure, please consult your physician.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

www.gadventures.com/medical-form.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit www.planeterra.org

Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program
Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at customerservice@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for Planeterra's monthly news to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

Be sure to stop by The Watering Hole, our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the Departure Lounge section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at wateringhole.gadventures.com.