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WEEK-END IN THE VALLÉE BLANCHE

The Vallée Blanche is one of the most beautiful and famous off-piste ski run in the world. It is located in the French Alps and is a fantastic 22-kilometer-long ski descent. In fact, it's one of the longest in the world!

This exciting 2-day trip starts in Chamonix, at the Aiguille du Midi cable car station. When at 3842m, your specialized guide will show you the amazing view of the Mont Blanc massif. You then descend the Aiguille du Midi snow ridge roped up with the guide and start your run from the easiest way, in order to enjoy the breathtaking landscapes peacefully. After a rewarded lunch break with a fantastic view, you descend the Mer de Glace before reaching Chamonix by the famous skiable path running in the forest. On the second day of this weekend, you will discover a wilder route to descend the Vallée Blanche. You will navigate between seracs and crevasses, heaps of fun! During all the descents, our guides will ensure your safety and open the way. They will also teach you the secrets of off-piste skiing. You will end the weekend, sad to leave but happy to have lived this amazing experience!

📍 Region	France
🏔️ Activity	Freeride Ski
🕒 Duration	2 days
👥 Group	4 to 6 people
📄 Code	SVBA
💰 Price	From €495
🧑 Level	3/5
🛡️ Comfort	3/5
🗣️ Language(s)	English

ITINERARY

📍 Day 1 **Discovering the Vallée Blanche**

We meet with our expert guide at 9 am at the Aiguille du Midi cable car station. He will check our equipment before taking the cable car. Up there, we discover one of the most beautiful panoramas of the Alps. The biggest peaks of the massif seem to be very close: Mont Blanc, Dent du Géant, Grandes Jorasses, Aiguille Verte...

We descend the Aiguille du Midi snow ridge roped up with the guide and begin our classic route run (few difficulties but magnificent scenery: Gervasutti eperon, Mont Blanc du Tacul). The guide always goes first to ensure our safety. When passing through the seracs of the Glacier du Géant, we have to be extremely careful and do precisely what the guide tells us. This requires a good ski control. Just after this passage, we will take time to eat our packed lunch and drink a warm tea! We then reach the flat surface of the Mer de Glace glacier. We have to ascend a steep 100m rocky slope to reach the skiable path which will get us back to Chamonix. If there is not enough snow, we will go back by the Montenvers railway station.

Positive difference in altitude : 100m | Negative difference in altitude : 2800m | Max Altitude : 3842m | Accommodation: hostel or lodge

📍 Day 2 **Second itinerary in the Vallée Blanche**

Today is an ambitious adventure day in high mountain!

After a good breakfast, we leave to the Aiguille du Midi cable car at 10 am (or earlier if conditions require it). We put our skis back on up there and descend through more secret off-piste routes (e.g. Petit Envers or Grand Envers route) chosen by the guide, such delightful runs! Sometimes we will ski really close to the crevices, so we must carefully follow the guide's way. We will probably be back in Chamonix around 4pm to say goodbye.

Positive difference in altitude : 100m | Negative difference in altitude : 2800m | Max Altitude : 3842m

ITINERARY CHANGE

The program can be modified by your guide due to weather conditions or participants physical conditions. For safety reasons and to ensure a uniform level corresponding to the one announced, the supervision and organisation boards have the right to interrupt your participation if your technical or physical level are lower than the one required. The interruption will not give you any right of refund or payment of compensation.

DATES & PRICES

International departures:

No departure for now

Trip code: SVBA

Included

A deposit of 30% of the trip's price will be needed during the booking, the whole price must be paid at least 30 days before departure.

- Technical organisation of the trip
- Aiguille du Midi cable car (2 trips)
- High mountain guide
- Collective equipment (carried by the guide)
- Loan of safety harness, avalanche transceiver, shovel and probe for 2 days
- 2 picnics (1 for each day)
- Montenvers train tickets if there is not enough snow to reach Chamonix by the skiable path
- Saturday night accommodation in Chamonix (hotel)

Not included

- All transports around the valley
- Flights
- Insurance and assistance
- Individual equipment (skis, shoes, sticks)
- Personal expenses
- Snacks
- Sunday night diner in Chamonix
- Anything that is not mentioned in the "price includes" section

International flights

If you wish, we can take care of booking your international flights to the closest airport of your destination.

Terms and conditions

Subscription

Subscribe to one of our activities or travels means accepting general sales conditions. Each client must fill a subscription form, which will be accepted only after the payment of a deposit accounting for 30% of the travel's price and according to the availability. If you subscribe less than 30 days before the trip, you must pay the whole price during the subscription. You can pay by bank transfer (SWIFT/IBAN) or with your credit card directly through our website (available soon). A booking confirmation will be sent to you by e-mail very soon.

Invoice procedure

Once your booking is registered, we will send you an email containing the invoice. Full payment is required at least 30 days before your arrival. If the customer does not settle the payment of the travel price within the period agreed upon, Altaï Alpes has the right to cancel the booking free of charge.

Cancellation policy

If for any reason, you decide to withdraw from a journey, the amount already paid will be refunded subject to the following exceptions:

- More than 30 days before departure, you will be charged for the amount of 50€
- From 30 to 21 days before departure, you will be charged for the amount of the deposit (30% of the trip's price)
- From 20 to 14 days before departure, you will be charged for 50% of the trip's price
- From 13 to 7 days before departure, you will be charged for 75% of the trip's price
- Less than 7 days before departure, you will be charged for the whole trip's price

Particular case :

Whatever the cancellation or contract change date, the following fees will be added to the charges above:

- Airline fixed costs: plane tickets are bought in advance to avoid too high airline prices, however they are non refundable in case of cancellation or plan changes. In that case, the charges above apply to the price of your trip without the plane ticket's price
- Ground fixed costs: you will be charged for the fees that were paid early
- Insurance fees: Insurance fees will not be refunded if you have subscribed to a multi-risk or cancellation insurance. The specific conditions will be written on your subscription confirmation. If you have no choice but to cancel your trip before departure, you must inform Montagne Expeditions and your insurance provider with a written statement as soon as possible, you will get a receipt.

The receipt date will be taken as the cancellation date to charge cancellation fees.

If Montagne Expeditions has no choice but to cancel a group travel due to an insufficient number of participants, the decision will be taken and the clients informed at least 31 days before departure. Altaï Alpes can also cancel a departure due to exceptional events threatening participants safety (social events, strikes, weather conditions). In that case, the trip's price will be fully refunded but the participants will not get any compensation.

Changes to travel contract

If any change in travel contract is made at the customer's request, the customer shall pay any fee that might arise from this change. In any case, every request for changes shall be notified in writing. In case of external events that could not be foreseen, Altaï Alpes might change some aspects of the travel contract. We will inform you of any changes as quickly as possible.

Pricing

All group travel prices on our website have been calculated for the indicated number of participants for each trip. The price list is confirmed after the booking. If the number of participants is lower than expected, an additional payment charge might be applied. For each travel and program, we mention the price per person – valid for the minimum number of participants – and we provide you with detailed explanations about the services included or not. Any change in the exchange rates or in the price of travel services in particular regarding the cost of the fuel, might entail price revision.

Contract transfer

In case of contract transfer by the customer to an assignee, modification and cancellation conditions apply.

Insurance

We recommend you to get your personal insurance before your departure to cover the activities undertaken by Montagne Expedition. If you have not purchased any of our insurances, we ask you to email us your insurance contract information (company, contract name, contract number, phone number) and bring those information with you on your trip.

PRACTICAL INFO

Staff

Your trip will be supervised by a high-mountain guide who will teach you technical elements needed for the good progress of your stay. He may need to modify the program in order to ensure safety regarding weather conditions and participants physical conditions.

Food

Meals

- Picnics for lunch
- Bring some snacks according to your tastes (cereal bars, dried fruits, etc...).

Drinks

- Bring a 1L water bootle
- Drinks aren't included in the price of your trip

Accommodation

We will stay in a nice and cozy lodge in the bustling heart of Chamonix.

Transportation

Access :

- By train : SNCF Saint Gervais les Bains le Fayet train station then the touristic Mont Blanc Express TER to Chamonix.
Timetable and prices on : www.voyages-sncf.com
- By road : A40 "Autoroute Blanche" to Chamonix

Dispersion :

- In the end of the afternoon in Chamonix (74)

Lodge before or after the trip :

- Le CAF du Tour starting from the end of March (<http://chaletdutour.ffcam.fr/>), half-board from 42€. Véronique prepares everything herself with organic products. It is our favorite lodge for small budget (20min drive from Chamonix).
- L'hôtel des Campanules (www.hotel-campanules.com), night from 49€. This hotel is easily accessible thanks to the train station of Les Houches. Accommodation near the city center of Chamonix
- Gîte le Chamoniard Volant (<http://www.chamoniard.com/>), night from 20€.
- L'hôtel du Prieuré*** (www.prieurechamonix.com/fr/index.php)
- L'hôtel Héliopic**** (www.heliopic-hotel-spa.com)
- Le Gustavia*** (<http://www.hotelgustavia.eu/>): in front of the central train station of Chamonix.

Budget & exchange

France is in the Eurozone. Therefore, the unit of the currency is the Euro.

Credit cards and debit cards are very useful for cash advances (but don't forget to bring your PIN number!).

ATMs are available in Chamonix, but there are no guarantees that your credit card will actually work in France. It is best to bring cash, just in case!

Be aware of the fees usually applied when purchasing products or services on a credit card.

Always take more rather than less, as you don't want to spend your trip constantly feeling short on funds. As currency exchange rates can often fluctuate, we recommend to check the following website for daily exchange rates: <https://www.xe.com/>

Tips

Clients usually pay for the guides' drinks : you might find it practical to make a group kitty at the beginning of your stay (no obligation).

Supplied equipment

Supplied equipment

- Collective technical equipment (ropes, carabiners)
- Individual safety equipment (avalanche transceiver, probe, shovel) + harness

Vital equipment

Technical equipment

Skis

- 1 pair of skis
- 1 pair of ski shoes
- Telescopic poles

Other

- Safety equipment : avalanche transceiver, probe, shovel
- Crampons with "Antibott" system
- Ice axe
- Harness and carabiners
- Survival blanket
- Pocket knife
- Thermos and water bottle

Personal equipment

Head

- Bonnet
- Hat or cap
- Scarf to put around your neck
- Sunscreen (face and lips)
- Sunglasses suited for glaciers (category 4) + ski goggles

Upper body

- Technical breathable long sleeve underweartype "Carline" (no cotton that dries too slowly)
- 1 shirt to put under your jumper (breathable and technical)
- 1 thick fleece jacket
- 1 duvet jacket
- 1 windstopper and waterproof jacket type Goretex
- 1 pair of mitains (fleece or wool)
- 1 pair of gloves (fleece or wool)
- 1 pair of silk under gloves

Lower body

- 1 pair of windstopper and waterproof trousers type Goretex
- 2 pairs of socks : 1 thick 1 thin

Other

- 1 toiletry bag
- Cream for sunburns (Biafine)
- Biodegradable toilet paper
- 1 bag to put over your bag in order to protect your belongings from getting wet in case of rain
- 1 waterproof pouch in which you will put your identity papers, your phone, your money and your insurance/assistance documents with all of your emergency phone numbers

Luggage

- You will carry your belongings and your technical equipment in a 40L alpinism backpack.
- Your personal belongings will stay at the lodge in Chamonix (you can bring them in a second bag)

Medicine

You guide will be carrying a collective first aid kit. However, it is important for you to bring your individual pharmacy, checked with your general doctor :

- Personal medication
- Pain killers (preferably Paracetamol)
- Double skin
- Elastoplast (excellent to prevent blisters)
- Bandages
- Disinfectant
- Anti-inflammatory
- Antispasmodic
- Anti-diarrheal
- Anti-vomiting
- Intestinal antiseptic
- Eye drops
- Light sleeping pills
- Ear plugs

Non exhaustive list

Passport

Please make sure your passport and travel documents are valid.

Visa

- Up to 90 days visit in France : citizens from most countries do not need a visa to visit France.
- Over 90 days visit in France : non-EU or non-EFTA citizens must have a visa to visit France over 90 days.

For further information, please check the following website : <https://france-visas.gouv.fr/>

Identity card

For EU citizens, you can use your identity card to travel to France.

Mandatory vaccines

No required vaccination.

Health information & recommendations

It is important to consult your doctor for medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit as well as any personal medical requirements.

Please keep in mind that we are often in remote areas, away from medical facilities. Please carefully read the brochure and itinerary when selecting your trip, to make sure our style of travel suits you.

Please note you will travel to high altitude. Most people can travel to 2 500m with minimal effects. However, everyone reacts differently to altitude and altitude sickness can occur.

For details on how to best prepare your trip please consult your physician.

Weather

The weather in the French Alps varies up and down the mountain chain. It is a mountainous region between 800 and 4000 meters, so altitude plays a big part in the local weather.

As you climb higher into the mountains it gets 1 degree cooler every 100 meters. It is the case all year around but other factors such as temperature inversions and winds influence the climate. The sun plays a very important role too. In the winter, when the sun is lower in the sky, some lower or north facing valleys are blocked from the sun by mountains for a large part of the day and are colder.

Spring can be a bit unpredictable : rain, sometimes even some snow interspersed with hot sunny days.

It can be quite hot in **summer**: around 20 to 30 degrees, but the fresh mountain air cools you down during your hike.

In **autumn**, temperatures start to cool down, but it is still perfect conditions for a walking holiday.

During **winter** time, the higher you get, the more snow you will see. Snow usually starts to fall in November and stays until April.

Keep in mind that weather conditions are unpredictable. Therefore, the trip organization can be modified for your safety.

Electricity

There will, of course, be electricity in Chamonix. If you are scared to run low on battery, we advise to bring an external battery charger.

Power plugs in France have the particularity of being male and female at the same time : they have 2 prongs and a receptacle. If you need an adapter, please purchase it before departure.

In France the power plugs and sockets are of type E. The standard voltage is 230 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz.

Local time

France is in the Central European Time Zone. Central European Standard Time (CET) is 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+1).

Like most states in Europe, Summer Time (Daylight-Saving) is observed in France, where the time is shifted forward by 1 hour; 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+2). After the summer months, the time in France is shifted back by 1 hour to Central European Time (CET or GMT+1).

Sustainable tourism

We do our best to offer trips subscribed to the principles of responsible and sustainable tourism. Our aim is to allow visitors to discover the many facets of France by taking you off the beaten path and getting you in touch with its nature and residents, while ensuring that your visits do not have a negative effect on its natural environment and people.

- Most of our accommodations are run by locals, thus ensuring that the largest part of the revenue generated through your trip will stay within the region.
- France is known for its exquisite cuisine. The art of cooking and the joy of eating are part of everyday life. Each region has its particular foods and flavors which we would like you to explore and appreciate.
- Water is a precious and rare good. Our team and those travelling with us are thus advised to use it with consideration and avoid excessive water use where possible.
- Please try to recycle your waste whenever possible, even though recycling may not be a well-known concept in all areas.
- Be cautious and respectful when hiking. Make sure to wear suitable footwear and avoid picking flowers, moving stones or lighting fires.