

Hiking in Style: Tour du Mont Blanc

Tour du Mont Blanc is undoubtedly one of the best known long distance hikes in Europe and the world as a whole. Comprising of century-old hunting and trading routes, this extensive hiking trail circles gracefully through the outstanding Mont Blanc Massif, the highest peak in Western Europe. It covers an approximate distance of 180 km, winding beautifully through Alpine meadows, over superb barren passes, into tiny hamlets and under gigantic glaciers.



Tour du Mont Blanc passes through three big Alpine countries of France, Italy and Switzerland. Interestingly, these three countries have very diverse and unique mix of architecture, food and culture that provide walkers with a huge variety of feels and flavors. For more than three hundred years, this spectacular hiking trail has been attracting hikers and mountaineers from different parts of the world.

The circular route of Tour du Mont Blanc is usually walked or hiked in counter-clockwise direction for a period of about 7 to 12 days. The hiking trail is also an Annual Mountain Marathon route whereby the winning athlete normally covers the whole distance within 24 hours or even less.

Each of the three Alpine countries has its starting point where visitors or tourists can start their walk. France has two starting points that visitors can choose to start from: Les Contamines in the Montjoie Valley and Les Houches in the Chamonix Valley. Italy has one starting point known as Courmayeur whereas Switzerland's starting point is Champex.



Over the past few years, the official route has changed and a number of alternative standard routes have been created. Some of the routes are very difficult and challenging to walk through in that they take walkers onto paths that require greater skills, awareness and fitness. Even though they may be difficult to follow, such paths enable walkers to gain access to a variety of scenic viewpoints. Other routes provide walkers with less demanding and convenient options that are quicker and easily accessible than the accepted routes. However, these simple routes provide walkers with limited viewpoints.

Hiking from Chamonix, an amiable old town in France that is situated right at the foot of Mont Blanc, you can manage to see some major attractions and views from the mountain-rigged Lac Blanc such as

Bionnassay Glacier and the snow-covered Domes de Miage. As you move to Italy from France via Cole de la Croix de Bonhomme, you will enjoy the wide 11,000-foot-high southern face view of Mont Blanc.



Entering Switzerland from Italy via the Grand Cole Ferret, you can enjoy the scenic views of the massive granite peaks of the Grandes Jorasses and Mont Dolent along the hiking trail. The Fenetre d'arpette in Switzerland provides wonderful views of the frosty bowl of the Plateau du Trient and the brilliant Trient Glacier.

Fenetre d'arpette in Switzerland and Col de Fours in France are the highest points on the trail. They both lie at an altitude of 8,734 Feet. Due to height fluctuations the region is known for unpredictable weather patterns and as a result, it is always advisable for hikers to come fully equipped with lots of clothes.

The entire route of Tour du Mont Blanc is lined with plenty of accommodations. They range from big rooms to separate luxurious bedrooms. Food and drinks are plenty and hikers normally have a variety to choose from.

Tour du Mont Blanc is definitely one of the best places that you should consider visiting. The hiking trail has existed for many years without losing its glory.

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