

Alpine Introduction Chamonix (France) or Arolla (Switzerland)

These courses are aimed at regular mountain hill walkers who want to broaden their experience to include the glacial regions of the Alps as well as those considering trips to the Greater Ranges. The courses focus on teaching the key skills required for safe and successful mountaineering in Alpine areas and will provide an excellent foundation for further Alpine courses as well as many of our expeditions. The emphasis will be on learning as you climb, so you will have plenty of time to absorb the wonderful environment you are in.



You will be guided by our professional IFMGA Mountain Guides (International Federation of Mountain Guiding Associations). This is the highest mountaineering qualification in the world and the only one that allows the instructor to legally work above the snowline and on glaciated terrain in the European Alps.

The skills covered will include:

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| ✚ Glacier travel & Crevasse rescue | ✚ Movement on Alpine terrain |
| ✚ Route finding and navigation | ✚ Use of Alpine mountain huts |
| ✚ Roping-up and moving together | ✚ Mountaineering routes graded F to PD |
| ✚ Ice axe and crampon technique | |

We offer the course in two stunning locations:

- **Arolla (Switzerland)** - provides some of the best introductory mountains in the Alps. They have everything to offer close at hand: rock, glaciers, ice, peaks close to 4000m and brilliant scenery. The guiding ratio is 1:3.
- **Chamonix (France)** - provides the opportunity to develop your skills in the shadow of Mont Blanc. This course is guided on a ratio of 1:2 allowing us to attempt rather more technical routes and hopefully a peak over 4000m.

Previous Experience & Fitness

You should have a good level of fitness as Alpine mountaineering can be very tiring. Normally we would expect you to be able to enjoy consecutive 7-8 hours days in the British Mountains. Previous use of crampons and ice axe is useful but not essential.

Participation Statement

Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Chamonix (France) Alpine Intro Outline Programme

Please note this is just a suggestion of a programme and the actual itinerary may be changed as a result of weather, conditions on the mountain and individual levels of fitness. Guiding ratio 1:2

- Saturday** Meet your guide at the hotel this evening for a briefing on the week's activities (hotel to be advised before your course).
- Sunday** Glacier du Tour for essential skills training: use of ice axe, crampons, roping-up for glacier travel and crevasse rescue. Overnight in Albert Premier Hut (2702m).
- Monday** Ascent of Aiguille du Tour (3554m). A glacial approach leads to steep snow slopes and a fine rocky scramble. Overnight in Trient Hut (3170m) or Albert Premier Hut.
- Tuesday** Ascent of the Tete Blanche (3429m) and or the Petit Fourche (3520m). Night back at your hotel.
- Wednesday** Traverse of the Aiguille du Croches (2840m), a fine rocky ridge line, similar to that of Crib Coch or Striding Edge. Night back at your hotel.
- Thursday** Stunning ride up to the Aiguille du Midi (3800m) followed by an ascent of the Cosmiques Arete, descend to Point Lachenal (3613m) then head to the hut. Overnight in the Cosmiques hut (3613m).
- Friday** A not too early start, sunrise, then an ascent of Mont Blanc du Tacul (4248m), stunning views and well worth the effort. Descend to Chamonix valley and the hotel.
- Saturday** Breakfast and departure or rest day before Mont Blanc extension.

The programme may be altered according to the weather and conditions to include the following mountains: La Petite Aiguille Verte (3152m) and Gran Paradiso (4061m), Weissmies (4017m) or Allalinhorn (4027m).



Travel

Flights are available to Geneva where buses, trains and transfer taxis run a regular service to Chamonix. Please contact the office for further details.

Maps & Guide Book

Map; IGN Carte de Randonnee – Chamonix (Massif du Mont Blanc) 3630 OT, 1:25,000
Guide Book; Mont Blanc Massif - Selected Climbs Vol I & II by Lindsay Griffin (Alpine Club)
Available from our shop 01539 433794 or online at www.adventurepeaks.com/shop

Arolla (Switzerland) Alpine Intro Outline Programme

Please note this is just a suggestion of a programme and the actual itinerary may be changed as a result of weather, conditions on the mountain and individual levels of fitness. Guiding ratio 1:3

- Saturday** Arrival at your hotel and a chance to relax before your instruction starts tomorrow.
(Actual hotel to be advised before your course).
- Sunday** Meet your guide for a briefing on the week's activities. Walk to the Dix hut, up to 4 hours walk, then local glacier for essential skills training: use of ice axe, crampons and roping-up for glacier travel. Overnight at the Dix Hut (2928m).
- Monday** Climb La Lurette (3548m), a great little peak just behind the refuge, with more skills training along the way. Overnight at the Dix Hut.
- Tuesday** Ascent of Mont Blanc de Cheilon (3869m), again with more skills workshops during the day. Overnight at the Dix Hut.
- Wednesday** Traverse of the Pigne Du Arolla (3796m) before heading to the Vignettes Hut.
- Thursday** Ascent of L'Eveque (3716m) or crevasse rescue training during descent to the valley. Overnight at hotel (or possibly Vignettes Hut).
- Friday** Descent to the valley or Evolene for a Via Ferrata.
- Saturday** Breakfast and departure.

The programme may be altered according to weather, conditions or other factors to include the following mountains: Pte de Vouasson (3489m), Mont Brule (3585m), Aiguille de la Tsa (3668).

Travel

One option is to fly to Geneva and then take a train to Sion, then 2 buses to Arolla. The train runs hourly from Geneva, the cost is approx £60 return. Tickets can be pre-booked online at www.sbb.ch or obtained at the station at Geneva Airport. For further information please contact the office. **Please note that the last bus to Arolla leaves Les Hauderes at approx 17:45hrs, therefore if you miss this you will have to take a taxi which will be very expensive.**

Map & Guidebooks

Map; Swisstopo Arolla 283 1:50,000

Guidebook; Valais Alps West by Lindsay Griffin (Alpine Club)

Available from our shop 01539 433794 or online at www.adventurepeaks.com/shop



What is Included

- ✚ All Instruction & Guiding
- ✚ Valley - Bed & Breakfast accommodation on a twin sharing basis. (Single rooms will be provided where possible if there is not a same sex client to share with.) (*Normally two or three star hotels but in busy periods we may have to use local guest houses*).
- ✚ Mountain Huts - Half board basis in dormitory accommodation
- ✚ Group mountaineering equipment such as ropes and other technical equipment

What is not included

- ✚ Transport between the UK and the course venue
- ✚ Insurance
- ✚ All lunches (it is much more cost effective to purchase packed lunch items in the valley before leaving for the mountains).
- ✚ Hot drinks & bottled water whilst in huts
- ✚ Lifts/cable cars: allow approx £80 - £120 (Chamonix only/no lift costs for Arolla)
- ✚ Personal climbing equipment and clothing (boots, ice axes, crampons, harnesses & helmets can be hired. We require at least 4 weeks notice of hire prior to your departure).
- ✚ Valley food - a 2/3 course meal would generally cost in the region of £20-25.
- ✚ Valley transport if required (unlikely to be needed, but clients share cost if Guides car is used at 25p per mile. This should be paid directly to the Guide.) e.g. travel to Gran Paradiso.

Mont Blanc Extension

Western Europe's highest peak is within reach. The 4810m summit of Mont Blanc can be attempted during a 4 day extension to our Alpine Introductory courses to giving a fitting end to your Alpine experience. Please see our separate information sheet.

Insurance

Any accident in the Alps can be an extremely costly business. It is essential that you take out full mountaineering insurance that covers you for mountain rescue and medical expenses. These policies can be obtained through the BMC or other specialist insurers. It is also recommended that the policy includes cancellation cover. Evidence of insurance must be carried with you in the mountains. You should also obtain a Global Health Insurance Card (formerly EHIC).

What are Alpine Mountain Huts?

Most routes take two days. The first is spent walking up to a hut and the second doing a summit. Alpine Huts are not as basic as the name suggests; however, the accommodation is in large communal bunks where blankets or duvets (but not sheets) are provided. You should take a sleeping bag liner as an alternative (this is compulsory in most huts). The location of the huts is often spectacular and part of the whole charm of Alpine mountaineering. Unfortunately, many get very crowded during July and August and in extreme cases can lead to changed itineraries. A continental style breakfast plus evening meals in the huts are included in the cost of your course. A typical evening meal would be soup followed by plenty of pasta or rice plus meat, and a dessert. Other food, drink, sweets, beer etc can be purchased in the huts but is expensive as the ingredients are brought in by helicopter, so most people take packed lunch food up with them from the valley. You can also purchase boiling water for hot drinks (not included) for which you may wish to carry tea bags/coffee or cuppa soups.

Equipment

On booking we will send you a detailed kit list. We have an extensive range of specialist equipment for hire which is sometimes available for purchase following your course. We will deduct the hire cost from the original price.

Outline Kit List (A full kit list is provided on booking)

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| ✚ **Ice Axe | ✚ 50 litre rucksack |
| ✚ **Crampons | ✚ Water bottle |
| ✚ **Climbing Helmet | ✚ Headtorch |
| ✚ **Climbing Harness | ✚ Sheet liner (compulsory in most huts) |
| ✚ **Mountaineering boots (B3) | ✚ Orange Survival Bag |
| ✚ Waterproof jacket & trousers | ✚ Whistle |
| ✚ Warm clothes | ✚ Compass |
| ✚ Hat & Gloves | |

** These items can be hired from us. Please let us know at the time of booking. All other technical equipment is provided.