

The High Alps

Hotel-to-hotel    independent walking

- Exciting high level walking; easy-to-follow footpaths, excellent signposting, superb value
- Awe-inspiring views of Mont Blanc, the Matterhorn, Dents du Midi and Swiss Alps
- Spectacular Alpine flora: over 1,200 varieties of wild flowers
- Traditional mountain villages; comfortable valley hotels, great regional cuisine
- Ibex, chamois, mouflon, red deer, eagles and falcons



This is a real Alpine walkers' holiday, exciting independent walks at a safe altitude but with an 'Haute Montagne' feel, plus the luxury of comfortable hotel accommodation every night. En route you can 'bag' the two highest peaks in the Chablais (both 2432m and both wildlife reserves). What's breathtaking is the scale of the mountains here, awesome views of snow-capped peaks in one wonderful geography lesson: Mont Blanc, the Dents du Midi, the Matterhorn, Monte Rosa, the central Swiss Alps, Lake Geneva, the Jura, the Rhône valley...

Amazingly, most of the Chablais is little frequented by walkers. The countryside is a mosaic of colorful Alpine meadows, mixed woodland and glacial tarns, crowned by dramatic rocky mountain peaks. There are wild flowers everywhere: 1,200 species, including gentian, orchids and edelweiss, and plenty of exciting wildlife too.

The footpaths are easy to follow, with excellent signposting, and there is virtually no road walking. Part of your route follows the classic Alpine long-distance footpath (GR5), and part follows old smugglers' trails high up along the Swiss border.



THE HIGH ALPS | DAY BY DAY

Day 1 Arrive at Les Gets

A taxi transfer from Geneva to Les Gets, then time to explore this charming alpine village or enjoy a swim in the pool before enjoying M Hominal's delicious cuisine.

Day 2 Les Gets to Lac de Montriond 20km/13mi/7.5hr

A well-marked path takes you to the summit of Mont Chéry (1826m) for fabulous views of the Les Gets valley. There's a fantastic panorama from the top, including a first sighting of Mont Blanc, before you descend through a flower-filled meadow - purple gentian and tassel hyacinth - to Col de l'Encrenaz. Skirt below the jagged peaks of the Pain de Sucre and the Pic de la Dollaz and descend to Montriond. Then it's a pretty riverside walk up to our attractive chalet hotel beside the green/blue Lac de Montriond.

Day 3 At Lac de Montriond

Excellent choice of local walks from a gentle stroll around the picturesque lake to an exhilarating ridge walk via the Ardent Waterfall up to the bustling village of Les Lindarets and then along the Super-Morzine ridge: fantastic 360° views. Full walking route notes provided.

Day 4 Lac de Montriond to Châtel 17km/11mi/6hr or 21km/13mi/9hr

The highlight of today's walk is the magnificent limestone pyramid of Mont de Grange (2432m), a wildlife reserve. Around 500 chamois live here, along with moufflons and red deer. From the summit you see a huge Alpine panorama as far as Italy and central Switzerland. Then down to Châtel - breathtaking views and excellent regional cuisine.

Day 5 At Châtel

Lots of choice of well-signed footpaths in the mountains here, and only a short walk into Switzerland is the pretty village of Morgins. Perhaps stay in Châtel, potter round the village market and choose from swimming, golf, tennis, and mountain biking. Or hire a water bicycle for a trip on the Lac de Vonnes - it's great fun!

Day 6 Châtel to La Chapelle d'Abondance 17km/11mi/7hr

From Le Morclan (1970m) you feel you can reach out and touch the jagged teeth of the Dents du Midi, with Mont Blanc to the south and a sweeping view east of the Bernese Alps. You follow the old smugglers' route high up along the Swiss border. Down through lush Alpine meadows thick with campanula, daisies and gentian to the pretty village of La Chapelle with its famous onion-domed church.

Day 7 At La Chapelle d'Abondance

If you're up to the challenge, the Cornettes de Bise is a must. As high as the Mont de Grange (2432m), this is one of France's few ibex reserves, with 400 in the area at the last census. Or perhaps just go as far as the beautifully secluded Lac d'Arvouin, you'll still be rewarded by spectacular views. Or if you're feeling lazy, wander round the pretty village and relax by the hotel swimming pool.

Day 8 La Chapelle d'Abondance to Abondance 14km/9mi/5hr or 16km/10mi/6.5hr

From the Pointe de Lachau (1962m) you can see the Matterhorn, 80km/50mi away! Down to the gorgeous hamlet of Ubine, where old chalets huddle round a tiny 17C chapel under the sheer wall of Mont Chauffé. The afternoon's almost all downhill, and you're soon relaxing in the hotel's private sauna and jacuzzi.

Day 9 At Abondance

Opposite the hotel is the 12C Abbaye de l'Assomption. The church (1275) is impressive, but it is the 14C Gothic cloister with 15C murals by Giacomo Jaquerio which steals the show. Why not also take a day trip to the 'seaside' town of Thonon and a boat ride on Lake Geneva?

Day 10 Abondance to St Jean d'Aulps/Les Gets 14km/9mi/5hr or 15km/10mi/5hr

Today offers a choice of two very different walks. The less energetic takes you to the Pointe des Follis, a great picnic spot for a relaxed end to your holiday. Or, weather permitting, you could - with a final burst of energy - climb to the wonderfully isolated tarn, Lac de Tavaneuse, where the setting is truly fabulous and the views magnificent as you go over the Col de Tavaneuse at 2000m. We meet you in St Jean d'Aulps for a ride back to Les Gets.

Day 11 Leave Les Gets

WHERE YOU STAY



Hotel Alpina ★★★
Les Gets Days 1+10



Hotel les Sapins ★★
Lac de Montriond Days 2+3



Hotel le Renard ★★
Châtel Days 4+5



Hotel le Chabi ★★
La Chapelle d'Abondance Days 6+7



Hotel de l'Abbaye ★★
Abondance Days 8+9

For extra nights we recommend Les Gets and Châtel.

Dates and Prices

Departs every two days

Tour Only

2012 departures

Jun 14-18	\$2,653
Sep 2-10	\$2,669
Jun 20-Jul 8, Aug 29-31	\$2,722
Jul 10-Aug 27	\$2,777

Singles: Add \$17 per night. Solo supplement is an additional \$485.

Child: This holiday is unsuitable for children under 14.

Holiday type: Independent walking, hotel-to-hotel, no minimum group size, however airport and luggage transfers are subject to at least 2 people (in total) booked on each departure.

Departs: Every two days from Jun 14 to Sep 10.

Duration: 11 days (10 nights).

Meals: Continental breakfast and evening meals.

Other details: In July and August ski lifts can be used to gain altitude on Days 2, 4 and 6 (pay locally). The Day 10 Lac de Tavaneuse option is often not possible until July. Please note also that many shops and mountain restaurants don't open until late June/early July. For "What your holiday price includes," see "Holiday Planning" section pp 48-51.

Tailor-made travel choices

Nearest Arrival Airport: Geneva Airport

Flights can be arranged from most US/CANADA airports, with connecting transfers as required, prices and details on request.

The above prices include our standard transfers: Geneva Airport at 12:55, (private taxi transfer to hotel, 60 mins, provided). **Return:** Geneva Airport by 11:50 (transfer provided).

Tour only: Transfers included from Geneva airport at 12:55, and back to Geneva airport departing hotel at 10:30.

W10HS

THE HIGH ALPS | WALKING DETAILS



This is one of the most demanding walks that we offer, with some strenuous climbs and descents each day. You'll need to be a regular walker and reasonably fit. Walking boots are essential and, given that mountain weather can change rapidly, waterproofs should always be carried.



Average daytime temperature (°C):

24 26 25 21
JUN JUL AUG SEP



Average monthly rainfall (mm):

75 67 99 84
JUN JUL AUG SEP