



Walking Below & Beyond **Mont Blanc**

Switzerland, Italy & France
September 23-October 5, 2017



Saturday, September 23

Depart the U.S. for independent flights to Geneva, Switzerland.

Sunday, September 24

Geneva, Switzerland to Villars sur Ollon

Arrive at Geneva Airport and transfer to our hotel (1.5 hours) in Villars sur Ollon, which sits at 4,100 ft. Enjoy an orientation walk through town before our welcome dinner. *Hôtel Du Golf and Spa (D)*

Walking time: 1 hour

Monday, September 25

Villars sur Ollon

Travel to Solalex (4,806 ft), a beautiful mountain pasture under the breathtaking cliff Miroir d'Argentine. Walk through pine forests and alpine meadows to Barboleuse (3,772 ft). After lunch at a local restaurant, walk to the picturesque village of Gryon (3,655 ft) where we enjoy a wine and liquor tasting in the Maison du Terroir, a local handicraft and food store.

Hôtel Du Golf and Spa (B,L,D)

Walking time: ~3.5 hours

Tuesday, September 26

Bretaye

Travel to Bretaye (6,000 ft), the starting point of today's walk. Hear a field lecture about Bretaye Lake, then walk across alpine meadows enjoying views of the Swiss Alps at every turn. Arrive to a farm and learn the details of alpine farming and cheese making. After a fondue lunch, hike through forested trails as we make our way back to Villars for a free evening and dinner on our own.

Hôtel Du Golf and Spa (B,L)

Walking time: ~3.5 hours

Wednesday, September 27

St. Bernard Pass to Cogne, Italy

Travel by bus to the Rhone Valley and up to the incredible St. Bernard Pass (8,100 ft), an ancient Roman transalpine route and more recently the path of Napoleon's army into Italy in 1800. Visit the St. Bernard Museum, the first hospice founded as early as 1049 and appropriately named after Saint Bernard. Enjoy a field lecture and lunch before continuing to the French speaking Valle d'Aosta in Italy. Arrive to Cogne (5,000 ft), the main gateway to the Parco Nazionale del Gran Paradiso.

Hotel Sant'Orso & Wellness Le Bois (B,L,D)

Walking time: ~2 hours

Thursday, September 28

Lillaz and Gimillan

Travel to Lillaz (5,304 ft) and the Lillaz waterfall. Walk along the Urtier River enjoying views of mountain peaks, glaciers and three different waterfalls. Return to the hotel for lunch before we head out to the village of Gimillan (5,900 ft) where we walk in Gran Paradiso National Park. After a field lecture, return to Cogne for dinner at a local restaurant.

Hotel Sant'Orso & Wellness Le Bois (B,L,D)

Walking time: ~3.5 hours

Friday, September 29

Aosta

Travel to the mountain town of Aosta (1,900 ft), founded by the Romans in 25 B.C. primarily as a military camp, and called the "Rome of the Alps." Explore the town and hear lecture about the history of the area. After an independent lunch and free time in Aosta, return to Cogne.

Hotel Sant'Orso & Wellness Le Bois (B)

Walking time: ~2 hours

Saturday, September 30

Valnontey and Alpe Vermiana

Travel to Valnontey to begin our walk along the Valnontey River, through forests of coniferous and larch trees to the Alpe Vermiana (5,800 ft). Experience fabulous views as you walk closer to the snow-covered Gran Paradiso Mountains. Enjoy a field lecture and a picnic lunch, followed by an afternoon of bread baking and tasting the local herbal liqueur.

Hotel Sant'Orso & Wellness Le Bois (B,L,D)

Walking time: ~3.5 hours

Sunday, October 1

Courmayeur, Italy to Chamonix, France

Depart Cogne for Courmayeur, a striking and fashionable resort located at the foot of Mont Blanc. Continue through the Mont Blanc tunnel to Chamonix (3,500 ft). On arrival, we walk around town and hear a lecture about the history of the town.

Mercure Chamonix Centre (B,L,D)

Walking time: ~1.5 hours

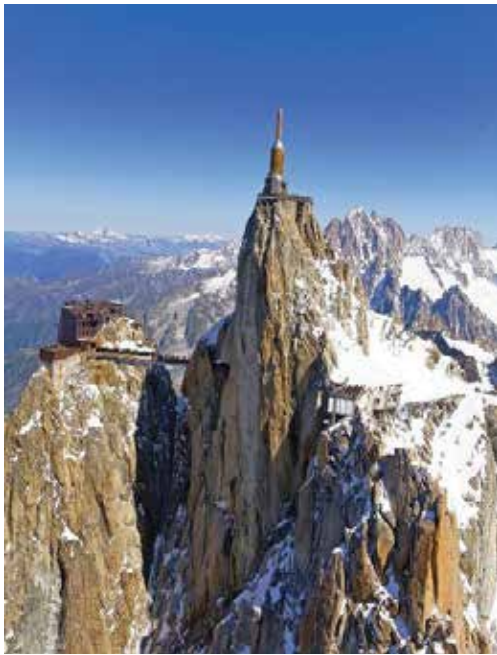
Monday, October 2

Aiguille de Midi

Ride the cable car up Mont Blanc, enjoying the marvelous views as it first climbs to Plan de l'Aiguille (7,600 ft) and then to Aiguille de Midi (12,700 ft). The panorama on a clear day is simply one of the best in the Alps. If the sky is clear, you may even get a glimpse of the Matterhorn. Hear a field lecture on the Aiguille du Midi and Mont Blanc, then walk from the middle station Plan de l'Aiguille (7,600 feet) to the Lac Bleu Lake. Return to Chamonix by cable car. Enjoy an evening and dinner on your own.

Mercure Chamonix Centre (B)

Walking time: ~1 hour



Tuesday, October 3

Petit Balcon Sud Trail and Chamonix

Hike from the town of Chamonix to the Petit Balcon Sud trail which leads through forested and open areas and offers the most spectacular views of the north face of Mont Blanc. Enjoy a field lecture and picnic on the trail. Tonight gather for a farewell drink and dinner.

Mercurie Chamonix Centre (B,L,D)

Walking time: ~3.5 hours

Wednesday, October 4

Chamonix to Geneva, Switzerland

Transfer by private coach to Geneva, Switzerland. Enjoy a one-hour bus tour of international Geneva, followed by a two-hour walking excursion in old town with visits to the Town Hall, St. Peter's Cathedral, the Arsenal and the Reformation Wall. Enjoy the rest of the day for independent exploration of the city's museums and gardens.

Novotel Genève Centre (B)

Walking time: ~2 hours

Thursday, October 5

Geneva to the U.S.

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to Geneva airport. (B)

What to Expect

Participants must be in very good health and able to keep up with an active group. Walks are moderate, from 1-5 miles and approximately 2-4 hours per day. Most walking activities each day will take place at an average altitude of 3,000-6,000 feet. The highest altitude we reach is 12,700 feet.

Travelers should be able to walk on gravel and dirt hiking trails, meadows, and pavement. Trails are well-marked, mostly gentle undulating hills, with some rocky sections and steep ascents. Sturdy walking/hiking shoes are required; ankle-high shoes are highly recommended.

One should be able to use stairs without handrails and walk and stand unassisted for periods of two hours at a time. You will need to board buses, trains and cable cars unassisted. We use local buses and trains at many times during the trip, as well as private vehicles. You do not have to participate in every activity, and there may be options for longer and shorter walks depending on the day.

Hotels are clean, comfortable and charming but not luxury accommodations.

Trip Details

Dates: September 23-October 5, 2017 (13 days)

Cost: \$4,895 per person, double occupancy; \$700 single room supplement

Group Size: Minimum 10, Maximum 20 (not including staff)

Included: Tour leader, local guides, and guest speakers; activities as specified in the itinerary; transportation throughout; airport transfers on designated group dates and times; 11 nights accommodations as specified (or similar); 11 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 7 dinners; wine and beer with welcome and farewell events; Commonwealth Club rep with 13 or more participants; gratuities to local guides, drivers, and for all included group activities; pre-departure materials.

Not included: International airfare to Switzerland; optional gratuity to tour leader; visa and passport fees; meals not specified as included; optional outings and gratuities for those outings; alcoholic beverages beyond welcome and farewell events; travel insurance (recommended, information will be sent upon registration); items of a purely personal nature.

Questions or to Sign Up

Call (415) 597-6720 or email
travel@commonwealthclub.org

Walking Below & Beyond Mont Blanc



Reservation Form September 23 - October 5, 2017

Phone: (415) 597-6720

Fax: (415) 597-6729

Name 1 Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. / Miss / Dr. / Prof.

Name 2 Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. / Miss / Dr. / Prof.

Address City/State/Zip

Home Phone Cell Phone

Email

Single Travelers Only:

If this is a reservation for one, please indicate:

I plan to share accommodations with:

OR I wish to have single accommodations.

OR I would like to know about possible roommates.

I am a smoker / nonsmoker (circle one).

Membership:

We require membership to The Commonwealth Club to travel with us.

Please check one of the following options:

I am a current member of the Commonwealth Club.

Please use the credit card information below to sign me up or renew my membership.

I will visit commonwealthclub.org/membership to become a member.

Payment:

Here is my deposit of \$ _____ (\$500 per person) for _____ place(s)

Enclosed is my check (made payable to *The Commonwealth Club of California*) OR

Charge my deposit to my: Visa MasterCard AMEX Discover

Card # Exp. Date Security Code

Authorized Cardholder Signature Date

I/We have read and agree to the Terms and Conditions for this program.

Signature(s)

Please note that final payment must be made by check.

Mail completed form to: Commonwealth Club Travel, PO Box 194210, San Francisco, CA 94119, or fax to (415) 597-6729.

For questions or to sign up over the phone call (415) 597-6720.

Terms & Conditions

The Commonwealth Club (CWC) has contracted European Walking Tours to organize this tour.

Reservations:

A \$500 per person deposit, along with a completed and signed Reservation Form, will reserve a place for participants on this program. The balance of the trip is due 90 days prior to departure and must be paid by check.

Eligibility:

We require membership to the Commonwealth Club to travel with us. People who live outside of the Bay Area may purchase a national membership. To learn about membership types and to purchase a membership, visit commonwealthclub.org/membership or call (415) 597-6720.

Cancellation and Refund Policy:

Notification of cancellation must be received in writing. At the time we receive your written cancellation, the following penalties will apply:

- 91+ days prior to departure: \$350 per person
- 90-1 days to departure: 100% fare

Tour pricing is based on the number of participants.

Tour can also be cancelled due to low enrollment.

Neither CWC nor European Walking Tours accepts liability for cancellation penalties related to domestic or international airline tickets purchased in conjunction with the tour.

Trip Cancellation and Interruption Insurance:

We strongly advise that all travelers purchase trip cancellation and interruption insurance as coverage against a covered unforeseen emergency that may force you to cancel or leave trip while it is in progress. A brochure describing coverage will be sent to you upon receipt of your reservation.

Medical Information:

Participation in this program requires that you be in good health and able to walk several miles each day. The "What to Expect" outlines what is required. If you have any concerns see your doctor on the advisability of you joining this program. It is essential that persons with any medical problems and related dietary restrictions make them known to us well before departure.

Itinerary Changes & Trip Delay:

Itinerary is based on information available at the time of printing and is subject to change. We reserve the right to change a program's dates, staff, itineraries, or accommodations as conditions warrant. If a trip must be delayed, or the itinerary changed, due to bad weather, road conditions, transportation delays, airline schedules, government intervention, sickness or other contingency for which CWC or European Walking Tours or its agents cannot make provision, the cost of delays or changes is not included.

Limitations of Liability:

In order to join the program, participants must complete a Participant Waiver provided by the CWC and agree to these terms:

CWC and European Walking Tours its Owners, Agents, and Employees act only as the agent for any transportation carrier, hotel, ground operator, or other suppliers of services connected with this program ("other providers"), and the other providers are solely responsible and liable for providing their respective services. CWC and European Walking Tours shall not be held liable for (A) any damage to, or loss of, property or injury to, or death of, persons occasioned directly or indirectly by an act or omission of any other provider, including but not limited to any defect in any aircraft, or vehicle operated or provided by such other provider, and (B) any loss or damage due to delay, cancellation, or disruption in any manner caused by the laws, regulations, acts or failures to act, demands, orders, or interpositions of any government or any subdivision or agent thereof, or by acts of God, strikes, fire, flood, war, rebellion, terrorism, insurrection, sickness, quarantine, epidemics, theft, or any other cause(s) beyond their control. The participant waives any claim against CWC/ European Walking Tours for any such loss, damage, injury, or death. By registering for the trip, the participant certifies that he/she does not have any mental, physical, or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other participants. CWC/ European Walking Tours shall not be liable for any air carrier's cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket to or from the departure city. Baggage and personal effects are at all times the sole responsibility of the traveler. Reasonable changes in the itinerary may be made where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of the passengers.