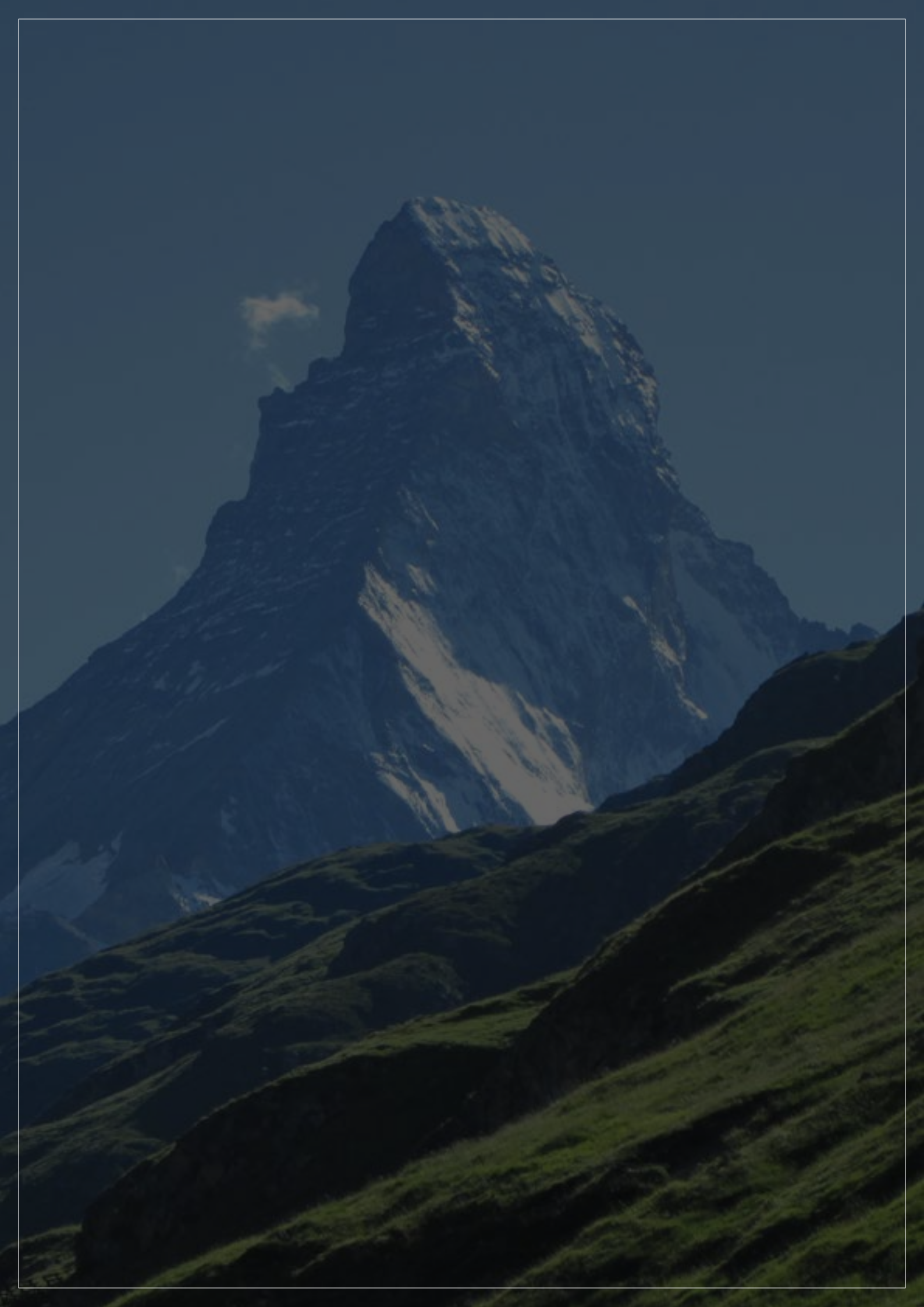
ADVENTURE CONSULTANTS
MOUNTAINEERING

MATTERHORN

4,478M/14,691FT

EX CHAMONIX

2026 TRIP NOTES



MATTERHON EX CHAMONIX TRIP NOTES

2026 TRIP DETAILS

Dates: Available on demand from July to September
Duration: 6 days
Departure: ex Chamonix, France
Price: €6,850 per person

A classic 'must-do' European climb. *Photo: Mike Roberts*

The Matterhorn is undeniably the most magnificent and well-known peak in the Alps. Its bold pyramidal shape evokes emotions of wonderment and even fear in those who view it for the first time, as its four distinct faces stand omnipotent and menacing over the green meadows below. Separated by sharp ridges, the four faces are orientated to the four points of the compass, the northern aspects within Switzerland while the southern side lies in Italy.

We ascend via the Hörnli Ridge that separates the North and East Faces via a long and technical route requiring the utmost attention from climbers. The steep rock ridge is very involving and a successful attempt requires a rapid rate of ascent and full concentration by a fit party. The steep North and East Faces drop away spectacularly on either side and the sense of exposure is dramatic.

With its formidable history and the magnificent grandeur of its architecture, the Hörnli Ridge on the Matterhorn is a climb that is definitely worth aspiring to.

HISTORY

The European Alps are full of climbing history. They are the birthplace of mountaineering and their rich heritage adds to the superb facilities, including catered huts and lift systems offering services not seen elsewhere.

The Hörnli Ridge is the route by which the Matterhorn's first ascent was made in 1865 by the tenacious Englishman, Edward Whymper, after many attempts on the mountain. In what became the most famous alpine calamity of all time, the group suffered a terrible tragedy on the descent when a broken rope resulted in the loss of four of the party.

ABOUT THE CLIMB

The Matterhorn is a superb summit demanding fitness, determination and a high level of competence on both rock and ice.

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▲Stupendous views from the Hörnli Ridge. *Photo: Paolo Pieroni*

The summit day will start well before dawn, around 3am, and you will be encouraged by your guide to move consistently to ensure you reach the summit in a reasonable timeframe. Depending on conditions, the ascent will take between 4–6 hours and an equal length of time to descend.

Whilst much of the rock on the Hörnli Ridge is good, the first part of the route follows the East Face, slightly to the left of the ridge and here the rock is slabby and loose.

Though it looks narrow from a distance, the Hörnli Ridge is broad and featured when climbing. There are many scrambling sections as well as some steep climbing pitches. The last 200m/650ft requires the use of crampons and an ice axe.

With 1,000m/3,300ft of climbing, it is a long and tiring day, so will take at least as long to descend as to climb. Stopping at the Hörnli Hut for a tea break, we continue down to the more comfortable hotel at Schwarzsee. If you arrive well prepared you will really enjoy this climb for its intensity, without encountering extreme terrain.

TRIP OUTLINE

Your guide will meet with you the morning after your arrival in Chamonix, France, for an equipment check and briefing about the upcoming programme and anticipated weather conditions. You will start the training by taking a lift to a high mountain region close to Chamonix, where you will make ascents of appropriate training routes on the Aiguille de l'Index. This is the time where you get to practice climbing skills and start to acclimatise for the ascent of the Matterhorn in the final days of the programme.

The following day you will ascend to the Aiguille du Midi to climb the Arête des Cosmiques (AD, 3,800m/12,500ft) which is a very enjoyable climb on mixed snow and rock. In addition to being a really good day out in the mountains, this will help to consolidate your acclimatisation and to get some good climbing under your belt to get you well prepared for the upcoming ascents.

Once training has been completed you will travel with your guide to Switzerland and ascend to the Hörnli Hut on the lower part of the Matterhorn's Hörnli Ridge to prepare for the ascent the following morning.

First and foremost, weather and conditions have to be favourable for a safe ascent of this serious peak. Although success cannot be guaranteed, we have developed our approach to give you a serious chance of attaining an ascent of this classic route.

The ascent is based entirely on a 1:1 guiding ratio. While some operators will clump you together with large groups during the early acclimatisation phase, we feel there is much to be gained on warm-up routes that get you prepared for the upcoming rigours and technical challenges that you will face.

We programme the trip over 6 days/7 nights to include the necessary period of acclimatisation before making an ascent at this altitude. We consider it vital that you work closely with your guide throughout the week to develop the appropriate level of communication and trust to make the ascent as a partnership of two people on a rope. Extra days can be added to the programme for additional acclimatisation and preparation days by signing up for our 2 day Europe Pre-Course and Acclimatisation Programme.

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Gaining ground on the lower reaches of the Matterhorn. *Photo: Tammy Schiro*

Enjoy warm-up climbs in the Chamonix region. *Photo: Marco Tamponi*

Enjoy the ambience of Chamonix. *Photo: Guy Cotter*

PREREQUISITE EXPERIENCE

To climb the Matterhorn, you need to be fit, have strong physical and mental stamina and be capable of strenuous exercise for several days duration. Prospective climbers must be competent in rock and alpine climbing practices and be aware that your ability to succeed will be determined more by your current condition and capability than previous ascents you may have made in the past. You will need to be proficient in snow and ice techniques, and cramponing.

In order to get up this long route, prospective climbers must be confident in rock climbing in alpine boots to grade US 5.7/ AUS 15/ UK HS and be capable of moving at a steady pace for extended periods in technical terrain on snow and rock. It is imperative you have a high degree of cardiovascular fitness to cope with the strains of the climb and the altitude. Your climbing history will include ascents of long and technical multi-pitch alpine routes, and you will be an active rock climber, current in the use of rope skills, as well as snow and ice climbing techniques.

ITINERARY

DAY 0

Arrive Chamonix, hotel night.

DAY 1

Meet with your guide for an equipment check and briefing before taking La Flégère and l'Index lifts to 2,400m/7,800ft. Traverse the peaks of Aiguille de l'Index (2,595m/8,514ft) and return to Chamonix via the La Flégère lift. Hotel night.

DAY 2

Take the Midi lift and acclimatise by traversing Pointe Lachenal (3,613m/11,854ft, AD). Return via the Arête des Cosmiques and the Midi lift, overnight at Cosmiques Hut (3,613m/11,854ft).

DAY 3

Walk across the Valle Blanche for a traverse of Entrèves (3,611m/11,847ft). Take the Panoramique lift back across and then descend to Chamonix. Hotel night.

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▲On the Matterhorn summit. *Photo: Mike Roberts*

DAY 4

Drive to Täsch in Switzerland, park and take the train up to Zermatt. Take the lift to Schwarzsee (1,050m/3,400ft) and hike to the Hörnli Hut (3,260m/10,696ft). This will take about 2 hours, arriving in time for supper and an early night.

DAY 5

3am start for Matterhorn (4,478m/14,691ft) via the Hörnli Ridge (AD). After our descent back to the Hörnli Hut, we continue down to the more comfortable hotel at Schwarzsee. Hotel night.

DAY 6

Enjoy a late start, descend to Zermatt and return to Chamonix. Possible rock climbing enroute and this is also a spare day in case of bad weather. Hotel night in Chamonix.

DAY 7

Depart Chamonix after breakfast.

NOTE: We can also initiate the programme in Zermatt in Switzerland where we acclimatise on local peaks prior to climbing the Matterhorn. For an alternative and more challenging route on the Matterhorn, we can also traverse up the Lion (Italian) Ridge and down to the Hörnli Hut. Please contact us for alternative itineraries and pricing.

THE ADVANTAGES OF CLIMBING WITH ADVENTURE CONSULTANTS

Adventure Consultants is renowned for the quality of its service and strategy applied to expedition and ascent climbing. Our reputation is attributed to meticulous planning and experienced logistics coordination. We have a philosophy of investing in every expedition to offer our climbers the best possible chance of success.

We employ strong and specialised IFMGA Mountain Guides, who are some of the most pre-eminent in the industry. Many of our expedition members and climbers come to us because they have seen us in action on a previous trip and decide to opt for our level of service and proven experience. Others return because they know we do our very best to make expeditions and guided ascents safe and successful.

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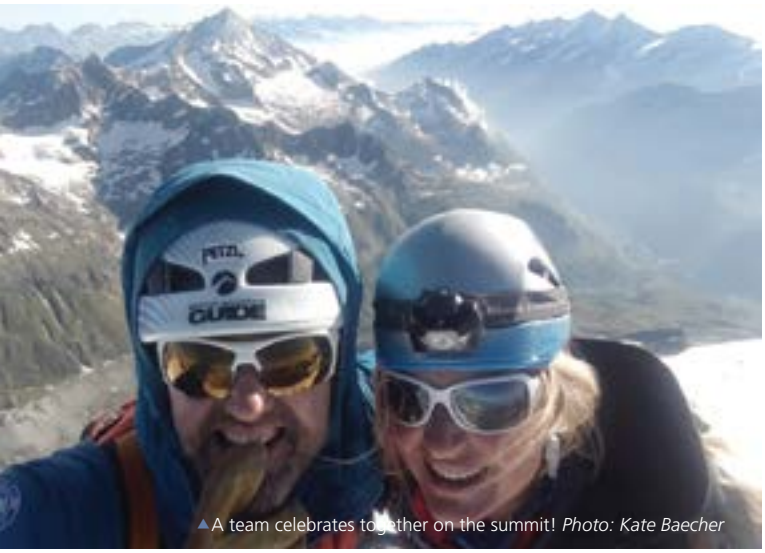
▲Looking down at climbers ascending the ridge. *Photo: Mike Roberts*



▲A team celebrates together on the summit! *Photo: Kate Baecher*

▲Approaching the base of the climb. *Photo: Kate Baecher*

CLIMBING SEASON

We operate on the Matterhorn from July through to September, and other times as conditions allow. In early July, you can expect more snow cover on the route and as temperatures warm up into the summer months from mid-July, we traditionally experience more settled weather and warmer temperatures.

WEATHER

Europe has a continental climate which in general encourages more stable weather. However, the weather in the high mountains can be changeable and at times very severe. It is possible that weather conditions may thwart an attempt on the summit of the Matterhorn in the time allotted. However, due to the length of the trip and our focus on the forecasts, we can often change our itinerary to work around frontal systems. Should the weather not allow a summit attempt within the time frame, it is sometimes possible to engage the guide for additional days depending on their availability.

EQUIPMENT

Climbing in the European Alps requires high-quality clothing and equipment due to the extremes of weather conditions. Our focus is on having the essential clothing and equipment to keep you warm and comfortable during the climb.

You will be sent an equipment checklist on confirmation of your booking. Your guide will go through this with you at the beginning of your trip. You can rent technical equipment for the climb, but you must provide your own clothing appropriate to mountaineering as per the equipment list. Actual equipment taken may vary subject to seasonal weather and route conditions. Group equipment including ropes and technical hardware will be provided by your guide.

COMMUNICATION & MESSAGES

Our guides are in cell phone communication with our operations base throughout the trip. This assists us with schedule and weather forecast updates, lift and accommodation coordination and safety

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▲Above the Solvay Hut. *Photo: Paolo Pieroni*

backup. Your own mobile phone should work in the region, although you may want to check with your own service provider first. Local mobile phones can be rented at the international airports.

FITNESS & HEALTH

In your build-up to the climb, it would be appropriate to be rock climbing regularly as well as training on hills for overall fitness. Your training should aim to progress until you are able to hike on consecutive days for at least 8 hours whilst carrying a 10kg/22lbs pack, incorporating the elevation gain of over 1,200m/4,000ft which is required on summit day. A regular rock climbing programme is also essential. Your guide will be attuned to your fitness levels and will regulate the pace accordingly; however, it is essential that you arrive physically prepared to succeed on this mountain.

Even climbing at the moderate altitudes in Europe has a definite physical effect on people. Most climbers notice a lower performance rate than normal. Summit day is physically demanding and a dedicated training programme is essential to enhance your chance of success. It is preferable to spend a few days at altitude prior to your scheduled climb to assist with your acclimatisation. Climbers regularly attend our Pre-Course and Acclimatisation Programme in Chamonix prior to partaking in the ascent.

Our registration form requests that you advise us of any medical problems you may have and of any medication you may be taking. Any information you supply will be treated as confidential.

FOOD

We provide breakfasts for the duration of the trip and evening meals on the hut nights while the trip is running. This is from breakfast on Day 1 until breakfast on your departure day. You will be responsible for your own lunch and snacks each day, plus evening meals on the non-mountain nights in Chamonix and Schwarzsee. This allows you to experience the exciting culinary options available as there are many restaurants and bars within close walking distance that provide a variety of foods to suit your tastes. Any additional food, bottled water, beverages or meals you purchase that are not mentioned in the inclusions will be at your own expense.

You should bring a selection of your favourite snack food and hydration drinks with you to ensure you are fuelled for by your preferred brands, as well as money for lunches and snacks whilst in the mountains. Actual amounts depend on your consumption but while you are climbing it's generally not possible to have a normal sized lunch, so you rely on snacks during the day and are able to take a late lunch once you arrive back at the hut.

If you have any special dietary requirements, please advise us at the time of registration. If your dietary requirements are especially strict you are advised to bring a sufficient supply of your required food types with you to ensure you are provided for.

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A group of climbers approach the Solvay Hut. *Photo: Paolo Pieroni*

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is provided on a twin share B&B basis from your arrival on the evening of Day 0 through to and including the night of Day 6. Accommodation in the mountains is in mountain huts in shared bunk rooms or dormitory rooms. Blankets are provided and no sleeping bag will be required, although you will require a 'sleeping sheet' for personal hygiene under the provided blankets. There are no single supplement options or private rooms available in the mountain huts but we can arrange this for you in Chamonix. We can also arrange an upgrade to four or five-star hotel accommodation—ask about the hotel options if interested.

TRAVEL TO CHAMONIX

We commence our Matterhorn Guided Ascent from Chamonix in France. The closest international airport is in Geneva, just over the border in Switzerland. Regular shuttles operate through to Chamonix and the trip takes about 1.5 hours. Your shuttle driver will drop you at your accommodation. At the completion of the course, the shuttle can take you from your hotel back to the airport. The shuttle transfers are at your own cost, but we can help arrange this for you.

INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that you take out Trip Cancellation Insurance and Travel Insurance, as well as Medical and Rescue Insurance to protect yourself in the event of injury or mishap prior to or during your trip.

While our focus is on safety and our track record supports this, the mountains do have hazards and there is the potential for mishap. If you were injured whilst on the trip, there is a very efficient rescue service nearby.

PRE-TRIP ACCLIMATISATION

It is preferable to spend a few days at altitude prior to your ascent to assist with your acclimatisation. Climbers regularly attend our Pre-trip Acclimatisation Programme in Chamonix prior to partaking in the ascent. This 2-day acclimatisation and re-familiarisation programme takes you on day climbs to high elevations on peaks that are easily accessible from Chamonix. This kickstarts your acclimatisation and gets you out climbing before the main programme begins. By enhancing your acclimatisation and fine-tuning your skills before

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▲Making progress on the Hörnli Ridge. *Photo: Mike Robertss*

the Matterhorn programme begins, you experience more enjoyment from the climb and enjoy a greater success rate.

PRICES

Cost for the Matterhorn Guided Ascent, ex Chamonix is €6,850 for a 1:1 guide to climber ratio.

All prices are subject to change without notice.

The cost includes:

- Qualified mountain guide
- Group technical equipment
- Lifts as per the scheduled itinerary
- Huts as per the scheduled itinerary
- Transport as per the scheduled itinerary
- Hotel B&B 5 nights as per scheduled itinerary, including first night and last night of course
- Breakfast and dinner during mountain component of the course

The cost **does not** include:

- Any lift, hut, hotel or transport costs additional to the programme due to weather or logistics (any changes will be actioned only after you have been consulted by your guide)
- Personal mountaineering clothing and equipment as per lists supplied
- Evening meals during hotel nights in Chamonix and Schwarzsee
- Lunches
- Extra additional meals, snacks or drinks purchased from huts or hotels
- Insurance for travel and climbing in Europe
- Transport to and from Chamonix (although we can arrange it for you)
- Gratuity

PRE-TRIP ACCLIMATISATION PROGRAMME PRICING

€1,170 per person at a 1:2 guide to climber ratio
€1,980 per person at a 1:1 guide to climber ratio

The trip price includes the hotel on arrival day and first night. The hotel on the second night would be included as Day 0 on the Matterhorn Guided Ascent programme to follow. Please note this programme is to immediately precede the Matterhorn Guided Ascent with no rest day in between.

PAYMENT

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following Euro bank account:

Bank of New Zealand
Offshore Branch
42 Willis Street
Spark Central
Wellington
New Zealand

for the account of Adventure Consultants Limited

Account Number: 1000-594771-0002
Account Type: Euros
Swift Address: BKNZNZ22

NOTE: All bank transfer charges are for the remitter's account.

We can also accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard and Amex), plus a 3% transaction fee.

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Taking in the view from the summit! *Photo: Chris Ensoll*

DEPOSIT

To confirm place on one of our Matterhorn Guided Ascents, we require a completed registration form with a deposit of €500 per person.

BALANCE

The balance payment is due 60 days prior to the course start date.

CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

Once you have paid your deposit your trip is confirmed, subject to payment of the balance of fees owing 60 days prior to your trip commencement date. A climber may then cancel their participation on the following basis:

- Cancellations outside of 60 days will result in the loss of the trip deposit.
- For cancellations made within 60 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 50% of the full fee.
- For cancellations made within 30 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 75% of the full fee.
- For cancellations within 15 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

We recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent if you wish to be covered against cancellation due to medical or personal reasons.

HOW TO JOIN THIS TRIP

If you would like to join one of our Matterhorn Guided Ascents, please complete our online booking form and forward your deposit payment at https://adventureconsultants.com/guided-ascents/europe-ascents/matterhorn#DepartureBookingBlock.

CONTACT US

If you require more information, please contact us at:

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Web: www.adventureconsultants.com

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▲Sunset colours the Matterhorn. *Photo: Olivier Baron*

Adventure Consultants is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and a corporate member of the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants is a supporter of the dZi Foundation in Nepal for their 'Revitalise a Village' programmes.

Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA/UIAGM standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.

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