Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix

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SNOWSHOEING - HOSPICE GRAND SAINT BERNARD

Duration: 3 | Fitness: ▲▲▲△△ | Technique: ▲▲▲△△ | Price from: 570 €

The Grand Saint-Bernard hospice is located at 2469 meters above sea level, on the border between the Swiss region of Val d'Entremont and the Italian region of Val d'Aoste. Here the tradition of hospitality has been perpetuated for over 1000 years. Founded in 1050 by Bernard de Menthon to welcome and protect travelers, the hospice is inaccessible by road from the first snowfalls. For this reason, in the winter it is only accessible by ski or snowshoes. It is from this mythic place, located in a stunning setting, that we propose three different day-hikes, alternating Switzerland and Italy. A guaranteed total escape, in a haven of peace full of history. This trip is perfect for people used to snowshoeing. It is a must in the Alps, it will not deceive you. All snowshoeing trips by the Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix are for small groups of 8 people maximum. In this way, our guides will be at your complete service, guaranteeing a high quality trip.

This trip is part of a selection of our favorite journeys, offering unique destinations to explore local heritage and provide you with a genuine change of scenery. Enjoy two discovery trips, one located in the heights of Vallorcine and the other in the Giffre Valley, near Samoëns. Immerse yourself in vast open spaces, whether it's in the Contamines Montjoie reserve. Lastly, explore the Italian Val Ferret in the Aosta Valley.

ITINERARY

Day 1

Bourg Saint-Bernard - Grand Saint-Bernard Hospice

Starting from Chamonix (or Martigny) we reach Bourg Saint-Bernard (1950 m), starting point of our hike. After putting our snowshoes on, we slowly go up towards the Grand Saint-Bernard pass (2469 m). Then, we continue onto the "Death Valley", in reference to the many travelers who died here for bad weather between the 18th and 19th century. Take the time to enjoy the area and its setting, before getting comfortable for the night.

Elevation gain: 510 m

Day 2

Fenêtre de Ferret

After a good breakfast prepared by the priests, we continue towards the Fenêtre de Ferret (2698m), border pass connecting the Grand Saint-Bernard Valley and the northern part of the Swiss Val Ferret. From the Fenêtre de Ferret, we climb up to a small panoramic point at 2823m above sea level. The view on the Grandes Jorasses, the Mont Dolent and the eastern part of the Mont-Blanc massif is stunning. Slide down to the hospice for the night.

Elevation gain and loss: 600 m

Day 3

West pass de Barasson

We reach the border crest at Col de Barasson (2635 m). The view on the Italian side is spectacular. We complete our trip by making our way back to Bourg Saint Bernard through the Death Valley. Arrival at Martigny station (Switzerland) and then Chamonix, at the end of the day.

Elevation gain: 500 m - Elevation loss: 900 m

GROUP BOOKING

Group session associates several people who don't know each other. It allows for a planned program to benefit from an attractive price on fixed dates. This formula is ideal for people looking for the friendliness of a group.

Dates : See below for the group booking module

Price 2027 : 570€ per person - based on minimum 4 participants

This price includes :
- organisation and mountain Leader guiding service
- half-Board accomodations at Grand Saint Bernard Hospice in dormitory,
- picnic lunches
- transfer from and back to Chamonix
- snowshoe, pole, avalanche transceiver (DVA), shovel and probe rental

This price does not include :
- drinks and personal expense (souvenirs…)
- repatriation insurance (mandatory)
- anything not mentioned in « included in the package »

PRIVATE BOOKING

Private booking is the historical relationship that binds a guide to his/her client. It allows you to be alone, or in a constituted group, with your guide that meets your specific needs. It is undoubtedly the ideal formula to realize your projects because it guarantees you a maximum of comfort. You are free to choose your departure date (depending on the availability of the huts) and the itinerary can be adjusted, according to your specific expectations.

For more information about our rates for private booking, please contact us

FURTHER INFORMATION

Find in this in this section, all the information about this activity. For any further information please contact our advisors (contact details above).

Meeting point : Meet at 9 am at the Compagnie des Guides office in Chamonix
Possibility to meet at Martigny train station on day 1, equipped for the hike

Ability level : Moderate trek. For active people who does not mind training to prepare for the hike. Multi-day snowshoe hike for people with trekking experience. 5 to 6-hour hike with average vertical gain between 500 m and 700 m. Snowshoe hikes on steeper terrain. Prior experience recommended. Each hiker carries daily necessities, picnic and safety avalanche safety kit. Hike with a lighter backpack on day 2. Children minimum 12 years old accompanied by a parent

Itinerary : In the event of heavy snowfall, the Grand Saint Bernard Hospice may become inaccessible. In such a case, an alternative destination in the area, such as the Brunet Hut at the foot of the Petit Combin, will be suggested to you

Guiding policy : each mountain leader can guides a group from 4 to 8 people. The Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix's guiding policy guarantees a high level experience. Children minimum 12 years old accompanied by a parent

Accomodation :
- During the trip : 2 nights at the Grand Saint Bernard Hospice, in mixed dormitory (or Brunet mountain hut in dormitory in the case of a change of plan)
- Before & after the trip: we have some hotel partners in Chamonix with special prices for our customers

Documentation : Participants must have an insurance with repatriation cover. Cancellation insurance is highly recommended. You can take out insurance offering both of these types of cover when you sign up

Preparing for the trip : few days before the trip, the mountain guide will be in contact to answer any questions you may have.

EQUIPMENT

We recommend you to pay particular attention to the choice of your equipment. It contributes greatly to the success of your stay. Weight is decisive: you always have to evaluate the ratio weight/comfort, to find the best compromise. In a general way, it is better to pile up several light coats rather than wear one big clothing.

Hiking boots
- Boots for snowshoeing should be warm and waterproof. They should also provide high ankle support. New boots should be worn a couple of times before.
- If your feet tend to get blisters easily, you can apply baby talc on dry feet in the morning before wearing your socks.

Back-pack
- Minimum size 40 L (a back-pack with extra room is better than too small).
- Once everything is packed, make sure there is enough room to fit your picnic lunch.
- Although backpack covers are very convenient in bad weather, we recommend using a very large plastic bag as a pack-liner to protect your personal belongings from getting wet.

Clothing
Underwear : avoid using cotton. Compared to technical synthetic material, it is heavier and it dries slowly. Wool is also getting popular amongst sportswear brands. Synthetic and wool are warmer ; they dry fast, and allow you to pack light.

Carrying weight
Taking enough time to pack is essential, as you are going to carry every item for several days in a row. Avoiding extra weight can easily be done by packing your clothes tightly, placing heavy items at the bottom of the pack, and avoiding empty spaces. As a result weight is better spread throughout your back and weight impression diminished).

Daily needs
- 1 synthetic long-sleeve shirt,
- 1 light polar fleece,
- 1 pair of Goretex pants, 1 long synthetic underwear to wear under your trousers,
- 1 a pair of wool socks,
- 1 Goretex jacket,
- 1 pair of fleece gloves, 1 pair of mittens, 1 pair of silk gloves,
- 1 warm hat, a scarf or neck warmer,
- 1 water bottle (1.5 quart, to 2 quarts minimum) isothermal if possible,
- 1 pocket knife + 1 « spork »,
- Cap or sun-hat and sunglasses (category # 3 minimum), sunscreen (face and lips),
- a camera and a pair of binoculars (optional).

What you need for the entire trip
- Down jacket or warm polar fleece,
- long underwear or sweat pants for the evening,
- changes of clothes: (T-shirt, underwear and socks) prefer synthetic to cotton,
- Pocket light or head lamp,
- Individual first aid kit *,
- Ultra-light shower kit (feel free to customize …) + synthetic « dry fast » towel,
- 1 one-person sleep-sheet (silk is the most comfortable and remains the lightest),
- ID card or passport + spare change for personal expenses + paper tissues and toilet paper,
- gaiters (recommended if your Goretex pants don't have a boot-skirt).

** Elastoplast (stretchable strapping tape), band-aids, second skin, medicine for common aches and pains (diarrhea, headaches, sore throat…). Don't forget to bring personal prescription treatment if you have one. Mountain leaders also carry a complete first aid kit.*

Our Rental Partners : You can rent your equipment with our rental shops partners and benefit from special price Millet (excluding crampons, ice axes and helmet), Sanglard Sports, Ravanel & Co & Concept Pro Shop
Our Equipment Partners : Millet, Dynastar, Julbo, Grivel & Monnet