

## FRANCE – THE FRENCH ALPS

8-days / 7-nights - One-hotel group guided walking tour based at Les Contamines



One of our most popular walking holidays we offer outstanding Alpine views beneath the imposing white peak of Europe's highest mountain Mont Blanc. Based in the Alpine village of Les Contamines at an altitude of 1,164 metres the only road along the valley ends at Notre Dame de la Gorge, just beyond the village. To the east is the Mont Blanc massif, with its impressive glaciers. To the west are the more rounded slopes of Mont Joly. Popular for summer walking and near to the 'Tour du Mont Blanc' trails that pass through France, Italy and Switzerland.

- Discover the high mountains and meadows of the Chamonix Valley
- Superb location at the base of Mont Blanc in the heart of the French Alps
- Enjoy traditional Savoyard specialties at our popular family-run 3-star hotel
- Ascend the famous Aiguille du Midi or ride the tramway high onto Mont Blanc

Our centre-based or one-hotel walking holidays offer a choice of two guided walks each day – usually an easier walk or a more challenging option. There is usually a free day midweek to relax or explore unguided.

**Cost per person:** AU\$1390 (twin share) Single room supplement AU\$260

**Departs:** 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> June, 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> Jul, 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2012

**Tour includes:** 7-nights in comfortable hotel accommodation room with ensuite bathrooms, with 7-breakfasts, 7-evening meals, experienced walks leader, 5-guided walks and a free sightseeing day midweek.

**Not included:** Airport transfers from Geneva (these can be pre-booked at extra cost or you can make your own way - ask for details), meals & drinks not mentioned & personal expenses.

**Guided walks:** At the discretion of the guides, there are walks on the slopes of Mont Blanc itself, discovering the hidden Miage Valley, the clear waters of Lac Vert, and the lush meadows of the Val Montjoie, all of which have the added attraction of stops at mountain huts. For mountain walkers, Les Contamines is the place to aim high and the guided walks take in the most spectacular scenery including the Taconnaz and Bossons Glaciers, the towering cliffs of the Passy Nature Reserve, and Nid d'Aigle high on the slopes of Mont Blanc.

**Hotel La Chemenaz:** This 3-star chalet style hotel, located in a tranquil location beneath the slopes of Mont Blanc, is just 20 minutes walk along a riverside path from the centre of Les Contamines. The family serve superb meals based on traditional Savoyard specialties. Hotel La Chemenaz has 38 spacious ensuite bedrooms decorated in cosy Savoyard style, and many with balconies and magnificent mountain views. There is also a lounge and bar area, which are open-plan with cosy alcoves. In front of the hotel is a garden, with tables and chairs for guests' use. There is an outdoor heated swimming pool, a sauna, spa pool, and boot room.

**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations**



**Suggested itinerary** – Tour starts & ends at Les Contamines

**Day 1:** Arrival day – plan to arrive at the hotel by mid-afternoon or at the latest before dinner

**Day 2: South into the Bon Nant Valley**

The first day walks start from the hotel and will introduce you to the Bon Nant Valley which heads due south from Les Contamines. The main track through the valley has been in existence since pre-Roman times, and was an important trade route until modern times. This is the route of the Tour du Mont Blanc.

**Day 3: West of Les Contamines**

Today's we walk onto the high ground that separates Les Contamines from Megève. One group returns via high alpine meadows and cols, the other takes a lower route passing meadows, native woodland and isolated chalets.

**Day 4: Plateau d'Assy and the Rochers des Fiz**

We journey high up onto the limestone massif to the north of Mont Blanc. This area is dominated by the cliffs towering up to the north, and the fantastic views across to Mont Blanc and the valley of Les Contamines to the south. The walks offer a village of Plateau d'Assy decorated by famous artists, such as Braque, Chagal and Matisse or an exhilarating walk with some mild scrambling to reach the Lac de Pormenaz and beautiful Lac Vert.

**Day 5: Free day** Today no walks are organised, allowing you to explore the local area or just relax.

**Day 6: Col du Joly and the Mont Joly ridge**

Today we go south and west by cable car. One walk explores the meadows around Col du Joly: an area abundant with wild flowers with an option to extend the walk to Le Baptieu. The other walk offers a high level route along the ridge between Megève and Les Contamines, reaching the high point of Mont Joly.

**Day 7: By the Mont Blanc Glaciers**

Bus to Les Houches and ascend by cable car to Le Prarion for a splendid overview of the areas visited earlier in the week, before heading closer to Mont Blanc. The highlight today is the view of the Bionnassay Glacier.

**Day 8:** Tour ends after breakfast - departure transfer available at extra cost if required

This program should give you a good feel for the walks. Your walk leaders will make the final selection of walks.

**Local transport to and from walks:** Local transport is not included in the cost of your holiday, please allow Euro 95 (approx \$140) per week for transport during the week, excluding your free day - payable locally.

**Footpath information:** Distances are approximate



Easier Walks: 8 to 13km on generally well-graded ascents. Up to 500m of ascent in a day



Harder Walks: 12 to 23km across rougher mountain terrain with some exposed sections. Up to 4300m of ascent in a day.

This tour runs different walking itineraries on subsequent weeks and is ideal as a two-week holiday experience.

**Outdoor Travel** offers one-hotel or centre-based guided walks in most of Europe including France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Turkey, Croatia, Greece, Slovakia, Slovenia or Norway. Self-guided walks are offered along pilgrims trails the Camino de Santiago in France & Spain or Portugal & Via Francigena to Rome.

Contact **Outdoor Travel** or your travel agent for more details, travel brochures and reservations:

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