



GRANDE TRAVERSEE DES ALPES self-guided - 4th section

From Larche to Menton



The Alps from one side to the other to meet people and mountains... The Grande Traversée des Alpes (GTA) between Lake Geneva and the Mediterranean is a long-distance journey. The opportunity to take a long break and put daily life aside. This itinerary runs along the Swiss and Italian borders while crossing five departments and some of the most famous massifs of the Alps.

4th section: from Larche to Menton - Ubaye, Mercantour, Vallée des Merveilles

The fourth section of this route starting from Lake Geneva to Menton. Undoubtedly the section with an itinerary whose diversity of landscapes, flora, heritage and architecture is most marked in the French Alps. From the high summits of the Ubaye, passing by lakes and wide open spaces of the Mercantour and the Vallée des Merveilles, diving towards the Mediterranean by a multitude of valleys, passes and ancient mountain villages. Do not be deceived the terrain and deep valleys make it a physically challenging section. A dazzling experience with a sea view to finish.

7 days

Self-guided / without a guide

With or without baggage transport

Accommodation : Classic (dormitory)

Level : ***

From : 655€

You will like

- Ubaye, Mercantour, Vallée des Merveilles
- Baggage transport
- Through the mountains to the Mediterranean!

The route

Day 1

Meet at 9am in front of Auberge du Lauzanier in Larche or at 8am at Montdauphin-Guillestre train station.

LARCHE - LAUZANIER VALLEY - PAS DE LA CAVALE

Depart for the Lauzanier Valley at the gates of the Mercantour National Park. Climb via a nice path to reach the Lauzanier Lake before a final slightly steeper climb up to the pass. A magnificent view from Col de la Cavale of the Tinée and the surrounding massifs. Descend into the high valleys of the Alpes Maritimes passing by the Col des Fourches and the magnificent promontory of Mont des Fourches. Reaching the Bonnette Restefond road (the highest road in Europe) encountering poignant vestiges of the Maginot line. Night in Bousseyas, the first hamlet of this high valley of Tinée.

6 hour walk / Elevation: +1100m -1000m

Day 2

ISOLA 2000 - COL DE LA MERCIÈRE - LE BORÉON

After an early transfer to Isola 2000 ski resort, climb to the Col de la Mercière (2342m). Descend, then cross through the old village of Mollière and up to Col De Salèze. Depending on the conditions and the level of the group, detour to Lake Negre. Descend into Vésubie to the village of Boréon. Night in a gîte.

6 hour walk / Elevation: +490m -1090m

Day 3

BOREON - PAS DES LARDES - MADONE DE FENESTRE - LACS DE PRALS - LA GODOLASQUE

From Boreon, climb the valley up to Trecolpas lake and Pas des Lardes (2448 m) dominated by the Gelas, highest summit of Mercantour. Going down to the hopice of the Madone de Fenestre. Going up the small valley of Poncet to get to la Baisse and the 5 lakes of Prals before going up to Baisse des Prals. Beautiful descent to the bottom of Godolasque Valley, to relais des Merveilles.

If this itinerary seems too long to you, taxi transfer in option between Boréon and the Madone de Fenestre (€50 per person, booking upon registration) or split this day by stopping at the refuge de Madone (8-day trek), +70€ booking upon registration, luggage transport: 50€ per person).

7.5 hour walk / Elevation: +1550 m - 1520 m

Day 4

VALLEE DE LA GODOLASQUE - REFUGE DE NICE - BAISSSE DE VALMASQUE - VALLEE DES MERVEILLES

Going up Godolasque valley up to lake Fous and refuge de Nice on top of it. From refuge de Nice going up tp Baisse Basto to get to the famous Vallée des Merveilles and its rock engraving next to the trail. A multitude of lakes will enchant you in the middle of this mineral landscape. Going down to refuge des Merveilles to spend the night.

6.5 hour walk / Elevation: + 1350 m ; - 790 m

Day 5

REFUGE DES MERVEILLES - PAS DU DIABLE - COL DU RAUX - L'AUTHION - CAMP D'ARGENT

Via a multitude of lakes you leave Vallée des Merveilles via Pas du Diable. Change of scenery, crossing several mountain passes at medium altitude through sheep pastures. At the Col du Raux, heading back to the small plateau of Authion dominated by a remarkable redoubt, high place of confrontation during the Second World War. From Authion, it is from here on a clear day the first sighting of the Mediterranean. Descend to the small ski resort of Camp d'Argent.

5.5 hour walk / Elevation: + 650 m ; - 1000 m

Day 6

LE CAMP D'ARGENT - MONT VENTABREN - MANGIABO - SOSPEL

Let's go for a great day on the ridges. Leaving these landscapes rich in military vestiges of the Second World War to reach Sospel by the Mount Ventabren and Mangiabo ridges. With a continuing view of the mouth of the Var and the outskirts of Nice. Charming descent to Sospel village on the Bévéra river for the night.

7 hour walk / Elevation: + 1050 m ; - 1750 m

Day 7

SOSPEL - COL DU RAZET - VIEUX CATSELLAR - MENTON

Last day of the GTA, not there yet... but can you smell the sea?! Beautiful climb to the Col de Razel (1032m) on an old paved path between ruined shepherd huts. Passing flocks of sheep and goats from Rove testifies to the arrival in Provence. The vegetation becomes much more leafy and fragrant. Chestnut trees, maples and rosemary line this beautiful day. Enjoy the last mountain pass, Col du Berceau (1050m) to picnic overlooking the bay and harbour of Menton... and a final descent of 1050m to the waters edge !

6 hour walk / Elevation: +950m -1450m

In Menton, your bags are left at the hotel you have booked (please provide accommodation details when booking). If you do not sleep in Menton, the drop-off and storage fees in Menton will be € 15 per bag.

The trip

LEVEL ***

Average elevation per day: 900 m.

Maximum elevation: 1450 m.

Maximum altitude of passage: 2800 m.

Altitude of accommodations: around 1800 m on average

Walking time: 5 to 7.30 hours per day

Type of hike: mountain route with no technical difficulty and accessible to children from 12 years.

Type of terrain: easy paths of medium mountain. The trails are well marked, you will often be above the stage of vegetation, so just a few passages in the forest. In the Mercantour, some pass passes will take place in scree.

You only carry your belongings of the day except for the night of the day 4 (refuge des Merveilles), your bags will be directly transported to the Silver Camp. It will be necessary to take with you your belongings for the night.

Travel made in collaboration with our local partners, willing to concoct an authentic stay.

ROAD BOOK

Before departure, we give you a travel file with:

- IGN map with route layout.
- 1 road-book with all the necessary information for the hike.
- 1 card holder.
- The list of accommodations.

HIKE

In France, the "Grande Randonnée" trails are marked in red and white (in both directions).

It is better to master the IGN map reading at 1/25000 and 1/50000.

BAGGAGE TRANSPORT

Without luggage transport: your luggages are carried by you exclusively.

With luggage transport: your luggage is daily transported to your accommodation by a vehicle except on day 4.

ACCOMMODATION

CLASSIC

6 nights in mountain refuge or comfortable gîte in dormitory and collective room.

COMFORT

In option, room for two people (depending on availability when booking) (double room in gîte: sheets and towels not provided, sanitary to share). Supplement is 115€/person. Possibility of double room for nights 1, 2, 3, 5, 6.

MEALS

Breakfast and dinner are provided in each accommodation.

In option: 6 picnics (day 1 prepared by yourself): **90€** for the week to book at registration. They also can be ordered the day before, directly on the spot.

PHYSICAL CONDITION

To be able to easily walk 15km (on flat trails) in 3 hours maximum.

If this is not the case, at least 3 weeks before departure, 2 to 3 times a week, we advise you to undertake some prior

fitness training: 4 to 5 km of jogging or 3 to 4 hours hiking or cycling. Your physical preparation will enable you enjoy your trek to the maximum.

Practical information

DEPARTURES

From mid-june to mid-septembre

ACCESS TO DEPARTURE POINT

You will leave your bags at the Lauzanier inn in Larche (exit the village towards Italy), this is the start of your hike. If you have chosen the option to transfer the day 1 between the SNCF station of Guillestre-Montdauphin and Larche, RDV at 8am precise at the SNCF train station.

BY TRAIN:

The easiest way to access this tour is by train as it is a linear hike and not a loop (please consult the SNCF to know the exact times).

Go: stop at Montdauphin station - Guillestre (Paris - Valence - Briançon line). You can arrive by night train or arrive more comfortably the day before by day train and sleep at the Lacour hotel at the SNCF station in Montdauphin-Guillestre.

Return: at the Menton station, you can reach Nice (Nice > Menton: 40 mn) and the trains or planes that take you to major destinations (arrival at the Nice station between 4pm and 6pm).

BY CAR:

In order to plan your trip, we advise you to inquire about your route at the different sites: Via Michelin or Mappy.

You can reach Larche by car directly: from Gap, Ubaye valley take direction Barcelonnette then Larche pass (Italian border). The village of Larche is 5 km before the pass. The Lauzanier inn is located at the exit of the village of Larche.

Free and unguarded parking near the hostel or tourist office.

Return to Montdauphin - Guillestre station if you came by car. Or, possibility to book the shuttle Menton > Montdauphin at 240€ per person (on the basis of 2 people), about 4:30 of journey.

END OF STAY

End of the hike on Saturday around 4:30 p.m.

your bags will be in the hotel you have booked (if you have taken the luggage transport option). If you leave Menton directly after the hike, we will drop off your bags at a hotel near the station (the hotel will charge us €15 per bag if you do not stay overnight).

Return by train:

At Menton train station, you can reach Nice (Nice => Menton: 40 mins) and the trains or planes that take you back to major destinations (arriving at Nice station between 4 and 6 pm).

Night trains : Nice - Paris; TGV;

Shuttle bus to Nice - Côte d'Azur airport in front of Nice Ville station, on the right along the avenue in front of the station.

You can spend the night in a hotel close to the station in Nice or Menton.

Or return to Montdauphin - Guillestre station if you came by car, but it will take you at least 5 hours to get back by train.

ACCOMMODATION BEFORE STAY

Possibility of arriving the day before:

At the [Auberge du Lauzanier](#) in Larche +33 (0)4 92 84 35 93 (starting point for the next day).

At the [Hotel Lacour](#) at the Montdauphin - Guillestre train station +33 (0)4 92 45 03 08 (then transfer to Larche optional, 40€ per person).

Dates & prices

DEPARTURE AND PRICE

Departure from the 16th of June to 16th of September 2024

Without luggage transport

655€ per person in classique accomodation (mini. 2 people)

770€ per person in comfort accomodation (double room except on day 4)

With luggage transport (except on day 4)

1 person : 1245€ per person, classic accomodation

2/3 persons : 950€ per person, classic accommodation

4/5 persons : 855€ per person, classic accommodation

6 people and more : 775€ per person, classic accomodation

Comfort option (2-person bedroom, except on day 4) : +115€ per person

Drop-off and storage costs in Menton (if you did not book an hotel in Menton for the last night on day 7): 15€ per luggage.

Supplement 6 picnics : 90€ / person

Supplement single person departure : 140 €

Optional Transfers (2 persons minimum) :

Transfer between Montdauphin station and Larche, day 1: 50€ per person

Transfer back between Menton station and Montdauphin, day 7 : 240€ per person

Transfer from Boréon to the Madonna de Fenestre on day 3 (to shorten the stage): 50€ per person

THE PRICE

It includes:

- Half-board from the dinner of the 1st day to the breakfast of the last day ;
- The road book: description and maps IGN (1 road book per registration file) ;
- Transfer between Bousieyas and Isola 2000 ;
- Luggage transport between accommodations, if you chose this option (except D4) ;
- Tourist taxes ;
- Organization and booking fees.

The price does not include:

- Lunch picnics (90€ / persone en supplément)
- Drinks, visits and other personal expenses ;
- Travel insurance.

The price is all inclusive from departure to end point.

Equipment and baggage

EQUIPMENT LIST

Clothing

- Walking trousers
- Shorts (Bikini/swimsuit, just in case!)
- Breathable or merino wool t-shirts
- Breathable or merino wool leggings
- Fleece or jumper
- Wind stopper or Goretex jacket
- Waterproof poncho + gaiters or Goretex trousers + waterproof rucksack cover
- Pair of gloves and a warm hat
- Sun hat or baseball cap
- Walking socks (1 pair per day)
- Sturdy walking boots with a good sole, already broken in
- 1 change of clothes for the evening
- A pair of comfortable shoes for the evening

Other Equipment

- Toilet bag
- Quick drying towel
- Sunglasses and sun cream
- Water bottle or Camelback (1.5 litre minimum)
- Knife, fork and spoon
- Plastic lunch box/plate for your picnic lunches
- Plastic cup for coffee
- Small First Aid kit (antihistamine, ibuprofen, Compeed type blister pads...)
- Survival blanket
- Head torch or hand torch
- Sleeping bag liner sheet and pillowcase (blankets provided at accommodation)
- Two adjustable walking poles (highly recommended)
- Identity card or passport

BACKPACK

Bring a comfortable backpack of 30 to 40 litres for your personal belongings for the day (warm clothes, waterproofs, water, plate and cutlery for your picnic, sunscreen and your identity papers) and please keep a little room to carry a picnic and snacks.

BAGGAGE TRANSPORT

Your baggage will be transported daily between accommodation by our logistics vehicle (except day 4). You are allowed 1 soft, sports type bag with all your possessions inside, **no heavier than 10kg**. Your bag has to be carried everyday by the the driver to refuges, which access is not always easy! **Luggage which is too big and too heavy won't be accepted by the drivers!**

HOW TO REGISTER

- By internet: <http://www.altitude-montblanc.com>
- By telephone: +33 (0)4 50 79 09 16
- By post: Please provide your details
 - Surname, First Name, Date of birth
 - Address
 - Email
 - Telephone
 - Mobile

If you wish to register by post, please complete the form below and return it to:

Altitude Mont-Blanc
180, route du lac
74110 MONTRIOND
FRANCE

Please specify whether you wish to take out an optional cancellation insurance (4.2% of the tour price).

On receipt of your registration we will email an invoice (per couple) with a request for a deposit of 30% in association with your account details at Altitude Mont-Blanc ('My Account'). Payment can be made by credit card, bank transfer or by cheque. On receipt of your deposit you will receive a registration confirmation.
The balance must be paid one month before departure without a reminder from us.
For self-guided tours, we will then send your tour pack (includes maps, descriptive book etc.)

Our terms and conditions of sale can be found on our website.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.



Registration by mail form

Last name:

PRENOM:

Date of birth:

Address:

Phone number:

Mobile phone number:

Email address:

SEJOUR DEMANDE:

Number of days:

Insurance:

Price:

x 30% =

Deposit

Locality where signed:

Date

Signature:

A large, light gray rectangular box intended for the user's signature.

Return with your deposit to:
Altitude Mont-Blanc, 62 Passage du Nant Devant, 74110 Montriond, FRANCE