

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 baggage transport

 Accommodation : Classic (dormitory)

 Level : ***

 From : 565€

You will like

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

The route

Day 1

Meet at 9:00am in front of Auberge du Lauzanier in Larche or at 8:00am at Montdauphin-Guillemestre 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 pleasant 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 -1100m

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 Negere. Descend into Vésubie to the village of Boréon. Night in a gîte.

6 hour walk / Elevation: +850m -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.

7.5 hour walk / Elevation: +1450 m - 1520 m

Day 4

VALLEE DE LA GODOLASQUE - REFUGE DE NICE - BAISSÉ 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 to 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

A magnificent day on a ridge awaits. 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 the village of Sospel 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 Razet (1032m) on an old paved path in the middle of ruined shepherd huts. Passing flocks of sheep and goats from Rove testifying 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 1050m of descent to the waters edge!

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

You will get your belongings near Menton train station

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 7 days / 6 nights:

6 nights in mountain refuge or comfortable gîte in dormitory of 4 to 8 people.

These are newly renovated accommodations with hot showers every night.

The food is neat there, most of the time your dishes will be prepared with products of the country.

Possibility of room for two people depending on availability when booking (double room in gîte: sheets and towels not provided, sanitary to share). Supplement: 130€/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): **80 €** for the week to book at registration. They can be ordered the day before, 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 hostel Lauzanier Larche (when you get out of the village direction Italy), it is the departure of the hike.

For those who wish, we can pick you up at 8 am sharp at the Guillestre - Montdauphin train station. **You need to book the shuttle**, please contact navette.queyras@gmail.com (25€ per person, 1h transfer).

Possibility to arrive the day before:

- At the hostel Lauzanier in Larche (starting point for the next day). Reservation required at 04 92 84 35 93 (half board from 55 € per person).
 - At the hotel Lacour at Montdauphin - Guillestre train station. Reservation required at 04 92 45 03 08 (room from 80 € per night).
- We will pick you up in the morning at 8am (shuttle : 25€/pers).

Access:

The simplest access for this circuit is by train as it is a linear hike (that's not a loop).

IF YOU COME BY TRAIN:

Your stop is Montdauphin - Guillestre station (line Paris - Valence - Briançon). You can arrive by night train or arrive more comfortably the day before by a day train and sleep at Hotel Lacour (room from 80 € per night).

Please consult the SNCF for the exact timetable at 08.92.35.35.35.
or on the Internet <https://www.oui.sncf/>

BY CAR

In order to plan your trip, we advise you to look at different sites: Via Michelin or Mappy.

You can also arrive by car directly to Larche, from Gap, Ubaye valley take direction Barcelonnette and then Larche pass (Italian border). The village of Larche is located 5 km before the pass. The Lauzanier Inn is located at the exit of Larche. Free parking near the hostel or near the tourist office.

END OF STAY

End of the hike on Saturday around 4:30pm, your bags will be in a hotel near Menton train station.

Return by train:

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

Night train: Nice - Paris; TGV ; Shuttle to Nice airport - Côte d'Azur in front of Nice Ville train station on the right along the

avenue in front of the train station.

You can spend the night in a hotel near the train station in Nice or Menton.

Or return to the Montdauphin - Guillestre train station if you are coming by car, but it will take you 5 hours minimum to come back by train.

ACCOMMODATION BEFORE AND AFTER STAY

Lauzanier Inn in Larche: 0033 (0) 4 92 84 35 93

Hotel Lacour at Montdauphin - Guillestre train station: 0033 (0) 4 92 45 03 08

TO CONTACT US

If you are late, contact the agency at: +33 (0) 4 50 79 09 16 or +33 (0) 6 42 49 76 07

Dates & prices

Departure from the 14th of June to 13th of September 2021

Without luggage transport

565€ per person in classique accomodation (at least 2 people)

695€ per person in comfort accomodation (double room except day 4)

With luggage transport (except on day 4)

1 person: 930€ classic accommodation

2 persons: 745€ per person, classic accommodation

3 persons and more: 710€ per person, classic accommodation

Comfort option (double room except day 4): **+130€** per person

Single supplement, classic accommodation : **180€**

For more informations and bookings, please call or email us.

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);
- The transport of luggage between the accommodations, if you chose this option except D4;
- Tourist taxes;
- Organization and booking fees;
- Transfers according to technical sheet.

The price does not include:

- Lunch picnics ;
- Drinks, visits and other personal expenses;
- The cancellation insurance (4.2% of the amount of the stay).

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 12kg**. 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!**

If you wish to prolong your holiday, we can safely hold another bag for you which you may leave with us at the departure point and it will be deposited at the end point with your other baggage.

Details

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:

First name:

Date of birth:

Address:

Phone number:

Mobile phone number:

Email address:

Requested tour:

Number of days:

Insurance:

Price:

x 30% =

Deposit

Locality where signed:

Date

Signature:

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