

Take on the challenge & join us as we trek
three countries in three days!



Changing childhoods.
Changing lives.

ALPS 2025

19 - 23 June 2025

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Co-op Alps Trek for Barnardos

19 - 23 June 2025



Trip overview

The Trek

Join us on an epic adventure as we trek through three countries in three days. This challenge will see you explore France, Italy and Switzerland as we take on a section of the Tour du Mont Blanc. The route encircles the Mont Blanc Massif and is considered one of the world's classic long-distance walking trails.

The valleys in this area are simply beautiful with vast pine forests, lush meadows, blue lakes, soaring rocky peaks and breath-taking glaciers. This magnificent alpine region is also home to a variety of wild flowers, birds and other wildlife.

Mont Blanc, or "White Mountain", is the highest mountain in the Mont Blanc Massif, and at an elevation of 4810m is the tallest peak in the Alps and Western Europe. It is permanently covered in snow and ice, giving rise to its nicknames, *La Dame Blanche* 'the White Lady' in France, and *Il Bianco* 'the White One' in Italy.

This 3-day trek will take you along part of this trail, trekking in 3 different countries anticlockwise from the east to north west, trekking in the Italian, Swiss and French Alps.

What is the experience like?

Who accompanies us?

You will be accompanied by local guides who have an excellent knowledge of hiking in the region. The guides are first aid trained and will support you throughout your journey. You will also be accompanied by a Different Travel Company UK tour manager.

How tough is it?

This trek is graded moderate to challenging because of the combination of long days trekking over uneven mountain terrain including steep ascents and descents for approximately 6-8 hours each day (variable depending on group pace), and basic sleeping conditions. It is essential that your training includes hill walking and trekking up and down gradients to best prepare you.

What is the climate like?

The climate is unpredictable in alpine regions but in general, the temperature will range from 20-25°C during the day and 10-20°C at night. Weather conditions will vary but in general you will experience sunny, clear days with a small chance of rain. As you ascend into more open and exposed areas of the mountains there may be very cold winds so having a suitable waterproof jacket and warm mid layer is important, even in mid-summer.

Please note: the temperatures and conditions above are historically accurate but climate change can impact the seasons so you may experience uncharacteristic conditions during the trip which are out of our control. The guides will assess the situation and make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and safety of the group.



Will we be trekking at high altitude?

The maximum altitude reached on the trek is 2537m at Grand Col Ferret. The average altitude is 1500m. When you ascend to higher altitudes it may make the trek feel more demanding than if it were at sea level, but your risk of altitude sickness is very low.

What is the terrain like?

The terrain will vary but in general you will trek on well-maintained trekking trails across rolling green hills, on stony trails next to gushing rivers, and a few small sections on paved roads. You will also pass through beautiful pine forests where there may be uneven terrain and tree roots to watch out for, or cross small streams using stepping stones. There are steep sections, so it is important that you have trained on hills in advance of departure.

Where will we stay?

Before the trek you will stay in a hotel near Courmayeur on a twin-share basis with en-suite facilities. During the trek you will stay in basic chalet and mountain refuges in mixed dormitories. Basic bedding is provided in the refuges, but you may wish to bring a sleeping bag liner for your own peace of mind and comfort.

What is the food like?

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided throughout the trip as per the itinerary. Breakfast will be typical continental style with items such as cheese, ham, fruit, bread and pastries, and served with tea and coffee. You will have a picnic lunch each day and the food items will be shared out in the morning to be carried by the group. A typical lunch may include fruit, cured meat, cheese, bread and salad. Dinners will be taken at the refuge and you will be served a set 'Menu of the Day' with soup and salad with bread to start, a main dish and a dessert. Bread and cheese will feature highly in your meals! Please inform us in advance if you have any dietary requirements or preferences.





Practical information

Who can take part?

You must be aged 18 or above to take part in the trek unaccompanied. It may be possible for you to participate if you are aged 16 or 17 years old if you are accompanied by a parent or guardian – please contact us for advice.

How fit do I need to be?

You are strongly advised to train to a good fitness level before departure to ensure fast recovery from each day's walk. An ideal candidate is someone open minded, positive and flexible, enjoys the challenges of being away from home, is happy to be pushed outside their comfort zone and is keen to try something new.

The distances covered may not be great, but you must be prepared for, and be capable of, trekking for many hours a day on steep, rough terrain while carrying a daypack of around 6-8kg in weight. If you attempt to complete the trek without training, it will be unnecessarily challenging and will hinder your experience, and the experience of your teammates.

Building up your core and leg muscle strength is important so exercises such as squats, lunges, push-ups, planks and crunches will really enhance your training. These exercises can be done at home – no gym needed. You can download a number of free apps, which will help you train and track your progress, e.g. MapMyWalk, C25K (couch to 5k run), MyFitnessPal (for a variety of sports).

You must take your training seriously and arrive as fit as you can be, so you get the most out of this challenge. Attempting to complete the trek without training will make it more challenging than necessary and will be detrimental to your experience, and the experience of your teammates.

Medical Declaration

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues must be specified. All your medical details are treated in the strictest confidence.

The information will be securely screened by a qualified medical professional, and details provided to your tour manager and local guides so our staff are adequately informed and prepared to support you during the trip. By completing our booking form you are giving consent for us to contact you confidentially with any follow up questions regarding your health.

If you declare any medical conditions you may be asked to provide more information, or we may request to contact your GP.

In the event that your medical issues at the time of booking represent a concern for your safety and wellbeing, or the safety and wellbeing of others in the group, you may be recommended not to take part. If this happens your booking will not be confirmed and the deposit will be refunded.

We must be informed if any conditions or medication change, or if new conditions develop. If necessary confirmation of fitness to travel from your GP or specialist may be required.

Please note that we will never unreasonably deny participation on a trip nor contravene the Equality Act 2010.





Health & Safety Assurance

Your health and safety is our top priority so rest assured that we are taking steps to ensure you not only have a memorable experience, but a safe one too.

We constantly monitor and follow the advice of the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) who provide recommendations and advice to British travellers about travel to a certain destination.

Health and safety is our top priority so we will **NEVER** operate a trip in an area where there is clear and present risk to our team members, whether that is due to a health outbreak, political instability, natural disasters or anything else.

If travel restrictions either in the UK, France, Italy or Switzerland prevent safe travel we will look to either postpone or cancel your trip at no cost to you.

Please note that at the time of travel there may be enhanced safety and security measures in airports, bag drop may take longer, and you may need to provide a certificate of health or proof of vaccination.

We will inform you about any information pertinent to your travel arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us on info@different-travel.com.

Trip cost

A £395 registration fee is payable at the time of booking, then you are asked to fundraise £2,950 for Barnardos.

A total of £2,360 (80%) is due to be fundraised by 27 March 2025. The remaining £590 is due by the date of departure.

What is included?

- ✓ Return flights from London (inc. current taxes and fuel surcharges),
- ✓ Transfers and transport throughout
- ✓ Accommodation in hotels, chalets & refuges (4 nights)
- ✓ Meals as specified
- ✓ Local guides
- ✓ Different Travel UK tour manager.

What is excluded?

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips (approx. £50)
- ✗ Personal expenses (e.g. drinks, souvenirs etc.)
- ✗ Vaccinations





Itinerary

Day 1 (Thursday 19 June 2025):

London – Geneva - Courmayeur

Depart London for Geneva. On arrival we will meet the local team and transfer to our hotel in Courmayeur, Italy, where we will enjoy a welcome dinner and a briefing on the trek to come.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: Dinner



Day 2 (Friday 20 June 2025):

Courmayeur – Val Ferret - Champex

After a morning transfer to Arnuva, we hike up to Grand Col Ferret at 2537m, the highest point of the trek on the border between Italy and Switzerland where spectacular views unfold across the valley. During the hike Glacier de Pré de Bar appears at the base of the snow-covered summits of Mount Dolent and l'A Neuve. Once at the pass, we descend to the Swiss Val Ferret passing scenes of traditional rural life such as open meadows and farmland all with a stunning mountain backdrop. From there we transfer to the charming village of Champex and stay overnight at our mountain chalet in Switzerland.

Accommodation: Chalet

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trek: Approx. 6-7 hrs (750m ascent/800m descent)

Day 3 (Saturday 21 June 2025):

Champex – Trient Valley

Today we hike from the Champex valley to the Trient valley. It will take us to the alpine pastures of Bovine. A balcony trail above the Rhone valley and its vineyards allows us to admire the peaks of the Bernese Oberland and the steep summits of the Combin massif. After descending in the shade of the larches, we arrive at the Col de la Forclaz, a key passage between the Rhone and Trient valleys. Overnight at a refuge in Trient.

Accommodation: Mountain refuge

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trek: Approx. 5-6 hrs (700, ascent/670 descent).

Day 4 (Sunday 22 June 2025):

Trient – Tre le Champ

Our final day starts with a steady climb which takes us to the Swiss-French border from where the views on the north of the Mont Blanc range are breathtaking. This fabulous scenery will stay in sight until we arrive in the hamlet of Tré le Champ. Tonight, we have a farewell dinner and stay overnight in Tré le Champ, France.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trek: Approx. 7 hrs (910m ascent / 750m descent)

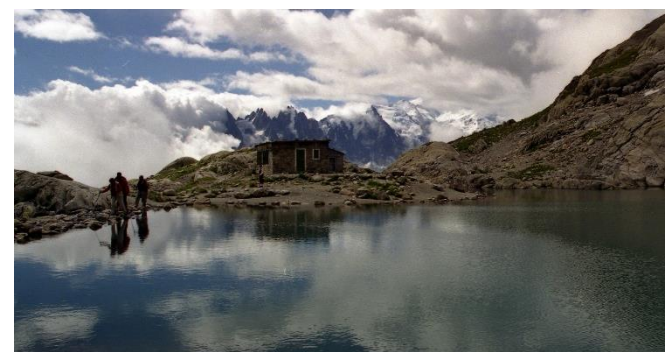
Day 5 (Monday 23 June 2025)

Tre le Champ - London

Today we transfer to Geneva airport for the flight back to London.

Meals: Breakfast

N.B. This itinerary may change due to weather, the ability of the group and so on. We will do our best to keep to the itinerary but we cannot be held responsible for changes outside of our control. In all circumstances your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest health and safety





Kit List – Three Countries in Three Days

The kit you take on your trek can make the difference between being ‘just a trek’ or a ‘memorable trek’. Our kit lists are put together with feedback from our own experiences and that of participants who have taken part in our previous trips.

The items on this list do not take into account your personal preferences based on your previous trekking experiences, or individual requirements.

PLEASE NOTE: This list is just a guideline and is not exhaustive or take into account personal preferences.

For information about items on this list please refer to the trip dossier or contact The Different Travel Company on info@different-travel.com

*Please consider eco-friendly or biodegradable options.

ESSENTIAL

SUGGESTED

OPTIONAL

DOCUMENTS & FLIGHT ESSENTIALS	✓
Passport and Copy	ESSENTIAL
E-Tickets	ESSENTIAL
Travel insurance	ESSENTIAL
ATM and credit card (s)	ESSENTIAL
Cash (£ Sterling)	ESSENTIAL
Pen for immigration forms	ESSENTIAL
Sunglasses (preferably polarized)	ESSENTIAL
Mobile phone + charger	ESSENTIAL
Camera + spare batteries	SUGGESTED

LUGGAGE	✓
Suitcase/large holdall	ESSENTIAL
Daypack (25 – 30 litres)	ESSENTIAL
Hand Luggage (take note of dimensions from airline)	ESSENTIAL
Combination padlocks	ESSENTIAL

CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR	✓
Trekking boots: Wear on flight or carry in hand luggage	ESSENTIAL
Lightweight trek trousers (zip off trousers ideal)	ESSENTIAL
Non-cotton base layer	ESSENTIAL
Non-cotton, technical t-shirts	ESSENTIAL
Non-cotton long sleeved top/shirt	ESSENTIAL
Trek socks	ESSENTIAL
Underwear	ESSENTIAL
Warm jacket (e.g. down/Primaloft)	ESSENTIAL
Warm mid layer or fleece	ESSENTIAL
Waterproof jacket	ESSENTIAL
Waterproof trousers	ESSENTIAL
Thermal top and bottoms (can also be used as pyjamas)	ESSENTIAL
Sun hat	ESSENTIAL
Warm hat	ESSENTIAL
Warm gloves	ESSENTIAL
Buff (www.buffwear.co.uk)	SUGGESTED

HEALTH & HYGIENE*	✓
Hygiene kit to include: toothbrush and toothpaste, antiperspirant deodorant, wet wipes, shampoo, conditioner, nail brush and nail care kit	ESSENTIAL
Personal first aid kit to include: prescription medicine, insect repellent, ibuprofen, paracetamol, plasters, blister plasters (e.g. Compeed), Imodium, rehydration salts (Dioralyte), antiseptic cream (e.g. Savlon), Anti-histamine cream/tablets, lip balm with SPF protection, zinc oxide tape, nail scissors/tweezers, muscle rub (e.g. Deep Heat), throat lozenges, decongestant, Vaseline	ESSENTIAL
Hairbrush/comb	ESSENTIAL
Feminine care products	SUGGESTED

OTHER KIT	✓
Sun block (high SPF)	ESSENTIAL
Toilet bag: toilet paper, wipes, hand sanitiser, nappy sacks	ESSENTIAL
2 ltr water hydration system (e.g. Camelbak)	ESSENTIAL
1 ltr water bottle	ESSENTIAL
LED head torch + spare batteries	ESSENTIAL
Adaptor (European 2 round pin)	ESSENTIAL
Ear plugs	ESSENTIAL
Trainers/casual shoes for evening	ESSENTIAL
Casual clothing for travel days	ESSENTIAL
Hiking poles – to be stowed in hold luggage for flight	SUGGESTED
Sleeping bag liner	SUGGESTED
Energy food/snack bars	SUGGESTED
Swimwear	OPTIONAL
Bags for dirty washing	OPTIONAL
Spare glasses/contact lenses	OPTIONAL
Video camera + charger	OPTIONAL
MP3 player/ipod	OPTIONAL
Portable power bank	OPTIONAL
Books/packs of cards	OPTIONAL
Travel pillow	OPTIONAL