

American Alpine Institute, Ltd.

Day 0: Arrive in Chamonix, meet guide in the evening, orientation, gear prep, food shop for lunches, etc.

Day 1: Valley Blanche. This is an off-piste ski day, great views of the Grand Jorasses, the Dru, and Mt. Blanc. Provides opportunity to ski (potentially difficult snow) and enjoy the view without much of a pack. Also allows time to fine tune ski gear if needed. We return to Chamonix.

Day 2: Grand Montet to Argentiere Hut. From the town of Argentiere (10k's from Chamonix) take the telepherique up and ski down onto the glacier then a little skin up to the hut. Spend the night there. About 3-4 hours.

Day 3: Argentiere Hut (2772m) to Trient Hut (3170m). Go up the Col du Chardonnet (3823m) down backside (might be technical) then back up the Fenetre de Saleinaz (3253m), onto the Trient Glacier and to the hut. Something of a long day (6-8 hours). Not too many options for variations.

Day 4: Trient Hut to Champex (small town in CH). Ski down the Val d Arpette either via the Col Ecandies (2796m) or go down into the Salina basin (great spring snow but a little steeper descent). Take a taxi from Champex and go to the town of Verbier (1/2 hr.) and take lifts up to Attelas ski station and traverse over to the Mt. Fort Hut (2457m). A long day that can easily be split into two with a night in a hotel with hot showers and a chance to load up on some raclette and Fondant, but when we do that it adds a day.

Day 5: Mt. Fort to Cabane Prafleuri. An ascent of the Rosablanche can be made along the way. The Prafleuri is a small, unguarded hut with a small, stocked wood stove, and it gives the option of going down into Arolla for a night. Regardless, the Prafleuri is a nice place to spend the night.

Day 6: Prafleuri to the Dix Hut (2928m). About 6 hours.

Day 7: Dix Hut to the Vignettes Hut (3157m). Very scenic with the possibility of climbing up the Pigne d'Arolla (a classic ski descent when the weather permits). The Vignettes Hut is really pretty with its famous toilets perched on the edge of a huge cliff... Watch out for those updrafts...

Day 8: Vignettes down past the Dent Herens and the Matterhorn. Great views of the Matterhorn. Night in Zermatt. Trip ends here unless someone wants to continue skiing to Saas Fee, which adds an extra day or two, depending on the pace.

Inclusions: 3 nights hotel, shared basis
6 nights in huts, dorm basis
dinners and breakfasts in huts
lift tickets
taxi from Champex to Verbier
guide fees and guide expenses

Exclusions: transportation to meeting place in Chamonix
transportation from ending place in Zermatt
meals in towns
snacks, lunches, and drinks in mountains/huts
gratuity to guide
single hotel supplement if needed (US\$120)
required insurance (approximately US\$30)