

# Monte Rosa Ascent 4,634m/15,203ft, Switzerland

An exhilarating mountaineering week in the scenic Swiss Alps culminating in a summit attempt on Monte Rosa's Dufourspitze.



## Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

## Holiday overview

Style	Trekking Peak
Accommodation	Hotels, Mountain Huts
Grade	Expedition Grade
Duration	9 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	Walks on: 6 days Alpine skills on: 1 day
Min/Max group size	2 / 8. Guaranteed to run for 2
Trip Leader	Mr Kevin O'Neale
Land only	Joining in Geneva, Switzerland
Max altitude	4,634m/15,203ft, Dufourspitze Summit, Day 7

**Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available**



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# Departures

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## Group departures

### 2022 Dates:

Sat 18 Jun - Sun 26 Jun

Sat 23 Jul - Sun 31 Jul

### Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 2 people and for a maximum of 8. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

### Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

### No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

### Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

### Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

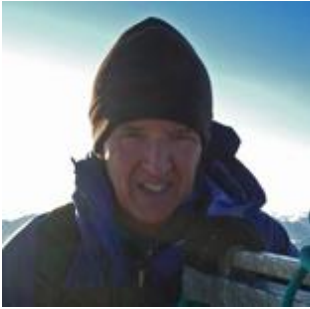
### Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts, who will have first-hand experience of the destination/s you want to visit. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday.

If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

## Your guide

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Kevin O'Neale qualified as a British Mountain Guide in 1992. It is the highest internationally recognised qualification for instruction and guiding in rock and ice climbing, mountaineering and off-piste skiing and ski touring - the coveted IFMGA carnet. It is recognised throughout the mountain world as your guarantee of their professional training and competence in all aspects of mountaineering and client care. Kevin also possesses the Mountaineering Instructors Certificate - M.I.C - the highest UK qualification in Mountaineering. He has been an instructor and mountain guide in the UK since 1978, having worked in North Wales, the Lake District, the Swiss and French Alps, as well as the Highlands of Scotland, and the Indian and Nepal Himalaya since then. He has based himself in Saas Grund and the Swiss Alps from 1994 to the present.

## Your trip highlights

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- Two 4,000m acclimatisation peaks and two nights in huts on Monte Rosa give the best opportunity to reach the summit
- The trip is led by Kevin O’Neale - a highly experienced IFMGA guide with extensive knowledge of the Alps
- An alpine skills day is included which covers the use of ice axe and crampons, roped glacier travel and crevasse rescue
- The trip is based in a comfortable hotel in Saas Grund; the Saas Valley is one of the prettiest in Switzerland
- Hire of crampons, ice axe, harness and other technical kit is free of charge

## At a glance itinerary

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Day 1	Fly London to Geneva. Group transfer to Saas Grund. Introductory briefing.
Day 2	Ecole de Glace alpine skills training at Hohsaas on the Trift Glacier.
Days 3-4	Two day high mountain traverse with the Weissmies, 4,017m/13,179ft as the primary objective. Overnight at the Almageller hut
Days 5	Climb second acclimatisation peak - the Allalinhorn 4,027m.
Day 6	Drive to Zermatt and take the Gornergat rack-railway up to Rotenboden. Walk to Monte Rosa hut 2,883m
Day 7	An early alpine start to reach the Summit of Monte Rosa Dufourspitze, 4,634m/15,203ft. Descend to Monte Rosa hut.
Day 8	Return to Saas Grund.
Day 9	Transfer to Geneva airport. Fly to London.

## Trip summary

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Monte Rosa is actually a series of 4,000m summits which together make up the Monte Rosa massif on the Swiss-Italian border. The Dufourspitze at 4,634m/15,203ft stands above the other summits making it the tallest mountain in Switzerland (shared with Italy), western Europe’s second highest peak, and an excellent mountaineering challenge. From its summit the mountains of Corsica can be seen 265 miles away to the South.

Your alpine base is the tranquil valley of Saas Grund, where you will stay in a friendly family-run hotel. Having sorted kit and met the team, your holiday proper starts with an alpine skills day to ensure familiarity with glacier travel. Here on the Trift Glacier you will have ample chance to refresh or learn alpine mountaineering skills, such as the use of crampons and ice axe, movement on snow and ice whilst roped, and simple crevasse rescue. You will be at 3,400m/11,155ft on the glacier so gaining valuable acclimatisation too.

Mountain skills under your belt, you embark on climbs to the summits of two spectacular mountains of over 4000m/13,000ft - the Weissmies, and the Alphubel or Allalinhorn. All three are satisfying mountaineering objectives which will greatly assist with your acclimatisation before you trek up to the contemporary Monte Rosa hut, a superb three hour walk over the Gornergletscher. The next morning, with all the excitement of an alpine start, you begin your ascent by torchlight through impressive glacial scenery and up along the rocky west ridge which leads to the pinnacle. Your ascent is via the Normal route which is graded PD+. Finally, standing on the summit of Dufourspitze you can enjoy the breathtaking views with 4,000m peaks in every direction. Although this ascent is not in itself difficult, it does require physical endurance and good acclimatisation, and this holiday has been carefully designed to maximise the chances of summit success.

## Special notes

### Itinerary

Please note that this itinerary is an example itinerary - the feasibility of alpine mountaineering is completely dependent on the prevailing weather conditions. The guide(s) will suggest alternatives if weather conditions dictate that ascending any of the acclimatisation peaks, and/or Monte Rosa, is not feasible. The decision about each day's activity rests with the guide. However, please rest assured they will do all they can to ensure you have a varied and rewarding trip.

### Climbing Monte Rosa

#### What it is?

- Western Europe's second highest mountain - Monte Rosa Dufourspitze at 4,634m/15,203ft
- We attempt Monte Rosa summit via the Normal route; this is an Alpine PD+ climb, which means it has a little technical difficulty

#### What it entails:

- The ascent is normally 6 ½ hours approximately, climbing from Monte Rosa hut to the summit, and 3 ½ hours descent by the same route
- Roped-up Glacier traverse
- Use of ice axe and crampons
- Good degree of physical fitness and stamina
- Confidence on rough terrain and walking on snow slopes
- Walking on exposed snow crest towards the summit
- 2:1 client/guide ratio on Monte Rosa
- 4:1 client/guide ratio on acclimatisation/training days

#### Experience/skills required:

- Use of ice axe and crampons - anyone considering Monte Rosa must have had some winter hill-walking experience with the use of ice axe and crampons
- If no experience of using ice axe and crampons, joining the Mountain Kingdoms 'Introduction to Alpine Mountaineering' trip or attending a similarly suitable Alpine Skills Course (where crevasse rescue is covered) would be beneficial, although crevasse rescue skills will be covered on the trip
- Strenuous trekking, or hill-walking experience
- Good head for heights

#### Technical gear needed:

- Mountaineering boots - phone Niki in the office for advice. Mountaineering boots can be hired (at a cost) from an outdoor shop in Saas Grund, although there will be no chance to wear them in
- Climbing Harness (can be provided without cost)
- Ice axe (can be provided without cost)
- Crampons (can be provided without cost)
- Helmet (can be provided without cost)
- Prussic loops and karabiners will be provided, without cost, by our agent

# Your trip itinerary

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## Day 1: Fly London to Geneva.

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On arrival at Geneva airport there will be a single group transfer to your hotel. This is timed to fit the group flight, please check with us for further information.

At around 7.30 in the evening there will be an introductory meeting and kit check, at which you will be issued any technical gear you need - crampons, ice-axe, helmet or harness. We will make sure that your Alpine Mountaineering Insurance is in order and discuss the itinerary for the next few days in the light of the most recent weather forecast.

**Overnight: Schönblick Hotel, Saas Grund (Meals: D)**

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## Day 2: 'Ecole de glace' refresher skills training at Hohsaas.

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At approximately 9:00am you will be met by the guides and, after a final check of gear, make your way to the main Saas Grund lift station at 1,550m, for the lift up to Hohsaas at 3,130m/10,264ft. Here you gear up and walk out onto the Trift Glacier for a session of what the French call 'Ecole de Glace' - refreshing or learning skills in the use of crampons and ice-axe, movement on snow & ice whilst roped, assessing for crevasse areas & coping with crossing crevasse zones, some simple crevasse rescue. All the while you will be gaining useful acclimatisation at about 3,400m/11,500ft. At the end of the day you descend and return to the hotel in Saas Grund.

**Overnight: Schönblick Hotel, Saas Grund (Meals: B D)**

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## Day 3: Start two-day Traverse of the Weissmies, 4,017m/13,179ft.

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Today is the first day of a two day expedition, the Traverse of the Weissmies with the summit at 4,017m as your ultimate objective. This is a classic alpine experience combining alpine scenery with rocky ridges, open snow fields and magnificent panoramic views.

You will leave the hotel at 9:00am, first taking the bus to Saas Almagell and then a chairlift up to Furgstalden before a 3½ hour walk up to the fine Almageller hut at 2,900m. After lunch at the hut the afternoon is spent either on a multi-pitch rock climb on the Dri Horlini close to the hut, or on more ropework. Enjoy the convivial mountain hut atmosphere in the evening, and soak up the superb Saas mountain views as the sun goes down, with the Monte Rosa massif ten miles to the west.



**Overnight: Almageller Hut (Meals: B D)**

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## Day 4: Ascent of the Weissmies, 4,017m/13,179ft - approximately 7 hours, 1,100m of ascent/800m descent.

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After an early 4:00am breakfast you start your ascent of the Weissmies 4,017m by its South Ridge; pleasant scrambling is followed by a spectacular snow arete to the summit. The views from the top are tremendous, with other 4,000m peaks to the north, south and west; whilst looking east, on a clear day, you can see for miles out across the Italian plains. Depending on conditions, your descent should take around a couple of hours, descending to either the Almageller hut, or traversing down the northwest flank of the Weissmies to the Hohsaas lift station.

**Overnight: Schönblick Hotel, Saas Grund (Meals: B D)**

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**Day 5: Ascent of the Allalinhorn, 4,027m/13,212ft - 4 hours, 500m ascent and descent.**

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This morning you take a short bus ride up to Saas Fee, and then up to the Mittelallalin at 3,500m using the big Saas Fee lift system. From the lift it should take around two to three hours to the summit which straddles the Saas and Matter valleys on the Mischabel ridge. Soak up the 360° panoramic views as you stand beneath the cross on the summit; the mountains spread before you include mighty Monte Rosa, your next objective. You return back down the same way descending to the valley bottom and to your hotel in Saas Grund.

This second ascent to over 4,000m builds confidence and gives great acclimatisation, which can make a big difference to the enjoyment of the ascent of your primary objective, Monte Rosa. At the same time it allows the guides to ensure that your technical skill level is at a good enough level to cope with the demands of Monte Rosa.

This evening there will be a final check of gear before the trip in the morning to Zermatt and the Monte Rosa hut. There will also be an opportunity to go over the route on the map, get an update on the latest weather and conditions on the mountain, and if necessary discuss alternatives if the weather or conditions preclude an attempt on Monte Rosa.

**Overnight: Schönblick Hotel, Saas Grund (Meals: B D)**

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**Day 6: Drive to Tasch and continue to Zermatt. - 50 minutes driving. Walk to Monte Rosa hut 2,883m/9,459ft - 4 hours, 400m ascent.**

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You meet your guide at the Schoenblick Hotel at 9:00am and then drive initially to Tasch, and then on to Zermatt stopping in town for lunch, to pick up any last minute items such as headtorch batteries and water, and to make a last check of the Meteo weather forecast. From Zermatt you take the Gornergrat rack-railway up to Rotenboden for the 3½ hour walk to the Monte Rosa hut, first along a trail and then over the Gorner Glacier. Standing at 2,883m the striking aluminum and glass Monte Rosa hut is a contemporary eco-building designed by architects from Lucerne University in collaboration with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. There are great views out over the Gorner Glacier, which is the third longest in the Western Alps.

**Overnight: Monte Rosa Hut (Meals: B D)**

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**Day 7: Climb to Monte Rosa summit, 4,634m/15,203ft, by the Normal Route. Descend to Monte Rosa Hut - 10 hours, 1,700m ascent and descent.**

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After a good rest and a few hours' sleep at the Monte Rosa hut you eat breakfast at the very early hour of 2am, trying your best to drink some tea or coffee and eat what is provided - usually bread and jam. Not easy, but important over the next few hours. With headtorch strapped to your helmet you set out into the dark. The ascent to the Dufourspitze summit is mostly on snow up the Monte Rosa glacier. You ascend through some impressive glacier scenery, with a final rocky west ridge to the summit requiring straightforward scrambling in a stupendous position. Although the ascent itself is not difficult, taking around six hours to the summit, it requires physical endurance and good acclimatisation.



Emotions of relief and exhilaration will run high as you finally stand on the summit. By this time dawn has broken and the valley now looks small from the second highest point in western Europe. You spend some time taking photos before starting the long descent back along the same route, reaching the Monte Rosa hut usually by early afternoon. Here you spend the night enjoying a well-earned rest in the afternoon before the evening meal, retiring to your bunk usually by 9:00pm, or earlier for most.

**Overnight: Monte Rosa Hut (Meals: B D)**

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**Day 8: Reserve day for Monte Rosa summit attempt, or drive back to Saas Grund.**

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Today offers you another chance at the summit if weather conditions were not conducive to an attempt yesterday, but are clear today. If Monte Rosa was climbed yesterday, after a 7am breakfast at the hut you return to the Rotenboden rack-railway, passing eager mountaineers on their way up as you were only yesterday, although it probably seems like days ago! Having descended to Zermatt you then transfer back by shuttle train to Tasch and then by car to Saas Grund. The afternoon is free for you to relax, then in the evening it is time for a final celebration dinner and a toast to the mountain Gods.

**Overnight: Schönblick Hotel, Saas Grund (Meals: B D)**

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**Day 9: Transfer to Geneva. Fly to London.**

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There will be a single timed minibus transfer from Saas Grund to Geneva airport - check with our office for further details. (Meals: B)

## Our grading system

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Monte Rosa Ascent is graded as an Expedition Grade trekking peak holiday, as described below.

**Expedition Grade**

These trips all involve long, hard days on trek and may include nights spent camping above the snow line. Ice axe, crampons and safety ropes may be used. These high altitude trips provide a considerable physical challenge and some technical experience may also be required.

Suitable for those with strenuous trekking experience in high mountain environments.

## Trip altitude

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**Important** - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend [www.medex.org.uk](http://www.medex.org.uk) as a good source of information.



## What the price includes

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**Mountain Kingdoms** aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

### What's included:

- ✓ Qualified UIAGM mountain guide(s)
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK (flight inclusive option).
- ✓ Single, timed group airport transfers on arrival and departure
- ✓ Transfer from Saas Grund post bus stop to the hotel
- ✓ Transfer Saas Grund-Zermatt-Saas Grund
- ✓ Hotel accommodation in Saas Grund at Schönblick on a half board basis
- ✓ Accommodation in mountain huts on days specified in the itinerary with breakfast and evening meals included
- ✓ Hire of equipment (climbing harness, crampons, ice axe, helmet, prussic loops and karabiners)
- ✓ A free high-quality Mountain Kingdoms kit bag
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ The option of joining one of our pre-trip meets in the Cotswolds.

### Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

### What's not included:

- ✗ Lift passes/tramway although lift passes in the Saas Grund Valley are free
- ✗ Lunches
- ✗ Sleeping bag liner
- ✗ Travel insurance

### Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

For our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag (these are required for certain treks), there is the choice of receiving either a free Water-to-Go bottle or a free Mountain Kingdoms fleece. If you are not eligible for a free bottle, you will still be able to buy a special Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>.

## Your accommodation

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We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



### **Schönblick Hotel, Saas Grund**

This friendly run hotel is very welcoming and has good views of the surrounding mountains. It is comfortable, relaxed and has a distinct 'family run' feel. Many of the rooms have balconies which are great for relaxing, sunning yourself and especially, drying out any kit.



### **Almageller Hut**

The splendid Almageller Hut is located at 2,894m on the south side of the Weissmies. There are clear view over the Valais mountain peaks and from the attractive terrace you can see no less than nine 4,000m peaks. The hut has 140 beds in dormitories, with duvets and pillows provided, and a spacious common room where meals are served. The hut has its own electricity, and water supply taken from a spring above the hut, with wash-rooms and toilets on the ground floor, but no showers.



### **Monte Rosa Hut**

The futuristic Monte Rosa Hut, a model in terms of energy and resource efficiency, has a spectacular location at 2,883 m, surrounded by the Gorner, Grenz and Monte-Rosa glaciers. Solar panels in the southern façade allow the the hut to be almost energy self-sufficient, and microfiltered glacier meltwater provides the water supply. The hut can accommodate up to 120 people in dormitory bedrooms (6-8 people) over the three floors. Pillows, duvets and a cover are provided on each bed but you will need to bring your own sleeping-bag liner or similar. There are plenty of toilets, a wash-room, and even hot showers available for an extra cost, payable to the hut warden. The warm wooden dining room has excellent mountain views and the external terrace, perfect for a sunset beer, looks out over the glacier. Meals are hearty and wholesome, and you can also buy snacks, beer and soft drinks.

## Meal arrangements

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Breakfast and dinner included, lunches at own expense.

## Flight arrangements

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### Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

### Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

## Further information

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When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

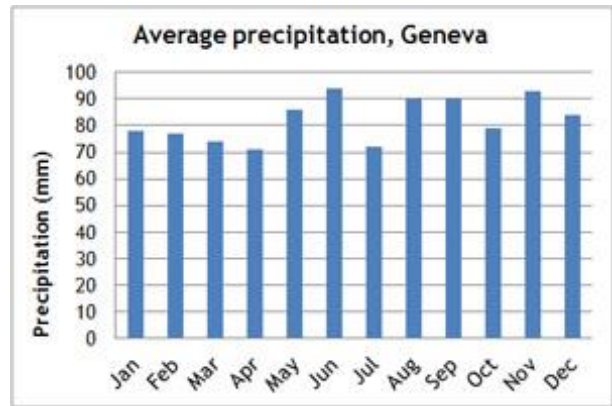
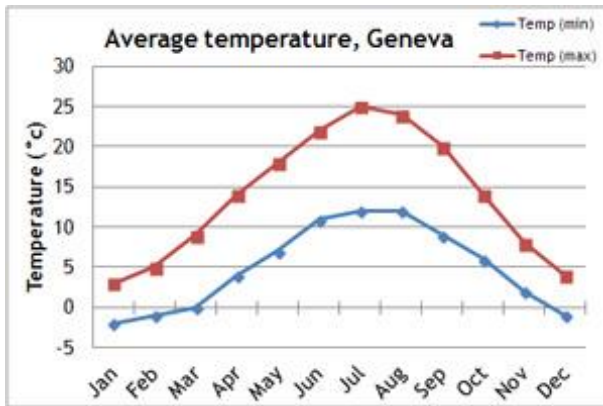
## The nature of adventure travel

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Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

# Climate information

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## Extensions

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### Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).



There are many ways you can extend your holiday with Mountain Kingdoms: you could book extra hotel nights at the start or end of your trip, arrange a personal sightseeing tour or enjoy some other exciting activities. In fact, whatever's available we can help make it happen. We're happy to suggest ideas, provide quotes and make all the arrangements.

We can also assist with flight and hotel upgrades.

## Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

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- Our programme includes seven days of guiding, and two 4,000m acclimatisation peaks to help increase your summit chances on Monte Rosa.
- We include two nights in the Monte Rosa hut which will allow for two summit attempts.
- Monte Rosa is far quieter than overcrowded Mont Blanc, offering a far pleasanter experience on the mountain and in the huts.
- Your guide - Kevin O'Neale is a highly experienced UIAGM guide - a Brit, who has based himself in Saas Grund in the summer since 1994 so has extensive knowledge of the area.
- We include an alpine skills day including use of ice axe and crampons, roped glacier travel, and crevasse rescue.
- You will be based in a charming hotel in Saas Grund with excellent views of the Mont Blanc range.
- Hire of crampons, ice axes, harnesses and other technical kit is free of charge, and given to you in Saas Grund so it doesn't add to your flight weight limit.
- We have a minimum group size of just 2 people so the trip is very likely to get 'up and running' and a maximum group size of 8 for an excellent client to guide ratio.
- We have a transparent pricing policy with no hidden costs or surcharges.
- We routinely research and make a reconnaissance of our new trips ourselves. If you have any questions about this trip, please contact Niki Morgan at the Mountain Kingdoms office.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com) or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

## What we say

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*This is a fantastic trip with time spent refreshing skills on the Trift Glacier and an ascent of two 4,000m mountains which are superb climbing objectives in their own right. The Saas Grund Valley is the perfect place to acclimatise for Monte Rosa as both the routes and the huts are quieter than around Chamonix/Mont Blanc area and therefore you have a much more relaxing and enjoyable experience. Kevin O'Neale is a highly experienced IFMGA guide with many years of alpine guiding under his belt, so you are in a very safe pair of hands.*  
-Niki Morgan, Operations Manager, Mountain Kingdoms

# Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

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## **Truly independent**

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

## **Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality**

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

## **Complete financial security**

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

## **No Surcharge Guarantee**

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

## **Award winning Responsible Tourism**

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).

## **Genuine small group travel**

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

## **Loyalty Discount**

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

## **Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier**

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

## **Comprehensive information**

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit [www.tourismdeclares.com](http://www.tourismdeclares.com)

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

### **Carbon Offsetting**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

### **Reducing Carbon Emissions**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

