Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Meet in Chamonix, France at 5pm at the hotel

We will meet in the lobby of our lodging in Chamonix for a Welcome and Introductions before enjoying our first dinner together. While some of us may prefer an early evening to get to bed early, undoubtedly some of us may prefer to wander the streets of this wonderful mountain village. Overnight Chamonix at Hotel L'Arve or similar. (D)

DAY 2

Visit Montevier, balcony hike

We’ll probably be feeling a bit of jet lag today and the best cure for that is a hike in this beautiful valley! We’ll head up the other side of the valley, taking the Brevant Lift to Plan Praz and then hiking up and over the ridge line. From here we ascend contour across the mountainside to the Col de Brevent with wide ranging views to the north, before joining a brief section of the Tour du Mont Blanc (TMB) and descending into a valley. Our path then starts to climb again, including a short ascent on a fixed ladder, before reaching the top station of the cable car to Le Brevent. Our efforts are rewarded with panoramic views (and refreshments!) and we’ll take a break before you decide whether you prefer to hike back into town or take the cable cars. The afternoon is free for you to explore the town or prepare for the trek, before we meet again for dinner. Hours hiking: 4 - 5  Elevation gain: 1914 feet. (B, D)

DAY 3

Col de Brevent hike, free time

There is so much hiking to do right in the Chamonix Valley that we’ll spend one more day before we leave for our trek. This time it’s an all day excursion to the Mer de Glace, the largest of Mont Blanc’s glaciers! A perfect 2nd day excursion and hike. We start with a visit a local bakery (or grocery) where each of us can purchase what looks good for a picnic lunch before taking the historic cog railway ride to Montevier. There we’ll visit an ice grotto carved into the glacier and view this magnificent glacier up close. After time to take in this amazing landscape, we hike up from the glacier to tree line where the entire valley opens before us. While enjoying our picnic lunch, we’ll gaze out over the spectacular Mer de Glace on one side and the entire Chamonix Valley on the other. We then continue our ‘balcony’ hike to the lower platform of the Auguille Lift where we take the lift to the Auguille du Midi and view Mount Blanc in all her glory! We will take the lift down to Chamonix and have the rest of the afternoon free to explore this charming town. Hours hiking: 4.5 - 5.5  Elevation gain: 1432 feet. Overnight Chamonix (B, D)

DAY 4

Hike from Bellevue to Les Contamines

We begin our Tour du Mont Blanc trek today with a short bus ride to Les Houches and then a cable car to the top of Bellevue. This is where we begin our trek on the famous Tour du Mont Blanc trail. After crossing over a picturesque railroad crossing we enter the forested side of Bellevue. Hiking along the trail we come to a gate - one of many we will encounter on this trek - just don’t forget to close it! Shortly we will be at the bottom of the mountain and here our true alpine hiking begins as we pass the terminus of the huge Glacier. We continue up through alpine meadows to the Col de Tricot (6,995 feet) where we are rewarded with views of the Dome du Gouter and the entire Chamonix Valley. A steep descent brings us to the village of Miages and Truc where lunch awaits us under the inviting umbrella of the rifugio. After lunch we climb out of the valley of Miage and ascend another ‘hill’, heading to the village of Les Contamines, our destination for the night. Hours hiking: 6 - 7  Elevation gain: 5,000 feet (cumulative) Overnight Les Contamines, Hotel Le Christiania or similar (B, D)

DAY 5
DAY 5

**Hike from Les Contamines to Les Chapieux**

From our hotel in the village of Les Contamines we will start the morning with a short shuttle to the Notre Dame de la Gorge, a famous 15th century mountain church that is worth a stop. Our trail today is up the broad Mont Joie Valley with a total elevation gain of over 4,000 feet. Initially our route climbs steeply alongside the Bon Nant River, on a path believed to be 2,000 years old, part of a link from Gaul to the Roman empire. Crossing a small ancient Roman bridge, we continue upward approaching the Refuge de Balme where we will take a welcome lunch break amid the high mountains and local cows. From here we continue climbing until finally reaching the Col du Bonhomme for yet another spectacular view of the valleys below. We’ll then continue along a ridge to the Col de la Croix du Bonhomme, our highpoint of the day. From here the path starts descending steeply and we ford several streams on our way to the charming little hamlet of Les Chapieux and the hospitable Hotel de la Nova. About 8 hours walking. Hours hiking: 6 - 8 Elevation gain: 4,000 + feet. Overnight De La Nova, Les Chapieux. (B,L,D)

DAY 6

**Hike from Les Chapieux to Rifugio Elisabetta**

Today will be a relatively shorter and easier day although we still gain over 3,000 feet as we climb from Les Chapieux to the Col de la Seigne. From the hotel De La Nova we get a short shuttle to 'the end of the road' and begin our hike at the bottom of Col de la Seigne. The climb is along a switchback trail where often enterprising locals offer donkey transports for backpacks up the trail! Arriving at the Col at 2,516m (8,255ft) the view ahead is amazing. This is the Franco-Italian border and we have our first view of the Italian side of Mont Blanc, including the entire Val Veny. On our left will the Mont Blanc massif. This side of the mountain is more angular, rockier, and the snowy peak is well in the distance. Descending from the col we head toward the Rifugio Elisabetta, located at the edge of the Vallon de la Lee Blanche glacier for our evening destination. The Rifugio is a typical 'high mountain' hut and we will arrive in time to enjoy the atmosphere, and explore around the Rifugio and along the edges of the glacier before enjoying their wonderful dinner. Hours hiking: 6 â€“ 7 Elevation gain: 3,000 + feet. Overnight Lac de Miage or similar (B,L,D)

DAY 7

**Hike from Rifugio Elisabetta to Courmayeur Italy**

Today we’re ‘going to town’! The Italian side of Mont Blanc with its many glaciers and craggy peaks continues to be a constant and gorgeous presence. We will continue our trek from our rifugio and head (of course!) up hill. We’ll arrive at Rifugio Maison Viella where you can purchase either lunch or hearty snack! After enjoying a bit of refreshment, we will take a cable car ride down to the town of Courmayeur. Courmayeur is a typical Italian mountaineering resort that offers interesting shops, winding streets, and lots of local flavor. Our hotel for the night is in Courmayeur so spending a bit of time getting to know this quaint little city is a possibility as we will go out for dinner tonight. Overnight: Courmayeur, Edelweiss Hotel or similar. Hours hiking: 5 â€“ 6 Elevation gain: 1500 feet B, D

DAY 8

**Lift system back to Chamonix**

We’ll begin today with a bit of free time â€“ a little extra sleep and a chance to explore Courmayeur! Picking up lunch at a local bakery before meeting late morning, we’ll continue our journey. If the weather is co-operative, we’ll leave Courmayeur and head up the hill by public bus to the base of the cable car system that travels up the Italian side of Mont Blanc and then continues up and across the mountain back to Chamonix. The lift system (which is actually a series of cable cars and gondolas) takes you into the heart of the Mont Blanc massif. As we ride above we can watch those below heading to some of the more famous mountaineering destinations, watch those crossing the massif by foot, view the Mer de Glace from the Italian side, and continue to marvel at this amazing mountain. If using the lift system is not possible, we will take public transportation back to Chamonix and get to go thru the tunnel! No bad alternatives! Arriving in Chamonix we will check into our hotel and the rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy Chamonix for a few hours before meeting for our last dinner together. Overnight Chamonix at Hotel L’Arve or similar. Hours hiking: Will vary (B, D)
Depart anytime

The trip officially ends this morning. After breakfast (or earlier if you have a plane to catch) we say adieu to Chamonix and take one last look at the beautiful Mont Blanc Massif. You can continue on to other explorations or, if you must, take the train or a shuttle to the Geneva airport to begin your journey home. B