

The Mont-Blanc

Sports

Country : France July 2016

The most beautiful pictures







Climbing the Mont-Blanc at 4808m is quite a challenge. Even more, if the departure is given from Chamonix. The approach is made slowly from the tourist resort, but, from the second day, the ice and the crevasses of the white valley spice up the whole thing. The main challenge begins in earnest on the fourth day, when you have to face, successively, the Mont-Blanc du Tacul, the Mont Maudit and the Mont-Blanc massif itself. This loop itinerary proposes to start from Chamonix and to come back, without mechanical assistance.

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By Olivier Paudex

Introduction

It had been a long time since the desire to climb the highest peak in the Alps had arisen. Nevertheless, between desire and reality, the **Mont-Blanc** is not so easily tamed. It is an experience that leaves its mark. Mont Blanc can be climbed from several faces and various starting points. Here is a five-day loop itinerary from **Chamonix to Chamonix**, without a lift.

Day 1, Chamonix – Refuge of the plan de l'Aiguille (2207m)

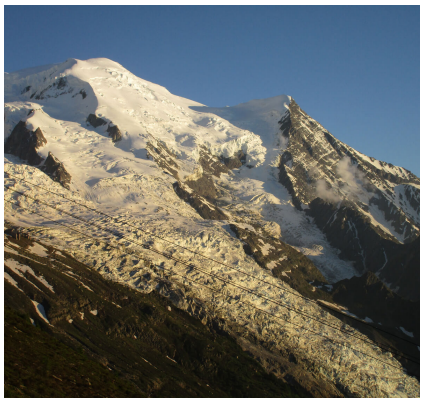
The group consists of three people, François-Xavier (the guide), Marc (a Belgian), and myself. After checking bags and equipment, the departure from Chamonix, on the cable car square, is via a footpath, located **to the left of the Grepon parking lot** The walk takes about **2h30** with breaks. The weather is splendid, as well as the view of the Alps.









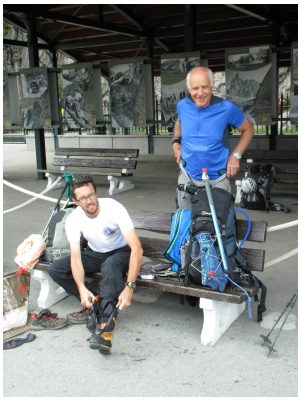

View of Chamonix, the Alps and the refuge of the plan de l'Aiguille

Day 2, Refuge of the Shark (2516m)

From the plan de l'Aiguille hut, the trail continues through meadows and narrow paths to reach the foot of the White Valley, the Sea of Ice. It takes **4 hours of walking** to reach the glacier.

It is at the terminal station of the **Montenvers** train that we prepare to face the glacier. Double bootie mountain boots are required and crampons should be kept handy.

The last wall to reach the refuge is via ladders that must be climbed.**The total walking time is about 7 hours.**





Readiness and tongue of the glacier













Glacier, crevasses and refuge of the Shark.

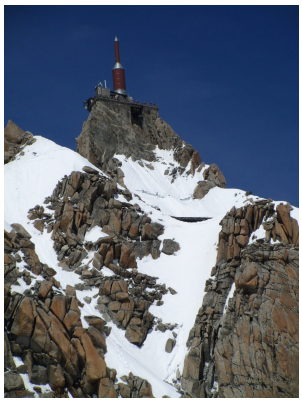
Day 3, Refuge of the Cosmiques (3613m)

To reach **the Cosmiques hut**, you need breath and impeccable physical condition. **There is more than 1000m of positive elevation gain** and the slope is smoother than an ice arena. As well as crampons and ropes are mandatory. It's rough.








At the foot of the Aiguille du Midi

Day 4, Mont-Blanc du Tacul (4248m), ...

Starting from the Cosmiques refuge, the route goes over the three mountains that must be cleared to reach the other side of the valley and **the refuge of Tête Rousse**, the final destination. **The start is given around 2am**. It is cold and dark. The climb to Mont du Tacul is rough and painful. A formation is set up in single file. **Arrival at the summit around 6am**.



Sunrise on the Mont-Blanc du Tacul

then the Mont Maudit (4465m), ...

Mont Maudit is the second bump to get over. Less slope, but a waterfall of ice to get over. The wait at the foot of Mont Maudit is long, if not endless. It's the only passage and it's jammed.**Arrived at the summit around 8am**.



Arrival on the plateau of Mont Maudit

and finally the Mont Blanc Massif (4808m)

The summit at last... **Arriving around 10am**.













The Mont-Blanc

Descent to the Goûter's hut (3815m), ...

Once the euphoria of the challenge accomplished is over, the descent is set in motion at a brisk pace. With the snow getting softer in the midday sun, it bodes well not to dawdle en route to the valley.

Arriving at the Goûter's hut around 2:00 pmleaves a sci-fi feel. The architecture is simply out of time. A good hour of rest then the end of the course to the**refuge of Tête Rousse**. We pick up a solitary mountaineer at the same time.





The Goûter's hut

to the, Refuge of Tête Rousse (3167m)

From **the Goûter's hut**, it takes **3 good hours** to get to the **refuge of Tête Rousse**, passing through the famous but difficult scree slope, a sort of vast field of rocks that is not very stable and in which you have to make your way. The arrival of this exhausting, but very rewarding climb of Mont Blanc by the three mountains, will have **lasted 15h**. A real madness, when you think about it afterwards.





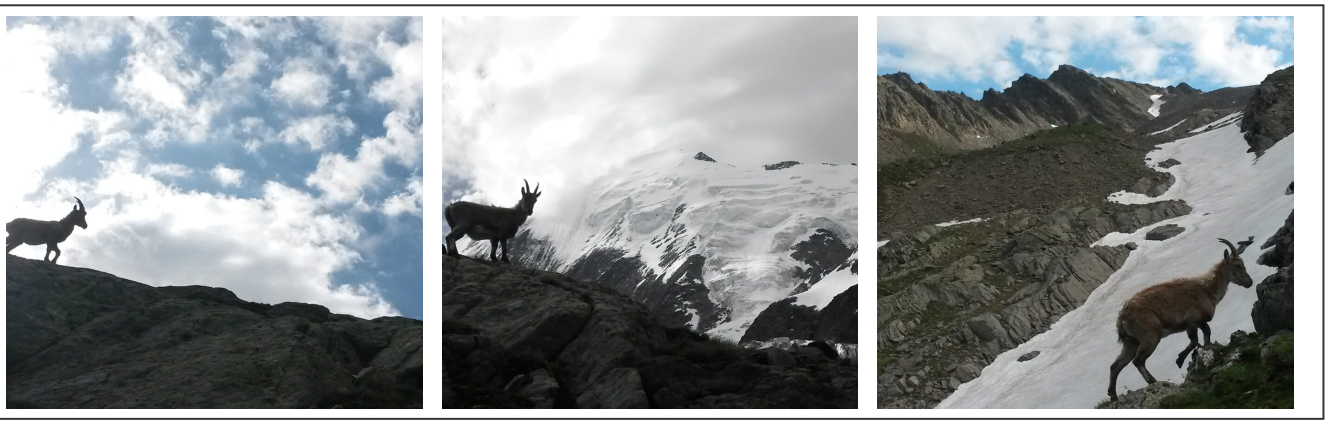
The refuge of Tête Rousse and its famous weather rock

Day 5, Way back to Chamonix

The way back to Chamonix will be by train, without having first passed through the playground of a chamois, not even frightened by our presence.



Descent from the refuge of Tête Rousse



A fearless chamois