

Summer 2009

# Northern Alps Mont Blanc

# Introduction to Mountain Climbing

SFA ARG M13

7 days / 6 nights

Level : Rookie  
Effort : \*\*

**Snow, ice and rock: learn basic mountain climbing techniques and experience one or two beautiful climbs.**

## PROGRAMME

### Sunday

Arrival between 10.00am and 5.00pm. As there are no activities on the day of arrival, you can arrive between 2.00 and 5.00pm to check into your accommodation and collect your sports equipment. Once you arrive, you can take full advantage of the swimming pool and village.  
Information meeting about your activities at 6.00pm.

### Monday

Full day excursion.  
Rock. Learn to rope up, belay, climb, maintain balance on your feet, top rope descent.

### Tuesday

Full day excursion.  
Ice. Location: the Mer de Glace. Use of crampons, ice axe. Roping up progression on a glacier.

### Wednesday

Full day excursion.  
Snow. Walking on a snowy slope, stopping a slide, glissading descent.  
Enjoy an initial short run.

### Thursday

Excursion to mountain refuge.  
Morning: practice climbing, setting up a belay, progression at the head of a roped party, rappel descent.  
Afternoon: climbing to a refuge to spend the night.

### Friday

Departure in the early morning and making an ascent, level F (easy) or PD. (relatively easy), such as the standard trail on the Aiguille du Tour (3,542 m).

### Saturday

Rock school, focused on movements.  
Sports programme ends at 2.00pm.

*Programme content is provided for information purposes only. It may be subject to modification or adjustment at any time, for technical or safety reasons, or because of weather conditions. In such an event, only UCPA supervisors are authorised to take the necessary decision(s).*



# PRACTICAL INFO

## Address:

UCPA Argentière  
BP 6  
74400 Chamonix

Tel. : +33 (0) 4 50 54 07 11  
e-mail : [argentiere@ucpa.asso.fr](mailto:argentiere@ucpa.asso.fr)  
<http://argentiere.ucpa.com>

## Start and end of programme:

Open for arrivals on Sunday between 10.00am and 5.00pm.  
As there are no activities on the day of arrival, you can arrive between 2.00 and 5.00pm to check into your accommodation and collect your sports equipment.  
You can arrive the day before the programme begins, between 6.00 and 9.00pm (subject to a supplement). You must register one week in advance (at the latest).  
The programme ends on Saturday at 2.00pm.

## How to find us:

By car: Autoroute Blanche to Chamonix then RN506 to Argentière (8km above Chamonix)  
UCPA Centre at 50 m to the right after a bridge under the railroad.

Parking: the centre has an outdoor, unguarded parking lot.  
When this lot is full, there are other outdoor, unguarded spaces available near the station.

By train: arrival at the Argentière station via Saint Gervais. The centre is 100m from the station.  
The UCPA is at Argentière - Vallée de Chamonix (74) and NOT at Argentière les Ecrins (05).

## Accommodation:

5 nights at the UCPA centre, 1 night in a refuge.

Lodgings outside of the centre provide blankets. No need to bring a down comforter, but do bring along a sleeping bag liner.  
Most of the shelters have no showers.  
In some cases, overnight stays in shelters may be replaced by a night of camping, either with tent or bivouac.

Rooms for two are available, to be reserved at registration.  
Please note: if your programme includes one or more nights in a shelter, the lodging will be dormitory-style (no double rooms).

## Meals:

All meals are included, from lunch on the first day to lunch on the final day of the programme.  
Meals for outings are organised but if you regularly crave cereal bars or chocolate, then come prepared!  
Evening meals at shelters may be provided by the keeper or you may prepare them yourself, with the help of a monitor or guide.  
Lunches from Monday to Friday are packed picnics.  
In some high altitude shelters, especially in Switzerland, there is only bottled water available, in which case it will be at your expense (prices as high as € 6 per bottle).

## Instructors:

Each programme is supervised by a Mountain Guide or a trainee guide.  
Familiar with the mountain and expert in safety and logistics, he/she will do everything to ensure that you get the most from your stay.

## Participants:

Groups of 5 participants (there may be one extra participant under exceptional circumstances).

## Terms and Conditions:

### Price includes:

Local transfers (however, for more flexibility, we ask you to use your personal vehicles, in return for reimbursement of expenses and insurance for the vehicle and its occupants), lodging, meals, training, the technical equipment necessary for the activity (see list of personal equipment and equipment lent by the UCPA) from the time we meet up on the first day until departure on the last day.

### NOT included in price:

Beverages (sometimes including water at shelters) and personal expenses, showers at shelters, bath linens, sleeping bag liners (required for itinerant programmes), optional insurance (see following section) as well as any other supplements not included in the programme (additional shelters or ski lifts not included in the programme).

## Insurance:

Your registration for an UCPA programme provides **ONLY** Civil Liability and Recourse and Defence coverage (coverage details in the catalogue and on our web site: [ucpa.com](http://ucpa.com)). So it is important for you to purchase your own Personal Accident coverage.

# PREPARING FOR YOUR HOLIDAY

## Level/ errain:

Level of exertion

This level is determined based on all the factors that make a programme more (or less) difficult: number of hours spent practising the sport, altitude, weight of pack, intensity of physical effort, climate, etc.

The level of effort indicated is the minimum level required.

## Rookie

This is your first time at this activity. These programs are especially designed for beginners. The location, equipment and teaching methods are specially designed to initiate rookies and teach the basics.

## \*\* - Fitness

A minimum level of physical fitness is required. So if you do a bit of jogging, dancing, cycling or any other type of sport, you'll be ok.

## Note:

To make sure the programme is a success and that each one gets as much out of it as possible, as well as for safety reasons, it is important that you have the required level of skills. If not, our supervisors have the right to refuse to allow you to follow the programme. In this case, it may not be possible to offer you a replacement programme, nor will we be able to reimburse you for the programme.

Do not overestimate your abilities!

## Health formalities:

No contra-indications with regard to physical exertion at high altitude or serious medical problems.

## Administrative formalities:

All of our programs may take place, in part or in full, abroad (Switzerland or Italy):

- Make sure that you have international coverage for rescue and repatriation expenses in case of accidents.

A valid passport or identity card required.

You will be asked for a deposit of 100 euros, payable by cheque or in cash.

At the end of your stay it will be returned to you:

- once the room has been cleaned,
- if there is no wilful or accidental damage to equipment and/or the premises,
- if no equipment is lost.

## Clothing and personal equipment to bring along:

Cap, scarf, knitted hat or headband, sunglasses (minimum #3 protection), "breathable" tee shirt such as Odlo, Capilène or Carline, polar fleece jacket, waterproof breathable jacket such as Goretex, waterproof breathable pants such as Goretex (not mandatory, but very useful in case of bad weather, and practically indispensable above 4,000 m), mountain climbing pants, warm tights, shorts, 2 or 3 pairs of loop-knit socks, 1 pair of gloves or mittens, regular or small boot muffs, tennis shoes, canteen or plastic bottle, front-face flashlight, 1 knife, plastic flatware and bowl, a 50-litre trash bag (to protect your personal effects in your ruck sack), toiletry case, small

towel, personal first aid kit (include a total sunblock), toilet paper, pocket money.

If you don't want to invest too much, you can replace:

- the breathable tee shirts with normal tee shirts
- the fleece with a larger sweater
- the Gore-Tex jacket with a windbreaker and an anorak.
- the Gore-Tex pants with windbreaker pants.
- the mountain climbing pants with a pair of heavy twill slacks.

You may want to bring earplugs for a more restful night at the mountain refuge.

Telescopic poles and a sleeping bag liner are not essential, but will add to your comfort.

You will find plenty of sports shops on-site that offer a wide choice at competitive prices. If you are in any doubt about what equipment you need, our guides can help by taking into account the local weather forecast and snow conditions at altitude.

## First-aid kit and personal pharmacy.

Each of our guides, instructors and leaders is equipped with an emergency first-aid kit.

As its name indicates, this is for use in the event of any major incident occurring during an excursion or trek. This kit is not intended to be the group's pharmacy for minor problems that crop up as a normal part of sports activity or travel.

We therefore suggest you equip yourself with a personal pharmacy.

Typical contents:

- Any medication you are currently taking or that you may need if you are prone to particular problems (allergies, etc.).
- Something to prevent/protect blisters: dressings such as Elastoplast or Micropore.
- Something to treat blisters: dressings such as Second Skin.
- Something to prevent or relieve ankle and knee problems: stretch bandages or supports.
- Something to clean small cuts and wounds: antiseptic wipes.
- Sun protection for skin and lips.
- Something to relieve intestinal problems that can result from a change in eating habits.
- Something to relieve headaches, stiffness, aches and pains.
- Something to relieve insect bites and stings.

You can always ask your doctor and pharmacist for advice. Please bear in mind that you will have to carry your pharmacy with you, so only bring the absolute minimum.

## Equipment provided by the UCPA:

All of the technical equipment will be loaned: mountain climbing shoes (leather or plastic outers), climbing boots, crampons, ice axe, harness, helmet, back pack, belay equipment, etc. Relatively new, standard equipment.

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## NOTICE

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This notice is to inform you about the particular type of mountaineering available at our various mountaineering and high mountain rock climbing courses.

UCPA is a training centre for mountaineering and high mountain activities. We strive to adapt our training to each course participant, teaching them to practice mountaineering in a responsible way both during and after the programme.

To achieve this objective, our programmes focus on teaching the necessary techniques and principles of mountain climbing.

This approach sometimes involves climbing in "independent" roped parties where participants practice safety techniques learned beforehand. The roped group then climbs alone, on their own initiative, without being roped to a guide. A guide supervises these climbs and determines what methods are to be used, depending on the level of course participants and the conditions of the terrain.

All participants in a mountaineering or high mountain rock climbing course must agree to accept the form of instruction proposed and attest to having read this information.