

## PRACTICAL INFO

### WEATHER

As you will be traveling from around 3,200 feet to 9,840 feet in elevation, you will experience several different temperatures and weather systems. During the summer months, it does snow on rare occasions, leaving a layer of snow on the ground that doesn't dissipate for a day or two, sometimes longer. Furthermore, afternoon storms frequently occur during the summer months. On the flip side, the valleys can be 80 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Layering is important to adapt to the changes of weather.

### CHECKING THE WEATHER AND TRAIL CONDITIONS

As the weather can change rapidly, it is important to inquire about the weather before you start the day. We recommend checking a third party source. A few recommendations are listed below:

#### **Weather:**

We recommend that you download the Meteo Swiss App. It includes weather animations which forecast of precipitation, precipitation type, temperature and cloud coverage, with realtime and forecast slide-function.

On the ground info in SWITZERLAND: +41 162 (French, German or Italian)

#### **Weather:**

<https://www.mountain-forecast.com/peaks/La-Cassorte/forecasts/3301>

- You can choose the peak that is closest to your route and also the elevation (remember to choose the elevation to see the forecast). In general, you will be hiking between 1,000 and 3,000 meters.

#### **Europaweg Official Website**

<http://europaweg.ch/>

- Information on the opening of the trail, bridge and deviations. Also has information on huts on the trail.

#### **Local knowledge:**

Ask your hotel reception and hut wardens about current route conditions. Most of the accommodation, especially the mountain huts, are used to hosting hikers and have some of the most up to date information on trails including potential dangers.

## FOOD

Your tour is booked half board in most locations. Bring a water purifier, so you are not reliant on buying bottled water at the huts. In the valleys, there are restaurants and grocery stores for you to gain resources.



## SAFETY

### NOTIFY SOMEONE ABOUT YOUR STATUS

Provide a friend with your itinerary and agree to some scheduled check ins. This is especially true for solo hikers. Knowing that some mountain huts do not have WiFi or cell signal, you can make key check in points in the valleys of Chamonix, Champex, Le Châble, Les Haudères, Zinal, Hotel Schwarzhorn, Grächen and Zermatt.

### HIKING EARLY IN THE MORNING

It is advised to begin your hike early so that you do not run out of daylight at the end of your trek and also so that you have adequate time to deal with changes in weather and conditions (afternoon thunderstorms are not uncommon). Still, when you begin early, please have an awareness of the trail conditions. As temperatures drop in the evening, snow can harden and become slippery, making conditions early in the morning more dangerous than those later in the day, when the temperatures have softened the snow.

## STORMS

"Ideally you should anticipate the storm by checking the weather forecast before setting off for the hike. Leaving early or finding shelter when the storm arrives is strongly recommended. We suggest you keep an eye on the threatening clouds during your hike, and do not hesitate to turn around. If you still find yourself exposed, stay calm, avoid running, stay away from metallic items or higher places, and avoid the shelter of isolated trees. If you are in a group, you should keep apart from one another, crouch low with your feet close together in order to minimize ground contact. Avoid exposed areas (ridges, crests, isolated trees) or leaning against rocks. Sitting on your backpack provides good isolation from the ground. Avoid using your phone." - La Chamonade

## SNOW

"Trails can be covered with a considerable amount of snow even early in the season. Beware of slipping hazards - if possible, bypass snowfields if they have even a minor slope and bring the proper equipment: crampons, ice-axe, telescoping poles, snow leggings. Another snow-related risk concerns difficulties getting oriented: heavy snow-cover can hide trail markings and make it difficult to find reference points and landmarks, especially during bad weather. Use a compass and a map or even a GPS. Caution - following the tracks of other hikers can lead you even farther off the trail! Keep in mind that waterways can be covered by snow bridges that may collapse under the weight of one or more excursionists, so be careful whenever hiking near rivers, streams and gulleys where water could meet up with snowfields. When a snow bridge has to be crossed, a safety line is recommended." - Autor du mont blanc:

## SLOPES

"Sloping of the ground can create a variety of different complications during the course of an excursion. Grassy slopes, especially when humid, wet or covered with frost, are very slippery. The risk of rock-slides should never be underestimated, especially when other groups of excursionists are in the vicinity. Proceed with utmost caution when hiking above other groups, and always be aware of your position relative to the possible trajectories of falling rock when downhill from other groups. While they may seem to offer convenient shelter from bad weather, large masses resting on an incline should never be trusted too much because of their precarious stability. Never underestimate the potential problems inherent to peaks: open-air ridges, the traversal of very steep slopes and exposed segments can provoke fear and panic. Try to keep your group together and do not leave the trail, however overwhelming it might seem." - Autor du mont blanc:

Do not try to take shortcuts, and if you ever lose the trail, the best strategy is to backtrack until you find a reliable point of reference.

## EMERGENCY CARD

### WHEN YOU SHOULD CALL EMERGENCY SERVICES

If your life or another life is endangered and you can not resolve the matter yourself, you should contact emergency services. Here are several situations which can constitute an emergency:

- Broken bones, serious injuries & open wounds
- You are trapped somewhere, either from a fall or terrain that is past your experience level
- You are lost or conditions make it impossible for you to continue
- You are trapped by severe weather, rockfall or avalanche

(adapted from the autor du mont Blanc)

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF AN ACCIDENT OCCURS

First, remain calm and do not make any rash decisions. If the injured is in a dangerous location, do not put yourself in risk as well. If you can reach the injured person, then:

- Protect them from the cold and other environmental conditions
- Assess the situation and the person's injuries
- Administer first aid, if you are trained.
- Call the Emergency Number listed and / or whistle for help

(adapted from the autor du mont Blanc)

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS AND PROCEDURE

La Chamonide recommends that you disclose five pieces of information:

#### FRANCE

**112**

#### SWITZERLAND

**144**

#### EUROPE-WIDE

**112**

#### PGHM (MOUNTAIN RESCUE MOUNT BLANC MASSIF)

**+33 (0) 4 50 53 16 89**

#### WHERE

Exact location, route, altitude

#### WHAT

Type of accident, number of victims,  
type of injuries

#### WEATHER

Wind and visibility

#### WHO

Identity and phone number

#### WHEN

Time of accident

When a helicopter approaches, one hand up and one hand slightly to the side (forming an "N") signals you do not need help, both hands up in a "Y" position signals that help is required.

You can also call for help if you are lost or injured with your whistle. Six blasts within a minute are the international distress signal, three blasts within a minute are a call back signal and one blast is "where are you" or a call back signal if you hear anything like Morse Code. Whistle blasts should last three seconds.