

WILDERPLACES SPRING

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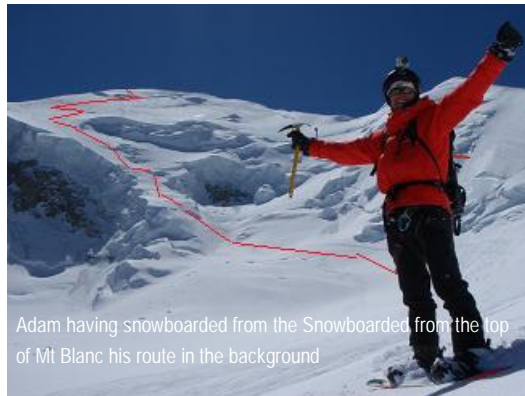
Spring is Here!

We thought we would have had another newsletter out by now but the winter was just manic with Haute Routes, Irish Snow Sport Association exams and training, backcountry courses, ice climbing and more powder skiing than you could shake a ski pole at. So here we are and it is spring already. Better late than never, Enjoy!

Adam Kelly's Mt Blanc Adventure

On the 3rd of May, Adam Kelly, tri-athlete and director of Zest fitness studio in Greystones Co. Wicklow snowboarded off the top of Mt. Blanc.

After many months of preparation at home Adam first spent 3 days acclimatising and training with Wilder-



Adam having snowboarded from the top of Mt Blanc his route in the background

places guide (Matt) Farmer before their summit attempt. Getting the right conditions to ski or snowboard from the summit of Mt. Blanc is extremely unusual. Most parties leave their skis at the Vallot hut below the summit. The trip was a two year dream of Adam's, he used it to raise money in aid of Special Olympics Ireland. Well done Adam and Farmer!

Find our more about Adam's trip on our Blog (<http://wilderplaces.wordpress.com/>)

Chamnoix—Zermatt in 24 Hrs

Have you completed or tried to complete the Haute Route on skis? Miles Bright UIAGM mountain guide and Robbie's neighbour completed the Haute Route in just 24 hrs. Miles left Grand Montets at 1200, arrived in Arolla at 2100 hours checked into a hotel, slept for 7 hours. Left Arolla at 0430 and got to Zermatt at 1200! Impressive eh!

Guide Profile: Pete Mason

Robbie first met Pete in 2002 when he was working as a ski technician in Chamonix, he has been working with Wilderplaces for the last 3 years.



How many American's have gone through the French guiding system and why did you decide to go through the French system? I'm the second

American to pass the guide's courses in the French system. I decided to go through the French system because I live here. The idea to become a guide never actually occurred to me while I was in the states. And, of course, zee French seestem eez zee best in zee world.

What was your best ever climbing trip? Hard to say. They all are special. Maybe the Salathé wall on El Capitan with my best friend Jack, or perhaps the North Face of the Matterhorn with Corrado...

What was your best ski tour? Really hard to say. A few turns in powder and I tend to forget where I am. I definitely had some epic days ski touring in the Colorado backcountry. Switzerland has great tours as well.

Where is your favourite place to climb and ski in France and America? Again, really hard to say. I enjoy bouldering in Médonnet, cragging in Bionnassay, alpine rock on the Grand Capucin, or alpinism on the big north faces.... In the states I really like Eldorado canyon, Yosemite, Touloumne, Needles, the Diamond.

For skiing- anywhere there's good snow! The skiing off the Aiguille du midi and in Brevent is great. I also enjoy Val D'Isere. In the states I skied in the summit county area- Arapahoe Basin, Vail, Breckenridge, and backcountry in the Indian Peaks and Rocky Mountain National Park.

What do you miss most about living in America? I miss my family and friends, miles of wilderness, the desert, and ESPN.



Our Experience, Your Adventure

Spring in Chamnoix

Originally from Sweden, now living in Oslo, Robin Qwint is a regular visitor to Chamonix. He is of the opinion that "Spring is the best time to be here, "so many dishes to choose from a real 'smorgisbord' of activities".

To show what he means here is Robin's trip:

Day 1: Arrive late to Argentiere.

Day 2: Ski Touring Off to Aiguille du Midi skied down the Petite Envers and hiked up to the Breche Puiseaux, chalky ski down the Mont Mallet glacier.

Day 3: Ice Climbing; The north east face of Mt. Blanc du Tacul on a route called Modica Noury, white out so overnight in Requin Refuge.

Day 4: Skied out Valley Blanche, rest day.

Day 5: Rock Climbing. Voie Contamine on the South Face of the Pillar D'Aiguille du Midi, a great crack climb.

Day 6: Headed to Verbier to spent the day skiing spring snow with two old friends.

Day 7: Rest Day.

Day 8: Ski touring. Back to Grand Montets to do some steep skiing from the col du Cristaux, Robin then hiked up to Col d'Argentiere on the Glacier du Tour Noir before heading back to Argentiere. Paul Pritchard was in town giving a lecture at the Hotel Eden so Robin walked down by the river to les Praz to hear him speak.

Day 9: Rest Day.

Day 10: Sport Climbing. Through the Mont Blanc tunnel to Valgrisenche to clip some bolts on the long sport climbs.

Day 11: Travel back to Norway Happy!

Adventurous Summer Holidays

Looking for an active holiday this summer? Why not sign up for one of our walking trips or learn how to alpine climb. Here is what we have on offer this summer:

Walking and easy mountaineering:

Tour du Mt Blanc – Spectacular 10 day walk circumnavigating the Mont Blanc Massif (1495€)

Tour du Grand Paradiso – Adventurous 6 days walking and mountaineering in the Grand Paradiso National Park the trip takes in the 4000m summit of Grand Paradiso (1395€)

"Spring is the best time to come to Chamonix, so many dishes to choose from a real 'smorgisbord' of activities"



Robin Qwint on Modica Noury

Walkers Haute Route – 10 day Walk from Chamonix to Zermatt on fabulous trails through beautiful surroundings. (1685€)

Classic Haute Route – 8 days glacier walking and easy mountaineering from Chamonix to Zermatt over high cols and through spectacular scenery. (1795€)

Alpine Climbing:

Mont Blanc – 6 days mountaineering with a goal to climb the highest peak in western Europe (1895€)

Alpine Training – we are running two excellent Alpine training courses. 1 for novices and 1 for climbers who want to improve and learn to Alpine climb or just have an adventurous fun holiday in the Alps! (1295€/1595€)

Private Trips – if you have a goal or trip in mind we'd love to help you realise it just get in touch!

Please see our website for more details of all of the above trips www.wilderplaces.com

A Visit From the American President

Wilderplaces were honoured to be visited by leading representatives of the American Mountain Guides Association at our Head Quarters here in Chamonix. AMGA President Margaret Wheeler, Executive Director Betsy Novak and IFMGA Guide Mat Farmer were on their way to the IFMGA's AGM in Engelberg, Switzerland. The AMGA now have 58 certified IFMGA guides.



R. Fenlon, M. Wheeler, B. Novak and M.