

**Highlights**

Ski past Chamonix's most famous peaks through spectacular glacial terrain
Break taking 17km Ski Descent
Lunch amongst high alpine peaks dramatic seracs and deep crevasses.

Dates: Organised on demand

Price: 380€

Introduction

The Valley Blanche is a spectacular 17km ski descent that starts at 3812m from the Aiguille du Midi and finishes at the Montanvers train station, or in Chamonix itself in good snow conditions. This means about 2800 meters of vertical skiing through the amazing glaciated scenery of the Mont Blanc Range.

Outline of the Day

You will begin your Vallee Blanche day by meeting your guide early in the morning at the Aiguille du Midi Cable Car station. The journey up is in two stages. The first brings you to the Plan de l'Aiguille (2300m). The second stage traverses the Les Pelerins glacier before rising dramatically up the North Face of the Aiguille du Midi.

From the Aiguille du Midi lift station you will have breathtaking views of the Mt. Blanc Massif, The Grand Jurasse, Chamonix below, and Switzerland to the east. Here you will put skis on your back pack and rope up to your guide to descend the narrow arête which give access to the Vallee Blanche. The arête will be equipped with safety ropes which act as a banister, and along with being roped to your guide, will help you on your way down.

Once off the arête you will put your skis on and enjoy a long and spectacular ski down the Mer du Glace. There are several variations of the Vallee Blanche; l'Evers du Plan, Le Petit Rognon and Col du Plan are a few of the most popular. You will most likely do the 'vrai' Vallee Blanche.

At first you set off on the Geant glacier then you trend left to the Glacier du Tacul. Here you are skiing beneath Mt Blanc du Tacul and the spectacular granite walls. Here your guide will be able to point out some world famous climbs such as the Gervasutti Pillar. From here the terrain opens out to the Mer du Glace glacier itself and you will enjoy pitch after pitch of spectacular skiing.



Sections for the day will involve negotiating your way beneath every changing seracs, narrow snow bridges and passages between deep crevasses. You must never forget that you are on a glacier. If your guide gives you directions please follow them closely and immediately. As a general rule when skiing on a glacier you must always stop above your guide and never below. If your guide stops it is likely he has come across a crevasse and is about to direct you safely around it!

Towards the last section of the Vallee Blanche, where the slope gives way to more gentle terrain and you are through the main area of danger you will have time to sit in the sun with a picnic and look back at what you have just skied down in awe!

From here you have a long relatively flat section (snow borders have your poles ready!) which takes you to the bottom of the Montenvers train station. You gain access to the station via a series of steps from the glacier edge and a mini cable. At Montenvers there is a café shop and viewing platform where you can enjoy a well earned "vin chaud" while waiting for the train back to Chamonix.

Please note that the exact nature of the itinerary is dependant upon a whole range of factors including weather and snow conditions and the ability and fitness of the group. Your Guide, Robbie Fenlon, will do everything he possibly can to follow the itinerary stated but you should be prepared for flexibility and possible changes in the itinerary.

Trip Pricing

The trip price is 380Euro.

Included in this price:

Services of a UIAGM Mountain Guide for the day
Group safety equipment including crevasse rescue equipment and group first aid kit
Office back up support

Not included in the price:

Personal equipment
Insurance
Lift ticket (approximately 30 Euro)

Group Size

Groups can be from 1 – 6 people

Trip Grading Level 1

The course has a ski grading of level 1. To join the trip you should have several weeks skiing under your belt and be comfortable parallel skiing red runs and easy blacks. You can expect to be skiing for an average of 4 hours on a wide range of snow conditions.

Why ski the Vallee Blanche with Wilderplaces?

With a range of companies offering to take tourists down the Vallee Blanche it is difficult to know which one to choose.



We believe the key to an enjoyable and safe Vallee Blanche experience is an early start and not to rush. Our UIAGM guiding team is led by Robbie Fenlon who has a passion for backcountry skiing and ski-touring in the Chamonix valley and has a great personality. You can be sure that Robbie and our other guides, Jeff, Linus and Pete will do everything possible to make this day the highlight of our week. All of our guides are highly knowledgeable and passionate about the area and will take the time to share this knowledge with you. We do not believe in rushing the Vallee Blanche and expect to spend the whole day helping you get the most out of your day to truly make it an experience of a life time.

Getting there and away

The vallee Blanche begins and ends in Chamonix, which is easily accessible from the Ireland, UK and other countries. Transfers from Geneva to Chamonix take approximately 90mins and reservations can be made online at www.mountaindropoffs.com. Mountain Drop offs can also arrange transfers from other resorts such as Morzine (1hr 20mins) Les Contamines (45min) and Megeve (1hr)

How to Book

You can book by contacting Claire in the office who will in turn send you full booking details. On confirmation of your booking you will be sent further details such as kit list and meeting times.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you are insured against medical and personal accident risks. This must be for the activities undertaken and include repatriation costs, air ambulance and helicopter rescue services and cancellation and curtailment. We also recommend that you take out insurance which includes baggage cover. You can purchase insurance to cover all your needs from the British Mountaineering Council at www.thebmc.co.uk

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Backcountry Skiing with Wilderplaces

We are passionate skiers and view backcountry skiing as perhaps the ultimate way to explore the high mountains. Our backcountry ski courses and ski tours are born out of personal knowledge and experience and we have spent many years building partnerships with the best guides and instructors here in the Alps.

Our passion for and knowledge of off-piste skiing and ski touring is combined with our skills and experience as adventure travel professionals. This means that you can be sure of a professional service from start to finish. If you need help with deciding upon the right trip or what type of equipment to bring, then be sure to give us a call. We would be delighted to assist based upon our personal knowledge and experience.

Climate

Winter in the Alps can bring a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions. During the day it is possible to experience sub-zero conditions through to ambient temperatures in the high 20's. Your personal clothing and equipment should reflect the wide variety of possi-



ble conditions.

Medical Information & Safety

We will provide you with detailed information when you book your holiday. On all our trips each guide is qualified in First-Aid and they will carry a comprehensive first aid kit with them at all times and have experience of treating medical situations in an outdoors environment. In addition, we do encourage clients to bring their own first aid kit. It is your own responsibility to ensure that you are physically fit enough to join an adventurous trip such as this. We recommend that you have a complete medical and dental checkup prior to departure.

Extending your Trip

Should you have more time during your stay in the Alps, we would be pleased to organise an off piste day customised to your requirements. A wide range of options are available and you could choose from personalised off-piste ski instruction to private mountain guiding, heli skiing, introduction to ski touring day or an ascent of a remote alpine peak.