



French Tarentaise (Self-Guided Walking Holiday)

Please email us at info@alpineexploratory.com or call us on +44 (0)1729 823 197 to chat about this holiday. You'll find all the latest information at www.alpineexploratory.com/holidays/french-tarentaise.html.



Nearing Refuge du Ruitor in the Tarentaise

About these Holiday Notes

These Holiday Notes help you decide whether this holiday is right for you. Before your trip we send you final detailed information.

Details

Start Montorlin
Finish Montorlin
Region Tarentaise
Country France
Length 6 walking/activity days and 7 nights
Total distance -
Typical day 10km (6 miles), 300m ascent
Highest altitude Around 2,500m
Grade Intermediate

Introduction

Explore the French Alps this summer! For a holiday that you can enjoy with your family, friends or colleagues, and where everyone can enjoy their choice of activities, look no further than the Tarentaise region of France.

Alpine Exploratory is delighted to include this multi-activity holiday in its programme. This is something different from our usual walking holidays and is thanks to us finding a superb chalet in an area with so much going on.

Of course, the local walking is excellent and we include routecards for a number of scenic local walks. Fill your days with as much walking or other outdoor activity as you like, or just relax in the comfort of the chalet with a good book.

Immerse yourself for a captivating week in the sights and the lifestyle of the French Alps!

Our approach

Your walks

The routecards describe gentle walks, with something for almost everyone. Reach high mountain lakes with only modest effort, secluded hamlets, and hidden valleys circled by snow-capped peaks.

Local activities

As much as the walking, the emphasis of this trip is on the vast range of outdoor activities that can be enjoyed in the area. Each day choose from rafting, mountain biking, horse riding, canyoning, golf, canoeing and more.

Routecards and maps

Each day you have a range of walking routes available to choose from, all explained in detail on your routecards. We give you the real French maps for you to follow, and not printouts or photocopies.

Getting there and back

Your holiday starts and ends in Montorlin. Travel to and from Montorlin is not included in the holiday price - we leave it to you to make the arrangements that suit you best. Geneva, Grenoble and Lyon airports are all quite convenient. It is also possible to take the train. The local activities and walks take in all of the local area; we strongly recommend hiring a car. Full information on flight and transfer options will be sent to you on booking.

Itinerary

This is a sample itinerary and you are free to choose any walks or activities on each day.

Day 1: Arrival in Montorlin

Evening arrival in Montorlin.

Day 2: Walk to le Monal

One of the Tarentaise's most enjoyable short walks takes a course through forests and open hillside to the picturesque hamlet of le Monal. On the way back, look round the small town of Seez. Perhaps there's also time for some high-ropes adventure in the afternoon!

Day 3: Canoeing and rafting

Head to the river near Bourg St. Maurice today, where you can hire your choice of craft.

Day 4: Walk to Refuge du Ruitor

The hills above Sainte-Foy Tarentaise are worthy of much exploration. Take a half-day walk to a high, hidden valley. In the afternoon take a leisurely cycle ride along the river.

Day 5: Mountain biking

Take to the forests above Montchavin-Les Coches, using the ski lifts before cruising down the tracks to the village.

Day 6: Walk to the chapel at les Vernettes

The beautiful chapel of Notre Dame des Vernettes is a simple walk uphill from the hamlet of La Chénarie. On a hot afternoon, head to the local outdoor pool for a dip.

Day 7: Walk to Lac de la Plagne

This is a walk that takes the best part of your day out. From Refuge de Rosuel follow the GR5 path into the Vanoise National Park along a highly scenic trail with views of waterfalls. In the higher hills, reach the lake and beyond it a very hospitable mountain hut, Refuge Entre Le Lac. (It is also possible to spend a night in this refuge as a 2-day trip.)

Day 8: Departure from Montorlin

Morning departure from Montorlin.

Accommodation

This holiday stays in a welcoming and comfortable chalet in the centre of the traditional hamlet of Montorlin, near the larger village of Montchavin.

The chalet has room for 10 people in five bedrooms. There are three double rooms (two with ensuite facilities) and two twin rooms. Each room has its own character; for example there are Savoyarde carved wooden bunks and a built-in four-poster, and who will get the room behind the big old wooden door?

On the top floor is the open-plan dining and sitting area. French windows give a view across the hillsides and down to the valley far below. Mont Blanc is visible on clear days.

Eat your meals at the big dining table and relax in the huge sofas. In case of rainy days or if you just fancy a break from being active, delve into the collection of DVDs, CDs and books. In the cellar there is room for storage of bikes and equipment.

The rooms and living area are over three floors, with another 5 steps between the dining and lounge areas.

Your info pack contains full details of your accommodation including contact details and directions.

The walking

Terrain

The routecards included in the holiday describe easy walks that should be manageable for most people. Typically a walk will start with a wide smooth track and later feature sections of narrower, perhaps more

rocky, path. In early summer (roughly June) it is possible that you will meet some small and simple patches of snow to cross. The walks vary in length and difficulty. Many take a morning or an afternoon, while one is more of a full day's outing.

Your own routes

While your routecards make up the walking for the trip, you are of course free to walk wherever you choose, taking side trips or going by a different route of your own choice. Please note that if you follow your own route you will have left the holiday for the duration.

The activities

Before your trip we send you a form on which you can specify activities you'd like to book in advance. We encourage you to choose before your trip, to save time during your holiday and to avoid disappointment if activities book up. Your hosts are expert at booking guests onto activities - armed with a bit of knowledge about what you would like to do, they will make sure you have a great time! Choose from these and more:

Mountain biking – from ski lifts or by rivers.
Canyoning - Drop into waterfalls and gorges!
Paragliding – in tandem with an instructor.
Horse riding – a civilised way to travel.
Climbing – with local instructors.
High ropes course – swing in the trees!
Rafting, canoeing, kayaking – local rivers.
Tennis, squash – Les Arcs and the valley.
Road cycling – challenging climbs to cols.
Ice skating – covered rink in Les Coches.
Open-air swimming – in a local lake.
Acro bungee – trampolines with a twist!
Glacier visits – attractions above La Plagne.
Mountain boarding – cruise the meadows.
Skateboarding – Urban Park at La Plagne.
Golf – 9 and 18 hole courses at Les Arcs.
Kids' leisure club – from 5 years.
Archery – in Montchavin-Les Coches.

In most of July and August the full ranges of activities and local facilities are open. In June and September there is a smaller choice of things to do, but the walking is always open!

Food

Breakfasts are included in your holiday. It is possible to add on meals in a flexible manner, up to full board, during the week. Your hosts are excellent cooks and will tell you all about the options. Breakfast in the chalet is a sociable meal with a range of cereals, porridge, toast, and a selection of hot items (eggs, bacon, pancakes) that changes daily.

The optional evening meal is a 3-course affair, including wine, that marks a fitting end to the day's activities. The chalet owners prepare it with great care taking influences from British and local Savoyarde cuisine. Packed lunches are another option, and if you choose to have tea in the chalet, come back after your day out to find freshly baked cake waiting for you. Your hosts make a different recipe each day – look out for the lemon drizzle cake!

For eating out there is plenty of scope. The Tarentaise is in the Savoie region of France, famous for its local specialities such as Beaufortain cheese. Try Savoyarde dishes including tarteflette (potatoes, bacon, onions and cheese). Local pizzas, *au feu du bois* (in a wood-fired oven), are excellent.

Insurance

Clients must have insurance to cover themselves for helicopter search & rescue, medical expenses and repatriation.

We recommend, but it is not compulsory, that you also have cover for personal liability, cancellation and your baggage and money.

You might find that your annual multi-trip travel insurance covers these items already. We will send you details of suitable insurance policies on booking.

Passports and visas

UK passport holders do not need a visa to enter France. Please check that your passport is in date.

Weather

The weather in the Tarentaise between June and September is generally highly suitable for Alpine walking and outdoor activities.

While snowfall is possible on higher ground all year round, it is unlikely in the summer. Higher up, small snow patches might remain in June, but should not pose problems.

June is a time for flowers and can be warm and summery. July and August are commonly the hottest months but with greater amounts of rain and greater risk of afternoon thunder storms; and September can bring some beautifully clear days. Thunderstorms are a particular danger in high summer, occurring most often in the afternoons.

It is sensible to come equipped for all the types of weather that might be experienced in a typical summer in the UK: from heavy rain storms with a chill in the air, to hot sunshine.

Flora and fauna

- + **Chamoix**, a symbol of the Alps, being deer-like with horns.
- + **Ibex**, similar to chamoix but larger and with longer, stripy horns.
- + **Marmots**, the cute burrowing animal with the high-pitched cry - a chunky squirrel.
- + **Alpine choughs**, medium-sized black birds that have a characteristically effortless-looking flight, red legs, yellow bill and a gregarious approach!

Equipment

You will need the usual equipment for mountain walking in the Alps. Especially important are good walking boots, waterproofs and sun protection. We will send you an equipment list on booking. Please also see the Equipment page of our website for more information.

For the activities, all the information you need can be hired at the local venues, including mountain bikes and safety equipment.

Local expenses

Local expenses include food and drink other than breakfasts, activities, local transport (we recommend that you bring a hire car), cable cars, attractions and extras.

Guided days

Hire a professional mountain leader to join you on this self-guided holiday, for one or more days. A leader helps plan and carry out each day's walking and adds interest to your holiday by pointing out local features. Please contact us for prices and more information.

Groups

As well as the standard option of booking the whole chalet for the exclusive use of your group, you are welcome to join the holiday by yourself or in a couple or small group, or see if we can match you up with other like-minded people on the same holiday. Any group will be a maximum of 10 people.

Hazards

Health
 France and the Tarentaise region do not require tourists to take any vaccinations. However, it is recommended to keep tetanus vaccines up to date.

Safety
 This is adventure travel! This holiday takes you to some wild and remote areas, in particular some areas of upland mountains where navigation can be difficult in poor weather. The weather can also be a hazard in itself.

During any walking (whether following a routecard or making your own route) and during any activities, you are responsible for your own actions and safety and you should join the trip with suitable skills, experience and equipment.

Further information

Please email us with any questions at info@alpineexploratory.com.

Disclaimer

This information is given in good faith and is believed to be correct at the time of issue. Alpine Exploratory cannot be liable for any loss or injury incurred.