



## Alpine Pass Route Central (Guided)

Please email us at [info@alpineexploratory.com](mailto:info@alpineexploratory.com) to ask about this trip.

You'll find all the latest information at [www.alpineexploratory.com/holidays/alpine-pass-route-central-guided.html](http://www.alpineexploratory.com/holidays/alpine-pass-route-central-guided.html).



Screens on the ascent to Hochturlli

### 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** Engelberg  
**Finish** Kandersteg  
**Region** Bernese Oberland  
**Country** Switzerland  
**Length** 7 walking days  
**Total distance** 112km (70 miles)  
**Typical day** 16km with 1,130m ascent  
**Highest altitude** 2,834m  
**Grade** Black3  
**Group size** 4 to 8 people plus leader

### Introduction

The Alpine Pass Route crosses Switzerland from East to West, from Sargans to Montreux. We take 7 days to cover the central stages of the route. Through the Bernese Oberland we pass the Eiger, Jungfrau and Monch.

As the name suggests, the theme is Alpine passes! On all but two days – those to Meiringen and to Mürren – our stages start in the valley and climb steadily to a col, typically either broad and grassy or narrow and rocky. Our night's accommodation lies in the village on the far side, down through meadows and forests. This is Swiss Alpine trekking at its most pure. These are solid mountain days requiring fitness and confidence. The reward is the sense of traveling through the mountains that we seek for all our treks, combined with grand old Swiss hotels in notable high resorts for example the car-free Mürren on its high shelf.

We take the normal routing of the Alpine Pass Route as well as giving some options for easier or more scenic paths.

Trek in the company of a fully qualified International Mountain Leader (IML). We move through the mountains on a flexible route that can be set according to the group's energy levels.

### Our approach

#### Your route

Our trip gives a complete journey on foot from Engelberg to Kandersteg, along the Alpine Pass Route. On completion you will have walked the central, high, section and passed by the most notable peaks including the Eiger, Jungfrau and Monch. On the trek itself, no transport is taken except for any that you would like to add in, to skip certain sections of valley walking or to descend by cable car.

#### Guided walks

Each day your leader guides the group along the stage. On some days there is a choice of route; which route we take depends on what people prefer and on the local conditions.

#### Getting there and back

Your holiday starts in the mountain town of Engelberg and ends in another outdoorsy town, Kandersteg. Travel to Engelberg and from Kandersteg is not included in the holiday price - we leave it to you to make the arrangements that suit you best. Zurich and Basel are the most convenient airports, with good quick trains to both Engelberg and Kandersteg stations; Geneva airport also works, as does Milan for the return from Kandersteg. Full information on flight and transfer options will be sent to you on booking.

### Itinerary

#### Arrival day: Arrival in Engelberg

Evening arrival in Engelberg, popular Swiss ski and mountain town. The group goes out to eat in the village. **Hotel in Engelberg**

#### Stage 1: Engelberg to Engstlenalp

(11km with 1,260m ascent)  
The Jochpass is the first of our cols, relatively modest at 2,207m and with ski infrastructure on either side. Nevertheless, the mountains are building up and we descend to the delightful meadow of Engstlenalp.  
**Auberge at Engstlenalp**

#### Stage 2: Engstlenalp to Meiringen

(20km with 650m ascent)  
Our main route is a traverse via Tannalp to Planplatten, where a cable car can be used to drop to Meiringen. On the way is the Balmeregghorn, a grassy hill with long views over meadows and the deep Gental.

#### Hotel in Meiringen

#### Stage 3: Meiringen to Grindelwald

(22km with 1,470m ascent)  
The passes continue with the easy-angled Grosse Scheidegg. In fact a small road goes over the pass and down to Grindelwald. We climb and descend through woods and meadows.

#### Hotel in Grindelwald

#### Stage 4: Grindelwald to Wengen

(18.5km with 1,170m ascent)  
The Kleine Scheidegg is today's pass, different to all others on the Alpine Pass Route in having a railway station at its summit: next stop the Jungfrauoch. We are walking under the North Face of the Eiger. Our descent to Wengen takes a quieter route, with train or cable car options available.

#### Hotel in Wengen

#### Stage 5: Wengen to Mürren

(8.5km with 860m ascent)  
If walked all the way, today is still a modest one. Our aim is the mountainside village of Mürren, car-free and a curious delight. It feels as if suspended in mid-air. The Grutschalp cable car and sweet old train can be used to bypass the stiff climb.

#### Hotel in Mürren

#### Stage 6: Mürren to Griesalp

(15.5km with 1,050m ascent)  
The first of a two-stage finale comes with the long climb to the Sefinafurgga (2,612m), the second-highest col of the whole APR. (The highest comes tomorrow!) The ascent is exceptionally scenic over Mürren and back to the Kleine Scheidegg. The pass is narrow, loose and rocky, and the descent to tiny Griesalp quick down meadows.

#### Auberge in Griesalp

#### Stage 7: Griesalp to Kandersteg

(16km with 1,440m ascent)  
The rocky Hochturlli (2,778m) col is not even the highlight of this exceptional day in the mountains. Perhaps the highlight is the Blümlialphütte (2,834m) just above the col, in classic Swiss Alpine Club style, or the glacial views and features on the descent. We walk on lateral moraine with waterfalls opposite. From the Oechinensee far below, there is a final track to Kandersteg, bustling in the valley.

#### Hotel in Kandersteg

#### Departure day: Departure from Kandersteg

Departure from Kandersteg after breakfast.



Our normal schedule of accommodation might not be available, especially for busier times or at shorter notice. We book accommodation as close as possible to this itinerary and give you a schedule to check before we proceed.

### Accommodation

Our standard schedule of accommodation consists of 6 nights in 3- or 4-star hotels and 2 nights in auberges (like simple hotels).

You will have a private room each night; at the hotels you have an ensuite bathroom, while at the auberges your bathroom might be shared.

If availability is tight at the 2 auberges then we'll let you know; in that case the choice is between dormitories, or taking the bus (scenic) to a nearby hotel, or finally shifting your dates either side.

On a private guided trip it is possible to stay in one or more Swiss mountain huts, on the Alpine Pass Route. Please ask us for details. The huts are comfortable and welcoming. Hut accommodation is in dormitories, either on Alpine-style communal sleeping platforms or in bunk beds. We can sometimes book private rooms at some of the huts.

Your info pack contains full details of your accommodation.

### The walking

#### Terrain

The Alpine Pass Route's terrain comprises the full range of Alpine walking, a typical day starting with wide tracks through forests, tarmac country lanes, then up to zig-zagging hillside paths and steep, rocky mountain paths. The two highest cols, the Sefinafurgga (2,612m) and the Hhturli (2,778m) involve loose paths over scree and shale, plus wooden steps built into the hillside, on both approach and descent. The Alpine Pass Route has no *via ferrata* or climbing sections and is a trek throughout.

#### Self-guided days

On this guided holiday there is the option each day for participants to walk by themselves instead of joining the group's

walk, either on their own route or following one of Alpine Exploratory's routecards.

### Your own routes

While your guided walks and the optional 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.

### Food

Meals included are all breakfasts plus 2 evening meals (at the 2 auberges). For lunches there is lots of opportunity to stock up on ingredients along the route. You will find huts and cafés during the walking, useful for lunch stops. Your leader will advise about food shops and refreshment stops along the route. For eating out there are good options in each village. The group will head to a restaurant and people are of course welcome to go off by themselves.

### 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

For 2017, passport holders of the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore do not need a visa to enter Switzerland.

### Weather

The weather in these parts of the Swiss Alps from mid-July to mid-September is generally highly suitable for Alpine walking. While snowfall is possible on higher ground all year round, it is unlikely in the Summer season.

During cold spells in summer, rain can fall as snow on the Alpine Pass Route's higher cols. Additionally, patches of snow left over from Winter and Spring might linger into July, but should not pose problems. July and August are commonly the hottest months but with greater amounts of rain and greater risk of afternoon thunder storms; the first half of September can be stable, with the chance of some beautifully clear days.

Thunderstorms are a particular danger in summer, occurring most often in the afternoons.

This all means that it is sensible to come equipped and expecting 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.

### Equipment

You will need the usual equipment for mountain walking in the Alps. Especially important are good walking boots, good waterproof jacket and waterproof trousers, and sun protection. For any huts you will need a sheet liner. No *via ferrata* equipment is needed. We will send you an equipment list on booking. Please also see the Equipment page of our website for more information.

### Local expenses

Local expenses include food and drink other than those meals that are included, plus any local transport, attractions and extras.

### Hazards

#### Health

Switzerland does 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. The weather can also be a hazard in itself. During any walking, whether following a guided walk or a routecard or making your own route, 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](mailto: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.