

**Trekking the Haute Route:
Mont Blanc to the Matterhorn
August 22, 2015 – September 7, 2015 (trip# 1528)**



The Matterhorn – the trek's endpoint in Zermatt, Switzerland

A personal foreword by trip leader Steve Cohen:

In the last decade I've been on/led treks in many regions of the world. The Haute Route is the only one I've chosen to repeat - why? Is it because it's in a spectacular alpine region with incredible above-treeline views for the large part of every day? Is it the physical challenge of covering ~114 miles of distance, climbing ~36,000 vertical feet and crossing 11 mountain passes? Or perhaps, is it the nice balance between staying in mountain huts and small hotels

in remote valley villages, the breathtaking setting of the Lac des Dix and Lac de Moiry, or the long ascent over the Fenetre d'Arpette? Or maybe it is the splendid Cabane de Moiry sited opposite a dramatic ice wall at 8,700 feet or the charm of Champex, an idyllic mountain resort village? Does the freedom from mechanized transportation for the entire trek also free one's spirit? Join Leslie and me on this unique adventure and find your own reasons why this classic alpine walk is such an exceptional trekking experience.

OVERVIEW



The church in Trient (we stay in Trient our second night out)

From Chamonix to Zermatt, from Mont Blanc to the Matterhorn. These two great mountaineering centers are among the most famous in the world. To walk from one to the other is to experience the greatest collection of 4000m peaks in all the Alps and to visit some of the most spectacular valleys. You'll happen upon charming villages and remote hamlets, roam through flower meadows and fragrant forests, traverse secluded mountain passes, trek alongside glaciers and encounter marmots, ibex and chamois.

Our journey will provide a visual feast as we hike for fourteen days through this captivating region. We will stay in hostels, hotels, and mountain huts similar to the AMC's with the important difference that they all serve wine and beer and most have hot showers. Trip leader Steve Cohen lived in Switzerland for three years and is competent in both French and German, the two languages used along the trek. He hiked the Haute Route in 2010. Trip co-leader Leslie Carson has led AMC hikes in New England for the past seven years, is a hike leader with August Camp and has traveled extensively in several countries.

TRIP ITINERARY

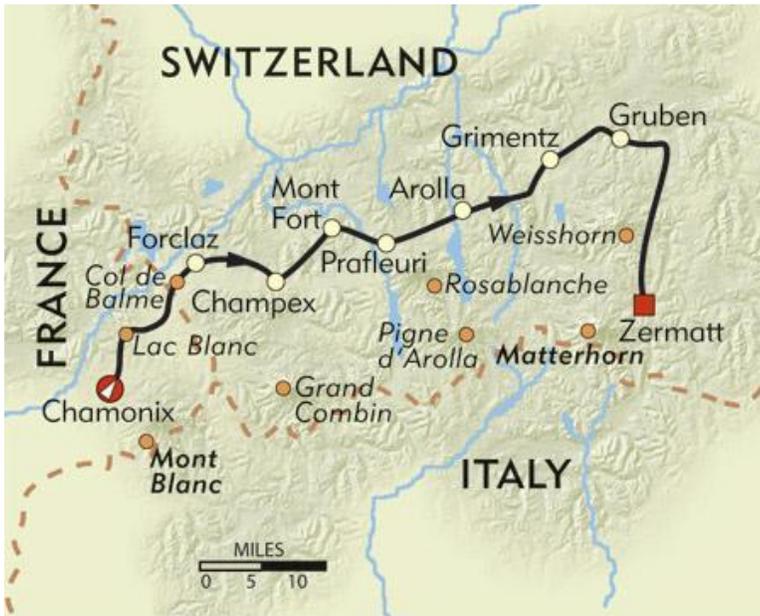
Our trek will follow the routes laid out in the guidebook "Chamonix to Zermatt, The Walker's Haute Route" by Kev Reynolds, published by the Cicerone Press. We will start our adventure



The climb to the Fenetre d'Arpette

in the afternoon in the town of Chamonix, France and end 14 days later in Zermatt, Switzerland. To ease our adjustment to European time we will spend the first evening in Chamonix, France. Aside from the days of arrival, departure and a half day sightseeing in Chamonix, we will be hiking every day with a typical altitude gain of ~823m (2,700')/day and a distance covered of ~13km (8 miles)/day. We will be outdoors ~8 hours per day of which ~6 hours is hiking and the balance for lunch and other breaks.

The map below shows the Haute Route from Chamonix to Zermatt:



Below is a day by day summary of the treks:

Date	Day#	Booktime (hrs)	Distance (km)	Elevation Gain (m)	Elevation Loss (m)	Lodging	
22-Aug	1					Depart for Geneva	
23-Aug	2					Chamonix	
24-Aug	3	3.50	12	500		Le Tour	
25-Aug	4	4.00	9	753	925	Trient	
26-Aug	5	7.00	14	1386	1199	Champex	
27-Aug	6	4.00	13	104	749	Le Chable	
28-Aug	7	6.50	9	1636	0	Cabane du Mont Fort	
29-Aug	8	6.50	14	885	740	Cabane de Prafleuri	
30-Aug	9	6.50	16	735	1353	Arolla	
31-Aug	10	4.00	10	554	215	La Sage	
1-Sep	11	5.50	10	1617	459	Cabane de Moiry	
2-Sep	12	5.50	14	462	1612	Zinal	
3-Sep	13	5.50	15	892	221	Cabane Bella Tola	
4-Sep	14	3.50	10	444	968	Gruben	
5-Sep	15	7.00	16	1072	1767	St. Nicklaus	
6-Sep	16	4.50	18	479	0	Zermatt	
7-Sep	17					Depart for US	
Total			182	11519	10208	(km/m)	
Total			114	35709	31645	(miles/feet)	

Notes:

- 1) 8/23 – AM Arrival in Geneva – PM transfer to Chamonix
- 2) 8/24 - AM explore Chamonix; PM hike to Le Tour
- 3) Hiking time is “pure” hiking time excluding stops. Rest breaks, lunch, time for photos, etc. typically adds ~two hours to each day’s activity.
- 4) The leaders reserve the right to change the itinerary for reasons such as weather, trail conditions, availability of accommodations, group preference, etc.
- 5) Conversions: one mile = 1.6km, one foot = .3 meter.

A typical day will have us waking up at 6:30AM and on the trail by 8:00AM. We may pass other huts along the way and indulge in homemade strudel as a lunchtime snack. We aim to arrive at our destination by 4:30PM each afternoon. Almost all huts/hotels have showers. The meals are hearty alpine fare. Vegetarian options are limited. All huts serve beer or wine. Dinner is at 6:30 or 7:00PM. Most people are in bed by 9-10PM.



On the trail between Le Chable and Cabane de Mont Fort

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

You should enjoy traveling and be comfortable traveling in areas which are unfamiliar to you. You should recognize that you may find yourself in closer quarters or be less comfortable than you are used to at home. You should make it a priority to help others on the trip and contribute to their having a great time. If you do that, we guarantee that you will have a great time.



Relaxing together after a great day of hiking

This is a strenuous hike geared towards the outdoors adventurer. Since breakfast, dinner and lodging are provided we will be traveling light, with backpacks in the range of twenty-five pounds fully loaded. You should have at least intermediate to advanced hiking skills. While no technical climbing is required, there are areas with narrow trails bordered by steep drop-offs: where appropriate there are steel cables for protection. We may use ladders bolted to

the mountainside for short ascents of steep terrain. For

more specific information about the kind of experience we are looking for, please read about the Experience and Risks below.

ACCOMMODATIONS

We will spend every night in either hotels or mountain huts. Blankets and pillows will be provided. Participants must bring a sleeping bag liner (a.k.a. sleep sack) to be used instead of sheets. Accommodations are typically dormitory-style with 4 to 12 persons/room: mattresses are either side-by-side or in two-level bunk beds. Alternatively, we may sometimes have two persons (same sex)/room sharing two adjacent mattresses in a single-bedframe.



The spectacular Cabane de Moiry is perched at 8,700 feet opposite the walls of the Aiguilles de la Le: the entrance is the original 1912 facade, the interior is now 2010 Danish modern

COST

The trip cost is \$2,650 for AMC members. Non-members can join for \$50, and get the same price. This will cover the following items:

- Lodging, breakfasts and dinners from breakfast in Chamonix through breakfast on the last day of the trip (9/7)
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage



The Lac des Dix

All lunches, trail snacks, alcohol, and other personal expenses are NOT included. Lunch supplies can be purchased at local groceries every few days or purchased from the hut manager.

Your transportation to Chamonix and back to the US from Zermatt is your responsibility. Most participants will choose to fly to the Geneva airport and take a bus or train to Chamonix and from Zermatt. The trip leaders will advise you as much as you need and will facilitate group travel. At this time, we estimate that the cost for a round trip ticket between the East Coast and Europe will be in the vicinity of \$1600.

The final trip cost will be adjusted in accordance with the best final arrangements we can make and currency fluctuations. Any savings we achieve, as well as any cost increases, will be passed back to you. Our cost estimates are conservative, and so a refund is considerably more likely than a price increase.

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run on a non-profit basis. Leaders are volunteers who are not compensated except for their travel costs associated with the trip. The advertised trip cost includes a surcharge, which goes toward the administrative expenses of the AMC Adventure Travel program.

The trip fee includes emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage, which is required by the AMC. It does *not* include insurance for travel delay, interruption, or cancellation, or for baggage loss. If the possibility of such problems concerns you, individual travel insurance is suggested. The AMC has a recommended vendor whose material will be sent to you if your application is accepted.

Any unspent funds will be refunded to the

participants. If the trip's financial position is strong enough at the start, the leaders may make partial refunds during the trip, in the form of payments toward some meals and/or free time activities which would otherwise not be included.



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REGISTRATION and CANCELLATION

To apply, you must complete and submit the Application, Confidential Medical form, and Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk and Release form. You may also decide to complete the optional Supplemental Medical Questionnaire. You can download them from this website: [Application Documents](#) Mail these forms and a deposit of \$1,000 payable to the *Appalachian Mountain Club* to Stephen Cohen 104 Manet Road Chestnut Hill, MA 02467. You will not be accepted and your check will not be deposited until the leaders

have determined by telephone conversation with you that you and the trip are a good match. The final balance of \$1,650 is due June 1, 2015. Deposit checks from wait-listed applicants will not be cashed until a spot is available, the applicant is accepted onto the trip, AND they confirm their continued interest.

Our cancellation policy is based on several considerations. Cancellation will not be allowed to raise the cost to the other participants or to the leaders. The minimum cancellation fee is \$200 once the trip has



We will pass through the historic village of Jungen located at 1,955m (6060')

been declared a go. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf, and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant.

We expect a group size of 12 people, including the 2 leaders. This trip is likely to fill quickly. If you are interested, you should apply as soon as possible. When registration is complete, we will send all participants the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all those going on the trip.

In the unlikely event that the trip is cancelled because not enough acceptable participants apply, everything you have paid will be refunded in full.

EXPERIENCE and RISKS

Climbing high mountain passes is physically very demanding. Most of our travels will be between 3,400 and 9,800 feet. Although these elevations should not be high enough for properly conditioned people to contract acute mountain sickness (AMS), the combination of physical exertion and slightly lower oxygen levels require that we pace ourselves and pay attention to proper nutrition and hydration. People wishing to participate in this trip must have previous hiking/backpacking experience, at the intermediate level or higher. Several of the days are long and strenuous. You need to be prepared to commit yourself to keeping in shape between the time you sign up for the trip to the time you depart on it.

When you participate in this activity, you should be prepared both physically and mentally, and equipped with the appropriate gear. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. We are not responsible for your safety; you are. Prior to your being accepted as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. Please do not be offended by our questions.

The weather is likely to be temperate and sunny, although there is always a possibility of some precipitation. That said, mountain climate is unpredictable and can range from 25 to 75 degrees. Snow can fall in every month of the year.

QUESTIONS and REQUESTING APPLICATION MATERIALS

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. We prefer to handle your inquiries by email if they are straight forward or by phone if they require discussion. The contact information is immediately below, with the leader biographies.

TRIP LEADERS



Steve Cohen leads three season hikes for the Hiking/Backpacking Committee of the AMC Boston Chapter. He has been a participant on many major excursions in the last seven years including trips to Alaska, the Smoky Mountains, Maroon Bells (near Aspen, CO), Grand Tetons/Yellowstone, Tour du Mont Blanc, Escalante Canyons (Utah), etc. In 2010 he organized and led a 14-day non-AMC trek along the Haute Route

from Chamonix, France to Zermatt, Switzerland. In 2011 he went rock climbing in the Dolomites (Italian Alps). In the last few years he led AMC hut-to-hut treks in the Dolomites, the Jungfrau region of Switzerland, Patagonia, and the Austrian Alps. He lived in Europe for four years and has a good command of both the French and German languages. Steve can be reached at 617 997-6861 or scohen1234@gmail.com.



Leslie Carson joined the AMC in 2004, but didn't start hiking with the club until 2005. Once she started, she never stopped. She became a hike leader for the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter in 2007 (and is now hiking vice-chair) and for August Camp. She has led four-season day and multi-day trips in New England for the past seven years. She became a member of the AMC White Mountains 4000 Footer Club in 2011, completed the Vermont 4000 Footers in 2013 and is currently working on hiking the remainder of the Maine 4000

Footers to complete the 67 New England Four Thousand Footers. She has traveled to

Italy, Belize, four Canadian provinces, eight Caribbean islands, and explored eleven national parks. Her experience with hut trips in New Hampshire and Maine and a desire to experience hut stays in other countries led Leslie to team up with Steve for this trip. Leslie can be reached at lesliecarson929@yahoo.com or 508-737-6627.

EQUIPMENT LIST

Below is a list of the required and recommended gear for the trip, as well as a list of items, which some people will bring and share.

Required and Essential Gear

- broken-in waterproof hiking boots
- at least 2-3 set of hiking socks with liners
- non-cotton shorts (or long pants if you prefer) and shirt for hiking
- backpack (aim for 35 liter)
- sleeping bag liner (a.k.a sleep sack)
- waterproof wind and rain gear (tops and bottoms)
- wool sweater, or synthetic pile/fleece jacket
- long underwear top and bottom
- hat for warmth, and gloves or mittens
- polypropylene, Coolmax, Bergelene or other synthetic extra layer clothing
- sunglasses
- hat or bandanna for sun protection
- sunscreen
- Texas, Crocs or other sandals (to wear in huts, which do NOT permit the wearing of hiking boots outside of the public areas)
- headlamp or flashlight with fresh batteries
- unbreakable bottles or hydration bladder (at least 2 liters total capacity)
- waterproof pack liner and/or pack cover
- high-energy trail snacks
- toiletry kit (many huts do not supply soap or shampoo)
- camp towel (many, but not all huts supply towels)
- ear plugs
- personal first aid kit (leaders will have a group first aid kit)

Optional Gear

- casual clothing for use in a hut
- gaiters (for rain)
- hiking poles
- whistle

- knife
- camera
- batteries/recharger/adapter plug
- pillowcase

Join us on this great adventure in one of the world's most spectacular mountain regions!

Acknowledgement: Many thanks to Steph Abegg (<http://www.stephabegg.com/>) for allowing us to use a few of her excellent photographs in this brochure.