

Bovine
Col de La Forclaz
La Caffè

Plan de l'Au
Champex-Lac

TMB

SELF GUIDED TOUR DU MONT BLANC EPIC: 2.5 DAY ITINERARY

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While we try and stick to the tried and tested itinerary below, the mountain, the accommodation availability and the weather sometimes has other ideas. We will always remain as flexible as possible to make sure we can change any plans if required.

This is a proposed itinerary and where you stay is subject to change based on how far in advance you book your trip. There is limited availability on this trek so we highly recommend booking in advance.

DAY 1:

ARRIVE IN CHAMONIX - HIKE UP TO COL DE BALME

The first day has been planned so you can arrive in Chamonix the same day and be up snoozing in a high mountain hut on your very first night! This itinerary is perfect for a long weekend arriving Friday lunchtime (or even mid afternoon) as the hike time for today is only 2.5 – 3.5 hours. Refuge Col de Balme (This may changed based on availability), famous for it's bright red shutters, is perched on the French – Swiss border at an altitude of 2191m. The refuge is one of the oldest on the TMB trail and Henri, the owner, is a wonderfully welcoming character. Hiking up from 1470m it's all uphill with 721m of elevation to climb. Don't leave setting off too late – dinner is at 18h plus take extra time to soak in the view – from the refuge you'll have a birds eye view of the entire Chamonix Valley framed by the picture postcard Mont Blanc Massif.

4.5km / 750m up / 0 down / 2.5 – 3.5 hours trekking

DAY 2:

COL DE BALME - LAC BLANC / REFUGE FLEGERE

From Refuge Col de Balme you'll descend down to the saddle of Col des Posettes before ascending the rock spine ridge to L'Aiguillette des Posettes (2201m). L'Aiguillette des Posettes forms the beginning of the impressive northern flank of the Chamonix Valley. In good weather the 360 degree panorama here will take your breath away – the icy dome of Mont Blanc, the iconic spire of the Drus, the Aiguilles Verte as well as Glacier du Tour Lac Blanc and the Lac d'Emosson dam over your shoulder in Switzerland. Bear in mind this high route along the Posette ridge should never be taken in bad weather – the ridge is known for lightning strikes. The well marked trail has a knee jarring descent from the L'Aiguillette des Posettes eventually meandering through the forest to pop out on the main road winding up to the Col des Montets. From here you'll begin the 3 hours climb up to Lac Blanc. The route climbs steadily for between 1.5-2 hrs until you reach the infamous TMB ladders – a series of 13 ladders and metal ware built into the rock. It's the most exciting physical aspect of the entire Tour du Mont Blanc – teenagers will love it! See notes at the top of this page for how to avoid these ladders if you suffer from vertigo. A further hour up brings you to Tête aux Vents, a large cairn (2132m) which borders the national park. From there the trail ascends for a further 1hr 30 mins to reach stunning Lac Blanc (2,352m).

15km / 1150m up / 1500m down / 5 – 6 hours trekking

DAY 3:

REFUGE FLEGÈRE / REFUGE LAC BLANC - LES HOUCHES

Today is a long day but there are exit options at 1h 15 (La Flégère) or 3hr (Plan Praz) via gondola. Our itinerary includes taking the Le Brévent cable car from Plan Praz which makes this days hike time around 7-8hrs. Without the Le Brévent cable car the entire trail would take almost 10 hours. From Lac Blanc you'll descend to pick up the trail along the Grand Balcon Sud on an easy undulating traverse to La Flégère and over to the Plan Praz plateau at Le Brévent. Drink in the extraordinarily spectacular views to your left of the Mont Blanc massif with it's gloriously jagged peaks, famous snowcapped dome and glacial tongues of ice. From Plan Praz you have an option to exit the trek here by descending direct to Chamonix town via the gondola. It will have been around 3 hours from leaving Lac Blanc. Our itinerary fast tracks to the top of Le Brévent via cable car which effectively lops two hours off the trail time. From the top of Brévent, historically argued to be the best view of Mont Blanc, the terrain changes to a dry rocky landscape as you start the descent down to Refuge Bellachat, a tiny refuge nestled into the rock with a large terrace boasting front row seats over to Mont Blanc, and then all the way down to Les Houches.

19km / 730m up / 1790m down / 7 – 9 hours trekking