

France Destination Specialist Programme

Module 4 - The Alps Mont Blanc

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Ski Chamonix Brevent

© Celia Margerard

THE ALPS MONT BLANC

The **Alps Mont Blanc** comprise the French Alps and the Rhône Valley and are the largest mountain chain in Europe extending for almost 1,000 kms. The most symbolic peak of the mountain range is the iconic Mont Blanc located at an altitude of 4,810km. The capital of this region is Lyon, accessible from Paris by direct Air France flights (2 hours). In winter 2019, Air France will progressively

add frequency and offer direct flights to Paris from its 3 gateways in India: New Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore.

Ski Resorts

The three departments in the Northern Alps are the Haute-Savoie, Savoie and Isère. This region is home to France's famous historic ski resorts such as Chamonix Mont Blanc and Megève, as well as its major skiing areas such as the Trois Vallées (Courchevel, Méribel, Les Ménuires) with 600 kms of connected slopes, former Paradiski (Les Arcs, La Plagne) with 425 kms of slopes or the duo Tignes Val d'Isère with 300 kms of slopes.

Gastronomy

Well-known classic specialties in the Alps include cheese fondue, *tartiflette* (cheese, onion, bacon and potato pie), *raclette* (semi firm cheese), *crozets* (pasta shells), *diots* (sausages), *ravioli* and *tourtons* (fritters) not to mention famous liqueurs that are made from larch or wormwood (Génépi).



© OT Chamonix Mario Colomel

Chamonix Mont Blanc

CHAMONIX MONT BLANC

Located at the crossroads of France, Switzerland and Italy, Chamonix Mont-Blanc is a French alpine town with a distinctly European character. The third most visited natural site most visited in the world, Chamonix Mont Blanc is popular worldwide for its Mont Blanc Summit.

Opening Dates

Winter dates: December - May (for winter activities)

Summer dates: July-August

Discovering Chamonix Mont Blanc

- Take a cable car ride to visit the Aiguille du Midi situated at 3,842 metres. Experience its Step into the Void (Pas dans le Vide) - a glass overhanging from where you can soak in stunning views of the alpine panorama.
- Montenvers - Mer de Glace: Depart from Chamonix on a cog-wheel train to arrive at the Montenvers site at 1,913m where scenic vistas of the Sea of Ice Glacier, the Drus peak and the Grandes Jorasses await you. Visit the Ice Cave that takes visitors into the very heart of the glacier. Discover the Glaciorium where the creation and evolution of the glaciers over the centuries is explained in detail.
- Hop aboard the mini tourist train that takes you on an amusing tour of the city of Chamonix Mont Blanc.



© Maxime Coquard

Montenvers Mer de Glace

Activities

- **Ski and Snowboarding:** In winter, with 4 large skiing areas, the Chamonix Valley welcomes snow-sport enthusiasts from all over the world. It offers slopes designed for amateurs to professional skiers.
- **Dogsledding for beginners:** Along with guides, you will learn how to steer a sled with huskies and handle your dog team.
- **Hiking:** Enjoy panoramic views of the valley and neighboring mountains on a hike.
- **Paragliding:** Take a tandem flight with a qualified pilot or lessons with a paragliding school to experience the Alps and enjoy fabulous panoramas.
- **White Water Rafting:** The Arve is a tremendous river for first timers wanting to experience the joys of rafting



Paragliding



© Jean Baptiste Bieuville

Morzine

MORZINE AVORIAZ

Located between Geneva and Chamonix Mont-Blanc, Morzine-Avoriaz is a traditional mountain village. Its mountain peaks, serene lakes, waterfalls and pine forests form part of its landscape which is embellished with a delightful Savoyard atmosphere. Ideally located in the heart of the Portes du Soleil ski area (13 linked resorts in France and Switzerland), Morzine is home to a wonderful playground of 650km of ski slopes in the winter.

Opening Dates:

Winter: Mid-December to April (winter activities)

Summer: July-August

Not too many touristic activities in June, October & November

Discovering Morzine

- With a guide, explore the old village and discover how Morzine has changed through the centuries (habitat, lifestyle, pastimes, Savoy's history, church history...)
- Experience a vintage horse carriage ride that has you discovering this authentic village at your own pace.



© Sam Ingles

Activities in Morzine

- **Ski:** Morzine offers its beginners the "YouCanSki" Package that helps them learn more about skiing. Thanks to its central location, Morzine is a great base for exploring the Portes du Soleil area and is well served by lifts going toward either Avoriaz or Les Gets from opposite sides of the resort.
- **Night Sledging:** Ascend by cable car and then sledge down the Pleney slopes at night. This 4km steep descent offers unmatched vistas of Morzine as you make your way down.
- **Snow Bike Ride:** Discover the mountains differently. An evening snowbike ride has you enjoying the panoramic views of the resort and the Morzine valley.
- **Off Road Scooter:** Riding an off-road scooter in Morzine offers visitors access to hundreds of marked trails in the Portes du Soleil without any pre-requisite training. While amateurs can traverse on the less challenging forest paths, experts can successfully zip through specially designed downhill trails.
- **Nordic Walking:** Nordic walking is a fast walking experience with specially adapted sticks. Choose from trails adapted for both beginners and amateurs between Mont-Blanc and Lake Geneva in Portes du Soleil.



Ski

© Sylvain Cochard



Nordic Walking



MEGÈVE

A resort built around a medieval village dating back to the 14th century, **Megève** teems with history and is world renowned. This chic ski resort is a harmonious amalgamation of nature, comfort, style, gastronomy and well-being.

Opening dates

Winter Dates: Mid-December to April (for ski)

Summer Dates: July- August (Open all year round)

Discovering Megève

- Include a visit to the Musée de Megève that acquaints you with the history of the town and is also home to exhibits on winter sports and skiing.
- Megève is considered to be a remarkable ambassador of mountain gastronomy thanks to its history and farming heritage. It is home to 89 restaurants out of which 3 have Michelin Stars. Enjoy a starred meal at the Flocons de Sel, Prima and Le 1920.
- Spend an enjoyable evening at the Casino Barrière that is also home to a nightclub and restaurant.



(C)Simon Garnier

- Enjoy a wellness experience at Les Fermes de Marie that offers you a range of treatments derived from organic derma-cosmetics, based on Edelweiss, alpine flowers and natural ingredients.

Activities in Megève

- **Ski:** The Mont d'Arbois ski area is your best bet for both skiing and hiking. Choose from a range of slopes adapted for beginners, children and professionals. For best views of the majestic Mont Blanc, head to Le Jaillet that also has a great variety of slopes.
- **Hiking:** Enjoy a short walk from the centre of Megève on the Chemin du Calvaire trail that boasts of picture postcard views.
- **Canyoning:** The canyon of La Belle au Bois presents many amazing opportunities for canyoning. Your adventure involves sliding down natural rock canyons, jumping into pools of clear water and even abseiling down a waterfall.
- **Golfing:** On the Mont d'Arbois Golf Course, tee off in style at an 18-hole golf course that stretches out over 50 hectares of woodland.





Val d'Isère

VAL D'ISÈRE

Situated at an altitude of 1850 metres, Val d'Isère is a globally renowned ski resort well-known for its charm and authenticity and is one of the Savoy region's most attractive villages. The annual 'Alpine Ski World Cup' competition begins here, and the resort has also played host to the winter Olympics 1992.

Opening dates

Winter Dates: December to April (for Winter activities)

Summer Dates: July- August

Closed: May, June, Oct-Nov

Discovering Val d'Isère

- Apart from its ski, the resort also has a number of luxury spas, high-end boutiques, a sports centre with a climbing wall, squash courts et al.
- The Vanoise National Park is one of the highlights of the entire Tarentaise region. Home to all sorts of wildlife, as well as a magnet for outdoor sports enthusiasts, it is well worth a visit at any time of year.
- Val d'Isère is a haven for night-owls. There's something going on every night of the week, whether its live music, dancing to some of the best DJ's on the international circuit and much more!



Activities in Val d'Isère

- **Ski:** Val d'Isère has guaranteed snow cover in its vast ski area with great snow and optimal weather conditions for skiing. Its ski area offers 300 kms of slopes. Professional skiers can ski at the iconic Face de Belvedere that has great views of the resort and the village. There is also the snowpark that is best suited for both beginners and professionals and also provides snowboarding opportunities.
- **Ice Driving / Karting:** Head down to the bottom of the resort to experience driving on ice. This amazing race track has been specially designed for adventure enthusiasts to spend an afternoon or evening rallying around the ice track in a choice of go karts, race cars or motor bikes



Prariond Valley



- **Wilderness Evening:** Spend the evening under the stars in a secret wilderness camp in the woods. Spend your evening around the camp fire with a drink and a traditional Savoyard meal. After this, get aboard a sledge and take a ride down through the starlit mountains
- **Hiking:** Head to the Prariond Valley that is replete with some brilliant trails through a breathtaking landscape. Along the hike, you will be treated to visuals of wildlife and a large range of flora and fauna.

COURCHEVEL

The glamorous ski resort of Courchevel is a part of Les Trois Vallées, the largest linked ski area in the world. Courchevel also refers to the towns of Courchevel 1300, Courchevel 1550, Courchevel 1650, and Courchevel 1850, which are named for their altitudes in metres. This ski-resort is often the favourite of Page 3 celebrities worldwide.

Opening dates

Winter Dates: December to April (for ski)

Summer Dates: July- August

Closed: May, June, Sep-Nov

Discover Courchevel

- Courchevel is well renowned for its gastronomy and has 7 Michelin starred restaurants. Newly awarded three-star restaurant – Le 1947 in Courchevel promises a sublime experience. Fine dining is also possible at non starred restaurants like Le 1850 Be Organic at Hotel La Sivolière.
- Courchevel is home to a fabulous nightlife where you may even encounter a celebrity.



© David Andre



Luge

Activities in Courchevel

- **Ski:** The Courchevel Valley is made up of 5 villages, has a north facing profile and on a clear day offers stunning views of Mont Blanc. For beginners, there's a huge range of slopes. Professional skiers will enjoy ski at Roc Merlet and at Saulire.
- **Luge:** The luge tracks at Moriond and Courchevel are a fun way of discovering the mountains. Luges can be rented at sports shops in Courchevel village and the luge track is free.
- **Hot-air Ballooning:** Possible from Courchevel 1850, hot-air ballooning takes place daily, in the morning and evening depending on weather conditions.

- **Snowmobile through trees:** Once the ski runs have closed for the day, try your hand at driving a 500cc snowmobile through the forest and the empty slopes alongside an expert guide.
- **Glacier walking:** For a truly unique experience, clamp on your crampons and go hiking on one of the many glaciers in the Three Valleys area. Breathtaking views and spectacular crevasses make this an incredible adventure.
- **Waterskiing & Wakeboarding:** There is a new wake park in Courchevel Le Praz that allows you to wakeboard, wakeskate, kneeboard and waterski around the lake.



Hot-air Balloon



Méribel

MÉRIBEL

Located in the heart of "Les Trois Vallées", Méribel personifies a typical French village surrounded by pine forests and replete with traditional chalets made of wood and stones. This alpine resort offers its visitors a breathtaking view of the Alps and the majestic Mont Blanc.

Opening dates

Winter Dates: Mid -December to April

Summer Dates: July- August

Closed: May, June, Sep-Nov

Discovering Méribel

- A legacy of the 1992 Olympic Games, Méribel's multi-sport centre provides you with a wealth of indoor activities. Choose from indoor climbing; swimming, bowling, skating or watching an ice-hockey match.
- Nothing gets you closer to the mountains then spending an evening high in a mountain refuge. Enjoy a Savoyard meal and return back to your hotel or spend the night at the refuge. Méribel offers a choice of 2 picturesque refuges away from the ski-resorts. You can choose to arrive on foot or be driven in a snow-scooter.

- Get even higher above the Alps with a tourist flight from Méribel's own airfield. You'll take off from the snow-covered Altiport and enjoy a spectacular flight either over the 3 Valleys or you can go further afield towards Les Arcs and experience amazing views of the Mont Blanc from the air.
- Experience a party in the mountains at La Folie Douce Meribel-Courchevel (also possible in other ski resorts such as Val d'Isère and Val Thorens). Watch the amazing cabaret and then dance to the live, dynamic house band.



La Folie Dance

Activities in Méribel

- **Ski:** Méribel is the perfect resort for beginners, families, more advanced skiers and snowboarders. At the top of the Méribel valley you'll find Mont Du Vallon (2,952m) which offers stunning views and is ideal for skiing. The valley also contains two of the best snowparks in Europe that includes a beginner jump line, a superpipe, and much more.
- **Horse Sleigh Rides:** This is a gentle and relaxing way to discover the magical settings around Lake Tueda.
- **Ice Fall Climbing:** With expert guides, learn how to climb frozen water-falls using specific ice axes and crampons in winter.
- **Snowshoeing:** Through the tranquil Alpine forest of Méribel, in the peace and quiet of the mountain trails, you can join a group or have a private outing with a professional instructor.
- **Heli-Dining Experience:** Arrive at your restaurant in style on a helicopter. Enjoy a helicopter transfer to the Michelin starred La Bouitte (3*) in Saint Martin de Belleville, Refuge du Tornieux and La Maison des Bois. All of these establishments offer breathtaking views and sublime cuisine.

VAL THORENS

Val Thorens, the highest ski resort in Europe (2300 m), known as the crowning peak of the “3 Vallées”, is the most extensive skiing area in the world (600 km of slopes and 172 ski lifts). The resort offers guaranteed snow from November to May and a wide range of ski-in and ski-out accommodations.

Opening Dates

Winter Dates: November to April

Summer Dates: July- August

Closed: May, June, Sep-Nov

Discovering Val Thorens

- A number of establishments in Val Thorens invite you to enjoy a genuine well-being experience that will recharge your batteries, de-stress, and pamper you in a refined, relaxing atmosphere.
- Non skiers can enjoy the Sports Center and Aqua-Spa which offers a large range of water-based activities, spa and a fitness centre.



Ziplining

© C. Cattin OT Val Thorens

- For a change of scenery, spend the evening in the Mongolian yurt of Chalet de la Marine (on Tue, Wed and Thu). After reaching the venue on a scooter or a snow groomer, discover a medley of dishes prepared on an ancient stove in the middle of the yurt.

Activities in Val Thorens

- **Ski:** The Val Thorens valley is made of three separate villages, Les Menuires, Val Thorens and Saint Martin De Belleville. With its own glacier and a peak elevation of 3,200m, optimal snow conditions are guaranteed throughout the season and into late spring.
- **Zipline:** Soar like a bird on La Tyrolienne; a zip wire that allows you to discover the mountains differently.
- **Ice Driving:** Drive on ice at the highest ice-racing track in Europe at 2200m at the Val Thorens Driving School. Choose from driving alongside a trained professional or enjoy a



Ice Karting



Ice Driving

passenger seat experience. You can also opt for ice-karting or ice-quads.

- **Ice Diving:** Embark on a timeless journey beneath the frozen Lac du Lou. After putting on a waterproof dry suit and diving equipment, it's time for 20 minutes of glacial exploration and discovering a different underwater world!
- **Snake Gliss:** Snake Gliss is an activity where up to 10 sledges are tied together, led by a professional instructor. This fun, thrilling activity involves a winding 45-minute descent from the top of the Funitel de Péclet.



© Monica Dalmasso

LES 2 ALPES

Situated in Isère, this famous ski destination offers you skiing opportunities in the European summer (22 June - 25 August) thanks to its glacier that culminates at an altitude of 3600 metres. Its variety of snow sports and activities and family-oriented events make [Les 2 Alpes](#) a family-friendly destination.

Opening dates

Winter Dates: November to April

Summer Dates: June to August (Ski available)

Closed: May, June, Sep, Nov

Discovering Les 2 Alpes

- Take the Jandri Express ski lift to Les 2 Alpes' famous glacier well-known for its panoramic views. Stop by at the Ice Cave which is situated at an altitude of 3,200 metres. Discover works of art sculpted into the ice during your visit.



Venosc

- Enjoy a party at the Pano Bar that can be easily reached by the Jandri Express mid-station. The party begins 3 pm onwards.
- Explore the unspoilt alpine village of Venosc accessible by gondola. Wander past artisanal shops and traditional restaurants and soak in the atmosphere of the Alps of a different era.

Activities in Les 2 Alpes

- **Ski:** Its location high up in the Ecrins mountain (in Oisans) range makes Les 2 Alpes one of the highest skiable summits in France. One spectacular run starts from the glacier at 3,600m and descends 2,300m to the village of Mont de Lans without the use of a ski-lift.
- **Skiing in the European Summer:** With guaranteed natural snow on a glacier culminating at an altitude of 3,600 metres, Les 2 Alpes is one of the rare ski areas to stay open even in the European summer.
- **Glacier Walking:** Glacier walking is an organized excursion across the frozen plains of the Alps. The excursions are led by qualified guides from adventure companies.
- **Ice Skating:** Ice skating beneath the snow-clad Alps is an unforgettable experience on the outdoor ice rink. Located beside the main square, it is open from 3 pm every day except Tuesdays and Thursdays.



© 2Alpes Yoarm_Pessin

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