

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Tour du Mont Blanc (MBT 2017)



TRIPDURATION
11
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Accommodation
Grade: Standard

Tour Type: Small Groups
Trek Grade: Challenging

Trip Code: MBT

Trip Highlights - Tour du Mont Blanc

- ✓ Completing the Tour du Mont Blanc - A great personal achievement
- ✓ Superb and varied mountain scenery - World class trekking through spectacular Alpine landscapes
- ✓ Chamonix and Courmayeur - Hang out and enjoy the views from restaurants and pavements cafés
- ✓ Food and Wine - Sample great local cuisine at our family-run hotels and guest houses

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 8 nights Standard Hotel
1 night Simple Hotel
1 night Simple Auberge

Included Meals: 10 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 6 dinners

Start Point: Join trip: Geneva Airport

End Point: Trip ends: Geneva Airport

Maximum Altitude on Trek (m): 2537

Transport: Bus, Public Bus

Countries: France, Switzerland, Italy

Tour du Mont Blanc

The Tour du Mont Blanc is one of the most spectacular treks in Europe. We hike 148 kilometres through France, Switzerland and Italy, across five major passes, staying along the way in comfortable hotels and a traditional auberge. We walk among breathtaking mountain scenery on the flanks of Mont Blanc, with views of some of the most dramatic peaks in the Alps.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Trek Grade: Challenging

You need to have a good level of fitness and previous trekking experience is recommended. Trekking days are generally longer, challenging and at higher altitudes. Terrain may be difficult and ascents and descents are often demanding.

Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

The Leader is an integral part of any Explore trip and your trek will be led by an qualified International Mountain Leader. We believe that our Leaders are the key to the success of our trips; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Leader will also take care of all the planning and organization throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this trip fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join trip Geneva airport; drive to Argentiere near Chamonix

Arriving at Geneva airport, we transfer in around one hour 20 minutes to our hotel in the pretty village of Argentiere (1252 m) in the Chamonix Valley. There will be a short briefing by our Leader about the week ahead, followed by dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**



 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Cable car to La Flegere and trek via Lac Blanc to Argentiere

After breakfast we take a local bus for 15 minutes from Argentiere to Chamonix and walk along the River Arve for about 30 minutes to Les Praz (1065 m) from where we take the Flegere cable car up to 1900 m. From here we hike through open countryside for one-and-a-half to two hours to Lac Blanc (2352 m). There are incredible views of the whole Mont Blanc range, including the Grandes Jorasses, Aiguille Vert and Le Dru. We then follow a beautiful path back through the forest back to our hotel at Argentiere (1252 m). Today's 10 kilometre trek will take approximately six to seven hours with a cumulative ascent of 450 m and descent of 1110 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 Hike to La Forclaz in Switzerland

From the hotel we walk through Old Argentiere and hike up to the Col des Posettes (1997 m) for superb views of Mont Blanc and the Chamonix Valley. From here, we traverse to the Col de Balme (2191 m) and look directly into Switzerland. We then descend through open country with views of glaciers to Trient (1297 m) and then on to La Forclaz (1526 m) where we spend the night. You will have your main baggage delivered to the hotel tonight. Today's 16.5 kilometre trek will take approximately five to six hours with a cumulative ascent of 980 m and descent of 894m.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Hike along the 'Bovine Route' to Champex

We hike along the Bovine Route to Champex (1486 m). The route winds its way through meadows, forests and open country with views of the great Sion Valley and the mountains of Verbier. There are no great ascents today and we arrive at our hotel near Champex Lake where you can head to for a sundowner. You will not have access to your main luggage tonight. Today's 13.5 kilometre trek will take approximately five hours with a cumulative ascent of 540 m and descent of 600 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Trek along the Val Ferret to La Fouly

From here it is a gentle five to six hour trek to La Fouly (1600 m) along the Val Ferret. We start our walk descending from Champex following the river along a pretty valley covered in trees to Praz-de-Fort. We then ascend in similar surroundings with wonderful views of Mt Dolent and the South Face of the Mont Blanc range. You will not have access to your main luggage tonight. Today's 19 kilometre trek will take approximately five to six hours with cumulative ascent of 540 m and descent of 440 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 Trek via Grand Col Ferret to La Palud in Italy

We continue from La Fouly along the Val Ferret and cross the impressive Grand Col Ferret (2537 m). From here, the descent is slightly steeper but rewards us with outstanding views of two of the Alps most iconic mountains - Le Grandes Jorasses and Mont Blanc. We stay at La Palud (1350 m), 3 km from Courmayeur and you will have your main baggage delivered to the hotel tonight. It's worth noting that it's possible to shorten today's walk by taking a bus for the final seven kilometres of the walk. Today's 27 kilometre trek will take approximately nine hours with a cumulative ascent of 830 m and descent of 1170 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 7 A rest day in La Palud near Courmayeur

Today has been left free to take a rest from the trail and soak up the ambience of the Alps. Nearby Courmayeur is one of Italy's premier ski resorts and is full of pretty shops, cafés and restaurants. Close by, there is the hot spring spa at Pre St Didier, the Skyway cable car that revolves as you ascend and plenty of other walking opportunities.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 8 Bus to Val Veny and trek to Les Chapieux

We take two public buses (approx 10 and 20 minutes each) and travel to Val Veny under the spectacular South Face and ridges of Mont Blanc. We trek along a wide glacial valley surrounded by glaciers and high peaks to the Col de la Seigne (2516 m) which marks the border between France and Italy. We then descend to Les Chapieux (1549 m). Today is quite a long day (it is possible to take a bus for the final five kilometres if you wish), although it is not steep. You will not have access to your luggage tonight, so you will want to pack accordingly. Today's 22.5 kilometre trek will take approximately seven hours with a cumulative ascent of 860 m and descent of 967 m.

Overnight: **Simple Auberge**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 Hike via Col du Bonhomme to Les Contamines

We make a steep ascent above Les Chapieux through marmot country and on through open meadows to more barren scenery. We cross two cols (2479 m and 2329 m) in wild surroundings with fabulous Alpine Flowers and marmots, weasels and chamois. We then head down through open country and a narrowing valley. Our destination is Les Contamines (1167 m) - a pretty ski village with an interesting church. We will stay approximately 1 km before the village of Les Contamines. There will be no access to your main luggage tonight. Today's 19.5 kilometre trek will take approximately six to seven hours with a cumulative ascent of 850 m and descent of 1320 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10 Trek to Les Houches via Col du Voza

Leaving Les Contamines we follow the Tour du Mont Blanc, passing the pretty hamlets of Gruvaz, Champel and Bionnassay. We then make the short, 500m ascent to the Col du Voza (1653m) which forms part of the huge massif above Les Houches. This is a fitting end to our trek with the most outstanding views of the Chamonix Valley, the Chamonix Aiguilles and the Mont Blanc massif. We descend from the col to the road at Les Houches where we take the bus back to Argentiere where we started our trek nine days ago. We are reunited with our luggage and will have a final nights meal in the evening, bidding farewell to our Leader. Today's 20 kilometre trek will take approximately seven hours with a cumulative ascent of 700 m and descent of 900m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 11 Drive to Geneva Airport where trip ends

Transfer to Geneva Airport where our trip ends.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Notes

We stay at small, family-run hotels for nine nights and in a traditional auberge (guesthouse) for one night. In the hotels you will usually be accommodated in twin rooms with private bathrooms, though occasionally you may have the use of a shared bathroom along the corridor. At Les Chapieux we stay at an auberge: this is a traditional mountain inn that is clean, friendly, full of fellow trekkers and has a great atmosphere. At the auberge we aim to have twins, triples or quads, but you may be in a dormitory if it is a busy part of the season. The bathrooms are shared. All bedding is provided.

Most meals are included at the hotels and auberge and will be a fixed three or four-course meal with vegetarian options. Drinks are not included, but all hotels have a selection of wines, beers and soft drinks.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 10 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 6 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

France

Lunch £: 11.00

Dinner £: 16.00 - 18.00

Switzerland

Lunch £: 16.00

Dinner £: 23.00

Italy

Lunch £: 6.00 - 10.00

Dinner £: 10.00 - 14.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

France

Bottle of Beer £: 4.00

Water £: 1.30

Switzerland

Bottle of Beer £: 5.20

Water £: 1.50

Italy

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00 - 4.00

Water £: 1.00 - 2.00

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Aiguille du Midi - Panoramic views of Alps Cable Car €55

Mountain biking - Full day bike hire €30

Rock climbing - Half day from €45

Rafting - 1.5 hour / €40-60 per person (depends on number of people taking part)

Public swimming pool - (3 pools, jacuzzi, death slide) €6

Paragliding - 1000 m vertical descent €120 / 2550 m vertical descent €220

Skyway Cable Car at Courmayeur - €40

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Service is included in French restaurants, although it is polite to tip 10% if the service has been very good. Bar staff and café waiters expect a small tip or loose change.

In Italy service is not included - allow 10% - and they also have a cover charge, or coperto, of 1 or 2 euros which is obligatory and literally pays for you to sit down.

Foreign Exchange

France

ATM Availability: In cities and most major towns

Credit Card Acceptance: In major restaurants (make sure you have informed your credit card company that you are travelling abroad as some companies will reject payments)

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques are no longer commonly accepted and can only be changed in larger airports with a Bureau de Change.

Local Currency: Euro

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Pounds Sterling and US Dollars can only be changed in larger airports with a Bureau de Change. Please change currency into Euros prior to arriving in France.

Where to Exchange: Bureau de Change can only be found in major cities and large airports. Many French banks no longer exchange Foreign currency.

Switzerland

ATM Availability: Local currency can be obtained using credit cards in ATM's.

Credit Card Acceptance: In major restaurants.

Travellers Cheques: Not recommended.

Local Currency: Swiss Franc.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Euros.

Where to Exchange: Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival

Italy

ATM Availability: Major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance: Larger hotels and restaurants.

Travellers Cheques: Only in major towns. Please note, the exchange rate for cash and Travellers Cheques is poor.

Local Currency: Euro.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: GBP.

Where to Exchange: We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducing Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

France: Visas are not required by UK, EU nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Italy: Visas are not required by UK, EU nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Switzerland: Visas are not required by UK, EU nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on **0208 5431846**.

Vaccinations & Protection

France

Nothing compulsory. Tetanus recommended. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Switzerland

Nothing compulsory; Tetanus recommended. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Italy

Nothing required. Tetanus recommended. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Trip

DAILY DISTANCES

Day 2	10km	6.5hrs
Day 3	16.5km	5.5hrs
Day 4	13.5km	5hrs
Day 5	19km	5.5hrs
Day 6	27km	9hrs
Day 7		
Day 8	22.5km	7hrs
Day 9	19.5km	6.5hrs
Day 10	20km	7hrs

Maximum Altitude on Trek (m)

2537

Trekking Details

This is an 8-day Trek with an average of 6 to 8 hours of walking a day. We will climb and descend distances of 1000 m on 5 of these days, reaching a maximum altitude of 2537 m. On days 6 and 8 there is the option to shorten the total walking by catching a bus for the final few kilometres. We have graded this trek as Challenging.

Climate

France

Across France, from April - August, weather conditions are generally warm and pleasant with moderate rainfall; Autumn temperatures are a bit lower and the winter months (though colder) remain mild. The summer months on the Mediterranean Coast in the south tend to be warmer than the rest of France and have less rainfall, and also more mild winters; freezing conditions are nearly unheard of. The mountainous areas of the Alps, Juros and Pyrenees can be quite different. During summer the morning and evening temperatures are considerably cooler and it becomes much colder in winter with heavy snowfall. Western France, along the English Channel, there can be very strong winds and frequent rain during the winter months Nov - Apr. Wine harvesting takes place in late August/early September.

Switzerland

Summers are generally warm, or even hot, with a three-month period when rain rarely falls. When it does rain in this season, it is heavy and often accompanied by thunder. There are as much as eleven to twelve hours' sunshine a day in summer, but as with anywhere in mainland Europe it can occasionally be cold and wet. Early and late summer is generally the best times to visit this region.

Italy

April/May and October/November are pleasantly warm. June/September are the hottest months. Showers are common in Autumn.

Clothing

The following are essential for your tour: Good quality waterproof jacket and trousers (e.g. Gore-Tex / e-Vent), a pac-a-mac is not good enough, fleece jacket, comfortable walking trousers, shorts, warm hat and gloves, sunhat, sunglasses and high factor sun cream. Please be aware that temperatures can change dramatically at altitude and at night. For around-town wear in Chamonix, you may wish to bring some slightly smarter clothes.

Equipment

You will need a water bottle (preferably 2 litres), torch, insect repellent and high factor sun cream. You may like to bring trekking poles. It is a good idea to line your daysac with a good quality plastic bag. This will go a long way in protecting your gear from any rainstorms we encounter. Tap water is safe to drink from the hotels and auberges, but water sources along the trail may not always be drinkable. Using tap water rather than bottled water will help avoid creating plastic bottle waste. Energy snacks including chocolate and sweets are recommended whilst on trek. Towels are not provided at Les Chapieux though you can hire one for €1: we suggest that you bring an easi-dry towel as they are lightweight and easy to carry. You may also wish to bring a sleeping bag liner for the stay at the auberge.

Footwear

You will need walking boots with proper ankle support and good tread. Trekking shoes are not good enough for the walks as they do not give ankle support. In addition, you should avoid cheap boots found in high-street shops that are merely trainers with a higher canvas side sewn on. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. We recommend that you wear/carry your walking boots as hand luggage on the international flight: should your luggage be delayed, your well broken-in boots will be irreplaceable. Bring comfortable shoes/sandals for relaxing in the evenings.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and a waterproof daypack. A capacity of 40 litres is recommended as you will need to carry enough overnight clothes (spare underwear, T shirt and toiletries etc) for the nights when you will not have access to your main luggage (days 4,5,8,9). There are showers at every night stop.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

France

Population: 65,821,885

Size of Country: 674,843 sq km

Major Language: French

Religion: Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Switzerland

Population: 7,866,500

Size of Country: 41,285 sq km

Major Language: German

Religion: Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Italy

Population: 60,681,514

Size of Country: 301,338 Sq KM

Major Language: Italian

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

France

2 Pin Round

Switzerland

3 Pin Round

Italy

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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