

CHAMONIX: Hiking in Switzerland, Tour des Ruans

Detailed itinerary, 9-day trip:

- Day 1:** A short transfer from the Geneva International Airport to Chamonix, Mont Blanc, the Alpine climbing and skiing capital of the world. Gourmet welcome dinner and trip briefing.
- Day 2:** A warm up hike in the Chamonix Valley in order to assess fitness levels and to fine-tune any skills needed during our week-long hike. Hiking high above the valley floor, if the weather permits, views of the Chamonix range are simply spectacular.
- Day 3:** An early morning hike up the Berard Valley to the hut of the same name. We can leave excess gear behind and begin a day hike up steep moraines to gain access to the base of the Aiguilles Rouges and a 360 degree panoramic view of the surrounding peaks. Night spent on the family-run hut in the company of fellow hikers.
- Day 4:** Climbing to the summit of the Mont Buet is a reward in itself as the views out towards the giants of the Alps such as the Dent Blanche and the Weisshorn are simply magical. But that will be only the first part of the day as we use cables and chains to climb down the Buet Ridge and down to the Hotel Refuge du Grenairon. A stunning day hiking over fins of limestone and sedimentary rocks, scrambling down steep ridges and admiring the nimble Ibex (mountain goats) as they look down at us from their vantage points. Night spent in the Grenairon refuge.
- Day 5:** An early start will be required for the longest day of our trek as we descend steeply down to the valley floor before ascending once again below the huge limestone cliffs of the Fer a Cheval, a massive 1000 meter amphitheatre where tremendous volumes of water cascade down the faces. We climb a very steep trail to reach the Vogealle hut where we will spend the night surrounded by the tinkling of sheep bells.
- Day 6:** One of the most exciting days of the trek. Using cables and ladders to assist our descent, we follow a series of ridgelines down to the 60 meter ladders which are perched above the Salanfe refuge. Another long day but well worth the effort as the tiny Salanfe hut is a welcomed site after such an exhilarating day on the trail.
- Day 7:** Another Alpine start as we make our way beneath the towering sedimentary towers of the Dents du Midi
- Day 8:** From the Emosson Dam, we head down to the French side, to Argentière and back to the busy Chamonix Valley.
- Day 9:** Departure day.
Transfer from the Chamonix valley to Geneva airport.