



# Alpine Trekking : Switzerland, Italy & France

Dates: September 2-16, 2018

Tour Leaders: Richard Ruppel & Jutta Brendel



Adventure Tours  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

## Overview

The term, Alpine trekking, is appropriate here because this tour encompasses several of the most respected, loved, and renowned trekking centers/regions in the Alps. Travelers will fly into Zurich and be transported to Lucerne to enjoy the stunning beauty and culture of this small walled medieval city on Lake Lucerne in the heart of Switzerland surrounded by Alpine peaks. Take in local theater and concert venues, art galleries, and museums.

Mt. Pilatus guards the city and Mt. Rigi beckons as other surrounding peaks invite trekking and exploration. From Lucerne, the journey continues into the high Central Swiss Alps to the village of Grindelwald, cradled in the shadow of the Monch, the Jungfrau and the Eiger - a famous Swiss Alpine trio in whose shadow we shall bask as we wander the surrounding greener peaks offering unrivaled mountain views. Grindelwald is a hiker's paradise and from there, our tour takes us across the Italian border to Courmayeur in northwestern-most Italy, the Aoste Valley, which lies at the southern base of Mount Blanc, the highest Alp. Courmayeur offers a plethora of hiking/walking trails and we will trek again on greener peaks while bathed in the September Italian sun.

Our final transfer takes us to the French village of Chamonix, where Alpine hiking began with Saussure's assault of Mont Blanc in 1787, and in turn initiated the golden age of Alpine exploration and Alpine tourism. From Chamonix travelers depart for the USA from Geneva, Switzerland. Travelers will have the opportunity to visit some of the most important hiking centers in the Alps and experience Swiss, Italian, and French culture and of course, cuisine. A few good hours of walking entitles travelers to choose the most delightful foods a traveler could desire - an important part of traveling with Richard & Jutta!

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrival in Zurich

September 2, 2018 (Sunday). Arrive in Zurich, Switzerland. Meet Tour Leaders at the airport. Motor coach transfer to Lucerne and enjoy an orientation walking tour of Lucerne in the afternoon.

Accommodations: [Hotel Rothaus](#)

*Meals Included: group welcome dinner*



*Photo by Tour Leader Richard Ruppel*

### Day 2: Lucerne/Mt. Rigi

Cruise on Lake Lucerne to Vitznau and hike Mt. Rigi, known for gentle walking for all abilities but affording commanding views of Lake Lucerne and the surrounding Alps from the summit of Rigi-Kulm and also from the Rigi-Scheidegg.

*Meals Included: breakfast*



### Day 3: Lucerne

Ascend Pilatus, the home mountain overlooking Lucerne and the Lake. We'll enjoy grand views of the city and surrounding Alpine landscape. Your afternoon is free to explore museums and galleries.  
*Meals Included: breakfast*

### Day 4: Bürgenstock/Lucerne

Cruise up the lake to the Kehrsiten-Bürgenstock station and ascend via elevator to the Bürgenstock-Felsenweg; walk along a high plateau through villages with commanding views eventually descending to the lake for a return cruise to Lucerne.

*Meals Included: breakfast*

### Day 5: Grindelwald/Eiger

Short motor coach transfer to Grindelwald in the Central Swiss Alps. Arriving in the morning enables participants the opportunity for a short hike from Mt. First (reached by cable car) to the Busalp via an Alpine Lake returning by local bus to Grindelwald. Wonderful views of Grindelwald, the famous peaks of the Eiger, the Monch and the Jungfrau. Accommodations:

[Hotel Central Wolter](#)

*Meals Included: breakfast & group dinner*



### Day 6: Mt. Faulhorn/Grindelwald

Hiking from the Schynige Platte (plateau) to Mt. Faulhorn and back to Grindelwald via Mt. First (cable car) affords travelers one of the most scenic walks in the Central Swiss Alps, with repeated stunning vistas.

*Meals Included: breakfast*

### Day 7: Jungfrau

Ascend via cog railway the Jungfrauoch (11,371 ft), one of the highest mountains of the Central Swiss Alps, often called the rooftop of Europe. Enjoy commanding views of a confluence of glaciers, a magical scientific station, full service restaurant, ice sculptures and yes, snow. This excursion is weather dependent and might be shifted to another day.

*Meals Included: breakfast*



Photo by Tour Leader Richard Ruppel

### Day 8: Muerren/Grindelwald

walk through Alpine meadows to the village of Wengen. Transfer to auto-free village of Lauterbrunnen and walk to Mürren. Return via local train to Grindelwald. This is a lengthy walk, but still a walk affording different angles and perspectives on the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau as well as other surrounding peaks.

*Meals Included: breakfast*

### Day 9: Grindelwald/Courmayeur

Scenic motor coach transfer from Grindelwald, Switzerland across the Italian border to Courmayeur in the northwestern most region of Italy. As time permits, a walking tour of historic Courmayeur will inspire travelers. Accommodations: [Hotel Croux](#)

*Meals Included: breakfast & group dinner*

### Day 10: Courmayeur

Hike from Courmayeur to a lovely mountain hut, the Maison Vielle-Lac des Vesses and back, offering stunning views of Mt. Blanc and the surrounding peaks.

*Meals Included: breakfast*



Photo by Traveler Jeff Trapp

### Day 11: Courmayeur/ Rufigio Bertona

Hike from Courmayeur to the Refugio Bertona - a hut with spectacular views or venture out on a longer circular route. Do any number of walks in the VIVA Trail System in the Valle d'Oste Nature Preserve in Val Ferret.

*Meals Included: breakfast*

### Day 12: Chamonix

Transfer via motor coach to Chamonix in France on the north side of Mt. Blanc. Accommodations: [Hotel Alpina](#)

*Meals Included: breakfast & group dinner*



Photo by Tour Leader Richard Ruppel

## Day 13: Montenvers/ Chamonix

Take the Aiguille du Midi Funicular up to the mid-station, Plan de L'Aiguille, ridge walk along the Grand Balcon Nord from the mid-station across to the Hotel du Montenvers on the Mer de Glace (Sea of Ice). Take the Montenvers train back to Chamonix.

*Meals Included: breakfast*

## Day 14: Mt. Blanc

Take the Aiguille du Midi Funicular up to the Aiguille du Midi (3,842 meters) with its large mountain top station, restaurant, scientific station and immediate views of the summit of Mt Blanc, Europe's highest Alp. This is the starting point for guided tours up Mt. Blanc (4,248 m).

*Meals included: group farewell dinner*



## Day 15: Geneva/Home

September 16, 2018 (Sunday). Motor coach transfer from Chamonix to the airport in Geneva Switzerland. Return flights to the USA.

*Meals Included: breakfast*

## Cost & Details

**COST:** \$3,989.00

**MY OWN ROOM:** \$440

**INCLUDED:** The cost includes all accommodations (comfortable lodging), meals listed in itinerary, activities listed in itinerary (unless listed as optional), all transfers in-country, and 1-2 bilingual UWSP Adventure Tours tour leaders.

**NOT INCLUDED:** Roundtrip airfare to Zurich, extra/non-group activities, meals not included in itinerary, extra purchases (such as souvenirs, alcoholic beverages, passes, and lodging sundries), coach bus drivers' & guides' tips, extra transfers (taxi, public trans, bike rental, etc. on free times), laundry service, and travel insurance.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The cost includes land only rate, per person, with double occupancy accommodations. Single rooms ("my own room") may be limited and cost extra. Depending on weather and other variables, some activities or accommodations may change prior to or during the tour. This tour will be active and requires a lot of walking. We will do our best to accommodate most fitness/health levels, however it's suggested that all participants have at least a moderate/good level of fitness and health. Our goal is to ensure a fun and safe wellness adventure for everyone aboard.

**TOUR LEADERS:** Richard Ruppel is an emeritus professor at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point where he taught German for 30 years. He has led 13 UWSP Adventure Tours tours in Europe. He speaks fluent German and has spent 7 years travelling, studying and teaching in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. Jutta Brendel taught English at UW-Stevens Point for many years and speaks both German and Italian. She has travelled to Italy every year for many years and has herself led over 8 UWSP Adventure Tours adventures to Italy.

**GROUP SIZE:** 12-18 participants

**CONTACT:** UWSP Adventure Tours, 715-340-8186, [adventure.tours@uwsp.edu](mailto:adventure.tours@uwsp.edu)

**REGISTRATION:** register online with credit card OR print registration, complete, & mail along with \$300 (pp) nonrefundable deposit

**WEBSITE:** [uwspadventuretours.com](http://uwspadventuretours.com)