



ALPINE MOUNTAINEERING JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

When you book your Alpine Mountaineering trip you will receive these joining instructions by email. To help with forward planning we have also published them on our web site. Please take the time to read all the details if you are coming on one of our Alpine Mountaineering trips.

Evolène

The pretty village of Evolène is 25km south of Sion. It is the largest village in the Val d'Hérens and has a good range of shops and services.

Getting here

Evolène can be reached easily within a day from the UK.

By train take the [Eurostar](#) from London St Pancras arriving in Paris "Gare du Nord". Transfer via metro lines 1 and 4 to Gare de Lyon and take the [TGV train to Sion](#) (via either Lausanne or Geneva - usually no need to change trains). Reservation is advisable (essential for Eurostar).

By car take the motorway to Sion*, then 25 minutes drive south to Evolene. It takes around 10 hours from Calais.

Plane: Direct to Geneva from most UK airports with Easyjet (www.easyjet.com), www.Jet2.com or www.ba.com - 1½ hours flight time; then transfer to half hourly train service from the airport terminal to Sion via Lausanne.

If flying, there are frequent punctual [trains](#) from **Geneva airport** which take 2 hours to Sion and cost around CHF72 each way full fare including bus fare to Evolene "Village". The bus station is right next to the train station and [buses depart regularly](#) until 7:45pm each night (last bus is at 8:45pm at weekends).

Bus: A regular Postbus service runs up from Sion (**Route number 381**) – the bus station is directly outside the train station. Services to Evolène leave at 12:45, 14.45, 15:45, 16:05, 16.45, 17.45, 18.45 on Saturday afternoon. There are also later services at 19:45 and 20.45 but you'll miss dinner - **please let us know if you're on the late bus** and we can keep some food for you. For your return, buses pass Evolene Village at 05.34, 06.40, 07:36, 09.48 and 10.48 on Saturday morning (45 min to Sion with quick connection to Geneva airport trains).

***Car further info:** 12-14 hrs from London. From Calais the fastest route is Reims - Chalons sur Marne-Troyes-Langres Sud-Besancon-Vallorbe-Lausanne-Martigny-Sion - all on autoroute to Langres Sud and after Vallorbe. French tolls are c.£20; the Swiss autoroute tax card, purchased at Vallorbe, costs CHF40. Driving is a cheap option for groups of 2 or more.

Discounted Car Hire: Frost Guiding clients benefit from a 10% discount at Rhino Car hire. Use this link to claim your discount - <http://www.rhinocarhire.com/frostguiding>

Return journeys should be booked for the Saturday; courses may finish late on Friday evening

Lost Baggage

If your baggage is lost on the flight (rare!) ask Geneva baggage office to send bags to **Route de Molignon 174, Les Hauderes 1984, Valais**; give them your mobile phone number, and Janine's number +41 78 874 78 31.

Take your boots and essential clothing in hand baggage just in case! Lost bags might not arrive until Monday.

Directions to Accommodation

See end of document for directions to accommodation.

Late Arrival

If you are going to arrive in Evolene after 19.30 on Saturday please call us (+41 78 874 78 31). If you miss the 20:45 bus you can take a taxi to Evolene from outside Sion railway station (price c. chf150).

Accommodation and meals

We are based in the traditional apartments "Beau Séjour" at the "Evolene Village" bus stop.

The apartments will be open from 14.00 onwards on Saturday.

Dinner and briefing will be at 7.15pm on the Saturday of arrival

When in the valley, all evening meals are served at 'Beau Séjour', except for Friday which gives you a chance to eat out in Evolène. We ask clients to help clear up after dinner and prepare their breakfasts and packed lunches, for which all food is provided and laid out.

Rooms should be vacated by 9.00 on Saturday morning. If you are staying for a second week please vacate the shared areas between 9.00 and 12 on a Saturday to allow for cleaning.

Please inform us before arrival if you require a vegetarian or special diet.

Extra nights

We may have space for clients arriving before the course start date (**£85/CHF95** per night half-board payable in cash on arrival). Please ask. If we are full, you can book a local hotel for extra nights (full listings on Evolène web-site - www.evolene-region.ch)

Swiss Card

On two-week courses or Eiger/Matterhorn weeks clients arriving by train can save costs by buying a Swiss Half-Fare Travel Card. It costs chf120 and gives half price travel on all buses, trains and most cablecars.

[Buy on-line here.](#)

OR at Geneva Airport rail station ticket office when you arrive.

Course Fees

Deposits are non-refundable. The balance of course fees must be paid 8 weeks before your course starts. If not received by then we are not bound to hold your reservation.

Up to 4 weeks prior to the course we will refund 25% of the total fee (excluding credit card charges) on cancellation. Thereafter no refunds can be made.

We strongly recommend that you have insurance cover for cancellation.

Insurance

All clients **must** be insured for **Rescue, Medical and 3rd party Liability**. In addition Cancellation and Baggage cover is strongly recommended.

1. The **British Mountaineering Council** offers [short term insurance for the Alps](#) as well as annual cover. Contact: BMC 0161 445 6111 E-mail: insure@thebmc.co.uk - this is the most comprehensive policy (you want "Alpine and Ski" cover for all our Alpine trips), but you must join the BMC to get it!
2. **Snowcard**: www.snowcard.co.uk offers flexible cover with optional choice of sections
3. **Austrian Alpine Club**: www.aacuk.org.uk : membership offers automatic worldwide rescue cover (see website for details)

Clients must bring their insurance certificates out to the Alps.

Equipment

You will find the kit list for your trip on our website clicking the "Extra Info" tab of the trip you booked (e.g. "Alpine Progression", "Climb the Matterhorn" etc).

If you need to hire equipment the required items should be reserved in advance and paid for in cash (chf) on the first Saturday night. Hire items/guides equipment lost will be charged for at replacement cost.

Mountain huts and cablecars

We use mountain huts for 2-4 nights on a one week, and 4-6 nights on a two week course (cost CHF70.- per night half-board). Cablecars may be used on some hut trips (cost range £20 to £90 per week). You pay for your own hut and cablecar expenses and the course fee covers the Guides' expenses.

Contact numbers / last minute enquiries

If you experience travel delays or last minute problems you can contact us on **mobile phones +41 78 874 78 31 (Janine), +41 78 874 78 11 (Graham)**. Relatives at home who need to get an urgent message to you during the trip should also follow this procedure.

Fitness and training

To get the most out of an Alpine climbing holiday you need to arrive fit, healthy and motivated. **For all courses** regular exercise is essential in the months approaching your holiday, and this should include several visits to hills or mountains accessible from where you live. If in any doubt about the necessary fitness, please ask us before booking – we'll be happy to help.

Our guidelines of **general cardio-vascular fitness** are:

1) you should be able to ascend approximately 400 metres (1400ft) on a steep graded path in one hour, wearing boots and carrying a day sack of 8-10kg. In descent you should be strong enough to descend 500-600 metres (1700-2000ft) on a steep path in approximately one hour. Your training must incorporate rough hilly walking to develop strength in leg and core muscle groups.

2) you must be confident of achieving long mountain days on rough terrain of 8 to 10 hours duration with total ascent and descent of around 1200 metres (4000ft). Stamina and endurance are essential for safe and successful Alpine mountaineering; so get out for a few long days in the preceding months, and wear your Alpine mountain boots to break in your feet and get used to walking in stiff soles.

If you are joining one of our **Intermediate** or **Advanced** courses you need to prepare for rock climbing and steep sections of snow and ice climbing. **Regular outdoor rock climbing**, especially on multi-pitch routes, is the best preparation. Don't flatter yourself on slabby routes! Many classic Alpine climbs (AD upwards, especially Eiger/Matterhorn) involve steep cracks, corners and chimneys where power and gymnastic movement are required. Work on your jamming, bridging and chimneying skills wherever possible. If you can't get away climbing much then use your local climbing wall and develop your upper body strength with weight training, pull-ups and push-ups, whether it is done at home or in the gym. For snow-ice faces you must have endurance in your arm and shoulder muscles to keep swinging axes over several hours.

If you train you will be properly **mentally prepared**. When training think about the scale and length of Alpine mountaineering. Visualize yourself climbing on a big peak. Draw inspiration from the coming challenges in the Alps when you are plugging away in the hills of home on a wet miserable day.

Finally, **don't rush** into a manic training program that is outside your previous experience. You will just get demoralized or injured. Build up gradually, whether it is in heights, grades, repetitions or distances. Regularity is the key to effective exercise – you should be exercising in some way **3 times a week** as a minimum. Always **Warm up before** and **Warm down after** any vigorous exercise session.

Boots and feet

We can't overemphasize the importance of getting comfortable boots and walking them in before an Alpine holiday. We often get cases where clients develop painful and debilitating blisters on a course, which can spoil or even curtail their holiday. It's not enough to walk around the garden or local streets in your brand new boots. You should wear-in the boots on several hill excursions. New boots should cover 20-50 miles before they go with you to the Alps.

If you are renting boots get your heel skin toughened up, bring plenty of adhesive strapping/blister patches and a flexible sock combination to the Alps.

Acclimatisation

Please be ready to experience the strange and unsettling effects of altitude in the Alps. Light-headedness, heavy sluggish leg muscles, occasional headaches and some loss of appetite or nausea can all be anticipated in course of acclimatization. Don't worry; some mild symptoms are normal in the first days. Some people feel them at 2500m, others don't feel anything until 4000m. Altitude affects different people in different ways. You must travel slower and must breathe more slowly and deeply above 3000m.

Don't hesitate to call us if you have any problems or queries about your plans for the trip.

We look forward to welcoming you to Evolene soon,

Graham and Janine

Directions to Beau Séjour, Evolene

Bus/On foot: Get off the bus at "Evolene Village" stop. Walk in the same direction as the bus. **Beau-Séjour** is the large 4-storey chalet on the left. The entrance is at the back and our apartments are on the second and third floors

By Car: Drive from Sion (motorway exit "Sion Est" and follow signs for Evolene/Val d'Herens) for c.25km until you pass Evolene to your right on the "bypass" (at the 50km/h speed limit sign).

After 200m take the turn on the left, following the diagonal entrance drive swinging up left into the parking area. Please park well in on the right hand side against the embankment.

