

CAUCASUS

Full-blown roof of Europe with its 5642m peak, Elbrouz is the Caucasian massif's king, and reigns as a master over the numerous summits of this mountain chain separating Northern and Southern Europe. Towards the East, located in the Khok chain, Mount Kazbek (dormant volcano) is the fourth highest summit of Caucasus and the second of highest of Georgia which it marks the frontier with Russia.

Covered with glaciers, thus the nickname "Mountain of ice", its name comes from the village of Kazbegui located in Georgia. After a flight to Moscow, we land in Mineralny Vody, thermal city located in the Caucasus massif. From there, we continue our journey towards Vladikavkaz, capital of North Ossetia. Then, after a transfer to Tmenikau, we join on foot the base camp of Mount Kazbek in the valley of Karmadon. After 4 days of acclimatization and climbs in the altitude camps, we will attempt the summit and join the valley afterwards.

We go in direction of Hathansu, meeting point for Russian highlanders, before climbing up to the Uncle Nick refuge from our base camp. There, we finalize our acclimatization to throw ourselves towards the summit. Once arrived in Seldov, we only have a small ridge left before we reach the top. We made it, and it's fabulous !

Once we're back at the refuge, we'll have a good rest and join the Hathansu camp. Then, we get to the city of Piatigorsk by walking on fantasy pistes in the middle of lush pastures.

 Region	Great ascent
 Activity	Expedition
	Summer
 Duration	16 days
 Group	6 to 9 people
 Code	VKZELB
 Price	From €3,895
 Level	3/5
 Comfort	3/5
 Language(s)	English

ITINERARY

📍 Day 1 **Flight Paris - Mineralny Vody - Vladikavkaz**

Departure from Paris to Mineralny Vody. Welcoming at the airport followed by a transfer to Vladikavkaz : 215km and around 3h drive.

Diner is planned on route.

Accommodation : Hotel

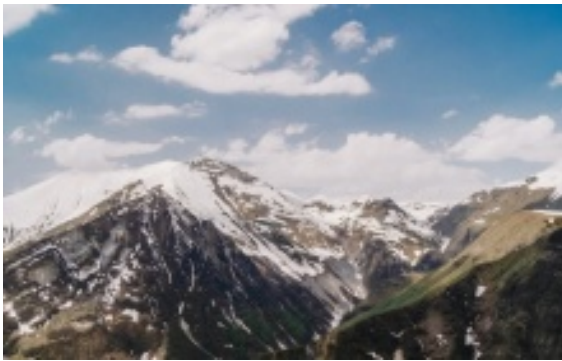
📍 Day 2 **Tmenikau - Base camp**

We start our day with a 35km transfer from Vladikavkaz to Tmenikau, small village at 1750m high. After passport and permits control, we'll have a traditional Ossetian meal prepared by our guides. From there starts our 12km trek leading us to the base camp in the valley of Karmadon, at 2450m.

Near our camp are two hot springs allowing us to have a nice bath !

Positive difference in altitude : around 700m | Accommodation : Camp

📍 Day 3 **Ascent to Camp 1**



We start today walking in direction of the Maili glacier and its West ridge. There are a few passages where a fixed rope will help us with our ascent. We'll arrive at the Camp 1 at 3400m high.

Positive difference in altitude : around 1000m | Accommodation : Camp 1

📍 Day 4 **Camp 2 at 4150m and Polyakov**

Through rocks, stones and snow, the ascent towards Camp 2 at 4150m is difficult. We will take advantage of our afternoon to ascend Polyakov at 4270m to train and acclimatize.

Positive difference in altitude : around 900m | Negative difference in altitude : around 200m | Accommodation : Camp 2

📍 Day 5 **Maili Glacier**

Acclimatization day which we'll take advantage of to do a few technical revisitions on the Maili glacier (without ascending to the top to avoid spending all of our energy unnecessarily) before returning to Camp 2 to spend the night.

Those who prefer can stay at the camp and rest before the next day's ascent.

Accommodation : Camp

📍 Day 6 **Mount Kazbek 5033m**



Today is the ascent day of Kazbek at 5033m ! After a fairly gentle beginning through the glacier, slopes are getting steeper right up to the top. We'll admire the amazing view on the Caucasus landscapes surrounding us. On the other side is Georgia and West stands Elbrouz. We did it, and we'll celebrat once we are back at the Camp 2.

Positive difference in altitude : around 900m | Negative difference in altitude : around 900m | Accommodation : Camp 2

📍 Day 7 **Spare day**

This day can be used in case of base weather on the previous day for the ascent. If the ascent is on this day, we can also cut the very long descent in 2 steps.

Accommodation : camp

📍 Day 8 **Return to Vladikavkaz**



Descent to Tmenikau and transfer to the hotel in Vladikavkaz to spend a well deserved night.

Negative difference in altitude : around 2400m | Accommodation : hotel

📍 Day 9 **Hathansu : base camp of Elbruz**



From Vladikavkaz, around 400km (around 6h30 drive) are separating us from Hathansu where is located the base camp of Elbruz. We settle our tents in the middle of the pasture at 2500m high and enjoy the breath taking landscape.

Accommodation : Tent

📍 Day 10 **Uncle Nick refuge**



Here is the great start : we get to the "Uncle Nick" refuge at 3760m using a good pathway. It will now be our base, surrounded with ice.

Positive difference in altitude : around 1200m | Accommodation : Uncle Nick refuge

📍 Day 11 **Acclimatization**

On a long walk on a flat terrain, we join an immense glacial plateau names Djikaughenkez and bordered by prominences at the Southeast from where we will have an incredible point of view on the Baksan valley and the central part of the mountain chain which, South, forms the frontier with Georgia.

Positive difference in altitude : around 700m | Negative difference in altitude : around 700m | Accommodation : Uncle Nick refuge

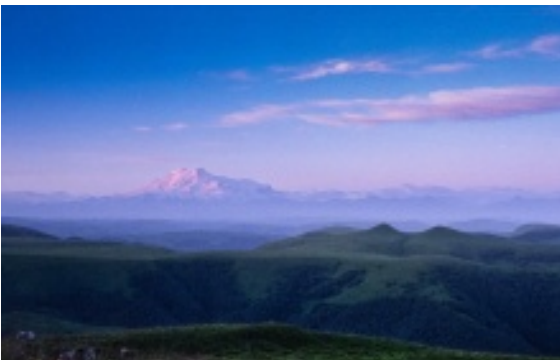
📍 Day 12 **Elbruz 5641m**



Very early wake up to trek towards the summit on fairly steep slopes. Arrival to Sedloy (5400m) between East and West peaks. We meet with other mountaineers arriving from the Normal Route. We have to put in all of our energy to finish those 200m separating us from the top and finally reach the summit plateau. Here we are, at the top of Europe ! We descend on the same itinerary to the refuge.

Positive difference in altitude : around 1900m | Negative difference in altitude : around 1900m | Accommodation : Refuge

📍 Day 13 **Spare day**



In case of bad weather on the previous day, we still have the opportunity to attempt reaching the summit on this spare day to guarantee a success !

Accommodation : Refuge

📍 Day 14 **Piatigorsk**

Descent to Hathansu and transfer to Piatigorsk by the valley of Malka.

Negative difference in altitude : 1200m | Accommodation : Hotel

📍 Day 15 **Spare day in Piatigorsk**



Sightseeing day in Piatigorsk or, if necessary, this day can be used as a spare day for Elbruz according to conditions.

Departure for France in the night from the airport of Myneralny Vodi 30km away from Piatigorsk.

📍 Day 16 **France**

Flight from Myneralny Vodi to Moscow and then to Paris. We land late in the morning (depending on the chosen flights). We say goodbye to each other after a wonderful adventure with our heads full of memories.

ITINERARY CHANGE

The program can be modified by your guide due to weather conditions or participants physical conditions. For safety reasons and to ensure a uniform level corresponding to the one announced, the supervision and organisation boards have the right to interrupt your participation if your technical or physical level are lower than the one required. The interruption will not give you any right of refund or payment of compensation.

DATES & PRICES

International departures:

No departure for now

Trip code: VKZELB

Included

- A french high mountain guide's supervision
- International and domestic flights + aerial taxes
- Ground transfers mentioned in the itinerary
- Every accommodation (hotels, lodges, refuge or camp)
- Meals except in Piatigorsk
- Parc taxes
- Permits
- Collective equipment
- A professional cook

Not included

- The Russian visa (around 190€)
- Meals in town (Piatigorsk)
- Tips
- Drinks and personal expenses
- Visits or activities non included in the program
- Insurance and assistance
- Registration fees : 18€/person

Terms and conditions

Booking conditions

Booking a trip with Montagne Expedition implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of sale. Each customer is required to complete a registration form and, subject to availability at the time of registration, travellers are expected to pay a deposit of 35% of the total price to complete their booking. Payments can be made online or by bank transfer. You will receive an e-mail with your booking confirmation.

Invoice procedure

Once your booking is confirmed you will receive an invoice by e-mail. The full balance of the trip must be received at least 35 days before your departure date. Montagne Expedition reserves the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

Cancellation policy

If for any reason you have to cancel your trip, Montagne Expedition requires written confirmation of your decision. The money you have paid will then be refunded according to the following deductions:

- Cancellation received more than 30 days prior to the departure date: a sum of €50 per person will be retained
- Cancellation received 30 to 21 days before the departure date: your deposit, 30% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 20 to 14 days before the departure date: 50% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 13 to 7 days before the departure date: 75% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received less than 7 days before the departure date: 100% of the total trip price will be retained

Special cases:

Please note that, regardless of the date of cancellation or modification if you have agreed to pay for services such as hotel reservations, flights or additional activities, these services are usually non-refundable so additional fees may apply.

- Fixed airfares: if your airline ticket was issued in advance, often done to avoid significant surcharges, you will be charged 100% of any non-refundable fees if you wish to change or cancel your flight plan.
- Fixed in-country costs: early charges for firm bookings will be charged if you cancel or modify your trip.

- Insurance costs: if you have taken out comprehensive or cancellation insurance, the cost of insurance is due and cannot be refunded.

Please note that fees apply according to the date Altaï Canarias receive your cancellation or modification request in writing

If we have to cancel a departure due to an insufficient number of participants, you will be informed no later than 21 days before departure and a full refund will be issued, you will not be entitled to further compensation. We reserve the rights to cancel departures due to exceptional circumstances which may impact the safety of participants. Such circumstances include those amounting to 'force majeure' in which case participants will receive a full refund but they will not be entitled to any compensation.

Changes to travel contract

If you wish to make a change to your booking please contact us in writing; you will be expected to pay any fee which might arise from this change. In the event of unforeseen external events, Montagne Expedition may change some aspects of the travel contract. If any changes are necessary you will be informed as quickly as possible.

Pricing

The prices on our website are updated regularly and all of the prices we advertise are accurate when published. Montagne Expedition reserve the rights to make changes to any of these prices. Before you make a booking we will give you the up-to-date price of your chosen holiday including any supplements, upgrades or additional activities you may have requested. If the number of travellers is fewer than the indicated number of participants on the website, a small group surcharge may be applied. For all of our trips we include details of services, prices and what is/is not included but please be aware that changes to the prices may be necessary in accordance with exchange rates or price changes of various components of the journey.

Contract transfer

If you are unable to travel for any reason with Montagne Expedition, you can transfer your booking to another person in which case our modification conditions apply. Both the transferor and transferee will be jointly and severally liable for payment of the total holiday price and other associated expenses. Some airline carriers treat name changes as cancellations and you may be required to pay for the cost of a new ticket.

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out personal travel insurance for your trip with Montagne Expedition as soon as your booking is confirmed. We advise you to purchase a travel insurance policy which covers flight cancellations, luggage loss and emergency health care. Please look carefully at which activities are covered by your insurer and do not forget to bring all necessary documents and information with you (name of the company, name of the contract, insurance policy number, telephone number...)

PRACTICAL INFO

Staff

Your trip will be supervised by a high-mountain guide who will teach you technical elements needed for the good progress of your stay. He may need to modify the program in order to ensure safety regarding weather conditions and participants physical conditions.

Food

Meals

- Very good quality and tasty local food, meals are prepared by chefs : they are excellent !
- Take some snacks according to your own tastes (cereals bars, chocolate bars, dry fruits,...).

Drinks

- We advise you to bring some water purification tablets (Aquatabs or Micropur) in order to drink tap water.
- Personal drinks are not included in the trip's price
- Bring cash for coffees, fruit juices, coke or beers during breaks...

Accommodation

Camp, refuges and hotels.

Transportation

We will have to carry all of our belongings except on days where we'll go back and forth.

Tips

Clients usually pay for the guides' drinks : you might find it practical to make a group kitty at the beginning of your stay (no obligation).

Supplied equipment

- First aid kit
- Ropes
- Technical equipment

Vital equipment

- 1 pair of alpinism boots
- 1 pair of gaiters
- 1 harness + 2 carabiners
- 1 ice axe
- 1 pair of crampons with antibott system
- 1 pair of telescopic poles
- 1 sleeping bag (double layers)
- 1 foam mattress or self inflating
- 1 safety cover
- 1 head lamp + long lasting batteries
- 1 pair of glacier sunglasses category 4 with nose protector + 1 extra pair
- 1 ski mask for the summit
- 1 1.5L thermos
- Hand heaters
- Sun cream + after sun cream (face and lips)
- 2 plastic bin bags (100L) to keep your bags waterproof
- 1 waterproof pouch in which you will put your identity papers, your phone, your money and your insurance/assistance contract with all of your emergency phone number

Material

Upper body :

- Windstopper bonnet
- Hat or cap
- Neck scarf
- Sunscreen (high protection) for skin and lips
- Sunglasses for glacier category 4 + ski goggles
- 2 technical breathable long sleeve underwear type "Carline" (no coton which dries too slowly)
- 1 technical and breathable shirt to put under your jumper
- 1 thick fleece jacket
- 1 fuzz jacket
- 1 wind stopper and waterproof jacket type Goretex
- 1 pair of wind stopper mittens (fleece or wool)
- 1 pair of undergloves

Lower body :

- 1 technical and breathable pair of tights type "Carline"
- 1 pair of comfortable mountain trousers
- 1 pair of wind stopper and waterproof trousers type Goretex
- 2 pairs of socks : 1 thin and 1 thick

Other :

- 1 bed sheet for refuges
- 1 small toiletry bag with 1 fast drying towel
- Cream for sunburns (Biafine)
- Biodegradable toilet paper
- 1 or 2 100L plastic bags and an overbag to protect your belongings and your bag
- 1 waterproof pouch in which you will put your identity paper, your phone, your money and your insurance/assistance contract with all of your emergency numbers

Luggage

Your equipment has to be split into 2 bags :

- 1 heavy and compact bag (50/60L backpack) with the minimum necessary for your arrival : leave with your alpinism boots at your feet
- 1 other backpack (under 20kg)

Medicine

Your guide is a trained first-aider and will carry a first aid kit at all times during your trip for use in emergencies. We recommend that you bring your own first aid kit containing :

- Personal medicine
- Pain reliever (preferably paracetamol)
- Double skin
- Elastoplast
- Local disinfectant
- Anti-inflammatory
- Antispasmodic
- Anti-diarrheal
- Anti-vomiting
- Intestinal antiseptic
- Eyewash
- Light sleeping pills
- Earplugs
- Broad spectrum antibiotic
- Vitamins C

Non-exhaustive list.

Passport

Please make sure your passport and travel documents are valid. We advise you to travel with a copy of your travel documents in case of theft or loss.

Visa

Mandatory !

It is a simple entry tourism visa. Its obtention is under your responsibility (count 7-21 days of examination delay + route delay). You will have to provide an identity photo (facing the camera, in colors and that lasted from less than 6 months), the visa application form (that you will have to complete on the website <https://visa.kdmid.ru/>), a photocopy in colors of your passport and insurance form.

- The visa application form has to be done online and then give the complete folder (passport, photo, invitation letter, visa application form, insurance certificate) to the Russian visa Center VFS.GLOBAL which prepares the visa applications.

- Email address of the assistance service : info.rusparis@vfshelpline.com
- Telephone assistance : 0033184889773 (the service is available from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)
- <http://vfsglobal.com/russia/france/contact-us.html> VFS.GLOBAL centralises the visa applications for the french territory

If you haven't got time to take care of your visa, we recommend calling our partner Visa-connect. Visa-connect can accompany you in the preparation of your visa application folder and take care of every formalities for you. This service is invoiced 45 euros (September 2019).

The mentioned information are only indicative for french citizens. They can be modified. **It is thus highly recommended to check with the consulate of your country a few months before your departure.**

Mandatory vaccines

Even if there are no mandatory vaccines, make sure to have the vaccines usually recommended in the occidental countries up to date (tetanus, diphtheria, polio, typhoid). Also, hepatitis A and B are recommended.

Weather

The weather can change a lot in a short amount of time. There can be wind and be very cold. The temperature of the air decreases of about 0,8°C every 100m of altitude. In high mountain, thermic variations are very rapid (shadow/sun and day/night). The wind and the humidity of the clothes aggravate considerably the thermic loss. The drop of the atmospheric layer makes the sun even more dangerous due to the rise of the ultraviolet radiation. An adequate equipment will protect you from the violent wind.

Sustainable tourism

We do our best to offer trips subscribed to the principles of responsible and sustainable tourism. Our aim is to allow visitors to discover the many facets of the mountains by taking you off the beaten path and getting you in touch with its nature and residents, while ensuring that your visits do not have a negative effect on its natural environment and people.

- Most of our accommodations are run by locals, thus ensuring that the largest part of the revenue generated through your trip will stay within the region.
- France is known for its exquisite cuisine. The art of cooking and the joy of eating are part of everyday life. Each region has its particular foods and flavors which we would like you to explore and appreciate.
- Water is a precious and rare good. Our team and those travelling with us are thus advised to use it with consideration and avoid excessive water use where possible.
- Please try to recycle your waste whenever possible, even though recycling may not be a well-known concept in all areas.
- Be cautious and respectful when hiking. Make sure to wear suitable footwear and avoid picking flowers, moving stones or lighting fires.