

# THE WILD SIDE OF ELBRUZ

With its 5641m high, Elbruz is the true 'Roof of Europe'.

It is a legendary volcano of which the Normal Route, located on the South side, is very frequented but does not present a major interest. However, the North side isn't more difficult technically but is surely the most preserved and wild. It is for us the ideal side to immerse in the traditional Russian mountain spirit and to share the adventure with the Caucasian nomads.

After a flying into Mineralnye Vody via Moscow, we take the road in direction of Piatigorsk. The next day, we' are driven to Hathansu : the base camp. From there, we start acclimatizing in a very bucolic surrounding (a paradise for flower amateurs). A good rest day allows us to enjoy the Hathansu site, meeting point of Russian highlanders. We then climb to 'Uncle Nik' refuge, which is our advanced base camp. Up there, we finalize our acclimation to be able to leave in a clear night towards the summit.. Once we reach the pass, there's only a small ridge before we reach the top. We have made it, and the view is breath taking and unforgettable !

Once back at the refuge, after a good relaxing time, we join the Hathansu camp and then, on beautiful and aerial slopes through lush pastures, we finally get back to the city of Piatigorsk.

 Region	Great ascent
 Activity	Expedition Summer
 Duration	12 days
 Group	6 to 9 people
 Code	VELBN
 Price	From €2,995
 Level	3/5
 Comfort	3/5
 Language(s)	English

## ITINERARY

### Days 1 to 2 **Moscou - Piatigorsk**



Departure from Paris to Moscow. We then continue our journey to Mineralnye Vody. From there, we hop on a minibus to get transferred to Piatigorsk in an hour, where we'll spend the night at the hotel.

*Accommodation : Hotel*

### Day 3 **Piatigorsk - Hathansu (2500 m)**

125km separate Piatigorsk from Hathansu. Thus, we leave early in the morning for a 5h drive. Then count 2h of walking to join the base camp at 2500m high.

*Positive difference in altitude : around 200m | Negative difference in altitude : around 200m | Accommodation : base camp*

### Day 4 **Acclimatization day**



Today is dedicated to acclimatization, photography and contemplation of the immense North side of Elbruz. Walks are possible around the camp, especially near the Pré de Stone Mushroom at 3000m. We prepare ourselves for the next day : sorting out our belongings that have to be transferred to the next camp.

*Positive difference in altitude : around 500m | Negative difference in altitude : around 500m | Altitude Max : 3000m | Accommodation : base camp*

### Day 5 **Acclimatization**

Acclimatization day where we'll climb up to the 'Uncle Nik' refuge, at 3760m, which is the advanced camp. We drop of our technical equipment that we carried up there.

In order to have a good night sleep, we get back down to Hathansu.

*Positive difference in altitude : around 1200m | Negative difference in altitude : around 1200m | Altitude Max : 3760m | Accommodation : Base camp*

### Day 6 **Hathansu - "Uncle Nik" refuge**



Today is the great start : we join the 'Uncle Nik' refuge at 3760m on a good path. It will be our base from now on, surrounded by ice : confort is basic in the huts, be prepared for that !

Our bags are loaded because we carry all of our personal belongings for 5 days. The afternoon is dedicated to rest and to acclimatize our body to the altitude.

*Positive difference in altitude : around 1200m | Altitude Max : 3760m | Accommodation : 'Uncle Nik' Refuge*

#### 📍 Day 7 **Acclimatization in altitude**

Today, we'll finalize our acclimatization by doing a hike up to around 4400m : early morning start to have some time to rest in the afternoon.

*Positive difference in altitude : around 600m | Negative difference in altitude : around 600m | Altitude Max : 4400m | Accommodation : 'Uncle Nik' refuge*

#### 📍 Day 8 **Elbruz ascent (5641 m)**



We wake up at midnight to leave around 1am in order to get going towards the summits on gentle slopes. First, we join 'Lens Rock' (stone camp). Once we arrive at Sedlov (5400m) in the middle of East and West summits, we meet the mountain climbers arriving from the Normal Route.

We have to get our strengths together to get up the last 200m separating us from the West peak at 5641m. Finally, here we are, standing open mouthed and agog in front of the amazing view.

Then starts the long descent back to the refuge. The wind and the cold are our enemies in this ascent, and we have to be ready to put up with it during a few hours. If conditions are too difficult to reach the West summit, the guide

can decide to try ascending the East summit.

*Positive difference in altitude : 1900m | Negative difference in altitude : 1900m | Altitude Max : 5641m | Accommodation : 'Uncle Nik' Refuge*

#### 📍 Day 9 **Spare day**



If weather conditions aren't good, the ascent of Elbrouz can be done on this spare day. It can also be used as a rest day. The knowledge and experience of your guide will optimize our chances to reach the top according to the weather and to the physical conditions of the group.

*Accommodation : Refuge*

#### 📍 Day 10 **"Uncle Nik" refuge - Hathansu**

Today, we descend to Hathansu. This day can also be used as a safety day if weather isn't on point the day before.

*Negative difference in altitude : around 1200m | Altitude Max : 3760m | Accommodation : Tent*

📍 Day 11 **Hathansu - Piatigorsk**



We hop on a car to get to Malka to then join the city of Piatigorsk, and spend the night at the hotel.

*Accommodation : Hotel*

📍 Day 12 **Piatigorsk - Paris**

Around noon, we'll join the airport 30km away and fly back to Moscow before Paris. once we arrive at night, we'll say goodbye to each other after a wonderful adventure together, full of unforgettable memories.

Please note that this itinerary, including walking distances and times, is indicative. Our guides aim to provide the adventure that is best suited to the weather, your interests and the demands of the group. Please be aware that in order to achieve this, changes to the programme may be made.

## DATES & PRICES

### *International departures:*

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No departure for now

Trip code: VELBN

### *Included*

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A deposit of 30% of the trip's price will be needed during the booking, the whole price must be paid at least 30 days before departure.

- The technical organization of the trip
- Mountaineering with high-mountain guides
- International and domestic flights, flight taxes
- Planned transfers
- Accommodation in hotels, refuges or tents
- Meals except in Piatigorsk and Moscow
- Licences
- Collective equipment
- Services from a local team

### *Not included*

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- The Russian visa
- Individual technical equipment
- Meals in town (Piatigorsk, Moscow)
- Tips
- Drinks and personal expenses
- Sightseeing and activities non included in the program
- Luggage supplement (ski cover)
- Insurance / assistance : research fees and helicopter rescue, hospitalisation and repatriation mandatory
- Registration fees : 18€/person

### *Terms and conditions*

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#### *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 Altai 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**

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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

The tour is supervised by a mountain guide who has been chosen for his field experience, his specific knowledge of one geographical area and the culture attached, as well as his passion for the region.

### 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

- We advise you to bring protection against noise (ear plugs).
- A few electrical plugs are available in refuges, but plan to bring an external battery to charge your camera and switch off your phone during the day.

### Transportation

On Day 3, 6, 7 & 8, for the final ascent we will only carry a light bag with our belongings for the day. On Day 4 : we'll carry the technical equipment to the base camp. On Day 5 : we'll carry our personal belongings including the sleeping equipment. On day 10 (descent) : we will carry all of our belongings including the technical and sleeping equipment.

### 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

- 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

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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 cotton which dries too slowly)
- 1 technical and breathable shirt to put under your jumper
- 1 thick fleece jacket
- 1 fuzzi 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

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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

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Your guide has a pharmacy of first urgency.

Plan with your doctor your personal pharmacy:

- 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*

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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.

## *Sustainable tourism*

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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.