

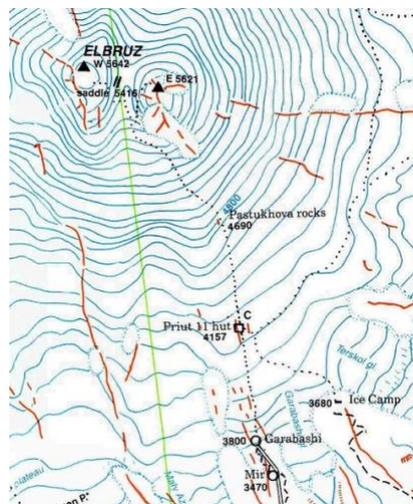
ELBRUS 1st – 8th June 2020

WHAT IS THE ROUTE LIKE ON ELBRUS?

The ascent of the West Peak (Standard Route, South Face) is a long ascent over a moderate incline that requires good acclimatization but has few technical difficulties or objective dangers such as crevasses. However, despite the apparent simplicity of this route, it can be dangerous. The altitude, variable weather and low temperature transforms the ascent into a real high-altitude adventure.

It follows the broad slope as far as the small rock islands known as Pastukhov Rocks and continues straight up for 400 metres towards the East Peak, gradually bearing left until reaching the saddle or col which is a good place to rest and eat. Head west and to the left side of the saddle, ascending the steeper snow slope on a rising traverse to the shoulder of the West Peak and a short distance directly up to the plateau. After crossing the broad and largely featureless plateau there is a short ascent to gain the small summit pinnacle.

The average time is from eight to ten hours for the ascent and about four hours for the descent. Crampons, ski poles and a walking axe are necessary, as well as a harness, slings and karabiners for safety, especially on the rising traverse above the Saddle where there is a fixed line to clip into. Helmets are not mandatory, there is no danger of rockfall from above but a chance of head injury in the event of a fall.



EXPERIENCE FOR MOUNT ELBRUS

It is certainly beneficial to have experience of moving on snow and ice for this trip to Mt Elbrus although we provide on-site training in alpine skills such as moving on crampons and self-arrest with a walking axe. This trip tends to attract a wide range of abilities, from people with Seven Summits aspirations who have climbed Kilimanjaro, to experienced hill walkers. This does mean that we have to be sure that everybody has the necessary skills for safety on the hill such as personal movement, understanding of layering and personal climate, handling a slip, being familiar with all the equipment and working in a team.

Elbrus is often sold as a walking holiday, but the weather means it can often turn out to be a proper winter mountaineering experience even in the height of the summer season. Comparisons to Kilimanjaro don't work really; this is a lower peak but much colder and requiring movement over permanent snow-covered slopes. Even though the normal route is clear and safe, the mentality towards experience has to be focussed on winter skills.



ELBRUS 1st – 8th June 2020

FITNESS TRAINING FOR ELBRUS

We recommend you work towards this trip with the aim of being capable of multiple days out on the hill carrying a pack up to 10kgs. People who are active in the hills generally have few problems on Mount Elbrus, but extra work on the calf muscles and thigh muscles will help. Cardio-vascular fitness can be assisted by swimming, circuit training and working on a HIIT programme.

Altitude is not such a problem on Elbrus because of our acclimatisation programme but summit day is still a big jump in altitude and a long day on the hill in the cold. Eating, drinking and sleeping well and keeping healthy at altitude are equally as important. Our programme allows everyone to build their 'mountain fitness' before going high and acclimatising not just to the height but also the climate and new surroundings. Fitness is mental as well as physical, so we like to promote a happy and positive team spirit before rushing to the top!

EQUIPMENT FOR ELBRUS

July and August are normally quite hot in the valley, so you could be wearing shorts and T-shirts with a fleece for the hikes. However, you should prepare for winter conditions on the mountain itself. It can be extremely cold and windy with either hard pack, ice or soft snow on the trail.

Make sure boots are double boots (plastic or hybrid), down jackets are mountain quality with hoods, mitts and gloves are warm and waterproof for the snow. Take sunglasses which cover around the eyes because the reflected glare off the snow can be intense, and goggles can either be full UV or yellow tinted for whiteout conditions. Good layering is essential, and your daysack should be big enough to accommodate the bulky clothes when you are not wearing them.

For the colder June trips, it is important to be particular about the warmth value of your equipment, especially jackets, hats, gloves and mitts and good quality socks in your boots. The slopes are more likely to be hard pack and ice, so crampons should be sharp.

For the climbing equipment we recommend a straight walking axe for use on easy slopes and for self-arrest, and lightweight is best. Crampons can be 10 point since there is no front pointing, either strap on or clip on depending on your boot. An alpine harness with a 120cm sling and two locking karabiners in case of needing to rope up and also for tying into the fixed line are also necessary. Helmets are optional, there is no danger of rockfall from above, but head injuries can be caused in a fall.





ELBRUS 1st – 8th June 2020

Sample program -

Day	Elevation	Travel Time	Info
1	2000m	4 hrs	Arrive into Mineralnye Vody (MRV) airport in the morning and met by staff. Transfer by minibus to Terskol (4 hours). Accommodation in local Hotel Nakra, full board.
2	2125m - 3000m	6 - 8 hrs	Day hike to Cheget Mountain (3000m), lunch enroute and return to hotel where we will check your kit before our evening meal.
3	2125m - 3500m	6 hrs	Drive to the Azau Glade (2350m) and up to Mir station (3500m) - 4hrs up and 2hrs down. Lunch in the meadow and back to hotel. Collect any rental gear in town.
4	2125m - 3900m	4 hrs	Ascend to mountain hut (3900m). Afternoon walk up to Priut Hut (4100m) and winter skills at altitude, weather dependant. Dinner and overnight in Mountain hut.
5	3900m	6 hrs	Hike to Pastukhov Rocks (4670m) for more acclimatisation and return to National Park Hut 3900m. Weather dependent, could be rest day as below.
6	3900m	3 hrs	Rest and training day in use of clothing and equipment such as crampons and ice axe, personal movement and dealing with cold and altitude. Back to hut for dinner and overnight.
7	3900m	12 hrs	1st possible summit day - awake at 3am. Snow machine to Pastukhov Rocks (this ground has already been covered on foot in previous days) and continue to summit. Return to mountain hut.
8	3900m - 5642m - 3900m	5 hrs	Return to Hotel / Vodka party
9	3900m - 2125m	0 hrs	Rest Day / Head to airport



ELBRUS 1st – 8th June 2020

MOUNT ELBRUS KIT LIST

Elbrus requires good quality winter mountain clothing. Please do contact us for specific questions about clothing and equipment, models and types.

Travel and Trekking

- Travel Clothes - you can leave these in the hotel
- Trekking clothes for acclimatisation hikes (valley and up to 2000m)
- Fleece jacket or a good quality soft shell jacket or lightweight down jacket (also for mountain)
- Waterproof jacket (also for mountain)
- Day sack
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen and lip screen - high protection
- Hiking boots (also for lower part of mountain and in hut)
- Sunhat
- Sunglasses - high UV protection
- Towel and shorts and maybe crocs for sauna

Mountain clothes

- Base layer - top and bottom (one set should be fine)
- Insulated trousers (you can also wear a base layer plus hiking trousers and shell bottoms)
- Mid layer fleeces
- Fleece jacket or a good quality soft shell jacket or lightweight synthetic down 'nano' jacket
- Mountain down jacket with hood - for winter conditions
- Outer shell trousers and jacket with hood

Head, hands and feet

- Warm hat preferably with ear covers
- Balaclava or buff
- Mountain socks, hiking socks and underwear (merino is good)
- Liner gloves - thin gloves which can be worn under your fleece gloves or mitts
- Fleece gloves or mountain gloves which are waterproof and warm
- Mitts - windproof and warm - make sure these are mountain quality
- Plastic mountain boots or good quality hybrids - good quality 'double boot' standard.
- Hut shoes - crocs or something similar, or you can use your hiking boots
- Goggles
- Gaiters - necessary in soft deep snow

Climbing equipment

- Walking axe - preferably with leash and rubber end protectors
- Crampons - 10 points are acceptable for this trip, there is no front pointing required.
- Harness - preferably alpine style with clips on the leg loops and a comfortable fleece waistband
- 1 x 120cm sling and 2 locking karabiners - for easy tying into a fixed line
- Helmet - optional. There is no danger of rockfall from above, but head injuries can occur in the event of a fall.



ELBRUS 1st – 8th June 2020

Other equipment

- Expedition bag/duffle bag for main gear (with padlock)
- Rucksack for hikes and summit day, 40 litres should be ample
- Light bag for leaving travel clothes in the hotel during the trip
- Sleeping bag, 3 or 4 season - the huts can get quite warm and the beds have mattresses
- Flask for hot drinks, 1 litre is best
- Personal health kit, wash kit and medicines
- Trekking poles with snow baskets
- Dry bags - selection for keeping clothes and sleeping bag dry (you will receive -25% Aquapac)
- Dirty clothes bag
- Headtorch with spare batteries
- Snacks from home, energy bars etc

INCLUDES

- Visa application papers (please note that some nationalities are charged an additional amount for travel papers)
- Municipal registration in the administrative centre of Tyrnauz which covers the Baksan Valley
- Minibus transfers to and from the Baksan Valley from the airport
- Hotel in Cheget with drying rooms, sauna, restaurant and twin rooms
- All hotel and restaurant meals and local taxis
- Mount Elbrus National Park fees
- All cable cars and chair lifts on the mountain
- Accommodation in the National Park hut
- All meals on the mountain and our own cook
- UK high altitude guild / medic
- 70L Dry duffle bag

EXCLUDES

- Flights - to Mineralnye Vody, Russia (usually via Moscow)
- Russian Visa - £85 - £110 (depends on speed of delivery, nationality & postage return option). Please also note that nowadays you are required to appear in person at the visa office in order to provide fingerprints, so there is an additional cost of travel to the visa office.
- Some consulates (usually Middle-Eastern & Eastern) require original visa travel papers. The cost of sending these by courier is not covered.
- Some nationalities are charged an additional premium for their travel papers which is not included (details below)
- Travel insurance
- Personal expenses estimate £50 for drinks and souvenirs
- Snow machine to Pastukhov Rocks on the summit morning (Optimal but advised £80ish)
- Single room supplement in Hotel - £160 for all days in the village (single accommodation is not possible in the mountain hut)
- Use of snow cat on descent only (however if one is needed for safety reasons then we will pay for it)

Cost £1700pp (Land Cost)