



## THE TOUR OF MONTE ROSA

Situated in the Swiss Alps, just east of the Matterhorn is the beautiful peak of Monte Rosa. Located in one of the most heavily glaciated areas in the Alps, it is the centrepiece of this challenging circuit. The walk offers views of Western Europe's largest and most spectacular peaks including the summits of Monte Rosa, Matterhorn, Dom and Taschhorn.

Beginning in Zermatt, our route follows the Europaweg - a high path offering stunning views of the Valais's most spectacular summits. We then cross into Saas Fee on a dramatic path carved into the rock with up close views of the nearby glaciers. We travel from Switzerland across into Italy and through the delightful Piemonte region with its blend of Italian and Germanic influences. As we move west we encounter a different culture as the western Piemonte was once a duchy of French Savoy. Finally, we ascend the lower flanks of the Matterhorn and cross the glaciated Theodul Pass before descending back into lively Zermatt.

### ITINERARY

#### DAY 1

Fly to Geneva – train to Zermatt. Flights are not included in the trip price, but we do include the rail transfer from Geneva Airport to Zermatt. On arrival in Zermatt we are met by our guide and transfer to our central hotel. After dinner there will be a trip briefing.

#### DAY 2

So that we get a gentle start to our challenging journey, this morning we will start by taking the cable car into the mountains. Once we reach the top station, we will begin our trek by traversing across the Europaweg, which is carved into the slopes of the Mattertal. During the day we be able to take the time to enjoy the magnificent views of both the Matterhorn and the Mischabel. We will spend the night at Europa Hut, perched above the valley.

#### DAY 3

Today we will continue our trek along the balcony trail of the Europaweg, which links herding hamlets, open hillsides and lush forests, as well offering the splendid views across the Rhone to the Oberland. Our destination for the day is Grachen, the driest village in Switzerland, which lies on the shelf above the Mattertal.

#### DAY 4

This morning we will follow the Grachen Hohenweg (high route), where we will be able to truly admire the Mischabel range, and its glaciers and high peaks, including the Dom. We will overnight in Saas Fee.

#### DAY 5

We will leave Saas Fee, by the rocky mountain trail, which leads to the Monte Moro pass. We will then follow the pass, which dates back to the Middle Ages, through boulder fields and imposing granite slabs, whilst enjoying the dramatic views of the east face of the Monte Rosa. We will continue our trek towards Staafa, where will be spending the night in a comfortable inn.

#### DAY 6

Today we will follow the ancient road over the Turlo pass towards Valsesia. We will pass among fantastic flora, as well as abandoned alp huts and remote stone farms. Throughout the day we will have impressive views of the Monte Rosa, along with other peaks in the Pennine Alps.

#### DAY 7

Our aim for the day is to ascend along the picturesque pass of Col d'Olen, which will prove to be one of the most challenging routes of the entire trek. The pass lies at 1700m, one of the high points in the trek, and holds magnificent

scenery; however for those who would prefer there is a lift to take you to over the demanding pass. After traversing the panoramic ridgeline, we will descend into the charming village of Gressoney.

**DAY 8**

This morning we will ascend through herding hamlets to a high pass with expansive views over the majestic summits of the Pennine Alps. We descend to the Val D'AYas and a charming country inn in Champoluc.

**DAY 9**

Today we will pass over another high point of our trek, along the Theodul Pass. This will be a relatively demanding day, however the views that we will gain of the surrounding summits will be more than worth the effort. Once we have crossed the glaciated pass, we make our descent to Zermatt.

**DAY 10**

Today we will have free time to enjoy the delights of the year-round sports resort of Zermatt. Take the time to absorb the last views of the surrounding mountain ranges, with snow-capped mountains, before exploring the local facilities and shops of this bustling town.

**DAY 11**

After a leisurely breakfast, those who are returning to the UK from Zermatt will transfer by rail to the airport, for the return flight home.