

CHALETS CHATEAUX CHASSELAS AND CHAUSSURES



Inroads into the **FRENCH ALPS** WITH **LE FRENZ CONNECTION**



TOUR DEPARTURE DATES: 2023

Please contact us directly for 2023 dates

NZ \$ 4250 (twin share) max 8 travellers

This circuit enables you to discover an authentic, bucolic and dynamic part of France, boots and all. The guided walks, cycles, and excursions that comprise this tour allow you to embark on a sensory journey and connect with a very special French region, peppered with wild flowers and weathered chalets, shaped by a unique history and fortified by local specialities, mountain cheeses and a host of new special wines to try. Majestic rocky massifs rival the stately castles of the Route des Ducs. Tiny routes serpentine along lakesides and up mountain passes. All the while your New Zealand-French guide will use their bilingual skills and regional knowledge of the French Alps to invite you into the heart of French life and culture.



DAY 1 ARRIVAL ANNECY

You will be met off the train at Annecy or the plane at Geneva.

Guided visit around the medieval old town of Annecy, along geranium bedecked canals to the lake past the old prison then up cobblestone streets to the castle.

Dinner in a charming restaurant in the old town overlooking the canal and two nights in a quality hotel in the old town overlooking the lakefront.

DAY 2

Early morning breakfast in one of the town's best boulangerie/cafes followed by a visit to the market buying local cheeses, salami and wine etc for a lakeside picnic lunch.

Boat Trip along Lake Annecy's shores passing pretty villages and stopping at the end of the lake for a shady picnic followed by a cycle ride along a converted railway line. We cycle through pretty lakeside villages, past fields,

and meander along the lakefront with time for a swim in Europe's cleanest lake. A free evening to wander Annecy's charming streets and choose where to dine at your leisure.

DAY 3

Drive to the Col de la Forclaz one of Europe's hot spots for paragliders for morning tea. (Option for a tandem flight upon reservation).

Picnic or café lunch option.



An afternoon visit to the Château de Menthon, inspiration for Walt Disney, and owned by the same family since the Middle Ages. The castle was home to St Bernard who jumped out of the castle window on the eve of his wedding to head for the mountains and become patron saint of the alps. (namesake to the St Bernard dog). Menthon St Bernard is one of France's few castles not to have been pillaged during the French revolution. As such its library hosts one of the country's oldest book collection with some 12 000 books predating the revolution, parchments and some of the first books to be printed in the 16th century. During the Second World War the count set up an illicit printing press in the castle for the local resistance movement.

Drive to Mégeve, one of France's most idyllic chi-chi ski villages, (home to the Rothschild family who set up a large portion of the resort's ski domain) and bucolic summer destination for lovers of nature, mountain cheeses, and ancient chalets. This village epitomises the true sense of cosy and we'll be staying in an authentic chalet hotel and dining on local specialities.

DAY 4

Morning alpine walk and visit to a local cheese maker. Option: picnic or lunch in Mégeve

Afternoon: We drive towards the riveting 4,808m Mont Blanc and to the cosmopolitan alpine town of Chamonix. A favourite destination for adventurers and climbers for over 150 years. Nestled below the Mont Blanc range, it has a buzzing café scene and night life. 2 nights' accommodation in a friendly chalet hotel.



DAY 5

Day off in Chamonix to visit the town's museum, cafes, and watch the world go by at leisure. Or, for those opting to foray into the Alps we can arrange an excursion to take your breath away. Chamonix is the stepping off point for cable car rides up the vertiginous Aiguille du Midi (3,842m) or a cog wheel train ride up the Mer de Glace to a snow cave with ice-sculpted furniture. Alternatively, we can book a mountain guide to take you hiking or climbing.



DAY 6

We leave the mighty Mont Blanc range and drive alongside the French side of Lake Geneva for a visit and some wine tasting at Château de Ripaille at Thonon-les-Bains. With Switzerland on the other side of the lake and a merging of water and sky the boats seem to be bobbing in the clouds. The area has been growing grapes since the Gallo-Roman period and the castle is surrounded by 22 hectares of



vines stretching towards the lakeside. From the Middle Ages the monks developed a long tradition for quality Chasselas and only handed it on to the Necker-Engel family just over a



hundred years ago. We continue along the lakeside to Yvoire, classified as one of France's most beautiful villages, and take time to lunch, wander, and explore this picture-perfect medieval village. Then it's on the road again in the direction of Le Grand Bornand. This picturesque alpine village is renowned for its authentic very old rustic chalets. We'll be dining and staying in one with atmosphere and charm.

DAY 7

We drive to the Plateau des Glières, a mighty plateau surrounded by impossibly steep cliffs. A sobering site in French history due to the relentless winter siege by German soldiers against a group of resistant fighters caught by the snow whilst waiting for a British supply drop.

We'll have a walk in the pastures and lunch on the Plateau.

We drive down for a guided visit to the Glières museum which pays tribute to that courageous last winter of the local resistance, and then it's back to Annecy for dinner and a last night roaming its pretty lit up streets.

And then onto the chic and historical lakeside village of Talloires. The village's beauty has been praised by Rousseau and Churchill, and captured on canvas by Cezanne. Its old stones breathe authenticity. The monastery, Duingt castle and mountains offer a stunning backdrop for a last dip or a lounge by the lake. Dinner in a local café.

DAY 8

Morning at leisure to explore more of Annecy and lakeside, walk in the forest above the old town, or shop in the town's many beautiful boutiques. We will accompany you to your train at Annecy or back to Geneva airport.



OUR PRICE INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

- Complimentary aperitif upon arrival
- All excursions and accompanied walks (excluding Chamonix and paragliding option)
- 7 nights twin-shared accommodation in a selection of quality hotels and chalets
- 7 x French breakfasts
- 6 x 2 to 3-course dinners in local restaurants specially selected to provide a choice in regional specialities. You will have a choice of entrees, mains and/or desserts within a fixed menu. (Beverages not included/ A la carte options possible with a surcharge). Dinner on Day 2 is not included so that you are at liberty to select your own gastronomic experience with a choice of restaurants at Annecy.
- Transfers to and from Annecy train station.
- Transfers to and from Geneva airport NZ \$100 surcharge per person
- Linguistic opportunity to communicate with the locals. (Optional but free of charge). We provide daily handouts of key phrases and vocabulary you will need and the opportunity to practice them with a French speaker over a glass of wine before the real thing.



NOT INCLUDED

- Telephone charges
- Laundry
- Beverages and snacks
- Extras on fixed menus
- Personal travel insurance

For information and bookings, please contact:

Sally and François
Le FRENZ Connection

www.lefrenzconnection.com
lefrenzconnection@hotmail.com

For terms and conditions please refer to booking form.