

Snowshoeing in the French Alps *New*

A short but satisfying winter adventure exploring the tranquil Clarée Valley on snowshoes.



Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Walking
Accommodation	Hotel for 4 nights, mountain hut for 1 night
Grade	Moderate
Duration	6 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	Snowshoeing: 3 days, optional walk on 1 day
Min/Max group size	4 / 8. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local Leader Claree Valley
Land only	Joining in Turin, Italy
Max altitude	2,680m/8,792ft, Day 4

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



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Group Departure Dates and Prices

Group departures

2027 Dates:

Sat 16 Jan - Thu 21 Jan

Sat 13 Mar - Thu 18 Mar

Group prices

Visit the holiday page of our website for up-to-date land only and flight inclusive prices for all group departure dates <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/holiday/snowshoeing-in-the-french-alps>. Single supplement options can also be found here.

No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 8. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your guide



You will be met on arrival at Turin airport by your French guide, Antoine Allier. Antoine is a fully qualified mountain guide and has been guiding walking groups for over 18 years across France, Spain and Scotland. He lives in Névache with his family throughout the year and is very passionate about exploring the mountains. He is extremely knowledgeable about local history, mountain flora and the wildlife of the valley.

Your trip highlights

- Explore the unspoilt Clarée Valley on snowshoes, no prior snowshoeing experience needed!
- Experience a winter mountain landscape unsullied by ski lifts or roads.
- Stay in a traditional, family run hotel with good food and facilities.
- Enjoy a night of adventure in a cosy mountain hut.

At a glance itinerary

Day 1	Fly London to Turin. Single group transfer across the border to your hotel at Névache.
Day 2	Snowshoe instruction. Snowshoe to the Col des Thures.
Day 3	Snowshoe to mountain hut.
Day 4	Snowshoe back out.
Day 5	Free day to do self-guided walk, snowshoe or husky sledding.
Day 6	Single group transfer to Turin airport for your flight back to London.

Trip summary

The beautiful Clarée Valley is situated in France near the Italian border; a hidden Alpine gem that has remained remarkably unspoiled. Characterised by its traditional Névache architecture and a network of mountain trails, the protected Clarée Valley that is a summer hiker's paradise, turns into a snowshoer's wonderland in winter.

The Clarée Valley was saved from over development through the efforts Emilie Carles, daughter of a local farmer and author of 'La Soupe aux Herbes Sauvages' - a fascinating and evocative account of her life in the region. Emilie's efforts halted the building of a motorway and ski lifts in this beautiful remote region, and all mountain activities must be made on foot - trekking in the summer and snowshoeing or ski touring in the winter.

All equipment and training will be given to you on your first day, before you set off to enjoy the excitement of walking in the mountains in the depths of winter. Crunchy snow is underfoot, the trees are hung with icicles and the deep silence is astonishing. You will explore the varied landscapes, see several well-known peaks such as the Black Needle and the Hand, and immerse yourself in the spectacular scenery which rises from snowy valley floor to the towering backdrop of the Écrins mountains at over 4,000m.

You will stay at the welcoming family-run L'Échaillon hotel in Névache for four nights where you will find a well-equipped spa, comfortable accommodation and superb food with a daily menu of delicious local dishes; in fact everything you need to relax and replenish after a good day out in the mountains.

For the complete winter adventure, one night will be spent in a mountain hut. These cosy, traditional huts are situated high above the valley floor and provide multi-bedded accommodation, indoor toilets, simple hot showers and delicious three course meals. You will be well looked after by the hut guardians who do all the cooking and stoke the wood burning stoves.

The base of the valley is situated at an altitude of 1,596m and it is normally possible to snowshoe directly from the hotel. This has been the case for at least the last 5 years. Please note that this itinerary may vary based on weather conditions and/or the recommendations of your guide.

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Fly London to Turin. Group Transfer To Hotel

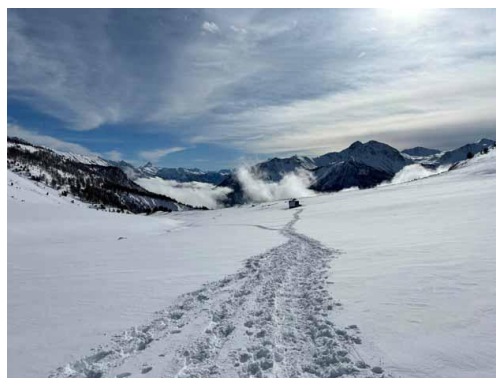
You will be met at Turin airport by either your guide or a driver and transferred to your hotel in a private minibus across the border in the south-eastern part of France. This will be a group transfer and takes approximately 2 hours; if you are booking your own flights please contact us to confirm arrangements.

Once you have passed the French-Italian border you will enter the Névache district and start zigzagging your way down to the base of the valley, passing through short mountain tunnels and getting your first tantalising glimpse of what the week has in store. The Clarée Valley is a glacial valley in the French Alps situated at 1,600m above sea level and entering it is rather like stepping back in time.

Overnight: L'échaillon Hotel, Névache (Meals: D)

Day 2: Snowshoe instruction. Walk to Plateau and Col des Thures, 2,289m/7,506ft - 600m/1,980ft ascent, 12km, 5-6 hours.

The first half hour or so this morning will be spent getting used to walking on snowshoes. Once you've got the hang of it, you head off on your first walk. Your route initially leads gently uphill straight from the hotel, heading north through a pine forest with glimpses of some very interesting landscapes. You then zig-zag uphill on a good path to the Plateau des Thures. Here there are fabulous views ahead on the vast snowy plateau, and time permitting you can walk on gently undulating ground to the far end of the plateau where there are far reaching vistas down to the next valley.



After a picnic lunch on the col, you return via a different route to the hotel.

Overnight: L'échaillon Hotel, Névache (Meals: BLD)

Day 3: Snowshoe to Refuge Buffère, 2,076m/6,850ft - 400m/1,320ft ascent, 8km, 4-5 hours.

Your guide will have given you advice the evening before on what to pack for your night in the hut. Weather depending, he will decide which route you are taking, but one possibility would be a short 10 minute road transfer to the ancient village of Névache, which is a fantastic sight in the snow. From here you follow the Clarée river upstream. The river itself is unlikely to be frozen but the narrow trail should be snow covered, with glistening snow sparkling in the sunlight, only disturbed by bird and animal tracks. After about 2km you turn up the side of the valley, again with superb views through the forest. The refuge is a welcome sight, situated at the start of a side valley. You may well explore further up the valley after leaving your pack at the refuge. Your night will be spent in the cosy hut where you can enjoy a warm welcome and a good, hearty meal.

Overnight: Mountain Hut In The Claree Valley (Meals: BLD)

Day 4: Snowshoe via the Refuge Ricou back to Névache, 2,680m/8,792ft - 300m/900ft ascent, 12 km, 5-6 hours.

Today you descend to the valley floor, either via the track or, snow permitting, via the more exciting woodland route. You will then walk further up the valley, ascending up the opposite side to the Ricou Refuge. You may well stop here for a hot chocolate or vin chaud. There are superb views across the Écrins range from here.

You will then make your way back down the valley possibly taking the wide track (a road in summer). Again there are wonderful views as you approach the village of Névache and the vehicle that will take you the 10 minutes back to the hotel.

Overnight: L'échaillon Hotel, Névache (Meals: BLD)

Day 5: Free day in the valley.

You are free today to do a self-guided walk in the valley. There are numerous options from the hotel, and you can choose to use snowshoes or walk with yak tracks. For the more energetic there is the option to try cross country or Nordic skiing or to go on a husky sledding trip (extra local payment required for the latter options).

Overnight: L'échaillon Hotel, Névache (Meals: BLD)

Day 6: Transfer to Turin airport. Fly to London.

After breakfast there will be a group transfer back to Turin airport for your flight to London. (Meals: B)

Our grading system

Snowshoeing in the Clarée Valley - Undiscovered Alps is graded as a Moderate trekking holiday, as described below.

Moderate

Holidays in this grade typically involve 5 to 10 days of walking or trekking. They will often venture into more remote country and can cross mountain passes. Altitudes though are still relatively low, going no higher than around 4,300m/14,000ft. Accommodation can include simple hotels, tea houses, lodges and camping.

Trip altitude

Important - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend www.medex.org.uk as a good source of information.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ 5 x breakfasts, 4 x picnic lunches, 5 x dinners
- ✓ All snowshoeing equipment
- ✓ Good quality hotel on a twin-share, full board basis
- ✓ One night in a mountain hut, multi-bedded room, shared simple facilities
- ✓ An experienced English-speaking local snowshoeing guide
- ✓ Single timed group transfers to/from Turin airport at the start and end of the holiday
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK (if booking our (flight inclusive option). If you are travelling land only, check with our office for transfer times at the airport
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ A free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips
- ✗ Bar bills

Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients, who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit [For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>](https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign).

Your accommodation

We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



L'echaillon Hotel, Névache

Situated in a peaceful hamlet, L'echaillon is a traditional two-star mountain chalet hotel with comfortable guest rooms, stunning panoramic views of the mountains, dining and bar area and outdoor terraces. The main building has 19 rooms, a restaurant, bar and spa. Since 2016, there is also an annex, located just 2 minutes away from the main building, with 8 newly renovated rooms. The great range of amenities includes sauna, hot tub, steam room, Wi-Fi and dry room. The hotel has maps, postcards and massage appointments available. A perfect base for your snowshoeing in the Clarée valley.



The hotel was built by Gérard and Anne Gentil in 1992. Back in 1973 Gérard was one of the first cross-country skiing instructors in Névache. Their son Robin has now been running the hotel for the last 8 years with his wife Emy.



Mountain Hut In The Clarée Valley

The mountain huts in the valley all have hut guardians who cook delicious three course meals, have well-fille bars and keep the stoves stocked with wood. The rooms are all multi bedded, some with bunks. There are indoor toilets and hot showers. The only access to the huts is by snow shoe or skis, plus the hut guardians have the use of a skidoo for re-supply and emergencies.

Meal arrangements

5 x breakfasts, 4 x picnic lunches, 5 x dinners

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

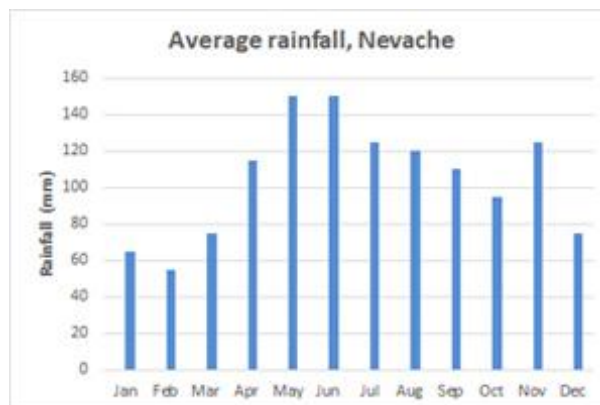
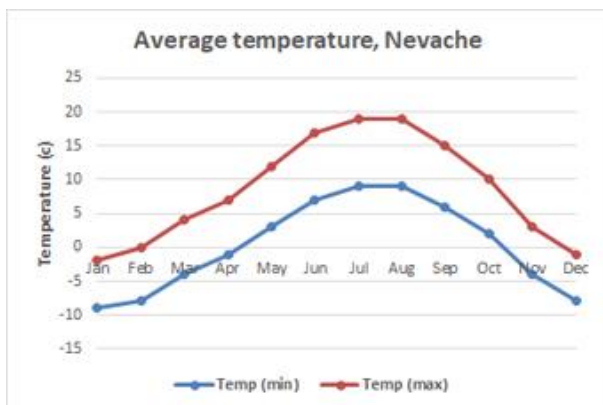
Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

Climate information



Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400.



Additional nights in the Clarée Valley

The Clarée Valley is such a magical place and has so much to offer, why not stay longer! If you would like to add extra hotel nights, we can book this for you.

Turin, Italy

You could spend a night or two in Turin at the start or end of your holiday. The city is known for its elegant architecture, cuisine and wine culture.

Further information

When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- This holiday is unique to Mountain Kingdoms and gives you the chance to thoroughly explore the outstanding beauty of the Clarée Valley on snowshoes
- Your trip will be led by an English-speaking French guide who is extremely experienced in mountain trekking and snowshoeing, and can share a great deal of fascinating information about the area.
- You will stay in a traditional alpine hotel with excellent local food and spa facilities.
- We include a night in a remote mountain hut for a real sense of winter adventure
- A fixed group transfer to/from the airport is included at the start and end of the trip.
- Our Reservations Manager, Seraphina, completed the recce trip of this holiday in 2025 and has also trekked in the area in the summer. Please give her a call on 01453 844400 if you have any questions.
- Our maximum group size is just 8 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience.
- If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights team for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

What our clients say



Wonderful to learn a new skill in stunning landscape. Antoine is an excellent guide, with amazing knowledge of the history of the valley as well as the flora and fauna. He is also great fun! The peace of walking through the valley in winter is astonishing, the silence is so deep.
-Seraphina Berry, Mountain Kingdoms



Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT

For almost four decades, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now have trips to all corners of the globe but are conscious that our holidays can have a detrimental impact on the world around us and want to do all we can to reduce that.

We have focused our main responsible tourism efforts on reducing the carbon emissions produced by our holidays, and counterbalancing this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole.

Carbon offsetting

Since 2007, we have donated a percentage of our client and staff flight costs to the Ecoan tree planting project in Peru. Ecoan are a trusted local NGO who use the funds directly to purchase seedling trees with the long-term goal of restoring 2.5 million acres of Andean land.

Ecoan maintains over 100 tree nurseries across Peru where their tree saplings are grown and then transported to planting sites during the rainy season. They use native trees such as the Polylepis, as these can survive at high altitudes. As well as sequestering carbon, they help protect against soil erosion, landslides and the effects of extreme weather on local crops. As such, they are enormously beneficial to the economic well-being of the surrounding communities. This is very much a community-led conservation project, with the local Quechuan people coming together to plant tens of thousands of saplings in the Andean highlands where they live. During the annual Queuña Raymi (tree festival), over 150,000 native trees can be planted in a single day!

For every person booking a long-haul, flight inclusive holiday with us, Ecoan can purchase and plant 20 trees in Peru, and for short-haul flights, 7 trees. Typically, we send over \$7,000 per year to Ecoan, which is over 7,000 trees.

Reducing carbon emissions

- ✓ We offer the majority of our clients a free, filtered Water-to-Go bottle to help reduce the need for single-use plastic bottles during their travels.
- ✓ We predominantly use locally-owned hotels and guesthouses rather than multinational chains. In some of our destinations, such as Bhutan, we use homestays. Not only does this type of small-sized, locally-owned accommodation have a much-reduced carbon footprint, but it also helps support communities.
- ✓ We evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel-efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, choose direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We have stopped offering unnecessary optional flights, such as Everest sightseeing. We try to minimise internal flights where possible.
- ✓ We recycle as much of our office waste as possible and have introduced a client portal to reduce paperwork and to make it easier for clients to manage their trips online.

Wider commitment to responsible and sustainable tourism

- ✓ We are signatories to the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside other like-minded travel companies to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.
- ✓ We will continue to support several charities with whom we have a long-standing relationship, such as Shiva Charity in Nepal.

Over the years, we have given sizeable payments to emergency relief when a disaster has occurred in the countries we operate in. We always try to ensure that these funds go directly to those who need them most to help rebuild their lives.

