



# Switzerland Trekking Trip

Information Pack

v2



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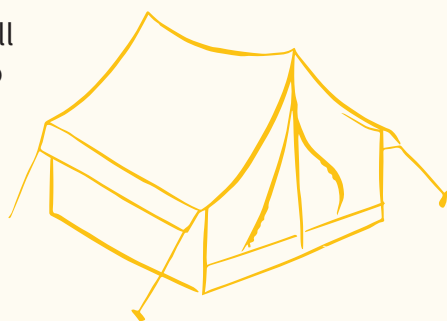
## There is no limit to what your child can achieve

The Trekking Expedition is a once-in-a-lifetime adventure for your child, enabling them to stretch their mental and physical limits in a safe and fun environment.

From our dedicated Les Martinets expedition base, your child will explore the beautiful Swiss Alps while staying in remote huts in the iconic Swiss countryside.

Our highly trained guides will lead your child through an inspirational programme. We have developed an exciting series of activities which are designed to help your child collaborate with their fellow students, connect with the environment, and develop valuable life skills such as leadership, self-reliance, risk taking, flexible thinking, organisation and perseverance. We believe this will be a memorable and motivating experience for every child, giving them a sense of self-accomplishment.

Students aged 12 or above of all nationalities are encouraged to apply.



## Les Martinets Expedition Package

The cost of the expedition is US\$460, which includes:

- In-country transportation
- Excursions and admission fees
- Accommodation
- Food
- Pre- and post-expedition training
- Travel insurance arranged centrally to cover all students
- Staffing & logistics

Nord Anglia Education is sponsoring a substantial portion of the expedition, including accommodation in the Alpine village of Les Plans Sur Bex and the Alpine mountain huts, as well as in-country transport, excursions and admission fees.

### Additional Costs

Parents will have to plan for an additional budget to cover the following:

- Flights (depending on country of origin)
- Visas (depending on country of origin)
- Personal equipment
- We suggest parents give their child roughly US\$150 in spending money should they want to buy souvenirs and/or miscellaneous items



## Your stay in Switzerland

Nord Anglia's dedicated Les Martinets expedition centre is a stunning chalet located in the Alpine village of Les Plans Sur Bex. We will also be venturing out to Alpine mountain huts in the surrounding area.

### Accommodation

Les Martinets is a very comfortable and fully equipped expedition base for our adventurers. Students will share a room with a fellow Nord Anglia student of the same gender and each floor has modern and recently renovated shower and toilet facilities. The centre also has WIFI, classrooms, a dining room and a range of sports facilities (football, volleyball, table tennis) on or near the site. Whilst on the two day mountain journey, we will stay in the historic Cabane Barraud. All mountain activities are weather dependent, but alternative plans will always be in place in case of bad weather.

### Transport

On arrival to the airport, your child will be collected by a well-respected local transfer company and transported to the Les Martinets base. We will be using similar vehicles to transport ourselves to venues throughout the week, and on occasion we may also use the Swiss public transport system for local shuttles.

### Currency

The currency in Switzerland is the Swiss Franc (CHF) which is readily available in most countries. Some spending money is advisable for additional snacks, drinks and souvenirs.

### Language

Although English is widely spoken, Switzerland also has four national languages: German, French, Italian and Rumantsch. In the region we will be visiting, French is the most commonly spoken language. If you are not already familiar with French it may be advisable to pack a phrase book in your bag, or practise with your fellow students before the trip

### Maps

You may wish to familiarise yourself with the area before setting off on the trip as we will be using maps to navigate our way around the mountains. It is recommended that you visit [this website](#) which has free digital maps of Switzerland and is a great resource to help plan prior to your trip. You can also get involved with the Global Campus online route planning exercise.

### Catering

Throughout the expedition, breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be provided. During the mountain journey, students will carry packed lunches during the day and be fully catered for whilst staying in the mountain huts. We would encourage students to bring high-energy snacks with them, though snacks can also be purchased from local supermarkets in the area.

## 7 Day Itinerary

### *Day 1*

#### **Arrival**

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The Nord Anglia team will greet your child upon arrival at Geneva International Airport and accompany them as they travel by coach to our expedition base in the Alpine village of Les Plans Sur Bex. Your child will spend the day relaxing and enjoying the beautiful Alpine surroundings whilst getting to know their fellow adventurers from Nord Anglia schools around the world. In the evening there will be a self-led walk or treasure hunt.

### *Day 2*

#### **Training**

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This is a training day to equip all students with the skills and knowledge to take part in a two day one night journey through the local Alpine terrain. Your child will receive training in navigation skills, camp craft and a range of other expedition skills, which will foster team work and leadership in challenging environments. Students will be immersed in nature, gaining a greater appreciation for the visually stunning Swiss countryside.

### *Day 3*

#### **Mountain Day**

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Students will travel from Les Martinets to a mountain hut where they will stay for the night. We have selected a range of routes which are suitable for various levels of experience. Your child's safety is our utmost concern and we will choose routes according to weather conditions on the day. Students will lead the trek under the close supervision of a professional international mountain leader.

### *Day 4*

#### **Mountain Day**

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On day two of the mountain journey students will lead themselves and their team via a different route back to Les Martinets. They will be coached in the skills required to look after each other in the mountains as well as what it takes to lead a group of people in challenging conditions.



*Day 5***Chocolate and Cheese**

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After several days of physical exertion and mountain trekking, your child will be rewarded with the finest in Swiss cuisine: cheese and chocolate. A lesson on the art of cheese and chocolate making will indulge their senses. Upon their return to Les Martinets, students will participate in a series of teambuilding and leadership activities.

*Day 6***Glacier 3000**

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With the effects of climate change more apparent on glaciers than almost anywhere else, your child will take a gondola up to Glacier 3000 to observe a high glacial environment and gain some understanding of the environmental impact in the region. A range of glacial activities will further immerse them in the outdoors, offering more opportunities for shared adventures with their new friends from around the world. In the evening, we will celebrate your child's accomplishments in an awards ceremony.

*Day 7***Depart**

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On the final day of the expedition your child will share experiences and reflections from the week, evaluating what they have learned and how this could be applied in school, daily life and future careers. Coaches have been arranged at various times throughout the day and each school will be accompanied back to the airport by the Nord Anglia team.



## Safety

Your child's health, safety and welfare is our first priority and we organise our expeditions to the highest standards so that your child can enjoy the experience, confidently and safely. Students will be supervised by the Nord Anglia Education Expedition Team with a high ratio of trained staff to students. All staff members are highly competent in first aid with appropriate medical kits on hand at all times.

Full risk assessments have been carried out on all activities, and we have implemented all necessary practical control measures as a result. To ensure the highest level of care for our students, we have thorough emergency response plans in place in an unlikely or unforeseen event. Should an incident occur, we will be able to deal with it as effectively and as quickly as possible.

In the unlikely event of an emergency while in Switzerland, your child will be treated by the International SOS. This service operates in 850 locations, in 92 different countries with 11,000 members of staff including 5,600 medical professionals, providing 24-hour medical and emergency assistance including global evacuation and repatriation. This is further strengthened by our partnership with Royal Sun Alliance who provide us with comprehensive travel insurance policy that work alongside our International SOS partnership. If you wish to use this policy, please let us know.

At all times, our team will have access to emergency contact information and carry suitable communication devices for the areas we are operating in. As well as providing an in school contact in the event of a family emergency at home, the emergency communication tree put in place prior to departure of the trip will be used should we need to contact you.

However, we must stress that at times we will have limited communication in remote areas. For this reason, we will not be making frequent calls home or posting a daily blog. Communication home can be accessed by students when available by web and phone, with time set aside to allow for this.

Switzerland is a very safe country to travel around. However, if you have any concerns please get in touch or [visit this website on foreign travel advice for more information](#).



## Training for the expedition

The training element of this expedition will make a huge difference to your child's enjoyment, comfort and safety. The goal of our training programme is to help your child fully prepare for their adventure. Physical preparation is only one aspect of training - mental preparation is equally as important. It is intended to be flexible so your child can fit it around school and family life, but would be best completed with the rest of the students participating from your child's school.

## Online Preparation

The Global Campus website will be integral in preparing your child for this expedition. This will be the go-to source of information to find the training plan your child will be expected to complete prior to attending the expedition.

On this expedition, your child will join other Nord Anglia schools and students from around the world. To help our adventurers get to know each other, we have a dedicated area on the Global Campus website. Global Campus is only accessible to Nord Anglia students and educators, providing a safe environment for your child to interact and learn. It will be used to deliver aspects of your child's training programme and gives them the opportunity to ask questions and meet the Expeditions Team and students. In addition to regular webinars, your child can also ask questions and discuss equipment needs, training programme or anything else for the trip in the community area.

## In-School Preparation

### Physical

The expedition and the Swiss terrain can be challenging. It is important that your child achieves a good level of physical fitness prior to the adventure. In school, we will be working on aerobic endurance, with a focus on walking and stair-climbing whilst carrying some added weight.

### Organisational

On an expedition like this it is vital to be organised. There will be various challenges and tasks to complete before departure. Some of these will be solo activities, while others will be carried out as part of the school group.

### Sharing the experience

This trip will be a memorable and motivating experience for participating students. We encourage them to share their new-found experience, knowledge and skills attained with both their families and school community. As part of the experience, we will set a number of challenges that will take advantage of various forms of media to share the journey with the community.

## Equipment List

All of the equipment noted below should be considered essential for the expedition. These items contribute to keeping your child safe, warm, dry and content. If you have any questions, please feel free to get in contact with your in-school trip organiser or [Angi Richards](#). We also recommend watching the equipment guidance videos posted on Global Campus. We'll be happy to advise you in more detail regarding equipment or suggest alternative suppliers in your area. The table below should be used as a guide to the minimum amount of equipment to be brought on the expedition.

### OUTDOOR CLOTHING

- 1x Waterproof jacket (lightweight breathable)
- 1x Waterproof trousers with long side zips
- 1x Spare warm fleece
- 2x Fleece mid layer or equivalent
- 3x Trekking trousers (no cotton)
- 1x Thermal leggings
- 2x Wicking thermal top long sleeved and light colour is ideal (base layer)
- 1x Warm gloves
- 1x Warm hat
- 1x Sun hat
- 3x Socks (warm loop lined pair)
- 1x Walking boots

### CASUAL CLOTHING

- You will need some casual clothing for use in the evening as well as underwear and nightwear.

### OVERNIGHT

- 1x Wash kit
- 1x Silk sheet liner
- 1x 2/3 season sleeping bag
- 1x Towel
- 1x Small pillow
- 1x Insect repellent
- 2x Wet wipes
- 6x Ear plugs

### EQUIPMENT

- 1x Sunglasses (CE rated 3 or 4)
- 1x Rucksack -35- 45l
- 1x Head torch
- 2x Spare batteries for torch
- 1x Sunscreen SPF 30+
- 1x Lip salve
- 2x 1-litre water bottle
- 1x Blister kit including zinc oxide tape, compeed or similar, non-adhesive dressings
- 1x Flip flops
- 1x Whistle

### PERSONAL

- Personal medications
- Passport and travel documentation
- Insurance documents
- Wallet with small amount of spending money

### OPTIONAL

- Book
- Camera
- Watch
- Pen and paper
- Trekking poles



## Shopping Guide



### 1. Hats

You will need both a warm hat and a sun hat on your trip. The sun hat should be wide brimmed, ideally with a string.

### 2. Head torch

A good head torch with plenty of spare batteries is vital. We recommend a modern, mid-range torch with an LED bulb.

### 3. Rucksack

A 35-45 litre rucksack will be sufficient. When buying a rucksack you should consider if it is comfortable and robust, whilst choosing a back system that works for you. It will need compression straps on the sides for attaching equipment and at least one smaller outside pocket for snacks and sunscreen.

### 4. Socks

Having the right socks is essential. They should be non-cotton, thick and well padded. We recommend spending more on socks, as they will really make a difference to your comfort on the expedition. Liner socks are also a useful purchase to keep moisture away from the feet and protect against blisters.

### 5. Walking boots

These are the most important purchase for the expedition to ensure maximum safety and comfort whilst on foot. It is vital they are comfortable and waterproof, with a deep tread/sole and extend above the ankle. Please purchase trekking boots rather than mountaineering boots.





### 9. Waterproof jacket and trousers

These items vary wildly in both quality and price. We advise that both ends of the spectrum are avoided, and that you choose something in the midrange in terms of price.

Waterproof jackets must be breathable and have pockets, whilst trousers must also be breathable and have a long zip down the legs to allow for easy changing with boots on.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING PONCHOS.

### 10. Dry bag

At least one dry bag is useful to keep your spare layers and anything dry. A 20-litre bag is suitable for this.

### 11. Base layer

Several long-sleeved base layers are required for this expedition in order to maintain warmth and to help draw moisture away from the body. These should not be cotton as they will remain wet for longer and provide little warmth. Suggested materials are polypropylene, merino wool or a mix of both. Light colours are best.

### 12. Fleece / mid layer

Fleece has become less popular in recent years, but it is still one of the best materials for warmth vs weight. Fleece can be purchased very cheaply - but again, cotton material should be avoided.

### 13. Trekking and thermal trousers

Please purchase both trekking and thermal trousers. Trekking trousers will be worn most days to provide warmth and help protect from the sun so ensure they are comfortable. Remember not to buy cotton or military clothing, and it is not essential that they convert into shorts. Having a set of thermal trousers that are a similar material to your base layer is essential, as they can be worn under trekking trousers in cold weather. They can often be purchased as a set.

### 6. Gloves

Your child should have a warm pair of water-repellent winter gloves, much like ski gloves. They should have a reasonable grip on the palm. Avoid woollen or fleece gloves.

### 7. Plate, bowl, mug, knife, fork, spoon

A non-breakable set is for use on the 2-day trek in the mountain.

### 8. 1-litre water bottle

You will need two 1-litre water bottles. They should be tough and see-through in order for us to monitor each student's water intake during the trip. A hydration system is also available for purchase, though these are easier to damage, more difficult to fill, and prone to freezing at lower temperatures.

## Where to buy your kit

There is a dizzying range of outdoor gear and clothing to choose from. We advise purchasing those in mid-range price bracket, avoiding low-quality products and the high-end equipment which may boast more technical features than needed.

It can be difficult to purchase all of these products in some countries, so we recommend shopping online well in advance in order to ensure your child has the correct kit. While you may discover a reputable seller in your own country, here are a few we recommend:

**UP AND UNDER** is a family run outlet in the United Kingdom that is happy to ship all over the world. We have negotiated a special Nord Anglia discount for all staff and students. To access this simply enter **NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION** into the discount code box on the left side of their website. This will automatically reduce all the prices displayed on the website. Anyone shopping from outside the EU can expect a further 20% reduction when VAT is removed. If you are shipping outside of the UK, after placing your order, you will receive an email during UK office hours with further details and the cost of shipping.

[www.upandunder.co.uk](http://www.upandunder.co.uk)

**REI** is one of the biggest suppliers of outdoor clothing and gear in the US. They are also happy to ship worldwide and offer some good value deals.

[www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)

**DECATHLON** is a multi-sport store with numerous outlets globally. However, they do not ship everywhere in the world.

[www.decathlon.com](http://www.decathlon.com)

**MONTANE** engineers innovative, lightweight, breathable clothing and equipment for endurance sports and activities in extreme environments. We now have a bespoke equipment deal with Montane who will post globally. You can access a 20% discount using a code available from your trip lead or the expedition team.

[www.montane.co.uk](http://www.montane.co.uk)

There are many more good online retailers who will ship internationally. If you are having any problems finding the correct kit, please contact either your in-school trip organiser or the NAE Expeditions Team.

## Travel and documentation

### Travel and insurance

The teacher acting as Trip Organiser at your child's school will be responsible for arranging flights as well as airport transfers to and from your child's school. They will also be able to assist in arranging Swiss entry visas if required; please do not underestimate the time that it takes for this to happen and arrange visas well in advance to avoid disappointment.

The NAE Expedition Team, in conjunction with Royal Sun Alliance, have arranged a comprehensive travel insurance policy with a focus on medical, evacuation and security cover, which works in conjunction with our International SOS policy.

### Visas

We recommend that your child obtain one well in advance of departure. This will speed up arrival and movement through the Geneva airport as well as preventing any potential visa issues upon arriving in Switzerland. Your child needs to apply for a tourist visa not a business or volunteer visa.

Passports should be valid for a minimum of 6 months after the return date.

To get the most up to date visa information you can contact your local Swiss embassy.

It is important to note that the visa application process varies from country to country so it is difficult for us to advise on country specific visa application requirements; please leave plenty of time to arrange this to avoid disappointment.

### Documents and forms

Medical and waiver forms will be distributed to you via a system called *Jotform*; please complete these as a matter of urgency, providing accurate information and uploading the requested documentation. Delays in the submission of this information have an impact on the planning of the student's experiences.

It is important that your child has a photocopy of the following documents with them while on expedition as well as handing a copy to their Trip Organiser:

- Passport
- Swiss tourist visa
- Medical certificates

For any questions or queries regarding any of the above, please contact your in-school Trip Organiser.

## Electronics



Game consoles, tablets and laptops should not be brought on the expedition. However, your child is welcome to bring their own mobile phone and camera, but they do so at their own risk. Nord Anglia Education cannot be held responsible for the loss, damage or theft of any of these items.

The expedition is an excellent opportunity for your child to unplug and spend some time getting to know fellow students from the Nord Anglia Education family away from technology. While in Switzerland your child's access to their mobile phone will be limited, phones will be locked in a secure office. Your child will have access to their phones at allotted times during the week, so they can message home and share their experiences. Students WILL NOT be able to use their mobile phones as cameras during the day, under any circumstance; if they wish to take photos of the trip they will need to use a camera.

All members of our expedition team carry a range of communication devices at all times, including satellite phones, two-way radios and mobile phones for international and local calls, to ensure we are able to freely communicate at all times in the event of an emergency or otherwise.

Switzerland uses 220 volt power outlets with a three pinned plug. Your child will need to bring a travel adapter with them if their electrical appliances do not comply with these.



## OTHER RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

### Expedition Staff

There will be three key Nord Anglia Education staff members on your child's expedition team. In addition to a Trip Organiser and Group Leader, both of whom will be a teacher from your child's school, there will also be a member of the Nord Anglia Education Expedition Team, who your child will meet via group webinars and the Global Campus online platform prior to departure.

Each staff members' roles and responsibilities will overlap considerably to ensure your child has a safe, enjoyable and educational time in Switzerland.

Your child and their teachers will get to know each other very well over the months leading up to the expedition, so that your child has a familiar face and someone that they can turn to while in Switzerland. These teachers will help with pre-trip preparation and be a point of contact for any expedition enquiries. While on expedition, teachers will be in charge of pastoral care managing the group and ensuring the general health and wellbeing of your child.

Below is a list of responsibilities for your school's Trip Leader and expedition support staff:

### Expedition Support Staff:

- Facilitate pre- and post-expedition work
- Manage the movement and transportation of students while on expedition
- Take responsibility for passports and other travel documents
- Monitor the group's health and wellbeing on expedition
- Administer basic first aid in accordance with level of training
- Administer any personal prescribed medication to students
- Reinforce trip rules, dealing with any behaviour issue in line with the school's expectations
- Encourage students to engage with all elements of the trip
- Be involved in daily staff meetings and feed back on the day's events

### Trip Leader:

Trip Leader will be also be tasked with the above duties in addition to the following responsibilities:

- Act as the in-school point of contact for the parents and NAE Expedition staff
- Ensure all relevant paperwork is distributed to students, parents and Group Leaders
- Receive all completed paperwork from parents and students
- Organise all transport to Switzerland and in your country of residence
- Support students where necessary in gaining the appropriate visa
- Oversee collection and verification of passports and travel documents prior to the trip departure



## Useful websites

- Fit for Travel is an NHS website offering up-to-date travel and health information to people traveling from the UK.  
[www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)
- The National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) promotes standards in travel medicine, providing travel health information for professionals and the public.  
[www.nathnac.org](http://www.nathnac.org)
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) directs and coordinates international health within the UN. Their website is full of up-to-date information regarding health issues all over the world.  
[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)
- Gov.uk offers up-to-date travel advice from the British government.  
[www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/switzerland](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/switzerland) / [www.gov.uk/government/world/switzerland](http://www.gov.uk/government/world/switzerland)
- Lonely Planet produce some of the best travel guides available. Their website is full of interesting information about traveling in Switzerland.  
[www.lonelyplanet.com/switzerland](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/switzerland)



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