

Grand Traverse of the Jura

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£1695
Advanced

The Grande Traversée du Jura (or GTJ) is a fabulous journey over the Jura mountains crossing through France and parts of Switzerland. Located not far from Geneva, the journey is made on *classic* cross country skis. This 142km long-distance ski trail was first completed in 1978 and is nearly all on prepared, pressed tracks.

Our route starts in the Haut Joux, Switzerland and finishes at Giron in the Ain département crossing the Jura and the Haut-Jura regional nature reserves. The ski route with its varied terrain and relief can't fail to impress you with its natural charm and beautiful landscapes. The inhabitants take immense pride in their local produce and culture - and this journey offers a taste of it all.

Each day we aim to cover approximately 20-30km of the tracks whilst carrying a small day pack. Each night we arrive at our hotel or gite to find our luggage waiting for us.

- Make a continuous 6-day ski tour across the Jura - East to West
- Ski 142km on prepared trails - Ascend 2685m - Descend 2705m!
- Stay in characterful accommodation in gîtes and hotels
- We are one of the few operators offering this classic ski journey
- All luggage transported for you - so carry just a day pack!
- Onward transfer included on departure day

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Thank you Vlad Plasternek for your video from our January 2015 GTJ - a great week!

[Departures Grand Traverse of the Jura \(GTJ\)](#)

Sitting on the border of both France and Switzerland, the Jura, a limestone plateau, lies very close to Geneva. Steeped in history, geology and gastronomy it also has mountains that go on for miles, but unlike the jagged peaks of the Alps it's of the 'Nordic rolling' variety. This unique trip which gives a real sense of making a journey is all on skis. Despite its popularity it's not unusual to ski all day without seeing any other skiers.

Bespoke Jura Trips

This trip can also be organised as a [bespoke](#) holiday where the itinerary can be changed to match the quantity and distances that suit the requirements of your group.

Itinerary

We always aim to complete the itinerary as outlined below, however, the following itinerary will be followed only when conditions and weather make it appropriate, both in terms of safety and enjoyment. Your guide will make a decision on your route based on those conditions.

Day 1 Meet in St Croix - Switzerland

The group meets at a typical hotel in the small Swiss town of St Croix. Your guide will meet you at your accommodation tonight and assist with organising any ski hire and brief you on the days ahead. The town has a bank, post office, sport shop and supermarket, useful for any last minute purchases.

Day 2 Les Fourgs to Metabief

We begin our Jura crossing by taking a short taxi transfer to the trail head at Les Fourgs where we buy our GTJ ski pass. We have time to find our ski legs and get used to the equipment before leaving Les Fourgs. Our trail commences along gentle terrain then up through pine trees and across snow covered meadows to reach Les Hopitaux Neufs. From here the ski trail continues to Metabief, a small ski town and our destination for the day. Due to limited accommodation here it is often necessary for our group to taxi to a neighbouring village for the night. Metabief is in France and has some shops including a pharmacy, bakers, supermarket, sports shop and an ATM. Total distance skied: 20km Ascent: 230m Descent: 350m.

Day 3 Metabief to Mouthe

Depending on the snow level we may take a short transfer to the trail head or in good winter seasons we leave Metabief and directly rejoin the trail. Alternating through forests and clearings, used in summer as pastures for cattle, we join a network of trails where we climb to the plateau of the 'Mont d'Or' for fine views and a picnic lunch. The local cheese producers are called Fruitières produce Comté, Morbier, Mont d'Or and Bleu de Gex and are all included as 'appellation contrôlée' designations for good wine and cheese. After lunch we enjoy skiing mainly downhill to Mouthe and La Source du Doubs (the river source). There is a sting in the tail today as a final climb takes us to our accommodation at the family run 'gîte' Chez Liadet for the night. Total distance skied: 29km Ascent: 630m Descent: 500m.

Day 4 Mouthe to Chapelle des Bois

The next three days of our journey take us in line with the race course of the world famous [Transjurassienne](#) ski race. The Transjurassienne is one of the most important cross-country ski events in France and is held in February each year. The course starts in Lamoura and a variety of races traverse up to 76kms of hilly ski trails before the finish line in Mouthé. Thousands of skiers from across the world congregate to attempt the event which takes place over 2 days.

Our journey takes us into fabulous pines woods and past summer meadows linking us first to Pre Poncet for lunch. As we enter the Combe des Cives the terrain angle eases for an enjoyable ski to a well earned cake stop and wood turners at the Chalet Anges. Another hour or so brings us to Chappelle des Bois and our accommodation for the night. Total distance skied: 26.5km Ascent: 390m Descent: 370m.

Day 5 Chapelle des Bois to Les Rousses

Chapelle des Bois in the Haut Jura boasts first class ski trails and it's quite often to pass practising race teams here. So we take to the trails once more today and initially ski towards Bellefontaine before starting to climb into the Forêt Risoux - the home to the famous wood needed to make the [stradavarius violins](#). Once our main climb is complete we can stop at the Chalet Gaillard for a hot drink before skiing the well pressed trails all the way to Les Rousses. We aim to finish a little earlier today so there will be time to visit the local town for souvenirs, ski equipment or tea & cake shopping. Or for those with energy to spare there's 220km's of pressed ski trails to explore! Total distance skied: 17km Ascent: 345m Descent 385m.

Day 6 Les Rousses to Lajoux

We leave Les Rousses and first cross the meadows towards Premanon, the home to the French National Nordic Ski School and where several Olympic champions have come from. We enter the woods here to another popular ski location, often visited by many ski teams, the *Forêt du Massacre*. The Forest houses some of the oldest fir trees in France and is named after an ancient battle in the area. Some first class skiing awaits and on a clear day a view of the Alps. Our high point for the day is in the heart of the forest at chalet 'La Frasse' where we can enjoy a well earned coffee and cake stop before our rolling descent to the delightful village of Lajoux. Total distance skied: 21km Ascent: 425m Descent: 340m.

Day 7 Lajoux to Giron

Our final day and one of the toughest to complete our 142km traverse we leave Lajoux for the Bellecombe or 'beautiful bowl' which doesn't disappoint. This open pasture winds it's way along side the Haute Jura chain and limestone crest. We have plenty of opportunities for stops along the way and after a series of ups and downs we reach a small gite for coffee and crepes just under the Cret au Merle (1448m). To complete this fantastic journey we make a gradual descent

through the forest to the trail end at Giron where a vin chaud and celebratory meal awaits! Total distance skied: 28.5km Ascent: 665m Descent: 740m.

Day 8 Departure

Today is departure day and the package ends after breakfast. Giron is a village approximately 40 minutes drive away from Bellegarde-sur-Valserine, a mainline TGV train station, and 1 hour 15 minutes from Geneva Airport. We will arrange and include ONE group transfer from Giron to Geneva Airport via Bellegarde. We aim to leave our accommodation at 08:15 and arrive at Geneva airport for 09:45. To make use of this service please ensure onward flights correspond with this time.

Price

Included: The fees of a qualified Nordic Ski Instructor who is also an International Mountain Leader and their expenses. Half board accommodation and local taxes for 7 nights. Accommodation is based on two people sharing or in some cases basic mixed non-segregated dormitory style accommodation. The accommodation arrangements are dependent on our group numbers and availability at the time of booking. On some nights twin rooms or singles can be arranged in advance which may incur an additional fee (please ask if you like this option upon booking). Luggage transfers (1x bag per person) and group transfer to Geneva Airport at the end of the trip.

Not included: Insurance, flights & arrival transfer, the GTJ ski pass (approximately 45 Euros for the week), ski hire (135 Euros) and it's return, drinks, lunches & snacks.

If in the event of a poor winter season it could be that the complete traverse is not possible and that we are required to ski in different locations each day using a vehicle to transfer us along the lower sections. Depending on the group size this may or may not incur an additional fee, however previously when we have used a vehicle back up it has not cost our guests any more.

Minimum numbers

This trip requires a minimum of 4 clients to run. We take a maximum of 8 clients.

Insurance

Please note that you must have the appropriate insurance for your chosen activity. You must be covered for helicopter rescue, repatriation and medical costs. With regard to this please be sure

you have read the Insurance section in our [Terms and Conditions](#).

Ski Rental

Cross country skiing equipment, which includes 'fishscale' classic skis (not skates or waxables), Salomon (or similar) boots, bindings and poles, can be hired locally at the start of the traverse. The total ski hire for the week is 135 Euros per person (this includes the cost of returning the equipment to the hire shop at the end of the trip). You will make your payment directly to the guide (cash only). All equipment hire must be arranged in advance, as it will be necessary to pre-order correct sizes. Please make note of your equipment hire on our booking form. We will need to know your height, weight, normal shoe size (you must give us your everyday shoe size and not your personal adjustment for wearing boots) and the measurement of your height up to your armpits (for ski pole hire). The guide will accompany clients to the hire shop and at the end of the traverse, will collect any hire equipment and organise its return.

Further Information

Upon booking a full list of the necessary suitable clothing will be provided.

The Alps are easily reached from other European and worldwide destinations by road, rail, coach or plane.

Our starting point is Saint-Croix in Switzerland and is easily reached from Geneva or Basel Airport by transferring by train - please consult

[www.schindler.ch](#) entering the destination as

Sainte-Croix, De France (Hotel). The cost of the train from Geneva is about 50 CHF taking 1h 50mins. Advanced booking is not necessary. Alternatively you may wish to travel entirely by rail in which case many high speed trains link via Besançon and out of Bellegarde-sur-Valserine.

For suggested travel links please refer to our

[Booking & Information](#) pages for further details.

If you would like to buy a map/guide book to track your journey along the way then your guide will have copies on sale at the welcome meeting for 12 Euros.

The Grand Traverse of the Jura is a classic cross-country ski tour and we are one of only three UK companies to offer this holiday. Tracks and Trails work as the main winter-specialist ground agent for booking this trip on behalf of other UK tour operators. Our clients could therefore join up with other adventurers who have booked via one of the few other specialist UK companies.

Accommodation Arrangements & Bad Weather Options

Our complete Jura traverse is approximately 142km, which means we will ski anything from between 20-30km per day. The 30km days include some easier terrain. The accommodation available is varied in its facilities and due to availability we do not always use exactly the same places so it could mean the daily distances on the day to day itinerary vary by a few kilometres. Please note that your guide will try to fulfil the stated itinerary but this is dependent on weather/snow & track conditions at the time.

On this tour you will only need to carry a daysack whilst skiing and your main baggage will be transferred every day between accommodation points. Luggage will be mainly transported in cars and small vans so we would ask that you keep both size and weight of luggage to a respectable limit of around 15kg (and only one bag per person), it is worth noting that you will be required to carry your own bag up and down from your accommodation every day. There will be 2 nights in ?dormitory? style accommodation with space normally limited on these nights.

The Grand Traverse of the Jura passes through sparsely populated territory and accommodation choices, especially for groups, are very limited. Accommodation will be on a half-board basis at a mixture of small hotels and French-style gîtes. Facilities at each night stop will vary. Rooms will be a mixture of twin-share with en-suite facilities and more basic non-segregated dormitory style accommodation with shared bathroom, within either a gîte or hotel.

Lunches will normally be picnics bought from either our accommodation, bakeries or in cafes when we pass them - please feel free to bring additional hill snacks from home.

We run our GTJ traverse at a time of year when the snow is most reliable and the tracks are well maintained in preparation for one of France's most important cross country ski races. However, in the event of poor snow conditions, we will offer an alternative Jura ski itinerary visiting the highest Nordic ski areas both regionally and on the traverse offering the same quantity of kilometres per day.

Our Partners

As our niche trips such as the Grand Traverse of the Jura are of a specialised nature we work with our partner companies to attract sufficient clients to reach the minimum number of participants to allow these trips to go ahead, meaning you are more likely to have your chosen holiday 'guaranteed'. If you have any queries with regard to this please contact us.

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Waking up in
the Jura