



## Summer Mountaineering Swiss Alps

### Course Description

From learning risk management to placing rock protection to effective communication, this exclusive course will give you a solid foundation in mountaineering. If you're looking for a challenge and you are intrigued in climbing one of the 4000m peaks of the Swiss Alps, this is the course for you.

### Features

- Duration 30 days
- Minimum Age 16
- Group size 4-10 Participants/2-4 Instructors
- Tuition 13.900 CHF
- Accommodation Double rooms, mountain huts, bivouac
- Elevation range 1000 – 4500 m

### Overview

The course encompasses a wide range of mountaineering skills to create a unique experience of the Swiss Alps. From rock climbing on steep rock faces, to glacier travel and peak ascents, this is an unparalleled immersion into the vertical world of the Alps.

This course is split into three different sections, which will be explained below. The order of the first two skill sections can vary due to weather conditions and will be located in the Bernese Alps, while the challenge section makes use of the whole Swiss Alps.

In between sections you'll be back in Gstaad for one night to reorganize equipment for the following section and make necessary arrangements.

### Course Section

#### Rock Climbing

- Duration: 10 Days
- Skills: top-roping, lead climbing, multi-pitch climbing, and bouldering

This section focuses on rock climbing and risk management. You will learn belaying techniques, basic climbing moves, knots and rope handling. Once you have mastered the basics you will progress to more advanced topics such as rappelling, protection placements, and multi-pitch climbing. You also may find opportunities to lead climb, if your skills meet our criteria.



During climbing camp you will be based in self-catering mountain huts, which might be shared with other people. You will stay in two or three locations for the duration of this section.

Since rock climbing is weather dependent, we schedule the climbing section to take advantage of good weather conditions and choose the locations accordingly. But we can't make any guarantees.

## **Mountaineering**

- Duration: 10 Days
- Skills: navigation, and route-planning; glacier travel; peak ascents; ridge scrambling; crampon use
- Elevation: 1500-3500m

On this section, you will explore the through the beautiful mountain ranges of the Bernese Alps.

You will learn to navigate through the mountains, and master skill such as rope handling, knots, ice axe use, glacier travel, ridge scrambling, ice protection placements, crampon use, crevasse rescue and hazard assessment.

In addition to these technical skills, you will have many opportunities to develop your leadership, risk management and decision-making techniques, and built up the physical and psychological capacity to successfully climb a 4000m peak.

During the mountaineering section you will be based in self-catering and/or catered mountain huts, which might be shared with other people. You will stay in two or three locations for the duration of this section. One night you will spend bivouacking under the stars.

## **Student challenge expedition**

- Duration: 10 Days
- Emphasise is on the mountaineering and rock climbing skills learned during the course
- Elevation: 1000-4500m

Under the supervision of your instructors you will plan and execute this section in small groups. You have the opportunity to set your own mountaineering and rock climbing goals, plan the route arrange and prepare the equipment, organize provisions and discuss emergency plans.

The goals will depend on the skill levels and competencies attained by individuals. But our student-instructor ratio allows you to fulfil your dreams like climbing the world famous Matterhorn

Group size depends on the skills of individuals and the technical difficulty of the set goal.



This intensive course aims at developing a solid understanding of the basics of mountaineering through experiential learning in a fun and supportive environment.

## **Learning Goals**

OCLS courses not only teach technical climbing skills but also teach leadership skills in challenging outdoor environments. Our students have the chance to apply these skills and hence have the chance for a positive transformational experience. In consequence our students take ownership of their own learning process.

At OCLS we design courses so that students are able to assume leadership roles, learn to make thoughtful decisions and manage risks, respect other team members, develop confidence, communicate effectively and appreciate simple living in the outdoors.

## **Weather and other Challenges**

The Alps are known for extreme weather conditions. Though mild and warm weather is more typical in September, students should expect anything from thunderstorms, to consistent rain, to a cold spell with snow. Weather changes can occur in a matter of minutes or can last for several days. There may be times when you are cold and wet, but you will learn to adapt and manage these situations. To help you keep warm and comfortable make sure you bring the appropriate gear from our equipment list.

## **Terrain**

During this course you will be travelling in a mountainous area characterized by steep slopes and rocky terrain. The approach to a rock cliff can be exclusively off-trail, demanding constant attention. Loose rock can be a hazard, adding to the challenge of climbing and hiking. Furthermore we will be travelling on glaciated terrain, using crampons and ice axes, or even exposed ridges and peaks.