



Climbing Mount Elbrus

Climbing Mount Elbrus is no easy feat. After 15 years of managing climbs on Mount Elbrus we have developed an itinerary for the best acclimatization, experience, and safety. Our 12-day program provides great trekking and acclimatization, along with multiple Mount Elbrus summit attempt.

We believe in quality acclimatization and in running safe, successful, and enjoyable experiences in low oxygen environments. If you want to maximize your experience climbing Mount Elbrus, you need to pick our 12-day program. The first part of the trip is camping and hiking for six days in beautiful mountain terrain. During the trekking part of the trip, all your personal equipment is transported by vehicle from camp to camp, so you do not have to carry all of your own gear during this part of the trip.

Over the past 15 years, we have developed our itinerary to offer maximum safety and success. Elbrus is a challenging expedition, there can be deep snow, 40+ mile an hour winds on summit night, cold arctic conditions on steep and challenging terrain. Therefore, having the right training and preparation is critical. This is not a trek; it is a mountaineering expedition with variable conditions.

We are happy to chat with you about training, preparation and why our itinerary is the best option for a safe and successful adventure to climb Mount Elbrus, one of the coveted seven summits. Get in touch Today!

ITINERY

- Day 1: Arrival to Mineralnye Vody – Transfer to Base Camp**
- Day 2: Base Camp – Acclimatization Hike**
- Day 3: Base Camp – Acclimatization Hike**
- Day 4: Move to the eastern side of Elbrus**
- Day 5: Move further across the eastern side of Elbrus**
- Day 6: Further Acclimatization – To Terskol (Hotel)**
- Day 7: Gondola up to the Huts on Mount Elbrus**
- Day 8: Acclimatization Hike and Training– Return to Huts**
- Day 9: Possible Summit Day!**
- Day 10: Possible Summit Day!**
- Day 11: Drive to Pyatigorsk and tour city**
- Day 12: Transfer back to Mineralnye Vody airport for your return flight**

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Arriving at the North Side of Mount Elbrus

You will need to arrive at Mineralnye Vody airport no later than mid-day. Our guides will meet you at the airport, do a quick change of clothes if needed and we will get underway. Have your



backpack ready with rain gear, fleece layer, hiking boots as if the weather is good, then we will get dropped off and hike 3 hours to our first campsite. All duffel bags will be transported directly to our Base Camp in a separate vehicle. We will stop after 40 minutes for some lunch and then get back on the road. The first part of the drive is on poor roads but after a while the road improves and there is nobody on them. The drive is on winding roads through the mountains towards the north side of Mount Elbrus. As we get closer to Mount Elbrus we have some close up views of the mountain before winding slow and steeply downhill towards the drop off point. If the weather is good, we will make a 3-hour hike walking past three waterfalls and stunning mountain scenery. The walk is a great way to start this trip with interesting cliff faces, stream, sulfur springs and beautiful landscape before walking into the Hathansu Meadow camp at 2,550m/ 8,366 feet. If raining, we will drive closer or even all the way into camp. Once you arrive you will be served soup and you can get your tent set up. There are toilets and showers in the camping area. There is also a small hut serving beer. There is possibly Wi-Fi for 250 Rubles for 24 hours and they have a couple of dart boards. Dinner will be around 7/ 7:30pm then you can get some sleep after a long travel day.

Day 2: Climbing Crown mountain at 3,125m/ 10,252 feet

It is best to get a lie in today. Most people on our trips are travelling a long way to reach this southern part of Russia and even though the sun starts coming up at 4:30am you will need to get some rest. Wake up at 7am for breakfast at 8am and then start hiking at 8:45am. We walk away from Mount Elbrus to climb a peak with stunning views of the region and Mount Elbrus. We walk up a dirt road before turning off into the grass and just keep going up. We traverse across the mountain before we reach a col with great views of Mount Elbrus and all of the Northern valleys of Elbrus. We cross a narrow ridge and stand on a small summit above 10,000 feet. This will take up to 3 hours and you will be treated to great views of Mount Elbrus. We will have lunch behind the ridge out of the wind. After resting up high for 30/45 minutes we will return slowly back down to our camping area. You can rest, use Wi-Fi, play cards and have some tea in our large mess/ dining tent. Dinner will be served at 7pm and then rest and get to know your teammates for the rest of the evening. 550m/1,800 feet of ascent and descent.

Day 3: Our first experience of the glacier 3,700m/ 12,139 feet on the North

After settling into camp life. We will make a higher acclimatization hike today. We will travel light today. Our goal is to reach 3,700m/ 12,139 feet and camp 1 on the Northern side of Mount Elbrus. There are less people on this side of the mountain and the scenery on the north and east are worth the effort. We will wait up at 6am, have breakfast at 7am and start walking at 7:45am. At the start of the day we walk through a narrow gully with mixed terrain. The trail is narrow, it can be mucky as it follows the small river up to the west and then turns south and you are heading straight towards the northern slopes of Mount Elbrus. If the weather is clear the views are some of the best, you can see in the whole region. We hike up steep rocky terrain



all the way up to the glacier. It is important to reach 11,000 / 12,000 feet and really kick start your acclimatization for higher on the mountain. You will walk right past the glacier, amazing boulder fields and rest higher for lunch and then return all the way back down to the camp by 3:30/ 4pm get some soup, rest and reminisce on a great day hiking around the northern slopes of Mount Elbrus. This is a long day out on the hill. You will cover 1,125m/ 3,690 feet of ascent and descent today.

Day 4: Say goodbye to the beautiful north and explore the eastern side of Elbrus

After some good sleep we will wake at 7am for breakfast at 8am and aim to leave this campsite by 8:45am/ 9am. We will help pack up the tents and retrace our steps back past the hot springs we passed on the first day. We will then follow the main road for 20 minutes before turning south and back into the mountains. At first, we have a steep ascent and then the terrain is up but more gradual all the way up to 2,900m/ 9,514 feet. We will have our packed lunch beside the river and continue up and over the pass. The other side is majestic Alpine scenery with nobody around. This is what makes our itinerary unique. We drop down 550m/ 1,804 feet on a beautiful trail to a campsite right beside the river at 2,300m/ 7,546 feet. It is warm and comfortable, and you can wash in the river and just chill and read a book in this beautiful mountain setting. We have a vehicle with us driving all our duffel bags from one camp to the next. The terrain is grassy and boggy in parts. We should arrive at 3:30pm in camp and dinner will be served at 7pm so plenty of time to enjoy this beautiful campsite with nobody else around. You will cover 475m/ 1,560 feet of ascent and 650m/ 2,132 feet of descent today.

Day 5: A high pass with great mountain viewing on the eastern slopes of Elbrus

We will wake at 6am, pack up all our gear, have breakfast at 7am, then pack away tents in the vehicles and start walking at 8am. We will retrace our initial steps from the first 20 minutes of the day before turning into a beautiful alpine valley with impressive peaks around us. We start off on grassy terrain into mixed rocky terrain under foot. In July and August, it can be very warm with temperatures up to 18 Celsius or 68 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and never gets really cold at night. We cross a good few streams as we hike for 4 hours continually up hill to a pass at 3,250m/ 10,663 feet. We will stay high on the pass for 40 minutes (weather dependent) have lunch on the pass and enjoy the stunning mountain scenery before heading down hill. It is steep downhill until we come onto an old dirt road that winds its way all the way down to the campsite at 2,450m/ 8,005 feet. The mountain scenery is world class all the way down into this new valley. You can see right along the Caucasus mountain range as we skirt the eastern side of Mount Elbrus. After a few hours of downhill we arrive into camp beside another river. You will cover 950m/ 3,117 feet of ascent and 800m/ 2,625 feet of descent.



Day 6: A big day with steep ascent and descent but you end up in a hotel room

After seeing nobody for days we head back towards civilization and a room for the night. If you love wilderness, mountain walking with nobody in sight this is the route for you. Not only that, our acclimatization program is the best out there. We guarantee it! We will get up at 6am, pack our bags and head into breakfast for 7am. Then help pack up the tents and aim to leave by 8am. We have easier terrain to start with in the first 45 minutes, we cross a wooden bridge and then start going uphill on steeper terrain, it almost turns into scrambling on one steep section before becoming easier to move. After a while we hit steeper terrain again, as we start the long 1 hour 30-minute rocky ascent to the top of the pass at 3,440m/ 11,286 feet. It can take up to 4 hours to reach the pass. It can be very windy on top and we can have lunch here or drop down 200m/ 656 feet to the Syltran lake for lunch. If the weather is clear the scenery is very special. This high alpine lake is peaceful and quiet with very few people around, even in high season. After a well-deserved lunch we start the long descent to the valley floor. Initially it is steep terrain down to the lake, below that it is steep rocky and boulder terrain and if rainy can be very tricky under foot. We have a few hours of this challenging terrain before reaching a jeep trail that leads us all the way down to the small town of Baskan. From here we will be picked up and transported to Terskol 2,250m/ 7,382 feet and our hotel for the night, this will take about 25 minutes. You will cover 990m/ 3,248 feet of ascent and 1,700m/ 5,577 feet of descent today. Dinner time will be set for around 7:30pm at the hotel. Time to rest and get some good sleep.

Day 7: Time to go up on Mount Elbrus from the South side

We have trekked and hiked on the northern slopes of Elbrus crossed the mountains around the eastern side of Elbrus and now we will attempt to stand on the summit from the southern side of the mountain. When you can get better safety, support and success you take it. That is why you the southern climbing route is the best route for climbing this mountain. Less people on the north but better safety and success on the south. It's as simple as that. After some good sleep it is time to get moving. We will probably set breakfast for 8am. Anyone picking up rental gear will need to do it early, right after breakfast. We will then do a final gear check between 8:30 and 10:30am pack up our 50/60 ltr backpack. Leave our duffel bags at the hotel and drive 10/15 minutes to the Gondola aiming to start heading up at 11am. The Gondola is open from 9am to 4pm. We don't want to be too early as people can be clearing out of the huts at 3,900m/ 12,795 feet. You will get a ski pass card and you will need to keep it safe for the way up and down. There are 3 different Gondola's, so you have to rotate in and out of them. Once you get off the Gondola you walk 5 minutes up hill to the huts at 3,900m/ 12,795 feet. There will be 4 people to a room, 2 bunk beds and 2 compartments in each unit. There is a heater, window and one outlet for charging (2 pin socket). There are 3 different toilet blocks in the area. The huts are positioned on a rocky ridge line. We will get settled and then head up for a hike to 4,050m/ 13,287 feet to the site of the Prijut II hut. Rest and then head back down for lunch. This should



take no longer than 1 hour 30 minutes. Then rest for the afternoon. Mealtimes are set and you only have 40 minutes as space is limited. Dinner could be set for 7 or 7:30pm.

Day 8: Acclimatize higher on the mountain up to 4,700m/ 15,420 feet

Hope for good weather as you never know what Elbrus will throw at you. We wake at 6am. You may be awake before that, as there is no shade on the window. You will walk across the snow for breakfast at 7am. You have to be finished at 7:45am so other groups can come in. Our goal is to start hiking up at 8am (weather permitting) this may change depending on conditions. We had rain, high winds and snowstorm on our last trip so you need to be patient. Our goal is to reach the Pastushok Rocks at 4,800m/ 15,748 feet. Try and hang out there for 30 minutes snack and come back down for lunch which might be set for 2pm. If the sun is out it can be very warm but the weather can change in an instant to cold, windy and snowy conditions. So, you need to be prepared. It can take 3/4 hours to hike up to the rocks and 1 hour 30 to 2 hours to make your way back to the huts. We have lunch and then retreat to the rooms to dry out all gear. We also want to make sure you everyone has their crampons tested, harnesses with slings and safety lines in place before a potential summit attempt.

Day 9: Summit or not to Summit

We will have reviewed the weather in the days leading up to the summit attempt. We will review each team member, check weather and make a call on the conditions before making a final plan for the top. In most cases it is best to rest this day, do some rope training, safety line training and get some rest before moving higher. Weather will also dictate if we go or wait. If we wait you get a lie in with breakfast at 9am. Snowstorms, thunder and lightning will dictate our plans. Sometimes everyone needs to stay in the huts as it can be snowing. Once the weather is right we will go out and do some training moving on rope, using safety lines and managing safety higher on the mountain. This training maybe in the morning or afternoon or the day before.

Day 10: Summit day!!

Depending on a range of factors the guides will devise a plan. A normal summit day would be waking at midnight and start to drink water and prepare. You would go over for breakfast at 1am and then get on the snow cat at 2am for the lift back up to 4,700m/ 15,430 feet. from here we will start climbing. It will be dark for the first few hours before lights starts glowing on the horizon at 4:30am. The plan is to walk for an hour, stop, go to the toilet, eat and drink and quickly keep moving. You would stop every hour for a few minutes and then keep moving towards your goal. The terrain is steep and challenging if there is fresh snow it is hard under foot, so you need to be rock solid for your summit attempt. There maybe be groups of under prepared people so we may have to maneuver around them to be able to keep a pace that keeps us warm. We will try and move slow and steady through the climb. It should take about 6



hours to reach the top. The terrain is steep in parts and the traverse from the saddle to the west summit is protected with fixed lines before moving onto easier terrain. You can see the summit as you make the long walk for 20 minutes to the true summit and the west peak of Mount Elbrus. From the top down it will take 3/4 hours to get back to the huts at 3,900m/ 12,795 feet. You will cover 942m/ 3,090 feet of ascent and 1,742m/ 5,715 feet of descent on this summit climb. This is a long day. We should arrive back at the huts by 12 mid-day. Have lunch, pack up our things and walk down to the Gondola for the return journey to the valley. We will schedule dinner for 7pm and you can get a shower and rest up and enjoy the success.

Day 11: Optional Chair lift up to 3,100m/ 10,170 feet explore the beautiful city of Pyatigorsk

If the weather is clear you should walk 10 minutes from the hotel to the chair lift that takes you up to Azaugichegetkara mountain. The scenery is breathtaking on both sides. You get great views of Mount Elbrus from this place. It costs \$15 per person and you can pay with credit card. You can hang out, take pictures climb up to the top of the peak at 3,350m/ 10,100 feet and then lift back down to the valley. We will then make the 3-hour drive to Pyatigorsk City and stay in a hotel for the night. Your guide will take you out on a walking tour and you can end the night with a dinner before returning to the hotel. There is a great Georgian restaurant with traditional food and dancing if you are interested in joining.

Day 12: You will be transferred back to the airport for your flight

Your guide will have all the airport flights with them and plan out the pickup times for you. You will need to arrive at the airport 2 hours 30 minutes before your flight back home.

Important Notes:

Every effort will be made to keep to the above itinerary, but as this is adventure travel in a remote mountain region, we cannot guarantee it. Weather conditions, road conditions, vehicle breakdowns and the health of participants can all contribute to changes. The trip leader will try to ensure that the trip runs according to plan, but an easy-going nature will be an asset!

We are your number one resource for the trip and if you sign up to one of our trips, we will send out complete trip Dossier with an itemized kit list and further information on how to fully prepare for the trip. While you are waiting for the Dossier, here is a very useful page on the Mount Elbrus Climb: <https://iantaylortrekking.com/blog/all-you-need-to-know-about-climbing-mount-elbrus/>.

THE PRICE INCLUDES:

- All necessary transfers in the above itinerary
- All personal equipment is transporter by car from camp to camp



- Accommodation according to the program
- Full board throughout the trip (excluding farewell dinner)
- Professional mountain guides
- Cook and camping equipment
- Necessary formality (Visa support, passport registration)
- All National park fees

NOT INCLUDED:

- International flights in and out of Mineralnye Vody airport
- Personal evacuation insurance and costs associated
- Personal insurance policy (obligatory)
- Personal trekking and mountaineering equipment
- Personal expenses
- Visa costs
- Snow cat drive to Pastukhov Rocks on summit night (Have EUR 70/90 with you in cash)
- Additional snow cat journeys if needed
- Tips for guides/cooks/drivers/support staff (approximately USD \$200-\$250)

Visiting Russia:

For visiting Russia, you must get a Russian Visa, this can be a lengthy process. No Visa can be obtained in an airport on arrival to Russia. To obtain the Visa, you can either visit your local Russian Embassy or you seek out services of a reliable agent. We use: <https://www.rushmytravelvisa.com/> for securing our Visa to Russia.

In order for you to start the process of applying for a Visa, you will need an Invitation letter and other documents from us. Upon signing up to the trip, we will require a copy of your passport and other details to configure these documents. This will be done in the months leading up to your trip and we will be available to assist you in this process.