

TRAVERSE THE SOUTHERN ALPS

several times...

from the French Queyras to Italian Monviso



**Hiking for the
mind, body &
palate**

Skip the Crowds!

On this scenic loop from Nice you'll discover an uncrowded area of the Alps, that will amaze and delight you.

Martha's HELI-HIKES *High, wild & beautiful*



September 10 - 19, 2026

8 DAYS OF HIKING

5 Nights in 2 Hotels, 4 Nights in 3 Rifugios

This circle tour conveniently begins and ends in Nice, France. Along the way, we will zigzag across the Alps, crossing between France and Italy three times. Days are spent hiking through the Queyras and Monviso regions — from its fairytale villages with ancient stone houses to its grazing sheep and jagged peaks, you'll soon understand Martha's excitement for this remote discovery.

Panoramic mountain views, gastronomical wonders, hand-picked lodging and leisurely distances will leave you with the quintessential French-Italian experience of the southern Alps.



- Leisurely hike across the Alps (three times)
- Walk to a legendary spot on the Tour de France
- Indulge in local lamb, raclette, and other specialties
- Experience medieval towns in France AND Italy
- Stay at hand-picked hotels and rifugios

Monviso, Italy

Explore...

ITINERARY SUMMARY

	Activity	Accommodation	Distance
Day 1	Van from Nice to Molines-en-Queyras	Hotel Le Chamois	4.5 Hour Drive
Day 2	Hike To Saint Veran	Hotel Le Chamois	4 - 6 km with elevation of +308m/-90m
Day 3	Hike To Refuge de la Blanche	Refuge de la Blanche	13 km + 850 m
Day 4	Italian Lakes Circuit	Refuge de la Blanche	10 km +/- 750 m
Day 5	Hike to Col Agnel	Hotel Le Chamois	7km + 420 m / - 60m (Plus additional hike options)
Day 6	Van And Hike To Rifugio Jervis	Rifugio Jervis	8.5 km +560 m / -1030 m
Day 7	Hike To Rifugio Granero or descend and drive to Agriturismo Mizoun	Rifugio Granero	4 km -500 m / - 40 m
Day 8	Hike to Valle Po Monviso	Agriturismo A Nostro Mizoun	8 km + 640 / -1000
Day 9	Monviso 3 Lakes Circuit	Agriturismo A Nostro Mizoun	8 km +/- 600 m
Day 10	Van to Nice	-	4 Hour Drive

Idyllic French Country

Day One

Departing mid-morning from Nice, our 4.5-hour drive by private van, passes through idyllic French countryside and over breathtaking mountain passes en route to the hamlet of Molines-en-Queyras, at an altitude of 1,700 metres. With a population that hovers around 300, this picture-book village is named after its mountain-top windmills.

Lodging is at the charming Hotel Le Chamois, most noted for its locally sourced breakfasts and regional dishes such as Raclette L'Estoilie, slow-roasted lamb, fondues and other alpine specialties. We will spend three nights at this hotel where we can walk right out the door and on to a hiking trail.



Destination Saint Veran

Day Two

With two hiking options, today's destination is Saint Veran at 2,042 metres. Whatever route you choose, today's short hike wends through a larch forest to one of Europe's highest villages, also an esteemed member of The Most Beautiful Villages of France Association. This 17th-century mining town is laced with ancient stone homes, wooden chalets, fountains, crosses and lovely terraces overlooking nearby peaks and high alpine meadows. We will further savour the panoramic views over lunch at La Fougagno restaurant. The choice is yours — walk or taxi back to Molines-en-Queyras.



Distance: 4 - 6 km each way



Elevation: +308m / - 90m

Refuge de la Blanche

Day Three

After leaving our bags at Hotel Chamois, we will trek 13 km to a charming refuge on the shores of Lac de la Blanche. With a private dormitory and an outstanding restaurant ranked No. 2 in the valley, the Refuge de la Blanche at 2,500 metres overlooks the magnificent Queyras Valley. Those who would prefer to skip a hike can take a taxi to the refuge.



Distance: 13 km



Elevation: + 850m

Monviso

Day Four

Crossing the Alps at Col Blanchet (2,897 m), you'll spy your first views of Monviso before we drop down to a necklace of five lakes in Italy, known as the Laghi Bes. Today's impressive circuit passes slender rock towers and glacier-studded peaks before we return to the Refuge de la Blanche, via Col de la Noire (2,955 m), where another exceptional dinner and overnight awaits.



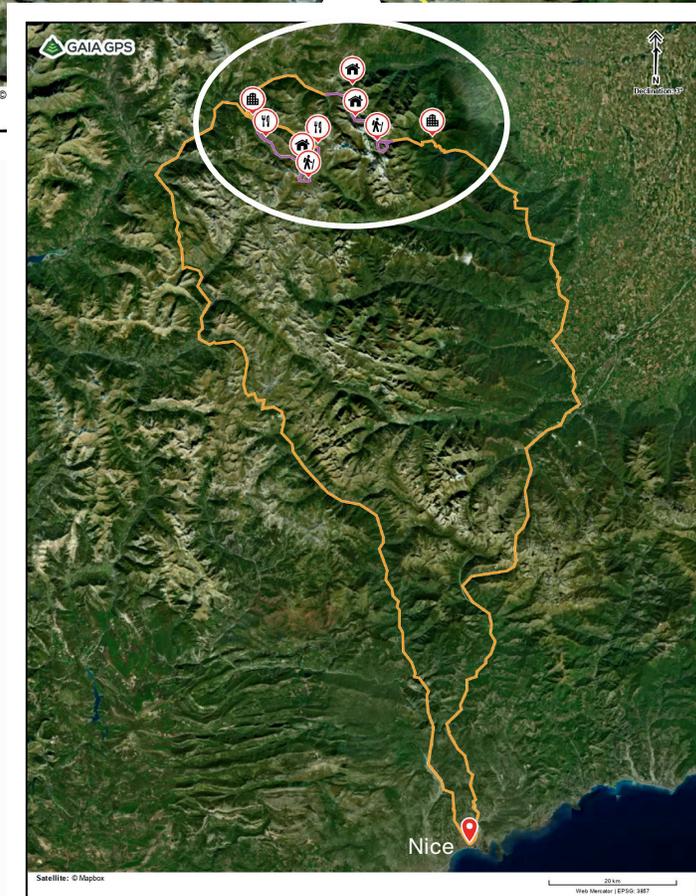
Distance: 10 km circuit



Elevation: +/- 750m



MAP



-  Road transport
-  Hiking
-  France/Italy Border

Col Agnel

Day Five

Today we head to Col Agnel (2,740 m) which may look oddly familiar as this spectacular area has been featured in legendary bike races such as the Tour de France and the Italian Giro.

Our high line route traverses Col Saint Veran. After our late lunch, we can taxi back to Molines-en-Queyras or descend along another high line trail, adding an extra 14 km, (+135 m /-930 m).

Options to tailor your distance are plentiful.



Distance: 7 km



Elevation: + 420 m / 360 m

Piedmontese Cuisine

Day Six

Leaving our bags for transport to our final destination in Italy, we will pack very lightly for our next two nights.

Today's destination is the pretty stone refuge, Rifugio Willy Jervis (1,732 m), snuggled in the heart of the Cottian Alps.

This cozy rifugio is loaded with comforts from private rooms to immaculate dorms, a charming resto with locally-sourced Piedmontese cuisine, a common lounge, hot showers and so forth.



Distance: 8.5 km



Elevation: +/- 560 m / 1030 m



Monte Granero

Day Six

Today's short hike slices through an alpine valley up to the lofty perch of Rifugio Granero (2,377 m), nestled at the foot of the fabled Monte Granero.

The oldest of the alpine refuges, this stone building dates back to 1926 but has recently been updated and renovated, equipping it with many desirable modcons.



Distance: 6 km



Elevation: + 670 m / - 40 m

A gentle option: Opt for a 4 km/ 500 m descent to Villa Nova Pellice, where Fabio awaits to bring you to Agriturismo Mizoun for one extra night.



1600's Farm House

Day Seven

Just before our descent, we can walk through the historic Buco di Viso tunnel, some 75m long by 3m wide, that links the Italian village of Crissolo with the French village of Ristolas.

Opened in 1479, it is one of Europe's most ancient tunnels, created to increase trade especially during winter when snow made many routes impassable. Further dropping 1,000 m into the Po Valley, we will find ourselves at the foot of Monviso, the pyramid-shaped peak made famous by the Paramount Pictures logo.

At the end of our descent is Rifugio Pian del Re, where refreshments and our van await to whisk us past the village of Crissolo and up a mountainside to Agriturismo il nostro Mizoun. Here we will stay in a restored stone farmhouse built in the 1600s, dine on beautifully-prepared farm and local produce, and, undoubtedly, sample a bottle or two from their impressive wine cellar.



Distance: 8 km



Elevation: + 640 m / - 1000 m



Three Lake Circuit

Day Nine

Starting at Pian del Regina, and finishing at Pian del Re is a magnificent three-lake circuit - fitting for our final hike. On the flank of Monviso (3,841 m), these lakes and vistas lie in the protected nature of two natural parks.

We will spend our final night at Agriturismo Mizoun where we will toast this grand Queyras-Monviso adventure.



Distance: 8 km



Elevation: +/- 600 m



Homeward Bound

Day Ten

Today we will hop in our van for a 4-hour drive back to Nice.





Meet Martha

Martha McCallum has chosen to live, play, and work in a place close to her heart — the Canadian Rockies. You'll enjoy her infectious love for exploring high alpine areas and the fact she delights in spoiling her guests. Certified by the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides (ACMG), Martha has guided trips in South America, Africa and Europe since 2016.



“I'm excited to discover the Molines-en-Queyras area with its great accommodation, superb restaurants and stunning hikes that start right at our doorstep.”

FAQ's

What is included?

From the moment you arrive and depart from nice, the following is included:

- All transportation except extra taxi rides
- All meals
- All accommodation
- No alcoholic beverages or gratuities are included

What level of fitness is needed?

We will hike mostly but not entirely on well-built trails, with some steeper or rockier sections. If you're happy with 10 -15 km days and up to 1000 m ups and downs you're going to love this region. There are some options for taxis or even for skipping a day or two if you wish.

What are the weather conditions?

The best weather time to visit the Queyras is July to mid-September, though this is also the time of highest visitation. Mid September suggests still comfortable weather without crowds. Average temperatures in September of past years show daytime highs in the mid and high teens, celsius, and lows can be in single digits but above 4c. Temperatures in the 20's would not be at all surprising.