

+44 208 144 8102 info@cloud9adventure.com https://www.cloud9adventure.com

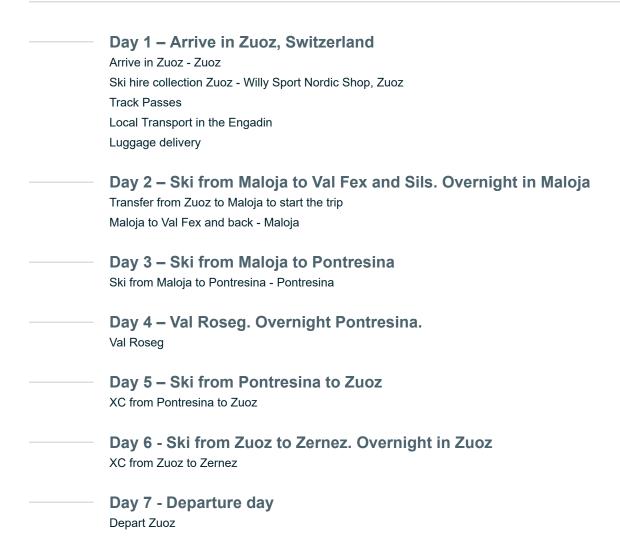


Self-Guided Engadin Ski Traverse

- Ski the route of one of Europe's most famous ski races: the Engadin Ski Marathon Stay in hand-picked traditional Engadin hotels Luggage delivery between hotels

The Engadin valley in Switzerland hosts one of Europe's largest cross-country ski races, the 42km Engadin Ski Marathon.

This region is hailed as a nirvana for cross-country skiers. Its 220km of groomed tracks (some of which are illuminated at night) are renowned for having excellent snow conditions.



Information & Documents



What's Included

- 6 nights' accommodation in carefully selected hotels in Zuoz, Maloja, Pontresina and back to Zuoz
- All breakfasts
- Evening meals in Zuoz & Pontresina for those who booked half-board
- one week track pass (valid 7 days, so let us know if you're arriving a day early or staying on so that we book it for the correct dates)
- Luggage delivery between overnight stops
- · Our recommendations for route choices along with GPS tracks
- Office support from a team of xc instructors who know the route well if you need anything, just ring our office and one
 of our team will be able to help



Not Included

- Flights
- Airport transfers (but we can organise if required)
- Ski & boot hire (but we can help organise if required)
- · Evening meals in St Moritz
- Lunches
- · Personal drinks and snacks
- · Trains or buses in the Engadin valley
- Travel insurance
- Tips



Engadin Ski Traverse - What to ExpectThe cross-country skiing

The Engadin is famous for cross country skiing, and thanks to its relatively high altitude, the snow conditions are often excellent. In general, the tracks are fairly flat or undulating.

A lot of the route follows the route of the famous Engadin Ski Marathon, and we've added a couple of interesting side valleys and a finish to Zernez to extend the route.

The race course undulates through the long and beautiful Engadin valley and has its more challenging sections.

We can accommodate either skate or classic skiers for this trip, but do note that some of the routes (Val Fex and Val Roseg) can only accommodate classic style, so if you're skating you'll do different routes on those days.

The Accommodation

Accommodation for the trip is in excellent, comfortable hotels. We have a 3* hotel version and a 4* hotel version of this trip. We can also alter the trip to overnight in St Moritz if you prefer (do note, this is a more expensive option and is priced accordingly!). If you would like to upgrade to a 5* hotel in St Moritz, just let us know.

The food

This trip is offered on a half-board basis, with all breakfasts included (including departure day), and most evening meals included depending on the hotel (if staying in St Moritz, we don't tend to include the meal because there is so much choice to eat out. It is better value to eat in your hotel in half-board, but a lot of our clients would like to try out a Michelin-starred restaurant for example, so we leave the choice flexible for St Mortiz. Just let us know if you would prefer half-board here).

The hotel restaurants are excellent, and you will have fresh local and regional ingredients.

Luggage

This is a hotel-based trip, and luggage is delivery is included each time you change hotel. We include 1 bag per person and luggage labels will delivered to your first hotel reception. You'll need to bring a small day pack to carry any extra clothing whilst on the tracks. For the shorter days, a "bum-bag" can be a good idea if the weather forecast is good.

Ski & boot hire

Ski and boot hire is not included in the cost of the trip, but we can help organise it if you like via Willy Sport in Zuoz. The price in 2024 is around 170 CHF for a set of classic skis & boots for 6 days. The price increases for the marathon week.

Money and tipping

All accommodation, and meals as described, are included in this trip, but please bring additional cash for snacks, lunches, drinks and tips. Beer, wine and soft drinks are available every night.

This entire trip is based in Switzerland, so Swiss francs will be required. We recommend an additional budget for coffees and lunches of around 40 CHF per person per day.

All of the restaurants and hotels in the towns will take card payments, but some of the track-side snack places will only take cash, so it's a good idea to make sure you have enough cash to cover this.

Evening meals can range from approx 60 CHF for a half-board evening meal, or can of course be a lot more if eating in a St Moritz restaurant, and less if you just have one course.

If you eat or stop for coffees, we normally recommend rounding up the amount to leave a tip, but usually only if the service has been good.

Winter weather in Switzerland

We are – of course! – expecting snow on the ground in March! Day-time temperatures in the region in March can range from a pleasant 5°C down to -10°C or colder still. If the sun is shining, we may find ourselves skiing in base layers and feeling quite warm, but if it's windy, cold or snowing, you will need adequate insulating layers, waterproofs and warm gloves. Staying warm and dry in the mountains is important, so please do be prepared for every eventuality.



Electric Supply and Plug - Switzerland

The electricity supply in Switzerland is 220-240V and uses "Type J" electrical sockets with 3 round pins (left-hand picture).

This means that normal European "Type C" plugs (2nd picture) often don't fit into the socket as they are the wrong shape, and sometimes the pins can be slightly too big.

There are usually some "Type C" sockets in hotel rooms in Switzerland, but not always: so it is a good idea to have at least one small non-circular charger (3rd picture) to ensure compatibility.

There are usually some plug sockets available in mountain huts but they are limited. Bringing a separate booster charger for your phone may be a good solution.





General Information - Self-Guided Cross Country Ski Trips Self-Guided Trips

Note that you are opting for a self-guided trip. We provide a guide book, maps, and additional Route Notes containing extra info that you often don't find in a guide book. We provide a bespoke app for your trip, downloadable on your smartphone or tablet, detailing the Route Notes and the hotels that we have booked for you - this will also be printed out for you as a booklet.

As you are booking a self-guided holiday, you must ensure that you are comfortable looking after yourselves in the mountains, that you can read a map and use a compass, and that you can make sensible decisions according to the weather and how you are feeling. By booking this holiday, you are taking the responsibility for making these decisions - any set of route notes is useless without a map, and you are taking the responsibility that you are happy route-finding in the mountains.

The network of cross-country ski tracks is not always in good condition, so a certain amount of "homework" is required every evening, to double check the condition of the tracks, to work out if anything is closed, and to make alternative arrangements if any part of the route is not going to be open. Closures can happen because of both too little, or too much, snow, so you'll be relying on websites that continually update. Bringing a device such as a smartphone or tablet will be invaluable - this trip would not be possible without one.

If you are at all in doubt about your ability or desire to do this, then we would recommend booking a guided trip, where the guide decides which route to take, and does all the research about the track conditions each day.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking this holiday that you must be insured against medical and personal accident risks (this must include helicopter rescue and repatriation costs). You may find that your annual multi-trip travel insurance covers this trip, but you should check that you are covered for cross-country skiing up to 3000m. We would also recommend that you take out holiday cancellation insurance at the time of booking: your deposit is non-refundable once you have booked, and the full balance is usually non-refundable depending on the timeframe (see our Terms and Conditions for further details).

You could try the following for quotes:

- World Nomads https://www.worldnomads.com/travel-insurance
- Staysure (UK only they had an excellent covid policy compared to other providers) https://www.staysure.co.uk/
- Battleface this is on the pricier side but excellent cover and one of the few companies who covers you when the FCDO are advising against travel to a particular destination (this has been useful during covid) https://www.battleface.com/en-gb/
- The BMC UK only https://www.thebmc.co.uk/modules/insurance/
- Ripcord by Redpoint Travel Protection https://redpointtravelprotection.com/plan/ripcord/

Please note, the above are insurance companies with whom our clients have previously had excellent service. Do note that policies and companies change: we are not a travel insurance provider, and it is your responsibility to take out insurance and to check that it provides the correct cover. We cannot answer questions about specific policies.

Mountain Rescue Insurance

If you already have some form of travel insurance, but are unsure whether mountain rescue is covered, or perhaps that the specific activity of your holiday may not be covered under your annual travel policy, then it is possible to organise just the mountain rescue aspect.

For EU residents (and for the purposes of this policy this does include Norway, Switzerland and the UK) it is £4.90 per day, and for US and the rest of the world it is £11.50. You can book it online here: https://www.cloud9adventure.com/online-store/Mountain-rescue-insurance-p101294506

In addition to travel insurance, UK citizens should also obtain or renew your EHIC or GHIC card from the <u>NHS</u>. This is not a replacement for insurance but it does mean you are entitled to the same treatment as any EU citizen, and unlike insurance it includes treatment of a pre-existing condition. You would normally have to pay for treatment at the time and then make a claim on return to the UK.

Please remember to bring a credit card with you on the trip: in the event of a medical problem or injury, you may be unable to complete the trek. You would normally need to pay for treatment, and would often have additional transport and accommodation costs. Although you can claim this back on your insurance, you usually have to pay at the time and make the insurance claim afterwards, so you must have a means of paying for this if necessary.

Responsible Travel

We care about the places we visit, and our philosophy is simple: that each and every one of our trips has a positive impact on the local community and environment. We use family-run hotels, gîtes and restaurants in order to support the local communities. And it's a small step but we also recommend carbon off-setting. Visit www.climatecare.org.

Adventure Travel

Please note that we specialise in Adventure Travel, the nature of which means that we cannot always follow our itinerary for a variety of reasons. All of our holidays can be subject to unexpected changes and you should be prepared to be flexible to accommodate these where necessary.

We update our itineraries on a regular basis to take into account such things as changes to trekking routes and the conditions of footpaths, but it is not always possible to guarantee that any of our holidays will run exactly according to the proposed itinerary. If during your holiday the itinerary is affected by immediate or local circumstances, our local office will help make any alternative arrangements required.

As a reputable tour operator, Cloud 9 Adventure supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office "Travel Aware" campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas, and we recommend that all our clients take a look at the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination on the official UK government website https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice. North Americans can also check out the US Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

Cloud 9 Adventure treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss alternatives. We have a local office in Chamonix, and our expert team monitor the conditions regularly to ensure that our trips are run safely, and are on hand to help if we need to change arrangements.

Preparing for your holiday

We have tried to grade the holiday as accurately as we can, with the intention of attracting people of similar abilities to each trip. As a general guideline, for cross-country ski trips it is important that you are honest about your ability.

Our beginners trips are intended for anyone who is active, but who haven't cross-country skied before (or perhaps you tried it a while ago, but didn't have tuition, and would like to go back to the beginning and see how it's done). We also run improver, intermediate, advanced & expert trips - so please do check out the descriptions on our website particularly before committing to an advanced or expert trip.

If we have described a trip as being tough or challenging, then you need to have the fitness and skills to cope with the challenge. As we are as accurate as we can be writing our trip notes, we do tend to be pretty good at making sure that the right people book each trip, but we do require a certain amount of personal responsibility for arriving fit and ready for your trip. If you're worried about this, then please start with one of our easier trips graded Improver or Intermediate, and you can build up to an Advanced or Expert trip.

Cross-country skiing is very good for you, and will certainly make you fitter! It's a low impact sport without too much stress on the limbs - HOWEVER - it is guaranteed to use muscles that you might not be used to using in everyday life, so we do recommend that you do some advance training.

The fitter you are, the more enjoyable your trip will be. We would also recommend that you adopt a weekly exercise regime leading up to your trip. Jogging, circuit training, squash and swimming are good for developing better stamina. The "eliptic cross-trainer" in a gym in particular mimics the movement that you would make for cross-country skiing. And strength training for the arms would also be useful (you don't have to go overboard, but a small amount of training in advance will help to avoid injury on the trip).



Self-Guided Cross-Country Ski Kit List

Essential items:

- Rucksack approx. 30L NO BIGGER! for you to carry each day. You may need to attach your skis as you sometimes need to carry them before you reach the snowline side straps make this easier to do.
- Kit bag or suitcase for your main luggage
- Waterproof jacket and trousers goretex jacket and trousers are perfect. Insulated ski trousers and jackets are likely to be too warm for the level of activity you will do, so a goretex shell is a better option.
- Socks bring a mixture of both normal hiking socks and perhaps a couple of pairs of warmer merino wool socks for the colder days. Take care if you are bringing thicker socks it is logical to think that a thicker pair will be warmer, but the reality is that it can make your boots a bit too tight and result in colder feet due to lack of circulation. My favourite socks are merino wool for cross country skiing, but these can be a bit hot if we have spring temperatures.
- Underwear

- Cross country ski trousers we would recommend a pair of cross-country ski trousers, designed for the job! These usually have a light amount of insulation just enough to keep you warm on a cold day, but not so much that you will overheat whilst exercising. They usually have a windproof front, but breathable back (again, designed to keep you warm enough without overheating). And they are usually made of a stretch-type material so as not to restrict your movement whilst skiing, whilst not being too loose, which would hinder your technique. Decathlon do a good range of very reasonably-priced cross country ski pants. My other favourite brands are Swix, Maloja and Bjorn Daehlie.
- Thermal base layer trousers such as long johns or thermal leggings
- Base layer t-shirts wicking t-shirts are better than cotton as they are lighter and dry faster
- Base layer top a long-sleeved merino wool top is the ideal base layer
- Mid layer top fleece jacket is good
- Warm jacket we recommend bringing a lightweight down jacket.
- Warm hat woolly or fleece hat
- Buff or fleecy neckwarmer
- Gloves we recommend bringing 2-3 pairs. I tend to bring 1 pair of lighter gloves for when it's warm (and when exercising uphill you can get quite warm, even in winter), an insulated mid-range pair which I wear most of the time, and a much warmer pair which rarely get used but when they do, in the cold weather, I'm really grateful for them. You can buy specific cross country ski gloves, but it's not essential for all your gloves to be specific to xc. You will want to check that your warmest pair can fit in the wrist loops of your ski poles most can, but bulky mitts probably wouldn't.
- Sunglasses essential as the effect of the sun reflecting off the snow can make its rays much more intense
- Suncream (small bottle to save weight)
- Lip protection (with sun screen)
- Water bottle we'd recommend nalgene bottles. On cold weather days I usually take half a litre of water, plus a hot flask of tea. On warmer winter days I'll take a 1L water bottle plus a flask of tea. We don't recommend camelbaks in the winter due to the tube freezing up.
- Goggles or cross country ski visor Needed in very snowy weather. I prefer a visor, because it allows good air flow
 and therefore rarely mists up. If you don't have a visor or xc-specific goggles, then clear/coloured cycling glasses would
 be okay. Normal ski googles would be passable, but can also mist up more easily when exercising.
- · Wash kit
- **Head torch –** just a lightweight torch, such as a Petzl Tikka / Zipka is fine for this trip.
- Plastic bags / dry sacks to keep essentials dry.
- Passport
- Cash for any coffee stops / lunches whilst on the trip
- Credit card for emergencies
- Basic first aid kit your leader will carry a large first aid kit, but you should bring a small first aid kit containing plasters, blister treatment, painkillers & diarrhea treatment (rehydration sachets & immodium)
- Compass
- **Emergency shelter** (doing a point-to-point route in the winter, you really should carry a shelter that would fit all of your group members if the weather was bad).

Optional items:

- **Head band** As you are generating quite a lot of heat whilst nordic skiing, a woolly hat can sometimes be too hot. So a head band is a great idea to keep your ears warm on a cold day.
- **Buff** can be useful for extra warmth if it's cold, or sun protection for your neck or head on a sunny day. I bring at least one to use instead of a sun hat (a sun hat probably won't stay on properly if you're moving fast!)
- Camera
- Book
- Comfortable shoes for the evenings
- **Mobile phone** there is phone reception for the majority of the trip. It is a good idea to have a phone in case of emergency or if you need to leave the group for any reason.
- Earplugs
- Snacks not essential as we are in the vicinity of shops most days, so you can top up your supply of snacks fairly regularly
- Swimwear some of the hotels may have a swimming pool, spa or sauna

- **Boot dryers** not many places have drying rooms, so since I discovered these, I don't go anywhere without them: https://www.sidas.com/en/boot-shoe-accessories/304-drywarmer-neo-usb-3661267109355.html
- Travel kettle, mug & tea bags / coffee it is unusual for hotels in continental Europe to provide tea and coffee-making
 facilities in the rooms
- Flask & selection of tea bags whilst it is on the optional list, I really rate having a flask of hot drink in the winter and would strongly recommend bringing one (plus your favourite tea bags).
- **Gaiters** either short or long I haven't needed these on alpine track-skiing trips.....so definitely not worth rushing out to buy some. But some folk like to bring them and they could be helpful in very heavy snow.

The following equipment is not included, but we can arrange hire:

- Classic cross country track skis (we recommend fishscales or skintec)
- Ski poles these are specific to classic cross country skiing
- · Classic cross country ski boots

Day 1 – Arrive in Zuoz, Switzerland



Arrive in Zuoz

The best way to travel from Zurich Airport to Zuoz is by train. You can view train times on www.sbb.ch/en

From Zurich Airport, you normally need to change at Zurich Hauptbahnhof, Landquart and Sagliains.

Please note that Zuoz town is a short but uphill walk from the railway station so luggage with wheels is a good idea.



Zuoz Zuoz, Grisons, CH, 7524



Ski hire collection Zuoz

If you are hiring equipment, it is usually best to pick it up the day before you start skiing.

We recommend Willy Sport in Zuoz.

They are super friendly, and passionate about cross-country skiing.

The shop is situated next to the ski tracks, approx 10 mins walk from Zuoz centre (note: there are various Willy Sport shops in this area: this is not the town centre shop, but the nordic specialist shop - you can click on the Willy Sport icon below and choose various options such as call them from the app, visit their website, or view the location on google maps).

We recommend booking equipment in advance: particularly in the run-up to the Engadin Marathon (this is Sun 10 March in 2024). We are happy to help you book equipment, but prefer you to contact the shop directly because they are the experts and will make sure you order the correct kit.

Note that lengths will be in cm, weight in kg, and shoe sizes in EU sizing, you can google to convert if required.

Shop opening times 2024

Monday - Friday 08:30 - 18:00

Saturday 08:30 - 17:00

Sunday 10:00 - 17:00



Willy Sport Nordic Shop, Zuoz Resgia, Zuoz, Graubünden, CH, 7524 +41 81 854 08 06



Track Passes

You need a track pass for this trip. In previous years you had to purchase this yourselves, but now it is available digitally we will organise for you.

These are valid for 7 days, so do let us know if you'd like it to start early, or finish later, than your scheduled trip.

You will normally need to have these accessible on a smartphone to show to the control areas, of which there are a couple along the route.

Note: if using this attachment, download it in advance when you have an internet connection. Probably easier to use the email we sent and add it to your Wallet.



Local Transport in the Engadin

You'll see that it's really easy to travel up and down the valley by train and bus. We tend to recommend this over taxis, as it gives you a great amount of flexibility about what time you arrive somewhere, and means you can lengthen or shorten your ski day if you like, and simply take the train or bus to the town you are staying.

It is possible to buy a weekly ticket, valid on all of the trains and buses in the valley, for 80 CHF (2nd class) or 136 CHF (1st class). You can buy this from the railway station.

We don't think, however, that most people would normally spend quite this much if you follow our recommended itinerary. But for convenience, many people choose this option as you don't have to queue to buy any tickets anywhere. If you were taking any additional journeys, it wouldn't take long to have spent this amount, so for some it can be worth it.

Another (in my view, the best) option is to download the sbb.ch app. This has an "Easy Ride" feature. You'll need to enter your card details and enable location services: but as soon as you get on a train, you swipe right to start it, and then once you finish your journey, you swipe left to stop. It then charges you the precise price for your journey, and is always the cheapest option possible. So if at the end of the week, you've used enough journeys to have warranted buying the weekly pass instead of individual tickets, that's what it charges you! So we would definitely recommend using the SBB app for hassle-free travel.



Luggage delivery

Your luggage will be delivered by private vehicle each time you change hotel. Make sure you put the Cloud 9 luggage labels on your bags, and let us know precisely how many bags you are leaving so we know how many to look out for. The luggage labels are dropped off at your first hotel the evening before you depart.

You normally leave the luggage in the reception area of the hotel (best to check at reception where they would like you to leave it), and make sure you leave all the luggage together so it doesn't get mixed up with any other clients or companies.

We book this for 11:00 each day, allowing you the chance to have a lazy morning when you want one, but equally, if you arrive at a hotel early having chosen a shorter day, it will always be there by 12:00.

Can you possibly let us know if you need to change this at all? We can't promise to be able to accommodate this, but we can certainly try.

Day 2 – Ski from Maloja to Val Fex and Sils. Overnight in Maloja



Transfer from Zuoz to Maloja to start the trip

You'll start by taking the train to St Moritz followed by the bus to Maloja to begin your Engadin trip.



Maloja to Val Fex and back

Ski from Maloja (the start of the Engadin ski marathon), via Isola to reach the entrance to the Fex valley. A climb (steep in places) then takes you up to the wild, hidden valley of Fex - truly beautiful - the perfect place for lunch. Ski back down to the valley floor to Sils. From Sils, a short bus ride takes you back to Maloja.

Distance: 16 km / 10 miles Ascent: 530 m / 1740 ft Descent: 530 m / 1740 ft Approx skiing time: 5 hours











Maloja Maloja, Graubünden, CH, 7516

Day 3 - Ski from Maloja to Pontresina



Ski from Maloja to Pontresina

Today's route will be along the route of the Engadin marathon (in fact, it's the half-marathon version of the event, ie the first half of the race). You'll ski across the Silvaplana lakes, past Silvaplana, past St Moritz on flat terrain. Once you hit St Moritz, you'll have the famous steep climb that's almost at a standstill in the race, followed by some fantastic rolling terrain. Finish with the equally famous "mattress hill" descent into Pontresina.

Distance: 25.8 km / 16 miles (yes, we know that a half-marathon is 13 miles, but this is what the GPS said!!!!)

Ascent: 527 m / 1729 ft Descent: 513 m / 1683 ft Approx skiing time: 5.5 hours

Note: if you want to make this day shorter and miss out the section from Maloja to Silvaplana, then simply get off the bus at Silvaplana. This will shorten the day by 8km / 5 miles. You can also alight at Sils if you'd like somewhere in between.







Pontresina Pontresina, Grisons, CH, 7504

Day 4 – Val Roseg. Overnight Pontresina.



Val Roseg

A fantastic day today will take you up a hidden valley to the foot of the Roseg glacier, and to a wonderful restaurant where you can soak up the views. And perhaps the best dessert buffet we've seen!

This route is only permitted for classic cross-country skiers.

Distance: 19.4 km /12 miles Ascent: 550 m / 1804 ft Descent: 550 m / 1804 ft Approx skiing time: 4.5 hours



Day 5 – Ski from Pontresina to Zuoz



XC from Pontresina to Zuoz

Today you'll tackle the second half of the marathon route as you ski from Pontresina to Zuoz. Your trail follows the route of the River Inn, which meets the Danube at Passau before flowing on to the Black Sea, via Vienna and Budapest. Picturesque Zuoz is a fabulous example of a traditional Engadin village, with its cobblestones and ancient buildings.

Distance: 17 km Ascent: 240 m Descent: 335 m

Approx skiing time: 4 hours







Day 6 - Ski from Zuoz to Zernez. Overnight in Zuoz



XC from Zuoz to Zernez

Today you'll explore the 22 km route between Zuoz and Zernez, often known as the 'Wild Valley' or the 'White Valley'. The first part of the trail is the final few kms of the marathon route (the marathon finishes in S-Chanf).

Then you'll ski through forest and woodlands, and near to the Rhaetian Railway's Albula-Bernina line, which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Your day finishes with a stunning descent into the Zernez National park. You should have plenty of time for a trip to the Zernez Museum before taking the train back to Zuoz.

Distance: 21.9 km / 13.6 miles Ascent: 489 m / 1604 ft Descent: 687 m / 2254 ft Approx skiing time: 4 hours







Day 7 - Departure day



Depart Zuoz

Suitably exhausted, your Cloud 9 Engadin experience will draw to a close after breakfast today. Your train tickets back to Zurich airport are not included today, but just let us know if you'd like any help booking this journey.

Train times can be found at www.sbb.ch/en