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Jura Cross-Country Ski Traverse - JST

- An unforgettable 154km cross country ski journey in the magical Jura mountains
- Take in the highest sections of the Jura on the TJS (Trans Jura Swiss) and the famous GTJ (Grand Traverse of the Jura)
- 6 days' cross-country skiing.
- Explore the 'locals' corners of this famous cross country region.
- Enjoy charming and authentic local accommodation.
- A unique journey, not offered by many operators.
- Daily luggage transfers included
- All breakfasts and evening meals included.
- Fully qualified and expert cross country ski guide: BASI Nordic Ski Instructor / International Mountain Leader.
- Grade 8: Challenging

The Jura mountains are located on the Swiss-French border and are world famous for their cross country ski tracks. Known locally as 'le pays qui respire' - the country with breathing space, this 6 day traverse explores both the less-travelled Swiss side (the Trans Jura Swiss), kept secret by the locals, and returns via the famous GTJ (Grand Traverse of the Jura) on the French side.

This trip ticks all the boxes for cross-country skiers who want to experience peace, tranquility and local mountain gastronomy, well away from the crowds.

The route takes us on a varied journey, mostly on beautifully pressed tracks, which link rolling ridges with snowy pastures and lovely, forested trails. The Jura is a limestone plateau, located in the shadow of the high Alps, and overlooking the Geneva basin and

Neuchatel region. Each day we'll cover between 17 and 33 kms. Daily luggage delivery means we'll enjoy the luxury of only carrying a small day pack.

Trip Summary

Day 1 - Arrive Les Rousses

Arrive in Les Rousses - Les Rousses

Day 2 - Col de la Givrine to Col du Marchairuz

Cross Country Ski from Col de la Givrine to Col du Marchairuz - Col du Marchairuz

Day 3 - Col du Marchairuz to Pont

Cross Country Ski from Col du Marchairuz to Mollendruz - Lac de Joux

Day 4 - Pont to Chapelle-des-Bois

Transfer from Pont to Chez Liadet

Ski from Mouthe to Chapelle des Bois or Chez L'Aime - Chapelle-des-Bois

Day 5 - Chapelle-des-Bois to Les Rousses

Ski from Chapelle-des-Bois to Les Rousses - Les Rousses

Day 6 - Les Rousses to Le Manon

Ski from Les Rousses to Lajoux or Le Manon - Le Manon

Day 7 - Le Manon to Giron

Ski from Le Manon to Giron - Giron

Depart Giron

8:15

Depart Giron

Day 1 - Arrive Les Rousses



Arrive in Les Rousses

Our group meets at the hotel in Les Rousses, a pretty French resort that is close to the Swiss border and part of the Les Rousses ski area. This forested region is our launch point to the Jura mountains and the area boasts an excellent network of cross country ski trails. It's best known for hosting one of France's most important xc races - the [Transjurassienne](#).

There are good ski rental shops, a tourist office, sports shops, a supermarket, bakeries, a pharmacy and ATMs, so it's a perfect starting point for our trip.

The easiest way to reach Les Rousses is by train from Geneva Airport to La Cure (just 3 km away from Les Rousses), followed by a taxi or bus to reach Les Rousses (see the Travel Information section for further details).

You should aim to arrive in time to organise ski hire, and we normally have an evening briefing before dinner, approximately 18:30.

Accommodation: 3* hotel



Les Rousses

Les Rousses, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, FR

Day 2 - Col de la Givrine to Col du Marchairuz



Cross Country Ski from Col de la Givrine to Col du Marchairuz

Our 154km cross country ski traverse of the Jura starts from the Col de la Givrine - a short transfer from our hotel, just over the border in Switzerland.

Note: we buy our ski passes here, and it's useful to have some Swiss Francs as the card machine does not always work here.

From La Givrine, we clip into our skis and head straight into the 'perfect' cross country terrain that this region is so well known for. Our ski route begins by following a rolling ridge line at about 1300m altitude, as far as the meadows of Pralets; an ideal spot for a picnic lunch. After refuelling and photo opportunities, the cross country tracks then continue along the ridge until - with a bit of the sting in the tail - we make a final climb up to our hotel on the Col du Marchairuz (1447m). After our first day on skis, we'll settle into a lovely hotel, with the option to enjoy a sauna before dinner.

Distance: 21 km / 13 miles

Ascent: 460m / 1509ft

Descent: 230m / 754ft

Approximate cross country skiing time: 6 hours

Accommodation: Hotel



Col du Marchairuz

Gimel, Vaud, CH, 1188

Day 3 - Col du Marchairuz to Pont



Cross Country Ski from Col du Marchairuz to Mollendruz

Today's tracks take us on a journey through traditional cheese country and open meadows, below the peak of Mont Tendre (1678m). Leaving our hotel at the Col du Marchairuz, we cross country ski through beautiful, rolling landscapes as far as our unique lunch spot, 'Refuge Bon Accueil', which is an old railway carriage that has now been turned into a cosy mountain hut. Lunch marks our high point of the day and from here it's a fun descent all the way to the Chalet Mollendruz (for coffee and cake!) before a final push to the Col de Mollendruz. Our accommodation for tonight is a hotel in the village of Pont, situated on the Lac de Joux. A taxi will take us from the col down to our hotel.

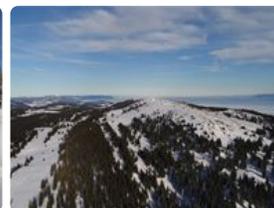
Distance: 17 km / 10.5 miles

Ascent: 340m / 1115ft

Descent: 700m / 2296ft

Approximate cross country skiing time: 6 hours

Accommodation: Hotel



Lac de Joux

Vaud, CH

Day 4 - Pont to Chapelle-des-Bois



Transfer from Pont to Chez Liadet

We take a short transfer from Pont to reach the start of today's skiing.



Ski from Mouthe to Chapelle des Bois or Chez L'Aime

Heard of the world-famous ski race, La Transjurassienne? For the next 3 days we'll be following the route! An annual event held every February, La Transju' is one of France's most iconic ski events, with thousands of skiers from across the globe converging on the region in their efforts to win this 2-day event. The race begins in Lamoura and offers a variety of challenging routes and races of up to 76 kms (47.5 miles) before its competitors cross the line in Mouthe.

Skiing at a more leisurely pace, we'll ski across rolling pastures and through picture-perfect forests of pine to reach Pré Poncet for lunch. After the Combe des Cives the terrain will ease, providing a lovely ski in to the Chalet des Anges where calories (cakes!) and the crafts of the local wood turner await. From here it's a final hour or so to Chapelle des Bois, and depending on accommodation availability, we often continue on to Bellefontaine for our overnight stop.

Distance: 26.5 km / 16.5 miles

Ascent: 390 m / 1,279 ft

Descent: 370 m / 1,213 ft

Accommodation: Mountain refuge



Chapelle-des-Bois

Chapelle-des-Bois, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, FR, 25240

Day 5 - Chapelle-des-Bois to Les Rousses



Ski from Chapelle-des-Bois to Les Rousses

Taking to the trail today towards Bellefontaine as we head towards Les Rousses, you are entering an area of world-class tracks, and we often encounter colourful race teams practising here. Before long we'll begin an ascent into the Forêt de Risoux, famed for providing the wood from which Stradivarius violins are crafted. After our main climb of the day, we can stop for a welcoming drink at Chalet Gaillard, before skiing well-pressed trails all the way to Les Rousses.

The town is perfect for souvenir shopping, nordic ski shops and other diversions, so we'll aim for an early finish to take full advantage. Les Rousses is a buzzing nordic area with 220 km (138 miles) of nordic ski tracks.

Distance: 17 km / 10.6 miles

Ascent: 345 m / 1,131 ft

Descent: 385 m / 1,262 ft

Accommodation: Hotel



Les Rousses

Les Rousses, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, FR

Day 6 - Les Rousses to Le Manon



Ski from Les Rousses to Lajoux or Le Manon

We depart Les Rousses and cross rolling meadows, heading towards Prémanon: home to the French National Nordic Ski School, and several Olympians. Our next destination, also popular with ski teams in training, is the rather eerily named *Forêt du Massacre*, named after a historic battle in the area. With views of the Alps on clear, sunny days, relax and enjoy the first-class skiing surrounded by some of the most ancient fir trees in France. A highlight of the day is our visit to Chalet La Frasse in the heart of the forest. Delicious cafes and caffeine will perk you up ready to enjoy the rolling descent to the picturesque village of Lajoux. Our overnight stop lies just over a kilometre away (0.7 miles) in the hamlet of Le Manon.

Distance: 21 km / 13 miles

Ascent: 425 m / 1,394 ft

Descent: 340 m / 1,115 ft

Accommodation: Hotel



Le Manon

Septmoncel, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, FR, 39310

Day 7 - Le Manon to Giron



Ski from Le Manon to Giron

This is what you've been building up to, our final and toughest day to complete our traverse. We'll leave Le Manon and head towards the aptly named Bellecombe, or beautiful bowl. An impressive spot with expansive views, we'll wind our way alongside the limestone peaks and crests of the Haute Jura mountain chain, enjoying a route that abounds with photo opportunities. Pushing on through the undulating scenery, we can grab a crêpe and coffee at a cosy refuge below the Crêt au Merle (1,448 m / 4,749 feet). As the perfect end to the day and indeed to our memorable Grand Traverse of the Jura, we'll savour a final forest descent to reach Giron and the trail's end. Although do keep some energy for the occasional short climb in our descent!

Look forward to a celebratory team meal with warming wine and hearty local dishes.

Distance: 28.5 km / 17.8 miles

Ascent: 665 m / 2,181 ft

Descent: 740 m / 2,427 ft

Accommodation: Hotel / Guesthouse



Giron

Giron, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, FR, 01130

Depart Giron



8:15

Depart Giron

As this is a linear traverse, we'll arrange and include one single-timed group transfer.

This will depart Giron and drop off at Bellegarde-sur-Valsérine TGV railway station for anyone with train connections, and continue on to Geneva airport. We aim to leave our accommodation at 08:15 to reach Bellegarde-sur-Valsérine at around 09:30, and Geneva airport for 09:45.

It is easy to take the train from Geneva airport to Geneva centre.

Trip Information & Documents



What's included

- All hotel accommodation (including arrival day and final evening)
- All breakfasts and evening meals
- Fully qualified and expert BASI Nordic Ski Teacher / International Mountain Leader (IML)
- Luggage delivery each day (1 bag per person)
- All transport in the itinerary (to and from hotel to the trail head) plus fixed time airport transfers



Not Included

- Flights
- Train travel
- Skis and other ski equipment
- Track pass (usually around 45 CHF for the week)
- Personal snacks and drinks
- Any transport, accommodation or additional expenses due to a participant not being able to complete the snowshoe traverse
- Travel / Mountain Rescue insurance
- Tips



Travel Arrangements - GTJ/TJS Combo

Arrival

The starting point for this trip is Les Rousses in France. The best way to reach Les Rousses is by train from Geneva Airport to La Cure (in Switzerland), then to take the ski-bus for the short 3km journey over the border to Les Rousses.

You'll need to change trains in Nyon (and sometimes Geneva centre), and you can find train times on the SBB website and app (www.sbb.ch/en).

Bus times from La Cure to Les Rousses can be found on the [Les Rousses Tourist Office](#) website, and we always add them to the arrival page of these trip notes once they have been released each winter.

Note: for all of our group trips we have chosen Les Rousses as the starting point for this trip as it is so convenient to walk into town to hire skis. For our private and self-guided trips, if you already have your own equipment and don't need to hire skis, you may wish to stay overnight at La Cure for your first night, as a) it's easier to get there, and b) easier to start your ski journey the following day. Just let us know if you'd like to do this.

Departure

We include a single-timed transfer from Giron at the end of the trip, that will drop off at both Bellegarde-sur-Valsérine TGV railway station, and Geneva Airport. On our group trips, this transfer will depart your accommodation at 08:15, to arrive at Bellegarde for 09:00, and Geneva Airport for 09:45.

On our private and self-guided trips, we will organise this transfer to co-ordinate with your train or flight time: but we will have included one transfer per group.

If you would like an additional private transfer to accommodate different train or flight times, just let us know.



Traverse of the Jura Cross Country Ski - What to Expect

The Cross Country Skiing

This cross country ski trip is Grade 8: Challenging. It is suitable for experienced cross country skiers with good base fitness levels. You need to have enough cross country ski experience to be able to just 'clip in and go'. Technically, you have mastered skiing on varied terrain, can control a snow plough on descents and be able to ski - at a steady tempo (with breaks) - for 6-8 hours per day. We ski at a pace that suits the group, on rolling terrain for up to 35km each day. Overall, the terrain is mostly rolling and flat, which means we can cover ground quite quickly but there are some more technical sections. There are significant ascents each day and a few 'un-pisted' sections where we will have to cut our own track or walk. These are generally low angle and we will be sure to take them at a steady pace. The descents are generally not too steep; fun rather than technical!

Ski Type, Ski Hire and Track Pass

The ideal skis to use for this trip are classic / fish scale style for cross-country (Nordic) skiing. We will not be waxing or using skins. The majority of the skiing will be on prepared trails. Please make sure that your ski boots are comfortable, warm classic style to match your bindings (NNN). Boots with a high ankle are more comfortable for this trip than a racing-style boot. Classic length ski poles (which should sit comfortably under your arm pit once stood on your skis) are also required.

Ski Hire: Cross country skiing equipment, which includes fish scale classic skis (not skates or waxables), Salomon (or similar) boots and bindings, and poles, can be hired locally in Les Rousses at the start of the traverse. The cost of equipment hire is €150 for the week, which includes the cost of returning the kit to the hire shop at the end of the trip. You will make your payment direct to the guide (cash only). Please confirm as far in advance as possible if you would like to arrange equipment hire as we'll need to pre-order the correct sizes. We will need to know your height, weight and normal shoe size (please give us your everyday shoe size and not your personal adjustment for wearing boots). Plus the measurement of your height up to your armpits (for ski pole hire). Your guide will usually accompany you to the hire shop at the start of the trip, and will collect any hire equipment and organise its return at the end.

You will also need to purchase a track pass for the week, to be able to ski on the cross country ski tracks. This is usually approximately 40 CHF for the week if buying in Switzerland, or 49 € if buying in France, and can be purchased from the kiosk at the start. Note that the card machine does not always work here, so it's a good idea to have Swiss francs in cash.

Accommodation

Our route through the Jura takes us through some very remote mountain villages and accommodation is not always easy to find, especially for groups. So please be prepared for variety! We stay on a half-board basis in small, local hotels, gites and guest houses. While the decor can vary, the hospitality and food is always warm and welcoming. All accommodation is on a twin share basis and single supplements may be available (please let us know well in advance so that we can do our best to arrange a single room). If you're travelling alone, you will be paired to share with another same-sex group member. Most bathrooms are en-suite but there may be some nights with shared facilities.

Food

All breakfasts and dinners are included. Food on this cross country ski trip is excellent; most of our hotels are small and the Jura region takes great pride in its excellent local produce - and wine. Please be aware that there may not be a huge choice, but a vegetarian option will be available (please do confirm this in advance of the trip). Packed lunches are not included but can easily be bought locally, either from the hotel or a nearby bakery or cafe. We recommend a budget of approx 20-25 CHF or € per day for lunches, snack food and soft drinks. Tap water in Switzerland and France is drinkable but any other drinks are not included. You can order beer, wine and soft drinks at all the hotels. Breakfasts are continental with coffee, tea, bread, cereal, fruit.

Luggage Delivery

Luggage is delivered each day to our next hotel. Please allow 1 piece of moderately sized luggage per person as our bags are delivered by car or small van, with limited space. Please also bring a day pack to carry anything you need while skiing.

Money and Tipping

All accommodation, breakfasts and evening meals are included in this trip, but please bring additional cash for snacks, drinks and tips. Beer, wine and soft drinks are available in our hotel every night and we usually have a lunch or coffee stop en route each day.

On this trip there are 2 nights in Switzerland, and 5 nights in France.

The currency in Switzerland is Swiss Francs and we recommend approx 100 CHF to cover your miscellaneous expenses including track pass, lunches, drinks for the first few days.

You'll buy your track pass just over the border in Switzerland (40 CHF).

You will also need some euros for your evening in Les Rousses at the beginning of the trek (approx 200 € are recommended).

You can usually spend with a card rather than cash in any of the towns: eg bakeries, shops and bars and restaurants in the evenings. But in the day-time if we stop for a coffee or a lunch, it is still often cash-only at the mountain restaurants or cafés.

If you intend to hire ski equipment you will also need an additional 150 Euros **in cash** - this covers ski, boot and pole hire along with return of skis to Les Rousses at the end. The money should therefore be given to the guide, not the hire shop.

There are several ATMs in Geneva Airport (both € and CHF), and on the trip, there are ATMs in Les Rousses (€) and Pont (CHF). Please also remember to bring a credit card in the event of a medical problem or injury, meaning you cannot complete the trek.

Tipping: Tipping your guide is the accepted way of saying 'Thank You' for good service. But do remember that tipping is voluntary and should only be done if you were pleased or delighted with the service. The amount is entirely up to you. Our staff are all paid fairly.

Weather

In general, the weather in the Jura is quite stable but temperatures can vary enormously - and throughout the day. It may reach -15°C on cold days, but a spring-like +15°C is also possible. If the sun is shining, we may find ourselves skiing in our base layers and feeling the heat, but if it's windy or snowing, we will need adequate insulating layers, waterproofs and gloves. Staying warm and dry is very important as it can get cold very quickly! Please be prepared for any eventuality and check the kit list at the end of this document.

Electric Supply and Plug - France and Switzerland

The electricity supply in both France & Switzerland is 220-240V.

France uses a standard European plug - either "Type C" with 2 round pins (left-hand picture), or "Type E" (2nd picture) with 2 round pins and a hole for the socket's male earthing pin.

Switzerland, however, uses "Type J" electrical sockets with 3 round pins - note the shape of the socket (3rd 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 (4th 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 - Guided Cross-Country Ski Trips

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 [NHS](#). 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 route changes and diversions, 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, the leader will make any changes that are necessary.

As a reputable tour operator, Cloud 9 Adventure supports the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office "Know Before You Go" campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas, and we recommend that all our clients take a look at the FCO Travel Advice for their chosen destination on the official FCO website www.fco.gov.uk. 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 FCO 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.

Group Size and Holiday Status

For each of our group adventures, there is a minimum number of participants required in order for the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from "Available" to "Guaranteed". In order to achieve minimum numbers, we run the trips in conjunction with several other small companies. We find that co-selling in this way means that almost all of our trips become "Guaranteed", and means that rather than 2 or 3 different companies all selling trips with 2-3 clients each, combining together with 1 guide means that we can offer the trips at a better price to you, and means that we achieve the minimum number faster. We are a small company with a high level of customer service, and we make sure that we only run trips in conjunction with companies who share our ethos. We know them well and have worked with them for years, and only use leaders who we know and trust to do an excellent job. We steer clear of large groups and cap our group size at 10 people for summer hiking trips, and 8 people for winter snowshoe or cross country ski trips, whilst many of the larger operators take up to 16 people.

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. If you don't arrive in good shape for your trip, then you could be putting yourself and others in danger: if you're taking too long each day, at best it cuts into the time you have to relax and shower before dinner, and at worst, it can be the difference between the whole group arriving in the dark! 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. We're not racing, so we are never expecting to be going too fast - we try to ski at a constant, steady pace, without the need to stop too frequently for rests. 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 "elliptic 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).

Guided Hotel-Based Cross-Country Ski Track Trip - Kit List

Essential items :

- **Rucksack** – approx. 30L - NO BIGGER! for you to carry each day. You may need to attach your skis as we sometimes need to carry them before we 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 goggles 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)

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 have a swimming pool, spa or sauna
- **Boot dryers** - not many places in the Alps 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