

Mt Elbrus

Elevation: 18,510 feet

Guide Service: Alpine Ascents International (AAI)

Fundraising minimum: \$10,000.00 USD

Dynamic in both region and terrain, Mt Elbrus stands as a watchtower between the great masses of Europe and Asia. Mt Elbrus is a large, double-coned volcano, whose twin summits vary by about 65 feet. The highest mountain on the European Continent has great appeal as it presents a strenuous and highly rewarding climb. The expedition begins in the city of St. Petersburg, a traditional vanguard of European culture. Depending on schedules, team members will take time to visit the Kremlin and Red Square.

Physical conditioning

This is an extreme, high-altitude climb. Climbers should have excellent strength and be comfortable climbing four to eight hours per day. Summit day is the most demanding portion of the climb, typically involving eight hours for the ascent and six to seven hours for the descent. Climbers must have basic knowledge of progression on snow and ice, self-arrest, crevasse rescue and glacier travel. Snow and ice slopes on Elbrus are moderate (up to 45 degrees).

Mt Elbrus Itinerary

Days 1 – 2: Fly to St. Petersburg. Climbers need to arrive by the scheduled arrival times or make special pick-up arrangements with AAI for an additional fee.

Day 3: We begin our journey with a tour of St. Petersburg. We meet our Russian friends and tour this spectacular city. We visit the world-renowned Hermitage, considered one of Europe's finest museums with vast collections of Rembrandt, Monet, Van Gogh, Rodin and Picasso displayed amidst architectural splendor. We also visit the St. Peter and Paul Fortress. We overnight in a hotel.

Day 4: Flight to Mineral Vody. After breakfast we fly south to Mineral Vody (mineral water) and travel by bus to our hotel in the Baksan Valley. The Baksan is known as the center of mountaineering, tourism and mountain skies, where climbing camps are situated. Mountaineers from all over the the regions of Russia come to the foot of Mt Elbrus to make ascents and develop the technical skills necessary to climb great peaks around the world. We have a thorough equipment check and orientation including principles of Leave No Trace environmental ethics.

Day 5: The acclimatization process begins by hiking in the beautiful Baksan Valley. The trails wind delicately throughout the foothills and offer exquisite views of Mt Elbrus's twin peaks. We usually take the ski tram to 9,000 feet and then hike to 11,000 feet. We spend the night at a nice hotel.

Day 6: Acclimatization hike to local observatory. This is a long day of walking with slight altitude increases. By the end of this day, most climbers are feeling strong and accustomed to the altitude.

Day 7: Move gear to "barrels," where we lodge at about 12,000 feet. We use the tram and ski lift to help move our gear. Here we put on crampons and hike up to the old Pruitt Hut. Sleep in barrels. (Lodging conditions such as the "barrels" and Pruitt Hut change from year to year depending on current construction. Our schedule may be adjusted to utilize the best available shelters.)

Day 8: Hike to Pastukov rocks (15,416 feet) and travel back to lodging.

Day 9: Move to hut and spend the afternoon readying ourselves for the summit attempt. Lodge in Pruitt Hut.

Day 10: Summit day. Depart camp via Sno-cat at 3:00 a.m. and ride to Pastukov Rocks area. From the rocks we begin our summit ascent. It is a long summit day, so you can expect a 12-hour roundtrip climb. From the summit, we have excellent views of the Caucasus, including Ushba, the Matterhorn of the region. Descend to lodging.

Day 11: Remain at lodging.

Day 12: Hiking, barbecue and celebration. (Days 11 and 12 can also be used as extra summit days).

Day 13: Return flight from Mineral Vody to Moscow.

Day 14: Tour of Moscow. This final night is a "free" night for Climbers to unwind from the climb as they desire. (Meals are not covered for this night.)

Day 15: Depart Moscow.

Special Notes:

- International round-trip airfare to St. Petersburg/Moscow not included (AAI pays for inter-country flights).
- Visa not included (\$150).
- Meals and lodging outside the listed itinerary not included.

- No vaccinations required.
- Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond the control of AAI not included.
- Single room supplement.
- Tips and excess baggage.
- Climbers will be responsible for all items on the [AAI gear list](#).
- Meals, porter assistance and all group climbing equipment (climbing ropes, technical hardware, and tents) will be provided by AAI

Mt Elbrus Climb Gear List

For a current list of required gear please visit <http://www.alpineascents.com/elbrus-g.asp>.