

GONZALES SISTER CITY PROGRAM OF VISIT **May, 18 to 22, 2016**



Mont Blanc



Le train "Mastrou"



**Le palais du Parlement
Grenoble**

PROGRAMME DE VISITE DE GONZALES
Du 18 mai au 22 mai 2016



GONZALES DELEGATION Visit

May 17-22, 2016

Tuesday May 17th: arrival in Paris of our friends Louisiana -

18 h Welcome at town hall and departure with host families

Wednesday May 18th : Day trip to Chamonix

Meet at 7:15 AM at the town hall parking lot, departure by coach.

Access via the Montenvers train to the area of "Ice Sea" (glaciers): crystal gallery, temple of nature, glaciolum - lunch at Montenvers - free time until 16:30, then return by coach to Meylan - arrival by 19:00.

Responsible person for the day: Johanna Gandy – tel 06 08 02 22 08

Thursday, May 19: Day trip to Ardèche

Meet at 7:15 AM at the town hall parking lot, departure by coach for Tournon sur Rhône. Train ride from Mastrou through the Doux ravines ("gorges du Doux") to Lamastre, then Tain l'Hermitage. Lunch at the restaurant "La Grappe d'Or" (the golden grape bunch) followed by a visit of the city of chocolate "Valrhona" with tasting (luxury brand). Return to Meylan by 19:00.

Responsible person for the day: Aline Cuvècle - tel 06 83 40 56 99

Friday, May 20: Day in Grenoble and great Gospel concert

*Meet at 10:45 Grenette square Grenoble. Departure at 11 AM visiting Grenoble via the "tourist train" with audio guide - lunch in town "caffe Forte". At 15:00, a guided tour in 2 groups of the Palace of Parliament, followed by some free time. In the evening, a **Gospel Concert** at the church our Lady of la Plaine Fleurie Louisiana square, followed by a "pot luck" dinner jointly prepared by the members.*

Responsible persons for the day: Jocelyne Mangaretto and Mireille Adj-Anastasiou

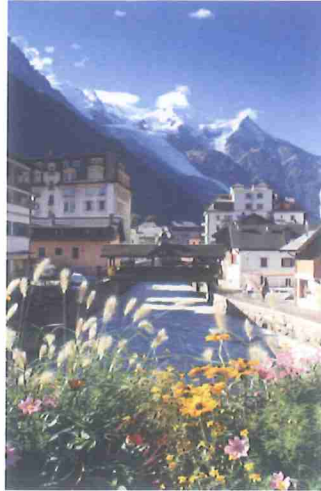
Tel 06 66 05 94 02 Tel: 06 22 82 10 55

Saturday, May 21: Free day in families - Official Dinner

19.30: Official dinner at the "Château du Mollard" in Touvet

Sunday, May 22: Departure of the Gonzales delegation for Lyon

Chamonix – Mont-Blanc

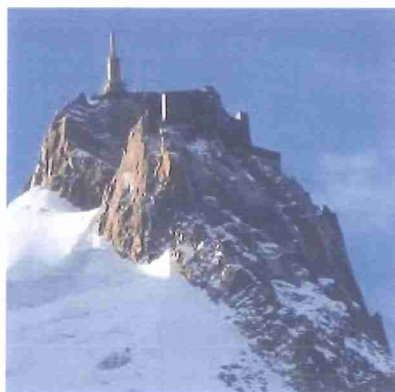


Chamonix-Mont-Blanc or, more commonly, **Chamonix** is a commune in the Haute-Savoie department in the Rhône-Alpes region in south-eastern France. It was the site of the 1924 Winter Olympics, the first Winter Olympics.

Situated near the massive peaks of the Aiguilles Rouges, Chamonix shares the summit of Mont Blanc with its neighbouring commune of Courmayeur in Italy, and owns the title of highest commune in France. The commune is well known and loved by skiers and by mountain enthusiasts of all types. Mont Blanc, with a summit elevation of 4,810 m (15,781 ft) above sea level, is the third most visited natural site in the world. With an area of 245 km² (95 sq mi), Chamonix is the fourth largest commune in mainland France.

Mountain sports

Chamonix is a popular winter sports resort town in France. As the highest European mountain west of Russia, Mont Blanc holds a special allure for mountain climbers, and Mark Twight described the town as "the death-sport capital of the world" because it is a base for almost all types of outdoor activity, especially their more extreme variants, such as ice climbing, rock climbing, extreme skiing, paragliding, rafting, and canyoning.



Chamonix is famous for its spectacular cable car up to the Aiguille du Midi 3,842 m (12,605 ft). Constructed in 1955, it was then the highest cable car in the world. Together with a cable car system going up to the Pointe Helbronner (3,462 m (11,358 ft)) from Entrèves in the Aosta Valley (Italy) it is possible to cross the entire Mont Blanc massif by cable car (the latter is only open during the summer).

In the summer months Chamonix is a mecca for alpine mountaineers, drawn to the area by challenges like the north, west and south-west faces of the Dru, the Frendo

Spur on the Aiguille du Midi, the north face of the Grandes Jorasses and the massive face climbs on the south side of Mont Blanc. Traversing the Alps on the GR 5 footpath or more accessible challenges like reaching the summit of Mont Blanc (by a number of possible routes) are also popular.

Chamonix is also a destination for mountain bikers. Besides the obvious lift-assisted areas for Free riders there are hundreds of kilometres of challenging hidden single-track trails – often only found with the help of guides, although since the summer of 2008 mountain biking is only permitted on a small selection of trails during July and August.

History



Horace-Benedict de Saussure's monument at Chamonix. Jacques Balmat (left) points towards the summit of Mont Blanc.

The valley was first mentioned in 1091, when it was granted by the Count of the Genevois to the great Benedictine house of St. Michel de la Cluse, near Turin, which by the early 13th century had established a priory there. However, in 1786 the inhabitants bought their freedom from the canons of Sallanches, to whom the priory had been transferred in 1519.

In 1530, the inhabitants obtained from the Count of the Genevois the privilege of holding two fairs a year, while the valley was often visited by the civil officials and by the bishops of Geneva (first recorded visit in 1411, while St. Francis de Sales came there in 1606). But travellers for pleasure were very rare.

The first party to publish (1744) an account of their visit was that of Dr. Richard Pococke, Mr. William Windham and other Englishmen who visited the Mer de Glace in 1741. In 1742 came P. Martel and several other Genevese, in 1760 H.B. de Saussure, and rather later Marc Th. Bourrit.

The growth of tourism in the early 19th century led to the formation of the *Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix* in 1821, to regulate access to the mountain slopes (which were communally or co-operatively owned), and this association held a monopoly of guiding from the town until it was broken by French government action in 1892; thereafter guides were required to hold a diploma issued by a commission dominated by civil servants and members of the French Alpine Club rather than local residents.

From the late 19th century on, tourist development was dominated by national and international initiatives rather than local entrepreneurs, though the local community was increasingly dependent upon and active in the tourist industry.



The commune successfully lobbied to change its name from Chamonix to Chamonix-Mont-Blanc in 1916. However, following the loss of its monopoly, the *Compagnie* reformed as an association of local guides, and retained an important role in local society; it provided the services of a friendly society to its members, and in the 20th century many of them were noted mountaineers and popularisers of mountain tourism, for example the novelist Roger Frison-Roche, the first member of the *Compagnie* not to be born in Chamonix.

The holding of the first Winter Olympic Games in Chamonix in 1924 further raised Chamonix's profile as an international tourist destination.

By the 1960s, agriculture had been reduced to a marginal activity, while the number of tourist beds available rose to around 60,000 by the end of the 20th century, with about 5 million visitors a year.

Cable cars

Chamonix has one of the highest cable cars in the world, which links the town to the summit of the Aiguille du Midi at 3842 m.^[14] On the other side of the valley, another cable car links Chamonix to the viewpoint of Planpraz. This cable car is based on an older system built in 1920, modernized in 1979, and upgraded again in 2008. A second line links Planpraz to the summit of Le Brévent at 2525 m.^{[15][16]} Many other cable cars exist in the valley, and are heavily used by skiers and residents.

The **Montenvers Railway** or **Chemin de fer du Montenvers** is a rack railway line in the Haute-Savoie region of France. The line runs from a connection with the SNCF, in Chamonix, to the *Hotel de Montenvers* station, at the Mer de Glace, at an altitude of 1,913 m (6,276 ft).

The line is 5.1 km (3.2 mi) long and has a rail gauge of 1,000 mm (3 ft 3 ³/₈ in). It is a rack and adhesion railway, using the Strub design to overcome a height difference of 871 m (2,858 ft). Except for the terminal stations, which are operated in adhesion mode, the line has a gradient varying from 11% to 22% and is equipped with rack rail. The line is electrified using an overhead line at 11000 V and 50 Hz ac, and service is provided by 6 electric railcars and 3 diesel locomotives. Trains run at 14 to 20 km/h (8.7 to 12.4 mph) and take 20 minutes for the journey.

The line is operated by the Compagnie du Mont-Blanc which also manages the Mont Blanc Tramway and many ski lifts in the Mont Blanc region. The first section of the line opened in 1908 and the line was completed in 1909. The line was worked by steam locomotives until it was electrified in 1953.

le Mastrou



Le Mastrou, is the name given to the « historical » trips from Tournon to Lamastre which have been running for over 120 years! The day trip starts by discovering the Gorges du Doux, then the train climbs up the Ardèche mountain with its sweet chestnut forests to arrive in Lamastre at midday.

Before returning at 2:45 p.m. there is time to see the town – have a meal in one of its many restaurants, visit the town, watch the world go by from a street café, have a picnic on the pleasant banks of the river Doux, go for a walk, enjoy a game of pétanque or a refreshing swim...

Day excursion: duration 1 hour 40 minutes one way

The 200 ton train is pulled by a locomotive identical to the one designed by the engineer Anatole Mallet (1837-1919). Mallet locomotives are articulated so that they can negotiate the tight curves in the gorges more easily. The four double acting pistons are operated by steam from the boiler which contains 3000 litres of water heated to 200°C under 14 bars of pressure. From Tournon to Lamastre the train consumes 700 kgs of coal and 4000 litres of water. Locomotive n°403 has been running the route since 1903. A listed historical “monument”, it was carefully restored in 2013 at the workshop of the Chemin de Fer du Vivarais, in Lamastre. Locomotive n°414 (1932) has joined its sister on our line in 2015.



Entourée de montagnes, on aime Grenoble avant tout pour son cadre : de belles échappées sont directement à portée de la ville, qui possède pour voisinage le massif de Belledonne et les parcs naturels régionaux du Vercors et de la Chartreuse ! VTT et sports de plein air en été, ski en hiver, ou randonnée en toute saison, ce ne sont pas les activités qui manquent de ce côté-là ! Ces montagnes sont omniprésentes en ville également, beau décor alpin en toile de fond... depuis la Bastille, un fort perché sur une hauteur dominant Grenoble, on redescend vers le centre-ville via le téléphérique, à la découverte du sympathique centre historique, des éléments de patrimoine conservés par la ville, et de quelques musées remarquables (musée Dauphinois, musée de Grenoble, musée d'Ancien Évêché...). Stendhal décrivait ainsi sa ville natale : « Au bout de chaque rue, une montagne... ». La capitale des Alpes (c'est la plus grande métropole alpine devant Innsbrück en Autriche et Bolzano en Italie) se distingue également par un dynamisme lié sans aucun doute à son pôle universitaire, qui attire de nombreux étudiants de tous pays, et au développement de son secteur de haute technologie avec le Polygone Scientifique et Minatec. C'est aujourd'hui un grand centre scientifique européen.

Surrounded by mountains, we like Grenoble primarily for its setting: beautiful vistas are directly within reach of the city, which has for neighborhood Belledonne and regional parks Vercors and Chartreuse! Mountain biking and outdoor sports in summer, skiing in winter or hiking in any season, it is not shortage of activities on this side here! These mountains are everywhere in town also, beautiful mountain scenery in the background ... from the Bastille, a fort perched on a hill overlooking Grenoble, one descends to the city center via the cable car, to discover the nice historical center, heritage elements preserved by the city, and some remarkable museums (Dauphinois museum, Grenoble museum, museum of Old Bishopric ...). . Stendhal described his hometown: "At the end of every street, a mountain ...". The capital of the Alps(the biggest alpine metropole before Innsbrück in Austria and Bolzano in Italy) is also distinguished by a dynamism bound undoubtedly its university center, which attracts many students from all countries, and the development of its high-tech sector with the Scientific Polygone and Minatec.It's today a big european scientific center.



Palais du Parlement. House of Parliament