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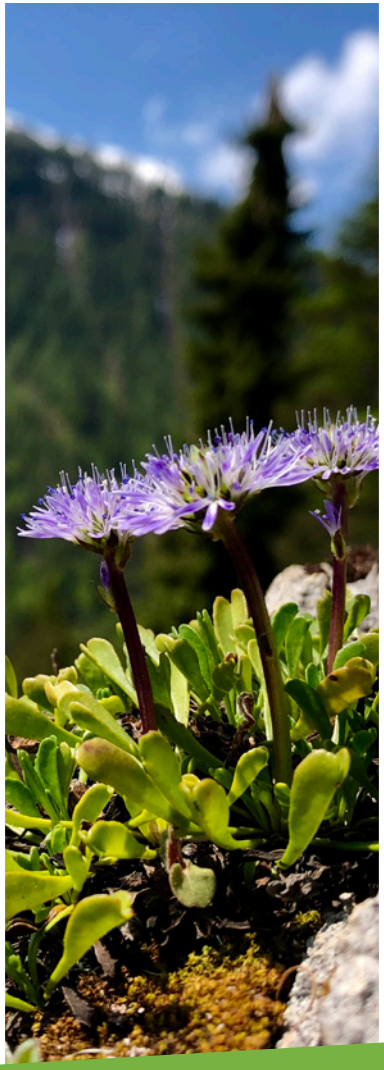

NATURE & CULTURE
AROUND MONT BLANC

An immersive experience in the heart of an exceptional heritage

summary

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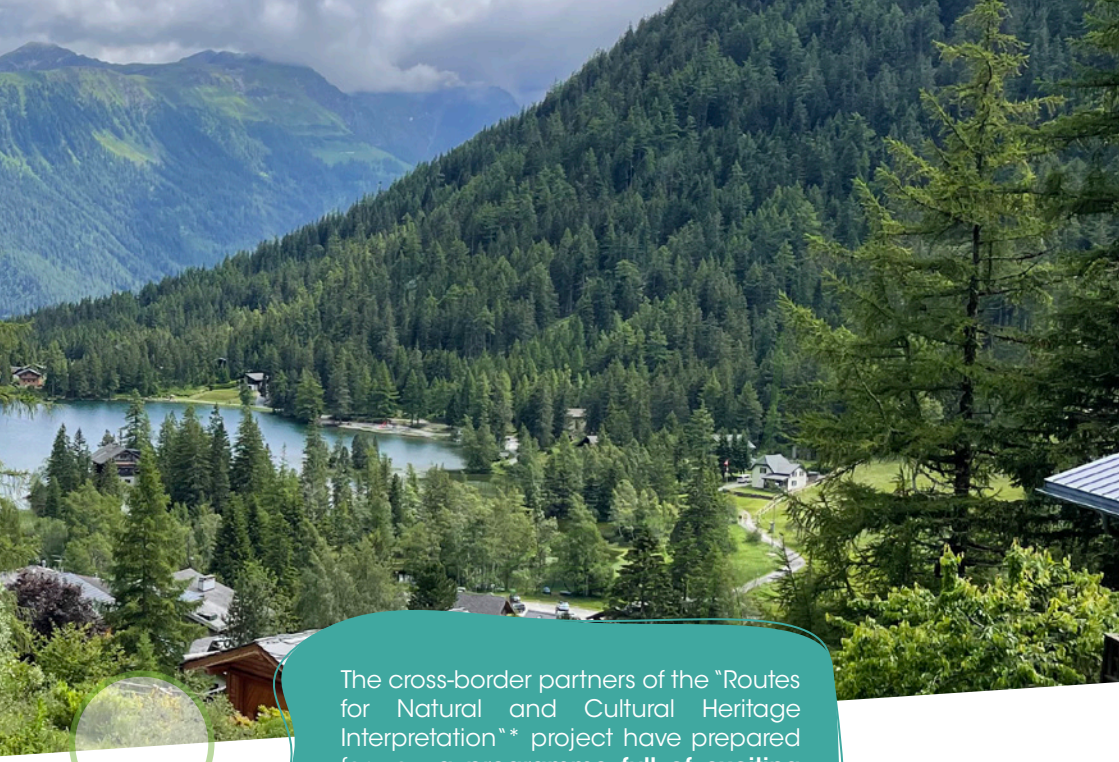
CONCEPT & DESIGN: signature-com.com.

Welcome to the top of Europe

For 30 years, **local partners around Mont-Blanc** have been working together **to offer you wonderful discoveries** and wake up your imagination. Come and live this experience, with the benefits born from **this cooperation and the existing cross-border connections.**

The Mont Blanc area wants, above all, to erase national borders **to share a common natural and cultural heritage,** in order to enhance it, with the same key words for all sides, Valais Canton, Aosta Valley and Haute-Savoie: **to enjoy and live this place in every season!**

Let yourself be carried away to discover places and heritages that are sometimes unknown despite the fame of the roof of Europe. **This brochure and its detachable map will help with you during your visits.**



The cross-border partners of the "Routes for Natural and Cultural Heritage Interpretation"* project have prepared for you **a programme full of exciting places.**

*To learn more about the project, go to page 31.

They imagined these visits around a common thread, **adaptation to climate change in the Alpine territories**, an issue which has been topical for a while now.

Mountain people, resilient by nature, have learned to live with climatic variations for generations. You will experience it through the visits offered on the 3 sides of Mont-Blanc...

The Alps, obstacle or connection?

Alpine passes were already used in prehistoric period. In the beginning of Roman domination (around the 1st century B.C.), they nevertheless acquired a new importance, in particular through the construction of **the Gaul road intended to connect Rome to the Rhone valley.**

An ambitious engineering project at that time

The Gaul road, an essential element for political and military expansion of the Roman Empire, was a huge work which necessarily had to **take into account the Alps chain and the highest mountains in Europe, and follow the the most suitable Alpine passes for this purpose.**

In Augusta Prætoria (Aosta), founded in 25 B.C., the Roman road split in two:

Great St. Bernard Pass

(Alpis Pœnina)
To connect Rome to the north-western provinces of the Empire, as well as to Great Britain.

Little St. Bernard Pass

(Alpis Graia)
To connect Rome to Gaul region

A road with remarkable archaeological remains

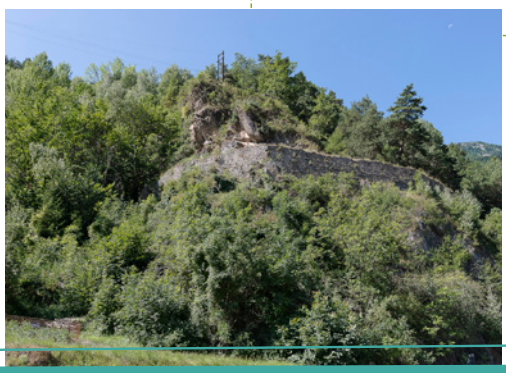
In the upper Aosta Valley, between Villeneuve and Avise:

Arvier, Mecosse and Leverogne
portions of the **substructions** remain (retaining structures for the roadway).

Under the medieval bridge of Leverogne, on the right bank, you can see the **arch of the Roman bridge.**

In front of the agglomeration of Runaz,
you will see, at mid-slope, the remains of **masonry substructures.**

In a place called Pierre Taillée,
the most monumental part of the road can be seen, some **cyclopean substructions** and cuts in the rock.



Of the road to the Alpis Pœnina,
a section of about sixty meters has survived, carved in stone. You can see it at «**Plan de Jupiter**» (today Great St. Bernard pass), where **archaeological excavations have brought to light the traces of a small temple** dedicated to *Jupiter Poeninus,* as well as some Roman *mansiones* (structures dedicated to welcoming travellers).

From here you will reach the town of Martigny,

on the opposite side of the Alps: a **Gallic settlement,** formerly known as *Octodurus,* which later became the Roman capital of the Pennine Alps under the name of *Forum Claudii Vallensium.*

At Little St. Bernard Pass,
you will discover the first evidence of the presence of the Romans at the pass: these are the remains of a **mansio**. Outside this reception building, there is a small Gallo-Roman temple, probably dedicated to a Celtic deity. Indeed, the Romans were willing to maintain the local cults of populations subject to the Empire: a significant number of coins were found there as well as a silver bust of Jupiter and a medallion representing Hercules.

For more information on the Gaul road, go to page 17.

Argentière glacier

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Argentière glacier threatened the village in front of which the Arve flows. (Engraving by Samuel Grundmann - Coll. Paul Payot - Conservatoire d'Art et d'Histoire, Annecy)

200 years later, only a few seracs (blocks of ice surrounded by crevasses) of the glacier are still visible and an alpine ski run now occupies the old moraine (debris of rock forming a large heap) on the glacier side.

Trient glacier

The melting of the Trient glacier was already an ongoing process in 1891. On the right, the moraine indicates the height reached by the glacier in 1850. (Photo by Oscar Nicollier)

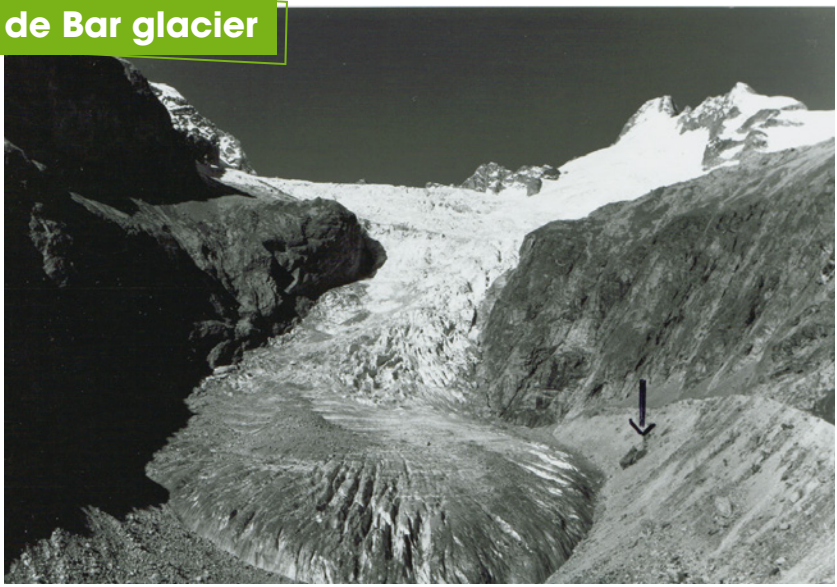
In 2008, the moraine is still present on the right, but barely visible because it is covered with vegetation.

Mer de Glace

Until the middle of the 19th century, the Mer de Glace descended to the bottom of the Chamonix valley, where it took the name Glacier des Bois. This is clearly visible on this illustration, back in 1815, from La Flégère.
(Produced by Mathias Gabriel Lory - Coll. Paul Payot - Conservatoire d'Art et d'Histoire, Annecy)

Its decline began in 1855. Since then, the Glacier des Bois disappeared and the Ice Sea has lost more than 3 km in length.

Pré de Bar glacier



The Pre de Bar glacier, on the Italian side of Mont Blanc and at the bottom of Val Ferret, in 1988 with its line, is spectacular in its almost perfect form, which seems to lie between two rocky canines. (Photo by Augusta Vittoria Cerutti).

The comparison with an image from 2020 shows how this retreat is huge: of the previous line there is now only a small part, devoured by caves and collapses.

During the ice ages,
the mountain world and its periphery were obviously extremely inhospitable. **Huge glaciers** covered the summits, while the valleys were buried under **hundreds of meters of ice** (more than 1,500 m at Sallanches, more than 2,500 m at Martigny)... only the sharpest peaks and ridges emerged from this ocean of ice.

It will be necessary to wait until the Neolithic period,
for the plains inhabitants to settle in the valleys, even if some incursions of prehistoric hunters on the fringes of the Alpine territory, thanks to specific warm periods, can be attested even before (cave of Baré, at Onnion - 74 - 30,000 years ago).

When you know that the Alpine valleys were already partly ice-free around 15,000 years ago, you can ask yourself:
What reasons pushed these new farmers and breeders to wait so long at the gates of the Alps?

- There were no climatic reasons, the glaciers having melted and the climate having become temperate.
- Nor environmental, the plants having quickly covered these territories, followed by the related fauna.
- This was essentially due to geomorphological reasons. In fact:


The glaciers considerably overdeepened the valleys (up to 1,000 m at the bottom of the current valley near Martigny, or almost 600 m below sea level).


During the melting, these deep valleys with steep slopes became huge lakes, several tens of kilometers long. Almost insurmountable obstacles for our ancestors. Erosion has taken thousands of years to fill these lakes with sediments.


The flattened valley bottoms then allowed populations to settle the interior part of the Alpine massif, as quickly as it had been restrained until then by the presence of glaciers, and then of lakes.

From self-subsistence...

Since the sixth millennium B.C., the Alps were gradually colonized: the inhabitants settled **first at the bottom of valleys** then in the mountains, developed an agro-sylvo-pastoral economy based mainly on self-subsistence.

...to an opening to the world

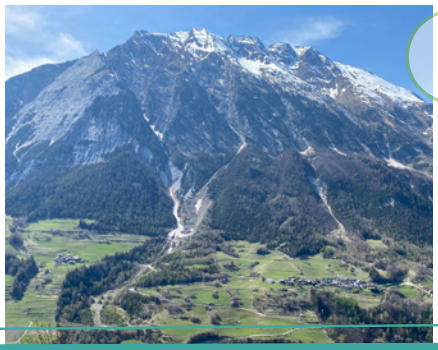
Eight thousand years later, the Alpine landscape has deeply changed. Crossed by **communication routes** and cable connections, it is connected to the world. With a lot of buildings, even urbanized in some places, **it attracts new residents, fascinated by the quality of life in the mountains or by its amazing landscapes.**

People have always adapted
to life in the mountains

Global warming is a big challenge for the inhabitants of the Alps. They have always adapted to the conditions provided by their living environment. In the past, populations were particularly dependent on their environment.

TOPOGRAPHIC RISKS

Complying with the risks associated with the topography, **the communities have established their villages in places sheltered from natural hazards.**



LOCAL RESOURCES

Because the rugged terrain complicates the establishment of communication routes, **they have relied on the local resources at their disposal** for subsistence, construction and the production of different goods.

USE OF SLOPES

The mountain terrain, which makes travel more difficult than elsewhere, **has been well exploited to compensate the shortness of the growing season:**

In the mountains, **agricultural activities were concentrated during a few months,** before winter. Then, everything stops with a certain isolation.

Populations have sought **to exploit the differences in altitude** rather than suffer from it, taking advantage of all land suitable for agriculture or livestock, up to around 3,000 m. Given the different rhythms of vegetations, they **smartly have spread out varied crops and activities at all altitudes.**

In addition to the main dwelling of the village and different ancillary utility buildings, **secondary constructions have been built at different altitudes for a temporary stay: the mazot** (at the level of the vineyard), **the mayen** (around 1,500 - 2,000 m), **the alpine chalet, or the tsa** (around 2,000 - 2,500 m).

SUN EXPOSURE

In addition to the altitude, **the exposure** was **also used wisely: cultivation terraces** were **laid out on the very sunny slopes,** even if **the habitat** was often satisfied also **with less well exposed land.**

ALPINE SOCIETIES

Deep solidarities and a strong sense of community have played an essential role in improving living conditions in the mountains.

Furthermore, in some cases, there is a **seasonal emigration.** This practice not only provided **additional income during winter,** but also contributed to the **cultural openness** of regions that we almost can consider as cut off from the world.

Reconsidering untapped potential

The Alps have experienced **deep socio-economic changes** in recent decades and other activities have taken over agriculture. **Tourism,** in particular **skiing,** and **hydroelectric production** are examples of this **modern exploitation of potentialities offered by this environment and climatic conditions specific of the mountain.**

Project sites to visit

#1 Sarriod de La Tour Castle

In this castle, dating from the 11th and 12th centuries for its oldest part, you can admire important series of wall paintings from the early 13th century and discover the remarkable «Hall of Heads», where beams decorations reveal peculiar and fantastic characters, sometimes monsters.

Opening **From October to March:** 10am to 1pm and from 14h to 17h. Closed on Mondays. Closed on December 25th and January 1st. From April to September: From 9am to 7pm, every day.

Rates **From 0 to 3€**

20 Rue du Petit-Saint-Bernard, 11010 Saint-Pierre (Aosta Valley) +39 (0)16 590 4689

castellivalledaosta@regione.vda.it

www.autourdumontblanc.com/amb/index.cfm/chateau-sarriod-de-la-tour.html

#2 Archaeological site the Wall (said) of Hannibal

Despite its name, it is not the memory of the Carthaginian General that is preserved by the remains of a **monumental wall** located at 2,650 m. of altitude. It is instead a precious testimony of the the tensions which emerged between Romans and locals at the rising of the **New Empire** in the 1st century B.C.

Opening **Opening from July to the end of September:** Free visit to the archaeological site, educational brochure to download from the site of www.ramha.ch. Departure from the village of Liddes or from the Cœur alpine pasture.

Rates **Free**

Association Recherches Archéologiques Mur (dit) d'Hannibal, Maison de Commune, 1945 Liddes

info@ramha.ch www.ramha.ch

#3 Gaul road

The Gaul road crosses the bottom of the central valley of the Aosta Valley, then, at the chief town, the road divides in the direction of the passes, Great and Little-Saint Bernard. On the high valley, you will see many remains of **the ancient road:** In Villeneuve, Arvier, as well as in Pierre Taillée (Avise) where **the most monumental part** is preserved.

Opening **Road in free access**

Rates **Free**

Aosta Valley

+39 (0)16 523 6627 info@turismo.vda.it

www.viadellegallie.vda.it

#4 Great St. Bernard Pass and hospice

The Great St. Bernard Pass, at an altitude of 2,473 m on the Italian-Swiss border, has a **centuries-old history**. It is a **natural, cultural and spiritual place,** known for its famous hospice inhabited all year round. A **new educational route around the lake** allows to discover the amazing places of this site, in addition to the visit of the Hospice Museum.

Opening **From mid-June to mid-October:** depending on road conditions of the pass.

Rates **From 0 to CHF 10.-**

2 Col du Grand-Saint-Bernard, 1946 Bourg-Saint-Pierre

+41 (0)27 787 12 36 hospice@gsbernard.com

www.gsbernard.com

Note: the prices and times are shown as a guide, they may change over time.

Nature & culture, an immersive experience in the heart of an exceptional heritage

Chalet du Col des Montets - 1,461 m

Jardin botanique alpin Flore-Alpe - 1,500 m

Maison de la réserve naturelle de Passy - 1,352 m

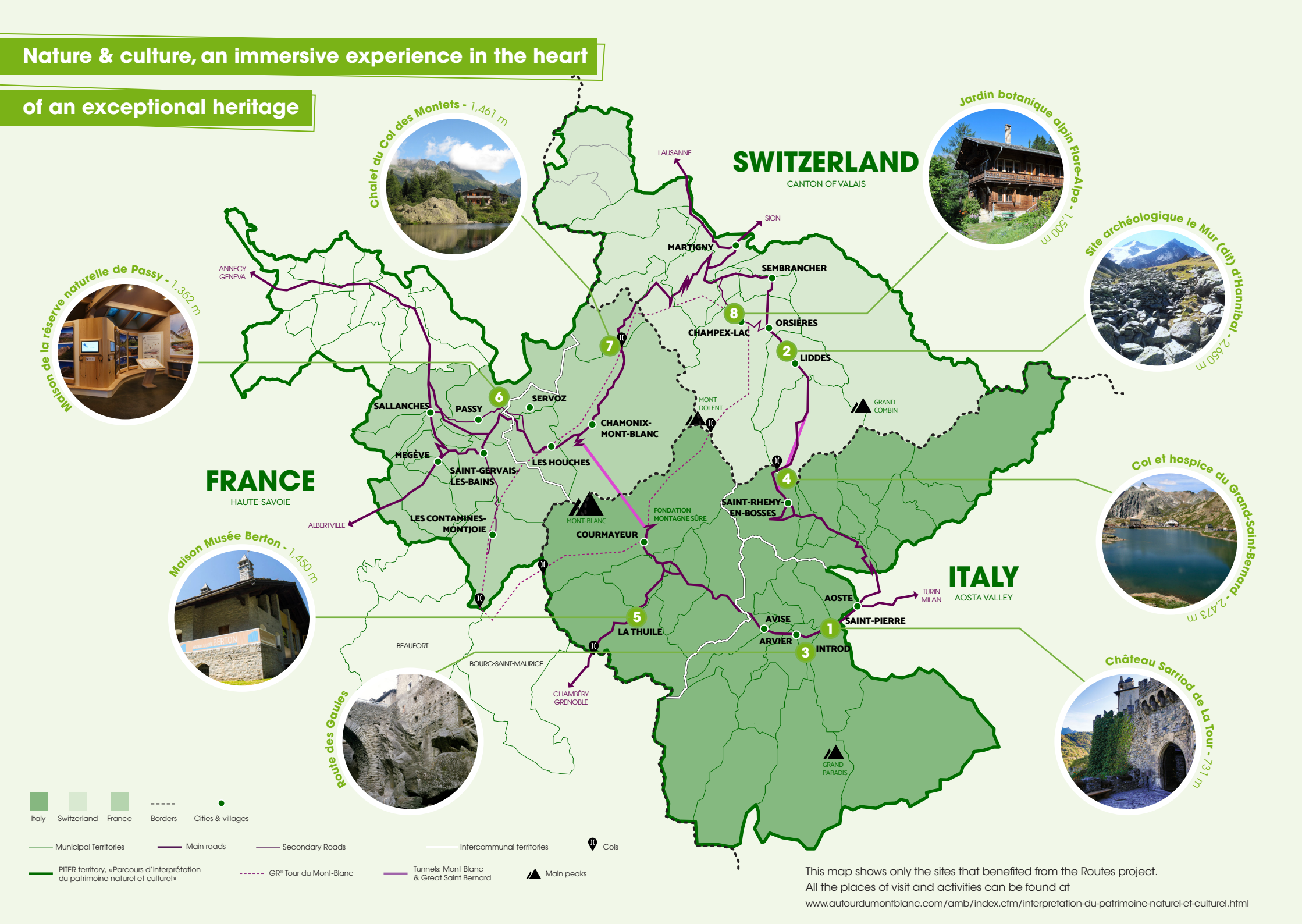
Site archéologique le Mur (dit) d'Hannibal - 2,650 m

Col et hospice du Grand-Saint-Bernard - 2,473 m

Maison Musée Berton - 1,450 m

Route des Gaules

Château Sarriod de La Tour - 731 m



This map shows only the sites that benefited from the Routes project.
All the places of visit and activities can be found at
www.autourdumontblanc.com/amb/index.cfm/interpretation-du-patrimoine-naturel-et-culturel.html

#5 Berton House Museum

A wonderful villa built by the brothers Robert and Louis Berton in 1975, which has now become a museum. You will see a **rich collection of over 250 pieces representing the craftsmanship of the Aosta Valley** through the centuries (from 1500 to mid-1900).

Opening **From December 1st to May 1st:** Friday and Saturday from 10am to 1pm and 4pm to 7pm and Sunday from 10am to 1pm. **During Christmas, Carnival and Easter holidays** from 4pm to 7pm. Closed on December 25th and 26th. **From June 20th to September 20th** from 3pm to 8pm daily except Mondays.

Rates **From 0 to 2€**

52 Hameau Entrèves, 11016 La Thuile (Aosta Valley) +39 (0)366 564 7161

maisonmuseeberton@gmail.com

www.maisonberton.it

#6 House of the Passy Nature Reserve

The house offers **permanent exhibitions on the fauna, flora and landscapes of the Nature Reserve.** You will find a supplied documentation, a play area and a shop.

Opening **During school holidays:** from 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. Exhibitions on the permanent free access passageway.

Specific request Dogs not allowed.

Rates **Free entry,** reservations required for groups.

321 Chemin des Parchets, 74190 Passy (Plaine Joux site)

+33 (0)4 50 90 23 07 rnpassy@gmail.com
reserve.passy@cen-haute-savoie.org

www.cen-haute-savoie.org/accueil-public/maison-reserve-naturelle-passy

#7 Chalet of Col des Montets

It is a whole **discovery of fauna, flora and climatic change** in this preserved environment that awaits you. Set in an exceptional natural setting, this chalet is also **a must-see starting point for hiking** to the iconic sites of the valley.

Opening **From mid-May to mid-September and all Saints' holidays:** 10am to 5pm excluding summer holidays. From 9.30am to 6pm during the summer holidays.

Rates **Free entry.**
Guided tours: Contact us.

Col des Montets, RD 1506, 74400 Chamonix Mont-Blanc

During the chalet's opening season: +33 (0)7 62 26 25 15 • Off season: +33 (0)7 63 78 62 84

alex.bruneau@ccvcmb.fr

www.autourdumontblanc.com/amb/index.cfm/chalet-du-col-des-montets.html

#8 Botanical Alpine Garden Flore-Alpe

Classified as a cultural property of national importance, this **enchanting** place welcomes **more than 4,000 species of plants from the local flora,** from surrounding regions, as well as from European mountain chains and other continents.

Opening **From May to October:** Every day from 10am to 6pm.

Rates **From 0 to CHF 8.** + ST Bernard PASS

27 Route de l'Adray, 1938 Champex-Lac (Orsières commune)

+41 (0)27 783 12 17 info@flore-alpe.ch

www.flore-alpe.ch

Did you know that **this change is happening twice as fast in the alpine zone**, with consequences that are already clearly visible?

Alpine populations have learned in the past to deal with the mountain environment and its unexpected events. But the current climate change evolution represents an unprecedented challenge for them, due to its pace and multiple impacts.

The glaciers

If we can see from the valley that the glaciers are lacking ice in some places, some insiduous phenomenons are taking place hidden from plain view. **The drastic loss of thickness** in the upstream areas, where snow and ice once accumulated, **suggests an accelerated disappearance.** The warming of the ice mass implies risks of sudden collapse.

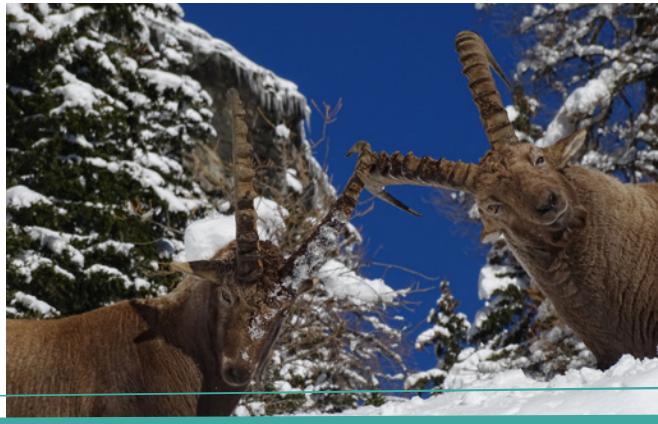
In other words, the vulnerability of those who can still appear as giants is considerable.

Wildlife

It finds itself obligated to retreat towards high altitude areas, on increasingly small spots. There, animals **struggle to find the food** that is suited to their regular diet.

The flora

Less reactive, the flora is exposed to the increasing number of unexpected events related to water and heat stress. Given its reproduction mode, **it also struggles to move at sufficient speed.**



Water resource

Resources in water are under surveillance, with a change in the availability of water already observed. **The stocks of snow from winter** no longer melt only in an ever premature spring **but also several times during winter.** This leads to winter floods and, in some areas, a **water shortage at the start of the summer.**

Alpine populations

Settled for about 7,000 years, the Alpine populations are however not witnessing their first environmental and climatic crisis. They **have always been able to cope with and adapt** to these constraints. The rise of industrial activity and tourism during the 20th century, with the maintenance of a fruitful agriculture, multiplies the challenges in these economically dynamic territories. Therefore, our territories have been putting in place, for several decades, **solutions to adapt to this new and evolving context.**

Experimentation, resilience... the Alps, and in particular, the Mont-Blanc region, **are a true laboratory of climate change.** Both its natural and cultural heritage, as well as the actors who keep it alive, are all witnesses of this evolution.

Climatic conditions
that vary with altitude...

As we reach higher altitudes, the air temperature decreases by an average of 0,6 °C every 100 meters, because sun rays are less absorbed by the atmosphere.

The temperature variations between day and night, but also between seasons, are more marked than in the plain. Precipitation is also higher in altitude, including snow.

... but also with the morphology of the ground

The exposure induces a very variable sunlight, generating almost tropical weather conditions close to **the ground on the southern slope** and **close to Artic ones on the northern slope.**This variability has consequences at slope level as well as at the micro-level of bumps and rocks or between places that remain covered in snow and peaks exposed to winds, where snow is constantly blown away.

A biodiversity
that adapts and specializes

The result is **a mosaic** of climatic conditions and therefore **species,** coexisting in sometimes just a few square meters.

It is the temperature that limits the presence of a species up and down.

For example,
the upper limit of the forest, visible by naked eye, reflects the temperature at which the conifers do not have enough heat to grow.

To survive in these particular conditions, biodiversity has adapted and improved specific skills. The Mont-Blanc Massif is home to many **remarkable species**, that:

- have **very fast development** skills but **limited productivity**,
- know how to reduce their energy needs,
- can withstand frost or dryness (sources: CREA Mont-Blanc).

More information on www.atlasmontblanc.org/survoler.

Nature today
tested by global warming

The fauna and flora of the Alps have adapted remarkably to the conditions of life in the mountains.

However, ongoing global warming puts species under pressure, forcing them to quickly adapt to new climate conditions.

Global warming in an alpine environment is measured through scientific tools at the Great Saint-Bernard pass, at 2,473 m altitude, where the oldest and highest weather station of the Alps is located. The data collected since 1817, clearly shows the climate warming: **average temperatures increased by 2.5°C at the pass in 150 years, while the exceptionally cold years gradually disappeared.** The nearby lake also can be used as an indicator: the complete thaw period, which generally takes place from June to October, has been extended by about fifteen days in sixty years.

In answer to these changing climatic conditions,

landscapes evolve to adapt to new environmental constraints.

The mountain ecosystem is moving higher and higher

- **On the slopes, trees** keep growing higher than they could for the past 7 centuries due to a colder climate.
- **Alpine lawns colonize areas recently cleared by the glacier,** where the so-called «pioneer» plant species are the first to settle.

Visualize the Mont-Blanc metamorphosis

The outdoor exhibition installed at the House of the Passy Nature Reserve*, as part of the Routes project, shows this evolution at the Mont-Blanc level. A game of perspectives shows what the positions of vegetation levels will be at the end of the 21st century. Impressive!

*For more information on the House of the Passy Nature Reserve, please visit page 20.

The lakes and streams change faces

The level of a lake is the result of **a light balance between water inputs and losses.** The repeated droughts of the early 21st century have caused the level of many lakes and torrents to drop.

New landscapes are taking shape

The melting of glaciers regularly results in the creation of lakes of different extents, which **can grow and disappear in a few years.**

«White» glaciers become «black» glaciers

The glacier lines that still go down at low altitude (the Ice Sea, Brenva glacier, Saleinaz glacier...) show now too many rocks. In the glacier basins, **the many collapses from summits give glaciers the look of a wide construction site** where, until the end of the 20th century, these areas were of a pure white. At high altitude, it is the wall ice that disappears very quickly. Even if it is generally exposed to the north and at more than 3,000 m altitude, it is only a few meters thick and **melts quickly, which contributes to the landscape changes.**

In the collective imagination, the high mountain is always associated with glaciers and eternal snow...

... A place of extreme beauty, considered immutable and unchanged in its icy coat... **But it is precisely from the high mountain that arrive the strongest signs of the current climate change.**

The retreat of the Rutor glacier. Photo taken in 2018 with yellow indication of the glacier front, in 1999.

The extent of alpine glaciers is reducing year after year

It is estimated that since 1850 **their area has decreased by about 30%** (-25% French Alps, -30% Italian Alps), with even more prominent local examples of reduction.

The glacier fronts are retreating tens of meters each year:

-21 m / year* In the Aosta Valley

-27 m / year in Switzerland

*Average data for the period 2000 - 2020.

Waterlogged elements are degrading

A marked evolution of the cryosphere is also observed throughout the Alps, i.e. of all the terrestrial environments and where water is present in the solid state.

Beyond glaciers, this includes:

- permafrost (permanently frozen ground)
- snow
- frozen lakes and rivers

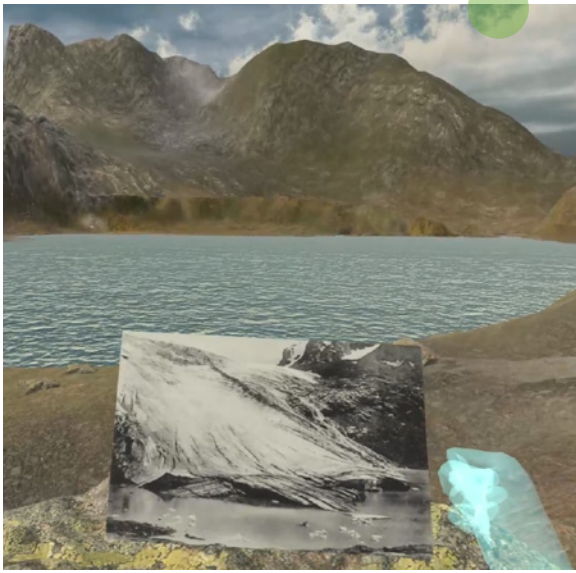
Among the changes observed:

- **degradation of permafrost** (raising the minimum altitude and decreasing the thickness of the layer permanently frozen)
- **decrease in permanence of the snowpack on the ground,** especially at the lowest altitudes.

This fast and marked change in glacial and periglacial environments is due, in particular, to the increase in annual average temperatures, which, since the late 80s, have increased in the Mont-Blanc territory by about 0,5°C per decade.

Increased and diversified risks linked to natural hazard

The current evolution has several consequences: the risk of collapse caused by rocky slope destabilization, the risk of collapse of the fronts of some temperate glaciers and the risk of flooding caused by the abrupt emptying of the glacial lakes.



Glacier du Rutor - an image from the educational tool in virtual reality

The Rutor Glacier: an immersive experience of climate change

As part of the Routes project, **a virtual reality educational tool** has been created for the Berton House Museum in La Thuile, to enable everyone to live the glacier experience: explore its morphology and understand the real effects of climate change on alpine glaciers. **Travelling through present, past and future, we can observe directly the evolution of the Rutor glacier,** whose front has retreated more than 2 km from the the position it had in the middle of the 19th century (about 300 m only in the decade 2009-2019).

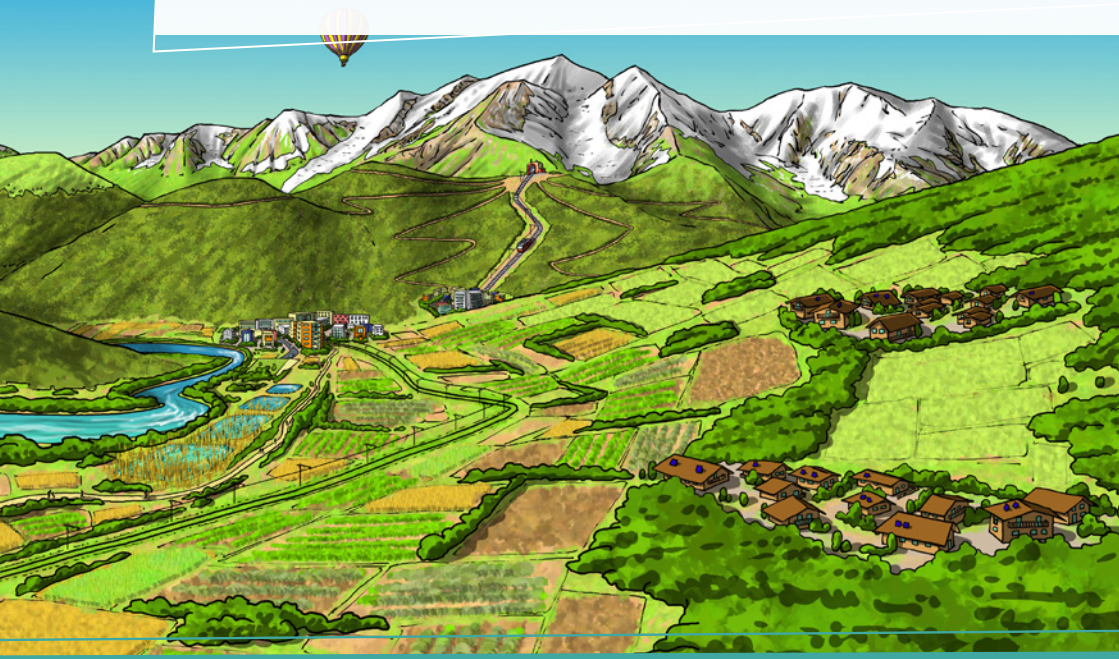
More information on the topic related to the territories of the Mont-Blanc is available on the sites of the Observatoire du Mont-Blanc (www.Observatoire.espace-mont-blanc.com), and the Espace Mont-Blanc (www. espace-mont-blanc.com), as well as on www.fondazionemontagnasicura.org.

Local populations are directly affected

Impacts on populations living in mountain areas are getting worse: variation in the availability and distribution of water resources, vulnerability of winter tourism...

It is now clear that current developments will continue in the coming decades, but the intensity and extent of changes and future impacts will depend on mitigation strategies. **It is our ability to reduce climate-altering emissions (especially CO2) that will allow us to contain global warming below 2°C.**

There are two different representations of evolution of a mountain valley: on the one hand, a life in harmony with the environment, but with a limited population capacity; on the other hand, anarchic development, leading to excessive consumption of natural spaces, resources and energy.
Undoubtedly, the future lies between these two perspectives, in a reasoned development of the finite space that is a valley.



The Cafés Citoyens,
thought and knowledge kaleidoscopes

- The history of the highlands around Mont Blanc.
- The adaptation of its populations to climate change.
- The wild beauty of landscapes and summits - sources of inspiration.
- The discovery of natural and cultural treasures embedded in the highest massive valleys of Europe.

These are some of the detailed topics that people delve into during the Cafés Citoyens, these **priviledged cross-border meetings** organized by the Safe Mountain Foundation (Foundation Montagna Sicura), to motivate the public and **provide new knowledge.**

All about passion

Glaciologists, geographers, historians, anthropologists, researchers and mid-mountain guides **have told us with passion the charm and beauty of our territories**, enhancing this **sense of identity and belonging** that connects the populations around Mont-Blanc.

Café Citoyen • Sarriod de La Tour Castle,
Saint-Pierre in Aosta Valley

Cultural landscape and evolution of the castle (with visit of the halls).
Some distinctive features of the Valaisan wine landscape, and the tourism associated with it, have been recalled, enhancing the cross-border aspect of the project, with a comparison among territories.

The Cafés Citoyens are important meeting events, a connection and **strengthening of the friendship among these three countries, and a boost to continue** on this path.
Participants have taken advantage of these meetings thanks to an in-depth study of new topics: transformation in time of the Mont Blanc territory, a mysterious and geographical space that became symbol of beauty and transcendence, etc.

Café Citoyen • Courmayeur

The true beauty of our glaciers and their key role in the evolution of the relationship between man and mountain, as well as a modern representation of high-altitude spaces.

From the end of the 18th century, **the Mont-Blanc and its glaciers**, with strong aesthetic and emotional connotations, became **objects of scientific and cultural interest**, of intellectual curiosity, and an artistic **source of inspiration** for renowned writers, poets and painters (contributing to the dissemination of the concept of beauty and geographical knowledge).

Discovery day • Val Vény

Discovering this must-see and amazing valley, the Val Vény, just after the Café Citoyen. Mid-mountain guides gave participants the tools and keys to understand **the extraordinary characteristics of these icy environments** and in particular of the Miage Glacier.

Training,
discovery and promotion of the natural and cultural heritage

44 Participants, mid-mountain guides of the Aosta Valley, Haute-Savoie and Valais Canton.

From one Ferret valley to the other

Travelling training for mid-mountain guides

The 1st cross-border training, organized by the Safe Mountain Foundation (Foundation Montagna Sicura)

Tour for guides, with experts in geology, glaciology and history, on the passes Ban Darrey and Fenêtre de Ferret on the border between Italy and Switzerland to reach the pass of the Great St. Bernard.

The experts play an essential role as connecting point in the discovery of the territory in all its aspects. Raising their skills on the topic of heritage enhancement is a strategic objective.

- **Overview of the most beautiful landscapes** and characteristic elements of the beautiful space around Mont-Blanc **through the eyes of the experts** in geology, glaciology, ecology and archaeology.
- **Discovery of the identity** and elements that constitute **the beauty of the heritage of the Mont-Blanc territory,** both from its natural and cultural point of view.

Espace Mont-Blanc
a flora and a heritage to share

Hybrid and interactive training to better understand territory issues

The 2nd cross-border training, organized by the Botanical Alpine Garden Flore-Alpe of Champex-Lac

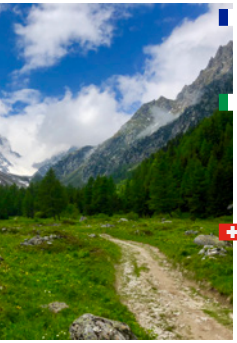
During virtual meetings and a hike, participants addressed key issues related to their practice and region. Is the Mont-Blanc territory a biodiversity hotspot in danger? Is it possible to see a common identity in these three territories? Should we unite to survive? How can you be amazed while learning about the challenges of global change?

- **Discovery of the beauty of natural, built and sociocultural heritage of Espace Mont-Blanc, with the intervention of Swiss, Italian and French specialists** in botany, biogeography, history, ethnology, anthropology, economics and mediation.
- **Excursion to the Botanical Garden and in the surroundings** of Champex-Lac to **become ambassadors of this amazing territory.**

Focus on "Routes for Natural and Cultural Heritage Interpretation" project

12 PARTNERS INVOLVED

6 local intercommunal authorities & 6 municipalities



Community of municipalities Pays du Mont-Blanc
Delegated subject: Municipality of Passy

Community of municipalities of the Valley of Chamonix Mont-Blanc

Group of Aosta Valley municipalities of Grand-Combin
Delegated subject: Municipality of Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses

Group of Aosta Valley municipalities of Valdigne-Mont-Blanc
Delegated subject: Municipality of La Thuile and Foundation Montagne Sûre

Group of Aosta Valley municipalities of Grand-Paradis,

Valais Canton

Municipalities of Bourg-Saint-Pierre, Liddes and Orsières,

Regional Center for Studies of Alpine populations (CREPA, Centre Régional d'Etudes des Populations Alpines)

Botanical Alpine Garden Flore-Alpe

Archaeological site the Wall (said) of Hannibal (RAHMA, Recherches Archéologiques du Mur (dit) d'Hannibal)

Beneficiaries of renovations and improvements

8 visiting sites

having received investments

House of the Passy Nature Reserve in Plaine-Joux • Chalet of Col des Montets in Chamonix Mont-Blanc • Botanical Alpine Garden Flore-Alpe in Champex-Lac • Archaeological site the Wall (said) of Hannibal in Liddes • Didactic trail at the pass of the Great St. Bernard • Pass of the Great St. Bernard and his former customs • Gaul road in Arvier and Avise • Sarriod de La Tour Castle in Saint-Pierre - Berton House Museum in La Thuile

Funding

1,647,059 €

committed by the French and Italian partner communities and municipalities.

- of which 85 % of European funding is € 1,4 million

CHF 471 575.-

committed by Swiss communities and partners.

Period

4 years

That is 3 years + 1 year granted following the health crisis, to develop the actions together and propose an attractive offer always new for all publics.

- October 2018 to October 2022.

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PHOTOS CREDITS

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C. Randin • H. Schepis • M. Vignolini • K. Weber