

## Elbrus - Expedition Information Pack

We have designed this document to give you all the detailed information you need in the most concise way possible. We hope you find it useful.

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### Fitness & Training:

We have classified Elbrus as a level 8 expedition, for more information about our levels system [click here](#). Our new itinerary on the north side of Elbrus is an extremely tough challenge with an average of five hours of trekking per day, except on the summit day which involves roughly 16 to 20 hours of trekking. Although this is not a technical climb, it does require the use of crampons and an ice axe. Previous experience in winter conditions and at high altitude (>5000m) is recommended. We will provide training in how to move on snow and ice during the first three days of hiking. It is your responsibility to contact us if you have any concerns regarding your level of fitness, health or ability to complete the trek.

Hillwalking: Everybody is different, so we cannot recommend a specific pre-expedition fitness programme. However please remember the fitter you are the more you will enjoy the expedition. We would recommend hiking at least twice per month in preparation for this expedition. In the three months prior to departure try to include two long training hikes (6-8 hours at a comfortable, steady pace) on consecutive days with a 20kg rucksack. You or someone in your party should have walking experience and the necessary navigational skills whenever you go out on the hills.

Remember; getting time on your feet is more important than completing hikes quickly! This is about building stamina and endurance.

In the Gym: Although hillwalking is best, you should also aim to complete at least three cardio training sessions per week. The type of training is not important, you just need to elevate your heart rate for 45 minutes to an hour. Typical sessions might be running, cycling, swimming, spin classes, circuit training, kettlebells or HIIT classes.

If you have low muscle mass in your legs, we suggest that you add strength training to your schedule. Developing muscle mass will protect your joints and this is very important especially on long descents.

If you have any old injuries, weak joints, soft tissue injuries or any other issues which affect your mobility we suggest you address these issues now. It goes without saying that if you are experiencing discomfort or pain during short training sessions the problem has the potential to become more serious when exercising for long durations on continuous days. Please visit your physiotherapist in an effort to address the issue and strengthen the weakened area.

Remember; it doesn't matter what kind of training you do – find something that you enjoy and you will stick with it!

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### Training Weekends:

We hold training weekends prior to all expeditions, where you will meet an expedition leader and your fellow adventurers! An experienced expedition leader will give a full expedition brief, lead two training hikes and offer expert advice on all aspects of the expedition including training, equipment, weather, and more. These events are also a lot of fun and they take place in Glendalough, Co. Wicklow, which is a stunning location! When you book an expedition with

Earth's Edge an account is generated for you on our website. You need to log on to your account to register for your training weekend.

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**Equipment:**

You are responsible for having the necessary personal equipment you need for this trek. When you sign up to an Earth's Edge expedition you are entitled to a loyalty card with our equipment partner; Great Outdoors. Great Outdoors has an excellent range of expedition equipment, very knowledgeable staff and is 100% Irish owned. The loyalty card entitles you to a 15% discount until the day your expedition departs and 10% discount thereafter. To apply for a loyalty card please forward your confirmation email and your postal address to [web@greatoutdoors.ie](mailto:web@greatoutdoors.ie) and they will send you a loyalty card. You can also take a copy of the email into their George's Street Store and they will generate a loyalty card for you while you wait. Allow 10 minutes for this.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST	
Synthetic mountaineering boots. (This item may be available to rent upon request.) -Examples of suitable boots; La Sportiva G2SM, Scarpa Phantom 6000 or similar. -Examples of unsuitable boots; La Sportiva Nepal Extreme, Scarpa Mont Blanc, Meindl Island Pro or similar.	
Gaiters if your boots do not have a built-in gaiter. Rental boots typically do not come with built-in gaiters.	
12 point crampons (This item is available to rent upon request).	
Walking ice axe (60 – 70cm): The ideal length of the ice axe depends on your height. Under 1.7m use 60cm, Between 1.7 & 1.9m use 65cm and over 1.9m use a 70cm tool. (This item may be available to rent upon request.)	
Sling (approx size 120cm x 10mm) x 2. (These are not available for rent.)	
Climbing harness & two screw gate carabiners. (This item may be available to rent upon request.)	
Trekking boots. If you are buying new boots for this trip please ensure they are well broken in before departure. Few things will make you more miserable during the trek than blisters.	
Runners or sandals (to wear in transit & at lower altitude when not trekking).	
Mid-weight hiking socks x 3. At least three pairs, some people choose to bring a pair of socks for each day of trekking.	
Heavyweight hiking socks x 2.	
Lightweight liner socks (for summit night).	
Underwear, we recommend you bring enough so you are comfortable at all times. Synthetic rather than cotton underwear is advisable.	
Shorts x 1.	
Lightweight trousers x 1.	
Softshell trousers x 1.	
Synthetic/wool/silk long johns x 2 (for night time use and summit night).	
Waterproof trousers (N.B. make sure the trousers have zips to the knee at least).	
Long sleeve base layers x 2 (silk, wool, or synthetic).	
Short sleeve base layer x 2 (as above).	
Mid-weight fleece, down or soft shell jackets x 2.	
A down jacket. It must be heavy weight with a hood (at least 750 grams in weight).	
Waterproof jacket.	
Waterproof poncho.	
A fleece hat to wear in the mornings and evenings.	
A buff.	
Category 3 or 4 sunglasses.	
Category 3 or 4 ski goggles.	
A sun hat with a wide brim to cover the face and neck.	
A pair of lightweight wool or synthetic liner gloves.	
A pair of heavy mountaineering gloves.	

A pair of heavy down mitts.	
Walking poles.	
Rucksack (65-80 litres): You will use this when carrying loads between basecamp and Camp 1 with an estimated maximum weight of 20kgs.	
Duffel bag (100-150 litres) to carry your equipment to basecamp. We recommend you use something strong and sturdy, as this bag will be carried by the support team.	
Dry bags. To organise and waterproof your equipment inside your bags.	
Water bottles: Three wide mouth 1 litre water bottles. If you wish to bring a water bladder to use at lower elevations, you can but it will not work at high altitude so you need bottles.	
Water bottle insulators for each of your bottles.	
A 500ml thermos flask.	
A warm sleeping bag (comfort rating of -10°C or lower).	
A sleeping bag liner (This helps to keep your sleeping bag clean and adds an extra season).	
Swimsuit (needed if you get the opportunity to visit a Russian Sauna).	
Spare laces.	
Suncream at least factor 30.	
SPF lip balm.	
Insect repellent, deet based products are best.	
Hand sanitiser. You need to have enough supplies for the duration of your expedition.	
Toiletries, N.B as little as possible, if you are travelling with friends try to share toiletries. * Wet wipes and a nail brush are very useful.	
Toilet roll.	
Personal first aid kit. You need to have enough supplies for the duration of your expedition. We recommend you carry the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rehydration salts</li> <li>● Plasters</li> <li>● Compeed</li> <li>● Paracetamol</li> <li>● Ibuprofen</li> <li>● Buscopan</li> <li>● Throat lozenges</li> <li>● Nasal spray</li> <li>● Decongestant such as Sudafed</li> <li>● Antibiotics suitable to treat traveller's diarrhoea <i>Azithromycin or something with similar coverage would be the most suitable antibiotic, please consult your doctor for up-to-date advice. The expedition medic will have a full medical kit to deal with issues of a more serious nature.</i></li> </ul>	
Personal medication. Please carry any medication you are currently taking on a regular basis such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Asthma inhalers</li> <li>● Nutritional supplements</li> <li>● Blood pressure tablets</li> </ul> If you suffer or have suffered from any skin condition, bring appropriate creams such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Canesten</li> <li>● Zovirax</li> <li>● Anusol</li> <li>● Hydrocortisone 1%</li> </ul>	
Small towel for washing.	
Personal snacks; although sufficient food is supplied throughout the trek you need to bring your own supply of high energy snacks for the expedition. Bring snacks you enjoy eating such as sweets, energy bars & chocolate.	
Headtorch with spare batteries.	
A spare set of clothes to wear after you finish the expedition.	

A photocopy of your travel insurance and passport.	
Vaccination booklet (if required).	
<b>OPTIONAL ITEMS</b>	
Diamox (tablet form not capsules); if you have decided to take it. For more information about Diamox its uses and side effects please refer to the information on AMS and Diamox in this document.	
We ensure that all drinking water provided to you is treated correctly but you may still wish to bring your own personal supply of tablets/drops for water purification such as iodine or chlorine. Powdered fruit juice can be used to disguise the taste of the purification.	
Power Adaptor – Plug C or F is used in Russia.	
Thermarest.	
Ear plugs.	
For glasses/contact wearers we advise bringing both glasses & contact lenses. Daily disposable lenses rather than monthlies are highly recommended.	
A camera.	
A book and/or writing paper.	
Hand warmer sachets.	

### Rental Equipment:

If you wish to rent equipment in Russia, you will find information on how do so on your account. You will receive login details for your account via email at the time of booking.

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### Flights:

For those that book a flight inclusive package with us, we will send the flight details via e-mail approximately two months prior to departure. We will also include information on the baggage allowance and packing instructions. For those that book a land only package please consult us prior to booking your flights. It is important you are on time for the trek briefing on the first day.

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### Description & Detailed Itinerary:

We are the only company in the world who send an International guide and doctor on our Elbrus (5,642m) expeditions while keeping group sizes sustainably small. Sending an international guide and doctor on all our Elbrus treks allows us to deliver an unrivalled level of safety and service for each and every one of our clients. Having smaller group sizes allows us to minimise our environmental impact and foster a stronger team dynamic.

Elbrus (5,642m) is Europe's highest peak and one of the 'Seven Summits'. Unlike most companies we ascend the mountain from the North side which has a lot of advantages when compared to the South side. The South side of Elbrus is essentially a ski resort. Ascending the mountain from this side sees climbers use cable cars, car lifts and piste machines to reach 4,700m and then walk the last 942 metres to reach the summit.

The North side is far more remote and so feels like a proper adventure! There is only a fraction of climbers on this side, however the highest place we can sleep on the mountain is at 3,700m which makes the summit day extremely tough with 1,900m elevation gain.

Located on the stunning Caucasus range the scenery on Elbrus is second to none. These beautiful mountains, which separate the Black Sea and Caspian Sea, are almost 1,000km across. The weather in the region is notoriously fickle and getting a clear window is the key to a successful summit attempt. Our 14-day itinerary allows us time to adjust the summit day by a day or two to take advantage of those windows when possible. The route from Camp 1 to the summit is completely covered in snow and ice but it is not technical. We would recommend you have experience on snow and ice but it is not essential as we will provide training on the expedition.

*Please note the following itinerary is very much subject to change based on weather conditions and the health and fitness of all expedition members. Our itinerary allows a fantastic opportunity to summit Elbrus without using any lifts or snowcats, however you should be aware there is no guarantee in reaching the summit. The nature of high-altitude peaks such as this one means that sometimes we don't get a window of good weather which allows us to attempt the summit.*

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**Day 1: Fly Dublin to Moscow.**

Depart Dublin on an overnight flight to Moscow. Overnight flight.

**Day 2: Fly Moscow to Mineralnye Vody and drive to Pyatigorsk, 3 hrs**

We reach Moscow in the early morning and take the connecting flight to Mineralnye Vody. From Mineralnye Vody we drive for less than an hour to reach Pyatigorsk. Pyatigorsk is popular with Russian tourists who come to visit the town's famous health spas. Relax in the hotel or explore the town in the afternoon. Today the expedition leader will check all participants' equipment and advise you on rental equipment. Overnight hotel. Altitude 500m.

**Day 3: Pyatigorsk to Emmanuel Meadows, 4 hrs.**

Today we take the four hour drive to our basecamp on the Emmanuel meadows (2,200m). The 100km journey starts on sealed road then moves to gravel and we even cross a river just before basecamp. It's a scenic drive through rural countryside and on clear days we get great views of Elbrus. In the afternoon we can go for a short walk to explore the beautiful meadow with wildflowers. Overnight camp.

**Day 4: Carry to Camp 1, 9 hrs.**

Today we carry equipment to camp 1 (3,763m). On this expedition you are required to carry food and some equipment to Camp 1. We may encounter some patches of snow near camp 1 but typically the route is on grass and rock. Once we have dropped our equipment we will return to basecamp for the night. Overnight camp.

**Day 5: Move to Camp 1, 7 hrs**

Today we retrace our steps and move to Camp 1. Overnight camp.

**Day 6: Rest & Skills Day.**

We take a rest day today and practise our snow and ice skills. In the mid-morning we go for a short walk to practice walking in crampons, using an ice axe, basic rope work and moving at altitude. Overnight camp.

**Day 7: Acclimatisation hike to Lentz Rocks, 6 hrs.**

Today we walk to the Lentz rocks (4,650m) gaining significant altitude. We focus on keeping a slow and steady pace to help our acclimatisation. It's a straight forward route and if the weather is good we will have lunch at the rocks and take in the surrounding views before descending back to the camp 1 for dinner. Overnight camp.

**Day 8: Rest Day.**

We take a day to rest bodies ahead of summit day tomorrow. Overnight camp.

**Day 9: Summit Day! 16 to 20 hrs.**

Climbing Elbrus from the North side is very tough. With a 1,900m elevation gain one needs strong physical and mental strength to reach the summit and return to camp 1. We will start in the very early morning by retracing our steps to the Lentz rocks. Usually we enjoy a break at the rocks for food and a hot drink as the sunrises. Once moving again we pass through an area of rocky outcrops and then start to traverse to the west towards the saddle. The saddle separates the Eastern (5,621m) and Western (5,642) summits of Elbrus. We take another break at the saddle and then ascend up the Western summit. Parts of this ascent are quite steep and there is some fixed rope for a short section. This section takes roughly 90 minutes and all the hard work is well worth it as on a clear day the panoramic views from the summit are second to none. We spend a short while at the summit (5,642m) for photos before descending all the way back to Camp 1. Overnight camp.

**Day 10: Spare Summit Attempt.**

A spare day in the case of bad weather on Day 9.

**Day 11: Camp 1 to Emmanuel Meadows, 4 hrs.**

Today we descend back to our base camp in the Emmanuel meadows (2,200m). Overnight camp.

**Day 12: Emmanuel Meadows to Pyatigorsk, 4 hrs.**

In the morning, we drive to Pyatigorsk. Your afternoon is free to visit the health spas or go shopping. In the evening, we go for dinner to celebrate the end of our expedition. Overnight hotel.

**Day 13: Pyatigorsk to Moscow, 3hrs.**

In the morning, we drive back to Mineralnye Vody for the flight back to Moscow. Overnight hotel.

**Day 14: Moscow to Dublin.**

Transfer to the airport in the early afternoon. Depart Moscow on a one stop flight to Dublin. Arrive back in Dublin in the late evening.

**Note:** In the case of bad weather some teams decide to move to the South side of the mountain and attempt the summit from there. The ascent from the south side requires a shorter weather window and can be a good option provided we can source vehicles for the journey around to Terskol. If there is a change to the itinerary of this nature you will need to pay your share of these costs.

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<b>Expedition Costs:</b>	<b>Euro</b>	<b>Sterling</b>	<b>Dollar</b>
Total costs excluding international flights. (Land only)	€3,499	£3,011	\$3,955
Total costs including international flights from Dublin.	€3,999	-	-

A deposit of €399/£399/\$399 is taken at the time of booking, a part payment of €1,000/£1000/\$1000 is due six months prior to departure and the final balance is due two months prior to departure. Prices in Dollar and Sterling were accurate at the time of writing. For up to date prices based on today's exchange rate please visit our website.

**Expedition Costs Include:**

- International flights from Dublin to Moscow, return economy class.
- Internal flights in Russia.
- Experienced Irish/UK expedition leader.
- Experienced Irish/UK expedition doctor.
- Training Weekend.
- Local guides, permits and park fees.
- All accommodation based on twin sharing in hotels in Moscow and Pyatigorsk and camping elsewhere.
- All meals and drinking water are included except in Moscow and Pyatigorsk where accommodation is based on B&B.
- A celebratory dinner at the end of the expedition.
- All transport throughout the expedition.
- All group gear consisting of first aid kits, communications equipment and cooking equipment etc.
- An Earth's Edge bandana for all participants.

**Expedition Costs Exclude:**

- Personal travel insurance.
- Medical vaccinations.
- Tourist visas.
- Personal equipment.
- Personal spending and tips.
- Expenses of a personal nature like laundry, phone calls, alcohol, excess baggage charges and any costs arising out of unforeseen circumstances such as bad weather, landslides, road conditions and any other circumstances beyond our control.
- Optional sightseeing in Moscow and Pyatigorsk.

**Notes:** For those booking a land only package you need to book your own international and internal flights to Mineralnye Vody. We can arrange airport transfers for you which you can book on your [Earth's Edge account](#).

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**Spending Money & Tips:**

We recommend that you carry €300 with you to Russia in mixed notes. You can exchange EURO or US Dollars into Roubles in Moscow airport, Mineralnye Vody airport or at the bank in Pyatigorsk. There are ATM machines in Pyatigorsk so do carry your credit card as a backup. Unfortunately, in Pyatigorsk the hotels and bars only accept cash.

The recommended tip for Elbrus is €70, please give your tip to the Expedition Leader and he/she will distribute the tip evenly among all local staff. The recommended spending amount above includes the tip for the local staff.

Note: There may be additional costs on the expedition which are outside the control of Earth's Edge which you would need to pay for locally. For example if there was a change to the itinerary due to weather and the group summited the mountain a day early, we would then return to Pyatigorsk a day early too. This would result in us needing an extra night in the hotel in Pyatigorsk which would cost in the region of €30 per person.

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#### **Weather:**

Temperatures on the expedition may vary from 0 to 30 degrees during the day and -20 to 10 degrees at night. It's best to be prepared for lower temperatures due to wind chill or the weather turning bad. Usually the days are hot and the nights are cold. You should be ready for inclement weather at all times as the weather can change rather quickly at high altitude. For accurate weather information please review these two websites;

Mountain Forecasts: [www.mountain-forecast.com](http://www.mountain-forecast.com)

Norwegian Meteorological Institute: [www.yr.no](http://www.yr.no)

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#### **Altitude Considerations:**

The human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of barometric pressures and there is plenty of oxygen even at the highest point of this expedition. However, the process of adaptation or acclimatisation does take time and the most important rule is to gain height slowly. Keeping well hydrated is also a huge factor in avoiding AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness). You will be encouraged to drink at least three litres of water per day. Five litres per day is ideal. You should eat well, snack regularly between meals and do not under any circumstances try to diet on this expedition. This will keep your energy levels high throughout the expedition. Although frustrating at times, remember to keep your walking pace slow and steady which will in turn have the same effect on your heart rate. It is those who can set and maintain the correct pace on the approach days that are strongest at higher elevations.

AMS is brought on by lower oxygen levels at higher altitudes. Symptoms include breathlessness, headache, poor sleep, nausea & dizziness. AMS is treated simply by not ascending to higher elevations or in more severe cases descending to lower elevations, where in most cases the symptoms are quickly relieved. This itinerary has been designed to minimise the chances of you experiencing altitude sickness. Our staff are highly experienced in these matters and will be able to give you good advice to help minimise any temporary discomfort that you might experience. Please note it is common for most people to experience mild headaches at higher elevations. Always keep your guide informed on how you are feeling.

At high altitude, and especially in dry conditions, it is essential you protect your airway. This means walking with a bandana covering your mouth and nose, often in hot weather, or when you are breathing heavily. Getting used to covering your airway while walking takes some time, so you should practice prior to departure.

Diamox (Acetazolamide) is a carbonic anhydrase inhibitor. In simple terms Diamox causes the kidneys to excrete more bicarbonate which causes the blood to become more acidic. Acidifying the blood stimulates ventilation, which increases the amount of oxygen in the blood which reduces the chances of getting AMS. We recommend all participants especially those who have had AMS in the past to take Diamox prophylactically (as a preventative) on this expedition, starting on the first day of trekking. Current guidelines suggest 125 mg twice per day (in tablet form not capsules). You should try taking Diamox for two days at some stage prior to departing Ireland to ensure you don't suffer any of the more serious side effects. Numbness and tingling fingers and toes are common but in some cases users can suffer from nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea. If you experience any of the latter three side-effects we would advise against using Diamox. Always consult and follow the advice of your own doctor about Diamox or any other medication.

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#### **Your Medical History:**

When you book an expedition with Earth's Edge an account is generated for you on our website. You will receive login details for your account via email at the time of booking. You need to log on to your account and complete your medical declaration. Once you login, click on required information to access your medical declaration. It is for your own safety that we require you to disclose as much detail about your medical history as possible. The information you supply is treated with the strictest confidence. We will do our best to accommodate everyone on this expedition, but we do reserve the right to refuse participation if we feel your safety or that of the group may be compromised. All participants on Earth's Edge expeditions are required to have a consent form completed by their own doctor. We recommend you do

this at the same time you see your doctor for travel vaccines (if required). The Doctor's Consent Form can be downloaded from your Earth's Edge account.

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#### **Your Dietary Requirements:**

We will try our best to cater for those with dietary restrictions. If you have any dietary restrictions, please declare them when completing your medical declaration on your Earth's Edge account. You will receive login details for your account via email at the time of booking. You need to log on to your account and complete your medical declaration. Once you login, click on required information to access your medical declaration. We will organise for you to have a suitable meal on your flight where meals are supplied by the airline. It is not possible for us to source specialist gluten or dairy free products locally. We will endeavour to provide suitable alternative carbohydrates, for example potatoes or rice rather than bread. If you want to have specialist food like gluten free bread and pasta or lactose free milk you will need to bring them with you on the expedition.

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#### **Vaccinations & Prophylaxis:**

We are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health directly. We recommend consulting your GP or The Travel Health Clinic ([www.travelhealth.ie](http://www.travelhealth.ie)) for the most up-to-date medical advice. You will find Vaccination and Prophylaxis Advice for this destination on your Earth's Edge account. When you book an expedition with Earth's Edge an account is generated for you on our website. You will receive login details for your account via email at the time of booking.

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#### **Tourist Visa:**

All participants are required to have a tourist visa to enter Russia. You must have at least two free pages in your passport and ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months after you return home. Six weeks prior to departure we will send you the required letter of invitation to obtain a visa. You will then need to follow the instructions of the Russian Embassy of your country to obtain a visa. Please allow at least 20 working days for your visa to process. It is your responsibility to ensure that you make the application in good time.

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#### **Travel Insurance:**

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have sufficient personal travel insurance for this expedition. Your policy must provide cover for; a) medical injury or sickness, b) trekking up to 5,700 metres, c) helicopter evacuation in an emergency situation, and d) repatriation to one's country of residence. You must declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your insurers and ensure you receive written confirmation that any pre-existing medical conditions are fully insured. We advise you to obtain travel insurance as soon as you book, that will cover you for unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or injury that might result in you not being able to take part in your expedition. We recommend Trailfinders for your travel insurance requirements as their policies cover a, b, c & d as above and include cancellation cover. To obtain travel insurance with Trailfinders go to [www.trailfinders.ie/insurance](http://www.trailfinders.ie/insurance) or call their travel insurance phone line +353 1 702 9102

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#### **Safety Standards:**

At Earth's Edge your safety is our priority. Your expedition leader is very experienced in the mountains and in international travel. All our expedition medics are qualified doctors with a keen interest in adventure travel and in expedition medicine. We use local guides, cooks, drivers and support staff of the highest standard. We employ local staff based on their qualifications, experience and references. Our doctor will have an extensive medical kit with them but please carry a basic first aid kit yourself too (as detailed in the equipment list). Always listen to your expedition leader and follow their instructions.

We advise all participants to do their own research on local laws and customs before travelling to Russia. Up to date travel advice can be found on the DFA website:

<https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice/a-z-list-of-countries/russian-federation/> .

Poor personal hygiene resulting in gastroenteritis (Delhi Belly) is the most common cause of illness on expeditions. The good news is that it is easily avoided if you remember to always wash your hands and apply hand sanitizer after going to the toilet and before touching food. Always use water fit for drinking to brush your teeth. While using showers or washing your face, try not to ingest any water. We recommend people eat as healthily as possible and take a multivitamin supplement and probiotics for one month prior to departure and during the expedition. This will help you adjust to changes in your diet and keep you healthy throughout the expedition.

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### Summit Day Policy:

Our goal on this expedition is for the entire group to reach the summit and return safely. Due to the difficulty of the summit day on this mountain and the importance of maintaining a good guide to guest ratio, it is essential we attempt the summit with a strong team. Any guests who are deemed by our expedition leader as not fit enough to reach and return from the summit safely, will not be allowed to attempt the summit. This ensures we have a strong team for summit and that those guests who are fit enough are given the best opportunity to attempt it.

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### About Elbrus:

Area:	17,075,400 sq. km
Population:	143,975,923 (2015 est.)
Official Languages:	Russian
Religion:	Russian Orthodox (75%), Muslim (5%) Christianity (2%), Other (2%) & no religious affiliation (16%)
Local Time:	GMT +3.00
Local Currency:	Rouble (RUB).
Currency for Exchange:	EURO, USD & GBP.
Where to Exchange:	In banks found in all major towns.
ATMs:	ATMs are found in all major towns.
Credit Cards:	Are generally accepted.

Up-to-date information concerning global exchange rates can be obtained at [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com).

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### Discounts and Photo Competition:

If you have travelled with us before please visit our [return customer](#) page for details on what discount you are entitled to.

If you have a friend who wants to travel with us please visit our [refer a friend](#) page for details on our referral programme.

If you are booking as part of a group please visit our [group discounts](#) page for details on what discount you are entitled to.

On each expedition, one person will win an Earth's Edge Down jacket and Gore-Tex jacket worth a total of €300. For more information and how to win please visit our [photo competition](#) page.

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### Why Choose Earth's Edge:

We are the only company in the world who send an international guide and doctor on all expeditions while keeping group sizes sustainably small.

- A highly experienced expedition leader from Ireland or the UK leads each of our expeditions. This ensures we consistently deliver professionally run expeditions. They will be there to offer you expert advice throughout your trip.
- An expedition doctor from Ireland or the UK accompanies each expedition to provide industry leading medical support. Should you fall ill or have an injury they will be there to provide immediate medical care.

To read more about our safety standards please visit our [safety page](#).

- We keep group sizes small to minimise our environmental impact and foster a strong group dynamic. Our maximum group size on most expeditions is 16 and our average group size is 13. On more challenging peaks our maximum group size is 12 and our average is 8.

Responsible travel is at the core of what we do at Earth's Edge and has been since our inception in 2007. As a certified B Corp we are committed to using business as a force for good to support our communities both locally and worldwide as well as create more environmental awareness. Visit our [B Corp page](#) to learn more.

We organise a number of environmental programmes and community projects here in Ireland and internationally. Our projects include;

- A scholarship to train porters to become guides on Kilimanjaro.
- Our office staff volunteer their time to take students from an inner-city Dublin school into the outdoors for an immersive learning experience.
- Each year we plant three native trees for each person that has travelled with us in the preceding 12 months.

To read more about our sustainability practises please visit our [responsible travel page](#).

- We are a 100% Irish owned small business. Our MD, James McManus, is involved in the daily running of the business and also leads three to five expeditions per year.
- We are a fully licensed and bonded company. As we are based in Ireland, we are licensed with the Commission of Aviation Regulation in Dublin, our licence number is 0711.
- Detailed risk assessment and management systems, including evacuation plans, are put in place prior to each expedition. Our team in Dublin provide 24/7 phone support to each expedition.
- We run training weekends two months prior to each expedition, which includes a full expedition brief, two training hikes and expert advice from an Earth's Edge expedition leader and doctor.
- We have clear and transparent pricing. What's included and excluded from your package is made clear prior to booking.
- All of our office team travel on one expedition per year which means they can answer your questions based on first-hand experience.
- When you sign up to an Earth's Edge expedition you are entitled to a discount from our equipment partners at [Great Outdoors](#) to ensure you get the best gear for your expedition.
- We post daily updates of each expedition on our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages so family and friends can monitor your progress.

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#### **Expedition FAQ:**

Have you a question that wasn't answered on this information pack? If so, please visit our [FAQ page](#) for a full list of frequently asked questions. If you can't find your answer there please [contact us](#).

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