

VALLÉE BLANCHE

MONT -BLANC

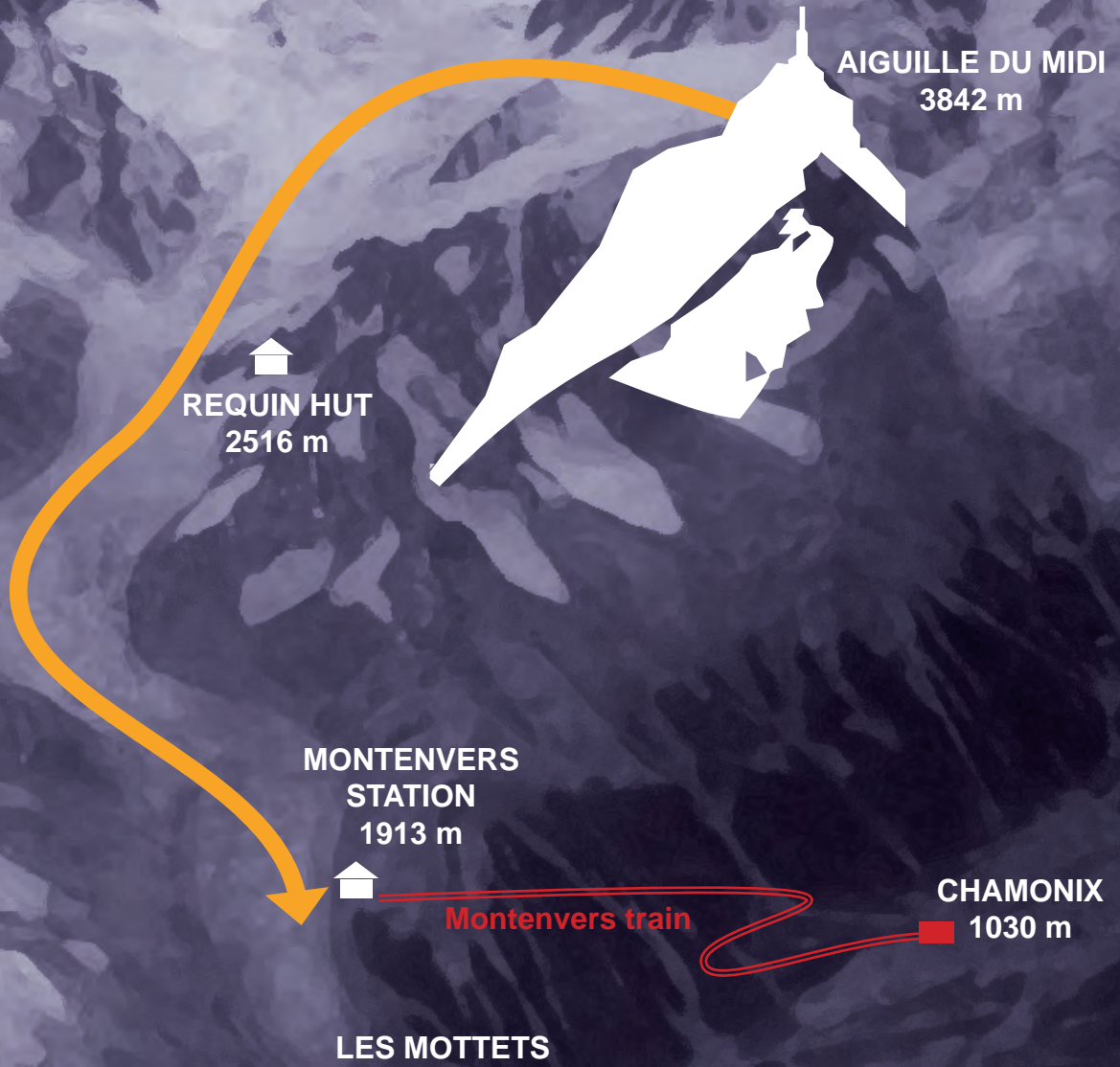
VALLÉE BLANCHE
Itinéraire de haute montagne, sur glacier
High mountain itinerary

NON SECURISE UNSECURED NON BALISE UNMARKED NON SURVEILLE UNPATROLED

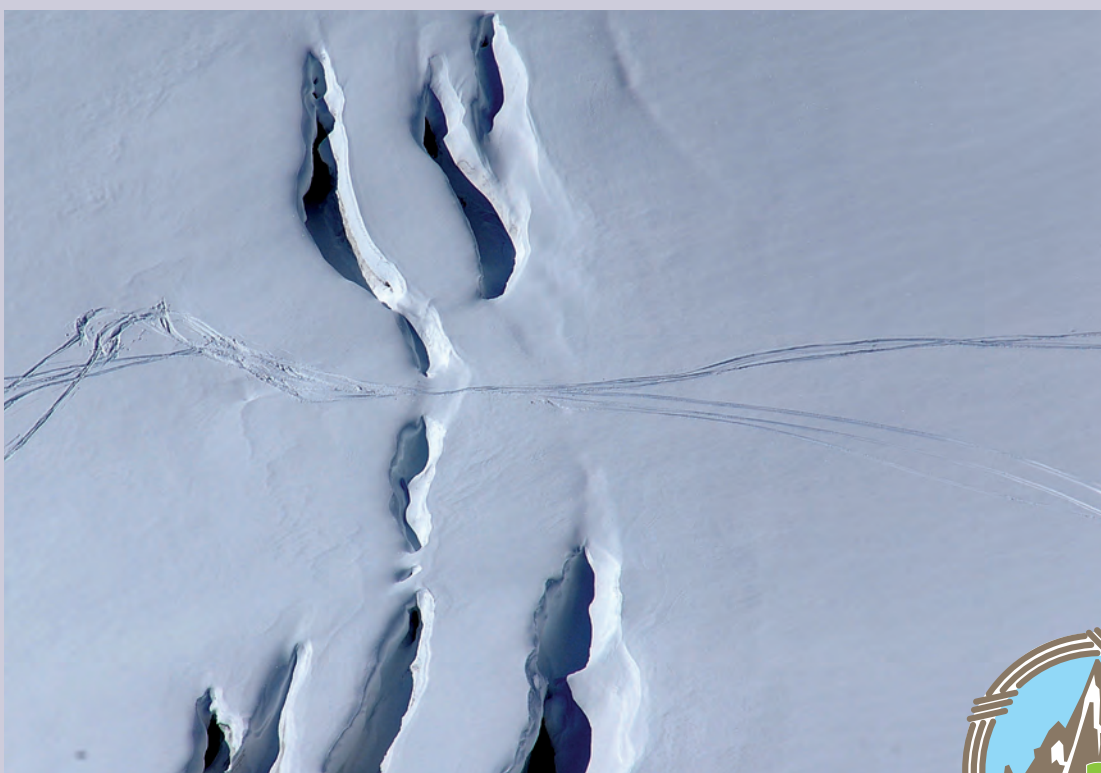
JAMAIS SEUL NEVER VENTURE ALONE

N° SECOURS RESCUE NUMBERS
PGHM: 00 33 450 53 16 89
EUROPE: 112

DÉPARTS DEPARTURE TIME MÉTÉO WEATHER KNOW WHEN TO TURN AROUND CREVASSES CREVASSES







GET INFORMED

High mountain itinerary



IT'S A 20 KM OFF-PISTE ITINERARY IN HIGH ALTITUDE ON GLACIER

IT IS NOT A SECURED SKI RUN : THERE ARE NO RUN MARKERS, NO PISTE BASHER, AND NO SKI PATROL.

IN THIS PLACE YOU MUST BE SELF-SUFFICIENT !

YOU NEED TO BE A GOOD AND FIT SKIER TO ENJOY THIS LONG ITINERARY IN HIGH ALTITUDE, WITH CHANGES OF SNOW.

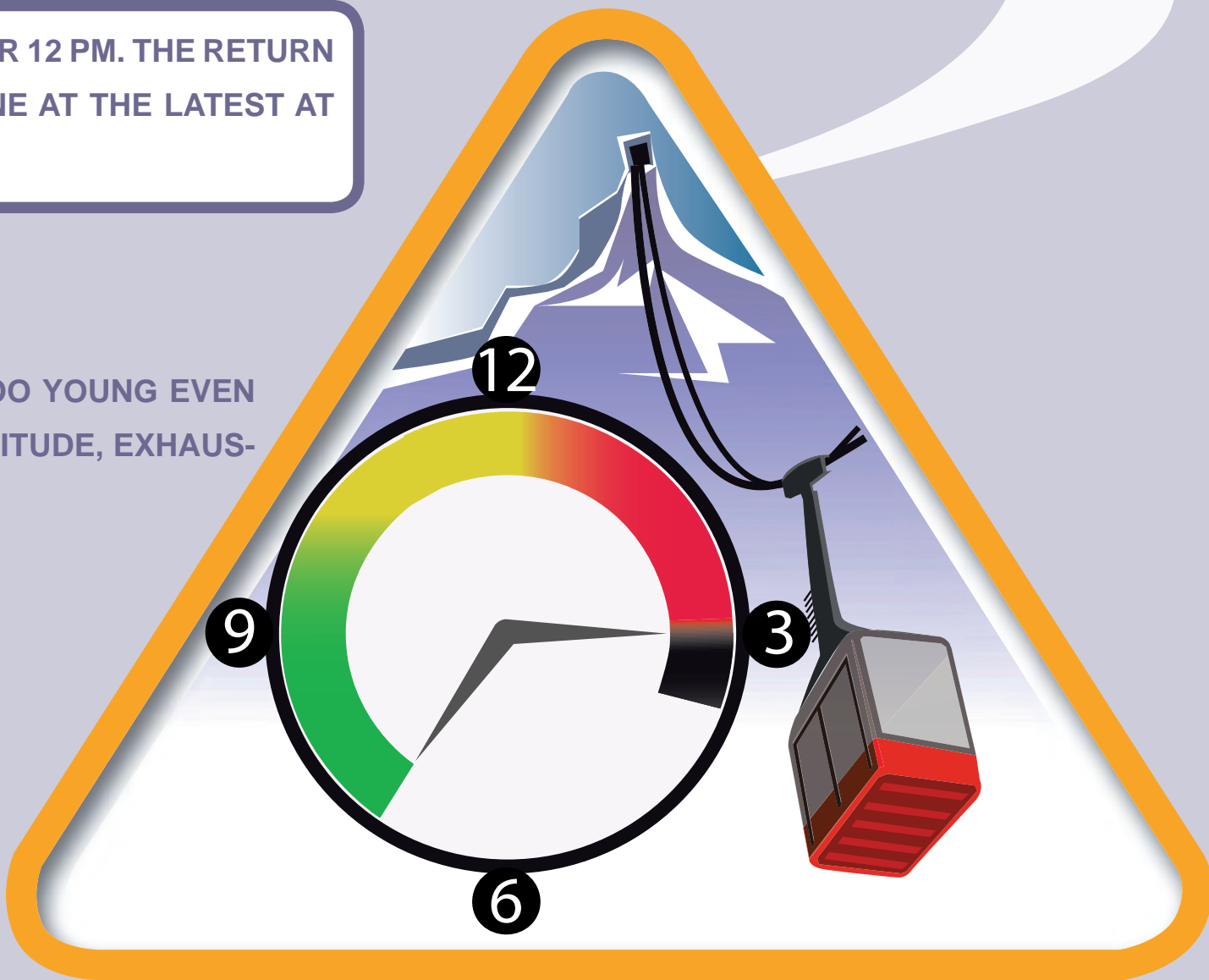
THE ACCESS TO THE GLACIER FROM THE CABLE CAR IS A WALK DOWN A THIN RIDGE. PART OF THE WINTER, THIS RIDGE IS EQUIPPED WITH A FIXED ROPE.



THE DESCENT TAKES FOUR TO FIVE HOURS WITH THE FIRST THIRD ABOVE 3000 M. KEEP A FULL DAY FOR THIS TRIP.

IT IS NOT ADVISABLE TO LEAVE AFTER 12 PM. THE RETURN AT MONTENVERS NEEDS TO BE DONE AT THE LATEST AT 4.30 PM.

DO NOT TAKE CHILDREN THAT ARE TOO YOUNG EVEN IF THEY ARE GOOD SKIERS (COLD, ATTITUDE, EXHAUSTION).



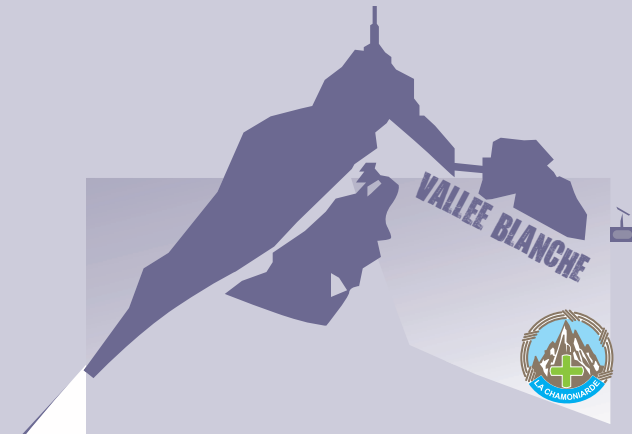
THINK ABOUT

DO NOT GO IF THE FORECAST IS BAD, THE SITUATION CAN BECOME DRAMATIC IF THE FOG OR THE BAD WEATHER COMES IN.

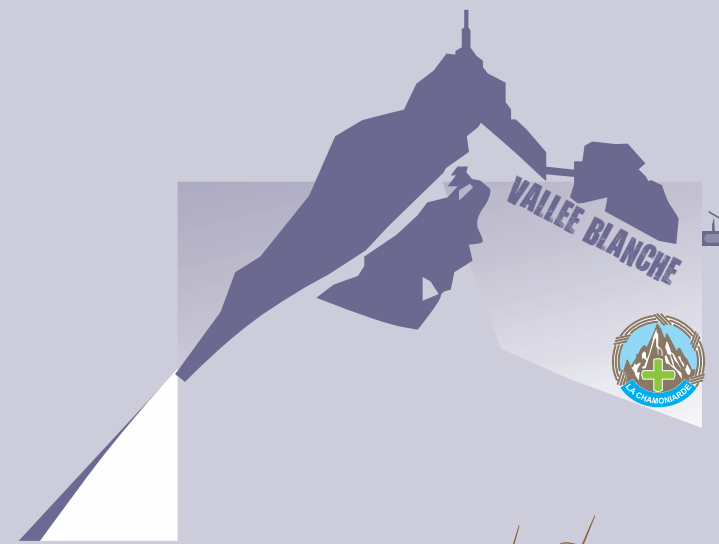
GET INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONDITIONS

(AVALANCHE RISK, SNOW QUALITY,
GENERAL CONDITIONS ON THE GLACIER,
RIDGE EQUIPMENT, SERACS AREA,
TRAFFIC ...)

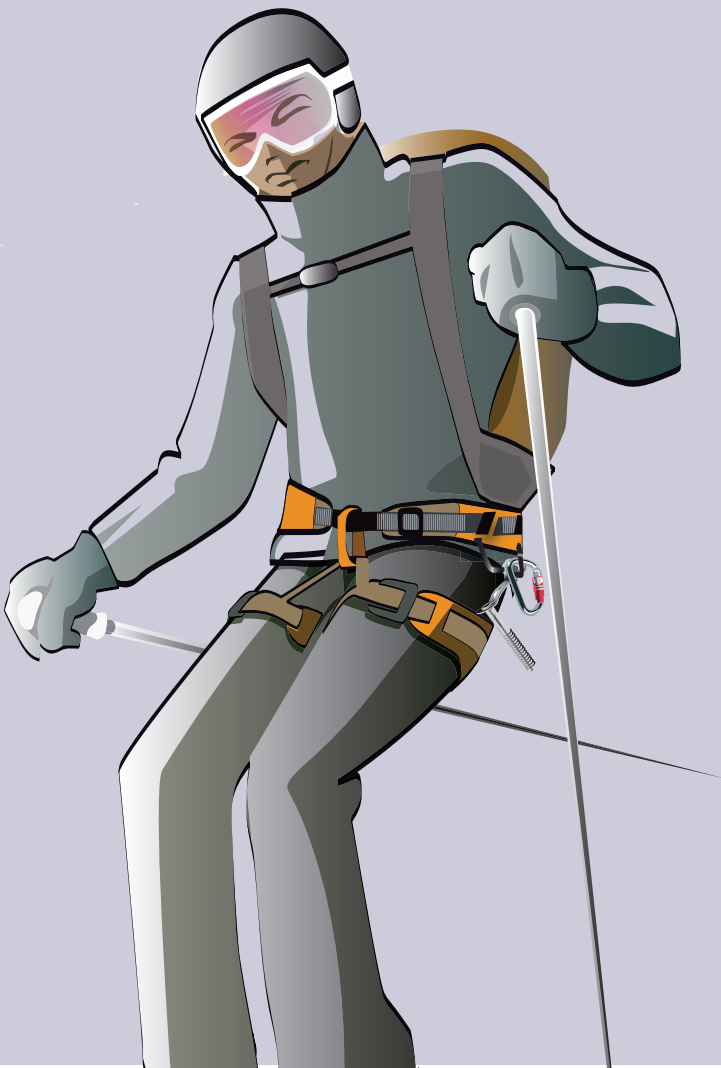
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COLD, ALTITUDE AND STRESS CAN REDUCE THE ABILITIES OF ANY SKIER.

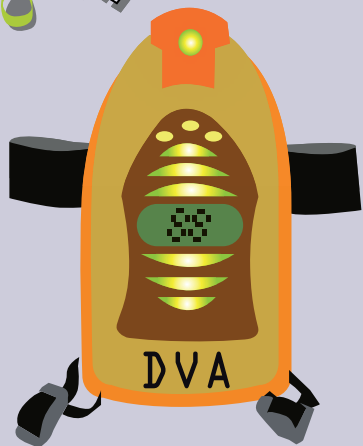
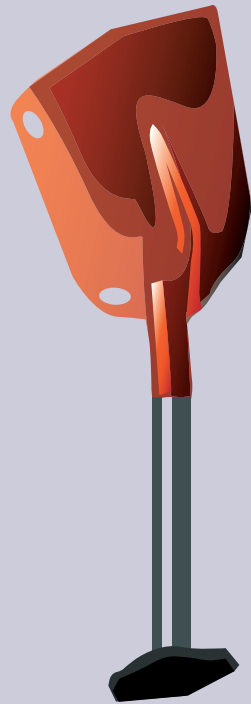
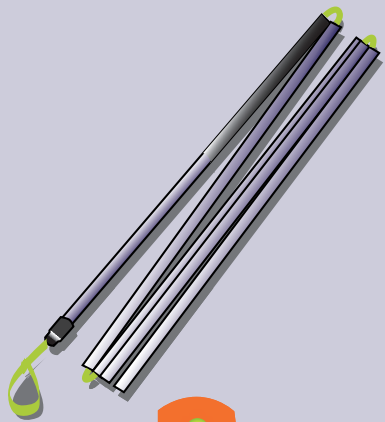


NEVER ALONE !



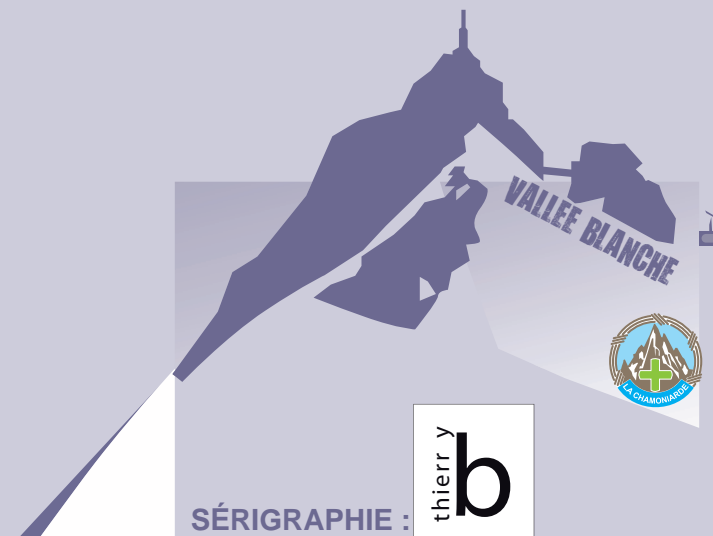
BE EQUIPPED !

BRING AN AVALANCHE TRANSCEIVER, A PROBE AND A SHOVEL, A HARNESS (EVEN IF YOU DON'T ROPE UP) AND CRAMPONS (ADVISED FOR THE DESCENT OF THE RIDGE).



BE RESPONSIBLE

HIRE A PROFESSIONAL GUIDE
IF YOU DON'T TRUST YOUR ABILITY.



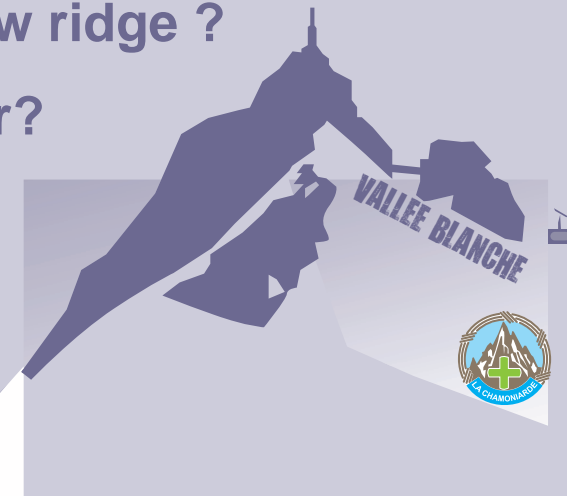
PHOTOS : © David RAVANEL / © Eric COURCIER
CONCEPTION/REALISATION : LA CHAMONIERDE

MAKE SURE YOU ARE ABLE TO DO IT



Questions

- 1 Do you know the altitude at the beginning of the Vallée Blanche run ? What effect would the altitude have on your physical capabilities ?
- 2 Your children are coming with you: are they subject to the same effects ?
- 3 What equipment is necessary for an individual skier on the Vallée Blanche? For a group of skiers?
- 4 What ski level is required ?
- 5 What is considered the best time of the season to do the Vallée Blanche?
- 6 How much can the weather forecast influence this downhill itinerary ?
- 7 When is the best recommended time of day to do the Vallée Blanche ?
- 8 How should you prepare yourself for the descent of the snow ridge ?
- 9 How should you anticipate the downhill skiing on the glacier?
- 10 Is it possible to stop anywhere on the Vallée Blanche?



Answers

- 1 The Aiguille du Midi cablecar takes you in a matter of minutes to an altitude of 3.842 meters. The drop in atmospheric pressure at this altitude means less oxygen available and therefore a drop of 20% of your physical capabilities.
- 2 Children are not much more sensitive to altitude conditions than an adult. However, up until adolescence, their level of resistance to sustained effort as well as to cold temperatures is less than of an adult. It is not recommended to bring the very young children along on this run, even if they have a technically good level.
- 3 It is vitally important to be properly equipped for cold weather conditions (the temperature can drop as low as -20° / -25° C); insure protection from high altitude sun rays (sunglasses of sufficient strength, category 3 or 4) and against dehydration and hypoglycaemia. The technical for each individual as well as for a group includes crampons, a harness, an ice pick, a transceiver, a shovel, a probe, a rope and the material necessary for rescue out of a crevasse.
- 4 This high mountain itinerary is neither groomed, secured, marked, nor is there any surveillance. The fact that you are a good skier on red or black runs will not necessarily make you a good skier on the Vallée Blanche. During the 22 km of downhill skiing, it is possible to run all



different types of snow: power, crusty, heavy...plus the narrow passageways leading down through the crevasse field. The stress factor is not to be neglected: a tapered snow spur, ice crevasses, the wind factor, cold temperatures...all these elements can limit your technical capabilities.

5 The Vallée Blanche can be skied throughout the winter (from December to may). However, at the beginning and at the end of the season, the Vallée Blanche can take on a much more alpine character: the snow spur may or may not be secured, avalanche risks, more or less snow cover, the glacier can be more or less open, snow bridges may be delicate.

6 The weather report should be a determining factor in your decision to undertake this itinerary. It is recommended to stay informed during the two days prior to your descent : recent snowfall – quantity, quality, avalanche risks...Make sure you are informed of the latest weather bulletin of the day: wind factor, visibility throughout the itinerary (uncertain weather, fog cover, consequences of the ‘ Foehn ‘ are particularly perceptible on the Vallée Blanche)

7 Considering the length of time necessary to ski the Vallée Blanche (between 4 and 6 hours), we strongly recommend an early departure and not to leave after 12:00noon: nightfall comes quickly and the Montenvers train station is closed during December and January. Snow bridges are much more fragile late in the day at the end of the season. Don't forget that the Aiguille cablecar , which takes you to the top of the run may be very busy with long lines. It is preferable to reserve ahead of time.

8 Whatever the conditions are on the spur (security equipment either nonexistent, partially in place), you should be equipped with crampons and a harness and you should know the appropriate method of roping up. Skis are cumbersome to carry by hand and should be attached to your backpack during the descent of the ridge.

9 You should know how to read the terrain in order to detect and avoid the dangerous aspects of a glacier : more or less visible crevasses, snow bridges may be more or less fragile...Remember that following a track or even another group of skiers, is in no way, a guarantee of security. Beware of the “ traffic jams “ that can occur on the technical passages: too many people can provoke dangerous behaviour in such situations.

10 Absolutely not! It is imperative to never stop for any length of time on a snow bridge – nor near or under a serac zone (the safety perimeter can be anywhere between a few hundred meters, depending on the zone). Never take off your skis while on a snow-covered glacier for fear of falling through a hidden snow bridge or into a crevasse.

