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ELBRUS SKI-TOURS – 12 days

Short description of the tour

Day 1. Meeting in Mineralnye Vody airport. Transfer to Prielbrusye. Accommodation in hotel 3* on Cheget glade. Meeting, preparation of equipment.

Day 2. Glade Cheget (2000 m) – cable-car till cafe “Ai” (2650 m) Sitour to Cupola of mount Cheget (3100 m)
Descent to glade Cheget.

Day 3. Transfer hotel–glade Azau (2350 m) Cable-cars – station Azau – station Krugozor (3000m)
Skitour – lake Azau – plateau Hotu-Tau – pass “Echo of the War”. (3200 m)
Descent to valley Azau (2350 m) – glade Azau.

Day 4. Glade Cheget – the Large Kogutai glacier – skitour to mount Kogutai (3300 m)
Descent to glade Cheget.

Day 5. Transfer hotel –gorge Adyl-su - camp “Dgan-Tugan” (2350m).
Skitour – glade Green hotel – Djankuat glacier(3400 m).
Descent on Djankuat glacier till camp “Dgan-Tugan”.

Day 6. Transfer hotel –gorge Adyr-su - camp “Djailyk” (2300m).
Skitour – the Adyrsu glacier – the Mestia hut (3150 m).
Descent on Mestia glacier till camp “Djailyk”.

Day 7. Ascent by cable-cars till station Mir (3500 m). Skitour till Priut-11 (4060 m).
Descent to valley Azau outside skiing tracks.

Day 8. Transfer hotel–Barrels(3700m)-skitour Priut 11 (4060m).
Skitour till Pastuhkov rocks (4700 m).

Day 9. Climbing Mt. Elbrus on Western top (5642 m).
Descent to barrels.

Day 10. Reserve day.
Descent to barrels.

Day 11. Descent from barrels to hotel.
preparation for departure

Day 12. Transfer hotel – Minvody

The necessary equipment for skiers (snowboarders use “snow-shoes”)

The personal equipment	The group equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skitour boots• Skitour Skins• Skitour ski-binding• Ski sticks• Crampons• Rucksack• The sleeping bag• Harness/short rope/carabiners• Ice-axe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first – aid set• The electric torches• A rope

The cost includes of 12 days Elbrus Ski-tour – 57 000 Rubles per person

includes:

1. Transfer airport Min Vody – hotel in Cheget – airport Min Vody.
2. Accommodation in private hotel on glade Cheget, according the program.
3. Accommodation in barrels Gara-Bashi, according the program.
4. Three meals a day (breakfast and supper in hotels, dinner – packed lunch).
5. All internal transfers.
6. Cable-ways (according the program).
7. Qualified skitour-instructor for acclimatization and climbing.
8. Cook in base “Gara-Bashi”.
9. Visa support, local registration, border permits.

doesn't include:

1. Snow-tractor.
2. Personal equipment.



The brief description of the tour

DAY 1

Arrival from Moscow (St. Petersburg etc.) to Mineralnye Vody airport. Meeting and [transfer to Elbrus area](#). Accommodation in [hotel 3* on Cheget glade](#), dinner. The road from Min Vody to hotel takes about **3-4 hours**.

DAY 2

Skitour to Cupola of mount Cheget (3400 m). Skiing over the [Cheget slopes](#).

The route starts on a large glade Cheget near the lower station of the cableway to Mt. Cheget, in 2 km from the Terskol vil. Here is a big hotel “Cheget” for 520 places, cafes, shops, a market, tourist bivouacs, many privat new hotels. Around the glade is a pine forest. In 17 minutes we mount an altitude of 2750 m by chair-lift Cheget-1, to the cafe “Ai” (in Balkarian – “a moon”).

From here an ice massif of Mt. Elbrus with the glaciers Terskol, Gara-Bashi and Azau is well seen, and also a southern ridge, on which the ribbon of the road to “The New Outlook” is stretching. We leave to the left on a course of a ski lift, bend slope of Mt. Cheget and ascend to the top of Cheget.

On the opposite part of the glade two triangles of the summits Small and Large Kogutai, a menacing wall Donguz-Orun-Bashi (4454 m) with huge pendulous glaciers and snow cornices, more to the right – a truncated pyramid of Mt. Nakra-Tau are well visible. Ski down to Cheget glade outside skiing tracks.

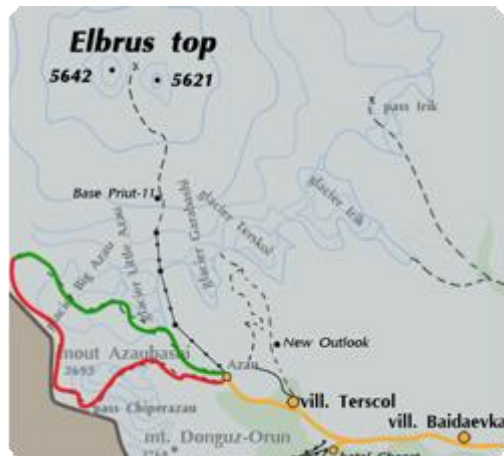


DAY 3

Transfer to the Azau glade – the Large Azau glacier – “Sand Hotel” – the pass “Echo of the War” – the Azau glade. Expansion – 14 km, duration – 8 hours.

The **river Baksan** starts a bit higher than **Terskol vil.**, from the coalescence of the **Gara-Bashi and Azau rivers**. In the steep gorge situated an interesting object of the nature – **the Large Azau glacier**, the largest of Elbrus region glaciers. Last century it is retreating fast, leaving huge masses of dead ice. You, probably, heard, that an ice is slowly flowing from a feed area of a glacier downwards, into the glade, where it melts slowly. If a mass of the melt ice is filled with a falling snow the glacier begins to retreat. If an accumulation of snow is slowed down, the glacier starts to retreat. If thus an ice flow does not reach the end of an ice tongue, the ice on it ceases to move, becomes dead and can be carved out from an alive, current ice. Thus a new, shorter tongue will be formed. All this can be seen on the Large Azau glacier.

The route to the Azau valley starts from the **Azau glade**. Not reaching 200m till the first constructions on the Azau glade, we turn from a highway to the river, in a pine forest. On the path along the river pass the lower station of the **Elbrus cable-way**.



It remains on the right on a course, on the ridge of the moraine covered with a forest, left by the receded Large Azau glacier.

It is possible to go down to the bank of the river even from a ski-lift along the steep path or going aside from it forward to Elbrus.

The forest is thinning out from a hillock an entry opens into the Azau gorge, clenched from both sides by vertical rocks. Their colour differs hardly: there is a border here among **dark effusive rocks** of Mt. Elbrus and **lighter rocks** of the Main Caucasian Gorge.

In the gorge on the right above the path raise the hexahedral columns from dark with white impregnations of diabase. The columns resemble tubes of an organ by something. In cloudy weather, when the black colour of the rocks is specially saturated and the waves of the gray mist cling to the stone columns, the picture gains a fancy tint. In this moment above Baksan there can be a sun, and the far sky, getting light blue between a fog cover and a gurgling

river, completes the picture.

Not far away from the entry into the gorge from the **Small Azau glacier** a flow is broken as a waterfall. Soon the gorge extends. A **waterfall** is seen ahead, by which the Large Azau glacier is descended from a **plateau Hotu-Tau**. One should keep here a little further from the slope: stone falls are frequent here.

In 1,5 hours of a walking from the **Azau glade** we cross over the spring, flowing out from a lake under the **Small Azau glacier**. The **lake** lies on a moraine highly above them. The water in the spring is weakly mineralized. It smells of sulfur in air – it is breathing the sleeping **volcano of Mt. Elbrus**.

A bit lower along the glade the river receives a tributary on the right flowing from the **glacier Chiper-Azau**. Some more hundred of meters, and the path comes up against the black wall of dead ice on the tongue of the glacier. From an ice the river breaks free with a fairing.

We can mount along the rocks along a talus and a moraine onto the glacier. It is necessary to be cautious: under a flake of rocks and clay there is an ice. Pieces of native sulphur are found there. It's dangerous to go higher because of the hidden cracks.

*Look around. Here a spring rings, directly along the glacier flows a small river, stones breaking away from the faults rustle. Sometimes in a thickness of an ice something is creaking: **the glacier lives and moves.***

Having mounted the glacier, we cross it along the border of an alive and dead ice to the right coast, where a slope the moraine the path is visible, and go along the morain in the direction of the tributary of the **Azau river**, flowing off the **glacier ChiperAzau**. Having turned into the glade of the tributary, we mount the sand-pebble terrace with the tracks of bivouacs and transparent springs. This place is called **“Sand hotel” (2700 m)**.

The rise from the Azau glade demands about **3 hours**.



From **“The Sand Hotel”** in the upper reaches of the glacier there are visible two similar summits: the right – **Azaubashi**, the left – **ChiperAzau**. From the **Azaubashi** up to the **“Sand Hotel”** a rocky ridge, ending with a pyramid-shaped summit above the glacier Large Azau. To the left of it there is situated the **pass “Echo of the War”**.

Three hundred meters west starts a herbaceous slope leading to a small green terrace with a spring and tracks of bivouacs. From a terrace both summits framing the pass **“Echo of the War”** are visible. With skitour equipment we start an ascent

along the spring up on the snow tongue. We go along the snow tongue carefully stamping the steps. Into the ready steps the legs put smoothly to keep steps for the going behind. The torn off step is covered by snow and then it is stamped again. For the snow tongue short scree leads to the pass.

*On a broad saddle the **memorable boards** to the defenders of the Caucasus are set. By the pass is a small lake. Behind it is strengthened a huge ice field covered with furrows from thawed water – the **Hotu-Tau plateau**. Above it rises the **two-headed Elbrus**. At the far end of the plateau is a lowering of the **Hotu-Tau pass**. Behind it the **Baksan gorge** with snow ridges above the glades of the rivers Irikchat and Kyrtkyk are visible. An arc skirting the “**Sand Hotel**” is viewed completely, opposite it, in a deep circus, there is the **Chegetkara glacier**, more to the right is a broad snow saddle of the **Chiper pass**, closer are the passes **ChiperAzau and Azau**.*

Skiing down to Azau glade and transfer to hotel in Cheget.

DAY 4

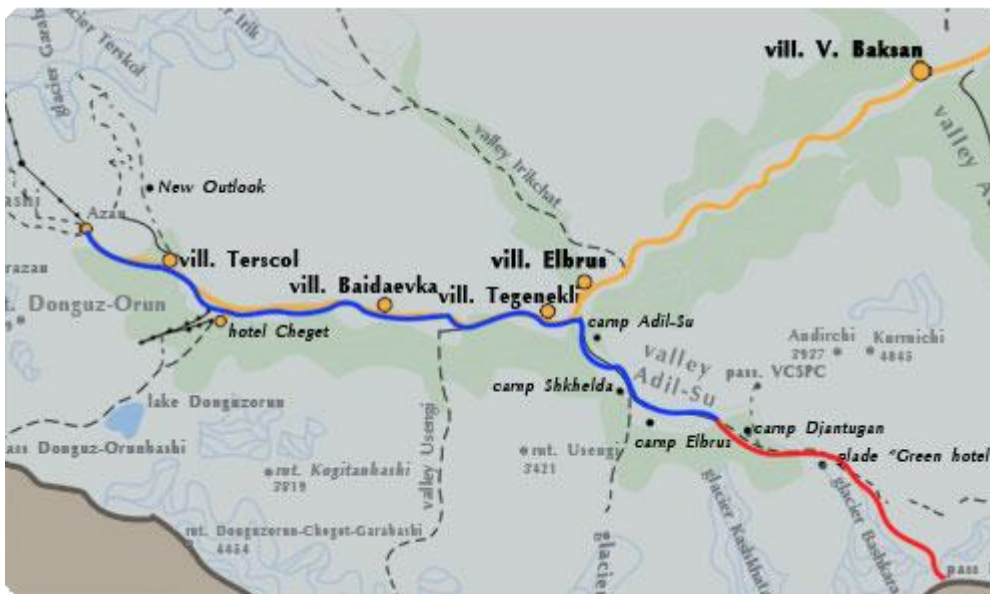
Climbing to the **mount Kogutai (3820m)** (the Cheget glade – the Large Kogutai glacier – the upper forest-line – the mount Kogutai – the Cheget glade).

The Kogutai spur of the Greater Caucasian Range begins from the west summit of the Dongus-Orun Massive and leads in the north – east direction. On this spur there are two rock summits: Bolshoi and Maly Kogutai.

From the Cheget Glade we cross the right bank of the **river Dongus-Orun** over the bridge that is located just near the Cheget Glade in the lower part of the Dongus-Orun Gorge. From here we go to the Kogutai Glade. In the distance of 50-80 meters from the upper and left glade corner of the motion direction begins the good path which goes to the upper forest – line. The further ascent lays over the sub alpine grasslands. The path comes to the left side of the **Kogutai River**. The river has some streams. We cross it over the stones and beams. Then we go up along the left bank of the Kogutai River over the bottom of the moraine valley. Keep the south direction till the end of the Large Kogutai Glacier. The end of the tongue hangs on the steep rounded rocks. Lunch and skiing down to camp-base. Then descent to hotel on glade Cheget. Dinner.

DAY 5

Transfer hotel – gorge Adyl-su – camp “Dgan-Tugan” (2350 m). Skitour – glade Green hotel – Djankuat glacier(3400 m). Descent on Djankuat glacier till camp “Dgan-Tugan”.



*The Adylsu gorge is one of the most beautiful in the Caucasus. Not difficult route on the motorway passes on the pine forests and alpine meadows gets acquainted with the interesting object of nature – **Kashkatash glacier**. Above the **Elbrus vil. (1770 m)** from the Baksan highway is branched a road to the glade of the Adylsu river, the right tributary of the Baksan river. We need to drive over the pine forest by the left bank of the river past the **camp “Adylsu”**. After border control checking by the bridge is a*

climbing **camp “Shhelda”**. We overcome a small ascent, and then we descend to the bridge on the right bank of the Adylsu river.

The forest remains behind. Now it'll be found by separate sites. On the right bank is situated the **climbing camp “Elbrus”**. From it if to look in the side of the Baksan, the **massif of Elbrus is seen**. On the left bank of the Adylsu river above the grey moraine slope the glade of the **glacier Kashkatash** opens. From under the glacier rumbles and outflows a swift flow. Below the greenish ice breaks on a moraine there is a pine forest and above the glacier – a sugar head of the **Bgeduch summit**. This is a show of amazing beauty!

In one hour from Elbrus vil. we approach **“Djan-Tugan” camp**. Under the camp – mineral springs.

Here we leave the car and continue the way to glade **“Green Hotel” (2400m)**.

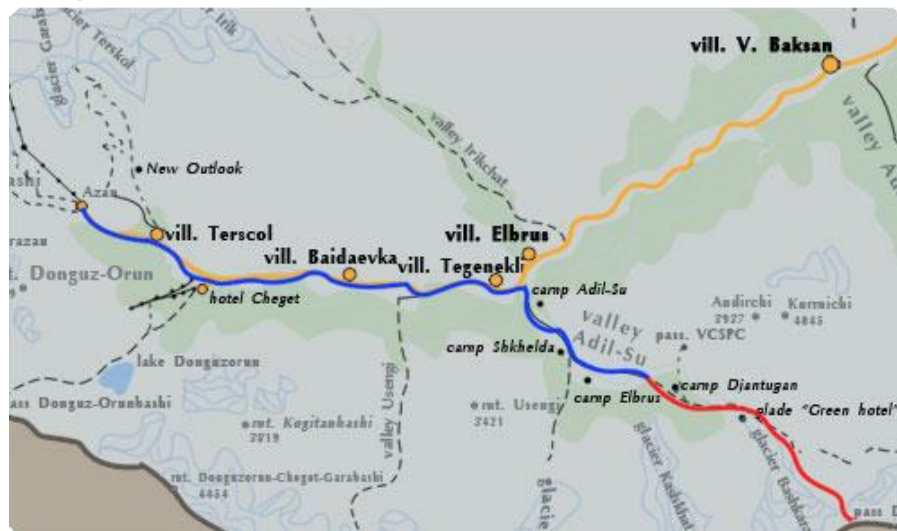
Above the climbing camp “Djan-Tugan” we cross the koshi (houses of the shepherds) glade. The path comes nearer to the river. In some places above the water wire handholds are made.

Soon the path passes on the left bank of the **Adylsu river**, which here is called Djankuat. In 20-30 minutes from the bridge we leave on a vast glade, below restricted by a billow of a right bank moraine of the **Bashkara glacier**, and above – by the left bank moraine of the **Djankuat glacier**.

In the middle of the glade there is **“Green Hotel” – a climbing hut (2400 m)**. To reach that hut from the climbing hut “Djan-Tugan” will take 1,5-2 hours. *Under the moraine, by the glacier, lies a beautiful lake. Below, behind the Adylsu glade, in glares of the sun burns **Mt. Elbrus**, below, space filling the bottom of the glade, the creeps white mist. In the upper reaches of the glade above the Djankuat glacier blaze snow summits.*

Djankuat glacier is not more than 20 minutes from here. The glacier is retreating slowly; therefore its tongue consists of alive ice. Skiing down on glacier. Transfer back to hotel in Cheget.

DAY 6



Transfer hotel – gorge Adyr-su – camp “Djailyk” (2300 m). Skitour – the Adyr-su glacier – the Mestia hut (3150 m). Descent on Mestia glacier till camp “Djailyk”. (Expansion – 22 km, duration – 6 hours.)

*The route gets acquainted with the glade of the Adyr-su river from the upper reaches of which opens the most beautiful panorama of the **Main Caucasian Range**.*

*The route will get acquainted the tourists with Verhny reaches of the Adyr-su glade – **a kingdom of eternal ice and snow**.*

Along the glade is made the motorway. By the bus stop “Verhny Baksan” (1500 m) from the highway departs the road into the glade of the right tributary Baksan-Adyr-su. In a kilometer from the highway the river Adyr-su goes out the canyon, sawed in the rocks (a mouth step). The bypass of the mouth step is called the Doktorsky pass. In the 1970s here was constructed an **automobile jack (lift)** and a stairway by an altitude of 60 m consisting of 400 steps.

Behind the jack begins the glade grown with a pine forest. Having crossing over the bridge to the right bank the tourists approach to the Vodopadnaya river. A tourist parking is equipped here. Further the road twists above the Adyr-su. Some sites of the forest piled up by avalanches are met. Approximately in a walk hour the glade extends, the road passes on the left bank of the river. On the right on a course opens the **glade Djalovchat** where is constructed a jack for the amateurs of the mountain skiing.

Above the river is clenched by huge boulders. Behind a canyon the road goes on the broad flat leftbank (3 hours walking from the Verhny Baksan). In front of it the massif Ullutauchan opens in all its beauty, above the road on a green site the monument to the perished climbers is established.

Soon the path enters the forest again, intercepts the Klumkolsu river leads the tourists to the **climbing camp “Djailyk” (2300 m)**. Just behind it on the bank of the Adyr-su river there is a good survey site from which the **passes Garvash** (a steep saddle to the left of Ullutau) and the **Mestiysky pass** are visible. The way from here takes up to 4 hours, on the return road it’ll take 2-2, 5 hours.

Behind “Djailyk”, at the **climbing camp “Ullutau”**, by the edge of the forest, the road ends. Above the camp the path bends a spur and on moraine patches climbs above a riverbed of the river. In 1,5 – 2 hours the tourists mount pebbly sites of **Mestia overnights (2500 m)**.

Below them is seen a tongue of **Mestia glacier** – a place of trainings of the climbers – beginners. More to the left, under a deep saddle of the pass Garvash, hangs down an icefall. Opposite it, on the left side of the glade is seen a glacier, above it – a saddle of the **Gumachi pass**, lower along the glade, by high rocky **Koiavgan-bashi summit**, is viewed narrow snow lobby of the **Koiavganaush pass**. It seems vertical, though actually not so is abrupt, the mountain outlook distorts a true picture. Just opposite, above the port side of the Mestia glacier, on a rock resembling a whale a little is the **Mestia hut (3150 m)** – a purpose of our hike.

To get places of night lodging pass a deep in a ridge hollow of the left side moraine of the glacier Adyr-su, then one must mount the glacier along the path. Above it there are some more equipped parkings.

To go on hiking one can only both at good visibility and reserve of forces and time. Along the glacier make for the **“Tail of a Whale”**. The glacier isn’t steep, but it demands attention. Having bent a rock at the left on a course, the tourists mount it behind along the scree slope.

It takes 8-9 hours of hiking till Verhny Baksan to the Mestia hut. One can overnight in the hut, and if it’s occupied you can put the tents. From the “Tail of a Whale” the whole glade Adyr-su is visible. In the evening above Baksan village white clubs of mist’ll hang. Oblique rays of sunset, breaking between summits, light up bright spots on the slopes. “Tail of a Whale” itself situated in the middle of ice, creates a feeling of flight.

Above the hut there is the Mestia pass for a long time served as a way from Svanetia (Georgia) to Baksan. To cross the pass one needs special climbing equipment. The short way to Black sea. Its closed now. Skitouring on the glacier and descent by big track to the valley. Driving back to hotel in Cheget glade.

DAY 7

Climbing to tourist’s hotel “Gara Bashi” (3800 m) by cableways “Elbrus” and “Gara-Bashi”.

From the **Azau Glade** up by the aerial tramways “Elbrus-1” and “Elbrus-2” and the chair-cable lift “Gara-Bashi”.

Accommodation in camp base “Gara Bashi”, dinner.

Training hike till base “Priut 11” (“To the Shelter of Eleven”). From Gara-Bashi to the “Shelter of Eleven” the path is made

over the snowfields. The marking sticks mark the path. The motion direction is the north. Don't deviate of the path because the glacier on which the path is made has many **crevasses** covered by snow. The path comes to the Shelter of Eleven. Its altitude is **4,200 meters** above sea level.

From here you can see the wonderful views of the mountains of the Central and West Caucasus. The both summits of Mount Elbrus are seen on the north. On the east, southeast and south you can see the Greater Caucasian Range and its northern spurs. The ranges of Svanetia (Gorgia) are seen behind the Greater Caucasian Range, on the Southwest, behind the Hotu-Tau Range, the West Caucasus and its ranges are seen.

After the rest skiing down to the Gara-Bashi along the ascent line.

DAY 8

Climbing for acclimatization to **Pastukhov's rocks (4800 m)**.

For the acclimatization effect there have to be two nights on altitude 4000m with climbing to Pastukhov's rocks (4800 m) on first day. Skiing to tourist's hotel "Gara Bashi".

DAY 9

Early morning climbing to a top of [mount Elbrus](#).

The beginning of climb is planed in 2 a.m., in direction of the Pastukhov Rocks (4,800 m), then to the **saddle** of Elbrus, here tourists have one hour rest and go to the Western or Eastern summit. Skiing to a camp "Gara Bashi".

DAY 10

Spare day for climbing. Skiing down to hotel on glade Cheget.

DAY 11

Free day. Skiing over the [Cheget slopes](#). *In case of free day we can transfer to **resort Nalchik** - capital of Kabardino-Balkaria, with visiting of hot springs. Hotel accommodation 3* in park area. Evening excursion around the city. Dinner in the park.*



DAY 12

Transfer to Min Vody airport. Departure to Moscow..

Trip dates 2017 – Elbrus Ski-tour 12 days

April	May
01/04/17 – 12/04/17	23/04/17 – 04/05/17
12/04/17 – 23/04/17	04/05/17 – 15/05/17