

Hike of the Month Chaberton



Parking: Free parking at the end of Montgenèvre towards Italy; otherwise, paid parking (quite expensive).

Departure: From this parking lot, take the GRP trail of the Vallon des Baisses.

Physical Condition: Be prepared for the effects of altitude on your body, especially if you are carrying a load. Avoid if you suffer from knee osteoarthritis, as pain may arise and become uncomfortable, especially if the body is poorly oxygenated.

Equipment for 2 days of trekking:

1. A warm sleeping bag (comfortable down to -5°C) is ideal but not mandatory, provided you have enough warm clothing for the night.
2. Nightwear: Bring winter socks (if you sleep at the summit) or long socks in general / inflatable pillow from Forclaz or Decathlon or a thick wool sweater to avoid discomfort from the ground / flashlight / underwear if you get hot / pants / thin sweater.
3. Daywear: Bring 2 technical t-shirts (anti-UV if possible) / shorts or breathable short pants / double membrane socks (if possible) / a rain poncho in case of problems / cap (covering the ears if possible) / hiking boots / sunglasses / sunscreen with SPF 50+.
4. Equipment: A backpack of 50 to 70L weighing between 10 to 12kg maximum, plan for 4 to 5L of water for 2 days as the river in the valley is often dry and there is no water from the ascent of the Chaberton pass to the summit / 1 to 2-person trekking tent / know your equipment in advance / first aid kit (survival blanket + headache medication, ointment, bandages, disinfectant, tick remover, etc.).

Weather Conditions: Prefer a regional anticyclonic situation to avoid orographic storms that can form at the end of the day and strike the highest peaks, of which Chaberton is one. Do not go in early July as many snowfields can make access to the summit difficult or even dangerous (final slope = 45° (100%)).

Ascent Time: Plan for 5 to 6 hours of ascent, considering heavy equipment, altitude, terrain, and the small 5-minute breaks necessary to avoid physical underperformance.

Places to camp:

1. The summit and the Fort (3131m): an inclined platform of 1° (almost horizontal) allowing for almost unlimited space; however, be careful of the wind as it is impossible to secure the tent with pegs due to the lack of ground at 3131m.
2. The Pass and the first batteries (2690-2750m): small flat areas, especially near some old batteries; however, be cautious of small debris such as barbed wire still present around / the pass is perfect as it is flat, the only downside is the morning fog that may appear.
3. Just below the summit (around 3000m): if you stay on the main path leading to the summit, just before the fort's batteries, there are small perfectly flat areas available for 1 or 2 tents; still, be careful as you are close to the void on the Italian side (cliffs), flashlight required.

Logistics:

1. Ascent time: 5 to 6 hours.
2. 3 parts: the valley (311m elevation gain, distance: 3.2km) / ascent of the pass (541m elevation gain, distance: 2.39km) / (467m elevation gain, distance: 2.58km).
3. Starting altitude (parking): approximately 1871m.
4. Summit altitude: 3131m.
5. Altitude of the Chaberton Pass: 2690m.
6. Total elevation gain: 1260m.
7. Total distance: 8.2km.

Additional Tips:

1. Visit the Chaberton fort: ice and eternal snow in the corridors, partially collapsed rooms, ruined or frozen stairs to avoid.
2. Do not go if you do not feel well. It is important; be sure!
3. Avoid stopping too frequently as it breaks the rhythm and tires the body more.