



Site Visit to Chamonix – 25th September 2019

Catherine Cosby of Mountains 4 All visited Chamonix

It is always vital to keep up to date and maintain a strong link with our existing partners, as well as bringing new ones to the 'family'. I had a great afternoon in **Chamonix** on Wednesday discovering two new hotels from the Best Mont Blanc Group – the Alpina Eclectic www.alpinachamonix.com and the Croix Blanche www.hotelcroixblanche-chamonix.fr and a new fun and enterprising restaurant www.burgerandwells.com along with a great new company offering action mountain activities. Meeting up with Ed Noel (ENDesign) who looks after the technical part of our website and has been instrumental in helping us to achieve so much over the past few years, to discuss future developments and projects.



Portfolio of Mountain Experiences

Just to remind everyone that this unique and ever-expanding Portfolio of Information on mountain experiences – ski resorts, ski and winter activities, places to stay, places to enjoy food and drink, spa and well-ness, summer activities, mountain guides, yoga, health and retreats..... Is at the core of our work and with over 12 years of research and personal visits, it is helping more and more people enjoy the life-empowering benefits of the alps and mountains world-wide.

Mountain Experiences

We are delighted to be including Mountain Action Holidays www.mountainactionholidays.com as part of our Portfolio of Mountain Experiences in Chamonix Mont Blanc. Julie, who owns and runs @mountainactionholidays knows the region extremely well and is enthusiastic about ensuring that her company is 'Inclusive and Accessible' to visitors. Many of the activities that she offers are inclusive but some may well depend on the mobility, physical or health condition of a particular participant. This is early days but Julie is going to do all she can to get more people on the mountain and finding that ultimate life-enhancing moment of freedom!

Inclusive and Accessible Places to Stay

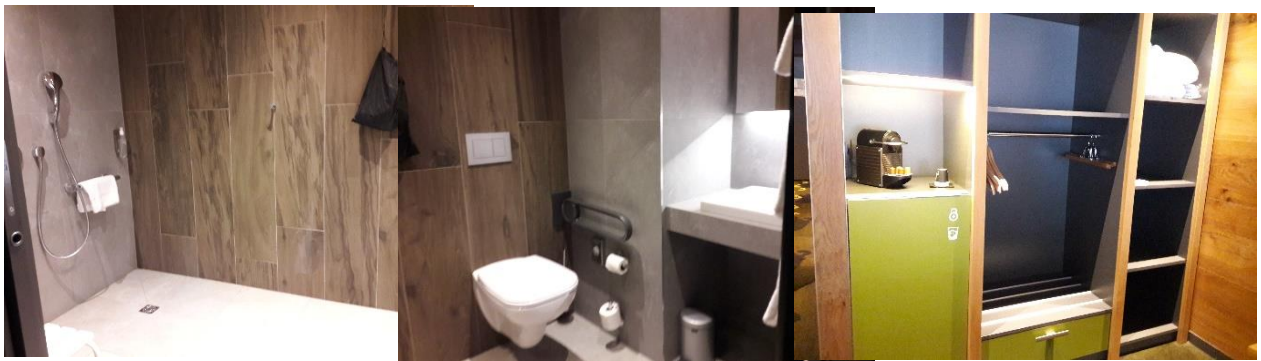
We are delighted to be adding the **Alpina Eclectic** and **Croix Blanche** to our Portfolio.

The Alpina underwent a major renovation and redecoration last year and is now fully inclusive and accessible for all health related conditions including those using a wheelchair. Even the spacious, bright and jazzy bar area has a bar that is also wheelchair height – so no having to use the periscope to ask for a glass of wine!

Totally step-free and with a large spacious lift – which is also designed for blind and visually impaired guests, this hotel is well on the way to being more than just inclusive and accessible.

There is work to be done to help visitors with a sensory condition but, having talked to my host there, it would appear that there is a great interest in pursuing this matter further. I am afraid that, as one finds out all too often, the emphasis from designers and planners is on ensuring that the wheelchair community are catered for but so often those who are blind, visually impaired, or audio impaired are left out of the equation – we need to change that!!

The bedrooms that are adapted for wheelchair users are bright, of a good size, and appear to have everything at the correct height.



I am more than happy to recommend the Alpina Eclectic as the staff are extremely helpful and the whole hotel has a vibrant feel about it. The top floor restaurant is quite stunning and well worth a visit even if one is not staying at the hotel! Not sure I have seen many restaurants with such amazing views of the surrounding mountains!

The **Hotel Croix Blanche** is not really fully wheelchair accessible – it would so much depend on how much one has to use a wheelchair your state of mobility. But for those with limited mobility it is very central and actually with a small lift, or if you can manage a few stairs, then it could well suit. Otherwise it is a great place – unpretentious and with a good atmosphere – that would suit almost everyone.



The older part of the hotel is very 'epoque' and past! The bedrooms are rather spacious and clean and comfortable – with such a good location in the old part is going to be quieter than the new might become a little noisy when the seasons are easy to have a delicious dinner in the centre of easy couple of minutes, or seconds, back to the

I think it works well for those wanting to explore bit of skiing or even join family and friends later



evokes an age of the quite old-fashioned but it is hard to beat. Being part of the hotel which in full swing but how the town and then an hotel!

Chamonix itself or do a up the mountain.

(photos are of the entrance to the old part and bedroom and shower-room)

Inclusive and Accessible Places to Eat and Drink



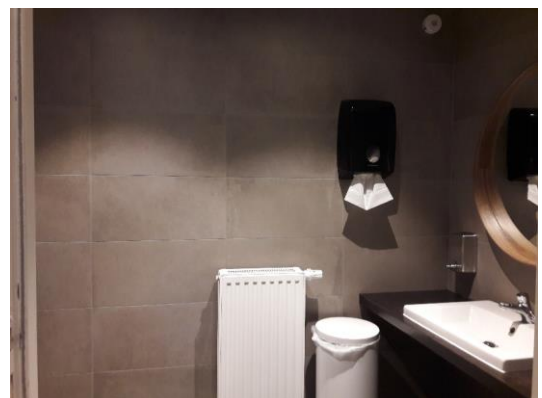
Burger & Wells www.burgerandwells.com can be found on the Avenue Croz (heading up towards the railway station). Bright, cheerful, and specializing in using regional products which are all organic and bio-sustainable, this new addition to Chamonix is well worth a visit!

Well worth a detour for a coffee, natural fruit juice, or a more substantial meal as it also has a good loo (washroom) for those using a wheelchair or, like so many of our beneficiaries, have a health / medical condition that necessitates a more frequent visit to the loo.

Only down-side is the lack of a fold-down table to change a young person who is a full-time wheelchair user. Mountains 4 All is on the case and we hope that Burger & Wells will be more inclusive to those who are in the category of 'wheelchair user'! No mother or carer wishes to change a child, young person on the floor!! We reckon it would be easy to put a drop-down table-shelf in the space to the right of the basin.....

Wake up restaurants, hotels, and the community in general – there are many types of wheelchair users and our lobby is to see facilities to accommodate a person who does not use the loo but is in need of changing!

For more information on any of the above locations, or for Chamonix Mont Blanc itself as destination and ski resort for an inclusive, accessible, and well-being holiday – trip, please contact catherine.cosby@mountains4all.org



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