

EXPLORE!



Self-Guided Walking in Provence

Explore the rugged limestone landscapes of the Plateau de Vaucluse between Mont Ventoux and the Luberon on this self-guided walking holiday. The walking routes traverse a landscape where steep cliffs and deep canyons - like the Gorges de la Sénancole - alternate with peaceful villages, mysterious 'bories' (circular drystone huts) and the Abbaye de Sénanque, beautifully situated among fields of lavender. Your walks will be accompanied by the musical chants of crickets, symbol of this enchanting land. There is really only one drawback to Provence and the Vaucluse: you will never want to leave.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Fontaine - de-Vaucluse** - Attractive village built around a spring at the foot of the Vaucluse Mountains
- ★ **Gordes** - Historic hill-top village with spectacular views
- ★ **Aromas of Provence** - walk through fields of lavender and herb-scented lanes
- ★ **Senanque Abbey** - Visit the Cistercian monks

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

WALKING GRADE:

Easy To Moderate

This grade is ideal if you want to enjoy both easy and moderate level walks on the same tour. You'll be walking mainly on good paths and at low altitude, with occasional more demanding ascents or descents.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Trip starts in Lagnes

Tonight's hospitable farmhouse accommodation is just a few kilometres outside Lagnes, the capital of Provence. If you have time, you may choose to go on a short circular walk to the small village of Les Cabrières d'Avignon, before enjoying a dinner of traditional local cuisine back at your guesthouse. This holiday includes a private taxi transfer from Cavaillon station to your hotel near Lagnes (approximately 10 km). Details of how to reach the start point of your holiday can be found on our website in the tour specific dates and prices section by clicking on 'Joining Info' and then the 'Show More' button. You can expect today's almost 10 kilometre walk to take approximately two and a half to three hours.



Accommodation: Le Mas du Grand Jonquier (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Dinner

DAY 2 - Walk to La Roque sur Pernes via Fontaine-de-Vaucluse

Today's route takes you through the renowned Fontaine-de-Vaucluse - home to one of the largest springs in the world which is the source of the spectacular emerald-coloured Sorgue River. No one actually knows how far underground the spring originates and, in the 1950s, a submersible could not find the bottom. Since then, a probe has made it to a sandy bed at a depth of 308 metres, but it is thought that the source of the spring lies even deeper. Walking on to La Roque sur Pernes, your accommodation for the next two nights is in a charming guesthouse in a spectacular and peaceful setting. Here, you can look forward to enjoying exceptional provençal cuisine during your included dinners. You can expect today's 11.5 kilometre walk to take approximately five hours.



Accommodation: Domaine de la Grange Neuve (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 3 - Circular walk through Le Beaucet and Venasque

On today's walk, you will pass through the village of Le Beaucet, set against a steep rock face. You'll then continue on to the impressive village of Venasque, towering high above the valley before passing a deep gorge and strolling through tranquil landscapes. Passing by the odd house and vineyard, enjoy the aromas of Provence on your way back to your guesthouse. You can expect today's 14 kilometre walk to take approximately five and a half hours.



Accommodation: Domaine de la Grange Neuve (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 4 - Walk to Gordes via Senanque Abbey

Today, you traverse quiet surroundings on your way up to Rochers Rouges. At the top, you can look forward to panoramic views of the Dentelles de Montmirail, Mont Ventoux and the Rhone Valley. Making your way back down to Senanque Abbey, you pass through evergreen holm oak woods dotted with rocky outcroppings. After visiting the abbey that is so famous for its lavender fields (in bloom June through to September) and home-grown produce, you continue on to the famous village of Gordes. Dominated by its church and castle, Gordes is regarded as one of the most beautiful villages in France. Looking out over the village from your hotel, you may well agree. You can expect today's 11.5 kilometre walk to take approximately five hours.



Accommodation: Le Mas des Romarins (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Circular route through the Gorges de la Veroncle

From Gordes, today's walking route takes you through the spectacular Gorges de la Veroncle, characterised by its steep, jagged cliffs. After descending down to the bottom of the gorge, you return to the top and follow quiet footpaths and country roads, passing the Bois d'Audibert. Your final ascent leads you back to Gordes, where you will spend a second night. You can expect today's 11.5 kilometre walk to take approximately four and a half hours.



Accommodation: Le Mas des Romarins (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Return to Lagnes via the Mur de la Peste and Village des Bories

From the lively town of Gordes, your last day of walking takes you across the silent Plateau de Vaucluse, with its many 'bories' - drystone huts that were once agricultural outhouses. Later in the day, you will visit the 'Village des Bories' - an open air museum dedicated to these unusual buildings. The resounding song of cicadas will accompany you as you pass through the beautiful Gorges de la Senanque on your way to the Mur de la Peste. This 27 kilometre-long wall was built to stop the spread of the plague in the 18th century. Watchtowers stood along its length, to guard against the movement of people. Descending back to Lagnes via the Tête du Soldat, your final night's accommodation is back at the guesthouse which welcomed you at the beginning of your holiday. You can expect today's almost 14 kilometre walk to take approximately four and a half hours.



Accommodation: Le Mas du Grand Jonquier (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Trip ends in Lagnes

After breakfast, the organised part of your holiday comes to an end. This holiday includes a private taxi transfer from your hotel near Lagnes to Cavailon station (approximately 10 km).



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Walking and Trekking information

DAILY DISTANCE

Day 1	13km
Day 2	12.5km
Day 3	15km
Day 4	12.5km
Day 5	11.5km
Day 6	13km

Walking grade

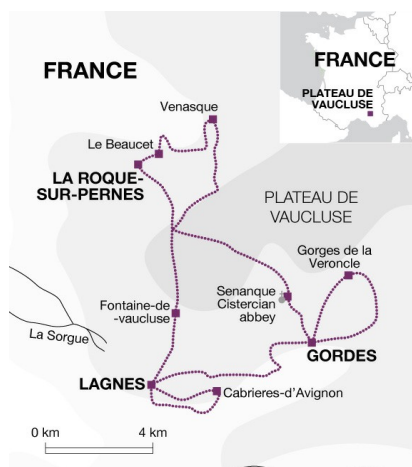
Easy to moderate

Trek details

On this journey you walk 68 km over 6 days (an average of 11 km per day). Your route follows wide unsurfaced tracks and footpaths with the occasional section on surfaced tracks or tarmac roads. There is an average daily ascent/descent of 300-350 m.

Max walking altitude (m)

661



What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 6
Dinner: 3



Accommodation

6 nights standard hotel

Trip information

Country information

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Climate

Across France, from April - August, weather conditions are generally warm and pleasant with moderate rainfall; Autumn temperatures are a bit lower and the winter months (though colder) remain mild. The summer months on the Mediterranean Coast in the south tend to be warmer than the rest of France and have less rainfall, and also more mild winters; freezing conditions are nearly unheard of. The mountainous areas of the Alps, Juros and Pyrenees can be quite different. During summer the morning and evening temperatures are considerably cooler and it becomes much colder in winter with heavy snowfall. Western France, along the English Channel, there can be very strong winds and frequent rain during the winter months Nov - Apr. Wine harvesting takes place in late August/early September.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Catholic

Language

French

Budgeting and packing

Clothing

Take light and comfortable clothing that can be layered according to the temperature. Early and late in the season go prepared with clothing to suit drops in temperature and possible showers. Light rainwear may be needed at any time of year, and a warm fleece/jacket is recommended for cooler evenings and nights. Take a swimming costume as our hotels have pools.

Footwear

Walking boots or shoes and comfortable trainers and/or sandals for sightseeing and relaxing.

Luggage: On tour

You will need one main piece of baggage and a daypack sufficiently large to take everything needed for your walking day, such as your water bottle, snacks, spare clothing and camera. Your main luggage will be transferred to your next accommodation on days 2, 4 and 6. Please clearly mark all your belongings with your name and the name of the next accommodation and speak to your accommodation about where you need to leave it on the morning of your departure.

Luggage transfer

Included between each hotel

Equipment

Insect repellent, sunglasses, walking poles, sunscreen and a water bottle are all recommended. Maps - Along with the destination manual and route notes you will be sent a set of maps that have been created specifically for this trip to help you navigate. The route is marked on each map together with a series of numbered waypoints which correspond with instructions in the route notes. Should you wish to purchase a more detailed commercially produced map we recommend the following:- General maps - IGN Institut Geographique N° 171 Marseille - Avignon - Aix en Provence 1:100.000, ISBN: 9782758523772 - IGN Institut Geographique N° 164 Carpentras - Digne les Bains - Drome 1:100.000, ISBN: 9782758523703 Topographic Map - IGN Institut Geographique N° 3142- OT Fontaine-de-Vaucluse, Cavaillon, Gordes, PNR du Luberon Alpen - Vaucluse - Drome 1:25.000, ISBN: 9782758504825

Country Information

France Holidays & Tours

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£11

Dinner price

£16.00 - 18.00

Beer price

£4

Water price

£1.3

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Euro

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Pounds Sterling and US Dollars can only be changed in larger airports with a Bureau de Change. Please change currency into Euros prior to arriving in France.

Where To Exchange

Bureau de Change can only be found in major cities and large airports. Many French banks no longer exchange Foreign currency.

ATM Availability

In cities and most major towns

Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants (make sure you have informed your credit card company that you are travelling abroad as some companies will reject payments)

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques are no longer commonly accepted and can only be changed in larger airports with a Bureau de Change.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Essential information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa Information

France: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, US, New Zealand, US or Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for

your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Maximum altitude (m)

661

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Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory. Tetanus recommended. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.
