

EXPLORE!

Walking in the Andorran Pyrenees
8 days

Andorra - Trip code PAW



Walking in the Andorran Pyrenees

Hidden deep in the Pyrenees, Andorra is one of the smallest countries in Europe and it offers superb summer walking. We base ourselves in the village of Soldeu and enjoy some of the area's most beautiful walks including: the UNESCO-protected valley of Madriu-Perafita-Claror, the glacial landscapes of Incles Valley, and Sorteny Valley, home to more than 700 species of flowers and plants.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Soldeu** - Stay in the heart of the Andorran Pyrenees
- ★ **Sorteny Nature Reserve** - A botanical haven with over 700 species of flora
- ★ **Incles Valley** - Walk through beautiful glacial landscapes to Cabana Sorda Lake
- ★ **The Andorran Valleys** - Explore the scenic majesty of the Vall de Riu and the Sorteny Valley
- ★ **The Madriu - Perafita-Claror Valley** - A UNESCO World Heritage glacial valley

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:

Moderate

For those who are fit and active, these moderate walks are normally on good paths and tracks at low altitude. Days may include some fairly demanding ascents and descents, so previous experience is preferable but not essential.

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join tour Barcelona. Drive to Soldeu

Joining the tour at Barcelona's international airport today we then depart the city by bus, heading towards the small alpine village of Soldeu, deep in the heart of the Andorran Pyrenees. The three hour journey should hopefully get us into Soldeu in time to enjoy a short orientation walk around the village before dinner. A popular ski resort, lying some 1,710 metres above sea level, Soldeu is an engaging mix of traditional rural inns, converted farmhouses and lively bars, providing us with an ideal base for our Pyrenean adventure.



Accommodation: Hotel Soldeu Maistre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Walking in the Vall de Riu

After a short taxi ride to the neighbouring village of Ransol this morning, we begin our walk into the Vall de Riu, another of Andorra's scenic gems. Encircled by a ring of glacial-formed mountains, the valley provides us with a beautiful backdrop to today's walk up to the small mountain village of Canillo. Home to Andorra's tallest church tower, and one of its finest Romanesque chapels, Canillo will be our final destination today, before returning to Soldeu by public bus.

Today's 11km walk is expected to take around 5hrs with 600m ascent and 1000m descent.



Accommodation: Hotel Soldeu Maistre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - Hiking in the Andorra valleys; visit Sorteny Valley and Estanyó Lake

This morning we drive a short distance to the Sorteny Nature Reserve, set amongst the fertile valleys of north-eastern Andorra. Renowned for its abundance of plant species, the valley is a botanical haven for over 700 species of flora, some of it unique to the Pyrenees region. The trail that we take today leads us up to Estanyó Lake (2,350 metres) and passes through an alpine landscape that is home to wild boar, martens, chamois and ptarmigan. Driving back to Soldeu later we may also have time to stop for a drink in the pretty mountain village of Ordino.

Today's 10km walk is expected to take around 4.5hrs with an ascent and descent of 600m.



Accommodation: Hotel Soldeu Maistre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Free day to explore Andorra la Vella

Some free time today affords us a chance to pay a visit to Andorra's bustling capital, Andorra la Vella. Home to the smallest parliament in Europe and the oldest Romanesque church in the principality, the city is also a great place for shopping. Alternatively you may wish to remain in Soldeu and enjoy some more walks around the area.



Accommodation: Hotel Soldeu Maistre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Walk in the Incles Valley

Our first walk takes us into the beautiful glacial landscapes of the Incles Valley, home to Scots pine, Pyrenean chamois and one of the largest alpine lakes in Andorra. We begin the day gently, before following the course of the river up to the Siscaro Lakes. Nestling within a glacial cirque at some 2,350 metres, the lake provides us with a beautiful spot to stop and enjoy a picnic lunch. There may even be an opportunity for us to walk a little further, towards the Incles Pass, before we head back down to the hotel.


Today's 14km walk is expected to take around 4.5hrs with 900m ascent and 1350m descent.



Accommodation: Hotel Soldeu Maistre (or similar)



Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Walking in the Madriu and Perafita Valleys

Today we explore the untouched wilderness of Andorra's only UNESCO World Heritage Site, the beautiful and remote Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley. Covering nearly 50 square kilometres this pristine setting is the country's spiritual and cultural heart, as well as being a haven for wildlife that includes marmot, bearded vulture and ptarmigan. Driving to the small hamlet of Saint Miquel d'Engolasers, we then hike up to the refuge at Fontverd, where we stop to enjoy a picnic lunch before heading back to Soldeu by bus.

Today's 12km walk is expected to take around 4.5hrs with 900m ascent and 400m descent.



Accommodation: Hotel Soldeu Maistre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Free day: optional white water rafting or 4WD excursions

There is an option today to take a drive across the Spanish border, travelling by 4WD vehicles through the medieval hamlet of Tor and on to the village of Llavorsi. From here we then have a chance to raft down the Noguera River, along 14 kilometres of exhilarating white water rapids, before making the journey back across the border to Soldeu. Alternatively you can just relax around the village, or take a trip back into the capital for a spa and maybe some last minute shopping.



Accommodation: Hotel Soldeu Maistre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Tour ends Barcelona Airport

Driving back to Barcelona this morning our journey ends back at the city's international airport.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Walking and Trekking information

DAILY DISTANCES

Day 2	11km
Day 3	10km
Day 4	
Day 5	14km
Day 6	12km

Walking grade

Moderate

Trek details

We walk on four days for between 5 and 6 hours each day. We have graded this trek as moderate.



What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 7



Transport

Bus
Taxi



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)



Accommodation

7 nights standard hotel

Trip information

Country information

Andorra

Climate

The Andorran climate is of Mediterranean mountainous type, with warm summers and cold winters. Temperatures can dip below freezing in the winter while summer temperature remain warm.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Roman Catholic

Language

Catalan

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Noguera River - Rafting 55€ plus 45€ for 4x4 return transfer (minimum group of 5)

Other walks - approximately 10-15€ for transfer

Visit to Andorra capital - Public bus fare 5€

Visit to Caldea spa - From 40€

Clothing

Waterproofs for showers are recommended as the weather can change with little notice as in all mountainous areas. Lightweight cotton clothing is advised from June to September with a fleece for higher walks.

Footwear

We recommend you bring walking boots with ankle support- leather or fabric are both fine. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. Also trainers or sandals for relaxing and general wear. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Total allowance: 44lb/20kg. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

During the summer months we recommend you bring a sunhat and sunscreen as temperatures can be high. A water bottle and a torch is essential. Walking poles may be useful.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow €10 for tipping drivers and site guides. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Country Information

Andorra

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

£7

Dinner price

£15

Beer price

£3.5

Water price

£1.5

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Euro.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

We recommend that you bring Euros.

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

It is also convenient to use a Visa/Mastercard at cashpoint machines.

Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants only.

Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Taxi

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single

Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Set against a backdrop of tree covered mountains, the Soldieu-Maistre Hotel enjoys a central yet quiet location in the village of Soldeu, northern Andorra. Open year round this modern family-run hotel offers 48 rooms over 3 floors. Built in mountain lodge style with a stone and wood panelled exterior the hotel is in keeping with its surroundings.

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.

Price Guarantee

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 and Passport Information

Spain: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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.

Non refundable permits

Andorra

Vaccinations

Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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 [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
