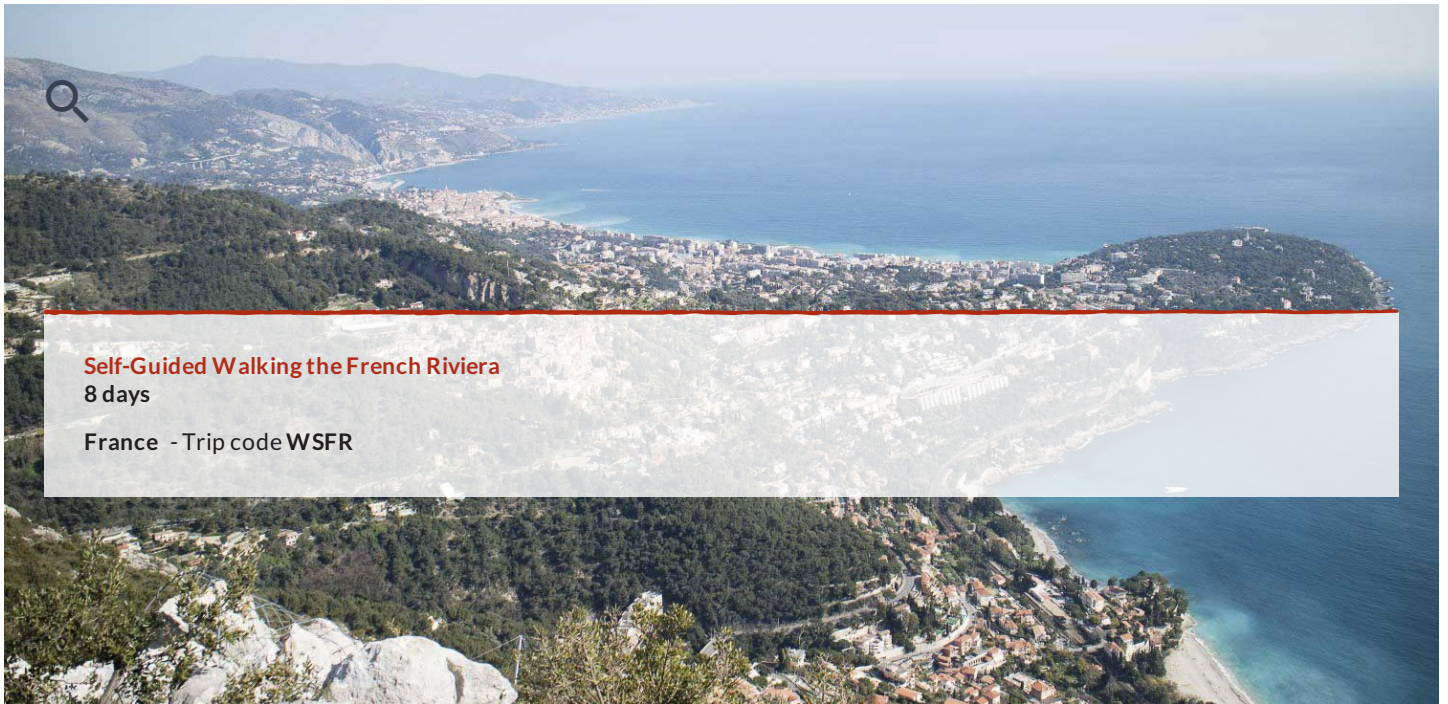


EXPLORE!



Self-Guided Walking the French Riviera
8 days

France - Trip code WSFR

Self-Guided Walking the French Riviera

Between Grasse and Menton, the inland paths overlooking the Mediterranean offer up an endless array of coastal panoramas and pass through a variety of scenic landscapes peppered with picturesque villages. This is the place where the steep foothills of the Alps meet the azure sea - a magnificent backdrop for a week of superb walking. Hike by steep gorges and tumbling waterfalls, enjoy the Riviera's mild climate and discover the region's characteristic flora including mimosa, box, yew and groves of orange, lemon and olive.

Trip highlights

- ★ Grasse - Enjoy the scent of the famed perfume village
- ★ Paradise Path - Scenic ascent to Gourdon for spectacular views
- ★ Dramatic, varied scenery - Deep gorges, waterfalls, river valleys and coastal views
- ★ French cuisine - Mouth-watering local delicacies and wines
- ★ Cote d'Azur - Walk from the mountains to the Mediterranean

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.

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Trip starts Grasse

You begin your journey in Grasse, the capital of fragrances. Depending on your arrival time you may wish to explore Grasse's old town, visit a perfumery or the Cathedral Notre Dame du Puy. This town is a true gem, up in the hills north of Nice with numerous ancient buildings and lots of character.



Accommodation: Hotel du Patti (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Walk from Grasse to medieval Pont du Loup

Today's walk to Pont du Loup takes you by the Belvedere of Grasse and the beautiful medieval village of Bar sur Loup. Don't miss the St Jacques-le-Majeur church with its impressive altarpiece and the 'Danse Macabre' or 'Dance of the Dead', a painting dating from the 15th century. Bar sur Loup is perched on a rocky spur overlooking the Loup River valley and is the perfect location for lunch before walking down to the bottom of the valley, at the mouth of the Gorges du Loup. Pont du Loup is small but charming. The tall pillars of an old railway viaduct cross the valley here, towering above the buildings of the village.

Today's 16km walk is expected to take about 4.5 hours and you will ascend 480m and descend 640m.



Accommodation: Auberge Des Gorges du Loup (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 3 - Hike from Pont du Loup to Courmes

Today you will ascend on the so-called 'Paradise Path' up to the medieval village of Gourdon, at an altitude of 760 metres above the Mediterranean Sea. Along with its must-see 13th century castle, you can enjoy beautiful views overlooking Cannes and its surrounds. The path from here is breathtakingly carved into the cliff-face of Gorges du Loup and you pass through tunnels and over footbridges and an aqueduct to the village of Courmes, located right above a waterfall.

Today's 14km walk is expected to take about 6 hours and you will ascend 790m and descend 440m.



Accommodation: Gite de La Cascade (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 4 - Walk from Courmes to Vence

Following a scenic ascent from the Pic des Courmettes (1248m), you will find yourself looking out over a stunning view all the way from Nice to Mandelieu. You can see the Gorges du Loup, city of Cannes, and the Lerins islands, whilst in the background lie the mountains of the Alps and the Mercantour. From the edge of the Puy de Tourette, you will look out over to the limestone plateau of Caussols towards Vence, Cheiron and various villages. All along the descent towards Vence, you can admire the beautiful landscapes of the Mediterranean with its 'restanques' (terraces dating back to the 16th century). Your destination of Vence is a wonderfully quaint town with a beautiful 11th century cathedral.

Today's 16km walk is expected to take about 4.5 hours and you will ascend 440m and descend 750m.



Accommodation: Hotel Victoire (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Vence to Saint- Jeannet

Today starts with a short a short taxi transfer to Coste Berarde. From here you cross the limestone plateau of the Plan de Noves to Saint-Jeannet, an extremely picturesque and authentic Provencal village perched on a ledge beneath the towering Baou de St Jeannet. You can hike up to the summit of the Baou (limestone escarpment) for a magnificent view out over the pink and yellow tiles of the village towards Nice, Antibes, the Baie des Anges (Angels Bay) and Estere. This stage is a personal favourite for many.


Today's 15km walk is expected to take about 5 hours and you will ascend 590m and descend 750m.



Accommodation: The Frogs House (or similar)



Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Taxi to La Turbie then trek to Saint- Agnes


After a taxi transfer (40min) to La Turbie, you set off on your hike into the Var Valley. Walking on trails high above the Mediterranean, you'll enjoy superb views over Monaco, Roquebrune Cap Martin and Menton. At the summit of Baudon (1200m) you are less than five kilometres from the sea with a panoramic coastal view stretching all the way from Ventimiglia in Italy to St Tropez. The route continues, ascending through the old village of Gorbio to Saint- Agnes. Perched on a rocky outcrop at an altitude of 766 metres, you can stroll along the quaint cobbled streets of the village or visit the ruins of a 12th century castle that once protected the village from Saracen invaders.


Today's 12km walk is expected to take about 4.5 hours and you will ascend 770m and descend 580m.



Accommodation: Hotel Le St Yves (or similar)

 Simple Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 7 - Long descent from Saint- Agnes to Menton


From Saint Agnes it's a long and scenic descent to Menton and the Mediterranean Sea. With the sea in front of you, this section of the route, passing through a variety of vegetation zones, is a real delight. Finally you arrive on the Riviera itself in the charming resort of Menton with its old town and its beach: tradition says that you must have a swim in the refreshing water!

Today's 10km walk is expected to take about 3.5 hours and you will ascend 250m and descend 920m.



Accommodation: Hotel Mediteranee (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Menton

After breakfast, the organised part of your holiday comes to an end.

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

Walking and Trekking information

DAILY DISTANCES

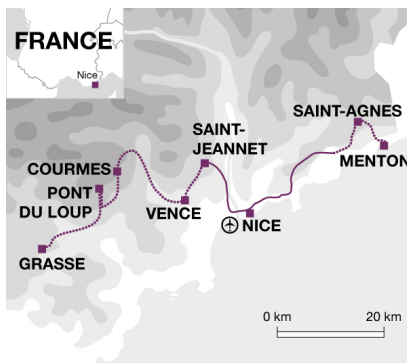
Day 2	16km
Day 3	14km
Day 4	16km
Day 5	15km
Day 6	12km
Day 7	10km

Walking grade

Moderate

Trek details

On this tour we walk 83 km over six days (an average of 14 km per day). We generally walk on well-marked paths and dirt tracks, there are some road sections. We have graded the route as moderate.



Staff on tour

Walking Programme Manager Caroline Phillips and Self-Guided Product Manager Ali Butler set out for the Riviera on a recce from a stormy Farnborough for three days of walking. [Find out how they got on and what were their surprises and highlights.](#)

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 7
Dinner: 3



Accommodation

6 nights standard hotel
1 nights simple hotel

Trip information

Country information

France

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

The following are essential: good quality waterproof jacket and trousers, fleece jacket, comfortable walking trousers, shorts, warm hat and gloves, sunhat and sunglasses.

Footwear

We recommend walking boots with proper ankle support and good tread. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. We recommend that you wear/carry your walking boots as hand luggage on the international flight. Should your luggage be delayed, your well broken in boots will be irreplaceable. Trainers or trekking sandals are useful for relaxing in the evening.

Luggage transfer

A luggage transfer between each accommodation. This is provided by a local taxi supplier.

Equipment

Bring a water bottle (preferably 2 litres) and high factor sun cream. Trekking poles are recommended. Tap water is safe to drink as are the fountains found in villages, but water sources along the trail may not always be drinkable. Using tap or purified water rather than bottled water will help avoid creating plastic bottle waste. Energy snacks including chocolate and sweets are recommended whilst on trek. You will need a torch for the tunnels on day 3 - Pont du Loup to Courmes.

Country Information

France

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

Recommended airport

Nice

Flying to your destination

For this trip you can fly into and back from Nice airport. Nice is served by both budget airlines (EasyJet from Gatwick) and non-budget airlines (including British Airways and Swiss Air).

Arrival and departure information

For this trip you can fly into and back from Nice airport.

From Nice airport you can take a bus directly to Grasse, line number 500. The journey takes approximately 1 hour 20 minutes and costs about 20 Euros. For timetable information call +33 (0)493909292

From Menton to Nice airport you can take bus number 110 which takes about 1 hour and costs approximately 25 Euros.

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

Visas are not required by UK, E.U Nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and 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.

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.

France**Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory. Tetanus recommended. 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.
