

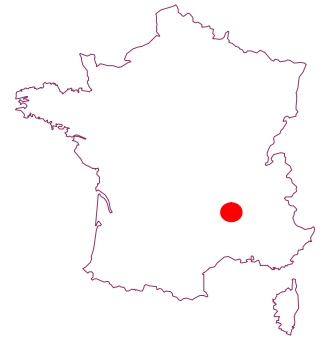
### Season

From May to end of October.

We recommend you to book this tour 3 or 4 months before the departure date if you plan to walk it in summer time. Great demand and few rooms!

### Difficulty: grade 2

this tour presents no major difficulty. You walk along the coastal path and there are no prolonged ascents and descents and no steep gradients. One day-walk is 26 km long but is flat.



### Itinerary

*8-day and 7-night self-guided walking holidays*

Day 1: Arrival in LE PUY EN VELAY. The volcanic site of Le Puy is of exceptional beauty, with pitons rising in number all across the plain. The city has a long history. Having always been a place of cultish or religious activity, it has more recently been dominated by Christianity and has become a sanctuary of the Virgin Mary. As a place of pilgrimage in itself, and the departure point for one of the paths on the pilgrimage of Santiago de Compostela, Le Puy deserves a visit. Take time to see the Episcopal city, Notre-Dame Cathedral, the cloister, the Saint Michel d'Aiguilhe Chapel sitting on a rock hill, and the old quarter. Le Puy is also famous for its lace, a liquor called La Verveine du Velay, and its lentils - Half-board accommodation in a two-star hotel.

Day 2: LE PUY EN VELAY - LE MONASTIER SUR GAZEILLE (19 km – 5 and a half hour walk). After walking through the plateau, you will descend into the Loire valley to Coubron dominated by the château of Bouzol. You will cross the river and go up on the other side to reach Le Monastier sur Gazeille, small town rich in history. The old city is very pleasant and is worth a visit - Half-board accommodation in a two-star hotel.

Day 3: LE MONASTIER SUR GAZEILLE – LE BOUCHET SAINT NICOLAS (23 km – 6 and a half hour walk). Before setting out, you will visit Monastier, its abbey and château, and the old streets and homes of the village. You will cross the valleys of the Gazeille and the Loire, then a vast plateau, to arrive at Le Bouchet.

Half-board accommodation in a farmhouse. All conveniences provided.

Day 4: LE BOUCHET – LANGOGNE (25 km – 7 hour walk). You will hike the length of the plateau, passing through picturesque little villages such as Landos and Jagonas, to reach Pradelles, a medieval city worth visiting. You will then arrive in Langogne, a small city that grew up around its medieval center.

Half-board accommodation in a two-star hotel.

Day 5: LANGOGNE – CHEYLARD L'EVEQUE (16 km – 4 and a half hour walk). Today's hike is short, giving you time to wander around the little villages you will pass through, such as Saint Flour de Merçoire, where you will discover a Romanesque church. Your destination for the day is Cheylard l'Eveque, a picturesque village at the end of the earth, sitting quietly in the shadow of the Notre Dame de Toutes les Graces Chapel, accessible by a path which leads one through the 14 Stations of the Cross - Half-board accommodation in a guest house with all conveniences provided.

Day 6: CHEYLARD – LA BASTIDE PUY LAURENT (19 km – 5 hour walk). You will cross through the forest and over small streams, admiring the landscape all the way to Luc, which now holds only the ruins of a château that once defended the entire Allier Valley. You will follow the river to La Bastide Puy Laurent.

Half-board accommodation in a one-star hotel with all conveniences

Day 7: LA BASTIDE – CHASSERADES with a round-trip journey to the Abbey of Notre Dame des Neiges (about an hour and a half walk) then, La Bastide – Chasseradès (12 km). In the morning you will leave for a visit of the Trappist abbey of Notre Dame des Neiges which Stevenson, though Protestant, often mentioned in his writings. The buildings were all rebuilt after a fire in 1912. You will return to La Bastide to point your route towards Chasseradès, passing through the lovely village of Chabalière, and by the Rocher de Rochaubo, which looks much like a château in ruins. Transfer by taxi from Chasserades to La Bastide.

Half-board accommodation in the same one-star hotel at La Bastide.

D8: LA BASTIDE PUY LAURENT. Tour ends after breakfast

## Access to and from

### Outward journey

By train : Le Puy en Velay is easily reached by the principal train stations in France, with correspondences in Lyon, Clermont-Ferrand or Saint Etienne.

By car : You will arrive in Le Puy en Velay by following highway A75 to route N102 by way of Brioude, or in Saint Etienne by route N88.

Where to park : Guarded, underground parking is available close to the Tourism Office of Le Puy, only 500 meters from the train station.

### Inward journey

By train : From La Bastide St Laurent, trains to Clermont or to Alès and Nîmes where you catch TGV trains to Marseille, Lyon or Paris

Return to Clermont and Le Puy en Velay by train to get back your car.

## Accommodation

7 overnight stops on a half-board basis in small family-run hotels or guest houses with ensuite facilities.

*Accommodation is normally in large bed or twin-bedded rooms, with en-suite facilities (at least shower, washbasin and toilet) when available, which is 95% of the time. However, you can stay in remote spots or small villages where there is little or no choice of accommodations and where facilities may be limited. In this case, you will share a bathroom or shower room and toilets with some other people on the same storey.*

*Picnic lunches are not included in the tour but are available from the hotel on request the previous evening, alternatively picnic materials can be bought at the stop village or at each of the towns and villages along the route. We indicate in the route notes where there are suitable restaurants or cafés for lunch stops. We recommend you to carry food and drinks if there are none convenient to the trail.*

## Included

- o Twin share accommodation with private facilities
- o Baggage transfer between hotels (except for STD option)
- o Route notes and maps
- o 7 dinners
- o transfer by taxi from Chasseradès to La Bastide St Laurent (Day 7)
- o Emergency phone number (8:00am to 7:00pm every day)

## Not included

- o Visa fees, transportation fees to and from the walk area
- o Insurance (strongly recommended on all trips)
- o Transfers except those mentioned above
- o Drinks
- o Additional meals
- o Spending of personal nature e.g. laundry, souvenirs, phone calls...



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