

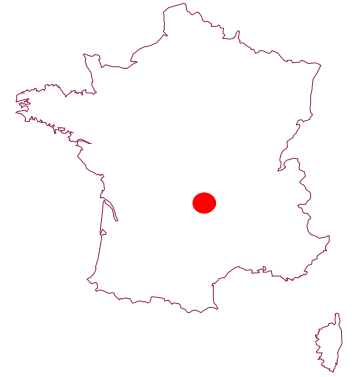
Season

From May to mid-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 3

You walk 6 to 8 hours a day. Terrain is hilly or mountainous. Total ascent is about 750 m a day. These tours are for regular week-end walkers. Trails are well-waymarked. No difficulty to find your way



Itinerary

9-day and 8-night self-guided walking holidays

Day 1 : Arrival at VOLVIC. This small village is located at the entry of the Parc des Volcans d'Auvergne and on a lava flow which came out of la Nugère volcano. Volvic is famous for its natural springs, in which the water is of the highest purity and contains few minerals. The city is also known for its hard stone. Many houses, the Saint Priest Church, as well as the very unique cemetery are all made of this stone - Half-board accommodation in a two-star hotel.

Day 2 : VOLVIC - ORCINES (21 km – ascent : 700 m). All along this walk, you will discover extinguished volcanoes whose shapes create the landscape of Auvergne. You will begin your walk through the woods, climbing the Puy de la Nugère so to descend towards the La Nugère Pass. You will continue making your way across other Puys volcanoes : Puy de Junes, Puy de la Coquille, Puy Chopine, all of them former craters. You will then walk down to the granite plateau and will pass round the Puy des Goules to join Orcines, a pleasant village located a few kilometres away from Clermont-Ferrand - Half-board accommodation in a two-star hotel.

Day 3: ORCINES - LASCHAMP (20 km – ascent : 500 m) The day will be long but instructive, beginning with a visit of Vulcania, a resort where you will discover the fascinating world of volcanoes and earth sciences. You will then start walking. You will pass around the Puy de Come and Le Grand Suchet before climbing the Puy de Dôme, which stands 1464 meters high. The ascent is quite hard but worth the effort! The panorama from this height is outstanding and lets you discover the whole Puy Chain, more than one hundred volcanoes! This sacred mountain was coroneted by a temple dedicated to Mercury, of which only a few ruins remain and in no way represent the splendor and richness of what it once was. You will then follow an old roman path to the Ceysnat Pass and arrive in Laschamp for a well-deserved rest - Half-board accommodation in a two-star hotel.

Day 4 : LASCHAMP – LAC D'AYDAT (18 km – ascent : 300 m). You will continue your journey through the volcanoes, crossing through the forest, and passing around most of the Puys : Puy de Mercoeur, Puy de Pourcharet, Puy du Montjuger. You will admire two volcanoes with open craters : the Puy de Lassolas and the Puy de la Vache, truly one



of a kind. A part of the crater was destroyed by a lava flow or an explosion. You will continue to the Puy de Vichatel and the Puy de Charmont, accessed by the la Ventouse Pass, still by way of the forest, and arrive at the Aydat Lake, a volcanic barrier lake - Half-board accommodation in a small hotel with all conveniences on the lake bank.

Day 5 : AYDAT LAKE – SAINT NECTAIRE (24 km – ascent : 300 m). You will cross Aydat and the villages of Phialex and Fohet before crossing a big plateau covered with pastures and broken into two parts by the Gorges de la Monne. Along the way, you will discover the Allée Couverte de la Grotte. You will traverse the village of Olloix whose church holds a beautiful recumbent statue. You will pass around the Puy d'Olloix and will walk to Saint Nectaire, crossing the villages of Lenteuge and Sauvagnat. Saint Nectaire is actually the union of two villages : Saint Nectaire le Haut, dominated by a great Romanesque church, and Saint Nectaire le Bas, a spa resort with more than 40 volcanic springs.

Half-board accommodation in a guest house with all conveniences

D6 : SAINT NECTAIRE – BESSE EN CHANDESSE (23 km – ascent : 500 m) Crossing the hamlet of Chautignat, you will reach Murol, situated on a picturesque spot and dominated by a lovely 13th century fortified castle. From the top of the keep, you will have a beautiful panoramic view of the La Couze Valley, Les Monts Dore and the Chambon Lake, at

which you will arrive by crossing the Bois de Bouves (Bouves Wood). You will follow the south bank of the lake to the charming village of Chambon-sur-Lac, and will walk up to the Saousses Plateau. Then, you will make your way to Le Saut du Cheix (Cheix Waterfall) and the hamlet of Courbanges, through forest and pastures. Finally, you will descend into the valley of Besse-en-Chandesse, a little medieval village which has conserved its ramparts and many old houses made of lava - Half-board accommodation in a small hotel with all conveniences in the village

Day 7 : BESSE – SUPER BESSE (17 km – ascent : 550 m). You now find yourself in the Massif des Monts Dore. You will leave Besse by passing through the hamlet of Olpilière and you will cross the pasture-covered Montagne des Fraux (Fraux Mountain) to reach Pavin Lake, one of the nicest of Auvergne. Encircled by forest, it appeared after an explosion which cut in the North flank of the Puy de Montchal a huge crater that progressively filled with water. You will pass around it, following a nice, shady little path and then admire it from the top of the Puy de Montchal. Indeed, from here you will have a gorgeous panoramic view of the surrounding area and the volcanoes of Auvergne. You will then descend into the valley to walk up to Super-Besse, passing Notre-Dame-de-Vassivière and the Hermines Lake on the way - Half-board accommodation in a two-star hotel.

Day 8 : SUPER BESSE – LE MONT DORE (7 hour walk – ascent : 600 m). By the Couhay and la Cabane Passes, you will climb to the summit of Puy de Sancy. Standing at 1885 meters, it is the highest point of the Massif Central. The panorama is gorgeous and largely worth the effort! You will continue along the crests dominating the beautiful Chaudefour Valley and across the Durbise Plateau, a vast stretch of poor grazing lands. You will then arrive at the La Croix St Robert Pass, and the Puy de l'Angle. You will now begin your descent towards the Mont Dore by passing the Grande Cascade (waterfall) and the wooded flanks of the Dordogne Valley whose source lies at the foot of Le Sancy. The Mont Dore spa-town, stretched out along the river; is your very pleasant destination for the evening. Half-board accommodation in a two-star hotel.

Day 9 : LE MONT DORE. Tour ends after breakfast.

Access to and from

Outward journey

By train : Volvic is on the Clermont-Ferrand-Le Mont Dore regional route. Change at Clermont Ferrand from Paris Gare de Lyon (several trains per day) or Lyon station.

By car : Volvic is accessible by the A71 motorway, (exit Volvic) And then, along D986 road.

Where to park : unguarded car parks are available around the Volvic train station or in the village

Outward journey

By train : Regular trains from Le Mont Dore to Clermont-Ferrand. Connection to Paris or Lyon

By car : trains from Le Mont-Dore to Volvic

Accommodation

8 nights with accommodation in 1 or 2 star hotel or guesthouse on half-board basis

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

- Twin share accommodation with private facilities
- Baggage transfer between hotels (except for STD option)
- Route notes and maps
- 8 dinners
- Emergency phone number (8:00am to 7:00pm every day)

Not included

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



La Caminade trademark of Sentiers de France

59 bis rue du Mûrier – BP 40226 – 37542 Saint Cyr sur Loire cedex – France
Tel : 00 33 (0)970 445 924 Fax : 00 33 (0)134 292 260 E-mail : contact@randolacaminade.com
Sarl au capital de 7630 euros –TO agreement n° LI 0940100008 –
Garantie bancaire APS – Assurances RCP : Covea risks