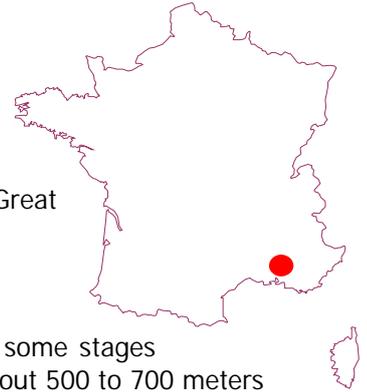


Season

From end of March to middle of November except in summer time (from end of June to middle of September) when the paths through the Provence mountains are off limits due to the high risks of fire.

We recommend you to book this tour 3 or 4 months before the departure date. Great demand and few rooms!



Difficulty: grade 3

No major difficulty, you walk 6 to 8 hours a day. The grade 3 reflects the length of some stages (between 25 or 30 kilometers) and the nature of the terrain. The total altitude gain is about 500 to 700 meters a day, some ascents or descents could be steep. This walk requires a reasonable degree of walking experience and a current good state of fitness. The trail is well marked with red and white GR signs or yellow PR signs

Itinerary

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

Day 1 : Arrival at AIX EN PROVENCE, ancient capital of Provence. You won't be able to resist strolling through this magical city with its numerous fountains, its shady squares and its private majestic mansions. Don't try ! Take the day to discover! Lodging and breakfast in a 2-star hotel, located in the city center

Day 2 : AIX – VAUVENARGUES (20 km) You will leave the city to the North-East, walking through fields and forests to the tour de César (old watchtower) and continue to a hill named La Tête du Marquis, above Vauvenargues, beautiful Provencal village dominating by a chateau where Picasso is buried.
Half-board accommodation in a one-star hotel with en-suite facilities



Day 3 : VAUVENARGUES - TRETTS (26 km – ascent : 700 meters)
You will climb the village of Vauvenargues to reach the bottom of the Sainte Victoire Mountain that you will ascent by taking the Imoucha path, traversing the Pas du Moine (the Moine pass) and the Costes Chaudes crests. Keep to the same path and let it lead you along the crests to the Priory and the Croix de Provence, the Baou de Vespre and the Mouches Peak that rises 1125 meters!
You will then descend into Puyloubier, a small village of narrow

streets and tall houses. Then, you will walk through the plain to reach Trets, a charming medieval village - Lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel at Trets

Day 4 : TRETTS - PLAN D'AUPS SAINTE BAUME (22 km). You will leave Trets, its well-preserved fortified walls, its narrow streets and the vaulted passages surrounding Sainte Marie's church, and you will cross the Regagnas mountains at the Saint Jean du Puy Hermitage. You will walk down to Sainte Zacharie and cross through the Sainte Baume Forest to arrive at Plan d'Aups - Half-board accommodation in a small family-run hotel

Day 5 : PLAN D'AUPS STE BAUME - GEMENOS (22 km – ascent : 500 meters). From the Plan d'Aups, you will walk to the Dominican convent of Hostellerie de la Sainte Baume and climb up the Sainte Baume, a brilliantly white limestone wall located 1000 meters above sea-level which casts into shadow a great forest of oaks and beech trees. Be sure to visit the Sainte Marie Madeleine Grotto and the Saint Pilon Chapel before continuing along the Sainte Baume Crest to the Bertagne Peak. Then, from the Aigle Pass, you will walk down the Vallon de l'Aigle to Saint Pons Park, an area of lush green vegetation, and continue on to reach Gemenos - Half-board accommodation in a small family-run hotel

Day 6 : GEMENOS - CASSIS (25 km). You will leave Gemenos by the Mont Cruvelier and will reach the Ange Pass. Traversing the Font Blanche forest, you will pass through Le Moutounier before walking down to the Ouillier and the Belle Fille passes. From here, you will climb the Couronne de Charlemagne, a hill that looks like a crown over the

Cassis vineyards, and pass around the Bau de la Saoupe, the last summit facing the ocean. You will finally walk down to Cassis centre where is located your hotel - Lodging and breakfast in a family-run hotel

Day 7: CALANQUE OF CASSIS (5-hour round walk). From the port you walk to Calanque de Port Miou and after calanque du Pin. Then you will leave the shore to ascent and go through Cadeiron plateau to reach Portalet d'En Vau (something like a pass) before plunging down into le vallon d'En Vau (narrow valley) to reach the next calanque, the calanque d'En Vau, one of the most beautiful along the coast. After swimming you walk up the vallons d'En Vau and de la Gardiole to reach an isolated forest house in the middle of this rocky massif. You will keep on your way through it to come back to the bottom of the calanque de Port Miou and return to Cassis
Lodging and breakfast in the same family-run hotel

Day 8 : CASSIS. Tour ends after breakfast.

Access to and from

Outward journey to Aix en Provence

By train : TGV trains to Aix en Provence.

By car : Aix en Provence is located on the A8 and A51 motorways

Where to park : Guarded pay car parks in Aix.

Inward journey from Cassis

By train : Transfer by bus or taxi from Cassis to the St Charles rail station in Marseille. Shuttle to the Cassis rail station at 3 km away from Cassis centre

Getting back your car : First go to Marseille train station and train to Aix en Provence

Accommodation

3 nights with accommodation in 1-star or family-run hotels on half-board basis

4 nights with accommodation in 1or 2-star or family-run hotels on lodging and breakfast 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

- o Twin share accommodation with private facilities
- o Baggage transfer between hotels (except for STD option)
- o Route notes and maps
- o 3 dinners
- 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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