

FRANCE: PROVENCE & ST. RÉMY

Guest Handbook

A Self-Guided Walking Adventure





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Travel Style

Our Self-Guided Walking Adventures are ideal for travelers with an independent spirit who enjoy exploring at their own pace. We provide authentic accommodations, luggage transfers, and some meals, along with comprehensive Route Notes, detailed maps, and 24-hour emergency assistance. This gives you the freedom to focus on the things that matter to you—no group, no guide, and no set schedule to stand in the way of enjoying your adventure, your way.



Overview

The essential Provence literally unfolds at your feet on this easygoing Self-Guided itinerary where open ridge walks along the Alpilles and Luberon mountain ranges provide sweeping views over the southern French landscape. The route takes you to picturesque hilltop villages—Gordes, Goult, Lacoste, and Bonnieux—and through countryside straight out of Van Gogh paintings (in fact you walk in his footsteps in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence). Trails gently descend through olive and almond groves to quaint medieval villages shaded by ancient trees, where colorful markets, fountains, and narrow cobbled lanes invite exploration. Accommodations offer signature Provençal hospitality and style, as well as the true Mediterranean flavors of fresh local cuisine and wine.



Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Arrival in Avignon. Transfer to Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

You are met in Avignon and transferred about 25 minutes to the classic southern French town of Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, where you may relax with an apéritif of chilled pastis (the local anise-flavored liqueur) in the shade of the fig trees your hotel is named after. Dinner tonight is a short walk away at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

DAY 2

Van Gogh loop; 6.2 miles, easy to moderate, 800-ft. elevation gain and loss. Additional optional detour: 5 miles, challenging, 1,000-ft. elevation gain and loss

Today you follow the Van Gogh trail, through the very scenes that inspired him. At the outset of your walk, explore the Roman ruins of Glanum, or the former monastery where Van Gogh spent the last year of his life, before following a winding botanical path up a gradual trail and to the crest of the Alpilles Mountains. Aromatic herbs and wildflowers carpet the hills as the views extend far into the horizon—a perfect setting for a picnic lunch. Upon your return to Saint-Rémy, the rest of the day is at your leisure.

Overnight in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

DAY 3

Saint-Rémy-de-Provence to Les Baux-de-Provence; 6.2 miles, easy to moderate, 900-ft. elevation gain and 350-ft. elevation loss. Transfer to Gordes

Today, once again, you leave Saint-Rémy on foot, but this time taking a different path than yesterday's walk, to the top of the windswept Alpilles. A rolling trail following the ridge is complete with awe-inspiring 360-degree views, which continue as the path gently undulates toward the medieval village of Les Baux-de-Provence, set atop its rocky perch. In addition to eating lunch (before 2 p.m. if you opt for a sit-down restaurant), there is time to visit the village, including the Carrières de Lumières, famed for its unique audio-visual shows, before a one-hour afternoon transfer to the Luberon Mountains and the village of Gordes, your home for the next two nights, and classified as one of the “most beautiful villages of France.” After settling in to your hotel, you step out for a dinner of Provençal specialties.

Overnight in Gordes





DAY 4

Abbey de Sénanque loop; 6.2 miles, easy to moderate, 800-ft. elevation gain and loss

The paths around Gordes are lined with old stone walls, lone farmhouses, and *bories*—centuries-old round shepherd’s huts constructed from dry stone. You follow the paths into the valley and soon

the vision of the 12th-century Sénanque Abbey appears, situated among some of the very few lavender fields in the area (which are in bloom from late June through July). After a picnic lunch overlooking the magnificent 850-year-old Cistercian abbey, a somewhat steep climb brings you back to your hotel, where the late-afternoon relaxation may include a refreshing swim before a drink and dinner.

Overnight in Gordes

DAY 5

Goult to Bonnieux; 7.5 miles, easy to moderate, 1,050-ft. elevation gain and 800-ft. elevation loss or Lacoste to Bonnieux; 3.5 miles, easy to moderate, 750-ft. elevation gain and 200-ft. elevation loss. Transfer to Lourmarin

Today offers two walking options of varying lengths. For the longer option, a short taxi transfer brings you to the Calavon Valley and the timeless village of Goult—perhaps the least known and visited of the beautiful towns in the Petit Luberon. Starting at its Romanesque church, medieval lanes lead you to the restored 18th-century Moulin de Jérusalem—one of the few remaining windmills that were strategically placed on the region’s ridges to grind grain. With sweeping views of the Calavon Valley below, you make your way past *bories* and farmhouses to the neighboring village of Lacoste, once home to the infamous Marquis de Sade and now to the remains of his castle. (For a shorter walking option, you may ask the morning’s taxi to bring you directly to Lacoste.) Heading back into the valley and through cherry orchards, vineyards, and truffle oak plantations, you reach the village of Bonnieux, crowned by its 12th-century church huddled under the canopy of massive cedar trees. There are many dining options to choose from for lunch in Bonnieux, some with spectacular views over

the valley. Your afternoon transfer brings you to your home for the next two nights in Lourmarin.

Overnight in Lourmarin

DAY 6

Lourmarin loop via Cadenet; 6 miles, easy to moderate, 550-ft. elevation gain and loss or Lourmarin loop via the crest of the Grand Luberon; 9.6 miles, challenging, 2,050-ft. elevation gain and loss



The day begins in Lourmarin, a small village nestled on the southern slopes of the Luberon Mountains. With its maze of cobblestone streets and centuries-old buildings, you'll soon see why it's listed as one of the most beautiful towns in France. From here, choose from two walk options along paths scented with wild thyme and rosemary through picturesque, vine-laden countryside bathed in sunlight. While the northern part of the Luberon is a mix of forest and fruit orchards, these routes amble through the majestic, arid landscape of the south, a region of bare limestone outcroppings, castles, vineyards, and private villas. Following small country roads still used by local farmers, an easy to moderate option leads you to the sleepy village of Cadenet in time for lunch. There is plenty of time to relax and soak in the atmosphere of this authentic Provençal village before returning to the trail to walk back to your hotel on foot.

A more challenging alternative loops into the heart of the Grand Luberon Mountain. The Combe des Cavaliers—literally “horseback riders’ hollow”—takes you on a steady climb toward the upper slopes. Continuing through oak forest, a steep, yet short ascent delivers you to the very crest of the Luberon, with picture-perfect views of Mount Ventoux framed in the distance. From here, an optional short detour further rewards with spectacular 360-degree views extending as far south as the Mediterranean Sea, and as far north as the snow-capped Alps. The mostly easy-going descent offers constant views of the Durance Valley before the final leg through farmer fields returns you to Lourmarin.



Overnight in Lourmarin

DAY 7

Departure from Avignon

You bid farewell to Provence and a complimentary transfer back to Avignon is provided after breakfast (approximately one hour).

ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back at countrywalkers.com/sustainable-travel.

MAKE IT TO MARKET

If you time your trip properly, you can browse stalls of farm-fresh produce, deliciously cured meats, and ever-so-colorful printed fabrics at an outdoor market in towns like Saint Rémy, Gordes, or Lourmarin. It's a delicious way to find lunch—and maybe a memento to enjoy once you return home.

- **Avignon:** Open Tuesday–Sunday from 6:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m. on weekdays and 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays (closed Mondays), there are plenty of opportunities to pop in and check out the famous Les Halles covered food market at Place Pie if spending pre- or post-tour time in Avignon. The best time to go is early Saturday morning when all the stands are open and the locals are out doing their shopping. The market houses 40 vendors selling fantastic local Provence produce including fruit, vegetables, cheese, wine, fish, meat (cured and fresh), spices, and more. On Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. the market also hosts free cooking demonstrations featuring chefs from around Avignon.
- **Saint-Rémy-de-Provence:** Well-known as one of the best in the region and highly recommended, the Wednesday St-Rémy market (weekly from approximately 7:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.) has everything—fabric, clothing, flowers, ceramics, beautifully carved olive wood bowls, as well as a plethora of produce and prepared food. **Start your tour on a Monday** to visit this legendary market prior to departing on your Day 3 walk to Les Baux-de-Provence, a **Tuesday** for a more relaxed visit prior to your Day 2 loop walk, or a **Wednesday** if spending a pre-tour night in Saint-Rémy or in Avignon with an early arrival into Saint-Rémy on Day 1. There is a smaller market on Saturdays with food only.
- **Gordes:** The weekly market in Gordes takes place on Tuesdays year-round from approximately 6:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. One of the most colorful markets in the area, the stalls at Gordes specialize in soaps, lavender, fabrics, and textiles. Set at the foot of the castle in the center of the village, it's also a great place to grab local cheeses and *saucisson*, as well as bread, olive oil, and honey—perfect for a picnic in the countryside! **Start your tour on a Saturday** to visit this market prior to your Day 4 loop walk to the Sénanque Abbey.
- **Bonnieux:** Small but picturesque, the Bonnieux weekly market takes place on Friday mornings from approximately 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. The market starts around the “new” church at the bottom of the hill with textiles and clothing, then winds up the hill with colorful bags, straw hats, leather goods,

tapenades, and jams, and continues up to the square where food is the highlight. **Start your tour on a Monday** to visit this delightful market at the end of your Day 5 walk.

- **Lourmarin:** At least twice the size of the Bonnieux market, the Lourmarin market takes place every Friday morning from approximately 8:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. While there are the typical pyramids of local honeys and jams, rows of cheese neatly arranged next to fresh eggs and sausages, and baskets filled to the brim with seasoned olives, there is more of an emphasis on clothing and home goods in comparison to Bonnieux—there are flowers galore, Provençal pottery and cookware, table cloths and other fine linens, silk scarves and sweaters, baskets and carved olive wood, soaps, jewelry, and much more. **Start your tour on a Sunday** to visit this market prior to your Day 6 loop walk. There is also a farmer’s market held during Tuesday evenings (from 6:30 p.m.) in the summer months (May–October) in the Old Fruit Co-operative.
- **Cadenet:** Monday morning is market day in the tiny village of Cadenet, where you will find the usual wonderful mix of fresh Provençal produce, arts, and crafts. **Start your tour on a Wednesday** to visit this market during the easier optional Lourmarin loop walk via Cadenet on Day 6.

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH

7 days, 6 nights

DEPARTURES

This tour is available daily, on request, from April 1 through June 25 and September 1 through November 15, 2019. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table. Please also note that the tour price includes one arrival transfer from Avignon to Saint-Rémy-de-Provence on Day 1 of the tour and one departure transfer from Lourmarin to Avignon on Day 7 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate arrival and/or departure times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers. All prices are per person, based on double occupancy.

TOUR PRICE

2019 DATES	2 guests	3-4 guests	5+ guests	Single Supplement	Solo Surcharge
Apr 1 - Apr 19	\$2,648	\$2,548	\$2,448	\$750	
Apr 20 - May 10	\$3,048	\$2,948	\$2,848	\$1,065	\$515
May 11 - May 28	\$2,848	\$2,748	\$2,648	\$970	\$440
May 29 - Jun 12	\$3,048	\$2,948	\$2,848	\$1,065	\$515
Jun 13 - Jun 25	\$2,848	\$2,748	\$2,648	\$970	\$440
Sep 1 - Oct 15	\$3,048	\$2,948	\$2,848	\$1,065	\$515
Oct 16 - Nov 15	\$2,648	\$2,548	\$2,448	\$750	\$640

STARTING POINT

Avignon, France (Avignon TGV train station, Avignon Centre train station, or an Avignon city hotel)

Based upon individual arrival times

ENDING POINT

Avignon, France (Avignon TGV train station, Avignon Centre train station, or an Avignon city hotel)

Based upon individual departure times

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 4 to 10 miles per day and limited options. There are daily ascents and descents—with some steep sections—up to 1,000 feet. One optional walk on Day 6 has an elevation gain and loss of 2,000 feet. Walks are through oak and pine forests, rugged hills dotted with Mediterranean herbs and shrubs, terraced farmland, and hillside vineyards. The terrain includes single-track trails, mostly cobbled but also loose stones or gravel. The terrain also includes farming tracks, some dirt roads, and occasionally a paved country road. This diverse itinerary combines both the Alpilles and the Luberon mountain ranges, passing scenes painted by Van Gogh as well as golden hilltop villages, with plenty of time for trailside picnics and to explore archaeological sites or markets.

Remember: preparation is the key to ensuring your tour readiness; the more you walk or participate in aerobic exercise prior to your trip, the more you will enjoy your experience!

Many people travel to Provence to see the lavender. Except for a few areas around the town of Gordes, lavender actually grows further north. Please also note that at the time of year our tours operate it will not be in bloom, as this generally happens between the end of June and the end of July, when it becomes too hot for walking and the risk of forest fires and path restrictions is high.

INCLUSIONS

- » Breakfast daily and three dinners (days 1, 3, and 5); beverages not included
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Local transfers as noted in the itinerary
- » Orientation meeting with a Country Walkers representative

- » Luggage transfers between the hotels
- » Detailed water- and tear-resistant Route Notes and maps
- » 24-hour tour-related support provided by Country Walkers' local partner
- » 24-hour travel-related support provided by One Call International Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will receive:

Within 24 hours of reservation confirmation:

A Confirmation Email with a link to our online guest portal, My Account, which allows you to view important information and manage parts of your account online. Similar to other web-based portals you may already use for online banking or shopping, My Account will let you:

- a. View your active reservations.
- b. Make a payment.
- c. Access the latest version of your reservation invoice.
- d. Access your guest profile where you'll be able to update essential information and preferences (passport information, important dietary considerations, allergies, etc.).
- e. Ensure that your contact information is the most up to date (name, address, phone number, email).
- f. Provide us with your tour arrival and departure details so that we may arrange any included arrival and departure transfers and/or orientation meetings.

One day following reservation confirmation:

An Online Participation Agreement Form to sign and submit (emailed).

Within one week of reservation confirmation:

- a. Your reservation invoice (emailed).
- b. Welcome Documents including your specific dated Hotel Itinerary and this Guest Handbook (emailed).

Approximately one month prior to departure:

Your Travel Documents including the following items (mailed):

- a. Maps and printed water- and tear-resistant Route Notes (day-to-day walking directions; emergency contact information; detailed daily itinerary; information regarding included meals, transfers, and daily logistics; restaurant recommendations for non-included meals; town maps; and information regarding optional activities and transportation).
- b. Printed Travel Documents (your specific dated Hotel Itinerary, Daily Itinerary Overview, and—if included—Arrival & Departure Transfers Overview).
- c. Luggage tags.

GRATUITIES

Standard gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers; however additional tips are always welcome, especially by your driver(s). Should you wish to tip for meals or services not included in the cost of the tour, please do so at your discretion. Local currency is preferred.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

STARTING POINT

Avignon, France (Avignon TGV train station, Avignon Centre train station, or an Avignon city hotel)

Based upon individual arrival times

A taxi driver will meet you at either the Avignon TGV (high-speed) train station, Avignon Centre (central) train station (on the ground floor in front of the newspaper stand, holding a sign with Country Walkers and/or your name on it), or an Avignon city hotel and transfer you approximately 25 minutes to the first hotel in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. A tour representative will meet you on Day 1 or 2 of the tour (based on your arrival plans) to provide an orientation meeting, ensure you are comfortably settled, and answer any questions you may have.

In order to arrange your arrival transfer and orientation meeting, please provide us with your arrival and departure details at least 45 days prior to departure through our online portal, My Account. (A Confirmation Email with a link to My Account will be sent to you within 24 hours of reservation confirmation.)

Please note that the tour price includes one arrival transfer from Avignon to Saint-Rémy-de-Provence on Day 1 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate arrival times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

Roissy Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG), Paris
aeroportsdeparis.fr or paris-cdg.com

Marseille Provence Airport (MRS), Marignane
marseille-airport.com

GETTING TO THE STARTING POINT

The most convenient way to travel to the tour starting point is by train. There are two train stations serving Avignon:

- » The Avignon TGV Train Station (Gare d'Avignon TGV; gares-sncf.com/fr/gare/fravg/avignon-tgv): servicing long-distance and high-speed trains, this station is situated 6 km from the city center.
- » The Avignon CENTRE Train Station (Gare d'Avignon Centre; gares-sncf.com/fr/gare/fraes/avignon-centre): dedicated to local trains, this station is located in the city center—just outside the medieval ramparts and only a few minutes' walk from the main sights and hotels of historic Avignon.
- » There is a regular train shuttle—"La Virgule," meaning "comma"—that runs every 15 minutes between the two stations. The journey takes five minutes and costs 1.60 euros.

If you are spending pre-tour time in Avignon, be sure to select "Avignon Centre" as your destination when making your train reservation. This way, if arriving into Avignon TGV station, your tickets will include the train shuttle that runs from the TGV station to the city center.

From Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG), Paris:

From Paris you can travel to the tour starting point via a direct TGV (high-speed) train from the Roissy Charles de Gaulle Airport to the Avignon TGV train station. Upon arrival at the airport, follow the directions to the train station ("gare SNCF" or "Paris par train") located in Terminal 2 of the airport. The journey from Paris to Avignon takes between 2½ and 3½ hours. Prices can vary greatly depending on how far in advance you purchase your train ticket. Be sure to validate your ticket in the small yellow machines located on the platform prior to boarding, or you may be assessed a large fine. For the TGV, your ticket indicates the train car number of your reserved seat, so you can wait in the designated platform area as shown on the platform chart.

If you plan on spending pre-tour time in Paris, you may take the RER B train from the airport to central Paris, which takes approximately 35 minutes, depending on your destination. The B line stops at the Gare du Nord, Châtelet-Les-Halles, Saint-Michel, and Denfert-Rochereau, and allows you to connect with the Paris Metro system. You can purchase your ticket for the RER at the SNCF desk of the airport (although the wait can be long) or by using one of the blue automated machines (which accept coins and some cards, but no bills). Trains to Avignon from central Paris depart from the Gare de Lyon train station. For more details on Paris public transportation, including interactive maps, schedules, and a journey planner, visit ratp.fr and click on "Finding your way."

From Marseille Provence Airport (MRS), Marignane:

From the Marseille Provence Airport, you can travel to the tour starting point combining a short shuttle bus ride and train from the Vitrolles Aéroport Marseille Provence train station to the Avignon Centre train station (60–90-minute train ride).

A free shuttle bus connects the Marseille Provence Airport (platform No. 3) with the Vitrolles Aéroport Marseille Provence train station in five minutes. Shuttles depart 20 minutes prior to every scheduled train departure. While there is no need to purchase tickets in advance, you may purchase train tickets online at [voyages-sncf.com](https://www.voyages-sncf.com). You may also purchase tickets upon arrival at the airport from machines by the entrance to Terminals 3–4, as well as at the train station itself. Be sure to validate your train ticket in the small yellow machines located on the platform prior to boarding, or you may be assessed a large fine.



Should you prefer a private transfer from Marseille Provence Airport (MRS) in Marignane directly to Saint-Rémy-de-Provence (rather than Avignon), Country Walkers would be happy to reserve this on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible to ensure availability. The additional cost (subject to change) of \$205 USD (1-3 guests; add \$55 for Sundays/Bank Holidays, or transfers after 7:00 p.m.) or \$305 (4-8 guests; add \$80 for Sundays/Bank Holidays, or transfers after 7:00 p.m.) per transfer is payable

directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies.

Arrival at Avignon TGV Train Station:

- » **Train shuttle & walk:** take the train shuttle—“La Virgule”—that runs every 15 minutes from Avignon TGV train station to Avignon Centre train station. The journey takes five minutes and costs 1.60 euros. The Hôtel Cloître St-Louis, our recommended pre- and/or post-tour hotel, is no more than a 5-minute walk from Avignon Centre train station. Standing in front of Avignon Centre and looking at the walled city, the gate in front of you is the Porte de la Republic. Enter the walled city through that gate and you will be on Cours Jean Jaurès. Inside the wall, ignore the first street on the left, Cours Président Kennedy. The second left, immediately after the chamber of commerce building, is Rue du Portal Boquier. Turn left there and the hotel door faces you in about one hundred feet.
- » **Taxi:** a taxi from Avignon TGV train station to Avignon city center takes approximately 15 minutes.

Arrival at Avignon Centre Train Station:

- » **Walk:** The Hôtel Cloître St-Louis, our recommended pre- and/or post-tour hotel, is no more than a 5-minute walk from Avignon Centre train station. Standing in front of Avignon Centre and looking at the walled city, the gate in front of you is the Porte de la Republic. Enter the walled city through that gate and you will be on Cours Jean Jaurès. Inside the wall, ignore the first street on the left, Cours Président Kennedy. The second left, immediately after the chamber of commerce building, is Rue du Portal Boquier. Turn left there and the hotel door faces you in about one hundred feet.
- » **Taxi:** a taxi from Avignon Centre train station to Avignon city center takes approximately 4 minutes.

For further rail information, including reservations, schedules, and up-to-date fares, please call Rail Europe at 877.257.2887 or consult their website:

raileurope.com. Or you may consult the French rail website: **voyages-sncf.com**. We recommend making train reservations in advance for major train routes. Reservations are required for all TGV trains.

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

You may wish to stay in Avignon, a provincial town you will not explore during the tour, either before or after your tour. We recommend the Hôtel Cloître St.-

Louis, a beautiful hotel blending ancient architecture with modern design, and boasting amenities including a rooftop swimming pool and sun terrace. Country Walkers would be happy to make a reservation here on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible to ensure availability. The cost, on-request, including tax and breakfast, is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies. These rooms are reserved as a service for you and include a service charge. Better rates may be available online.

Hôtel Cloître St.-Louis

20 rue Portail Boquier
84000 Avignon
Tel 011 33 490 27 55 55
Email hotel@cloitre-saint-louis.com
cloitre-saint-louis.com

Should you wish to spend a pre-tour night in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, you may wish to stay at Hotel Sous les Figuiers, our standard hotel for the first two nights of the tour. Country Walkers would be happy to make a reservation here on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible to ensure availability. The cost, on-request, including tax and breakfast, is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies. These rooms are reserved as a service for you and include a service charge. Better rates may be available online; however, please note that if you make your reservation directly with the hotel, you may not be able to secure the same room as assigned to you for the night on tour.

ENDING POINT

Avignon, France (Avignon TGV train station, Avignon Centre train station, or an Avignon city hotel)

Based upon individual departure times

A transfer will be provided (approximately one hour) from the final hotel in Lourmarin to Avignon (TGV or central train station, or city hotel). The most convenient way to travel from Avignon to your next destination is by train. Please refer to the Getting to the Starting Point section for more details on train travel.

In order to arrange your departure transfer, please provide us with your arrival and departure details at least 45 days prior to departure through

our online portal, My Account. (A Confirmation Email with a link to My Account will be sent to you within 24 hours of reservation confirmation.)

Please note that the tour price includes one departure transfer from Lourmarin to Avignon on Day 7 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate departure times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

Several trains depart Avignon for Paris each day. Please check airline schedules carefully. If you plan to schedule return flights immediately following the tour's conclusion, please contact your airline directly for specific check-in requirements and allow plenty of time (several hours at least) between your rail and flight connections.

Should you prefer a private one-hour transfer from Lourmarin directly to Marseille Provence Airport (MRS) in Marignane, Country Walkers would be happy to reserve this on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible to ensure availability. The additional cost (subject to change) of \$55 USD (up to 8 guests) per transfer is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies.

POST-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

Should you wish to spend a post-tour night in Lourmarin, you may wish to stay at Hotel Bastide de Lourmarin, our standard hotel for the final nights of the tour. Country Walkers would be happy to make a reservation here on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible to ensure availability. The cost, on-request, is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies. These rooms are reserved as a service for you and include a service charge. Better rates may be available online; however, please note that if you make your reservation directly with the hotel, you may not be able to secure the same room as assigned to you for the night on tour.

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*, which gives peace of mind for every guest. From the moment your reservation is confirmed, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless Self-Guided experience. For best availability, reserve your trip early.

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

Please note that the method by which Self-Guided Adventures are reserved differs in important ways from typical scheduled tours. We encourage all guests to refrain from purchasing plane tickets or making contingent plans until they receive confirmation from us. Here's how the process works:

1. **Reservation Request.** The process begins when you make a reservation request for this tour, either online at countrywalkers.com or by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. Please note the online form does not on its own constitute a final reservation or a guarantee of tour space. If you use the form, one of our Tour Consultants will call within one business day. Outside of 90 days prior to the tour start date, a \$350 per person deposit is required at the time of the reservation request. Within 90 days prior to the tour start date, your final tour cost is required. If we are unable to accommodate you on your preferred dates/tour (or an alternative of your choice), this payment is fully refunded.
2. **Reservation Request Receipt.** Upon receipt of your deposit and preferred tour start dates, you will be provided with an emailed reservation request receipt, stating your reservation number and reconfirming the details of your reservation request (tour name, departure date, and tour price), while we get working on securing availability with all the hotels.
3. **Confirmation.** Our goal is to confirm your reservation request within five business days; however, this may take longer for a variety of reasons. All of our accommodations are available on a request basis; we do not hold blocks of rooms and, therefore, must confirm availability at the time of your request. If possible, we recommend you provide a range of back-up tour start dates at the time of your initial request. Once your reservation is confirmed, a Tour Consultant will contact

you. Once you have received our official confirmation, you can make flight reservations.

4. **Final Payment.** Final tour payment is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As pricing is determined over a year in advance, we may be forced to change our listed price over time. However, please note that once your reservation is confirmed, we will always honor the price quoted when you booked.

TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Availability: Since we typically use small, boutique properties for Self-Guided tours, securing availability can sometimes prove challenging, especially on short notice. (Again, we encourage guests to book early and be flexible.) On some tours, if our standard property is not available, we may have alternate hotels of equivalent quality that we have approved. We'll book one of these alternates if the standard property is not available. If the hotel or room type requires a surcharge, we will contact you prior to reserving it. We will not reserve non-approved properties.

Room Category: We typically book standard rooms. If you are interested in upgrading your room type, please contact a Tour Consultant. Please bear in mind that upgrades are not available at every hotel; surcharges will be determined once we know what's available. Triple rooms (or rooms with two beds) can be a rarity. Should you desire such an accommodation, we may need to offer two rooms—supplements may apply. Please allow us extra time to sort the options out.

ORIENTATION MEETING & TRANSFERS

Though Self-Guided tours are a predominantly private experience, there are occasions where you may be in contact with others. Because guests are allowed to pick their own start dates, there may be other Country Walkers travelers staying in the same properties as you or even starting on the same date. For this reason, we may need to combine your orientation meeting with that of other guests or ask you to share on-tour transfers. This does not mean you need to walk together.

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of

completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation. Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Participation Agreement to accept your responsibilities.

CHANGES IN PLANS

After booking, you may change your reservation's destination, departure date, departure city, or Tour Extensions for a \$100-per-person administrative fee. We will waive this fee for changes made within the first two weeks of booking. Any cancellation charges or applicable fees imposed by hotels or operators will be passed along to the guest. We encourage you to consult our cancel policy for the particular trip you have booked. All changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. Please note that tours with seasonal pricing may involve a higher price point. Please note: This change policy does not apply to Special Departures. Please notify us in writing.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Cancellations must be made in writing and fees are applied as noted. Cancellation refunds will be calculated as of the date we receive your written cancellation. All payments for travel services not provided to the guest will be refunded in accordance with these Terms and Conditions and in accordance with Country Walkers' cancellation policy. Exceptions to this cancellation policy cannot be made for any reason, including personal emergencies, illness, or weather. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table.

Self-Guided Adventures

- » Cancellations received on or before 91 days prior to the start of the trip: \$150 per person
- » Cancellations received 90 to 61 days prior to the start of the trip: 25 percent loss of trip price
- » Cancellations received 60 or fewer days prior to the start of the trip: 100 percent loss of trip price

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

SELF-GUIDED FLIGHT CONCIERGE

Our knowledgeable team will happily find flight itineraries that sync perfectly with your international Self-Guided Adventure. Simply request a price quote at the time of booking and, once your reservation is confirmed, we will contact you with available options. Please note that you are under no obligation to purchase the quoted flight itinerary.

Learn more about the Self-Guided Flight Concierge—including our complete policies—on our website at: <https://www.countrywalkers.com/self-guided-air-terms-and-conditions/>.

Other travel arrangements not included in the price of your trip (such as local train tickets or post-tour excursions) can be purchased through your local travel agent, or Better Travel, a Vermont-based agency (800.331.6996 or bettertravel@madriver.com).

France at a Glance

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS



U.S. citizens: Passports are required. To minimize any inconveniences during travel, the State Department recommends that passports be valid for at least six months following your scheduled return. Visas are not required for stays of up to 90 days. For more information, see travel.state.gov.

Travel Tip

Have a variety of options to start your trip: ATM card(s), credit card(s), some dollars to exchange, and some euros in small denominations.

CURRENCY

France uses the euro (EUR). For current exchange rates, visit oanda.com.

Many businesses in Europe will no longer accept credit cards without PIN numbers (chip and pin cards). Always contact your bank or your credit-card company for details on fees and card use when traveling.

TIME ZONE

France is in the Central European Time Zone, Eastern Standard Time plus six hours. For more information on worldwide time zones, see worldtimezone.com.

PHONE & INTERNET



France country code: +33

Cell phone coverage throughout France is extensive, but cannot be guaranteed to be accessible on all American mobile carriers or to function at all times while on the trail or in remote areas. For more information regarding international phone use, please refer to countrywalkers.com/phones.

Internet access is generally very good in towns and villages; however, it is not guaranteed at all of the hotels used on the tour. For more details regarding Wi-Fi availability, please refer to the Itinerary Overview.

LANGUAGE

The official language of France is French.

While knowledge of the local language is not necessary, you may want to learn some fun and useful phrases; see bbc.co.uk/languages/French.

ELECTRICITY

Alternating current of 230V and 50Hz is used in France. Plugs have either two round pins and a hole, or just two round pins. For a full listing of electrical outlets worldwide, see electricaloutlet.org.

WEATHER

France has a range of climates, and—depending on the region—spring, summer, and fall are ideal for an active vacation.

Provence, in southern France, has a pleasant Mediterranean climate with daytime temperatures in the 70s during tour dates. Normandy and Brittany, on the northwest coasts, can have pleasant weather in the 50s to low 70s, and evenings in the 50s with occasional rain showers. In the French Alps, mornings and evenings can be around freezing in the morning and evening, especially at higher elevations, with daytime temperatures rising into the 70s and even low 80s.

For up-to-date forecasts, see qwikcast.com. For historical average temperatures and rainfall, see weatherbase.com.

FOOD & DRINK

French cuisine has great regional variation and, thus, is based on fresh and local ingredients from each area. In France's northern tier, the rich butter- and cream-based classics originated—and the creamy cow's milk cheeses of Normandy such as camembert. Fresh seafood, especially oysters, is served in Brittany. In the Alps, hearty mountain fare includes cheese fondue and grilled raclette cheese over steamed potatoes. The cuisine of southern France is quintessentially Mediterranean, with olive oil, herbs, fresh vegetables, and goat cheeses. Common to all regions, of course, are crusty breads, buttery croissants, and exquisite desserts, from fine pastries to rustic fruit tarts.



Travel Tip

- Bringing your own hair dryer or other electrical device? You'll need a travel converter, available at most hardware, travel, or consumer electronic stores.
- For laptops or an electronic device with a dual voltage switch, you'll need the adapter plug but not a converter.

A meal in France—lunch or dinner—typically consists of three courses, starting with an *entrée* (appetizer), followed by a *plat principal* (main dish), and finishing with a dessert or cheese plate. First brought to Narbonne in the south by the Romans, the wines of France mirror the variation and excellence of its cuisine. Menus feature a region's local wines, as well as those from other regions. For example, In Provence, red Rhône or rosé wines pair perfectly with the cuisine. In Normandy and Brittany, local hard cider is served with crepes and Calvados, apple brandy, as an after-dinner *digestif*.

LIFE IN FRANCE

Shopping and banking hours

Shops and stores are generally open Monday to Saturday between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., and from 2:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.; department stores and supermarkets are open all day from 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Open-air markets vary by day of the week in towns and villages and generally operate from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

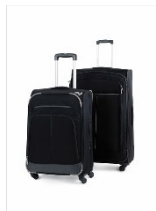
Banks are open from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday (in Paris they are open all day).

Meal times

Breakfast is served at hotels from 7:00 a.m. to 10-10:30 a.m. In restaurants, lunch is served (almost exclusively) from noon to 2:00 p.m. (at other times, you'll have to get a sandwich) and dinner is usually served from 7:30 to 10:00 p.m.

Tipping

Gratuities in restaurants and bars are included in the total bill (*service compris*); however it is customary to leave 5 to 10 percent of the total, or to round up the total. Taxi drivers are tipped 10 to 15 percent of the total. For luggage assistance, a tip of 1 to 2 euros per bag is appropriate.



TRAVEL RESOURCES

National French tourist board official site
us.rendezvousenfrance.com

Public holidays

To assist in travel planning, it may be helpful to be aware of

French public holidays, visit the French tourist board's website:

us.rendezvousenfrance.com/en/information/french-public-and-school-holidays.

TRAVEL IN FRANCE

Trains

SNCF: **sncf.com/en**, France's national train company

Raileurope: **raileurope.com** or 800.622.8600: a U.S.-based company that provides schedules, reservations, and ticketing for all European train networks (their multi-day/-week/-month passes in one country or combinations of countries may be an economical and convenient choice for European train travel.).

Travel Tip

Be aware that you have to validate your train ticket by "punching" it before boarding, using a small machine located on the way to the train platform, which stamps the time and date on it.

Other local transportation

Direct flights from the U.S. are only available to Paris, Nice, and Lyon, but reaching any destination is easy thanks to France's excellent rail network. Regional bus lines and internal flights (which are never more than 1½ hours) are also widely available. For information on French airports, visit **aeroport.fr** (in French only). Taxis are available at all major airports, train stations, and in smaller towns, and can be reserved in advance (your hotel can usually provide assistance). Most major car rental agencies are available at French airports and train stations.

For more information, go to **us.rendezvousenfrance.com/en/about-france/renting-car-and-driving-france**.

FRENCH WINE AT A GLANCE

Each wine of France has a particular grape varietal linked to its *terroir*—the combination of local climate and soil conditions. Here is an overview of France’s main wine-producing regions: Alsace, Bordeaux, Burgundy, Champagne, Loire, Provence, and the Rhône Valley.

Region	Grape	Notes
Alsace	Gewürztraminer, Pinot blanc, Pinot gris, and Riesling	Tall, narrow <i>flûte</i> -shaped bottles contain some of the world’s driest Rieslings that pair nicely with seafood, spicy cuisines, and cheeses.
Bordeaux	Cabernet sauvignon, Cabernet franc, and Merlot	Balanced dry reds accompany meat and cheeses, and dry whites with seafood.
Burgundy	Reds are Pinot noir and whites are Chardonnay	Un-oaked white (Chablis) pairs with seafood and poultry, and reds with classic beef dishes.
Champagne	Pinot noir, Chardonnay, Pinot meunier	Champagne’s scale of sweetness from less to more is: Brut Natural or Brut Zero, Extra Brut, and Brut. Delicious as an aperitif and with raw oysters, it’s best served between 45 and 48° F in a <i>flûte</i> , of course!
Loire	Reds: Cabernet franc Whites: Sauvignon blanc, Chenin blanc, Melon de Bourgogne	To accompany seafood, look for whites from Sancerre, Vouvray, and Pouilly-Fumé.
Provence	Reds: Mourvèdre, Grenache, Cinsault, with Cabernet sauvignon and Syrah growing, and Carignan decreasing; White: Grenache blanc, Marsanne, Viognier, Chardonnay	Reds can accompany roasts and grilled dishes. Chilled rosé pairs well with the garlic-based dishes of the region.
Rhône Valley	Grenache, Syrah, and Viognier	Classic red wines, such as the southern Rhône’s Châteauneuf-du-Pape, pair well with grilled dishes, cheese, and fruit.

Packing List

PACKING TIPS

Pack light! Keep in mind most hotels are small and family-run and may not provide luggage assistance from the reception area to the room so there will be times you may have to carry your own luggage short distances. Due to space constraints, we require you to limit your luggage to one medium piece (approximately 18x15x29 inches or 8,000 cu. in.) and one small carry-on, per person. Please note that due to health and safety reasons, our local representatives are not permitted to carry (individual) bags that exceed 30 lbs (15 kg). We recommend packing any personal necessities, medications, your hotel itinerary/emergency contact information, your hiking boots (or shoes), and extra clothes in your carry-on luggage in the event that your baggage is delayed. We suggest leaving valuable jewelry at home. A copy of your passport or other important documents should be kept in a separate area of your luggage. Always be alert when carrying a purse, camera, money belt, or backpack in busy cities, airports, and train stations.

FOOTWEAR

- » Hiking boots or shoes. There are many brands to choose from. Proper fit is crucial, so try on new boots or shoes while wearing socks you plan to use on tour. Be sure to break in new footwear well before your tour begins. If you are bringing a favorite pair of older boots, please check that soles and seams are in good shape before you depart! By the time you're ready to join your walking tour, you should be able to complete 5–10 miles of walking without discomfort. We require lightweight boots or shoes with proper ankle support and good tread to ensure stability on all types of terrain. Waterproof footwear keeps feet dry in heavy rain and water resistant footwear keeps feet dry in heavy dew.
- » Comfortable shoes for evening strolls
- » Synthetic, moisture-wicking socks (cotton socks are not recommended for walking as they will quickly cause blisters)
- » Blister remedy

CLOTHING

- » Lightweight, wash-and-wear long pants

- » Long-sleeved, wash-and-wear shirt
- » T-shirts and shorts
- » Polar fleece or light wool pullover (it will keep you warm even when wet)
- » Dinner attire: dress is smart casual
- » Light jacket or sweater for evening strolls and al fresco dining

OUTERWEAR

- » Waterproof rain gear: jacket, pants, hat, or hood
- » Windbreaker with hood (your rain gear may be suitable)
- » Hat with a broad brim or visor

EQUIPMENT

- » Cell phone (an International cell phone or your own cell phone with an International calling plan): for both practical and safety reasons, **we strongly advise that you carry a cell phone while traveling and at all times while you are out walking.** (Please note you may encounter intermittent coverage while on the trail or in remote areas.)
- » Travel adapter/s (connectors that change the plug shape to match the electrical outlet, thereby allowing a dual-voltage appliance or a converter from one country to be plugged into the wall outlet of another country) and converter/s (only if bringing electric appliances, such as a hair dryer, iron, or any appliance that has a mechanical motor. If the appliance is electronic, which contains a computer chip, a converter is usually not required.)
- » Pack (minimum size of 25L): large enough to carry water, extra clothing, rain gear, lunch, and personal items (camera, etc.)
- » Waterproof cover for pack
- » Water bottle, canteen, or CamelBak-type water reservoir or hydration pack to carry your own water while walking (equivalent of one liter)
- » Sunblock and lip balm
- » Insect repellent
- » Sunglasses
- » Toilet kit for when facilities are not available on the walks. Include zip-lock baggies, tissues, and moist towelettes, which can be disposed of upon return to the hotel

- » Personal first-aid kit including any medications you ordinarily take (in their original container)

OPTIONAL

- » Telescopic walking sticks. (Please note that while telescopic walking sticks ***are recommended*** for this tour, they are not provided by Country Walkers; therefore, please plan on bringing your own should you wish to use them.)
- » Binoculars
- » Bathing suit for optional swimming in hotel pools
- » Flip flops or water sandals
- » Camera and charger and/or extra batteries
- » Zip-lock bags (to keep camera and valuables dry)
- » Small notebook and pen
- » Field guides
- » Folding umbrella
- » Waterproof poncho (in addition to aforementioned rain gear, especially if expecting wet weather): while the aforementioned rain gear may suffice, a poncho offers the advantage of being lightweight, compact, big enough to cover both you and your backpack, long enough to allow for sitting on wet surfaces or act as a shelter, cool enough to wear during summer rains, and is cheap!
- » Bandana
- » Washcloth (many European hotels do not provide them)
- » Hand sanitizer and/or moist towelettes
- » Motion sickness bracelets or other non-sleep-inducing remedy if prone to motion sickness on bus or car rides
- » Alarm clock

ONLINE STORE

To help you prepare for your trip, we've carefully selected a range of comfortable, easy-packing travel apparel and accessories from leading brands such as Eagle Creek, Craghoppers, Patagonia, Tilley, and others. Whether you're traveling to Vietnam, walking in Canada, or exploring the hills of Ireland, our Travel Shop is here to ensure you're ready to enjoy your adventure to the fullest.

Visit the CW Travel Shop at cw.newheadings.com.