

walking Tours in the French Pyrenees 2018

MY NAME IS PATRICK ARRIEULA. I was born in south-west France in a little village at the foot of the French Pyrénées in the Béarn region near the Spanish and Basque borders.

Since 1996 my wife Robbie and I have escorted unique tours in the Pyrenees Atlantic region of south-west France during spring and autumn. We would like to share with you our passion for this beautiful part of France. Our tours are based in the countryside, giving you the rare opportunity to meet the locals, taste the regional produce, admire the beautiful landscapes and experience the culture. The walking tours are suitable for all those who enjoy walking as well as good dining. **During our tours we settle in at the one hotel for the 9 days avoiding the inconvenience of repacking and changing hotels.** On the Camino (St James Way) tour it is necessary to change hotels during the tour as we are following the trail, but we do try to keep this to a minimum. The small family-run hotels have been chosen for their comfort and good regional table. **The price of the tours includes all the activities stated, all meals and wine.** All the rooms offer private ensuite facilities and shops and banks are all within walking distance of the hotels. All singles will have their own room and facilities unless sharing with a friend. During the tours, participants have the choice of joining daily activities or relaxing in the village for the day. A coach will ensure a comfortable journey along the French country roads and enable us to drive to different destinations every day and admire spectacular scenery.

Included in your trip: All transport, accommodation, breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and activities as stated in the brochure. Wine is included with all sit-down meals.

The tours are limited to a maximum of 20 and a minimum of 10 participants. Your booking will be secure upon payment of a deposit of \$400 AUD per person. See the back of the brochure for more details.



Testimonials

I had a fabulous time, your humour, knowledge of the area, love of people shown in a million small and large ways, your ability to keep the group moving into the next stage without having us feel rushed, have all made this a time for me to treasure. You are both amazing for your genuine interest of people and your ability to engage with the locals which brought so many extra fun moments. Well done Patrick & Robbie. P Blackwell

Patrick's knowledge & love of the area was a huge asset. Patrick's & Robbie's happy, positive, generous personalities contributed to the overall experience. What a privilege to be able to spend a day in your village meeting your family and joining in with the locals. M Baldwin.

A truly wonderful trip with variation on walks and visits to places of interest. Patrick's & Robbie's laid-back but very professional attitude, made the trip a memorable experience. Many thanks to you both for a great holiday. I & L Hanan



Get-together in Bowral

A get-together for participants coming on our 2018 tours will be held in Bowral NSW Australia, to fine-tune details. The get-together will be held on Sunday March 4th, 2018 for the May tour and on Sunday July 22nd, 2018 for the Sep/Oct tours. An information booklet about the tours will be provided on the day.

Attention walkers

The walking tours with challenging walks are suitable for regular, experienced walkers. We will be walking over mountains and the grades of the walks will range from easy to challenging. **The distance of the walks will vary from 5kms to 18kms and the ascents from 100 to 700 meters.** Uphill and downhill training is most important.

We suggest that, for your greatest enjoyment and appreciation of the walking tours, you try to arrive in Europe a few days prior to the tour starting, so you will be rested beforehand.

“Pistoulet” Our place in France available for holiday rental !

This 19th century country cottage is situated in the village of Lagor in the Béarn region. It is located within a stone's throw of the mountains, the sea, Spain and the Basque country - so much to do and discover! It has three bedrooms, will sleep 6 people very comfortably and offers a view of the Pyrénées.

Downstairs: Fully equipped kitchen, dining and living area, glassed verandah, separate toilet, bathroom and one bedroom.

Upstairs: 2 bedrooms with a bathroom and toilet. **Outdoors:** Small garden at the rear and parking inside the front courtyard.

Where is Lagor? The village of Lagor is situated between Mourenx and Maslacq, 20 minutes from Pau and Orthez railway stations. Pau airport is accessible from Paris. Shopping facilities are minutes from Lagor.



Private tours

All our tours can be organised for private groups. These tours are for groups of friends who like to share holidays together. We can design itineraries to suit individual groups, combining walking, food, culture and lots more. A minimum of 10 participants is required. Please give us a call for more information.

April / May 2018 St James Way (The Pilgrim Walking Trail)

During this tour, we would like to share with you our passion for walking as well as giving you a little insight into what this mysterious trail named 'Santiago de Compostella' or 'The St James Way' has to offer. For hundreds of years now, pilgrims, walkers and travellers have taken this route to Santiago De Compostella to see the tomb of St James. The walks will average about 17 kms per day, crossing the picturesque Gers and Tarn & Garonne regions and finishing in the Béarn region. We will follow the Le Puy trail, said to be the most beautiful. The grade of the walk is moderate. All your luggage, other than your day pack, will be carried for you by bus. The trail includes unsealed roads, forest trails and country roads and if you don't feel like walking, you have the option of rest days.

April/ May Walking tour: 30th April – 8th May Cost: \$ 3630 per person twin share. Single supplement: \$ 250

Monday 30th April:

All participants will be met at Agen railway station at 13.50. This is the arrival time of the TGV 8503 from Paris, Montparnasse. Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour. The bus will take us to Auvillar, voted one of France's most beautiful villages, where we will be spending our first two nights. The afternoon will be free to explore the village, followed by welcome drinks and dinner at the hotel. [Train tickets not included in package].

Tuesday 1st May:

16.5 km walk from Auvillar to the village of Miradoux, in the Gers region. We will picnic along the way. Dinner at the hotel.

Wednesday 2nd May:

Checkout followed by a bus trip to Miradoux for a 15 km walk to the beautiful Gallo-Roman town of Lectoure, one of the oldest villages in the Gers region, where we will be spending our next two nights. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Thursday 3rd May:

19 km walk from Lectoure to La Romieu, in the heart of Gascony. La Romieu is known for its unique collegiate church and its legend of the cats! Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Friday 4th May: Breakfast

Checkout followed by a bus trip to La Romieu to start a 16 km walk to the medieval town of Condom, where we will be spending our next three nights. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Saturday 5th May: Rest day.

Free morning to explore Condom, its market, churches and museums and to organise your own lunch. In the afternoon we will take you to visit the Chateau de Cassaigne, constructed in the 13th century, in the heart of the Armagnac region. Here you can taste their succulent prunes in Armagnac, as well as the local wines and liqueurs. We will stop in Larresingle, France's smallest fortified village. Dinner in a country restaurant.

Sunday 6th May:

17 km walk from Condom to Montreal, Gascony's first bastide, and also voted one of France's most beautiful villages. Picnic along the way. Dinner at the hotel.

Monday 7th May:

Checkout followed by a bus trip to Montreal for our last 18 km walk to Eauze, the capital of the Armagnac. After the walk the bus will take us to Monein in the Béarn region (approximately 2-hour drive) to spend our last night. Farewell drinks and dinner at the hotel.

Tuesday 8th May:

The bus will take all participants to Pau railway station to catch the 11.06 TGV 8581 for Paris. This will be the only transport organised that day. Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour.



May 2018 itinerary in the Béarn & Basque regions

This tour will cover my region of the Béarn and part of the Basque regions taking us through breathtaking scenery and snow-capped mountains during the spring season. You will be able to share a day with local villagers and play ancient games and of course taste some of the regional food and wine. I am proud to be Béarnais and to share my village life with you!!

May Walking tour: 12th – 20th May

Cost: \$ 3350 per person twin share.

Single supplement: \$160

Saturday 12th May:

All participants will be met at Pau railway station at 14.06. This is the arrival time of the TGV 8573 from Paris, Montparnasse. Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour. [Train tickets not included in package]. Participants will be taken to the hotel in Monein. Those who are not using this pick-up service will make their own way to the hotel. Welcome drinks will be served before dinner, with folk-singers performing local traditional songs, followed by dinner in the hotel.

Sunday 13th May:

Journey by bus to the village of Gavarnie for a 3-hour walk to Le Cirque de Gavarnie. Picnic lunch. On the way back, a quick stop to see the twelfth-century fortified church in the village of Luz St Sauveur. Dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Monday 14th May:

Journey by bus to Gamarthe for an easy village-to-village walk retracing part of the ancient St Jacques de Compostella pilgrimage route (14 km), ending in St Jean Pied de Port. Free time to wander through the old fortified village. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Tuesday 15th May:

Journey by bus to Bious Artigues to the three D'Ayous lakes for a 5-hour walk. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Wednesday 16th May:

Relaxing day including a village-to-village walk to give us a chance to experience the local countryside. Light lunch at a local 'gite' with free time in Monein in the afternoon. Dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Thursday 17th May:

Journey by bus to walk to Lake D'Estaiens, a 4-hour walk. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Friday 18th May:

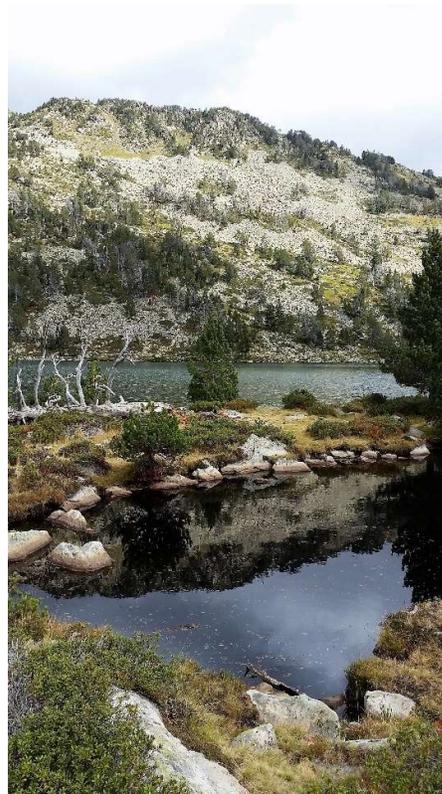
Journey by bus to Larrau for a 6-hour walk in the Olcarte Gorges. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Saturday 19th May:

Quick trip to my village, Abos, for a game of quilles de neuf and quilles de six and a stroll around the village, including an official welcome by the village Mayor. Light lunch followed by a wine tasting and a 3 km walk back to Monein for a game of pétanque. Dinner at the hotel.

Sunday 20th May:

The bus will take all participants to Pau railway station to catch the 11.06 TGV 8581 for Paris. This will be the only transport organised that day. Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour.



September 2018 Itinerary in the Midi Pyrénées region

The Hautes Pyrenees region, known because of the Tour de France, has spectacularly breath-taking views, a national park abundant with rare fauna & flora and mountain villages overflowing with character, charm and history.

September Walking tour: 13th – 21st Sept

Cost: \$ 3780 per person twin share.

Single supplement: \$ 400

Thursday 13th September:

All participants will be met in Lannemezan railway station at 15.43. This is the arrival time of the TER 72708 from Tarbes which connects with the TGV 8573 departing Paris Montparnasse at 08.28. Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour. [Train tickets not included in package]. Participants will be met and taken to the hotel in Arreau, approximately 30 minutes away. Those who are not using this pick-up service will make their own way to the hotel. We will meet for welcome drinks followed by dinner at the hotel.

Friday 14th September:

Bus trip to Gouaux for a 5-hour walk village to village including a visit to a goat farm, and finish in Arreau. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Saturday 15th September:

Bus trip to the Col D'Azet for a 4-hour walk starting between the Aure and Louron valleys following the trail down to St Lary. Light lunch at a local Auberge. Dinner at the hotel.

Sunday 16th September:

Start in Arreau for a 17km walk on the Santiago De Compostella trail to Lortet. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Monday 17th September:

Bus trip to Esparros to visit one of Europe's most amazing abyss followed by a visit to a working water flour mill and then a wine tasting. Lunch will include a taste of the south! Dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Tuesday 18th September:

Bus trip to the natural reserve of Néouvielle for a 4.5-hour walk around the lakes. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Wednesday 19th September:

Bus trip to Spain for a 5-hour walk in the Pineta Valley. Picnic lunch. Dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Thursday 20th September:

Bus trip to the Louron Valley for a 5-hour walk to the refuge of Soula via the gorges of Clarabide. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Friday 21st September:

The bus will take all participants to Lannemezan railway station in the morning to catch the TER 72728 to Tarbes at 11.05 and then the TGV 8514 for Paris, Montparnasse. This will be the only transport organised that day. Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour.



Tour conditions

Included in your trip

All transport, accommodation, breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and activities as stated in the brochure. Menus will be organised by us to offer you a taste of the many specialties of the regional gastronomy. Wine is included with all sit-down meals but if the wines are not to your liking, you are free to purchase your own. The quantity of the wine served will be sufficient to accompany the meals.

Conditions for bookings and cancellations

Everyone participating in the tour must complete and sign a booking form and pay a **non-refundable** deposit of 400 Australian dollars per person. Your booking will be secured upon payment of the deposit. If you would like to join us on a tour you can send your deposit cheque, made out to - Pyrenees Tours - including the booking form and photo to the following address: Pyrenees Tours, PO Box 469 Bowral NSW 2576 Australia. **Credit card surcharges: Visa - 1.8%, Amex - 2.8%** All participants must have travel insurance. **We strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance as soon as you have paid any deposit on any of your travel arrangements. Make sure your travel insurance covers you against loss of deposit or final payment, in case of unavoidable cancellation.** A signed accident waiver and release of liability form which we will provide will need to be included with your doctor's certificate. The balance of the tour cost is due no less than 60 days before departure of the tour. Prices are based on cost and exchange of the Euro at the time of printing. We reserve the right to adjust the tour price should there be a significant change.

Due to our financial commitments to our various suppliers, your deposit will be forfeited if you cancel. Cancellations within 59 to 30 days before the start of the tour = 50% refund of tour price, less than 29 days, no refund will be given.

Not included in your trip

Tips, insurance (i.e. travel, health, loss or damage to personal property) phone calls, extra expenses which are not included in the itinerary.

Tour cancellation

Should it be necessary to cancel the tour, due to failure to reach minimum numbers, 40-days' notice will be given and a full refund of the tour cost will be paid.

Our responsibility as tour organisers

It is our responsibility to ensure that tour activities have been organised as stated in the program. It is also our right to alter the itinerary, if necessary, in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Any extra costs resulting from these alterations will not be our responsibility.

No responsibility will be accepted for any delays occurring during the tour. It is at our discretion to stop any persons from participating in any of the activities should they not have the required level of fitness on any particular day.

Responsibility of tour participants

It is the responsibility of the participant to organise and pay for all travel documents, i.e. passports, visas, tickets, insurance, departure tax. All participants need travel insurance. The participants will be responsible for any injury, sickness, loss, or damage that might occur.

If any participant wishes to alter the itinerary in any way, all resulting costs and organisation will be his/her responsibility. It is the responsibility of the participant to be at the point of pick-up as specified and at the time specified. If this is not possible it is the participant's responsibility to rejoin the tour at his/her own expense.

Awareness

Participants should be aware of the risks and dangers involved in walking activities such as weather extremes due to unexpected and sudden changes, rocky and uneven terrain on which the activities may take place, physical exertion and lack of immediate medical assistance due to remoteness of the activities. Participants will need adequate fitness to undertake the walking activities.



Booking form (This form can be photocopied)

A photo and a \$400 deposit per person must be included with the booking form.

Names.....			
Address.....			
Town.....	State.....	Post code	
Phone.....		Mobile.....	
Email.....			
Single <input type="checkbox"/> Double <input type="checkbox"/> Twin share <input type="checkbox"/> Triple share <input type="checkbox"/> Name of the person/s you will be sharing with.....			
Walking Tour <input type="checkbox"/> Other tour <input type="checkbox"/> Date of the tour: From.....To.....			
I / we have read, accept and understand the booking conditions in the brochure and will provide proof of travel insurance and doctor's certificate with the final payment.			
Signed.....	Date.....	Signed.....	Date.....

For more information

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