

2024

Walking Tours in Southwest France

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My Name is Patrick Arriuela. 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 border.

Since 1996, my wife Robbie and I have escorted unique tours in the Pyrenees region and the south-west of 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 the unique flavours of the traditional regional specialties. **During our tours we are based at the one hotel for the 9 days avoiding the inconvenience of repacking and changing hotels.** The small family-run hotels have been chosen for their comfort and authentic regional table 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 and a driver 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: 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 secured upon payment of a deposit of \$400 AUD per person. See the back of the brochure for more details and your booking form.



Testimonials

Patrick & Robbie, you offer such a unique experience in a very friendly, relaxed and intimate environment, great local knowledge and passion for your area, a holiday to remember, merci Martial C

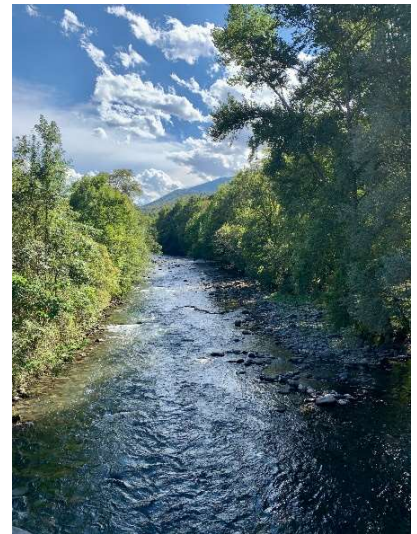
One of the best travel experiences in my life, can't wait to book next year's tour. Edwina M

Thank you so much for sharing this beautiful part of France, the scenery, walks, great food and attention to details made this holiday very special. All-inclusive was great value with so much more than expected. Can't wait to join you again. John & Kate M



Get-together in Bowral

A get-together for those booked on a tour will be held in Bowral on Sunday March 10th, 2024, for the April/May tour and on Sunday July 7th, 2024, for the Sept/Oct tours. An information booklet about your tour will be provided on the day or sent to you if you can't attend.



Attention walkers

The walking tours are suitable for regular, experienced walkers. The itineraries will vary and include mountain trails, country lanes and forest trails. The grades of the walks will range from easy to challenging, depending on your choice of itinerary. **The distance of the walks will vary from 5kms to 18kms and the ascents from 100m to 700m. Both up and downhill training are important especially for the mountain itineraries.**

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.

Private tours

All our tours can be organised for private groups of friends who like to share a special holiday together! We can design your itinerary to suit your individual group, combining walking, food and culture. A minimum of 12 participants is required. Please give us a call for more information.



"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 six people very comfortably and offers a view of the Pyrénées.

Photos of Pistoulet



April / May 2024 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: April 29th – May 7th Cost: \$4170 per person twin share Single supplement: \$442

Monday 29th April:

All participants will be met at Agen railway station at 14.21. This is the arrival time of TGV 8505 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 30th April:

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

Wednesday 1st May:

Checkout followed by a bus trip to Miradoux for a 15km 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 2nd May:

19km 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 3rd May: Breakfast

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

Saturday 4th May: Rest Day.

Free morning to explore Condom and 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 as well as the local Armagnac. Next stop, Forces, a medieval bastide for a game of Pétanque. Dinner in a country restaurant.

Sunday 5th May:

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

Monday 6th May:

Checkout followed by a bus trip to Montreal for our last 18km walk to Eauze, the capital of the Armagnac. Light lunch in a restaurant before taking the bus to Pau in the Béarn region (approximately 2-hour drive) to spend our last night. Farewell drinks and dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Tuesday 7th May:

The bus will take all participants to Pau railway station to catch the 11.32 TGV 8581 for Paris. **Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour.**



May 2024 Itinerary Dordogne/Périgord Region

Discover one of France's most scenic regions with its ancient traditions and its abundance of produce set in a landscape of winding rivers and mystical forests. The Bastide town of Monpazier, where you will be staying, is voted as one of France's most beautiful villages. This tour combines easier walking in undulating country with a gourmet experience of the region's delicacies! The longest walk on this tour is 12kms.

Walking tour: May 16th – May 24th Cost: \$ 5100 per person twin share Single supplement: \$800

Thursday 16th May:

Participants will be met at Bergerac railway station at 15.00. This is the arrival time of the TER from Bordeaux which connects with the TGV departing Paris Montparnasse. **Timetable 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 Monpazier, approximately 40 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 17th May:

Bus trip to St Cyprien for a 4km walk to a truffle farm including a visit and lunch in a nearby restaurant. Free time in the afternoon in the village of Limeuil, voted one of France's most beautiful villages. Light dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Saturday 18th May:

We will start the 13km walk in Monpazier and walk to Lacapelle Biron. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Sunday 19th May:

Bus trip to Issigeac for free time at the fabulous market, followed by a light lunch in Monflanquin. After lunch we will visit hazelnut and prune farms. This region is prized all over France for its hazelnuts and prunes! Dinner at the hotel.

Monday 20th May:

Bus trip to Pomport for a 12km walk among the Bergerac & Monbazillac vineyards followed by a wine tasting. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Tuesday 21st May:

Bus trip to Beynac for a 7km walk to La Roque Gageac along the Dordogne River. In the afternoon we will visit Chateau Milandes and its gardens and learn the amazing story of Josephine Baker. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel

Wednesday 22nd May:

Bus trip to Berbiguières for a 7km walk to a ferme auberge for lunch. Light dinner at a bar/deli.

Thursday 23rd May:

Bus trip to Pechboutier for a cooking demonstration which includes a light lunch. After lunch we will drive to Trémolat for a 7km walk with a panoramic view of the Dordogne River. Farewell dinner at the hotel.

Friday 24th May:

The bus will take all participants to Bergerac railway station in the morning to catch the TER at 09.36 to connect in Bordeaux with the TGV for Paris, Gare Montparnasse. This will be the only transport organised that day. **Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour.**



2024 Itinerary in the Midi Pyrénées Region

The Hautes Pyrenees region, known because of the Tour de France, has spectacular views, a national park abundant with rare fauna & flora and mountain villages overflowing with character, charm and history. The beautiful village of Arreau will be our base for the tour.

Walking tour: Sept 5th – Sept 13th

Cost: \$ 4530 per person twin share

Single supplement: \$ 550

Thursday 5th September:

Participants will be met in Lannemezan railway station at 16.00. This is the arrival time of the TER from Tarbes which connects with the TGV departing Paris Montparnasse at 09.45. **Timetable to 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 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 6th 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 7th 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 8th September:

Start in Arreau for a 14km walk on the Santiago De Compostella trail to Héchettes. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Monday 9th September:

Bus trip to Esparros to visit one of Europe's most amazing abysses, followed by a visit to a working water mill still producing flour. Lunch will include a taste of the south, followed by a game of pétanque. Dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Tuesday 10th 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 11th September:

Bus trip to Spain for a 5 hour walk in the Pineta Valley. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Thursday 12th 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 in a nearby restaurant.

Friday 13th September:

The bus will take all participants to Lannemezan railway station in the morning to catch the TER to Tarbes at 09.56 to connect with the TGV 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.**

2024 Itinerary in the Basque Region

The Basque country is one of France's most colourful regions offering a long list of unforgettable culture, history, charm and of course – food!!!! A place to remember! We will be staying in the beautiful village of Espelette.

Walking tour: Sept 22nd - Sept 30th

Cost: \$4584 per person twin share

Single supplement: \$495

Sunday 22nd September:

All participants will be met at Bayonne railway station at 14.00. This is the arrival time of the TGV 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 met and taken to the hotel in Espelette, approximately 30 minutes away. Those who are not using this pick-up service will make their own way to the hotel. The afternoon will be free to relax and explore the village. Welcome drinks followed by dinner in the hotel.

Monday 23rd September:

Bus trip to St Jean Pied de Port to spend time at the local trip market and then on to the village of Irouléguay where we will start our 8 km country lane walk to the village of St Étienne de Baigorry. Picnic lunch. After lunch we will stroll around the village and later visit a chilli farm. Dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Tuesday 24th September:

Bus trip to Les Aldudes for a 4 hour walk among the palombieres [the wild squab hunting huts] with magical valley views. Picnic lunch. After the walk we will visit a Basque Charcuterie, enjoy a tasting, and see the unique breed of Basque pig. Dinner in a nearby restaurant

Wednesday 25th September:

We will cross the border into Spain and walk along the ridge of Mount Jaizkebel to the seaport of Passajes taking in the spectacular views of the Pyrénées and the Atlantic. Light lunch in a restaurant and free time to visit the village. Dinner at the hotel.

Thursday 26th September:

The morning will start with a guided tour of Espelette with a local personality, followed by a visit to the chocolate maker and then a tasting of the locally produced foie gras. We will then make our way to the port of Socoa, for Ttoro, a traditional Basque seafood soup, followed by a stroll along the water's edge and free time to experience the history and charm of St Jean de Luz. Dinner at the hotel.

Friday 27th September:

Bus trip to Urdax in Spain for a 4 hour walk crossing back into France. Picnic lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

Saturday 28th September:

4 hour walk in the hills surrounding the village of Itxassou with a casual lunch in a country restaurant. The afternoon will be spent playing some traditional games. Dinner at the hotel.

Sunday 29th September:

Trip to the Col Ignasse for a ride on the petit train to the top of La Rhune. A 2.5 hour walk will take us back down the mountain. Picnic lunch. We will stop in Ainhoa for time to explore this beautiful village. Farewell dinner at the hotel.

Monday 30th September:

The bus will take all participants to Bayonne railway station in the morning to catch the 10.10 TGV for Paris, Montparnasse. This will be the only transport organised for that day. **Details will be confirmed a few months before the start of the tour.**

Tour conditions

Included in your trip

All transport included in the tour itinerary, 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 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 enough 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 will need to forward the booking form and a recent photo to Pyrenees Tours, PO Box 469 Bowral NSW 2576 Australia. **Bank transfer, cheques or credit card payments are available. Credit card surcharges apply: Visa, Mastercard 1.8%. Amex 2.8%.** All participants must provide proof of travel insurance. **We strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance as soon as you have paid any monies towards any of your travel arrangements. Make sure your travel insurance covers you against loss of deposit or final payment, in case of unavoidable cancellations.** A signed accident waiver and release of liability form which we will provide will need to be included with your doctor's certificate stating you are fit and well to undertake a walking tour. The balance of the tour cost is due no less than 60 days before departure of the tour. Prices are based on the cost and exchange of the Euro at the time of printing. We reserve the right to adjust the tour price should there be significant changes in the rates.

Due to 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: 30% refund of monies paid. (not including deposit) Cancellations within 29 to 0 days before start of tour: 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, if paid, will be refunded. Due to constant changes with Covid restrictions, please visit smartraveller.gov.au if you live in Australia, or your relevant government web page from your country, to comply with the French requirements to enable you to enter France and other European countries.

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 \$400 AUD deposit per person must be included with the booking form.

Names.....	
Address.....	
Town.....	State..... Postcode
Phone..... Mobile.....	
Email.....	
Single <input type="checkbox"/> Double <input type="checkbox"/> Twin share <input type="checkbox"/> Name of the person/s you will be sharing with.....	
Walking Tour <input type="checkbox"/> Private 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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