



Hiking Provence & The Luberon

AMC Adventure Travel Trip #2132

September 18-25, 2021



South Eastern France is a magical place where light, landscapes, and people have woven a patchwork of striking beauty and refined living. It has inspired some of the most recognizable works of art and the most delightful wines and French dishes imaginable. PROVENCE is one of France's most visited rural destinations and yet, it maintains a refreshingly quiet, natural air about it. From its craggy limestone outcrops adorned in pines and cedars to the lavender fields below and the ageless hilltop medieval towns, you will certainly gain a sense of how unique the region is. We invite you to explore some of the classic day hikes of Provence with us!



Trip Description

Our hiking adventure is considered active but not as demanding as trekking holidays can be. Expect to be on your feet throughout the day exploring the authentic and natural side of Provence's best kept secrets. From the Baby Alps (**Les Alpilles**), to the enchanting forests and crags of the **Luberon** and the inspiring landscapes of **Sainte Victoire**, you will be exposed to the greatest diversity the region has to offer. There will also be opportunities to visit the colorful markets of Provence and see some beautiful historic buildings, grand architecture, and sample a wide range of local gastronomy. Our tour ends with a return to Aix en Provence in the heart of this beautiful region – leaving options to explore further or return home.

The tour is 7 nights / 8 days in duration and to make the most out of the experience we stay in 3 locations over that period. Short transfers between 20 minutes and 1 hr 15 min max are required to bring us to trail heads and/or new destinations and you carry only a light backpack daily. The hikes are led by an experienced leader from the AMC and a local professional guide who is a specialist in the region.

Throughout our time together we will endeavor to enjoy and understand this wonderful region via the AMC's mission of education, conservation, and appreciation of the natural world.



Expectations of Participants

This trip is rated EASY for experienced hikers who enjoy an active vacation. You should be fit enough to walk 4 to 6 miles per day for several days in a row carrying a day pack with your personal gear (i.e., rain gear, pack lunch, extra layers, etc.) in all different weather conditions. Daily elevation gain/loss will range between 600' and 750' and one day is planned to be 8 miles with a 1200' elevation gain.

While the majority of our walking will be on comfortable footpaths, participants should expect to be on rougher trails as well.

Prior to your acceptance as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss with us your capabilities and experiences. We may also request references to confirm your fitness level and suitability for participating in trip activities. While the leaders will make a reasonable attempt to ensure a good "fit" between the trip and participants, you are ultimately responsible for being aware of the risks involved in the activities and for conducting yourself accordingly. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety.

It may happen on any trip that a participant is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of safety, whether it be of the group or of the individual. Illness, injury, lack of proper gear, or fitness are examples of some conditions that might result in an individual being unable to participate in one or more activities. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this may not always be possible.

This is a group activity and we will be spending many, but not all, hours together. We expect that everyone will pitch in and contribute to helping each other have a great time.



Planned Itinerary:

17 Sept or Prior: Leave USA on an overnight flight to Marseille

No meals, accommodation, or activities provided today.



Day 1 – 18 Sept: Arrive Aix en Provence

Meals included: Welcome Dinner

Accommodation: Aix en Provence / 4* Hotel Roi Rene or similar

Activities: Your tour will start at the hotel in Aix en Provence where you will be met in the afternoon by your AMC guide. Today there are no scheduled activities, allowing adjustment to the time change and self-explore Aix's pretty historic quarter. The Hop On/Off guided bus tour is a great way to see the city without using too much energy. A welcome dinner is included tonight.



Day 2 – 19 Sept: Hiking St. Remy & Lac du Perou

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: St. Remy/4* Hotel de L'image or similar

Activities: This morning we transfer 1 hr 15 min to St. Rémy de Provence in the beautiful Les Alpilles (Baby Alps) region. Our first hike takes us from the hotel to the region of Lac Du Peiroou in the foothills of the Les Alpilles. Expect to hike 4 to 6 miles with approximately 600 feet elevation gain. After the hike we visit the enchanting Hospital of St. Paul where Van Gogh spent a year of his life. There is an informative trail around the Hospital dedicated to Van Gogh's art where one could imagine him painting fields of lavender surrounded by cedars.



Day 3 – 20 Sept: Hiking St. Remy to Les Baux (Provence's Baby Alps)

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Same hotel as previous night.

Activities: Today we hike the classic Les Alpilles route from our hotel to the fortified village of Les Baux. Covering approximately 8 miles total with 1200 feet elevation gain, the route is largely on a rural track and meanders its way over the spine of the forested and limestone craggy escarpment of the Alpilles range. Upon arrival to Les Baux, we have an interpretive walk through the medieval streets to explore the village history before making our way by coach back to St. Remy.



Day 4 – 21 Sept: Hiking Gordes & the Sénanque Abbey

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Gordes/3* Hotel Carcarille or similar

Activities: A transfer of 1 hour takes us to the Luberon Mountains this morning and wonderful Gordes village. Today's hike is to the beautiful 12th Century Sénanque Abbey – an architectural masterpiece set in the Luberon's pristine setting and historical landscapes from the French Revolution. From the Abbey we carry on through the western hillsides, pastures and forests, climbing our way back to the village of Gordes – returning us to the hotel in time to enjoy the lovely ambience of our rural guest house and Gordes region itself. Hiking distance today approximately 4-6 miles with 750 feet elevation gain.



Day 5 – 22 Sept: Hiking Gordes & the Veroncle Gorge

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Gordes (same as previous night)

Activities: This morning we set off on foot from the hotel to make a day hike into the heartland of the Luberon and we will explore the lush valleys of fruit orchards, farmsteads and vineyards – including the stunning Veroncle Gorge featuring wonderful karst limestone features, bubbling streams, and historic abandoned mills. Total hiking distance today will be approximately 5-6 miles with a 680 foot elevation gain.



Day 6 – 23 Sept: REST DAY – Free Options

Meals included: Breakfast. Dinner is on your own...a chance to explore Gordes lovely restaurants!

Accommodation: Gordes (same as previous night)

Activities: Today you are free to self-explore the valley of the Luberon. Options include visiting historical Roussillon village and perhaps the Ochre Mines where a number of easy hikes can be found. Other options include renting a bike (or ebike); re-visiting Gordes village; take a vineyard tour; sample tasty dishes in a local tavern, or just relax around our hotel and pool for the day! Shared taxi and local bus services provide easy means of transport if required.



Day 7 – 24 Sept: Hiking Lac Zola & The Landscapes of Cezanne

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Aix en Provence / Hotel Negrecoste 4 stars (or similar)

Activities: After breakfast we transfer 1 hour 15 min to Le Tholonet, Cezanne's very own backdrop to many works of art. A Provence hiking tour would not be complete without walking through the limestone outcrops and pine forests beneath the peak of Sainte Victoire in the Aix en Provence region. It was here that Cezanne spent countless hours with easel and paints capturing the contrasting light between the mountain and sky. The hiking here is wonderful, diverse and we will cover an undulating 4-5 miles over an elevation gain of approximately 600 feet today. After completing the hike, we will return (20 min) to Aix en Provence for our final evening together and a farewell dinner.



Day 8 – 25 Sept: Departure Day

Meals included: Breakfast only

Accommodation: None provided / Departure day

Activities: Today after breakfast you can return to the Marseille airport via taxi or local shuttle bus or continue on to other destinations in France. The airport transfer is not included in the trip price however our local guide can help arrange your departure options. From Marseille you are free to travel to other destinations in the region or onward travel home.

While the itinerary in this prospectus is what the leaders have planned at the time of writing, various factors may require changes for reasons of group ability, safety, transportation, and unforeseeable circumstances such as weather considerations, natural disasters in the areas to be visited, or recommendations of governmental agencies. Our rest day might shift to adjust for inclement weather. The leaders reserve the right to make such changes as necessary, both before and during the trip.



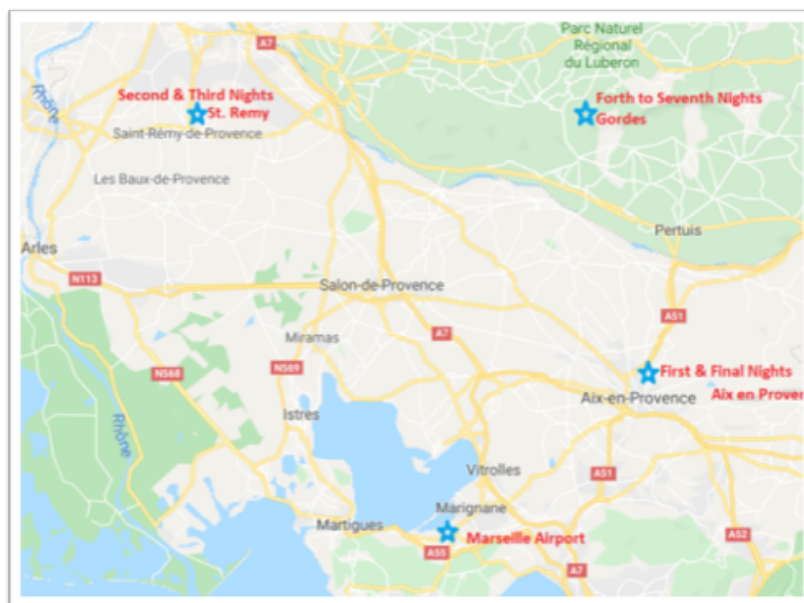
What to Expect

This trip is rated a difficulty of 3: [Easy](#). This trip can be enjoyed by just about anyone with a reasonable level of fitness and with consecutive day hiking experience. The longest hike is approximately 8 miles with 1200' elevation gain and the rest of the hikes are 4-6 miles with 600-750' elevation gains. Trail conditions are varied and consist of old cart tracks through hillsides and fields, narrow stony trails in National Parks, and even some paved road connecting sections. Solid hiking shoes or light boots and walking poles are recommended, this is HILLY countryside, though not mountainous.

Weather wise, due to proximity to both the Mediterranean and the Alps, some rain showers and strong winds may exist but will generally be short lived. Expect warm temperatures of up to the 70's in the day and nightly lows in the mid 50's.

Our accommodations will be at comfortable 3* and 4* hotels with luggage transfer between our destinations. Solo travelers will be paired with a same gender roommate. Single rooms might be available with a "single supplement".

We will have 7 nights lodging, 7 breakfasts, and 6 dinners at our hotels. Lunches are pay-as-you-go and plans will be determined based on our days' activities; we may pack food with us or stop to eat at local cafes along our route. Participants with specific dietary requirements should contact the leaders for additional information.



Cost of the Trip

The trip will cost \$2,995 for AMC members, \$3,095 for non-members. Non-members can join AMC for \$50 by clicking [here](#). Included is: seven (7) nights of lodging, seven (7) breakfasts, six (6) group dinners, and five (5) guided hikes, all hiking transfers, and emergency medical and evacuation insurance. A limited number of single rooms (single supplement) may be available at an additional cost.

The cost of lunches, drinks, and incidentals - essentially anything not specifically detailed above, *is not* included in the price. We recommend budgeting \$15 - \$20 per day for these expenses.

The trip fee includes an AMC overhead charge to cover the administrative expenses of offering AMC Adventure Travel excursions and, in accordance with AMC you are subsidizing some of the leaders' cost. The trip fee also includes emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage which is required by AMC.

The price for this excursion is based on quotes or estimates obtained at the time the trip was submitted to the Adventure Travel Committee for approval. The final price will be adjusted in accordance with the best final arrangements we can make. As with all Adventure Travel Committee excursions, this trip is run on a non-profit basis; any savings we achieve, as well as any cost increases we incur, will be shared by trip participants. Our cost estimates are conservative, and so a refund is considerably more likely than a price increase.

Your round-trip airfare and land travel to / from Aix en Provence, which we currently estimate at \$1,200-1,600, *is not included*. Leaders will be glad to provide information on suggested flights and train schedules.



Important Notes:

The price of the trip is subject to an increase should the value of the US dollar versus the Euro decline significantly from the estimated exchange rate of 1.20Euro to \$1.00USD. Conversely, any unspent funds resulting from exchange rates being more favorable than our estimate will be refunded to the participants.

Insurance

While the trip cost *does* include insurance for medical emergencies and evacuations, it ***does not*** include insurance for travel delay, interruption or cancellation of the trip, or baggage loss. Purchasing such insurance is strongly suggested. The leaders will send you information to help you purchase this insurance through a preferred AMC vendor or you can purchase through your own preferred vendor. Please note that most of these types of travel insurance require you to purchase the insurance within a certain number of days after booking your trip – once you have received a formal acceptance letter, please do not delay in purchasing your insurance if you choose to do so.

Safety

As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events, procedures and policies have been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with volunteer leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to adverse weather and environmental conditions, remote locations of our trips and camps, and transportation in vehicles, on foot, by boat, or on a bike. When you apply for acceptance onto a trip, please carefully read and sign the Adventure Travel Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity Agreement and call if you have any questions.



Cancellation Policy

The AMC Adventure Travel cancellation policy is based on the fact that your cancellation may not raise the cost to the other participants or to the leaders. Once you are notified the trip is declared to run as scheduled, the minimum cancellation fee is \$200. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant. Should the leaders be able to replace you, you may be charged a reduced penalty. This will generally not be determined until after the trip. Failure to make trip payment(s) in a timely manner will be considered a cancellation.

On rare occasions AMC Adventure Travel may need to cancel all or a portion of a trip due to force majeure [e.g. terrorism, local health conditions, natural disaster, changes in local regulatory environment, etc.] In the event of such a cancellation, your trip fee will be refunded less any trip expenses already incurred plus any non-cancellable future trip expenditures. AMC Adventure Travel is not responsible for additional expenses incurred by you in preparing for the trip (including non-refundable air tickets, visa fees, gear or medical expenses, etc).

How to Proceed

To apply to the trip, email the leader(s) letting them know that you are interested in receiving the trip application forms:

Karen Barsanti
4 Vineyard Drive
Stratham, NH 03885
(603) 770-1980
karenbarsantiAMC@gmail.com

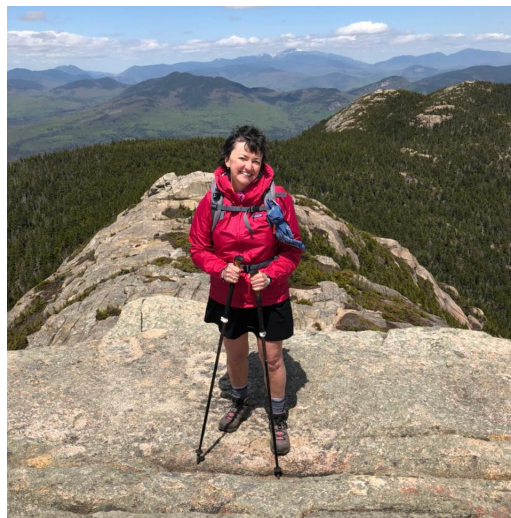
We will send you the application, risk release, and medical forms which you will need to print, complete, sign and return along with the required deposit check of \$1,000 made payable to the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Your official acceptance onto the trip will not happen until the leaders have determined by a telephone conversation with you that you and the trip are a good match.

Once you have been officially accepted and the trip has the required number of qualified participants to make the trip 'a go,' your check will be deposited and the trip's cancellation policy will take effect (see below). The rest of the trip fee will be due by June 10, 2020.

Karen Barsanti, Leader:

Karen is a member of the NH Chapter and has led trips for over 15 years for NH Excursions, NH Family Group, August Camp, and Adventure Travel. She is certified by *Wilderness Medical Associates International* in Wilderness First Aid, AED, and CPR. She is a past Chair of the NH Chapter and currently serves as Secretary of Adventure Travel. Karen looks forward to hiking and exploring Provençe with fellow Adventure Travelers.



**Required Gear:**

Passport and Medical Insurance Card
Backpack (20-25 liters) with waterproof pack cover
2 one-liter water bottles or hydration system
Personal first aid kit with head lamp
Waterproof packable jacket and pants
Lightweight Wool or Polartec hat, gloves, and top
Waterproof hiking boots
Hiking socks, shorts, pants, tees, and long sleeve tops
Sun protection: wide-brim hat, sunglasses, lotion, and lip balm
Leisure clothes for travel and hotel
Personal toiletries

Optional Recommendations:

Hiking poles (*must be in checked bag*)
Gaiters (for pebbles and dust, not for snow)
Camera
Binoculars
Ear plugs
Small knife (*must be in checked bag*)
Compass
Extra shoelaces
Zipper closure plastic bags for packing lunches and snacks
Reading material for breaks in the action
Luggage locks