

Hiking Through Provence
AMC Adventure Travel Trip #2310
September 18-25, 2023



“If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere.”
~Vincent van Gogh

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!

Planned Itinerary:

September 17 or Prior: Leave USA on an overnight flight to France

We recommend flying into either Paris or Marseille and then taking a train to Aix en Provence.



Day 1 – Sep 18: Arrive Aix en Provence

Meals included: Welcome Dinner

Accommodation: Aix en Provence / 4* Hotel

Activities: Your adventure 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-exploration of Aix's pretty historic quarter. A welcome dinner is included tonight.



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

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: St. Remy/4* Hotel

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 – Sep 20: 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 at 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 – Sep 21: Hiking Gordes & the Sénanque Abbey

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Gordes/3* Hotel

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 is approximately 4-6 miles with 750 feet elevation gain.



Day 5 – Sep 22: 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 – Sep 23: 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 – Sep 24: Hiking Lac Zola & The Landscapes of Cezanne

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Aix en Provence / 4* Hotel

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 – Sep 25: Departure Day

Meals included: Breakfast only

Accommodation: None provided / Departure day

Activities: Today after breakfast we say farewell and continue to other destinations in France or return to the Marseilles airport. The airport transfer is not included in the trip price however our local hotel can help arrange your departure options.



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 temperatures in the 70's during the day with nightly lows in the 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. 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.

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Cost of the Trip

The trip will cost \$3,495 for AMC members and \$3,595 for non-members. Non-members can join AMC for \$50 by clicking [here](#). Included in the price: 7 nights of lodging, 7 breakfasts, 6 group dinners, 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.

Your round-trip airfare and land travel to / from Paris or Marseilles, which we currently estimate at \$1,440 , *is not included*. Leaders will be glad to provide information on suggested flights.

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.

How to Proceed

To apply for this trip, email karenbarsantiAMC@gmail.com to let her know that you are interested in receiving the trip application forms.

We will send you the application materials 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.

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.

Your official acceptance onto the trip will not happen until the leader(s) have determined by a telephone conversation with you that you and the trip are a good match. Once you have been officially accepted your deposit check will be processed, the trip’s cancellation policy will take effect including a \$300 minimum cancellation fee, and final payment will be due by March 15, 2023.

Terms and Conditions

By booking a trip with us, you agree with the [terms and conditions](#). Please read this information and contact the trip leaders with questions.

Karen Barsanti, Leader:

Karen is a member of the NH Chapter and has led trips for 20-ish 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 Chair of Adventure Travel.

Karen looks forward to hiking through Provenance with fellow Adventure Travelers.

Contact: karenthurstonbarsanti@gmail.com





Required Gear:

Passport, Medical Insurance Card, and EU-required Vaccine Credentials
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
Broken-in hiking boots and hiking socks & liners
Lightweight 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