

RUSTIC TRAILS HOLIDAYS

Wine & Walking, 11 June 2011

Highlights

Based at La Maison Rose in the village of Saillans, the highlights of this walking holiday include:

- Five days guided walking of between 3-6 hours per day including breaks. There will be some uphill sections but the pace is easy.
- Spectacular views; mediterranean and alpine scenery.
- Eagles, vultures, chamois and other wildlife.
- Visits to wine producers and vineyards.
- Learn about the way of life and heritage of the region.
- We leave one day and evening free for you to explore further or relax.
- Luxurious accommodation with private swimming pool.
- Delicious home cooked cuisine, informal wine tasting.

Summary

We put together the 'Wine and Walking' holiday following requests from several of our clients who were keen walkers but who wanted to take the opportunity to sample wines from the Rhone valley and other French regions. We were happy to oblige - it's still a walking holiday, but with very informal wine tasting each evening, plus some winemakers and vineyard tours thrown in.

Through the week, between the walks, we visit a couple of wine producers and taste some delicious wines. And each evening we sample a few different examples: silky syrahs from St Joseph and Cornas, surprisingly complex wines from Cairanne and Rasteau, powerful examples from Chateauneuf du Pape and Gigondas, and of course the very local wines from our valley. We are confident that your interest in French wine will be rekindled, you may even learn something! And of course for those of you who've driven here from the UK, there is the bonus of taking your new found treasures home.

All this is within the context of a walking holiday of course; please therefore study the itinerary below to get a feel for the walking.

Itinerary

N.B. The itinerary is a guide and will vary depending on the weather and other factors

Day 1, Saturday

Arrive at La Maison Rose in time for dinner on the terrace.

Day 2, Sunday (breakfast from 8.15 to 9.30)

We take a walk around the local village market, the local goat's cheese and charcuterie are worth a try. We then head off for a short minibus trip to the start of the first walk, La Vallee de la Gervanne and Gigors. Highlights of this area include the restored village of Cobonne and the market town of Beaufort, as well as stunning views towards the Vercors, the Drome valley and the Rhone.

Day 3, Monday

We take a short walk today, leaving time for a vineyard visit. We drive 15 km to Bezaudon, via a spectacular col. A delightful three hour walk leads us to the ruined tower of the old village, a magnificent spot for lunch, offering gorgeous views south to Provence and Mont Ventoux. We spend the afternoon visiting a wine producer in the area.

Day 4, Tuesday

We travel to the Col du Rousset, in the Vercors National Park, a winter ski resort. In spring it's a carpet of wild flowers., and in autumn it's about the clear skies and the griffon vultures soaring overhead, and of course the views of the Vercors and the Drome valley a mile below, from the edge of the plateau. This is one of the best places in the region for walking, and we probably won't see anyone else. If time permits, we stop in the market town of Die (pronounced 'Dee') for a look round. This is the town after which the local wine is named – Clairette de Die and Cremant de Die, both sparkling whites; very unusual this far south and almost unheard of in Britain.

Day 5, Wednesday

Rest day. A non walking day to relax or visit one of the nearby market towns of Die or Crest. Alternatively, we have some prepared routes that you can do on your own if you would rather walk. Or visit one or more of the local winemakers, and do some free sampling.

Evening meal in local restaurant.

Day 6, Thursday

We head south today towards Nyons and Cotes du Rhone country. There is some excellent walking here; the scenery is more mediterranean in feel, more olive groves and rolling countryside. We should have time to look round Nyons; as well as a very big market, the ancient streets provide hours of fascination. We visit a wine producer in the afternoon, and find out more about the local wine. This is more or less grape harvest time, the 'vendange', so we might be able to see them at work.

Day 7, Friday

A big walking day, we head east up the valley and then north towards the Combau, the most spectacular high level (but flat) walking in the region. The views towards the alps are superb, and there is abundant wildlife here.

Practical information

Minimum group size is 5, maximum 10. Minimum age: 18 years. We provide an English speaking guide for the group who will lead all the walks during the week. The guide will not be provided for anyone walking on a route other than with the group.

What to bring

In addition to your usual clothes, you will need the following:-

- Lightweight walking boots with good ankle support.
- Waterproof / windproof jacket.
- Fleece or warm top.
- Sun hat and sun cream.
- Water bottle.
- Day rucksack (for your belongings and picnic lunch).
- Walking poles if you like to use them.

As well as a camera and binoculars, we suggest you bring a blank CD so that you can take a copy of digital photographs taken by the guide and any other members of the group.

Joining the trip

Included in the cost of your holiday is an airport transfer to and from Lyon St Exupery or to and from Valence TGV, for Saturday arrivals and departures. If you are taking this option you will be given further details on booking. Alternatively you may prefer to make your own arrangements, in this case please arrive at your accommodation from 4pm onwards on your arrival day.

Passports

All nationalities require a full passport that is valid for the length of your stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents.

Insurance

It is a requirement of our terms and conditions that you have taken out appropriate travel insurance in respect of your holiday.

Extra expenses and spending money

Allow about 30 euros for the evening meal on the rest day, plus money for drinks etc in bars and cafes. There is an autoteller in the village.

Accommodation

La Maison Rose has three double and two twin bedded rooms with en-suite facilities. You will have full use of the large sitting room, dining room, terraces, swimming pool and garden. The house is a short walk from the centre of the village and two minutes from the river Drome.

Meals:

Breakfast will be provided each morning on the terrace. It is self-service and comprises cereal, yoghurt, fruit, eggs, croissants, bread, jam, marmalade and honey, tea and coffee.

Lunch: five picnic lunches are provided consisting of filled baguettes of your choice, salad, fruit, cakes, snack bars and soft drinks.

Afternoon tea; tea, coffee and biscuits is served on your return from the day's walking.

Dinner; six home cooked dinners of four courses, including unlimited wine, mineral water, tea or coffee.

We do not offer a choice of meals but if you have a food allergy or are vegetarian please discuss your requirements with us.

Facilities:

A washing machine is available, and a fridge/freezer for any food items. A PC is at your disposal for viewing and copying photographs.

The library contains a broad selection of books; there are also maps and guidebooks to borrow.

The swimming pool is open from 8 am each day.

Most UK terrestrial channels can be viewed on the satellite television in the lounge.

Drinks with meals are free and unlimited; a minibar and wine list is available for drinks at other times, for which a nominal charge is made.

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