

RUSTIC TRAILS

hidden gems in southeast france



homepage

holidays

dates & prices

booking

offers

contact

guestbook

Drome Explorer

Wildlife & Flowers

Wine & Walking

Discovering Corsica

Explorer Plus

Autumn Delights

Self Guided

Wildlife and Flowers

One of our most popular holidays, we've expanded our repertoire to include new walks and even more wild flowers.

There are many reasons why we love this secret corner of Europe, but the wild flowers in May and early June are probably at the top of the list. Scattered like sparkling jewels, the orchids and other wild flowers are the greatest treasure. Our location in the Drome valley to the south of the Vercors lies at the apex of three climatic zones: Alpine, Mediterranean and Continental Europe. The implications for the flora and fauna are immediately apparent as we explore the area.

To the north lies the Vercors National Park, France's largest nature reserve, a vast mountainous area a mile above sea level, cut by deep limestone gorges among meadows and moorlands, forests, peaks and ridges. Almost no-one lives here, its just the walkers who experience the stunning alpine flowers in spring, the dazzling gentians, peonies, wild tulips and narcissi, and many orchids. (Spring comes late in the Vercors; down in the valley you could be sipping rosé and cooling off in the pool while the flowers are giving their best). As well as spending time in the Vercors National Park, we explore some excellent locations in the valley and to the south, noting the climatic effects of the Mediterranean, and through the week should see a huge range of flowers. The walking is never too difficult, and there is plenty of time to take photographs.

But it's not just about the wild flowers, the wildlife is superb; we will visit a nesting site of a pair of golden eagles up the valley; if we're lucky we'll see the birds. We could also see short toed eagles, griffon vultures, chamois, ibex and marmots, and much more. There will be marvellous views every day, and we always find a good spot for a picnic lunch.

Most of our walks are twenty to forty minutes away by minibus; we set off by about 9.30am, returning by 4pm or 5pm. All the walks are graded 'easy' on this guided group holiday.

At a glance:

Holiday dates: Weeks commencing 14 May 2011, 4 June 2011.

Walking grade: Easy.

Price: £739

Flights: Click [here](#)

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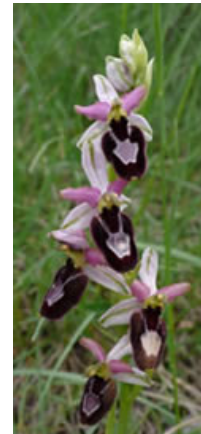
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Bookings and enquiries : telephone 0845 680 0475 or e-mail: info@rustictrails.co.uk