



Explore France at your own pace

Day 1: Arrival

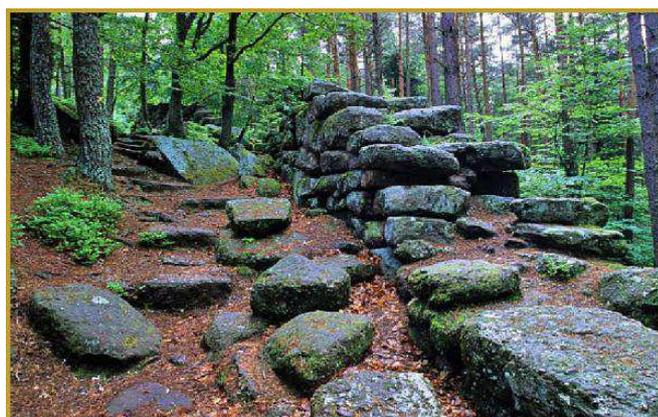
Strasbourg, seat of the new European Parliament, is an ancient and lively city, filled with treasures to explore. It was named a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1988, the first city to be honoured with the title in its entirety. This tour allows you time to meander the canals, cobblestoned streets, and small boutiques of Strasbourg. Visit the old town, its picturesque quarters and half-timbered houses in the neighbourhood known as "The Petite France". Visit the Gothic cathedral and its famous astronomical clock, and the European Parliament. Be sure to sate your appetite as well with the pastries, giant soft pretzels and fresh cheeses at every corner.

Day 2: Rosheim to Obernai 13 km / 8 miles

After breakfast, we transfer you westwards, to the base of the Vosges Mountains that you will be skirting along and exploring for the rest of the week. You start in the pretty village of Rosheim with the Romanesque Saint Peters and Paul Church, and its three Medieval town gates, and its small rose-gardens, as well as the Romanesque house, recognized as the oldest in the region, and beautifully restored. After explorations in town, your walk takes you up in the hills, through the small village of Rosenwiller, with its Jewish cemetery – the largest and oldest in Alsace. From there, descend into the vineyard village of Boersch, with its three fortified medieval gateways and magnificent Renaissance town hall. You can stop to explore the town, perhaps do a wine tasting, and find some lunch or a cold refreshment. Your walk from there takes you on small paths and roads following along the Ehn River for a stretch, and passing an old mill. Your final destination is Obernai, entrenched in centuries of history, and with wonderful restaurants and boutiques to explore.

Day 3: Mont St Odile – The Pagan Wall 17 km / 10.5 miles

Today's walk is in two parts. In the morning, we transfer you up into the hills, to the Sainte Odile Abbey, perched at the top of the most famous peak of the Vosges. Your walk follows a pretty section of the mysterious Pagan Wall, a huge construction about 10 kilometres (6.2 mi) long which encircles Mont Sainte Odile Abbey. The origins and date of the wall are still disputed, with some claiming that it is a 3,000 year old druid construction and more recent research suggesting that it dates from the 7th century AD, about the time that the convent was built.





Whichever theory you uphold, the walk is lovely, through dense forest, and offering occasional spectacular panoramas. Be sure to take the time as well to visit the Abbey itself, including the church and the chapel where Sainte Odile's tomb is interred. After some lunch, perhaps at the Abbey, the route then takes you downwards, through forest and eventual vineyards. You'll pass ruined castles, and impressive rock formations. About halfway back your path brings you into the charming small vineyard town of Ottrott, where you can have a drink and a break, or perhaps take the time to do a winetasting. Continue on, essentially downhill all the way, back to Obernai for a second evening.

Day 4: Haut Koenigsbourg to Ribeauvillé 15 km / 9.4 miles

This morning we transfer you up to the incredible castle of Haut Koenigsbourg. This impressive medieval-lesque castle is nestled at a strategic location on a high hill overlooking the Alsatian plain; as a result it was used by successive powers from the Middle Ages until the Thirty Years' War when it was abandoned. In 1900 it was restored under the direction of Emperor Wilhelm II who wished to create a castle with Medieval qualities and more generally of German civilization. He hoped it would reinforce the bond of Alsatians with Germany, as they had only recently (1871) been incorporated into the German Reich. After your visit, your walk heads overall downhill, leaving the dense Vosges forest and passing along the way several lovely small villages: St Hippolyte, Rohrschwihr, and Bergheim, each worth some exploration. You finish the day descending into Ribeauville, with beautiful half-timbered buildings from the 16th and 17th centuries in the old town, and a variety of shops, wineries, and historic sites.



Day 5: Katzenthal to Ribeauvillé - The Wine Route 16 km / 9.7 miles

This morning you walk southwards from Ribeauvillé along the Alsatian wine route, passing through beautiful vineyards, orchards, and charming small villages, such as Ammerschwihr, with its unique *Kaefferkopf* Grand Cru wines, and Kientzheim, with its medieval ramparts. One of the highlights of the day though will certainly be the town of Riquewihr. This town has much of its medieval fortifications and a castle still intact; it largely escaped damage during the Second World War, and is quite simply gorgeous. You'll want to stop long enough to do the little walking tour of the historic centre that we provide. The route brings you at its end to the vineyard village of Katzenthal. This lovely village, at the bottom of a pretty valley, is surrounded by the vineyards, including its Grand Cru Wineck Schlossberg, named after the castle, originally built in the year 1200. The ruins of the castle are above the village if you feel like an additional climb, before your transfer back to Ribeauvillé for a second night.



Day 6: Voegtlinshoffen to Colmar 15 km / 9.3 miles

This morning you will be dropped in the small vineyard village of Voegtlinshoffen, with its half-timbered houses, and a community of peregrine falcons living on the nearby pink-granite cliffs. The morning will be spent exploring more of the vineyards and villages of the Alsace wine route, as you

make your way northwards into Eguisheim. Eguisheim will enchant you, with its concentric round street setup, medieval ramparts, and half-timbered houses. It is recognized as the birthplace of winegrowing in Alsace, and you can do some tasting here, before perhaps finding some lunch. The route then turns away from the vineyards and across the





plains, entering the town of Colmar on a tranquil path, following the Lauch River. The historic center of this town, where you are staying, reveals its charm: the colors and atmosphere of streets still embody much of the Middle Ages. Churches, cloisters, half-timbered houses, facades with ornate wood sculptures, paintings, and edifices from the Renaissance abound.

Day 7: Departure – Bon Voyage!

After a final delicious breakfast, there are easy connections out of Colmar train station for your continued travels from Alsace. Bon Voyage!



What's included in your Alsace Walking Tour:

- 6 nights' accommodation of the comfort level of your choice * CLASSIC, CLASSIC +, or DELUXE
- Hotel taxes
- All breakfasts, 3 dinners (drinks not included with the dinners)
- Orientation with our Trip Manager by phone at the start of the trip
- Luggage transfers from hotel to hotel
- Taxi transfers for the walks, as described in the itinerary
- Detailed maps and step-by-step route instructions
- Uploadable GPS file of the route to use on a free APP in your smartphone
 - * Can be used without international internet plan (offline)
- Regional information and advice
- Phone call support 7 days a week

