

EXPLORE Provence at own pace

Day 1: Arrival in Avignon

Upon your arrival into Avignon, we will transfer you to your first hotel in the heart of the Luberon. Bonnieux is extremely typical of the region's the hilltop villages, described in Peter Mayle's famous book, *A Year in Provence*. With its panoramic views out onto the Calavon plains, it is spectacularly set at 425m. As well as the twisting cobblestoned streets and lovely tiny squares, there are vestiges of its medieval history, including the original fortress, the ramparts, and the 12th century Romanesque chapel of the church. If you feel like warming up for your walks, you can climb the 86 steps of the old church at the top of the village – you'll be protected by the shade of the 100-year old cedars! Dinner tonight is included at your hotel.

Day 2: Menerbes to Bonnieux via Lacoste 14 km / 9 Miles

Your first day's walk is truly beautiful, with a great mixture of tiny paths and small forest roads, vineyards and a few of the classic Luberon hilltop villages along the way. After a short transfer, we leave you in the centre of Menerbes. Definitely take a bit of time to explore there (we provide a small walking tour) as this village is quite charming. You can visit the boutique of a regional truffle organisation for a taste of the Provencal truffle before starting out as well if you wish! You'll love the scents and views, as you hike through forest, pretty fields and orchards, and vineyards. Pass right through the property of the lovely Abbey of Ste Hilaire, and then arrive (around lunchtime) in Lacoste, where the infamous Marquis de Sade lived (in the chateau, today in ruins) in the 18th century. At the end of the day, the hike brings you back into the village of Bonnieux for a second evening.

Day 3: Gargas to Joucas via Roussillon 15 km / 10.2 Miles

Your walk today starts in the village of Gargas, just outside Apt, and wends its way through the Luberon Geological Reserve towards Roussillon. This Luberon hill village, charming in and of itself with its winding streets and cafes and shops, is more famous for its incredible ochre mines - the surrounding red and burnt orange cliffs were mined for ages for the pigments for dyes. From here you have a relatively easy walk on to Joucas through lovely countryside - but save some energy for the end, to climb a little uphill to your hotel in Joucas at the end. Joucas is a tiny village, nestled at the foot of the more impressive Luberon range, and has become a favourite for artists to come and attempt to capture the area's incredible light.

Day 4 : Senanque Abbey and Gordes 14 km / 9 Miles

Today's walk is one of the most beautiful. It starts at the Abbey of Senanque, a huge and beautiful 12th century Cistercian abbey, surrounded by lavender fields, and still active. It is nestled in a tranquil valley, so after your explorations there, your walk will get you warmed up as you climb away. After, descend on a tiny and





picturesque path, lined with ancient stone walls into Gordes. This village is one of France's rated "Prettiest Villages", and has one of the most spectacular views of the region. Take the time while there to explore the bories village, on the outskirts of town. These traditional stone buildings dot the countryside of the Luberon. From Gordes, climb towards Murs, for some spectacular views, and explore this pretty little village with its many fountains. Then an easygoing path brings you back to Joucas for a second evening.



Day 5: Beaumes de Venise to Seguret 17 km / 10.6 Miles

We transfer you this morning into the southern Rhone. Your walk starts in one of the AOC villages of the southern Rhone, Beaumes de Venise. Explore the charming main square and tiny streets, or take the time to enjoy a wine tasting (the village is famous for a lovely sweet dessert wine), or a tasting of the regional olive oils at the local mill and boutique. Then wend your way northwards, past a tiny chapel and through a string of vineyard villages: Vaqueyras, on to Gigondas, and through Sablet right near the end of the day - tastings possible throughout. Dinner at your hotel's excellent restaurant, in the countryside between Sablet and Seguret.

Day 6: Sablet to Vaison la Romaine via Seguret 12 km / 7 Miles

Walk from your hotel through the vineyards up to tiny Seguret, one of France's official "Prettiest Villages", where you can meander the cobblestoned streets. Then a pretty forest walk to Vaison la Romaine, with its Roman theatre and shady squares. Your walk is not very long, allowing you time to explore in this appealing town, with its Roman vestiges, and ruined chateau above the medieval centre. Or simply hang out in a small café, watching the locals and enjoying a drink in the true relaxed Provencal style, and deciding where you might like to enjoy your final dinner this evening. (please note, the DELUXE itinerary has a second night in Beaumes de Venise – we transfer you to the start of the walk and then back at the end of the afternoon).

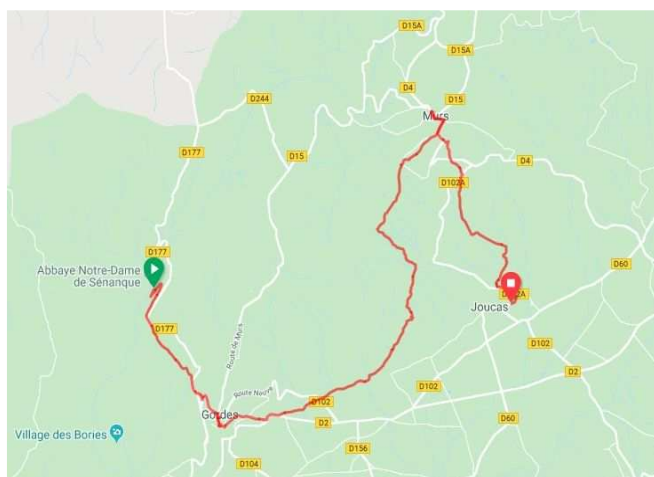
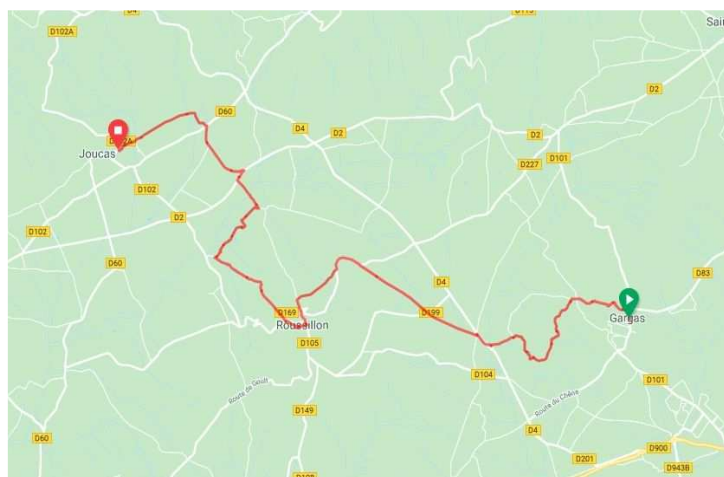
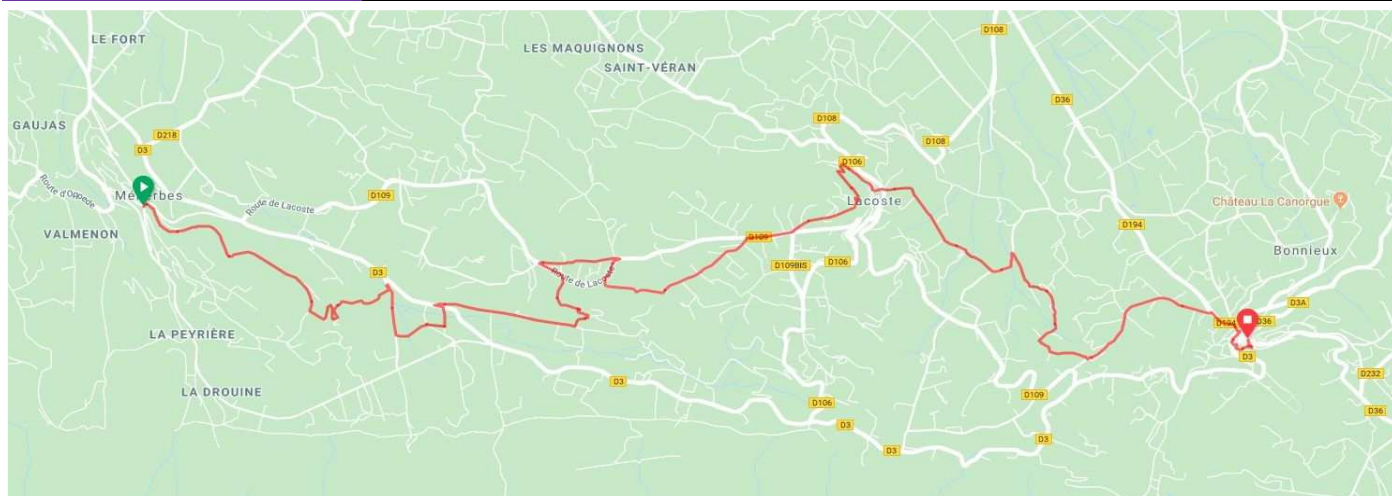
Day 7: Departure – Bon Voyage!

After breakfast, we transfer you back to Avignon train station in time for your further travels.





WALKING IN PROvence : 6 NIGHT "Best Of"



What's included in your Provence Walking Tour package:

- 6 nights' accommodation of the comfort level of your choice: CLASSIC, CLASSIC+ or DELUXE
- Hotel taxes
- All breakfasts, 3 dinners (drinks not included with dinners)
- Orientation by phone with our Trip Manager at the start of the trip
- Transfer to first hotel from Avignon
- Transfer to Avignon at end of trip
- Transfers for the walks as described and Luggage transfers from hotel to hotel
- 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 offline)
- Regional information and advice
- Phone call support 7 days a week

