

FRANCE – CATALONIA

8-days / 7-nights guided walking and sightseeing tour in French Catalonia at Argelès-sur-Mer



Catalonia is more typically associated with Spain but the region extends through to the Languedoc across the French and Spanish border. Northern Catalonia offers superb walking opportunities along the dramatic coastline dotted with secluded coves and pretty beaches, or through the wild landscapes further inland. Added to the spectacular walking there is the fascinating history of this border region, Catalan heritage and traditions, and exceptional cuisine – northern Catalonia is a true hidden gem.

Catalonia offers a wide variety of walks, from coastal walking along the famous Sentier du Littoral, to shaded routes between pretty villages, and artists' hideaways. The routes inland are far less touristed and are filled with historical sites including WWII forts. We walk in the foothills of the Pyrenees and in the hills near the Spanish coastal resort town of Llanca, and visit Collioure, a fishing village whose beautiful natural setting and intense light attracted many artists including Henri Matisse.

Cost from: \$2670 per person (twin share) Single room supplement from \$375 (limited availability)

Departs: 14th, 21st, 28th April; 5th, 12th, 19th May; 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th September

Tour includes: 7 nights in a comfortable hotel room with ensuite bathroom, 7 breakfasts, 7 evening meals, experienced walks leader, local transport to/from the walks.

Not Included: Meals and drinks not mentioned, personal expenses, excursions on the free day each week. Airport transfers from/to Barcelona at set times can be pre-booked at extra cost and we recommend you take these - please ask for details when booking.

Accommodation: The 3-star **Grand Hotel du Lido** sits on the seafront in the resort town of Argelès-sur-Mer and boasts wide-reaching views over the azure Mediterranean Sea. The hotel sits within shaded gardens and has a private beach as well as a heated outdoor pool. The stylish ensuite guest rooms have air conditioning and balcony or terrace and most have sea views. Holidays at Argelès-sur-Mer are half board, with continental breakfast and three-course evening meals, featuring typical Catalan dishes.



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Footpath and walking information



Easier Walks: 8 to 13km on good paths, with some rocky sections. Up to 450m of ascent in a day.



Harder Walks: 11 to 16km on good but occasionally rough paths, with some rocky sections. Up to 760m of ascent in a day.

The walking day: On a typical centre-based holiday there is a choice of walks each day all arranged by experienced walking guides. Choose the option which best suits your interests and fitness, easier or more challenging. As the holiday progresses perhaps try a more challenging level - it's your choice.

Suggested itinerary: The itinerary below should give you a good feel for the walks at the resort but is subject to change. The final selection of walks will be made by your walking leaders, who will brief you each evening on the next day's proposed routes.

Day 1: Arrival day. Plan to arrive at the hotel in Argelès-sur-Mer by mid-afternoon. Transfers at set times from Barcelona Airport are available at extra cost, ask us for details.

Day 2: Le Sentier du Littoral – Starting from the hotel we walk part of this pathway, which stretches along the coastline from the nature reserve of Mas Larrieu, past rocky coves and secluded beaches, as far as the charming fishing village of Collioure and the larger commercial harbour at Port-Vendres.

Day 3: The Massif des Albères – From the medieval village Laroque des Albères there are many paths into the wooded slopes of the massif des Albères, through cork and chestnut forest to the Casot del Guarda refuge hut.

Day 4: Banyuls-sur-Mer – Walk from Port Vendres through vineyards or via the remote headland at Cap Bear to the open-air museum at the former explosive manufactory in Pauilles. We continue along the undulating Sentier du Littoral to the pleasant beach resort of Banyuls-sur-Mer.

Day 5: Free day. No walks are planned for today. Relax at the hotel, walk independently, or explore the local area. The medieval town of Perpignan, once the capital of the far-reaching Kingdom of Mallorca, is worth a visit, or take a train into Spanish Catalonia to the Dali Museum at Figueres.

Day 6: Spanish Catalonia – We cross the border to the Spanish resort town Llanca and walk in the hills around the town for magnificent views of the coast.

Day 7: Foothills of the Pyrenees – We explore the hinterland behind Argelès, walking paths in the forested slopes of the Pyrenees as they descend to the Mediterranean. We may walk to the Tour de la Massane, a 13th Century defensive tower, for views of the whole Vermillion Coast, then continue on to Valmy, with its 19th century 'chateau' which is one of the earliest buildings constructed with reinforced concrete.

Day 8: Departure day. Tour ends after breakfast. Ask about departure transfer to Barcelona Airport (extra cost).

Outdoor Travel offer similar guided centre-based or self-guided inn-to-inn walking holidays in many other areas of Europe including the **Cinque Terre, Tuscany, Umbria**, and the **Amalfi Coast** in Italy, the **Dalmatian Coast** of Croatia, the **French Alps, Provence, Dordogne**, or **Riviera Coast**. Try Wainwright's challenging **Coast to Coast** walk in England or the scenic **West Highland Way** in Scotland, or pilgrimage routes such as the **Way of St James** or Camino de Santiago in France & Spain, or the pilgrims' road to Rome, the **Via Francigena** in Italy.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

- Call Toll free 1800 331 582 or (03) 57551743 or Fax (03) 57501020
- Email: info@outdoortravel.com.au
- Web: <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au>
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright, VIC 3741, Australia