



Hiking tour of Provence and the French Riviera



*'In every walk with nature,
one receives far more than he seeks.'*
~John Muir

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Trip Summary..... 3

Itinerary Snapshot 3

 Itinerary in Detail 3

 Course Content..... 5

Visas and Passports..... 6

Flights and Airports..... 6

Packing List..... 6

Money Matters 8

Tipping 9

Travel Practicalities 9

Trip Insurance 9

Immunizations..... 10

Water & Food 10

Prescriptions 10

Voltage 10

Thievery and Safety..... 10

Jet Lag Precautions..... 11

Weather 11

Recommended Reading..... 12

Travel Resources 12

Map of Provence & France 13

Trip Summary

The South of France is a Mecca for walking. Whether it is in the hills and limestone escarpments, the fields of lavender and vineyards or the rocky paths and pebbly beaches of the South Coast it is possible to get away from the droves of Cannes and St. Tropez. All you need is a sturdy pair of walking shoes.

We will be walking trails along the South coast west from the St. Tropez area towards Marseilles and visiting small villages inland typical of the Provence region. We will see flora and fauna typical to this region – Bonelli's Eagles soaring majestically above the high rocky cliffs or walking amongst the 'Garrigue'.

The accommodations were chosen for their comfort and charm as well as their position in the areas we will be visiting to make it easier to discover the trails and small medieval villages dotted around.

We begin with a transfer from the pick-up point to the St. Tropez area and over the trip walk West finishing in the beautiful 'Calanques' area, just east of Marseille at the town of Cassis.

****Note: depending on availability, we may choose a different hotel of similar type and quality***

Itinerary Snapshot

*Generally, CME lectures will be held in the mornings, though this could vary at the instructor's discretion.
(Meals included: B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner)*

Day 1	A group transfer will depart from airport @ 1PM to the hotel. D
Day 2	Hiking along the coast around the St Tropez peninsula (3-4 Hours, 6 Miles). B, L & D
Day 3	Cap Lardier (5 Hours, 8-9 Miles @ Sea Level). Dinner is on your own today in the village. B & L
Day 4	L'île de Porquerolle (5 Hours, 5-6 Miles). B, L & D
Day 5	Rest Day. Lunch on your own today in St. Nary. Wine tasting in Bandol vine growing region after lunch. B & L
Day 6	La Montagne St. Baume (6 Hours, 9 miles @ 2,500'). B, L & D
Day 7	Baie des Nations. (3½ hours, 8 miles @ 1,310') Dinner on your own tonight. B & L
Day 8	The "Calanques" (6 hours, 10 miles.) 2,000' combined ascents. B, L & D
Day 9	Early Group Transfers to the airport.

Itinerary in Detail

Day 1: Arrival Day

Group transfer from the Marseille airport at one o'clock, to your hotel. A two hour transfer takes us to our hotel 'la Garbine'. At six o'clock, you will meet your guides who will explain the 'workings' of the trip followed by a welcome dinner. The dinner is a gastronomic delight at a restaurant in the nearby village of Ramatuelle, a typical 'provincial' community where we will have time to tour the village before our meal.

Hotel La Garbine (D)

2: Hiking along the coast around the St Tropez Peninsula

CME lectures in the morning. Leaving the hotel on foot we will hike along the coast passing many of the famous beaches such as the Pampelone Beach where we may see some famous celebrities. The trail takes in some of the most beautiful coastline of the area. The hike continues around the peninsula where we will transfer into the town of St. Tropez where you will have a couple of hours to peruse the shops, the citadelle, or just enjoy a beverage and admire the expensive yachts. Dinner will be at a restaurant about 10 minutes walk from our hotel. 3-4 hrs. 6 miles.

Hotel La Garbine (B/L/D)

Day 3: Cap Lardier

CME lectures in the morning. Continuing the "*sentier du littoral*" sometimes called the Coastguard Path we are in a nature conservation area with colourful shrubs and flowers, umbrella shaped pine trees (pin parasol), and views of tiny islands like "Crocodile Island." This is a National Marine park where the hundreds of species of flora and the fauna are protected. Especially the rare land and marine birds we will see.

Transfer to our hotel. Dinner is on your own at 'Borne Les Mimosa,' the village cited as the most flowery village in all of France. The hotel is situated a 10 minute walk from the village.

5 hrs. 8-9 miles. Sea level.

La Domaine du Mirage (B & L)

Day 4: L'île de Porquerolle

CME lectures in the morning. After a transfer to the small port we board a ferry. Approximately, a half hour boat ride takes us to the historic island of Porquerolle, also part of the National Park, protecting flora et fauna since 1971. We will see the Agatte fort, walk to the lighthouse and see the vineyards, beaches and cliffs of this small beautiful island which has been a military post for centuries. There will even be the opportunity to bathe in the sea. We finish the afternoon back on the ferry to take us back to the mainland. This hike is weather dependent. 5 hrs. 5-6 Miles.

La Domaine du Mirage (B/L/Dinner in the village)

Day 5: Nation Bay

CME lectures in the morning. A long drive takes us to St. Nary where you will be free to explore this small coastline town and have lunch on your own. In the afternoon we will transfer to the Bandol vine growing region to visit a vineyard and taste some wine. Short ride to La Cadière. La Cadière-d'Azur is a small, old, medieval hilltop village where our hotel is situated. A 14 century cloister building. Dinner in Le Castellet only 5 minutes away. Another charming Provençal hilltop town.

Hotel Bérard & Spa, la Cadière (B/D)

Day 6: La Montagne St. Baume

CME lectures in the morning. Today we abandon the coast for the mountain of St. Baume, 1,048m. high. Along the way we will discover the Mediterranean Glacier! This consists of buildings, which take advantage of the cool air from the hillside for making ice. Our beautiful trail takes us above the limestone cliffs, which rise up above



the garrigues with views of the sea and Provence interior. Transfer 50 minutes to our hotel. Gourmet dinner at the hotel.

6hrs. 9 miles. 2,500ft.

Hotel Bérard & Spa, la Cadière (B/L/D)

Day 7: Baie des Nations

CME lectures in the morning. Transfer to the coast. The path we take, the 'sentier du littoral', was made by the customs men as a way of controlling the smuggling of goods that was rife in this region. You'll have enough time to enjoy your lunch near the sea before taking this beautiful path passing the Pointe du Defens and the Pointe Fauconniere, walking at sea level to high safe sea cliffs. We finish the hike at Madrague. Transfer to Cassis.

4hrs. 10 miles. Dinner on your own.

Hotel Le Mahogany, Cassis (B/L)

Day 8: The "Calanques"

The Calanques are a succession of narrow canyons with white limestone cliffs jutting into the azur blue sea. Probably the highlight of the trip as far as beauty is concerned, a photographer's paradise. Our trail takes us along the coast meandering in and out of these little 'fjords' with breath-taking views. This is a well-known region for hikers and climbers of the South of France and was classed as the tenth National Park of France in only 2012.

6hrs. 10 miles. 2,000' combined ascents. Farewell dinner at the harbour.

Hotel Le Mahogany, Cassis (B/L/D)

Day 9: Morning Group Transfers to Marseille Airport

There will be a morning transfer to the airport for mid-day flights. If your flight is very early then you will need to arrange a taxi separately. It takes around 1 hour to travel to the airport.

Hiking Details

We will be walking on well-kept trails however they are rocky, so good walking boots are advised. Most days we will transfer to the head of the trail. Walking is at an easy pace – time for photos and explanations along the way. Lunch is picnic style somewhere along the trail, unless of rain. There are no bathroom facilities along the trail. It is 'au nature'. At the end of the trail there is usually a pick-up back to the hotel in time for "discussions".

Course Content

- › Altitude Illness
- › Hypothermia
- › Frostbite and Other Cold Injuries
- › Environmental Heat Illness
- › Snake Envenomation
- › Traveler's Diarrhea, Giardia & Other Waterborne Wilderness Infections
- › Surviving the Unexpected Night Out
- › Lightning Injuries
- › Improvised Medical and Trauma Care
- › Management of Fractures and Dislocations
- › Preparing for Foreign Travel
- › Backcountry Medical Kits
- › Wilderness Wound Management
- › Wild Animal Attacks
- › Patient Assessment in Wilderness Settings
- › Wilderness Dermatology
- › Marine Hazards & Envenomations

Hotel Contact Information

Hotel La Garbine, Ramatuelle

Tel. +33 04 94 97 11 84

<http://www.lagarbine.com/en/9-s-la-garbine-our-hotel.html>

Le Domaine du Mirage, Borne

Tel. +33 04 94 05 32 60

<http://www.domainedumirage.com/en/hotel.htm>

Hotel Bérard & Spa, la Cadière

Tel. +33 04 94 90 11 43

<http://hotel-berard.com>

Hotel Le Mahogany, Cassis

Tél : +33 04 42 01 05 70

Website : www.hotelmahogany.com

Visas and Passports

U.S. citizens are required to have a valid passport that is valid for 6 months after your travel dates begin.

Flights and Airports

You are responsible for booking all flights, international as well as domestic. However, if you need help, please feel free to call or email the Bio Bio office.

Flying In...

A group transfer is scheduled to leave Marseille airport at approximately 1:00 PM. Michael Cooper, your guide, will be waiting to meet you with a sign that says "Bio Bio Expeditions". After some time to settle in and relax at the hotel, the group will meet at 6:00 PM for a briefing and welcome dinner.

Flying Out...

There will be a morning transfer to the airport for mid-day flights. If your flight is very early then you will need to arrange a taxi separately. It takes around 1 hour to travel to the airport.

France is in the Central European Time (CET) zone, which is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST) and 9 hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time (PST).

Packing List

Baggage Allowance and Suggested Gear

Please see what restrictions your airline imposes, as the rules and allowances are constantly changing. Typically you are allowed two checked bags up to 50Lbs each, plus one carry on bag and a purse.

Try to go as light as possible and take *only* the essentials.

Traveler's tip: when you fly, always wear or bring in your carry-on bag all irreplaceable items such as cameras, medications, spare eyeglasses, important papers, some warm clothes, and **your hiking boots** as well as any toothpaste or lotions in a plastic zip loc bag for security.

Luggage

- Main luggage. Make sure your bag is sturdy and water-resistant. Wheeled luggage is OK on this trip, though we do prefer wheeled duffels for efficient stacking. Hard shell suitcases are not advisable.
- Daypack. It should have a capacity of 1500 to 2000 cubic inches, and can double as your carry-on bag.
- Extra roll-up duffel (optional). To carry home any souvenirs you buy.

Clothing Notes

The weather is variable in Provence. As such, during your trip you could experience a broad spectrum of weather: from hot sunny days to cold windy and/or rainy days. Temperature could vary between 50-80 degrees Fahrenheit. Due to these different possibilities you must dress in layers that can be adjusted quickly to suit the conditions. We suggest that you layer with synthetic clothing. Synthetic fabrics are the most effective barriers against cold and wet weather conditions. They provide the best insulation, are light in weight, wick away perspiration, and dry quickly if wet. They are also very handy when traveling, as they require no ironing. We strongly discourage the use of cotton garments in cold or wet mountain conditions.

When layering, the innermost layer should be long underwear (Capaline or Polypropylene). The middle layer can be a synthetic or wool shirt, and water wicking pants (soft shell pants are ideal). The outermost layer should be a good quality fleece (or soft shell) jacket and a Gore-Tex wind/rain parka (or similar garment with wind and waterproof protection). Wind and rainproof pants are also essential.

We have not included quantities for each item listed. Use your own judgment, based on the expected weather conditions and overall packing/weight restrictions for your luggage.

Underwear & Socks

- Regular underwear (synthetics dry more quickly).
- Long thermal underwear (Capaline or Polypropylene).
- Lightweight hiking socks which are suitable for your walking shoes.

Shirts

- Long-sleeved shirts of synthetic or lightweight cotton fabric to protect you from the sun and bugs during the day, and for evening wear.
- Short-sleeved shirts, T-shirts and/or tank tops of quick-drying synthetic fabrics for outdoor activities.

Pants & Shorts

- Full-length pants of synthetic or lightweight cotton fabric for sun and bug protection during the day, and for evening wear.
- Warm pants for colder weather (fleece or soft shell are ideal).
- Hiking/walking shorts made of a quick-drying synthetic fabric or lightweight cotton fabric.
- Board shorts to wear while swimming.

Headwear

- Sun hat (baseball cap, visor, or hat with wide brim and chinstrap).
- Bandanna – sun protection for the neck (optional).
- Warm hat for colder weather (wool or fleece).

Outerwear

- Lightweight rain/wind jacket.
- Fleece pullover for cool evenings.
- Lightweight down sweater type jacket (optional).

Footwear

- Lightweight hiking boots with ankle support for walking on uneven terrain.
- Light weight walking shoes to wear around towns.

Travel Accessories

- Water bottle, 1 or 1.5-quart capacity. This is optional, but we prefer that you bring your own water bottle and refill it, rather than using disposable plastic bottles that will end up in landfill.
- Toiletry kit—soap, toothbrush, etc.
- Sunglasses.
- Spare pair of prescription glasses, prescription sunglasses, or contact lenses (if you use them).
- Sunscreen and lip protection of SPF 15 or higher.
- Personal first aid kit with pain relief medication, Band-Aids, antiseptic ointment, prescribed medications and EpiPen, if you need them. NOTE – Our guides carry a Wilderness First Responder kit (or equivalent) with basic First Aid materials such as blister and bug bite ointments, but they cannot legally prescribe or administer medication to you. **The guides are not paramedics, nurses, or physicians – they are not licensed medical professionals.** Please consult with your personal Physician regarding what you should bring with you, and plan to come equipped as necessary.

Optional Travel Accessories

- Binoculars.
- Washcloth.
- Hand sanitizer or disposable pre-moistened wipes for quick hand washing and hygiene.
- Camera with plenty of film or memory cards and batteries.
- Insect repellent (highly recommended for sandflies that frequent NZ's most beautiful places during the day). To ensure you have repellent that really works against sandflies, your guide will have two repellents available for sale (one of which is a natural product made from essential oils).
- Plastic bags of various sizes for keeping things sorted out and dry in your duffel. Ziploc type bags work well for camera gear, binoculars, books, and film.
- Repair kit with needle, thread, and safety pins.
- Swiss Army-type pocketknife (must be packed in your checked bag during flights).
- Reading and writing materials.
- Playing cards.
- Ear plugs.
- Walking stick(s).

Money Matters

Currency

The currency of France is the Euro (€).

Extra Expenses

You are responsible for some meals and optional activities, as stipulated in the itinerary. For meals that are included, you will need to pay for your own alcohol. You will also need money for gifts and tipping.

ATMs

ATMs are widely available in France, certainly in all cities and bigger towns, and even at a bank or two in smaller places. But don't always count on it. As you're venturing into rural France, it's always good to have euros in your pocket.

Credit Cards

If your credit card has been programmed with a PIN, it's likely you can use your card at ATMs in France to withdraw money as a cash advance. Always ask your bank before you leave home about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad, the limit each day, and also let them know where you are going so they do not put a hold on your card. You may be charged a fee for each transaction.

Most of the bigger restaurants and shops accept credit cards. If you have American Express, Visa, Master Card and Diners Club, you're probably equipped for any establishment that takes cards. If you only have one, have VISA.

Travelers Cheques



Travel checks are accepted at hotels, banks and some stores. You will need to show your passport to cash your checks at the bank.

Tipping

Tipping is, of course, entirely voluntary and how much you give depends on how you feel about the service you have received. Typically, you should designate 10-15% of the land cost of the trip for tips. For example, a \$4000

trip would mean \$400 in tips.

Other smaller tips might be for airport luggage carriers, hotel staff and drivers.

Travel Practicalities

Trip Insurance

Bio Bio Expeditions recommends that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, contact Travelex Insurance Services at 800-228-9792 and reference location number 05-8655. Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. Travel Insurance is underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276. 55Y.

Immunizations

Although there are no immunizations required to travel to France, it is usually recommended that all travelers should be up-to-date on routine vaccines before every trip. These vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot. Planning to travel abroad is an ideal time to ensure that all routine vaccination cover is complete.

In general, we advise that you consult your physician regarding recommended immunizations and other health precautions. Bio Bio Expeditions does not take responsibility for which medications or inoculations you and your physician deem necessary for your safe participation on the hike in France.

For further information, call the CDC's International Traveler's Hotline:

Phone: 1-888-232-4636

Online: www.cdc.gov

Water & Food

Food and water standards in France are similar to those in the United States. Most travelers do not need to take special food or water precautions beyond what they normally do at home.

Prescriptions

If you currently take prescription medications, be sure to have a plentiful supply and also the doctor's written prescription in case you need a refill. It is best to carry medications in your carry-on bag in case of lost luggage. Also, if you wear prescription glasses or contacts, we advise that you bring along a spare set.

Voltage

Electrical current in France is 220 volts, 50 AC, the plugs are different from the USA two prong.

Thievery and Safety

France is generally a very safe place to travel with a relatively low crime rate. However, you should take the same care with your personal safety and your possessions as you would in any other country, or at home. Always keep your wits about you and be aware of your surroundings. When with other people, watch out for each other. Large crowds are prime locations for pick-pocketing to occur. Keep your money in a money belt or hidden pouch around your neck and under your shirt. When purchasing items, do not pull out lots of money. We advise that you leave all valuable jewelry, including watches, at home. Thieves often work in pairs or groups - one tries to distract you (e.g.: by squirting food or paint on your clothing) and in the ensuing confusion, another one makes off with your belongings).

Take copies of your important documents (like your passport and credit cards), and keep them separate from the originals. You should also keep a record of the description and serial number of valuable items (like digital cameras).

Jet Lag Precautions

When you cross several time zones to reach your destination, you often lose many hours of regular sleep. On arrival, your body then must suddenly adjust to new sleeping and eating patterns. The result is jet lag. Its symptoms are fatigue – often compounded by insomnia and restlessness – irritability, and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag’ but you can minimize it. Here’s how:

- Start your trip well rested. Try to begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave.
- Switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane. Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Try to sleep on overnight flights
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before and during your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and or fruit juice while flying. You should buy a large bottle of water at a kiosk right before boarding – once you have cleared inside security and are “inside”.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap, unless you didn’t sleep at all on the plane.
- Don’t push yourself to see a lot on your first day
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Weather

The Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, located in the south east of France is renowned for its hot temperatures and pleasant climate throughout the year and especially for its sunny and dry weather during the summer months.

Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur is lined along its southern side by the Mediterranean Sea. Thus, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur soaks in the warmth of this Mediterranean climate.

The region benefits from 2835.5 sunshine hours a year and is the hottest place of France. However, there is a noticeable climate difference between the littoral and inland. Indeed, because of its numerous reliefs the temperature can be relatively low on the mountains while being really gentle on the coast during the winter time.

During summer months, the weather and climate in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur area of France can be quite cool and fresh on the mountains while being really hot on the coast as well as dry and muggy inland. A particularity of this region remains the wind called the Mistral which can sometimes be particularly violent.

Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur is a quite dry region due to its Mediterranean climate and if the rainfalls are rare along the coast, they are pretty heavy though. This climate encourages the growth of numerous plants like mimosa.

Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Climate

Climate Type	Mediterranean.
Average Temperature	Summer: 22.7°C, Winter 6.4°C, September 25.2°C
Average sunshine	2,835.5 hours per year
Average rainfall	Summer: 23.6mm, Winter: 53.8mm.

Recommended Reading

- *A Year in Provence*, Peter Mayle's
- *Two Towns in Provence*, M. F. K. Fisher
- *Vincent van Gogh -- Letters from Provence*, Martin Bailey
- *A Pig in Provence: Good Food and Simple Pleasures in the South of France*, Georgeanne Brennan
- *We've Always Had Paris . . . and Provence*, Patricia Wells

Travel Resources

Travel

<http://travel.michelin.com/web/destination/France-Provence> - Michelin Travel Guide

<http://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/france/provence/> - Rough Guide

http://wikitravel.org/en/Provence-Alpes-C%C3%B4te_d'Azur – short, sweet and to the point overview; WikiTravel

Money

www.xe.net/ucc/ - This is a universal currency converter site.

www.visa.com/pd/atm/main/html - A list of ATM machines world wide

Clothing / Gear

www.patagonia.com - Expedition clothing.

www.rei.com - Expedition gear and clothing.

www.mountainhardwear.com - Tents, sleeping bags, expeditions wear.

www.exofficio.com - Lightweight travel clothes - Great for Safaris!

www.eaglecreek.com - Excellent travel gear and packing tips from the experts

www.cameraworld.com - The best prices on camera and video gear!

www.nrsweb.com - Anything you could ever want for the river.

www.llbean.com - Gear and clothing for any adventure.

Health

www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm - All the latest recommendations on vaccination and health concerns worldwide.

Passport and Embassy Information

www.travel.state.gov/passport_services.html - How to get a passport fast! - List of Embassies worldwide.

Weather

www.weather.com - Find out the weather anywhere in the world!

Travel Warnings

http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html - State department warnings for overseas travelers.

Map of Provence & France

