



TRIP NOTES 2023

SELF-GUIDED WALKING HOLIDAY · 8 DAYS

Ardèche Adventure

8 days · from £985

“Our most challenging walk: high wooded hills, views to the Alps and exceptional food along the way.”

Cassie



A walk through the quiet north of the Ardèche: high wooded hills with views to the Alps, villages more than 1,000 m (about 3,300 ft) up, and exceptional food along the way.

THE ESSENTIALS

Key facts

DURATION	8 days (7 nights)
WALKING EACH DAY	13–23.2 km (8–14 miles) An optional walk on day 6 (14.6 km (9.1 miles))
ACTIVITY LEVEL	Challenging, with some strenuous stretches
DAILY CLIMB	Up to 1,070 m (about 3,500 ft) Measured from our GPX tracks
START AND FINISH	Circular from Lamastre
OWNED AND RUN BY	Cassie at Dordogne Experience
HOLIDAY STYLE	Self-guided, inn to inn, with your luggage moved for you
SEASON AND START DAYS	April–October Start any day except Tuesday
HOTELS	Hôtel des Négociants (Lamastre, 3 nights), Hôtel des Voyageurs (Lalouvesc), Auberge des Myrtilles (St Bonnet-le-Froid) and Le Bois Sauvage (St Agrève, 2 nights)
MEALS	7 breakfasts, 7 dinners Bed & breakfast option on 3 nights
LOCATION	Ardèche, France

WHERE YOU'LL GO

The route



Drawn from our own GPX tracks (optional walks dashed). We email you these tracks as GPX files for your phone. Town positions © OpenStreetMap contributors.



Which part of the Ardèche?

Not the famous gorges in the south. This walk is in the green, hilly north of the département, close to where it meets the Loire and Haute-Loire.

PER PERSON

2027 prices

	8 DAYS 7 nights
Per person, sharing a double or twin	£985
Single room supplement	+£265
Travelling solo (on top of the per-person price)	+£450

Prices are per person, sharing a double/twin room. The 8-day holiday (highlighted) is the one described here.

In US dollars	about US\$1,320
In Canadian dollars	about C\$1,840
In Australian dollars	about A\$1,880
In New Zealand dollars	about NZ\$2,320
In euros	about €1,180

Approximate amounts at the 23 October 2026 exchange rate. Prices are set in pounds, and you can pay in any currency you prefer.

ALONG THE WAY

What to expect



Hills around Lamastre in autumn
Photo: Gaillard Jérôme / CC BY-SA 3.0



Lalouvesc and its basilica
Photo: Zimpalaa / CC BY-SA 3.0



Saint-Agrève below Mont Chiniac
Photo: PRA / CC BY 2.5



YOUR HOLIDAY

At a glance

DAY	ROUTE	DISTANCE	CLIMB	OVERNIGHT
1	Arrival in Lamastre	–	–	Lamastre · Hôtel des Négociants
2	Le Crestet to Lamastre	13.0 km (8.1 miles)	↑ 380 m (about 1,250 ft) ↓ 460 m (about 1,500 ft)	Lamastre · Hôtel des Négociants
3	Lamastre to Lalouvesc	22.3 km (14 miles)	↑ 1,070 m (about 3,500 ft) ↓ 360 m (about 1,200 ft)	Lalouvesc · Hôtel des Voyageurs
4	Lalouvesc to St Bonnet-le-Froid	19.7 km (12 miles)	↑ 650 m (about 2,150 ft) ↓ 600 m (about 1,950 ft)	St Bonnet-le-Froid · Auberge des Myrtilles
5	St Bonnet-le-Froid to St Agrève	22.3 km (14 miles)	↑ 260 m (about 850 ft) ↓ 320 m (about 1,050 ft)	St Agrève · Le Bois Sauvage
6	Rest day in St Agrève	Optional 14.6 km (9.1 miles)	↑ 190 m (about 600 ft) ↓ 660 m (about 2,150 ft)	St Agrève · Le Bois Sauvage
7	St Agrève to Lamastre	23.2 km (14 miles)	↑ 210 m (about 700 ft) ↓ 870 m (about 2,850 ft)	Lamastre · Hôtel des Négociants
8	Departure	–	–	–

Climbs shown where we've measured the route.



IN DETAIL

Day by day

DAY

1

Arrival in Lamastre

Dinner included

Arrive in Lamastre, a small town with ivy-clad château ruins and a bustling traditional market.

Tonight: Lamastre · Hôtel des Négociants



The ruined Château de Retourtour above Lamastre
Photo: Charcutaille / CC BY-SA 3.0

DAY

2

Le Crestet to Lamastre

13.0 km (8.1 miles)

↑ 380 m (about 1,250 ft) ↓ 460 m (about 1,500 ft)

Dinner included

A taxi picks you up at 9am and takes you to Le Crestet to start the walk; it's included. Le Crestet is a small village surrounded by woodland, looking out over the valley of the river Doux. An ancient shaded path climbs past terraced orchards to far-reaching views, before you drop back down into Lamastre.

Tonight: Lamastre · Hôtel des Négociants



Le Crestet, seen from the hill of the Trois Croix
Photo: FredSeiller / CC BY-SA 4.0

ELEVATION

795 m

370 m

0 km

13.0 km

DAY

3

Lamastre to Lalouvesc

22.3 km (14 miles)

↑ 1,070 m (about 3,500 ft) ↓ 360 m (about 1,200 ft)

Dinner included

The big climb of the week. It's mostly uphill, but there are superb viewpoints all the way and, on a clear day, the Alps on the horizon. After a final steep pull you follow a ridge into Lalouvesc, 1,080 m (about 3,550 ft) up.

Tonight: Lalouvesc · Hôtel des Voyageurs



Lalouvesc's public garden, with the basilica behind
Photo: François Bassaget / CC BY-SA 4.0

ELEVATION

1,173 m

374 m

0 km

22.3 km

DAY

4

Lalouvesc to St Bonnet-le-Froid

19.7 km (12 miles)

↑ 650 m (about 2,150 ft) ↓ 600 m (about 1,950 ft)

Dinner included (bed & breakfast option)

A day through woodland. Buy a picnic in Lalouvesc before you set off, because lunch today is at one of the most beautiful picnic spots in France. St Bonnet-le-Froid has a highly regarded Michelin-recommended restaurant, so you can choose bed and breakfast tonight, or upgrade your hotel too. Your own hotel, the Auberge des Myrtilles, is a restored farmhouse just outside the village.

Tonight: St Bonnet-le-Froid · Auberge des Myrtilles



St Bonnet-le-Froid, looking towards the village centre
Photo: AirScott / CC BY-SA 4.0

ELEVATION

1,133 m

834 m

0 km

19.7 km

DAY

5

St Bonnet-le-Froid to St Agrève

22.3 km (14 miles)

↑ 260 m (about 850 ft) ↓ 320 m (about 1,050 ft)

Dinner included

Rolling countryside again, but more open, with the chance of a swim in the beautiful Lac de Devesset. You arrive in St Agrève, 1,050 m (about 3,450 ft) up, with exceptional views on a clear day.



Tonight: St Agrève · Le Bois Sauvage

ELEVATION

1,191 m

995 m

0 km

22.3 km

DAY

6

Rest day in St Agrève

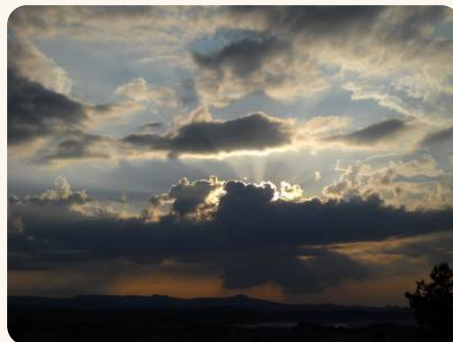
Optional 14.6 km (9.1 miles)

↑ 190 m (about 600 ft) ↓ 660 m (about 2,150 ft)

Dinner included (bed & breakfast option)

A free day. If you'd like to stretch your legs, there's an optional walk from St Agrève down to St Martin-de-Valamas. A taxi meets you at St Martin-de-Valamas at 4pm and takes you back; it's included. Tonight you can choose bed and breakfast and eat at the Michelin-recommended restaurant at the Hôtel Faurie.

Tonight: St Agrève · Le Bois Sauvage



The view from Mont Chiniac, above St Agrève
Photo: Urbain2 / CC BY-SA 3.0

ELEVATION

1,057 m

512 m

0 km

14.6 km

DAY

7

St Agrève to Lamastre

23.2 km (14 miles)

↑ 210 m (about 700 ft) ↓ 870 m (about 2,850 ft)

Dinner included (bed & breakfast option)

A downhill day from St Agrève (1,050 m, about 3,450 ft) to Lamastre (366 m, about 1,200 ft), much of it on an ancient path where the old paving still shows in places. There's another chance tonight to switch to bed and breakfast and try the Michelin-recommended Restaurant Le Midi.

Tonight: Lamastre · Hôtel des Négociants



The ivy-clad walls of the Château de Retourtour, Lamastre
Photo: Charcutaille / CC BY-SA 3.0

ELEVATION

1,077 m

372 m

0 km

23.2 km



DAY
8

Departure

Your holiday ends after breakfast.

WALK ALL DAY, EAT VERY WELL

Food along the way



Caillette ardéchoise

Photo: Marianne Casamance / CC BY-SA 3.0



Picodon goat's cheese

Photo: Thesupermat / CC BY-SA 4.0



Ardéchois, a chestnut cream cake

Photo: stu_spivack / CC BY-SA 2.0

NO SURPRISES

What's included

Included

- ✓ 7 nights' accommodation, sharing a double or twin room
- ✓ 7 breakfasts and 7 dinners
- ✓ The taxi from Lamastre to Le Crestet on day 2
- ✓ The taxi back from St Martin-de-Valamas to St Agrève after the optional day 6 walk
- ✓ Your luggage moved on each time you change hotel
- ✓ Our detailed route notes
- ✓ GPX files by email, with simple instructions for using them on your phone
- ✓ Support by phone and WhatsApp throughout your holiday

Not included

- Travel to and from Lamastre
- Lunches and drinks
- Entrance fees (châteaux, caves, gardens and museums)
- Travel insurance (we strongly recommend it)
- Personal expenses



BEFORE YOU GO

Practical information



Looking north from the road out of Lalouvesc
Photo: Remi Mathis / CC BY-SA 3.0



The hamlet of Monteil, near Le Crestet
Photo: FredSeiller / CC BY-SA 3.0



A bridge over the Eyrieux near St Agrève
Photo: Havang(nl) / CC0

Getting there and away

By air. Lyon Saint-Exupéry is the nearest major airport, with TGV trains from the airport station to Valence in about 40 minutes.

From further afield. From Australia, the USA and further afield, most long-haul flights land at Paris Charles de Gaulle, where TGV trains leave from the airport station for Valence; or connect to Lyon Saint-Exupéry.

By train. Take the TGV to Valence, then it's under an hour by taxi to Lamastre.

By car. Calais to Lamastre is around 900 km, roughly 9 hours' driving.

Going home. The walk ends in Lamastre after breakfast on day 8, under an hour by taxi from Valence. Your hotel can book a taxi for you.

Day 6. If you do the optional walk to St Martin-de-Valamas, a taxi meets you there at 4pm and takes you back to St Agrève; it's included.

Day 2. A taxi picks you up at 9am and takes you to Le Crestet to start the walk; it's included.

Route finding

Our detailed route notes come in digital form, so you always know where the next turn is.

We also email you GPX files, with simple instructions for using them on your phone, so you can see exactly where you are on the map.

It varies by route. Some sections are waymarked, and your route notes tell you where. The notes and GPS guide you the rest of the way.

Bring a smartphone with mobile data and a power bank. If you take a wrong turn, the GPX track shows you the way back, and we're a call or WhatsApp away.

Our family walked this route when we created it, and it was re-walked and its GPS tracks updated in recent years, so our route notes are tried and tested.



Meals and dietary needs

Included: 7 breakfasts and 7 dinners. The day-by-day shows which nights include dinner. On 3 nights you can swap dinner for bed and breakfast.

Shops and cafés are few and far between on the high plateau, so buy picnic food where the day-by-day suggests, such as in Lalouvesc on day 4.

Some hotels can make you a packed lunch; details are in your route notes.

Breakfast is usually French-style: fresh bread and croissants with butter and jam, and coffee, tea or hot chocolate. Some hotels add yoghurt, fruit or cheese.

Lunch is up to you, and it's one of the pleasures of the day: pick up a picnic from a village bakery or market, or stop at a café along the way. On some days there are few shops on the route, so it's worth buying lunch before you set off.

Tell us about any dietary needs when you book and we'll let every hotel know. Vegetarian meals are no problem. Other needs, such as gluten-free food or a serious allergy, are harder for small country kitchens, so please talk to Cassie before you book, and always carry any medication you need.

Drinks aren't included: anything you enjoy with dinner is simply settled with the hotel before you leave.

Your luggage

Whenever you change hotel, your bags are taken on for you, so they're waiting when you arrive. Please have them ready at reception by 9am.

During the day you only need a daypack: water, snacks, a waterproof, sun cream and a hat, plus anything you'll want before evening, such as medication.

Many of our hotels are in old buildings and some have no lift, so expect the odd flight of stairs with your bags.

One bag per person, up to 20 kg.

Hotels and check-in

Rooms are usually ready from mid-afternoon, and check-out is usually by 10 or 11am. If you arrive early, the hotel will normally look after your bags while you explore.

Most rooms have a shower rather than a bath, as is usual in French country hotels.

The day-by-day above lists your hotels night by night, and we'll send you full details with your booking confirmation.



Weather and when to go

Our season runs from April to October.

The route climbs to over 1,000 m, so it's noticeably cooler than the river valleys, and evenings can be fresh even in summer: pack a warm layer.

May and June are lovely, with long days and meadows full of wildflowers; September brings clear, crisp days.

Weather changes quickly in the hills, so carry a waterproof every day, and in July and August be ready for afternoon thunderstorms.

Language

French is the language of the route. Most hotels speak some English, but in small villages, shops and cafés you'll often find they don't.

A few words go a long way and are always appreciated: *bonjour* as you walk into a shop, *merci*, and *l'addition*, *s'il vous plaît* when you'd like the bill.

FROM KEV AND CASSIE

Welcome

Thank you for reading. We plan every holiday ourselves, from the routes to the hotels, and we'd love to help you plan yours. Send us your dates and any questions you have, and I'll be in touch within 24 hours.

Cassie

Owned and run by Cassie, with Keith and Val on hand with advice.

Cassie plans and looks after this holiday herself, from your first email to the day you head home.

Ready when you are

Tell us when you'd like to travel and we'll check availability and send you a quote, with the full details of your holiday.

Enquire: www.dordogneexperience.com/book-holiday

Call or WhatsApp Cassie: +44 7476 205 325

Email: hello@dordogneexperience.com

This holiday: www.dordogneexperience.com/ardeche



Scan to enquire about this holiday

Booking and cancelling: A 25% deposit secures your holiday. The balance is due 8 weeks before you travel (book within 8 weeks and the full price is due when you book). Cancelling, in writing: more than 56 days before departure, 25% of the holiday price (your deposit); 56 to 29 days, 50%; 28 to 15 days, 70%; 14 days or less, 100%. Prices are set in pounds, and you can pay in any currency you prefer. Book early for May, June and September. Our hotels are small and often family-run, and they fill first in those months, so the earlier you book, the more choice of dates you'll have. [Read the full Terms](http://www.dordogneexperience.com/terms-of-service): www.dordogneexperience.com/terms-of-service.

Dordogne Experience has been organising walking and cycling holidays in the region for over 40 years.