

A Week in Provence - Rail Travel from London

Trip style: Guided Walking Holidays

Destination: 📍 France

Trip code: MCN07-LRL09

Trip Walking Grade: ,il 2 & 3

Carbon Footprint: 🌳 189kg CO2



Holiday Overview

Spend time in sweet-scented Provence with our rail-only trip to the south of France. Hop across the English Channel via Eurostar from London St Pancras before switching to France's premier high-speed rail service for a scenic journey to the sunny corner of the country that's been mused about by many an artistic great. Relax in a comfortable seat and watch the French countryside fly by as you think about the highlights ahead; incredible hiking terrain, chocolate-box towns and villages, and wonderful local markets stocked with the very best bread, olives, cheese, meats, and wine.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Discovering unspoilt Provence, famed for its food and wine
- Discovering the thermal baths in Gréoux-les-Bains
- Visiting charming hilltop villages including Moustiers-Sainte-Marie
- Exploring delightful Quinson and the Verdon Gorge
- Reliving the golden age of rail travel
- Trekking through the majestic Luberon Valley

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return rail travel from London to Aix-en-Provence and transfers
- Fully escorted travel with an HF Holidays Tour Manager
- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- 7 nights' accommodation in Gréoux-les-Bains
- 7 breakfasts and 7 dinners
- All sightseeing and entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- All in-destination transport

WALKING GRADES AND OPTIONS

This is a level 2 and level 3 graded Activity, Easier walks: 4 to 8 miles (6½ to 13km) on good paths, which are sometimes rocky underfoot. Up to 1,400 feet (420m) of ascent in a day. Harder walks: 6 to 10 miles (9½ to 16km) on good paths, with some steeper, rougher routes. Up to 2,500 feet (750m) of ascent in a day.

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrival Day

Meet your HF Holidays Tour Manager at London St. Pancras and board the Eurostar to Lille. At Lille, change to the TGV train for your onward journey to Aix-En-Provence. A short coach transfer of about an hour will take you to your hotel.

Day 2 Introducing Gréoux: between river and plateau

Today both walks start and finish at the hotel.

Day 3 Forcalquier and the Abbey of Salagon at Mane

Today both groups take the coach to the bustling hill town of Forcalquier and its thriving atmospheric weekly market.

Day 4 Céreste and the Luberon

Today both groups will travel by coach to the village of Céreste for walks in the majestic Luberon valley.

Day 5 Free Day

Each week there is a free day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently or visit local places of interest. Some options for your free day may include:

Gréoux-les-Bains: Explore the town of Gréoux-les-Bains and learn about the therapeutic qualities of its natural spring - discovered by the Romans. Walk up to the Castle of the Templars before stopping for lunch at one of the town's many restaurants.

Manosque or Aix-en-Provence: There are bus connections to Manosque and Aix en Provence. Aix-en-Provence the bohemian, chic university town with museums and sights painted by Cezanne.

Riez: Take a bus to Riez and discover this wonderfully preserved Provençal village with its traditional Wednesday market, old buildings, restaurants and Roman remains.

Hotel facilities: Enjoy the facilities of the Hotel Villa Borghese; swim in its heated pool, enjoy a relaxing lunch on the terrace or play a game of table tennis or boules.

Day 6 The ridges above Moustiers Saint Marie

Our walks today take different routes to finish in the medieval streets of Moustiers St Marie.

Day 7 Quinson and the Gorge of the Verdon

A pleasant drive brings both groups to the lower Verdon Gorge. Both groups will have the opportunity to walk in the gorge and see the remains of the old Verdon canal, built to channel water to the city of Aix en Provence. The paths in the gorge are narrow in places but have handrails; there are also occasional metal staircases with handrails.

Day 8 Departure Day

Depart for your relaxing rail journey back to London St. Pancras via Lille and the Eurostar

Daily Walk Options



Easier Walks

Good paths but walks are a bit longer. Some walks, particularly in mountain areas, may have sections over rough or steeper terrain.



Medium Walks

Walks follow well-defined paths, though often in hilly or upland areas, or along rugged coastal footpaths. These may be rough or steep in sections and will require reasonable fitness.

Accommodation

Villa Borghese 4-star – Provence

The 4-star Villa Borghese has a fine tradition of service and is a member of The Originals, Human Hotels & Resorts. The owners of Villa Borghese will be very happy to welcome you to their hotel which is in a lovely, quiet and comfortable setting surrounded by gardens and woodland. Gréoux-les-Bains is close to the Verdon Gorges, the Luberon and the lavender fields in Provence. The hotel has an outdoor pool, tennis courts, fitness centre and spa.

Food & drink

Holidays at Gréoux-les-Bains are half-board with a 3-course served dinner.

The hotel prides itself on serving locally sourced produce from within 20km of the town.

Rooms

Villa Borghese has 65 en-suite bedrooms, most of which have a balcony or terrace.

Facilities in the bedrooms include:

- Telephone
- TV
- Hairdryer
- Safe deposit box
- Air conditioning
- Shaving point
- Mini-bar (extra charge)
- Tea and coffee making facilities

The hotel is surrounded by a small wood and offers pleasant views from the bedrooms.

About your stay

There is a small outdoor heated (from around mid April to mid October, weather dependant) swimming pool next to the sun terrace.

Villa Borghese has a tennis court, table tennis, and a spa offering a range of treatments (extra charge).

Relax at the cosy bar with an open fireplace.

The hotel offers its guests free Wi-Fi.

Travel Details

Address

Hotel Villa Borghese
Avenue des Thermes
04800 Gréoux-les-Bains
Provence

Tel: [0033 492 780 091](tel:0033492780091)

Useful Holiday Information

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags
- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

Trip Information

We are committed to running our Guided Walking holidays in a safe manner and your co-operation with this is much appreciated. No outdoor activity can be 100% risk free; however, if you take sensible precautions and adhere to your leaders' instructions, your holiday will be both safe and enjoyable. On the first evening of your holiday (dependent on arrival time, the leaders will give a short talk about safety on the walks – we would ask everyone to attend.

Walking as a group: Our leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole and will show more caution over potential risks (such as bad or exceptionally hot weather than an individual or couple might make on a private outing. Walks may be modified or cancelled following the leaders' assessment of the day-to-day situation. Your leaders will refuse to accept any guest whose clothing, equipment, behaviour or walking ability is considered unsuitable, and where it could affect the safety and enjoyment of other guests on the proposed walk. It is your responsibility to follow the leader's guidelines, for the benefit and safety of the group as a whole. If you leave the group, then your leader will no longer have responsibility for you. For safety reasons, we stipulate a minimum party size of two guests in addition to the leader.

First aid: In line with current practice, each leader carries a group first aid kit but is not able to supply any 'medication', including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream.

Hydration: In warm weather it is very important to keep hydrated. You will need to carry water with you on walks, more during hot weather or on more demanding walks. One good way of hydrating is to use a hydration pack which allows drinking without constant stopping. This can then be filled up from water sources as required.

Even with an GHIC card, medicines and outpatient treatment normally have to be paid for at the time and the costs reclaimed afterwards – details are available at dh.gov.uk/travellers. Therefore insurance is extremely important, as is access to emergency money, preferably a credit card.

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6

months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.

We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.

British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

Tripnote validity

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

Document produced: 23 July 2026

