Andorra: Jewel of the Pyrenees



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Andorra	4 & 8	496kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Tucked away between France and Spain, the tiny European principality of Andorra is situated among the southern peaks of the Pyrenees Mountains. With an enchanting mix of lush valleys, secluded lakes, and glittering rivers, this small-but-mighty nation offers outstanding walking opportunities. Staying in the pretty village of Soldeu, we have the perfect base from which to discover a wealth of stunning backdrops, trails, and unforgettable views in all directions.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- The mountain landscapes of Soldeu
- Marvelling at Andorra's flora and fauna
- Sorteny Valley Nature Park a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve
- Admiring the lakes of the Pessons Valley
- Discovering the Vall d'Incles
- Spending your free day in the capital, Andorra La Vella

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers

- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in Soldeu
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Transfer from Toulouse Airport to Soldeu in Andorra. Settle in at your hotel.

Day 2 **Soldeu and Vall d'Incles**

Northeast of Soldeu, the Incles valley hosts a wide variety of flora and fauna but has also managed to retain its wild character. One of the largest valleys in Andorra, the Incles is as remote as it is beautiful with landscapes that include forests, lakes, streams and mountain chalets.

Option 1 - Pont de la Baladosa to Travenc Bridge

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Ascent: 950 feet (290m)

Descent: 950 feet (290m)

Walking from the hotel, we'll walk the Incles valley there and back with a scenic loop from Pont de la Baladosa to Travenc Bridge at the end of the valley. En-route we'll see the typical Andorran chalets. The descent follows the River Riu d'Incles back to the hotel.

Option 2 - Incles Valley to Siscaro plateau

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 1,750 feet (530m)

Descent: 1,750 feet (530m)

Walking from the hotel, we'll follow a circular walk about the town, through forest and meadows. We'll then walk the Incles valley following a scenic balcony all the way up to the Siscaro plateau which provides views of the Siscaro valley, surrounded by high peaks such as the Tossal d'Incles (2,568m). The descent follows the River Riu d'Incles back to the hotel.

Day 3 **Vall de Sorteny**

Declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in October 2020, the Sorteny Valley Nature Park has a huge diversity of flora, with more than 700 phanerogam species and more than 50 species endemic to the Pyrenees.

Option 1 - Sorteny Valley

Distance: 4.5 miles (7km)

Ascent: 950 feet (290m)

Descent: 950 feet (290m)

We'll walk the wild and remote Sorteny Valley following the Riu de Rialb river, and passing the Borda de Sorteny hut.

Option 2 - Sorteny Valley and Estanyo Lake

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 1,850 feet (570m)

Descent : 1,850 feet (570m)

Also following the Riu de Rialb river and passing the Borda de Sorteny hut, this option extends things by taking us all the way up to Estanyo Lake (2,350m), that sits below the second highest peak in Andorra.

Day 4 **Vall del Madriu– Engolasters Lake**

The Madriu-Perafita-Claror valley was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2004. Its dramatic landscapes of craggy cliffs and glaciers offset by high open pastures and steep wooded valleys covers 10% of the principality of Andorra. Engolasters is perhaps the most well-known of Andorra's lakes and the remains of its original dam turbine can still be seen today.

Option 1 - Engolasters Lake

Distance: 5 ½ miles (9km)

Ascent: 980 feet (300m)

Descent : 490 feet (150m)

A very informative walk where we'll see the dam of Engolasters lake and find out how it was built. The Tamaro Caldes viewpoint offers spectacular views that are well worth the walk.

Option 2 - Vall Madriu to Engolasters Lake

Distance: 7 ½ miles (12km)

Ascent: 2,200 feet (670m)

Descent : 920 feet (280m)

We'll walk across two valleys from Vall Madriu to Engolaster lake, passing by the Refugi de Fontverd hut.

Day 5 Free Day

Enjoy a free day where no walks are offered. You may wish to relax and enjoy the hotel's spa or take the regular local bus service to the capital, Andorra La Vella. Shoppers can take advantage of the microstate's advantageous tax rules, enjoy the famous Caldea Spa, or visit the Bicycle Museum. The Sanctuary of Meritxell combines art, religion and nature and can be reached by local bus.

Day 6 Estany Primer de Pessons

Today we'll journey southeast of Soldeu to Grau Roig. Both walks will follow the Pessons valley famous for its beautiful lakes.

Option 1 - The lakes of the Pessons valley

Distance: 4 miles (6 km)

Ascent: 950 feet (290m)

Descent: 950 feet (290m)

This is a circular walk from Grau Roig which passes through a remote and untamed valley. We'll pass numerous wonderful lakes like Estany Primer and Estany Forcat. Please note, the terrain can a little rocky at times so we will take our time.

Option 2 - The lakes of the Pessons valley and views of Encamp

Distance: 5 ½ miles (9km)

Ascent: 1,300 feet (400m)

Descent: 1,300 feet (400m)

Starting from Grau Roig, this is a harder version of the Option 1 walk, passing all the lakes of the valley. We'll be rewarded with views of the valley sweeping down to Encamp.

Day 7 Vall de Riu

We'll take a short transfer this morning and walk back to the hotel in the afternoon. Our final day walks take place on easier terrain, with tracks that are on compacted ground and offer spectacular views over the valley. Today provides an opportunity for those who wish to cross the famous Tibetan Bridge (payable locally). Though it's just a metre wide, it's one of the longest bridges in the world at 603 metres, and comes in at 158 metres high.

Option 1 - Vall del Riu

Distance: 4 ½ miles (7km)

Ascent: 720 feet (220m)

Descent: 720 feet (220m)

An impressive balcony walk from Canillo to the Tibetan Bridge and back, which takes us above the Vall del Riu river. This walk is followed by the visit of the lovely village of Canillo. Crossing the the Tibetan Bridge is payable locally.

Option 2 - Vall del Riu and Ransol

Distance: 5 ½ miles (9km)

Ascent: 1,380 feet (420m)

Descent: 1,870 feet (570m)

A harder version of the option walk, this balcony walk leads us from Canillo to Ransol, above the Vall del Riu river. We'll pass the Vall del Riu hut before the chance to cross the Tibetan Bridge (payable locally).

Day 8 Departure Day

Coach transfer from hotel to Toulouse Airport.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.



Challenging walking grade 8

Challenging walks for fit, experienced walkers. Expect rugged or mountainous terrain, or some longer distances than typical for this grade. Typically, 12-13 miles (19-21km) with around 2,300ft (700m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Piolets, Soldeu, Andorra (2026 departures)

In the heart of Soldeu, Hotel Piolets offers the perfect blend of alpine charm and modern comfort. The cosy bedrooms are equipped with TV, minibar, hairdryer and safe. In the evening guests can enjoy dinner in the buffet-style restaurant or relax in the bar. Facilities include an indoor swimming pool, jacuzzi, sauna and gym and there is free Wi-Fi throughout the hotel

Please note that the hotel does not have a full-sized swimming pool. Instead, guests can access the spa facilities, which include a small indoor pool, jacuzzi, sauna and gym, for an additional fee.

Hotel Himalaia, Soldeu, Andorra (2027 departures)

With Himalaya-inspired decor enhancing its inviting setting, the Hotel Himalaia Soldeu provides a warm and welcoming place to stay in Andorra. The hotel has 106 well-appointed rooms complete with free Wi-Fi, satellite TV, hairdryer, as well as a minibar and safe. Guests can look forward to dining in the buffet-style restaurant, relaxing at the bar, or making use of the lounge area and pool table. The hotel also has a spa area with two jacuzzis, a Turkish bath and a sauna, as well as a gym.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

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.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

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

Andorra does not have its own airport and is normally accessed via France, which are part of the Schengen Area.

For UK passport holders, your passport must:

- Have been issued within the last 10 years on the date you enter the Schengen Area
- Be valid for at least 3 months after your planned departure from the Schengen Area

When arriving in France your passport will normally be stamped on entry and exit to the Schengen Area. There are usually no routine passport checks at the Andorra border.

Length of Stay

UK passport holders can visit countries in the Schengen Area for up to 90 days within any 180-day period without a visa.

As travel to Andorra is via France and passport controls are limited, time spent in Andorra may count towards your Schengen 90-day allowance.

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

Passport Stamping

When you cross the French–Andorran border, French border officers may stamp your passport on both entry into Andorra and exit back into France.

While the stamp isn't strictly mandatory, it is strongly recommended, especially for British travellers, because:

Without the border stamps, the days you spend in Andorra may be counted towards your 90 day Schengen travel allowance.

With the correct stamps, only your first and last day of travel are counted, rather than the full duration of your stay.

What to Expect During Your Transfer

To help ensure your time in Andorra is recorded correctly:

Your transfer vehicle will stop at the French–Andorran border in both directions so you have the opportunity to get your passport stamped.

Border officials have advised that the process is usually quick, but it may add around 30 minutes to your transfer time.

his small step helps protect your Schengen allowance and keeps your future EU travel running smoothly.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

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)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- 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)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The local currency is the Euro (€)

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.

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