

HIKING JOURNEY

A Taste of Europe

GERMANY & FRANCE – A WALKING HOLIDAY IN THE BLACK FOREST, ALSACE & CHAMPAGNE

14 DAYS



WALKABOUT
GOURMET ADVENTURES

Journey Overview

The Black Forest has always been a region which conjures up images of deep dark forests with winding romantic paths, picturesque valleys and cosy timber farmhouses. Discover a fairytale landscape as we walk our way through some of southern Germany's most beautiful countryside. Its stunning beauty which includes pristine mountain streams, alpine meadows and hillsides ablaze with wildflowers, allow you to step back in time and imagine what ancient Germany might have once been like.

The Alsace region, nestled between the Rhine River and the Vosges Mountains, is one of France's most unique areas. It is blessed with a wealth of beautiful scenery, cultural sights and is famous the world over for its fine white wine and delicious cuisine. The storybook villages with their Tudor-style houses are an absolute delight. Our walks take us along the famous wine route and into the glorious deciduous forests of the Vosges. We learn about the area's Celtic heritage and visit some of Europe's finest old castles and monasteries.

Champagne is a world-famous region, located in north-eastern France. The champenois vineyards are planted only with pinot noir, pinot meunier and chardonnay grapes. These magnificent vineyards stretch as far as the eye can see over rolling hillsides, dotted with picturesque villages. Behind these billions of bubbles is a long history and it wasn't until the late 17th century that the tart wines of Champagne became the sparkling wines that we all know so well today. Our walks take us through this lovely undulating countryside - past vineyards, gorgeous oak forests and beside swift flowing streams.

Journey Schedule

DAY 1

Luzern (Switzerland) - Waldshut (Germany) - Menzenschwand

DAY 2

Menzenschwand - Feldberg - Menzenschwand

DAY 3

Menzenschwand - St Blasien - Menzenschwand

DAY 4

Menzenschwand - Herzogenhorn - Spiess Horn - Menzenschwand

DAY 5

Free Day

DAY 6

Menzenschwand - Freiburg - Strasbourg - Obernai

DAY 7

Obernai - St. Odile - St Nabor - Bernardsviller

DAY 8

Barr - St Odile - Landsberg - Obernai

DAY 9

Obernai - Chatenois - Haute Koenigsbourg

DAY 10

Free Day

DAY 11

Obernai - Vosges Mountains - Vittel - Courban

DAY 12

Courban - Essoyes - Courban

DAY 13

Chatillon Sur Seine - Mussy Sur Seine - Les Riceys - Courban

DAY 14

Courban - Dijon - Beaune - Lyon

Journey Itinerary



DAY 1

Luzern (Switzerland) - Waldshut (Germany) -
Menzenschwand

This morning we meet at 10.00 a.m. at:

Boutique Hotel KARL, St. Karliquai 12, 6004 Luzern, Switzerland

Phone +41 41 410 24 74, Fax +41 41 410 84 14

info@hotel-karl.ch

Our route takes us out of Luzern in the direction of Zurich, Switzerland's financial capital. From here its only a short drive to the German border and the beautiful town of

Waldshut located on the Rhein River in the southern Black Forest. It is a very historic town dating back to the 1400's with lots of medieval buildings. We allow time for an early lunch and a stroll around this little architectural gem.

In the afternoon we make our way deep into the Black Forest stopping in St Blasien. This historic town is famous for its large Dome Cathedral, the 3rd largest in Europe. From here it's only a 15 minute drive to our hotel in beautiful Menzenschwand, at the head of the Alb Valley.

After settling into our accommodation, we should have time for a relaxing walk around the village before we meet in the cosy "stube" for our welcome drink.

HOTEL HIRSCHEN MENZENSCHWAND



DAY 2

Menzenschwand - Feldberg - Menzenschwand

Our trail today takes us out of Menzenschwand across a lush valley to the southern slopes of the Feldberg. We gradually wind our way up this slope through a dense fir forest until we arrive at some lovely alpine meadows. From here it is not far to the summit of the Feldberg (1,493 metres) where we are afforded magnificent views in all directions. After allowing time for a restful lunch on top of the Feldberg we make our way back down into a forest of tall dark evergreens which give the area its 'black look'. They rise up from a forest floor so free of undergrowth that it appears to have been swept. Our trail takes us back into the Alb Valley, past some lovely waterfalls and into our village of Menzenschwand.

 **5 HOURS**

 **HOTEL HIRSCHEN MENZENSCHWAND**



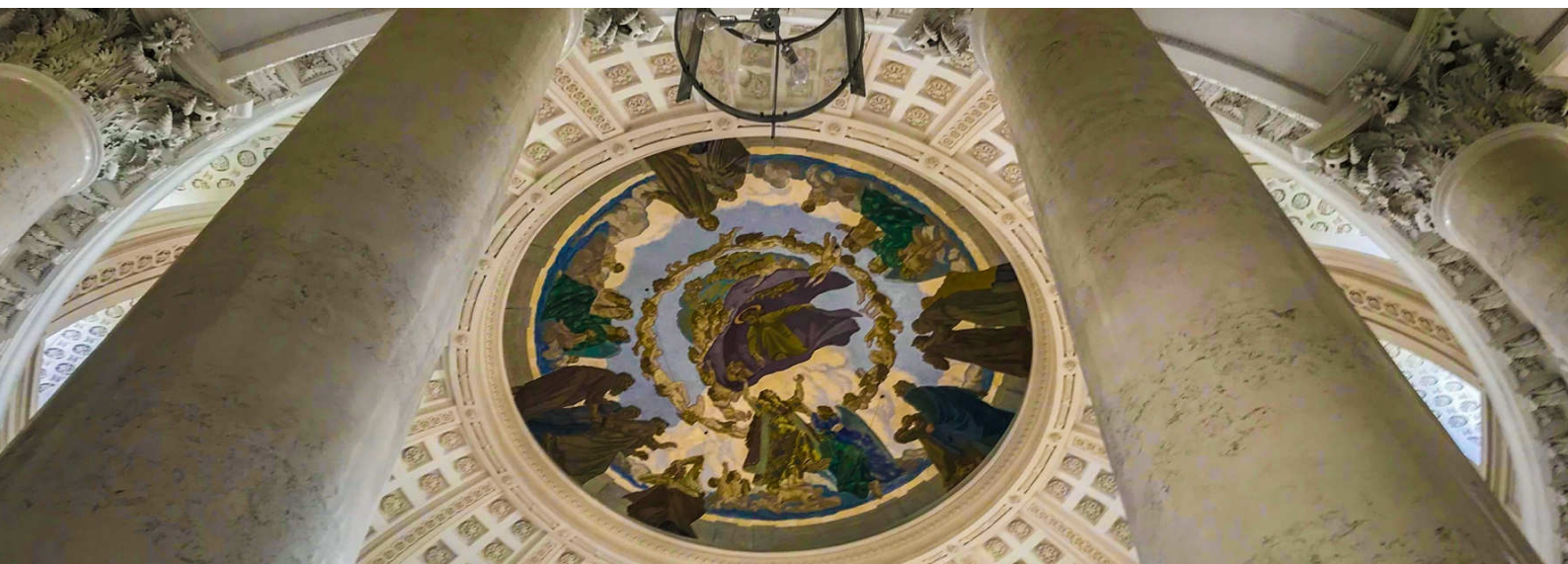
DAY 3

Menzenschwand - St Blasien – Menzenschwand

After another hearty German breakfast, we wander through the village passing the traditional Black Forest farmhouses with their steep pitched roofs. In this region, old traditions still live on and Sundays and festive occasions you may see the inhabitants in their colourful local dress. As we leave the village, we join the walking trail to St. Blasien via the Rundbuchenweg towards Steppberg. Along the way we experience, first-hand, the charming evergreens of the Black Forest. At Neuhausetloch we join up with the Muchenander weg which we follow all the way to St Blasien. Here you will have time to visit the third largest dome cathedral in Europe and the other attractions of this famous 'Kneipp' Health Resort. After lunch we leave the town and follow the beautiful Alb River upstream until we reach the Glashof sawmill. For a short distance our trail takes us away from the river until we rejoin it again at the Glashof Bridge. Joining the Holzmatten weg we continue through some delightful forest and on the outskirts of Menzenschwand we traverse some beautiful meadows before arriving at the "Vorderdorf" - the lower village of Menzenschwand. From here it is not far to our hotel.

 **5 HOURS**

 **HOTEL HIRSCHEN MENZENSCHWAND**



DAY 4

Menzenschwand - Herzhogenhorn - Spiess Horn - Menzenschwand

Today we depart from our hotel and follow a winding path through a beautiful valley which gradually ascends to a glorious alpine meadow. Our trail continues to wind its way up through a thick evergreen forest until we come out onto the meadows just below the summit of Herzhogenhorn. From here we are afforded beautiful views over the southern Black Forest and weather conditions permitting we may even get a glimpse of the towering peaks of the Swiss Alps. After a well-earned break to admire the views we make our way back down into the fir trees until we reach the cosy mountain hut - "Krunkelbach Hutte". Here we take a well-earned break in this traditional mountain inn. After lunch our trail descends across the meadows until we reach Krunkelbach Weg which we follow back down into the Alb Valley and our village of Menzenschwand. Tonight, relax in the charming dining room of our cosy hotel as we enjoy another delicious "Black Forest" dinner.

 **5 HOURS**

 **HOTEL HIRSCHEN MENZENSCHWAND**



DAY 5

Free Day

Today you have the opportunity to absorb the charm of the Black Forest. For those wanting to do some more walking there are lots of nearby trails to explore. You may prefer to catch the local bus back down to St Blasien or alternatively why not indulge yourself in the newly opened Radon Revival Spa Centre.

There are a wide range of massages and other therapies available or you may wish to take advantage of the relaxing heated indoor and outdoor pools or take the sauna. Dinner is included this evening at our hotel.

HOTEL HIRSCHEN MENZENSCHWAND



DAY 6

Menzenschwand - Freiburg - Strasbourg – Obernai

Today we say goodbye to our lovely village of Menzenschwand and leave the Black Forest and make our way to Freiburg. It is a famous University city and is renowned for its reputation as one of the most “environmentally friendly” cities in Europe. From here we join the German autobahn to take us to Strasbourg, the capital of Alsace. It has a population of 400,000 inhabitants. It is at the crossroads of Europe, seat of many European institutions such as the European parliament and famous for its cuisine and has a 500-year-old cathedral which is made of local red sandstone. We allow time for you to wander through the quaint narrow streets of the old town – an area not to be missed is Petite France which is not far from the Cathedral and the canal. After lunch we meet again at our vehicle and have a short drive to the beautiful town of Obernai.

Located at the foot of Mount St.Odile, it is a small picturesque town. It conjures up images of the age of the Renaissance, which has generously given Obernai its immense cultural wealth. Obernai is one of the many villages and small towns along the 120 km long wine route. The road winds along the eastern side of the Les Vosges Mountains through deep valleys. The little walled towns tucked away at the foot of the mountains are delightfully impressive, with their bell towers, ramparts, welcoming inns with signs, churches and roadside crucifixes. Mysterious castles overlook the plains and paths run right through the vineyards.

Alsace has always been a welcoming and hospitable area. In the late afternoon we arrive at our lovely hotel which is located in the meticulously restored medieval old town. This former manor house and wine cellar of the distinguished Baron de Gail family, is now one of the premier hotels of the region.

This evening allow the chef to spoil us with a delicious meal in the exquisitely furnished restaurant.

 **À LA COUR D'ALSACE**

DAY 7

Obernai - St. Odile - St Nabor - Bernardsviller

After a sumptuous breakfast buffet, we set off towards Mont St. Odile. Our trail takes us through the tiny wine producing village of Ottrot, famous for its production of pinot noir. After a morning tea break, we begin our climb through the hills towards Mont St. Odile. From the top we have panoramic views overlooking the Alsace wine region and where it is possible to view up to 100 villages. On a clear day you can see the cathedral in Strasbourg and the Black Forest in Germany. Mont St. Odile is the site of a convent founded in the 7th century by Odile, the patron of Alsace. Odile was born blind at Obernai but miraculously received sight at her baptism. Abandoned after a fire in 1546, the convent was re-occupied in the 17th century by monks, who remained here until the Revolution. The church of 1687 and neighbouring chapels are devoted to Odile's cult. Today the convent operates as a hotel and is still operated by the nuns and priests from the Bishopric of Strasbourg. After lunch we start our descent towards St Nabor. Our trail takes us past the famous St Odile spring before leaving the glorious deciduous forest and back into the vineyards once again. Our final wine village is Bernardsviller before we arrive in Obernai.

 **5-6 HOURS**

 **À LA COUR D'ALSACE**



DAY 8

Barr - St Odile - Landsberg – Obernai

Today we drive to the village of Barr which is located below the slopes of Mont Saint Odile. Our track winds its way up through the vineyards from where we have panoramic views back down to Barr and some of the neighbouring villages. There are seven Alsace grape varieties which ripen on the sunny hillsides – sylvaner, riesling, gewurztraminer, muscat, tokay pinot gris, pinot blanc and pinot noir. Often during our walk through the vineyards, we will find informative signboards which describe the work of the grower, the skill of making Alsace wines and the differences between each grape type. We leave the vineyards and enter a thick oak forest which runs all the way up to the Mont St Odile plateau. Our track crosses a section of the interesting “Mur Païen”, a prehistoric or Celtic work composed of huge blocks of sandstone. They are piled up to form a wall over 10 kms long and in some places 3 metres high. At Kiosque Jadelot we are afforded tremendous views deep into the Vosges Mountains. In the afternoon our walk takes us down the St Ulrich Valley back into the beautiful forest known as Foret de Barr. Our trail then winds its way back through the vineyards on the outskirts of Barr. This beautiful medieval village is famous for its typically Alsatian cafés one of the most famous is “Patisserie J Oster”. The building looks like it is straight out of a fairy tale – 100% kitsch but all the more reason to visit – don’t miss the delicious cakes and pastries!

 **5 HOURS**

 **À LA COUR D’ALSACE**



DAY 9

Obernai - Chatenois - Haute Koenigsbourg

Today we drive to Chatenois from where we begin our walk through the forest up to Haute Koenigsbourg (755 metres). It dominates the plain below and is one of the most spectacular fortresses in Alsace.

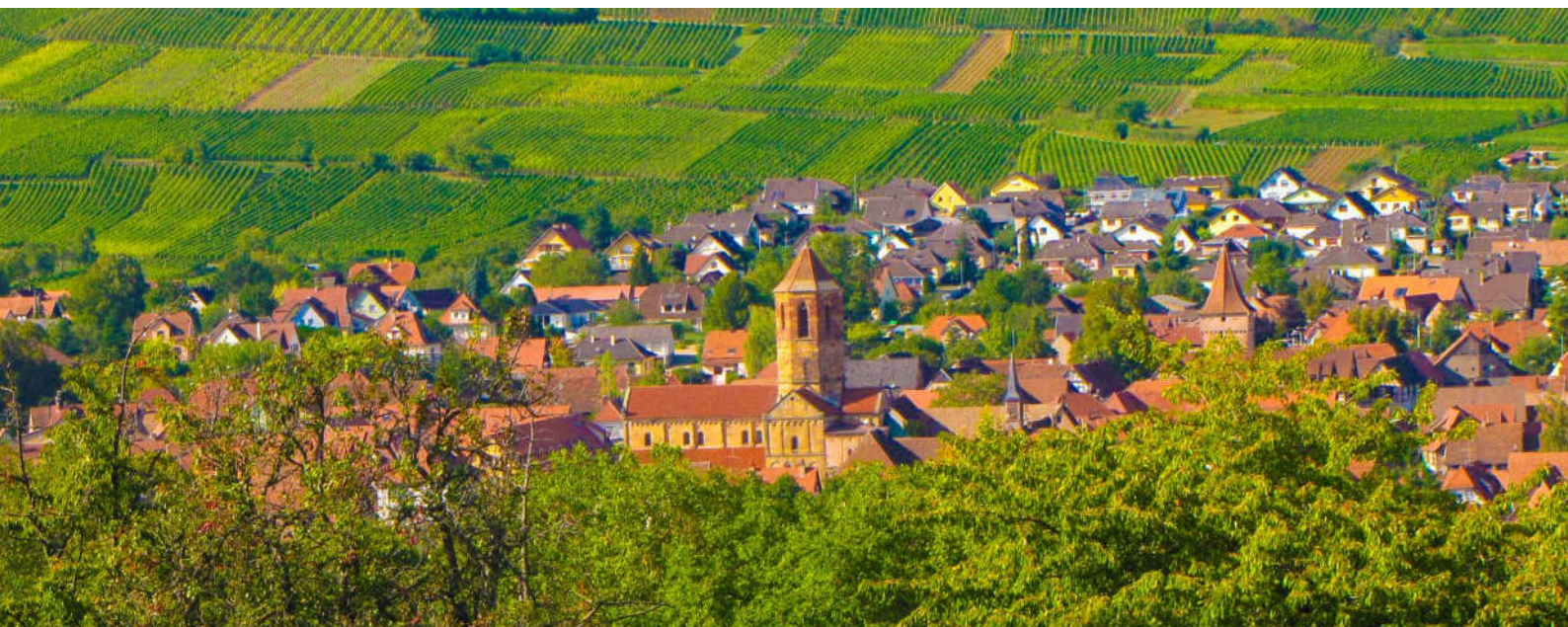
The main part was constructed by Count Oswald de Thierstein (1480) but the keep dates from to the 12th century. In 1899 the ruins were presented by Selestat to Kaiser Wilhelm II who had them restored with German thoroughness at public expense. The interior contains collections of furniture, etc. and a Marquette of the castle before its restoration. It served as the background to Jean Renoir's film "La Grande Illusion" (1937).

After our lunch break we make our way back down through a beautiful beech forest to Chatenois where we re-join our minibuses for our return journey.

Our route this afternoon is along the famous wine route of Alsace passing through some of the quaintest wine villages in France.

 **5 HOURS**

 **À LA COUR D'ALSACE**



DAY 10

Free Day

Today you have the opportunity to relax in our lovely hotel and absorb the atmosphere of this charming Alsace town.

For those wanting to do something a little more energetic, there are a number of walks which can be taken through the vineyards or the nearby hills.

Tonight's dinner is at your leisure – choose one of the many restaurants in the town or eat a la carte in our excellent hotel restaurant.

À LA COUR D'ALSACE



DAY 11

Obernai - Vosges Mountains - Vittel – Courban

Today we leave the beautiful wine villages of Alsace and make our way over the Vosges Mountains towards the famous spa town of Vittel where we have our lunch. Vittel is famous the world over for its mineral water but it has also been a well-known spa town since the 1850's. In fact, much earlier than this the Romans took the curative waters at Vittel in ancient times. With the advent of tourism in the late 1800's the town flourished with thermal baths, a casino, hippodrome, villas for wealthy families, and a grand train station to receive its wealthy and fashionable guests. Today this grandeur is somewhat faded but the town still has a charm.

In the afternoon our route takes us across the plains out of the Dept of Vosges and into Haute-Marne which is known for its rich agriculture especially cropping. In the late afternoon we arrive in the tiny village of Courban. Nestled in this village is the enchanting Chateau de Courban. This noble, classical mansion enclosed by ancient stone walls, has been rebuilt in 1839 on the foundations of a 17th century castle which has left a beautiful tower housing a dovecote. More recently the Vandendriessche family have lovingly restored the chateau and have established a charming boutique hotel. Husband Pierre has used his extensive talents as an interior decorator to individually decorate each room as well as creating an atmosphere of informality in the spacious lounges and the cosy bar. A barn, a small stable, an old shelter, magical ponds and grand terraces have all been retained and give rhythm to the French-style gardens. As one of the entries in the guest book describes: "Here is a cultural and romantic stop, a place immersed in silence and charm where you will be able to savour food of a high quality."

In 2015, chef Takashi Kinochita took over the reigns as head chef of their restaurant- 3 years later they were awarded a Michelin*. Today the restaurant is under the capable hands of head chef Nicholas Thomas and his pastry chef Sae Hasegaw. Together they continue the tradition of the Michelin - starred gastronomic restaurant at Chateau Courban. After settling into our hotel, we meet on the terrace for our first pre-dinner drink in this enchanting establishment.

CHÂTEAU DE COURBAN

DAY 12

Courban - Essoyes – Courban

Today we have our first drive through the delightful Champagne countryside. We begin our walk in the quiet market town of Essoyes. This Champagne village became famous in the late 1800s when August Renoir decided to move there with his wife, Aline. Renoir's wife was born and bred in the village and she introduced her husband to her hometown in 1885 and he instantly fell in love with it. The light, the landscape and last but not least, the lifestyle, delighted the painter. In 1895 the couple decided to purchase a home and their third child Claude was born there. Our particular walk today is called the Gabrielle Renard Circuit and it passes through parts of the countryside where Renoir painted his model Gabrielle. Our trail takes us out of the town up to a wooded hill and then descends through some champagne producing vineyards to the Ource River Valley. We take our lunch break in the tiny village of Verpillieres beside the river. This was also the location for one of Renoir's paintings – "Gabrielle au jardin". From here our trail moves away from the valley into a wooded hillside where we join the GR long distance walking path which takes us back to the centre of Essoyes and onto his former studio which now exhibits some of his paintings and a history of his life. After a refreshing drink in the local café we join our vehicle for the short drive back to Courban.

 **4 HOURS**

 **CHÂTEAU DE COURBAN**



DAY 13

Chatillon Sur Seine - Mussy Sur Seine - Les Riceys – Courban

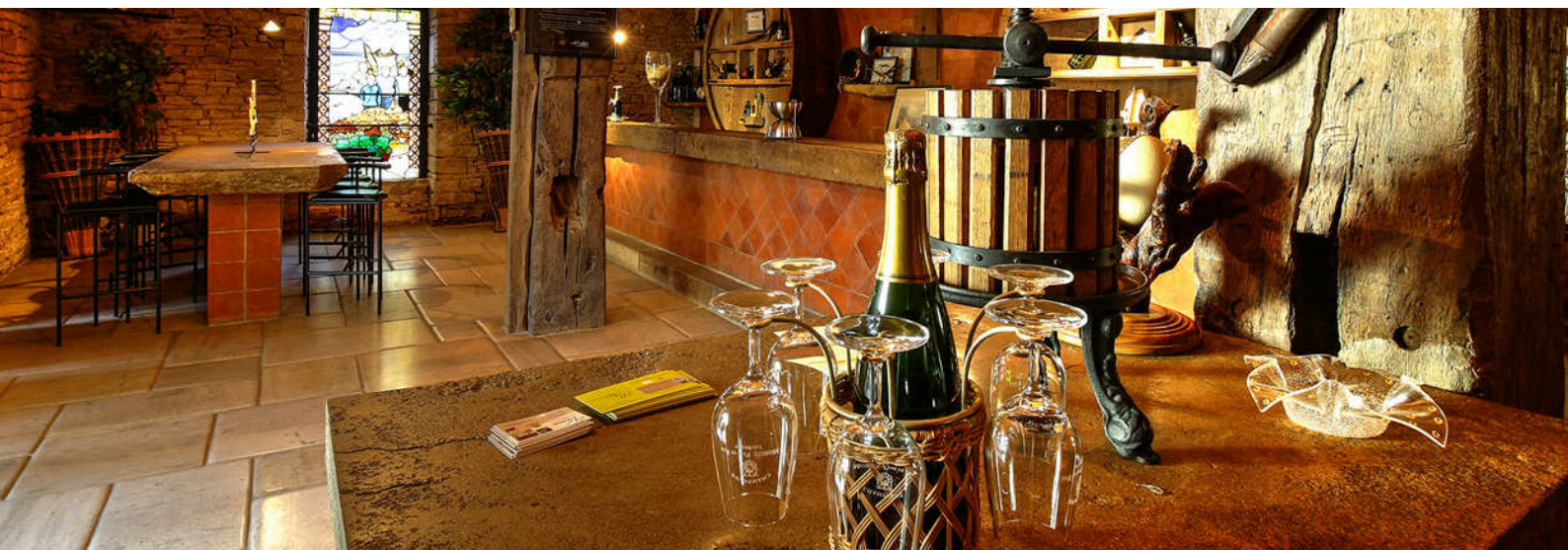
This morning we depart for Chatillon sur Seine where we stop to purchase our picnic lunch and take a stroll around this lovely market town. Our route then follows the Seine River to Mussy sur Seine where we leave the river and travel through the extensive vineyard area of Les Riceys. We begin our walk in this delightful Champagne producing village.

This ancient village dates back to the 11th century and there are a number of classified buildings still standing. Our route takes us up through a lovely forest and into the vineyards. This region produces some of the best champagne in France as well as 2 other AOC wines - Coteaux Champenois and Rose des Riceys. Our trail arrives at a wooded plateau which we traverse and then descend back to the outskirts of Les Riceys.

One of the oldest established champagne producers in the area is Morize Pere et Fils. This small family vineyard has been producing champagne for many generations using both pinot noir and chardonnay grapes. We finish our day with a champagne tasting in their 13th century cellar. After re-joining our vehicle, we travel back to Courban for our final celebratory dinner in the Chateau.

 **4 HOURS**

 **CHÂTEAU DE COURBAN**



DAY 14

Courban - Dijon - Beaune - Lyon

This morning after a leisurely breakfast we say goodbye to our beautiful chateau and travel towards Dijon and our lunch stop at the delightful town of Beaune. This walled town at the centre of the Burgundy winemaking region is one of France's most famous wine towns. Surrounded by the Côte d'Or vineyards, the cobbled town is renowned for an annual wine auction held at the Hôtel-Dieu (Hospices de Beaune). Recognized by its colourful, geometric-patterned tile roof, this 15th-century former hospital is now the Hôtel-Dieu Museum. Beaune is in the heart of the world-famous Burgundy wine region – home of the pinot noir and chardonnay. You will have time to have a good look around this adorable market town and grab some lunch before we regroup and head south to our drop off at Lyon at approximately 5.00pm at the

Grand Hôtel Château Perrache
12 cours de Verdun Rambaud
Esplanade de la gare
69002 LYON - France
Tel. (+33)4/72771500
H1292@accor.com



Journey Accommodation

Hotel Hirschen Menzenschwand

NIGHTS 1 - 5



À La Cour d'Alsace

NIGHTS 6 - 10



Chateau de Courban and Spa Nuxe

NIGHT 11 - 13



Journey Notes

PRICE INCLUDES

- Experienced guide.
- Pick up at 10.00 am at Boutique Hotel KARL in Luzern on Day 1 and drop off at approximately 5.00 pm at the Grand Hôtel Château Perrache in Lyon on Day 14.
- Price includes transport between Luzern on Day 1 and Lyon on Day 14.
- Twin share accommodation from Day 1 to Day 13, including 13 breakfasts and 12 dinners.

NOT INCLUDED IN TRIP COSTS

Transport before and after "The Walk", lunch, 1 evening meal on the free day in Alsace, evening drinks, in-between meal snacks, laundry, medical expenses, items of a personal nature and entry fees.

WHAT TO BRING

Daypack and comfortable walking boots, waterproof raincoat and rain over-pants, warm hat and gloves, sun hat, sunglasses, sun-cream and bathers (pools in some hotels!). A pair of walking sticks makes the walking easier and helps with the balance on rough terrain.

As we are restricted with the amount of luggage we can carry in our vehicles please ensure that your CASES DO NOT EXCEED 20 KG's per guest.

PRE-WALK PREPARATION

We suggest that prior to your walking holiday you prepare yourself to obtain a level of fitness that will allow you to enjoy your walking holiday.

This, of course, is dependent upon your existing fitness level. Remember, the fitter you are, the more you will enjoy the holiday!

- Start with some short walks which include stairs or hills and increase the length of walks over a couple of months.

- We suggest you carry a backpack with water, camera, jacket, snacks, etc. to assist you with your preparation and allow you to get used to the extra weight on your back.
- We also ask that your boots are comfortable and well-worn in.
- Perhaps enjoy some walks through our local national parks and over uneven surfaces to gain confidence with your boots or new walking shoes.

PLEASE NOTE

All accommodation on tour includes private facilities (toilet and shower/bath).

Single rooms can usually be arranged for a supplement. Please ask for details. We will endeavour to match people together if they would like to share a twin room with another guest to avoid paying the single room supplement. However, as this is not always possible, 'single' clients will have to pay the supplement.

All walks during the 14-day tour are optional. Guests can choose to have more free days than the two already included in the itinerary.

The walking pace on the walks is leisurely. Guests do not have to be experienced, although a good level of fitness is necessary.



Get in touch and book your journey today.



0461 277 612



info@walkaboutgourmet.com

Follow the journey.



Quality Practices

Committed to exceeding your expectations with great customer service and the highest standards of quality practices, Walkabout Gourmet Adventures complies with the National Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP).



Quality
Tourism
Framework



T-QUAL
AUSTRALIAN TOURISM
QUALITY ASSURED

Parks
VICTORIA

www.walkaboutgourmet.com