

HIKING JOURNEY

Gems of the Riviera

WALKING TOUR IN LIGURIA, CINQUE TERRE & THE CÔTE D'AZUR

14 DAYS



WALKABOUT

GOURMET ADVENTURES

Journey Overview

When you think about Italy, most people instinctively picture renowned places such as Rome, the Colosseum or the leaning tower of Pisa. While these are all beautiful Italian staples, there are other places in Italy that are just as wonderful and scrumptious as these. Liguria's beautiful rugged coastline and azure blue seas inspired poets and literary greats - Byron, Shelley and Hemingway. In fact, The Gulf of Poets is named after Byron's swimming adventure across Portovenere Bay. Later, the small towns of the Italian Riviera were to become the playground of movie stars Orson Welles and Sophia Loren. Strictly speaking, the Italian Riviera runs from France's Côte d'Azur to Tuscany. The city of Genoa, the capital of Italy's Liguria region, is roughly in the middle.

Our journey begins in Florence and follows the scenes from some famous films along the Italian Riviera and the Cote d'Azur. "A Room with a View" was partly filmed in the hills surrounding Florence where our tour begins. From here we travel to the Ligurian Coast. It has a striking landscape of cliffs, beaches, a fantastic cuisine, uncompromised seaside towns and remote inland villages which stretch all the way from Cinque Terre to the French border.

The hills and mountains in the backdrop make it a spectacular setting. Sestri Levante, formerly a fishing village, is both beautiful and full of life with stunning sea views on the two bays. The town makes a perfect base for discovering the wonders of Liguria and is not too far away from the well-known sites like the Cinque Terre and Portofino. Our walks will take us to the most picturesque and quaint towns and villages along the Ligurian coast. On our journey through Liguria's villages and unspoiled nature, we discover some places where famous Italian and foreign movies have been filmed - The Trip to Italy; Enchanted April - filmed in Portofino and The Bourne Identity with Matt Damon, where one scene was filmed at the Imperia harbour.

The stretch of coast belonging to Imperia Province is also known as the Riviera dei Fiori, the Flower Riviera, characterised by bays, ports and coves. At a short distance from the coast, behind the hills, are valleys and pristine woods with many great walking tracks.

Time to cross the border into France and our adventure continues along the Cote d'Azur, known for its dramatic mountains, sparkling blue mediterranean waters and a craggy coastline.

On our coastal walking track, we discover the famed St-Jean Cap Ferrat peninsular with luxurious villas, including the spectacular Villa Ephrussi. We explore the hilltop villages of Vence and St Agnès and stroll the streets of beautiful Menton. ... “And God Created Woman”, with Brigitte Bardot, “Bonjour Tristesse” and “La Piscine”, starring Alain Delon, Romy Schneider, Maurice Ronet and Jane Birkin and “Two for the Road” with Albert Finney and Audrey Hepburn were all films set along the Côte d’Azur.

Our final destination is St Tropez, one of the world’s most famous “villages”. Once a totally unknown fishing community, St Tropez started its days of fame when it attracted prestigious painters in the first part of the 20th century. It later gained international attention when stars of the movie industry (Brigitte Bardot, to name only the “sparkiest”) made St Tropez their trendy place of vacation and even sometimes their home.

On our walk we explore a fairly steep stretch of the coastline before moving more inland across some very pretty vineyards. In the evening we have time to wander around the port and explore the narrow alleys of the historic port.



Journey Schedule

DAY 1

Florence - Lucca - Sestri Levante

DAY 2

Sestri Levante - Santa Margherita - Portofino

DAY 3

Sestri Levante - San Fruttiuso - Camogli

DAY 4

Free Day - Cinque Terre

DAY 5

Sestri Levante - Punta Manara

DAY 6

Sestri Levante - Alassio - Laigueglia - Borgomaro

DAY 7

Borgomaro - Lucinasco - Chiesa Della Maddalena - Monte Acquarone

DAY 8

Borgomaro - Caravonica - Madonna Delle Vigne

DAY 9

Borgomaro - Eze - Villefranche Sur Mer

DAY 10

Villefranche Sur Mer - Cap Ferrat - Villefranche Sur Mer

DAY 11

Free Day In Villefranche Sur Mer Or Menton - Sainte Agnes

DAY 12

Villefranche Sur Mer - Vence - St Paul De Vence - St Tropez

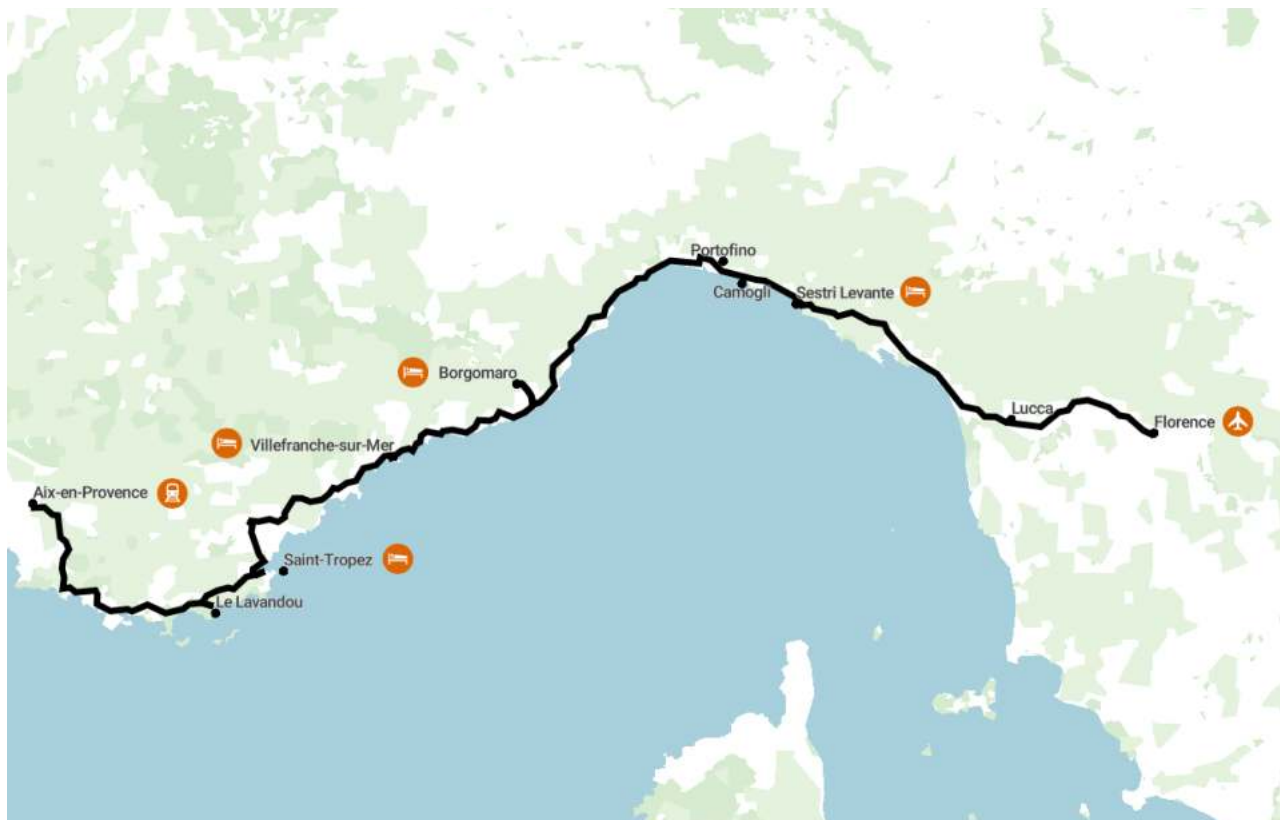
DAY 13

St Tropez - Sentier Littoral

DAY 14

St Tropez - Le Lavandou - Aix-En-Provence

Journey Itinerary



DAY 1

Florence - Lucca - Sestri Levante

We meet at 10.00 a.m at

Pensione Bencista
Via B. da Maiano, 4
50014 Fiesole (Florence)
Email: info@bencista.com

We certainly can recommend staying at this charming hotel in the hills in Fiesole – just 25 minutes by bus from the city centre of Florence. Please book direct.

After our pick-up, we join the autostrada A11 and drive to Lucca where we spend some time exploring this beautiful Tuscan town with its medieval buildings, magnificent churches and tiny piazzas - reminders of the city's long history. In the afternoon we continue to Sestri Levante, a little gem on the Ligurian coast. Once upon a time a quiet fishing village, the original part of Sestri Levante is actually on a peninsula, with the beautiful bay of Baia del Silenzio on one side and Baia delle Favole on the other. These two bays were named in honor of the Danish author HC Andersen who lived in Sestri for a short time. After our check-in you have time to relax in the garden or at the pool. Tonight, we walk up to the Castello in Sestri Levante for an aperitivo, followed by dinner. From the terrace we have the most amazing panorama of the two gulfs - the Bay of Favole and the Bay of Silence. Our restaurant for tonight "Ai Castelli" is part of one of the most beautiful hotels in the world, famous for its medieval-style building. A magic atmosphere envelops the restaurant when the sunset plays hide and seek behind the Promontory of Portofino. The cuisine consists of fresh fish and shellfish caught with the hotel's own vessel every day. The restaurant "Ai Castelli" is a real experience, made even more gastronomically intriguing by the competence of the sommelier.

 **2 HOURS**

 **SESTRI LEVANTE, ITALY**



DAY 2

Sestri Levante - Santa Margherita – Portofino

After breakfast we make our way to the railway station and take the train to Santa Margherita, which is surrounded by hills and the Ligurian Sea. The stunning marina and the long pebble beach with the colourful houses along the shore create an unforgettable panorama. We allow time to explore this elegant seaside town, which claims to have some of the most beautiful views in Italy. There is a scenic harbour, good food and, I do I dare to say, fantastic clothes shopping.

We meet again in the late morning and start our walk near the port from where we follow the red crosses painted on the walls and stones. The track to Nazarego is steep at the beginning but it levels off after the climb. The views towards Rapallo are just stunning and there is hardly anyone on this section of the hike so it is quiet and peaceful. From here we follow the path to the Mulino della Gassetta and may stop here for lunch! We continue to Olmi from where we soon turn off to "rosetta". The bench is a welcome sight before our path continues down a slight slope, advancing on the beautiful path of gravel and stone, shaded by magnificent chestnut trees, oaks and pine trees.

We continue downhill before turning off into a paved pathway that takes us through some pretty upscale farmland and houses. From now on it is all downhill and we can see Portofino's harbour as we approach the town, getting a glimpse of beautiful villas and very well kept gardens.

According to Pliny the Elder, Portofino was founded by the Romans with the name of Portus Delphini because of the great number of dolphins that populated the sea. Today VIPs of any kind and known all over the world populate this tiny town. Many historic, notable people spent their time in Portofino...from Winston Churchill, Liz Taylor, Richard Burton, Alain Delon, George Clooney to Madonna.

Portofino is extremely beautiful because of its small square, the famous "piazzetta", surrounded by little pastel-coloured houses, pointed-arched porticos and elegant boutiques.

We allow time to discover this gorgeous town...the Divo Martino's Church - originally built in the 10th century, the St. George's Church and the Brown Castle, surrounded by a Mediterranean garden. We can also walk up to the lighthouse to enjoy a breathtaking view of the coast.

After a refreshing drink and some people watching in the piazzetta of Portofino, we take a ferry and return to Sestri Levante - or alternatively the bus to Santa Margherita and train back to our hotel.

Dinner tonight is at a renowned restaurant at the Portobello beach.

 **5 HOURS**

 **SESTRI LEVANTE, ITALY**



DAY 3

Sestri Levante – San Fruttuoso – Camogli

After breakfast we walk to the port and take the ferry across the Gulf of Tigullio to the Abbey of San Fruttuoso. The coastline is spectacular and arriving at San Fruttuoso from the sea is a real treat – the perfect start to our day! The hamlet consists of a few restaurants, a 10th century Benedictine monastery of golden stone, a 16th century watchtower that overlooks the small pebble beach and a vibrant turquoise sea. With the dramatic mountain backdrop, it feels secluded and far from the real world. Built by Greek monks in the 10th century, it was rebuilt after one hundred years and renovated over and over until the 16th century.

It is named after the martyr bishop Fruttuoso, killed in Tarragona, in Catalonia, in 259 AD, during the eighth persecution of the Christians, under emperor Valerian. According to tradition, Fruttuoso appeared in the dreams of five monks, telling them where to bury his mortal remains – which rest, to this day, inside the church.

The abbey is part of Portofino's Regional Nature Park and can be reached only by ferry or by foot. The sea here is incredibly clear and pristine so do not forget to take your swimming gear today. We allow some time to explore the Abbey as well as the nearby watchtower to get the feel of the history of the place.

After a long break we start our hike up on a rocky trail along many switchbacks. It takes us through pine forests, chestnut and olive groves with a mix of ups and downs until we reach the Via Crucis and the mysteries of the Rosary illustrated with polychrome tiles. It ends at the parish church of San Rocco, at 221 metres above sea level and we have splendid panoramic views of the Golfo Paradiso. From here we start our final descent to the charming seaside town of Camogli. The trail follows about 800 stairs, which are mercifully only about 6 inches high. The lack of decision-making will allow us to look around and enjoy the flowers, the distant views of the houses and churches all the way down to Camogli.

Scenes from the film "Belle du Seigneur" come into sight. Based on Albert Cohen's best-selling 1968 French novel, Natalia Vodianova made her first leading role. Snaps of her and Jonathan Rhys Meyers riding horses in Camogli, were scenes from their Belle du Seigneur filming.

Camogli is a typical seaside village, known for its harbour and the tall and colorful buildings near the sea. It is also called the "City of the Thousand White Sailing Ships" or "Gem of the Golfo Paradiso". The medieval town centre, with its typical tall houses, uphill alleys, steps and porches, surround the small harbour. Of medieval origin (sec.

XI), but also rebuilt over the centuries, is the Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, which stands on what was the ancient settlement of the island and overlooks the small harbour. Built in the 12th century, it has suffered over the centuries with many renovations and expansions and currently the facade is neoclassical.

In the late afternoon we return to Sestri Levante by train and dinner will be in a small local restaurant.

 **4 HOURS**

 **SESTRI LEVANTE, ITALY**



DAY 4

Free Day - Cinque Terre

Today you have the opportunity to absorb the true atmosphere of Sestri Levante. Explore the historic centre, hidden alleyways, the characteristic architecture and the many artistic treasures. Take a stroll through the centre with many tempting shops and cafes! Our hotel is the perfect place to relax in the garden, take a swim in the pool or laze like a true Italian on the private hotel beach, which is right opposite of our hotel. There is also the opportunity to take the 10.00 a.m. ferry to the Cinque Terre. It is one of the most beautiful parts of the Italian coastline. Discover the five tiny fishing villages, which are made up of cute colorful houses tumbling down the rocky hills right to the ocean. The surrounding hills are full of olive groves and vineyards, offering authentic local Italian produce. Located in the Liguria region of Italy, making up part of the Italian Riviera and just west to the city of La Spezia, the five towns of the Cinque Terre make up a national park and a UNESCO world heritage site. Monterosso al Mare, Vernazza, Corniglia, Riomaggiore and Manarola are connected by a beautiful 12 km hiking trail which offers stunning views over each of the five villages, as well as the Italian Riviera and the ocean and is definitely the best way to explore the region. Tonight, we meet again for aperitivo and talk about the experiences of our day!!

SESTRI LEVANTE, ITALY



DAY 5

Sestri Levante - Punta Manara

Our walk to the promontory of Punta Manara starts right from our hotel. One of today's major challenges is to walk past the many bakeries that produce all kinds of delicacies as well as a very delicious focaccia for our picnic. We follow the "caruggio", the central pedestrian street of Sestri Levante and soon leave the shops behind. Our track starts immediately uphill, and looking back, we have our first view of the Baia delle Favole and get a beautiful glimpse of the Gulf of Tigullio. A little further up and we are immersed in the vegetation and the silence with splendid panoramas over the sea. The views over the Sestri peninsula and the Bay of Silence are spectacular. We continue to follow the signs to Punta Manara and our path is immersed in increasingly Mediterranean vegetation, with maritime pines, holm oaks and corbezzoli trees (delicious red fruits, very tasty in autumn) along the way. The sea below us is particularly clear and has an amazingly blue colour. We reach Punta Manara with its Saracen watchtower from where we can admire a glimpse of the Cinque Terre coast on one side and the Portofino promontory on the other. From here we return to Sestri Levante along a very beautiful path, over fantastic cliffs and vegetation. The evening is free at your own leisure.

 **4 HOURS**

 **SESTRI LEVANTE, ITALY**



DAY 6

Sestri Levante - Alassio - Laigueglia – Borgomaro

Today we leave our charming hotel and return to the autostrada, travelling west in the direction of Imperia. On our way we will return to the coastal road and stop in the lovely town of Laigueglia for lunch and a stroll along the mediterranean before we continue to Imperia and our village of Borgomaro where we stay for the next three nights. The village has a population of about 900 and is built on a hillside, with a mountain-fed stream running right through it. Our hotel is known as an “albergo diffuso” which is a hotel spread amongst various buildings throughout the village, in renovated townhouses, now collectively called Relais Del Maro. Here we are perfectly placed for our walks in the pristine mountain air and hillsides overflowing with wildflowers. Many locals here grow Taggiasca olives and other local specialties to make their own olive oil. Later in the afternoon we drive the short distance to Cà Sottane, an agriturismo with a strong vocation in contact with nature. It’s located in the countryside, among olive trees, semi-wild animals and a sacred pillar, which still retains a holy image on wood. Here we join Brigitte and Laura, originally from Marseille, Provence for our short cooking seminar, followed by dinner. The decor of the cosy restaurant reflects their Provençal origins and taste for travel and antiques.

 **1 HOUR**


 **BORGOMARO, ITALY**



DAY 7

Borgomaro - Lucinasco - Chiesa Della Maddalena - Monte Acquarone

Our walk today starts in the small village of Lucinasco, which was a feudal estate of the Ventimiglia aristocracy in the past. It has about 280 inhabitants and is perhaps the only place in Liguria where olives are still picked by hand and without the use of any instruments. This is why the Liguria Regional Council has chosen this little town with a view over the alps and the sea as the most appropriate area for the promotion of superior quality olive oil and the creation of an olive-growing exhibition area. We walk the few metres to the small lake and the church of Santo Stefano from where our path begins. You can continue your cultural visit by seeing the Romanesque church of the Maddalena, a national monument, and the medieval parish church of Santo Stefano, hidden away in the middle of a splendid park containing waterfalls and a lake. We follow a small road through the woods until we reach the 15th century monumental Church of Maddalena. Built in the Romanesque style, it has a pristine setting in the woods and is declared a national monument. From here our walking trail continues and now follows a GR walking track which takes us through the forest uphill to the church of Monte Acquarone. This old mule track follows the crest line and we have beautiful views over the Impero Valley and all the way to the sea. Once we have arrived at Monte Acquarone we will stop to take in the stunning views before we make our way down to the small road and the church of Monte Acquarone. From here we follow the small road all the way back to the church of Santo Stefano and Lucinasco where we will re-join our buses and return to Borgomaro. Alternatively, and time permitting, it is possible to return to Borgomaro on foot.

 **4 - 6 HOURS**

 **BORGOMARO, ITALY**

DAY 8

Borgomaro - Caravonica - Madonna Delle Vigne

Our walk today starts directly from our hotel from where we turn into the via Convento which we follow all the way to the village of Caravonica. It is a mountain village located at the foot of the hill of San Bartolomeo, at about 350 metres above sea level, near the valley of Arroscia. The village is devoted to agriculture, the cultivation of olive trees and vines. It was a fief of the Counts of Ventimiglia that built a castle in the higher part of the village. Caravonica can be considered a gathering of several villages, linked together by the local parish church of San Michele.

We traverse the village and soon reach the small shrine of the Madonna delle Vigne, built on the ancient Royal Road in Piedmont. It dates from the late 16th century and underwent refurbishments in the 18th century. It has recently been restored and features a small porch outside, which is adorned by 17th century stuccos of the artists Marvaldi and Casella and a fresco depicting the Madonna of Carrega. Beside the church is located a hospice for pilgrims during the 17th century.

Time permitting we can continue on to San Bartolomeo d'Arzeno, a district of Caravonica, located in an even higher position, first belonged to the Knights of Rhodes and then to those of Malta. The church, located outside the town centre and built in the 11th century, is at present the local cemetery. In the meanwhile, a modern church, entitled to San Michele Arcangelo has been built within the town's limits. The village experienced the same events that have characterised the history of other similar Ligurian towns and it was inserted after the Congress of Vienna in the Kingdom of Sardinia and in 1861 in the new kingdom of Italy.

At the end of our walk we re-join our buses and return to Borgomaro. Time to relax or have a refreshing swim in the pool and aperitif on the hotel's terrace. Dinner tonight is at your own leisure.



4 - 6 HOURS



BORGOMARO, ITALY

DAY 9

Borgomaro - Eze - Villefranche Sur Mer

Today we leave the lovely village of Borgomaro and not long before we cross the border into France and the beautiful village of Eze. It is built on a hillside, with a sister town at sea-level called Eze-sur-Mer.

Here also is the location for the Galimard soap-factory and Fragonard perfume factory. This perfume, soap and cosmetic factory is equipped with modern laboratories and workshops where you can discover the secrets of perfume and cosmetics manufacturing on a guided tour. Of course, it ends with their beautiful shop where you can buy high quality products.

Eze village is more than 1,500 years old and has a labyrinth of cobblestone streets. It is well-known for its many art galleries, workshops and small Provençal shops.

There are many places where we could stop for a late lunch but we recommend the Château de la Chèvre d'Or. It is in the heart of Eze village with incredible views and romanticism atmosphere.

The botanical garden in Eze is suspended 430 metres over the Mediterranean sea and offers amazing views of the French Riviera. It features over 2,000 different types of cacti, succulents and rare vegetation surrounding the remains of an ancient chateau, with sculptures and art.

From here it is only a short distance to our hotel in Villefranche. It faces the mediterranean and is ideally located in a marvellous bay.

Our dinner tonight will be in a cosy restaurant close to our hotel.

 **2 1/2 HOURS**

 **VILLEFRANCHE, COTE D'AZUR**

DAY 10

Villefranche Sur Mer - Cap Ferrat - Villefranche Sur Mer

Today we drive the short distance to Cap Ferrat, a stunning peninsula in the Mediterranean sea with lots of picturesque coves and beaches with turquoise water.

Before we set off for our walk, we visit Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, an Italianate villa built for Beatrice de Rothschild. It houses an extensive collection of 18th century impressionist paintings as well as many oriental artifacts. The villa is surrounded by garden themes, which include Spanish, Florentine, Stone Garden, Japanese, Exotic, Rose Garden, Provençal, Sèvres and French. The whole setup is stunning. You get an idea how the French aristocracy lived in the early 19th century. In 1883 Beatrice Rothschild, aged 19, married Maurice Ephrussi, a Russian banker.

After our visit we discover the peninsula on foot. It is studded with grand mansions and villas surrounded by exquisite gardens and pine trees. Our path takes us through Cap Ferrat and soon after becomes very arid with jagged limestone rocks, bleached white from the sun, contrasting against the bright blue of the sea. The footpath gently meanders around the headland, not gaining much altitude other than the occasional staircase leading up or down to the next section. The lighthouse that dominates the tip of the peninsula was originally built by the Sardinians in 1827 but was destroyed during the Second World War and then rebuilt in the 1950's. It's not the most picturesque of lighthouses but has an interesting past. To the left are gorgeous views of rocky coves, sparkling blue waves and the occasional sailboat whereas on the right are some of the Riviera's most sought-after villas. Look up and all you'll see is the odd balcony of a grand Belle Epoque mansion jutting out from the seclusion of the dense pine forest. The second half of the loop is more shaded with lush foliage and pine trees spilling over from either side of the path. The views as we wind around the last few bends are lovely, we can see across to the bright pink bougainvillea of Villefranche-Sur-Mer and into the pretty bay of Plage de Passable. From the beach we climb the staircase up to the main road and either walk back to Villefranche or take the bus from the Passable/Rothschild stop.

 **3 - 4 HOURS**

 **VILLEFRANCHE, COTE D'AZUR**

DAY 11

Free Day in Villefranche Sur Mer Or Menton - Sainte Agnes

Today is a free day but for those who are interested, we would like to take you to Menton, one of the most beautiful towns in France. It does not show the ostentatious wealth of Monaco or Cap Ferrat, nor the hustle and bustle of Nice but has a gentler, slow moving pace, basking in its beautiful setting. It has a mild climate all year round and is famous for its gardens, citrus and palm trees. Here, the sleepiness of the French Riviera remains, with its shuttered villas, terracotta roofs, dreamy beaches, palm trees and lemon gardens. Because of its close proximity to Italy, Menton can sometimes feel more Italian than French, from the culture and buildings to the delicious food. We have time to enjoy the atmosphere and to explore the beauty of this magical coastal town. In the afternoon we drive to Sainte Agnès. This is definitely a lovely little village perched on the flank of a mountain, high above the mediterranean. Sainte-Agnès has narrow stone-paved streets and many arched passages and everything is pretty well restored. Many of the village houses are 15th to 18th century. A feature of Sainte Agnès is the incredible view of the coast, the sea, the mountains and Italy. For even better views we can take the short but steep climb up to the ruins of the 9th century chateau above the town. From the jagged peak we can see the incredible defensive position. According to legend, the castle was built by a Saracen Prince, later restored in 1502 and today it is in ruins. Enough of the ancient walls remain, complete with arrow slits, to give a good feeling of what it was like in medieval times. In the evening we have a final dinner in Villefranche.

 **3 - 4 HOURS**

 **VILLEFRANCHE, COTE D'AZUR**

DAY 12

Villefranche Sur Mer – Vence - St Paul De Vence – St Tropez

This morning we leave Villfranche and drive to Vence. It still has a tight, walled circle of medieval buildings, much as it appeared hundreds of years ago. The town is full of flowers, olives and orange trees are cultivated in the surroundings. Vence is also the town of artists, with painters, sculptors and writers of many nationalities living and working here. Famous painters who worked in Vence include Dufy, Soutine, Matisse, Chagall and Dubuffet. D.H. Lawrence spent his last days in Vence and was buried there. We spend some time visiting the Chapel of Matisse before we drive to St Paul de Vence. This beautiful village harbours countless treasures within its ramparts. We take time to explore the pedestrian streets of Saint-Paul de Vence and immerse ourselves into the village's history, heritage and multiple art galleries. In the afternoon we continue and drive to Saint Tropez, one of the world's most famous "villages". Once a totally unknown fishing community, St Tropez started its days of fame when it attracted prestigious painters in the first part of the 20th century - Paul Signac, Matisse, Bonnard... ever since Brigitte Bardot filmed the 50s classic Et Dieu... créa la Femme (...And God Created Woman) in St. Tropez, this small fishing village became a jet-setting favorite. It is set on the clear blue waters of St Tropez Bay, about 100 kms west of Nice and the town has a population of almost 6,000 people that soars to 60,000 during the summer.

A big shopping event in St. Tropez is the morning market on Place des Lices every Tuesday and Saturday, where we can find many food items from Provence, souvenirs and various other things.

Wine has always been a major contributor to the local economy and remains one even today, when it has been surpassed by tourism. Before checking into our hotel, we stop at Chateau Pampelone to taste some of their delicious wines.

Dinner will be in a local cosy restaurant.

 **2 HOURS**

 **ST TROPEZ, FRANCE**

DAY 13

St Tropez – Sentier Littoral

After breakfast we set off to buy our lunch in St Tropez and then drive the short distance to the start of our walk. We pass by the Bay des Canebiers' private nautical club, onto the Plage des Tamaris and then up to the road that climbs and meanders between homes. We pass under the stone door to the Cap Saint-Pierre and follow the panel of the Sentier Littoral. Our coastal path goes around the Cap de Saint-Tropez and leads us from beaches to creeks, offering beautiful views of the Mediterranean Sea. Within the reserve, our walking track becomes narrower and offers dramatic views, up and down the steep seashore. The short climbs and subsequent descents amidst mediterranean bush or pines are demanding at times, but the beauty of the place is an ample reward. We walk down towards the Cap Rabiou and see a stone-walled villa that mirrors the old fortress walls of St Tropez. At the Calanque de la Rabiou, the rocks above the sea look like milk chocolate spun and folded in fudge.

We continue to the protected plage de la Moutte, which exhibits its beautiful white sand. At the Cap des Salins we can see the granite tombstone of Emile Ollivier (1825-1913), minister under Napoleon III who lived for a while in the chateau La Motte. We end our walk at the white powdered sand and popular Plage des Salins from where we make our way back to St Tropez.

The rest of the afternoon is free for you to explore St Tropez at your leisure. The old town and harbour still have hints of a fishermen's village charm but the Vieux Port is lined with luxury yachts and packed with tourists who come here to admire them. St. Tropez is the rare small town where you can find the latest designer fashion along with quaint local shops. Capri is not the only place to have a clothing item named after it - in St. Tropez you'll find the Tropézienne sandals. The Rondini and K. Jacques families have been making them since the 1920s and where else would be the place to pick up a quality pair if not here!!

Tonight we meet for our final pre-dinner drink to reflect on our many experiences before our last dinner in a fine dining restaurant.



4 HOURS



LE LAVANDOU, COTE D'AZUR

DAY 14

St Tropez - Le Lavandou - Aix-En-Provence

Today we leave our mediterranean hotspot and follow the coast to Lavandou where we stop for a short stroll and coffee. From here we continue to Toulon from where we take the freeway to Aix-en-Provence where our tour ends at approximately 2.00 p.m. at

Hotel AQUABELLA

2 rue des Etuves,

13100 Aix-en-Provence

T: +33 4 42 99 15 00



Journey Accommodation

Grand Hotel Villa Balbi

NIGHT 1 - 5



Relais del Maro

NIGHT 6 - 8



Hotel La Flore

NIGHT 9 - 11



La Bastide du Port

NIGHT 12 - 13



Journey Notes

PRICE INCLUDES

- Pick up at Pensione Bencista in Florence and drop off at Hotel Aquabella or the TGV station in Aix-en-Provence. Price includes transport between Florence on Day 1 and drop off at Hotel Aquabella or the TGV station, Aix-en-Provence on Day 14.
- Twin share accommodation from Day 1 to Day 13. Including 13 breakfasts, 11 dinners, ferries and entry fees.

NOT INCLUDED IN TRIP COSTS

Transport before and after the tour, 2 dinners, lunches, drinks, travel insurance, laundry, medical expenses and items of a personal nature.

WHAT TO BRING

Day pack, walking shoes or boots, waterproof raincoat, or umbrella, sun hat, sunglasses, sun cream, bathers and a pocket-knife for the picnics. Please restrict your luggage to a maximum of 20 kg.

We also recommend telescopic walking sticks. They help with the climbing, relieve the stress on the knees when going down and in any case improve the balance.

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 for the 13 nights. 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 for the 13 nights.

All walks during the 14 Day tour are optional or can be taken in parts. Guests can choose to have more free days than the two already included in the itinerary.

The walking pace on all 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

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