



Approaching the heights of Mont Lozere

Stevenson Trail EXTRA

More Time, More Convenient, more Enjoyment

Tour Highlights

- ☞ A World's top Travel Adventure - Forbes Traveler
- ☞ A gentler pace across four historic natural regions
- ☞ Enjoy sub-alpine to Mediterranean flora
- ☞ Hike volcanic plateau, schist valley and the best of Cévennes' hillcrests
- ☞ Marvel at the lunar-like landscape of Pic Finiels [1699 m/5573 ft]
- ☞ Spend a night in one of RLS' favourite inns in Goudet
- ☞ Our tour is recommended by The Times: see on-site tour page.



Fact File

- ✓ THIRTEEN-night, self-guided, inn-to-inn tour
- ✓ Graded moderate - you average 10½ miles-17 kms a day
- ✓ Only one long day, which you can reduce by 4 kms
- ✓ Luggage transfers throughout, up to 13 kgs per person
- ✓ Most convenient access via Lyon by train
- ✓ Start any day from mid-April to mid-October
- ✓ Welcoming mix of '2-star standard' hotels, auberges and guest houses.



Theme

Stevenson Trail [GR 70] is not only a modern classic, but the benchmark for recreational hikes. You walk from Le Monastier, near Puy-en-Velay in Haute Loire, to St Jean-du-Gard in Cévennes, a distance of 125-miles/201 kms. Walked by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1878, the route inspired him to write 'Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes' (1879), a ground-breaking novel and classic of outdoor literature that set the standard for travelogues thereafter.

Stevenson was, in many ways, the pioneer of the modern hiking movement, as the book presents hiking and camping outdoors as a recreational activity. RLS was also keen to explore the theme of the Religious Wars and the trail takes you through the heart of Huguenot and 'Camisard' country. Other Cévenol themes to explore can be found on our website.

Stevenson Trail sees you walking what's now considered one of the top-ten trails in France, increasingly popular with hikers wishing to retrace RLS's footsteps. If you enjoy inn-to-inn trails, then this hike across volcanic upland and through schist valley is guaranteed to delight.

Stevenson often slept out under trees in a prototype sleeping bag. You enjoy wholesome food in welcoming, en-suite accommodation as you trek across southern Auvergne and northern Languedoc with just your light backpack.

If you only ever experience one hotel-to-hotel hike, this is arguably the one to do; and if that's not enough, Causses & Cévennes has recently gained UNESCO World heritage status, so there's never been a better time to savour the delights of France's last frontier region.





Approaching le chemin de crêtes

13-night Itinerary¹ [distances and times are approximate]

- Day 1** Le Puy. Arrival and hotel check-in.
- Day 2** **Le Monastier to Goudet.** [6.5 miles-9.5 kms, 3 hrs, +190 ms -325 ms]
Taxi transfer (20 kms) to Le Monastier, where RLS started his trek. Have a good look around the village, with its abbey, castle and museum before commencing your descent into the Upper Loire Valley.
- Day 3** **Goudet to Le Bouchet St Nicolas.** [8.5 miles-12.5 kms, 4.5 hrs, +400 ms]
You climb through charming hamlets and across volcanic plateau, before arriving at Stevenson's next overnight stop.
- Day 4** **Le Bouchet St Nicolas to Pradelles.** [12 miles-19 kms, 5 hrs, +285 ms -375 ms]
The ascents and descents are less steep today, but the walking is far from flat as you climb to the volcanic plateau from the Arquejol Viaduct before descending to the fine granite 'City of the High Prairies'.
- Day 5** **Pradelles to Cheylard l'Eveque.**
[11 miles-18 kms, 6 hrs, +310 ms -320 ms]
Descend to Langogne and into the land of the 'Beast of Gevaudan.' Then continue through forest and charming hamlet en route to the medieval village of Cheylard, replete with hill-top chapel.
- Day 6** **Cheylard l'Eveque to La Bastide Puy-Laurent.**
[12 miles-19 kms, 5 hrs, +240 ms -380 ms]
Climb through the Gardille forest and lunch beside its eponymous lake, before descending to the impressive ruins of Luc castle. Then follow the medieval Regordane Way across the Allier River to your historic resting place.
- Day 7** **La Bastide to Chasseradès.** [7.5 miles-12 kms, 3.5 hrs, +330 ms - 160 ms]
You climb to the Atlantic - Mediterranean watershed, and head down valley to picturesque Chasseradès.
- Day 8** **Chasseradès to Le Bleymard.** [10.25 miles-16.5 kms, 5.5 hrs, +280 ms -390 ms]
You climb into Goulet Forest, and enter the Cevennes proper with some great views, before enjoying a fine walk alongside the fledgling River Lot to Les Alpiers and onto Bleymard.
- Day 9** **Le Bleymard to Pont de Montvert.**
[10.5 miles-16.5 kms, 6.5 hrs, +630 ms -824 ms]
A memorable ascent to Mont Lozere, and the highest point in south-central France, Pic de Finiels (1699 ms). Then descend through a chaos of boulders to Finiels and a fine walk into Camisard Country.
- Day 10** **Pont de Montvert to Florac.**
[17.5 miles-28 kms, 7 hrs, +545 ms -875 ms. Take the GR68 and save 4 kms!]
The day is blessed with some memorable views over the 'blue waves' of the Cevennes hills as you walk mountain crest, crossing from Mediterranean to Alpine flora and back along the fabulous watershed.
- Day 11** **Florac to Cassagnas.** [11 miles-16.5 kms, 5 hrs, +200 ms -50 ms].
You walk the fabulous Mimente Valley trail, and pass the ruins of the château at St. Julien d'Arapon en route to the village of Cassagnas, a former Camisard stronghold.
- Day 12** **Cassagnas to St Germain de Calberte.** [8.5 miles-15 kms, 5 hrs, +270 ms -260 ms].
You climb to Pierre Plantée Pass at 891 ms and past several menhirs and chestnut groves, the traditional staff of life in the Cevennes, before arriving at character-full St Germain.
- Day 13** **St Germain to St. Jean du Gard.**
[13 miles-21 kms, 6 hrs, +350 ms -900 ms]
A memorable last-day's trek that has you walking the Corniche des Cevennes and climbing to a 360 degree vantage point for those last-gasp photos. A foot-soaking in the Gardon de St Jean is a fitting finalé.
- Day 14** **End of Tour.** Breakfast and either bus or taxi to Ales. Bon retour et à bientôt!





The Mimente Valley trail along the former Florac to St Cecile railway line closed in the 1960s

What's Included

- ✓ 13 nights B & B in comfortable, '2-star standard' accommodation - see below
- ✓ 11 evening meals, 11 picnic lunches & local hotel taxes
- ✓ Transfer from Le Puy to Le Monastier on Day Two
- ✓ Hiking notes™ maps and themed dossier
- ✓ Luggage transfers²
- ✓ Telephone help-line service offering 7/7 native English support from 8am to 8pm.



Not included

- ⊗ Remaining meals and all drinks and extras - options are listed in your dossier and walking notes
- ⊗ Personal expenses
- ⊗ Entrances into any optional cultural visits and venues
- ⊗ Hiking, personal and travel insurances
- ⊗ Single rooms - unless booked at the single-person rate
- ⊗ Travel to and from the tour start and finish points.



Auberges, Chambres d'hotes & Hotels.

“Carefully-selected accommodation based on knowing our providers intimately and matching them with your preferences.”

As always, and subject to availability, our commitment to our customers is to offer the best accommodation in every stage along the trail. The RLS trail traverses France's most isolated regions, so don't expect luxury hotels to be the order of the day. However, our RLS mix comprises a range of comfortable, family-run hotels, chambres d'hotes and auberges, essentially of '2-star standard.' En-suite facilities are offered throughout with one exception, where WCs are in the corridor a few steps away from your room.

Evening meals follow a fixed menu format for all half-board guests and do not include drinks. Most hotel menus provide a meat or fish dish, plus a vegetarian option; whilst chambres d'hotes and auberges tend to function around one common meal of which all guests partake, bar vegetarians, who would have an alternative dish. All showcase 'produits du terroirs' typical of the regions through which you walk. Vegetarians are generally well catered for, vegans less so, but fruitarians need not apply!

Lunches can be enjoyed en route or the contents of a packed lunch purchased before you commence each day's walking. Relevant details are in the tour dossier and walking notes.





If you have a particular preference for any of the accommodation-types above mentioned, please let us know on your booking form and we will do our best to weight your accommodation mix in that direction. However, options are limited in some locations, and all accommodation is small-scale, so such preferences cannot be a precondition for your booking.

Finally, note that all French hotel star ratings underwent a major review by the relevant authorities in 2012/2013, as ratings had lost touch with reality. Such reviews were long overdue, but expensive and individual hotels are expected to pay. Many have chosen not to bother and simply choose to remain 'starless' out of choice. Why? Because the costs would simply be passed onto their traditional customer base, who may not be prepared to pay the extra - and many hoteliers resent State profiteering. This does not mean that these hotels have suddenly become inferior. However, knowing one's accommodation suppliers intimately is now more important than ever!

Access & Departure

- **By air:** to Lyon or Paris
- **By rail:**
From UK, Eurostar to Lille and change for Lyon
From Paris, to Lyon in 3½ hours.
From Lyon, change for regional [TER] train to Le Puy via St Etienne in 2½ hours.
- **By car:** leave your car in the central Le Puy car park in Le Puy.
- **Departure from St Jean:** by bus or taxi - please ask us for details
- **Departure by rail:** is from Alès [16 miles from St Jean] to Nimes in 40 minutes and onward train to Lyon [60 mins], Paris CG airport [3½ hours] or Lille [4½ hours].
- **Departure by air:** from Lyon, Paris, Montpellier or Nimes to Luton via RyanAir.
- **Optional return transfer to Le Puy** at tour's end - please ask us for details.



**2023
price:**

Per person in double/twin-bedded room:
£1530.00 Pounds Sterling or €1785.00 Euros

Booking

Email, phone, LiveChat or Skype us and we will email you everything you need to reserve your tour.



An alternative way of walking the RLS, popular with some of our customers.

Ten reasons to book with The Enlightened Traveller®



Our Guarantee

In accordance with "The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992" all passengers booking with The Enlightened Traveller® are fully protected for the initial deposit and subsequently the balance of all monies paid to us, including repatriation if required, arising from cancellation or curtailment of your travel arrangements due to the insolvency of The Enlightened Traveller®.

Consumer beware: This insurance is only valid for passengers who book and pay directly with/to The Enlightened Traveller® and not via intermediaries. Please see our website for full details.

- ❶ Better service and recommended by The Times: see on-site tour page
- ❷ Benefit from French-based expertise and our total focus on France
- ❸ Buy direct from us, the tour provider, and get great value for money
- ❹ Personalise your trip to suit your own requirements
- ❺ Industry-leading walking notes make orientation easy
- ❻ Insightful dossier & 1:50,000 scale maps - 1:25,000 full scale maps are available for a supplement.
- ❼ 7/7, 8am to 8 pm telephone support in native English
- ❽ We transport your luggage from hotel to hotel. Option to travel along with your luggage if you need a rest day: supplements apply, subject to availability and places are limited².
- ❾ Peace of mind: your money is safe when booking with us - all passengers are fully insured for the initial deposit and balance, irrespective of the means of payment, in the unlikely event of insolvency.
- ❿ Anglo-French family business that tries harder: join the family!



Notes

¹ We reserve the right to alter parts of the above programme for the benefit of safety and the quality of the overall experience.

² You are entitled to take one piece of luggage per person weighing up to 13 kgs. Supplements are payable for extra or overweight luggage.

Note: we are able to arrange for your excess luggage to be securely stored for the duration of your tour and delivered to the final hotel before your departure. Please ask us for further details of this service if it is of interest to you.

Travelling with your luggage must be booked the evening before and is subject to availability and a fee of approx. 30.00 Euros per person. (in 2022).

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