



The Gardon, one Autumn morning

The St-Giles Pilgrimage - Part Two

Garrigues, Costieres and Camargue

Tour Highlights

- ☞ Discover the southern section of France's quintessential pilgrimage trail.
- ☞ Explore a Roman trail to Nîmes, a section of the Arles Route and Camargue canal paths.
- ☞ Follow in the tracks of Kings, Archbishops, Crusaders and The Reformation.
- ☞ Enjoy changing countryside and flora unified by one cultural heritage and cuisine.
- ☞ Visit medieval and fortified hamlets and villages, Roman Nîmes and the Crusader port of Aigues-Mortes.



Fact File

- ✓ Self-guided, inn-to-inn tour across three 'natural' regions.
- ✓ 7-night light tour from Vézénobres to Aigues-Mortes.
- ✓ Average 5 hours and 8 miles/12 kms a day.
- ✓ Convenient access from Alès via Nîmes.
- ✓ Departures any day from mid-March to end-October.
- ✓ Luggage transfers throughout, plus people transfers.
- ✓ Mix of comfortable guest houses and hotels.



Theme

Saint-Giles Pilgrimage, takes you along the southern section of the Hexagon's very own medieval pilgrimage trail. Recently-resuscitated and labeled the GR 700 or Regordane, it is a leisurely, 60-mile/83-km walk across scenic and undulating lowland.

You follow an ancient Roman trail along the Gardon Valley, through classic Mediterranean Garrigues countryside, traverse a series of charming hill-top villages en route and stay in the best of accommodation: stone 'mas' when out-of-town, two-star standard hotels when in town.

Pilgrims have walked this sacred path since the tenth century, but the preceding period was one of Roman dominance and subsequent invasions by Vandales, Wisigoths and Saracens. Charlemagne's calming influence is writ large across the landscape; and both the Camisard Rebellion and the Nazi occupation left their mark.





*The magnificent walled cité of
Aigues-Mortes*

Experience a master-class in French history and enter Roman Nemasus [Nîmes] by a unique 'back door'. Then stride out across the picturesque Costières region, with its Roman vineyards, and past the first tall reeds that signal your arrival in the Camargue delta.

In days of yore, the ancient 'port' of St Gilles-du-Gard, and its fine abbey, were reason enough to walk the 211 kilometres from Le Puy-en-Velay. Nevertheless, for many pilgrims it signaled an important staging post en route either to the Promised Land or Santiago de Compostella; and when the port became silted up, the Crusaders and many a pilgrim continued onto The Holy Land via Aigues-Mortes.

Thus our decision to allow you to do the same: to enjoy the contrasting scenery as you hike from the Cevennes foothills across Garrigues and Costières to St-Gilles in Camargue; and then continue onto the Mediterranean Coast, and the magnificent walled cité of Aigues-Mortes, via a section of the 'Arles Route' [via Toulousana] and a variety of Camargue canal paths.

Saint-Giles Pilgrimage is the chance for everyone to enjoy France's forgotten medieval pilgrimage on a light walking holiday to the Med.

Across the Garrigues - Mt Bouquet in the background



7-night Itinerary¹

Day 1 **Arrive in Vezénobres.** Train to Alès where your transfer to Vezénobres awaits (transfer included in your fees). Enjoy a ramble around this fine medieval village lying in the Cevennes foothills. Night in Vezénobres.

Day 2 **Vezénobres to Moussac.**
[8 miles-12½ kms, +55 ms, -85, approx. 5 hours.]
The Gardon is extraordinarily wide at Ners, with its stone bridge, and the fortified hamlet of Lascours a real treat. The views over the Garrigues are splendid and the wine very much AOC. Collection and short transfer. Night near Moussac.

Day 3 **Moussac to La Calmette.**
[8 miles-13 kms, +65 ms, -60 ms, approx. 5 hours.]
After-breakfast, return transfer to Moussac. You continue your journey along the multi-faceted Gardonenque to Dions, with its fascinating geological chasm. Then wend your way through vine country to La Calmette with its historic centre or 'Circulade'. Night in La Calmette.

Day 4 **La Calmette to Nîmes.**
[10½ miles-16 kms, +85 ms, -130 ms, approx. 5½ hours.]
You climb and cross a fine bucolic Garrigues trail before arriving at the Nîmes hinterland. Wend your way through the Bois des Espesses en route to the Roman Tour Magna, the splendours of Les Jardins de la Fontaines and the fine historic centre. Night in Nîmes centre.

Day 5 **Nîmes to St Gilles.**
[9½ miles-15½ kms, +60 ms, - 80 ms, approx. 5 hours.]
Short transfer to the outskirts of Nîmes Metropole. The pleasant trail takes you through one of Europe's oldest wine domains. You arrive in St-Gilles with plenty of time to visit the Abbey and its 'crypt,' as well as walk a little of the canal if you wish. Night in St-Gilles.

Day 6 **St Gilles to Vauvert.**
[10½ miles/16½ kms, + 82 ms, - 56 ms, approx. 5 hrs walking]
Just when you thought your pilgrimage was over, you join the Chemin de St-Jacques de Compostelle [Arles Route] for an interesting day's hike across the northern Camargue. Night in Vauvert.

Day 7 **Vauvert to Aigues-Mortes.**
[13 miles/20 kms, + 56 ms, - 91 ms, approx. 5½ hrs walking time]
Your final day comprises a fine walk along the banks of Le Canal du Rhone at Sete towards the Tour De Constance of the perfectly-preserved ramparts of the ancient port and town of St Louis, Aigues-Mortes. Night in Aigues-Mortes.

Day 8 **End of Tour.**
Breakfast and onward journey by train to Nîmes or perhaps bus or taxi to La Grande Motte or Montpellier.





Les Costieres wine domains

What's Included

- ✓ 7 nights' bed and breakfast /B & B [incl. local taxes] in a mix of carefully-selected hotel and guest house accommodation - see below.
- ✓ Diner in La Calmette
- ✓ Industry-leading hiking notes, 1:25,000 maps and themed dossier
- ✓ Luggage transfers throughout ²
- ✓ People transfers relevant to the tour - see itinerary.
- ✓ Telephone help-line service with 7/7, 8 'till late native English support



Not included

- ⊗ Remaining meals and all drinks and extras - lunch and dinner 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.



Camisard Country





Camargue's emblematic Flamant Rose Photo © Andrea Bonetti

Comfortable Hotels and superior guest houses

“Carefully-selected accommodation based on knowing our partners well.”

As always, and subject to availability, our commitment is to offer the best accommodation at every stage along the trail. You stay in comfortable accommodation of a good standard, with private rooms and en suite facilities throughout, that has been carefully selected on the basis of superior cuisine, facilities, location, service and welcome.



Accommodation comprises a range of ‘2-star standard’ hotels [when in town] supplemented by charming chambres d’hotes [guest houses] in the villages en route. Your Nîmes hotel is 3-star and centrally-located.



Evening meals are not included (with the exception of La Calmette), allowing you greater choice and personalization according to budget and taste. The contents of packed lunches can be purchased before you commence each day’s walking. Relevant details are in the tour dossier and walking notes.



The ubiquitous olive groves

Access & Departure

How to get to Alès

Due to the popularity of Nîmes, the options for getting to the City are plentiful. Once there, Alès is just a short onward regional train journey of 40 minutes away.

Your hiking commences in Vezenobrès, located in the Cevenol foothills.

By Air

Getting to Nîmes is relatively straightforward from the following airports:

1. Nîmes airport - flights from the UK and Brussels via RyanAir.
2. Lyon International Airport, with onward connections by fast train [60 mins] to Nîmes.
3. Montpellier International Airport, with onward connections by train [30 mins] to Nîmes.
4. Avignon International Airport, with onward connections by train [30 mins] to Nîmes.
5. Marseille International Airport, with onward connections by train to Nîmes.
6. Clermont-Ferrand Airport, with onward connections direct to Alès by regional [TER] train on 'Le Cevenol'.

By Rail

Best access is via SNCF [TGV] railway station to Nîmes [4 hrs fast train/TGV from Paris or Lille, 1½ hrs from Lyon]

Alternative regional [TER] train ['Le Cevenol'] direct to Alès from Paris, with change at Clermont-Ferrand.

Our customers recommend RailEurope.com for research and ticketing.





Le Tour Carbonniere en Camargue

Ten reasons to book with The Enlightened Traveller®



- ❶ Best accommodation, better service
- ❷ Benefit from French-based expertise and our total focus on France
- ❸ Buy direct from us, the tour provider, and get better value for money
- ❹ Personalise your trip to suit your own requirements
- ❺ Industry-leading walking notes make orientation easy
- ❻ 1:25 000 full scale maps & insightful dossier
- ❼ 7/7 telephone support, from 8 'til late, 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: subject to availability, 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: We'll look after you like one of the family!



*Canal du Rhone
a Sete*



Sunflowers at Vezenobres

2021 prices:

Per person in double or
twin-bedded room:
£850.00 Pounds Sterling#
or **€945.00 Euros**



Booking

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

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®.

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 We accept no responsibility for lost valuables. We
advise you not to bring computers and business-related
equipment and to use lockable cases.

Please contact us to check for the latest Sterling prices.
Sterling prices are confirmed at the time of booking.

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