



Approaching Aubrac

Le Puy to Conques - Le Puy Route in Comfort

The Best of the Camino in Comfort

Tour Highlights

- ☞ The finest section of France's Classic Pilgrimage trail.
- ☞ Choose from two fine accommodation-led formats to suit you - El Camino with a difference.
- ☞ Hike across five historic regions and through Auvergne, Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrenees, incl. the Aubrac Plateau.
- ☞ Superlative start - Le Puy en Velay and its World Heritage sites.
- ☞ Great Finish: the UNESCO medieval cité of Conques.



Fact File

- ✓ 12-night, self-guided, inn-to-inn walking tour through the best of rural France.
- ✓ Graded as a moderate challenge, averaging 12 miles/ 19 kms a day over a total of 134 miles/215 kms. Options to shorten or lengthen days to suit your agenda.
- ✓ Best access from Lyon.
- ✓ Start any day from early April to mid-October.
- ✓ Luggage transfers throughout².

Theme

Le Puy to Conques in Comfort is the finest section of France's Compostella pilgrimage trail. Forget about trekking all the way across the foggy Pyrenees and into Spain along endless monotone highways and instead enjoy the most scenic slice of The Hexagon's best-loved hiking cake - the Le Puy Route from Le Puy en Velay to Conques. It is the only section of this historic highway that we choose to promote as it offers the optimum experience and captures the essence of 'El Camino' in one, two-week chunk.



Le Puy to Conques in Comfort is special for many reasons: it is the most-popular section, boasting the best countryside and accommodation; so meet like-minded hikers and enjoy the comforts of our accommodation-led tour designed especially for those who like a fine hike followed by tasty food and home comforts in the excellent company of global peers.



The magnificent chateau d'Estaing

So enjoy the best of the Camino sliced into bite-sized chunks and revel in the experience of a life-time, at a reasonable pace that allows you to get from A to B, chatter with others along the way and still have plenty of time to admire the views and absorb the heritage-rich ambiance.

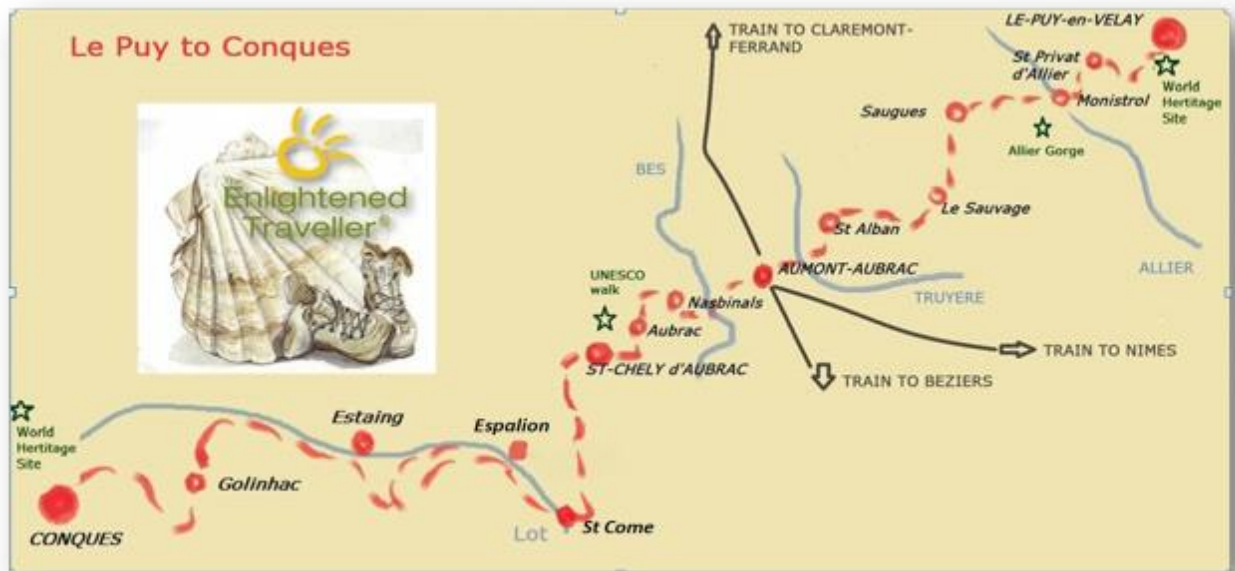
Le Puy to Conques in Comfort also allows you to tailor the accommodation 'ideal types' to suit your personal preferences, be they guest house or hotel-led. We will do our very best to maximise your chosen 'format' subject to availability bien sûr!

If you seek a fortnight's total immersion in the best of rural France, then look no further than the best section of the Le Puy Route with complementary accommodation.



La Chapelle de la Bastide in Margeride





Le Puy to Conques in Comfort: twelve-night tour itinerary

[All distances, times and elevation figures are approximate] ¹

Day 1 Arrive in Le Puy en Velay.

Steeped in Christian history, the monuments and squares of Le Puy merit your attention - get there early, check into your centrally-located 3-star hotel and have a good look around.

Night in Le Puy.

Day 2 Le Puy to St Privat d'Allier. [14½ miles-23½ kms, approx. 7 hrs, +600 ms -300 ms].

Climb out of the Puy basin to the Velay Plateau and its volcanic cones and follow the trail above the Dolaizon river to St Christophe. Cross the Devès, France's largest basalt Plateau, via a series of charming villages and arrive at St Privat, with its Roman-style church and castle vestiges.

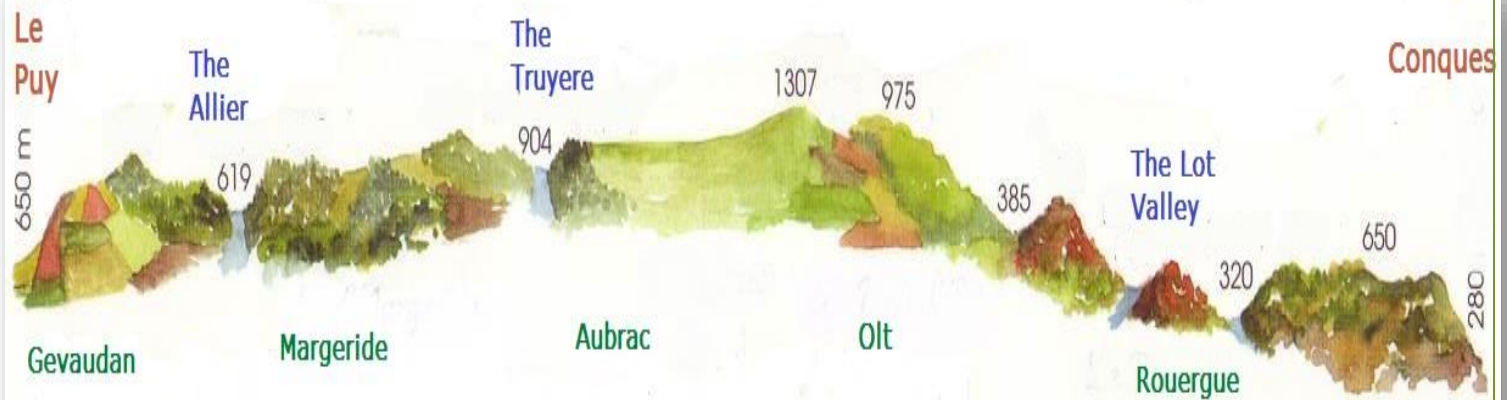
Night in St Privat.



Day 3 St Privat d'Allier to Saugues. [12 miles-19 kms, approx. 6 hrs, +600 ms -500 ms]

You climb to a majestic belvedere before gaining Rochegude with its fine hillside chapel and castle ruins on the Velay-Gevaudan border. Then descend into the Allier Gorge with its own 'Pao de Açucar' outcrop before crossing the Eiffel bridge and climbing up past the semi-troglodyte St Madeleine chapel and into the granite mountains of Margeride. The descent to Saugues is a delight.

Night in Saugues.



Day 4 Saugues to Le Sauvage. [12 miles-19½ kms, approx. 5½ hrs, +350ms -40ms]

The option exists to combine days 4 & 5 - please ask our advice.

The hamlet of La Clauze is dominated by its 12th century tower perched atop a vast granite outcrop. Further on, the walk along the Virlange Valley is a treat and the climb up through the Ranchoulet woods never dull. Say hello to the friendly 'wild horses' before descending to Le Sauvage for refreshments and your transfer.

Second night in Saugues - it's nice not to have to pack that case!

Day 5 Le Sauvage to St Alban sur Limagnole.
[8 miles-13 kms, approx. 3½ hrs, +20ms -350ms]

Designed as a rest day, we start by returning you to Le Sauvage. From there you climb to Hospitalet col and visit the Chapelle de Saint Roche before crossing into Lozere [Languedoc-Roussillon] and descending to St Alban and its Romanesque church. Then enjoy the ambiance and facilities in your overnight accommodation.

Night in St Alban.

*All the way from
Geneva*



Day 6 St Alban sur Limagnole to Aumont-Aubrac.

[9 miles-14½ kms, 4 hrs, +280ms -185ms.]

Options exist to combine days 5 & 6 - please ask our advice. You finish crossing the granite Margeride and enter volcanic Aubrac. A short day full of fine and varied trails and boulder-speckled scenery.

Night in Aumont-Aubrac.

Day 7 Aumont-Aubrac to Nasbinals.

[16½ miles-26½ kms, approx. 7½ hrs, +340ms -190ms, with option to reduce the day by approx. 1½ miles-2½ kms]

Our favourite day takes you to La Chaze de Peyre, with its fine [still used] communal oven, then onto the charming Chapelle de Bastide before you arrive at Les Quatre Chemins and a welcome beverage. By now the forest has given way to enormous expanses of rolling green and cattle-laden pastures.

Night in Nasbinals.

Day 8 Nasbinals to St Chely d'Aubrac.

[10½ miles-17 kms, approx. 4½ hrs, +135ms -490ms.]

The grand finale, a World Heritage-rated walk, is blessed with more fabulous rolling hillsides before you descend to the picturesque village of Aubrac, overseen by its white porcelain statue of the Virgin Mary. A fine lunch-spot, with its Tour des Anglais, you then commence your protracted descent into the Lot Valley and enjoy your final over-nighter in charming St Chely.

Night in St Chely.



The enchanting Lot Valley





The Lot at Espalion

- Day 9 St Chely d'Aubrac to St Come-d'Olt**
 [10 miles-16 kms in 4½ hrs with +200ms -650ms]
 or
Option to continue onto Espalion
 [16 miles-25½ kms in 6½ hrs with approx. +245ms -840ms]

Cross the UNESCO bridge and climb through several hamlets in Le Pays d'Olt before crossing the Cannels and descending through aged vines to the first glimpses of the delightful walled village of St Come on The Lot.
 Night in St Come-d'Olt or Espalion.



- Day 10 St Come-d'Olt to Estaing**
 [12½ miles-20½ kms, 5 hrs with approx. +460ms -500ms]
 or
Espalion to Estaing
 [hotel-led option at 7 miles-11 kms, 3½ hrs, with approx. +455ms -260ms]

Choose between the high or the low road to Espalion. We traverse Le Rouergue along the left bank of the tranquil River Lot, pass the Chateau de Calmont before enjoying lunch at the charming village of Armagnac with its fine domaine. Then continue the oenology lesson upon arrival in Estaing, home to the once powerful Valery-Giscard and its Wine House and Museum.

Night in Estaing.





Chateau de Calmont

Day 11 Estaing to Golinhac

[10 miles-16 kms, 5 hrs with approx. +420ms -90ms]

Drag yourself across Le Pont Vieux and enjoy a prolonged meander along the banks of the enchanting Lot before climbing Le Chemin des Croix to your comfy overnight resting place. Night in Golinhac.

Day 12 Golinhac to Conques

[13 miles-21 kms, 6½ hrs with approx. +200ms -600ms]

Continue along Le Chemin des Croix via the charming watering holes of Espayrac and its twin Senergues before descending into the Ouche and Dourdou Gorges towards the medieval cité of 'Concha', nowadays known as Conques, the grand finalé to a great tour.

Night in Conques.

Day 13 End of Le Puy to Conques tour.

Breakfast followed by check out. Please enquire about onward transfers to Aumont-Aubrac, Le Puy or Figeac. Bonne continuation and we hope to see you next year.

The unassuming gateway to Conques





Modern farming methods

What's Included

- ✓ 12 nights' stay in carefully-selected accommodation that's on the trail
- ✓ 12 breakfasts and 9 evening meals & all local taxes.
- ✓ Themed dossier, Hiking Insight Notes and 1: 50,000 maps. The Way is very well way marked and we consider this scale map as entirely adequate for this particular trail.
- ✓ Luggage transfers throughout ²
- ✓ Two people transfers.
- ✓ Telephone help-line service with 7/7 Native-English support from 8am to 8 pm.

Not included

- ⊗ Remaining meals and all drinks and extras - lunch and dinner options are listed in your dossier and walking notes.
- ⊗ 1: 25,000 scale maps: nine of these would be required to cover the tour, which we are happy to supply at a supplement. Please enquire.
- ⊗ 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.



The Abbey at Conques

Comfortable Hotels and Superior guest houses

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

We have literally combed the trail to find the best accommodation that the St. James' Way or Le Puy Route has to offer, so that you enjoy the over-night stay as much as the hiking. We are thus delighted to bring you two options from which you can choose according to your own personal tastes:

1. **Le Puy to Conques [Guest house-led]** sets out with the express aim of placing our customers in seven fine guest houses along the trail. Bedrooms are all, of course, en suite and comfort levels are high. The objective is to allow you to meet interesting travellers along the Way, who value the same comforts as you, and spend time with hosts who know the area and its history and enjoy sharing it with their guests.



The human factor and the personal touch is thus writ large in this option. Your hosts are accustomed to welcoming Anglophones into their homes although, as with anything in life, your extra effort will be handsomely rewarded and so practicing some French [however rudimentary] is highly recommended.

All homes are on The Way itself. Where your hosts do not provide an evening meal, the village in question offers a multitude of local options to suit most tastes less nearby.

You can expect to spend the remaining nights in two 3-star hotels, one 2-star hotel, a welcoming countryside auberge and a recently-refurbished walker's inn with all mod-cons.

2. **Le Puy to Conques [Hotel-led]** allows you to experience the trail by day whilst focussing the evenings on you, your family and close companions. You set the social agenda in the welcoming environment of your hotel bar, restaurant or room. All hotels are on the trail and the average standard is 2-star or higher.



Our hotel-led, French Camino experience brings you:

- six 3-star hotels,
- four 2-star hotels,
- one welcoming countryside auberge, and
- a recently-refurbished walkers' inn with all mod-cons.

This is the most popular stretch of France's Way of St James and so early booking is advised. Nevertheless, availability is like a moving escalator and things can change from day to day. Our commitment is to bring you your preferred accommodation option, guest house-led or Hotel-led in its purest form. However, we cannot guarantee that corresponding accommodation will always be available at each stage and so this cannot be a precondition of your booking. Where we are unable to accommodate you in the desired chambres d'hotes or hotel stay on a particular night, you will be placed in the equivalent hotel or guest house, respectively - **with a corresponding modest increase or decrease in that night's fees.**

Access & Departure

How to get to Le Puy-en-Velay

Arrival:

- By air: to Lyon or Paris
- By rail: see bahn.com

From UK, Eurostar to Lille and change for Lyon

From Paris to Lyon by TGV 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 as us for details.



Departure:

- We can transfer you back to either Aumont-Aubrac or Le Puy-en-Velay after breakfast or alternatively onto Figeac, space permitting and subject to an advanced booking. Please ask us for details.

Aumont-Aubrac lies on the regional railway line that runs north-south connecting Clermont-Ferrand to Beziers. Onward transport leaves here from around 11am and it takes approx. 2 hours to go north to Clermont-Ferrand or 3½ south to Beziers. Alternatively, you can travel east across by SNCF bus to Mende [the capital of Lozere] followed by onward train to La Bastide-Puy-Laurent and onto Nimes in approx. 5½ hours.



The Aubrac Plateau

Ten reasons to book with The Enlightened Traveller®



- ❶ Best accommodation, better service and recommended by The Times
- 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 tour to suit your own requirements
- ❺ Industry-leading walking notes make orientation easy
- ❻ 1:50 000 scale maps & insightful dossier
- ❼ 7/7 telephone support in native English and from 8am to 8pm
- ❽ We transport your luggage from hotel to hotel². Option to travel along with your luggage if you need a rest day: supplements apply, subject to availability and places are limited³.
- 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!



Near Finieyroles

2024 prices:

Per person rate in double or twin-bedded room:

Le Puy to Conques [Guest house-led]

£1165.00 Pounds Sterling or €1385.00 Euros

Le Puy to Conques [Hotel-led]

£1325.00 Pounds Sterling or €1575.00 Euros

- Extra nights: On Request
- Want to combine days 4 & 5? Ask us for details.

Booking

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

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 This covers one piece of luggage per person up to 13 kgs in weight. Supplements apply for overweight luggage and we accept no responsibility for lost valuables. We advise you not to bring computers and business-related equipment.

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.

³ Travelling with your luggage must be booked the night before subject to availability and costs approx. 30 Euros.

The Enlightened Traveller® Walking Holidays in France Ltd.

Equity House,
12 Park Lane, Tilehurst,
READING, RG31 5DL
England

UK: (0800) 4488 404

France: 06 95 04 12 63

Email: info@walking-holidays-france.com

Intern: <https://walking-holidays-france.com>

Skype: [theenlightenedtraveller](https://www.skype.com/en/contacts/theenlightenedtraveller)

Facebook.com/TheEnlightenedTraveller

Instagram.com/the.enlightened.traveller

Peace of Mind

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

© The Enlightened Traveller 2023

