



Beaufort castle at Goudet

Stevenson Trail Part One

Walk the northern half of RLS's literary trail

Tour Highlights

- ☞ **A World's top Travel Adventure - Forbes Traveler**
- ☞ **Our tour is recommended by The Times: see tour page**
- ☞ **Cross two historic natural regions**
- ☞ **Enjoy sub-alpine flora in deepest rural France**
- ☞ **Hike volcanic plateau & the Upper Loire Valley**
- ☞ **Stay in the best mix of accommodation en route.**



Fact File

- ✓ **Six-night, self-guided, inn-to-inn tour**
- ✓ **Graded moderate: you average 9 miles/14½ kms a day**
- ✓ **Luggage transfers throughout, up to 13 kgs per person**
- ✓ **Convenient access from Lyon or Nimes**
- ✓ **Start any day from mid-April to mid-October**
- ✓ **Welcoming '2-star-standard' hotels, auberges & guest houses.**



Theme

Stevenson Trail [GR 70] is not only a modern classic, but the benchmark for recreational hikes. On this hike you walk from Le Monastier, near Puy-en-Velay in Haute Loire, to Chasseradès in north-eastern Lozere, a distance of 61 miles/94 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 whole modern hiking movement, as the book presents hiking and camping outdoors as recreational activities. The fledgling writer often slept out under trees in a prototype sleeping bag. You enjoy wholesome food in welcoming, en-suite accommodation.

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 is guaranteed to delight your senses.

If you only ever experience one hike in rural France, this is arguably the one to do; and in this format, you get to split the trail in two equal chunks and walk them on separate occasions to suit you.



The view from Pradelles

6-night Itinerary¹

Day 1 Le Puy.

Arrival and hotel check-in. A visit to Le Puy merits a day's stay in itself, so get there early!

Day 2 Le Monastier to Le Bouchet St Nicolas.

[15 miles/24 kms, +460 ms -175 ms, approx. 7 hrs]

Taxi transfer (20 kms) to Le Monastier, where RLS started his trek. Take a look around before commencing your descent into the Upper Loire Valley. After Goudet, you climb through charming hamlets and across volcanic plateau, before arriving in Le Bouchet.

Day 3 Le Bouchet St Nicolas to Pradelles.

[12½ miles-19 kms, approx. 5 hrs, +285 ms -375 ms]

Enjoy the Arquejol viaduct and views from on high en route to the 'City of High Prairies'.

Day 4 Pradelles to Cheylard l'Eveque.

[14½ miles-21½ kms, 6 hrs, +320 ms -350 ms.]

Follow a 19th century variant of the Regordane to Langogne and enjoy a short walk round its historic 'circulade.' Then traverse Gevaudan's volcanic plateau to the medieval village of Cheylard, replete with church, chapel and abbey.

Day 5 Cheylard l'Eveque to La Bastide.

[12.5 miles-19 kms. approx. 5 hrs, +240 ms -380 ms]

Descend to your lakeside lunch-spot and onwards to Luc castle. Then south through linear settlements and across the Allier.

Day 6 La Bastide to Chasseradès.

[7.5 miles-12 kms, approx. 4 hrs +330 m, -160 m.]

You climb to the Atlantic-Mediterranean watershed and head down valley to picturesque Chasseradès. This is a short final day, enabling an optional walk to The Abbey of the Snows (where Stevenson stayed) before leaving La Bastide - a round trip of 3¾ miles/6 kms.

Day 7 End of Tour.

Breakfast, short transfer to La Bastide [included in tour fees] and onward journey by mountain railway, either south to Nimes or north to Claremont-Ferrand. **Join us next year for Part Two of this walking tour.**





Le Château de Luc

What's Included

- ✓ 6 nights bed & breakfast in comfortable, '2-star-standard' accommodation or equivalent
- ✓ 5 evening meals and all local hotel taxes
- ✓ Transfer from Le Puy to Le Monastier on Day Two and Chasseradès to La Bastide on departure day
- ✓ Hiking Insight notes™ 1: 50,000 scale maps and themed dossier - 1: 25,000 scale available at extra cost
- ✓ All luggage transfers²
- ✓ 7/7 telephone help-line service with local native English support.



Not included

- ⊗ Remaining meals and all drinks and extras - options are listed in your dossier and ask us re packed lunch supplement at time of booking
- ⊗ 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.

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

Nearest airport or TGV railway station is Lyon, with onward train to Le Puy-en-Velay.

- **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-en-Velay car park. Please ask us for details and about our shuttle to return you to Le Puy.
- **Departure from La Bastide:** by train, either north to Claremont-Ferrand [and onto Paris] or south to Nimes and onwards to Lyon, Marseilles, Paris, etc. - please ask us for details
- **Departure by air:** from Lyon, Paris, Montpellier or Nimes to Luton via RyanAir daily.
- **Optional return transfer to Le Puy** at tour's end - please ask us for details.



The peaceful scene from Le Bouchet St Nicolas

**2024
prices:**

**Per person in double/twin-bedded room:
£775.00 Pounds Sterling# or €925.00 Euros**

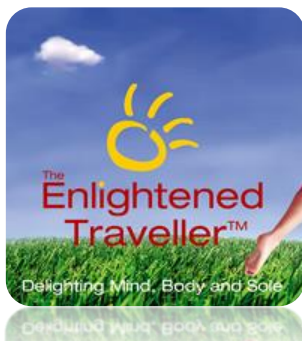
Booking

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®.

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- 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 meet your own requirements
- ❺ Industry-leading Walking Insight Notes™
- ❻ Travel along with your luggage if you need a rest day - subject to availability, a supplement and places are limited²
- ❼ 7/7 telephone help-line from 8 till late in native English
- ❽ Recommended by Forbes Traveller - see website tour page for details
- ❾ Peace of mind: your money is safe when booking with us - passengers are insured for the initial deposit and balance, irrespective of the means of payment, in the unlikely event of insolvency.
- ❿ We transport your luggage from hotel-to-hotel².

Notes

¹ We reserve the right to alter parts of the above programme for the benefit of group 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 - i.e., no suitcase must exceed 13 kgs. Supplements are payable for extra or overweight luggage.

Travelling with your luggage must be booked the evening before and is subject to availability and a fee of approx. 40.00 Euros per person.

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

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