



Spectacular countryside

Walking in Cantal

Hiking France's enchanting and verdant Volcanic Uplands

Tour Highlights

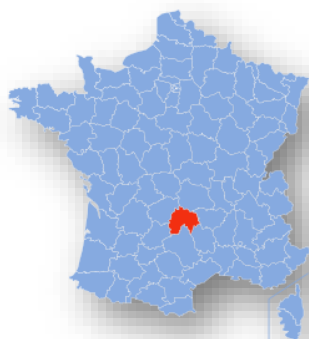
- ☞ Explore five peaks over 5000' [1500 ms], incl. Plomb du Cantal (6084').
- ☞ Marvel at the view from atop Puy Mary (5848'), Cantal's emblematic 'mont.'
- ☞ Hike a scenic Compostella variant and a magnificent ancient Roman trail.
- ☞ Fine Cantal villages & breath-taking glacial valleys.
- ☞ Enjoy fine cuisine, including Cantal and Bleu d'Auvergne cheeses, alligot and pounti. Five Cantalian dinners and lunches included.

Fact File

- ✓ Self-guided, inn-to-inn tour across Les Monts du Cantal.
- ✓ 6-night moderate challenge, with notable elevation gain/loss and two quite challenging days.
- ✓ Start and finish in picturesque Murat.
- ✓ Average 6 hours and 10 miles/16 kms a day.
- ✓ Convenient access by train from Paris via Clarmont-Ferrand or Lyon.
- ✓ Arrivals mid-May to mid-October, bar Sundays and Tuesdays.
- ✓ Luggage transfers throughout.
- ✓ Welcoming 3-star hotels, plus one 2-star and a mountain auberge.



Theme



Walking in Cantal takes you to the Auvergne region and the heart of the Massif Central. You walk Europe's largest extinct volcano and the enchanting summits, ridges and valleys that constitute this walkers' paradise. In the process you climb the region's highest peaks or 'puys', the original 'chimneys' of the volcano, which include Plomb du Cantal (at 6084 feet/1855 metres) and the emblematic Puy Mary.

This is a **moderate** tour with two quite challenging days: Day 3 [but reducible via the cable car] and Day 5's 'sacré balade circulaire' that takes in the heavenly trilogy of Brèche de Rolland, the ridge over Puy Chavaroche and Puy Mary itself - which can be shortened on request, although the whole tour is well within the capabilities of all fit individuals who walk regularly.

Your hiking starts and finishes in the fine Cantalian town of Murat. You walk a variant of The Way of St James [via Averno] to get into position and then selected contours that include long stretches of the ubiquitous GR400. By the end of the week, you will feel an eternal bond with the extraordinary beauty of Cantal and recognize from a distance each and every Puy with which you have had the privilege to get acquainted during your week's stay.



The Roman trail to Thiezac

6-night Itinerary¹

- Day 1** **Arrival in Murat by car or train.** Car parking is available. Check into your comfortable 3-star hotel and explore the sloping streets of this picturesque market town. Night in Murat.
- Day 2** **Murat to Lioran.** [9½ miles-15 kms, 6½ hrs, +750 m, -400 m.]
Climb to Murat's pilgrimage shrine along a variant of the Compostella Trail [Via Aversa] en route to Cantal's volcanic uplands, incl., 'Eagle's Beak Rock' and the Teton du Venus, at 1700 ms and 1669 ms respectively.
Night in a charming mountain auberge with log fire.
- Day 3** **Lioran to Thiézac.**
[12 miles-19½ kms, 7½ hrs, +585 ms, -1000 ms.]
Climb to Cantal's highest peak and the spectacular 360 degree panorama for lunch. Then walk a remarkable Roman trail along ridge and over upland moor.
Option to take the cable car to Plomb du Cantal [open 15th June to 15th September and costing 8 Euros p/p - not incl.], which reduces the day by 2½ hrs and the challenge from quite challenging to moderate, with almost no ascents.
Night in Thiézac.
- Day 4** **Thiézac to Mandailles.**
[8 miles-13 kms, 5 hrs, + 750ms -600ms.]
Climb out of the the Cère valley and enjoy some fine countryside towards Puy de la Poche and l'Elanceze and an impressive belvedere over the Cantalian Massif.
First night in Mandailles.
- Day 5** **Circular walk to Puy Mary.**
[12½ miles-20 kms, 7 hrs, + / - 1000 ms.]
The piece de resistance and exquisite day's hiking comprises arguably the top-three features of the Cantal Massif. Morning transfer option shaves 5 kms off the distance - book in advance!
Second night in Mandailles.
- Day 6** **Mandaïlles to Lioran.** [7 miles-11 kms, 4½ hrs, +765ms, -500 ms.]
Puy Griou is one of the most endearing of the region's volcanic cones. Today you get to climb it before your final descent to the conviviality of your hikers' tavern.
Collection from Lioran and enjoy the last night back in the fine Cantalian town of Murat.
- Day 7** **End of your tour.** Breakfast and onward journey by car or train. Au revoir et bon retour.





Heather on route to Puy Mary

What's Included

- ✓ 6 nights' comfortable accommodation in carefully-selected hotels and one auberge - see below
- ✓ 6 breakfasts and 5 evening meals - leaving you free to choose where to dine in Murat on your last evening, where multiple options exist
- ✓ 5 Cantalian picnic lunches
- ✓ Industry-leading hiking notes, 1:25,000 maps and themed dossier
- ✓ Luggage and people transfers as per the tour Itinerary above
- ✓ Telephone help-line service with 7/7 and 8 till late native English and French-based support.

Not included

- i. Remaining meals and all drinks and extras
- ii. Personal expenses
- iii. Entrances into any optional cultural visits and venues
- iv. Hiking, health, personal and travel insurances
- v. Single rooms - unless booked at the single-person rate
- vi. Travel to and from Murat.



The picturesque Cantalian village of Murat



En route from Mandailles

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

**Ideal mix
of fine
hotels
with one
mountain
auberge**

As always, and subject to availability, our commitment is to offer the best accommodation at every stage along the trail. You stay in very comfortable accommodation of a high standard throughout, with private rooms and en suite facilities, except for the auberge where WCs and showers are in the corridor.



Accommodation has been carefully selected on the basis of superior cuisine, facilities, location, service and welcome.

Your accommodation comprises one 2-star hotel and two 3-star hotels supplemented by a popular and welcoming mountain auberge, ideal for socializing with other hikers around the log fire.



Evening meals are included except in Murat on your final night, where multiple options exist and you can choose according to budget and taste.

Packed lunches are included for your convenience.



The view from the south



Access & Departure

Your tour commences and terminates in the delightful Cantalian town of **Murat**. Best access is by train via **Claremont-Ferrand**, from where a regular and direct service [no changes] takes only 90 minutes.

Getting to **Claremont-Ferrand** is easy:

By Rail

- i. From Paris to Claremont-Ferrand takes approx. 3½ hours, or
- ii. From Lyon to Claremont-Ferrand in 2½ hours.

Alternatives to consider are:

- iii. From Toulouse, train to Brive-le-Gaillard, where you change for Murat, or
- iv. From Rodez, train to St Denis-pres-Martel, where you change for Murat.

Our customers recommend <https://loco2.com/> for researching and ticketing.

By Air

Nearest airport is Claremont-Ferrand, with international flights from Amsterdam, Brussels, Geneva and Milan, and internal flights from most major French airports.

By Car

Ask us about the options for parking your car for those who wish to drive to Murat.





Verdant uplands

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 better value for money
- ❹ Personalise your tour to suit your requirements
- ❺ Industry-leading walking notes make orientation easy
- ❻ 1:25 000 full scale map & insightful dossier
- ❼ 7/7 and 8 till late 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: subject to availability and a cash supplement.
- 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!



Meet the locals

*We carry your
luggage*



2024 prices:

Per person in double or
twin-bedded room:
£950.00 Pounds Sterling or
€1125.00 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 are fully protected for the initial deposit and subsequently the balance of all monies paid to us, arising from cancellation or curtailment of your holiday arrangements due to insolvency, irrespective of method of payment.

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 20 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. Ask us for help if you want to bring more luggage than the above. Storage options exist.



The Enlightened Traveller® Walking Holidays in France Ltd.

12 Park Lane
Tilehurst, READING
RG31 5DL, England
Tels:

UK: (0800) 4488 404

FR: 06 95 04 12 63

Email: info@walking-holidays-france.com

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

Skype: theenlightenedtraveller

Facebook.com/TheEnlightenedTraveller

Instagram.com/the.enlightened.traveller

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Delighting Mind, Body and Sole!