



Pyrénées : GR 10 - 6th Section From Aulus les Bains to Merens

From Aulus-les-bains to Mérens in Haute Ariège you cross the Western and the central sections of the Pyrenees and the ariégeoise part of the chain. This region is identifiable by its high plateau landscapes, deep valleys hemmed in by soaring summits, sometimes dusted with snow, and mountain lakes whose waters change in colour.

In the evenings, at your accommodation, superb ariégeoise cuisine will set you up you for the next day ahead of you. The Bassiès refuge is surrounded by lakes and will satisfy your thirst for big, sweeping spaces. At Vicdessos, in the heart of Aston, discover 'orris', ancient dry stone circular cabins where shepherds used to stay on their high altitude pastures.

Tour Aventure Trekking

Agence de voyages LI 02A.06 0002 - Garantie Financière de 137204€ : APS - Contrat RC : n°86 410 716 Gan Eurocourtage IARD

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Program

D1 - Start of holiday in Aulus-les-bains

After a transfer from Saint Giron to Aulus-les-Bains time to settle into the gîte. Option to visit the thermal village or to do a loop walk.

Guzet lake and Ars waterfall

A great loop walk from Aulus-les-Bains to a mountain lake and the superb waterfall, the Cascade d'Ars.

Distance : 11km, duration : 4h00, altitude gain : +735m, descent : -735m.

D2 - Aulus to refuge de Bassiès

From Aulus les Bains the walk up towards the Port de Saleix (at 1794m altitude) is demanding, there is 1100m altitude gain. The beauty of the mountain scenery is awesome, there are plenty of interesting sites on the way up, rural barns, fresh bubbly mountain torrents, a rich Pyrenean flora and an old mine. Once at the Port de Saleix, the views are towards the valley of Auzat, the high altitude lake of Vicdessos and of Bassiès. It is a mountain day that is full of character.

Distance : 10km, duration : 5h30, altitude gain : +1185m, descent : -285m.

D3 - Bassiès to Goulier

From the Bassiès refuge, the GR10 passes a series of lakes at Bassiès and leads towards the valley of Auzat. A superb trail continues on from the valley to Goulier. En route you will traverse the mountain village of Olbier. Today's walk is short so it is possible to set out in the morning from the refuge and do an extra walk in the direction of the glacier cirque, the Etangs de Lavants de l'Escale (Only to be undertaken in fine weather). An alternative is to take the time to visit the villages you pass along the way.

Distance : 18km, duration : 5h00, altitude gain : +385m, descent : -930m.

D4 - Goulier to Arquizat

From Goulier, the GR10 heads East crossing several high mountain passes and mountain hamlets, such as Lercoul, Siguer and Gestières. Each of these merit a pause to see the super architecture and soak up the ambience of time stood still - Roman churches, traditional orris, barns and high mountain farms. Old stone walling and terraces are signs of a once busy agricultural activity. From the Col de Gamel the descent towards the villages of Norgeat then Arquizat are off the GR, the route follows a path marked in yellow.

Distance : 16km, duration : 7h30, altitude gain : +1089m, descent : -1440m.

D5 - Col de Sasc to the plateau de Beille

The large open spaces of Pla du Four mark the approach to the plateau of Beille. The plateau has a certain notoriety from its nordic ski station and as being on the itinerary for the famous Tour de France race.

Distance : 17km, duration : 6h30, altitude gain : +1134m, descent : -1115m.

D6 - Plateau de Beille to the Rulhe refuge

The GR10 trail heads towards the col des Finestres, you walk up through a open expanse of natural beauty, the mountainside is criss crossed with cross country skiers in the winter. As you make your way up to the col de la Didorte

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(alt 2093m) you can't help but be impressed by the extraordinarily stunning landscapes. You follow the ridge the 'Crete des Isards' to the col de Terre Nègre and onto the refuge du Rulhe. A high mountain ambience is guaranteed.
Distance : 16km, duration : 5h30, altitude gain : +618m, descent : -250m.

D7 - Rulhe refuge to Mérens

This is the last day's walking and the trail is particularly scenic. You will need to set out fairly early, following the GR10 past two mountain lakes to arrive early afternoon at the railway station in Merens.

Distance : 17km, duration : 5h00, altitude gain : +440m, descent : -1575m.

This programme is an example of the itinerary we aim to adhere to. It may be possible, if situations arise that are beyond our control, for the itinerary to be modified.

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Details

Level of difficulty

Walks from 4h00 to 7h30. The walks are on good footpaths and trails, the terrain is varied but often rocky. You need to be used to walking and take regular exercise to enjoy this holiday.

Price

- From 15/06/2010 to 30/09/2010 : Price per Adult 470 €

Supplements/reductions :

- Supplement 3 nights in room (according to availabilities) and 3 night in dormitories : 50 €/pers.

Price includes :

Half board accommodation, transfers days 1, 5 and 6, luggage transfers days 3, 4, 5 and 7, the dossier containing your maps, route notes and all necessary details needed for your holiday.

Price does not include :

Entrance fees, additional transfers, drinks, picnics, additional activities, holiday insurance and travel.

Encadrement

Self-guided walking.

Carrying

You will need to carry a day sack only, with your water bottle, camera, picnic and gortex jacket.

Our bag-moving service means you can travel light during your walks. Except for the nights in refuges on day 2 and 6 where you will need to carry personal belongings for the night (sleeping bag sheet, change of clothes, toiletries).

Your main luggage - will be transported by vehicle between the different night stops. Exception day 2 and 6 where you will have to carry some personal belongings for the night. We ask you to please limit your main luggage to between 10-15kg to facilitate the transportation and carrying for the taxis. It is also important to consider that it may be necessary to carry your bags short distances at the start or end of your holiday. (Consult with us for left luggage facilities)

Accommodation/food

Accommodation :

2 nights in mountain refuges and 4 nights on gites (communal dormitories), half-board. Bring a light-weight sleeping bag or a liner.

Possibility to sleep 3 nights in room and 3 nights in dormitory (according availabilities), with a 50€/pers supplement.

Food :

- Continental breakfast (tea, coffee, milk, butter, jam)
- Evening meals in gites, often based on local specialities.
- Pic-nics and drinks not included.

Starting point/end

Starting point : Day 1 at 15h30, at Saint Girons bus station (09). (welcome possible at 11h30 : if so let us know when you book).

If you are doing the 5th and 6th section of the GR10, the night in Aulus is offered, half-board in a gite.

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End : Day 7 after the walk, in Mérens les Vals (09).

Organisation

We propose a self guided, independent formula. You choose your departure date and we will take care of all the rest between the initial rendez-vous time through to the dispersion point. We transport your bags between the hotels (days 3, 4, 5 and 7), provide the maps and good walking route notes. This is a way of enjoying complete flexibility, you dictate the pace and rhythm of your holiday.

Your transfers

Day 1 : At 15h30, transfer from St-Girons to Aulus for clients not doing both the 5th and 6th section of the GR10.

Day 5 : At 7h45, transfer (around 30mn) from Arquizat to the col du Sasc.

At 17h00, transfer from the Plateau de Beille to Arquizat.

Day 6 : At 8h00, from Arquizat to the Plateau de Beille.

Dates

Every day from mid-june to the end of September.

(for a departure on a different date, consult us). Booking from two people or more.

Number of participants

From 2 people

Access

Toulouse-Blagnac airport, Saint-Girons (Ariège) train station.

Bibliography

Rough Guide the Pyrenees - Marc Dubin 2004

Practical information

- Ariège Pyrénées tourism committee -BP 143 - 09004 Foix Cedex

- Aulus-les-Bains tourist office, tel : 0033 561960001

- Foix tourist office, tel : 0033 561651212

- Haut Couserans tourist office, tel/fax : 0033 561960001

Web site : www.haut-couserans.com

Email : tourisme@haut-couserans.com

- Ax-les-thermes tourist office, tel : 0033 561646060

- Transport Denamiel ligne bus company, Foix-Saint Girons, tel : 0033 5.61.66.24.37

- Train information : www.ter-sncf.com

- Local weather : 0033 (0)892680209 (Ariège)

- High mountain police, tel : 0561642258

ACCESS:

How to get to Saint Girons :

- By air :

Toulouse-Blagnac airport (128km), tel : 0033 561424400; connections to Toulouse Matabiau train station via navette every 20mn.

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- By train or bus :

Trains from Toulouse-Matabiau station to Bouspens, SNCF line between Toulouse and Montréjeau. In Bouspens, SNCF bus to Saint Giron, Ariège.

From Saint Giron, transfer organised by taxi at 15h30, in front of Saint Giron ferry terminal to Aulus les Bains. To meet at 11h30, inform Tour Aventure when booking.

As an indication:

Leaves Toulouse – arrives in Bouspens, SNCF bus from in front of Bouspens station, arrives in Saint Giron.

Contact the SNCF www.ter-sncf.com to confirm timetable.

- By car :

From Toulouse, 128km, autoroute via Saint Gaudens; to Saint Martory, take Saint-Giron.

From Lyon, Marseille, Montpellier, rejoin Carcassonne, then direction Foix/Mirepoix; to Foix, Foix, rejoin directly Saint-Giron.

PARKING:

Free parking in Aulus-les-Bains :

Camping-car parking space, near the tourist office or in the village; inform a member of staff at the office..

How to leave Mérens :

TER train direction Toulouse (SNCF line La Tour de Carol – Toulouse), stops in Foix.

2 trains in the afternoon. From Foix correspondances by bus to Saint-Giron.

(line Foix - Saint-Giron, Denamiel busses, tel : 0033 561662437)

How to get to Saint Giron from Mérens to recuperate you car :

From Foix to Saint Giron : bus from Foix, behind the post office, to get to Saint Giron, (no bus on Sundays) - contact Autocars Denamiel tel : 0033 561662437.

By taxi from Foix to Saint-Giron : around 80,00Euros

Taxi Dedieu : tel 0682853296

What to bring and pack

- Bags

A small day pack for your water bottle, camera, picnic and waterproof.

A bag, rucksack or suitcase for your main luggage 10kg maximum per person.

- For Walking

Good walking shoes or boots with a good grip sole

Walking socks.

Warm fleece

Shorts and T shirts.

Swimming costume or trunks

Towel

2 Walking poles (optional)

Water bottle (one litre minimum)

Personal first aid kit with good blister protection

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- For your picnics

A good cutting knife, fork, spoon, plastic cup and plate
some plastic bags

- Sun and rain protection

Sunglasses and sun cream

Sun hat

Wind and waterproof jacket (Gore-tex stlye)

- Relaxing time

Trainers or open sandals

Warm Fleece and casual wear

Tour Aventure Backup

The Tour Aventure team is present and always at hand to ensure the smooth running of your holiday. We are on the ground and ready to assist in any eventuality.

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