

Purely PYRENEES

walking and cycling holidays

Mediterranean Pyrenees Coastal Walk: Collioure to Cadaquès



This classic walk along the surprisingly unspoilt Mediterranean coast has it all: hidden coves, magnificent cliff-top walking, charming little fishing ports; easy walking, and high quality accommodation with excellent cuisine.

6 nights, 5 comfortable self-guided walking days

- Minimum required 2
- From point to point
- With luggage transportation
- Self-guided

Code :
FP2PUCO



The plus points

- **Luggage transfers every day so you only carry a daysack**
- **High quality, original hotels with dinner usually included**
- **24/7 customer service**

Before departure, please check that you have an updated fact sheet.

https://www.purelypyrenees.com/classic_mediterranean_pyrenees_coastal_walk_collioure_cadaques.html

This classic itinerary (with exclusive Purely Pyrenees elements) offers you the best of the Catalan (both French and Spanish) Mediterranean. With the magnificent backdrop of the Pyrenees, explore an unspoilt coastline with its creeks, coves, beaches, gentle cliffs and panoramic views. You will discover attractive fishing villages and small resorts where you will be able to enjoy family run auberges, boutique hotels and memorable meals. This is a region of fascinating contrasts: a landscape steeped in history where you will be able to discover walled villages, castles and signal towers as well as Matisse, Salvador Dali and other interesting artists. And there is no better or more rewarding way of exploring this coastline than on foot and at your own pace. This itinerary includes several private transfers to enable you to only walk the "best bits". Inevitably, this adds to the holiday's cost, so it cannot be directly compared with apparently similar holidays.

■ PROGRAMME

DAY 1

Arrival at Collioure

Standard option: You make your own way to Collioure.

With extra airport pick-up: We meet you at Perpignan airport or railway station.

You begin your trip in the artist's village and fishing port of Collioure with the Mediterranean lapping the walls of its royal castle. Depending on your arrival time, you can easily spend 2 hours exploring the village. Whichever transport option you choose, this will be a memorable beginning to a memorable holiday, made all the more memorable because of the hotel you stay in.

Hôtel* Les Princes de Catalogne :**

The hotel is welcoming and well-situated at the very heart of Collioure, just metres from the port and the sea. Dinner will be in a nearby restaurant (The "Can Pla") which offers a selection of local specialities.

Transfer time : 40 minutes if you've booked the Perpignan-Collioure transfer.

DAY 2

Collioure - Banyuls

Once you are satisfied that you have enjoyed all Collioure offers, you walk up to the old windmill, then on up to the fort of St Elme where you can enjoy the panoramic views of the coast, both north and south. From there, you have 2 options, along the coast or over the mountains.

The Coastal Walk : you walk down to the typically Catalan and very active Port Vendres, then follow the coast by Cap Bear with its numerous attractive coves and creeks, often featuring vines and delightfully colourful, fragrant flowers. Then Paulilles beach offers an almost irresistible opportunity for a swim and sunbathe before continuing to Banyuls by Cap d'Ullastret with its crystal clear waters and hidden coves.

The Foothills Walk : you go over the mountains, you continue climbing up to the majestic Madeloc Tower through alternating "maquis" and vines, and when you see the breath-taking 360° view running from the Spanish border to the plains of Roussillon you understand why they built this watch tower here. From here you descend through vineyards and chestnut orchards until you reach Banyuls. A very satisfying walk.

Banyuls is an interesting and historic frontier town, which is also the end of the famous trans-Pyrenean 900 kilometre GR10 from the Atlantic to here on the Mediterranean.

You now stay at the four star Hôtel Les Elmes, exclusively located overlooking the sheltered beach and scenic bay, understandably popular with yachts. The terrace and the huge windows of its La Littorine gourmet restaurant enable you to enjoy sea views while eating excellent food. Many rooms have sea views, and some have balconies.

Walking time : 5h or 5h30. Distance : 13,5 or 15km. Elevation : + 500 or +700m / - 500 or -700m.

DAY 3

Banyuls - Port Bou

Today you can choose from two different walking options again. One of the walks sticks to the coast while the other climbs up into the foothills, but both will take you across the Franco-Spanish border on foot and onto the interesting (but little known) border village of Port-Bou.

The Coastal Walk: you begin by walking right by the sea, but soon up onto the cliffs that form Cap Cerbère with its marine nature reserve (marked by yellow buoys) stretching almost a mile out to sea to protect the consequently numerous fish and many other sea creatures. You pass beautiful creeks popular with yachtsmen before climbing up to the border at Col des Belitres, then descend gently down to Port-Bou.

The Foothills Walk: from Banyuls small lanes with ancient stone walls enable you to climb comfortably up through vineyards then "maquis" to enjoy a series of panoramic views of the nearby coast and hills with the higher Pyrenees in the distance, including the nearly 8,500 feet Mount Canigou 30 miles away, which often has snow on its summit right into summer. You walk, however, up to the rather more manageable 2,000 feet close to the signal tower, Tour de Querroig, that marks the frontier before enjoying magnificent sea views as you descend to Port-Bou.

From Port Bou, you will be transferred on to Llança.

You stay in Llança, which is an attractive and interesting resort (lovely beach) and fishing port. The Hôtel La Goleta is situated near the port, comfortable and welcoming. You'll have dinner at the hotel restaurant and taste the Catalan cuisine.

Walking time : 4h30 or 5h. Distance : 11,5km or 13km. Elevation : + 500 or +700m / - 500 or - 700m. Transfer time : 20 minutes.

DAY 4

Llança - Port de la Selva

The Coastal Walk : you walk past some impressive architect designed villas to arrive at the Sarnella lighthouse, and soon after the pretty, white village of Port de la Selva offering both vibrancy and tranquillity. You can now explore the village, and enjoy all that your characterful, waterside hotel offers, or explore the lovely port of Fornells with its golden cliffs and tiny harbour.

The Foothills Walk : this is a superb route through "maquis", up hidden valleys and along pilgrim paths to the beautiful small chapel of St Helena, and the imposing monastery of San Père de Rodes from where there are magnificent coastal views including Cape Creus and the white coastal villages, but if you want to climb even higher to San Salvador castle from where you can see the bay of Rosas and the Pyrenees, including, of course, Mount Canigou. Either way, you descend with the blue of the Mediterranean shimmering constantly in front of you in order to arrive at Port de la Selva.

Located a few yards from the sea, the four star Hôtel Porto Cristo is full of character (once a maritime warehouse), especially in its atmospheric vaulted restaurant, but also offers stylish and spacious bedrooms, excellent spa facilities, and its other, nearby sea view restaurant that specialises in seafood. We think you will find it a thoroughly pleasant experience.

Walking time : 4h or 5h. Distance : 12km or 15,5km. Elevation : + 250m or + 500 to + 700m / - 250m or - 500 to - 700m.

DAY 5

Port de la Selva - Cadaquès

You climb up out of Port de la Selva, and cross the wild and unspoilt coastal foothills of Cap de Creus, but also visit the particularly beautiful and steep sided Cala Taballera cove. As you cross the cape you will see ancient dry stone shelters among the trees and other natural pleasures of this remarkable landscape. The walk ends with a panoramic descent through stone walls and olive trees to Cadaques, although we would recommend extending it by visiting the Cala Nans lighthouse, not least so as to enjoy the beautiful view of Cadaquès

You now stay for the last two nights at the four star Hôtel Playa Sol, which offers everything you would expect from such a well located, refined hotel. It is right on the waterside with its own small beach, so you get wonderful coastal views from the public rooms and many bedrooms. Yet behind the main building there is an extensive, olive tree filled garden with tennis court and excellent swimming pool. You are a gentle stroll from the centre of Cadaquès. We leave you free to choose your own restaurant for tonight, although you can always ask us for recommendations (you can also take a look in your favourite guide book, and your hotel can give you recommendations too).

Walking time : 4h30. Distance : 13kmkm. Elevation : + 450m / - 600m.

DAY 6

Cadaques - Cap de Creus - Cadaquès

Circular walk out to the lighthouse on Cap de Creus, which is the most easterly point on the whole of the Iberian peninsula, then you can walk to the Pla de la Tudela on a rough road with those rather strange rocks which inspired some of Salvador Dali's most famous works. You then walk towards, then close to the coast with its little bays and coves with crystal clear water and endless photographic opportunities. Your destination is Dali's adopted home village of Port-Lligat, and it takes no genius to see why he chose it. We would thoroughly recommend visiting his wonderfully quirky waterside house before walking on to Cap de S'Oliguera, not least because it gives you a memorable view as you arrive back in Cadaqués, although you can cut the journey short by walking directly to Cadaqués.

We leave you free to choose your own restaurant again, although you can always ask us for recommendations (you can also take a look in your favourite guide book, and your hotel can give you recommendations too).

Walking time : 4h30 or 6h. Distance : 12km or 18km. Elevation : + 300m or + 400m / - 300m or -400m.

DAY 7

End of stay

Standard option: We transfer you back to Collioure. On the way we can make a 1h30 stop at the amazing Dali museum in Figueras which is really worth a visit if you'd enjoy that.

With extra airport pick-up: We will transfer you back to Perpignan airport or railway station. We'll also do the stop at the Dali museum if you want.

When you book, please tell us if you want to do the stop at the Dali museum on the way back.

Transfer time : 2h or 3h30 with the museum visit.

Elements beyond our control (the weather, level of group, logistical risks, other miscellaneous reasons...) may lead our team to modify the programme. We aim to please, but your safety will systematically be our priority.

PROGRAMME OF DEPARTURES

1 March to 30 Juin and 1 September to 30 October.

MEETING POINT

Standard option: You make your own way to Collioure.

With extra airport pick-up: We meet you at Perpignan airport or railway station.

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TO GET TO THE MEETING POINT

SNCF runs overnight sleeper trains from Paris to Perpignan and Collioure, and daytime TGV express trains go to Perpignan. There are flights to Perpignan from London and Paris, to Barcelona, Girona and Montpellier from several European cities, to Toulouse from numerous British and European cities, and to Carcassonne from London. Some of these flights only fly (or only fly frequently) in the height of summer.

CAR SHARING

To reduce your travel costs as well as carbon emissions, think about car sharing, whether you are a driver or passenger. Connect to [Blablacar](#) it's simple and practical.

We recommend that you compare the cost of various different means of accessing your circuit start point by using the website [Rome2Rio](#) or [Comparabus](#). Contrary to what the names suggest, these sites propose several different means of completing a journey, including, flights, trains, buses and even car sharing.

PARKING

There are several options for parking in Collioure.

- In town for about 45euros/week.
- Free car parks in the outskirts with buses to the town center (attention, some days there are no buses).
- Private car park "Garage Jacques Veine" tel : +33 (0)4 68 82 02 75, about 35euros/week. You'll have to call him a few days before arrival to book and inform him about your schedule. He can then bring you to the hotel after you've parked the car. Don't forget to fix a schedule by the end of your tour.

GUARANTEED DEPARTURE FROM (PERS)

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LEVEL

This holiday features comfortable rather than challenging walking, and is suitable for anybody who enjoys "a good walk". On most days there are choices of itineraries, which you can decide for yourselves each day. It can get very hot in July and August, as well as much more crowded, but the temperatures are moderated by the mountains and sea breezes. We would recommend May, June and September as the best months.

Although the stages are not very long, in places the paths are quite stoney, with some steep parts early in the trip. If you are not used to walking over this type of terrain you may need to add a little time to the itineraries.

LUGGAGE TRANSPORTATION

We will transfer your luggage between each hotel, so all you need to carry when walking is a daysack with whatever you regard as essentials.

SUPERVISION

This is an independent, self-guided holiday.

ACCOMMODATION

You stay in double or twin rooms for 4 nights in four star hotels, 2 nights in three star hotels, and 1 night in a particularly good two star hotel.

MEALS

You will eat very well. Dinners are based on set menus featuring regional specialities, fish etc usually with 3 or 4 choices for each of three courses, but you can pay locally for upgraded choices.

The evening meal on night 3 may be regarded as "gourmet". The two evening meals at Cadaqués are not included in the price.

Breakfast is included every morning, but lunches and picnics are not because there are plenty of places to make your own choices, although the night before you can ask the hotel for a picnic, which you can pay for locally.

TRANSFERS

Usually transfers are in people carriers, mini-buses, cars or taxis. Often they will be exclusively for you.

THE PRICE INCLUDES

4 nights dinner, bed and breakfast, plus 2 nights bed and breakfast; transfer back to Collioure Day 7, transfers to and from Perpignan (only if you have selected this option); daily people transfers; daily luggage transfers; detailed walking instructions; 1:25,000 IGN map; 24/7 customer phone service.

THE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

The journey to the start point or from the finish point; lunches; drinks with meals ; non-standard menu items ; entry fees.

CONTENTS OF YOUR TRAVEL FOLDER

When we have received your balance of payment for your holiday, and in the month before departure, we send you all the documentation you need: detailed itinerary showing dates, times, contact details etc; a detailed guide to your walking route (with options) and lots of cultural, historical and nature background information; formal documents (invoices, contracts etc); luggage labels etc. If you book at the last minute, we can send this information to your first night hotel.

■ EQUIPMENT

Do pack everything into one suitcase (preferably soft form) and bring a weatherproof daysack (small rucksack) each. We transport your luggage, and large rucksacks are difficult for flights and cars.

Do invest in "tech" clothing - light, waterproof, breathable, quick drying etc - and good walking boots with ankle protection (trainers will not be good enough).

Do simplify your "tech" equipment if you can: for example, can you get communications, internet access, entertainment, music and books all on your smartphone ? There's plenty of space in your luggage for a Kindle, so do you need to take books as well ?

Do choose comfortable clothing for evenings too - usually people dress casual, or at most smart casual, but remember you are usually staying and dining in quality hotels.

Do remember that while you are enjoying some of the most unspoilt and magnificent scenery and landscapes in the world, and walking for hours without seeing another soul, you will be staying in villages and towns with shops that have most of the things you might need as replacements, or if you've forgotten stuff. After all, you are in France and Spain, not the middle of nowhere !

LUGGAGE

- A soft travel bag, avoid suitcases, which are more cumbersome and limit the weight of your belongings to 10 kg if possible.
- A small backpack of 30 litres minimum for your daytime requirements.

CLOTHES

- Waterproof and breathable anorak (Gore-Tex type)
- Fleece or a sweater (depending on the location and season)
- Waterproof over-trousers
- Pair of gloves (depending on the location and season)
- Sun hat (with all round brim)
- Shorts
- Swimming costume + packaway towel
- Several pairs of proper walking socks
- Underwear
- Pair of trainers or light evening shoes
- Comfortable clothing for the evening

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Walking boots (with ankle protection)
- Sunglasses, sunscreen and lip protection
- Water bottle or backpack container (allow 2 litres per person per day)
- Tupperware type container for the picnic + cutlery
- Compass
- Waterproof cover for walking instructions and map
- Head torch
- Survival blanket
- Mobile phone (signal strength is often surprisingly good, but cannot be relied on)
- Your identity documents (including driving licence - you never know when...)

FIRST AID KIT

- Small shared kit (gauze, plasters, analgesic, blister plasters, earplugs, pain killers, indigestion tablets)

LUGGAGE

Please use soft travel bags, and restrict each bag to 10 kilos. You will also need a daysack of about 30 litres.

CLOTHES

You will know what to bring, but casual as much as smart casual clothing works for most evenings, and your priority should be comfort, especially for your feet!

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

For walking, you will know what to bring, but we would recommend ankle protecting walking boots, a complete waterproof and breathable outfit, sunhat, plenty of sun protection, a 2 litre water container per person, waterproof map case, compass, head torch, mobile phone, small first aid kit, and a Tupperware container and utensils for lunches.

■ MORE INFORMATION

THE AREA

The walking takes place at the Mediterranean end of the Pyrenees. The final mountains tumble down directly into the sea, but they are no longer anything like the high alpine pastures of the Central Pyrenees. Here, there are cacti and Mediterranean scrub and the weather is much more reliable. The wonderful smells of lavender, thyme and rosemary are never far away. The most significant weather feature would be the strong "Tramontana" wind, which can sometimes be quite relentless.

Politically, this part of the Mediterranean is divided between France (department of the Pyrénées Orientales) and Spain (province of Girona). However, both parts form part of Catalonia and in 2017 the part that is south of the border claimed independence from Spain. This independence has not been officially recognised by any other European nation, but many people will insist that they are now independent. The situation is likely to develop significantly over the coming years, but the subject can be quite a thorny one, so you should be aware that the opinions of local people should be respected whether you happen to agree with them or not.

French is the main language north of the border (with some Catalan spoken), but south of the border you are likely to hear more Catalan spoken than Spanish. Most place names are in Catalan, and both "northerners" and "southerners" are united by a common Catalan culture.

On the French side of the border, the towns of Banyuls and Collioure cannot be missed - Banyuls is famous for its terraced vineyards overlooking the Med (feel free to taste the local wine!), and Collioure for its picturesque harbour and lighthouse, inspiration to great artists from the fauvism movement such as Matisse or Derain. From the coast, you will notice one mountain standing out from the rest as you look inland - the mighty Canigou (2784m). Purely Pyrenees also runs trips to climb this mountain!

The easternmost point of the Pyrenean range can be found in this region: Cap de Creus, in Spanish Catalonia (a headland that also happens to be the most easterly point of the whole of the Iberian Peninsula). This is a wonderful place to explore on foot to observe some of the incredible rock formations and bizarre landscapes that inspired Salvador Dali in some of his most famous surrealist paintings. For fans of Dali, it is also possible to visit a museum dedicated to him in Port Lligat near Cadaqués.

There are some gorgeous landscapes in this part of the world, which can also change several times in the same day. The transition between the seaside and the mountains is immediate - you just have to climb up a little and contemplate this tortured coastline with the plains of Roussillon to the North and the Empordà to the South. Not to mention the fantastic sunrises over the Med!

Architecture speaking, the castle in Collioure (with the sea lapping at its outer walls) and the magnificent Romanesque mountain monastery of Sant Père de Rodes are not to be missed.

If eating is your thing, then there is paella, grilled sardines, fresh anchovies, Catalan sausages or crema catalana just to name a few specialities. They also love to eat toasted bread with tomato and olive oil for breakfast. You can also try Cava (the Catalan answer to Champagne) or Cremat, a drink based on burnt rum and coffee.

■ INSURANCE

Insurances are contracted between the client and the sales agent.

■ ACTING FOR RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Purely Pyrenees who's organising this tour is a founding member of Action for Responsible Tourism.

The label "Action for Responsible Tourism" was awarded Purely Pyrenees in 2009. It is controled, every year, bys ECOCERT.

Based on common values of respect, solidarity and quality, ATR aims to harmonize professional practices of its members.

To win the confidence of customers, it focuses on four key commitments, which arise from many activities in the field and at home.

- Clear information and awareness of responsible tourism given to the traveller.
- Selection of providers in the spirit of responsible tourism.
- Setting up of a transfer of competencies to the providers.
- Commitment in relation to the tour operator's own structure.

More information on the label ATR on /www.tourisme-responsable.org

■ CONTACT US

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■ NOTES

