



Chemin St. Jacques Hiking 13 Days

Summary

Length

13 days/12 nights,
with 11 days walking

Dates

Any start date between May
1 and September 15

Level

13 to 24 km daily (7 to 14
miles), averaging 18.5 km
(11.5 miles)

This trip is suited to experi-
enced hikers

On most days there are
climbs and descents which
can be steep and require
caution if the weather is wet

Follow in the footsteps of pilgrims who, for over a thousand years, travelled through France on their way to the shrine of the Apostle James the Elder at Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Follow the Grande Randonnée (GR) 65, a long distance walking path, to travel the first 200 km of the Way of St. James from Le Puy to Conques. Cross the rugged countryside of the Auvergne and the Massif Central, through picturesque towns and past the roadside crosses, chapels, and looming fortresses that marked the way for the faithful in centuries past.

Itinerary



Day 1

Arrive in stunning
Le Puy-en-Velay,
one of the four
main starting
points for the pil-
grimage to Com-
postela. Pilgrims
gathered at the
magnificent

Cathédrale-de-Notre-Dame before their
departure.

Day 2

Follow the pilgrims' route past churches of
volcanic rock and fields where the famous
green lentils of Le Puy grow. Their distinc-
tive taste is said to be due to the volcanic
soil in which they grow. Arrive in the small
town of Saint-Privat D'Allier.

Day 3

Head across the plateau through
Rochegude, a frontier stronghold; pause at
the chapel of St. James where pilgrims
stopped for devotions. Today's destination
is Saugues which English mercenaries, left
unemployed by the end of the Hundred
Years' War, occupied until they were paid
off.

Day 4

Cross the Margaride plateau, through pine
forests and small villages and past ruined
castles to Domaine du Sauvage, a scattering
of farm buildings near the site of a pilgrims'
hospice. A taxi will pick you up and transfer
you back to Saugues, where you'll spend a
second night.

Day 5

Start with a taxi
transfer to Do-
maine du Sauvage,
from where you
head into the
countryside past
the Chapelle Saint-
Rouget, built of the
red sandstone so
widely used in the region. You'll see it again
in the cathedral and chateau when you ar-
rive in Saint-Alban-sur-Limagnole.



Day 6

Walk through woods, across moors, beside
pastures with old stone walls, and along an
ancient Roman road to the charming town
of Aumont-Aubrac.

Day 7

Enjoy another day among beautiful pastures
and moors before climbing to Montgros,
near the cross- country ski centre of Nas-
binal.



How to get there?

The tour starts in the town of Le Puy-en-Velay, located about 360 km south of Paris.

There are several trains every day from Paris. The trip takes around six hours and usually requires at least one change.

You depart from the tour area by way of Rodez where you can connect to trains to Paris or other destinations.

Itinerary

Day 8

This is your last day on high plateaus. Pass through Aubrac where the Brothers Hospitalier once kept an estate in order to protect the pilgrims. Arrive at the pretty town of Saint-Chély-D'Aubrac.

Day 9

Walk through remote country to the fortified town of Saint-Côme-d'Olt, designated one of the Plus Beaux Villages de France.

Day 10

Enter the Lot River Valley; visit wonderful old towns like Espalion and Saint-Pierre de Bes-suéjols on your way to Estaing, another Plus Beau Village.

Day 11

Beautiful canyon scenery and simple villages mark the route to Espayrac graced by an old stone cross and the church of Saint-Pierre.

Day 12

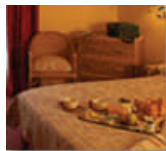
A short day's walk takes you to Conques, clustered around the huge abbey church of Ste-Foy, where the relics of Ste. Foy, a Christian martyr, once drew thousands of pilgrims. Conques itself is a magical destination in a dramatic setting.

Day 13

Explore Conques before departing for home or other destinations.

Accommodation

Classic



Hotel du Parc,

Le Puy en Velay

Overlooking a magnificent garden, the 3-star Hotel du Parc , offers comfortable rooms with modern amenities.



Hotel de la vieille Auberge,

Saint Privat d'Allier

This small, traditional hotel boasts beautiful views on the "gorges". The restaurant offers wonderful regional specialties.



Relais st Roch – Chateau de la Chastre,

Saint Alban sur Limagnole

Christian Chavignon has made this 19th century residence a haven of peace and tranquility.

The service is warm and the rooms are charming and relaxing. The restaurant "la Petite Maison", provides generous, authentic dishes which will satisfy the most discerning gourmet.

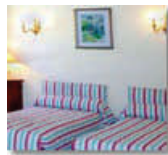


The Price includes:

- 12 nights hotels
- All breakfasts and 4 dinners
- Detailed route instructions and map
- Luggage transfers

Accommodation

Classic



Hotel Prouheze,

Aumont d'Aubrac

This 3-star hotel has comfortable rooms equipped with all modern amenities.



Auberge la Maison de Rosalie,

Montgros

The Auberge de la Maison Rosalie is an unpretentious 2-star hotel with modern facilities. It serves a simple 'menu du jour' to its hotel guests.



Hotel des Voyageurs,

Saint Chely d'Aubrac

The Hotel des Voyageurs has bright and cheerful rooms.

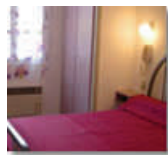
The hotel has been in the same family for four generations, and the restaurant offers delicious regional specialties.



Hotel des voyageurs,

Saint Come d'Olt

A small 2-star hotel with comfortable rooms in the centre of the village.



Aux Armes d'Estaing,

Estaing

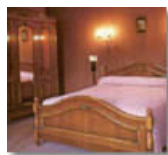
The Hotel Aux Armes d'Estaing is a very good hotel overlooking the Lot valley. The large dining room has a fine stone fireplace in which the chef cooks a range of regional specialties.



Hotel de la Vallee,

Espeyrac

This small hotel, owned by the family Marragou, offers a warm welcome. The hotel has a pleasant restaurant and bar.



Auberge de saint Jacques,

Conques

Located in the heart of the medieval village and just in front of the famous Abbey Sainte Foy, this 2-star hotel has a very good restaurant with regional specialties.