



Tour Information



Languedoc Roussillon by Rail





Travel

Passports

You may need to renew your British Passport if you are travelling to an EU country. **Please ensure your passport is less than 10 years old (even if it has 3 months or more left on it) and has at least 3 months validity remaining from the date of travel.**

For more information, please visit: [passport checker](#)

Visas

You do not need a visa for short trips to France. For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

For further information, please check here: [travel to the EU](#)

French consulate: PO Box 57, 6A Cromwell Place, London SW7 2EW; Tel (020) 7838 2000/1. Information Service: Tel (0891) 887 733, Fax: (020) 7838 2046. Opening hours: 0900-1130 (and 1600-1630 for visa collection only) Mon-Fri (except British and French national holidays).



Tickets

The tour manager will distribute Eurostar tickets at St Pancras. Please meet at the statue underneath the big clock on the first floor 1½ - 2 hours prior to departure time.

Please take care not to lose your tickets and please check that the details on your tickets are accurate. Your ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.

A light meal will be served to passengers travelling Standard Premier on Eurostar. Standard class Eurostar tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although there is a buffet car serving drinks and snacks.

Train Seats

On all legs of the journey, you have reserved seat and carriage numbers which are shown clearly on your ticket.



Baggage

All clients are responsible for handling their own luggage, including carrying it on and off the trains and lifting it onto the luggage storage racks, which may be located overhead. Therefore, all luggage must be of a manageable size and should not exceed 15kg in weight. Baggage can be stored on overhead shelves or at the entrance to the carriages. Trolleys are available at St Pancras, but bags do need to be carried on to the platform. Porters are sometimes but not always available at St Pancras.

Travel Editions recommends a luggage delivery service called **thebaggageman**, where your suitcase can be picked up from your home before departure and delivered straight to your hotel; therefore removing the worry about carrying your cases onto and off the trains.

For further information:

<http://www.thebaggageman.com>

Transfers

On arrival, the hotel is a 200m walk from Montpellier St Roch.

On departure, transfer by coach (15 mins.) to Montpellier Sud de France.

Special Requests

If you haven't already done so, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.

Border Control

At border control, you may need to show a return or onward ticket, show you have enough money for your stay, use separate lanes from EU, EEA and Swiss citizens when queuing.



Accommodation

Oceania Le Métropole Hotel

The traditional 4-star Oceania Le Métropole Hotel is located in the centre of the beautiful city of Montpellier, a 2-minute walk from the main square, the *Place de la Comédie*. Dating from 1898, this hotel offers a high standard of accommodation and service, it was completely renovated during 2016. Facilities here include comfortable rooms with private bath/shower, hairdryer, TV, telephone, safe and wi-fi. A bar, a belle-époque-style restaurant *La Closerie*, a tranquil enclosed garden and an outdoor swimming pool are also available.

For more information visit their website

<https://www.oceaniahotels.com/en/hotel/hotel-oceania-le-metropole-montpellier>



Food

Typical dishes include *Cassoulet* (casserole of haricot beans, mutton, pork or sausages and preserved goose), *Confit de Canard* (pieces of duck preserved in the bird's natural fat for extra taste), *tapenade* (luscious paste made with olives, olive oil, anchovies, capers and garlic). Truffles, asparagus, wild mushrooms and oysters are local products you will see on menus. In Sète enjoy the traditional fish stew, *Bourride*, made with fresh monkfish and served with a garlic mayonnaise.

Crème Catalane (baked custard with a thin and crisp caramel coating) and *Clafoutis* (flan like dessert made with local grown apricots, cherries and peaches) are traditional Languedoc Roussillon desserts.

Almost all restaurants offer two types of meals: *a la carte* (extensive choice for each course, generally more expensive) and *le menu* (a set meal at a fixed price).

The bill (*l'addition*) will not be presented until it is asked for, even if clients sit and talk for half an hour after finishing their meal. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, and no further tipping is required.

Generally speaking, mealtimes in France are strictly observed. Lunch is as a rule served from noon to 13:30, dinner usually from 20:00-21:30, but the larger the city, the later the dining hour.



Drink

Wine is by far the most popular alcoholic beverage in France, and the choice will vary according to region. With 400'000 acres under vines in the region, Languedoc Roussillon is responsible for about a third of France's total wine production. As early as the 1st century AD, in his *Natural History*, Pliny the Elder mentions wine production in this area, the roman province of Gallia Narbonensis. Languedoc Roussillon mainly produces red wines, such as *Corbières*, *Côtes du Roussillon* and *Coteaux du Languedoc*. The sparkling *Crémant de Limoux* and the sweet *Muscat* are well appreciated white wines.

In elegant restaurants the wine list will be separate from the main menu, but in less opulent establishments will be printed on the back or along the side of the *carte*. The waiter will usually be glad to advise an appropriate choice. If in doubt, try the house wine; this will usually be less expensive and will always be the owner's pride.

Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

Breakfast daily and a welcome dinner at a local restaurant on the second evening

Taking food into EU countries

You are not able to take meat, milk or any products containing them into EU countries.



Destination

Step into the past wandering through the streets of *Saint-Guilhem-le-Desert*, be confronted by wonderful modern architecture at the *Millau Viaduct*, enjoy characterful seaside towns and experience Cathar history at the breath-taking citadel of *Carcassonne*.

From our base in the delightful southern city of Montpellier visit all the beautiful sites the region of Languedoc Roussillon has to offer.

Places of interest included in the tour:

Montpellier

The capital of the Languedoc-Roussillon region, Montpellier is an attractive and lively southern city, and the perfect base for touring this area. The main sights here include the *Promenade de Peyrou*, a grand 18th century square dominated by the *Chateau d'Eau*; the old town lined with 17th century mansions including the *Hotel des Trésoriers de la Bourse*; the 12th century *Towers de la Babote and Des Pins*, and the *Musée Fabre* that houses an excellent collection of French paintings. Eating out here is an affordable delight with plenty of restaurants catering to most tastes and budgets. Explore the vibrant quartier Saint Roch for excellent restaurants.

For more information about Montpellier, please visit:

<https://www.montpellier-france.com/>

Pézenas and Sète

The charming and compact town of Pézenas is easily appreciated in a gentle stroll that takes in most of its (well-indicated) sights, such as the *Hotel des Barons de Lacoste*, the *Maison des Pauvres* and the *Porte Fauçères*. Host to medieval fairs, seat of the Governors of Languedoc during the 16th and 17th centuries and adopted by Molière and his *Illustre Theatre* troupe of actors, Pezenas is delightfully rich in history and culture.

The fishing port of Sète is very much a working town as well as a tourist seaside resort, and its quayside restaurants selling fish straight off the boat are as likely to be frequented by sailors as visitors. Sights here include the *Grand Canal* lined with Italianate houses decorated in pastel colours and seafood restaurants and the *Marin Cemetery* above the town, where poet Paul Valéry is buried.

For more information about Pézenas, please visit:

<https://www.france-voyage.com/tourism/pezenas-1009.htm>

For more information about Sète, please visit:

<http://www.en.ot-sete.fr/>

Carcassonne and Narbonne

The citadel of Carcassonne is a perfectly restored medieval town. Crowning a steep bank overlooking the River Aude, it offers a fairytale skyline of turrets and ramparts. The walled city, some parts of which date back to the 5th century, was extensively restored in 1853. Highlights of the fortified old town include the *Château Comtal* and the *Basilica of St-Nazaire* which houses the famous Siege Stone, the *Musée Lapidaire* and the *Porte Narbonnaise*, the gateway to the old city, which is almost like stepping back in time.

The charming town of Narbonne is bisected by the 17th century *Canal du Midi*, with the restored medieval quarter to the north, where most of the sights are to be found. These include the impressive 13th century *Cathédrale Saint-Just et Saint-Pasteur*, the *Archbishops' Palace* and "horreum," an intriguing underground warren of granaries and grain chutes dating from the 1st century BC when Narbonne was the capital of the largest Roman province in Gaul.

For more information about Carcassonne, please visit:

<http://www.tourism-carcassonne.co.uk/>

For more information about Narbonne, please visit:

<https://www.france-voyage.com/tourism/narbonne-69.htm>

Millau Viaduct & St-Guilhem-le-Desert

Stretching 1.5 miles over the Tarn River valley, the *Millau Viaduct* has been hailed as one of the engineering wonders of the 21st century and it is certainly a spectacular sight. Standing 1,125 feet tall it is the highest bridge in the world, taller than the Eiffel Tower and more than 100 metres taller than Canary Wharf. The huge bulk of the 242,000 tonne structure, designed by British architect Lord Norman Foster, is belied by its elegant lines,

described by its creator as a “sculpture in the landscape.”

Remotely situated in the Hérault Valley, the stunningly picturesque village of *St- Guilhem-le-Désert* grew up around the *Abbaye de Gellone* founded by William of Aquitaine in the 9th century. It is dominated by the strikingly simple *Romanesque Abbey church*, famed for its possession of a fragment of the True Cross.

For more information about the Millau Viaduct, please visit:

<https://www.tourisme-aveyron.com/en/millau-viaduct/discover-millau-viaduct>

For more information about the St-Guilhem-le-Désert, please visit:

<http://www.saintguilhem-valleeherault.fr/en/>

Aigues-Mortes & the Camargue

The perfectly preserved walled town of *Aigues-Mortes* (“Place of Dead Waters”) is approached across the salt marshes of the Petit Camargue just to the east of Montpellier. The fortified town was established by Louis XI in the 13th century to consolidate his power on the Mediterranean and was built to a strict grid pattern. Now marooned three miles from the sea, it was from here that Louis XI twice departed for the Crusades.

The Camargue region is a protected area of outstanding natural beauty and numbers wild horses and migrant flamingoes amongst the wildlife it accommodates.

For more information about Aigues-Mortes, please visit:

<http://www.ot-aiguesmortes.fr/en/>

For more information about the Camargue, please visit:

<https://www.francethisway.com/places/camargue.php>

Reading Suggestions

Graham Robb, *The Discovery of France*.

A general introduction to French culture, landscape and history, it also features an excellent insight into the distinctive character of France’s regions.

Bernard Levin, *From the Camargue to the Alps: A Walk Across France in Hannibal’s footsteps*.

As the title suggests, English journalist Bernard Levin follows the Carthaginian military commander’s path across France to Italy, describing history, landscape and culture on his way.

Tobias Smollett, *Travels through France and Italy, 1766*.

Laurance Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy, 1768*.

Both 18th century authors travelled through France, to Nice, continuing along to Italy. Sterne’s personal and sentimental account can be seen as a response to quarrelsome and deriding Smollett’s.

Rupert Wright, *Notes from the Languedoc*

Wright describes Languedoc’s history, culture and renowned inhabitants in a light hearted fashion, making this a easy, enjoyable read.

Angela Murrills (author) & Peter Matthews (illustrator), *Hot sun, cool shadow: Savouring the food, history and mystery of the Languedoc*

Award-winning food writer Murrills gives a delightful account of the region’s history, culture, and of course, delicious food and wine.

Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.

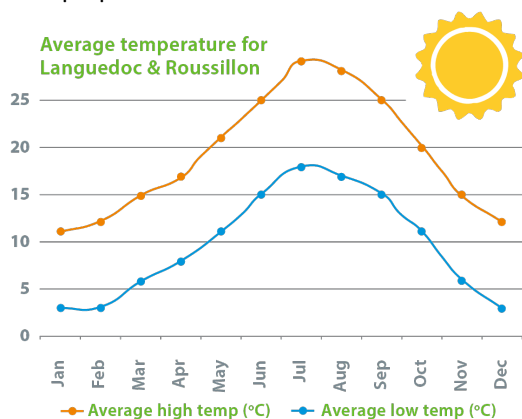
Grading

This tour has been graded as **Moderate**: Walking between sites, lots of standing for viewing.



The Basics

Climate – The weather in Languedoc Roussillon at this time of year is likely to be pleasant, but there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.



Time – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

Language – French.

Religion – Roman Catholic.

National holidays – New Year's day (01 Jan); Easter Monday; Labour day (01 May); Victory in Europe day (08 May); Ascension day; Whit Sunday; Whit Monday; National day (14 Jul); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); All Saints' day (01 Nov); Armistice day (11 Nov); Christmas day (25 Dec).

Currency – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Banks – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

Credit cards – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you are eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it is advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times.

Electricity – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

Drinking water – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

Shops and museums – Montpellier has wide variety of shops. Small towns have quaint boutiques and beautiful markets.

Department stores are open 0900-1830 Monday to Saturday. Most shops are closed between 1200-1430. Some food shops (particularly bakers) are open Sunday mornings, in which case they will probably close Monday. Many shops close all day or half-day Monday.

Please note that most museums close on Mondays.

Clothes & Shoes – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended.

Camera – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

Bath plugs – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

Telephones/mobiles – The guarantee of free mobile phone roaming throughout the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway has ended. Check with your phone operator to find out about any roaming charges that might be applied after 1st January 2021. A new law means that you are protected from getting mobile data charges above £45 without you knowing. Once you reach £45, you need to opt in to spend more so that you can continue using the internet while you are abroad. Your phone operator will tell how you can do this.

Tipping – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm.



Health

Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.



Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.

General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Sun Protection

Always ensure you take sufficient sun protection and moisturiser. A sun hat and sunglasses are also advisable.

Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC)

Before you travel, make sure you've got a valid UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or travel insurance with health cover.

You may not have access to free emergency medical treatment and could be charged for your healthcare if you do not have an EHIC or GHIC when visiting an EU country, or travel insurance with full healthcare cover when visiting Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. If you have an EHIC it will still be valid while it remains in date. Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) will be valid if you're travelling to an EU country.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For further information about the GHIC please visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7841 023807 or 00 44 7441 343850

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate Marseille

24 avenue du Prado

13006 Marseille

France

+33 (0)4 91 15 72 10

Marseilleconsular.marseille@fco.gov.uk

Mon, Wed and Fri: 09:00 to 12:30. Outside these hours a consular Emergency Service is in operation and can be contacted on +33 (0)4 91 15 72 10

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