TECHNICAL SHEET

HIKING ALONG THE PINECONE TRAIN Self guided

Hiking trails and railways in the Alpes de Haute Provence

Reference · 349

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DURATION	TRAVEL STYLE	LUGGAGE
7 days	**Self-guided**	**Without luggage transfer**

ACCOMMODATION	LEVEL	FROM
Comfort (room)	**3/4 ★★★☆**	**835 €**

From Nice to Haute Provence, from olive trees to chestnut trees, the gentle rhythm of the train and hiking transports you on a timeless adventure. In 1911, the railway link between Nice and Digne became a reality after half a century of planning! The line experienced prosperity, the First World War, the demographic decline of the mountains... and many episodes that threatened to close it down... Fortunately, its defenders created the Groupe d'Etude pour les Chemins de fer de Provence (GECP). Since 1980, this association of volunteers has been operating the Train des Pignes à Vapeur on the line, which has now been modernised and is also operated by the Sud - Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur Region.

This gentle journey takes you from Entrevaux, an exceptional medieval town, to Saint-André-les-Alpes, a commune in the Verdon Regional Natural Park, via the stunning natural site of the Grès d'Annot. Six hikes starting from villages with varied charms and atmospheres.

You will love

- The legendary Pignes railway line (Chemin de fer de Provence) and its medieval villages
- The famous sandstones of Annot
- Hiking in the upper Verdon
- The possibility of travelling almost all year round
- Holidays without the car, accessible from Digne or Nice

Day-by-day itinerary

DAY 1

Departure at 8 a.m. or 12:20 p.m. from Nice CFP station

ENTREVAUX – SA CITADELLE – LES LACS

The train takes you from the French Riviera to the Var Valley. The medieval village of Entrevaux is the first stop on the journey, and the afternoon will be spent on an initial hike to explore the heights of the town. Overnight stay in a hotel in Entrevaux.

3 hour walk / Elevation : +650m ; -450m / 9km

DAY 2

LES GRES D'ANNOT

New train journey to Annot! The sandstone cliffs overlooking the village are home to sculptures and legends that have been created over the centuries. It is also a fantastic playground for climbers from all over France. Check in at your hotel in Annot for two nights.

4 hour walk / Elevation : +750m ; -750m / 10km

DAY 3

MEAILLES – CRÊTE DU COUGNAS

The small Méailles plateau has many gems to discover during this hike: its railway station, its hilltop village, its cliffs, its "roubines", its caves and its ridges. But be careful: on the return journey, **the train only stops on request, so you'll have to wave your arms vigorously to avoid being left behind on the platform!** Second night in Annot.

6.5 hour walk / Elevation : +950m ; -950m / 15km

DAY 4

PEYRESQ – COLLE SAINT MICHEL

This time, **the train stops in the middle of the forest**, with no roads or buildings, just a small shelter. Departure for the village of Peyresq and its turbulent history through the upper Vaïre valley. The most resilient will continue on to Plan du Rieu before finishing at La Colle, a historic crossing point between the Verdon and Var regions. Overnight stay in a hostel in La Colle Saint Michel **without luggage**.

4.5 hour walk / Elevation : +950m ; -550m / 10km

2.5 hours of additional walking and 550m additional elevation by le plan du Rieu

DAY 5

PUY DE RENT – SAINT ANDRE LES ALPES

The day begins on a wide ridge and panoramic summit. The view stretches from the surrounding Mercantour mountains to the sea. A long descent takes you to **the train that will take you back to St André**. At the end of the afternoon, there is the option of a short hike above Lake Castillon. Accommodation for 2 nights in a hotel.

5 hour walk / Elevation : +750m ; -1200m / 14km

DAY 6

COURCHONS – CRÊTE DU LOUP

After passing through numerous villages during the week that narrowly escaped extinction, here is one that has definitely fallen into ruin. It is easy to imagine how hard life must have been up here, and a few elements remind us of this: the church, the cemetery, the oven, the wash house... Some will follow the canal back to its source and then on to the Crête du Loup, while the most resilient will go as far as the summit of the Aup and its landscape of isolated steppes. Last night in St André.

5.5 hour walk / Elevation : +750m ; -750m / 18km

1.5 hours of additional walking and 350m additional elevation to the Aup summit.

DAY 7

TRAIN DES PIGNES / PINE CONE TRAIN

The last day is devoted to the return journey, allowing you to enjoy the entire line from Saint André to Nice.

2.30 hour of train

End of the tour during the day in Nice

The programme has been drawn up on the basis of the latest information available at the time of writing; imponderables are always possible and situations beyond our control may alter its course.

Dates and prices

DEPARTURES AND PRICES

En 2026, departures available from May to October, on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays ;

835€ per person in comfortable hotel accommodation, based on 2 people.

THE PRICE

The price includes:

- Accommodation in half board from the night of the 1st day to breakfast on the last day;
- Road book: description and maps (1 road book per registration pack);
- Tourist taxes;
- Organisational and booking fees ;
- the train tickets mentioned in the route ;
- Luggage transport between Annot and St André les Alpes.

The price does not include:

- Picnic lunches;
- Drinks, visits, etc. ;
- The journey from your home to the venue and back;
- The luggage transportation on day 4 ;
- Guiding: your are responsible for your own safety;
- Cancellation assistance insurance ;

The price applies from departure to end point.

The journey

LEVEL ***

Elevation: +/- 700m -1000m approximately per day.
Walking time: 4 to 6 hours per day.
Type of trek: mountain hike on trails including gravel paths.

You have to be in a general good fitness level. Please practice regurlarly a cardio sport such as hiking, running, cycling or another sport.
Your physical preparation will enable you to enjoy your trek to the maximum.
Please find the description of the levels by clicking here: levels of difficulty

The roadbook provides sufficient information on the itinerary of your hike. However, it is essential to be able to read an IGN 1:25,000 map and to be sufficiently autonomous in the mountains to be able to tackle the itinerary with confidence, whatever the weather (fog, snow, etc.). Guiding is not included in the self-guided package.
You will be crossing areas with no telephone network. For your own safety, you may wish to bring along a radio or the latest generation telephone with a satellite connection.

ROAD BOOK

Before departure, we send you a travel folder containing:
- Maps IGN TOP 25 with the route highlighted.
- 1 road-book containing all the necessary information for the trek.
- 1 waterproof map holder.
- Accommodation list.

SIGNPOSTS AND WAYMARKS ALONG THE TREK

In France, the hiking trails are signposted, with regular panels pointing the way.
It is preferable to be able to read a topographic map 1/25000.

TRAIN ROUTE

- D1 : Nice - Entrevaux
- D2 : Entrevaux - Annot
- D3 : Annot - Méailles & Méailles - Annot
- D4 : Annot - Halte de Peyresq
- D5 : Halte d'Allons-Argens - St André les Alpes
- D7 : St André les Alpes - Nice

LUGGAGE TRANSPORT

You are responsible for transporting your luggage between the different accommodations, except between Annot and St André les Alpes (Our taxi partner will take care of transferring your luggage).

ACCOMMODATION

5 nights in a hotel in a room for 2 people
1 night half-board in a dormitory in a hostel.

All accommodation offers hot showers.

MEALS

Breakfast is provided in each accommodation.
Dinners are not included (except on day 4) and can be taken in the various outlets or restaurants.
Picnics are not included and can be ordered the day before in some accommodation.
You can buy supplies in local shops.

Please inform us about your food allergies and special diets **at the time of booking.**
We do our best to accommodate special diets (gluten-free, vegetarian, etc.). However, we encourage you to bring some additional products for your own picnics.

MAPS

IGN Top 25 - 3541OT Annot & 3641 Moyen Var

Practical information

ACCESS TO DEPARTURE POINT

Departure from Nice or Digne-les-Bains (please specify when registering) .

BY TRAIN / BUS
Inbound: departure from Paris-Gare de Lyon the day before : www.oui.sncf

ACCOMMODATION BEFORE AND AFTER

By request we can book a bedroom for you before and/or after your tour.

INSURANCE

In accordance with regulations, we are covered by Professional Liability Insurance. Under no circumstances, we can replace your personal civil liability.
The repatriation insurance EUROP ASSISTANCE that we offer is dedicated to French speaking people living in Europe. If it is not your case, we advise you to subscribe to another travel insurance which will cover you in case of injury and repatriation during your trek.

If you chose to take out repatriation insurance with EUROP ASSISTANCE whom we propose, Altitude Mont Blanc will only serve as an intermediary between the client and the insurer. We cannot influence either party. We adhere to strict conditions of sale. You are responsible for compliance with the reporting procedures of any incident.

Before making any decision, contact EUROP ASSISTANCE.

CONTACT US

If you are late please contact the agency as soon as possible: **+33 (0)4 50 79 09 16** or **+33 (0)6 42 49 76 07**

Equipment and luggage

EQUIPMENT LIST

Clothing

- Walking trousers
- Shorts (Bikini/swimsuit, just in case!)
- Breathable or merino wool t-shirts
- Breathable or merino wool leggings
- Fleece or jumper
- Wind stopper or Goretex jacket
- Lightweight down jacket
- Waterproof poncho + gaiters or Goretex trousers + waterproof rucksack cover
- Pair of gloves and a warm hat
- Sun hat or baseball cap
- Walking socks (1 pair per day)
- Sturdy walking boots with a good sole, already broken in
- 1 change of clothes for the evening
- A pair of comfortable shoes for the evening

Other Equipment

- Toilet bag
- Quick drying towel
- Sunglasses and sun cream
- Water bottle or Camelback (1.5 litre minimum)
- Knife, fork and spoon
- Plastic lunch box/plate for your picnic lunches (0,4l to 0,5l)
- Plastic cup for coffee
- Small First Aid kit (antihistamine, ibuprofen, Compeed type blister pads...)
- Survival blanket
- Head torch or hand torch
- Sleeping bag liner sheet and pillowcase (blankets provided at accommodation)
- Two adjustable walking poles (highly recommended)
- Identity card or passport

BACKPACK

Bring a comfortable backpack of 30 to 40 litres for your personal belongings for the day (warm clothes, waterproofs, water, plate and cutlery for your picnic, sunscreen and your identity documents) and please keep a little room to carry a picnic and snacks.

LUGGAGE TRANSPORT

You are allowed **1 soft, sports type bag, with all your possessions inside, of 10kg maximum per person.** Your baggage will be transported daily between accommodation by our logistics vehicle.
Baggage which is too heavy won't be accepted by the drivers, please think of their backs!

BACKPACK FOR THE NIGHTS WITHOUT LUGGAGE

For the night 4, when you don't have your luggage at your accommodation, here are a few tips on what to add to your backpack (around 2 kg is enough!):
- a small toiletries bag
- your sleeping bag liner
- a change of clothes (just the bare essentials!) and comfortable shoes/clothes for the evening

Details

HOW TO REGISTER

- Online: www.altitude-montblanc.com

- By telephone: +33 (0)4 50 79 09 16

- By post: Please provide your details

- Surname, First Name, Date of birth
- Address
- Email
- Telephone
- Mobile

If you wish to register by post, please complete the form below and return it to:

Altitude Mont-Blanc
62, passage du Nant Devant
74110 MONTRIOND
FRANCE

Please specify whether you wish to take out an optional cancellation insurance (4.2% of the tour price).

On receipt of your registration we will email an invoice (per couple) with a request for a deposit of 30% in association with your account details at Altitude Mont-Blanc
('My Account'). Payment can be made by credit card, bank transfer or by cheque. On receipt of your deposit you will receive a registration confirmation.
The balance must be paid one month before departure without a reminder from us.
For self-guided tours, we will then send your tour pack (includes maps, descriptive book etc.)

Our terms and conditions of sale can be found on our website.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Postal booking form

Complete this form and return it with your deposit.

Last name	
First name	
Birth date	
Address	
Phone	
Mobile phone	
Email	
Requested trip	**HIKING ALONG THE PINECONE TRAIN Self guided**
Number of days	**7**
Insurance	
Trip price	**835 €**
Estimated deposit (30%)	**250,50 €**
Signed in	
Date	
Signature	

Return with your deposit to

Altitude Montblanc, 62 Passage du Nant Devant, 74110 Montriond

+33 (0)4 50 79 09 16 · info@altitude-montblanc.com

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