SPLENDORS OF VAL MAIRA self-guided

Discover the Pearl of Occitan on a self-drive tour

Reference · 287

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

ACCOMMODATION	LEVEL	FROM
Classic or comfort	**2/4 ★★☆☆**	**520 €**

Nestled on the foothills of the Ubaye, the so-called "Pearl of the Occitan" remains the valley that has never so well worn its nickname.
The Val Maïra, a very wild valley inhabited by a few hundred inhabitants, is located in the south of Piedmont, between France to the west and the Po Valley, only 45 km long, bordered by two massive mountain ranges and crossed by the Maïra River.
This secret valley will enchant you with the authenticity of its architecture, its gastronomy and its inhabitants.
What we propose to you through this circuit, is to observe this valley from above, to follow in the footsteps of the farmers in the pastures, smugglers on the high passes or even on those of the carabinieri, whose remains of high-altitude barracks testify to a strong presence on these beautiful heights at a time not very distant.
In the evening, comfortably settled in your Locanda Occitane, you enjoy an unusual "Italian-style" welcome. Nestled in small mountain hamlets, you will be charmed by the beauty and tranquility of the villages of Val Maira.

You will love

- Discovering an authentic country from its passes
- A unique architectural and natural heritage
- Follow in the footsteps of smugglers and carabinieri
- Warm welcome in hostels

Day-by-day itinerary

DAY 1

Head to Chiappera, one of the villages nestled at the foot of the border, where you can park your vehicle and leave your luggage in the morning in your evening inn (rooms available from 4.30pm).

CHIAPPERA - ROURE LAKES AND MARY'S PASS

Departing from this charming village, you climb up to the bottom of the Maurin valley dominated by the very characteristic Rocca Provençale. The objective of this day of walking, is to reach the Franco-Italian border to find a myriad of wild lakes nestled at more than 2800 m of altitude (you will have to leave early in the morning). A perfect loop that will satisfy hikers in search of wild and unusual spaces. Diner and night in hostel.

6.30 hours walk / Altitude difference: +1050 m ; +1050 m

DAY 2

5 LAKES LOOP - CHIAPPERA

Here is one of the most beautiful altitude loops of this small massif... Lakes, passes, the charm of the high plateaus and the green pastures that are hard to imagine during this ascent in an environment where glaciers have shaped landscapes. Trails remarkably “cut” by the military up to high altitude will testify to an era, not so far away where life was quite different in these mountains. The transition to the resurgences of the Maira springs will offer you a refreshing break! Night and diner in auberge.

6h30 hours walk / Altitude difference: +1030 m; -1030 m

DAY 3

BIVACCO BONFANTE - ELVA

Transfer from your accomodation: 35 minutes transfer with your personal vehicle to Elva.

The Bivoacco Bonfante is nestled at the foot of one of the pillars of the Val Maira: the Pelvo d'Elva (3061 m). We suggest you to discover it and why not climb the Pelvo for the more experienced. Nestled on the foothills of the Sampeyre pass, border between Val Varaita and Val Maira, with its southern exposure, Elva is a village where it is good to live. The road to climb there is spectacular, the series of small hamlets with adret offer a preserved architecture, typical of the valley. On your return from the Col de Sampeyre, do not hesitate to stop at the church of Santa Maria Assunta, a real jewel of Romanesque art. You can admire 15th century frescoes attributed to Hans Clemer, who was long called «the Master of Elva». Night and dinner in an auberge.

4.30 hours walk / Altitude difference: +410 m; -410 m

DAY 4

CHIALVETTA AND BRIC CASSIN

Transfer from your accomodation: 30 minutes transfer with your vehicle to the valley of Chialvetta

The walk of the day takes you to the secret Vallon of Unerzio where the remarkable village of Chialvetta and its oversized bell tower reigns! This deep valley with typical hamlets of Pratorotondo and Vivière, leads you to the wide pass of Gardetta from where we propose to climb the Bric Cassin which proudly dominates the entire plateau of Gardetta and the famous Rocca Meja. Back you can walk in Chialvetta and push the door of the museum «La Maisoun d'en Bot» nestled in an old barn, which preserves many objects of the daily life of Occitane culture. Night and dinner in an auberge.

5.30 hours walk / Altitude difference: +850 m; -850 m

DAY 5

ROCCA MEJA LOOP

Transfer from your accomodation : 30 minutes transfer with your vehicle to the Preit valley

The Preit valley that opens under Mount Oserto and the sculptural Rocca Maja form the backdrop of your formidable loop around the Rocca Meja. It is an enchanting valley, with its peaceful mills in the depths of the torrents and its hamlets that you will find throughout your day, whether to access the start of your hike or along your route. This long but accessible hike will delight hikers in search of diversity of landscape and a unique flora... You will have to leave early! Night and dinner in an auberge.

7 hours walk / Altitude difference : +1200 m; -1020 m

DAY 6

MARMORA LA PUNTA TEMPESTA

Transfer from your hike: 15 minutes transfer with your vehicle to the start of the hike

Panoramic day with well-opened views of the Val Maira, but also much further towards the Viso, the plain of the Po... An easy but wild ridge day off the beaten track. Starting from your accommodation you cross the rosary of villages to reach the start of your hike at the Col Intersile at more than 2000 m altitude. You reach this succession of small peaks with an evocative name: Punta Tempesta and Punta Piovosaet.

5 hours walk / Altitude difference : +710 m; -710 m

In addition to the hikes described in the program, your route book will be supplemented by proposals with a level lower (level 2-3), which will allow you to take a day off or adapt your trip in case of fatigue or bad weather.

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

Dates and prices

DEPARTURES AND PRICES

Departures from 9th June to 23rd September 2026

6-day, 5-night self-drive tour
€520 per person in standard accommodation
€750 per person in comfort locanda** and *** accommodation in a room for 2 people
Single supplement: **€70** for standard accommodation
Single room supplement: **€185** per person

Optional extras:
5 picnics: **€65** / person

Additional nights :
Extra night half-board in a mountain gîte: **€70** per person,
Extra night half-board in a Locanda: **€110** per person (in room for 2 or 3 people) .

THE PRICE

Includes:

- Half-board from dinner of the 1st day to breakfast of the last day;
- The road book: description and IGN cards (1 complete road book per group);
- The tourist tax;
- Organization and booking fees;

Does not include:

- Lunch picnics;
- Drinks, visits and other personal expenses;
- Transfers by taxi or bus;
- Luggage transfer;
- Transportation to and from the meeting place;
- Cancellation assistance insurance

The journey

LEVEL **

Average level
Average positive altitude difference: 900 m per day
Maximum altitude difference: 1100 m
Average duration of stages: 4.5 to 6 hours per day
Altitude of accommodation: 1500 m
Nature of the terrain: on trails and varied easy medium mountain terrain.

This trip requires you to be in good general shape. To prepare, we recommend regular walking, jogging, cycling or another sport. Your physical preparation will make your stay easier and help you enjoy it all the more.
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 a 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 of the latest generation telephone with satellite connection.

This trip is organised in collaboration with our local partners, who are as committed as we are to offering you an authentic holiday.

ROAD BOOK

Your roadbook will be sent to you by post on receipt of payment of the balance for your stay. It includes :

- A route book,
- A set of IGN maps,
- A route map with a list of accommodation,
- Access to the digital application that you can download onto your smartphone.

For all bookings made less than 3 weeks before departure, paper travel documents cannot be sent. Only the digital version will be made available.

INTERNAL TRANSFERS

Transfers are made with your personal vehicle.

ACCOMODATION

As accommodation capacity is limited in the Val Maira, we may have to change the order of the stages in order to offer you ‘the best’ accommodation, subject to availability.

Chiappera : 2 nights - Locanda la Scuola chez Stéfano or Locanda Provençale
Elva: 1 night - La Locanda d'Elva
Marmora : 2 nights - La Locanda Lou Pitavin chez Marco or la Locanda Marmu

Two types of accommodation are available (each of the above structures offers 2 types of accommodation):

CLASSIC: a ‘refugio’ section (gite and refuge-type shared rooms, bed linen and towels not provided)
COMFORT: a ‘Locanda’ section (hotel service with typical, refined rooms, private bathroom facilities, linen provided).

MEALS

Breakfasts and dinners are provided in each accommodation.The cuisine is extremely tasty, hearty and typical of this valley. Most of the meals are prepared with produce from the valley's farms, and the breakfasts are full, often savoury and sweet. Picnics are not included. Possibility to refuel in small 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.

Practical information

ACCESS TO THE START POINT

The start of your trek is in the village of **Chiappera**, 12021 Acceglio (province of Coni Italy). GPS coordinates: 44.49254N 6.92294E.
You can deposit your luggage in your accommodation, the contact details will be sent to you with the travel file.

BY TRAIN

Turin station (Italy) or SNCFstation Briançon (France) + car rental

BY CAR

Four main accesses: Fréjus Tunnel, Montgenèvre Pass, Agnel Pass or Larche Pass

BY PLANE

Turin Airport (Italy) + car rental

END OF THE STAY

End of the stay in early afternoon in Marmora.

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 IMPACT EVASION 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 IMPACT EVASION 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 / IMPACT EVASION.

CONTACT US

If you are late please let us know 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
- 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
- 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 if your are in refuge version
- Two adjustable and highly walking poles
- 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 papers) and please keep a little room to carry a picnic and snacks.

LUGGAGE TRANSPORT

With your personal vehicle

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	**SPLENDORS OF VAL MAIRA self-guided**
Number of days	**6**
Insurance	
Trip price	**520 €**
Estimated deposit (30%)	**156 €**
Signed in	
Date	
Signature	

Return with your deposit to

Altitude Montblanc, 62 Passage du Nant Devant, 74110 Montriond

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