

Factsheet | Self-guided walk | Level 4/5  | 6 walking days on the GR10

GR10 Etsaut - Cauterets : From Béarn to the Pyrénées National Park

Your route in brief

- Self-guided walk without guide
- Walk with family, friends or as a couple
- Possibility of a comfort version with 4 nights in room
- Transport of your luggage between each stage except for 2 nights in refuges (depending on the option chosen)
- Access and return possible via Etsaut and Cauterets
- Duration 7 days / 6 nights

Strong points

- Part of the Crossing the Pyrenees in the heart of the Pyrenees National Park
- The discovery of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau from the Col d'Ayous
- The impressive Chemin de la Mâture
- A rich and varied fauna and flora
- Numerous lakes along the route
- The mountain villages of Gabas, Arrens, Estaing, Cauterets...



From Etsaut to Cauterets, the GR10 takes you through the Pyrenean National Park. Created in 1967 to preserve an exceptional natural heritage, the park stretches from the Aspe valley to the Aure valley, along the Spanish border and two departments, the Pyrénées-Atlantiques and the Hautes-Pyrénées. Setting off from Etsaut, via the famous chemin de la Mâture, you will reach the grandiose surroundings of the Ossau valley, that opens out before you and affords a spectacular view of the pyramid-shaped Pic de Midi d'Ossau that culminates at 2884m. From Gabas to Arrens valley, passing through the ski resort of Gourette, you encounter a succession of lakes and villages in stone and slate and a never-ending wilderness that serves as summer pastures. After having discovered the Arrens and Estaing valleys, you finish your holiday in the spa town of Cauterets, capital of the Bigorre.

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•PROGRAM

Day 1 : Start of your holiday in Etsaut

Once you have settled into your accommodation you can visit villages of Etsaut or Borce and the Maison du Parc.

The Moulette Bridge

Easy hike in shady loop up to the Moulette bridge, in the forest to discover high barns.

- Distance : 4km, duration : around 2h15, altitude gain : +330m, descent : -330m.

Day 2 : From Etsaut to Ayous refuge

Today's walk is challenging with 1700m altitude gain. It offers scenery of an amazing magnitude: the Chemin de la mature, the plateau of Baigt-Sencours, shepherd's cabins and as a highlight, the vision of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau, whose reflection shimmers in the waters of the lake Gentau.

- Distance : 15km, duration : around 6h45, altitude gain : +1650m, descent : -300m.

Day 3 : From Ayous refuge to Gabas

Setting out from the refuge at Ayous, the GR10 drops down to the village of Gabas. Today's walk is shorter and it's a chance to recuperate after yesterday's efforts (or longer variants). The distance from the lake to the village isn't far and will take about 3h00. The village is typically Pyrenean and situated in the famous valley of Ossau, with an emblematic summit, an exceptional flora and fauna, as well as a super cheese ! Possibility of two different longer variants: via Lac Bersau or via the Col de Suzon.

- Distance : 10km, duration : around 3h30, altitude gain : +50m, descent : -950m.
- Distance : 12,5km, duration : around 4h30, altitude gain : +200m, descent : -1100m (Variant Lac Bersau).
- Distance : 20km, duration : around 8h, altitude gain : +900m, descent : -1800m (Variant Col de Suzon).

Day 4 : From Gabas to Gourette

Today's walk is strenuous, the climb up to the Hourquette d'Arre which culminates at 2465m, this is the highest part of the GR10 in the Pyrenees Atlantiques. You descend towards the lake Anglas and continue down to the ski station, Gourette. There is a good chance that you will be able to observe some remarkable fauna such as the majestic rare vautour fauve, vultures, royal eagles, mountain isards and marmots. Late snow covering is regular on this stage : a variant enabling to avoid the high point of Hourquette d'Arre can be organized. *Possibility to shorten the hike with a morning transfer or divide the hike in 2 by adding an extra night, please contact us.*

- Distance : 21,5km, duration : around 9h, altitude gain : +1700m, descent : -1400m
- Distance : 30km, duration : around 11h30, altitude gain : +2050m, descent : -1750m (Snow variant).

Day 5 : From Gourette to Arrens Marsous

Today's stage of the GR10 is a transition, the trail crosses the border between the Béarn and Bigorre regions. You will be walking across high summer pastures and past shepherd's cabins to the Col de Tortes at an altitude of 1799m and on to the Col de Saucède at 1525m. You will arrive at the village of Arrens in the Val D'Azun valley, the first market town of the Bigorre region. Then you will reach the village of Estaing via the Bordères pass.

- Distance : 13,5km, duration : around 6h, altitude gain : +900m, descent : -1400m

Day 6 : From Arrens Marsous to Ilhéou refuge

From Arrens, you will reach the village of Estaing and its lake, framed by wooded slopes. Then the GR10 joins the high mountain pastures of the Ilhéou pass (2242m), after having passed the Arriousec and Barbat huts. From the pass, the path descends to the Lac d'Ilhéou or Lac Bleu, and its guarded refuge. In case of late snow, a variant is proposed, outside the GR10, by a balcony itinerary, passing above the Lac Noir.

- Distance : 18km, duration : around 7h30, altitude gain : +1650m, descent : -550m

Day 7 : From Ilhéou refuge to Cauterets

Just a short walk for the last section of this part of the GR10. To Cauterets, passing by the Escala d'Ilhéou, you will no doubt have the chance to see marmottes and isards. In this high, airy mountain ambiance there are many traces of glacier erosion, lakes and moraines. Possibility of a longer variant via the Haugade Pass and the Marcadau Valley.

- Distance : 8km, duration : around 3h, altitude gain : +50m, descent : -1100m.
- Distance : 18km, duration : around 6h30, altitude gain : +500m, descent : -1550m (variant).

This programme is an example of the itinerary we aim to adhere to. It may be necessary, if situations arise that are beyond our control, for the itinerary to be modified.

• DATES AND PRICES

Departures

Every days from the middle of June to the end of September.

Booking from 2 people (solitary traveller: consult us).

From 15/06/2025 to 30/09/2025 :

Prices with luggage transfer :

Price per person for a group of 2 persons	735€
Price per person for a group of 3 persons	660€
Price per person for a group of 4 persons	620€
Price per person for a group of 5 persons	595€
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	585€

Prices without luggage transfer :

Price per person for a group of 2 persons	530€
Price per person for a group of 3 persons	515€
Price per person for a group of 4 persons	505€
Price per person for a group of 5 persons	500€
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	495€

Extras :

- Comfort version (4 nights in rooms) : 115€/pers
- Extra for a single room (if comfort version) : 135€/pers
- Extra 6 picnics : 85€/pers
- Transfer back from Cauterets to Etsaut on a week day : 305€/transfer
- Transfer back from Cauterets to Etsaut on Sundays and public holidays: 345€/transfer
- Extra night in Etsaut half board double room : 75€/pers
- Extra night in Etsaut half board single room : 115€/pers
- Extra night in Etsaut half board shared dormitory : 50€/pers
- Extra night in Cauterets half board double room : 70€/pers
- Extra night in Cauterets half board single room : 80€/pers
- Extra night in Cauterets half board shared dormitory : 55€/pers

The price includes :

- Half-board accommodation
- Luggage transport depending on the option chosen except for two nights in refuge days 2 and 6
- Dossier containing maps, route notes (1 for 4 persons, given in 1st accommodation)
- GPS tracks if you ask us + access to the detailed itinerary on the Mhikes GPS mobile application

The price does not include :

- Holiday and travel insurance

- 15€ for booking fees
- Showers in the mountain refuge
- Drinks and picnics

• TAILOR MADE HOLIDAYS

We can put together a suitable holiday for you taking into account all your specific requests and budget. Many individuals and trekking companies have relied on us for years. With our tailor-made holidays we always aim to provide you with the best quality at the fairest price.

If you want to :

- increase the comfort of your accommodations,
- change the duration of your trip,
- organize additional activities or visits,
- get a transfer from/to an airport,
- organize an extra night,

Contact Gaëtan
Tél : 0033 5 34 14 51 50
gaetan@respyrenees.com

• ORGANIZATION

We propose a self-guided, independent formula. You choose your departure date and we will take care of all the rest from the initial meeting time through to the dispersion point. We book your accommodations, we transport your bags between the accommodations except for two nights in refuge days 2 and 6 (depending on the option chosen). We provide you with the maps and good walking route notes sent to the first accommodation as well as an access to the detailed itinerary on the Mhikes GPS mobile application. This is a way of enjoying complete flexibility, you dictate the pace and rhythm of your holiday. Moreover, our team will answer all your questions, and will provide all useful advice in order to make this holiday a success.

• TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Level 4/5

Trained hiker, in good physical condition with a experience of mountain hiking. Hiking of 7h-8h per day on average, altitude difference of 1000m-1300m on average, on accessible trails but also in rough terrain, with some small technical difficulties. The walking times mentioned are given as an indication, they are average times that only take into account the duration of the actual walking without counting the break times. Depending on the weather conditions, the walking pace can also vary, ranging from +300m to +500m of climb per hour.

Guide

Self-guided walking, without guide.

Carrying

You will need to carry a day backpack only. Our bag-moving service means you can travel light during your walks. Your main luggage (that should please be easily transportable) will be transported by vehicle except for the nights in mountain refuge, D2 and D6, where you have to carry your necessary personal belongings for the night, including a lightweight sleeping bag or liner, change of clothes, toiletries. Unless you have chosen the version without luggage transport, in which case you'll carry all your gear from one stage to the next.

• ACCOMMODATION/FOOD

Accommodation

Half board

3 nights in a shared dormitory in mountain refuges on days 2, 4 and 6.

3 nights in a shared dormitory in gite on days 1, 3 and 5.

COMFORT VERSION (with extra) :

2 nights in room in guest rooms on days 1 and 3

1 night in a hotel*** in room on day 5
1 night in a hotel** in room on day 4
2 nights in shared dormitory in mountain refuge on days 2 and 6.

For nights in shared dormitory, bring a sleeping bag liner (blankets provided)

Food

- Continental breakfast (tea, coffee, milk, butter, jam)
- Evening meals in accommodations, often based on local specialities, include a starter, a main course and a dessert.
- Picnics not included. They can be reserved in advance (with extra). Or you can buy them directly at your accommodation or at the grocery stores, mini-markets and bakeries listed in the roadbook.
- Drinks not included.

•PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Starting : Day 1 at your accommodation in Etsaut according to your time of arrival.

Ending : Day 7 in Cauterets, after your walk.

How to reach Etsaut by public transport:

Trains from the main towns to Bedous (with connections) : <https://www.sncf-connect.com/en-en/>

Bus from Bedous to Etsaut (ligne 550 Bedous > Canfranc): <https://www.citrampyrenees.fr/horaires-tarifs>

How to leave Cauterets by public transport:

Bus from Cauterets to Lourdes (Hautes Pyrénées - Ligne 965 – Axe Lourdes > Cauterets): <https://www.lio-occitanie.fr/horaires-et-plans/>

From Lourdes, train to main towns (with connections): <https://www.sncf-connect.com/en-en/>

How to reach Etsaut from Cauterets by public transport:

Bus from Cauterets to Lourdes (Hautes Pyrénées - Ligne 965 - Axe Lourdes > Cauterets): <https://www.lio-occitanie.fr/horaires-et-plans/>

Train from Lourdes to Bedous (with connection in Pau): <https://www.sncf-connect.com/en-en/>

Nearest airport :

Pau airport

Tarbes-Lourdes airport

Toulouse-Blagnac airport

Biarritz airport

Parking lot in Etsaut :

Parking lot Eglise place, opposite the Mairie (free and unguarded/supervised)

Parking lot in Cauterets :

All paid and free parking lots visible on this page: https://www.cauterets.com/blog/stationnement-a-cauterets/?to_lang=en

If you're leaving your car for the duration of your stay, please check with the tourist office to find out if there are any events (festivals, markets, etc.) taking place in your parking area.

We recommend to arrive by train to avoid returns to departure to recover your car, because itineraries can be very long and badly served and very expensive if you take a taxi. If you insist to come with your car, we recommend you to leave your car on the arrival point the first day and to do the run to the departure point because the first day you have plenty of time to do the run and you will not be tired by a week walking.

•WHAT TO BRING AND PACK

Your main luggage (if package includes luggage transport between accommodations) :

For logistical reasons, we ask you not to bring more than one item/person. Its weight should not exceed 12kg - 15kg.

Your day backpack

The size of your bag varies upon the type of activity.

For a walk without portage : 30L minimum

For a walk with partial portage : 50L minimum

For a walk with portage : 60L minimum

Whatever activity you participate in, you should always carry in your rucksack:

- Rainwear, warm clothing, spare T-shirt, sunglasses, sun cream, first aid kit, picnic kit, personal items, etc.)
- Picnic lunch of the day (bring a plastic box)
- Sufficient water (minimum 1.5 litre water bottle)

Walking Boots

The type of boot depends upon the activities you take part in however they are one of your most important items. They should be comfortable, waterproof and breathable. For the best protection we advise ankle boots.

We recommend our young walkers to wear flexible walking boots with a good sole and back.

For mountain walking for more than 4 hours long we recommend a boot with a fairly ridged sole.

If you need to buy a new pair of boots, we advise you wear them in before the start of your holiday. Don't wear boots that are too small because feet have a tendency to swell up. Be careful with your shoes that have been left in the wardrobe for too long. The lifespan of a shoe is 2 to 5 years. After a while the soles will come off and the seams can tear.

Clothes:

- A wind and rainproof jacket
- A thick jumper or a fleece
- Comfortable walking trousers
- Shorts, t shirts as well as breathable base layers
- Spare clothes
- Swimwear and towel
- For the start and end of season, hat and gloves suitable for GR10 walks at altitude.

For Sleeping

- Sleeping bag liner for all nights spent in the gites and mountain shelters (blankets are provided)
- Earplugs

For Picnics

- Sealed plastic box (0.5L) to carry salads
- Cutlery (folding knife and fork)
- A 1,5L minimum flask

Small equipment

- A pair of tennis shoes, or sandals for the evening
- A pair of telescopic poles (optional)
- Sunglasses and sun cream
- Hat, cap or bob
- Camera...
- A small toilet bag, with towel
- Torch or headlamp
- Toilet paper
- A mini-pharmacy: personal medication, Compeed for blisters, elastoplast, gauze, disinfectant, arnica granules and aspirin in case of minor injuries, a survival blanket.