

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

GR10 Cauterets – Bagnères de Luchon : Variant through Vignemale and Gavarnie

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 (depending on the option chosen) except for 3 nights in refuges (normal version) or except 2 nights in refuge (comfort version)
- Access and return possible via Cauterets and Luchon
- Duration 7 days / 6 nights

Strong points

- A part of the itinerary in the Pyrenees National Park
- The discovery of the Natural Reserve of Néouvielle and its mountain lakes
- A rich and varied fauna and flora
- The discovery of the impressive North face of the Vignemale
- The Luchonnais region and its lakes : Lac d'Oô, Espingo, Saussat...
- Beautiful mountain villages : Cauterets, Gavarnie, St Lary Soulan, Germ, Bagnères de Luchon...



In the heart of the Central Pyrenees, this variant of the 4th section invites you to discover amazing sites, beginning with the Gaube Valley, on foot of the Vignemale, the highest French Pyrenees summit. The night at the Oulettes de Gaube refuge, ideally situated at the foot of the impressive and spectacular North Face of the Vignemale, and then the discovery of the Cirque de Gavarnie are the other highlights of the first part of the hike. Then, from Barèges to Bagnères de Luchon, nature opens its doors wide to you. You will cross the Néouvielle Nature Reserve and its remarkable glacial lakes, before reaching, via the villages of Azet or Germ, the famous guarded refuge of the Espingo lake, and finally Bagnères de Luchon, the Queen of the Pyrenees.

www.gr10-liberte.com / www.respyrenees.com

www.maison-iptuxainia.com

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•PROGRAM

Day 1 : Start of your holiday in Cauterets

This week's walking starts at Cauterets. Situated at 950m altitude, Cauterets has an authentic, Pyrenean mountain charm and is well known for its thermal spas. Time to discover and enjoy the town or go hiking.

The Turon des Oules and the plateau du Lisey

Possibility of doing a forest walk in the direction of Turon des Oules 1380m, it's possible to continue to the Plateau du Lisey.

- Distance : 12km, duration : around 5h, altitude gain : +850m, descent : -850m (Turon des Oules and Plateau du Lisey).

Day 2: From Cauterets to the Oulettes de Gaube refuge

The first part of the hike is enlivened by the bubbling of the waterfalls of the Gave du Jéret, on a pleasant path that will take you from Cauterets to the Pont d'Espagne. The climb continues to the famous Gaube lake, then to the Oulettes de Gaube refuge at the foot of the imposing Vignemale (3298m) and its impressive north face, a mythical summit in the history of Pyreneanism.

- Distance : 15km, duration : around 6h, altitude gain : +1350m, descent : -150m.

Day 3 : From the Oulettes de Gaube refuge to Gavarnie

Today's stage leads to Gavarnie and its famous Cirque. From the Oulettes refuge you will reach the Hourquette d'Ossoue and the Baysse Refuge, the starting point for the ascent of the mythical Vignemale. A long and beautiful descent then awaits you. After passing the Bellevues caves, dug by Count Henry Russell between 1881 and 1893, you will enter the Ossoue valley. Once past the Ossoue dam, a beautiful balcony path leads to the village of Gavarnie from where you can enjoy superb views of the world-famous cirque.

- Distance : 21km, duration : around 7h30, altitude gain : +850m, descent : -1550m.

Day 4 : from Tournaboup to lac de l'Oule

Short transfer to the parking de Tournaboup (It is also possible for you to hike this section, adding two nights in Luz and Barèges, please consult us). From Tournaboup, you will start an ascent to the Col de Madamète via the beautiful Aygues Cluses valley and its lakes. After crossing the pass, you will enter the splendid Néouvielle Nature Reserve, where you can admire the enchanting landscapes. The walk ends with the lakes of Aumar, Aubert, the Estoudou pass and finally the lake of Oule. For the comfort version, the walk ends at Lake Orédon.

- Distance : 18km, duration : around 7h30, altitude gain : +1200m, descent : -850m (normal version with arrival at Lac de l'Oule).
- Distance : 15,5km, duration : around 6h, altitude gain : +1000m, descent : -650m (comfort version with arrival at Lac d'Oredon).

Day 5 : from Lac de l'Oule to Vielle Aure

From the Oule refuge, you follow the lake and climb up to the Col de Portet, culminating at 2215m. From the col, the trail passes via the ski resort of Saint Lary. It makes its way across high altitude pastures before descending to the village of Vielle-Aure and the site of its manganese mine near Saint-Lary-Soulan.

- Distance : 17,5km, duration : around 6h45, altitude gain : +500m, descent : -1500m (normal version with departure from Lac de l'Oule).
- Distance : 20km, duration : around 8h00, altitude gain : +800m, descent : -1850m (normal version with departure from Lac d'Oredon).

Day 6 : from Germ to the Espingo refuge

In the morning, transfer to Germ (It is possible to include the walk from St Lary to Germ in the tour, adding a night in Germ : Contact us). From Germ you can enjoy some superb views over the French/Spanish summits. The mountain lifestyle and agricultural traditions reign in this area. From the village, the GR crosses the Pas de Couret at an altitude of 2131m, this passage takes you into the "Luchonnais" (area of Bagnères de Luchon). The ascension towards Espingo lake, through the Granges d'Astau and the Lac d'Oo, is a pure wonder. Possibility to divide this long stage in 2 by adding an

extra night, please contact us.

- Distance : 17km, duration : around 8h00, altitude gain : +1650m, descent : -1050m.

Day 7 : from the Espingo Refuge to Luchon

The walk to Luchon will plunge you into a high mountain decor. You will traverse the Hourquette des Hounts at a high altitude of 2275m, before crossing the mountain pass, the Col de la Coume de Bourg at 2272m. From here you can choose to follow the variant that is off the GR10, the ascension of the Pic de Céciré. This magnificent summit offers stunning views in the direction of Maladetta massif and the Spigeoles. The descent towards Luchon passes through the ski resort of Superbagnères. In July and August, it is possible to take the cable car of the ski resort to avoid a long descent (not included in the price).

- Distance : 18,5km, duration : around 7h30, altitude gain : +650m, descent : -1950m.
- Distance : 11,5km, duration : around 4h45, altitude gain : +650m, descent : -800m (with cable car in July/August)

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 day from the beginning of July to the end of September.
Booking from 2 people (solitary traveller: consult us).

From 01/07/2024 to 30/09/2024 :

Prices with luggage transfer :

Price per person for a group of 2 persons	735€
Price per person for a group of 3 persons	655€
Price per person for a group of 4 persons	615€
Price per person for a group of 5 persons	595€
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	580€

Prices without luggage transfer :

Price per person for a group of 2 persons	595€
Price per person for a group of 3 persons	570€
Price per person for a group of 4 persons	555€
Price per person for a group of 5 persons	545€
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	535€

Extras :

- Comfort version (5 nights in room) : 125€/pers
- Extra for a single room (if comfort version) : 110€/pers
- Extra 6 picnics : 75€/pers
- Transfer from Luchon to Cauterets on a week day : 250€/transfer
- Transfer from Luchon to Cauterets on Sundays and public holidays : 300€/transfer
- Extra night in Cauterets half board double room : 60€/pers
- Extra night in Cauterets half board single room : 70€/pers
- Extra night in Cauterets half board shared dormitory : 55€/pers
- Extra night in Luchon half board double room : 70€/pers

- Extra night in Luchon half board single room : 90€/pers

The price include :

- Half-board accommodation
- Transfers days 4 and 6
- Luggage transport depending on the option chosen except for 3 nights in refuges on days 2, 4 and 6 (normal version)
- Luggage transport depending on the option chosen except for 2 nights in refuges on days 2 and 6 (comfort version)
- Dossier containing maps, route notes (1 for 4 persons) sent at your first 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 huts
- 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 between the initial meeting time through to the departure point. We book your accommodations, we transport your bags between the accommodations (depending on the option chosen) except for 3 nights in refuges on days 2, 4 and 6 (normal version) or for 2 nights in refuges on days 4 and 6 (comfort version). We also take care of your transfers D4 and D6. 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.

Your transfers during the walk :

- Day 4 : At 7h30 AM, Transfer (45min) from Gavarnie to Tournaboup parking. This transfer has been planned, to avoid an unattractive section of the GR10. It is possible to include the walk Gavarnie-Tournaboup in the tour, adding 2 nights in Luz St Sauveur and Barèges : contact us.

- Day 6 : At 7h45 AM, transfer (30 min) from Vielle Aure to Germ. This transfer aims at shortening a long and strenuous walk. It is possible to include the walk Vielle Aure-Germ in the tour, adding a night in Germ : contact us.

•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 night in mountain refuge, D2, D4 and D6 or just D2 and D6 for comfort version, 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) :

1 night in room in gite on day 1

1 night in room in hotel** on day 3

1 night in room in a guest house on day 5

1 night in room in a chalet/mountain hotel 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 Cauterets (65), according to your time of arrival.

Ending : Day 7 in Luchon (31), after your walk.

How to get to Cauterets :

- **By air :** Lourdes-Tarbes Airport; Pau-Pyrénées Airport; Toulouse-Blagnac Airport
- **By train and bus :** Numerous TER trains from the main cities towards Lourdes then bus from Lourdes to Cauterets.
- **By car :** From Tarbes follow Lourdes, Argeles- Gazost, then Cauterets.

PARKING :

Parking in Cauterets :

All free and paid parking lots on this page: <https://www.cauterets.com/blog/stationnement-a-cauterets/>

Parking in Luchon :

Free : Behind the post office, from the phone box, in front of the train station, Luchon exit.

How to leave Luchon :

Bus from Luchon to Montréjeau. Then SNCF connections to many cities : Toulouse, Pau, Bordeaux...

How to get to Cauterets from Luchon :

Bus from Luchon to Montréjeau. TER train from Montréjeau to Lourdes. Bus from Lourdes to Cauterets.

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.