

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

GR10 Vernet les Bains - Banyuls sur Mer : From the Canigou to the Sea

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 1 night in mountain refuge
- Access and return possible via Vernet les Bains and Banyuls sur Mer
- Duration 7 days / 6 nights

Highlines

- A part of the itinerary in the Natural Park of the Catalan Pyrenees
- The crossing and the ascent of the Canigou and its immense panorama
- The diversified and preserved paths of the Canigou balcony
- The Albère massif plunging into the sea
- The arrival on the sea and the magnificent Vermeille coast, final of the crossing of the Pyrenees
- Sunny weather on this section of the Pyrenees



The mountain that is fully representative and symbolic of the Eastern Pyrenees, the very symbol of the Catalans, is the Massif du Canigou. This summit dominates the Roussillon plains and the Mediterranean coastline. The position of the summit is isolated from the rest of the Pyrenean chain, so it stands out and is easy to spot, omnipresent in the landscape. It is nicknamed the Fujiyama Catalan. These protected areas that you walk through are a special environment and for nature lovers there is rich flora and fauna to admire. From Vernet-les-Bains, depending on the weather and your motivation, you have the choice of going around the Canigou summit, or going up and over! Then, you will drop down to the Roman spa town Arles sur Tech. From here, the GR10 gets close to the French/Spanish border, after having passed the Roc de France and the famous Col du Perthus, you will drop down into a vegetation of Mediterranean garrigue. The last mountain foothills of the Massif des Albères give way to the sea. You can't help but be charmed as you approach the enticing blue coastline. The sandy beach of Banyuls, one of the prettiest spots along the Vermeille coastline is not far off !

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•PROGRAM

Day 1 : Arrival in Vernet-les Bains

Installation in your accommodation, according to your arrival time. Depending on your arrival time, you can visit the village or go hiking.

The Cascade des Anglais and the Saint Vincent

A refreshing out-and-back hike to discover the spectacular waterfalls in the Gorges de St Vincent, offering a nice mix of lush vegetation, cool gorges, bridges and footbridges. There are also several small watering holes to refresh yourself.

Pic de la Pena

Hike to the Pic de la Pena (1062m) which offers a superb view of the Canigou and the surroundings of Vernet-les-Bains. You will also see the Abbey of Saint-Martin du Canigou lurking in its setting.

- Distance: 6km, duration : about 2h30, altitude gain : + 375m, descent : - 375m.
- Distance: 6km, duration : about 2h45, altitude gain : + 470m, descent : - 470m

Day 2 : From Vernet les Bains to Cortalets refuge

In the morning transfer (15min) to the Col de Jou at the start of the hike. From the col de Jou, the GR10 reaches the refuge de Mariailles, a splendid site overlooking spectacular gorges, in the heart of the wild forests of the Cadi basin. Then it goes around the famous Canigou via the col de Ségalès (2040m), the jasse del Py and the refuge de Bonne-Aygue before reaching the guarded refuge des Cortalets : a superb route in the Mediterranean mountains. In good weather, the Canigou, outside the GR10, it's a summit accessible, the final ascent remains more famous for the elegance of the path than for the difficulty encountered. From the summit, a grandiose panorama as far as the sea and the plain of Roussillon.

- Distance : 20km, duration : about 8h, altitude gain : +1600m, descent : -600m.
- Distance : 16.5km, duration : about 7h30, altitude gain : +1650m, descent : -650m (Canigou variant).

Day 3 : From Cortalets refuge to Batère

Leaving the century-old refuge of Les Cortalets, you follow the balcony of the Canigou for most of the day. Step by step, you discover a breathtaking panorama. The view stretches from Roussillon to the Mediterranean to the Cerdagne and Capcir; and from the Corbières to the Montagne Noire to Sète and the Cévennes. At the end of the day, you will travel along the "iron road", the mining sites of the Canigou which were once renowned for the quality of their ore.

- Distance : 16km, duration : about 5h45, altitude gain : +450m, descent : -1150m.

Day 4 : From Batère to Arles sur Tech

During the descent to the charming tourist resort of Arles sur Tech, you will encounter many types of vegetation in this massif, from high altitude pastures to forests. The alpine environment is slowly transforming into a Mediterranean environment. The Canigou Massif itself is home to a quarter of the plant species in France and all the mountain wildlife you would expect. You reach Arles, nestled in a meander of the Tech. This small medieval town is home to the abbey of Sainte Marie, founded in the 8th century, and a 13th century cloister.

- Distance : 12,5km, duration : about 4h15, altitude gain : +100m, descent : -1250m.

Day 5 : From Montalba to Las Illas

Transfer (25min) from Arles sur Tech to Montalba (can be avoided, consult us). Start from the hamlet of Montalba d'Amélie, with its incomparable isolation and charm. At the exit of the beech and chestnut woods, the Cerda pass offers itself to you, at the base of the Sant Salvador rock. Then it is the crest of the Frausa rock with its wide panorama of the Catalan plain of the Empordà.

- Distance : 17,5km, duration : about 6h45, altitude gain : +1050m, descent : -1050m.

Day 6 : From Las Illas to Col de l'Ouillat

This stage is the transitional point of the Pyrenean crossing as the GR10 approaches the Alberes massif and joins the Franco-Spanish frontier up to the col du Perthus. Its twin, the GR11, takes on the same itinerary on the Spanish side. The Alberes is the last Pyrenean massif before diving into the deep blue sea. Crossing it is a real pleasure given the diversity of the landscapes.

- Distance : 25km, duration : about 8h, altitude gain : +1000m, descent : -650m.

Day 7 : From Col de l'Ouillat to Banyuls sur Mer

A long stage, with highlights such as the passage to the Pic Neulos, the Pic des Quatre-Termes, or the Pic de Saifort, the last promontory before the descent to the sea. Here, in the heart of the Mediterranean vegetation, everything has been shaped by the tramontana. Further down, the vegetation of the Pyrenean foothills has taken on the appearance of vineyards, with its "casots", dry stone huts. The sea is there, very close, attractive.

- Distance : 23km, duration : about 8h, altitude gain : +700m, descent : -1600m.

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 June to the end of September.

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

From 01/06/2024 to 30/09/2024 :

Prices with luggage transfer :

Price per person for a group of 2 persons	795€
Price per person for a group of 3 persons	695€
Price per person for a group of 4 persons	650€
Price per person for a group of 5 persons	620€
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	600€

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	495€
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	490€

Extras :

- Comfort version (4 nights in rooms) : 80€/pers
- Extra single room (if comfort version) : 120€/pers
- Extra 6 picnics : 75€/pers
- Transfer back from Banyuls to Vernet les Bains on a week day: 235€/transfer
- Transfer back from Banyuls to Vernet les Bains on Sundays and public holidays: 275€/transfer
- Extra night in Vernet half board double room : 65€/pers
- Extra night in Vernet half board single room : 95€/pers
- Extra night in Banyuls Bed & Brekafast double room : 75€/pers
- Extra night in Vernet Bed & Breakfast single room : 90€/pers

The price includes :

- Half-board accommodation
- Transfer mentioned in the program
- Luggage transfers depending on the option chosen except for 1 night in refuge day 2
- 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
- Showers in the mountain huts
- Booking fees (15€)
- 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
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•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 (depending on the option chosen) except for the night in refuge on day 2 ; We organize your transfers mentioned in the program. 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.

Transfer during the stay :

- Day 2 : At 8am, transfer (15mn) from Vernet les Bains to col de Jou at the start of the hike.
- Day 5 : At 8am, transfer (25min) from Arles sur Tech to Montalba at the start of the hike in order to shorten a long and strenuous walk (can be avoided, consult 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 day 2 for night in mountain refuge, 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

1 night in hotel**, in a room on day 1

3 nights in gite in shared dormitory on days 4, 5 and 6

1 night in mountain gite in shared dormitory on day 3

1 night in a mountain refuge in a shared dormitory on day 2

COMFORT VERSION (with extra cost) :

1 night in hotel** in room on day 1

1 night in a guest house, in room on day 4

1 night in mountain gite in room on day 3

1 night in gite in room on day 6

1 night in mountain gite in shared dormitory on day 2

1 night in mountain refuge in shared dormitory on day 5

For the nights in dormitory, bring a sleeping bag liner (blankets are 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 Vernet-les-Bains (66), according to your time of arrival.

Ending : Day 7 in Banyuls sur Mer (66), after your walk.

How to get to Vernet les Bains :

- By air :

Toulouse-Blagnac airport(140km) : tel 0033 (0)561424400, shuttle service to Toulouse Matabiau train station all the 20mn. Perpignan airport : tel 0033 (0)468526070

- By train :

TER from Perpignan station to Villefranche de Conflent. Then bus from Villefranche de Conflent to Vernet-les Bains.

- By car :

From Perpignan, N116 to Villefranche-de-Conflent, and Vernet-les-Bains.

PARKING : - Parking in Vernet les Bains : All free : on top of la Place de la République, next to schools, or post office car park.

How to leave Banyuls :

TER train from Banyuls to Perpignan (Cerbère to Perpignan line).

To join Vernet-les Bains from Banyuls :

TER train from Banyuls to Perpignan. Train from Perpignan to Villefranche de Conflent. Bus from Villefranche de Confemlnt to Vernet les Bains.

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.