PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Passports and Visas

Most nationalities, including British, require a full passport that must

be valid beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility

to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa,

if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country

you are to visit. The information below is primarily for UK passport

holders, and other nationalities should check with their travel agent

or the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of

local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or

otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Certain European nationalities may be able to travel within Europe

on their national identity card. Check carefully with the relevant

authorities if you intend to do this.

No visa required for British passport holders.

Visa regulations can change without notice: please check the current

regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

Vaccinations and Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before

going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way

to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

There are no specific health risks on this trip.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not

qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly

recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health

Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information.

Insurance - are you adequately covered?

You must have adequate travel insurance, and if you are joining a trip

which goes to high altitude, you must check that you are covered up

to the maximum altitude of the trip. If you are resident in the UK we

strongly recommend Exodus travel insurance, which is specifically

designed to cover all activities on your trip.

Local Time

GMT +1hrs

Group, Staff and Support

The group will generally be between 4 and 18 people. There will be a

local leader and drivers and local guides where needed.

The minimum age of clients on this trip is 16 years. Please note

that anyone aged under 18 must be accompanied by (and share

accommodation with) a parent or legal guardian.

Solo Departures

We have chosen one or two departure dates on a selection of our

most popular trips which are specifically recommended for clients

travelling on their own. However, we do not exclude couples or friends

travelling together from these departures, so we do not guarantee

that the group will be entirely made up of solos.

Dates of Solo Departures can be found in our brochures or on

our website. For further details please visit: www.exodus.co.uk/

solodepartures.

MONEY MATTERS

Currency Information

The national currency of France is the Euro (EUR), with an exchange

rate of 1.2 to the UK£ and 0.75 to the US$.

Exchange rates are correct at the time of publication.

ATM availability/Credit Card Acceptance/Travellers cheques

We recommend you bring your spending money in cash, but Visa /

MasterCard credit or debit cards may be useful for shopping, extra

excursions and withdrawing cash from ATMs (cash points). We do not

recommend travellers cheques, as they may be difficult to change

during the holiday. Cash points are available in Toulouse and Ax-les-

Thermes (there is one located near the hotel).

Extra Expenses and Spending Money

Allow €40-50 for the 2 lunches and 1 dinner not included. You will

also need some local currency for any drinks during the week.

Optional Excursions (approximate costs, depending on group

sizes)

There is a 'rest day' included in this holiday (normally Thursday),

when no guided walk will be provided. It is also possible to opt out

of the guided walk on any day if you prefer to do your own thing. A

full list of activities (and prices) will be provided on arrival, but the

following list is intended to give you an idea.

Self guided walks: There are plenty of nice riverside / forest walks

from the door of the hotel (which will not be done on the guided

days). Our favourites include a walk up to the Cathar Chateau at

Lordat (where there is a excellent Bird of Prey in Flight demonstration)

or to the Refuge de Chioula for Lunch.

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Cycling: Both road and mountain bikes can be hired locally and there

are many 'Tour de France' climbs or exhilarating cable car assisted

descents to be enjoyed.

Water sports: Canyoning, rafting, canoeing are all possibilities and

day or half day trips can be arranged with the local guides office on

arrival.

Culture: There are good rail links to the Medieval city of Foix, which

is overlooked by its castle which now hosts a local history museum

and art gallery.

Thermal Baths: This luxury Roman spa facility is located in the centre

of Ax-les-Thermes and is open every afternoon / evening throughout

the summer. It hosts a relaxation pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, fridgidarium,

vaporium, hammam and even has an outside whirlpool! Entrance to

the baths is €15 for 2 hrs.

WHAT TO TAKE

Essential Equipment and Clothing

In addition to your 'normal' daily clothes, you will need:

Medium sized daysack (approx 35 litres capacity)

walking boots (with good tread and ankle support)

waterproof jacket

large capacity water bottle(s) (2 litres recommended)

warm 2-season fleece

sunhat and sunglasses

personal medication (e.g. drugs and blister treatment, not First Aid

kit)

high factor sun cream

warm hat and long fingered gloves

alarm clock

The hotel provides basic toiletries and towels.

There is a very good gear shop in Ax and most things can be picked

up locally.

Optional items:

Waterproof over trousers

gaiters

mobile telephone (make sure it is unblocked to work in France)

flask

camera

swimsuit (for health spa and bathing in mountain lakes)

reading material for the evenings

For May, early June, late Sept and Oct: The mornings can be fairly

fresh so please pack accordingly including a thicker fleece or gilet.

Baggage and Baggage Allowance

At time of writing the standard weight limit for hold baggage on

the recommended international carrier for this trip is 23kg. We

recommend packing only one piece of checked baggage.

As advice about luggage allowances for both hand and hold luggage

is subject to change, we suggest you check www.baa.com and/or the

airline's website for the latest information prior to your departure.

Reading List:

Books and pamphlets (mostly in French) about the area can be

purchased locally. However the following books give a good

overview about the Pyrenees in general.

Rough Guide to the Pyrenees - Marc Dublin

The Pyrenees. Cicerone Guide - Kev Reynolds

Clear Waters Rising - Nicholas Crane. 1997. Travelogue about a

long distance walk: first section about the Pyrenees is particularly

inspiring!

Trekking in the Pyrenees. Trailblazer Productions - Douglas

Streatfield-James.

Maps:

Maps of the area are available locally, however if you wish to

purchase one in advance we recommend the following:

IGN Top 25. 2148TT. 1:25,000 Ax Les Thermes.

IGN Top 25. 2249OT 1:25,000 Bourg-Madame

For further information on books and maps contact Stanfords at

Long Acre, London, WC2E 9LP. Tel: 020 7836 1321.

Website: www.stanfords.co.uk

If you are interested in any of these books then you can order them

from our own Exodus shop, 'Exodus Travel Essentials',

JOIN THE EXODUS ONLINE COMMUNITY

Don't forget to visit the Community area on our website. You can view

the range of Exodus videos and podcasts, read trip write-ups which

have featured in the national media and take advantage of some

special deals on travel gear and equipment.

In the Compass Café forum you'll find the Departure Lounge where you

can discuss your trip with fellow travellers before you depart. When

you get back from your holiday remember to upload your images to

the relevant trip page on our website. This helps other people see

what our holidays are really like and you'll be entered automatically

into our monthly photo competition.

To make full use of the Compass Café you'll need to join My Exodus.

It's free, registration is simple and easy, so what are you waiting for?

http://www.exodus.co.uk/community

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL CLIENTS

Exodus operates a 24 hour duty office for emergencies, which can be

contacted on 0044 (0) 1582 644 100.

Every time that you travel abroad you should take the time to read

the warnings in the essential information in the brochure or at www.

exodus.co.uk/about-exodus/essential-information?

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers, and

details of how to reach the start point, will be sent to you approximately

2 to 3 weeks prior to departure. If you do not receive these at least

a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our

office or your travel agent.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where

differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure,

the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to

unexpected changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared

to be flexible where necessary. Occasionally, as stated in our brochure,

it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned. This may

be for a variety of reasons - climatic, political, physical or other.

In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative

arrangements that maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

As fuel prices, airport taxes and exchange rates fluctuate, and airlines

manage their rates to match demand, it is proving harder than ever

to guarantee our Flight Inclusive prices. Although we endeavour to

keep our website as accurate as possible, daily fluctuations mean that

our Flight Inclusive price may be out of date. For accurate prices we

recommend that you contact one of our Travel Experts, or your Travel

Agent.

*Prices and exchange rates were correct at the time of publication. The*

*most up-to-date prices can be found on the Exodus website.*

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