

## FRANCE – EXPLORE THE MAGNIFICENT FRENCH ALPS

8-day / 7-night one-hotel group guided walking tour based at Annecy



The French Alps are one of our most popular walking destinations, offering outstanding Alpine views, iconic peaks, a rich history and culture, and hearty mountain cuisine. On this holiday, we are based in Annecy, one of France's most attractive towns, on the shores of Lake Annecy.

Discover the Massif des Brauges Natural Park, over 81,000 hectares of limestone cliffs, forests, and alpine pastures, ideal for hiking in any season. There is a wide selection of walking trails in the nature reserve dotted with wine-producing villages along the way. There is a free day midweek allowing time to explore Annecy's lakeshore walking and cycling paths and its Vieille Ville (old town), with its famous canals and bridges.

Our one-hotel walking holidays offer a choice of two guided walks each day – usually an easier walk or a more challenging option. There is a free day midweek to relax or explore independently.

**Cost from:**                    **\$3690** (per person, twin share)                    Single room supplement from \$930

**2023 Departures:**        6, 20 May,        9, 16, 23 September

**Includes:**                    7 nights in a comfortable 3-star hotel room with ensuite bathroom, 7 breakfasts, 7 evening meals, local transport to / from the walks, experienced walks leaders with a choice usually of two levels of walking on 5 days.

**Not included:**              Meals & drinks not mentioned, personal expenses, transport and/or excursions on your free day, airport transfers – ask about options when booking

**Accommodation:**        We stay at the **Hotel Catalpa**, a 3-star hotel on the shore of Lake Annecy within strolling distance of Annecy's charming old town. There are 53 comfortable well-appointed rooms. Evening meals are taken at either the hotel or in local restaurants allowing you to sample the seasonal cuisine.



**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations**

**Footpath & walking information:** Distances are approximate



Easier Walks: 6-8km on good paths with up to 340m ascent in a day.



Harder Walks: 9-13km walking with up to 560m ascent and 450m descent in a day.

**Suggested itinerary:** The itinerary below should give you a good feel for the walks but is subject to change. The final selection of walks each day will be made by your walking leaders.

**Day 1: Arrival day.** Plan to arrive at the hotel in Annecy by mid-afternoon. Annecy reached by train from Paris in 4½ hours or Lyon in 2 hours. We offer a coach transfer at a set time from Geneva airport at extra cost – ask for details when you make your booking. Dinner and briefing on the week ahead with walking guides.

**Day 2: Lake Annecy** We transfer to St Jorioz, on the western shore of Lake Annecy, and follow a lakeside path, passing marinas and reed beds, then ascend to a belvedere with fine views over the lake. The harder walk takes a detour on a rougher path, scrambling over limestone to reach the Taillefer ridge. Both groups finish their walk in Duingt, with its typical 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century Savoyard stone houses and its chateau on a peninsula jutting into the lake, and we take a delightful boat trip back to Annecy.

**Day 3: Exploring Annecy** Starting with a gentle stroll along the lake shoreline and passing the town hall, which is surrounded by the Jardin de l'Europe. We explore the history, monuments and canals of the 'Venice of the Alps'. The harder route ascends to Annecy Chateau, the Basilica and panoramic views overlooking the town

**Day 4: The Bauges Mountains** We'll start today's walk with a climb to the spectacular views from the Fort de Tamie. Journey through alpine meadows before descending to the valley and the Abbey of Tamié, a Cistercian abbey founded in 1132.

**Day 5: Free day.** No walks are organised on this day. You may like to stroll around Annecy's Vielle Ville (old town), visit the chateau, tour the museum at the Palais de l'Île, hire a bike to ride the cycle path through the city and along the lakeshore. Annecy is also a top destination for paragliding, so perhaps take a tandem paragliding flight to see the area from a bird's-eye perspective.

**Day 6: Gorges du Fier** We climb above the gorge to pass through the villages of Maclamod and Chavanod. Continuing through the Annecy countryside the walk descends to the spectacular narrow canyon and the River Fier. Or pass the Chateau of Montrottier and ascend through the village of Lovagny to the viewpoints in the forests of the Montagne d'Age. Both walks take in the spectacular gorge where you can discover 'Giants' Kettles' carved out by the river over thousands of years and boulders stacked high in all their shapes and forms.

**Day 7: Eastern shore of Lake Annecy** From the beautiful village of Talloire we walk to Menthon Saint Bernard taking in Roc de Cher, a natural reserve and protected area on a little rocky peninsula. Or head to the Cascades d'Angon where a 35m waterfall at the bottom of the canyon is a renowned spot for canyoning enthusiasts. Descending to Talloires the walk then ascends the Roc de Chere via a direct route to reach the Belvedere.

**Day 8: Departure day.** Tour ends after breakfast. Ask about departure transfer to Geneva airport (at extra cost).

**Outdoor Travel** offer guided centre-based or self-guided inn-to-inn walking holidays in many areas of Europe including the **Cinque Terre, Tuscany, Umbria**, the **Amalfi Coast** in Italy, the **Dalmatian Coast** of Croatia, **French Catalonia, Provence, Dordogne**, or **Riviera Coast**. Try Wainwright's challenging **Coast to Coast** walk in England or the **West Highland Way** in Scotland, or walk pilgrimage routes such as the **Way of St James** or Camino de Santiago in France & Spain, or the pilgrims' road to Rome, the **Via Francigena** in Italy.

**Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:**

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