



**NO SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT
IN APRIL &
OCTOBER**

8 days from £719

April, June, September & October

The Valleys of Roussillon

This holiday offers excellent walking in the hills of the Roussillon area of southwest France, sometimes called French Catalonia – it only became French in the 17th century. There is a great affinity between the ‘French’ and ‘Spanish’ Catalans, and your holiday includes a stay in both French and Spanish Catalonia. Also included in the holiday is a visit to Dali’s eccentric theatre-museum in Figueras - a mind-expanding sort of place! – and some time in the wonderful city of Barcelona. In short, this is a unique opportunity to walk in, and discover, one of the most fascinating parts of Europe and to enjoy the sunshine of the Mediterranean at the same time!

• 3 nights hb on the Catalan Coast, 4 hb in the French hills • Entrances to Dali Theatre-Museum, Figueres, and to the fort in Prats de Mollo • 3 guided walks: coast, mountain, valley • Visit to Barcelona

PROGRAMME

DAY ONE: Flight to Reus or Barcelona. On arrival transfer to your coastal hotel for two nights half board accommodation. Transfer time 50 minutes.

DAY TWO: Optional half-day excursion to the Roman city of Tarragona where you can see the amphitheatre, port and beach and stroll through the medieval centre. Under the Romans, Tarragona was the capital of the Province of Northern Spain and home to the Emperor Augustus – a Temple in his honour stood on the site of the current Cathedral.

DAY THREE: Today you depart for France. En route you make a stop in Dali’s home town of Figueras, close to the French border, and home to his surreal (in the truest sense!) theatre-museum (entrance included). The Dali Museum is one of the most-visited museums in Spain...and with its luminous-egg façade, it is not just the interior that seems to want to stretch your mind! From there it is just an hour to your hotel in Amélie-les-Bains, in the spectacular Vallespir valley, where you have four nights half board accommodation.

DAYS FOUR TO SIX: In Amélie with three included walks.

Walk 1: From your hotel you walk along the right bank of the river Tech before turning uphill taking an old footpath towards the old Vauban-style fort overlooking the town. You’ll pass one of the thermal springs for which Amélie is famous – it has been a spa resort since Roman times. After a coffee break you continue towards the medieval village of Palalda before returning to the hotel along the left bank of the river. 5 miles with ascent/descent of 200m.

Walk 2: The High Vallespir. You travel 40 minutes further up the Vallespir Valley to the fortified village of Prats de Mollo. A little further on lies the Spanish border at Col d’Ares, where you start your 3-hour walk on the ‘Cami de la Retirada’ – the Refugees’ Way that many followed out of Spain during the Civil War. You will also walk up to Vauban’s impressive Fort Lagarde, and take in the village church with its impressive altarpiece. Prats de Mollo stands on the side of the impressive Mount Canigou, snow-capped for much of the year, and with forests and mountain meadows abounding. 4.5 miles, 800m descent with 100m ascent/descent to the fort.

Walk 3: The Vermilion Coast. You travel 45 minutes to the coast at Banyuls sur Mer, for a four - hour coastal walk following the ‘Customs Agent’s Path’.

You make a stop in Port Vendres - home to Rennie Mackintosh for many years, before continuing to the artists’ resort of Collioure, a port since Roman times. The spectacular Chateau-Royal is worth a visit, and reproductions of works by artists who painted in Collioure (Matisse and Derain in particular) will be found on the quaysides. 6 miles, 300m of ascent/descent.

DAY SEVEN: Today you journey back south to the Costa Dorada for the last night of your holiday, which is again on a half board basis. En route a stop will be made in the exciting city of Barcelona, capital of Catalonia. Ramble(!) down the Rambla and you will find pavement artists and buskers, stalls selling all kinds of bric-a-brac - an avenue bursting with life and colour. Or you can visit the weird and wonderful cathedral of the Sagrada Familia - Gaudi’s masterpiece.

DAY EIGHT: Free time until your transfer to the airport for your return flight.

YOUR HOTELS

NUBAHOTEL ★★★★★, Coma-Ruga. (first two and last nights) See The hotel stands close to the broad sandy beach. This unspoilt resort is quiet out of season, rather busier at weekends. A reasonable selection of shops, bars and restaurants is about 10 minutes walk (700m) away, and the railway station with half-hourly departures to Barcelona is about 15 minutes walk. There is also a local bus service to the nearby county town of El Vendrell, birthplace of Pablo Casals: his villa, now an interesting museum, is within walking distance of the hotel. The hotel has a spa centre (a reasonable extra charge applies), restaurant, bar, lounge, and outdoor pool. Rooms, which all have balcony, also have 2 queen size beds, bathroom with hairdryer, phone, air-conditioning/heating, satellite LCD tv, and safety deposit box (charge applies). Free wifi in public areas. (www.nubahotelcomarruga.com)

HOTEL DE LA REINE AMELIE ★★★★★, Amélie-les-Bains (four nights)

In the rugged Vallespir Valley, alongside the River Tech, Amélie is a spa town 20 miles from the coast and surrounded by pleasant mountain scenery. The hotel has a bar, lounge area, restaurant and comfortable bedrooms with private bath/shower, wc, tv, free wifi, and phone. Some have a balcony too. (www.reineamelie.com)