

C009-ST Calanques and Frioul islands

No walks from June 15 to September 15
due to maximum fire risks



The Calanques spread out across twenty kilometers between Marseille and Cassis. This limestone mountain, which reaches 565 meters at Mont Puget, glistens dazzlingly and bristles with ruinous and decayed ridges. Renowned for their beauty and charm, the Calanques consist of narrow valleys surrounded by abrupt rocky facades, dug out through the ages by rivers and now submerged entirely by the sea. On the other side of Cassis, the cliffs of the Canaille Mountain plunge into the ocean from a height of 300 meters! In the midst of all this rocky upset, lies the small fishing port of Cassis, known for fresh fish and one of the best white wines of Provence. Here you will spend your evenings on the terrace, enjoying these luxuries and living a dream!



Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrival at MARSEILLE. We invite you to spend some time to visit the historic city around your hotel located in the Vieux Port, and to ascend to The church Notre-Dame-de-la-Garde that overlooks the bay of Marseille, great view of the town - Lodging and breakfast in a 2-star hotel by the Vieux Port

Day 2 – CHATEAU D'IF and FRIOUL ISLANDS – These islands visible from Marseille are only at 20 minutes by boat from Vieux Port. You will visit the chateau d'If a fortress built by François I and made famous by Alexandre Dumas' novel, The Count of Monte Cristo. Then you take again the boat to reach the islands Pomègues and Ratonneau islands which have been connected after the construction of a dam in 1825. At the 17th Century, they had nothing to attract tourists and were used like places of quarantine for people affected by plague, yellow fever and other contagious diseases. The Caroline hospital built on Ratonneau Island was used to treat yellow fever patients.



Those who like to sunbathe on the beach will be happy with the different sand beaches but the true wealth of these islands is the diversity and number of heavenly creeks, allowing bathes far from civilization. Return to Marseille in end-of-day - Lodging and breakfast in the same hotel.

Day 3 - CALANQUE DE MORGIUO – MARSEILLE (6 hour walk). Your day will begin with an escort by taxi to the Calanque de Morgiou. The taxi ride will bring you across the limestone mountain – dry and arid, but of extreme beauty – and will leave you at the sea's edge. This calanque is home to a charming port and several little huts.

You will leave this small paradise and climb up to the Crête de Morgiou, then walk down the opposite slope to the calanque of Sormiou. You will climb to the summit of Sormiou and then down again into the next calanque, or will make your way along the rocks that jut out towards the sea, and will continue in this pattern. You will discover the Cirque des Walkyries, will look down upon the Escu, Podestat and Marseilleveyre calanques, and will then reach

the Mounine beach. You will climb again a little ways to reach the Callelongue calanque, the destination point of this day's journey. The most courageous among you may choose to continue along the sea front or take the Esterel massif to the ancient neighborhoods of Marseille, and the hotel. For those who have had enough for the day, you will find your way back to comfort by means of the city's public transportation or by taxi - *Lodging and breakfast in the same 2-star hotel.*

Day 4 - CALANQUE DE MORGIUO – CASSIS (7 hour walk – ascent: 950 meters). Transfer by taxi to the Calanque de Morgiou. Then you will begin your trek to Cassis. You will walk round the Crêt de Saint Michel to reach the Calanque du Sugiton and the famous rock named Le torpilleur or Le Crocodile. You will continue along the foot of the Falaises des toits (cliffs) and reach the first ridges with breathtaking panoramas of the seaside and calanques. From calanques (Saint Jean de Dieu, Oule, En-vau, Port Pin and others) to passes, or making your way along the Devenson cliffs, you will pass through striking landscapes, each of them more beautiful than the one before. You may wish to take a quick swim from time to time in the calanques before tackling the next climb, each defeated summit bringing you closer to Cassis, where a cool drink awaits you on the veranda as the

sun sets upon the horizon line, illuminating the Soubeyrane cliffs - *Lodging and breakfast in a 2-star hotel in the center of Cassis*

Day 5 - LA CIOTAT – CASSIS (5 hours'walk). Today's walk will greatly differ from yesterday, being less challenging and giving you an opportunity to recuperate. The taxi will leave you at La Ciotat, close to the Calanque du Mugel. Overhead looms the imposing rock structure of Le Bec de l'Aigle. After having descended into the Figuerolles bay – just to wet your feet a bit – you will head in the direction of the ruins of the Sainte Croix chapel sitting above the Soubeyranes cliffs, reaching up more than 300 meters from the sea's surface. The path continues through sparse vegetation and along the cliff's edge, giving breath-taking views of the ocean, the Cap Canaille and the magnificent bay, where nestles Cassis. This adorable harbor is surrounded at the east by calanques, at the west by the Cap Canaille, and the first foothills of the Etoile chain, covered by vineyards that produce one of the greatest white wines in Provence. You will arrive at the harbor, full of life and of tourists, towards the start of the evening. Your hotel will be a welcome treat, just off the beach – *Lodging and breakfast in the same hotel*

Day 6 - CASSIS. The tour ends after breakfast.



Season

All round the year except in summer time when Calanques mountains are closed due to maximum risks of fire

What's included?

- 5 night's accommodation in selected 2-star hotels with breakfasts
- Dinners not included
- Hotel to hotel luggage transfer
- Taxi transfers : Marseille-the Morgiou calanque (x2), Cassis-La Ciotat
- A set of maps (1/25 000 scale) with the route marked on and detailed route notes describing the trail.
- A daily itinerary together with information about facilities and places of interest along the trail.
- Phone emergency assistance.

Visa fees - transportation fees to and from the walk area - Insurance (strongly recommended on all trips) - Transfers except those mentioned above – Drinks - Additional meals – Entrance fees - Spending of personal nature e.g. laundry, souvenirs, phone calls,... are not included

Getting there and away

By plane: Marseille international airport is served by low-cost companies from the main European towns

By train: Scheduled links (TGV or fast trains) between Marseille and the French main towns.

By car: Marseille in on the A7 motorway.

Where to park: several pay guarded car parks nearby Le Vieux Port in Marseille

Walk difficulty

Grade 4 : 6 to 7 hours walking a day with long ascents and descents more than 1000 m. You walk high mountains as the Alps or Massif Central, on rough and stony paths. On occasion route-finding may be tricky and request some walking experience. A reasonably high standard of fitness and stamina are essential for enjoyment of this hike.

