From the French-Italian border down to the Mediterranean

Departure Nice » Arrival Monaco - Hike from Limone Piemonte to Monaco

7 Days | 6 nights | Difficulty | Max. difficulty

In this one-week hike, you will leave Nice on board a picturesque train to plunge into the eastern Maritime Alps and cross into Italy. You will walk back to the very end of the Via Alpina in Monaco, alternating between the Red and Blue trails in the Mercantour National Park and also taking in the famous Vallée des Merveilles with its breathtaking rock engravings.

Period recommended: mid-June to mid-October

Public transport at departure
"Train des Merveilles" to Tende then change: Nice-Ville 9h24, Tende 11h05/13h05, Limone (Italia) 13h25 (route 5, Nice-Cuneo).

Public transport at arrival
Trains every half hour to Nice and Ventimiglia (25 min. each)
www.bahn.de

Lodgings at departure
- Gablonzer Hütte – +43 6136 8465 (office@gablonzerhuette.at)
- Hotel Berghof – +43 4285 8271-0 (berghof-nassfeld@carnica.at)
- Forerestia di Carnino – (+39) 0174 390194 (info@rifugiiodonbarbera.eu)
- Auberge de Jeunesse Les Camélia – +33 4 93 62 15 54 (nice-camelias@fuaj.org)
- Auberge de Jeunesse du Mont Boron – +33 4 93 89 23 64 (nice@fuaj.org)
- Bed & Breakfast 'L Mai (bandb.salbertrand@gmail.com)

Useful topographic maps
Ref. / Name | Publisher | Scale
TOP25 3741OT | IGN | 1:25.000
Alpes Sans Frontières n°4 - Vallée des Merveilles / Val Vermenagna | IGN-IGM | 1:25.000
TOP25 3741ET | IGN | 1:25.000

Day 1 : Nice - Limonetto
Difficulty | Walking time | 1h30 min | 200 m | 0 m

Starting from Nice-Ville train station, you travel on board the Train des Merveilles tourist railway to discover the Paillon and Roya-Bévéra valleys. Stop in Tende for lunch in this medieval little town with its charming gothic, Renaissance and baroque architectural heritage. You cross the border at the Tende tunnel on a further 20min. train journey and arrive in Limone, Italy in the early afternoon. Finish the day with a 6km-walk along a gently ascending path to Limonetto, where you will sleep.

Websites relative to natural and cultural heritage

Lodgings
- Albergo da Lino +39 183 325039 +39 3482454978
- Arucador Boutique Lodge +39 340 1602642 +39 348 2902263 Email: hotel@arrucador.it
- Hotel Edelweiss +39 0171 928138 Email: info@edelweisslimone.it
- Albergo Panice +39 0171 928136 Email: info@albergopanice.it
- Gasthof zum Rudi +43 676 9343605 Email: sabrinabiscardini@gmail.com
- Bed & Breakfast 'L Mai 3339288102
- Rifugio Alpe Selle 3472628880

Day 2 : Limonetto - Castérino
Difficulty | Walking time | 5h10 min | 1000 m | 965 m

Today’s hike follows the Via Alpina Red Trail. It starts gently up the Rio Prati della Chiesa river valley, then climbs steeply through woods and finally across scree slopes to the baisse de Salente pass, on the French border, by the Giaure fort. Heading down on the French side, you pass the old Peïrefique
barracks and several bunkers before reaching the hamlet of Castérino. Here you have a choice between two friendly inns.

**Websites relative to natural and cultural heritage**
- PROVINCIA DI CUNEO: [http://www.provincia.cuneo.it/montagna/index.htm](http://www.provincia.cuneo.it/montagna/index.htm)

**Lodgings**

| Gite Santa Maria Maddalena | +33 4 93 04 65 93 | Email: gitedecasterino@wanadoo.fr | [http://www.casterino.com](http://www.casterino.com) |
| Hotel les Melezes        | +33 4 93 04 95 95 | Email: lesmelezescasterino@aliceadsf.fr | [http://www.lesmelezes.fr/](http://www.lesmelezes.fr/) |

**Day 3: Castérino - Refuge des Merveilles**
- Difficulty ✈ | Walking time: 6h00 min | ▲ 1220 m | ▼ 660 m

**Related stages:**
- R146
- R147

Walk along the Valmasque stream and around the Mont Paracouerte to enter the Mercantour National Park. The trail leads you to the Valmasque hut where you can stop for refreshments. Continue southwards, along the Lac Vert, Lac Noir then Lac du Basto lakes. Shortly before the Baisse de Valmasque pass you leave the Via Alpina and continue along the GR®52, entering the famous Vallée des Merveilles (Valley of Marvels). Overnight at the Refuge des Merveilles hut.

**Websites relative to natural and cultural heritage**
- Mercantour National Park: [http://www.mercantour.eu](http://www.mercantour.eu)

**Lodgings**

| Refuge des Merveilles | +33 4 93 04 64 64 | Email: jochen.boggero@lesaem.org | [www.cafnice.org](http://www.cafnice.org) |

**Day 4: Refuge des Merveilles - Col de Turini**
- Difficulty ✈ | Walking time: 5h20 min | ▲ 820 m | ▼ 1220 m

This long stage, still along the GR®52, leads you outside the Mercantour National Park and into the Nice foothills, with its Mediterranean scents and perched villages. The numerous successive “baisses” (passes) offers you breathtaking panoramas. From the Refuge des Merveilles, the trail goes up to the Muta lake to reach the Pas du Diable pass. Cross down to the bottom of the valley then follow the Ciantasque stream, which you cross at altitude 2120m to continue south-westerly along the slope until the Baisse Cavaline. You then go onto the other side and continue along the slope under the Raus summit and to the Raus pass. There, change to the northern side again and walk under the Tuor summit to reach the Pointe des Trois Communes peak. You can sleep either at the Baise de Camp d’Argent or at the Col de Turini.

**Lodgings**

| Hotel Le Yeti          | +33 4 93 91 57 01 | Email: contact@leyeti.fr | [http://www.leyeti.fr](http://www.leyeti.fr/) |
| Hotel Le Ranch         | +33 4 93 91 57 58 | Email: info@estive-mercantour.fr | [http://www.estive-mercantour.fr/](http://www.estive-mercantour.fr/) |
| Hotel Le Ranch         | +33 4 93 91 57 23 +33 6 09 88 99 03 | Email: ranch.turini@yahoo.fr | [http://www.ranch-turini.com/](http://www.ranch-turini.com/) |

**Day 5: Col de Turini - Sospel**
- Difficulty ✈ | Walking time: 8h45 min | ▲ 725 m | ▼ 2007 m

Today you are back on the Via Alpina for the last stage of its “Blue Trail”, along GR®52. It enters the core zone of the Mercantour national park just after the village of Moulinet and leaves it at the “Bandita de Barrins” area on the southernmost edge of the park. Next, a descent brings you to the stage destination, Sospel, a medieval village at the heart of the Bévéra valley.

**Websites relative to natural and cultural heritage**
- Mercantour National Park: [http://www.mercantour.eu](http://www.mercantour.eu)

**Lodgings**

| Gite collectif municipal de Moulinet | +33 4 93 04 80 07 | Email: secretaire.moulinet@wanadoo.fr | [http://www.moulinet.net](http://www.moulinet.net) |
| Camping St Sebastien               | +33 4 93 04 80 37 | Email: info@hotel-de-france-sospel.com | [http://www.hotel-de-france-sospel.com/](http://www.hotel-de-france-sospel.com/) |
| Hotel de France                    | +33 4 93 04 00 01 | Email: sospel@sospel.net | [http://www.sospel.net](http://www.sospel.net) |
| Gite du Mercantour                 | +33 4 93 04 00 09 | Email: sospel@sospel.net | [http://www.sospel.net](http://www.sospel.net) |
| Hotel des Etrangers                | +33 4 93 04 00 09 | Email: sospel@sospel.net | [http://www.sospel.net](http://www.sospel.net) |
| Auberge Provencale                 | +33 4 93 04 00 31 | Email: aubergeprovencale2@wanadoo.fr | [http://www.aubergeprovencale.fr/](http://www.aubergeprovencale.fr/) |

**Day 6: Sospel - Peillon**
- Difficulty ✈ | Walking time: 5h45 min | ▲ 1191 m | ▼ 1164 m

**Related stages:**
- D61

In Sospel you reconnect with the Via Alpina Red Trail which you will now follow until its end. Today’s long, low-altitude stage heads towards the Farguet pass then descends through very Mediterranean countryside to the preserved village of Peille before arriving at the hamlet of Peillon, the stage
On leaving Peillon, the trail joins the GR® 51 B, crosses the village of La Turbie with its Trophy of Augustus and then, facing the Mediterranean and its increasingly present maritime air, arrives in the Principality of Monaco, which it crosses to reach the Palais square, the final destination on the Red Trail.

Related stages:
R161

Lodgings

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<th>Lodging</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tr>
<td>Auberge de la Madone</td>
<td>+33 4 93 79 91 17</td>
<td><a href="mailto:auberge.de.la.madone@wanadoo.fr">auberge.de.la.madone@wanadoo.fr</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.auberge-madone-peillon.com">www.auberge-madone-peillon.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Auberge Lou Pourtail</td>
<td>+33 4 93 79 91 17</td>
<td><a href="mailto:auberge.de.la.madone@wanadoo.fr">auberge.de.la.madone@wanadoo.fr</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.auberge-madone-peillon.com">www.auberge-madone-peillon.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping de la Laune</td>
<td>+33 4 93 79 91 61</td>
<td><a href="mailto:contact@campingdelalaune.com">contact@campingdelalaune.com</a></td>
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Day 7 : Peillon - Monaco

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<thead>
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<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Walking time</th>
<th>Ascent</th>
<th>Descent</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2h50 min</td>
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<td>692 m</td>
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Related stages:
R161