

Factsheet | Self-guided walk | Level 3/5    | 6-7 walking days

# GR10 Aulus les Bains – Mérens les Vals : Natural Park of the Pyrénées Ariègeoises

## Your route in brief

- Self-guided walk without guide
- Walk with family, friends or as a couple
- Possibility of a comfort version with 4 nights in room
- Transport of your luggage between each stage (depending on the option chosen) except for 2 nights in mountain refuges
- Access and return possible via Aulus les Bains and Mérens les Vals
- Duration 7 days / 6 nights

## Strong points

- A part of the itinerary in the Natural Park of the Ariegean Pyrenees
- The small preserved mountain hamlets
- The wild beauty of the Haute Ariège
- The lake site of the Bassiès ponds
- The wild massif of Aston
- Diversified itinerary between crests, forests, lakes, high mountains, green valleys and summer pasture plateaus



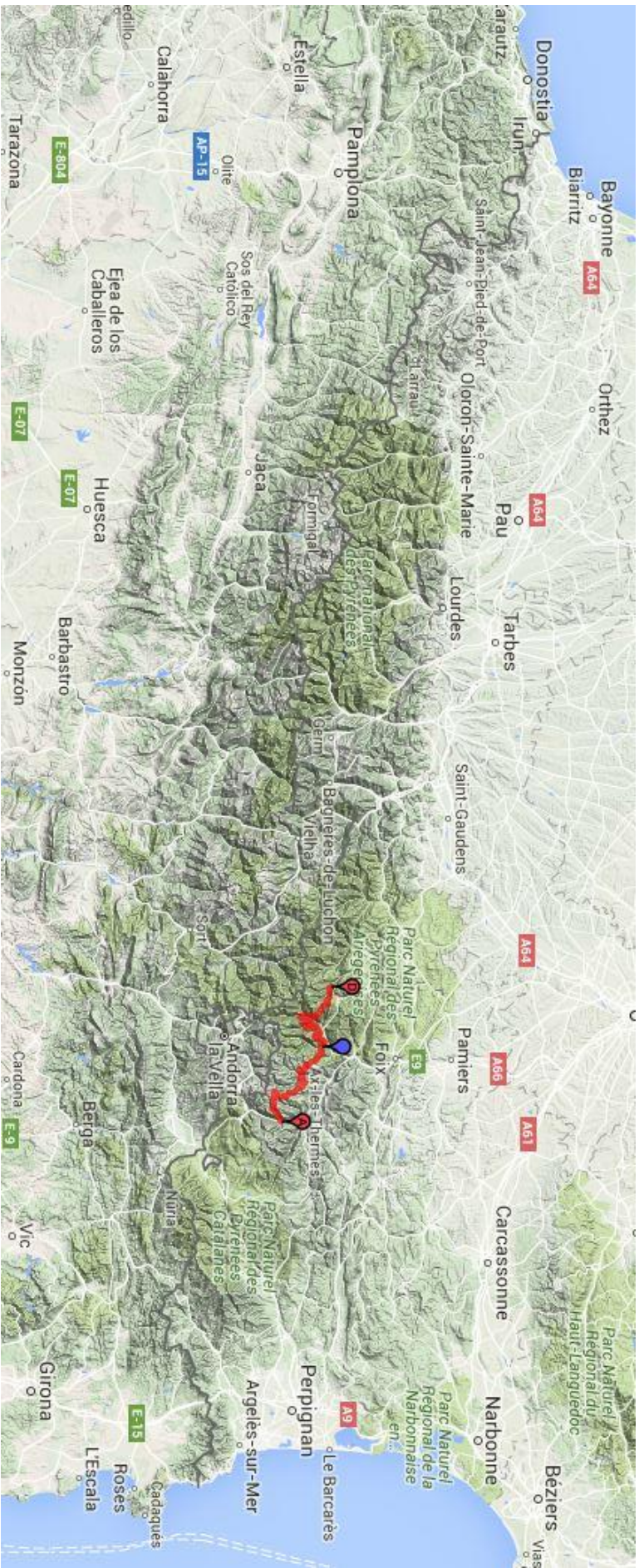
The walk from Aulus-les-bains to Mérens in Haute Ariège connects the western and the central sections of the Pyrenees with the Ariège part of the mountain range. This region is known for its high plateau landscapes, deep valleys hemmed in by soaring summits, sometimes covered with a sprinkling of snow, and mountain lakes whose waters change in colour. In the evening, the Ariège gastronomy will get you back in shape for the next day. From Aulus, the guarded refuge of Bassiès surrounded by lakes will satisfy your desires for wide open spaces. In Vicdessos region, then, the discovery of orris, ancient circular dry stone constructions will allow you to put meaning and images on what is called pastoralism in the Auzat valley. The arrival on Mérens, at the gates of the nearby Capcir and Andorra, after the mountain stage of the Rulhe refuge will finally convince you that you will have to return one day to Haute-Ariège.

[www.gr10-liberte.com](http://www.gr10-liberte.com) / [www.respyrenees.com](http://www.respyrenees.com)

[www.maison-iputxainia.com](http://www.maison-iputxainia.com)

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## •PROGRAM

### **Day 1 : Start of your holiday in Aulus les Bains**

Your holiday starts at your accommodation in Aulus-les-Bains. Option to visit the thermal village or to do a loop walk.

#### **Guzet lake and Ars Waterfall**

A great loop walk from Aulus-les-Bains to a mountain lake and the superb waterfall, the Cascade d'Ars.

#### **The waterfall of Ars**

This is another option for a shorter loop walk: it will take you to the great "Cascade d'Ars" which gives Aulus-les-Bains, famous spa resort, its reputation.

- Distance : 13km, duration : around 5h00, altitude gain : +880m, descent : -880m.
- Distance : 10,5km, durée : around 3h45, dénivelé plus : +740m, dénivelé moins : -740m.

### **Day 2 : from Aulus to Bassiès refuge**

From Aulus les Bains a walk up towards the Port de Saleix (1794m altitude). The beauty of the mountain scenery is awesome, rural barns, fresh, bubbly mountain torrents, a rich Pyrenean flora and an old mine. From the Port of Saleix, you can admire the view towards the Auzat and Vicdessos valleys, then the Bassiès lakes, before reaching the refuge.

- Distance : 11km, duration : around 5h15, altitude gain : +1270m, descent : -370m.

### **Day 3 : from Bassiès refuge to Goulier**

The GR 10 goes along the magnificent Bassiès ponds, and joins the lower part of the high Vicdessos valley in the direction of Auzat, at the foot of Montcalm, the last summit of more than 3000m altitude towards the Mediterranean. Then a superb path leads to Goulier, passing through Olbier, a pretty little mountain village in the Ariège Pyrenees..

- Distance : 13km, duration : around 4h30, altitude gain : +450m, descent : -995m.

### **Day 4 : from Goulier to Siguer**

Starting from Goulier, the day's itinerary crosses many cols and passes through beautiful forests and mountain hamlets such as Lercoul and Siguer. The built heritage in these places is important: Romanesque churches, orris, barns or bordes. Near the villages, take the time to discover the remains of the old cultivation terraces, with their low stone walls.

- Distance : 11,5km, duration : around 4h45, altitude gain : +650m, descent : -950m.

### **Day 5 : from Siguer to "Pont de Coudènes"**

From Siguer and after a forest climb, you will reach the panoramic ridge of the Bède which leads to the summit of the Pla de Montcamp, a vast high plateau with a wonderful 360° view of the Ariège mountains. You will then cross the wide open spaces of the Pla du Four, ideal for grazing animals as the Courtal Marti and Balledreyte huts testify. You will then cross the Sirmont pass before descending to the Coudènes bridge. [Transfer from the Coudènes bridge to your accommodation in valley.](#)

- Distance : 15,5km, duration : around 7h30, altitude gain : +1500m, descent : -1200m.

### **Day 6 : from the Plateau de Beille to Rulhe refuge**

In the morning, transfer to the plateau de Beille, famous for its nordic ski station and for being on the itinerary for the Tour de France race. Ascent to the Rulhe refuge via the col des Finestres, Didorte, Belh and Terre Nègre. A high mountain ambience is guaranteed!

- Distance : 14km, duration : around 5h15, altitude gain : +785m, descent : -380m.

### **Day 7 : from Rulhe refuge to Mérens**

Starting from the Rulhe refuge, the GR 10 first crosses the Calmette pass, then skirts around the Etang Bleu, following the Lhasse ridge with beautiful views over the Rulhe massif. Then a descent leads over the Comte pond. The path then descends along the Mourguillou stream to reach the jasse of the same name, opposite the Font des Fièvres, before arriving in Mérens.

- Distance : 12,5km, duration : around 5h15, altitude gain : +330m, descent : -1460m.

*This programme is an example of the itinerary we aim to adhere to. It may be necessary, if situations arise that are beyond our control, for the itinerary to be modified.*

## • DATES AND PRICES

### Departures

Every days from the middle of June to the end of September.

Booking from 2 people (solitary traveller: consult us).

From 15/06/2023 to 30/09/2023 :

### Prices with luggage transfer :

Price per person for a group of 2 persons	<b>695€</b>
Price per person for a group of 3 persons	<b>650€</b>
Price per person for a group of 4 persons	<b>625€</b>
Price per person for a group of 5 persons	<b>610€</b>
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	<b>595€</b>

### Prices without luggage transfer :

Price per person for a group of 2 persons	<b>620€</b>
Price per person for a group of 3 persons	<b>600€</b>
Price per person for a group of 4 persons	<b>585€</b>
Price per person for a group of 5 persons	<b>575€</b>
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	<b>565€</b>

### Extras :

- Comfort version (4 nights in rooms) : 55€/pers
- Extra for a single room : 160€/pers
- Transfer back from Mérens to Aulus les Bains on weekdays: 190€/transfer
- Transfer back from Mérens to Aulus les Bains on Sundays and public holidays: 210€/transfer
- Extra night in Aulus half board double room : 65€/pers
- Extra night in Aulus half board single room : 95€/pers
- Extra night in Aulus half board shared dormitory : 55€/pers
- Extra night in Mérens half board double room : 55€/pers
- Extra night in Mérens half board single room : 65€/pers
- Extra night in Mérens half board shared dormitory : 50€/pers

### The price includes :

- Half board accommodation
- Transfers days 5 and 6
- Luggage transport depending on the option chosen except for 2 nights in refuge on days 2 and 6
- Dossier containing maps, route notes (1 for 4 persons, given in 1st accommodation)
- GPS tracks if you ask us + access to the detailed itinerary on the Mhikes GPS mobile application

### The price does not include :

- Holiday and travel insurance
- 15€ for booking fees
- Showers in the mountain huts
- Additional transfers
- Entrance fees, additional activities
- Drinks and picnics

## • TAILOR MADE HOLIDAYS

We can put together a suitable holiday for you taking into account all your specific requests and budget. Many individuals and trekking companies have relied on us for years. With our tailor-made holidays we always aim to provide you with the best quality at the fairest price.

### If you want to :

- increase the comfort of your accommodations,
- change the duration of your trip,
- organize additional activities or visits,
- get a transfer from/to an airport,
- organize an extra night

**Contact Gaëtan**  
Tél : 0033 5 34 14 51 50  
[gaetan@respyrenees.com](mailto:gaetan@respyrenees.com)

## • ORGANIZATION

We propose a self-guided, independent formula. You choose your departure date and we will take care of all the rest from the initial meeting time through to the dispersion point. We transport your bags between the accommodations (depending on the option chosen) except for 2 nights in refuges on days 2 and 6. We provide you with the maps and good walking route notes sent to the first accommodation as well as an access to the detailed itinerary on the Mhikes GPS mobile application. This is a way of enjoying complete flexibility, you dictate the pace and rhythm of your holiday. Moreover, our team will answer all your questions, and will provide all useful advice in order to make this holiday a success.

### Your transfers during the walk :

Day 5 : At 5.30 PM, transfer from the Pont de Coudènes to your accommodation in valley to make up for the lack of accommodation on this part of the GR10.

- Day 6 : At 8.00 AM, transfer from your accommodation in valley to the Plateau de Beille to resume the hike.

## • TECHNICAL INFORMATION

### Level 3/5

Regular walker, in good physical condition with experience of mountain hiking. Hiking 6h-7h per day on average, altitude difference 700m-1000m on average, on fairly easy trails, with some small technical difficulties. The walking times mentioned are given as an indication, they are average times that only take into account the duration of the actual walking without counting the break times. Depending on the weather conditions, the walking pace can also vary, ranging from +300m to +500m of climb per hour.

### Guide

Self-guided walking, without guide.

### Carrying

You will need to carry a day backpack only. Our bag-moving service means you can travel light during your walks. Except for the nights in refuges on day 2 and 6 where you will need to carry personal belongings for the night (sleeping bag sheet, change of clothes, toiletries) as you will not have access to your main luggage those nights. Your main luggage (that should please be easily transportable) will be transported by vehicle between the different night stops, unless you have chosen the version without luggage transport.

## • ACCOMMODATION/FOOD

### Accommodation

Half board

2 nights in a shared dormitory in mountain refuges on days 2 and 6. Bring a sleeping bag liner (blankets provided)

3 nights in a shared dormitory in gite on days 1, 3 and 5. Bring a sleeping bag liner (blankets provided)

1 night in room in guest room on day 4

**COMFORT VERSION (with extra) :**

2 nights in room in guest room on days 1 and 4

2 nights in room in gite on days 3 and 5

2 nights in a shared dormitory in mountain refuges on days 2 and 6. Bring a sleeping bag liner (blankets provided)

**Food**

- Continental breakfast (tea, coffee, milk, butter, jam)

- Evening meals in gites, often based on local specialities, include a starter, a main course and a dessert.

- Pic-nics and drinks not included.

**• PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

**Starting :** Day 1 at your accommodation in Aulus- les-Bains (09)

**Ending :** Day 7 after the walk, in Merens (09).

**How to get to Aulus les Bains:**

- **By air :** Toulouse-Blagnac airport
- **By train or bus :** TER trains from the main cities towards Boussens (<https://www.oui.sncf>) then bus from Boussens to St Girons. Then bus from Saint-Girons to Aulus.
- **By car :** From Toulouse, 128km, autoroute via Saint Gaudens ; to Saint Martory, take Saint-Girons / From Lyon, Marseille, Montpellier, rejoin Carcassonne, then direction Foix/Mirepoix ; from Foix, rejoin directly Saint-Girons, then

**PARKING :**

Free parking in Aulus-les-Bains : Camper van parking space, near the tourist office or in the village ; inform a member of staff at the office.

**How to leave Mérens :**

TER train direction Toulouse (SNCF line La Tour de Carol – Toulouse), stops in Foix.

**How to get to Aulus from Mérens :**

TER trains from Mérens to Foix (SNCF line La Tour de Carol - Toulouse). Bus from Foix to Saint Girons and from Saint Girons to Aulus les Bains.

We recommend to arrive by train to avoid returns to departure to recover your car, because itineraries can be very long and badly served and very expensive if you take a taxi. If you insist to come with your car, we recommend you to leave your car on the arrival point the first day and to do the run to the departure point because the first day you have plenty of time to do the run and you will not be tired by a week walking.

**•WHAT TO BRING AND PACK**

**Your main luggage:**

For logistical reasons, we ask you not to bring more than one item/person. Its weight should not exceed 12kg - 15kg.

**Your day backpack**

The size of your bag varies upon the type of activity.

For a walk without portage : 30L minimum

For a walk with partial portage : 50L minimum

For a walk with portage : 60L minimum

Whatever activity you participate in, you should always carry in your rucksack:

- Rainwear, warm clothing, spare T-shirt, sunglasses, sun cream, first aid kit, picnic kit, personal items, etc.)

- Picnic lunch of the day (bring a plastic box)

- Sufficient water (minimum 1.5 litre water bottle)

### **Walking Boots**

The type of boot depends upon the activities you take part in however they are one of your most important items. They should be comfortable, waterproof and breathable. For the best protection we advise ankle boots.

We recommend our young walkers to wear flexible walking boots with a good sole and back.

For mountain walking for more than 4 hours long we recommend a boot with a fairly ridged sole.

If you need to buy a new pair of boots, we advise you wear them in before the start of your holiday. Don't wear boots that are too small because feet have a tendency to swell up. Be careful with your shoes that have been left in the wardrobe for too long. The lifespan of a shoe is 2 to 5 years. After a while the soles will come off and the seams can tear.

### **Clothes:**

- A wind and rainproof jacket
- A thick jumper or a fleece
- Comfortable walking trousers
- Shorts, t shirts as well as breathable base layers
- Spare clothes
- Swimwear and towel
- For the start and end of season, hat and gloves suitable for GR10 walks at altitude.

### **For Sleeping**

- Sleeping bag liner for all nights spent in the gites and mountain shelters (blankets are provided)
- Earplugs

### **For Picnics**

- Sealed plastic box (0.5L) to carry salads
- Cutlery (folding knife and fork)
- A 1,5L minimum flask

### **Small equipment**

- A pair of tennis shoes, or sandals for the evening
- A pair of telescopic poles (optional)
- Sunglasses and sun cream
- Hat, cap or bob
- Camera...
- A small toilet bag, with towel
- Torch or headlamp
- Toilet paper
- A mini-pharmacy: personal medication, Compeed for blisters, elastoplast, gauze, disinfectant, arnica granules and aspirin in case of minor injuries, a survival blanket.