

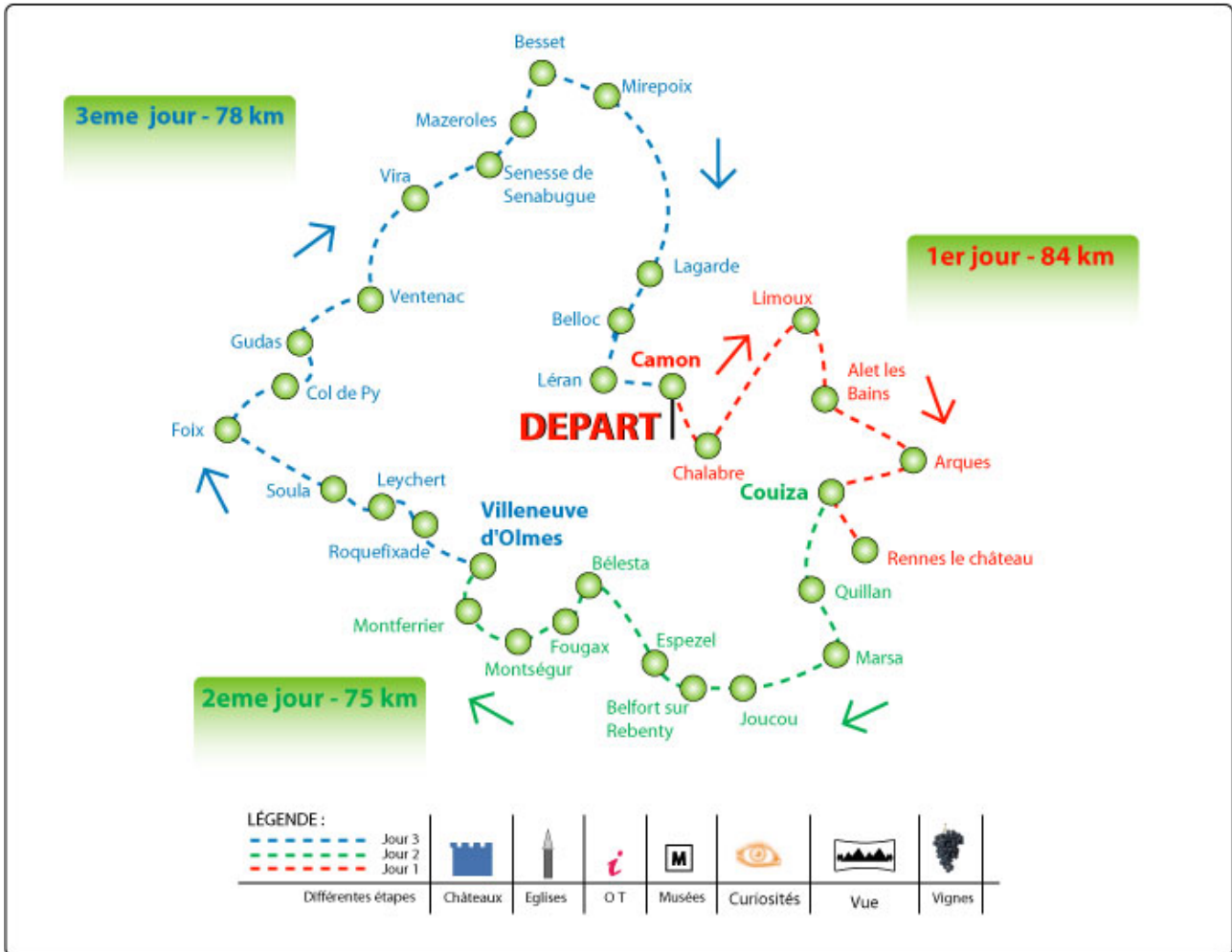


Comté de Foix walled towns and cathare castles
Circuit N°18



Even though the priest's treasure of Rennes-le-Château is still a source of dream the true history of this land is the Cathares' one. Its trace can be found all along this itinerary through the castles and mansions which stand in unique settings.

<i>The travel book recommend the number of minimum days which can be devoted to the itinerary.</i>



Enjoy a stopover in the time and space from Niaux grotto to the Space Museum in Toulouse, discover this vast region, a land of vineyard and sun providing multiple resources.

Wines : Cahors, Madiran, Gaillac, Pacherenc, côtes du Frontonnais, Côtes de St Mont.

Local Produce/Gastronomy : armagnac, goose preserves, cassoulet, duck, foie gras, ceps, truffles, beans tarbais, tripes, aligot, garbure, cheeses (roquefort, laguiole, Rocamadour, bleu des Causses, moulis, tomme des Pyrénées), pink garlic from Lautrec, chasselas de Moissac, saussage from Toulouse, melon from Quercy.

Traditional Handicraft : Laguiole knives, gloves from Millau, furniture of art from Revel, hats from Caussade, Pewters from Grammat and Rouergue, Coppers from Durfort, horn combs from Lavelanet.



Comté de Foix walled towns and cathare castles, Circuit N°18

1 Day 1 :

Your journey will start in this small village gathered around its powerful abbey also called the castle Camon.

Then you will follow a small valley between the Roubi Choux wood and the dam of Montbel. You will travel up to the Saint-Benoît pass. At the top of it an exceptional panorama will open up towards the Aude valley in the south and the Mirepoix area in the north.

After the Espinas pass you will drive down towards Limoux by crossing the vineyard gave birth to the Blanquette as early as the XIVth century. By crossing the Pont Neuf (XIVth century) you will discover the animated streets of the town, then you will follow up the Aude stream in the direction of Alet-les-Bains. The historical centre of this town will reveals its charm as it remains gathered within the XIIth century ramparts. You will specially notice the remains of the former Roman abbey.

You will leave again the Aude valley to travel along a twisted road towards the Espinas pass.

Before Arques you will discover very beautiful views over the valley. The imposing keep of Arques will remind your position on the very area where the crusades against the Albigeois were held.

Before having a well earned rest at the former Ducs de Joyeuse's castle you will travel through Rennes-le-Château situated at the end of a road which offers a superb panorama. This village was mainly famous for his priest's sudden fortune. Would have the priest Saunière discovered the Templars' treasure ?

1 Day 1 : Road book

Crossed places and towns	N° of crossed roads	KM	Comments
CAMON	D16	0.0	
SONNAC-SUR-L'HERS	D16	0.0	
CHALABRE	D620	7.0	
COL DE SAINT-BENOIT	D620	0.0	
SAINT-BENOIT	D620	0.0	
COL DE L'ESPINAS	D620	0.0	
LA BEZOLE	D620	0.0	
LIMOUX	D118	26.0	
ALET-LES-BAINS	D118	0.0	
CROISEMENT	D70	10.0	
TERROLES	D70	0.0	
ARQUES	D613	19.0	
SERRES	D613	0.0	
COUIZA	D52	12.0	
RENNES-LE-CHATEAU	D52	0.0	
COUIZA	D52	10.0	

1 Day 1 : The lodgings suggested by french-itinerary.com

. SAINT-MARTIN-DE-VILLEREGLAN

Château de Villereglan (Chambres d'Hôtes) - 1 allée du Parc - 11300 SAINT-MARTIN-DE-VILLEREGLAN
Phone : 0468315943 - fax 0468315943 - @ : info@chateaudevillereglan.com

. CAMON

Château de Camon (Hôtel) - château de Camon - 09500 CAMON
Phone : 0561603123 - fax 0561603123 - @ : peter.katielawton@wanadoo.fr

. CHALABRE

Hôtel de France (Hôtel) - Cours Raynaud - 11230 CHALABRE
Phone : 0468696860 - fax 0468696861 - @ : hotel-de-france8@wanadoo.fr

. LIMOUX

Grand Hôtel Moderne et Pigeon (Hôtel) - 1 Place du Général Leclerc - 11300 LIMOUX
Phone : 0468310025 - fax 0468311243 - @ : info@grandhotelmmodernepigeon.fr

. ALET-LES-BAINS



L'Evêché (Hôtel) - Avenue Nicolas Pavillon - 11580 ALET-LES-BAINS
Phone : 0468699025 - fax 0468699194 - @ : contact.eveche@free.fr

. COUIZA

Châteaux des Ducs de Joyeuse (Hôtel) - châteaux des Ducs de Joyeuse - 11190 COUIZA
Phone : 0468742350 - fax 0468742336 - @ : d.avelange@wanadoo.fr

Châteaux des Ducs de Joyeuse (Hôtel) - châteaux des Ducs de Joyeuse - 11190 COUIZA
Phone : 0468742350 - fax 0468742336 - @ : d.avelange@wanadoo.fr

 **Day 1 : Visits selected by french-itinerary.com**

. CAMON

Ancienne Abbatale (Eglise) - 09500 CAMON
Phone : 0561682828

. LIMOUX

Catharama (Curiosité) - 11303 LIMOUX
Phone : 0668311589

Aimery Sieur d'Arques (Viticulteur) - avenue de Carcassonne - 11303 LIMOUX
Phone : 0468746300 - fax 0468746313

 **Day 1 : The Notebook practises of french-itinerary.com**

. PAMIERS

Cycles Passion (Location de vélos) - 32 avenue de Foix - 09103 PAMIERS
Phone : 0561601405

. CAMON

Office de Tourisme - 10 rue Georges d'Armagnac - 09500 CAMON
Phone : 0561688826 - fax 0561681207 - @ : mairie.camon@wordline.fr

. LIMOUX

Office de Tourisme - promenade Tivoli
BP5 - 11303 LIMOUX
Phone : 0468311182 - fax 0468318714 - @ : limox@fnotsi.net

. ALET LES BAINS

Office de Tourisme - Avenue Nicolas Pavillon - 11580 ALET LES BAINS
Phone : 0668699356 - fax 0468699407 - @ : alet-les-bains@fnotsi.net



Comté de Foix walled towns and cathare castles, Circuit N°18

2 Day 2 :

The Duc de Joyeuse's castle rising in its park on the bank of the river Aude in the village of Couiza, is a historical listed monument.

You will reach Quillan on a small road which lingers along the river. You will keep on travelling upstream the river Aude by entering the pass of Pierre. Surrounded by high cliffs the passage is quite impressive mainly after the crossing of the Trou du Curé a tunnel built by the Saint-Martin-Lys' priest.

You will leave the pass of Pierre-Lys to reach the gorges of Rebeuty through a picturesque road on the plateau of Sault which will lead you to Joucou a small village built around a former abbey.

After having crossed the gorges of Joucou where the tunnels follow the overhangs you will reach Bélesta in a hilly landscape punctuated with forests and pastures.

You will discover one the country curiosities : the intermittent fountain of Fontestorbes near the road which leads you to Montségur. At last you will approach Montségur, a major site of catharism with some emotion.

Within this imposing site you will still feel the density of these men ' heroism who chose to climb the stake rather than renouncing to their conviction on 16th march 1244. From the top of the castle ruins risen after 1245 by the lord of Mirepoix, you will embrace a majestic landscape.

Then you will reach le Castrum de Villeneuve-d'Olmes for an evening of meditation.

2 Day 2 : Road book

Crossed places and towns	N° of crossed roads	KM	Comments
COUIZA	D118	0.0	
CROISEMENT	D92	5.0	
QUILLAN	D117	5.0	
DEFILE DE PIERRE	D117	0.0	
CROISEMENT	D107	9.0	
MARSA	D107	0.0	
JOUCOU	D107	0.0	
BELFORT-SUR-REBENTY	D107	0.0	
CROISEMENT	D29	20.0	
ESPEZEL	D29	0.0	
CROISEMENT	D613	4.0	
CROISEMENT	D29	1.0	
BELESTA	D9	11.0	
FOUGAX-ET-BARRINEUF	D9	0.0	
MONTSEGUR	D9	11.0	
VILLENEUVE-D'OLMES	D9	9.0	

2 Day 2 : The lodgings suggested by french-itinerary.com

. ESPERAZA

La Maison du Chapelier (Chambres d'Hôtes) - 7 rue Elie Sermet - 11260 ESPERAZA
Phone : 0468742249 - @ : andy@chambresdhotels.org

. LAROQUE-D'OLMES

Le Castel d'Olmes (Hôtel) - 76 avenue du 11 novembre - 09600 LAROQUE-D'OLMES
Phone : 0561010458 - fax 0561058437

. COUIZA

Châteaux des Ducs de Joyeuse (Hôtel) - châteaux des Ducs de Joyeuse - 11190 COUIZA
Phone : 0468742350 - fax 0468742336 - @ : d.avelange@wanadoo.fr

. VILLENEUVE D'OLMES

Le Castrum (Hôtel) - Laouzet - 09300 VILLENEUVE D'OLMES
Phone : 0561013224 - fax 0561012285 - @ : castrum@chateauxhotels.com



Day 2 : Visits selected by french-itinerary.com

. MONTSEGUR

Musée archéologique - 09300 MONTSEGUR
Phone : 0561011027

Château de Montségur (Château) - 09300 MONTSEGUR
Phone : 0561010694



Day 2 : The Notebook practises of french-itinerary.com

. BELESTA

Office de Tourisme - Mairie - 09300 BELESTA
Phone : 0561016002 - fax 0561035048

. MONTSEGUR

Office de Tourisme - 09300 MONTSEGUR
Phone : 0561030303 - fax 0661030303 - @ : info.tourisme@montsegur.org



Comté de Foix walled towns and cathare castles, Circuit N°18

3 Day 3 :

After a bathe in the Castrum swimming pool facing the unique panorama of the Pyrénées range you will leave this beautiful Occitane home to cross the valley of la Baure and reach Roquefixade, the castle of which perched on a spur was another refuge for the Cathares. The village typical of the XIIIth century walled towns lies around a rectangular square rectangulaire which owns a fountain-watering place. You will leave the Olmes land to reach Foix. At the end of the valley and on top of its rock the fortress towers the city and watches the entrance of the upper valley of Ariège.

Stroll in the quarters of the old town and do not forget to cast a glance at the river famous to carry sand enclosing gold flakes. While visiting the castle you will discover a magnificent panorama over the Pyrénées range, the valley of Ariège and the Sugarloaf Mount of Montgaillard. Then you will resume the driving towards the Plantaure mountains.

A scenic journey will lead you to the Py pass before travelling to the foot of the Mount Pastouret the summit of the area. From villages to helmets you will reach the Hers valley that you will follow up to Mirepoix.

This walled town is quite outstanding for its main square surrounded by houses from the XIIIth and XVth centuries. Their first floor supported by wood roof structures which are superbly worked lay forward stunningly beautiful frames. After a ferry crossing to the Montbel dam you will reach the charm and the quietness of the former abbey of Camon

3 Day 3 : Road book

Crossed places and towns	N° of crossed roads	KM	Comments
VILLENEUVE-D'OLMES	D509	0.0	
CROISEMENT	D117	1.0	
CROISEMENT	D9A	2.0	
ROQUEFIXADE	D9A	0.0	
LEYCHERT	D9A	0.0	
SOULA	D9A	0.0	
FOIX	D1	20.0	
COL-DE-PY	D13	0.0	
GUDAS	D	3.0	
VENTENAC	D	5.0	
CROISEMENT	D48	3.0	
GALZAN	D48	0.0	
VIRA	D13	4.0	
SENESSE-DE-SENABUGUE	D13	0.0	
MAZEROLLES	D13	11.0	
BESSET	D119	0.0	
MIREPOIX	D626	3.0	
MOULIN-NEUF	D507	6.0	
LAGARDE	D7	3.0	
CROISEMENT	D107	3.0	
BELLOC	D107	0.0	
LERAN	D28	6.0	
LAC-DE-MONTBEL	D28	0.0	
LERAN	D107	3.0	
CROISEMENT	D	1.0	
CAMON	D	4.0	

3 Day 3 : The lodgings suggested by french-itinerary.com

. VILLENEUVE D'OLMES

Le Castrum (Hôtel) - Laouzet - 09300 VILLENEUVE D'OLMES
Phone : 0561013224 - fax 0561012285 - @ : castrum@chateauxhotels.com

. ROQUEFIXADE

Le Relais des Trois Châteaux (Hôtel) - Lieu dit Palot - 09300 ROQUEFIXADE
Phone : 0561013399 - fax 0561017373 - @ : lerelaistroischateaux@wanadoo.fr



. FOIX

Pyrene (Hôtel) - Le Vignoble - 09000 FOIX
Phone : 0561654866 - fax 0561654669 - @ : hotel.pyrene@wanadoo.fr

Lons (Hôtel) - 6 place Duthil - 09000 FOIX
Phone : 0534092800 - fax 0561026818 - @ : hotel-lons-foix@wanadoo.fr

Hôtel du Lac (Hôtel) - lieu dit Couloumié - 09000 FOIX
Phone : 0561651717 - fax 0561029424 - @ : hotel.du.lac.foix@free.fr

. MIREPOIX

Relais Royal (Hôtel) - 8 rue du Maréchal Clauzel - 09500 MIREPOIX
Phone : 0561601919 - fax 0561601415 - @ : relaisroyal@relaischateaux.com

La Maison des Consuls (Hôtel) - 6 place des Couverts - 09500 MIREPOIX
Phone : 0561688181 - fax 0561688115 - @ : hotel@maisondesconsuls.com

. CAMON

Château de Camon (Hôtel) - château de Camon - 09500 CAMON
Phone : 0561603123 - fax 0561603123 - @ : peter.katielawton@wanadoo.fr

Day 3 : Visits selected by french-itinerary.com

. FOIX

Château de Foix (Château) - 09000 FOIX
Phone : 0561655605

. CAMON

Ancienne Abbatiale (Eglise) - 09500 CAMON
Phone : 0561682828

Day 3 : The Notebook practises of french-itinerary.com

. FOIX

Office de Tourisme - 29 rue Declassé - 09000 FOIX
Phone : 0561651212 - fax 0561656463

. MIREPOIX

Office de Tourisme - 09500 MIREPOIX
Phone : 0561688376 - fax 0561688948 - @ : contact@ot-mirepoix.fr

. CAMON

Office de Tourisme - 10 rue Georges d'Armagnac - 09500 CAMON
Phone : 0561688826 - fax 0561681207 - @ : mairie.camon@wordline.fr