

# Self guided walking holiday for wine lovers in Priorat



## Highlights

**A week's self guided walking holiday in the beautiful up and coming foodie haven of Priorat in north east Spain, Explore the terraced vineyards and quiet paths at your own pace and dine on gourmet food, accompanied by some seriously sophisticated red wine.**

In the north east corner of Spain, home to the fiercely independent and proud Catalonia, lies the beautiful and relatively undiscovered region of Priorat. This area is all about wine! It has been made here since a monastery began production in the 12th Century, but it was not until fairly recently that wine makers here have placed themselves on the map. The hilly terrain and incredibly steep vine terraces make you wonder how they ever managed to grow wine here! Some vineyards still need to employ mules rather than tractors, as machines just can't handle the steep and rocky landscape. Don't come here expecting a backwards industry however. Due to the soil and the difficulty in harvesting the grapes, the region produces some of the most expensive, exclusive and fashionable wines in the world.

Lying just 2 hours from Barcelona, the region is easy to get to and a must for any true gourmet wine lovers!

On this week long self guided walking holiday in the beautiful wine country of Priorat, you will spend your days exploring the vineyards and sampling the delicious wines and olive oils produced there. Hiking through the rocky and rugged terrain, with the magnificent Montsant mountain range in the distance, you will explore the area at your own pace. See the ruins of a Carthusian monastery where wine was made back in the 12th Century, and walk along quiet and undiscovered trails winding through the wine terraces. As well as exploring on foot, you will also be discovering the region with your tastebuds as you sample the wines and olive oils produced in the region. Visiting some of the regions better known wine makers, as well as some hidden gems, you will be able to taste the wine in private tasting sessions. When you're not off exploring, a lot of care has gone into hand picking some superb accommodation which will lay on some delicious local food and wine in the evenings.

## Is it for me?

This self guided walking holiday in Catalonia combines three of our favourite things, walking, great food and great wine - and the beauty is that none is done to excess. Walks each day are between 7-12km, (around 2-4 hours). The terrain is hilly so you will be climbing between 300 and 500m each day (after all the region is renowned for its steeply terraced picturesque vineyards). Its fair to say therefore that you would want to be reasonably fit, but certainly needn't be a dedicated hiker. Most meals and all accommodation are arranged and whilst that might put off some independent travellers, it is a real treat to be able to enjoy a days walking knowing that you'll have a great meal at one of the best restaurants in town when you get there.

Your local guide will leave you to walk at your own pace during the days, but will ensure that you are transported to and from the walks and the tasting sessions. That way, you have the perfect balance of walking at your own pace, yet not having to worry about logistics!

## Accommodation

Accommodation is in charming boutique hotels and inns which have all been hand-picked for their quality and character.

Prices from

**1,030** GBP (8 days) per person

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All of the meals are included. A typical breakfast might be locally baked bread, sausages, orange juice. Lunch will be in the form of a picnic and so can be eaten where you choose along the way. Dinner will consist of local Catalan food served at quality restaurants. Wine is to be purchased separately and in this region you will be spoilt for choice!

## Itinerary

**Day 1:** Your hosts will pick you up from the train station in Falset (the capital and wine making epicentre of the region). You'll be staying in El Molar acclimatising on arrival with your first wine tasting of the Montsant DO followed by dinner.

**Day 2:** On your first full day you'll be walking from Scala Dei to Gratallops. You'll be given a lift to Scala Dei and enjoy a tasting of the local olive oil and wine to fortify you for the walk. The path to Gratallops follows an ancient road over a dramatic crest, with fantastic views of the mountain range. You'll stay at the Hotel Cal Llop in Gratallops. The Hotel Cal Llop is a stylish small hotel with a superb restaurant. It is very well reviewed on tripadvisor. Gratallops itself is a small village that revolves mainly around wine, hosting cellars of many local producers.

**Day 3:** The next day you'll walk the old road from Gratallops to Torroja del Priorat a hidden village sat on a small rocky outcrop. You'll be staying at the recently renovated Abadia del Priorat. They will put on a wine tasting for you in the afternoon.

**Day 4:** On your third full day the route takes you by stony path to the ruins of Escaladei picturesquely nestled right at the foot of the Monstsant Mountains. Escaladei was the first monastery established on the Iberian Peninsula in 1215 after the departure of the Moohrs in 1153.

**Day 5:** A 3 hour walk (they're all about 10km or 3hours) the next day takes you to Porrera, sat at the bottom of a hidden valley. Your accommodation is La Icona del Pont Vell, which will also put on an olive oil tasting in the afternoon

**Day 6:** On the fifth full day you'll have two options, a walk or a spa (ok, you can do both but you'll have to pay extra). For those still with fresh legs you can follow the old monks path to visit the wineries of Poboleda (returning by car), for those fancying a rest you can lay back for a spa session at La Icona del Pont Vell (your accommodation).

**Day 7:** Your last full day takes you back full circle to Falset, the capital of the Priorat wine region. You'll be staying at Mas Ardevol, a hidden little gem outside the main town. Mas Ardevol is a haven overlooking the hills and vineyards, perfect for taking it easy after all that walking. Of course, as you will have come to expect, they'll put on a superb dinner with great wine.

**Day 8:** The next morning you'll be picked up by a taxi for the journey back to Falset railway station

## Details

### Getting there

You can be picked up from the train station at Falset.

### Price includes

7 nights in boutique hotels and inns (2 nights in 4\*, 1 night in 3\* and 4 nights in a rural tourism lodging)

All meals including gourmet dinners

DOC Priorat wine tastings

DO Siurana Olive Oil tasting session

Spa session at La Icona del Pont Vell (rural hotel)

Guidebook: topographical guide with descriptions of the routes mentioned in the daily program

Map, scale 1:50000, of the Priorat

Luggage transport

Pickup at the Renfe station in Falset on arrival to El Priorat and return from Mas Ardevol to the Falset Renfe station

Transfers at the beginning of the routes, days 3, 5 and 6

### Price details

Price is per person based on double occupancy. Single supplement: \$240.

### When is best

This holiday is available upon request all year round. The route is open from March 1st until July 15th and from September 8th until December 15th. \* Because the routes are short this program is also available in the months of January and February, but as some hotels are closed in these months, the daily program may vary.

### Available

Jan—Dec

### Typical Duration

1 week

### Comfort level

Refined (boutique or luxury accommodation and food)

**Experience required**

**A reasonable interest is all that is needed**