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Medieval Villages of Provence Self-Guided Cycling Trip Notes

-  **Ways to Travel:** Self-Guided
-  **Destinations:** Adventure Holidays in France
-  **Programmes:** Cycling

Trip Code:
C07PL



8 Days Flight Inclusive
8 Days Land only
Min age: 8

Trip Overview

On this seven night holiday you'll discover the beauty of Provence - a region where refinement and tradition blend beautifully, and whose natural light and landscapes have served as inspiration to the likes of Van Gogh, Cezanne, Picasso and Dumas, not to mention Peter Mayle! You'll look out over a patchwork blanket of fields, olive groves, vineyards and, in the south east, apple orchards which cover the floor between the mountains on either side. While the vineyards here may not be as well-known as those of the Rhone, Burgundy and Bordeaux, some superb wines are produced here - so be sure to stop off for a tasting or two.

At a Glance

- 7 nights hotel-to-hotel accommodation in a mix of hotels
- 5 days cycling (Including two optional rides)
- Services of your local Headwater Representative
- Headwater Wine Collection Service
- GPS route directions and maps
- *RideWithGPS* navigation app
- High quality hybrid bikes
- Luggage transfers between hotels

- Countries visited: Adventure Holidays in France

Trip Highlights

- A lavender-scented patchwork of sun drenched vineyards, olive groves and apple orchards
- Medieval perched villages: Gordes and Bonnieux, with spectacular views across the Luberon
- Quiet country lanes and cycle paths; beautiful Provencal countryside and sleepy hamlets
- Great lunch options; chateaux and wine estates all too happy to provide tastings
- A variety of hotels, each with a swimming pool
- Based on our popular 6 night, Hilltop Villages of Provence Cycling

Is This Trip for You?

Classification: Self-Guided

Average daily distance on move on days: 35km (22 miles).

No. of days cycling: 5 (Including one optional ride)

Terrain: The cycling is mostly on plains or gentle foothills and we have used the quietest possible lanes to link the towns and villages. There are only occasional (unavoidable) short stretches on major roads. One or two parts of the countryside are fairly hilly, so take your time on the steeper climbs and admire the wonderful long-distance views.

Vehicle Support: This is a self-guided trip for those who prefer to cycle independently, but with our assistance to take out the stress of the logistics and planning. We arrange your accommodations, provide you with a map and route notes so that you can cycle at your own pace. A representative will be there to meet you, make sure the bikes are all set up and will be on call throughout the trip should you need.

It is important that you are happy reading maps and following route notes, we make these as accurate as possible and they are regularly checked.

As this is a self-guided holiday there is no group and no leader. There may be others on the same departure date as you, but you will not be organised together. The route notes contain a 24-hour emergency assistance telephone number should you need it and in emergencies, the local representative is normally able to dispatch a taxi or pick you up themselves. They may wish to charge for this service.

Your itinerary has been designed to give you a taste of the picturesque perched villages which pepper Provence's breathtaking, lavender-scented Luberon area. The hilly landscape of the region means the cycling can be challenging at times but for each tough climb you'll be rewarded with a spectacular view. Starting in the medieval town of Pernes-les-Fontaines, famous for its numerous ancient stone fountains and lavoirs, you'll enjoy far-reaching views over the Luberon as you make your way to the ochre-red village of Roussillon passing vineyards, chateaux and castles on the way. You then head out along the Ochre Trail and along country lanes to pass through some of the most beautiful villages in Provence - each one offering stirring images along with a history which, in some places, stretches back over a thousand years - before your final stretch takes in sweeping apple orchards, typical French villages, quaint cafes and the fascinating network of caves at Grotte de Thouzon.

Group

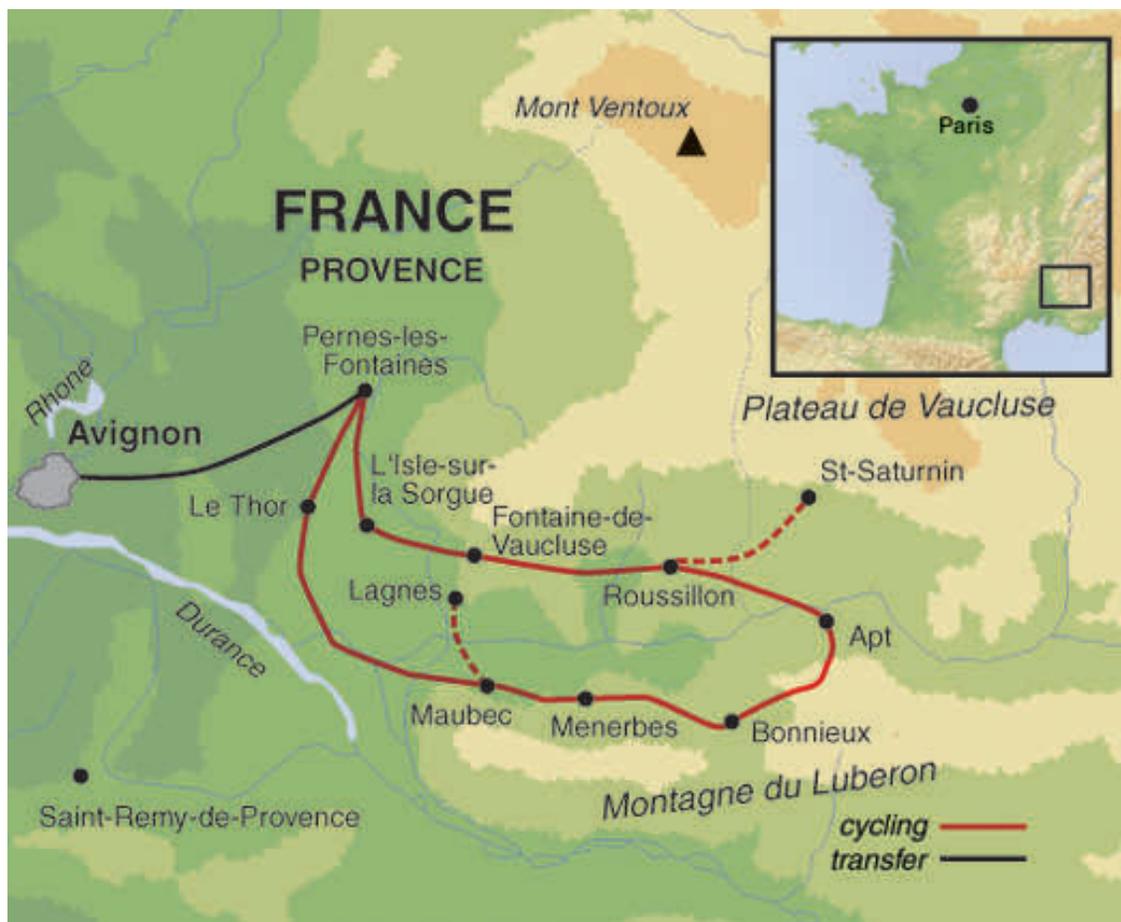
As this is a self-guided holiday there is no group and no leader. A local representative is on hand to assist you and will meet you at the beginning of the week to go through the route notes and point out particular places of interest. Your luggage is transferred and route notes and maps are provided. Please note: the walking and luggage transfers included in this tour are subject to a minimum of 2 people (in total) booked on the departure. A supplement (payable in advance) to cover these transfers and sole occupancy of a room will apply if only 1 person travelling on a departure date.

Adult min age: 18

Child min age: 8

Child max age: 17

Itinerary



Land Only

Start City: Avignon

End City: Pernes-Les-Fontaines

Land Only Itinerary

Day 1

Arrive in Avignon

Time for a stroll in this beautiful town before dinner (pay locally). **Staying at Hotel Bristol.**

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 2

Avignon to Pernes-Les-Fontaines

There's lots to discover in Avignon, including its 14th century Palais des Papes and the famous Pont d'Avignon. In the afternoon we transfer you to Pernes-les-Fontaines and the Hotel l'Hermitage. Dinner here is included (in a local restaurant). **Staying at Hotel l'Hermitage.**

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 3

Pernes-Les-Fontaines to Roussillon

Pass by Pernes-les-Fontaines before setting off alongside the Canal de Carpentras and on through the beautiful scenery of the Vaucluse down to the popular town of L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue. The old town here is entirely surrounded by the clear waters of the River Sorgue. There are lots of lunch options in the town, or you could stop a little further on in the pretty village of Fontaine-de-Vaucluse. In the afternoon you climb to enjoy your first spectacular views of the Luberon before descending past vineyards, olive groves and windmills, and on to the ochre-painted village of Roussillon; this is the starting point of the Ochre Trail and your home for the next two nights. **Staying at Hotel Les Sables D'Ocres.**

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 48 km / 30 miles

Day 4

At Roussillon (free day or optional ride)

Explore Roussillon, one of the Plus Beaux Villages de France, to discover its ochre-red rocks, stone buildings and unusual rock formations known as the 'Provençal Colorado'. For those wanting a longer day out, it's a scenic cycle ride through Provençal countryside up to the picturesque perched village of St Saturnin-les-Apt with its crumbling castle and one of the best views in the Luberon. **Staying at Hotel Les Sables D'Ocres.**

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 24 km / 15 miles

Day 5

Roussillon to Maubec

Take the Ochre Trail to the village of Gargas and visit the Ochre Mines of Bruoux. Take the cycle path to the medieval town of Apt, then continue on to enjoy Bonnieux with its lovely chateau, ruined castle at Lacoste, and Menerbes, made famous by author Peter Mayle. You'll stay at La Bastide du Bois Breant and dinner is included on your two nights here. **Staying at La Bastide du Bois Breant.**

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Distance covered: 49 km / 31 miles

Day 6

At Maubec (free day or optional ride)

Take a circular ride past the orchards and meadows to the pretty villages of Lagnes, Robion, and the beautiful watermill in Taillades. Or you could take a taxi to Saint-Remy-de-Provence, with its delightful old town, Roman site and monastery. **Staying at La Bastide du Bois Breant.**

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Distance covered: 26 km / 16.5 miles

Day 7

Maubec to Pernes-Les-Fontaines

Follow the lanes and pass the orchards all the way to the medieval town of Le Thor, then pass the ruins of the monastery at Thouzon. Continue on to Pernes-les-Fontaines and explore this medieval old town. **Staying at Hotel l'Hermitage, Breakfast with dinner in local restaurant.**

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Distance covered: 38 km / 24 miles

Day 8

Leave Pernes-Les-Fontaines

Meals included: Breakfast

All ascents, descents and distances listed above have been measured by our local partners or tour leaders. Please note that different GPS measuring devices can give differing results dependent on the barometric pressures at the time. Measurements stated throughout these trips notes are given to help you understand the types of terrain and distances you will encounter.

Accommodation

Hotels



We've hand-picked a lovely selection of hotels for your holiday. The Hotel l'Hermitage in Pernes-les-Fontaines is set in 2 hectares of grounds with a saltwater swimming pool and its own orangery; the Hotel les Sables d'Ocre in Roussillon sits amidst landscaped lawns with a relaxing pool area; while the Bastide du Bois Breant in Maubec is a former farm house, once owned by a duchess and set amid its own woodland in the peaceful south west of the Luberon.

Where a single supplement is available, paying for a single only guarantees a room for single use. It does not always mean a twin or double room will be provided for sole occupancy.

Single supplement from \$644.80 USD

Food & Transport

Eating & Drinking

All continental breakfasts and 4 evening meals included

Provençale cuisine is a blend of many influences from the plentiful sea, to neighbour Italy and the early Roman occupation. The soil is rich and the climate is conducive to producing a wide variety of fruit and vegetables.

Whilst not the most sophisticated of the French cuisines, most dishes use the excellent tasting local fresh produce. Cooking à la Provençale uses local olive oil, garlic, peppers, tomatoes, courgettes, aubergines and wild herbs, all ripened by the sun to give an

intensity of flavour. You can browse among the colours and smells, and make picnic purchases at the lively local markets. The proximity of the sea makes fish and seafood an important element of the local cuisine. Regional dishes include the famous bouillabaisse, a rich fish stew served with aioli and rouille; the bourride - a lighter version of the bouillabaisse; pistou soupe (summer vegetable soup with a blend of garlic, basil and olive oil); authentic ratatouille, large colourful salads and delicious courgette flower fritters. Tapenade and anchoïade are savoury dips made with local olives and anchovies; pissaladière is an onion tart with olives and anchovies and is very likely to have come from the Romans.

Weather & Seasonality

Weather Information

Temperatures tend to average around 30°C during the summer months and fall to an average of 15°C during winter. The infamous Mistral wind can have a great effect on the temperatures, particularly in the western part of Provence.

July and August are very warm with little to no rainfall. Temperatures tend to climb up to 30°C during the day. At night it cools off considerably, especially on the coast, near a lake or in the mountains. In general, the farther away from the coast the more oppressive the heat becomes during the day.

The months around the high season are the most pleasant (May, June, September, October) with average temperatures between 22°C and 27°C. October is the most uncertain month of the four, but of course it can also be a splendid month with warm, sunny days and practically no rain.

Weather Charts

Joining Instructions

Alternative Air Travel

Alternative flights, onward rail to your holiday area, and connecting private transfers can be arranged from most UK airports. If you would like to use one of the many 'low cost' airlines, we can book these on your behalf (£30 admin fee per person). We can also book UK shuttles to connect with your onward flight, please call for details and prices.

Alternative transfers

If you require alternative transfers (because you will be arriving at a different time to our standard flights), then we can usually arrange these for you (there may be an additional charge).

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers will be sent to you as part of our Final Joining Instructions. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

Transfers Details

Standard transfers

Transfers included from Avignon TGV train station at 13:19, and back to Avignon TGV train station at 11:45.

Location start: Pernes-Les-Fontaines

Location end: Pernes-Les-Fontaines

What to Take

Essential Equipment

Waterproofs

Warm jumper/fleece

Suncream

Water bottle (1 litre) you will be able to refill each day at the accommodation.

Please note that cycling helmets are compulsory in France for children under 12. As we are unable to provide these, we strongly recommend that you bring your own.

Optional Equipment

Swimming Costume

Local Bike Details

A quality local hire bike is included in the overall price of our cycling holidays. At the time of booking we will take your height in order to reserve equipment. There may on occasions be insufficient bikes available in the correct size; we will endeavour to find suitable alternative equipment but this cannot be guaranteed. We will tell you before you book whether suitably sized bikes are available.

Conditions

1. The equipment remains the property of the supplier and you may not sell, hire out or part possession with the equipment.
2. You must not misuse the equipment and must return it in the same condition as when received (ordinary wear and tear excepted). The supplier is entitled to charge for any damage caused to the equipment during the period of hire.
3. You must ensure that the equipment is adequately secured when not in use. In the event of the equipment being lost or stolen, you may be liable for the replacement value of the equipment
4. You must not use the equipment whilst under the influence of drink or drugs and should immediately notify the Supplier in the event of breakdown or loss.

Bringing Your Own Bike

If you prefer the familiarity of your own bike, you may of course bring it along. Please advise us at the time of booking and you will receive a discount off the price of the holiday, as specified above. You will be responsible for any extra baggage charges, please speak to our Sales team for individual airline fees. Any clients bringing their own bike should ensure they have adequate cover for loss, damage or theft under their travel, home contents or a specialist insurance policy. If Exodus is confident that we have taken all reasonable care to ensure the safety of your bike, in the rare event of loss, damage or theft you will need to claim under your own insurance policy.

Extra Bike Bits

You may like to bring your own pedals and saddle (excluding the seat post) or gel saddle cover to fit to the hire bikes. We encourage this, if it is your preference. However, please note that you are responsible for your own equipment, and removing your saddle/pedals at the end of the trip. We cannot guarantee the return of any bike parts left behind.

Exodus Policy on Cycling Helmets

Wearing a helmet is mandatory for anyone taking part in any guided Exodus cycling holiday. Group members must bring their own helmets, as they are not available for hire, even if they are hiring a bike from Exodus.

For self-guided cycling holidays wearing a helmet is highly recommended. Customers who choose to ignore our advice do so entirely at their own risk and on the understanding that it may affect the validity of their travel insurance. It should also be noted that in some countries we travel to wearing a helmet is already a legal requirement.

Cycling of all kinds has its dangers and accidents can happen from time to time. Please ensure that you are properly prepared for the riding you are going to undertake.

Recommended Cycling Clothing

Padded cycling shorts (with loose 'over-shorts' where recommended), breathable clothing, and a lightweight waterproof/windproof top. Shoes with relatively stiff soles are better for biking, but are not essential unless you are cycling long distances. Most people want to carry certain items with them during the day while cycling, for this we recommend a large bum-bag or small close-fitting daysack.

GPS Route Navigation



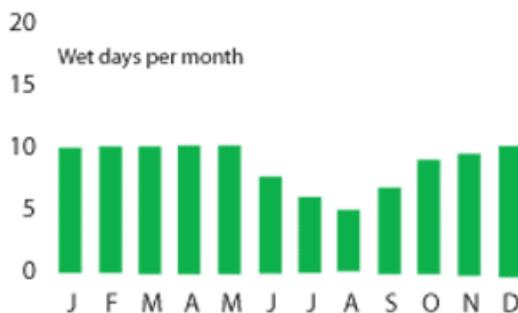
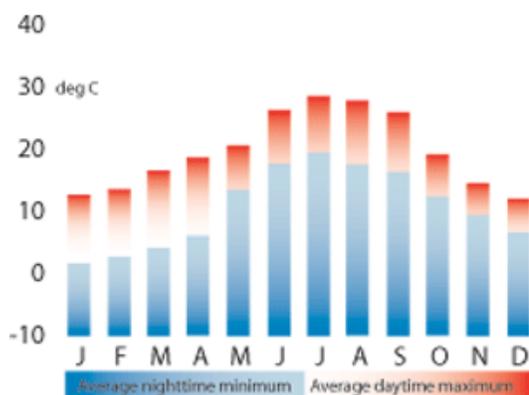
We've teamed up with RideWithGPS to provide our carefully researched and checked itineraries in a convenient format, similar to a car satnav, with turn-by-turn instructions all along your route.

Before you travel we'll send you everything you need to download your route notes and the free RideWithGPS app. It's available for iPhone and Android and the routes can also be used on any regular GPS device such as the Garmin Edge bike computers or Forerunner fitness devices.

- Free app for iPhone and Android
- Full turn-by-turn audio instructions
- Live GPS mapping
- Interactive 'point of interest' information
- No wifi needed and no data charges
- Easy to use
- Access to premium app features
- Regularly checked and updated routes

Reading List

- Michelin Green Guides: Provence
- The Rough Guide to Provence and the Côte d'Azur
- Lonely Planet: Provence and the Côte d'Azur



Practical Information

Passport

Adventure Holidays in France

Most nationalities, including British, require a full passport that must be valid beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for UK passport holders, and other nationalities should

check with their travel agent or the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visa

Adventure Holidays in France

No visa required for British passport holders.

For further Brexit travel advice please visit <https://www.abta.com/tips-and-advice/brexit-advice-for-travellers>

Visa regulations can change without notice: please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

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Vaccination

Adventure Holidays in France

There are no specific health risks.

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information. Please note: vaccinations that are routinely recommended to residents of the UK, North America or Australasia are not considered to form part of the travel health advice, and you should ensure these are kept up to date where necessary.

For additional information please visit: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>

Insurance - are you adequately covered?

It is a condition of joining any of our holidays that you must be fully insured against medical and personal accident risks (to include repatriation costs and air ambulance or helicopter rescue services where appropriate). On arrival in destination for your trip, you will be asked to present details to your leader or local representative of your policy.

If you are resident in the UK we strongly recommend the Exodus travel insurance policy, this is specifically designed to cover all activities on your trip. If arranging your own policy please ensure that you are covered for all activities that are part of the trip, optional activities that you intend to take part in and/or on high altitude itineraries, that you are covered up to the maximum altitude of the trip.

Local Time

Adventure Holidays in France's Timezone: Europe/Paris CEST (GMT +02:00)

Electricity

Adventure Holidays in France's Electricity: European plug - 2 round pins. 230 Volts AC.

Money

Adventure Holidays in France's Currency

The national currency of France is the Euro (EUR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication (October 2017) of approximately 1.1 to the GBP, 0.84 to the USD, 0.67 to the CAD, 0.66 to the AUD and 0.59 to the NZD.

ATM Availability

ATMs are widely available, but we recommend taking some Euros cash with you in case you can't get to a bank at the start of the trip. Cards are widely accepted.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

You will need spending money for meals not included in the itinerary and all drinks. We suggest €25 per day to cover a few drinks if not then €10 per day. On the days where lunch is not included expect to spend €10-€15.





Responsible Tourism

At Exodus we believe in the power of Responsible Travel.

Every time we travel, we are part of a global movement that creates jobs, builds more sustainable societies, encourages cultural understanding and safeguards common natural and cultural heritage. To learn more about what Responsible Travel means to Exodus click here...

Exodus Community

Join the Exodus online community

Don't forget to visit the Community area on our website. You can view the range of Exodus videos and podcasts, read trip write-ups which have featured in the national media and take advantage of some special deals on travel gear and equipment.

In the Community Travel Forum you'll find the Departure Lounge where you can discuss your trip with fellow travellers before you depart. When you get back from your holiday remember to upload your images to the relevant trip page on our website. This helps other people see what our holidays are really like and you'll be entered automatically into our monthly photo competition.

To make full use of the Community you'll need to join My Exodus. It's free, registration is simple and easy, so what are you waiting for?

Important Information

On all guided trips

Although our leaders are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorise them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.

Although rarely enforced, by booking this trip you agree to section 14 of our Booking Conditions which clearly states that our leaders have the authority to do this. In these circumstances we will ensure anyone sitting out is safely provided for and offered alternative options where possible. Refunds will not be provided for activities missed and customers may be liable for additional costs incurred.

On all trips

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call the Exodus office and ask to speak to one of the experts on this itinerary.

In an emergency, please contact our 24 hour out of hours service on +44 (0) 844 326 7041.

Every time that you travel abroad you should take the time to read the warnings in the essential information in the brochure.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers, and details of how to reach the start point, will be sent to you approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to departure. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure or website, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure and website. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary. Occasionally, as stated in our brochure, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, political, physical or other. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements that maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

As fuel prices, airport taxes and exchange rates fluctuate, and airlines manage their rates to match demand, it is proving harder than ever to guarantee our Flight Inclusive prices. Although we endeavour to keep our website as accurate as possible, daily fluctuations mean that our Flight Inclusive price may be out of date. For accurate prices we recommend that you contact one of our Travel Experts, or your Travel Agent.

TRAVEL AWARE -STAY SAFE & HEALTHY ABROAD

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the NHS have up-to-date advice on staying safe and healthy abroad. For more on security, local laws, plus passport and visa information, see <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>

Keep informed of current travel health news by visiting <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>

Advice can change so check regularly for updates.

For all latest travel information about your holiday, please visit our [Travel Safety Advice](#) page.

How to Book

Ready to book? Please contact your travel agent



Version 1