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# Villages & Vineyards of Alsace, Self-Guided Walk Trip Notes

-  **Ways to Travel:** Self-Guided
-  **Destinations:** Adventure Holidays in France
-  **Programmes:** Walking & Trekking

Trip Code:  
**W08AS**



**9 Days** Land only  
**Min age:** 8

## Trip Overview

This unique part of France provides a fantastic step back in time - an absolute must for the history buff and those who appreciate a good glass of wine. Having been fought over for centuries by Germany and France, this rolling, wine-growing heartland is now heavily characterised by an eclectic mix of cuisine, language, architecture and customs. Pristine German and French cemeteries offer a moving reminder of Alsace's history.

## At a Glance

- 8 nights in 3-star accommodation
- 4 days walking
- A choice of walks each day; one easier walk or a more challenging walk
- Altitude maximum 650m, average 350m
- Countries visited: Adventure Holidays in France

## Trip Highlights

- Walk through vineyards, ancient oak forest and unspoilt flower-filled gingerbread villages
- Try the regional wines
- Visit romantic castles, Gothic churches, medieval villages; Riquewihr and Colmar, the 'Venice of Alsace'

## Is This Trip for You?

Along the way you will pass through some of the most beautiful villages in France; Kaysersberg and Riquewihr, with their brightly-coloured, half-timbered buildings decked with window boxes spilling with geraniums and traditional ornamental features. Alsace is a well-known white wine region boasting several Grands Crus vineyards, and every village, no matter their size, will have a 'cave' or 'degustation' to visit. The people are welcoming and helpful and keen for you to sample their produce!

### Activity level: 3 (Moderate)

For those who wish to take on more challenging terrain or longer routes, there are longer walking options attached to three of the four walking days. These take you up into the forests of the Vosges and provide a wonderful contrast to the undulating trail through the vineyards. You can visit the tiny Chapel St Alexis or The Galtz monument with its viewing platform or even have a walk around the ruins of the chateaux of Ribeauville.

This is a self-guided tour, as such there will be no group or tour leader and you are free to complete the walks at your own pace. Please bear in mind that although this is a self-guided holiday, the atmosphere in the hotels tends to be quite social and they will sometimes seat guests together at breakfast and dinner. We have suggested that 8yrs is the minimum age for this trip, but as it is self-guided and you will be leading your own family we will ultimately leave this decision up to you.

## 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. The route notes contain an emergency telephone number. In an emergency, the local representative is normally able to dispatch a taxi or pick you up themselves. They may wish to charge for this service.

**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:** 12

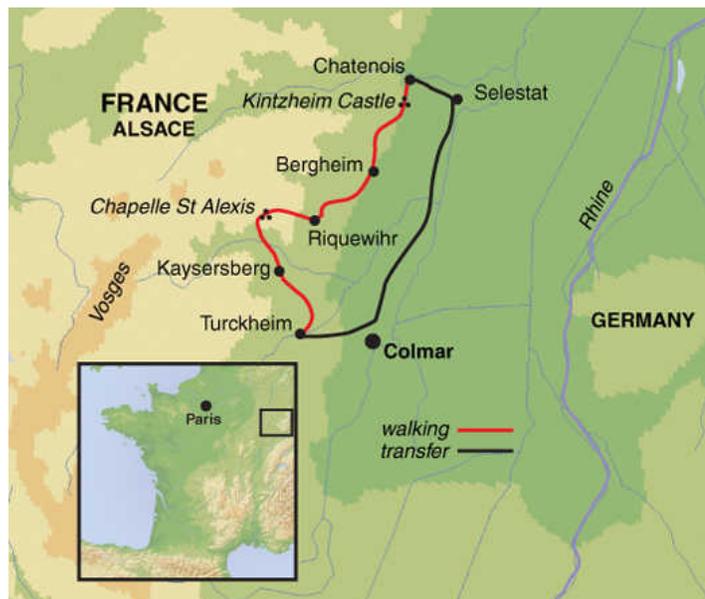
**Child min age:** 8

**Child max age:** 11

**Min group size:** 1

**Max group size:** 6

## Itinerary



## Land Only

**Start City:** Turckheim

**End City:** Turckheim

## Land Only Itinerary

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### Day 1

#### Arrive at Turckheim

Your first night is spent in a friendly Alsatian hotel in the heart of the village. With so many restaurants on your doorstep, we've left you free to choose where to dine this evening.

**Standard hotel**

**Meals included:** Breakfast

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### Day 2

#### Turckheim to Kaysersberg

Today it's time to explore Turckheim's Renaissance church and medieval gate where storks still nest. Your walk through the vines takes you past flower-filled Niedermorschwihr and Ammerschwihr where you can taste the local vintage, Kaefferkopf, in cosy wine cellars. It's then on to the fortified town of Kaysersberg and your hotel on a quiet cobbled street in the old town.

Two options: 10km/6.5mi/2hr or 21km/14mi/4hr

**Standard hotel**

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Distance covered:** 21 km / 14 miles

**Activity (hours):** 4

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### Day 3

#### At Kaysersberg

In the morning why not stroll up to the ruins of the medieval castle for a bird's eye view over Kaysersberg's half-timbered houses decked with geraniums along the River Weiss? Afterwards, perhaps follow a valley trail to Kientzheim or visit Colmar, only 25 minutes by local bus. Known as the 'Venice of Alsace', it's a honeycomb of pretty canals and gorgeous pastel-coloured houses.

**Standard hotel**

**Meals included:** Breakfast

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### Day 4

#### Kaysersberg to Riquewihr

A gentle climb through oak and beech forest leads to Chapelle St Alexis hidden in the woods and with a great auberge for lunch. Your route then descends in and out of pine forest and before long, you get your first glimpses of the showcase of Renaissance houses that earn Riquewihr its nickname, 'Pearl of the Vineyards'. An easier route through the typically Alsatian villages of Kientzheim and Sigolsheim take you up to a war memorial with incredible panoramic views of the Vosges plains, then pick up the Camino de Santiago into Riquewihr.

Two options: 11km/7mi/2hr or 12km/7.5mi/3.5hr

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Distance covered:** 12 km / 8 miles

**Activity (hours):** 3.5

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## Day 5

### At Riquewihr

The town of Riquewihr is so enchanting it's been declared an historic monument in its entirety. You'll be fascinated by its cobbled alleys, galleried courtyards, fountains and colourful signboards.

**Standard hotel**

**Meals included:** Breakfast

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## Day 6

### Riquewihr to Bergheim

You pass through the heart of medieval Alsace via the Riesling vineyards nestling at the foot of the mountains. Hunawihr has a fortified church and stork sanctuary; you'll also find otters, butterflies and orchids in the reserve. Three ruined castles of the once-powerful Counts of Ribeaupierre loom overhead as you walk on through the vines to Bergheim.

Two options: 11km/7mi/2hr or 19km/12mi/4hr

**Standard hotel**

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Distance covered:** 19 km / 12 miles

**Activity (hours):** 4

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## Day 7

### At Bergheim

This colourful and ancient market town was a medieval refuge where criminals on the run were safe from persecution. There are lots of beautiful timber-framed houses and a decorated fountain in the old square. Be sure to take a short taxi ride or do the longer optional walk to the amazing Haut-Koenigsbourg Castle; it's a gentle downhill walk back too!

**Standard hotel**

**Meals included:** Breakfast

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## Day 8

### Bergheim to Chatenois/Turckheim

You continue parallel to the Route des Vins to a poignant WW2 German military cemetery with panoramic views over the famous restored castle at Haut-Koenigsbourg. At St-Hippolyte there's a Gothic church and fountain, while the ruined court of medieval Kintzheim Castle is the setting for spectacular flying displays by birds of prey. At Chatenois, where the walk finishes, we give you a lift back to Turckheim.

Two options: 12km/7.5mi/2.5hr or 14km/9mi/3hr

**Standard hotel**

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Distance covered:** 14 km / 9 miles

**Activity (hours):** 3

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## Day 9

### Leave Turckheim

If you have pre-booked a transfer, we will take you to Colmar train station in time for your journey home.

**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

All of the hotels are in atmospheric half-timbered villages that are typical of this region, including the stunning Hotel des Deux Clefs in Turckheim whose building dates back to the 16th Century and is officially classed as a monument historique. The beautifully converted 16th Century Hotel a l'Oriel in the heart of Riquewihr has a cosy winstub and a pretty internal courtyard, where, weather permitting, breakfast can be taken.

All prices are based on 2 persons sharing, so if there is an odd number of people travelling in your party or you are travelling alone, there will be a compulsory supplement for a single room for the tour duration. For a solo traveller there is an additional charge to cover transfer costs. Please call for further details.

*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 \$384.40 USD

## Food & Transport

### Eating & Drinking

Continental breakfasts are included in this trip.

Although traditional Alsatian cuisine is originally a peasant cuisine featuring potatoes, cabbage, beef and pork as the main ingredients, there are now some 30 Michelin starred restaurants in the Alsace region, offering visually spectacular and delicious, locally sourced, dishes. With two 'starred' restaurants in Kaysersberg, one in Riquewihr and one in Ammerschwihr, along with several others featured in the Michelin guide, there is plenty of top quality dining to choose from along your route. The cuisine features a lot of different pies, long simmered or stewed dishes like the traditional baeckeoffe. There is also the famous tarte flambée (flammekeuche in Alsatian dialect), a thin dough covered in cream, chopped onions and diced bacon. The influence of German cuisine and food habits is mainly marked in the important consumption of pork products and charcuterie.

'Winstub' is a traditional Alsatian restaurant. Originally it was a public space where the Alsatian wine-makers used to come to present and sell their wine. They used to serve traditional simple dishes to their customers, to accompany their tasting.

### Transportation

Your luggage will be transported between the hotels by taxi or minibus. The local representative is often able to dispatch a taxi should you need it in an emergency, but may wish to charge you for this service.

## Weather & Seasonality

### When to go

Each September Ribeauville town celebrates one of the oldest festivals in Alsace; the Fete des Menetriers (Festival of the Minstrels). In the C8, Ribeauville was passed to the Lord of Rappolstein (the protector of the wandering minstrels). If you look carefully, you will see evidence of the Piper.

## Weather Information

Alsace offers an ideal climate for walking, with pleasant temperatures and high levels of sunshine. The warmest month to visit is July, with an average temperature of 20oC. The region is much drier than some of the neighbouring regions, Colmar is France's second driest town. The wettest month to visit is May, so remember your waterproofs.

## Joining Instructions

The tour only prices for this holiday do not include train station transfers. If you require pre-booked transfers, then we can usually arrange these for you (additional charge, inquire for prices). Pre-booked transfers can be arranged from Colmar train station and back to Colmar train station.

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.

**Location start:** Turckheim

**Location end:** Turckheim

## What to Take

### Essential Equipment

Walking boots

Water bottle

Daypack

Sun hat, sun cream and sunglasses

Warm jumper

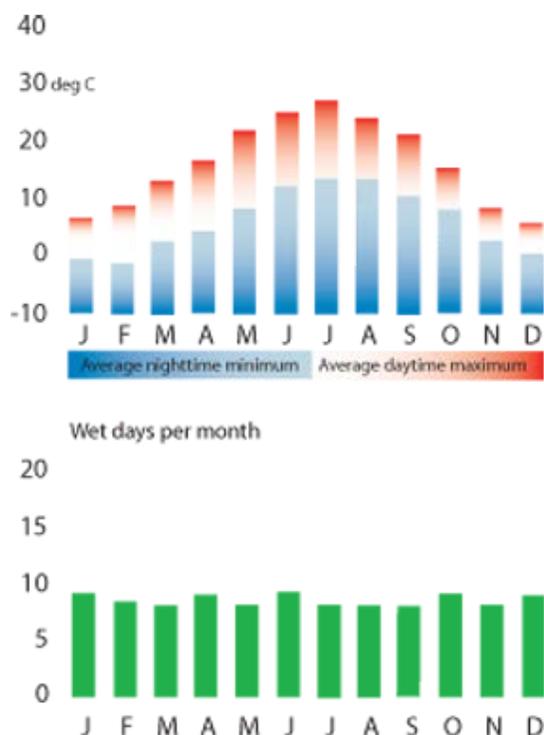
Waterproofs

### Optional Equipment

Walking poles



## Weather Charts



## 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 US passport holders.

For further travel advice please visit U.S. State Department at <https://www.state.gov/travelers/>

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

### 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 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: Centers for Disease Control C.D.C at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

### **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 of the United States, we recommend the Travelex Travel Select 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 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.

### **Extra Expenses & Spending Money**

For lunches and dinners not included allow about €10-30 per meal depending on the standard of restaurant chosen - expect to pay much more for Michelin-starred restaurants in the region (there are a few!). You will need extra if you intend to buy wine at the table each evening.



## **Responsible Tourism**

At Breakaway 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.

## **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 authorize 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 5 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 Breakaway 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.

### **TRAVEL AWARE -STAY SAFE & HEALTHY ABROAD**

The U.S. State Department has up-to-date advice on staying safe and healthy abroad. For more on security, local laws, plus passport and visa information, see <https://www.state.gov/travelers/>

Keep informed of current travel health news by visiting Centers for Disease Control C.D.C at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

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 **Breakaway Adventures on Tel: 1-800-567-6286; International Tel: +1-843-856-9771.**

**<https://www.breakaway-adventures.com>**