

# Stanford **TRAVEL/STUDY**

## **LANGUEDOC WALK**

**September 27 to October 8, 2022**

Join Ed Steidle, a scholar of the literature and art of medieval and Renaissance Europe, and trail expert Peter Watson on this new Stanford walk through the former province of Languedoc. As we walk from Southwest France to Catalunya in Spain, indulge in regional dishes such as cassoulet accompanied by some of the famous local wines from the Languedoc. Explore the Albigensian bastides, medieval villages perched along the cliffs overlooking the Aveyron River. Learn the extraordinary history of the people of the Languedoc and the Cathar heretics, driven from their homes by French troops and the Inquisition. Visit some of the spectacularly situated, impregnable mountain strongholds built by the Cathars and reputed to hold hidden treasure. Throughout our journey, take in the scenery that inspired renowned painters such as Albi-born Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and a young Pablo Picasso, who spent a summer in the shadow of the great Serra del Cadí.

## **FACULTY LEADER**

### **Edward Steidle**

Ed Steidle began his graduate studies in comparative literature at Johns Hopkins University and went on to earn his master's degree and doctorate at UC Berkeley. Since joining the Stanford faculty in 1984, he has taught in various departments, including the Western Culture program, the literature and arts track of the English department and the graduate program in the humanities. He also developed the successful Crossroads series for the Continuing Studies program. He has focused his studies on the cultures of antiquity and the medieval world across Eurasia, in particular on the comparative aspects of their history, literature and art. Most recently he has taught a series of classes on the European Renaissance and its impact on non-Western cultures. On our walks, Ed's lectures will explore, among other topics, the pivotal role of the Languedoc in the development and dissemination of courtly love across Europe and its effect on the evolution of Western gender ideals. He will also cover the origins and significance of the Cathar heresy on the development of French history in succeeding centuries.

- Joined Stanford faculty in 1984
- Has taught in Stanford's English department, graduate program in the humanities and Continuing Studies program
- BA, English literature and Eastern philosophy, Franklin & Marshall College
- MA, comparative literature, and PhD, medieval comparative literature, UC Berkeley

## **ITINERARY**

Tuesday, September 27

### **Toulouse, France / Albi**

Arrive at Toulouse airport and transfer to Albi. This town, home of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and one of the finest cathedrals in the South of France, gave its name to the Albigensian Crusade and is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. We stay at a fine riverside property, a member of the Relais & Châteaux association. This evening join fellow walkers for a welcome reception and dinner. LA RÉSERVE ALBI (D)

Wednesday, September 28

**Albi / Cordes-sur-Ciel**

Today walk to Cordes-sur-Ciel, one of the beautiful towns known as the *bastides albigeoises*, built by the victorious French after their subjugation of the Languedoc. These delightful fortified medieval villages dotting the local cliffs and hills were once symbols of repression to their 13th-century inhabitants. LA RÉSERVE ALBI (B,L,D)

Thursday, September 29

**Albi / Lastours / Carcassonne**

We spend the morning walking through Albi and visiting the spectacular red brick cathedral that dominates the town. Built in the southern Romanesque style in the late 14 century, the church is a remarkable testament to the powers of religious orthodoxy. Later this morning we drive south to the Montagne Noire to the four châteaux of Lastours, the most famous of which is the supremely evocative Cabaret set on a spur above the meander of the Orbiel River. This stronghold surrendered to Simon de Montfort in 1211. Our afternoon walk gives us a brief taste of the scenery on the southern slopes of this isolated region. From here we continue by coach to the impressive medieval town of Carcassonne, where we spend the next three nights in the renowned Hôtel de la Cité. HÔTEL DE LA CITÉ CARCASSONNE (B,L,D)

Friday, September 30

**Carcassonne / Montréal / Fanjeaux / Carcassonne**

This morning we drive a short distance to the west to the small fortified towns of Montréal and Fanjeaux. It was here that Saint Dominic had his first encounters with the Cathars and established his first monastery in the Languedoc. We follow in his footsteps as we walk between the two villages and down to Prouille, still home to the Dominicans today, where we have lunch. Later we return to Carcassonne by road for a guided visit of this extraordinary town. HÔTEL DE LA CITÉ CARCASSONNE (B,L)

Saturday, October 1

**Carcassonne / Foix / Montségur**

We drive south to the town of Foix where we can see the fine old castle and cathedral. Next we stop at the village and castle of Montségur. This great stronghold of the Cathars' proved to be a thorn in the side of the French royal forces. After our picnic lunch, we set off from the château for a walk through the woods and along open ridges continuing down into the valley. We return to Carcassonne by road. HÔTEL DE LA CITÉ CARCASSONNE (B,L)

Sunday, October 2

**Carcassonne / Fontfroide / Bélesta**

Heading east we leave the hills behind and make our way across the *garrigue*, or scrublands, of southern France. Our walk leads past the vineyards and forests of the Corbières to visit the Cistercian Abbey at Fontfroide, founded at the end of the 11th century. The murder of Pierre de Castlenau, a monk from this bastion of orthodoxy, was the direct cause of the Albigensian Crusade in 1208. This evening we continue by road to the town of Bélesta, where we spend the next two nights at a renovated winery. DOMAINE RIBERACH (B,L,D)

Monday, October 3

**Bélesta / Prades / Bélesta**

Prades was a well-known refuge for the Cathars as their castles were being besieged farther north in the lowlands of the Languedoc. We pass through the town as we cross the valley onto the iconic Canigou massif, as our splendid mountain walk takes us through some of the loveliest scenery of the trip. In the late afternoon, we return to our hotel by road. DOMAINE RIBERACH (B,L,D)

Tuesday, October 4

**Bélesta / La Seu d'Urgell, Spain**

We drive west, and to the border with Spain and Catalunya. Here we walk through the dramatic scenery of the Cerdanya mountains to a beautiful remote tarn. We continue this afternoon to La Seu d'Urgell, the last bishopric in Spain. HOTEL EL CASTELL DE CIUTAT (B,L,D)

Wednesday, October 5

**La Seu d'Urgell / Cadí Massif**

A morning walk along tracks and paths high in the mountains leads across the flank of the magnificent Serra del Cadí. This region is famed as the final refuge of the Cathar heretics, and its landscapes inspired the young Pablo Picasso. Following our picnic lunch, we continue our path before returning to our Relais & Châteaux property La Seu d'Urgell HOTEL EL CASTELL DE CIUTAT (B,L,D)

Thursday, October 6

**La Seu d'Urgell / Organyà / Barcelona**

We depart La Seu d'Urgell and head south, pausing for a short walk along the southern edge of the Cadí mountains in the little town of Organyà, home of the oldest known texts written in the Catalan language. After a final picnic lunch, we drive down to the plains until we reach the cosmopolitan city of Barcelona for our final two nights. MONUMENT HOTEL (B,L)

Friday, October 7

**Barcelona**

A full day in Barcelona begins with an optional guided tour of some of the iconic sights of this vibrant, artistic city. The afternoon is free for independent exploration. This evening join fellow travelers for a farewell reception and celebration dinner. MONUMENT HOTEL (B,D)

Saturday, October 8

**Barcelona / Home**

Transfer to the airport for outbound flights. (B)

## INFORMATION

### WALK OPTIONS

To fully enjoy the beautiful southern French and Catalán countryside, we're offering two options for most of the days when walks are scheduled. All walks are led by experienced leaders.

OPTION I is a walk of between 4 and 8 miles (approximately 2.5 to 4 hours of walking). These walking trails undulate over varied and sometimes rough (muddy, rocky, uneven) terrain that has altitude gains (and losses) of about 600 feet.

OPTION II is a longer, more strenuous walk or hike of between 6 and 13 miles (approximately 3.5 to 6 hours of walking) that allows more adventurous walkers to explore the higher areas and see the wilder parts of the countryside. These walking trails can be rugged, rocky and steep, and have altitude gains and/or losses of between 600 and 1,800 feet. It will not be possible for walkers on the longer walks to visit or spend as much time at some of the sites on our itinerary as those taking Option I.

### **Covid-19 and Travel**

Due to the fluid nature of travel requirements and local Covid-19 conditions, travel protocols for our program will be shared closer to departure. To read more about Travel/Study's general approach to ensuring traveler health and safety, visit <https://alumni.stanford.edu/get/page/covidtravel>.

### **Size**

This trip is limited to 32 participants. Single accommodations are limited.

### **Cost\***

\$9,995 per person, double occupancy

\$12,195 per person, single occupancy

\*Stanford Alumni Association nonmembers add \$300 per person.

### **Included**

- Educational program with lecture series and predeparture materials, including an education resource list and travel information
- Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program
- All tours and excursions as described in the itinerary
- Gratuities to guides and drivers for all group activities
- 11 nights of superior hotel accommodations
- 11 breakfasts, 9 lunches and 8 dinners
- Welcome and farewell receptions
- Group transfer(s) and baggage handling on program arrival and departure days
- On-tour quarantine-related trip-cancellation, -interruption and -delay insurance coverage
- General medical, accident and evacuation insurance

### **Not Included**

- Your personal flights to and from the program
- Passport and visa fees
- Immunization costs
- Meals and beverages other than those specified as included
- Independent and private transfers
- Nonquarantine-related trip-cancellation, -interruption and -delay insurance coverage
- Baggage insurance
- Excess-baggage charges
- Personal items such as internet access, telephone calls, laundry and gratuities for nongroup services

### **Air Arrangements**

You are responsible for booking and purchasing airfare to the start location and from the end location of the program. These air purchases are NOT included in the program cost. To assist you in making these independent arrangements, we will send you details with your confirmation materials on when to arrive and depart.

### **What to Expect**

We consider this program to be moderately strenuous to physically demanding, depending in part on your choice of the two walk options offered most days. The two options have varying distances and levels of difficulty; you should plan to walk with the group you've chosen for the entire day. Participants must be physically fit, active and in good health, and must be able to navigate walking routes that are often rugged, uneven and steep without assistance. All our walks are led by experienced leaders. The countryside trails are often farm tracks and narrow paths that wind among fields, open scrub and shaded woodlands. The paths are sometimes rocky or have exposed roots and may be muddy or wet at times. Elevation gains and losses are no greater than 600 feet on Option I walks and 1,800 feet on Option II walks. Sturdy, well-fitting, waterproof, broken-in hiking boots with ankle support are essential. Participants will need to bring a light daypack with rain gear, extra layers, sunscreen and a water supply. "Nature" is often the only restroom available, and you must be comfortable using it and carrying out paper waste.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **Eligibility**

We encourage membership in the Stanford Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is \$300 more than the members' price. The nonmember fee is waived for anyone traveling as a paid guest of a current member, as well as for emerita or emeritus faculty and staff. To purchase a membership, call (650) 725-0692 or visit <http://alumni.stanford.edu/goto/membership>.

### **Deposits, Payments and Cancellations**

A \$1,000-per-person deposit is required to reserve space on this program. Final payment is due 120 days prior to program start. Deposits and any payments are refundable, less a \$500-per-person cancellation fee, until 120 days prior to program start. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and we resell your place(s), in which case a \$1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply.

### **Insurance**

Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian residents with general medical, accident and evacuation coverage, as well as on-tour quarantine-related trip-cancellation, -interruption and -delay insurance coverage, under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. You may choose to subscribe to optional nonquarantine-related trip-cancellation, -interruption and -delay insurance coverage and/or baggage insurance. Information offering such insurance will be included in your confirmation materials. The product offered includes special benefits if you purchase your insurance within 14 days of receiving your welcome email.

**Responsibility**

The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motor coach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates include arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. We reserve the right to cancel any program prior to departure, in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. We also reserve the right to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance. Neither the Stanford Alumni Association, nor Stanford University, nor our operators accept liability for any carrier's cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in connection with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect at the time the brochure is published and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign an Assumption of Risk.

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