



Hante France

Goals and Summary

On your Hante you will have the wonderful opportunity to explore the culture and natural regions of Southern France. Using the writings of Robert Louis Stevenson as a guide for the cultural history of the Stevenson Trail, you will backpack for 8 days through the south of France, hiking from village to village. Other days of this course will be spent exploring the cultural history of Paris and the small village of St. Jean-du-Gard and its surroundings.

On this Hante you will focus on immersion in French Culture, while exploring the 4 distinct natural regions of Southern France. The Stevenson Trail is thought to be one of the first trails to introduce the idea of backpacking as a recreational activity, and not purely out of necessity for trade or travel. This accompanied by the varied terrain and unique cultural markers of each village, give a glimpse into the life of those who have lived in Southern France for the past 200 years.

In order for this trip to be successful, everyone will need to be prepared to travel and bring lots of patience and energy. You will be hiking an average of 8-15 miles a day during the trekking portion and all of the hiking will take place in varied terrain, either on old roads, pastures or single track hiking trails. Your packs will be smaller and lighter than traditional backpacking packs (20-30Lbs) but the distances will be longer than a typical backpacking trip. Your Hante will bring you into the fantastic histories and stories of France through cultural and geographic immersion. When you are not on trek you will be walking through towns and cities, meeting and interacting with locals, and getting off the traditional path of tourism in the area. Your instructors want you to walk away from this Hante having gained a sense of what historical factors have shaped the region, but most importantly, they want to help you foster your own personal connection to the natural world.

The Hante program is committed to the creation of a unique community. We ask you to commit to live and work as a part of the community we will create on our grand adventure. You'll find that everyone will have different strengths and weaknesses, but your instructors will help to create a nurturing community in which you will feel the support you need to succeed. As a member of the community you will be responsible to the group that you will be living, learning, working, playing, sharing, and laughing with for the three weeks of your trip. This takes commitment from everyone to be group oriented. What this means is that at times you will have to put individual needs behind the needs of the group. This can be difficult, but this will help the trip to be much more meaningful for all of us. A community's strength springs from the dedication of its individuals.

Finally, spending three weeks in France is a major undertaking. International trekking and traveling is incredibly rewarding, but being 100% prepared is completely critical. We can't stress enough the importance of being prepared. Please carefully read all of the material in this packet, as well as, the information we will be sending over the course of the following months. Remember, we are here to be a resource for you. If there are questions or concerns, please contact us. This IS going to be an adventure of a lifetime.