



Top 10 walking adventures in Europe this summer from UTracks

Get out in the open air this summer on walking adventures throughout Europe and enjoy the best of the continent's culture and landscapes - specialist operator UTracks has selected 10 of its top walking holidays combining value for money with scenic beauty and local colour.

Quoted prices are inclusive of accommodation, most meals, equipment, baggage transfers, and clear maps with images.

1. Mont Blanc Family Adventure – 7 day guided walk

Hidden valleys, hanging glaciers and mountain cafes will fulfil any fantasy about the world-renowned Mont Blanc. Staying overnight in charming alpine and mountain huts, you will explore the small picturesque villages along the way and feast on French, Swiss and Italian cuisines. Prices start from £605 per adult and £465 per child under 12. Departures every Sunday from 5 July to 23 August.

2. Compostela Trail - Leon to Santiago – 15 day self guided walk in Spain

If the entire 1000-mile famous pilgrimage trail sounds daunting, you can start it from the pretty town of Leon and hike your way through northern Spain to the legendary Santiago de Compostela and the tomb of St James. The route offers a fine balance of walks in spectacular natural settings and visits to inspiring cultural sites. Adult price: £1,090. Daily departures available throughout the summer.

3. Walking the Julian Alps – 7-day self guided walk

Explore the limestone Julian Alps in Slovenia, one of the finest mountain settings in Europe. You will climb paths showcasing World War I relics, walking alongside and swimming in stunning turquoise lakes. Weekly departures on Mondays and Thursdays from 15 June to 10 September 2009; price: £860 per adult.

4. Douro Valley – 5 day self guided walk in Portugal

The Douro Valley is Portugal's port wine region - in fact it's home to the very first demarcated wine region in the world. During this exciting trip, you will gaze at scenic hills covered with terraces of vines falling steeply down to the riverbanks, experience one of the greatest rail journeys in Europe from Porto to Pinhao, and enjoy the wines - of course! Prices start from £590 for adult and £472 per child. High season surcharge applies.

5. Walking in Iceland – 5 day guided walk (NEW)

Iceland has a distinctive volcanic landscape, featuring lava fields and huge moss-filled volcanic craters, offers the perfect backdrop for day walks. From Reykjavik to Laki to the village of Vik, each day will reveal new scenery and activities, including a glacier walk, visits to historical sites and even an opportunity to bathe in steaming hot springs. Prices start from £1,090 per adult. Monthly departures; high season surcharge applies.

6. Cinque Terre – 7 day self guided walk in Italy

Travel back to 15th century Italy visiting the Cinque Terre (Five Lands), a series of five small characterful fishing villages dug into the cliffs and overlooking the Mediterranean coastline. Locals have spent thousands of years transforming the steep mountainsides into beautiful cultivable terraces. Activities en route include wineries walks and a visit to the Apuanes Alps, where the famous Carrare marble is extracted. Prices: £490 per adult, children from £392. Daily departures until October.

7. The Crusader Trail – 7 day self guided walk in Southern France

An adventure full of intrigue, the Crusader Trail follows a network of secret ancient trails through the forests, vineyards and orchards leading to the mysterious Cathar castles, near the Pyrenees. Home to the Cathar sect that was exterminated during France's 13th century crusades, the region is full of well-preserved reminders of its past. Daily departures until the end of September; price: £770 per adult.

8. Volcanoes of Sicily (Italy) – 8 day guided walk

Discover the beautiful Aeolian Islands - seven diverse islands where you can climb dramatic cliffs, walk along black beaches, bathe in unspoiled thermal hot springs, snorkel and explore the famous Mt Etna volcano, which boasts a line of gaping craters. Trips available on selected departures until October; prices start from £1,080 per adult.

9. Bulgaria on Foot – 8 day self guided tour (NEW)

The Rila and Pirin mountain ranges of Bulgaria are home to vast alpine meadows, glacial lakes, rare vegetation and a rich variety of fauna. Travelling in this region offers an alternative mountain experience in a country, which simply teems with history and beautiful natural landscapes. Activities include a visit to Bulgaria's most famous monastery, discovering the traditional lifestyle of hidden villages and a chance to ascend the highest peak in the Pirin Mountains. Departures from 4 July to 12 September 2009; priced from £630 per adult.

10. Lycian Coastal Walk - 8-day guided walk (NEW)

Walk through history along Turkey's stunning Tekke Peninsula as you follow the fabled Lycian Way. This mountainous route encompasses spectacular coastal views, a necropolis lost in vegetation, a side excursion to the remains of the immersed city of Kekova, and archaeological treasures dating back to the 8th Century BC. Prices start from £760 per adult; selected departures from June to October.

For more information and bookings visit www.UTracks.com or call 0845 241 7599.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS:

UTracks offers a collection of affordable, innovative and fun adventures throughout Europe and is a division of World Expeditions, a world leader in small group trekking and adventure holidays. Often self-guided, UTracks' adventures allow travellers the flexibility to explore at their own pace and spend longer on what interests them most.

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