Trip Overview

The Pyrenees mountains mark the geographical border between France and Spain, and are the historical center of the Catalan culture and language. Nestled on the French side of this mountain range lies the GR10 which passes Mount Canigou—a major cultural symbol in local artwork, stories, and representations.

This trip will explore cultural similarities of Catalan communities in both France and Spain. We will be spending time in Catalan capitals: Perpignan, France and Barcelona, Spain; learning about the Catalan culture from local experts and public museums. Four days and three nights will be spent trekking a section of the GR 10 route. Starting in Vernet-les-Bains and concluding in Arles-sur-Tech, we will backpack through the picturesque mountain landscape of small villages and thirteenth century ruins. The trip will conclude along the Mediterranean Sea, enjoying the local food, art, and unique culture of Banyuls-sur-Mer and Barcelona Spain.

General Schedule of Trip

**Friday, May 20th:** Depart independently to arrive in Perpignan, France on the 21st.

**May 21:** Arrive in France, travel to the Hotel, and spend the evening in Perpignan.

**May 22:** Explore Perpignan as a group; learn more about Catalan culture in France.

**May 23-26:** Catch a bus to Vernet les Bains and begin the hike along the GR10. Hike past Mt. Canigou and arrive in Arles sur-Tech

**May 27:** Take a bus to Banyuls sur Mer, explore

**May 29:** Take a Train from Banyuls sur Mer to Barcelona Spain

**May 30:** Visit Catalan cultural sites in Barcelona, explore the city; final group dinner

**Tuesday, May 31st:** Return home or continue traveling on your own

Facilitators

This program will be facilitated by Alex Calder ’16 and Sarah Francisco ’17 of GRAB, and Thomas Vaillant, visiting Professor in the French Department. Alex has facilitated Winterfest trips for the past two years, and Sarah has facilitated Ascent the past two years. Both have led for the program for three years.

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The Pyrenees and Catalan Culture
May 21-30, 2016

Registration and Payment: Registration is at www.gettysburg.edu/grab. A $150 non-refundable deposit is due at time of registration to secure a place on the trip of your choice. We accept Visa, Mastercard, Discover, e-checks or cash. The final payment will be required at least 60 days prior the trip departure date. To register, please fill out the online form or call the Office of Experiential Education at 717.337.6319.

Not Included in the Price: Hospitalization, individual evacuation costs, insurance, meals in destination cities prior to and at the conclusion of the trip, souvenirs, alcohol, excess baggage charges, or other personal expenses incurred outside the scope of the trip. We DO NOT include airfare in the pricing of our trips. We want to give participants the opportunity to have flexibility in their travel arrangements. Some people will have frequent flyer miles, many people will be traveling from various destinations, while others may already be at the site location or decide to extend their trip once our expedition has concluded.

The Trek: Trekking distances range from 7-12 miles a day. Average time trekking ranges from 3-6 hours, which includes stops for lunch & breaks, appreciating the sites, general conversation, and sometimes just figuring out the route. The trekking series expeditions are designed to accommodate those who enjoy trekking at a moderate pace but also enjoy taking numerous stops to enjoy the location (1-3 miles an hour).

Group Size: The trip consists of two GRAB staff members from the Office of Experiential Education, Thomas Vaillant from the French department, and up to nine participants from the Gettysburg College community. Students, employees and their families, and alumni of the college are all welcome.

Transportation: You are responsible for your own flights to Perpignan, France and from Barcelona, Spain and for your transportation from the airport to the hotel, and back to the airport at the end of the program. All other ground transportation will be arranged, provided, and included in the cost of the trip. If you plan on traveling further following the trip, you are responsible for those logistics as well.

Accommodations: The program’s accommodations will include two nights in a hotel in Perpignan, camping in both developed and undeveloped sites along the GR10, one night in Banyuls sur Mer, and one night in Barcelona.

Meals: Breakfast and dinner will be covered by the program cost in Perpignan, Banyuls sur Mer, and Barcelona. Participants will be responsible for any lunches in these cities. On the trail, breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided each day. Participants will be responsible for any additional snacks or meals off the trail and while traveling to and from France and Spain.

Weather: Be prepared for warm, springtime weather, typically sunny or partly cloudy. Average temperatures at this time of year range from 50 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit, but the higher elevations of the Pyrenees (elevation >3000 feet) and surrounding Mt. Canigou can bring extreme weather conditions.

Physical Preparation: You do not need to be a top notch athlete to participate on this program, but preparation will make the trip much more enjoyable. Exercising 3-5 days a week and walking with a 30 pound pack to get used to the weight are great ways to prepare. No prior experience hiking is required, and all backcountry skills and expectations will be covered during the trip.

Health and Medical & Release of Liability: We require each participant to fill out medical/liability forms for Gettysburg College and for any contracted services who request similar documentation. We can provide information on short term insurance that covers baggage, accident/life, and trip cancellation which is required for our international programs. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Cancellation of Trips: We reserve the right to cancel trips due to lack of participants, State Department warnings, or natural occurrences that may be potentially hazardous. If you cancel the trip more than 60 days before the departure date, you will receive a full refund minus the $150 deposit. If cancellation occurs 45 -60 days prior to the departure date a 50% refund is available. If cancellation occurs 21 - 44 days prior to the trip a 25% refund will be available. There will be no refunds for cancellations made within 21 days of the expedition.