

Weekend Snowshoeing

Pyrenees Adventure

France | 2,500m



www.360-expeditions.com

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Snow Shoeing in the **Ariege** region of the **French Pyrenees** is a **winter trekking** expedition you will remember forever! Spend a long weekend visiting the quiet and less frequented areas of the Plateau de Sault whilst snow shoe walking to refuges in a stunning location. The views of the high snow capped **Andorran peaks** are breathtaking. We'll provide you with all the professional guidance you need and sort out all the organisation. All you need to bring to the table is good general fitness and an adventurous spirit.

Based out of Lesparrou Retreats and Adventures in the stunning French Pyrenees you will begin your 2 day winter exploration. We will snow shoe through unexplored areas where you are likely to see **Chamois, Deer** and **Stoats** as they dart through this magical

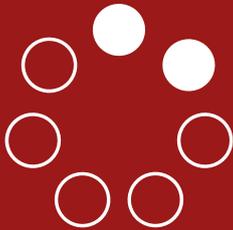
winter wonderland of beech forests and open hillsides

All food, equipment, accommodation and transport to and from the start and end points is provided. So all you need to do is walk, soak up the views and breath in the fresh clean Ariege mountain air. Our passion is to impart knowledge and our priority is always safety. You will be in the good hands of a highly experienced guide with vast local knowledge.

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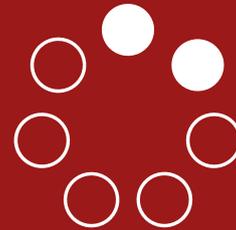
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Physical - P2

Prolonged walking over varied terrain. There may be uphill and downhill, so a good solid fitness is required. Expect to be able to do a 6 to 8 hour walk over undulating terrain with a few punchy uphill climbs carrying a pack up to 6kg in weight.



Technical - T2

Consider this a trek, although there may be occasion to use hands for short sections of easy scrambling. No previous climbing or trekking experience is necessary.

Please note that the grading system used is a rough guide only.

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ITINERARY

DAY 1 : Arrive Toulouse

Meet with your guides at Toulouse airport and transfer to Lesparrou Retreats and adventures.

We will be given our snow shoes and equipment and then our 360 guide will give an introduction to snowshoe techniques and safety procedures before we begin our snow trek the next day. Evening spent having a relaxing dinner.

D

DAY 2 : Snowshoe to Refuge Chioula

Today begin our winter exploration of this amazing picturesque landscape. We start the day with a hearty traditional continental breakfast, load our rucksacks, snow shoes and safety equipment into the mini bus for a short transfer to the start of our adventure on snow shoes. We will make our way across Plateau de Saluts to reach Refuge Chioula; where we will spend the night after a relaxing dinner, discussing the days events

The altitude gain will be around 600m. We will be walking for approximately 5 hours through rolling nordic terrain.

BLD

DAY 3 : Snowshoe to pick up point

After breakfast at the refuge we will don our snowshoes and begin our day of snowshoeing. We will trek for 5-6hrs till we reach our pick up point.

Through the day we will be greeted by superb views and winter wildlife. We will arrive back at Lesparrou Retreats in time for afternoon with cake and hot showers. Our final meal will be taken at la Theatre in Lavelanet before a last comfy night in the cosy accomodation at Lesparrou.

BLD

DAY Day 4 : Return UK

A continental breakfast and a transfer back to Toulouse airport ends your stay with us in the French Pyrenees

B

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KIT LIST

Bags & Packs

Rucksack

Approx. 40-50L rucksack. Your day to day pack that you carry with your daily essentials, fitted with shoulder straps and importantly a waist belt

Waterproof rucksack cover

To protect rucksack from rain

Spare bag

Spare bag with spare clothes, towel, etc which can be left at Lesparrou Retreats and Adventures so you can get changed at the end of the 2 day expedition

Sleeping Gear

2-3 Season sleeping bag

You should bring a 2/3 season sleeping bag depending on whether you are a warm or cold sleeper. A silk sleeping bag liner will enhance this rating on the coldest nights

Sleeping bag liner (sheet sleeping bag)

Silk is best for keeping the bag clean and you a little warmer and is lighter than cotton

Headwear

Sunglasses

Worth spending money on good UV filters. Category 4 wrap around style are essential due to the strength of UV rays at altitude. Julbo is our preferred supplier

Warm headgear

This can be a warm hat, beanie, balaclava, anything to reduce the heat loss from your head

Sunblock

Buy the highest SPF you can find as UV intensifies with altitude

Lip salve

Sun cream will not work on your lips and they are very susceptible to burn without proper protection

Upper Body

Waterproof jacket (Outer layer)

Gore-Tex or event seam sealed are recommended and big enough to fit over a couple of layers. This jacket will also serve as a great windproof too

Base layer x 2

This is the layer closest to the skin and its principal function is to draw (wick) moisture and sweat away from the skin. You can also get thermal base layers for use at higher altitudes that provide an additional insulative layer while still drawing sweat during times of high exertion

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KIT LIST

Mid layer (long sleeved fleece tops)

These are typically lightweight microfleece or similar technology that provide varying degrees of warmth and insulation without being overly bulky or heavy to pack

Duvet jacket

Synthetic jackets recommended as they stay warm if wet. Arc'teryx recommended

Lower Body

Waterproof trousers

Like the jacket, an essential piece of kit to stay dry and should also be Gore-tex

Long Johns

Thermal insulation for the lower body

Underwear

Merino or wicking material, not cotton. How many pairs you take is entirely up to you

Feet

Trekking socks x 2

Single layer or wearing 2 pairs is a personal choice and lighter weight merino wool is a good option

4 season trekking boots

Well broken in with mid - high ankle support

Hydration

Water bottles / bladder

2L capacity in Nalgene bottles

Evening Wear

Comfortable trainers

Comfortable trainers/shoes for the evening

Evening clothes

Comfortable clothes for the evening

Toiletries

Travel towel

Travel towels from the likes of Lifesystems are perfect

Wash kit

Keep it simple on the mountain. Essentials are toothbrush, toothpaste and deodorant. Moisturiser is advisable, everything else is a luxury!

Miscellaneous

Personal medication

Keep this in your daysack

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KIT LIST

Personal first aid kit

The 360 med kits are designed to be used in emergencies and akin to an A&E rather than a pharmacy on Expeditions so please come prepared with useful meds for yourself such as painkillers (Ibuprofen if you can take it and a Paracetamol) plus blister plasters, plasters, antiseptic, rehydration sachets and any muscle rubs you wish to use.

Thermal flask

Lunch box

To put your lunch in so your sandwiches don't get squashed, un-squashed ones are much more appetising!

Camera

Bring plenty of spare batteries and memory cards

Snacks

You will be fed very well and given snacks each day however we advise bringing a small selection as a little bit of comfort. Extra snacks can be bought en-route if needed. Energy gels and protein bars are not suitable

Head torch

We recommend Petzl head torches. Bring spare batteries.

Documentation

Passport

Don't forget this! Your passport should have at least 6 months validity. With your passport expiry date at least six months after the final day of travel.

Copy of passport

Just in case

Travel insurance

Copy of own travel insurance details. And relevant contact numbers. We have a partnership with True Traveller and would recommend that you contact them when looking for travel insurance for your trip with 360. However, it is vital that you ensure that the insurance cover they offer is suitable for you, taking your personal circumstances (items to be insured, cancellation cover, medical history) into account. Many other insurance providers are available and we do recommend that you shop around to get the best cover for you on the expedition you are undertaking. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

Dental check up

We recommend you have a dental check-up before your trip. New fillings can be an issue at altitude if there is an air pocket left in the gap

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KIT LIST

EH1C (formerly E111)

While you do have travel insurance, this can save you paperwork and reduce upfront costs should you have a minor ailment or need to see a local GP if you already have one

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FAQ'S

Guides

Are your guides qualified?

All the guides working on our courses hold the International Mountain Leader(IML) which is equivalent to the French " Accompagnateur de Montagne". We are all also registered to work in France which is a legal requirement in France.

Food and Water

Where do we get drinking water from?

You will fill your bottles before we leave Lesparrou. There is drinking water at the refuge.

What is the food like in the refuges?

The food in the refuges is plentiful and of very good quality, often using locally sourced ingredients. Breakfasts consist of pastries, fresh bread and jams and you can expect a three course meal in the evenings.

Can allergies be catered for?

Absolutely, please inform the office of any allergies or intolerance's and we will ensure that these are taken into account on the trek.

What if I run out of snacks? Are there places to buy stuff?

It is best to bring enough snacks for the 2 day snowshoeing expedition with you.

Accommodation

What are the gîtes and refuges like?

The sleeping arrangements are large shared rooms with up to 6 mattresses on large platforms. You will need to bring your own sleeping bag, but it is very cosy and all part of the "mountain hut" experience.

Can you get a hot shower there?

Yes, hot showers are available. There may be a small supplement for hot water.

Health and Safety

What happens if there is a problem on the mountain?

Your 360 guides are suitably qualified for such situations and have access to rescue services.

Am I likely to suffer from altitude sickness on this expedition?

Not on this expedition.

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FAQ'S

Kit

Can I bring my own snow shoes and/or poles?

If you have your own snow shoes which you like, this is fine. We strongly recommend that you have heel raisers and please also bring some spare items such as straps which are specific to the snow shoe in case you need to repair them. We carry a generic snow shoe repair kit for breakages but the specific ones are much better.

The Trek

What do I do if I arrive early on the pickup day?

Toulouse centre is easily accessible from the airport by buses which run every 15 minutes. There is left luggage facilities at Toulouse train station, where the bus drops you. Toulouse is a beautiful city to explore.

The Weather

What's the weather like up there?

The climate of the Pyrenees is generally better than the UK, lovely and sunny, and reasonably warm (pretty hot lower down). But there is still the risk of inclement weather, so we advise in the kit list to pack accordingly). And just like any other holiday, having a quick last minute look at the forecast before you come out can be a useful pointer of what's in store.

Travel

What flights would you suggest?

For this expedition, you will need to book flights to Toulouse Blagnac Airport. You can fly with any of the following airlines from several major airports in the UK: Easyjet, RyanAir and British Airways.

360 will meet you at a fixed pick up point at Toulouse airport with a meeting time that coincides with British Airways (BA), RyanAir (FR) and Easyjet (EZY) flights arriving from London. Please contact the office for flights arriving from non-London airports so we can arrange a suitable meeting time.

Insurance

Do I need insurance?

You must carry individual travel insurance to take part in the expedition. We cannot take you on the mountain without proof of insurance.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

Your insurance details are requested on the booking form, however this can be arranged at a later date. 360 Expeditions will be requesting your insurance details 8 weeks before your departure.

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FAQ'S

Do I need an European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for this expedition?

As the trip is based in France it is also worth having a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) as this "gives card holders the right to access state-provided healthcare on temporary stays in other European Economic Area (EEA) countries or Switzerland. Treatment should be provided on the same basis as it would be to a resident of that country and is provided either at reduced cost or, in many cases, for free.

The EHIC covers treatment that is medically necessary until the card holder returns home. This includes treatment for pre-existing medical conditions." If you don't already have one, you can apply for one [here](#) and it is free.

Many travel insurers won't cover your medical costs in the unlikely event that you need medical treatment whilst you are away which could have been covered by an EHIC.

Training

What training do we need for this if any?

For this snowshoeing weekend we advice you to spend time on general fitness training for walking. With some hill training.

Finance

What is your cancellation and refund policy?

Please read our terms and conditions careful before you depart. 360 Expeditions highly recommends trip cancellation insurance for all expeditions. Due to the nature and heavy costs of government and operator permits we must adhere to a stringent refund policy.

What additional spending money will we need?

You can buy beverages at the refuge a beer will be around 3 euros. They will not except cards so please bring cash.

There is also an honesty bar in the accommodation at Lesparrou, beer and wine are 2 euros each.

Electronics

Can we charge our phones and cameras at the refuges?

Yes it will be possible but the number of sockets will be limited.

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FAQ'S

Do we need a travel adapter for the plug sockets in the hotel or are they the same as the UK?

The voltage is 220v / 50Hz like the UK. Rectangular or round three-pin plugs are used. It is possible to recharge your electronic items and batteries for a small cost at all the lodges.

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TRAINING PROGRAM

To begin 6 months prior to the expedition where possible.

1. CVS: Cardiovascular exercise which is low impact such as swimming, cycling, cross trainer, rowing.

2. Weekend walk should be done over undulating terrain. Only a light rucksack needs to be carried.

3. For specific exercises it is worth doing static squats and heel raises on a regular basis to improve leg muscles prior to the trip. Static squats are especially useful to help protect the knees. Please remember that it is still important to have a well balanced workout using a variety of muscle groups.

4. It is worth winding down and resting in the week leading up to the trip, doing several light walks to keep things going.

5. When walking going at a pace of a brisk walk with a light sweat and enough to feel breathless is recommended

6. During the program, rather than step up suddenly each month (example, going for 3 one hour walks each week during the weekdays in April to 3 one and half hour walks suddenly in May) it is better to build up gradually each week so there isn't a large transition (example, going for 3 one hour walks during week 1 in April, going for 3 one hour and ten minute walks during week 2 in April, going for 3 one hour and fifteen minute walks during week 3 in April, going for 3 one hour and twenty minute walks during week 4 in April)

6. It is important you seek medical advice prior to starting any training program, especially if you are not used to regular physical exertion

All the best with your training.

MONTH 1

OPT 1

2 x 30 mins weekday walk
1 x 1 hour weekend walk
1 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 30 mins weekday walk
2 x 1 hour weekend walk
1 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 2

OPT 1

2 x 45 mins weekday walk
1 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 45 mins weekday walk
2 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 3

OPT 1

2 x 45 mins weekday walk
1 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 45 mins weekday walk
2 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 4

OPT 1

3 x 1 hour weekday walk
1 x 4 hours weekend walk
3 x 15 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 1 hour weekday walk
2 x 4 hours weekend walk
3 x 15 mins CVS

MONTH 5

OPT 1

3 x 1.5 hours weekday walk
1 x 5 hours weekend walk
3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 1.5 hours weekday walk
2 x 5 hours weekend walk
3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

MONTH 6

OPT 1

3 x 2 hours weekday walk
1 x 6 hours weekend walk
3 x 30 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 3 hours weekday walk
2 x 6 hours weekend walk
3 x 30 mins CVS



“Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty & well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out & loudly proclaiming ‘Wow! What a Ride!’ “

Dream it. Plan it. Live it.