

Côte d'Azur to the Alps
Eastern Provence
10 car tours • 70 long and short walks



GPS

This is a sample from the
PDF edition of
Landscapes of
**EASTERN
PROVENCE**
Côte d'Azur to the Alps

a countryside guide
Fourth edition



John and Pat Underwood

This shorter sampler includes some of the introductory text, the introductions to each of the main sections (Picnicking, Car Touring and Walking) with an example of each. There is a total of 180 pages, plus two pull-out touring maps, in the full book.



SUNFLOWER BOOKS



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Vineyards below the Montagne Ste-Victoire (Car tour 10). The perfect harmony between man and nature is, for us, the secret of the French countryside.





Picnicking

Picnicking possibilities are limitless in Provence — especially if you follow the example of the locals and tour with a collapsible table and chairs (seasonally available at very low cost in many supermarkets). Picnic areas with tables lie en route on some of the tours; these are indicated in the touring notes and on the touring map with the symbol A .

All the walks in the book offer superb picnic settings, but on days when you are planning *only* to tour by car it is helpful to have some idea of where you might stop for an alfresco lunch. At the top of each car tour we suggest a few picnic spots, favourites of ours over the years. They are highlighted on the touring map, with a *P* printed in green. Where possible we have chosen places where there is something firm and dry to sit on.

One of the best things about picnicking is choosing picnic food at the **local markets** and *boulangeries*. The fruit and salad vegetables are so fresh here in the south, and there is always the opportunity to try something new from the deli. We often pick up specialities as well — Verdon honey or *marrons glacés* from Collobrières — not only for ourselves, but to bring home as gifts for special friends. Of course another irresistible attraction is the weekly (even daily) market in Provençal towns and villages, where they sell everything from tomatoes to tablecloths. These are highlighted in the car touring notes by the symbol M ; the specific market *days* are listed in the Index.

Madone de Fenestre, with snow-capped Mt Gélas in the background — just one of the lovely picnic spots on Car tour 2



A country code for walkers and motorists

Please bear in mind that all land in Provence is privately owned, whether by an individual or a district. All waymarked walks and other routes described in this book are permissive, *not* ‘rights of way’. Behave responsibly, never forgetting the danger of forest fires.

- **Do not light fires** except at purpose-built barbecues.

Never park blocking a fire-fighting track!

- **Do not frighten animals.** When driving, always stop the car until the livestock have moved off the road.

- **Walk quietly** through all farms, hamlets and villages, leaving any gates just as you find them.

- **Protect all wild and cultivated plants.** Don’t pick wild flowers or uproot saplings. Obviously crops are someone’s livelihood and should not be touched. **Never walk over cultivated land!**

- **Take all your litter away with you.**

- **Stay on the path.** Don’t take short cuts on zigzag paths; this damages vegetation and hastens erosion, eventually destroying the main path.





Touring

The ten car tours in this first volume of *Landscapes of Provence* take you north from Nice to the Alps and then west to Aix-en-Provence. While a few important centres have been omitted for lack of space, we feel that the two books present a comprehensive introduction to some of the most beautiful landscapes for first-time visitors. And as a change from motoring, we highly recommend the delightful train journey described on pages 168-170.

The touring notes are brief: they include little history or information readily available in guides of a more general nature. *We concentrate instead on route planning*: each tour has been devised to follow **the most beautiful roads** in the relevant region and to take you to the starting point of some delightful **walks**. (Further information about some of the places visited can be found in the notes for the walks.)

The double-sided fold-out map is designed to give you a quick overview of the touring areas, walks and picnic places *in both volumes*. At the start of each tour we refer to the relevant Michelin touring map(s), which are so handy to use in conjunction with their *Red Guide*. **Important:** *Unless you are using a satnav or smartphone, both driver and navigator should look over the latest Michelin Red Guide before entering or leaving any large city*, so that you have some idea of where you are heading and the landmarks en route. It is *never* as simple as it looks on the maps, and *hours* can be wasted twirling in spaghetti loops on ring roads round cities like Aix!

The **touring bases** are, obviously, just *suggestions*, and the tours can be joined at any point en route (the major villages are shown at the top of each tour). Since some of the territory covered is well away from popular tourist areas, we chose bases which offered not only hotels, but *our* essential requirements for making an early-morning start: a petrol station and a mini-market! In many cases, however, we broke the tours to spend a night or two at one of our favourite hotels near a walk — like the top-class château at Trigance or the modestly priced Trois Vallées at the Col de Turini.

Because this is a *countryside* guide, the tours often bypass the villages en route, however beautiful or historically important. We do, however, use symbols to alert you to the cultural highlights (a **key to the symbols** used is on the touring map).



Olive trees below Sigale (Car tour 7)

Some other points to keep in mind: **petrol stations** are often closed on Sundays and holidays in the remote areas covered by some of the tours. **Cyclists** do *not* travel in single file, nor is cycling confined to weekends. But on Sundays some roads will be closed off for cycle races: you will have to take a short *déviations*. *Déviations*, however, may *not* be short when they involve roadworks. Especially in spring, long stretches of road will be closed, and you may have to go up to 50km out of your way! French **arrow signposting** can be mystifying until you get used to it.

You may note discrepancies in **road numbering**: in a move towards regionalisation, responsibility for most roads was devolved to local authorities well over a decade ago. Thousands of roads were renumbered, even iconic trunk roads like the old N85 — the Route Napoléon (rather like renumbering Route 66 in the States)! But some work is still ongoing, and not all signs were changed on the ground when we last drove here.

Finally, remember that **Sundays and holidays** are a nightmare at the most popular ‘sights’, and places like the Grand Canyon du Verdon and Madone d’Utelle should be avoided. Our tours have been planned not only to take you on the most beautiful roads, but to reach as many of the three-star attractions as possible before or after the crowds. If you follow our advice, but you *still* encounter crowds, we have to admit: we never tour Provence in July or August.

Tour 1: THE CORNICHE D'OR AND THE ESTÉREL

Nice • Antibes • Cannes • Massif de l'Estérel • Nice

174km/108mi; 5-6h driving;
Michelin map 341.

Walks en route: 5-7, also many other walk combinations in the Estérel (see text below and map pages 88-89); Walks 1-4 and 8-10 are easily reached from Nice.

This tour assumes an early morning start, so that the red rock of the Estérel can be seen at its best with a low sun rising in the east (and so that the busy coastal roads will be less

crowded). Be sure to fill up with petrol before turning into the Estérel, and have your picnic with you.

Picnic suggestions: There are good picnic places *all over* the Estérel, but particularly pleasant settings are the lake near the Grenouillet ford (just as you start into the massif; rocks to sit on and some shade) or the dam 30 minutes along Walk 5 (photos on page 87).

This tour skirts our favourite stretch of coast in the south of France; it wins — by a nose — over the Riviera proper (Nice to Menton, Tour 2). This may be because it is less built up, but what stays in the memory are the turquoise-to-jade creeks (*calanques*) below the road, pierced by blades of crimson rock. Beyond Cap d'Antibes, we come upon the glorious sweep of the Golfe de la Napoule and then follow the Golden Corniche above these *calanques*. Heading inland, we climb into the 'rock garden' of the Estérel, where spring-flowering *maquis* and lime-green pines shimmer against yet more fiery-red porphyry rock.

Leave **Nice** on the D6098 (coastal road to ANTIBES), then follow signs for CAP D'ANTIBES.

One could easily spend half a day at **Antibes**★ (15km *i*✚**M**♫); save Antibes and other towns along the coast for another day, when you could easily visit by public transport and not have the hassle of finding a parking space.

You round the small peninsula of **Cap d'Antibes**★, with its luxury hotels, immaculate gardens and fine coastal views (📷).

Staying beside the coast, you rejoin the main D6098 at **Juan-les-Pins** (*i*). After merging temporarily with the wider D6007 and rounding the **Pointe de la Croisette** (📷), you come to **Cannes**★ (33km *i*✚**M**♫) and the beautiful sweep of the **Golfe de la Napoule**. Save at least a day for your visit to Cannes — another

town best visited by train or bus.

Beyond **La Napoule** (*i*♫**M**♫), now following the **Corniche d'Or** (Golden Corniche), you skim past one resort after another.

Walk 6 begins and ends at **Théoule-sur-Mer** (**M**✚♫), coming back into the village via the viewpoint at **Pointe de l'Aiguille** (📷). You pass above the honeycombe of **Port-la-Galère**, snuggling unseen into terraces bordering the bay. It's worth stopping at the *unsigned* viewpoint just past the hotel La Tour at **Pointe de l'Esquillon**★ (📷) for the fine views of the coast all the way back east to Cap d'Antibes. The red porphyry cliffs of the Estérel rise up to the right.

You pass **Miramar** and then **Le Trayas**, a strung-out settlement on wooded slopes beside the sea. Now the sharply indented

Top: the red porphyry rock of Cap Roux (top); boars near the Roussiveau Forestry house. There are more photos on page 87.

calanques create a breathtaking landscape down to your left. Just beyond **Pointe du Cap Roux** there is an especially fine viewpoint (📷) over this setting at **Pointe de l'Observatoire**★.

Beyond **Anthéor**, at **Agay** (64km 📍), we leave the coast to delve into the **Estérel Massif**★.

At the roundabout, turn right on the D100 for VALESCURE* and, 1.6km uphill, fork right on a narrow tarmac road (small brown sign: MASSIF DE L'ESTEREL).

Cap Roux dominates the landscape on the right, after you pass to the left of the **Maison Forestière du Gratadis** — a large pale pink and green building half hidden behind bushy conifers.

At the Y-fork, go right for PIC DE L'OURS (perhaps refer now to the large-scale map on pages 88-89).

You ford the **Grenouillet** stream; a lovely lake is on the left here.

At the next junction (*Carrefour de Mourrefrey*), keep straight ahead for PIC DE L'OURS, where the Cap Roux road comes in from the right (signposted back to the *Rocher de St-Barthélemy*).

Cap Roux rises brilliantly above you here. Travelling on the north side of St-Pilon and Cap Roux, you come to the **Site de la Ste-Baume**, from where footpaths shown on a walkers' information board with map lead up to a cave-chapel dedicated to St-Honorat (1h return) and a viewing table on the summit of Cap Roux (a 2h circuit). These paths are shown on

*But for Walk 7, continue for 2km to the WWII monuments at **Cap du Dramont**, where you can park.



the map on pages 88-89, but *beware*: they are quite strenuous, vertiginous in places, and not recommended on windy days.

There are fine views to the sea as you climb through an extraordinary landscape of rounded red rock hills freckled with *maquis*. At the **Col de l'Evêque** you head right into a one-way system, continuing round the Pic d'Aurelle (📷) to the **Col des Lentisques** (footpath to the summit of Pic d'Aurelle; 📷 45min return).

Turn right at the col.

More splendid coastal views unravel as you climb, and there are ample opportunities to park. Red rock falls away straight below you, and you look out over the *Corniche d'Or* all the way back to Cap d'Antibes. Le Trayas is framed by the tip of Point Esquillon, and the Lérin Islands shimmer in the mirror of Napoule Bay.

At the **Col Notre-Dame** (76.5km), the GR51 off to the right leads to the summits of the Petites and Grosses Grues (📷 1h30min return). You could also climb to Pic de l'Ours (📷 1h30min return); these routes are shown on the map on pages 88-89.

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The main tour turns back south from this pass*; keep right, into the one-way system at the **Col des Lentisques**. Once back at the **Col de l'Evêque**, turn right, again on a two-way road. Just under 4km along, fork right for MAISON DU GRATADIS, AGAY (the sign may be missing). After passing the lake again and crossing the ford, turn sharp right for COL BELLE-BARBE.

Some 400m along, at the **Col de Belle-Barbe** (85km), pull up to park for Walk 5. Or continue straight on. The twin summits of **Perthus** rise ahead on the right. While no peak in the Estérel is very high, the deep ravines, jagged crags and tortuous roads all conspire to convey that enjoyable feeling of being 'in the mountains'.

When you come to the **Col du Mistral** (*beyond which the road is closed to motor vehicles*), retrace your route via the Col de Belle-Barbe and, at the lake, keep straight ahead, to continue past the Maison Forestière du Gratadis.

At the D100, turn right for VALESCURE/ST-RAPHAEL (this sign may be missing as well).

Passing small scattered vineyards and new housing developments, keep heading towards Valescure at the roundabouts. Soon you pass

through the beautiful **Valescure** golfing development, studded with graceful parasol pines.

After 6.2km along the D100, at a roundabout signed 'Carrefour de l'Oratoire', with a small shrine ahead on the right, turn sharp right on the inconspicuously signposted FD DE L'ESTEREL — the Route Forestière de la Louve (closed from 9pm to 6am).

There is a dramatic view to Mont Vinaigre, the highest point in the massif, from this road.

At the **Carrefour de la Colle Douce** (a roundabout with a few trees in the middle, possibly unsigned), fork left. Cross the Pont de la Bécasse and turn left at the T-junction.

Now you have joined the ancient **Via Aurelia** which once linked Rome with Arles via Genoa, St-Raphaël, Fréjus and Aix. Some 3m/9ft wide, it was paved and cambered; as it approached the various staging posts, pavements were raised along the side for pedestrians. Long after Roman times this remained the only road to Italy; today the DN7/D6007 follow much the same route east of Mont Vinaigre.

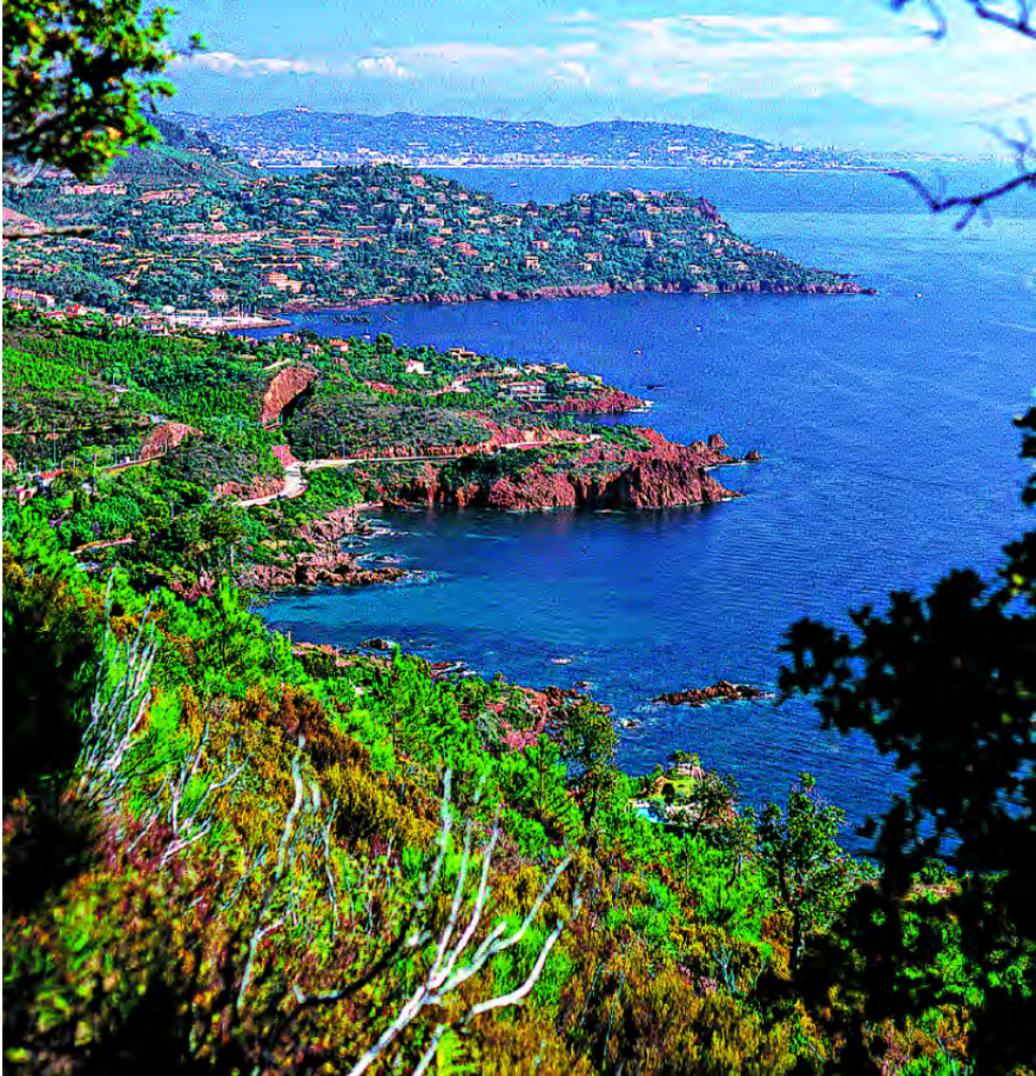
Turn right at the T-junction; go straight over a roundabout and continue to a roundabout on the DN7 (104km), where you turn right for CANNES.

Fortunately for walkers, but unfortunately for motorists, one can no longer drive to Mont Vinaigre. If you've done enough walking for today, keep ahead to the motorway back to Nice.

Otherwise, after 6km, just past the Col du Testanier, turn right for MONT VINAIGRE.

Pull in to the car park by the **Maison Forestière du Malpey**.

*But from the Col Notre-Dame one can continue (outside summer) for another 5km to the Col des Trois Termes. After about 2.5km, at the **Col de la Cadière**, the GR51 can be followed northeast along the **Sentier des Balcons de la Côte d'Azur**. It is worth walking along this level track for 2km/30min, to the Rocher des Monges, just past the junction for the Col de Théoule. Beyond the Col de la Cadière the road deteriorates and is closed to motor vehicles beyond the Col des Trois Termes, so you cannot drive through to the DN7/D6007.



Coastal view towards the Golfe de la Napoule and the Corniche d'Or, from the Sentier des Balcons de la Côte d'Azur (possible variation of Walk 6)

Looking at this pretty rose-hued building in idyllic surroundings, it's hard to conjure up the past ... the 18th century, when this stretch of the Aurelian Way was the most dangerous spot on the infamous 'Estérel road' and menaced by brigands. Gaspard de Besse (who met an especially grisly death at the age of 25) was the most famous among them; his hideout was a cave in the side of Mont Vinaigre.

Now a choice of routes to the summit of **Mont Vinaigre**★ (618m/2027ft; 109km) is shown on the walkers' information board, the shortest being about 1h30min

return. From the old watchtower there is a splendid panorama; in the south and east you can trace all of the day's tour. The very top is crowned with a typically complex relay station!

From Vinaigre return to the Malpey forestry house and turn right. Turn right again at the DN7 (113km).

Some 4.5km along, you pass to the right of the lovely **Auberge des Adrets** — one of de Besse's favourite watering holes.

*Continue on the DN7/D6007 for 17km, then join the motorway back to **Nice** (174km).*



Walking

Many people who go to France purely for a walking holiday are likely to be tackling one of the long linear routes mentioned on page 6. *This book has been written for motorists who want to tour some of the most beautiful roads in eastern Provence and enjoy some walking along the way.* Very few of the walks are strenuous — we don't include hikes to summits that can be reached by car (like Utelle). The walks have been chosen to highlight the great variety of landscapes in this part of Provence and to focus on our favourite beauty spots.

Although the walks are scattered between the Alps and Aix, you should find many within easy reach (no more than an hour away by car or public transport) wherever you are based. If you are staying in one area for a couple of weeks, buy the relevant IGN 'Top 25' map (see page 7) and visit the nearest tourist office to ask about local walks and up-to-date **bus/train timetables** (many walks are accessible by public transport; see 'How to get there' at the top of each walk).

Weather

Many walks in this book can be done year round, but from mid-June to mid-September it will be far too hot to enjoy any but the easiest rambles. *Moreover, trails in forestry areas (the Estérel, Maures and Ste-Victoire for example) may be closed from mid-June to mid-September if the fire risk is high. At www.var.gouv.fr key in 'forest roads' under 'Recherche', for a map showing fire risk (Var's search engine understands English!). The map is updated daily; if the risk is red, you will not be allowed in the area, even on foot.*

Spring and autumn are the best seasons for walking; not only are the temperatures moderate, but there is an extravaganza of wild flowers and seasonal foliage. On the other hand, you may well have to put up with a few days of torrential rain. In winter the walks in the Mercantour will be 'off bounds' (*some access roads may even be closed between mid-October and mid-June*), and it may be *bitterly* cold atop Ste-Victoire or in the Verdon, even if there is no snow. *Always take local advice before walking in the high mountains between October and May.* The notorious *mistral* blows for about a third of the year (usually in winter/spring). It can be difficult to stand upright, and no walks should be attempted in areas exposed to this northerly wind.

Waymarking, grading, safety, GPS

You will encounter **waymarking** on almost all the walks. There are three principal types of route:

- **PR** ('Petite Randonnée'): local day walks, waymarked yellow
- **GR** ('Grande Randonnée'): long-distance walks, waymarked red/white (not to be confused with a red flash on a white paint background, which is local boundary marking, *not* route marking)
- **GRP** ('Grande Randonnée du Pays'): *recently developed* networks of circular/linear trails of varying lengths, designed to acquaint walkers with a particular region, waymarked red/yellow

Waymarking features common to all three routes:

- A *flash* (stripe of paint) indicates 'Route continues this way';
- A right- or left-angled flash (or an arrow) means 'Change direction';
- An 'X' means 'Wrong way'.

GR waymarking is meticulously maintained, as is PR waymarking and numbered signposting in Alpes Maritimes. In the past, however, some local councils changed PR routes from year to year, often *without* removing old waymarks.* Bear in mind, too, that *our walks do not always follow the waymarked routes*. At the top of each walk we mention current waymarking *at time of writing or updating*.

The walks have been **graded** for the deskbound person who nevertheless keeps reasonably fit. *Do* check your timings against ours on a short walk before tackling one of the longer hikes. These are *neat walking times*; increase the overall time by *at least one-third* to allow for breaks, and *double it* in really hot weather. There is a quick overview of each walk's grade in the Contents. But for a full description of the grade, please see the walk itself. Below is a brief overview of the three gradings:

- easy-moderate; ascents/descents of no more than about 300m/1000ft; good surfaces underfoot; easily followed
- moderate-strenuous; ascents/descents may be over 500m/1800ft; variable surfaces; you must be sure-footed and agile; possible route-finding problems
- very strenuous — only suitable for very experienced hillwalkers; difficult terrain underfoot.
- very exposed; you must have a head for heights

Safety depends in great part on *knowing what to expect and being properly equipped*. For this reason we urge you to read through the *whole* walk description at your leisure *before* setting out, so that you have a mental picture of each stage of the route and the landmarks. On *most* of our walks you will encounter other people — an advantage if you get into difficulty. Nevertheless, we advise you **never** to walk alone.

*For this reason *never* follow faded local waymarks without the corresponding *up-to-date* IGN map or details from the tourist office. You could find yourself on a dangerous path that has not been maintained for years. Beware, too: any walks described as '*sportif*' are always potentially hazardous!

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- No **motor vehicles** or **bicycles** are allowed, except on authorised roads and tracks;
- **Dogs** are not allowed — even on leads (this rule is unlikely to affect UK visitors, but has proved disappointing for those travelling in their own cars from the Continent);
- The picking (or digging up!) of **plants**, the collection of **minerals** or any other ‘souvenirs’ is strictly forbidden;
- **Hunting** is not allowed;
- Lighting **fires** is not allowed;
- **Camping** in tents or caravans is not allowed, but ‘wild’ camping is permitted — at a distance of at least one hour on foot from the nearest road access;
- Playing **radios** is forbidden — as is making any other loud **noise**.

You can read more about the Mercantour at the national park’s official website, www.mercantour.eu.



Signposting and waymarking in the Mercantour is carried out by the Conseil Général des Alpes-Maritimes and is just superb. See page 7 for their website details.

Maps The maps in this book, adapted from IGN 1:25,000 maps, have been reproduced at a scale of 1:50,000 or larger. Although our maps should suffice for each of our walks, if you are staying in an area for any length of time and planning to walk, we strongly urge you to buy the latest IGN ‘Top 25’ map for the area — either before travelling or when you are in France (they are very widely available).

Note: The latest IGN maps for the Alpes Maritimes show numbered signposts along all waymarked walks. We have mentioned numbered signposts and added them to our maps *where they existed at press date* (Beuil, for instance), but *not* where they did not exist on the ground when we last checked the walks prior to publication (for instance, at Cap Ferrat).

motorway	spring, tank, etc	bus stop
main road	aqueduct	car parking
secondary road	church.chapel	railway station
minor or urban road	shrine or cross	tourist ‘train’
motorable track	cemetery	castle, fort.ruins
other track	picnic tables	specified building
cart track, path, trail	pylon, transmitter	quarry, mine.cave
main walk	electricity wires	windmill.stadium
alternative walk	tourist office	walkers' signposts
watercourse, pipe	exposed path	monument, tower
height in metres	rock formation.mill	walk start.waypoint
	best views	campsite.antiquity

Walk 8: FROM LA TURBIE TO EZE-BORD-DE-MER

NB: La Trophee des Alpes is closed on Mondays.

Distance: 9.3km/5.8mi; 3h15min

Grade: ● easy ascent of 200m/650ft, followed by a strenuous descent of 600m/1970ft. Little shade. Yellow PR waymarking. *IGN map 3742 OT*

IGN map 3742 OT

Equipment: see page 72; walking stick(s)

Refreshments: available at La Turbie and Eze

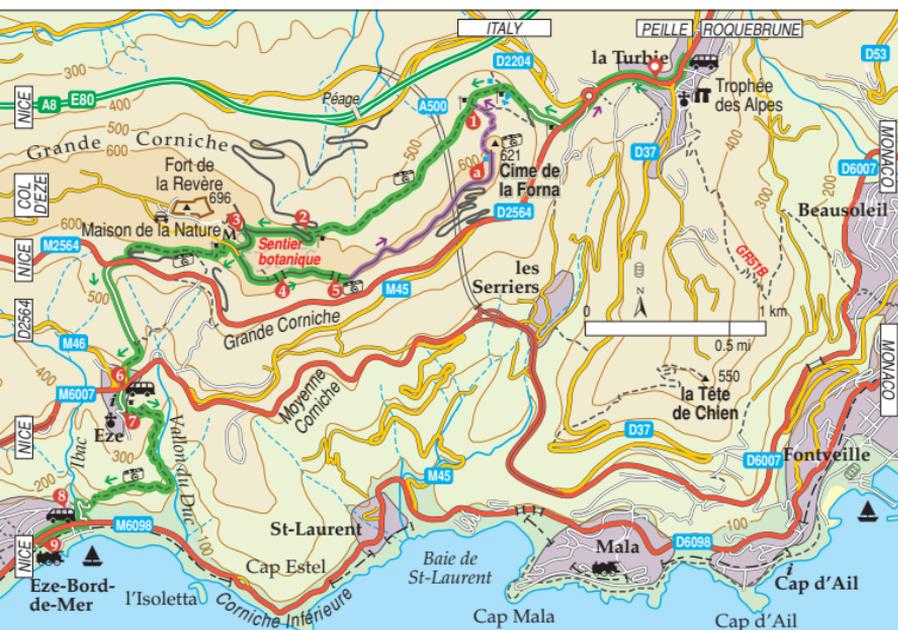
Travel:  116 (www.lignesdazur.com) to La Turbie; return by  100 (same website) or  (www.sncf.com) from Eze-Bord-de-Mer

Shorter walk: La Turbie — Eze-Village. 6km/3.7mi; 2h20min; ● fairly easy, but with a steep descent of 280m/920ft. Follow the main walk to Eze-Village and return by  112 (same website as  116

above). This avoids the final very steep descent of 320m/1050ft. Perhaps visit the exquisite Jardin Exotique at Eze.

Alternative walk: La Turbie — Maison de la Nature — La Turbie. 7.2km/4.5mi; 2h50min; ● easy ascent/descent of 200m/650ft.  (Car tour 2; park near the *mairie* (43° 44.722'N, 7° 23.964'E) or  116 (as above) to La Turbie. Follow the main walk to the SECOND TUNNEL (5) at the 1h40min-point, then continue along the corniche track, eventually forking left to a water tank on the **Cime de la Fornia** (1). Fork left again, to descend a stony path back to the reservoirs, and retrace your steps to La Turbie. (Optional detour: include the **Sentier botanique**, with a *table d'orientation*.)

On this walk you will enjoy some of the finest views on the whole of the Riviera. The main walk rises gently along the north side of the Grande Corniche crest, with superb views up to the mountains, before crossing the shoulder — to a magnificent coastal panorama. From here the main walk dives south, with plunging views over Eze and Cap Ferrat, while the Alternative walk contours east along the old corniche military track, with coastal views towards Italy.





Eze-Village

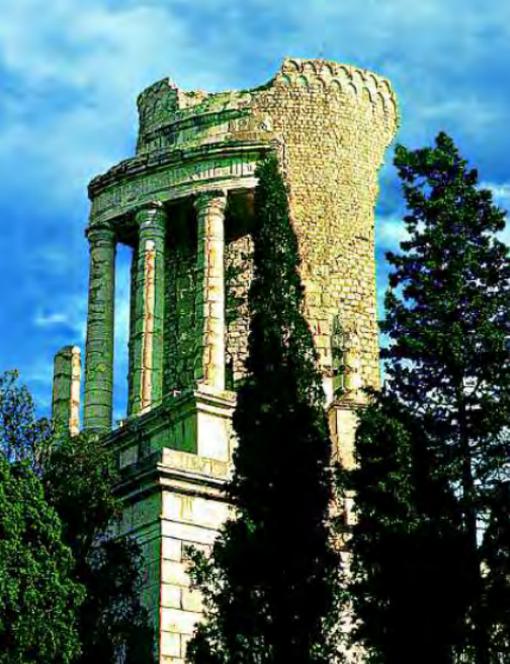
The walk begins at the MAIRIE on the main road (D2564, the **Grande Corniche**) in **La Turbie** (●). Cross over the road to the Hotel Napoléon, then turn left. After 450m/yds, at the ROUNDABOUT, ignore the D2204 off right to the motorway; go straight across towards 'Nice' and walk past a cylindrical PILLAR WITH AN IRON CROSS on the top (on your right). Some 250m/yds from the roundabout, turn right up the **Chemin de la Fornia** (10min; ♣). There are fine views back to the Trophée des Alpes as you climb. As the tarmac runs out, keep straight ahead on a cart track (①; ♣: CIME DE LA FORNIA), to pass to the right of a RESERVOIR (20min). Just before a second, square reservoir, turn left up another stony cart track (♣). In two minutes keep straight ahead (♣: FORT DE LA REVERE). (*The Alternative walk returns via the 'Cime de la Fornia' path to the left here.*)

Now a lovely path through tall grass takes you along the northern flanks of the **Grande Corniche**, just below the crest. You look north to Utelle, where the chapel shown on page 25 teeters on the

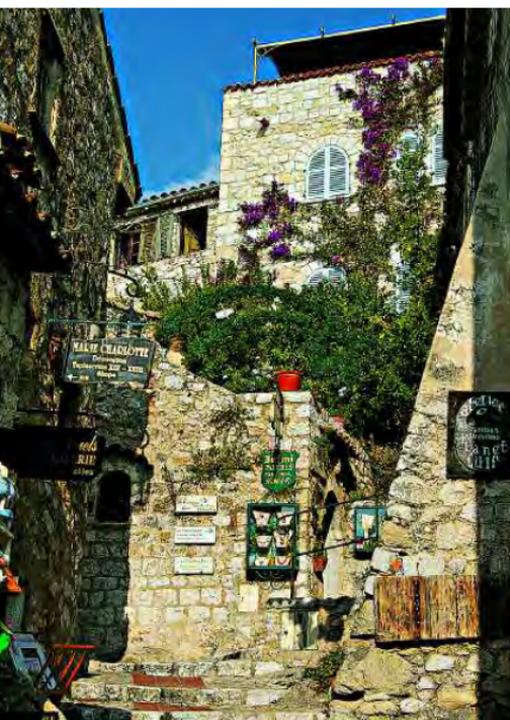
edge of the cliff, and the mountains of the Mercantour. The Fort de la Revère crowns the rise to the west, above two forestry park buildings. From here the frenetic jockeying for position at the motorway toll booths below seems a world away.

On meeting the U-bend of a track, turn left uphill (②; ♣: FORT DE LA REVERE). You emerge at a large *doline* (sinkhole) and the **Maison de la Nature** (③; 1h25min), with an interesting little museum, well-landscaped gardens, and picnic tables. Before continuing towards Eze, walk downhill to the coastal overlook (with benches) and follow the corniche track for short way. After five minutes, just before the FIRST TUNNEL (④), a **Sentier botanique** (with a *table d'orientation*) turns sharply up to the left — a possible detour. Continue through a SECOND TUNNEL (⑤; 1h40min), to take in the superb coastal panorama. (*The Alternative walk continues along this track.*)

From the second tunnel retrace your steps to the Maison de la Nature and start walking up the road towards the **Fort de la**



La Trophée des Alpes (top) and one of the alleys in Eze-Village



Revère. But after less than 100m/yds, turn left down a footpath (¶: EZE-VILLAGE). This pretty path descends through tall grass. Ignore a steep path down sharp left (¶: EZE-VILLAGE; it may be numbered 650); keep right, descending more gradually above some luxurious villas. On coming to a concrete

drive, follow it downhill to the right. Keep right, downhill, at further junctions, until you meet the **Grande Corniche** again (2h05min). Cross *carefully*, turn right for 20m/yds, then turn left down a lane, the **Chemin Serre du Forque** (¶). The shade of pines is welcome here, but the descent is *very* steep. Keep straight down, whether by tar, path or steps, until you meet the M6007, the **Moyenne Corniche**, opposite the entrance to **Eze-Village** (6; 2h20min; BUS SHELTER, CAFÉS). Take a break here before, knees a-tremble, you begin the final descent.

Cross the road and head up into Eze, passing the **TOURIST OFFICE** on your right. Just past the **FRAGONARD PERFUMERY SHOP** on your left, you will turn left down the **Chemin Frédéric Nietzsche** (7; ¶: EZE MER). But first join the crowds and walk on through this enchanting village — to visit the tropical gardens, church, and White Penitent's Chapel.

Nietzsche's wide old trail (he apparently climbed it every morning from his house on the coast) descends in gentle zigzags through a surprisingly wild valley (**Vallon du Duc**) above deeply-cut *calanques*. Eventually the path turns right, crosses a **COL** (2h50min) and makes the final descent — with fine views over Cap Ferrat. When you meet the M6098 (**Corniche Inférieure**) at **Eze-Bord-de-Mer**, turn right to the **BUS SHELTER** (8). Steps to the **RAILWAY STATION** (9; 3h15min) on the south side of the road are just 60m/yds further on, behind an eastbound bus shelter.



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