



Vaunières

PROJECT : The village of Vaunieres is a **national and international meeting center**. Our project aims at **bringing together people from very different social and cultural backgrounds**. Every year, international volunteers, families, handicapped people, youngsters with social disabilities or tourists come during their free time to take part in the restoration of the village, to take a holiday or to organize a specific project (theater plays, seminars...).

The participation of international volunteers in our project is a unique chance for all the participants to discover new cultures and promote volunteering. For international volunteers, the Vaunieres open workcamp is an **original way of discovering our social project**. In order to make the most of your stay, we encourage you to stay at least six months.

Vaunières is the ideal place for nature lovers. We are far away from any city and we live according to the seasons and in harmony with the surrounding environment.

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT: Our project is situated in a very **rural environment**. Most of the houses of Vaunieres date back to the 17th century, at a time when pastoral activities were thriving. Since the 1950's, most of the families had to leave the countryside to find a better paid job in town. However, many people in the surrounding villages work hard to maintain a social and cultural life in their village. The best way to meet with them is to join their local festivals!

GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT: Vaunieres village is situated in the **low Alps (alt 1200)** and is set in the heart of the **mountains**. The weather is much like that of the south of France—it is sunny and dry, although it gets quite chilly at night since we are in the mountains. Moreover, there can be a lot of snow in winter, from December to February.

THE GROUP: There are up to **8 international volunteers** involved in the project at all times. You will also share your house with French young adults or teenagers (between 2 and 4) who are faced with social, familial or professional difficulties.

Through collective living (workshop, meals, evening activities), and activities you propose yourself, you will help the permanent team take care of members of the community who are in need of particular forms of assistance.

However, we strongly encourage you to meet with the all residents of the village who come to work and meet with you (families, French groups, etc.) instead of limiting yourself to socializing only within the workcamp group.

We expect volunteers to be autonomous in everyday life. The permanent staff, including the long term volunteers, is there to support you and help you out and we hope that you will take on responsibilities and become part of our team!

The volunteers are part of the permanent team that runs the project throughout the opening season. They are involved transversely in all the actions that are carried out by the association.

They help with the management of the center : prepare and clean the lodgings, plan the menus, organize activities and animations, orientate and inform the newcomers.

Volunteers also lead certain activities and, through these activities, facilitate interactions and cultural exchanges between the diverse groups of people who come in Fai.

Volunteers have a key role in supporting the permanent staff with more specific hosting, like young adults or teenagers faced with social, familial or professional difficulties. Volunteers organize activities and animations during weekdays, evenings and weekends and help the permanent team to take care of the public with more specific needs.

WORK AND COLLECTIVE LIFE : Everyone contribute to the project. By means of this experience, you may harvest the fruit of the work of the previous volunteers, while planting seeds for future generations of volunteers. The workshops take many different forms: building, renovation, developments of natural spaces, cooking, gardening, artistic projects...

During your volunteering, we will continue **restoring the village**, doing some landscaping and **environmental work** : cutting wood, gardening. This village is welcoming and hospitable. There are no cleaning or kitchen staff here... **everyone contributes to the housework**. We share by working together on the workshops and in all that we need to do to bring the house to life and to make it welcoming.

With the consent of the paid staff, volunteers who wish to may become pedagogic activity leaders on the international workcamps in Vaunières.

You will also take part in **evening intercultural and musical** gatherings and participate in local festivals taking place in the surrounding villages.

Vaunières, a village for everyone, is a **place where anything is possible**. Every person, every group can develop their own projects in accordance with the spirit of this town. It is by no means a resort, here everyone has to be an active member during their stay, and act in partnership with the staff.



LANGUAGE: Although many people understand English, we ask you to **learn French**. Most of the people that you will get to meet have not been to University and cannot speak a foreign language!

ACTIVITIES: You will join our staff in the organization of activities for all the residents of the village. There is a **large range of possibilities** to do so (barbecue, thematic evenings, organizing a concert, a party, a sports tournament etc...). You will also be able to **discover and visit the region**. Finally, the natural environment is splendid and there are many possibilities of trekking in the mountains, visiting the shepherd up in the mountains etc...

DON'T FORGET: Rucksack, sleeping bag, a rain coat, warm clothes (especially if you come in winter, there is lot of snow in the area), **working clothes, good shoes**, towels, a swimsuit, a torch, your music, instruments, energy... and also **something typical of your country** : documentation, pictures, recipes, food, games, etc.

Be aware that mobile phones have no reception in Vaunières and that internet is very slow. Technological communication will be at a minimum. However, you will enjoy evenings with the other volunteers and the staff around the fireplace, chatting and playing games together.

MEETING POINT: It is best to **arrive on a Monday**, or another weekday, not during the week-end. We will collect you at the **station Lus la Croix Haute**, and we will go to Vaunières together. It is essential that you confirm your arrival a few days in advance (email is the best). When you arrive at the station, please call us on 0033-4.92.58.15.54 to let us know that you are there. Don't forget to bring some change and a telephone card.

HOW TO ARRIVE BY PLANE

You can fly to Lyon and take the train to Grenoble. If you fly to Paris, you will also have to take a train to Grenoble. From Grenoble, take another train (see below).

BY TRAIN

From Paris (Gare de Lyon), to Grenoble.

From Grenoble, take a train in the direction of Gap and stop at Lus la Croix Haute.

From Marseille, take the direction of Veynes or Gap, change at Veynes en Devoluy and get out at Lus la Croix Haute.

Check train timetables on: www.voyages-sncf.com

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