

The Little Yellow Train of the Pyrenees

France boasts of numerous spectacular scenes that have for a long time been must-visit destinations for millions of tourists. The Yellow Train of the Pyrenees is one of the many attractions. It is a unique route that ranks among the top railway journeys you can enjoy in this world. Despite having been first commissioned in 1909, the meter-gauge railway that is also electric, has stood the test of time and is still running strong.



From its lower terminal at Villefranche de Conflent that is at an altitude of 427 meters, the railway rises through a scenery with a very striking appearance to its summit which is at the highest railway station in France – Bolquere Eyne – at an altitude of 1592m above sea level. After that, the railway then falls through the Pyrenean valley to the terminal at Latour de Cartol.

Out of the ten original units, seven of them are still functioning perfectly. In 2004, Stadler built two additional units that are modern with toilets, air-conditioning, and electric doors. Along the railway, visitors get treated to an amazing view of the rocky mountainous scenery, the deep valley of the Tet, forests, villages, chasms, two historic fortresses, effusive streams, and a dangerously perched old hermitage.



Not only do tourists get fascinated by the natural scenery, the human made scenery is also amazing. Along the railway is Pont Gischarde, also called Pont Cassage, which is the only rail suspension bridge in France. Apart from that, there are numerous short tunnels, bridges, and viaducts. There are also other attractions along the railway. These include:

Villefranche de Conflent: This is a UNESCO heritage site that was fortified by Vauban in the 17th century when the area became under French sovereignty, from the Spanish reign. Near this attraction is Fort Liberia and Vernet les Bains, which are both on the mountain-side above the town.



Mont Louis: Even though it is less impressive than Villefranche de Conflent, Mont Louis is also a UNESCO world heritage site.

Odeillo Font Romeu: This is a small village that is home to the world's first solar power station, which was opened in 1970. It is also a very popular ski resort in the Pyrenees.

Bourg Madame: This is a small town. It is from this point that you can get a quick trip into the historic town of Puigcerda, which is only one kilometer away.

Latour de Carol: To the rail enthusiast, this is the station to visit. It is the only station in Europe, and perhaps worldwide, that serves three different railway lines with different gauges. It serves Train Jaune (metre-gauge), SNCF line to Toulouse (European standard gauge) and the line to Barcelona, which is Spanish broad gauge.

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