

# DISCOVER PROVENCE –DAY TOUR



**we** travel FRANCE



### From Paris

- High speed train station :  
Marseille , Aix en Provence  
and Avignon – 3 hr direct train  
from Paris train station or Paris  
CDG airport train station
- Marseille Airport : One hour  
flight from
- Paris Nice Airport : National  
and International flight – 01h30  
drive from Provence





# CONTENTS



## FULL DAY TOURS

- Aix en Provence
- Alpilles
- Luberon
- Camargues
- Cassis & Bandol
- Marseille
- Avignon & Chateau Neuf du Papes

## PROVENCE GOURMET TOUR

- Aix en Provence Gourmet tour
- Cooking class ( St Remy on Wednesday & Arles on Saturday)
- A kind of Pic nic Gourmet tour

## FROM PROVENCE TO RIVIERA

- Green Provence & Lorgues
- Gorge du Verdon







## Full day Aix en Provence

Meet your English speaking driver guide in the lobby of your hotel and departure for a full day visit of Aix en Provence including

- Walking tour of Aix en Provence
- Visit of the Atelier Cezanne
- Free time for shopping

Protected by the Montagne Ste Victoire which rises to 1,011m. Aix is surrounded by countryside full of authentic Provencal houses and traditional French style gardens. The name Aix comes from the source discovered when the city was founded in 123b.c. by the Romans. Aix was the capitol of Provence in the 15th century, Wealthy merchants and local dignitaries helped turn this city into the Florence of Provence as we know it today.

One can find all the beauty of the noble Provence of the 17th and 18th centuries: handsome houses of the upper class, private mansions, city squares' bursting with flowers, ancient fountains and shaded narrow streets.

Aix was the inspiration to many of the greatest writers and painters: Guigou, Stendhal, Mistral, Zola, and Cézanne, There is even a special Cezanne tour which one can follow through the streets of Aix stopping at points marked with a C.

As a city of art and culture Aix possesses a wealth of superb architecture that has been carefully preserved and restored. Walking through the Cours Mirabeau and the Rue Gaston de Saporta one can admire the private mansions with their sculptured doors and windows and the intricate iron work on the balconies. Discerning shoppers choose the elegant boutiques in the quartier Mazarin.







9am – Meet your English speaking driver guide in the lobby of your hotel and departure for a **visit of Saint remy en Provence (Wednesday Market )**

**Situated in the heart of the Alpilles Saint Rémy** is one of the "must-sees" in Provence. Surrounded by lush green perfumed valleys, its ancient streets are lined with beautifully restored old houses... you will soon be seduced by Saint Rémy's charm! While strolling through the narrow winding streets you will discover fantastic old fountains, shady squares, picturesque restaurants and elegant boutiques. From the place Jean Jaurès to the gates of the old town, you will come across a long succession of "hôtels particuliers" (often converted into museums or art galleries), convents, chapels, and ornate houses from the 17th and 18th century. The beauty of the countryside and the quality of light has inspired many artists, writers and painters. Without a doubt, the most famous was Vincent Van Gogh who produced more than 150 paintings of the countryside surrounding Saint Rémy de Provence. You can walk to the very same places painted by the artist and discover the mountain of St Rémy, fields of wheat and coquelicots (wild flowers), olive trees and cypruses - all just as it was more than a century ago.

Departure for Les Baux de Provence

### **Les Baux de Provence including les Carriere de Lumiere**

The village of the Baux de Provence is situated in the heart of the Alpilles on a rocky plateau 245m high. A brilliant view of Arles, the Camargue and the Alpilles can be seen from the look-out points! This immense and superb stone fortress is without doubt one of the "must-sees" on the Provencal tourist trail! The village is officially classified and labeled as "one of the most beautiful villages in France". Its cultural heritage is exceptionally rich, with 22 architectural treasures classified as "Historic Monuments" The village has been painstakingly restored and is now one of the most popular attractions in the region... The village can only be visited by foot and you will admire the ancient houses that have been carefully restored, beautiful Renaissance façades and several magnificent "hôtels particuliers" which today serve as art galleries or museums.

### **The day will continue with a visit of the Carrières de Lumières**

In the heart of Alpilles, the monumental "Carrières de Lumières" host extraordinary multimedia shows which are unique in the world. Culturespaces is organising an innovative and ambitious project with 4 key aspects:

New high-performance technological equipment for this outstanding audio visual show. Each area of the Carrières invites visitors on an extraordinary audio visual journey made possible by cutting-edge technological equipment and methods developed by Culturespaces and its multimedia partners: 70 video projectors, 3D audio adapted to the specific characteristics of the site, etc.

More surfaces used in the show to give it more breadth and extend this artistic journey.

Lunch at leisure your guide will suggest you the best place to have lunch depending on your







### **9am – Meet your English speaking driver guide in the lobby of your hotel and departure for a visit of the Luberon**

Between the Alpe de haute provence and the Vaucluse plain, the bold outline of the Luberon Mountain rises up: this is the symbol of the area, a mountain which brings the area together rather than separates. From the valleys of Calavon in the north, to the Durance in the south, the natural link for these "pays du Luberon" which sway gently around its feet.

This is the real Provence, full of character. A sweet dolce vita of a climate and pure clean air which just breathes the incredible contrasts between a rich, and variable natural environment :the blue strides of lavender, the subtle nuances of green in the forests, the flamboyant and blinding colours of the cliffs of ochre, or the austere white of the limestone hills.

This is the living Luberon, where everything goes back to "man's» relationship with the basic element, earth. The dry stone walls and bories, the imposing "bastides", villages perched on the sides of hills between church and château of which some are extremely famous: Lourmarin, Gordes , Manosque, Roussillon..., and others less well known but nevertheless just as attractive, like Vaucluse or Mirabeau, where "Jean de Florette" and "Manon des Sources" were filmed.... and lots of other places just waiting to be discovered.

### **First stop with a visit of Bonnieux**

The village of Bonnieux, perched on a rocky outcropping near the pass between the Petit Luberon and Grand Luberon mountains. This is an outstanding and very central location in the valley north of the Luberon mountain.

### **Then continue with a visit of Roussillon & Les Ogres**

The ochre of the Luberon fascinates. From Roussillon to Gignac, by way of Villars, Gargas and Rustrel, the former ochre quarries of the Apt valley (Vaucluse) surge from the past, hiking trails have been blazed, panoramic viewpoints opened up, signs of bygone days brought up to date and car parks can be found.

The **Abbaye Notre-Dame de Sénanque** is a lovely medieval Cistercian abbey that is one of the best places to see Provence's famed lavender fields. Founded in 1148 and once again populated by Cistercian monks, the peaceful abbey welcomes visitors and provides overnight retreats.

### **End of the day with a visit of Gordes**

**Gordes** is a very beautiful old village, perched on the southern edge of the high Plateau de Vaucluse. The stone buildings built in tight against the base of the cliffs and those perched on the rocks above, including the 12th-century castle, are made of an beige stone that glows orange in the morning sun. The view from the village is a southern panorama out across fields and forests and small perched villages to the Montagne du Luberon

6pm – end of the tour at your hotel







This is a full day experiencing the best of the Camargue, the region known as the Wild West of Provence.

You will start with a visit of Arles

Roman monuments, others from the Romanesque period, Vincent Van Gogh's presence, memories of Frederic Mistral... This two-hour tour, on foot, will take you through the historic center of Arles to discover the main monuments of the city, experience its picturesque streets, savor its traditions... T.

You'll have a two-hour horseback ride or jeep tours where you'll see the famous white horses and black bulls. Then it will followed by a gourmet picnic served with wine! After lunch, you'll get to experience a scenic drive where, you'll get to see plenty of pink flamingoes.

The Camargue is a unique area lying between two arms of the Rhône river. Its vast expanses give it a special atmosphere to be found nowhere else. It is paradise for migratory birds, a nesting area for flamingoes, and home to bulls and horses.







Meet your private English speaking driver guide **and departure for a visit of Marseille.**

Enjoy a walking tour including **the old Harbor, the Vieux Panier district and the new Museum the Mucem .**

Surging up from the north quay of the Old Port, its tall, narrow houses draped with washing lines and criss-crossed by steep steps with gutters running down the middle, Marseille's Old Town, or Panier, is steeped in history.

This was the site first settled by the Greeks who founded the city of Massalia, as it was known then, in 600 BC and has welcomed successive waves of immigration ever since, initially from Italy and Corsica, more recently from everywhere from South America and North Africa to Vietnam and the Comoro Islands, near Madagascar

**The Panier's** expansion was funded by rich traders in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries ("panier" means "the basket" and comes from a 17th century inn, Le Logis du Panier, located on what's now the Rue du Panier).

Some elements of this era survive (see below), but great swathes of the Panier were destroyed during the Second World War, when its labyrinthine warren was a haven for Resistance fighters, Jews and Communists: in short, all those who embodied Marseille's feisty, freedom-loving spirit.

**The MuCEM**, a national museum designed for the Mediterranean of the 21st century, is located on a 30,000 m<sup>2</sup> site. This site includes the Fort Saint-Jean, a historic monument overlooking the Vieux-Port dating back to the 12th century, and a new building designed by architect Rudy Ricciotti on the J4 esplanade. The two buildings are linked by a footbridge.

Lunch at leisure – your guide will suggest you the best place to have lunch depending on your taste and requirements.

5pm - End of the tour at your ship









Meet your private English speaking driver guide and **departure for a visit of Bandol & Cassis.**

### **Bandol (40min drive)**

The vineyards of Bandol are famous: Whatever the color, the wines of Bandol are amongst the best of the Midi and even of France. You will be driven thru the vineyard and will stop by some famous village such as La Cadière d'Azur, Le Castellet. Perched on the edge of its cliff, on a hill opposite the village of Castellet, La Cadière d'Azur is a small medieval village which benefits from a panorama that goes right to the shores of the Mediterranean. It is surrounded by pine forests and overlooks the renowned and famous Bandole(AOC) vineyard. La Cadière has the charm of those Provençal villages that have retained their authentic identity with its small flower-filled streets steeped in history.

### **Then you will continue to cassis for a visit. (30min drive)**

This little seaside resort is snuggled at the foot of a very tall cliff called Cap Canaille. Cassis is a wonderful place to stroll about with its picturesque fishing port lined with cafes and restaurants.

The city built with its streets going up and down has lovely old quarters with an elegant hotel de ville on the shady square, where the inhabitants came to cool off and play "petanque" on summer nights

Lunch at leisure – your guide will suggest you the best place to have lunch depending on your taste and requirements.

5pm – end of the tour at your hotel







## Avignon & ChateauNeuf du

9am - Meet your private English speaking driver guide in the lobby of your hotel and **departure for a visit of Avignon & Chateauneuf du pape (1 wine tasting included)**

Once in Avignon, you won't want to leave, and the town is too interesting to let you go. Avignon is ancient, full of history, life, youth, art, music and activity. Just to "see" the town itself, you could wander the narrow streets inside the fortified walls for days without tiring of them. Avignon is a **UNESCO World heritage site**.

A great shopping area, with pedestrian streets without automobiles (not always the case in France), and loads of shops of all kinds. Southeast of the Place de l'Horloge: rue des Marchands, rue Rouge and adjoining streets are full of clothing and other shops.

Book market on the Cours Jean Jaures, just inside the wall in front of the train station.

**Palais des Papes** is certainly among the most dominating structures of both the Christian world as well as the city of Avignon. In the case of the former, the structure enjoys an almost infamous status, while in the latter, the castle overlooks all of the city from a hill. The castle was the meeting place of a group of cardinals who wanted to topple the authority of the pope in Rome, and came pretty close to succeeding as well. The palace has defensive as well as aesthetic properties. There are many incidents that occurred in connection with the magnificent monument that is the **Palais des Papes**. The palace was built by Benedict XII, who was the third pope in Avignon. After the palace was built, Avignon became like a Vatican in the north. The period when popes had their bases in Avignon was called the "Babylon Captivity" in **Rome**.

Lunch at leisure in Avignon - Your guide will suggest you the best place to have lunch depending on your taste and requirements.

**Châteauneuf-du-Pape** is the best wine of Provence. In richness and in complexity, it compares with the greatest wines of Bordeaux and Burgundy. The Châteauneuf du Pape wine is thick, harsh, powerful and richly colored. It is elaborated with 13 authorized and controlled grape-varieties among which Syrah, Grenache and Clairette.



## PROVENÇAL GOURMET TOURS











## Aix en Provence Gourmet tour

9.am – meet your private English speaking guide and departure for **a gourmet tour of Aix en Provence**

Most people associate France with its gastronomic heritage of fine food and wine and Aix en Provence is a perfect example of this idea. Aix is a foodie's paradise, as evidenced not just by the number of restaurants, bistros and cafés, but by centuries' old food speciality shops that still maintain their first-class reputations. At a time when supermarkets seem to be taking over, customers continue to crowd into these shops in search of the best in each category of cuisine. You will meet the craftsmen and craftswomen, the owners and generations of family who own these culinary treasures. We will taste their specialties as well, many of them awarded gastronomic prizes in France.

This tour will also take in the small, daily market in the Place Richelme, allowing us to pause for coffee at a traditional "*torrefacteur's*" café, or coffee roastery. Having explored the historic medieval quarter of Aix, we will save the best for (almost) last, visiting the most ancient of craftsman, the *fromagère*. You will be bewildered by the range of cheeses displayed in his tiny shop and the amount of customers crowding in. We will select a few cheeses and trot off to enjoy them at the counter of a Provence wines specialist, finishing our morning with a wine and cheese pairing. If you consider yourself a true gourmet, you will enjoy this French culinary adventure, as Jennifer passionately introduces you to the best food specialists and gastronomic heritage and history of Aix en Provence.

End of the tour around 12.30pm and continue your discovery of the Provence Capital on your own





**9am This morning meet your private English speaking driver and transfer to Arles where you will meet the chef and departure for Arles weekly market**

- **Arles on Saturday only**
- **St Remy de Provence on Wednesday only**

A stay in Arles will give you the chance to savour the wide variety of its local products while strolling through the market. This is one of the most beautiful markets in Provence. It stretches over two kilometers and is full of smells and colours.

You can buy anything here: fruit and vegetables, cheese, flowers and spices, meat and fish, honey, fresh regional products, but also clothes and shoes. You should take the time to taste and compare before buying. On the esplanade there is also a country market, which brings together many organic farmers, selling fruits and vegetables, rice, bread, honey, etc.

**Then you will drive to his restaurant for a cooking class between 10 am and noon followed by a lunch**

Chef Yvan will meet us there to visit a few local producers and get all the ingredients you will need for your cooking class. Once that will be done, we will head toward Graveson (20 min away) where will be held your class.

You will get to know about chef Yvan!

For 14 years Yvan travelled and cooked around the world to discover other cultures, lifestyle, cooking traditions. To him, cooking is a way to express himself, a way to meet and entertain people throughout food. Yvan hosted few TV shows in France and abroad and has written number of cooking books.

His latest creation was a live show, on stage with 5 musicians, talking about his life as a chef, his adventures, telling all about his discoveries and sharing food and wines with the spectators. Expect to have great fun and to learn some fantastic tips to cook back home some fantastic recipes.

Of course, the class will be followed with lunch (served with wines).

**Don't you worry, you drink, we will drive you back to your hotel**









Meet your private English speaking driver guide – **departure for a Picnic Lunch & wine estate private visit & tasting**

Today depart with, your private driver guide for the day , for a day call “one of the Kind Picnic”

This Unique experience will make you enjoy the best Provence’s soil has to offer. Forget about the crowded hilltop villages for today and give yourself over to the delights of this one-of-a- Kind-picnic.

Sebastien will pick you at your residence at 10 am and you will start the day by visiting 2 vineyards. There the winemaker himself will provide and exclusive tour of the wine cellar , which will be followed by a tasting, including AOC wines and vintage, highly sophisticated labels to introduce your taste bud with Provence. This gourmet tour will not be complete without visiting a reputed goat farm that produces cheeses, you will enjoy a tasting of a fine selections of cheeses.

Now that your stomach is ready for lunch, it is now time to head toward the picnic location. You will tastes a few wines to choose what you want drink to pair your picnic courses.

Set in the heart of the vineyard , a gourmet picnic made of local seasonable products only awaits you for this country style ( but still sophisticated ) lunch. An alternative and bucolic way to enjoy our local gastronomy.

To carry on, we continue the day visiting and old olive oil mill that still produces using the traditional process.

La provence being resourceful, we will finish our tastings by paying a visit of a honey farm.

If you fancy a little break with food, how about learning how to play the traditional Provencal balls game called Petanque ?

You will be back at your hotel around 6 pm

## FROM PROVENCE TO RIVIERA



© Brian Janssen PHOTOGRAPHY









## Lorgues & Green Provence

Breakfast at your hotel and check out

9.30am - Meet your private English speaking driver in the lobby of your hotel and departure for the Riviera– En route, enjoy a visit of the Thoronet Abbey. (1h30 drive)

The Thoronet Abbey was a Cistercian monastery in the department of Var in Provence, France. The Thoronet Abbey was founded in 1120 from Mazan Abbey, and was one of the Cistercian abbeys known as the "three sisters" of Provence (the others were Senanque Abbey and Silvacane Abbey).

It was suppressed in the French Revolution, but the impressive buildings were bought back by the state in 1854 and have since been preserved.

1pm - Then enjoy a lunch at Chez Bruno (15mn drive from le Thoronet) – to be paid on site

Clement Bruno is a super chef who aims to please visitors to Lorgues and the South of France with his truffle menu which changes three times a week. He created Chez Bruno from an estate given to him by his grand-parents. His ambition is to make the restaurant unique by mixing great cooking, love, passion, and sheer determination. He believes that luxury has no social boundaries; it is merely about pleasing others in a beautiful location. In this goal, he has triumphed; with guests to Chez Bruno including the president of France Nicolas Sarkozy, Lionardo di Caprio, Pavarotti, and Robert De Niro, who sit along -side home owners from Lorgues as well as visitors from all over the world. The restaurant is simply decorated in white table clothes and bone china.

3pm – Departure for Riviera(1,30hour drive)

4,30pm – Arrival at your hotel









Breakfast and Check out

9am - Meet your English speaking driver guide at your hotel and departure for the riviera passing by Moustier St Marie & Gorges du Verdon

## **Departure for Moustier St Marie along gorges du Verdon to enjoy the breathtaking view**

The deep cliff of the Gorges du Verdon is unique in Europe and is one of the greatest tourist attractions in Provence. We invite you to discover this area of spectacular natural beauty. This immense and magnificent canyon straddles the departments of Var and the Alpes de Hautes Provence . The gigantic cliffs of calcareous rock are the result of the erosion of the Verdon River.

## **Moustier ST Marie – Gorges du Verdon**

The village sits astride a rushing mountain stream that divides the two halves with a narrow rocky canyon. The view of this mini-gorge, with small waterfalls down inside and medieval houses above, is beautiful. The sound of the river, and the running fountains all over the village, give Moustiers the feeling of an Alpine village. The village has narrow medieval streets and vaulted passages, and becomes more "natural" when you get up above the ceramics shops.

Lunch at leisure in Moustier.

Around 2pm – departure for Riviera - 2 hours drive