

**Saturday: Côte d'Azur – Vence (D)**

Arrival in Nice and meet greet our English speaking local tour manager. Private transfer to Vence in the Alpes Maritimes region on the Côte d'Azur. Vence is perfectly situated just north east of Nice and strategically well placed to visit both the coast and the surrounding areas - minimising distances and optimising our vacation time. Check in to our hotel in Vence. We will have some free time to discover Vence and to relax and freshen-up.

- 19.30 Welcome dinner with local specialities

*Overnight at the Hotel le Floréal, Côte d'Azur (3-night stay)*

**Sunday: Monaco (B / D)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 9.00 - Transfer to Monaco
- 10.00 - Walk through the old town of Monaco  
Monaco, ruled by Prince Albert II, is the second smallest state in Europe. His father Prince Rainier III was married to the former Oscar-winning actress Grace Kelly. The tiny country is famous for its abundance of attractions including the scenic old town with its courts, the church where Grace and Rainier are buried and magnificent sea views. Annual events including the Grand Prix Formula 1 and the International Circus Festival fascinate thousands of visitors yearly. During our free time in Monaco you may elect to see the changing of the guard in front of the Prince's palace or try your luck in Monte Carlo's world-famous casino and possibly have lunch there as well?

Late afternoon return to Vence

Dinner tonight in a nice local restaurant

**Monday: Loup Canyon - Perfume and more (B)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 8.30 Transfer to Grasse passing by the wild Loup River Canyon with a photo stop.  
Located only a few kilometers from Cannes, in the hinterland of Côte d'Azur, rests Grasse; the world capital of perfume. Small alleys, 17th and 18th century buildings, 19th-century elegant town Palais' and lovely gardens paint the picture of Grasse. Breathtaking views make it "the balcony of the "Mediterranean". Art and perfume exhibitions can be seen throughout the year.

**OPTIONAL:**

Lunch with regional products (e.g. Provençal picnic served as buffet) and later an opportunity to buy specialities from the shop.

**OPTIONAL:**

Visit a flower farm that plants roses and jasmine for a number of famous perfume brands including Chanel, Guerlain and Patou, as well as jam and rose water.

Balance of day open for individual exploration.

Return to Vence with a possible stop at Saint-Paul-de-Vence. Vineyards, cypresses and orchards, famous artists have lived and worked at Saint-Paul-de-Vence. In addition to the history, famous artworks can be marveled at Fondation

Maeght, a modern museum. The locals are well-known as brilliant boule players. Unfortunately the village can be very crowded during the summer season

Final return to Vence and an open evening.

## **Tuesday: Marseille – Provence (B / D)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 8.30 Transfer to Marseille
- 11.30 Guided visit at Marseille  
With 800,000 inhabitants, Marseille is the second largest city in France. The seaport is an up-and-coming unique area to this trendy Mediterranean metropolis; a hidden jewel combining oriental and occidental influences. Main attractions include the old port, the old town quarter “Le Panier” and the basilica as well as many museums.

Independent lunch

- 16.00 Transfer to Provence
- 18.00 Check in to our hotel
- 20.30 Dinner at our hotel

*Overnight Hotel Les Echevins, Tarascon (7-night stay)*

## **Wednesday: Aix-en-Provence (B / D)**

Breakfast at our hotel

Morning at leisure to visit the St. Remy Saturday market

- 13:00 Transfer to Aix-en-Provence  
Time to enjoy the beautiful colourful village - the former capital of Provence - embedded in a hill. The landscape became world famous through the pictures of the godfather of modern painting Paul Cézanne. Here we can explore various stations representing his life by following a “C” clearly marked on the ground. The Romans founded the town “Aqua Sextia” with its warm water wells, almost countless cultural spots, museums, courts, palaces and churches from 17th and 18th century will highlight our visit.
- 16.00 Return to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

## **Thursday: Montmajour - Arles – Camargue (B / D)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 9.30 Transfer to Arles
- 10.00 Visit the Abbey de Montmajour  
The abbey is one of the most beautiful examples of Roman architecture. Benedictine monks found it in the 10th century.
- 12.30 Guided city tour of Arles  
Arles is, without doubt, the main home of Van Gogh who produced about 300 art style paintings and drafts within a 15 month period. Nearly a dozen Van-Gogh stations lead the visitor through the town. Arles is also one of Europe’s oldest towns dating from a Celtic-Ligurian settlement over Greek and Roman colonisation to become an important Christian centre. Interesting places here include the Roman arena, now used for bullfights, the Roman theatre, thermal spring de Constatin and St. Trophime cathedral. Many UNESCO world heritage monuments can be found in your explorations today.

Free time and independent lunch.

Possible afternoon trip:

- 16.30 Tour through the Camargue  
A beautiful nature park featuring pink flamingos, half wild white horses and black cattle
- 18.30 Return to our hotel
- 19.30 Dinner

## **Friday: Les-Baux-de-Provence – Glanum and Van Gogh (B / D)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 9.00 Transfer to the Alpilles
- 9.30 Visit of Les-Baux-de-Provence  
One of France's most beautiful villages situated on the south side of the Alpilles on a rock plateau.

### **OPTIONAL:**

Visit the Château with antique war machinery or the Musée des Santons, a museum with a magnificent collection of typical Christmas cradle figures.

- Lunch and open until
- 14.00 Transfer to Glanum
- 14.30 Walk through Glanum  
A wonderful visit to this archaeological site, an antique Roman town. The excavation started in 1912, unearthed impressive religious and various buildings from the 6th to 3rd century B.C. A triumphal arc and a tomb are also located nearby.
- 16.00 Transfer to Saint-Rémy-de-Provence  
Visit the former St. Paul de Mausole monastery (Hospital and church). This Provence-Roman masterpiece was used during the 19th century as a mental institution where Vincent Van Gogh spent one year and painted his famous irises. A reconstruction of his room can also be seen.
- 18.00 Return to our hotel
- 19.30 Dinner and overnight

## **Saturday: Avignon – Pont-du-Gard (B)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 9.00 Transfer to Avignon
- 9.30 Guided city tour of Avignon  
Avignon was the European cultural metropolis. The town's history was closely associated with the history of the Papacy and was the centre of Christianity in the 14th century. During this ancient time Avignon was the residence of 7 popes and 2 antipopes who lived in the monumental palace that still dominates the town. The cathedral and smaller palaces are interesting sites and the half-destroyed bridge "St.Bénézet" made famous by a popular folk song.

Independent lunch and an open afternoon

- 15.00 Transfer to Pont-du-Gard
- 15.30 Visit to the famous antique water bridge  
Pont-du-Gard is a 3 storied Roman aqueduct with the length of 275 meters that used to transport 20,000 m<sup>3</sup> per day over 2,000 years ago!
- 16.30 Return to our hotel for overnight and an open evening

## **Sunday: Aix-en-Provence – Courthézon (B / L)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 10.00 Transfer to Châteauneuf-du-Pape  
Châteauneuf-du-Pape is a small medieval village with 2,000 inhabitants and a reputation as the most exclusive and expensive wine site in Provence. 3,200 ha of wine yards produce 13 million bottles per year of which only 700,000 are white wines. The gravel stores the warmth of the day to give it back during night which allows a high degree of grape ripeness.
- 10.30 Visit a local winery including a wine tasting
- Lunch – we plan on scheduling this at a winery  
Open until...
- 15.00 Transfer to Courthézon
- 15.30 Walk through Courthézon  
The village's history goes back 6,000 years before the modern era. Being one of the oldest farming settlements in Europe, its golden era was in the Middle Ages under the reign of the Princes of Orange. The houses are painted

with frescoes featuring medieval scenes. 15 fresh water fountains are spread throughout the village and a main attraction Château Val Seille; its park, glass atrium and aviary.

### **OPTIONAL:**

Artistically illuminated, on summer evenings it (the chateau) hosts in its open-air theatre many diverse and free shows. During the last weekend in August, the Autumn Festival livens up the town with a different theme each year, including a dinner and show on Saturday evening and parades with some three hundred costumed participants on Sunday." (costs and date for 2018 are open)

Independent dinner and a return to our hotel.

### **Monday: Roussillon - L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue (B / D)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 8.30 Transfer to Roussillon
- 9.30 Morning visit to the colorful town of Roussillon  
Stop to see the ocher cliffs which are featured in many paintings. The shades from the rock and soil vary from white to yellow and orange to purple and represent the typical azure colours of Southern France
- 12.00 Transfer to L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue
- 12.30 Discovery the lovely village and enjoy an independent lunch here  
The former fishing village in the Vaucluse region is paradise situated on a river island. In the old town little alleys are intertwined with shops and coffees that tempt a visit. The village will enthral art and antique enthusiasts. On the Sorgue River, paddle wheels still turn and stairs guide us to the former washing places at the river's edge
- 15.00 Return to our hotel

Dinner in a local restaurant and overnight.

### **Tuesday: Truffles – Distillery – Valence (B / D)**

Breakfast at our hotel and check-out

- 8.30 Transfer to Grignan
- 10.30 Visit a truffles "farm" - Search for truffles with the help of a dog, wine and truffle tasting. Truffles are the "black diamonds" of the Drôme region. This fungus grows underground in symbiotic relationship with the roots of a host tree. Today dogs are used to seek out these tasty tubers instead of pigs which were too destructive
- Independent lunch
- 14.30 Visit a world famous distillery including a tasting of syrup, aperitif (anis) or other liquors.  
Regional distilleries specialise in different products including syrup, liquor and oil from lavender which grows in the fields
- 16.30 Transfer to the Valence region
- 17.30 Check into our hotel.
- 19.00 Dinner

*Overnight at The Hotel Les Cèdres, Soyons*

### **Wednesday: Shoes – Lyon (B / L)**

Breakfast at our hotel

- 9.00 Transfer to Romain-sur-Isère
- 9.30 Visit the international shoe museum  
Romain is famous for its leather works and shoe production. The museum hosts an impressive collection showcasing the international history of foot wear and also extravagant, contemporary and classic shoe styles
- Free time to explore on our own
- 12.00 Lunch with local specialities
- 14.00 Transfer to Lyon
- 16.00 Guided city tour of Lyon by bus  
Lyon is the third largest city after Paris and the capital of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region. The old town and parts of the peninsula are designated as UNESCO world heritage. Much of the city's wealth came from silk and is

reflected in its many impressive buildings, squares and churches. Lyon is the gastronomic capital of France and famous for its traditional kitchens as well as its haute cuisine

- 18.30 Check into the Best Western Hotel Charlemagne.

Open evening in Lyon

*Overnight at Best Western Hotel Charlemagne*

### **Thursday: Lyon (B / D)**

Breakfast at our hotel

Our final day is left open for individual exploration in the wonderful city of Lyon. Discover the museums, the market halls Paul Bocuse, walks and shopping.

- 19.00 Farewell dinner in a nice local restaurant

### **Friday: Departure (B)**

Breakfast at our hotel

Transfer to the airport for our final departure home - or independently extend your stay in France or other European destinations.