



French Wine EXPLORERS

A TASTE of PROVENCE *and the* FRENCH RIVIERA

A 10 day Private Custom Wine, Culinary and Cultural Tour

The Rhone Valley and Provence have some of the most spectacularly beautiful vineyards in France. Vines cover the landscape as far as the eye can see in most places, punctuated by olive groves and lavender fields. You'll find an incredibly rich variety of fascinating sites to discover while enjoying the full-bodied, expressive local wines and sun-drenched Provençal cuisine.



DAY 1**D**

Welcome to France! Your driver will meet you as you exit customs of the **Nice International Airport or at the Avignon train station**, and you will be transferred to your home for the next 3 days, the lovely **4* Relais Chateau member property, L'Auberge at Chateau de Berne**. At about 1.5 hours from Nice or Avignon, L'Auberge lies just to the north of Lorgues in the heart of the Chateau de Berne estate where 550 hectares of woodlands and vineyards stretch out between the Mediterranean and the Gorges du Verdon. Check into the hotel and spend the remaining day relaxing and discovering this enchanting property. Enjoy a **welcome wine-tasting dinner** tonight with a tasting of Château de Berne's wines.

Amenities include:

The fitness center with sauna • Heated outdoor swimming pool
tennis courts • table tennis • petanque court
numerous walking paths • quad and bicycle rentals
Spa and wellness center • 2 restaurants, one gourmet & one casual
Professional kitchen for cooking classes
Wine producing estate on property

DAY 2**B, L, D**

Today we enjoy a **private cooking class on property**, in the professional kitchen specially dedicated for cooking classes. The Chef reveals the secrets of his recipes, either classical or original, with fresh and sunny flavors, but always simple to realize. The respect for products is a fundamental value for the Chef who works every day with the **vegetables of the kitchen garden**. He will welcome you at the **Cooking School** specially fitted out in a bastide of the domain. All the necessary material is foreseen for enjoyable lesson. You'll end the lesson with **lunch, feasting on your creations!** Enjoy the remainder of the day discovering the property. **Dinner at the hotel included tonight.**

DAY 3**B, L**

The **grape harvest** is the climax of the wine-grower's work. Take place in this convivial harvest equipped with a bucket and shears. The wine growers will welcome you and share with you their noble passion for the wine making process, from the vine to the finished product in the bottle. End your harvest experience with a **guided tour of the cellars, wine tasting and lunch**. (Outside of harvest season, a private tour of the region and tour of cellars and tasting, followed by lunch will replace the harvest.) Then you will be transferred to the beautiful walled city of **Avignon**. Transfer to your lovely **4* centrally located hotel** near the Popes' Palace. This eighteenth-century mansion has interiors that reflect the period, with painted woodwork and antique-tile floors. Rooms are "classy and sophisticated but with a touch of whimsy." Enjoy an evening on own, and dine among the many restaurants Avignon has to offer.

DAY 4**B, L**

Today our journeys take us to **Chateauf-neuf-du-Pape and Gigondas**. You'll be greeted by your English-speaking, wine expert guide/driver for a visit to **three leading wine estates** in **Châteauf-neuf-du-Pape** and **Gigondas**. The morning commences in vineyards high up in the Gigondas hills where your guide explains how "**terroir**" influences the wines that you will taste at the cellar of a leading producer. After a **wine tasting lunch** at an excellent local restaurant, you will travel to **Châteauf-neuf-du-Pape**. The 14th century Papal chateau - a monument to this village's rich wine history - towers of the village. As you tour the scenic vineyards and the cellars of two of its leading estates your guide will explain how the diverse terroir, grape varieties and winemaking methods define the characteristics and quality of the wines that you taste. Return to your hotel for an evening on own.

DAY 5**B, L**

This morning savor life "**a la Provençal**" with a **market visit** in the lovely village of **Vaison La Romaine** led by your private chef. Purchase the fresh ingredients for your culinary class, **meet your chef's favorite local food suppliers**, and travel to your lovely private setting where you will enjoy a hands on class featuring specialties of the region. Savor the fruits of your labor **tasting your creations during lunch**. Return to **Vaison La Romaine** for some free time for shopping, walking the cobblestone streets, or relaxing at a cafe. With its shady spots under plane trees, its cool fountains, its busy streets, its welcoming terraces with cafes and restaurants and, of course, its superb market with all the many typical smells and colors of the South of France, Vaison-la-Romaine has all the charm of a **genuine Provençal town**. Return to your hotel in the late afternoon for an evening on own.

DAY 6**B, L or D**

Enjoy the morning to explore Avignon on own before travelling south to **Aix-en-Provence**. Aix en Provence, the capital of Provence, is a living history book, with a rich heritage thousands of years old. A tour of Aix en Provence is a chance to travel in time. Its **architectural and cultural heritage** is accessible to everyone, treasures that you will discover simply by walking around the town. Check into your lovely, and centrally located Hotel **Bastides du Cours**. In the true tradition of Provence, rooms and suites at La Bastide du Cours are settled in a house filled with history and located **on Cours Mirabeau**, in the very heart of Aix en Provence. Everything here is designed to offer the most enjoyable nights under Provence's skies, combining a refined decor and a warm atmosphere with the highest amenities (king size beds, private sauna, Jacuzzi, separate bathrooms, private terrace, room service, access for disabled people, air conditioning, mini bar, safe, flat screen TV, multi line telephone, restaurant...). Enjoy the remaining day exploring Aix on your own. Choose to have **lunch or dinner tonight in their lovely restaurant** (menu Gandolfe-wines not included).

LEGEND FOR MEALS INCLUDED IN YOUR TOUR:

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

DAY 7**B,L**

We dedicate the morning to discovering Aix with a **guided tour of the city**, and a **visit to Cezanne's studio**. Atelier des Lauves is a real place of memories, where Cézanne has left his mark. He worked there every day during the last four years of his life. Dozens of works, including his last 'Large Bathers', were painted in this workshop full of light and silence. After a **lovely lunch featuring traditional specialties** of the region, we dedicate the afternoon to exploring regional culinary delicacies. Provence is a small but high quality producer of olive oil, olives and their derivative products. We have selected some of the well **known olive oil mills**, where you will learn about the process of growing and harvesting olives and pressing them for olive oil. You will also have the opportunity to **taste two types of appetizers**: tapenade, a spread made with black olives, capers, anchovies, fresh basil, olive oil, garlic and coarse salt, and anchoiade, made from salted anchovies and garlic; normally no olives are used here, just olive oil. (We will customize the day to suit your preferences which could include more wine touring, visit to other villages in the area such as St. Remy, etc) Return to your hotel late afternoon. Enjoy your last evening in Aix on own.

**DAY 8****B**

Enjoy a scenic two-hour private transfer to **Eze Village**, a veritable eagle's nest perched high above the Mediterranean, just 12 km from Nice. Accommodations: **Chateau de la Chevre d'Or**, an outstanding boutique Relais and Chateau member hotel that literally is integrated into the medieval stone village of Eze. The views are inspiring; on one of the frequent clear days, the view extends all the way to St. Tropez. Take the rest of the afternoon to enjoy the views. Small narrow roads, archways and superbly restored stone houses, shady squares, refreshing ancient fountains... you will soon be seduced by the marvels of Eze. Evening on own.

DAY 9**B,L**

It's worth taking the time to discover **Nice** in depth: wander at random through the narrow streets of the old town and then stroll along the famous "**Promenade**" before entering into the heart of the city with its rich architectural and cultural heritage and its parks and gardens. A **delicious lunch** uncovering the gourmet treasures of the area is included. We will **customize your day to your requests**, including a gourmet walking tour in the afternoon, free time for shopping, full day of touring of the Riviera, visit to the perfume capital of Provence, Grasse or perhaps additional wine touring. Return to your hotel end of the afternoon, and evening on own.

DAY 10**B**

Transfer to the Nice International Airport or train station, and continue your journeys with fond memories of your Provence wine, culinary and cultural discoveries.

YOUR CUSTOMIZED 10 DAY LUXURY TOUR INCLUDES:

- Creation of your totally customized itinerary, crafted to your particular preferences, and all advance arrangements for your tour
- The services of professional local expert guide as mentioned (roughly 8 hours each day)
- All private tours as mentioned in itinerary, including:
 - 2 Private hands on cooking classes followed by lunch with leading chefs of the region
 - Private grape harvest, followed by a tour and tasting in the cellars, and wine grower's traditional lunch
- Full day of wine touring featuring the best estates of Chateaneuf du Pape
- Full day cultural and culinary tour of Aix en Provence
- Full day of touring in and around Nice customized to your preferences
- All transfers by chauffeur-driven, air conditioned sedan or minivan, as mentioned in the itinerary
- 2 nights' deluxe accommodations at 4-star luxury (French 5-star equivalent) Relais and Chateau member Hotel l'Auberge de Berne, double occupancy
- 3 nights deluxe accommodations at 4-star boutique Hotel La Mirande in Avignon, Deluxe Room
- 2 nights deluxe accommodations at 4-star luxury Hotel Bastide du Cours in Aix-en-Provence, Deluxe Room
- 2 nights deluxe accommodations at 4-star Relais Chateau Member Chateau de Chevre d'Or in Eze, Deluxe Room
- Gourmet Buffet breakfast each day
- 6 gourmet lunches
- 3 gourmet dinners
- Information on the region and its wines sent to you in advance of your tour

Price based on 2 guests, double occupancy: US \$9900/person

Price based on 4 guests, double occupancy: US \$8100/person

Price based on 6 guests, double occupancy: US \$7700/person

Subject to availability Single supplement: please inquire

For groups of 7 or more guests: please contact us for a price quote.

Not included: any personal expenses, or any service not specifically mentioned above as included in the price of your tour.

TO BOOK YOUR TOUR

Contact us at info@wine-tours-france.com or **1-877-261-1500**.

We accept VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover Card or checks or money orders in US Dollars.

WINE CHATEAUX AND ESTATES

We include only top-quality wine chateaux and estates in our programs. Chateau visits are scheduled by special arrangement, and some chateaux or estates, including any mentioned in the Itinerary, may not be available on your dates. Once you book your program with us, we will contact the estates to determine which are available. If there are specific chateaux or estates you would like to visit, please let us know, and we will contact your preferences first when arranging visits and tastings for you.

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