



## Wine Tour in Southern Rhone

From Lyon to the Camargue, passing through the regions of Provence and the Luberon, the Rhône Valley vineyards are divided into two large wine-growing areas.

To the north, the Septentrional vineyard clings to the abrupt hillsides in the steep mountain ranges; to the south, the Meridional vineyard enjoys the plains and gentle slopes.

The 14 wine routes wind through historic villages in varying landscapes. They take you to the vineyards where the famous wines are made: Hermitage, Côte-Rôtie, Beaumes-de-Venise ...

Between fields of lavender and olive trees, share special moments with the winemakers, learn about wine and enjoy the hundreds of wine events. Under the southern sun, discover the Palace of the Popes of Avignon, the Pont du Gard, or the ornate Pont-d'Arc cave.

The diversity of the wine-growing areas, due to the complex soils and variations of the Mediterranean climate, gives the Rhône Valley wines their unique character. Mostly reds, the wines of the Rhône are divided into three colours. In the north, robust but fine reds and aromatic whites. In the south, more full-bodied reds, expressive whites and round and fruity rosés. Sweet wines complete this large range.

## Trip Summary

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### DAY 1 - ARRIVAL

Arrival transfer in Avignon

Check in at Hotel de Garlande\*\*\* (or similar) - Hotel de Garlande

### DAY 4 - AROUND AVIGNON

AVIGNON & PONT DU GARD

### DAY 3 - WINES, VILLAGES & LANDSCAPES

PROVENCE WINE FULL DAY

### DAY 2 - DISCOVER WINES OF PROVENCE

GIGONDAS, VACQUEYRAS & CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

### DAY 5 - ROSE WINES FULL DAY

ROSE WINES

### DAY 6 - THE LUBERON FOR A DAY

LUBERON WINES & VILLAGES FOR A DAY

FAREWELL DINNER IN AVIGNON

### DAY 7 - DEPARTURE

Departure transfer

## DAY 1 - ARRIVAL

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### **Arrival transfer in Avignon**

Arrive in Avignon and transfer to your hotel.

We can organize a transfer from the TGV train station or from Marseille airport.



### **Check in at Hotel de Garlande\*\*\* (or similar)**



#### **Hotel de Garlande**

20 rue Galante, Avignon, Provence-Alpes-Côte, FR, 84000  
+33 4 90 80 08 85

## DAY 4 - AROUND AVIGNON



### AVIGNON & PONT DU GARD

As the city is best explored by foot, you will embark on a 3 hour guided walking tour of Avignon. From 1309 to 1377, the Catholic popes did not live in the Vatican but in Avignon. Actually, Avignon was controlled by the popes (just like the Vatican) until 1791, when it became part of France.

**As a consequence, the popes build a magnificent palace as their residence in Avignon.** The Palais des Papes is massive and remains one of the largest medieval Gothic buildings in Europe. In the 14th century, the palace was also home to the largest library in Europe, with more than 2,000 books. Today, the palace is classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site and can be visited.

On your walking tour, you will also see the Avignon bridge which, according to the legend, was first built in the 12th by a young shepherd who followed divine orders. At the time, it was the only place to cross the Rhône river between Lyon and the Mediterranean Sea. The bridge was dismantled and rebuilt several times over the centuries, and was finally abandoned after the river destroyed part of it.

***Entrances to the Pope's Palace and Avignon Bridge included.***

Lunch at leisure in Avignon

### In the afternoon, departure to the Pont du Gard

A true masterpiece of ancient architecture, the Pont du Gard aqueduct is one of the most beautiful Roman constructions in the region. Discover more about this startling monument as you follow the course of its history through the ages.

A masterpiece of engineering from the Roman times. Today, a large portion of the three-tiered aqueduct is still standing and is classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site. We bet you have never seen anything like it before!



## DAY 3 - WINES, VILLAGES & LANDSCAPES



### PROVENCE WINE FULL DAY BANDOL & CASSIS WINE REGIONS

Depart for the Bandol and Cassis wine regions.

Here, not only will you be amazed by the great wines that are produced in the area, but it is also a region where the landscapes are of great beauty. Located between the creeks, locally known as Calanques, and the Cap Canaille the confidential wine-producing area of Cassis borders the Mediterranean sea.

We will stop at carefully selected wineries to enjoy wine tasting sessions of the famous white wines of Cassis. For lunch, our stop will be in the small fishing village of Cassis where numerous restaurants await, serving delicious seafood paired with wine of course.

After lunch, it will be time to head out to the Bandol wine-producing area. This appellation is famous for its red wines but also produces some very aromatic and fresh Provence Rosé wines.

All in all, we will stop in 3 wineries throughout the day so that you may experience the best wines the Cassis & Bandol appellations have to offer.



## DAY 2 - DISCOVER WINES OF PROVENCE



### GIGONDAS, VACQUEYRAS & CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

On your first day in the Provence region, Southern Cote du Rhone, we will take you to three famous wine appellation with a tasting in each of them.

#### Gigondas

The vines in Gigondas are nestled at the foot of the Dentelles de Montmirail mountains, their deep roots nourish those of the Gigondas wines, which have so many marvels to offer grapes that make marvelous Gigondas wines. The grey limestone soils of the Dentelles de Montmirail provide unique, well-structured terroirs. These in turn produce red wines with aromas of brandied fruit, developing over time into earthy, truffled notes, while the complex, shimmering rosés display notes of red fruits, almonds, and spices.

#### Vacqueyras

The wines of Vacqueyras are shaped by their distinctive terroirs, and are available in red, white and rosé. The soils here are very varied, giving the Vacqueyras wines a wealth of different fragrances and flavours. The wines are powerful and full of character, and have a distinctive edge of freshness and finesse. They are often chosen for their reliably high quality, and since 1998 have been the official wines of the Avignon Festival, building up their reputation with a broad international audience.

#### Chateauneuf-du-Pape

The Chateauneuf du Pape wines are well known for their full bodied red wines made predominantly with different grape varieties such as Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre that are typical grapes that can be found in the southern vineyards of France. There are also some white Chateauneuf du Pape wines that are intensely perfumed. The grape varieties used for the white wines include Grenache Blanc, Rousannes, Clairette and Bourboulenc many of which are rustic french varietals.

Enjoy a lunch at a local restaurant in Chateauneuf-du-Pape, drinks included.

Pick up and drop off at your hotel with private English speaking guide and private transportation.



## DAY 5 - ROSE WINES FULL DAY



### ROSE WINES

In Provence, making rosé is a speciality, and a longstanding way of life, thanks to Provence's climate, terroir and varieties which are perfectly suited to this wine.

It is only logical then that Provence should be the number one French region for the production of rosé wines: 150 million AOC bottles in 2020, accounting for 38% of rosé production nationwide and 4.2% around the world! In the minds of consumers too, Provence is the top wine region associated with rosé. This is no surprise: it is the only one to dedicate 91% of their vines to that wine! From vineyard management to wine-making, by way of the choice of varieties, every step is carefully thought out by Provence's wine-growers to ensure they produce high-quality rosé wines.

Today, taste different rosé wines in two wineries around **Cote de Provence and Montagne Sainte Victoire**.

To the East of Aix-en-Provence, nature has made the Arc Valley **ideal for viticulture**, one of the most perfect imaginable. Mount Sainte-Victoire to the north and the Sainte-Baume massif to the south create a corridor which protects the valley itself. This microclimate has elements of a continental climate favourable to wine growing. It is therefore protected from maritime influences and is naturally healthy, thanks to winds which regularly blow along it. Vines were already being cultivated in Roman times. Their cultivation developed further in the middle ages, under the influence of the great monastic orders.

By order of consumer preference: Peach, Melon, Mango, Pomelo, Mandarin and Redcurrant are the names of the six main colours of the rosé wines made in Provence. Developed in partnership with the Centre de Recherche and d'Expérimentation sur le Vin Rosé, this colour chart provides a reference for describing the colour of a rosé with precision. Useful to producers and consumers alike.

*During your day, enjoy a pic nic lunch at a local winery (if weather permits). Drinks included.*



## DAY 6 - THE LUBERON FOR A DAY



### LUBERON WINES & VILLAGES FOR A DAY

For this last day, enjoy a last tasting in the Luberon vineyards.

The *appellation* sits in fabulous, natural surroundings. The entire AOC area nestles within the heart of the **Parc Naturel Régional du Luberon (Luberon Regional Nature Park)**. Here, the winemakers feel duty-bound to respect the land and their natural resources. The *appellation* produces wine in all three colours: red, rosé and white.

AOC Luberon is a mountain *appellation*. Here, the vines grow at an altitude of between 200 and 450 metres. The *terroir* is rich, with Miocene sands in the “Pays d’Aigue” area, limestone scree at the foot of the mountain, and the red clay found specifically in the Apt area. The climate is a mix of Rhone influences and benefits from the cooler temperatures of the high provençal plateaux. The mountain range brings about significant variations in temperature, which ensure that the red wines retain their bite, and that there is a substantial production of white wines.

Lunch is at leisure during the day.

#### **Gordes and Senanque Abbey**

After lunch, it will be time to head out to the village of Gordes, classified as one of the most beautiful villages in France. Facing the Luberon mountain range, the village is composed of small paved streets, known as calades, where it feels so nice to get lost in. To mostly appreciate this unique village, magic operates in spring and autumn as summer is very crowded by the number of visitors. After some time in the village, we will take you to the Cistercian abbey of Sénanque for a photo stop. In July, the Abbey is surrounded by magnificent Lavender fields.

#### **Roussillon & Lourmarin villages**

The villages of Lourmarin and Roussillon are next to your program. Roussillon is a typical hilltop village located just above a rock formation called the “Provençal Colorado”. Here, you will have some time for personal discovery that will allow you to stroll down the village or walk along the “ochre path”, a 30-minute walk. Lourmarin village is yet another famous Provence villages and is known to be an artist’s village. Located in a gorgeous setting that is surrounded by olive and almond trees, the village has attracted numerous artists and writers such as Henri Bosco and Albert Camus. Again, enjoy some time in the village where options include the visit of its ancient castle. The village was a source of inspiration from Peter Mayle for “A year in Provence”.

Drop off at your hotel at the end of the day.



### FAREWELL DINNER IN AVIGNON

This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Avignon located at a walking distance from your hotel.



## DAY 7 - DEPARTURE

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### **Departure transfer**

Breakfast at your hotel, check out and transfer to Avignon TGV train station of Marseille airport.

## Information & Documents

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### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

We will endeavor to make all the necessary arrangements for the winery visits as per mentioned in the program. However, all winery visits and tastings are subject to availability at time of booking and cannot be guaranteed. If ever a winery should not be available for a visit, tasting or lunch, we will replace it with an equivalent winery that has the same classification and produces the same quality wine or offers the same service (meals, special tastings etc...).



### INCLUSIONS

Arrival and departure transfers from Avignon train station or Marseille airport. *One transfer per group at arrival and departure is included. Other transfers can be added as an option.*

Accommodation for 6 nights at 3\* Hotel de Garlande (or similar)

Breakfast from day 2 to 7

Hotel local Taxes

Transportation in premium minivan or minibus

Driver Guide for groups up to 8

Driver and Guide for groups over 8

Entrances to the Avignon Bridge, Pope's Palace, Pont du Gard

Walking tour of Avignon, Cassis, Gordes, Lourmarin, Roussillon

3 tastings on Day 2, 3 tasting on Day 3, 3 tastings on Day 5

1 lunch in Chateauneuf du Pape, 1 pic nic lunch

Farewell dinner in local restaurant in Avignon

### EXCLUSIONS

Meals, drinks unless specified in program

Personal insurance and expenses

Entrance fees to monuments, museums unless specified in program

Additional wine tasting fees in the wineries

Gratuities for the guide and driver