



PROVENCE & LAVENDER FIELDS

DAY 1

Today you arrive in the south of France, here you will enjoy a warm climate and a relaxed pace for your vacation. In the arrivals hall you will be met by your driver who will assist you and transfer you to your quiet hotel, where you can relax and refresh, before setting out to explore the town you are in.

You will stay in a bed and breakfast of good comfort in Pernes Les Fontaines, 20 minutes from Avignon. Your room has its own bathroom.

You will have at your disposal an outdoor living area very friendly. After your day tour, you can enjoy the pool (between May-September).

Excellent wines produced in our beautiful region will accompany each dish beautifully, without forgetting a local brandy to finish in beauty a wonderful evening.

You will share these delicious moments with Nathalie and Olivier, your hosts.

DAY 2

Today you start, your Provence Discovery. Your guide who you met last night will arrive after breakfast for your first day out. The Lavenders, Gardens and Flowers are the focus of your week, but you will also get to see the beautiful region and what it has to offer. Alain will take you around visiting some of the country's most beautiful parts. Your first stop is Avignon.

DAY 3

First of all, you will go to L'Occitane for a factory tour to discover, in the very heart of Provence, the thousand and one scents of L'Occitane.

From the beginning of blooming, enjoy the aroma and beauty of these gorgeous blue crops, real cast of amethyst.

A stop in Valensole is a very interesting little town built on the side of a hill overlooking a small river valley. It's located at the northern edge of the Parc Naturel Régional du Verdon, on the Valensole Plateau, famous for the lavender fields.

On the way to Moustiers Saintes Marie, you will discover many lavender distilleries.

Moustiers-Ste-Marie sits below a narrow notch at the base of rocky cliffs. Above the village, the Notre-Dame de Beauvoir chapel sits high in the notch, behind the ruins of the ancient defensive walls, and hidden in the shadows for most of the day.

DAY 4

Once again today you will be taken out to visit more beautiful and remarkable places.

Arles is a town in the Provence in the southeast of France. Remote, uneventful, but definitely no waste of time, Arles is absolutely steeped in Provençal culture. The museums are small, but have some interested artifacts. Unfortunately there are no Van Goghs to be found in the city, despite the fact that his residence in Arles was his most productive. Chico Bouchiki, co-founder of the gypsy kings, as well as the rest of the band, is from Arles. Take a lazy stroll along the Rhône, dip into a café and continue strolling.

DAY 5

Notre-Dame de la Garde is a basilica located in Marseille, France. This ornate Neo-Byzantine church is situated at the highest natural point in Marseille, a 162m (532 ft) limestone outcrop on the south side of the Old Port. As well as being a major local landmark, it is the site of a popular annual pilgrimage every Assumption Day (August 15). Local inhabitants commonly refer to it as la bonne mère ("the good mother").

DAY 6

Ventoux AOC (formerly Côtes du Ventoux AOC) is a wine-growing AOC in the southeastern region of the Rhône wine region of France, where the wines are produced in 51 communes of the Vaucluse département along the lower slopes of the Ventoux mountain and at the foot of the Vaucluse Mountains. The neighbouring appellation of Côtes du Luberon AOC stretches along its southern border and is separated from it by the Calavon river.



The three main areas of the region, the Malaucène basin, the foothills of the Mont Ventoux to the east of Carpentras and to the north of Cavaillon are less ravaged by the Mistral due to some shelter afforded by the Ventoux-Vaucluse-Luberon mountain range. Archeological discoveries of wine making equipment have dated that wine has been produced in the area at least since around 30AD.

Gigondas is a commune in the Vaucluse department in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region in southeastern France. While the village was very famous for its 'eau purgative de Montmirail' in the 19th century, it is now home to famous wines.

DAY 7

The most beautiful villages of Luberon area.

Bonnieux is one of the many historic "hill villages" in the region. Dating back to Roman times, it rests on top of the Luberon hills casting a watchful gaze across the rest of the valley. Next to the village is a Cedar forest that began with trees imported from North Africa during the Napoleonic era.

It sits opposite Mont Ventoux, other notable villages in the area include Ménerbes, Lacoste, Roussillon, and Gordes.

Ménerbes is a commune in the Vaucluse department in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region in southeastern France, a walled village on a hilltop in the Luberon mountains, foothills of the French Alps.

Rural Vaucluse was described by author Marcel Pagnol in such novels as *Manon des Sources*, a hardscrabble peasant life in a declining economy. In the years after 1945 the region offered cheap holiday homes. By 1960 Ménerbes was half depopulated but was the residence of Dora Maar, one of Picasso's models, and the widow of artist Nicholas de Stael, and holiday homes of a London art dealer and a French diplomat, whose visitors to Ménerbes thus included many artistic notables. The region grew lavender, mushrooms, truffles and harsh red wine. Within sight of Ménerbes are the ruins of the Chateau de Lacoste, country residence of the notorious Marquis de Sade.

Ménerbes became known in the English-speaking world since 1990 through the books of British author Peter Mayle, tales of a British expatriate who settled in the village of Ménerbes. One of his books was made into a film *A Good Year* (2006) directed by Ridley Scott and starring Russell Crowe, which was filmed nearby in the region. Much was actually filmed in the nearby town of Bonnieux.

Roussillon is one of the historical counties of the former Principality of Catalonia, corresponding roughly to the present-day southern French département of Pyrénées-Orientales (Eastern Pyrenees). It may also refer to French Catalonia or Northern Catalonia, the latter term used particularly by the Catalan-speaking community.

Built on the foothills of the Monts of Vaucluse, facing the Luberon, Gordes is one of the most well-known hilltop villages in the region, and one of the most beautiful in France. Its houses and buildings of white stone root themselves into the sharp cliff of the mountain, its labyrinth of "calades" (narrow cobblestone streets) do not leave the visitor indifferent to its charms.

Many artists have stayed in the village of Gordes and have contributed to its fame. Some, such as André Lhote, Marc Chagall, Victor Vasarely and Pol Mara came to stay.

Gordes is the seat of many cultural events in summer with its museums, a festival, concerts and numerous exhibitions. Fontaine-de-Vaucluse is a medieval village tucked in a "closed valley" at the southwestern corner of the mountainous Plateau de Vaucluse, 25 km east of Avignon. We have some complaints about the village being touristic, but it is ancient, it's interesting, and it's worth a visit. A key feature of Fontaine-de-Vaucluse is the truly amazing and unique sight of a river gushing up out of the ground. At the base of high, rocky cliffs, a deep pool of seemingly still water is actually a full-fledged river gushing up out of the depths. A few meters from this pool, the white water rapids crash down over black rocks, giving away the truth of the "still waters" of the source of the Sorgue river. Below the rapids, the river settles down to a wide expanse in front of dams and waterwheels, passing under the bridge at the center of the village, and then flowing on downstream as a lovely river

DAY 8

Today you leave the quiet village of Pernes Les Fontaines, and catch a train to Nice. Your driver will come and collect you and take you to the station. The train journey takes about three hours.

The city is called Nice la Belle (Nissa La Bella in Niçard), which means Nice the Beautiful, which is also the title of the unofficial anthem of Nice, written by Menica Rondelly in 1912. Nice is the capital of the Alpes Maritimes département and the second biggest city of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region after Marseille.

The area of today's Nice is believed to be among the oldest human settlements in Europe. One of the archaeological sites, Terra Amata, displays evidence of a very early use of fire. Around 350BC, Greeks of Marseille founded a permanent settlement and called it Nikaia, after Nike, the goddess of victory.

Luxury Hotel, the Hotel Westminster is situated on center of the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, on the seafront, just a few steps from the city center, luxury shopping area and the historic streets of the old town of Nice.

A way of life in a unique Belle Epoque style on the French Riviera

2 Nights Sea View Room. Inclusive of Breakfast.

DAY 9

THE BOTANICAL GARDEN OF THE CITY OF NICE

Walk and discover, this recent municipal park created in 1983 present more than 3500 species on 3 hectares. Located on the hillside, it offers a remarkable view on the mouth of the Var, with a vast panorama from the Alps to Esterel.

The originality of the garden comes from the presentation: a part of the collections are reconstitution of typical landscape of world mediterranean climates (California, South Africa, Australia, Mexico, Mediterranean-basin, Canary Islands).

Among the classical zones, the ethnobotanic part is very well represented with his medicinal, aromatic and poisonous plants. A qualified guide makes you discover all this secrets and this bewitching scents.

DAY 10

Today you will leave the coastal resort and head back into the picturesque countryside. You can collect your rental from the nearby office and head off on your own adventures. Grasse is en-route and first appeared in ancient maps in the Middle Ages, in the early 11th century. At the dawn of the 12th century, Grasse became a free commune and an active trading city and today's Grasse has maintained the urban structure of this period.

The charming old town's architectural pattern, a snaking network of tiny alleys, bears traces of successive extensions around the original summit called Le Puy, where the temporal and spiritual center of power, the Cathedral, was built.

La Bastide Saint-Antoine in Grasse, France, is surrounded by grounds spanning five hectares with lush Mediterranean vegetation set amidst olive groves. La Bastide commands views of the surrounding plains and the Bay of Cannes and offers a wealth of pleasures for the eye, palate, and spirit.

1 night, inclusive of Evening Dinner & Breakfast.

DAYS 11-15

You are now back in an area you started. With so much more to explore and see, and now in a location ideal for some light walking, and your rental to go off and find and discover new sites, villages and towns.

Les Ramparts Hotel. Built on the ancient ramparts of one of the most beautiful villages

of France, the Hotel-Restaurant "LES REMPARTS" is a really charming and quiet place, overlooking a magnificent valley in the heart of Provence. Our subtle cuisine inspired by the traditional Mediterranean cooking is served in our panoramic restaurant.

5 Nights, Inclusive of Breakfast.

DAY 16

Today is your last day in the Provence area. Once you have checked out, you can go off and explore for the rest of the day. You are booked into the Best Western Marseille Hotel at the airport, it is only 300m away. Once you have checked in, I would suggest returning the car, so this is done. There is a shuttle that leaves at 5am which can take you to the airport. This will give you plenty of time for your check-in as it is only a European flight for your connection. (If you have been given a time to check in, which means getting there earlier, please let reception know, if you want transport) Located in the very heart of the airport, the Best Western Hotel is ideally located.

DAY 17

Sadly today is departure day. You can fly from Marseille airport to Frankfurt for your connecting flight home. Give yourselves plenty of time to get to the airport, return the car and check-in.

*Hotels named are our first choice and subject to availability.

