



# AMAZING PROVENCE & FRENCH RIVIERA

## SHARED TOUR PACKAGE - 8 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

A tour in Provence & Riviera from Avignon, Local private transport, An English-speaking expert guide, Guided tours of Avignon and Palace of Popes, Sightseeing of Luberon & Gordes, Tour and wine tasting at a local Chateauneuf du Pape domain, Visit of Roussillon, Cassis sightseeing and its calanques, Tour of vineyards of Bandol and wine tasting at a local domain, Sightseeing of Grasse, Saint Paul de Vence & Eze, 3 nights at a 4\* hotel in Avignon, 2 nights at a 4\* hotel in Aix en Provence and 2 nights at a 4\* hotel in Nice - with breakfasts included.

# ITINERARY

## DAY 1 - ARRIVAL TRANSFER IN AVIGNON

Welcome to Avignon!

From its elaborate past when it was the Capital of the Christian world, Avignon still shines with its stunning architectural legacy, much of it having UNESCO's World Heritage status.

Check in at the Four-Star Hotel de l'Horloge for three nights - with breakfasts.

## DAY 2 – MORNING: GUIDED TOUR OF THE CITY AND THE POPES PALACE

*At 9.30am meet your English-speaking local guide who will be ready to share his passion and knowledge of the city and of Provence.*

Start your 3-hr guided walking tour of Avignon and get ready to see the best sites in the city! Climb to the top of the fortified medieval city walls to reach the "Rocher des Doms" garden and gaze upon the city as it stretches out along the Rhône River. Discover the historical past of Avignon where the papacy was established in the early 14th century.

Next, it's time to visit the Papal Palace for a guided tour (entrance ticket included). Explore the largest gothic-style palace in Europe and begin to imagine the luxurious way of life enjoyed there in the medieval period. Enjoy interesting stories and anecdotes from your local guide as you go.

After the Popes' Palace you'll walk through the cobbled streets of Avignon to the Place de l'Horloge where you will uncover the secrets of its painted windows. See the town hall topped with its clock tower, and the theatre. The end of your walking tour in Avignon will be toasted with a glass of Côtes du Rhône wine served in a local place close to the Pope's Palace.

Your walking tour will come to an end at 12.30pm. Just in time for lunch!



*Afternoon: tour to the Luberon villages*

Join this afternoon small group tour and see the best of the Luberon with a local enthusiastic guide. Departing from Avignon at 1.30pm your guide will invite you to delve into the Provencal atmosphere. Immerse yourself in the unique atmosphere of the Luberon area and its villages, some of the most beautiful in France!

Your first visit of the afternoon is to Roussillon and its famous ochre cliffs. Don't forget your camera to capture this wonder with all its different shades of brown, orange and red.

After visiting Roussillon, your guide will take you onwards to Ménerbes, a well-known village thanks to Peter Mayle's book "A Year in Provence".

Next up on your discovery of the Luberon is a visit to the famous Roman bridge, the Pont Julien. You will then drive through the village of Lacoste, where you can find the Marquis de Sade's castle.

The last visit of the day is to the village of Gordes. Perched high up in the Luberon and known as one of "the most beautiful villages in France" you will enjoy some free time to discover the village and its famous buildings which are all made from dry stones.



After a magnificent afternoon in the Luberon your guide will drive you back to Avignon where you will arrive at 7pm. Dinner is at your leisure.

### **DAY 3 – DAY TOUR FROM AVIGNON AND FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF VAN GOGH VISITING ARLES SAINT-REMY DE PROVENCE AND THE WINES OF CHATEAUNEUF -DU-PAPE**

*Meet your friendly expert guide at 8.30am in Avignon and get ready for a memorable day trip in Provence. Each Provençal village has its own personality and local specialties, your guide knows all the secrets of each village and will share these with you as you go.*

First stop on your tour is Arles to discover the sites painted by Van Gogh. Enjoy a guided walking tour in the city, discover its heritage and the various sites painted by Vincent Van Gogh during his stay in Arles (including "The Night Café" and "The Garden of the Health Home").

After Arles you'll journey on to visit Saint-Rémy de Provence to continue following in the footsteps of Van Gogh. Enjoy a walking tour with your guide and see Van Gogh's painting reproductions. Then you will visit a recreation of Van Gogh's bedroom (ticket included) in Saint Paul de Mausolea, the hospital where he stayed.

*Lunch is at your leisure upon your guide's recommendations.*

No trip to Provence is complete without a visit to the vineyards of Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

Enjoy a wine tour to 2 different Chateauneuf-du-Pape vineyards. Visit the famous castle in the centre of the village and admire the exceptional "terroir". Take in the views of the vineyards surrounding this former summer residence of the popes. Learn about the history and the "know-how" of the local winemakers. In the cellar, you will find a selection of domains and chateaux of the Rhone Valley.

Don't miss this typical Provençal experience, it is all authentic!

Your tour will end back in Avignon where you will be dropped off at 6.30pm.

Please note: the order of the visits can change because of market day! Wednesdays in Saint-Rémy and Saturdays in Arles. This full day tour will return to Avignon in the middle of the day.



#### **DAY 4 – TRANSFER TO AIX EN PROVENCE**

Check out, private transfer to Aix en Provence

Check in at your hotel\*\*\*\* in Aix en Provence for 2 nights B&B hotel Roi René or similar, based on superior room

Discover this amazing village at your leisure (half day walk can be added to your itinerary on request)



## DAY 5 – CASSIS, THE CALANQUES AND BANDOL

*Pick-up is at 9:00 AM*

There are some places you can't help falling in love with at first sight and Cassis is one of them!

Your morning excursion to Cassis begins in Aix-en-Provence where you meet your friendly tour guide. Set off for an unforgettable visit and take in the panoramic view from the Cape Canaille, the highest maritime cliff in Europe (photo stop) as you go.

Arriving in Cassis, walk around the old fishing port, with all its colourful boats. If you join the tour on a Wednesday or a Friday, you can also enjoy the local market.

You will embark on a 45-min cruise from Cassis to discover the calanques, limestone cliffs which dive into the clear blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea and create natural coves (fat, rocky claws that resemble Norwegian fjords and poke out into the sea).



*Lunch is at your leisure upon your guide's recommendations.*

#### Wine tour to Côtes de Provence Sainte-Victoire Vineyard

Spend a wonderful afternoon visiting two charming wineries in Provence and enjoy stunning views of Cezanne's countryside!

Climb aboard our upmarket minivan and set off for the scenic drive to the landscapes of Sainte-Victoire Mountain. See Provence through the eyes of the famous painter Cézanne who found inspiration in this beautiful scenery. The Côtes de Provence Sainte-Victoire vineyards like all the vineyards in Provence, are some of the most natural in France due to the drying effects of the Mistral wind. The shallow soils, formed by limestone and argillaceous sandstone, produce high-quality wines.

Enjoy visits to two Provence vineyards for tours and wine tastings. Both estates have been selected for their authenticity and charm. You might be lucky and meet the owner of the Domain!

Be sure to bring your camera and capture the views of the Sainte Victoire Mountain!

The wines you taste will be wonderful full-bodied reds with excellent structure (typical grape varieties used are Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault, Mourvèdre, Carignan, and Cabernet-Sauvignon), and subtle, elegant rosés.

*Drop-off is approximately at 6:00 at your hotel. Dinner is at your leisure.*

#### **DAY 6 – ARRIVAL ON THE FRENCH RIVIERA...NICE!**

Check out, private transfer to Aix en Provence TGV station to Nice (2nd class)

Private transfer to the hotel

Check in at hotel\*\*\*\* in Nice B&B West End or similar, based on a superior room

*Discover the Nice city at your leisure (half day walk can be added to your itinerary on request)*

Nice's Promenade des Anglais and Carnival are well known. But it's only after you've gotten here and soaked up some of the city's atmosphere and unique light that the tag line 'Capital of the Côte d'Azur' begins to make sense as a tangible reality.



## DAY 7 – MONACO, CANNES, ANTIBES, SAINT-PAUL DE VENCE AND EZE, THE BEST OF THE FRENCH RIVIERA

*8.30 am: Meet your friendly guide for the day in the centre of Nice and climb aboard your luxury minivan. Your guide is an expert in the region and will share his knowledge as your journey begins on the drive from Nice. Your day will start with panoramic views across Nice, the Bay of Angels, the Bay of Villefranche and Saint Jean Cap Ferrat, before heading off along the famous coastal road.*

**Eze:** Your first stop of the morning will be to the historic village of Eze. This medieval village is perched on a hill at 429 metres and allows for incredible views from its walls. Stroll through the charming and picturesque medieval alleyways, see the beautiful boutiques and luxury hotels tucked away in the cobbled streets and ancient village walls. Then enjoy a guided visit of the Fragonard perfume factory.

**Monaco:** Your guide will drive you to the center of Monaco and you will be able to alight in Le Rocher. Visit the Neo-Romanesque Cathedrale where Grace Kelly lies and stroll through the old town of Monaco. Then enjoy the changing of the guards at the Prince’s Palace!

Visiting Monaco is not complete without experiencing the famous Grand Prix Formula 1 circuit! Your guide will drive you along the key parts of the famous circuit and show you the most emblematic symbols of Monaco’s luxury, its Grand Casino and the Hotel de Paris before heading back to Nice for lunch.

**1.30 pm:** You will have free time in Nice to grab a quick lunch. You can ask your guide for some suggestions.



**Antibes:** After lunch in Nice it’s time to climb back aboard your minibus and set off along the coastal road towards Antibes to discover its fortress walls, the old town and the breathtaking views across the Mediterranean and the Cap d’Antibes.

Your guide will drive you past the charming and lively marinas of Juan-les-Pins and Golf-Juan on your way to your next destination of the day, the famous festival venue of Cannes!

**Cannes:** Live like a celebrity whilst in Cannes and take a picture of yourself on the red carpet! Admire the palm trees, the luxury boutiques and the impressive hotels on “La Croisette”.

**Saint Paul-de-Vence:** Leaving the glitter and sparkle of Cannes, it's time to head towards a totally different and contrasting location in the region. The charming medieval village of Saint Paul-De-Vence. Perched high on a hill, you will enjoy the beautiful surrounding landscapes while wandering around the ramparts. Stroll along the picturesque alleyways which have been the inspiration for so many artists over the centuries. The artistic and creative spirit of Saint-Paul-de-Vence can be felt around every street corner!

7.00 pm: After visiting Saint-Paul-de-Vence it will be time for the drive back to Nice. After a day experiencing the best of the Cote d'Azur you will arrive back in the centre of the city at 7 pm.

*There is a risk of heavy traffic during the high season. Our local driver-guide will do his utmost to reduce the time spent in the minibus...whilst, of course, making it as agreeable as possible!*

## **DAY 8 – END OF OUR SERVICES**

Check out is after the nice breakfast.

**Avignon:** The Four-Star Hotel de l'Horloge\*\*\*\* for three nights

Right in the city centre, and close to the Pont d'Avignon, the hotel de l'Horloge is a charming Four-Star establishment in an ideal location.

**Aix en Provence:** The Roi René Hotel\*\*\*\* for two nights

You'll find the Roi René Hotel ideally situated in the heart of Aix en Provence, surrounded by a magnificent Mediterranean garden.

**Nice:** The West End Hotel\*\*\*\* for two nights

### **This package includes**

Please note that this package is based on a double occupancy room

Three nights in a Four-Star hotel in Avignon - with breakfasts

Two nights in a Four-Star hotel in Aix en Provence - with breakfasts

Two nights in a Four-Star hotel in Nice - with breakfasts

Local private transport

An English-speaking expert guide

All day tours and visit detailed above

### **This package does not include:**

Extra meals and drinks

Personal expenses

Other visits not listed

Guide appreciation gratuity

### *Additional information*

*Providers are subject to change according to availability at the time of the reservation. Should this arise, we will provide a parallel alternative at the same high standard.*