

Vineyards & Villages of the Luberon

# Provence Cultural Walking Adventure



*Classic*  
JOURNEYS™





“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

— *Travel + Leisure*

## The South of France You've Dreamed Of

Practice saying: “I’m vacationing in the south of France this year.” Wonderful as it sounds, it’s even better in real life. Think quiet country trails that wind through cherry orchards beneath rustic perched villages. In season, purple ribbons of lavender drape the hills. A friend (who also happens to be your local guide) insists on drizzling your warm bread with the award-winning olive oil she presses herself. You bask in the legendary sunlight, in the very landscapes Cezanne and van Gogh painted. The cultural landmarks are inspiring too – from the Roman’s Pont du Gard aqueduct to serene Sénanque Abbey. And fair warning: on our walking tour in Provence you can get very used to lunches that end with ripe figs, goat cheese and a final sip of chilly rosé. This is Provence at its purest, and you will never forget it.

## DAY 1

## AVIGNON

- Enjoy a guided walk of Avignon
- See the Palais de Papes, where the Popes lived in the 14th and 15th centuries

From the moment you set foot in Avignon, there's no question you're in Provence. The Rhône churns past the city's walls. Dominating it all is the Palais des Papes, home of the breakaway papacy from 1316 until the 15th century. Today, its sweeping forecourt is sprinkled with lovely cafes and it's a stage for street performers who vie for your attention. We'll see it all—including the Pont d'Avignon, the bridge to nowhere—on a get-acquainted walk. And we'll rove, as well, through twisting streets where the region's trademark geraniums overflow the numerous window boxes.

This evening we gather for a special welcome dinner.

**Overnight:** Avignon

**Meals:** D

## DAY 2

## PONT-DU-GARD / UZÉS

- Follow a countryside path to the Pont-du-Gard aqueduct • Walk past old watermills in the Alzon River Valley

The breakfast table may include bowls of seasonal fruit. And preserves and warm croissants and blood-orange juice and... well, you get the picture. Eat hearty, because today begins with a beautiful countryside walk. At the end: the Pont-du-Gard, one of the surviving Roman wonders of the world. Remnant of an aqueduct system built over 2,000 years ago, the arched structure soars over the Gardon River. It's a classical treasure...and a monumental lesson in the vivid history of the region. Late in the morning, we make a short journey to the charming village of Uzés for lunch at a café. You'll have the option of staying on a little longer to explore and shop, or you can choose from two walks into the Alzon River valley to see the old watermill houses. We return to our country hotel in the late afternoon where you may want to relax by the pool or enjoy a pastis before dinner. A few sips of the potent yellow aperitif and you may just start seeing Provence like a certain one-eared painter who also favored the drink.

**Overnight:** Sauveterre

**Meals:** B, D

## DAY 3

## CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

- Explore the Roman Theater in Orange
- Savor a Châteauneuf-du-Pape wine-tasting
- Cook with Michelin-starred chef Alain Nicolet

After a classic provençal breakfast, we'll take a leisurely amble through the region's vineyards, before our morning's destination: the Roman theater of Orange, another of the best-preserved structures dating back to ancient times.

After a morning spent among the vineyards, we think a visit to one of our favorite wineries is in order. Even if you're not a certified wine-lover, you'll recognize Châteauneuf-du-Pape as one of France's premiere wine regions. Because our group is small, we're able to enter the cellars for a tasting (where other groups are not permitted). We also see the ruins of Château des Papes, the summer retreat of the Popes. From the remaining walls, we get a magnificent view across the Rhône valley.

Our afternoon is the culinary pinnacle of the week as we join Michelin-starred Chef Alain Nicolet for an amazing cooking instruction. He will share the secrets of cuisine à la Provençale, the complex and savory flavors built on fresh herbs, peppery olive oil, garlic, and tomatoes. With the kitchen full of fresh Mediterranean produce, we roll up our sleeves, fire up the stove, and get a memorable hands-on lesson from a true master. Appetites stoked by the aromas of Chef Alain's kitchen, we sit down to the spectacular dinner we helped prepare.

**Overnight:** Sauveterre

**Meals:** B, D

## DAY 4

## ALPILLES / ST. RÉMY

- Taste the olive oil at our friend's mill
- Shopping the village market in Saint-Rémy



## DAILY ITINERARY

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### • Visit a 12th-century cloister once inhabited by Van Gogh

Today we cross over to the Rhône's opposite banks into the scenic heart of Provence, beginning with the Alpilles, named for the enchanting chain of small limestone mountains dotted with villages, cypress trees, and sunflowers. Along the way, we stop at Moulin Barbentane, the traditional olive mill that's a labor of love for our friends Isabelle and Jean. Their pressings have won international awards, and they tell us about the art of raising and selecting olives before treating us to a tasting of their oils.

Next we'll visit the weekly market in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, featuring fresh cheeses, fruits, wines, and other local products, perfect to fill our basket for the midday picnic that awaits. From Saint Rémy we'll walk (or board our minicoach, if you'd prefer) to Les Baux. Our early afternoon walk captures this gorgeous medieval village perched on a rocky crest jutting up abruptly from the plains below, and is the perfect view to accompany our authentic *pique-nique*.

As we venture into a scenic rock quarry, we'll take in the town's monumental sound and light show, Carrières de Lumières, where projected images of famous artwork are dramatically cast upon vast stretches of natural rock. When our eyes adjust back to the light of day, we'll make our way to St. Paul de Mausole. Near St. Rémy lies this 12th-century cloister where Van Gogh spent the last year of his life. Using reproductions, the caretakers make it easy to see how much of the local landscape appeared in his paintings.

We end the day at our luxurious hotel nestled in a 19th-century townhouse in the heart of St. Rémy, as we will for the remainder of our week together. This evening you may choose to swim, relax at the hotel or venture into St. Rémy for some shopping and dinner.

**Overnight:** Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

**Meals:** B, L

## DAY 5

### LUBERON / GORDES

- Walk to Sénanque Abbey, surrounded by lavender
- Explore the enigmatic stone hut Bories

After a relaxing start to the day over croissants and café au lait, we enter the Luberon, which you may recognize from Peter Mayle's book "A Year in Provence" and visit the village of Roussillon. It's a startling sight, constructed as it was from 17 different shades of red sandstone. We have a short, enjoyable walk through the ochre quarries, then depart for Sénanque Abbey, set in an isolated valley surrounded by a field of lavender and oaks. One of only three Cistercian monasteries in Provence, it is still occupied by the monks.

After lunch and a visit, we take an easy stroll to Gordes. Our trail winds past one of the trademark structures of Provence, a borie. Bories are amazing corbelled vaults of flagstones, stacked high with no mortar to secure them. Similar to Neolithic examples found elsewhere in Europe, these are believed to be from the 18th or 19th century. They're remotely located and some experts speculate that they were built to escape the plague.

If you'd prefer to skip this walk, you can ride ahead in the van and arrive in Gordes early, with time to go people-watching and shopping. We return to our hotel in the late afternoon to relax before our festive farewell dinner together.

**Overnight:** Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

**Meals:** B, D

## DAY 6

### AIX-EN-PROVENCE

- Follow Cézanne's footsteps • Bid farewell to Provence

From farm country, we venture to the elegant university town of Aix-en-Provence, home of Cézanne. A guided walk retraces many of the artist's footsteps, and includes the beautiful Cours Mirabeau Boulevard with its outdoor cafes, sculpted plane trees and fountains, as well as the flower and vegetable market. At the end of our visit, we'll deliver you directly to the city's TGV rail station.

**Meals:** B

# DAILY ITINERARY

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## Tour Hotels



### Hotel D'Europe

Built as a marquis' private residence in 1580, this 5-star property has been a hotel since 1799. The rooms are quiet and lovely, and you are steps from the Palais des Papes and the lively street life of Avignon.

**OVERNIGHT:** Avignon | **NIGHTS:** 1



### Chateau de Varenne

This 18th-century château has views of Mont Ventoux and the Luberon. Renovated to reflect its original splendor, it offers a garden where you can relax under a 400-year-old cedar tree, or cool off on a warm Provençal afternoon with a dip in the pool.

**OVERNIGHT:** Sauveterre | **NIGHTS:** 2



### Le Saint-Rémy

At the foot of the Alpilles and in the heart of the historic village of Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, this 5-star hotel is nestled in a 19th-century townhouse and features a spa, outdoor pool, and a restaurant with garden and terrace.

**OVERNIGHT:** Saint-Remy-de-Provence | **NIGHTS:** 2

## Tour Dates & Prices

To see the full list of dates and prices for this tour, go to our website by clicking [here](#).

Want to travel with just your group on a date of your choosing? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://www.classicjourneys.com/private) to learn more about Private Journeys.

## Trip Essentials

**TRIP LENGTH** 6 Days, 5 Nights

**START** Hotel d'Europe lobby, Avignon, France

**END** TGV Station, Aix-en-Provence, France

**TERRAIN** Easy to moderate on good trails, always with mini-van support.

## What's Included

- All breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners, and 1 cooking instruction
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

## Above & Beyond Benefits

- Privileged Access Events
- Wine on Us
- Perfect Pairings Dinners
- Invisible Check-In

**READY TO BOOK?**  
**CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION**

## Or give us a call

**1-800-200-3887**

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

[moreinfo@classicjourneys.com](mailto:moreinfo@classicjourneys.com)

### AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to [a whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

### ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

\*\*Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

# THE Classic Journeys Difference

## HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.



At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

*Franklin*  
President & Founder



## You can expect the highest standards:



### Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



### Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



### Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



### Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



### Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



### Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

## You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Provence...

- Savoring a private wine tasting at a Châteauneuf-du-Pape vineyard
- Visiting the 12th-century cloister where Van Gogh spent his final years
- Accepting an invitation from the monks at an active Cistercian monastery set amidst fields of lavender
- Walking to the soaring Pont du Gard, built by the Romans
- Luxuriating in your chateau hotel in St-Rémy-de-Provence

"Pre-trip material was extremely comprehensive, and the few questions we did have were handled at the time of our call and with thorough feedback."

-Donna K., Silverlake, WI.