

A Visit to Provence



Thursday 17 - Tuesday 22 October 2024

*A 5 night / 6 day tour based in
Aix-en-Provence and Avignon*

THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 2024

Independent travel arrangements to London Stansted.

We will check in for our flight with Ryanair to Marseilles, due to depart at 12.30 and arrive at 15.30 local time (*please note that flights are not included within the tour price and the schedule may be subject to change*).

We will be met on arrival by our local coach and guide for the transfer to **Aix-en-Provence**, where we will check in to the centrally located **Hôtel Le Concorde** (3 star) for overnight accommodation. A **welcome dinner** will be taken in a nearby local restaurant.

FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER 2024

We will check out of the hotel after breakfast and meet our local guide for a **guided walking tour** of **Aix-en-Provence**, formerly the capital of Provence and often known as 'the city of a thousand fountains'. These, combined with the quiet squares, fine mansion houses and delightful streets and alleyways, make it arguably one of France's most beautiful cities.

We will visit the **Granet Museum**, housing an ever expanding collection which includes works by Ingres, Degas, Renoir, Gauguin, Monet, Cézanne, Van Gogh, Picasso and Bonnard. Its permanent collection makes it one of the richest provincial museums in France. There will also be time to explore the **White Penitents Chapel**, an extension of the Granet Museum. The chapel is a jewel of 17th century Aix architecture that displays the majority of the museum's Jean Planque collection, who was a personal friend of Picasso. There will be free time to take lunch in Aix.

We will travel by coach to the **Château d'Ansouis** for a **private guided visit**. The history of the castle dates back to the 10th century when it was constructed as a military fortress. It has been remodelled extensively over the years to its present configuration, and the exterior combines medieval and Renaissance architectural styles. The interior of the castle, which is now a family home, is decorated with a collection of ornate furnishings, tapestries and works of art. The gardens and terraces overlook the Vallée 'Aigues.

We will continue to **Avignon** and check in to the **Avignon Grand Hôtel** (4 star), our base for the next 4 nights on a bed and breakfast basis. **Dinner** will be taken in the hotel restaurant this evening.

SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER 2024

After breakfast at the hotel we will meet our local guide and embark on a **guided walking tour** of Avignon, a walled city located at the confluence of the rivers Rhône and Durance. We will visit the **Pont d'Avignon**, a medieval bridge that once linked the two banks of the Rhône and today retains just 4 of its original 22 arches. We will also visit the **Palais des Papes**. Lying at the centre of fertile countryside, the imposing Palace of the Popes acts as reminder of the long residency of the pontiffs, who were exiled from Rome. The papal court resided here from 1309 to a 1377, during which time the modest Episcopal dwelling was transformed into a magnificent palace. There will be free time to take lunch in Avignon.

This afternoon we will travel by coach to **Orange**. The historical town contains two of the the finest Roman monuments in Europe; the **Théâtre Antique d'Orange**, which is known for its world famous concerts, and the **Arc de Triomphe d'Orange** that celebrates Julius Caesar's conquest of the Gauls and victory over the Greek fleet.

We will also visit **The Museum of Art and History of Orange**, installed in a 17th century mansion and housing a fine collection of art and artifacts from the region of Provence, as well as other parts of Europe.

Late afternoon we will travel to Châteauneuf-du-Pape for a **wine tasting**. We will return to our hotel by coach for an evening at leisure.

SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER 2024

After breakfast at the hotel we will travel by coach to **Gordes** on the foothills of the Monts of Vaucluse (panoramic view only). We will visit the nearby Cistercian **Abbey of Notre-Dame de Senanque**, founded in 1148.

We will continue to **Roussillon**, located in the Luberon region of France. Surrounded by large ochre deposits, the village is famous for its magnificent cliffs and the colourful façades of the buildings along the winding central streets, varying in shades of light yellow to dark red. There will be some free time to take lunch.

This afternoon we will visit **Fontaine-de-Vaucluse**, that takes its name from the surrounding spring that feeds into the River Sorgue. Within the village there are several riverside shops and restaurants and an 11th century Romanesque church, and the ruins of a Medieval castle overlook Fontaine-de-Vaucluse.

Should time allow we will also visit **L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue**, a small Provencal town known for its selection of antique shops and market stalls. The River Sorgue runs through the town, and we will see a number of waterwheels that once powered the thriving textile and paper-making industries in L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue in the mid 19th century. We will return to our hotel by coach for an evening at leisure.

MONDAY 21 OCTOBER 2024

After breakfast at the hotel we will travel by coach to the town of **Les Baux de Provence**. Les Baux is dominated by its deserted citadel, but the living village below retains Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance detail and many of the houses are hewn out of bare rock.

We will continue to **St Rémy de Provence**, a town of tree-lined boulevards, narrow streets, fountains and the birthplace of the prophet Nostradamus. We will visit the nearby **Monastery of Saint Paul de Mausole**, a former 11th century Benedictine monastery. Franciscan monks established a psychiatric asylum within the property in the early 1600s, and Vincent Van Gogh admitted himself from 1889-1890. Works including 'The Starry Night', 'The Wheat Field' and 'The Ravine' were among the many he produced during his time here.

We will continue to **Arles**, a charming town boasting many important Roman remains. Its position on the River Rhone makes it a natural historic gateway to the

Camargue. There will be time to take lunch on arrival. Visits in Arles will include the **Roman Amphitheatre**, one of the best preserved monuments of Roman Provence, the **Roman Theatre** which was once a fortress and now acts as home to the Arles Festival, and the 12th century church of **St Trophime**.

We will return to our hotel. After some time to freshen up a **farewell dinner** will be served this evening in a local restaurant.

TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2024

We will check out of the hotel after breakfast and travel to Vers-Pont-du-Gard, to visit the eponymous bridge. Built to bring water to the city of Nîmes, the **Pont du Gard** comprises three tiers of archways and is the highest of all elevated Roman aqueducts, and one of the best preserved.

We will continue to the city of **Nîmes**. Another pivotal outpost of the Roman Empire, it is often referred to as the 'Rome of France' due to its well preserved Roman monuments. We will have a short **guided walking tour** of Nîmes followed by free time to take lunch.

We will transfer by coach to Marseilles Airport for our return flight with Ryanair to London Stansted, due to depart at 16.35 and arrive at 17.35 (*please note that flights are not included within the tour price and the schedule may be subject to change*).

Independent onward travel arrangements.

Please note that this tour involves a reasonable amount of walking and it is therefore unsuitable for those with mobility problems.

Please note that as this tour has been planned many months in advance, the final itinerary may vary slightly from the above.

Heritage
GROUP TRAVEL

Charlotte House, 12 Charlotte Street
Bath, BA1 2NE
Tel: 01225 466620
www.grouptravel.co.uk



TOUR PRICE

£1,395 per person sharing a twin/double room (*excluding flights*)
£220 single supplement

PRICE INCLUDES

Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation in Aix
4 nights' bed and breakfast accommodation in Avignon
3 dinners
Wine tasting in Châteauneuf-du-Pape
Private guided tour of the Château d'Ansouis
Services of a local tour guide throughout
All local coach transfers in France as per itinerary
All booking and entrance fees as per the itinerary
VOX audio headsets
Gratuities

HOTEL DETAILS

Hôtel Le Concorde (3 star)

66-68 Boulevard Du Roi René, 13100 Aix-en-Provence

hotel-aixenprovence-concorde.com

Avignon Grand Hôtel (4 star)

34 Boulevard Saint Roch, 84000 Avignon

avignon-grand-hotel.com

MINIMUM NUMBERS

The price of the tour is based on a minimum of
25 paying participants.

PASSPORT & VISA REQUIREMENTS

British Nationals should be in possession of a valid 10 year passport: visas are not required for travel to France. Other Nationals should contact the French Embassy to confirm current visa requirements.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a condition of booking that each tour participant carries full travel insurance and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have adequate insurance for this tour. We have arranged a scheme with specialists Brokersure Limited who are fully authorised and regulated by the FCA (firm reference number 501719) full details of which can be found on the FCA website www.fca.org.uk. Please call Brokersure on 0330 880 3625 for a quote. *Please ensure that any policy has adequate cover for COVID-19 related issues.*

SUGGESTED FLIGHTS

We hope to use the following flights with Ryanair:

17/10/24 - Stansted/Marseilles - 12.30 (15.30) FR 6541

22/10/24 - Marseilles/Stansted - 16.35 (17.35) FR 6542

All flights are subject to schedule change by the airline.

The tour price shown **excludes** airfares as these can vary on a daily basis. Heritage Group Travel can book flights on your behalf and will pass on the airfare at cost price plus an administration fee of £10 per person. We anticipate flights to be in the region of £350 per person but should fares excessively exceed this amount we will contact you. In the unlikely event that the tour does not materialise your deposit will be refunded in full. Please indicate on the booking form if you would prefer to make your own travel arrangements. We ask you **not** to book your flights until you have received written confirmation that your booking has been accepted and that the tour will be going ahead.

YOUR FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Our ATOL Number is 3707. All the flights and flight-inclusive tours in this brochure are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to:
www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate

BOOKING & FINAL TRAVEL DETAILS

To reserve your place on the tour, please send your completed booking form and deposit of **£500 per person**, to **Heritage Group Travel**, as soon as possible and no later than **Friday 26 April 2024**. As places on the tour are limited, bookings will be accepted on a 'first come, first served' basis. You will receive a confirmation of your booking combined with an invoice for the final balance. Final travel details (itinerary flight ticket and luggage label) will be available approximately 10-14 days prior to travel. The final balance is due by **Thursday 25 July 2024**.