

# **Presents:**

# Rhone Valley, Provence & The Riviera

Travel Dates: October 19-29, 2016

11 days, 9 nights accommodation, sightseeing, meals and airfare from Boston



Experience the highlights and hidden gems of France. This tour will bring you to Lyon, France gastronomical capital, also known for its hidden Traboules, silk production and of course, the Beaujolais! Then journey to Provence to experience first- hand the azure skies, fragrant fields and windswept landscapes that inspired artists like Cézanne and Van Gogh. Visit Avignon, Aix en Provence, the Roussillon and Luberon areas and the famed hilltop villages. Finally, arrive in Nice, on the "Cote d'Azur". See the Chagall and Matisse Museum and sample some of the local gastronomy and wine tastings. Join us on our tour of Rhone-Alps, Provence & the French Riviera and enjoy a wonderful inspiring experience - one that you will never forget.

Museum School at the Springfield Museums 21 Edward Street, Springfield, MA 01103 Contact: Jeanne Fontaine <u>ifontaine@springfieldmuseums.org</u> PH: 413 314 6482 Day 1: Oct 19, 2016: Depart the US on a group flight from Boston to Lyon, France.

Day 2: Oct 20, 2016: Welcome to Lyon. Upon arrival, collect your luggage and meet your driver and assistant at the exit. Transfer to your hotel and check in. Rest of the day at leisure. In the evening, meet our fellow travelers at a welcome dinner at the hotel. Overnight in Lyon.

#### Day 3: Oct 21, 2016: Old Lyon, its Traboules and silk printing

Breakfast at the hotel. In the morning, visit Old Lyon's Renaissance District: This unique area of gothic and renaissance architecture along the banks of the river Saone has been listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. After visiting the gothic cathedral, wander through the narrow cobbled streets and "traboules". These famous covered passageways go from one street to the next via corridors through houses hiding superbly renovated architectural treasures: inner courtyards, galleries "à l'Italienne," spiral staircases, etc. Free time for lunch on your own in Lyon. Lyon is the capital of silk weaving in France. You will discover the Traboules winding down the hill of the Croix-Rousse where 30,000 "canuts" or silk weavers lived in the 19th century. The "traboules" were very important for them. You will understand why! History is everywhere on the bustling slopes of the Croix-Rousse as we discover the ruins of the Gallo-Roman amphitheater where the first Christians died as martyrs. Additionally, we will see how professional screen printing is done and view a demonstration of painting by hand on silk velvet. Return to the hotel. Dinner in a local restaurant to highlight the wonderful food of this region of France (drinks included).

#### Day 4: Oct 22, 2016: Beaujolais wine region.

Breakfast at the hotel. In the morning, head to the valley of the river Azergues! The trip through the south of the Beaujolais country goes through Châtillon, Chessy-les-Mines, and the Bois d'Oingt, and up to the charming village of Oingt perched on the top of a hill where we stop for a visit. It is completely built in "pierres dorées" the local golden-colored sandstone and offers a magnificent panorama of the surrounding countryside. Continue to Chateau de Javernand. Chateau Javernand is a charming town house built in the late eighteenth century with flowering gardens offering a panoramic.view of the valley. After a guided tour of the domain and the cellar, you will have the opportunity to taste the wine produced at the chateau, as well as a local specialty: the Mâchon! The tasting is followed by a light lunch (included). After lunch, continue to Beaujeu for a guided walking tour of the city. Beaujeu is the historic capital of Beaujolais region named after the lords of the region: Beaujeu - Beaujolais. It was one of the three baronies of the kingdom of France, at a time, between the XI and XV century, when Beaujeu entered by marriage into the royal family. Free time to visit the Marius Audin museum of Art and Traditions or the Maison du Terroir Beaujolais (entrances not included). Return to the hotel. Dinner on your own and overnight in Lyon.

#### Day 5: Oct 23, 2016: Avignon, Palace of the popes, Les Baux de Provence and Saint Paul de Mausole

Breakfast at the hotel. Morning transfer to the train station in Lyon and board the TGV high speed train to Avignon, Provence. Upon arrival, enjoy a panoramic tour of Avignon, the city of the Popes during the 14th century. View the medieval walls, the Pont d'Avignon on the Rhone River and the Popes' Palace- the largest gothic palace in all of Europe. Free time for lunch in Avignon. In the afternoon, visit the charming village of Les Baux de Provence. Officially classified and labelled as "one of the most beautiful villages in France," the village has kept the narrow streets, the imposing ruins of a castle and the heritage of the proud lords and troubadours from the Middle Ages. From the rocky plateau, admire the breathtaking views and exceptional scenery. We continue with a visit to St Paul de Mausole hospital where Van Gogh was admitted. This beautiful old monastery complex is a masterpiece of Provençal Romanesque art located just beside the Roman site of Glanum. It is popular today because of Van Gogh's stay here in 1889-90. From the top of the stairs you can see the wheat field that Vincent Van Gogh contemplated and painted during his year of confinement in the men's pavilion. Saint Paul de Mausole remains today a psychiatric health institution. Check in at our hotel and dinner on your own. Overnight in Avignon.

#### Day 6: Oct 24, 2016: Luberon Villages, Gordes , Roussillon and Bonnieux

Breakfast at the hotel. Journey to the amazing villages of Luberon. First stop in Roussillon. While Provence is more a state of mind than a place – you can't actually point to Provence on a map – the hilltop village of Roussillon is exactly what visitors think of when they say they want to visit Provence. Picturesque, compact, colorful and with astounding views of the countryside, this village in the Vaucluse couldn't be more Provençal if it tried. Continue to Gordes, one of those "hidden gem" towns, often overlooked for the more popular Avignon nearby. It is officially classified and labelled as "one of the most beautiful villages in France." Its residents are justly proud of the title and much care has been taken to accommodate visitors while preserving the original flavor of the village. Proceed to Bonnieux, perched on a narrow, steep ridge, it rises up from a flat plain to the 12th-century "Eglise Haute" church at the top with its elevated, pointed steeple. Return to the hotel. Check in and dinner in a local restaurant to discover some of the typical food of the area. (drinks included). Overnight in Avignon.

#### Day 7: Oct 25, 2016: Arles, Nimes and Pont du Gard

Breakfast at the hotel. Travel to the spectacular Pont du Gard aqueduct, a masterpiece of Roman engineering built to bring water from the Uzes Springs to the city of Nimes. We will continue to Nimes with its extensive Roman relics, in particular two of the best preserved – the spectacular Amphitheatre, and the "Maison Caree," a small remarkably preserved Roman Temple. We will have free time for lunch in Nimes. In the afternoon, proceed to Arles to follow in the footsteps of Van Gogh and visit the sites that influenced his artistic creativity during his stay in Arles. We will explore more ancient sites including the church of Saint Trophime (carved portal from the 12th century) built on the site of an 8th-century church dedicated to Saint Stephen and Van Gogh's Café Terrace on the Place du Forum where the statue of Nobel Laureate author Frederic Mistral stands. Return to Avignon, dinner on your own and overnight.

#### Day 8: Oct 26, 2016: Aix En Provence and transfer to Nice.

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure by coach to Aix-en-Provence to discover the city of water and art. Walking tour of the Cours Mirabeau, decorated with fountains and edged with 17th and 18th century private mansions. Discover the architectural wealth of the city: the 4 Dolphins Fountain, the Preachers Fountain, the Albertas Square, the town-hall square, the Cardeurs Square and Saint-Sauveur cathedral. Visit Cézanne's Studio (Atelier des Lauves) and experience the artist's most private space. On September 1, 1902, Cézanne gradually settled into his large country studio. He worked there every day during the last four years of his life, producing significant masterworks. In this studio, the objects he treasured, the models of his last still lifes, his furniture and his tools intimately connect you with the painter. Lunch in Aix-en-Provence. Continue to Nice and upon arrival check in at the hotel. The rest of the day is at your leisure with dinner on your own. Overnight in Nice.

#### Day 9: Oct 27, 2016: Nice and Matisse and Chagall Museums.

Breakfast at the hotel. Start the day with a visit to Mt. Boron and enjoy the views overlooking the Bay of Angels and the Old Town of Nice. You'll see Castle Hill, site of the trading town founded by the Greeks 2,500 years ago. Immerse yourself in Nice's history on Place Garibaldi in the Old Town and marvel at the modern New Town as you walk along Promenade des Arts, home to the Modern Art Museum, Sosno's Library and the Acropolis Center. Arriving in Cimiez, winter home of Queen Victoria, we will visit the Matisse Museum and walk among the olive tree gardens and the 15th century garden of the Franciscan Monastery. You will also visit the extraordinary Russian Cathedral, the most beautiful outside of Russia. Return by Promenade des Anglais passing its famous landmarks and "Belle Epoque" buildings. This morning will end with a visit to the flower market in Cours Saleya. Lunch in a local restaurant to try the famous "Salade Niçoise" and local seafood specialties. In the afternoon, visit the Marc Chagall Museum. This national museum was created by the artist's will to bring together his most important biblical works in one dedicated space. These works consist of 17 paintings that make up the Biblical Message. The permanent collection is the biggest public collection of works by Marc Chagall. Organized around the set of works produced by the painter on the Old Testament themes, it is supplemented by a large number of works of secular and religious inspiration: over 400 painting, gouaches, drawings, wash drawings and pastels. Dinner on your own. Overnight in Nice.

## Day 10: Oct 28, 2016: Saint Paul de Vence, Maeght Foundation, Rosaire chapel & wine tasting, light lunch in a chateau.

Breakfast at the hotel. Travel to the second-most visited village in France, Saint Paul de Vence. With its cobblestone streets and chic art galleries, it's easy to see why the town is so popular. After a short walking tour, we will visit the Maeght Foundation. This exceptional site contains one of the most important collections in Europe, with paintings, sculptures, drawings and graphic works of modern art from the 20th century (Bonnard, Braque, Calder, Chagall, Chillida, Giacometti, Léger, Miró, Ubac...) and many contemporary artists. Continue to the Rosaire Chapel. Conceived by Henri Matisse, the Rosaire Chapel is one of the greatest sacred art monuments of the 20th Century and the first designed entirely by a painter. From 1948 to 1951, Matisse drew up the plans for the edifice and all the details of its design: architecture, stained glass windows, interior furnishings, murals and vestments of the priests. The first stone of the chapel was laid in 1949. The inauguration and consecration of Notre Dame of Rosaire, took place in 1951. For Henry Matisse, "this work required me four years of an exclusive and entiring effort and it is the fruit of my whole working life. In spite of all its imperfections I consider it as my masterpiece.".

Day 11: Oct 29, 2016: Nice / U.S.: After breakfast, transfer to airport for your flight back home. (Breakfast)

**Please note:** This tour includes moderate physical activity. The itinerary blends some longer days with shorter days and more leisure time. Walking tours, as well as walking slightly longer distances, up stairs or on uneven walking surfaces should be expected.

# **OPTIONAL POST 3-Night PARIS EXTENTION**

**Day 11: Oct 29<sup>th</sup>: Paris:** Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to Nice train station or airport with our assistant. Our journey by train or flight from Nice to Paris will last approx. 6hrs. Upon arrival in Paris, meet our local assistant and transfer to the hotel. Check in at the hotel and dinner on your own. Overnight in Paris.

**Day 12:** Oct 30<sup>th</sup>: Panoramic Paris, Lunch cruise and Montmartre: After breakfast, depart for a full-day tour of the magnificent city of Paris. Enjoy a sightseeing tour of the city's classic landmarks: the Champs Elysées, Arc de Triomphe, Eiffel Tower, the Invalides and its grand avenues. Then, we will have a wonderful lunch cruise aboard a glass boat on the Seine River with a panoramic view of the city You can either enjoy your afternoon at leisure to visit the Eiffel Tower (tickets not included) or rejoin your guide and coach for a visit Montmartre Paris district and the Sacré Coeur basilica. Return to the hotel. Dinner on your own. Overnight in Paris.

**Day 13: Oct 31**<sup>st</sup>: **Optional Chartres and Versailles:** After breakfast, enjoy the day at leisure to explore the many charms of Paris on your own or you may instead choose to take a full-day optional tour to Versailles & Chartres. The Court of Versailles was the center of political power in France from 1682, when Louis XIV moved from Paris, until the royal family was forced to return to the capital in October 1789, after the beginning of the French Revolution. Versailles is, therefore, famous not only as an opulent royal dwelling, but a symbol of the system of absolute monarchy of the Ancien Régime and its eventual downfall. The Palace at Versailles is unrivalled, in perhaps the world, by the level of artistry on display in the appointments of its many salons and rooms. The attention to detail and opulence are truly astounding and a must-see. Continuing on, you will discover The Cathedral of Chartres. Partially built starting in 1145, and then reconstructed over a 26-year period after the fire of 1194, the Chartres Cathedral marks the high point of French Gothic art. Marvel at this masterpiece with its vast nave, in pure ogival style; the porches, adorned with fine sculptures from the middle of the 12th century; the magnificent 12th-and-13th-century stained-glass windows, and the very mysterious labyrinth, built circa 1200, laid into the floor, all in remarkable condition. Return to the hotel and evening on your own. Overnight in Paris.

Day 14: Nov 1st: Departure: Breakfast at the hotel. Check out and transfer to Paris airport with our assistant. End of our tour.

# MAIN PROGRAM INCLUSIONS:

- Round-trip air transportation from Boston (BOS). Fuel surcharges and air taxes are included (valid at time of printing)
- First class hotel accommodation for 9 nights, staying 3 nights in Lyon MGallery Carlton, 4 star hotel centrally located; 3 nights in Avignon at Hotel de l'Horloge 4 star hotel centrally located; 3 nights in Nice at Mercure Nice Centre Grimaldi 4 star hotel centrally located or similar hotels including hotel taxes and service charges
- Daily breakfasts, 3 lunches and 4 dinners with wine water and coffee tea included.
- Porterage at the hotels (based on one bag per person)
- Deluxe air-conditioned motor-coach with driver throughout the itinerary
- Airport transfers with English speaking assistant
- Local city taxes
- Local tour leader/guide throughout the itinerary
- Sightseeings: Guided tours of Lyon, Beujolais, Avignon, Luberon, St Remy de Provence, Les Baux de Provence, Alres , Nimes, Aix en Provence, Nice and Saint Paul de Vence
- Entraces fees / wine tastings and inclusions as per itinerary
- TGV Train ticket from Lyon to Avignon

# EXCLUSIONS:

- Meals and beverage not mentioned in itinerary
- Entrance fees not mentioned in itinerary
- Personal expenses (Mini bar, phones, etc..)
- Tips for guides, assistants and drivers. (Approx. \$120)
- Travel Insurance

### PRICING:

Main program tour price is \$4,995 per person in double occupancy. For single occupancy, add \$725.

# Optional 3-Night Paris Extension is \$895 per person in double occupancy, \$325 single supplement.

Fuel surcharges are included at \$232 per person and air taxes are included at \$90 per person. Fuel surcharges and air taxes are valid at the time of printing and are subject to change. Hotels may be substituted with similar category hotels. Other gateways are available at an additional cost. The price does not include tips, travel insurance, airline luggage overage fees, passports fees, visas as well as items of a personal nature. Porterage includes 1 suitcase (regular size 23kg) + 1 carry-on per person maximum allowed.

# **OPTIONAL POST PARIS 3 NIGHT PROGRAM INCLUSIONS:**

- Private transfer from hotel in Nice to Nice train station and from Paris train station to Hotel in Paris + assistant
- Train ticket 2<sup>nd</sup> class from Nice to Paris (5 ½ hours TGV)
- 3 nights at the 4 star centrally located Pullman Bercy hotel in Paris including local city taxes
- Daily breakfast (x3)
- Porterage at the hotel (1 bag per person in and out)
- Full day tour of Paris & Montmartre including professional English speaking guide and private deluxe coach + tickets to Montmartre train
- Lunch cruise on the Seine River 3 course meal with drinks (including wine, water and coffee)
- Airport transfer from the hotel + assistant

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Land only option (Deduct \$ 850 per person) Note: *Transfers not included. Optional Post Paris 3 Night extension: \$895 In DBL occup; + \$325 In SGL occup.							
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