



## IMPRESSIONS OF PROVENCE AND PARIS

**\$6500 PER PERSON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY**

**September 28 – October 5, 2022 (Depart US on September 27)**

**IF requirements of vaccine or proof or, anything else related to the World Wide Pandemic are required you must present proof before you depart the US to JUST LADIES TRAVELING – Adventures and Cultures, Inc.**

### **DAY 1 – Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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#### Arrival in Avignon TGV Station

Welcome by your private English-speaking driver and English host at the main exit of the platform and private transfer to la Mirande

Set in an old mansion at the foot of the Palais des Papes in the heart of Avignon, La Mirande is steeped in secular history. This timeless refuge offers a dreamy, relaxing and authentic experience in a refined, 18th century-esque décor. With both a gastronomic restaurant and a chef's table, the hotel serves honest, living cuisine with respect for ingredients and humankind; a culinary hymn to land and its biodiversity.

The hotel is named after the famous room in the Palais des Papes, La Mirande, where the Pope's representatives held receptions for the city's notables and visiting high-ranking officials. Its ancient walls hold years of history. Originally a Cardinal's Palace in the 14th century, the ruins of La Mirande were restored during the 17th century to create the Hôtel de Vervins and its baroque façade by architect Pierre Mignard, later becoming the Hôtel Pamard between the late 18th and 20th centuries.

The Stein family researched the typical styles and materials of the region in depth before beginning restoration works between 1987 and 1990. While some listed features reflect the early origins of La Mirande, its owners wanted to recreate the atmosphere of an 18th century aristocratic residence, where period tapestries and chandeliers harmoniously co-exist with tufted armchairs and master paintings. The 18th century interior en vogue in the Age of Enlightenment were recreated when, in 1990 La Mirande opened its doors as a hotel-restaurant. This very French house was inspired by the grace of living that, for some, existed before the time of revolutions.

The twenty-six upper-floor rooms boast a unique décor, each with its own 18th century wall hanging recreated by Braquenié, Le Manach, Canovas, Comoglio and Rubelli, to name a few. The abundant Indienne fabrics, also known as “toile de Jouy”, are a perfect match for the silk-lined curtains with large pleats that pool softly on the floor. All modern comforts are seamlessly integrated into the interior design, as evinced by the “mirror” televisions. The bright and cheerful rooms quickly help tired travellers relax and unwind. Many of them afford a splendid and unique view of the high walls of the Palais des Papes. The bathroom constitutes a noble room in itself, with a delightfully unexpected décor of vintage Mauny block-printed wallpaper, antique faucets and Carrare marble.



*Please note that due to the situation of the Mirande in the historical district, the coach depending on the number of guests may not be able to park in front of the hotel, and a 5/10 minutes' walk maybe required*  
*Our host and the hotel will take care of the luggage*

Check in and time at leisure to Rest

Tonight the group will gather for a light dinner.

## **DAY 2 – Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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**9am - Meet your guide and departure for a walking visit of Avignon Historical center and The Popes' Palace.**

This graceful city, famed for its annual performing art festival, is also an animated student city and an ideal spot for discovering Provence.

Its turn as the papal seat of power under the 14<sup>th</sup> Century has bestowed the city with a treasury of magnificent art and architecture, none grander than the massive medieval fortress and The Popes' Palace.



Main sights consist of the ramparts, the “Palais des Papes” (Popes’ Palace) a site of the UNESCO World Heritage. Built in 1309, and the world’s largest Gothic palace. (Frescos Chapel, Pope’s apartment, and the “Stag Room”, decorated with superb hunting scenes. On the Palace Square stands the Romanesque Notre Dame Cathedral, (17<sup>th</sup> C.); and at the opposite, the “Hotel des Monnaies”.

**Guided city tour of Avignon:** Since the door of the Rhône, your guide will speak to you about the famous bridge of Avignon, the Bridge Saint-Benezet of the 12th century, and ramparts of the 14th. By taking the district of the balance, the place of the Roman city "Aveno", you will make your way to **The Popes' Palace**. Having told you the story of the rock of Doms and various monuments which line the place, your guide will lead you to the Palace for a visit of the largest Gothic palace in the world (14th s).



**Meet your driver and departure for Villeuneuve les Avignon and lunch**

#### **1PM Lunch at the Bistrot du Moulin**

Adjacent to the Charterhouse Mill, in the unusual setting of its ancient barn, the Mill Bistro offers a warm ambience and seasonal, generous and authentic cooking.

The chef emphasizes the importance of fresh local products that are prepared on site. The origin of dishes is rigorously controlled. The regional wine list is designed to perfectly match the spirit of the Bistro.

Specialty of the Bistro: the table of home-made desserts created by the Patisserie Chefs. As well as being a delight for the eyes, it is an invitation to sample different flavours from fruit tarts to subtly-perfumed sweets, fruits in syrup, and little individual delicacies to satisfy all tastes



#### **The day will continue with a Visit of the Benedictine Abbey of St-André at Villeneuve-les-Avignon**

A visit to the remains of the 10C Benedictine Abbey of St-André at Villeneuve-les-Avignon is well worth the climb. Its stunning Italian and Mediterranean gardens are rich in rose bowers, ornamental pools and

fountains, statues and tall cypress trees. The views over Avignon are quite spectacular and even better, deckchairs are available so you can relax while sampling the views.

**RETURN TO your hotel around 4.30 pm**

**Time to change**

**5 pm – Enjoy a cooking class at your hotel followed by a diner ( wine included)**

The old kitchen installed in the middle of the mid-19th century to serve the needs of the Pamards, then one of the leading families in Avignon, is also the setting for the “Table Haute” cooking school. Its resident chef and some of the region’s greatest chefs lead cooking classes for all culinary enthusiasts, from those looking for an introduction to the art of Provençal cooking to those wishing to enhance their knowledge of gastronomy.

In keeping with La Mirande’s spirit of conviviality, novice chefs will have the pleasure of inviting friends to join them round the table and share in the meal they have prepared.



**DAY 3 – Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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**9am Meet your private English speaking guide and driver and departure for a full day visit of the Luberon , starting with a visit of Gordes**

Gordes is a very beautiful old village, perched on the southern edge of the high Plateau de Vaucluse. The stone buildings built in tight against the base of the cliffs and those perched on the rocks above, including the 12th-century castle, are made of a beige stone that glows orange in the morning sun. The view from the village is a southern panorama out across fields and forests and small perched villages to the Montagne du Luberon.



**Then you will take the road to Menerbes for the Visit of the Jardin de Carmejane**

The Luberon region of Provence is famous for its hilltop villages, vineyards and gardens. One of the most picturesque villages in the region is Menerbes, at the heart of which stands La Carmejane, an 11th century bastide with terraced gardens that seem to spring straight from the rocks. Perched high up on the cliff top, the garden enjoys spectacular views north across vine covered fields to the far away Mont Ventoux



## Lunch and visit of Menerbes

Menerbes is best approached from the north, when it emerges from the sea of cherry orchards and vineyards, like a ship at anchor, the outline of its deck picked out by blocks of ancient buildings, churches and citadels.

Menerbes has survived centuries of strife and Peter Mayle remarkably well. When Mayle wrote *A Year in Provence* here it brought the coachloads to photograph every square inch of the village. But now Menerbes has returned to what it was - a beautiful, quiet medieval village, exquisitely poised over the Luberon valley.

At one end of Menerbes is the Citadelle, a miniature fortress of the 16th century, and at the other end are the cemetery and the chateau du Castellet, where the expressionist painter Nicolas de Stael lived.

In between is a walk along the top of Menerbes, through paths and alleys, the Place de la Mairie, and the many example of 16th and 17th century architecture, till you get to the church and cemetery, where all journeys end.

All along the way the views over the steeply pitched sides are memorable, whether to the south and the Luberon mountain, or northward over the plain to the Monts de Vaucluse and the white-tipped Mont Ventoux.

This is the upper, less-visited level of Menerbes. Halfway up are the shops and restaurants.



## The day will end with a visit for the beautiful village of Lacoste

Lacoste takes you up, up through the centuries, from the little restaurant at the bottom with its two curry options, past the Café de la France and its spectacular hanging terrace. Then the Mairie and up into the middle ages, over heavy cobbles as you enter the ancient heart of the old Lacoste through the Portail de la Garde.

Up here little has changed except the tread of time, from as far back as the 1400s. Here there are no shops or restaurants, just a jumble of ornately decorated doors, mullioned windows, and intriguing architectural details.

Then suddenly you reach the Marquis de Sade's castle at the very top of Lacoste. It is in a state of partial ruin, but it has been under renovation since the 1950s, first by one man as a labour of love, and now by the fashion designer Pierre Cardin, who also presides over the Festival Lacoste in July and August.

The Festival Lacoste is a series of musical, theatrical and other artistic events, including opera in the theatre formed in the quarry at Lacoste.



**End of the tour around 5/6 pm**

**DAY 4 – Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

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**9am Meet your private English speaking guide and driver and departure for a morning visit of St Remy de Provence and the local weekly market**

Saint Rémy is one of the "must-sees" in Provence. Surrounded by lush green perfumed valleys, its ancient streets are lined with beautifully restored old houses. While strolling through the narrow winding streets you will discover fantastic old fountains, shady squares, picturesque restaurants, and elegant boutiques. From the place Jean Jaurès to the gates of the old town, you will come across a long succession of "hôtels particuliers" (often converted into museums or art galleries), convents, chapels, and ornate houses from the 17th and 18th centuries. The beauty of the countryside and the quality of light has inspired many artists, writers and painters. Without a doubt, the most famous was Vincent Van Gogh who produced more than 150 paintings of the countryside surrounding Saint Rémy de Provence. You can walk to the very same places painted by the artist and discover the mountain of St Rémy, fields of wheat and coquelicots (wild flowers), olive trees and cypresses - all just as it was more than a century ago.



**Lunch at Oustau - 3 courses , 1/2 bottle of water , 1/4 wine & coffee or tea per person – same MENU for all guests. Oustau – L' OUSTAU DE BAUMANIER IS SIMPLY ONE OF THE BEST RESTAURANTS IN FRANCE AND WILL BE A GASTRONOMIC MEMORY OF PROVENCE.**

The majesty of this 16C Provençal country house doesn't detract from the cuisine. Indeed the chef concocts intensely flavoured dishes that take inspiration from the region, and alternates long-established favourites with more modern flashes of inspiration. In fine weather you can eat on the superb shady terrace looking out over the Alpilles.

*A la Carte – 2 separates tables one of 7 and one of 8 guests. Please note that there may be a 10-15 minute difference in services / courses between the tables due to different servers and kitchen progression.*

## Les Baux de Provence

A brilliant view of Arles, the Camargue and the Alpilles can be seen from the look-out points. This immense and superb stone fortress is without doubt one of the "must-sees" on the Provencal trail. The village is officially classified and labeled as "one of the most beautiful villages in France". Its cultural heritage is exceptionally rich, with 22 architectural treasures classified as "Historic Monuments". The village has been painstakingly restored and is now one of the most popular attractions in the region. The village can only be visited by foot where you'll admire the ancient houses that have been carefully restored, beautiful Renaissance façades and several magnificent "hôtels particuliers".



**Return to your hotel around 6 pm**

## DAY 5 – Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

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**9am - Meet your private English speaking driver and your guide and departure for a morning visit of Fontaine de Vaucluse**

**Fontaine du Vaucluse:** 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.



**Around 10./10.30 am you will be driven to Isle sur la Sorgue and some time at leisure for lunch and the weekly flea market**

**Isle sur Sorgue** is a compact medieval town is built on the islands of five branches of the Sorgue River, 7 km downstream from its source at Fontaine-de-Vaucluse. The river flows through, past, in and around the town, in its many natural beds and several canals. Even without gondolas, water adds a special beauty and character to a town. Sorgue has its many river branches and canals, huge overhanging plane trees and several large, lovely waterwheels. Even if the many mills are no longer working, some of the waterwheels still turn.



**On your way back to your hotel , you will make a detour to chateau neuf du Pape and a private wine tasting**

**Châteauneuf-du-Pape** is the best wine of Provence. In richness and in complexity, it compares with the greatest wines of Bordeaux and Burgundy. The Châteauneuf du Pape wine is thick, harsh, powerful and richly colored. It is elaborated with 13 authorized and controlled grape-varieties among which Syrah, Grenache and Clairette.



**5 pm – end of the tour at your hotel**

**For your last night in Provence enjoy a 3 courses diner at la Mirande with wine and water**

**DAY 6 – Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022**

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Breakfast at your hotel

Check out at your Hotel and transfer to Avignon train station

**Upon your arrival at Avignon TGV train station - An English speaking hostess will be there to help you**

**TBA – Departure train from Avignon TGV train station to Paris – 2h45 ride - Schedule and reservation will open 3 Months in Advance**

- *1<sup>st</sup> Class TGV Train Ticket*

**Upon your arrival at Paris train station – Welcome by your private English-speaking driver and English host at the main exit of the platform and private transfer to your hotel in Paris**

**DAY 7 – Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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**Day at leisure in Paris**

## DAY 8 – Wednesday, October 5th, 2022

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Check out at your Hotel

**4hours prior to your flight departure – Meet your English-speaking driver in the lobby of your hotel and transfer directly to Paris Airport - 1 luggage and 1 carry on per person allowed**

### **End of our services**

#### DETAILS aND WAIVER

Airfare not included – train ticket from Avignon to Paris included

If you arrive early in France or depart after the group, transfers are not included.

#### INCLUDED IN TRIP COSTS:

TRANSFERS FROM AVIGNON TRAIN OR MARSEILLE AIRPORT ON DAY OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE ONLY

7 NIGHT ACCOMODATIONS

TAXES, PORTERAGE

3 LUNCHES

3 DINNERS

BREAKFAST DAILY

PORTERAGE

ALL TRANSPORT FOR VISITS AND TOURS

GUIDES FOR EVERY VISIT and entrance fees

TIPS FOR GUIDES AND DRIVERS

HOSTED BY JUST LADIES TRAVELING ESCORTS

Registration form required and may be gotten from [justladiestraveling@gmail.com](mailto:justladiestraveling@gmail.com).

Deposit for this trip is \$2000 and non refundable unless resold.