

ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE TOUR SEPTEMBER 17 – OCTOBER 8, 2016

AUTUMN IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE

Group size: minimum 7, maximum 16

3 WEEKS IN FRANCE: PRICE: 5500\$NZ each

Includes everything specified here: all travel from Nice to Bordeaux, visits + audio-guides where available, accommodation in charming 3-star hotels or equivalent, double or twin rooms (supplement for single room: \$500), all breakfasts, «picnic» lunches (bread, pâté, cheese, wine, etc) where appropriate, one specially-chosen fine restaurant a day, usually dinner (not including drinks) - gifts for certain hosts, tasting regional specialties. *Items in italics indicate choices to be made according to preferences and time.*

Arrange and pay your own Air Travel NZ-France

SATURDAY 17: ARRIVE NICE Settle into your hotel , near the Promenade des Anglais (2 nights) -Main market and Flower market .

SUNDAY 18 - Matisse + Chagall galleries –Monte Carlo - the lovely village of Eze.

MONDAY 19: *Vallauris Chapel (Picasso)- Cagnes s/mer :Les Collettes (Renoir)* - Cannes - Grasse (visit perfumery) – Castellane - Grand Canyon of the Verdon - Moustiers-Sainte-Marie (porcelain) to AIX-EN-PROVENCE (3 nights).

TUESDAY 20: AIX-EN-PROVENCE: walking tour - lunch by the fountain of the “Archevêché” – Cathedral – Studio of Cézanne – Granet Museum.

WEDNESDAY 21: ST MAXIMIN Basilica – Thoronet Abbey - Mountain-chain and forests of Sainte-Baume, Saint-Pons, St.Pilon... beautiful fishing village of CASSIS – boat-trip to the “Calanques” - spectacular Route des Crêtes – beaches – TOULON (biggest naval base in France).

THURS 22/9: into the « Southern Alps » - Manosque, Château Arnoux, les Pénitents - historic perched town of Sisteron and its Citadelle. Dinner of regional specialties at Hôtel Muret (great mountain views) in SIGOYER 2 nights DBB.

FRI 23/9: “Demoiselles coiffées” (amazing rock-formations) - Lake & huge Dam of Serre-Ponçon - and Napoléon's Hat! -*Boscodon Abbey – Embrun* - L'Argentière lookout - Mont-Dauphin and especially BRIANÇON for Vauban's impressive fortifications and tasting a local “tartiflette” at the “Gavroche” - Return via the high Col d'Izoard & village of Cervières.

SAT 24/9: beautiful Eygues Gorge – NYONS (olive museum!) - Roman town of VAISON-la-Romaine – stunning amphitheatre & Arc de Triomphe of ORANGE - to AVIGNON 2 nights.

SUN 25/9: AVIGNON on foot - Pope's Palace - the Bridge! - the ‘remparts’...

MON 26/9: PONT DU GARD - to NÎMES: Fantastic Roman Arena, "Maison carrée", Magne Tower... - to HÔTEL Passiflore, VERGÈZE, DBB 2 nights.

TUES 27/9: picturesque towns of LES BAUX & ST RÉMY (St-Martin) – stunning "Carrière des Lumières" - ARLES (Roman Arena, Espace Van Gogh, etc) – "CAMARGUE" – Gypsy "capital" of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, Ornithological Park, AIGUES-MORTES (walled mediaeval town) .

WED 28/9: walk about MONTPELLIER (Cathedral – Musée Fabre – Antigone district) – beautiful town and convent-church of St. Guilhem-le-Désert - LODÈVE for dinner + informal piano recital by Conrad Wilkinson. 2 nights in Lodève.

THURS 29/9: Mediaeval town of LA COUVERTOIRADE - ROQUEFORT (visit cheese-caves) - spectacular MILLAU VIADUCT to the impressive rock-formations of "le Chaos" (amazing views).

FRI 30/9: Valmagne Abbey - PÉZENAS - Jardin d'Adrien - Puisserguier: Wine-tasting + cellar-visit + apéritif with buffet... 2 Nights B&B PUISSEGUIER .

SAT 01/10: the "GARRIGUE" – 9 Ecluses - Excursion and lunch on the CANAL DU MIDI + Malpas canal-tunnel - Ensérune Oppidium - to BÉZIERS Cathedral (Chris will play the organ for you!) and La Madeleine -Tourist train! - Authentic Moroccan meal...

SUN 02/10 : South to NARBONNE and CATALONIA – beautiful artists' port of COLLIOURE – Cape Rederis - into Spain – FIGUERAS (extraordinary Dalí Museum) – Céret (*Modern Art museum*) - to Hôtel Grand Duc + gourmet dinner in GINCLA: 1 night.

MON 03/10 Cathar castles of PUYLAURENS, *Quéribus*, *Peyrepertuse*, *Montségur* – the esoteric *Rennes-le-Château* - CARCASSONNE (fantastic mediaeval walled city) – ALBI – tremble at the Judgement Day mural... Toulouse-Lautrec Museum - to TOULOUSE: 2 nights.

TUES 04/10: Breakfast on the stunning Capitole Square - Visit beautiful historic city of Toulouse - le Capitole - Les Jacobins – St.Sernin Basilica... afternoon free (*museum of les Augustins?*) Dinner at La Cave de la Maréchale (cassoulet!)

WED 05/10 CAHORS and its Valentré Bridge – *picturesque village of St-Cirq-Lapopie* - famous perched town of ROCAMADOUR – spectacular Dordogne gorge, *Domme* - castles of Beynac & La Roque-Gageac - beautifully restored town of SARLAT - Hôtel Royal (of course) Vézère (LE BUGUE) DBB 2 nights.

THURS 06/10 : Caves of LES EYZIES with our own specialist guide for a half-day tour of prehistoric cave-paintings and demonstration of fire- and flint-making and javelin throwing - La Roque St Christophe (troglodyte site).

FRI 07/10: BERGERAC - *explore the Dordogne river on a "gabarre"* – Wine Museum – Tobacco Museum - SAINTE FOY LA GRANDE ("bastide") – ST ÉMILION (wine and amazing underground church) – to BORDEAUX (1 night) . FAREWELL DINNER .

SAT 08/10: Royal breakfast (naturellement) – visit historic and beautifully restored BORDEAUX – leave in afternoon... au revoir... TGV to PARIS (?) Fly to NZ (?).