

CULTURE + WALKING

PROVENCE

Vineyards & Villages of the Luberon



→ *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) drizzles 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 Romans' Pont du Gard aqueduct to serene Sénanque Abbey. And fair warning: 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 Uzès 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
- 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

DAILY ITINERARY

PROVENCE | VINEYARDS & VILLAGES OF THE LUBERON | CULTURE + WALKING

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



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: | NIGHTS: 2

Tour Dates & Prices

Tour Dates	Price per Person	Price per Person
	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy
May 10-15, 2020	\$5,095	\$5,790
June 21-26, 2020	\$5,295	\$5,990
September 6-11, 2020	\$5,295	\$5,990
October 11-16, 2020	\$5,295	\$5,990
May 9-14, 2021	\$5,195	\$5,890
June 20-25, 2021	\$5,395	\$6,090
September 5-10, 2021	\$5,395	\$6,090
October 10-15, 2021	\$5,395	\$6,090

Want a different date? Or your own date? Visit CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE to learn more about private journeys.

Trip Essentials

TRIP LENGTH: 6 Days, 5 Nights

START: 3:00 PM Hotel d'Europe lobby, Avignon, France

END: 3:00 PM TGV Station, Aix-en-Provence, France

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

What's Included

- Memorable accommodations for 5 nights
- 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

1-833-387-1210

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

moreinfo@classicjourneys.com

Travel for Free

Your trip is free when you organize a Classic Journeys trip with 10 or more travelers (including you)! Or you can share your savings with other group members.

TRAVEL WORRY-FREE!

It's easy with insurance from Travel Guard. Your policy can cover trip cancellation, travel delays, lost luggage, medical emergencies, and more. If you are traveling with kids, add them to your policy at no extra cost. [Click here](#) or call 800-826-4919 for details.

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!

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

"My experience in Provence was more than I expected. The cultural history, architectural history and the foods/wine we enjoyed gave me a better understanding of the area in which we travelled."

—Donna K., Silverlake, WI

Let's Go!

TO RESERVE: 833.493.5038 | [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/RESERVATIONS](https://www.classicjourneys.com/reservations)

You might also enjoy...



Dordogne Valley

Bordeaux & Southwestern France

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Ambling in the legendary vineyards of St. Émilion
- Marveling at castles and fortified villages
- Viewing prehistoric cave art firsthand

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/bordeaux/>.



Loire & Burgundy

Dijon, Chenonceaux & Châteaux

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Tasting local wines in Burgundy and Loire
- Wandering twisting lanes of medieval towns
- Following riverside footpaths to stunning chateaux

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/loire/>.



Napa & Sonoma

California Wine Country

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Savoring private winery tours and tastings
- Rambling redwood groves and rolling hillsides
- Exploring the classic towns of Yountville, Healdsburg and Sonoma

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/napa/>.

You might also enjoy...



Slovenia & Croatia

Ljubljana to the Istrian Peninsula

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Strolling vineyard trails to stunning hilltowns
- Cruising emerald islands to a national park
- Rambling Roman footpaths and ancient ruins

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/istria-slovenia-walking-tour/>.



Tuscany & the Cinque Terre

Chianti, Florence & Seaside Villages

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Wine-tasting on the grounds of a castle
- Traversing the streets of towering hill towns
- Jumping to the head of the line to see Michelangelo's David

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/tuscany/>.

“Enthusiasm is Contagious”

AS TRAVEL + LEISURE NAMES CLASSIC JOURNEYS THE WORLD'S BEST TOUR OPERATOR FOR 2019, FOUNDER EDWARD PIEGZA REVEALS HOW IT FEELS. ENTHUSIASTICALLY.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Just before publication of this issue, Travel + Leisure magazine announced that its readers have voted Classic Journeys the World's Best Tour Operator for 2019. It's the second time Classic Journeys has won that recognition and the 14th consecutive year the company has been in the Top 10.

Congratulations! How did you get the news?

I received a top-secret email and phone call from the editor of *Travel + Leisure* a few weeks ago with orders not to tell ANYONE. Friends and neighbors must have wondered why my smile has been so extra big lately. Now they know.

And how does it feel to be the World's Best Tour Operator again?

Awesome. Humbling. So, so satisfying. Deeply gratifying to learn that we have achieved what we set out to do which is to handcraft trips of a lifetime for every guest who travels with us. I'm known as long-winded, so I could probably come up with 10 or 15 more ways to describe it if you want me to keep going.

Why do you think *Travel + Leisure* gave you this recognition?

Actually, it isn't the *T+L* editors who make the decision. That's the best part. Their readers cast the votes. So the people who do the traveling, the guests who explore the world with us and our competitors — they are the ones who raised their hands to tell *T+L* that Classic Journeys is the World's Best Tour Operator based on their own experiences. Let me say it right here: "To all of you who voted for us, you are the World's Best Guests!"

What do you think makes your guests the World's Best Guests?

That's easy. They are curious. They care about connecting with people of different cultures and immersing themselves in the world. They treasure experiences more than things. Like the old ad slogan went, they go for the gusto and crave the chance to have one-of-a-kind moments. They are incredibly interesting and interested people, and all of us at Classic Journeys count it as a real privilege to share in their passion for travel. And we feel that way on the

other 364 days of the year when we're not celebrating recognition like this.

I guess this is what you meant when you told me that "Enthusiasm is contagious."

Absolutely. That's not our official motto, but it could be. We love what we do. We enjoy helping guests figure out how to invest their precious time and budget. I can honestly say that all of us feel that way — the Guest Services folks who interact with you while you're planning your trip, the Tour Operations team members who plan all of the logistics, the local guides who lead each one of our trips full time. There's just a huge amount of positive energy in what we do, and I think it truly is hard to resist. We'd climb into every one of our guest's suitcases and go along with them if we could. Because we can't, we call each guest while they're on tour just to be sure they are having a trip of a lifetime.

Has anyone ever called Classic Journeys obsessive?

I hope so, because we are. Everything is in the details. For instance, we've created a special tour for the total eclipse of the sun which is going to pass over parts of South America in 2020. We've already analyzed likely traffic patterns in the most remote areas and figured out how to structure our itinerary so that our guests will be in place in the path of totality while the people who don't plan ahead will be stuck in jams on remote dirt roads. We enjoy obsessing about details like that so that our guests never have to.



How can you top this?

Oh, we never let ourselves think of it that way. We just continue to approach every single guest on each and every departure like the most important guest we've ever had. It seems to be working! Of course, we keep looking for new ways to win more converts. For 2019, we've launched a new series of Classic Journeys that are based from

"I voted for you!"

We've heard that expression so many times lately from guests who registered their votes with *Travel + Leisure*. Given the results, we know it's true ... and you know that your votes really count!

STAFF AND GUIDES

"I always feel like I'm traveling with a best friend. I prefer your local guides to the ones that other companies fly in."

ITINERARIES AND DESTINATIONS

"If it's on my bucket list, you always seem to go there. Of course, with so many options you always seem to make my list longer and longer!"

ACTIVITIES

"On your trips, I've cooked with Michelin chefs, sung songs with Quechua schoolchildren, and walked on glaciers with the descendants of Vikings. Fun doesn't begin to describe it."

ACCOMMODATIONS

"How you manage so many 5-star properties on these trips shocks me. But please, please, please keep it up!"

FOOD

"I have never eaten so well so often so happily. When you people claim that you are foodies, you aren't kidding."

OVERALL VALUE

"We have never had a better vacation at any price."

river cruise boats. On a different note, seeing how many travelers can't always find as much vacation time as they really want, we have developed a series of 6-day or shorter quick trips that go as far afield as Iceland, the Galápagos and Morocco.

Final thoughts?

It's always an honor to win recognition. But, for all of us at Classic Journeys, the biggest privilege is to share the dreams of our guests and make those dreams come true. That connection is the best feeling of all.