



From Provence to Corsica

2 TO 23 SEPTEMBER 2019



My Travel Philosophy

In September 2019 I am leading a tour which will visit many of my favourites in France – the south of France and the island of Corsica. I have been leading tours here for 25 years now through these areas. My connections with both these areas are intimate and I'm excited about sharing these with you.

We will start in Rhone Valley Provence which is so well loved by travellers everywhere, exploring the area around Avignon and through to the Luberon Valley – every image is picture postcard perfect! Then I want to take you through to the Var region which lies between Aix en Provence and Nice – an area untouched by the tourism that the Rhone Valley sees. There are no tour buses in the Var!

Then after a brief intoxicating pause in the fishing port of Cassis, just out of Marseille, we will fly the short distance to Ajaccio on the island of Corsica. Here we will explore the "Island of Beauty" from the south to the north, from the beaches to the mountains. I've always thought that a visit here is like a visit back in time, in the best way! Corsica will leave you entranced.

I have never been a great fan of the classic group tour mentality, and as a result have put together a programme which is very personable, and most of all fun! I think it is important that people see less, but see it better. I want people to meet locals and experience their lifestyles, as well as experiencing their history. I also want people to have time out, and the opportunity to relax as well - there's no point if you need a holiday at the end of the trip!! Don't be surprised if I get you out walking in the hills, swimming in the sea, or tasting food in a chef's kitchen. With over 25 years of leading small groups through France I am well positioned to enthuse, motivate and inspire you!!



Rhone Valley Provence

Monday 2 September to Friday 6 September 2019

We are going to start our tour and our stay in Provence staying in the charming village of St Remy de Provence, just to the south of Avignon. During our time here we will explore the magic of the wine town of Chateauneuf du Pape and the town of Avignon itself. We will learn about the life of Vincent Van Gogh here in the south of France, and expose ourselves to the treats that come from this the food basket of Europe, whilst learning all about the stories from yesteryear until today. We will visit the less-travelled region of the Camargue, famous for its wild horses and pink flamingoes!



Provence, Luberon Valley

Friday 6 September to Monday 9 September 2019

We are going to travel a short distance today into the heart of “perfect” Provence in the Luberon Valley. Our hotel is picture perfect and will give us a special spot for exploring the pleasures and treasures of this rich region. In this “Peter Mayle” territory I especially have a private garden I would like to introduce you to, as well as seeing the large lavender fields in the hills. We have the very special market on Sunday morning at the antique village of Isle sur la Sorgue to visit, after which we’ll stay and spoil ourselves for lunch in a beautiful garden setting. I have lots of special places around here I’d like to show you, in particular the villages of Gordes and Roussillon. We are in a perfect spot for making special visits to explore this region, before returning each day to the tranquillity of our hotel.



Var Interiors

Monday 9 September to Friday 13 September 2019

Today we are going to move through to the region known as the Var situated between Nice and Aix en Provence. We have some exceptional accommodation surrounded by trees and rolling hills from where we will do our exploring. One day we will explore the impressive Gorges de Verdon, a geographical feature that impresses more than the Grand Canyon in the US. One day we will visit some of the oft-seen charming villages of the region. This is such a different corner of France with such localness in these picture-perfect villages. One day we will explore the coast visiting the glamorous luxury boats and brand-named shops of St Tropez.



Fishing Port - Cassis

Friday 13 September to Sunday 15 September 2019

Today we are going to drive to the Mediterranean Coast to the delightful fishing village of Cassis, which is situated only 25km away from the large city of Marseille. This is a place you won’t want to leave. Our hotel has a beach directly in front of us, with views before us that will keep you transfixed. When you see this fishermen’s village for the first time you will certainly gape, and it will become more and more a place you’d like to return to. It is small enough to be intimate and original but not too large to be commercial. You have the option of going for a cruise along the coast for several hours where you will be enchanted by the bright blue turquoise sea and the impressive bays known as calanques.



Propriano, Corsica

Sunday 15 September to Wednesday 18 September 2019

This morning we will drive to the Marseille Airport for our short flight to Ajaccio in Corsica. We begin our Corsican sojourn in the south of the island at the seaside town of Propriano. Here our rooms open right on to the sandy beach, whilst being only a short stroll away from all the restaurants and shops in the village. Perfection. While here we are going to explore some of the prehistoric history of the island (world!) from over 5000 years ago, as well as spend a day at the town of Bonifacio, which is one of the most impressive towns in the world!! While visiting this town we will take a cruise around the coast, which allows us the best views of this walled perched village on the coast.



Calvi, Corsica

Wednesday 18 September to Monday 23 September 2019

The island's favourite son is indeed Napoleon Bonaparte and today we will begin by driving to his home town, Ajaccio, where we will visit his home. From here we will drive through the centre of the island through the mountain ranges before arriving in the north of the island at another drop-dead gorgeous seafront town, Calvi! This part of

the island is very dear to me, and I can't wait to take you into the hills to drive through and visit villages and countryside that seem almost untouched from over 1000 years ago. Villages with such exotic names such as Calenzana, Zilia



and Montemaggiore will impress you so much for their simplicity and soul. As well we are going to take a boat trip along the coast to visit the World Heritage natural site of Scandola, a marine and coastal nature reserve. I will also be taking you into the mountains where we will see parts of the world famous GR20 walking trail that crosses the island from near Calvi through to a point near Bonifacio in the south of the island. We could even walk on some of this trail, just so we can say we've been on it!

A visit through Corsica is like nothing else. The island of Corsica is indeed French, but the mentality and outlook on life is purely Corsican! You're in for a treat!

End of Tour

Monday 23 September 2019

Today the tour ends. From Calvi there are flights to Marseille and Nice regularly, so onward travel is easy to arrange from each of these places.

Pre and Post Tour Plans

Previous travellers who have joined me on this tour before have begun their tour with a few nights in Paris, at the beginning of the tour in order to get over their “jet lag”, and then caught a train to Avignon or fly to Marseille. Similarly if you flew in to Marseille Airport then it is an easy transfer to your first hotel. Then at the end of the tour you can either fly through to Nice to spend a few nights (or more there) before onward travels. If you ended in Nice then you have easy international flights with Emirates Airline, who fly in and out of Nice to/from Dubai.

Pricing:

Please note that the price for this tour is approximately:

€8,700 per person (prices will be fixed in late October 2018)

Deposit:

A deposit of 1000€ per person is required on booking.

Included:

The following is included in your tour:

Accommodation and breakfasts throughout.

Guiding and Transportation. End of tour transport to airport or station (if this coincides with rest of the group).

Eight special dinners included (wine and water included), 1 Lunch.

Visits (referred to above)

Not Included:

Air Travel from Marseille to Ajaccio, Corsica

Comprehensive Travel Insurance. This is compulsory and payment assumes that you have this in place.

Single Supplement – if you require a single occupancy room then there will be a supplement of 1700€.

Hotels:

We will be staying in charming small boutique three star hotels throughout. All hotels have access to swimming pools or the sea, and all have air-conditioned rooms (with private facilities). Feel free to ask for more details.
