

THE TRAVEL CLUB

Grand Tour of France

15 DAYS: Saturday, September 21-Saturday, October 5, 2019

\$4,579 per person double occupancy; \$5,634 for single reservations

Discover the many sides of France. Travel from the culinary capital of Lyon to the iconic city of Paris, and through the plethora of charming medieval villages and coastal Riviera towns in-between. This grand tour is your chance to eat, drink, and sightsee your way through this dynamic country.

Your tour package includes

- 13 nights in handpicked hotels, 13 breakfasts, 5 dinners with beer or wine,
- 10 guided sightseeing tours, Expert Tour Director & local guides, Private deluxe motor coach

Included highlights

- Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourvière, Avignon's Papal Palace, Arles, Carcassonne, Bordeaux, château country, Mont-Saint-Michel, Eiffel Tower photo stop,

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 3 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including paved roads, cobblestone streets, and sandy paths, with some hills.



Overnight Flight

Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Lyon today.

Lyon

Day 2: Arrival in Lyon

Included meals: Dinner

Welcome to France! Spend an afternoon getting to know Lyon on your own before meeting your Tour Director and fellow travelers at a welcome dinner.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Lyon

Included meals: Breakfast

A local guide introduces you to France's culinary capital on a tour through Lyon's UNESCO-recognized city center. • Take in the Gothic and Renaissance architecture as you pass by the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourvière • Step inside Lyon Cathedral and walk through centuries-old *traboules*, or underground passages Enjoy a free afternoon in Lyon or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion

Medieval Village of Pérouges

\$59/pp

Make your way to the charming village of Pérouges, a favorite among the French for its winding cobblestone streets and medieval architecture. Visit the central Tilleul Square for a panoramic view of the area and explore the Fortress Church of Sainte-Marie Madeleine. After taking in the scenery, stop at a local bakery to sample some of the region's sweetest specialties. Taste a galette, which is a round, flat tart filled with berries, and hypocras, a spiced wine flavored with honey, ginger, and cinnamon. Must book 20 days before departure.

Nice

Day 4: Nice via Avignon

Included meals: Breakfast

Travel through the countryside toward the French Riviera, stopping to explore the historic Provençal city of Avignon en route to Nice. • Stroll through the historic town center, which is surrounded by the city's original medieval walls • Step inside the magnificent Papal Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage site Spend a free evening in Nice or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion

Evening in Monaco

\$115/pp

Spend an evening in Monaco, a tiny principality that's world-renowned for its luxuriousness. Ruled by the Grimaldis, Europe's oldest royal family, Monaco has retained its independence for more than 700 years. Your Tour Director introduces you to the Old Town, which is perched atop the Rock of Monaco. This 203-foot-tall monolith overlooks the Mediterranean Sea and is part of the Monaco-Ville quarter, the oldest of the country's four quarters. While here, you'll stop and view the outside of the Royal Palace. Next, sit down for an included dinner at a nearby restaurant before heading to the Monte Carlo Casino. Enjoy free time to step inside the world-famous casino. Please note: Travelers under the age of 18 are not permitted to enter the casino. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$125)

Day 5: Sightseeing tour of Nice

Included meals: Breakfast

Get to know Nice's many charms on a guided sightseeing tour. • Drive along the Promenade des Anglais • Discover the narrow streets of the Old Town • Explore the Roman amphitheater • Wander around the gardens of the Franciscan Monastery in Cimiez Enjoy a free afternoon in Nice or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion **Medieval Saint-Paul-de-Vence & Provençal Dinner** **\$129/pp**

Make your way to Saint-Paul-de-Vence, a celebrity haven and one of the oldest villages on the French Riviera. Upon arrival, your Tour Director will introduce you to its rich medieval history and wonderful art scene on a guided tour. Pass Place du Jeu de Boules, Porte de Vence, Place de la Grande Fontaine, and the Collegiate Church before stopping at Maison Bremond 1830 to sample local culinary specialties. Then, sit down to a meal of delicious Provençal flavors. After sampling tapenade and Pastis, an anise-flavored apéritif, enjoy a three-course dinner served with wine. Please note: This excursion involves difficult walking on uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets with some hills and stairs. We recommend wearing a comfortable pair of walking shoes. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$139)

Montpellier

Day 6: Montpellier via Arles

Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Make your way through the Provençal landscapes that influenced the French master painters, stopping in Arles for a walking tour with your Tour Director in the lead. • Stroll along beautiful boulevards and view the city's old hospital, where artist Van Gogh stayed • Enter the Arles Arena, a two-story Roman amphitheater Then continue on to Montpellier, where you'll spend the night.

Bordeaux

Day 7: Bordeaux via Carcassonne

Included meals: Breakfast

On the way to Bordeaux, stop in UNESCO-listed Carcassonne, a medieval fortified town.

Day 8: Sightseeing tour of Bordeaux

Included meals: Breakfast

Meet your local guide for a panoramic tour of Bordeaux, the capital of the Aquitaine region, which is well-known for its wine. • Stop at the Place des Quinconces • Drive along the Garonne River, stopping at Place de la Bourse • Enter the Basilica of Saint Michael • Pass the lively hub of the Place de la Comédie and the Grand Théâtre Enjoy a free afternoon in Bordeaux or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion **Bordeaux Dinner & Wine Tasting** **\$125/pp**

Head outside the city of Bordeaux to the countryside where some of France's best wines are produced. Tour the historic village of Saint-Émilion, known for its namesake monolithic church, unique underground monuments, and centuries-old vineyards. Visit a local winery for a tour of the cellar and to learn about the winemaking process. Then, sip your way through world-renowned varieties, including prestigious Grand Crus. After your tour and tasting, discuss your favorites over dinner at the vineyard. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$135)

Loire Valley

Day 9: The Loire Valley via La Rochelle

Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Make your way to the Atlantic port city of La Rochelle, home to a charming harbor and medieval towers, and explore with your Tour Director in the lead. Later, arrive in the Loire Valley.

Day 10: Sightseeing tour of the Loire Valley

Included meals: Breakfast

Get to know château country on a sightseeing tour today. Step inside the extravagant Château de Chenonceau, where you'll discover how it got the nickname "Château des Femmes," and explore its

surrounding gardens. Then, continue on to the town of Amboise for free time. Enjoy a free evening in the Loire Valley or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Loire Valley Dinner & Wine Tasting \$99/pp

Cap off your day in the Loire Valley by taking in views of châteaux and greenery on your way to a local wine cellar. With its central location in the country, this area draws culinary influence from several parts of France, which you'll experience during a wine tasting and dinner at a local restaurant. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$109)

Normandy Region

Day 11: The Normandy Region via Mont-Saint-Michel Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Travel north to the historic Normandy coastline. Stop for several visits along the way, including a guided tour of Mont-Saint-Michel. • Stop to see the medieval Château de Fougères • Visit the striking, 8th-century island Abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel • See how the UNESCO-recognized site, perched high on a granite rock, is surrounded by water at high tide and quicksand at low tide

Day 12: Free day in the Normandy Region Included meals: Breakfast

Spend a full free day in the Normandy region or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion D-Day Beaches of Normandy \$75/pp

Relive World War II history during this excursion to Normandy, where the Allied troops landed in June 1944. First, stop at the American Cemetery in Colleville—the burial place for more than 9,000 American soldiers who lost their lives during the battle of Normandy. Then, make your way to the Overlord Museum near Omaha Beach, which holds war vehicles and personal items of many soldiers who fought during the period between the Allied landing and Paris' liberation. From there, visit Pointe du Hoc to view the evocative granite monument erected by the French in honor of the American Second Ranger Battalion, who seized the German canons here before they could be used to fire on American troops landing on Omaha Beach. Stop in the town of Bayeaux to enjoy free time for lunch, and pay a visit to Juno Beach and the Bény-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery if time permits. Please note: This excursion requires some walking on uneven terrain. The order of inclusions may vary based on departure and season. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$85)

Paris

Day 13: Travel to Paris Included meals: Breakfast

Transfer to France's capital city this morning. Once you're settled in, enjoy a free afternoon or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Dinner in Paris & Seine River Cruise \$115/pp

Take in the nighttime allure of the City of Light on a special evening excursion. The event begins with dinner at a local restaurant. After you dine, board a boat cruise along the Seine. As you coast along the river and under Paris' bridges, you'll behold the illuminated monuments of the city glittering alongside the riverbanks. Please note: The dress code may vary depending on the restaurant for your dinner. Your Tour Director will advise you on what to wear, but shorts and sneakers are likely to be considered

inappropriate attire. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$125)

Day 14: Sightseeing tour of Paris

Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

A guided tour introduces you to the architecture, scenery, and history of the City of Light's many neighborhoods, called *arrondissements*. • Drive down the sycamore-lined Champs-Élysées to view the Arc de Triomphe • Pass Pont Neuf and the legendary Notre-Dame Cathedral, located on an island in the Seine River • See the Eiffel Tower, the Palais Garnier opera house, and Place de la Concorde, the city's grandest square • Marvel at the iconic architecture of the Louvre and Hôtel des Invalides Enjoy a free afternoon in Paris or add an excursion. Then, join your group at a farewell dinner this evening.

Optional Excursion

Versailles Palace & Gardens

\$119/pp

The reign of Louis XIV, known as the "Sun King," set new standards for decadence among the crowned heads of Europe. It took 50 years and 35,000 workers to turn Versailles, once a small hunting lodge, into the most magnificent château in all of France and the envy of royalty worldwide. On this excursion, you will see the palace in all its glory as you tour the State Apartments and the glittering Hall of Mirrors. Then, stroll through the lavish gardens to admire their fine statuary, splendid fountains, and colorful flowerbeds. Must book 45 days before departure.

Day 15: Departure

Included meals: Breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or continue exploring Paris.

Add an extension to Paris

from \$349 2 nights

Paris

Day 15: Free day in Paris

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy a free day in Paris or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion

Monet & the Landscapes of Giverny

\$85/pp

The village of Giverny was home to Claude Monet from 1883 until his death in 1926. On a visit to Monet's home and gardens, discover the subtle palette of colors that inspired his Water Lilies series and gave rise to a new way of seeing. Please note: This excursion is seasonal and runs from April through October. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price:\$95)

Day 16: Free day in Paris

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy another free day in Paris. This evening, sip a farewell drink as you celebrate your trip with your fellow group members.

Day 17: Departure

Included meals: Breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.