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La Belle Vie – Tour France’s Famous Wine Regions

Immerse yourself in the tastes and flavours of France.

Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrive in Paris

Inclusions: Paris Boutique Hotel

Is there a city more renowned for its romance and beauty?

After checking in to our hotel in Paris, we will get together that evening for a group “meet and greet” and an introduction to your tour leader. This is an excellent opportunity to get to know our fellow passengers. Then the group will “cheers!” to the start of your unforgettable trip!

As there is not much time in Paris (and to get over the jet lag!), we suggest you arrive a few days early so you can get under the skin of the City of Light.

France Travel Solutions can arrange extra nights’ accommodation pre and post-tour for those that require more time in this lovely capital.

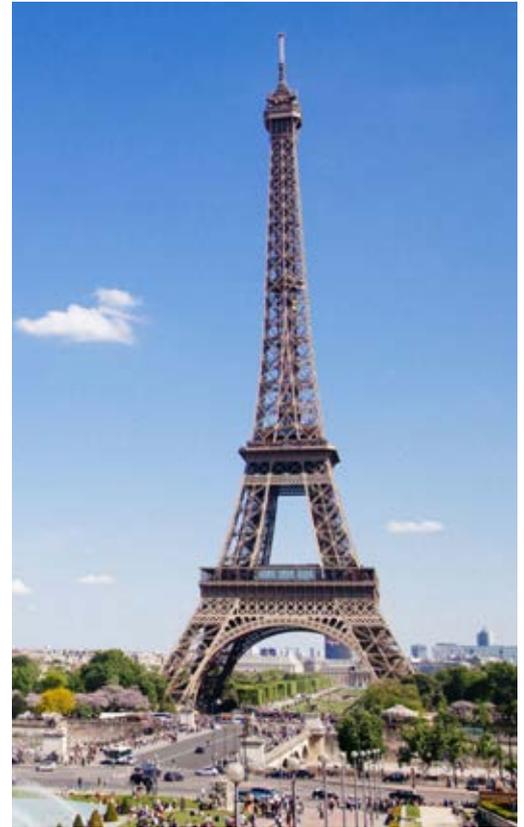
Day 2 - Paris (day trip to Champagne Region)

Inclusions: Paris Boutique Hotel / Maison Cuillier visit vineyard and cellar, champagne tasting, meet the family owner / Champagne Mercier visit, unique audio tour experience and tasting

After breakfast, we journey east to the picturesque Champagne region near Reims and enjoy a visit to a family vineyard. On arrival, we’ll be offered a tailor-made family vineyard imprint for the natural protection of the terroir. A unique experience followed by tasting rich in emotions.

Following the visit to the vineyard, you will have the opportunity to visit the impressive gothic Reims’ Cathedral and free time to explore the capital city of Champagne region.

In the afternoon we’ll visit some of the world’s most famous Champagne houses in Epernay. We’ll board the train and tour the emblematic Maison Mercier cellars enjoying a unique and immersive audio tour experience, followed by a tasting. We return to our base in Paris later in the afternoon.



Day 3 - Paris>Chablis>Dijon

Inclusions: Dijon Aparthotel 3 stars

Our accommodation is right in the heart of Paris, making it easy to take our time and leisurely stroll exploring the nation's capital and discover the many attractions that make it one of the most treasured destinations in the world. Live your Parisienne life, your Tour Leader will help you to navigate to your favourite spots.

We enjoy a morning pleasuring in the heart of Paris, before making our way southeast to Burgundy. We'll swap fizz for the dry wines of Chablis with an included tasting before making our way to Dijon. Prepare your palate! It will be a culinary experience in Dijon with the new wine and food museum centre dedicated to celebrating the "Gastronomic Meal of the French".

Day 4 - Dijon or Beaune - Your trip, your choice!

Inclusions: Dijon Aparthotel 3 stars

We have time today to explore Dijon and "Les Halles" the expansive French market. Wander through the myriad of food stalls and local produce with the locals. Fresh fruit and plenty of street food are on offer. Here you will find the fabled Mulot et Petit-Jean, the seller of only traditional Burgundian products which includes gingerbread, and of course classic mustard with a multitude of flavours such as lemon, herb, and honey.

A classic day of living and eating local in France.

You will have the option:

If you prefer, your team leader will accommodate you, making your way to the Capital of Burgundy wine city, Beaune, where you will be exposed to the Hospices de Beaune, one of France's most prestigious historic monuments as well as the largest cellars of Burgundy.

Day 5 - Dijon > Chateauneuf du Pape

Inclusions: Typical Guesthouse near Chateauneuf du Pape

Meals: Dinner

After lunch, we'll leave Dijon behind and set our sights on the world-famous wine area of Provence, where the art of living is celebrated on a daily basis. A favourite destination for all wine lovers wishing to taste one of the most prestigious Rhone Valley vintages. We will settle in for four nights in the very heart of South of France's most authentic and provincial guesthouse surrounded by vineyards.



Day 6 - Chateauneuf du Pape (day trip to Aix-en-Provence and le Var)

Inclusions: Typical guesthouse near Chateauneuf du Pape / Visit of 2 wineries and wine tastings

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Soak up the friendly character of the people of Aix-en-Provence this morning. Explore its unavoidable local market which reveals the generosity of the Provencal terroir; goat cheeses, olive oil, lavender and garrigue honey, garlands of garlic, aromatic herbs, charcuterie, vegetables, and sun-drenched fruits will amaze your senses. Feel like part of the landscape seeking out the unique local cafés, shopping streets, squares and fountains.

Vine as far as eyes can see will be in the program this afternoon. We will visit a wonderful Estate where art and wine are the way of living. From the cellar to the garden, the artists' cuvees to the collections, everything is to be enjoyed. We will visit the sculpture park, the exhibition spaces and remarkable gardens before a tasting of five wines of this Provencal character estate.

We will then be finishing our wine road journey for the day at Domaine de Cala where the two Michelin Star chef and owner of the estate, Joachim Splichard, will be expecting our arrival.

You've been invited to an exceptional diner of excellence to remember.

Day 7 - Chateauneuf du Pape or L'Isle sur la Sorgue market and Gordes. Your trip, your choice!

Inclusions: Typical guesthouse near Chateauneuf du Pape

Meals: Breakfast

Some of the most lovely villages to be found in France are right next to us. With so many visits opportunities in this amazing part of the world you will have the choice to; Explore the historical village which gave its name to the wine appellation surrounding it, or, come for a drive into the heart of the village's antique shops, the largest outdoor flea market in the idyllic Luberon area with colourful and tasty products. Take the time to stroll through pretty cobblestone lanes as we discover the treasures of "The Little Venice" town which is unlike any other.



Day 8 - Chateauneuf du Pape (day trip to Avignon and Le Pont du Gard)

Inclusions: Typical guesthouse near Chateauneuf du Pape

Meals: Breakfast

First today, we will visit a masterpiece of ancient architecture: the Pont du Gard, a massive 2000-year-old Roman aqueduct. It is a milestone of human engineering and one of the greatest monuments of France that stands as a reminder of the tremendous power of the Roman Empire.

We'll then, stop off in Avignon, where we'll be able to take a stroll around this historic city. You'll have the opportunity to visit the Palace of the Popes – one of the most significant medieval buildings in Europe and the centre of the Roman Catholic world during the 14th century. You will have the rest of the afternoon and evening to spend as you please. Perhaps seek out a local wine cellar and sample some of the local Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Côtes-du-Rhône wines – accompanied by a sumptuous French meal, of course!

Day 9 - Chateauneuf du Pape > Carcassonne > Bordeaux région

Inclusions: Comfortable Guesthouse Bordeaux region

Meals: Breakfast and dinner

A long and scenic travel day today from Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean. We will break it up with an astonishing place of discovery: Carcassonne, world heritage site by UNESCO. This magnificent city with its fortress and castle will take your breath away. You will have some free time to explore on your own walking between the ramparts and surveying the lands, you will feel like you are in a movie, maybe because of the Robin Hood movie scenes filmed here!

Our journey continues on into the world-famous region of Bordeaux where we will spend the next four nights based in a typical small village surrounded by vineyard.

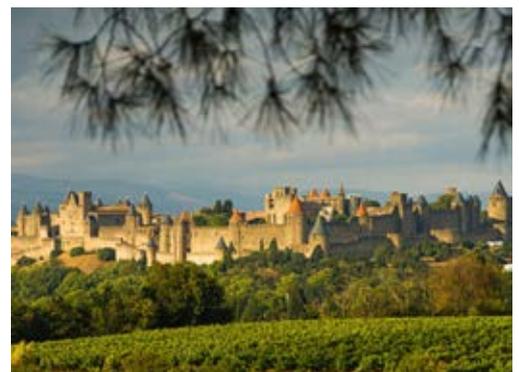
Day 10 - Medoc region (day trip to Arcachon)

Inclusions: Guesthouse Bordeaux region / boat cruising

Meals: Breakfast and picnic lunch

Today we are on the water in nearby Arcachon Bay. We will board our Pinasse – a typical wooden boat – to enjoy a tour of Arcachon Bay including a close-up view of the oyster parks where we will make a stop to taste its famous oysters.

The beautiful Arcachon Bay, “A small, interior sea” opens



to the Atlantic Ocean surrounded by pine forests and picturesque fishermen's villages. With your skipper, you will discover the area "like a local" and learn all there is to know about the traditions and treasures of this beautiful part of France! Famed for its sumptuous seafood, particularly oysters Arcachon bay also has Europe's longest and highest dune of sand that you will climb for the sport of it or just enjoy the breathtaking view from a delightful restaurant.



Day 11 - Medoc region (day trip to Bordeaux city)

Inclusions: Comfortable Guesthouse Bordeaux region

Meals: Breakfast

Today is your free day in vibrant Bordeaux where you will be able to access the best wine museum in the world! La Cité du Vin, is a unique cultural centre dedicated to the universal, living heritage of wine. It offers a spectacular journey around the world, throughout the ages, across countless cultures and civilisations. This grand homage to the drink that France is famous for and the one-of-a-kind experience you get here makes it a must-see when visiting Bordeaux.

The choice is yours; you may prefer to shop as it will be the perfect place for it!

You will again have the possibility to explore another market, Les Halles de Bacalan - a newly renovated farmers market where local producers are eager to let you taste their specialties in the heart of Bordeaux. Move from stand to stand - taste and enjoy the local gourmet specialties as you go! A very special and authentic moment! Foodies' lovers do not miss it!

Day 12 - Medoc région (day trip to wineries)

Inclusions: Comfortable Guesthouse Bordeaux Region / Visit of 2 wineries and wine tastings

Meals: Breakfast

Discover the world-famous Medoc region, where the grandiose chateaux were built as showcases for both the wealth of the owners and the quality of their wines. We will stay in a typical familial cosy house in the heart of the Medoc vineyard, which extends over nearly 100km and bring together the most prestigious Grands Crus Classes of Bordeaux as well as tasty Crus Bourgeois and Artisans. Our wonderful host is looking forward to having you as guests and cannot wait to cook for you some local specialties.



Day 13 - Bordeaux région > Chinon Loire Valley

Inclusions: Comfortable Guesthouse Chinon

Meals: Breakfast and dinner

Today we are moving north toward the Loire Valley. We will cross the Garonne on the fantastic ferry boat and will enjoy our scenic drive before arriving at our next destination where we will find ourselves deep in the fairy-tale territory. Here, the landscape's skyline is peppered with the turrets of castles. We will settle in the beautiful quintessential town of Chinon for the last three nights of our magical trip.

Day 14 - Day 14 - Chinon (day trip to Amboise and Chenonceau)

Inclusions: Comfortable Guesthouse Chinon / Entrance Château d'Amboise et Entrance Château de Chenonceaux

Meals: Breakfast

Today we'll see some of the most spectacular castles of the Loire Valley, steeped in the history of noblemen and kings since the 11th century.

But first this morning we'll be strolling in one of the most popular markets in the region, the large Sunday market along the banks of the river Loire at Amboise.

Then you will have the opportunity to visit the Chateau d'Amboise, with its impressive gardens and a lovely view across the rooftops of Amboise, you will enjoy the sight perhaps with a picnic by the Loire with the bottle of Vouvray, bread cheese and rillettes that you have just bought. We'll finish our day touring the Château de Chenonceau. The "Chateau des Dames", a bridge built across the Cher is famous for the prominent women who lived in it (Diane de Poitiers, Catherine de Medicis...) and for the beauty of its Renaissance Gardens.

Day 15 - Chinon

Inclusions: Comfortable Guesthouse Chinon / Visit of 2 wineries and wine tastings

Meals: Breakfast and picnic Lunch

Learn the secrets of Loire Valley wine during a guided tour and wine tasting at the Château du Petit Thouars, then select your favourite wine to accompany your authentic picnic lunch, overlooking the idyllic Loire Valley vineyards.

On our way back to Chinon in the afternoon, we'll enjoy the last detour at a local winery, where we'll be visiting the cellars before sampling a glass or two cheering on our



last night.

Day 16 - Chinon > Chambord > Paris

Inclusions: Visit Château de Chambord

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch

The last stop but not least of our journey, The Estate of Chambord. More than a castle, it's a work of art, a grandiose sacred place, a trip to the heart of the Valley of the Kings! We'll have an audio guided tour of the unique monument as defined by its architecture and proportions. Leonardo da Vinci likely took part in its conception. With more than 400 rooms and the double-spiral staircase, Chambord is a highlight of the Loire Valley and to our trip.

For lunch, let's leave the tourist trails behind. We'll enjoy a last convivial lunch made up of local products in a castle nicknamed "the Chambord construction site hut"! Slip into the skin of a castellan, chat with the countess who lives on site, and enjoy the intimacy of the place. What a finish to our wonderful La Belle Vie Tour.

All fairy-tale have an end, it's time to head on to Paris, our fabulous circle is completed. We will assist with your further plan and destination.

We hope we will have succeeded our mission of sharing our culture and regions for a trip full of good times and smiles and that you will join us again on one of our other tours!



Tour Inclusions and Entry Admissions

Accommodation

- 15 nights in boutique accommodation or traditional guesthouse

Your Tour Team

- Experienced bilingual Tour Leader and Chauffeur

Transport

- Premium minibus transportation
- Access to your choice of visit, and the flexibility of transportation from your Tour Leader

Entry Admissions

- Champagne tasting session in Reims region and Epernay
- Tour visit of 2 Champagne Estate

- Tour visit and tasting in Chablis
- Entrance and visit to two wineries in Provence
- Entrance and visit to two wineries with tasting in the famous Medoc, Bordeaux region
- Entrance and audio-guided visit of 3 castles in the Loire Valley
- Tour visit of vineyard and cellar with tastings in 2 Estates in the Loire Valley
- Boat cruising in the Atlantic famous Arcachon Bay

Meals

- 11 European-style breakfasts (B), 3 picnic lunches (L), 4 traditional dinners with locals (D)



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