

Pilgrims and Heretics in Southern France, Part 1: Provence

A Saint Martin's Art and Spirituality Tour, October 24-November 6, 2009, conducted by Father John Graham and Gregory Bailey, an experienced guide to art and antiquities with an advanced degree in Art History from the Ecole du Louvre. The itinerary includes the following:

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Saturday, October 24: departure from Houston

DAY 1 (*Sunday, October 25*) **Arles**

Upon arrival at Paris' Charles-de-Gaulle airport, we board the high-speed TGV at 11:42 a.m. southward to Avignon; a private coach will transfer us to that most charming and typical of Provençal towns, friendly and colorful **Arles**, where we check into our hotel in the historic city center next to the ancient *Roman amphitheater* and *theater*. After giving you time to freshen up, we begin our introduction to Arles with a brief stroll, including a peek inside the still-active *amphitheater*, home to popular bullfights, followed by dinner at the hotel upon our return.

DAY 2 (*Monday, October 26*) **Arles**

Our first day of pilgrimage begins with a morning walking tour of Arles, focusing on the important pilgrimage church of *Saint-Trophime*, with its richly sculpted cloister. We continue on to the center of town since ancient Roman times, the intimate *place du Forum*, immortalized in paint by Vincent van Gogh, where we pause for lunch. In the afternoon, join us for an optional tour of the ancient Baths of Constantine, explore the fascinating streets on your own, or relax in the spa facilities in the garden of our hotel. Dinner is at your leisure.

DAY 3 (*Tuesday, October 27*) **Around Arles**

As Arles was one of the most important centers of the diffusion of Christianity in France, we delve into its earliest period with a visit to the *Museum of Antiquities*, which houses one of the most important collections of paleo-Christian sarcophagi outside of Rome. Afterward, the romantic ruins of the *Abbey of Montmajour* outside town testify to the evolution of the new faith in the Middle Ages. For lunch, we venture across the Rhone river into its fertile delta, the *Camargue*, where a long-time collaborator of Alain Ducasse has taken his retreat from the hectic world in an organic vegetable patch. Upon return to Arles, the rest of the afternoon and evening are free.

DAY 4 (*Wednesday, October 28*) **Marseille**

Today we head eastward to the largest and oldest city in Provence, the ancient Greek colony of **Marseille**. to see the early monastic center of *Saint-Victor* on the fabulously picturesque old port, followed by a quay-side stroll to the famous fish market and that most quintessential Marseillais meal, an authentic *bouillabaisse*. Upon return to Arles, join an optional tour of the enchanting ancient cemetery, *Les Alyscamps*, or shop, relax, or explore the other museums in town at your leisure. Dinner is free.

DAY 5 (*Thursday, October 29*) **Les Alpilles**

The lovely town of **Saint-Rémy-de-Provence** counts among its charms the ancient ruins of *Glanum* as well as the medieval monastery of *Saint-Paul-de-Mausole*, transformed under the Revolution into an insane asylum, where Van Gogh famously completed some 150 of his most important paintings in the year from May 1889 to May 1890. After these sights, enjoy lunch on your own at one of Saint-Rémy's lively bistros. Afterwards, we head into the mountains known as *Les Alpilles* to the spectacular medieval stronghold of *Les-Baux-de-Provence*, followed by a wine and olive oil tasting. In the evening, we bid farewell to Arles with a group dinner.

DAY 6 (*Friday, October 30*) **Saint-Gilles, Nîmes**

After checking out of our hotel, we board our coach to study the most important center of Romanesque sculpture in Provence, **Saint-Gilles**, and then proceed to thriving **Nîmes** to see its *Roman amphitheater* and the celebrated *Maison Carré*, one of the best-preserved examples of an ancient Roman temple in the world. Enjoy lunch on your own, followed by a short walking tour highlighting the city cathedral, *Nôtre-Dame-et-Saint-Castor*. We continue onward to the former papal capital of **Avignon**, check into our hotel inside the medieval walls and gather for dinner.

DAY 7 (*Saturday, October 31*) **Avignon**

Today's walking tour of Avignon focuses on the collection of early Renaissance paintings in the *Petit Palais* and the impressively fortified Gothic *Palace of the Popes* (where we will have a guided tasting of the wines from the Cotes du Rhone). After lunch in the lovely *place du Palais*, we take the scenic route back to the hotel to get acquainted with some of Avignon's other sites. Dinner is on your own.

DAY 8 (*Sunday, November 1*) **Sénanque, Gordes**

The village of **L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue** is famous as the Provençal center of antique dealers. We visit during the popular and scenic Sunday morning outdoor market, with a peek inside the wonderfully decorated local church. After lunch (on your own) we change pace and head into the hills for a bit of Cistercian calm at the beautiful (and still active) monastery of *Sénanque*, where we will celebrate the eucharist after touring the monastery. On the way back to Avignon we pause in the stunningly picturesque village of **Gordes**. Dinner is free.

DAY 9 (*Monday, November 2*) **Aix-en-Provence**

We head southeast to the capital of Provence, stately **Aix-en-Provence**, to visit its impressive cathedral, *Saint-Sauveur*, with its early baptistery, pause for lunch (not included) near the majestic *Cours Mirabeau*, and peruse the painting collection in the *Musée Granet* in the afternoon. Dinner is on your own.

DAY 10 (*Tuesday, November 3*) **Uzès, Pont du Gard**

The beautifully preserved village of **Uzès** was an important center of Protestantism in the 16th century as well as the seat of the oldest and highest-ranking duchy in France. We visit the Cathedral and the (still-inhabited) private *Ducal chateau*, and enjoy lunch in the *place des Herbes*. On our way back to Avignon we stop to admire the world-famous *Pont du Gard*, an awe-inspiring Roman aqueduct bridge which originally brought water to Nimes. Dinner is free.

DAY 11 (*Wednesday, November 4*) **Villeneuve-lès-Avignon**

Just across the Rhone river, the medieval town of **Villeneuve-lès-Avignon** welcomes us with its old *Carthusian monastery* and the intimate *Musée Pierre-de-Luxembourg*, housing the majestic altarpiece of the *Coronation of the Virgin* by the most important Provençal painter of the Renaissance, Enguerrand Quarton. Lunch and the afternoon are yours to explore Avignon at your leisure (optional visit of the painting collections in the *Musée Calvet*). We meet in the evening for a farewell dinner to Avignon.

DAY 12 (*Thursday, November 5*) **Paris**

We check out of our hotel in Avignon and board the TGV back to **Paris**. After checking into our hotel in the Latin Quarter, lunch and the afternoon are yours to explore the City of Lights on your own; we meet in the evening for a farewell dinner at the oldest restaurant in Paris.

DAY 13 (*Friday, November 6*)

Check-out of hotel and departure from Charles-de-Gaulle airport.

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Price of the tour is **\$4300.00** per person exclusive of airfare. **This includes**

- 12 nights hotel accommodation, based on double occupancy (5 nights in **Arles**, 6 nights in **Avignon**, and 1 night in **Paris**, for a total of 12 nights)
- 22 out of 36 meals (all breakfasts, 5 lunches and 5 dinners). All lunches and dinners include mineral water, coffee or tea, and specially selected wines.
- all site entrances and guide fees
- all transportation (private coach, transfers to and from airport, first-class TGV train to and from Provence)

Airfare is not included.

Reservations are confirmed upon a receipt of a non-refundable deposit of \$750.00 per participant by Friday, July 31, 2009, and full payment is required by **Saturday, August 22, 2009**.

The price does not include: single room supplements, airfare, food and drink not listed on the itinerary, passport and visa expenses, immunizations, personal travel insurance, arrival/departure airport or country taxes, items of a personal nature, telephone calls, or excess baggage charges.

Insurance: Gregory Bailey Custom Travel recommends trip cancellation, emergency medical, and eventually personal theft insurance. While we make every effort to ensure proper baggage handling, Gregory Bailey Custom Travel cannot be held responsible for damage, loss, or theft of luggage or personal belongings.

Cancellations must be received in writing. Cancellations received on or before Saturday, August 22, 2009 will be assessed a \$250 cancellation fee. Cancellations received from August 23 to Saturday, October 10, 2009 will forfeit 30% of the cost of the land package price (\$1290.00). Cancellations received from October 11 to October 22, 2009 will forfeit 50% of the cost of the

land package price (\$2150.00). Cancellations within 48 hours or "no show" at the time of departure will result in forfeiture of the entire cost of the land package price (\$4300.00).

A single supplement of \$500.00 is to be paid by participants who specifically request single accommodation. Prices as given are for lodging in double-occupancy rooms. This request is subject to availability. If the participant is traveling alone and wishes to share accommodations, Gregory Bailey Custom Travel agrees to attempt to pair him or her with a roommate of the same gender. However, If Gregory Bailey Custom Travel is unable to match you with a roommate, the single supplement charge will be applied.

All participants must have a valid passport. Non-U.S. citizens may need visas, and bear the responsibility of verification. While Gregory Bailey Custom Travel makes every effort to design a relaxing tour, **walking** is an integral part of traveling in Europe and clients are expected to be in reasonable shape; those requiring special treatments and attention must let us know at the time of reservation. Gregory Bailey Custom Travel strongly recommends bringing at least one pair of comfortable walking shoes. This also being a gastronomic tour, we choose **menus** in order to present a wide and appropriate variety of the region's cuisine; clients are requested to let us know of any food allergies or food items you "just plain can't stand under any circumstances." We try hard to make accommodations within the measure of the possible.

Gregory Bailey Custom Travel acts only as agent for the suppliers of travel conveyance, transport, accommodation, or other service, and has no responsibility in whole or in part for any delayed departure or arrival, missed carrier connections, loss, death, damage or injury to person or property, accident, mechanical defect, and failure or negligence of any nature howsoever caused in connection with any accommodation, transportation, or other services. Gregory Bailey Custom Travel cannot be held responsible for events beyond its control, such as (without limitation) acts of God, war (whether declared or undeclared), terrorist activities, strikes or government restrictions. We reserve the right to cancel the tour at any time. In this event, a full refund will be made. We cannot however be held responsible for additional expenses incurred by participants in preparing for the trip. Gregory Bailey Custom Travel reserves the right to make changes in the itinerary, substituting similar or equivalent services, when necessary. Gregory Bailey Custom Travel reserves the right to decline or accept any person as a member of the tour without notice, and to cancel the participation of any client whose behavior is in the opinion of a representative of the company causing excessive distress, damage or annoyance to anyone or to anyone's property. Gregory Bailey Custom Travel's responsibility for the client will cease immediately and no compensation will be paid for any loss. In the unlikely event of any legal dispute, the courts of the State of Texas will have exclusive jurisdiction and the laws of the State of Texas will govern any dispute.