



# Randonnée Tours

## Provence Drive & Stroll 8 Days

### Summary

#### Length

8 days/7 nights

#### Dates

Start any date between  
March 15 and October 15

We recommend you to start your trip on a Monday so that you can enjoy the provençal market in Vaison held every Tuesday.

#### Level

35 to 140 km driving daily  
(21 to 88 miles)

On most days there are at least two walks to choose from, typically two to four hours in length

*Travelling in Provence is a sensual experience. As you move slowly through the landscape smell the wild thyme and rosemary. Stop to admire the texture of olive trees against old stone walls. Taste fresh chèvre mingled with piquant tapenade. Listen to the splash of fountains in village squares lined with rustling plane trees. Go slowly and savour!*

## Itinerary



#### Day 1

Arrive in Avignon and pick up your car. Head for Châteauneuf-du-Pape to walk amongst world-renowned

vineyards, then continue to Orange, a walker's delight, with some of the finest Roman monuments in Europe. Your destination is Vaison-la-Romaine, a bustling town with interesting shops, a romantic medieval quarter, and extensive Roman remains.

#### Day 2

Explore Vaison before driving into the rugged Drôme to Nyons, famous for its olive oil. Pass fields of lavender on the way to Dieulefit, with a long history of pottery production, and Le Poët-Laval, officially listed as a Plus Beau Village. Enjoy a walk into the gorgeous countryside before heading for Buis-les-Baronnies, a herb and flower centre known particularly as the central depot for the linden flower harvest. Then it's on to Mollans-sur-Ouvèze, before returning to Vaison.

#### Day 3

Travel through vineyards, ringed by hills and mountains. Walk from Gigondas, a delightful Côtes-du-Rhône wine

village, into the spiky Dentelles, limestone mountains eroded by the wind. Then continue to Beaumes-de-Venise, known for its sweet, white dessert wine. From the château ruins overlooking the town, walk to the superb Romanesque chapel of Notre-Dame d'Aubun. Then follow the route through Crillon-le-Brave, Bédoin, St-Didier, and Venasque to today's destination, Pernes-les-Fontaines.

#### Day 4

Today you'll head for Gordes, a striking perched village that has become an artists' colony. Along the way visit Fontaine-de-Vaucluse where you can walk to the resurgent spring that is the source of the Sorgue River. Extend your route through Murs and Joucas in the limestone countryside of the Vaucluse. Enjoy walks to a village of dry-stone huts known as bories and to the magnificent Cistercian abbey of Sénanque, set in a peaceful, remote valley.





## How to get there?

The tour begins in Avignon, which is on the TGV train line from Paris.

Car rental offices are very close to the train station.

It's also possible to start in Orange, a little farther to the north. Orange also has car rentals.

We'll provide you with instructions on how to reach Avignon and Orange by train.

## Itinerary

### Day 5

Drive into the Luberon, made famous by Peter Mayle. One of the day's highlights is red Roussillon high on ochre hills. Visit the ochre quarries before heading to Goult, walk to olive terraces dating from the Middle Ages and a ruined Celtic hilltop oppidum. Then on to Lacoste, a beautiful village rising in tiers up a hill crowned by the ruined castle of the Marquis de Sade. Savour the silence at Fort de Buoux, once a stronghold of pre-Roman Celtic Gauls and inhabited right into the 17th century, before returning to Gordes.

### Day 6

Today's destination is the quiet country town of St-Rémy-de-Provence. Along the way you'll visit Ménerbes, officially designated a Plus Beau Village. Pause to enjoy the spectacular view from near the church and visit the corkscrew museum. Continue to Oppède-le-Vieux, a fascinating ruined village, where a fragrant, herb-lined path takes you to the dramatic church and the remains of a 12th-century castle. Explore the narrow, winding streets of Eygalière, then head to St-Rémy in time to take a stroll through town and visit nearby Glanum, the extensive remains of an ancient Greco-Roman town. Perhaps visit the village and haunting citadel ruins of Les Baux, south of St-Rémy.

### Day 7

Drive to Arles, where you can easily fill a day. The Roman monuments, the magnificent cathedral of St-Trophime, and the Alyscamps, one of the most famous necropolises in the world from Roman times to the Middle Ages are only some of the sights. Don't forget to relax with a coffee on the Place de la République and watch the passing parade. If you like, head down to the Camargue, a vast flat region of sand dunes, salt marshes, and pastures, where cowboys on native Camargue horses herd black bulls and thousands of migrating birds stop on their journeys.

### Day 8

There's still time for a café au lait at the Café des Arts before driving to Avignon to return your rental car and catch a train for your next destination. If you have time, detour to visit the spectacular Pont du Gard, a huge Roman aqueduct considered one of the greatest feats of ancient engineering.



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## ***The Price includes:***

- 7 nights hotels
- All breakfasts and 2 dinners
- Detailed route instructions and map
- NOTE THAT CAR RENTAL IS NOT INCLUDED

## Accommodation

### Classic



#### **Hôtel Le Burrhus**

Vaison-La-Romaine

This hotel overlooks a pretty square right in the heart of Vaison. The hotel has been recently renovated, and often hosts art exhibits in the hotel's lounges.



#### **L'Hermitage**

Pernes-les-Fontaines

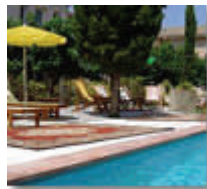
A charming hotel in a former family mansion, set in grounds with 100-year old trees. There are lovely gardens and a large swimming pool.



#### **Hôtel Les Romarins**

Gordes

A charming boutique hotel with views over Gordes, and an inviting pool and gardens. The town is only a five minute walk away.



#### **Hôtel Gounod**

Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

The original and oldest hotel in Saint Rémy, has been renovated using stylish furnishing and rich colours. There is a beautiful pool in the courtyard surrounded by gardens.

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## Accommodation

### B & B



#### **L' Evêché**

Vaison-La-Romaine

This is a huge house, but the proprietors only rent out five rooms to spend more time with their guests. There are great views of the old town and the castle, and each of the rooms is individually decorated.



#### **Saint Barthelemy**

Pernes-les-Fontaines

St Barthélémy is a delightfully restored 18th century farmhouse set in shaded parkland by a small stream and waterfall. The comfortable rooms are furnished in Provençal style. Large breakfasts include home-made pastries and jams.



#### **Le Mas des Oliviers**

Gordes

Situated on the hillside, there is a magnificent view on the massif of Luberon. Guests can enjoy the swimming-pool, a game of table tennis, or just relax in the garden.



#### **Hôtel du Soleil**

Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

This tranquil hotel is a short walk from the historical centre. There is a swimming pool and many shady areas to relax on the surrounding terrace.



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## Accommodation

### Luxe



#### **Hotel Beffroi**

Vaison-La-Romaine

Located in the medieval village, this chateau features lovely gardens and a pool. It is in one of the most beautiful 16th century mansions in the Old City of Vaison; you can enjoy a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside.



#### **La Bastide de Gordes & Spa**

Gordes

With incredible views, this 4-star hotel is an extraordinary property, built in levels with pool, dining terraces and lawns. Rooms are large and exquisitely appointed.



#### **L'Atelier de L'Image**

Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

This chic and modern 4-star hotel has been established around the theme of photography and has a gallery. There is a Resto-Bar that serves Japanese and French cuisine in contemporary decor or on the terrace in summer.