

TOURdeFORKS

...uncommon epicurean adventures

Culinary Tours of France and Italy, 2009



What We Offer:

Luxury, escorted culinary adventures. We also offer customized tours for the independent traveler, a couple on a romantic escape, a group on vacation, or a corporate team on retreat. Our exclusive and original tours best represent the food, wine and culinary traditions of each memorable destination.

What We Do:

Design the perfect culinary vacation, for a weekend or a week or more—in Italy, France, and in late 2009, Turkey. Chefs, culinary experts, food writers, wine and cheese makers introduce you to the best of regional cuisine through insider tours of markets and wineries; hands-on cooking classes; visits to artisanal producers and dining at hand-selected restaurants. Our expert guides help create an experience that both your palate and your mind will long remember.

Scheduled Departures for 2009:

- Sites of Exceptional Taste: Provence, May 2–10th
- Emilia Romagna, Italy: October 23rd–29th

Your Travel Counselor:

Provence and the Volcanic Heartland of France May 2-10, 2009

This journey, like no other you'll find anywhere, is a delightful gastronomical discovery of France's Sites of Exceptional Culinary Taste, places dedicated to outstanding products. We'll take a culinary pilgrimage to unveil different facets of local ingredients, broadly expanding your knowledge of French food, the countryside, the people and their methods of production. We'll have intimate conversations with producers and growers, be welcomed by great chefs of the region, prepare local cuisine, dine in private homes and Michelin starred restaurants, visit olive orchards, vineyards, candy and pottery workshops, all the while savoring the quality of exceptional products. And, of course, you'll have time to shop for all these local products!

We'll visit 6 Sites of Exceptional Culinary Taste in Provence:

- Nyons, site of olive orchards and Tanche olive oil
- Beaumes-de-Venise, unique terraced vineyards near Mt. Ventoux
- Chateauneuf du Pape, best wines in the world
- St-Paul-Trois-Chateaux, small truffle market town
- Apt, town of provençal color and candy
- Le-Puy-en-Velay, lentils, lace and liqueur

Day 1, Thursday, Lyon

Arrive in Lyon, a city of Roman ruins and the capital gastronomique of France. Transfer to a luxury hotel. Enjoy a welcome cocktail. Our welcome dinner and cooking demonstration in the ambiance of a unique cookbook store showcase the fantastic food finds we'll discover on this tour.

Day 2, Friday, Provence, the land of ocre

On the way to a sumptuous chateau in Provence, we'll have private access to an ancient wine quarry storehouse and be treated to a unique wine tasting. Weather permitting, an open-air motorboat weaves its way to Valence throughout the Isere, Ardeche and Drome departments, past the Hermitage, Cotes du Rhone, St. Joseph, St Peray and Cornas vineyards. Lunch is taken in the middle of Valence's old village. The young chef, trained by Pic, Chabran, Robuchon, and les Freres Pourcels among others, is an upcoming star on France's culinary scene. Chef Poinot's "menu de degustation" accompanied by local wines, awaits us before we continue the short trip to our luxury accommodations. This will be our home base in the Drome to explore the Provençal Sites of Exceptional Culinary Taste. A light dinner under the stars of Provence completes the day, before a restful night's sleep in the quiet luxury chateau.

Day 3, Saturday, Nyons

Glimmering olive orchards and old gnarled trees of Tanche olives lure us to Nyons, a Site of Exceptional Culinary Taste. A trip to a local market begins our Provençal cuisine experience. A cooking course includes a leisurely lunch dining on our own creations. Stroll through an ancient olive grove with a local producer who will take us to his olive oil mill. This incredible opportunity includes a visit to the Institute of Olive Oil with a lesson on how to taste this fruity oil with its buttery aroma and banana finish. You'll have time to stroll through the quaint village, savor ice cream and crème brûlée made with olive oil or lavender and take a tour of a lavender distillery. Shop at one of the local boutiques, like Maison Dozol, for Provençal products such as soaps and lotions made from local lavender and olive oil. .

Day 4, Sunday, Beaumes-de-Venise and Chateauneuf du Pape

This is some of the most breathtaking landscape in Provence! Beaumes-de-Venise, a Site of Exceptional Culinary Taste because of its Muscat wine, welcomes us with a bumpy ride through the uniquely terraced vineyards of the Dentelles de Montmirail. In the shadow of Mount Ventoux, we'll



enjoy a scenic picnic lunch of local wine, cheese, fruit, sandwiches and chocolate. We'll visit the Caves des Vignerons de Beaumes-de-Venise and learn the secret of creating this unusual, light wine. Later in the day we'll head to Chateau-neuf-du-Pape, yes, a Site of Exceptional Culinary Taste for its world-famous wine. This evening promises to be like no other: we've been invited to dine on local cuisine in the ambiance of a private vineyard. Chateau-neuf-de-Pape's wines are classified among the "best wines in the world".

Day 5, Monday, Apt

After a leisurely morning and optional activities at our chateau, we'll drive to Apt, a charming provençal village and a Site of Exceptional Culinary taste because of its fruits confits, candied fruits. The theme for our visit? "The Colors of Provence." In the middle of a natural park and the Luberon region of the Massif Central, we'll discover the magnificent countryside, the "ochre pathway." Blood-red and bright gold colors of the earth have been used as coloring agents since ancient Roman times. Our guide will enlighten us about the color that defines the cuisine and pottery of Provence. A visit to a workshop lets us see the creation of Provencal pottery, la faience provençale. Take home some of the colorful and uniquely layered pieces. Watch an artisanal candy maker as she explains and demonstrates the candy making process, using fresh fruits such as melons, strawberries, cherries and apricots. Master Chef Serges Peuzin will perform his magic by demonstrating and offering his cuisine based on the colors of Provence and candied fruit.

Day 6, Tuesday, St-Paul-Trois-Chateaux, Montelimar and Auvergne

Before our departure for the Auvergne region, learn about truffles near the small village of St-Paul-Trois-Chateaux, an up and coming exceptional taste site. This is just the beginning as the adventure continues in Montelimar with a visit to the nougat factory of Chaudron d'Or, a candy-making demonstration and, most importantly, a tasting. As we pass through the ochre countryside of Provence, small villages offer breathtaking views in the Parc des Monts d'Archeche, the deep volcanic heartland of France. A stop in a beautiful 18th century village perched atop a dormant volcano is the perfect place for lunch. Then we'll settle into our countryside retreat in the unspoiled and long-unknown land of Haut Allier. Musical chimes announce our dinner, masterfully made with ingredients from the Haute Loire. Take delight in culinary specialties like fresh soup of artichoke hearts with smoked bacon mousse, shoulder of lamb Haute Loire basted in spices for seven hours and carotte gelot confite with homemade cumin ice cream.

Day 7, Wednesday, Le-Puy-en-Velay

Awaken to a copious country breakfast of fresh grain bread, homemade marmalade and fresh goat's cheese, compliments of Monsieur the Mayor's young goat. Our epicurean journey begins this day in Le-Puy-en-Velay, a small town of lentils, lace and liqueur and a departure point on the pilgrimage

route to Saint Jacques de Compostella. Le Puy is recognized as one of France's Pays d'Art et Histoire, town of art and history. Options today include visits to the Cathedral, a UNESCO monument, a tour of the town, a stop at a lace-making school or a visit to the Pages Liqueur Factory followed by an aperitif of Verveine du Velay. For lunch, Francois Gagnaire, a master of creating intricate flavors with the simplest products of the region, welcomes us at his starred restaurant. In his hands, the lentilles de Le Puy become the green pearls of haute cuisine We'll learn more about the production of the lentille verte du Puy, the green lentil, also known as the grain of life. Lentils play a vital role in the history, architecture and gastronomy of this volcanic region of central France. Later in the day, enjoy a specialty tea, chocolate, pastries at La Chanterelle where the baker, Julien, will explain how he makes his tart with chestnut, "le Saint-Bonnet," and offers a taste of his praline chocolates made with cepe mushrooms.

Day 8, Thursday, Dinner in a three-star restaurant



What a way to complete our culinary pilgrimage. Today offers an incredible opportunity to savor the cuisine of 3-starred chefs, Regis and Jacques Marcon. Specialties of the chefs include a cassoulet of blue lobster with green lentils, a menu of champignons, local mushrooms, along with artichokes. After our diner d'adieu, we'll rest peacefully in the comfortable accommodations chez Marcon.

Day 9, Friday

Depart for the Lyon airport or continue your stay in France at your leisure.

HOTELS

Le Royal, Lyon
Chateau Rochegude, Drome
Les Deux Abbesses, St. Arcons-d'Allier
Clos des Cimes, St-Bonnet-le-Froid

PRICE

\$7,500 based on double share. Single supplement \$1,500. Maximum of 12 guests.

TOURdeFORKS

...uncommon epicurean adventures

Emilia Romagna October 23–29, 2009

Make a culinary pilgrimage to Emilia-Romagna, the richest and most complex gastronomic region in Italy. Discover methods behind regional gastronomy: the link between flavor, landscape, heritage and traditional skills.

Day 1 Thursday, Bologna



Private transfer from Bologna airport to hotel to relax and unpack. In the afternoon, meet with the group and visit Bologna's temple to Emilia-Romagna cuisine, Tamburini, one of the finest food shops in the world. Dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight in Bologna.

Day 2 Friday, Bologna

A morning guided coffee tasting at Bologna's oldest cafe. After lunch, a walking tour of Bologna and time for shopping. Dinner at your leisure. Overnight in Bologna.

Day 3 Modena, Mantova, Zibello

Departure for Modena for a tour and lunch with a traditional Balsamic Vinegar maker. Continue to Zibello for a meeting with the producer of "culatello", the Ferrari of air dried ham. These free-range black pigs feed on acorns which impart a superb nutty flavor to the ham. Overnight at Corte Pallavicina on the banks of the Po River, with dinner at Cavallino Bianco in Zibello.

Day 4 Parma

Cooking class of traditional Emilian specialties and lunch at Antica Corte Pallavicina. Afternoon visit to nearby Verdi's house and museum in Busseto. Overnight at Corte Pallavicina.

Day 5 Ravenna

Guided walking tour of Parma.

A night at the opera in the *Teatro Regio* in Parma. Overnight in Parma.

Day 6

Visit to Parmigiano-Reggiano producer for tour and tasting of the king of cheeses. After visit to Lini winery in Coreggio for a Lambrusco tasting, we drive to Ravenna. Afternoon walking tour of Unesco Heritage Site featuring Byzantine mosaics. Farewell dinner in Ravenna.

Day 6

Morning private transfer to Bologna airport.

HOTELS

Corona D'oro, Bologna
Relais Antica Corte Pallavicina, Zibello
Grand Hotel de la Ville, Parma
Albergo Capello, Ravenna

PRICES

\$5,350 based on double share.
Single supplement \$850. Maximum of 12 guests.