



Esprit de France

Paris the City of Light

France is synonymous with fine wine and food so we include some fabulous, authentic dining experiences here. Your journey also brings you tête-à-tête with the country's artistic heritage and wealth of historic and architectural marvels.

DAY 1 – PARIS. 🏰 🍷 🍷

Welcome to Paris! After a warm welcome from your Tour Director, transfers depart Charles de Gaulle Airport at 08:30 11:00 and 13:30 hours for your landmark hotel in the City of Light. The epitome of Parisian chic, settle in and relax before a Welcome Reception this evening. Get to know your fellow guests over a drink and light dinner. Hotel: Hilton Arc De Triomphe. (WR)

DAY 2 – SPARKLING CHAMPAGNE. 🏰 🍷 🍷

The high speed TGV train ferries you eastwards to the town of Reims, important in French history as the coronation place of kings. Drive out into the Champagne vineyards to learn about the appellation system. Walk in the footsteps of Napoleon as you visit the underground cellars and taste some exceptional champagne. An exquisite and delicious lunch has been arranged, which of course includes a glass of the local sparkling wine. Then return to Paris where the evening is at leisure. (BB,HL)

DAY 3 – PARIS AND THE PALAIS DU LOUVRE. 🏰 🍷 🍷

In the mid 19th century, Baron Haussmann transformed much of medieval Paris into something more modern. Admire his work as you glide along the elegant, tree lined boulevards that link all the iconic sights like the Arc de Triomphe and Eiffel Tower. Disembark for a private tour of one of the world's greatest art collections at the Louvre Museum. Your guide leads you through the galleries to see the Venus de Milo, Winged Victory, Mona Lisa and many more works amassed over the ages by the Kings of France. (BB)

DAY 4 – PARIS – CHARTRES – LOIRE VALLEY. 🏰 🍷 🍷

Head south to Chartres to visit the magnificent gothic Cathedral, world renowned for its stained glass windows. Then on again, past Orleans, and along the valley of the Loire River, where the nobility and royalty of France built their chateaux as symbols of their wealth and power. Visit King Francis' 'hunting lodge' of Chambord - 440

rooms and a chimney for every day of the year! Now on through Chinon, with its associations with Joan of Arc, to your 15th century château hotel, set in its own park. Hotel: Château de Marçay. (BB,D)

DAY 5 – LOIRE – COGNAC – BORDEAUX. 🏰 🍷 🍷

Enter Aquitaine today, paradoxically named land of water but in fact famous for its wines. Stop in Cognac to examine the secrets of the distillation process and taste the brandy. Then move on to Bordeaux, containing the finest examples of 18C architecture in France. See the façades of the quay sides, the Grand Théâtre and magnificent Esplanade des Quinconces. Tonight, your gala evening begins with a drive to the Chateau Smith-Haut-Lafitte, one of the leading estates in the Graves region. On arrival taste some of the recent vintage before sitting down to a mouth watering three course dinner, all accompanied with matching wine to enhance your dining experience. Hotel: Regent Grand. (BB,HD)

DAY 6 – ST EMILION AND THE DORDOGNE. 🏰 🍷 🍷

Travel out to the wine town of St-Emilion perched on a rocky outcrop overlooking the Dordogne Valley. St-Emilion offers all the beauty of a medieval village with ancient paved streets, ramparts surrounded by vines and rows of houses that slope down the plains below. Then take a scenic excursion into the beautiful countryside of the Dordogne. Today's excursion also includes a tasting of the full-bodied red wines for which the region is famous. (BB)

DAY 7 – BORDEAUX – CARCASSONNE – FLOURE. 🏰 🍷 🍷

As you follow the fertile Garonne Valley upstream this morning, vineyards are everywhere. Travel through the plum growing region, where the prunes 'pruneaux d'Agen' are renowned throughout France. Continuing east, you arrive at the medieval town of Carcassonne. Entering Carcassonne is like stepping back in time; the city has a complete set of ramparts, a medieval keep, even a sports ground for jousting! In a tiny, nearby village your charming, rustic and unmistakably French hotel awaits with its heavy oak beams, lovely gardens and a great outdoor pool. Hotel: Chateau de Floure. (BB,D)

DAY 8 – FLOURE – VILLENEUVE-LÈS-AVIGNON. 🏰 🍷 🍷

Head east and follow the Golfe du Lion around the flat marshy area formed by the Rhone Delta, famous for wild, white horses, black bulls and pink flamingoes. Upon reaching historic Avignon, visit the

14th Century 'Palace of Popes' and see the four remaining arches of the Bridge of St. Benezet, the Pont D'Avignon of the famous song. Your 5 star hotel lies across the river, nestled in a priest's garden perfumed by roses and wisteria. Hotel: Le Prieure. (BB,D)

DAY 9 – POST-IMPRESSIONISTS LANDS. 🏰 🍷 🍷

A journey into the sun baked landscapes that played a key role in the development of modern art. First drive to the charming village of St Remy, birthplace of Nostradamus. At the nearby asylum of St. Paul de Mausole, Van Gogh painted some of his most famous works. Visit the beautiful cloister, gardens and upstairs Van Gogh's bedroom and bath. Now visit medieval Les Baux-de-Provence, perched atop a rocky spur, and crowned with a ruined castle. After taking in the magnificent views, taste the local produce at a nearby olive oil mill. Return to your charming and elegant hotel, where you are at leisure. (BB)

DAY 10 – VILLENEUVE-LÈS-AVIGNON – NICE. 🏰 🍷 🍷

Eastwards today to the thermal resort of Aix-en-Provence for a brief stop near the fountains and shady plane trees of the elegant Cours Mirabeau. Take 'La Provençale', the inland highway, towards the Côte d'Azur before veering off to the hill-top village of St Paul de Vence, where famous contemporary painters perpetuate art as a living tradition. Savour a glass of wine and superb highlight lunch before driving down to the sparkling Mediterranean and the elegant resort of Nice. Take a stroll along the fabled Promenade des Anglais, or browse in the exclusive boutiques. Hotel: Boscolo Exedra. (BB,HL)

DAY 11 – THE LEGENDARY CÔTE D'AZUR. 🏰 🍷 🍷

Drive to Monaco to walk through the old town to see the Royal Palace, the yacht-filled harbour and the Cathedral where the late Prince Ranier and Princess Grace are buried. Then return along the coast to the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild on Cap Ferrat. Surrounded by 17 acres of landscaped gardens, the magnificent rose-coloured villa of Baroness Rothschild is filled with rare porcelain, old master paintings and antique furniture. The balance of the afternoon is at leisure in Nice. Tonight you have reservations for an end-of-tour Celebration dinner with wine at a delightful local restaurant. (BB,CD)

DAY 12 – NICE.

Your tour comes to an end after breakfast. Transfers arrive at Nice Airport at 06:15 and 09:00 hours. (BB)

12 DAYS ~ FRANCE

- Key**
-  LUXURY HOTELS IN DESIRABLE LOCATIONS PLUS NIGHTS
 -  PREMIUM HIGHLIGHTS
 -  VISITS INCLUDE ENTRANCE
 -  HIGHLIGHT MEALS
 -  DRINK INCLUDED
 -  GUIDED SIGHTSEEING OR ORIENTATION TOUR
- See hotel details on page 216-222



TOUR CODE: G500A *Your Unique and Exclusive Gold Departures*

| Starts Paris: | Ends Nice: | Twin Share p.p. | Single Supp. Option | Starts Paris: | Ends Nice: | Twin Share p.p. | Single Supp. Option | Starts Paris: | Ends Nice: | Twin Share p.p. | Single Supp. Option | Starts Paris: | Ends Nice: | Twin Share p.p. | Single Supp. Option |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Sat 21 Apr | - Wed 02 May | \$6550 | \$2215 | Sat 09 Jun | - Wed 20 Jun | \$6799 | \$2455 | * Sat 15 Sep | - Wed 26 Sep | \$6799 | \$2455 | Sat 13 Oct | - Wed 24 Oct | \$6650 | \$2360 |
| Sat 28 Apr | - Wed 09 May | \$6550 | \$2215 | Sat 16 Jun | - Wed 27 Jun | \$6799 | \$2455 | Sat 22 Sep | - Wed 03 Oct | \$6799 | \$2455 | Sat 20 Oct | - Wed 31 Oct | \$6650 | \$2360 |
| Sat 12 May | - Wed 23 May | \$6799 | \$2455 | Sat 01 Sep | - Wed 12 Sep | \$6799 | \$2455 | * Sat 29 Sep | - Wed 10 Oct | \$6685 | \$2480 | | | | |
| Sat 26 May | - Wed 06 Jun | \$6799 | \$2455 | Sat 08 Sep | - Wed 19 Sep | \$6799 | \$2455 | Sat 06 Oct | - Wed 17 Oct | \$6650 | \$2360 | | | | |

Reductions
 Triple Room Reductions
SAVE \$575 p.p. 21 Apr - 28 Apr, 13 Oct - 20 Oct.
SAVE \$765 p.p. 12 May, 15 Sep.
SAVE \$650 p.p. 26 May - 08 Sep, 22 Sep.
SAVE \$720 p.p. 29 Sep - 06 Oct.
Insight's Great Savings & Discounts
SAVE \$660 per person with Young Traveller Discount
SAVE up to \$340 per person with 2nd Tour Discount
SAVE up to \$340 per person with Frequent Traveller Discount

Early Payment Discount 12 mths 10 mths 6 mths
SAVE per person \$660 \$495 \$330
 For additional information regarding Insight's Great Savings and Discounts, please see page 214.
Notes
 All prices are in US dollars.
 * These departures stay at the Fairmont Monte Carlo Hotel in Monaco, instead of Nice.

Extra Accommodation
 Per person, per night
 Hilton Arc de Triomphe, Paris
 09 May-15 May, 17 Oct-22 Oct '12 \$540 \$1,014 \$400
 Other times \$427 \$788 \$325
 Boscolo Exedra, Nice \$348 \$619 \$295
DEF  **Definite Departures (DEF)**
 These are regularly updated and listed on our website www.insightvacations.com (see page 215 for details).



TOUR PACE

Your quest for the spirit of France is as unhurried as it is refined. Each day has its *raison d'être*, yet always tempered with a relaxing meal or leisure time to explore or maybe spend in the delightful surroundings of your hotel.

YOUR LUXURY GOLD HOTELS

Every conceivable style is represented here, from contemporary chic in central Paris to charming, rural chateaux. Stay in a secluded converted 14C priory and a prestigious building in Belle Époque style on the main boulevard of Nice.

YOUR EXCLUSIVE COLLECTION OF INCLUDED HIGHLIGHTS

- Reims:** See the Cathedral
- Champagne:** Cellar visit and Champagne tasting.
- Paris:** See the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe and other major landmarks as well as a guided tour of the Louvre Museum.
- Chartres:** Visit the magnificent gothic Cathedral.
- Loire Valley:** Visit the grand Château de Chambord.
- Cognac:** Witness the distillation process and taste the brandy.
- Bordeaux:** See the façades of the quaysides, the Grand Théâtre and Esplanade des Quinconces on your orientation tour.
- Dordogne Valley:** Visit St Emillion and enjoy a wine tasting.
- Carcassonne:** Enjoy the ambience of this medieval walled town.
- Avignon:** Visit the Palace of the Popes and the famous bridge.
- Saint-Rémy-de-Provence:** Visit St. Paul de Mausole monastery, where Van Gogh painted some of his most famous works.
- Les Baux-de-Provence:** One of the most beautiful villages in France set on a rocky spur in the Alpes mountains.
- Aix-en-Provence:** Enjoy the ambience of the Cours Mirabeau.
- St Paul de Vence:** Wander through the narrow cobbled streets and enjoy the panoramic views.
- Monaco:** Walk through the old town to see the Royal Palace and visit the Cathedral.
- Cap Ferrat:** Visit the Belle Epoque style Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, set on a hill with dizzying sea views on both sides.

YOUR DELICIOUS DINING EXPERIENCES

- Get to know your Tour Director and fellow guests over a Welcome Reception including a light meal (WR)
- A highlight lunch in the Champagne region. (HL)
- Wine pairing and gala dinner on a chateau estate in Bordeaux (HD)
- A highlight lunch of authentic local cuisine in the village of St Paul de Vence. (HL)
- A Celebration dinner with wine on the French Riviera. (CD).
- 11 Buffet Breakfasts (BB), 3 three course dinners with choice (D).

YOUR INCLUSIVE GOLD SERVICES

- Escorted by your 'Personal Concierge', an Insight professional Tour Director; and accompanied by expert local guides where appropriate.
- First Class TGV train from Paris to Reims
- Enjoy the unique comfort of Insight's luxury air-conditioned 40 seat coach with extended leg room and on-board restroom.
- Insight Traveller Welcome pack
- Airport arrival and departure transfers at scheduled times on Day 1 and Day 12.

HIGHLIGHT MEALS & INCLUDED SIGHTSEEING ARE WORTH APPROXIMATELY US\$838