



# Tastes of Provence

9 Days



*The Adventure Company* | EST. 1969

**MT + SOBEK**™

MOUNTAIN TRAVEL SOBEK

**CELEBRATING 50 YEARS**  
AS THE PIONEER OF ADVENTURE TRAVEL

# ➤ Tastes of Provence

Give in to the irresistible pleasures of French Provence, where century-old trails lead to medieval villages, world-famous vineyards, and enchanting farmlands. Meander through the vibrant stalls of Les Halles market, where locals seek out the best regional produce. Tour Chateauneuf du Pape, with wines famed for their privileged microclimate and terroir, and savor a gourmet picnic among ancient Grenache and Syrah vines. In the sleepy village of Saint Didier, sample yet another Provencal specialty — nougat, and visit Josiane Deal's award-winning fromagerie in Vaison to choose French cheeses for dinner out on the terrace.

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## Details

Arrive: Avignon, France

Depart: Avignon, France

Duration: 9 Days

Group Size: 4-16 Guests

Minimum Age: 16 Years Old

Activity Level:



## Testimonials

*"Great experience every time with some of the most knowledgeable guides in their fields. We always come home with wonderful memories of the people we meet and things we see."*

Bob J.

*"Exceptional trips! Go with MT Sobek!"*

Mitch S.

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## Why Take This Trip With Us?

### REASON #01

For 50 years MT Sobek has created unique hiking adventures and powered hikers with fantastic regional fare thanks to our local know-how.

### REASON #02

Our adventure takes you away from the tour-bus crowds and out on timeless trails over Provence's thyme-laden hills.

### REASON #03

This Rhone Valley tour is perfect for foodies looking to sample premier cheeses and wines, and hike it off too!

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## What to Expect



### ACTIVITIES

Wine, oil and cheese tastings at farms and vineyards, hiking through dazzling scenery, touring medieval towns, and bustling markets. Plus kayak the Sorgue River.



### LODGING

Modern and classic hotels offer upscale amenities and services in culturally, historically and naturally rich surroundings.



### CLIMATE

The Mediterranean climate of Provence is warm and dry. Mornings may be cool, but it will warm up to hot during the day.

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## Meet Our Guides

Our expert guides and trip leaders are truly the key to our trips' success. Many are locals who live in-country year-round; others have made it their second home—all are passionate, enthusiastic and endlessly knowledgeable. Meet two of the guides that might be on your trip.

Life is too short to be bored—which could be penned as Anne-Charlotte's mantra. Her travels have taken her around the world and she's worked a number of trades, from dentist to lumberjack! But the one constant has always been her love of nature, growing up with a mountain-guide-of-a-father, and embarking on many treks of her own. As a guide, Anne-Charlotte began along the rough trails of Corsica before favoring the rolling hills of Provence. Soft-spoken, attentive, and with a heart of gold, Anne-Charlotte will ensure your Provence experience will be a memorable one. And don't try to stump her on anything botany-related: it won't work.

**Anne-Charlotte Luneau**

Stuart is Canadian by birth but Provençal by heart, having devoted the past decade of his life to exploring and leading groups along the trails of Provence. An all-around specialist of the region, he'll get you better acquainted with every aspect of the countryside. Always attentive to his groups—to their interests and hiking ambitions—every one of his adventures becomes custom-tailored to his guests. And his picnics never cease to amaze. An avid bike rider, Stuart also leads bike tours, dragging himself up his yearly pilgrimage to the summit of Mont Ventoux.

**Stuart Sommers**

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# Itinerary

## DAY 1

### ARRIVE AT AVIGNON

Arrive in Avignon this afternoon and transfer to your hotel in the city center. Perched on the Rhone and crowned by the immense Papal Palace, Avignon is as rich in history as it is in contemporary arts. Explore this enchanting town on foot and walk across the legendary Pont d'Avignon, originally built in the 12th century. This evening, meet your guide and fellow group at the hotel and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

**Meals:** D

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## DAY 2

### INDULGE IN STEAK-FRITES & HIKE TO FRIGOLET ABBEY

After a guided city tour, head to Les Halles covered market, where locals and chefs hunt for the best regional products. Savor lunch at a secret bistro that showcases market-fresh ingredients — try steak or fish picked fresh from the stalls, served with frites made from the market's wonderful organic potatoes. After a short drive across the Durance River to the tiny Montagnette hill, work off your meal on a hike to St Michel de Frigolet Abbey, a peaceful 12th-century chapel with a baroque church. Explore the wonders of Avignon's dining scene on your own tonight.

**Activity:** 2 hours/3 miles hiking with 300' elevation gain & loss

**Meals:** B, L

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## DAY 3

### EXPLORE THE ANCIENT WINE REGION OF CHATEAUNEUF DU PAPE

Take a short drive from Avignon to the village of Chateauneuf du Pape, home to a hilltop medieval castle and the most famous of the Rhone Valley wines. Unveil the meaning of terroir while strolling the smooth red rocks between the prized vines. Stop by a renowned village wine domaine for a tasting, enjoy a gourmet Provencal picnic among the ancient Grenache and Syrah vines, and continue walking through the vineyards. End up in Vaison la Romaine, a stunningly intact medieval village that sits on France's largest Roman archeological site.

**Activity:** 3 hours/7 miles hiking with 164' elevation gain & loss

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 4

### BROWSE VAISON'S STREET MARKET & HIKE DENTELLES DE MONTMIRAIL

Explore the weekly street market of Vaison, one of the best in Provence, with colorful stalls selling everything from fresh produce, cheeses, meats and spices to crafts and clothing. Enjoy free time to pick up your picnic fare, then take a transfer to the medieval village of Gigondas, perched high above the plains and second only to Chateauneuf du Pape for its red wines. Hike past the terraced vineyards and up to the Dentelles de Montmirail,

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a set of sheer limestone cliffs soaring high above the vines. Return to Vaison and have dinner together at a local restaurant.

**Activity:** 3.5 hours/7 miles hiking with 330' elevation gain & loss

**Meals:** B, D

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## DAY 5

### REWARD A FOREST HIKE WITH PROVENÇAL SPECIALTIES

Transfer to Mont Serein on the upper slopes of Mont Ventoux, Provence's highest mountain, at just over 6,300 feet. Walk through a serene larch forest and on to a lookout that affords a panorama of the entire chain of the Alps, including Mont Blanc. At a traditional chalet nestled in the meadows, savor the ubiquitous alpine tartiflette: potato-caramelized-onion-and-melted-cheese-goodness. In the afternoon, visit a family-run goat farm to learn how goat cheese is made — and to taste it. Return to Vaison to explore on your own and choose a top restaurant for dinner.

**Activity:** 2.5 hours/4 miles hiking with 600' elevation gain & loss

**Meals:** B, L

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## DAY 6

### VISIT AN OLIVE MILL IN NYONS & VAISON'S FAMED CHEESE SHOP

Transfer north to the village of Nyons, tucked away in a valley and rarely visited. Enjoy free time to explore the Thursday market. Walk into the hills, through olive groves known for their very mild, almost sweet olive oil. Visit a working olive mill and learn about the cultivation of olive trees and olive oil in Provence. Return to Vaison to visit Josiane Deal's award-winning cheese shop, rated the best in France. Pick up some of her cheeses, grab some wine, and have a feast on the hotel terrace overlooking the main square.

**Activity:** 2.5 hours/3 miles hiking with 500' elevation gain & loss

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 7

### TRY NOUGAT IN VENASQUE & TAKE A COOKING CLASS IN L'ISLE SUR LA SORGUE

Head southward to the Monts du Vaucluse range, draped with oak forests and muscat vineyards. Walk to the perched medieval village of Venasque, high above the cherry-orchard plains with its stone homes, cobbled streets, and an ancient church. After a gourmet picnic, head to Saint Didier village to visit a shop that specializes in nougat, a Provençal specialty made with almonds and honey. At L'Isle sur la Sorgue, an island-of-a-village surrounded by the Sorgue River, take part in a cooking class with a local chef — and enjoy dinner with the Provençal specialties you've prepared.

**Activity:** 3 hours/4 miles hiking with 900' elevation gain & loss

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**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 8

### ENJOY HOME-COOKED FARE IN THE LUBERON

Transfer to the Luberon mountains, center-stage in Peter Mayle's *A Year in Provence*, and see one of its lesser-known villages: Oppede-le-Vieux — a medieval labyrinth of cobbled streets winding up to the church and castle. Walk on a picturesque trail, with orchards and villas in the foothills and jagged limestone slopes of the Petit Luberon mountain above. Enjoy a home-cooked Provencal meal in a sleepy village, showcasing olive tapenade and slow-cooked lamb. In the afternoon, take a lazy kayak journey down the Sorgue River, straight back to L'Isle sur la Sorgue. Enjoy a farewell dinner together.

**Activity:** 2.5 hours/4 miles hiking with 200' elevation gain & loss

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 9

### ENJOY MARKET DAY IN L'ISLE SUR LA SORGUE OR RETURN TO AVIGNON

The adventure ends today. But it's Sunday: market day in L'Isle sur la Sorgue, and the entire town is filled with one of the best-known markets in Provence. The village also happens to be the antiques capital of Provence, so there are lots of reasons to spend part of the day here, or an extra night. Otherwise take the transfer to the Avignon train station after breakfast.

**Meals:** B

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## Dates

Aug 31 - Sep 8, 2019

Jun 6 - 14, 2020

Sep 19 - 27, 2020

For full terms and conditions please visit [www.mtsobek.com/terms](http://www.mtsobek.com/terms). Please note that our itineraries may be subject to change.

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## Pricing

2019

\$ 4,995 per person

### Additional Cost

\$ 900 Single Supplement

2020

\$ 4,795 per person

### Additional Cost

\$ 900 Single Supplement

### PRICE INCLUDES

- Expert leadership from experienced adventure guides
- Accommodations as noted in the itinerary
- Meals as noted in the daily itinerary
- Potable water and snacks throughout
- 1 glass of wine or beer at dinner
- All group entrance fees, activities, and ground transportation
- Arrival and departure day group transfers to Avignon train station

### PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare, any airport taxes, or excess baggage charges
- Lunch on Day 4 and dinner on Day 5
- Optional tips to your adventures guide(s) and driver(s)
- Personal expenses such as medical immunizations, phone calls, laundry, or souvenirs
- Transfers to and from Avignon train station outside of the group transfers
- Optional travel protection

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## ➤ **The World of MT Sobek**

At Mountain Travel Sobek, we believe life is an adventure and adventure is life.

As the originators, innovators and leaders in adventure travel for more than five decades, we passionately create, craft and share indelible, transformative journeys to the world's most memorable places. Our more than 200 unique and once-in-a-lifetime trips are designed to inspire and exhilarate, enliven and excite--opening eyes and minds through profoundly personal connections with nature and culture.

Our small group and custom adventures span the globe, and the spectrum—of interests, environments and activities—every one expertly planned and knowledgeably and passionately guided. And our commitment to making every experience a remarkable one has earned us preferred travel outfitter status for National Geographic Active Expeditions, Active New York Times Journeys, and Smithsonian Active Journeys.

We are *the* adventure company.

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### **Awards**



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