

2024 - Essence of Burgundy & Provence

7-NIGHT CRUISE WITH 3 NIGHTS GENEVA PRE-CRUISE AND 3 NIGHTS NICE POST-CRUISE

Indulge in French flavors on a palate-pleasing itinerary that highlights the essence of France's Burgundy and Provence. Uncover the Roman history of Chalon-sur Saône and delight in charming Tournus with its towering Romanesque abbey and historic apothecary shop. Visit French châteaux from Burgundy to Provence, taste your way through the French culinary capital of Lyon and visit the Papal Palace in Avignon. While you'll get more than a taste of Burgundy and Provence during this itinerary, the essence of these destinations will linger on your palate – and in your heart – for a lifetime!

OVERVIEW:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>
1	GENEVA	Hotel check-in
2	GENEVA	“The Peace Capital” city tour
3	GENEVA	“Pearl of the French Alps” Annecy excursion Chillon Castle visit
4	GENEVA	Transfer to ship Dijon city tour EMBARKATION
5	CHALON-SUR-SAÔNE	Historic City tour OR Beaune walking tour OR Château de Couches Scenic cruising OR Chalon-Tournus bike tour OR Chalonnaise wine tasting
6	TOURNUS	Tournus city tour & Abbey of Saint Philibert visit OR Château Cormatin OR Medieval Brancion Scenic cruising OR Tournus-Mâcon bike tour OR Mâconnais wine tasting
7	MACON	“The South Burgundy City” Mâcon tour OR Cluny & Berze-le-Chatel visit OR Bike tour to Berze-le-Chatel OR Monastère de Brou Scenic Cruising OR Beaujolais wine tasting Illuminations cruise
8	LYON	“France’s Culinary Capital” city tour OR Lyon bike tour OR Vieux Lyon walk and tasting tour Vienne walking tour

		OR ViaRhôna bike tour
		OR Mount Pipet hike
9	VIENNE	Scenic cruising
		Viviers walking tour
		OR Bike tour
		OR Grignan excursion & truffle farm visit
10	AVIGNON	Walking tour and Papal Palace
		OR Tastes of Avignon
		Arles walking tour
		OR Van Gogh walking tour
		OR Arles bike tour
11	ARLES	DISEMBARKATION
		Transfer to Nice
		Hotel check-in
12	NICE	Nice city tour
13	NICE	Cote d'Azur & Monaco Excursion
14	NICE	Return flight home

ITINERARY DETAILS:

Day 1, GENEVA. Check into your Geneva hotel for the beginning of your Essence of Burgundy & Provence pre-cruise land program.

Day 2, GENEVA. Get acquainted with Geneva, the “Peace City,” and gateway to the Swiss Alps, on your guided walking tour. With traditions in both watchmaking and chocolate making, this beautiful city has a rich history, which you will glimpse during your excursion. (B)

Day 3, GENEVA. Venture south to the “Pearl of the French Alps,” Annecy, on your morning excursion. Home to beautiful castles, including the Château d’Annecy, home to the Counts of Geneva, and natural green spaces with bike trails winding through along the lake. Later in the day, visit Chillon Castle, a picture-perfect medieval island fortress with three formal great halls, a chapel and beautifully arched underground rooms that once served as a prison. (B)

Day 4, GENEVA - DIJON - EMBARKATION. Transfer from Geneva to Dijon, France and enjoy a walking tour through the wonderfully picturesque capital of the historic Burgundy region. Renowned for its traditional mustard, Dijon also boasts one of the best-preserved medieval centers in France, with postcard-perfect architecture, including its cathedral of Saint-Benigne de Dijon grand Palace of the Dukes and Estates of Burgundy. Spend free time at your own leisure for lunch. Later, board your ship in preparation for your 7-night cruise. (B,D)

Day 5, CHALON-SUR-SAÔNE - TOURNUS. Located in southern Burgundy at the heart of the Côte Chalonnaise wine region, Chalon-Sur-Saône whispers the secrets of its medieval past which you will discover on your historic city tour. Alternatively, choose an excursion in Beaune, a walled town nestled in the heart of Cote d’Or vineyards where you’ll stroll the cobblestone streets and take in such sights as the mosaic-tiled roof of the Hôtel-Dieu de Beaune, founded in the 15th century as a hospital for the less fortunate. Or, visit the storybook Château de Couches, a medieval fortress enveloped in idyllic hills and greenery that once served the Dukes of Burgundy. Later in the day, enjoy a scenic sailing to Tournus, or sample the region’s famous white Mâconnais wines. Alternatively, pedal from Chalon-Sur-Saône to Tournus on an exhilarating guided bike tour. (B,L,D)

Day 6, TOURNUS - MACON. Today you have a choice of a number of excursions as you explore the cities of Tournus and Macon. Let your knowledgeable guide lead you through Tournus and to its magnificent Benedictine Abbey of Saint Philibert. Or choose instead to visit the moated Château de Cormatin, which dates back to the early 17th century and features ornate apartments as well as a beautifully manicured garden. As an alternative, venture to the medieval village of Brancion with its preserved gateway, church and market hall. Return to the ship and enjoy a scenic cruise to Mâcon Or, instead, join a guided bike tour from Tournus to Mâcon or go wine tasting and meet the ship in Mâcon. (B,L,D)

Day 7, MACON - LYON. Join a guided tour through the “South Burgundy City” of Mâcon, learning about its local vineyards, museums, historical sites and perhaps its famous son, the poet and minister Alphonse de Lamartine. Or venture somewhat off the beaten path to Cluny, known for its large abbey, and the nearby castle Berze-le-Chatel, a well-preserved fortress perched on a rocky hill offering stunning views below. Alternately, you can enjoy a guided bike tour to Berze-le-Chatel. Should architecture or religion be one of your main interests, perhaps choose the excursion to the Royal Monastery of Brou, built in the 16th century and boasting a glorious white façade as well as a beautifully tiled roof. Return to the ship and head to the Sun Deck to enjoy a light lunch and the passing landscapes on the way to Villefranche-

sur-Saône. Or enjoy a tasting of Beaujolais wines before meeting your ship in Villefranche-sur-Saône. During the evening, enjoy a special Illuminations cruise – a highlight of your river cruise – as you enter the city of Lyon. (B,L,D)

Day 8, LYON - VIENNE. Discover dynamic Lyon, starting in Fourvière Hill, part of the city’s historic region that is now a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site and home to the 19th-century basilica Notre-Dame de Fourvière. Continue on to the old town of Lyon, followed by a guided walk through the St. Jean district, where you will be introduced to the city’s unique covered walkways, known as “traboules.” Or get active a guided bike tour through the city designed with cyclists in mind. If you’re a self-described foodie, our Vieux Lyon tasting tour is for you, during which you’ll have a chance to taste some of Lyon’s local delights. Later in the day, sail to Vienne, which boasts a Roman past that can be seen in its marvelously preserved ruins. There you can enjoy a guided walking tour around the city. For those wishing to be more active, you can either take a guided bike tour along a portion of the ViaRhôna bike route or a guided hike from the ship to the Monastery at Mount Pipet. (B,L,D)

Day 9, VIENNE - VIVIERS. Take your coffee on your balcony or the Sun Deck as you cruise to Viviers, a charming medieval city with picturesque 16th and 18th century monuments. For a more active adventure, pedal through this bicycle-friendly city. Alternately, you can go to the magnificent hilltop village, Grignan. After visiting this enchanting Provençal town, go in search of the highly prized “Black Diamond” truffles with a farmer and his trustworthy canine companion. (B,L,D)

Day 10, AVIGNON - ARLES. Avignon, aptly named the “City of Popes,” was the center of the Catholic Church in the 14th century when its “Palais des Papes” was the equivalent of today’s Vatican. Discover the history of Avignon on a guided walking tour that includes the Papal Palace and the well-preserved medieval walls surrounding the historic center of town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Alternately, you can visit three venues around Avignon to taste regional specialties including macarons, cheese and wine, and tapenades. Later in the day, rejoin the ship in Arles, considered one of the most beautiful cities in France. Let your experienced guide lead you to the top sights, including the Romanesque cathedral and Roman amphitheater; or take a guided bike tour to the Roman ruins. If you wish to delve further into Van Gogh’s Arles, join a special walking tour along with a visit to the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, showcasing his legacy. Or take some time to focus on wellness with a guided bike tour through town. (B,L,D)

Day 11, ARLES - AIX-EN-PROVENCE - NICE - DISEMBARKATION. Disembark your ship in Arles and head to Aix-en-Provence, birthplace of renowned painter Paul Cézanne. See the highlights of this delightful city known for its provincial markets. Afterward, take a scenic ride to Nice where you’ll enjoy a panoramic tour before checking into your hotel. (B)

Day 12, NICE. Tour the scenic capital of the French Riviera, where tourism has been alive for three centuries. Gaze at the azure waters of the Mediterranean and take in such sites as the Saint Reparate cathedral, opera house and Prefecture Palace. (B)

Day 13, NICE. Head to the hilltop town of Eze for a scenic walking tour along its charming cobblestone streets. Later, explore intimate Monaco-Ville, a sleepy medieval village, before taking in the luxury and beauty of Monte Carlo, famous for its opulent casino. (B)

Day 14, DEPART NICE. Bid farewell to Nice and prepare for your homeward flight. (B)