

CLASSICAL RHONE VALLEY

WITH THE MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA

**A CLASSICAL FLOATING MUSIC FESTIVAL TO
PROVENCE, BURGUNDY AND PARIS**

APRIL 6–16, 2026



**SAVE
UP TO
\$500**

LOOK INSIDE
FOR DETAILS

Custom River Journeys With Earthbound Expeditions

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AN EXCLUSIVE MUSIC, FOOD, WINE AND ART LOVERS JOURNEY **PARIS BURGUNDY PROVENCE**

APRIL 6-16, 2026

SAVE ^{UP} TO
\$500
per person
see pricing page
for details



Bonjour! It's April in Paris and we're inviting you to join friends and fans of Minnesota Public Radio and the Minnesota Orchestra for a classical music adventure along France's beautiful Rhone River.

Enjoy three pre-cruise April evenings in Paris as we walk in the footsteps of Picasso, Rodin and Hemingway, and have free time to explore the many museums, bookstores, colorful markets and cafés of Paris. Immerse yourself in a tour of the Opéra Garnier, an experience that will leave you spellbound in the heart of this enchanting city. Then off to Lyon to board our exclusively chartered first-class small ship, the MS van Gogh. We will cruise on the historic Rhône River among picturesque villages, ancient archaeological sites and esteemed wine estates. And back by popular demand... a robust program of classical music curated and performed on board by the renowned and celebrated pianist Jon Kimura Parker, Minnesota Orchestra's beloved Creative Partner and Host for Summer at Orchestra Hall.

This adventure is a perfect composition of breathtaking natural splendor, exceptional music and unforgettable art. Whatever your passion, be it classical music, wine tasting, food, art, or simply pursuing the French "joie de vivre," do join us. We look forward to exploring the treasures of France with you in 2026!

Melissa Ousley

Melissa Ousley

*On-Air Host, YourClassical MPR &
Minnesota Orchestra Live Broadcasts*

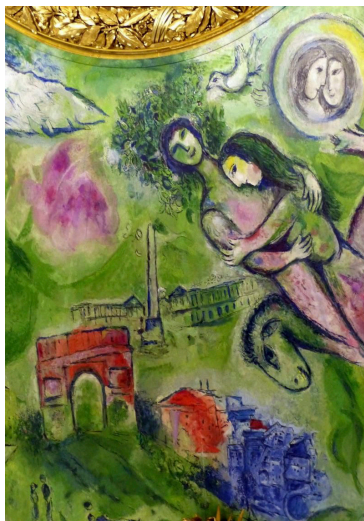


Arc de Triomphe

TOUR THE HISTORIC PARIS PALAIS OPERA GARNIER



Enjoy a special tour of the Palais Opera Garnier! A 19th-century architectural masterpiece, the Palais Garnier Opera House, built by Charles Garnier and opened in 1875, is the 13th opera house in Paris since the introduction of French opera by Louis XIV in 1669. Napoleon III commissioned it as part of the renovation works in the capital carried out under his command by Baron Haussmann.



*Detail of the Palais Garnier ceiling
painted by Marc Chagall*

The ceiling in the main auditorium, painted by Marc Chagall, took a year to successfully complete. This imposing work stands out for its luminous colors and myriad details including winged characters, quintessential Parisian buildings and monuments like the Arc de Triomphe, and musical instruments. The especially keen-eyed may find Chagall himself or André Malraux, who commissioned this monumental fresco.



Sample the wines of Burgundy and the Rhone Valley



Palais Garnier Opera House

YOUR CLASSICAL JOURNEY BEGINS

DAY 0 APRIL 5, 2026: DEPART USA

Depart USA for France.

DAY 1 APRIL 6: IN THE CITY OF LIGHT, PARIS

Bienvenue à Paris. Stroll the lively streets and enjoy a delicious meal and orientation at a local restaurant with your MPR and Earthbound Expeditions hosts. Sleep in the heart of Paris. (D)

DAY 2 APRIL 7: PARIS OPERA

MUSIC EVENT Whether it's your first time in Paris or perhaps you've visited the City of Lights many times, there is always something new to discover! Spend a free day exploring at your own pace. Or, join knowledgeable local guides and tour the renowned

Paris Opera House. A delicious lunch is included at a nearby café. A classical concert will be included this evening. Sleep in the heart of Paris. (B,L)

DAY 3 APRIL 8: DAY IN PARIS

This morning, take time to explore the sights of Paris at your leisure. Your guides will be available to assist with sightseeing ideas during your free time. Sleep in Paris (B)

DAY 4 APRIL 9: DISCOVER BURGUNDY & SAIL SOUTH TO PROVENCE

Epicurean Beaune – Burgundy's wine capital is located on the prestigious Côtes de Nuits. In the 18th century, the town became the center of the wine trade. Today we will visit the Hôtel-Dieu de Beaune, which sponsors

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Pont du Gard, France



we will visit the Hôtel-Dieu de Beaune, which sponsors the prestigious wine auction. Visit an ancient cellar and sample some of the finest wines of the region before making our way to Lyon. The city of Lyon was founded by the Romans and is the third largest city in France. It is also a UNESCO heritage site and a vibrant place to visit with the well-deserved title of the gastronomic capital of France. Board the privately chartered first-class MS Van Gogh in the afternoon. Enjoy a Welcome Aboard dinner and concert tonight. Sleep on board the MS Van Gogh. (B,D)

DAY 5 APRIL 10: EXPLORE LYON / SUNSET SAIL TO PROVENCE

**MUSIC
EVENT**

Spend a day exploring this spellbinding city. Tour the opera house, the Roman theater and explore the city's charming neighborhoods.

Winding their way through buildings, courtyards, and up and down staircases, Lyon's secret covered passageways, or traboules, are an ideal way of visiting the city's hidden and colorful past. Every traboule is different though. Each has a unique pastel color, a particular curve or spiral staircase, vaulted ceilings or Renaissance arches. In the late afternoon turn your smiles to the sun as you enjoy a scenic sail down the Rhône. **Classical concert this evening.** Sleep on board. (B,L,D)

DAY 6 APRIL 11: ARRIVE IN AVIGNON VIA CHATEAUNEUF

**MUSIC
EVENT**

This morning enjoy a tour and tasting in the Rhone valley; the region famous for Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Once home to the

popes, this region produces some of France's most celebrated wines. Enjoy a tasting before we make our way to Avignon. Enjoy the lively atmosphere of this medieval walled city. Stay in Avignon for lunch in a local café or walk back to the ship. This afternoon, tour the Papal Palace with your informative local guides and enjoy some free time for additional independent exploration. We'll re-board the ship in time to dine and dance "sous le Pont d'Avignon" until we depart! **Classical concert this evening.** Sleep on board. (B,L,D)

DAY 7 APRIL 12: ANCIENT ROMAN TREASURE AND VAN GOGH'S ARLES



Join the morning excursion to the spectacular 2,000 year old aqueduct of the Pont du Gard. Considered one of the best preserved antiquities in Europe, it is a stunning feat of Roman engineering. Built without mortar, the massive stones were perfectly carved

TRIP FACTS

- 11 Days/10 Nights
- Depart USA on April 5, 2026
- Trip begins in Paris, France April 6, 2026
- Trip ends in Lyon, France on April 16, 2026
- All ship cabins with outside view

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and placed and have staunchly survived for centuries. Return on board for lunch and cruise to Arles. An example of Provence at its quintessential best, Arles filled with Roman ruins still used today and shops displaying traditional Provençal fabrics, herbes de Provence, honey, lavender and soap. Arles is also well known for the visual arts. The Musée Réattu contains many of Picasso's sketches and there are year-round photography expositions and galleries including the Van Gogh Foundation, which features rotating exhibits of contemporary works. Enjoy a late afternoon walking tour of Arles' highlights and return on board for dinner. Sleep on board. (B,L,D)

DAYS 8 & 9 APRIL 13 & 14: ST. REMY, VAN GOGH AND OLIVE OIL TASTING

MUSIC EVENT Head into the scenic Provençal countryside to Les Baux de Provence and the delightful town of St Rémy. Stroll the villages, and enjoy a walk around the grounds of the peaceful St Paul Mausole, a veritable masterpiece of Provençal Romanesque art, built in the neighborhood of the Gallo-Roman site of Glanum. This is the famous asylum where Vincent Van Gogh spent time resting and painting. Finally, stop to taste some of the wonderfully aromatic olive oil of this region before heading back to Arles to board the ship. **Classical concert one evening.** Sleep on board. (B,L,D)

INCLUDED IN YOUR JOURNEY

- With Minnesota Public Radio host Melissa Ousley
- With featured guest artist Jon Kimura Parker
- Guided by Earthbound Co-founders, Danna and Matthew Brumley
- 3 fabulous pre-cruise nights in Paris
- A special tour of the Paris Opera Garnier
- 7 nights on board the newly refurbished first-class, *MS Van Gogh*
- On-board concerts
- Special wine tastings in the Rhône Valley and Burgundy
- Outings to colorful local markets, a truffle farm and Provençal villages
- In-depth city walking tours of Avignon and Arles with local experts
- Entrances to all activities listed in itinerary

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DAY 10 APRIL 15: VIVIERS AND TRUFFLE FARMS

When disembarking at Viviers, you have the impression of entering a village where time has stood still. Boasting the oldest cathedral in France that's still in use, along with impressive examples of Renaissance and 18th century architecture, Viviers is a lovely stop for pondering the illustrious past. Join an excursion to an enchanting village and some local truffle farms, where the adorable working dogs will obligingly demonstrate their truffle-digging

skills. Back to the ship for lunch, and free time to wander in quiet Viviers. Sleep on board. (B,L,D)

DAY 11 APRIL 16: LYON / TRIP CONCLUDES

Arrive back in Lyon in the early morning, so those extending their journey are welcome to depart at any time. Breakfast will be served as usual and transfers to the Lyon airport will be provided for travelers departing today. We wish you all "un très bon voyage!" (B)



Cruise on the gorgeous
Rhône River for 6 Nights

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FEATURED ARTIST

Jon Kimura Parker

*Minnesota Orchestra's Creative Partner
for Summer at Orchestra Hall*

Pianist Jon Kimura Parker is known for his charisma, infectious enthusiasm, and dynamic performances. He is Creative Partner for the Minnesota Orchestra's Summer at Orchestra Hall, Artistic Director of the Honens International Piano Competition, Artistic Advisor for the Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival, and Keyboard

Chair at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. He has lectured at Yale, Princeton, and Juilliard. His exceptional level of experience with concerto repertoire includes performances in Carnegie Hall, Berlin's Philharmonie, London's Royal Festival Hall, Tokyo's Suntory Hall and the Sydney Opera House. He has a long association with the concertos of Beethoven and is in his 50th year performing the 3rd Concerto.

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YOUR HOSTS



Melissa Ousley
Host
YourClassical MPR

Melissa Ousley stumbled into a career in broadcasting many years ago when she moved to Wichita, Kansas, to be near her soon-to-be husband. The attraction to radio work was immediate and the chance to be around great music without having to practice piano was irresistible. After establishing herself as a host and producer in Kansas, Melissa moved to Minnesota and continued her work at WCAL in Northfield and Minnesota Public Radio in St. Paul and hosts live Friday night broadcasts of the Minnesota Orchestra. While she earned a bachelor's degree from Eastman School of Music, she's quick to point out that her decades of work in radio have taught her the most. When she's away from the airwaves, Melissa loves to run, read, and spend time with friends and family. This will be Melissa's third hosted trip.



Aloysia Friedmann
Violin

Named as a Musical America Top Professional of the Year and recipient of the Chamber Music America Acclaim award, violinist and violist Aloysia Friedmann is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival, now in its 29th season. Ms. Friedmann has performed with the New York's Orchestra of St. Luke's, at festivals in Hong Kong, Santa Fe, Seattle, Portland, Reno, Napa, Maui, Ottawa and San Antonio, and has taught at Rice University, the University of Houston and the Sarasota Music Festival. Her orchestral career began in the Minnesota Orchestra in 1986, and she is currently Associate Concertmaster of ROCO in Houston, and also a founding violinist in the Mainly Mozart Festival All-Star Orchestra in San Diego.



Amy Hyatt
Event and Custom Travel
Manager, Minnesota
Public Radio and
American Public Media

On cruise ships, in concert halls, in conference rooms and in all corners of hospitality, Amy Hyatt has made a 20 year-career out of going above and beyond, to make people feel welcome, accepted, appreciated, seen and known through events and customized travel for Minnesota Public Radio and American Public Media. Prior to working in public media, she worked as the director of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association's 100th Anniversary and for both the 2000 Sydney Olympic and 2002 Salt Lake Olympic Games and can assure you the Olympic flame never goes out during the torch relay. The only thing Amy loves more than traveling the world is coming home to her cat and cozy home in St. Paul.



Danna Brumley
Earthbound Expeditions

Danna Brumley is the co-founder of Earthbound Expeditions. She studied French language and Civilization at the Université d'Aix-Marseille and Sociolinguistics at La Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris. After completing her studies, she lived in Paris for several years, after which she began guiding tour groups throughout Europe. Thanks to Earthbound, Danna has worked in Western and Eastern Europe, Central and South America, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.



David Sailer-Haugland
Minnesota Orchestra

David Sailer-Haugland is the Vice President of Marketing and Guest Relations Minnesota Orchestra. David has been working in non-profit arts and higher education organizations for over 35 years with a significant amount of his career spent serving in a variety of positions with the Minnesota Orchestral Association. David has a Master's Degree in Education from the University of Wisconsin. David believes that music belongs to everyone and is extremely proud of the numerous guests he has served at Orchestra Hall in his tenure with the Minnesota Orchestral Association.

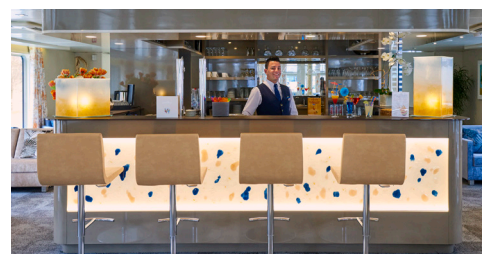


Matthew Brumley
Earthbound Expeditions

Matthew is the founder of Earthbound Expeditions and has been leading and creating public radio and museum adventures worldwide for 25 plus years. After completing his undergraduate studies at the universities of Copenhagen and Moscow, he went on to attend the graduate program at the London School of Economics. He has lived in Copenhagen, Paris, London, Tel Aviv and San Jose, Costa Rica.

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YOUR CLASSICAL HOME: **MS VAN GOGH**

Completely renovated in 2018, the *MS Van Gogh* has been redesigned and refitted according to the new standards of the company and offers larger, bright and comfortable spaces. In terms of decoration, the colour combination of gray blue and orange creates a lot of style and elegance. In a nod to the artist whose name it takes, the ship showcases some of his famous paintings, including those from the Sunflowers series. The patterns of the fabrics as well as the dressing of the bar follow the techniques developed by Van Gogh: impressionism and pointillism.

The two main common areas are located on the upper deck. At the front, the lounge / bar and at the back, the restaurant where all meals will be served during the cruise. The 20 cabins on the upper deck have French balconies and the 34 cabins on the main deck have windows. On the sun deck, an ideal place to relax and admire the landscapes, passengers can enjoy comfortable sun loungers, as well as a large shaded area.

"The ship was beautiful – very clean with a great captain and crew. The food was excellent. We had plenty of room in our cabin and never felt cramped. Everyone seemed to have a wonderful time.

We would definitely sail on this ship again!"

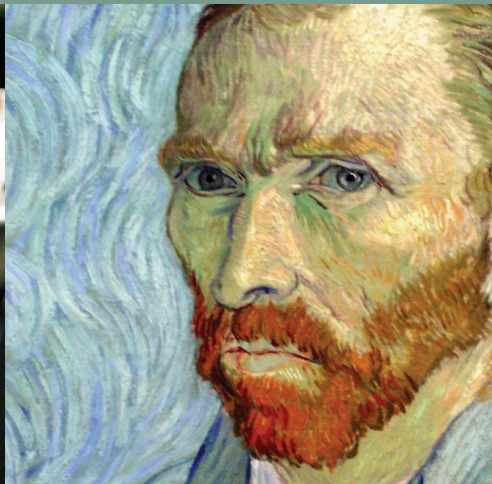
— Bonnie and Tom, USA

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THE ULTIMATE **PRIVATE SMALL
SHIP** CLASSICAL, WINE, FOOD
AND ARTS VOYAGE TO PARIS,
BURGUNDY AND PROVENCE



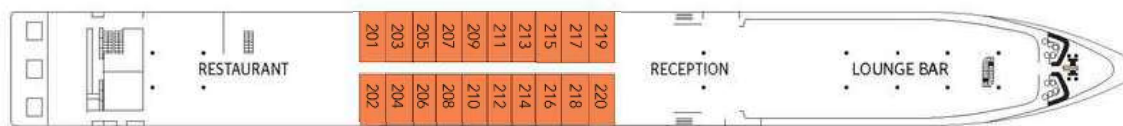


MS VAN GOGH DECK PLAN & PRICING

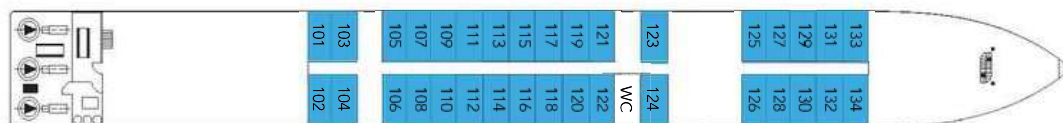
Sun Deck



Upper Deck – Ravel



Main Deck – Debussy



IT'S INCLUDED: 11 DAYS – 23 MEALS
CLASSICAL CONCERTS, AND **ALL** SHORE EXCURSIONS

Double Cabin Category	Per Person Before Discount	Deposit by Nov. 1, 2025 & Each Save	Pay Final Balance by Check & Save	Price After Discount Each
Main Deck – Debussy	\$6,595	-\$300	-\$100	\$6,195
Upper Deck – Ravel	\$7,195	-\$300	-\$100	\$6,795

**EXTRA
\$100
SAVINGS**
FOR TRAVEL
ALUMNI

Single Travelers: Upper or Main Deck add \$1,395. Space is limited.

Not included: Gratuities for ship staff, travel insurance, airfare, and meals/items not mentioned in your itinerary are not included. Port taxes, charges, and fees are currently estimated at \$95 per person.

Savings: A \$100 discount is applied for all Earthbound Expeditions and MPR travel alumni. If your deposit is made by November 1, 2025, you will receive the early signup discount. Additionally, if you make your final payment by check, you will also receive the pay-by-check discount.

*Final Balance by Check Discount may only be applied to final balances over \$3,100 per person.

Advanced, canceled or delayed sailing for cruises: Please note that cruise schedules and tour activities can be subject to change due to changes in water levels, port accessibility, weather, labor disputes or for any other reason whatsoever. The Owner or Operator of the cruise vessel may, at any time, cancel, advance or postpone any scheduled tour and may, but is not obliged to, substitute another vessel or itinerary, and it shall not be liable for any loss whatsoever to passengers by reason of any such cancellation, advancement or postponement.



Avignon Bridge

For more information and to
reserve your space call 206-842-9775
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