



DETAILED ITINERARY*

PROVENCE ACTIVE CULINARY ADVENTURE— VIBRANT MARKETS & BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES



WALKING & HIKING | Premiere Hotels

*Thank you for your interest! Please note that this itinerary is subject to change, including trip start and end locations. Do not schedule your flights until your reservation is confirmed.



CINDI TAYLOR
Travel Concierge
Certified Backroads Specialist

LET'S PLAN YOUR NEXT
Active Vacation

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This trip exceeded all expectations! The ability to walk ahead or behind, choose longer or shorter hikes made the trip perfect for everyone. The guides were helpful, gracious and loads of fun! Our group bonded instantly and I know some lifetime friendships were formed. The special presentations by local guides in Gordes and St. Remy were indeed special.

Pamela Martinson | Redwood City, CA

Click [HERE](#) to read more reviews

6 DAYS, 5 NIGHTS

Click [HERE](#) for departure dates and pricing details

ACTIVITY LEVELS 1-4

[See below for details](#)

TO RESERVE YOUR TRIP

Sign up online [HERE](#) or call 800-GO-ACTIVE (462-2848) or 510-527-1555

 **BACKROADS**

WHY BACKROADS?

*"Backroads is the best of the best."
Sheryl Simons | SK, Canada*

Never Subcontracted

We operate our own trips around the globe. That way we control the quality—and we're fully responsible for your great experience.

Two Support Vans

We provide two support vans on all of our trips* so you can count on us to be there when you need us, regardless of the route you take.

Three Leaders

Our trips have three leaders*, for an average 6:1 guest-to-leader ratio. On Walking & Hiking Trips, two or more leaders or local guides get out on the trail with you, offering superior support. Guests consistently score our leaders 9.7 out of 10, telling us they make all the difference.

Thoughtful Trip Design

We know how to create exceptional travel experiences, ensuring that you get the most from your trip as it unfolds.

Multiple Daily Routes

Being able to choose among several expertly designed routes each day gives you the freedom to enjoy the best of a region at your own pace.

We Celebrate Mixed Abilities

To accommodate varied activity levels, you need three leaders, two vans, multiple route options, detailed directions, a rating system showing if shuttles are required, and plenty of well-matched riding/hiking companions.

*See web for more information on leaders and van support

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Backroads Quality Guide



DAY 1

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 11:30 a.m. at the Avignon TGV train station in Avignon, France (Gare Avignon TGV; this is not the Avignon Centre train station. If you arrive at Avignon Centre, you'll need to take a 10-minute train or a 15-minute taxi ride to the Avignon TGV station). Look for a Trip Leader in front of the main entrance to the TGV station (*sortie nord*) next to the bus parking area.

Please arrive dressed in your hiking clothes and bring your luggage and a daypack with your rain gear and anything else you may want for today's hike (your luggage will be transported to our first night's accommodations).

SHUTTLE TO MAS DE LA DAME 45 Minutes

MAS DE LA DAME TO BAUMANIERE ROUTE 4.9 Miles (500' elevation gain)

Bienvenue en Provence! After meeting, we shuttle to an organic winery and traditional *mas* (farm) just outside of Les Baux-de-Provence for a lovely picnic lunch.

Nourished and ready for our first hike, we set out on foot among lush vineyards and silver-green olive groves toward the hilltop ruins of a 10th-century castle with expansive views of the surrounding landscape.

The route continues into Les Baux-de-Provence. With narrow lanes, old houses and castle ruins, this Plus Beaux (Most Beautiful) Villages of France member is a fascinating

place to explore. In the Middle Ages it was home to the Seigneurs des Baux. These self-proclaimed descendants of Magus Balthazar (one of the Three Wise Men), erected fortifications and proceeded to wage incessant warfare on neighboring clans—and eventually each other. From here, we visit the impressive nearby Carrières de Lumières. This ambitious multimedia exhibit space is situated inside a large stone quarry and celebrates the world's greatest artists.

Afterward, we make our way to Baumanière, our elegant hotel, nestled beneath Les Baux and surrounded by country gardens of roses and herbs, cypress groves and olive trees. Settle into your room, relax in the garden or perhaps head to the spa. (Spa treatments are not included in the trip price. Advance reservations are recommended.)

After getting further acquainted over aperitifs, we dine at the hotel's La Cabro d'Or restaurant. *Lodging: Baumanière*

DAY 2

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

La Caume Route: 4.3 Miles * (800' elevation gain)

Mas Route: 7 Miles (1,000')

St-Rémy Route: 10 Miles (1,100')

REGIONAL COOKING DEMONSTRATION 1 ½ Hours

**with shuttle*

Today's hike leads us up and over the ridge of Les Baux through fragrant pine trees overlooking the Alpilles Mountains. Our trail starts in the Val d'Enfer (Valley of Hell), an eerie landscape pockmarked with caves and, according to legend, frequented by witches and goblins. It was here that Dante supposedly found inspiration for the hell in his Divine Comedy.

If you're ready to kick off your hiking shoes after our morning's route, hop in the shuttle for a lift to a nearby farm and enjoy a regional cooking demonstration. Otherwise, we make our way on foot into the heart of the Alpilles Regional Nature Reserve, arriving at Le Rocher des Deux Trous (The Rock with Two Holes), a fascinating geological feature.

Does the scenery look familiar? It's said that this area is where Vincent van Gogh painted some of his masterpieces, including *Starry Night*!

After meeting up for lunch, opt for a lift in the shuttle or follow a trail alongside a Roman canal toward St-Rémy. Along the way, you may spot wild herbes de Provence. These herbs, which include rosemary, savory, thyme and sage, give the local goat cheese, *chèvre*, its unique flavor. Our destination this afternoon is Le Château des Alpilles, our home for the next two nights, located on peaceful parkland just outside St-Rémy.

Make yourself at home at Le Château des Alpilles and unwind, perhaps spending some time lounging by the pool. Then join your leaders for a friendly game of *pétanque* before we meet for a delightful Provençal dinner at the hotel's restaurant. *Lodging: Le Château des Alpilles*



DAY 3

COOKING CLASS WITH YVAN CADIOU 4 Hours

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Canal to St-Paul de Mausole Route: 3.9 Miles* (400' elevation gain)

Van Gogh Loop: 5.8 Miles (1,300')

**with shuttle*

We are in for a treat this morning with a cooking class led by the locally renowned chef Yvan Cadiou. Yvan invites us into his home kitchen where he infuses his teaching with humor and entertainment. We learn recipes for favorite regional dishes and then prepare them for our lunch!

Afterward, follow along a peaceful canal and admire the Alpilles reflected in the lake at Peirou as we set off on foot toward St-Paul-de-Mausole, a monastery that was converted into a mental asylum in the 1800's. Here we meet our charming local guide, Marie-Charlotte Bouton. She tells of the asylum's most famous resident, Vincent van Gogh, who secluded himself here for a year in 1890 after cutting off his ear in Arles. Although it was likely the most difficult period of the artist's life, it was also one of his most prolific: inspired by the Alpilles landscape, he produced more than 100 drawings and 140 paintings, including *Irises* and *Wheat Fields with Cypresses*.

Afterward you can choose to walk to town or follow a quiet path to our hotel. Of course, the Backroads van is also an option for the return trip. This evening, dinner is on your own in St-Rémy—your Trip Leaders are happy to provide recommendations. *Lodging: Le Château des Alpilles*

DAY 4

ST-RÉMY MARKET VISIT* 2 Hours

SHUTTLE TO ROUSSILLON 1 Hour

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Luberon Valley Route: 3.5 Miles* (100' elevation gain)

Gordes Route: 6.2 Miles (600')

Hôtel Les Bories Route: 7.3 Miles (900')

**with shuttle*

Enjoy a short lift to St-Rémy, where fountains, gardens, cheery cafés and treelined boulevards await. The town, a thriving artists' community with one of the most celebrated outdoor markets in Provence, is a great place to immerse yourself in the local culture. Shop for regional crafts, as well as bread, fruit and cheese for a picnic (lunch is on your own later today) or an afternoon *goûter* (snack).*

After exploring the town we set our sights on the Luberon Valley, immortalized in Peter Mayle's *A Year in Provence*. Our first stop is Roussillon, which sits on one of the world's biggest ocher deposits. Adored by artists for centuries, the village is renowned for its striking natural surroundings, namely the Chaussée des Géants, a canyon radiant with 16 shades of ocher.

Next, we head into town to admire beautiful golden-hued buildings and views over the Luberon. Browse the shops, which offer a wide array of local items, and wander the quaint side streets. When you're hungry, settle at a café table for lunch on your own, or find a shady spot to enjoy your market picnic.

This afternoon, walk a gentle path between the Vaucluse Plateau and the Luberon Mountains, passing charming country homes with vineyards and olive groves separated by wheat fields and cypress trees. Today's final destination is Gordes, a picture-perfect *village perché* (perched village) clinging to the craggy southern face of the high Vaucluse Plateau. Here, we're welcomed at the stylish Hôtel Les Bories, our home for the next two nights. Lounge poolside, take in the views of the valley, or perhaps head to the spa.

Dinner tonight is a memorable evening in the kitchen of our Michelin-starred chef: Xavier Mathieu. *Lodging: Hôtel Les Bories & Spa*

**Please note: should the St-Rémy market be closed due to festivals, weather or other factors, an alternate activity will be offered.*

DAY 5

SHUTTLE TO BONNIEUX 30 Minutes

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Hidden Luberon Route: 4.7 Miles * (800' elevation gain)

Aiguebrun Valley Route: 7.7 Miles * (1,300')

Fort de Buoux Route: 7.9 Miles * (1,100')

**with shuttle*

After breakfast, we shuttle to the hillside town of Bonnieux, set atop a ridge rising from the flat plain. Explore its narrow winding side streets or find a scenic spot to enjoy views of the Luberon Valley before heading out on a hike into the hills. As you trek through the valley that separates Bonnieux and Buoux, you'll be surrounded by the Grand Luberon's cliffs and deep woods before joining a sunnier trail that leads past lavender fields and provides views of the remains of Fort de Buoux across the ravine.

We enjoy lunch in the secluded valley of Aiguebrun. When

you're done eating, hop in the Backroads van for a ride back to Gordes or continue on foot into a gorge popular among local rock climbers. The path eventually leads all the way up to Fort de Buoux. You can admire what's left of the impressive fort both from the valley floor and from atop the cliff.

This evening on the hotel terrace, kick back and appreciate *un verre de vin* while the sun sets over the Luberon—this may just be the perfect way to end a full day on your feet! We gather for a farewell dinner at one of the region's best Michelin-starred restaurants and raise a toast to new friends and an unforgettable Provençal adventure. *Lodging: Hôtel Les Bories & Spa*



DAY 6

ABBAYE DE SÉNANQUE ROUTE 1.7 Miles * (400' elevation gain)

WALKING TOUR OF GORDES 1 Hour

SHUTTLE TO AVIGNON TGV STATION 45 Minutes

**with shuttle*

After an early breakfast we walk to Abbaye de Sénanque, a Cistercian monastery founded in 1148. Take a moment to admire this historic building set amid oak groves and a fragrant sea of lavender. Then there's time to freshen up at the hotel before we begin our private walking tour of Gordes with a local guide who introduces us to some hidden corners and reveals little-known pieces of cultural and architectural history. After our tour we grab a quick

lunch and say our goodbyes before a private coach brings you to the Avignon TGV train station. Please see "Arriving & Departing" for end-of-trip logistics.

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE

We are always seeking opportunities to enhance this itinerary. We'll be certain to notify you of any important changes prior to departure; other changes may be communicated on trip by your leaders.

SHIFT GEARS

Our trips are designed to be flexible, giving you the freedom to experience the best of the region the way YOU want. Feel like you're ready to go, go, go? We can show you the way! Want some downtime or prefer to head out on your own? No problem!

Your Trip Leaders will make sure to tell you the best days to take time for yourself (if you want it) without feeling like you're missing out.

So feel free to shift gears and make it your day!

TRIP ACCOMMODATIONS

Premiere Hotels



1 Night Baumanière

An enchanting hideaway in the heart of the Alpilles Mountains with magnificent gardens. A Relais & Châteaux member. (pool, spa) | Les Baux-de-Provence | www.baumaniere.com | +33-(0)4-90-54-33-07

2 Nights Le Château des Alpilles

A refined 19th-century manor house owned and lovingly renovated by a mother and daughter. (pool) | St-Rémy-de-Provence | www.chateaudesalpilles.com | +33-(0)4-90-92-03-33

2 Nights (Pictured) Hôtel Les Bories & Spa

This Small Luxury Hotels of the World member features a Michelin-starred restaurant, a tranquil setting and stunning views of the Luberon. (pool, spa) | Gordes | www.hotellesbories.com | +33-(0)4-90-72-00-51

ARRIVING & DEPARTING

After reviewing the following information, please inform us of your arrival and departure plans on your *Personal Information Form*.

Depending on train schedules, you may need to spend the night before your trip in our meeting town or wait at the train station between your arrival and the start of your Backroads trip.

All prices are in US dollars and subject to change.

Meeting Time & Location

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 11:30 a.m. at the Avignon TGV train station in Avignon, France. (Gare Avignon TGV; this is not the Avignon Centre train station. If you arrive at Avignon Centre, you'll need to take a 10-minute train or a 15-minute taxi ride to the Avignon TGV station.) Look for a Trip Leader in front of the main entrance to the TGV station (*sortie nord*) next to the bus parking area.

Please arrive dressed in your hiking clothes and bring your luggage and a daypack with your rain gear and anything else you may want for today's hike (your luggage will be transported to our first night's accommodations).

Conclusion of the Trip

On the last day of the trip, a private coach will drop you off at the Avignon TGV train station at approximately 1:30 p.m., in time to catch an afternoon train to Paris or other destinations.

Flight Arrangements

This trip starts and ends in Avignon, France. We recommend flying into Paris and then taking a train to the Avignon TGV station. Another option is to fly into Marseille (MRS; www.marseille-airport.com) and take the train to Avignon or rent a car and drive.

For information on Paris airports, visit www.adp.fr, the Aéroports de Paris website, which

offers maps of the airports' terminals, up-to-date security advisories, and details on transportation options to and from Charles de Gaulle and Orly Airports.

When to Book Flights

Please note that trip start and end locations are subject to change and can vary by departure. A Travel Planner, complete with trip details specific to your chosen date, will be sent to you at time of booking or soon after and will be viewable in your Backroads account. **Do not schedule your flights until your reservation is confirmed.**

For help arranging air transportation to and from your Backroads trip, please work with your own travel advisor, or you may work with our travel agency partner. Their professional expert travel advisors are ready to share their insiders' knowledge of Backroads and our worldwide destinations and are available to assist you with any of your travel needs. Please note that they are an independent travel agency and consulting and ticketing fees may apply, based on the services requested. Simply ask your Backroads Trip Consultant to connect you! You can also book directly with the airline, or through a travel website.

Taking the Train to the Avignon TGV Station

Depending on train schedules, **you may need to arrive in Avignon the day before the trip starts.**

From Charles de Gaulle Airport: It's possible to take the TGV (*train à grande vitesse* or high-speed train) direct from the airport to Avignon. There are several daily departures to the Avignon TGV station; the trip takes about 3½ hours and tickets start around \$100.

From central Paris: You can also catch one of the regularly scheduled TGV departures from Paris' Lyon station (Gare de Lyon). Travel time is about 2¾ hours. Tickets start at \$80.

From Marseille: Regularly scheduled departures are available from Marseille to Avignon. If you are traveling from the Marseille airport, you'll need to take the 25-minute shuttle from the airport to the Saint Charles train station. A train from the Saint Charles station to Avignon takes around 30 minutes; tickets start at about \$20.

Transportation between Charles de Gaulle Airport & Central Paris

Taxi: The fare to central Paris is \$60–\$80. Rates vary according to the time of day; supplements are added on Sundays and holidays, for each piece of luggage and for additional passengers. Although the airport is just 15 miles outside of central Paris, the trip into the city often takes close to an hour because of traffic.

Super Shuttle Paris (www.parissupershuttle.com; +33-(0)8-11-70-78-12): This is a convenient and stress-free way to reach your Paris destination. Shared shuttle service costs around \$30 for one person and around \$20 for each additional passenger. Reservations are required. You can also reserve a private shuttle for up to eight passengers for approximately \$110.

Air France Bus (www.lescarsairfrance.com; +33-(0)8-92-35-08-20): Air France buses provide service from all terminals to several specific locations in central Paris, including the Champs-Élysées, Gare Montparnasse and Gare de Lyon. Buses leave about every 30 minutes (depending on your destination) from early morning to late evening; one-way fares cost around \$20. Tickets can be purchased online, at the Air France Coach ticket office at the airport or from the driver.

Roissybus (www.ratp.fr; +33-(0)8-92-69-32-46): The Paris Transit Authority's (RATP) Roissybus offers service between the airport and Place de l'Opéra (at the corner of Rue Scribe and Rue Auber) every 15–20 minutes, 6 a.m.–12:30 a.m. Cost per person is approximately \$12. Travel time to central Paris varies from 45 minutes to well over 1 hour, depending on traffic. RATP also offers **RER (or "RoissyRail")** metro service between the airport's TGV stations and several Paris stations including Gare du Nord, Châtelet-Les Halles and Denfert-Rochereau. Trains run every 10–20 minutes 5 a.m.–midnight. The trip takes 25–45 minutes depending on your destination, and tickets cost about \$10 per person.

Transportation Between Orly Airport & Central Paris

Taxi: Expect to pay \$45–\$70 for the trip into central Paris. Rates vary according to the time of day; supplements are added on Sundays and holidays, for each piece of luggage and for additional passengers. Orly is located about 9 miles south of the city center, a 20- to 40-minute ride, depending on traffic.

Super Shuttle Paris (en.supershuttle.fr; +33-(0)8-11-70-78-12): Super Shuttle also provides shared shuttle service from Orly Airport. The fare is about \$20 for one person and about \$10 for each additional passenger. Reservations are required.

Air France Bus (www.lescarsairfrance.com; +33-(0)8-92-35-08-20): The Air France bus runs between Orly, Gare Montparnasse, Invalides and Étoile/Champs-Élysées Metro stations every 30 minutes from around 6 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. The cost one-way is approximately \$14 per person; the trip time is 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Orlybus (www.ratp.fr; +33-(0)8-92-69-32-46): The Paris Transit Authority's (RATP) Orlybus provides service every 8–15 minutes, 6 a.m.–12:30 a.m. to Denfert-Rochereau Metro station for around \$9 per person; average trip time is 30 minutes. Another option is the Orlyval monorail, which departs for the Antony RER station from each terminal's arrivals area every 4–7 minutes, 6 a.m.–11 p.m.; the 6-minute trip costs about \$10. From here the RER B line will get you to Paris in about 25 minutes.

PRICES & SCHEDULES

All prices and schedules were current at the time of printing, but are subject to change at any time.



DURING YOUR TRIP

Trip Leaders

Each of your Trip Leaders plays many roles during your vacation: guide, host, caretaker, naturalist, chef, historian, troubleshooter, interpreter. These remarkable individuals have highly developed instincts for making people comfortable, for seamlessly handling the logistics of travel and for successfully navigating a wide range of unexpected situations. They're passionately committed to ensuring you enjoy an exceptional vacation—smooth, flexible and tailored to your needs. According to past guests, the caliber of our leaders is what sets Backroads apart from all other travel companies. With their knowledge, professionalism, enthusiasm and service ethic, they're the number-one reason people return to travel with us again and again. We look forward to having you meet them.

Meals

Food is an important part of the Backroads experience. For lunch we look for the best way to capture the essence of the region. It may be a Backroads Grand Picnic, when your Trip Leaders prepare the freshest and healthiest local fare at a carefully chosen setting along the day's route; a boxed lunch; a packed lunch; a meal together at a favorite restaurant; or the opportunity to have lunch on your own.

Our dinners typically feature regional specialties and Mediterranean-influenced cuisine, with an emphasis on fresh vegetables, seafood, lamb and cheese.

All breakfasts, five lunches and four dinners are included in the trip price. One lunch and one dinner are on your own.

DESTINATION DETAILS

Climate

Provence is known for its sunny and relatively mild climate, **though unseasonably high temperatures are increasingly common.** July and August are usually quite hot, and humidity is often high in June and September. Rain is possible year-round—don't forget to bring waterproof breathable rain gear. The mistral, Provence's famously strong wind, can whip up at any moment, so come prepared with a windbreaker and warm layers.

Avignon

Average:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
High °F	49	53	59	67	74	82
Low °F	34	36	41	45	51	58
Precip. inches	0.9	1.3	1.9	2.1	2.5	1.7
Average:	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
High °F	87	87	78	68	56	50
Low °F	61	60	57	49	41	37
Precip. inches	1.3	1.8	2.6	3.3	3	2.1



TRIP DOCUMENTS & MORE

Travel Documents

A valid passport is required for travel to France. A visa is not required for US citizens, provided you are staying in the country less than 90 days.

Note that some countries require your passport to be valid for a specified amount of time beyond your departure date (up to 6 months). Be sure to check the expiration date and physical condition of your passport and verify the travel document requirements with the consulates of the countries you are planning to visit during your trip. Passports issued to minors under the age of 16 are set to expire every 5 years. Check your expiration dates carefully!

IMPORTANT: Each time you renew your passport, you are issued a new passport number. Depending on the trip, some of our service providers (like hotels or airlines) may require current passport information for each guest, so if you renew your passport after booking your trip, please make sure to update us with the new information prior to your departure date.

We recommend that you make two photocopies of your airline ticket/e-ticket confirmation and your passport. Leave one set of copies at home with a friend or relative, and bring one set with you, keeping it separate from the original documents.

GETTING ACTIVE FOR YOUR TRIP

NAVIGATION OPTIONS ON THIS TRIP

Turn-by-turn paper directions included.

Downloadable GPS files available for use on your own device—log into your account at Backroads.com 2 weeks before your trip for more details.

Activity Level

The routes on this trip are rated Levels 1–4.

ACTIVITY LEVEL	Avg. Time in hours	BIKING		WALKING	
		Avg. Miles	Max Elev. Gain in feet	Avg. Miles	Max Elev. Gain in feet
1	2-3 hrs	8-22	1000'	2-5	800'
2	2-4 hrs	18-32	2200'	4-7	1300'
3	3-5 hrs	26-42	3400'	5-9	2000'
4	4-6 hrs	36-54	4400'	6-11	3000'
5	5-7+ hrs	48-70+	4400'+	7-13+	4000'+

Review the "Activity Level" section on the web for more details on daily route options.

Terrain

Our routes on this trip are along dirt paths and quiet country roads, with a few optional rocky trails. Most of our walks include short to medium hills with some optional longer climbs; though we encounter some level sections, be prepared to navigate occasional steep ascents and descents.

Remember, take your time and go at your own pace—you're on vacation! Your Backroads Trip Leaders will be available at intersecting routes when you're ready for a snack, a cool drink, or a lift back if you're done for the day. Most days you'll have a choice of mileage options, so you can decide how active you want to be—it's always up to you.

Conditioning Tips

Every Backroads trip is designed to appeal to a wide variety of interests and fitness levels. We know your pace may vary from one day to the next—and your traveling companions' may differ somewhat from yours. So we present a range of mileage options, and each day you decide exactly what and how much you want to do.

Before your trip, we suggest walking and hiking regularly and hitting a few hills whenever you can. Review the route options in the daily itinerary for the range of mileages offered on this trip. But mostly, just show up and have fun!

WHERE TO STAY BEFORE & AFTER YOUR TRIP

For help arranging hotel accommodations for before and after your Backroads trip, or an extension to your trip, please work with your own travel advisor, or you may work with our preferred travel agency partner. Their team of professional travel advisors are ready to share their insiders' knowledge of Backroads and our worldwide destinations and are available to assist you with any of your travel needs. Please note that they are an independent travel agency and consulting and ticketing fees may apply, based on the services requested. Simply ask your Backroads Trip Consultant to connect you! You can also book directly with the hotel, or through a travel website.

Please note that Backroads does not block rooms and does not offer special rates for pre- and post-trip stays. If you plan on extending your stay at our first night's hotel before the trip starts or our last night's hotel when the trip ends, let the hotel reservations agent know that you're traveling with Backroads—you may be able to avoid changing rooms. **We recommend booking your rooms as early as possible, especially during peak travel season!**

The following is a selection of recommended properties that span a range of prices, amenities and locations. Refer to the Hotel Room Rates guide for the starting double-occupancy rates, which were accurate at time of printing. Note that rates are subject to change and some hotels may require a minimum stay.

HOTEL ROOM RATES
IN US DOLLARS PER NIGHT

\$501 and up..... ◆◆◆◆◆

\$300 to \$500..... ◆◆◆◆◆

\$201 to \$300..... ◆◆◆◆◆

Up to \$200..... ◆◆◆◆◆

Avignon

Hotel map: bit.ly/AvignonHotels

La Mirande

Located near the Palais des Papes, this hotel is the place to stay in Avignon if you want to feel like a 17th-century aristocrat. After a painstaking restoration, the historic integrity of this former cardinal’s palace is preserved in its authentic belle epoque antiques. | 4 Place de la Mirande | www.la-mirande.fr | +33-(0)4-90-14-20-20 | 26 rooms | Rates: ◆◆◆◆◆

Hôtel d’Europe

A former 16th-century home, Hôtel d'Europe has welcomed such famous guests as Victor Hugo, Tennessee Williams, Pablo Picasso and even Napoléon Bonaparte. *Travel + Leisure* World's Best. | 14 Place Crillon | www.heurope.com | +33-(0)4-90-14-76-76 | 44 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆◆◆◆◆

Auberge de Cassagne & Spa

The Auberge de Cassagne is a quintessential Provençal house removed from downtown’s hustle and bustle. A Small Luxury Hotels of the World member. (pool, spa) | 450 Allée de Cassagne | www.aubergedecassagne.com | +33-(0)4-90-31-04-18 | 40 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆◆◆◆◆

La Banasterie

Located in the heart of town, this charming bed-and-breakfast was originally an 11th-century residence. Each comfortable guest room is uniquely decorated and

named with a chocolate theme. | 11 Rue de la Banasterie | +33-(0)3-87-72-96-36 | www.labanasterie.com | 5 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆◆

Paris

Hotel map: bit.ly/ParisPPH

Hôtel Barrière Le Fouquet's

A Leading Hotels of the World member, this elegant five-star hotel is just a short walk from the Champs-Élysées and the Arc de Triomphe. Quintessentially Parisian, the hotel also features five restaurants and three bars and is eco-certified, committed to both luxury and sustainability. (pool, spa) | 46 Avenue George V, 8th Arrondissement | www.lucienbarriere.com | +33-(0)1-40-69-60-00 | 82 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆◆◆◆◆ | *Contact Barrière Group's Louise Wirmann at lwirmann@groupebarriere.com and mention Backroads to claim one complimentary continental breakfast per person per day and VIP welcome amenities.*

Hôtel Bel Ami

The Bel Ami hides a sleek and funky interior in a narrow street of lively St-Germain-des-Prés. The rooms are Parisian-sized, but extras like chocolates left on pillows and a delicious breakfast make them feel like home, and supremely strollable Boulevard St-Germain is just around the corner. (spa) | 7/11 rue St-Benoît, 6th arrondissement | www.hotelbelami-paris.com | +33-(0)1-42-61-53-53 | 108 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆◆◆◆◆ | *Contact B Signature Hotels' Agathe Jousse at agathe.jousse@bsignaturehotels.com and mention Backroads to claim one complimentary continental breakfast per person per day, a VIP welcome, early check-in and late check-out upon availability, and a room upgrade if available at check-in time.*

Hôtel de Sers

Constructed in 1880 as the private mansion of the Marquis de Sers, the Hôtel de Sers became a hotel in 1935 and underwent an interior remodel in 2015. Sumptuous elegance reigns within, and the splendor of the Golden Triangle district awaits without—a feast for those with a robust appetite for the City of Lights. | 41 Avenue Pierre 1er de Serbie, 8th arrondissement | www.hoteldesers-paris.com | +33-(0)1-53-23-75-75 | 52 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆◆◆◆◆ | *Contact B Signature Hotels' Agathe*

Jousse at agathe.jousse@bsignaturehotels.com and mention *Backroads* to claim one complimentary continental breakfast per person per day, a VIP welcome, early check-in and late check-out upon availability, and a room upgrade if available at check-in time.

Le Meurice

This hotel features a three-Michelin-starred restaurant, a full-service health club with Valmont spa treatments and one of the finest locations in Paris—right across from the Tuileries Gardens. *Travel + Leisure* World's Best and *Condé Nast Traveler* Gold List. (spa) | 228 Rue de Rivoli, 1st Arrondissement | www.meuricehotel.com | +33-(0)1-44-58-10-10 | 160 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Park Hyatt Paris-Vendôme

Housed in five separate Haussmann-era buildings, the Park Hyatt Paris-Vendôme stands as a monument to modern-day luxury. The superb location, not far from the Champs-Élysées and Place de la Concorde, gives the Park Hyatt an edge over many comparable five-star hotels in the city. *Travel + Leisure* World's Best. (spa) | 5 Rue de la Paix, 2nd Arrondissement | www.paris.vendome.hyatt.com | +33-(0)1-58-71-12-34 | 162 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Hôtel Le Cinq Codet

Excellent concierge service and eclectic modern design are the hallmarks of the Cinq Codet. The on-site bistro, Sundāri spa, views from top-floor suites and location in a chic Left Bank neighborhood are just icing on the cake. (spa) | 5 rue Louis Codet, 7th arrondissement | le5codet.com | +33-(0)1-53-85-15-60 | 67 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ | *Booking code "BACKROADS" will entitle you to one complimentary breakfast per person per day, a VIP welcome, and a room upgrade upon availability.*

Hôtel d'Aubusson

A petite gem with an unbeatable location between the Seine and Boulevard St-Germain, Hôtel d'Aubusson offers the amenities of a larger hotel along with unusually (by European standards) spacious guest rooms. | 33 Rue Dauphine, 6th Arrondissement | www.hoteldaubusson.com | +33-(0)1-43-29-43-43 | 49 suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Hôtel Pullman Paris Montparnasse

Located in the heart of Paris, close to Montparnasse train station, the Eiffel Tower and Saint-Germain-des-Prés, this 25-floor modern hotel is a convenient choice. | 19 Rue du Commandant René Mouchotte, 14th Arrondissement | www.pullmanhotels.com | +33-(0)1-44-36-44-36 | 957 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Hôtel Relais Christine

This boutique hotel offers a more intimate experience than many others. With its location in St-Germain-des-Prés on the Left Bank, there's no shortage of great cafés, restaurants and shops nearby. A Small Luxury Hotels of the World member. (spa) | 3 Rue Christine, 6th Arrondissement | www.relais-christine.com | +33-(0)1-40-51-60-80 | 51 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Hôtel Splendid Étoile

Its enviable address near the iconic Champs-Élysées and Arc de Triomphe is just one of the reasons guests love Hôtel Splendid Étoile. This is a luxurious little corner of Paris not to be overlooked. | 1 Avenue Carnot, 8th Arrondissement | www.hsplendid.com | +33-(0)1-45-72-72-00 | 57 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Hôtel Balmoral

Housed in a 19th-century Haussmann-style building, this elegant hotel is set on a peaceful street just a stone's throw from the Champs-Élysées and the Arc de Triomphe. | 6 Rue du Général Lanrezac, 8th Arrondissement | www.balmoral-paris-hotel.com | +33-(0)1-43-80-30-50 | 52 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆

Hôtel Caron de Beaumarchais

This charming hotel's eponym, Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, the 18th-century playwright best known for *The Marriage of Figaro*, lived just up the road at one time. While not particularly spacious, guest rooms are well appointed with modern conveniences. You'll enjoy the location in the heart of historic Le Marais. | 12 Rue Vieille du Temple, 4th Arrondissement | www.carondebeaumarchais.com | +33-(0)1-42-72-34-12 | 19 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆

Hôtel du Panthéon

Set in the heart of Paris opposite the Panthéon, the hotel allows easy access to sightseeing, shopping, and a variety of restaurants and cafés. | 19 Place du Panthéon, 5th Arrondissement | www.hoteldupantheon.com | +33-(0)1-43-54-32-95 | 36 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Hôtel du Petit Moulin

This stylish boutique hotel, housed in a completely renovated 17th-century building, is conveniently situated near the Picasso Museum, the Carnavalet Museum, the Place des Vosges and the Hôtel de Ville. A Small Luxury Hotels of the World member. | 29/31 Rue du Poitou, 3rd Arrondissement | www.paris-hotel-petitmoulin.com | +33-(0)1-42-74-10-10 | 17 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Hôtel Mathis

Subtle but undeniably chic, this four-star boutique hotel is ideally located in the heart of the Triangle d'Or (Golden Triangle): Champs-Élysées, Avenue Montaigne and Avenue George V. Set on a quiet street but close to some of the city's best-known sites, this hotel is the ideal place to fall in love with Paris. | 3 Rue de Ponthieu, 8th Arrondissement | www.hotelmthis.com | +33-(0)1-42-25-73-01 | 23 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Hôtel Montalembert

Built in 1926, this five-star boutique hotel is ideally located in the heart of St-Germain just steps away from art galleries and designer boutiques, and within walking distance of the Louvre and Musée d'Orsay. | 3 Rue de Montalembert, 7th Arrondissement | www.hotel-montalembert.fr | +33-(0)1-45-49-68-68 | 54 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Hôtel Victoria Palace

Set between St-Germain and Montparnasse, the Victoria Palace has been a Left Bank landmark since 1913, hosting such luminaries as writer James Joyce and painter Giorgio de Chirico. | 6 Rue Blaise Desgoffe, 6th Arrondissement | www.victoriapalace.com | +33-(0)1-45-49-70-00 | 62 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Grand Hôtel Français

Occupying a beautiful 18th-century building, the Grand

Hôtel Français sits on the bustling Place de la Nation, one of Paris' major crossroads. The city's key sights are just a 5- to 10-minute ride away by bus or metro line. | 223 Boulevard Voltaire, 11th Arrondissement | www.grand-hotel-francais.fr | +33-(0)1-43-71-27-57 | 36 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦

Hôtel du Collège de France

Sitting pretty next to the renowned Sorbonne, this cozy hotel offers comfort and a bit of old-world Paris in the heart of the Latin Quarter. | 7 Rue Thénard, 5th Arrondissement | www.hotel-collegedefrance.com | +33-(0)1-43-26-78-36 | 29 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦

Hôtel Thérèse

Enjoy the warm relaxed atmosphere at Hôtel Thérèse, located within walking distance of the Louvre, Palais Royal, Rue St-Honoré and L'Opéra. Guest rooms are small, but the hotel has great character and excellent service. | 5/7 Rue Thérèse, 1st Arrondissement | www.hoteltherese.com | +33-(0)1-42-96-10-01 | 43 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦

New Orient Hôtel

The New Orient's location near the Villiers Metro station in the "Europe" district makes getting anywhere in Paris quick and easy. The Champs-Élysées and Montmartre are just a leisurely 20-minute stroll away, and you're only 5 minutes from Rue de Levis (the open-air market). | 16 Rue de Constantinople, 8th Arrondissement | www.hotel-paris-orient.com | +33-(0)1-45-22-21-64 | 30 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦

Marseille

Hotel map: bit.ly/MarseilleHotels

Hôtel Sofitel Marseille Vieux Port

Overlooking the Vieux Port, this luxury hotel mirrors the fluid nature of the meandering waterway below. Take advantage of the short walk into town to explore Marseille's many historic and cultural attractions. (pool, spa) | 36 Boulevard Charles Livon | www.sofitel.com | +33-(0)4-91-15-59-00 | 134 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Hôtel La Résidence du Vieux Port

Built in 1954, the hotel's chic contemporary exterior is in stark contrast to the typical Provençal accommodation. Upgrade to a Club room for remarkable views of Vieux Port and the surrounding waterfront. | 18 Quai du Port | +33-(0)4-91-91-91-22 | www.hotel-residence-marseille.com | 50 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Radisson Blu Hotel

The Radisson Blu exudes casual seaside elegance. Relax by the rooftop pool while soaking up panoramic views of the ancient Fort Saint-Nicolas. (pool) | 38-40 Quai de Rive Neuve | www.radissonblu.com/hotel-marseille | (800) 333-3333 (from the US) or +33-(0)4-88-92-19-50 | 189 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦



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