

PROVENCE – AVIGNON, THE CAMARGUE & RHÔNE RIVER CRUISE

7-days / 6-nights quality river cruising, wine, gourmet food, wildlife, history and natural beauty



Rest and relax whilst our comfortable *French family-run* hotel barge meanders its way through the tranquil waterways of Provence and southern France. Beautifully presented, everything about this barge has been designed to help you feel at home. The décor is stylish and very French with paintings from local artists exhibited in the main lounge. Once on board, you are introduced to the crew with a welcome drink. After a brief presentation you will be guided through the boat by the captain. A *welcome* dinner is served by our resident Chef. All meals are served on board – prepared from selected local ingredients. Breakfast and lunch usually consist of a hot or cold buffet. Dinner is a more traditional gourmet meal served at table. You can discover a wide variety of regional specialties including fresh local cheeses, local wines including red and white or rosé, French Champagne and other local sparkling wines.

Between 2 to 6 hours a day are dedicated to cruising. Guided excursions are organized each day by our air-conditioned bus. These excursions have been designed exclusively for our passengers, often to places where perhaps other tourists rarely are allowed. We visit some of the more famous monuments and places of interest across the region usually avoiding the busy periods. On Saturday, the last day, we transfer you from the boat to a defined transfer point (usually a nearby railway station) for your onward travel connections.

On board the barge there is a selection of books and games. Cycling is an invigorating way to stimulate your appetite, there are bikes available on-board with free time to explore our ports of call in the evening.

Cruising: Avignon to Aigues Mortes or return for 7-days / 6-nights

Highlights: The Rhône River delta and Camargue with its flamingos, black fighting bulls and wild horses, its churches and ancient Roman history, Van Gogh's Arles, the medieval village of Les Baux and the world renowned wines of Châteauneuf-du-Pape

Costs from: **Value season:** \$4790 per person twin share Single cabin supplement \$1530
13th March – 23rd April, 17th July – 13th August, 23rd October – 5th November, 2022

Mid-season: \$5495 per person twin share Single cabin supplement \$1530
24th April – 14th May, 26th June – 16th July, 14th – 27th August, 2nd – 22nd October, 2022

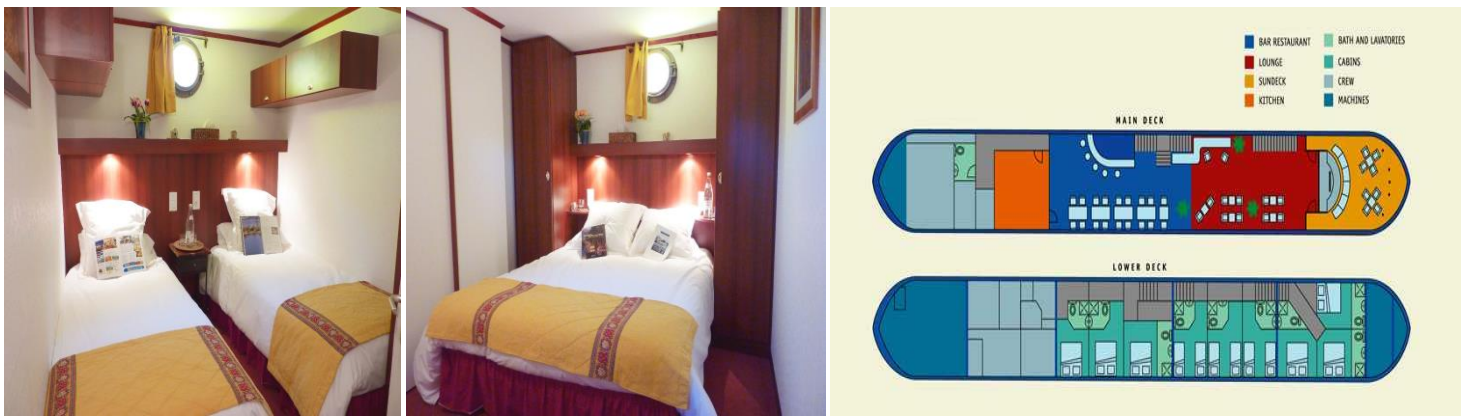
High season: \$6195 per person twin share Single cabin supplement \$1875
15th May – 25th June, 28th August – 1st October, 2022

Departs: Selected Sundays from 13th March – 30th October, 2022 (please ask for the latest availability)

Includes: Cabin accommodation with ensuite bathroom (there are six queen-bedded cabins and three twin-bedded cabins), all meals with wine, transfers from the pick up point to the barge and return, excursions, full open bar, tour guide and crew

Full group Charters are available on selected dates at discounted rates. Special Theme Charters including wine, cooking, golf or cycling are also available at a supplement – ask for details

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Suggested itinerary (subject to change – cruises may be offered in reverse on alternate weeks):

Day 1 Sunday

Transfer (by arrangement) to the barge, which is moored on the River Rhône close to the city of Avignon and its medieval ramparts. There is some free time to explore the city before your first dinner on board the barge which should give you an indication of the high standard of cuisine that will be served during the cruise. The accompanying wines have been specially chosen from local vineyards.

Day 2 Monday

Our focus today is on medieval history and the spectacular and world-renowned wines of the region. We first take a guided tour to learn about the religious and artistic importance of Avignon's past with a visit to the Palace of the French Popes. A lunch cruise takes us closer to one of the best cellars of Châteauneuf-du-Pape where we have a guided tour followed by a wine tasting. This evening we cruise to Villeneuve lès Avignon where we moor overnight. The wines we tasted in the morning are back on the table at dinner.

Day 3 Tuesday

Today's highlight is the Roman aqueduct Pont du Gard and we have time to explore or visit the nearby museum. We return to the barge and cruise to Vallabrègues, a quiet, charming river port. Here we have time to relax, perhaps take a walk or a bike ride or play the pétanque under the plane trees.

Day 4 Wednesday

After breakfast we visit the charming historical village of Les Baux de Provence with some free time for shopping. Back on board we pass through the massive 10-metre lock of Beaucaire and sail down to Arles, the wonderful 'open-air museum' of a city full of Roman ruins and historical buildings, one of the real highlights of Provence.

Day 5 Thursday

We explore Arles in the morning to see the shops and market. We can try to unravel the joys and despair of the painter Vincent Van Gogh who painted 300 canvases during his time here in 1888. In the afternoon we navigate our way towards the spectacular marshlands and wildlife sanctuary, the Camargue. We cruise on the Rhône River, the Petit Rhône and by canal to reach the quiet and traditional village of Gallician. Look out for pretty pink flamingos that are frequently here.

Day 6 Friday

Our last excursion is to the wilder side of the Camargue. We visit a *manade*, a typical ranch, where the *gardians à cheval*, the local authentic cowboys, show us how they manage the herds of black fighting bulls on their superb grey or white horses. Our final destination is Aigues-Mortes – a 14th Century walled city rising from a flat landscape, from which St Louis (King Louis IX) set sail on the seventh Crusade in 1248. We have our farewell dinner on-board the barge this evening.

Day 7 Saturday

The cruise ends after breakfast with a transfer to the defined transfer point (usually a nearby railway or TGV station) for your onward travel arrangements.

Outdoor Travel offers a wide variety of cruising holidays - including hotel barges; narrowboats, self-skipped motor cruisers and Bike & Barge crises in most regions of France and in many other destinations in Europe including, Italy, Germany, Austria, England, Scotland and Ireland.

Contact Outdoor Travel for itinerary details and reservations

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