

Tour
Information



Meet Monty in Provence



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Travel

Passports

Please ensure your 10-year British Passport is not out of date and is valid for a full three months beyond the duration of your visit. EU, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino or Switzerland valid national identification cards are also acceptable for travel to France.

Visas

British and EU passport holders are not required to have a visa.

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

French consulate: PO Box 57, 6A Cromwell Place, London SW7 2EW; Tel (020) 7838 2000/1. Information Service: Tel (0891) 887 733, Fax: (020) 7838 2046. Opening hours: 0900-1130 (and 1600-1630 for visa collection only) Mon-Fri (except British and French national holidays).



Tickets

You will be issued with return train tickets. Please take care not to lose your tickets and please check that the details on your tickets are accurate. Your ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.

Standard Premier on Eurostar tickets is indicated by two asterisks in the class type section in the top right-hand corner. A light meal will be served to passengers travelling Standard Premier on Eurostar. Standard class Eurostar tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although there is a buffet car serving drinks and snacks.

TGV tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although a buffet car is available.

Train Seats

On all legs of the journey you have reserved seat and carriage numbers which are shown clearly on your ticket.



Baggage

As with most trains, passengers are responsible for carrying baggage onto and off the train. Baggage can be stored on overhead shelves or at the entrance to the carriages. Trolleys are available at St Pancras and Lille, but bags do need to be carried on to the platform. Porters are sometimes but not always available at St Pancras.

Travel Editions recommends a luggage delivery service called **thebaggageman**, where your suitcase can be picked up from your home before departure and delivered straight to your hotel; therefore removing the worry about carrying your cases onto and off the trains.

For further information: www.thebaggageman.com

Labels

Please use the luggage labels provided. It is useful to have your home address located inside your suitcase should the label go astray.

Transfers

On arrival in Aix, transfer by coach to your hotel – The Best Western, Aix-en-Provence (approx. 15 minutes transfer).

Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.



Accommodation

Best Western le Galice, Aix-en-Provence

Hotel Le Galice, a 4-star hotel with 90 rooms ideally located a 10-minute walk from the famous Rotonde, in the city centre of Aix-en-Provence. The hotel enjoys an exceptional location, which will allow you to discover Aix-en-Provence and its secrets to the rhythm of the Provençal traditions. Discover our restaurant Le Galice, enjoy a relaxing moment with a drink in our bar and enjoy our outdoor swimming pool (open from May to September depending on weather conditions). The comfortable room feature private facilities with either a bath or shower, TV, Wifi and tea / coffee making facilities.

For more information visit their website

<https://www.hotelgalice-aix.com/>



Food

Colourful red and yellow peppers, glorious tomatoes, aubergines, fresh fish, Provençal herbs (basil, thyme, rosemary, sage, marjoram...), olives and olive oil, citrus fruits ripened in the Mediterranean sunshine form the basis of the Provençal *cuisine*. Traditional dishes of the region include *Ratatouille* (stew of courgettes, tomatoes, red and green peppers and aubergines braised with garlic, olive oil and *Herbes de Provence*), *Bouillabaisse* (fish soup), *Soupe au Pistou* (vegetable and bean soup with fresh basil), *Pissaladière* (golden onion, anchovy and olive pizza), *Daube Provençale* (classic French beef stew), *Aïoli* (garlic mayonnaise generally accompanies fish, vegetables or crusty bread) and *tapenade* (luscious Provençal paste made with olives, olive oil, anchovies, capers and garlic).

Enjoy the traditional Provençal sweets, such as *Tarte aux fruits*, *Calisson* (made from a paste of ground almonds, candied melon and orange peel, covered with bright royal icing) and *Nougat*. Coffee is served after the meal and will be black, in small cups, unless a *café au lait* (or *crème*) is requested. A typically Provençal apéritif drink is *Pastis* (such as Ricard), an aniseed liqueur.

Almost all restaurants offer two types of meals: *a la carte* (extensive choice for each course, generally more expensive) and *le menu* (a set meal at a fixed price).

The bill (*l'addition*) will not be presented until it is asked for, even if clients sit and talk for half an hour after finishing their meal. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, and no further tipping is required.

Generally speaking, mealtimes in France are strictly observed. Lunch is as a rule served from noon to 1330, dinner usually from 2000-2130, but the larger the city, the later the dining hour.



Drink

Wine is by far the most popular alcoholic beverage in France, and the choice will vary according to region. Provence is best known for its rosé wine; the pink wines of Massalia (today's Marseille) were already famous in Roman times. Côtes de Provence AOC is the main wine region, producing about 75% of all wine in Provence, of which 80% is rosé.

In elegant restaurants the wine list will be separate from the main menu, but in less opulent establishments will be printed on the back or along the side of the *carte*. The waiter will usually be glad to advise an appropriate choice. If in doubt, try the house wine; this will usually be less expensive and will always be the owner's pride.

Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

Breakfast – daily

Lunch – lunch on day 4

Dinner – private dinner with wine on day 4 plus dinner on the first night at the hotel



Destination

Known as the city of a thousand fountains, the former capital of Provence, Aix, is a lovely spa town with a host of classical mansions, elegant boulevards and beautiful paved squares. The city's most famous son is Paul Cézanne, whose studio is preserved exactly as he left it when he died in 1906. Other sights include the *Cathedral of St Sauveur*, noted for Froment's "Triptych of the Burning Bush" and several museums, including the *Musée Granet* of fine art and archaeology and the *Tapestry Museum*. It is a wonderful place to linger, too, at an outdoor café, particularly one of many along the elegant tree-lined *Cours Mirabeau*.

During your trip you will visit:

Val Joanis

Created in 1978 with the help of landscape gardener Tobbie Loup de Viane, the garden of Chateau Val Joanis has been noted as "Remarkable Garden" since 2005 and elected "Garden of the Year" in 2008. Conceived with the images of the gardens of the XVIIth century, three terraces unfold in the shelter of the mistral. The old-fashioned vegetable garden, ensuring self-sufficiency in vegetables and fruits, coexists harmoniously with the important collection of perennials, roses and other Mediterranean species.

For more information about Val Joanis, visit:
<https://www.val-joanis.com/>

Pavilion de Galon

The Pavillon de Galon was built at the end of the 18th century as a hunting lodge and is located on the south side of the Luberon mountain range of southern France. Its 5 hectare garden, which contains a modern French formal garden created in 2004, was awarded the "Remarkable Garden" label by the French Ministry of Culture & Environment in 2010. This label is awarded for 5 years and requires the garden to be open to the public at least 40 days per year.

For more information about Pavilion de Galon, visit:
<https://www.pavillondegalon.com/gardens>

Aquajardin

Designed by Alain Stroppiana, this Aquatic Garden of more than 15,000 m² invites you to discover, in a magnificent setting, multiple varieties of plants, shrubs and trees. You will also discover colourful koi carp and a collection of water lilies. Listed by the Parks and Gardens of France Committee for several years, the Garden has been labelled "Remarkable Garden" since November 2007.

For more information about Aquajardin, visit:
<http://www.pontdugard.fr/en>

La Jeg

La Jeg is one of the best gardens in Provence. Designed by New Zealand landscape artist Anthony Paul and owned by art lover Tony Stone, the garden nestles into the foothills of Mont Ventoux and is blasted by Mistral and Sirocco winds which scorch the soil. Boldly planted with lavenders and other drought loving plants, the garden also contains some beautiful sculpture carefully chosen and placed by Anthony and Tony. The garden melts easily into the surrounding borrowed landscape to create a truly harmonious work of art.

For more information about La Jeg, visit:
<https://clivenichols.com/la-jeg-france/>

Clos Pascal

This garden is situated not far from the centre of the classic hilltop town of Ménerbes in the beautiful Luberon valley which has national park status. The garden was created some twenty years ago by the owner and designer of the better known La Louve garden, Nicole de Vésian. Every garden is different, but in its combination of style and terrain Le Clos Pascal has a particular quality which stays in the memory. It divides itself into two very distinct parts although throughout there is the unifying style of topiary at which the French excel.

La Louve

La Louve was designed and built by Nicole de Vésian, a designer with Hermès who specialised in textiles and later in life turned to gardens. She purchased La Louve in 1986, as a village house with a plot of south-facing waste land. Over the course of ten years, she transformed the space into a complex work of art, combining stone and

topiarised scrubland plants, and in so doing transformed the image of the Provençal garden. As she turned 80, Nicole de Vésian decided to build a new house, with a garden on a single level, near the top of the village. She then sold La Louve to Judith Pillsbury, an art dealer from Paris and garden expert, who has tended the garden like a curator. Nowadays Sylvie and Pascal Verger-Lanel maintain the character of each one of the four major garden spaces, replacing plants when necessary with total respect for the original design and layout.

For more information about la Louve, visit:
<https://www.provenceguide.co.uk/cultural-heritage/luberon/la-louve-garden/provence-843029-1.html>

Jardins des Plantes Tinctoriales

This Conservatory Botanical Garden has been ranked as an "Outstanding Garden". It is indeed remarkable for many reasons - its specificity, the beauty, the position - planted on the terraces of the 18th century Château de Lauris (a registered historical monument). The gardens overlook the Durance river valley. The gardens are unique in Europe and are entirely dedicated to plants used to make colours. On the terraced gardens of the Lauris Château, embellished with fountains and basins dating from the 18th century, come discover over 300 plants traditionally used for making paint, inks and dyes for use with textiles.

For more information about the Jardin des Plantes Tinctoriales, visit:
<https://www.provenceguide.co.uk/cultural-heritage/luberon/the-conservatory-botanical-garden/provence-4690142-1.html>

Gordes

Built on the foothills of the Monts of Vaucluse, facing the Luberon, Gordes is one of the most well-known hilltop villages in the region, and one of the most beautiful in France. Its houses and buildings of white stone root themselves into the sharp cliff of the mountain, its labyrinthine of "calades" (narrow cobblestone streets) do not leave the visitor indifferent to its charms. Many artists have stayed in the village of Gordes and have contributed to its fame. Some, such as André Lhote, Marc Chagall, Victor Vasarely and Pol Mara came to stay.

For more information about Gordes, visit:
<https://www.avignon-et-provence.com/en/tourism-provence/gordes>

Senanque Abbey

The abbey of Senanque is founded the 9th of the Calends of July 1148 (23th of June) by Cistercian monks from Mazan in Ardeche. Our Lady of Senanque is the fourth Cistercian abbey founded in Provence, after Le Thoronet, Aiguebelle and Silvacane. Situated, since the 12th century, deep in its Provençal valley, the Abbey of Sénanque is one of the most pure examples of the primitive Cistercian architecture.

For more information about Senanque Abbey, visit:
<https://www.senanque.fr/en/>

Lavender Museum

The Lincélé family, producers & distillers of fine Lavender for several generations on the Vaucluse Hills share with you the charms and medicinal virtues of lavender, at the museum which was created in 1991. Lavender has been used for many centuries in pharmacology and perfumes. Even after centuries of usage lavender perfume remains attractive and continues to be a basic component in the creation of perfumes.

For more information about The Lavender Museum, visit:
<http://www.thelavendermuseum.com/>

Your speaker



Monty was born in 1955, brought up in Hampshire where he gardened from a young age, and educated at a variety of schools and at Magdalene College, Cambridge. From the early 1980's Monty and his wife Sarah set up and ran a jewellery business which enjoyed a great flurry of

success in the mid-eighties but folded in 1990 just as Monty's television and writing career was taking off. But he says "I learned much more from the failure of our business than I did from its success". Monty first appeared on television in 1989 on This Morning and continued as their regular gardening expert for 8 years and has now presented gardening and travel programmes for over twenty years. He became the lead presenter for the BBC flagship programme Gardeners' World between 2003 and

2008 and then again from 2011 when Monty began hosting *Gardeners' World* from his home Longmeadow in Herefordshire. He is also the main presenter for the Chelsea Flower Show coverage for BBC2.

His other TV credits include, *Tomorrow's World*, *Fork to Fork*, *Real Gardens*, *Lost Gardens Around The World In 80 Gardens*, *Growing Out Of Trouble*, *My Dream Farm* and *Mastercrafts*. Monty presented a series on Italian Gardens on BBC2 which was followed by another on French Gardens. In 2014 presented a series called *Real Craft* for More4 and *Big Dreams Small Spaces* for the BBC. Monty's latest series for BBC2 *The Secret History of the British Garden* is due for transmission in 2015. Further he is has recently finished recording the second series of *Shared Planet* for Radio 4. In this programme Monty explores the complex interface between a growing human population and wildlife. He is a prolific journalist and was the Observer's gardening editor from 1994 until 2006 and now writes a regular column for the Daily Mail and *Gardeners' World Magazine*. He has written over 20 books including the best selling *Fork to Fork*, *The Sensuous Garden*, *The Jewel Garden* (with Sarah Don), *The Complete Gardener* and most recently, *The Road to Le Tholonet*.

Monty is a committed organic gardener and was for many years the President of the Soil Association. He has worked with schools, and groups of drug addicts to build respect and reward from working with the natural world and has a strong belief in the importance of communities working together through an understanding and love of the land.

"The real importance of gardening is the empowerment that it gives people, however small or seemingly insignificant their gardens might be. It is surprising how liberating it is, if you can grow anything at all - and there is as much pleasure in a snowdrop as in a successful career".

Gardens guide – David Hurrion

David started gardening as a child and has been growing plants for more than 40 years. He has worked in gardens and nurseries, growing on a range of different soils and in



different regions of the UK. His extensive knowledge and practical experience of plants, crops and growing techniques is founded on a thorough botanical and scientific training, complemented by

an in-depth understanding of garden design, wildlife, geology and climatology. He has travelled to every continent, with the exception of Antarctica, to discover plants and gardens, both independently and on more than 50 trips accompanying groups of gardeners.

Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday

Reading Suggestions

Monty Don, *The Road to Le Tholonet: A French Garden Journey*.

Monty's own book on French gardens - much of it set around Provence, as he lived in Aix for some months.

Louisa Jones, *Modern Garden Design in Provence: Nicole de Vesian Gardens*.

Canadian born Louisa Jones has been gardening in southern France since 1975 when she and her husband bought the old farmhouse they still inhabit. She has written some thirty books about contemporary French gardens, recently specializing in Mediterranean regions.

Alex Dingwall-Main, *The Luberon Garden*.

A lyrical and witty account of the year-long transformation of a "secret" garden in Provence. High upon a hill in the Luberon region, sits the village of Menerbes. Behind a ramshackle house at the edge of the village, descending over seven levels, the author uncovered the perfect Provencal garden.



The Basics

Climate – The weather in Provence at this time of year is likely to be pleasant, but there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.



Time – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

Language – French.

Religion – Roman Catholic.

National holidays – New Year's day (01 Jan); Easter Monday; Labour day (01 May); Victory in Europe day (08 May); Ascension day; Whit Sunday; Whit Monday; National day (14 Jul); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); All Saints' day (01 Nov); Armistice day (11 Nov); Christmas day (25 Dec).

Currency – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Banks – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

Credit cards – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

Electricity – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

Drinking water – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

Shops and museums – Cities and large towns have a wide variety of shops. Villages have small boutiques and beautiful markets.

Department stores are open 0900-1830 Monday to Saturday. Most shops are closed between 1200-1430. Some food shops (particularly bakers) are open Sunday mornings, in which case they will probably close Monday. Many shops close all day or half-day Monday.

Please note that most museums are closed on Mondays.

Clothes & Shoes – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended.

Camera – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

Bath plugs – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

Telephones/mobiles – You should be able to use your mobile phone in France, depending on your operator and contract.

Tipping – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



Health

Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.



Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.

General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Sun Protection

Always ensure you take sufficient sun protection and moisturiser. A sun hat and sunglasses are also advisable.

Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know

your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

The EHIC replaced the old E111 in 2006. Valid in all EEA countries, the card lets you get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. It will cover you for treatment that is needed to allow you to continue your stay until your planned return. It also covers the treatment of pre-existing medical conditions.

Please note that the EHIC **is not** an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs such as being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. Therefore, it is important to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy. It is also important to note that each country's healthcare system is slightly different, so the EHIC might not cover everything that would be generally free on the NHS.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For more information about the EHIC please visit: <https://www.ehic.org.uk>



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7899 796542 or

00 44 7831 133079

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate Marseille

24 avenue du Prado

13006 Marseille

France

+33 (0)4 91 15 72 10

Marseilleconsular.marseille@fco.gov.uk

Mon, Wed and Fri: 0900 to 1230. Outside these hours a consular Emergency Service is in operation and can be contacted on +33 (0)4 91 15 72 10

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