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## PROGRAM: *LA PROVENCE* 10-20 juillet 2027

Our Provençale immersion combines **French-language seminars, cultural visits, excursions, and plenty of free time** to experience the city at your own pace. With our historian seminar leader, we'll look beyond the postcard image of Provence to explore the history, politics, people, traditions, and challenges that have shaped this extraordinary part of the country in particular and France as a whole. There will be plenty of time to enjoy Provence the way the locals do: strolling along the waterfront in Marseille, lingering over a café *avec vue sur la mer*, exploring the markets and shops in Aix, and discovering the charming towns that give Provence its unique reputation.

### **Samedi, 10 juillet Bienvenue à Marseille !**

Arrive in Marseille at your leisure and settle into your hotel. In the early evening, we'll gather for a **welcome cocktail** and introductions, followed by our first group dinner in the heart of *le vieux port*.

### **Dimanche, 11 juillet Marseille: les origines grecques et romaines**

To take advantage of the *fraîcheur du matin*, we'll set out early to discover the city itself, with a **guided exploration of Marseille's historic center**—perhaps even in the form of a playful city treasure hunt. From the Old Port and historic neighborhoods to the traces of ancient *Massalia*, we'll begin putting Marseille's history into context. After lunch together, we'll spend a comfortable afternoon in our air-conditioned hotel, as our seminar leader takes us back to the very beginning: founded by the Greeks more than 2,600 years ago, "Massalia" has always been a crossroads of Mediterranean peoples and cultures.

### **Lundi, 12 juillet Les enjeux de la France après les élections**

What is happening in French politics today? France will have just elected a new president after a bruising campaign. Our second seminar will give us a window into contemporary French political life and the many tumultuous issues confronting the country today. We'll then connect the discussion to the institutions themselves, with a visit focusing on **European and public affairs in Marseille**, at the office of the European Parlement located in the city.

### **Mardi, 13 juillet Journée libre, ou Cassis**

Choose your own adventure today: stay in Marseille and enjoy a leisurely day, or join us for an excursion to **Cassis**, one of the charming little port towns of the Mediterranean coast. We'll have time to explore the harbor and enjoy a boat ride to the breathtaking Calanques. After lunch, we're invited to the **Clos Sainte-Magdeleine vignoble**, where we'll be treated to a *dégustation de vin* overlooking the sea. Simply sublime.

### **Mercredi, 14 juillet Marseille: ville d'accueil**

Marseille has been a city of immigration for more than two millennia. Greeks, Romans, Italians, Armenians, North Africans, *pieds-noirs*, and more recent arrivals from around the world have all contributed to the city's remarkable cultural mix. Our morning seminar will explore this complex history and place it within the broader story of immigration in France. In the afternoon, we'll visit the **MuCEM—the Museum of the Civilizations of Europe and the Mediterranean**. Set dramatically beside the sea, this museum offers an ideal setting in which to continue our exploration of the cultures and peoples of the Mediterranean world.

#### **Jeudi 15 juillet *Journée libre ou la Côte Bleue***

All aboard *le train bleu*! Settle in for one of the most beautiful rail journeys in Provence. This local train line hugs the Mediterranean coast going west out of the city, passing rocky cliffs, hidden coves, fishing villages, singular beaches, and spectacular sea views along the way. We'll stop to explore a couple of the charming coastal villages before continuing our journey to Martigues, *la Venice Provençale*, along this remarkably unspoiled stretch of Provence, so dear to the Marseillais. We'll have lunch in Martigues and explore the **Félix Zeim** museum, which showcases the artist's luminous Mediterranean landscapes alongside works by other painters drawn to Martigues and its distinctive light.

#### **Vendredi, 16 juillet *Le parler et l'esprit marseillais : accent de Marseille et mythes***

What makes Marseille... Marseille? In today's seminar, we'll delve into the world of Marseille's distinctive accent, expressions, humor, legends, and popular culture. In the afternoon, we'll explore the world of **Marcel Pagnol**, perhaps Marseille's most beloved literary and cinematic ambassador, with a visit to the **Château de la Buzine**, the château he so lovingly described in his book *Le Château de ma mère*. We'll say goodbye to our teacher this evening at a special *dîner d'adieu*.

**Samedi, 17 juillet *De la mer au cœur de la Provence !*** Today, we'll travel inward and relocate to Aix-en-Provence. We'll arrive in time for its spectacular lively marché, then have lunch together in a shaded pavilion. Afterwards, a stroll through town or a visit to the impressive **Musée Granet** to round out our afternoon before returning to our hotel for a leisurely splash in the pool and a late-afternoon *apéro à la Provençale* on the shaded patio.

#### **Dimanche, 18 juillet *Le Pont du Gard-les Baux de Provence-le Mas de la Dame***

Today we venture beyond Aix for a memorable day exploring some of the most evocative landscapes and landmarks of Provence. We begin at the magnificent Pont du Gard, the spectacular Roman aqueduct that has spanned the Gard River for nearly 2,000 years. After taking in this extraordinary feat of ancient engineering and its beautiful natural setting, we continue to the hilltop village of **Les Baux-de-Provence**, perched dramatically above the Alpilles. Stroll through its narrow medieval streets, browse the little shops and galleries, and enjoy the sweeping views across the Provençal countryside. We'll then spend a delightful hour visiting the exceptional **Carrières des Lumières**, the birthplace of the immersive digital art experience that has since been replicated around the world.

On our return to Aix, we make a special stop at **Le Mas de la Dame**, where we will discover another side of Provence through its wine and art of living. A visit and tasting at this charming Provençal estate owned and operated by women offers a relaxed and convivial way to end our day before returning to Aix.

#### **Lundi, 19 juillet *Journée libre!***

Our final full day is completely free in Aix. Return to a favorite neighborhood, take a quick trip to Avignon, browse the shops, visit a museum, sit at a café, or simply wander and explore the windy streets in the vieil Aix. In the evening, we'll come together for a **farewell dinner** to celebrate our time together and all that we have discovered.

#### **Mardi, 20 juillet *Au Revoir la Provence, ou : l'aventure continue !***

After breakfast, it's time to say goodbye to this fabulous region, and for those who must leave, we bid you safe travels. Or if you would like to extend your stay by one night, we'll head by coach bus into the heart of the **Luberon**, visiting some of Provence's most iconic landscapes and villages: the **Abbey of Sénanque** with its splendid garden of lavender, **Gordes** and its houses set in the hillside, and stunning **Roussillon** with its ochre cliffs and red mineral sands. On the way back, we'll stop at the **Mas des Infermières**, the Luberon vineyard owned by British filmmaker Ridley Scott, for a taste of his Provence and a glance at some of his riveting movies. We'll return to Aix for one last night, and we encourage you to stay longer if you're able in this charming region. If not, you can take a TGV right to CDG tomorrow, or fly out from the easily-accessible Marseille airport nearby. **Adieussiàs!**

**Mercredi, 21 juillet *Au Revoir*** pour ceux qui ont participé à l'extension.

