



Hidden Treasures of Southern France

Thursday, May 5th. Departure from your chosen gateway city. **Overnight: Plane**

Friday, May 6th. Your arrival in Toulouse will be met by your Discover Europe Tour Director and your coach, before heading directly to your hotel. After time to unpack, rest, and settle in, Smith Faculty Speaker, Pamela Petro, will introduce the week ahead. The day will conclude with a welcome dinner. **(D) Overnight: Toulouse**

Saturday, May 7th. This morning you'll visit the premier fortified city in Europe, Carcassonne, a UNESCO World Heritage site. This spectacular medieval stronghold, replete with towers and turreted walls, first became a fortress under the Celts in 6th century BC. You'll then return to Toulouse for a free afternoon of shopping and sightseeing—options include St Sernin, one of the most influential Romanesque abbeys in Europe—in this vibrant, Mediterranean-influenced city. In the evening you may sample a local restaurant of your choice. **(B) Overnight: Toulouse**

Sunday, May 8th. Leaving Toulouse, your first stop today will be Albi, a classic red brick-and-tile Languedoc town where Cathars, 12th century Catholic heretics, were infamously burned at the stake. In Albi you'll visit the Musee Toulouse-Lautrec and one of the most startlingly original cathedrals of the Middle Ages. Afterwards you'll stop in Rodez for lunch and visit to the Musee Fenaille, with its fabulous, utterly unique collection of figurative menhirs. You'll continue on to your hotel just outside the ancient pilgrimage destination of Rocamadour. **(B, D) Overnight: Rocamadour**

Monday, May 9th. Today you'll take to "The Road," as The Way of St James is known. (All pilgrimage routes in France together constitute a UNESCO World Heritage site.) In particular The Road will lead you to Ste. Foy, a stunning, 11th century Romanesque Abbey—one of the best-loved pilgrimage churches in France—in the tiny village of Conques, hidden in an exquisite valley. Tonight you'll enjoy a free evening in Rocamadour. **(B) Overnight: Rocamadour**

Tuesday, May 10th. Today you'll travel even further back in time, to the Stone Age itself, when you visit the Grotte de Font de Gaume, a cave that was inhabited in 14,000 BC, complete with original cave paintings. You'll also visit the Musee National de Prehistoire in Les Eyzies-de-Tayac. It was in caves just above the museum that remains of Cro-Magnon man and some of France's most famous cave paintings were discovered in the 1860s. We'll break the return trip with a wine-tasting in the elegant city of Cahors, famous for its "black wine," made from Malbec grapes. This evening you'll be free to explore Rocamadour and sample local restaurants. **(B) Overnight: Rocamadour**



Rocamadour

Wednesday, May 11th. This morning you'll visit St Pierre de Moissac, a Romanesque abbey completed in 1100 that shelters the finest, oldest, and largest cloister with carved capitals on earth. It's a place of rare artistic and historic beauty, and a perennial stop on the St James pilgrimage. Afterwards you'll travel to Bordeaux through lush river valleys—the fertile farm and orchard land of southwest France—where you'll settle into your elegant hotel in the center of Bordeaux. Dinner tonight will be in the hotel. **(B, D) Overnight: Bordeaux**

Thursday, May 12th. Today you'll explore beautiful, sophisticated Bordeaux, one of the leading wine cities in the world and another important way station on the pilgrimage to Compostela. In the morning you'll view the city in the company of a local guide, and then depart for the legendary wine center of St. Emilion. Here you'll have a wine tasting and then free time to explore the town and have lunch. You'll return to Bordeaux mid-afternoon to have time for a little shopping before finding that perfect little brasserie for dinner. **(B) Overnight: Bordeaux**



A Votre Sante

Friday, May 13th. Today you'll visit Arcachon, a stunning seaside town with a great swath of white-sand beach, and the largest dune in Europe, in the company of Ann Sanford, a local Smith alumna. After an exploration of town and beach, Ann has arranged a private tour of a Belle Epoque mansion, where you'll enjoy cocktails, before dining on the Arcachon waterfront. **(B, D) Overnight: Bordeaux**

Saturday, May 14th. This morning you'll depart from Bordeaux, either to catch return flights to the USA, or to spend some time in Paris. **(B) Overnight: Home**