



# PLEASURES *of* Provence

AIX-EN-PROVENCE

**NO SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT**  
for Solo  
Travelers

SPONSORED BY

**EXPLORERS**  
ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

University of Illinois Alumni Association  
September 23 – October 1, 2025

# EXPLORERS

ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

## Dear EXPLORERS and Friends,

Join us for this magical seven-night sojourn through the storied region of Provence, France. Unpack once and make Aix-en-Provence your home for the week as you embark on excursions throughout the Provençal countryside to explore its picturesque villages and vibrant cities.

In Aix, stroll down the enchanting Cours Mirabeau, visit Paul Cézanne's atelier and meander through the "City of a Thousand Fountains." Take in Avignon's medieval streets and travel back in time at the 14th-century Pope's Palace. And, behold the awe-inspiring UNESCO World Heritage site of Pont du Gard, a feat of Roman engineering.

You'll also tour Arles, brimming with Roman ruins, to see the colossal amphitheater of Les Arènes d'Arles, and witness sites that inspired many of Van Gogh's paintings. See the wonders of dazzling Marseille, France's oldest city. And, visit some of the most beautiful villages in France, including breathtaking Les Baux, romantic St. Remy, and the lovely Luberon mountain villages of Cucuron and Lourmarin.

Along the way, savor a tour and Rhône tasting in the famed wine-making village of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, tour a truffle plantation and olive tree farm and search for fresh truffles here, and learn to play the fun game of *pétanque*.

This exceptional program has been thoughtfully designed with educational enrichment from expert guides and lecturers, and it is sure to be a crowd-pleaser. Guarantee your spot by making your reservation today!

Sincerely,



David Bambrey  
President

The EXPLORERS program is open to alumni of the University of Illinois, their families, and friends.

**844-414-0369**

**<https://uiaa.org/explorers/>**

### UNESCO World Heritage

1. Historic Centre of Avignon: Papal Palace, Avignon
2. Pont du Gard (Roman Aqueduct), Occitanie region
3. Arles, Roman and Romanesque Monuments, Arles



Saint Trophime Cathedral, Arles



Arles





# A World of Discovery



On this extraordinary trip, immerse yourself in the quintessential pleasures of Provence, where color and light magically transform into captivating vistas. You'll savor renowned wine and cuisine, marvel at magnificent architecture and delight in exploring the picturesque villages and cities of this special region of France. Plus, walk in the footsteps of Vincent van Gogh and Paul Cézanne, discovering the city scenes and lush landscapes that inspired their art.

*Top: Palace of the Popes, Avignon*

*Cover: Market, Aix-en-Provence*

*Mail panel: Sunflowers | Olive farm visit*

## Inspiring Moments



- Stroll **Aix-en-Provence's** picturesque boulevard, **Cours Mirabeau**.
- Immerse yourself in the artist's life with a tour of **Paul Cézanne's studio**.
- Gaze in wonder at the **Pont du Gard**, built by the Romans in 19 B.C.
- Bask in the tranquil beauty of historic **Saint-Rémy-de-Provence**.
- See the **Roman Amphitheatre in Arles**, still used for plays, concerts and bullfights.
- Cruise through the steep-walled inlets of the **Calanques of Marseille**.
- Join in the hunt for France's elusive "black gold" at **Les Pastras truffle plantation**.
- Experience three **UNESCO World Heritage sites**.

ALUMNI CAMPUS  
ABROAD®



Pont du Gard

## Day 1 | In Transit

Depart your gateway city for Marseille, France. 🌐

## Day 2 | Marseille | Aix-en-Provence

Upon arrival, transfer 🚗 and check in to the Grand Hôtel Roi René Aix-en-Provence. Take a brief walking tour with your Travel Director to get acquainted with the area. This evening, meet your fellow travelers at a Welcome Reception and Dinner.

## Day 3 | Aix-en-Provence | Cassis & its Calanques

**Aix-en-Provence & Cézanne's Studio.** Set out to explore this captivating capital of Provence, your home for the week. On a guided tour, stroll beneath a canopy of plane trees along the famed Cours Mirabeau, considered one of the most beautiful boulevards in Europe. Pass by the Cathédrale Saint-Sauveur d'Aix-en-Provence and Place de l'Hôtel de Ville. See the places Paul Cézanne frequented, such as Les Deux Garçons café, and where he found inspiration when he lived here. Then, find your muse during a visit to his *atelier*, imagining the artist at work.

**Cassis & its Calanques.** Next, drive to Cassis, a quaint, sun-drenched Provençal fishing village on the Mediterranean coast, to savor a fresh seafood lunch at a local restaurant. Continue on a boat cruise through the narrow inlets of the famous Calanques of Marseille to be awed by the unique geological formations of tall needle rocks rising from brilliant blue-green waters.

## Day 4 | Avignon

**Palais des Papes & Avignon.** Revel in history with a guided visit to the massive, medieval Pope's Palace, an outstanding example of Gothic architecture that served as the papal seat during the 14th century. Walk through history as you learn about the palace's storied and turbulent past. Be humbled by original, faded, ancient frescoes and see inside grand chambers, once the Pope's private apartments.

**Pont Du Gard.** Continue to visit the remarkably preserved Pont du Gard, built by the Romans in 19 B.C. Contemplate the architectural scale, Roman engineering and construction mastery of this massive, three-tiered aqueduct.

**Châteauneuf-du-Pape.** Enjoy a scenic drive to the southern Rhône valley and the famed wine-making village of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Visit a winery for a tour and lunch, and savor a tasting of the classic, full-bodied Rhône wines.

Châteauneuf-du-Pape







*Notre-Dame de la Garde, Marseille*

## Day 5 | Arles, Les Baux & St. Remy

**Arles.** Embark on a walking tour of coastal Arles, brimming with impressive Romanesque monuments and Roman ruins, colorful pastel houses and artistic inspiration. Marvel at the colossal amphitheater of Les Arènes and the Cathedral of St. Trôphime, a masterpiece of Romanesque style. Wander the cobblestone streets and pass by Café Van Gogh, the inspiration for “Café Terrace at Night.”

**Free Time:** Explore more of Arles’ artistic heritage during lunch and time at leisure.

**Les Baux & St. Remy.** Delight in visits to two quintessentially Provençal villages. Les Baux, perched atop towering limestone cliffs, offers breathtaking views, a tiny medieval village and ancient fortress. In romantic St. Remy’s, gaze at the lush, perfumed valleys that inspired more than 150 of Van Gogh’s paintings during one of his most artistically fruitful periods. Return to Aix for a festive group dinner tonight.

*Farmhouse in Provence by Vincent van Gogh, 1888*



## Day 6 | Marseille

**Marseille.** This dazzling, vibrant port city on the Mediterranean coast is the oldest city in France, founded around 600 BC. On a coach and walking tour, experience the tapestry of diverse cultures, eclectic neighborhoods and architectural wonders. See Palais Longchamp and drive along the harbor up to Notre-Dame de la Garde basilica to witness the spectacular panoramic views. Then, stroll the labyrinth of alleys, steep staircases and small squares in Le Panier, Marseille’s oldest district, soaking up the bohemian vibe of this multicultural hub.

**Free Time:** Find a café for lunch on your own and spend the remainder of the day exploring at leisure. Consider a visit to the Museum of Civilizations of Europe and the Mediterranean.

**Enrichment. Splendors of Aix-en-Provence & the South of France.**

*Charming Lourmarin, Luberon*





## Day 7 | The Luberon

**AHI Connects | Les Pastras Provence.** Venture to Les Pastras for a tour of the black truffle plantation and olive tree grove followed by a chance to join professional hunters in a search for the elusive “black gold.” Savor a tasting of organic truffle and olive oil, fresh truffle hors d’oeuvres and Champagne before sitting down to a Provençal buffet lunch here.

**Luberon Mountain Villages.** Bask in idyllic views on a leisurely panoramic tour of two of the most lovely villages in the Luberon massif, Cucuron and Lourmarin, once home to Nobel prize-winning author, Albert Camus.

**The Game of Pétanque.** Back at Les Pastras, learn to play Provence’s most popular game, *pétanque*, accompanied by rosé and pastis!

## Day 8 | Aix-en-Provence

**Free Time:** Make the most of your final day by exploring Aix on your own. Visit notable art museums, open-air markets and fountains! This evening, bid *au revoir* to your fellow travelers at Farewell Reception and Dinner.

## Day 9 | In Transit

After breakfast, transfer to the Marseille airport for the return flight to your gateway city.

**Note:** Itinerary may change due to local conditions. Flights and transfers included for AHI FlexAir participants.

### Note About Activity Levels

We have designated activity levels for all excursions on this program. For more details, please call or visit our website.

#### Excursions on this itinerary require:

- walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and/or uneven surfaces
- getting on/off motor coaches and boats

## Included Features



### Accommodations (with baggage handling)

- **7 nights** at the first-class Grand Hotel ROI Rene Aix-en-Provence Ctr-MGallery, Aix-en-Provence, France.

### Extensive Meal Program

- 7 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners, including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine, beer or soft drinks with lunch and dinner.

### Your One-of-a-Kind Journey

- **Small group:** Sized just right at 28 guests.
- **Enrichment by expert speakers** enhances your insight into the region.
- **Engaging excursions** showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- **AHI Connects | Local immersion.**
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions to mingle with fellow travelers.
- **Free time** to pursue your individual interests.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- Complimentary travel mementos.
- **AHI Sustainability Promise:** We strive to make a positive impact wherever we travel.

Calanques of Cassis





## Accommodations



### Grand Hotel ROI Rene | Aix-en-Provence, France



Just a 5-minute walk from the famed Cours Mirabeau and downtown Aix-en-Provence, the Grand Hôtel Roi René is a boutique hotel featuring a serene, welcoming atmosphere with a unique design and luxury bedding. Relax on the terrace while sipping a signature cocktail or by the heated swimming pool, a true treasure in the city center. The hotel also offers a fitness room with yoga and meditation sessions available.



Fontaine de la Rotonde, Aix-en-Provence



# Reserve your trip today!

To book your journey,  
please call our AHI Travel Experts  
at **844-414-0369** or  
visit **<https://uiaa.org/explorers/>**.

## Program Dates

### Travel dates †

**September 23 – October 1, 2025**

† Travel dates include any overnights required for international travel. These dates may vary depending on air schedules.

### Tour dates\*

**September 24 – October 1, 2025**

\* Tour dates begin on the scheduled arrival date at your destination and end on the scheduled departure date from your destination.

## Land Program

Full Price	\$5,040
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Special Savings	\$750
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<b>Early Booking Special Price*</b>	<b>\$4,290</b>
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\*Early Booking Special Price valid if booked by date on address panel and paid in full at booking. If you pay only your deposit by early booking date, you still save \$250 per person.

Price includes applicable program taxes (such as VAT and port charges). All prices quoted are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated).

Special offers, promotions and discounts cannot be combined.

**Single supplement waived for solo travelers!** This offer is limited, capacity-controlled and tends to sell out quickly.

**Please note:** Program-specific terms and conditions are available at <https://il.ahitravel.com/destinations/1863A?schoold=69>. You can also request a copy from our travel experts.

Any payment to AHI Travel constitutes your acceptance of the terms and conditions set out therein, including but not limited to the cancellation terms.

## AHI FlexAir

### Let us arrange your flights

**Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:**

- **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- arrival and departure **transfers** on group dates
- **flexibility** to change or cancel your reservation before departure on most flights. (Fees may apply)
- **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays

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*Les Baux*



*Fresh truffle hors d'oeuvres, Les Pastras*



*Dried lavender*



*Pottery*

## AHI Travel Expertise



From your reservation to your return home, we are here to ensure you have the adventure of a lifetime.

### *Before you go:*

**Travel Consultants** stand ready to answer your questions as they guide you through the reservation process.

**Travel & Air Coordinators** each offer their personalized assistance with flights, electives and special requests.

**Travel Information** provides pre-departure details and enrichment about your destination.

### *Once you arrive:*

**Your Travel Director**, a seasoned, multilingual professional, manages daily logistics so you enjoy a seamless experience.

**Handpicked Expert Guides** offer fascinating insights and share their passion for their country with you.

**Knowledgeable Lecturers** deepen your appreciation for the region and its history, culture and current events.



*Hunting for truffles, Truffle farm, Les Pastras*

# EXPLORERS

## ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

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Urbana, IL 61801

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**844-414-0369**  
**<https://uiaa.org/explorers/>**



**Experience the singular delights of magical Provence!**

**AHI Travel's** mission is to deliver inspirational, educational and cultural programs that delight travelers.

**With AHI you can rely on:**

- Experienced Travel Directors who attend to every detail of your journey.
- An exceptional travel value.
- Unique access to local sites.
- Flexibility and customization.
- Safety and security.



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