



# France for Solo Travelers: Paris, Provence & the Riviera

10 days | 12 days with French Riviera extension

Paris' cultural cache. Lyon's stellar cuisine. The hamlets, harbors, and happenings of the Côte d'Azur—better known as the French Riviera. A visit to France is always a pleasure, and when you travel in a group alongside other solo travelers, you can focus on relishing each moment. Go solo, not alone, from France's dynamic capital to its Mediterranean shores via the villages and eateries of Provence. If you'd love to linger just a bit longer, add this tour's extension and indulge in another few days by the sea.



## Your tour package includes

- 8 nights in a private room at handpicked hotels
- 8 breakfasts
- 3 dinners with beer or wine
- 1 wine tasting
- 1 food tasting
- 4 guided sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 1 train ride

## Included highlights

- Eiffel Tower photo stop
- Hôtel des Invalides in Paris
- Cathedral Saint Jean-Baptiste in Lyon
- Lyonnais cuisine tasting tour
- Avignon's Papal Palace
- Châteauneuf-du-Pape wine region
- Moustiers-Sainte-Marie medieval village
- Perfume workshop in Grasse
- Nice's Old Town

## Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 1.5 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including paved roads and cobblestone streets, with few hills.

## Group size

15–28

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Paris today.

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## Paris → 2 nights

### Day 2: Arrival in Paris

*Included meals: welcome dinner*

Bonne arrivée! After clearing arrivals, transfer from the airport to your hotel to recharge. Then, get to know your Tour Director and fellow group members at a mixer before going to a historic cafe for a welcome dinner, served with beer or wine. Drink in the ambiance and let your first impression of Paris leave you enchanted.

### Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Paris

*Included meals: breakfast*

Ready to be dazzled by the City of Light? Begin your first full day in France with a tour of its splendid capital, Paris. With a local guide leading the way, you'll get an overview of its most recognizable landmarks and a feel for the character of its arrondissements. (That's French for "districts," and it's how Parisians refer to the city's neighborhoods.)

- Drive down the sycamore-lined Avenue des Champs-Élysées—an icon of France that's lined with majestic monuments, glitzy restaurants, and glamorous storefronts. Continue to its western end and take in the magnificent Arc de Triomphe, originally built to commemorate one of Napoleon's many conquests. A dozen different avenues spoke from this epic arch, making it Paris' symbolic heart.
- Pass the 16th-century Pont Neuf, the oldest stone bridge in Paris, and Notre-Dame Cathedral. Watching over its arrondissement from an island in the Seine River, this French Gothic masterwork is one of the city's enduring sights.
- Make a photo stop at the Eiffel Tower (you know this one!) before viewing the Palais Garnier opera house and the Place de la Concorde, the city's grandest square.
- Pass by the I.M. Pei-designed Louvre Pyramid—the grandiose glass gateway to the

world's preeminent art museum. Then, marvel at the Hôtel des Invalides: Erected in the 17th century and built to a height of roughly 350 feet, this gold-domed structure is the largest church building in all of Paris and serves as the final resting place of its greatest military leaders.

If you need a break from the buzz of this electric city, seek royal refuge by adding an afternoon outing to the Palace and Gardens of Versailles. You'll encounter gilded walkways, fresco-adorned ceilings, and close to 2,000 acres of immaculate green space—all just a few miles west of Paris. Or, stay in town and use your free time to amble to the Champ-de-Mars and savor a picnic in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower.  
+ Versailles Palace & Gardens

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## Lyon → 2 nights

### Day 4: Train ride to Lyon & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast, tasting*

Begin your journey south of Paris by transferring to Gare de Lyon and boarding the TGV. (That stands for Train à Grande Vitesse—literally "high-speed train." With speeds capping out at 200 mph, they really mean it!) After a zippy ride through landscapes that inspired France's most virtuosic artists, arrive at your final destination: Lyon. Once you're there, enjoy some free time to grab lunch before meeting a local guide for an introduction to France's culinary capital.

- Set out on a walking tour of Lyon's UNESCO-recognized city center, taking in its Gothic and Renaissance architecture as you go. Along the way, you'll pass the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourvière. You may have already seen it as you coasted into town, but this hilltop cathedral—built on the site of an old Roman forum—staggered up close.
- Drive over Saint-Exupéry Hill—named for Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the Lyon-born author of the world-famous novella, *The Little Prince*—stopping in several districts en route. Highlights include the riverside Quais de Saône area and the landmark-lined Place des Terraux, but there's plenty more to see beyond this popular pair.
- Continue through Vieux Lyon, the Old Town

and largest Renaissance district in the city, and step inside the Cathédrale Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Lyon. Simply known as "Lyon Cathedral" in English, this Gothic church took 300 years to complete and houses a 14th-century astronomical clock. You might just catch it tolling!

- Explore some of Lyon's many traboules—secret covered passageways that once helped workers and merchants shuttle between streets. Word has it that it takes a true Lyonnais to locate these hidden paths; luckily, your local guide's one of them.
- Wrap up with a sampling of the city's cuisine. Join your guide for a tasting of cheese, charcuterie, and wine, before finishing your sightseeing tour with a sweet treat from a boulangerie. (That's the French word for bakery, and with more than 30,000 of them in the country, it's a word you'll use often.)

After a day of travel and tastings, enjoy an evening to yourself. If you're craving another bite to eat, seek out a bouchon. Unique to Lyon, these eateries serve hearty local dishes and regional wines in a cozy atmosphere. Not just any restaurant can claim the title, though: Only a few dozen meet the traditional qualifications needed, so do a little digging and find your favorite, or ask your Tour Director for a recommendation.

### Day 5: Free day in Lyon

*Included meals: breakfast*

After easing into your day with a free morning, choose one of two paths: Either add an afternoon excursion to the quaint commune of Pérouges—and see why it's recognized as one of Les Plus Beaux Villages de France ("the most beautiful villages in France")—or take a few hours to continue snacking your way through Lyon. Then, wind down on your own and pack up for tomorrow's transfer to Avignon.  
+ Medieval Village of Pérouges

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## Avignon → 2 nights

### Day 6: Transfer to Avignon, sightseeing tour & Châteauneuf-du-Pape wine tasting

*Included meals: breakfast, wine tasting, dinner*

Today, drive into Provence and make your way to

the “City of the Popes.” Sited along the Rhône River, Avignon’s place at the confluence of history and culture dates to it being the seat of the Catholic papacy in the 14th century. Upon arrival, discover its legacy of architecture and art with a local guide leading the way with a visit to the magnificent Papal Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most significant medieval Gothic buildings in all of Europe. From its cavernous chambers to its extensive courtyards, the enormous structure boasts fortress-like walls more than 160 feet tall—a surefire way to protect its residents. Interested in some wine to toast a day well-spent? Roll into the Rhône Valley and visit a cellar specializing in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. One of the most famous French Appellations d’Origine Contrôlée, or AOCs, these prized wines are crafted with one of 13 designated varieties—and during your visit, you’ll get to sample some of them.

Afterward, sit down at a local restaurant for an included dinner of Provençal specialties, served with beer or wine, before returning to your hotel and calling it a night.

#### Day 7: Free day in Avignon

*Included meals: breakfast*

For a one-of-a-kind blend of Roman history and Post-Impressionist heritage, tack today’s optional outing to the riverside city of Arles onto your itinerary. Alternatively, plan a peaceful personal retreat to Île de la Barthelasse. France’s largest river island is just a short bus or ferry ride from Central Avignon, and its protected green space offers broad views of the city.

+ Arles & Pont du Gard

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## French Riviera → 2 nights

### Day 8: French Riviera via Moustiers-Sainte-Marie & Grasse

*Included meals: breakfast*

From Avignon, take the scenic route and travel to the French Riviera, pausing to tour its charming medieval villages and mesmerizing Mediterranean coastline.

- First, stop in Moustiers-Sainte-Marie. Home to just over 700 people, Moustiers has protected the western mouth of the Verdon Gorge for more than a millennium. Marvel at its olive-planted hills as you drive in—and perhaps catch a glimpse of the famous gold star strung up above the town between two

cliffs—then enjoy free time to wander its cobbled streets. For centuries, Moustiers played a key role in the pottery trade; today, you can see that legacy in the form of its famous, tin-glazed faience.

- After grabbing some food in Moustiers, board your bus once again and rumble down the Route Napoléon. Tracing the steps of Napoléon Bonaparte after his return from exile, this scenic drive runs all the way to the Côte d’Azur. And when we say “scenic,” we mean it: Sweeping sea views, forested valleys, and much more line this 195-mile highway.
- Exit the route and stop in Grasse—the center of France’s perfume industry and the fragrance capital of the world. Breathe in the sights, sounds, and smells of the town as you make your way to a professional workshop, where you’ll craft an Eau de Cologne of your own with guidance from a local expert.

End your day on a high note, leaving Grasse and transferring to your hotel on the French Riviera. After settling in, use your free evening to explore the area at your leisure or cap your travels with some rest and relaxation.

### Day 9: Sightseeing tour of Nice

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

Nestled between Cannes and the Principality of Monaco on the Côte d’Azur, Nice is part cultural hub, part coastal resort, and entirely fascinating. Fall in love with “La Belle” during a guided tour of the city this morning, and see which of its quarters claims your heart.

- Drive along the Promenade des Anglais, a waterfront walkway dear to locals and tourists alike. Spot the various highlights called out by your local guide: The distinguished Hôtel Negresco, casino-hotel Palais de la Méditerranée, and the iron sculpture *La Chaise* all line the promenade.
- Stop in the upscale Cimiez neighborhood to explore a pair of legendary landmarks. First, enter the second-century Roman amphitheater—one ruin among many that formerly constituted the Roman city of Cemenelum—before moving on to the thriving gardens of the Cimiez Monastery. Monks have found solace in its peaceful surroundings since the 800s, and you can, too. Bask in a blissful moment of calm, then continue on your sightseeing tour.
- Conclude your day with free time in Nice’s Old Town, a labyrinth of narrow streets connecting bustling squares, quaint cafes,

and the vibrant Cours Saleya market. (Looking for souvenirs? Here’s your last chance! Pick up tapenades, candied fruit, and other local specialties for the gourmand in your life.)

Later, celebrate your trip at a farewell dinner this evening, served with beer or wine.

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## Flight Home

### Day 10: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home—or keep falling head over heels for the French Riviera on the tour’s extension.

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## + French Riviera extension

Intriguing inlets, captivating capes, and Neptunian blue as far as the eye can see—the French Riviera knows how to put on a show. This tour’s extension gives you a front-row seat to it all, from the sea cliffs of Cap Ferrat to the regal streets of Monaco. (And if you want an encore, there are plenty of optional excursions to choose from.)

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## French Riviera → 2 nights

### Day 10: Sightseeing tour of Cap Ferrat

*Included meals: breakfast*

Embark on a sunny, salty exploration of the French Riviera, a region known for its glamorous resorts and yacht-dotted coasts.

- Marvel at scene-stealing views of the Mediterranean Sea as you stand atop the cliffs of Cap Ferrat. Turquoise waters, washes of greenery, and coves peeking from the coastline combine to make the dreamiest vistas.
- Tour the opulent Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, a magnificent mansion with lavishly decorated rooms commissioned by the Rothschild banking family. The real allure, however, lies in the meticulously landscaped, themed gardens surrounding the villa, each boasting its own unique charm—from the fragrant rose garden to the exotic Spanish garden.

Return to your hotel to freshen up, then enjoy an

afternoon on your own. Keep exploring into the evening—or, if you'd prefer a glimpse into the French Riviera's rich art scene, add an excursion to Saint-Paul-de-Vence and enjoy a tour of its culture and cuisine.

+ Medieval Saint-Paul-de-Vence

#### **Day 11: Free day in the French Riviera**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Make the most of your last full day on tour. To rub shoulders with the rich and famous in their favorite playground, take up the optional outing to the nearby city-state of Monaco. Or, dig deeper into the French Riviera's art scene by staying behind in Nice and roaming one of its museums. The Musée Matisse catalogs the works of one of the city's most celebrated former residents, while the Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain—MAMAC for short—showcases avant-garde creations. Finally, rejoin your fellow group members in the evening for a farewell drink and celebrate your trip.

+ A Day in Monaco

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## **Flight Home**

#### **Day 12: Departure**

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

# Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.\* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: [goaheadtours.com/FR6](https://goaheadtours.com/FR6) | 1-800-597-0350

## Day 3: Versailles Palace & Gardens

\$139 (5 hours, departure time varies)

The reign of Louis XIV, known as the "Sun King," set new standards for decadence among the crowned heads of Europe. It took 50 years and 35,000 workers to turn Versailles, once a small hunting lodge, into the most magnificent chateau in all of France and the envy of royalty worldwide. On this excursion, you'll see the palace in all its glory as you tour the State Apartments and the glittering Hall of Mirrors. Then, stroll through the lavish gardens to admire their fine statuary, splendid fountains, and colorful flowerbeds. Please note:

Versailles Palace is closed on Mondays. The optional excursion may be moved to a different day on tour to accommodate schedules. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 45 days prior to departure.

## Day 5: Medieval Village of Pérouges

\$69 (4 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Make your way to the charming village of Pérouges, a favorite among the French for its winding cobblestone streets and medieval architecture. Visit the central Place du Tilleul for a panoramic view of the area and explore the fortress-church of Sainte Marie Madeleine. After taking in the scenery, stop at a local bakery to sample some of the region's sweetest specialties. Taste a galette—a round, flat tart filled with berries—and hypocras, a spiced wine flavored with honey, ginger, and cinnamon. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

## Day 7: Arles & Pont du Gard

\$95/\$105\* (7 hours, departs in the morning)

Make your way to Arles, a picturesque Provençal city and a longtime artist's haven. It once counted the famous Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh among its residents—he created hundreds of masterpieces while living there—and today, you'll admire the landscapes and sites that inspired him while on a guided tour with a local expert. Stroll through quaint streets and pass the city's old hospital, where van Gogh stayed when his mental health started to decline. Then, learn more about Arles' Roman past while exploring the UNESCO-recognized Arles Amphitheatre. Enjoy free time before making your way to the Pont du Gard, the region's famed Roman aqueduct. Enter its museum to see artifacts, virtual renderings, and life-sized displays, then set off on a short walk to view the grand UNESCO-listed structure up close.

## Extension excursion options

### Day 10: Medieval Saint-Paul-de-Vence

\$99/\$109\* (5 hours, departs in the evening)

Make your way to Saint-Paul-de-Vence, a celebrity haven and one of the oldest villages on the French Riviera. Upon arrival, your Tour Director will introduce you to its rich medieval history and wonderful art scene on a guided tour. Pass Place du Jeu de Boules, Porte de Vence, Place de la Grande Fontaine, and the Collegiate Church before stopping at Maison Bremond 1830 to sample local culinary specialties. Please note: This excursion involves difficult walking on uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets with some hills and stairs. We recommend wearing a comfortable pair of walking shoes.

### Day 11: A Day in Monaco

\$129/\$139\* (7 hours, departs in the morning)

Despite its size, Monaco boasts a substantial international reputation—and if you enjoy the finer things in life, you may already feel an unmistakable pull to the second-smallest country in the world. Begin your exploration by ascending Le Rocher, a quartier—or quarter—nicknamed for the elevated rock that houses the historic Old Town. Enter the iconic Casino de Monte-Carlo for an audio-guided tour of its gilded walls, dramatic chandeliers, and elaborate ceilings. Then, back in Monaco's Old Town, gaze at the Cathedral of Our Immaculate Lady, an exquisite example of Romanesque-Byzantine architecture and the final resting place of Prince Rainier III and Princess Grace. Pause outside the majestic Prince's Palace of Monaco, first built as a fortress in the late 12th century, and drink in the view of the sparkling coastline. (You might even catch the Prince's Carabinieri performing the daily changing of the guard ceremony!) Afterward, enjoy free time to explore on your own before heading back to your hotel on the French Riviera.

\*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.com/terms](https://goaheadtours.com/terms)