

Lourdes - Avignon - Monaco - Nice

Saint Magdalen de Pazzi Parish

with

Fr. Ken Brighenti

My Dear Friends,

Once again, I am hosting a superb European experience that is part of our wonderful Catholic tradition: trip to Lourdes, Riviera and Provence, France. Our diocese will be celebrating “A Year with Mary”, so how fitting to visit one the most popular Marian Shrines in the World. Fratelli and Company, once again, has put together a unique package of spirituality, conviviality and general socializing. Along with daily Holy Mass, we will visit historic sites and imbibe in the local culture of the region. YES, that includes the local wineries of Cote du Rhone and Chateauf du Pape (Burgundy). For those of you, who came on our Tuscany experience, know what a great value you received. Therefore, I am hoping that you can join me and others on this extraordinary French experience.

Best Wishes,

Fr. Brighenti



Day 1 – Departure USA to Toulouse, France

Depart USA—to Toulouse , France. Meals and entertainment aloft.

Day 2—Arrival Toulouse, FR to Lourdes

The place where Our Blessed Mother appeared in the Grotto of Massabielle to the poor shepherd girl, Bernadette. She appeared 18 times between February 11 - July 16, 1858, thus defining of the Dogma of “The Immaculate Conception” by Pope Pius IX. This little market town has been a pilgrimage site of world renowned ever since. We will check into our hotel then walk over to the shrine to visit the Sacred Grotto. Some free time for private devotions . Later after supper (included) we can return to the Grotto for the evening Candlelight procession. Overnight in Lourdes.

Day 3—Lourdes



After morning Mass we will enjoy a walking tour of Lourdes, visiting the places associated with the life of St. Bernadette: the Holy Hill, the local mill, the parish church and the “Cachot” and the chapel where she received her First Holy Communion. Later, at leisure, explore the town’s rich historical and natural heritage and be submerged in the atmosphere that reigned during the apparitions and the spirit of brotherhood that is still present today. Alternatively, you can visit the miraculous baths and be submerged in the waters of Lourdes with the many other pilgrims. “*Being lowered into the baths at Lourdes is an act of humiliation and trust, an act of faith*”. Supper (Included) and overnight in Lourdes. After dinner at the hotel, you can return to the Sanctuary this evening for the Rosary and Torchlight Procession, beginning about 8:30PM.

DAY 4—Lourdes / Free Day for Private Prayer and Devotions

Today after mass (TBA) the day will be yours to enjoy, pray or meditate in this most holy place of Our Lady. Today would also be a good time for those who want to participate in the baths of Lourdes. Most pilgrims want to take the “baths” at Lourdes in the miraculous spring water. Be aware that this will take quite a bit of your time here (waiting in line) so don’t leave it for last. Take the baths as soon as possible. Supper (included) and overnight in Lourdes.



Day 5 Lourdes to Avignon

After breakfast we will have an early departure for the city of Avignon which will be our home base for the next several days. Avignon, in southeastern France's Provence region, is set on the Rhône River. From 1309 to 1377, it was the seat of the Catholic popes. It remained under papal rule until becoming part of France in 1791. This legacy can be seen in the massive Palais des Papes (Popes' Palace) in the city center, which is surrounded by medieval stone ramparts. Along the route we will stop for lunch and some free time in the medieval city of Carcassonne. Upon arrival we will check into our hotel. Supper (included) with wine, water and coffee and overnight in Avignon.



Day 6 —Avignon to Wine Tasting in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Orange

The fame of this vineyard dates back to the 18th century, when the Popes contributed to its development. Châteauneuf-du-Pape AOC permits thirteen different varieties of grape in red wine but the blend must be predominantly Grenache. There are approximately 320 producers in the municipalities of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Orange, Bédarrides, Sorgues and Courthézon. Visit of a wine producer with wine tasting. Then depart to Orange. In Orange you will discover two major monuments of the Roman time: the triumphal arch (Arc de Triomphe) and the Roman Theater, that was able to hold up to 9000 persons. It is the best preserved theatre in Europe and hosts the Opera festival “Chorégies d' Orange” each July and August. It owes its fame in particular to its magnificent stage wall, amazingly well-preserved and unique in the Western world.

Return to Avignon in the afternoon. Avignon offers an exceptional range of architecture - the view at Avignon with the Pont Bénézet, the ramparts and four gigantic towers of the Pope's Palace is unique. The construction of the Popes' Palace began in



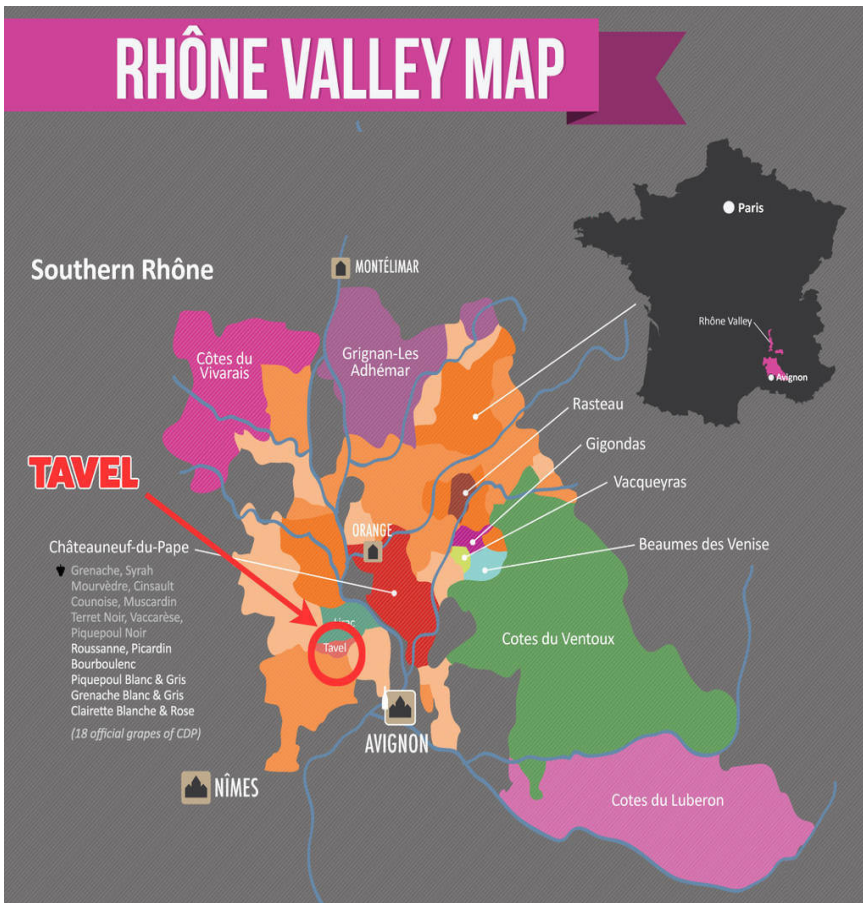
1335 by pope Benoît XII with the “Old Palace” and continued by his successor Clément VI who added the “New Palace” – this monumental building is the most stunning Gothic ensemble of the Occident. Visit of the Palace.

After the visit, enjoy a nice wine tasting in the “Carré du Palais”:<https://www.carredupalais.fr/> The cave is the former vault of the Banque de France and contains more than 10,000 bottles of winegrowers and wine merchants AOC Côtes du Rhône and the Rhone Valley. Dinner in the Bis-trot du Carré du Palais, with wine pairing, chosen

by the sommelier. Overnight in Avignon.

Day 7—Avignon to Cote du Rhone “Wine Road”

After breakfast leave Avignon to discover a part of the Côtes du Rhône wine road. Situated in the Vaucluse between Avignon and Bollène, this “appellation” includes several great wines internationally renowned : Châteauneuf du Pape, Gigondas and Vacqueyras. You will drive north in the direction of Gigondas. This charming village can be discovered at the foot of the mountain chain “Dentelles de Montmrail”. Gigondas is a “must” for wine lovers. Walk through the narrow, pretty streets and alleyways lined with medieval stone houses. Visit a vineyard (Chateau de Saint Cosme or Domaine de Mourchon) with tasting. Via the Col de la Chaîne and Malaucène you will drive to the region of Beauges de Venise. Stop in the village Beauges de Venise, discover the picturesque old town, flower-lined streets and alleyways. After a short way up, you can admire old houses with some beautifully restored doors. A 5 minute drive from the centre admire the Chapelle Notre Dame d'Aubune. The bell tower is a stunning example of 9th century Romanesque art. Down the village, (Avenue Raspail) wine cellars offer tasting and sale of the famous Beauges de Venise, a Muscat wine. The second vineyard for this day will be the Chateau de Pesquié. Chateau de Pesquie is a family owned vineyard nearby the Mont Ventoux – mountain appearing on several paintings of Cezanne, van Gogh... The terroir has a great mineral diversity, predominantly consisting of limestone. The Ventoux Mountain provides exceptional conditions to create outstanding wines. (AOC Ventoux) Visit and tasting. Dinner on your own and overnight in Avignon



Day 8—Avignon to Villages in the Bandol and the Var

Today you experience the vineyard of Bandol, where vines grow on terraces over about 1600 hectares in a sort of “natural amphitheater”. The Bandol vineyard concentrates on 8 towns in the department Var: Bandol, Le Beausset, Le Castellet, La Cadière d’Azur, Saint Cyr-sur-Mer, Sainte-Anne d’Evenos, Sanary-sur-Mer and Ollioules. The grapes to be found here are:



Grenache, Clairette, Syrah, Le Mourvedre, Cinsault, Roll, Sauvignon, Carignan, Bourboulenc, Marsanne, Ugni Bland and Sémillion. Visit the charming village of La Cadière d’Azur. Perched at the edge of a cliff, on the hill facing the village of Le Castellet, this small medieval village enjoys a wide view towards the Mediterranean. Sur-



rounded by pine forests, overlooking the famous vineyard (AOC) of Bandol. La Cadière has the charm of these Provençal villages still authentic with its flowery streets full of history. Then stop in Le Castellet: Several films were made in this charming mountain village near Bandol. This former fortress with well-preserved city walls, a 12th century church, and the charming old town invites you for a walk. A nice view into the hinterland towards Ste-Baume completes the visit. Wine tasting at the Domaine de Souviou. Here you taste Bandol AOC, Côtes de Provence...and olive oil! Then on to Nice, and check in at your Hotel. Supper included with wine, water and coffee and overnight in Nice.

Day 9 — Principality of Monaco

Today after breakfast we will begin our full day excursion from Nice to Monaco. Discover the delights of France’s Côte d’Azur on this French Riviera day trip from Nice. Explore the medieval village of Eze, nestled high in the hills over the France’s rugged coastline. Enjoy magnificent views of the Mediterranean coast as you head to the **picturesque medieval village of Eze** for a guided perfumery tour at the famous Fragonard perfume factory.

Dating from the Middle Ages, the village was built on top of the rocky outcrop. The walls of the twelfth century were dismantled in 1706 by order of Louis XIV. Take the cobbled streets to reach the top where you can find today the exotic garden and the castle ruins, the view is amazing (427 meters high).

In Monaco, watch the changing of the guard ceremony at the Prince’s Palace, enjoy a drive along the road used for the world famous Formula One Grand Prix race and explore the Casino square, the gardens in Monte Carlo:

In front of the Palais du Prince, you will notice the Carabinieri Barracks . Created on the 8th of December 1817, the Carabinieri’s mission is to ensure the safety of the Royal Family as well as maintain public order.

The Cathedral of neo-Roman style, the first stone was laid the 6th of January 1875. Entirely built in white stones from La Turbie during the reign of Prince Charles III, it was completed on the 12th of November 1903. You can pay tribute to Monaco’s Princes and "Princess Grace de Monaco" (Grace Kelly) who rest here .

The Justice Palace was inaugurated in 1930, built in solid tufa, a porous gray stone also used to construct the walls.

The Casino de Monte Carlo whose construction was ordered by the Société des Bains de Mer (created by François Blanc in 1863) and the plans were developed in 1878 by the famous architect Charles Garnier. Supper included, with wine, water and coffee and overnight in Nice.



Day 10 - Nice / Free Day—Optional Wine tasting in the afternoon. Farewell Dinner Evening

Between sea and mountains Nice is located in the wonderful "Baie des Anges" with its "Promenade des Anglais", its flower market, the museums (Chagall, Matisse, Palais Lascaris etc.) and the charming old town, " Vieux Nice ". In the narrow little streets or squares you discover a number of small shops and restaurants – the typical Franco-Italian atmosphere of Nice. Belle Epoque style, sometimes mingles with Art Deco architecture - "Nissa La Bella" is known for its relaxed, typically southern life style. The numerous restaurants allow to taste traditional dishes, among them, the famous "Socca" (Chickpea pancake) cooked in wood fire. In the harbor of Nice, you can visit the Confiserie Florian. Florian Nice opened its doors in 1974 after the purchase of the old niçois chocolate factory "Florian" created in the nineteenth century - of which Henri Matisse was a regular customer. At that time, ships from Africa delivered the precious cocoa beans, which engulfs the neighboring streets when being roasted. Renovated in 1994, it is now the



showcase in town of the parent company of Pont-du- Loup. Same spirit, same flavors, same specialties. In the afternoon, for those interested, a wine tasting waits for you at the emblematic Caves Bianchi in Nice downtown. France's top-quality wines, less prominent but not fewer promising wines, some popular top-quality foreign wines, eaux de vie, aperitifs and most curiously since 1860, olive oil! Here you can choose a tasting of: Bordeaux, Bourgogne, Côtes de Provence, Champagne, ...or have a tasting "around the world" (one wine of each continent). For the tasting we included ; "Promenade en terroirs de Provence » (1 White Bellet, 1 Rosé Provence and 1 red Bando). Farewell Dinner in a very nice restaurant in downtown Nice. Overnight in Nice.

Day 11—Departure—Nice Airport

Today, as we depart the "douce vie" of the French Riviera. We say "Au Revoir" (until we meet again) Never "adieu" as we board our jet homebound after an astonishing trip. From the Pyrenees of Lourdes to the Wine Country of Rhone and Burgundy, to Monaco and to the ambiance of Nice on the French Riviera along the Mediterranean Coast, we arrive at home with many outstanding memories of this terrific voyage.



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September 16—26, 2019

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