

FINDERS & KEEPERS SAFARIS

A LIFE OF MAKING MEMORIES

PRIVATE JOURNEY

The French Grand Journey

“The Louvre, the Hall of Mirrors, Chambord’s double-helix staircase, Lyon’s tables and the Côte d’Azur”

10

DAYS

3

LOIRE CHÂTEAUX

5

UNESCO SITES

4

RIVIERA TOWNS

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\$14,200

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Overview

A grand tour of the country — the romance of Paris, the absolute monarchy of Versailles, the fairy-tale châteaux of the Loire, the gastronomic capital at Lyon, and finally the glamour of the French Riviera. This is France's art, history, cooking and Mediterranean lifestyle in a single line, moving south the whole way.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Three nights at the Hôtel Plaza Athénée on Avenue Montaigne
- Notre-Dame, the Île de la Cité and a private Seine dinner cruise
- A private Paris food walk: croissants, baguette, Camembert and Comté, crêpes, macarons
- Chambord, Chenonceau and Cheverny in the Loire Valley
- Monaco, Monte Carlo and the hilltop village of Èze
- The Louvre privately guided — the Mona Lisa, the Venus de Milo, the Winged Victory
- Montmartre, Sacré-Cœur and the Place du Tertre
- Versailles — the Hall of Mirrors, the King's Grand Apartments and Le Nôtre's gardens
- A night in the Soufflot Dome at the InterContinental Lyon, on a site with 800 years of history
- Saint-Paul-de-Vence, the Maeght Foundation and lunch at La Colombe d'Or

The Louvre, the Hall of Mirrors, Chambord's double-helix staircase, Lyon's tables and the Côte d'Azur

The Itinerary

01

PARIS

Day 1 | Arrival in Paris

Land at Charles de Gaulle and transfer to the Hôtel Plaza Athénée on Avenue Montaigne — a palace hotel in the most exclusive few hundred metres in Paris, with the Eiffel Tower over the rooftops. The evening walks the grand boulevards: the Champs-Élysées down from the Arc de Triomphe, then the Place de la Concorde — the largest square in the city, with its Egyptian obelisk and the tower framed beyond it. Through the Tuileries, the formal garden that runs from the Concorde to the Louvre and where Parisians actually sit. Dinner is a classic brasserie: escargots, steak frites, or coq au vin.

- Hôtel Plaza Athénée
- Dinner

02

PARIS

Day 2 | The Icons of Paris

The Eiffel Tower first — ascended, or seen from the Trocadéro esplanade, which gives the photograph everyone actually wants. Then the Louvre with a private guide: the Mona Lisa, the Venus de Milo, the Winged Victory of Samothrace, and the building itself, which was a royal palace long before it was a museum. I.M. Pei's glass pyramid has become as much an icon as anything inside. The afternoon takes in the Palais Royal, once Richelieu's residence, then the Île de la Cité where Paris was founded, and Notre-Dame — flying buttresses, rose windows and 850 years of the city's history in one building. The evening is a private dinner cruise on the Seine, past the Louvre, the tower and Notre-Dame with everything lit and doubled in the water.

- Hôtel Plaza Athénée
- Breakfast, Dinner

03

PARIS

Day 3 | Montmartre & French Food

The morning is Montmartre, the hill that has been the centre of Parisian artistic life for over a century. Sacré-Cœur first, and the view from its steps across the entire city; then the cobbled streets past studios and cafés where Picasso, Modigliani and Van Gogh worked, the Place du Tertre with its portrait painters, and the Moulin Rouge down in Pigalle. The afternoon is a private culinary walk through traditional neighbourhoods — French gastronomy is on UNESCO's intangible heritage list, and this is the day that explains why. Croissants and baguette; Camembert through to aged Comté; regional wines; crêpes savoury and sweet; artisan chocolate; éclairs, mille-feuilles and macarons. The evening is free for the Champs-Élysées or the Rue Saint-Honoré.

- Hôtel Plaza Athénée
- Breakfast, Lunch

04

VERSAILLES & THE LOIRE VALLEY

Day 4 | Paris » Versailles » the Loire

Out to Versailles, the most visited historical monument in France and the clearest surviving statement of what absolute monarchy looked like. The Hall of Mirrors is the room: 357 mirrors facing seventeen windows, built to stun a court and still managing it. Then the King's Grand Apartments, Marie Antoinette's quarters, the Royal Chapel, Le Nôtre's gardens with their fountains and impossible geometry, and the Grand Trianon, the smaller palace the king escaped to. After lunch you continue south into the Loire Valley and check in at Les Sources de Cheverny, an estate between Chambord and Chenonceau where period architecture and contemporary design sit together, with a Caudalie spa, a pool and bicycles for the estate.

- Les Sources de Cheverny
- Breakfast, Dinner

05

LYON

Day 5 | The Loire Châteaux » Lyon

Three châteaux in a morning, and each one a different argument. Chambord is the largest and most extravagant, a Renaissance statement by François I, with a double-helix staircase attributed to Leonardo spiralling up through its centre. Chenonceau — the Ladies' Château — spans the Cher River on arches, and its history belongs to the women who ran it: Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de' Medici. Cheverny has been lived in by the same family for six centuries, is the most completely furnished château in the valley, and is the castle Hergé drew for Tintin. The afternoon continues to Lyon at the confluence of the Rhône and the Saône. The evening explores Vieux Lyon, one of the largest Renaissance districts in Europe, with its cobbled lanes and its traboules — covered passages cut straight through the buildings.

- InterContinental Lyon – Hotel Dieu
- Breakfast, Dinner

06

NICE

Day 6 | Lyon » Nice

A TGV south, about three hours, past the vineyards of the Rhône and the lavender of Provence to the Mediterranean. Your transfer takes you to the Negresco on the Promenade des Anglais, a Riviera landmark since 1913, where each of the rooms and suites tells the story of a different era of French art. The afternoon explores Nice: the Promenade itself, named for the English aristocrats who made the town fashionable in the 19th century; Vieux Nice and its narrow coloured streets; the Cours Saleya flower and produce market; the Place Masséna; and Castle Hill for the view across the Baie des Anges.

- Hotel Negresco
- Breakfast, Dinner

07

MONACO & ÈZE

Day 7 | Monaco & Monte Carlo

East along the Riviera to Monaco, the second-smallest country in the world and one of the most concentrated displays of wealth anywhere. Le Rocher, the old town on its headland, holds the Prince's Palace and its ceremonial apartments, and the cathedral where Princess Grace and Prince Rainier are buried. The Oceanographic Museum is built into the cliff face. The Monte Carlo Casino, Belle Époque and unapologetic, is the building that made the name. The afternoon takes the coastal road back by way of Èze, a medieval village on a rock 427 metres above the sea — perfectly preserved, and with one of the great views on the coast.

- Hotel Negresco
- Breakfast

08

CANNES & ANTIBES

Day 8 | Cannes & Antibes

West this time, to Cannes: La Croisette with its palms and its palace hotels, the Palais des Festivals and its red-carpet steps, the old port full of yachts, and Le Suquet, the old town on the hill above it all. Then Antibes on its peninsula — a medieval old town, a Provençal market that runs daily, Port Vauban among the largest marinas in the Mediterranean, and a waterfront looking back to Nice with the Alps behind it. Back to Nice in the evening.

- Hotel Negresco
- Breakfast

09

SAINT-PAUL-DE-VENCE

Day 9 | Saint-Paul-de-Vence

A slower, more indulgent day. Saint-Paul-de-Vence is a medieval village on a rocky outcrop behind Nice and one of the most beautiful in France — a favourite of Chagall, Prévert and Matisse, and it is not hard to see why. The whole village reads as an open-air museum: cobbled lanes, stone houses, artisan workshops and galleries. The Maeght Foundation, designed by Josep Lluís Sert, is one of the most important modern art museums in Europe, with Miró, Giacometti, Braque, Calder and Matisse. Lunch is Provençal, ideally at La Colombe d'Or, the inn where artists once paid their bills with paintings that now hang on its walls. Back to Nice for a farewell dinner over the sea.

- Hotel Negresco
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY BY DAY (CONTINUED)

10

SAINT-PAUL-DE-VENCE

Day 10 | Departure

Breakfast at the hotel and, if the flight allows, a last walk along the Promenade des Anglais. Private transfer to Nice Côte d'Azur Airport.

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— Breakfast

INVESTMENT

Pricing & Inclusions

PER PERSON SHARING

\$15,000

SINGLE TRAVELLER SUPPLEMENT

On Request

Pricing is an estimate subject to confirmation based on season, room category, and final accommodation selection.

SEASONAL PRICING

Nov – Mar	BEST VALUE	\$14,200
Quiet cities, museums without queues		
Jun – Aug	PEAK SEASON	\$17,800
Long days, warm seas, busy sites		
Apr – May, Sep – Oct	SHOULDER SEASON	\$15,900
The sweet spot — mild, bright, uncrowded		

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- » Private chauffeur throughout, including Paris – Versailles – Loire – Lyon
- » 9 nights accommodation across four properties
- » TGV high-speed rail Lyon – Nice, first class
- » Daily breakfast, plus meals as detailed in the itinerary
- » Private licensed guides in Paris, Versailles, the Loire, Lyon and the Riviera
- » Louvre Museum timed entry with a private guide
- » Eiffel Tower access and Notre-Dame / Île de la Cité visit
- » Private Seine dinner cruise
- » Private Paris culinary walking tour with tastings
- » Château de Versailles entry including the Grand Trianon and gardens
- » Château de Chambord, Château de Chenonceau and Château de Cheverny entry
- » Guided Vieux Lyon and Fourvière visit

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to Paris and from Nice
- City tourist taxes, payable at each hotel
- Monte Carlo Casino entry and gaming
- Lunches and dinners not listed in the itinerary
- Gratuities for guides, drivers and hotel staff

FINDERS & KEEPERS SAFARIS

Tell us what you have in mind.

This itinerary is a starting point, not a fixed departure. The pace, the lodges, the length, the dates and the party travelling can all be reshaped around you.

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HOURS

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The French Grand Journey