



Languedoc Itinerary 2020

September 20-October 2, 2020 ■ Group capped at 16

- Comfortable hotels and charming inns – all with private bath
- Transportation in nine-passenger van • Outstanding cuisine
- Medieval **Carcassonne**, a walled miracle from the Middle Ages
- The beautiful fishing port of **Collioure** • Shopping opportunities
- France with a flavor of Spain – the border country of **Catalonia**
- The wines of southern France: **Collioure, Banyuls, Corbières**
- A picnic featuring local produce • Fabulous outdoor markets
- Romanesque churches • Red-brick **Albi & Toulouse-Lautrec Museum**
- Some of France's most beautiful villages – **Cordes, Bruniquel, Mirepoix**

Tour cost – \$4,295* per person sharing for land arrangements (airfare not included) • Singles add \$550

TOUR SUMMARY	FLY FROM U.S. – Leave Sept. 18, arrive Sept. 19 (overnight, Holiday Inn , Toulouse airport)
Tour begins and ends in Toulouse	TOUR BEGINS – At 9 a.m. Sept. 20, lobby, Holiday Inn , near Toulouse airport
	TOUR ENDS – October 2, in the morning, at Toulouse airport (you will fly home today)
	12 NIGHTS • TOUR MEALS – Breakfast daily and eight other meals (lunches & dinners)

■ Day 1 (Sunday, September 20)

We meet at our hotel near the airport of **Toulouse** and head south and east. Soon we stop at the massive fortress of **Salses** for a visit. After a peek at sunny **Péripignan**, we come to the perfect French fishing village of **Collioure** and settle into our hotel. Come along for a stroll and a **WELCOME APERITIF**, followed by **DINNER**. **OVERNIGHT – COLLIOURE**

■ Day 2 (Monday, September 21)

Following a morning orientation to our tour, we head to the old town of **Elne** (hilltop cathedral and cloisters sheltering some of France's best Romanesque carvings). Look closely and you'll see **Adam and Eve!** In the afternoon, we visit the wine town of **Banyuls**, with its large pleasure boat harbor, followed by the lively fishing port of **Port-Vendres**. Returning to Collioure, we have free time – perhaps you'll want to follow the sign-posted walk that commemorates the many 19th century artists who painted scenes of the village. **LUNCH. OVERNIGHT – COLLIOURE**

■ Day 3 (Tuesday, September 22)

Today we explore part of the **Pyrenées Mountains** and the spa country around **Céret** – a part of France called **Roussillon**. Céret is a farming (early cherries) and arts-and-crafts center with a lively, modern art museum (ceramics by

Picasso). After a delicious **LUNCH** in Ceret, we explore the nearby **Fou Gorge**, a deep chasm in the **Pyrenées** foothills, accessed via catwalks high above a rushing stream. Late in the day we return to Collioure. If you wish, visit the town *château*. **OVERNIGHT – COLLIOURE**

■ Day 4 (Wednesday, September 23)

We leave **Collioure** today, but not before spending an hour in its colorful weekly market, just outside our hotel, where we shop for a picnic. By 11 a.m. we are on the road, headed north. Soon we have arrived at one of the most beautiful villages of France, **Castelnou**. After our picnic lunch and a peek at the adorable village, we arrive in the pretty town of **Narbonne**, founded by the Romans. Here we find an **archeological museum** possessing one of the finest collections of Roman paintings in France. **OVERNIGHT – NARBONNE**

■ Day 5 (Thursday, September 24)

On a day trip, we first visit the winery of **Noilly Prat**, maker of fine Vermouths. Then it's on to delightful **Pézenas**, a medieval town where we find authentic southern French architecture and **LUNCH** at a fine restaurant. Later, after free time in Pézenas, we return to **Narbonne** or, if time allows, stop off in historic **Béziers**, whose cathedral figures prominently in the crusade against the **Cathars**. **OVERNIGHT – NARBONNE**

■ Day 6 (Friday, September 25)

Leaving Narbonne, we first visit the **Abbey of Fontfroide**, a magnificently sited religious retreat dating from 1093. From here we make our way along the scenic **Canal du Midi**, passing through the pretty town of **Trebes**, and so arrive at the fabled, walled city of **Carcassonne**. **OVERNIGHT – CARCASSONNE**

■ Day 7 (Saturday, September 26)

We spend today in **Carcassonne**, absorbing its medieval ambiance. There is a *château* to visit and shops, wine tasting and the magnificently intact city walls – some of Europe’s finest. At mid-day we pause for **LUNCH** at an outdoor restaurant. **OVERNIGHT – CARCASSONNE**

■ Day 8 (Sunday, September 27)

On a day trip out of **Carcassonne**, we first visit **Mirepoix**, officially classed as among France’s most beautiful villages. Its half-timbered center shelters an amazing ensemble of 12th-century buildings. Later we arrive at **Limoux**, a pretty spot with an arcaded square and the center of a vast wine region. The vintners of Limoux claim to have invented sparkling wine long before the winemakers of **Champagne**. Back in **Carcassonne**, we relax or visit the ancient town as dusk settles over the walls. **DINNER** tonight in old Carcassonne. **OVERNIGHT – CARCASSONNE**

■ Day 9 (Monday, September 28)

Today we leave **Carcassonne**, but not before taking a boat ride on the **Canal du Midi**. Then we head north into the forested mountain range called the **Montagne Noire**. Crossing over, we come to the village of **Lautrec**, also on the list of France’s most beautiful. Finally we arrive at the handsome, red-brick town of **Albi** and orient ourselves with a walking tour of the old center. **DINNER** in Albi tonight. **OVERNIGHT – ALBI**

■ Day 10 (Tuesday, September 29)

Albi is a joy to explore, with a warren of pedestrian streets lined with pretty buildings, a picturesque riverside setting and two magnificent monuments. The **cathedral** is a soaring brick monstrosity, looking more like a dungeon than a church, for good reason: when built in 1282 it was designed as a fortress to symbolize the power of the Catholic Church over the oft-rebellious citizens of Albi. Nearby is the **Toulouse-Lautrec Museum** (he was born in Albi), with dozens of skilled works by the artist and others. Later, come along on a boat ride on the **Tarn River**. **OVERNIGHT – ALBI**

■ Day 11 (Wednesday, September 30)

We climb to the nearby village of **Cordes-sur-Ciel** today and get to know this hilltop gem, one of France’s most beautiful villages. In Cordes, enjoy the remarkable site, atop a rocky outcrop overlooking the valley of the **Cérou River**. Visit the fine old mansion called the **Maison du Grand Fauconnier**, with its museum dedicated to the works of artist **Yves-Brayer**. In the afternoon, if time allows, we can visit nearby **Castres**, and its **Musée Goya**, with a fine collection of paintings by top Spanish artists (**Goya, Velásquez, Murillo, Zurburán** and others). **OVERNIGHT – ALBI**

■ Day 12 (Thursday, October 1)

From **Albi** we loop back toward **Toulouse** and its airport. Along the way are two exceptionally pretty villages – **Bruniquel**, under a brooding *château*, and **St. Antonin-Noble-Val**, lying at the base of a sheer wall of white rock. We also enjoy an magnificent **AU REVOIR LUNCH** at a fine country restaurant. Finally, at day’s end, we arrive at the **Toulouse Airport**. **OVERNIGHT – TOULOUSE AIRPORT**

■ Getaway day (Friday, October 2)

It’s time to say *au revoir* to Languedoc with a flight home from **Toulouse**.

Notes

MEALS – All tours include breakfast and eight other meals (lunches and dinners), as indicated in **BOLD CAPS** in the itinerary.

OUR HOTELS

Hôtel la Frégate, Collioure
Hôtel la Résidence, Narbonne
Hôtel Mercure, Carcassonne
Hôtellerie St. Antoine, Albi
Holiday Inn, Toulouse Airport

HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS – Subject to change according to availability.

ITINERARY – Details of this preliminary itinerary could change. A final itinerary will be issued closer to trip departure.

* **TOUR PRICE** – Price of \$4,195 is based on a “benchmark” U.S. dollar/euro exchange rate that existed pre-tour and could change if there are significant exchange rate fluctuations. Call us for details - (800) 676-1247 Price quoted is for land arrangements only and does not include airfare.