Europe

Provence: The Art of Living Well with Lyndey Milan

trip highlights

- Embrace the Provençal joie de vivre with Lyndey Milan OAM – good food, beautiful places and time to enjoy both
- Walk in Van Gogh's footsteps in Saint-Rémy de Provence and discover Cézanne's Aix en Provence
- Go behind the scenes at Maison AIX, touring the estate and cellar before tasting one of Provence's best-known rosés
- Shop the market, cook in a local home and linger over the Provençal lunch you've created
- Walk from hilltop Gordes to Sénanque Abbey for a guided visit, and treasure hunt through the famous brocante of L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue
- Taste organic olive oil amongst the groves of the Luberon

Trip Duration	11 days	**Trip Code:** LMPR
Grade	Adventure touring	
Activities	Day walks, Food and wine touring, Markets and museums, Cooking class	
Summary	10 nights in boutique hotels	

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the trip

Join Lyndey Milan OAM in the luminous South of France for a journey through Provence, where art, food and wine are all part of a way of life that celebrates taking time to enjoy the good things - beneath brilliant blue skies and over glasses of chilled rosé. Timed for that lovely moment when summer gives way to autumn, when the grape harvest brings life to the vineyards and market stalls brim with the last of summer's produce, this exclusive small-group tour combines relaxed countryside walks, colourful markets, wine experiences, artistic encounters and memorable meals, with plenty of time to embrace the Provençal art of living well.

Beginning in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, we step into a landscape of stone villages and limestone hills that has inspired artists for generations. Walk in the footsteps of Vincent van Gogh, discover the colourful world of Provençal textiles and pause for an apéritif before continuing to elegant Aix-en-Provence. Here, art and gastronomy take centre stage, with visits to Cézanne's studio, a hands-on Provençal cooking experience and a special visit to Maison AIX, producer of one of Provence's best-known rosés, where we tour the estate and cellar and, of course, taste the wines.

Our final days take us into the heart of the Luberon, where we settle into the spectacular hilltop village of Gordes for four nights. Taste organic olive oils amongst the groves, picnic in the countryside, wander the market and lanes of beautiful Lourmarin and venture underground at Gargas to discover the historic ochre quarries, where the richly coloured mineral was extracted for use as a natural pigment in paints. Walk through the Sénancole Valley to its medieval abbey, and enjoy one of France's great Sunday traditions, treasure hunting amongst the antiques, vintage finds and brocante of L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue.

Throughout the journey, Lyndey brings her infectious enthusiasm for food, wine and the good things in life. There's time to explore, but also time to linger – over lunch, beside the pool, at a café or over an apéritif. Because in Provence, sometimes doing very little is exactly the point.

With just 16 places available, early booking is recommended.

trip cost

Joining St Remy de Provence from:	$13990
	All prices are per person

options & supplements

Single use rooms:	$3500

about your leader/escort

Lyndey Milan OAM is one of Australia's most respected food and wine personalities, with more than four decades spent sharing her passion for good food, wine and the cultures that surround them. An award-winning chef, author, presenter and industry leader, she was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her services to hospitality, particularly the food and wine industry, and to the community. At the heart of Lyndey's work is a belief that food and wine are about much more than what is on the plate or in the glass – they bring people together and offer a wonderful way to understand a place and its culture. It's a philosophy perfectly suited to Provence. With her warmth, curiosity and infectious enthusiasm for the good things in life, Lyndey brings a wonderfully personal dimension to this celebration of the food, wine, art and joie de vivre of the South of France.

at a glance

DAY 1	FRI 24 SEP: JOIN SAINT-RÉMY-DE-PROVENCE
DAY 2	SAT 25 SEPTEMBER: IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF VAN GOGH
DAY 3	SUN 26 SEPTEMBER: MARKET DAY AND ON TO AIX EN PROVENCE
DAY 4	MON 27 SEPTEMBER: THE ART OF LIVING WELL: AIX AND PROVENÇAL ROSÉ
DAY 5	TUE 28 SEPTEMBER: MARKET TO TABLE
DAY 6	WED 29 SEPTEMBER: CEZANNE'S AIX
DAY 7	THU 30 SEPTEMBER: FROM OLIVE GROVES TO GORDES
DAY 8	FRI 01 OCTOBER: THE BEAUTY OF LOURMARIN
DAY 9	SAT 02 OCTOBER: WALKING IN THE LUBERON

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trip dates

2027 24 Sep - 04 Oct

fast facts

Countries Visited:
France

Visas:
Please check visa requirements with your reservations consultant*

Singles:
Single travellers who are unable to be matched with another single traveller of the same gender, must pay a single supplement on this trip.

important note

The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

DAY 10	SUN 03 OCTOBER: BROCANTE AND VINTAGE FINDS IN L'ISLE-SUR-LA-SORGUE
DAY 11	MON 04 OCTOBER: AU REVOIR PROVENCE

additional deposits required

To secure the accommodation for this tour we are required to pay deposits well in advance.

As all deposits are non refundable we strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance as soon as your place on this trip is confirmed by World Expeditions.

what's included

- Accompanied by food and wine personality Lyndey Milan OAM
- 10 nights in boutique hotels on a twin share basis - limited single supplements available
- 10 breakfasts, 1 picnic lunch (& one cooking class lunch), and 6 dinners
- Private transport throughout
- English speaking local guide
- Tour and wine tasting at a Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence appellation winery
- Walking tour of Aix-en-Provence
- Full day Provencal cooking class including market visit
- Tour and tasting at an olive farm and mill with picnic lunch
- Guided visit of Cezanne's studio Atelier des Lauves in Aix en Provence
- Guided visit of Abbaye Notre-Dame de Senanque in Gordes
- Guided visit of Mines de Bruoux with a blind wine tasting in the galleries by Domaine de la Coquillade
- Guided visit of Musée Souleiado textile house in Tarascon
- Entrance to Saint-Paul-de-Mausole monastery in St Remy de Provence
- Entrance to Caumont Centre d'Art with audio guide in Aix en Provence
- Lourmarin, Saint-Rémy-de-Provence and Aix-en-Provence markets, as well as the Sunday brocante at L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue
- City taxes
- Tips for driver and local guide

what's not included

- Travel to St Remy de Provence and from Gordes
- Travel insurance - compulsory
- Visa if applicable
- Single supplement if booked in your own room - limited number available
- Meals, drinks & entrance fees not noted as included

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Fri 24 Sep: Join Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

Welcome to Provence and the beautiful town of Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, our introduction to the sun-drenched landscapes and easy elegance of the South of France. Arriving in late September, we find Provence beginning its gentle transition into autumn, with warm days, softer light and the grape harvest bringing a sense of activity to the vineyards. This is a town made for wandering, with tree-lined streets, handsome old buildings, café terraces and inviting food shops creating an unmistakably Provençal atmosphere. Our hotel is right in the heart of Saint-Rémy, putting the town on our doorstep while providing a relaxed base for our stay. There's an outdoor pool and sun loungers too, perfect for settling into the slower pace of

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southern France after your journey. After settling in, we enjoy our first taste of the region's joie de vivre – good food, local wine and time around the table are simply part of everyday life here. Bienvenue en Provence!

Overnight: Hotel Gounod, Saint Remy de Provence (or similar)

meals: D

DAY 2 Sat 25 September: In the footsteps of Van Gogh

Saint-Rémy has an extraordinary connection with Vincent van Gogh, who in 1889 admitted himself to the Saint-Paul-de-Mausole monastery and spent a year here, finding inspiration in the light, landscapes and scenes of Provence. We follow the Van Gogh Walking Trail, an easy walk of around an hour from the centre of Saint-Rémy to Saint-Paul-de-Mausole. Along the way, around 20 panels reproduce works by Van Gogh, allowing us to see some of the landscapes and scenes that inspired his paintings. Our walk brings us to Saint-Paul-de-Mausole, where we visit the former monastery and discover more about this extraordinarily productive chapter of Van Gogh's life. During his time in Saint-Rémy he created some of his best-known works, including Irises, Olive Orchard and Wheat Field with Cypresses, finding inspiration in the gardens, olive trees and countryside around him. Walking through these same surroundings brings the art and landscape together in a wonderfully tangible way.

Later in the afternoon we turn from the colours of Van Gogh to another wonderfully colourful expression of Provence, travelling the short distance to Tarascon to visit the Musée Souleiado. Provençal printed fabrics, with their exuberant patterns and brilliant colours, have been part of the region's identity for centuries, and Souleiado has played a role in preserving this tradition since 1806. Housed in the company's former workshops, the museum traces the story and craftsmanship behind these distinctive textiles, with some 50,000 printing plates revealing the artistry, techniques and savoir-faire behind this enduring element of Provençal style. Afterwards, there's time to stroll through Tarascon before settling in for an apéritif - that wonderfully French pause at the end of the afternoon for a drink and conversation. We will have dinner in Tarascon, before returning to Saint-Rémy.

Overnight: Hotel Gounod, Saint Remy de Provence

meals: B,D

DAY 3 Sun 26 September: Market day and on to Aix en Provence

There's no need to rush in Provence. Enjoy a leisurely start to the day in Saint-Rémy before we continue our journey. We make our way towards Aix-en-Provence, stopping en route at the Sunday market in Le Puy-Sainte-Réparade. Local markets are an essential part of life in Provence, bringing together the colours, flavours and produce of the surrounding countryside. This is a chance to browse the stalls, see what's in season and soak up the wonderfully social atmosphere of a Provençal market. At this time of year, the stalls begin to reflect the change of season, with figs, grapes, late-summer vegetables, cheeses, olives and other local produce. From here it's a short drive on to Aix-en-Provence, an elegant southern city of tree-lined boulevards, fountains, honey-coloured buildings and café terraces. Long associated with art, food and the pleasures of Provençal life, 'Aix' will be our base for the next four nights. Our contemporary-style hotel is ideally placed just a five-minute walk from the Cours Mirabeau and the heart of the city, making it easy to step out and explore à votre rythme - at your own pace. There's also an outdoor pool and terrace for those moments when doing very little feels like exactly the right thing to do in Provence.

This afternoon, we set out on a two-hour walking tour exploring Aix through the life and work of its most famous artist, Paul Cézanne, who was born here in 1839 and

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remained deeply connected to Provence throughout his life. Rather than simply admire his paintings, we'll walk the streets and neighbourhoods that formed part of his everyday world. Beginning around the elegant Cours Mirabeau and Quartier Mazarin, we trace Cézanne's story through the city, passing places associated with his childhood, education and later life. Our route takes us by the Musée Granet, where Cézanne once took drawing classes, and Collège Mignet, where he studied and formed his famous friendship with the young Émile Zola. We continue along Rue Mignet and into the narrow streets of the Old Town, discovering another side of Aix beyond its grand boulevards. We'll also hear about the cafés and gathering places that were part of the city's social life, including the celebrated Les Deux Garçons on the Cours Mirabeau, long associated with Cézanne and other artists and writers. By the end of the walk, we'll have a better sense not only of Cézanne the artist, but of the city that shaped him – wonderful context for what we'll discover later in Aix.

Overnight: Grand Roi Rene, Aix en Provence (or similar)

meals: B,D

DAY 4 Mon 27 September: The Art of Living Well: Aix and Provençal Rosé

Aix-en-Provence reveals a more cosmopolitan side of Provence. Set inland rather than on the coast, it is a lively university city with a compact and wonderfully walkable historic centre. There's a sophistication to Aix, but it's also unmistakably relaxed, with people gathering beneath the plane trees for coffee, lunch or an apéritif.

Today we head into the countryside to Maison AIX, producer of AIX Rosé and one of the recognisable names in contemporary Provençal rosé. Set amongst the vineyards of the Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence appellation, the estate is devoted to producing its flagship rosé, a wine that has built an international following for its elegant Provençal style. Our visit begins with a guided tour of the estate and cellar, taking us behind the scenes to learn about the winemaking and bottling process before, naturally, tasting the wines. Late September also places us in the season of les vendanges - the grape harvest - an important time in Provence's wine country. The vineyards sit at around 420m /1,378ft above sea level, where warm Mediterranean sunshine, cooler nights and the famous Mistral help shape the growing conditions. Grenache, Syrah and Cinsault are at the heart of AIX Rosé, coming together in the pale, dry style that has become so closely associated with Provence. It's a fitting place to spend our day with Lyndey, discovering more about the wine, landscape and winemaking behind one of Provence's best-known rosés - and why a chilled glass of rosé feels so completely at home here.

Overnight: Grand Roi Rene, Aix en Provence

meals: B

DAY 5 Tue 28 September: Market to Table

Food is one of the great pleasures of Provence, and today we experience it, beginning where so much of Provençal life happens – at the market. Accompanied by our local host, we wander the stalls, discovering what is in season and gathering inspiration for the lunch we'll prepare together. There's wine to discover too, with a tasting at a local winery before continuing to our host's home for a private, hands-on cooking class. We'll explore the vegetable garden and then learn to prepare a selection of typical Provençal dishes, with the menu changing according to the season and what looks best at the market. It might include stuffed zucchini flowers, olive tapenade and garlic aioli, seafood, lamb with ratatouille, pissaladière or a beautifully simple

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seasonal tart or clafoutis. Best of all, we sit down together afterwards to enjoy the lunch we've created, accompanied by wine, with plenty of time around the table. Bon appétit!

The evening is free to enjoy as you wish.

Overnight: Grand Roi Rene, Aix en Provence

meals: B,L

DAY 6 Wed 29 September: Cezanne's Aix

Few artists are as closely entwined with Aix-en-Provence as Paul Cézanne. Born here in 1839, the painter returned again and again to the landscapes of Provence, finding endless inspiration in the light, colours and forms of his homeland. We visit Atelier des Lauves, the studio Cézanne had built in Aix in 1902 and where he worked during the final years of his life, until his death in 1906. Now preserved as a biographical museum, the studio offers a wonderfully personal glimpse into the artist's working world and the surroundings in which some of his final works were created.

Our exploration of Aix's artistic side continues at the Caumont Centre d'Art, with audio guide, housed within one of the city's finest 18th-century mansions in the elegant Mazarin quarter. Designed in the French tradition of a grand residence "between courtyard and garden", the Hôtel de Caumont feels like a château brought into the heart of the city, with its handsome courtyard, beautifully proportioned interiors and formal gardens, recreated in the spirit of their original 18th-century design with clipped boxwood, geometric lawns, ornamental pools and fountains. Beyond the architecture and gardens, Caumont is also one of Aix's important cultural spaces.

Overnight: Grand Roi Rene, Aix en Provence

meals: B,D

DAY 7 Thu 30 September: From olive groves to Gordes

Aix is particularly lovely when there's nowhere you need to be. The morning is yours to enjoy at leisure, sleep in, linger over coffee at a café, browse the shops or wander through the daily market.

Later, we travel into the Luberon, a landscape of vineyards, olive groves, orchards and beautiful old villages that seems to encapsulate so much of the romance of Provence. By late September the landscape is beginning to soften towards autumn, while olives are ripening on the trees ahead of the harvest later in the year. Near Cadenet we visit a family-owned organic olive estate and mill. Some 4,000 olive trees spread across the estate, with views towards the Luberon hills providing a wonderfully Provençal backdrop. Here we learn about the cultivation of olives and the production of the estate's organic, AOP and medal-winning oils. We sample the different oils and discover some of the subtleties of flavour before settling in to enjoy a gourmet picnic amongst the surroundings of the estate. It's another cornerstone of Provençal life - good produce, beautiful countryside and the simple pleasure of enjoying both in the place they come from.

From Cadenet we continue deeper into the Luberon to Gordes, our home for the final four nights. Perched dramatically on a hillside, its pale stone houses tumble down the slopes above sweeping countryside. Classified as one of Les Plus Beaux Villages de France, it is one of the defining images of Provence. Our base is a characterful 19th-century Provençal house just a five-minute walk from the centre of the village. Dry-

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stone walls, terraced gardens and rooms decorated in Provençal style give it plenty of local character, while the outdoor pool provides a particularly lovely place to relax – complete with views towards Gordes itself.

Overnight: Mas De Romarins, Gordes (or similar)

meals: B,L,D

DAY 8 Fri 01 October: The beauty of Lourmarin

There are villages you visit, and others you simply want to settle into for a while. Lourmarin is very much the latter. Set in the Luberon and officially recognised as one of Les Plus Beaux Villages de France – the Most Beautiful Villages of France – it's a wonderfully inviting place of old stone houses, shady streets, café terraces and Provençal village life. We arrive in time for market day, when the village takes on an extra buzz and the streets fill with stalls. There's time to browse before enjoying Lourmarin at your own pace – find a café table for lunch, explore the shops and galleries, or simply wander and see where the lanes take you.

In the afternoon we leave Lourmarin for Gargas, around half an hour away, where an altogether different side of the Luberon awaits beneath the hills. The Bruoux Mines are former ochre quarries, worked during the 19th and early 20th centuries, where vast underground galleries were carved into the rock to extract the natural mineral pigments once used to colour paints. Ochre is part of the visual character of this corner of Provence, ranging from pale yellow to intense shades of red, and our guided visit takes us underground to discover more about the people, geology and industry behind it. There's another surprise waiting in the galleries. In collaboration with Coquillade Vineyards, we take part in a blind tasting of local wines in the natural darkness of the mine. Without the visual clues of a label, bottle or even the colour of the wine itself, the focus shifts to aroma, flavour and texture – putting the senses to work and discover just how much our eyes influence what we think we are tasting. The galleries remain at around 10C/50F, even when Provence is warm outside, so bring a jacket for our underground visit. Afterwards, we emerge back into the Provençal sunshine and continue to Gordes where the evening is free for your own plans.

Overnight: Mas De Romarins, Gordes

meals: B

DAY 9 Sat 02 October: Walking in the Luberon

The beauty of the Luberon is not confined to its hilltop villages. On foot, we discover a quieter landscape of fragrant herbs, old stone walls, cultivated fields and valleys. Setting out from Gordes, our circular walk leads approximately 5km/3 mi through the countryside and down into the Sénancole Valley, passing thyme-scented fields and traditional dry-stone huts along the way. As we descend, one of Provence's most celebrated sights comes into view – the Abbey of Notre-Dame de Sénanque. Founded in 1148 by Cistercian monks from Mazan in the Ardèche, Sénanque remains a working Cistercian abbey and is an impressive example of Romanesque architecture. Here we join a guided tour of the abbey, learning more about its beautifully simple architecture, its history and the Cistercian monastic life that has shaped this place for centuries. After our visit, we continue the circular route a further 5km/3 mi walk back to Gordes, following old paths and sections lined by the dry-stone walls so characteristic of this

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part of Provence. Returning to our hotel, the pool awaits – a particularly appealing prospect after our time on foot in the Provençal countryside. Perhaps an apéritif will follow. We're becoming rather good at this Provençal way of life by now.

Walk:10 km/6.2 mi - approx 3 hours

Ascent/descent: 250m/820ft each way

NOTE: Walk can be shortened if you prefer to take the tour bus after the visit of the abbey.

Overnight: Mas De Romarins, Gordes

meals: B

DAY 10 Sun 03 October: Brocante and vintage finds in L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue

Sunday in L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue is something of an institution. This picturesque Provençal town is renowned for its antiques and brocante - vintage furniture, decorative objects, linens, ceramics and curiosities - and Sunday brings together its traditional food market and sprawling open-air flea market. Around 300 stalls transform Avenue des Quatre Otages into an open-air brocante, while the town's many permanent antique dealers add to the treasure hunting. You never quite know what you might find – an old Provençal linen, a piece of pottery, a vintage poster or a piece of French silverware. Whether you're hunting for something to take home or simply enjoying the theatre of it all, browsing is half the pleasure.

We return to Gordes late afternoon where you may wish to enjoy one last wander through the village, or retreat to the pool with a book. In the evening, we come together for our farewell dinner in Gordes, celebrating our time in Provence over good food, wine and conversation.

Overnight: Mas De Romarins, Gordes

meals: D

DAY 11 Mon 04 October: Au revoir Provence

Our time together in Provence comes to an end after breakfast in Gordes.

Over the past days we've walked through landscapes that inspired great artists, wandered colourful markets and village streets, cooked and shared meals, tasted wine and olive oil, and – perhaps most importantly – embraced a little of the southern French art of living well.

Perhaps Provence's greatest reminder is that joie de vivre often lies in the simplest pleasures: good food, beautiful surroundings, time with others and, occasionally, the pleasure of doing very little at all.

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

climate

Late September is a lovely time to visit Provence, as the heat of summer begins to ease while the days are generally still warm and sunny. Daytime temperatures typically reach around 22 - 26C (72 - 79F), cooling to around 12 - 16C (54 - 61F) overnight. Occasional rain is possible as autumn approaches. We recommend packing light layers for the daytime, a warmer layer for evenings and early mornings, and a light waterproof jacket. It's an ideal time for walking, outdoor dining and enjoying Provence without the peak heat of midsummer.

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dietary requirements

This is a food focussed itinerary and we want you to get the absolute best out of it so it's essential you let us know any dietary needs. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Group members must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

visas

IMPORTANT NOTE

The introduction of the ETIAS has been delayed indefinitely. No action is required from travellers at this point.

The European Union will inform about the specific date for the start of ETIAS several months prior to its launch.

see https://travel-europe.europa.eu/etias_en

Until then, visas not required for citizens of Australia, Canada, USA and New Zealand for up to 90 days in a period of 180 days for all Schengen countries (see https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/schengen-borders-and-visa/visa-policy_en . Please ensure your passport is stamped on arrival in the Schengen area. For all other nationalities and for longer stays in countries covered by the Schengen Agreement (Australian New Zealand, Canadian and US passport holders), please contact the relevant embassy. Stays of longer than 90 days in the Schengen area require a long stay visa for the country you are spending most time in. However long stay visas are unlikely to be issued unless there is a valid reason (eg. studying in country). Unfortunately we cannot assist in obtaining visas for long stays due to individual country visa requirements.

how to book

To book your place on this trip, you will need to complete a Booking Form (online or request a PDF) and pay a non-refundable deposit.

The tour requires a minimum of 10 people to guarantee the departure, with a maximum group size of 16.

An additional deposit is collected at the time of booking due to advance payments required for the accommodation. This is simply applied against your trip balance, which is due 90 days prior to the trip commencement.

For travel to St Remy de Provence, and onward from Gordes, the best train connections will be from Avignon with a train time to/from Paris of around 3 hours.