

CIRCA



TOURS

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Hospices de Beaune - Burgundy

Photos by Circa Tours

Wines of Burgundy, Provence and Champagne

Dijon - Beaune - Avignon - Reims - Epernay - Paris
(9 days - 7 nights)

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SAMPLE ITINERARY

This is an example of a possible itinerary. It can be resized, reorganized and customized to fit your interests, budget and schedule. It can also be combined with other tours.

HIGHLIGHTS (9 days - 7 nights)

DAY	ACTIVITIES	NIGHT
1	Leave the U.S.	
2	Arrive in Paris. High-speed train to Dijon . Afternoon at leisure	Dijon
3	Half-day wine tour. Train to Beaune . Afternoon at leisure (visit the Hospice de Beaune, etc.)	Beaune
4	Full-day wine tour	Beaune
5	Train to Dijon and high-speed train to Avignon . Afternoon at leisure	Avignon
6	Private Provence tour (Chateaufort du Pape, Gigondas, etc.)	Avignon
7	High-speed train to Paris . Afternoon at leisure	Paris
8	Private Champagne tour	Paris
9	Private airport transfer. Return to U.S.	

ITINERARY (for more options, see our “France Highlights”)

Day 1: Leave U.S.

Day 2: Arrive at **Roissy - Charles de Gaulle airport** and catch a high-speed train for arrival in **Dijon** in mid-afternoon. Explore the city on your own: the Palace of the Dukes of Burgundy, the Fine Arts Museum (also known as “le Petit Louvre”), the Mustard Museum, etc.

Day 3: Start your **Burgundy** exploration with a half-day guided wine tour along the “Route des Grands Crus” from Dijon to **Nuits Saint Georges**. Enjoy the picturesque scenery of beautiful vineyards and charming villages, and visit world-famous, 12th-century **Clos de Vougeot** castle, the headquarters of the Brotherhood of the Knights of Tastevin. Along the way you will learn how to decipher the complex Burgundy wine labels, as well as the importance of “terroir”, the different farming methods and the art of wine tasting. Visit a traditional wine cellar in the company of the winemaker or a sommelier who will share his passion for wine with you. Wine tastings are included, of course.

Beaune is only a short train ride away. Settle down in your hotel this afternoon and stroll around the beautiful, quaint medieval town for the rest of the day. Beaune’s main attraction is the Flemish-Gothic **Hospices de Beaune**, where the famous, lavish Burgundy charity wine auction is held every November. The signature feature of the building is the distinctive brightly-colored tile roof. The original site was a hospice, which has been converted to a museum. In Beaune you can also visit the Museum of Burgundy Wine.



Day 4: Yesterday was the introduction. Today is the in-depth appreciation. A typical full-day tour will take you to three family-owned “domaines” where you can taste a dozen or so Pinot Noirs, Chardonnays and Aligotés from the bottle or from barrels. For lunch, enjoy a three-course gourmet meal with wine in a local restaurant. The **Côte de Beaune** itinerary typically goes to the following villages: Santenay, Puligny-Montrachet, Chassagne-Montrachet, Meursault, Monthélie, Savigny-Les-Beaune and the Hautes-Côtes de Beaune. And the **Côte Chalonnaise** tour typically goes to Montagny, Givry, Mercurey and Rully.

Day 5: Take the train to **Provence** this morning. Enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Beaujolais region on your way down to **Avignon**. The afternoon is yours to visit the



historic city, the Palais des Papes, the famous Pont d'Avignon, etc.

Avignon, universally known for the nursery rhyme “sur le pont d'Avignon...” (the famous Benezet Bridge, stretching halfway across the Rhone River), is an ancient town defended by mighty crenellated ramparts. It was a major religious center in the Middle Ages, hence the massive Palais des Papes, which served as a fortress, a church and a residence for seven successive popes during the 14th century. Nowadays, this quaint city is appreciated for the ambiance of its narrow streets, ubiquitous cafes, and trendy shops. Located in the heart of Provence, Avignon is a perfect base for the exploration of the surrounding countryside.



Day 6: Escorted by your own private guide, start the day by exploring the famed wine region of **Chateaufneuf du Pape**. For wine connoisseurs, the region offers many more lesser-known appellations: **Seguret, Gigondas**, etc. Then head out to Orange with its Roman Theater, still in use for shows and performances today, and its imposing Arc de Triomphe. In the afternoon, wander around the Roman ruins of Vaison la Romaine, a sizeable Roman city in its time. On the way back, enjoy a scenic drive through the spectacular rock formations of Dentelles de Montmirail and stop for a tasting of the famous Beaume de Venise liqueur.

Day 7: The high-speed train will whisk you back to **Paris** this morning. You only have one afternoon in Paris on this itinerary. So you might want to concentrate on something you haven't seen before or, if this is your first visit to the City of Light, you might want to focus on the highlights (the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral, Montmartre, etc.)



Day 8: No wine tour of France would be complete without a full-day excursion to nearby **Champagne**. But first, you will stop at the cathedral in **Reims** for a guided tour of this magnificent Gothic masterpiece, for centuries the site of the coronation of French kings. Next, attend a presentation on growing grapes before visiting a winery near **Epernay**. There, you will see the tools and techniques used in the making of sparkling wine - a press, vats, the storage of bottles - and the key stages of making champagne will be explained. This visit will be followed by a tasting session. Traditional lunch in Epernay. In the afternoon, visit the world-famous **Moët & Chandon** wine cellars. Return to Paris via the Marne River valley.

Day 9: Airport transfer and return to the U.S.

Hello, my name is **Pierre Mainguéné**. I personally handcrafted this itinerary.



I am the co-founder and president of Circa Tours. I was born and raised in Brittany, France so, as a native European, I love everything about the “old country” especially France, Spain and Portugal, the three countries we specialize in. I love their history (and there is lots of it), their art (same thing), their cuisine (especially in France, Catalonia and the Basque Country), their wine (everywhere), their lifestyle and the endless diversity of the local cultures.

In dozens of trips I have taken to Europe, I have traveled to nearly every corner of those countries, and I continue my journey of discovery every year. I am a Travel-Institute certified France and Spain Specialist, and I am also recognized by the Tourist Office of Portugal as a certified Portugal Specialist.

My goal is to create the best possible trip for you. I am always ready to listen to your wishes (however creative) and feedback, and I will always enjoy sharing my experiences with you.

That's me, by the way, in front of a Joaquin Sorolla painting in Madrid. And, the following are some comments made by a few of our clients:

- “Our trip was fantastic! We had such a wonderful time! All went well including getting our train tickets to Seville changed the day of the strike. Our guides were nothing less than phenomenal! We can't thank you and your staff enough for putting together a trip that was worthy of our 30th anniversary celebration!” M.B., Massachusetts
- “Pierre. Thank you for your services. I really enjoyed dealing with you. You are so knowledgeable, pleasant and professional. I certainly will recommend you to friends.” J.L., Colorado
- “It was not a good trip - it was a GREAT trip! Truly everything was fabulous, ran smoothly, and worked well. The guides were excellent, the itinerary perfect. We enjoyed Spain very much and will ask you for assistance on our next journey to southern Europe!” J.K., California
- “Circa Tours did a good job. They worked very closely with us in putting the program together. We were very pleased with how efficient everything ran. The information we received from Circa Tours was done up very well, which allowed us to just pull the appropriate paperwork and be on our way. The tours were very well done. The guides we had with the local travel providers did a very good job of explaining the areas we toured. Pierre at Circa Tours made sure we saw a bit of everything.” D.T., Florida
- “We are all home, safe and sound - very tired, but in a hazy daze of love for France. Thank you and Carolyn SO much for arranging such an amazing trip for all of us. Throughout the trip, my sisters, mom and myself could be heard saying such things as, “THANK YOU, PIERRE”...or, “thank goodness for Pierre!!!” Martine was an excellent guide, by the way...very good, nice, thorough and professional. We wouldn't have been able to do HALF of what we did (and certainly not with nearly as much carefree enjoyment) with out her. Thank you and Carolyn for all of you expertise and care in helping us and doing all of the hard work for us! Thank you! Thank you!!!” K.B., Iowa