



## Cruise Details

Name:	Spectacular South of France
Reference:	SCENICFRAC200526-1
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Sapphire
Regions:	Rhone and Saone
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Departs On:	20 May 26
Departs From:	Lyon
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Arrives On:	30 May 26
Arrives At:	Lyon
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Cruise Nights:	10
Total Vacation Days:	11

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Lyon (France)

Welcome to spectacular Lyon, France's third largest city and one of its most culturally vibrant with a blend of fascinating history and a sophisticated dining and shopping scene. Upon arrival, transfer to Scenic Sapphire, where your friendly crew await to welcome you on board. Spend the afternoon exploring your Scenic Space-Ship. Relax in your luxurious suite or take a beverage to the Sun Deck and admire the magnificent views across the city of Lyon.

Arrives On: 20 May 26

### Day 2: Lyon (France)

Perhaps wake up to a coffee delivered to your suite by your personal butler and enjoy a leisurely breakfast at Crystal Dining as your Scenic Space-Ship cruises along the Saône River. You will be sailing towards Chalon-sur-Saône. An idyllic base for exploring the Burgundy wine region,

Chalon-sur-Saône is a charming town with half-timbered houses and a magnificent Gothic cathedral just south of Beaune, often referred to as the epicentre for oenophiles.

**Freechoice:** Explore your way with a choice from these Scenic Freechoice experiences:

**Guided tour of Beaune and Les Hospices:** From Chalon-sur-Saône, you will travel through spectacular countryside past stone houses and vineyards to the beautiful town of Beaune, where you will join a guided tour. The highlight will be the spectacular Les Hospices de Beaune, a Gothic-style hospital founded in the Middle Ages, with decorative flamboyant roof tiles, surrounded by vineyards producing prestigious wine and now housing a museum. You will have free time to explore the town at your own leisure before returning to your Scenic Space-Ship.

**Local Estate Visit:** Visit a local estate situated in the heart of Burgundy. This Burgundy wine domain is a place full of history where you will be able to taste the wines from Côte de Beaune surrounded by unique architecture.

**Photography Museum:** Learn the history of photography in the town where it was first invented. The museum aims to explain photography since its invention through to the digital image, with a collection including almost three million photographs and objects, which you will observe during a guided tour. (Please note: This is closed on a Tuesday).

Arrives On: 21 May 26

## Day 2: Chalon-sur-Saône (France)

Arrives On: 21 May 26

## Day 3: Tournus (France)

Your Scenic Space-Ship will depart Chalon-sur-Saône early this morning and sail to Tournus, a riverside town founded by the Romans, its dominating abbey a splendid example of Romanesque architecture.

**Freechoice:** Make your selection for today's Scenic Freechoice experiences:

**Excursion to Chateau de Cormatin:** Transfer by coach from Tournus to the historic Château de Cormatin, built in 1606. The castle boasts a fascinating history and has been lovingly restored back to its original glory. Admire the castle's gilded rooms, moat, water features and more than 10 hectares of manicured gardens on a guided tour.

**Truffle Tasting:** Meet a local truffle farmer and his dog and learn the tricks and techniques of truffle farming before enjoying a tasting of his delicious produce.

**Cooking Class at the restaurant of Georges Blanc:** Take a short coach transfer to the villages of Vonnas where you will have a short orientation tour before visiting the restaurant of the three star Michelin Chef, Georges Blanc for a cooking demonstration. After the cooking demonstration, take the opportunity to visit the village museum, the Museum has been lovingly created by Georges Blanc in dedication to his family who have lived and worked in this region of France for 150 years, with his great-grandparents first settling in Vonnas in 1872 where they opened a lemonade cafe.

**Cooperage demonstration:** Just steps from your Space-Ship, witness the long-standing

tradition of barrel making. Admire a skilled artisan as they show you the secret of this art and learn how this craft still plays a crucial role in wine and spirit making.

Tonight, your on board Chef has specially sourced local Truffles and will cook an extraordinary welcome dinner showcasing the regions Truffles.

Arrives On: 22 May 26

#### Day 4: Tournon-sur-Rhône (France)

This morning your Space-Ship will arrive in Tournon, a hillside village with terraced vineyards, an enchanting castle dating back to the 10th century and quaint cobblestoned streets.

**Freechoice:** Spend this morning at your preferred pace with one of the following Scenic Freechoice experiences:

- Walking tour of Tournon: Explore the riverside town of Tournon by foot. Discover its fascinating history and make a stop at the impressive castle built between the 10th and 16th centuries that dominates the town. Afterwards you have free time to wander the narrow streets of Tournon or cross France's oldest suspension bridge to the neighbouring town of Tain l'Hermitage, home to prestigious chocolatiers Valrhona Chocolate, which has been operating here since 1922.
- Hiking through the vineyards in Tournon: Get close to nature as you hike through the sloping vineyards that overlook the Rhône River above Tournon. Learn about the local wine production and taste some of the delicious drops of the region.
- Biking along the Rhône: Enjoy a guided cycling tour along the banks of the Rhône through picturesque villages to the charming recreational village of Glun.

This afternoon enjoy a refreshing drink on the terrace of Tournon Castle. This ancient castle holds prime position overlooking the Rhône river and the surrounding terraced vineyards.

Arrives On: 23 May 26

#### Day 5: Avignon (France)

This morning you'll have time to relax on board as your Scenic Space-Ship cruises towards the city of Avignon in Provence. Known as the City of the Popes, Avignon is rich in history and astounding medieval architecture but has a youthful energy to it with a buzzing arts scene. The former 14th century papal capital is circled by city walls, home to the magnificent World Heritage-listed Palais des Papes (Pope's Palace), one of the largest surviving Gothic palaces in Europe, and the remaining four arches of the famous Pont d'Avignon bridge, which was once the only way to cross the Rhône between Lyon and the Mediterranean Sea.

**Freechoice:** Choose from a selection of Scenic Freechoice options this afternoon:

- Guided walking tour: From the ship, you will be guided on a walk in Avignon, to the historic city walls and the Pope's Palace, home to the Papacy and seat of Western Christianity in the 14th century. Avignon is filled with cobblestoned streets and the palace comprises numerous steps, so a moderate degree of fitness is required for this tour.

Excursion to Pont Du Gard: Visit the ancient Roman aqueduct, Pont du Gard, on a guided tour. Dating to the middle of the first century, this engineering masterpiece was designed to carry water to the city of Nîmes.

Kayaking at Pont du Gard: Paddle along the Gardon River towards the impressive and well-preserved Pont du Gard, the ancient aqueduct which dates to the Roman empire.

**Enrich** This evening's Scenic Enrich: Private classical concert and dinner at the Pope's Palace: You will be treated to a truly unforgettable classical concert at the prestigious Pope's Palace of Avignon. When the doors are closed to the general public, you'll have one of the most visited sites in France to yourself. Upon arrival, you will be ushered into the grandiose palace for an exclusive gala dinner and a concert by a trio of musicians. Be immersed in the beauty of famous classical pieces, which gain a new fascinating dimension inside the palace's walls.

Arrives On: 24 May 26

### Day 6: Avignon (France)

Avignon is known as the gateway to Provence, a region blanketed in vineyards and lavender fields, rolling hills and historic villages. Today you will have the chance to explore more of this captivating part of southern France.

**Freechoice:**

Explore your way with one of today's Scenic Freechoice

Excursion to Luberon villages and Senanque Abbey: Visit the village of Gordes, considered "one of the most beautiful villages in France". Teetering high above the hills of Luberon, Gordes' stone buildings spiral around the rock on which it is perched, its church and castle at the apex. After Gordes, you will visit nearby Senanque Abbey, a picturesque Cistercian Abbey.

Wine tasting in Chateauneuf du Pape: The fertile banks of the Rhône are peppered with Côte du Rhône vineyards, including at the village of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, where centuries of wine production make for a very fascinating history. Take this opportunity to sample some of the region's most celebrated wines.

Lavender Museum with visit to the village of Roussillon: Roussillon and its Ochre Trail are among the main attractions on Luberon's ochre circuit, a landscape of ochre cliffs. Take a guided tour through this charming village before a visit to a local lavender producer where you will learn how lavender is grown, harvested and utilised in this region.

Shop with a chef & Scenic Culinaire: Gourmands can join Scenic's on board chef on a visit to a local food market where you will have an opportunity to shop for and taste the best ingredients this region has to offer. Upon returning to your Scenic Space-Ship, head to the Scenic Culinaire cooking school for an interactive cooking demonstration making some of France's most popular and delicious dishes using the ingredients you have just bought. (Please note: Avignon Markert is closed on a Monday)

Arrives On: 25 May 26

### Day 7: Arles (France)

Leaving Avignon early this morning, your Scenic Space-Ship will depart for Arles. Founded by Julius Caesar, this city is rich in Roman history and is thought to have the largest number of Roman ruins after The Eternal City itself. It was also home to Vincent Van Gogh in 1888, who drew inspiration from the landscape for a multitude of his paintings and drawings.

**Freechoice:** Decide how you will spend your day with today's selection of Scenic Freechoice

**Guided tour of Arles:** Take a short walk from your Scenic Space-Ship to the heart of Arles. The city is home to some impressive Roman ruins, including Las Arenas, an amphitheatre that seats 20,000 and is still in use today. Experience the vibrant colours and striking quality of Arles' light - it will be easy to see why the city has inspired so many artists.

**Visit Les Baux with Carrières de Lumières:** Journey to the stunning medieval village of Les Baux, perched on a rocky outcrop and often regarded as one of France's most beautiful villages. Visit a former quarry in the Les Baux region that is now the site of Carrières de Lumières, an enormous 7,000 square-metre site that hosts a visual and musical production highlighting the works of notable world-famous artists.

**Ancestry of the Kitchen:** Visit a local olive farm where you will learn the techniques of olive oil production. Here you will meet with a local whose family have worked the land on this Olive Farm for centuries and who will share insight into everyday life in the region, as well as divulge traditional Provençal recipes.

**Lavender Fields to Cream: A Provence Herbal Workshop:** The Provence region is renowned for its stunning landscapes and the production of aromatic herbs, particularly lavender. At certain times of the year (typically from late June to mid-August), fields are transformed into a breathtaking sea of purple. On this excursion, you'll visit a local organic farm specializing in the production of essential oils from lavender, thyme, rosemary, and other Provençal herbs. Discover the health benefits of these plants, learn the process of essential oil extraction, and create your own lavender-based cream to take home.

This afternoon is free to explore Arles at your own pace or return to your Scenic Space-Ship and indulge in an on board painting class. Vincent Van Gogh once said that 'The whole future of art is to be found in the South of France' this is just one example of the high regard this region is held by artists the world over. Learn about the artistic heritage of this region while painting a masterpiece of your own.

Arrives On: 26 May 26

### Day 8: Viviers (France)

This morning you will arrive in Viviers, often described as an open-air museum for its rich medieval heritage and architecture.

**Freechoice:**

Make your selection for this morning's Scenic Freechoice experiences:

**Walking tour of Viviers:** Enjoy a walking tour with your local guide to explore Viviers, a town with an important heritage and rich past. Admire the many monuments and architectural treasures such as the Cathedral of St. Vincent, which was first built in the 11th century and is resplendent in 18th-century gothic style and a Renaissance facade. Afterwards, enjoy some free time to explore Viviers at your leisure.

**French Resistance Walking Tour:** During a walking tour of Viviers, learn about

the French Resistance, who fought against the Nazi Occupation of France during World War II. Hear local stories of heroism and daring missions as you explore the historic town.

**Freechoice:** This afternoon, choose to explore your way with these Scenic Freechoice  
Ardèche Nature Park with Caverne du Pont-d'Arc Museum: Explore the Ardèche Nature Park, which stretches from the Rhône Valley to the Ardeche Mountains and contains medieval fortress ruins. You will also be immersed in the Caverne du Pont-d'Arc Museum, the largest decorated Palaeolithic cave replica in the world. The original site was deemed too fragile for public access, so this replica cave was built only a few kilometres from the actual cave.  
Explore the caves in the Ardeche Nature Park: Drive through the rugged natural beauty of Ardeche Nature Park, from the Ardeche Gorge to the equally impressive Madeleine Caves, where you can admire the intricate rock formations, stalagmites and stalactites, and underground lakes. (The Madeline caves are located underground and comprise of numerous steps, a moderate degree of fitness and sturdy shoes are required for this tour).  
Excursion to Grignan de Provence: Join your local guide in an exploration of this beautiful town; see the mighty castle that dominates from a hilltop, as well as the Collegiate Church of the Holy Saviour, before enjoying some time at leisure.

Arrives On: 27 May 26

#### Day 10: Lyon (France)

Wake up this morning in Lyon. This fascinating city rivals Paris in the culinary stakes, was home to prestigious chef Paul Bocuse and the Lumiere brothers who invented the cinematograph, has a long history of silk production, and comprises ancient Roman ruins and fascinating subterranean passageways that date to the 4th century.

**Freechoice:** Make your selection for today's Scenic Freechoice:  
Guided tour of Lyon: Traverse Lyon's hidden traboules, secret passageways that were built for easy transport of silk and other textiles. There are hundreds in the region and some date to the 4th century; they were used in World War II by the Resistance. You will also visit Notre Dame de Fourviere, a majestic basilica built in 1872 that also offers a fabulous vantage point for views across Lyon.  
Silk painting workshop: Lyon has a rich heritage in silk production that dates back almost five centuries when Louis XI chose the city as a potential base for the silk weaving industry. In the 19th century, silk was one of the city's largest industries. During a workshop, learn about the history and process of its production.  
Excursion to Perouges: Visit the medieval walled village of Perouges, perched atop a hill overlooking the Ain River. The village has been well-preserved since the 14th century and is one of the most picturesque villages in the region.

The afternoon is free to wander the cobbled streets of Lyon. Perhaps you'd like to spend time sampling local dishes in a bouchon 'local eating houses' or head to the Le Halles de Lyon Paul Bocuse, an undercover gourmet market that will tickle your tastebuds.

This evening, a local pâtissier will come on board with a selection of their finest desserts for your dining pleasure.

Arrives On: 29 May 26

### Day 11: Lyon (France)

Depart after a wonderful farewell breakfast. Lyon is the end of your cruise, but it will be the start of a lifetime of wonderful memories.

This itinerary is a guide only and may be amended for operational reasons such as high and low water. As such, the cruise may operate altered from that stated above. Please refer to our terms and conditions.

^Massage/spa treatments at additional cost.  
Please note: Scenic Culinaire capacity is limited.

Please note: Preview itinerary subject to change.

Arrives On: 30 May 26

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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