



EXPERIENCES IN FRANCE



WELCOME TO LES BATEAUX BELMOND

We're thrilled you've chosen to explore the beautiful waterways of Burgundy, Champagne, Camargue and Provence aboard our luxurious barges. On the following pages you can browse the wide array of activities, from wine tastings and market tours to cookery lessons and helicopter flights. Each expertly guided activity is designed to enrich your experience of the magical regions we glide through. These experiences are best booked on board with your guide, who can assist with any further information you may need.

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	FOOD AND WINE
	NATURE



Champagne



Champagne

Most famous for the effervescent wine produced in areas including Reims, Epernay and Châlons-en-Champagne, where tours of the hallowed cellars are a must, the region offers a wide range of appealing activities. Visit elegant châteaux and a historic battleground, explore the great outdoors on horseback or by hot-air balloon.

CHÂTEAU VAUX-LE-VICOMTE

Enjoy a private visit to the magnificent, baroque Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte, masterpiece of 17th-century parliamentarian Nicolas Fouquet and a location for the 1998 film "The Man in the Iron Mask".



PLOYEZ-JACQUEMART CHAMPAGNE TOUR

Visit the family-run champagne house in Ludes, exploring cellars that were used to hide members of the Royal Air Force during World War II. Enjoy an exclusive tasting of their vintage champagnes, hosted by Laurence Ployez in the dreamy setting of the garden.



Ask your guide for more details.

VISIT TO BELLEAU WOOD

Your guide will take you to the site of a famous battle during World War I, when American soldiers stopped the progression of the German army. Afterwards you continue to the 420-acre Aisne-Marne American Cemetery and Memorial where 2,288 soldiers are buried.



MAKE YOUR OWN CHAMPAGNE

Grasp this unique chance to create your own personally blended champagne under the expert guidance of a cellar master. Your sparkling creation will need a few years to age in the cellars, but your patience will be amply rewarded when you enjoy the first effervescent sip with your friends at home.



This is an additional experience to customise your adventure.
Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

HOT-AIR BALLOONING

Soar into the air high above the Reims Mountain Regional Nature Park and Champagne area. With a glass of chilled fizz in hand, toast the magnificent views below as you drift past fairytale châteaux and vineyard-clad hilltops.



This is an additional experience to customise your adventure.
Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

AVENUE DE CHAMPAGNE - CHAMPAGNE TASTING

Take a wander down the elegant Avenue de Champagne in Epernay and be dazzled by the prestigious champagne houses lining each side. Beneath the buildings a mind-boggling 110km of cellars store more than 200 million bottles of the precious fizz. Admire the palatial facades and swish courtyards before enjoying a private tasting at either Moët & Chandon or Dom Pérignon.



Please ask your guide for details.

SPECIAL OCCASION OR SURPRISE - CHEF'S DINNER

Celebrate a momentous occasion or treat a loved one to an evening of pure indulgence. Relax over a gastronomic tasting menu, paired with fine wines, exclusively imagined and prepared for you by your onboard chef. Chef will consult you over your preferences, such as favourite ingredients and dishes, to create an unforgettable dining experience.



A supplementary charge may apply.

REIMS

Join your guide on a visit to the splendid city of Reims, not just an important centre of champagne production but where some 34 French sovereigns were crowned. Explore the immense gothic cathedral, where the glittering coronations took place, and the Musée des Beaux-Arts, an 18th-century abbey housing a rich collection of artworks. There will be time to wander the shopping district, visit the champagne houses or sit at a pavement café and watch the world go by.



Please ask your guide for details.

HORSE RIDING

Explore the area on horseback. Our guide can arrange for you to saddle up and take a guided trek through the glorious Champagne landscape.



This is an additional experience to customise your adventure.
Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

CHÂLONS-EN-CHAMPAGNE

Explore the City of Art and History, whose numerous attractions include the magnificent, gothic Saint-Etienne Cathedral, adorned with beautiful stained-glass windows, the museum of the Notre-Dame-en-Vaux Cloister with remarkable sculptures and statues, and three glorious gardens in the centre and adjoining the canal.



Please ask your guide for details.



Provence



Provence

Sun-drenched Provence never fails to enchant with its fields of lavender and olive groves, its rocky mountains and deep gorges—landscapes that have inspired celebrated artists from Cézanne to Van Gogh. As you sail through the stunning scenery, alight to enjoy activities ranging from cookery to canoeing and truffle hunting to city tours.

CANOEING

Embark on an unforgettable ride down the crystalline waters of the Gorges du Gardon. Navigate your way through breathtaking scenery and steer beneath the historic Roman aqueduct, the Pont du Gard.



We can tailor your canoeing session to your wishes and cater to all levels of experience. All equipment is provided. Ask your guide for further details. Additional charge may apply.

CARRIÈRES DE LUMIÈRES

Delight your senses at the Carrières de Lumières, in Les Baux-de-Provence, where an abandoned limestone quarry is the site of an extraordinary multimedia show. Images are projected onto the ground and the huge rock walls in a sensational, fully immersive art exhibition.



Shows take place daily. Ask your guide for details. A light jacket is advised as the carrières can be chilly.

COOKERY LESSONS

Unlock the secrets of French cuisine in the old kitchen of La Mirande, set in a historic 5-star boutique hotel in Avignon, close to the Papal Palace. Here, Séverine Sagnet invites some of the region's greatest chefs to lead cooking classes for all enthusiasts, whether you're looking for an introduction to Provençal cooking or wish to hone your existing skills.



This is an add-on activity to enhance your adventure. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

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A supplementary charge may apply.

WATER SPORTS

We can arrange for you to enjoy a variety of water sports to suit all ages and abilities. The cable-ski park in Condrieu allows everyone to 'have great fun without having great skill'. From water-skiing to wakeboarding, it's a chance to test your skills on the water.



This is an add-on activity to enhance your adventure. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

GOLF

The sunny climate and stunning scenery make Provence a fantastic destination for a game or two of golf. Enjoy top-notch facilities at the region's most prestigious courses.



Full- and half-day experiences are available throughout your trip. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

CREATE YOUR OWN SCENT

The magnificent gardens and ancient cloisters of the sweet-smelling Couvent des Cordeliers, in Forcalquier, are the backdrop for a wonderful workshop in perfumery. You'll be guided through the process of creating your own exclusive perfume, discovering the aromatic ingredients that go into its composition.



This is an add-on activity to enhance your adventure. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

HOT-AIR BALLOON FLIGHTS

Discover the patchwork of hilltop villages, lavender fields and other hidden treasures which only a balloon ride can reveal. Enjoy a champagne breakfast as the sun rises and watch the scenery below drift by, bathed in golden morning light.



This is an add-on activity to enhance your adventure. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

CAMARGUE BULL FARM

The bull is the undisputed king of the Camargue. See the mighty beasts at an authentic, family-run bull farm and horse ranch. Enjoy a ride in a horse-driven caliche to view the ranch with one of the family members.



Please ask your guide for details.

ARDÈCHE TRAIN

Experience a magical steam-train ride through the stunning Doux Gorge. From the large, open windows gain panoramic views of the tumbling river and rocky gorge dotted with historic viaducts and bridges. The line opened in 1891, following the path of the Doux River, which has carved deep gorges into the ancient Ardèche plateau.



A round-trip on the train lasts 1 hour 15 minutes. We arrange all transfers. Ask your guide for details.

LAVENDER MESSAGE

A massage al fresco is a fabulous way to indulge the senses. Enjoy a soothing treatment surrounded by fragrant lavender and be welcomed into the private home of your host, Odile, at Bleu Lavarde in Clansaye, who will reveal the wonderful properties of this very Provençal plant.



This is an add-on activity to enhance your adventure. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

TRUFFLE HUNTING

Unearth one of gastronomy's most sought-after ingredients on a fun forest adventure. Learn how truffles are cultivated and how special dogs are trained to sniff them out, then join an expert harvester on a hunt for the elusive "black gold". The final thrill is a degustation of this most aromatic prize.



WINE TASTING IN CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

Enjoy a private tasting in the charming village famed for its prized red wine. The former summer home of the Avignon popes, this medieval hillside enclave is guarded by the ruins of an ancient château, which dominate the landscape for miles around. Your tasting takes place in the atmospheric cellar of Châteauneuf Le Nerte.



VAN GOGH IN SAINT-RÉMY

Visit the delightful Provençal village of Saint-Rémy to immerse yourself in the works and world of Van Gogh. In the late 1880s, Vincent spent a year in an asylum here as a self-admitted patient, and painted many works of the gardens, wheat field and various individuals. See his room and view the masterpieces he completed during his stay.



CITY TOUR OF ARLES

Join your guide on a walking tour of Arles, a former capital of ancient Rome. Visit impressive remains such as the amphitheatre, which is still used for theatrical productions and concerts. You may also recognise attractions such as the café on the Place du Forum from Van Gogh's famous paintings; the artist enjoyed great productivity here for a year.



Please ask your guide for details.

PALAIS DES PAPES

Between 1309 and 1377 the popes lived not in Rome, but in Avignon, a fact reflected in the city's magnificent architecture. Enjoy a guided walking tour of the walled city and soaring Papal Palace, followed by time at leisure to visit the enticing shops or sample the city's vibrant café culture.



LYON

Join your guide on a walking tour of Lyon, France's second city and an engaging cultural, historic and gastronomic hub. Dominating the skyline is the gleaming white Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourvière, a neo-Byzantine church with an ornate interior. Lyon is also renowned for its enchanting silk-weaving quarter and chic boutiques. Enjoy time at leisure to browse, or simply relax in a sunny pavement café and watch the world go by.



TAIN L'HERMITAGE

The finest Côtes du Rhône wines and gourmet chocolate make Tain-l'Hermitage, set on the banks of the River Rhône, a gourmet paradise. Enjoy a private tasting of Hermitage vintages at M Ferraton's family winery, followed by a tour of the world-famous Valrhona Chocolate factory and boutique.





Canal du Midi



Canal du Midi

Arguably the most beautiful waterway in France, the 17th-century Canal du Midi runs from Toulouse through the Languedoc wine region to the Mediterranean port of Sète. Meander through avenues of sun-dappled plane trees past fields of sunflowers, quiet villages and historic cities, and alight to explore unique attractions including the Camargue and Carcassonne.

L'OPPIDUM D'ENSÉRUNE

Join your guide on a fascinating trip to this pre-Roman hilltop settlement, 8km west of Béziers. Inhabited between 600BC and 100AD, it's one of the most important archaeological sites in the region. The location affords a panoramic view of the Pond of Montady, a former freshwater wetland drained in 1247 and transformed into a sunburst-shaped network of ditches. Your excursion also includes a private wine tasting at the home of a local producer.



FONTFROIDE ABBEY

Set in a magnificent rural location, this former Cistercian monastery, founded in the 11th century, is now privately owned and has been lovingly restored by the Fayet family. Your guide will accompany you to visit the well-kept gardens and peaceful cloister.



NARBONNE MARKET TOUR

Narbonne is a lively Mediterranean City and an important wine-producing centre. The historic architecture, shady boulevards and location on the banks of the River Robine all contribute to its charm. Enjoy a visit to its bustling covered market, escorted by your onboard chef. Mingle with the locals and chat to stallholders as you help choose your dinner ingredients from the enticing array of produce on offer.



This is a guided morning excursion with your chef.

LUNCH AT GUISSAN

La Cambuse du Saunier is one of the Languedoc's most extraordinary dining destinations. With its magical location on the water's edge, overlooking the pink-tinged salt pans of Guissan, there's no better place to enjoy a leisurely lunch of fresh seafood and chilled local wine. Afterwards, take time to visit the museum and gift shop, where specialities include herb- and spice-scented salts, salted caramel, wines and chocolates.



Ask your guide for more details. Charges may apply.

VISIT TO MINERVE & WINE TASTING

This ancient village is set on a limestone cliff, overlooking the beautiful Cesse and Brian gorges below. Its now ruined castle was once a Cathar stronghold, besieged and captured by Simon de Montford. Your guide will reveal the fascinating folklore surrounding Minerve before escorting you to a local domaine for a delicious wine tasting.



Ask your guide for more details.

BALADE VIGNERONNE

Embark on a "balade vigneronne"—vineyard walk—at Château Canet, a family-run wine and olive domaine set in the tranquil Minervois countryside. After a short visit to their cellars you'll stroll into the vineyards, stopping to taste different wines next to the very vines that produced them. If wished, you can learn how wine is blended and, under the guidance of the Château's winemaker, create your own personalised blend.



An additional charge applies for the wine blending session.

PICNIC IN THE OLIVE GROVES

In the shade of an ancient olive grove, set at the Château Canet, enjoy a tasting of succulent olives and the delectable oil they produce. Then relax over a tranquil alfresco picnic lunch, prepared by your chef.



The picnic can be tailored to your tastes.
Please talk to your chef for details.

COOKERY SCHOOL

This exceptional foodie experience begins with a visit to Carcassonne's covered market, where you can taste and select from the many local delicacies on offer. Return to Millepetit, by the Canal du Midi, where you learn to create classic specialities including sauces and decadent desserts. After your morning's work, relax over an aperitif of Millepetit rosé and stylish homemade canapés. Then take your seat on the canal-side terrace, beneath the shady plane trees, to enjoy a traditional three-course lunch featuring the dishes you've just prepared.



The barge collects you directly from the jetty after lunch. A charge applies for this activity—please ask your guide for details.

CARCASSONNE

Enjoy a guided tour of magnificent Carcassonne, Europe's largest medieval fortress. Explore the intricate fortifications of the two castellated walls, one inside the other, and savour the stunning views from the battlements towards the Pyrenees. Visit the cathedral, remarkable for its stained-glass rose windows, and soak up the unique ambience of this spectacular, UNESCO-listed hilltop town.



THE CAMARGUE

Europe's largest nature reserve is famous for its intoxicating beauty and is a haven for wildlife. Animals including the famous Camargue bulls, white horses, pink flamingos and freshwater turtles share the exceptional natural environment. In summer, some 30,000 flamingos can be counted and 150,000 birds migrate annually. Enjoy an unforgettable excursion which offers abundant photo opportunities.



Ask your guide for more details.



ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

For thrill seekers, the region's mountains and sea, strong winds and balmy heat offer great opportunities for air and water sports. We can arrange paragliding, kite surfing, hot-air ballooning, white water rafting, paddle boarding, scuba diving, canyoning and more at locations close to your route.



Your guide will book your chosen activity and escort you to the location. Additional charges may apply

HORSE RIDING

The Languedoc region is famous for its horse-riding trails. Over 4,400 miles of paths and bridleways weave from the Mediterranean coast through gorges and mountains, passing historical sites such as Cathar castles, and plunging you into breathtaking scenery.



Your guide can recommend trails suited to your level of experience and arrange the activity for you. Additional charges may apply.

PÂTISSERIE WORKSHOP

In the rustic kitchen of his B&B, Jean-Claude, a classically trained pastry chef with over 35 years' experience, will teach you the basic skills needed to create delicate, mouth-watering pastries and chocolate confections.



This fun class lasts for a couple of hours and includes transfers and all cooking equipment.

SPECIAL OCCASION OR SURPRISE - CHEF'S DINNER

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A supplementary charge may apply.



Burgundy



Burgundy

Known for producing some of the finest wines in the world, many of Burgundy's attractions reflect its centuries-old vinous industry. Discover world-renowned cellars and magnificent medieval buildings in Beaune and Dijon; head into the vineyards by Jeep or paddle along the waterways by canoe. Adventures in art, gastronomy and tree climbing are all yours to embrace.

HOT-AIR BALLOON FLIGHTS

Admire the breathtaking landscape of the Côte D'Or from a kestrel's soaring perspective. Drift high above the picturesque châteaux of the Côtes des Vins and absorb unrivalled views of the vineyards that produce fabled wines such as Chablis, Vougeot and Pouilly-Fuissé.



This is an additional activity to enhance your adventure. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

WILLYS JEEP ADVENTURE

Willys Jeeps are legendary, open-top World War II vehicles that have been restored by local enthusiasts for exhilarating leisure trips. Embark on an action-packed journey into the heart of the vineyards and rustic villages of southern Burgundy.



This is an additional activity to enhance your adventure. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

CANOEING

Glide along at your own pace. Take time to discover the plants and wildlife hidden in the banks and crevices of the Burgundy waterways. Relax and unwind as you paddle along, stopping to rest on the tranquil banks as the mood takes you.



This is an additional activity to enhance your adventure. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

GOLF

For golfers, Burgundy is as famous for its greens as for its vineyards and cuisine. Enjoy breathtaking scenery and top-notch facilities at the region's most prestigious courses.



Full and half-day experiences are available throughout your trip. Charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

TRUFFLE HUNTING

Set off on a forest adventure to uncover the black jewel of Burgundy. Accompanied by an expert harvester and his highly trained dog, you'll hunt under the trees for the elusive Truffe de Bourgogne. Afterwards, enjoy a degustation of this most aromatic prize.



This is an additional activity and charges may apply—please ask your guide for details.

TREE-CLIMBING ADVENTURES

Enjoy family fun at a local forest adventure park. Climb the trees, follow high trails through the branches and soar along zip lines. The park caters for all levels so you can start off easy and progress to greater challenges.



Your guide can arrange transfers to and from the park.

ART DU TONNEAU

A delightful way to learn about cooperage, this authentic activity enables you and your family or friends to work together assembling a wooden barrel by hand. A great challenge with a beautiful end result.



Ask your guide for more details.

WINE ACADEMY

Immerse yourself fully in the world of Burgundy wines by signing up for our Wine Academy. Cruise past the vineyards where the precious grapes are grown, stopping off for private tastings at magnificent châteaux. Throughout, your experience is brought alive by Grands Crus specialist Pascal Wagner—often referred to as “a walking encyclopaedia of oenology”.



A supplement is payable for this activity, which must be booked in advance, prior to travel. Similar experiences can be arranged in other regions along our routes. Please ask your guide for more information.

PAUL DAY SCULPTURE

Enjoy a private visit to the studio of British sculptor Paul Day, whose contemporary, high relief works in terracotta, resin and bronze have been widely exhibited throughout Europe. You may already be familiar with his statue of a couple embracing, called The Meeting Place, at St Pancras Station, London, or his Battle of Britain monument on London's Embankment. Meet the artist at home, ask him about his work and inspiration, and view his private collection.



Please ask your guide for more details. This is subject to the artist's availability and should be booked in advanced.

COOKERY SCHOOL

Housed in a 17th-century building in the historic centre of Beaune, The Cook's Atelier offers the chance to explore, prepare and taste Burgundy's culinary specialities. Your experience will begin on foot, away from the kitchen. Tour the charming town, stopping to chat with producers and gather provisions. Then wind back to the Atelier for an expert cookery class. Master French recipes and cooking techniques and rustle up a Burgundy classic or two.



This half-day experience is an additional activity to your itinerary and charges may apply. Please ask your guide for more details.

HELICOPTER RIDES

Fly over the lush, rolling landscapes of Burgundy, following the valleys, vineyards, canals and rivers, on a thrilling, scenic helicopter ride.

This is an add-on activity. Various flight times available. Charges apply—please ask your guide for details.

PICNIC & CHÂTEAU TOUR

Enjoy an alfresco spread in the beautiful gardens surrounding Château de Longecourt. Our chef will prepare a sumptuous picnic for you to enjoy in the shade of the ancient plane trees. After lunch, tour the flamboyant, moat-encircled castle in the company of the friendly owner, Count Roland de Saint-Seine.



Ask your guide for more details.

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A supplementary charge may apply.

BEAUNE TOUR

Explore the winding cobbled streets and visit the Hôtel-Dieu des Hospices de Beaune, a former charity hospital boasting exceptional architecture, stunning multi-coloured tiled roofs and interiors housing artistic treasures. Afterwards, enjoy a wine tasting in the private cellars of Joseph Drouhin, where the King of France and Duke of Burgundy once stored their wines.



CHÂTEAU DE POMMARD WINE TASTING

Visit one of the most beautiful wine estates in Burgundy, where grand architecture meets a passion for winemaking. Enjoy a private tour of the 18th-century cellars and an expert-led tasting and admire the fine art collection.



CLOS DE VOUGEOT

Enjoy a visit to this medieval château, now the headquarters of the great Burgundian wine society, the Chevaliers du Tastevin. Admire the ancient wine presses and atmospheric vat houses once used by the Cistercian monks.



DIJON MARKET

Leave the barge early with your chef and head to Dijon's vibrant, colourful Les Halles, a daily market offering an enticing array of local and seasonal delicacies. Afterwards visit the historic Maille mustard shop and the monumental Palais des Ducs, former home of the powerful Dukes of Burgundy. Take note of the fine medieval and Renaissance buildings around you as you go.



CHÂTEAU DE RULLY

Nestled in the Dheune Valley, Château de Rully has belonged to the same family since it was founded in the 12th century. The owner will show you round his magnificent home, sharing intriguing tales of his ancestors. Your visit finishes in the 15th-century kitchen with a tasting of the de Ternay family's acclaimed wines.



CHÂTEAU DE CHAMIREY

Built in Mercurey in the early 18th century, this historic estate owned by the Devillard family encompasses over 95 acres of vines, including some of the finest premiers crus of the appellation. Visitors can now look forward to an exceptional "vine to wine" experience and tasting.



ON-SHORE DINING

Burgundy boasts a wealth of incredible restaurants. If you wish to dine on shore, chat to your guide about recommendations. Examples include:

- **Abbaye de la Bussière**, a Michelin-starred restaurant in a beautifully restored Cistercian abbey. As well as dining here, you can enjoy a private tour of the abbey and grounds with the owner.
- **Maison Lameloise**, boasting three Michelin stars since 2007 in the picturesque town of Chagny.
- **L'Amayllis**, a converted mill in Saint-Rémy serving refined fare from a Michelin-starred chef.



A charge for additional meals on shore may apply.



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