

FRENCH LANGUAGE & CULTURE TOUR 2008

Paris & Aix-en-Provence

21 SEPTEMBER – 11 OCTOBER 2008

with Brian McKay

OVERALL CONCEPT :

At the heart of this tour are two of the most popular tourist destinations in France. In order to allow participants to take full advantage of an exceptional cultural experience, while returning home with significantly increased vocabulary and general fluency, much of the language work will be essentially a preparation for the various guided visits, excursions and other activities during the three weeks of the tour.

To provide language experience / revision for general communication, and language learning around specific cultural themes which are developed by a rich programme of guided visits, tours and excursions.

LEVELS & PARTICIPANTS: All levels of French, from intermediate through to advanced, will be catered for. Enthusiastic beginners should also cope well. Morning sessions and other language activities will, for the most part, be adapted to the different levels of the participants.

PARIS : France is the most visited country in the world and Paris by far the most visited city. The combination of history, art, architecture, striking monuments and vistas, together with its remarkable diversity, make Paris a compulsory choice for anyone interested in France and things French.

AIX EN PROVENCE : Aix is one of the cities most favoured by the French as an ideal place to live. For the visitor, the combination of tree-lined avenues, fountains, square, terrace cafés, delightful buildings and the odour of provençal cooking in the air, make it the perfect introduction to the region of Provence that has so seduced artists, writers and musicians. The emphasis during this part of the tour will be more on discovering Aix and the surrounding region of Provence. Language preparation will be restricted to that strictly necessary for visits, activities or excursions, some of this will take place in the coach during the actual excursions.

GENERAL STRUCTURE :

- Part I 12 days in Paris.
- Part II 8 days in Aix en Provence

Morning : in general, these will be given over to class sessions in two parts, with no more than 12/15 per group :

- 1) Pronunciation and general communication
- 2) Vocabulary and context for afternoon programme and evening activities around specific theme

Afternoon : guided walking tours and excursions

These afternoon sessions will be for the full group, and in most cases this will take the form of a guided walk or excursion built around a specific theme which has been prepared in the morning. A professional guide, specialist in the field of study for the day, will lead the walk/excursion.

DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAMME OUTLINE :
(Meals included : B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner)

Day 1 Sunday 21 September (L)

Early morning : arrival Roissy CDG airport. Participants are met at airport and taken for guided coach and walking tour of some of the main sights of Paris, then for a *group lunch* before being taken to the hotel for settling in.

Mid afternoon : a cruise on the Seine in a *bateau-mouche*. Free for the rest of the evening

Day 2 : Monday 22 September (B-D)

Morning: Classes on the theme : “The architectural façade of Paris” – how, when just wandering through Paris, even when you can’t see any of the great monuments, you know you couldn’t be anywhere else! You will also be shown how to recognise the historical periods of the city’s architecture.

Afternoon : “The face of Paris – from the Renaissance to the 21st century.” A bus and walking tour around the streets of Paris provides a basic historical and architectural experience of the city.

Most foreign visitors to Paris find the bus system too complicated to use. We always devote the first session with our student groups, young and old alike, to making everyone familiar with the bus system for it is the best way to travel round the city, and to familiarise oneself with it!

The bus tour will end down the Grands Boulevards, followed by a guided walk on the theme of Haussmann’s Paris, and ending with a tour of the Galeries Lafayette or Printemps (where people can stay on to shop afterwards if they so wish!)

In the *evening* : *welcome dinner* in a well known *Art Nouveau* restaurant in Montparnasse

Day 3 Tuesday 23 September (B-D)

Morning : classes on the theme “French Impressionism – and Paris at the heart of painting”

Preparing also a French film to be watched in the evening.

Afternoon : guided walking tour of Montmartre

Evening : Cinema : French film, prepared in the morning.

Group Dinner

Day 4 Wednesday 24 September (B-D)

Morning : classes on the theme “the history of Paris from Roman times to the Renaissance”

Afternoon : guided walking tour and visit the crypt of Notre-Dame, and the Cluny museum (Museum of the Middle Ages)

Group dinner

Day 5 Thursday 25 September (B-D)

Morning : classes on the theme of Paris from the 17th century

Preparing also a play you will see in theatre in the evening

Afternoon : guided walking tour of the area of Paris known as the Marais, followed by a guided visit of the Musée Carnavalet, the Museum devoted to the History of Paris, where, in the 17th century, Madame de Sévigné lived.

Early group dinner

Evening : Theatre to see a French play (prepared in the morning)

Day 6 Friday 26 September (B-D)

Morning 9h-10h : guided visit to one of the great Friday morning street markets : every one will be armed with a questionnaire!

11h00 Guided visit of the Musée d'Orsay (the national French Impressionist museum).

Afternoon : coach excursion to Giverny to visit Claude Monet's house, his beautiful garden and the lake featuring the famous water lilies.

Group dinner

Day 7 : Saturday 27 September (B-D)

Morning : Guided visit of the Musée de la Musique, (in the *Cite de la Musique la Villette*), one of the world's most important collections of musical instruments from the 17th century to the present day, covering the whole range of the world's musical experience (more than 5000 exhibits). The museum is one of the oldest in France, having been established as part of the national Conservatoire created under the Convention, in 1794. A questionnaire will be provided.

Afternoon : free. (Possibility of shopping and /or visiting other museums you wanted to see)

Group dinner

Day 8 : Sunday 28 September (B-D)

All-day guided tour of Versailles, including the newly restored cottage of Marie-Antoinette and the King's vegetable garden, as well as the château itself and the *Galerie des Glaces* now completely restored and amazingly beautiful such as Louis XIV knew it.

Here again you'll be given a questionnaire!

Group dinner

Day 9 Monday 29 September (B-D)

Morning : classes will begin with discussion on the activities of Friday, Saturday and Sunday and the various questionnaires.

Then the theme will be French Music. (B-D)

Afternoon : guided visit of the Opéra Garnier which will be followed by a guided walking tour of "Passages Couverts", the *galeries marchandes* of the 18th & 19th centuries.

Group dinner

Day 10 Tuesday 30 September (B-D)

Morning : classes on the theme "The gardens of Paris – the evolution of styles and the importance of cemeteries in French culture and society"

Afternoon : guided walking tour of a classical garden, a romantic-period garden, and of Paris's most famous cemetery, the *Père-Lachaise*.

Here again you will be given a questionnaire!

Day 11 Wednesday 1 October (B-D)

Morning Guided walking tour on the theme of arts and crafts in Paris : rue de Paradis and Place Vendôme, with notes and questionnaire.

Early afternoon : guided visit to the *Cognacq-Jay* museum, one of the most fabulous places in Paris to visit!

Rest of the afternoon free

Group dinner

Day 12 Thursday 2 October (B-D)

Morning : TGV to Aix-en-Provence. Transfer by coach and settle into hotel.

Afternoon : You'll be given maps and instructions on how to discover Aix by yourselves and familiarise yourself as quickly as possible.

Group Dinner

Day 13 Friday 3 October (B-D)

Morning : classes on the theme "Provence, history, its great towns, architecture and life"

Afternoon : guided walking tour of Aix – the old town, cathedral, "hôtels particuliers" and the fountains.

Group dinner

Day 14 Saturday 4 October (B-D)

Morning : classes on the theme "The painter Paul Cézanne in Aix and Van Gogh in Arles"

Afternoon : guided visits to Cézanne's house and studio followed by the *Musée Granet*.

Group Dinner

Day 15 Sunday 5 October (B-L)

All day coach excursion : the Carmargue region, Saintes Maries de la Mer, a boat trip on the Petit Rhône and *group lunch* in the historic walled town of Aigues-Mortes.

The group will be provided with study notes for the day's trip and the guide for the day will present the programme in detail, in the coach, using the speaker system.

Free for the evening on return to Aix

Day 16 Monday 6 October (B-D)

All day coach excursion : World Heritage city of Arles. Guided visits on the themes of Roman Arles, Medieval Arles and Van Gogh.

Return via the Roman site of St Rémy de Provence, the famous *Moulin de Daudet* and the spectacular setting of Les Baux de Provence.

As for Sunday the group will receive notes and the programme will be presented in the coach.

Group dinner

Day 17 Tuesday 7 October (B-L)

All day devoted to market and cooking with a restaurant chef in Aix.

Morning visit to the market of Aix with the chef, explaining how to choose the produce.

Preparation of the lunch under his guidance.

Learning also how to taste wine

Lunch - will be that which you have prepared

Afternoon round the table discussion on the experiences of the morning

Free for the rest of the evening

Day 18 Wednesday 8 October (B-D)

All day coach excursion : Marseille (guided tours of the old city and port, plus a boat trip to the *Chateau d'If* or to the *Calanques*)

Group dinner

Day 19 Thursday 9 October (B-D)

Morning classes : a round table in which each member of the group will be asked to make a short oral presentation of one aspect of the stay in France which has been of particular interest.

Afternoon : Free until Farewell Dinner.

Farewell dinner

Day 20 Friday 10 October (B)

Return to Paris by TGV arriving mid-afternoon. Rest of day in Paris and night reserved in hotel. (No dinner organized)

Day 21 Saturday 11 October.

Morning coach transfer to Roissy CDG

COSTS

The France-only cost includes :

- 20 nights BB (good two star accommodation, double or twin share, Paris & Aix)
- One main meal a day (usually dinner) including two special meals (welcome and farewell)
- Guides for all the afternoon visits linked to the course.
- Preparation of study notes and questionnaires as required by the programme
- All coach transfers (Roissy CDG, Gare de Lyon, and Gare TGV Aix)
- Cooking lesson, including early morning visit to the market, wine tasting, and meal organised by the *Ecole de Cuisine* of the restaurant *Le Passage* and their chef in Aix.
- TGV return to Aix-en-Provence (second class including reservations)
- One afternoon coach tour from Paris.
- Three full day coach tours from Aix.
- Two weeks "carte orange" in Paris plus return ticket supplement for Versailles
- All guides Paris, Aix, and around.
- Two class-rooms booked for the two levels in Paris and Aix.
- All museums and pre-booked visits included in tour, plus bateau-mouche in Paris, boat trip in Marseille, and cruise on the Petit Rhône (Camargue)..
- Tutors for groups in morning sessions throughout

The only elements which are not included in the cost of the language tour, are the flight to and from France and the second lighter meal of each day. Otherwise, once in France, all participants really need is their spending money!

The group is divided into two groups of different levels in the morning.

For a minimum of 20 paying participants :

Price per person : 2950 euros (or approx 5575\$NZ)

Single supplement : 680 euros (or approx 1285\$NZ)