

Provence Art Experience

Painting workshop in southern France - Luberon



Make plane reservations to fly on the day before the 1st day of the workshop and arrive at Marseille Airport in the morning of the first day. Departure will be from Marseille Airport (MRS). We organize all transfers.

Day 1 - Arrival in Luberon

Welcome to Provence Art Experience!

Mathieu will pick you up at the Marseille Provence Airport (MRS) and drive everyone to the Luberon townhouse «The Mas» perched on the heights of a beautiful village. Ideally situated, surrounded by oaks, plane trees (*Platanus*) and a view of the unique cedar forest. You will instantly feel at home in a family atmosphere yet quiet and very French.

On our arrival we will settle in with a magnifique rosé wine from the Chateau de Canorgues which is just outside Bonnieux. Our dear cook for the 10 days will be preparing the welcoming dinner. You will receive a little surprise welcome gift...

We will settle in and visit the surrounding commodities that are on site and visit Bonnieux.



No matter what route you take to Bonnieux, you will see the church tower well before you arrive. At a height of 425m, the tower dominates the countryside and the surroundings of this magnificent Luberon village.

The houses spread out on the hill-side form a striking harmony of earth-toned colours and shapes.

Some superb residences dating back to the 16th, 17th, and 18th century serve as a reminder that Bonnieux was a wealthy village when this region, the Comtat Venaissin, belonged to the Popes.

You will receive a welcome pack including a city map, a list of must-sees and of our favorite places for wine tasting, shopping, and favorite restaurants.



Day 2 - Vaugines, simple and charming

The breakfast will be served at the guest house then we will spend the day in the quiet shady village of Vaugines which is only 30 minutes away. Our dear artist instructor will give a demo on a chosen subject warming everyone up for the following days.

We will have lunch in a lovely little restaurant in the area and dinner at the guest house prepared by our chef.



Vaugines is situated in the foothills of the Grand Luberon. It is a very old village, simple and charming far from the main routes. It has kept its original Provencal identity, witnessed by its peaceful streets ornamented with pretty traditional houses. Here the landscape is wild and authentic.

It notably features an attractive main square with a stone fountain, an old village with narrow shaded streets, the Capitainerie (a remarkable Renaissance town house built by Antoine Bouchard) and the church of Saint Barthélémy.



It was chosen as the setting for the famous French films "Jean de Florette" and "Manon des Sources", adapted from books written by the Provencal author Marcel Pagnol and starring Yves Montand.

The ancient stone church at the edge of the village was built in 1004 and is still in use. In front are massive, multi-centenaire plane trees, some of the biggest you've ever seen.



Day 3

Cucuron and its street market - only on Tuesdays!

Breakfast at the guest house and a picnic for lunch in Cucuron with the delicacies, fresh fruits and vegetables bought at the market! And dinner at the guest house. Cucuron is best known for its beautiful pool of water in the main square (called a bassin), so big it is like a small lake! Paintingn Cucuron is like a dream.



The bassin and square are shaded by towering, 200-year-old plane trees, which pleases the diners in the restaurant and bar alongside the water. Whether it is psychological or physical, the water seems to cool down the hottest days. Cucuron market, a great little market, takes place around the bassin on Tuesday mornings.

From the high points of the village you can see Cezanne's beloved Mont St Victoire, the Alpilles, and the south flank of the Luberon mountain close by. You will also see the fertile farmland all around.



You can walk around the medieval part of the village inside the old rampart walls in half an hour, taking in the best view over the rooftops from the dungeon St Michel, exploring the pretty winding streets and fountains to the church at the other end of the village.

Cucuron is a member of the Most Beautiful Villages of France association, and is constructed in the usual style of the Middle Ages, with streets and houses winding their way up to a castle at the highest point (only the castle's dungeon remains).



Day 4 - Oppède le vieux, a magnificent little hill-top village.

The breakfast will be served at the guest house then we will spend the day in the unique village of Oppède le vieux. There is so many incredible spots where you can set up your easel! We will have lunch in a very typical restaurant (the colorful sunshades you can see in the picture below) and dinner at the guest house prepared by our chef.



Oppède-le-vieux came back to life during WW2, when a commune of artists, sculptors and writers started settling in the empty houses and renovating them (including the wife of the writer Saint-Exupéry).

You will be enchanted by this historic village which has so much to offer: a 12th century collegiate church which dominates the skyline, the ruins of an ancient chateau and the remains of historic workshops and boutiques.



It is a pleasure to wander around this village and visitors will admire the charming 15th and 16th century houses that have been skilfully restored.

Built high on a rocky outcrop and surrounded by lush vegetation, thick forests and rocks form a striking backdrop. There is still a sense of 'what happened here?' as you wander up through the remaining old



Day 5

Rest day! After 4 days of intense experience you will need a well deserved slow and easy day. Maybe stay in our beautiful guest house and just wander in Bonnieux as you please. We call it the Provence syndrom day!

Breakfast at the guest house, lunch at the guest house and dinner in a local restaurant - so our chef can rest a little bit as well and we get to discover a lovely little place!

But what about spring in Provence and its incredible blooming explosion!?



In spring the garrigue (moor or scrubland - the typical Provence landscape) along the coast is rich with the scents of rosemary, wild thyme and Mediterranean pine, and the bright colours of purple-pink centranthus, yellow broom and red poppies! All these wildflowers will later wither away in the fierce midsummer sun so this is the best time to see them.

Lavender! Yellow brooms! (Genêts) are! Here is a view near Gordes with «Les dentelles de Montmirail» mountains in the background.



Fields of wild poppies under olive trees are a common thing in Provence in April and May.

The no-less famous Irises are blooming everywhere as well



Day 6

Isle sur la Sorgue & Fontaine de Vaucluse

Breakfast at the guest house, pique nique on the banks of the river Sorgue and dinner at the guest house by our dear chef. Today it will be shades of blue and green with the magnificent Sorgue!



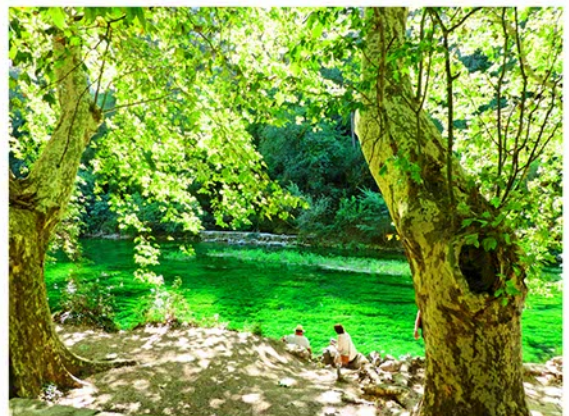
Where the Sorgue splits into two streams, L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue sprang up. Over the last 40 years L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue has become famous as the antiques capital of Provence.

Crystal-clear, emerald water that flows through it, shallow and calm enough that you can see the trout lazing in the sun, but powerful enough to have brought industry, wealth, and the accumulations of architecture and populace that come with wealth.



The village of Fontaine de Vaucluse is squeezed into the sharp end of a narrow valley and takes its name from the beautiful and mysterious spring feeding the river Sorgue. We can visit the Vallis Clausa Museum, a reconstitution of manually operated paper-making mill using ancestral techniques.

For most of the year all you can see is a deep blue pool of water at the bottom of towering cliffs. But during spring or very heavy rainfall it lives up to its name, with water gushing out at 200m³ (52,000 gallons) every second - this is one of the largest springs in the world.



**Day 7 - Arles, the biggest and more colorful street market in Provence!
& Les Baux, one of the most beautiful medieval village and the light quarry
- a magnificent enchantement of lights, paintings and music.**

Breakfast at the guest house, pique nique in les Baux and dinner at the guest house by our chef.



Arles's outdoor market is one of the biggest you will see with vendors selling delicious food (mediterranean, greek, spanish, etc), cheese and meats, ceramics, fabric, spices, cookies and sweets, etc. Some vendors give out samples. Make sure you come on an empty stomach!

Although there are numerous places to visit in Arles, the main star is the town itself. Open squares with bustling cafés linked by narrow streets lined with attractive houses and shops, many looking old and faded and all the more romantic as a result.



Set in the heart of the Alpilles regional country park, Les Baux-de-Provence is a listed heritage site that has won titles such as "one of the Most Beautiful Villages in France".

The monumental "Carrières de Lumières" host extraordinary multimedia shows which are unique in the world. Like walking in a dream of lights nested in an ancient and mysterious temple.



Day 8

Roussillon, spectacular!

Breakfast at the guest house, lunch at Roussillon and dinner by Ze chef!

Situated in the heart of one of the biggest ochre deposits in the world, Roussillon is famous for its magnificent red cliffs and ochre quarries. Stunning experience!



In Roussillon a quirk of nature has set the landscape ablaze with ochre, a natural pigment in the rock ranging from soft gold to burnt orange, russet red and burnt sienna brown.

As you approach Roussillon you notice that the fields have turned reddish orange, as if you are wearing the wrong sunglasses.



You can say that there are 17 shades of ochre daubed across the houses of the village, drawn from the palette of the old ochre quarry next door. But that doesn't do justice to the flamboyant, technicolor glory of Roussillon, the reds, yellows, oranges and pinks that merge one into the other as you wander around the spiralling streets.

We will visit the conservatory of pigments at L'Usine Mathieu. The stages of the washing process, the kiln and the mills were restored to help visitors understand the steps in the treatment of the mineral, from its extraction to its shipment throughout the world.



Day 9

After 3 days of walking around you will enjoy a slow day among flowers.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner at the guest house by our chef.

Gardens! The Luberon has numerous gorgeous gardens scattered in the area. Here is a few of those we could visit and paint!



«Le jardin neuf de Lauris» with its 250 different plant species on 7 terraces in the Chateau neuf de Lauris overlooking the Durance river in the valley. A delight!

In the Chateau neuf de Lauris, the «Jardin des plantes tinctoriales» is a treasure of plants used as natural dyes, cosmetics and remedies.



The superb «Jardin de la louve» in Bonnieux! Owned and sculpted by Nicole de Vessian, stylist for Hermès.

«Jardin à la française du pavillon Gallon»
Near Cucuron, the pavillon Gallon is a XVIII century beautiful house with a superb french garden.



Day 10

Departure day - Kleenex day

Breakfast at the guest house and warm hugs with our chef, Mathieu will drive you to Marseille Airport and accompany you to the check-ins to make sure you are on the right plane! We hope you had the most memorable souvenir of Provence in your hearts on on your canvas!



A note to our dear artist participants:

Depending on the weather or unforeseen circumstances we might have to swap some dates and adapt this itinerary. A selection of other locations has been carefully handpicked by your hosts and your artist instructor for a tailored optimal painting experience.

We have administrative autorizations to paint in many famous places if the rain shows up.

Our goal is to provide you the best experience possible,
we will discuss - as a group - any modification to the itinerary.

Your host, guide, driver and interpret: Mathieu Brousses

I was born and raised in Arles, Provence. I studied biology and film making. After 10 years in Paris working for the movie industry and television networks I came back to Provence to enjoy life, my wife and son, rebuild and live in a 200 years old house near Aix en Provence. I know Provence and its people like the back of my hand. With Wendy Higbee Carando I co-founded the Provence Art Experience in 2015. Art is part of my everyday life. I will be doing everything so you have a memorable stay: a unique experience!

For more information, contact me at:
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