Travel with Scott and Curtis

Cruising the Rhône: Lyon to Provence & the South of France

March 2029

🍷 **France:** Lyon, Vienne, Tournon, Viviers, Nimes, Avignon, Arles, Toulouse

Discover the timeless beauty, rich history, and irresistible charm of southern France on an unforgettable journey along the Rhône River. Cruise for 10 nights aboard the M/S River Chanson, sailing past picturesque villages, rolling vineyards, and breathtaking countryside. Explore Lyon, France's celebrated gastronomic capital, and uncover ancient Roman treasures in Vienne, Nîmes, and Arles, the enchanting town that inspired Vincent van Gogh. Marvel at Avignon's magnificent Palace of the Popes, wander medieval streets lined with Gothic cathedrals and historic architecture, and savor the flavors of the region through local markets, vineyard visits, and traditional French cuisine. Along the way, enjoy meaningful cultural encounters with local families and discover the traditions that make Provence so special. Conclude your adventure in Toulouse, the beautiful "Pink City," where centuries of history blend with vibrant modern French life. From scenic river cruising to authentic cultural experiences, this journey captures the very best of southern France.

What to Expect On This Incredible Trip

A journey through the heart of southern France, where scenic Rhône River cruising, centuries of history, and authentic French culture come together. You will experience…

- Scenic river cruising past rolling vineyards, charming medieval villages, and the picturesque landscapes of the Rhône Valley and Provence
- UNESCO World Heritage Sites, ancient Roman amphitheaters, Gothic cathedrals, and magnificent papal palaces
- Guided explorations of historic cities: Lyon, Vienne, Avignon, Arles, and Toulouse
- Authentic cultural exchanges, including a home-hosted visit with a French family and encounters with local farmers
- French culinary traditions through bustling food markets, vineyard visits, regional wine, artisan chocolates, and onboard cooking demonstrations
- Immersive cultural experiences, from discovering Vincent van Gogh's artistic legacy in Arles to exploring Provence's traditional bull farms
- A relaxed blend of guided sightseeing, leisurely river sailing, enriching discussions, and free time for personal discovery

It balances:

- Ancient Roman grandeur and medieval French heritage
- Scenic Rhône River landscapes and the rustic charm of Provence
- World-renowned French gastronomy and celebrated wine traditions
- Historic architecture, artistic inspiration, and cultural discovery
- Authentic local encounters and traditional French ways of life
- Comfortable river cruising, enriching exploration, and relaxation



📌 Trip Overview

France: *Lyon, Vienne, Tournon, Viviers, Nimes, Avignon, Arles, Toulouse*

M/S River Chanson: *Privately Owned, 86-passenger Ship*

Exact site order and itinerary subject to final G.C.T. itinerary for the year.

Dates: March 2029
Trip Price (includes airfare from DTW): $7,349 - $8,149 per person*
Single Supplement: $1,499
Duration: 14 Days

!!Please note: *Prices are subject to change**

🗓️ Expected Itinerary Overview

Day 1: Depart USA

Depart the United States on your overnight international flight to Paris, France.

Begin your journey to southern France, where centuries of history, picturesque landscapes, and unforgettable cultural experiences await.

Day 2: Arrive Lyon, France • Embark Ship

Arrive in Lyon and transfer to the M/S River Chanson, your home for the next 10 nights.

Upon arrival:

- *Settle into your comfortable cabin*
- *Enjoy an optional orientation walk with your Program Director*
- *Explore Lyon independently*
- *Meet fellow travelers, including those arriving from the optional Paris pre-trip extension*

- *Attend a welcome safety briefing and Port Talk*

Dinner onboard.

Evening at leisure to relax or enjoy a scenic stroll through illuminated Lyon.

Meals: *Dinner*

Day 3: Lyon • Historic Old Town • French Market Experience

Discover Lyon, France's celebrated gastronomic capital and a city rich in Roman and Renaissance history.

Morning walking tour of Vieux Lyon (Old Lyon):

- *Explore the UNESCO-listed historic district*
- *Wander charming medieval and Renaissance streets*
- *Learn about Lyon's history as a major silk-trading center*
- *Discover the city's Roman heritage and architectural treasures*

Exclusive Discovery:

- *Visit a traditional French market*
- *Learn about local delicacies from the Monts du Lyonnais region*
- *Discover how French residents shop for fresh ingredients and regional specialties*

Afternoon free to explore Lyon's shops, restaurants, and historic neighborhoods independently.

Evening:

- *Welcome Drink onboard*
- *Captain's Welcome Dinner*
- *Relax aboard the ship or enjoy Lyon's nightlife*

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 4: Lyon • Fourvière Hill • Home-Hosted Cultural Visit

Continue exploring Lyon's fascinating history, scenic landmarks, and local traditions.

Morning Exclusive Discovery:

- *Learn about Lyon's important role in the French Resistance during World War II*

Guided exploration:

- *Ride the funicular railway to Fourvière Hill*
- *Enjoy panoramic views overlooking Lyon*
- *Discover the historic UNESCO World Heritage area*
- *Enjoy free time to explore the city*

Afternoon Exclusive Cultural Experience:

- *Visit the home of a local French family*
- *Learn about everyday life and traditions in Lyon*
- *Share conversation and enjoy goûter, a traditional French afternoon snack*

Return to the ship and begin cruising toward Vienne.

Dinner onboard. Evening at leisure.

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 5: Vienne • Côte-Rôtie Vineyards • Cruise to Tournon

Discover the ancient Roman heritage and celebrated wine traditions of the Rhône Valley.

Morning exploration of Vienne:

- *Enjoy a guided walking tour of this historic city*
- *Discover remarkable Roman ruins dating back more than 2,000 years*
- *Learn about the city's strategic importance during the Roman Empire*

Rhône Valley Wine Experience:

- *Visit a local vineyard in the renowned Côte-Rôtie wine region*
- *Admire steeply terraced vineyards overlooking the countryside*
- *Learn about the region's celebrated winemaking heritage*

Afternoon:

- *Return to the ship for lunch*
- *Enjoy scenic cruising toward Tournon*
- *Participate in an onboard French cooking demonstration with the ship's chef*

Dinner onboard. Evening at leisure.

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 6: Tournon • Chocolate Tasting • Vineyard Train Ride

Explore picturesque Tournon, known for its scenic vineyards, charming streets, and world-famous chocolate.

Morning discoveries:

- *Guided discovery walk through historic Tournon*
- *Visit a local chocolate shop and sample its specialties*
- *Learn about the town's connection to renowned Valrhona chocolate*

Scenic Vineyard Experience:

- *Board Le Petit Train des Vignes for a charming ride through the vineyards*
- *Enjoy panoramic views of the Rhône River*
- *Admire rolling hillsides and sun-drenched vineyard landscapes*

Free time to explore Tournon independently.

Afternoon:

- *Return to the ship for lunch*
- *Set sail toward Viviers*
- *Join your Program Director for an enriching discussion about a contemporary French issue*

Dinner onboard. Evening at leisure.

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 7: Viviers • Scenic Rhône River Cruising

Discover the timeless charm of Viviers, a beautifully preserved town filled with medieval and Renaissance architecture.

Morning walking tour:

- *Explore Viviers' historic streets and atmospheric neighborhoods*
- *Discover centuries-old buildings and architectural landmarks*
- *See the Cathedral of St. Vincent, featuring Romanesque and Gothic influences*
- *Learn about the town's cultural and religious heritage*

Free time to explore independently.

Afternoon Scenic Cruising:

- *Sail through the beautiful Ardèche region*
- *Admire vineyard-covered hillsides, historic villages, and peaceful river scenery*
- *Pass through Bollène Lock, the deepest lock in France*
- *Relax onboard and take in the landscapes of southern France*

Dinner onboard.

Enjoy live entertainment in the ship's lounge during the evening.

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 8: Nîmes • Ancient Roman Treasures • Cruise to Avignon

Step back in time in Nîmes, often called the "French Rome" for its remarkably preserved Roman monuments.

Morning guided excursion:

- *Travel by motorcoach to historic Nîmes*
- *Explore the city's impressive ancient Roman heritage*
- *Visit the magnificent Roman Amphitheatre, reminiscent of Rome's Colosseum*
- *View the Maison Carrée, one of the world's best-preserved Roman temples*
- *Learn about daily life and architecture during the Roman Empire*

Enjoy free time to explore Nîmes independently.

Lunch at a local restaurant.

Afternoon:

- *Return to the M/S River Chanson*
- *Set sail toward historic Avignon*
- *Enjoy the beautiful scenery along the Rhône River*

Dinner onboard. Evening at leisure.

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 9: Avignon • Palace of the Popes • Optional Pont du Gard

Discover Avignon, the magnificent "City of Popes," known for its medieval fortifications, Gothic architecture, and rich religious history.

Morning guided walking tour:

- *Explore Avignon's historic streets and neighborhoods*
- *Learn about the city's role as the seat of the papacy during the 14th century*
- *Visit the impressive Palace of the Popes*
- *Admire the city's medieval architecture and historic landmarks*

Afternoon free for independent exploration.

Optional Pont du Gard Excursion:

- *Visit the remarkable ancient Roman aqueduct bridge*
- *Learn about Roman engineering and construction*
- *Explore the accompanying museum and discover the aqueduct's fascinating history*

Dinner onboard. Evening at leisure.

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 10: Avignon • Optional Provence Excursion • Cruise to Arles

Enjoy another day discovering the history, artistic heritage, and timeless beauty of Provence.

Morning:

- *Guided discovery walk through one of Avignon's historic neighborhoods*
- *Free time to wander charming streets, browse local shops, or relax at a café*

Optional A Morning in Provence Excursion:

- *Visit Les Baux-de-Provence, a picturesque Provençal village*
- *Discover the village's historic charm and dramatic surroundings*
- *Experience Carrières de Lumières, an immersive art exhibition displayed across the walls of immense limestone chambers*

Afternoon Scenic Cruising:

- *Return to the ship and sail toward Arles*
- *Admire the scenic landscapes of Provence*
- *Learn about Arles, known as "Little Roma" for its impressive Roman amphitheater and ancient thermal baths*

Evening:

- *Enjoy a special Provençal-themed dinner onboard*
- *Experience traditional musical entertainment*
- *Relax in the ship's lounge*

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 11: Arles • Vincent van Gogh • Traditional Bull Farm Visit

Explore Arles, a historic Provençal town celebrated for its ancient Roman monuments and connection to artist Vincent van Gogh.

Morning walking tour:

- *Discover Arles' charming historic streets*
- *Learn about its impressive Roman heritage*
- *Follow in the footsteps of Vincent van Gogh*
- *See landmarks and locations that inspired his famous paintings*

- *Visit the exterior of the hospital where Van Gogh stayed and painted during his time in Arles*

Afternoon Exclusive Discovery:

- *Visit a traditional family-owned Provençal bull farm*
- *Meet local gardians, the cowboys of southern France*
- *Learn about their rural lifestyle and livestock-raising traditions*
- *Experience authentic local hospitality*
- *Ride aboard a farm truck to observe the bulls in their natural surroundings*

Evening:

- *Return to the ship*
- *Gather with fellow travelers for a special Farewell Dinner onboard*
- *Enjoy your final evening aboard the M/S River Chanson*

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*

Day 12: Disembark Ship • Family Farm Visit • Toulouse

Conclude your Rhône River cruise and continue your journey through the beautiful countryside of southern France.

Morning:

- *Enjoy breakfast onboard*
- *Disembark the M/S River Chanson*
- *Begin your scenic overland journey toward Toulouse*

Exclusive Farm Experience:

- *Visit a local family-owned farm*
- *Learn about regional agricultural traditions*
- *Sample fresh products grown and produced on the farm*
- *Enjoy an included farm lunch*

Afternoon:

- *Continue to Toulouse, known as La Ville Rose or "The Pink City"*
- *Check into your hotel*
- *Enjoy free time to settle in or explore the surrounding neighborhood*

- *Optional vicinity walk with your Program Director*

Dinner on your own. Evening at leisure.

Meals: *Breakfast & Lunch*

Day 13: Toulouse • Historic Markets • Farewell Dinner

Discover the rich heritage, vibrant culture, and architectural beauty of Toulouse, one of southern France's most captivating cities.

Morning guided walking tour:

- *Explore Toulouse's historic center and distinctive pink-brick architecture*
- *Learn about the city's medieval history and cultural traditions*
- *Visit the bustling Victor Hugo Market, home to more than 100 stalls*
- *Discover local foods, regional specialties, and traditional French market life*
- *Visit the Basilica of Saint-Sernin, a magnificent 12th-century UNESCO World Heritage Site*

Afternoon:

- *Free time to explore Toulouse independently*
- *Browse charming shops and local markets*
- *Enjoy the city's relaxed atmosphere and lively cafés*
- *Discover more of its historic architecture and cultural landmarks*

Evening Farewell Celebration:

- *Gather with fellow travelers for a Farewell Briefing*
- *Enjoy a special Farewell Dinner at an authentic French restaurant*
- *Celebrate the memorable experiences of your journey through southern France*

Meals: *Breakfast & Dinner*

Day 14: Toulouse • Return Home

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel before transferring to the airport for your return flight to the United States.

Travelers wishing to extend their European adventure may continue with the optional French & Italian Rivieras post-trip extension.

Meals: *Breakfast*

***Exact details for this tour will be updated on the G.C.T. travel site once the official itinerary is confirmed. This more detailed G.C.T. itinerary can be found by clicking here.*



✅ What's Included

- 12 nights' accommodations, including 10 nights aboard our privately owned river ship
- 33 meals—12 breakfasts, 10 lunches, and 11 dinners
- All transportation, including internal flights and transfers
- International airfare, airport transfers, taxes, fees & fuel surcharges
- Services of a local Program Director
- 12 activities, including a farm visit and a French market experience in Lyon

- Gratuities for local guides and drivers

✈️ Flight Booking Notes

When confirming your deposit, please specify:

- Travel class preference (Coach, Premium Select, Business)
- Aisle or window seating
- Any special requests or meal preferences

ℹ️ Additional Notes

- **Prices subject to change**, especially airfare and fees.
- Customizations and optional extensions are available.
- Physical Requirements: Activity level is **moderately easy (Level 2 out of 5)**





Online Reservations: www.TravelwithScottandCurtis.com
Phone Reservations: (269) 209-5889