



Private Gallo-Roman France: Provence

Sponsored by
The Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America

Arranged by Pamela Huntington Darling & Associates

Sunday, March 28 to Saturday, April 3, 2010



This exclusive Gallo-Roman tour is specially designed to inspire architects, interior designers, landscapers, connoisseurs and enthusiasts of Classical Architecture and its origins. As well, it offers visits and receptions at many notable private residences and gardens, and the enjoyment of the French Art of Living. Paul Gunther, president of the ICA&CA, we join us on our tour.

Participants will travel to beautiful Provence to discover, with experts, major Gallo-Roman sites of the world, many recently restored and UNESCO World Cultural Heritage sites. Among our noteworthy visits, we will admire the remarkable Roman treasures discovered in 2007 in the Rhone River during archaeological excavations carried out by the French Culture Ministry, now on exhibit.

To compliment our Gallo-Roman tour, we will be welcomed by the proprietors of significant private residences, domains and chateaux of distinction, certain owned by members of the French nobility, some of which were built on Gallo-Roman sites, most inaccessible to the public. The residences feature unique architecture and décor, housing important artwork ranging from the Gallo-Roman period to present. We will visit some of the most impressive private gardens in Europe and also enjoy dining in Michelin-starred establishments.

We will stay at the Château des Alpilles in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, a 19th century former private residence set in a vast park, and at La Mirande in Avignon, housed in an 18th century private mansion next to the Palace of the Popes. Both these 4-star luxury hotels offer refined detail and décor as well as excellent service.

Perhaps in no other colony of the Roman Empire did the Roman civilization achieve such astounding results as in Provence, which possesses major, outstandingly preserved monuments of the Roman world.

During the last 20 years, these Gallo-Roman sites have been extensively studied by experts. Recent discoveries and restoration work, including the Pont du Gard aqueduct, the Triumphal Arch in Orange, the Theatre and Amphitheatre in Arles, and the Maison Carrée in Nîmes, have contributed to a better understanding of Gallo-Roman civilization, the use of their monuments, their building techniques, dates of construction, and later history. Experimental archaeology, a new field of research, has also expanded the knowledge of their civilization.

To date, little or nothing has been published for the layman of the last 20 years of research. However, thanks to the experts who will present these sites, we will gain first-hand knowledge of the recent discoveries and a more accurate understanding of their meaning. We will also admire many of these Gallo-Roman monuments in their newly restored splendour.

Tour Highlights

Sunday, March 28: SAINT-REMY-DE-PROVENCE

Guests arrive independently by the TGV train to Avignon from the Paris Gare de Lyon train station or from the Paris Airport CDG 2 train station. From Avignon, it is a 20-minute taxi drive to the Hotel des Alpilles in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence.

To adjust to the time difference, we recommend that the participants arrive in France a day or two prior to the first day of the program. We will assist participants with making reservations for extra nights at preferential rates either in Paris, Avignon or in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence.

***Arrival at the Château des Alpilles, Saint-Rémy-de-Provence**



The proprietors Françoise Bon and her daughter, Catherine Rollin, will welcome us to their 4-star, luxury chateau-hotel, located in a peaceful setting, 1 mile from the charming Saint-Rémy village. The Château des Alpilles is a splendid 19th century, former private residence, surrounded by a handsome park. A favourite address of connoisseurs, our residence is chosen for its charm, hospitality, and central location while visiting Provence.

The spacious rooms and bathrooms are most attractively decorated, ranging from classical décor in the main house to contemporary in the extended buildings. The restaurant serves delicious, regional meals and has a fine wine list. One immediately feels the warmth and graciousness of the proprietors and their experienced, attentive staff, whose desire is to assure that your stay is the ultimate in enjoyment.

The website is: www.chateaudesalpilles.com.



*** Welcoming Early Evening Visit and Dinner, at the historic residence of Sophie de Brignac the Mas de Payan**



We are invited by Sophie de Brignac, an expert in dendrology (the study of trees and shrubs) and vice-president of the association “*Parcs et Jardins de Provence, Alpes et Cote d’Azur*”, for an informal visit of the gardens and dinner at her residence, set in the foothills of the Alpilles. Mas de Payan, a 13th-century fortified farm, is believed to have been built by the monks of the Abbaye de Montmajour. In the 17th century, the edifice was extended by its owners, the Payan, a French noble family. Abandoned for several decades, the property was purchased in 1981, by the present owner, a self-taught gardener and landscaper. At that time the garden consisted of two acres of scrub, a few dead elms, and a clump of willows. As a result of Sophie de Brignac’s relentless dedication to restoring her historic home and to creating an impressive park, including a “potager” in a French garden setting, the property is visited by botanical garden associations from all over the world.

Monday, March 29: NIMES

Nîmes is considered “the epicenter of Roman Gaul”, once one of the largest cities of the Empire, called by locals “the Rome of France”, with magnificently preserved monuments. Like Rome, Nîmes is built on seven hills. In 27 B.C., Caesar Augustus visited Narbonne, on the banks of the Fontaine spring; site of the cult of Nemausus, the god of the spring, and the new Roman province was called Narbo Martius, name of capital of Narbonnaise, the oldest Roman city founded in Gaul.

Sophie Bouzat-Wildbolz, a Swiss-American expert guide, who has been researching and assuring historic visits on Gallo-Roman France throughout the area for over 20 years, will guide us throughout our program. As well, other experts will intervene during specific visits, noted in the program.

* **Jardins de la Fontaine**, or Fountain sanctuary, is one of the **finest of all public gardens in France**, classically themed, a combination of Versailles-style magnificence and Roman grandeur. The shrine was dedicated to Nemausus, the spirit of the spring, to the mother goddesses of the city, and to Emperor Augustus. Built around 25 B.C., making holy water available year-round in honour of the cult, site of elaborate baths, the curative properties of its waters were famous throughout the Roman Empire.



* **Tour de Magne**, a watchtower overlooking the gardens, perhaps the oldest Gallic building, and the **Temple de Diane**, a Roman nymphaeum, which marked the sanctuary of the Imperial Cult for travellers.

*** Maison Carrée, the only fully preserved Roman temple still standing in the world**



Thierry Algrin, *Architecte en Chef des Monuments Historiques*, will guide us on a special visit of this historical site, the only fully preserved Roman temple still standing in the world, which has just undergone a remarkable restoration, an almost perfectly preserved Hellenistic-style temple. One of the finest existing examples of Roman architecture, it was built under the reign of Augustus and was modeled on the Temple of Apollo in Rome. Thomas Jefferson made reference to the Maison Carrée in his design for the entrance to the Richmond Capitol.

*** Aux Plaisirs des Halles**

This unpretentious, pleasant bistro, with attentive service, rendezvous of gourmets, offers one of the best meals to be savoured in Provence. Everything is carefully prepared by the chef, who proposes an imaginative, light menu of tasty regional cuisine.

*** Amphitheatre, considered the most well preserved of the amphitheatres built during the Roman Empire**

Of the 300 amphitheatres built during the Roman Empire, Nîmes', constructed around 90 A.D., is considered the most beautifully preserved. Seating up to 24,000 spectators, it is from the same period as the amphitheatre in Arles, but with slight architectural differences, such as the galleries constructed in the Greek trabeated form, employing vertical supports and horizontal beams instead of arches or vaults in contrast with the Roman practice of using arches on the ground level of an arena to support the weight of the construction on the upper floor.

*** Private visit of the gardens at the residence of Bruno and Dominique Lafourcade, "Les Confines"**

We will be received by Bruno and Dominique Lafourcade at their residence, "Les Confines", for a private visit of the breathtaking gardens designed by Dominique Lafourcade, an artist and self-taught landscaper, who has gained recognition for her creations and has inspired landscapers and gardeners around the world. Her awe-inspiring style is distinctly French with Italian influences.



Bruno Lafourcade and their son, Alexandre, both architects, have a well-deserved reputation for their transformations of ancient residences or lesser, modest buildings in Provence into bastides that seem to exist since hundreds of years, while Dominique focuses on the landscaping. Masters of metamorphosis since 1970, the Lafourcades have completed more than 300 transformations for their international clientele. For his contribution to culture and architecture, Bruno Lafourcade was titled by the French Government "Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres".

* Guests will enjoy a dinner of regional specialties at the hotel.

Tuesday, March 30: ARLES: a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site

With our expert guide, we will visit the following sites:



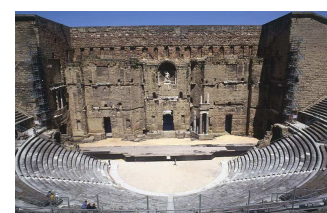
*** Private visit with Claude Sintès, Director of the Musée de l'Arles et de la Provence antiques, closed to the public on this day**

We are just in time to view this major exhibit and will be lead by Claude Sintès, Director of the Museum. The exhibit, "**Caesar, the memory of the Rhone River – 20 years of exploration of the river that runs through Arles**", features outstanding Roman treasures discovered in 2007 in the depths of the Rhone River during archaeological excavations. 650 antique objects are on display, including an extraordinary find of 20 Roman sculptures and bronzes. Among them is a treasure that has shaken the archaeological world: a realistic marble bust dating from 49 B.C., believed to be the oldest representation of Julius Caesar made during his lifetime.

*** Bistrot "A Côté"**

Located in the heart of the historic centre of Arles, behind the Theatre antique, this bistro is an extension of Michelin 2-star chef, Jean-Luc Rabanel's restaurant "L'Atelier" next door (closed Monday's). We will enjoy the relaxed, Spanish-style atmosphere with an open kitchen area and savour Rabanel's imaginative cuisine, quality regional dishes of the season, served by an attentive staff.

* **Arles' Antique Theatre** was built around 27-25 B.C. and recently restored by **Alain-Charles Perrot, *Architecte en Chef des Monuments Historiques***, also responsible for the restoration of the Paris Opera Garnier and the Palais Royal, who will guide us on this visit schedule permitting. The Roman authorities considered the theatre a means of spreading Roman culture to the colonies and a way of distracting the populace from political activities. Magnificent stage sets were important as was



the use of stage machinery. Our visit ends with a brief presentation by Arles' Director of Historical Monuments, Bouzid Sabeg, of the problems encountered using such fragile, historical sites for present-day festivals.



* **Arles' Amphitheatre**, built between 80 A.D. and 90 A.D., could seat 20,000 spectators. Modeled on the Coliseum in Rome, it has an ingenious system of numerous access corridors to allow spectators to enter and leave efficiently. Like all Roman amphitheatres, Arles' is elliptical in form, but is slightly larger than the one in Nîmes, built later. In the Middle Ages, Arles' Amphitheatre was transformed into a fortress, with more than 200 houses and two chapels inside. Restoration began in 1825

with the clearing of the houses, and in 1830 the first bullfight took place, still used today for that purpose. Picasso, among other celebrities, often came to the Arena to watch bullfights.

* **Café du Grand Hôtel Nord-Pinus** We will stop for refreshments at this historic hotel and Arlesien "institution" with its superb baroque and "corrida" décor, haunted by the memory of its illustrious former guests including Pablo Picasso, Jean Cocteau and a number of famous bullfighters.

* **Hôtel de Ville** We will have a quick look at the City Hall vestibule, an amazing masterwork of the architect Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Chief architect of King Louis XIV. Using the technique of stereotomy (the science of cutting and shaping stones to fit together to construct weight-bearing arches), during a stay in the South of France in 1673, Hardouin-Mansart designed the entrance hall of 16 meters across without intermediary pillars, resulting in an exceptional vaulted ceiling.

* **Cocktail Buffet Dinner with the proprietors, Craig and Ginny Magher, at their residence, Mas de Baraquet**

We are invited by Craig and Ginny Magher for dinner at their residence, set on 120 acres, offering a fabulous view of the Alpilles. Other guests will include Bruno and Dominique Lafourcade. Over 12 years ago, Bruno and Alexandre Lafourcade worked with the Maghers, from Atlanta, to transform a large barn and farmhouse into an 18th century-style *bastide* with admirable gardens, designed by Dominique Lafourcade. Ginny Magher, an interior designer, decorated the residence giving each room its distinctive personality while espousing the charm of Provence.



Wednesday, March 31: SAINT-REMY-DE-PROVENCE

Guests will choose between the two morning activities:

* **Saint-Rémy-de-Provence Market Day** Wednesday is a market day in Saint Rémy-de-Provence spread across squares in the old town of St Rémy. And the market before Easter Sunday will be special. We will take those who wish to visit the market to discover the special places.

* **Architectural tour of Saint-Rémy-de-Provence** With an architect from Bruno Lafourcade's firm and our expert guide, we will walk along the quaint streets in the old town to indulge in St Rémy's rich architectural heritage, dating back to the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

* **Private Luncheon at the Mas d'Altaves, residence of Emile Garcin**

We will be invited for an informal luncheon at the Mas d'Altaves, property of Emile Garcin. Native of Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, he founded, over 40 years ago, the well-known international real estate agency, representing rare, prestigious properties in France and in Europe. Twenty-five years ago, Emile Garcin fell in love with the Mas d'Altaves, formerly a farm and winery built in the 17th century and remodeled in the 18th and mid 19th centuries. He purchased the property and transformed it into a country manor, and landscaped the gardens himself. The manor, its gardens and "potager" exude authenticity, serenity and natural beauty.



* **Les Antiques: Ruins of Glanum, Mausoleum, and Triumphal Arch**

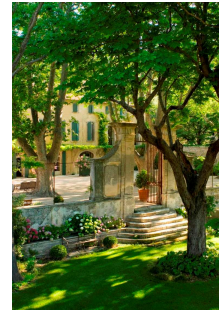
After a picturesque drive through the countryside, we will visit with our expert guide Les Antiques and the site of Glanum (named after a local Celtic god), which is famous for two rare Roman monuments from the time of the Roman Emperor Augustus, a 60-foot mausoleum — one of the best preserved of the Roman world, dedicated to members of the emperor's family, and a triumphal arch to mark the entrance to the town. These edifices are not only significantly historic but they are also remarkable.

* **Private Dinner with the proprietors at their residence, the Abbaye de Pierredon, a former monastery in the hills of Les Baux de Provence**

We are invited by the proprietors for dinner at their residence, with Bruno and Dominique Lafourcade. The following excerpt is taken from an article written by Jean Bond Rafferty, for the New York Times on October 26, 2006, entitled,

“Rebuilding with style in a year in Provence”: “Among the more than 300 projects that the Lafourcades have completed, one of the most outstanding is the Abbaye de Pierredon in the hills near Les Baux de Provence. A 12th-century chapel, all that remained of a monastery, and a bastide, or country house, built in 1602, were joined seamlessly to create a private residence of nearly 27,000 square feet.

Although many of the Lafourcades' projects are noted for classical interiors, they have...a growing trend of clients' wanting a contemporary style. The Abbaye was one such project, and Alexandre Lafourcade, who supervised the work, specializes in such decors. The Abbaye's garden spotlights the artistry of Dominique Lafourcade ...whose gardens often feature (landscaping) native to the Mediterranean...” Above image: ©Guy Hervais



Thursday, April 1:

*** Pont-du-Gard Aqueduct, the best conserved and the highest Roman built aqueduct-bridge in the world, a UNESCO World Heritage site**

We will visit the site with our expert guide and a director of the Pont-du-Gard. Symbol of the power of the Roman civilisation, the Pont-du-Gard is the highest Roman built aqueduct-bridge, the best conserved, and one of the greatest civil engineering feats in the world. Its sole objective was to carry the channels and pipes that stretched over 50 kilometres from the springs of the Eure to the water tower in Nîmes. A major construction that took 15 years to build, between 40 and 60 A.D., under the empires of Claude and Nero, a brilliant assembly of very large stones held together without mortar, the aqueduct stands 49 meters high, with its three tiers of receding arches. By special request, guests, should they wish, may climb a staircase to the top level of the aqueduct to enjoy a superb view.

*** Luncheon at the Hostellerie Le Castellas, Michelin 2-star restaurant, one of the best addresses in Provence,**

This may be the best meal we will have in Provence, creatively and delectably outstanding, with fine service. Located in the village of Collias, this noteworthy establishment is formed by several 17th century stone houses with an enclosed garden and a small pool resembling a Roman bath. Guests are warmly welcomed and treated to a deliciously light luncheon, specially prepared by the chef Jérôme Nutile, perfectly accomplished modern cuisine based on classic dishes.



*** Arrival at the hotel La Mirande, a 4-star luxury hotel in Avignon, for a free afternoon**

Guests will check into this 4-star luxury hotel, considered one of the most outstanding addresses in Provence, privileged with an exceptional location next to the Palace of the Popes, an ideal location in the historical city of Avignon. La Mirande offers luxury comfort in the refined atmosphere of an historic, elegant 16th century mansion with stunning décor, a profusion of refined detail and excellent service. The hotel also offers an elegant dining room with a Michelin star, and a pleasant terrace with a fountain where one can also dine.

*** Afternoon Promenade in Avignon** Guests can enjoy an architectural walk in Avignon with our expert guide or visit this historic town on their own.

*** Dinner at La Mirande's Michelin-starred restaurant in the handsome dining room** In the evening, guests are invited to dinner enjoy a specially prepared dinner at La Mirande, or they can sample the local gastronomy on their own.

Friday, April 2

The city of **Orange** is site of an impressive Triumphal Arch and the semi-circular Antique Roman Theatre, both UNESCO World Heritage sites. *With our expert guide, we will visit to the following sites:*

*** Triumphal Arch** was built in 20 B.C. on the north side of the city to commemorate the victories of the Second Legion in Roman Gaul. This extremely well preserved monument is older than the three famous Triumphal Arches still standing in Rome. The Arch is amazing by its size (72 feet high, 69 feet wide and 26 feet deep) and by its well preserved sculptures of battle scenes and captured armour, and naval symbols referring to the Emperor Augustus' victory over Antony and Cleopatra. Note that the columns and pediment of the west face are especially well proportioned.

*** Antique Theatre** was built during the reign of the Emperor Augustus, this is the only Roman theatre in the world that has an almost complete stage wall. It was originally decorated with marble columns and statues, remnants of which remain. As often the case (as in Lyon), the seating area, accommodating 9,000 spectators, was carved out of an existing

hill. On either side of the stage are the "basilicae", 2-storey towers from which minor actors made their entrance. Schedule permitting, we will visit with **Didier Repellin, *Architecte en Chef des Monuments Historiques***

*** Private Luncheon and visit at the Château de Brantes with the proprietor, Countess de Brantes, featuring one of Provence' spectacular, private gardens**

We will enjoy a relaxing luncheon with the Countess **Louis** de Brantes in the exceptional setting of this splendid chateau and its park, listed by the French Ministry of Culture as one of the "Notable Gardens of France". After a convivial luncheon, we will enjoy a visit in the park.

Château de Brantes was built in 1700 by the del Biancos, a Florentine family, whose ancestors settled in 1600 in the Papal city of Avignon. It was enlarged in 1815 by General de Cessac, Minister of Napoleon I, whose wife was a descendant of the del Bianco and was restored in 1956 by the present owners, descendants of the del Biancos.



The garden is centered around three ornamental ponds, designed by Danish landscape architect Mogens Tvede, lined with viburnum, box trees and cypress. Surrounding are 100-year-old lagerstroemias and a 200-year-old magnolia grandiflora, among the oldest in Europe. From early spring until winter, the borders of this Tuscan-style garden are radiant with flowering camellias, peonies, iceberg rosebushes, Indian hawthorn, marsh mallows, dwarf plumbagos, blue and white agapanthus... amongst immaculate lawns.

*** Private visit to the Château de Barbentane, the "Petit Trianon du Soleil", with the proprietor, the Marquise de Puget de Barbentane**

We will be greeted by the Marquise de Puget de Barbentane and lead on a private visit of the Château, property of the same family since its origins. This "Petit Trianon du Soleil" (Little Trianon of the Sun), featuring classically influenced architecture, was built, commencing in 1674, by architect Louis-François de la Valfenière, and was completed in its present-day state at the end of the 18th century.



It is to Joseph-Pierre Balthazar de Puget, Marquis de Barbentane, King Louis XV's Ambassador to Florence, that is owed the remarkable architecture and sumptuous décor, adorned with stucco and striking geometrically patterned Carrare marble floors, creating an exceptional setting, including vaulted ceilings, and the rich Louis XV and Louis XVI period furniture, that is still to be admired.

Terraces overlook the formal Italian-style gardens, decorated with sculptures, dominating a park of tercentennial sycamore trees. This residence, considered "the most Italian of the chateaux of Provence".

*** Farewell dinner at the Château La Nerthe with the Director of the Vineyard and David Cobbold, renowned wine & gastronomy expert**



To end your memorable tour in Provence, we have arranged a special dinner, invited by the proprietors to the Château La Nerthe, whose architecture is of classical inspiration and whose winery is considered one of the best of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Christian Voeux, Director of the Vineyard, and David Cobbold, a well-known wine and gastronomy expert, will welcome us for our farewell evening, beginning with a visit of the ancient wine cellars, followed by a wine tasting ceremony, and culminating in a gourmet dinner. This is a rare invitation, as the proprietors rarely receive guests other than family and friends, and a wonderful way to conclude our exclusive program!

Saturday, April 3: Departure

If you wish to prolong your stay, we will assist you with extra booking (at preferential rates) and train schedule.

Tour price: \$6,950 per person based on double occupancy; \$700 single supplement applies, based on an exchange rate of \$1.45/1 Euro, and a minimum of 12 participants (maximum 18 participants), plus a tax-deductible \$300 donation for the ICA&CA.

Rate includes: 6 days of private visits; 6 nights of accommodation in 4-star luxury hotels; all breakfasts; 5 luncheons and 5 dinners in private residences; costs involved in the program, including transport to and from events during tour, all private visits, expert guides, etc.

For more information and to reserve, please email or call Pamela Huntington Darling at your earliest convenience. Email: pdarling@eventsofprestige.com . Telephone in Paris, France: 011 33 1 45 67 62 81.