



LUXURY WINE TOUR OF THE RHÔNE VALLEY

JUNE 1ST – 5TH, 2026

— Hosted by Rod Smith MW —

US \$4,995 *per person*

From Lyon, the food capital of France, to the former papal residence of Avignon, gateway to Provence, a chance to taste some of the world's finest Syrah from Côte-Rôtie and Hermitage; marvel at the nearly lost cradle of Viognier at Condrieu and delight in the warm-hearted, multi-varietal blends of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Follow the mighty Rhône River and meet and taste with some of the leading producers of the Northern and Southern Rhône as well as appeasing your gourmet palates along the way.

Each day includes visits and tastings at some of the most famous names in the Rhône Valley that have a long and notable history. We will have an insight into each property dealing with viticulture, winemaking and the untranslatable word “terroir.”

COME AND DISCOVER

SYRAH & VIOGNIER EXTRAVAGANZA with private visits to **E. Guigal**, **M. Chapoutier**, **Domaine de Boisseyt** and **Paul Jaboulet Aîné**.

AN INSIDER'S LOOK at Châteauneuf-du-Pape with a welcome lunch at **Vignobles Alain Jaume**, a visit to **Domaine la Barroche**, and a visit to the icon **Château la Nerthe** who will also host us for a blow-out final lunch.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE WINES of the Southern Rhône with visits to **Domaine des Bernardins** in Beaumes de Venise and **Château d'Aqueria** in Tavel.

SELECT ACCOMMODATION at Relais & Châteaux 4-star **La Pyramide** in Vienne and 5-star **Hotel d'Europe** in Avignon.

MICHELIN-STARRED DINING at **La Pyramide** (2-stars) in Vienne and **La Mirande** (1-star) in Avignon as well as local fare, flavour, and wines hosted by our winery partners.



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YOUR HOST

ROD SMITH MW



Rod is currently the Vice-Chair of the Institute of Masters of Wine, and is a wine educator, marketer, and journalist based in the South of France. With a client list that includes some of the wealthiest, most discerning and demanding customers, Rod is the owner/director of the Riviera Wine Academy.

Prior to this, Rod worked for *Vins Sans Frontières* – the leading wine supplier to the superyacht industry in the South of France. He has also worked for a variety of wine importers and retailers in the UK and is an established WSET educator. Rod has been extensively involved in judging wine competitions in such countries as the UK, the USA, China, and Australia.

With a deep knowledge and passion for wines, Rod is an expert on the Rhône Valley and is the perfect gentleman and host for your tour.

PRICE

US \$4,995

This price includes accommodation, local transport, all tastings, all meals included in the itinerary, and all applicable taxes and gratuities. Flights and travel arrangements to Lyon, return journey from Avignon, items of a personal nature, and travel insurance are not included. We recommend that you contact your travel agent to arrange travel insurance.

There is a US \$675 supplement if you are travelling by yourself. This cost is to cover the cost of single-room occupancy at each of our hotels.

Deposit at booking: \$250 non-refundable administration booking fee
120 days from start: Remaining deposit (plus single supplement if applicable)



LUXURY WINE TOUR OF THE RHÔNE VALLEY

ITINERARY | DAY 1

MONDAY, JUNE 1ST – CÔTE-RÔTIE & CONDRIEU

10:00 am - Depart for Ampuis in The Northern Rhône

Meet with Rod at Hotel Le Royal Lyon and depart for Ampuis in the Northern Rhône. Place Bellecour is located in central Lyon and is the city's largest square.

Meet at:

Hotel Le Royal Lyon
20 Place Bellecour, Lyon
Tel: +33 (0)4 78 37 57 31
www.lyonhotel-leroyal.com

E. GUIGAL

The house of Guigal needs little introduction – the leading producer of Condrieu and Côte-Rôtie, famous for the La La single vineyard wines (La Mouline, La Landonne and La Turque) and a major player in both the Northern and Southern Rhône. Get set for an action-packed visit, including tour of the cellars and a visit to the vineyards, plus a convivial lunch and of course lots of wine tasting . www.guigal.com

ROMAN RUINS OF VIENNE

After so much wine, we propose a relaxed walk to end the afternoon, discovering the historic patrimony of Vienne. Here we have some of the best preserved Roman ruins in all France, featuring a grand amphitheatre, temple and gardens.

LA PYRAMIDE

In the early evening, we will check into our Relais & Châteaux hotel in the town of Vienne, our home for the first 2 nights. La Pyramide is a temple of French gastronomy, the first establishment ever to obtain 3 Michelin stars under chef/owner Fernand Point in the 1930s. Alain Chapel, Paul Bocuse and the Troisgros brothers all trained here. We will celebrate the start of our tour with a gourmet dinner prepared by chef-owner Patrick Henriroux, holder of 2 Michelin stars since 1992. www.lapyramide.com



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ITINERARY | DAY 2

TUESDAY, JUNE 2ND – HERMITAGE

10:00 am - Depart hotel

M. CHAPOUTIER

What a way to start the day! The Tain l'Hermitage-based producer is the largest landowner on the hill of Hermitage, with other vineyards in a number of Northern and Southern Rhône appellations. And they are all cultivated biodynamically. Chapoutier is a serious player where quality is of an essence. We'll visit the famous hill and learn about the different sites and biodynamics before tasting a range of spectacular wines, including both red and the rare white Hermitage. We'll then complete the visit with lunch at the estate. www.chapoutier.com

JABOULET

With more than 170 years of grape-growing and winemaking, Paul Jaboulet Aîné (a.k.a. Jaboulet) is one of the Rhône Valley's most iconic producers. Now in the second-generation of ownership by the Frey family, owner and winemaker Caroline Frey adheres to a policy that great wines must come from great grapes. The estate vineyards have been certified organic since 2013 and the company invests in regional bio-diversity. The wines are masterful blends, whether it be the entry-level Parellèle 45 (arguably the world's top-selling Côtes du Rhône) up to the red Hermitage *La Chapelle* – arguably one of France's greatest Syrahs. In between are excellent wines, both red and white, from different Northern and Southern Rhône *crus*. www.jaboulet.com

FREE EVENING IN VIENNE

After a great day in Tain l'Hermitage we will return to La Pyramide at around 6:30pm. This is a free evening to explore Vienne or rest at the hotel and have a light dinner at their bistro, l'Espace PH3.



EXCLUSIVE LUXURY WINE TOUR OF THE RHÔNE VALLEY

ITINERARY | DAY 3

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3RD - CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

9:30 am – Check out and depart hotel

VIGNOBLES ALAIN JAUME

Our first stop in the Southern Rhône is Alain Jaume's Châteauneuf-du-Pape property, Domaine Grand Veneur. The family have been growing grapes in the area for nearly 200 years and today they favour organic wine production to protect the soil and the environment. A convivial lunch at the estate's Table de Alain Jaume awaits with a welcome meal based around local produce paired with 9 different Rhône wines. www.vignobles-alain-jaume.com

DOMAINE DES BERNARDINS

After lunch we head to the appellation of Beaumes de Venise where we visit with one of the appellation's leading producers, Domaine des Bernardins. Originally owned by Bernardin monks, the estate was purchased and developed by the Castaud family who are now in their 5th generation of ownership. They employ sustainable grape-growing methods with most vineyard activity being done by hand to ensure the highest quality of grapes possible. Their reds and whites are classic Southern Rhône blends based on Grenache Noir or Grenache Blanc, but it is their Muscat de Beaumes de Venise that is their signature style. Elegant and perfumed, Muscat de Beaumes de Venise rank among the very best of France's traditional fortified wines, and Domaine des Bernardins is widely recognized as the leader in this style of wine.

www.domaine-des-bernardins.com

HOTEL LE PRIEURÉ BAUMANIERE

We now check into a beautiful and utterly charming Relais & Chateaux 5 star hotel just across the river from Avignon. This will be your base for the rest of the trip. After a day of travel to the southern Rhône and tasting we'll have a free night to let you relax and/or explore. Stroll the riverside and admire the famous Pont d'Avignon, dine locally or take a 10 minute taxi ride into Avignon itself.. <https://www.leprieure.com/?lang=en>



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ITINERARY | DAY 4

THURSDAY, JUNE 4TH – TAVEL & CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

After three days of outstanding estates, wines, and dinners, we propose a morning in Avignon, where you can wander the streets and boutiques, stop at a café terrace to people-watch, or visit the famed *Palais des Papes*.

Returning to the hotel, we will share an early light lunch - accompanied by some delicious wines of course - before heading out for our afternoon program..

1:15 pm – Depart hotel

CHÂTEAU D'AQUERIA

Tavel is considered a serious rosé, one that can hold its own with the local cuisine, and Château d'Aqueria is one of the leading producers. The immense estate dates to the 18th century and is unique in the region for its classic design. The Olivier family owned the property since 1919 and are now in their 3rd generation of producing classic Tavels as well as fresh, stylish reds and whites from nearby Lirac. Sit back and enjoy a multi-coloured tasting where the skill of the vigneron really shows through. www.aqueria.com

DOMAINE LA BARROCHE

The Barrot family like to say that Grenache flows in their veins, which might actually be the case as they have been cultivating grapes for 320 years and began producing their own wines in the mid-19th century. Today, brother and sister team Julien and Laetitia are at the helm with a focus on terroir-driven cuvées from their 15-hectare vineyard. Here, Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah are the main varieties but planted among them are the rare Terret Noir and Clairette Rose. Some of the vines date back to the mid-19th century, a rarity in Europe to have such a concentration of century-old vines. Along with a tasting of different vintages of their vines, this will be an informative journey into the vineyards of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. www.domainelabarroche.com

RESTAURANT LE PRIEURÉ

After a brief rest, it's time to prepare for another very special dinner, in the hotel's own Michelin-starred restaurant Le Prieuré. The 5-course gastronomic menu will highlight the best of chef Christophe Chiavola's refined Mediterranean-inspired cuisine. Naturally, we will choose a selection of great wines to do justice to the food. <https://www.leprieure.com/the-restaurant/the-chef/?lang=en>



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ITINERARY | DAY 5

FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH – CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

11:00 am – Check-out and depart hotel

DOMAINE DE PEGAU

Château la Nerthe The original property dates back to the early 17th century, but the Pégau label only began selling in 1987. Within 5 short years, the Domaine de Pégau red Chateauneuf-du-Pape was rated among the top wines in the world. Today, with more than 70ha shared between the original estate and the Chateau Pégau property acquired in 2012, the wines of Pégau continue to be among the region's most highly regarded reds and whites.
www.pegau.com

We will enjoy a tasting at Pégau before driving to the top of the hill in Chateauneuf-du-Pape for a panoramic view. Then we wander back down the hill, with time to look at the shops in the small streets of this famous village.

CHÂTEAU LA NERTHE

Château la Nerthe is the oldest and one of the largest domaines in Châteauneuf. Its history can be traced back to the 12th century with a reputation that has been recognized since the 16th. After phylloxera, the then owner, Commandant Joseph Ducos, introduced the idea of planting multiple grape varieties which was later taken up by the authorities when the AOC was created. In 1985 it was bought by the Richard family who have invested and upgraded the estate. Our visit will begin with a jaw-dropping tasting of their reds and whites followed by a blow-out celebration lunch hosted by La Nerthe. www.chateaulanerthe.fr

Following lunch we will take a short drive for a hilltop panoramic view of Châteauneuf-du-Pape at the foot of the Pope's former summer palace. From there, we will have some free time to wander the shop- and café-lined lanes of the village of Châteauneuf-du-Pape itself.

5:15 PM – Tour Ends

We will depart Châteauneuf-du-Pape at 4:30pm to take you to Avignon TGV station by 5:15 pm for guests who wish to catch a TGV back to Lyon or Paris. The bus will then make a final stop in Avignon city centre for those staying on.

