



## LUXURY WINE TOUR OF THE RHÔNE VALLEY

SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> – 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2027

— Hosted by Rod Smith MW —

**US \$5,995** *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.”

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### COME AND DISCOVER

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*This is a sample itinerary. The final itinerary should be almost identical once the last wineries confirm.*

**SYRAH & VIOGNIER EXTRAVAGANZA** with private visits to **Guigal**, **Chapoutier**, and **Delas Freres**.

**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 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 two Relais & Châteaux hotels : the 4-star **La Pyramide** in Vienne and the beautiful 5-star **Hotel Le Prieuré Baumanière** outside Avignon.

**MICHELIN-STARRED DINING** at **La Pyramide** (2-stars) in Vienne and **Le Prieuré** (1-star) in Villeneuve-lès-Avignon 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 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.

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## PRICE

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**US \$5,995**

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)



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## ITINERARY | DAY 1

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### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> – 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](http://www.lyonhotel-leroyal.com)

#### E. GUIGAL

The house of Guigal needs little introduction – the largest 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 a full-on deep dive into the Guigal universe, with a broad introductory tasting, a fine wine-fuelled lunch, and visits to both cellar and vineyard. [www.guigal.com](http://www.guigal.com)

#### ANCIENT ROMAN BUILDINGS OF VIENNE

Difficult to follow Guigal, so we thought you might like a break from wine. Our base for the first 2 nights is the town of Vienne is famous for one of the most celebrated Michelin star restaurants in all France, La Pyramide. It is also famous for its collection of ancient Roman buildings, many of which are remarkably well-preserved. We will stop off in the heart of the town to allow a leisurely walk and discovery of this amazing 2000 year old patrimony.

#### 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 Henririoux, holder of 2 Michelin stars since 1992. [www.lapyramide.com](http://www.lapyramide.com)



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## ITINERARY | DAY 2

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### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> – 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](http://www.chapoutier.com)

#### **DELAS FRERES**

This exceptional producer, which was founded in 1835, joined the illustrious Roederer Group in 1993 and since then there has been a long-term plan of continuous improvement. Delas own wonderful vineyards in Hermitage and Crozes-Hermitage; vineyards whose ancient stone walls have been upgraded and breathe new life. The elegant architecture of the new facility is replete with smaller, modern concrete vats that allow each vineyard plot to be vinified separately for maximum terroir expression. Delas is now back on top-form, with their top wines rivaling the very best in the region, and they can age marvelously in bottle. [www.delas.com](http://www.delas.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.



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## ITINERARY | DAY 3

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### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup> - 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](http://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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 ranks 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](http://www.domaine-des-bernardins.com)

#### HOTEL LE PRIEURÉ BAUMANIÈRE

Our base for the second half of the trip is the picture-postcard perfect Prieuré Baumanière, a beautiful and utterly charming oasis of calm and luxury just across the river from Avignon. Originally a 14th century Priory, it is now a 5-star rated Relais & Châteaux. After a day of travel to the southern Rhône and tasting we'll have a free night to let you relax at the hotel, and/or explore Avignon, which is a short 10 minute taxi ride away.

<https://www.leprieure.com/the-5-star-hotel/?lang=en>



# LUXURY WINE TOUR OF THE RHÔNE VALLEY

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## ITINERARY | DAY 4

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### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup> – TAVEL & CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

After three days of outstanding estates, wines, and dinners, today is a late start. Enjoy the morning to sleep in, enjoy the delightful hotel gardens, or cross the river to Avignon to wander the streets and visit the famed *Palais des Papes* or *Pont d'Avignon*. Find a spot for a brunch or early lunch, because we have a full afternoon of wine touring to come.

**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 18<sup>th</sup> century and is unique in the region for its classic design. The Olivier family owned the property since 1919 and are now in their 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of producing classic Tavel 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](http://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-19<sup>th</sup> 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-19<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.domainelabarroche.com)

#### LE PRIEURE RESTAURANT

Back at the hotel, you will have time to relax and freshen up before our second Michelin star dinner of the week. Best of all, we do not need to get into a bus to get there, the restaurant is on the hotel premises. Chef Christophe Chiavola has earned his prestigious Michelin star for a cuisine inspired by nature and the cycle of the seasons. Our gastronomic dinner will of course be accompanied by a selection of great Rhone wines, to mark our last evening together. <https://www.leprieure.com/the-restaurant/gastronomic-dinner/?lang=en>



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## ITINERARY | DAY 5

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### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24<sup>TH</sup> – CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

**11:00 am – Check-out and depart hotel**

#### 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 12<sup>th</sup> century with a reputation that has been recognized since the 16<sup>th</sup>. 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](http://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 wishing to stay on.

**Price: \$5,995 US per person based on double occupancy.**

**There is a \$675 US per person single supplement.**

**Space is limited to 20.**

It will be a great trip with lots of fine wine, great food, amazing estates, two luxury hotels, a nice amount of wine education and many, many laughs. Should you have any questions please [info@finevintageltd.com](mailto:info@finevintageltd.com).

