

# THE ART OF LIVING IN PROVENCE

A Culinary Adventure in France  
September 15—22, 2017  
Hosted by The Chopping Block + Onward Travel

The  
**Chopping  
Block**

ONWARD TRAVEL   
EST 2014

the art of living in provence



# The Chopping Block

Provence is a region characterized by tradition and culture. The locals are passionate people, well practiced in l'art d'vivre, the art of living.

Provence, in Southern France, stretches from the Mediterranean Sea to the hills of Haute Provence, from the Rhone River to the Italian Alps. It is the region home to well-known, healthful Mediterranean cuisine and wonderful wines, most notably, rosé.

The Chopping Block and Sommelier and cookbook author Viktorija Todorovska invite you to join a culinary tour to Provence. During this special journey, we'll spend a full week exploring the culinary traditions of the region. In addition to experiencing one of the world's most iconic food enthusiast destinations, you'll be accompanied along the way by Viktorija, Nice-resident and wine educator, who will help you truly understand and deeply experience Provence.

Enjoy hands-on cooking classes, in-depth wine tastings, interaction with locals, comfortable accommodations, and a wonderful group of fellow travelers. Food is art in France, and in Provence, the beautiful ingredients are the stars. From sunny Nice, to the hills of Forcalquier, to charming Aix-in-Provence, we'll wine and dine, cook and create, and immerse ourselves in picturesque Provence.



Imagine yourself...

Cooking (and eating!)  
ingredient-focused  
Mediterranean cuisine.

Swirling and sipping  
rosé, at the source.

Strolling along the  
longest beach on the  
French Riviera.

## Welcome to France!

DAY 1: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 15

- Stroll Nice's picturesque beach and dip your toes in the Mediterranean Sea.
- Taste many typical Niçois dishes at a family-owned restaurant.

Bienvenue! Arrive by plane or train to Nice and we'll whisk you to the hotel. We'll convene as a group this evening to get acquainted and toast the week ahead. Viktorija will introduce us to our local surrounds as we will enjoy our first glass of rosé. To shake off the jetlag, let's go for a walk along Nice's beach, which is the longest and the prettiest on the French Riviera. The beach is flanked by the Promenade des Anglais, a large pedestrian and bicycle path busy with locals chatting and strolling during the evening.

We'll end our walk at one of Nice's most traditional restaurants: Chez Acchiardo. The Acchiardo family, originally from Piemonte in Italy, greet their guests every night and give you a sense you are in their home. The menu includes traditional Niçois dishes such as salade Niçoise, soupe au pistou, merda de can (gnocchi made with beet greens), and the best red mullet fillets in Nice. After a delicious and festive dinner, enjoy a good night's sleep.

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Meals Dinner

## Do as the Locals Do

DAY 2: SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 16

- Play pétanque with locals, a glass of rosé in hand.
- Taste wines from the AOP Bellet, unique to Nice.

Enjoy a delicious breakfast spread as you will each morning. We'll enjoy a leisurely pace today as it is a late summer Saturday in Nice. This morning, join Viktorija for a walk through the Port, the working area of Nice where locals live. Have a morning coffee in the Nice sunshine and meet local food and craft artisans. We'll have a delicious Nicoise lunch at a casual spot and then partake in the game of Provence: pétanque! While away the afternoon playing this fun game, or skip off to the beach!

We'll reconvene early evening to head to La Cave de la Tour for a wine tasting. This family-owned establishment is the gathering place for the residents of Vieux Nice and the only wine bar where the Niçois language is spoken more than French or Italian. The locals start gathering as soon as the bar re-opens for the evening and in most cases brothers and co-owners Jean Phillipe and Gilles don't even

have to ask what the order is: a glass of delightful rosé is poured and the conversation starts. Viktorija will lead us in a tasting of the white, rosé, and red from the appellation Bellet, the only AOP in France that is completely within the city limits of a single city. The production is small and most of these wines do not make it outside the city of Nice, so this is a unique opportunity to taste them. The rest of the evening is yours to enjoy as you wish, restaurant recommendations provided.

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Meals Breakfast, Lunch



## Provençal Food Immersion

DAY 3: SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 17

- Visit the lively Cours Saleya farmers market.
- Roll up your sleeves and prepare Provençal specialities.

We'll begin the day at the Cours Saleya market. In the heart of Old Nice, this market is a lively daily happening where you can find fresh fruits and vegetables from growers who live in the hills just outside Nice, fresh fish, and great Provençal products such as lavender honey, tapenade, and goat cheese. Chef Karine will meet us to introduce us to the market and to select products for our cooking class this afternoon.

Surely you have a good appetite by now? Midday we'll enjoy a street food lunch complemented by local craft beer. Nice is the city with the most developed street food culture in France. All over Vieux Nice, the old part of the city, street vendors sell petits farcis (mini stuffed

## DAILY ITINERARY the art of living in provence

vegetables that are the perfect finger food), socca (a chickpea flour pancake sprinkled with black pepper), pan bagnat (the legendary sandwich of Nice, invented when locals were reusing leftover salade niçoise and putting it on bread so as not to waste), and pissaladiere (the onion tart Nice is famous for). We'll join locals and travelers, sit outside, and enjoy the street food and street life of Nice.

Enjoy a little time to shop or linger at the seaside. Then, we're off to a charming atelier to enjoy a cooking class hosted by Chef Karine. Nice is one of only two cities in France with a cuisine that is recognized as being completely separate from French cuisine (the other one is Lyon) and it will be a treat to learn about this delicious and healthful style of cooking and to feast on our creations.

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Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## The Sea to the Mountains

DAY 4: MONDAY SEPTEMBER 18

- Experience the wines and vines of Côtes de Provence.
- Tuck into a gourmet feast in the mountains.

This morning we'll depart Nice after breakfast, en route to the mountains. Our first stop is La Maison de Vins where we'll taste the wines of the appellation Côtes de Provence. La Maison de Vins is a vinothèque that represents the producers of this appellation, featuring over 800 labels, and offers visitors a chance to get to know the wines. We will taste 3 wines and we will also visit the Research Center for Rosé, the only one of its kind in the world, to learn a little about how rosé is made.

We'll lunch in the shade of large pine trees at Pinede in Les Arcs, a restaurant where vigneron and their guests often enjoy pizza with fresh local ingredients and chilled rosé. Once satiated, we're heading north to Charembeau, an 18th century farmhouse cum inn, in Haute Provence. Known for mountains and a rugged landscape, this region has its own wines and cuisine. We will be based in Forcalquier, a hilltop town that was the capital of Haute Provence in the Middle Ages. It is now charming town with a 12th-century cathedral. After settling in, we'll enjoy a gourmet dinner showcasing the local cuisine here in the mountains.

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Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



## Celebrating Mediterranean Cuisine

DAY 5: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 19

- Cook with local ingredients in a picture-perfect Provençal kitchen.
- Taste local products and wines from the hills.

This morning we're off to a charming cooking school at a country house: L'Oustaou d'Oulivié. They produce organic olive oil so we will have a chance to visit the olive grove and learn about Haute Provence olive oil. We will start the day in the l'Orangerie (orange grove) and collect fresh ingredients from the farm garden. Tie on an apron and enjoy a cooking class featuring beautiful, fresh ingredients and uncomplicated recipes such as homemade pasta, tapenades and grilled fish. We'll cook and enjoy a true Mediterranean meal in the beautiful kitchen complete with an AGA range.

Enjoy some time this afternoon to go for a stroll or visit Forcalquier. Tonight we'll have a picnic dinner at Charembeau featuring the best local products: lavender honey, charcuterie, Banon cheese (AOC goat cheese), and traditional cookies. Viktorija will lead us in a wine class featuring lesser known, local wines from the hills of Provence.

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Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## The City of Water

DAY 6: WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 20

- [Tour Aix-en-Provence, the historical capital of Provence.](#)
- [Pair cheese and wine until your heart's content.](#)

This morning we're departing early because it is market day in Aix-en-Provence! In addition to perusing the market, we'll take a walking tour to learn about Aix's history and famous fountains. The Romans called Aix the City of Water because of its many beautiful fountains. Calissons cookies are a specialty of Aix. We'll visit a shop together to learn about this confection. They're made from almond paste and can be flavored with many other ingredients including lavender. Enjoy lunch on your own and time to shop and wander.

Settle in at our third hotel, Hôtel Cézanne, a trendy boutique property with an atmospheric bar. Early evening we'll enjoy a cheese and wine tasting at a beautiful shop, La Fromagerie du Passage. This will likely be the perfect light dinner for most, enjoy the remainder of the evening in town or relaxing at Hôtel Cézanne.

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Meals Breakfast, Light Dinner

## Market to Bowl

DAY 7: THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 21

- [Visit Marseille's fish market and lunch on their signature dish: bouillabaisse.](#)
- [See a different side of Provence in Marseille's artist Panier neighborhood.](#)

Mid-morning we're off to Marseille, a vibrant, modern port city. Marseille is the second largest city in France and the fish market is a center of daily life for locals. The cuisine in Marseille has many international influences due to the city's diverse population but the signature dish is bouillabaisse. Bouillabaisse was born out of poverty, when fishermen used the catch of the day they could not sell to make a flavorful soup. We will go to the fish market in the Port to learn about the fish for bouillabaisse, then enjoy it for lunch at Miramar, one of the most praised restaurants for bouillabaisse.

After lunch we'll walk around Panier, the old, working-class part of Marseille currently the home of many artists. Our visit will conclude with a visit to Marseille's urban winery. Fabienne will welcome us to her winery she operates with her husband. The grapes come from

vineyards surrounding the city, from the hills where the Romans planted the first vineyards when they came to Provence around 600 BCE. We'll taste the wines and toast our time together! After a full, delicious day, spend your last evening as you please.

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Meals Breakfast, Lunch

## Au Revoir!

DAY 8: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 22

- [Head home with wonderful memories!](#)

Depart from Aix-in-Provence at your convenience. Transfers arranged to the airport or train station. Bon voyage!

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Meals Breakfast

## TRIP INFORMATION the art of living in provence

BEGINS	Nice, France on September 15 Transfer provided from Nice Côte d'Azur Int'l Airport
ENDS	Aix-en-Provence, France on September 22 Transfer provided to Marseille Provence Airport
MOBILITY	This tour includes walking for 15-30 minutes at a time, plus stairs and cobblestones. If you have limited mobility, we can accommodate you, but it is essential to let us know at the time of registration. Travelers may always opt out of activities they deem too physically challenging but refunds will not be provided.
TRIP LENGTH	8 days, 7 nights
LODGING	<i>Hotel Masséna Nice</i>   3 Nights   Our four-star home base in the center of Nice, close to the old quarter and the seaside. <i>Charembreau Hotel</i>   2 Nights   An eco-friendly country inn in the town of Forcalquier. <i>Hotel Cézanne Aix-en-Provence</i>   2 Nights   Suite accommodations at a stylish hotel, walking distance to the center of Aix. Visit the lively bar.
TOUR DATES & PRICE	September 15-22, 2017 Double Occupancy \$3,625 per traveler Single Supplement \$515 additional

### AIR TRAVEL:

The tour will start and end with airport transfers, beginning in Nice and concluding in Aix-en-Provence. Please confirm with Onward Travel that the tour is a "go" before booking non-refundable airfare. Contact Onward Travel for assistance.

### Trip price includes the following:

- Airport transfers and ground transportation to/from all scheduled activities.
- Seven nights accommodations, comfortable private en suite room.
- Most meals: daily breakfasts, five lunches, and five dinners. We have fantastic gourmet experiences, wine included, of course!
- Guide services throughout the tour to truly understand Provence.
- Activities, tastings, cooking classes, and tours as detailed in the itinerary.
- Swag and Viktorija's book: *Provence Food and Wine: The Art of Living*.

### Register now!

Visit [www.onwardtravel.co](http://www.onwardtravel.co) to complete the registration form and submit payment.

\$1,250 deposit due upon booking, balance due by July 15, 2017.

## TRIP INFORMATION the art of living in provence

### ABOUT THE CHOPPING BLOCK & VIKTORIJA TODOROVSKA

The Chopping Block is a Chicago-based recreational cooking school, with locations in Merchandise Mart and Logan Square. For nearly 20 years, TCB has been on a mission to get the country to cook. Owner Shelley Young has assembled a talented team of “chefstuctors” who teach classes featuring topics that range from sushi to mixology to modern Mexican cuisine.

Viktorija Todorovska is a wine educator and writer, formerly based in Chicago and now based in sunny Nice. She is an accredited Sommelier and has taught wine classes at The Chopping Block for a number of years. Viktorija is also a French wine scholar and a Certified Specialist of Wine. She is the author of several books including *Provence Food and Wine: The Art of Living*.



### ABOUT ONWARD TRAVEL

Onward Travel is a boutique travel planning company that carefully crafts itineraries to create an authentic, engaging trip that exposes the destination and roots travelers to the place. Onward was founded by two sisters, inspired by their family's cooking school on a farm in Bucks County, PA that has offered culinary-focused travel to customers for over two decades.

### PROVENCE IN SEPTEMBER

Lucky us, visiting Provence in mid-September! Expect long, sunny days. The summer crowds will have abated and weather is lovely and moderate. The sea is still warm and you may enjoy an afternoon at the beach. The grapes are hanging heavy on the vines and the markets are bountiful this time of year. The temperature ranges in September from 65-80 degrees. Plan to bring layers and prepare for possible rain. Onward Travel will provide packing notes in advance of the trip.

### MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL INFORMATION

- Passports are required for American citizens travelling to France. Visas are not required. Note your passport should be valid for at least six months beyond the date of travel.
- To determine the current exchange rate, Google “USD to EUR.”
- Travel Protection: Onward Travel recommends that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. Travel protection plans include coverage for Trip Cancellation, Trip Interruption, Emergency Medical and Emergency Evacuation/Repatriation, Trip Delay, Baggage Delay and more. For more information on the recommended plans or to enroll, contact Travelex Insurance Services at 800-228-9792 and reference location number 32-0704. For a summary of plan details on benefits, coverages, limitations and exclusions, please refer to the applicable Description of Coverage. Travel Insurance is underwritten by Transamerica Casualty Insurance Company, Columbus, Ohio; NAIC #10952. 1308294



### Get in Touch!

Contact Molly with questions or special requests.

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A special thank you to photographer Francois Millo for use of his work in this itinerary.