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## Provence Hotel Barge Cruise ~ Avignon to Aigues Mortes on Le Phénicien

6 Nights | 3 Rounds | Parties of 8-16

Petits légumes farcis de Provence with Mas Sainte Berthe AOC 'les Baux' (2004) for dinner. Tour and taste one of Chateauneuf-du-Pape's best cellars in Villeneuve les Avignon. Eighteen holes at Seve Ballesteros' marvelous **Pont Royal Golf Club**. C'est la vie in southern France with PerryGolf on board the 16-passenger luxury hotel barge **Le Phénicien** as she cruises the Rhône River and the Rhône-Sete canal between Avignon and Aigues-Mortes. Our route will meander through the Provence and the Languedoc-Roussillon regions where thousands of years of culture, world-renowned wines, gastronomic food, unspoiled natural beauty – and splendid golf – await your arrival.

Le Phénicien blends the spaciousness of a larger river cruiser with the intimacy of a well-appointed canal barge. There are eight cabins with twin beds or king bed, and ensuite baths. The 1000-foot salon offers ample lounge seating, bar, and elegant dining all with panoramic views through large picture windows. Admiring the Camargue landscape from the teak sundeck is an experience you will remember.

Meals on Le Phénicien will be professionally prepared by your Chef from selected local ingredients. Breakfast and Lunch is enjoyed by buffet, your gourmet dinner is served. You will discover a wide variety of local traditional specialties accompanied by choice local wines, Champagne and other sparkling wines.

Daily sightseeing excursions are highlighted by a guided tour of **Avignon** including The Palace of the Popes, residence of the Sovereign Pontiffs during the 14th century and the largest Gothic palace in the world. Astounding Roman antiquities are the subject of several tours; the gigantic aqueduct 'Le Pont du Gard' and the city of **Arles**, known as 'Little Rome in Gaul' for its considerable economic and religious importance to the Roman Empire which ruled Arles for over 700 years. **Aigues-Mortes** is a walled medieval town remarkable for the nearly perfect preservation of its Middle Ages construction. Our last excursion will take us in the deep heart of the wild Camargue where we will find one of the most prestigious Manade – a ranch – where the horse guardians, authentic local cowboys, show how they tend the herds of bulls on their superb white steeds.

The three rounds of golf you'll play are every bit the match for this exceptional lifestyle experience. Ballesteros' **Pont Royal Golf Club**, overlooking the village of Mallemort, is an excellently maintained championship layout featuring large bunkers and various water hazards across a hilly landscape. Strategy and accuracy are the keys to your round although longer hitters will find exciting risk/reward opportunities on several holes. **Servanes Golf Club** is laid out below a huge limestone escarpment in the Alpilles mountains (one of Cezanne's favorite landscapes) set among cypress and plane trees at the foothills of the rocky Alpilles Mountains. Olive groves line the fairways below the cliffs followed by three holes around a beautifully landscaped lake. **La Grande Motte** was designed by Robert Trent Jones Senior, and meanders through the flat Camargue landscapes, home of the pink flamingos, ducks and black bulls. Trent Jones has cleverly shaped a high class course on this magnificent coastal land.

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## Detailed Itinerary

### DAY 1 (SUNDAY): AVIGNON

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Guests are met upon their arrival in the late afternoon in **Avignon** by barge personnel who will assist with luggage and the transfer to the awaiting Le Phénicien. Settle in to your new surroundings, perhaps a stroll around Avignon, and later and enjoy welcome cocktails onboard.

Dinner this evening will be served with wines specially selected from top local vineyards.

**Overnight:** Le Phénicien at **Avignon**

### DAY 2 (MONDAY): AVIGNON – VILLENEUVE LES AVIGNON

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After breakfast Golfers will depart Le Phénicien in Avignon to play at **Pont Royal**. Designed by Seve Ballesteros, it features large bunkering, water hazards and ravines which are all played over an undulating landscape. Pont Royal requires clever strategy and accuracy more so than strength, but like on many Seve designs long hitters have real opportunities to take risks on several holes. When the Mistral is blowing, Pont Royal becomes one of the most difficult courses on continental Europe.

**NON-GOLFERS:** Enjoy a morning tour in **Avignon**, including a visit the **Palace of the Popes**, residence of the Sovereign Pontiffs during the 14th century. The Palace of the Popes stands as the mighty symbol of the church's influence throughout the western Christian world in the 14th century. Construction was started in 1335 and completed in less than twenty years under the leadership of two popes, Benedict XII and his successor Clement VI. The Popes Palace is the biggest Gothic palace in all of Europe. Visitors can see over 20 rooms with particular attention to the pope's private chambers and the frescoes painted by the Italian artist Matteo Giovannetti.

Following the tour, Le Phénicien will depart Avignon and sail for **Chateauneuf du Pape**. After being joined by the Golfers, all will enjoy a visit to one of the best vineyards in the region. Vines were cultivated here since the 12th century. Enjoy a walk within the vineyards before discovering the 13 grape varieties used in Chateauneuf du Pape and learn the secrets of one of the best French wines.

Following the visit travel by motor coach to rejoin Le Phénicien in the charming village of **Villeneuve les Avignon**, the residence of cardinals during the 14th century. The village is rich in historical monuments and history and rises up a rocky escarpment above the west bank of the Rhône, looking down upon its older neighbour from behind far more convincing fortifications. Historically, Villeneuve operated largely as a suburb of Avignon, with palatial residences constructed by the cardinals and a great monastery founded by Pope Innocent VI.

Dinner on board.

**Overnight:** Le Phénicien at **Villeneuve les Avignon**

### DAY 3 (TUESDAY): VILLENEUVE LES AVIGNON – VALLABREGUES

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After breakfast a group visit is planned to the gigantic Roman aqueduct **Le Pont du Gard**!. Two thousand years ago over 1,000 people worked for 5 years to build this amazing structure. The objective was to transport water

from the Eure spring to the city of Nimes via a 50km long aqueduct.

After the visit Le Phénicien will sail from **Villeneuve les Avignon** to **Vallabregues**, a quiet and charming little port on the banks of the Rhone River. People enjoy playing pétanque, or boules in the sandy areas under shady trees near the town center. The streets of Vallabregues are too narrow for cars and most villagers get around by bicycle.

Dinner on board.

**Overnight:** Le Phénicien at **Vallabregues**

#### DAY 4 (WEDNESDAY): VALLABREGUES – ARLES

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Golfers will play this morning at **Servanes**. Set at the foot of the Alpilles Mountains. The course twists and turns along the white rocky barrier, contrasting with the bright blue sky and the rich colours of the countryside. The fairways are bordered with olive trees, vines, cypress trees and cascading lakes.

NON-GOLFERS: Today visit **Les Baux de Provence**, a magnificent historical village, featuring an incredibly rich architectural heritage. Perched on a rocky spur, the citadel overlooks the Provencal landscape offering a brilliant view of Arles, the Camargue and the Alpilles. The village is officially classified and labelled as 'one of the most beautiful villages in France'. Its cultural heritage is exceptionally rich, with 22 architectural treasures classified as Historic Monuments, including the church, chateau, town-hall, hospital, chapels, houses and doorways.

Non-Golfers will continue the tour around the **Alpilles Mountains**. These limestone hills are surrounded by the pleasant Provencal villages of Fontvieille, Paradou, Maussane, Saint-Remy and are set amongst vineyards and olive orchards.

After the morning activities all guests return to Le Phénicien in Vallabregues and enjoy an afternoon sail to **Arles**. Known as 'Little Rome in Gaul', for the splendor of its Roman and Romanesque monuments, including the the Roman Theater. It's splendid medieval monuments bear witness to the wealth and dynamism of the early Middle Ages. **Arles** also has many lovely preserved buildings from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries which is an essential element of the charm of this old city. The horizon around Arles is made up of different landscapes surrounding the city and continues to fascinate visitors from all over the world.

Dinner on board

**Overnight:** Le Phénicien at **Arles**

#### DAY 5 (THURSDAY): ARLES - GALLICIAN

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This morning the group will go deep into the heart of the wild **Camargue** to visit a **Manade**, which is a typical ranch, where the horse guardians (authentic local cowboys), show how they tend the herds of bulls on their superb white horses. Return to the barge for a scenic journey on the Rhone from **Arles to Gallician**.

Dinner on board

**Overnight:** Le Phénicien at **Gallician**

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## DAY 6 (FRIDAY): GALLICIAN – AIGUES-MORTES

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Enjoy a morning sail from Gallician to Aigues-Mortes.

Golfers will depart *Le Phénicien* in Aigues Mortes and transfer for golf at **La Grande Motte**. Designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr, this course meanders through the Camargue landscape. Trent Jones cleverly shaped the course on this magnificent land, the main features are the large bunkers, tree lined fairways.

NON-GOLFERS: Enjoy a tour around medieval **Aigues-Mortes**. The city of the 'Dead waters' was established by the French Crusader King, Louis IX and developed and fortified by his son, Philip the bold, and his grandson, Philip the Fair. Louis built the Tower de Constance and had a channel dug across the marshes to connect Aigues Mortes with the sea. The Tower de Constance, a great building 100ft high with walls 20ft thick, was built to protect the workers during the construction of the town. It lies outside the main city and is connected with the city walls by a narrow bridge which spans the only part of the original moat left undrained. Aigues Mortes is unlike most medieval cities as it has not been greatly restored. While tourism plays a large part of the town's economy, wine, asparagus and sea salt are also important staples. In the surrounding countryside, bulls and Camargue horses are bred.

Dinner on board

**Overnight:** *Le Phénicien* at **Aigues-Mortes**

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## DAY 7 (SATURDAY): AIGUES-MORTES

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After breakfast, by 9:00am disembark *Le Phénicien* in **Aigues-Mortes** this morning and continue with onward travel arrangements.

*On alternate weeks the cruise sails in the reverse direction. This is a sample itinerary and is subject to change.*

## Golf Schedule

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### PONT ROYAL GOLF CLUB: AVIGNON, FRANCE

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### SERVANES GOLF CLUB: VALLABREGUES, FRANCE

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the rich colours of the countryside. The fairways are bordered with olive trees, vines, cypress trees and cascading lakes.

## LA GRANDE MOTTE: GALLICIAN, FRANCE

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