

France's Impressions Voyages

The ultimate travel experience in France

PROVENCE



L'ETOILE

**First Class barge, 8 passengers,
Sunday to Saturday,**

L'ETOILE is a classic Dutch 8-passenger first class barge converted to today's standards of comfort. Her cosy atmosphere will make you feel immediately at home. This barge is owner-operated by Cobbie and a multi-lingual crew. They are friendly, helpful and speak fluent English, but if you wish, will speak French with you. Its cruise route on the Rhone River, Petit Rhone and Canal du Rhone a Sete combines well-known sites of Provence with intimate and unusual moorings in the Camargue and on the Mediterranean for an entirely personalized experience.

Highlights

- Visit to Pont du Gard and the Pope's Palace in Avignon
- The hilltop village of Les Baux de Provence
- Saint Rémy de Provence
- Arles and the Café van Gogh and Roman Amphitheatre
- A 13th C. walled medieval town of Aigues Mortes
- Maguelone Abbey Church



Itinerary

Provence : River Rhone, Petit Rhone, Canal du Rhone a Sete

Sunday: Villeneuve les Avignon Welcome Aboard

You'll be met at 4:00 at the front door of the Avignon TGV Station. (From Paris, take TGV# 6113, departing the Gare de Lyon Train Station at 1:16pm, arrive Avignon TGV at 3:56pm. You can also drop off your rental car at the Avignon TGV Station. All transfers to/from the cruise route are in addition to the cruise fare and must be booked separately). Then you'll be chauffeured to the L'Estello, moored at Villeneuve-les-Avignon. After a festive welcome drink there is time to settle into your cabins, relax on deck, or go for a walk in the city of Villeneuve-les-Avignon. Dinner will be served, accompanied by carefully chosen wines from local vineyards.

Monday: Cruise to Avignon Cruise past Avignon's Famous Bridge!

In the morning, take a short cruise to Avignon for one of the highpoints of the week: A tour of the large Palais de Papes, from which a rival papacy was established in the 14th century. This building, along with the historic center of Avignon, is classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. There is time to stroll and shop, followed by lunch on board. Our second excursion of the day takes us to nearby Chateauneuf-du-Pape for wine tasting. Then it's back on board for a late afternoon cruise past the famous and unfinished Pont d'Avignon bridge, which almost - but not quite - spans the River Rhone! See the bridge pictured above.

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Tuesday: Avignon to Vallabrègues Pont du Gard - Incredible Roman Aqueduct

This morning, visit Le Pont du Gard, an incredible aqueduct built to carry water to the important Roman city of Nimes. It was constructed entirely without mortar - using stones weighing many tons! After experiencing this monument, why not add to your knowledge at the on site museum. The Pont du Gard is pictured at right. Then it's back to L'ESTELLO for lunch and in the afternoon cruise to the tranquil mooring of Vallabregues. This typical Provençal village gives you the possibility of walking, a bike ride or why not do as the French, play 'boules' on the town square, while sipping a 'Pastis'.

This morning you begin your cruise. We float on the scenic Canal du Rhone a Sete to moor in Bellegarde, a typical, charming provençal village. After lunch you will visit the famous and enchanting hilltop village of Les Baux, known for its gorgeous views over the provençal landscape and its artisans colony. Dinner on board with a view of the river will be memorable.

Wednesday : Vallabrègues to Arles Hilltop Village of Les Baux - Take in gorgeous views!

After breakfast we bring you the hilltop village of Les Baux de Provence, pictured at left, known for its gorgeous views over the Provençal landscape and its artisans colony. Optional, but strongly recommended, is a visit to the Cathedral of Images, a former stone quarry, now used as a three-dimensional screening room. Or take the time to shop for souvenirs in adorable shops which line the cobblestoned streets. Lunch will be ready for on the barge. Later this afternoon, we continue our cruise on the Rhone River, and pass a high Rhone lock to moor at Arles, the town where van Gogh fell in love with the lights and colors of this fascinating countryside.

Thursday : Arles to Gallician Roman Ruins in Arles

After breakfast we propose a walking tour of Arles. Heading to the heart of town we will see les Arènes, a Roman amphitheater built in the first century AD. There will be time for a drink in one of the outdoor cafés on the Place du Forum, where van Gogh painted his famous painting "Café van Gogh". After lunch, we will leave the Rhone River and turn into the 'Petit Rhone. After passing the lock of Saint Gilles, we will continue our cruise on the Canal du Rhone a Sete. Our mooring for this night is near Gallician. For wine lovers, there is a local wine shop here, where you can taste and buy the regional 'Costières de Nimes' wines.

Friday : Gallician to Aigues-Mortes 13th-Century Walled Town - Stroll, shop and enjoy a coffee

We start our day cruising through the stunningly beautiful Camargue National Park, home to various wildlife including black bulls and the beautiful white Camargue horses. Then moor at the gates of the amazing 13th century walled town of Aigues-Mortes, an embarkation port for the crusades. There are many historical sites to visit and there will be time to walk along the walls, shop for souvenirs or relax in one of the many outdoor cafés. A farewell dinner awaits you back on board!

Saturday : Aigues-Mortes to Montpellier Au Revoir

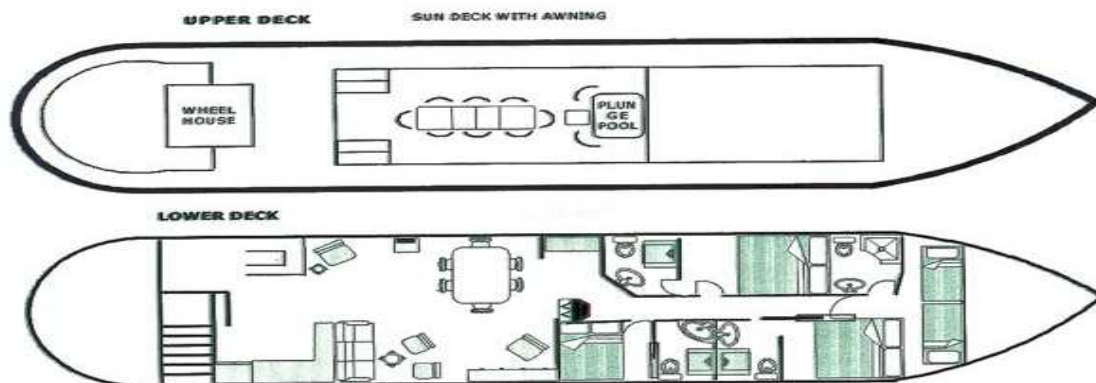
After breakfast, we will say 'Au Revoir' and we will transfer you to the Montpellier Train Station in time to meet TGV# 6208, depart Montpellier at 10:21am, arrive back at the Paris Gare de Lyon Train Station at 1:49pm. We hope to see you again on L'Estello!

Occasionally an itinerary will be changed due to canal closures or inclement weather. The Captain will substitute an equally interesting route. Change in itinerary will not be accepted as a cause for cancelling your cruise.

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Floor Plan



Barge Features

Passengers: **8**

Crew: **3**

Barge Size: **111 ft x 15.8 ft**

Cabins: **4**

Cabin Size: **69 - 116 sq ft** Accommodations: **1 newly renovated twin cabin at 69 sq ft, 1 junior double cabin @ 88 sq. ft, 1 king cabin @ 92 sq. ft, 1 king cabin @ 116 sq. ft**

Heat & Air: **Yes**

Laundry: **No**

Amenities: **Hairdryers, library, bicycles, sundeck, plunge pool, music system**

Email Access: **Yes**

TV/DVD/CD: **Yes**

Electricity: **220V**

L'ETOILE 2011 SEASON PRICES in US \$

March 27 thru November 26

Cabin (per person, double occupancy)	\$ 2,950	Twin cabin
	\$ 3,400	Double cabin
	\$ 3,800	King Size cabin

Single Occupancy Supplement Contact us

Theme cruises: Families with Children, Barge & Bike, Barge & Wine, Barge & Shopping, Barge & Culinary,

For further information please contact us.

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Included in Cruise Price

- Transportation by van between meeting point and barge
- Private cabin with ensuite bath
- Excellent cuisine with breakfast, lunch and dinner each day
- Open bar with all wines, alcoholic beverages and soft drinks
- Daily escorted excursions by air-conditioned van
- Barge amenities including bicycles, plunge pool on deck

