THOMAS P. GOHAGAN & COMPANY

VILLAGE LIFE® IN LANGUEDOC®
The REAL South of France
September 30 to October 8, 2017
From approximately $3495 plus air

ITINERARY
Day   Destination
1     Depart the U.S. or Canada
2     Toulouse, France/Couiza
3     Couiza/Mirepoix/Vals
4     Couiza/Montazels/Rennes-le-Château/Alet-les-Bains
5     Couiza/Carcassonne/Canal du Midi
6     Couiza/Peyrepertuse/Cucugnan/Gorge de Galamus
7     Couiza/Collioure
8     Couiza/Abbaye of Fontfroide
9     Couiza/Toulouse/Return to the U.S. or Canada

Activity Level
Moderately Active

HIGHLIGHTS
- Custom-designed nine-day itinerary, the newest addition to Gohagan & Company’s widely acclaimed VILLAGE LIFE® series.
- Immerse yourself in the unique way of life in the beautiful and historic Languedoc-Roussillon region, with its lofty Cathar fortresses and legends of the Holy Grail.
- Unpack just once and stay in the charming 16th-century CHÂTEAU DES DUCS DE JOYEUSE, a classified historical monument at the foothills of the Pyrénées Mountains.
- Discover the seldom-visited Aude département, home to traditional French villages, olive groves and the world’s largest wine growing region.
- Cruise the Canal du Midi and visit Carcassonne, both UNESCO World Heritage sites.
- See the vestiges of the fortress of Peyrepertuse, one of the “Five Sons of Carcassonne.”
- Marvel at the region’s natural wonders—the Corbières and the Gorges of Galamus.
- Most meals—breakfast daily, four lunches and three dinners—are included, featuring superb local cuisine and complimentary house wine with included dinners.
- Sample renowned local wines, including Blanquette, the world’s first sparkling wine.
- Enjoy enriching educational lectures.
- Exclusive VILLAGE FORUM® featuring local residents.
- Toulouse Pre-Program and Albi Post-Program Options.

CHÂTEAU DES DUCS DE JOYEUSE

*The Travel Program outlined here is subject to the features, final pricing and terms and conditions set forth in the published Travel Program brochure.
The spirit of the French Renaissance is well preserved in this authentic 16th-century castle turned enchanting boutique hotel, the perfect home base for your exploration of the Languedoc-Roussillon region. Located amid beautiful grounds on the banks of the River Aude in the charming medieval village of Couiza, the CHÂTEAU DES DUCS DE JOYEUSE is a historical monument offering you modern amenities and traditional southern French hospitality in the heart of Cathar Country.

Each of the 34 spacious guest rooms is individually appointed in old-world décor and features one queen bed or two twin beds with private bathroom, flat-screen satellite television, direct dial telephone, safe and hair dryer.

Fine French cuisine featuring fresh local ingredients is served in the inviting hotel restaurant, complete with medieval tapestries and shields and a monumental fireplace. Guests may enjoy full continental buffet breakfast in the restaurant or in the Renaissance-style courtyard. The hotel’s own wine cellar, formerly the chapel of the château, offers regional wine, olive oil, jam and honey for sale, while the intimate bar, located in one of the towers of the castle, serves the region’s famous Blanquette de Limoux.

There is complimentary WiFi access in public areas, a heated outdoor swimming pool, tennis court and boules for la pétanque, French lawn bowling. The dedicated hotel staff is pleased to provide attentive service.

INCLUDED FEATURES

IN COUIZA
- Seven nights in the charming, 16th-century CHÂTEAU DES DUCS DE JOYEUSE.
- Private Welcome Reception in the hotel.
- Breakfast each day in the hotel.
- Welcome and Farewell Dinners in the hotel.

EXPERT-GUIDED EXCURSIONS
- Tour of the small villages of Couiza and Montazels, where the Salz and Aude Rivers meet, and visit to the picturesque village of Alet-les-Bains, known for its ninth-century abbey ruins and natural hot springs.
- View of the largest of the Cathar castles, Peyrepertuse, perched atop a 2300-foot outcropping and considered Languedoc’s finest medieval architecture.
- Scenic drive into rugged wine region of Corbières and along the awe-inspiring Gorges of Galamus to visit Ermitage Saint-Antoine, built into the cliff face of the gorge.
- Excursion to the Ariège département, one of France’s least populated and most unspoiled regions, for a visit to the unusual rock-hewn troglodyte church in the village of Vals and a tour of the medieval bastide town of Mirepoix.
- Walking tour of the UNESCO World Heritage site of La Cité de Carcassonne, with visits to the Romanesque-Gothic Basilica of Saints Nazarius and Celsus, featuring stained-glass windows from the 13th to 19th centuries, and the medieval Château Comtal and its archaeological museum.
- Full-day excursion to the picturesque coastal town of Collioure, inspiration to Henri Matisse, André Derain and Pablo Picasso, with a visit to the medieval Royal Castle.
- Visit to the Romanesque former Cistercian Abbey of Fontfroide.

EXCLUSIVE CULTURAL ENRICHMENTS

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Tour of mysterious Rennes-le-Château, the centuries-old legends of which have seeped into contemporary lore and literature, including Dan Brown’s best-selling mystery, *The Da Vinci Code*.

Tasting of the region’s famous Blanquette, the world’s first sparkling wine.

Four lunches featuring regional cuisine—in Alet-les-Bains, gateway to the upper Aude River Valley; in medieval Cucugnan and Mirepoix; and in seaside Collioure.

Cruise aboard a traditional flat-bottomed boat on the grand 17th-century Canal du Midi, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Special Village Forum® with local residents who will discuss life in southern France.

**Enhanced Travel Services**

- Transfers and luggage handling abroad for participants whose arrival(s)/departure(s) coincide with the scheduled group transfer(s).
- All excursions and visits, as outlined above, with experienced local guides.
- Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- Hospitality desk in the hotel.
- The services of experienced Gohagan & Company Program Directors throughout the program.
- Complimentary use of a state-of-the-art audio headset for each participant during guided excursions.
- Travel document wallet, name badge and pre-departure information.
- Automatic $250,000 flight insurance policy for each participant ticketed on flights by Gohagan & Company.

**Toulouse Pre-Program Option**

A medieval university city, Toulouse lies along the sun-kissed banks of the Garonne River in southern France. Enjoy a walking tour through its centuries-old cobblestone streets, experiencing some of the city’s most impressive monuments along the way. See the 11th-century Basilique de St-Sernin, the largest Romanesque basilica in Europe, built to accommodate pilgrims on the route of Santiago de Compostela. Tour the Hôtel d’Assézat, a magnificent townhouse overlooking the city and walk through the 13th-century Les Jacobins, the first Dominican monastery founded by Saint Dominic and a masterpiece of southern French Gothic architecture. Explore the Place du Capitole, Toulouse’s main public square built with the beautiful dusty-rose colored bricks that lend the city its nickname, *La Ville Rose* (the pink city). Accommodations are for two nights in the deluxe, ideally located Grand Hotel de l’Opéra in Toulouse.

**Albi Post-Program Option**

Experience the charming town of Albi—a UNESCO World Heritage site—rich with history and embellished with the artistic treasures of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, born here in 1864. Enjoy a walking tour through its medieval quarters, once a stronghold of the Cathars, and see the lofty 13th-century Cathédrale de Sainte-Cécile perched high above the town. Tour the Musée Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, located in the majestic, 13th-century Palais de la Berbie and housing the largest collection of the artist’s work anywhere in the world. Delight in a private, specially arranged cruise aboard a gabare—a traditional merchant boat—along the tranquil River Tarn. Visit the picturesque cité of Cordes sur Ciel, established in 1222 and one of the best preserved medieval towns in all of France. Accommodations are for three nights in the historic Hostellie du Grand St-Antoine in the heart of medieval Albi.

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The Pre-Program and Post-Program Options are available at additional cost. Details will be provided with your reservation confirmation.