



# Decanter<sup>®</sup> Wine Experiences

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## RHÔNE VALLEY WINE TOUR





# Explore The Great Wines of the Rhône Valley

Join Decanter on an exclusive tour of the Rhône Valley, the second largest wine-growing region in France with vineyards as far as the eye can see. The area is divided into multiple world-class appellations, from Crozes Hermitage, Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Côte-Rôtie and Condrieu, to name just a few. As we follow the Rhône river downstream, traversing through the Northern and Southern Rhône, you'll notice the landscape change from the dramatic granitic slopes of Côte-Rôtie and Hermitage, to the sweeping Provençal landscape of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, with olive groves and fields of lavender among the vineyards.

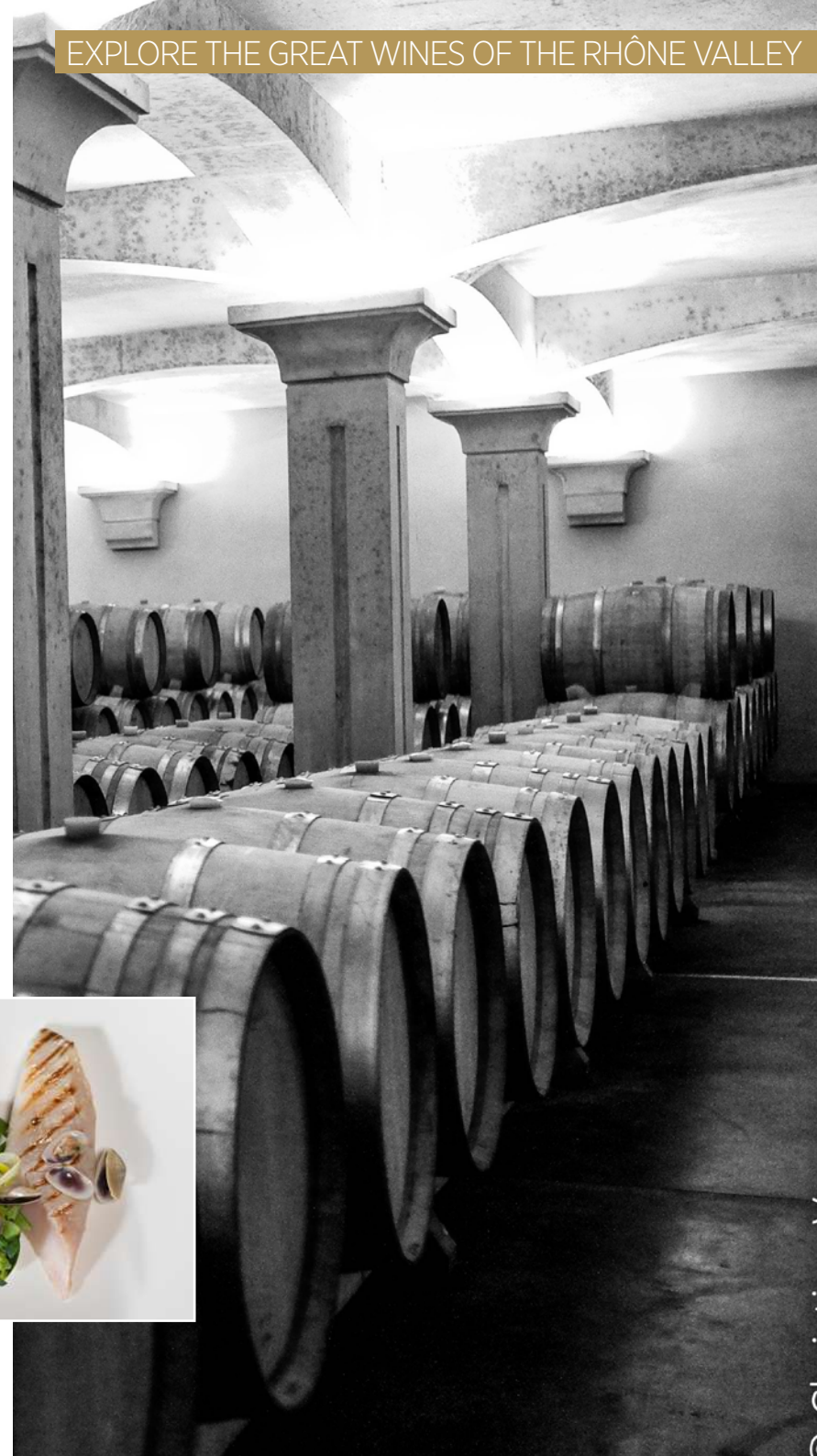
You'll see the character of the wines change, as we visit some of the most iconic wineries of the region and taste

with some of the greatest winemakers of the Rhône, in their private cellars and sun-drenched vineyards. Explore the fascinating diversity of the wines, from the rich Viognier of Condrieu, the wild Syrah of Cornas, to the glorious Grenache of Gigondas.

Join fellow Decanter readers on this exclusive, week-long tour and sample some of the finest wines this region has to offer, all under the expert guidance of Decanter's contributing editor Matt Walls. We'll stay in beautiful properties and dine at some memorable restaurants along the way. Numbers are limited to 25 guests to retain the personal intimacy of sampling wine with a group of like-minded wine enthusiasts. As spaces are likely to sell out fast, register your interest now.

## Highlights

- Enjoy an expertly curated itinerary by Matt Walls.
- Walk among the picturesque vineyards of this beautiful wine region.
- Lunch in the vineyards and meet some of the greatest winemakers of the Rhône Valley.
- Experience an in-depth exploration of Rhône wines, discovering the Southern and the Northern Rhône – two very different regions in one trip.
- Taste some of the most prestigious red and white wines from legendary appellations.
- Sample some of the finest local cuisine at Michelin-starred establishments, favourite neighbourhood restaurants recommended by locals, and during simple picnics and tasting tours.





# Expert

## Matt Walls Contributing Editor, Decanter

Matt Walls is an award-winning freelance wine writer, author and broadcaster who contributes to various UK and international publications. He is a contributing editor for Decanter and panel chair for the Rhône at the Decanter

World Wine Awards. He has recently returned to the UK after living near Avignon for two years researching his latest book, *Wines of the Rhône*, which was shortlisted for the André Simon Food and Drink Book Awards 2022. Previously he was a wine buyer and manager at London wine retailer The Sampler and Fine Wines Manager for wine shipper Mentzendorff.





# Itinerary



## Monday, June 26: Discovering Condrieu and Côte-Rôtie

After breakfast, we'll take a short drive to visit the estate of Xavier Gérard, an up-and-coming star of both Côte-Rôtie and Condrieu with excellent vineyards in both appellations including a parcel of the fabled Côte-Rôtie lieu-dit La Landonne.

From here we'll continue to Domaine Pierre-Jean Villa who can tell us about his journey from Burgundy to the Rhône. We'll see why his wines are considered some of the most elegant in the region.

From here we'll continue to Ampuis for lunch. Suitably refreshed, we'll drive to Domaine du Monteillet for a tour and tasting with the charismatic Stéphane Montez high on the Ardèche plateau. We'll return to the hotel late this afternoon before heading out to dinner at le Cottage

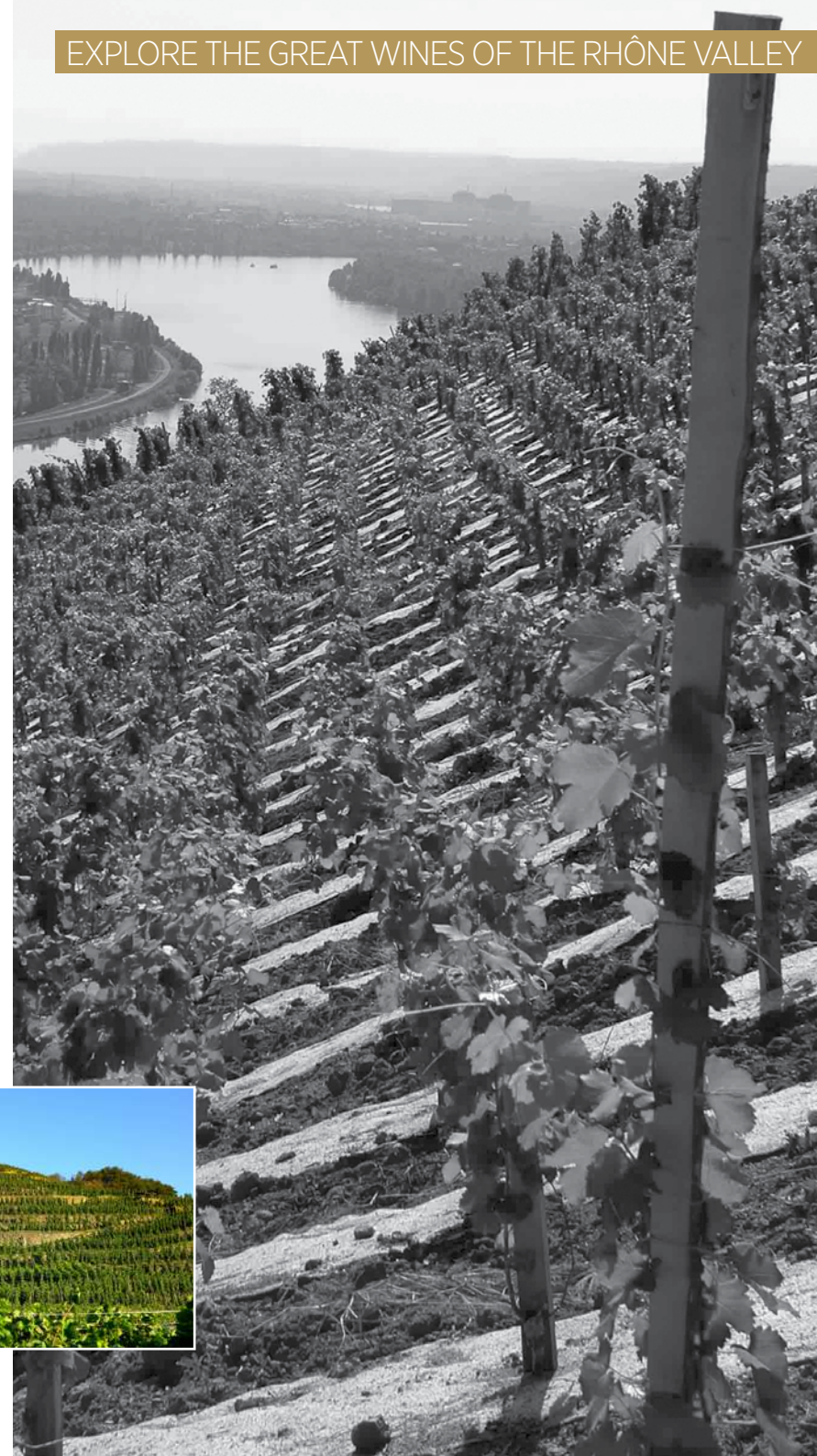
- **Hotel:** Domaine de Clairefontaine
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, dinner



## Sunday, June 25: Bienvenue à Lyon

Arrive in Lyon airport in the afternoon and take a transfer by private coach to the 4-star hotel Domaine de Clairefontaine, surrounded by magnificent parkland in Chonas L'Amballan, near Côte-Rôtie. Time has been set aside to settle in before gathering with fellow wine enthusiasts for a welcome dinner at award-winning Chef Phillippe Giradon's Michelin star restaurant within the hotel.

- **Hotel:** Domaine de Clairefontaine
- **Meals:** Dinner





# Itinerary

## Tuesday, June 27: Tain and Tournon – discovering Hermitage, Crozes-Hermitage and Saint-Joseph

We'll check out of the hotel after breakfast and drive to Domaine Laurent Habrard where we will enjoy a coffee break with the winemaker, walk through the scenic vineyards and taste some excellent Hermitage and Crozes-Hermitage together. Laurent has been a pioneer in organic viticulture since his estate was established in the early 2000s and is now moving towards biodynamics.

We will enjoy a picnic in the vineyard before moving on to Domaine Guy Farge for a tasting and a guided tour of his Saint-Joseph vineyards, some of which are over 100 years old.

Check into the 4-star Fac et Spera hotel and spa in Tain l'Hermitage this afternoon. Stroll down to the river and board an exclusive cruise along the Rhône. As you glide past picturesque villages in the late afternoon light, Matt Walls will lead a wine tasting served with an informal picnic of local specialities.

- **Hotel:** Fac et Spera
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Wednesday, June 28: Discovering Cornas and Saint-Péray

This is the day we discover the terroirs of Saint-Péray and Cornas.

From the hotel we'll walk to the iconic Chapoutier for a tour of the vineyards. We'll compare five different wines, including some of their legendary Hermitage Sélections Parcelles.

After lunch at a local bistro in Saint-Péray we will visit Lionel Fraisse, winemaker at Cornas legend Domaine Alain Vogé, another organic producer. The estate has exceptional hillside vines, entirely worked by hand. We will return to the hotel in the late afternoon.

Evening at leisure to explore the villages of Tain l'Hermitage and Tournon.

- **Hotel:** Fac et Spera
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch





# Itinerary

## Thursday, June 29: Châteauneuf-du-Pape

We will check out of the hotel after breakfast and drive south towards Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

We will pause at the secluded Clos du Caillou, an organic producer who makes some of the most thrilling red and white Châteauneuf-du-Papes, whose wines always favour finesse over raw power. From here we will continue to the village of Châteauneuf du Pape for lunch at La Mère Germaine, a Michelin-starred restaurant with wonderful views and an exceptional wine list.

This afternoon we will visit Château La Nerthe, one of the most beautiful estates in the region. See the cellars with their spectacular vats hollowed out of the rock. Note the private lockers labelled for France's top restaurants, and the collection of old vintages, dating back to 1929, a testament to their great ageing potential. We'll taste a selection of their Châteauneufs before continuing to Avignon and checking into the 5-star Hotel d'Europe in the heart of this beautiful Provençal city. Dinner is at leisure in Avignon.

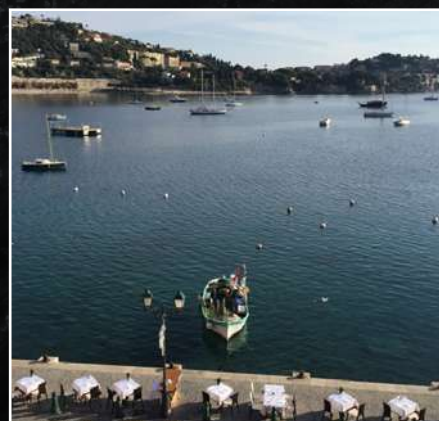
- **Hotel:** Hotel d'Europe
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## Friday, June 30: Discovering Gigondas and Vacqueyras

We'll drive to Domaine Montirius this morning, located on the edge of Vacqueyras, bathed by the sun and cooled by the Mistral. This is one of the first estates in the region to convert to biodynamics and they have a strict 'no wood' rule in the winery.

After a lunch in Gigondas, we'll explore this jewel of a village and its surrounding mountain terroir, followed by a visit and tasting at Domaine des Bosquets, one of the most exciting contemporary producers in the Southern Rhône. Return to Avignon for evening and dinner at leisure

- **Hotel:** Hotel d'Europe
- **Hotel:** Breakfast, Lunch





# Itinerary



demonstration of tapenades (using fresh olives, capers, and anchovies sourced from the market) in his workshop, located in Les Halles. We will then sit down with the chef for a two-course lunch. In the afternoon, we will enjoy a guided tour of the Palais des Papes, one of the largest and most important mediaeval Gothic buildings in Europe and Papal seat during the 14th century. In the evening, we will celebrate our journey at a gala farewell dinner.

- **Hotel:** Hotel d'Europe
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Sunday, July 2: Departure

After breakfast, transfers to Marseille airport for individual flights home.

- **Meals:** Breakfast

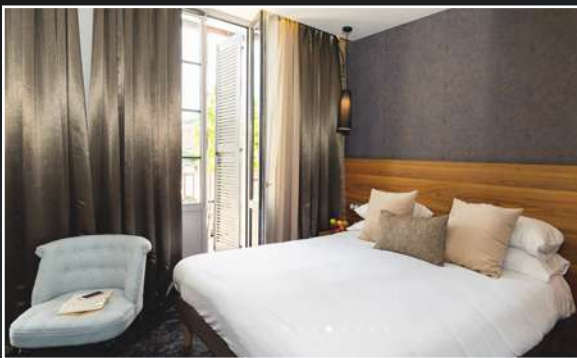
## Saturday, July 1: Exploring Avignon

In the morning, we will stroll through the Halles d'Avignon food hall with Jonathan Chiri, an American chef who worked at the Michelin-starred restaurant at the Hotel La Mirande. He will lead us through the covered market to taste some of the finest examples of local specialties, such as olives, goat cheeses, and the Provençal bread, fougasse. Next attend a cooking





# Hotels



## Domaine de Clairefontaine

Domaine de Clairefontaine is a deluxe boutique hotel surrounded by beautiful parkland offering 18 elegant guest rooms that combine local charm and comfort, complete with all modern amenities. Owners Laurence and Philippe Girardon have created a country retreat that features high-end local furnishings, making guests feel at home. Philippe, also a Michelin-starred chef, uses many of his homegrown ingredients and produce in the award-winning restaurant in the adjoining 17th-century mansion house.

## Hotel Fac & Spera

Fac & Spera, meaning “do and hope,” is the motto of the Chapoutier wine estate. This 4-star hotel, located in Tain l’Hermitage, was created by the Chapoutier family and embodies their spirit: “Wine is a way of life. It’s all about sharing a meal, enjoying

a moment together, and discovering a new region. It’s all interconnected.” This sophisticated hotel includes a swimming pool and deluxe spa and a very good bistro that offers excellent traditional cuisine with an extensive wine list from Hermitage and other terroirs.

## Hotel d’Europe

The Hotel d’Europe is one of the oldest hotels in France. This luxury 5-star establishment was the former home of the Marquis de Graveson, built in 1580 on one of the most beautiful squares in Avignon. It has a long-standing reputation as a place to stay for discerning travellers, having been included in the Michelin guide since its launch in 1900! The bright and spacious guest rooms offer refined elegance and marble bathrooms. There are several fine restaurants including the Michelin-starred La Vieille Fontaine.

### Pricing:

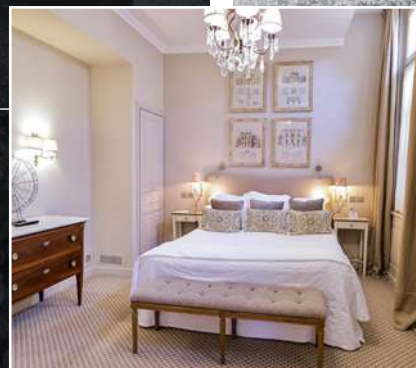
■ **Double Occupancy:**

**\$8,990 per person**

■ **Single Occupancy:**

**\$10,275**

■ **Deposit: \$750**







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June 25 - July 2 2023

[BOOK NOW](#)

