

# REGISTER HERE



## Simpson Alumni Travel Program: An Escape on the Rhone – Lyon to Arles

May 21-28, 2024

*(with optional two-night, one-day pre-cruise Paris/Normandy Experience)*



Starting at \$3,750/person double occupancy

Reach out to [andy.english@simpson.edu](mailto:andy.english@simpson.edu) for single occupancy rates

(Cruise only – includes gratuities, port fees, travel protection and included Discovery/Active/Classic excursions listed on itinerary. Does not include airfare, cabin upgrades, optional excursions, airport transfers, Paris/Normandy Experience or pre/post-nights)





Whether you're an art lover, a foodie, a history buff, or an energetic adventurer, your Active & Discovery cruise on the Rhône River offers just-right included activities and excursions to suit your interests. With Avalon Choice® inclusions, you can select the experiences that are perfect for your preference and pace. From Classic to Active to Discovery experiences, you can reach each destination your way. Begin in the culinary capital of France—Lyon—where you can choose a culinary walk to discover architecture and local specialties, or take a cooking class. Embark on a kayak excursion or simply linger in a sidewalk café; stroll Avignon's papal palace or attend a wine tasting in an underground cave. With so many included choices, you'll find the perfect way to spend your day—from a ghost tour in Viviers to a guided bike ride through the Gard region, to a chocolate factory tour.

Take a painting workshop in Arles—in the style of Van Gogh. Visit an oyster farm or ride a bike through Camargue Regional Nature Park to spot flamingos. You'll have the classic sightseeing and relaxing activities in each destination, along with your choice of included arts, culture, and cuisine excursions. Our Active & Discovery Rhône River cruise with Avalon includes activities and excursions to experience the Rhône River your way and at your pace. Enjoy included sightseeing with Certified Local Guides, Guided Optional Excursions and Tours, and ample free time to explore on your own. Explore CLASSIC sights, embark on ACTIVE excursions, and make a new DISCOVERY through hands-on cultural and artistic experiences shared by local residents and experts.

## Day 1, Tuesday May 21, 2024

### LYON, FRANCE (EMBARKATION)

Welcome to France. [The Avalon Poetry II](#) is ready for boarding.

Flights into Lyon must arrive by 3:30 pm.

Guests must be on board ship by 5 pm.

**DISCOVERY** | Get an entirely different perspective of Lyon on this relaxing evening drive around the illuminated city. Experience the heart of the city in the magical Presqu'île district, admire the grand architecture of the historic buildings lining Place des Terreaux, see monumental Bartholdi Fountain, and more!

OVERNIGHT DOCKING IN LYON

(Dinner)

## Day 2, Wednesday May 22, 2024

### LYON - A Festival of Colors, Aromas, and Taste

**ACTIVE** | Take a Guided Urban Hike through Lyon's secret passageways (Traboules) for a glimpse into the city's 19th-century silk trade, OR:

**DISCOVERY** | Take a Guided Culinary Walk through Lyon to discover architecture and local specialties in a festival of colors, aromas and taste—exclusive for Avalon guests, OR:

**DISCOVERY** | Join our Cooking Class to learn to make your own Lyonnaise specialty.

This afternoon, you might take an off-the-beaten-path Guided Optional Tour (Avalon exclusive) through private and public terraces for panoramic views of Lyon, starting on the roof of the Basilica de Fourvière.

### EVENING CRUISE TO TAIN L'HERMITAGE/TOURNON

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

## Day 3, Thursday May 23, 2024

### TAIN L'HERMITAGE/TOURNON - Chocolatiers and Railway Engineers in the Twin City Gorge

**ACTIVE** | For a unique experience and panoramic views, join a Guided Excursion this morning on a rail-bike along the descent of the Gorges du Doux, OR:

**ACTIVE** | Join a Guided Hike in the picturesque vineyards surrounding the twin cities of Tournon and Tain-l'Hermitage, OR:

**DISCOVERY** | Have a true "chocolate experience" with a tour of the Valrhona Chocolate Factory and Museum, OR:

**CLASSIC** | Take a Guided Sightseeing Tour of Tournon—twin city to Tain-l'Hermitage and one of France's oldest medieval cities. You'll see its imposing 16th-century castle.

And then

**DISCOVERY** | Join a Cooking Demonstration and learn how to prepare a Lyonnaise treat while sailing to Viviers.

### VIVIERS - Fascinating History, and Nighttime Ghost Stories

**DISCOVERY** | For a different perspective on the town, join us on a nighttime Guided Tour of Viviers, discovering the legends, tales and ghost stories of this enchanting town.

### OVERNIGHT DOCKING IN VIVIERS

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

## Day 4, Friday May 24, 2024

### VIVIERS–LOCK BOLLÈNE River Gorge Kayaks, Underground Wines, and Ghost Stories

**ACTIVE** | Immerse yourself in the scenery with a Guided Kayak Trip in the Gorges de l’Ardèche on the spectacular canyons of this Rhône tributary, OR:

**ACTIVE** | Find inspiration from the amazing landscape of the region with a Guided Hike through the Natural Reserve of Cirque d’Estre, OR:

**ACTIVE** | Join a Guided Visit for a surprising underground Wine Tasting—under the direction of an expert Speleologist (cave guide) and an oenologist (wine-making expert).

Cruise through the soaring walls of the Lock Bollène on your way to Avignon this afternoon.

#### OVERNIGHT DOCKING IN AVIGNON

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

## Day 5, Saturday May 25, 2024

### AVIGNON Bike Pedals, Papal Palaces, and Perfumes in Provence

**ACTIVE** | Join a leisurely guided E-Bike Ride through Gard region; after all, no need to pedal on the way back, OR:

**DISCOVERY** | Visit an authentic Provencal farmhouse for a delightful experience to fill your senses as you see how essential oils are created, OR:

**CLASSIC** | Take a guided sightseeing Tour of Avignon, including a visit to the world’s largest gothic fortress—the 14<sup>th</sup> century Palace Of the Popes. Also, explore Les Halles’ covered market.

This afternoon, you may choose to join a Guided Optional Tour of the famed wine cellars of Châteauneuf-du-Pape for a wine tasting, or you may opt for a Guided Optional Excursion on a kayak through the waters of Pont du Gard—the highest of all elevated Roman aqueducts.

You may also choose to spend free time to explore Avignon—known as the heart of Provence. Take a leisurely stroll or a bike ride through the tree-lined streets and leafy squares within Avignon’s medieval walls.

#### EVENING CRUISE TO ARLES

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

## Day 6, Sunday May 26, 2024

### ARLES A Master Painter and a Matador in Provence

**ACTIVE** | Experience the legends of Val d'Enfer with a Guided Hike; an area taking its name from the unique white limestone rock formations. The excursion includes an unforgettable audio/video experience of light, images, and music at the Carrières de Lumières, OR:

**DISCOVERY** | Attend a Painting Workshop to learn techniques of Vincent van Gogh. Create your own painting in the style of the legendary artist, OR:

**CLASSIC** | Join a Guided Sightseeing Tour of Arles to get to know this charming town, including a visit with a local bullfighter to learn about the secrets and traditions handed down through generations.

This afternoon, enjoy free time to shop, stroll, or just relax in a lovely park along Arles' Boulevard des Lices. Alternatively, feel free to choose one of the optional excursions on offer.

Later, enjoy on board live entertainment.

OVERNIGHT DOCKING IN ARLES

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

## Day 7, Monday May 27, 2024

### PORT-SAINT-LOUIS Oysters and Flamingos in the Rhône Delta

Enjoy a morning cruise to Port-Saint-Louis on the Sky Deck of your ship.

**ACTIVE** | Take a Guided Bike Ride through the Camargue Natural Park with an eye out for more than 400 bird species— including pink flamingos—along the trails of the Mediterranean's Rhône delta, OR:

**DISCOVERY** | Enjoy a taste of local life with a visit to an oyster farm in the Camargue Natural Park on a Guided Tour to enjoy an oyster tasting and learn how this delicacy is farmed, OR:

**DISCOVERY** | Visit one of France's most popular and pristine nature reserves on this memorable visit to a traditional black bull ranch in Camargue Regional Nature Park!

OVERNIGHT DOCKING IN ARLES

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

## Day 8, Tuesday May 28, 2024

### ARLES (DISEMBARKATION)

Your cruise ends with breakfast this morning.

Flights should not leave Marseille airport before 10 am.

(Breakfast)

## Optional Pre-cruise Paris/Normandy Experience

May 19 - 21, 2024

\$1,450/double or \$1,125/single traveler

### Day 1, Sunday May 19, 2024

#### PARIS

Arrive to Paris, France. Hotel accommodations at Pullman Paris Tour Eiffel.

Enjoy free time in the Ville d'Amour (City of Love).

At 5:00 p.m., meet for a welcome drink at the hotel bar followed by free time to dine as you wish.



## Day 2, Monday May 20, 2024

### PARIS & NORMANDY

Depart at 7 a.m. from our hotel to enjoy a full day excursion from Paris to the D-Day Beaches in Normandy in the company of an official guide, who will bring these historic sites to life. Enjoy the ride in a luxury air-conditioned bus to relax and admire the beautiful landscapes of the Normandy countryside.

On June 6, 1944, known as D-Day, the Allies opened a new European front against the troops of the Third Reich during the Second World War. It was the largest military operation in history, which marked the beginning of the Battle of Normandy and would lead to the end of the Second World War. More than 150,000 soldiers from America, Britain, Canada and many other nations landed by sea and air on a number of beaches along the Normandy coastline (Utah Beach, Omaha Beach, Juno Beach, etc.) and at the steep cliffs at Pointe du Hoc.

The first stage of the visit will be on the beaches of Omaha Beach. Stormed by the American Rangers on June 6th, it is one of the strong points of the German fortifications on the Normandy coast, equipped at the time with a large number of heavy artillery pieces.

Then visit the famous St. Lawrence American War Cemetery located just above Omaha Beach in the town of Colleville-sur-mer. This 70-hectare site includes 9387 white marble headstones perfectly aligned on a lawn, the memorial, a chapel and the garden of the missing. It now honors the American soldiers who died during the Battle of Normandy in World War II and is one of 25 permanent U.S. burial sites abroad.

Then, a stop at Arromanches, a historic site known for its artificial harbor that was installed as part of the Normandy landings. It was used to unload 9000 tons of material on D-Day. Today, floating reinforced concrete caissons called "Phoenix" are still visible. You can enjoy a moment of relaxation on site to have your complimentary lunch.

In the afternoon, you will visit the 360 Museum of Arromanches where you can observe the remains of one of the two artificial harbors built by the Allies.

The last stop is near the sandy beach of Juno and its cemetery, one of the main beaches of the landing of June 6, 1944 by the Canadians. Return to our hotel in Paris around 8 pm.

## Day 3, Tuesday May 21, 2024

### PARIS AND LYON

Depart mid-morning from our hotel to the Paris Gare de Lyon train station for high-speed train trip to Lyon.

Arrive in Lyon and transfer to ship – Official beginning of cruise portion.