# Cruising Burgundy & Provence to the Côte d'Azur

RIVER CRUISE TOUR

Plus optional extensions in

Paris; Nice; The Italian Riviera & the Cinque Terre

RON/ROL/SOL 2013

## Cruising Burgundy & Provence to the Côte d'Azur Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
1 DACCDODT VICAC AND TDAVIEL DOCUMENTES	
1. PASSPORT, VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS Passport Required	
Visas not Required	
•	
No U.S. Passport?	
Backup Photocopies	
Optional Tours—Early Purchase Required	
2. YOUR HEALTH	
Keep Your Abilities In Mind	
Health Check and Inoculations	
Jet Lag Relief	8
3. LUGGAGE REGULATIONS	9
Size, Number and Weight restrictions	
Airport Security/TSA	
4. WHEN YOU ARRIVE	11
GCCL Air Travelers	
5. MONEY MATTERS	
How to Carry Your Money	
Onboard Ship	
Shopping	
U.S. Customs Regulations and Shipping Charges	
Problem with a Purchase?	
To Tip or Not to Tip	1/
6. PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP	18
In General	18
Luggage Suggestions	18
Packing Your Carry-On	19
Clothing Options	
Travel Gear Suggestions	19
Consider	
Medicines	20
Other Gear	20
7. REGIONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION	21
	•
8. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY	
In General	
Regional Electricity	
Electricity Onboard	
Smartphones	
Cell Phones	
Phone Calling Cards	
FHOLO CICAL	

9. GRAND CIRCLE CRUISE LINE'S EUROPEAN RIVER SHIPS	26
Shore Excursions	26
Onboard Activities	
Onboard Facilities	28
Ship Specifications	29
10. ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS	30
During Your Land Excursions & Optional Extensions	30
Paris in Brief (Main Tour and Optional Extension)	
Nice in Brief—Optional Extension	32
The Italian Riviera & the Cinque Terre in Brief—Optional Extension	
11. DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	36
12. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	42
Books, Maps, and Movies	42
Grand Circle Community & Useful Websites	47
Tourist Board Addresses	

### INTRODUCTION

#### ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

We've gathered some introductory information that may prove helpful for this Grand Circle Cruise Line itinerary. For detailed and timely information, it's wise to visit appropriate websites and confirm luggage regulations, weather conditions and other variable elements of your trip. If you expect to embark on personal exploration, or wish to discover more about the countries you visit, we suggest that you consult your choice of the many in-depth travel guidebooks devoted to your destinations. Refer to our additional resources section (at the end of the handbook) for other sources of insight.

#### ABOUT GRAND CIRCLE TRAVEL

Grand Circle Travel, founded in 1958 to serve the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), is the leader in international travel, adventure and discovery for Americans aged 50 and over. Grand Circle vacations have been recommended by *The New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Travel+Leisure*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel*, among other publications. But our most impressive reviews come from the more than one million people who have traveled with us and from readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* who placed Grand Circle Cruise Lines, the cruise branch of Grand Circle, in the Top 10 of the World's Best Cruise Lines for eight years — in 2012 ranking Grand Circle Cruise Lines the #1 World's Best River Cruise Line. Grand Circle has earned a spot on the prestigious *Condé Nast Traveler* Gold List for seven consecutive years as well. For 2011 *Condé Nast Traveler* named seven Grand Circle Cruise Line river ships among the 20 best river ships in the world; for 2012 the Grand Circle Cruise Lines was named to their Platinum Circle of top cruise lines.

#### YOUR GCCL PROGRAM DIRECTOR

During your exclusive Grand Circle Cruise Tour, you'll have reliable assistance available at all times from an on-site Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director. Your Program Director is fluent in English and can give you an inside perspective on your destinations. He or she is supported along the way by local tour guides, who guide you expertly through particular sites and cities.

Many Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Directors are graduates of professional education programs for travel guides. In addition, they receive specialized training directly from Grand Circle Cruise Line, training that is based on what we've learned from thousands of past travelers about how to make the trip most enjoyable. Your Program Director offers both a deep knowledge of the region and a commitment to make this a very pleasant, informative, and rewarding travel experience for you.

Your Program Director will provide sightseeing trips, handle all travel details, reserve optional tours you choose to take, oversee your Discovery Series events, and provide any other assistance you may need. You will be in the company of a Program Director throughout your Cruise Tour (and during the optional Paris, Nice, The Italian Riviera and the Cinque Terre land extensions if you take them).

#### WEATHER CONDITIONS AND RIVER DEPTHS

Throughout the river cruise season, weather conditions affect river depths, and water levels may require adjustments to your itinerary. When river depths rise or fall during your River Cruise, Grand Circle Cruise Line will be required to adjust your itinerary for your safety and to adhere to the current governmental and nautical requirements. Navigation may also be disrupted on Bank Holidays due to closed locks. Though we strive to adhere to our planned itinerary, we may not always be able to follow it exactly as planned. Therefore the sequence of ports visited and the days on which included features and optional tours occur may vary.

### 1. PASSPORT, VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS



You need a passport for this itinerary.

### Note

#### Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary:

- It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- It should have the recommended number of blank pages (see below for details).
- The blank pages must be labeled "Visas" at the top. Pages labeled "Amendments and Endorsements" are not acceptable.

#### **Recommended number of blank pages:**

This recommendation is based on a "worst case" scenario. On this trip you might use fewer pages, depending on the whims of the Immigration officials you meet. Since the consequence of having too few pages can be severe—you could be denied entry into a country—we opt for a *better safe than sorry* policy, and recommend these guidelines:

### Main trip and extensions: 1 blank "Visa" page.

Because the U.S. authorities may stamp your passport when you re-enter the United States, and because they may refuse to do so on a page that already has a stamp on it, you should have at least 2 blank passport pages available.

Please take moment to check if your passport meets all of these requirements. If it you are refused entry, you may be required by that country to return to the U.S. immediately, which would be at your own expense.

#### If you need to renew your passport or get extra pages:

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at <a href="https://www.travel.state.gov">www.travel.state.gov</a> for information on obtaining a new passport, renewing your existing passport, or for additional pages. You can renew your passport by mail if it is not damaged, if you obtained it within the last fifteen years, and if it's in the name you want on your new passport. Many local post offices carry forms for renewing by mail or obtaining extra pages. Allow several weeks for processing your passport. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

**NOTE:** When updating your passport, it is worthwhile to check the prices on all the different services that might apply to you. For example, it might be less expensive to renew your passport than to have pages added, depending on the number of pages you need.

### Visas not Required

U.S. citizens do not need a visa for entry into France or Italy.

### No U.S. Passport?

**Non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. passport holders**: If you are **not** a U.S. citizen or if you possess a passport from a country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate or embassy about possible visa requirements. Or, you can contact PVS International, who can also assist non-U.S. citizens:

#### **PVS International**

Passport & Visa Services 1700 N Moore Street Rosslyn Center, suite 310 Arlington, VA 22209 Telephone: 1-800-556-9990

### **Backup Photocopies**

The smartest and easiest security precaution you can take is to carry photocopies of the personal information pages of your passport, your air ticket, your traveler's check serial numbers, and your credit cards. Bring along extra passport-sized photos. Add the phone and fax numbers for reporting lost credit cards, and for your travel protection plan company if you have purchased one and for your medical emergency network. Store the copies separate from the originals. This can save you immeasurable time, money, and bother if your documents are lost or stolen during your trip. In addition, you can scan these photocopies and email them to your personal email address so that a replacement can be printed out if needed.

### Optional Tours—Early Purchase Required

### Versailles

To pre-book the Versailles optional tour you must do so by 10 days prior to departure. This tour cannot be booked onsite.

Embark on an optional half-day excursion to the Palace of Versailles—the former home of 3,000 princes, ministers, and servants. Your guided tour will take you through the palace's Grand Chambers, the Hall of Mirrors (where the Treaty of Versailles, ending World War I, was signed in 1919), and the Royal Chapel. You'll take in the luminous decor in marble, chased bronze, and gold leaf, as well as Rococo-style woodwork and Italian-style painted ceilings. As you explore, you'll discover how much the palace has been expanded and embellished since Louis XIII first built a modest hunting lodge at Versailles in 1623. You'll also enjoy time to visit the French gardens at your leisure. The cost of this optional tour is about \$80 per person.

(Please note: Versailles is the most visited site in France. This tour involves a lot of walking inside the palace and uneven footing on the cobblestones in the courtyard. Visitor circulation inside the palace is carefully monitored by the staff and they may impose time limits for individual rooms. Even with a reserved ticket you may encounter waiting lines at the entrance. The palace is not air conditioned and it can be uncomfortably hot. Similar lines may occur during the Louvre optional tour – with crowds in front of the most important work. Note that the Louvre optional tour does not need to be pre-purchased.)

### 2. YOUR HEALTH



### **Keep Your Abilities In Mind**

You can encounter unaccustomed challenges on even the shortest journey — river cruises, for instance, mean adapting to life aboard ship, with the potential for rocky moments, and wet, slippery docks. At some docks you may have to step from ship to ship before reaching shore. In addition, terrain onshore can be uneven, unpaved, or cobble stoned; both included and optional tours can require extended walking to guarantee a truly rewarding experience. For this fast paced itinerary you must be able to walk for 1-3 miles unassisted over the course of each day. Some of the places you'll visit have not been improved with elevators, escalators, ramps, railings or other aids. If you have difficulty walking in terms of balance or stamina, or are generally inactive in your daily life consider an exercise program to tone up for your cruise. If in doubt, consult your physician describing the length and type of rigors you'll encounter. Please note that this trip is not wheelchair, walker, or rollator accessible; nor can Grand Circle Cruise Line accommodate motorized scooters of any kind.



## **Health Check and Inoculations**

Feeling healthy and confident of your mobility is essential if you want to fully enjoy your trip abroad. Please be aware that this program features a fair amount of walking up and down inclines in towns with uneven or cobblestone streets. At some of the quaint river ports, you may encounter old-style wooden piers that lack modern ramps. For your comfort and safety, we recommend this program only to individuals in good physical condition. If you have any doubts, please discuss them with your doctor, and follow his or her advice. If you have difficulty walking or are wheelchair-bound, please consider a different Grand Circle Cruise Line vacation.

If you have a condition that requires special equipment or treatment, you must bring and be responsible for all necessary items related to your condition. If you take medications regularly, be sure to pack an ample supply that will last your entire trip, as obtaining refills of your medication can be difficult during your cruise. Pack these medications in your carry-on bag, and keep them in their original, labeled containers. To be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications, you should also bring copies of the prescriptions, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name. A loose filling or developing cavity would be difficult to remedy while you are traveling. You may want to have a dental exam before your trip.

### **Basic Illness Prevention**

It's common for people traveling in contained spaces to be more susceptible to easily transmitted viral and bacterial illnesses such as flu, stomach and respiratory bugs, and colds. The single most effective way to prevent this is frequent hand-washing. We ask all travelers to be extra diligent in their normal hand-washing hygiene, and to drink plenty of fluids for proper hydration. Simple steps like these will help ensure that everyone enjoys the comfortable, carefree vacation they looked forward to.

#### **Vaccinations**

**Check with the CDC:** To ensure you receive any needed vaccinations we suggest that you check the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for your destination. You can contact them at:

**On-line** — if you have access to the Internet, we suggest you visit the CDC's Web site at **www.cdc.gov/travel**, where you will find comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.

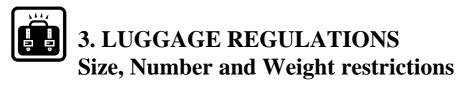
**By phone**—at the CDC's Hotline toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day. Please note that automated information may be arranged topically by disease, rather than by country or region.

**Consult your doctor:** After checking the CDC's recommendations we strongly suggest that you consult your family physician concerning any vaccinations or medications that you may need on this trip. At the time of print there were no specific vaccinations required for entry into any of the countries on your itinerary.

### **Jet Lag Relief**

You will feel better on the first days of your trip if, shortly before you leave home, you start to adjust to the different time zone of your destination. Since you will cross several time zones to reach your destination, you may lose many hours of regular sleep. On arrival, your body then will have to suddenly adjust to new sleeping and eating patterns. The result is jet lag. Its symptoms are fatigue—often compounded by insomnia and general restlessness—irritability, and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag; but you can minimize it. Here's how:

- Start your trip well rested. Try to begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave.
- Switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane. Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Try to sleep on overnight flights.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying.
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane, and make an effort to get up and walk about the cabin a few times to keep your blood circulation normal.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.



It may seem early to discuss luggage and packing, but if you know current industry standards for international flights you can start to plan what type of luggage you'll use, how much clothing to bring, etc. The following information can help you in your trip preparations. We'll remind you to confirm your U.S./international luggage limits (and update regional limits, if applicable) in your final documents (arriving about two weeks before your departure).

MAIN TRIP LIMITS					
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person				
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The current <b>standard</b> is <b>50lbs for checked bags</b> and <b>15 lbs for carry-on bags</b> .				
Size restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches ( <i>length+width+depth</i> ). Generally, <b>62 linear inches is the checked bag limit</b> ; <b>carry-on limit is 45 linear inches</b> .				
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.				
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS					

Both extensions have the same luggage restrictions as the main trip.

#### **REMARKS / SUGGESTIONS**

One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person: Due to the space limitations on bus transfers, you'll be restricted to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional airlines luggage fees (which are your responsibility). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person for flights to Europe and other international flights.

Note: Enforcement of published restrictions by countries and airlines is a matter of governmental and corporate policy. Enforcement may include spot checks and may be inconsistently applied. Expect penalties and fines to be imposed immediately, however, when and if enforced. Before you choose to ignore the published restrictions you should ask: Do I feel lucky? And, even if you answer yes, you should make sure that you have the ability to pay the fine.

#### Should I confirm luggage restrictions with my U.S./international airline(s) before departure?

Absolutely, confirm current restrictions about a week or so before your departure. You should take this step no matter if your vacation has a lower limit then the average international flight or not, because there may be recent changes, such as new security regulations, or an update to the standard weight/size allowances. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our webpage in the FAQ section.

You should also check with the airlines on luggage fees—many airlines charge to check luggage, even on international flights. Others may charge a fee if you bring a second carry-on item, like a purse or a laptop. These fees are not included in your trip price; they are payable directly to the airlines. If you are making a connecting flight, you should also confirm if your luggage can be checked through to your final destination. For more information about air travel, see the "Air Travel" section of your Important *Information* booklet.

### **Airport Security/TSA**

**Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage may change**. To avoid inadvertently packing restricted items in your carry-on, we suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website at www.tsa.gov/public.

**Liquids and your carry on:** Follow the **TSA's 3-1-1 rule**: Liquids must be in a 3.4 ounce or less (100ml) bottle (by volume); all bottles must be in a 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin. One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3.4 ounce (100ml) container size is a security measure. Note that this rule is used increasingly throughout the world.

#### For flights that originate in the U.S:

To reduce the risk of damage to your luggage, do not lock your bags when checking in for flights originating in the U.S. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is responsible for screening all checked luggage at commercial airports throughout the U.S. TSA baggage-handling agents may need access to your luggage and will break locks if required. TSA "accepted and recognized" locks are widely available: screeners can open and re-lock bags using these locks if a physical inspection is required.

#### For flights originating outside the U.S.:

On all flights outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend you lock your luggage. This is not a legal requirement but merely a precaution against theft. Have the keys handy, as you may need to open your luggage for a security screening or for customs in the U.S. or Europe.

### 4. WHEN YOU ARRIVE

### **GCCL Air Travelers**

U.S. Departure: If you are among a group of ten or more GCCL travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, a GCCL Airport Representative will assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. The Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time and at the gate one hour before your departure time (security permitting).

Please note: If you are arriving at your international gateway city via a connecting domestic flight, the Grand Circle Cruise Line Representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.

Europe Arrival: Europe Arrival: If you made air arrangements through Grand Circle Cruise Line, a GCCL representative or a transfer driver will meet you outside the Customs area in the arrival hall of the airport to assist you with your transfer to the hotel. (GCCL staff and porters are not allowed in the Customs area.) Please wear your Grand Circle Cruise Line nametag so our staff can identify you; GCCL staff will be holding a GCCL sign for identification. Lost luggage must be reported <a href="before">before</a> you exit the luggage hall area because you will not be allowed back in after you leave customs. If you cannot locate our staff in the arrival hall, go to the Information Desk and ask them to assist you by calling the local GCCL office or the emergency numbers.

Important note: On arrival, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and load it onto a cart (available for  $1 \in$ ), which you then will move through customs. When you exit customs, you'll handle your cart until reaching your motorcoach. Your motorcoach driver will load your luggage onto your motorcoach.

**U.S. Return:** At the end of your main trip or optional post-trip extension, you'll be transferred to the airport for your return flight to the U.S. If you are among a group of ten or more GCCL travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, a GCCL Airport Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights.

Important Note on Name Tags: Please remember to wear your Grand Circle Cruise Line name tag when you exit Customs, upon arrival and when you return to the U.S., so that you are readily identifiable as a GCCL traveler.

### 5. MONEY MATTERS



## **How to Carry Your Money**

**Traveler's checks—not recommended:** We urge you not to rely on traveler's checks for your personal expenses. They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's most practical to view any traveler's checks you might bring as a last "cash" resort in the event of a special situation.

**Euros** have an advantage. Cash is more readily exchanged and accepted than traveler's checks, and sometimes commands a better exchange rate. You might also consider using a debit card, another reliable payment method. U.S. dollars are NOT accepted in France or Italy.

There is no need to obtain Euros before your trip – though having 50 or 100€ might be helpful. You can change money at money exchange offices (to exchange cash you may be asked to show your passport), or rely on ATMs for walking around money. Please note that torn, dirty, or taped bills may not be accepted; and some locations may refuse to handle large banknotes (100 Euro or 100 U.S. dollars) due to counterfeit concerns.

#### **Credit Cards**

Though major American credit cards (American Express, Visa, and MasterCard) are accepted abroad, always inquire if your brand of credit card is accepted before deciding on your purchase. It is also wise to notify the credit card company that you will be using your cards abroad so that they may remove any security block. When using a major credit card you may receive a different exchange rate than if you pay with cash; inquire about the rate first. Please be aware that credit cards might not be accepted for small purchases or in the markets. Note that the Discover credit card is not widely accepted outside the U.S. Keep your receipts in case you have questions about the conversion or exchange rate. Also, keep your receipts as proof of purchase for items to be shipped home.

In many parts of Europe a new credit card called a chip-and-PIN (a personal identification number) card has been introduced. This new card is more secure than the standard swipe-and-sign card, but it needs a PIN to work. In some cases you may find that a shop has already switched to the new system and, if so, they will ask you for a PIN to complete your transaction. For this reason we suggest checking if your credit card already has a PIN on file for it. Don't be surprised if it doesn't—this new technology is not used in the U.S. yet, so many U.S. credit cards won't have a PIN.

**Debit cards**: Debit cards are very popular in Europe, and are widely accepted, but will *almost always* require a PIN. Many U.S. banks offer a combined ATM and debit card. Check your ATM card, and if it has a Visa or a MasterCard logo, ask your bank if can used as a debit card in Europe. (If there's no logo, then you probably can't use it as a debit card, but your bank will know for certain). If it can be used as a debit card, all you'll need is the same PIN you use at the ATM.

#### **PIN Numbers**

When you are *off ship* a PIN will be required for most debit card transactions and some credit card transactions. However, a PIN number will <u>not</u> be required for purchases made aboard the ship, and not for the payment of optional tours.

**If your credit card doesn't have a PIN:** Many shops in Europe will still take the swipe-and-sign cards. And if the shop absolutely requires a PIN, you can simply use another form of payment.

#### **ATMs**

When traveling, typically PLUS, Cirrus, and other bank networks are available throughout large cities and small towns. Always notify your bank before you leave home that you are going abroad so that they may remove any blocks on your account and also ask them about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad. For cash withdrawals, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's 4-digit PIN (Personal Identification Number), as many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their numeric keys, they only display digits.

**Note on ATM use:** Many banks impose a fee ranging from \$1 to \$5 every time you use an ATM in a foreign city. You may want to limit the number of withdrawals that you make. Your Program Director/Hospitality Desk Representative can advise you on locations, but when to exchange money is left to your discretion.

### **Currency**

The euro is the official currency of France and Italy. Euro banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

Banknotes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500

• Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 cents; 1 and 2 euros

**France: Banking Hours:** Banking hours in Paris are usually from 10.00am to 5.00pm, Monday through Friday. Throughout the rest of France, banks are usually open from 10am to 1pm, and 3pm to 5pm, Tuesday through Saturday. Banks often close earlier the day before a public holiday. **Note that banks do** *NOT* exchange currency.

Italy: Banking Hours: Bank hours are usually Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 1:30 pm, and 3 pm to 4 pm; banks are closed on Saturday and Sunday. To exchange cash and Traveler's Checks you will need to have your passport with you. In banks there often is a special counter reserved for exchanging money. Many banks exchange money only in the morning; many do not exchange money at all or limit changes to bills of \$20 or more. In Italy, money can be changed not only at banks, but also at CAMBIOs (Exchange Offices), General Post Offices, and some travel agencies and hotels. Exchange rates will be most favorable at banks, although banks always charge a commission for the service.

Currency exchange rates fluctuate daily. Your Program Director will advise you of the exchange rate upon your arrival. For current exchange rates, please refer to the our website, or the financial section of your newspaper. On our website select the region and then click on the country you'll be visiting. A link to the currency converter is included in the menu on the page of each individual country.

### **Onboard Ship**

Two separate bills will be issued:

1) **Shipboard account:** This bill is for onboard purchases (drinks at the bar, gift shop purchases, laundry, etc) and is calculated in Euros.

**Payment Options:** 

Cash: Euros or U.S. dollars are accepted

**Credit card:** American Express, MasterCard, or Visa are accepted **Debit card:** Cards with Visa or MasterCard logos are accepted

If you pay with a credit or debit card: You will need to sign a receipt and/or supply a PIN number, depending on the card account requirements (onboard sales terminals accept both.)

NOT accepted: Personal checks, Discover card.

2) **Optional tour account:** This bill is for optional tours taken during the trip; it is calculated in U.S. dollars.

### **Payment Options:**

Credit card: American Express, MasterCard, or Visa cards are accepted

**Debit card:** Cards with Visa or MasterCard logos are accepted. The card must allow you to *sign* for purchases — you will *not* be able to enter a PIN. You will need to sign an optional tour form as proof of payment.

**NOT accepted:** *Personal checks, cash, Discover card, or PIN-only debit cards.* 

**Please note:** Shipboard and optional tour account payments made by credit card may take up to 3 months to process. We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "**OPT Boston**" (depending on your credit card company).

Exchange services: Onboard ship we will break down or change larger U.S. bills into smaller ones (for example, one U.S. \$50 bill into U.S. \$20, \$10, \$5, and \$1 bills), and change U.S. currency into Euros (for example U.S. \$20 into Euro €XX — depending on exchange rate). This service is available only for the Euro & U.S. dollar currencies. The daily exchange is **limited to a maximum of U.S. \$50 per person**. You can exchange larger amounts at local exchange offices in port towns. Withdrawals from your credit card cannot be made aboard ship. When ashore, the exchange rate is often very high at tourist locations and, since the adoption of the euro, smaller banks usually will not change foreign currencies.

ATM Machines: Generally, the best, quickest, and safest way to get local currency is to use your ATM card. There are ATM machines in almost every place you will visit ashore.



It is Grand Circle Cruise Line's goal to identify and provide you with shopping opportunities that highlight unique, locally produced products with good value from reliable vendors. For this reason there may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is <u>no</u> requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. **Grand Circle Cruise Line cannot be responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.** 

Value-Added Tax: The French value-added tax (VAT) is typically 19.6% and can be as high as 33.33% on luxury articles. Depending on how much you spend on certain goods, you may be eligible for a partial refund of this tax. Ask the shopkeeper or salesperson at the time of purchase. Be sure to save all receipts for Customs. Note that the ships do *not* have VAT forms. (Generally, you have to spend over 175€ at the same shop, on the same day, and have filled out a special form for this process.)

If you plan a major purchase, we strongly recommend that you research the prices and quality available at home before your trip. Just one visit to an import shop or gold dealer will put you way ahead when you go shopping. This is the only way to know if you are getting a good price.

**Shop hours:** Stores are generally open from 10am to 7pm Monday through Saturday. Shops in France are usually closed on Sundays.

#### In Paris

Perfumes, fashion, jewelry, art, glass, and china—these are just a few of the many goods for which France is famous. The big department stores in Paris are excellent places to get an idea of what's available—or to spend an afternoon if your shopping time is limited. The biggest—and best—are *Galeries Lafayette* and *Printemps*, both on the Boulevard Haussmann, near the Opera and the Madeleine. The *Prisunic* and *Monoprix* chains have lower prices, but the selection isn't as good.

Or, if you're looking for something particular, you can head straight to one of the specialized shopping areas. *Haute couture* can be found in the streets around the Champs Elysées: Av. George V, Av. Montaigne, Rue Francois I, and Rue de Faubourg St. Honore. The Rue de Paradis is lined with crystal and china shops, and St. Germain des Prés has more than its share of art galleries. The best and most expensive antiques dealers are along the Faubourg St. Honoré on the Right Bank. For great flea markets, head to the Marche d'Aligre, at the Place d'Aligre, or the Puces de St. Ouen, near the Porte de Clignancourt.

### In Nice

Shopping for both designer names and common brands is a popular pastime on the French Riviera. The plethora of shops range in atmosphere and price from very chic and expensive to down-to-earth and affordable. There is also a strong local emphasis, with plenty of products from the area available for sale, especially at the colorful open-air markets. In Nice, street market shopping in La Vieille Ville is the least expensive and perhaps the most fun. Rue Massena, Place Magenta, and Rue Paradis are the pedestrian zone of shops and cafés, with Rue Paradis noted for its elegant shops. There's also a flea market on Quai Lunel, Tuesdays through Saturdays. The avenue Jean Medecin is a prosperous high street with department stores and a pair of shopping malls—the Galeries Lafayette and the Nice Etoile. A street well worth inclusion on any round of the shops is the rue St. Francois de Paule.

Monte Carlo and Cannes are world-renowned for their exclusive boutiques selling upscale fashion pieces, pricey jewelry, and all types of accessories. In Antibes and Juan les Pins, you can find everything from trinkets to high fashion.

#### In Italy

Whether it refers to high fashion or Maserati automobiles, "Made in Italy" has become synonymous with style and quality craftsmanship. Among the most popular buys are leather goods, silk ties, knitwear, gold jewelry, ceramics, straw goods and other handicrafts, small cabinets, and jewelry boxes. Each region in Italy has its specialties:

Liguria is known for ceramics from the craftspeople of Albisola Superiore, ship models, handicrafts, and, of course, pesto. Local street markets and stores commonly have a wealth of offerings.

Bargaining is **not** common in Italy. Prices in all shops are fixed and include taxes. Shops are generally open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9 am to 1 pm; they close for lunch and re-open 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Individual stores might vary these hours. Some shops are closed on Sundays and Monday mornings during the winter months, while they are closed Saturday afternoons and Sundays during the summer months.

### **U.S.** Customs Regulations and Shipping Charges

### **Exemption Amounts**

Articles totaling \$800, at fair retail value where they were acquired, may be imported free of charge if you bring them with you. A flat rate of duty—usually a percentage—will be applied to the next \$1,000 worth (fair retail value) of merchandise. The U.S. Customs Inspector determines the value of your items when you enter, and is not bound by your bill of sale. In almost every case, however, a genuine bill of sale will be honored.

#### **Fees on Items Shipped Home**

Items shipped home are *always* subject to duty when received in the U.S. There will also be charges for shipping. Although some shops abroad may offer to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the customs facility closest to you and payment of the *export* duties (the fee to remove an item from its country of origin) not door-to-door shipping or *import* duties (the fee the U.S. government charges to bring an item into the U.S.). All additional duties or shipping charges would be the responsibility of the purchaser—you.

Therefore unless the item is small enough to mail or to be sent by a global parcel service (like FedEx) you should be prepared to pay customs duties and for shipping or pick-up from the nearest customs facility. This is why the U.S. Customs & Border Protection service states: "The most cost-effective thing to do is to take your purchases with you if at all possible."

#### **Illegal Items**

It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins. For more information on what you may or may not bring back into the United States, you can obtain the publication "Know Before You Go" from the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection by phone, mail or from their website:

U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20229 Tel. 1-877-227-5511 www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/

### **Problem with a Purchase?**

The best way to address a problem with a purchase is to not have one in the first place! So don't forget to examine merchandise before paying for it, check contracts or agreements before signing, and review your receipt before leaving the shop. For major purchases, don't hesitate to ask in advance about the return policy—local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up.

But what if you do discover an issue with an item later on? In that case, your best recourse is to contact the vendor directly. For this reason we recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. due to delays in communication, the complexities of international shipping/customs duties, and even cultural differences in how business is conducted.

### To Tip or Not to Tip

Sometimes *that* is the question. The good news is twofold: we're fresh out of Shakespearean soliloquies, so no thesauri will get injured in this production; and the answer the question "to tip or not to tip (and how much to tip if you so choose)" is *always* a personal decision. Tipping is a common practice both at home and abroad and we offer these guidelines to answer questions about appropriate tipping amounts. It can be useful to have this information on site – when the question *must* be answered – and ahead of time for travel budgeting purposes. Tips below are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency (usually preferred) or in U.S. dollars (personal/traveler's checks should *never* be used for tips).

**Shipboard:** Shipboard gratuities to the cruise personnel are not included in the cost of your River Cruise. The ships' tipping guidelines recommend a flat tip of \$10-\$12 U.S. per person, per day, which will be pooled among all cruise staff. For your convenience tips for the crew can be paid with a credit card.

**GCCL Program Director:** Gratuities to your Program Director are not included in the cost of your River Cruise. If you would like to express a personal "Thank You" to the Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director assigned to your group, especially if he/she has provided you with individual assistance, it would be appreciated. We recommend \$4-\$6 per person, per day. Please note that tips for our Program Directors can only be in the form of cash, and local currency is appreciated.

**Drivers and Local Guides:** We recommend \$2-\$3 per person for motorcoach drivers or local tour guides during half or full day tours.

**Port Stops & Land Stays:** During your port stops and land stays, you may dine in a local restaurant, take a taxi, or avail yourself of some other service where tipping is customary. A service charge is usually included in restaurant and bar bills—look for the statement "service compris" on the bill or menu. If this appears, no additional tip is needed, otherwise it's customary to leave around 10% of the bill for your waiter or bartender. As for taxis, in many cities the tip is included in the fare, and will be announced on a sign inside the cab; otherwise a 10% tip is appropriate. For hotel housekeeping staff not onboard the ship, a tip in local currency equal to about \$1 per person, per day, is sufficient.

### In Italy:

**Public Restrooms:** Most public restrooms in this region are manned by a local staff that takes care of cleaning and supplies. It is customary to leave a small tip for the staff—about \$.65 per person (in local currencies).

**Time at Leisure:** During the times that you explore independently, you may dine in a local restaurant, take a taxi, or avail yourself of some other service where tipping is customary. In Italy, restaurant checks sometimes include service charges (*servizio incluso*) – but this is *not* a tip. It is customary to tip waiters 5% to 10% depending on the quality of the service. Taxi drivers expect about 10%. If the doorman calls a cab for you, the tip is generally about 50 cents euro.

### 6. PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP



### In General

**Travel light.** A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. Eliminate all but the essentials and start packing a few days before you leave. That way, you'll have time to think—not fret—about what you might be forgetting. To have a varied travel wardrobe, yet keep your luggage light, we

recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated pants and shirts, skirts and blouses, or pantsuits that can be mixed to create different outfits.

Pack casual clothes. Comfortable, low-key apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations and aboard ship. Basic pants, shirts, walking shorts, sportswear, everyday dresses and skirts, supportive shoes, and functional outdoor clothes are recommended. At dinner, you will not need to wear "dressy" clothing; men do not need a tie or jacket. You may want one or two "smart casual" outfits for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it's completely up to you. If you plan to enjoy a special dinner out in Paris or on the Côte d'Azur, a blazer or a sports jacket, trousers, and tie will get a man into finer restaurants; for women, a pretty dress or pantsuit will suffice. Côte d'Azur casinos, which you may choose to visit if you take our Nice extension, do not allow jeans or tennis shoes, but a "smart casual" outfit is acceptable. A cover charge may apply. Cameras are *not* allowed in the casinos.

Plan to dress in layers on shore excursions. Be prepared for a variety of weather conditions: warm days with sun, chilly temperatures with showers, and evenings that could dip into the 40s or 50s, for the "shoulder" season. In November, evenings may even fall into the 30s. For warmer conditions, a mixture of cotton sweaters, sweatshirts, long-sleeved shirts, summery tops, pants, skirts, and walking shorts is recommended. Evenings call for a warm outfit and a heavy sweater or jacket. A sturdy windproof shell over a heavy sweatshirt, sweater, or fleece top is ideal for being out on deck at night. On land excursions, dress in layers. You can then easily adjust to any temperature shifts by removing or adding a layer. For possible showers, take a folding travel umbrella and/or rain hat. A waterproof jacket with a hood is ideal. Please note that Paris and the south of France can often be very hot in July and August, with average temperatures in the 90F range.

Good walking shoes are critical. This program features many included tours that follow steep, unpaved or cobbled routes; and even an average day of light sightseeing or shopping can put great demands on your feet. Supportive, waterproof sports shoes are ideal for daytime shore excursions. If you prefer more ankle support, take light hiking boots. Bring five to seven pairs of socks. In case you get caught in the rain, we suggest you bring an extra pair of walking shoes, and rain boots or galoshes. Aboard ship, you'll want non-slip shoes with rubber soles.

### **Luggage Suggestions**

Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase for your checked luggage. Due to space limitations on our motor coaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Porterage at airports and hotels is provided for **one** bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags.

Consider a daypack or small backpack as your carry-on bag. It will do double duty during excursions and walking trips. A daypack leaves your hands free and distributes its weight onto your back. Packed with daily travel needs (sweater, camera, rain/wind jacket, water bottle, etc.), it will compress to fit the

storage space of foreign motorcoaches, and yet still have room for an impulse buy at a local street market.

**Inner bags**: Packing is easier if you use inner bags to help organize your gear. Use plastic bags, nylon stuff sacks, or packing cubes to organize inside your suitcase. Isolate liquids, store camera gear and important papers in heavy-duty Ziploc style bags.

**Tip:** a second, empty lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home – but remember that you may incur extra luggage fees. If you're traveling with a companion we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.

### **Packing Your Carry-On**

Using a daypack as a carry-on bag for your flights is a smart solution. We <u>strongly urge</u> you to pack your carry-on with at least one full change of clothes, your camera gear, medications, changes of socks and underwear, your important travel documents, and other irreplaceable items, in case your checked bags go astray. Store camera gear and important papers in plastic bags to protect them from dirt and moisture. With a daypack you can then remove these items on arrival and load your bag with the gear you'll need on walking tours and excursions.

**NOTE:** Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage change frequently. To avoid inadvertently packing any restricted items in your carry-on luggage, we strongly suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website, at <a href="https://www.tsa.gov">www.tsa.gov</a> which keeps a current list of restricted items. From the main website click on *Our Travelers*, then *Air Travel*, and then you will see a link for *Prohibited Items*.

### **Clothing Options**

We've included information below on the weather you can expect for the regions you'll be visiting on your travels. Taking into account the climate you'll encounter and the general suggestions we offer above will enable you to create a flexible wardrobe that's light enough for sophisticated travel and will guarantee comfort in all the conditions you can expect to encounter. The luggage weight and size restrictions imposed by travel realities today have made traveling light an absolute necessity. With modern fabrics – Gore-Tex, Polarfleece, polypropylene, etc. – lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy. A visit to any on-line or local sporting goods/outdoor stores (L.L. Bean, REI, EMS, etc.) will yield a treasure trove of lightweight, specialized, and fashionable clothing and gear that is readily adaptable to your itinerary.

### **Travel Gear Suggestions**

Though it's often fun to do things as the locals do, it can be frustrating when daily necessities or conveniences from home aren't available. To travel wisely these days you must juggle your personal needs and preferences against the physical constraints of your transportation—whether it's an international airplane, a transfer motorcoach, a small ship or a day-long trek on a camel. You'll have to distinguish between what you **must** have, what you'd *like* to have, whether you can zip your suitcase closed, and what you can reasonably expect to wrestle through airport hallways and security checkpoints. Consult the following items to create your personal checklist – ignoring what you don't need and making the tough decisions over borderline cases. Remember that many airlines today will charge you extra for added luggage.

What not to pack: do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Also avoid packing glass bottles; use plastic containers instead. Leave checkbooks, non-essential credit cards, valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose at home.

**Cabin amenities include:** shower gel, hand soap, hairdryer, shower cap, nail file, washcloth, and towels. We have still mentioned some of these items in the checklists below, in case you have preferred brands you want to bring with you on your cruise.

Most hotels in France do not provide wash cloths. You may want to bring your own.

Consider	
<ul> <li>Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, body soap, moisturizer, lip balm, etc.</li> <li>Spare eyeglasses/contact lens and your prescription</li> <li>Sunglasses with a neck strap</li> <li>Sun hat or visor</li> <li>Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger</li> <li>Insect repellent with DEET</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>□ Travel money bag or money belt</li> <li>□ Pocket-size tissues</li> <li>□ Flashlight, extra batteries/bulb</li> <li>□ Compact umbrella</li> <li>□ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards (as well as the originals)</li> <li>□ Extra passport-sized photos</li> <li>□ Electrical transformer &amp; plug adapter—see "Regional Electricity" below</li> </ul>
Medicines	
<ul> <li>☐ Your own prescription medicines</li> <li>☐ Vitamins</li> <li>☐ Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan</li> <li>☐ Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin</li> <li>☐ Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax</li> </ul>	☐ Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta ☐ Anti-diarrheal: Imodium ☐ Band-Aids, Moleskin foot pads ☐ Antibiotics: Neosporin/Bacitracin
Other Gear	
<ul> <li>□ Travel alarm</li> <li>□ Compact binoculars</li> <li>□ Hanging toiletry bag with pockets</li> <li>□ Moist towelettes (packets) and/or antibacterial "water-free" hand cleanser</li> <li>□ Hand-wash laundry soap (Woolite), clothespins/travel clothesline/stopper</li> </ul>	Reading materials Travel journal/note pad Swimsuit Home address book Photos, small gift for home-hosted visit Phrase book Collapsible walking staff
☐ Wash cloth	Pocket-size calculator for exchange rates

### 7. REGIONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION

We can't predict the weather you'll have on your travels – our local weathermen are lucky to get tomorrow right! So, as your departure nears, it's a great idea to visit the *My Account* feature of **www.gct.com** for a current 10-day forecast of temperatures and conditions at your destinations. Or check Internet weather sites (www.wunderground.com is very comprehensive) for those forecasts and tweak your wardrobe accordingly. You'll find historical averages and general information on local climates below – but, given recent weather extremes, it's even more important to consult up-to-the-minute resources.

**Paris:** The City of Light has about the same weather as our Middle Atlantic States, though it's usually not warmer than 75° F, or colder than 30° F. The main characteristic of the city's weather is its changeability. Bright skies can abruptly turn cloudy and a chilly drizzle ensue; then just as quickly as the rain began, it can end, and the sun shines again.

Another volatile aspect of Parisian weather is the blasts of rapidly moving air—probably the result of a wind tunnel effect caused by the city's long boulevards being bordered by buildings of uniform height. But other than the occasional winds and rain (which add an undeniable drama to many of the city's panoramas), Paris offers among the most pleasant weather conditions of any capital in Europe, with a highly tolerable average temperature of 53°.

The early spring can still be on the cool side, but later on in the season, temperatures are usually comfortable, often reaching into the low 60s. Summers are rarely overly warm—the upper 70s is the norm—though a spell of hot weather can settle in for a few days, or even a week or two. Early autumn is slightly cooler, with temperatures edging toward the 50s. By November, it may dip into the 40s. Rain is a common occurrence year-round.

**Côte d'Azur:** As a rule, the Provence and Riviera regions have much more sunshine, higher temperatures, and longer spells of consistent weather than areas farther north. The towns situated on the Côte d'Azur follow the old geography lesson precept about the Mediterranean: hot dry summers, warm wet winters—except that the winters can also be chilly at night and in the early morning. The middle of the day is often clear and brilliant. The rain, when it comes, generally goes away again quite soon. But it can also rain buckets, seemingly all of a sudden. Another local weather feature is wind. Some breezes are gentle and soothing, but there is a variety of fiercer winds as well. The most famous is the *mistral*, which comes tearing down from the north out of a clear sky and generally blows for several days at a time, especially during spring. *Note on summer weather: Temperatures can be rather hot in the summer, so if you are traveling in this season, be sure to take clothes that will breathe.* 

**Santa Marherita Ligure, Cinque Terre:** The Italian Riviera is protected from cold northern winds by two mountain ranges, the Maritime Alps and Ligurian Apennines. The region has quite mild winters and bright, hot summers, and lots of sunshine all year. It has an average of 60 rainy days per year, and it rarely snows. Beaches, alas, are relatively rare.

Here is the data from the weather observation stations closest to our destinations.

	WHAT'S THE TEMPERATURE?  Average highs (taken at 2 pm) and lows (taken just before sunrise) in °F.										
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV		
Nice (f	Nice (for Côte d'Azur)										
High	58	61	67	74	90	90	75	68	61		
Low	46	49	62	67	67	68	63	56	48		
Lyon											
High	53	58	67	73	85	90	72	61	50		
Low	38	42	50	57	61	60	54	47	39		
Paris											
High	51	57	64	70	75	75	69	59	49		
Low	38	42	49	54	58	57	52	46	39		
Santa	Santa Margherita Ligure, Italy (for the Italian Riviera) optional extension										
High	59	64	71	78	84	86	80	73	66		
Low	50	51	57	64	69	69	68	60	55		

**Please note:** The data cited here reflect *climate* as opposed to *weather* conditions, and serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. A 60 degree *average* high temperature means that days may be as warm as 80 or as cool as 40 – but it's most likely you'll encounter temperatures in the 50 to 70 degree range.

### 8. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY



### In General

Smartphone, tablet, digital camera/camcorder, MP3 player: travel today can involve technology that didn't exist even five years ago. The usefulness of digital devices is enormous: smartphones can keep you connected and offer up-to-the-minute

information via your cell plan or a local Wi-Fi connection. With a tablet (or smartphone) you can store multiple country guidebooks, access maps and connect to the internet in a small, lightweight device. (*Tip:* you can download this document from the Grand Circle Travel website and import it into your tablet or e-reader, many of which can display PDF files.)

Compact and lightweight, digital camcorders and cameras take high definition movies and still images of the people you meet and places you visit. For robust use a laptop may be effective; for occasional use it's wiser to rely on Internet cafes or a tablet and hotel Internet access rather than shoulder the heft and size of a laptop.

To use these devices you should first consider the services available at your destinations. You'll encounter a range of electrical standards, varied plug configurations to access the local current, erratic availability (electricity and internet access), and differing technological standards.

You'll need to assess your power and data storage needs, and the accessories required to recharge/connect/use these devices. Finally, it's smart to read the owner's manual *before* you depart. Pay particular attention to electrical, power and storage requirements to ensure that you understand exactly what you need. Thorough preparation is the best guarantee that your devices will work up to their potential.



### **Regional Electricity**

The standard U.S. electrical system — 110V 60Hz current and flat two- or three-pronged polarized plug system — is rare elsewhere. The rest of the world overwhelmingly uses 220-240V and 50/60Hz current with a variety of plug shapes, sizes, and configurations. Some plugs will work with multiple receptacles, while others won't. Europe is largely standardized to the Type C "Europlug."

Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V 50/60Hz service will ruin the motor. We suggest that you choose *dual* voltage appliances (widely available) that work on both 110 and 220/240 voltage. Dual voltage appliances need only plug adapters.

If you bring 110V appliances, such as a hair dryer (note that hotels often supply hairdryers and coffee makers) or a shaver, you'll need a transformer (to halve the 220/240V current) as well as plug adapters. Regional transformer/adapter kits can be found at hardware or online stores. However, transformers can be unreliable and a broken one will leave you lugging a useless 110V appliance. Battery-operated alternatives are an option, but will need a supply of batteries.

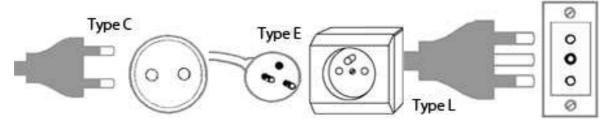
France uses the Type C "*Europlug*" and Type E plugs and receptacles that accommodate them, and uses 230 V and 50 Hz current. The electric current in Italy is 220 V AC, 50 Hz. Italy uses Type C, L and F

plugs and receptacles that fit them, so bring a variety of adapters and a transformer for the 220V current in order to operate any small appliances you bring.

### **Electricity Onboard**

On board the M/S Chardonnay and M/S Provence cabins have 220 volts, with European-style outlets.

On all ships, a *limited* number of transformers and adapter plugs are available at the ship's reception desk for occasional use. If you need these items for the duration of the cruise, we recommend you bring your own.



If you use multiple digital devices—cell phone, digital camera, MP3 player, etc. – it's handy to have a travel power strip, perhaps with a surge suppressors and USB port for charging cell phones, MP3 players or e-readers without carrying device-specific plugs.

**Smartphones** 

It will require some effort to get the most out of your smartphone when you travel. Even with an international roaming plan, costs can add up quickly – those handy apps often pile up download fees. The simplest solution is to shut down all cell phone functions, automatic data feeds and roaming options, and take advantage of your phone via any available Wi-Fi. With an Internet VOIP app (like Skype) you can make inexpensive calls. If necessary, turn international roaming back on and your phone will work as usual – albeit at added cost. If your phone doesn't support international roaming (most smartphones do), some carriers offer loaners.

App quality, availability and costs vary – as do platforms (iPhone, Android, Blackberry ...), so again you'll need to do some legwork. Apps come in all forms: packing lists, currency converters, language translators, maps, journals, Wi-Fi hotspot finders ... one problem is going to be searching through the vast array of available apps to uncover what works best and what you're likely to use most. Smartphones have a lot to offer, but their small size can be a drawback for some uses (maps, extended reading, etc.)

### **Cell Phones**

If you want to use a standard cell phone while traveling overseas, be sure to check with your service provider (www.verizon.com, www.t-mobile.com etc.) to see if your phone will work outside the U.S. or whether you're better off renting an international phone. The websites www.travelcell.com and www.globalcellularrental.com have good information on rentals. Or, consider buying an inexpensive local phone for your stay.

### **Phone Calling Cards**

If you don't carry a phone, you can use a prepaid calling card to call the U.S. with minimal additional charges. Besides the prepaid long distance charges, you might have a local fee of a few cents and possibly a connection fee if you are using your card at a hotel. Check with the reception desk prior to using it to avoid unexpected charges.

Calling cards purchased locally are usually less expensive than those purchased in the U.S. and are more likely to work with the local system. Note that dialing a U.S. 1-800 number outside the continental United States will incur costly long distance fees, since 1-800 does not work outside the U.S.

### **Photo Gear**

For many people, capturing the highlights of their travel experiences in photographs or movies and sharing them is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the journey. Remember, however: some individuals and cultures and are less tolerant of photography than others. It's always best to respect local customs. And in some countries you might be charged for photography at specific sites, or banned from taking any photographs at all.

Digital cameras and camcorders are excellent travel companions—and many do dual duty by recording movies *and* still images. Fist sized camcorders can capture HD movies and high quality still photos; cameras the size of a deck of cards are great for snapshots and casual movie clips. With an ample supply of high-capacity memory cards you can record your whole trip with a small, lightweight package.

But you must remember the batteries. Recharging batteries is sometimes impossible, cameras can drain batteries *very* quickly, and replacements may be unavailable. Whether you need standard or proprietary batteries, it's wise to have spares. Be sure your charger will work with the local electrical system, and bring more than enough memory cards—they may be hard or impossible to find. Memory cards are small, thin and light: you can never have too much storage.

Compact cameras are impractical for distant subjects and are often weak in dim light. Some models have a zoom lens of up to 120mm, which is good for middle distances. For distant subjects a *megazoom* (with a zoom lens of at least 300mm) or a single lens reflex (DSLR) camera with up to a 300mm telephoto lens are good choices. With a DSLR you can use multiple lenses, though your gear can quickly get complex, weighty and cumbersome. Cameras or lenses that need a tripod are impractical for travel photography. A single mid-range telephoto lens (18-200mm) coupled with a small, fast prime lens (for low light/no flash situations) is an effective, flexible and compact kit. Consider mirrorless interchangeable lens cameras (MILC), which combine small bodies and multiple, small lenses with high quality for both still and HD movie images.

If you use a DSLR or MILC camera, protect the lenses with a UV filter and bring lens caps, covers, cleaning paper and a waterproof bag (a heavy duty Ziploc-style bag is good) to protect your gear. Be sure your camera has a flash that you can turn off, and if it's detachable, remember to pack it. (At many sites and museums, flashes are *not* permitted.)

Consider disposable cameras, as well. They are inexpensive and capable of acceptable photos as long as the light is not too dim or bright. X-rays do not damage the data of digital cameras (in any media format), and so pose no problems for travelers using digital cameras.

# 9. GRAND CIRCLE CRUISE LINE'S EUROPEAN RIVER SHIPS

### M/S Chardonnay and M/S Provence

The picturesque villages and vineyards along the Rhône and Saône rivers are best appreciated aboard a river ship that's as charming and welcoming as the region itself. That's why we couldn't resist the opportunity to add the M/S Chardonnay and the M/S Provence to our fleet. Carrying a maximum of just 46 passengers each, these ships provide our most intimate cruising experience yet. The M/S Chardonnay and M/S Provence were designed especially for cruising the waterways of France. The traditional décor evokes the warmth of Provence, with hand painted wooden furniture and colorful printed fabrics. In the dining room, savor true Provençal cuisine. As you cruise, you'll have ample opportunity to relax and take in the scenery, either from the Sun Deck or the lounge, with its panoramic floor-to-ceiling windows. And in the evenings, retire to your comfortable cabin, where you'll enjoy a generous 205-210 square feet of space on the M/S Provence or 190-210 square feet on the M/S Chardonnay. Best of all, because we own both ships, you're guaranteed the same high standards of comfort and service that you've come to expect aboard any Grand Circle Cruise Line river ship. We can also assure you that you'll be sharing this unique travel experience with only like-minded Grand Circle Cruise Line travelers. And when you cruise with only 46 passengers, you'll enjoy a level of camaraderie with your fellow travelers that's unsurpassed. You'll experience how this classic river cruise adventure just got even better.

#### Included features of the M/S Chardonnay & M/S Provence:

#### The River Ship:

- Restaurant with single open seating
- Open Sun Deck for prime viewing
- Bar and lounge with panoramic floor-toceiling windows
- Shipboard entertainment
- Smoke-free environment
- All shipboard announcements made in English

#### **All Cabins:**

- All outside cabins
- Layout of 205-210 square feet on the M/S *Provence*, 190-210 square feet on the M/S *Chardonnay*
- Twin beds and seating area
- Private bath with shower, hair dryer
- Color TV with CNN, movies, and a bow camera for ship-front views
- Ample closet and dresser space
- Direct-dial telephone

An important word: While our fleet features larger-than-usual riverboat cabins, please keep in mind that these ships are river vessels, not large ocean cruise ships. Riverboat cabins, in comparison, are relatively small, and ship amenities, in general, are comfortable but not lavish.

### **Shore Excursions**

Included during your cruise are many sightseeing tours. Other optional tours are available for purchase. Your Program Director will provide information on these optional excursions on your arrival. Please note that optional tours can only be purchased with a credit card.

### **Onboard Activities**

During your cruise you'll enjoy exclusive Discovery Series events, including group activities that relate to the region, theme dinners, organized discussions, and talks on upcoming ports of call.

### **Dining**

You'll enjoy fine cuisine and excellent views in your ship's dining room, featuring a warm decor of dark woods, rich carpeting, floor-to-ceiling windows, and white-linen and china table settings. Your ship's daily service includes a breakfast buffet, lunch, and a more formal dinner. Our professional chefs will create unique menus for you that feature regional specialties. Included with dinner are two complimentary drinks (choose from house wine, draft beer, or soft drink) per guest, per dinner. In addition, a selection of other fine wines and beer is available for purchase. Passengers may also bring a bottle of their own favorite wine to dinner to enjoy at their table. Should you care to avail yourself of this service, there will be a corkage fee of approximately €10 (Euro) per bottle, charged to your passenger account.

Please note that if you bring your own alcohol aboard, it can only be consumed in the dining room as described above, or in your cabin. Consumption of alcohol purchased outside the ship is not permitted in the lounge or public areas. We also offer complimentary coffee and tea throughout the day, available at meals and from the machine in the reception area.

**Open-table, single-seating for all meals:** Each meal is open seating—reservations of any kind are not accepted. Dinner has only one designated time for its open seating, announced each day aboard ship.

**Dining times:** Dining times for all meals may vary depending on the day's sightseeing and sailing schedule, but in general, meal times are as follows:

Early riser breakfast: 7:00-7:30 am

**Breakfast:** 7:30-9:00 am **Lunch:** 1:00-2:30 pm **Dinner:** 7:00-9:00 pm

**Special diets & celebrations:** Special diets, such as low-cholesterol or vegetarian, can be accommodated, as well as the recognition of a birthday. Please call Grand Circle Cruise Line to submit your request no later than 45 days prior to departure. Religious dietary regimens, such as kosher or halal meals, cannot be prepared aboard ship.

**Dress code:** The dining-room dress code is casual, though most travelers dress nicely for the Captain's Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner.

**Non-smoking policy:** The entire dining room is non-smoking at all times.

### **Embarkation/Disembarkation**

On the day of disembarkation, your cabin will no longer be available after breakfast. You may sit in the ship's lounge or on the Sun Deck until disembarkation.

### **Dock and Landing Etiquette**

River waterways are simply not big enough to support large landing docks such as those built on ocean shorelines. It is common for river ships to tie up alongside each other at some piers—particularly in ports where docking area is restricted. While we try to arrange the most convenient mooring available in each port of call, outboard boats may occasionally obstruct views, and you may have to step across other ships when you want to go ashore.

### **Onboard Facilities**



#### **Headsets**

During the cruise portion of your trip, complimentary headsets will be provided on all of your included and optional tours, so that you can better hear your Program Director or local guide. Feel free to bring your own headphones or earbuds if they use the standard 3mm miniplug (used on iPods, smartphones, MP3 players etc.)



### For your Relaxation

These include a sun deck with lounge, library, and lounge with bar.



Limited Wi-Fi service is available for free in the lounge, library, reception and bar areas on board these Grand Circle Cruise Line ships: *Concerto, Harmony, Melody, Rhapsody, Adagio, Aria,* and the *Bizet*. Wi-Fi service is not available in individual cabins, restaurants or other common areas. If you want to use the Wi-Fi connection you'll need to bring your own device (laptop/tablet/netbook) — ships do **not** rent or loan these devices. To use the Wi-Fi service, please visit Reception after you board for access information. Shipboard access is subject to the challenges of travel: ship location, signal availability, and usage volume on board will affect connectivity and speed. The ship's Internet connection demands a strong 3G cell phone signal, which is unavailable in many of the areas we visit. You can expect disruptions of both long and short duration.



### **Laundry Service**

Laundry service is available for a fee (currently it costs about €2 per shirt). Please note that neither self-service laundry facilities nor dry cleaning services are available.



### **Linen Service**

There will be one change of bed linens during your cruise. Towels are changed daily.

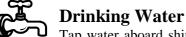


#### Lounge/Bar

The bar is open from 10 am to 2 pm, and from 4 pm to 11 pm, with soft drinks, beer, wine, and liquors for sale. Prices are in Euros.



Our entire fleet adheres to stringent European safety standards. Ships feature fully-staffed reception desks for most of the day (from 6:30 AM to 10 PM) and each cabin is equipped with an emergency call button.



Tap water aboard ship is safe for drinking. Bottled water is also available. There is one ice machine onboard.

**Telephone Services** 

To make telephone calls from the ship, you will be charged on your shipboard account on the last day of the cruise. Phone calls are directly from your cabin and through satellite, and *are charged per minute without regard to whether or not it is a local, international or Calling Card based call.* We advise you to use it only for an emergency, as this is a very expensive service (for example, a call to New York City would cost about \$3.75 per minute).

### **Smoking/Non-Smoking Policy**

All cabins are non-smoking. Smoking is permitted only outside on the sun deck. Smoking is not allowed anywhere else on the ships.

### **Ship Specifications**

The ships are of French registry with international crews and feature the following specifications:

	Entered service	Length	Width	Passenger capacity n		Decks	Cabins	Elevator	Chairlift
M/S Chard	onnay 1999	260	28	46	14	3	27	no	no
M/S Prover	2000	292	31	46	14	3	27	no	no

### 10. ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS

### **During Your Land Excursions & Optional Extensions**

We're including some handy practical details and a brief introduction to the places you'll visit on your River Cruise Tour. If you expect to explore in depth on your own, we recommend that you consult one of the many available book-length guides to your destinations. If you have one or two specific sites, museums or features that you're interested in, an internet search is the ideal way to get-up-to-date information and details. And of course your Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director or Hospitality Desk Representative will be able to assist you with suggestions and arrangements of activities you wish to participate in during your stay.



**Drinking Water**Tap water in France is clean and perfectly fine to drink. Bottled water is sold in shops,

### **Internet Access and Email**

Internet cafés are available in many of the cities you visit on your Cruise Tour; however it prices for use may vary. While sailing Internet access may be unavailable, depending on locks, bridges, and regional remoteness. Internet access will be most consistently available when the ship is docked in larger cities.



### **Laundry Service**

Laundry service and dry cleaning are available through your hotel for an additional fee.



USA Today and the International Herald Tribune are generally available in the bigger cities (Paris, Lyon, Avignon etc.)

English-language newspapers such as the Guardian, and the Financial Times are occasionally available for sale on the day of issue in major French cities. Most other English newspapers as well as Swiss, Italian, German, and Spanish titles, if available, are sold on the day after issue. The European is published on Fridays.

The daily French newspaper Nice Matin covers the southeast of France, including Monaco. La Gazette, an attractive bimonthly newsmagazine that covers Monaco, the Riviera, and Europe, is more societyoriented (the magazine is printed in Monaco, in French and English), as is the slick Riviera, which is available in English. The major French newspapers are Le Monde, Le Figaro, and Liberation.

### **Paris in Brief (Main Tour and Optional Extension)**

### **City Layout and Details**

Paris occupies 432 square miles (six more than San Francisco). In central Paris, the *Rive Droite* (Right Bank)—the shore to the right as you face downriver—is north of the Seine, while the *Rive Gauche* (Left Bank) is south of the river. Streets that are more or less parallel to the Seine are numbered from east to west, in the direction in which the river flows. On streets that are perpendicular to the river (or approximately so), the numbering starts at the river; building numbers get higher the farther away from the Seine you go. Thirty-two bridges link the Right and Left banks, some providing access to the two small islands at the heart of the city. This city center, called *Ile de la Cité*, is the birthplace of Paris and includes the sites of Notre Dame and Ile St. Louis, a moat-guarded isle with 17<sup>th</sup>-century mansions.

Between 1860 and 1870 Baron Haussmann forever changed the look of Paris by creating the legendary boulevards: boulevards St. Michel, St. Germain, Haussmann, Malesherbes, Sebastopol, Magenta, Voltaire, and Strasbourg. The "main street" on the Right Bank is, of course, the Champs-Elysées, beginning at the Arc de Triomphe and running to the Place de la Concorde. Haussmann also created Avenue de l'Opéra (as well as the Opéra), and the twelve avenues that radiate star-like from the Arc de Triomphe, giving it its original name of Place de l'Etoile (renamed Place Charles de Gaulle following the general's death). Today it is often referred to as Place Charles de Gaulle Etoile.

Haussmann also cleared *Ile de la Cité* of its medieval buildings, transforming it into a showcase for Notre Dame. Finally, he laid out the two elegant parks on the western and southeastern fringes of the city: Bois de Boulogne and Bois de Vincennes.

Paris has been divided since 1860 into 20 *arrondissements* (districts), which spiral out from the center of the city like a clockwise snail. Each district has its own city hall, police station, and main post office. All addresses include the *arrondissement* number (written in Roman or Arabic numerals and followed by "e" or "er").

#### Cuisine

Paris is one of the culinary capitals of the world. Whether you opt for just a croissant and café au lait or splurge on an epicurean feast, this is the city in which to indulge all your gastronomic dreams. Remember, too, that there is no such thing as "Parisian" food; rather, Paris is the city in which you can try regional delights from Provence, Alsace, Normandy, Brittany, and many other places. Not to mention the vast array of international restaurants that are available, which enable you to choose from virtually every type of cuisine—from superb pasta and Asian stir-fry to exquisite Middle Eastern couscous and Indian curries.

Regardless of the cuisine you select, a meal without wine is like a day without the sun, say the French, who are the greatest producers and the greatest consumers of wine. The general subtlety and quality of French wines cannot be equaled elsewhere. The best-known wines come from Burgundy, Bordeaux, and the Rhône Valley. A very popular and inexpensive red wine, excellent with red meat and most cheeses, is Beaujolais. For a reasonable dry white wine, good with seafood and white meats, try Muscadet or Chablis.

*Important Note:* Dining out in Paris can be expensive, even at moderate restaurants. Bistros feature a la carte menus and are less expensive. The ubiquitous baguette sandwich is even cheaper still! Your Grand Circle Program Director can advise you on eating establishments that offer good food at the best price, or if you feel like a splurge, on gourmet restaurants that feature fine French cuisine.

### **Laundry Service**

Self-service laundromats are available in Paris. The cost is approximately \$10 U.S. to wash and dry one load of clothes. Your hotel also provides laundry services, but the fees are very high. It's much less expensive to launder your clothes yourself.

### **Local Transportation**

The underground Metro operates from 5:30 am to 1:15 am. It is clean, quiet, and easy to use. The different lines are identified by the names of their terminals at either end. Every station has clear directional maps, some with push-button devices that light up the proper route after a destination button is pushed. Keep your ticket (you may need it to exit the station). A tenticket book (carnet) is available at a reduced rate.

Taxis can be found at stands at main intersections, outside railway stations, and in the streets. Fares increase at night. The green light beside the roof light signifies availability.

### **Nice in Brief—Optional Extension**

### **City Layout and Details**

The city is one big easy-to-scan color postcard: the lapis lazuli of the Bay of Angels (Baie des Anges), the activity of the Vieux Port, and the timelessness of the towering Castle (Chateau)—the name given to the hill, with ruins of an old fortress, that looms over the harbor. Along the bay runs the fabled promenade des Anglais, a broad seafront avenue that resembles a mile-long outdoor café. At one end of the promenade is the popular Place Masséna—semitropical gardens set against crimson buildings and graceful arcades. Avenue Jean Medecin is the main Street; it bisects the city with a straight line from Place Masséna to the railroad station.

The old city, La Vieille Ville, is a little piano-shaped quarter—all narrow and cobbled—that huddles in the shadow of the Chateau. La Vieille Ville's boundaries are the quai des Etats Unis and the boulevard Jean Jaurés beside the Paillon River, which is covered in parts by esplanades and divides the old town from modern Nice to the west.

#### Cuisine

The cuisine of Nice and the Côte d'Azur is characterized by that delicious southern mix of olive oil, garlic and fresh tomatoes, onions and anchovies, and black olives. These ingredients constitute the base for many of the local fish and meat specialties. The key cooking-style words are Provençal and Niçois. Many dishes feature fragrant herbs like fennel, thyme, rosemary, and bay leaf; others are centered around garlic, tomatoes, and olives. In fact, olives of every conceivable size and color, cured with herbs or salt or flavored oil, feature prominently in the cuisine. Also typically Mediterranean is the extensive use of shellfish (clams, cockles, crabs, mussels, sea anemones, sea urchins) and fish (bass, red mullet, sardines), either grilled or combined in chunky, spicy soups.

Locally produced artichokes and asparagus are much favored along the Côte d'Azur. Ratatouille, an olive oil-based stew of aubergines and tomatoes, is also very popular; it is perhaps the most famous of all vegetable dishes. Another Mediterranean "claim to fame" is *salade niçoise*—tuna, tomatoes, black olives, capers, potatoes, string beans, and hard-boiled eggs—first created in Nice. Its sandwich form, *pan bagnat*, is available at every local snack bar.

The celebrated aperitif along the Riviera is *pastis* (essence of aniseed), which is high in alcohol and usually served diluted with iced water. The local wines are uncomplicated but go well with seasoned food that calls for a refreshing, fruity wine—and Cotes de Provence (mostly dry rosés) are just that. Or try a glass of Bandol rouge (red), blanc de Provence (white), or Bellet (red or white).

### **Local Transportation**

The town center is compact and easily accessible by foot. Many areas have become pedestrian zones, such as Rue Masséna and some of its cross streets, as well as numerous streets in La Vieille Ville. You can hop on a bus for outlying districts, such as Cimiez, at the

Place Masséna.

Boats operate from Nice to Marseille, from St-Tropez to the charming Hyeres Islands, and from Antibes, Cannes, and Juan-les-Pins to the Lerins Islands. The operator is SNCM (*Societe National Maritime Corse-Mediterranee*).

## The Italian Riviera & the Cinque Terre in Brief—Optional Extension

### **City Layout and Details**

More relaxed and casual than other nearby destinations, Santa Margherita Ligure is an ideal base for day trips in the Italian Riviera. The town offers everything a Riviera playground should: palm trees lining the harbor, cafés that spill out into the seaside squares, local shops and a marina packed with yachts. The city sparkles with a blend of architectural styles, colorful buildings (some with typical trompe l'oeil frescoes,) olive groves and a 16th century castle built to protect the town against African pirates.

Located between Rapallo and La Spezia, the Cinque Terre is a rugged portion of coast on the Italian Riviera. "The Five Lands" area is composed of five villages spread along the litoral: Monterosso al Mare, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola, and Riomaggiore. The coastline, villages, and surrounding hillsides (as well as three small islands) are all part of the Cinque Terre National Park, which is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The area is largely inaccessible to cars, and was historically visited mainly by sea, until the Genoa-La Spezia railway—connecting the villages via local walking paths—was built in the 1870s.

Stacked high on the rugged cliffs, houses were built in terraces over the centuries, creating small towns that slip colorfully down to the sea in a jumble of tilted, multi-story abodes. Each town has its own particular flavor, but all share a charming, lambent glow as they preside over the sea below. Their isolation and lack of modern day clutter and "improvements" have made them particularly popular with visitors.

### **Cuisine**

The ancient Romans were the originators of the first fully developed cuisine of the Western world. Drawing on an abundance of fine, natural ingredients from the fertile Roman countryside and influenced by Greece and Asia Minor, they evolved a gastronomic tradition still felt in kitchens the world over.

Traditional Italian cooking is quite like the Italian people themselves—robust and hearty. Popular ingredients include any combination of tomatoes, garlic, olive oil, onions, celery, parsley, seafood, parmesan cheese, mozzarella cheese, chicken, and, of course, every type of pasta, from spaghetti and fettuccine to penne and ravioli. Seasonal vegetables include yellow, red, and green sweet peppers; eggplant; mushrooms; green and broad beans; zucchini; asparagus; and artichokes.

While pesto is perhaps the best known regional specialty, Liguria's cuisine is varied, with an emphasis on fish–appropriate for a region that stretches along the coast from the French border east and south to La Spezia along the Ligurian Sea. You'll also find local dishes from the mountains that protect the coastal region from the chilly north winds.

Locally, *trenette* (a thin ribbon style pasta) is the traditional pasta served with *pesto alla genovese*. The dish is called *trenette al pesto*, and can include potatoes and green beans. Trenette can also be served with clams, mussels, and a host of other seafood options. Pesto might simply be spread on a slice of bread, and is used as a garnish on Genoese minestrone soup.

Popular local seafood includes anchovies, mussels from La Spezia, tuna and less frequently crab, octopus and lobster. *Capon Magro*, once a staple food of fishermen is made from salted rock fish between 'sailors' bread (hard bread, soaked in vinegar) and topped with vegetables.

As everywhere in Italy, olive oil is essential to many local dishes, and the terraced slopes of the Ligurian hills produce high quality oil. One Ligurian pasta is known as *trofie*. It's a short, pencil sized curly pasta twisted like a unicorn's horn and pointed at both ends, made from a paste of flour, water, salt and chestnuts. *Croxetti*, another pasta variant, are round pasta discs, like medallions, stamped with decorative patterns.

Away from the coast chestnuts, ground into flour or dried for stews, were long a traditional ingredient. Meats, like wild boar and veal, are also available in the hills.

### **Local Transportation**

Trains service most of the coastal towns around the Gulf of Tigullio, and buses are even more convenient. Taxis are available as well. From April through September there is a ferry service between the towns of Portofino and Cinque Terre with stops in other small maritime villages along the Gulf of Tigullio as well. Rental cars are also available--you don't need an international driver's license in Italy, but you must be over 21.

In the villages of the Cinque Terre you'll have to rely on your feet for transportation – trains stop at paths that lead to coast, but there are no cars or buses to get you there. The walk is usually less than a mile or so.



Water in Italy is generally safe, but as an added precaution against stomach upset, we recommend you drink bottled water as often as possible. Pure mineral water is sold everywhere in 33 centiliter and 1½-liter clear-plastic bottles. Another choice for water is mineral soda (carbonated mineral water). If you're out of bottled water, hotel tap water is okay to drink, but it may taste unpleasant due to heavy chlorination.

# **Hotel Courtesy**

Italian hotels do not allow food and beverages to be taken from their breakfast rooms, nor is it courteous to eat or drink food or beverages purchased elsewhere in hotel common rooms. In conformity with municipal laws to promote urban decorum, hotels do not allow hanging laundry on room balconies. Travel clotheslines, used in your bathroom, are a more private and effective solution.



# **Laundry Service**

Your Program Director or concierge can assist you with making arrangements for these services.

**Newspapers & Magazines** 

English language newspapers are rapidly losing favor to by news-related websites. Coverage of the Italian Riviera (and French Riviera) in English is available through *The Riviera Times* – on sale at newsstands and online at: http://www.rivieratimes.com/

Imported English-language newspapers and magazines are harder to find. You may find some English periodicals and/or newspapers for sale at local kiosks; your Program Director can direct you to the nearest stand. The *International Herald Tribune*, now printed in Rome, is available at most newsstands; it often lists major events in Italy in its Saturday "Weekend" section. Issues are usually one day behind the *Tribune*'s original publication date.

# 11. DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

#### France

Area: 211,208 square miles

Capital: Paris
Language: French

**Location:** France is a large country, two and a half times as big as Great Britain, extending for some 600 miles from north to south and from east to west. It has coastlines on both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Its southern land border is Spain; to the north are Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany; to the east are Switzerland and Italy.

**Geography:** Except for extreme northern France, which is part of the Flanders plain, the country may be described as four river basins and a plateau. Three of the streams flow west—the Seine into the English Channel, the Loire into the Atlantic, and the Garonne into the Bay of Biscay. The Rhône flows south into the Mediterranean. For about 100 miles, the Rhine is France's eastern border. In the Alps, near the Italian and Swiss borders, is Europe's highest point—Mont Blanc, at 15,781 feet.

**Population (2007 estimate):** 64,057,790

Religion: Roman Catholic (85%), Muslim (7%), Protestant (2%), Jewish (1%), unaffiliated (5%)

**Time Zone:** France is ahead of U.S. Eastern Time by six hours, Central Time by seven hours, Mountain Time by eight hours, and Pacific Time by nine hours. The French use the 24-hour clock (they do not use the am and pm system): after midday, just continue counting 13, 14, and so on to provide the 24-hour clock time. For example, 1 pm = 13:00.

Holidays (nationally recognized; does not include religious, local or culturally based events):

- 01/01 New Year's Day
- 03/29 Good Friday
- 04/01 Easter Monday
- 05/01 Labor Day / May Day
- 05/08 WWII Victory Day
- 05/09 Ascension Day
- 05/20 Whit Monday
- 07/14 Bastille Day
- 08/15 Assumption of Mary
- 11/01 All Saints
- 11/11 Armistice Day
- 12/25 Christmas Day

FRANCE HAS BEEN INHABITED SINCE PREHISTORIC TIMES, evidenced by the Lascaux cave paintings in the Dordogne that date back about 25,000 years. By 10,000 B.C., human communities had migrated across the whole of France. After the ice cap receded, the climate became warmer and wetter, and by about 7000 B.C., farming and pastoral communities were springing up. By 2000 B.C., copper made its debut, and by 1800 B.C., the Bronze Age had arrived in the southeast of the country. Trade links with Spain, central, Europe, and Wessex in Britain were soon established.

When the Celts journeyed to the land they called Gaul sometime before the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C., it was occupied by Iberians and Ligurians. Greeks colonized the area around Marseille—which they called Massilia—founding the oldest city in France. And Julius Caesar conquered Gaul for Rome in 57-52 B.C.

Lutecia, later to become Paris, was built by the Gallo-Romans in 52 B.C., and the great Roman Amphitheater at Arles was built in 46 B.C. During the 5th century A.D., Germanic tribes invaded, especially the Franks, who converted to Christianity under Clovis I and established the kingdom that became known as France.

On Christmas Day, 800, Charlemagne, king of the Franks, was crowned by the pope in Rome as Holy Roman Emperor, inspiring a unified national spirit across all of France. Although Charlemagne's empire was not long-lasting, it left an indelible imprint upon the French consciousness, even though the vulnerability of successive rulers allowed regional princes, such as the dukes of Burgundy and Normandy, to amass tremendous power. In 987, however, the French nobility elected Hugh Capet king of France, and from this point, French national history is generally agreed to begin. Capet helped to centralize the monarchy, led the Crusades and wars with England, and instituted the Capetian dynasty. During the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, trade prospered, craft guilds were founded, and new towns cropped up. Paris grew in importance as the royal city and as the intellectual mecca of Europe; the newly established Sorbonne (1257) drew such teachers, lecturers, and philosophers as Abelard, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas.

Unfortunately, this era of accomplishment and peace was followed by the destruction and bloodshed of the Hundred Years War of 1337-1453. At its core, the war was essentially a dynastic struggle with England, whose Norman kings held vast feudal estates in France. The series of wars ultimately benefited France, by forcing out the English and intensifying the strength of the French monarchy. Once again, as in the days of Charlemagne, the French throne exuded a powerful, almost mystic aura, this time with the aid of Joan of Arc, whose divine voices urged her to lead the French to victory at Orleans in 1429 and to champion Charles VII as king of France.

During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Valois and Bourbon kings continued to fortify the royal authority, moving the country toward absolute monarchy. The ironclad rule of Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin (1624-61) set the stage for their splendid successor, Louis XIV, whose reign was probably unequaled in the history of Europe for its elaborate and magnificent style. He established the Baroque power base of Versailles and introduced Europe to a gloriously gilded France—so resplendent that it earned him the title of the Sun King. His was an age of brilliant achievements in art and literature, making France indisputably the intellectual capital of Europe. French became the international language for more than a century afterward.

Ironically, the very splendor of the French monarchy helped precipitate its downfall, for it was expensive to maintain and someone had to pay. The major cause of the French Revolution was the system of special privileges that exempted nobles and clergy from the taxes paid by the peasants and the middle class. In 1789, these latter groups rebelled against the monarchy, guillotined both the king and his queen, Marie Antoinette, and established the short-lived First Republic. The chaos that followed the revolution resulted in the rise of Napoleon, who proclaimed himself emperor in 1804 and, though a dictator, undertook to spread the ideal of liberty to the world through his conquests. After his fall in 1814, the monarchy was restored.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, France alternated between democracy and dictatorship and was characterized by the steady growth of a new French Empire. A revolution in 1848 established a Second Republic, which was superseded by the dictatorship of Napoleon III, nephew of the emperor. Finally, a Third Republic was founded in 1870, during which the Impressionist school of painting emerged, as well as the Modernist movement of music and poetry, heralded by composers Ravel and Debussy and poets Mallarme and Verlaine.

From 1914-18, France fought with the Allies in World War I. Afterwards, with the Treaty of Versailles (1919), France regained the areas of Alsace and Lorraine. Between wars, France nourished major artistic and philosophical movements: Constructivism, Dadaism, Surrealism, and Existentialism.

At the beginning of World War II, France sided with the Allies until it was invaded and defeated by Germany in 1940. The French government, under Marshal Philippe Petain, a World War I hero, established a puppet government in the Vichy. On D-Day—June 6, 1944—the Allies landed on the beaches of Normandy and successfully invaded France. Additional Allied forces landed in Provence. Paris was liberated in August 1944, and France immediately declared full allegiance to the Allies. A provisional government then took power under General de Gaulle.

After World War II, the Fourth Republic was created; it collapsed in 1958 under the pressure of a revolution in Algeria. A Fifth Republic, engineered by Charles de Gaulle, was formed, and under a new constitution, De Gaulle became the first president. He resigned in 1969, after widespread disturbances were begun by student riots in Paris. In 1981, Francois Mitterrand was elected the first Socialist president of France since World War II. He was reelected to a second term in 1988. In 1995, Jacques Chirac, mayor of Paris, was elected president.

France made international headlines on the technological front in 1990, when its new TGV (*Train à Grande Vitesse*) clocked a world record of 322 mph on a practice run. Today, the TGV operates daily service between a number of destinations. In 1997, the world's largest library, the Bibliotheque Nationale Francois Mitterrand, was inaugurated in Paris, and in 1998, France hosted and won the Soccer World Cup, amid enthusiastic crowds the likes of which had not been seen since the end of the war. In 1999, France launched the euro—the single European currency—on prices in shops and restaurants (the actual euro bills and coins were introduced in January, 2002).

Despite its many modern advances, however, visitors can, for the most part, still see the country's past. The French preserve their old buildings well, whether it's the royal chateaux of Blois and Chambord in the Loire Valley or the splendid cathedrals of Chartres and Reims. The landscapes of France are captivating, from the rugged Pyrenees mountains of southern France, and the snow-covered Alps farther north, to the luxuriant vegetation and posh villas of the sun-kissed Riviera on the Mediterranean coast, to the stark, chalk cliffs of Normandy's beaches.

Two of the most appealing areas in France, Provence and the Riviera, are adjacent to one another. Sunny Provence includes towns unmatched anywhere for their charm and beauty; they are set in the craggy mountains from Avignon southeast to Aix-en-Provence. Just south and west is the Riviera, stretching along the coast from Menton to St. Tropez. This is a region beloved by modern painters like Picasso and Matisse for its dramatic cliffs overlooking the clear blue Mediterranean waters, its quaint bays and fishing villages, and its elegant villas and stylish beaches.

# **Italy**

**Area:** 116,305 square miles

Capital: Rome

Languages: In addition to Italian, many of Italy's natives speak French and English. In the Southern

Tyrol region (Alps) German is common.

**Location:** Italy lies in southern Europe, bordering France in the northwest, the Ligurian Sea and the Tyrrhenian Sea in the west, the Ionian Sea in the south, the Adriatic Sea in the east, Slovenia in the northeast, and Austria and Switzerland in the north. The country includes the Mediterranean islands of Sicily and Sardinia and several other small islands.

**Geography:** From the mountains in the north to the island of Sicily, the geography of Italy varies widely – as does the climate, scenery and culture.

**Lazio:** (Rome) In central Italy, Lazio is one of the central Italian regions, and the one that encompasses Rome. It is comprised of about 25% mountains (inland) and 75% coastal plains or hill country. It is generically called the Roman *Campagna*. Rome itself is on the Tiber River, about 15 miles inland of the Tyrrhenian Sea – although the present city extends to coastal Ostia.

**Tuscany:** (Florence) The region of Tuscany is a blend of rugged hills, fertile valleys, and long stretches of sandy beaches that curve along the west coast of central Italy and fringe the pine-forested coastal plain of the Maremma. The cities and towns of Tuscany house the centuries-old heritage of culture and art that produced magnificent medieval cathedrals and the marvels of the Renaissance.

# **Liguria:** (The Italian Riviera)

Stretching from France to the west, Piedmont to the north, and Tuscany in the east, Liguria lies on the Ligurian Sea. This narrow strip of land sits between the sea, the Alps and the Apennines Mountains. This 200-mile coastline is a thin strip of rapid descents from the mountains to the considerable depths of the Ligurian sea. It features an enviable climate, but minimal access to the lovely Ligurian waters and only two significant harbors – at Genoa and La Spezia.

**Trentino Alto Aldige/Sudtirol:** (Bolzano) Trentino is among the rare Italian regions with no access to the sea. It is mountainous and includes the majestic Dolomite Mountains as well as many small, pristine lakes. Ruled by Austria for many centuries it is officially bilingual; German is prevalent in the northern region. It is well known for its wines, winter resorts, and the grandeur of its scenery.

**Veneto:** (Venice) Venice proper is in the coastal zone of the Veneto region – which borders other regions as diverse as the Trentino Alto Aldige (and Sudtirol), Lombardy and Austria proper at its northernmost corner. The region is comprised of about 30% mountains, with the Po River Valley making up much of the rest of the topography – including hills and the coastal region. Venice stretches across 117 small islands in the marshy Venetian Lagoon along the Adriatic, sited along the shoreline between the mouths of the Po (to the south) and the Piave (to the north) Rivers.

# **Population (2011 estimate):** 60,600,000 **Religion:** Roman Catholic 98%, Other 2%

**Time zone:** All of Italy is on Central European Time, one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (six hours ahead of Eastern Time). Summer hours operate from the last weekend in March until the last weekend in September.

# **Holidays:**

01/01	New Year's Day
01/06	Epiphany
03/31	Easter Day
04/01	Easter Monday
04/25	Liberation Day
05/01	Labor Day
06/02	Founding of the Republic
08/15	Assumption Day
11/01	All Saints
12/08	Feast of the Immaculate Conception
12/25	Christmas Day
12/26	St. Stephen's Day

ITALY HAS A LONG AND COMPLICATED HISTORY. Its earliest recorded civilization dates back to around 2000 B.C., when the peninsula was settled by fair-complexioned Ligurians, ancestors of the Latins. Sometime near the 9th century B.C., boatloads of Greeks landed on Italian shores, and Italy became the site for the myth of Ulysses and other famous legends. The Greeks inhabited southern Italy and Sicily during the 8th century B.C., forming colonies of city-states called Magna Graecia. The Greek civilization prospered in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C., but waned in the 4th century B.C. While the Greeks were busy settling the south, the Etruscans, a highly artistic populace from Asia Minor, built strong communities in central Italy.

The Etruscans ruled until the Roman revolt around 510 B.C. By 250 B.C., the Romans had conquered Italy and established Rome as the seat of their empire. Julius Caesar reigned throughout the 1st century B.C., and his defeat of France made Rome the ruler of the entire Mediterranean world. Under Caesar, Roman culture flourished. Its unprecedented splendor was further enriched by Greek architectural and artistic influences. Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C. and succeeded by his nephew Octavian, later known as Augustus, who instituted the Pax Romana, two centuries of peace during which the Roman Empire was as mighty as it would ever be. At the end of the 2nd century A.D., the Roman bishop was made head of the new Christian religion—a position that granted him enormous power in the political arena.

Rome's glory during the 200-year-long Pax Romana began to decline in the 3rd century A.D., when a succession of inept and corrupt emperors weakened the city. By the 4th century A.D., Rome had become very divided politically, and new administrative capitals were founded in such cities as Milan and Trier, Germany. In A.D. 395, Constantine moved the Roman capital to Constantinople (Istanbul), which left the city of Rome very vulnerable. During the 400s, it was repeatedly attacked by barbarians and in 475 completely fell to a barbarian chief, who soon after opened regions of Italy to Teutonic settlement.

Italy was briefly reunited in 800, when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne Holy Roman Emperor. But over the next century, the country disintegrated into contentious kingdoms at constant battle for control of provincial lands. Italy's turmoil continued for an astounding length of time, as different city-states waged war after war up to the early 19th century, when Napoleon took over Italy.

Despite this internal dissension and strife, Italian society and culture reached its peak during the Renaissance in the 15th and 16th centuries. The independent city-states formed a delicate balance of power, and affluent patrons such as the Medici family of Florence greatly supported the arts. This golden age of human endeavor and artistic creation spawned some of the greatest painters, sculptors, and inventors of Western civilization—Leonardo da Vinci, a genius in many vocations, the epitome of the Renaissance man (1452-1519); Michelangelo (1475-1564); Raphael (1483-1564); and the architect Brunelleschi (1377-1466).

After Napoleon's series of invasions, the Italian people sought to squelch foreign domination, which gave birth to the movement for political unity in Italy, known as the *Risorgimento* (Resurrection). Italian nationalism gathered broad support under the popular leader Giuseppe Garibaldi, and Italy was finally united under King Victor Emmanuel II in 1870.

The country was ruled as a monarchy and joined the Allies in World War I. Benito Mussolini rose to power during the early 1920s and ushered in one of the darkest periods in Italy's history. Mussolini ("Il Duce") organized discontented Italians into the Fascist Party to "rescue Italy from Bolshevism"—but what he actually delivered was a totalitarian state controlled by the militia. Mussolini formed an alliance with Hitler and fought against the Allies during World War II. The Italian Resistance Movement fought Mussolini and the Nazis, but their reprisals took a heavy toll: 400,000 people were killed, hundreds of thousands were left homeless, and the economy was sharply disrupted. In 1945, Mussolini was captured in Milan by Partisans and executed.

Italy was declared a republic in 1946, but during the postwar era it was seriously divided by extreme political differences. Dozens of governments rose and fell. The leading parties were the diametrically opposed Centrist Christian Democrats and the Italian Communist Party. In the 1970s, a prolonged outbreak of terrorist acts by the left-wing Red Brigades threatened domestic stability, but by the early 1980s, the terrorist groups had been suppressed.

In the early 1990s, public discontent with the government intensified due to a soaring inflation rate and disillusioning scandals that involved the Mafia and many government leaders. In 1996, Italians elected a new government dominated by a center-left coalition for the first time since the proclamation of the Italian Republic. Italy adopted the euro as its currency in January 1999. The new bills and coins started circulating in 2002.

# 12. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# Books, Maps, and Movies

If your local store or library doesn't stock the books or movies below, the Internet offers a wide variety of options for finding older or rare stock – try AbeBooks (abebooks.com), Alibris (albris.com), Amazon (amazon.com) or Barnes & Noble (bn.com) — or any of the smaller websites. Of course, this selection is not meant to be comprehensive, and is offered as a starting point for your research.

# Paris to the Moon by Adam Gopnik (Travel Essays)

A self-described "comic-sentimental essayist," Gopnik spent the years from 1995 to 2000 in Paris writing the "Paris Journals" for the New Yorker. Collected here are his most charming, insightful, heartfelt, and humorous dispatches on the Parisian people, culture, food, economy, and lifestyle.

# Paris in the Fifties by Stanley Karnow (Memoir)

The passions, the jazz, the wine, and the personalities of postwar Paris come to life in this vibrant portrait from a Pulitzer Prize-winning author who was there.

# A Moveable Feast by Ernest Hemingway (Memoir)

Personal reminiscences and sketches of Paris, which Hemingway created during his time there between 1921 and 1926.

# A Year in Provence and Toujours Provence by Peter Mayle (Memoir)

Several years ago, Peter Mayle, an advertising executive, and his wife, a tax inspector, left England and moved to a farmhouse in France's Luberon Valley. In these two best-selling books, he recounts his humorous attempts to blend into the Provençal lifestyle, as well as maintain his 200-year-old "new" home

# Running in Place: Scenes from the South of France by Nicholas Delbanco (Culture)

"In this stunning evocation of Provençal culture and history, the critically lauded novelist and essayist Nicholas Delbanco captures both the immediacy of this changing region and the time-honored traditions of its past." –Amazon.com Editorial Reviews

# The Magic of Provence: Pleasures of Southern France by Yvone Lenard (Memoir/Travel Essays)

"When Lenard returned to her native France and purchased a house in a Provençal village, an enchanted world of food, wine, and unusual adventures opened up before her. This is her account of the spell cast on her by Provence...as well as tales of others who have been drawn to the region, including Vincent van Gogh, Brigitte Bardot, and Princess Caroline of Monaco. [Features] recipes for food and drinks and tips for entertaining in the Provençal style." -Amazon.com Editorial Reviews

# A Traveller's History of France by Robert Cole (History)

Written for the general reader, this 256-page volume begins with the first conquests of ancient Gaul and continues through the Renaissance, the French Revolution, and on through the events of 20<sup>th</sup>-century French history. Includes maps and an A-Z gazetteer.

# Blood Sisters: The French Revolution in Women's Memory by Marilyn Talom (History)

During the French Revolution, scores of female "aristocrats and bourgeoisies, royalists and republicans, as well as servants and peasants, left accounts of the turbulence they witnessed. This collection of the best of these women's chronicles...ranges from the political to the personal and eloquently attests to the human costs of radical social change." -Book News

# *The French* by Theodore Zeldin (Culture)

A witty survey of the country of France, its people, and all things French. The author draws on comments from French men, women, children, and seniors to answer the questions foreign visitors ask most.

# My Life in France by Julia Child with Alex Prud'homme (Memoir)

Memoir of the famous chef's first, formative stay in France in 1949. Child describes herself as a "rather loud and unserious Californian," without a word of French. She enrolled at the Cordon Bleu and toiled with increasing zeal and competence. With the bestselling *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* (1961), she revolutionized the American idea of cooking. This memoir recalls gorgeous meals in bygone Parisian restaurants, and reveals the personality and some of the secret arts of a culinary genius.

# Italy

# The House of Medici: Its Rise and Fall by Christopher Hibbert (History)

Portrays the Medici's personal lives and political squabbles, and captures the workings of Renaissance city-state politics.

# The Italians by Luigi Barzini (Culture)

Barzini's classic book offers readers a refreshingly frank discussion of the history and culture of his homeland, past and present.

# Italian Backgrounds by Edith Wharton (Travel Account)

Originally published in 1906, Wharton's travel diary still rings true in its depiction of the Italian people and culture.

# Italian Hours by Henry James (Travel Account)

Travel essays by the famous 19th-century American novelist who absolutely adored Italy.

# **Guidebooks:**

Your Program Director will be happy to provide recommendations and suggestions during the trip, so a guidebook is not a necessity. But a good one can be invaluable as a one-stop reference, so for those travelers who have asked for suggestions, we offer these guidelines. Since different guidebook series each have their own target audience and structure, it is well worth your time to browse your local library or bookstore to find the one(s) you like best. To get you started, here is some general information on the most popular series:

Culture Smart! – Focuses on local customs and etiquette instead of sights, dining, etc.

**DK** Eyewitness – Innovative visuals make these books easy to use and a nice souvenir once the trip is over. The focus is primarily on the sights and activities.

*Fodor's* – A classic guidebook with strong information on activities, shopping, and dining. Good mix of upscale recommendations and budget suggestions.

*Frommer's* – A comprehensive guide series that is known for its restaurant recommendations.

*Insight* – Offers more information on history and culture than usual, nice visuals, good maps.

*Lonely Planet* – Practical guides geared towards a more adventurous traveler on a budget.

*National Geographic* – From the same company that publishes the magazine. Excellent photographs, good information on history, nature, and culture.

Rough Guides – For the independent traveler on a budget. Particularly known for their maps.

#### Maps:

Most hotels will provide maps free of charge at the reception desk or in your room. These maps are usually sufficient for our travelers, but if you plan on any independent exploration, you may wish to consider purchasing a map before your departure. This can be especially useful in a country that doesn't use the Roman alphabet as the hotel maps may only be printed in the local language.

Some recommended map series include: Rand McNally international maps (especially the StreetWise series), Insight's FlexiMaps, and Rough Guide's destination maps. We suggest that you visit your local bookstore or library to get a better sense of which type of map is best for your needs before making a purchase.

#### **Suggested Movies**

Here are few of our favorite movies that are about, or set in, or from the region you'll be traveling. Most are available at movie rental stores and websites—or even your public library. Sometimes films produced outside of the U.S. may be hard to find, but they are usually available online. Lists are highly subjective – and choosing the best of French films in under fifty pages is a fool's errand. If your favorites are missing, start a chat with fellow travelers and you'll likely find even more treasured movies to share.

# France:

*Paris Je T'aime* (2006, color) An unusual project that strings together 20 short films with only one thing in common—they all take place in Paris. There's some big names involved, both starring (Steve Buscemi, Juliette Binoche, Nick Nolte, Natalie Portman, Gena Rowlands) and directing (the Coen brothers, Wes Craven, Gerard Depardieu, Gurinder Chadha). Some of the films are in English and some in French with subtitles.

Amelie starring Audrey Tautou and Mathieu Kassovitz (2001, color) A romantic comedy about a girl named Amélie Poulain and her magical journey to help others and find true love of her own. This 2001 gem tells the heartwarming story of a shy waitress in Paris who decides to change the lives of those around her for the better, while struggling with her own isolation. The award-winning film from director Jean-Pierre Jeunet is a whimsical depiction of contemporary Parisian life, sure to capture the hearts of its viewers time and time again.

*Charade* starring Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant (1963, color) Newly widowed and broke, Regina Lambert (played by Hepburn) tries to find the fortune her late husband stole—before his partners in crime find it. But can she trust the mysterious man who says he's trying to help her (Grant)? It's two great stars, at their best, in Paris.

Julie & Julia starring Meryl Streep and Amy Adams (2009, color) Two stories intertwine: "Julia" focuses on Julia Child's first forays into French cooking while "Julie" is about a modern-day writer's attempt to make every recipe in Childs' first cookbook. Although only partly set in France, French cooking plays a key role in almost every scene.

**To Catch a Thief** starring Grace Kelly and Cary Grant (1955, color) A retired jewel thief tries to clear his name after a rash of burglaries on the French Rivera. Not only a good story, but also notable as the last film Grace Kelly made with Alfred Hitchcock before starting a new career as Princess of Monaco.

*The Longest Day* starring John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Robert Mitchum (1963, B&W) An epic re-telling of D-Day from the American, English, French, and German points of view. The filmmakers tried to be as authentic as possible, with actors speaking the correct native language (English, French, or German) and battle scenes that were recreated with the help of military advisors who were at D-Day themselves.

La Vie En Rose starring Marion Cotillard (2007, color) In an Oscar-winning performance, Cotillard transforms herself into the famous French singer Edith Paif for this biopic told as a series of non-linear flashbacks. In French with subtitles.

A Very Long Engagement starring Audrey Tautou and Gaspard Ulliel (2004, color) At the end of WWI, five French soldiers are thrown into the no-man's land between the French and German trenches. All five are declared dead, but Mathilde, the tenacious fiancée of the youngest victim, is convinced that at least one soldier is still alive. Is it her soldier? The film does a good job at balancing the sadness of WWI with humor, sweetness, and romance. In French with subtitles.

*Au revoir, les enfants* A 1987 film from director Louis Malle, about an 11-year-old boy's experience at a Catholic boarding school during the Nazi occupation of France. Rivals at first, the two students Julien and Jean Bonnet form a bond and eventually become best of friends. Julien learns that Jean is Jewish and the priests at their school are hiding him from the Nazis. On one cold morning in January 1944, the boy's friendship is cut short by a traumatic moment in history that will never be forgotten.

*Jules and Jim* This 1962 film from Director François Truffaut, is about three people in love and how their relationship evolves over the years. Set in Paris before World War I, two friends, Jules and Jim, fall in love with the same women, Catherine. This French cinematic masterpiece has it all—a dissection of the uniquely French concept: *ménage a trois*, thoughtful insights on friendship, love, and war, and an oddly endearing connection between the three.

The Intouchables A2011 film directed by Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano, starring Francois Cluzet and Omar Sy. Sy, as Driss, a Senegalese man living in a slum outside Paris gets a job as caretaker to Philippe – a quadriplegic. Blending comedy and poignancy the film conveys both Philippe's desire not to be pitied and Driss' guileless honesty. The subject does not suggest a comedic masterpiece, but audiences in France and everywhere else have loved its gentle touch.

# **Italy:**

La Strada (Federico Fellini, 1954) starring Guilietta Masina, Anthony Quinn

Masina was tiny and had an almost clown-like face, like a female Charlie Chaplin. The plot is about a pair of circus performers who travel all over Italy, juggling in the street. Quinn's character is oblivious to the importance of his partner — in both life and work – until too late. One of great tragic love stories it's a lovely film that seems to define the magic of cinema.

La Dolce Vita, "The Sweet Life" (Federico Fellini, 1961) Starring: Marcello Mastroianni, Anita Ekberg

An engrossing social commentary, and one of Federico Fellini's masterpieces (though the competition is keen). It's a detailed panorama of Rome's modern decadence and sophisticated immorality, held tightly in focus by the detached, wandering protagonist through whom we see it all. (Other important Fellini films include *City of Women* and 8 ½.)

The Bicycle Thief (Vittorio De Sica, 1949) Starring: Lamberto Maggiorani, Enzo Staiola

As it follows a man desperate to retrieve the stolen bicycle that is crucial to his family's survival, De Sica's film subtly examines the human condition, society, family, justice, and anguish in the poverty of post World War II Italy. It won an Honorary Academy Award for Best Foreign Language film in 1949. (De Sica's other important films include *Umberto D.*, *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, and *Two Women*.)

# 1900 (Bernado Bertolucci, 1977) Starring Robert de Niro, Gerard Depardieu

Bernardo Bertolucci's epic history follows the lives of two friends (one a peasant, the other a land owner) born on the same day in Italy. Their lives unfold with vivid cinematography and lush imagery of the beautiful countryside. The movie jumps forward, to the end of World War 1, and follows their story until 1945. At 5 ½ hours longs, it rewards patience.

# Ossessione (Luchino Visconti, 1943) Starring Clara Calamai, Massimo Girotti

The first film based on the book *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. Set in rural Italy, it is an earthy exploration of human desire. The plot is the tale of a wandering tramp who has an affair with the wife of a restaurant owner. The two then conspire to murder her husband and attempt to live happily ever after. Often considered one of the first films of the Neo-Realism movement.

# Pane, amore e fantasia (Luigi Comencini, 1953) Starring Gina Lollobrigida, Vittorio De Sica

A wonderfully innocent, sexy comedy set in central Italy in a backward and rural village. The plot is simple: a young woman is courted by a lot of admirers, including a local police chief, but the movie embodies the resilient Italian spirit, and plays to the clichés — spaghetti, sun, the cult of love, and feisty women — as it suggests the honest basis for those truisms.

# Life Is Beautiful (Roberto Benigni, 1997) Starring Roberto Benigni, Nicoletta Braschi

The Jewish country boy Guido, a romantic in Mussolini's Italy raises a son in the shadow of fascism. He is determined to shelter his son from the evils around them, maintaining a ruse with comic ingenuity, even as the horrors escalate. Despite being a over the top in many instances, this is a moving and poignant tale of a father's sacrifice to save not just his young son's life but his innocence in the face of evil acts.

# Tea with Mussolini (Franco Zeffirelli, 1999) Starring Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Cher

A semi-autobiographical account of Zeffirelli's life in World War II Italy. Luca, Zeffirelli's character, is raised in Florence by his absent father's secretary among a group of British and American women, who must deal with the rise of fascism, the dangers of resistance, and weather dictatorial custody and betrayal.



# **Grand Circle Community & Useful Websites**

If you have access to the Internet, the following sites offer a wealth of information:

Visit the Grand Circle Community website for a world of travel news and information:

www.gct.com/community

**Government websites:** 

**International health information: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)** 

www.cdc.gov/travel

U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information

www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): agency responsible for screening luggage in U.S.

www.tsa.gov/public

National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport information

www.travel.state.gov

#### General travel information websites:

**Travel books** 

www.amazon.com

www.barnesandnoble.com

World weather

www.intellicast.com

www.weather.com

Foreign languages for travelers: basic terms in more than 80 languages

www.travlang.com/languages

Travel tips: packing light, choosing luggage, etc.

www.travelite.org

Net café guide: 100s of locations around the globe

www.cybercafes.com

Electric current and plug types

www.kropla.com/electric2.htm

Foreign exchange rates

www.oanda.com/converter/classic

**ATM locators** 

www.mastercard.com/atm for Cirrus ATMs

www.visa.com/pd/atm for PLUS ATMs

**Country information:** 

visiteurope.com/ Links to countries

www.inyourpocket.com/free-instant-city-guides.html

**Tourist information: France** 

www.franceguide.com

www.francetourism.com

www.franceway.com

www.francekeys.com

**Tourist information: Paris** 

www.paris.org

www.paris-touristoffice.com

www.smartweb.fr/paris

Tourist information: Burgundy/Rhone

www.lyon-france.com www.burgundy-tourism.com

Tourist information: French Riviera & Provence

www.avignon-et-provence.com www.cannes-on-line.com www.provence.guideweb.com Tourist information: Nice www.nicetourism.com

**Tourist information: Italy** www.italiantourism.com **Italy** 

#### U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information

www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel

 $Transportation \ Security \ Administration \ (TSA): \ agency \ responsible \ for \ screening \ luggage \ in \ U.S.$ 

www.tsa.gov/public

National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport and visa information

www.travel.state.gov



# **Tourist Board Addresses**

For further information, contact:

# **The French Government Tourist Office**

444 Madison Avenue, Floor 16 New York, NY 10022 Telephone: 1-212-838-7800

# **Italian National Tourist Office**

630 Fifth Avenue Suite 1565 New York, NY 10111

Telephone: 1-212-245-4822 or 1-212-245-5618

# **Italian National Tourist Office**

401 N. Michigan Ave.

Suite 3030

Chicago, IL 60611

Telephone: 1-312-644-0990 or -0996

# **Italian National Tourist Office**

12400 Wilshire Blvd.

Suite 550

Los Angeles, CA 90025 Telephone: 1-310-820-0098