

French Wine

EXPLORERS



TREASURES OF THE LOIRE VALLEY

7 DAYS, 6 NIGHTS

PRIVATE TOUR

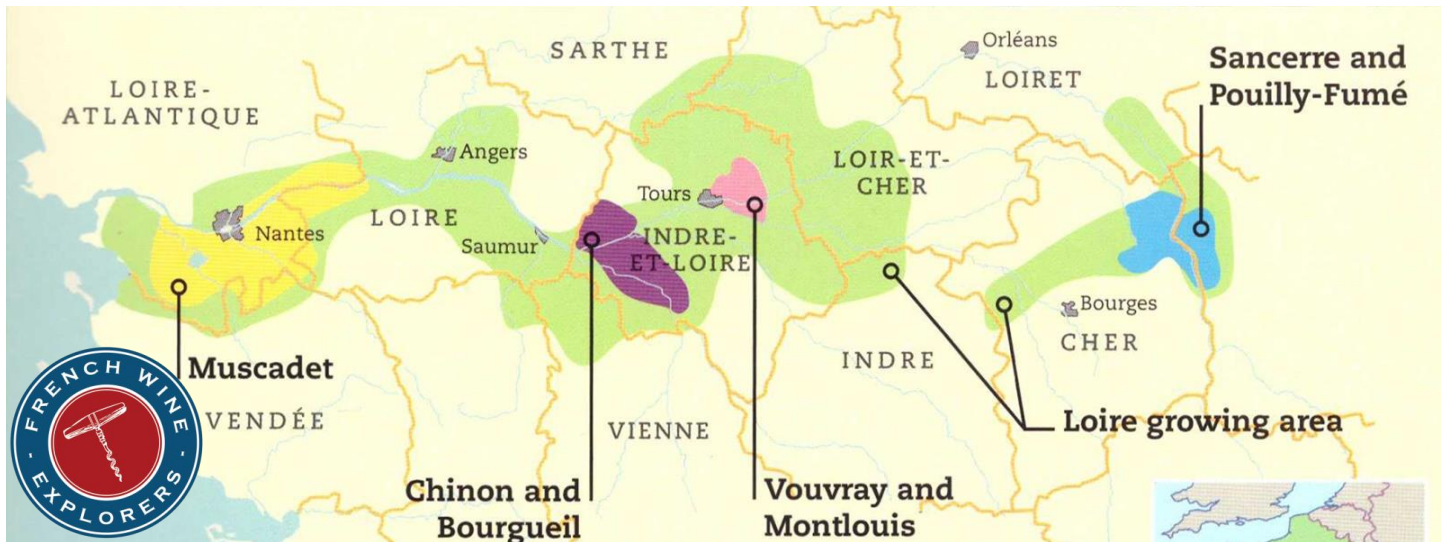
AVAILABLE YEAR ROUND

Known for its majestic **royal chateaux** and **great red and white wines**, the Loire Valley is a favorite destination for **wine lovers** visiting France. It boasts a large variety of **fine wines** and you'll taste the best of them at the finest producers of **Muscadet, Vouvray, Chinon, Bourgueil, Savennières**, or **Côteaux du Layon**. Stay in magnificent 4-star hotels and enjoy fabulous Michelin-starred dining (including the excellent **local goat cheeses**). This is a truly unique and memorable experience for any wine lover wanting to discover a wide range of wines from France.

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ITINERARY*



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DAY 1 WELCOME TO NANTES

- Arrive in Nantes and transfer on own to your hotel, the **Radisson Blu Nantes**. Remainder of day on own.

DAY 2 WHITES OF MUSCADET

B,L

- Discover the **wines of Muscadet**. Muscadet is the perfect wine with fish and being close to the Atlantic it is wonderfully fresh. Contrary to popular belief Muscadet from good vintages and top-quality producers can easily be kept ten years. A young Muscadet is ideal with a **seafood platter**, while a **grilled fish** with the local *beurre blanc* calls for an older vintage. You will have a presentation of the vineyards of Muscadet, starting at a **local boutique grower producer**.
- Enjoy another tasting before we pause for lunch (included) at a restaurant known for its fish specialties, **Chez Clemence** sitting just next to the Loire river.
- This afternoon, we'll visit **Chateau de Goulaine** where you will meet Christophe de Goulaine for a tasting in the kitchen of the chateau.
- Return to your hotel late afternoon, evening on own.

DAY 3 ANGERS AND SAUMUR, AMBOISE

B,L

- Today we'll start with a visit of **Chateau d'Angers**. Founded in the 9th century by the Counts of Anjou, it was expanded to its current size in the 13th century. At the heart of this vast fortress, discover the gardens and the famous Apocalypse Tapestry.
- Next, we pause in the Anjou vineyards in **Brissac Quince**. Anjou is the heart of the Loire Valley and its vineyards. Famous for its gentle climate, it produces a wide range of wines - virtually everything apart from fortified wines. The greatest glories of Anjou's vineyards are the sweet wines from the Coteaux du Layon and the Coteaux de l'Aubance made from remarkable Chenin Blanc grape, whose birthplace is here. The past 20 years have seen a renaissance in the making of Anjou's sweet wines, which are often rich but not cloying because of the balancing acidity.
- Enjoy **lunch** (included) featuring specialties of the region in an authentic **troglodyte cave**.
- This afternoon, we stop at **Chateau de Targe in Parnay**, and visit the property with the owner, Mr Pisani-Ferry. Along with **Chinon**, **Saumur Champigny** is the Loire's best known red.
- **Transfer to Amboise and check into your 4* boutique hotel** in Amboise. Evening on own.

DAY 4 CHINON AND BOURGUEIL

B

- Enjoy the **morning to relax and to discover Amboise on own**. We recommend the **Clos Luce**, a few yards away from the Royal Castle of Amboise. Leonardo da Vinci spent the last years of his life there until his death in 1519. After you tour his bedroom, office, reception room and kitchen, you will go to the invention room where the most spectacular machines Leonardo invented are on display.
- After lunch on own, start with a visit and tasting of **Chinon wines** at **Domaine Pierre Sourdais at Cravant les Coteaux**. Pierre Sourdais has built a reputation based on the consistently high quality of the **Chinon wines** he produces. In Chinon, **Cabernet Franc is dominant** and, although up to 10% of Cabernet Sauvignon is authorized, it is rarely used.
- Then taste **Bourgueil wines** at a second estate in the region.
- Return to your hotel late afternoon, evening on own.

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DAY 5 VOUVRAY AND ICONIC CHENONCEAU B,L

- Today, you will discover the vineyards of **Vouvray**. Top Vouvray, especially an older vintage, is one of the great wines of France. Made from Chenin Blanc, the style of Vouvray varies enormously from austere dry to richly sweet. Start with a **leading boutique Vouvray grower producer**.
- Following lunch (included), visit a larger estate such as **Domaine Huet in Vouvray** followed by a tasting of their wines. Since its founding in 1928, Domaine Huet has been the standard-bearer for great, age-worthy Chenin Blanc.
- Finally, we will visit **Chateau de Chenonceau**. The unique architecture of the chateau and bridge makes it one of the most original chateaux of the Loire Valley. Chenonceau is related to important French Renaissance women and was offered by King Henry II to his mistress Diane de Poitiers.
- Return to your hotel late afternoon, evening on own.

DAY 6 WHITES AND REDS OF SANCERRE B,L

- Today we head towards **Sancerre**. If spectacular and beautiful vineyards are what you are looking for, then Sancerre is the place for you. Sancerre's steep vineyards have a grandeur that you will find nowhere else in the Loire. Here and on the other side of the Loire, in Pouilly as well as the smaller appellations of this region, resides the heartland of crisp, dry and mineral Sauvignon Blanc. The white and red wine has propelled Sancerre from a poor, backward part of France, to the Loire's best known and wealthiest vineyard. There has been a red wine revolution over the past 15 years as producers have started to take Pinot Noir seriously. The region produces some reds that offer competition to the village appellation wines of Burgundy.
- On our way, we'll stop at a **local goat cheese maker** and tour their facilities.
- Next we will stop at **Domaine Henri Bourgeois** in Sancerre for a tasting of their wines. For 10 generations, the family has devoted its passion and values to Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir to craft wines of unique expression.
- Lunch will be a gourmet **food and wine pairing** experience in the heart of the village of Sancerre.
- Late afternoon check into your **boutique hotel in Chavignol**, remainder of afternoon and evening on own.

DAY 7 SANCERRE AND POUILLY FUME B

- Enjoy a full day of touring discovering more wines from **Sancerre, and of Pouilly-Fume**.
- **In Pouilly-Fumé**, only white wines may be made, and the vast majority is planted with Sauvignon Blanc. Pouilly Fumé's smoky "gunflint" aroma is its trademark, especially notable in wines grown on limestone soils. Unlike Sancerre, its neighbor on the left bank of the Loire, Pouilly Fumé is dedicated exclusively to the production of white wine, growing Sauvignon Blanc and Chasselas.
- At the end of the day transfer to the train station in Sancerre.
- **Continue your journeys with fond memories of the splendor of the Loire Valley.**

LEGEND FOR MEALS INCLUDED IN YOUR TOUR: B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

**Itinerary subject to change: every effort will be made to keep the itinerary as close as possible to what appears here; however, the final itinerary may vary due to wine producer schedules, availability and factors beyond our control.*

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YOUR LUXURY TOUR IN THE LOIRE VALLEY INCLUDES:

- A customized tour featuring the best hotel and touring elements tailored to your preferences
- The services of an English-speaking wine expert guide throughout the tour
- Deluxe, air-conditioned transportation throughout
- 2 nights accommodations at the 4 * Radison Blu Nantes
- 3 nights accommodations at a 4* boutique hotel in Amboise
- 1 night accommodations at a boutique hotel in Chavignol
- VIP Tours and tastings at some of the finest chateaux of the region
- Buffet breakfast each day and four lunches paired with wine
- Information on the region and its wines sent to you in advance of your tour

Price based on 2 guests, double occupancy: US \$5990.00 per person

Price based on 4 guests, double occupancy: US \$4990.00 per person

Price based on 6 guests, double occupancy: US \$4590.00 per person

(Sunday or Monday start day is preferable)

Subject to availability. Single supplement: please inquire. For groups of 7 or more guests: please contact us for a price quote. Not included: any personal expenses, or any services not specifically mentioned above as included in the price of your tour.

WINE CHATEAUX AND ESTATES

We include only top-quality wine chateaux and estates in our programs. Chateau visits are scheduled by special arrangement, and some chateaux or estates, including any mentioned in the Itinerary, may not be available on your dates. Once you book your program with us, we will contact the estates to determine which are available. If there are specific chateaux or estates you would like to visit, please let us know, and we will contact your preferences first when arranging visits and tastings for you.

To reserve this program: contact us at info@wine-tours-france.com

Tel.: 1-877-261-1500 or 410-745-5406 (outside the USA)

We look forward to meeting you!

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