



## **A. Exclusive France Tours**

Established by entrepreneur and cultural connoisseur Marie Tesson who boasts almost 25 years of experience in the luxury tourism industry, Exclusive France Tours is centered around a philosophy of prestige, cultural authenticity, exclusivity as well as sharing. We know that ultra-luxury experiences are by necessity unique. That's why we aim to give each of our clients an in-depth, ultra-bespoke experience, recognizing that every traveler who comes to us is seeking a travel adventure that's entirely their own. Our tours are painstakingly tailored to the personal interests and desires of our clients-- but are also designed to surprise, delight and transport. Our luxury tours go far beyond enjoyable journeys: we aim to make our clients live, feel, and taste France in all its glorious cultural specificity.

Exclusive France Tours is also one of the leading luxury agencies offering bespoke wine tours of France. We specialize in offering clients private visits to prestigious cellars that are often inaccessible to the general public, including in Bourgogne, Bordeaux, Champagne, the Loire Valley, Provence, the Rhone Valley and Alsace. Meetings with local vintners and food tours featuring local wines are also part of our offer.

## **B. Marie, the owner and MD of Exclusive France Tours: a passion for bringing happiness to people and a permanent quest for excellence and uniqueness**

When I was young, I wanted to discover the world through locals. I discovered several countries, but not as a «tourist»: I went several times to the USA as a student and each time lived with American families. I also had a long internship in Mexico and Spain where I staid with locals. I also worked several years to Australia, which became a second home to. Even when I was spending just a short time in a country, I managed to discover it as a local, with local friends, or business partners. What I am interested in, more than anything, is the people. As for me, understanding a country goes through meeting the locals.

In parallel, I've always been obsessed with reaching excellence and going always a step further, in any possible way. In my studies in international finance and law, that I completed in Paris where I was born. In the different positions I held: in my first job as Investment officer at the Australian Embassy in Paris. As the MD of the French Chamber of Commerce in Sydney. In the high-end corporate events I got to organize in Australia and throughout France. In my love for wine and food. In the hidden places and once in a lifestyle experiences I seek for my clients. My priority is to deliver the very best for whatever I've been asked to do.

When I came back to France in 1999, my love for people combined with this never-ending quest for excellence naturally gave me the desire to make France discover in an intimist and exclusive way that no one could even dream of. This is how I set up my first tourism agency in Burgundy.

I've often been told that I have a contagious enthusiasm for introducing Americans to the hidden treasures of our beautiful regions such as Burgundy, Provence, Champagne,

Bordeaux, the Loire Valley, the French Riviera, Normandy, but also lesser renowned areas such as Dordogne, Brittany, the Basque Country and Alsace.

### C. Our strengths

- **An uncommon thorough knowledge of France in many confidential and exclusive ways as well as an exceptional network in several French areas** – built year after year, driven by first our clients who inspired me to explore a specific area for them, on a special angle. As they always look for extraordinary experiences, I got to work each single French region in depth to find precious partners who perfectly understand the high standard quality I seek. This is how we now manage to get privileged access to places usually closed to public and to people who do not receive tourists.
- **A strong expertise in the wine industry** in the different French wine-making areas thanks to Marie's personal connections as she used to be the wife of a renowned Burgundy wine maker for 15 years. She got to understand how the wine industry works and thus she can now open doors of wine estates which are usually totally closed to public. She also manages to build a strong relationship with various actors of the industry, from the winemakers to owners of famous castles as well as sommeliers and wine professionals in order to accompany her clients during their stay.
- **A developed sense of listening and understanding our clients 'needs beyond words.** From our experience and solid knowledge, we become experts at foreseeing and shaping our clients' journey to fulfill their high expectations.
- **A strong creativity potential, nurtured by our clients 'desires and dreams.** France is such a rich playground that you could imagine infinite singular possibilities and combinations for our clients. The more challenging the request will be, the more inspiration it will generate in us. This is also certainly why we got recognized as "tailored proposals designers" as the word of mouth spreads amongst people who ask us to write and set up a scenario to propose their fiance.
- **A first-class mastery of logistics,** with a capability to react efficiently on the ground in case of a last-minute issue. Every single tour made for our individuals benefits from our procedure in logistics based on the same rigorous standards that the ones used for major luxury corporate events.
- **A passion for creating well designed, thrilling programs,** which could be on a single theme or on a specific area or, even better, on multiple areas – which certainly becomes one of our biggest assets as we can offer cross-regional thrilling tours and even "**mini Tours de France**" with remarkable happenings and rare encounters to make these tours outstanding. Even the most touristy places will become yours for a while as we will make them discover in a way which will make you forget and eventually avoid the crowds. One of our biggest challenges and certainly one of our

biggest satisfactions as well is the way we got to make discover in a truly privileged way the most touristy place in France, the Mont Saint Michel. After several months of thoughts, exchanges with our local partners and inspection tours, we got it right and are so happy to share this with our clients!

We hope these few words give you a sense of what makes us stand out from the crowd.

#### **D. Our favorite French areas**

I cannot pick one region over another. I love them all! As for me, my genuine love for the French regions is similar to the way you love your children: as much but differently. They got their own personality, their own amazing treasures in multiple ways. The beauty of our job is to reveal the inner energy of every single region, which has its own specific vibes and ways of living. Which makes France so captivating!

Just to name a few, and not the major ones that everyone got in mind:

#### **BURGUNDY**

It was my first love. Therefore, there will always be something special about Burgundy for me.

I fell in love with Burgundy. First through a glass of its wine ...well, and a winemaker as well! ☺ The spell of the bouquet of Burgundy wines – sometimes fruity, sometimes animal. It's an explosion of aromas which titillate your nose, your mouth, even your childhood memories ... a sensorial adventure full of surprises for those who take time to explore.

That pleasure is even more vivid when you savor these rich, precious tastes on their own soil. The real Burgundy reveals itself only to those who listen to it, to those who desire it. To immerse yourself, to understand its wines means to discover Burgundy's history, its terroirs, its people, winemakers, cooking, and seasons ... so many undreamt-of treasures, so many delights to come! Discover Burgundy off the beaten track, explore its vineyards and villages: Meursault, Vosne-Romanée, Gevrey-Chambertin, Pommard, Aloxe-Corton, Chassagne-Montrachet, Chablis, Chambolle-Musigny ... so many promises in these renowned names! Experience Burgundy through its wines, what a superb way to discover it and learn at the same time.

This is how Burgundy and its hidden treasures appeal to me, this is how I can introduce you to Burgundy's charms too – in an intimate way. Burgundy remains still a secretive, reserved place in many ways. With our help to open doors it's much more a rewarding experience.

#### **DORDOGNE**

Dordogne is so endearing and fascinating. Somehow, it brings back memories of family holidays in an ancient farm with dinners around a big oak table covered with terrines, fruit tarts and local cheeses – and indeed, I spent some holidays there when I was a kid. When I got to explore this blessed French area on a professional angle, thanks to some specific requests of my clients, I was in heaven! A stay there is heartwarming. It got it all, with first a stunning countryside everywhere with quaint middle age villages, quaint houses, mills and farms.

It also houses some of the world's most brilliant prehistoric art. Even if you are not into parietal art before going there, as soon as you arrive in Dordogne, you question yourself about the great mystery of the origins of the Humanity, you just cannot help it. You got signs from our ancestors everywhere. You will be fascinated and moved by the drawings you will admire in the caves – they will tell you so much about the way our ancestors lived in the ancient times.

Dordogne is also renowned for its rich gastronomic heritage, made of a myriad of local rich products such as the famous black truffle; some delicious walnuts which will make cakes to die for as well as an intense and tasty walnut oil; the so sweet and tasty strawberries; the delicate and well balanced caviar which is now sourced by Michelin starred restaurants; and, last but not least, the traditional duck foie gras and duck confit that every single farm around will serve.

There is also a fabulous choice for outdoor enthusiasts with great canoeing, biking and hiking. A great combination of nature and culture are the ingredients for an unforgettable French journey.

Another great thing as well is the proximity with Bordeaux: more and more often, we combine the 2 areas as the experience in each of them is so different, it will make the discovery even more interesting and rich.

## **BRITTANY**

Like Dordogne, Brittany is in the heart of so many French people: at one stage, we all went to Brittany to spend some holidays or to learn how to sail. It is within our family common heritage.

Brittany is first renowned for its stunning, constantly changing scenery with a glorious, rough coast shaped by the ocean. Usually, we all enjoy a bright blue sky: in Brittany, you will surprise yourself to fall in love with the array of greys Brittany would reveal to you. It is hard to believe the beauty it provides.

Brittany reveals itself to those who want to discover it from inside. It has its own strong identity. It is a territory as such. There, you will have the feeling to be in Brittany, not in France. And even when you go North and then South, you'll see: the locals of a specific place will make you clearly understand that they have nothing to do with the ones from another place... Brittons are proud of their identity. They have kept all their authenticity,

which is certainly why they are so likeable. They will be eager to share their passion for their land and its marvels, but you need some keys to get to them.

Brittany is also a paradise for foodies: there you will get to taste exceptional oysters and seafood, as well with fish. There, you will also discover a cultural treat: buckwheat!

Buckwheat is as important for Brittons as bread for French people. The traditional buckwheat galettes (crepes) are within the DNA of locals. Not to forget apple cider and salted butter: in Brittany, do not expect to find regular butter, there is almost none! Could you imagine that in France some salted-butter makers have been recognized as "gourmet craftsmen" at the highest level. Where else than in Brittany would you find that...

Brittany is also a mecca for any birdwatcher, with worldly renowned spots which attract thousands of amateurs every year. We got connections with amazing nature guides as well as ornithologists who share with us their hidden observatory tricks and best sites. It is a wonder you should live once in your lifetime.

A first easy trip to Brittany could be combined for instance with a historical exploration of the WWII sites in Normandy and the visit of the Mont Saint Michel.

## **PROVENCE... AND MARSEILLES!**

Provence is like Paris, Champagne and Bordeaux: it got a strong appeal throughout the world. Its speaks for itself. Talking about Provence instantly brings a smile on anyone's face – synonymous of blue sky all year long, cicada song, "douceur de vivre", colorful markets, cute perched villages, artists everywhere, bright colors, amazing tasty food, pleasant wines, as well as the traditional petanque game with a glass of Pastis! Hard to resist... The area got it all. The reality equals what you got in mind.

If you like to go a bit further and be surprised, I would like to share with you the big crush I got some years ago for Marseilles: even if Marseilles was already part of your playground, at that time I got a request for a client for a 7 days Provence tour, but based in Marseilles.

Which was the indicator for us to get to know Marseilles much in depth... this is how I ended spending a week for Christmas with my 2 children there, as it was becoming really urgent to understand Marseilles from insight. And this is how my love affair with Marseilles started... There is an incredible energy in Marseilles, and you will surely feel it as you step in. From the fishermen going back and force to the port, bringing the freshest fish, to the market vendors and restaurants cuisines getting ready to delight your taste buds, and the retired sipping an espresso on a sunny terrace... Everything is picturesque in Marseille, starting with the light, forget about Instagram filters here, you don't need them. The lovely chaos and troubling mix induced by the coexistence of many cultures is part of the charm of the city. When you think about it, it is very similar to the feeling you could experience visiting a place like Brooklyn, NY. Marseilles literally exudes the purest and most authentic French Southern Soul and, beware, you might actually fall in love with the Phocaeen city at first sight.