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FALL/WINTER 2015

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"The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net of wonder forever."

YOUR GUIDE TO HEAVEN ON EARTH

— Jacques-Yves Cousteau



rom chic village townhouses to vineyard châteaux and bull ranches, these are the countryside stunners luring wine lovers and style seekers of all kinds into the hills. Find which one fits your travel vibe for a fall foray into picture-perfect Provence.

FOR DESIGN LOVERS: Hôtel de Tourrel

The seven-room Hôtel de Tourrel opened this May, marrying high design with high comfort. An ambitious restoration project, the hotel features oversized suites spread throughout two historic buildings that the owners combined to create the residence. Located in the center of picturesque Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, the property retains original architectural details—beamed ceilings, exposed stone and a grand central staircase that dates to the 17th century—with the clean lines of contemporary décor and an impeccable collection of 1920s furnishings. Added bonus: a sleek restaurant and a well-equipped wine shop, where you can uncork one of the owner's selections and sip away on the rooftop terrace or by the pool.

FOR RESORT SEEKERS: Domaine de Manville

A former farming estate, the sprawling Domaine de Manville debuted as a resort in 2014. Set at the base of Les Baux-de-Provence, with its famous castle, Château des Baux, and art exhibits, the hotel's own grounds include an 18-hole golf course, a spa, multiple restaurants, indoor and outdoor pools and even a children's club with on-staff nannies, run in charming gypsy caravans set in a wooded grove. The owners, originally from the area, spent seven years finalizing each detail, transforming the heritage buildings into 39 well-appointed hotel rooms and villas. A far cry from shabby chic, Manville's version of country décor is a stylish upgrade that could keep any urbane Parisian happy, with custom leather headboards on platform beds, furnishings from the L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue antique markets, pops of color in turquoise accent walls and claw-foot soaking tubs.

FOR HISTORY BUFFS: Les Lodges Sainte Victoire Hôtel & Spa

Although Provence is full of quaint towns, Aix-en-Provence may be more famous than all, thanks to its art (Cézanne lived and worked here), Aix-Marseille University and its unimpeachable beauty. The base for exploration is Les Lodges Sainte Victoire, a two-year-old boutique hotel and spa in Le Tholonet, five minutes outside the city center. Built into a lush hillside, 39 rooms are divided amongst the main building, a garden addition and four villas with private swimming pools. Although many guests check in for the convenient location, most find leaving difficult thanks to the spa, infinity pool and Le Saint-Estève, the hotel's gastronomic eatery for which chef Mathias Dandine just earned his third Michelin star in 2014. With drop-dead gorgeous views from the terrace, which looks out onto Montagne

Sainte-Victoire—a chosen subject of Cézanne that he painted no less than 87 times—this is a place to dine, even if you're not staying.

FOR COWBOYS: Le Mas de Peint

Think cowboys are an American invention? Think again. The Camargue, France's southern plains, has served as agricultural land since the 1500s. This is where *guardians* (French cowboys) still ride sturdy horses and herd free-range cattle at the edge of the sea. To get the ultimate ranch experience, book a room at Le Mas de Peint, a 1,300-acre family-owned ranch with eight guestrooms, five junior suites and four spaces for events. The classic French-Country décor features exposed pine rafters, antique writing desks and well-worn leather club chairs, the perfect vessel to sink into and enjoy a morning coffee or a pre-dinner cocktail. Ride with a wrangler in the morning, relax by the pool in the afternoon and head into nearby Arles in the evening to see a bull fight. Experienced riders can even saddle up with a *guardian* and herd bull—an experience not for the faint of heart.

FOR FOODIES: L'Hostellerie de l'Abbaye de la Celle

Alain Ducasse may have earned his stars (19, to be exact) as a chef, but he's proven that his talents extend beyond the kitchen with three hotels in Provence, as well as one in Tuscany. The smallest is L'Hostellerie de l'Abbaye de la Celle, a 10-room hideaway in the tiny town of La Celle. An easy drive to everything from Le Var to *la mer*, L'Hostellerie is just the romantic bolthole required to escape the crowds elsewhere. Spacious suites, which emerged from renovation in 2011 and are furnished with carved wooden beds and Ducasse's personal collection of museum-worthy art, sit either in the main house or in the former stables. The grounds include an organic garden, a pool and, of course, a Michelin-starred restaurant helmed by Ducasse disciple Benoit Witz. Tip: Brad and Angelina's Château Miraval is nearby, and their rosé is on the menu. Word is they dine here when they're in town.

FOR VINOPHILES: Château de Berne

Check in and stay put at this 18th century wine estate tucked away in the Var region of Provence. With a nearly 9,000-square-foot spa, a cooking school, walking and biking trails crossing the 1,500-acre estate and three restaurants—including an intimate chef's table experience—there's no reason to leave. Wine lovers can also tour and taste their way through the award-winning winery's cellar. The 27 rooms, each overlooking vineyards and gardens, feature traditional Provençal décor with tiled floors and colorful linens. This summer, the estate unveiled a massive renovation, adding additional polish to its coveted Relais & Châteaux ranking.

Contact your travel agent to book your Provence vacation.

