



Decanter® Wine Experiences

EXPLORE THE WINES OF
THE RHÔNE VALLEY

WITH MATT WALLS

June 2 – 9 2024

Expert

Matt Walls *Contributing Editor, Decanter*

Matt Walls is an award-winning wine writer, published author and broadcaster. He is a contributing editor for Decanter, covering the Rhône Valley and panel chair for the Rhône at the Decanter World Wine Awards. He has recently published his latest book *Wines of the Rhône*, which was shortlisted for the André Simon Food and Drink Book Awards.

“For this trip I’ve put together a mix of legendary estates that are standard bearers for their appellations alongside under-the-radar producers who I’m sure will be the stars of tomorrow. I’ve never met a wine lover who doesn’t appreciate fine food, so we’ll also be visiting some of my favourite places to eat in both North and South. It promises to be an unforgettable experience!”

Matt Walls



Highlights

- Private boat tour and tasting hosted by Matt Walls on the Rhône River
- Explore Les Halles food market with a local food and wine expert
- Exclusive access to some of the best wineries in the region

Itinerary

Sunday, June 02 Bienvenue à Lyon

Arrive in Lyon airport in the afternoon and take a transfer by private coach to the 4-star hotel Domaine de Clairefontaine, surrounded by magnificent parkland in Chonas L'Amballan, near Côte-Rôtie. Time has been set aside to settle in before

gathering with fellow wine enthusiasts for a welcome dinner and cocktail reception at the award-winning Chef Phillippe Giradon's Michelin star restaurant within the hotel.

Hotel: Domaine de Clairefontaine

Meals: Dinner



Monday, June 03 Discovering Condrieu and Côte-Rôtie

After breakfast, we'll take a short drive to visit Domaine Pierre-Jean Villa who can tell us about his journey from Burgundy to the Rhône. We'll see why his wines are considered some of the most elegant in the region. From here we will drive to the estate of Xavier Gérard, an up-and-coming star of both Côte-Rôtie and Condrieu with excellent vineyards in both appellations including a parcel of the fabled Côte-Rôtie lieu-dit La Landonne.

We'll stop to enjoy lunch at the informal Epicurieux in Ampuis and once we're suitably refreshed, we'll drive a short distance to Domaine Benjamin & David Duclaux for a tour and tasting with one of the brothers. Their Côte-Rôties are fast approaching the premier league, but prices remain remarkably fair – for now! We'll return to the hotel late this afternoon before heading out to dinner at le Cottage.

- **Hotel:** Domaine de Clairefontaine
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Itinerary

Tuesday, June 04

Tain and Tournon – discovering Hermitage, Crozes-Hermitage and Saint-Joseph

We'll check out of the hotel after breakfast and drive to Domaine Laurent Fayolle, undoubtedly one of the greatest producers in Crozes-Hermitage, making standout reds and whites year in, year out. We'll walk through his vineyards together then taste through his wines – including his red and white Hermitage. Made in tiny amounts but superbly elegant, they're a great insider tip.

We'll enjoy lunch at a quaint local restaurant before heading to Domaine Julien Cécillon, widely considered to be one of the up-and-coming stars of the Northern Rhône. He makes intense and characterful

wines across four appellations – Saint-Joseph, Crozes-Hermitage, Saint-Péray and Cornas – so we can compare and contrast these different local styles with Julien to talk us through the terroir.

The evening will consist of a stroll down to the river to board an exclusive cruise along the Rhône (subject to confirmation). As you glide past picturesque villages in the golden hour, Matt Walls will lead you through a tasting of lesser-known appellations, unusual grape varieties and hidden gems, all served with an informal picnic of local specialities.

- **Hotel:** Fac et Spera
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

“The selection of estates that Matt chose to visit was great. An excellent mix of well-known names with new discoveries”

Amber LeBeau



Itinerary

Wednesday, June 05

Discovering Cornas and Saint-Péray

This is the day we discover the terroirs of Saint-Péray and Cornas. From the hotel we'll walk to the iconic Chapoutier for an exclusive wine tasting at the top of their vineyards by the Tour Carrée, where we will enjoy panoramic views- a feature unavailable to the general public. Here, we will compare five different wines, including some of their legendary Hermitage Sélections Parcellaires.

After lunch we will transfer to Domaine Chaboud-Cellier. It's a domaine you might not have encountered yet, as it was only established in 2020. The

vineyards and expertise here however have deep roots; it's a collaboration between Stéphan Chaboud, 6th generation winegrower in Saint-Péray, and Charlène Cellier, one of the most promising young winemakers of her generation. Together they produce highly impressive wines – particularly their spellbinding sparkling Saint-Péray. We'll return to the hotel in the late afternoon.

Evening at leisure to explore the villages of Tain l'Hermitage and Tournon.

- **Hotel:** Fac et Spera
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

“Decanter trip with local experts like this trip are EXCELLENT”
Gregory



Itinerary

Thursday, June 06 Châteauneuf-du-Pape

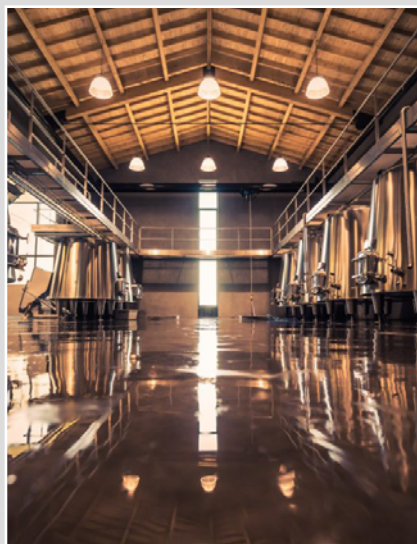
After breakfast we will transfer to the secluded Clos du Caillou, an organic producer who makes some of the most thrilling red and white Châteauneuf-du-Papes, whose wines always favour finesse over raw power. From here we will continue to the village of Châteauneuf-du-Pape for lunch at La Mère Germaine, a Michelin-starred restaurant with wonderful views and an exceptional wine list.

In the afternoon we'll spend some time at one of the most revered of all the great estates of Châteauneuf-du-

Pape – Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe. Working organically with ancient vines in some of the finest vineyard land in the appellation –La Crau – they craft traditional red and white Châteauneufs that age beautifully.

We'll taste through their range before continuing to Avignon and checking into the 4-star Hotel de Cambis in the heart of this beautiful Provençal city. Dinner is at leisure in Avignon.

- Hotel:** Hotel de Cambis
- Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

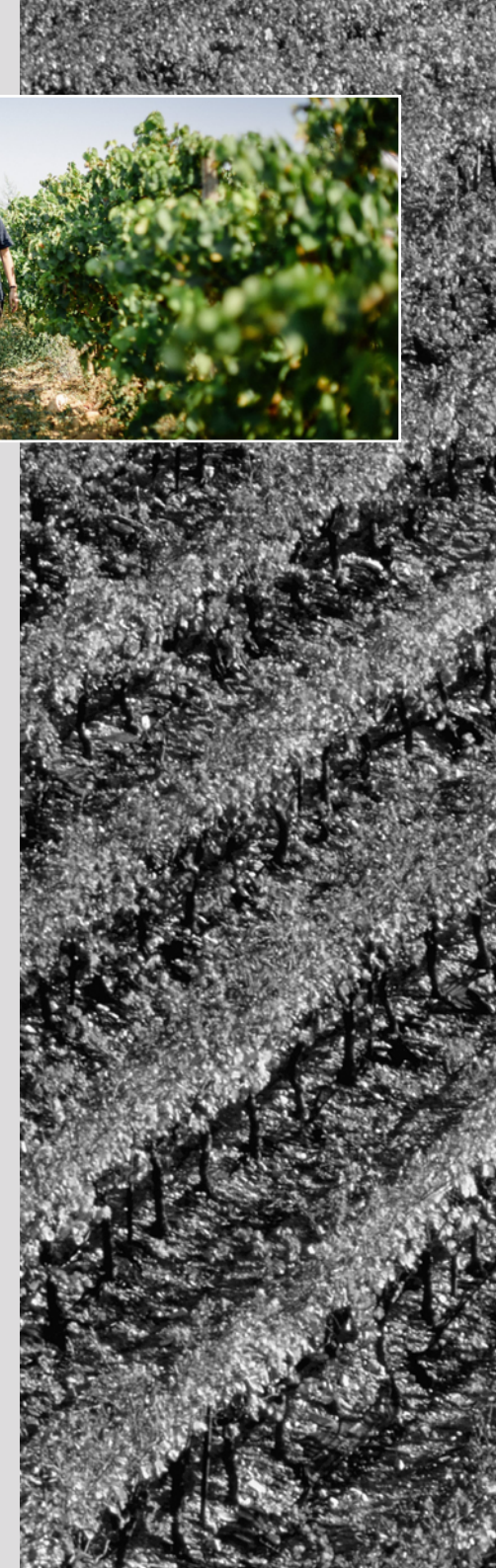


Friday, June 07 Discovering Gigondas and Vacqueyras

We'll drive to Domaine Montirius this morning, located on the edge of Vacqueyras, bathed by the sun and cooled by the Mistral. This is one of the first estates in the region to convert to biodynamics and they have a strict 'no wood' rule in the winery. After a lunch in Gigondas, we'll explore this jewel of a village followed by a visit and tasting at Domaine Santa Duc, one of the most exciting contemporary

producers in the Southern Rhône. They were one step ahead of their neighbours with organic and then biodynamic viticulture, and they remain forward looking today - going back to co-planting different varieties and replanting heritage grapes such as Counoise. Return to Avignon for evening and dinner at leisure.

- Hotel:** Hotel de Cambis
- Hotel:** Breakfast, Lunch



Itinerary

Saturday, June 08 Exploring Avignon

In the morning, we will stroll through the Halles d'Avignon food hall with sommelier Kelly McAuliffe. He will lead us through the covered market to taste some of the finest examples of local specialties, such as olives, goat cheeses, charcuterie, and the Provençal bread, fougasse along with some wine. You will have the opportunity to explore and enjoy

lunch at leisure before we reconvene to enjoy a guided tour of the Palais des Papes, one of the largest and most important mediaeval Gothic buildings in Europe and Papal seat during the 14th century. In the evening, we will celebrate our journey at a gala farewell dinner.

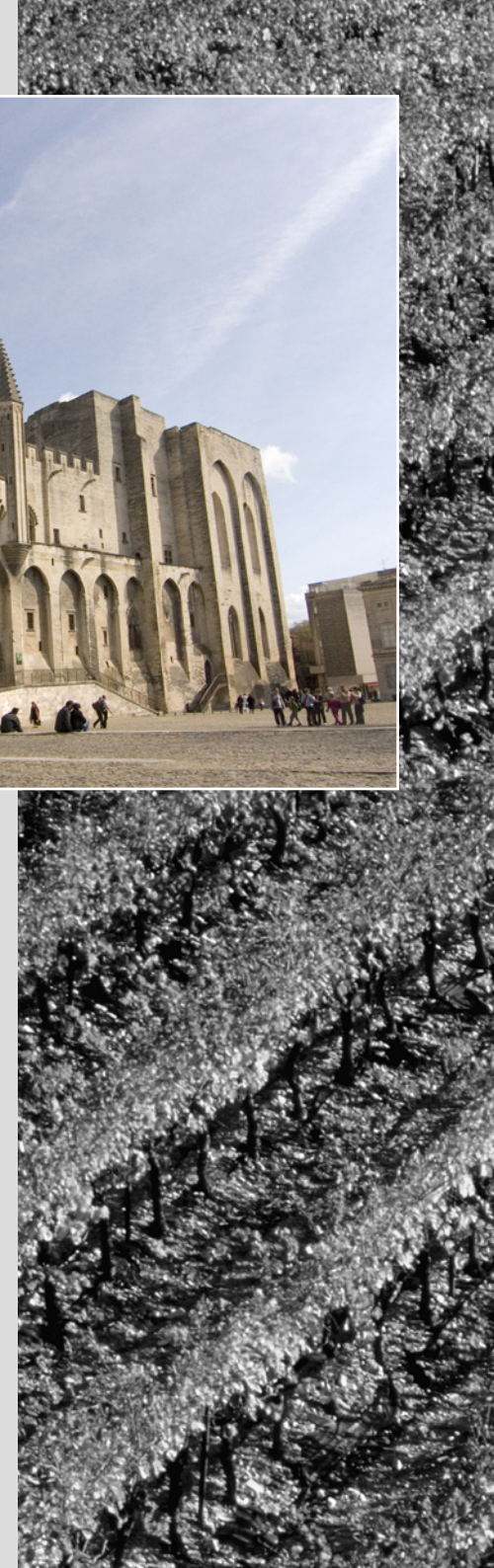
- Hotel:** Hotel de Cambis
- Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Sunday, June 09 Au Revoir

After breakfast individual arrangements for flights home.

- Meals:** Breakfast



Hotels

Domaine de Clairefontaine

Domaine de Clairefontaine is a deluxe boutique hotel surrounded by beautiful parkland offering 18 elegant guest rooms that combine local charm and comfort, complete with all modern amenities. Owners Laurence and Philippe Girardon have created a

country retreat that features high-end local furnishings, making guests feel at home. Philippe, also a Michelin-starred chef, uses many of his homegrown ingredients and produce in the award-winning restaurant in the adjoining 17th-century mansion house.



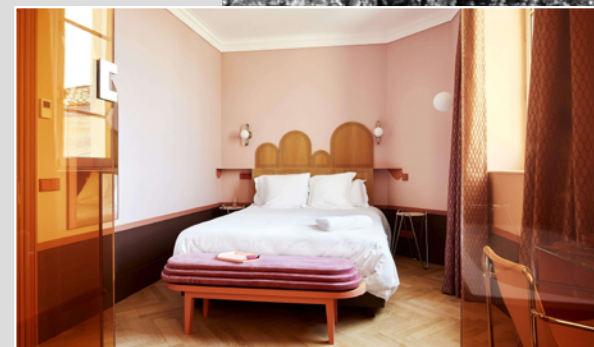
Hotel Fac & Spera

Fac & Spera, meaning “do and hope,” is the motto of the Chapoutier wine estate. This 4-star hotel, located in Tain l'Hermitage, was created by the Chapoutier family and embodies their spirit: “Wine is a way of life. It's all about sharing a meal, enjoying a moment together, and discovering a new region. It's all interconnected.” This sophisticated hotel includes a swimming pool and deluxe spa and a very good bistro that offers excellent traditional cuisine with an extensive wine list from Hermitage and other terroirs.



Hotel de Cambis

Housed in a beautiful old building, ideally situated in the heart of Avignon, the design and services of Hotel De Cambis have been carefully considered to ensure a pleasant stay. Nestled in the mediaeval fortifications of the city of Avignon, the Hotel De Cambis offers ideal accommodation from which to explore the City of Popes. The hotel pays tribute to the unique identity of this region in various ways; as soon as you walk through the doors, you will be drawn into an artistic concept that revolves around the colours of wine, its sensations and emotions.



Pricing:

■ **Price: \$8900**
(single supplement \$1,285).

■ **Deposit: \$750**



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BOOK NOW

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