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### **CASTLES AND WINES 3 DAYS/2 NIGHTS**

*For a week-end, this program introduces you to the Cathar Country and all its special cultural, oenological and gastronomic features. A treat for Epicureans.*

#### ***FRIDAY: CARCASSONNE***

Arrival at noon. Reception at **Carcassonne** airport and transfer to the city.  
We will set you up in your hotel, from which you can discover our superb medieval city. The gourmet dinner will also be provided in the City of Carcassonne.

#### Sample Menu:

*Green Asparagus soup with turmeric*

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*Sea Bass with Peas, Beans and Lemon Conserve*

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*Pan fried Lamb loin with Gravy cooked in Tagine style*

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*Moist Chocolate Cake with Caramel*

Night at the hotel.

#### ***SATURDAY: VILLAGES AND REGION OF THE CORBIERES - MEDIEVAL MEAL***

After breakfast, your guide and private oenologist will accompany you throughout the day as you explore mediaval villages and **Corbières** wines. You will have to travel only a few kilometers to see our hilly landscapes and colourful vineyards.

*The Corbières is a vast rectangular area with evidence of a turbulent geological history. The "terroir" (soil) is especially suited to red wine. The Carignan grape variety is used 50%. More and more often the wine is matured in oak barrels. This demonstrates the high quality approach used by the wine growers of Corbières for a century.*

*The red wines are rich, spicy, balanced and fruity.*

Wine tasting in a wine cellar of **Cabardès** with your private oenologist. You will taste another vintage label and your oenologist will be sure to compare this vineyard with those of the Corbières.

Gourmet dinner at Lastours

Sample menu:

*Delicate Watercress Cream Soup, with "Petit Gris" Snails*  
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*Bass in White Wine Sauce with braised Fennel and Green Olives*  
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*Crusty Saddle of Lamb with Basil and Vegetables in Wine*  
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*Matured cheeses*  
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*Bitter Chocolate Tart with Bourbon Vanilla Ice-cream*  
*¼ l of Wine; Coffee*

Guided tour of the Castles of **Lastours**. From the panoramic viewpoint, a magnificent sight of the four Castles: **Surdespine, Cabaret, Tour Régine** and **Quertineux**, located on the same mountain peak. Built on the top of a rocky shelf 300 meters high, these four castles controlled one of the principal access roads into the Cabardès and the Black Mountains. They gained importance during the Albigensian crusade.

Return to **Carcassonne** and transfer to the airport.

3-STAR HOTEL SUP	4-STAR HOTEL
GROUP OF 30 PARTICIPANTS	GROUP OF 30 PARTICIPANTS
375 EUROS	485 EUROS

**PRICES INCLUDE:**

- Transfer from airport and transport for the stay by luxury coach
- Accommodation in 3-star hotel with supp. or 4-star hotel in the medieval city (based on double room)
- Meals from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 3
- Services of a private oenologist
- Services of a private guide
- The visits indicated in the program

**PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE:**

- Tourist tax
- Air travel
- Personal expenses
- Drinks during meals
- Cancellation / repatriation assistance insurance
- Supplement for individual room

This program is subject to availability during reservation.

Arrival at **Lagrasse** (“one of the most beautiful villages of France”). Located in a charming valley and with the Orbieu flowing through it, Lagrasse nestles in the foothills and vineyards famous for their characterful, high-quality wines. Tour of the fortified village with its paved streets winding around the Bénédictine Abbey of Ste Marie d’Orbieu, currently inhabited by the Canons. Lagrasse, known as the “city of arts and trades” is home to numerous craftsmen (potters, watercolorists, leather workers, etc.). In this enchanting place, the crafts industry has found a never-failing source of inspiration.

As you leave the village, the path becomes more winding and leads you to a vineyard which has won awards on

several occasions. Here you will have the opportunity to taste typical **Corbières** label wines. The oenologist will introduce you to wine tasting and help you to *understand* the treasures of our region.

You go on to the village of **Villerouge-Terménes** for lunch.

Here, authenticity is the order of the day. Located in the castle, the **Medieval Rôtisserie**, unique in Europe, will take you back to the life and times of the castle in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The surroundings as well as the food were recreated according to a book of that epoch. You will eat this amazing cuisine in the chimney corner with an ancient bread chopping board or with utensils discovered during excavations in the castle. ...a journey back in time.

Sample menu:

*"King Manfred" Pie with Batavia Lettuce with Honey Sauce*

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*Spring Chicken Ræsti with Hazelnut Piccada*

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*Pears in Ypocras with Almond "Gastelets"*

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*Matured cheeses*

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*Local Red and White Wines*

*Languedoc Red Ypocras*

Tour of Villerouge-Terménes castle, where Bélibaste, the last Cathar Parfait, was burnt in 1321.

Wine tasting on the return journey in another **Corbières vineyard**. You will meet a friendly, welcoming wine estate owner, who will share his passion for the region with you.

Your oenologist will continue the introduction to wine appreciation begun in the morning.

Gourmet dinner and night in the city of **Carcassonne**.

***SUNDAY: THE CITY/LASTOURS/VINEYARDS OF CABARDES***

Guided tour of the **Medieval City** with your private guide, exploring its 52 towers, 3 kms of walls and the St Nazaire basilica. This fortified medieval city acquired ramparts in the 4<sup>th</sup> century and the castle of the Viscounts of Trencavel in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It was saved from destruction in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and restored by Viollet Le Duc. It was listed as a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1997.

Departure for the **Cabardès**.

*Located in the North West of Carcassonne, the vineyard of Cabardès lies in the foothills of the Black Mountains. Its position enables it to enjoy not only the warm, exuberant Mediterranean climate, but also the temperate oceanic climate. This duality is also found in the soils and the vine types used, and is reflected in the character of the wines and their originality. By visiting the estates, you can see the wine-grower's vision for yourself and taste the wines.*