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## Paris and the Villages and Vineyards of France

September 8-18, 2011

From approximately \$3,795 per person, plus airfare and V.A.T. (if applicable), based on double occupancy.

Discover the bucolic countryside, picturesque vineyards and charming towns of Champagne and Burgundy on a special program that combines the history and charm of these regions with the sophistication of the nation's capital. Begin in **Reims**, once the coronation-site of French kings, and today your gateway to the idyllic landscape and renowned champagne houses in the area. Visit **Hautvilliers** and see the Abbey of Saint Pierre, where Dom Perignon invented the process for champagne production. Walk in the footsteps of Burgundy's dukes as you traverse the streets in **Dijon**. Visit **Beaune** to see its stunning hospital, a repository of priceless works of art. Travel the scenic **Route des Grands Crus** before concluding in Paris, the *City of Light*. Explore world-renowned museums and see famous landmarks—a fitting end to a journey showcasing the best of France!

### Day-By-Day Itinerary:

#### DAY 1 ~ IN TRANSIT

Depart your gateway city for Paris aboard scheduled jet service.\*

#### DAY 2 ~ REIMS

Upon arrival, transfer\* to **Reims** and *L'Assiette Champenoise*. This evening, gather with fellow travelers for a *Welcome Dinner*.

#### DAY 3 ~ REIMS

**Excursion: Reims.** This morning, discover the highlights of this delightful town. Among its treasures is the Cathedral Nôtre Dame de Reims, where France's kings were once crowned.

**Local Flavor:** Savor lunch at a local restaurant.

**Excursion: Taittinger.** Visit Taittinger, one of the most prestigious wine houses in the Champagne region. Indulge in a tasting of its famed vintages after a tour of the estate.

#### DAY 4 ~ REIMS

**Excursion: Montagne de Reims.** Experience the joy of autumn in the Champagne region with a cruise along the Meuse River. After the cruise, visit Epernay, whose Avenue de Champagne is lined with renowned champagne houses.

**Excursion: Hautvilliers.** This afternoon, journey to Hautvilliers, the *Pearl of Champagne*. It was at the town's Abbey of Saint Pierre that the monk Dom Perignon invented the process for making the famous sparkling wine.

**Local Flavor:** Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant in Reims.

#### DAY 5 ~ TROYES/DIJON

**Excursion: Troyes.** En route to Dijon, stop at Troyes, the former capital of the Champagne region. A tour of this historic city showcases its storied charm. Upon arrival in **Dijon**, check in at the *Sofitel Dijon La Cloche*.

#### DAY 6 ~ DIJON/BEAUNE

**Excursion: Dijon.** Dijon's historic town center abounds with outstanding architecture and the prestige that has graced this town through the centuries. Among its landmarks are stately stone mansions and charming half-timbered houses that date from the 15th and 16th centuries.

**Excursion: Beaune.** This afternoon, travel to Beaune, the *Jewel of Burgundy*. A city known for its beauty, wine and art, its historic sights include the Hospices de Beaune. Built as a hospital to serve the needy, it is home to stunning paintings, impressive furniture and colorful tapestries.

**Local Flavor:** Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant in Dijon.

#### DAY 7 ~ DIJON

**Excursion: Route des Grands Crus.** Embark on a scenic drive of the road that links the wineproducing towns of the Côte d'Or. Visit some of the famous vineyards.

#### DAY 8 ~ PARIS

Board the high-speed TGV train to **Paris** and the *Hotel Baltimore*.

**Excursion: City of Light.** Discover the myriad of landmarks that adorn this dazzling capital. See the Arc de Triomphe, the Cathedral de Nôtre Dame, the Eiffel Tower and other exciting highlights.

#### DAY 9 ~ PARIS

**Excursion: Musée d'Orsay.** Visit one of Europe's greatest collections of Impressionist art. See works by Monet, van Gogh, Renoir, Degas and other celebrated artists.

**Independent Exploration:** The afternoon is free for sightseeing on your own in Paris.

#### DAY 10 ~ PARIS

**Excursion: Le Marais.** Today's walking tour reveals the beauty of the historic Marais district. Admire opulent mansions, stroll under the arcades of the Place des Vosges and discover the culture of one of Paris' best-loved neighborhoods. Tonight, attend a *Farewell Dinner* at a Parisian restaurant.

#### DAY 11 ~ IN TRANSIT

Transfer to the airport for the return flights to your gateway city.\*

*NOTE: Itinerary sequence and/or scheduled events may change. Many excursions in this program involve an element of walking.*