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Modernism on the Mediterranean: From Van Gogh to Picasso in Provence & the Côte d’Azur with Page Knox, Lecturer & Educator

March 6–14, 2024
Modernism on the Mediterranean: From Van Gogh to Picasso in Provence & the Côte d’Azur

Dear Members and Friends of The Metropolitan Museum of Art,

In March 2024, I invite you to join me in the South of France, where groundbreaking artists from Van Gogh and Picasso to Dora Maar and Anselm Kiefer have found inspiration in the sun-drenched landscapes of Provence and the Côte d’Azur. As a Columbia University lecturer with expertise on modern masters, I look forward to immersing you in these beautiful French regions and the ongoing inspiration they offer for innovative artists, going behind the scenes of excellent private art collections and artist studios.

In UNESCO-listed Avignon, the 14th-century papal seat, we’ll see rooms not open to the public at the richly frescoed Palais des Papes. A guided tour of Avignon’s Collection Lambert will reveal a renowned art dealer’s incredible private collection of masterpieces by Van Gogh, Degas, Picasso, Cy Twombly, Louise Lawler, and others. In Ménerbes, an expert will introduce us to Maison Dora Maar, the former home of the French experimental photographer who was Picasso’s muse, where we’ll see her private drawings and paintings up close.

We’ll immerse ourselves in the world of Van Gogh in his adopted home of Arles. Nearby, we’ll go behind the scenes in the nearby Monastery of Saint-Paul-de-Mausole, where Van Gogh created works such as The Starry Night as a patient here, with access to his personal room. An overnight stay at Provence’s Château La Coste will be a thrill, as this 600-acre vineyard resort seamlessly blends art, architecture, nature, and wine culture. Notably, it hosts a sculpture garden with works from a “Who’s Who?” list in contemporary art and architecture, from Tadao Ando and Renzo Piano to Louise Bourgeois and Richard Serra.

We’ll encounter Picasso’s legacy along the Côte d’Azur, with private looks at Antibes’s Picasso Museum and his celebrated war and peace murals inside a 12th-century church. Later, a highlight will be an exclusive visit to the Fondation Maeght, established in 1964 by art dealers whose friends like Miró, Chagall, Giacometti, and Braque contributed both to the museum’s design and its collection. Finally, we’ll have an in-depth guided look at Henri Matisse’s vibrantly colorful, fully realized vision at the tiny 1951 Catholic church that he designed near the Mediterranean coast.

I hope you join me on this enlightening journey into groundbreaking art surrounded by the breathtaking beauty of the South of France.

Sincerely,

Page Knox
Lecturer and Educator
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Trip Highlights

— Enjoy a special overnight experience at Château La Coste, a 600-acre Provençal vineyard retreat acclaimed as an “unmissable art destination” by Sotheby’s, with an inside look at its art installations by Frank Gehry, Ai Weiwei, and many other masters

— Join an expert guide behind the scenes at the Maison Dora Maar, once the home of unsung yet influential French photographer Dora Maar, Picasso’s partner and muse, for an intimate look at her drawings, paintings, and poems

— In the Provençal countryside, go behind the scenes at the Fondation Maeght, the legacy of prominent art dealers whose personal friends like Miró, Chagall, and Giacometti helped conceive the museum and contributed works to its vast collection

— Savor a private inside look at the 1951 Matisse Chapel, the fully realized vision of Henri Matisse, who designed every aspect of this small, colorful Catholic church

— In the UNESCO-listed city of Avignon, enjoy access to impressive spaces typically closed to the public at Palais des Papes, the world’s largest Gothic palace and 14th-century home of the papacy, admiring its exceptional interior frescoes
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Avignon
Saturday, March 9
Today, spend more time in the ancient city of Avignon, whose historical center is UNESCO-listed for its spectacular medieval architecture. Take a special private visit to Avignon’s most famous structure, the 14th-century Palais de Papes, the world’s largest Gothic palace, and view some of the rooms not usually seen by the public. Popes like Benedict XII and Clement VI enhanced the palace with wonders like remarkable frescoes in its chapels.Later, explore a unique art installation. You will also take a guided tour of the Musée Calvet. Admire some of its 20th-century highlights, including Pierre Bonnard’s Winter Day and several paintings by the Belarus-born French Expressionist painter Chaim Soutine. Dinner is at leisure.

Avignon / Arles / Saint-Rémy-de-Provence
Sunday, March 10
Discover Van Gogh’s world in Arles, where the Dutch painter spent 14 productive months starting in February 1888. Begin your day with an in-depth guided tour of LUMA Arles, featuring a 15,000-square-meter tower by architect Frank Gehry, inspired by Van Gogh’s love of the region’s light and adorned with 11,000 angled reflective steel panels. Continue to Fondation Van Gogh, a non-profit dedicated to his legacy, where you’ll explore his enduring impact on art during a private tour. Later, visit Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, where you will embark on a private tour of the Monastery of Saint-Paul-de-Mausole, where Van Gogh lived as a patient from May 1889 to May 1890, creating 100 drawings and 150 paintings, including masterpieces like Irises, Wheat Field with Cypresses, and The Starry Night. Explore the grounds and visit his room. Enjoy dinner at leisure.

Gordes or Roussillon / Le Puy-Sainte-Réparade
Monday, March 11
In the morning, choose between two options: embark on an exclusive tour of Abbaye Notre-Dame de Sénanque’s private garden, led by the owner of this 12th-century Cistercian abbey surrounded by tranquil lavender fields in Gordes. Alternatively, explore the historic ochre paths in Roussillon, with its red and orange landscapes from the area’s ochre deposits.

Le Puy-Sainte-Réparade / Antibes / Nice
Tuesday, March 12
After free time at Château La Coste, venture to the seaside town of Antibes. After lunch upon arrival, explore the Picasso Museum, housed within the historic Château Grimaldi, where Picasso set up his workshop in 1946. This museum was the world’s first dedicated to Picasso and features a collection of 23 paintings, 44 drawings, and 78 ceramics donated to Picasso and features a collection of 23 paintings, 44 drawings, and 78 ceramics donated by the artist himself. The museum’s terrace displays remarkable sculptures by artists like Germaine Richier and Joan Miró.

Nice / Vallauris / Saint-Paul-de-Vence / Vence / Nice
Wednesday, March 13
Transfer to Vallauris for an exclusive guided look inside the Picasso Chapel, a 12th-century building that houses his final remarkable piece of political art, Chapelle La Guerre et La Paix (War and Peace Chapel), dramatic murals painted in 1952 on plywood panels.

Then take a behind-the-scenes tour of Fondation Maeght, which celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2024. Designed by Josep Lluís Sert, this museum is the enduring legacy of art dealers Aimé and Marguerite Maeght.
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Reservation Form

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