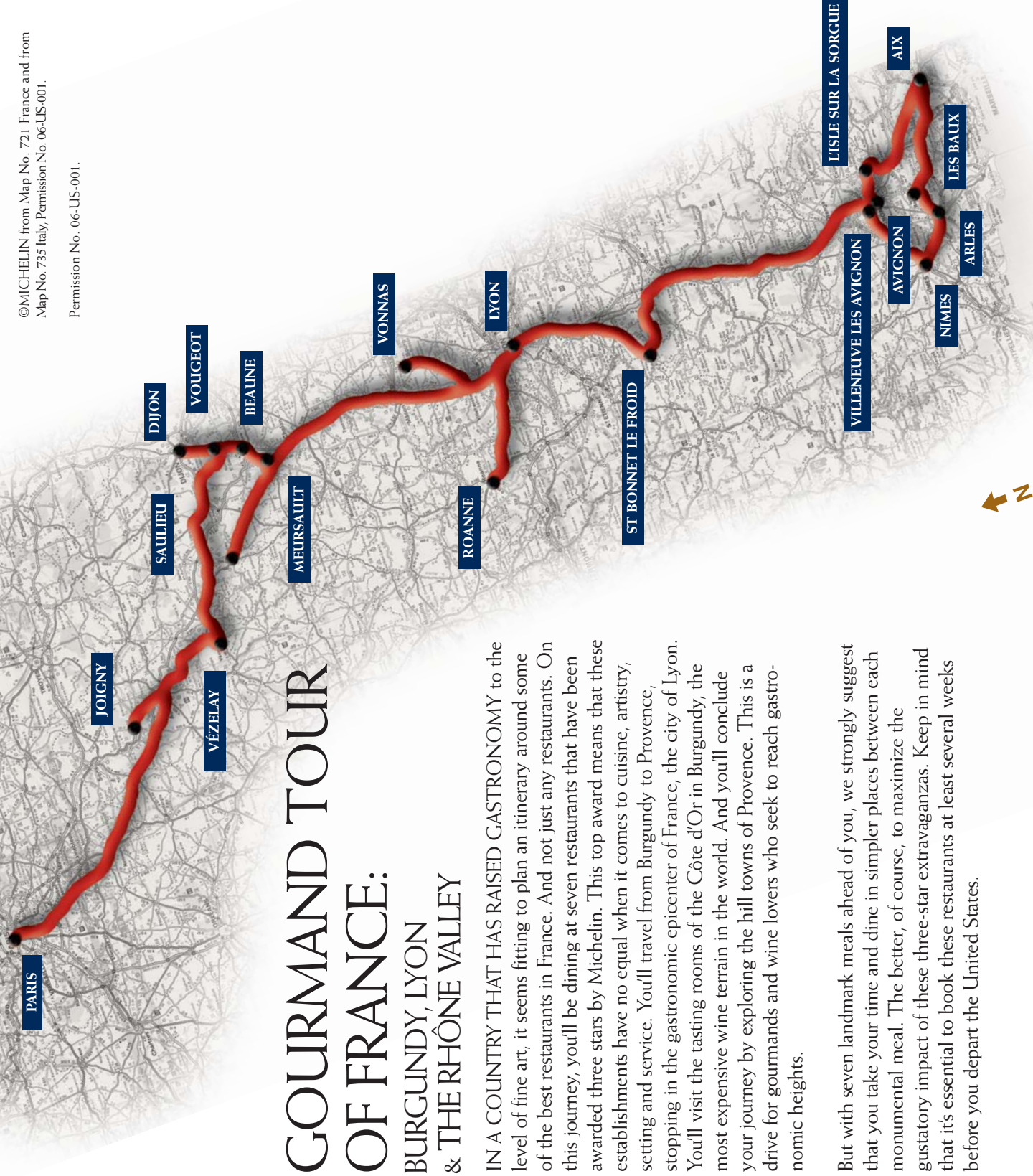


GOURMAND TOUR OF FRANCE: BURGUNDY, LYON & THE RHÔNE VALLEY

IN A COUNTRY THAT HAS RAISED GASTRONOMY to the level of fine art, it seems fitting to plan an itinerary around some of the best restaurants in France. And not just any restaurants. On this journey, you'll be dining at seven restaurants that have been awarded three stars by Michelin. This top award means that these establishments have no equal when it comes to cuisine, artistry, setting and service. You'll travel from Burgundy to Provence, stopping in the gastronomic epicenter of France, the city of Lyon. You'll visit the tasting rooms of the Côte d'Or in Burgundy, the most expensive wine terrain in the world. And you'll conclude your journey by exploring the hill towns of Provence. This is a drive for gourmands and wine lovers who seek to reach gastronomic heights.

But with seven landmark meals ahead of you, we strongly suggest that you take your time and dine in simpler places between each monumental meal. The better, of course, to maximize the gustatory impact of these three-star extravaganzas. Keep in mind that it's essential to book these restaurants at least several weeks before you depart the United States.



GOURMAND TOUR OF FRANCE

(Mileage is estimated from each preceding city or site. Before you begin your trip, please note: For space reasons, we could not provide the most detailed map with this brochure.)

We recommend the use of *Michelin Map #721 France in conjunction with this guide.*
To order *Michelin maps*, call 888-610-5122.)

PARIS CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT

The major gateway to Paris and the rest of France, the airport lies just outside of Paris and is the perfect starting point for your gastronomic tour.

1.42 miles

VÉZELAY— Plan on staying in Vézelay for two nights, dining one night here and one night in neighboring Joigny. Vézelay's Basilique Ste. Madeleine was once one of the starting points for the famed pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Now pilgrims of a different sort come to L'Espérance, in nearby St Pere sous Vézelay. The glass-roofed restaurant opens onto a delightful garden, the perfect setting to enjoy turbot in a salt crust and lobster butter, veal in sweet and sour caramel sauce or other culinary magic from chef Marc Meneau.

50 miles

JOIGNY— You can work up an appetite by simply wandering the small streets and cobbled alleys and flower-filled courtyards of this medieval city on the Yonne River. Then step inside La Côte Saint Jacques, where you can settle in for several hours and taste the work of Jean Michel

Lorain. You might start with hearts of scallop wrapped in bacon, sample black truffles and cream of white beans, move on to bresse chicken steamed in champagne and conclude with rose ice cream



in crisp tulip shell and crystallized rose petals.

86 miles

VOUGEOT— This village, located in the Côte de Nuits wine-growing area of Burgundy, is best known for the 124-acre Grand Cru vineyard, Clos de Vougeot. But it's also home to Château Gilly, a glorious hotel that combines a 14th-century Cistercian monastery with a 17th-century chateau. Surrounded by formal gardens and boasting a swimming pool, it's a fine place to settle in for a few nights. You're in the heart of the Côte d'Or; one of the greatest stretches of vineyards in the world. Comprising the Côte de Beaune and the Côte de Nuits, these vineyards stretch for about 30 miles, all the way from Dijon to Santenay. Take day trips to Beaune, Dijon and Meursault, and continue your three-star pilgrimage in the town of Saulieu.

11 miles

BEAUNE— The seat of the Burgundian wine trade, Beaune is one of the most charming little cities in France. The stone walls are hung with wisteria, there's a profusion of lilacs, and stone ramparts enclose a magical garden. The centerpiece is the Hôtel Dieu, a hospice dating from 1443 with the multicolored roof tiles that are a hallmark of Burgundian architecture. Today it's known for its charity wine auction every November. Stop at the informative Musée du Vin de Bourgogne and plan on lunch in one of Beaune's many restaurants.

1.5 miles

DIJON— The name *Dijon* may well evoke the famous mustard that is still made here, but the city of Dijon is also an architectural feast, a legacy of the Dukes of Burgundy. The Palais des Ducs is where the city's greatest artistic treasures can be found, in the Musée des Beaux Arts. Stroll the cobbled streets of Rue Verrerie and have a

casual lunch at Place Darcy, a square filled with cafés and restaurants.

2.1 miles

MEURSAULT— Some of the world's finest Chardonnay is produced here, making a tasting an absolute necessity. Have a rustic lunch in a bistro and then drive back slowly through some of Burgundy's prettiest villages.

63 miles

SAULIEU— The single best reason to make the drive to Saulieu is to dine at Le Relais Bernard Loiseau. This holy grail for gastronomes carries on with three stars, despite the death of its namesake chef. There are four dining rooms overlooking a charming English garden. Savor classics like artichoke and crab Bavarian cream with a tomato sauce, spinach timbale with marrow and candied shallots or roasted white with a yellow sauce sorbet and a red currant sauce.

108 miles

LYON— Lyon is where you'll be basing yourself for three nights of culinary delights, with trips to neighboring Roanne and Vonnas. The second city of France, Lyon is known as the country's gastronomic capital, the home of chef Paul Bocuse and dozens of other lauded culinary artists. But culinary achievements aside, you can enjoy the city's extraordinary architectural heritage, from Gallo Roman remains to the Renaissance splendor of the old city. There are cobblestone streets, covered passageways known as *traboules*, and two Roman amphitheaters. For gastronomes, the highlight of any visit to Lyon is dinner at Paul Bocuse, the eponymous three-star restaurant of the man responsible for Nouvelle Cuisine. In a theatrical jewel box of a

space, indulge in his classics such as black truffle soup or red snapper served in a potato casing.

5.5 miles

ROANNE— You could tell your friends that you were traveling to Roanne to visit the Musée Joseph Déchelette, which has a fine collection of Italian and French earthenware. But any serious foodie knows that Roanne was put on the map by Troisgros, and the third generation of said family is now in charge. The restaurant has maintained three stars since 1968. You come here to savor a bain marie of foie gras and black truffle pesto, and then follow it with milk-fed veal cutlet coated with mustard seeds and served with potato roses. You end, perhaps, with a soft ganache of chocolate, coffee ice cream and salted shortbread.

58 miles

VONNAS— The Bresse chicken prepared by chef Georges Blanc in his eponymous restaurant is reason alone to visit Vonnas, a flower-bedecked village. It's classically served with cloves of garlic and a foie gras sauce. And it's been served by his family for generations. The setting, a 19th-century inn, is charming and personalized. And the wine cellar, with more than 130,000 bottles, is one of the most celebrated in France.

117 miles

ST BONNET LE FROID— This village in the heart of mushroom country is the perfect location for an overnight stop. Set on a plateau some 3,000 feet above the Rhône Valley, St Bonnet le Froid is the setting for a mushroom festival every November. And it's the home of chef Régis



Marcon, whose three-star Le Clos des Cimes has stellar views of the surrounding hill. You can dine here on a "chaud froid" of wild mushrooms and lobster in floral sweet and sour. In spring and autumn, there is a set mushroom menu. Regardless of the season, plan to stay the night in a cozy room upstairs.

137 miles VILLENEUVE LES AVI-

GNON— Across the Rhône River from

Avignon,

Le Prieuré in

Villeneuve

les Avignon

will be

your base

for the rest

of this

exploration.

Relax, swim

in the pool

and plan to visit

Nîmes, Arles, Les

Baux, Aix and Lisle sur

la Sorgue on day trips. Begin

in Avignon itself, which has been

singled out as a UNESCO World

Heritage Site. At its heart lies the

Palais des Papes, the Palace of the

Popes. Stroll down Rue Joseph

Vernet and Rue du Roi Ren, with

their wonderful 17th-and

18th-century houses. And linger

at the Place de l'Horloge, where

the Hôtel de Ville's Gothic clock

overlooks sidewalk cafés and a

century-old merry-go-round.

27 miles

NÎMES— Nîmes has the best

preserved Roman amphitheater

in the world, where you can see

both bullfights and opera. The old

town has the narrow streets and

small squares that you'd expect to

find in a French city. Don't miss

the Jardin de la Fontaine, built

around the spring that drew the

Romans here. It evolved into an

18th-century formal garden of pools and stone terraces. Also see the much-photographed Pont du Gard, the astonishing aqueduct built by the Romans.

29 miles

ARLES— It was the extraordinary

light that drew Vincent van Gogh

to Arles, a city that he loved to

paint. In the city's heart, Place du

Forum, you'll see a café, in one

corner that is said to be in his

painting, *Café at Night*. There's

a well-preserved Roman

arena, Les Arenes, at the

city's heart, where

bullfighting reigns

supreme. And

between shopping

for fabrics, laven-

der and honey,

make time for the

lively Saturday

morning farmer's

market.

29 miles

LES BAUX— Located high up

on a windy plateau, Les Baux is one

of the most-visited sites in southern

France, so arrive first thing in the

morning or late in the afternoon.

The ruins of Château des Baux, a

castle carved out of the rocky moun-

tain peak, should be explored. And

though the narrow streets of Les

Baux are packed with cafés and

souvenir shops, the village remains

a site worth seeing.

56 miles

AIX— Arguably the most charming

town in Provence, this university

town and former capital of Provence

was immortalized by a native son,

the painter Paul Cézanne. There is

much to see in Aix, from Ste Saviour

Cathedral to Cézanne's studio.

But when you stroll down Cours

Mirabeau, the main avenue that's

shaded by plane trees, a café stop

is obligatory.

24 miles

LISLE SUR LA SORGUE—

Criss-crossed by canals and the

channels of the Sorgue River, Lisle

sur la Sorgue's ancient wooden

waterwheels and winding streets

lined with plane trees offer a lazy

cham. On Sundays, chic Parisians

arrive to hunt for treasures at the

town's famous antiques market near

the train station. Wander into Notre

Dame des Anges, a vast 13th-century

structure that was essentially rebuilt

into a Baroque pastiche in the 17th-

century. Or visit the 18th-century

Hôtel Dieu, with its fine chapel.

On Thursdays and Sundays, colorful

food markets take over the streets.

AVIGNON— Drop your car off at

Avignon's train station and take the

TGV from Avignon to Paris.

HOTELS

La Tour Rose. Philippe Chavent's

silk-swathed hotel occupies several

houses around a courtyard. The

glass-roof-restaurant was once a

chapel. Each of the 12 rooms is

named for an old silk factory and

is plushly decorated.

22 Rue du Boeuf, Lyon.

Tel: (33) 04 78 37 2590

www.tour-rose.com

For reservations in the US: 800-735-2478

Château de Gilly. This gem is

located in the heart of Burgundy's -

most revered wine-growing

country between Dijon and Beaune.

The hotel has 36 rooms and 12

apartments that combine

the best of a classic hotel

and a resort. Gilly les

Cîteaux, Vougeot.

Tel: (33) 03 80 62 89 98

www.grandes-etapes-

francaises.fr

Le Prieuré. Set in a

14th-century priory, the

hotel has rose gardens,

a pool and tennis



courts.

The 36-room property

feels like a resort within the town.

7 Place du Chapitre, Villeneuve les

Avignon.

Tel: (33) 04 90 15 90 15

www.leprieure.fr

THREE-STAR RESTAURANTS

LEspérance. Route de Vézelay,

St Père sous Vézelay.

Tel: (33) 03 86 33 39 10

www.marc-meneau-esperance.com

La Côte Saint Jacques.

14 Faubourg de Paris, Joigny.

Tel: (33) 03 86 62 09 70

www.cotesainjacques.com

Le Relais Bernard Loiseau. Saulieu.

Tel: (33) 03 80 90 53 53

www.bernard-loiseau.com

Poul Bocuse. Pont de Collonges,

Collonges au Mont D'Or.

Tel: (33) 04 72 42 90 90

www.bocuse.fr

Troisgros. Place de la Gare, Roanne.

Tel: (33) 04 77 71 66 97

www.troisgros.com

Georges Blanc. Place du Marché,

Vonnas.

Tel: (33) 04 74 50 90 90

www.georgesblanc.com

Le Clos des Cimes. Le Village,

St Bonnet le Froid.

Tel: (33) 04 71 59 93 72

www.regismatcon.fr

