Exploring the Languedoc

September 9th - 17th 2020

One of the strongest motivations to travel is the deep yearning we have to connect with the past. We understand ourselves and the world around us a bit better by exploring the past, whether it be the thrill of entering an ancient building or the silence of standing in a timeless landscape. If this is the experience you are seeking, there could be no better place to spend a week than in the mysterious and spellbinding Ariège. Set in the south-west of France, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, we have found the perfect setting for a week of time travel, the Château de Camon.

Charlemagne, on his return from conquering the Moors in Spain, put the village of Camon under the authority of Notre-Dame. By the middle of the 10th century a Benedictine Abbey was in place. Troubadours, crusaders, itinerant knights, Spanish princesses and persecuted Cathars passed through the region. The Abbey of Camon was an important sanctuary along the way and, by the 16th century, a fortified manor (Château) had been built to secure the Abbey. The Château has now been offering comfort and tranquility to travelers for five hundred years! Vaulted ceilings, four-poster beds and beautiful fabrics make the Château both spine-tinglingly authentic and sumptuously cozy.

With the Château de Camon as our base for seven nights, we will set off to explore the antiquities of the Aude and Ariège regions. From the ruins of Cathar castles to the medieval grandeur of Carcassonne, it would be impossible to head home without feeling moved by the shadows of the past!

The cost of this itinerary, per person, double occupancy, is:

| Land Only (no airfare included): | $3950 |
| Single Supplement: | $880 |

Airfares are available from many US cities. Please call for details.

The following services are included:

- **Hotels:** 7 nights’ accommodation at the Château de Camon including all taxes and service charges
- **Coaching:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- **Meals:** Breakfast daily, 2 lunches and 5 dinners
- **Guides:** Discover Europe tour guide throughout
- **Expenses:** Porterage of one large suitcase per person
- **Entrances:** Entrance fees to all sites as detailed in the itinerary
- **Lectures:** Lectures by Smith faculty. The faculty member is yet to be determined for this departure. Information will be provided upon final confirmation

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour. Insurance information will be mailed to each registrant on receipt of deposit.
Wednesday, September 9th - Departure from your US gateway city. **Overnight: Plane**

Thursday, September 10th - On arrival in Toulouse you will be met by Discover Europe’s representative for a 90-minute drive to the Château. The rest of the day is free to unpack, relax and begin exploring the Château and surrounding village. This evening we will gather on the terrace for drinks before a welcome dinner party. **(D) Overnight: Camon**

Friday, September 11th - Enjoy a leisurely start this morning to shake off the effects of the long flights. Stroll around the village and visit the abbey church, then set off on an excursion - with the first stop being the town of Foix, dominated by its imposing Château. Enjoy an independent lunch here before continuing to the next destination. The more adventurous and sure footed can opt for a half-mile walk along an uneven subterranean riverbed which will take you back to the Magdalenian period (c. 11,000 BCE) and to the vast chamber of the Grotte de Niaux. Leaping from the walls of the cave are the most beautiful images of horses, ibex, stags and bison, some still as fresh as the day they were painted. These are among the best prehistoric paintings you will see anywhere in Europe. Alternatively, those who opt-out will be taken to the local prehistory museum in Tarascon, where you can see replicas of the cave art. Dine at the Château this evening. **(B, D) Overnight: Camon**

Saturday, September 12th - Head up into the Pyrenees, stopping first at the village of Montaillou, famous for being the last enclave of the persecuted Cathars. Take an easy hike around the ruins of the Château and then stop at the Col de Chiuola resort for lunch with the most magnificent views of the Pyrenees at the restaurant La Marmotte Toquée. Afterwards descend to visit the spa town of Ax-les-Thermes, before returning to the hotel. The rest of the day is free. Choose to eat at the hotel again or venture out to a local restaurant in nearby Mirepoix. **(B, L) Overnight: Camon**

Sunday, September 13th - This morning traverse the heavenly Ariège countryside to the magical Romanesque Abbey of St. Hilaire. Then continue on to Limoux, famed for its Blanquette - a sparkling wine. Enjoy an independent lunch with ample time for shopping in La Place de la République in the beautiful heart of the old town before returning to Camon in mid-afternoon. Take time to relax by the pool or enjoy a cocktail on the terrace before dinner at the Château. **(B, D) Overnight: Camon**

Monday, September 14th - Begin with a leisurely breakfast on the terrace. Depart on a three-mile journey to Mirepoix for market day. Explore one of France’s most exquisite medieval squares and enjoy a coffee at one of the many cafés. Weather permitting, we will have a picnic lunch at the nearby village of Roquefixade where we will take a walk up to the medieval castle. Montségur, a ruined castle, set high on a rocky crag will be the next stop, which was the final refuge of the persecuted Cathars. In 1244 the Catholic Church carried out one of its worst atrocities ever; 225 Cathars, who refused to recant, were burnt on a communal pyre. For those who enjoy a hike, there will be time to make the 30-minute ascent to the castle. Alternatively, take time to appreciate the wonderful views from the base. On returning to the hotel there will be time to relax and enjoy a cocktail on the terrace, before dinner at a local restaurant. **(B, D) Overnight: Camon**

Tuesday, September 15th - This morning tour the cellars of the bio-dynamic vineyard of Château Maris and taste the delightful product before we have lunch. Spend the afternoon touring the medieval fortress town of Carcassonne. If you had to choose one medieval fortress town to visit, Carcassonne would be it. Meander through the narrow alleyways and explore the inner fortress, Château Comtal. Pay a visit to the beautiful St. Nazaire church with some of the loveliest stained glass in France before returning to Camon for an evening at leisure. **(B, L) Overnight: Camon**

Wednesday, September 16th - Today’s first stop is a visit to the mountain-top village of Rennes-le-Château. The parish church is full of symbols and secret codes indicating that Abbé Saunière, the priest from 1885 to 1910, discovered the lost treasure of Solomon, which had been brought to the region by the Visigoths in the 5th century. Take an independent lunch before journeying back to the Château, stopping in Puivert en route. Relatively intact for a Cathar castle, Puivert is in a wonderful position overlooking the surrounding countryside. In the village, visit the Museum Quercorb (the local name for the surrounding area). Tonight, enjoy a final dinner at the Château, always beautifully presented by master chef Tom Sleigh. **(B, D) Overnight: Camon**

Thursday, September 17th - Reluctantly bid farewell to the abbey this morning and head back to Toulouse Airport for flights back to the US. Please make sure your return flight departs after 11:00 am. **(B)**

*Please note that there is no elevator, and there are no ground floor rooms, at the Château. Participants must be able to climb at least two flights of stairs. If you require a room on the lowest level possible, please let us know.

**Key to included meals:** B - breakfast, L - lunch, D - dinner
General Instructions
1. Please type or print.
2. Make checks payable to Discover Europe, Ltd.
3. Be sure to read the Terms & Conditions and the Refund Policy contained on the reverse before signing.
4. Complete both sides of this form.
5. Detach the bottom section and return to Discover Europe with your deposit of $500 per person, if this has not already been paid. Keep the top section for your records.

Detailed Instructions
Name(s). Please make sure that your name appears on this form exactly as it does on your passport. Include your “Known As” or preferred name.

Passport Details. Having your passport details ahead of time enables Discover Europe to speed the check-in process at hotels and helps in the event of lost or stolen documents.

Address. If you have a temporary address, please let us have the details, including dates that you are there, on a separate sheet.

Dietary Requirements. Please let us know if you require any special meals both for the hotels and the airlines.

Health Information. It is very valuable for us to know ahead of time if you require any special assistance. Discover Europe tours are always paced for comfort, but inevitably there is also a certain amount of walking involved. Participants should have sufficient stamina to keep pace with the tour group and not cause delays. Please consult with your physician if have any questions regarding your ability to participate fully.

Trip Details
Please fill in the name of the trip you wish to register for, the departure date and your departure airport or city.

Emergency Contact
This information is essential.

Independent Flight Arrangements
1. If transatlantic flights are not already included as part of your tour package, Discover Europe will be very happy to book these for you. The fee for this service is $40 per ticket.
2. If you are arranging your own flights, please provide your complete flight information, giving the following: dates of travel, airline(s), flight numbers, departure and arrival airports and departure and arrival times for all flight segments that you have booked. Transportation to and from the hotel for arrival and departure arrangements that are separate from the group can be made at an additional cost. It is essential that we receive your complete flight information at least 60 days prior to your trip departure.

Rooming Requirements
Please tick the appropriate boxes. We will book non-smoking rooms. If you are sharing a room, please let us know with whom. If you would like to share a room but do not have a roommate, we will be happy to try and match you up but unfortunately cannot guarantee that this will be possible. If no match is available, the single supplement will apply.

Note: A twin room has two separate single beds in it. A double room has one large bed. Please let us know your preference.

Passenger Details for The Château de Camon (0909/SCC)

Passport Name:

1. Title First Middle Last

2. Title First Middle Last

Known As: 1. 2.

Passport 1#: Exp.Date: DOB:

Passport 2#: Exp.Date: DOB:

Address:

City: State: Zip: E-mail:

Preferred Telephone: ( ) work/cell/home circle one

Secondary Telephone: ( ) work/cell/home circle one

Special Dietary Requirements: ____________________________

Health Information: ____________________________

Other Comments or Notes: ____________________________

Smith Class Year: ____________________________

Trip Details
Departure Date: Return Date: ____________________________

Departure Airport or City: ____________________________

I would like to extend my trip to: ____________________________

Please return this form to:
Discover Europe, Ltd.
95 Adams Street, Keene, NH 03431
1. Please be sure to complete both sides of this form.
2. Space on this journey is limited and registrations are accepted strictly on a first come, first served basis.
3. Registration and payment imply acceptance of the terms and conditions described herein. This information, as well as your itinerary description regarding dates, inclusions and prices, form the basis of your individual contract with Discover Europe, Ltd.
4. Registration and payment waive and release Discover Europe, Ltd., Smith College their affiliates, directors, officers, employees, including any person or entity employed or utilized by them, from all claims arising from any injury, loss, damage, accident, delay or expense resulting from events beyond their control, including, without limitation: natural disasters, war, strikes, incidents of politically-motivated violence, sickness or quarantine, government restrictions or regulations, and in the absence of its own gross negligence, arising from the use of any vehicle or from any act of omission by any bus or car rental agency, airline, taxi or tour service, hotel, restaurant, or other firm, agency, company or individual.
5. Discover Europe, Ltd. reserves the right to substitute hotels, airlines, activities or excursions in response to changes in availability, local events or weather conditions, provided such substitutions do not adversely affect the overall quality of the tour. Such substitutions do not constitute grounds for withdrawal with full refund.
6. Conduct During the Tour: You are responsible for respecting the authority and following the directions of the tour guide and the laws of the countries in your itinerary. We may exclude you from participating in all or any part of the tour if, in our sole discretion, your condition or behavior renders you unfit for the tour or unfit for continuation once the tour has begun. Unfitness may include, without limitation, any behavior that, regardless of its cause, is inappropriate or offensive or interferes with the delivery of tour services, or may constitute a hazard or embarrassment. In such case, our liability shall be strictly limited to refund of the recoverable cost of any unused portion of the tour. Should you decide not to participate in certain parts of the tour or use certain goods included in the tour, no refunds will be made for those unused parts of the tour or goods.

**Payment Schedule**
1. A deposit of $500 must accompany this completed form (if it has not already been paid).
2. The remaining balance will be billed and payable 90 days prior to trip departure.

**Tour Cost Adjustments**
Discover Europe makes every effort to guarantee that the published cost of your chosen tour will not change. However, we do reserve the right to make adjustments in the following circumstances:
1. Exchange rates. Should the value of the dollar fall against the currency of the countries visited on your tour by more than 10% in the 6 months prior to trip departure.

**Emergency Contact Information**
Name: 
Email: 
Primary Telephone: (______)

**Flight Information**
(Please check one)
Do you want Discover Europe to book your flights: □Yes □No
Flight details (if self-arranged), to be provided at least 90 days prior to departure: 

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**Terms & Conditions**

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**Refund Policy**
1. Participants who withdraw more than 90 days prior to tour departure will receive a refund of all monies received by Discover Europe, Ltd., less a $200 cancellation penalty per person.
2. Participants who withdraw fewer than 90 days prior to tour departure will receive a refund of all monies received by Discover Europe, Ltd., less the following cancellation penalties:
   - 90-61 days prior to departure: $1000 per person
   - 60 days or less prior to departure: no refund
3. Please note that the final payment becomes due upon receipt of the final invoice and will remain payable, as per the above schedule, if your cancellation is received after this.
4. These cancellation penalty amounts do not include any airfares purchased on your behalf by Discover Europe, Ltd. Note that the least expensive airfares are usually non-refundable. Refunds for airline tickets will be handled separately from the refund of the land tour package.
5. Trip cancellation insurance is not included in your Discover Europe tour package. Discover Europe, Ltd., strongly advises that you purchase travel insurance for your upcoming trip. Information describing the services of a recommended travel insurance company will be made available to you upon registration by Smith Travel. To contact Smith Travel, please call (800) 225-2029 or email alumtrav@smith.edu.
6. All cancellation requests must be received in writing by Discover Europe, Ltd.
7. There is no provision for refund for any activities missed due to the participant’s absence once the tour has started.
8. Your place on this tour is not transferable.

**Inclusions & Exclusions**
1. All inclusions are listed on the day-by-day itinerary and registration form.
2. The following are not included (unless specifically mentioned in the itinerary): travel insurance, transportation to and from the participant’s home to their chosen departure airport, passport fees, excess baggage charges, tips to couriers and tour bus drivers, items of a personal nature.

**Rooming Requirements**
(Please check one)
□ I would like a single room (see itinerary for supplement)
□ I will be sharing with: ____________________________
We would like a □double □twin-bedded room

**Permissions**
Discover Europe may include my e-mail address on the tour passenger list. □Yes □No

**Signatures**
The undersigned has read the tour itinerary and recognizes and accepts any risk inherent therein. The undersigned also understands and hereby agrees for and on behalf of his/her dependents, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns to abide by the conditions set forth in the terms and conditions listed in this brochure and to release and hold harmless Smith College and any of their officers, trustees, agents, licensees, or representatives, from any and all liability for delays, injuries, or death or for the loss of or damage to his/her property however occurring during any portion of, or in relation to, the tour.

Signature: ____________________________ Date: __________

Signature: ____________________________ Date: __________