

[Renting A Villa In Provence](#)

The Top Things to Know About Renting a Villa in Provence...

Only Provence will assist you if finding the perfect [luxury villa for rent in Provence](#) and help you prepare for your vacation in Provence... You've decided that it's finally time to live (or re-live) that lifelong dream of visiting Provence, and you know that renting yourself a private villa is the way to go. To prepare for your journey, we've outlined the top 10 things you need to know about [renting a villa in Provence](#).

When to Go To Provence



Visions of lavender fields and rolling hills of sunflowers might have you immediately thinking that summer is the best time to go. Yes, Provence is magical in the summer months and time does seem to stop as you sip wine on the terrace with the hum of cicadas in the background. But other seasons offer a peace and charm not found in these more touristed weeks. September and October are ideal months to rent your villa in Provence. The days are still filled with hot sunshine and allow for lazy meals enjoyed outside around the pool, yet there is that slight nip in the air, tempting you to get cozy around the fireplace at night. The villages and markets are less busy with tourists, bringing out a slower paced and authentic Provencal life. It's within these fall months that the precious grapes are

harvested—life just seems to take on a special buzz during this “vendange” period.



Renting a Car In Provence: A Necessity

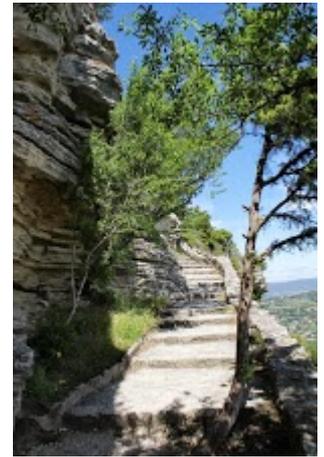


There is simply no way around it—renting a car is a necessity for your stay in Provence. Even if your villa is located inside a village, exploring the region’s villages, wineries and historic sites will require a car. If you are nicely placed somewhere in the Luberon, most everything you will want to do will be within a 30-minute drive. All of the major rental car companies can be found at the airport and TGV stations and you can reserve easily from your home county using any of the major travel sites such as Travelocity or Expedia.

Don't risk being lost: Travel with or rent a GPS:

No matter how beautiful the countryside, nobody wants to spend

precious vacation time lost in the car. While clients are given detailed directions to their villas, getting there after a long day of travel can be challenging when you are tired. Only Provence provides its clients with the GPS coordinates, guaranteeing a smooth arrival to the villa should you travel with or rent a GPS.



Getting To Provence



If you are staying in inland Provence, flying into Marseilles is the most convenient airport. Most of the villas offered through Only Provence are approximately a 45-minute drive from here. The Nice airport is 2.5 hours away from inland Provence—so we only suggest flying into Nice if you have secured a vacation property in the Cote D'Azur / Riviera.

For those traveling to France for the first time, Paris should not be missed. Many Only Provence clients fly into Paris for a few days, then take the fast TGV train (2.5 hours) to either Avignon or Aix-en-Provence in time for the Saturday check-in.

Money Matters



Travelers checks are now a thing of the past and ATMs are the way to go. Found in almost all villages and at grocery stores, ATMs are the easiest method for access to cash in euros. Limits at each machine hover around the 300-500 euro mark per day.

While your bank might charge a small fee to use ATMs abroad, it will be less than what you pay to exchange at the airport or at a bank. Only Provence suggests getting a small amount of Euro cash from the ATM when you arrive to the airport in France as the toll booths heading into the Luberon require cash – most foreign credit cards are denied at the booth. Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted across Provence, the only exception being the toll booths and the odd gas station.



Grocery Shopping & The Market In Provence

While you will enjoy the local markets for regional specialties, Provence has fantastic, large grocery stores—Casino, Carrefour, Auchan, SuperU and Intermarche are the major names. Many of these stores also have foreign



sections stocked with items from home. While the stores resemble those from home, Provence has yet to make the jump to 24/7 operating hours. Smaller grocery stores will still close for lunch, and on Sundays or Mondays. As most travelers will

be checking into their villas on Saturday afternoon, we suggest asking the person who greets you at the villa to suggest a store open for Sunday shopping.



Beware

No place is perfect and tourists anywhere in the world could be a target. While Provence is a very safe place to travel overall, cameras and purses are stolen from rental cars in the summer months in the main tourist villages. Make sure your rental car is locked at all times and free of personal items.

Tipping

Almost all restaurants include tax and a 15% service charge (service compris) in their prices. If you found the service exceptional, feel free to leave a little extra change for the waiter (between 2 and 10 Euros). It is customary and expected to tip your in-house chef and maid. We suggest 15% for the chef and between 75-200 Euros per week for the maid, depending on the size of your group, length of stay and the level of service you received.

Bugs and Bees

It comes with the territory. Provence is known for its spectacular countryside and with this comes bugs and some bees. No matter how luxurious your villa, there is no way to rid Provence of its natural side. Bees and wasps will come to the pool for water and flies come and go freely as most houses do not have screens on the windows.



Treat Yourself to a Chef...at least once while In Provence





Only [Provence](#) has been renting villas in the region for over 10 years and feedback has been consistent from day one. "The evening with the chef was the highlight of our stay," they say. Chef Ronald, who has been working with Only Provence since its inception, now spends several weeks a year in the US cooking for clients he initially cooked for in Provence. The evening with the chef goes in the "making memories" category...not to be missed.



