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## Autumn in Provence

By [Su Stephens](#) on Sep 18, 2018 in [Europe](#), [Events](#), [Food and Drink](#), [France](#), [Leisure Travel](#), [Regions](#), [Speciality Travel](#), [Travel Miscellany](#), [Western Europe](#)

Autumn the best time of year to visit Provence? Quite possibly! For those of you who are looking for the perfect destination for an Autumn getaway, carry on reading to discover some of the highlights of this fabulous region in September, October & November along with details of some unmissable events that are well worth attending. Whatever your travel plans are this Autumn I hope you enjoy this magical time of year!

### **The weather**

The word 'Autumn', particularly to those of us who live in more Northern climes, tends to conjure up mental images of frost, leaves falling from the trees and can almost send a shiver down your spine in anticipation of the cold returning with a vengeance. Provence is no stranger to cold weather in the depths of winter, but we are exceptionally fortunate that 'real' Autumn weather doesn't arrive until much later in the year.



September and October in particular can be positively summery with temperatures hitting 30C on a good day and the evenings late to draw in meaning you can carry on enjoying summer activities for much longer.

### **The crowds**

Whilst I would be the last person to suggest fewer people should visit Provence, there is no doubt it can get extremely busy during the summer months! It comes as no surprise that with school out, families want to holiday in this beautiful part of the world and Provence is here to welcome them! That said, with the main holiday season behind us, those of us who are lucky enough to be able to vacation outside of the school holidays will be able to enjoy the classic tourist's spots without the crowds.



You will have popular destinations like the Gorges de Verdon almost to yourself in September and find it much easier to walk around a local market or pop into town for a wander.

### **The wine**

Vines that march across the landscape are a much-loved feature of Provence. The beautiful green, ordered rows of vines add huge visual appeal to the region. Visitors over the summer could be forgiven for thinking nothing much happens with these vines, but the arrival of Autumn brings with it the grape harvest and vineyards suddenly become a hive of activity.



The leaves change from green to amazing reds, golds and browns and thousands of pickers seem to make light work of gathering in bunch after bunch of perfectly ripened grapes which are whisked off to local wineries to begin their journey into a sumptuous bottle of Red, White or Rosé. It's an exciting time to explore vineyards and, as a bonus, this time of year brings with it numerous wine festivals to celebrate the harvest. If you're a wine lover, visiting Provence in the Autumn is a must!

### **The Great Outdoors**

Although, as mentioned, the weather can be exquisite at this time of year, the really hot days are behind us which make it the perfect time of year to get out and about exploring, hiking and biking. After all, as lovely as temperatures of 35C or more at the height of summer can be for lounging around by the pool, you're unlikely to want to exert yourself too much! Autumn then offers the perfect balance to get out and explore the stunning countryside found in this part of the world.



Enjoy a day trip cycling through vineyards, head to hills around Aubagne, a historic little town near Marseille or even spend some time on the beach. The sea is definitely still warm enough for swimming! A whole host of outdoor events are lined up throughout the Autumn as well, such as Septembre en Mer (September by the Sea) for you to enjoy. A list of events can be found at the end of this article.

### **The food**

Although always amazing, food in Provence comes into sharp focus in the Autumn as harvest time is celebrated. Things really kick off with the Fête de la Gastronomie which is a nationwide celebration of all things food. Watch out for all manner of fetes, feasts and events organised as part of this gastronomic extravaganza.



There is an abundance of produce to be bought in markets across Provence – make the most of the summer fruits and vegetables before winter takes hold! You will also want to watch out for truffles, chestnuts and Cèpes (wild mushrooms) which are now in season. And if you love going to amazing restaurants (and who doesn't?) then 'Tous au Restaurant' is for you. This annual event sees Michelin starred restaurants offer two for one dining 'deals' – an irresistible excuse to treat yourself to a superb meal at one of the top restaurants in France!

### Events this Autumn

Although not an exhaustive list (there are just too many things going on at this time of year to mention them all!), hopefully the events summarised below give you a flavour of what's going on in Provence throughout the Autumn. If I've missed any obvious ones feel free to add them in the comments!

*1st to the 31st September – Septembre en Mer, Marseille:* An extravagant celebration of everything to do with the sea. Enjoy lots (and lots!) of events and activities including concerts, guided tours, kayak outings and more.

*21st to the 23rd September – la Fête de la Gastronomie:* At the last count, 5922 events across France (with many of these in Provence) have been organised to celebrate everything gastronomic!

*21st to the 23rd September – Les Vendanges Étoilées de Cassis:* One for the foodies! This three-day event is dedicated to food and AOC Cassis wines. Come along and enjoy cookery demonstrations from more than 50 chefs and sample food and drink including truffles, foie gras, olive oils, dried fruits, cheeses, honey, wine and more from numerous exhibitors.

*1st to the 14th October – Tous au Restaurant:* It's quite simple really... choose from an extensive list of participating restaurants (including those with Michelin stars), book a table and enjoy dinner for two for the price of one!

*17th November – Ban des Truffles, Richerenches:* Celebrate the official start of the truffle season with the first truffle market of the year at the historic village of Richerenches. We guarantee there will be plenty of opportunities to sample these 'black diamonds'.

*September to November:* There are tens if not hundreds of festivals which are organised across Provence during the Autumn. From small village affairs to multi day extravaganzas there is sure to be something going on during your visit. Your best bet for the most up-to-date information is to pop into a local Office de Tourisme on your arrival in Provence.

*Su Stephens is Owner of [Olives & Vines](#). Olives & Vines is a luxury holiday company based in the South of France offering stays at their beautifully designed holiday house and boutique hotel in Le Castellet.*