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## **PLUM IN PROVENCE**

**COME AND EXPERIENCE 4/5 DAYS OF FUN FILLED COOKING AND EATING.....not to mention drinking and exploring the beautiful region of the UZEGE.**

**Non cooking partners are welcome, and will find plenty of ways of occupying themselves until they join us at the dinner table.**



**Please contact Darian Day on 01367 820 262 or via the website.**

**Read on for menus for the 'Autumn Flavours' October course.**



## Autumn flavours: A Provençal cooking course in the Uzege.

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### **WHAT PLUM IN PROVENCE OFFERS YOU: (And your non cooking partners)**

Practicing and learning cooking skills are the backbone of this course. At Mas De L'Aveugle we mix a warm and welcoming atmosphere with a lively, interactive kitchen.

Each day introduces a valuable skill, such as de-boning poultry or pastry making. Problems arising from our experiences in the kitchen will be solved and demonstrated so that our guests leave with a real understanding of Provençal cooking.

However the most important thing to our team at Mas De L'Aveugle is that our guests enjoy every minute of their stay with us – so expect your glass to be permanently topped up with crisp Rhone wines. Prepare to leave the pace of everyday life behind and share in our passion for Provençal food and wine, whilst enjoying everything else this exceptional region of France has to offer.

**BELOW IS A PROPOSED ITINARY, HOWEVER WE CAN ABSOLUTELY TAILOR THE WEEK TO YOUR REQUIREMENTS.....BE THEY CULINARY, OR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF A FEW DAYS IN PROVENCE.**

Where possible we would hope to include a trip to an olive oil tasting at the local oil producers, and follow this with a demonstration of bread making, to enjoy as a light meal, combining the bread with the olive oil.



**Day 1:** 3.30pm Arrive Nimes and transfer to Mas De L'Aveugle.

To help you adjust to the gentle pace of Provençal life you will have plenty of time to unpack and settle into your luxurious comfortable rooms, and then maybe take a slow stroll around the hamlet, glass in hand to begin the process of winding down.

When you are ready, we invite you to join us on the terrace, where we will discuss our three/ four days of cooking. For dinner, the local bistro is to be recommended and tables will be reserved for you but with no obligation.

There are no shortages of excellent restaurants in the area, or if you prefer you are welcome to self cater at the Mas.

**Day 2:**

Spicy tomato, fennel and orange soup

Galantine of chicken stuffed with pine nuts, olives, parsley and lemon.

Broccoli, avocado and Pistachios with Pistachio oil

Lemon mousse

Breakfast has been set for 8 – 9 am, a traditional French fare of croissants, fresh baguette and brioche with plenty of strong coffee to get us going. Over breakfast we will form the group into three teams. Each team will be responsible for one area of the menu, rotating through the menu as the course progresses.

The skills element of today's menu will be demonstrated with clear instructions for each recipe. Galantine of chicken is a traditional recipe where the bones are removed leaving the flesh in one piece, into this the stuffing is placed, sewn up and roasted. This is not an easy task but one well worth learning as you will see when you sit down to eat it. Any suggestions are always welcome; it is often interesting and even beneficial to hear different ways of doing things. Having finished our 'work' a late light lunch is served on the terrace.

There are a number of activities available in the vicinity. Bikes are available for people wanting to explore the miles of 'route blanche' There is a tennis court a short bike ride/drive away, we have a good selection of rackets and balls. There are 2 equestrian centres locally, and we are happy to arrange hacks for our guests. The ping pong table at the house is always good fun, and, depending on the weather, the pool, the terraces and garden, and a library of holiday reading.

We are also very happy to take a group into the beautiful town of Uzes, where you will find an array of little Provençal boutiques, offering everything from soaps to bedspreads, foods to wines, and wonderful bars and restaurants under the stone arches.

Dinner begins with a leisurely aperitif at 7pm and then we will sit down to enjoy the food we have just cooked.



### Day 3:

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Provençal chickpea spread with cumin

Onion and pancetta tart

Grilled courgette warm salad with mint oil

Chateau Pesquie's white peaches poached in red wine

The art of making pastry is perhaps the most revered by most of us, really light and delicious pastry is a rarity. When I was trained I learnt the longhand method, using table knives to 'cut in' the butter and then the fingers to produce the crumbs. Although long winded this method taught me to understand the principles of good pastry, but I will show you how this can be perfectly replicated in a food processor. All good cooks should be able to make perfect pastry it a fundamental skill of a cooks repertoire and actually very easy to achieve. This classic French tart is heavenly, very rich and strong on flavour.

The chickpea pate introduces us to the North African influences that are typical in this part of France. Markets always have a wonderful selection of spices and the flavours are used liberally in Southern French cooking.

The grilled courgette salad demonstrates just how sweet and delicious this elegant marrow can be and it provides a clean flavour to balance the richness of the tart.

In the afternoon, we are happy to take a group to visit the famous Pont du Gard viaduct, and time allowing, a trip to Avignon, and the Palace du Papes.



Visit [www.avignon-et-provence.com](http://www.avignon-et-provence.com) for more info.



#### Day 4:

Assuming day 4 falls on a Saturday, we will begin with a trip to Uzes to wander around the large and well known market.

Green olive toasts with minted goat cheese

Rabbit stuffed with Pistachios and sage

Tomato salad with a caper and lime dressing

Warm figs with lavender and raspberries

Although we celebrate the Glorious Twelfth in Britain the start of the game season has little impact in most butcher's shops and consequently we cook very little of it. This is a shame as game meat is wild and therefore organic with a very distinctive flavour. However in France, particularly in rural hamlets like Uzes rabbit remains a much appreciated and often free commodity with many recipes devoted to it. This recipe fuses the powerful flavours of pistachios and sage to compliment the rabbit meat. If you haven't cooked rabbit before because you were unsure how to prepare it you will see how straight forward it is to cook.

A warm compote for pudding combines some of Provence's most typical flavours, a perfect culinary note to capitalise on our morning at the market.

#### . Optional day 5: (Cooking, or departure day)

Mussels with Pesto

Sautéed quail marinated with mustard and fennel

Oven roasted cherry tomatoes and chicory

Sweet chestnut mousse with cherry sauce

Mussels are often only eaten at a restaurant, there is always the worry of seafood poisoning and how one tells a bad, or dead, mussel from a healthy fresh one. Therefore it seemed invaluable to include it here on our course. This most simple of dishes is a delight, both light and high on flavour, once you have learnt the rules of cooking mussels you will never look back. Equally, fresh pesto is a two minute operation and infinitely more tasty than the jars one buys, I always like to have a small pot of homemade pesto in my fridge so that I can create an 'instant' meal at any moment.

Quails are more popular in France than the UK and you will see them in butcher's, petit, yet the meat is strong and flavoursome. I will demonstrate how to butterfly the quail in preparation for cooking.

**Day 6:** Depart for Nimes at 12 noon



## **PROPOSED DATES AND TARIFFS.**

Suggested flights: Luton/Nimes [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com) (Prices vary) or Gatwick/Marseilles [www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com) Car hire would be necessary

Transfers from Nimes are £40 per person, or we suggest you rent cars if you want to be more independent during your stay. We can supply full lists of directions.

### **The autumn courses will run from:**

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October to Monday 13<sup>th</sup> / Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October. \* INTRODUCTORY OFFER \*

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October to Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> / Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October. \* INTRODUCTORY OFFER \*

Accommodation, tuition, breakfast and dinner (day 2 onwards) \*£575/£650 per person.

**Non cooking partners are welcome.** They can simply enjoy the house, pool, and surrounding area, or we can organise wine or cycling tours, then of course they get to join us for our delicious evening meals!

Discounts for group bookings.

PLEASE VISIT:

[www.plumcateringbrighton.co.uk](http://www.plumcateringbrighton.co.uk)

For more about chef and food journalist Kim Ryan.

[www.uzes-holidays.com](http://www.uzes-holidays.com)

For more about Mas De L'Aveugle.

