

## Athos

### Sample Family Itinerary Marseillan to Argeliers (or reverse)

#### MARSEILLAN

**Sunday** 4pm pick up at designated point in Beziers

Your family will be met by ATHOS Captain and Tour Guide. In the comfort of ATHOS' private air-conditioned Chrysler minivans, you will be chauffeured to where the ATHOS awaits you at her moorings. You will be treated to a full-crew Welcome Aboard, including an introduction to the Ship's Dog, Jill! Toasting with either Champagne or soft drinks, the Chef will offer a selection of Mediterranean canapés fit for kids and adults alike.

Once you are settled into your cabin, there may still be time for a quick bicycle ride in the quaint village of Marseillan. The Athos collection of children's and adult bicycles, childseats/trailer & helmets are at your disposal throughout the week. You will be invited to a 4-course dinner, prepared by our highly acclaimed Chef. Athos will have asked in advance about your family's likes and dislikes so that the crew can present you with meals and mealtimes that meet the whole family's approval!

#### Monday Marseillan - Portiragnes

While coffee is available at any time from the bar, continental-style breakfast is served, at your leisure, beginning at 8:30am. A breakfast buffet offers a selection to please everyone: cereals, juices, yogurts, cold meats and cheese, and fresh pastries and bread from the local boulangerie. Your guide suggests a drive out to the Mediterranean for a splash in the sea, a walk in the sand, or a seaside wander. On your return Julian and the crew get Athos underway and move out onto the open waters of the Etang de Thau. The Etang hosts Europe's largest mussel and oyster park and for those who love seafood, today's lunch will be spectacular! The crew's favourite swimming pool is the Etang - join them and jump in to cool off! As Julian brings Athos into her mooring at Portiragnes you are a 2 minute cycle ride from the beach – time to burn off some energy and enjoy a pre-dinner dip!

#### Tuesday PORTIRAGNES – FONSERANNES

Your guide suggests a drive to Pezenas this morning. Pezenas was the seat of the 13thC Languedoc Court, where playwright Moliere once spent some time. The town centre is filled with costume-makers, artisanal hat shops and artists exhibits...and a few fantastic homemade ice cream shops too! After spending a morning of browsing shops and learning about the historical court houses of Pezenas, you return for the boat for some lunch and r&r. Captain Julian starts the engines, and the Athos begins an eye-opening afternoon of lock-climbing towards the Fonserrannes.

The towpath on this section is paved and smooth – perfect for afternoon cycling or walking. You will cruise over the **18thC Canal Bridge** which will carry the ATHOS over the Orb River. The finale is the 17thC feat of engineering, the **Neuf Ecluses** (or staircase locks). ATHOS crew expertly tie her up in each lock, and wait for the gates to close safely behind her before the water levels fill and allow her to pass one lock to the next. This evening's mooring is the breath-taking viewpoint at the **Fonserrannes**. Your guide proposes a friendly family game of petanque to work up your appetite for the Chef's creations this evening.

#### Wednesday FONSERANNES – REGISMONT LE HAUT

This morning your guide invites enthusiastic swimmers and paddlers on an excursion into the **Cevennes mountains**, where large, wide **kayaks** float down the River Orb! After the scenic drive into the hills, everyone is handed a helmet and lifejacket, then set off in kayaking groups to navigate the mostly-shallow riverbed. Chef has packed a superb **picnic lunch** to be served by crewmembers who have accompanied the trip. For those more enthusiastic about relaxing than kayaking, Julian invites you to stay on board for a leisurely cruise, lunch on deck, and a quiet time under the parasol. Cruising gets under way as kayakers return and Athos makes her way towards towards Regismont le Haut.

#### Thursday REGISMONT - CAPESTANG

Following breakfast, your guide suggests a browse through the morning market at Narbonne. Even for non-shoppers, Narbonne offers much entertainment on a Thursday morning! Explore an excavated portion of the original Roman road, the **Via Domitia**, or, browse through the well-compiled Roman Museum, or, discover the beauty of **St. Juste Cathedral**, or, simply take a moment to blend into the scene: sit and relax in one of the many cafés. Returning for another delicious lunch onboard, Captain gets Athos underway and moves towards Capestang. On your arrival, your

guide visit to the local organic **Goat's cheese farm** at Combebelle. The 30 minute drive into the Minervoise hillside proves worthwhile: Combebelle is a petting zoo where everyone can watch the goats being milked, learn how the cheese is made, taste the products, and of course, bring some back to Athos to eat! On the way back, your guide stops at Bize Minervoise, where the locals **swim** in the river – a refreshing pre-lunch cool-down at the end of a busy day!

On returning to the Athos, Chef has once again prepared a special meal, and the view over Capestang towards the flood-lit St. Etienne Collegiale is a pleasant setting for an al fresco dinner.

### **Friday CAPESTANG-ARGELIERS**

After breakfast this morning, the much-awaited excursion to the famous Medieval double-walled city of **Carcassonne** is planned. Your Guide will include the legendary tales of Dame Carcas, and a visit to the tombstone of Simon de Montfort. He will also make sure that there is still time to browse the shops, including the acclaimed wooden & traditional toyshop here.

The Captain is getting ATHOS underway for an afternoon's cruise to Argeliers, and Chef serves up another gourmet meal while the whole family relaxes on the sunny deck.

If exercise and a swim are in order, cycling enthusiasts might like to hop off with bicycles and Jill the dog.

Alternatively, your guide proposes a quick drive to the **swimming** hole at the **Cesse river** under the **17<sup>th</sup> C Canal Bridge**. Ready for a refreshing glass of wine or a cold drink? Another delicious meal has been prepared. The on board hostess asks if everyone would like to eat al fresco? Chef's efforts are sure to make this evening worth remembering! Captain Julian will join your party for your final dinner onboard this evening. During the evening, he will also invite the crew to make a farewell toast with you.

### **Saturday ARGELIERS**

After breakfast, everyone waves goodbye to Jill and the Crew, who have looked after your every need throughout the week. The minivans will now depart to the appointed destination in Beziers.