

# DAY 1 MORNING

## THE PLACE DE L'ORATOIRE AND THE COLLINE DES MOURGUES



## Assaulting the Top of the Mourgues Hill

Brocante, Elsa, Aragon and Canilhac

Palace of Canilhac

On leaving the Atelier hotel, I start by hunting in the **Magasin**. Tons of furniture and objects at unbeatable prices. This shop is located in a former hotel (the Hotel du Midi), which was itself in a former chapel.



Hotel du Midi or Le Magasin

The Oratory Square



Then, I go up the rue de la Foire to reach **the place de l'Oratoire**. On the way I say hello to the Felibre writer Bruno Eyrié (15 rue de la Foire), a local figure, and above all to the mythical couple Aragon/ Triolet who stayed in this house in 1942 (7 pl. de l'oratoire). It was here that Aragon completed "Les yeux d'Elsa". Note **La Quête du Graal**, an excellent address for a good massage.

# MY Villeneuve



I love this square so much: a hundred-year-old plane tree, beautiful facades, such as those of the Calvet and Montanègues hotels, or of course those of the **Palais de Canilhac**. It is the prestigious Villeneuve of the 14th to 17th centuries.

I walk up the **montée de la Tour**, undoubtedly one of the most beautiful streets in Villeneuve. The difference in altitude adds to its charm. I can't help but enter the old gardens of the

Palais de Canilhac, now called "**la Colline des Mourgues**" (Mourgues means "nuns" in Provencal). The view from the north is fantastic! In my opinion, the most beautiful view of Villeneuve. I immortalize this moment for the umpteenth time. No wonder that great painters, like Corot, were in love with this hill. If, like me, you are "rabbits", meaning that you always want to reach the highest point, you will be rewarded, not with a view, but with a small chapel, decorated with frescoes, which I personally am not crazy about. But all tastes are in the nature. On the way down, look at the work of our dear local wind, the Mistral: the trees are leaning. Impossible to lose the North!



Leaning tree



View from the hill



# DAY 1 THE PHILIPPE LE BEL TOWER DISTRICT

## MORNING

### The Gateway to France

Back in Rue montée de la Tour, I exchange money at the hotel of the same name. And yes, Villeneuve had its own currency until 1700... And royal, Please. Thank you **Charles V**. I also observe the remains of the Orsini Palace visible just before the Tower, on the Rhône side. **Pope Clement VI** was one of its famous owners.



This house now has an excellent table d'hôte (**Maison Orsini** - Reservation required). The view of the City of the Popes is "Cardinal".

The final touch of this morning is the climb to the top of the Tour **Philippe-le-Bel**. 125 steps higher (nobody agrees on the number!), I contemplate **an unforgettable 360° view**. At the same time, watchtower, terminus of the Pont d'Avignon, tollgate, entrance to the Kingdom of France, remains of a royal castle... At the top, I feel the weight of the past and the considerable strategic importance that this building must have had in the 14th century.

3 CHARACTERS,  
3 HERITAGES



CHARLES V



CLEMENT VI



PHILIP IV

## My Villeneuve



## LUNCH BREAK

This little physical effort gave me an appetite. Perfect, I see a small guinguette that I like very much, typical of the 1900s, located on the banks of the Rhône. **The Guinguette du Vieux-Moulin** is at the foot of the Tower and its feet in the water.





# DAY 1 AFTERNOON

## THE ABBEY PLAIN



The real NATURE at 2 min.

A digestive stroll is in order. What could be better than a stroll along the counter-channel in the **Plaine de l'Abbaye**. Whatever the season, it's a magical walk through the monks' former farmland.

You start from **the Guinguette**. Then you choose the duration, short or long version. **See the proposal on the right**.

At any time, it is possible to go back to the hotel. Each time I walk around the plain, it is a new discovery. A huge 16th century **PLANE TREE**, a 300 year old **OAK tree** (at the end of the canal), magnificent **views** of the Fort Saint-André or the Ventoux, an unusual pine forest (chemin de la Savoye) ideal for a snack, an **18th century MAS** (de Bourbon), orchards, fields of wheat and sunflowers, shared gardens, horses or ponies (Delphine's)...

If you are lucky, you will even see **BEAVERS**, or rather their works. Because these little rodents are rather nocturnal (well, not so little... A good metre!)

For me, the Abbey Plain is a kind of Paradise. During my walks, how many times have I said "I would so like to live in the Plain". Unfortunately, it is an inaccessible jewel, because even if floods are becoming increasingly rare, the plain is in a flood zone.

So I make the most of it by leaving our beautiful medieval city. Each time I measure how lucky we are to go from a rich historical environment to a space of true Nature, all in a few minutes.

## MY Villeneuve



## BIKE & DINNER

I like to rent bikes at the **Hotel de l'Atelier** and ride around the Plaine de l'Abbaye. In the evening, I deserved tapas at the **Barrel** or a vegetarian dinner at **Naturabsolv**.

PROPOSAL  
FOR A WALK

