



INSTITUTE FOR
AMERICAN
UNIVERSITIES

The Aix Center
The Marchutz School of Art
Le Centre d'Avignon

The Aix Center
2 Bis, Rue du Bon Pasteur
13100 Aix-en-Provence
France
Tel +33 0/4 42.23.02.82 Fax +33 0/4 42.21.11.38
E-mail: IAUAix@iaufrance.org
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., M-F
(Emergencies only, outside these hours: +33 0/6 82.59.64.48)

Le Centre d'Avignon
5, rue Figuière
84000 Avignon
France
Tel +33 0/4 90.82.58.50 Fax +33 0/4 90.85.42.47
E-mail: avignon@iaufrance.org
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m., M-TH; 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m., F
(Emergencies only, outside these hours: +33 0/6 82.59.64.53)

The Marchutz School of Art
Please refer to the Aix Center

www.iaufrance.org

Note: When dialing from outside France, omit the "0" following "33." When dialing inside France, begin dialing with "0."

For example, to dial the Aix Center Number:

From the U.S.: 011.33.4.42.23.02.82

Within Europe: 00.33.4.42.23.02.82

Within France: 04.42.23.02.82

Table of Contents

Welcome.....	3
Preparing for France.....	3
Passport and Visa.....	3
Homestays	4
Demi-Pension/Meals	4
Independent Living.....	4
French Culture – Importance of Food in France	5
Meals.....	5
Courtesy	6
Alcoholic Beverages.....	6
Security.....	6
Health and Insurance	7
Living in Provence.....	8
Maps	8
Climate	8
Temperature and Equivalents.....	8
Packing and What to Bring.....	8
Laundry.....	10
Electricity	10
Traveling to Provence	10
Time Equivalents	10
IAU Contact Information.....	11
Local Hotels	11
Local Transportation	13
Train Tips.....	13
Travel Websites	13
Money.....	13
Personal Expenses.....	13
Bringing Money to France	14
Safety	14
Credit Cards	14
Communication.....	14
Mail	14
E-mail and Internet.....	15
Telephones.....	16
Cell Phones	16
Internet Calling	16
Using Your French Host’s Phone.....	16
Orientation.....	16
Of Interest in Provence.....	16
Regional Points of Interest.....	16

Welcome...

Welcome to IAU! Whatever your reasons for deciding to study abroad, you are embarking on one of the more profound adventures in your life — how profound you will most likely appreciate only after returning home. The ways in which you take advantage of your time in Aix and/or Avignon — studying at the Institute, with your French host, and exploring on your own — will inspire your experience.

PREPARING FOR FRANCE

Doing some research into your new environment before you leave can be not only a practical benefit but can contribute to the excitement of what will, without doubt, be an adventure. Here are some ideas:

- Internet – you can discover a great deal about France and Provence by searching the Internet on subjects such as history, culture, artists, food and customs and by searching specific cities.
- Your college/university library as well as the one in your home city will have volumes on history, culture, artists who worked in Provence, travel picture books, and cookbooks.
- *Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong* by Nadeau-Barlow and *Survival Kit for Overseas Living* by L. Robert Kohls would be good preparation.

Remember that many of your assumptions about yourself and your world will be challenged.

Remember, too, that for many students, living and studying abroad have been the most significant and memorable educational and personal experiences of their lives.

PASSPORT AND VISA (more detailed information can be found in your acceptance packet checklist)

Semester and academic year students will need a valid passport and student visa, regardless of the length of stay. You will need three months to obtain both and we recommend starting the process as soon as possible or you risk arriving late to the program. American passport holders are not required to apply for a visa for the summer program. However, if you are an international student, depending on your citizenship, you may need a visa for the summer program and the process can take up to 2 months. Please alert IAU and contact the French consulate for your home country to find out more details.

- **Visas for Semester and Academic Year Students** - Students must first apply to CampusFrance (<http://usa.campusfrance.org/en/campusfrance-usa/22.html>). After applying to CampusFrance, students may then apply for their visa at the consulate.
- **Visas for Summer Students** –Summer students with American passports are not required to apply for a visa, and do not need to apply to CampusFrance. If you do not hold an American passport, please read the information below for non-U.S. citizens.
- **Apply for your visa at the French Consulate** (semester and academic year students must first apply to CampusFrance) You can find the consulate serving your legal state of residence at www.ambafrance-us.org. More details can also be found in your acceptance e-mail and on IAU's website at www.iaufrance.org/before_go/passport.iaux.
- **Non-United States citizens** - Non-U.S. citizens must check visa requirements upon acceptance so you are able to complete the process before your departure. Please do so by contacting the French consulate for your home country and alert IAU. This process can take up to two months so you need to start early or you risk not receiving your visa on time to leave for the program. If you are planning on traveling in Europe, you may need additional visas to visit other countries so please be sure to inquire about this at the consulate.

HOMESTAYS

Living in a French home is considered the best form of housing because it provides an immediate introduction to life in this new place. It is an incomparable opportunity for those who seek knowledge that is neither superficial nor second hand. It provides an introduction into the community and is a great incentive to learning the language. IAU's hosts come from a cross-section of society; they belong to no particular professional or social milieu, but all are carefully chosen and many have hosted American students for several years.

Most of the rooms available with the hosts are approximately a 15- to 35-minute walk from classes. Accommodations a bit farther from the Center may be more spacious. Students should consult with the housing coordinator should any questions arise regarding the homestay arrangement.

Housing coordinators make periodic visits to the hosts to be sure that the cleanliness and comfort meet the Institute's standards. With very few exceptions, IAU alumni feel that living in a French home is far preferable to living independently. Some benefits agreed on universally:

- French comprehension and speaking ability improve dramatically
- Awareness of current events, political outlook, and cultural customs enrich their lives immeasurably
- The food may be a delightful education in itself, and dinnertime may provide a gracious and lively event each day

You must be flexible and accepting within your French household, and will in all likelihood find the attitude rewarded.

Demi-Pension/Meals

When living in French homes, students are on a *demi-pension* "plan." This includes daily breakfast and six dinners per week. Bed linen, pillow, and blankets are provided, but not towels, and the room is cleaned weekly. Your host will generally provide one machine load of wash per week.

Visiting parents or friends should make prior hotel reservations. No arrangements can be made for lodging other persons or pets. If your arrival time at the beginning of the semester is delayed, please telephone IAU as we must keep your host informed. Please do not plan to arrive after 8 pm.

To allow us the flexibility in getting you settled, housing assignments often have to be made shortly before the semester begins. Specific information regarding your hosts will be provided to you via e-mail about two weeks before your departure. Housing is reserved from two days (i.e. the Saturday) prior to the beginning of orientation until 12 noon on the day after the last exam.

Independent Living

IAU does not offer independent housing; if you choose to rent an apartment you will have to make the arrangements on your own. Be aware that apartments are hard to find in the crowded university towns of Aix and Avignon, and rent is very high. One month's rent, plus a deposit equal to one, sometimes two, months' rent (reimbursed if there are no outstanding bills or damage at the end of your stay) must be

paid in advance to the apartment owner. Heating, electricity, gas, and telephone are additional. You will also not be provided with linens or cookware. If you choose this situation, it is best that you start making arrangements before you arrive in France, as housing can be difficult to find.

French Culture – Importance of food in France

You are probably well aware that the French are known for their delicious cuisine. It is an important part of their daily life. You will see them buying fresh bread, produce and seafood and you will soon realize as you explore Provence and see all the markets, boulangeries, patisseries and specialty food stores how important meal time is in France.

Dinner in France is typically later than in the U.S. Many French restaurants do not even open for dinner until 7:00 p.m. You should expect to eat dinner with your host between 7:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. This is an excellent opportunity to get to know your host, discuss your life at IAU, ask questions about French culture and share your background and culture (not to mention a great way to practice your French!) and to enjoy French cuisine.

Enjoying dinner together each evening is a special event. It gives your host pleasure to see you enjoy the meal. Letting your host know that you enjoyed dinner is always much appreciated. Even if you did not, you should still thank your host for the dinner. You may want to offer to help prepare the meal or to help clean up – this is a great way to become a part of the household – and maybe learn some secret French recipes along the way! All of our hosts are different – and some may have rules when it comes to food. For example, you should not assume that you have free access to what is in the refrigerator unless your host clearly invites you to do so.

One of the reasons you are studying abroad is because you want to experience a different culture and live outside of your comfort zone. One of the best parts of studying abroad is being open to this new culture – and new cuisine. You may be presented with meals that you normally would not eat in the U.S. but this is part of the adventure and we encourage you to try new foods, even foods that you normally wouldn't try because you may be very surprised! Your willingness to adapt to French eating habits will have great rewards and will be a very memorable part of your time in France.

Meals

Students are responsible for lunches. There are a multitude of affordable cafés, brasseries, boulangeries, small sandwich and grocery shops near each center at lunch and in most neighborhoods. The open market – daily in both Aix and in Avignon's Les Halles – offers an abundant harvest of fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese, fish, herbs, and flowers. This is the most economical place to shop for food. (1 kilo=2.2 lbs.) Students may sometimes have access to cooking facilities in their homes. By American standards, the French tend to eat late in the evening, commonly not before 8 pm. A meal is a social event to be lingered over in enjoyment of the food and the conversation.

Typical Prices for:

- Sandwich and a drink – 4,5 Euros to 6 Euros
- Seated meal in a restaurant, café, brasserie – approximately 13 Euros
- Coffee and a croissant – 2,5 Euros

Courtesy

The success of your study abroad experience depends largely on you, but there are a few suggestions that we hope will further enhance your time in France.

- An open mind and a good sense of humor are prime prerequisites on your part.
- France has a long history and a deep-rooted culture. As a people, the French are generally more formal than most Americans, a difference that can lead to misunderstanding and quick judgments. Politeness and basic rules of courtesy represent an important aspect of daily life in France. If you really wish to integrate French culture, certain “rules” are “de rigueur.” For example:
 - Greet people as you enter a store: “*Bonjour*”; or if you call an American friend living with a French family: “*Bonjour, Madame*” or “*Bonsoir, Monsieur. Puis-je parler à _____, s’il vous plaît?*”
 - Compliment your host on his or her culinary talents.
 - Remember to let your host know your plans if you are not coming home for a meal or if you are going away for a weekend or on vacation. Let them know the dates and times they can expect you home.
 - When in doubt or when you don’t understand, ask. Try to keep a good sense of humor rather than criticize immediately because it is not like what you are used to at home. Different points of view are a source of enrichment not criticism. Appreciate changes and differences. Be curious. Dare to discover differences and appreciate them! You are, in your own way, an ambassador of the United States!

Alcoholic Beverages

Drinking alcohol while socializing is common in many parts of the world. The attitude in some countries toward alcohol may be much different than in the United States. Drinking in some countries is part of the social experience, but not the focus of it. Excessive drinking or drunken behavior is not acceptable and IAU considers it reason for expulsion. For more information on IAU’s policies, please visit www.iaufrance.org/policies.iaux.

Security

As in many cities, you will encounter both passive and more active panhandlers. Sometimes beggars work in teams in order to distract their targets. Pickpockets do exist and are remarkably resourceful. To protect yourself, be sure to:

- Carry your valuables—passport, money, tickets, driver’s license — in a secure place such as an interior pocket, money belt or neck pouch.
- Make photocopies of the first two pages of your passport, your driver’s license, and a list of credit card numbers, and leave these at home.
- Blend as much as you can into the local culture including speaking, when possible, the host country language in public; maintaining a low profile by avoiding wearing clothing printed with the name of US colleges, universities, products, and locales; staying away from discos/restaurants known to be frequented by Americans; and using common sense in divulging information to strangers about yourself, your program, and fellow students.

Health & Insurance

Your system will naturally take a couple of weeks to adjust to a change in climate, food, and different living habits, but otherwise students usually have few problems. Tap water in France is safe and the diet contains plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Moderation in diet is recommended when traveling. Beyond Europe, students should be particularly careful with water and fresh/uncooked foods.

Students who wear glasses or contact lenses should have their eyes examined and bring at least two pairs of their prescribed lenses. Glasses are sometimes broken or misplaced.

French regulations permit students to bring a one-month supply of any medication required for an on-going treatment, along with its prescription and/or its formula. Refills of the medication or its equivalent may then be obtained at a French pharmacy. More often, however, students must consult a French doctor in order to obtain a corresponding prescription in French. If your insurance policy covers your medication and you wish to bring several months' supply, make sure that all pills are in labeled bottles and that you have a note from your doctor to show at customs. This has worked for students in the past, but be aware that you run the risk of having your medication confiscated.

Normally, no vaccination or inoculation is necessary for entry into any country in Western Europe, nor are they usually required by American regulations for re-entry into the US. Some physicians, however, advise inoculation for typhoid fever, smallpox and typhus, and others advise a tetanus booster shot. You may want to ask your doctor about getting a flu shot before you leave for France, including the H1N1 vaccination. If you are not able to get one before you leave, it is possible to get the vaccination once in France.

It is always a good idea to consult with your physician and dentist for individual advice on the best regime for you. If after consultation it is felt you would have any special health/safety needs while living in the south of France, please check these with the Institute to see if we can provide sufficient support for these needs.

In the French health system, all medical-related expenses must be paid out-of-pocket, and are reimbursed at a later date. With the insurance coverage provided by IAU through *Generali Assurances* (beginning the first day of class and ending the last day of exams), you are guaranteed 80% reimbursement for all medical and hospital expenses. Doctor's fees (for the visit itself) are usually about 22 to 25 Euros (more for house calls — about 55 to 60 Euros). Repatriation insurance is mandatory by law for any student studying in France, and is also included in this coverage. For further details regarding the coverage provided by *Generali Assurances*, please consult the application form found on IAU's website under "Applicants" and "Required Forms."

Living in Provence

Maps

To get a better idea of the cities of Aix-en-Provence and of Avignon, we recommend looking at some online maps of the cities and the region. You can find various maps for Aix here:

www.aixenprovencetourism.com/uk/aix-plans.htm. A map of Avignon can be found the Tourist Office website under “Pratique” and “Plan:” www.ot-avignon.fr. Google maps is also a good resource.

Climate

We recommend that you look up the weather and temperature equivalents in Aix-en-Provence or Avignon on www.weather.com to have a better idea on what kind of weather to expect in Provence. Compared to the northern US, the climate of Provence is usually milder, sunny and fairly dry. However, temperatures from October to March are cold — below freezing — especially in early morning. It is often rainy in spring. The average winter temperature on a sunny afternoon is 10-11°C (50°F). The average temperature in July and August is around 28°C (85°F). European homes are usually smaller and heated at a lower temperature than those in the US, so plan your packing accordingly. During the winter months, you will need a heavy jacket.

Temperature Equivalents

°F 0° 10° 20° 30° 40° 50° 60° 70° 80° 90° 100°

°C -18° -12° -7° -1° 5° 10° 16° 21° 27° 31° 38°

Packing & What to Bring

Less is more and we recommend that you keep baggage to a minimum. Many students packing to study abroad follow the advice of seasoned travelers to lay out the very least you must have to get by for the semester or year, then remove half of it and possibly half again and pack what’s left. Your French host will do one load of laundry per week so you will have clean clothes each week.

Please keep in mind that many things can be purchased once you arrive including toiletries, towel, hair dryer, film, umbrella, etc. These items take up needed space in your suitcase and can easily be purchased once you arrive.

Airline restrictions on baggage must also be considered. Two pieces, checked, and one carry-on are the norm but airlines may have different baggage restrictions so please check with your airline before you begin packing. In addition, many airlines are now charging for each piece of baggage that you check in and may have weight limits and charge extra if your baggage is heavy. Don’t forget to label each piece of luggage with your name, the Institute address and telephone number. Stick labels outside and inside each piece of luggage. All baggage should be checked through to your destination airport.

Female students have remarked that in addition to the suggested wardrobe, they wish they had brought more “good” clothes. Because this is open to wide interpretation, it may be helpful simply to keep in mind that your clothes should be responsive to the same contingencies encountered by a student in a city such as Chicago or New York. French of all ages tend to present themselves conservatively and with a certain chic. Black is always correct and you will notice that many French wear black and darker colors.

Remember that you can also buy a couple pieces of clothing once you arrive in France and it is a good idea to bring clothes you can layer.

Whatever you bring, you need to be able to easily carry everything by yourself. Large, heavy suitcases are awkward and cumbersome on trains, planes, and in narrow European staircases. Elevators are not as common in Europe as they are in the U.S. – keep this in mind when you are packing and ask yourself if you would be able to carry your belongings by yourself up a set of narrow stairs. Apartments and houses in France do not usually have as much living space as what you are accustomed to in the U.S. This is another reason to limit your belongings as you may not have as much closet space as at home. Reasonably sized duffle bags and backpacks are recommended (and anything with wheels always helps!). A backpack is the most comfortable way to go once you are abroad. Here is an example of some of the items you may want to pack:

- Warm coat/jacket
- Gloves, hat, scarf
- Clothing which can be layered
- Sleepwear/shorts/pants/t-shirts/shirts/sweaters/swimsuit/underwear/socks
- Set of dress clothes
- Sturdy walking shoes/pair of dress shoes/flip-flops
- Watch/travel alarm clock
- Glasses/contacts
- Toothbrush/hairbrush
- Quart sized bag of toiletries packed in your carry-on (*you can buy more when you arrive in France*)
- MP3 Player/camera/chargers
- Emergency kit (*aspirin, motion-sickness tablets, etc.*)
- Any daily medication (*supply of medicine for length of stay*)
- Passport/Visa/airline ticket (*in your carry-on*)
- French/English dictionary (*you could also purchase this once in France*)
- Small gift for your host family (*If your home city or state is famous for a certain product or craft, it would be nice for you to bring a sample for your host. They do not expect any gifts from you but would certainly enjoy a small souvenir with which to remember you by.*)
- Laptop computer (*if you have one, IAU offers WIFI at the program centers*)
- Adaptor/convertor **(Please see note below - you may also wait and purchase this in France)*
- Washcloth/Towel
- Printout of this guide

* If you want to use your laptop, hairdryer, etc. in France, you will need an adaptor and possibly a converter. The adaptor allows you to plug it into the wall, while a converter changes the electrical current from 110 volts to 220 volts. For example, if you have a hair dryer that allows you to change the electrical

current, you would only need the adaptor. Many laptops now automatically convert the electrical current to the French standard so you would only need an adaptor. To give you a better idea on what an adaptor looks like, please visit: www.embassyworld.com/Voltage/Photos.html.

Laundry

Dry-cleaning in Europe is very expensive. Laundromats, on the other hand, are relatively cheap, although the machines can be hard on delicate clothes. One load, washed and tumbled dry, costs approximately 6 Euros. Your host family will provide only one machine load of laundry per week. Very few French families will have driers.

Electricity

In France, the electric voltage is 220v 50 cycles (not 110v 60 cycles as in North America). We advise you to bring convertible appliances with adapter plugs such as hair dryers and electric razors, or buy small converters before leaving the US. In France, a converter will cost no more than an inexpensive hair dryer. There are two basic types of converters: high wattage for appliances with heating elements (hair dryers), and low wattage for motorized appliances (MP3 players, radios). There is also a type of converter which can switch between low and high. Adaptors are the plug that you would put on the end of your cord so that it will fit into the outlets in France. The converter is a device that converts the electric voltage so that your appliance will work with the 220v. Most new laptops already have an electrical block integrated into the power cord which means that you will only need an adaptor for your laptop. Please check the box on the power cord to confirm.

Here is an example of a plug/outlet in France:



Traveling to Provence

Pack some essential toiletries and a change of clothes in a small carry-on bag in case your luggage is lost. Luggage is lost on occasion but almost always turns up one or two days later and is delivered to the Institute (as long as you put the Institute address on your tag). In your carry-on items, all liquids must be in 3oz or smaller containers and placed in a single, quart-sized, zip top, clear plastic bag. **Refer to the IAU web site for more details concerning travel.**

European Time Equivalent

1-11 a.m.	Same	6 p.m.	18:00
Noon	12:00	7 p.m.	19:00
1 p.m.	13:00	8 p.m.	20:00
2 p.m.	14:00	9 p.m.	21:00
3 p.m.	15:00	10 p.m.	22:00
4 p.m.	16:00	11 p.m.	23:00
5 p.m.	17:00	Midnight	24:00

IAU Contact Information

Note: France is seven hours ahead of Central Standard Time.

The Aix Center

2 bis, rue du Bon Pasteur

13100 Aix-en-Provence

Tel. +33 0/4 42.23.02.82

Office Hours: 8:30 am–5:00 pm, M-F

(Emergencies only, outside these hours: +33 0/6 82.59.64.48)

Le Centre d'Avignon

5, rue Figuière

84000 Avignon

Tel. +33 0/4 90.82.58.50

Office Hours: 8:30 am–6:00 pm, M-TH; 8:30 am–4:00 pm, F

(Emergencies only, outside these hours: +33 0/6 82.59.64.53)

The Marchutz School of Art:

Please refer to the Aix Center

Local Hotels

You may make reservations with the following hotels for visiting family or friends or if you arrive before the program begins:

Aix

Hôtel Paul ★

10, avenue Pasteur

+33/4 42 23 23 89

hotel.paul@wanadoo.fr / www.aix-en-provence.com/hotelpaul

40 à 62 Euros (*reception desk open until 10 pm*)

Hôtel Globe ★★

74, cours Sextius

+33 0/4 42.26.03.58

contact@hotelduglobe.com / www.hotelduglobe.com

42 à 103 Euros (*closed in January*)

Hôtel Les 4 Dauphins ★★

54 rue Roux Alphéran

+33 0/4 42 38 16 39

lesquatredauphins@wanadoo.fr / www.lesquatredauphins.fr

55 à 120 Euros

Hôtel St. Christophe ★★

2 Avenue Victor Hugo

+33 0/4 42.26.01.24

saintchristophe@francemarket.com / www.hotel-saintchristophe.com/

80 à 146 Euros

Hôtel Cardinal ★★

24, rue Cardinale

+33 0/4 42 38 32 30

hotel.cardinal@wanadoo.fr / www.hotel-cardinal-aix.com

60 à 110 Euros

Le Negrecoste ★★★

Grand Hôtel Negre Coste

33 cours Mirabeau

+33 0/4 42.27.74.22

contact@hotelnegrecoste.com / www.hotelnegrecoste.com

90 à 180 Euros

Hôtel Aquabella ★★★

2, rue des Etuves

+33 0/4 42.99.15.00

info@aquabella.fr / www.aquabella.fr

114 à 175 Euros (Ask for IAU special rates)

Aix Tourist Office web site: www.aixenprovencetourism.com

Avignon

Hôtel Mignon ★

12, rue Joseph Vernet

+33 0/4 90.82.17.30

hotel-mignon@wanadoo.fr / www.hotel-mignon.com

45 à 70 Euros

Hôtel de Blauvac ★★

11, rue Bancasse

+33 0/4 90.86.34.11

blauvac@aol.com / www.hotel-blauvac.com

65 à 90 Euros/WIFI/English speaking (Ask for IAU special rates)

Hôtel de Garlande ★★

20, rue Galante

+33 0/4 90.80.08.85

hotel-de-garlande@wanadoo.fr / www.hoteldegarlande.com

77 à 120 Euros/WIFI/English speaking (Ask for IAU special rates)

Hôtel Kyriad ★★
26 Place de l'Horloge
+33 0/4 90.82.21.45

Avignon Tourist Office web site: www.ot-avignon.fr

Note: When dialing from outside France, omit the "0" following "33." When dialing inside France, begin dialing with "0."

For example, to dial the Aix Center Number:

From the U.S.: 011.33.4.42.23.02.82

Within Europe: 00.33.4.42.23.02.82

Within France: 04.42.23.02.82

Local Transportation

Public transportation in and out of town is frequent and reliable. Unfortunately, bus service is suspended at 10:30 pm in Aix and around 8 pm in Avignon during the week.

Train Tips

- Take a bottle of drinking water — *eau minérale* — and a snack. Dining cars are expensive.
- To travel on the TGV, you must buy a ticket and reserve a seat. Luggage restrictions may require storage in the baggage car.
- We advise you to buy the "carte jeune" which is for travelers between 12 and 25 years old and provides discounts on train travel. (www.sncf.com/en_EN/flash/)
- Second class travel is very comfortable and much less expensive than first class.
- Comfortable clothes are recommended.
- Do not leave bags or purses on seat. Keep on your lap.
- You are strongly advised not to arrive in Marseille late at night.

Travel Websites

www.statravel.com

www.routard.com

www.marseille.aeroport.fr

www.ryanair.com/site/FR/

www.raileurope.com

www.sncf.fr

www.tgv.com

www.expedia.fr

www.easyjet.com

Money

Personal Expenses

You will need money for vacation travel, lunches, weekend meals, bus fares, laundry, postage, theater, movies, cafés, etc. Although spending habits vary among students, plan on approximately \$2,000 to

\$2,500 per semester for these expenses. Dollar-Euro exchange rates fluctuate, so check www.xe.com for the current rate.

Expect costs for the first months to be double those for subsequent months; initial purchases, adjusting to foreign currency and a new life are expensive. Do not count on earning money while abroad. Your French student visa prohibits employment.

Bringing Money to France

The increasing availability of ATMs has simplified gaining access to your funds while abroad. ATMs are widely available in both Aix and Avignon, and cash will be withdrawn in Euros. Be aware that your home bank may charge a small transaction fee (usually between \$1.50–\$3.00). Bank of America is the current exception; they have an affiliate bank in Provence (BNP Paribas) so their customers may withdraw without a fee. It's always smart to check with your bank on their ATM policies as they can change often. Before you leave for France, please contact your bank to let them know that you will be leaving the country. It is also a good idea to buy some Euros before you leave so you will already have them when you arrive.

Personal checks are difficult to cash and should be avoided; a fee is required and the transaction takes several weeks.

Safety

Precautions against theft should be taken at all times and particularly on trains and buses. Purses, wallets, passports, credit cards and money are lost each year through lack of vigilance. Never put your documents or money in your backpack.

Make photocopies of valuable documents and carry these separately in your suitcase.

Credit Cards

Major credit cards (Visa or MasterCard) are widely accepted by many businesses here, and with certain types of accounts (depending on your credit line) you may withdraw up to \$1,000 or the equivalent in Euros. Any of the major banks on the Cours Mirabeau or Cours Sextius (Aix) and the Boulevard de la République (Avignon) can perform this service for you. If you have a MasterCard credit card you may obtain a cash advance from Crédit Agricole offices in Aix and Avignon.

Communication

Mail

Mail for Aix students should be sent by airmail to:
Institute for American Universities
27, place de l'Université, BP 30970
13604 Aix-en-Provence CEDEX 1
France Tel. +33 0/4 42.23.39.35 Fax. +33 0/4 42.21.11.38

For Avignon students:
Institute for American Universities
5, rue Figuière
84000 Avignon France
Tel. +33 0/4 90.82.58.50 Fax. +33 0/4 90.85.42.47

Note: When dialing from outside France, omit the "0" following "33." When dialing inside France, begin dialing with "0."

For example, to dial the Avignon Center Number:

From the U.S.: 011.33.4.90.82.58.50

Within Europe: 00.33.4.90.82.58.50

Within France: 04.90.82.58.50

In general, all packages sent from the US are subject to duty charges. These charges can possibly be avoided if the sender clearly marks packages "*articles usagés pour étudiant,*" ("items for student use") and places the value at under \$25. The package should also be declared as a gift on the small green customs sticker. In either case, the value of a package's contents should be declared as \$25 or less if you do not wish to pay customs.

The risk of loss of an uninsured package is minimal with either Federal Express or UPS. If the package is insured, then the declared value for insurance purposes and the cost of shipping become the basis for calculating customs taxes and the value added tax (vat). This can be very expensive.

E-mail and Internet

It is useful and convenient for students to bring a laptop with them to France in order to use the wireless connection in the immediate vicinity of the Aix and Avignon centers. If students do not have a laptop, they may use the computer facilities at IAU or the Internet cafes around town when the centers are closed. Please note that many hosts do not have wireless connections.

At the Aix Center:

The Aix Center's main academic building has a wireless environment available Monday through Thursday 8 am to 7 pm, and Friday until 6 pm. There is also a computer lab where students have access to computers and a printer between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday. If students need to use the Internet later in the evening or on weekends, there are Internet cafés located in Aix. Students should be aware that many hosts in Aix do not have an Internet connection and if they do, it is unlikely to be wireless.

At the Centre d'Avignon:

The Centre d'Avignon has high speed wireless connections and a dedicated wireless printer, as well as three computer stations available when the Center is open: between 8:30 am and 6:00 pm Monday through Thursday and on Friday's from 8:30 am until 4:00 pm. At other times, one may use the internet connection at one's host (if available) through free hotspots or at Internet cafés.

Telephones

France is divided into telephone code zones. Inside France, dial 0 and the zone code followed by the number; from outside, following the country and/or city codes, omit the 0, and follow with the zone code and the number.

When calling the United States with an AT&T card, dial 0 800 99 00 11 then the number; an MCI card, dial 0 800 99 00 19; Sprint card, dial 0 800 99 00 87. To telephone collect, dial 0 800 99 00 11.

Cell Phones

IAU recommends having a cell phone and students may find details on the various options on our cell phone table at www.iaufrance.org/Aix/faq.cfm#CellPhones. Avignon students also have the option of renting a pay-as-you-go cell phone from the Institute. Details can be found at www.iaufrance.org/Avignon/faq.cfm#CellPhones.

Internet Calling

Skype, Google and Yahoo all have free PC-to-PC calling. Visit www.skype.com, www.google.com/talk, or messenger.yahoo.com for more information.

Using Your French Host's Telephone

If you are living with a French host, do not expect to use the telephone unless you are given permission to do so. Even local calls cost money. Do not encourage your fellow students to telephone you except for urgent reasons. Your French family's telephone number should never be given to casual acquaintances. Your family in the States should allow for the time difference and call you between the in-France hours of 8 am and 10 am or 7 pm and 9 pm.

When you do make or receive calls, keep the time to a minimum (5 minutes). In France, the understanding of a minimal call is far shorter than in the United States.

Orientation

Orientation for all incoming students takes place the first one and a half days during the first two weeks of each semester, and is designed to help students become familiar with their new environment. Students are introduced to one another, IAU and to Aix or Avignon. They meet with the Housing and Academic Directors and with the staff. During this period, the academic policies of IAU are explained, and information is given about housing, cross-cultural adaptation, banking, cell phone availability and pricing, and Internet cafés. New students are briefed on social and recreational activities such as sports, ski trips, local gyms, excursions, etc. In Avignon, French *Animateurs* show students around the city, answer questions about life in France, and introduce their new American friends to *les jeunes avignonnais*.

Of Interest in Provence

Provence abounds with interesting sites. Some may be visited on organized outings.

Regional Points of Interest

Aigues-Mortes

Fortified town, 12th century

Aix-en-Provence

Cézanne's atelier; Cathédrale St Sauveur (architecture dating back

Antibes	to 5th century); St. Jean de Malte (13th century gothic church); museums Picasso museum
Arles	Roman monuments; Romanesque church and cloister St-Trophime; Réattu museum; bullfighting arena; archaeological museum; home to Van Gogh and Gauguin
Avignon	Palais des Papes; Pont St. Bénézet; 14th century city walls; Calvet museum; Petit Palais museum, Fondation Lambert
Les Baux-de-Provence	Village built in the rock, dating back to Medieval age
Bonnieux	Picturesque village; 12th century church
La Camargue	Nature reserve
Carpentras	Cathédrale St. Siffrein (15th century); museums; oldest synagogue in France
Cavaillon	12th century cathedral; museums
Fontaine de Vaucluse	Pétrarque museum;
Fontvielle	Moulin de Daudet; antique shops
Fréjus	Roman ruins; cathedral, 4th to 5th century baptistry
Glanum	Excavations of a Greek and Roman city
Gordes	Vasarely museum; Bories (ancient stone dwellings)
L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue	Picturesque town; 17th century church; antique shops
Lacoste	Château du Marquis de Sade
Marseille	Notre-Dame de la Garde (church); Greek excavations (la Bourse); Basilique St-Victor (crypt dating back to 5th century); museums; old port
Monte Carlo	Oceanographic museum and aquarium; casinos; Prince's palace ;Grand Prix race
Montpellier	Fabre museum; cathedral; Promenade du Peyrou
Nice	Matisse Museum; Promenade des Anglais
Nîmes	Roman monuments; Jardins de la Fontaine; bullfighting arena
L'OM	Olympique Marseille, top-ranked football team
Orange	Roman theater and arch; Cathédrale Notre-Dame
Pont du Gard	Roman aqueduct
Roussillon	Ochre mines; Lawrence Wylie's "Village in the Vaucluse"
Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer	Fortified church; gypsy festival each May
Saint-Maximin	Gothic basilica; Remains of Mary Magdelene and chapel within the cliff
Saint-Paul-de-Vence	Fondation Maeght (museum of modern art)
Saint-Rémy-de-Provence	Roman arch and monuments
Saint-Tropez	Musée de l'Annonciade (post-impressionism)
Sénanque	12th century Cistercian Abbey
Silvacane	12th century Cistercian Abbey
Tarascon	Medieval castle overlooking the Rhône
Le Thoronet	12th century Cistercian Abbey, mass with authentic Gregorian chants
Toulon	Caryatids by Puget; museum
Uzès	Renaissance castle
Vaison-la-Romaine	Romanesque church and cloister; excavations

Vauvenargues	Château and burial site of Picasso
Vence	Matisse Chapel
Villefranche	Chapelle St-Pierre decorated by Jean Cocteau
Villeneuve-Les-Avignon	Summer Palace of the Popes. La Chartreuse; Fort St-André (14th century)

Visit a few websites before coming:

www.aixenprovencetourism.com

www.provenceweb.fr

www.ot-avignon.fr

www.france-rdv.com