



ACADEMIC
STUDIES ABROAD

Site-Specific Guide – Aix-en-Provence

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Please see our [Pre-Departure Guide for All Programs](#) for additional important pre-departure information!

PRE-DEPARTURE

Important Phone Numbers

**** PROGRAM THESE EMERGENCY NUMBERS INTO YOUR CELL PHONE****

<p><u>ASA Office in Boston, MA</u> Academic Studies Abroad 16 Cohasset St. Roslindale, MA 02131-3013 Tel: 617-327-9388 Lee Frankel Emergency Cell: 413-221-4559 Fax: 617-327-9390 E-mail: info@academicstudies.com</p> <p>Lee Frankel, Director lee@academicstudies.com Chelsea Kaloupek, Assistant Director chelsea@academicstudies.com</p>	<p><u>IAU College</u> -The School of Humanities & Social Sciences -The Marchutz School of Fine Arts 8, rue de Littéra BP 30970 13604 Aix-en-Provence CEDEX 1 enroll@iaufrance.org housing@iaufrance.org</p> <p>Office tel: 04 42 23 02 82* Office Hours: 8:30am-6pm, M-F.</p> <p>Emergency cell phone numbers: Primary: 06 82 59 64 48* or 06 82 59 64 55* or 06 22 51 63 54*</p> <p>https://iaufrance.org/contact/emergency</p> <p><i>*This is the LOCAL number you would dial once in France. See international dialing instructions below.</i></p>								
<p><u>U.S. Embassy in France</u> U.S. Embassy, Paris: https://fr.usembassy.gov/</p> <p>U.S. Consulate, Marseilles: https://fr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/marseille/</p>	<p><u>Emergency</u> (Local numbers, as dialed in France)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">Police/Ambulance</td> <td>112 (has an English-speaking option)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SOS Medicine</td> <td>04 42 26 40 40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hospital</td> <td>04 42 33 50 00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Taxi</td> <td>04 42 27 71 11</td> </tr> </table>	Police/Ambulance	112 (has an English-speaking option)	SOS Medicine	04 42 26 40 40	Hospital	04 42 33 50 00	Taxi	04 42 27 71 11
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In an emergency, please contact the IAU College staff or the ASA office immediately. It is of utmost importance that you notify us of any problems, issues, or concerns that you encounter while you're abroad.

International Dialing Instructions

011 = INTERNATIONAL DIALING CODE 34 = COUNTRY CODE (FRANCE)

--How to Dial Within France

Dial the local number as is, without the country code, and include the leading zero. Example: 0 42 23 39 35 (dial the number in full, including the zero)

--How to Call France from the U.S.

Dial 011 plus 33 plus the local number, but drop the first 0 of the local number. For example, if the number you're trying to call is 0 42 23 39 35, you would dial 011 33 42 23 39 35.

--How to Call the U.S. from France

001 + area code and number

Passport & Visa

All students must have a passport that is valid for at least 6 months beyond the day you plan to return to the U.S.

You must have your passport stamped upon your first entry into France! This will document your entry into the country; failing to get your passport stamped could cause problems with your visa.

Academic Year students are required to register with the French Office of Immigration and Integration (OFII) after arriving in France. This is the last step of the visa process. The IAU staff in France will help you with this process. (Semester and Summer students will not need to register.)

Academic Year students will need to present:

1. The completed residence form that you submitted for your visa application in the U.S. **YOU MUST BRING THIS WITH YOU TO FRANCE!**
2. A photocopy of the ID pages of your passport and a photocopy of the Immigration Stamp you received at the border.

Academic Year students will *also* need to appear for an interview and a medical examination. During this appointment, you will need to present:

- 1) €55 in cash (processing fee)
- 2) Your passport
- 3) Proof of accommodation/residence in France (IAU will give this to you after you arrive)
- 4) One ID/passport photo (You can bring this from home *or* have one taken after you arrive in France)

What should I do if I lose my passport?

Contact the local police, the U.S. Embassy, and an IAU staff member immediately. Having a photocopy of your passport on hand will make it MUCH easier to have it replaced.

-U.S. Embassy, Paris: <https://fr.usembassy.gov/>

-U.S. Consulate, Marseilles: <https://fr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/marseille/>

Budgeting for Your Trip

The **EURO (€)** became the official currency of France on January 1, 1999. Bills come in denominations of €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200 and €500. Coins come in denominations of €2, €1, 50 cents, 20 cents, 10 cents, 5 cents, 2 cents and 1 cent. The exchange rate fluctuates all the time, so go to <http://www.XE.com> for the current rate.

How much money should I bring?

Recommended amount: **US\$250-300** PER WEEK OF YOUR STAY

Please note that these are general guidelines based on what past students have reported spending. Some students spend less and others more. The above figures do not allow for traveling every weekend, eating out a lot, or shopping every day.

What expenses should I budget for?

*** Housing, medical insurance, and all other ASA services are not included during the break between semesters or terms.*

** = Accounted for in weekly money recommendation above.*

1. Registration with the French Office of Immigration and Integration (Academic Year Students only)
Cost: €55 (cash). This is the last step of the visa process, after you arrive in France. The IAU staff will assist you with this process.
2. Daily lunch and 1 dinner per week*
Your French host will provide you with daily breakfast and 6 dinners per week. You will need to cover daily lunch and 1 dinner per week.
3. Some laundry*
Only one load of laundry per week is included with your homestay, so you may need to do extra laundry at a Laundromat. Price is approx. €6 per load for washer & dryer.
4. Materials for your classes
This includes art materials for those taking Studio Art or Photography.
5. Local transportation
Budget **US\$300 per semester / US\$100 per summer session**. Local transportation includes getting to and from class, getting around town during your free time, getting to and from where your group is meeting to depart for an excursion and getting home after an excursion, etc. This will include paying for bus and taxi fares. Most students walk back and forth to class, and some take the bus.
6. Phone usage (calls and text messages)
Budget **US\$400 per semester / \$75 per summer session**.
7. Spending money / Personal expenses*
Entertainment, shopping, souvenirs, dining out, travel, haircuts, doctor visits, toothpaste, etc. This is accounted for in our weekly money recommendation (see previous page).
8. Meals on excursions*

9. Transportation back to the airport at the end of the program
Budget \$25

ARRIVAL

Airport Pick-up

What should I do when I get off the plane at Marseilles airport?

► After you de-plane, you will go through Passport Control (also called Immigration) and Customs. After Passport Control and Customs, follow signs to baggage claim. Delayed baggage must be reported to your airline's lost luggage counter before exiting the baggage claim area!

► **After claiming your bags, exit into the airport lobby and look for an IAU sign OR a sign with your name on it. IAU College staff will be waiting for you in the airport lobby.** They cannot meet you in baggage claim!

► Once you locate the IAU staff, the IAU shuttle bus will take you to Aix, where you will either: 1) Be dropped off at your French host's address, OR 2) You will be dropped off at a central meeting point in Aix-en-Provence, and then your French host will come pick you up shortly at the meeting point and take you home. The IAU shuttle bus leaves the airport approximately every 2 hours between 8am and 7pm on arrival day.

► ***If you have trouble finding an IAU staff member,*** inquire at the information booth on the ground floor of Hall 1.

► **Address for delivery of delayed luggage:**

Please have lost luggage delivered directly to your French host's address. ASA will email you the address of your French host approximately 1 week before your program start date. Write their address on your Last-Minute Checklist and pack it in your carry-on, and save their address to your phone's Notes.

If my flight is delayed, will you still pick me up at the airport?

If you will not be arriving as scheduled, it is YOUR responsibility to notify the emergency contact person indicated on your **Last-Minute Checklist**. They will let you know if you will still be picked up at the airport. We will make every effort to pick you up.

ACADEMICS

Academic Policies

Course load

A minimum of 15 credits per semester (5 classes) is required and constitutes a normal full-time load with IAU. Summer students will take 3-9 credits (1-3 classes). To take fewer credits than the minimum, IAU requires written permission from the home institution prior to the student's arrival.

Credit Transfer

Before departure from the United States, students must arrange credit transfer with their Dean, Study Abroad Advisor, or Department Head who must sign the ASA Release and Credits Form, signifying that work completed at IAU will receive credit toward your degree.

The Institute for American Universities issues an official, traditional American transcript with American letter grades. IAU courses have been accepted for academic credit by over 700 North American institutions of higher learning since the Institute's founding in 1957.

Drop/Add

Students may change their course selection in consultation with the Academic Director during the first two weeks of the semester. No new courses may be dropped or added after that period.

Pass/Fail

Students who are taking fifteen semester hours on a graded basis may elect to take one course on a pass/fail basis. Such a choice must be declared no later than the drop/add period and may not be changed after that date. For purposes of pass/fail grading, "pass" is considered a grade of C or above.

Withdrawal Pass/Fail

From the end of the drop/add period to the end of the eighth week of classes, a student may withdraw from a course with the consent of the Academic Director. Students who withdraw during this period will receive a grade of WP or WF (Withdrawal Pass or Fail), which will appear on the official Institute transcript. Check the academic calendar below for specific dates.

Auditing Classes at the Institute

Students may audit a class in addition to the normal course load, with the permission of the Academic Director and the instructor. Attendance must be on a regular basis throughout the semester. Auditing a course does not entail any reduction in regular tuition. No grades may be awarded for audited courses. However, notation of the audit may be entered on the student's transcript.

Attendance

Since the Institute believes that a student has an obligation to participate in class, regular attendance is expected of all students. Class attendance is a factor in the final assessment of a student's academic performance and includes her/his presence on all excursions related to a course syllabus.

Incompletes

The last day for a student to request an Incomplete ("I") grade for a course is no later than the last day of regularly scheduled classes. The instructor grants or denies this request and informs the Academic Director in writing of the decision. The Academic Director reviews this decision and determines the final result.

Normally, an Incomplete may only be granted for reasons of documented illness, death in the immediate family, or other extraordinary extenuating circumstances. Simple failure to complete assigned work in a timely fashion does not justify the granting of an Incomplete.

Unfinished work must be completed satisfactorily within the regular semester immediately following the semester in which the Incomplete was granted, or the course grade will become a permanent grade of "F".

Grading Policies

Grades are assigned by the instructor of the course. No grade may normally be changed except for reason of material or clerical error. A student with a grade of "D" or "F" may retake a course once in order to improve the grade and obtain credit. The original grade "D" or "F" remains on the student's transcript.

Students withdrawing from a course after the official drop/add period should see the paragraph on withdrawal.

What are classes like?

Classes are usually small and have less than 25 students each. Classes are taught in English or French, depending on the subject.

Academic Calendar

Please note: Calendar is subject to change. Excursion dates and locations will be announced by **email** shortly prior to departure. **All Orientation meetings are mandatory.**

At the following link, you can see the Academic Calendar for your program:

<https://www.academicstudies.com/aix-en-provence-france-program-calendar/>

EVERYDAY LIFE

Housing

ASA will email you your housing assignment **approximately 1 week** before your program start date.

Where will I be living and what should I expect regarding housing?

Living in a French home is considered the best form of housing because it provides an immediate introduction to life in this new place. This offers you the best possible way to learn about French culture and the French language. Living arrangements and the composition of families varies. The term “family” should not be interpreted too narrowly. Increasingly, about 50% of the host families are childless couples or divorced women with children who enjoy having a student living with them. Host families 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.

Students find that speaking French at home is the single greatest factor in increasing their facility with the language. Living in a French home is seen universally as an invaluable opportunity not found in many study abroad programs. Naturally, all students must accept the constraints and responsibilities that such arrangements entail. Whenever possible, IAU accommodates students' stated housing preferences.

Your host family will provide you with daily continental breakfast and 6 dinners a week. Students are responsible for lunches. There is a multitude of affordable cafés, brasseries, small sandwich and grocery shops from which to choose. There is also a fantastic open market in Aix. You are expected to conform to your host's meal times. You should not ask to have your breakfast or dinner at times other than when the family does.

Your host family will also provide you with one machine load of laundry per week. You may take care of additional laundry at a Laundromat for around €6 per wash & dry. In addition, your room will be cleaned for you on a weekly basis; but this doesn't mean it's ok to have a messy room! Out of respect for your host and their home, please keep your room neat and tidy.

Please keep in mind that French homes do not have the same amount of space that most Americans are accustomed to. You will not find large walk-in closets or large bedrooms. The French enjoy socializing with their friends, but usually do so outside their homes. For this reason, you will not find many big screen televisions, hi-tech stereos, or expensive home entertainment centers. You will be given your own key, but if it is lost or stolen you may have to pay to replace the locks. You will not have a curfew, but please be considerate of your family and let them know of your whereabouts and expected time you will be home. You must always ask permission to bring over a visitor. **OVERNIGHT GUESTS OF ANY KIND ARE NOT ALLOWED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE!**

****NOTE: You will have Internet access in your French home, but it might be hard-wired (Ethernet) and not WiFi. IAU's buildings do have free WiFi for all students, so bring your laptop.**

Things to keep in mind when living with a French host family:

Electricity and water are very expensive. Be sure to take short showers (10-15 minutes maximum) and turn off all lights and appliances when leaving a room, even if you are leaving for only a short time. Also, most homes do not have air conditioning. Most of the buildings are older, which means they can be drafty in the winter, and European homes are usually heated at a lower temperature than those in the U.S. So, it is important to pack warm clothing, and to dress in layers during the winter.

Be sure to use good manners, and say hello when you come home and goodbye when you leave. Always be quiet and courteous when returning home late at night.

The occasional gift (such as flowers or bringing home dessert) will get you far with your French host! PLEASE DON'T FORGET THAT THIS IS A HOME, NOT A HOTEL!

When will I know which host family I will be living with?

To allow us the flexibility to better serve your needs, housing assignments often have to be made shortly before the semester begins. Specific information regarding your host family will be provided to you via email within one week prior to your departure. Housing is reserved from the official arrival date until 12 noon on the day after the last exam.

What if I don't like my host family?

If you raise any concerns about a host family, our staff will investigate the problem, speak with the host family, and hopefully resolve it. Many times a concern can be a cultural misunderstanding or a communication problem that is easily resolved. If, for any reason, we are unable to settle an issue between a host family and a student, we will move the student to a new family. It is of utmost importance that you contact ASA or the IAU Housing Coordinator with any concerns you have with your host family.

How far will I live from school?

Most students can walk to and from class, as the majority of host families are located within a 15-30 minute walk from the school. **But, because of the way the city is laid out, there are some host families that are further away from school than others and may require the use of public transportation.** Aix has very good public transportation that you'll learn about during orientation. Please keep in mind that bus service ends at 10:30 PM in Aix during the week, but there are reasonably priced taxis in Aix.

Move-out Day

YOU MUST VACATE YOUR HOST FAMILY'S RESIDENCE BY 12 NOON ON THE OFFICIAL LAST DAY OF THE PROGRAM. You may not stay in your ASA housing after the official last day of the program.

There is an inexpensive shuttle bus that runs every half hour from the *gare routiere* in Aix to Marseilles airport, from 4:40am to 10:40pm daily. Cost is about €10 one way. Please note, for students with an early morning departure from Marseilles (i.e. 6am), the 4:40am bus will get you there in time! For more details about this bus service, visit <http://www.mrsairport.com/eng/index.jsp> and go to "Access/Plan your arrival."

French Food and Customs

Your host family will provide you with continental breakfast 7 days per week and dinner 6 days per week. Students are responsible for lunch, but this should not be a problem with the multitude of affordable cafes, *brasseries*, *boulangeries*, small sandwich and grocery shops that are located in town. There is also a daily open market in Aix that provides an abundance of fresh fruit, herbs, cheese, fish, flowers, and vegetables.
(1 kilo = 2.2 pounds)

In France, breakfast is usually not as substantial as Americans are used to. With your host family, breakfast might include cereal, tea, toast or croissant & jam, cookies, etc. Lunch and dinner are much more substantial meals. The French tend to eat later, compared to American ideology, commonly not before 8 pm. A meal to the French is a time to enjoy and linger over a good meal. Although drinking alcohol is part of the social experience at some meals, excessive drinking is not acceptable.

Alcoholic Beverages

The French do enjoy drinking socially as part of their culture, but they do it very responsibly, and it is normally not the focus of the social experience. They also enjoy alcohol on special occasions and holidays, but again, in moderation. The French generally do not drink to get drunk, and frown upon those who do. In French culture, it is considered in very poor taste to be drunk. Normally the only drunk people in a bar or discotheque are non-natives. Excessive drinking or drunken behavior is not acceptable, and both IAU and ASA consider it reason for expulsion.

French Culture – Some Advice

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 requirements 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 part of daily life in France. If you really wish to integrate French culture, certain “rules” are “de rigueur.” For example:

1. Greet people as you enter a small store: “*Bonjour.*” Or if you phone an American friend living with a French family: “*Bonjour, Madame,*” or “*Bonsoir, Monsieru. Puis-je parler à _____, s’il vous plait?*”
2. Compliment your host/hostess on her culinary talents.
3. 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.
4. 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 America. 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.
5. Try to blend into the local culture as much as you can. This includes speaking the local language, when possible; maintaining a low profile by avoiding wearing clothing printed with the names of U.S. 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.

Is it safe to drink the water?

Yes. But you will find that in most European countries, it is more common for people to use bottled mineral or still water to drink rather than tap water.

How to Dress in France

The French of all ages tend to present themselves conservatively with a certain chic. You should expect to dress a bit more formally in France and you must be aware that you are not on a U.S. college campus. Also, the French tend to wear more dark/neutral colors (black, gray, beige, brown). If you bring clothes in these colors, you will not only blend in better, but you’ll save space in your suitcase because you can mix and match using fewer pieces.

Although jeans are certainly fine to wear in France, you should plan to pair your jeans with more “nice” clothes than you might at home. For example, don’t wear jeans *and* a sweatshirt/t-shirt in France. Black is always correct. You will find that people wear more dark-colored clothes and may stay away from very brightly colored clothes or clothes with loud prints/patterns. **Ripped jeans or shorts are never acceptable in France.**

Example: You may walk into a local bar wearing flip-flops and a college T-shirt and ask for a can of coca-cola at 10:00 a.m. Immediately, you will notice that you are the only one in the bar with open-toed shoes, a short sleeved shirt, no jacket and drinking a Coke. The rest of the patrons of the bar will be “dressed up” wearing jackets, pants, closed-toe shoes or boots and ordering a coffee.

While people may, of course, dress as they prefer in France, keep in mind that it is easy to stick out as a foreigner because of your clothing. The French simply tend to have a more formal or “put together” way of dressing than is typical of American college students. **The French do not go out in public in sweats, stretch pants, yoga pants, or flip flops, unless they are on their way to the gym. Flip flops are only worn at the beach. Pajamas are never to be worn outside the home.**

Many churches and cathedrals do not allow people to enter unless their legs and shoulders are covered, even in summer months, so keep this in mind while travelling or while on a program field trip/excursion.

Many cities in Europe have cobblestone, which is notoriously uneven and hard to walk on. It is not advisable to attempt to walk on cobblestone in any sort of heel (even a low heel), especially if the streets are slippery from rain. Students HAVE sprained their ankles this way and spent the rest of the semester on crutches. It is MUCH easier than you realize to slip or sprain your ankle. Broken heels and straps are common, too. Be careful if you’re walking on cobblestone and please don’t wear heels! Finally, it is difficult to roll your suitcases on the cobblestone – you may have to carry them, so try not to pack too heavy. Watch out for broken suitcase wheels from the cobblestone. Happens all the time...some students have had to buy new luggage.

Weather

Aix-en-Provence has a very pleasant and rather mild climate with an **average of 300 sunny days a year**. Provence has a Mediterranean climate characterized by a hot, dry summer with not much rain (average of 60 rainy days per year). Normally it is only rainy in the Spring. Summer lasts until October, followed by a short autumn that lasts until the end of December. Winters are also rather mild. Average winter temperature on a sunny afternoon is 10-11 degrees Celsius (50 F). The average temperature in July and August is around 28 degrees Celsius (85 F). **European homes aren’t heated as well as American homes, so pack accordingly, including warm pajamas and socks, and things you can layer. Students have reported that although the winter weather was not very cold, it felt colder because the heating didn’t work as well. Layering your clothes will help.**

Average Temperatures (in Fahrenheit):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
52	50	60	65	77	86	87	84.5	77	71	58	49

Hotels in Aix-en-Provence

Hotel Paul	www.aix-en-provence.com/hotelpaul
Hotel Les 4 Dauphins	www.lesquatredauphins.fr
Hotel St. Christophe	www.hotel-saintchristophe.com
Hotel Cardinal	www.hotel-cardinal-aix.com
Hotel les Augustins	www.hotel-augustins.com
Hotel le Manoir	www.hotelmanoir.com
Hotel Artea	www.hotel-arte-aix-en-provence.com
Hotel Aquabella	www.aquabella.fr

STAYING IN TOUCH

- For information about cell phones abroad, please see the [ASA PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE FOR ALL PROGRAMS](#)

Time Difference

What is the time difference between France and where I live?

The following times are the number of hours BEHIND France each region is:

Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
9 hours	8 hours	7 hours	6 hours

So, if it is 6pm in France, then it is 12 noon Eastern, 11am Central, and 9am Pacific.

Computers & Internet

Should I bring a laptop?

YES. You will have Internet access in your French homestay, as well as on campus in IAU's buildings. *However, the Internet connection in your homestay might be hard-wired (Ethernet) and not WiFi.* Please note: You may not use your laptop to surf the web or check email during class. IAU also has a small computer lab with computers that students can use, but since it is small, it is better to bring a laptop if you have one.

- For information about using a plug adapter with your laptop, SEE [PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE FOR ALL PROGRAMS](#)