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Capture the Castle with Collette

Collette announces new castle-stay tours

Collette has announced two exciting new castle-stay tours 'France Magnifique' and 'Journey Through Southern France' to add to its current suite of exquisite, luxury castle-stay tours, that includes Irish beauties Bellingham and Dromoland castles. The new tours are on sale now for departures from May 2016 and will feature the sumptuous Chateau D'Augerville, fabulous Fontevraud L'Hôtel and the historic Hotel de la Cité.

For travellers who dream of walking with princes, courtiers and kings, Collette's castle-stays make this possible.

Featuring a two-night stay in the majestic Chateau D'Augerville, the new France Magnifique tour will commence in 2016 taking travellers on a journey to discover the very best France has to offer. Chateau D'Augerville will see travellers lounging in lavishly-appointed drawing rooms with drapes of velvet and gilded furnishings, wandering through splendid gardens and dining like nobility in the magnificent grand hall. For Francophiles, staying at the castle is a real treat, with past-notable guests including the likes of literary legends Alexandre Dumas and François-René de Chateaubriand and Romantic artist Eugene Delacroix.

The tour, starting in panoramic Paris, offers travellers all must-see highlights as well, in the landmark architecture of the Arc de Triomphe, the Cathedral of Notre Dame and the Champs-Élysées. Other highlights include the Normandy coast, where the group will learn about the epic battle of Normandy and later see the relics of the artificial Mulberry port. Travellers can meander through the streets of Saint-Malo, freckled with frick-and-frack houses and soak up the stunning vistas in this famous seaside village.

Fontevraud L'Hôtel and Hotel de La Cité castles both feature in Collette's new Journey Through Southern France tour. Fontevraud castle is where old worlds and new worlds collide. With an intricately carved exterior of sheer opulence, juxtaposed with a contemporary, minimalist décor, the castle serves as a virtual time machine for travellers on this tour.

Travellers will fraternise with French royalty in Fontevraud L'Hotel. An antique jewel, this castle was favoured by illustrious figures such as the Plantagenet family, Counts of Anjou and Kings of England. Henry II, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Richard the Lionheart and Isabelle d'Angoulême (widow of John Lackland - King John) are buried at Fontevraud. Their recumbent statues, which rested on their tombs can still be seen in the castle grounds today.

Hotel de La Cité is equally extravagant, with an outdoor tree-lined swimming pool, luxury spa and massage facilities and Michelin-star restaurant La Barbacane, all set against the theatrical backdrop of the castle's fortress-like architecture.

In this tour, travellers will bask in the radiance of Paris the 'City of Lights', become burgeoning wine experts in Bordeaux, visit picturesque Provence and Carcassonne and marvel at the medieval village of Avignon, rich in history and culture. An optional 'Flavours of Provence' activity will see visitors accompany a local chef as they forage for truffles with truffle pigs and then whip up culinary



wonders. Exploring the Loire valley, travellers will visit celebrated Chinon wine village and spend time with a local winemaker at his biodynamic winery. From sampling tantalising tannins to dining like kings, there is something for every traveller on this Journey through Southern France.

“We are excited to be able to offer such a diverse range of accommodation and activities in our product range. What makes these tours so special and unique is that our clients have the chance to sleep and dine in the castles – not just visit them. These castles have played host to some of the great historic and cultural icons, so our clients are in good company!” said Alison Mead, Collette’s Australian Business Manager.

In Collette’s Countryside of the Emerald Isle tour, travellers can gaze in wonderment at the jewel-like hues of Ireland’s luscious landscape. Relishing in royalty, travellers will become enchanted by the baronial Bellingham castle. Strolling the grounds of babbling brooks, green gardens, weeping willows and stately turrets and towers wrapped in winding vines, the castle is reminiscent of a fairytale. The tour, beginning in Dublin, will also take travellers on a journey through Kinsale, where they will drive along the West Cork’s Wild Atlantic Way and admire the spectacular coastal scene.

The Elegant Ireland tour takes travellers on a different Irish dance through Dublin, Killarney and Castlemartyr. Guests will lose themselves in the magic of Ireland’s decadent Dromoland castle. With treasures like sparkling chandeliers, ornate tapestries of burgundy and royal blue, gold embossed cornices and dramatic coats of armour, this castellan experience will transport travellers back to a time where riches meant power and power meant everything.

Highlights of this Irish experience also include stopping at Blarney Castle to kiss the famous Blarney Stone and receive the ‘gift of the gab’, exploring the Ring of Kerry with its plunging cliffs, beautiful beaches and rolling hills of green, or finding solace in pampering at the Castlemartyr resort’s luxury spa.

For more details on Collette’s castle collection please see the attached backgrounder.

For details of the full tours or to book a trip:

Contact your local travel agent

Call Collette on 1300 792 195 or visit www.gocollette.com

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About Collette

Established in 1918, Collette is a third-generation, family-owned worldwide tour operator. With headquarters in Rhode Island, Collette’s recently- opened Sydney office adds to the company’s global presence which includes offices in Vancouver, Toronto and London.

On offer is an extensive collection of four-star escorted tours, river and ocean cruises, rail journeys, small group tours, family tours and garden holidays. Renowned for connecting guests with cultural experiences which go far beyond those of an ordinary holiday, Collette prides itself on providing real value to its guests and agent partners. Knowledgeable tour managers, an industry-leading travel protection plan and inclusive touring are just part of the top-quality Collette experience. Just sit back, relax and be guided on your Collette adventure!

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