



### Le Couvent des Minimes, Mane-en-Provence \$\$\$\$



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Savvy Provence lovers are heading east of Apt, where the lavender fields aren't hemmed in by tour buses. Discover this unspoiled place in the sun from this hillside seventeenth-century convent. Eschewing the Provençal clichés of print fabrics and painted furniture, the 46 rooms have an appealingly restrained decor of oak parquet floors and taupe curtains and upholstery. Weather permitting, Le Cloître restaurant serves outdoors in the courtyard of the old cloister, but the main dining room, with views of the surrounding countryside, is also a superb setting in which to sample the excellent Provençale cuisine. The pool is built into a raised terrace, and the spa is run by L'Occitane, which was founded in nearby Manesque. All told, Le Couvent des Minimes is the kind of place that will make you want to spend a year in Provence (doubles, \$295–\$530).

**When to go:** Avoid the crowds by visiting Provence in May, June, September, or October.

**Which room to book:** Since standard doubles are small, reserve one of the more spacious Les Restanques (deluxe doubles), or splurge on La Cassine suite, which is in the bell tower.