



LE COUVENT DES MINIMES
Hôtel & Spa

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Photographs available on

http://www.eyes2market.fr/tel_echa_rge ment/Couv en t-des-Minimes/Photos 2011

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Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes, Three centuries of History



The Couvent des Minimes was founded in 1613 by the Marquis Melchior de Forbin Janson for the nuns of Les Minimes, a mendicant order established by Saint Vincent de Paul, in Mané in what was to become the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence region.

At the time, the cultivation and the study of plants was an important activity in the life of the Convent. Louis Feuillée, botanist to Louis XIV, studied and wrote two botanical surveys there. During his expeditions to South America he studied new species of plants such as the nasturtium and the fuchsia which he brought back to France.

After the French Revolution, the Couvent des Minimes was to remain empty until 1862, when canon Terrasson, archpriest of Forcalquier, undertook its restoration and transformation into an almshouse.

Mr Saint Vincent who worked on the restoration of the Convent was unable to hide his enthusiasm: « Les Minimes! It is impossible to imagine this marvellous site, surrounded and protected by the mountain chain of the Alps from which Les Minimes are separated by a wide plain, resembling a sea of flowers in springtime. The almond trees, both pink and white, give it a delicious finery. Narcissi, anemones in a variety of colours and white daisies emerge from the verdant surroundings. Sweet-smelling May bushes abound and there are flowers all around. It is a joy for the eyes ».

A few years later, a community of Franciscan Missionnaires de Marie Sisters settled here and looked after the almshouse and its residents. Between two missions abroad, the Sisters cultivated terraced-gardens where they planted fruit trees and vines, crops which enabled them to provide food for the residents and for the recovery of the Sisters returning from tropical countries. In 1999, the Sisters left the Convent which was to remain empty until it became a place of relaxation and well-being, the Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa.

A gem in the heart of Provence

The pure architecture of the Eglise des Minimes is exceptionally beautiful in a style which marks the transition between Renaissance and Baroque. The façade is particularly remarkable with its triglyphs (vertical carvings) set between rosettes, and its hammered crest. The large traditional-style altar table and the stained-glass window of Marie-Madeleine only adds to the architectural perfection of the church's interior, and what better place to daydream and relax than in the small cloister with its fountain.

« An extraordinary garden... »

The garden of Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa is an extraordinary garden, just like the one in Charles Trenet's song. Even if the ducks don't speak English and the birds are not selling seed and little pieces of gruyere cheese, the garden of Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa nevertheless has all the elements of the « singing madman's » dreams.

The garden of the Convent is a place which holds countless memories and tells the story of the Minimes, men and women devoted to contemplation and botany. It is also a place of beauty where the sweet-smelling plants which make up the products used in the spa appeal to the senses.

Each step takes the visitor on a new journey through the fitting marriage of the convent's past and present.

At the entrance, guests are plunged into the very special universe of the Couvent des Minimes as they walk down a long path lined with Italian cypress and thuya.

The "Jardin des Minimes" garden, created on the terraces is a blend of fragrances where lavender and hybrid-lavender, beehives and acacia trees, lemon balm, verbena, and lemon trees can be seen side by side, and which is an invitation to discover the plants from which the beauty products used in the spa are made.

Visitors are swept off on a real journey along the terraces or « bancaous » which are the image of the botanical discoveries made by the Minimes all over the world. The first part takes you through the trees and aromatic bushes of Provence from olive to almond, rosemary to lavender, and then on an escapade into the Mediterranean with argan trees, palm trees, jasmine, purple rock-roses, mugwort, myrtle.... The journey ends in the footsteps of Louis Feuillé, who was a student in the Couvent des Minimes and brought back fuchsias, nasturtiums and papayas from his expeditions with an opening onto the world with Mexican sage, Argentinian plum trees, shea, canna, banana trees, or vetiver, ... In summer, treatments are provided in light structures overlooking the valley.

In the cloister, beds of simples in contrasting reds and greens, with thyme, sage, savoury, absinth, oregano, rosemary, immortelles and red basil take the visitor back to the spirit of the walled garden of the Minimes, the last great Medieval order.

The path to the spa plunges the visitor into a world of fragrances with roses, iris, lily, spurge, carnations...

The Couvent des Minimes pays homage to the Franciscan sisters who made the place so welcoming. Every flower in the beds of campanulas, black poppies, aquilegia, oxalis, bears the name of one of the sisters.

It goes without saying that Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtels & Spa incorporates respect for the environment, and solar panels installed along the access to the Convent have been integrated into the surroundings as a « false lake ». The brilliance of the panels is used as a water mirror and light grasses have been planted to hide them without altering their capacity for collecting solar energy.

**«Sensations revisited»
Between Luberon and Haute Provence...**



Located in Mane, in the Alpes de Haute-Provence, Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa which opened in June 2008, is a haven of peace and a privileged environment.

A story of shared passions

Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa was born of both a passion for the site and a passion for this particular region of Provence.

Created in 2004 by the L'Occitane group, the Couvent des Minimes brand perpetuates the tradition of well-being and therapy in a unique venue which gave it its name through its natural beauty recipes.

Today, the combination of the L'Occitane teams and hotel and spa professionals all inspired by a common love of the region and well-being, has given birth to a venue and spa therapy. The Couvent des Minimes has opened a new page in its history and has become Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa, a delightful hotel, with 46 rooms and suites, and a Spa by L'Occitane where the therapies provided with L'Occitane and Couvent des Minimes products make it a marvellous secluded area of pleasure.

Pure, modern lines

Nestled within the walls of the Couvent, an enchanting hotel was designed as a cocoon of well-being. The 46 rooms and suites, still heavily steeped in history, were remodelled to combine the charm of history and the serenity of the site with the comfort of a very special place.

The planning of Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes was entrusted to Bruno Legrand, an architect specializing in the restoration of ancient buildings. Bruno Legrand has gone to great lengths to render its original feeling to the Couvent and harmonize the different buildings erected over the centuries. Combines simplicity and purity, and the beauty of the building is enhanced by a blend of modernity and sobriety.



Luxury and refinement can be seen everywhere in the quality of the materials. White stone dominates, set off in the bedrooms by touches of pastel, plum or blueberry on the walls. The pale oak of the furniture, specially created for the hotel, tones in with the linen chocolate brown or string-coloured curtains which match the piping on the damask velvet bedspread. Touches of colour are given by the chairs covered in a flowered fabric in off-white, taupe, brick red, and chocolate or a striped fabric in grey, black, violet and pink. Heated stones in the parquet flooring lead from the bedroom to the bathroom, where unworked stone predominates with grey or chocolate brown stoneware for the bath and the shower, and bush hammered natural stone for the basin.

Some rooms have their own private garden, or a patio, others have a terrace.

For its restoration, Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa called on the talents of local artisans and Compagnons du Tour de France. Enterprises from Forcalquier, Manosque or Marseille put their know-how to the service of the hotel for the old woodwork, the floor tiling, or the outside restoration.

The rebirth of the Couvent des Minimes

The Bruno Legrand Architecture team, initiator of the restoration of the Couvent des Minimes, is made up of around ten people with the best skills to fully carry out exceptional projects.

Bruno Legrand, Nathalie Robin and Sophie Coste manage all the design, from the architecture and its technical constraints to the decoration, design and creation of furniture associating the craftsmen of the Compagnons du Tour de France.

Besides traditional projects in the Paris region involving housing or head offices, they are restoring a large number of wine properties in the Bordeaux region; such as Château Léoville Poyferré in the Médoc, Château Sansonnet in St Emilion or Château Le Gay in Pomerol.



The team is presently studying the new hôtel du Mont d'Arbois in Megève, and hotel projects integrated into wine estates in Argentina, where it is designing all the landscaping, plantations, irrigation and the building of wine cellars. (Clos de los Sieté – Mendoza – Argentina on behalf of major industrialists: Dassault, Rothschild, Catherine Péré-Vergé and the Cuvelier family).

One of BLA's most attractive projects is the Eglise Notre Dame d'Espérance developed in 1997 in the rue de la Roquette in the 11th arrondissement in Paris.

« Le Cloître » Restaurant: a menu filled with sunshine



In Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa, the « Le Cloître » restaurant, in a decor of utmost purity where the grey and chocolate brown of the curtains is associated with the white tablecloths and the plum and violet of the chairs plays on the flavours of Provence.

Philippe Guérin, the « Cloître » chef, has devised a sunshine-filled menu, blending the scents and flavours of Provence with Mediterranean tastes and smells. Made from natural ingredients, the dishes retain their regional identity, and his menus are an ode to the region's riches.

« *Les asperges de Saint Vincent en fricassée, en flanc, en velouté à la mousse de lait* », a variation on the theme of asparagus from Provence, with its vinaigrette and truffles, as a lovage-flavoured flan, or a velouté perfumed with lemongrass under

« *Le Croustillant de cabillaud demi-sel, au romarin et jambon*

Jabujo » with a brandade mouillette, marinated squid and pequillos peppers served with a tomato juice flavoured with an old sherry vinegar. Marinated in rosemary, and cooked on the plancha, this delicious crispy cod is a journey through a sun-kissed country.

« *Le pigeonneau des Alpes de Haute Provence* » young pigeon with allspice, roasted with rhubarb, and accompanied by an escalope and hot foie gras with a sage-pineapple juice, or « *le Pavé de loup de Méditerranée doré sur sa peau, légèrement épicé* », sea bass with a fennel stock flavoured with vegetables from the kitchen-garden of the Convent and highlighting regional produce. « *Le Blanc de Saint Pierre à la Plancha* », John Dory with candied lemon, spring onions, sun-dried tomatoes and dried fruit is a tribute to Provençal tradition.

To appreciate the variety of dishes devised by Philippe Guérin, in addition to the Carte (85 to 105 per person), « Le Cloître » offers its guests a Menu du Marché (50 per person) and a « Menu Découverte Provence et Méditerranée » (90 per person, served at lunch and dinner-time)





In summer, « **Le Cloître** » is extended onto a delightful patio, where you can sample the wealth of the Mediterranean in caramel-coloured armchairs with white cushions.

In summertime too, you can enjoy a light lunch beside the pool in the « **Bancaou** » bar-restaurant.

Two bars for a drink with friends, or simply for relaxing:

Le Pesquier, a bar lounge opening on to the patio for a drink in summer or a relaxed lunch in winter in front of a wood fire. Its library is ideal for discovering the secrets of the region, a drink in your hand.

Le Caveau, a musical bar with a view over the garden.

La Cornue a wine cellar for sampling great wines.

Le Couvent des Minimes Spa by L'Occitane



Welcome to Le Couvent des Minimes Spa by L'Occitane, an authentic refuge that brings you back to nature. Every gesture, every ingredient, every ritual is drawn from a page of the L'Occitane grand herbarium, a resource of hundreds of essential oils and natural ingredients, including Red Rice, Immortelle, Olive, Shea, Lavender...For over thirty years, the fields of Provence and the traditions and techniques of this unspoiled land have been the secret and inspiration behind L'Occitane beauty products.

The treatment menu and massage sequences have been developed in close collaboration with L'Occitane global Spa experts. This way, they are nurtured and inspired by the techniques and traditions from all around the world and, in respect for authenticity, are only hand-performed.

Prior to your treatment, you are greeted with a "Welcome Ritual", a footbath performed with Aromachologie Effervescent Sugar Cubes. Your experience then takes you on a true olfactory journey, sequenced at every step by soothing or energizing aromas. The voyage of the senses continues through gestures, sensorial textures, relaxing music and the herbal teas inspired by Provençal traditions.

Every moment at the Spa is dedicated to skincare, wellbeing and superior service. Special attention and added treatment enhancements allow clients to experience the ultimate in naturality,

Couvent des Minimes Spa by L'Occitane.

A few years ago, L'Occitane decided to continue writing its history by creating a Spa experience as an extension of the brand.

Brazil and Asia were the first to start out on this journey of discovery, establishing the protocol of natural treatments as upheld by L'Occitane in the spirit of Provence and Mediterranean traditions – natural formulae and ingredients, calming fragrances and exclusively hand-performed massages...Each sequence is an escapade into the unspoiled countryside of Provence.

Jean Louis Pierrisnard (Director of Research & Development at L'Occitane) defines L'Occitane treatments as a hallmark of high-quality where documented ingredients are carefully selected for their excellence and traceable origins according to strict and exacting criteria.

For the most part, ingredients are sourced from Provence and the Mediterranean and steeped in local traditions and cultures: immortelle from Corsica, red rice from Camargue, olives and almonds. The use of Shea butter produced by women's cooperatives in Burkina Faso, illustrates L'Occitane's commitment to Fair Trade.

2011 : NEW TREATMENTS

Renewing Wind Caress Body Brushing

1hr00

Gentle smoothing massage performed all over the body with our signature brushes effectively removes dead cells and stimulates micro-circulation. Targeted acupressure points combined with gentle palm pressures will enhance the body's energy flows. Immediate result: A true 3-in-1 treatment to experience boosted energy, exfoliated and satin-soft skin!

Deep Tissue Intense Relief

1hr00

This protocol combines Hawaiian Lomi Lomi massage, acupressure and gentle stretching. A deep-tissue massage and soothing essential oils ease muscular tension, with a focus on the back, shoulders and nape of the neck. Perfect for recuperating after a long journey.

Almond Detoxifying Balance

1hr00

Inspired by lymphatic drainage, this massage boosts circulation and helps rid the body of toxins. The Body Tonic Oil and its unique association of almond & cameline oils with red algae extracts and pure essential oils heighten the effects of the massage. Afterwards, your body feels lighter and invigorated.

Blissful Cocoon For Mom-To-Be

1hr00

Effleurages: gentle movements and massages. The blissful touch of the Balinese and Swedish techniques inspired the softness of this ritual dedicated to mothers-to-be. The delightful massage is associated with a nourishing formula, enriched in grape and apricot seed oils to gently accompany the changes linked to maternity. You will be left simply peaceful - muscles deeply relaxed, legs feeling lighter, skin softened – already looking forward to your next cocoon journey.

Purifying Olive Treatment for the Back

0hr30

An exfoliating and purifying back treatment – ideal before a special occasion. Exfoliation is followed by either a clarifying treatment or a relaxing massage, then a tailor-made mask.

FACIALS

These traditional treatments meet the fundamental needs of our skin, coupling refined products with precise techniques. Excellent results and pleasure guaranteed.



“L’Occitane Signature” treatment: Immortelle Secret of Youth 1hr 15

This treatment calls on the patented properties of immortelle and its organic essential oil rich in regenerating properties to stimulate cell renewal and improve collagen synthesis. Skin is smoother and firmer, visibly younger.

Immortelle Secret to Brightness

1hr15

A high-precision treatment to combat the effects of time and sun exposure, revealing a clear, radiant

complexion. To correct and prevent the appearance of dark spots, the immortelle lifting massage is combined with a formula enriched with vitamin C derivative.

Immortelle Divine Secret to Everlasting Youth 1hr30

The absolute treatment for the face and décolleté area will bring a touch of luxury to your skin. A combination of treatments to smooth away the effects of time, including to the décolleté area particularly exposed and subject to aging skin.

Very Precious Facial Treatment 1hr30

This facial treatment is our all-round solution to successfully combat signs of aging: wrinkles, sagging, dull complexion, dark spots and other skin complaints. It includes our Signature lifting and firming massage, as well as the application of two successive masks for best results. To help you relax and evacuate stress and tension, this treatment also includes a full foot, hand and shoulder massage.

Olive Recipe for Glowing Skin

1hr15

The secret of its success lies in the patented properties of the olive, symbol of the countryside of Provence. Renowned for its moisturising effects and complexion enhancing properties, it protects skin against the damaging effects of free radicals. For a radiant complexion, this facial treatment is ideal for anyone suffering from the effects of pollution, jetlag or stress

Shea-cotton Soothing Cocoon 1hr15

For skin that feels tight or has been damaged by climatic conditions, L’Occitane brings together Shea butter and organic cotton oil and combines them with a massage that promotes drainage. Suitable for even the most sensitive skin, this treatment restores the skin’s natural protection.

Almond-Apple Velvety Skin 1hr15

This dual action facial treatment is ideal for women wishing to tighten their pores and protect their complexion from the first visible signs of aging. It features a unique and patented combination of active ingredients produced in Provence: almond proteins, apple extracts and organic apple vinegar protect the skin’s hydrophilic film and tighten pores. Firmer and more radiant, the skin is soft and velvet to the touch.

Female Gold with Shea 1hr15

This facial treatment is designed for those suffering from dehydrated or naturally dry skin. Shea butter has been used for centuries in its native Africa as a natural moisturizer to repair and restore balance to dry skin. Once replenished, skin will feel comfortably soft.

Red Rice Mediterranean Pureness 1h15

This innovative treatment is based on locally harvested red rice from the unspoiled and protected lands of Camargue situated in southern Provence. Newly patented for its purifying properties, it is naturally rich in zinc and recognized for its capacity to regulate sebum production. It is used in rice powder form for its mattifying effect. Red rice extracts and formulae act to further heighten benefits when combined with a Signature draining massage to encourage the elimination of toxins and reveal a deeply purified complexion.

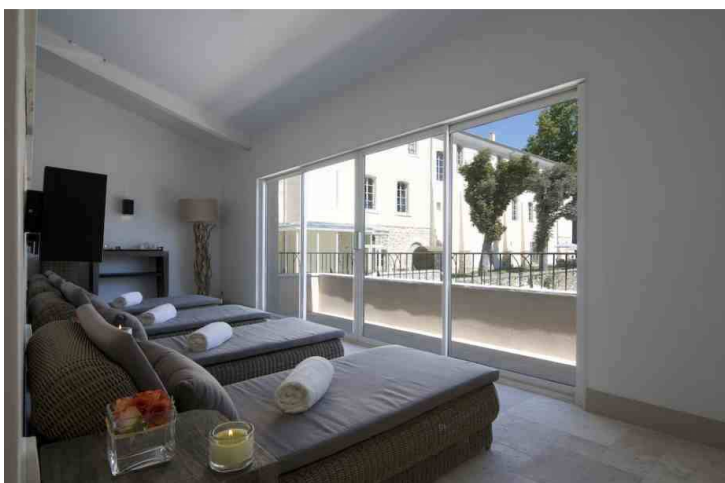
Cade 'For Men' 1hr15

This treatment has been especially designed to meet the specific needs of men's skin: a subtle blend of Cade and sandalwood, immortelle and rosemary essential oils, naturally repair, protect and purify the skin to regulate sebum production. Combined with our Signature drainage treatment, it will stimulate circulation leaving skin feeling invigorated.

BODY CARE

Intense pleasure of Provence

A true journey of the senses in the spirit of Provence, its scents and marvellous plants, massages to relax and revitalise combined with authentic sculpting treatments.



Scrubs and wraps 0hr30

The delicious textures of these exfoliation treatments eliminate dead cells, leaving skin perfectly prepared for treatment.

Revitalizing Aromachologie Massage 1hr00

The Japanese Shiatsu technique is combined with Swedish effleurage strokes and the properties of mint, pine and rosemary essential oils. This massage stimulates the acupuncture meridians and releases

energy from all parts of the body. Feelings of fatigue or weakness simply disappear!

Relaxing Aromachologie Massage 1hr00 4-hand massage* 0hr30

Swedish effleurage strokes, Chinese acupuncture and Balinese massage techniques stimulate circulation and ease tension. Aromachologie essential oils – lavender, tea tree and geranium – ensure complete relaxation. The body and mind feel truly calm; sleep will come more easily.

Stones and Provence 1hr30

Full face and body treatment with warm and cool stones to introduce you to new sensations. To begin, a revitalizing facial lifting and firming treatment, followed by a relaxing massage combined with the penetrating heat from amethyst, natural rock crystals and yellow quartz stones to quickly dispel tension. Feel your muscles relax as your body's energy is restored and your mind becomes calm.

Great Ayurvedic Ritual

1h00

A body massage inspired by Indian traditions to restore harmony and re-align energy flows. At the same time, a combination of invigorating yet relaxing techniques will help balance and calm the mind.

Almond Delightful Shape 1hr00

A contouring massage which combines lymphatic drainage and precise techniques to stimulate circulation and help rid the body of toxins. L'Occitane Almond Supple Skin Oil acts on skin elasticity. After the massage, skin is perfectly prepared to feel the beneficial effects of L'Occitane's Almond Delightful Shape for a smooth firm finish.

“Couvent des Minimes Spa Signature” Hot & Cold Citrus Verbena 1hr15

Invigorating and refreshing, to revitalize the body and mind. After a “Welcome Ritual” footbath, treatment begins with an initial hot body scrub followed by a refreshing shower. A deep body massage targeting areas of tension and muscle strain brings a feeling of total relaxation. Once you are fully relaxed, you will appreciate the application of cold compresses scented with essential oils, followed by the moisturising Sorbet Body Cream and Eau de Toilette Body Splash.

Mediterranean Poetry Rituals



The magic of a Siesté Bath 1h30

In the polysensual Siesté area, you will float in the perfumed bath of your choice. Your mind will sail on the music and scented mists, shrouded in the colours specially chosen for you

Pure Pleasure Head to Toe 1hr30

An unexpected blend of treatment and pleasure: your multisensory experience in the Siesté is followed by a hair care treatment from our “Root to tip” hair care range combined with a

deeply relaxing scalp massage. After a facial exfoliation, a moisturizing mask is applied and the treatment ends with a full foot and leg massage.

Sensorial Euphoria 1hr30

Your sensory journey begins with a Siesté, an invitation to indulgence, and is followed by a relaxing massage. Feel the tension lift and your mind grow calm.

Great Mediterranean Hamman Ritual 1hr30

A great classic re-interpreted especially for Le Couvent des Minimes: hammam, traditional black soap exfoliation with added honey-based skin polish, then a Rassoul wrap and Shea butter face mask. A relaxing aromatic massage brings the ritual to an end.

Rainfall Scented Delights

Rain Shower Massage 0h30

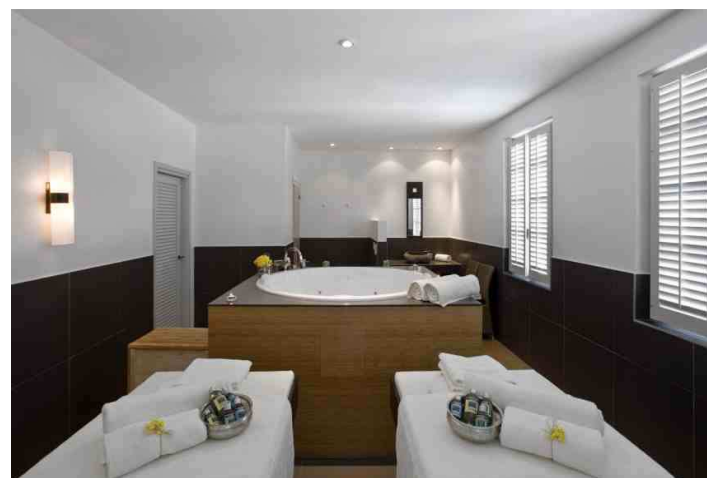
Indulge in the surprising experience of a relaxing massage with scented oils under the fine warm mist of a cascade shower.

Exquisite Rain Shower Experience 1h00

Experience pure pleasure and beauty as your body is exfoliated under a soft rainfall shower. Calm and at peace, you can then enjoy a relaxing massage. The therapist's hands become one with the warm water to offer you the most delicious of sensations.

Journey for Two

These rituals are an invitation to discovery and sharing (couple, family or friends). A spacious treatment room similar to a hotel suite is set aside just for you, complete with deep tub and two massage tables to enjoy your body treatments.



Duet in Provence 1hr30

The soft sensuality of a moisturizing, relaxing and delicately scented bath is followed by a calming massage to leave you feeling deeply relaxed.

Starry Night 2hr00

A delicate Shea bath followed by a moisturizing body scrub and relaxing body massage.

COMPLEMENTARY TREATMENTS

Grand rituals "Ultimate sensations"



Tailor-made facial treatment

A perfect blend of treatments to experience a moment of pure beauty and well-being. We strongly recommend the relaxation session to help you fully enjoy your ritual.

Time for Intense d'Oc 2hr00

Body Scrub Moisturizing Wrap Relaxing Aromachologie Massage

Exceptional Moments in Provence 2hr30

Body scrub. Relaxing Aromachologie treatment

Relaxation Experience

Help yourself prepare for treatment with this moment of intense pleasure for a deeply relaxing and revitalising experience: indoor chromotherapy pool with relaxation beds and rest area, natural hot and cold drinks, laconium (gentle dry sauna at 55°), caldarium (air at 45° humidity with aromatic essence steam), men's and women's saunas and rest area. The price is 25 per person and per session. "The Relaxation Experience" is free with every therapy booked on a basis of 100 .

All treatments are charged according to the following schedule:

0hr30	60
1h00	100
1h15	125
1h30	150
2h00	190
2h30	245
3h00	280

*Four-hand massages are charged at 100 for 30 minutes.

** Duet treatments are charged per person.

The experience you will enjoy is the result of many years of research on well-being in Provence, combined with reference treatment techniques and rituals from Asia and Europe, developed and assembled by L'Occitane and Le Couvent des Minimes for your ultimate pleasure. Quality of products and respect for age-old traditions ensure superb results in a unique setting in the heart of Provence.

The beauty recipes of the Couvent des Minimes



Continuing the long tradition of plant-based therapy and well-being which is part of the Convent's history, the recipes of the range of beauty products « Couvent des Minimes » are elaborated following a centuries-old know-how, using around fifty natural ingredients selected for their beneficial properties.

The residents of the Couvent des Minimes had more than 70 hives from which they harvested honey for food and beeswax to make candles. The nourishing recipes of the Couvent des Minimes range associate honey known for its fortifying properties, shea butter and a selection of plants with complementary and beneficial properties to soften and protect.

During the hot Provençal summers, an age-old custom has it that women pick verbena leaves and rinse them with water before rubbing their bodies with them to restore energy. Inspired by this tradition, the energizing recipes associate revitalising verbena and toning lemon.

Lastly, in the great tradition of the Couvent des Minimes of Mane, soothing beauty recipes associate essential oil of fine lavender and moisturizing extract of white acacia. A selection of plants with complementary and beneficial properties is added to each of these recipes.

Beauty recipes in your room

Sustaining the tradition of a love of plants, the hotel offers a selection of « Couvent des Minimes » products in the rooms. On the menu: pure honey and shea vegetable soap, energising verbena and lemon shower gel, soothing body milk with extracts of lavender and acacia, a gentle healthy shampoo, and the « Gardener's Balm » for hands with shea and seven magic plants (mimosa, verbena, chamomile, mallow, calendula, lemon balm, rosemary).

The Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa boutique

Inside the cloister, fitted as a Medieval pharmacy, the « Couvent des Minimes » shop offers the whole range of beauty recipes of the brand and L'Occitane, and also many exclusive products, created for the hotel, to tempt the Convent's guests: olive oil, Minimes honey, organic jams from the orchards of the Convent, and Provençal herbariums, or old postcards.

Escapade into the land of Giono



Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa offers a complete range of recreation and activities, both in the hotel and around. In addition to the Couvent des Minimes Spa by L'Occitane, the hotel has a heated outdoor swimming pool and a tennis court lit up by night.

For those who are keen to swing a club, the « Golf du Luberon », an 18-hole course designed in a natural park in the colours of Provence and the Digne La Lavande course will provide everything they need.

For the lovers of Provence, Mane and the surrounding area are a real gold-mine.

« Que Mane soit et demeure » (May Mane be and remain) From its rich medieval past, Mane has retained the old town with its steep narrow streets, its citadel encircled by 3500 metres of ramparts, its XVIth century church with its Florentine doorway and altar in polychromatic marble. Mane also has two of the jewels of Haute-Provence: the priory of Salagon, a group of XIIth and XVIIth century buildings and the Château de Sauvan, which rightly bears its nickname of 'little Trianon in Provence ». This magnificent palace was built for François de Forbin Janson in XVIIIth century. Its carefully restored gardens make a pleasant walk.

Of course, Manosque cannot be ignored. What a delight to walk in the footsteps of Jean Giono, a child of the region, who devoted all of his work to Provence. He wrote « the real treasure of Manosque is its beauty ». As you walk through the town, you discover a thousand-year old town with a rich past, where each era has left its mark and its style. A visit to the Musée de l'Occitane will initiate you to the wealth and composition of the brand's products.

Quite near by, the very lovely village of Forcalquier. Don't miss the Monday morning market which spreads its smells and colours right through the town and is the weekly meeting place for producers, artisans and locals... atmosphere guaranteed! Visit the charming old town with its narrow streets, its small shady squares and its beautiful old XIIIth and XVth century houses. For many years, a number of writers, painters, sculptors and artists have come to live in Forcalquier, charmed by the beauty of the site and the warm welcome from the locals.

In Graveson en Provence, a journey into the land of smells awaits you. The Musée des arômes et du parfum will help you to discover the way in which perfumes are created, and you can visit the experimental garden of aromatic plants.

Seminars in the perfumes of Provence



Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa welcomes top of the range seminars and incentives.

For seminars, the establishment has:

A wood-panelled « Boardroom » equipped with all the latest technology. This room can hold up to 12 persons.

An adjoining room with a fireplace and so far designed for meetings, a moment of relaxation or a private meal.

A 30-person meeting room.

Lastly, the chapel of the convent which can hold up to 150 persons for cocktails, exhibitions, dinners, music festivals.

Vincenzo Iaconis, New Manager at the Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa



Vincenzo Iaconis, the new General Manager at the Relais & Château Le Couvent des Minimes Hotel & Spa in Mane in Pro vence, is a luxury hotel and gastronomy specialist. After studying to be a land surveyor, nothing seemed to indicate that Vincenzo Iaconis (aged 49) was headed for a career in the hotel business. Except, of course, for his passion for gastronomy.

After having started out in his native land, Italy, in 1984 he left for the United States, working as a reception manager at the Marriott Hotel in Bethesda in Maryland, and then as a restaurant manager in Georgetown. In 1988, he moved to Paris, where he started a pizza business before taking over at “Bice”, an Italian restaurant in the 8th arrondissement. In 1996, he joined Pierre Gagnaire (three Michelin stars) as Hotel Manager.

From 1997 on he managed the restaurants at two luxury hotels near to the Champs-Élysées, Hotel Balzac and Hotel de Vigny. In this position he was responsible for the “Le Salon Bar” traditional restaurant at Hotel Balzac, the “El Nacional” private club with the chef Gérard Basire, and the “Baretto” Art Deco restaurant in the Hotel de Vigny.

Philippe Guerin Fragrantly Mediterranean food



After having trained with great chefs such as Alain Chapel in Mionnay, Jean Bardet in Tours, and a first incursion into the South, in the « Jardin des Sens » in Montpellier, with Jacques and Laurent Pourcel, in 1995, Philippe Guérin met 1995 Alain Llorca. Llorca gave him the position of sous-chef in the restaurant « Les Peintres » in Cagnes-sur-Mer, before welcoming him as his assistant at « Chantecler », the Négresco Hotel's restaurant. This meeting was to confirm his passion for a southern cuisine with Italian inspiration. In 2001, he continued his career in the south and ensured the management of the kitchens of the Château du Domaine Saint Martin in Vence, a superb Relais & Châteaux.

Philippe Guérin, the 38-year old chef from Touraine has been an adoptive Mediterranean for some time. Since May 2008, he has been managing «Le Cloître » the restaurant of Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes Hôtel & Spa, a sublime venue in Giono's Provence and a real haven of peace in centuries-old olive groves.

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Between tradition and modernity, Philippe Guérin's cuisine is both honest and delicate. Versed in light and refined Mediterranean cuisine with the accents of Italy, Philippe Guérin dexterously wields the scents of herbs and inventive marriages of vegetables and spices, concocted in the respect of his motto: « flavours must enrich without obliterating each other ».

Information

Relais & Châteaux Le Couvent des Minimes

Accommodations

46 bedrooms, including 6 Suites

Satellite TV, DVD player, stereo in all the rooms, complimentary Wi-Fi Internet access throughout the hotel.

Restaurant and Bars

- Restaurant Gastronomique « Le Cloître » - Summer restaurant « Bancaou »
- Bar Lounge « Le Pesquier » - Musical bar « Le Caveau des Minimes »
- Room Service

Recreation

- Heated outdoor swimming pool - A tennis court
- A library - Golf course nearby
- A Park and aromatic gardens to explore

Business Area

- 3 private rooms for 2 to 50 persons, including one 12-person « Boardroom »
- The 250 sq. m. Church (150 persons) which can be used for private events, exhibitions, cocktails, galas

Le Couvent des Minimes Spa by L'Occitane (7500 square feet)

- 5 individual therapy rooms - One double room
- A lacunium - Two saunas
- A caldarium
- An indoor chro motherapy pool
- A state of the art fitness centre equipped with Techo gym

Access:

TGV station (50 min) : TGV Aix en Provence - Motorway : A51 – Aix en Provence/Gap : exit 19 La Brillane (take road for Forcalquier, Volx, St Maime and Mane).

Airport: Marseille - (1 hour)

Transfer between Aix en Provence and the hotel on request

Information and booking

Tel: +33 (0) 4.92.74.77.77

Fax : +33 (0)4.92.74.77.78

reservations@couventdesminimes-hotelspa.com

Address:

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www.couventdesminimes-hotelspa.com