One of the strongest motivations to travel is the deep yearning we have to connect with the past. Some may explain this by an awareness of past lives, others may simply enjoy the thrill of entering an ancient building or standing in a timeless landscape where their imaginations ignite and conjure the past. If this is the experience you are seeking, there could be no better place to spend a week than in the mysterious and spellbinding Ariège. Set in the south-west of France, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, we have found the perfect setting for a week of time travel, the Château de Camon.

Charlemagne, on his return from harassing the Moors in Spain, put the village of Camon under the authority of Notre-Dame. By the middle of the 10th century a Benedictine Abbey was in place. Troubadours, crusaders, itinerant knights, Spanish princesses and persecuted Cathars passed through the region. The Abbey of Camon was an important sanctuary along the way and, by the 16th century, a fortified manor (château) had been built to secure the Abbey. The Château has now been offering comfort and tranquility to travelers for five hundred years! Vaulted ceilings, four-poster beds, beautiful fabrics and all the amenities of 21st-century living make the château both spine-tinglingly authentic and sumptuously cozy.

With the Château de Camon as our base for seven nights, each day we will set off to explore the antiquities of the Aude and Ariège regions. From the ruins of Cathar castles to the medieval grandeur of Carcassonne, it will be impossible to head home without feeling touched by the shadows of the past!

The cost of this itinerary, per person, double occupancy, is:

**Land Only (no airfare included):** $3860

**Single supplement:** $880

Airfares are available from many US cities. Please call for details.

**The following services are included:**

**Hotels:** 7 nights’ accommodation at the Château de Camon with all taxes and service charges included

**Coaching:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary

**Meals:** Breakfast daily, 1 lunch and 5 dinners

**Guides:** Discover Europe tour guide throughout

**Expenses:** Porterage of one large suitcase per person

**Entrances:** Entrance fees to all sites as detailed in the itinerary

**Lectures:** Talks by Smith faculty member (to be confirmed)

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour. Insurance information will be mailed to each registrant on receipt of deposit.
Friday, October 12th - Departure from your US gateway city. **Overnight: Plane**

Saturday, October 13th - Your arrival in Toulouse will be met by your Discover Europe representative for the short drive to the Château. The rest of the day is free to unpack, relax and begin exploring the neighborhood. This evening, the group will gather on the terrace for drinks before a welcome dinner party. (D) **Overnight: Camon**

Sunday, October 14th - This morning, those that are still feeling the effects of the long flights can relax at the Château or take a stroll around the village. The more adventurous can opt to get a serious dose of time travel! A half-mile walk along an uneven subterranean riverbed will take you back to the Magdalenian period (circa 11,000 BC) and to the vast chamber of the Grotte de Niaux. Leaping from the walls of the cave are the most beautiful images of horses, ibex, stags and bison, some still as fresh as the day they were painted. These are among the best prehistoric paintings you will see anywhere in Europe. Meeting back in Camon at lunch time, we set off as a group for an afternoon excursion to the nearby town of Foix. We dine at the Château again this evening. (B, D) **Overnight: Camon**

Monday, October 15th - Enjoy a leisurely breakfast on the terrace overlooking the lovely gardens which are set against the distant Pyrenean peaks. The day continues with a three-mile journey to Mirepoix on market day. There will be time to explore one of France’s most exquisite medieval squares, and to enjoy a coffee at one of the many cafés. Weather permitting, we will have a picnic lunch at the nearby village of Roquefixade where we will take a walk to the medieval castle before heading to Montségur. The ruined castle, set high on a rocky crag, was the final refuge of the persecuted Cathars. In 1244, the Catholic Church carried out one of its worst ever atrocities; 225 Cathars, who refused to recant, were burnt on a communal pyre. There will be time to make the half-hour ascent to the castle for those who enjoy a hike. Alternatively, enjoy the wonderful views and reflect on the horrors of the past! Before returning to the Château, we will stop at the village museum. We return to the Château with time to relax by the pool, or enjoy a cocktail on the terrace, before we head to a local restaurant for dinner. (B, D) **Overnight: Camon**

Tuesday, October 16th - Weather permitting, we'll head up into the high Pyrenees just across the border into Spain. First we’ll visit the charming town of Camprodon with its fortified bridge and romantic town square and then on to the tiny mountain village of Queralbs. Here, we will have lunch in a local inn and visit the church with its 11th-century fresco of Christ in Judgement. This afternoon we wend our way back down, through Ax-les-Thermes to Camon. Tonight, we dine together at the Château. (B, D) **Overnight: Camon**

Wednesday, October 17th - This morning we will cut across the heavenly Ariège countryside to the magical Romanesque Abbey of St. Hillaire. Then on to Limoux, famed for its Blanquette - a sparkling wine. There will be free time for shopping in La Place de la République in the beautiful heart of the old town before continuing to the fabulous Gayda vineyard where we will be welcomed for a gourmet lunch by Tim Ford, the head vintner (if available). After a leisurely lunch, we will tour the vineyard and estate, ending with a tasting of their excellent produce in the Vinecole (literally, wine school). Returning to Camon in mid-afternoon, your day is free - you can choose to eat at the hotel again or venture out to a local restaurant in nearby Mirepoix. (B, L) **Overnight: Camon**

Thursday, October 18th - If you had to choose one medieval fortress town to visit, Carcassonne would be it. Restored to perfection, you only need imagine fellow travelers dressed in sackcloth, doublet and hose, and you're back in the medieval world! We will visit the beautiful St. Nazaire church with some of the loveliest stained glass in France. Enjoy time to tour the inner fortress, Château Comtal, and wander the narrow alleyways. After time for lunch, we’ll return to Camon for a free evening to explore the village. (B) **Overnight: Camon**
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19" - This morning we’ll head to the mountain-top village of Rennes-le-Château. A visit to the parish church will either spark or rejuvenate your interest in Dan Brown’s mysteries. The church is full of symbols and secret codes which may indicate that Abbé Saunière, the priest from 1885 to 1910, had discovered the lost treasure of Solomon, brought to the region by the Visigoths in the 5th century. We’ll have time for lunch before a beautiful drive takes us back to the Château, stopping in Puivert on the way. Relatively intact for a Cathar castle, Puivert is in a wonderful position overlooking the surrounding countryside. We’ll also visit the Museum of Quercorb (the local name for the surrounding area) in the village. Tonight, we celebrate with a final dinner at the Château, always beautifully presented by master chef Tom Sleigh.

**(B, D) OVERNIGHT: CAMON**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20" - Reluctantly we will bid farewell to the Château de Camon this morning and head back to Toulouse Airport for flights back to the US. (B)

* Please note that a faculty member is yet to be determined for this departure. Information will be provided upon final confirmation.

Key to included meals: **B** - breakfast, **L** - lunch, **D** - dinner

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### Registration Form & Terms and Conditions

**General Instructions:**
1. Please type or print.
2. Make checks payable to Discover Europe, Ltd.
3. Be sure to read the Terms & Conditions and the Refund Policy before signing.
4. Complete both sides of this form.
5. Detach the bottom section and mail it to Smith College with your deposit of $500 per person. Keep the top section for your records.

**Detailed Instructions:**

**Name(s)** - Please make sure that your name appears on this form exactly as it does on your passport. Include your “Known As” or preferred name, if applicable.

**Passport Details** - Having your passport details ahead of time enables Discover Europe to speed the check-in process at hotels and helps in the event of lost or stolen documents.

**Address** - If you have a second address, please let us have the details, including dates that you are there, on a separate sheet.

**Dietary Requirements** - Please list any special dietary requirements.

**Health Information** - A certain amount of walking is involved in this trip. Check the itinerary with your physician to ensure a safe and comfortable journey. Travelers requiring special assistance must be accompanied by a companion.

**Emergency Contact** - This information is essential.

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### Passenger Details: Château de Camon (1012/SCC)

**Passport Name:**

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**Known As:** 1. 2.

1. **Passport Number**

2. **Passport Number**

**Address:**

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**E-mail:**

**Prefered Telephone:**

**Secondary Telephone:**

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### Special Dietary Requirements:

**Health Information:**

**Other Comments or Notes:**

**Year of Graduation from Smith:**

### Trip Details

**Departure Date:**

**Return Date:**

**Departure Airport or City:**

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### Please return this form to:

Smith Travel
Office of Alumnae Relations, 33 Elm St.
Northampton, MA 01063 or fax to: (413) 585-2015
**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

1. Completed both sides of this form.
2. Space on this journey is limited and registrations are accepted strictly on a first come, first served basis.
3. Registration and payment imply acceptance of the terms and conditions described herein. This information, as well as your itinerary description regarding dates, inclusions and prices, form the basis of your individual contract with Discover Europe, Ltd.
4. Registration and payment waive and release Discover Europe, Ltd., and Smith College, their affiliates, directors, officers, employees, including any person or entity employed or utilized by them, from all claims arising from any injury, loss, damage, accident, delay or expense resulting from events beyond their control, including, without limitation: natural disasters, war, strikes, incidents of politically-motivated violence, sickness or quarantine, government restrictions or regulations, and in the absence of its own gross negligence, arising from the use of any vehicle or from any act of omission by any bus or car rental agency, airline, taxi or tour service, hotel, restaurant, or other firm, agency, company or individual.
5. Discover Europe, Ltd. reserves the right to substitute hotels, airlines, activities or excursions in response to changes in availability, local events or weather conditions, provided such substitutions do not adversely affect the overall quality of the tour. Such substitutions do not constitute grounds for withdrawal with full refund.
6. Conduct During the Tour: You are also responsible for respecting the authority and following the directions of the tour guide and the laws of the countries in your itinerary. We may exclude you from participating in all or any part of the tour if, in our sole discretion, your condition or behavior renders you unfit for the tour or unfit for continuation once the tour has begun. Unfitness may include, without limitation, any behavior that, regardless of its cause, is inappropriate or offensive or interferes with the delivery of tour services, or may constitute a hazard or embarrassment. In such case, our liability shall be strictly limited to refund of the recoverable cost of any unused portion of the tour. Should you decide not to participate in certain parts of the tour or use certain goods included in the tour, no refunds will be made for those unused parts of the tour or goods.

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

1. A deposit of $500 must accompany this completed form if it has not already been paid.
2. The remaining balance will be billed and payable 90 days prior to trip departure.

**TOUR COST ADJUSTMENTS**

Discover Europe makes every effort to guarantee that the published cost of your chosen tour will not change. However we do reserve the right to make adjustments in the following circumstances:

1. Exchange rates. Should the value of the dollar fall against the currency of the countries visited on your tour by more than 10% in the 6 months prior to trip departure.
2. Group size. This tour has been based on a group size of 15-20 participants. Should we end up with less than 15 people, Discover Europe will work with the Smith College to determine a course of action which will involve either paying a surcharge to keep the tour as is, or making adjustments to the tour in order to keep the cost the same.
3. Airfares. If your tour includes airfare, Discover Europe reserves the right to pass along increases in costs (taxes, airport fees, fuel surcharges, etc.) that are charged by the airline involved.

**REFUND POLICY**

1. Participants who withdraw more than 90 days prior to tour departure will receive a refund of all monies received by Discover Europe, Ltd., less a $200 cancellation penalty.
2. Participants who withdraw fewer than 90 days prior to tour departure will receive a refund of all monies received by Discover Europe, Ltd., less the following cancellation penalties:
   - 90-61 days prior to departure: $1000 per person
   - 60 days - trip departure: no refund (unless traveler has insurance)
3. Please note that the final payment becomes due upon receipt of the final invoice and will remain payable, as per the above schedule, if your cancellation is received after this.
4. These cancellation penalty amounts do not include any airfares purchased on your behalf by Discover Europe Ltd. Note that the least expensive airfares are usually non-refundable. Refunds for airline tickets will be handled separately from the refund of the land tour package.
5. Comprehensive travel insurance is not included in your tour package. Smith College strongly advises that you purchase travel insurance for your upcoming trip. Information describing the services of a recommended travel insurance company will be made available upon registration by Smith College.
6. All cancellation requests must be received in writing.
7. There is no provision for refund for any activities missed due to the participant’s absence once the tour has started.

**INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS**

1. All inclusions on The Château de Camon are listed on the day-by-day itinerary and registration form.
2. The following are not included (unless specifically mentioned in the itinerary): travel insurance, transportation to and from the participant’s home to their chosen departure airport, passport fees, excess baggage charges, tips to couriers and tour bus drivers, items of a personal nature.

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name: __________________________
Address: _________________________
City: __________________ State: ______ Zip: ______
Home Telephone: (_____) ________

**FLIGHT INFORMATION**

(Please check one)

- Do you want Discover Europe to book your flights? □ Yes □ No
- Flight details (if self-arranged): __________________________

**ROOMING REQUIREMENTS**

(Please check one)

- □ I would like a single room (see itinerary for supplement)
- □ I will be sharing with: __________________________
- We would like a □ double □ twin-bedded room

**PERMISSIONS**

Discover Europe may include my e-mail address on the tour passenger list.
- □ Yes □ No

**SIGNATURES**

The undersigned has read the tour itinerary and recognizes and accepts any risk inherent therein. The undersigned also understands and hereby agrees for and on behalf of his/her dependents, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns to abide by the conditions set forth in the terms and conditions listed in this brochure and to release and hold harmless Smith College and any of their officers, trustees, agents, licensees, or representatives, from any and all liability for delays, injuries, or death or for the loss or damage to his/her property however occurring during any portion of, or in relation to, the tour.

SIGNATURE: ____________________ DATE: ____________