

# travel



**HAWAII'S BACKYARD**

There is plenty to do but many ways to relax at Kukui'ula on Kauai >> **D3**

SIGNS OF HAWAIIAN LIFE >> **D5**  
LAS VEGAS ADVISOR >> **D5**



## Cruising the Rhone River

Village-hopping through some of France's most charming regions can be enchanting

Photos and story by **Julie L. Kessler**  
Special to the Star-Advertiser

**F**RANCE has had a tragic run of late. It started with the murderous rampage at the Charlie Hebdo magazine in January 2015 and continued most recently with the Nice massacre along the busy Promenade des Anglais just six months ago, on Bastille Day.

While these events give travelers great pause, statistically speaking, my demise will more likely come from a lightning strike or L.A. road rage. Thus, my husband, Casey, joined me on a long-planned Viking River Cruise in September, commencing with a pre-cruise land excursion in Dijon, embarkation in Lyon for one week weaving through captivating coastal villages and wonderful wine regions, finally ending in Avignon and Marseille.

We made concessions to safety. We agreed we would take no trains or visit any outdoor restaurants. Those compromises ended our first morning when sunshine, cafe and people-watching beckoned.

**Delightful Dijon**

The historical capital of Burgundy and Gustav Eiffel's birthplace, Dijon is a mecca of Renaissance and medieval architecture, gastronomy and great wine.

Strolling Dijon's historic center is a visual feast. Its gargoyle-graced Notre Dame Cathedral and 15th-century, timber-framed homes and stone mansions reflect its medieval past. And one of France's oldest museums — opened in 1787 — the magnificent Beaux-Arts, is housed in the Ducal Palace and contains art stretching from Egyptian to the 20th century.

No trip to Dijon would be complete without tasting its choice condiment: mustard. Several specialty shops in the old city provide sampling with much the same reverence as wine, with bread and palate cleansers. Favorites were black truffle- and chardonnay-infused varieties.

A 45-minute drive through storybook villages of Volnay

Please see **CRUISE, D4**



At top left, Notre Dame de la Garde cathedral overlooks the Vieux (Old) Port of Marseille with its boat-lined quays. At top, the village of Viviers by night from atop the town walls with St. Vincent's bell tower in the background. Above, in the small village of Vienne, France, the Augustus and Livia Temple was dedicated to Rome and later converted into a church.

**IF YOU GO ...**

**Rhone River cruise**

>> **The best way:** Viking has several seven- to 15-day French River cruises commencing in Paris. Avignon, Lyon and Bordeaux scheduled for 2017. Rates start at \$1,849 per guest, depending on voyage and length; includes guided excursions, unlimited Wi-Fi, wine with meals and other benefits. Vikingrivercruises.com, 800-706-1483

>> **Where to stay:** Marseille, Hotel Sofitel Vieux Port, 36 Blvd. Charles Lyon, 13007. Contemporary hotel with sumptuous beds, wonderful port views and ideally located within walking distance to important sights. Mouthwatering seafood risotto and salad Nicoise are offered at its Le Carré Bistromanie. Rates start at \$205, including access to well-equipped gym, spa and pool. Sofitel.com, 800-221-4542

