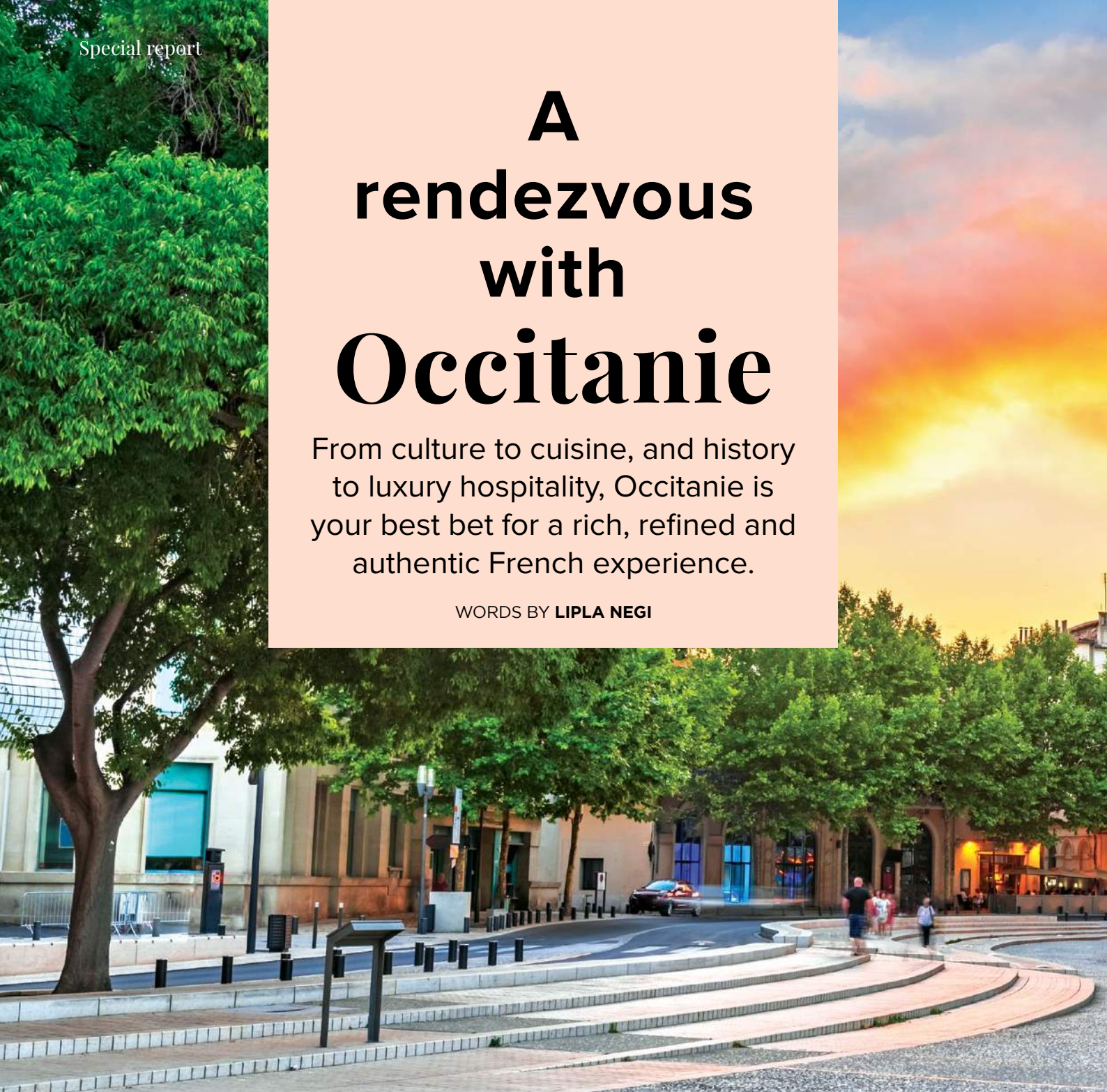


A rendezvous with Occitanie

From culture to cuisine, and history to luxury hospitality, Occitanie is your best bet for a rich, refined and authentic French experience.

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While Paris is getting all the limelight as the host city for Olympics 2024, there is a lot to explore for travellers beyond the capital city or French Riviera. With its diverse offerings, pristine natural beauty and resplendent chateaus and castles straight out of fairytales, Occitanie ticks all boxes for an immersive travel experience. It is France's second-biggest region with 220 kilometres of Mediterranean coastline, that appeals to all kinds of travellers —

history buff, nature lovers, adventure seekers, luxury connoisseurs or digital nomads. The region offers the best of hospitality with hotels offering premium luxury experience.

India is one of the key source markets for the region, and it is leaving no stone unturned to offer the best in hospitality to Indian tourists. "France is expecting a substantial growth in all Asian markets in 2024. In 2023, we saw substantial rise in all Asian markets, although the growth is yet to meet pre-COVID level. In India, we have seen a

strong demand from wedding and luxury segments. Indian travellers are showing keen interest in luxury experiences in Paris, experiential tours in South of France and Ski resorts in the Alps region," **Sophie Mandrillon**, Marketing Director, Atout France. With an array of winter sports resorts and wellness resorts, Occitanie ticks all boxes for a rejuvenating rendezvous.

Savouring La Ville Rose

Recently, Toulouse, the capital of France's southern Occitanie region



played host to the 17th Rendez-vous en France held on 25-26 March. Popularly known as La Ville Rose—The Pink City—a name given to the city for its eye pleasing terracotta architecture, it is also the centre of European aerospace industry. France's fourth largest city is home to many historic sites such as Capitole that houses the city hall and a theatre, the Jacobins convent, which is the birthplace of the Dominican order and the Basilica of Saint-Sernin, a UNESCO site listed as part of the Way of St. James pilgrimage route.



Luxe stays in Occitanie

Reviving the spirit of roaring twenties, the **Maison Albar Hotel - L'imperator** is an art deco jewel in Nimes.

A member of Relais & Chateaux, **Domaine de Verchant** in Montpellier sits in the middle of vineyards and offers luxurious stay.

Overlooking a vineyard, **Domaine de Privadiere**, Uzès serves a rejuvenating countryside experience with a spa & gourmet restaurant.

A former 17th-century mansion, **Hôtel Richer de Belleval** exhibits the spirit of heritage and artistic harmony.





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A prelude to the main trade event, the pre-show FAM trips were carefully curated by Atout France in collaboration with host region to spotlight its history, culture, and culinary traditions. From vineyards to medieval era chateaus and churches, one such FAM trips took us on an invigorating exploration of some of the most popular and culturally rich cities of the region – Nimes, Uzès, Montpellier, Carcassonne and of course, Toulouse.

Sparkling cities, enriched experiences

A common thread running across all these terrific cities is the architecture that stands symbolic of France’s rich past transcending decades. From luxury hotels right next to a medieval castle to chateaus and vineyards complementing as the backyard view for some of the world’s best resorts and spas, the hospitality firmly backed by magnificent architecture and spirit-renewing nature, Occitanie are incredibly indulgent. Whether it is luxury travellers or business groups, these hotels and resorts are equipped to cater to all kinds and sizes of travellers. In addition, the picturesque resorts serve as perfect setting for a dreamy intimate Indian wedding, delighting guests with gastronomy, wellness, and relaxation.

A place that looks as much in the past as it looks ahead, Occitanie region with all its culturally-enriched cities and towns is worth exploring for all types of travellers. From Pont du Gard in Nimes to La Cite, the best-preserved Medieval fortress of Carcassonne and the

Tourism in figures

The highest accommodation capacity in France

with

3.3 mn

beds



16.3 mn

hotel nights
(4th highest in France)



3rd region for overseas tourists



30 mn

visitors every year

1st France’s most popular thermal spa destination

around

1/3

of the national spa market





Basilica of Saint-Sernin in Toulouse (a masterpiece of Roman art), every turn on the streets of these invigorating cities is earmarked by historic sites. Also, quintessential to these city streets are coffee shops and Patisseries that serve the French magic in a cuppa.

Exclusive tours could also be curated for student groups, especially in Toulouse, which has

a significant student population. The tour operators dealing in study tours will find many state-of-the-art industry and other professional spaces led by budding entrepreneurs as well as multi-generational family businesses. La Maison de la Violette is a family business founded by H el ene Vi e offers products based on the famous Toulouse Violet—the city’s emblematic flower. Today, she

runs this business with her daughter Melanie. Similarly, AHPY Creations’ Bleu de Pastel, conserving the history of blue gold (Indigo), is run by the gifted Annette Hardouin and her husband is a lesson in art and craftsmanship. The region is strewn with a variety of local gems, offering unique, authentic and stimulating experiences that make Occitanie a must visit for every traveller. **HT**



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