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French Apéritif Tradition Celebrated During European Heritage Days

Events across France highlight the cultural significance of the apéritif, with tastings, workshops, and regional specialties drawing widespread participation.

Wednesday, September 17, 2025



The French tradition of the apéritif will take center stage during the upcoming European Heritage Days, celebrated from September 19 to 21 across France. The apéritif, a ritual that traces its roots to the Latin verb “aperire,” meaning “to open,” is intended to stimulate the appetite and bring people together before a meal. Over centuries, it has evolved into a cherished social custom, enjoyed by friends and families in every season.

A recent survey conducted by OpinionWay this summer found that eight out of ten French people consider the apéritif an integral part of their cultural heritage. The practice is so deeply woven into French life that UNESCO has recognized it as part of the world’s intangible cultural heritage. The survey also revealed that younger adults are especially attached to this tradition, with 88 percent of respondents aged 25 to 34 saying the apéritif is a key element of French heritage.

Regional pride plays a significant role in how the apéritif is enjoyed. Sixty percent of those surveyed said they prefer to serve drinks and snacks typical of their own region. The ritual of clinking glasses before taking a sip remains important for most, with 77 percent saying they never skip this gesture.

This year, the apéritif will be highlighted during the Heritage Days through a special event called “L’Apéritif du Patrimoine.” Organized by the Maison des Vins & Spiritueux, the event will feature tastings, masterclasses, workshops on traditional preparation methods, historical tours, concerts, and opportunities to meet local producers. More than 70 wine and spirits houses will open their doors to visitors, offering insights into their history, craftsmanship, and regional specialties.

The event aims to showcase not only the flavors but also the stories behind some of France’s most iconic beverages. Attendees will have a chance to learn about longstanding traditions and discover new trends in French aperitifs. Organizers hope that by bringing together producers and the public, they can foster appreciation for both local customs and national heritage.

Further details about participating venues and a full schedule of activities are available on the official website for L’Apéritif du Patrimoine. The celebration promises to offer both locals and tourists an immersive experience into one of France’s most beloved

rituals.