

Columbia Association/CAJA of Cergy-Pontoise
Cuisine and Culture Exchange
October 17-29, 2008

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the 2008 Culture and Cuisine Exchange with Cergy-Pontoise, France. Enclosed is the application form. Please read it carefully, fill out the entire form, and return it by August 29, 2008 to International Exchange Programs, Columbia Association, 10221 Wincopin Circle, Columbia, MD 21044.

We will be departing from Washington Dulles International Airport on Friday, October 17, 2008 and staying with host families in Columbia's French sister city, Cergy-Pontoise, which is about half an hour from Paris. During this time, participants will attend two cooking classes, a wine education and tasting session, a cheese education and tasting session, visit a traditional French market, dine together in restaurants and in smaller groups in families' homes, and see sights of interest in and around Cergy-Pontoise and Paris.

On Saturday, October 25, 2008, we will take the TGV (high speed train) to Toulon, in the south of France, where we will be met by a bus that will take us to the hotel where we will spend the second part of our trip. We will see part of the Mediterranean coast, tour Marseille, Aix-en-Provence, and two wineries, as well as dine together on the traditional cuisine of the Provence region. We will return to Paris by train on Wednesday, October 29, 2008 in time for an afternoon flight back to Washington.

The cost of the full program is **\$4,200** or \$3,900 if you opt out of participation in the cooking classes (based on double occupancy at the hotel in Provence). For single occupancy there is an additional \$200 fee. We will attempt to pair single travelers who request it together so that they can receive the double occupancy room rate.

This rate is only guaranteed for applications received prior to 5:00 p.m. August 29, 2008. Prices are subject to change based on airline fees after September 1, 2008. Residents of Columbia Association-assessed property will be given first priority for this exchange until August 22, 2008. Other Howard County residents are invited to apply and will be accepted on a space-available basis.

A partial program fee of \$3,000 must accompany this application and can be paid by check, money order, or credit card. The balance must be paid by September 15, 2008. The fee will be returned if you are not accepted; otherwise a portion may be refundable depending on the date of withdrawal. The Columbia Association encourages you to purchase travel insurance.

If you have questions about the exchange, please do not hesitate to call me at 410-715-3162 or email sistercities@columbiaassociation.com.

Sincerely,

Meredith L. Jaffe, Manager
International Exchange and Multicultural Programs

Tentative Itinerary

Friday, October 17th

Depart Columbia for Washington Dulles International Airport, overnight flight to Paris

Saturday, October 18th

Arrive in Paris, travel to Cergy-Pontoise to host families' homes, welcome reception

Sunday, October 19th

Free day with host family

Monday, October 20th – Friday, October 24th

- Two cooking classes of approximately three hours each (given in English) by a professor of French cuisine assisted by student chefs
- Wine education and tasting
- Cheese education and tasting
- Visit to traditional French market
- Restaurant meals
- Meals in groups at families' homes
- Meals with host families
- Visit to sites in Paris
- Visits to sites in the Cergy region (Le Vexin, regional brewery)

Saturday, October 25th

- TGV (high speed train) to Toulon
- Bus tour of Mediterranean coast
- Shopping
- Welcome reception

Sunday, October 26th

- Breakfast at hotel
- Tour of Marseille
- Bouillabaisse dinner

Monday, October 27th

- Breakfast at hotel
- Tour of Aix-en-Provence
- Seafood Medley Dinner

Tuesday, October 28th

- Breakfast at hotel
- Tours of two vineyards

Wednesday, October 29th

- Breakfast at hotel
- TGV to Paris
- Return flight from Paris to Washington Dulles

Program Application

Full Name (as it appears on passport) _____

Full Street Address (including zip code) _____

Day telephone _____

Home telephone _____

Cell or other telephone _____

Why do you want to participate in this exchange? _____

Please describe your skill level and experience with speaking the French language.

Please describe your experience with and knowledge of French culture.

Please tell us about your interest in cooking (background, specific types of cuisine, etc.).

Will you be traveling with a spouse, partner, or friend who must also be accepted in order for you to participate? _____ yes _____ no

Columbia Association International Exchange and Multicultural Programs
2008 Cuisine and Culture Exchange

If yes, please give their full name: _____

Please note: each person must complete a separate application, however they should be submitted together.

If no, but you would like to be housed with another specific applicant, please list that persons name _____

Some host families will host two participants, we will make every attempt to honor your request, but this cannot be guaranteed.

If you are not traveling with someone

_____ Pair me with another traveler of the same sex.

_____ I wish to have my own room for an additional cost of \$200.

All rooms at the hotel have toilets and sinks, and standard rooms have showers. There is an additional cost of \$75 per person for a room with a bathtub, and \$108 (in addition to the \$200) for a single occupancy room with a bathtub.

_____ I wish to have a bathtub instead of a shower for an additional cost of \$150/double or \$308/single.

The following questions will assist us in placing you with a host family.

Are you allergic or do you prefer not to stay in a home with domestic animals? If yes, please indicate which types of animals.

Do you have other allergies or sensitivities? If so, please indicate. _____

Hobbies and activities: _____

Is there anything else you would like to share with the International Exchange staff or with your host family? _____

In fall 2009, the Columbia Association International Exchange Program plans to host guests from Cergy-Pontoise and share American cuisine and culture with them. Would you be willing to host a guest at that time? _____ yes _____ no

Would you be willing to be involved in other ways, e.g. hosting a dinner for a small group at your home, or planning an outing with them? _____ yes _____ no

Program Agreement

I, _____, hereby agree with the Columbia Association, Inc. (the "Association") to the following by affixing my signature below on this date, _____, 2008.

In connection with my participation in the Sister Cities Cuisine and Culture Exchange (the "Program"), I understand and acknowledge the nature and extent of the activities that will be involved in the Program and assume the risks inherent in such activities on behalf of myself. I voluntarily waive all claims, costs, liabilities, expenses (including attorneys' fees), and judgments against the Association, its directors, officers, employees, servants, subcontractors, and agents, and hereby release, excuse, and discharge the Association, its directors, officers, employees, servants, subcontractors, and agents from all claims, costs, liabilities, expenses (including attorneys' fees), and judgments which may arise out of my participation in the Program and all aspects attendant thereto. The undersigned further agrees to indemnify and hold the Association, its directors, officers, employees, servants, subcontractors, and agents harmless from any and all claims, damages, actions, liabilities, expenses (including attorneys' fees), and judgments which may arise out of my participation in the Program. I have adequate medical, accident, dismemberment, and repatriation insurance coverage. I have verified this insurance coverage with my insurance agent and have confirmed valid overseas coverage. I understand that the Association provides no medical, accident, dismemberment, or repatriation insurance. Upon my acceptance into the program, I will complete the medical history and emergency form.

I understand that application does not guarantee acceptance into the program and that this exchange may be canceled if the minimum number of participants is not reached.

I hereby declare that I have reviewed the program information and application materials, and that I am aware of and accept the program requirements for participation. I further declare that my application is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant's name _____

Applicant's signature _____ Date _____

If traveling with a spouse, partner, or friend, please fill out separate applications and mail together.

Program Fee and Payment Policy

- A partial program fee of \$3,000 is due when the completed application is submitted, and can be paid with a personal check, money order, or credit card. The balance must be paid by September 15, 2008.
- The fee of \$4,200 (\$3,900 for a non-cooking companion) is based on airline prices staying relatively constant. Late applicants will be charged a surcharge if the airfare is raised significantly.
- Any participant who chooses not to or is unable to travel may be eligible for a partial refund of the airfare as well as for expenses for meals and travel within the Paris region. A refund for the train to Provence and the Provence portion of the trip will only be available if another participant takes the place of the non-traveler.
- Program fees will be refunded if the minimum number of participants is not reached.

If you have questions, please call Meredith Jaffe at 410-715-3162.

I have read and accept the above policy.

Date _____ Signature _____

Printed name _____