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# SPRING EQUINOX - Edition#9

20<sup>th</sup> March 2023



## Spring

Frost-locked all the winter,  
Seeds, and roots, and stones of fruits,  
What shall make their sap ascend  
That they may put forth shoots?

Christina Rossetti

## Welcome to our March 2023 edition

We hope you've been keeping well and that the first quarter of 2023 has gone well for you. According to our calendar, spring begins today but gazing out of the window at the rain pouring from a steely grey sky, it still looks – and feels – like the middle of winter! When Wordsworth was confined to his couch and unable to wander lonely as a cloud, he was comforted by the image of his beloved daffodils, as they 'flash upon that inward eye': so why not take a leaf out of his book and, by reading the latest article in our Art and About series, let the sun-drenched scenes and azure sky of southern France flash upon your inward eye - what better way can there be to beat the winter blues!

## In Our Studio

...is where we hope to be, far more frequently, during the up and coming warmer months, so please bear with us, until once again the Muse settles upon us! In the meantime, you can rest assured that as a subscriber to our Newsletter,

you'll be the first to hear when we do have some brand new work to show, hopefully, towards the end of the year. Consequently, we won't be participating in this Year's **FarOpen Art Trail Exhibition**, which will run from Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July to Sun 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022 inclusive, when many of our fellow FarOpen members will be eagerly looking forward to welcoming all art-lovers to their studios. More details can be found on the FarOpen website at: [www.faropen.co.uk](http://www.faropen.co.uk)

...and also, don't forget that you can still visit **our own Art Website** at:

<http://www.kalitheafreeuk.com>

where not only can you see the full catalogue of all our art but also, you can directly purchase cards, prints, original works and enquire about bespoke commissions.

## Carmen's 'ARTSY' Crossword Solution

To those of you who gave our Christmas Crossword a go, we hope you found it enjoyable but if you got stuck on some of the

clues, you'll find the full solution at the end of this Newsletter.

## A Week in Provence, anybody?

As a regular art fan, you'll know that Carmen and I have often alluded to our various art-themed visits to France; and so, just in case you might like to do something similar sometime, we thought that with this brief travelog of ours (from 2018) we'd give you some idea of how an art-themed break like this might fit together.

We've both contributed our best tips on some of the great things there are to see, the accommodation we found and how we travelled around this fascinating foreign land. There were two art venue towns we wanted to visit: **Aix-en-Provence and Arles**, each with a strong association with impressionists and both being attractive places in their own right.

### Aix-en-Provence: The city

The **main art interest** is a visit to the home and studio of Paul Cezanne and access to his viewpoint of the distant Mont St Victoire: the subject of many of his landscapes.



Cezanne's view of Mont St Victoire near the studio

Cezanne's studio is just a thirty-minute walk from the town centre. When you head back into town, you'll find more of Cezanne's works in the Musée Granet, which also houses many other master-pieces, from the Renaissance, right through to the present day. In addition, the town has a delightful, centrally-located pedestrianised precinct which, especially on Sundays, has market stalls, street performers and places to eat and drink. Ask for a street plan at your hotel reception.



Part of Cezanne's studio

### Aix-en-Provence: Hotel

We stayed at and can recommend 'Le Cezanne' (4-star standard), situated some 200 metres from Aix-en-Provence railway station and very close to the town centre. It has character, comfortable rooms, a good breakfast restaurant and a large outdoor 'honesty' bar area for daytime and late drinks and is suitable for those who may wish to smoke.

### Arles: The town

The **main art interest** is the town's connexion with Vincent van Gogh: it has the 'Fondation Vincent van Gogh' gallery, where you will see many of his works;



One of many paintings by Van Gogh on display

Also, 'L'Espace van Gogh' – the hospital where he was admitted:



Hospital grounds: 'L'Espace van Gogh'



and 'Café van Gogh' (formerly: Café Terrace) and the subject of his famous painting 'Café Terrace on the Place du Forum, Arles at Night') where you can eat well (Carmen loved their seafood and chicken paella!) and soak up some of the local 'old town' atmosphere and *vin rouge*.

Arles is situated on the River Rhone and offers a wealth of historic buildings, including a well-preserved Roman arena, ruined Roman temples and many other ancient buildings.



Arles: Roman arena

The town is wonderfully compact with a fascinating day and night life, with street markets, bars and cafés in a labyrinth of narrow, winding medieval streets. During September (usually, but please check) every year, there is the famous 'Arles Festival du Cheval' held in the town, which is a quite remarkable spectacle and one not to be missed.

*P.S. try to go to the Arles festival on the Friday or Saturday when it's in full swing; Sunday can be a disappointment.*

## Arles: Hotel

We stayed at, and can recommend 'Hotel Le Rodin' (which has a delightful outdoor swimming pool, within a tranquil garden area) yet it is only a twenty-minute walk from the town centre, along 'Avenue de Stalingrad' – the road was named in commemoration of the defeat of the German Sixth Army's siege of Stalingrad in WWII: a turning-point in the attempted Nazi invasion of Russia.



Hotel Le Rodin's garden & pool

The Rodin hotel is a twenty minute walk - or five-minute taxi ride - from Arles railway station.

## Our stepping-off point: Marseille

**W**e chose to fly to Marseille International Airport. Marseille is between Aix and Arles on the SNCF network and is a resort with beaches so that, as a stepping-off point for trips to art venues in either Aix or Arles, you have access to the sea.

Transfer from the airport to Marseille city centre is by bus (about 6 Euros one way) every 15 minutes or a taxi.

The bus will cost about 10 euros and drop you at Marseille's mainline rail terminus station 'Saint-Charles'.

Taxis will be around 50-60 euros one way but can drop you at your hotel.

*Beware fake taxi drivers who prey on tourists and are unlicensed and uninsured. Make sure your taxi has a registration plate at the rear.*

## Marseille: The city

Marseille is a city filled with history and colourful culture, home to beautiful museums, art galleries and restaurants near the port.



Marseille port & basilica

Notre Dame de la Garde Basilica and the Cathédrale La Major are two stunning churches worth visiting. A popular and convenient area to stay is near the Prado Beach.

## Marseille: Hotel

We stayed at the 'Aparthotel Adagio' which has its own swimming pool and sunbathing area. The hotel is convenient for the beach and sea-front restaurants; a good-sized supermarket; a pharmacy and buses, which connect with the city's underground network and ultimately, the 'Saint-Charles' main railway terminus. On the nearby coast road 'Promenade Georges Pompidou', you can take buses to the port and city centre.

There is a good selection of medium priced restaurants along the waterfront within easy staggering distance of the Adagio hotel.

## Travelling around:

So once there, unless you choose to hire a car to travel around the south coast, here's how the trains fit into the trip.

Carmen is writing an article for our next quarterly issue, in which she describes our more comprehensive self-drive art-trail-themed holiday (way back in 2015) so watch out for that one!

Anyway, I'm glad to be able to tell you that the French rail system (SNCF) leaves our own uniquely dilapidated British outfit firmly in the shade! Where comfort, price, frequency, reliability and speed are concerned, they really do take the cake... so be of good heart!

The map shows you where Arles, Marseille and Aix-en-Provence are located with respect to one another.

Nearly all French hotels of any size have a website or listing and you can book your accommodation to suit.

We found that hotel receptionists are usually very helpful and can hand you a local street map and advice on local venues and where to catch buses and trains etc.



Rail connexions

Of course you'll need to look up the latest information on all these places and get a firm booking for everything, but this is just a suggestion; an itinerary that worked pretty well for us. We wish you happy travelling!

## Carmen's 'ARTSY' Crossword: The Solution.



Well, that's it for this quarter. We hope you enjoyed reading about or trip. More on France *by car* next time.

In the meantime... have a great summer!