

MARKET TO MARKET IN PROVENCE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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How better to enjoy the legendary markets of Provence than from your own “week in Provence” apartment? Doorways, Ltd., a firm in Bryn Mawr, PA, can fix you up with an apartment in a small town, 15 minutes south of Avignon. Here, you unpack once, then armed with the information booklets that come with your rental, you are ready for adventure.

Most villages have a specific day of the week for *le marché*, and the folks at Doorways provide you with a list of market days for the villages surrounding your own “home-away-from-home”. Gathering the ingredients for your evening feast is like strolling through an art gallery rich in color and character. In medieval squares, the smells of baking bread, grilling chicken, roasting nuts are captured and captivating. Here you will find cavaillon melons, Roquefort cheese, goat cheeses, olive oils, hot baked bread, fresh fish, paté, vegetables, and even rabbits roasting on a spit. Collect everything to chop into your *ratatouille* or your *bouillabaisse* at home that evening. Or savor a spread already made for a picnic *en plein air*. Even the bumbling exchange of money becomes a person-to-person cultural exchange, and after the initial anxiety recedes, you’ll start to blend in and experience a relaxed sense of belonging unusual for a tourist.

Some special villages on Doorways’ list include the flower market in Aix-en-Provence, where you also may want to linger at one of the famous outdoor cafés lining the central boulevard, Cours Mirabeau, shaded by plane trees and refreshed by the splashing fountain. You may visit Cézanne’s modest studio or see Montagne Ste-Victoire, the mountain he loved to paint. If you fancy herbs and spices, visit St. Rémy’s Wednesday market. After the market, you may want to follow the Van Gogh trail or visit Les Baux, the citadel atop the bauxite mountains just to the south of St. Rémy. Not to be missed is the unusual North African market in the center of Beaucaire, a town also known as a port for Rhône cruise boats. The medieval village of Uzès blooms on Saturday with the colors of ripe vegetables, sun flowers, lavender and fresh fruit, a brilliant contrast with the ancient gray stone arcades. It will make the artist within you want to take up brush and palette. Stop on the way home for a kayak ride down the Gard or picnic at the monumental Roman aqueduct, le Pont du Gard.

(cont.)

L'Isle-sur-Sorgue is famous for its antique market on Sunday morning. Bonnieux offers an asparagus market every day in April and May. Carpentras is known for its big market on Fridays and for the truffle market in the Place Aristide Briand mornings from the end of November to the beginning of March. One village is renowned for the much sought-after Provençal pottery and *faience*. At the end of January, Orange has a wine fair. You'll find excellent regional wines like the dark red Côte du Rhône and the superb Châteauneuf du Pape. Grasse is the place for perfume; other villages specialize in honey, marmalade or carved wooden figures.

Flounced skirts, tablecloths and napkins printed in vivid blues, reds and yellows, will catch your eye. Bright colors are in keeping with the sunny landscape, the bright blue skies, and the fields of lavender and sunflowers. You can go to the source in Tarascon, by visiting the Souleiado headquarters to see the history of the Provençal printed fabric, sold in the US as Pierre Deux fabrics. Or, if you dare, visit the outlet for Les Olivades, the competitor, down the street.

A week for two in an apartment costs as little as \$285 per person this spring and fall at La Conviviale, a 16th century stone priory which has been tastefully converted into light and artistic apartments. The prices include linens and utilities, hair dryers, modern bathrooms and comfortable beds and well-equipped kitchens. La Conviviale is located in a small village where you can walk for your morning café au lait and croissant and daily bread. The walled grounds have a swimming pool and laundry room, which are shared.

Doorways offers full packages including their services, a rental car, flights and the apartment. Before you leave the US, you'll receive a welcome package with your documents, travel tips, a list of favorite local restaurants and market days, complete directions to your apartment, a map, the name and phone of an English-speaking contact, and suggestions of places to visit, that is when you can tear yourself away from the simple pleasures of daily village life, imbued with the essence of Provence. Call Doorways, 800-261-4460, for apartment descriptions and photos.