

Eau de Vie

a wine, spirits, and travel newsletter

Vol. 31 July 2021

RENTING A VILLA IN PROVENCE

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in an 18th century villa in Provence?

Imagine this: You wake as the light slowly rises to brighten the stone walls of your bedroom. The honey colored light is greeted by a soft morning breeze as it whisks the aromas of the courtyard in through the large shuttered windows you left open. You breathe deeply and savor the aromas of rosemary, cedar, lavender and crushed stone. You make your way to the window, your hands resting on the cool stone sill and peer down to see a table being set. Familiar smells waft into your room. Coffee, croissants, crusty loaves of bread, and fresh squeezed orange which stir your belly awake. Already your best friends are coming to the table, their steps crunching on the gravel as they approach. The staff silently and efficiently arrange the table outside for breakfast. The chef must have been up early to make the overfilled baskets of bread.

Your best friends sit next to each other while plates and cups are quickly placed for them. The coffee filling their cups convinces you to hurry down. No need to change. They are in their pajamas, they've got bed head. The sun is now above the hills, and the courtyard is filling with pastel sunlight. It's going to be

another glorious day in Provence.

As a travel agent I get multiple email solicitations each day offering all kinds of travel products. Recently, I received an email describing the renting out of entire castles, villas, chalets and châteaux in multiple locations through out Europe. Curious, I thought. What would it cost to...say... take a week in Provence....in an old villa.

[I found this particular offering.](#)

Click the link to see pictures for this vacation rental.

This villa will accommodate 16 guests, has a heated swimming pool, tennis and boules courts, barbecue area, gym, and comes with a butler, dedicated concierge, chefs for 3 meals per day, two waiters and daily housekeeping service.

The villa, an 18th century farmhouse, is situated on an oxbow in the middle of the Rhone River. If your budget allows, it can be rented for \$95,398 per week plus a €10,000 upfront payment for food. A 50% deposit is required.

Obviously, there are less expensive options, our boating trips are one. But here's how some people do it. Anyone care to rent a villa in Provence?

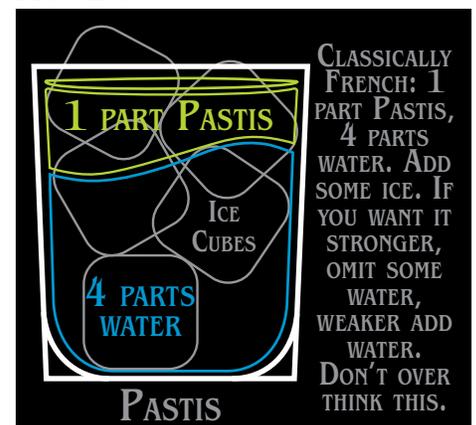
PASTIS DE MARSEILLE

Summer afternoons in Provence can be hot and the Provençal have a simple recipe for beating the heat: a cafe, some shade and a Pastis.

There are many types of Pastis but the most famous are Ricard and Pernod. They are anise based clear spirits. Both spirits change color when mixed with water. Ricard turns a pastel yellow and it is a maceration of herbs with anise and liquorice. Pernod turns a pastel green as it uses anise and a touch of wormwood in its recipe.

These two companies used to be competitors, each making their own spirits, but in 1975 they merged and formed one of the biggest beverage corporations in the world: Pernod Ricard.

If you find yourself sweltering away this summer maybe you should take a break, pour yourself a Pastis and sit in the shade like they do in Provence.



YOU CAN GO BUT CAN YOU COME HOME?



This picture is of President Biden arm in arm with Emmanuel Macron, the President of France, along with Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the EU, recently at the G7 meeting in Cornwall. Notice something?

No masks. No social distancing. Heck, they are arm in arm. Vaccinated? Definitely. Talking about opening their country borders? Of course.

Two days after this picture was taken the EU put the USA on the “white list” of safe countries that will be permitted to enter the European Union. A day later, France classified the USA as a “green” country and removed the requirement for a negative Covid test for vaccinated travelers.

Our neighbors to the north were also added to the list for safe travelers. If vaccinated we can easily go... but our return is a bit more complicated.

Currently, the USA has a closed border to everyone except US citizens or permanent residents. If you travel out of the country via air you'll be required to present a negative Covid test taken at least 3 days before your trip home. The land border with Canada is closed but open with Mexico. You can

drive into the USA from Mexico but not Canada. An American arriving from Mexico via car is not required to present a negative Covid test.

I'm a bit surprised that the USA has not yet reciprocated the EU vaccinated traveler policy. Do I think this will happen? Absolutely. When? Maybe soon, maybe on or around the 4th of July?

In the mean time what are you supposed to do? One solution is to purchase a home test kit. Currently there is only one option. It's this, the [Abbot Binaxnow Covid-19 AG Card Home Test and Novica App](#).

The way this works is you **must** purchase the test kits from [eMed](#) but more importantly each traveler needs to download and create an account with the [Novica App](#). This app will allow the traveler to receive the test results in a digital format that is acceptable for the required re-entry test to the USA.

I called eMed to clarify some points because the test kits are sold in packs of 6. They said registration with the App and the creation of an account on a smart phone was the crucial step for each person taking the test. Everyone must have their own account. It is also imperative to have a smart phone and a second device to have the test properly proxied. The whole process takes about 30 minutes to complete.

Until the requirements change, you can go but be prepared to be tested to come home.

Dîner en Blanc Duluth

The RSVP's are starting to come in. If you are interested in joining us for an evening picnic in the yard please be sure to let me know. This picnic is formal informality. We'll engage in traditions new and old all the while enjoying the company of a fine summer evening with friends.

Not sure what this is? Here is a [short video explaining](#) this quirky French picnic. *Dîner en Blanc Duluth* will be on **August 7th, 2021** at our house, 2620 E. Superior Street, in the yard.

Here's what you need to know:

👉 It is BYOE. (*Bring Your Own Everything.*) Literally everything. Food, chairs, drink. You can make this as fancy or as simple as you like ~ table and chairs or a blanket.

👑 **Dress code:** all white. Really. This is a fancy, all white dress up picnic. I did say it's quirky.

📧 **RSVP:** (*respondes s'il vous plait*) to david@savvynomad.com.

🕒 **August 7th, 2021.** Come set up between 6-7pm, share in the *Votre Sante, (to your health)* toast at 7pm. Eat and drink at your leisure.

This is essentially just a picnic at our house, out in the garden, and in the driveway if needed. An evening of socializing, eating, drinking and toasting to our collective existence, to life. This is a renewal of our friendships in person, rather than in digital, and an opportunity to enjoy each others company with grace, elegance, food, wine and companionship. Will you join us for *Dîner en Blanc Duluth*?