

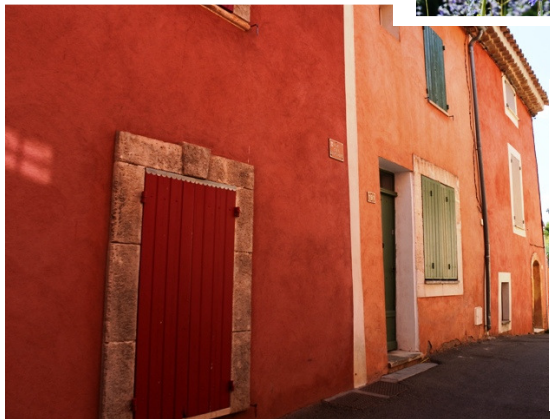


Provence - August 2017

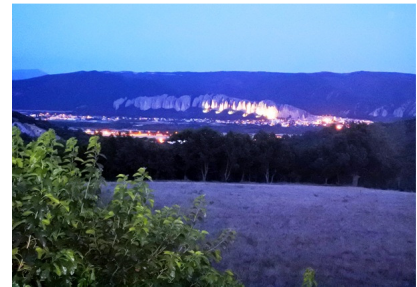
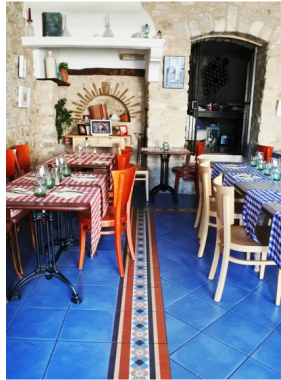
With Otter safely packed away on land till next season, in Grau d'Agde, we meandered through Provence and the Luberon region search of the famous lavender fields, the villages perched on mountaintops, the traditional stone houses and lively markets....



We were on our way to an unforgettable Runrig Concert held on a warm summer night in the beautiful grounds of Schloss Schwetzingen, Heidelberg – hundreds of "oldies" like us rocking away, seated on the lawns – to celebrate our silver wedding anniversary. The plateau of the Grand Luberon is carpeted with purple lavender-fields upon fields of it- but, alas, we were a week too late and it had already faded or been harvested early, in the unusually hot temperatures. However, we did have a wonderful day at the huge and very lively street market along the canals of l'Isle sur la Sorgue -the Venice of Provence! Famous for its antiques.



2 millenium ago, the Romans used the ochre earth around the spectacular village of Roussillon for pottery glazes. Almost every building, and many of the fine tombstones in the village churchyard, are rendered in vivid hues of ochre and pink. Quite a stunning sight and you can follow a trail leading along the red and yellow cliffs from which the colours are hewn. In the clear, late afternoon sun the whole village glows. It's gorgeous.



We were lucky enough to stay in some lovely little hotels, all with their own Provencal charm. It was so hot...thank goodness for air conditioning in the car! Tuck was the trouper he always was...and as usual charmed everyone he met at each hotel. In April he had developed a serious illness but made it through and we owed a lot to the great care he was given by several French vets along the way who checked his medicine and went out of their way to help us, and him have a good summer on Otter. Almost finished on his meds, we breathed a sigh of relief- we had done it-.... we made it home.



We didn't know that time was running out....