

## **GARDEN WEEKS IN PROVENCE—April and October 2012**

Author Louisa Jones, Martin Stein of the Hôtel la Mirande and Susan Worner Tours

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**Sunday April 15<sup>nd</sup> –Saturday 21<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup>--Saturday October 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Sunday April 15<sup>th</sup>** 7 pm *Introduction to landscapes and gardens in Provence*  
by Louisa Jones, aperitif and welcome dinner at La Mirande.

**Monday April 16<sup>th</sup> Northeast Alpilles;** A morning admiring the gardens and sculpture of leading tree sculptor Marc Nucera, in his company. Café lunch (not included), then a rarely visited but beautifully maintained work by Alain David Idoux and Marc Nucera. Late afternoon visit to Les Confines, the masterpiece of designer Dominique Lafourcade, with her new African garden, guided by herself.

**Tuesday April 17<sup>th</sup> The Luberon:** The Clos Pascal, Nicole de Vésian's very private terraced garden, half wild, half rustic. The courtyard of an American art foundation and the Carmejane, spectacular cliff hanging garden, where we are invited to lunch. Finally la Louve, by Nicole de Vésian, see Louisa's prizewinning book on this designer and this garden (2011).

**Wednesday April 18<sup>th</sup> Mont Ventoux:** Visit to a château garden first laid out by Alain David Idoux, with ongoing work by Marc Nucera and a Japanese tea garden by Erik Borja. Picnic lunch and visit in one of the region's most interesting sculpture gardens designed by Anthony Paul.

**Thursday April 19<sup>th</sup>: The northwest Alpilles:** The gardens of fashion and press magnate Pierre Bergé, by Michel Semini: domino courtyards each with its own character. Then Altavès, an authentic Provençal garden adapted to contemporary taste. Back to Avignon for individual lunch. Late afternoon cooking lesson at La Mirande in the vaulted medieval kitchen.

**Friday April 20<sup>th</sup> The central Alpilles:** In the heart of the mountains, the gardens of Avignon's main auctioneer. Picnic lunch at a hidden farmstead near Les Baux with the artist owners, home gardeners, in a beautiful half wild place. Afternoon visit to the Mas de Benoît, Alain David Idoux's masterpiece, the best of Provençal landscape art.

**APRIL**.....spring had come to meet me, a spring such as one imagines in fairy-tales, the exuberant, ephemeral, irresistible spring of Provence, rich and fresh, springing up in sudden bursts of greenery, in plants already tall which sway and ripple in the wind, in mauve Judas trees and paulownias the colour of grey periwinkles, in laburnums, wisterias and roses.. a scent of honey and pine, of varnished buds and lilac. The cherry trees cast a violet shadow on the reddish earth... Colette, The Vagabond

Itineraries based on arrangements with private people may change, though these contacts are confirmed. There is a great deal of choice. If anything is removed, something comparable will be substituted.

## Garden Week in Provence—October 2012

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**Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup>** : 7pm *Introduction to landscapes and gardens in Provence* by Louisa Jones, aperitif and welcome dinner at La Mirande.

### **Monday October 8 The North Luberon**

A wonderful, still unpublished garden by Michel Semini, with rose arbors, orchards, vineyards, a vast parterre made of ornamental grasses. The courtyard of an American art foundation, then lunch, invited by the owner, at the fabulous Carmejane, Provence's most famous garden today, an eagle's nest. Finally the iconic Louve, gardens by Nicole de Vésian (see Louisa's prizewinning book).

### **Tuesday October 9 Eastern Alpilles and the south Luberon**

Dominique Lafourcade's fabulous gardens, Les Confines, with the new African gardens, probably with her. Picnic lunch in the very new and very old gardens at the Pavillon de Galons (Roman pool). Finally a wild woodland landscape garden designed by Nicole de Vésian at a medieval priory once belonging to Jane Fonda.

### **Wednesday October 10 Central Alpilles**

The Mas Théo and Mas Vincent: domino courtyards of Pierre Bergé, art collector, and life companion of Yves Saint Laurent (masterpiece of designer Michel Semini). Time at the market and individual lunch in Saint Rémy de Provence. Finally, the family nursery of Pierre and Pia Braun, specializing in Mediterranean plants.

### **Thursday October 11 The Gard, west of Avignon**

The Gardens of the Noria, leading garden by Arnaud Maurières and Eric Ossart near Uzès. Return to Avignon for individual lunch and free time before a convivial cooking lesson in the vaulted basement kitchens of the Mirande.

### **Friday October 12 Southern and Eastern Alpilles**

One of the best bastide garden by Dominique Lafourcade's, much published; picnic lunch in the midst of the wild hills of Les Baux. Final visit to the minimalist land art creation Mas de Benoit by Alain David Idoux and tree sculptor Marc Nucera.

## **OCTOBER**

I have done another canvas, "An Autumn Garden", with two cypresses, bottle-green, shaped like bottles, and three little chestnut trees, a little yew with pale-lemon foliage, two bushes blood-red with scarlet purple leaves; some sand, some grass, and some blue sky...The falling of leaves is beginning; you can see the trees turning yellow, and the yellow increasing every day. it is as least as beautiful as the orchards in bloom.

Vincent Van Gogh, letter to his brother Theo

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**PRACTICAL INFORMATION:** *The maximum number of participants is 16. The cost for two people sharing is a large double room is 3960€ per person, and for one person with single occupancy of a double room the cost is 4790€ . The rate includes 6 nights in a deluxe double room as well buffet breakfast, 3 dinners at La Mirande of which one preceded by a cooking class, three lunches, local transportation. Visits are organized each day for minimum coach time, using Avignon like the hub of a wheel. We average three gardens a day, in small but comfortable vehicles. Departure is at nine sharp from the hotel, return between 5-6 p.m. As of January 2012, to get the payment schedule and a booking form, contact the Susan Worner agency: <http://www.susanwornertours.com/> Email: [info@susanwornertours.com](mailto:info@susanwornertours.com). In the meantime, contact Francis Lacoste at La Mirande hotel*

## **TESTIMONIALS from earlier participants:**

*Thank you for one of the most memorable weeks of my life!*  
Joan Simms, 2008, returned in 2011

*Louisa, thank you once again. Your depth of knowledge and passion for new garden design/land art in Provence; your ability to share that knowledge so well and your gentle caring and patience with us, all made the whole garden experience so special.*

Justine Tennant, April 2011

*This was the most wonderful tour-- all I'd hoped and then more. I enjoyed every aspect - the gardens of course, my fellow travelers, the hotel, the meals (both the formal and informal) the weather (yes, you should take a bow for that!) and the overall organization. I thank you also for your wonderful relaxed attitude, your incredible knowledge and great willingness to share it with such patience and grace.*

Kay Annoni, April 2011

*You did a wonderful job, I felt like visiting with the close friend, and the intimate atmosphere of the group and Martin and his staff was superb. I wish I could spend every April with you.*

Irina Frayer, garden designer, April 2011

*We returned home energized and inspired. I think this was the best trip of my life!* Ewa Zembrozsi, 2008

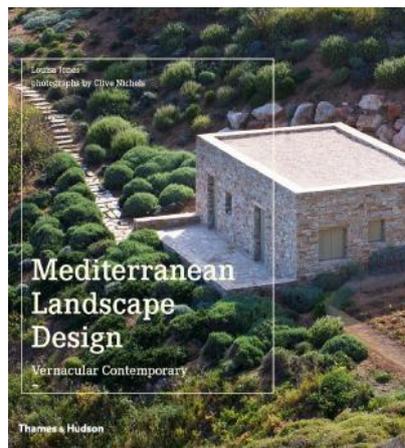
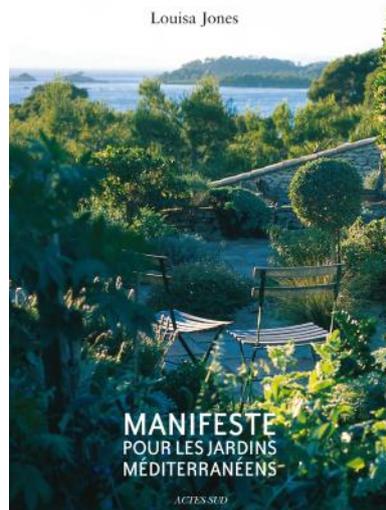
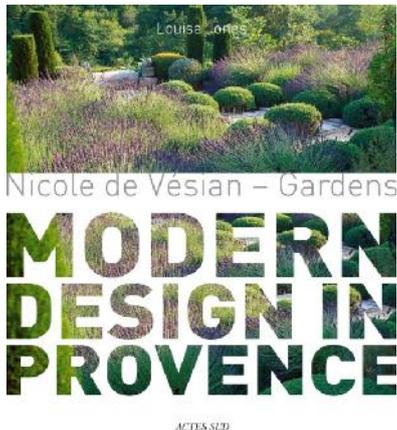
*Thank you so much for your marvellous tour, it was stimulating and exciting in every way, visually, intellectually, gastronomically. La Mirande was the perfect base, and Martin the perfect host.*

Michael and Penny Hunter, 2008

*The tour with Louisa was the best garden tour we have ever taken and staying at La Mirande is a remarkable experience.* Mary Tonetti Dorra . 2007

## BOOKS BY LOUISA JONES

New Books by Louisa Jones: *Mediterranean Landscape Design: Vernacular Contemporary* and *Manifeste pour les jardins méditerranéens* (Spring 2012)  
Nicole de Vésian: *Modern Design in Provence* (2011)



### BOOKS BY LOUISA JONES in English (a selection):

- ***Mediterranean Landscape Design: Vernacular Contemporary*** Thames and Hudson 2012
- ***Mediterranean Garden Manifesto*** Actes Sud, 2012
- ***Nicole de Vésian: Modern Design in Provence***, Actes Sud, 2011
- ***The Garden Visitors' Companion*** Thames and Hudson, 2009
- ***New Gardens in Provence*** Stewart, Tabori and Chang, 2006
- ***Provence Harvest*** with chef Jacques Chibois, STC in New York, 2005
- ***Serre de la Madone*** English version Actes Sud 2003 sold only at the gardens.
- ***The French Country Garden*** Thames and Hudson, 2000.
- ***Gardens of Provence, 1992 and 2000***,
- ***Gardens of the French Riviera 1994 and 2000***.
- ***Kitchen Gardens of France*** Thames and Hudson, 1997.