



Sarlat and Nice France Trip Notes
See Medoc and Berlin Marathon files separately
September 7-28, 2011

Where is this Beynac town? It's a small medieval village perched on the edge of a hill overlooking the Dordogne River in the Perigord region of France. The closest major airport is Bordeaux about three hours away. Some folks know the medieval town of Sarlat which is about 20 minutes drive away; Tom chose Beynac as much because of the unique 13th century modernized house he found but also because it would be quieter than Sarlat. (It was an excellent choice.) Some folks know of the pre-history caves as old as 20,000 years found in the region with the best known but closed to the public being Lascaux.

Marathons? It was Tom's idea that since we were in the area that I do the famous Medoc wine region marathon. This was his first venture to a start and finish line and as my Medoc Marathon trip report will tell (under separate cover) it might be my very favorite marathon of all time. It was my idea to add on the Berlin Marathon at the end of the trip – which would give me the Five Major Marathons under my running belt. A little bit much as it turned out and for various reasons.

Living quarters

Most of you know that our 'residence' is a large part of our trip. We want to experience the local markets, restaurants, shopping and living conditions albeit with some upgraded modern convenience. The home in Beynac with its 13th century walls, views from multiple decks plus its modernization did it all. Portions from the VRBO website:



One of our sundecks; one of the three bedrooms with its own bathroom; the house is situated about in the middle of this picture; the main living room overlooking the pool on one side and the river on the other, and connected to an open family style and modernized kitchen.

As good as it gets: 3 Bedrooms, 3 Baths with a view to die for. This is the loveliest stretch of the Dordogne river and a 'not to be missed' stop. From this stunningly beautiful rental house with panoramic views of the Dordogne river & four Chateaux, you can stroll to the restaurants, food and antique shops, art galleries, summer market, Chateaux, Pre history Museum & the Dordogne river; you can go canoeing, hot air ballooning, take bike tours, walking tours and horse riding all in Beynac. This is a beautiful light and airy house in the stunning 'must visit' medieval village of Beynac. It has a superb south facing garden with terraces and pool all overlooking four Chateaux & the Dordogne River. You can relax with a glass of the local Bergerac wine whilst you watch the setting sun turn the river fiery reds and the swans gracefully drift by. Marvel at the beautiful Hot Air Balloons as they float by above you. You can stroll through the winding cobbled streets lined with honey colored stone houses, visit the shops & restaurants, art galleries & summer craft market, all within a five minute walk from the house. You can even take a passenger boat trip up stream past some of the best Chateaux and Bastide villages in the Dordogne. "L'ancienne Poste" is a beautiful stone, luxury rental, parts of which date from the 13th Century. The living, dining and kitchen area plus all the bedrooms have panoramic views over this historical part of the

Dordogne River to four Chateaux. The beautiful living room is light and airy with high ceilings and windows overlooking the Dordogne to the front at the pool to the side. There is a log burner fireplace and satellite television. The kitchen opens onto the south facing terrace, with table and chairs for sunny al fresco breakfasts and shaded evening meals with a glass of wine. The Garden Bedroom has an ensuite bathroom and 13th Century stone archway with French Doors opening onto the south facing garden. This room has walls 3 feet thick. The Middle Bedroom has high ceilings with a king bed and double French doors giving panoramic views of the valley below; it has an ensuite shower room & ceiling fan. The Vaulted bedroom has a King bed and a large single bed with a beautiful vaulted beamed ceiling plus an ensuite shower room and panoramic views. The main south facing garden and terraces overlook the river and Chateaux. To the side of the property is the private pool with sun decking and a shaded flower covered seating area. "L'ancienne Poste" is accessible by car and has the advantage of a private covered garage (formerly the village forge), which is a rarity in this medieval village. The layout of this house is spread over four floors as it hugs the hillside.

History of Beynac: L'ancienne Poste" was originally Beynac's Post Office and the narrow cobbled street that it's on was the main road from Sarlat to Bordeaux via Bergerac, following the Dordogne River. This magical stretch of the gently flowing Dordogne River overlooks four Chateaux and one of the historic sites of the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) between England & France. Beynac itself rises dramatically from the valley floor and was once the home of Richard the Lionheart, who was the King of England from 1189 until 1199 when he met an untimely death in a small siege in the Limousin. You may already be familiar with Beynac from watching such films as 'Chocolat', 'Joan of Arc', 'The Musketeer' & 'Timeline'.

Photos – Tom's photos available at www.TomsKoi.com click on Photo Shows are so good there's no sense in my adding them.

Chateau des Milandes

There are ancient castles and there are those modernized with celebrity status. An interesting one is that previously owned and modernized by Josephine Baker. It might have been the reason she died destitute. From the website: *Chateau des Milandes was built in 1489. It was left to fall into ruin during the French Revolution but restored in the 19th Century when it was bought, in the 1930s, by the legendary Josephine Baker. The chateau is one of the prettier of the chateaus in this area and is surrounded by a very pleasant garden. The chateau illustrates the transition from gothic to Renaissance architecture with features inside from both eras. Inside the large windows let in plenty of light? The chateau is now largely devoted to Josephine Baker. Starting with the nude photographs taken of Josephine early in her career, moving on, in the salle de music-hall, to photos of her many stage appearances and displays including one of her legendary banana belts! Le grand salon, a beautiful room with a gothic frieze and a Renaissance frieze, plus a collection of fabulous dresses worn by Josephine Baker and created by some of the most famous dress designers of the day. Another room is dedicated to Josephine's resistance work and includes her military uniform and the medals she was awarded for her work in the resistance. This included helping numerous refugees escape France and transmitting to General de Galle messages written in invisible ink on the pages of her music.*

Josephine's art deco bathrooms can be seen. One of these is in the colours of her favourite perfume, Arpège, by Jeanne Lanvin. Principally the colours are gold and black. The bedroom of Jo Bouillon, her fourth husband and father of their twelve adopted children, can also be seen. The exhibition finishes in the kitchen where there is a large and very sad picture of Josephine sat on her doorstep having been evicted from the chateau when it was forcibly sold to pay back some of Josephine's debts.



We move to the French Riviera aka Cote d'Azur

Remember we lived in the area for a month in the 70s? We were studying French at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Cap D'Ail about 1 kilometer outside of Monaco on the Grand Corniche. We've returned in between and most recently in 2007 when we rented a huge home overlooking the Mediterranean in Cap D'Ail. At that time we'd stayed in a hotel for a couple days in Nice and vowed

to return for a longer time. So here we are, in an apartment facing the Promenade des Anglais with a balcony and full view of the Mediterranean again. From website:



A section of the living room with Asian influences; the foyer; one of the bedrooms; our balcony facing the water.

2 Bedrooms + 2.5 Baths. This lovely apartment is one block from the world-known Hotel Negresco and 10 minutes walk to the city centre. One can watch the beautiful sunrise and the breathtaking view of the Mediterranean Sea from the balcony and the masters' bedroom. Each chair in the dining area has a view of the sea. The windows are all double glazed thereby reducing any noise to a minimum. The beach is just across the street with a lifeguard station right in front of the apartment. There are beach restaurants in front of the apartment and every two blocks for your convenience. The master bedroom overlooking the sea has an Italian wrought-iron king size bed with an adjoining bathroom furnished with a Villeroy & Boch bathtub, toilet, bidet and lavabo. It has a bay window with automatic shutters, a sitting area, also equipped with TV/DVD/VCR and CD equipment. The second bedroom with a courtyard view has a queen size bed with a CD player; TV for movie viewing it has its own shower, bidet and lavabo. Between the two bedrooms there is a guest toilet. The kitchen is modern and fully-equipped including fine bone china breakfast and dinner sets, coffee machine, electric wok, juicer and integrated washer/dryer machines. It is walking distance to the city centre, surrounded with restaurants, bakeries, specialty stores, bike/moto rental shop and a supermarket less than a minute away. It is close to the newly opened Musee Massena, 5-star hotels, 2 casinos and boutiques of famous brands like Chanel, Louis Vuitton and Cartier to name a few. There is ample street parking on the side street and around the area. One can also enjoy a leisurely walk to the famous Flower Market where fresh flowers, vegetables, fish and Provencal specialties are sold every day and antiques once a week. At noon the flower market is converted to small restaurants where you can enjoy Nice specialties and seafood dishes. Visiting Old Nice is always a treat-finding old churches, quaint streets full of interesting stores and food stalls.

The apartment had been upgraded and furnishings modernized since the sales pitch on VRBO but again, I'll let www.TomsKoi.com show you.

Monte Carlo Casino in Monaco

A priority was walking from Cap D'Ail to Monaco along the base pedestrian walkway. Spending the day in Monaco and walking back the same way took one lovely and full day. It was dark coming home however. Here's a YouTube we took while standing in front of Monte Carlo's Casino. www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQ8IcR3v5aQ

From Wikipedia: *The **Monte Carlo Casino** is one of the most notable buildings in Monaco. The casino complex is a gambling facility which also includes the Grand Théâtre de Monte Carlo, an opera and ballet house, and the office of the Ballets de Monte Carlo. It is situated in the Monte Carlo district, although the citizens of Monaco are forbidden to enter the gaming rooms. It hosts the annual European Poker Tour Grand Final. The casino is owned by the Société des bains de mer de Monaco, a public company in which the government and Prince Albert has a majority interest. This corporation also owns the principal hotels and nightclubs of the community that serve the tourist trade.*



The route of the Monaco Grand Prix (the Circuit de Monaco) is past the casino. The Monte Carlo methods, a class of random sampling algorithms, were named for the casino.

The casino was designed by the architect Charles Garnier, who also created the Paris opéra. It has a distinctly Beaux Arts style. The idea of opening a gambling casino in Monaco belongs to Princess Maria Caroline, a shrewd, business-minded spouse of Prince Florestan. Revenues from the proposed casino, as well as from a hotel and spa services, were

supposed to solve the House of Grimaldi's persistent financial problems that became especially acute after the loss of tax revenue from two breakaway towns, Menton and Roquebrune, in 1848. After gambling was legalized in 1854, a team of Frenchmen was assembled by Charles, Florestan's son and future Prince of Monaco, who spent two years devising the development plans and writing a prospectus for investors. The first casino was opened in 1856 in a modest villa near the harbour. François Blanc, a French entrepreneur and operator of a casino in Bad Homburg, was invited to operate the gaming tables under a 50-year concession. To manage the casino business, a new company—the Société des Bains de Mer—was formed, in which Blanc became a majority stockholder. Blanc quickly raised the capital and began the massive construction. The construction of the current building started in 1858 and completed in 1863. On Blanc's insistence, the gambling complex was renamed to make it sound more attractive to casino visitors. A few suggestions were considered, and the name Monte Carlo was chosen in Charles' honor. In 1910 the building was expanded with a theatre, Salle Garnier, suitable for housing opera and ballet performances.

Breaking the bank: In 1873, Joseph Jagger gained the casino great publicity by "breaking the bank at Monte Carlo" by discovering and capitalizing on a bias in one of the casino's roulette wheels. Technically, the bank in this sense was the money kept on the table by the croupier. According to an article in The Times in the late 19th century, it was thus possible to "break the bank" several times. The 1892 song The Man that Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo, made famous by Charles Coburns, was probably inspired by the exploits of Charles Wells, who "broke the bank" on many occasions on the first two of his three trips. According to the book Busting Vegas by Ben Mezrich, a team of blackjack players recruited from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology by team-leader Victor Cassius attempted to break the bank at Monte Carlo with the assistance of a team-play-based system. The book describes how the management of Monte Carlo responded to the progress of the team, whose members included Semyon Dukach and others mentioned by aliases.

The casino in movies: James Bond, fictional British spy and protagonist of the Bond book and movie series, is often associated with the city's glamorous Belle Époque casino. This was a model for the setting of Ian Fleming's first Bond novel, Casino Royale (1953), 'Royale-Les-Eaux' being a fictional resort in the style of Monte Carlo. The real Monte Carlo and its casino provided one of the locations for the James Bond movies, Never Say Never Again, and Golden Eye, and served as the setting in the CBS "Climax!" episode, Casino Royale.

Supercars of Monaco

One of our entertainments is watching the super rich of Monaco. They don't dress like they used to but they drive even better than ever. While we took a lot of pictures of specialty cars, here's a video if you're interested in Bugatti (\$1.5 million), Mercedes SLR (\$.5 million), Rolls Royce Corniche, and Bentley Continental. Where the first day seeing an SLR and Tom being sure it would be the only one we'd ever see in our lifetime, we were stunned if not shocked to find six or seven more SLRs. There's sure a lot of money in Monaco! www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkmuQPsLpn4

Ellen says it best about the change in the mode of dress of the super rich: *I'm relieved to see that square in front of the Casino hasn't changed since I was there. I was almost afraid to look. So much has changed all over the world, I was afraid Monaco too, might have become a modern architectural nightmare. I remember being stunned by how small Monaco is, how tee-tiny their harbor is. I was also terribly disappointed by who was in the casino. Having fueled my image of the world of casinos with MGM movies, I expected to see men in black tie, women in gowns by Adriain (MGM's costume designer) dripping diamonds - the suave and the beautiful. Instead it was full of the usual tourists, in scruffy clothes, a few tacky hangers-on in tweed jackets, looking like lounge lizards - a very sorry lot. No heads of state, no Maharajahs or Maharanis, or socialites. Just a motley cross-section of humanity. Like someone threw cold water on my dream world!*

But after walking around Monaco, the group was taken to a restaurant high up on the mountainside for a lavish dinner. The view from that restaurant - of the coastline outlined in lights was so spectacular, we kept getting up from table to walk out on the balcony to have yet another look. The view was right out of fairyland – mountains cascading down to the water, bays and inlets all outlined with a necklace of lights as far as you could see in both directions. Memorable. In some ways even more spectacular than Italy's Amalfii Coast.

I remember the celebration when Grace Kelly married Prince Rainier. This glimpse of Monaco was my first shocked clue that Grace Kelly's dream might not be quite that splendiferous! Now that I've read her book, I'm guessing she might have been happier if she'd married Oleg Cassini (but her father wouldn't have been.). As Rudy Stohler, Professor emeritus at UC Berkeley (and my mentor in malacology and life) used to say, "You pays your nickel and you takes your chances! Aside from my over-expectations, Monaco is a very interesting monument to a by-gone era of glamour and royalty.

I hope you and Tom are having a wonderful time. The area is pretty astonishingly beautiful. The food is stunningly good. And there's more to do than your time will allow. For me, that's a recipe for happiness. Means I'd have to come back!

Villa and Gardens Ephrussi de Rothschild



In Saint Jean Cap Ferrat is this amazing home of one of the daughters of the famous family. Said to be the most beautiful French Riviera Palazzo it also has nine wonderful gardens. Through the art dealers and experts she befriended, Baroness Ephrussi de Rothschild sought out artworks all over the world, transforming the Villa at Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat into a collector's paradise. Between sea and sky, overlooking the bay of Villefranche, the nine heavenly gardens are adorned with patios, fountains, ponds, flowered and shaded paths. Pictures from the web and see Tom's on his photo show.



We have been in the area plenty of times but never took the big chunk of a day it takes to tour the villa. It was worth it.



Observations on France by Ellen

Is this a running marathon or a wine-tasting marathon? 57 wineries and 22 tastings -- Now, how the h--- do they expect anyone to run a marathon on a course like that? I'm guessing nobody expects any records to be broken on this one!!! It

sounds like it's one of those French weekend food/wine festivals that they've combined with a marathon. I'd say it's an obstacle course for runners. Anyone who stays on course would have to be a teetotaler or born with no taste buds!!!

I once read a book (in fact, I may own the book) about food festivals in France. Seems you can find one every weekend somewhere in France. They're created to celebrate and to sell the food or wine specialty of the host city/town/ region. They involve a lot of ceremony. People come in renaissance robes and costumes, wearing huge big medals hung on ribbons.

There is an incredible amount of wine imbibed, an incredible amount of food consumed, and from mid-morning on Saturday until night-fall on Sunday, everyone is more or less tipsy - at least feeling no pain. Let me know how this works for a runner.

On a trip called Masterpieces of France, we started in Nice and stayed at the Negresco. In fact, the chef at the Negresco did a special dinner for the group, complete with our own special menu. I was VERY impressed. Good heavens - that's been 30 years ago. I'm sure Nice, like every other place on the planet, has changed a lot, so I have no idea what it's like today. Matisse lived there, and, if I remember correctly, there are some major museums there. St. Paul de Vence is a wonderful romantic hill town outside Nice, perfect for lunch. In fact, the food in the region is wonderful.

What a great trip. What a lot to see and enjoy in a short time. You will have fun. No doubt about that! This one is a WOW!

Hotel Negresco

Our apartment was just up the next block from this famous hotel and also facing the Mediterranean. Until I read the history I thought this hotel was one of the early buildings of the area but not so. It used to be that you could walk in and wander through the building and admire the art work but like the Café de Paris in Monte Carlo, there are guards at the door now. So we paid up something in the range of \$50 to have a couple drinks.



Like our residences, we enjoy indulging in a famous place or two. As we sat there in the Negresco full of rich history and people who didn't look rich at all, we had to appreciate some of the other noted bars we've visited and kept in our memory bank: George V in Paris, Pierre in NYC, Breakers in Palm Beach, Bellagio in Vegas and the Peninsula in Hong Kong. I'm sure there are more but the price was right for all of these when you add up the memories.

From Wikipedia: *The Hotel Negresco on the Promenade des Anglais on the Baie des Anges in Nice, France was named for Henri Negresco (1868–1920) who had the palatial hotel constructed in 1912. In keeping with the conventions of the times, when the Negresco first opened in 1913 its front opened facing the Mediterranean sea. Henri Negresco, born the son of an innkeeper in Bucharest, Romania, left home at the age of 15 going first to Paris then to the French Riviera where he became very successful. As director of the Municipal Casino in Nice, he had the idea to build a sumptuous hotel of quality that would attract the wealthiest of clients. After arranging the financing, he hired architect Édouard-Jean Niermans to design the hotel with Gustave Eiffel reportedly commissioned to do its now famous pink dome. The spectacular Baccarat 16,309-crystal chandelier in the Negresco's lobby was commissioned by Czar Nicholas II, who due to the October revolution was unable to take delivery. Bad luck came to Henri Negresco when World War I broke out two years after he opened for business and his hotel was converted to a hospital. By the end of the War, wealthy visitors to the Riviera had dropped off to the point that the hotel was in severe financial difficulty. Seized by creditors, the Negresco was sold to a Belgian company and Henri Negresco died a few years later in Paris at the age of 52. Over the years, the hotel had its ups and downs and in 1957 was sold to the Augier family. Madame Jeanne Augier reinvigorated the hotel with luxurious decorations and furnishings, including an outstanding art collection and rooms with mink bedspreads. Noted for its doormen dressed in the manner of the staff in 18th-century elite bourgeois households, complete with red-plumed postillion hats, the hotel also offers renowned gourmet dining at the Regency-style Le Chantecler under its new chef Bruno Turbot, brought in from Normandy when previous chef Alain Llorca took over the equally fabled Moulin de Mougins. In 2003, the Hotel Negresco was listed by the government of France as a National Historic Building and is a member of Leading Hotels of the World.*

Eze Village

This little village is both seaside and then the old medieval town up high on a hilltop and it's always a favorite to walk around. Something in the style of St Paul de Vence, it is known for its Michelin star highly acclaimed Chevre d'Or hotel and restaurant. I'd thought we might eat a small meal there for the experience but at a few hundred per plate, we both decided not. We did see another SLR parked in its courtyard and we did eat at Eze Village just not at the Chevre d'Or.



From Wikipedia: *The area surrounding Èze was first populated around 2000 BC as a commune situated near Mount Bastide. The earliest occurrence of the name "Èze" can be found in the maritime books of Antonin as a bay called the St. Laurent of Èze. The area was subsequently occupied by not only the Romans but also the Moors who held the area for approximately 80 years until they were driven out by William of Provence in 973. By 1388 Èze fell under the jurisdiction of the House of Savoy, who built up the town as a fortified stronghold because of its proximity to Nice. The history of Èze became turbulent several times in the next few centuries as French and Turkish troops seized the village under orders from Hayreddin Barbarossa in 1543, and Louis XIV destroyed the walls surrounding the city in 1706 in the war of the Spanish succession. Finally in April 1860, Eze was designated as part of France by unanimous decision by the people of Eze.*

Èze has been described as an "eagle's nest" because of its location overlooking a high cliff 1,401 ft above sea level on the French Mediterranean. It's so high that the light ochre church within (Notre Dame de l'Assomption built in 1764) can be seen from afar. An Egyptian cross inside the church suggests the village's ancient roots, when the Phoenicians erected a temple there to honor the goddess Isis. Traditionally, the territory of the Principality of Monaco was considered to begin in the Èze village (outskirts of Nice), running along the Mediterranean coast to Menton, on the present Italian border. Eze, is renowned tourist site on the French Riviera, is famous worldwide for the view of the sea from its hill top. Its Jardin botanique d'Èze is known for its collection of cactus and succulents, as well as its panoramic views. Walt Disney spent a significant amount of time in Èze. The oldest building in the village is the Chapelle de la Sainte Croix and dates back to 1306. Members of the lay order of the White Penitents of Èze, in charge of giving assistance to plague victims, would hold their meetings there. The shape of the bell-turret is an indication that the village once belonged to the Republic of Genoa. The small medieval village is famous for its beauty and charm. Its many shops, art galleries, hotels and restaurants attract a large number of tourists and honeymooners. As a result Èze has become a "museum village", few local residents live here. From Èze you have gorgeous views of the Mediterranean Sea.

St Jean Cap Ferrat

It is located on a peninsula next to Beaulieu-sur-Mer and to Villefranche-sur-Mer and extends out to Cap Ferrat. A bay on either side, noted for its tranquillity and warm climate. It's famous as a holiday destination amongst European aristocracy and international millionaires.

The interest extends into some of Tom's history which makes for entertainment for me too. In the 60s, while assigned to SHAPE/NATO headquarters when it was located south of Paris in Orleans, he had camped where there are zillionaire homes now. We always drive out onto the inlet and this time spent some time in their 'old town.'

History from Wikipedia: *At the beginning of the 20th century, King Léopold II of Belgium owned an estate on Cap Ferrat and built several houses and an artificial lake. The main residence is the Villa des Cèdres, which has been owned by Marnier-Lapostolle (the makers of Grand Marnier) since 1924 and is now in part a botanical garden called the Jardin botanique "Les Cèdres". In 1905, Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild chose Cap Ferrat to build a Tuscan style palazzo, now known as Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild museum; part of the history of Saint Jean Cap Ferrat. Today Saint-Jean Cap-Ferrat has probably some of the most expensive real estate in the world and continues to attract the rich and famous. It is truly one of the crown jewels of the French Riviera. The luxurious properties are nestled amongst lush vegetation. Discreetly built and protected from prying eyes, they often include a private beach and locked gate-ways.*



In the history of Saint Jean Cap Ferrat, some of the estates on Cap Ferrat have hosted a plethora of celebrities among others: King Leopold II of Belgium, Baroness de Rothschild, Charlie Chaplin, Rainier III, David Niven, Somerset Maugham, Jean Cocteau, Lady Kenmare and Roderick Cameron, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, Pierre and Sao Schlumberger, Hubert de Givenchy, Rachel Lambert Mellon, Mary Wells Lawrence, Isadora Duncan, Winston Churchill, French Prime Ministers Maurice Rouvier and Raymond Barre and many more. Major Berkeley Levett, an English aristocrat and witness in the infamous Royal Baccarat Scandal, lived in Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat with his brewery heiress wife, the former Sibell Bass.

This wonderful place is the apex of the French Riviera's "golden triangle", of Cap Ferrat, Beaulieu and Villefranche.

Miscellaneous

While in Nice we found a video of Tom's garden put onto YouTube by a friend. An article came out in the In-Jersey magazine also. Here's some input from the article and film.

From Ellen to Tom: You deserve to be proud! The thing I find fascinating is that every time you made an addition to the garden (the fence for instance), it wasn't just an addition it was an enhancement that lifted the whole garden to a higher level. You took such care about the proportions and the materials, and exercised your good judgment and good taste and ended up creating a very special garden - a marvelous example of beauty - calming and exciting at the same time. It really sings! You deserve to be proud! So glad you had another perfect day in paradise. You know, Tom, those of us who can allow ourselves "perfect days" are really lucky. So few people really allow themselves to enjoy to that degree! Cheers. All the best, Ellen

To Ellen from Tom: Thanks for the compliment and kind words - special from you. I'm very proud and a bit amazed myself at times. Just in from my last drive along the Cote d'Azur - another perfect day in paradise. See ya, Tom

From Ellen to Tom: Your video (forwarded by Diana) is SO professional, so beautiful and informative. I don't remember seeing the raked gravel and rock(s?) part of the garden reminiscent of Ryoan-ji, but think it's the perfect creation for that part of the garden. You've really created a masterpiece, Tom. I'm betting it's the best Japanese garden in private hands outside Japan! You can be extremely proud of your creation!!! All the best, Ellen

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ5ziqCYtKk>

NJ magazine on Tom's pond: If you too are curious, the article done by Valerie Sudol (who did a big garden special in the Star Ledger on Tom's pond a few years ago) can be found at www.nj.com/inside-jersey. The index at page at 5-6 has a big picture then I think the article is on pages 115-116. You can go direct to those pages without looking at the entire magazine.

What's next? From Nice, I left on Friday to Berlin and Tom left on Saturday to Paris and then home to NJ. My Berlin trip was of course to complete my quest for the Five Majors and stay a few days as a tourist. I was not well but managed the trip, marathon and touring no matter and went home the following Wednesday. We would be home about a week until venturing off to Venice for a trip of a lifetime or so we hope – private showings of villas and palazzos from October 7 to 17th. The end of October will take me to Ireland for the Dublin marathon.

Itinerary

Wed Sep 7 - Diana and Tom

6:15pm Depart Newark EWR via CO#56

Thu Sep 8 – Diana and Tom

7:45am Arrive Paris CDG

Taxi Airport Taxi Transfers – 50 minutes or CDG airport to Orly - Air France operates a bus transfer service departing Terminal 1 and 2A-2F every 30 minutes

1:10pm Depart Paris Orly ORY via AF6260

2:15pm Arrive Bordeaux BOD

4:00pm Avis rental car at Bordeaux BOD Airport conf #05393667US6

Hotel Chateau Meyre (1) – 2 nights

16, route de Castelnau, 33480 Avensan France Tele: 33 (0) 5.56.58.22.84 reservations
Tele: Tel. 00 33 (0)5 56 58 10 77 www.chateaumeyre.com/en/main.php

Fri Sep 9 – Diana and Tom

10am Bibs distributed at Pauillac Sport Hall “Cosec” until 11pm

Requires identity card and registration certificate; obtain wrist bands for party

6:30pm Soiree Mille-Pates au chateau Castera, St Germain D’Esteuil to 8pm paid for 2 people

7:00pm Soiree Pates a’ Caisses a la sale des fetes de Saint-Estephe

Tasting dinner by Syndicat Viticole with chateau owners

Sat Sep 10 – Diana and Tom

9:30am Marathon start on the Pauillac quays with 6 ½ hour limit – finish at same location
22 fluid stations, 23 grand cru tasting locations, 59 vineyards, 55 music venues, 50 castles crossings,
including sausage, bayonne ham, oysters, steak, cheese, grapes, ice cream on the course –
costumes required; undulating with 24% dust roads; closed to traffic; chip timed to 6:51 last year

4:30pm Meet up with Tom either at finish line or parking lot - depart via car to Sarlat area

House L’ancienne Poste, Beynac et Cazenac, 24220 (2)

[#106240](http://www.vrbo.com) - WiFi available through neighbor but may be unreliable; free WiFi in town

See link in file to print off house location in Beynac plus directions with note to NOT follow GPS directions

Local rep: Xanthe Eadie, Route de Barbals, 24200 Sarlat la Caneda, France

Tele: 33 (0) 553 302096 or mobile 33 (0) 625698575

Sat Sep 17 – Diana and Tom

Noon Return Avis rental car

2:15pm Depart Bordeaux BOD via AF#7874

3:30pm Arrive Nice NCE

4:00pm Avis rental car at Nice NCE conf #05393784US4

Apartment Le Bel Azur, 49 Promenade des Anglais, 3rd Floor, 06000 Nice, France (3)

Tele 00 33 (0) 06 08 58 65 54 or 00 41 (0) 76 326 2323

www.vrbo.com/227236#photos for Nice

Fri Sep 23 – Diana

2:20pm Depart Nice NCE via Air Berlin #8751
4:00pm Arrive Duesseldorf for plane change
4:45pm Depart Duesseldorf via Air Berlin#6446
5:55pm Arrive Berlin Tegel TXL

Transport: Kurfürstendamm Subway Station is 3-minute walk from the hotel. Also bus direct from Tegel Airport.

Hotel Hotel Concorde Berlin by Marathontours.com
Augsburger Str. 41, Charlottenburg, 10789 Berlin - 330 ft from Kurfürstendamm Blvd
Tele: +49 (0) 30 800 999 0 - Free WiFi from room and lobby

Sat Sep 24 – Tom

11:30am Return Avis rental car

1:15pm Depart Nice NCE via AF7703
2:50pm Arrive Paris CDG

Hotel Marriott Charles de Gaulle Airport
Zone Hotelier Allee du Verger, Roissy en France, 95700 France Tele: 33 1 34385353

Sun Sep 25 – Tom

10:00am Depart Paris CDG via CO#57
12:30pm Arrive Newark EWR

Wed Sep 28 - Diana

9:35am Depart Berlin TXL via CO#97
12:40pm Arrive Newark EWR

(1) Chateau Meyre - Located in the heart of Medoc, between the vineyards of Margaux and Moulis, Château Meyre has been planted with vines for more than three centuries. During the past few years, the 19th century château has been restored to capture its original character and magnificence. Today, surrounded by a splendid park with tennis court and swimming pool, our hotel "Le Clos de Meyre" welcomes you from March until November. Its nine traditional rooms will provide comfort within Chateau Meyre's surrounding vineyards.

(2) Sarlat house www.vrbo.com #106240

Accommodations: House, 3 Bedrooms, 3 Baths (Sleeps 7)

'THIS IS AS GOOD AS IT GETS' - 'A LUXURY VACATION RENTAL WITH A VIEW TO DIE FOR'
You really can do it all here & leave your car in the garage for the whole holiday. This is the loveliest stretch of the Dordogne river & a 'not to be missed' stop for any traveler. A spectacular base for your vacation in the perfect Dordogne location, whatever time of year you visit. From this stunningly beautiful rental house with panoramic views of the Dordogne river & 4 Chateaux, you can stroll to the restaurants, food & antique shops, art galleries, summer market, Chateaux, Pre history Museum & the Dordogne river; you can go canoeing, hot air ballooning, take bike tours, walking tours & horse riding all in Beynac. This perfect Dordogne vacation rental house allows you to visit the nearby attractions very easily, whether it be Sarlat, Domme, Lascaux Caves, Rocamadour, the pre historic cave paintings, troglodyte houses or Bergerac & St.Emilion Vineyards !!!

This is a beautiful light & airy house in the stunning 'must visit' Medieval village of Beynac. It has a superb south facing garden with terraces & pool all overlooking 4 Chateaux & the Dordogne River. You can relax with a glass of the local Bergerac wine whilst you watch the setting sun turn the river fiery reds & the swans gracefully drift by. Marvel at the beautiful Hot Air Balloons as they float by above you. You can stroll through the winding cobbled streets lined with honey colored stone houses, visit the shops & restaurants, art galleries & summer craft market, all within a 5 minute walk from the house. Why don't you relax by the river in the dappled shade of a tree or go with the flow & hire a canoe. You can even take a passenger boat trip up stream past some of the best Chateaux & Bastide villages in the Dordogne. Domme, La Roque Gageac, Sarlat, Rocamadour, Lascaux & the Font de Gaume Caves are all nearby.

'THE PERFECT DORDOGNE RENTAL - THERE REALLY IS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE RIGHT HERE ON YOUR DOORSTEP WHATEVER TIME OF YEAR YOU VISIT!!!!'

HOUSE DESCRIPTION - L'ancienne Poste is a beautiful stone, 3 bed, 3 bath/shower room luxury vacation rental, parts of which date from the 13th Century!!!

The living, dining & kitchen area & all the bedrooms have panoramic views over this historical part of the Dordogne River to 4 Chateaux.

The beautiful living room is light & airy with high ceilings & windows overlooking the Dordogne to the front at the pool to the side. There is a log burner for cozy winter nights in front of the fire, with a stack of logs ready for your use. For your added comfort we have installed British satellite television.

The kitchen opens onto the south facing terrace, with table & chairs for sunny al fresco breakfasts & shaded evening meals with a glass of wine.

The Garden Bedroom, has an ensuite bathroom, two extra long & very comfortable single beds & 13th Century stone archway with French Doors opening onto the south facing garden. This room has walls 3 feet thick!!

The Middle Bedroom has high ceilings with a 160cm King bed & double French doors giving panoramic views of the valley below; it has an ensuite shower room & ceiling fan.

The Vaulted bedroom has a 160cm King bed & a large 120cm single bed, with a beautiful vaulted beamed ceiling & ceiling fans, an ensuite shower room & panoramic views.

For your arrival the beds will be made up with crisp white cotton bedlinen & the bathrooms will have 2 white towels & 1 pool towel pp.

For rentals during the cooler months, in addition to the log burner in the living room there are electric radiators throughout the house.

The main south facing garden & terraces overlook the river & Chateaux, a perfect place to sit and dream, read or sip a glass of wine. A perfect place to watch the world pass you by on the river below. To the side of the property is the private pool with sun decking & a shaded flower covered seating area. There are ample sun loungers & chairs for all our guests.

L'ancienne Poste is accessible by car and has the advantage of a private covered garage (formerly the village forge), which is a rarity in this medieval village. However, wide vehicles will not be able to access the garage, so please hire a smaller car. Otherwise, we have 1 free parking ticket for the village car parks. Additional parking tickets are available for approx. 12 euros per week.

The layout of this house is spread over four floors as it hugs the hillside. The Garden bedroom is the first/garden level, then the kitchen and living area on the next level, then the Master bedroom & then finally the vaulted bedroom which is the fourth floor. The lower three floors all have outside access due to the nature of the village, so are in effect all ground floors!

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BEYNAC - L'ancienne Poste, as you may have guessed, was originally Beynac's Post Office & the narrow cobbled street that it's on was the main road from Sarlat to Bordeaux via Bergerac, following the Dordogne River.

This magical stretch of the gently flowing Dordogne River overlooks 4 Chateaux & one of the historic sites of the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) between England & France. Beynac itself rises dramatically from the valley floor & was once the home of Richard the Lionheart, who was the King of England from 1189 until 1199 when he met an untimely death in a small siege in the Limousin.

Beynac will enchant & captivate you at every turn, from its narrow medieval streets lined with soft honey colored stone houses, shops, art galleries & restaurants to its magnificent Chateau; which is perched high on top the cliff & has majestically watched over the Dordogne valley since 1150.

You may already be familiar with Beynac from watching such films as 'Chocolat', 'Joan of Arc', 'The Musketeer' & 'Timeline'.

Deck/Patio: There is a really stunning terrace just off the kitchen which is the perfect place whether it is for breakfasts, morning coffee or evening meals. It has a covering of purple and white flowering wisteria with stunning 180 degree views from the rising sun over Chateau Marqueyssac to the East, southerly views over Chateaux Castlenaud and Fayrac and the Dordogne river and finally follow the setting sun to the west and magnificent views down the Dordogne river as it flows to Bordeaux and the Atlantic coast. There are also seating and lounging areas on the south and west sides of the house, providing both shaded and sunny areas to relax with the same panoramic views of the river and castles.

Gazebo: Adjoining the pool is a flower covered shaded resting area with a table and chairs.

(3) Nice apartment on Promenade des Angles

Accommodations: Apartment, 2 Bedrooms + 2.5 Baths (Sleeps 4-6)

This lovely apartment with special chandeliers in the living & in the two bedrooms is situated on the famous Promenade des Anglais. It is one block from the world-known Hotel Negresco & 10 minutes walk to the city centre. One can watch the beautiful sunrise and the breathtaking view of the Mediterranean Sea from the balcony and the masters' bedroom. Each chair in the dining area has a view of the sea. The windows are all double glazed thereby reducing any noise to a minimum. The beach is just across the street with a lifeguard station right in front of the apartment. There are beach restaurants in front of the apartment and every two blocks for your convenience. Restaurants are also on both sides of the apartment and around the area.

The master bedroom overlooking the sea has an Italian wrought-iron king size bed with an adjoining bathroom furnished with a Villeroy & Boch bathtub, toilet, bidet and lavabo. It has a bay window with automatic shutters, a sitting area, also equipped with TV/DVD/VCR and CD equipment for your convenience. The second bedroom with a courtyard view has a queen size bed with a CD player, TV for movie viewing, it has its own shower, bidet and lavabo. Between the 2 bedrooms there is a guest toilet. The kitchen is modern and fully-equipped including fine bone china breakfast and dinner sets, coffee machine, electric wok, juicer and integrated washer/dryer machines.

It is walking distance to the city centre, surrounded with restaurants, bakeries, specialty stores, bike/moto rental shop and a supermarket less than a minute away. It is close to the newly opened Musee Massena, 5-star hotels, 2 casinos and boutiques of famous brands like Chanel, Louis Vuitton and Cartier to name a few. There is ample street parking on the side street and around the area.

One can also enjoy a leisurely walk to the famous Flower Market where fresh flowers, vegetables, fish and provençal specialties are sold every day and antiquities once a week. At noon the flower market is converted to small restaurants where you can enjoy Nice specialties and seafood dishes. Visiting Old Nice is always a treat-finding old churches, quaint streets full of interesting stores and food stalls.

Public transportation is accessible for travel to Villefranche, Monaco, Eze, Cannes, Antibes, St. Paul de Vence, Grasse and as far as Aix-en-Provence. The airport bus stops right in front of the apartment. The train station is also a 15-minute walk.

Nice is a city full of sports and cultural activities all year round like the marathon in January, Carnival in February, Paris-Nice Bike Race in March, Triathlon in June, Jazz and Classical Festivals, concerts and famous museums to visit like Matisse, Picasso and Chagall, to say the least. One can also attend the Cannes Film Festival, Monaco Grand Prix, the Lemon and Orange Festival in Menton while vacationing in Nice.