



VISITING GARDENS IN FRANCE & PORTUGAL

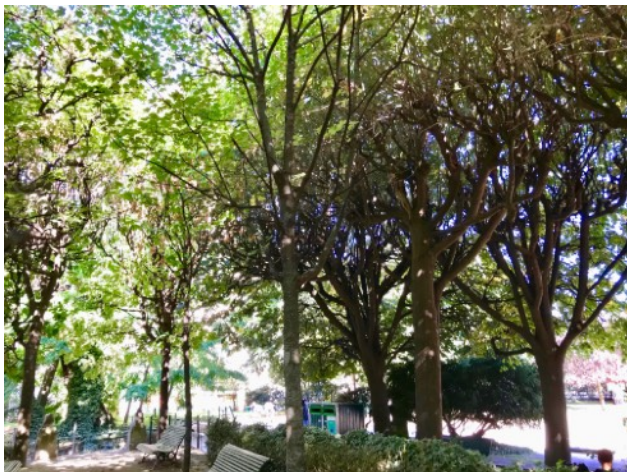
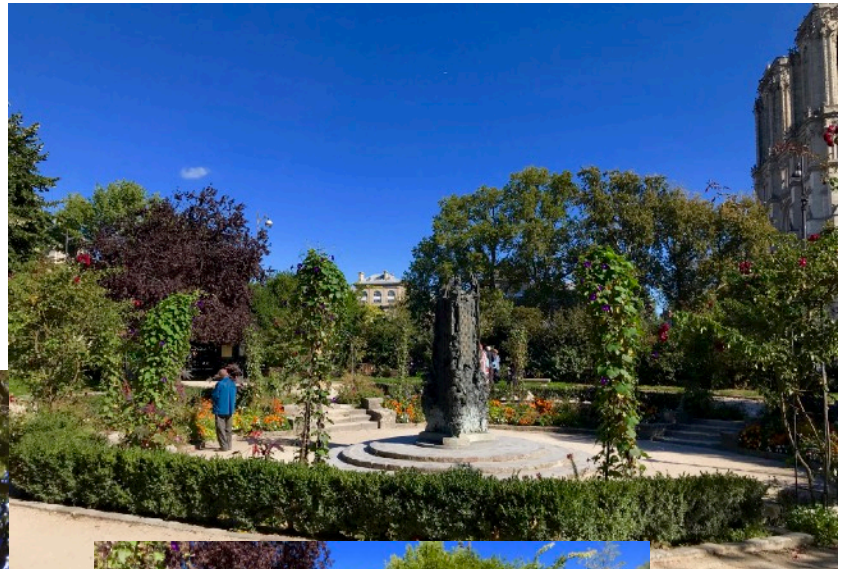
by Kate Yturri

Gardens in Europe are often big and showy. Locals lunch, walk, run and read in them. Tourists visit them. Think the Luxembourg Gardens, the Tuileries or Jardin des Plantes in Paris or the gardens around Versailles.

The gardens I enjoy the most are the small, quiet gardens or large areas that we don't think of as gardens that you can walk through in solitude.

On a recent trip to France and Portugal I enjoyed some fabulous gardens you may not have heard of. Many of them are neighborhood gardens that are frequented by locals who sit and chat, read or picnic. Many of these we don't even think of as "gardens." They all have cobblestone, or gravel paths, benches and often tables and of course lots of plants - trees, shrubs, flowers.

On my first walk upon arriving in Paris I encountered Square Rene -Viviani which is near Notre Dame and Saint Chapelle in the center of Paris - the Latin Quarter.



Montmartre, where many famous artists have lived and created their art has many small gardens. The Basilique de Sacre Coeur sits atop this neighborhood on the highest hill in Paris. This small garden, Square Jehan Rictus, is situated around the “Wall of Love.”



Pere Lachaise Cemetery, established by Napoleon Bonaparte, is the famous resting place of many well known people, from around the world. Gertrude Stein, Edith Piaf, Jim Morrison and many, many others rest in peace amongst beautiful cobblestone paths, trees and flowers.



Surrounding the cemetery is the beautiful park, Parc de Belleville. I was there on a perfect fall day, cool and rainy!

Provence was sunny and warm. The gardens were smaller since the terrain all around is lush and older, think Roman. Provencal towns are small town-like. In Avignon I enjoyed walking through Square Agricola Perdiguier daily.



Arles is even quieter with narrower streets and fewer visitors. The Roman ruins, Jardin d'Ete, the Saturday market, the handcrafted everything, even BEE hotels, and of course the parks like gardens were enchanting.

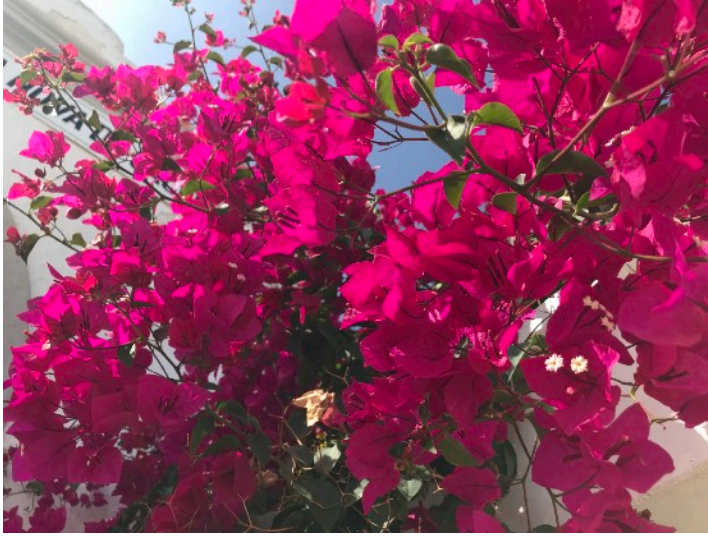


In St. Remy de Provence there was much to love... the Roman ruins, Vincent Van Gogh lore and beautiful trees!



Cassis, the quiet Cote d'Azur city on the French Riviera, is stunning with blue green ocean and bougainvillea everywhere. The entire town is a garden.





Lisbon, Portugal is a vibrant city with tree-lined avenues, and many gardens. I visited the Calouste Gulbenkian museum which was full of historical artifacts and art, and surrounded by gardens. People were strolling through the lawns and plants, eating lunch, feeding ducks, chatting together. It is a quiet, tranquil oasis from the city. The garden is visible from inside the museum and many birds, insects and other animals were easily observed.



Southern Portugal, the Algarve, is sunny, hot and feels tropical. The beaches on the Atlantic and nearby rivers attract many European tourists. Citrus groves are everywhere and the orange juice is always fresh squeezed and delicious! The Algarve had many fires in 2022 and I saw damage as I traveled by train from Lisbon to the small town of Luz. It seemed untouched by the fires and was a jungle of tropical blooming plants, palm trees and agave! Gardens surrounded me everywhere I went.

