



# A Year in Provence

By Peter Mayle

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**A Year in Provence** By Peter Mayle

## National Bestseller

In this witty and warm-hearted account, Peter Mayle tells what it is like to realize a long-cherished dream and actually move into a 200-year-old stone farmhouse in the remote country of the Lubéron with his wife and two large dogs. He endures January's frosty mistral as it comes howling down the Rhône Valley, discovers the secrets of goat racing through the middle of town, and delights in the glorious regional cuisine. **A Year in Provence** transports us into all the earthy pleasures of Provençal life and lets us live vicariously at a tempo governed by seasons, not by days.

*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

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## **A Year in Provence By Peter Mayle Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #50332 in eBooks
- Published on: 2010-05-07
- Released on: 2010-05-19
- Format: Kindle eBook

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

Who hasn't dreamed, on a mundane Monday or frowzy Friday, of chucking it all in and packing off to the south of France? Provençal cookbooks and guidebooks entice with provocatively fresh salads and azure skies, but is it really all Côtes-du-Rhône and fleur-de-lis? Author Peter Mayle answers that question with wit, warmth, and wicked candor in *A Year in Provence*, the chronicle of his own foray into Provençal domesticity.

Beginning, appropriately enough, on New Year's Day with a divine luncheon in a quaint restaurant, Mayle sets the scene and pits his British sensibilities against it. "We had talked about it during the long gray winters and the damp green summers," he writes, "looked with an addict's longing at photographs of village markets and vineyards, dreamed of being woken up by the sun slanting through the bedroom window." He describes in loving detail the charming, 200-year-old farmhouse at the base of the Lubéron Mountains, its thick stone walls and well-tended vines, its wine *cave* and wells, its shade trees and swimming pool--its lack of central heating. Indeed, not 10 pages into the book, reality comes crashing into conflict with the idyll when the Mistral, that frigid wind that ravages the Rhône valley in winter, cracks the pipes, rips tiles from the roof, and tears a window from its hinges. And that's just January.

In prose that skips along lightly, Mayle records the highlights of each month, from the aberration of snow in February and the algae-filled swimming pool of March through the tourist invasions and unpredictable renovations of the summer months to a quiet Christmas alone. Throughout the book, he paints colorful portraits of his neighbors, the Provençaux grocers and butchers and farmers who amuse, confuse, and befuddle him at every turn. *A Year in Provence* is part memoir, part homeowner's manual, part travelogue, and all charming fun. --L.A. Smith

### From Publishers Weekly

The author describes his first 12 months in Provence, after he and his wife have abandoned England for an 18th-century farmhouse in the Luberon Mountains. Throwing themselves into the life of this rural region, they master the local customs, gain partial understanding of their neighbors' patois, overcome the frustrations of French bureaucracy, and learn to deal with workmen who operate on the idiosyncratic Provençal sense of time. In nimble prose, Mayle, columnist for *GQ*, captures the humorous aspects of visits to markets, vineyards and goat races, and hunting for mushrooms. Even donating blood is an occasion for fun. The Provençal cuisine is Mayle's leitmotif, however. He opens with an account of a memorable New Year's lunch, ends with an appreciation of an impromptu Christmas dinner, and describes just about every meal eaten during the months in between. His adventures, gastronomic and otherwise, are thoroughly entertaining. Illustrations not seen by PW.

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### From Library Journal

An amusing account of an English couple's first year as residents of rural Provence, from the unpleasantness of the winter mistral to the transgressions of summer tourists. Since the old farmhouse they purchased needed repairs, they were immediately beset with problems in dealing with the foibles of local craftspeople and officialdom, not to mention the neighbors--human and animal. Nowhere in France is the consumption of food and drink taken more seriously, and food preparation, dining, and wining anecdotes are prominent in virtually every chapter. A Francophile's delight, this is a highly entertaining book which also teaches a lesson in social life and customs. Recommended for most collections. Mayle is the author of such popular books for

children as *Where Did I Come From and What's Happening to Me.* --Ed.  
- *Sondra Brunhumer, Western Michigan Univ. Libs., Kalamazoo*  
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## **Users Review**

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