



Provence A-Z: A Francophile's Essential Handbook (Vintage Departures)

By Peter Mayle

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The ultimate “dictionary” for lovers of Provence: Peter Mayle's personal selection of the foods, customs and words he finds most fascinating, curious, delicious, or just plain fun.

Though organized from A to Z, this is hardly a conventional work of reference. In more than 170 entries, Peter Mayle—bestselling author of *A Year in Provence*—writes about subjects as wide-ranging as architecture and *zingue-zingue-zoun* (in the local patois, a word meant to describe the sound of a violin). And, of course, he writes about food and drink: *vin rosé*, truffles, olives, melons, bouillabaisse, the cheese that killed a Roman emperor, even a cure for indigestion.

Provence A-Z is a delight for Peter Mayle's ever-growing audience and the perfect complement to any guidebook on Provence, or, for that matter, France.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The author of several books set in Provence, including the now classic travel tome *A Year in Provence* and a more recent novel, *A Good Year*, Mayle has once again trapped the sunshine, the wind and the very lavender-laden air of the southeastern French countryside in his prose. The reference-desk title is appropriate if the desk in reference is that of a librarian at your favorite getaway inn in Aix or Marseille. This anecdotal encyclopedia may have been written expressly for discovery on the shelf of a rented *mas*, "a collection of agricultural buildings joined together," and enjoyed over an afternoon repast of Banon, "armed with a fresh baguette and a bottle of local wine." Mayle is the self-appointed pied piper of Provence for Anglophone Francophiles everywhere, and these entries, from "Accent" to "Zingue-Zingue-Zoun," display the same conversational style his fans have come to expect. He includes information about lesser-known sights like the museum of the Foreign Legion and local food like bouillabaisse, but the charm of the book is in unexpected factual gems like "the male goat can copulate up to forty times a day" found in an otherwise straightforward entry about chèvre. Mayle writes beautifully of the seasons—Automne, Été, Hiver and Printemps—which he shares as his own personal Provence with the earnestly planning tourist and the dreamy armchair traveler alike. (*Nov.*)

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From [Booklist](#)

Peter Mayle is synonymous with Provence, the region in the South of France where, as an expatriate from Britain, he has lived for many years and written about in such best-selling nonfiction accounts as *A Year in Provence* (1990) and *Toujours Provence* (1991) and such fun novels as *Hotel Pastis* (1993) and *Chasing Cezanne* (1997). His new book, obviously from the title, is another installment in his coverage of his favorite location and topic. More than 200 entries ranging in length from four lines to two to three pages appear on its pages, in alphabetical order, in which he discusses topics relevant to Provencal life. Although Mayle insists "It's impossible business, trying to squeeze Provence into a single volume," he's done his best. The result is a delightful education for armchair travelers--or actual ones who are heading there for a visit or have previously done so. From "Accent" ("If words were edible, Provencal speech would be a rich, thick, pungent verbal stew") to "Zola, Francois" (father of novelist Emile), a personal and personable book. *Brad Hooper*
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Review

"Mayle's affection for lavender fields and languid lunched continues unabated-and so does his influence."
—*USA Today*

"Mayle's magpie dictionary yields amusing facts . . . and useful information. . . . You'll soon succumb to his road-tested charm."

—*The New York Times Book Review*

"Whether he's smacking his lips in gustatory contentment or mock exasperation, Mayle's affection runneth over. . . . If there is anything charmless or depressing in all of Provence, its secret is safe with him."

—*The Boston Globe*

"After nearly two decades of writing about the character and the characters of Provence, Mayle's love for this rich and colorful region is undiminished."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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What do you regarding book? It is not important with you? Or just adding material when you require something to explain what the one you have problem? How about your extra time? Or are you busy particular person? If you don't have spare time to accomplish others business, it is give you a sense of feeling bored faster. And you have extra time? What did you do? Every person has many questions above. They should answer that question due to the fact just their can do which. It said that about reserve. Book is familiar in each person. Yes, it is appropriate. Because start from on guardería until university need this kind of Provence A-Z: A Francophile's Essential Handbook (Vintage Departures) to read.

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Paul Horn:

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