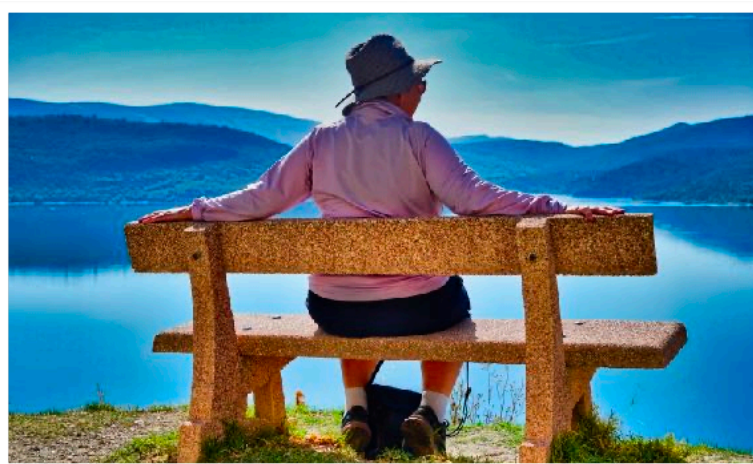


# EUROPE 2023

4 months | 6 countries | 8 house swaps | 10 journey legs | 2 grand-boys



## Lake de Sainte Croix

A longer drive was on the cards for today. We decided to investigate the area to the east of us. It was a two hour drive started at 7.30 so that we got the lovely early morning glow. Day break comes here late — not till 7 o'clock is it truly light. We got some crazy directions from “Emily” (our GPS) that gave us some too close and personal views of a few places. On one occasion we did not help by going the wrong way inside a small village. I found it a bit unnerving on occasions but Siggie enjoyed the experience I think. He seems to be able to drive a vehicle literally anywhere - fitting through even the smallest of spaces.

We left the closer confines of the Luberon and entered some “wider” country that presented fields of grapes, sun flowers and corn. Eventually we came to the valley of the Verdon and the alps of Provence.

The first view of Lake de Sainte Croix was quite spectacular. It was so refreshing to see it after the relatively dry country of the Luberon. The lake was created by damming the Verdon river in the early 1970s. It is now a body of water 12km in length. The views to the mountains beyond (the high alps of Provence) were of layered shapes of light blue and grey. Some of the villages were flooded but others now have a spectacular front yard water view.

On arrival at the lake we mounted our bikes and had a short ride along the foreshore. It was extremely quiet with only a few people enjoying the scene. I'm sure it would not have been like this yesterday (Sunday). With a variety of water craft lining the shore the lake is obviously a water sports paradise. Interesting that all of them were powered by battery.

After our bike ride we strolled a little further and spent a few minutes eating ice cream in a cafe overlooking the sand. The calmness of water was broken by lone swimmers, paddle boarders and an occasional kayak. It was a very serene and peaceful scene in every sense.



Modern shabby sheik

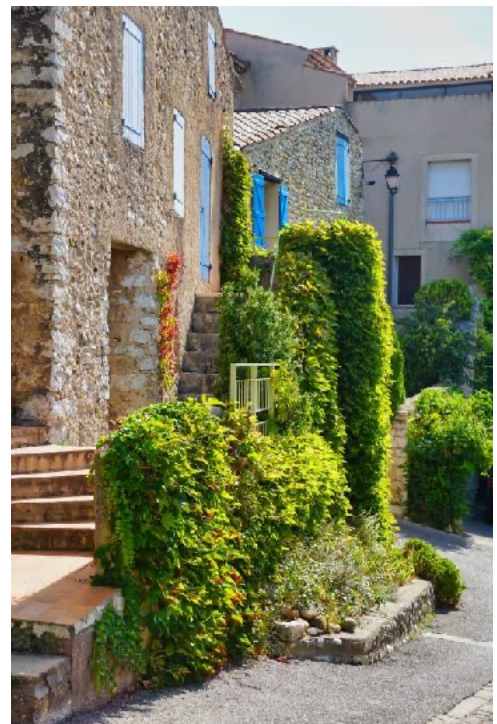


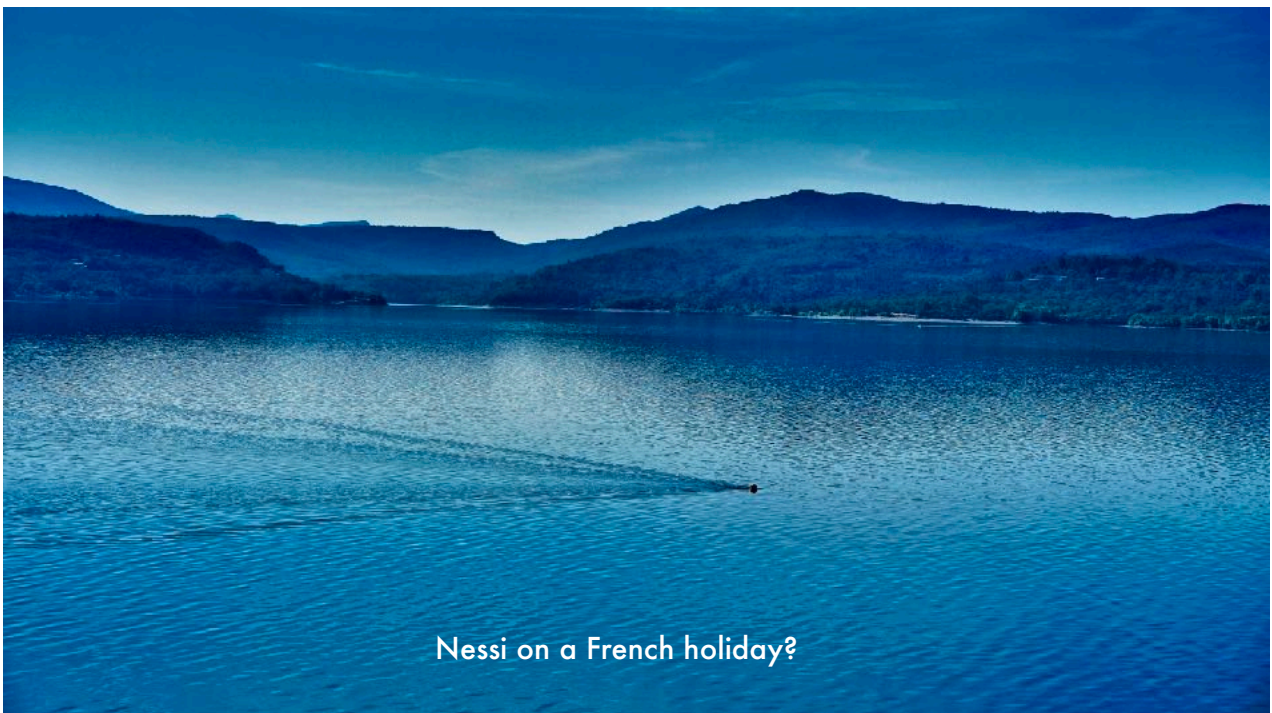
We drove on up the very narrow road trying to find a parking spot in the village that hung from the cliffs above (Sainte Croix du Verdon) but ended up right at the very top of the village. A walk down through the village rewarded us with more spectacular views from this truly picturesque place. It was indeed a unique setting but the steep incline of the streets resulted in lots of deep breathing.

Our trip back home (via a slightly different route) was very pleasant. We turned on music which played a wide variety of artists - classic, modern and those in-between. As soon as Boccelli started to sing, Sigg, as he usually does when his favourite singer comes on, shed a few tears. Lots of happy memories, past travels, family and friends, anniversaries and good times came flooding back - we are in France after all. Life is good.

The rising sun was no longer in our eyes and the wider roads were more gentle on the nerves. Back roads are certainly more interesting because you have to drive slowly and watch every curve and rise which heightens your experiences while major highways, although getting you where you want to go quickly, means you miss so much.

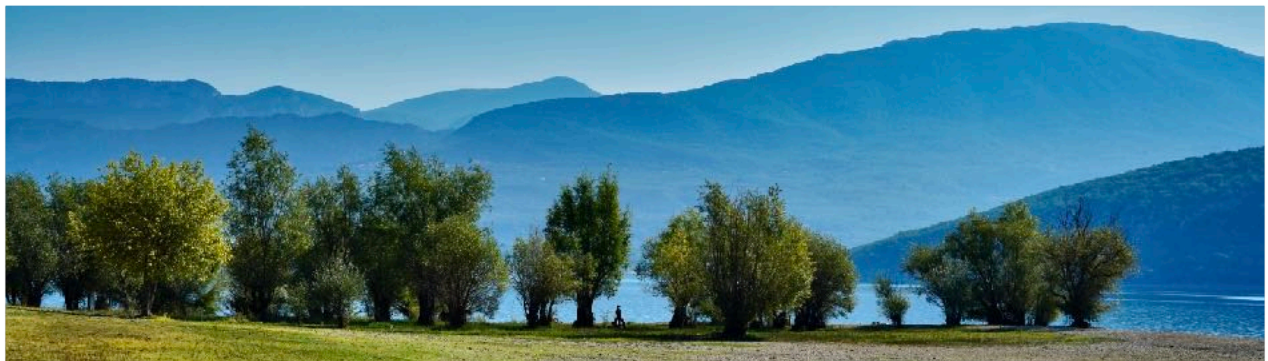
One afternoon task of interest is locating local rubbish outlets. Household rubbish is not collected here in France (at least in this part of the country). One has to separate it into paper, recyclables and general waste and take it to local depositories. It made me wonder how this would pan out in Australia?

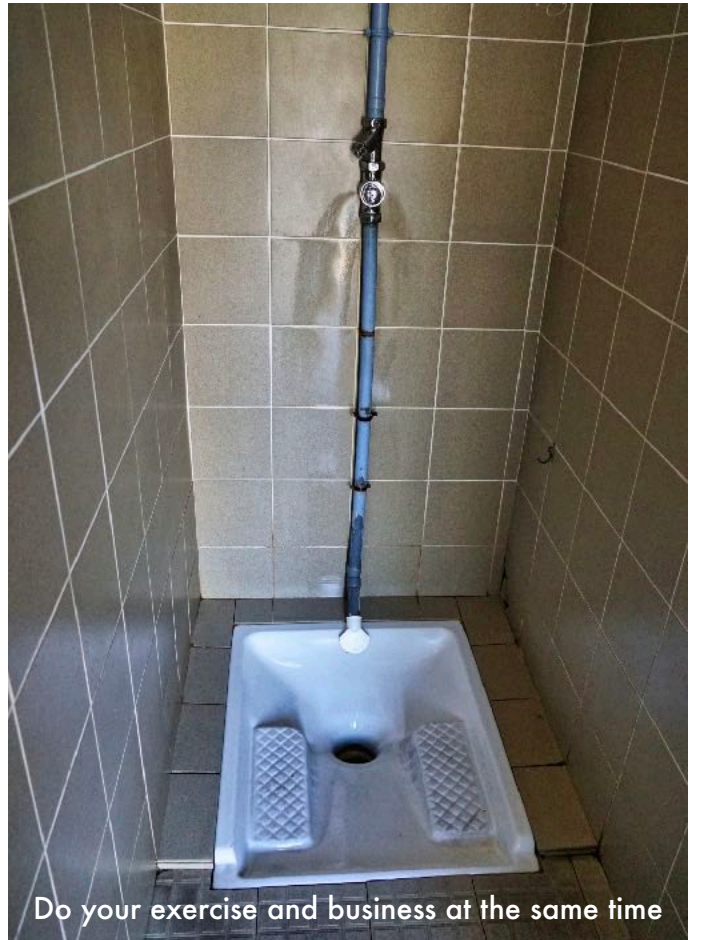




Nessi on a French holiday?







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