

Superb Location of our Villa in western (Roman) Provence

Villa Romantique is less than 1 mile from the historic medieval town of Beaucaire, with its imposing 12th century ruined castle which was built by the Counts of Toulouse, and perches high on a rock overlooking the majestic river Rhone flowing south as it nears the end of its journey to the Mediterranean.

The beautiful Rhone-Sete canal goes in a south-westerly direction from here, and the delightful Beaucaire marina is crammed with colourful boats of all shapes and sizes, and is bordered with many charming restaurants and bars. Alongside the marina, the square with its two fountains is shaded by the typical spreading plane trees (platanes) so loved in village and town squares throughout this region.

Originally known as Ugernum in Roman times 200 years BC, it was a stopping point on the 'Via Domitia', the ancient route from Rome through the south of France to Spain.

Beaucaire - meaning 'beautiful stone' - was the most important market place in the whole of France throughout the Middle Ages and for over 400 years. Prices struck here for commodities such as wine and cheese, gold and silver, salt and spices, fruit and meat, leather and silks, tin and iron, implements, pots and pans, swords and armour became the agreed standard prices throughout France. Its Medieval Fairs attracted over 300,000 buyers and sellers, actors, and performers of all types who came by boat, on foot, by cart and on horseback for 7 days every summer from all over Europe and as far away as Asia. There are countless ancient buildings which bear witness to Beaucaire's great past, for instance the fine Town Hall built in 1679 bearing the inscription – the town motto "Famous for its Fair, Renowned for its Fidelity". The town is steeped in history and still today there are many regular markets, fairs, festivals, processions and celebrations commemorating bygone days and traditions.

Beaucaire looks across the Rhone to its equally lovely neighbour Tarascon with its marvellous Good King Rene's castle, one of the best preserved medieval chateau fortresses in the whole of France, its partly fortified old town, the 17th century Town Hall and grand 19th century theatre – originally a 16th century abbey.