

FROM PARIS TO PROVENCE

FRENCH PAINTING AT THE BARNES





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June 29–August 31

Charting a journey through France, this exhibition examines a selection of French paintings from the Barnes collection through the notion of place—places lived, places visited, places remembered. Beginning with the impressionists in Paris and along the country's northwest coast, the exhibition then follows Vincent van Gogh and Paul Cézanne to the South of France, where Cézanne's home region of Provence provided a pastoral yet modern counterpoint to cosmopolitan Paris. By the early 20th century, the impressionists and post-impressionists enjoyed international recognition, prompting artists from across Europe to move to Paris, including Amedeo Modigliani, Chaïm Soutine, Giorgio de Chirico, and Joan Miró.

From the dynamic suburbs of the capital to Cézanne's country estate called the Jas de Bouffan, *From Paris to Provence* explores the specific places that informed the subjects, palettes, and painting techniques of these artists. With France as its center, this exhibition considers how travel—both abroad and at home—enriches and impacts life and art.

This exhibition was organized by Cindy Kang, curator at the Barnes.

Dr. Barnes's Travels in France

In 1912, Dr. Albert C. Barnes sent his friend, the American artist William Glackens, to Paris with \$20,000 to purchase modern European art. Glackens acquired 33 works, which laid the foundation for Dr. Barnes's renowned collection.

After that initial trip, Barnes began to travel to France for his own collecting expeditions; he visited Europe at least once a year for the rest of his life, interrupted only by war. His travels throughout France exposed him to new art and deepened his relationships with artists and dealers. As his collection grew, so did his appreciation for all things French, from quaint seaside villages to the great wines of Burgundy.



Dr. Albert C. Barnes on the interior deck of a steamship, undated. Unidentified photographer. Photograph Collection, BFA

"I had a wonderful time; two solid weeks in Paris looking at pictures nearly all the time, and especially hunting around among the small dealers and obscure cafés to find new talent."

Letter. Albert C. Barnes to Max Kuehne, July 26, 1921. Albert C. Barnes Correspondence, Barnes Foundation Archives (BFA)

Road Trip to the South

In 1921, Dr. Barnes traveled through the South of France, where he encountered the landscapes that inspired artists like Paul Cézanne and Pierre-Auguste Renoir.



"One of the most delightful experiences I ever had was two days spent at Renoir's house at Cagnes . . . Another epoch-making experience was a week's motor trip through the Chateau district and through the valleys of the Dordogne and Tarne. The beauty of this scenery it would be impossible to even hint at except to say I have never seen anything . . . that can compare with it in wild grandeur and beauty. I motored with Mr. George Durand-Ruel and stopped for two days at his estate in Dordogne, which consists of an old chateau . . . where he lives like a feudal baron of old."

Letter. Albert C. Barnes to Max Kuehne, July 26, 1921. Albert C. Barnes Correspondence, BFA

Pierre-Auguste Renoir. *Farmhouse*, 1917. The Barnes Foundation, BF47

Dr. Barnes's Breton Affair



Art dealer Georges Keller introduced Dr. Barnes to Port Manec'h, a charming village in Brittany where he envisioned installing a European outpost of the Barnes Foundation. This educational and cultural center would serve the local community and welcome artists from all over to work in peace. In 1937, his attempt to buy the hotel Tante Jeanne for this purpose proved unsuccessful; however, Barnes did purchase a dog called Fidèle from the proprietor of the inn.

"We lived in [Port Manec'h], a small fishing village right on the sea in a tiny inn where the cooking was as good as anything I had ever had in France. I got to know intimately the not more than 100 inhabitants, all of them fishermen, and I participated in all the local celebrations, including the religious one on August 15th where my position as honorary president of the Prefecture called upon me to lead the procession even in advance of the priest."

Letter. Albert C. Barnes to J.Th. Piek, August 20, 1945. Albert C. Barnes Correspondence, BFA

In this 1938 travel flyer for Port Manec'h, the hotel Tante Jeanne sits on a hill near the port.
Albert C. Barnes Personal Papers, BFA

A Connoisseur of French Wines

Dr. Barnes's love of French culture was not limited to aesthetic output. Through his travels, he developed a passion for the nation's wines, which he championed as a member of the Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin, an organization dedicated to preserving the legacy of winemaking in the Burgundy region.



"I got acquainted with [famed Michelin chef Alexandre] Dumaine, and each year since then . . . I have spent several days with him and devoted much of my time to learning from that great connoisseur the qualities of the various Burgundy wines. . . . All this is a cherished memory."

Letter. Albert C. Barnes to Jules Bohy, February 1, 1949. Albert C. Barnes Correspondence, BFA

—Written and researched by Chase Frost, Curatorial Pathways Intern



Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin membership card, December 4, 1946. Albert C. Barnes Correspondence, BFA

Barnes with Fidèle on the steamship *Normandie*, 1938. Photograph by Georges F. Doriot.
Photograph Collection, BFA

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