



## Offsites, Meet-ups, and Retreats in our house in France

Many friends and associates have visited the 1600s house where we live in the south of France. It's an inspiring place to meet, create, and connect. "Can I bring a team here for an off-site?" someone asked, and "you should do retreats here, or meet-ups" suggested others. It took some time for the house to agree but now we're ready for you.

**To do things differently, we need to see things differently** - and that's what my talks and workshops around the world are about. I reframe questions, and alert you to edge projects and networks where transformational change is emerging.

The approach seems to be effective. Three quarters of my clients say our session was "inspiring". McKinsey Quarterly called me "a global expert on innovation and the green economy". And for Business Week, I'm "one of the great voices on sustainability".

Readers of my last book, *How To Thrive In The Next Economy*, too, have celebrated its "vision with the potential to transform", its "inspiring insights about the future" and the "real world examples that triggered us to take action".

But watching me on a stage, or chatting together in a noisy room, are low bandwidth ways to interact. There are better ways.

### Off-sites (for companies and professionals)

If you come to an offsite here as a single group, you'll get my exclusive attention. I'll cast fresh eyes on your project, or plan, and suggest new ways to frame the questions you arrive with. The ideal number is five to ten people. Before you come, we discuss your needs by skype. When you are here, I typically work with you and your team for two hours in the morning. You then work in groups, or reflect quietly on your own. Then we get together again at the end of each day.

## Meet-ups

We also host week-long meet-ups a couple of times a year for individuals: students, researchers, writers, or designers - including xskool alumni. Our meet-ups are ideal if you're working on a thesis, or project, and could use time-out to think, reflect, and get feedback from me and some other fresh minds in the group.

In the morning and evening of a meet-up, I'm available to give you project feedback, or help with your presentation, or ask-me-anything, 1:1.

## The house

We're in an imposing town house dating from the 1600s in the old centre of a small market town. The house faces onto a pedestrian street. The space we offer is ideal for between one and ten people.

The house contains:

- meeting and/or talking spaces with tables, solid chairs, and sofas
- an outside veranda and walled courtyard (200m<sup>2</sup>) to talk, eat, or ponder;
- a ground floor workroom/summer-kitchen
- showers and toilets.
- wifi everywhere

We live on the first floor and converted the downstairs and the second floor into an *Apartment*, a *Studio* and the *Yellow Room*. The staircase connects all and gives the spaces their independent access.

## Accommodation

Our house can comfortably sleep 8-10 people. The standard configuration is:

*The Apartment* 2nd floor (90m<sup>2</sup>):

Duplex. Fully equipped kitchen and small salon with a writing nook, a fire place and a wc.

*Sleeping*: one floor up via an open staircase, a spacious room with 1 large double bed (= 2 single mattresses on a 180cm base, single bedding)

+ In the same room an additional single bed.

+ On the same floor separated by a sliding door a "monk's cel" with one single bed.

+ 1 bathroom with wc and bath tub/shower

*The Studio* Ground floor (40m<sup>2</sup>):

One standard double bed (140cm) and one sofa bed (single). Shower room and wc.

*The Yellow Room* Ground floor (17m<sup>2</sup>):

small-double bed (or large single ...), 120cm.

Shower room to be shared with the occupants of the *Studio* (Shower room has independent entry).

There is an additional wc on the same floor.

All spaces have tables, chairs and comfortable writing/reading nooks.

Of course we supply the basics: bedding, towels, etc. We can add 2 extra beds if needed.

If numbers go up, or if you need more single-rooms than we can provide, we can point you to local rooms for rent.



*The CasaNatural Crew stayed in the Apartment in 2018*



*sleeping quarters in the Apartment*





*the stone central staircase*

## Food and drink

Self-serve. There are multiple kitchens in the house, equipped and supplied with the basics or more. Bakeries, market, supermarkets are in walking distance. Restaurants, bars, cafes are within 5 minutes walk; we're happy to recommend. Also, we can organise a "chef a domicile".

## Getting here

Montpellier or Nîmes: less than one hour  
Arles, Avignon: ninety min.  
Marseille: two hours

### *Connections to Ganges*

Tram/Bus from Montpellier: ask us  
Pick-up from station/airport: ask us

## The town

Our food market is 50m from the house  
Our house is in the historic centre of the small (4,000 people) market town of Ganges. It lies at the confluence of the Rieutord, Hérault, and Vis rivers (great river swimming holes and waterfalls). The sea is 40 km away. Shops, banks, the medical centre, a local hospital, the town hall, the cinema, the theatre - all are a couple of minutes away on foot.

## About John Thackara

Founder of Doors of Perception, Senior Fellow at the Royal College of Art in London, and visiting professor at Tongji University in Shanghai, John travels the world looking for below-the-radar examples of what a sustainable future can be like. He writes about these stories online, and in books; he also advises cities, companies, and institutions on how to get started. His most recent book - *How To Thrive In the Next Economy* (Thames & Hudson) - has now also been published in China (2019).



*extensive CV* <http://thackara.com/working-with-john-thackara/>

## The Cévennes

Ganges is southern gateway to the Cévennes National Park, a world heritage ecological site; our region is #1 for ecological health and biodiversity in France. The region's shepherds have helped shape the landscape over centuries. Culturally, the region has been a "terre de refuge" for centuries. From the first Gabale tribes to Résistance fighters in World War Two, and eventually hippies in the 1970s, the Cévennes has long been been a region of dissenters, rebels, fugitives and nonconformists. And now, you :)

## Price

No two off-sites or meet-ups are ever the same, so we don't have a standard price list. But if you send us an email, we'll reply swiftly.

## Contact

[meeting@thackara.com](mailto:meeting@thackara.com)

## Testimonials

*"The surroundings are soooooo beautiful".*

*"We really loved the apartment, it's light, airy, comfortable, and well-equipped"*

*"the perfect place to hide out and finish writing that thesis, project proposal, or book"*

*"Very spacious, centrally located, and the kitchen and bathroom amenities are new"*

*"the Studio is newly renovated, comfy and has an impressive library!"*