

IN THE ARTIST'S STUDIO

A select group of Rolls-Royce guests took part in an experiential art event that enabled them to meet some of Europe's leading artists and collectors, while enjoying the comfort and style of a dedicated Rolls-Royce fleet

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It is late August in the south of France. Blue skies, brilliant sunshine and breathtaking landscapes await an elite group of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars' guests as they gather for what promises to be a quite extraordinary experience.

They are taking part in the first ever Rolls-Royce Motor Cars European Art Drive. A unique event that saw them gain privileged access to artists' homes and studios, stay in bespoke accommodation and sample some of the finest cuisine in the region. Interspersed with the art and gastronomy, the customers, who came from the south of France as well as Switzerland, Italy and Germany, were able to drive the entire range of Rolls-Royce cars around some spectacular scenery: it was an experiential event unlike any other.

Day one began with a private visit to Gallery Guy Pieters in St. Paul de Vence, one of the oldest medieval towns on the French →

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ART DRIVE

Riviera. Guy Pieters is a central figure in the world of modern and contemporary art collecting and is widely known for his flair for discovering new talent. Guy personally welcomed the guests into his gallery and later his home for an evening drink, where they were able to talk to him about contemporary art trends in a relaxed environment. Even those unfamiliar with contemporary art found that they were learning something new from an expert in the field.

Dinner on this first evening was taken on the terrace at La Colombe d'Or, a beautiful hotel and restaurant with an art collection to rival any small museum.

Day two began with a drive south along the riviera to visit the studio of the internationally renowned French conceptual artist Bernar Venet. Venet works in different media – sculpture, painting, photography, film, music composition, performance art and furniture design. But he is perhaps best known for his Indeterminate Lines, Arcs, Angles and Straight Lines sculptures – some so big that they have to be transported in pieces to be assembled on location. One such example is shown on the previous page, dwarfing the Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Wraith placed in front of it with enormous self supporting steel beams.

This extraordinary experience for customers was then followed by a drive into the hills of Provence for lunch at the Institut-Gastronomie-Riviera. A training ground for professional chefs, the Institut is not usually open to the public as a restaurant but an exception was made for Rolls-Royce by Nicholas Denis and his team, led by head chef Christophe Guibert.

All through this second day customers were able to drive the Phantom Drop Head, Ghost Series II or Wraith as they wove their way through the villages in the spectacular Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region. Each of them later acknowledged that the trip offered the perfect combination: the elegance and bespoke craftsmanship that goes into each and every Rolls-Royce Motor Car allied to learning about the making of contemporary art and nouvelle cuisine: all in an unhurried and special atmosphere.

Later on during the second day a visit to the private automobile collection of Dr Arnold Kawlath was yet another memorable moment. The family behind the collection (all of which are registered and driven regularly around the world) live in the hills just 15 minutes from Cannes, and it is here, in a mirrored garage, that nine classic automobiles take pride of place. Famous marques such as Alvis, Jaguar, Packard and a Bentley from 1949, at the time the brand was part of Rolls-Royce, were on display.

That evening dinner was taken at Villa Arman, hosted by Corice Arman, wife of the late, great French-American painter Arman. Arman is best-known for his 'accumulations' and sculptures that destroy and recombine objects and was a contemporary of Andy Warhol, who filmed him at a performance in 1964. Arman's wife welcomed customers into their villa for an unforgettable evening. One customer described the villa as a "surrealist wonderland".

The final day revolved around brunch at Sylvie Farhi's home. Wife of the late French sculptor Jean Claude Farhi, this climax of the weekend was yet another example of unprecedented access, with an in-depth insight into Jean Claude's atelier and home. Like Venet, Farhi created monumental sculptures often more than 30 metres high. One example, called *Dissemination* greets passengers at Nice's international airport.

Brunch at Chez Farhi was a truly fitting way to end this unique weekend - what more could one ask for? RR

RR will be covering the 2015 Art Drive event which takes place in Belgium later this year.

GALLERY GUY PIETERS

a unique collection of modern and contemporary art, such as this captivating sculpture



LA COLOMBE D'OR

a beautiful hotel and restaurant that has hosted many well-known artists



BERNAR VENET

best known for his Indeterminate Lines, Arcs, Angles and Straight Lines sculptures – some so big that they have to be transported in pieces to be assembled on location



INSTITUT-GASTRONOMIE-RIVIERA

the Institut is not usually open to the public but an exception was made for Rolls-Royce



PRIVATE CAR COLLECTION

nine classic automobiles take pride of place in this private automobile collection



VILLA ARMAN

Arman's wife welcomed customers into their villa for an unforgettable evening



JEAN CLAUDE FARHI

the late French sculptor created extraordinary artworks that have defined his legacy



UNIQUE JOURNEY

The Art Drive gave customers an opportunity to experience the entire Rolls-Royce Motor Cars range