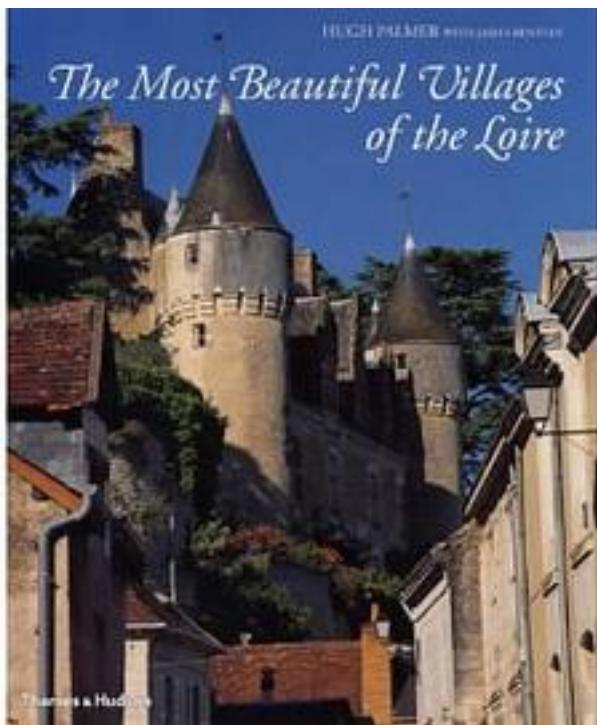


The Most Beautiful Villages of the Loire



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Usually associated with splendid Renaissance châteaux and historical monuments, the Loire valley is in fact a place of even greater interest than the image of popular perception. The Loire River itself is the longest in France and passes through a succession of landscapes, many of them of a richness that proves this is truly "the garden of France." And there is variety too, reflected in the buildings and settings of the beautiful villages so stunningly illustrated in this book. Traveling west, James Bentley and Hugh Palmer take us first to the communities around Orléans, the villages of the Loiret and Cher départements. We then progress to the lands around Blois and Tours, where, it is said, the purest French is spoken. Here begin the villages with the great

châteaux, such as Chambord, Cheverny, and Azay-le-Rideau, reached by long roads lined with poplars or lying beside the banks of one of the many tributaries of the Loire. The slopes here are frequently vine-clad, producing the delicious white wines that make such a fine accompaniment to the traditional fish cuisine of the region. And finally we arrive at the villages around Angers and Nantes where willow-lined rivers divide a landscape of quiet opulence, and green fields alternate with market gardens growing vegetables, flowers, and fruit. Over thirty villages of the Loire valley are described and beautifully photographed in this book, which is completed by special sections on wine and food and abbeys and churches. As with all the volumes in The Most Beautiful Villages series, there are appendices listing the most important sites, markets, hotels, and restaurants. 275 color illustrations.

作者介绍:

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