

Letter 463  
Arles, 21 February 1888

My dear Theo,

During my journey I thought of you at least as much as I did of the new country I was seeing.

Only I said to myself that perhaps later on you will often be coming here yourself. It seems to me almost impossible to work in Paris unless one has some place of retreat where one can recuperate and get one's tranquillity and poise back. Without that, one would get hopelessly stultified.

And now I'll begin by telling you that there's about two feet of snow everywhere, and more is still falling. Arles doesn't seem to me any bigger than Breda or Mons.

Before getting to Tarascon I noticed a magnificent landscape of huge yellow rocks, piled up in the strangest and most imposing forms. In the little village between these rocks were rows of small round trees with olive-green or grey-green leaves, which I think were lemon trees.

But here in Arles the country seems flat. I have seen some splendid red stretches of soil planted with vines, with a background of mountains of the most delicate lilac. And the landscapes in the snow, with the summits white against a sky as luminous as the snow, were just like the winter landscapes that the Japanese have painted.

Here is my address:

Restaurant Carrel,

30 Rue Cavalerie, Arles

(Departement Bouches du Rhône).

I have seen only a little of the town so far, as I was pretty beat last night.

I'll write soon. Yesterday in an antique shop on the same street, the man told me that he knew of a Monticelli. With a handshake for you and the comrades.

Ever yours, Vincent