

Sunbury Antiques Market Kempton, UK

Dealers descend on Kempton Park Racecourse twice-monthly to exhibit at the Sunbury Antiques fair – they have been known to number over 700 on occasion. Easy to reach from west London, the market is popular with the Notting Hill set, who head across from the capital on the second and last Tuesday of each month with a view to furnishing their flats, utilising the handy onsite courier service that will take anything to your home for just £2 a mile. Case in point? Interiors mavens like Anouska Lancaster are market regulars, as are film-set stylists and creatives across London. Steven Spielberg has even been spotted eyeing up the wares. THE DETAIL 25 July, 8/29 Aug, 12/26 Sept, 6.30am-2pm; early entry £5, free after 8am. sunburyantiques.com/kempton

L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue Provence, France

Tucked between the lazy meanders of the Sorgue river, the Provençal town of L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue is a curio collectors' paradise. Throughout the year, resident dealers spill out on to pavements in the city centre, displaying vintage Pernod signs and glittering chandeliers under the glorious blue Provençal sky. When the international fair rolls into town twice a year, expect over 2,000 visiting exhibitors scattered across encampments between houses, bartering over teetering towers of French linen, elegant china and even vintage cars. Le Jardin du Quai jardin-du-quai.com offers a simple bistro lunch amid the bustle, while the 18th-century, antiques-filled La Bastide de Marie hotel labastidedemarie.com 20 minutes' drive away, is a calm oasis among verdant vineyards. THE DETAIL 11-15 Aug; free. uk.islesurlasorguetourisme.com



CORNER THE MARKET

Getting lost in a great market is one of the joys of visiting a new destination, but which are the best antique markets for bargain hunters and connoisseurs? Lucy Kehoe tours Europe to reveal choice finds

Ardingly International Antiques and Collector's Fair West Sussex, UK

Continental influences imbue this antique fair near Ardingly, West Sussex, thanks to lorry-loads of high-quality European decorative items – lacquered commodes, delicate French fabrics and exquisite antique silver – arriving at the showground from as far afield as Hungary several times a year. Pair ramblings around the fair with a visit to Wakehurst kew.org the historical country estate owned by Kew Gardens. With 17 elegantly appointed rooms and a Michelin-starred restaurant overlooking glorious gardens, Gravetye Manor gravetyemanor.co.uk lies a short drive from the showground – the perfect bookend to a mid-week break away exploring Ardingly's antiques. THE DETAIL 5-6 Sept; entry £20. iacf.co.uk/ardingly

Newark Antiques & Collectors Fair

Newark and Nottinghamshire Showground, UK

You'll need stamina to tackle what is billed as Europe's largest antique fair when it descends six times a year. Over 30 years old, and sprawling across 34 hectares, this vast show, two hours from London, is a favourite for serious dealers, with Goldscheider figurines selling for up to £2,000 and hagglers arriving from 5am for an 8 or 9am start. Thanks to its size, collectables are diverse; expect everything from naval memorabilia and vintage jelly moulds to overstuffed armchairs and patina-clad garden antiques sold by knowledgeable vendors. Make it a weekend by booking a suite at the historic Langar Hall Hotel, langarhall.com 30 minutes' drive away. THE DETAIL 10-11 Aug, entry from £6. iacf.co.uk/newark

Photos by Angela Dukes; Shutterstock; Unsplash; Miika Baumeister; Alain Hocquet; Stefano Cellai



Clockwise from far left: you'll find ornate clocks, vintage publications and even doors if you know where to look; a Kempton seller; Arezzo; bric-a-brac aplenty; plus finer things; syphons for retro lovers; be prepared to rummage





La Braderie de Lille takes over the Old Town in early September

Marché aux Puces de Saint-Ouen Paris, France

The labyrinth-like streets of the Puces de Saint-Ouen were once the lawless haunts of Paris' petty thieves. Now all 14 districts of the market in the north of central Paris have been transformed into a collectors' cache of era-spanning shops and stalls. Beware its size: this idiosyncratic market is too vast to explore in a day. Head to Marché Dauphine to find authentic Louis XVI furniture or dive into the Marché Serpette for shelves of vintage Louis Vuitton handbags. After a morning spent digging through Hermès silk scarves, the bistro menu at L'Esquisse esquisse-paris18.fr a 20-minute walk away, entices with its playful twists on French favourites. THE DETAIL Sat/Sun; Mon from 11am; free. pucesdeparissaintouen.com

La Braderie de Lille Lille, France

Antiques aficionados hotly await the September dates of Europe's largest flea market, which takes over Lille's enchanting, 17th-century Old Town and fills 100km of cobbled streets with 10,000 stalls selling anything from majolica cabbage-leaf plates and Bourbon-era relics to eclectic objets d'art. Just as important as the antiques, however, is the city's appetite, as restaurants across Lille serve vast quantities of *moules frites* for the festivities, a flea market tradition dating back to the 15th century that culminates in a mussel shell competition. For a sweet-toothed pitstop, head to the iconic patisserie Méert meert.fr on rue Esquermoise to scoff signature *gaufre* waffles beneath the chromolithographed and gilded 18th-century ceiling. THE DETAIL 2-3 Sept; free. braderie-de-lille.fr

Vlooiemarkt IJ-Hallen Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Once the ship-building district, NDSM Wharf is now Amsterdam's creative quarter, playing host to the vast IJ-Hallen second-hand market one or two weekends a month. A free ferry ride will take you from the city centre to the wharf. Pick up breakfast at circular bakery Bbrood bbrood.nl before soaking up the atmosphere inside two industrial warehouses packed with second-hand furnishings. Elsewhere on the Wharf, 80-odd artists' studios house experimental artworks and Straat Museum straatmuseum.com showcases the city's street-art stars. Come sunset, the informal Plek plek.nl pairs relaxed dining with waterside views. THE DETAIL 5-6, 26-27 Aug, 16-17, 30 Sept-1 Oct; entry £5.15. ijhallen.nl

Avenida Da Liberdade Antique Market Lisbon, Portugal

Lisbon's most luxurious avenue, the tree-shaded Avenida da Liberdade, hosts a well-heeled alternative flea market to the city's infamous Feira da Ladra on the second weekend of the month and some extra Saturdays. Prices are high among the respected sellers - but the goods laid out on port-coloured tablecloths are authentic antiques sourced from across Portugal. Dining options around the market are similarly opulent. Head to Pedro Pena Bastos' Cura fourseasons.com for a lunchtime tasting menu of contemporary Portuguese cuisine. Nearby The One Palácio da Anunciada hotelstheone.com provides a regal place to rest your head, and guests have access to a rooftop pool - a rarity in Lisbon. THE DETAIL 12-13, 26 Aug, 9-10, 23 Sept; free. visitlisboa.com

Marché des Antiquaires du Sablon Brussels, Belgium

Head to the historic place du Grand Sablon for antique book selections and palatial European furnishings, tidily stacked beneath the angelic arches of the square's 15th-century church - rest assured, there's no rummaging among bric-a-bric at this weekend market. When you need a break, we'd skip the queues at Pierre Marcolini's flagship store - despite the chocolatier's celebrity - located right beside the market and slip into nearby rival Neuhaus neuhauschocolates.com to fix chocolate cravings. The Belgium chocolatier invented praline as a way to administer medicines - and the brand's modern-day iteration is every bit as addictive. THE DETAIL Sat/Sun mornings; free. markets.brussels.be

Jeu de Balle Brussels, Belgium

Watch your step: every morning, traders lay out wares on blankets and tables in the cobbled place du Jeu de Balle in Brussels' street-art-stamped Marolles district. This famous market has been selling curios since 1873 - expect to pick up trinkets you never knew you wanted at impressive prices. Keep an eye out for original Hergé *Tintin* comics between the antique crossbows, mid-century dining sets, oil paintings of pastoral Flemish landscapes and crates of antique silverware. Afterwards, sidestep the backgammon-playing old-timers and errant accordion players to find rue Blaes for a browse of the city's permanent *brocante* vintage shops. THE DETAIL Every morning; free. markets.brussels.be



'Antiques aficionados hotly await the September dates of Europe's largest flea market, which takes over Lille's 17th-century Old Town, and just as important is the town's appetite: vast quantities of *moules frites* are served'

Clockwise from top left: stalls of linen; silver; and homewares; L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue; brass finds; stall over the Sorgue; classic frames; vintage toys; and cars for collectors



Photos by Angela Dukes; Shutterstock; Blossom Green



Clockwise from above left: get the full set; meet knowledgeable vendors; a colourful array for aficionados; be diverted by vintage items; ask about the origins of items you fancy; a frame to suit every picture; find a one-off; combine a trip to Paris with Pucés; history in portraits

Birkelunden Flea Market Oslo, Norway

Oslo's urbane Grünerløkka district deserves a weekend's worth of exploring. With something akin to the energy of New York's Williamsburg, this creative hub is a hive of coffee shops, bars and - in the large Birkelunden Park - a weekly flea market. Start explorations at [Oslovelo oslovelo.no](http://Oslovelo.oslovelo.no) a coffee shop/bike centre that's something of a social hub, then get into the swing of shopping with a visit to Velouria Vintage velouria.vintage.no before winding through Woodstock-worthy fringed jackets and leather Eames lounge chairs at the flea market. End the day with oenophiles at Territoriet wine bar territoriet.no THE DETAIL Sun, from 12pm; free.

Antique Market at Ostbahnhof Berlin, Germany

Of the myriad weekend flea markets around Berlin, the bohemian collection of stalls set out by professional sellers to the north of the German capital's Ostbahnhof station is a collectors' favourite. Best in summer, join Berliners strolling between alleyways formed by elegant mid-century modern home furnishings, jewellery, porcelain and abstract modern artwork, before visiting Hotel Amano East Side amanogroup.de in the city, located a short stroll away, between the station and the East Side Gallery. The hotel's rooftop terrace is a paradisaical spot for late summer evenings lingering over cocktails. THE DETAIL Sun; free. visitberlin.de

Radschlägermarkt Düsseldorf, Germany

Once Germany's fashion capital and art epicentre, Düsseldorf has long harboured artists and eccentrics along its architecturally impressive streets. Follow the cool crowd to the city's popular flea market, the Radschlägermarkt, held on one Sunday of each month, to explore a sprawl of antique merchandise famed for its late 20th-century goods carted in from the Netherlands, Belgium and further afield. Join locals curating their vintage get-ups, grab Eighties Neue Deutsche Welle vinyls from record collectors and then head back into the city centre for a dinner of sophisticated sharing plates at The Kitchen thekitchenduesseldorf.de a minimalist city bistro with a killer German-led wine list. THE DETAIL 13 Aug, 10 Sept, from 11am; free. radschlaegermarkt-duesseldorf.de

Mercatino Antiquariato Campo San Maurizio Venice, Italy

Flea markets in Venice are tricky to track down, but one of the city's most charming that occurs just five or so times a year is worth seeking out, with the next in mid-September. Faded, striped awnings protect moody oil paintings and gilded mirror frames on display at Campo San Maurizio's Mercatino Antiquariato while tables glittering with rosary beads and fragile Murano chandeliers teeter below the Juliet-balconied historic buildings around the square. Prepare to be hustled by sharp-tongued Venetian nonnas seeking nostalgic curiosities. Make like a Venetian by scoffing a scoop of *gelato al limone* at Gelateria Paolin on Campo Santo Stefano before browsing. Want something more substantial? Seven minutes away, Ombra del Leone ombradelleone.com serves quality, simple seafood with views across the Grand Canal. THE DETAIL 15-17 Sept; free. mercatinocamposanmaurizio.it

Flohmarkt am Naschmarkt Vienna, Austria

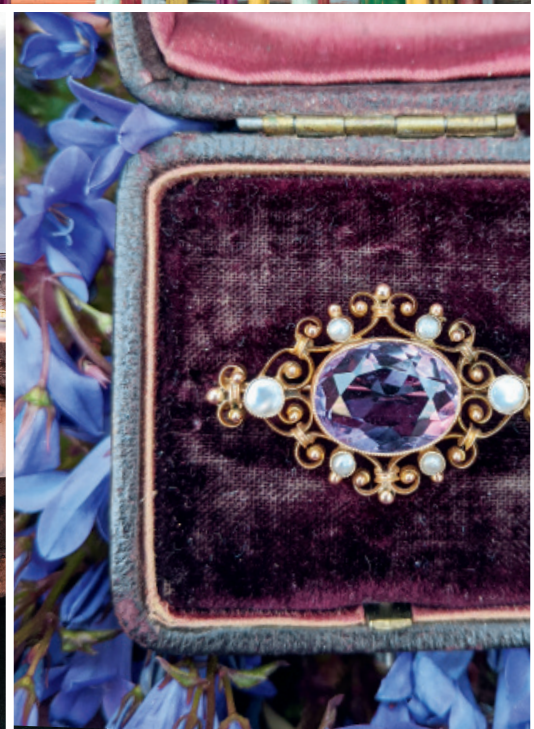
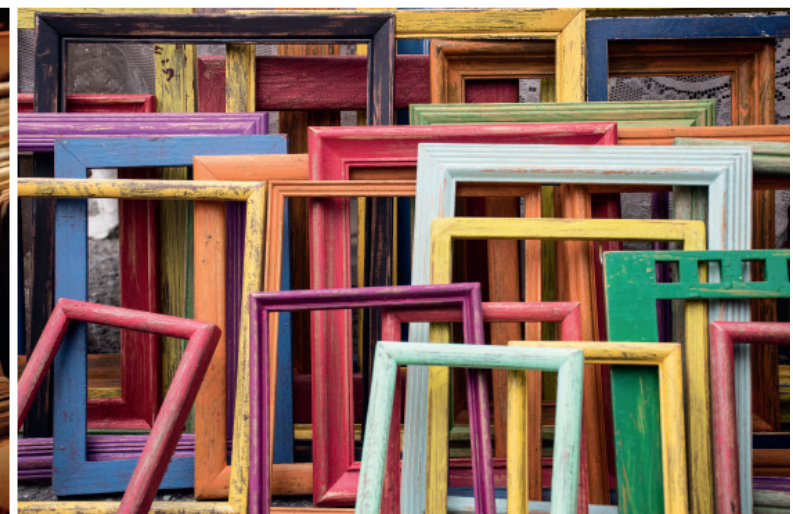
Stalls of professional dealers sit cheek-by-jowl with kitsch curios at Vienna's best-loved flea fair, right next to the city's sprawling general market. Open every Saturday, the 400-strong stalls set up shop a short stroll from the elegant Kettenbrückengasse metro station, selling historic items from Soviet-made cameras to ornate Austro-Hungarian cabinets and sickle-stamped military memorabilia. At least half the market stalls are reserved for professional antiques dealers, but if you're seeking something specific, make tracks to the area around the famous Dorotheum auction house in the Innere Stadt, the city's antiques district. THE DETAIL Sat mornings; free. wien.gv.at

Mercadillo Histórico Del Jueves Seville, Spain

Residents of Feria, Seville's bohemian district, are woken up early every Thursday by the dulcet tones of market traders greeting each other as they set up shop in the empty cobbled streets. Calle Feria's weekly flea market specialises in all things Spanish, so expect to see patina-patched crucifixes, flaking iconography, clinking old keys and intricately hand-painted fans on sale. Traders drive a hard bargain, so prepare to haggle, then duck inside the cool interiors of Antigua Abacería de San Lorenzo, an atmospheric bodega just off the square, to refuel on chorizo plates and refreshingly crisp fino sherry. THE DETAIL Thurs mornings; free.

Fiera Antiquaria di Arezzo Tuscany, Italy

The sun has barely kissed the crumbling, honeyed walls of Arezzo's Renaissance-era streets when traders begin unloading their wares at one of Italy's best-regarded antiques markets on the first weekend of the month. Visitors trickle in a few hours later, manoeuvring between walnut dressers, baroque chests and ornate chairs - allegedly owned by the Medicis - in search of exclusive offerings in this Tuscan town. Prepare to haggle but don't expect bargains: traders know their stock and won't let 17th-century oil paintings go for a song. Hotels are hard to come by in central Arezzo, but there are numerous apartments to rent, many just minutes from the Piazza Grande - la Corte del Re lacortedelre.net has a range of accommodation. THE DETAIL 5-6 Aug, 2-3 Sept; free. fieraantiquaria.org



Photos by Angela Dukes; Unsplash; Jessica Ruscello; Anthony Delanoix