

FRANCE TODAY

The Magazine of French Travel and Culture

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**The New
Louvre-Lens**

**Volcano Skiing
in Auvergne**

**A Young Designer
Flying High**

**Jura Wines on
the Upswing**

VOLUME 28, NO. 1
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**Inside:
2013 Travel Study Guide**



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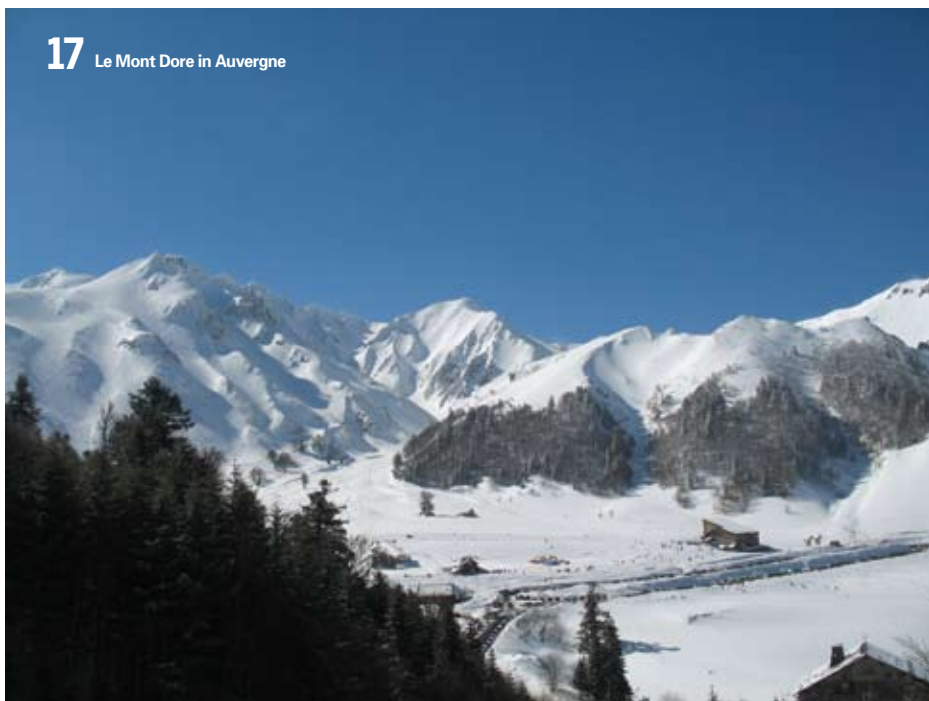
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Mont Dore © OT Sancy; Ciel de Paris © Vincent Leroux; Temps Machine; vase © London, British Museum, Greece and Rome; Audiard © Tim Whitby/Getty Images for BFI

Publisher Louis F. Kyle

Editor-in-Chief Judy Fayard

Associate Editor/Web Manager
Vivian Thomas

Editorial Assistant Claire Senard

Art Direction Joey Rigg

Contributors

Julien Bisson, Andrea Bolitho, Lanie Goodman, Jeffrey T. Iverson, Jennifer Ladonne, Susan Herrmann Loomis, Jean Bond Rafferty, Thirza Vallois, Ellen Wallace
Travel Study Guide: C.C. Glenn, Richelle Harrison Plesse, Kaylen Baker

Consulting Photographers

Bob Peterson, Guy Marineau, James O'Mara

Copy Editing & Translation

Martha Fay, Elizabeth Bell, Wendy Taylor

Marketing and Digital Coordinator

C.C. Glenn, ccglenn@francetoday.com

Subscription Fulfillment Manager

Ahjin Kim, 646.792.2157
subscriptions@francetoday.com

Advertising

Katie Fuller, 646.792.2148
kfuller@francetoday.com

Classifieds

C.C. Glenn, classifieds@francetoday.com

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CALENDAR

What's On & What's Up

FOR YOUR NEXT TRIP TO FRANCE



Hall of the Château de Ferrières, c.1860, by Eugène Lami, in the Rothschild exhibit at the BNF, Paris

PARIS

Les Mille et Une Nuits

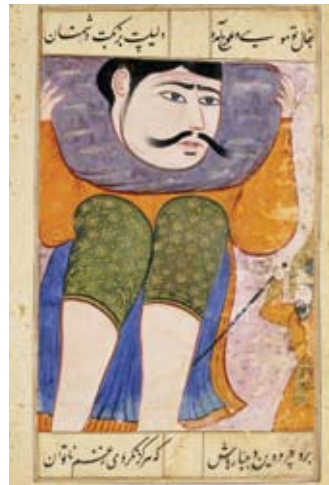
More than 300 paintings, drawings, manuscripts and illuminations, books, photos, film clips, costumes and objets d'art illustrate Western interpretations of the celebrated Persian, Arab, Indian and Asian tales of *The Arabian Nights*—Scheherazade, Sinbad et al.

Institut du Monde Arabe, 1 rue des Fossés Saint Bernard, 5th, Métro: Jussieu, 01.40.51.38.38.

www.imarabe.org
€10.50 Through Apr 28

Les Rothschild en France au XIXe Siècle

Nearly 200 paintings, drawings, photos, books and manuscripts documenting the history of the French branch of the Rothschild family, starting with the 1812 arrival in Paris of James, one of the five sons of Frankfurt banker Mayer Amschel Rothschild. A portrait of newly industrialized, grand bourgeois 19th-century



Moses Hitting King Og, 16th century, at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris

society in Paris—city mansions, country châteaux, art, music, philanthropy and power.

Bibliothèque Nationale de France/Richelieu, 5 rue Vivienne, 2nd, Métro: Palais Royal, 01.53.79.59.59.
www.bnf.fr **€7 Through Feb 10**

Art du Jeu, Jeu dans L'Art, de Babylone à l'Occident Médiéval

The setting couldn't be better.

Displayed in the ruins of 2nd/3rd century Roman baths beneath the 15th-century Parisian mansion that houses the museum, some 250 examples of the games of chance and strategy that were part of daily life in Greek, Roman and Middle Eastern antiquity and in the Middle Ages, including dice, chess, checkers, backgammon, tarot cards and board games.

Musée de Cluny, 6 pl Paul Painlevé, 5th, Métro: Cluny-La Sorbonne, 01.53.73.78.16.

www.musee-moyenage.fr
€8.50 Through Mar 4

Des Fleurs en Hiver: Delacroix-Othoniel-Creten

An exhibit of Delacroix's little-known floral paintings and watercolors, painted mostly toward the end of his life and inspired by his own garden outside his atelier, his country house in Champrosay and George Sand's Château de Nohant. Flower-inspired works by contemporary



Nice, Black Notebook, 1918, by Henri Matisse, at the Hermitage Foundation in Lausanne

artists Jean-Michel Othoniel and Johan Creten offer contrast.

Musée Eugène Delacroix, 6 rue de Furstenberg, 6th, Métro: Mabillon, 01.44.41.86.50.
www.musee-delacroix.fr
€7 Through Mar 18

Léonard de Vinci, Projets, Dessins, Machines

An exhibit of 40 scale models of machines designed by Leonardo da Vinci, constructed in the 1950s from his extraordinarily clear and precise drawings by Milan's National Museum of Science and Technology. Cool for kids, fascinating for everyone.

Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, 30 ave Corentin Cariou, 19th, Métro: Porte de la Villette, 01.40.05.70.00.
www.cite-sciences.fr
€11 Through Aug 18

ILE-DE-FRANCE

Versailles et l'Antique

A spectacular exhibit, designed by Italian theater and opera

director Pier Luigi Pizzi, assembling for the first time more than 200 sculptures, paintings, drawings, engravings, tapestries, furnishings and objets d'art from former royal collections—all Greek or Roman antiquities, 18th-century copies or works with ancient mythological themes.

Château de Versailles, Place d'Armes, Versailles, 01.30.83.78.00.
www.chateauversailles.fr
€15 Through Mar 17

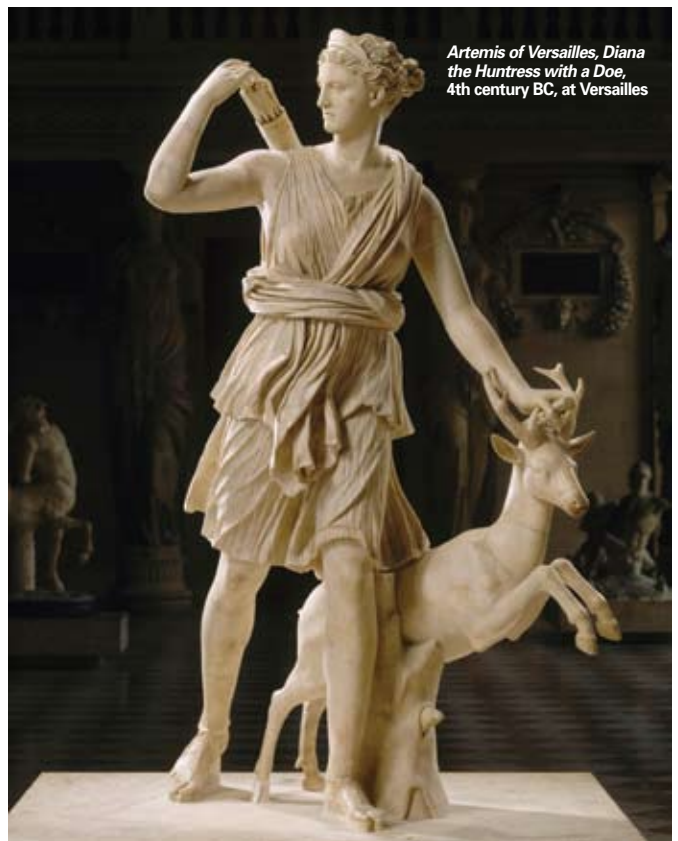
PROVINCE

Marseille-Provence 2013 Capitale Européenne de la Culture

The city of Marseille, founded circa 600 BC, together with seven smaller Provençal cities—Aix-en-Provence, Arles, Aubagne, Gardanne, Istres, Martigues and Salon-de-Provence—is a designated European Culture Capital for 2013. The festivities kick off Jan 12–13 and continue



Medusa 2, in the exhibit Under the Sea, A World... at the Villa Méditerranée, part of Marseille-Provence 2013



Artemis of Versailles, Diana the Huntress with a Doe, 4th century BC, at Versailles

all year—exhibitions, concerts, theater, dance, circuses, gastronomic celebrations, sports events and more.

www.mp2013.fr

SWITZERLAND

Fenêtres

Subtitled “From the Renaissance to Today: Durer, Monet, Magritte...”, the exhibit tracks

the recurrent motif of windows in Western painting, as symbols, elements of perspective and sources of light, from the 15th to the 20th century, with 150 works by Bonnard, Matisse, Mondrian, Vuillard, Vallotton and others.

Fondation de l'Hermitage, 2 route du Signal, Lausanne, +41.21.320.50.01.
www.fondation-hermitage.ch
12 Swiss francs Jan 25–May 20

AND DON'T FORGET

these events and their closing dates:

PARIS

- Le Cercle de l'Art Moderne Musée du Luxembourg, Jan 6
- Raphaël, Les Dernières Années Musée du Louvre, Jan 14
- Bohèmes Grand Palais, Jan 14
- Canaletto–Guardi Musée Jacquemart-André, Jan 14
- L'Impressionnisme et la Mode Musée d'Orsay, Jan 20
- Mary Cassatt à Paris Mona Bismarck American Center, Jan 20
- Six Siècles d'Art du Livre Musée des Lettres et Manuscrits, Jan 20
- Les Enfants du Paradis Cinémathèque Française, Jan 27
- Fleuve Rouge au Mékong, Visions du Viêt Nam Musée Cernuschi, Jan 27
- Edward Hopper Grand Palais, Jan 28
- Chypre entre Byzance et l'Occident Louvre, Jan 28
- Canaletto et Venise Musée Maillol, Feb 10
- L'Art en Guerre, France 1938–1947 Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de

- Paris, Feb 17
- Les Couleurs du Ciel Musée Carnavalet, Feb 24
- Et l'Homme Créa... le Robot Musée des Arts et Métiers, Mar 3
- Van Gogh/Hiroshige Pinacothèque de Paris, Mar 17
- Dalí Centre Pompidou, Mar 25
- Cheveux Chéris Musée du Quai Branly, July 14

PROVINCE

- Fables du Paysage Flamand Palais des Beaux-Arts, Lille, Jan 14
- Babel Palais des Beaux-Arts, Lille, Jan 14
- L'Automobile Dans Tous Ses Etats Hôtel des Arts, Toulon, Jan 20
- Renaissance Louvre-Lens, Lens, Mar 11
- Le Temps des Collections Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen, May 26

SWITZERLAND

- Edgar Degas Fondation Beyeler, Basel, Jan 27

For more Calendar events:
www.francetoday.com

Favorite Tables

A roundup of top picks by France Today contributors



Chef Patrice Gelbart at Youpi & Voilà

PARIS

Time for pleasure

Opened last spring, **Youpi & Voilà** is just one of many neo-bistros and wannabes that have recently popped up on the Paris scene, but it stands out from the crowd with its genuine southwest-style conviviality. In recent years, French restaurant guides from *Gault & Millau* to *Omnivore* have raved about self-taught chef Patrice Gelbart and his village restaurant near Toulouse, Aux Berges du Cérou, where he served a cuisine based on artfully elevated farm-direct produce. In moving to Paris he brought along his grandmother's wooden table and a philosophy involving what he calls *la cuisine philanthropique*.

"It's about preserving small farmers and a diversity of flavors," he says. "It's working with products that have a face behind them, and having the fairest prices possible." Gelbart can tell stories about the men and women who produce every herb, fish or wine he serves—and there's time to listen to them. In a city all too rapidly forsaking its own tradition of dining pleasure, with restaurants packing in diners elbow to elbow before rushing them out the door to make room for a second service, Gelbart serves only single sittings for both lunch and dinner.

"Parisian life is hectic enough already," he says. "You don't need that when you go out to eat, too." He may seem a bit gruff at first, but Gelbart and his team strive to create a relaxed

atmosphere where diners can enjoy one of sommelier Jean-Philippe Morice's selection of excellent natural wines while savoring four courses of instinctive, incisive cooking. A few examples: lightly pickled mackerel fillet with fresh horseradish; pumpkin soup, raw foie gras and mushrooms; scallops with Jerusalem artichoke emulsion and *botargo*, or *poutargue* (Mediterranean cured fish roe); and Limousin beef with celeriac purée, anchovy and fresh walnuts. For dessert? Black radish "rice pudding style" with chicory ice cream. *8 rue Vicq d'Azir, 10th, 01.83.89.12.63. www.youpietvoila.fr. Lunch €20/€25, fixed price 4-course dinner €38. Wines start at €25* —Jeffrey T. Iverson

PARIS

Cool fusion

You might be fooled by its old-fashioned Gallic name and its neo-bistro decor, but **Marcel** is really a Franco-Indian fusion restaurant. Opened two years ago on the left bank of the Canal Saint Martin, amid the trendy cafés and boutiques, it can be spotted from afar thanks to the big industrial glass windows of its facade. Inside, there's no faux Indian kitsch to be found, just a cool, classy contemporary interior with wood paneling, colonial-style tables, leather club chairs, oriental rugs and a big black-and-white bar. The subdued lighting adds a romantic touch,

and it's usually packed with the *bobos* who populate the neighborhood.

The food is definitely less authentic than the traditional Indian fare found in the small canteens clustered around the nearby Gare du Nord, but there's a fine selection of fusion cuisine, mixing classics—curries, tandoori or massala chicken, Punjabi lamb—with such quirky innovative dishes as an Indian burger wrapped in a *naan*. You might sometimes wish for a heavier hand with the spices, but even the milder sauces are still tasty, especially the one that accompanies the butter chicken. Kudos to the desserts, too, notably the *kheer* (a rice pudding flavored with cardamom) and the *kulfi* (a dairy dessert served with almonds and mango). The tab is quite reasonable for such a sophisticated spot, and for diners in the front, it includes the pleasure of contemplating the view of the canal from the comfort of the leather club chairs. *90 quai de Jemmapes, 10th, 01.42.03.57.20. €25. Wines start at €24.*

—Julien Bisson

PARIS

Truly old favorite

It's no wonder Woody Allen used **Polidor** as one of the locations for his time-travel fantasy, *Midnight in Paris*. Stepping through the door is stepping back in time. Founded in 1845 as a *crémèrie*—its full name remains Crémèrie Restaurant Polidor—selling dairy products and the occasional omelet, it had become a full-fledged restaurant by the end of the 19th century. Little has changed since then: a golden glow from glass-shaded lamps shines on burnished wood paneling, mirrored walls are scrawled with the wine of the month, a blackboard announces that the restaurant no longer accepts checks or credit cards "since 1845", and the rows of little wooden boxes on the back wall once held the *serviettes* of regular clients.

And an illustrious lot they were: Boris Vian, Jean Jaurès, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Hemingway, Joyce, Gide, Ernst, Valéry, all frequented Polidor for the simple, satisfying dishes it still offers today: pumpkin or lentil soup, *confit de canard*, *pintade* with cabbage, tarte Tatin.

Service is brisk and no-nonsense, and you'll be seated at long tables with other clients (great for solo diners), but the food is good, sometimes even excellent—a recent dinner included succulent, perfectly cooked coquilles Saint Jacques. And with prices starting at €4 for entrées (*oeufs mayonnaise*), €11 for main dishes (*boeuf bourguignon*), and €4 for desserts (*baba au rhum*), it's as great a



The back room at Marcel

bargain for today's traveler as it was for garret-dwellers of the past. And it's open daily, for lunch and dinner, every day of the year. It's certainly not inventive contemporary cuisine, but it's a charming, almost magical, piece of Paris history.

41 rue Monsieur le Prince, 6th. 01.43.26.95.34. Menus €25/€35. Wines start at €16. No credit cards. —Vivian Thomas

LYON

Lunchtime fun

Lyon's central Les Halles de Lyon-Paul Bocuse is the largest covered market in France, and it's not just for buying food, wine and other provisions. It's also home to several restaurants. One favorite is **Passionnement Truffles**, a small restaurant-plus-gourmet-grocery-shop at the Cours Lafayette end, which serves the best chicken I have tasted in years. As its name suggests, the specialty is truffles, which are served in a variety of ways, including truffle-based risotto, pastas and beef filet with truffle sauce, and some of them can be very expensive indeed, for example, *brouillade de truffes* (scrambled eggs with truffles) at €68. But there is a set two-course lunchtime menu—without truffles—that is both delicious and good value. On the Sunday I took some family guests from Britain there, the restaurant was packed; there were no seats inside but the waiter rustled up a few tables for us, complete with bar stools, just outside, in the corridor. Initially we were skeptical, but it didn't take long for us to realize we had possibly the best seats in the house: we really felt part of the market, able to watch shoppers selecting their lobsters and basking in the

amazing atmosphere of Les Halles—a food-lovers' paradise with the best of just about everything from fish to *fromage* and oysters to olives on sale.

That particular day we all ordered the plat du jour—chicken with a morel sauce and potato gratin. The chicken was tender and the sauce was creamy, rich, with just enough morels to give it that earthy taste without becoming overpowering. Desserts were either a simple *fromage blanc* with cream or a decidedly more decadent chocolate fondant, crusty on the outside with a perfect melting middle. They say the proof of the pudding is

in the eating, and we ate, and approved. We went right back two weeks later with the next batch of visitors. ■

102 cours Lafayette, Lyon, 04.78.60.15.98. Lunch menu €16.50 (without truffles); à la carte €70. Wines start at €19

—Andrea Bolitho

Alexander Lobrano is on temporary leave from his regular *A La Carte* column to finish his forthcoming book, *Hungry for France*, to be published by Rizzoli next fall.

For all our restaurant reviews see www.francetoday.com



Polidor

BOUTIQUE BEAT

In The News

by Jennifer Ladonne



Dress from the new Repetto collection



The new perfume boutique Nose

With zillions of perfume brands out there, who has the time, or the stamina, to make the switch from the old tried-and-true to something newer, bolder or more expressive of who we are now? The partners behind **Nose**, Paris's new fragrance concept store, set out to tackle the dilemma with a personalized service designed to identify your ideal aroma. The bright, 2,000-square-foot loft space is a world away from hectic department store counters. Cozy up to the zinc bar for a complimentary cup of coffee, tea or mineral water while a friendly bilingual specialist takes you through a seven-step diagnostic to determine your olfactive profile. Mine was done by Nicolas Cloutier, one of **Nose's** several partners who spent nearly three years compiling a vast database of nearly every fragrance on the market.

By analyzing my three most recent favorite perfumes Cloutier identified my preferred notes—a hierarchy of

spice, floral, citrus, musk and others—and came up with five recommendations from the shop's 50 niche fragrances, which he sprayed onto smelling strips for my approval. Customers rate each recommendation according to preference—and if you still haven't hit aromatic gold the specialist will make further recommendations until you do. The basic process takes about 25 minutes, but clients are welcome to spend all the additional time they need to browse, sniff or take a walk around the block while a perfume develops on the skin. According to Cloutier, some 20,000 people have been "diagnosed" since the boutique opened last June, both in-store and via the online service, where samples of your top five fragrances can be ordered for 3€ each.

Nose also carries top-of-the-line and hard-to-find body lotions and bath gels, candles by Cire Trudon, fragrant laundry soaps by The Laundress and a cosmetic serum called Oh My Cold, by Codage, to soothe winter-ravaged faces. Fans can keep up with in-store events and new products via the monthly noseletter. 20 rue Bachaumont, 2nd, 01.40.26.46.03. www.nose.fr

SIMPLY SEXY

In a picturesque corner of Saint Germain des Prés, the minuscule rue Bourbon-le-Château is undergoing a



Le Labo fragrances



Le Labo

quiet renaissance, with a handful of beautiful new shops including the recently opened **Le Labo**.

Part laboratory, part *parfumerie*, Le Labo's no-nonsense approach to fragrance is a breath of fresh, delectably scented air. Like many newer niche perfumers, Le Labo positions itself as an alternative to the high-pressure and overtly commercial circus that is today's perfume industry. No glossy packaging or sex-fueled ad fantasies here, just ten straightforward fragrances "lovingly formulated by hand", with names that mean what they say. Rose 31, for example, has rose as its primary natural essence and uses a total of 31 elements to build the final composition. But simplicity does not mean they lack sex appeal. Formulated by some of the world's foremost noses, and designed to be worn by both men and women, the perfumes range from the smoky and provocative—Labdanum 18—to the voluptuously floral Jasmin 17.

Each of Le Labo's principal boutiques—New York, London, Tokyo, Paris, Los Angeles—has its own exclusive fragrance, unavailable anywhere else. For Paris it's Vanilla 44 that you'll have to travel to try.

The ten basic scents have also been incorporated into shower gels, massage oils and body lotions, with packaging that can be personalized for gift-giving. Six luscious soy-based candles—with their own fragrances, different from the perfumes—burn for up to 70 hours (Figue 15 is sublime). There's also scented laundry soap and a sturdy carryall like those used by the rose harvesters in the fields of the southern French perfume capital Grasse. Perfume prices start at €45, candles are €57, lotions and massage oils €50. *6 rue Bourbon-le-Château, 6th, 01.46.34.37.65. www.lelabofragrances.com*

CLASSIC GRACE

French dancewear giant Repetto's breakout mainstream success with its celebrated ballet flats led to an expanded footwear and handbag line, introduced late last year, followed very quickly by its first ready-to-wear collection, **La Garde-Robe Repetto** (Repetto's wardrobe, or closet) launched in Paris in December.

But in seeking a larger audience the company clearly has no intention of straying too far from the ballet theme. The new line capitalizes on Repetto's long expertise with dance apparel, whose defining features are construction, ease of movement and gracefulness. Each of the 19 pieces in the ultrafeminine new Garde-Robe collection looks as if it could go twirling right off the stage and into the street, or vice versa.

Handmade in France or Italy, the collection's six dress styles, five skirts and eight tops are offered in seven colors ranging from the classic powder pink, black and *rose chausson*—that indefinable rosy-beige color of new ballet slippers—with touches of ecru, lilac, coral and silver. Versatile and classic, the pieces are easy to mix and match and go brilliantly with jeans or tailored suits. The basic tops are form-fitting but designed for maximum comfort,

and can be dressed up or down. The flowing skirts come in four lengths, mid-thigh to mid-calf. A long-sleeved, meticulously constructed cardigan called *Esprit Corset* fastens up the front with real corset hooks. It's a timeless wardrobe, with pieces that will never go out of style. *22 rue de la Paix, 2nd, 01.44.71.83.12; 51 rue des Francs Bourgeois, 4th, 01.70.79.89.37; 51 rue du Four, 6th, 01.45.44.98.65 and others, also department stores. www.repetto.fr* ■ For more of the best French boutiques and shopping: www.francetoday.com



Bright coral is one of seven colors in the new Garde-Robe collection by Repetto

Dress Courtesy Repetto; Labo © Eric-Ray Davidson



Compounding a fragrance at Le Labo

Design Now

Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance

by Jean Bond Rafferty

Young French designer Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance is flying high. In 2012, he imagined such lofty perches as Megu, the new Japanese restaurant in the Alpina Gstaad hotel, and the Ciel de Paris bar, the pinnacle of Parisian panoramas on the 56th floor of the Tour Montparnasse. His latest is three-star chef Yannick Alléno's epicurean summit, the Yquem Private Dining Room at Paris's Hôtel Meurice.

In all three, alluring curves and warm, natural materials delight the eye and soothe the senses. His head-turning furniture designs include the Manta desk for Ceccotti, an airy structure with the elegance and sleek lines of a vintage racing yacht; Calla, a seductive and sinuous leather-and-wool-upholstered chair for Zanotta; and the polished ergonomics of the Corvo armchair for American manufacturer Bernhardt Design—a complex industrial tour de force based on the tension between different thicknesses of wood, all assembled by hand.

Tracked down in his off-the-beaten-track studio in an unmarked passage near the Bastille, the soft-spoken, 38-year-old designer, whose words whizz



The Bamby chair for Marcel By

at TGV-speed, explained what's behind his idea of design.

What is the role of design in the world today?

Function is fundamental. Industrial designers must follow the advances in the rail, aeronautic or electronic fields. But in furniture design, the first thing that starts me off is the poetic dimension. The chair has not really evolved in a hundred years. Yes, there are spectacular chairs, but there has not been a real revolution.

Is there a style or school of French design with characteristics in common?

What we have in common is that we all have very developed egos, and we all have an individual desire to do something away from a collective movement, contrary to the English and Dutch. We don't have a school, but we have a real, anchored tradition in the decorative arts. We don't have a contemporary furniture design industry like the Italians, but that gives us more liberty to imagine, to dream.

You had success very early with the celebrity restaurant Sketch in London in 2002. Did that change everything?

Not for me. Just recently I met someone who thought Marc Newson and Ron Arad had created the space. In fact, Arad did a desk for the entrance and Newson did the food trolleys. Two other architects and I did 80 or 90 percent of it. I worked for

three or four years on it, but I never had a real title, and the plan was catastrophic. In the end, it turned out alright. And I realized I wanted to create my own company—Neonata—and be alone with my computer. I started doing furniture for Ceccotti, and that led to the Alain Senderens restaurant in 2005. But it was when I was named designer of the year for Maison&Objet in 2007 that it all really took off.

Do you see a difference between design and art, or between design and sculpture, since your father is a sculptor and you studied metal sculpture as well as furniture design?

The difference is fundamental. Design is linked to reproduction, mass production. Art is the unique piece, and that is what creates its value. A designer is obliged to make things that function, and he isn't about to make a €100,000 mold to produce one or two objects. Design is a vocation in which you are happy to have commercial success. An artist doesn't need his work to tell a story; a designer expects his objects to speak for him, and it must be in a language everyone can understand.

Yet there seems a real sculptural link to your design, and you do describe your furniture as being on the brink of abstraction.

Yes, my Manta furniture is like a functional sculpture. I used to have a large desk full of objects everywhere—it was real chaos. But with the Manta desk, everything can be organized in an hour. Things almost arrange themselves.



Ciel de Paris



The Calla chair for Zanotta



The elegant and sleek Manta desk for Ceccotti

For me, the eye caresses each object before the hand does. After clothing, furniture is the second thing that interacts directly with the body, and you can have a sensory relation with it. I'm inspired by nature, not necessarily in the exact form—making a wooden chair leg in the shape of a tree branch, for example—but in a more general way, so that like a tree with a superb bark you will want to touch it.

Doesn't your Borghese banquette quite literally reflect nature?

The Borghese banquette is very figurative, with a dose of abstraction. The back is a metal network of branches that supports cushion forms inspired by the parasol pines of the Villa Borghese in Rome.

I always like to design things from both sides, front and back. I've never understood someone who says it's all right to push the bed against the wall and not see the back. I think the Buonanotte Valentina bed I did for Ceccotti is the most interesting when it's viewed from behind—the curved back made of wooden slats was inspired by the horizon

of Tuscan hills at sunset and the sun setting on the sea.

Haven't you always used a lot of natural materials like wood and leather?

Yes, but now I also adore Corian, and Soft Touch paint that looks like velvet. I used it for my *Naturoscopie* exhibition at Galerie BSL [in Paris]. For that I didn't work with natural elements, but with materials that responded best to the emotion I was trying to translate. For example, I used carbon covered with a Soft Touch paint to make a velvety contrast with the honeycomb aluminum of leather-covered shelves. They were inspired by the kind of molecular structures you see under a microscope, in a cell or a slice of wood.

Your 2008 *Marée Noire au Clair de Lune (Oil Slick in Moonlight)* show at Pierre Bergé's Brussels gallery was an unusual tribute to nature.

There was a black platform with big waves, as if it had been extracted from the sea. My grandfather was a professor of soil science—as a child, I used to make core borings for him.

My parents were always respectful and attentive to nature and the environment. I learned to respect those things, and look at them differently. I spent years walking on the beach, diving and looking. Now, to hold onto that, I go back to the sea when I can.

I'm nourished by my childhood—the sea, the rocks, the horizon, the life of Brittany—not always precise moments, but diffuse emotions, like a perfume.

Sometimes I do a project without knowing what's behind it and sometimes there is a direct connection—but both come from the long-term memory anchored in your unconsciousness. It's something older, something you know, and that I can find sometimes when I am drawing.

You draw everything by hand. Is there something emotional in the paper, the pencil?

Completely, I need the dimension you get when you're working by hand. You don't have the same emotion in front of a computer. ■

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ROOM SERVICE

Marseille Mama!

Tucked away in a quiet residential neighborhood, Marseille's latest two-star boutique hotel might be mistaken for a modern office building. But right inside the door of **Mama Shelter**, the discreet throb of electro music and sculptured silver octopi atop glass cases of edgy gift items tell a very different story. The new southern sister of Paris's wildly successful, low-cost Mama Shelter has an identity all its own, dreamed up by the same founders: Serge Trigano (of Club Med fame), urbanist philosopher Cyril Auizerate, and designer Philippe Starck.

Call it resolutely regional: you can bone up on your Marseillais slang in the elevator, wallpapered with local dictionary terms (*agassins*, *balletti*, *cagnard*) or sample 40 kinds of pastis (*pastaga*) at the sun-drenched patio bar. The 127 rooms are all luminous and deeply comfortable, whether you choose the most affordable cozy attic rooms or the spacious family suite with a foldout sofa. Along with stylish beds, thick duvets, glowing headboards, scribbly-print linoleum floors, and fragrant Kiehl's products in the shower-only bathrooms, other fun amenities abound, from superhero masks draped on the light fixtures to large iMac TV screens, Wi-Fi, internet maps, free films and a device for shooting in-room photos to make your friends envious.

The long steel bar has colorful kiddie inner tubes strung overhead; in the convivial restaurant and music lounge, the menu planned by chef Alain Senderens offers tasty comfort food classics and Mediterranean dishes including fried squid, crusted cod and mussel soup with chorizo fingers. And in keeping with the vibes at this low-cost luxury hip haven, the young designer fashion boutiques and cafés of the trendy Cours Julien are just a 15-minute stroll away ■

64 rue de la Loubière, 04.84.35.20.00. Rooms start at €69. www.mamashelter.com

—Lanie Goodman

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The restaurant



One of the 127 bedrooms and suites



The terrace with its giant chessboard



THE NEW LOUVRE-LENS

by Thirza Vallois



The entrance to the new building of the Louvre-Lens museum

It's a shock to see the names Louvre and Lens side by side. The Louvre needs no introduction, but unless you've lived in France, you are unlikely to have heard of Lens. Situated deep in the coal-mining country of the Pas de Calais *département* in northern France, Lens's only claim to fame has so far been its soccer team, France's national champions in 1998. That year, Lens's 41,650-seat stadium—a capacity larger than the town's entire population—played host to the World Cup; it was a short-lived glory, and the team has since dropped to Second Division.

Reduced to a heap of ruins during World War I, and plagued with massive unemployment following the gradual closure of the mines, in 2000 Lens also lost its only cinema,

the Art Deco Apollo Theater, where Josephine Baker had once performed. In short, the Second Division soccer team was all Lens had left to hang on to other than the unenviable national poverty record held by its *département*, the Pas de Calais.

But on December 4, 2012, the new Louvre annex in Lens was inaugurated, bringing with it new hopes and prospects. The date was chosen for a symbolic reason: it's the feast day of Saint Barbe, the patron saint of miners.

Taking a cue from Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum, which replaced the city's metal industry as an economic engine, and following the Pompidou Center-Metz in Lorraine, with some half-million visitors per year since its 2010 opening, the directors of the Louvre-Lens are targeting similar numbers and hoping to regenerate the region's economy.

Saint Barbe's Day

The project was launched in 2003. Strangely, the Nord-Pas de Calais was the only region that responded to the Ministry of Culture's tender for the proposed annex. President Jacques Chirac selected Lens because: a) the city had an available nearly 50-acre site within walking distance of the railway station; b) it's centrally situated within the distressed region; c) it has excellent rail connections, and is only an hour from Paris on the TGV; and d) it had no museums. The response among ordinary people in the region, however, was mitigated. Some €88 million of the €150-million project will be supported by the region—taxpayers' money that local people thought could be better spent. But on Saint Barbe's Day 2012 they visited the new museum in droves, and celebrated it after nightfall with a display



The glass walls make the building transparent from one side to the other

Photos © SANA/Akazuyo Sejima et Ryue Nishizawa-IMREY CULBERT/Celia Imrey et Tim Culbert-MOSBACH PAY/SAGISTE/Catherine Mosbach. Photo © Hisao Suzuki



The main entrance hall

of fireworks and, it's said, some 600 tons of French fries.

Architects worldwide were immediately more enthusiastic, and sent in more than 120 applications. The project chosen was that of the Japanese SANAA agency, whose principals, Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, won the coveted Pritzker Prize in 2010 and are currently engineering the conversion of Paris department store La Samaritaine.

In Lens they carried minimalism to the extreme, producing a luminous masterpiece of glass and aluminum so transparent it looks as if it might disintegrate and melt into air. The aim was to open up the building to the outside and bring in the light, creating a seamless continuity between inside and out, between the museum and the recreation park surrounding it. Vestiges of a former mine have been integrated into the landscape—the haulage routes, for example, are now the park's winding paths.

From the inside looking out, the museum



La Galerie du Temps

offers panoramas of the northern countryside and its mining past—rows of little red brick houses and two UNESCO-listed slag heaps that look like dark twin volcanoes. The structure itself is simple, basically a succession of boxes with subtly curved walls that create a fluid effect. Two rectangular wings run in opposite directions from the central hall, which contains La Grande Galerie, the backbone of the museum, and a smaller gallery for temporary exhibitions.

Seducing the audience

Adjoining them are the Glass Pavilion and an auditorium, La Scène. From above, the box-like sections look like glistening pieces of a domino game, delicately floating on the fragile soil above the town. Henri Loyrette, the Louvre's President and CEO, insists that this is "the new wing of the Louvre," the latest in the long succession of wings grafted onto the illustrious monument over the centuries, starting with the original medieval fortress (now part of the Sully Wing) and ending—until now—with the museum's underground entrance beneath I.M. Pei's glass pyramid.

Now the far-flung "wing" in Lens carries over the transparency of the Pyramid, a transparency that's also conceptually driven. In order to embrace and seduce the audience, nothing is hidden from the eye, whether it is the "bubbles" in the main hall (one of which contains the bookshop) or the glass-walled conservation area and restoration workshops down in the basement. Lens is probably the only museum anywhere that offers visitors continuous behind-the-scene views.

The 32,300-square-foot Grande Galerie—long and narrow at 393 ft by 82 ft—provides a single, uninterrupted space awash in natural

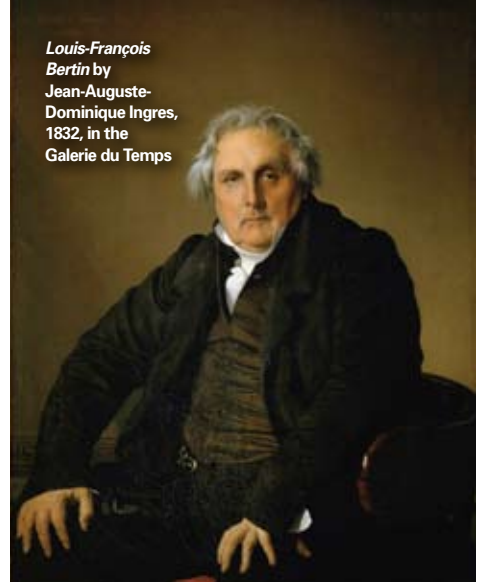
light filtering through the perforated aluminum ceiling, with more diffused light reflected by the polished aluminum walls. The effect is glorious, everything shining and white, enhanced by the blurry reflections of artworks and visitors on the walls.

All the works on display come from the Louvre's collection. The initial selection is scheduled for five years, with a yearly rotation of about 20% of the content. Delacroix's famous *Liberty Leading the People*, for example, will be replaced after the first year. The rotations will take place on December 4, to keep the symbolic date alive.

The first theme chosen for this semi-permanent collection is time, so for the next five years the Grande Galerie is also La Galerie du Temps. From the entrance, visitors journey through some 5,000 years of art history, starting around 3,500 BC and ending around 1850 (the cutoff date for the Louvre itself, beyond which the French national art collection takes up at the Musée d'Orsay).

Delighting the eye

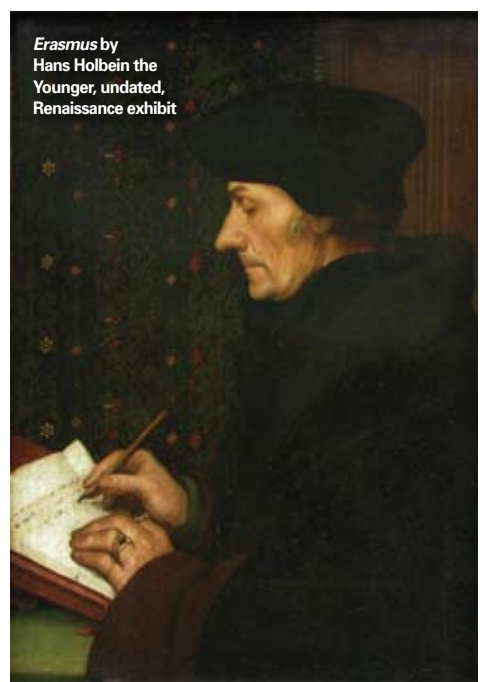
Along the route are 205 sculptures, paintings, drawings and other works of art—each magnificent on its own and all magnificently displayed on freestanding plinths or in room-like clusters of panels. The eye delights in the eclectic choices, representing all the Louvre's departments and all the periods, territories and techniques in its collections—ancient sculptures, Roman mosaics, Islamic ceramics and paintings by Raphael, Rembrandt, Rubens, El Greco, Goya, Georges de La Tour and so many others—including Fragonard's famous portrait of Diderot, which recently made headlines when, after all these years, it turned out not to be Diderot.



Louis-François Bertin by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, 1832, in the Galerie du Temps



The Virgin, Infant Jesus and Saint Anne by Leonardo da Vinci, 15th century, in the Renaissance exhibit



Erasmus by Hans Holbein the Younger, undated, Renaissance exhibit

July 28. Liberty Leading the People, 1830, by Eugène Delacroix in the Galerie du Temps



The Empire of Time on the World, 16th century, in the Glass Pavilion



Da Vinci and Dürer

Unlike the Paris Louvre, where works are confined to their respective departments, the uninterrupted space here makes it possible to compare and confront works from different eras and civilizations, an innovative approach reflecting our increasingly globalized society.

Somewhat smaller—19,400 sq ft and 262 ft x 74 ft—the temporary exhibition gallery will host two shows every year. The first, *The Renaissance: Revolution in European Arts 1400–1530*, illustrates once more the desire to bring down barriers and explore art horizontally. With over 250 artworks, organized around 13 themes, it embraces all the

revolutionary and innovative aspects of the Renaissance. The *Mona Lisa* didn't make the trip to Lens, but Leonardo da Vinci's *The Virgin, the Infant Jesus and Saint Anne* is a superb substitute. Botticelli's *Venus* looks ravishing after three years of restoration, just for this exhibit. Dürer's *Triumphal Arch of Emperor Maximilian I*, a single monumental image divided into 191 woodcuts, each nearly 9 ft high, is usually presented in separate albums but is assembled here on one wall.

These and all the other gems on display dispel the fears that Louvre-Lens might be a poor man's version of the one in Paris. Furthermore, the subject matter of future temporary exhibitions aims to place Louvre-

Lens in the center of Europe, with hopes it will draw international visitors, especially from near neighbors Britain, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and Germany. Scheduled for summer 2013: *Rubens and Europe*.

Day tripping

The temporary exhibit schedule is also set in collaboration with the region's plethora of excellent museums—there are 46 in the Nord-Pas de Calais—and samples of their collections will be displayed in the temporary exhibitions and in the Glass Pavilion. Rather than compete with the surrounding area's museums, it is hoped that Louvre-Lens will serve as a new spearhead for the mutual benefit of all.

Beyond culture and education, museums today are an economic venture, generating jobs and tourist traffic. Thanks to its central position in northwest Europe, the quick and easy access from neighboring countries and major cities—not least Brussels and London—is likely to add to its appeal. There is every reason to believe that the Guggenheim effect will take off.

The city's hotel infrastructure is also being improved—among the projects underway is the conversion of the Art Deco Apollo Theater. For the time being, with Lens only an hour from Paris on the TGV and the new museum's pleasant scale, a visit can be handled in a leisurely day trip. Many might prefer it to the exhausting queues outside Pei's Pyramid and the overcrowded, noisy atmosphere underneath. Here's wishing the Louvre-Lens a grand future. Let's hope it won't become a victim of its own success. ■

Thirza Vallois is the author of several books on Paris and France. www.thirzavallois.com Find them in the France Today Bookstore: www.francetoday.com/store

Practical information:

Rue Paul Bert or Rue Georges Bernanos, 03.21.18.62.62. www.louvre-lens.fr

Opening times:

Open daily except Tuesdays, from 10 am to 6 pm (to 10 pm on the first Friday of the month except July and August)

Entry fee €9

Free admission to the Grande Galerie and Pavillon de Verre through 2013

SKIING THE VOLCANO



by *Andrea Bolitho*

Skiing on the slopes of a volcano sounds like a risky pastime. Hurtling down an erupting mountain at break-neck speed while dodging balls of burning lava seems more like a James Bond sort of thing. But no need to worry. Although there are more than 80 separate volcanic craters in the Auvergne region—the highest concentration in Europe—they are all dead or dormant. Although the last eruption was only 7,000 years ago—a blink on the geological time scale—the big ones all blew their tops about 100,000 years earlier.

The Auvergne has three main ski resorts; Le Lioran in the Cantal *département*, and Super Besse and Le Mont Dore in the Puy-de-Dôme. They lie on either side of the 6,188-ft Puy de Sancy, the highest mountain in central France and part of an ancient volcano. (The word *puy*, much used in the region, means mountain or

The summit of the Puy de Sancy volcano



The village of Besse



summit.) By Alpine standards all three resorts are small, but small also means fewer people, shorter lines and less expensive lift passes.

Le Mont Dore is an old spa town—its hot springs were used by the ancient Gauls before the Romans turned up—but its faded 19th-century glamour is a long way from the ritzy resorts of the Alps. Happily for the rest of us, the Auvergne is not yet on the jet-setter's itinerary. One of France's oldest winter sports resorts, opened in 1907, Le Mont Dore is still a lesser-known winter holiday destination, although it offers great skiing, both downhill and cross-country, and a host of other quirky, snowy pastimes in the heart of *l'Hexagone*—both geographically and metaphorically. The early 19th-century spa building is worth a peek for its ornate Byzantine-Romanesque interior, and a cable-car ride to the top of the Puy de Sancy offers a spectacular view.

Le Lioran and its modern adjunct Super Lioran sit between the volcanic peaks of the Puy Griou and the Plomb du Cantal, near the Font de Cère, the source of both the Alagnon and Cère rivers. Extending over neighboring communities, it's the biggest ski area in the region, covering a total of some 370 acres, with nearly 40 miles of downhill ski runs and many miles of cross-country trails. Like Le Mont Dore, it also offers snowboarding, snowshoeing, skating, dogsledding and other winter sports. And skiers arriving at Le Lioran by train (about six hours from Paris) can hit the slopes directly with a surface lift (*téléski*) leaving right from the station.

Harder and more fun

Super Besse is located at an altitude of 4,430 ft. While it has a reasonable selection of downhill pistes, it also offers 77 miles of superb cross-country or Nordic ski trails. Cross-country skiing—in French, *ski de fond*—is a world away from its daredevil downhill cousin. You can enjoy nature, and the surrounding sights and sounds of the snowscape, in a way that is just not possible when you are slaloming downhill at top speed. All of a sudden you are aware of the forest, the birds in the trees and the gurgling streams. It is more like hiking in a winter wonderland, but a little bit harder and a lot more fun. Cross-country skiing uses every major muscle group, and it's one of the sports that burns the most calories per hour—although, to be fair, probably not if you keep stopping every few minutes to enjoy the view.

Cross-country skis are much narrower than normal skis. Although they have bindings to keep your feet attached, your heels are not fixed to the skis, allowing you to push forward with a more natural movement. On the flip side, it also means you are liable to slip and slide around a lot more—at least if you



are a complete beginner like me.

Getting into motion is relatively easy. Stopping is less so. The required movement is a cross between skating and walking with slightly bent knees; as you get the hang of it, you can glide further with each “step”. As we pushed off on the easy, green-coded circuit called Le Madalet, things seemed to be going quite well. But poised at the top of a gentle incline I realized I wasn’t sure about the mechanics of braking. It turns out you do a one-sided snowplow, with your downhill leg doing most of the work. But holding a snowplow is not easy when your skis keep slipping from under your feet, and my initial efforts probably gave my instructor a few (well-disguised) giggles.

After I appeared to have mastered the basics, we moved on to La Biche, a medium-level red circuit. (Cross-country uses the same color coding as downhill.) La Biche was considerably longer than Le Madalet, and the slopes much steeper, leading to a new difficulty—going uphill. Better cross-country skiers skate up, using their poles for an extra boost. The less-than-expert neophyte always has the option of sidestepping up the slope.

Cross-country skiing dates back to



The volcanic Lake Pavin
near Super Besse



Off-piste skiing in a coulee near the Puy de Sancy

prehistoric times in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, and well into the 19th century it was one of the main ways to get around those countries in winter. In fact it is still a way of life for some in Scandinavia. It's the second most popular winter sport in France, after downhill skiing. And, as lift passes at some Alpine resorts approach €50 a day, cross-country offers a refreshingly inexpensive way to get out and enjoy the snow. While a downhill pass in Super Besse is €28.70, a pass for the Nordic trails is just €6.80. Of course there is much less to maintain in terms of high-altitude lifts, but the trails themselves must be kept snow covered, even if it means—as it frequently does—bringing in buckets of snow from elsewhere.

The medieval village of Besse lies just a few miles below the resort of Super Besse, and a shuttle bus runs between the village and

the ski area several times a day. Super Besse is a pleasant enough place, a purpose-built ski station with blocks of rental apartments, plenty of parking and numerous shops selling ski equipment, ski clothing and regional specialties. But Besse is the real thing.

Mysterious aura

With its narrow streets between slate-roofed houses built with dark grey volcanic stone, Besse seems a world away from its sunny mountaintop cousin. For a start, in winter there is almost no one there. This, our guide assured us, is not the case in the summer, when the village is extremely popular with vacationers. Combined with the low January sunlight and the rust-red shutters—originally so colored because they were not painted but stained with blood from the butcher's—the nearly deserted streets give

Besse a mysterious, slightly otherworldly atmosphere.

The centerpiece of the village is its 12th-century church, Saint André. Inside is a black Madonna carved from cedar. Each July, with much ceremony, the statue is carried up to the chapel of Vassivière in the mountains, and each September it is brought back to Besse. The Virgin's annual pilgrimage stems from a local legend: The statue's original home was the mountain chapel, but in the 16th century it was decided to bring her down to the village. Clearly she wasn't happy with her new home and made her way—by herself—back to the chapel overnight. This apparent miracle happened three times before it was decided that the Virgin would thereafter have both summer and winter homes.

Say cheese

For a small village, Besse has a surprising number of cheese shops. But the Auvergne is justly proud of its regional cheeses and boasts five that are certified *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* or AOC—the most AOC cheeses of any region in France: the Bleu d'Auvergne from the Massif Central; Cantal from the Cantal mountains and foothills; Fourme d'Ambert, made in the Livradois-Forez area; Salers, a summer cheese from the heights of Cantal; and Saint-Nectaire from the Massif du Sancy.

A soft, silky cow's-milk cheese, Saint-Nectaire has been made in the Auvergne since at least the 17th century and was presented at the court of Louis XIV. Various farms near Besse, including the Ferme la Clef des Champs run by Nathalie et Philippe Grampeyre, offer tours of their cheese-making operations and the chance to buy some top-quality fresh produce. For real cheese enthusiasts, there is a Route des Fromages AOP d'Auvergne to follow, taking in some of region's best cheese producers.

For many visitors to France, their only glimpse of the Auvergne is from the car window as they head down the A75. They are missing out on a remote and beautiful region. But while the Auvergne may be rural it is not primitive; you can holiday in style here in the growing number of boutique hotels and guesthouses such as the Datcha Anastasia in Besse-et-Saint-Anastaise and the Lac du Pêcher eco-lodge in Chavagnac. But nature will always be its biggest draw, and of course all those volcanos—in summer the view from one of the puy-tops is a stunning expanse of craters in vivid emerald green. ■

For more about the Auvergne: Of Castles and Kings, France Today July/August 2007, and www.francetoday.com.



Vineyards surrounding the village of Le Vernois in the Jura

On the Upswing

France's Jura mountains are defined by deep, secret forests and rushing streams, so it is always a surprise to suddenly come upon snug villages edged by magnificent vineyards. Coming down into Arbois, there is such an abrupt change of scenery and state of mind that your arrival calls for a pause. A glass of Jura wine is just the thing.

If it's summer, it might be a fruity, floral Savagnin, or a Jura red with surprising notes of blossoming rose. If snow lies over the land, try a deeply nutty 15-year-old *vin jaune*, or yellow wine—deep golden in color, but dry. If you're very lucky, you might find one of the extraordinary bottles of very old *vin jaune* that lie hidden in some cellars—although it's unlikely to be as prestigious as the 1774 bottle, harbored by eight generations of the Vercel family before it was auctioned in Geneva in May 2012 for nearly \$50,000.

After nearly a century of slow decline, the wines of the Jura are making a remarkable comeback

by Ellen Wallace

It's time to meet Jura wines, if you haven't yet done so. It's highly likely that many Americans haven't—the production is so small that even the French are often unfamiliar with them. The Jura is overshadowed in today's wine world by the global notoriety of the wines of its big neighbors, Burgundy and Champagne. It hasn't always been so, and happily this somewhat neglected wine region is now having the comeback it deserves, finally finding its 21st-century niche.

Border basics

The region of Franche-Comté extends along France's eastern border, sharing the Jura mountain chain with Switzerland. The southernmost of the region's four *départements* is also called Jura, and it is home to all six French AOC Jura wines, whose vineyards stretch from north of Arbois to Saint-Amour (not to be confused with the Beaujolais village of the same name, which is in fact only a short distance away in Rhône-Alpes).

Frédéric Lambert tending his vineyards near Poligny



La Reine Jeanne wine cellar in Arbois

Four of the Jura AOCs cover geographic areas: Arbois, Château-Chalon, Côtes du Jura and L'Étoile. The two others are specialty products: Macvin, a liqueur, and sparkling Crémant du Jura, both of which are coupled with their geographic appellations.

Under French legislation, wines labeled Jura can be made from only five grape varieties: the red Pinot Noir and white Chardonnay so famously used in nearby Champagne; white Savagnin, also called Savagnin Blanc, the Jura's signature grape (not to be confused with Sauvignon); and the red Trousseau and Poulsard.

Poulsard (sometimes called Ploussard)

accounts for some 80% of the region's red grape production. Pinot Noir is a demanding grape that, in the hands of a good grower, gives lower yields of excellent quality. Trousseau, which has beautiful red leaves in the autumn, has a deep rich color and tannic qualities much appreciated in the cellar for helping wines to age well. Jura reds are often served with grilled fish or the great variety of smoked meats for which the mountains above the vineyards are famous.

Super Savagnin

But it's the white wines of the Jura that predominate. Chardonnay is the most widely

grown variety, much of it used in sparkling wines; it accounts for at least 50% of the grapes in a Crémant du Jura, which is made by virtually every local winery, and can include any of the five authorized grape varieties.

Blends of Chardonnay and Savagnin are popular and often excellent. But be forewarned: these blends, and single-variety Savagnins, are made in many styles, from completely un-oaked to cask-aged for several months. Ask when you're sampling, to avoid unwanted surprises.

Jura whites labeled "floral" are fruity wines generally served with richer foods, including cheese. Those labeled "traditional"—including the bulk of the Savagnin wines—are oxidized to varying degrees (evaporation is allowed in the barrels, without topping up), making some reminiscent of *fino* sherry, while others are fresh and vibrant. You can drink them with foods that pair well with any classic dry white wine, including fish and white meat.

Financial Times columnist Jancis Robinson, Britain's *grande dame* of wine, recently wrote that Savagnin Blanc is the most "exciting" wine here, "capable of making extremely tense, long-lived, full-bodied dry whites".

Robinson is one of the three authors of *Wine Grapes*, a tome published in November 2012 that is already being called a classic: four years in the making and 1,200 pages long, it's an encyclopedia of grape varieties around the world, based on new DNA studies. Co-author and Swiss scientist José Vouillamoz credits Savagnin with being the ancestor of Traminer, Gewürztraminer and other grapes. Its birthplace, he writes, was most likely right here in Franche-Comté.

Veiled gold

Savagnin is the basis for vin jaune—renowned for the extraordinarily complex range of aromas it develops as it ages: nuts, spices, curry, cinnamon, dried fruits. Golden and dry, it is justifiably famous, but definitely not a beginner-friendly wine.

Its unusual maturing process, called *sous-voile*, is responsible for giving it such a deep, rich set of notes. Made with late-harvest grapes, the fermented wine must be kept a minimum of six years and three months in slightly porous oak barrels that are not topped up, as most wines are. The amount of evaporation—the "angels share"—is considerable, up to 40%, but the wine is protected from contact with the air and over-oxidization by a thin, foamy veil (the *voile*) of yeast that forms on the surface.

Vin jaune originated in Château-Chalon but it is made in the other three AOC areas as well, and traditionally bottled in a stocky 62-centiliter (21-oz) bottle called a *clavelin*. There is nothing subtle about it, and newcomers to wine generally find it hard going, but for connoisseurs it is one of the summits of the winemaker's art.

Top Swiss winemaker Raymond Paccot recounts that when he was young his father sent him across the border to meet a vin jaune producer. He found the wine undrinkable, assumed there was some mistake and refused more. To his chagrin, he later learned that it was considered one of the world's finest wines. "As with many well-aged special wines," he says, "you have to learn to appreciate it."

To savor with cheese

But young winemakers Anne and Frédéric Lambert, whose organic-oriented winery is in Pont du Bourg, near Le Chateley, contend that "vin jaune is not just for specialists, and once you become familiar with them, you begin to appreciate the beauty of the different *terroirs*."

Geneva-based rare wine dealer Pierre Chevrier, who bought that 1774 bottle at Christie's with a group of friends, said that they planned to drink it together at a dinner in a few years.

Indeed, vin jaune can accompany a meal—foods with creamy mushroom sauces are the classic pairing, with the wine served at a relatively warm 57° F or so. But a better beginner's approach is to savor it with a variety of cheeses. Recommended by the Jura winemakers' association: Comté, Vacherin Mont d'Or, Morbier, Bleu de Gex and other blue cheeses.

Finally, another renowned Jura specialty is *vin de paille*, or straw wine, so called because it is traditionally made by leaving late-harvest grapes to sweeten and gradually dry out on straw mats for three months. These sweet wines, with 10-20% residual sugar, are often served with foie gras or dessert.

In the 19th century Franche-Comté was one of France's largest wine areas, with nearly 50,000 acres of vineyards, about the same as neighboring Burgundy.

But the region fell victim to a number of problems, starting with massive production of very mixed quality. Then phylloxera moved in waves through the vineyards from 1879 to 1895, hitting the area harder than elsewhere. Franc-Comtois botanist Pierre-Marie-Alexis



Arbois



Clavelin bottles of vin jaune

Millardet was part of the team credited with saving Europe's vineyards with their discovery that grafting stock from resistant American vines stopped the rampaging aphid-like pest. Millardet also invented the world's first fungicide, a mixture of quicklime and copper sulfate still used in vineyards everywhere.

Pasteur's home

Another local man had already made a name for himself as a wine savior: Born in Dole and raised in Arbois, Louis Pasteur made remarkable discoveries in many scientific fields, including vaccines against rabies and anthrax, but he is best-known for the pro-

cess that bears his name. In 1863 Napoleon III mandated Pasteur to study the diseases afflicting French wines, and his research established that killing microbes at a particular time and temperature would prevent spoiling, without changing the taste. Pasteurization, as he called his patented process, was initially applied to wine and beer, and only later used for milk.

Pasteur never foundered in his love for the Jura, and he returned regularly to vacation in Arbois, where he had his own vineyards. His home there, on the banks of the Cuisance River—his father was a tanner—is now a museum.



Diseases and pests took their toll on Jura vineyards, as did the two world wars, but a more important contributor to the region's viticultural downfall was probably a new rail line that took competing wines from Languedoc-Roussillon directly to Paris. Add shifting fads and tastes plus political battles that at one point made headlines when Jura winemakers went on a tax strike, then took tax collectors hostage, in 1906.

By 1960 Jura vineyards covered only some 2,500 acres. The AOCs were established in 1936-37, a good move towards quality control, but they took another 50 years to achieve clear results. Vineyards were replanted with good AOC vines, quality controls put in place. The result: a fine selection of regional wines and specialties that are sometimes world-class.

Today Jura wines are a showcase for France's capacity to revive a wine region that was in a long, slow decline, by focusing on quality. Young Jura winemakers, after decades in the European Union, have grown closer to their excellent wine-making neighbors in Alsace, Germany and Switzerland, finding new ways to improve quality. And as the Jura's revival swings into full gear, there is also an increasing shift to organic and biodynamic methods. ■

LA PERCÉE DU VIN JAUNE

An annual wine festival held the first weekend in February, celebrating the *percée*, or tapping, of the first barrel of the new vintage with a carnival-style parade, costumed revelers, an auction of old vintages, a sommelier contest, wine tasting, folk dancing and fireworks. *February 2-3, Voiteur (9 miles north of Lons-le-Saunier). €13 entrance and a tasting glass.*

A FEW JURA FAVORITES:

MONTIGNY-LES-ARSURES

Domaine André et Mireille Tissot, run by Bénédicte and Stéphane Tissot, two hot young Jura producers whose biodynamic wines are getting high marks everywhere. Top picks: the pricey Clos de la Tour de Curon Chardonnay, and the reasonable reds Singulier Trousseau 2010 and Poulsard Vieilles Vignes. www.stephane-tissot.com

Jacques Puffeney, known as “the pope of Arbois” for his traditional well-aged wines. His vin jaune is famous, but try his Arbois Poulsard red and the classic Cuvée Sacha 2010, a Savagnin-Chardonnay blend. *11 Quartier Saint Laurent, 03.84.66.10.89*

POLIGNY

Domaine Benoit Badoz The 100% Pinot Noir Crémant du Jura is terrific: a rosé, dry and sparkling, and at under €10 a great buy from this young winemaker whose family has been in the business for ten generations. www.badoz.fr

CHATEAU-CHALON

Domaine Berthet-Bondet Château-Chalon is the classic for vin jaune and a good one to try. The Savagnins, including the excellent Naturé, show how the same grape can give very varied wines. www.berthet-bondet.net

ARLAY

Domaine Jean Bourdy, one of the oldest

Jura producers, has been making vin jaune continually since the 16th century. The family owns an extraordinary collection of vintage bottles, but try their simpler Savagnin. www.cavesjeanbourdy.com

ARBOIS-MESNAY

Domaine Martin-Faudot's award-winning but reasonably priced *vin de paille* is rich amber in color, with notes of pear and quince—it's gorgeous with dark chocolate. www.domaine-martin.fr

VOITEUR

François Mossu, “the great specialist”, according to one of his fellow producers, has a low public profile and small production, but his wines are beautiful. Try his Savagnin and Château-Chalon vin jaune. *3 route de Ménétru, 03.84.85.26.35*

PUPILLIN

Maison Pierre Overnoy The much-admired organic wine pioneer, Overnoy is now retired but his philosophy is carried on by Emmanuel Houillon. Go for the red Arbois Pupillin Ploussard, a fine example of “natural” wine, about \$35. *Rue Abbé Guichard, 03.84.66.24.27*

LE CHATELET

Domaine Frédéric Lambert Newcomers (1994) Marie-Anne and Frédéric Lambert are organic wine pioneers. Try Les Gryphées, a deep, rich white with apricot and licorice notes, and the classic white blend Tradition. www.domaine-frederic-lambert.fr



Braised beef cheeks
with squash purée

A Cheeky Proposition

A birthday dinner takes some surprising turns...

by Susan Herrmann Loomis

In November a friend asked me to make a main dish for his wife's birthday dinner. The guest list was up to 120, he said. He didn't think it would top 150. It was the sort of challenge I love, and I agreed to do it.

What, I mused, would make a wonderful, elegant and festive meal for a big group in December, when curtains and shutters close on the chime of four; fires are lit in woodstove and fireplace, and everyone hunkers down for warmth and comfort?

Something warming and fragrant, sophisticated and different, yet simple and satisfying. I leaned immediately in the direction of fattened duck breast, *magret de canard*, for it is meat without being too meaty, rich without being heavy and always elegant. It is without doubt one of the most popular foods in France.

Not long afterwards, I was enjoying a gorgeous dish of braised beef cheeks in a local restaurant. As I savored the tender meat, a light bulb went off. Forget duck. Everyone does duck. I would re-create this very dish on my plate. It was a perfect fit; the surprise of such an unusual dish would delight. After all, who on earth ever serves beef cheeks at a birthday party?

The negative imperative

That I'd never cooked a beef cheek in my life didn't worry me. Pork cheeks are a staple in my repertoire; I figured the beefy version would be similar. Both are "forgotten" pieces, eschewed by a public increasingly accustomed to the quick and easy.

I set about searching for cheeks, by going next door to my butcher. I had eight weeks to prepare, but beef cheeks for 150 was, I suspected, a tall order. I realized I was more right than I thought when I saw the butcher's eyebrows hit his hairline. "*Oh là là là là!*" he said. "*Ça va être diiiiiiiiiciiiiile*"—that's going to be really tough.

I listened as he told me how scarce beef cheeks were around the holidays, how expensive they were, how difficult it would be to find enough, and would I consider duck breast because he could get them, easily, and for a fine price.

I've lived in France long enough to let the moment pass. Initial reactions here are almost universally negative. Once the declaration was made and the worried look on my face registered, the cogs in the butcher's brain began to move.

"Let me take care of it," he said. "I'll let you know tomorrow."

Buckets and pans

I was there bright and early the following day, and with a conspiratorial wink, the butcher assured me of beef cheeks for 150.

But as life would have it, the number of guests increased daily. Soon it was 180, then 200. With each increase, I headed to see the butcher, who was now involved in my project. He'd pick up the phone, put the question and turn to me with a "*C'est bon*". Where the scarcity of beef cheeks had gone, I had no idea. It occurred to me that I might be depriving all of northern France with my request, but as I try to remember, I am not responsible.

When the guest list hit 250, I began to worry. But my butcher was

now my buddy, and he assured me it would be no problem. “Do you have enough pans?” he asked. When I said I was going to buy them, he said not to bother, he’d loan me his. Then he offered buckets for marinating, his freezer for keeping, his refrigerator the day of the party.

Armed with his complicity, I forged ahead. Those cheeks couldn’t sit on the plate alone, but I had Baptiste Bourdon, farmer, and his purple carrots on my side. I ordered a small field full, a several dozen squashes, for a purée with star anise.

I set about testing the dish. It turned out more than perfect. Beef cheeks give definition to the word “sumptuous”, as they transform from almost rock hard to fork tender when cooked long and slow in wine, herbs, some orange and a sprinkling of salt and pepper.

So, I was ready. The cheeks would arrive in lots of 15 kilos (33 pounds); the butcher would trim and wrap each. I emptied my freezer, and went to take possession of my first batch.

Slight snafu

Then I called the farm where the event was to be held, to set a date to go see the kitchen there. The owner, a friend of a friend, began to ask me questions on the order of “How do you plan to serve the dish hot?” “Why, I will cook it in my kitchen, then put it in your oven to heat.”

“There is no oven at our facility,” he countered. “You will have to bring your own.”

I was speechless. His farm wasn’t a farm at all; it was a “facility” for groups such as the one I was planning to feed. I didn’t believe him. “You have no oven? What do you have for warming things?” I asked.

“We have one microwave,” he said.

I held on to the phone as a thousand scenarios surged through my brain. No oven. No heat. Cold food. Hundreds starving, crying, angry.

“Madame, you are proposing to climb Mount Everest in your tennis shoes,” the disembodied voice on the phone said.

I thanked him and hung up.

Delivery day

I made myself a cup of coffee, and picked up the phone again. I called a few friends in the business to ask their advice. Answers came back rapidly. “Suicide.” “Ruined reputation.” “I’m a caterer and I wouldn’t do it.”

Then, the friend who’d asked me to do the meal for the birthday called. “Susan, don’t

do it,” he said, simply. “It started out small and fun. Now it’s huge. I’ve got time to call a caterer.”

But what about the challenge? The enjoyment? The beef cheeks in the freezer? The many yet to come?

I grabbed my checkbook and ran to the butcher, because it was delivery day for the next batch; I hoped he could cancel his order for the rest. When I explained he shrugged. “You are right not to do it,” he said. “I will try to sell all the cheeks I have. People will be very happy to have them.”

Sainted butcher.

The carrots would stay in the field.

The squash would fly off the market stall in other directions than mine.

And I would enjoy the party, sitting down with everyone else, to a catered meal.

I did keep the fifteen kilos of beef cheeks in my freezer. I’m delighted to have them,

because now I cook beef cheeks with a certain regularity. I may have begun a trend; many of my friends served beef cheeks at their Christmas tables, so impressed were they by their melting tenderness, their subtle flavor.

Here’s my recipe, in hopes you can find beef cheeks of your own. They’re truly a delight, particularly in the dark days of January—easy to prepare, wonderful to share. You may substitute chuck roast if necessary. Do follow the recipe, cook it long and slow, and understand that while it will be delicious, it won’t have quite the lush texture of the cheeks. Happy New Year! ■

Susan Herrmann Loomis teaches cooking classes in Normandy and Paris.

www.onrueatin.com. Find her cookbooks in

the France Today Bookstore:

www.francetoday.com/store

For more food stories and recipes:

www.francetoday.com

BRAISED BEEF CHEEKS JOUES DE BOEUF BRAISEES

1 lb (500 g) beef cheeks (you may substitute chuck roast)

4 cups (1 liter) hearty red wine, such as a Languedoc

4 bay leaves

10 sprigs thyme

10 peppercorns

1/4 orange, preferably organic

2 carrots, trimmed, peeled, diced

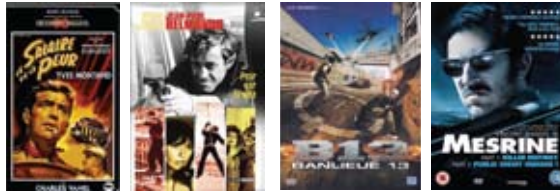
2 to 4 cups (1/2 to 1 liter) beef stock

1. Trim all the nerves and fat from the beef cheeks.
2. Cut the beef cheeks in three pieces, and put in a non-reactive bowl. Cover with the wine; add 2 bay leaves and all the thyme, peppercorns, orange and carrots. Cover and marinate for 24 hours, or at least overnight, turning once or twice.
3. Preheat the oven to 270 degrees F (130 C).
4. Remove cheeks from marinade and pat dry. Strain the marinade, discarding the herbs, orange and carrots. Place marinade in a saucepan over medium heat, and when it is hot, flame it. Remove it from the heat.
5. Brown the cheeks in a nonstick skillet placed over medium-high heat, season with salt and pepper and transfer to a roasting pan. Pour the wine over the cheeks, add the remaining bay leaves and 2 cups (500 ml) stock, or as much as you need to cover the cheeks. Cover the pan and roast in the oven until the cheeks are tender and melting, at least 4 hours. Check occasionally, adding additional stock or wine if necessary to cover the cheeks.
6. Remove the cover from the pan and let the cheeks cook another hour, turning them two or three times.
7. When the cheeks are fully tender, remove them from the pan. Place the cooking liquid over medium-high heat, and reduce until you have about 1-1/2 cups. Correct seasoning.
8. Using two forks, shred the beef cheeks. Add enough reduced cooking liquid to moisten the cheeks. Serve accompanied by braised carrots and squash purée (see Kuri Squash Purée, *France Today*, October 2012; also on *www.francetoday.com*)

Serves 4

FILM PICKS

Top 5 French Action Movies



Widely praised for its intellectual and avant-garde *cinéma d'auteur*, the French film industry also has a long but lesser-known tradition in action movies, from the old master Henri-Georges Clouzot to the latest episode of *Taken 2*.

by Julien Bisson

MOST FRANTIC

Le Salaire de la Peur (The Wages of Fear), Henri-Georges Clouzot, 1953
When an oil well catches fire in South America, four European men—French, Italian and Dutch—are hired to drive two trucks packed with the nitroglycerine needed to extinguish it. But the road is extremely dangerous and the vehicles are not properly equipped to carry the volatile, explosive liquid. The mission proves deadly as the rival duos engage in a furious competition. Released a year before his classic *Les Diaboliques*, the stark and tense action film is also a Clouzot masterpiece, with gripping pursuit scenes and superb black-and-white cinematography. Its existentialist tone relies on fine acting, including a great performance by fledgling actor Yves Montand who plays Mario, an impulsive playboy driven to failure and madness. The movie won the Grand Prix at Cannes and the British Academy Award for Best Film, and was remade twice in the US, as *Violent Road* (Howard Koch, 1958) and *Sorcerer* (William Friedkin, 1977). But nothing beats Clouzot's original.

MOST INFLUENTIAL

Touchez Pas au Grisbi (Grisbi), Jacques Becker, 1954
Adapted from a novel by Albert Simonin, the film recounts the story of Max (Jean Gabin), an aging gangster, who has vowed to retire after he and his partner

Riton successfully rob 50 million francs in gold bars. But Riton is betrayed by his girlfriend (Jeanne Moreau) and kidnapped by a rival gang, which demands the *grisbi*—slang for loot—as a ransom. Both parties agree to an exchange, but it does not go smoothly. A world away from comedies like *Le Cave se Rebiffe* or *Les Tontons Flingueurs*, also adapted from Simonin novels, *Touchez Pas au Grisbi* is a very dark film noir that greatly influenced younger directors including Jules Dassin and Jean-Pierre Melville. It also helped Jean Gabin to relaunch his career, which had been in decline, and marked the screen debut of Italian-born ex-wrestler Lino Ventura, who went on to play many roles opposite his pal Gabin, and eventually became one of the most popular actors in France.

MOST THRILLING

Peur Sur la Ville (Fear Over the City), Henri Verneuil, 1975
Star of the French action movies of the 1960s and 1970s, Jean-Paul Belmondo is at his best in this popular classic. "Bébel" plays Commissaire Letellier, a tough cop facing a vicious serial killer named Minos, who targets young women, he claims, to rid the world of sexual immorality. Even today it is hard not to marvel at director Henri Verneuil's spectacular chase scenes around Paris, involving rooftops, gutters, cars, moving trains and a helicopter, among other things. Belmondo did most of the stunts himself, enhancing

the film's credibility and rhythm, as does Ennio Morricone's memorable score. But Paris is the true star of the movie, providing the marvelous scenic background for the suspenseful and athletic drama. If you liked Steve McQueen in *Bullitt*, then this movie is highly recommended.

MOST SPECTACULAR

Banlieue 13 (District B13), Pierre Morel, 2004
The past decade has set a new standard for French action movies, thanks to one man: Luc Besson. The director of *Léon* and *Nikita* has also written and produced numerous films over the years, including English-speaking hits such as *Taken* and *The Transporter*. But his best production remains *Banlieue 13*, directed by Pierre Morel, a futuristic movie in which Parisian suburbs are literally walled off. An undercover cop and an ex-con are sent into District 13 to defuse a neutron bomb and take down a ruthless kingpin. Flawless action, fast-paced dialogue and spectacular stunts are at the core of this impressive movie, which packs all the lessons of the action genre into a single film. It might not be *Citizen Kane* in terms of story line, but you will hardly find a better source of pure adrenalin elsewhere.

MOST ICONIC

Mesrine (Killer Instinct), Jean-François Richet, 2008
Usually intended for young male audiences, action movies can sometimes cross gender

and generational borders: the widely acclaimed *Mesrine* is one of them. Directed by Jean-François Richet (already known for the turbulent *Ma 6-T Va Crack-er*), this two-part blockbuster is based on the true story of legendary outlaw Jacques Mesrine, a smart and violent gangster who came to be known as France's Public Enemy No. 1 in the 1970s. After several highly publicized kidnappings, robberies and prison escapes, the iconic criminal figure was shot to death in his car by the police. Romantic and cruel, tragic and flamboyant, the epic tale is carried by the mesmerizing Vincent Cassel in the title role; digging artfully into Mesrine's troubled psyche, he is at once charming and terrifying. No wonder he snatched a César for his stunning performance.

Tied for Sixth

L'Homme de Rio (That Man from Rio), Philippe de Broca, 1964
Le Professionnel (The Professional), Georges Lautner, 1981
Nikita (La Femme Nikita), Luc Besson, 1990
Léon (The Professional), Luc Besson, 1994
Dobermann Jan Kounen, 1997
Les Rivières Pourpres (The Crimson Rivers), Mathieu Kassovitz, 2000
Ne Le Dis à Personne (Tell No One), Guillaume Canet, 2006
Trailers of most of these films are on www.youtube.com

BOX OFFICE

The top 10 movie hits in France

- The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 2**
Bill Condon
- Skyfall** Sam Mendes
- Thérèse Desqueyroux**
Claude Miller
- The Impossible**
Juan Antonio Bayona
- Argo** Ben Affleck
- Comme des Frères**
Hugo Gélin
- Stars 80** Frédéric Forestier,
Thomas Langmann
- Trouble With the Curve**
Robert Lorenz
- The Capital** (Capital)
Costa-Gavras
- A Royal Affair** Nikolaj Arcel

BEST SELLERS IN FRANCE

FICTION

- La Vérité sur l'Affaire Harry Quebert** Joël Dicker (De Fallois)
Cinquante Nuances de Grey (Fifty Shades of Grey) E.L. James (JC Lattès)
Le Sermon sur la Chute de Rome Jérôme Ferrari (Actes Sud)
L'Hiver du Monde (Winter of the World) Ken Follett (Robert Laffont)
Une Place à Prendre (The Casual Vacancy) J.K. Rowling (Grasset)
- CDs: Classical**
La Voix des Rêves Philippe Jaroussky (Virgin Classics)
Songs Plácido Domingo (Sony Masterworks)
Mission Cecilia Bartoli (Decca)
Nouveau Monde: Baroque Arias and Songs Patricia Petibon (Deutsche Grammophon)
Joyeux Noël André Rieu (Polydor)

DVDs

- The Dark Knight Rises** Christopher Nolan
Brave Mark Andrews, Brenda Chapman
Rust and Bone Jacques Audiard
Marley Kevin Macdonald
Le Prénom Alexandre de La Patellière, Matthieu Delaporte

Find French films in our France Today bookstore: www.francetoday.com/store

Other possible sources: www.amazon.ca, www.amazon.fr, www.facetsdvd.com, www.fnac.com

To watch DVDs ordered from France, you'll need a multiformat DVD player that can read Zone 2 DVDs.



Matthias Schoenaerts, left, and Audiard at work

Jacques Audiard

by Lanie Goodman

Unpredictable is one word that aptly describes director Jacques Audiard's newest film, *De Rouille et d'Os* (*Rust and Bone*), an unlikely romance between two solitary characters that ricochets from killer whales to a tragic accident and brutal bare-knuckle fighting.

Loosely adapted from a story by Canadian writer Craig Davidson, the screenplay for *Rust and Bone* took Audiard and his co-author Thomas Bidegain some three years to complete. "It's hard to summarize what happens scene by scene," says the 60-year-old writer-director, and that's exactly the way he wants it.

"When I'm telling a story," Audiard explains, "I like to create gaps in the writing. You construct narrative arcs and then you break some of the segments. In the same way, if you give a complete finish to the characters, it will be disappointing. If you decide to conclude all the action you've begun, it will be boring. Characters should be pushed to a certain point, and not beyond."

Audiard speaks quickly, rhythmically, much like the dialogue in his films, alternating between gravity and witty retorts. As one of

France's best-known filmmakers, renowned for his *polars* (thrillers), the director's emblematic *nouveau-noir* style is a heady mix of close-ups and attention to unvarnished details, with elliptical flashes that evoke both a raw intensity and a lyrical quality. His dramatic approach is emotionally charged, but restrained enough to avoid any hint of pathos.

The physical element

Nominated for a Golden Globe as Best Foreign Language Film, *Rust and Bone* opens with the ex-boxer Ali, played by Belgian actor Mathias Schoenaerts (*Bullhead*)—homeless, broke and suddenly left in charge of his five-year-old son, whom he hardly knows. He jumps on a train from Belgium to Antibes, on the Mediterranean coast, with the boy in tow, and persuades his sister to take them both in until he gets back on his feet. Working as a nightclub bouncer, he rescues Stephanie (Marion Cotillard), from a drunken altercation and drives her home.

Attractive and self-confident, Stephanie takes Ali's phone number but is clearly put off by his blunt manner. But later, while

at work as an orca trainer at Marineland, she has a tragic accident and loses both lower legs. Eventually she calls Ali. He takes her on outings to the beach, carries her on his shoulders and helps her to rediscover the pleasures of swimming. The rejuvenating physicality of their relationship eventually extends to sex and a wordless, deeper bonding.

“We knew that the physical element would be an important part of the film,” says Audiard. “When you write a story in which the feminine character has two cut-off legs, and there’s going to be an erotic dimension, you know the love scenes will be different,” Audiard continues. “It’s more a question of how to abandon oneself in love.”

“The character, Stephanie, is terrified to give herself to another,” he explains. “When she takes off her clothes it’s an incredible striptease—she’s more than naked at that moment.”

Serial challenges

In contrast to Audiard’s previous international success, the somber, claustrophobic prison drama *Un Prophète*, 2010 (*A Prophet*), *Rust and Bone* creates a space for a certain intimacy to develop. “The two films are very different,” he says with a smile. “In *A Prophet* there’s no woman, no love and no light. Here we wanted to create a love story, with sunshine and wide screen shots.”

As for the cast, Audiard says he was seeking a mix of strength and frailty in both characters. “I knew in advance I wanted Marion,” he says, because he was “blown away” by her portrayal of Edith Piaf in *La Vie en Rose* (2007) and had been waiting for a chance to work with her.

He also knew that there would be some technical challenges, given the heroine’s profession and the terrible twist of fate she endures. “Marion is very brave,” he adds. “She has a tomboyish quality about her. She’s got guts. At one point she was actually performing with the orcas. Killer whales are very dangerous animals.”

Surprisingly, the astonishing technical effects turned out to be less daunting than expected. “Contrary to what I feared, the tech work didn’t take too much time away from the film,” Audiard says. “Ten years ago I wouldn’t have been able to make this film—the special effects would have been too heavy-handed. During the entire shoot I had to remind myself ‘she has no legs’, since she was wearing green tights,” the director continues. “But Marion never forgot it.”

“It’s true that the special effects had to be incredible,” agrees Cotillard, “but it didn’t affect the shooting. We just did the work we usually do, and they digitally took off my legs. With Jacques,” she adds, “the love



Marion Cotillard and Schoenaerts in a scene from *Rust and Bone*

he has for his characters is so strong that it’s very inspiring.”

“In one scene,” recounts Audiard, “we did about ten takes because Marion was playing the role full on, as if she were in a Tod Browning film. I told her to slow down. But most of the time, when I bring actors in one direction and they take it even further, they make it their own, and they’re always right.”

He first considered finding a professional boxer to play Ali, but after seeing Schoenaerts in *Bullhead*, he changed his mind. Though audiences might not initially feel sympathy for the rough and inarticulate Ali, the character—like many of Audiard’s male protagonists—is not as unfeeling as he might seem. “What defines a hero is courage,” he says. “It’s not because they’re particularly nice.”

Western in the works?

Rust and Bone also explores father-son relationships, a subject often broached in other Audiard films. “It’s more about a father who doesn’t know he’s a father,” he says, smiling. “Ali is very juvenile himself, and he treats his son like a little brother. So in a way, the film is also about paternity. It’s about a guy learning to admit he’s a father, and in the end finding the words to say ‘I love you.’”

Audiard’s own father, Michel Audiard, was also a director, but best known as a prolific screenwriter, with some 130 films featuring colorful slangy dialogue and his own brand of popular mordant humor. After initially rejecting the movie business, Jacques abandoned literature and philosophy at the Sorbonne and went to work as an assistant to Roman Polanski for the chilling 1976 drama *Le Locataire* (*The Tenant*).

After writing several successful scripts during the 1980s, he directed his first feature, *Regarde les Hommes Tomber* (*See How They Fall*), in 1994.

A dark road movie about hired killers starring Matthieu Kassovitz and Jean-Louis Trintignant, the film won three Césars, including Best New Director and Best First Film.

He followed with two more features, *Un Héros Très Discret* (*A Self-Made Hero*, 1996) and *Sur Mes Lèvres* (*Read My Lips*, 2001), and then another major success with *De Battre Mon Coeur S’est Arrêté* (*The Beat That My Heart Skipped*, 2005). A superb remake of the 1978 *Fingers* by James Toback, the jumpy psychological thriller tackles multilayered mysteries about love and self-imposed prisons. Romain Duris stars as Thomas, a ruthless real-estate entrepreneur involved in brutal, shady deals until he accidentally crosses paths with a revered music teacher and something snaps. He seeks out private lessons with a beautiful Chinese pianist to prepare for an audition—a chance to set his crooked destiny back on course.

The powerful prison tale *A Prophet*, awarded the Grand Prix du Jury at the Cannes Festival and nominated for a Foreign Language Film Oscar, stars Tahar Rahim as Malik, an illiterate Arab youth who winds up in jail and finds himself at the mercy of ever-present violence and humiliation. But as he learns to read and write, he builds his own little empire to survive.

So what’s next? Audiard smiles, leaning back in his armchair. “Well, Thomas Bidegain and I have a musical and we have a western. Even while we were writing *Rust and Bone*, we stopped at one point to work on the musical. I’m not really sure why I like the genre—perhaps to make reality enchanting?”

As for the western, he says it would mark his English-language debut. “When you do a western, it has to be in English.” ■

For more *Rencontres*: www.francetoday.com

TRAVEL STUDY GUIDE

2013

Combining travel and study is a time-honored tradition, at least since the Middle Ages, when students trekked across Europe to study at the first universities, whose initial fame often rested on particular subjects—theology at the University of Paris, founded by Robert de Sorbon in the mid-13th century, or medicine and law at the University of Montpellier, officially established in 1289 but operating long before. Today, when it comes to mastering French, there's no better way to learn than by traveling in France, immersed in the language by everything you see and hear every day. You can study at the Paris Sorbonne or in Montpellier, or scores of other cities and regions from the Alps to the Côte d'Azur. The choice of courses is vast, from rigorous academic programs to relaxed courses focused on pleasure and practical conversation—you'll find a few varied examples here. You can also combine your immersion in France with mastering the art of French cooking, or watercolor painting or wine tasting, as you'll see from our listings starting on page 35.

LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

INSTITUT DE FRANÇAIS – VILLEFRANCHE-SUR-MER

With a stunning location on the Côte d'Azur, the **Institut de Français** in Villefranche-sur-Mer is a popular choice for students of all ages who would like to combine language learning with the laidback Riviera lifestyle. Housed in a traditional Provençal villa, the school overlooks the Mediterranean from its hilltop perch and is within easy reach of Nice, Cannes and Monte Carlo. The sunny former village of Villefranche-sur-Mer sometimes looks like a movie set—and has often been one—with its charming small port, spectacular natural harbor, 16th-century citadel and narrow 17th-century streets. The school boasts a glittering cast of past students, too, from former Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and founder of *Lonely Planet* Maureen Wheeler, to actress Kathy Bates and celebrity hairdresser Vidal Sassoon.

The Institut offers an all-year-round intensive course that promises true immersion in the language and works to develop natural speaking ability using a concept known as the “total approach”. Courses run 8 1/2 hours a day, five days a week, for two to four weeks, and combine various methods and activities—traditional lessons, games, films, songs and role-playing—all in French only—to prepare students for everyday conversation. “I appreciated the school's focus on the spoken, not written word,” former student Kelly McDermott, from Denver, says. “The technique mimics the way we learned our mother



tongue as children...introducing the information immediately to our mouths, not just our minds. I believe that's why students leave the Institut actually speaking the language, not just knowing it on paper.”

Offering regular sessions across eight levels, the Institut de Français limits classes to no more than ten students. Full sessions consist of 160 hours of tuition over four weeks. Shorter sessions of two or three weeks are possible, for students who are not absolute beginners. Course fees range from €1,350 to €3,300. For an extra fee, the school can also provide accommodation in nearby

apartments for the duration of the course. 23 ave Général-Leclerc, Villefranche-sur-Mer, 04.93.01.88.44. www.institutdefrancais.com
—Richelle Harrison Plesse

ACCENT FRANÇAIS – MONTPELLIER

Whether for a brief introduction to the French language or intensive, one-on-one classes, **Accent Français** in Montpellier offers a variety of courses for students of all levels. Besides general French courses, the school also offers very popular specialized offerings combining French with cooking classes, wine classes and/or cultural programs. Students may also attend a mix of group and private lessons with the combined courses option. For those who would like to spend some time learning the language while on vacation, the “holiday course” mixes study and sightseeing, pairing lessons with city tours, movie screenings and music/dance/theater outings.

Students of all ages and many nationalities sign up for Accent Français courses that run anywhere from one week to several months. Courses include small study groups (3 to 10 students), two teachers per class and a focus on practical communication through oral training, although all four primary language skills are covered—reading, writing, speaking and listening. “I felt the immersion left me able to speak more confidently,” says Linda May, a student at Accent Français in 2010. “The teachers were encouraging, they connected well with students and made the classes very interesting.”

[Apprendre le français à Montpellier]



Une expérience unique !

Montpellier is THE spot to learn French. Immerse yourself in the language and culture of France in the dynamic Mediterranean city of Montpellier. You can find top-rated language schools such as Accent Français, Erasme, IMLS, Institut Européen de Français, Institut Linguistique du Peyrou, LSF... With a wide range of courses for every level and length of stay, we can help you find the programme most adapted to your needs.

More information on :

www.ot-montpellier.fr/en/language-stay

www.accentfrançais.com • www.centre-linguistique-montpellier.com

www.imls.fr • www.institut-europeen.com • www.ilp-france.com • www.lsf-france.com



Montpellier

OFFICE DE TOURISME

Pupils are encouraged to take part in the school's regular extracurricular activity program: evenings out in local cafés, bars and restaurants, karaoke parties, picnics, food and wine tastings, workshops and sporting activities—all handy ways to practice the language in an authentic French environment. Conveniently located in Montpellier's old town, Accent Français is steps away from the Place de la Comédie, the city's action central.

The location is another of the school's major attractions. Montpellier is the capital of the Languedoc-Roussillon region, at the crossroads between Mediterranean beaches and the hilly vineyard country that produces Minervois, Corbières, Faugères, Saint-Chinian and many other wines. The city has a solid reputation as a student center—the University of Montpellier was founded in the late 13th century, and has long been renowned for its medical school—one notable 16th-century medical graduate was Rabelais. Today, with

its medieval squares, grandiose *hôtels particuliers* and 300 days of sunshine per year, the southern city remains a popular choice with students.

2 rue de Verdun, Montpellier, 04.67.58.12.68.

www.accentfrancais.com

—R.H.P.

ISEFE DE CHAMBÉRY

The Alpine jewel of Chambéry and the surrounding region of mountains and lakes are an outdoor enthusiast's dream, and provide a spectacular setting for learning French. ISEFE (Institut Savoisien d'Etudes Françaises pour Etrangers), part of the University of Savoie, offers a variety of French courses all year round. Its general French course, spanning a trimester, admits up to 18 students, and features an 18-hour-a-week program.

Mara LaPorte, from Tennessee, chose ISEFE because students are immersed in all that is French right away, even with no prior knowledge of the language. "The professors were very helpful and



A class photo at ISEFE in Chambéry

went the extra mile to teach us as much as possible," she says. Fellow student Henry Ross, also from Tennessee, agrees. "The teachers use a variety of different methods, and I think they do a good job of keeping students engaged." Commenting on the classes, he says they are "well organized, with a good balance of reading, writing, listening, speaking and culture."

In addition to the standard general course, a number of themed courses cater to up to eight students at a time and cover such subjects as French literature, French history and civilization, gastronomy and theater. Intensive courses, focusing on comprehension and expression, are offered over periods of three, four or seven weeks. Summer courses are a great opportunity to learn, or perfect, the language while enjoying the region's many festivals. The school has its own restaurant and library, and it regularly organizes a raft of cultural and recreational activities including mountain hikes; day trips to nearby lakes; guided tours of local sights and monuments; cultural nights out for movies, concerts or theater; and an array of sports from rowing to rock climbing.

For fun exploring farther afield, by train—they are frequent and inexpensive—Chambéry is about 45 minutes from Grenoble to the south and Annecy with its beautiful lake to the north and,

going west, only an hour and a half from Lyon, one of France's most fascinating cities.

Domaine Universitaire de Jacob-Bellecombette, Chambéry, 04.79.75.84.14.

www.isefe.univ-savoie.fr

—R.H.P.

CCFS - SORBONNE, PARIS

The CCFS (*Cours de Civilisation Française de la Sorbonne*) were created in 1919 to endorse French culture by teaching French civilization and French as a foreign language. The courses, steeped in history and tradition, at the University of Paris-Sorbonne have gone from welcoming a handful of Americans in the early days to accepting as many as 9,000 students a year, of more than 130 different nationalities. Centrally located on Paris's Left Bank, the Sorbonne is one of the symbols of the French capital.

While many schools these days focus on speaking skills,



The entrance to the Sorbonne



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Email : af.toulouse@wanadoo.fr
Internet : www.alliance-toulouse.org

Group photo Courtesy: ISEFE; Sorbonne © Thomas Larois - Fotolia.com

the CCFS program is also a bastion of the old school and aims to devote equal time to all basic language skills and also to shepherd students through the history of French civilization from its origins to the present day. All courses include language classes that delve into French grammar, conjugation, spelling, vocabulary and literary texts, plus separate phonetic labs to help students improve pronunciation, understanding and oral expression.

The popular “classic” four-month course consists of 12 hours of classes a week for French language students of all levels, who can choose between morning and afternoon classes. The complete four-month course, with 20 hours of classes a week, is significantly more intensive—the most comprehensive course available at the school and also the most in demand. Students in the complete course attend twice-weekly two-hour French civilization lectures in addition to regular language classes and phonetics labs. Short sessions are in place for students who want an intense course of less than three months, although a cultural program is offered as an option for short-session students who want to stay on. For Spring Semester 2013, Feb 14–May 31, the fee for the classic course is €1,490; the complete course is €1,740. (For a detailed list of upcoming courses and fees, see the CCFS website.)

There are a few downsides to studying French in Paris: it can be a very expensive city to live in, and the distractions are many. On the positive side, students, tourists, business visitors and residents alike are often swept away by the beauty, romance and joie de vivre of the city, and the distractions are wonderful.

Centre de l'Estrapade, 16 bis rue de l'Estrapade, Paris 5th, 01.44.10.77.00.

www.cafs-sorbonne.fr

—R.H.P.

LA LEÇON DE FRANÇAIS - PARIS

Opened last year, La Leçon de Français is an “itinerant Parisian language school” for private lessons founded by the effervescent Elizabeth Bettencourt. With a degree in linguistics and an Alliance Française diploma for teaching French as a foreign language, Bettencourt worked in a private language school for two years before setting out on her own to create “the kind of school I dreamed about, a school without walls, where learning would be a pleasure, where no one gets bored, where there are several teachers for each student and the students do most of the talking”.

The focus is on spoken French, and programs are custom-designed for each student—most are adults, 20-somethings to seniors. Individual schedules depend on a student’s level, interests and specific goals. A schedule of ten hours a week might involve four hours of spoken French, four hours of French culture and two hours of pronunciation. A less intensive schedule might be two hours, twice a week. Teaching aids include computers, iPads and voice recordings. One California couple did a one-week course in Paris and now keeps up at home with weekly lessons via Skype. American Claire Bennis, retired after eight years in Paris with IBM, started with La Leçon de Français last year. “I can hear my progress in real time with my recordings on the lessons, and having the teacher’s recordings at home gives me great practice in listening. I am very pleased. It’s the first time I feel confident in my French.”

Pronunciation is taught by Jeanne Deledicq, an opera singer who holds a post-graduate degree in linguistics and teaches diction to actors and singers; classes are held in her artist’s studio. Language and culture are taught by Bettencourt and three other professors, and the classroom is



Elizabeth Bettencourt, right, of The French Lesson, with a student in a Montparnasse café

Paris—cafés, museums, gardens, markets and shops.

Single students or small groups might meet at the Café de la Mairie near the church of Saint Sulpice and, after working on grammar and vocabulary over coffee, visit the church to discuss its Delacroix paintings and then drop into the Pierre Hermé pastry shop. A lesson at Café Select in Montparnasse starts with a discussion of Ernest Hemingway and James Joyce, and segues to the Montparnasse cemetery to see the graves of Baudelaire and Man Ray. Other lessons happen in the tea salon of the Petit Palais and the garden of the Musée de la

Vie Romantique, or include visits to the Drouot auction house or the chic concept store Merci.

“We definitely want students to learn grammar and pronunciation,” says Bettencourt, “but the most important thing is for them to be able to say what they want to say, with ease and confidence.”

Fees range from €50 an hour for flexible “residents” courses (minimum 60 hours) to €80 an hour for one-week courses (min. 10 hours). *1 rue Bénard, Paris 14th, 06.11.86.26.31.*

elizabeth.bettencourt

@thefrenchlesson.fr,

www.thefrenchlesson.fr

—Judy Fayard

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www.ila-france.com

COOKING SCHOOLS

THE KITCHEN AT CAMONT-GASCONY

American-born author and chef Kate Hill spent a decade or so aboard a canal barge conducting voyages of culinary discovery along the waterways of southwest



France. But in 1991 she came ashore to an 18th-century farmhouse in the Garonne Valley near the village of Sainte-Colomben-Bruilhois, where she created the “culinary retreat” that is now **The Kitchen at Camont**. In her cooking-studio-cum-school, Kate welcomes professional cooks and enthusiastic amateurs from around the world to discover the secrets of Gascon cooking and much more. If *haute cuisine* is what you are after, best to take your *toque* somewhere else. But if you want to learn about *cassoulet*, terrines and *tourtes*, or join workshops to practice breadmaking, rustic pastries and farmhouse favorites, Camont is an ideal choice. There are also lessons in kitchen gardening, beekeeping, food photography and, for the less fainthearted, an intensive introduction-to-butchery course linked to the ancient art of *charcuterie*. You don't have to slaughter your own pig to participate, but by the end of the program you will have a head-to-tail knowl-

edge of how to transform every morsel of a *cochon* into a bewildering variety of edible delights. (The pundit who decreed that those who like sausage should not see it being made obviously never had the pleasure of visiting Camont.)

Few places in France can rival the abundance of the Garonne Valley or the diversity of its farm produce, and Camont is a microcosm of the region, with its homegrown vegetables, fruit trees and herb gardens. Classes are intensive, six-hour affairs from 9:30 am to 5 pm, but everything pauses around noon for a long French lunch washed down with the appropriate wine, and there are also expeditions to local markets and farms to meet artisan food producers. Camont is open all year, offering one-, three- and five-day cooking courses; one-week or one-month charcuterie programs; and three-day weekend photography workshops.

The nearest large town is Agen, which is about four hours from Paris via the TGV high-speed train, and the airports at Toulouse and Bordeaux are only 90 minutes away by car or an hour by train. Camont does not provide accommodation but Kate can recommend a number of charming local village inns and hotels. Course rates range from €250–€1,750. katedecamont@me.com, www.kitchen-at-camont.com

—Chris Redman

LA CUISINE PARIS

Opened in October 2009 by Olivier Pugliesi-Conti and Jane Bertch, **La Cuisine Paris**, in the Marais district near the river, introduces its students to the technique and beauty of classic French cuisine in a friendly, approachable environment. Classes at La Cuisine Paris last between two and four hours, and are held in an airy upstairs



Making croissants at La Cuisine Paris

kitchen with a black-and-white tiled floor. Lunch or dinner, with wine, follows savory cooking classes, at a dining table overlooking the Seine. All classes are small, with no more than eight students per teacher—most of them trained at Paris's prestigious professional school, the *École Ferrandi*—and they all allow for hands-on learning.

“We've taken food preparation and made it accessible,” says Bertch. “The point isn't to stand back and look at it from a distance. It's about sharing something wonderful.”

Indoor classes range from *macaron* techniques and cheese-tasting to deboning and cooking whole chickens, and seasonal options vary—there's a *Bûche de Noël* class around Christmastime, for making the traditional log-shaped French holiday dessert, and a *Galette des Rois* class in January, for baking those frangipane-filled “king cakes” with a trinket hidden inside. Outdoor classes involve market and food-shop tours, from chocolate boutiques to hunting provisions at an open street market like the Left Bank's *Marché Maubert*.

The variety of classes offered, along with the short duration and reasonable prices of individual classes (€60–€150), encourages students to repeat. One student, Carrie Tse, took four classes in the same week: “This is my first trip to Paris, and I think the best

approach to learning about a new place is to start with the food.”

Kathryn O'Connor, who returned for a second class, agrees. “That's the way we share, through food. A cooking class helps us understand who we are—if you want to know someone, sit down and eat with them.”

Students often continue their conversations downstairs after classes, at one of the small tables in the reception room. “I've been able to interact with a lot of people here,” says Tse. “It's fun.”

“Our students go on foot from here to Notre Dame, to the Bastille, on just an easy stroll after class,” says Bertch. And moreover, after class, for example, students can also meander off to nearby E. Dehillerin, the renowned professional kitchen equipment store that is a paradise of marvels for anyone interested in cooking, baking or croissant-making.

La Cuisine Paris provides students of all ages and all (or no) cooking backgrounds with a tasty way to enter into French culture, with the idea that food is nourishment on many levels, especially in France. Some of us visiting Paris—or elsewhere in France—can't wait to get our hands full of dough and strip the chicken from the bones. *80 Quai de l'Hôtel de Ville, Paris 4th. 01.40.51.78.18. contact@lacuisineparis.com, www.lacuisineparis.com*

—Kaylen Baker

Find the perfect program with our comprehensive listing of programs. Language programs have been organized by region, and cooking and wine schools are organized by category. Consult our key to make sure you choose a school that meets your needs. Check out the schools' websites to learn more about all they have to offer.

KEY

Setting

- Urban
- Countryside
- Online

Attendees

- Adults
- Adults & Teens
- Teens
- Children
- All ages
- College level

Requirements

- Some French needed
- Fluency required
- Specific start date and length

Available/Included

- Certificate preparation
- Leisure activities



France is divided into five geographical areas, each with its own area code. For calls within France, area codes use two digits: 01, 02, 03, 04 and 05. When calling from the United States, dial 011 for international and 33 for France, then delete the zero in the French area code. For example, if the telephone number shown in the listings is 01.55.12.13.14, to call from outside France you will dial 011.33.1.55.12.13.14.

GENERAL SEARCH INFORMATION

CampusFrance: Website portal for studying in French universities. Guides to choosing schools, applying and living. Visit website for prices.

www.usa.campusfrance.org/

01- PARIS

ACCORD ÉCOLE DE LANGUES
Paris © 01.55.33.52.33
www.french-paris.com



From €300 for 20 hrs/wk for 1 - 4 wks. Options include intensive classes, one-on-one instruction, summer program for families & teens, programs for ages 50+ & business French. For €80 fee, school will arrange accommodation. Homestays from €235/wk.

ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE PARIS ILE-DE-FRANCE
Paris © 01.42.84.90.00
www.alliancefr.org/en



From €222 for 20 hrs/wk. Workshops for €98/wk (9 hrs). Options include intensive, evening & private (hourly fee) classes. Thematic classes such as "Art de Vivre à la Française" & "Paris, La Gourmande" offered as well as business French. From €695 for a 2 wk homestay.

COURS DE CIVILISATION FRANÇAISE DE LA SORBONNE
Paris © 01.44.10.77.00
www.cafs-sorbonne.fr



Check website for class options & prices. General & intensive French courses & evening classes available, as well as business French. Courses coincide w/academic calendar. Online Registration available. Housing services upon request.

ÉCOLE FRANCE LANGUE
Paris © 01.45.00.40.15
www.france-langue.fr



Group courses start at €230 for 15 hrs/wk + €30 fee. Short & long-term courses offered. Private classes available. Programs in French & business, tourism, or fashion. Au Pair program offered. 2 campuses in Paris; campuses in Biarritz, Bordeaux & Nice. For €80 fee, school will arrange accommodation. Homestays from €168/wk.

ÉCOLE DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE POUR ÉTRANGERS (ELFE)
Paris © 01.48.78.73.00
www.elfe-paris.com



Mini-groups (max 6) start at €395 for 15 hrs/wk. Group & private classes taught. Business French, French for Teachers & French + Art/Design or Fashion available. Special courses for ages 50+ & for under 25. Cultural excursions available for a fee (wine tastings, cooking classes). Homestays from €230/wk. Various online classes offered..

ÉCOLE LUTECE LANGUE
Paris © 01.42.36.31.51
www.lutece-langue.com



€247.5 for 15 hrs/wk for 1-3 weeks + €55 fee. Programs range in degree of intensity. Evening & private lessons offered plus specialized courses on French cuisine, business French. Online registration. School will arrange housing (€77 fee) from €30/night in a homestay.

INSTITUT CATHOLIQUE DE PARIS
Paris © 01.44.39.52.68
www.icp.fr/ilcf



Prices based on hrs/wk per semester. From €460 for 3 hrs/wk/semester. Check website for all prices. Semester & monthly courses offered in language, civilization, business French & teacher's training. Evening classes available. Online registration. For a €100 fee, homestays can be arranged from €1015 for 4 wks.

LA LEÇON DE FRANÇAIS
Paris © 06.11.86.26.31
www.thefrenchlesson.fr



An "itinerant" language school w/focus on spoken French, pronunciation & French culture. Custom-designed. From €50/hr for flexible "residents" courses (min 60 hrs) to €80/hr for 1-week "tourist" courses (min 10 hrs).

VERLAINE LANGUE
Paris © 01.45.88.05.75
www.verlaine-langue.com



€280 for 10 hrs/wk for 2 wks; €330 for 3 wks; €398 for 4 wks. Housing suggestions provided upon request. Maximum of 6 people per class.

02 - NORTHWEST

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL D'ÉTUDE DES LANGUES (CIEL)
Brest © 02.98.30.45.75
www.ciel.fr



From €230 for 17.5 hrs/wk + fees. General & Intensive courses offered as well as business French, teacher preparation, French + Gastronomy or Cultural Heritage. Program for school groups (aged 13-18). Campus offers 3 residence halls; homestays available from €189/wk.

CENTRE LINGUISTIQUE POUR ÉTRANGERS
Tours © 02.47.64.06.19
www.clc.fr



€790 for 2 wks 20 hrs/wk. Classes offered in the afternoon & evening; small group & one-on-one courses offered. Courses geared towards ages 50+. Homestays from €190/wk.

CŒUR DE FRANCE ÉCOLE DE LANGUES
Sancerre © 02.48.79.34.08
www.coeurdefrance.com



From €435 for 20 hrs/wk. Small group, one-on-one, family & couple's classes available. Cultural excursions. School offers a few apartments onsite starting at €650/wk & can help book several nearby apartments.

ÉCOLANGUES
Angers © 02.41.25.73.73
www.ecolangues.com



First wk €600, then €540/wk (25 hrs/wk). Housing included, other types of accommodation can be arranged. Small group, one-on-one & courses for 2 available in general & business French, French for teachers.

FRANÇAIS À LA CARTE
Tours © 02.47.96.42.18
www.lessonsinfrench.com



Small group (max 5) courses offered as well as individual, duo & classes for teachers. From €890 for 4 wks (15 hr/wk). Homestays from €170/wk.

FRENCH IN NORMANDY
Rouen © 02.35.72.08.63
www.frenchinnormandy.com



From €199 for 15 hrs/week + €85 fee. General & business French offered as well as French & Cultural programs (cuisine, arts...) For a €30 fee, school will place students in homestay.

IMMERSION FRANCE
Suèvres © 02.54.87.86.02
www.immersionfrance.co.uk



£730/wk. Courses available June through Sept only; accommodation, meals & full board included. Cooking classes may be added for an additional fee.

LE FRANÇAIS FACE À FACE
Angers © 06.66.60.00.63
www.lefrancaisfaceface.com



Sixty hrs of French immersion (5 days) for €1800 (40 hrs of classes). One-on-one intensive classes for professionals. Accommodation & meals beginning at €850/wk. Lodging à la carte.

LE POYENVAL
Bazoges-en-Pareds © 02.51.51.26.85
www.lepoyenval.com



€1195/wk includes classes, meals & accommodation; €130 for day course. School and housing in a château. In addition to small group classes (max 5), French + painting or photography also offered.



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AVERAGE OF
5
STUDENTS
PER CLASS

SCHOOL LISTINGS

03 - NORTHEAST

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL D'ÉTUDES FRANÇAISES
Dijon ☎ 03.80.39.35.60
www.u-bourgogne.fr/cief



From €490 for 2 wks; €1395/semester. Intensive courses taught on weekly basis year-round as well as semester courses. Campus dorms available during summer from €391/4 wks. Homestays & student residences can be booked year-round. Cooking classes & cultural excursions offered.

CIEF DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE REIMS

Reims ☎ 03.26.91.81.95
www.univ-reims.fr/cief



€700/semester. €320 - €400 for 3 wks in summer (20 hrs/wk). Semester & short summer courses offered. Housing may be arranged off-campus.

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL D'ÉTUDES DE LANGUES (CIEL)

Strasbourg ☎ 03.88.43.08.31
www.ciel-strasbourg.org



From €410 for 2 wks (15 hrs/wk). Small group classes start every 2 weeks year-round. Private classes & workshops available. Evening courses, business French & French for teachers offered.

FRENCH IMMERSION IN CHAMPAGNE

Verdelot ✉ marie.varlet@wanadoo.fr
www.french-immersion-champagne.fr



Individual, small group & programs for families/couples offered. Prices vary depending on program & length. Several charming hotels & gites nearby. "Sparkling Weekend" centered around French language & wine available.

INSTITUT CATHOLIQUE LILLE CLARIFE

Lille ☎ 03.20.57.92.19
clarife.univ-catholille.fr



€295 for 36-hr module; €625 for 70-hr summer module. Spring & summer courses. Homestays & housing in university residences may be arranged. Evening courses offered.

04 - SOUTHEAST

ACCENT FRANÇAIS

Montpellier ☎ 04.67.58.12.68
www.accentfrancais.com



From €220/wk for 20 hrs/wk. General & intensive French, medical & business French, French & cooking, French for teachers & courses for ages 50+. Homestays from €120/wk. Summer housing on campus for €125/wk.

ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE MARSEILLE-PROVENCE

Marseille ☎ 04.96.10.24.60
www.afmarseille.org



From €256 for 4 wks (8 hrs/wk). Classes offered year-round. French for Au Pairs offered. Homestays available from €15/night.

ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE GRENOBLE

Grenoble ☎ 04.76.56.25.84
www.alliancefr-grenoble.org



Starting at €198 for 20 hrs. Group & private courses available in general, professional & scientific French. Conversation circles & cooking sessions available. School can help arrange housing.

ALTIPLANO TRAINING

Chamonix, Mens ☎ 04.76.34.25.15
www.altiplanotraining.com



From €735 for course only (15 hrs); Immersion programs (including housing) from €1150/wk (15 hrs). Intensive courses in Chamonix plus immersion courses in Mens. One-on-one instruction. Cooking courses available. Courses offered year-round. Family French courses offered during the summer.

CAVILAM

Vichy ☎ 04.70.30.83.83
www.cavilam.com



Group classes from €290/wk (20 hrs) + €60 fee. Classes start every Monday except for beginners, which start on specific dates. Group & individual classes + variety of other programs. French + golf, cuisine or hydrotherapy offered. French & sports for ages 12 - 16. Homestays from €18.50/night.

CENTRE UNIVERSITAIRE D'ÉTUDES FRANÇAISES DE GRENOBLE (CUEF)

Grenoble ☎ 04.76.82.43.70
www.u-grenoble3.fr/cuef



See website for prices. General & professional French, French for teachers. Language, culture & cooking courses also offered. Housing on campus; homestays or other accommodations may be arranged.

CERAN LINGUA

Morières-lès-Avignon ☎ 04.90.02.05.00
www.ceran.com



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CREA-LANGUES

Moustiers-Ste-Marie ☎ +32.51.31.97.42
www.crealangues.com



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EUROLINGUA INSTITUTE

Montpellier ✉ info@eurolingua.com
www.eurolingua.com



From €305/wk for 4 wks (15 hrs/wk). Summer courses only. Long & short term programs, activities available. Homestays available from €30/night.

ICILANGUE

Nice ☎ 04.93.16.94.17
www.icilangue.com



From €225/wk (15 hrs/wk). Small group classes (max 5) & private lessons. Homestays available from €26/night. Excursions offered for additional fee.

INSTITUT CÉSAR LANGUES

Montpellier ☎ 04.67.63.43.69
www.institutcesar.com



Group (max 6), individual & telephone classes taught year-round. Special courses on wine, terroir & discovering the region offered, as well as classes geared to seniors.

INSTITUT EUROPÉEN DE FRANÇAIS

Montpellier ☎ 04.67.91.70.00
www.institut-europeen.com



Courses start at €230/wk for 22 lessons. Courses offered in general French, business French & French for teachers. French courses combined w/ internship also available. Student residences can be booked; homestays from €138/wk.

INSTITUT DE FRANÇAIS

Villefranche-sur-Mer ☎ 04.93.01.88.44
www.institutdefrancais.com



€2800 for 4 wks from Dec to April; €3400 for 4 wks from May to Nov. + €60 fee. 2- or 4-week immersion programs offered. Breakfast, lunch included in price. Accommodation at the school from €380 for 4 wks.

INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DES ALPES

Anancy ☎ 04.50.45.38.37
www.ifalpes.fr



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INSTITUT DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE UZÈS

Uzès ☎ 04.66.22.74.08
www.uzes-french-school.com



€39.80/hr for private lessons. Price decreases as hours increase. One-on-one instruction. French language courses combined w/art, cuisine & history. Couple's & family courses available. Accommodation suggestions upon request.

INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DE LANGUEAix-en-Provence ☎ 04.42.93.47.90
www.is-aix.com

From €645 for 2 wks + €75 fee. Several courses available (group or private) for short & long term in all levels of French. Language courses combined w/golf, wine, painting, sailing or horseback riding classes. Business French, French for Teachers offered. Homestays from €179/wk.

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www.ila-france.com

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www.imls.fr/en

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