

CHEZ MAQUIGNON PLACES OF INTEREST

Quite close is a village in the direction of Chalais called Aubiterre the prettiest village in France. It has the oldest Monolithic Church well worth a visit. At the same time you could visit Chalais.

St EMILLION and the surrounding are is a 'Mecca for wine buffs' and the town is beautiful. A train ride around the vineyards etc is available.

COGNAC is approximately half hours drive away and is the most chic town in Charente. It has lovely shopping and restaurants, (don't forget they shut at lunchtimes). You can get a great meal in the main square at a restaurant called La Coque D'or, the Plat de Jour 3 courses about 10 euros. You can visit all the Cognac houses, we think the best is Remi Martin it costs 1 1/2 euros and includes a train ride through the vineyards and the cellars. There is no walking involved, Tel 45 35 76 66 and they will give you the times of the English tours and you can book your place. It is situated at Merpins. We suggest a morning visit and lunch in Cognac or an afternoon visit shopping and dinner or return for a barbeque. DON'T MISS GOING TO COGNAC.

The drink of Charente is PINEAU. The best produce and the president of the federation is in our village, his name is Andre BODIN. You can call on Andre at anytime and he will show you round and give you plenty of samples. We have been known to come home DRUNK. To get to Mr Bodin turn right when facing the Inter Marche at Baignes go for approximately 1/2 mile until you come to a cast iron railway bridge, turn left follow the lane for approximately 1/2 mile and the house in front of you La Lande is the place. Tel 03 45 78 43 32. Tell them you are from Chez Maquignon. His son who is normally there is called Jackie.

BAIGNES - THE CAFE DE PARIS in the square is a great place for a drink. The owner Marcell and his 2 daughters run the place. Tell them you are staying at Chez Maquignon and they will make you very welcome. They are usually closed on a Monday.

ANGUOLEME The capital of Charente. Park near the hotel de Ville (Town Hall) and explore the back streets around there. There are over 100 small bistros (Indian, Chinese, Mexican everything is catered for). It is a 3D-minute ride well worth the journey. Wonderful parks, buildings, cathedrals etc it is very chic and shopping is good.

BORDEAUX - an hour away - has everything you can expect as the second city of France.

SUPERMARKETS - the one in Baignes is excellent but we also feel Leclerc in Barbezieux (10 minutes away) is much better and gives a wider choice. Also Auchan at La Couronne Just off N10 on way to Anguoleme). This is a hypermarket with its own arcade of shops as well. Selling everything from food and wine, fresh fish and cheeses to designer clothes, furniture and perfume, and well worth an evening visit (open to 10pm) and could be coupled with a *visit* to the town for a meal. Beer *is about 6 euros for 24 bottles. A good bottle of wine starts at £1.20 (yes really).*

AUBERGES - (Farm Restaurants). This is the best eating in France in our opinion. We use the following:

1. BAINES - Peirre & Michelle Jaulin - Puigareau Tel:05 45 7842 52. It is past the Cafe De Paris in the Square. Follow the road until you come to a crucifix, fork right and it is the first big house on the left. You need to visit to make a reservation.
2. ORIOLLES - Chez Baron Andre Porcheron. Tel: 05 45 98 79 22. Oriolles is the other side of the N10.
3. CHANTILLAC-Madam La Roche. Tel:05 45 78 4131. This is approximately 8km along the N10 towards Bordeaux and turn right.

All the Auberges give you at least 5 or 6 courses Aperitif and all the wine you can drink. The prices are approximately 16 to 20 euros per person. They mainly serve duck, veal. Rabbit and other produce of the farm. There is only one word for it FANTASTIC ! You won't want to do more than one or two in a week and don't eat too much at lunchtime.