

Magic Moments in the Médoc

Although it is now quite a few years ago, some wonderful memories of this part of France remain.

One such was when our coach party was taken on a tour around an imposing château and vineyard. It ended with a glass of red wine each, served by an affable young man who spoke excellent English.

Having engaged him in conversation, I mentioned that we were all Welsh rugby fans. He told me that he had stayed in Pontypool and played for Pontypool second team whilst learning English and obligingly filled our glasses again!

Geographically, the Médoc is the tongue of land in the estuary of the Gironde river. In common usage it refers to more fine wine than any other name in the world. Margaux, Saint-Julien, Pauillac and Saint-Estephe and their surrounding villages are all Médoc.

It was visits such as this that introduced me to the Médoc reds, wine dominated by the cabernet sauvignon grape with 20% merlot adding a dark, fruity flavour, or wine in which a majority of merlot is blended with cabernets franc and sauvignon, with a dash of petit verdot grape.

The soil (terroir) undoubtedly holds the key to these wines and it is thanks to the Romans that the vines were first planted here.

However, it was not until the 12th century, when Aquitaine became a possession of the English crown through the marriage of Eleanor to Henry Plantagenet, who became Henry 11 that Bordeaux became an important wine exporter.

In 1855, under Napoleon III, the best wine châteaux of the area were classified as Grand Cru estates, from first to fifth growths, although this classification was

Intended solely for the Paris Exhibition of that year; it has remained unchanged ever since, although the quality of the wine produced often has!



Three of the great Premier Crus - Château Lafite-Rothschild, Mouton Rothschild and Latour are near the village of Pauillac, where on one trip, I toured around the area with three friends. After a little degustation (wine-tasting) here and there, we stopped for lunch. Two of my companions settled for baguettes but the third, our driver, insisted that such an opportune moment to enjoy authentic French cuisine should not be wasted, so he and I set off to visit an hotel nearby where we enjoyed an excellent meal washed down with two or three bottles of claret!

Later, having picked up our two friends and on leaving the area at some speed, our driver hit the kerb when turning a corner. "Goodness!" (or words to that effect) he said. "I don't know how that happened."

"I do," said a stern voice from the back of the car, "Slow down, man, you're drunk!"

Fortunately, we made it back to our hotel without any further mishaps!



Richard Rowe

Très intéressant!

We say,
"I have a frog
in my throat



In France
They say,
"I have a cat
in my throat."

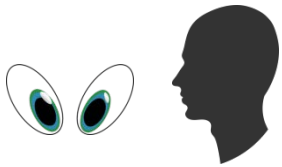


J'ai un chat dans la gorge.

We say that it
will cost
an arm and a leg



In France they
Say it will cost
the eyes and
the head.



Ça coûte les yeux de la tête.

To speak French very poorly
**Parler Français Comme Une Vache
Espagnole.**

**La plupart d'entre nous parlent français
comme une vache espagnole.**
(Most of us speak French like a Spanish cow) ...but we're getting better every time we try!! Good luck with your French when our twinnners visit in April.
Ivor Williams

Pour les enfants

Match the English to the French

1	Salut
2	Bonjour
3	Bonsoir
4	Comment allez vous?
5	Bien
6	Très bien
7	Comme ci, comme ça
8	Comment vous appelez-vous?
9	Je m'appelle _____
10	Enchanté
11	Au revoir
12	À la prochaine
13	À plus tard
14	À bientôt
15	Bonne-nuit

1	What's your name?	8
2	Pleased to meet you	
3	Hi	
4	Good night	
5	See you soon	
6	My name is _____	
7	See you later	
8	Good day	
9	Fine	
10	Good evening	
11	Until next time	
12	How are you?	
13	Very good	
14	Good-bye	
15	So, so	



PSSTTA itinerary for the visit from Saint Sebastien sur Loire on 14th – 18th April 2017.

Friday 14th April:

Guests arrive 11.00 – 12.00am. Reception in Newton Institute where teas, coffees, hot cross buns, Welsh cakes and maybe a glass of wine will be served. The rest of the day to be spent with hosts apart from Committee members who will attend a joint Committee meeting in the Old Town Hall at The Prince of Wales Inn, Kenfig @ 6.00pm.

Saturday 15th April:

Jump Jam activity centre for the children. Free day with hosts.

Evening concert @ 6.30 pm at The Masonic Home with Col Canto and Maesteg Male Voice Choir. Wine and Welsh cakes to be served. Tickets £7

Sunday 16th April:

Free morning with hosts. BBQ at Mary and Bobby's house at 4.30pm. Hosts/members to bring their own food etc for the BBQ and a communal salad. Desserts will be provided.

Monday 17th April.

Trip to Cwm Deri Vineyard, near Narberth, West Wales.

Depart 9.30am to arrive at 11.00am. Tour of vineyard followed by wine tasting and lunch at 12.00pm. £ 10.00. There will be some free places on the French coach. Possible visit to Narberth on the way home.

Evening Soiree at The High Tide Inn @7.00pm. 2 Course Dinner (Braised steak and chips followed by pear and raspberry crumble or ice cream, with a vegetarian option if required.) Entertainment by the Porthcawl Ukulele Band. £12.00.

Tuesday 18th April: Our guests depart @ 9.00am.

All times are approximate and confirmation nearer the time. Please see website for latest news.

All members (and other friends/ guests) are welcome to these events, even if you are not hosting.



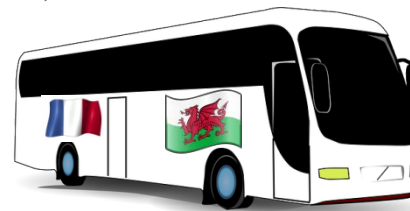
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Spring 2017



Visit By Saint Sébastien-sur-Loire

Please make a note in your diaries for this year's French visit. They will be here in Porthcawl between 14 and 18 April (Easter)



Please see provisional itinerary on the back of this newsletter.

Please let Bobby and Mary know if you intend going to any event where there will be a charge – it would be good for them to know in advance so that venues are aware of numbers.

Message from Chairman

Hope to see as many members as possible to support and enjoy the visit from our French friends. Please let us know which events you will be attending as soon as possible.

Mary

AGM Friday 19th May which will be at 7.00pm at the Grove (bar meals will be available from 6.30)



Membership Report

The number of memberships stands at 91 with three corporate members still unpaid for the current year. I am fairly optimistic that they will pay – would mean £75 for our coffers – but if they do not hurry up, they will be doubling up: subs become due once more on July 1st. Of course, I am always happy to receive payment before the due date. Who wants to win the gold medal?

On behalf of the PSSTTA I should like to welcome the following new members and to wish them a long and enjoyable association with us.

Mary Gough of Stoneleigh Court

John and Cathryn Hodges of

Bryneglwys Gardens, Newton

Andrea Jones of Neville Road

Anne Jones of Reynallt Place

Elaine and Paul Winstanley of North cornelly

Lin Williams of Mary Street

Apologies if I have omitted anyone; if I have done so, please let me know and I will rectify next time.

While Rob Chick was our chairman we never reached his target of 100 members. It is believed he was even contemplating enrolling family members, his dogs and cat to attain his target but was dissuaded! Should you know of anyone who might wish to join, do your utmost to persuade them; they won't regret it!

Dave Bush