

L'Age Baston Chronicles 2008

EDITORIAL

A couple of weeks ago we heard the Cranes flying south. There were hundreds of them calling to each other in the dark as they migrated to warmer climes. Alex and I always get really excited about them. We rush out and wave twice a year; once as they go south in winter and then again north in the spring. We wish them luck and say we'll see them soon. We get excited when we get your booking forms too, and when you leave we sadly wave you off down the drive saying we'll see you again. Like the cranes, maybe our returning guests are happily obeying some deep homing instinct. They zero-in on the certainties of a warm welcome, beautiful place and good things to do. The Cranes have been migrating for thousands of years while the tradition of hospitality at L'Age Baston only goes back to the early-middle ages. We think it is a tradition well worth preserving. 2009 sees L'Age Baston's 700th Anniversary. We hope you will be able to join us. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all. Medieval Feast anyone?

Travel Update

In April 2008 Ryanair began flying from Stansted into Angoulême. This is only 20 minutes from L'Age Baston so keep checking their schedules for 2009.

We shall be collecting from Limoges, Bordeaux and Angoulême as usual but can only collect from Poitiers by special request. (Alas we cannot be in four places at once!) Please let us know collection & departure place and times at least two months in advance so that we can coordinate our pick ups and guarantee we can collect you on time.

New tutors

A warm L'Age Baston welcome to Jenny Halstead and Alastair Price who join the art team this summer.



Jenny is enthusiastic and skilled as both artist and teacher. She would be a

perfect companion on your artistic journey, wherever you might be starting from.

Alastair is an accomplished draughtsman, painter and muralist. He



is a warm-hearted and humorous teacher whose good nature and expertise will boost your learning curve.

Digging for victory

Exceptional crops of courgettes this year, and what a difference it made having haricot straight from the garden. We are expanding the vegetable plots to include a wider variety. Even a path or two perhaps. We shall be



making our own sausages, hams, and cooked meats again this February and we are keen to try out some new recipes we found.

Smoking! (Food that is)....

No secret anymore

Last summer the 'Secret Garden' went to stage I in the clearance scheme. Guests got to enjoy new views over the



valley and had clear sight of the mysterious 'round window room' that locks only from the outside. Stage II clearance is to follow. Who knows what secrets it will reveal for 2009?

Happy 700th

As the editorial mentioned 2009 marks L'Age Baston's 700th anniversary. We aren't sure exactly when building first started so we decided to have a celebration each week. We thought a medieval banquet would be fun. The classic dishes of the period, music, table settings, clothes, table manners and games have all fallen before the mighty search engines.



Finding wine from that period that is still drinkable might be a bit of a problem! If you have any costumes feel free to bring them.

Bricolage

We are doing our best for the world economy by continuing our programme of re-decoration and improvements. Alex is up to her eyes in major curtains for the hall and John is planning how to install a wood-burner to make the middle of the house more winter comfortable. Let's hope he gets it working before the children come at Christmas



Wild cow warning

One morning in November John went down to feed the donkeys and found they weren't alone.

There in a corner of the field was a limousine heifer of a nervous disposition. She belongs to Mr Chauvin (farm opposite) and she had been on the "run" for over a month! The farmer rushed over (after his lunch) but by then she had disappeared again. We like to think of her still - living off the land, rustling through the drying maize and darting across the little roads for choice bits of pasture. Go for it girl.

History mystery

John and Alex used to take all those stories about monks buried in the garden with a pinch of salt. Then they came across a new local history site and dived in. Guess what? In 1687 there was a seigneur de L'Age Baston who was buried in the garden by his wife. Sans 'ceremoine religieuse' even. You'll have to get Alex to tell you the full story - the clockmakers servants included. John and Alex are a bit more cautious about where they dig now.



THE CHRISTMAS RECIPE

Rôti de lapin à la moutarde
(Roast rabbit with mustard)

Serves 4-6

1 plump rabbit
Salt and pepper
100g Dijon mustard
100g unsalted butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
250ml white wine
150ml cream
half a teaspoon nutmeg
Salt and pepper the rabbit.
Spread with half the mustard.
Put in a roasting tin with the butter and oil.
Put in a hot oven 200 deg c,
Gas mark 6 for 30 minutes
basting and turning frequently.
Add the wine and nutmeg and cook for another 15minutes or so until the rabbit is tender.
Remove the rabbit from the cooking liquid and keep warm.
Reduce the liquid by half.
Add the rest of the mustard and stir.
Carve the rabbit into portions and then strain the sauce over the dish.
Serve immediately.

Help wanted & given

If you know of anyone who might be interested in slaving away at L'Age Baston this summer please contact Alex and John.

course dates, prices, and booking conditions

Early Booking Prices

Book before 28

February

Painting

7 nights £735
14 nights £1,420

French Country Cooking
7 nights £735

Walking in the Charente
7 nights £665
14 nights £1,280

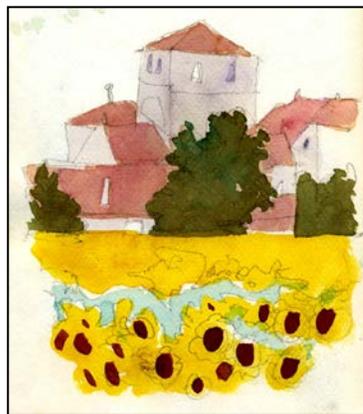
French for Francophiles
7 nights £880
14 nights £1,710

French Intensive
7 nights £1,160
14 nights £2,270

French Intensive Exclusive
7 nights £1,685
14 nights £3,420

Partners & Friends
7 nights 14 nights

Sharing £425 £800
Own Room £500 £950



Painting

May 21 28 John Barber
June 4 11 Caroline Johnson
June 18 25 David Chandler
July 2 9 David Chandler
July 16 23 Alastair Price
July 30 Group Booking
Aug 6 13 Jenny Halstead
Aug 20 27 Graham Morgan
Sep 3 Jennifer Johnson
Sep 10 Group Booking
Sep 17 24 John Barber

7 nights £785
14 nights £1,520

What we like about the painters at LB is that each season produces a huge range of work in different styles. Again this year there was some really strong work and it was lovely to see the students responding to the place, the ambience and the tutors.

We are planning trips on location and to local exhibitions and collections next year. We promise that we will do our level best to make sure you don't run out of biscuits.

On the renovation front - John has promised to finish the loo and fix a shower! We have planned a patio just outside the studio but that depends on the spring weather. What you can be sure of is that in 2009 L'Age Baston will give you simply the best Painting Holiday ever.



Walking in the Charente

May 21, 28 June 18, 25
July 9, 16 Aug 13, 20
Sept 3, 17

7 nights £715
14 nights £1,380

This is the view down the



drive. A great way to start or even finish a healthy, relaxing ramble in the Charente Countryside. Come walking with John and set the world to rights in congenial company and fresh air. This year we saw deer, pine martins, harriers, and even another walker (once).

French Course Dates

May 21
June 4, 11
July 16, 23
Aug 6, 13, 20, 27
Sept 3, 17

French for Francophiles
7 nights £910
14 nights £1,770

French Intensive Course
7 nights £1,210
14 nights £2,370

French Intensive Exclusive
7 nights £1,735
14 nights £3,520

Genevieve, Patrick and Sophie are the core of our brilliant team of French tutors. Professional, experienced and committed they will put you through your paces, guide you towards your learning goals and help you to have fun in the process.

Partners & Friends
7 nights 14 nights
Sharing £475 £900
Own Room £550 £1,050



E-Mail Problems
If you have problems with contacting us by e-mail try lagebaston@gmail.com
We will keep the old one running for at least a year.

Booking Conditions

A deposit of 25% is required at the time of booking. Payment is due eight weeks before the start of your holiday. Bookings made within eight weeks of the start of your holiday must be accompanied by payment in full. Cancellations must be advised in **WRITING**. It is the policy of L'Age Baston to try to re-book your place as soon as advised of a cancellation. If successful, your deposit/full payment will be refunded less cancellation costs born by L'Age Baston. L'Age Baston reserves the right to retain all or part of the deposit/full payment.

INSURANCE

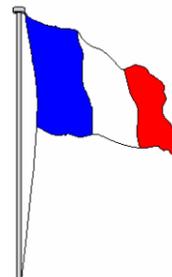
As a condition of booking and for your own protection, please take out full holiday

insurance including cover for accident & medical expenses, loss of personal property, personal liability, cancellations & costs.

Don't forget, if you would like our full brochure, write, phone or e-mail.

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French Country Cooking



June 4 July 2 Aug 6 Sept 24
7 nights £785

Another wonderful year in the kitchen. Our first French "cooker" too. Cassoulets, Tarte Tatins and lots of lovely courgette dishes emerged from the kitchen. Angoulême market was a good visit as was the Cognac trip. New recipes are ready to be tried over Christmas to see if they pass the family test.

