

Travel info for the Herbal Summer Retreat 2012

Dear participants,

Our farm's postal address is "Peyrissaguet, 19370 Chamberet, France" – we're a 20 minute drive from the beautiful ancient village of Treignac. Due to the corporate greed taking over the world, you can no longer google this address, as for the last two months it will without fail make you drive to some business in the nearby village. Or it will make you go to one of enterprise of the same name. So if you are driving, make sure you go to either Chamberet or Treignac, depending on where you are coming from, and follow the below instructions. You may wish to look it up on a good old map, although Peyrissaguet is a farm name and marked on only the most detailed of maps.

You will be able to share travel arrangements via the participants' google group.

Getting to our farm

We would recommend that you share travel plans to cut down on costs and give you more options and put you in touch with other people coming on the course if you wish. In order to do so, we will set up a google group for participants.

The nearest railway station is Uzerche (sometimes a stop on the main line from Paris, but not every train stops there), which is a 30 minute road journey.

By air and train

For international participants, Paris Charles de Gaulle (CDG) is the most convenient international airport. European participants could consider either Limoges or Toulouse airports and to take the train from there to Uzerche. *Limoges Airport* (www.aeroportlimoges.com) During the summer Air France, Ryanair & Flybe operate schedules here and a limited shuttle bus from the airport to Limoges railway station is available, but traveling to Peyrissaguet involves changing trains twice and another taxi or taking an expensive 50-minute taxi ride. *Toulouse Airport* (TOU) is a bigger airport with a better choice of flights. Navette Aeroport Toulouse operates a shuttle bus from the airport to Toulouse railway station every 20 minutes. From there take a train to Uzerche and a taxi to our farm (more details below).

Paris-CDG

If you need to overnight in Paris but doesn't want to venture into central Paris, CDG. Airport offers a wide choice of airport hotels. Last year the group stayed in Hotel Premiere Classe (Paris Nord 2), 309 rue de la Belle Etoile roissy@premiereclasse.fr **33 – (0)1 48 63 06 01. (www.premiereclass.com). This two star is one of the cheapest of the airport hotels, room are basic, staff have English and there's a small restaurant. As there are several Premiere Classe hotels at CDG, be sure you take the shuttle bus to the hotel Paris Nord 2! Anyone wishing to get away from the Airport complex, should consider Novotel Convention & Wellness Roissy, CDG. Hotel, which is a ten minute walk to the small village of Roissy-en-France and which give you flavour of France. The hotel has an airport shuttle service – again perhaps you may consider sharing with another participant to cut down on costs.

Changing money

It is wisest to exchange your currency into Euros at the airport if you need to, as the train stations do not offer this service, and the last train station is very small. You might be able to ask the taxi driver to let you use a money machine, for instance the one in Chamberet right along the route to the farm (the bank is called *Credit Agricole*), but you would need to be able to negotiate that in French with the driver. The farm is remote, and it will be a few days before we do the first outing which passes by a money machine.

Staying over in Paris

If you would like to stay in Paris overnight, please visit www.tripadvisor.com, or www.fodors.com/forum to work out your best option.

Taking the train from CDG

Train tickets in France must be bought in advance and cannot be brought on the train. Prior to getting on the train you must *composter le billet* - devalidate the ticket by stamping it at a yellow box-like machine at the beginning of the platform. The train conductors forgive confused looking foreigners for not having understood this or what they are saying to them ... but you've been warned!

If you get your ticket at a ticket office, it is already stamped for the journey. Tickets brought from a vending machine (or with no human contact) at the train station or airport are not stamped and you will need to do this.

In France purchasing a train ticket you automatically gives you seat reservation, and must find the carriage number and seat number shown on the ticket. If the train is empty, you may of course sit wherever you like. Once a train is sold out, you can no longer take it – you'll be travelling in the holiday season so recommend you book in advance.

French railway's website is www.sncf.com Click on the British flag at the bottom for the English version. It does not always work, and you might need to get a friend who knows basic French to help you, or consult a travel agent. Be aware that trains will not be shown if you try to buy before they have installed the summer schedule. It sometimes only comes up six weeks before the travel date.

Buying train tickets online and not asking to have it mailed to you (I do not think this is possible for international clients), ***you must bring the same bank card you bought it with online to retrieve it (it may be worth checking the card will still be in date at time of travel)*** The ticket is connected to that card, and the person at the counter will find it for you based on your card.

Train travel from CDG Airport to Limoges and Uzerche (depending on times)

There is only one direct and very fast train some days from Charles de Gaulle airport to Limoges. The *TGV Lille – Europe* leaves the airport at 19.17 h (7.17 pm) [this has been the case up to now, but is of course subject to change]. Although the train bears the name of Lille, a town in the North of France, at that time of day it returns South to Toulouse. It does not go to Lille, but comes from there. Read below under ***by train/metro*** on how to proceed from Limoges to Uzerche.

Taking the train via Paris city Centre

If it's not possible to take the evening train – you can make connections from central Paris to Limoges or directly to Uzerche.

The Paris train station serving Limoges is called Austerlitz, or Gare d'Austerlitz.

(www.bonjourlafrance.com – for a map Central Paris stations)

Getting from CDG to Gare d'Austerlitz:

By bus: Air France Bus no 4 goes to Gare d'Lyon every 20 minutes and from there you can walk, take a taxi or take the metro to Gare d'Austerlitz.

By train/metro: Take the RER B (blue line) from the airport to *St Michel* station. It will say *Paris* on the sign on the platform where you have to get in. At *St Michel Notre Dame*, switch to the RER C (yellow line). Attention! There are signs to Paris – Austerlitz, but that is the local metro line and involves having to carry your luggage down a *very long* flight of stairs. Follow the yellow RER line. The right direction can end in four different places, so it can be confusing what the sign might say as to where it is heading. Ask someone on the platform whether this side is going to *Gare d'Austerlitz*. In a pinch, just ask *Austerlitz?!?* (The English pronunciation would probably be *ou* as in *ouch!* > *Ousterleetz*), or write the station name on a piece of paper. Get off at *Gare d'Austerlitz* (Austerlitz station), which comes after one stop.

Young people in Paris do speak basic English and will be happy to help you, pointing you in the right direction. Parisians are used to helping lost looking tourists!

You take the train to Uzerche or, depending on travel times, to *Limoges Benedictine* station, switch to a local train to *Uzerche*, or take a taxi from the main entrance.

Uzerche has a very small train station, and taxis need to be pre-booked. There is a government sponsored taxi for the price of 5 Euro per person only that you can pre-book at **33 – 555 – 179119. You would have to speak French to do that. If your train is late, the government taxi which is operated like a mini-bus will not wait for you, so have the other taxi numbers on you just in case. It does not run in the early morning hours and books out fast, so call ahead of time. We recommend booking two days before even for private taxis (perhaps ask the hotel to book for you) – and again suggest sharing the taxi journey. The normal non-sponsored taxi can be booked under any of the following numbers (predial **33 for France and leave out the 0 if you are called internationally). The normal cost for a non-government-sponsored taxi is between 40 and 60 Euros:

06 80 03 31 61

05 55 18 03 20

05 55 18 03 21

05 55 73 35 20

06 08 83 35 80

At Uzerche railway station, Hotel de la Gare to the right (with station behind you), great for coffee and reasonable snacks. Maybe you can ask the taxi to meet you there. Uzerche has a beautiful town centre is approx. 25 minutes walk, and you may be able to leave the luggage at the station or the hotel. Here is what last year's participant Peter has to say about this:

“I bought my train ticket online (before I left for France) from Uzerche back to Paris. I left my luggage with the ticket office - they did it as a favor. I don't think they get a lot of tourists.

I spent a half day in the old city center. It is a beautiful old fortified medieval town - completely intact - looks like it is full of castles. Apparently it was never taken by force as its geography – the canyon - and walls protected it. There is an great small art museum in a church there - with bear and elk sculptures - lots of artists and potters live there. We went to some interesting shops, selling art, pottery, antiques, jewelry etc. I bought a very colorful whimsical felted and embroidered necklace and earrings there that a firey older frenchwoman artist was selling in her shop with a view of the valley. The business district is a bit of a walk from the train but do-able especially if you don't have bags. “

By car:

First of all – entering the farm’s postal address into your GPS does no longer work – see introductory paragraph above ... then read on!

If you are planning to come by car, the shortest way to get here very much depends on which direction you are coming from. If you arriving from the North or South, you will most likely take the highway A 20.

Coming from the North, you would exit at exit number 39 and follow the signs for *Linards*. From *Linards*, you would follow the signs to *Chamberet*. Once in *Chamberet*, you turn left towards *Eymoutiers* (you will be heading north). Right at the end of *Chamberet* village, there is a roundabout. Turn right at the roundabout towards *Lacelle* (you will be heading east). Very quickly, the road forks with both of the new roads going over a small bridge each. Take a right at that fork towards *St Hilaire les Courbes*. Follow the road as it goes up the mountain for about 4 km, then descends into a valley. Take the first possible left turn once the road goes up again and around a slight left turn. There is a small sign pointing up the hill to your left saying *Peyrissaguet*. You can see the farm from there. We are in the first building on your right.

Coming from the South, take exit number 43. Follow the signs to *Masseret*, *Meilhards*, and *Chamberet*. Once you arrive in *Chamberet*, stay straight on that road through the village (you are traveling north), until you come to a roundabout at the other end of *Chamberet*. Turn right at the roundabout towards *Lacelle* (you will be heading east). Very quickly, the road forks with both of

the new roads going over a small bridge each. Take a right at that fork towards *St Hilaire les Courbes*. Follow the road as it goes up the mountain for about 4 km, then descends into a valley. Take the first possible left turn once the road goes up again and around a slight left turn. There is a small sign pointing up the hill to your left saying *Peyrissaguet*. You can see the farm from there. We are in the first building on your right.

Contact and how to buy a phone card

If you need to contact us at that time, please call 05 55 98 23 97. This is a landline. If you need to send a text message, please use 06 06 44 55 17. Please bear in mind that in France, the receiver of a call from an international cell phone pays expensively to receive the call. Please only call if absolutely necessary. In general rule, you need to buy a phone card to make a phone call from a public phone in France. These are usually available from a *bureau de tabac*, shops sells magazines, cigarettes (all the magazine shops at the airport sell them) – ask for a *carte téléphonique*. Nowadays, they often take the form of a receipt printer out by the cash register, and there are two numbers – the first is the access code phone number. You will be given the option to hear the messages in English language. Then you have to dial the phone card code.

Return Travels

Please remember that Charles de Gaulle airport is a busy airport and busier with summer traffic. Please allow for plenty of time – you may have to take another shuttle train to your terminal, and/or a long walk to your gate. People returning to the USA should allow at least three hours check-in time because of heightened security measures and extra searches.

If you wish to reach Charles de Gaulle airport the fastest and easiest way, there is an early morning train from Uzerche, a 30 minute car journey (see *Taking the train* above). Right now, I cannot confirm the summer schedule for this fast train, but it should not change from the winter schedule. It leaves Limoges at 7.38 am and reaches Charles de Gaulle airport at 11.31 am, but does not run every day. It stops at both, terminal 1 and 2. You can walk up from the platform to the gates. If you don't know which terminal you fly out of, there is a shuttle train between the terminals.