

2010
Season

The Barge Company

Relax, Unwind and Let the World Float by...™



Itinerary

Pictures

Client Quotes

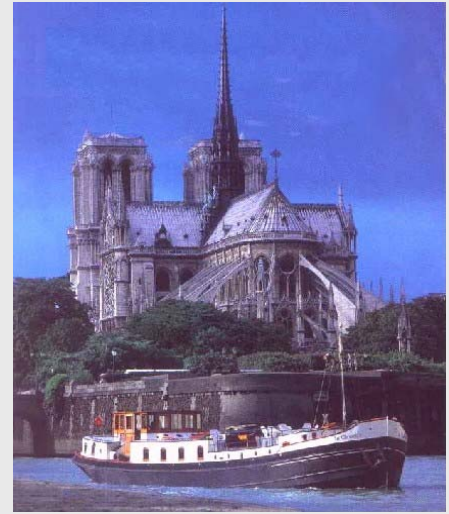
Food + Wine

Deck Plan

'La Chouette' Cruising in Northern France

'Mainly Monet', 'A Taste of Burgundy', 'Champagne Experience' and 'Waterways of Paris' Cruises, in Ile-de-France, Normandy, Burgundy and Champagne (all cruises start or end in Paris) and 'Meander on the Meuse' in Belgium

- 100 FEET LONG (30 METRES)
- 6 GUESTS
- 4 CREW
- 3 CABINS—DOUBLE OR TWIN (EACH WITH PRIVATE EN SUITE BATHROOM)
- BICYCLES
- AIR CONDITIONING IN CABINS
- CENTRAL HEATING
- COMFORTABLE PRIVATE MINIBUS FOR EXCURSIONS
- TV, VIDEO, LIBRARY, GAMES,
- CD MUSIC SYSTEM



La Chouette is a traditional Dutch motor barge built in 1934 for carrying cargoes along the inland waterways of Europe. She has now been lovingly and professionally converted into a luxury charter barge for six guests in the space often devoted to twice that number. Each guest room has its own en suite bathroom and the barge interior is carpeted throughout and decorated in traditional style with extensive use being made of mahogany panelling and brass fittings. Up above there is a vast sundeck on which to laze and where lunch is usually served beneath the cooling shade of a giant parasol. Evening meals are enjoyed off the barge in specially chosen restaurants, often Michelin starred.

In 2010 La Chouette will continue to offer clients the very special 'Waterways of Paris' cruises (enjoy an unforgettable visit to Paris and its environs, from a three or four night stay to a whole week) as well as her popular Champagne, Burgundy, Normandy and Belgium cruises. For the 'Waterways of Paris' cruise guests can choose to stay put in Paris for some (or all) of their stay, sightseeing to their hearts content, or cruise the delightful canals of Paris as well as the enchanting River Seine - under the bridges of Paris, or a combination of these. Guests can be collected in Paris and transferred to La Chouette, returning you to your Paris place of choice at the end of the cruise. There are many possibilities available from a simple few days bed and breakfast only on a static mooring in Paris through to a full weeks cruise (six nights) in and around Paris with all meals (with one top restaurant meal per day) included. These trips are bespoke and can be tailored to your particular wishes. Availability will depend on bookings already taken so don't delay in getting in touch! See following pages for sample itineraries.

2010 PRICES (USD)

Charter for up to 4 Guests \$21,400

Charter for up to 6 Guests \$25,400

Guests enjoy one meal per day in specially selected restaurants—often Michelin-starred (included in the charter price).

PICK-UP— By arrangement in Paris, Epernay, Rouen or Auxerre at 2pm

DROP-OFF— By arrangement, usually at the local train station, after breakfast on the morning of the day of departure.

CRUISES START ON THURSDAY AND FINISH ON THE FOLLOWING WEDNESDAY

'Mainly Monet' Cruise Highlights: Champagne Cruise through Paris, Monet's home and garden at Giverny. Marmottan museum housing more than 100 Monet paintings, Rouen Cathedral. Impressionist multi-media spectacular at Chateau d'Auvers sur Oise. Richard the Lionheart's 12th Century fortress at Les Andelys

'A Taste of Burgundy' Cruise Highlights: Champagne cruise through Paris. Barbizon, famed village of the Pre-Impressionist painters in the Fontainebleau Forest. Mediaeval town of Moret-sur-Loing. Private wine tasting at Cotes St Jacques. Magnificent spired city of Auxerre. Irancy, a picturesque village which produces superb red wine. Wine tasting – the world renowned dry white Chablis

'Champagne Experience' Cruise Highlights: Champagne Cruise through Paris, Private tasting of Brie de Meaux cheese with Givry red wine. Hautvillers, home of Dom Perignon, famed creator of champagne, Reims Cathedral. Visit to Moet & Chandon's sister champagne caves of Mercier.

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'La Chouette'

Sample Itinerary

The 'Mainly Monet' Cruise — between Paris and Rouen, in Normandy (North of France)

From the magnificent city of Paris follow the River Seine towards Rouen, famed capital of Normandy, where Monet painted the cathedral in so many different lights and moods. The following is a suggested itinerary only. Alternatives may be made according to guests' wishes and availability. The following is a suggested itinerary only.

Thursday, Day 1 - Your captain will meet you at your Paris hôtel. You will be escorted to La Chouette waiting for you at a nearby quay on the river Seine. Soon you will be cruising through the city of Paris, sipping champagne and soaking in the wonderful atmosphere.

As we head out of Paris we pass Asnières and Argenteuil, names immortalised by the Impressionist painters like Monet and Renoir. Our mooring for tonight is at the very place these famous artists would meet for rest and relaxation. Maison Fournaise at Chatou was their favourite restaurant. And this is where you will enjoy your first evening meal of the cruise.

Friday, Day 2—Breakfast is a relaxed affair on board La Chouette. Waken to the aroma of fresh coffee and croissants warming. A short early morning cruise takes us to La Grenouillère (The Froggery!) It was here that Monet and Renoir worked side by side painting the floating café. We carry on as far as Bougival to see where other Impressionists set up their easels and compare the view today with the one they painted. Some say Impressionism was born here.

We then take the van to visit the Marmottan Museum where over 100 of Monet's paintings are housed. Here you will also see work by most of the other Impressionists like Renoir, Sisley and Caillebotte. There was great friendship amongst this school of artists and Monet worked alongside many of them during his lifetime.

Lunch is at the bustling restaurant Chez Clement after which we cruise to Conflans Ste. Honorine at the confluence of the Seine and the Oise rivers. We moor a little outside the town at a peaceful country village where we can enjoy a barbecue on deck.

Saturday, Day 3—Our cruising area today takes us further up the River Oise to Auvers-sur-Oise where Van Gogh lived and which he introduced to the world through his painting "L'Eglise d'Auvers", (Auvers' Church). We take lunch in the Auberge Ravoux where Van Gogh spent his last days and visit the fascinating museum dedicated to him. A short walk or van ride takes us to the Chateau d'Auvers where we take a multi-media journey back in time into the Age of the Impressionists. We then return to La Chouette and cruise down river to re-join the Seine at Conflans Ste. Honorine where we moor for the night. Supper on board.

Sunday, Day 4—An early start this morning to visit the local bargees street market and stroll along the quay to see the many barges moored here, up to seven abreast. Cruise to Limay then take the van through some stunning countryside to Le Moulin de Fourges for lunch. This afternoon we drive to Giverny to see Monet's home and garden and the American Museum of Art. Supper on board

Monday, Day 5—Our first cruise stop today is Mantes-la-Jolie. Free time to take a short walking tour of the town and visit the 12th Century Collegiate Church "Notre Dame" which is one of the most beautiful examples of gothic architecture. We then cruise to Rolleboise where we have lunch on board. This afternoon's visit is to Chateau de la Roche Guyon, parts of which are hidden in the depths of the cliff face. All along here the caves, hollowed out by pre-historic man, are now used as barns and garages. We can also visit Vétheuil, another of Monet's homes. Dinner tonight is at the restaurant of the Chateau de la Corniche which, as its name suggests, is poised high above the Seine with a fantastic panoramic view.

Tuesday, Day 6—This morning's cruise is to the beautiful town of Les Andelys nestling under the impressive ruins of Chateau Gaillard built by Richard the Lionheart. After lunch on board we take the van to visit the stunning village of Lyon La Forêt and Chateau Vascoeuil with its marvellous sculptures. Dinner at Le Mistral.

Wednesday, Day 7—Depart after breakfast and on the way to Rouen rail station we make one last and lasting visit to Rouen Cathédrale. No "Monet Experience" would be complete without this.

PLEASE NOTE—ITINERARIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. THIS IS ONLY TO GIVE AN IDEA OF WHAT CAN BE DONE!

The 'Taste of Burgundy' Cruise — between Paris and Auxerre, Burgundy

From Paris, the City of Light, we cruise upstream on the River Seine then turn onto the River Yonne which leads us to Burgundy and the famed vineyards of Chablis, Irancy and Côte St. Jacques. On the way we may take in a chateau and visit the hometown of a famous Impressionist artist. The following is a suggested itinerary only. Alternative excursions may be made according to guests' wishes and availability.

Thursday, Day 1—Your captain will meet you at your Paris hôtel and escort you directly to La Chouette waiting in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower. Soon you will be cruising through the city of Paris, sipping champagne as you pass under those renowned bridges and on past the Louvre, the Musée d'Orsay and the magnificent Notre Dame Cathedral. As we leave the city the surroundings change to the smart country houses of suburbia. Barbecue supper on board.

Friday, Day 2—The day starts when you feel like it. You are on holiday, after all. Breakfast can be taken before we leave or while we're cruising to Melun from where we can take an excursion to Chateau de Vaux-le-Vicomte. This is the first of the great houses to be built in the seventeenth century combining impressive architecture with beautifully designed gardens. Further up river, we moor at Bois le Roi (King's Wood) where we can try our luck at a game of pétanque on the boules park nearby. Dinner is taken in the delightful Restaurant de la Marine just a short walk away.

Saturday, Day 3—This morning our mini-bus can take us on a trip through the Fontainebleau Forest to Barbizon, the charming village where the pre-Impressionist painters congregated and where in the Auberge Ganne we can see examples of their work. After lunch on board we cruise to Moret-sur-Loing where Impressionist painter Alfred Sisley lived and take a guided tour of this fascinating medieval town steeped in history. Dinner is taken in one of Moret's finest restaurants, La Palette.

Sunday, Day 4—An early morning visit to the street market in St Mammés. This is one of the "barge capitals" of France and where you will see many commercial barges tied up. The market is on the quay alongside these barges. We then cruise to our Sunday lunchtime stop at the Restaurant La Gaule on the river Yonne. Sunday lunch in France is special and needs to be savoured slowly. On through several of the Yonne's characteristic locks with sloping sides to our stop for the night near Champfleury. Supper on board

Monday, Day 5—Our first cruise stop today is Sens where we can visit the magnificent cathedral and museum containing a unique collection of ancient fabrics and priest's vestments. Lunch on board. An afternoon cruise to Villeneuve sur Yonne takes us through some of the most beautiful Yonne valley countryside. We moor right outside our restaurant for this evening's dinner. But before that we visit the vineyards of the Côte St. Jacques and enjoy a *dégustation*, or tasting, of the local wine. We may also be able to see a winepress, which has been used since the 14th century. Dinner at La Lucarne Aux Chouettes, a riverside restaurant owned by Leslie Caron.

Tuesday, Day 6—This morning we take a leisurely cruise to Joigny where, after a walk around the old town we take lunch on board. This afternoon's visit takes in Auxerre with its monumental architecture, Irancy for a tasting of its excellent red and rosé wines and Chablis and the villages around where we taste that world famous dry white wine. Dinner at Le Moulin

Wednesday, Day 7—After breakfast we will escort you to the rail station for your return journey to Paris.

The 'Champagne Experience' Cruise — between Paris and Reims, Champagne

This route combines the splendour of Paris, capital of France, with the sparkle of Reims and Epernay, the twin capitals of the Champagne region. The following is a suggested itinerary only. We may substitute new and interesting excursions and restaurants, as they become available and according to guests' wishes.

Day 1, Thursday—Your captain will meet you at your Paris hôtel and escort you directly to La Chouette moored nearby. Marvel at the sights of Paris from the magnificent River Seine. We will show you Paris in an unforgettable way, 'Under the Bridges of Paris...' on board La Chouette with a glass of champagne in your hand. We cruise upstream out of the city for just a few miles before we leave the hustle and bustle of the Seine for the peace and tranquillity of the River Marne. Our mooring for the night is in the quiet town of Le Perreux and dinner tonight is at the Restaurant L'Aigle d'Or in Croissy Beaubourg. <http://www.aigledor.fr>

Day 2, Friday—Our morning cruise takes us into the narrow canal sections of this navigation which by-pass parts of the river that are too shallow to navigate. We pause a while at Lagny, a bright market town on the bank of the river, where we can take a stroll around the market and where Bobbie can stock up with more fresh produce. On to the magnificent city of Meaux dominated by its impressive cathedral. After lunch on board we can take a guided visit of Meaux Cathedral and learn about the influence and importance of Bishop Bossuet. Then we can visit the Salle d'Exposition de Brie de Meaux to hear about the history and manufacture of this world famous cheese. You can take the opportunity of tasting the cheese with a fine Givry red wine. We re-join La Chouette in plenty of time to enjoy an aperitif before taking dinner in the Michelin starred Auberge de la Brie in Couilly-Pont-aux-Dames. <http://www.aubergedelabrie.com>

Day 3, Saturday—An early start to our day sees us cruising one of the most beautiful stretches of the Valley of the Marne. Breakfast can be taken as we wind around the meanders spotting grey heron and kingfisher as we go. Guests interested in industrial archaeology might care to take a short visit to see the giant waterwheel, which transports water from the river Marne to the canal de l'Ourcq. Lunch is taken on board and we arrive at our mooring spot for the night in Nanteuil sur Marne just a stones throw from our restaurant for dinner, the Auberge Lion d'Or. But before dinner we make our first champagne visit and learn from master champagne producer Gerbeaux how he puts the bubbles in the bottle...and more!

Day 4, Sunday—Today's cruise is to Chateau Thierry through idyllic countryside. On arrival at our mooring we can take a trip to Hill 204, and Belleau Wood, the scene of the last major engagement in World War 1 and where a massive American Monument stands and surveys the valley below. With appetites whetted by the walk we repair to the Michelin starred Auberge le Relais for lunch. <http://www.relaisreuilly.com> Sunday lunch in France is sacred and is to be savoured. It is also very much a family affair. Our afternoon sailing takes us to Dormans where La Chapelle de la Reconnaissance stands above the town celebrating the two victories of the Battles of the Marne and where we moor for the night. From here we can make another champagne house visit, every one is different and each has its own unique quality. Supper on board.

Day 5, Monday—After an early start, we cruise past mile after mile of champagne vineyards meticulously cultivated in their serried ranks up the hillsides. Next we see Hautvillers upon the hillside to our left. This is where Dom Perignon, reputed to have discovered the 'Méthode Champenoise', lived and worked as the cellar-master in the Benedictine Abbey for forty-seven years. This is where we leave the river and take to the canal, which runs alongside. With locks just large enough for La Chouette to squeeze into we are now in a different waterway world. But still we are surrounded by vines. We choose a mooring convenient from where to take a van ride into Epernay where we can visit the 'champagne producer for the people', Mercier. Sister to Moët et Chandon, Mercier provides a fascinating visit and tasting and we follow this with lunch at one of our favourite restaurants, La Cave à Champagne. <http://la-cave-a-champagne.com> After lunch we can take a visit to the village of Hautvillers before returning to La Chouette to carry on up the canal towards Reims and moor at the confluence of two canals at Condé sur Marne. Supper on board.

Day 6, Tuesday—We start when the locks open and the fresh croissants and pastries have been delivered to the barge and we ascend fifteen of these locks on our way to Reims. Visits to Tattinger or Veuve Clicquot as well as Reims Cathedral and the shops are the order of the day which is capped by dinner in a bustling Rémois brasserie, Le Boulingrin. <http://www.boulingrin.fr>

Day 7, Wednesday—After breakfast transfer to Reims railway station where high-speed trains depart for Paris.

PLEASE NOTE: THESE ARE SAMPLE ITINERARIES AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. ON ALTERNATE WEEKS CRUISES WILL BE IN REVERSE DIRECTION.

The 'Waterways of Paris' —Sample Itinerary 1 (A B+B Weekend in Paris)

Day 1: Guests are collected from their Paris location - e.g. hotel, rail station, airport—and are transferred to La Chouette moored in central Paris. Guests are welcomed on board with a Champagne cocktail and introduced to the crew and to their accommodation.

Guests are free to visit places of interest in Paris with any help and suggestions we can give.

Day 2: Breakfast is served on board La Chouette at a time to suit our guests after which they are free to continue their Paris sight-seeing.

Day 3: After breakfast on board, and at a time to suit, the guests are escorted to their Paris place of choice.

N.B.: On one of the days, to suit the party, La Chouette will cruise "Under the Bridges of Paris" to show the city in an unforgettable way. Cruise lasts approximately two hours.

The 'Waterways of Paris' Cruise - Sample Itinerary 2 (Four Day Cruise through Paris)

Day 1: Guests are collected from their Paris location—e.g. hotel, rail station, airport—and are transferred in our air-conditioned mini-bus to La Chouette moored in the countryside an hour's ride from Paris. Guests are welcomed on board with a Champagne cocktail and introduced to the crew and to their accommodation.

We cruise on the beautiful river Marne to the magnificent city of Meaux dominated by its impressive cathedral and famous for Brie de Meaux cheese.

After an aperitif on board guests are escorted to one of Meaux's top restaurants for dinner.

Day 2: We cruise into Paris stopping on the way to explore Lagny a riverside town with a twice-weekly market and where we have lunch on board. Our entry to Paris "Under the Bridges of Paris" will thrill all sitting out on our deck and has never failed to impress.

Dinner at the restaurant Altitude 95 part way up the Eiffel Tower with the sun setting over the city skyline.

Day 3: Our morning's cruise takes us deeper into the Town of Paris along the Canal St. Martin with its double locks and outstanding iron swing bridges. Passing through the Basin de la Villette we head for the giant lock which will take us onto the Canal St. Denis. Passing the space age-like sports stadium, the Stade de France, we head down to rejoin the river Seine then head downstream for Chatou.

Chatou is where Monet and Renoir, among many other Impressionist painters, congregated and painted life on the river. We will dine tonight at the very restaurant they frequented, Maison Fournaise, and feel their very presence on the balcony where Renoir painted his famous "Le Déjeuner des Canotiers", the luncheon party of the boatmen.

Day 4: Cruising further downstream on the Seine we reach Conflans Ste. Honorine where we find hundreds of barges moored up to seven deep. This is one of France's barge capitals. This is also where we turn off the river Seine and onto the river Oise. This takes us to a charming little town called Auvers-sur-Oise where Van Gogh lived the last few weeks of his short life and where in that time he painted sixty pictures. We dine at the very inn where he lived and choose from a menu with many of the dishes of his time. There is an interesting exhibition at the inn as well as a comprehensive audio-visual exhibition on Impressionism at the nearby Chateau d'Auvers.

Day 5: After breakfast on board we will transfer guests to the Paris location of their choice.

PLEASE NOTE—These are just two illustrations of how a trip might be configured to suit clients' particular wishes.

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'La Chouette'

More Pictures...

(Click on an image to enlarge)

Meet your host and hostess...Bob and Bobbie



The Cosy Saloon



A Double Cabin



Bob and Bobbie Marsland have cruised the waterways of England and France for more than 30 years as well as taking several sailing trips on charter yachts in the Mediterranean.

Bob's work has been in television. He was a TV Director with the BBC before setting-up his own Independent Television Production Company. Bobbie also worked for the BBC and it was there that they met while on different training courses at the BBC training school. Bobbie left the BBC to bring up their children, and later forged a new career as a Government Officer in the Department of Social Security.

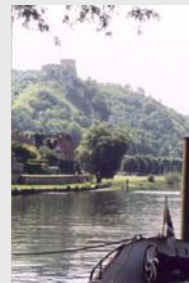
It was their mutual desire to change direction and create a business they could work in together that led them to buy a Dutch barge and have it converted into a luxury charter boat ideally suited to the French waterways.

Bobbie's passion for cooking and Bob's love of boating, combined with their fascination with France and all that is French, will ensure that you have a holiday to remember!

La Chouette cruising through golden vineyards on the 'Champagne Experience' Cruises...



Beautiful scenery on the 'Mainly Monet' Cruise Route...



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Here are just a few of the wonderful things that past clients have had to say about their cruises on LA CHOchette...

What a delightful adventure! We wanted to taste French wines, eat good food, meet new people and relax! Mission accomplished!!" Noel and Coleen Grffith, Cheyenne. (Taste of Burgundy)

"It was all I'd hoped. I definitely know it was all Lucie hoped. Thanks for a wonderful week and for making a culture and cuisine less mysterious." Lucie and Harry Osborne, Cheyenne. (Taste of Burgundy)

"You and La Chouette made my Internet surfing REALLY look good. Thank you for a wonderful week" Jane and Andy Paine, Indianapolis IN . (Mainly Monet)

"We had a fabulous week. The food, the wine and especially the cheese. Thank you for making my birthday special with the Roquefort!" Georgie and Chuck Taylor, Cheyanne WY. (Taste of Burgundy)

"This is the first time in forty one years that Peter ever relaxed on a vacation! Simply the best time we've ever had. We've eaten and laughed our way through the entire trip - bravo! Susan and Peter Coker, Chapel Hill NC (Mainly Monet)

"Thank you so much for a wonderful week on your floating home. You are very gracious, knowledgeable and warm people and made us feel so welcome. The meals were memorable and selection of restaurants was perfect. It was so nice to have new friends and we will definitely see you again." Francis and George Seelke, Gainesville, GA (Champagne Experience)

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'La Chouette'

Food and Wine



All breakfasts are taken on board. Lunches on board consist of a selection of home-made soups, quiches, salads, pâtés and cold meats and a variety of regional cheeses. Five course dinners are of the highest quality, showcasing Bobbie's delicious home cooking. Different wines accompany each meal.

A speciality of a cruise on *La Chouette* is eating out. On average one meal per day will be taken ashore. Bob and Bobbie personally will take you and eat with you in a wide variety of typical French restaurants chosen for the quality of their food, wine and service—some are even Michelin starred. Many are featured in guidebooks. Help is therefore at hand with menu translation and ordering, should this be necessary.

On board the barge they serve **château bottled wines and Grand Cru and Premier Cru Champagnes.**

They also choose **different cheeses for every meal** so their guests enjoy a very wide selection whilst with them. One group on their "Champagne Experience" cruise counted the number of different champagnes they had tasted and the different cheeses they had eaten. Each numbered around twenty!

SAMPLE LUNCH MENU

Cucumber and Dill Soup

Smoked salmon
Egg Mayonnaise Flan
Mixed Salad
Crusty French Bread
Brie de Meaux

Fresh Fruit

SAMPLE DINNER MENU

Roasted Red Peppers with Olive Tapenade and Tomato

Leg of Lamb with a Red Wine Sauce

Selection of French Cheeses

Baked Peaches with Vanilla Ice-Cream

Coffee and Chocolates

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