

2008
Season

The Barge Company

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



The Elegant 'Esperance' is our - Barge of the Month - October 2008



Welcome to our October 2008 'Barge of the Month' feature. Back in April as the 2008 cruise season dawned, Mark, Felix and I spent a decadent morning aboard the supremely elegant—yet modern and great fun—'Esperance' barge. Moored on the [Canal du Midi](#) in the centre of the buzzing cosmopolitan city of Toulouse in the south of France (easily accessible by TGV high speed train from Paris), she was nestled under an impressive, natural cathedral of gently swaying plain trees. It was fantastic weather and a glorious day to be out looking at such a unique barge...

Her exterior livery is a mix of classic black and vibrant 'Occitane' tones of daffodil yellow and turquoise blue - a stunning combination and a memorable signature on the water! Taking only 4 guests in elegant luxury (although 6 can be accommodated easily in a 'secret' extra double cabin) the 'Esperance' is possibly the most exclusive hotel-barge to cruise in France. Understated elegance and gentility are her trademark, and guests are very much invited to see and experience the finer things in life whilst aboard her.



One huge 'Honeymoon Suite'....



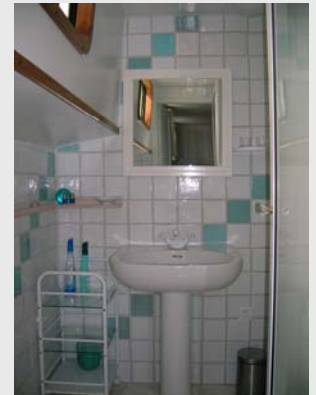
The 'jewel in the crown' of the 'Esperance' has to be her gorgeously spacious 'honeymoon suite' which accommodates two guests in the most superb style. With imposing king-size bed, private porthole windows with sofa and throw cushions, claw-footed bath and dressing table, she also has her own two private bathrooms - one with over-sized power shower and hand made Occitane-look tiles, and the other with bidet, WC and washbasin (see below right). There's no excuse for a lack of romance here... Whether it's your first honeymoon, your fifth, or your chosen location to propose to your loved one, your week in this cabin will surely be unforgettable. Mark and I have slept here in the past so I can speak from experience!



Having said all that about the 'Honeymoon Suite', the double cabin is not to be underestimated, even though it is smaller in actual size. In comparison with most other barge's double cabins it is definitely very spacious, with ample room to manoeuvre around the room.



Essentially it is still a very beautiful room to sleep and spend time in. There's a very refined table and a gentil padded seat which can be used for writing letters in tranquillity, as well as tasteful paintings on the walls and ample room for storing many clothes and shoes. Our son Felix (then 18 months old, below) was very impressed with the cupboard space and was instantly at home in this cabin!).



The en suite bathroom is also of a very high quality with power shower, large washbasin and WC. The tiles are again hand made 'Occitane-look' in a white and turquoise formation. Everything is designed to ensure that guests on the ['Esperance'](#) are made totally at ease and 'at home' in as little time as possible. Add to that, the fact that Mathias—your charismatic Captain and the owner of the barge in one—is such a fun, knowledgeable person with an immense local knowledge (he is French and of the south of France) and you absolutely cannot go wrong.





When you're not relaxing at the curvaceous bar, or chilling out in the over-sized lounge area (see pics to left, right and below), you may be relaxing on deck at the large marble table, or even lying back in the heavenly spa pool (below right).



If you're interested, Mathias will be happy to regale you with stories his experiences on the canal—of boats and personages of note - and you may choose your excursions in discussion with him over an *aperitif*. In the morning he or a crew member may use the nippy quad bike (below) to fetch your croissants and pastries from the local bakery (sorry—it's not for guests' use!). Lunches may be taken on deck in the speckled sunlight (weather permitting) or inside at the round table with high chairs (above) - they really are surprisingly comfortable. One thing is for certain, anyone who cruises on the '[Esperance](#)' will return home after their cruise feeling as if they discovered a side of France they never knew existed, and that they certainly wouldn't have seen if Mathias had not been their guide...**To find out more about the 'Esperance' cruises in 2009 please [click here](#).**



TO CONTACT US...

Phone: 0033 563 02 87 04, Fax: 0033 563 02 24 11
 Phone (Toll-Free from USA+CANADA): 1-800-688-0245
 Email: info@bargecompany.com
 Website: www.bargecompany.com



The Barge Cruise Company Ltd.
 501 Chemin Lacoste
 82170 Grisolles
 FRANCE

