

2006  
Season

# The Barge Company

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



## The 'Belle Epoque' is our - 'Barge of the Month' December 2005 - perfect for cycling or walking groups!



The serene, crystal waters of the Nivernais Canal offer the most tranquil cruising opportunity aboard this very high standard hotel-barge specialising in charter groups of up to 12 people (although individual cabins are also available).



In May 2005 The Barge Company was honoured to be welcomed warmly aboard the [Belle Epoque](#) barge during one of her famous cruises along the glorious Nivernais Canal between Clamecy and Auxerre in Burgundy, France. We took these great new pictures and had a good old look around! Enjoy the following 3 pages of exclusive photographs and 'insider details' on this grand lady of the water, brought to you exclusively by The Barge Company.

The [Belle Epoque](#) takes 12 people on board in 6 luxurious suites, each with en suite private bathroom of course. There is also a small single cabin available for a 13th person such as a Specialised Guide or Travel Agent who may be accompanying the group.

Enjoying a huge, flower-decked sun deck is one of the many pleasures of cruising on the [Belle Epoque](#) and you'll soon find yourself feeling very relaxed indeed. Her route on the Nivernais Canal between Auxerre and Clamecy (or reverse) helps by being an exceedingly tranquil one, and is particularly suitable for cycling or walking groups thanks to the lovely, very well maintained tow path that runs right next to the canal for most of the route, plus the myriad of small, medieval villages that are scattered throughout the countryside to right and left of the cruise route.

Cruise close to the best of the Burgundian wine-making region, visiting the tiny village of Chablis, for example, where you will enjoy a private wine-tasting in the ancient cellars of a family-run winery...just one of the many possibilities!





The interior of the Belle Epoque is very spacious, with a large, open plan saloon and dining area being the principal interior area for guests' relaxation. A unique and very cosy circular banquette seat (above left) is perfect for families sit at and play board games during less favourable weather (though this is rare indeed!), or simply to sit at whilst enjoying a cool white wine or cocktail from the large and imposing bar which is also in the main saloon area. There are several other intimate rest areas in the saloon, so guests are never obliged to all sit together— if people wish to sit quietly and read a book in their own corner, for example, that is no problem and is easily achieved.

The opulent and solid dining room table (above right) is also a useful place to enjoy a board game, cards or chess on those not-so-cheery days, as well as enjoying the gourmet food prepared especially by your chef for you each evening of course.

When the sun is shining however, which is most of the time in this region of France, guests are encouraged to take full advantage of the sunny sun deck (see pic on page one), not to mention the ultimate luxury of the large splash pool which is certainly big enough for major fun! While we were on board the children were making the most of this play opportunity and we could understand why!

Suites are large (by barging standards) on the [Belle Epoque](#) and bathrooms are each tiled throughout in light grey marble (see picture below). Showers are a generous size and all fittings are of a very good quality, both in terms of materials and workmanship. Good-sized mirrors and plenty of space in which to manouvre also make being on the Belle Epoque a real pleasure.



**With a dedicated crew of 5 to look after your every need, you'll be sure to make the most of this decadent cruise.**

For a preview of the [Belle Epoque sample itinerary](#) for 2006, please click [here](#)

To see **more pictures of the interior** click [here](#)

To read **what past clients have said** about her click [here](#)

and...to enjoy a **preview of her food and wine** please click [here](#)



Perhaps the 'secret weapon' of the [Belle Epoque](#) is her talented and affable chef, Louis, who we caught up with whilst on board. Louis was delighted to spend some time talking with us and pose for photographs—a true professional. Louis has worked on other barges before the [Belle Epoque](#), and understands the need to take into account dietary requirements of all the clients, whilst at the same time treating them to gourmet food throughout the week, of a standard that they'll never forget. Here's an example of a [Belle Epoque](#) dinner menu for the last night—the 'Captain's Gala Dinner'! -

### Example 'Captain's Gala Dinner' Menu

#### ASSORTED HORS D'OEUVRES

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SAUTEED CHICKEN LIVERS WITH PARSLEY MOUSSE  
VEAL FILLET IN WHOLE GRAIN MUSTARD SAUCE, SAFFRON  
TAGLIATELLI, SAUTEED LEEKS  
TOSSED SALAD

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CHEESES  
EPOISSES  
MOUTIN DE CHARENTAIS

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CHOCOLATE AND ALMOND CAKE IN COINTREAU SAUCE  
WITH COINTREAU ICE CREAM



If you're interested in cruising on the the [Belle Epoque](#) please [contact us](#) for further information or to check available dates for your cruise.

We'd love to hear from you.

*Mark and Marie*