

Welcome to la huitième étape de La Bicyclette Jaune.

Its hard to believe that the festive season is upon us again! What a difference a year makes! Last year the realities of the world wide financial crisis were just taking hold and it was time to fasten the seat belts to get ready for a wild ride. This year things are a little brighter with the distinct feeling the the world's economies have some traction again.

Certainly it was a slower summer season for most in the tourism business and some businesses still may not see the light of day in 2010. The smart ones are those that realize that this is the time for creative targeted tourism. Travellers today want active experiences -- fewer and fewer are seeking "fly and flop" vacations. To be successful in today's environment requires the identification of a niche market and working hard to cultivate it -- just like we are doing at La Bicyclette Jaune.

Thank you to all those who have written to us over the past few months looking for advice and recommendations on travelling to Southern France, please keep your emails coming.

Joyeux Noël et bonne année 2010!
 Tim, [La Bicyclette Jaune](#) | [e-mail me](#)

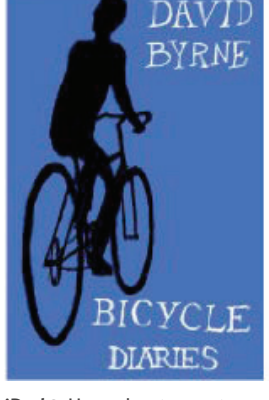
TdF 2010

While the 2009 Tour spent a good part of the first week in Provence and included an ascent of Mt. Ventoux on the penultimate stage, in 2010 Le Tour will only skirt Provence. Heading to the lovely market town of Revel on the edge of Montagne Noir and the Parc Naturel Régional du Haut Languedoc on Stage 13, the Tour hits the Pyrenees hard on Stage 14. Mark our words that this is where the race will be decided. For more details www.letour.fr



Gift Giving Ideas for the Cyclist on your List....

Christmas is approaching fast and the coming days are especially critical for those looking to order gifts online. If there's a cyclist on your "not sure what to get" holiday gift list, we've got some suggestions for you!



David Byrne "Bicycle Diaries" After designing bicycle racks for the city of New York and taking his bike on the road for many tours, David Byrne put his cycling adventures to paper in his new book "Bicycle Diaries". The book is described as a "panoramic window on urban life over the past 20 years—a big window positioned at bike level, that looks out on a dense man-made landscape." Get it at [Amazon](#).

Bicycle Speaker for iPod® How about a water-resistant iPod speaker case that sits in a custom waterbottle cage. A handlebar mounted wireless remote control allows for safe cycling while listening to tunes. For more information, visit www.ihomeaudio.com



Wine Tycoon Computer Game At La Bicyclette Jaune cycling and wine go hand-in-hand. With Wine Tycoon we can indulge our Walter Mitty daydreams of operating a successful Chateau. The game allows players to create vineyards in 10 of France's most prestigious wine regions including Bordeaux, Burgundy and Champagne. Players have to build their winery, plant and tend to their vines throughout the year, hire staff to harvest the grapes and produce up to 50 wines from more than 40 grape varieties. www.winetycoon.gotgameentertainment.com

Erg Video: Virtual Reality Cycling: Real video cycling simulations for CompuTrainer. Winter indoor training gets boring for even the most dedicated cyclist. Liven it up for the cyclist on your list with live training videos filmed throughout Southern France including Mt. Ventoux. *Designed specifically to integrate with the power based operation of the Computrainer.*

www.ergvideo.com
 Read a review on www.pezcyclingnews.com

Rapha Wish List. While its better to give than to receive, you have to admit that receiving is pretty good too. Sign up for the Rapha Wish List. It's free and enables you to select your favourite products for future purchase. The best thing about this feature is you can also email the list to friends and family, just in time for Christmas. www.rapha.cc



Auto Train: Train Transport for Your Vehicle



Have a car in Paris but don't feeling like driving the 1,200 or so kilometres to the south of the country? Look into the Auto Train, a year round service linking Paris with a dozens destinations through to the south of France. Your car travels alone, and you follow at your convenience in a high speed TGV or by plane if you choose. You collect your vehicle once you reach your destination.

Auto-Train services can be booked up to 90 days in advance, the earlier the better for discounted fares. The fare from Paris to Marseille is approximately 130 Euro one way for a standard vehicle. TGV fares from Paris to Marseille start from 25 Euro one way. Most vehicles can be transported, but check for restrictions, e.g. convertibles with soft roofs are not accepted. [Auto-Train](#)

Smart Phones: Your Best Friend on the Road

If you own an iPhone or BlackBerry it has undoubtedly changed the way you communicate and interact with others. With the right applications your phone can also be a valuable resource when on the road. Here's three of our favourite travel apps.



WorldMate Live (iPhone and BlackBerry: Free)
 Forward your itinerary to WorldMate and it will update and sync everything for you. It will map your destinations, suggest hotels that fit your price and star-rating criteria, send you reminders of your appointments, and find friends and colleagues close by. WorldMate also offers a premium service (\$11.95 (US) a month or \$99.95 a year) that includes real-time flight status updates and the ability to book alternative flights on any of 350 airlines. www.worldmate.com

iTranslate (iPhone: free) **Navita Translator** (BlackBerry: free)
 As close as you're probably going to find to a universal translator, iTranslates handles words and sentences in 52 languages, including Macedoniain, Maltese and Tagalog!
 iPhone www.sonicomobile.com/itranslate.html
 BlackBerry www.bbtranslator.com

Where (iPhone and BlackBerry: Free)
 Launch Where when you arrive somewhere new and it will put the people, places and things you're looking for at your fingertips. It uses your phone's GPS to give you everything from the weather, news, and restaurant reviews, to the closest coffee shop, cheapest gas, traffic updates, movie show times and more, providing instant maps and directions. www.where.com

Noel Provencal



In Provence, the traditional Christmas meal is called *le gros souper* (the big supper). It ends with the *Table des 13 Desserts*, a ritual number of 13 desserts symbolizing Christ and his 12 Apostles.

The desserts are served all at the same time and according to tradition each guest must taste each one of them to ensure good fortune throughout the coming year. And while the desserts vary by region, fortunately for our waistlines they are generally a mix of fresh and dried fruits, nuts and small sweets!

And what would dessert be without wine? With dried fruit try a red from Cote de Beaune or St. Emillion and with fresh fruit how about a rose from Provence? We suggest a Chateau Minuty, Cuvée de l'Oratoire.

"Classement Général"

Useful Tips for Travelling to Provence

MARSEILLE Pullman Marseille Provence



(formerly *Hotel Sofitel Marseille Aeroport Marseille*) This is a great hotel located just 3 minutes from the Marseille Provence Aeroport and 10 minutes from Aix en Provence TGV station. A perfect stopover for an early flight, this is a pleasant 4 star "airport hotel" with interesting bar and restaurant which serves a very nice buffet. Leisure facilities include an outdoor pool, tennis, gym, steam room and sauna. One of the most comfortable beds we have experienced in a hotel and surprisingly no airport noise lit was a pleasure to relax in the garden. Free wired internet, wireless needs a voucher.

Aéroport Marseille Provence
 BP 50
 13728 MARGNANE
 FRANCE
 GPS :N 43° 26' 45.95" E 5° 13' 35.46"
 Tel. (+33)4/42784278
 Fax. (+33)4/42784270
[Website](#)

Aire (Auto Rest Areas) Simple to Shopping Mall



The aires (rest areas) found along the network of French autoroutes range from small picnic areas (aires de repos) with an emergency telephone, washup facilities and a few picnic tables/seats located every 10 km, to filling stations with a variety of services auto services and food service which can be found every 30-40 km. Large full service mall-like centres with restaurants and hotels are generally found every 100 km or so. Souvenir shops carry a nice selection of local produce and regional gifts, although probably a little pricier than you would find in the towns themselves.

All Service stations on the autoroutes have children's areas equipped with diaper changing stations, bottle warmers, and high chairs.



For more information and tips about motorway services in France check out. www.about-france.com

For more information on all the Autoroutes of France. www.autoroutes.fr

"Le Bidon"

Domaine de Ferrand



Superb wines have been made by Philippe Bravay, the fourth generation Bravay, at this estate over recent years. Until 1995 when Philippe took control most of the production was sold to negociants, however since 1997 most of the wine has been bottled under the Domaine de Ferrand name.

Consisting of only 5.5 hectares (13 acres), Domaine de Ferrand benefits from very old vines- half are nearly 100 years old- and practices organic, low-yielding growing techniques. While their Chateauferrand is nearly all Grenache, all twelve other authorized grape varieties are represented in the blend. This is a traditional, dense, full bodied and full flavored Chateauferrand that can be cellared for a decade or more.

"Bravay has also turned in a beautiful 2006 Chateauferrand du Pape displaying the classic, complex aromatic profile that he seems to achieve routinely. Aromas of black fruits, scorched earth, incense, licorice, pepper, and roasted Provencal herbs are followed by a full-bodied, rich, deep, long, concentrated wine with impressive layers of black cherries and black currants. Drink it over the next 10-15 years.92 points." *Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate #179*

CONTACT:
 Philippe Bravay
 Chemin de St-Jean,
 Quartier Le Gres, 84100 Orange.
 Tel. 490 342 606
 Direct Sales are available but appointments are recommended.

"La Musette"

Tarte aux Pignons



Pine nut tart is a traditional Provencal dessert with a rich ground almond and candied fruit filling topped with delicate pine nuts.

- 2 tbsp raisins
- 3 tbsp rum
- 5 tbsp soft unsalted butter
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 1/3 cup ground almonds
- 3 small eggs
- 1 cup diced candied fruit
- 3/4 cup pine nuts

Put the raisins in a cup, add the rum, cover and set aside to macerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Preheat the oven to 200 degree C. Generously butter a 24 cm tart pan with a removable bottom.

In a bowl, mix together the sugar, ground almonds, and soft butter. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then stir in the rum-soaked raisins (along with any remaining rum) and the diced candied fruit.

Roll out pastry dough thinly on a floured work surface. Lift on to the tart pan and press in lightly with your hands taking care not to stretch the dough. Prick the pastry a few times with a fork.

Spoon the filling into the pastry and spread evenly. Cover the surface with the pine nuts and press in gently. Bake for 35-40 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Carefully remove the sides of the pan. Serve cut into wedges

Serves 4 to 6.