

August 2006

## Welcome to le Quercy en vacances!

The season of the fetes has arrived in true style, vibrating with visitors all eager to join in the fun. Every little town, village and hamlet has at least one day of partying, followed by half the contents of the local cellars and at least four courses of splendid local cuisine, followed, if you're not very careful, by some outrageously vigorous dancing. I was swept off my feet – literally – last year by an elderly Lothario who insisted on lifting his shirt and rolling the muscles of his six pack at me. I kept treading on his toes because I've never learned to tango and neither, I suspect, had he. When I waved at him the next day he didn't even recognise me, but then of course it might not have been him...



As I sit here writing to you my eye is caught by vast cream swallowtail butterflies flirting on the lavender bushes and clumsily avoiding the hummingbird hawk moths, busily collecting nectar with their quick, darting flight and a proboscis as long as their bodies. Between them they perform an elegant ballet that goes on from sunrise to sunset. They share the summer honours with the evocative cicadas, which supply the orchestra.

Further afield oleander and hibiscus colour every garden, vines grace every terrace and the bunches of grapes that hang enticingly down from their delicious shade are already beginning to plump and blush. The vineyards are tended carefully now too, next years vintage is hanging in the balance, although I'm reliably informed by my vigneron neighbours that the signs are propitious, who knows, perhaps as good as 2003?



In the swollen markets the results of the summer harvest are almost overwhelming. At my favourite fruit stall thirty or forty crates of crimson peaches jostle with a teetering tower of boxes spilling with glorious, juicy apricots. The Reine Claude plums are just coming into season – a short, sweet treat in this area – and our wonderful quercynoise melons are heaped wherever there's a space. They're served for breakfast, as an entrée for almost every meal, eaten as a snack mid-afternoon and still we can't eat them all. Then there are the vast heaps of oversized peppers and strings of long, waxy chillies. I love fresh chillies, but you have to be a little careful when buying them in a market, the French are still amateurs when it comes to spicy food and

stallholders tend to be cagey about the variety and degree of heat. As a result I almost blew the beloved through the roof last night. I retrieved him without too much damage and he proceeded to put out the fire with a second bottle of deliciously blackcurranty Prieure de Cenac – purely for medicinal purposes, naturally.

Another August anomaly is the boom in the café business. Tables are rarely empty. Waiters appear in force, like the march of the penguins, flirting with lithe, scantily clad teenagers and collecting unprecedented tips for small services to numerous babies. The French sip their café, watch and smile from their usual places at the bar or in the quiet of the dining room.

It's the season. It's wearing, but it's wonderful.

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## What's New on FrenchEntrée-LotandQuercy.com?



### Tornado Hits Tarn et Garonne - worst storm since records began

When the phone rang unexpectedly at 6.30 a.m. my husband Paul answered it. I could tell that he was talking to Richard, the incumbent 'locataire' at our house near Caylus in Tarn-et-Garonne, and that there'd been some sort of problem, but I couldn't tell what...

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### The Sporting Life in France - the importance of being a good sport

Sport is something the French take very seriously. It's not only the taking part and the strong competitive spirit, but also the whole ethos of what you're going to wear. The 'sporty' Frenchman chooses his wardrobe for every sport....

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### Lot and Quercy Business Directory

Every day, hundreds of people view our pages searching for houses, holidays, local tradesmen and other service providers. If you have a Lot and Quercy related product or service you can add a basic listing to our Business Directory completely FREE. If you're looking for something, we already have more than 200 local businesses listed..

[Business Directory](#)



### Reiki Treatment and Training in South West France

Stress Solutions is a Complementary Health Practice based in the Lot and Quercy region and rapidly becoming the premiere site in South West France for Reiki training and treatment. Reiki is a completely safe, natural, holistic treatment, simple, non-invasive and extremely powerful.

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### August Art Exhibition in the Lot - Pom'Art In Pomarède from 6-20 August

Pom'Art: Pomarède is host to an exciting new exhibition of six artists in August. On display are sculptures, paintings, photographs, stained glass, and paper and mixed media.

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### Dog of the Month - Introducing Dixie

This is Dixie. She is a very playful friendly little dog, not a beauty, but a heart-stealer nonetheless. Fine with cats and other dogs and just waiting for a chance in life...

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### Photo Exhibition of Michele Ch'i - August 16-26 2006, Serignac, Lot

A native of Hong Kong and a resident of the Lot valley since 2000, photographer and documentary-maker Michele Ch'i often looks outside the visual box, relating her work to other senses and other dimensions...

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### FrenchEntrée Overtakes Chez Nous - Advertising Results Update

Web site traffic data from one of our rental property advertisers shows that they receive more visitors from FrenchEntrée than they do from Chez Nous and French Connections combined - at a fraction of the cost...

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### L'Oustal Immobilier in Montaignu de Quercy

Welcome to L'Oustal Immobilier. Trui Seys and her multi lingual team have years of experience of finding people their dream homes in this beautiful region of South West France. They have developed an enviable reputation for providing a professional and friendly service...

[L'Oustal Immobilier](#)



### Swimming Pools and Pool Security Systems from Piscine-Plus

Do you want an in-ground swimming pool that looks beautiful, can be installed quickly and doesn't cost the Earth? Piscine-Plus have the answer. A 37 square metre pool, fully installed in two weeks for only 14,150 euros!

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### Channel 4 Comes to the Lot and Quercy - Selling Houses Abroad

The Channel 4 program - Selling Houses Abroad are filming in the Lot. They have done a "make-over" on a three bedroom village house in Cazals and are inviting prospective purchasers to come and take a look...

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### Exchange Rate Comparison - Moneycorp can save you money

Buying euros for your property purchase in France? Save money by using a specialist foreign currency dealer. Moneycorp offers extremely competitive exchange rates, no commission charges and low transfer fees.

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## Featured Rental Properties - Available This Summer!



### Beautiful Country House in the Lot Valley near Cahors (sleeps 9 +2)

A beautiful old vigneron's house nestling among vineyards and overlooking the river Lot in the south of France. Set in it's own grounds, with a heated 6 x 12 m pool, it is very private yet within walking distance (2.5Km) of a medieval village with market and all facilities. Full linen and maid service included.

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### Superb Country House in the Lot (sleeps 6-14)

La Chave is an attractive, American owned house finished to a very high standard. The main house sleeps six in three bedrooms (plus a double pull out couch) and the converted barn sleeps a further six. The swimming pool (10m x 5m) has beautiful views down and across the valley.

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