



Charter World *e-news*



Charter World Yachting Holidays
- Australia's original yacht charter specialists

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Dear Charter World,

Recently back from our Croatian sailing and French canal trips, I am longing to return as soon as possible - it was sensational. We also spent some time playing 'Tommy Tourist' in London and Paris, but as most of you know travelling in big cities can be extremely tiring and hard work.

Unpacking once on a boat (always close to all of your gear, stopping wherever and whenever you like, and being treated by quayside restauraners as travellers instead of tourists) still make boating holidays the most relaxing and versatile way to experience the sights, people and atmosphere.

We also enjoyed making several new friends from all parts of the world who spent nights alongside us on the cosmopolitan town quays.

Before we sailed in Croatia I noted that we had eleven different charter groups overlapping our dates. We were lucky enough to catch up with Greg Pratt and his crew of seven enjoying the space of their Lagoon 440 and had a fantastic night at the Zori's restaurant on the Island of St Clement for Lynn's birthday.

Then we caught up with Con Ryan and crew (in the stunning little anchorage of Prvic) who were on day four of their 21 day charter on a Beneteau 50. Both clients we had never met face to face before however we had sensational nights and lots of laughs. I have written a small piece on our canal experience below. Croatia in our next edition.

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• FEATURE VESSELS - JEANNEAU 57 & CAPRICE CANAL BARGE



JEANNEAU 57

The new Jeanneau 57 arrives in Greece in 2011 as the newest and largest available. A dinghy garage is probably the most striking characteristic and a bit James Bondish, although the concept makes total sense.

As you would expect - generator, air-conditioning, microwave, electric genoa winches, LCD TV's and a hydraulic gangway are all included. The 1800 watt inverter runs all of these as well as electric toilets. The huge 140hp VW engine will provide excellent propulsion.

Configured as four double (or converted twin) with ensuites, it is the premier bareboat for 2011. Australians are already lining up with two groups taking two weeks in 2011.

CAPRICE CANAL BARGE

At 40' the Le boat Caprice is an excellent canal cruiser for either two couples or a small family.

A very large Vee cabin and choice of twin or double amidships, are both serviced by very large ensuites which offer great shower roses that give a real bathroom experience. 1300 litres of water is an ocean for bareboaters and shorepower is used to supplement the traditionally engine heated water system.

A very affective heating and cooling system is ducted to the cabins, heads and main saloon area, which again can run on shorepower full time if required.

A spacious galley incorporates a large bar fridge, efficient gas stove and microwave. The driving position down stairs is excellent as is the large bench seat and dash board which we used as an office. Upstairs the driving position gives great vision with a sun deck the best place to be during the day.

Types of canal barges vary enormously and some having copied a traditional design which can have inherent compromises.

Please call us for further details.

• CROATIA UPDATE



The recent down turn in the European and World economy (except seemingly for Australia) over the last year has seen less new boats sold into charter for the 2010/11 season. For years we were lucky enough to have a wealth of choice of new vessels and while there are some, we believe the quality operators will be the only ones who can consistently keep 2-5year old vessels in excellent condition.

New for Croatia in 2011 unfortunately will be another tax, this time a Transit Log at approx \$150 per charter similar to the Turkish Transit Log fee. This is on top of the recent Eu1 per person per day National Park fee. Croatia needs to be careful in my opinion that it does not price itself out of the competition - with marina and mooring fees already edging closer to Italy and France.

Having said this, there is always the option to anchor in the bays beside many marinas, which can charge between \$70 and \$90 a night for access to power and water as well as use of showers. Croatia also still offers exceptional value especially for the Australian dollar, for provisioning, restaurants and alcohol.

2011 promises more of the same (see below). There is just so much to see and do in Croatia that it should definitely be marked as a must return destination. Locals are friendly, scenery is spectacular (the best in the Med) and the service and food quality excellent. Many of you have already experienced the Split to Dubrovnik southern area, however north of Split offers different experiences and more stunning anchorages.

Please call if you require further updates on sailing in Croatia (our own trip will be featured next edition).

• 2011 - THE TIME TO GO

The time has never been better to take a yacht charter holiday in the Mediterranean or Pacific/Asia with airfare and yacht charter package prices the best for many years.

Early bird airfares for 2011 are again highly competitive with more airlines now flying into Australia driving intense competition.

Imagine, the best economic climate where the Australian dollar buys more in Europe than at any time in history, no sars, bird flu or any other distraction to worry about.

The quality of service both ashore and from our charter operators has evolved to be the best ever.

Anecdotely the weather seems to be back to normal over the past two seasons - too many good reasons to go in 2011!

• AIRFARES

Early bird airfares to Europe are now released, noticeably this year without season restrictions for several carriers. Emirates are offering an economy airfare of \$1995 which includes taxes in peak season from Sydney/Melbourne/Brisbane to Istanbul return (\$6630 Business) Perth/Paris including tax. From our experience any economy fare below \$2000 represents great value and reminds me that fares have not increased for 10 years.

On our recent trip we flew Singapore Airlines new A380 and I felt that flying was easier, with less noise than the 747's. Our preference is for economy on the upper deck, however Singapore's configuration is also fine downstairs. As always the service was superb.

Charter flights in Europe are increasing the way to get around offering sectors for mostly under \$100 per sector if booked early.

• SPECIALS

WHITSUNDAYS

For charters 31 Oct - 17 Dec 2010:

Pay for 5 & sail for 6 nights

Pay for 6 & sail for 8 nights

Pay for 8 & sail for 11 nights

For charters 01 Jan - 08 April 2011:

Pay for 4 & sail for 5 nights

Pay for 5 & sail for 7 nights

Pay for 7 & sail for 10 nights

MEDITERRANEAN

Early booking discount 5-10% with varying operators

Special 25% discount on May 2011 for early birds with one operator

SEYCHELLES

30% Discount for charters 11 Dec 2010 - 03 Jan 2011.

MADAGASCAR

30% Discount for charters 25 Nov - 28 Dec 2010

THAILAND

20% Discount for charters 09-30 April 2011.

TAHITI

20% Discount for charters 23 Oct 2010 - 26 March 2011.

CABIN CHARTERS

Madagascar/Maldives/Tahiti

30-50% Discount for last minute cabin charter bookings departing in November 2010.

• CRUISING BURGUNDY/NIVERNAIS CANALS - OUR WAY!



Navigating your canal barge into its first lock is a slightly daunting experience given that our boat briefing was delivered mostly in French and translated by our 14 year old - Jack.

No licensing or boating experience is necessary (say the glossy brochures) - if you can drive a boat then you qualify as a Rear Admiral at the very least.

We moved into midstream, reduced speed and lined up the lock, with the Base Manager carefully watching our departure then disaster (pronounced more like saboteur and indeed there was a form of sabotage)!

Somewhere back on the designer's table the naval architect had plotted our demise. A small but significant placement of the horn threatened to blow our holiday out of the water. Placed innocuously (and virtually hidden) at knee level the air horn was inadvertently knocked not once (but in a panic) three or four times. Looking up, our first lock-keeper (who was slowly ambling up to our gate) stopped suddenly and placed his hands on his hips, staring directly at us.

'Oh merde!' We had left the base only 5 minutes and had already upset our first lock-keeper. Worse still, after an icy stare he returned to his little lock house - no doubt to inform on CB radio all lock-keepers down stream (by our count 31) of the rude and impatient "English pigs!" Or perhaps he would just refuse to let us pass. We had 7 days and I anticipated the possibility of travelling the 500 metres behind us to the next lock twice or three times a day.

I moved our barge a little closer as he returned from the lock house, his hand waving in the air, "Pardon, excuse moi, incompetente imbecile (pointing clearly at myself)". The Mexican standoff was brief (to our relief), he walked forward put his hands on the winch and our gates began to open like a Roman drawbridge to welcome us in.

Our crew of four (including Lynn, Jack and our 13 year old daughter Holly) had chosen to cruise one-way from Chatel Censoir (Nivernais Canal) to Laroche Migennes (Burgundy Canal) - we had six nights to cruise 65 kilometers and 31 locks.

Canal cruising can now be undertaken in eight European countries and forty areas, so the choice is immense with one-ways and return to base options. It could take several years to see this huge labyrinth of interconnected waterways.

France's Canal du Nivernais in the Burgundy region is only a 2 hour train ride south-east of Paris and reputedly (and justifiably so) one of the prettiest canals in Europe. It passes through picture postcard rural landscapes, delightful small villages and large towns such as Auxerre and Laroche Migennes. Our clients have returned over many years raving about this canal in particular.

Unlike many areas the Nivernais is a mixture of river and man made canal systems which offers greater variety. Originally conceived by Henri IV the canal sections were built between 1783 and 1842. Their main purpose was to tame the Yonne River which could then be used to transport timber. A side benefit of this

process for us was that the original tow paths made excellent bike paths.

We took four bikes which were easy to lift on and off and secure. Most mornings we would ride both along the banks and inland short distances to discover small towns and restaurants in this world renowned food and wine region.

Our route was downstream, which is slightly easier as you throw your lines at deck height before descending in the lock, (rather than throw your lines up). Our barge 'Caprice' was very comfortable for the four of us. A large twin Vee berth in the bow and double or twin cabin amidships both were serviced by a large ensuite with almost the best showers I have had on a self drive boat.

Rubber surrounds these vessels and from the outside they resemble bumper boats in a theme park. Coming from two weeks sailing in Croatia, we were probably a bit too precious about touching the sides of the locks and we saw later that even the private barges used touch parking as a navigational tool.

An inside and outside driving position is vital and not standard on most charter barges. The upstairs fly bridge allows great vision over the levy banks and a better aspect in the sun. Inside is great if you have some rain, as we did, and the onboard heater a good option if chilly. Microwaves in a large galley encouraged as to cook aboard more than we thought we would. Large surround windows allowed viewing from the galley and main saloon with always stunning backdrops of 400 year old structures, lush green farming land or overhanging foliage.

The locks in the Nivernais are some of the smallest in France and therefore have no commercial or large barges and from Chatel Censoir to Auxerre are large enough for two small barges only and are all operated by lock-keepers.

Even our first lock-keeper was friendly and helpful after our misunderstanding - Jack and Holly helped on all of these locks which was appreciated and cut our passing time almost in half. The average time taken to enter and depart for us was 5-10 minutes. Tipping is not customary and only one lock keeper offered to sell us something being good value wine. About half enjoyed having a chat in English and were often seen tending their flower beds and gardens beside the lock house.

Our arrival into Auxerre was in a carnival atmosphere with Auxerre playing Real Madrid later that night and the lock-keepers excited about the prospect of playing arguably one of the world's most powerful football teams. It had been seven years since Real Madrid had travelled to Auxerre, and the stadium of 22,000 was booked out about a year in advance. 'Viva la Auxerre'

We managed to berth beside the stadium and at least soak up some of the crowd atmosphere. Auxerre's old quarter with its abbey and gothic cathedral was a highlight for our crew. The restaurants and shopping were superb and worth several days in their own right.

Small villages such as Vermenton and Vincelottes were also great fun and felt like a long way from mainstream tourist paths "palez vous anglais" not even worth uttering. Good cruising guides offer tips on side excursions to wineries within easy cycling distance.

A 'boulangier' or patisserie is always only a short ride away, with warm croissants and baguettes available every morning. Even at the end of the season we never really found any rudeness (which the French who are perhaps unfairly stigmatised with) and 31 lock-keepers was a valid survey!

Overall we enjoyed the adventure and found it an extremely relaxing way to immerse ourselves in an authentic French culture. It was a great wind down and perfect add-on to the bareboat charter - can't wait for the next one!

Good chartering!

Brook Felsenthal
and the Charter World Team