

GOURMET

For gourmets looking to learn how to recreate some of the stunning meals enjoyed in French restaurants, or wine buffs seeking to increase their knowledge and cellar at the same time, there are many excellent options. The sheer number of cookery classes available throughout the country may seem overwhelming, so the first step in choosing an activity holiday of this kind is to consider your initial skill level and what you wish to achieve from the break. From die-hard kitchen disasters to budding restaurateurs, there is a gourmet break in France which will suit.

Two options for beginner chefs are the "cookery holiday" from **Cook in France** which emphasizes fun rather than serious hard work in the kitchen and Rosa Jackson's cooking school, **Les Petits Farcis**, in Nice (see pp526-7) where she guides food-lovers around the town's glorious fresh produce stalls explaining how to spot the best melon, or how to cook the intimidating artichoke. The Cook in France team offers many specialized

courses (such as matching wine to food) alongside their standard culinary classes while Rosa Jackson's cooking school, offers the opportunity to rustle up a menu depending on what looks great in the market that particular day.

Budding culinary stars might want to head to Provence to learn from the master's pupils with the lessons at **La Bastide de Moustiers**. Alain Ducasse's provincial inn in Moustiers-Sainte-Marie (see pp514-5). The lessons take place in the hotel's kitchen with Michelin-starred chef Vincent Maillard and his team, all of whom are former Ducasse pupils. The lessons focus on Provençal cooking with an emphasis on local produce from the garden and village markets.

Oenophiles, on the other hand, might like to join with the **French Wine Explorers** who offer tours around vineyards and intimate sessions with boutique producers. Alternatively, arranging wine classes via the French tourist office can be an excellent idea, with details of serious classes and tastings, approved by the French tourist board.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

France is a top choice for creative people looking to get away from it all and to express themselves in beautiful surroundings. Whether your preferred method of expression is scribbling in a notebook by yourself on the banks of a river, or perfecting your pastel technique in an art master class, there is an outlet for you somewhere in France.

Arts in South West France offer courses in everything from print-making to sculpture, or creative writing to art therapy. Individual and group classes, geared to different levels of ability, are taught by exhibiting artists.

Courses in crafts, such as glass painting and scrapbook making, are on offer at **La Croix Rompue**, a delightful farmhouse in Normandy. The classes are small and the setting very relaxing.

Those with a passion for seeing life through a lense are well-catered for with photography courses in **Brachlaille** in the south of France, home of the photographer's forum. Tuition is flexible and various specialities are offered.

DIRECTORY

SPECIALIST HOLIDAYS

French Institute

17 Queensberry Place,
London SW7 2DT
United Kingdom
Tel 020 7073 1350.
Fax 020 7073 1355.

Union REMPART

1 rue des Guillemites,
75004 Paris.
Tel 01 42 71 96 55.
www.rempart.com

GOLF

Crowne Plaza Biarritz and American Golf School

1 Carrefour Helianthe
64200 Biarritz
Tel 05 59 43 81 21
www.cpb Biarritz.fr

Fédération Française de Golf

68 rue Anatole France,
92300 Levallois Perret.
Tel 01 41 49 77 00.
www.ffg.org

Golf Hotel Grenoble Charmeil

38210 Saint Quentin sur
Isere
Tel 04 76 93 67 28
www.golfhotelcharmeil.com

Golf Hotel du Priere

Domaine de St-Yvieux
35540 Le Tronchet
Tel 02 99 58 98 99

Hotel des Mougins

205 Avenue du Golf
06250 Mougins
Tel 04 92 92 17 07
www.hotel-de-mougins.com

Hotel Royal and Evian Masters

South Shore Lake Geneva
74500 Evian
Tel 04 50 26 85 00
www.royalparcevia.com

HIKING

Fédération Française de Randonnée Pédestre

14 rue Riquet, 75019 Paris.
Tel 01 44 89 93 93.
www.ffrandonnee.fr

CYCLING

CTC

Cotterell House, 69
Meadow, Godalming,
Surrey GU7 3HS
United Kingdom.
Tel 0870 873 0060.
www.ctc.org.uk

Duvine Adventures

www.duvine.com

Fédération Française de Cyclisme

12 rue Louis Bertrand,
94100 Ivry-sur-Seine.
Tel 01 56 20 88 88.
www.ffc.fr

Velo Echappe

www.veloechappe.com

HORSE RIDING

A La Carte Sportive

www.carte-sportive.com

Cheval et Chateaux

www.cheval-et-chateaux.com

France Way

www.franceway.com