

### *Trip to France's south west*

Over Toussaint, one year, we did a driving trip to multiple destinations in France's southwest. We were a group of seven. My family plus my parents went with us on this vacation.

We drove down to the wine town of St. Emilion to spend a few nights. It was basked in warm sand colored stone. We stayed at:

Au Logis des Remparts \*\*\*

18 rue Guadet

33330 Saint Emilion

[www.logisdesremparts.com](http://www.logisdesremparts.com)

05 57 24 70 43

We walked to a winery (Chateau Champion) for a private tour, did some wine tastings at the shops in town and enjoyed the hilly streets and nice shops.

We then drove down to the southwest coast and visited Biarritz for a couple of days. The kids loved the vibe of this surfer town. At the recommendation of Ms. Smith (ASP middle school teacher) we stayed at:

The Palacito Hotel \*\*

1, rue Gambetta

64200 Biarritz

[www.hotel-palacito.com](http://www.hotel-palacito.com)

05 59 24 04 89

She also recommended favorites: Bar Jean 5, rue des Halles for tapas, Chez Albert (actually the outside little grill by Chez Albert) on the Port des Pecheurs for dinner and Le Vivier Des Halles. My French teacher, who summers in Biarritz every year, also recommended restaurants: Le Clos Basque and the Le Saint Amour. Most of these restaurants were closed when we were there at Toussaint, either for All Saint's day or because they were closed seasonally. I would recommend this trip for May - September for the best bet.

We then drove to the pilgrimage town of Lourdes, near the Pyrenees mountains.

We stayed for a night at:

The Hotel Saint-Sauveur

9, rue Sainte-Marie

65103 Lourdes

05 62 94 25 03

This town really shuts down after October 31<sup>st</sup>, so it was a bit eerie in the town at that time of year. The grotto and pilgrimage sight was quite impressive and would be even more moving in the regular season.

We then finished in the Loire valley. We stayed in Amboise at:

Novotel Tours Sud

La Vrillonnerie

Route Nationale 10

[www.accorhotels.com](http://www.accorhotels.com)

02 47 80 18 10

We visited the chateau at Amboise and Chenonceau. I would highly recommend, if you go in May or in the summer you also visit the chateau Villandry if you love beautiful gardens.

We've also stayed at the Manoir St. Thomas in Amboise (nice) and have had the recommendation of Le Moulin de Bacchus (02 47 52 27 90) near Vouvray.

It was a lot of driving over a week's time, but we saw many beautiful parts of France. Bon courage!