

The Old Tannery

www.volunteer-france.com

EVERYDAY LIVING

Accommodation

In The Little House are six beds in five bedrooms on the mezzanine floor. On the ground floor is the kitchen/dining/lounge and toilet, shower and bathroom. The kitchen is fully equipped and includes a gas cooker and stove, fridge/freezer, dishwasher and microwave plus all the useful stuff.

Food and Drink

There are markets in Carcassonne and Revel on Saturday mornings and in Bram on Wednesday mornings. Almost all shops close between at least 12pm and 2pm. Some shops don't re-open until 4pm.

Fire hazard warning

In summer, even a simple spark can set off a forest fire in the surrounding countryside. Outdoors fires are outlawed (except barbecues, but even these are recommended to have a bucket of water standing by just in case).

As smokers are kindly requested to go outside to smoke, they must take extra care not to start a fire outside. And please pick up your cigarette butts.

Ecology and environmental issues

Simply by making a few small adjustments to routines, everyone can help make a difference to this little corner of the planet. We try to support local or fair trade suppliers wherever possible and encourage recycling and environmentally friendly choices. We provide biodegradable products such as washing liquid, soap and dishwashing products, and we'd like you to help by participating responsibly in these efforts.

Here are some ideas of ways in which you can help during your stay by helping to put in place a few sustainable solutions for the benefit of people and nature:

Reduce waste and pollution

All waste systems, anywhere in the world, eventually end up in the sea. So being aware of what goes down the drain – shampoo, soap, washing up liquid, clothes washing liquid, dishwashing products – is important. Our environmentally friendly cleaning products contain plant extracts that degrade quickly. You can help by:

- Using all products sparingly (e.g. one shampoo is usually enough; half a tablet for the dishwasher is usually enough);
- Putting sanitary waste and wrappings in the dustbin not down the toilet;
- Not putting waste oil down sinks or drains;
- Using the composting toilets.

Save energy

When the house was renovated, it was made as energy friendly as possible by fitting it with cavity walls and loft insulation. Whenever possible, we choose energy-efficient appliances and light bulbs as well as a gas oven which costs a quarter of the price of running an electric one. You can help by:

- Switching off all the lights and electrical appliances when not in use;
- Letting clothes dry naturally on the clothesline outside rather than using a tumble drier;
- Keeping lids on pans when cooking to economise on gas.

Save water

If you spot a leak, please let us *know* so that it can be fixed (a leak can waste up to 13 litres of water a day!).

You can help by:

- Avoiding dripping taps;
- Only using the clothes washing machine when there's a full load (share!)
- Don't leave the tap running while you clean your teeth.

Power to the consumer!

Today's society is consumer based which means we have great consumer power and as more people buy environmentally friendly products, suppliers must meet this demand. To help avoid the use of damaging chemicals such as pesticides, which can pollute waterways and the rest of the environment, you can help by:

- Taking your own bag or re-using plastic carrier-bags when shopping;
- Buying local produce (there are organic vegetables grown in Montolieu);
- Buying seasonal fruit and vegetables from the local shops (which helps to reduce costs and pollution from transporting imported goods).

Shared and public transport

If you are going to Carcassonne by car, take someone with you. If you don't have a car and you want to go, ask around – one car journey is better than two. There are occasional buses from Montolieu too (see under transport later).

Recycling

There are full instructions on what can and can't be recycled on display.

Save wood and paper

We buy recyclable products such as toilet tissue and stationery. You can also help by recycling as much as you can - if you have any unwanted clothes or books, please leave them in the recycling area on the ground floor of the factory and we'll take them to charity shops in Carcassonne.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Bank and Cash

The nearest cash machine is in Saissac.

Telephone

Most mobile phones work here – although some networks are not that good!

Emergency telephone number is 112 and locally the following ones are used from fixed lines:

Police: 17 Fire: 18 Emergency medical service: 15 Phone information: 12

Letters & Post Office

The full postal address is:

270 chemin de la Tannerie, 11170 MONTOLIEU, France.

The Post Office is open Monday, Thursday and Friday 9am to 12pm; Tuesday and Wednesday 1:30pm to 4:30pm; Saturday 10:00am to 12pm. Last time for collection from the post box, which is by the church, is 2pm. No collection on Sunday.

Email

We are equipped with a computer with Internet access. Mobile devices can connect to the WiFi on the first floor of the factory.

Transport

Bikes: you're welcome to borrow a bike to pop into the village but please take good care of them and put them back in the bicycle stand in the garage when you've finished. Please report any repairs that are needed.

Buses: local transport is a bus from Montolieu to Carcassonne. In summer, there are buses on Tuesdays and Thursdays leaving Montolieu at 09:05 a.m. and 13:05 from in front of the Vival grocery shop. The return journey from Carcassonne leaves at 12.10 and 18:10. On Saturdays, just the early bus operates. In school term, there are also buses every weekday morning at 07.05.

Trains: once in Carcassonne, travelling in France is normally fairly easy by train, especially with the TGV (high-speed-train) that links to most of the larger cities. If you travel by train, don't forget to stamp your ticket ("compostage") in the machine before you board, otherwise you're travelling unlawfully. (useful sites : www.voyages-sncf.com and www.trainline.fr).

Planes: Carcassonne airport (Salvaza) has direct flights to London Stansted, Manchester, Glasgow, East Midlands, Charleroi in Belgium, Dublin and Cork in Ireland and Porto in Portugal with Ryanair (www.ryanair.com).

Toulouse international airport (one hour by car and a bit more by train) has more widespread connections.

Insurance

We are not responsible for insuring you. It is therefore strongly recommend that you take accident, illness, public liability and travel insurance for the duration of your stay to make sure you are covered in case of an accident to yourself or caused by you to a third party.

CODE OF CONDUCT

French laws

During your stay in France, you are asked to abide by French laws.

Travelling off site

If you leave the site for anything more than one day, please keep us informed of your whereabouts so that you can be contacted if necessary.

Returning to your country of origin at the end of the program

Because of visa requirements, you agree to return home on a particular date before even setting foot in France. It is your responsibility to respect these dates.

ADVICE & TIPS

Fewer problems occur to persons who behave “respectfully” compared to those whose actions appear provocative. In order to help you keep safe and avoid trouble, here are various tips which other people have recommended or found useful, most of which apply wherever you’re living.

The frequency of safety problems depends on many factors: they are more frequent in the suburban areas than in the countryside, in cities than in villages, at night than in full daylight, so the good news is that you should be fairly safe in Montolieu because it’s a rural village!

Safety

- When going out, don’t carry large amounts of money and don’t flash it about
- Keep your wallet secure
- Make sure your keys don’t have a tag with the address
- If possible, be accompanied by friends or colleagues (at least at the beginning)
- Don’t accept a ride in a car whose driver is unknown to you
- Carry personal identification (keep the original back at base and carry a photocopy)
- Always keep a note of your phone number with you
- A phone card is useful: make sure you know how to use it
- Petty thievery does happen, so leave your precious belongings under lock and key at base

Safety on site

Make sure you become familiar with how to use the different electrical, gas (the kitchen gas stove has no pilot light and must be lit manually) heating appliances.

Find the first aid-kit and the fire extinguisher so you know where they are in the event of an emergency. Make sure you know the phone numbers to be called in case of emergency (displayed on the notice board in the Little House).

Harassment

Don't do anything unacceptable to your own morals and values.

Climate

In Montolieu, the climate varies according to the seasons, ranging from a few weeks in the winter when it gets really cold and the long warm/hot summer months. In between summer and winter, there are cool evenings; wet grey days and periods of brilliant blue sky, especially in autumn! It's rare to get snow in Montolieu but the distant view over the Pyrenees lets you know whether it's been snowing at higher altitudes. Round here, they say that if the Pyrenees look "close", it's going to rain in a few days time.

Language

French is the official language but local languages are still heard, especially amongst the older people. Our local language (or "patois") is Occitan and you'll probably hear it on the main square in Montolieu.

Finally, please remember:

Behave like a member of our team...because you are a member, not a guest! Teamwork takes effort, especially respecting each other's codes, customs and the varied ways in which we each choose to meet needs.

...and smile!

WHERE TO FIND FURTHER INFORMATION

To know more about France and us, take a look at:

www.franceguide.com	French Tourist Office website
www.alliancefr.org :	“Alliance Française”
www.tourisme-cabardes.fr	For Montolieu
www.peacefactory.fr	For information about our NVC training courses held here
www.volunteer-france.com	For information about volunteering here

And finally, please don't forget that if you have any bright ideas to add to this list, do let us know