

Eating out

Whether it be alfresco dining in the garden, a formal dinner at home or eating out at a restaurant, it can be a most pleasurable experience.

While visiting the Loire Valley we suggest you should have the 'French restaurant' experience at least once –or more if your budget can stand it!

Don't be put off with the idea of snails or frog's legs, which you should at least try once! There are so many dishes to get your taste-buds excited that even with the debate as to whether French cooking is still the best in the world or not, you will, for the most part, be delighted.

Below is a list of restaurants we frequently visit, and would highly recommend –

Le Bouff'tard – Hommes (20-minute drive)

This is a traditional French restaurant; the French tend to eat their larger meal at lunch time and therefore a lot of the restaurants have fixed price menus. At 13 euros per person for 3 courses and half a litre of wine you can't go wrong! The menu changes every day and there are usually three options per course to choose from.

L'entracte – Saumur (40-minute drive)

A European Brasserie with a big choice – it is renowned for its Moules Frites and meats such as Duck Breast, but the burgers are also delicious.

Le Grand Bleu – Saumur (40-minute drive)

A restaurant specialising in fish and seafood.

Le Vulcano – Le Lude (20-minute drive)

An Italian restaurant in the small town of Le Lude, specialising in freshly made pizzas.

L'Orangerie – Saumur (40-minute drive)

A bistro style restaurant located in the courtyard of the Chateau with breath-taking views – French / international cuisine with a fairly small menu.

L'Oree des Bois – La-Breille-les-Pins (30-minute drive)

A gastronomic cuisine where terroir and creativity blend with subtlety. A traditional French restaurant with a choice of three set menus at different costs, plus an a la carte menu. Lunch and Dinner available, with both indoor and outdoor seating areas.

Le Pelican – Vernantes (20-minute drive)

Tasty and authentic cuisine made from selected local produce, with a selection of set menus.

La Cave aux Moines – Chenehutte Treves-Cunault (50-minute drive)

Set within tuffeau stone caves dug in the 12th century onwards, this cave was used as far back as the beginning of the 20th century to cultivate mushrooms. The restaurant has several set menus using products from the caves – snails, mushrooms and the famous regional speciality: "the fouee" (a delicious dough worked and baked in front of you, in an oven as in the days of our ancestors).

Please click each restaurant heading to be taken to their website.

Takeaways

In France, they do not do takeaways in the usual sense. Instead, they have catering vans which park up in various villages on certain nights of the week.

Pizza Fred

Pizza Fred is a Pizza Van which comes to the nearby villages on certain evenings and cooks fresh stone-baked pizzas to order.

Monday – Place de l’église, Noyant (10-minute drive)
 Tuesday – Place de la mairie, Vernantes (20-minute drive)
 Thursday – Place de l’église, Noyant (10-minute drive)
 Friday – Route Principal, Breil (10-minute drive)
 Saturday - Place de la mairie, Vernantes (20-minute drive)
 Sunday – Place Jules des Bois, Parçay-les-Pins (15-minute drive)

Dandi’s Café

Dandi’s Café is a catering van ran by an English lady who now lives in the Loire. She specialises in burgers, hot dogs, bacon sandwiches and fish and chips. This van also comes to the nearby villages on certain evenings.

Monday – Château-du-Loir – 6pm – 9pm (30 minute drive)
 Tuesday – Place du Champ Foire, Le Lude – 6pm – 9pm (20-minute drive)
 Wednesday – La Fleche Camping – 6 – 9pm (35-minute drive)
 Thursday – Le Lude Camping – 6 – 9pm (20-minute drive)
 Friday – Church car park, Noyant – 6pm – 9pm (10-minute drive)
 Saturday – Action car park, La Fleche – 12pm – 2.30pm (35-minute drive)
 Saturday – La Fleche Camping – 6 – 9pm (35-minute drive)