



ROMANTIC GETAWAY IN BURGUNDY FRANCE

BY SHERRIE WILKOLASKI

Move over Paris, Burgundy has stolen my heart. France is for lovers and if your thoughts of a stroll along the Seine leave you daydreaming for romance, let your mind wander to the French countryside. Not sure where to settle your thoughts? Let me give you a nudge in the right direction. Make your way to Chef Katherine Frelon's La Ferme de La Lochere gourmet culinary getaway, and you'll enjoy a week of intimate and delicious delights.

Your romantic escape starts as you board an express train from Gare de Lyon in Paris to Montbard station. The complexities of the city life quickly fade into the simplicity of the country lifestyle, with the passing of each village. Once at the station you'll be greeted by Katherine's premier wine expert Brendan Moore and he'll be your driver on the quick trip to La Ferme de La Lochere. Throughout your stay, you'll get to spend time with the fabulous Mr. Moore who will describe wine, like you've never heard before. His knowledge and passion is infectious. If you're an oenophile, you'll have found your new wine guru, and if a neophyte, Brendan will take you on a cherished wine journey that you won't soon forget.

Perhaps I should mention that there will be a handful of other guests that will be staying at your countryside retreat, and joining you for group dinners and other excursions, as you will be entertained together. Don't let the other guests interfere with your romantic vacation. Think of the opportunities you'll have to steal away from your small group, but there is the larger chance you'll make new friends, while enjoying discussions about the local markets, wineries and raving about the food you'll be savoring at every meal.

Upon arriving at Katherine's culinary escape you'll be personally welcomed by the chef and her small staff. Don't worry that you don't speak the language. Katherine is a British chef that has found her home at 6 rue de la lochere, MARGNY LE CAHO UET 21150, France. You'll enjoy her English accent, and will marvel at the ease in which she can move so elegantly between her native tongue and French. *C'est impressionnant!*

After offering you an aperitif to get your evening started, she will escort you to your room to freshen up for your gourmet dinner. She will have selected a room that suits your own style in one of the five guest rooms. Your en suite bath is one of the most luxurious you'll find while traveling in this region and is complete with cozy white robes, and



L'Occitane en Provence beauty products. Every room is unique in its design and has been decorated by Katherine in her modern country French style.

There is no need for a knock on your bedroom door to invite you down to dinner. The delectable fragrance coming from the kitchen will be all you need to join the rest of the household in the dining area. The warm oversized farm table will be fabulously decorated and candles flickering to provide just enough mood lighting to make it seem like a dream. By now you're on to a glass of wine, and knowing Brendan, he's offered you an *Aligoté* from a local vineyard. He'll talk you through how the



Photos Courtesy of La Ferme de La Lochere.

grapes are farmed, the history of the family and why this wine has a crisp apricot finish. He can explain how that wine has been brought to life, and the magic behind it. From how the winds blow, to where on the mountainside vines were planted and other details that will leave you amazed. From one bottle to the next, stories, insight and excitement, abound.

Katherine has been in the kitchen preparing your gourmet dinner while you're enjoying the wine experience in front of the fireplace. Of course you've been getting a sneak peek at her culinary skills, tasting her *gougères*, pickled garlic, olives and other *nibblies* to tide you over. As she calls everyone to the dinner table, it's more like a large dance floor for her show-stopping dishes. You sit down to the first course, Veloute of Celeriac with Spiced Bread. Veloute is a smooth and creamy soup and she has featured celeriac. If you're not familiar with celeriac it is a turnip-root vegetable, or sometimes referenced as a celery nob. Katherine loves to serve this with warm spiced bread. She recommends this as a late night treat during the cold winter months, snuggled up in front of the fire with your sweetheart.

For the main course she serves a Slow Braised Pork Belly dish with seasonal vegetables. Your mouth waters before bringing the first bite to your lips and there are ample baskets of bread at hand, as you'll need several pieces to wipe your plate clean from the gravy drippings. The wine pairing is a Pinot Noir

from Flavigny, one of her favorite local vineyards. You're welcome to seconds and even thirds if you so desire; just be sure to save room for dessert.

You'll end the meal on a refreshing light note with her famous Lemon Posset with Lemon Curd and Shortbread. It is simple and delicious. The perfect way to end the dinner. This dessert is one of Katherine's favorites because she is huge fan of lemons, but more importantly it's quick to make and always impresses her guests. Of course a meal in France isn't truly over until you've experienced the cheese and more wine. Katherine not only loves cheese, she is a connoisseur. She'll explain to you how to truly enjoy the flavors and textures of each cheese selection and the accompaniments, and the conversation will flow deep into the night.

As you drift off to sleep on the first night of your Burgundy adventure, you'll be completely satisfied, nestled in your bed, anticipating what the week ahead will bring you. More than any other vacation you're sure to take, *La Ferme de La Lochere's* experience is what true romance is all about. A bespoke culinary excursion that is sure to bring a couple closer and allow you to enjoy an intimacy that you won't experience anywhere else. ■



To learn more about Katherine Frelon's bespoke culinary vacations go to www.katherinefrelon.com and www.lafermedelalochere.com.