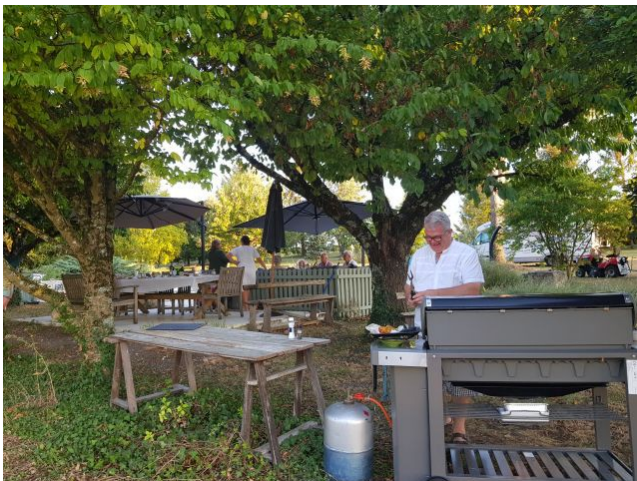


FRANCE
Segonzac & Milhars
September 2019

Saturday 7 September - 291miles



A warm welcome awaited us at Graham and Susannah's impressive Château. This is our first visit as we missed Graham's 60th when Rick had a perforated appendix. They've been here five years and I am amazed how much they have achieved, especially as I know how difficult it is to get French workmen. Susannah used to have an Antiques shop in Hove and her style is evident in the furnishings. She has recently started letting two rooms and her guests joined us and their friends Pableo and Clara a for a barbeque supper by the pool. We couldn't stop gorging ourselves on the delicious figs from their two trees.



Sunday 8 September

We cycled to Segonzac, it's a great little town with restaurants, bars and an excellent Supermarket that had a fresh fish stall selling oysters, crabs etc set up outside. Being in the Cognac area we cycled 27 kms through fields of grapevines and past many once grand houses.



Susannah had two other sets of guests arriving today and also her friend Nyree from Brighton. We toasted Nyree's arrival with a strong Bloody Mary and that led onto afternoon and evening drinks. Susannah's evening was spoilt by one of the guest's having a rant about Nyree informing the other guests that they were going to watch football until midnight as one of their sons was playing for Finland. She seemed to think that Nyree thought they may be football hooligans. The Viking and his lady friend said they weren't bothered as they would be having sex all night. Rick must be well over his allotted units but his heart rate seemed okay. They were fascinated by our Samsung watches and we all ended up using them to compare heart rates.



Monday 9 September – 122 miles



The drive to Marmande took an hour longer that it should have done as we went the wrong way. We stayed on a park like Aire beside the River Gorande for 10 euros which included electricity. We cycled along the river and into the town but being a Monday most shops were shut. We are really enjoying the new bikes even though I am finding it difficult to get my leg over when getting on and off.



Tuesday 10 September – 137 miles

There was heavy rain during the night and our table and chairs got soaked. It's the coldest day so far. On the way to Alan's we stopped at an Aire that you had to drive over a narrow bridge and park between the a row of trees that were very close to the river. Rick's dropping a pin on the map location isn't working as we keep going wrong. We now use our phones for navigation and for some reason we couldn't get them to take us on the motorway. It's interesting how the scenery on the journey changed from fields and fields of vineyards to more majestic mountains and orchards.

We haven't been to Alan's for 3 years and its always a pleasure to be able to sit on his balcony with a drink and enjoy the view. As it was jumper weather we decided to go to a restaurant in St Antinon which did a great 3 courses for 25 euros.



Wednesday 11 September

The weather is back to normal and reached 26 degrees. We cycled to Varin and stopped at the restaurant for a drink and ended up staying for lunch. Rick and Alan had an enormous pork chop. It was a relaxing afternoon by the pool until Rick said his heart rate had gone up to 150. We thought maybe he was dehydrated after the bike ride so he drank lots of water. That didn't bring the heart rate down but meant he had to make numerous trips to the toilet. Alan cooked us a superb supper, we each cooked our strips of duck breast on the hot plate. Rick had an early night as he still had a high heart rate and had also started a cough.



Thursday 12 September



It's all eating and drinking here. Morning drink at the fortified commune of Cordes-sur-Ciel and straight onto Le Segalar for lunch. It's a 15 minutes walk from Alan's and he's a regular. The rest of the afternoon spent by the swimming pool as it was about 30 degrees. Rick's heart was racing again and most of the time was spent checking it on his Samsung watch. If we didn't have the watch we probably wouldn't have known about it and not worried so much. He has drunk moderately, could be that, but also it could be the strong coffee or that he has had to take his puffer. No way is he going to drink a load of water again after at least 14 trips to the toilet yesterday. We hardly had time to recover from lunch when we were served up salad with foie gras with a stonking bottle of red. Brexit, brexit, brexit talk.



Friday 13 September - 71 miles



We followed Alan on the way to Gaillac with stops for the Post Office, rubbish and laundry. Brilliant market in Gaillac, didn't really have a chance to look around as we had a long goodbye lunch with Alan. He is a man that likes to lunch! Camping du Lac de Bonnefon near Naurelle. Had a swim to cool us down as it was over 30 degrees. The rest of the day was dominated by Rick's heart beat, checking his watch again and again.



Saturday 14 September -156 miles

No alcohol or caffeine for Rick until his heart rate settles, even though it is down a little today. It's a bit showery and we ended up driving much further than anticipated. We drove round Rodez but didn't stop and headed for the A75 towards Clermont Ferrand stopping overnight at Les Pradeaux. It was a tiring journey as we were held up twice by roadworks. We stayed at this campsite called "Château de Grange Fort" 3 years ago and tonight they have a wedding party. Rick cooked spaghetti with shellfish and we are both feeling hot and bloated.



Sunday 15 September – 253 miles

A long drive, about 6.5 hours including two short stops. Surprisingly, we have had difficulty finding a free space in the Aire's along the motorways, who would have thought it would be so busy this time of the year. Tonight we are staying at L'Arada Parc, Sonzay near Tours. Such a hot day and what better way than to cool off in their lovely warm pool. A busy but inviting site, Rick bought a pair of Speedo's as they are obligatory in France but worth every penny. An uncomfortable night as the motorhome must have been on a slope.

Monday 16 September -101 miles

Big decision has been made today, we are going to sell the motorhome. Our enthusiasm has waned a bit since I got left with the motorhome when Rick got appendicitis and after ten years we are ready to do weekend breaks or stay in a mobile home. Rick's ticker has settled a bit but still not quite back to normal. Do we go home early or go back to the house in Saint Ellier. The house won as it is now very comfortable and the weather for the coming week looks good.

