



Le Gentil Retreat

LATE WINTER NEWS

What do we do in the winter when we don't have guests?

We still work...but also enjoy a good log fire in the evenings after a day outside! There's always plenty to do...and never a dull moment.



We created a log wall habitat from the conifer branches felled recently. Bonfires are not allowed here for environmental reasons, so everything has been recycled on site. We now have a pile of wood chip mulch to use!



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La Cache, our two bedroom gîte is now available for booking. Overlooking the meadow and woodland, it's a peaceful spot with a terrace to watch the sun set over the neighbouring vines.



Winter planting

We have planted some fruit and nut trees including apple, pear, almond and apricot, and are developing an area as a mini forest garden. The overgrown fig, and huge bay tree have now been pruned. We plan to add more edible plants and herbs, as well as wildlife friendly species. A eucalyptus has been planted for Jackie to use for eco printing.

Renovations

The process of painting shutters and doors continues, however many of them are past their useful life so are needing to be replaced. We have been busy working together to improve the exterior aesthetics, utilising the original fittings where possible.



Potager

Our potager plot has been extended. We were lucky to source a supply of horse manure which has enabled further 'no-dig' beds to be created. The challenge this year again is likely to be the water supply. Following over a month with no rain this winter, it is likely restrictions will be put in place. We're looking at further ways to capture and store rainwater.



Le Petit Chat



Monsieur Ferguson, aka 'Olliver' continues to amaze us with his recovery and spirit of adventure. He follows us around, supervising much of the works, unless of course he is asleep in front of the fire. He has been with us over 6 months now, and is loving life.



Winter Snow

We had a couple of flutters of snow this year which is quite a rarity here. Whilst very pretty it caused some damage and a little remedial work was needed to remove overhanging branches.



Our neighbours...



Time out...

We have been in the UK a fair amount this Winter for family reasons, but when time has allowed we have enjoyed local walks and visits. This was a beautiful morning at the blue lakes, Guizengeard.



We visited the stunning subterranean church of Saint-Jean at Aubeterre. Carved into the rock in the seventh century, it is one of the largest churches of this type in Europe. Well worth a visit, and Aubeterre itself is a pretty little town.

Fishing...



Mark was delighted that a fishing lake has opened nearby. It offers day tickets on a 2.5 acre lake for a relaxing day fishing a well stocked lake. He's yet to test out the golf course but that may be next...

Thank you for reading!
Mark & Jackie

