

# Charming Berry

press pack



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**Berry**  
province



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# THE BERRY,

## Hints and whispers of a secret place

To the south west of the Centre-Val de Loire region and at the very heart of France, flourishes a verdant and bucolic destination: the Berry. Without natural boundaries, the departements created by Napoleon cut it in two. The departmental tourist authorities of the Cher and the Indre have decided to help discover the Berry in its integrity, with aim to develop tourism with a human face.

The lakes and forests of the Brenne, the meandering valley of the Creuse, the arid hills which produce the wines of Sancerre, picturesque small towns, a unique history, artists, porcelain manufacturers, wine makers, writers such as George Sand and Alain-Fournier, Impressionists delighting in the quality of its light... all have together modelled the character of the Berry inhabitants, the heirs of this tradition of good living, still at the heart of their unspoilt natural haven.

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# BERRY

## REMARKABLE GARDENS



Jardins du Prieuré d'Orsan © P. Régnier / ADT18



© E. Morichon / CDT36



Jardins du Château de Bouges © J.F. Hellio & N. Van Ingen

Range from the traditional French style of very formal bedding schemes surrounding chateaux to smaller more relaxed planty schemes, Berry Secret gardens are displaying natural beauty. From an artistic garden to medieval and romantic natural settings, Secret gardens offer panoramic views of a generous nature combined with the inspiration and imagination of the gardens' owners.

Berry Secret gardens are enjoying an excellent reputation, maintained by passionate gardeners. 7 gardens are considered "Remarkable" by the Ministry of Culture and Communication for their inventive and daring green settings. Nature lovers will enjoy unique places, alive with music and events all year round: horticultural and botanical events, plant markets, exhibitions, celebrations, classic and jazz concerts...

Gardens of the Château d'Ainay-le-Vieil

Floral Park of Apremont-sur-Allier

Gardens of Prieuré Notre-Dame d'Orsan

Gardens of Drulon

Gardens of the Château d'Azay-le-Ferron

The Garden of George Sand's estate

Gardens of the Château de Bouges



Jardins du Prieuré d'Orsan © P. Régnier / ADT18

Château d'Ainay-le-Vieil © R. Lacroix



Apremont-sur-Allier © R. Lacroix

## Gardens of the Château d'Ainay-le-Vieil

Following a tempest in 1984 part of the park surrounding the Château d'Ainay-le-Vieil was turned into a rose garden in the style of 17th century gardens. This rose garden now contains around 180 varieties and traces the steps leading to today's modern roses from the early work to produce new rose cultivars. Following this success the owners turned their attention to the four chartreuses (walled gardens) and each of these were planted with a different theme. There is a fruit garden, a herb garden, a garden devoted to meditation and a white garden.

## Floral Park of Apremont-sur-Allier

The garden opens on huge lime trees, elegant cottages and the magical White Garden inspired by Sissinghurst, in England. A cascade of falls in series of joint lakes and ponds. In May, the air is fragrant with white and blue Wisteria japonica. By the riverside of Allier, overhung by the castle, the floral park, created nearly half a century ago by Gilles de Brissac, is an astonishing discovery.

## Gardens of Prieuré Notre-Dame d'Orsan

The Orsan priory was established in 1107 by Robert d'Arbrissel as an off-shoot of the Abbey of Fontevraud. The Orsan gardens are a true architectural gem inspired by medieval tapestries and illuminations. These twelve enclosed gardens combine landscape creation and organic crop production.

## Gardens of Drulon

Six beautiful gardens and an exciting path through the rich Berry landscape are forming the exceptional background of an exhibition of contemporary art renewed each year. A stunning collection of tree peonies, roses, hemerocallis and dahlias. Interesting from spring up to fall.



Jardins de Drulon © Carla Rump



Château de Bouges © Hellio & Van Ingen



Jardins du Domaine de George Sand © Hellio & Van Ingen



Château d'Azay-le-Ferron © Hellio & Van Ingen

## Gardens of the Château d'Azay-le-Ferron

Listed Remarkable Garden in 2010, the park of Azay-le-Ferron Castle is a romantic green setting. It was designed in 1856 by the Bühler brothers, renowned landscape gardeners of the time, on demand of the owners. While strolling within its 18 hectares, the visitor will discover at the turns of the paths, the harmony and the botanic treasure of the park, rose gardens of over 300 rosebushes, a reputed collection of sculpted yews of which shapes are suggestive of chess pieces, the tree track, an initiatory walk to botanical that uncovers remarkable trees (oak, cedar, sequoia, maple, thula,...), a collection of fruit-trees constituted by rare and old variety (more than 300 fruit-trees distributed on several orchard).

## Gardens of the Château de Bouges

French-style gardens, a flower garden, a large exotic garden and an English-style park, Bouges displays diversity rich in discovery. The Château of Bouges, built around 1765 with a rigorously classical balance, unmistakably evokes the Petit Trianon de Versailles. In the immediate surroundings of the château, the French-style gardens stretch out, restructured in the last century by the famous landscape gardener, Achille Duchêne ; borders of boxwood and yew trees pruned into cone shapes, surrounded by a double line of lime trees. The flower garden is situated not far from the château, and has been listed as a "remarkable garden" since 2004. Beyond, the informal land-scaped park consisting of rare tree species stretches out over 80 hectares.

## Gardens of the George Sand's House

"The Black Valley" is for George Sand an inexhaustible source of inspiration. Upon death of her grandmother, Aurore Dupin (George Sand future) receives an inheritance. Beautiful mansion surrounded by a park and gardens where the novelist liked to stroll. As well as her passion for writing, she was an extremely keen gardener. Nohant is also a place of inspiration for many artists: Balzac, Dumas son, Chopin, Delacroix, Flaubert... George Sand died in 1876, she lies on the edge of the garden, in the private cemetery of the family, not far from the two big cedar trees symbolising the birth of her children.

# THE UNSPOILT NATURE OF THE BERRY

## BIRDWATCHING AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES IN BRENNE



Guifette Moustac © Helliö & Van Ingen



Observation © Helliö & Van Ingen

At the limit of the Berry, the Brenne Parc naturel régional covers some 166 000 hectares. Its creation in 1989 has permitted the protection and promotion of this internationally renowned wetland area, home to a rare flora and fauna and famous for its 3000 or so 'fishponds'. The Brenne is a patchwork of many different habitats: meadows, hedgerows, lowland heath, woodland and many lakes. Some three hundred species of bird have been observed in the Brenne such as black-necked grebe, little bittern, cattle egret, black kite and whiskered terns... Many plant species including 36 orchid species (among them its very own Brenne orchid), rare butterflies, species of dragonflies and other insects and a large population of European Pond Tortoise can be observed. At the Le Bouchet Visitor Centre (in Rosnay), slide shows, guided visits and nature trails organised from spring up to fall, allow the visitor to explore the wealth of the region. A friendly warm welcome awaits the visitor with a tasting area for trying local products. A visit to the Maison de la Nature in Saint-Michel-en-Brenne completes the exploration of the natural surroundings and their wildlife.

On foot, on horseback or on mountain bike, the Brenne satisfies people who can't sit still. Botanists, bird watchers, wildlife photographers and more generally nature lovers will be overwhelmed by this huge, natural, magically-coloured mosaic of water and forest. The Brenne Parc naturel régional puts green values into tourism. First-class accommodations await visitors for a rest.

### More than 1000 thousand animals in a preserved area

Nearby, in the Haute-Touche Park, more than a thousand animals roam freely within the 180 hectares available to them. Three and a half kilometres of footpaths offer superb opportunities to observe wolf, wild boar, llama, zebra, yak, bison and antelope. The fauna is completed by a rare collection of deer as well as forty species of bird. The reserve is home to many threatened species that can be observed on foot or by bike through the park paths.



Réserve de la Haute-Touche © Helliö & Van Ingen

## THE SWAMPS OF BOURGES



Marais de Bourges © R. Lacroix



Marais de Bourges © R. Lacroix

At the very heart of the city, the swamps of Bourges constitute an enclave of 135 hectares of urban farming dating from the 12th century. The city of Avaricum was built on a promontary surrounded by swamps, which were used as natural fortification. In the 12th century, Carmelite Order, who owned some plots, began to clean these « foul and dangerous » greenfiled areas, to install mills instead. In 1618, the city, in need of grants, sold part of the marshes to a syndicate of land owners. Canals were built to clear land for farming. Gardening became the main activity which intensified until the 19th century. In the last century, with the profound lifestyle change, market gardening was slowly destined to disappear. Nowadays, gardening activity is recovering thanks to home gardeners. The swamps of Bourges have an excellent reputation thanks to the « Natural Heritage » classification (since 2003) that passionate gardeners help to maintain. These greenfiled areas are quite unique. Each garden has a specific setting, despite the graceful harmony of the place. Leeks, cabbage, carrots and beets are raised there in perfect order. Flowers and vegetables are mixed in an original and fanciful way. Wooden sheds, carefully surrounded by flowers, give to this green paradise a lively atmosphere.

## BIKING THE LOIRE RIVER

"La Loire à Vélo" is an itinerary that is being built section by section and which now covers about 800 km alongside the Loire and its tributaries. This cycling track can be use in full thanks to guidebooks, linking Cuffy (in Cher) to St Brévin-les-Pins (in Loire-Atlantique). In the Cher department, the itinerary is complete and starts at the Le Guétin canal bridge, near Le Bec d'Allier in the commune of Cuffy. A branch to La Guerche sur l'Aubois and its railway station and to Apremont sur Allier, ranked as one of the most beautiful villages in France, has been included. Cycling the Loire in the Cher department is a great occasion to discover beautiful features of the Loire Valley region : vineyards of Sancerre, châteaux and cultural heritage sites, beautiful natural landscapes and the delights of the Berry gastronomy.



Loire à vélo © Caféine

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS



© Hellio & Van Ingen



© Aéroclub d'Issoudun



Golf de Sancerre © R. Lacroix

In the Berry, all leisure activities are available from the more traditional to the most modern and exciting - from bathing to climbing, water-skiing to parachuting, kayak to bungee jumping, horse-riding to golf.

With more than 7 000 km of way marked footpaths, the Berry is ideal for walkers and countryside lovers. Villages, crosses and fountains in the little hamlets along the way, forests, valleys, lakes, fields are just some of the delights that await the visitor. All areas show the itineraries open to access by foot, mountain bike and horse-riding. There are numerous annual ramblers' events like the 56km hike from Bourges to Sancerre or the Brenne ramble in which hundreds participate on foot, on bike, on horseback or in pony-traps.

Between the lakes of the upper Brenne and, to the South, the wooded valleys of the lower Brenne, the Creuse carves its impetuous course through steep rocks, relaxing here and there before once more transforming itself into rushing rapids. Wild and enclosed, the Creuse valley offers an enormous range of water sports such as fishing, canoeing, sailing and wind surfing, as well as more extreme sports such as climbing, potholing and parachuting. Walkers will find magnificent landscapes whilst the meditative soul will succumb to the picturesque charms of a river which still captivates many artists.

The Berry reserves a green paradise for golfers (both beginners and experienced players) at, for example, the Nançay golf course, the Sancerre course at Saint-Satur running alongside the Loire, Villedieu by the side of the Trégonce, the Domaine des Dryades in George Sand country and others including Bourges, Vierzon, and Les Sarrays at Issoudun.

# A FRENCH WAY OF LIFE



The land and gastronomy are at the heart of this region and its traditions. Due to the large amount of products available, dishes in the Berry are prepared with appeal and generosity including a wealth of specialities. As a starter the potato galette, the Pâté de Pâques and the citrouillat - puff pastry filled with pumpkin, are very traditional. Then, after a first class river fish cooked in Reuilly, one can try the Berry's typical dish, the "poulet en barbouille", Berry black chicken roasted in red wine with pearl onions and lardons. The Berry green lentil is a genuine local product. Its specific chustness-like flavour was recognised in 1996 by a "Red Label" classification. For dessert, one might choose between the Cher black cherry custard, an apple gougère from the Brenne or the divine poirat, made with local pears.

## A TASTE FOR GOAT'S CHEESE

The highlight of the Berry gastronomic tradition can be found in the breadth of flavours of goat's cheeses from Valençay, Chavignol and Pouligny-Saint-Pierre.

The A.O.C. of Chavignol produces a very celebrated goats' cheese crottin. Pouligny-Saint-Pierre and Valençay also form part of the culinary heritage and their cheeses owe their unique flavours to the local breed of red goats, the richness of the pastures and the skills of the cheese-makers. According to local legend, Valençay goats' cheese was traditionally shaped in the form of a pointed pyramid, like its cousin from Pouligny-Saint-Pierre still is today. Monsieur de Talleyrand, who attached great importance to the quality



Valençay & Pouligny Saint-Pierre © AB photo-graphiste

of his table and personally supervised the dishes served, was expecting a visit from Napoleon returning from his disastrous campaign in Egypt. Upon making a final inspection of the larder, the Prince noticed the cheese board. At the sight of these pretty ash-coated pyramids, his diplomatic heart skipped a beat. So as not to darken the mood of the emperor he drew out his sabre and chopped off their tops – forever.



Vignobles de Sancerre © P. Régnier / ADT18



Vins du Centre Loire © Studio Pixel

## THE VINEYARDS OF CENTRE-LOIRE

On this ensemble of flavours play the harmonies of the vineyards of Centre-Loire: Sancerre, Menetou-Salon, Quincy, Reuilly, Châteaumeillant and somewhere on the way, the Valençay. Winemaking in Berry developed around the 12th century thanks to the number of priories which furthered the culture of the wine. Today, Sancerre, to name but one, is known throughout the world. These elegant wines draw their character from the flinty and chalky Berry soils. Their depth of personality is a result of restricting yields and careful selection of the grapes. The Sauvignon, a variety celebrated for its richness is the only grape used for the white wines of Sancerre, Menetou-Salon, Quincy and Reuilly, all of which are AOC classed areas. White wine represents about 85% of production. The region's second grape, though not indigenous, is the Pinot Noir used to produce reds and rosés in Sancerre, Menetou-Salon and Reuilly, although some of the delicate Pinot Gris is also grown in the latter. The Gamay is the starting point for the wines of Châteaumeillant, whilst Cabernet Pinot Noir is used for the winemaking of Valençay.

## THE BERRY SWEETENED SPECIALITIES



Spécialités sucrées du Berry © Studio Pixel

The Berry "savoir-faire" is also in hand-made sweetened specialties. Georges Forest, a talented confectioner from the Berry, invented the first filled sweet in the world in 1879. Crunchy and soft at the same time, he christened it the «forestine». At the heart of the old town of Bourges, La Maison des Forestines opened its doors in 1884. Another sweet delicacy of the Berry are the sablés de Nançay, little pure-butter shortbreads. Finally, the Croquets de Chârost, delicious almond biscuits, are typical of the Berry as are the famous massepains d'Issoudun, Balzac's favourite dessert. All these specialties can be savoured with Monin range of liqueurs. After discovering transatlantic cocktails, Georges Monin developed a new style of spirit to be drunk on the rocks in the American fashion. Far from being traditional liqueurs, they are highly original and distinctive, distilled from lime zest and tropical plants - so original that they remain unique and unchanged.

Berry region is full of ancient traditions and particular customs. These can be enjoyed at the many local fairs and markets that go on, particularly in the summer.

# THE LIVING HERITAGE OF THE BERRY

## AN ARTISTIC AND LITERARY HERITAGE



Ecole du Grand Meaulnes © R. Lacroix



Lecture chez George Sand © Helligo & Van Ingen

### George Sand's House

Aurore Dupin, better known by the name of George Sand, inherited the Château de Nohant in 1821, after the death of her grandmother. In 1822 she married Baron Casimir Dudevant and had two children, Maurice and Solange. She started work as a journalist with the Figaro in Paris in 1831, after separating from her husband. Aurore Dupin became George Sand in 1832, a pseudonym she owed to one of her lovers, Jules Sandeau. Her first novel "Indiana" was greeted with success and started her literary career, opening the way to the great literary circles and salons. In her novels, she expressed the enduring love she felt for the lower Berry with its dark valleys and violet woodlands. George Sand was an original personality, audacious, a woman of letters, of politics, generous, feminist, ecologist, independent and rebellious to the end. In the Château de Nohant, a delightful country residence, little has changed since the time when George Sand entertained Chopin, Balzac, Delacroix, Flaubert and Liszt. All together show the Berry at its most romantic. Her study, her boudoir and her bedroom all celebrate her memory, as do the grounds where she was laid to rest in the small family cemetery. The George Sand's estate is open to visitors all year round. A tea room await visitors for a lunchbreak.



Maison de George Sand © Helligo & Van Ingen

### Epineuil-le-Fleuriel, the schoolhouse of the Grand Meaulnes

With its desks, blackboards, wood-burning stoves, morality panels and violet ink, the school at Epineuil-le-Fleuriel hasn't changed since the arrival of its pupil Henri Alban-Fournier, alias Alain-Fournier. It was in this long red house clad in Virginia creeper, similar to that described in his novel, "where the most tormented and cherished days of his life flowed by". In 1905 the brief vision of a young girl inflamed his imagination and was later immortalised in his only literary work, Le Grand Meaulnes was published in 1913 and became an immediate success. A year later its author died whilst on military patrol. A visit to the school-museum at Epineuil-le-Fleuriel takes the visitor back to the time that inspired one of the most celebrated french novelist.

## Jacques Tati and Sainte-Sévère, a truly long-term friendly story



Maison de Jour de Fête © Helligo & Van Ingen

The celebrated film “Jour de Fête” by Jacques Tati was shot at Sainte Sévère, a pretty village in the Berry region. As a refugee, Tati settled nearby on a farm during the World War II. He promised the inhabitants to return and shoot his first feature, launching Tati's international reputation. The house of “Jour de Fête” takes the visitor back in 1947 to the village of Sainte-Sévère, transformed at the time by the arrival of a film crew for the shooting of “Jour de Fête”. Visitors will go over the event through the look of a child who retained the shooting memories by filming them with a coffee mill. To be seen with

family, 3D projections, film set, sounds, special effects offer 70 minutes of laughter and thrills. English versions of audioguides take visitors through the town and different filming locations.

## CHÂTEAUX AND RESIDENCIES OF GREAT MEN

### Valençay Château, a Loire Château in Berry



Dramatically overhanging its pretty town on the banks of the Nahon, the Château of Valençay guards the secret memories of its illustrious former occupant: Monsieur de Talleyrand. Its architecture elegantly blends all styles from the Renaissance to the 19th century. In any of the hundred rooms of the château—all furnished in a remarkable fashion from the Regency period, Louis XVI and Empire Style, one can imagine the splendour of the great receptions held “au château” by this intellectual eminence conceiving the Europe of Nations.

Charles Talleyrand, diplomat and visionary, Minister and Emperor Napoléon’s councillor, welcomed all the political greats, foreign diplomats and influential women from court in this wonderful setting. The château, one of the largest in France, would appear from its Renaissance style and magnificence, to have been inspired by that at Chambord, its royal neighbour. Its regal dimensions did not alter the finesse of its detail. Nowadays the huge, English-style gardens play host to many animations and attractions : «La Forêt des Princes» is a one-way circuit of 4 km all around the park. Using electric cars the visitor can discover unusual and delightful places around the historic castle. «Le Jardin d’Antonin» is a 600 m<sup>2</sup> gardens with more than 300 species of culinary herbs, the visitor has fun trying to guess all the scents. Twice a year, Valençay greets the visitor with its 3 000 candlelights as night falls. Throughout summer, pageants are a wonderful way to discover the castle in its most beautiful settings.

## La Route Jacques Coeur, bringing châteaux to life



© Château de la Verrerie - Route Jacques Coeur Château de Culan - Route Jacques Coeur © P. Régnier

Born around 1400, Jacques Coeur, a small merchant, became, within the space of ten years, a major international trader. He dealt in spices, silk and arms with the countries of the Middle East and Northern Europe. He also became the Finance Minister of King Charles VII who eventually took umbrage at the extent of his powers. Thus Jacques Coeur fell into disgrace and all his belongings were confiscated. The Jacques Coeur Palace, which he had had built for his personal use, remains the jewel in the crown of Berry monuments. In memory of this illustrious ancestor, this route brings together 18 different sites and monuments (privately-owned châteaux, museums, ancient historical sites, abbey...) from which Aubigny-sur-Nère village and Château de la Verrerie are notable for their ties with the ancient kingdom of Scotland.

## HISTORIC TOWNS AND « MOST BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES »

The Indre and Berry are both dotted with interesting and lively market towns and picturesque villages, with ancient Romanesque architecture in their churches, abbeys and bridges.

### Bourges, a wealth of history in the capital of the Berry

Dominating the town and its marshlands, the majestic Saint Etienne Cathedral has been on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites since December 1992 for its unique architecture. Capital of France during the time of Charles VII, Bourges became a busy commercial center in the 15th century and was graced with the elegant Palace of Jacques Coeur, one of the most beautiful privately-owned French stately homes of the 15th century. Five free-entry museums, the Hôtel Lallement, the Museum of the Best Artisans of France, the Estève Museum, the Berry Museum, and the Schoolhouse Museum, provide ample opportunities for discovering the rich history of the province. A city of light and music, Bourges puts on three grand annual pageants : le Printemps de Bourges, the «Summer in Bourges», and the «Illuminated Nights», a magnificent sound and light circuit that combines culture, tourism, and heritage.



Vieille ville de Bourges © JC Pinheiro



Cathédrale de Bourges © P. Régnier / ADT18



Gargilesse © Hellio & Van Ingen



Saint-Benoît-du-Sault © Hellio & Van Ingen



Apremont-sur-Allier ©R. Lacroix

### Gargilesse-Dampierre, George Sand's "little Switzerland"

This Berry village - that George Sand was so fond of has played host to many painters all of whom were charmed by the romantic sight of its steeply-roofed houses, clustered harmoniously around the Romanesque church and the castle. The Villa Algira is the tiny house that George Sand used as a place of rest and inspiration. Rated amongst the hundred most beautiful villages in France, Gargilesse still enjoys a wealth of cultural events today that take place in a welcoming, easygoing atmosphere.

### Saint-Benoît-du-Sault, a charming medieval city

The little medieval city is perched on a rocky outcrop. It owes its name to the Benedictine priory that was founded here in the 10th century. A tangle of narrow, sometimes sloping alleys tempt the visitor to explore this village that seems as if it has strayed from the Middle Ages. Solid ramparts encircle this old town and its half-timbered houses. Enter a fortified door near the bell-tower to see the church, apse and nave dating back to the 11th century. 15th and 16th century houses with sculpted doors and windows show the city's prosperity.

### Apremont-sur-Allier, a picturesque village surrounded by flowers

Situated on the west bank of the river Allier, Apremont-sur-Allier is considered one of the most beautiful villages of France. The castle became a fortress in the Middle Ages to defend a strategic position on the Allier river and to get a fare from travellers who crossed. Eugène Schneider, the successful entrepreneur renovated his wife's native village in the medieval local style in the 19th century. The old fortress still maintains five of its 12 or 14 original towers, as well as walls. The castle is surrounded by a flower park in the English style. The garden is notorious for its Chinese bridge and its Turkish pavilion. In the village the Boatmen's House is located at the place of the old harbour where quarry stones were shipped for the Loire chateaux.

# PRINCIPAL EVENTS

## MUSIC IN BERRY



© F. Legris Spelle



From spring to autumn, the Berry abound in music festivals, celebrating Chopin to Tchaikovsky and Liszt. The festival programmes are rich and varied, designed and produced to take the audience deep into the heart of the world's best-loved classical music.

### **Musical Summer at Noirlac**

In the superb Cistercian abbey, a spiritually vibrant festival.

### **The Festival of Boucard**

30 years on and still providing sheer pleasure in the barn of this medieval château.

### **The Romanesque Churches Festival**

Impromptu and authentic, a string of concerts with irresistible acoustic qualities.

### **«Les Très Riches Heures» of Organ in the Berry**

For 11 years now Bourges cathedral has played host to the masters of this fabulous instrument.

### **Nohant Festival**

A unique international festival that celebrates the complete works of Frederic Chopin. Many of them were composed in Nohant, by the side of George Sand. The pieces will be performed both on a period and contemporary piano.

### **Musical Encounters at the Abbey of Prée**

An initiative of the musicians in residence, works of classical and contemporary chamber music.

### **The Gargillesse International Harp Festival**

The beautiful Romanesque church at Gargillesse is home each year to the harp festival.

## Lisztomanias

A packed programme of meetings, schools of music, impromptu performances and concerts – all in homage to Liszt, the grand master of romantic music.

## Festival de la Voix

Each year, Châteauroux plays host to choral song and takes on an international outlook with artists from all over Europe.

## August in music at Ainay-le-Vieil Château

From jazz to chamber music, the festival is a friendly moment around the wonderful Château of Ainay-le-Vieil, one of the steps of the famous Route Jacques Coeur.

## OTHERS EVENTS



Printemps de Bourges © P. Régnier / ADT18

## Printemps de Bourges

Every French song has been sung in Bourges and a lot of new talent discovered. In thirty years, the Printemps de Bourges has become a real institution. Today it is one of the most important festivals of French and European song.

## International Gathering of Luthiers

This festival is the unmissable date for all lovers of instruments and traditional music. During the day, the visitor can enjoy the Ars Château Park and visit some 130 stringed instrument makers' stands on display and listen to the many different types of music. As night falls, the stage is home to an international performance. Specially constructed wooden floors around the château resonate with the sound of dancing.



Festival des luthiers © E. Morichon / CDT36



© Stage et Festival DARC

## DARC Festival

DARC – an acronym for Dance, Art, Rhythm and Creation – attracts hundred of participants from the whole world and thousands of enthusiastic spectators each year. This event allies dance workshops for every level with public concerts.

# PLACES TO STAY IN THE BERRY

## SAINT-VICTOR LA GRAND' MAISON



© S. Demoget / CDT36

Situated on the top of a wooded hillside, overlooking the steep valley of the Anglin, in the Brenne natural regional park, the manor and its outbuildings (4 cottages) combine the elegance of a 12 hectares protected area with the generosity and creativity of its owners. The St Victor Grand'Maison integrates local initiatives, artisans and farmers who feed an authentic lifestyle. Fresh and local products are served for breakfast or in lunch packs highlighting the quality of regional products. The owners help create a personalized stays around a theme and linked to the discovery of the Berry (history, antique chasing, fooding, painting, gardening, cooking...on request). Activities around the property are numerous: canoeing, fishing, Nordic walking, golf, hunting, horse-riding, cycling, bird watching... [www.saintvictorlagrandmaison.fr](http://www.saintvictorlagrandmaison.fr)

## CHÂTEAU CHARLY

Very close to the attractive hilltop town of Sancerre, Chateau Charly offers its guests 5 luxury bedroom suites on a Bed & Breakfast with evening meals by arrangement. The guests will appreciate the timeless elegance of a bygone age subtly blended with antiques and contemporary furnishings, encompassed by the comforts of modern living. The aim of Château Charly is to be as green, self sustaining and environmentally friendly as possible. The Chateau is heated and using the very latest in green renewable technology. **A new experience** : the owner



© Château Charly

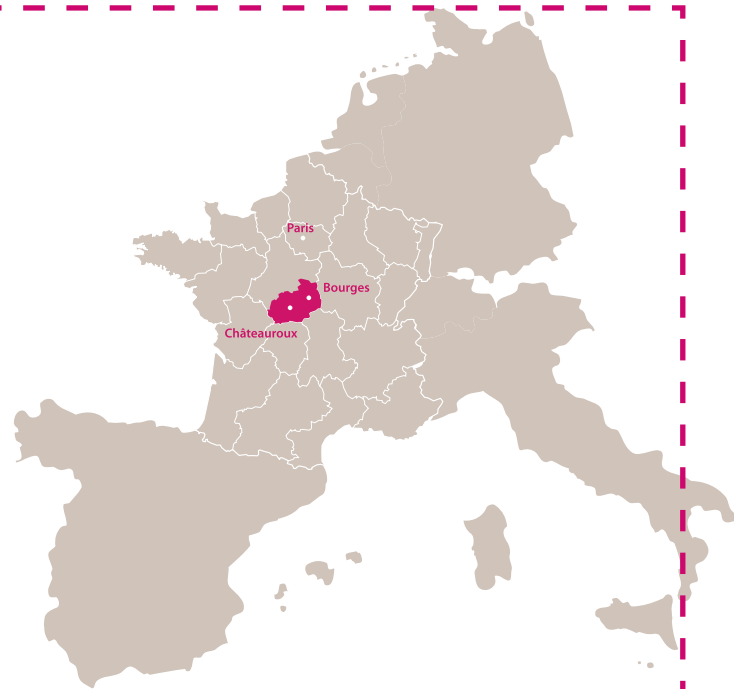
of Château Charly is offering what he believes to be a truly unique opportunity. The guest decide for himself the value of his luxury stay in the Chateau. This concept will benefit 2 chosen charities as 100% of the amount the guest decides to pay for Bed & Breakfast will be passed over by the owner.

[www.chateaucharly.com](http://www.chateaucharly.com)

# COMING TO BERRY

The easiest way is to fly to Paris, then use the train from Paris-Austerlitz to Châteauroux or Bourges (2 hours by train). There are low cost flights to either Tours or Poitiers and to Limoges from a choice of airports in Britain. It is then possible to do the rest of the journey with a hire car

**Road access:** It's an easy drive using the motorways: A10 – A71 – A20



# YOUR REPORTS

The Berry will be happy to invite you to discover its great countrysides, wildlife, castles, unique sites and a warm and enthusiastic welcoming.

We remain at your service to :

- help you in choosing relevant subjects for reporting
- propose you press trips on specific thematics
- give you financial support for a press trip in our region (accomodation, food, transport...)
- provide you any additionnal information you might need

You can join us on [www.berryprovince.com](http://www.berryprovince.com).

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