

Dear friends, dear guests,

As you already know, this newsletter starts the booking schedule for Emmanuelle. I know that you will be indulgent and accommodating because every year, it is a real headache for her to place you as best as possible and in accordance with your wishes. As you also know, priority for dates and places goes to our regulars according to their seniority, but this, until January 30, 2025. After this date, available locations are allocated as and when requested, as in all campsites.

This is the way we have chosen to thank you for your loyalty and friendship.

You may be surprised by the early arrival of our newsletter this year and the deadline of January 30, the last deadline to guarantee priority in the choice of places and periods of stay to our most loyal guests. Indeed, we are certainly two weeks ahead if we compare to previous years, but Emmanuelle and I made this choice because since the beginning of November we have been receiving a lot of reservation requests. More than in previous years. Many new families who do not always understand why our reservation schedule is not open and seem surprised or even shocked when we ask them to come back to us at the beginning of next year. Some have also booked in other establishments and do not hesitate to let us know ... That's how it is, we will not die from it!

A quick word on the 2024 season. We have found a summer climate similar to that of 15 or 20 years ago, with regular rain throughout the season, without extreme temperatures. Nature has particularly appreciated ... probably more than our guests.

We all know that a summer like this is the exception because the rule tends more towards summers without rain and with high temperatures. The attendance was good from start to finish. We always find you with pleasure and emotion and, as every year, Emmanuelle and I have once again made new beautiful encounters.

The end of the season was special with the announcement of the last themed week. Yes, age is there, and despite the pleasure of sharing, conviviality, discovery that characterize these very special stays, we were increasingly suffering from the fatigue of the end of the season and felt our motivation drop ... slowly, but surely. We all know that when we are there, it is better to say stop before this "drop in speed" is visible or felt by our guests ...

Our two lodges and our apartments have been well rented with unfortunately two cancellations and we

have a sweet thought for our friends who had to cancel, not without regret and sadness, their stays.

What's new in Montrouant?

November has passed, without drama this time. Our respective families are doing well. Mom is still in good shape despite her 92 years, she rakes the dead leaves and tracks down the last brambles or weeds that escaped her last summer. The children are doing very well and continue to enjoy their work, which is not without importance, as you know.

The four of us were in Scotland at the end of October - beginning of November ... and it was a beautiful and rich experience. I always have a hard time leaving Montrouant but I do not regret my stay there. Two things particularly touched us during this trip:

the kindness of the population

the beauty of the landscapes, vast, harsh, wild but so endearing

The only small downside is the quality of the food. As French people from the Burgundy countryside we think that there is a little effort to be made there ...

An important piece of information that I must develop here is the reduction in our number of pitches. For some of you this is not a scoop, we were already talking about it last season. Because to keep intact these little sparks, these little heartbeats that we feel when we find you in Montrouant, to preserve this pleasure of contact, this warm atmosphere when we serve you chicken, pizzas, quiches or fries

under the marquee, we have to reduce our quota of hours worked a little and this necessarily involves the removal of a few pitches. Emmanuelle and I have therefore removed three pitches, bringing our capacity from 40 to 37 pitches. These are pitches no. 1, no. 6 and no. 11. You have understood that this decision radically changes the numbering of the pitches of the entire campsite and for those of you who have become loyal, over the years, to the same pitch, you will have to be particularly careful when making your reservation. At the end of the letter you will find two plans, summarily drawn, one for 2024 and the other for 2025, who will help you in your choice. Emmanuelle, who knows your habits well, will also be happy to help you.

As for the beer, I think that our campers from the first half of the season appreciated it because everything was drunk very quickly. It is true that the quantity was not sufficient. The good news is that we have found the solution to our acidity problems due to the lactic bacteria in the wine that contaminated the vats and beer bottles before filling. With Marco's experience and Graeme's expert advice, I think that 2025 will be the year of beer in Montrouant!

Especially since we will not have any wine next year. Most of you already know that the vines suffered severe frosts last April and we were unable to harvest! Things will be better next year. I only have 400 liters of white wine left in the vat, the equivalent of 500 bottles, and I admit I don't know how and when to offer them...

The young Floréal (white grape) plantation is doing well, it will require a lot of weeding work because this year the grass has not stopped growing, but I am impatiently waiting for the first harvest, in 2027, because the two white wines from Floréal that I had the opportunity to taste really pleased me with aromas of Sauvignon and a zest of exotic fruit!

We start again next March 2025 the truffle tree plantations interrupted this year by the planting of vines. Another four or five years before the discovery of the first truffles? Maybe less, certainly more... we will see... in any case the trees are growing nicely!

The draining of the pond was again quick this year. We emptied it in four times. We fished 240 beautiful zanders from 1 summer old of 20 to 25 cm. It is particularly rare to have such a size after only a few months of growth ... we should have had three times more instead of the 1450 small zanders of 8 to 10 cm, difficult to sell because too fragile. The black bass spawning was poor again this year with 160 specimens of a size ranging from 8 to 16 cm. The good surprise came from the carp, whose stock is slowly rebuilding with 60 beautiful specimens (one of them weighs 25 kg) and the tench which have grown particularly well, the algae that developed in the pond this summer must have something to do with it. They greatly favored the spawning of the tench because we found a lot of small tenchons, fish preferred by the zanders. The negative side of these "weeds" is that they do not favor, far from it, fishing with a line. There will be less next year because my neighbor on the other side of the lake no longer has manure to spread in the meadows overlooking the pond. It is the leaching by the rains, abundant last summer, which provided the nitrogen necessary for the growth of all these aquatic herbs. These plants also favored the development of crayfish, particularly numerous (perhaps too many) this year. That is the gist of it, friends.

Let us hope that the year 2025 that is coming up will be the year of the end of the war in Ukraine. Let us hope that Trump does not lose his cool too often and that the French will know how to come together to face the political and especially economic problems that await them ...

Let us end on pleasant notes.

Emmanuelle and I would like to thank those of you who send us these kind messages and these pretty cards that are so pleasant to read. The little attentions and the little gifts made during the summer

are always special moments for us when we look at them or taste them, in autumn and winter, because they remind us of your faces, your kindness and the good times spent together.

We wish you a sweet, peaceful and happy Christmas as well as the best for the year ahead, for you and those you love.

Kind regards to all,

Jean Mi