

The apartments:

This is my second time to stay in these apartments, June 2008 and Jan 2009. They are more than sufficient, are very comfortable and have all features you could possibly want, from en-suite to fully fitted kitchen. I have been in the summer, the bedrooms were cool and in the winter, the heating had to be turned down in the rooms. One apartment had a patio the other had a balcony. You should buy some breakfast foods, breads, cheeses and basics such as milk and coffee before you arrive, in case you decide to have a snack with your other apartment visitors or just a late night sitting outside.

I have stayed extensively in hotels for work purposes and avoid them if possible on holidays. These apartments are more relaxing and comfortable. They have the feel of home comforts but waking up in France!

In addition I believe if there is something that you do need I am sure the owners would provide it where possible.

Access:

The area is approx 1.5 – 2 hrs drive from the many airports and easy to get to. Aim for Ledignan on the map and you are practically there. For those who have not driven in France before it's easy. Take your time to get used to it. The roads are narrow and winding with plenty of roundabouts, but the road surface is great and easy to get around. The airports to check are Grenoble (3 hrs), Carcassonne (2 hrs – motorway) and Marseille (1.5 hrs motorway). I also arrived into Nice and drove the south coast (4 hours) but visited Monte Carlo etc. on the arrival day. You also have to pay tolls on the motorways, collect ticket on entry and pay on exit. The motorways are easy to navigate and from what I have experienced the French drivers are pleasant, safe and act by the rules of the road on these motorways. Also watch for the speed signs. There are cameras in areas which are signposted by large brown signs before you get to them.

The local area:

It is a country area, quite and relaxing. You will do some driving, as there are many local towns to visit. You will likely eat out for dinner each night, as food is very reasonable and very good. There is a local pub/ restaurant in nearby Saint-Jean-de-Serres run by Christian and Brigitte. They are very welcoming, helpful and the food is very good. They do great pizza in house and for take away. Christian is also a very helpful at teaching the odd French word or two. The pub is very sociable and the locals are very welcoming. The towns to visit are Sauve (atmosphere, restaurants and small food shops), Avignon (history and good restaurant near the castle with outside café), Ales for shops and general visit, Uzès for coffee shops, pasteries and the Saturday market. Carcassonne has an old centre part to it if you have time before the airport, and Grenoble is a large town. Visit Nice and Monte Carlo if possible.

Tips for the trip:

You have to hire a car. You should buy basic foods for the breakfast and snacks. You don't need household linens etc. Buy wine and beer in a shop before you get there. Bring a sat nav. if possible or buy a great map book of the area before you go. Bring your DVD's /CD's as the apartments are fully equipped. French is not essential but knowing some words is very helpful and makes life a bit easier. Don't be afraid to try it as most people are very helpful and they will also try to speak some English.

Overall I will be back to stay again for a few days. I like it there, plenty to do and see but relaxing and enjoyable.

Fearghal McHugh – January 2009