A Francophile’s guide to... Boston, Massachusetts

With its red-brick buildings and narrow, compact streets, the historic city of Boston is known for having a distinctively European air. Exploring the city you’ll find plenty of French links too, from elegant eateries to inspiring museum collections.

Art enthusiasts should head for Newbury Street where the aptly named Galerie d’Orsay (tel: (US) 617 266 8001, www.galerie-dorsay.com, pictured right) holds works by many French masters including Toulouse-Lautrec, Camille Pissarro, Édouard Manet and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. The Museum of Fine Arts (tel: (US) 617 267 9300, www.mfa.org) has a fine collection by the Impressionists, especially Claude Monet, and also stages a French film festival every July. For other Gallic events, the French Cultural Center (tel: (US) 617 912 0400, www.frenchculturalcenter.org) organises talks, exhibitions, language workshops and tastings.

Boston offers a French dining experience for every mood. The Petit Robert bistros (tel: (US) 617 737 1777, www.petitrobertbistro.com) share a jovial vibe for brunch or lunch while atmospheric Aquitaine (tel: (US) 617 424 8577, www.aquitaineboston.com) will transport you back to vintage Paris. For something special, try award-winning Menton in the Fort Point neighbourhood (tel: (US) 617 737 0099, http://mentonboston.com), or Mistral in the stylish South End (tel: (US) 617 867 9300, www.mistralbistro.com), both of which offer menus inspired by the South of France.

For French fashion, Newbury Street is where you’ll find ultra-luxe Chanel, Louis Vuitton and Hermès, or if it’s the French psyche you want to tap into, Schoenhof’s foreign bookshop has all the classic tomes (tel: (US) 617 547 8855, www.schoenhofs.com).

More information: www.bostonusa.com

Does your hometown have French connections? Tell us at editorial@francemag.com.

**PROVENCE**

The battery-powered Sun-e-Bikes make cycling through the hilltop villages of the Luberon and Alpilles a far less strenuous experience. Around 200 are available for hire in Bonnieux and Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. The bikes have 21 gears and the all-important motor is placed discreetly on the front wheel to help on those usually calf-burning hill-climbs.

Rental from €35 per day.

Tel: (Fr) 4 90 74 09 96/4 32 62 08 39 www.location-velo-provence.com

**CHAMPAGNE**

After a couple of flutes of local fizz, the last thing you want to do is exert yourself on a hill-climb. A better idea is to join the Bike About tour company and discover the rolling hills of Champagne by e-bike, visiting world-famous vineyards and villages, with stops along the way to meet producers and enjoy tastings. The day trip leaves from Paris and costs €135, including return train fare to Épernay, e-bike hire and guided cellar tours and tasting.

Tel: (Fr) 6 18 80 84 92 www.bikeabouttours.com

**SAVOIE**

You don’t have to be a Tour de France rider to tackle the Alpine cols. Hire one of six e-bike models from the vélostation at Chambéry and explore the vineyards and mountain scenery at speeds of up to 25km/h. Day hire from €6.

Tel: (Fr) 4 79 96 34 13 www.chambery-metropole.fr/83-velostation.htm

**LOIRE**

Make sure your cycling visit to château country, lives up to the stateliness of your surroundings with a trip with Inntravel, which has a six-night, e-bike itinerary around the villages and castles of the Loire’s Sologne area. Good hotels and luggage transfers make the trip an easy ride. Prices from €972.

Tel: (UK) 1653 617 001, www.inntravel.co.uk

**TAKING A RIDE ON AN ELECTRIC BIKE...**

(continued from previous page)