

# Intrepid and Zen...

Greetings from Troubadour Travel - Newsletter 2011

This year, 2011, saw us run two markedly different tours to my beloved Aquitaine.

In early July under a warm early summer sky an “Intrepid” tour took our youthful group, which included key players from a Golden Oldies hockey team, to the heart of Aquitaine. Full days of activities, from hiking in the lush Pyrenees to visiting the historical cities in Dordogne.

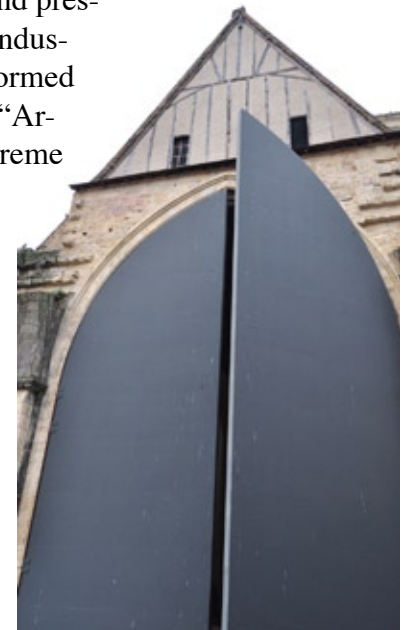
On our walk along a track, once cobbled by Napoleon, where even those with a modest step can easily straddle the border, one foot in France and one in Spain



A well earned break while exploring a gorge deep inside the Basque country

In Sarlat the fascinating blends of past and present. Behind the newly made dark steel industrial doors, a 15 century church is transformed into a covered market. Inscribed inside: “Architecture is a blend of nostalgia and extreme anticipation”.

Solange shops for our picnic lunch, selecting fresh fruit and regional cheeses.



*“Our chance to meet and talk to local people a real plus! Also the glimpse into their homes and lives, great. Many thanks to you both for your enthusiasm and passion for life, to be admired “*

- Lois and Ron

And drifting down the Vezere, where the forests and the many chateau give company to the hundreds of prehistoric sites that remained hidden in the valley for thousands of years.



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Our September tour was markedly different from the first, remaining peacefully in Labourd and lower Navarre. It was a period of rest and reflection, which included morning yoga sessions, afternoon discussions, and moments of contemplation in the rich Basque landscape, reflections about meaningful life and meaningful work. It was such a unique experience that in the early Pyrenean autumn Lani and I agreed to design future tours together, a blend of my established tours to Aquitaine and her workshops about business and wellbeing. (An introduction to Lani's work can be found at <http://holisticdevelopment.org.nz/>)

*Solange's knowledge of local customs added a lot of interest and her appreciation of good food which she shared so generously with us, added to our waistlines not hers! It was an unforgettable experience. - Ineke*

*Thank you for an amazing wining, dining and walking experience. Meeting your delightful French friends has been an added bonus. It has been a fulfilled adventure I'll remember forever. - Robin*

*Hope all is well with you and THANK YOU once again for paying such good attention to my personality and choosing such perfect things for me to do, places to go, food to eat etc. It was really very wonderful. - Lani*

### **Tour Dates for 2012**

Basque Country - Pyrenees, new "Intrepid" tour: June 16 - 22, starting and ending in St Jean de Luz. \$3500

Aquitaine - "Classic": June 23 - July 6, 14 days, starting St Jean de Luz and finishing in Bordeaux via Dordogne and St Emilion. \$8540

Aquitaine new "Intrepid" tour - June 23 - July 6, 14 days, starting St Jean de Luz and finishing in Bordeaux via Dordogne and St Emilion \$7000

Pays Basque "Intrepid"- September 15- 22, 8 days, starting and finishing in St. Jean de Luz. Where the mountains meet the sea, Soule, Labourd and Lower Navarre. \$4000

"Classic" tour available in September on demand.

Morocco Trekking Tour. Tours to Morocco and the Atlas Mountains are still available for 2012 - Dates and pricing for groups by negotiation only.

Are you a GROUP? Special group pricing available for all tours  
...and don't forget Solange also provides a design a tour service.

*We hope that this newsletter finds you in good health and spirits.*

*It is 15 years now that I have been enjoying sharing the culture of my beloved France (Aquitaine) with new found Kiwi friends. It is also a continuing adventure for me, my passion is still alive and will be so for years to come. If you know someone who may wish to join us, please let them know. My promise to them is to guide them on an "experience of a lifetime" ...*

*Amities, Solange*

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