

Newsletter autumn 2013

Dear guests of Chalet Solneige,

The summer season is really over now: we are in the Netherlands to enjoy our vacation, in the rainy and stormy weather!

It is time for our regular newsletter...

The summer season

This year our summer season started on the 7th of May and it ended on the 27th of October. For almost 6 months non-stop we have been busy with the chalet and hosting all our guests. A summer season with beautiful weather, however there was a layer of 20 cm of snow in the garden on the 25th of May. A summer with lots of visits from friends and acquaintances, many guests who came for the 2nd or 3rd time and fortunately also a lot of new guests.

With the great help of Claudia (chef) and Ysanne (sous-chef) in the kitchen, we have prepared a lot of dinners. It is such a luxury to have a graduate chef in the kitchen! We have had a real good time together, we even had time to make some nice trips together into the high mountains (see picture).



Activities



This summer we had some special events: of course the week of Alpe d'Huez (the sponsor tour for the Dutch cancer foundation). Once again a very special week with interesting stories of all our guests about their motivation to participate in this event.

Furthermore there were many sport events such as "la Marmotte cycle tour", 174 km of cycling over 5 cols (= ca. 5000 meters of climbing) in one day.

But most important the 100th version of the Tour de France. We hosted a big group of Australian cyclists who have cycled

parts of the route themselves. The climb of the Alpe d'Huez twice on the same day was, of course, very spectacular. We stood on the side of the road to cheer for the cyclists of the Tour.

As in previous years we welcomed besides cyclists also a lot of motorcyclists. They are always very enthusiastic about the wonderful tours that you can make from Vaujany. They often use Chalet Solneige as a starting point for tours in the French Alps.

Also the walkers have discovered Chalet Solneige. While some come for a one-day hike, others made a two- or three-day hikes to cabins like de refuge d'Etendard in the mountains.

New groups

This year we had a couple of family weeks. Besides the celebration of the 80th anniversary of Therese's father, we also had a family reunion of a Dutch-American family, with no less than three generations. It was a wonderful week, with short walks and long hikes, a picnic on the Alpe d'Huez and a BBQ in the garden.

Further we notice that the new ice rink attracts ice skaters from many other countries. This year we hosted guests from Luxembourg for a training camp of 2 weeks. At the end we were invited to come and see the results in their show.

Solneige trophy



Just like last year there was a competition for the Solneige trophy between the cyclists who visited Solneige and climbed the Alpe d'Huez. Pieter made a new ranking: (1% reduction on your time per year of above the age of 30). This caused lots of discussions and calculation at the dining table.

In the end, this year's winners are Matthijs Stam (NL) and Anders Norgaard Preisler (DK), with a time of 57 minutes; congratulations to both of you! You will receive the Solneige trophy soon.

Well and the ladies, how did they perform? This year there were a lot of women who took the challenge of the Alpe d'Huez. But apparently they did not consider the ascent as a contest and did not register their time. Our own daughter Yvonne registered the fastest time, however she is not joining the competition. But she will get a honourable distinction of course. Further we have to mention Claudia, the chef, who did the climb between preparing the dessert in the morning and the cooking in the afternoon (see photo), and Nikki, who climbed the Alpe d'Huez on that particular 25th of May in the snow!

Personal

This summer some changes took place in our private life. Most important were Karin's exams for her French baccalaureate (photo). In August she has moved to the city Maastricht, where she has started her study at University College Maastricht. Fifty percent of her fellow students are from abroad, she has friends from Australia, Norway, Egypt and Italy now.

Therese's favourite cat Lemon has disappeared since early summer, and despite a lot of searching she was not found. None the less we have a new cat: a real character that was found in Vaujany and was looking for a new home. It's a funny tomboy, which we named Genepi. With Yara, Minou and Genepi now we truly have a whole ménagerie.



Now after 3 years we really are at ease in our Chalet Solneige. Everything runs more and more without saying. That is also because we have found a very enthusiastic and hard-working team of course. There was a lot of laughter in the kitchen, we have learned new cooking methods, and tried out new recipes. Even on the busiest day of the season, when the dishwasher broke down, we bought and installed a new one within a day without a single moment of stress.

Fall and holiday

In October we still had a lot of guests, but it was much less than the number of guests in the summer months. We had the time to enjoy the mountains and the beautiful colors of fall ourselves. We made some great hikes together. Of course we also had to do some maintenance work: the new balcony edges and kitchen cabinets in the apartments were placed.

Now we have a nice long vacation, we enjoy our stay in the Netherlands and have a great time with our daughters. Finally we have time for all sorts of activities, which we can't do when we are in France.



The coming winter season

We are looking forward to the winter season. The first snow has already fallen and on the pistes you could do some skiing if the lifts were open.

Ashley will come back in the winter season. Ashley and Tom have worked in Solneige previous summer; after a summer in Corsica they come back to the Alps this winter.

The most important news from the ski station is that the lifts open earlier this year; starting at the 6th of December. Early December (12th – 15th December) we will welcome the French Ice Dancing Championships in Vaujany. Then it is time to buy Christmas trees, to put up the Christmas decorations and to light the candles. The Christmas week and the New Year's week will be pleasantly busy with our guests and of course our children.



Best wishes from Therese and Pieter

Special Offers

Also we would like to present you 2 offers in this newsletter, for all the readers of the newsletter. Feel free to forward this newsletter to friends and acquaintances.

Wintersports

Take the advantage of the quiet weeks in the winter season. You will have the impression that you have the slopes all for yourself.

In the period from the 11th of January until the 1st of February and 8th of March until the 5th of April, readers of the Solneige newsletter get **10% discount** on the rates for the rooms (half board) and apartments (self catering).

For example: a week stay in a double room (half board; accommodation, breakfast, high tea and dinner) normally € 545 now **€ 490** per person.



Holidays in the French Alps: the complete chalet for yourself



Come with your whole family or invite all your friends! We have good experiences with larger groups (families or groups of friends) that rent the entire chalet. You rent all 6 rooms (16 beds) and it is possible to expand with the rooms in the apartments (total of 28 beds) and you have the whole chalet including the large and small lounge and garden all for yourself. Perfect to celebrate an important birthday or your 25-, 40-or 50-year-wedding.

We will make a custom-made offer and take special wishes in account. If you are interested, please call us or send an email to: solneige@wanadoo.fr