

## *Bicycle Gourmet's SECRET Treasures of France*



### CHAPTER TWO

#### THOSE FAB FROGS

The greatest “Treasure of France” for me, are the French people. (And, isn't that true wherever you are?) It's the people that make the place. And the French people make France a place of genuine hospitality.



And, no - they're not arrogant. The word is - proud. With just reason. And, happily, neither are they bland. They love ya -

or they hate ya.No -“Gee, I guess they’re ok.” which is what I especially *LOVE*! Because I *HATE* mediocre! “Maybes” JUST WASTE YOUR TIME. “Yes” or “No”, equally desirable for the same reason. “Yes” means: “Come on in!” “No” means: “Knock on the next door.” OK- that’s my rant.(thanks for hangin’ in!)

As you might expect,there is a (sometimes)unspoken rivalry between city and country French.(Happily, not as extreme as the Montagues and the Capulets!)



The mantra of country froggies is that city folk are cold,distant,speedy money grubbers,disconnected from reality. The city dwellers response,while overtly complimentary,is delivered in the same tone you would adopt attempting to explain television to a cave man.

Once,discussing photography with country folk,I described Eugene Atget’s classic book:”A Vision of Paris.”which is totally night scenes of deserted streets.Their comment: “Paris sans Parisians.....Quelle reve! (“Paris without Parisians....what a dream!”)

**Bottom Line:** My welcome in Paris has been equal in warmth and friendliness to my country encounters.And although I*am* travelling by bike on the home turf of the world’s most celebrated bike race – I’m willing to bet(at least one glass o’ wine)that your experience will be the same.

*UNLESS ...*

you're in a store "just looking." Then, they will zap you with a zillion watts of pouty disdain. And should you be foolish enough to attempt a question, Their (much superior to you) reply will be on the order of: "Excuse a moi... mai... votre accent c'est tres, tres bizzzzzzzare" as they turn and offer you a V.I.P. view of their backside.



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