Eau de Vie

a wine, spirits, and travel newsletter

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Alsace to Burgundy

I know dear readers, that this newsletter is the most infrequent form of correspondence you receive. Receiving it is like waiting for a bus that doesn't have a schedule and for one that maybe you never intended to board. Others writers of newsletters are more diligent, more verbose, maybe more relevant or more helpful but ever since I started collecting names and sending unsolicited emails to, well, mostly our wide and diverse network of friends, I've always been a bit protective of your attention. Meaning, I don't want to harass, to harangue, I/we simply wish to entertain, amuse, and if you are willing, to allow yourself to be detained by our exploits as we either taste and travel together.

It is with this in mind that I happily inform you that our France 2025 trips are all sold, we are 100% subscribed and when I say we, I include our boat partners Rick and Carla Egge who are also guiding trips in France on our co-owned boat the Relax Companion.
This fall we will be taking our companions on a stunning trip from Dijon (the Ducal Capital of Burgundy) up the Canal du Rhone au Rhin (the canal from the Rhone to the Rhine) to the capital of the Franche-Comté, Besançon.

In order for us to do this, to deliver these weeks of heaping French gastronomy, history and scenery, we will need to get our little floating home in France to...well Burgundy.

And this is this spring's (May & June) challenge. If you remember we bought our boat in Strasbourg, on the border with Germany in the far north eastern corner of France. This region is historically called Alsace and we've cruised here for three years. On our boat we've visited Nancy and eaten quiche Lorraine in Lorraine, eaten choucroute, and Baeckeoffe (Alsatian pot pie) at our favorite restaurant in Saverne, run by Elodie and Herve. They serve up his grandmother's recipes, in steaming hot crockery pots, down below the street in an old cellar from the 1400s. We always stopped at Jean Cline's Boulangerie (bakery) in Gondrexange to partake in his ever present smile, disarming welcome, warm bread and effervescent generosity. And we've loved getting below skin deep into the true nature and feel of this part of France. But it is the nature of the traveler to say goodbye and it is time for us to slip the lines from our comfortable familiar mooring and head into the unknown.

Starting in mid May, Rick, Carla, Sara and I will be taking the Relax Companion on the longest trip we've ever taken on a boat or together. We will be moving the boat from Strasbourg to Saint-Jean-de-Losne in central Burgundy. If we can take the direct route it will take us 20 days to travel 405km, 170 locks, 2 tunnels and 3 rivers. I say if, because one of the rivers we need to travel on is the Rhine. The Rhine is a mighty river. It is well plied by commercial craft: barges and cruise ships, and if there

is too much rain, or too much melt in the Alps, when we need to go up-current toward Switzerland, we simply won't be able to power past the current and we'll be forced to travel the other way around, through Nancy and down the western edge of the Vosges mountains. This is a longer route and we'd need to travel a distance of over 600km and utilize over 200 locks!

Thoughout this spring-time journey I'm going to commit myself to documenting it. Not just because I want to remember this journey, which literally could be once in our lifetimes, but I also want to share this with you.

Here is my plan: every day of our journey I'm going to post either a photo on Instagram or a video on YouTube. These will be shared on Facebook as well, it's just they won't start there.

In 2021 I published 37 daily vlogs of our travels on the canals in France, this spring we will be in France for 52 days and I'm giving myself a little break to make it slightly easier on me and maybe slightly better for you too.

If you want to follow along, you can subscribe to our YouTube Channel, Instagram or Facebook page by click the logo below.

Join us in Burgundy in 2026?

Click the image above to download the 2026 planner

Over the last two months we've been talking a lot about France, boating and travel - which are some of my favorite subjects so I've been having a great late winter / early spring. In between the chatting I've also been doing some thinking, planning and arranging of schedules because while we are only just ¼ done with 2025 we are also taking reservations for 2026.

For 2026 we opened the chart book and are also soaking into the familiar. In the spring (late April to early June) we will be traveling back into the heart of the Franche-Comté between Dijon and Besançon.

In the fall (August to October) we are heading into the vineyards, to capture the harvest, traveling from St-Jean-de-Losne to Montceau-les-Mines on the Canal du Centre. In either season we will engage in France in a way which is unique to only the boater - we will be traveling through rural and urban France employing a method of a bygone era. Allow yourself to be seduced by an adventure in Burgundy.

We are now taking reservations for 2026 and if you want a cabin on our boat you need to talk/email/text us now. All our chatting is paying off and we have taken reservations for a number of cabins already. Currently, Sara and I are 50% sold for 2026. The planner above shows both spring and fall and boat trips guided by Rick and Carla and Sara and I.

Here, let me pour you a glass of wine and let's talk about Burgundy.

Sara's teaching a class at Yoga North in April. It's targeted to a specific age of woman. She says, "Would you like to find strength, balance and restoration during the transition into, through and out of menopause?" If so, Join Sara in person at Yoga North or online via Zoom.