



SOME REFERENCES Residential French Immersion Program

➤ References and Comments from Teachers and Students

I had heard about Gilles' exciting new concept of an immersion French experience, set in pleasant surroundings, from a teaching colleague and decided to trial a group of Year 10 students for 4 days at La Maison de Ste-Claire. I can honestly say that it was a most worthwhile trip on all accounts. Gilles talked at length with me beforehand, to tailor-make a programme that fitted our students. Activities were very varied from horse riding to bush walking, watching pre-selected French programmes from the satellite link to French T.V. to having cookery lessons - and, of course, all in French!

Students also took part in interactive language lessons every day as part of the activities. During this time they built strategies to help them gain maximum benefit from our intensive stay for future language lessons. I know the students benefitted enormously from this type of unique exposure to the language. Whilst there, we ate like kings! The French cuisine was superb, as was the accommodation, even the meals we prepared as part of a French cookery lesson! Students were continually involved, using their language skills in a meaningful and productive way. What better way is there to learn a language than to apply it to situations students can relate to? We definitely will be returning to La Maison de Sainte-Claire, and with groups of different ages and needs.

If you cannot get to France, this is the next best!

Barry Hills,
Head of French
All Saints Anglican School
Gold Coast.



La Maison de Ste. Claire est une petite France ici en Australie. C'est formidable!

Que je suis heureuse d'avoir été ici. Dans une semaine, j'ai appris des choses que je pensais je ne comprendrais jamais! Si j'avais la chance, je retournerais à la Maison de Ste. Claire tout de suite! C'est vrai, c'est juste comme « la petite France ».

On a chanté, bien discuté dans la classe, mangé, joué à la pétanque, sauté des crêpes, etc ... et nous avons aimé tout! C'était fantastique!

Very good teaching Monsieur Gilles! I have learnt so much in just four days than at school for two and a half years! Would love to come back.

The small class made me confident to voice my opinion and even make regular mistakes comfortably. I found at the end of the week that listening to and reading French came more naturally and fluently.

I have no idea that my French could improve so much in 5 days! I think I learnt more through the activities because I was able to put everything into context. This experience has certainly been a great way for motivation and improvement for me.

The food was "vachement bon", fresh and copious! Never experienced this at a camp! None of us was ever hungry as there was so much.

The service is excellent, expectations unsurpassed! Such an accommodating and welcoming family.

Gilles' in-service is practical, interesting and inspiring. I loved it!

Gilles is a great person to have as a speaker because of his French and teaching experience. The opportunity to speak French is inspiring and invaluable for me!

J'ai passé trois jours formidable. Les cours, la nourriture, le paysage ... c'était magnifique.

Quel bel endroit! Et quel week-end super! J'ai beaucoup appris et je me suis bien amusé.

Si votre objectif est de bien gâter vos invités vous avez très bien réussi! C'était un très bon week-end d'immersion.

Parfait!

Merci pour tout! C'était un week-end paradisiaque. A la prochaine fois!



UN WEEKEND FORMIDABLE

In August this year, a group of ten year 12 French students from Somerville House, spent a wonderful weekend at the Maison de Ste. Claire, at Upper Crystal Creek, near Murwillumbah. They dined à la française, watched French films sub-titled in French, read interesting texts on their set themes, Social Issues, discussed topical issues, sang French songs from TV5, played pétanque, gathered raspberries and cooked a super raspberry flan – and ate magnificently!

They were completely immersed in the French language and culture. Meals were French-style and students were encouraged to speak French at all times. Gilles Berger is a magnificent teacher – he encourages students to be adventurous with their speaking but is not afraid to correct mistakes so that students feel that they are improving. There were a variety of tasks so that students were never bored. All ten students returned home completely satisfied with their weekend and felt that their four skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading) had very much improved.

The Maison de Ste. Claire experience does not stop when the students finally leave this beautiful gite. Gilles and his wife, Zarina, are constantly there to provide additional resources once teachers are back at the coalface.

I can heartily recommend such an experience for students. In fact, I will be returning in 2003, confident that a new group of year 12's will revel in such a stimulating intellectual environment, balanced with the picturesque sylvan setting of Crystal Creek.

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