

## 11 Cap de la Bielle

An attractive village house in Nestier in Haute Pyrenees. 3 double and 1 single bedrooms. Kitchen-diner with wood-burner for chilly evenings. Washing machine and drier. Comfortable living room with large wood-burning fire. Pretty, terraced garden with pond, ample sheltered places to sit out and enjoy family meals. Double Garage.

Nestier is a pretty village set in wonderful rolling countryside with fabulous hill and high mountain walks and views. It is on a route for the pilgrimage to St Jacques de Compostela (el camino). St Laurent de Neste is less than 5 minutes drive with assorted shops for all basic needs, a library and cinema, and a takeaway pizza. The towns of Montrejeau and Lannemezan are 10-15 minutes away on the A64 motorway from Toulouse. Airports at Tarbes/Lourdes (45 min), Pau (60 min) and Toulouse (75 min). Northern Spain is 50 minutes away - through a choice of two tunnels. The Atlantic coast is about 2 hours, and the Mediterranean is under 3 hours.

The Pyrenean valleys are lush from its famously high rainfall, but the thunderstorms and snow are heavy, so rainy days are infrequent. Barely any breeze means days feel warm from March through November.

### Bucolic Bit

The animals are content. Cattle feed their own calves; sheep graze in large flocks; goats and pigs forage in and out woods. Donkeys and horses keep company. Chickens and geese wander over quiet roads. Cats hunt field mice. Dogs doze, stalling cars in the villages, or waiting to take passing walkers up their mountain. Red squirrels, deer and boar have the great forests for cover. Kites, buzzards and vultures circle on the thermals. Martins and bats flick dragonflies off the lakes. Lizards play hide-and-seek among wild flowers and trout shelter beneath the cascades and eddies of streams and rivers, unseen.

### Restuarants

There are 2 excellent hotel-restaurants in the village. [The Monestere du Mont Ares](#) and [The Castera](#), which is Michelin rated, and opens as a bistrot in summer.. [The Cafe du Village](#) is ten minutes cycle at Aneres, and caters for the local commune and travellers alike.

### Swimming

Ten minutes walk from the house is [Les Ocybelles](#), a natural open air swimming pool and play area. Nearby Montrejeau has a swimming lake with beach area and playground and a bar/restaurant. Five minute drive takes you to an in/out-door pool at [Le Bataillet](#).

### Cycling.

The Tour de France passes close-by every year (St Gaudens, Tourmalet, Aspin, Port Balès), and there are many marked competitive mountain trails locally. However, Nestier is next to the Neste / Garonne rivers, and the Gers Plateaux, so the rides can be all levels - from beginners to VTT -- velo toute terrain. (We have two mountain/road bikes, and you can hire further from Le Bataillet.)

### Skiing

Nine Ski-stations are within an hour's drive. Cap Nistos is the closest - about 45 minutes, which also has snow-shoe hire for the less ambitious.

#### Historic Sites:

Some of the oldest inhabited caves in the world are nearby. [The Grottes de Gargas](#), with stunning cave art is 15 minute drive away. [Labastides and Esparros](#) are about 30 minutes.

There is a huge [Roman villa at MontMaurin](#), and large Roman Market town/city at Lugdunum Convenarum ([St Bertrand-de-Comminge](#)).

Medieval (and earlier) churches are found all around. Particularly, the Cathedral of Saint-Bertrand and Basilica Saint-Just-de-Valcabrère are listed by Unesco World Heritage. Many of the local churches in the Aure and Louron valleys have wonderful ancient frescos, set in picturesque mountain town and villages like Arreau and Aspet. Luchon, in the Arran Valley, became a popular destination for high society from the 18th century onwards, with the thermal baths a must. Their main attraction is the vaporarium, a huge natural steam bath. Castles ([Mauvezin](#)), forts, monasteries ([Escaladieu](#)), and chateaus ([Montrejeau](#), [St Martory](#)) are everywhere, both sides of the border.

#### Music

There are music festivals at [Nestier](#) (May 1 and 2), [Montrejeau](#) (International folk 13-16 August), [Marcillac](#) (Jazz 27 July- 16 August), [St Bertand](#) (Classical/Organ, 14 July- 6 September), [Tarbes](#) (Tango 15-23 August).

#### Other activities

In the Louron Valley, Loudenvielle also has a modern-day spa at [Balnea](#), it also has a para-gliding centre, and a tree-top park. Lannemezan has a [tree-top park](#), and a [children's amusement park](#). Climbing rocks are around at Sarp (20 min) and [Sarrancolin](#) (30 min). Canoeing is at [Valcabrere](#) (20 min). Horse and pony-riding at [Mazere de Neste](#) (10 min). Trout fly-fishing at Tuzeguet (10 min) on the Neste.







