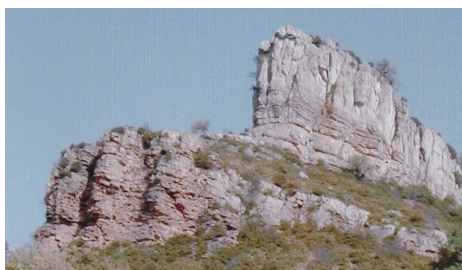


Around Beaujolais

Beaujolais? Wine of course, but much more. It is a “UNESCO Global Geopark”, because of remarkable and varied geology. It has a diversity of landscapes and fine views. This map shows the best-known part of “Pays Beaujolais”, the “Beaujolais Vignoble”. But to the east is the scenic “Beaujolais Vert”, and to the south, the “Beaujolais des Pierres Dorees”.

We have visited the three notable high points which command the vineyard region..

Firstly, in the south of Beaujolais, the dome of Mont Brouilly is the vestige of a volcano. Near the top is the ‘geoscope belvedere’, an open-air display of the rock-types of Beaujolais – with a fine view over the vineyards and beyond.



Next, and very different is the Rock of Solutre, a limestone escarpment to the north, actually in Burgundy and just outside the Beaujolais area. There is a museum of pre-history housing the rich remains of pre-historic times. And from the museum it is a fine walk to the top.

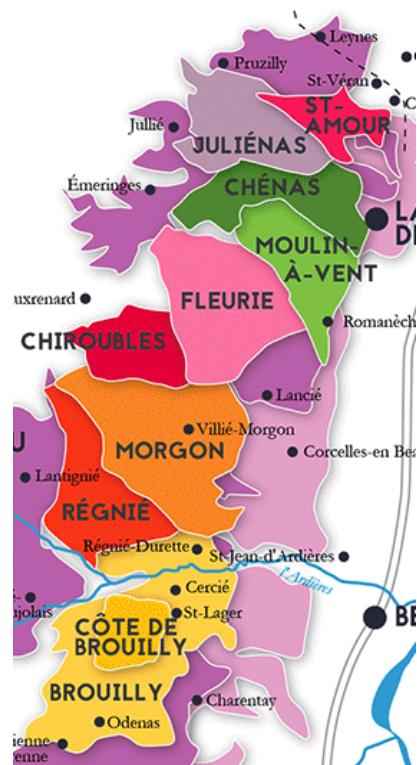


To the west of the region is a chain of low mountains rising beyond the vineyards. On a high ledge is the “Terrasse de Chiroubles” with the “Sentier panoramique des 10 Crus”. Each stopping point has a tablet inscribed with information about a particular village – and often an amusing anecdote. The tablets are aligned with views of those villages on the plain below.

That leads us to the wines. A frequent stop has been at the Cave de Fleurie; another at the Chateau des Correux in Leynes. But there is one visit that we cannot forget. The Hameau du Vin is a “Wine Park” – a Theme Park of Viticulture and Wine. It is a major tourist attraction situated quite close to the emblematic windmill of Moulin a Vent. It has 100,000 visitors a year. Not really our scene! But when we arrived one morning there was nobody else at all. We found it extremely amusing to be automatically guided through the succession of automatic auditoriums as if we were part of a



crowd! Emerging into the garden, we loved the birdsong – coming from loud-speakers in the trees; the trees were real!



Beaujolais hosts an elite cycle race – the Tour du Beaujolais Cyclistes. We were lucky to be in Villie Morgon to see the end of one of the stages.

East of Mont Brouilly, leaving the “Beaujolais Vignoble” is Vaux en Beaujolais, the inspiration for Clochemerle. And then one is in the “Beaujolais Vert”.



This is divided by the valley of the Azergues. Just north of Lamure sur Azergues the railway climbs a spiral to rise from the valley.

Beyond Lamure one reaches the Lac des Sapins, an artificial lake created as a tourist attraction. North from here is the Col du Pavillon. There is a small hotel here where we have stopped.



Beyond is the small town of Cours la Ville. And the city of Roanne is further on.