

MOTOR BOAT

ON TEST

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THE BEST GETAWAYS

10 GREAT BOATING HOLIDAYS YOUR FAMILY WILL LOVE

Rent these superb houses with moorings



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AMER 92 • EVO MARINE DEAUVILLE 23M





The beautifully restored
Maison d'Aquitaine.



9 Île de Ré MAISON D'AQUITAINE

This sunny Biscay Island lies eight miles from La Rochelle, linked to the French mainland by a three-mile bridge. St Martin-en-Ré is an old fortified port, whose 17th-Century ramparts glow richly in afternoon sun. Its locked basin is one of the most picturesque in France and the town is a popular haunt of wealthy Parisians. The basin is sheltered from any weather and accessible for 2½ hours each side of high water. During summer, the quays feel as Mediterranean as Cassis or St Tropez.

An imposing 15th-Century church graces the centre of St Martin on Place d'Eudes d'Aquitaine. Opposite the main door behind a row of old limes, Maison d'Aquitaine is an impeccably renovated Ile de Ré townhouse, originally built for church clergy. Restored by local craftsmen, the house boasts typical terracotta floors, exposed beams and wood panelling.

Île de Ré became fashionable in the 1960s when many artists, writers and painters acquired salt-workers' and fishermen's houses. The island villages have retained their charm, with distinctive lime-washed houses, traditional green shutters and narrow streets bright with hollyhocks. The shallow tidal inlets on the north side of Ré are ideal for cultivating oysters and the local Huitres des Pertuis are among the best in France.

With your boat moored in St Martin, it's not far across to La Rochelle, with its famous twin forts and Vieux Port surrounded by leafy quays, café terraces and old family restaurants where lunchtimes linger into the warm afternoons.

Address: Maison d'Aquitaine, Place d'Eudes d'Aquitaine, 17410 St Martin-en-Ré, France.

Sleeps: Up to 6.

Bookings: Holiday Lettings www.holidaylettings.co.uk

Tel: +44 (0)1865 312000. **Email:** info@holidaylettings.co.uk

Rental per week: €2,600 high season, €1,900 low season.

Getting there by road: Ile de Ré is about 4½ hrs drive from St Malo and 6 hrs from Cherbourg, via Rennes, Nantes and La Rochelle.

By air: Low cost flights to La Rochelle from Stansted and other UK airports.

By boat: Refer to *North Biscay* by the RCC Pilotage Foundation, published by Imray at £35 (ISBN 0-85288-702-7).

Nearest moorings: St Martin locked basin, 5 mins stroll from the house.

Isle de Ré's locked basin is one of the most picturesque in France, and is a popular haunt of wealthy Parisians. During balmy summer days, the quays feel as Mediterranean as Cassis or St Tropez

10 County Cork LOUGH INE HOUSE

A short drive from Skibbereen, at the head of a secret inlet off the coast of West Cork, an elegant Regency house looks down on an enchanting expanse of sheltered water, surrounded by 16 acres of rolling farmland and ancient woods. This is Lough Ine House, built in 1830 as a hunting lodge for Lord Carbery and now a private country retreat that you can rent for a special holiday in one of Ireland's most charming corners.

Lough Ine House is only 4km from Baltimore, one of my favourite Irish ports-of-call, with its snug harbour and colourful waterfront pubs and restaurants. The visitors' pontoons at Baltimore make a good base from which to explore the intricate cruising grounds between the closely packed islands off this part of the coast. Baltimore Harbour is almost completely hemmed in by Sherkin Island, but a narrow sound leads to a maze of channels and anchorages around Hare Island.

Back at Lough Ine (sometimes Lough Hyne), your holiday house overlooks an almost land-locked sea water lake, in the middle of which stands an island with castle ruins. A slipway juts out across a shingle beach and you can take the rowing boat over to the island or down to the mouth. Although the lough is tidal, its narrow shallow entrance is only navigable by a small dinghy, adding to the seclusion of this unique hideaway. The house is elegantly furnished for comfortable living, with its capacious sofas, polished oak floors and a splendid conservatory, where an old vine flourishes in Gulf Stream warmth.

Address: Lough Ine House, near Skibbereen, West Cork, Ireland.

Sleeps: Up to 10.

Bookings: www.irbeard.net **Email:** Mrs Beard at irene@irbeard.net

Rental per week: £2,140 high season, £1,680 low season.

Getting there

By ferry: Pembroke to Rosslare with Irish Ferries, then N25 to Cork, N71 to Skibbereen, R595 towards Baltimore and left turn to Lough Ine.

By air: Flights to Cork from many UK airports, then N71 to Skibbereen, R595 towards Baltimore and left turn to Lough Ine.

By boat: Refer to *South and West Coasts of Ireland Sailing Directions* by the Irish Cruising Club, available from Imray at £37.50 (ISBN 97-80950-17179-1).

Nearest berthing: Baltimore Harbour at visitors' pontoons.



Lough Ine House is a former hunting lodge.