

Retirement in France, How is it? — 4 Testimonies

We have asked four British expatriates who have retired and live in France to tell us how it feels. To each of them we have asked the same questions: Can you briefly explain your typical day in France? What are some of the problems you have encountered regarding French administrative rules and procedures? Do you feel that you've made the right choice to retire in France? And what are some of the benefits and disadvantages of living as a retiree in France in comparison to living in England? Their replies are below.

chicken or fish or pasta. Occasionally I'll treat myself to a little siesta, then at least four times a week a walk in the area. It is good walking country. It is either in the *garrigue*, around the lake or seashore or along the *falaise*. The other three days I go for a swim at the local pool. The evening meal is usually a salad whilst I watch the

an apartment nearby, and that, too, requires maintenance before the *locataires* season commences. And I am a member of a Masonic Lodge in Narbonne and a supporter of the Leucatois Local History Society.

The bureaucracy in France is what I think drives every expatriate.

SAMPLE PAGE

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waken the dead in the nearby cemetery. Breakfast! Much as I enjoy the produce of the *boulangerie*, it does nothing for the waistline, so bread is reserved for Sundays or when family or friends come to stay. Breakfast

ending, as every housewife will attest to. Situated on three levels, there is a constant round of cleaning, washing and ironing. Lunch around 12.30pm is usually a melange of fresh vegetables with



"Life in my village is similar to that in England many, many years ago".

hair. Why were these not requested in the first instance? No response. Eventually after 2 years I request an interview with a local representative at the *mairie* and I'm assured there is no problem. Six

Vocabulary of Retirement

L'âge de la retraite = retirement age (usually 60 years old in France)

La retraite = pension.

La pension (de retraite) = pension (but less used than *retraite*).

La retraite de la Sécu / Sécurité sociale = the basic retirement pension, from the Social Security.

La retraite de base = idem.

La retraite complémentaire = complementary pension.

Le plafond de retraite = the maximum pension one can receive (for example for the *retraite de la sécu* one cannot get more than 50% of an amount determined by the Social Security).

Un régime de retraite = a retirement scheme.

Toucher sa retraite = to receive one's pension.

Avoir une petite retraite = to get a small pension.

Le départ en retraite = retiring - the point that one actually retires

Prendre sa retraite = To retire.

Un(e) retraité(e) = A retired person

La pré-retraite = a early retirement possibility offered by French companies and Social Security, that many French people use (usually at around 52-55 years old, sometimes even earlier).

Une maison de retraite = a retirement home.

Un club de retraités = a private leisure, social, sports or activities club whose members are retired persons. Communities usually make their municipal meeting halls available for meetings/activities.

Un club du 3^e âge = idem.

Un club des aînés = idem.

