



La Cascade bathes in the evening sunshine. Fishing lodge on left.



Belgian Guido Vink with a 6lb rainbow taken during his visit.



Enjoy a drink outside by the water in summer.



The restaurant will cook your catch on request.

The rooms & bar area

There are 4 refurbished and comfortable en-suite double bedrooms on the first floor. Twin beds can also be arranged. The ground floor bedroom is suitable for wheelchair users where a double or twin bed can be arranged.

- There is a gîte which can accommodate up to 4 adults.
- Coffee, tea, biscuits and TV (French and English, terrestrial and Sky) are provided in all rooms.
- Continental breakfast included with all bedrooms.
- Free Wi-Fi.



David prepares a drink for his guests.



Britain's Queen waves from the bar.

La Cascade

A bit of England nestling in a beautiful French valley 75 minutes from Calais. **Russell Hill** receives a warm welcome at this newly-established fishery

FISHERIES are recognising the need to meet customer needs and offer a better all-round experience. And so we see more accommodation, tackle shops and variety of fishing coming to the fore. Some places even have a bar and restaurant akin to golf clubs! But we'd never been to a water that 'had it all' so to speak. Until now.

La Cascade Fishery in the peaceful Canche Valley near Arras, northern France is the perfect weekend retreat or stop-off point on your journey through France.

Englishman David Hughes and wife Veronique took on La Cascade five years ago and dug the 1.5-acre lake from scratch. Although still a work in progress, they've managed to create a little piece of heaven with the help of their son James. There's great food and a varied menu from the onsite restaurant, terrific bar with a thriving evening atmosphere, separate angling lodge with tackle shop, clean toilets, well-designed fishing lake with very clear water and excellent onsite accommodation overlooking the lake.

Former rugby coach and retired architect David is a man who never stops working and sees La Cascade as his final 'project' having taken up fly-fishing a few years back and then conducting plenty of research into fishery management. Luckily the lake has an excellent water supply, fed by artesian wells and springs and consequently the trout are very content.

Patriotic banter

He's boldly creating a small 'flavour of England' here too, which attracts banter from the locals, especially when the two countries play each other in the Six Nation's rugby tournament! There's a miniature model of the Queen on the bar and endless homage to 'Blighty' dotted all over the walls.

David is only too keen to open the whisky last thing at night while relaxing in the bar and loves to share memories of famous sporting highs and lows between our respective countries. Like I said, he's a brave fellow!

The locals seem to warm to this 'English

castle' and many of the villagers drop by for some verbal 'sport', usually at David's expense.

It's a place not only to fish, but to relax too as there's a treatment room upstairs from the tackle shop where non-angling partners can enjoy a bit of 'me' time.

Top of the water sport

The fishing itself is classic dry fly with plenty of rainbows and some browns to 6lb taken off the top to Sedge, CDC and Bob's Bits. Small weighted nymphs also take their share and the fish fight extremely well due to the cool water supply from subsurface



An English pub-style sign.

springs. The lake has been designed so that every inch of water is easily reached with a moderate to decent cast. Wooden platforms connect to three islands, although one is currently left angler-free due to nesting birds.

A rich water, there's quite a lot of weed during the warmer months and on our visit much of this was raked out and left in piles around the shoreline. Some might find this a tad unsightly but the critters living in the weed can at least return to the water this way. The subsurface weed is the good, oxygenating type and the fish certainly look very healthy.

Good anglers will catch well into double figures number wise and newcomers can expect at least one fish because - if you're stealthy - it's possible to catch quite close in. The water requires patience though because, despite fish being easily seen cruising just subsurface, they're certainly not easy, which is a good thing and preferred by the discerning French anglers. Get your presentation right and you're in for a real treat though. >>



Guido plays one of his many fish caught on dries.

Places to visit

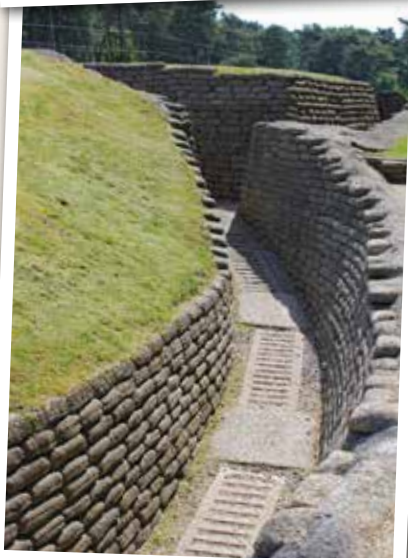
The small market towns of Avesnes-Le-Comte, Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise and Frévent are within easy reach. The beautiful city of Arras is a 30 minutes' drive, Louvre Lens 35 minutes, Amiens 40 minutes, and Lille and Le Touquet 50 minutes. Close to many WWI sites including Thiepval and Vimy Ridge.



Canadian National Vimy Memorial.



The graves of French servicemen.



Preserved WWI trenches at Vimy Ridge.

Wooden platforms connect anglers to three small islands.



A deep well provides La Cascade with a superb water supply.



The editor plays a fish caught on a small weighted nymph.



“They didn’t want to leave having caught and released so many fish – vowing to return.”

Anglers get hooked

David remembers one story when two Belgian anglers booked a day. He returned late that evening from an errand and thought he’d see if the pair were at the bar so he could see how their day went. He was astonished to see them still out on the water fishing in the dark. They didn’t want to leave, having caught and released so many fish – vowing to return.

As a stop off for avid English holiday-makers who love to fly-fish, La Cascade is top notch with everything a couple could wish for. We met touring motorcycling duos and visiting French anglers from far afield. Being the only stillwater in the area, anglers would have to drive for about three hours to the nearest trout lake and French fly anglers in this area are mainly river fishers. So there’s not much in the way of competition here, it’s a very welcome oasis.

If you’re a fan of imitative sport to nymphs and dries then you’ll enjoy a stay here. The facilities are superb and you’ll revel in the warm atmosphere that you tend to find with most family-run businesses.

There are plans for expansion, which require the problematic journey through French planning permission. But if they come to pass, La Cascade really will be THE place of dreams. 🍷



FACTFILE

La Cascade

A full list of packages are provided involving trips to the battlegrounds of WWI and a whole wealth of other activities which can be viewed on their website. Of particular note during our visit was the Vimy Ridge memorial and one of the many cemeteries dedicated to French, German and British soldiers. The nearby town of Arras is also highly recommended. Speak with Dave and Veronique beforehand and they can advise. La Cascade is a Troutmasters water – one of only two in France.

ACTIVITIES AT LACASCADE INCLUDE:

- Beginners introduction to fly-fishing
- Helicopter tours of the Northern French countryside
- Treks around the French countryside
- Cycling / mountain biking with several routes departing from La Cascade
- Canoeing down La Canche river that runs alongside complex
- Car/motorbike rallies with several routes departing from La Cascade.

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