

VISIT TO THE GERMAN SUBMARINE BASE, BORDEAUX
SATURDAY 19th MAY 2018, 14h30

The casual visitor strolling westwards from the trendy Chartrons district of Bordeaux will be surprised to find his or her route barred by a large expanse of dark water, which has all the appearance of being a largely unused and inaccessible inland harbour.

On the far side, emerging from the water, is a long, crouching mass of concrete. This was the German submarine base, from where the U-boats carried out their deadly forays into the Atlantic. Their berths lie eerily empty, the inside of the building is dark and dank, water drips from unseen walls. Innumerable corridors and narrow passages lead into total darkness. James Bond would be quite at home here.

After years of abandon, and obviously unable to blow it up, the Bordeaux authorities now use a small part of the base for exhibitions. Given the prevailing gloom, works featuring light and sound find an ideal setting.

We propose a visit to the base on Saturday 19th May, at 14h30. An English-speaking guide will explain the history of the base, and then participants will be free to make their own way around the current exhibition, « Digital Abysses », an original approach to subaquatic fauna and flora.

The entrance to the base, including the guided tour, costs 7€. Free parking is available in front of the building.

If you wish to make a day of it, we suggest in the morning a visit to the most recent Bordeaux monument, the Cité des Vins, built on the Garonne (not to be confused with the older « Cité Mondiale des Vins » which is upstream and inland). It is remarkably staged, very complete, and great fun, but the entrance costs 20€ (at time of writing!) and you need to allow a good hour and a half for the visit.

For lunch, we propose the brasserie « Latitude » situated in the free-zone area of the Cité des Vins overlooking the river, where a good-quality three course lunch, glass of wine and coffee costs 28€. Alternatively, just next to the restaurant there is a snack-bar which serves a few hot dishes, salads, sandwiches, etc.

The programme is therefore as follows :

- 12h15 Meet in the foyer of the Cité des Vins
- 12h30 Lunch
- 13h45 A short drive (or walk for the energetic) to the Submarine Base
- 14h30 Visit of the Base and exhibition

If you are interested by this outing, please contact Marion at moustemp@aol.com, stating whether or not you would like to lunch with the group. She will then send you all practical details about access, parking etc. Replies would be appreciated before the 20th April, because of restaurant availability.

We look forward to seeing you.

Marion Tempé and the Committee