



Carol Zimmerman de Montrichard-Dalléas '66

C'est Magnifique! How an American became an ambassador for France

When France refused to support the war in Iraq in spring 2003, representatives on Capitol Hill responded by substituting the word *freedom* for the word *French* on cafeteria menus. Almost overnight, French fries and French toast became Freedom fries and Freedom toast.

It was one of the more recent installments in sometimes-prickly Franco-American relations. Transplanted American **Carol Zimmerman de Montrichard-Dalléas '66** has made it her personal mission to change all that.

After studying French at Hartford College for Women and a semester spent in France as an *au pair*, Dalléas fell in love with the culture and moved there in 1972. Ever since, she has worked to promote French culture to English-speaking countries. Dalléas also runs a bed-and-breakfast, La Forge, a 200-year-old stone cottage located in the Bordeaux wine country.

"I love sharing my home and French life with my guests," says Dalléas. "They go home feeling they've been visiting an American cousin in France."

Dalléas partners with local chefs, markets, and bakeries to give her guests a taste of the authentic French foods that she loves. She also arranges countryside bike tours as well as cooking classes and dinners in local private homes, which she describes as "the very best way to understand France and the French."

Dalléas credits the University of Hartford with nurturing her interest in other cultures, and she encourages current students to take advantage of study-abroad opportunities. "This was just the kind of life I had been looking for," says Dalléas.

Does the thought of pedaling your way through the rolling hills and vineyards of Bordeaux pique your interest? Dalléas hopes alumni who travel to Paris will consider a week at La Forge. Visit www.whatscookinginfrance.com for more information, or e-mail Dalléas at info@whatscookinginfrance.com. ■