



Castle-building courses: how can I apply? 2011 season

Guédelon is a genuine construction site and the project is managed by a company. If you would like to play an active role in the building of Guédelon castle, then it is possible to come and spend time working on site for periods of 3-7 days (one week maximum). Adults are welcome to apply for places on these courses; under-18s can only participate if they are **at least 16 years of age** and are accompanied by an adult. No specific skills are required - only a positive attitude, a desire to learn and support for our venture. Please note that places on our courses are limited : you should not come to the site to work until you have received confirmation that your application has been successful.

French is the main language spoken on site; however we also welcome English-speakers as course participants. You are not required to speak French and a number of workers on site do speak English; however, in order to benefit fully from your stay, it is in your interest to acquire a minimum of basic French, for example: yes, no, please, thank-you, I don't understand, I don't speak French etc. It is important to be sensitive to the fact that the visiting public is, for the most part, francophone and you should be prepared to indicate to visitors the workers who can respond to their questions, if you are unable to.

About Guédelon

Guédelon is a genuine construction site on which employees, tourists, school parties, work trainees, research students and academics come together. In order to create a positive atmosphere on site, it is important that all participants abide by the same rules which apply to Guédelon's workers. A copy of these communal rules – namely respect, patience and friendliness – will be submitted for your approval before you attend a course.

You must come equipped with **a pair of steel-toe cap safety boots**, and wear the costume worn by a Guédelon worker: a pair of plain, neutral-coloured long trousers and over-shirt (we will supply further details of how safety shoes can be obtained, how the simple costume can be made up, and additional details about the dress code).

You will work alongside the team of builders; you will learn about the building and production techniques used on the Guédelon Medieval Construction Site; you will support the team in their daily tasks and assist in the general up-keep of the site. A charge of €4 per day is made to cover training, administration and insurance costs, and is payable on booking (following confirmation of a place on a course). However, in order to avoid costly bank charges, it is possible for European and overseas participants to pay on arrival (cash or credit card).

The construction site is in the middle of a forest, 6km from the nearest village (Saint-Sauveur) and 30km from the nearest railway station (Cosne-sur-Loire). **You must come with a means of transport**, as no public transport runs to, or from, the site. For insurance reasons **Guédelon's workers can, under no condition, provide transport for course participants**.

You must be in good health.

If you have not previously visited the site, before starting the course, it is advisable to **consult our website** and contact us if you require any additional information about the project.

Spending time at Guédelon is an opportunity to:

- find out more about heritage and conservation by helping build a castle with reference to defined archaeological models;
- take part in a unique venture alongside other enthusiasts;
- join the Guédelon team and experience daily life on the construction site;
- benefit from the experience of the team in order to learn about the building techniques of the 13th century.

Lessons in ancient building techniques

Posts on site are **allotted** by our master mason, Florian RENUCCI, according to:

- the immediate requirements on site.
- the skills and the area of interest of participants, i.e. woodwork or stonemasonry.

Depending on your abilities, you may be asked to help quarry stone, supply the masons with building materials, build walls, cut and dress stone, hoist loads using the treadmill winch, as well as make oak shingles or clay tiles, or try your hand at green woodwork. You will take part in the site's weekly activities: site meeting, transporting stone, mixing mortar.

Blacksmithing and basketry are reserved for participants who already have a high level of skill in these areas.

Three different types of courses are available:

- **Bâtisseur:** the "master builder" course is designed for individuals. The course runs for a minimum of 3 days, and a week maximum. Only two such courses may be attended in any one season. A **daily fee of €4** applies. Bookings must be made (following confirmation of a place on a course) **at least 3 weeks before** your arrival. You must have suitable individual insurance – including health insurance, civil liability and repatriation cover. A copy of your up-to-date insurance must be sent to us along with the application.
- **Professional work placement:** this course is designed for students as part of their professional training. You must be enrolled with a college/training centre and have a formal work experience contract and suitable insurance. **Professional work placement students do not have to pay the €4 daily fee;** however you must purchase the **€10 introductory pack** which will allow you to prepare your stay. This pack includes a guided tour (English or French) and a booklet about Guédelon and information about the work which takes place at each post). At your request, a certificate will be presented at the end of the course. The cost of meals will also be charged to you. The work placement can last for several weeks.
- **Groups of trainees:** this course is aimed at groups of students accompanied by a teacher. The group size - including tutors - must not exceed **12 people**. The course runs for a minimum of 3 days, and a week maximum. All participants must be **at least 16 years of age**. A **daily fee of €4 per person** per course applies. In order to make the most out of your stay, each trainee must purchase an **introductory pack (€10 per person per course)**. A certificate will be presented to the trainees at the end of the course at the request of the group leaders.

Opening hours In 2011, Guedelon is open from 2nd april to 2nd november.
The site opens from 10:00 – 18:00 (19:00 in the high season).
Course participants – *bâtisseurs* – work from 10:00 – 13:00, and then 14:00-18:00.
At the start of the course, you should arrive at 9:45 and go to the offices.

Lunches

You may, if you choose, order lunch from the staff canteen – the pre-cooked meals are delivered to the site by the company Avenance. Meals will be charged at **€5.50 a head** (cost price). Alternatively, you may bring your own lunch and eat it in the canteen with the staff. Other meals (breakfast and evening meals) are not available. Please note that for lunches ordered from the staff canteen there is no vegetarian option. If you have any specific dietary requirements (wheat allergies etc.) we recommend that you provide your own lunch. A refrigerator and microwave, as well as plates and cutlery are provided for your use.

Accommodation

There is no accommodation on site at Guédelon. There are various different types of accommodation available in the area (bed and breakfast, campsites, and gîtes). We can supply a list of addresses if required. Camper vans cannot stay in Guédelon's car park overnight. Camping in the surrounding woodland is not permitted. Course participants cannot bring dogs to work, even those kept on leads.

Insurance : If you are injured in an accident whilst participating in the construction, you are covered by Guedelon's public liability insurance ; however you must have personal liability cover in case someone is injured or their property is damaged by you or something belonging to you, they could sue you. You must check that the conditions of your personal liability policy covers your activities on the construction site.

How can I book a place on a course?

You must first write to us - **preferably by email**, or by fax or letter – explaining why you would like to take part in the building of Guédelon castle and providing us with some practical information about yourself (full address, current work situation, planned means of transport, dates of availability, lunch options). We will then contact you in the days following your application.

For groups: the application must be sent to us – preferably by email – accompanied by details of your educational project and the contact telephone number of the organiser. After consideration by our master mason, Florian Renucci, we will contact you to let you know if your application has been successful. If at all possible, we do recommend that at least the group leader visit Guédelon before attending a course. It will be possible for the group to follow a guided tour of the site before they begin work.

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