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Venture through Burgundy, and as the miles pass, the tranquility of the region begins to calm the restlessness that often accompanies wanderlust. Over hills and valleys, rows of grapevines burst with fruit. Clusters of Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, and Pinot Noir grapes glisten like jewels against the rolling emerald slopes. In the distance, walled medieval villages beckon with stories of old and the promise of what is yet to be.

The capital of the Burgundy wine trade is Beaune, a fortified town in the Côte-d'Or area. A sprawling 580 hectares (more than 1,400 acres) of rich vineyard soil produce red vintages known for their mellow, aromatic character. "We refer to our vintners as farmers who just happen to grow grapes," says a local proprietress. "They are truly passionate. Viticulture is taken very seriously here, but winemakers wear coveralls rather than a suit and tie."

Above left and center right: Linger in the courtyard of Hotel Le Cep invites summertime bliss. Top right: Beaune restaurant Loiseau des Vignes—awarded its first Michelin star in 2010—neighbors the upscale auberge. Opposite: The city centre is worth a stroll.

