

Truffle hunt in Quercy-France

On a foggy and spooky December morning 2007 it was time to find a truffle the famous black diamond!

Not far from Belfort-de-Quercy our friends Veronique and Marc (who are truffle farmers) had invited us and the family to try our luck.



Finders luck of course depends (almost) solely on the skill of the specially trained truffle dog, their dog proved to be a real pro! Within minutes he got the scent and there was the first golf ball sized one.

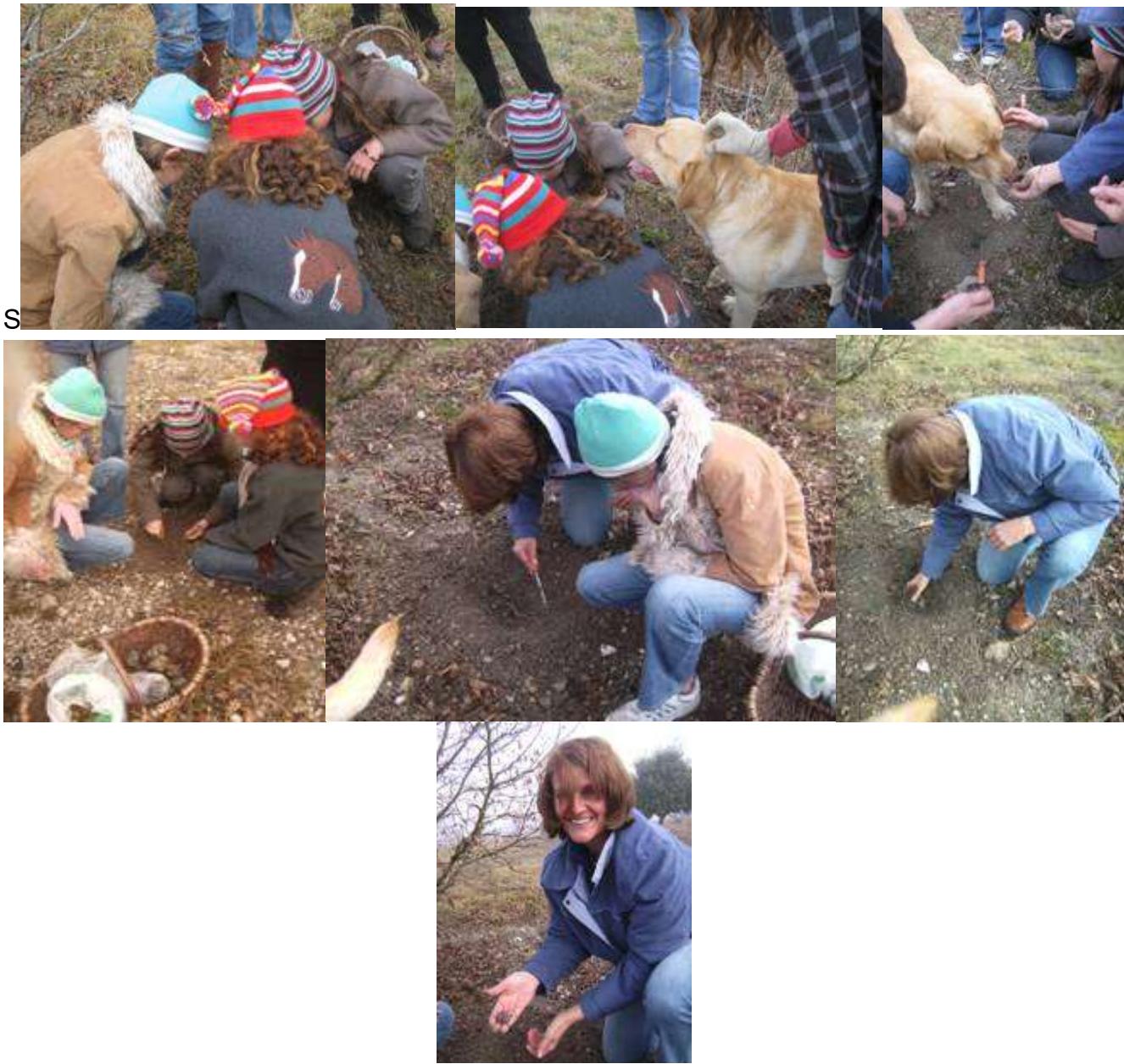
When the dog has indicated a find you have to be FAST before it scrapes it apart, a screwdriver is the best tool to loosen the truffle from the hard dirt.



Soon there was a scramble and funnily enough the most productive tree was the small one below. The black truffle of the species Black Perigord/Tube Melanosporum is considered (at least in France) the king of the truffles grows beneath oak trees and quite interestingly under hazelnut bushes.



Quickly even the family children got the hang of it digging rapidly with the screwdrivers.



Soon the basket, to our surprise, was getting well filled, though we had expected, with luck, only to find a single one!



Back at the cozy farmhouse next to the fire the truffles had to be brushed and then weighed, 1,542 kg (not a bad harvest at the going price of 1000 Euros a kilo!) Then they had to be graded according to size, look and smell. And what an overpowering smell of the special earthy scent. Most were prime class!



So what is it all good for?

The simplest is often the best. A wonderful farm egg omelet or mixed with salted butter spread on a fresh piece of country bread or added to a cream sauce for the pasta. Anyway it is an experience en par with caviar, lobster and the like.

