

DOMINIQUE BREMOND



PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIPPE GLADE

As you walk into Dominique Bremond's office, your eye is immediately caught by the various objects placed about the room: a French flag, Native American artifacts, photographs of France, Tahiti and Italy, a bottle of red wine, pictures of sunflowers. The cartoon character Tintin appears on the walls as well as on her watch. An aria from Madama Butterfly rises from her computer, followed by a tango, a French song then Rap. Yet her passion is for language and her specialty is French grammar. She teaches both an advanced course based on the "Cours de Civilisation Française de la Sorbonne" and a teachers' program for experienced and aspiring teachers of French.

Born and raised in Lyon, Dominique faced her first business challenge upon earning her master's degree in philosophy: "I knew of course that my degree qualified me for only one thing: unemployment," but with parents who owned five vocational schools, she inherited the savoir-faire essential for success in the business world. Following the birth of her son in 1991, she created the perfect enterprise to fulfill her passion for words and business. Now in its fourteenth year, her school, called simply The French Class, enjoys a loyal following of adults desiring to pursue the study of French language and culture without the burden and restrictions of a college program. "More and more people want to possess authentic foreign language skills for their travel abroad." With Paris still the most visited city in the world, the demand for high quality French classes sees no sign of waning.

Dominique's obvious love for teaching French is reflected by her school's decor of warm Provençal yellows and tranquil blues which creates an ambiance highly conducive to learning. Her friendly staff shares her enthusiasm. The reception area with its well-stocked library opens out to classrooms for four to ten students maximum extending an amicable *bienvenue* to all. The French Class offers eight different levels, from beginning to proficiency. Classes are Monday through Saturday, morning, afternoon or evening. Private instruction is also available. In addition, there is a potpourri of courses and workshops devoted to French culture, literature, business, art, and phonetics. Dominique is also a translator certified by the French Consulate in San Francisco. Since she thrives on challenge, she is preparing a series of CDs as a supplement to the educational material she has already published. "My life has been dedicated to trying to stick to what I love, so far, so good."