

Dordogne Travel Guide

by Everything Dordogne

Sarlat Feature

TOP 10 THINGS TO DO IN THE DORDOGNE

BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES

BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES OF THE
DORDOGNE

CAVES.CAVES.CAVES

PRE-HISTORIC CAVES OF THE
VEZERE VALLEY

CHATEAUX

FORTRESS' FROM MEDIEVAL
TIMES

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The Dordogne



About The Dordogne

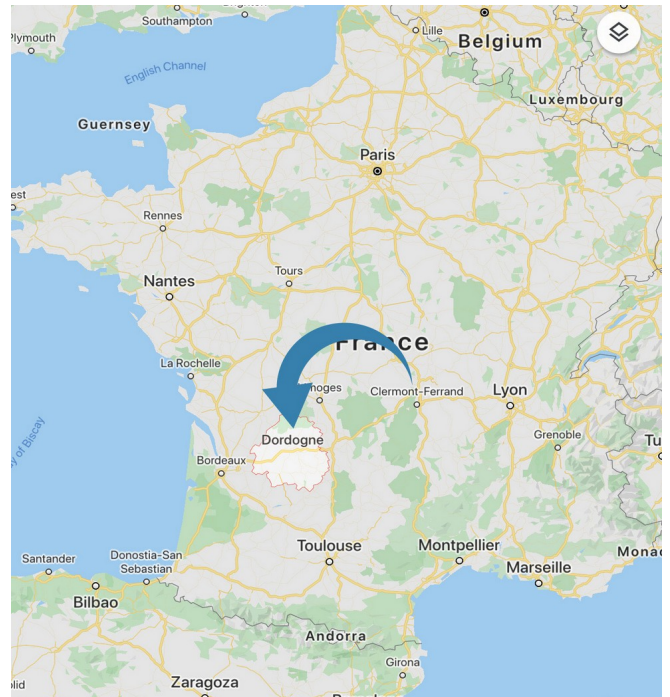
With fortified chateaux, bastide towns, pretty villages and pre-historic sites at every turn this lovely part of France is a must see.

The Dordogne is located in the region of Nouvelle - Aquitaine in south west France, between the Loire valley and the High Pyrenees and named after the great river Dordogne that runs through it. It roughly corresponds with the ancient county of Perigord that was first settle by the Gauls.

In addition to its castles, chateaux, churches, bastides and cave fortresses, the Perigord region has preserved from centuries past, a number of wonderful villages which still have their market halls, dovecotes, tories (stone huts), churches, abbeys and castles. Saint-Leon-sur-Vezere, Connezac, Saint-Jean-de-Côle, La Roque-Gageac and many others are beautifully preserved examples of medieval of architecture.

The larger towns of Périgueux and Bergerac old centres have been restored and developed into pedestrian areas, which are a delight to explore.

Sarlat in the heart of Black Perigord has been recognised as one of, if not the, best preserved medieval town in France or perhaps Europe and definitely should be on your must see list.



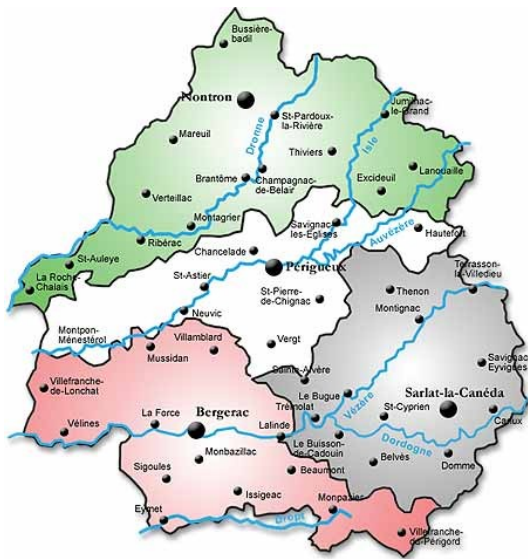
Food

Food lovers thrive in the Dordogne with fresh produce markets to be found across the departments and restaurants showcasing the specialities of the region including foie gras, truffles, walnuts and of course wine from the vineyards that abound in South West France.

Find out all you need to know about markets here



The Four Perigords



The Four Perigords

Perigord is an ancient French region that roughly corresponds to the area that is now the Dordogne, you will often hear French locals refer to the area as Perigord rather than the Dordogne. Perigord is divided into 4 areas that reflect the terrain of the area.

The **Perigord Vert** (Green Périgord) is made up of green valleys with many rivers and streams. Nontron is the main town.

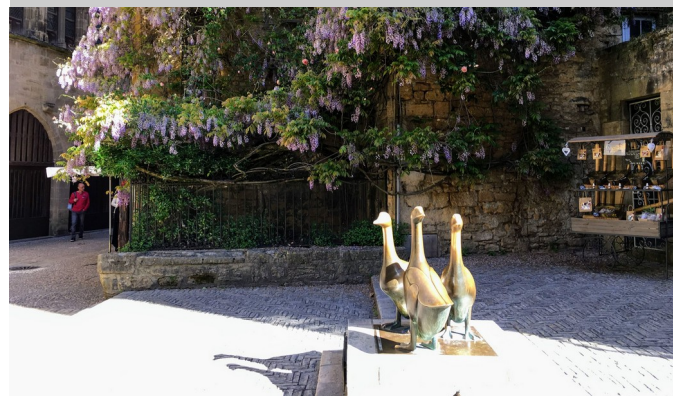
The **Perigord Noir** (Black Périgord) is home of the historic Sarlat and gets its name from the dark woods of oak and pine where the famous Perigord truffle is found. The rivers Dordogne and Vézère both run through Perigord Noir

The **Perigord Pourpre** (Purple Périgord) is a wine region with the main city being Bergerac.

The **Périgord Blanc** (White Périgord) is a region of limestone plateaux, wide valleys, and meadows. Périgueux is the capital of this region and the main administrative city of the Dordogne.



Brantôme – Perigord Vert



Sarlat – Perigord Noir



Monpazier – Perigord Pourpre



Hautefort – Perigord Blanc

TOP 10 THINGS TO DO IN THE DORDOGNE

Visit the Chateaux

The Dordogne Valley is home to over 1000 chateaux – there is everything from defensive chateaux or castles from which the 100 years war was fought to stately homes. The chateaux are famous throughout France and it is worth visiting more than one of the chateaux of the Dordogne as they all have something different to offer.

Explore the Beautiful Villages of the Dordogne

The Dordogne plays host to a number of gorgeous villages. As you drive around the region you will come across quaint, cute, picture perfect villages at every turn. At the very top of this list are a number of villages that have received the prestigious classification as “Most Beautiful Villages of France” (Les Plus Beaux Villages de France). There are 152 “Les Plus Beaux Villages de France” ten of which are found in the Dordogne – more than any other department in France.

Pre History Museum at Les Eyzies

The National Museum of Pre-History Les Eyzies houses a collection of over one million relics and artefacts found from the many pre-historic sites in the area. The Les Eyzies National Museum of Pre-History is a fascinating Les Eyzies tourist attraction and great place to learn about pre-historic man and a must for any history lover.

Visit Marqueyssac Gardens

The Hanging Gardens of Marqueyssac are unique gardens suspended high above the Dordogne River on a rocky outcrop. They are set in the grounds of the 17th century Chateau de Marqueyssac and are classified among the Notable Gardens of France by the Committee of Parks and Gardens of the French Ministry of Culture.

Shop at the Markets

The Markets are an important part of daily life in France, it is a chance for locals to meet and exchange gossip and to buy the best possible produce available. Most towns and villages hold a weekly market with local produce and delicacies being sold.

Dine Out

The Dordogne is a food lovers haven with exceptional produce and specialities abounding. From tiny bistro's to restaurants in stunning chateau and vineyards through to those with the coveted Michelin stars there is something to suit all tastes and budgets.

Explore Sarlat

Beautiful Sarlat is a medieval town that developed around a large Benedictine abbey of Carolingian origin. Due to surrounding terrain modern history largely passed it by therefore, Sarlat has remained preserved and is one of the towns most representative of 14th century France.

Canoe the Dordogne River

Hire a canoe from one of the many canoe outfitters and float down the river passing ancient villages and chateaux along the way. Stop for a picnic on one of the riverside beaches before being picked up at the other end and returned to your car.

Visit Domme

The village of Domme is a bastide town that dates from circa 1280 and played an important role during the 100 years war. Domme sits high above the Dordogne Valley, 150 metres above the Dordogne river which meanders peacefully below.

Pre-Historic Grottes & Caves

The pre-historic caves and grottes of the Dordogne play a significant role in the history of both the area and Cro-Magnon man – the first early modern humans who lived 20,000 to 40,000 years ago. The first sample of Cro-Magnon man was discovered in the town of Les Eyzies – de Taynac (or just Les Eyzies) in the heart of the Dordogne. There are hundreds of caves and grottes across the Dordogne region including the famous Lascaux and Font du Guame.



Sarlat

A Medieval Gem in the
Heart of the Dordogne

Sarlat

Sarlat is a beautifully preserved medieval town in the heart of the Dordogne in South West France.

The town developed around a large Benedictine abbey of Carolingian origin around 840. The medieval Sarlat Cathedral is dedicated to Saint Sacerdos the bishop of Limoges.

Before the introduction of trains and a road system Sarlat was very remote and access was difficult. Due to this Sarlat has remained preserved and is one of the towns most representative of 14th century France.

It owes its current status on France's Tentative List for future nomination as a UNESCO World Heritage site to writer, resistance fighter and politician André Malraux, who, as Minister of Culture (1960–1969), restored the town and many other sites of historic significance throughout France.



The centre of the old town consists of impeccably restored stone buildings and is largely car-free.

The old town of Sarlat is quite small and very easy to navigate. The town is divided roughly in the middle by Rue de la Republique which was cut through the town in the 19th century. Rue de la Republique is the main shopping street in the old town with a variety of shops, restaurants and patisseries dotted along it.

The best way to explore Sarlat is to simply start at one end of the town and wander through the labyrinth of lane ways and tiny streets. There is something to see at every turn.

Sarlat has a number of events and festivals throughout the year.



Sarlat | Things To See

St Sacerdos Cathedral - Originally part of the church of a Benedictine Abbey built in the 12th C by the monks of Calabre abbey who transported the relics of the cathedrals namesake, St Sacerdos, the bishop of Limoges to the site. The building was modified in the 14th, 16th & 17th centuries however still retains some of its original Romanesque style. The large entrance was added in the 17th century and the statues seen in the entrance are of unknown origin and date.

The Fountains Courtyard – The Canon Courtyard - In this courtyard you will find two public fountains used by the abbey and where the water still runs freely.

Chapel of St Benoit or Blue Penitents - A small 12th century Romanesque chapel which was restored in the 17th century.

Jardin des Enfeus - This is a sloping garden behind the Cathedral with tombstones from the monastic cemetery with arched insets containing sarcophagi from the 14th & 16th centuries of the distinguished gentry of Sarlat.

La Lanterne des Morts - This is a conical shaped monument that was built in 1147 to honour a visit to the town by Saint Bernard who preformed the famous miracle of the "loaves which cured". During its time the tower has served as a chapel, a charnel-house, then in the 17th century as a place for electing the consuls and during the French Revolution it was a powder magazine.

Le Presidial - The seat of the Royal Justice under King Henri II in the 16th century. This building has an unusual facade and is set in a beautiful garden. It has a large central arch supporting a loggia, topped by a campanile lantern, a structure of wooden props supporting the lantern to light the vast interior staircase. The building now houses a popular restaurant.

Hotel de Gerard - Has a splendid renaissance gallery. In the courtyard there are exhibition rooms for art works and a large room decorated in the 17th century style.

Passage Henri de Segoggne, Impasse des Violettes, Place Andre Malraux. - This ancient quarter was restored after the Malraux law on the Protection of Historical Towns, 4th August 1962. Several houses dating from the 13th, 15th and 16th century with half timber corbels and stone roofs can be found in this area of Sarlat.

La Boetie Residence - The birthplace of Etienne de la Boetie, a noted judge, writer and it is said the founder of modern political philosophy, in the 15th century. This is one of the finest homes in Sarlat and is characterised by an Italian Renaissance style facade. This property is on Place de la Liberte, the towns main square.

Place de al Liberte - This is the main public square of Sarlat and is bordered by traditional houses from the 16th & 17th centuries and has a number of restored passageways running from it. There are number of cafes and restaurants in the square.

Hotel de Gisson - Situated on Place de la Liberte it was built in the 17th century. It features a hexagonal stone-roofed tower, providing a spectacular backdrop.

Plamon House or Consuls' House - This is one of Sarlat's most remarkable houses. Opposite is Vassal House from the 15th century, Saint Mary's Fountain, Mirandol House and nearby is Tapinois de Betou House from the 15th century with a magnificent 17th century wooden staircase.

Chapelle des Recollets - This building dating from the 17th century and was formerly the chapel of the Friars convent, it now houses a school.

Ramparts – The Hangmans Tower - High arched gateway leads to the outer boulevard which was once a dry moat. The Hangman's Tower dates from the 16th century and is one of the last two remaining out of the eighteen which once protected the city.

St Mary's Church - St Mary's dominated Place de la Liberte and was formerly the Sarlat parish church. Built in the 14th & 15th centuries in meridian Gothic style it remained intact until the Revolution.

It was badly damaged by successive pillages and sold in 1815. All that remains today are the two bays under a ribbed vault and the bell-tower with its steeple missing but features several interesting gargoyles. Renovated by the well known architect Jean Nouvel it is now a market.

There is an elevator that will take you to the top of the building which affords a stunning view across Sarlat.

Sarlat Information

Market

The famous Sarlat market is held twice a week in the old town. Wednesday mornings are dedicated to food with the local produce providers setting up their stalls in and around Place de la Liberte.

On a Saturday the food producers are back in and around Place de la Liberte in the morning until around 1pm. General traders with a variety of goods can be found along Rue de la Republique for the entire day.

Gardens

The gardeners of Sarlat take great pride in the gardens that come under their care - even the roundabouts within the town are a work of art.

Need To Know

Parking - Sarlat old town is fully pedestrianised and has no parking. Parking can be found at:-

- Av du General de Gualle (D704) next to the cemetery.
- Boulevard Henri Arlet near the post office.
- Av Thiers.

ATM's – ATM's can be found along Rue de la Republique.

Tourism Information – The tourist office is in the old town on rue Tourny next to the Cathedral.

Markets

Sarlat Market – Markets are held:-

Saturday: in the old town – food and general merchandise from 8.30 am to 6 pm.

Saturday Morning Market: Place de la Liberté – food market from 8.30 am to 1 pm.

Wednesday Morning: Place de la Liberté – small food market from 8.30 am to 1 pm.

Covered Market - Open all year in the former Sainte Marie church in Place de la Liberté.

Off Season: everyday (except on Thursday) from 8.30 am to 1 pm

High Season: everyday from 8.30 am to 2 pm. On Friday from 9.30 am to 8 pm.

Organic Night Market - Place du 14 Juillet (in front of the Post Office).

Thursdays from the 17th of June to the 16th of September 6pm to 10pm

Public Transport - Sarlat has very limited public transport.

Supermarkets – All the main supermarkets are on the outskirts of town.

Carrefour – Rue de l'Abbe Breuil

E.LeClerc – Route du Lot

Casino – Avenue de la Dordogne

Petrol Stations – Petrol stations can be found at the supermarkets



Getting To Sarlat

Trains run from Paris to Sarlat via either Bordeaux or Souillac.

The route via Bordeaux is on a TGV from Gare Montparnasse Paris to either Libourne or Bordeaux. Then change trains for the local TER train that runs from Bordeaux/Libourne to Sarlat. This takes about 6 hours.

Intercity trains depart Gare de Austerlitz for Souillac several times a day and take about 5 hours.

The number 6 bus runs between Souillac and Sarlat daily. Go to transports.nouvelle-aquitaine.fr to use the handy planner and get timetables or download the App from the App store or Google Play. Cars Nouvelle-Aquitaine.

One other option is to get the train from Gare de Austerlitz to Brive la Gaillarde and collect a hire car and drive the rest of the way (about 50km). There is a Europcar office 50 metres from the Brive train station.

There is a Europcar office in Sarlat 450m from the train station.

It is recommended that you have a car while in the Dordogne as the public transport is very limited.



Holiday Sarlat



Villa La Peyrière Holiday Rental Sarlat

- 3 Bedrooms
- 2 Bathroom
- Private Pool
- Walk to Sarlat
- Five Star Reviews

For more information
and to enquire visit
www.villalapeyriere.net

Villa La Peyrière is a beautiful old stone house located in Central Sarlat, surrounded by 2100 square metres of established gardens and just a short stroll from the medieval quarter of Sarlat, in the heart of the beautiful Dordogne.

The property has been designed to make the most of the outdoors in the summer months as well as provide a comfortable living space in the cooler months and is walking distance to the old town. The property offers flexible accommodation and caters to families, couples or groups of friends. We offer discounts for long term off season stays.

The Private Pool is surrounded by landscaped gardens and is the perfect location to relax and soak up the summer sun.

Adjacent to the house there is a Patio surrounded by gardens, trees and visiting bird life with two BBQs (gas and wood), creating an intimate outdoor dining area that makes the most of the outdoor environment and views across the valley.

The newly upgraded and fully equipped Chef's Kitchen has Smeg appliances throughout and is a great space in which to create a culinary masterpiece.

Villa La Peyrière has Excellent / Five Star Reviews on all the major accommodation sites including Trip Advisor and Home Away and is an excellent base from which to explore Sarlat and the villages of the Dordogne, including Domme, Saint Cyprian, Les Eyzies, Montignac and Racamadour. Explore the local markets and discover local gourmet delights and more.



You enter the Villa into a stone sitting room, off the sitting room to one side is the kitchen which has stone walls, a large fireplace and is fitted with Smeg appliances.

To the other side of the sitting room is a large lounge / dining room with french doors leading to the garden.

All 3 bedrooms are upstairs and consist of 2 double bedrooms and a twin bedroom all of which have been recently renovated.

There are two bathrooms one an en-suite to the master bedroom.

Outside there are several different garden 'rooms' including a herb garden and walnut grove.

The pool sits in the lower garden which is surrounded by garden beds and privacy hedges.

There are two BBQ's, one wood and one gas and a lovely paved terrace with outdoor tables and chairs and views across the valley.

www.villalapeyriere.net





Beautiful Villages of the Dordogne

Beautiful Villages of the Dordogne

Les Plus Beaux Villages de France or in English The Most Beautiful Villages of France is an independent association that was created in 1982 to promote small French villages that have quality heritage.

To be awarded a Les Plus Beaux Village de France the village must meet the following criteria: the population of the village must not exceed 2,000 inhabitants, there must be at least 2 protected areas (picturesque or legendary sites, or sites of scientific, artistic or historic interest), and the decision to apply must be taken by the town council.

The Dordogne boasts more designated Beautiful Villages than any other department in France with ten of these lovely villages across the area. The nearby Lot department also has its share of Beautiful Villages all of which are within easy reach of the Dordogne.

Belves | Beautiful Village of France

Belves is a pretty medieval town that sits high above the Nauze Valley in the Dordogne. The town lies 34 km SW of Sarlat.

The town has 7 bell towers and withstood wars and invasion to have a wonderfully preserved old town centre and a lovely market square.

History

Historians believe that the Celts first settle here in 250BC. Due to its safe position high on a rocky spur it became a Roman market town. The Visigoths settled in the area after the downfall of the Roman empire and then after a brutal war the Franks. In 848 the town was destroyed by the Normans and Vikings who plundered many towns in their sweep across the country.

The town and most of the surrounding area was devastated in the 10th and 11th centuries by the plague which killed tens of thousands of people.

After the marriage of Helen of Aquitaine to Henry Plantagenet the town came under English rule and the area was one of the major battlegrounds of the 100 years war and the town suffered much damage.

The town also suffered greatly through the war of religions and for a time was held by the Protestants.

Belves was the capital of the region in the 18th century and now is a delightful town to visit with a typical bastide layout and centre.



Things to See and Do in Belves

Covered Market

The Belves covered markets date from the 15th century. An interesting item is the pilori chain on one of the pillars. This was put round the neck of wrong-doers and they were held there for two or three days as punishment.

Le Castrum

The old town of Belves, or Le Castrum originates from the 11/12th century and was once surrounded by ramparts. The Belfry was built in the 11th century and was originally a defensive tower overhanging a deep moat with caves that people lived in.

Troglodyte Dwellings

At the bottom of the moat the troglodytes lived and a visit to the "Habitations troglodytes" is interesting.

Tour de l'Auditeur

This tower dates from the 11th century. Guards would enter by ladder and then pull it up to prevent intruders.

La Tour du Guet

This is another watch tower that dates from the middle ages and overlooks the valley and so could warn when the enemy approached.

Hotel Bontemps

This building dates to the 12th century and was renovated in 1520 in the Italian Renaissance style.

Freres Precheurs

Once a monastery this 13th century building is now the town hall.

Beynac-et-Cazenac | Beautiful Village of France

Beynac-et-Cazenac or as it is known by the locals Beynac is on the banks of the River Dordogne, to the south-west of Sarlat.

The village spreads along the northern bank of the Dordogne river, and up the hill behind, reaching the chateau that stands above the village and river.

The narrow lanes wind up through the village and the houses are made from the traditional Dordogne yellow stone.

History

The area has been occupied since the bronze age and was sacked by both barbarians and the Normans.

The first record of the chateau was of Lord was Hélie de Beynac who built the first fortress in 1050.

The chateau and village was seized by Richard the Lion Heart in 1197 but was regained by the French in 1199.

During the 13th and 14th centuries Beynac played an influential role in the area and featured significantly in the 100 years war fought between the English and the French.

During the 17th century the population of Beynac joined with the rebellious peasants from Saint-Vincent and Bézenac to march on Sarlat, this was the beginning of the civil war.

Beynac and its Chateau are now both medieval treasures which allows one a small glimpse of history.



Things to See and Do

Chateau de Beynac

Chateau de Beynac is one of France's great chateaux and one of the best restored. Dating from the 10th century this grand defensive fortress sits high on a rocky outcrop and commands stunning views of the valley.

Once a major influence in the area the chateau featured heavily in the 100 years war as it sits on what was once the border of France and England and close to its enemies the English held Chateau de Castelnaud across the river.

Richard the Lion heart conquered the chateau and ruled for a brief time before his death.

The chateau is open all year, 7 days. Tickets can be purchased at the gate or on line.

Wander the Ancient Streets

Beynac et Cazenac is a labyrinth of tiny lane ways and alleys with quaint cottages and houses leading up to the chateau which are a delight to explore – note however it is steep so if you don't fancy the climb you can park at the top of the village and view it from above.

Lunch by the River

Enjoy lunch at one of the restaurants along the river at the edge of the village.

Canoes

Beynac is one of the many spots along the river you can pick up a canoe. This is a great way to experience the river and the valley. The trip is generally one way (going with the current) and tour operators collect you at the other end and return you to where you started.

Castelnaud-la-Chapelle | Beautiful Village of France

Castelnaud-la-Chapelle is a picturesque medieval village that sits on a rocky promontory where the Dordogne and Cerou rivers meet.

It is dominated by the Chateau Castelnaud which rises up over the small village.

The chateau offers stunning views of the Dordogne river and across the valley to the once arch enemy Chateau de Beynac.

History

Its rich past goes back to the 12th century and while the feudal fortress was considered impregnable, it was conquered by Simon de Montfort in 1214, during the crusade against the Albigensiens.

Situated in English territory, the castle and village were rival to Beynac castle, which

remained loyal to the king of France during the 100 years war.

Considered as the strongest rampart of Perigord Chateau Castelnaud was involved in all of the religious battles.

From the 17th century on however this austere citadel was abandoned in favour of more welcoming dwellings and gradually fell to ruin. It is presently being restored.

Nearby there is a small river beach from which you can swim. There are also canoes that can be hired just by the bridge.



Things to See and Do

Chateau de Castelnaud

Once considered the strongest fortress in the region Castelnaud has played a major role in all the wars of the area. It was an English stronghold during the 100 year war. The chateau has now been restored and gives visitors an insight into the history of the times.

Defensive Equipment

The chateau houses an extensive collection of arms and medieval war machinery. In the upper courtyard are a collection of catapults and trebuchets which are interesting to view.

Canoes

Castelnaud is one of the many spots along the river you can pick up a canoe. This is a great way to experience the river and the valley. The trip is generally one way (going with the current) and tour operators collect you at the other end and return you to where you started.

River Beach

Near the chateau is a pleasant river beach which is a good place for a picnic or swim on a hot day.

Domme | Beautiful Village of France

The bastide village of Domme sits high above the Dordogne Valley, 150 metres above the Dordogne river which meanders peacefully below.

From Belvedere de la Barre there are stunning views across the Dordogne valley.

History

Situated on an exceptional site, at the crossroads of main regional routes, a Feudal castle marked the spot until 1280. King of France, Philippe the Bold had a fortified village constructed in 1280, following his campaign along the Dordogne river, asserting its strength over the wealthy lords of the area. Domme obtained the privilege of minting its own currency.

In 1307 a number of Knight Templars were

imprisoned in the Porte des Tours during the trial against them. The Templar graffiti that bear witness to this time can still be seen today.

Domme was coveted by the English who first took the town in 1347 and it repeatedly changed rulers throughout the war until 1437 when it finally fell under French rule again.

The most damaging invasion was during the Religious wars when it was taken by Huguenots under the command of the famous Protestant captain, Geoffroy de Vivans. A majority of its medieval edifices were destroyed during this time.

Today Domme is a popular destination in the Dordogne for locals and visitors alike.



Things to See and Do

Templar Knights Graffiti

Visit the Porte des Tours and the graffiti of the Knight Templar's held captive here.

Caves / Grotte

The Grotte of Domme is the largest natural cave in the Périgord Noir, featuring colonnades, stalactites and stalagmites. The entrance to the caves is found in the market place. The tour takes approximately 45 minutes.

Museum Paul Reclus

Musée Paul Reclus is housed in a beautiful building that is part of the cultural heritage of Domme. The museum showcases an interesting collection of items with a focus on Archaeology, Ethnology and History.

The L' Oustal du Perigord.

Is home to a large collection of antiques and traditional items from the 19th and 20th centuries. The collection tells of peasant life in the region, providing other valuable evidence of their art and their history.

The Petit Train

Take a guided tour of Domme in a petit train with audio commentary or a guide.

La Roque – Gageac | Beautiful Village of France

La Roque Gageac is a picturesque village that is wedged between the Dordogne River and towering limestone cliffs about 10 km from Sarlat in the Dordogne region of France.

The village is designated as one of France's Le Plus Beaux Villages de France and is simply a delight. Cobbled paths wind their way between yellow stone houses that nestle below the cliff face, while gabarres, reminiscent of the old trading barges that once plied the river, cruise past.

History

Historians believe that the village has been occupied since pre-historic times and have found many flint axe-heads and other stone tools in the fields. A troglodyte fort set in the cliffs 40 metres above the town gives evidence to its earliest settlers.

To defend against invaders including Viking armies in long boats in the 12th century fortifications were built high in the cliffs, these fortifications continued to be built right through until the 17th century making the town impregnable. The Hundred Years War, and then France's bitter "Wars of Religion", turned La Roque Gageac into a key stronghold, impregnable and densely populated.

In the Middle Ages La Roque Gageac became an important trading town and port and boasted a population of 1500 people.

Today you can take a sightseeing tour along the river in a gabarre (river boat) that has been sympathetically reproduced.



Things to See and Do

Manoir de Tarde

This Renaissance grand manoir was built for the Tarde family notably Jean Tarde (1562-1636), who was an historian, as well as a cartographer, mathematician, astronomer, theologian, philosopher, and a friend of Galileo. This building consists of two main sections, with pointed gables and enchanting mullioned windows.

Romanesque Church

Halfway up the cliff sits the pretty Romanesque Church, the views down the valley and along the river from the courtyard of the church are stunning.

Sub Tropical Garden

These gardens are alongside the church, halfway up the cliff, and boast luxuriant sub-tropical and Mediterranean plants. It is thought that these plants do well here due to a unique micro-climate.

Chateau de la Malartrie

Once the home of nobility the chateau became a leper hospital in the 12th century. The building has been since transformed several times.

Monpazier | Beautiful Village of France

Monpazier is a bastide town in the southern Dordogne. The town square sits in the middle of the bastide and is home to a beautifully restored covered market.

When built the town was considered to be a perfect design and became a great influence to some of France's greatest architects.

Monpazier has not been damaged by the passing of time and the wars that have been fought around it and remains a stunning example of a Medieval bastide town.

Monpazier is a Grand National Site of France and a Le Plus Beaux de Villages de France. It has 32 buildings and sites that are protected as Historic Monuments.

History

Monpazier was founded on January 7, 1284, on behalf of King Edward I of England, by his steward John Grailly.

Monpazier was an important stronghold during the Hundred Years War and it was not until the reign of Charles V, King of France from 1366 to 1380, that the town came under French rule.

The town was also a centre of peasant rebellion twice in 1594 and then again in 1637 provoked by the misery brought about by the War of Religions. Both uprisings were brutally suppressed.

Now Monpazier is a quiet village with a popular Saturday market and is well worth a visit.



Things to See and Do

Place de Cornieres

The town square with beautifully intact covered market surrounded by arcades and arches. Dine at one of the restaurants that dot the square in the warm summer months.

Saint-Dominique Church

A fortified church dating from the 15th century.

Maison Chaitre

The finest example of a medieval house occupying 2 building blocks. Opposite St Dominique Church.

Recollects

Convent behind the church which once cared for the poor and educated girls. Now a permanent and temporary art exhibition space.

Flower Festival

On the 3rd Sunday of May Monpazier hosts a flower festival which is famous throughout the region.

Market

The weekly market is held every Thursday morning.

Beautiful Villages of the Dordogne



Saint Amand-de-Coly

Saint Amand de Coly is a pretty town in the southern Dordogne not far from Montignac.

In the centre of Saint Amand is its fortified church which is reputed to be the most beautiful fortified church in the Dordogne. The village is named after Saint Amand who was a hermit living in a cave in the hillside in the 6th century.

The abbey church dates back to the 12th century and next to the church are the abbey remains. In the 14th century the church was converted into a fortress but despite its additional defences it remains a beautiful Romanesque church.



Saint Leon-sur-Vezere

Saint Leon-sur-Vezere is in the southern Dordogne 25 km from Sarlat.

The church in St Leon sur Vezere is on the site of an ancient Gallo-Roman villa and you can see some traces of this on the side of the church next to the river.

It is on the pilgrim route that led from the Abbey of Vezelay in Burgundy and on towards the abbeys at Cadouin and Saint Avit Senieur.



Saint - Jean -de-Cole

Saint Jean-de-Cole is in the Northern Dordogne near Thivers.

The village square is flanked on one side by the Chateau de la Marthonie which was built over a period of time and the represents different design periods.

On another side of the square is the Romanesque Byzantine church of St Jean Baptist built in the 12th century.

The other sides of the square have traditional cottage-style houses.

Beautiful Villages of the Dordogne



Limeuil

Limeuil holds a stunning location where the Rivers Dordogne and Vézère meet. The two rivers are graced by stoned arched bridges which make an excellent photo opportunity.

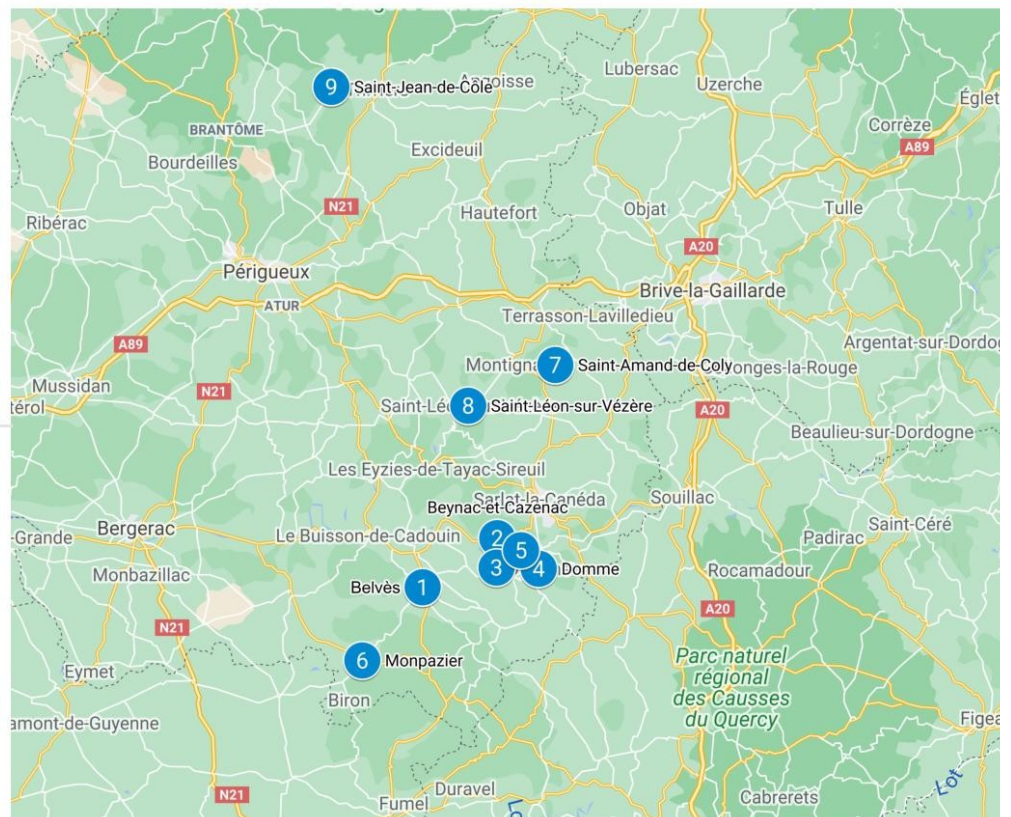
Like many towns and villages of the area this once fortified town was pillaged by the Vikings and suffered greatly during the Hundred Year War. You can still see three of the old fortified gates that stand testament to the town's history.

Limeuil is a pretty place to stop for a picnic by the river and for a wander through the village.

Map - Beautiful Villages of the Dordogne

Beautiful Villages Dordogne

- 1 Belvès
- 2 Beynac-et-Cazenac
- 3 Castelnau-la-Chapelle
- 4 Domme
- 5 La Roque-Gageac
- 6 Monpazier
- 7 Saint-Amand-de-Coly
- 8 Saint-Léon-sur-Vézère
- 9 Saint-Jean-de-Côle



Other Notable Villages



Rocamadour

Rocamadour is a town perched high on a rocky plateau overlooking the Alzou Valley. It is estimated that the town receives 1.5 million visitors each year and is a major point on the religious pilgrimage route.

For pilgrims Rocamadour is important for The Shrine of Our Lady of Rocamadour or Sanctuaries which is a complex of religious structures that are set halfway down the cliff and centred on a statue of the Virgin Mary (Black Madonna) and the tomb of an ancient saint, St. Amadour.

History

According to the legend, Rocamadour is named after the founder of the ancient sanctuary, Saint Amadour the tax collector of Jericho mentioned in Luke 19:1-10, and the husband of St. Veronica, who wiped Jesus' face on the way to Calvary.

This legend has been disputed by historians, however it is known that Rocamadour was first mentioned in the texts of Pope Gregory VII as one of the four main pilgrimage sites in the Middle Ages along with Rome, Jerusalem and Compostela.



Things to See and Do

Sanctuaries

These are a series of 12th to 14th century chapels that are halfway down the cliff. The Sanctuaries hold the town's most important relics. There are 216 steps leading down the Grand Escalier, stairway, which pilgrims climb on their knees.

Black Madonna (Vierge Noir)

The famous Black Madonna is one of the two most significant relics in Rocamadour. The statue is housed in the Chapelle Notre Dame which is part of the Sanctuaries.

Chapelle Miraculeuse

The Chapelle Miraculeuse contains the Tomb of St. Amadour, who is said to have carved out of an hermitage in the rock. Hanging from the roof is one of the oldest known clocks, which dates to the 8th century.

Basilique St-Sauveur

The Basilique St-Sauveur was built in the Romanesque-Gothic style from the 11th to the 13th centuries. It's decorated with paintings and inscriptions recalling visits of celebrated persons, including Philippe the Handsome.

Chapelle St-Michel

A 12th-century Romanesque chapel is sheltered by an overhanging rock; inside are well-preserved frescoes dating from the 12th century. Outside there is a courtyard where there is a broken sword said to be a fragment of Durandal, once wielded by the hero Roland, one of Charlemagne great warriors.

Les Eyzies de Taynac-Sirueil

Les Eyzies de Taynac-Sirueil (known as Les Eyzies) is a pretty town in the Perigord Noir region of the Dordogne that is famous for its pre-history, grottes, caves and troglodyte dwellings.

The pre-history site was discovered during construction for a railroad went through Les Eyzies in 1868, when a rock shelter in a limestone cliff was uncovered.

In and around Les Eyzies are a series of prehistoric rock dwellings, the caves include some of the most significant archaeological finds of the Upper Palaeolithic (from about 40,000 to

10,000 years ago) and Middle Palaeolithic (200,000 to 40,000 years ago) periods; they are especially noted for their extensive wall drawings.

Situated in the Vézère Valley the Les Eyzies caves are among a series of decorated grottes in the area that were collectively designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1979.



Things To See and Do

National Pre-History Museum

The National Pre-History Museum houses over one million prehistoric objects. It is the most visited museum of prehistory in France.

By the wealth of its collection the Museum comes second in the world, preceded only by the museum at St Germain-en-Laye.

The Museum of Pre-History Les Eyzies-de-Taynac

The national prehistory museum brings together the biggest Palaeolithic collection in France and second largest in Europe and is one of the great things to see and do in the area.

The Museum is closed on Tuesdays.

Caves and Grottes of Les Eyzies

There are many Caves and Grottes to be discovered in Les Eyzies and the surrounding area. The most famous being Font du Guame on the outskirts of the town.

Pole International de la History Les Eyzies

Free centre for information on all prehistoric sites in the area. Bilingual staff to answer questions, such as hours of operation, maps to get there, times for tours.

Chateau du Commarque Les Eyzies

A 12th century Chateau in a valley where the Beune runs with prehistoric caves below.

Les Eyzies Market

The Les Eyzies market is on every Monday morning and is packed with fresh regional produce and crafts.



Caves & Grottes of The Dordogne

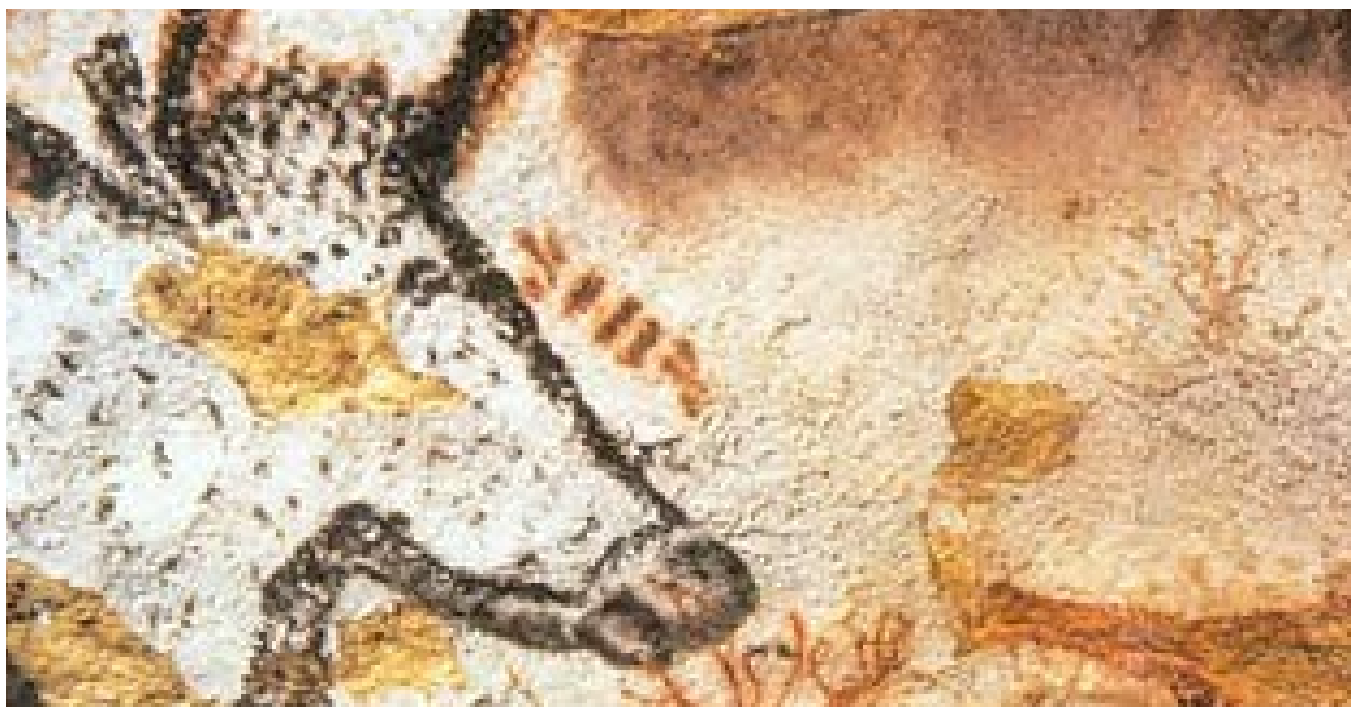
The pre-historic caves and grottes of the Dordogne play a significant role in the history of both the area and Cro-Magnon man - the first early modern humans who lived 20,000 to 40,000 years ago.

The first sample of Cro-Magnon man was discovered in the town of Les Eyzies - de Taynac (or just Les Eyzies) in the heart of the Dordogne. There are many grottes across the Dordogne – here will have listed the most significant.

While visiting the pre-historic caves and grottes in Les Eyzies make sure you take time to visit the National Pre-History Museum - it is a fascinating glimpse in to man's past.



Caves and Grottes of the Dordogne



Lascaux II Caves at Montignac

The most important prehistoric grottes or caves in France, the Lascaux caves, are one of the highlights of a trip to the Dordogne. Discovered in 1940 by four boys searching for their dog the original caves were damaged by the number of visitors and closed in 1963. In 1983 **Lascaux II** was open which is an exact copy of the original. In 2016 **Lascaux IV** opened which is a larger and more accurate replica which integrates digital technology into the display in a new museum inside the hill overlooking Montignac.

La Roque Saint Christophe

About halfway between Le Bugue and Montignac is the pre-historic troglodyte town of La Roque Saint Christophe which sits 90 metres above the River Vézère.

These prehistoric shelters and grottes and were once home to an entire village and as you walk along it you can see remains of the forge, the church and other buildings.

Gouffre de Proumeyssac

Near Le Bugue, the prehistoric caves and grottes at Proumeyssac are highly renowned. The main feature is the enormous 'Cathedral of Crystal' - a stunning, huge and beautifully lit cavern. You can pay extra and enter by the same method as the original visitors - a suspended basket, now motorised but originally lowered by a horse. The caves and grottes are expertly lit to highlight the spectacular rock formations.

Les Grottes de Maxange

Discovered in 2000, these prehistoric caves and grottes at Le Buisson de Cadouin are now open to the public.

Gouffre de Padirac Lot

The Gouffre de Padirac is the favourite prehistoric caves and grottes of many in the Dordogne area. The cave is entered by boat.

Grotte de Villars

A great spectacle of lighting and water bring these caves and grottes to life, and truly show the various rock formations at their best. There are also renowned prehistoric paintings, including an unusual prehistoric painting of a person (usually only animals were painted in prehistoric paintings) to see.

Grotte de Cougnac at Payrignac

This has both a natural cave with a ceiling of very fine stalactites and a cave with prehistoric paintings. It is 18km from Sarlat.

Grotte de Domme Dordogne

These caves are underneath the village of Domme allowing you to visit the caves and visit one of France's most beautiful villages at the same time.

Troglodyte houses at Belves

Underneath the main square of Belves there is a prehistoric troglodyte village in grottes which is very interesting to visit. Belves is also one of France's most beautiful villages.

Troglodyte Fort at La Roque Gageac

These are cliff side dwellings, dating from the 12th century, rather than underground caverns, and are found 40 metres up the cliffs at La Roque-Gageac on the Dordogne River.

Grotte de Rouffignac

An electric train takes you into a prehistoric cavern where you will find engravings of mammoths, rhinoceros, horses and bison.

Caves and Grottes of Les Eyzies



L'abri Pataud Les Eyzies

L'abri Pataud cave is in the centre of Les-Eyzies-de-Tayac and was lived in by prehistoric Cro-Magnon between 20,000 and 40,000 years ago. Many of the items found during archaeological digs can be seen in the neighbouring museum of pre-history, which show-cases many prehistoric artifacts.

Grotte de Font de Gaume Les Eyzies

The Font de Gaume cave, just over 1km east of Les Eyzies on the D47 has a superb collection of prehistoric paintings. To protect the prehistoric paintings visitor numbers in the cave are limited and in peak season it is best to make a reservation before visiting these caves. It is advisable to book ahead if you wish to visit this cave and grottes.

L'abri du Cap Blanc near Les Eyzies

9km east of Les Eyzies this prehistoric natural rock shelter contains frieze of prehistoric horses and bison. It is considered to be the best example of sculpture of the Middle Magdalenian period in France.

Grotte de Combarelles near Les Eyzies

This prehistoric cave, 3km north-east of Les Eyzies contains engravings of pre-historic animals and some human figures.

Les Grottes du Roc de Cazelle Les Eyzies

Also to the east of Les Eyzies are caves of Les Grottes du roc de Cazelle which were lived in by prehistoric man and then turned into a fortified house in the Middle Ages.

La Grotte de Bernifal Les Eyzies

This prehistoric cave is home to both prehistoric paintings and stalactites and stalagmites. It is only open from July to September.

South of Les Eyzies

Grotte de Bara Bahau near Les Eyzies

Prehistoric Cave system 2km north of Le Bugue, with lots of animal pictures carved into the walls.

Le Gouffre de Proumeyssac Les Eyzies

A wonderful natural cave full of stalactites and stalagmites.

North of Les Eyzies

Grotte du Grand Roc Les Eyzies

A few kilometres north-west of Les Eyzies the prehistoric Grottes du Grand Roc caves contain amazing stalactites and stalagmites.

Laugerie-Basse NW Les Eyzies

North-west of Les-Eyzies and adjacent to the Grottes du Grand Roc, Laugerie Basse is a prehistoric cave type shelter used by Cro-Magnon man.

Les Abris de Castel-Merle near Les Eyzies

There are several prehistoric shelters, some containing engravings and sculptures. There is also a museum on-site.

Le Conquil

Le Conquil is a park with troglodyte dwellings. It also has a dinosaur park for children and a tree adventure course.

Caves and Grottes of Les Eyzies



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Chateaux of the Dordogne

It is claimed the Dordogne has over 1000 chateaux.

There is everything from defensive chateaux or castles from which the 100 years war was fought to stately homes.

The chateaux are famous throughout France and it is worth visiting more than one of the chateaux of the Dordogne as they all have something different to offer.

The Dordogne Valley is often referred to as the 'Valley of the 5 Chateaux' due to the five very historic chateaux dating from the 100 years wars. The two most impressive chateaux are the famous Chateau de Beynac and Chateau de Castelnaud.

These chateaux are reputed to be the most visited chateaux in France.

Chateaux of the Dordogne | Valley of the Five Chateaux

Valley of the Five Chateaux

The Dordogne Valley is known as the Valley of the five Chateaux for the five historic and vastly different chateaux that all played a role in the 100 years war. The largest and most historically significant are Chateau de Castelnaud and Chateau de Beynac.

Le Chateau de Castelnaud

The most visited chateau in the South of France dominates the picturesque village of Castelnaud-la-Chapelle on the left bank of the Dordogne River.

During the Middle-Ages, the mighty English chateau commanded the strategic position at the confluence of the Dordogne and the Céou Rivers, opposite the rival French castle of Beynac.

This castle is truly magnificent and transport one back in time. Castelnaud is open every day year-round, opening times vary depending on the time of year.

Chateau de Beynac

This impressive 10th century chateau has been destroyed and rebuilt many times over the years. It includes features of many ages, including some rare frescoes of the 15th century.

It played a significant role in the 100 years war when the castle was in French hands and battled the English across the river in their strong hold of Chateau Castelnaud. Chateau Beynac is open every day of the year 10AM to 7PM.

Les Chateau Milandes

Chateau Milandes is a smaller prettier chateau on the left bank of the Dordogne river. It was built in 1489 by François de

Caumont, Lord of Castelnaud for his wife who requested a more comfortable place to live than the feudal Castelnaud. He retained various architectural elements from the Middle-Ages, including turrets, newel staircases, and gargoyles.

From the Revolution throughout the entire 19th century, the castle was inhabited, though was barely maintained, before it suffered a serious fire. It was restored from 1900 to 1908 by Charles de Claverie.

Josephine Baker purchased Les Milandes in 1947 and installed contemporary comforts such as central heating, running water and electricity. Baker's massive expenses led her into bankruptcy and the castle was sold in 1968 for a tenth of its value.

The gardens of the chateau are beautiful and well worth a visit.

Chateau Monfort

This castle is privately owned and not open to the public.

Chateau Fayac

This castle is privately owned and not open to the public.





Chateau de Beynac

Chateau Beynac is built on a plateau with a sheer cliff to one side on the banks of the Dordogne River with the cliff acting as a natural defence. The defences were built up on the plateau: double crenellated walls, double moats, one of which was a deepened natural ravine, and double barbican.

In 1050 Hélie de Beynac, the first known and recorded lord, installed the first fortified presence *Castrum*. During the 13th and 14th centuries, the power of Beynac permitted it to become an important influence within the region. The Lords of Beynac contributed greatly to the anti-English wars, while all the while expanding their territory.

In the 15th century, Beynac was designated as a Barony and became very prosperous.

The religious wars also brought new sufferings to the population, in particular in the 16th century. This combined with new taxes, brutal winters and no food saw great unrest amongst the people. Gatherings were organised in the forests, the peasant uprising, the "croquants", had started. This was the start of the French Revolution.

In 1761, the last heiress of the Lords and Barons of Beynac, Marie-Claude, married Christophe de Beaumont. When Marie-Claud died in 1811, after eight centuries of history, the line of the Beynacs disappeared.

The castle was bought in 1962 by Lucien Grosso who has restored it.

At the chateau you can view beautiful rich tapestries showing hunting and other scenes from the lives of the lords of the period. The Château de Beynac has been listed as a monument historique by the French Ministry of Culture since 1944.

The Chapel

As with numerous chapels in the middle ages, this one was dedicated to the mother of Christ: Marie, but locally, for the Inhabitants it is Notre-Dame de Beynac.

The origin of the first building dates back to the 12th and 13 centuries. The major part of the modifications and changes coming during the 14th and 15th centuries.

Chateau de Castelnaud



Chateau de Castelnaud sits high above the Dordogne River in the Dordogne region of Perigord Noir. Castelnaud - or Castelnaud, meaning the “new castle” - was founded in the 12th century as a defensive fortress and faces its once arch enemy Chateau Beynac across the Dordogne river.

Castelnaud was a major defensive fortress through the 100 Year War and came under English rule during this period. Chateau Beynac across the river was a major foe of Castelnaud. Abandoned in the 17th century the chateau fell into disrepair and in the 19th century it was used as a stone quarry.

In 1966, it was listed officially as an Historic Site and has since been brought back to life through a series of outstanding restoration projects. Its “Museum of Medieval Warfare” was founded in 1985.

Things to See

The Museum of Medieval Weapons contains a collection of 200 items of arms and armour (weapons for cutting and thrusting, missile weapons, artillery pieces), as well as furniture of the period.

War Machines

At Castelnaud you will find a reconstruction of medieval war machines, in full size.

- Tower-positioned giant crossbow: This giant crossbow was used by the defenders of a stronghold from a fixed position.
- The Pedrero and the Bricole: Both were forms of catapult: men pulled on ropes to bend back the arm and then fire stones.
- The Trebuchet: Also using the counterweight principle, this machine was in use up to the 16th century. Despite its low rate of fire - only one or two per hour - it was the most powerful machine used in the Middle Ages.
- The Bombard: The first forms of artillery using gunpowder appeared in the 14th century. Handling them was a delicate matter. Before reloading, the gunners had to wait for them to cool down. Result: their best rate of fire was only once an hour.

Chateaux of the Dordogne | Other Notable Chateaux

Le Chateau de Commarque, Les Eyzies

The chateau was founded during the 12th century on the request of the abbots of Sarlat. Initially the Château de Commarque was only a wooden tower, its primary function was ensure the safety of the valley.

During the Hundred Year War, the Chateau was captured by the English. During the War of Religion, the Chateau was taken by the Catholics, due to the Beynacs being Protestant partisans.

The chateau has been undergoing restoration since 1994. It has been listed since 1943 as a monument historique by the French Ministry of Culture. There is a prehistoric cave under the chateau.

Chateau Bourdeilles, Brantome

The Chateau de Bourdeilles was designed by a woman, Jacquet Montbron. There are two parts to this chateau, a fortress dating from the 13th century, dominated by an octagonal living area and a Renaissance castle with richly furnished rooms such as the golden lounge with a beautiful painted ceiling. There is a prestigious collection of furniture including the bed of Spanish Charles V.

Chateau Biron Dordogne

The chateau Biron was privately owned by the same family for 24 generations when it was lost in the early 20th century to gambling debts of the then Baron. Biron is smaller than many of the big defensive chateaux of the area and you can get a really good sense of what life was like in medieval times. This lovely castle is currently being painstakingly restored. Chateau Biron is close to the Bastide town of Monpazier.

Chateau de Hautefort, Hautefort

Chateau Hautefort is 40km east of Perigueux, one of the most prestigious castles in the Dordogne and is a classified an historical monument.

Once a defensive chateau Hautefort was transformed into a palatial residence during the 16th and 17th centuries.

The castle became a prison during the revolution and fell into decline in the early 1900's when it was stripped of much of its finery.

Rescued in 1929 it was restored before being destroyed by fire in 1968. The owner immediately set to restoring it with local and national help.

This elegant castle contains paintings and tapestries from the 17th century and is surrounded by formal French gardens and parkland.

Chateau de Fenelon, Sainte Mondane

It's a beautiful castle surrounded by a triple wall and located above the village of Saint Mondane. The castle has a collection of armour, weapons and furniture dating back to 15, 16 17 and 18th centuries.

Chateau de Jumilhac, Thiviers

If you go as far as possible in the northeast corner of the department of Dordogne, you will find the magnificent Chateau de Jumilhac. The remarkable feature of this castle is the roof - an extravaganza of towers and turrets that led to Jumilhac being described as having the most romantic rooftops in France.

Chateau de Montreal, Isaac

A nice little chateau and formal gardens.





Gardens of the Dordogne

Gardens of Chateau de Eyrignac



The Gardens of the Manoir d'Eyrignac have been handed down from generation to generation for the past 500 years.

The first gardens were designed in the XVIIIth Century in the French style, inspired by those of the villas of Italy.

They were completely revised in the XIXth Century to that of an English-style park.

The garden is split into 5 main areas: the Box Labyrinth; the Plant Sculptures Kingdom; the Manor and French garden; Capucine's gardens and the White Garden and Flower Meadow.

The gardens are near the town of Salignac, north-east of Sarlat.

Gardens of La Roque Gageac



The picturesque village of La Roque Gageac boasts an area of Sub Tropical Gardens that were planted in the 1970's.

The exotic gardens are alongside the church, halfway up the cliff, and contain luxuriant sub-tropical and Mediterranean plants including lemon trees, banana trees and many species of palm.

It is thought that these plants do well here due to a unique micro-climate produced by the protection of the cliff and little or no wind.

Water Gardens of Carsac



The Jardins d'Eau are set over 3 acres located in Saint Rome, Carsac-Aillac, Dordogne.

The gardens are a collection of large ponds set above the Dordogne River that contain 16 lotus species and a large variety of other aquatic plants.

The garden has a backdrop of cliffs and wood and is a lovely relaxed place to visit.

They are open May to October with an admission fee charged.

Carsac - Aillac is 9km from Sarlat.

Gardens of the Dordogne

Gardens of Chateau Hautefort



From the 17th century, there have been formal gardens at Hautefort. However, the original gardens were destroyed over the centuries by wars and neglect.

The garden that is seen today was established in the 20th century by the Baron and Baroness de Bastard between 1950 and 1980.

Laid out in terraces around the château, the formal gardens are perfect for an stroll.

These gardens are one of the great contributions made by the Baroness de Bastard towards rescuing the Chateau de Hautefort,

The Panoramic Gardens of Limeuil



The Panoramic Gardens of Limeuil surround a medieval chateau which was renovated in the 19th century. During this time the chateau and the gardens were maintained by the then owner.

Sadly like many grand properties both the chateau and garden were abandoned until 2004 when the town of Limeuil and the association, 'Au Fil du Temps' took charge of the park.

The entrance to the gardens is by the chateau where the garden opens out into a small arboretum which features a giant sequoia tree.

Bamboo Gardens of Planbuisson



The Jardins de Planbuisson is a large bamboo and grasses garden covering 1.5 hectares. The collections include more than 180 species of bamboo and 210 species of grasses from around the world.

The large variety of grasses is also something not often seen in one place and makes an interesting trip and is certainly different from other French gardens.

The garden was created in 1989 by Michel Bonfils as a private collection and is now managed by a garden association.

The gardens are situated in Le Buisson de Cadouin in the Dordogne. There is a small entrance fee which goes toward its upkeep.



Markets of the Dordogne

Markets

The Markets are an important part of daily life in France, it is a chance for locals to meet and exchange gossip and to buy the best possible produce available. If you are in France during cherry or strawberry season - buy some. They will be the best fruit you have ever eaten!

The Dordogne is renowned for duck and goose products, walnuts and Rocamadour cheese which is produced nearby.

When shopping in markets in the Dordogne pick up some confit de canard to cook when you get back to your holiday gite.

Markets are held in different villages on different days with speciality markets such as Truffles and Chestnut markets held seasonally.

If you are visiting the markets in the Dordogne in the peak of summer it is advisable to get there early as it can get very busy.

Market Schedule
Download Here
Or Visit the Website
Everything Dordogne Markets

Food in the Dordogne.

Food is a very serious business in France. In 2010 UNESCO added French cuisine to the list of cultural objects that are called 'intangible cultural heritage'.

The food of each region is quite different with each region having its own specialities which have traditionally come from what is available on the land or sea. In the Dordogne it is duck, goose, goat cheese and walnuts along with excellent fresh produce

The French people consistently vote the Dordogne as the #1 food region in France.



