



## FRANCE

# DISCOVER SARLAT AND THE DORDOGNE VALLEY (TOUR CODE: 11964)

### STARTS AND ENDS

in Sarlat

### TRAVEL PERIODS

01 Apr 25 - 31 Oct 25

### EXPERIENCE

Cultural

### TRAVEL STYLE

Independent Holiday Packages

Discover France's best-kept secret, the Dordogne region. Admire its medieval hilltop castles, historic cave paintings and charming villages.

## Highlights

- Enjoy a **Cruise on the Dordogne River**
- See Extraordinary pre-historic **Cave Paintings**
- Visit the beautiful village of **Rocamadour**
- Wander the picturesque town of **Sarlat**

Based in Sarlat, in the heart of the Dordogne region, join us on this 5-day experience to discover the essentials of this fascinating French province. Follow your guide on these day trips from Sarlat and visit one of the most well preserved 17th century towns.

You will also experience a unique visit to the Lascaux IV Cave that will plunge you back to the origins of Art. The tour also includes the visit of some of the most beautiful villages of the area as well as a boat ride on the River Dordogne so as to admire stunning landscapes and mighty medieval fortresses lined up along the River.



- ✓ ENTIRE Cooling-Off Period
- ✓ ENTIRE Change of Mind
- ✓ ENTIRE On Ground Support
- ✓ ENTIRE AUD Prices
- ✓ ENTIRE Industry Accredited
- ✓ ENTIRE Australian Owned

## INCLUSIONS

- 4 nights in Sarlat at Hotel Le Renoir - 3\* or similar
- Daily Breakfast
- Gourmet walking tour of Sarlat
- Half day small group tour (max 8 people) of the Villages of the Dordogne Valley
- Full day Small Group tour (max 8 people) of the Paleolithic Art of the Caves
- Half day Small Group Tour (max 8 people) of Rocamadour

## ITINERARY

Day 1

### Sarlat

Arrive in Sarlat on your own and settle into your hotel.

Explore the exceptional beauty of **Sarlat** at your own pace. Because modern history has largely passed it by, Sarlat has remained preserved and is one of the most representative towns of 14th century France. Located in the heart of the Perigord Noir, the town possesses an outstanding number of buildings and houses dating from the 13th to 18th century. Take some time to stroll through the small narrow alleys and streets for personal discovery.

Overnight stay in Sarlat at **Hotel Le Renoir**.



Day 2

Sarlat Domme La Roque Gageac Beynac Sarlat

After breakfast, meet your English speaking driver-guide at Place Pasteur and start your **gourmet walking tour**.

Walk towards the Market and begin your discovery of the best produce of the Dordogne region. Then stop at a family run local delicacies shop. Here, we will taste small toasts spread with patés or foie gras from either duck or goose. Then, taste a top rated Foie Gras from a local producer that has obtained many awards at the Paris Exhibition. Finish this tasting stop with a local cheese called Trappe d'Echourgnac. Trappist cheese is pressed, uncooked, fermented by retro-rubbing or by using the "morge" scrubbing technique. Then walnut liqueur is added. How much? And, then what? Well, that's a secret never to be told! All this will be rinsed with a tasting of a White & Red Bergerac wine.

Follow your guide through the medieval streets of Sarlat. This walking tour allows your guide to point out all the local products of the season that arrive from all corners of the Dordogne. If you are lucky, it might be the season of strawberries, of which the Dordogne is famous for, and your guide will make sure that you have the opportunity to sample some.

Another very popular stop is at a local walnut cake producers stall. Walnut Cake is a true specialty of the Dordogne. It is said that there are as many recipes as there are ducks and geese in the Dordogne, and that's a lot! Let your guide take you to his / her preferred producer.

Your next stop will be a **visit of a Church that has become a Market**. Even though this market is accessible on the other days as well, we stop here as there is a great opportunity to taste very different specialties. As a starter you will get to taste half-cooked Foie Gras accompanied by a glass of Bergerac white wine. This will be followed by dried magret (duck breast) with pepper.

Finally, listen to your guide as you are introduced to the the king of mushrooms, the black truffle. If you would like to buy some, then this is the place. You can also purchase black truffle oil that makes for a great seasoning. End with a total walnut experience. Taste the local walnut oil, the croquants - a dry and crunchy caramelised sugar biscuit like treat. End the tasting with a shot of walnut liquor to rinse all these delicious treats right down.

Enjoy some free time for personal discovery and lunch (at own expense)

#### **In the afternoon, visit the Villages of the Dordogne Valley.**

Drive to the beautiful village of Domme. With its trapezoid city plan, Domme is a bastide, or a fortified medieval town, adapted to the surrounding terrain, and thus falling short of the rectangular city plan characteristic to bastides. The village is classified as one of the "Plus Beaux Villages de France" ("The Most Beautiful Villages of France").

In 1307, Knight Templars were imprisoned in Domme while during the Hundred Years' War, the bastide was coveted by the English who first took the town in 1347 and repeatedly changed rulers throughout the war until 1437 when it finally fell under French rule again.

Then drive to La Roque Gageac and enjoy a **peaceful cruise on the the Dordogne River** on board an authentic Gabarre to admire mighty castles that loom over the riverside. The Gabarres are traditional flat-bottomed boats that have been used for transporting goods along the Dordogne since the Middle Ages.

A trip on one of the Gabarres offers a relaxing way to enjoy the sight of some of the many Dordogne chateaux and villages from the perspective of the river. Various sights and wildlife are pointed out to you as you meander slowly down the river as well as the history of the Gabarres.

Finally, reach Beynac to admire the village and the Castle. This Middle Ages construction, with its austere appearance, is perched on top of a limestone cliff, dominating the town and the north bank of the Dordogne River. The castle was built in the 12th century by the barons of Beynac (one of the four baronies of Périgord) to close the valley.

The sheer cliff face being sufficient to discourage any assault from that side, the defenses were built up on the plateau: double crenelated walls, double moats, one of which was a deepened natural ravine, double barbican. See architectural phenomenon, aided by nature, and discover more about the history of this unusual city on this half-day tour!

6.00pm drop off in Sarlat and night at your hotel.

Overnight stay in Sarlat at **Hotel Le Renoir**.

Breakfast





Day **3**

## Sarlat Vézère Valley & Rouffignac Cave Sarlat

After breakfast, meet your English speaking driver-guide at Place Pasteur and depart for the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the **Vézère Valley**.

Some 15,000 years B.C. unknown artists created breathtaking paintings, drawings and etchings inside caves of which the most extraordinary examples are found in the Dordogne area. You'll be introduced to this fascinating art and to the people who created it.

Enjoy a guided visit of the National Prehistory Museum. Established in July 2004, the museum houses some 18,000 pieces and a collection of six million artifacts. The museum's collections were established as early as 1913, when researcher Denis Peyrony convinced the French state to acquire the Château des Eyzies, built at the end of the 16th century, and to transform it into an excavation warehouse that could double up as a museum. Follow your guide and discover the main chapters of the Hominids' development through an anthropological frieze and a brief reminder of Africa's history, starting with the early Australopithecines. Many themes are explored, including the legendary "Lucy", the small 3.5-million-year-old woman discovered in Ethiopia in 1974. You will then visit the permanent exhibit galleries that will plunge you into the mists of time, revealing seven sequences that cover the entire Paleolithic era through an "ideal historiography".

Enjoy some free time for lunch (at your own expense) in Montignac or a village of the Dordogne region. Ask your guide for recommendations.

Continue to **Rouffignac Cave**. This cave possesses original and authentic etchings and drawings. The Rouffignac cave was already mentioned in 1575 by François de Belleforest. In his "Cosmographie Universelle" he cites "paintings and animal traces". In the 19th century, the cave was known as a tourist attraction. Famous archaeologists like Henry Breuil, André Glory and Martel had visited the cave in the early 20th century, but it was only in 1956 when Louis-René Nougier and Romain Robert, two prehistorians from the Pyrenees, rediscovered and confirmed the cave art.

Finally, end the tour with the visit of brand new Lascaux IV cave – open since December 2016. For the first time, all of Lascaux is revealed. A complete new replica retraces the discovery of the famous decorated cave. But that's not the end of the adventure: the entire site inquires into the position that Lascaux occupies in cave art and its relation to contemporary creation. The opening of the International Centre for Cave Art marks the beginning of a new adventure combining the emotion of ancestral art and an important technological achievement.

6.00pm drop off in Sarlat and night at your hotel.

Overnight stay in Sarlat at **Hotel Le Renoir**.

Breakfast



## Day 4

### Sarlat Rocamadour Sarlat

After breakfast, meet your English speaking driver-guide at Place Pasteur and depart for the village of **Rocamadour**.

Miraculous rock, collection of tales, legends and beliefs, sanctuary of the Black Virgin, pilgrimage site: the Village of Rocamadour is all of this at the same time. The old medieval houses, the towers and fortifications, the oratories all tumble along the steep cliff that dominates the Alzou Canyon. The whole site is topped off by the castle and its dungeon and the seven sanctuaries. Your guide will certainly stop here for a breathtaking view of the whole site that make for fantastic photo opportunities.

You will follow a guided walking tour of the village and then enjoy some free time for lunch. Rocamadour is without a doubt one of the most beautiful villages of the area. Classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site as it is located on the way to Santiago de Compostela (St James Way), the main attraction of the village lies in its sanctuaries especially that of Notre Dame that bears a statue of the Black Virgin.

The visit of the village can be difficult for those with walking difficulties due to the step paths and steps, but please note that you may access the sanctuaries by lift (tickets not included in price). For lunch, there are many restaurants & snacks to be found in the village and your guide will make suggestions depending on what type of meal you are looking for.

1.00pm drop off in Sarlat and night at your hotel.

Overnight stay in Sarlat at **Hotel Le Renoir**.

Breakfast



Day **5**

## Sarlat

Breakfast at your hotel, where your tour ends.

Breakfast

## OPTIONAL EXTRAS

1 additional Pre-night in Sarlat

Add 1 extra night at the beginning of your package and extend your stay in Sarlat!





Prices are dynamic based on travel dates. Please proceed to [Book Now](#) or [Contact Us](#) for details.

## 1 additional Post-night in Sarlat

Add 1 extra night at the end of your package and extend your stay in Sarlat!



Prices are dynamic based on travel dates. Please proceed to [Book Now](#) or [Contact Us](#) for details.

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

French

## LOCAL CURRENCY

EUR

- Order of Tours can be modified depending on availability of the activities.
- We work with a selection of hotels in each location. All bookings are subject to availability, which means our team will confirm your specific hotels upon confirmation and payment of deposit. The package price is based on 3-star accommodation.

## Excluded

- International airfares and taxes
- Domestic airfares and taxes, unless otherwise specified in our holiday package
- Visa expenses, processing and issuance fees
- Meals other than as specified in our holiday package
- Travel Insurance or expenses of a personal nature (mini-bar, phone call, laundry, etc.)
- Tips or gratuities to guides, drivers, porters, hotel, restaurant or boat staff, etc.
- Or any other travel expense that has not been included in our holiday package