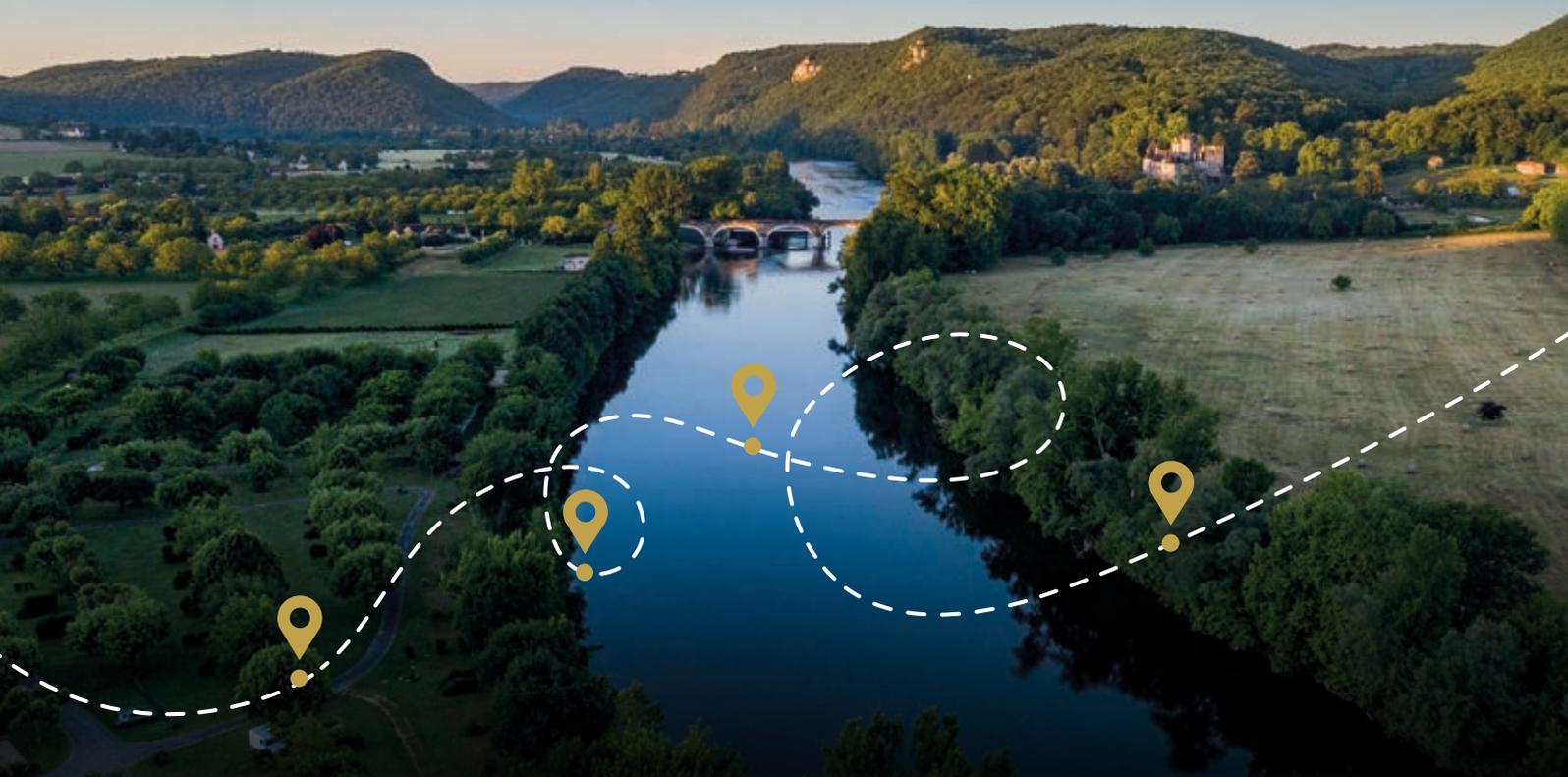


# Journey to the Dordogne Valley

{ READY-MADE TOURS FROM 1 TO 4 DAYS }

## ROADBOOK

*Simplify your life, let yourself be guided  
on the mythical road of the 1001 Châteaux!*



**DORDOGNE**  
Valley

Édition 2024/2025



# The Dordogne Valley,

all along its history, local traditions and way of life



The Périgord is an enchanting area, with a **rich archaeological, historic and cultural heritage** and sumptuous landscapes. It is crossed by a majestic river that will give its name to the current department: the Dordogne.

The name of Périgord still remains and is frequently given to this area, because the «borders» of the current department are almost the same as the former county. The name “Périgord” comes from the Gaelic population of the Petrocores (Petrocorii means «the people of the four groups or armies»).

With the development of tourist industry in the 20th century, four sub-areas have been created and colors have been associated to their names to qualify the **landscapes**: Green Perigord , in the north of the department, to speak of its lush landscapes irrigated by numerous rivers, White Perigord for its **limestone** which is very white around Périgueux and that we see outcropping around the fields , Purple Perigord for the color of the leaves of the **vineyards** in the fall, and finally the Dark or Black Périgord for the dark foliage of its abundant green oak trees and the activities related to **coal** in the past.

Most of your Road Trip will take place in the famous Black Perigord, along the river Dordogne, link between the Central Massif and the Atlantic Ocean , and classified in 2012 as a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO, including an entire watershed of an area of almost 24,000 km<sup>2</sup>.



# Day 1

Stairway to heaven...

PÉRIGUEUX - TRÉMOLAT - LIMEUIL

57 km



1 Wow!



Cathédrale Saint-Front

Before leaving Périgueux, we recommend you visit the roofs of Saint-Front Cathedral.

The steps lead you as close as possible to the domes of the cathedral, allowing while climbing, to discover first the cloister and the entrance to the cathedral, then gradually the landscape widens up to discover the domes of the 12th century, highly restored under the direction of Paul Abadie in the 19th century, then the Isle River flowing quietly at the foot of the cathedral and finally the city of Périgueux surrounded by wooded hills.

2 A must see

## The Vesunna Museum !

This museum is not only an archeological museum dedicated to the Roman period of the ancient town of Vesone, but it is also a site: Jean Nouvel built a light and luminous architecture over a Gallo-Roman villa ! The collection of the museum reveals lifestyle, daily and leisure activities of the Petrocorii, it is a necessary passage before searching the remains of the ancient town scattered over that of today

Vesunna Museum



3



Cingle et église Saint-Nicolas - Trémolat

Departure from Périgueux (market days in the morning on Wednesday and Saturday) and follow road N21 to reach road D8 (50 km) to reach the top of **the Cingle de Trémolat** (Meander of Trémolat): a breathtaking vista, resulting from natural erosion of limestone over thousands of years.

This exceptional panorama of the Cingle is described as «one of the wonders of the world» by André Maurois (member of the French Academy). While crossing the **village of Trémolat**, during a short break, you will discover in the choir of **the church Saint-Nicolas**, 12th C. parts of polychrome frescoes that were preserved. 7 km from Trémolat you'll find Limeuil, passing by the Cingle of the same name: the village is built around a rocky spur, at the confluence of the Dordogne and the Vézère.

# 4

From one of the parking area at the footstep of the village, the main street leads to the summit of **the Panoramic Gardens of Limeuil**, situated on the site of the medieval fortress. These gardens are designed in an educational and playful way, with medicinal and tinctorial plants, it also offers a breathtaking panoramic view!

**Time for a meeting:** After the visit to the gardens, going down towards the rivers, a careful exploration of the village will reveal several small workshops. Craftsmen create their works here, as in the past. In this small village where artisanal shops could be found one after another, some traces are still there. One of them, a glass blower, a straw weaver or a potter will share his/her passion for his/her art and the way they deal with the material.



## Sites

- **Roof top of Saint-Front cathedral - Perigueux**  
[www.tourisme-grandperigueux.fr](http://www.tourisme-grandperigueux.fr)
- **Vesuna Museum - Perigueux**  
[www.perigueux-vesunna.fr](http://www.perigueux-vesunna.fr)
- **The Panoramic Gardens of Limeuil**  
[jardins-panoramiques-limeuil.com](http://jardins-panoramiques-limeuil.com)
- **Gardens of Chartreuse de Colombier - Paunat**  
[chartreuseducolombier.com](http://chartreuseducolombier.com)

## Accommodations

- **Chambre d'Hôtes Au Bon Accueil - Limeuil**  
[www.au-bon-accueil-limeuil.com](http://www.au-bon-accueil-limeuil.com)
- **Chambre d'Hôtes La Rolandie Haute Limeuil**  
[www.larolandie-limeuil.com](http://www.larolandie-limeuil.com)
- **Camping 4\* Le Port de Limeuil**  
[leportdelimeuil.com](http://leportdelimeuil.com)
- **Camping 4\* La Ferme de Perdigat - Limeuil**  
[www.perdigat.com](http://www.perdigat.com)
- **Village de gîtes Lesco Del Pont - Trémolat**  
[lescodelpont.com](http://lescodelpont.com)
- **Hôtel 4\* La Métairie Mauzac-et-Grand-Castang**  
[www.la-metairie.com](http://www.la-metairie.com)
- **Hôtel 4\* Le Vieux Logis - Trémolat**  
[www.vieux-logis.com](http://www.vieux-logis.com)

# 5

## Focus on



### The Gardens of the Chartreuse du Colombier :

An elegant garden inspired by the 18th century, as if resting on the woods, surrounds a chartreuse: a calm and relaxing atmosphere, varied species of plants and flowers, ornamental vegetable garden, pigeon houses and pavilions will charm you just as much as their owner.

# Day 2

Underground worlds  
and local patrimony

LIMEUIL - GOUFFRE DE PROUMEYSSAC -  
BELVÈS - CHÂTEAU DES MILANDES -  
BEYNAC



The small village of Paunat is worth a detour! The abbatial church of Saint-Martial, built at the beginning of the 12th C. on previous foundations, was the church of one of the oldest abbeys of Périgord. From Le Bugue drive to Audrix for a breathtaking experience: sound and underground light.

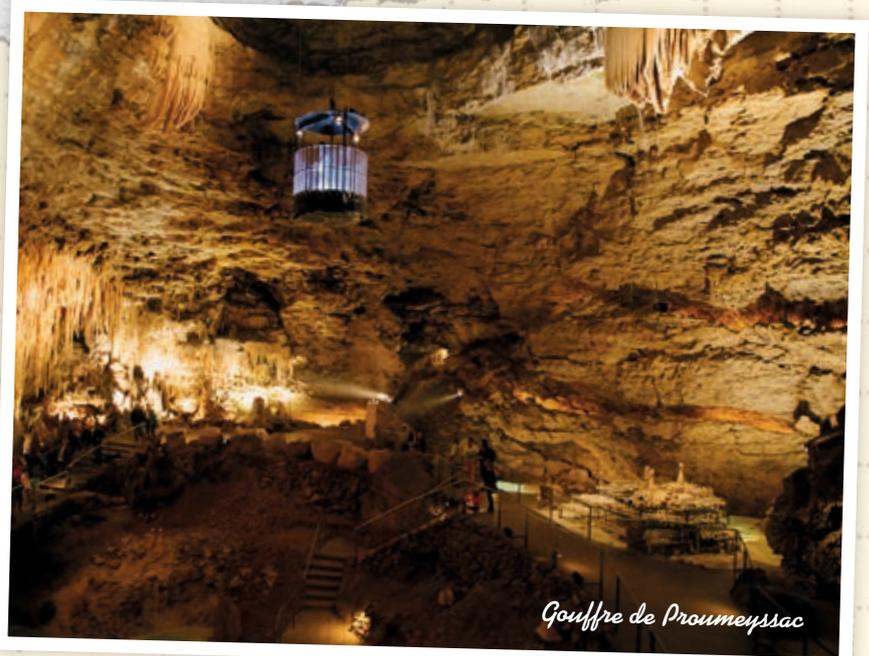
**1** Wow!

## The Chasm of Proumeyssac

is the largest built-up cavity of the Périgord, it offers a guided tour along with two different sound and light shows, focusing on imagination and the millenary past of the abyss.

An unexpected experience will welcome you: like the visitors of the early 20th century, descent into the abyss in a suspended basket to the middle of the impressive vault ornated by thousands of stalactites, some of which represent several tons of calcite.

It's quite an experience !



*Gouffre de Proumeyssac*

**2** A must see

**Urval**, a charming small white-stone village and typical Perigord architecture.

Not to be missed: the small, fortified Romanesque church and the 14th C. communal bread oven, still used once a year during the village festival!

Drive in the direction of the charming village of **Belvès**, a 11th C. fortified village perched on a rocky spur overlooking the Nauze valley.

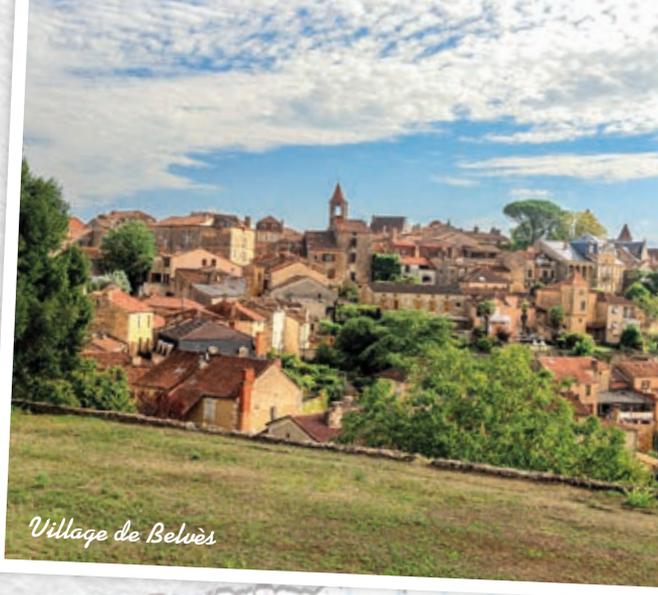
Belvès has kept an interesting part of its medieval heritage, including a Romanesque keep remodeled into a dovecote in the Renaissance called Tour de l'Auditeur, but also a 15th C. belfry housed in an older tower where the tourist office is located today, the entrance door of the castrum, the watchtower and many other vestiges.

# 3

## Highlight:

Near the market hall, dating from the end of the Middle Age, are underground **troglo-dytic habitats** used by the poorest families, from the 13th to the 18th C.

These dwellings are a succession of small rooms that were once situated at the foot of the ditch of the ramparts of Belvès. A moving testimony of life in the past with the presence of elements referring to the daily activities of these families. Bookings for this visit should be made at the tourist office.



Take road D53 and drive in the direction of the **Castle des Milandes**, a castle built to become the new residence of Claude de Cardillac, the wife of François de Caumont, lord of the castle of Castelnaud.

This castle will be redesigned before welcoming one of the most famous music hall singers and dancers of the first half of the 20th century: Josephine Baker!

She will rent first and then purchase this sumptuous residence to live there with her last companion Jo Bouillon and their 12 adopted children from different nationalities and religions to establish the «Rainbow Tribe».

The castle traces the life of Josephine and pays tribute to this great artist who did not hesitate to take many risks to help the Resistance by passing on messages and protecting agents of the intelligence services. In addition to the collections and the remarkable estate, a magnificent gardens invites you to rest and to contemplate before the start of the raptor show highlighted by the comments of passionate falconers.

## Sites

- **The Chasm of Proumeyssac**  
[www.gouffre-proumeyssac.com](http://www.gouffre-proumeyssac.com)  
24260 Audrix
- **Troglos of Belvès**  
<http://www.perigordnoir-valleedordogne.com/fr/patrimoine-culturel>  
24170 Belvès
- **Castle des Milandes**  
[www.milandes.com](http://www.milandes.com)  
24250 Castelnaud-la-Chapelle

## Accommodations

- **Chambre d'Hôtes La Source**  
[www.la-source-beynac-et-cazenac.com](http://www.la-source-beynac-et-cazenac.com)  
24220 Beynac-et-Cazenac
- **Chambre d'Hôtes La Maison d'Alice**  
<https://lamaisondalice.com>  
24220 Vézac
- **Camping 3\* Le Capeyrou**  
[www.campinglecapeyrou.com](http://www.campinglecapeyrou.com)  
24220 Beynac-et-Cazenac
- **Camping de charme 4\* Maisonneuve**  
[www.campingmaisonneuve.com](http://www.campingmaisonneuve.com)  
24250 Castelnaud-la-Chapelle
- **Camping 5\* domaine de Soleil-Plage**  
[www.soleilplage.fr](http://www.soleilplage.fr)  
24200 Sarlat
- **Hôtel 3\* l'Oustal de Vézac**  
<https://hotel-sarlat-perigord-oustal.com>  
24220 Vézac

# Day 3

## BEYNAC - LA ROQUE-GAGEAC - BEYNAC

the rhythm of footsteps  
and water: take your time!



Château de Beynac

1

**Take a hike through nature and history in the company of a local certified guide (about 3 ½ h).**

Dominating the Dordogne river at nearly 150 m above ground, stands the proud silhouette of one of the most impressive fortresses of the Périgord, the **Castle of Beynac** ! The construction of this imposing building started in the Middle Ages and will remain in the hands of the same family for about 900 years !

During the Hundred Years' War the Dordogne River was the border between the kingdoms of France and England, and the two rival castles, Beynac and Castelnau thus became «border guards». An unforgettable trip to the heart of the Middle Ages, by the roads and trails of the village. A half-day with a local guide to listen to the secrets of places and landscapes, to enter the castle and learn about main historic characters such as Richard the Lionhearted who have and to discover treasures the Perigord has to offer today while **visiting a mill** producing a gold-colored walnut oil with a well-balanced taste and pleasant fragrance.



La Roque-Gageac

2

The village of **La Roque-Gageac** nestled at the footstep of the cliffs along the Dordogne River, deserves all the time it needs to be discovered. Follow the former Roman road that leads to the top of the village at the foot of the **troglodytic fortress**. This fortress built in the beginning of 12th C. is 40m high and accepts visitors. Along the hike other treasures will show up: **the Manor of Tarde** (who was a friend of Galileo and happy owner of the first astronomic telescope), a Romanesque church covered with dry tone slabs, an exotic garden with palm trees, banana trees, oleander and other Mediterranean plants.

**Sarlat-la-Canéda**, capital of the Dark Perigord region, is a small medieval and Renaissance town of incomparable charm, with a maze of gas-lit alleyways that add a gentle warmth to the romantic atmosphere as night falls. Every street, alleyway and passageway has a historic monument to admire. Sarlat, a town of art and history, will captivate you with its medieval streets. Let yourself be carried back in time by the sumptuous, authentic and lively setting that is Sarlat today! Must-See: The Saturday market, the smells that will delight gourmets and gourmands, the colours and the atmosphere are unforgettable for those who venture there.

But above all, Sarlat is the city of the seventh art. Countless films have been shot in this city of character, so will you be able to find them?



Sarlat la Canéda

The Dordogne can also be discovered from the water, by slowly descending the river on board of a **flat-bottom barge** that in the past allowed the transport of various goods from the hinterland to the Atlantic coast.

A narrated boat ride tells you about the various flat-bottom boats that were used, about the traffic down and up the river and the fauna living in this biosphere reserve.



3

## Highlights:



### Gardens of Marqueyssac

From the Gardens of Marqueyssac, one of the 4 castles overlooking this natural border between the rival kingdoms of France and England, an extraordinary 360° panorama opens up during a shady walk on top of the cliff.

A garden of 150,000 hand-trimmed boxwood with soft and rounded shapes, precedes a denser area laid out in a «natural» way, with to the south more Mediterranean species adapted to the limestone and dry soil, and to the north local species requiring more moisture such as hornbeam and maple.

22 hectares of garden that provides many activities such as the Via Ferrata route, thematic workshops, or hammocks suspended between trees for nap lovers...

## Sites

### • Si Beynac m'était conté...

(A 4.5 km walk guided by a tour guide, with a visit to Beynac castle and a walnut oil mill.

### • Château de Beynac

<http://chateau-beynac.com>  
24220 Beynac-et-Cazenac

### • Moulin du Trel

<http://lemoulindutrel.com>  
24220 Vézac

### • Gabares Norbert

<http://www.gabarres.com>  
24250 La Roque-Gageac

### • Les Jardins de Marqueyssac

<https://marqueyssac.com>  
24220 Vézac

## Accommodations

### • Chambre d'Hôtes La Source

[www.la-source-beynac-et-cazenac.com](http://www.la-source-beynac-et-cazenac.com)  
24220 Beynac-et-Cazenac

### • Chambre d'Hôtes La Maison d'Alice

<https://lamaisondalice.com>  
24220 Vézac

### • Camping 3\* Le Capeyrou

[www.campinglecapeyrou.com](http://www.campinglecapeyrou.com)  
24220 Beynac-et-Cazenac

### • Camping de charme 4\* Maisonneuve

[www.campingmaisonneuve.com](http://www.campingmaisonneuve.com)  
24250 Castelnaud-la-Chapelle

### • Camping 5\* domaine de Soleil-Plage

[www.soleilplage.fr](http://www.soleilplage.fr)  
24200 Sarlat

### • Hôtel 3\* l'Oustal de Vézac

<https://hotel-sarlat-perigord-oustal.com>  
24220 Vézac

# Day 4

Human stories

BEYNAC - DOMME - CARSAC-AILLAC -  
CARLUX - PRATS-DE-CARLUX -  
CHÂTEAU LACYPIERRE



1

Vue du village de Domme



Going up the Dordogne River you'll see **Domme**: a bastide, located on top of the cliff, built more than 700 years ago by the King of France.

A town founded before the Hundred Years War in Southwest France. The foundation of these numerous bastides aimed to protect, defend and gather populations that were scattered before, to create local economic life based on market and fair activities, to deforest and make trade roads safer. This will lead to a similar spatial organization in all these villages, like a central square surrounded by shops, with a regular grid layout and often surrounded by fortifications.

Domme is a special bastide built on top of the cliffs overlooking a river, it was fortified from the very beginning to be a surveillance post to supervise the close by English territories.

From the Belvedere de la Barre, discover breathtaking views of the Dordogne valley. Following the Dordogne, you will be surprised by the hamlet at the foot of the Chateau of Montfort.



Belvédère de Domme

2 A must see

At the foot of the Château de Montfort is situated the workshop of potter Claude Auliac. After changing profession, she took up with passion the challenge to learn the techniques of pottery and little by little she is on her way to master the field she has chosen: the Raku and manufactures sober and powerful creations. On the way to Carsac-Aillac, the **Loop of Montfort** offers a splendid panorama and a photo opportunity!

3 Worth a glimpse:

The marvelous little Romanesque **Church of Carsac** has a splendid dry-stone roof and a contemporary stations of the cross designed by artist Léon Zack.

# 4

**Robert Doisneau**, a famous photographer, has spent his first paid vacations in the Dordogne Valley. He will come back many times and shoots numerous photos of his friends, landscapes, monuments, local characters and anonymous people.

The rail station of Carlux was remodeled into a museum in 2018 to display photos by Doisneau and other exhibits.



# 5

## Focus on

**The Château de Fénelon** is a feudal estate, perfectly preserved and embellished after the Hundred Years War to become a comfortable home. It stands up like a guard at the Dordogne Valley.

The famous François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon was born here in. He became an archbishop of Cambrai, he was an opponent to absolutism and author of the famous *Télémaque*.

Access to the chateau is protected by three consecutive fortified walls and a rich collection of artworks is displayed in the middle of ancient furniture and the memories of this character who has marked his time and region.



## Sites

- **Rail station Robert Doisneau**  
[www.lagare-robertdoisneau.com](http://www.lagare-robertdoisneau.com)  
24370 Carlux
- **Le château de Fénelon**  
<http://www.chateau-fenelon.fr>  
24370 Sainte-Mondane
- **Les Oies du Périgord Noir**  
<http://www.oies-du-perigord.com>  
24370 Prats-de-Carlux
- **Le château de Lacypierre**  
[www.chateau-lacypierre-perigord.fr](http://www.chateau-lacypierre-perigord.fr)  
24590 Saint-Crépin-et-Carlucet

### Gastronomic discovery:

At Prats-de-Carlux, a charming couple, Karelle & Jean-Sylvain, raise geese and welcomes visitors at their farm «Les oies du Perigord Noir ». They explain with passion how they operate, how they grow organic cereals to feed their geese who lives outdoors in the meadows and woods. Their produces that you can taste are a subtle blending of traditional recipes and a touch of modernity.

# 6

Nestled in a green setting, the **Chateau de Lacypierre** is a little local beauty, with warm yellow stone and a dry-stone roof. It is entirely refurbished and restored with passion by its owners, Florence and Isabelle, who will gladly tell you the history of the estate: the chateau has turned into a simple farm, then abandoned before revival.



# Usefull Addresses

## Picnick areas

- **Area with a view over Belvès**, near the parking lot at the outskirts of the medieval town.
- **On the banks of the Céou and the Dordogne, in Castlenaud-la-Chapelle**, near the parking lot of the lower village.
- **Les Oies du Périgord Noir**  
(Picnic/food basket, to be reserved)



## Market days

- **Périgueux**: Wednesday and Saturday morning, main market, smaller market around the covered market hall everyday.
- **Trémolat**: Tuesday morning
- **Le Bugue**: Tuesday morning
- **Le Buisson**: Friday morning
- **Saint-Cyprien**: Sunday morning
- **Domme**: Thursday morning
- **Sarlat-la-Canéda**: Wednesday and Saturday morning

## What to bring home ?

- **Walnut or hazelnut oil**, truffle oil or walnut flower from the Moulin du Trel.
- **Goose foie gras** of Périgord Noir.
- **Available at food markets**: Cabécous (goat cheese), crispy walnut or hazelnut cookies Monbazillac or Bergerac Wine or walnut wine.
- **A small cristalized pottery** from the Gouffre de Proumeyssac.
- **A artisanal item** from a glass blower, a straw weaver or a potter from Limeuil.
- **A original creation** of potter Claude Alliac in Montfort-Vitrac.
- **Nontron knives** available at la Coutellerie Favié in Périgueux, 5 rue Limogeanne.
- **La coutellerie Le Périgord**, Sarlat knives, 47 avenue de la République in Sarlat.

## Restaurants suggestions

- **Le Bistrot d'en Face**, Trémolat
- **Le Vieux Logis**, Trémolat
- **Au Bon Accueil**, Limeuil
- **Chez Julien**, Paunat
- **O' Plaisir des Sens**, La Roque-Gageac
- **La Petite Tonnelle**, Beynac-et-Cazenac
- **Le Centenaire**, Montfort-Vitrac
- **Le café de la gare Doisneau**, Carlux
- **Ferme-auberge La Borie Blanche**  
(beef specialties), Domme
- **Ferme-auberge Le Cantou** (duck specialties), Sainte-Mondane

## Sport & Leisure

- **Canoeing on the Dordogne**, starting in Cénac, La Roque-Gageac or Vitrac to go by the most beautiful chateaux of the valley.
- **Roam la Via Ferrata** in the Gardens of Marqueyssac.
- **Play bocce ball** in La Roque-Gageac.
- **Fly on a hot air balloon** over the Valley of the 5 Chateaux.





# *My best memories*

*Wow!*

*A must  
see* 

I can paste here, my photos memories...

*My favorite sites*



1

2

3

*To see  
during my  
next visit!*

\* Sites and accommodations mentioned in this roadbook are only suggestions..

# DORDOGNE Valley

Photos : Déclic&Décoile, B. Dupuy, Dan Courtice, L. Druet, Luc Fauret, Agence les conteurs, Michel Leger, ADT Pays des Basitides, Laugery Bordeaux, OT Pays de Feneion, Château Lacypierre, - BrockandBetty

For further information, please visit our website:  
**[www.visit-dordogne-valley.co.uk/](http://www.visit-dordogne-valley.co.uk/)**