

An aerial photograph of a picturesque French town, likely in the Dordogne region. The town features numerous stone buildings with grey roofs, some with traditional conical turrets. It is situated along a river with a stone bridge. The surrounding landscape is lush and green, with rolling hills in the background under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

FRANCE DORDOGNE *Valley*

Press kit : stories & inspiration

l'étonnant voyage!

VALLÉE DE LA DORDOGNE

THE QUICK-SCAN BRIEF

THE DORDOGNE VALLEY

SOUTH-WEST OF FRANCE OCCITANIE & NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE

8 "Plus Beaux Villages de France"



1 UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve



1 UNESCO global Geopark "Causses du Quercy"

Padirac : Europe's most monumental chasm

CHAPTER
01
EDITORIAL ANGLES



The “anti-mass tourism” stronghold

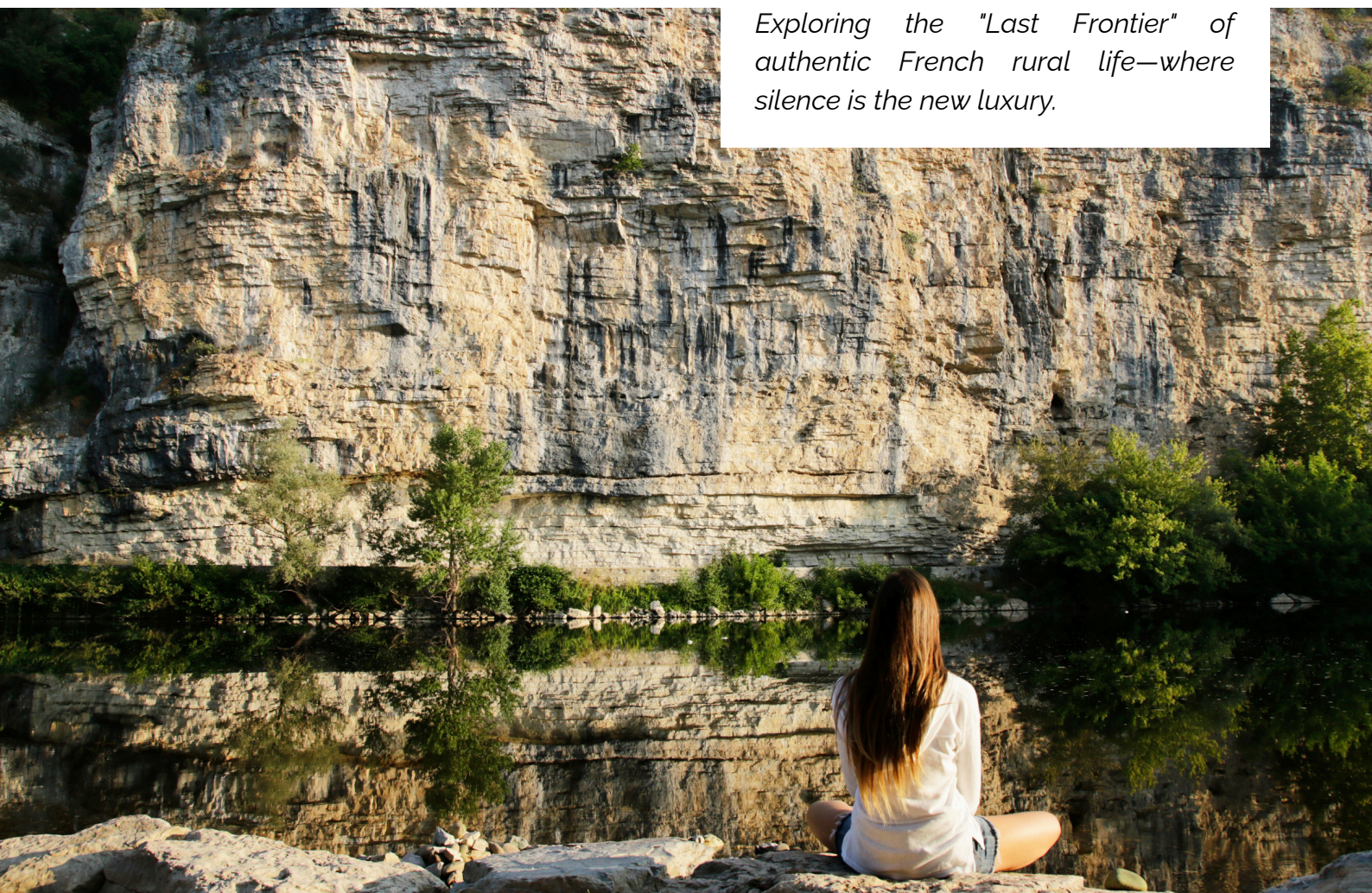
The luxury of time

In an era of “fast travel,” the Dordogne Valley offers **a rare sanctuary of authenticity**. Here, tourism is not a commodity but **an invitation to slow down**.

The valley lives to the rhythm of the river and the seasons, where the local “**art de vivre**” is preserved by families who have tended this land for centuries.

Angle

Exploring the “Last Frontier” of authentic French rural life—where silence is the new luxury.





The vertical pilgrimage

Faith vs physics

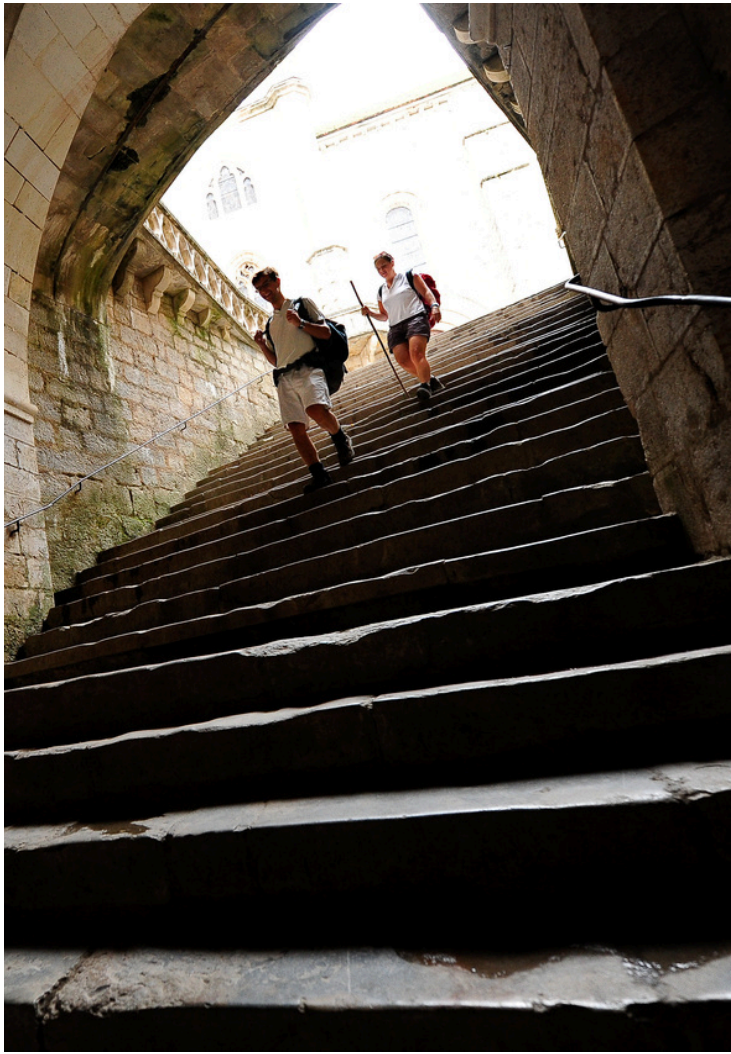
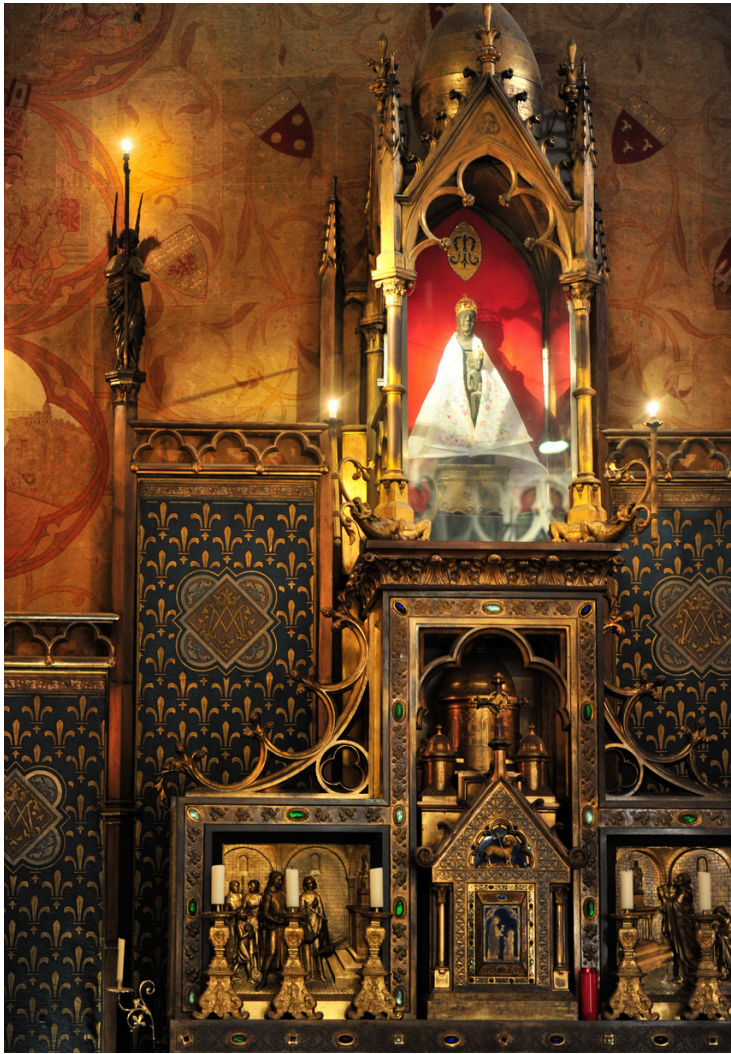
Rocamadour defies gravity. Clinging to a sheer 150-meter limestone cliff, this medieval marvel was built by builders who treated stone like lace.

From the **216 steps** of the Grand Escalier to **the legendary "Durandal" sword** lodged in the rock and the sanctuary of **the miraculous Black Madonna**, it is a site where medieval engineering meets mystical legend.

Angle

Sacred architecture—How faith and physics created Europe's most spectacular cliffside sanctuary.





From convent to couture

The Chanel blueprint

The Cistercian Abbey of Aubazine holds a secret known to few fashion historians. It was here, amidst the austere beauty of the orphanage, that a young **Gabrielle Chanel** found her aesthetic voice.

The monastic sobriety, the contrast of black and white habits, and **the interlaced geometric patterns of the stained glass windows** became the literal blueprint for **the Chanel logo and the "Little Black Dress."**

Angle

Fashion pilgrimage—Mapping the monastic roots of Coco Chanel's minimalist revolution.





From the birth of ritual to the abyss

Deep time

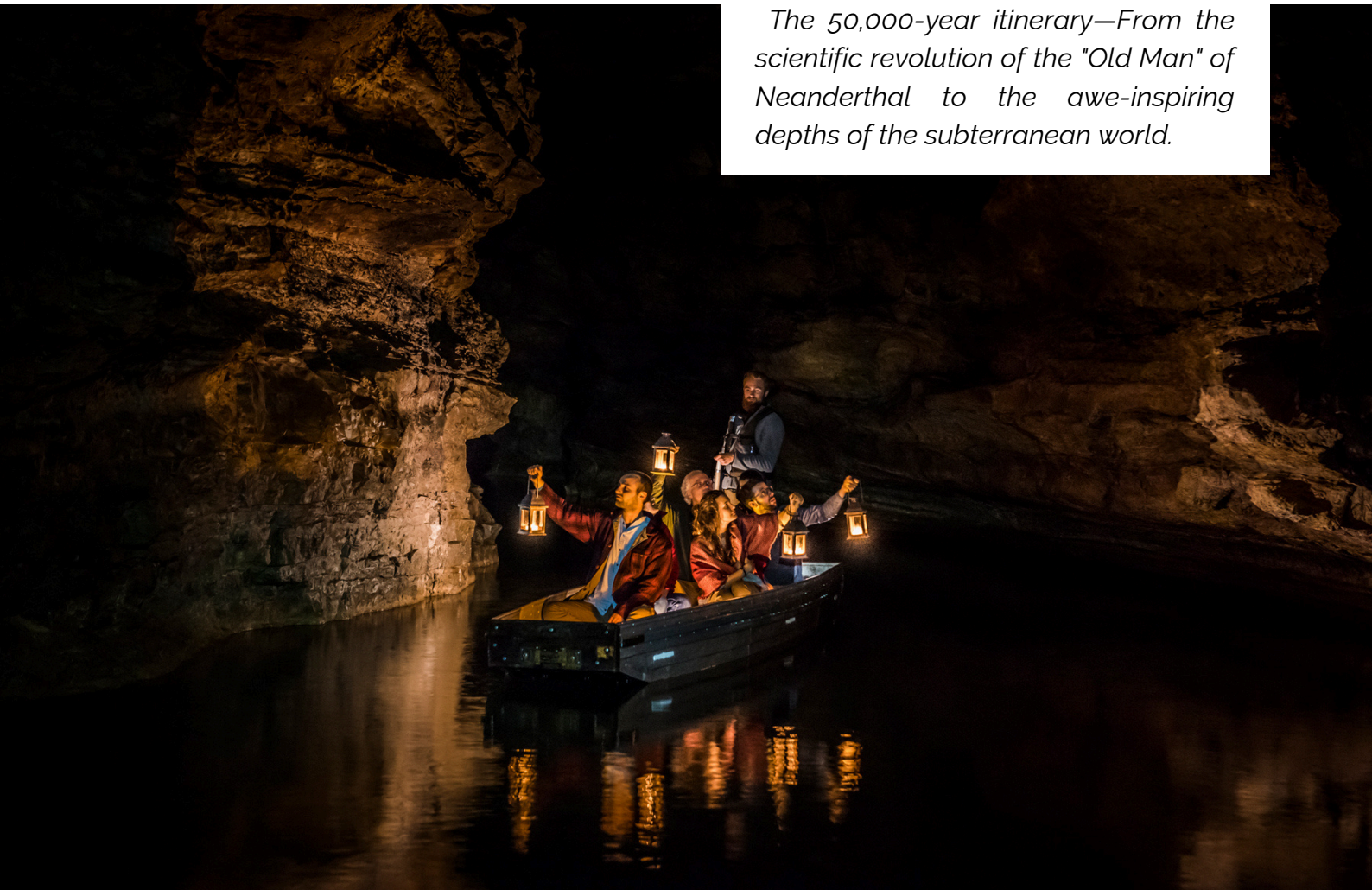
A unique "vertical" journey through time.

It begins at La Chapelle-aux-Saints, the site of a 1908 discovery that revolutionized our understanding of humanity by providing **the first-ever evidence of a Neanderthal burial**—proving that our ancestors possessed symbolic thought and compassion.

The journey then plunges 103 meters into the earth at **the Gouffre de Padirac, Europe's most monumental chasm**, where a silent subterranean river leads to cathedral-like chambers sculpted over millions of years.

Angle

The 50,000-year itinerary—From the scientific revolution of the "Old Man" of Neanderthal to the awe-inspiring depths of the subterranean world.





CHAPTER

02

CORE DESTINATION PILLARS



Heritage : the stone that speaks !

The Dordogne Valley is a **living museum of architectural diversity**.

The crimson village : Collonges-la-Rouge is entirely built from local red sandstone, creating a surreal, ruby-colored landscape that glows at sunset. In 1982, it became the birthplace of the "*Les Plus Beaux Villages de France*" label, sparking a global movement to protect rural heritage.

The seven towers of Martel : known as the "City of Seven Towers," Martel's skyline is a testament to its medieval power as a trading hub. Its narrow streets and fortified manors offer a journey back to the age of the Viscounts of Turenne.

The Riviera Limousine : nestled on the banks of the river, Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne is a medieval jewel famous for its Saint-Pierre Abbey. Its 12th-century tympanum, a masterpiece of Romanesque art, depicts a monumental Last Judgment. With its palm trees and mild climate, the town serves as a vibrant departure point for traditional gabare boat trips.





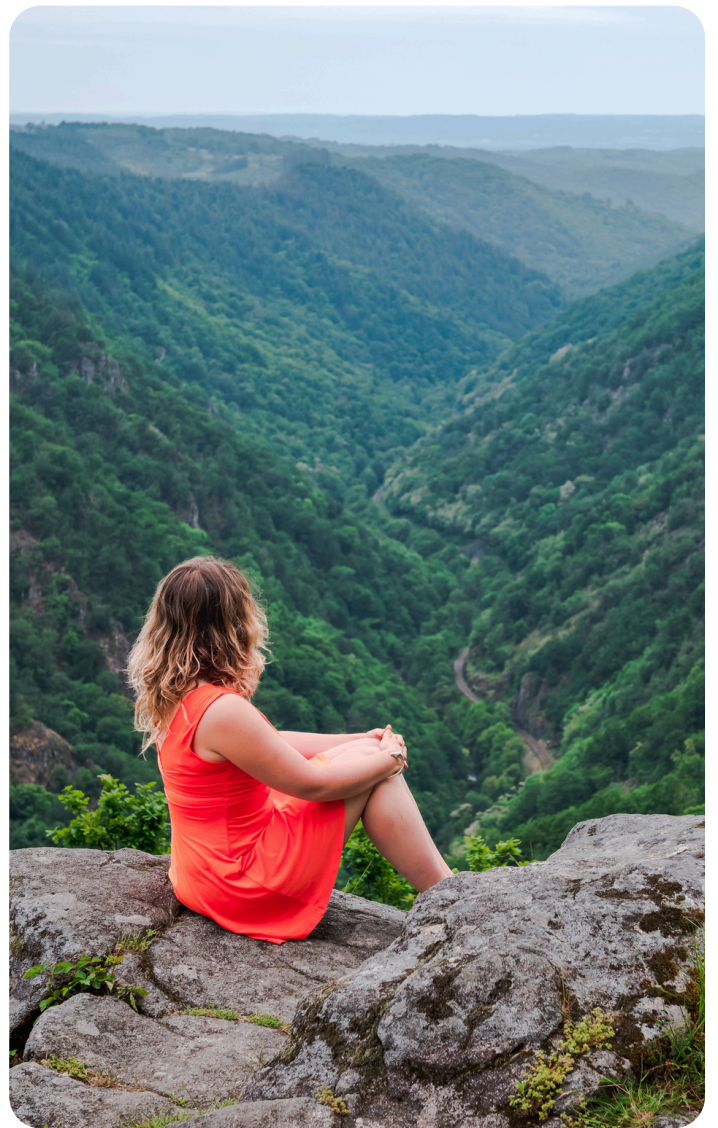
Nature : the Unesco double crown

The Dordogne Valley is defined by the **constant dialogue between water and stone**.

The living river : the Dordogne is the soul of the valley. Once a busy highway for gabarriers (merchants transporting wine and timber on flat-bottomed boats), it is now a haven for biodiversity. Navigating its waters by canoe or traditional gabare offers a silent, immersive perspective on the limestone cliffs and perched castles.

The limestone plateau (Causses du Quercy) : this UNESCO Global Geopark is a land of secrets. Dry-stone walls crisscross a landscape of oaks and wild orchids, hiding mysterious sinkholes and vast underground networks. It is a place of absolute quiet, where the lack of human light makes the night sky feel close enough to touch.





CHAPTER

03

A GASTRONOMIC ODYSSEY



Terroir icons

The "farm-to-table" philosophy is not a trend, but a centuries-old reality. Here, the raw treasures of the earth meet the refined precision of haute cuisine.

The black diamond : the Périgord Black Truffle (*Tuber melanosporum*) is the winter star. From December to March, the secret ritual of the "cavage" (truffle hunting with dogs or pigs) culminates in the intense, aromatic atmosphere of the local markets.



The walnut legacy: the Périgord Walnut (AOP) is the "gold" of the valley, a heritage dating back over a thousand years. From the lush riverbanks to the limestone plateaus, sprawling orchards of Franquette, Marbot, and Corne varieties define the local landscape. Local producers still uphold the ancestral tradition of harvesting and drying, followed by slow cold-pressing in artisanal mills. This patient process results in a deep-amber oil.

The Michelin constellation “Haute Cuisine” with a sense of place

The Dordogne Valley boasts a remarkable density of culinary excellence, anchored by **four Michelin- one starred restaurants** that serve as the territory's ambassadors.

These chefs don't just cook, **they narrate the landscape.**

- **Château de la Treyne** : fine dining on a grand terrace suspended over the river.
- **Le Pont de l'Ouyse** : sophisticated riverbank dining at the foot of ancient cliffs.
- **Les Trois Soleils de Montal** : a showcase of precision and local seasonal passion.
- **Cueillette** : a contemporary, nature-focused perspective on local ingredients.



YOUR NEXT STORY STARTS HERE

HOW TO GET THERE ?



ACCESS

AIR : Brive-Vallée de la Dordogne airport (direct flights from London/Paris).

RAIL : direct Intercités from Paris Austerlitz to Brive-la-Gaillarde (4h30).

CAR : a scenic 2-hour drive from Toulouse or Bordeaux.

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The Dordogne Valley is not a destination to consume, but a landscape to listen to—slowly, deeply, and forever.

YOUR DEDICATED CONTACT

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l'étonnant voyage!

VALLÉE DE LA DORDOGNE

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