

Touring holidays of France

Expressions



Gastronomic tour of Aquitaine, Dordogne and Tarn



Gastronomic tour of Aquitaine, Dordogne and Tarn fly-drive holiday

8 NIGHTS / 9 DAYS

Bordeaux

Dordogne

Tarn



This 8-night fly-drive touring holiday has as its focus the gastronomy of the regions of Aquitaine, the Dordogne and the Tarn, all in the south-west of France and with strong traditions of food and wine. Bordeaux is synonymous with world-class, fine wine but also steak dishes such as the entrecote marchand de vin and fish and shellfish from the Atlantic coast; the Dordogne is associated with duck and goose, cheese and walnuts, truffles and mushrooms; and the Tarn too is known for its rustic and hearty food including boar, wild mushrooms, pink garlic, pork and biscuits, pumpkin pancakes and chocolate. In each region you are able to taste the cuisine and produce of the region at your hotel restaurant, each with a Michelin star. You start your gastronomic tour at Bordeaux, collect your hire-car and drive less than 30 minutes to your first stop which is at a Relais & Chateaux boutique hotel with Michelin-starred restaurant and cookery school and its own vineyards on the edge of Bordeaux. You spend two nights here with the chance to book a cookery lesson in advance. We also give you the option of having two gourmet dinners with wine included in your stay. From the Bordeaux region you travel into the heart of the Dordogne and stay in the village of Tremolat, in an historic manor-house hotel with Michelin-starred restaurant. You have three nights in the Dordogne to visit local markets, cultural sites and to rest. Your third stay is in the beautiful region of the Tarn, north of Gaillac, again in a chateau-hotel with Michelin-starred restaurant with its own vineyard. The restaurant here at the Chateau de Salettes has a good choice of menu including a food and wine pairing menu. There is plenty to fill your two full days here from visiting the Gaillac vineyards to visiting local artisan food producers. You return to either Toulouse or Bordeaux.

PRICES

From £1,170 per person

Based on two people sharing a double or twin room. Supplement for half board for 2 nights: £250 per person (Half board includes a 5-course dinner with 2 glasses of wine at Le Saint-James).

DATES

This fly-drive holiday can be arranged for any dates of your choice subject to availability.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Scheduled flight with British Airways London to Bordeaux, Bordeaux or Toulouse to London
- Hire of a Group B car for the duration of the holiday
- 2 nights' bed and breakfast in a Deluxe room at Le Saint-James in Bouliac, near Bordeaux
- 3 nights' bed and breakfast in a Superior double room at Le Vieux Logis in Trémolat
- 3 nights' bed and breakfast in a Grand Confort double room at Le Château de Salettes near Gaillac
- Concierge service and Expressions Holidays regional helpful hints

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Early check-in or late check-out at any hotels (although we can arrange this on request at additional cost)
- Any other services not mentioned above, such as transfers and meals except breakfast at hotels
- Personal holiday insurance. This is essential and cover should be in place from when you book the holiday.
- Local tourist tax, usually between Euros 1 and 3 per person per night, and payable locally to the hotel details.

Day one arrive in Bordeaux

You arrive in Bordeaux and collect your hire-car. It is a short drive of about 30 minutes from the airport to your first stop, just outside the city of Bordeaux, in a small village amid vineyards. Perfectly situated for tasting the best of the Bordeaux wines and for both sampling haute cuisines as well as trying your hand at cooking it, Le Saint-James is the ideal first stop for this touring holiday. You stay here for two nights.

Day two in Bordeaux

You have a full day to explore the vineyards of Bordeaux, soak up some culture in the city itself or try your hand at a cookery lesson at Le Saint James. The elegant restaurant of Le Saint James boasts floor-to-ceiling windows that take full advantage of the rural views which form the backdrop for the fine dining offered by the hotel's Michelin-starred Chef, Nicolas Magie. Here you can enjoy dishes inspired by the Aquitaine region in the fine-dining restaurant. The hotel also has a cooking school with lessons held in a purpose-built kitchen and suitable for all ages and all levels of culinary skill. The hotel produces its own wine and you can take a tour of the wine cellar with the sommelier, sampling the numerous wines and champagnes. At harvest time, you also have the chance to learn about the process of wine production from start to finish, from the picking of the grapes by hand to winemaking in the hotel's cellar. The Château Rauzan Gassies and the Château Mouton Rothschild are very popular locations for tasting; the best of which are the fruity Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, as well as Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, and Malbec. Follow the Gironde Estuary north to find Margaux and other producers in the Médoc or head east out of Bordeaux to find the town of Saint-Emilion and its many prestigious vineyards. If you are interested in a cooking lesson at Le Saint James, you should ask us to check the schedule for you to make sure something is available on the date you are at the hotel, and then ask us to book it for you.

Day three Bordeaux to the Dordogne

Today you leave the Bordeaux area to drive for just over two hours into the heart of the Dordogne to the village of Tremolat on the northern bank of the river. In terms of the route, we would suggest that you spend some time visiting along the way. Perhaps this is the day to visit St Emilion as you leave Bordeaux and possibly to call into the Bergerac before reaching your destination for the night. You spend three nights in Tremolat. Make the most of your days in Trémolat, walk into the centre



Dordogne

of the village to appreciate the imposing and austere Saint Nicolas Church. Its riverside position makes it ideal for kayaking and fishing, and the neighbouring hills make for fantastic hiking trails.

Days four and five in the Dordogne

The Dordogne is renowned for its rich and hearty cuisine and the region produces all manner of fascinating food stuffs, from walnuts to mushrooms, from cheese to truffles, from foie gras to pork delicacies. There is wine too, at Bergerac and Montbazillac. The Dordogne has a great number of very picturesque small towns, most of which have markets on various days of the week. Sarlat is probably the best known but Domme, La Roche Gageac, Les Eyzies and Beynac are worth seeking out. Some of the towns also have night-time markets where you can eat, drink and listen to music. You have two full days in this area to become acquainted with all manner of foodie things but also to experience the rich culture and history of the region, from the prehistoric cave paintings at Lascaux and Les Eyzies to the mediaeval fortresses that perch on rocky crags above the meandering valley of the Dordogne, to beautifully fashioned gardens, at Eyrygnac and Marqueyssac for example..

Day six Dordogne to the Tarn

Today's journey takes you south through the historic region of the Quercy, and perhaps to stop at the town of Cahors in the Lot valley for lunch before reach your final stop on this gastronomic tour of the south-west of France, north of Gaillac in the village of Cahuzac-sur-Vère. You stay here for three nights.

Days seven and eight in the Tarn

Set in the heart of the Gaillac vineyards, Le Château de Salettes produces its very own red and white wines which can be sampled along with a selection of other wines from the cellar. The Michelin-starred restaurant serves creative and refined cuisine, with a tasting menu that allows guests to sample an assortment of dishes, accompanied by matching wines. Cahuzac-sur-Vère, the official home of the Château des Salettes, is known for its sugared almonds, biscuits with jam, and the excellence of its chocolatiers, making it the ideal gastronomic stop-off point for any food-lover with a sweet tooth. Drive out to the Musée de l'Art et du Sucre in the Maison Prunet at Cordes-sur-Ciel to see the high-quality sugar products and chocolate turned into works of art. As home to some of the most renowned wine estates in the area, Cahuzac-sur-Vère itself has much to offer. To whet the appetite, perhaps, visit the Domaine des Tres Cantous and sample the Vin d'Autan and Vin de Voile. Venture out into the Gaillac vineyards to discover the fairy-tale, fortified villages and their wine. Famous as the area is for its dry and sweet white wines, look out for Mauzac, Ondenc, Muscadelle and Loin de l'Oeil on your travels. For a concise overview of everything wine-related that Gaillac has to offer, head into the town itself, and the Maison des Vins de Gaillac, to learn more about the wider variety of grapes grown in the area and to taste more of the wine available. Also nearby is Albi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and bursting with the remarkable history of France. The most immediate point of interest in this small town is its red-brick mediaeval cathedral, St. Cecilia's. Witness how its imposing exterior blends into the delicate

wood and stone decoration of its interior. Adorning the whole western wall are extensive murals depicting the Last Judgement. Just next door, the Bishop's palace houses the Toulouse Lautrec museum, dedicated to the works of the post-impressionistic iconographer Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. From outside the cathedral, you can make your way west to the square which overlooks the River Tarn or pass the museum to walk across the thousand-year-old Old Bridge. Albi retains the look and feel of its traditional way of life and holds a farmer's market on the Place Fernand Pelloutier on Tuesday and Saturday mornings. Another pretty village is that of Rabastens, that also has a lively market, and lots of historical buildings including the Notre-Dame-du-Bourg church. You can take hiking trails from the village through vineyards and orchards nearby.

Day nine The Tarn to Bordeaux or Toulouse

Today you head back to Bordeaux or you can fly from Toulouse with British Airways.



Albi



Dordogne valley

GENERAL INFORMATION

This tailor-made touring holiday is one of several suggested touring holidays we can offer you exactly as it is but also with any alterations you might want including extra nights in one or more places or adding in extra places. All our tours can be extended so that you can include a longer stay in one mountain or lake resort too, perhaps at the end of the itinerary. Do call to discuss the options with our travel consultants.

OUR TOURS

Our tailor-made touring holidays are suggested itineraries which can be adapted in numerous ways. They can be fly-drive (with flight and hire-car included), self-drive (with ferry or Eurotunnel included with your own car) or rail and hire-car.

FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS

Our arrangements are very flexible in that you choose to travel on any day you want, subject to availability of your chosen transport and hotels. As mentioned above, additional nights can be added at any point.

OUR PRICES

The sample prices mentioned in this leaflet are generally a 'from' price based on the cheapest season of travel. However, train fares and hotel rates can change (up and down depending on offers), so we give you an accurate price for your holiday when we provide you with a quotation. Our sample prices should be used as an indication of how much a particular combination will cost and to show the differences on average between the hotel categories on offer.

TOUR CODE

FRFD06

The logo for Expressions Holidays, featuring the word "Expressions" in a white, elegant script font on a dark blue rectangular background.

BOOKING CONDITIONS

Our booking conditions apply to all holidays. A copy can be found on our website and a copy is also sent to you with a written quotation and when you make a booking.

FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Expressions Holidays offers full financial protection for all holidays you book with us. If your holiday includes a flight, the ATOL (3076) covers the costs of the holiday. If the holiday does not include a flight, it is the ABTOT bond that protects the cost of the holiday. We are also members of AITO (the Association of Independent Tour Operators).

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HOW TO BOOK

To make a booking, just phone us on

01392 441250

and we can take you through the details we need and start the booking process.