

Bordeaux Vineyards & Southwestern France

# Dordogne Valley Cultural Walking Adventure



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JOURNEYS™





“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

—Travel + Leisure

## Castles, Vineyards & Cave Paintings

Everything we love best about France is abundant in the scenic southwest. Great wine? Bordeaux wine vintners travel their limestone hillsides to package their harvest into remarkable reds—and we taste our way through their treasures. History? The Vezere River Valley's cave paintings are some of the earliest signs of modern man. Culture? From the 13th to the 15th centuries, the Dordogne was the border between France and England; the fortifications, châteaux and villages built so close together for defense now make for lovely, compact walking tours in Dordogne. Along the way, we spend time with artisans, tradesmen and even a truffle hunter. And the lifestyle? Think of yourself at one of the loveliest inns we've ever discovered, strolling by your 13th century millpond before dining on a country stew and crème brûlée by candlelight. If you love to lose yourself in the life of the places you visit, this is the perfect experience for you.

## DAY 1

### BORDEAUX / ST. EMILION

- Walk scenic vineyard paths and visit to caves
- Enjoy a wine tasting
- Tour the historic town of St. Emilion
- Visit a local bakery to taste the local specialty, macarons

We meet this morning in the beautiful UNESCO World Heritage City of Bordeaux. From here, it's only a 30-minute drive to St. Emilion. This picturesque town, also a World Heritage site, is a charming tangle of narrow streets, exactly what you'd imagine an ancient wine-making center to look like.

Many of the vineyards here sit on steep hillsides of limestone or crowd up against the small villages that dot the countryside. We'll take time to wander through the vineyards, taking in the picturesque views and learning about local wine-making traditions. The region also has some of the finest wine caves and we'll enter these cool, musky depths, and sample some of the region's best at a tasting.

Then we're off to roam through the historic and scenic town on a guided afternoon walk. As you know from this morning, St. Emilion is one of the most renowned centers for red Bordeaux wines. (The Romans first planted vines here in the 2nd century.) But it's not all wine; St. Emilion is equally famous for its macaron cookies, and we'll visit a fragrant bakery to see how they're made and taste the wares. Later, we continue on to our home for the next three nights in Les Eyzies.

**Overnight:** Les Eyzies

**Meals:** D

## DAY 2

### DOMME / CASTELNAUD

- Visit Château de Marqueyssac's gardens
- Compare a ruined castle and a bastide (fortified village)
- Scenic riverside walk to Castelnaud
- Tour the Hundred Years War English headquarters
- Enjoy a cinematic setting for dinner this evening in picturesque Sarlat

Following breakfast, we journey into the Dordogne region, where we pay an eye-popping visit to the gardens of Château de Marqueyssac. From its prominent position on a cliff overlooking the Dordogne River, we can see four of the famed castles of the area, including Castelnaud, Beynac and Fayrac. Once the country house of the pope in the 18th century, it is said that the pontiff sat in a seat carved out of stone for him at Marqueyssac and surveyed the river valley. Seeing an opening in the landscape without a church, he commissioned one to be built in St. Julien, where it still stands.

In time for lunch, we arrive amid the honey colored stone of the houses and fortifications of Domme, the most famous and well-preserved of the bastides. From here, we walk right out of town on a lovely footpath that leads down to the Dordogne River. From St. Julien, we follow the river—first through open countryside past walnut, poplar and wild plum trees, then around a bend downhill with incredible views past fields of crops to Castelnaud village and its fortified castle.

This evening, we head into Sarlat for dinner. The photogenic village is often used as the setting for motion pictures set in the Middle Ages because of its well-preserved center. Our festive dinner tonight is at the former Court of Justice.

**Overnight:** Les Eyzies

**Meals:** B, D

## DAY 3

### LES EYZIES

- Accompany an expert truffle hunter and his dogs in search of the prized local specialty
- Meet with a local artist
- Enjoy a cinematic setting for dinner this evening in picturesque Sarlat

This morning we take a break from history and concentrate on our stomachs. To start, we meet with an amazing local friend, Eduard. He is one of the world's foremost experts on truffles, and he welcomes us for a truffle hunt. You'll be amazed at how his dogs are able to source the prized truffles from under the oak trees. We'll also enjoy a memorable tasting of the local specialty.

For a leisurely start to the afternoon, we visit a local friend—a highly regarded artist—at her studio where she shares with us insights into her etching and printing techniques.

**Overnight:** Les Eyzies

**Meals:** B, L

## DAY 4

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### COMMARQUE CASTLE

- **Examine cave etchings that are 27,000 years old**
- **Explore the banks of La Beune River along an ancient cobble-stoned Roman road**

We begin our walk along a riverside path upstream to the Gorge d'Enfer. (If your French is good, you may be wondering about the "Canyon of Hell"; in fact, the reference is not to beautiful scenery, but rather to an ancient story about a priest's opinion of where some of the artifacts found nearby had originated!)

Along the way, our guide shares with us a very private visit that we know of no one else (tourist, traveler or tour company) making—to see a Paleolithic engraving that dates back 27,000 years. We'll make a hushed visit that we think you'll really enjoy. Our walk ends at Laugerie Basse, a prehistoric rock shelter embedded in the cliffs overlooking the Vezere Valley. Our walk this afternoon encapsulates all of the Dordogne and Vezere valleys into one beautiful compact stroll. We follow the banks of La Beune River and even a portion of an ancient cobble-stoned Roman road.

Along the way, our guide shares with us stories and anecdotes about the nature, pre-history, modern history, troglodytic ruins, fortified and leisure castles. Our destination is Commarque Castle.

Later, we'll join our guide for a walk in and around Les Eyzies, before heading towards Lascaux, our home for the next two nights.

**Overnight:** Montignac-Lascaux

**Meals:** B, D

## DAY 5

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### LA ROQUE ST. CHRISTOPHE / LASCAUX II CAVES

- **Visit a troglodyte village and fortress**
- **Accept an invitation to a private artifact collection**
- **Lascaux II caves**

This morning our destination is La Roque St. Christophe, a fascinating troglodyte village that has been continuously inhabited, first by the Neanderthals, for more than 50,000 years. After a visit to the fortress and a chance to enjoy the wonderfully scenic views over the Vezere, we follow the Vezere River south on foot a few miles to St. Leon-sur-Vezere, a tiny and charming riverside village with a beautiful Romanesque church and renaissance château. Arriving mid-day we stop for a picnic lunch along the river.

Continuing along the river on foot, in the village of Sergeac we are guests of a local friend, who welcomes us to explore his private collection containing prehistoric tools, jewels and other artifacts found in the area. This is both a privilege and an opportunity to see the finest collection in France in a private setting.

The Dordogne region is noted for an incredible concentration of over 130 Paleolithic sites, the most renowned of which is Lascaux. On our final exploration of the week, we pay a visit to the Lascaux II caves with perfect replicas of the 17,000-year-old paintings found in Lascaux. The artfully crafted caves illustrate an important part of the prehistory of the area with paintings of bulls, bison and stags. Later we return to our hotel in the late afternoon to relax or shop before a festive farewell dinner.

**Overnight:** Montignac-Lascaux

**Meals:** B, L, D

## DAY 6

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### MONTIGNAC / BRIVE

- **Market day at Montignac**
- **Part company in Brive**

This morning we'll have time to meander through market day in Montignac, and later stroll through Saint Amand de Coly, a lovely village nestled in the Dordogne countryside with what is reputed to be the most beautiful fortified 12th-century church in the Perigord.

## DAILY ITINERARY

Dordogne Valley: Bordeaux Vineyards & Southwestern France | Cultural Walking Adventure

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Late morning, we part company in Brive for return trains to Paris or transfers to Bordeaux and the southwest.

Meals: B





## Tour Hotels



### **Hotel Les Glycines**

Overlooking the Vezere river, this four star property features a gourmet restaurant, spa, and six acres of wooded park land.

**OVERNIGHT:** Les Eyzies-de-tayac-sireuil | **NIGHTS:** 3



### **Hotel de Bouilhac**

Steps from the sacred hill of Lascaux, Hotel de Bouilhac is a 17th century hotel whose elegant architecture is typical of the Perigord Noir and is registered with the Historic Monuments of the region.

**OVERNIGHT:** Montignac-Lascaux | **NIGHTS:** 2

## Tour Dates & Prices

To see the full list of dates and prices for this tour, go to our website by clicking [here](#).

Want to travel with just your group on a date of your choosing? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://www.classicjourneys.com/private) to learn more about Private Journeys.

## Trip Essentials

**TRIP LENGTH** 6 Days, 5 Nights

**START** Hotel Burdigala lobby, Bordeaux, France

**END** Rail Station, Brive, France

**TERRAIN** Easy to moderate on good trails and coastal paths. At your option, up to 2 to 4 hours of walking per day, with a mini-van in support.

## What's Included

- All breakfasts, 2 lunches and 4 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

## Above & Beyond Benefits

- Wine on Us
- Invisible Check-In
- Privileged Access Events

**READY TO BOOK?**  
**CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION**

## Or give us a call

**1-800-200-3887**

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

[moreinfo@classicjourneys.com](mailto:moreinfo@classicjourneys.com)

### AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to [a whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

### ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

\*\*Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

# THE Classic Journeys Difference

## HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.



At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

*Samuel*  
President & Founder



## You can expect the highest standards:



### Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



### Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



### Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



### Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



### Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



### Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

## You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Dordogne Valley...

- Visiting Grotte de Font-de-Gaume, and other prehistoric cave paintings not open to the public
- Exploring the vineyards and caves of legendary St. Emilion, with plenty of time for tastings of Bordeaux's premier appellation
- Truffle-hunting with a foremost expert and a follow-up tasting of the delicacy
- Luxuriating in perfectly-sited hotels, including one that is a gracious 13th-century inn deep in the French countryside
- Unraveling ancient mysteries with expert local guide Bart, a renowned historian who's as comfortable with 25,000-year-old cave paintings as he is with the search for the perfect crème brûlée

"We have traveled around the world with many groups and individually, and we have never had a trip such as this. Bart was not just an excellent guide, but brought pre-history to life. The hotels were charming, the food was delicious, and the ambiance outstanding. We look forward to traveling with Classic Journeys again."

-Alfred and Zora M., New York, NY,