

l'étonnant voyage!

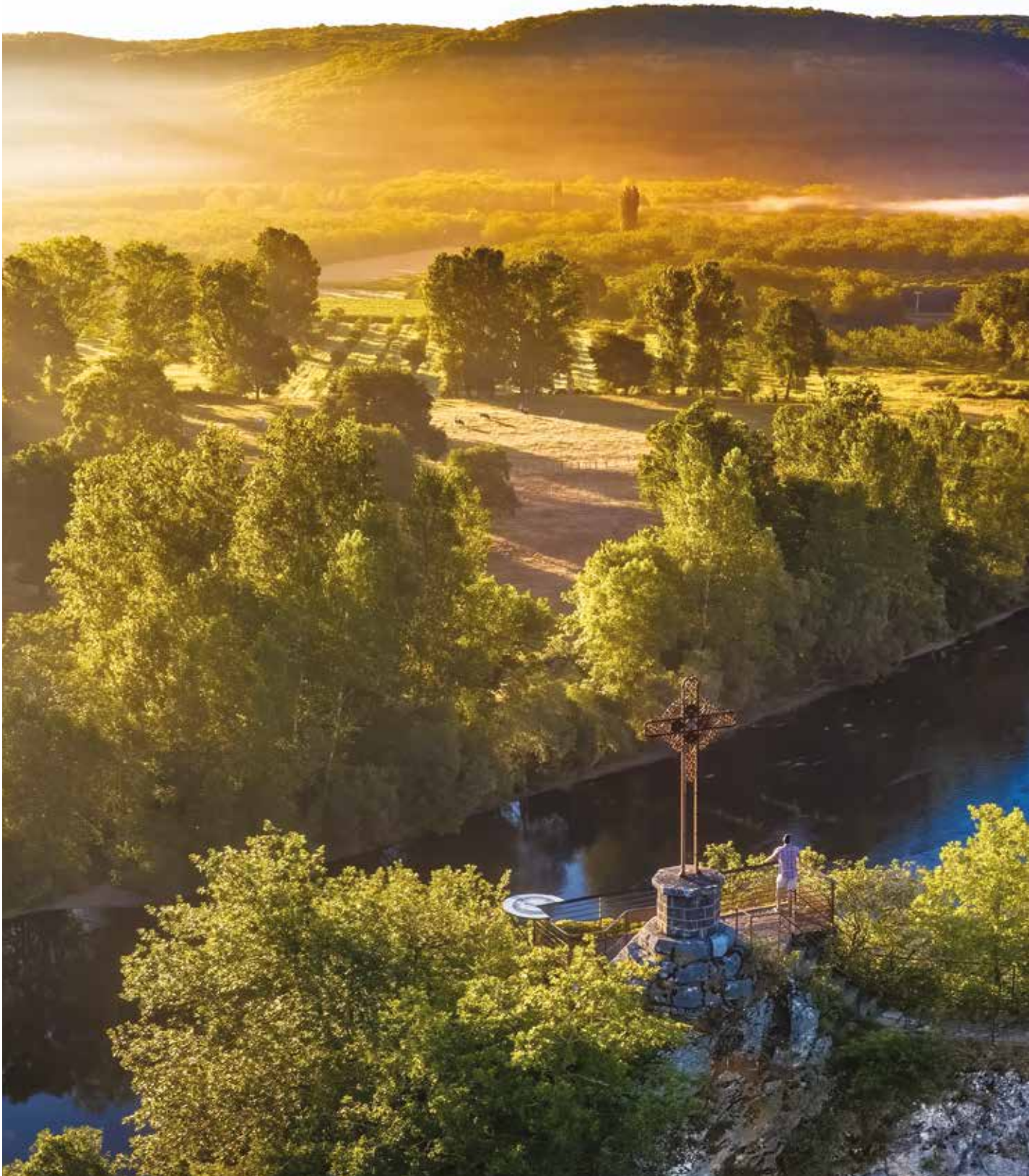
A surprising journey!

PRESS KIT



Vallée de la Dordogne

ROCAMADOUR • PADIRAC • COLLONGES-LA-ROUGE





The Dordogne Valley

A surprising journey!

Take your time, slow down, reconnect with your inner balance and follow the gentle pace of the river.

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the Dordogne Valley

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KEY FACTS AND FIGURES OF THE DORDOGNE VALLEY

REGIONS

Occitanie and Nouvelle-Aquitaine

2

DEPARTMENTS

Lot and Corrèze

130km

OF DORDOGNE
RIVER

1

DESTINATION
PROMOTED
INTERNATIONALLY

1

GRAND SITE
OCCITANIE

Rocamadour -
Dordogne Valley

72,000

Inhabitants

141

VILLAGES

23,000

km²

35,000

Sleeping capacity

1,709

Places to sleep

5

 of the most beautiful
villages in France

5

 MILLION
nights spent every year

Sites Remarquables du Goût

Martel for walnuts, Rocamadour for cheese,
Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne for strawberries

3

Protected Designation of Origin

Walnuts of Périgord, Rocamadour cheese and wines of Corrèze,
1 IGP: Quercy Lamb - 1 Label Rouge: Veal

1.5m visitors per year to Rocamadour
600,000 to Collonges-la-Rouge

365,000 visitors to the Dordogne Valley
Tourist Office each year

20% are foreign visitors

1. Great Britain • 2. Spain • 3. Belgium

A vibrant spring scene featuring a field of colorful flowers in the foreground, a red brick church with spires in the middle ground, and rolling green hills under a blue sky with white clouds. A large green circle is overlaid on the top left.

SPRING

make the most of now

Disconnect and be amazed...
smaller paths lead to green and
blue horizons, where Heaven
meets the Earth.

SEASONS

A dynamic summer scene showing a person in a red cap and blue shirt kayaking down a river. The kayaker is wearing a life jacket and using a blue paddle. The water is splashing around the yellow kayak. A large red circle is overlaid on the bottom left.

SUMMER

a sense of adventure

Wild beaches, swimming, canoeing down
the river...End the day with a tasty treat from
a night market or by sipping wine on
a restaurant terrace.



AUTUMN

nature's treats

Pick up walnuts and chestnuts on the paths, perhaps even a few ceps in the forest, feel the warm sun on your face...Choose a gentler pace of life to explore the Dordogne Valley and its festival of colours in this most beautiful of seasons.

REASONS



WINTER

black and gold

Black, like the fragrant winter truffles, wrapped in wicker baskets adorning market stalls. Black, like the Virgin Statue in the Sanctuary of Rocamadour. Gold, like her crown, or the candles lit in the chapel. Gold, like a warm log fire or Christmas decorations laid out for the big day.



ROCAMADOUR THE SACRED CITY

*"The houses above the river, the churches
above the houses, the rocks above the
churches and the castle on the rocks."*



High and mighty

Rocamadour is suspended between Heaven and Earth in vertiginous layers of houses and chapels. Crowned by a castle, the medieval city has been a great pilgrimage site for over a thousand years. Both listed as **UNESCO World Heritage Sites**, the basilica Saint Sauveur and the crypt Saint Amadour stand at the top of the 216 steps of the Great Pilgrims Staircase. Pilgrims and visitors alike can only feel moved by the beauty and the weight of history within these walls. An astonishing site where faith and legends have attracted kings, queens, knights and lowly prisoners in search of forgiveness for centuries.

The Black Madonna

The ultimate aim of the pilgrimage to Rocamadour, the statue of the Black Virgin, was apparently discovered alongside the body of Saint Amadour in the 12th century. The dark wooden sculpture has been linked to many **miracles**, surprisingly often at **sea**. She is said to have saved the crew of the famous explorer Jacques Cartier on his voyage of discovery to Canada. Small boat replicas are hanging from the ceiling in the chapel as well as shackles hooked on the wall as the Black Madonna was also freeing **prisoners** at the end of their pilgrimage. On the ceiling, the bell of miracles is said to toll on its own when a miracle happens.

A BIT OF HISTORY

- 1105 :** *First mention of Rocamadour as a place dedicated to the worship of the Virgin Mary*
- 1166 :** *Discovery of the body of Saint Amadour. Hundreds of pilgrims rush to the site*
- 1172 :** *Writing of the Book of Miracles*
- 1193 à 1317 :** *Golden era for pilgrimage to Rocamadour*
- 1244 :** *Visit of Saint Louis coming back from a crusade*
- 1337 à 1453 :** *The Hundred Years War*
- 1369 :** *The English occupy Rocamadour*
- 1562 :** *Pillage of the Sanctuary by the Protestants*
- 1858 à 1872 :** *Restoration of Rocamadour*
- 2013 :** *Rocamadour celebrates 1,000 years of pilgrimage*
- 2016 :** *850th anniversary of the discovery of Saint Amadour. His relics are returned to the Sanctuary*

L'Estanquet, the bistrot at the top

Pilgrims used to stop closeby in l'Hospitalet, before starting the last part of their journey down to the Sanctuary. Today, l'Estanquet, meaning '*bistrot*' in Occitan, treats travellers with a fine mix of flavours whilst in keeping the traditional spirit.
*33 (0)5 65 10 98 08

Les Esclargies, hôtel au naturel

Hidden amongst oak trees, les Esclargies is at one with nature : wood, stone, earthy colours, large garden to lie down and relax, scrumptious breakfasts...A true haven a few minutes walk from the heart of Rocamadour.
www.esclargies.com

Au Cantou, spiritual stay

"*Find a brother in everyone we meet*" is the motto of the two Sisters welcoming pilgrims in the house just below the Sanctuary. Dormitory and private rooms.
www.sanctuaierocamadour.com/le-cantou



COLLONGES LA ROUGE

Built in red sandstone, Collonges-la-Rouge is aptly named the Ruby of the Dordogne Valley. The presence of 2.2% iron oxide in the rock gives a unique colour to the buildings and seem to blaze in the evening sun. Historic narrow streets, artist workshops, generous cuisine, sunny terraces...Collonges-la-Rouge is an unexpected treasure to meander through or simply watch the world go by.



THE MOST BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES IN FRANCE

No less than five villages in the Dordogne Valley have obtained the prestigious label “*Plus Beaux Villages de France*”: Collonges-la-Rouge, Curemonte, Carennac, Loubressac and Autoire. This label was actually created here in 1982 at the initiative of the mayor of Collonges, M. Charles Ceyrac.

François Ceyrac, a local figure

When you push open the door of his lodging in the heart of Collonges you will immediately feel at home. François has an innate sense of hospitality, a human warmth that radiates throughout the house. After hanging your damp clothes in front of the stove and stretching your tired muscles after hours of walking, you will quickly regain your strength. François knows this village like the back of his hand and will share with you its secrets.
www.lamerelle.fr



Le Cantou

Le Cantou means both ‘fireplace’ and ‘heart of the family’ in Occitan. And this restaurant is just that: a family story where savoir-faire has passed between generations. The owners have moved from their native Paris in order to bring to life their grandmother’s ancient recipes: veal, duck, confit...to be enjoyed on the terrace under the vine in summer or vaulted cellar in winter.
www.lecantou.fr

Auberge de Benges

100% home-made using only fresh and local produce directly from local farmers. The result is a generous cuisine elaborated with pride and finesse. Set at one end of the village, the terrace covered with vines opens onto flower gardens where the subtle scent of aromatic plants lingers throughout the evening.
www.aubergedebenges.com



5 OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES IN FRANCE

Carennac

between the Middle Ages and Renaissance

With its cloister, 11th century priory, Renaissance houses overlooking the banks of the Dordogne and an island named Calypso...Carennac wraps around the monastic buildings in narrow medieval streets.

CLUNIAN SITES

Founded in 910, the abbey of Cluny started the biggest network of medieval monastic buildings in Occidental Europe. From the 10th to the 18th century, this powerful abbey was the source of over 1,400 religious sites. The Dordogne Valley holds two of them: the 11th century priory buildings in Carennac and the 12th century abbey in Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne.

Curemonte

everything comes in threes

Three castles, three churches, three fountains, three crosses... High on a crest of a small hill, Curemonte is an impressive balancing act. The writer Colette found refuge there at her daughter's house during the Second World War.



Loubressac

perched up on a hill

Built on a rocky prow in a dominant position, facing the castle of Castelnaud-Bretenoux, the medieval village of Loubressac enjoys one of the most beautiful panoramas of the Dordogne Valley.

Collonges-la-Rouge

the first place designated as one of the "Most Beautiful Villages in France"

The unexpected colour of the stones, towers and turrets, working in harmony together with the stone roofs, makes this place unique. *More information on page 11.*



VILLAGES AND VOYAGES

“To travel is to live”

Hans Christian Andersen

MARTEL, THE TOWN WITH SEVEN TOWERS

Situated on the Causse plateau, the fairytale medieval town of Martel is one of the few that wasn't erected around a castle or monastic buildings. It is positioned at the crossing of two former major trade routes: an antique North-South route and a West-East axis used to haul wine and salt from the Atlantic coast.

From the beginning of the 12th century, Martel became a rich and prosperous city. In the same era, it also became a major stopover town for pilgrims on their way to Rocamadour. Its coat of arms depicting three hammers indicates that Martel was also home to many artisans.

Forgotten for a while, Martel experienced a revival in the 19th century thanks to the truffle trade. A dynamic town with over twenty restaurants, small shops, twice weekly market and many activities, today Martel is a must-do stop in the Dordogne Valley.



Full steam ahead

The Truffadou embarks passengers on a breathtaking trip along the cliff's edge, pulled by diesel or steam locomotives. Thus named because it transported truffles from Martel towards the capital, it makes today a vertiginous round trip of 12km with lovely views over the Dordogne Valley.

www.trainduhautquercy.info

Having a ball

Every Wednesday evening from mid-July to the end of August, the Martel hall comes to life with the sound of bands playing popular tunes. The terraces of the restaurants spread all around the square spill out with diners, dancers and children as people start cutting a groove on the dancefloor. The atmosphere is in full swing until late into the night and everybody goes home with a smile on their face and heads full of melodies.

La Devinie

Guest house in the centre of Martel. The four bedrooms, each inspired by a different perfume, offer a cosy and exclusive atmosphere for a dream holiday. Gourmet breakfasts in the garden or in the large convivial kitchen.

www.la-devinie.com

Le Petit Moulin

Wine bar and bistronomic restaurant, plates to share and original homemade dishes that change according to the season and the chef's inspiration. You can even prolong the experience as Adrien, the young dynamic owner, has opened pretty guest rooms above the restaurant.

www.facebook.com/lepetitmoulinde martel

Maison Sophie

Discreet charm, elegant setting, fine cuisine. Set on the market square, Maison Sophie proposes a menu with fresh produce from the market, delicious vegetarian options and home-made gourmet burgers.

www.facebook.com/pages/category/Restaurant/Maison-Sophie-344028206223633



Escape to the waterfalls

Hike into the wilderness to find one of these most amazing spectacles of nature...

The waterfall of Autoire: Above the listed village, it performs a spectacular plunge of 30 metres high in the middle of woodlands.

The waterfalls of Murel: Deep into the gorges, they form three successive waterfalls that subside in beautiful natural pools.

The cascades of Vieyres: Well hidden and terribly exotic, they are the well deserved treat after a beautiful hike in the forest.



Water and stone



Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne, the Riviera of the Limousin

Part of the Cluny abbey network dating from the 12th century, the abbey church of Beaulieu has managed to retain its remarkable carved tympanum. Hidden by the Huguenots during the Wars of Religion, it also escaped from revolutionary destruction two centuries later. The narrow medieval streets lead to the flower filled docks that stretch along the Dordogne, the pier and the chapel of the Penitents. The warm micro-climate of the city, where palm trees and banana plants grow randomly, gave it the nickname of Riviera Limousine.



Wooden barges on the Dordogne

The last witness of an intense economic activity that did not cease until 1910, the gabares are large flat-bottomed boats that were used to travel regularly on the Dordogne river. Stacked with wood to make wine barrels in Bordeaux, they in turn brought back precious salts and colonial products to the area. Today, passionate storytellers recount these great adventures during a relaxing trip upon the water. Departure from Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne and Argentat-sur-Dordogne. www.vallee-dordogne.com/la-vallee-de-la-dordogne/activites/balades-en-gabares



Aubazine, from Cistercian monks to Coco Chanel

Aubazine preserves many sites and remains built by monks in the 12th century, including the Canal des Moines and a Cistercian abbey where Coco Chanel, abandoned by her father, spent several formative years.

Coco Chanel

The young Gabrielle Chanel spent six years of her childhood at the orphanage of the Aubazine Abbey where she first learned to sew. She drew inspiration from within the Abbey walls, particularly her taste for clean-cut clothing, a predilection for black and white, and even the famous Chanel logo, which can be seen in the intertwined stained glass windows of the abbey.



The monks canal

Unique in Europe, this remarkable canal built by monks in the 12th century is a true feat of art and technique. Following the contours of the rocky slope in order to supply water to the monastery of Aubazine, the canal stretches over 1,500 metres, defying natural obstacles along its path.

MEDIEVAL HERITAGE



FEUDAL CITADELS AND MEDIEVAL CASTLES

Like a set from Game of Thrones...The steep cliffs and dense forest that encircle this once feudal citadel add a touch of mystery to an exceptional medieval site: The Towers of Merle. Nearby, the tall silhouettes of the Carbonnières Towers have dominated the landscape since the 11th century. You can discover the numerous and impressive castles of the region nestled amongst nature, hidden besides the meandering contours of the Dordogne or straddling cliff tops proudly overlooking the river below...

When admiring the impressive fortress of Castelnaud-Bretenoux, feel struck by the engineering feat of medieval builders who created it and imagine a time when knights roamed the land before it.

www.castelnaud-bretenoux.fr



Château de Montal, a woman's work

Completely renovated in 2016, the Château de Montal is a jewel of the French Renaissance. Designed by a woman with a tragic destiny, it illustrates all the finesse and beauty of the 16th century.

www.chateau-montal.fr

Château des doyens

Located within the monastic buildings of Carennac, the Château des Doyens now houses the Land of Art and History headquarters. Salignac de Lamothe Fénelon wrote *"The adventures of Telemachus"* for the grandson of Louis XIV there. Open for visitors with no charge to see the monumental fireplaces, the painted 17th century ceiling and temporary exhibitions.

www.pays-vallee-dordogne.com

Tours de Merle, a medieval escape game

90 minutes. It's the time each team has to find the treasures. A giant adventure game for older children and adults alike, where eight teams compete to solve the clues, with exclusive use of the entire site.

www.toursdemerle.fr



The mills of yesteryears

In a land criss-crossed by so many rivers, watermills have played an integral part of the rural heritage. At the bottom of the Alzou canyon at Rocamadour stand the ruins of the **Moulin du Saut** in an environmentally protected area. On the banks of the Ouyse river, its turquoise waters still turns the wheel of the **Moulin de Cougnaguet**, built in the 14th century by the monks of a Cistercian abbey. A little further upstream, at the **Moulin de Caoulet**, fleshy and tasty trout are bred and raised straight from the river.

Moulin de Caoulet: +33 (0)5 65 37 97 75

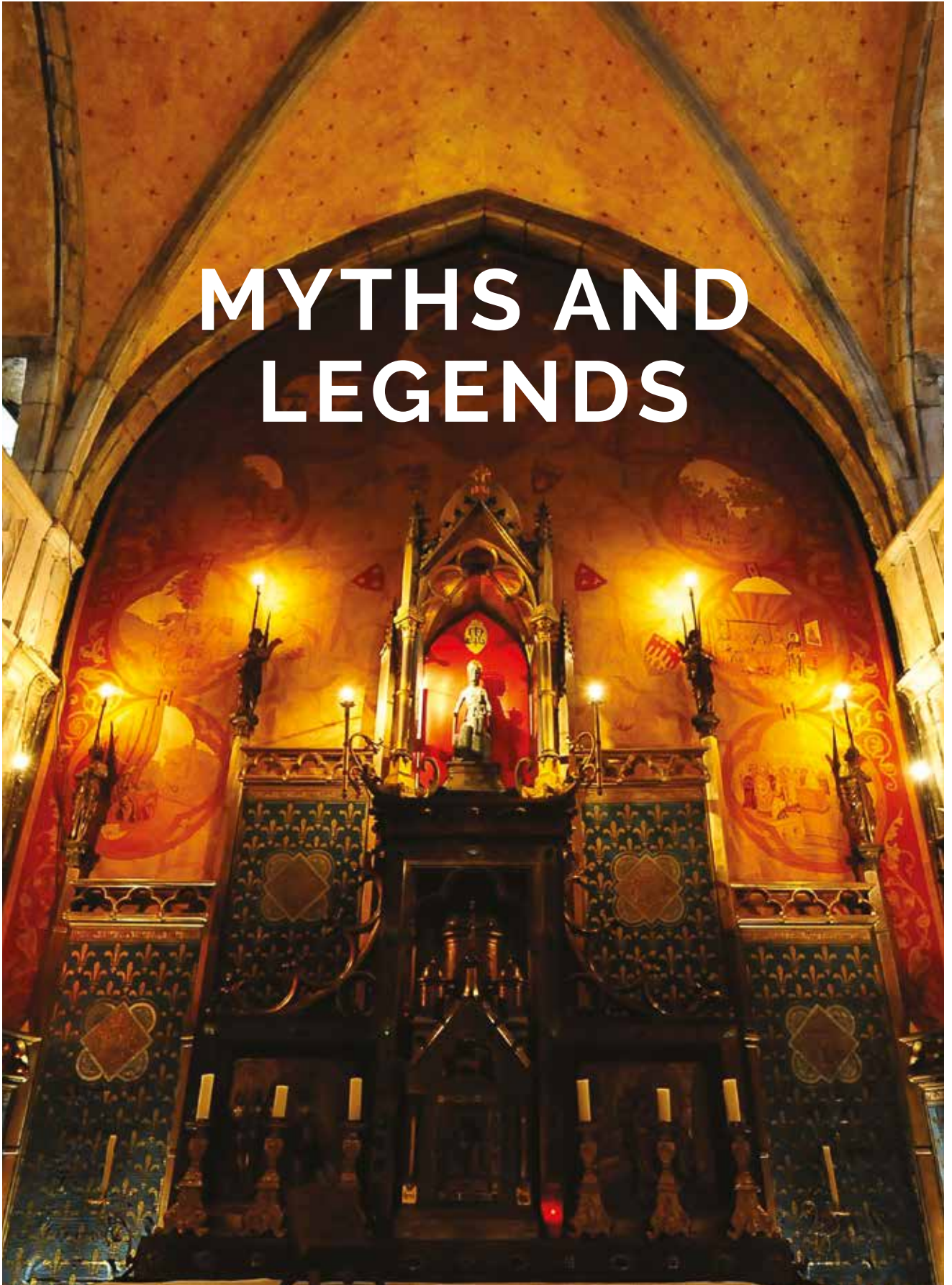
Hubert, the soul of the mill

With his blue overalls and accent rolling like pebbles through water, Hubert welcomes visitors to his mill as he would to his own house. He demonstrates the working millstones, plunges his hands into the flour and speaks of a time when the monk-millers had to defend themselves against treacherous robbers... Then visitors move to the kitchen, as if from another time, to taste his "moonshine" and walnuts scattered on the table...A truly authentic experience made possible by the wonderfully humane passion of Hubert.

www.cougnaguet.com



MYTHS AND LEGENDS



Heroic tales and legendary creatures

A pact with the devil - *Gouffre de Padirac*

One night, Saint Martin, discouraged not to have found any souls likely to go straight to Paradise, was riding his old mule on the cause plateau. Suddenly, on the edge of the Padirac chasm, appears Satan, sneering, with a bag full of souls. Realising that Saint Martin was empty handed, he offered him a deal. *"I do not pact with the devil."* replied the latter, and listening only to his courage, he jumped over the chasm with a prodigious leap. Satan, unbalanced, fell into the depths of the abyss...The footprint of the mule's hooves on the rock are still visible today at the edge of the chasm.

The sword in the stone - *Rocamadour*

In the 8th century, Roland, a brave knight and nephew of the French King Charlemagne, was fighting against the Sarracens. Badly injured, he didn't want his sword to be captured by his enemies. He tried to break it on a boulder but the rock broke into two halves instead. He then implored the Archangel Saint Michael for help and threw his sword as hard as his remaining strength allowed. The sword flew over 300km to land in Rocamadour where you can still see it today, lodged into the cliff above the chapel of miracles.



The divine wrath - *Martel*

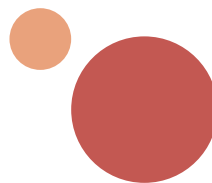
Son of the King of England and elder brother of Richard the Lionheart, Henry Court Mantel was destined to rule. But disinherited by his father, he was forced to pillage abbeys around France. In 1183 he robbed the Sanctuary of Rocamadour of its treasure and attracted the divine wrath upon himself. According to the legend, the miraculous bell in the Sanctuary started to toll and Henry fell gravely ill. He took refuge in the village of Martel, where now stands the tower of Maison Fabri. Torn by remorse, he confessed his crimes and begged his father the King for forgiveness. By the time the messenger returned, Henry was slowly dying, wearing a heavy cross on his chest in penitence.

Black-eyed sheep - *Plateau du Causse*

In order to protect his sheep from the fiery sun of the cause which was damaging the sight of his flock, a shepherd had idea one day of painting their eyes with charcoal. The sheep felt much better and the lambs began to be born that way. It is for this reason that the sheep of the cause have very distinctive black eyes that look like sunglasses. They are called *"the sheep with dark glasses"*.

The coulobre - *Argentat-sur-Dordogne*

Since the beginning of time people have invented legends to help them face their fears. Thus was born on the banks of the Dordogne a Coulobre - a snake in Occitan, the local Loch Ness monster in many ways! A dragon's head resting on a snake's body from which his large clawed feet allow him to step over the river. The people who descended the Dordogne on their gabare barges were his favourite dish, although the Coulobre enjoyed as much the young maidens who ventured a little too close to the banks...



A night sky photograph featuring the Milky Way galaxy arching across the frame, with a misty forest landscape in the foreground. The text "NATURAL HERITAGE" is centered in the upper half of the image.

NATURAL HERITAGE

Nature and biodiversity



Over the moon

Distant planets, shooting stars...Lie down and observe the depths of the universe. The night sky of the Natural Regional Park of the Causses du Quercy is one of the purest in France, with very low light pollution. This has earned it the nickname "*Black Triangle*".

Domostella

Sleep under the stars in a glass dome and wake up in the midst of nature with the first light and birds in morning song.
www.lamaisondesetoiles.fr

Domaine du Bel Air

Observe the sky with Sébastien and his telescope at his bed and breakfast Domaine du Bel Air. Then in the morning, drink a coffee under a centuries-old oak tree.
www.domaine-belair.com

The Dordogne : A World Biosphere Reserve

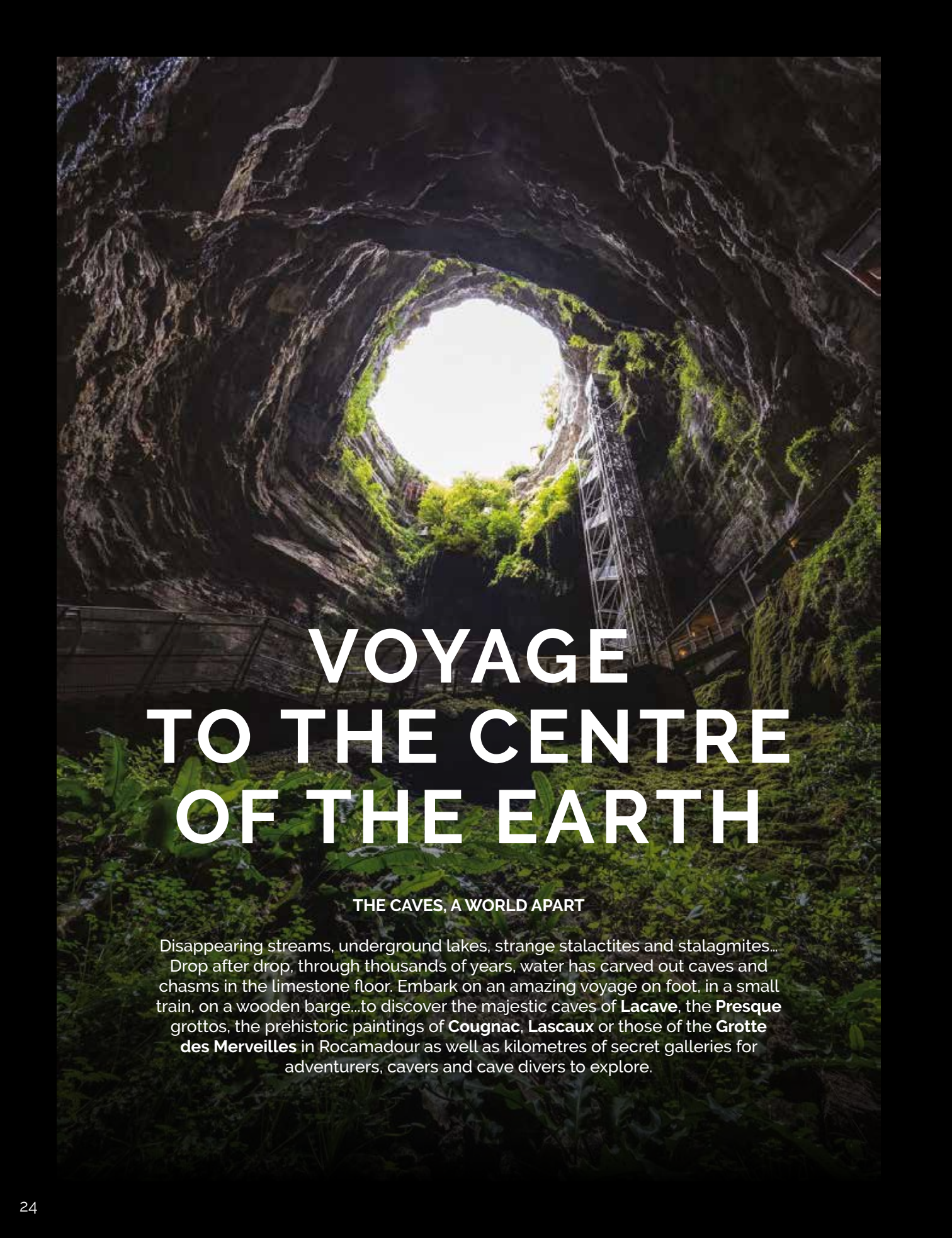
Bringing life to the length and breadth of the region, the Dordogne River is classified a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO, in recognition of its beautifully preserved natural environment and the great diversity of its flora and fauna. It is the only river in France to own this prestigious label.

Natural Regional Park of the Causses du Quercy

In 2017, the Natural Regional Natural Park of the Causses and Quercy was recognised as an area with geological specificities of international importance. It is classified World Geopark by UNESCO. It is, among other things, a space for developing geotourism and raising awareness of the sustainable use of the Earth's resources.

Label Natura 2000

The Dordogne Valley is home to a remarkable diversity of plants and animals on a national, European and global scale. Many rare and endangered species in other parts of the world still live here, especially species inhabiting wetlands.



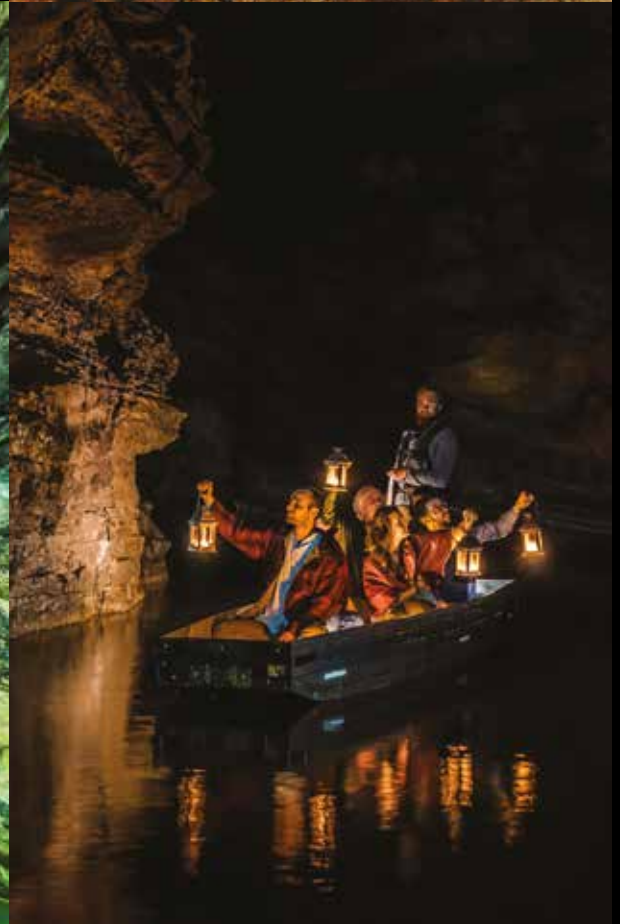
VOYAGE TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH

THE CAVES, A WORLD APART

Disappearing streams, underground lakes, strange stalactites and stalagmites... Drop after drop, through thousands of years, water has carved out caves and chasms in the limestone floor. Embark on an amazing voyage on foot, in a small train, on a wooden barge...to discover the majestic caves of **Lacave**, the **Presque grottos**, the prehistoric paintings of **Cougnac**, **Lascaux** or those of the **Grotte des Merveilles** in Rocamadour as well as kilometres of secret galleries for adventurers, cavers and cave divers to explore.

The birthplace of humanity

From cave paintings to dolmens, from Roman occupation to the Hundred Years War, from the Renaissance to the Revolution, from the Resistance to today...History's mark is everywhere. Tracing back the footsteps of our distant ancestors, they lead us to the **Neanderthal skeleton** found in La Chapelle-aux-Saints, the archeological site of **l'Archéosite des Fieux**, the cave paintings of **Lascaux** or the **Grottes des Merveilles** in Rocamadour...



Gouffre de Padirac, the Devil's chasm

For centuries, the Padirac chasm terrorised local people who referred to it as the Devil's Hole. These superstitions only disappeared when the explorer Edouard-Alfred Martel was first lowered into the cavity in 1889. Today visitors can take a boat ride on the emerald underground river 103 metres below the surface before continuing the journey on foot through truly outstanding natural galleries.

www.gouffre-de-padirac.com

With a lantern

Just like Edouard-Alfred Martel during his first descent 130 years ago, the Gouffre de Padirac regularly organises a select number of visits with a simple lantern as the only light source. An utterly unique experience that reveals the impressive immensity of the site under flickering flame.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Everybody out!

Throw yourself in the deep end

Swimming and Canoeing

Drift on the water, under the limestone cliffs, admire the flight of a heron or kingfisher, paddle gently downstream, in the middle of nature, surrounded by all the shades of green and blue. From the canoe, the landscape slowly changes: perched villages, castles, orchards... The journey lasts 130km with new discoveries around every bend.

Wilder and faster in Argentat, the river slows and widens in Beaulieu where the old gabare barges used to depart. Then cliffs start to emerge, along with stone villages and pebble beaches. Labelled World Biosphere Reserve for the quality of its waters and its natural environment, the Dordogne is a delight for swimmers and water lovers.

There is an abundance of wild beaches to choose from throughout its course, some are also supervised, like that of Gluges, sunny throughout the day.



Canyoning

Abseiling in wild torrents, diving in natural pools carved out by rivers...Canyoning combines adventure and nature, physical effort and thrilling sensations. You can experience this in the streams of the Ségala with a guide and all necessary equipment provided for.

www.compagnie-sports-nature.com/canyoning-dordogne
www.escapadenatureargentat.com

Skimming stones

First, you have to find the right pebble: very flat, neither too small nor too thick (this is called a 'resquilhète'). Then there is the technique: bend down to shave the water, breathe in, focus and then throw the pebble sharply... *Splash!* All the strength and skill come from the wrist and success is measured by the number of ricochets made across the water. Some even reach the other shore. Can you?





Below, above and beyond

From thrills to relaxation

Suspension ridge

Limestone cliffs, rock faces, natural corridors and breathtaking panoramas...The geological diversity of the Dordogne Valley is a challenge for climbers of all levels, whether on the cliffs of Autoire or high above the Ouyse and the Dordogne rivers ...Accessible to all the family, the Via Ferrata in Argentat is a great combination of hiking and rock climbing with a rewarding viewpoint over the river when reaching the top.
www.escapadenatureargentat.com/fr/4-via-ferrata-dordogne-argentat-correze

Cave diving - going underground

Slightly scary but utterly fascinating, the underground world has remained untouched by time. For those who dare to venture there, the experience will leave indelible memories. Dozens of kilometers of underground galleries carved through limestone soil and rock are accessible to beginners or experienced adventurers, in dry or partially submerged caves, with a qualified instructor.
www.compagnie-sports-nature.com/speleologie-lot

Underground diving

The Dordogne Valley is one of the three major destinations in the world for cave diving enthusiasts. Every two years in Gramat the International Congress for cave divers is held. The discipline being very technical, it is obligatory to have passed a level 2 diving certificate to practice it. An initiation to this experience is proposed by Les Vasques du Quercy.
www.quercy-plongee.com

Like a fish to water

Wild trout from March to September, pike, zander, black bass...The Dordogne Valley is recognised as one of the best fishing spots in Europe, great for all techniques, especially fly fishing. Specialised guides offer their services to accompany fishermen of all levels and help them improve their technique in some great fishing spots.
www.visit-dordogne-valley.co.uk/activities/fishing/the-definitive-guide-to-fishing-in-the-dordogne-valley

Fish and gîtes

Fishing is his passion. As a qualified fishing guide, Luc offers invaluable advice for catching trout, pike and improving fly-fishing techniques. His three gîtes accommodation also provides access to an indoor pool designed to practice angling.
www.fishandgites.com



Rambling through the countryside

"It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters in the end."

Ernest Hemingway

A breath of fresh air and bucolic happiness, hiking allows you to reconnect with the essentials at your own pace. In the Dordogne Valley, more than a hundred walks chosen for their environmental or historical interest lead walkers through protected areas, deep valleys, small streams, arid plateaus and timeless villages.

www.visit-dordogne-valley.co.uk/activities/walks-and-hikes/one-with-nature

Finding your path

Since 1998 the Routes of Santiago de Compostela have been listed as World Heritage by UNESCO. Rocamadour, since the Middle Ages a place of pilgrimage in its own right, is also one of the points of convergence for three variants of the paths of Saint James in the Dordogne Valley.

www.chemin-de-st-jacques-voie-de-rocamadour-limousin-haut-quercy.fr

The **Via Arverna** leaves from Clermont-Ferrand and follows deep and wild gorges before crossing many of the *"Most Beautiful Villages of France"*.

The **Voie de Rocamadour** from Benevent l'Abbaye passes through Aubazine, Collonges-la-Rouge, Martel and Rocamadour.

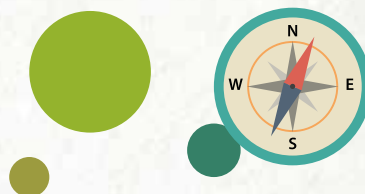
As for the famous **Voie du Puy en Velay**, it leads its way through stunning countryside from Figeac to Rocamadour and then heads south towards Cahors.



Geocaching - the incredible treasure hunt

Hundreds of people are going treasure hunting mad in the Dordogne Valley. Twenty circuits are accessible by downloading the free App 'Terra Aventura'. Nothing's easier, you can even choose to play in English! Just follow the path, answer the riddles and find the hiding place. A great way to get out and about with the whole family.

www.terra-aventura.fr





Travelling light

ROAMING FREE

Travelling from place to place enables a unique sense of freedom. Freedom to fully enjoy the moment, liberated from the weight of everyday life and everyday stress. Whether on long distance walking trails, canoeing down the river for a week, cycling on small country roads or on horseback over a few days... The pace slows down, we take time to listen to ourselves and the surrounding world. Who knows which road will be taken next?

Of dams and villages

A 200km hiking track in the wilderness through unspoilt and breathtaking countryside leading to the dams taming the river. On the way, wooden huts with kitchen and running water welcome walkers for the night.

www.ladordognedevillagesenbarrages.com



Long distance canoeing

Most companies that rent canoes offer the possibility of going on an adventure over a few days, whether you are travelling alone or in a group. These à la carte trips take between two and seven days on the Dordogne. Some also offer camping equipment to take on board: tent, stove, mattress ...so you can spend magical nights counting stars under one of the purest skies in France.





ZEN ATTITUDE - BODY AND SOUL

Le Manoir de Malagorse

Upscale guesthouse in an old farmhouse for yoga retreat, massages, relaxing in the garden and home cooking.
www.manoir-de-malagorse.fr

Le Clos du Chevalier

Already a stopover place for pilgrims in the 12th century, this former commandery specialises in fasting and hiking breaks.
www.jeune-leclosduchevalier.com

Spalazen Nature

Lodges at the edge of the woods with private spa, log fire, suspended net as a reading space...in total harmony with nature.
www.spalazen-nature.com

Le Grand Couvent

Spiritual retreat or accommodation with excellent value for money, le Grand Couvent is a succession of imposing buildings, chapel, seminar rooms and a 2* hotel. The twenty Sisters of Our Lady of Calvary welcome pilgrims or visitors and share with those who wish to partake a time of prayer and spiritual reflection.
www.grandcouventgramat.fr



OUT IN THE GARDEN

Botanic gardens, rose gardens, parks and arboretums - all conducive to meditation and the awakening of the senses.

Some of the gardens to discover in the Dordogne Valley:

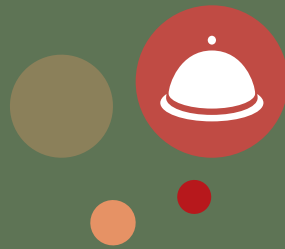
Les jardins Sothys, 4 hectares inspired by the world of cosmetics.
www.lesjardinssothys.fr

Les jardins du Manoir d'Eyrignac, a masterpiece in topiary gardens.
www.eyrignac.com

Le jardin de l'Ancien Couvent, an intimate garden suspended above the Dordogne River.
www.jardindelanciencouvent.com



GOURMET SPECIALITIES





A close-up photograph of a person's hands, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, holding a cluster of about ten walnuts. The walnuts are light brown with their characteristic wrinkled shells. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text "Regional delights" is overlaid in white, centered over the walnuts, with a short horizontal line underneath it.

Regional
delights



Rocamadour Goat's Cheese AOP

Small goat's cheese made with unpasteurised milk with techniques dating back to the 15th century. Its creamy texture brings out butter and hazelnut flavours. 40 million cheeses produced each year and 35g of pure pleasure.

Strawberries of Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne

Sweet temptations from March to November, they come in many different varieties. From the early **gariguette** to the creeping **cirafine**, they can all be found on market days throughout the Dordogne Valley. Strawberries have their own festival in Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne every 2nd Sunday of May.

The Périgord AOP walnuts

A healthy nut indeed, walnuts come in four varieties: the traditional **Marbot**, the typical **Grandjean**, the seductive **Franquette** and the rustic **Corne**. They are delicious fresh or dried, whole or in kernels and pressed into oil. They also accompany salads, cheeses and a multitude of regional dishes. To find out more and meet the millers, go to the **Moulin de la Vie Contée** near Collonges-la-Rouge and the **Moulin à Huile de Noix** in Martel.

www.laviecontee.fr / www.moulincastagne.com

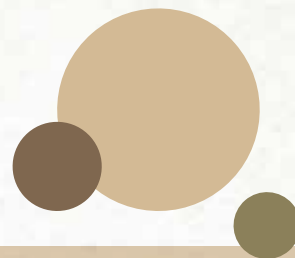
Not to be missed: The Walnut Museum in Saillac with Bar/Restaurant www.4demoiselles.fr

The farm lamb of Quercy

Distinguished by their distinctive black-rimmed eyes, Quercy lambs grow up on the Causse plateaus where they roam free. Delicious and tender, the Quercy lamb has been recognised for its quality with a "*Label Rouge*".

Chestnuts

Nicknamed "*the bread tree*", the chestnut tree and its fruit have contributed to the livelihood of the inhabitants here for centuries. A food source for both humans and animals alike, chestnut trees have also traditionally been used for making furniture, barrels, carpentry, baskets, fences... The chestnut today is a sought after produce that goes perfectly with ceps, roast poultry, fish... Every third weekend of October, the town of Beynat organises an award-winning chestnut fair.



THE BLACK TRUFFLES

They grow on the limestone plateaus of the Causse, often under an oak tree. Rare and mysterious, their intoxicating fragrance delights the finest palates. To find them, the locals have learned to cultivate the art of patience and observation with the help of a dog or a pig trained especially for this purpose. The truffles, also called black diamond, are harvested in winter, usually from December to March. In the markets, they are hidden under a cloth so that they retain all of their distinctive aroma. Their rarity and seasonality make them a favourite around Christmas. They also work well with simpler dishes such as scrambled eggs, an omelette or a risotto.

Where to taste it

At La Ferme de la Truffe where Delphine serves large truffle omelettes with the truffles growing on her farm. www.agritourismetruffe.fr

Also at the **Marché de Cuzance in December** or the award-winning **Martel market in January**, both followed by a gourmet meal around the truffle.





LA RESQUILHÈTE

The cocktail of the Dordogne Valley

Its name comes from the Occitan word meaning "skimming stone". Made with strawberries, the emblematic fruit of the Dordogne Valley, this fresh and sparkling cocktail bounces off the palate. To be enjoyed all summer, in moderation of course!

Recipe:

1 cl of strawberry syrup

2 cl of lemon juice

4 cl of Cointreau

Mint leaf

Sparkling water

Ice cubes

Strawberry for decoration

Wines, vineyards and Vieille Prune

"The best wine is not necessarily the most expensive but the one you share with friends", Georges Brassens, french poet and singer-songwriter.

A good meal always deserves a good wine! Cultivated here for centuries, the reds, whites or rosés of the Dordogne Valley perfectly accompany local produce. Enjoy responsibly while varying the pleasures by trying a **Coteaux de Glanes**, an **Amadour** or a **Mille et Une Pierres**. To end the festivities, indulge in a small glass of **Vieille Prune** (or Old Plum), a delicacy made in Souillac by hand for several generations. www.lavieilleprune.com

Philippe Leymat, 100% organic and local

Philippe is proud of his produce: beef, walnuts and walnut oil, free-range chickens, all 100% organic since 2013. And then there is the wine! Red, white, rosé : 1001 Pierres and Miel des Muses straw wine. This "diversified farmer" (Ferme des Gariottes in Collonges-la-Rouge), a native of Branceilles and head of his local winemaking cooperative enjoys creating products of taste and character. www.lepaniergaillard.com
www.1001-pierres.com



Le Miel des Muses

Straw wine has been part of the local heritage since the Middle Ages. Developed by the **natural desiccation** of red or white grapes to obtain a concentration of sugar and aromas, le Miel des Muses (honey of the muse) is enjoyed as an aperitif or to accompany foie gras, cheese and desserts. The wine, like the Mille et Une Pierres, is part of the wines of Corrèze recognised for their quality and awarded with a PDO (Protection Designation of Origin) in 2017.

www.1001-pierres.com

Lou Pé Dé Gril

Francine and Maurice at Curemonte concoct a drink as delicious as it is improbable: an aperitif based on **dandelion flowers**. They also make jams, jellies and chutneys... Everything is made from **wild dandelions**, which they both pick by hand. Lou Pé de Gril or 'The Cricket's Foot' is an unmissable stop for gourmets and the curious, passing through the beautiful village of Curemonte.

www.loupedegril.fr

AWAKEN YOUR SENSES

Places to enjoy night and day



Starry-eyed

Four Michelin-starred restaurants in the Dordogne Valley

Le Pont de l'Ouisse

A talent passed down for several generations and a passion for local gastronomy. A magical place at the edge of the stream, under the castle of Belcastel, this upscale hotel and restaurant also offers a luxurious holiday home where the Michelin star meal can be delivered to your door.

www.lepontdelouisse.com

Le Château de la Treyne

Suspended above the Dordogne, a dream castle with terrace on the river lit by candles at dusk. Luxury rooms, fine cuisine, for the pleasure of all the senses.

www.chateaudelatreyne.com

Le Déjeuner de Sousceyrac

Tasty local produce, authentic flavors, without fuss. Rustic setting and affordable rooms to extend a nature stay in the hills of the Ségala.

www.au-dejeuner-de-sousceyrac.com

Les 3 Soleils

A name inspired by a tapestry created by Jean Lurçat who lived a few kilometres away, it provides delicious cuisine and a menu that changes regularly.

www.3soleils.fr

Small bistrots

Friendly and authentic

Chez Maryse in Monceaux-sur-Dordogne

A small bistrot facing the Dordogne, the fishermen's meeting place in the early morning, Chez Maryse has been weaving social ties for three generations. Bar, grocery store, rendez-vous for lovers of the river... Behind her counter, Maryse sells newspapers, fishing permits and coffee in this genuine bar of the high valley.

*33 (0)5 55 28 13 33

La Vache qui Fume in La Chapelle Saint-Géraud

From the dish of the day every lunchtime to a larger choice of tasty entrees à la carte: locally sourced farm meat, guinea fowl with walnut wine, sweetbreads with oyster mushrooms, homemade fries, accompanied by sauces created by the chef. Concerts are also scheduled there throughout the year.

*33 (0)5 55 28 99 20

Le Pourquoi Pas in Floirac

Pub, creperie, traditional wooden games...Le Pourquoi Pas is a warm and friendly place with a choice of over a hundred quality beers, predominantly Belgian.

www.lepourquoipas.fr

Ambient chic

The place and the plate

The Sothys Gardens restaurant in Auriac

Set in an old barn overlooking the lake, beautiful restaurant with original dishes brought to life by the chef Jean-Michel Salcedo.

www.lesjardinssothys.fr/le-restaurant

Le Beau Site in Rocamadour

Splendid view of the Alzou canyon from the elegant dining room or on the terrace in the shade of linden trees. Quercy leg of lamb cooked to perfection, carpaccio of duck breast, baba with Vieille Prune de Souillac, vegetarian menu...A culinary treat in the heart of this medieval city.

www.beausite-rocamadour.com

Home cooking

True traditional cuisine

La Bonne Famille in Sarrazac

A passion for cooking passed down through the generations: pastis Quercynois (confit, porcini mushrooms, gizzards and salsify in a flaky pastry), pan fried foie gras, pâté with chestnut, samosa with Rocamadour cheese, figs and nuts... Worth a detour for both the cuisine and the pretty village of Sarrazac.

www.labonnefamille.fr

Chez Janine in Hautefage

Behind her stove Janine prepares typical dishes and a hearty cuisine: vegetable soup, potatoes with mince stuffing, stuffed cabbage and a flognarde with apples like nowhere else... Simple recipes made with love.

✆33 (0)5 55 28 80 97

Le Moulin à Huile de Noix in Martel

Mrs Castagné gets busy in the kitchen preparing authentic dishes with produce from the family farm. Her son Romain makes the walnut oil that is served in the salads. Then come the main dishes: foie gras, confit, lamb, home-made desserts. And if you are lucky, beignets made with acacia flowers. Delicious!

www.moulin-martel.com

IN THE ARMS OF MORPHEUS

Unusual places to spend the night

Nature Huts: Hêtre sous le Charme

Cut off from the world, wooden cabins hang in the trees with breathtaking views. Breakfasts or dinners delivered in a basket. Water and solar electricity.

www.hetresouslecharme.com

Luxury cabin: La Truffière

Accommodation nestled in the trees, with all the home comforts for the whole family, air conditioning, spa on the terrace...

www.chateau-cantecor.com

Fairytale Huts: La Ferme des Histoires Mélangées

Nothing is straight, everything is higgledy piggledy, no electricity, just candles...But how cosy! How fun! A real Snow White experience and long live the adventure!

www.lafermedeshistoiresmelangees.com



A woman in a white t-shirt and dark leggings is watering a garden with a blue watering can. The garden is filled with small white flowers. The scene is set in a field with trees in the background, and the sun is low in the sky, creating a warm, golden light. A large green circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'MADE IN THE DORDOGNE VALLEY'. There are also several smaller green circles of varying sizes scattered in the upper right corner of the image.

MADE IN THE DORDOGNE VALLEY

Watering the garden of the organic cosmetics brand
Beauty Garden, Auriac, Corrèze

Beauty Garden

The organic brand of the high-end Sothys line of cosmetics

Since 2014, the herbalists at Beauty Garden have been manufacturing herbal teas and organic cosmetics in their kitchen garden. The plants and vegetables used in the range are grown, pampered and harvested at Auriac in the Dordogne Valley. The brand is also committed to eco-design with wooden packaging which are ecological and also made in France.

www.beautygarden.com

Exquises Caprines

A soft and creamy soap

These handmade goat's milk soaps come in several fragrances. Presented in a wooden box, their shape is reminiscent of the famous little cheese and is particularly recommended for dry and sensitive skin. Both shop and workshop are in the hamlet of Les Alix, 3km from Rocamadour.

www.exquisescaprines.com

The Corrèze Knife

Original design, distinguished by an engraved chestnut leaf. Each knife is a unique piece and is guaranteed for life. Shop in Collonges-la-Rouge.

www.atelier-couteaux.com/fr/15-corr%C3%A8ze

Bonne Maman

The recipe is simple: 50% fruit, 50% sugar! The Bonne Maman jam was born here in 1971 at the confluence of the rivers Cère and Dordogne. Bonne Maman, an affectionate name given to grandmothers, reflects the generosity and the quality of the produce of the Dordogne Valley. The recipe *Chestnuts and Walnuts* mixed with cottage cheese is a pure delight.

www.bonne-maman.com



ARTIST PORTRAITS



Sismikazot, an artistic duo

Both natives of the Dordogne Valley, their art was born in the graffiti movement. Mixing abstract, figurative and typography, their mural paintings adorn large walls in France and beyond. Their studio is still located in Cornac, a small village of artists with many trompe-l'oeil frescoes.

www.sismikazot.com

Emmeran Rollin, a gifted organist

Listening to him playing on the organ at Rocamadour is always a great moment of emotion. The power of this magnificent instrument, inaugurated in 2013 and whose shape recalls a boat bow, resonates in the basilica and in the soul of the listener. An accomplished musician, Emmeran Rollin is also the director of the Rocamadour Festival and is a leading contributor to the ever-growing fame of this festival of sacred music.

www.rocamadourfestival.com

Jean Lurcat, from French the Resistance to maker of tapestries

A man of conviction and fighter in the Resistance, Jean Lurcat is recognised as the great craftsman who almost single-handedly revived the art of tapestry in the twentieth century. A multi-talented artist, many of his works are exhibited in the studio/museum in the Château de Saint-Laurent-les-Tours where he lived in the post-war period.

www.tourisme-lot.com/sites-a-visiter/atelier-musee-jean-lurcat-658405

YEARLY EVENTS IN THE DORDOGNE VALLEY

For all events visit:

www.visit-dordogne-valley.co.uk/french-living/what-s-on-in-the-dordogne-valley



MAY

Strawberry Festival
BEAULIEU-SUR-DORDOGNE
Activities, market, giant strawberry tart
*33 (0)6 70 72 49 17
fetedelafraise@laposte.net

PENTECOSTE SUNDAY

Cheese Festival
ROCAMADOUR
Flore Vailland - *33 (0)6 37 47 16 89

JULY

Souillac en Jazz
SOUILLAC
International Jazz Festival
info@souillacenjazz.fr
www.souillacenjazz.fr

Tous sur le Pont
ARGENTAT-SUR-DORDOGNE
Raft crews and lively events
*33 (0)6 71 32 14 76
www.toussurlepont.fr

JULY/AUGUST

Les Théâtrales
COLLONGES-LA-ROUGE
Open air theatre festival every Tuesday
*33 (0)5 55 25 41 19
www.theatrales-collonges.org

Saint-Céré Festival
SAINT-CÉRÉ
& SURROUNDING AREA
Opera Festival
*33 (0)5 65 38 28 08
www.scenograph.fr
public@scenograph.fr

Ecaussystème
GIGNAC
Eco-citizen modern music festival
*33 (0)5 65 32 69 05
www.ecaussysteme.com

AUGUST

Rocamadour Festival
ROCAMADOUR
Sacred music festival
*33 (0)6 52 74 01 06
www.rocamadourfestival.com
contact@rocamadourfestival.com

SEPTEMBER

**Venetian and Renaissance
Costume Parade**
COLLONGES-LA-ROUGE
*33 (0)7 85 18 13 99
paquet.jean-louis@orange.fr
Facebook : Collonges festif

XTrail Dordogne Argentat-Xaintrie
ARGENTAT-SUR-DORDOGNE
*33 (0)6 41 42 95 35
xtraildordogne@orange.fr
www.xtrail-correze-dordogne.com



The Montgolfiades
 ROCAMADOUR
 European Hot Air Balloon Rally
 *33 (0)6 79 24 28 21
 contact@rocamadouraerostat.fr
 www.rocamadouraerostat.fr

OCTOBER

Chestnut Festival
 BEYNAT
 Mr. Lomenech - *33 (0)5 55 85 97 82

Walnut Festivals
 THEGRA
 Mr. Hobbe - *33 (0)6 12 31 21 08
 SAILLAC
 www.4demoiselles.fr

PARTY TIME

Friendly and festive, the Dordogne Valley loves to prolong the good times late into the night. Whether it is the village festivals that run all summer, concerts or guinguette restaurants, you will regularly need a lie in the next day.

DO NOT MISS

Tous sur le Pont in Argentat-sur-Dordogne in July:
 Makeshift boats, craft rafts on different themes each year.
 The whole town parties until first light.

Festival des Bandas in Martel in July:
 The marching bands face off each other playing popular tunes, everyone dresses up in red and white to dance in the streets, drink beer and join in the fun. Warning: sleepless night extremely likely.

The village festivals : a different (or even several) festivals every weekend, with music groups, fireworks - they usually last two to three days.

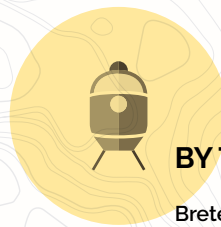
Guinguettes restaurants on the edge of the water:
 Eat well, dance and maybe even swim.

Le Vieux Chêne in Montvalent:
 Restaurant with a grassy beach on the Dordogne, bar, swimming pool and dance floor.
 *33 (0)5 65 37 40 15

Copeyre's guinguette in Gluges:
 Only open in the summer months, traditional menu where people do chabro (put wine in their soup) and eat typical dishes on checkered table cloths to the sounds of the accordion.
 *33 (0)5 65 32 72 61



HOW TO GET TO THE DORDOGNE VALLEY



BY TRAIN

Bretenoux-Biars Station
Tel.: +33 (0)5 65 10 31 00

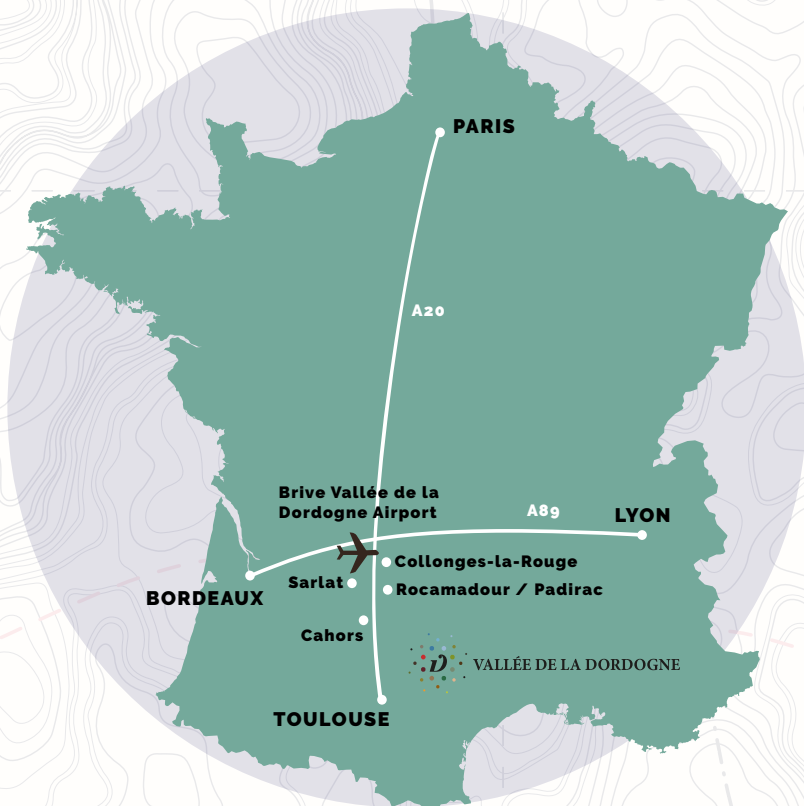
Brive-la-Gaillarde Station
Tel.: +33 (0)5 55 18 42 00

Gramat Station
Tel.: +33 (0)5 65 38 71 27

Rocamadour Station
Tel.: +33 (0)5 65 38 71 27

Saint-Denis-près-Martel Station
Tel.: +33 (0)5 65 32 42 08

Souillac Station
Tel.: +33 (0)5 65 32 78 21



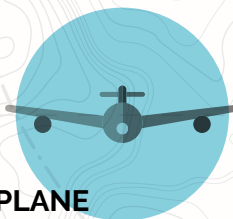
BY CAR

From Paris
A20 – exits 49 / 52 / 53 / 54 / 55 / 56

From Toulouse
A20 – exits 56 / 55 / 52 / 49

From Bordeaux
A89, A20

From Lyon
A47, A72, A71, A89, A20



BY PLANE

Brive Vallée de la Dordogne Airport
Regular flights from: Paris, London, Ajaccio, Porto
Tel.: +33 (0)5 55 22 40 00

Toulouse-Blagnac Airport
National and International flights
Tel.: +33 (0) 825 380 000

Limoges International Airport
Direct flights from: Bristol, Leeds-Bradford, London, Nottingham, Southampton, Paris-Orly, Lyon and connecting flights
Tel.: +33 (0)5 55 43 30 30



SEE YOU SOON!



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#ValleeDeLaDordogne



www.vallee-dordogne.com



Vallée de la Dordogne

ROCAMADOUR • PADIRAC • COLLONGES-LA-ROUGE

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