

Journey to the Dordogne Valley

{ READY-MADE TOURS FROM 1 TO 3 DAYS }

ROADBOOK

The magical voyage



DORDOGNE
Valley

Édition 2025



Dordogne Valley

the magical voyage

Corrèze, Lot and Dordogne-Périgord... Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Occitanie: three départements and two regions to soak up the heritage, scenery and milestone moments in French history along the Espérance River. Visit a whole host of outstanding and unspoilt sites, upstream and downstream.



A 3-day voyage taking you down the Dordogne, a source of life and thoroughfare since the dawn of time. This is a place where nature, man and history have created a land of contrasts to give the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve soul.

As you follow your chosen itinerary, the scenery's untamed and often unexpected beauty makes you feel like you're constantly exploring, beneath «France's starriest sky» or amid the Causse stones, stopping at some of the Most Beautiful Villages in France, fortresses that have watched over the valley for over a millennium, ports celebrating the memory of the «gabariers» (river boatmen), legendary towns and vines with sweet nectars that mark the classic chapters of an adventure back in time and detours off the beaten track.

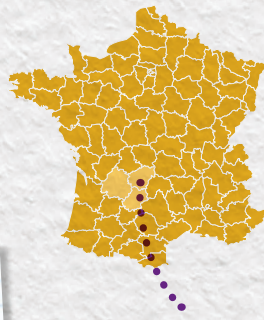
From Brive to Bergerac with stops in Collonges-la-Rouge, Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne, Saint-Céré, Rocamadour and Sarlat, encounters and experiences are yours for the taking as the hills roll by... Whether you're on the roads, footpaths, rivers or hiking trails, the valley is teeming with gems carved out over thousands of years.

This trip may only give you a glimpse of our local treasures, but it will open your eyes to how the Dordogne Valley can thrill and dazzle any visitor who takes the time to explore it.



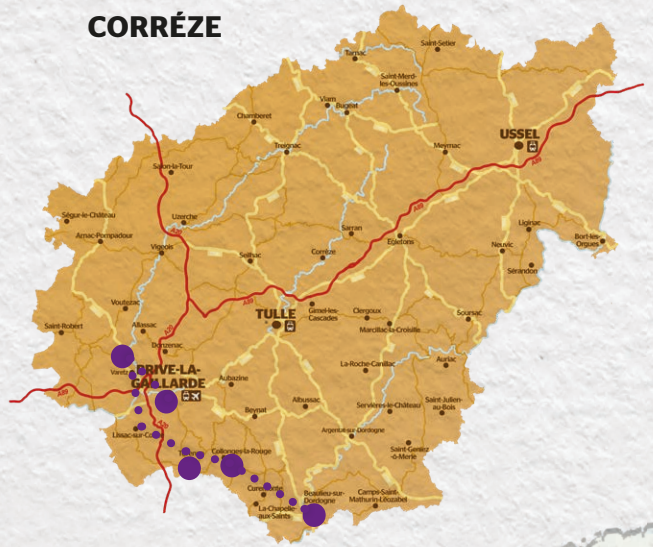
Day 1

First encounters
of the Corrèze kind



≈ 60 km

CORRÈZE



1 Hit the road

Whether you land at Brive-La Roche Airport, pull into the train station or drive from wherever you are, you simply have to start in **Brive-la-Gaillarde**... It's the best introduction to the Corrèze good life. Top tip? Take a trip to the twice-weekly market in and around Halle Georges Brassens or the daily Halle Gaillarde market (closed Monday) to stock up on local colours and flavours. After that, take the D152 to Varetz.



Market in Brive-la-Gaillarde



Brive-la-Gaillarde

2 Profile

Colette's Gardens and Château de Castel-Novel

Just before Varetz, a sprawling area is home to six gardens telling the story of the famous novelist Colette's life in flowers, puzzles and words, from her childhood in Burgundy to her later years at the Palais Royal. It's a one-of-a-kind botanical world whose giant games and 5000m² maze children love.

Château de Castel Novel, where the writer spent some of her early years, is just a stone's throw from here. It's now the perfect place for a spot of lunch at the site's restaurant, either inside the castle walls or on the terrace looking out over the grounds.



Colette's Gardens

3 Highlight

The first of the Most Beautiful Villages in France

Let's get back on the Brive road to head south then take the D38 to a legendary village... **Collonges-la-Rouge** lies within Quercy and Limousin and the red town burnishes against the green surrounding valley. You won't believe your eyes as you gaze at the town on the Meysac fault. The rolling horizon is at its peak at dawn and dusk, so take a walk to soak up the architecture and history of a village that's had many lives. Red sandstone buildings, ochre stone slates or blue grey slates: the buildings come together in harmony. Saint-Pierre Church, Renaissance castles, the old grain and wine market hall and Pénitents Chapel capture centuries gone by: a stage for pilgrims on the Way of St James in the Middle Ages, a castellany for the **Turenne** viscount from the 13th century, a thriving trade town from the 16th century and headquarters for the Black Penitents until the late 19th century... A traditional village where you'll love wandering around its shops and restaurant terraces. It's no wonder the «Most Beautiful Villages in France» accolade began here!

With such a magical visit under your belt, it's time to venture closer to the valley on the D940 to the Espérance River and another of the «Most Beautiful Villages in France»: **Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne**.



Sites, experiences

- **Colette's Gardens in Varetz**
www.lesjardinsdecolette.com
- **Château de Vassinhac in Collonges-la-Rouge**
www.chateaudevassinhac.com
- **Saint-Pierre Abbey in Beaulieu**
www.tourismecorreze.com

Where to eat and sleep

- **Château de Castel Novel in Varetz**
www.castelnovel.com/en/home
- **Le Relais Saint-Jacques de Compostelle hotel and restaurant in Collonges la Rouge**
www.hotel-stjacques.com
- **Château de Vassinhac B&B in Collonges la Rouge**
www.chateaudevassinhac.com
- **La Douce France B&B in Collonges la Rouge**
<https://dourieux.wixsite.com/ladoucefrance>
- **Le Maraîcher restaurant in Collonges la Rouge**
<https://lemaraicher.fr/>
- **Le Cantou restaurant in Collonges la Rouge**
www.lecantou.fr
- **À l'ombre du figuier restaurant in Collonges la Rouge**
www.tourismecorreze.com
- **Hôtel les Flots Bleus in Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne**
www.hotel-flotsbleus.com
- **Hôtel le Turenne in Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne**
www.leturenne.com
- **Hôtel Le Beaulieu in Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne**
www.hotelbeaulieudordogne.com
- **Le Clos Rodolphe B&B in Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne**
<https://closrodolphe.fr>

4 Wow factor !

A pilgrimage to Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne

The fishing and farming village was part of the great river trade era and has been a prime location since the Early Middle Ages, when the archbishop of Bourges, Rodolphe de Turenne, founded a Benedictine Abbey (856-858). The building demands respect... The Limousin romanesque monastery in pale ochre sandstone was based on plans for a sprawling pilgrimage church with a keep-bell tower. Before you go in... Look up! The tympanum in the porch was sculpted by Toulouse masons in the early 12th century and is a sight for sore eyes. The town expanded around it within circular ramparts with three fortified gates. Beyond the banks, the reflection of the Pénitents Chapel belltower seems to sink into the Dordogne. Dinner and a good sleep by the river will do you the world of good after your busy day, before you head upstream for even more adventures.

Day 2

In the Lot, from the valley to the causses



1

Hit the road

Today the river is beckoning us across to explore the left bank on the D940. If you like surprising detours, then you're going to love the second day's adventure... The D14 introduces you to the medieval **Château de Castelnau-Bretenoux**, standing on a 200m high hill with all-encompassing views for miles from its castle walk. Hook up with the D807 then D241 towards Saint-Céré where **Château de Montal** takes you back to a time that's overshadowed by these medieval lands.



Château de Castelnau-Bretenoux

2

Highlight

Château de Montal

The castle was built in the «first Renaissance» style and originally called «repaire Saint-Pierre». Jehanne de Balsac d'Entraygues transformed it in the first half of the 16th century and you can hear all about her on a tour of the site. The Centre des Monuments Nationaux has been in charge of the landmark in Saint-Jean-Lespinasse since 2006. It was then opened to the public and is a shining example of outstanding architecture with exceptional sculptural work. This is actually where Da Vinci's Mona Lisa was hidden during World War II in March 1943. It stayed here until its return to the Louvre after the Liberation in 1945. Now it's time to take the D673 to pay a visit to Saint-Céré.



Château de Montal

3

Sate your appetite in...

Saint Céré, Quercy's «Little Venice»

The town lies beneath the Ségala foothills (part of the Massif Central in Quercy) and at the junction between Limargue and Causse in the Dordogne Valley. It was originally founded in the 8th century and expanded around the Saint-Laurent towers that watch over it. Several branches of the Bave River once ran through it until canals were built to stop flooding in 1611... hence the nickname, «Little Venice». Despite its bustling trade history, Saint-Céré has held onto its outstanding architecture. It's a joy to walk around and you can sate your appetite at the restaurants in the town centre.

Let's continue our road west to explore Rocamadour... You can take the D807 and 840 or, if you'd like another magical detour, venture onto the cause via Padirac and Rocamadour.



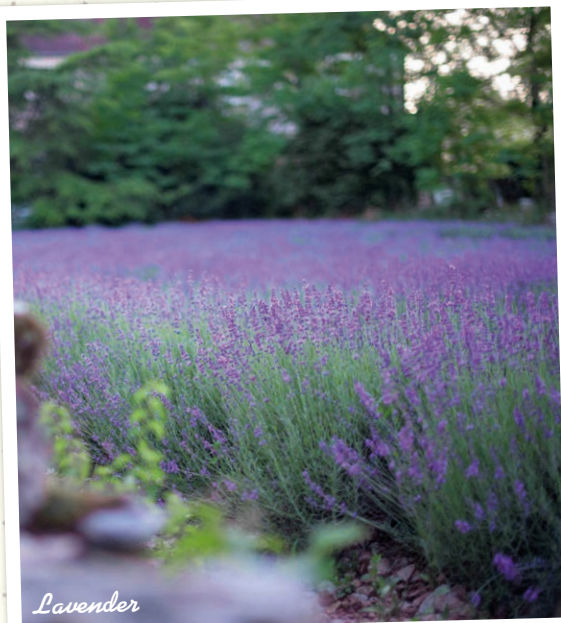
Saint-Céré

4

Wow factor !

An ancient pilgrimage in the holy town

A trip here can be mystical, spiritual, architectural, memorable or touristy. **Rocamadour**... «Houses on the river, churches on the houses, rocks on the churches, castle on the rock»: is how the author Pierre Loti described the sacred town. This cliffside labyrinth was a major pilgrimage site in the Middle Ages, a key stage of the Way of St James and is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. From the only street lined with shops and restaurants, Notre-Dame Chapel, the castle walls and Saint-Amadour Crypt to Saint-Sauveur Basilica and its 7 chapels... prepare to get your calf muscles working! If you're not tired out from all the climbing, make like the pilgrims of old and scale the 216 steps to the top on your knees. Just don't try to pull Durandal, Roland de Roncevaux's legendary sword, out of the rock next to Notre-Dame Chapel... The real sword in the stone!



5

Worth a look



Quercy goats and lavender

Drystone walls on the plateau beneath the town mark out the Quercy causses meadows and help farmers keep their legacies alive. You can meet them: enjoy a tour and tasting at La Borie d'Imbert goat farm or visit Ferme des Alix, which is reviving the region's bygone lavender growing and distillation trade.

Have dinner at Le Bellevue restaurant and stay at Hôtel les Esclargies, on a cliff road overlooking the medieval town and Alzou Canyon... This is where the sun will rise ready for your next adventure along the Dordogne.



Sites

- **Château de Castelnau-Bretenoux**
www.castlenau-bretenoux.fr
- **Château de Montal in Saint-Jean-Lespinasse**
www.chateau-montal.fr
- **Rocamadour (46)**
www.vallee-dordogne.com/rocamadour
- **La Borie d'Imbert goat farm in Rocamadour**
<https://fermelaboriedimbert.com>
- **Ferme des Alix in Rocamadour**
<https://fermedesalix.fr>

Where to stay

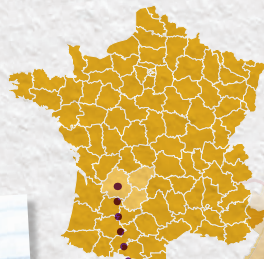
- **Hôtel Les Esclargies in Rocamadour**
www.esclargies.com

Where to eat

- **Le Bellevue in Rocamadour**
www.hotel-bellevue-rocamadour.com

Day 3

In Périgord,
the valley of châteaux
and vineyards



≈ 110 km



Hit the road

1

You're going to have to cross the Dordogne again to continue downstream... Let's opt for the peace and magic of the cause on the D247, fork onto the D43 as you near Lacave, cross Pont de Pinsac bridge and go through Souillac to make your way to Périgord on the right bank of the Dordogne. After a few twists and turns, the road leads to **Sarlat** then heads back to the Espérance River for an epic adventure... as far as the **Bergerac** vineyards.



2 Profile



Sarlat, medieval crown jewel

Given the incredible number of listed buildings that make it one of the densest medieval settings in the world, the old town is high on any history and architecture buff's bucket list. You won't know where to look in a whirlwind of yellow stone walls and slate roofs, as you wander among the lanes and squares gazing at manors (including Hôtel Plamon), Maison de La Boétie, Saint-Sacerdos Cathedral, Palais des Evêques, Pénitents Chapels, Sainte-Marie Church (renovated by the architect Jean Nouvel), its panoramic lift and so much more. The town is buzzing with lively markets, shops, café and restaurant terraces and an atmosphere you can only experience as you walk on the cobbles in one of the very first areas to be protected by the Malraux Law (tax deductions for restoring listed buildings in heritage sites).



Let's take the D46 then D703 to Vitrac to get nearer the valley. Keep your eyes peeled at the fork (on the right) before Cénac bridge!

3 Worth a look

The valley of châteaux

From here on in you're going to see four of the most beautiful villages in France as you go down the Espérance River: the hilltop Domme bastide, cliffside La Roque-Gageac, Castelnaud-la-Chapelle with its château on a rocky headland and Beynac with its almost 1000 year old fortress. Depending on the season and what you fancy, these sites are great for visiting and feasting. The world is your oyster!



4 Highlight

Let's meet Joséphine Baker

Lunch at the Château des Milandes restaurant is a great way to soak up the atmosphere at the castle and gardens that Joséphine Baker called home. The site captures the spirit of the music hall legend, WWII Resistance fighter, mother to the «Rainbow Tribe» (after adopting 12 children of different nationalities), singer and showgirl who was buried at the Panthéon in November 2021. The château rooms celebrate the artist with photos, posters, stage costumes, episodes from her personal life and milestone moments.

Let's stay on the left bank and head to Allas-les-Mines before switching to the right bank (careful, the bridge is narrow) and back to the aptly-named D704 «Valley Road».

5 Wow factor!



Sites

- Sarlat
www.sarlat-tourisme.com/en
- Château des Milandes
www.milandes.com
- Château de Monbazillac
<https://chateau-monbazillac.com>

Where to eat

- La Belle Etoile in La Roque-Gageac
<https://hotel-belle-etoile-dordogne.fr>
- La Petite Tonnelle in Beynac-et-Cazenac
<https://la-petite-tonnelle.fr>
- Château de Monrecour in Saint-Vincent-de Cosse
<https://monrecour.com>
- Le Pavillon Brizay at Château de Monbazillac
<https://chateau-monbazillac.com>

Monbazillac, a world of art and aroma

Let's stick with the designation as between here and Cyrano's hometown of Bergerac, you'll start seeing départementale numbers on the road: 25, 29, 28 etc. The landscapes slowly change and the river widens. You need to cross it another two times to reach our last stop: the first time in Lalinde then before or in Bergerac itself depending on how you choose to reach the legendary vineyard of Monbazillac.

It was founded in 1550 on a hilltop overlooking the valley and the château of the same name features a blend of medieval and Renaissance architecture. The cooperative winemakers took it over in 1960 and now their descendants protect the château and the reputation of the terroir to share the legacy with the public. Château de Monbazillac and its golden sweet or dessert wine were given a new showcase in 2023 with exhibitions, tastings and an interactive immersive tour bringing history and new technology together.

If it's time to leave then Bergerac Airport is a stone's throw from here, the station is on the other side of Cyrano's hometown... or would like to carry on your adventure?

Tourist offices - Lot and Corrèze

• Office de Tourisme de TULLE en CORRÈZE

Bureau de TULLE

14, place Gambetta - 19000 Tulle

www.tulle-en-correze.com

Tél. +33 (0)5 55 26 59 61

Mail : tourisme@tulle-en-correze.com

Bureau de CORRÈZE

Le bourg 19800 Corrèze

Bureau de GIMEL-LES-CASCADES

Le bourg 19800 Gimel-les-Cascades

• Office de Tourisme de BRIVE-AGGLO

Bureau de BRIVE

Place du 14 juillet - 19100 Brive-la-Gaillarde

www.brive-tourisme.com

Brive-la-Gaillarde : +33 (0)5 55 24 08 80

Mail : service.accueil@brive-tourisme.com

Bureau d'ALLASSAC

Le bourg - 19240 Allassac

Bureau de TURENNE

Le bourg - 19500 Turenne

Bureau de NOAILLES

Le bourg - 19600 Noailles

Bureau d'AYEN

Place Louis Mareuse - 19310 Ayen

Bureau de LISSAC

Le moulin de Lissac - 19600 lissac

Bureau d'OBJAT

Place Charles de Gaulle - 19130 Objat

Bureau de SAINT-ROBERT

Agence postale - 19310 Saint Robert

Bureau de DONZENAC

Médiathèque Place de la Riche - 19270 Donzenac

• Office de Tourisme de HAUTE-CORRÈZE

Bureau de MEYMAC

1, place de l'Hôtel de Ville - 19250 Meymac

www.tourisme-hautecorreze.fr

Meymac : +33 (0)5 19 60 00 30

Mail : contact-meymac@otc-haute-correze.fr

Bureau d'USSEL

Place Voltaire - 19200 Ussel

Mail : contact-ussel@otc-haute-correze.fr

Bureau de BORT-LES-ORGUES

Place Marmontel - 19110 Bort-les-Orgues

Mail : contact-bortlesorgues@otc-haute-correze.fr

Bureau de BUGÉAT

35, place du Champ de Foire - 19170 Bugeat

Mail : contact-bugeat@otc-haute-correze.fr

Bureau de NEUVIC

Rue de la Tour des 5 Pierres - 19160 Neuvic

Mail : contact-neuvic@otc-haute-correze.fr

• Office de Tourisme TERRE DE CORRÈZE

Bureau d'UZERCHE

10, place de la Libération - 19140 Uzerche

www.terresdecorreze.com

Tél. +33 (0)5 55 73 15 71

Mail : accueil@terresdecorreze.com

Bureau d'ARNAC-POMPADOUR

Entrée du Haras - 19230 Arnac-Pompadour

Bureau de TREIGNAC

Place de la République - 19260 Treignac

Bureau de CHAMBERET

Le bourg 19370 Chamberet

• Office de Tourisme du PAYS D'EGLETONS

Bureau d'Egletons

Rue Joseph Vialaneix - 19300 Egletons

www.tourisme-egletons.com

Tél. +33 (0)5 55 93 04 34

Mail : accueil@tourisme-egletons.com

Bureau de MARCILLAC-la-CROISILLE

Le bourg - 19320 Marcillac-la Croisille

Bureau de MOUSTIER-VENTADOUR

Le Château - 19300 Moustier-Ventadour

• DORDOGNE VALLEY Tourist Office

Rue Roland le Preux - 46500 ROCAMADOUR

www.vallee-dordogne.com

+33 (0)5 65 33 22 00

Our Tourist Information Centers

• Argentat-sur-Dordogne • Aubazine • Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne • Carennac • Collonges-la-Rouge • Gramat • Martel • Rocamadour • Saint-Céré • Souillac

 Office de Tourisme

Produits Locaux





Tourist Offices - Dordogne

• Office de Tourisme Périgord Noir Vallée Dordogne

www.perigordnoir-valleedordogne.com

Domme : +33 (0)5 53 31 71 00

Daglan : +33 (0)5 53 29 88 84

Belvès : +33 (0)5 53 29 10 20

Villefranche du Périgord : +33 (0)5 53 29 98 37

Saint-Cyprien : +33 (0)5 53 30 36 09

• Office de Tourisme Bergerac - Sud Dordogne

www.pays-bergerac-tourisme.com

Quai Cyrano - Bergerac : +33 (0)5 53 57 03 11

• Office de Tourisme Périgord Dronne Belle

www.perigord-dronne-belle.fr

Brantôme : +33 (0)5 53 05 80 63

Mareuil, Bourdeilles

• Office de Tourisme Naturellement Périgord

www.naturellementperigord.fr

Excideuil : +33 (0)5 53 52 29 79

Lanouaille : +33 (0)5 53 62 17 82

• Office de Tourisme Portes Sud Périgord

www.pays-bergerac-tourisme.com

Eymet : +33 (0)5 53 23 74 95

Issigeac : +33 (0)5 53 58 79 62

• Office de Tourisme des Bastides Dordogne Périgord

www.pays-bergerac-tourisme.com

Monpazier : +33 (0)5 53 22 68 59

Beaumont du Périgord : +33 (0)5 53 22 39 12

Lalinde : +33 (0)5 53 61 08 55

Cadouin : +33 (0)9 85 00 07 13

• Office de Tourisme Lascaux-Dordogne Vallée Vézère

www.lascaux-dordogne.com

Tél. +33 (0)5 53 51 82 60

Montignac, Le Bugue, Les Eyzies, Rouffignac, Limeuil

• Office de Tourisme du Pays Montponnais

<https://tourisme-isleperigord.com/>

Montpon-Ménéstérol : +33 (0)5 53 82 23 77

• Office de Tourisme de Mussidan-Villamblard

<https://tourisme-isleperigord.com/>

Mussidan : +33 (0)5 53 81 73 87

• Office de Tourisme du Périgord Nontronnais

www.tourisme-nontron.fr

Nontron : +33 (0)5 53 56 25 50

Piégut-Pluviers : +33 (0)5 53 60 74 75

Varaignes : +33 (0)5 53 56 35 76

Saint-Pardoux la Rivière : +33 (0)5 53 56 25 50

• Office de Tourisme Destination Périgueux

www.destination-perigueux.fr

Périgueux : Tél. +33 (0)5 53 02 80 22

• Office de Tourisme du Grand Périgueux

www.tourisme-grandperigueux.fr

Boulazac-Isle-Manoire : +33 (0)5 53 53 10 63

Sainte-Alvère : +33 (0)5 53 61 76 89

Sorges : +33 (0)5 53 05 90 11

Vergt : +33 (0)5 53 03 45 10

• Office de Tourisme du Périgord Ribéracois

www.perigordriberacois.fr

Ribérac : +33 (0)5 53 90 03 10

• Office de Tourisme de Saint Astier - Neuvic

<https://tourisme-isleperigord.com/>

Saint Astier : +33 (0)5 53 54 13 85

Neuvic : +33 (0)5 53 81 52 11

• Office de Tourisme du Pays de Saint-Aulaye en Périgord

www.tourisme-saintaulaye.fr

Saint Aulaye : +33 (0)5 53 90 63 74

La Roche-Chalais (juillet-août)

• Office de Tourisme du Pays de Fénelon en Périgord Noir

www.fenelon-tourisme.com

Carlux : +33 (0)5 53 59 10 70

Salignac - Eyvigues (juillet-août) : +33 (0)5 53 59 10 70

• Office de Tourisme Sarlat Périgord Noir

www.sarlat-tourisme.com

Sarlat (toute l'année) : +33 (0)5 53 31 45 45

Beynac et Cazenac, La Roque Gageac

• Office de Tourisme Vézère Périgord Noir

www.vezere-perigord.fr

Terrasson : +33 (0)5 53 50 37 56

Hautefort : +33 (0)5 53 50 40 27 (ouvert d'avril à fin octobre)

Thenon : +33 (0)5 53 06 35 10 (juillet-août)

• Office de Tourisme Périgord Limousin

www.perigord-limousin-tourisme.com

Thiviers : +33 (0)5 53 55 12 50

Saint-Jean de Côte : +33 (0)5 53 62 14 15

Jumilhac : +33 (0)5 53 52 55 43

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.
A full list of sites and accommodations is available on our website :

www.visit-dordogne-valley.co.uk

DORDOGNE Valley



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