

NOURISH

The Dordogne is renowned for its lively traditional markets and there is one to be found nearby almost every day of the week providing an overwhelming choice of mouth watering fresh organic produce. A small local market arrives in *Hautefort* on Wednesday morning and a larger market arrives on the first Monday of every month.

The *Excideuil* market is on Thursdays and one of the most popular markets in the area. It is highly recommended for a wide range of fresh produce including fish and cheeses. *Saint Yrieux* specialises in local cheeses and with a couple of lovely local delicatessens on the side streets, it is well worth a visit.



Salon de Thé / Les Petits Plaisirs, Le Troubadour and Auberge du Parc restaurants are steps from the house across the village square and all serve delicious French food in a welcoming atmosphere.

A friendly bar next to the tabac in the village has an outside terrace with stunning views over the surrounding countryside and is a lovely spot for an evening drink. Hautefort's new brewery, *Brasserie du Chanoine* is tucked behind the Château. This friendly little brewery offers a range of organic wine, teas, spices, nuts and oils as well as their own organic beer.

In the nearby village of Badefols D'Ans the small family run restaurant *L'Estaminet* offers a true French experience, Chantal the host is charming and her cooked to order food rustic and delicious. The *Auberge des Tilleuls* is next to the chateau and named after the lime tree adjacent to the restaurant. It showcases traditional cuisine and its pretty terrace comes alive with dinner concerts in the summer.

NURTURE

The stunning *Château de Hautefort* and gardens are well worth a visit. The beautiful 'jardins à la française' offer breathtaking views of the surrounding countryside and the Château itself has a fascinating history.



The furnished rooms, the chapel, the tower of Britain and the underground tunnel are all open to the public and information and history of the Château, ranging from the 16th century to the devastating fire last century, is provided (in English) throughout your tour. The Château is also open on Wednesday evenings for nocturnal visits and concerts in July and August.



A hospital was founded by Jacques Francois Macquis de Hautefort in the seventeenth century, and today the listed building houses the *museum of medicine* in Hautefort. Behind the Office de Tourisme the interesting museum tracks the evolution of medicine over 3 centuries.

Local posters and leaflets in the village advertise the horaires et séances for the nearby cinéma at the salle du château in Excideuil. A lovely environment and great for practicing french.

The *Lascaux caves*, the ‘Sistine Chapel of prehistory’ and the *Vallée de l’Homme* provide a fascinating glimpse of this remote age through the eyes of prehistoric artists. Famous for their Paleolithic cave paintings, remarkable for their detail, rich colour and lifelike quality they are estimated to be over 17,300 years old. The valley itself contains 147 prehistoric sites and 25 decorated caves.



Halfway between Les Eyzies and Montignac-Lascaux and situated in the Vallée de l'Homme, *La Roque Saint-Christophe* is one such refuge built thousands of years ago. The one kilometre long and eighty metres high limestone wall is a fascinating insight into our ancestors as well as offering stunning views of the Vézère river and valley down below. *St Leon-Vezère* is a lovely spot for lunch or tea on the way home and 'le déjeuner sur l'herbe' is a delightful find with picnic tables on the river bank.



The pretty local village *Saint Robert*, one of 'Les Plus Beaux Villages de France', is arranged around a Benedictine Monastery. The fortified 12th Century Romanesque Church and stately freestone houses provide a beautiful setting for an evening stroll. Behind the church find outstanding views across hilly countryside on the borders of the Corrèze and the Dordogne.

About 30 minutes away, another beautiful village worth a visit is *Ségur-le-Château*. A medieval village situated in the Corrèze on the Auvézère river, Ségur is full of houses built during the Renaissance that became elegant homes for the nobility. In the summer the village comes alive and on Monday nights an open market and group evening meal takes place on the green by the river. It is a real treat, and everyone is incredibly welcoming, a great way to spend a warm summer evening. *La Part des Anges*, a small restaurant with a delightful terrace looking over the river is a lovely spot for a meal.



Known as the 'Venice of the Périgord', *Brantôme* is encircled by a loop of the river Dronne and is classed as one of the 'Les Plus Beaux Detours' in France. The Benedictine Abbey on the river's edge is superb and the troglodyte section along with the famous cave of the 'Last Judgement' is open during the Summer for night time visits. The 11th Century bell tower is one of the oldest in France and stands on a rocky outcrop at the bottom of the cliff.

The beautifully restored ancient city of *Périgueux* offers narrow streets, stunning boulevard and a pleasant pedestrianised area around the impressive 16th Century Cathédrale Saint-Front. In the heart of the *Périgord* a visit to the city is an opportunity to stroll through the centuries, visit prehistoric and Roman museums or simply enjoy one of its many restaurants and bars



The vibrant medieval town of *Sarlat*, the *Vézère valley* dotted with picturesque towns and villages, the *Dordogne* with its stunning chateaux, *Rocamadour* hanging onto its cliffs, and *Bordeaux* France's wine capital, with its fascinating museums and medieval core, are all close by and offer memorable day trips across this beautiful and extensive region.



NATURE

Numerous hiking and bike routes start from the village, winding through undulating hills and warm valleys. Promenades et randonnées maps are available from the local Office de Tourisme and bikes can easily be hired nearby or delivered to your door at *Rediat Cor*





The local *Auvézère* and *Vézère* rivers and the many lakes within easy reach of the village offer endless adventure and opportunities for canoeing through gentle white waters and small weirs, swimming from sandy beaches, fishing and windsurfing as well as providing a relaxing setting for picnics on nearby river banks.



An exhilarating way to take in the local scenery is by hot air balloon. In the summer evenings you will hear and see the gentle large balloons fly over the village and lift off is usually from the foot of the chateau.



Horse riding is available in *local villages* and in the heart of a 100 hectare wooded park, the largest recreational lake in the Dordogne at *Rouffiac* offers a large variety of water sports in addition to a pleasant environment for walking and biking.

Arnac-Pompadour is famous for its chateau but also its stud farm, the Pompadour National Anglo-Arab Stud, and its racecourse. Known locally as the *Cité du Cheval*, *Pompadour* is a pretty town with a welcoming community and is named after Louis XV's favourite mistress Madame de Pompadour.



The race course was opened in 1836 and in addition to steeplechasing, Pompadour's annual race events include flat and cross country. This popular race course is rated 1st class for steeplechasing and 2nd class on the flat and is considered to be one of the most beautiful and undulating in France. There are also numerous show jumping and dressage events held throughout the year.

A number of beautiful award winning gardens are close by. *The Hanging Gardens of Marqueyssac* are listed as a Natural Historical Monument, and this private estate is the most visited in Aquitaine. Designed for walking, the paths through the gardens are organised into three circuits that lead to the Belvedere. At 130 metres above the Dordogne, the views across the valley are absolutely stunning. There's a lovely tea shop and terrace (that sprinkles cool water over you on a hot day), with yet more views, this time over to the wonderful Beynac-et-Cazenac.



Eyrynac Manor Gardens, on the way to Sarlat, is one of France's more beautiful private gardens. Open every day of the year, the gardens show a unique collection of topiary sculptures and 50,000 yew, hornbeam, box and ivy plants. The views and the Manor itself are lovely and the gardens throughout the year are full of colour. Useful information is provided throughout the gardens explaining the designs.



Les Jardins de l'Imaginaire is in the heart of the historic district of Terrasson-Leveledieu. Thirteen natural landscapes recount the history of gardens since the Roman period, bringing together the art of gardens and the history of humanity, with lovely views overlooking the Vézère river.

Les Jardins Panoramique de Limeuil are a perfect excuse to visit the wonderfully situated village of Limeuil. Medieval stone houses climb steeply up the hillside and there is a particularly good river beach that is perfect for cooling off. The gardens offer a panoramic view of the confluence of the Dordogne and Vézère rivers after you've wandered through a lovely set of gardens and landscaped park, and an arboretum planted at the end of the 19th century.



'*La perle géologique du Périgord*', the stunning stalactites and stalagmites and crystal clear underground river in the 3km long *Grotte de Tourtoirac* were discovered only recently in 1995 and are now open to visit and admire throughout the summer. A 300 metre path runs through the cave unveiling its' secret vaults, hollows, massive columns, elegant draperies and rimstone.

Baptised the 'Crystal Cathedral' *Le Gouffre de Proumeyssac* is the largest developed abyss in the Périgord. Guided tours are available and a tunnel leads you easily into the immense underground vault. An option (if you dare!) is to drop into the cave, in a suspended aerial base allowing you to experience the thrills felt by the earliest visitors. The new aerial basket holds 11 people and the floor rotates 360' as you descend.