

Five Reasons to Visit Dordogne France

There are hundreds of reasons to visit Dordogne France, but five that top our list.

Known by its older name, Perigord, Dordogne is France's third largest region located in southwestern France about a 5 hour drive south of Paris between Lyon and Bordeaux. The Perigord region is full of medieval towns, gorgeous châteaux, prehistoric caves, elite gardens, awesome food and all in and around the spectacular countryside. So don't delay, visit Dordogne France this year!

There are four major towns are Périgueux, Bergerac, and Sarlat, but don't stop at visiting those towns and experiencing all that the Dordogne has to offer. When you visit Dordogne France, you'll pass by many honey-colored stone houses and rich green meadows. Along the way you'll be reminded why the Dordogne, the rural south-west of France is so loved by residents and tourists.

Here are five reasons to visit Dordogne, France.

1. **Le Châteaux** – The Dordogne region has around 1000 castles and exquisite châteaux. Some of the most visited châteaux include the 15th century *Chateau des Milandes* which was restored by the legendary jazz and singer and actress Josephine Baker.



Châteaux des Milandes in Dordogne, France. Photo by Manfred Heyde.

Also, worth a visit is the fortified 12th century *Châteaux de Beynac*. Set 200 meters high on a cliff that juts out onto the Dordogne River, it was temporarily occupied by Richard Lion Heart. The history alone is a reason to visit as well as the fantastic views of the countryside.

2. **Gorgeous Gardens** – When you visit Dordogne France, you'll see it has its share of châteaux as well as astonishing gardens to match.

The most famous being *Les Jardins de Marqueyssac* with numerous perfectly manicured boxed hedges. The gardens overlook the chalky cliffs of the Dordogne offering an amazing panoramic view of Perigord. Even more amazing than a day trip to the gardens is visiting the magically

illuminated gardens during the summer evenings.



The Gardens of Marqueyssac, Dordogne, France. Photo by Lemoussu

- 3. Quintessentially French towns** – There are three major towns in Dordogne, Bergerac in the south-west, Perigueux further north, and Sarlat in the south-east, but don't stop at those three. One never tires of visiting any of the towns especially those classified as '*les Plus Beaux Detours*' in France, so just look for the label *Most beautiful detour in France* and you're on the right track. One city on the detour is Brantôme, also known as the known as the Venice of the Dordogne. A stop at the Benedictine Abbey on the river's edge and the old stone bridge are well worth the visit. Each village has its own charm so make time to thoroughly enjoy as many as possible.



Abbey of Brantôme, Dordogne, France, Photo by Monster1000

4. **Brilliant Caves** – France is peppered with hundreds of caves full of prehistoric art and extraordinary rock formations hidden deep beneath a sea of caverns. At *Grotte de Rouffignac*, the electric train descends you to complete darkness where you'll see nearly 100 line drawings and engravings of mammoths, horses, and bison as well as the 'Great Ceiling' decorated with 65 animal figures. When visiting *Gouffre de Padirac* you'll see nature's beauty in an underground gorge. After the 99 meter descent (elevator or stairs), you take to a gondola ride to enjoy the beauty of the limestone caves.



Photo by cave painter

5. **A Gourmand Experience** – I had to save the best for last as without a doubt, Dordogne is a foodie region. It's the food and wine which draw many people to Dordogne. After all, the region is France's capital of foie gras, duck, and truffle. Vegetarians, don't fret, the daily markets in the towns and villages are full of seasonal produce such as walnuts, strawberries, mushrooms, goat cheese (*cabécou*), and French breads of course. And what better way to enjoy Dordogne's bounty than with one of the region's Bergerac wines. The region is one of the few in France that produce nearly as many white wines as red (around 48% versus 52%). The area contains 13 *Appellations Contrôlées* where Bergerac red wine, Côtes de Bergerac red wine, Bergerac dry white wine, Bergerac rosé wine and Côtes de Bergerac sweet white wines, are grown in the Bergerac vineyards.



Photo by JPS68

Need another reason to visit Dordogne France? Stay-tuned as we update you on more great things to see and do in Dordogne France.