

Great Explorations



Trip Dates

2012

May 26-June 1
July 3-9
August 26- Sept 1

2013

May 25-31
July 2-8
August 25- 31

Self-guided and custom trips also available and can start any day. Call or email for details.

Trip Size

8-16 participants

Total Days:

7 days/ 6 nights

Arrive/Depart:

Bordeaux -
Les Eyzies/Rocamadour

Activity Level:

Moderate
20-40+ miles daily
van supported

Terrain:

3 days gently rolling, 3
days are moderately
rolling

Dordogne, Biking

Biking along the most beautiful river in France

We first started coming to this region in the early 1980's, attracted by quiet country roads to bike and wonderful scenery, with castles seemingly around every corner; the Dordogne retains this charm and now has superb hotels and restaurants. In addition, the sites of Lascaux II, Rocamadour and others make this a unique place in all of the world

Only Great Explorations:

- Small groups, extraordinary guides, and authentic experiences.
- Entry to the extraordinary cave paintings at Font de Gaume where only a small number of visitors are allowed each day.
- A meal you will never forget- dinner at Auberge la Plume d'Oie in la Roque Gageac, one of 'le plus beaux villages en France'.
- Learn falconry at the former castle of Josephine Baker.
- Distinctive, charming hotels too small for larger groups.
- We design and operate our own trips so there are only good surprises.

Itinerary



Getting there :

Bordeaux - Les Eyzies: Most participants will spend an evening in Bordeaux and transfer to Les Eyzies on the 10h50 train the morning of Day 1 (you can also reach Les Eyzies from Paris through Limoge on an 8:15 train). We have recommendations for excellent hotels in the historical district of Bordeaux.

DAYS 1+2:

Les Eyzies - Our trip starts from Les Eyzies which is easily reached from Bordeaux by train. We'll meet at 12h 40 on arrival of the 10:50 Bordeaux train at the Les Eyzies train station and cycle to Campagne for lunch at a local bistrot. The villages of le Bugue and Limeuil (members of the 'most beautiful villages in France') will provide a wonderful introduction to the region. Les Eyzies is where the first discoveries of Homo sapiens were made. We'll visit the prehistory museum and Fonte de Gaume, where cave paintings from 12,000 B.C. can be seen. On our second day of cycling, we'll trace the Vezere River northward, perhaps with a visit to one of the extraordinary underground grottes famous in the area (20, 30 or 50 miles)

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Cost

Land Cost (current year):

US \$2250

Includes 6B/2L/5D

Single Supplement:

US \$400

Bike Rental:

US \$140

DAYS 3+4:

La Roque Gageac - The Dordogne has castles throughout the region and we've designed our cycling route to pass by the most impressive. We'll visit the Chateau de Castelnaud, built 1000 years ago and still majestic in its appearance and Les Milandes, where the actress Josephine Baker lived with her adopted children until 1964. Reaching Sarlat, the impeccably restored Renaissance town, we'll enjoy a walking tour. La Roque Gageac, one of the 'plus jolie villages en France', boasts a wonderful hotel situated at the river's edge. (25, 40, or 60 miles)



DAYS 5+6:

Rocamadour - The ride to Rocamadour is nothing short of spectacular as we ride up onto escarpments and down through lush valleys, following the Dordogne river. We'll have lunch in Souillac before continuing on to Rocamadour, one of the most famous pilgrimage sites in France. On our final day of riding we'll explore Antoir, Loubressac and perhaps Carenac, which has the largest bicycle museum in France. Back in Rocamadour we'll celebrate at a local restaurant to toast our week together.

DAY 7: Depart at your leisure from Rocamadour train station.

Post-trip Extension (optional): For those interested in extending their time in southwestern France, you may wish to consider 2 extra days (either before or after your trip) in St. Emilion, described by one of the guide books: '*set in a natural amphitheatre surrounded by its famous vines.. a gem, a lovely town mellowed to the color of old piano keys. A favorite of medieval popes and English kings, it has been restored to much of its old elegance...*' The biking is along small vineyard roads where you'll stop for degustations (tastings) and visits to the areas winemakers. Please note that the extension is self-guided and includes 2 nights lodging with breakfast daily, bicycles, route instructions, maps etc. St. Emilion is easily reached from Bordeaux (if doing before the trip). If doing after the trip, we recommend renting a car from Souillac-we'll provide details in your confirmation package.

Accommodations



Moulin de la Beune, Les Eyzies

A former mill, this charming casual inn has one of the top restaurants in Les Eyzies. It's location, on a quiet side street in the center of town, makes it ideal for discovering the secrets of Les Eyzies. Both the hotel and restaurant are recommended by the venerable Guide de Charme.



Hotel de la Belle Etoile, La Roque Gageac

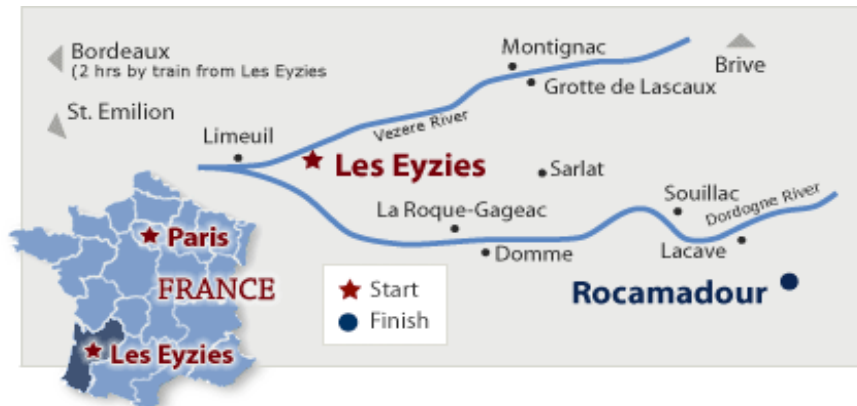
Situated in one of the most beautiful villages in France, all rooms at this hotel enjoy views over the river. Three generations of inn-keepers ensure that the welcome is warm. A short stroll from the hotel is one of our favourite restaurants in France, La Plume D'Oie.

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La Vieille Tours, Rocamadour

Formerly a 16th C chateau, this charming hotel features gardens and large swimming pool; the rooms are furnished with period furniture and the intimate restaurant is exquisite. Located a short distance outside of town ensures quite, restful sleep. This is a hotel you won't want to leave!



What's Included in the Cost of Your Trip?

- services of one or more experienced Great Explorations guides and support vehicle
- 6 nights lodging
- all breakfasts, 2 lunches, and all dinners but 1
- entrance fees for selected historical sites and museums
- detailed map and route instructions
- all baggage transportation
- all transportation from initial meeting point to final drop-off (see arrive/depart cities)

The extension includes 2 nights at the Hostellerie de Plaisance, St. Emilion. It is described as 'the most luxurious hotel in St. Emilion with an elegant gourmet restaurant and terrace.'

Please note: Final itinerary is subject to revision; any changes made are done so in an attempt to provide the best possible trip given route conditions and available services. Due to the nature of our business and exchange rates, prices are subject to change. All prices quoted are U.S. dollars but we gladly accept payment in Canadian dollars also. Due to cancellations and waiting lists, trip availability fluctuates daily. If you have any questions or would like to confirm space on this trip before making your reservation, please contact us at info@great-explorations.com or by telephone at **604.730.1247**