

Snap Happy week.

We invite all those who like photography to stay at Le Manoir for 'Snap Happy Week', 22nd—29th April 2017. This is a fully-catered holiday in the beautiful Dordogne, where you will be able to indulge your passion for photography.

The light is perfect for all aspects of photography, and the holiday includes trips to interesting places for taking the most amazing photos, such as Bordeaux and St Emilion. There is an abundance of wonderful nature and architecture to be preserved forever with your camera, with early-morning mists, sunny afternoons, and tranquil evenings just waiting to be captured for posterity.

Coupled with wine tasting and sight-seeing, this is a holiday not to be missed.

Included in the week:

Accommodation, breakfasts, lunches (except in Bordeaux), and evening meals with local wine, a wine tasting visit to a St Emilion vineyard, day and/afternoon trips to Bordeaux, Bergerac and Monbazillac and more. The price is £800 per person, with no single supplement.

Airport transfers from Bergerac airport included if required. Transfers from Bordeaux is possible, for an extra charge.

Although there is no official tutor, you will have a host on every outing, and everyone here is passionate about photography, and you will be advised on the best places to take photos. There will be ample time for discussion over the evening meals.

You are assured of a wonderful holiday, where you will make new friends and take home memories and photos to treasure.

Your holiday includes:

Accommodation, each room having private en-suite facilities (no single supplement)

Breakfast, lunch (except in Bordeaux) and dinner with local wine.

Use of the private pool, weather permitting

Hosted day trips and entry fees (except for optional extras)

Airport transfer from Bergerac Airport if required

Not included:

Travel and transport to Le Manoir (Bergerac airport transfer included if required)

Travel Insurance (we advise that you have this)

Cameras

Alcohol with meals on trips out

Sunday.

After breakfast, and the chance to take some photos of the Estate, we set off for St Seurin, in the Gironde, for the Sunday morning market. The town is alive with stallholders and sellers, and is an excellent example of the typical French market. Then we will visit the little Church, which is on the banks of the River Isle, before returning to Le Manoir for lunch.

The afternoon sees us driving down to Duras, in the Lot-et-Garonne, where we will have a tour of the Castle. We will wend our way through a maze of thirty rooms, and discover the architectural splendours of a medieval castle and an 18th Century country mansion.

The Castle comes to life through the stones and we can easily imagine the celebrations in the Hall of the “Three Marshals”, dedicated to the festivities and ceremonies, the rapid movements of the servants in the “Hundred logs” kitchen, the smell of bread in the bakery...and more. The Courtyard has an Italianate style and looking up, we can see the private apartments of the Duke and Duchess. This bakery, built into the bedrock, provided bread to the people of the castle and those of the villagers when they took refuge there. There are opportunities to take some marvellous photographs, both of the castle and the views beyond.



Then we drive back to the Manoir, in time to relax before the three-course dinner, with local wine.

Monday.

Today, we are off to Bergerac, passing St Méard de Gurson and Le Fleix. We will start off in the Old Town, where you will see a statue of Cyrano de Bergerac, unusual in that it is painted in colour and stands on a stainless steel pedestal, standing proudly in the square Place Pelissiere, overlooked by a fascinating church with a tiny parapet next to the bell. It's a nice place to have a coffee and soak up the sunshine before finding the second statue, made of stone, standing on Place de la Myrpe, near the river. Wending our way through the narrow streets, we will come to the main church, Notre Dame, in the town centre. There are three museums, including the town museum, a statue museum and a tobacco museum. There is also a wine house by the river which features a small exhibition on the history of wine growing. Bergerac offers some of the finest wines in the Bordeaux region due to the soil's excellent drainage - a result of its proximity to the Dordogne River.



Then it's off to Monbazillac, where we will take a tour of the castle.

Ground floor, 3 themes: 17th century furniture, Protestantism, ancient crafts: The Grand Salon, the ceremonial room of the Château, has a French-style beamed ceiling, a Renaissance fireplace and a magnificent herringbone parquet floor in oak, cherry wood and pine. The Little Salon has Perigourdine furniture from the 17th century. Also, in various rooms: the old crafts associated with vine-growing and the wine business, and engravings and documents relating to the Wars of Religion between Catholics and Protestants, when the lords of Monbazillac offered protection to Protestant meetings.



The first floor pays homage to artists: During the course of your visit you will see the dining room of the actor Mounet-Sully (1841-1916), engravings by Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), the German painter and engraver, prints and

original drawings by the Perigourde caricaturist SEM (1863-1934). The largest room on this floor regularly features exhibitions by contemporary artists. Furniture from the 16th and 17th centuries in the room known as the Vicomtesse's Bedroom is not to be missed.

Discover the world of wine in the cellars: A wall of 6,000 bottles of Monbazillac in golden yellow colours, the "Dutch Brands" display which testifies to the glorious past of this region. The 16th century vaulted kitchens, their fireplaces, bread ovens, wells, sinks, fruit gardens and 18th and 19th century kitchen utensils. Note the earth floor. The wine museum, with objects and tools for vine-growing and a permanent educational exhibition: 9 panels showing the history of vines, the Monbazillac vineyard, its prestigious appellation, the winegrowing calendar and the history of the Monbazillac cooperative, owner of the site.

After the tour, there will be the opportunity for wine tasting, then it's back to Le Manoir for a chance to have a swim, or just relax before dinner.

Tuesday.

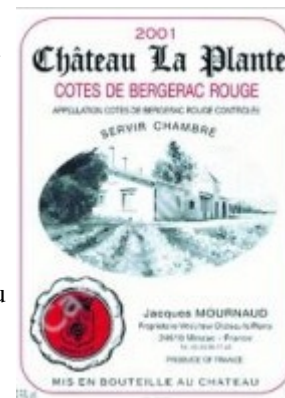
Today, we will have a walk around the lakes after breakfast, and maybe venture into the woods. Then it's time for coffee before driving to Les Bigaroux for lunch at La Puce. Course after course is served, accompanied by St Emilion wine. No time for a siesta, though: we're off to visit St Emilion! Famous for its wines, St Emilion boasts having the tallest monolithic church in Europe. You have the opportunity to climb the church tower (all 196 steps) for a fantastic view of the rooftops and the Dordogne Valley. If you are feeling energetic, you might like to climb the Tour de Roi for a different perspective of the town and surrounding countryside. We will be able to take photos of the oldest house in the town, and meander along the tiny cobbled streets (flat shoes are definitely advised). There are little shops and boutiques, places to sample wine, and you can even buy your very own vine to take home!



Then it's back to Le Manoir, past vineyard after vineyard, stopping for photos of the 14th century castle, high on a hill, at Monbadon. You will have time to relax before dinner, and there will be a fun quiz afterwards.

Wednesday.

After a leisurely breakfast, and time to take some morning photos, it's off to Chateau la Plante for a tour of the cellar and wine tasting. The proprietor, Mr. Jacques Moreneau, is 85 years old, and, although he speaks very little English, everyone is able to understand what he says. He will offer you several glasses of various wines, including red, white, sweet white and rosé. His vineyards are in St Emilion and Bergerac, so there is quite a choice of flavours. Because he sells direct, it is possible to buy a bottle of St Emilion wine for as little as 5€ - it would cost at least three times that in St Emilion itself! The welcome room has a vast array of his diplomas and awards, and there are wooden carvings, slogans extolling the virtue of drinking wine, and you will see how wine was made years ago before modernisation arrived (the old machines are now museum pieces).



Then it's back to Le Manoir for lunch before we set off to Aubeterre sur Dronne for a trip around the underground church.



Hewn from solid rock in the 12th century, is the largest subterranean church in Europe, and a visit is an awesome experience, both in appreciating the sheer scale of the structure, and in appreciating the Christian fervour which drove the workers, with their limited tools, to create it.

Its original purpose was to conserve religious artefacts in a series of pits, and in a reliquary (“a container of Holy relics”), inspired by the Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which was discovered during the First Crusade at the end of the 11th century.

In carving this structure directly from the limestone cliffs on which Aubeterre is built, the people may also have been influenced by tales from the later Crusades, of the rock hewn temples and underground cities of the Cappodician region of modern day Turkey.

The church itself, and its crypt, were hidden for centuries by a rock fall, and only rediscovered in the 1950's. The sheer scale of this edifice with its nave 20 metres in height, its surrounding gallery, and the hundreds of stone tombs (“sarcophagi”) in the necropolis, bear witness to its importance as a sacred, religious destination.

Pilgrims en route to St.Jacques de Compostelle would take time to pray in front of the religious relics which, they believed, possessed protective powers to safeguard them on their journey. Long before Christian pilgrims, the cults of earth and water nourished the faith of humans at such sacred places, this aura of magic and mystery remains palpable today for all those who enter this natural wonder.

Then we drive back to Montpon-Ménestérol for a visit to the Moulin de Duellas, on the banks of the River Isle, where there are plenty of photo opportunities.



After this, we return to Le Manoir before going to the local restaurant, La Guarida, in Montpeyrroux, for our evening meal.

Thursday.

After breakfast, it's time to go to Bordeaux, where we will spend the day taking photos of many and varied subjects.



We will start off with the magnificent fountain in the square, then continue towards Rue St Catharine, the main shopping street in the city.

Then the day is yours. We can stay together, or you can wander off—we will meet up later at a given point.

You might like to visit the cathedral, and climb to the top of the Cathedral Tower, at a height of 50 metres.

There is an excellent Art Gallery, with two exhibition buildings, right in the centre of Town.

No visit to Bordeaux is complete without seeing the Mirror Walk, in front of the Customs Building on the bank of the river. Every few minutes, a light mist appears—it's amazing!

Then it's back to Le Manoir for dinner.

Friday.

Today we'll be going to Rauzan, in the Gironde, about 40 minutes away. Built by Jean Sans Terre, Duke of Normandy (1199-1204), Duke of Guyenne (1199-1216) and King of England from 1199 to 1216, the castle was built on a rock, Antiquity. Witness to the war of 100 years, the castle of Rauzan was taken twice by the French, including Bertrand du Guesclin in 1377. Classified in 1862 by historical monuments, some enthusiasts of medieval architecture undertook the work of clearing and restoration in the 1970s when some enthusiasts of medieval architecture undertake work of clearing and restoration.



The view from the top is breathtaking.

We will have lunch in Rauzan, and then we will walk a few metres to the Célestine Grotto, which dates from the Quaternary era and was dug in the limestone rock by an underground river. The Célestine cave, named in homage to the owner of the site, was discovered by chance in 1845 and the first exploratory visits were made. It also served as a hiding place for resistance fighters. Fallen into oblivion for 70 years, it is now possible to descend the steps to discover the stalactites and stalagmites forgotten for centuries. It is not possible to take photos in the grotto, unfortunately, but it well worth having a look.

Then it's back to Le Manoir for our farewell dinner, and the chance to show off our photos.

Saturday.

Time to say our 'Farewells' after breakfast.