



SPARTAN
PATHWAYS TRAVEL
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI

April 25 to May 3, 2024

VILLAGE LIFE[®] France



VILLAGE LIFE® FRANCE

Get a glimpse of village life in the spectacular southwestern French countryside. Immerse yourself within majestic remnants of prehistoric and medieval times on this nine-day land program and seven-night stay at the luxury PLAZA MADELEINE HÔTEL. Be transported back in time amongst magnificent centuries-old paintings within carefully-preserved caves and regal castles. Visit the International Centre for Cave Art at Lascaux and view stunning simulations of one of humankind's earliest artistic creations. Fall into the rhythms of everyday life in Sarlat-la-Canéda, one of Europe's most intact medieval villages, and explore four UNESCO World Heritage Sites—the ancient pilgrimage site of Rocamadour; the cavernous L'Abri du Cap-Blanc, Rouffignac; the prehistoric Les Eyzies-de-Tayac-Sireuil; and the ancient troglodyte village of La Madeleine. This exemplary journey through the beginnings of human existence as we know it make for a trip of a lifetime.

Front cover: Sarlat town center, Place de la Liberté



Fortified Château de Beynac



Dear Spartans:

Join a small group of travelers for a unique opportunity to experience the provincial region of Dordogne, still referred to by locals as Périgord Noir. Here, castles tell the story of a different time alongside the region's extraordinary cave paintings more than 17,000 years old. Dordogne offers centuries-old rituals, epicurean traditions, and archaeological treasures that are preserved within a breathtaking landscape of hills, rivers, limestone gorges, and forests.

Our carefully curated itinerary explores four UNESCO World Heritage Sites—the ancient pilgrimage site of Rocamadour; the archaeological treasures of L'Abri du Cap-Blanc, Rouffignac; Les Eyzies-de-Tayac-Sireuil; and the prehistoric troglodyte village of La Madeleine. Visit the renowned International Centre for Cave Art at Lascaux to view dazzling simulations of one of humankind's earliest artistic creations, known as the "Sistine Chapel of Prehistory."

Fall into the rhythms of everyday life in Sarlat-la-Canéda, one of Europe's most-intact medieval villages. Spend seven nights at the PLAZA MADELEINE HÔTEL, a restored 19th-century townhouse. In addition to the included meals in the hotel, dine on regional specialties during traditional three-course dinners in authentic French bistros.

This program through Dordogne offers a quintessential sojourn through the timeless southwest region of France at an excellent value—and you unpack only once! Book now while space and early booking savings are still available.

Go Green!

Regina Cross
Director, Spartan Pathways Travel Program
MSU Alumni Office
888-697-2863

**To secure your spot, call Gohagan & Company at 800-922-3088
or visit gohagantravel.com/reserve**



A Taste of France

Southwestern France is renowned for its exquisite wines and *fromage* (cheese) varieties, thanks to the region's fertile soil and favorable climate. When it comes to wine, Dordogne offers exceptional varieties—one of the most esteemed being Bergerac, a delicate red wine known for its deep ruby color and balanced flavors of black fruits, spices, and subtle oak nuances, giving the wine great potential for aging. Another prized Dordogne wine is Monbazillac, a sweet white wine with notes of apricot, peach, and honeycomb. Dordogne is also home to delectable cheeses—including Rocamadour, a goat cheese with a creamy texture and a slightly nutty flavor which pairs wonderfully with the region's red wines. Another noteworthy cheese is Bleu des Causses, a blue cheese with a creamy, crumbly texture and a tangy, slightly spicy taste, often enjoyed with sweet white wines. The soft and creamy Chaumes pairs well with red wines, especially those from St. Emilion—and the full and smoky Trappe d'Echourgnac is best matched with fruity red wines. The treasures of Dordogne's wine and cheese culture are sure to tantalize your taste buds and leave a lasting impression.





9-DAY/7-NIGHT ITINERARY

Depart Home City/

Day 1

Depart your home city on an overnight flight.

Bordeaux, France/ Sarlat-la-Canéda

Day 2

Arrive in Bordeaux and transfer to Sarlat-la-Canéda. Check into the PLAZA MADELINE HÔTEL. (D)

Sarlat-la-Canéda

Day 3

Start the day with a presentation about preserving the village's medieval architecture by a local expert at the hotel. Stroll through the streets of Sarlat-la-Canéda and see the 16th century cathedral of Saint Sacerdos and the sublime Romanesque design of the Chapel of the White Penitents. The cultural heart of Sarlat is the Place de la Liberté, where every Wednesday and Saturday one of France's most

storied markets is held—a tradition dating back to the Middle Ages. Enjoy lunch with a sampling of wine, cheese and other delectable local food at the market and take the rest of the afternoon to experience the market at your leisure. Join your fellow travel companions at the welcome reception at the hotel. (B,R)

Rocamadour

Day 4

The UNESCO World Heritage-designated Rocamadour has one of the most dramatic settings of any village in the world, essentially carved into a grand sheer limestone cliff. During the Middle Ages, pilgrims flocked here from across Europe to perform penance by ascending the 216 steps of Le Grand Escalier on their knees—seeking miracles from the sacred

12th-century statue of the Black Virgin and Child, a walnut carving more than 1,000 years old. Embedded in the cliff above the doorway to the Chapelle de Notre Dame is a sword said to be that of the heroic knight Roland. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and explore Rocamadour at your leisure before returning to the hotel. (B,L)

Les Eyzies-de-Tayac-Sireuil/L'Abri du Cap-Blanc

Day 5

Discover Les Eyzes-de-Tayac-Sireuil, where the first known bones of Homo sapiens were discovered. Explore the National Museum of Prehistory in Les Eyzies in a guided tour and see L'Abri du Cap-Blanc's UNESCO-designated prehistoric cave friezes. Marvel at some of the earliest artifacts and remains of human





The Grand Rue in Domme

civilization, along with one-of-a-kind life-size cave paintings. (B,L)

Sarlat-La-Canéda/Lascaux Day 6

In 1940, a quartet of schoolboys stumbled onto the Lascaux cave, a repository of the most stunning works of prehistoric art and today a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Although the original cave is no longer accessible to visitors for the sake of preservation, you will see a perfect reproduction in the International Center for Cave Art at Lascaux. (B,D)

Sarlat-La-Canéda/ Rouffignac/Tursac, Madeleine Village Day 7

Visit Rouffignac, “Cave of a Hundred Mammoths,” known for its extraordinary Great Ceiling decorated with beautifully rendered

friezes of woolly rhinoceros and mammoth engravings at an enormous scale. After lunch at a local restaurant, travel to Tursac to discover the prehistoric village of La Madeleine, perched on the high cliffs above the Vézère River. See the remains of majestic caves occupied by families over more than 15,000 years, the most recent occupants from the 19th century. Enjoy a private French folk music and dance performance after dinner on your own in Sarlat. (B,L)

Sarlat-La-Canéda/ Beynac/Domme Day 8

Traverse an elaborate series of stone walls, parapet walks, watchtowers, and passageways at the fortified Château de Beynac. Cruise the Dordogne River aboard a private 19th-century gabare,

followed by lunch in a local restaurant. Travel along the meandering road from Dordogne to Domme, an authentic medieval fortified village. Enter through its original ramparts and see graffiti etched by the Knights Templar on the inner village walls. See an unforgettable panoramic view of old pale stone houses topped with bright orange roofs yielding to the cliff’s edge—and a lush, green horizon stretching for miles. Enjoy free time in Domme before heading back to the hotel for dinner. (B,L,D)

Bordeaux/ Return to Home City Day 9

Enjoy an early breakfast buffet at the hotel before your overnight return flight to your home city. (B)



Bronze geese statue in Place du Marché aux Oies square in Sarlat



PLAZA MADELINE HÔTEL

Enjoy the traditional pace of VILLAGE LIFE® during your stay in the family-owned PLAZA MADELINE HÔTEL—located just beyond the ancient walls of Sarlat-la-Canéda's medieval quarter, a short walk from the village center. A grand 19th-century townhouse, this historical *hôtel de charme* marries traditional features with French *esprit contemporain*.

Each of the 39 stylish, air-conditioned guest rooms have been renovated or upgraded and feature two twin beds or one queen bed, private bathroom, individual climate control, satellite television, phone, Wi-Fi access, safe, minibar, and hair dryer.

The hotel dining room, where continental breakfast is served daily—featuring freshly baked breads, pastries, and charcuterie—is reserved for the exclusive use of hotel guests. There is a brasserie pub with lounge and private terrace, a petit lounge with computer facilities and internet access, a heated outdoor swimming pool, solarium, and spa with a Jacuzzi and sauna. The dedicated hotel staff is pleased to provide attentive service.





Arched passageways at Château de Beynac

2024 DEPARTURE DATE

April 25 to May 3 (Tour Begins: April 26)

LAND RATES

per person, based on double occupancy, excluding taxes

**Early Booking
Rate through
December 6, 2023**

*Rate after
December 6, 2023*

Includes Accommodations

\$3,775

\$4,195

Singles are available upon request for an additional \$1,100 and is capacity controlled.

To secure your spot, call Gohagan & Company at 800-922-3088 or visit gohagantravel.com/reserve

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STEP INTO PREHISTORIC TIMES

Lascaux Cave Art

You will find the greatest concentration of prehistoric art sites anywhere in the world in the enchanting *département* of the region of Dordogne. Limestone caves and rocky overhangs provided Ice Age humans with not only shelter, but also a vast canvas for extraordinary paintings. In Lascaux and Rouffignac—the two most well-known caves and both UNESCO World Heritage Sites—extinct aurochs, wild stallion, and antelopes that were painted over 17,000 years ago still prance, preen, and gallop before your eyes. The original Lascaux cave has been closed to the public since 1963 for preservation purposes; however, the incredible replica in the International Centre for Cave Art at Lascaux allows you to experience these iconic cave paintings interactively, providing a realistic, stimulating representation of the exuberant colors that have faded in the original cave.

Rouffignac offers up-close views of over 250 deft prehistoric drawings and paintings that cover a gallery of cavernous walls and ceilings, including the famous friezes of two bison ready to engage each other in battle and 10 mammoths in procession—one of the largest cave paintings ever discovered.

Near the village of Les Eyzies, visit the original Cro-Magnon rock shelter and UNESCO World Heritage Site of L'Abri de Cap-Blanc, showcasing the rare, life-size frieze of horses and bison sculpted in limestone. An expert-guided tour of the National Museum of Prehistory in Les Eyzies helps put this vast network of prehistoric art into context. La Madeleine also features magnificent caves inhabited by families over many millennia.

Prehistoric village of La Madeleine



INCLUDED FEATURES

- ◆ Transfers and luggage handling abroad if you purchased air through Gohagan & Company and your arrival(s)/departure(s) coincide with the scheduled group transfer(s).
- ◆ Experienced, English-speaking local guides for included excursions.
- ◆ Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- ◆ Complimentary bottled water in your suite and on excursions.
- ◆ Experienced Gohagan & Company Travel Directors at your service.
- ◆ Complimentary use of an audio headset during guided excursions.
- ◆ Automatic \$250,000 flight insurance policy for each participant ticketed on flights by Gohagan & Company.
- ◆ Hospitality desk at the hotel.
- ◆ Meals included as noted in the itinerary (B,L,R,D).

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