

Itinerary I · Four days

THE CHÂTEAU SET · SELF-GUIDED

Art

From the painted caves of the Vézère to the living ateliers of the villages, the Dordogne holds 17,000 years of art within an easy drive of the château, moving through all of it: prehistoric, Roman, Renaissance, classical, and the work being made here now.

DAY 1

The painted caves VÉZÈRE VALLEY

The day every art lover comes to the Dordogne for. The valley of the Vézère holds the densest concentration of prehistoric painted caves in the world, and a morning here sets the tone for everything that follows.

● MORNING

Lascaux IV, Montignac

[[drive time]] by car

The Centre International d'Art Pariétal holds a full replica of the Lascaux cave: 17,000 years of painted wall, rendered in painstaking detail. It is among the finest museum experiences in France and the natural place to begin.

**The cave most visitors never think to ask about***Unlock the full itinerary to see our local tip.***LUNCH** *Unlock the full itinerary to see our recommendation.*

● AFTERNOON

Pastels Girault, Montignac

In Montignac

A few steps from Lascaux, the world's oldest pastel maker has been producing pigments since 1780. For anyone who paints, the boutique and atelier are a quiet revelation: colour as craft, made the same way for nearly 250 years.

● EVENING

Back at the château

Home

Supplies are laid out in the grounds for those who want to put the day's impressions straight onto canvas while the light goes off the garden.

**SUPPER** *Unlock the full itinerary to see our recommendation.*

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DAY 2

Fine art and the Roman city PÉRIGUEUX

Périgueux gathers several centuries of art into a single walkable city: a fine-art collection begun in the 1850s, and a Gallo-Roman house whose painted walls have survived eighteen hundred years.

● MORNING

MAAP, Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie

[[drive time]] by car

The oldest museum in the Dordogne. Its fine-art wing holds Flemish, French and Italian paintings from the 16th to 19th centuries, alongside works deposited from the Louvre and bought from the Paris Salons. This is the canvas-and-oils chapter the caves cannot tell.

**LUNCH** *Unlock the full itinerary to see our recommendation.*

● MIDDAY

Vesunna, the Gallo-Roman domus

In Périgueux

Jean Nouvel's glass-and-steel building floats above the remains of a Roman house, discovered in 1959 with its painted plaster still on the walls. Around the central garden, a second-century fresco of marine creatures glows against a deep Bordeaux red.

● AFTERNOON

The old town

On foot

Time to walk the medieval and Renaissance streets, with their galleries and the Byzantine-domed cathedral, before the drive home.

**Two stops worth making in town***Unlock the full itinerary to see our local tip.***SUPPER** *Unlock the full itinerary to see our recommendation.*

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DAY 3

Living ateliers SARLAT AND THE VILLAGES

The tradition is not only behind glass. Across the Périgord, working artists keep open studios, and a day spent among them is a day watching the region's art being made rather than remembered.

● MORNING

One atelier, your choice of medium

[[drive time]] by car

Choose one. Atelier Moulia is a working painter's studio in the French manner, impressionist roots with a modern hand, where you can watch the technique that produces the work and carry a canvas home. Or spend the morning with a glassblower, watching molten glass become object, among the most absorbing things to do in the region. (Pastels Girault also runs an atelier, for those who took Day 1 at a different pace.) [[confirm or replace atelier names]]

**If an atelier doesn't appeal***Unlock the full itinerary to see our local tip.***LUNCH** *Unlock the full itinerary to see our recommendation.*

● AFTERNOON

Sarlat's gallery streets

On foot

The medieval streets of Sarlat hold gallery after gallery and studio after studio, paintings and sculpture and engraving among the golden stone. The artists are often at work and glad to talk.

**Our galleries and shops in Sarlat***Unlock the full itinerary to see our local tip.***SUPPER** *Unlock the full itinerary to see our recommendation.*

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DAY 4

The hunt and the table SUNDAY

Sunday has its own rhythm in the Périgord. The morning is for the hunt, the afternoon for making something of your own, the evening for a gallery opening.

● MORNING

Chiner at the brocante

[[drive time]] by car

A brocante is part antique market, part treasure hunt. The French art of sifting it is called chiner, and a Sunday morning spent at it can turn up an old oil, a worn frame, a drawing nobody else looked twice at. The Périgord is excellent brocante country.



The brocante we'd send you to

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● AFTERNOON

An artist at the château

At the château

The afternoon can close with a lesson in your own drawing room. We keep a list of local artists who will come to the château to teach, pastel among the most rewarding for a single afternoon.



Bring an artist to the château

Unlock the full itinerary to see our local tip.

● EVENING

A vernissage

[[drive time]] by car

The season brings a steady run of gallery openings across the region. Arriving at a vernissage, glass in hand, is the most natural way to meet the artists and see new work before it goes anywhere else.



Which Sunday-evening opening to find

Unlock the full itinerary to see our local tip.**LATE TABLE** *Unlock the full itinerary to see our recommendation.*

The starred tips and table recommendations throughout these four days are revealed when you book "The Château Set." They are the part we would not hand to anyone but a guest.