



South West France with Mary Moody 22 September – 9 October 2008

highlights

- Exploring lesser known areas of South West France with Mary Moody who has an incredible passion for this region

- Exploring interesting historical towns and villages

- Experiencing the timelessness of the river landscape overlooked by imposing castles

- Enjoying the **culinary specialties**

- Soaking up the **hospitality** of family run hotels

the trip



Described as 'A Village Ramble' this unique tour involves several hours of gentle walking in the mornings followed by a delightful picnic lunch in which the local produce and wines are sampled. The tour covers the local history, architecture, cultural traditions, agriculture and cuisine and includes visits to historic towns, villages and chateaux as well as gardens, a vineyard and a farm tour. The evenings are reserved for a variety of dining experiences; from local farm restaurants to some of the most famous gastronomic establishments. This tour is an excellent opportunity to discover the delights of the Lot and Dordogne Valleys in the Midi Pyrenees region of southern France. The tour will be led by Mary Moody, a former presenter on the ABC's Gardening Australia and the author of three best selling travel memoirs - Au Revoir, Last Tango in Toulouse and The Long Hot Summer as well as numerous gardening books and magazines. Mary has owned a small village house in Frayssinet-le-Gelat for five years and has explored the tiny villages and towns that make up France's "best kept secret". She adores this region of France and takes delight in sharing it with other Australians.

further reading:

- ⇒ Insight Guide Southwest France
- ⇒ The Rough Guide to the Dordogne and the Lot
- ⇒ Cadogan Guide to Southwest France; Blue Guide to Southwest France
- ⇒ Lonely Planet Guide to Southwest France
- ⇒ Cooking and Travelling in Southwest France by Stephanie Alexander.



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Itinerary at a glance

DAY 1	Meet at Railway station (Gare) Austerlitz Paris - train to Gourdon. Overnight Gourdon
DAY 2	In and around Gourdon. Overnight Gourdon (BL)
DAY 3	Day trip to Sarlat. Overnight Gourdon (BD)
DAY 4	Into the Dordogne. Visit Chateau Marqueyssac. O'night Gourdon (B)
DAY 5	To Belves (BL)
DAY 6	To Monpazier and Biron (BL)
DAY 7	Cazal Sunday Market and visit to Villefranche du Perigod. Overnight Gourdon (BLD)
DAY 8	To Causse and Rocamadour. Overnight Puy L'Eveque (BL)
DAY 9	In Puy L'Eveque. Afternoon visit to Bonaguil Castle. Overnight Puy L'Eveque (BLD)
DAY 10	To Grezels and Belaye. Overnight Puy L'Eveque (BLD)
DAY 11	To Cahors. Overnight Cahors(BL)
DAY 12	To Bouzies. Overnight Cahors (BL)
DAY 13	In Cahors. Dinner at the Terminus Hotel. Overnight Cahors (BLD)
DAY 14	Free day at leisure (B)
DAY 15	To Albi via Millau Viaduct and la Couvertoirade. Overnight Mercure Hotel, Albi (B)
DAY 16	In Albi sightseeing. Overnight Mercure Hotel, Albi (BL)
DAY 17	To Cordes sur Ciel, Conques & Chateau du Bosc. Overnight Mercure Hotel, Albi (BL)
DAY 18	Transfer to Toulouse. Trip concludes (B)

detailed itinerary:

DAY 1 Monday 22nd September 2008

Meet at Paris Gare Austerlitz at around 0900. Mary Moody will greet you there and assist you on to the train. Our train departs for Gourdon at around 1000 and our arrival into Gourdon is about 1545 (we will provide exact details prior to departure). It is advisable to take some food and water with you on the train, as the mobile food trolley that comes through the train is not very reliable. On arrival into Gourdon our luggage will be transferred to our hotel. We will walk to the hotel, which is about 15 minutes from the station. In the early evening we will have a group get together over an aperitif for a briefing to discuss what you will be doing for the next few weeks.

DAY 2 Tuesday 23rd September 2008

Gourdon is an ancient town with a medieval heart and an elegant circular shopping street that follows what once would have been the main fortification wall. Tuesday morning is the weekly general market, which is



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fun to explore from 9 am onwards. Jan and Mary will meet you at 10.30 am in the township and walk you to the Grottes de Cougnac - a fascinating series of limestone caves that contain prehistoric cave drawings. Visiting these caves sets the scene for the human history of this region, dating back 25,000 years. After touring the caves we will have the first of our leisurely picnic lunches, sampling the local food and wines and then walk back to Gourdon where the rest of the afternoon and evening is free for you to relax or to continue exploring the town. (B,L)

DAY 3 Wednesday 24th September 2008

After breakfast a bus will arrive at the hotel and take us to Sarlat, one of the most famous towns in the Dordogne. Admired for its well-preserved architecture and enchanting narrow streets, we will be visiting on the popular market day, held in La Place de la Liberte, where you can explore at leisure then find a cafe or restaurant for lunch. Apart from the markets, there is also excellent shopping in Sarlat as well as a 16th century cathedral and many fine buildings and winding backstreets that reflect the fascinating history of the township. Mid afternoon we will return to Gourdon. In the evening there will be a fine dinner at the Hotel Bouriane. Mary and Jan will join the group for dinner. Wine and drinks at own expense.(B,D)

DAY 4 Thursday 25th September 2008

This morning after breakfast we will enjoy another delightful drive into the Dordogne, following the river with its quaint villages overshadowed by numerous castles. We will visit the Chateau Marqueyssac, which is famous for its unique gardens, set high on a promontory with spectacular views of the surrounding countryside. The garden has two distinct areas - a formal terraced parterre with sculptured topiary and an enchanting woodland walk where you can wander for an hour or so before returning to the chateau for lunch at the restaurant. We will then drive to the fortified hilltop town of Domme, which is also famous for its views and narrow backstreets. Take your time to explore this very beautiful town that has most of its medieval wall in tact. We return to Gourdon in the afternoon and the remainder of the day is free. (B)

DAY 5 Friday 26th September 2008

From Gourdon you will be driven through some beautiful countryside to Belves. From Belves you will be taken on a tour of some of the local farms. The first farm is typical of the mixed farming practised in this area as it specialises in all aspects of beekeeping as well as cattle, sheep, horses, crops and poultry. Afterwards you will go to a tobacco farm where the growing and curing of tobacco is demonstrated. Your next stop will be a Ferme Auberge for lunch that is served in the farmer's dining room and is lots of fun. Prepare yourself for a feast of soup, foie gras, duck, cheese, dessert and coffee plus the local wine. 80% of what you eat and drink will have been produced on this farm. After lunch you will visit a foie gras farm where you will be shown the full production of this local delicacy. You will then return to Gourdon. The evening is free. (B, L)

DAY 6 Saturday 27th September 2008

Today you will have the opportunity of visiting the bastide (fortified) town of Montpazier and the ancient Chateau de Biron. Montpazier was built in the 13th century and is a walled township with a beautiful central market square which is often used as the location for films set in that period. We



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will allow time for exploring. Make sure you give yourself time to walk down the narrow side streets and look at the medieval houses. Monpazier is built on a grid pattern with all the wider streets returning to the town square that is in the centre. After lunch we will set off to Biron which stands on a hillside that has a commanding view of the surrounding countryside. The chateau has a dungeon, a tannery, kitchens, fabulous parquet floors and many other rooms that have been restored to appear as they would have in medieval times. Late afternoon return to Gourdon. (B,L)

DAY 7 Sunday 28th September 2008

After breakfast the coach will take us to the Cazals Sunday morning market. This is a well-loved local market and you will spend most of the morning here. You may wish to drop over to the Café de Paris for an aperitif before we head off to Villefranche du Perigord. This village is yet another bastide town that has a beautiful square and church. We will have another one of our picnic lunches at the local Plan d'eau. The food we will have for lunch will be purchased by you at the Cazals markets. This will give you the opportunity of shopping in a French regional market and it will be lots of fun. After lunch there will be time for you to walk through the village and look at the very interesting houses and shops. We will then return to our lovely hotel in Gourdon. Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant. (B, L, D)

DAY 8 Monday 29th September 2008

Today is one of the highlights of your time in the southwest. We will have to check out of our accommodation early as we will be travelling by coach to the fascinating area known as the Causse. You will find this very different from what you have seen around Gourdon and Belves particularly in regards to methods of farming. When we arrive, we will relax and enjoy another picnic lunch before driving to the ancient pilgrimage town of Rocamadour, considered one of the most important historic sites in all France. We start our tour at the Bishop's Palace, walking down past the 14 Stations of the Cross to the ancient church of St Saveur, which has been the centre of the cult of the Black Virgin since the 14th century. Below the Church is the village with its many cafes and shops. In the afternoon we will drive to another ancient pilgrimage town, Puy L'Eveque, where you will be staying for the next three nights. There are several good local restaurants where you can find a place to have dinner. (B,L)

DAY 9 Tuesday 30th September 2008

This morning you will have a chance to get to know Puy L'Eveque. In the morning there is a local market, which is fun to explore. This market is quite small and spills out into the surrounding streets. You can buy local produce, clothes, fresh fruit, etc. Take particular note of le marchand de poisson (fishmonger) and charcuterie (delicatessen) as they sell their wares from their trucks.

After this our coach will pick us up and take us on the short trip to Bonaguil Castle. Bonaguil is the last fortified, medieval castle to be built in the south of France. It was constructed under the orders of a megalomaniac baron in the 14th century to counter the new types of weapons being introduced. We will do a self guided tour of the castle and this will take about 1 to 1.5 hours. After this we will do a short walk to a local winery and historic bird museum where we will have a picnic lunch.



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You can also take the opportunity of tasting the wines and if you wish purchase some of them. Afternoon return to Puy L'Eveque. In the evening Mary will join the group for dinner in the excellent restaurant at the hotel. Wine and drinks are not included. (B,L,D)

DAY 10 Wednesday 1st October 2008

Today we will walk down through the backstreets of Puy L'Eveque. We will visit the medieval church and graveyard before proceeding down the narrow streets past old stone houses to the Lot river. We will then visit an ancient, restored watermill. Mary and Jan will meet us at an old converted railway tunnel that is now used as a specialty wine and gift shop. From there we will take a short bus trip to a local historical pottery then on to the small village of Grezels from where we will walk past the chateau into the forest, then past some lovely vineyards and farmhouses to Belaye where we will have our picnic lunch. Belaye is high above the river and affords some brilliant views across the valley to Prayssac. You will return to Puy L'Eveque in the afternoon. The rest of the day is free. This evening we will be taken to the village of Les Arques, home of the contemporary Russian sculptor, Zadkine. Les Arques is also where you find La Recreation, a restaurant made famous in Michael Saunders' book, "From Here You Can't See Paris". We will have dinner at La Recreation with our hosts Noelle and Jacques Rattier serving a most delicious four course meal. (B, L, D)

DAY 11 Thursday 2nd October 2008

Today is very special. In the morning after we have checked out of our hotel, we will be driven to Frayssinet-le-Gelat where you will be greeted by Mary and enjoy morning tea or coffee in her small village house. Mary and Jan will guide you around the village, visiting the Romanesque church and the memorial to the villagers who were killed in a massacre during World War 11. The bus will then take us to the nearby village of Pomarede where we will be welcomed by Lucienne Hayter who will serve aperitifs in her charming garden. Then off to lunch at Madame Murats, the village restaurant about which Mary has written so much in all her books. We will be well fed by Jeanne Murat and her daughter Sylvie in this traditional, workingman's restaurant. After the five course lunch you won't feel like doing much, so it's off to our new hotel in Cahors for a quiet afternoon and evening. Once you have settled into the hotel, the rest of the day is free. (B,L)

DAY 12 Friday 3rd October 2008

This morning after breakfast our coach will drive us up river to the tiny village of Bouzies. Here you will see the "English Fort", cross the narrow bridge before embarking on a beautiful walk along the ancient tow path that follows the river. The walk will take about 2 hours and the going is relatively flat until the last section where you have to climb a steep path up to the village of St Cirq Lapopie. This village has been described as the most picturesque village in all of France. It has magnificent medieval houses and buildings as well as many restaurants and gift shops. Take your time to explore its tiny streets and alleyways. You can walk up to the ruins of the castle where you will obtain a superb view of the Lot valley. From St Cirq Lapopie you will return to Bouzies by coach for a picnic lunch on the banks of the river. About mid afternoon you will return to your hotel in Cahors. Cahors is a fascinating ancient town famous for the Pont Valentre, one of the best-preserved medieval bridges in Europe. This



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	evening is free. There are many fine cafes in Cahors so you should have no trouble finding somewhere for dinner.(B, L)
DAY 13	Saturday 4th October 2008
	As today is Saturday, the Cahors market will be in full swing. After a few hours at the market, where you will be able to shop for our last picnic lunch together, Mary will take you through the historic St. Etienne Cathedral and give a small talk on Cahors which was once the most important centre in the region, tracing its roots back to Romans times. We will picnic in a quiet park and the rest of the afternoon is free to explore the township or rest in readiness for tonight's big dinner at the famous Le Balandre, one of the best restaurants in the region. The meal is served in the traditional dining room of the Terminus Hotel with its waiters in long white aprons and the maitre d' in his dinner suit. This will be an everlasting memory of your time in the Lot. Wine and drinks are not included.(B, L, D)
DAY 14	Sunday 5th October 2008
	On your last day in The Lot you are free to do whatever you please. Even though some of the shops are closed on a Sunday there are lots of winding backstreets to explore, the river's edge for walking and local attractions such as the Musee de Resistance which traces the history of the area during the last World War. There are lots of cafes and restaurants where you can enjoy lunch and dinner. It is worthwhile to cross the Pont Valentre and take the track to the large cross on a hill overlooking the river and the city. If you haven't already done so visit the Musee de Resistance that is dedicated to all those who were in the resistance movement during WW2 and to those who were forcibly removed to the east as slave labour. Entry is free but a donation is expected.(B)
DAY 15	Monday 6th October 2008
	This morning we depart Cahors and go via the Millau Viaduct and the delightful French town of La Couvertoirade to Albi. Albi is an historic and medieval town in the South West of France, located on the river Tarn and an important cultural and artistic centre of the region. We will spend our final 3 nights of the tour exploring Albi and its surrounds. Overnight Mercure Hotel, Albi(B)
DAY 16	Tuesday 7th October 2008
	In Albi – sightseeing. Nowhere else in the world will you get to see such a varied array of works by Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, who was born in Albi in 1864. During our day sightseeing and exploring in Albi we visit the Musee Toulouse Lautrec as well as the magnificent and imposing Cathedrale Sainte Cecile. Overnight Mercure Hotel, Albi (B)
DAY 17	Wednesday 8th October 2008
	Today we will take a day trip to some of the outlying towns around Albi. We will visit the fortified town of Cordes sur Ciel which has preserved an extraordinary medieval architectural heritage including remains of fortifications as well as a collection of magnificent Gothic style houses unique in France. We will also explore the treasures at Conques and visit the Chateau du Bosc where Toulouse Lautrec spent his family holidays. Overnight Mercure Hotel, Albi (B)



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DAY 18 Thursday 9th October 2008

Transfer to Toulouse where trip concludes (B)

inclusions

- 17 breakfasts, 12 lunches, 6 dinners (does not include drinks)
Continental breakfasts are served and will often consist of breads, spreads, yoghurt, tea, coffee & juices. Dinner will consist of three to four courses which will include local specialties.
- 17 nights accommodation in 3 star hotels on a twinshare basis
- All transfers and coach touring as listed in the itinerary
- Train fare from Paris to Gourdon – 2nd class
- Entrance fees to gardens, caves, Chateaux in The Lot

Items not included

- Travel to Paris & return from Toulouse
- Meals not specified in the itinerary (BLD)
- Items of a personal nature
- Entrance fees not specified
- Transfers
- Travel Insurance

price

land only: \$6190.00 AUD

Note: Land only arrangements begin on the morning of Day 1 at Paris Austerlitz Railway Station and end on Day 18 in Toulouse.

single supplement: \$1800.00AUD

The tour price is based on two people sharing a room. If you are travelling as a single, then we will do our best to twin share you with someone of the same gender unless you specify on your booking form that you would like to occupy a single room/tent. In case of the latter, we are obliged to charge a 'single supplement', or if we are unsuccessful in matching you up with another traveller. For electing a single room throughout, a single supplement charge will apply.

package price ex-Sydney: \$8890.00 AUD

The above price includes the land only arrangements as described above plus 2 nights accommodation in Paris in twin share, return economy flights from Sydney to Paris with Thai International Airways, and one way 2nd class train fare Toulouse to Paris.

Note: Airport taxes and all other transfers not included – allow approx. \$600.00

The above price is contingent on fares being available in the booking class (Thai Q/H) that was used for the purpose of costing this exclusive tour.

joining instructions

In your Final Documents that you will receive from World Expeditions (within one month of trip departure) you will find your Rail Ticket included for your train journey from Paris,



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Gare Austerlitz to Gourdon. We will also provide a detailed instruction on the address of the Gare Austerlitz as well as Platform Numbers and any other relevant information. Mary will be in Paris to assist you.

pre & post tour accommodation

Pre tour accommodation in Paris and post tour accommodation in Toulouse is not included in the trip package. If you would like World Expeditions to make a reservation for you, please call us on 1300 720 000. Alternatively, you may like to book your own accommodation on-line for pre or post-tour nights. Please refer to the following websites and/or booking services.

www.octopustravel.com.au

www.expedia.com.au

fast facts

VISAS	Visas not required for citizens of Australia, Britain, Canada, USA and New Zealand. For all other nationalities please contact the relevant embassy
COUNTRIES VISITED:	France
SPECIALSIT GEAR REQUIRED	None
CLIMATE	The trip runs in September/October during the European Autumn where temperatures can range between 5-18 degree Celsius.

how to book

Please note that all reservations are subject to availability at the time of booking. Your booking will be held for seven days pending receipt of a non-refundable deposit per person and the completed booking form. The deposit is payable by cheque (made payable to World Expeditions), credit card or direct deposit.

Please fax or post your completed booking form to:

World Expeditions
Level 5, 71 York St
Sydney 2000
Ph: (02) 8270 8400
Fax: (02) 8270 8401

World Expeditions has access to competitive airfares to **Europe**. Call your nearest World Expeditions office for assistance with your travel arrangements including flights, travel insurance & additional accommodation.

pre-departure information

On receipt of your booking form and deposit (and once minimum group numbers have been reached), World Expeditions will forward detailed pre departure information. This will include such details as recommended clothing lists, vaccinations, documentation and all details to help you prepare for the trip ahead.



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insurance

Current comprehensive travel insurance is a condition of the acceptance of your booking by World Expeditions. The cost of travel insurance does not form part of the advised price and must be paid additionally. We recommend Suresave, with whom we have been working for several years and have the utmost respect for their product and the handling of claims. Alternatively you may have your own insurance company that you deal with frequently. Travel documentation will not be released to you until evidence of such insurance being in force is provided.

final payment

Final payment by cheque is due 60 days prior to departure. For further information please refer to the terms and conditions outlined on the back of the booking form.