



## South West France with Mary Moody 12- 28 September 2009

### highlights

- Spending 2 nights in Paris and visiting the glorious gardens and home of impressionist Claude Monet

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

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- Exploring historic towns and villages

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

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- Enjoying the **wonderful regional food and wine**

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

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### the trip

This unique tour of South West France includes some gentle walking in the mornings followed by delightful picnic and restaurant lunches in which the local food and wines can be enjoyed. We commence this tour in Paris where you will meet Mary and take a guided tour of the home and glorious garden of impressionist Claude Monet. Once in the South West, while walking and talking, we delve into regional history, architecture, cultural tradition and agriculture and along the way we visit historic towns, villages and chateaux as well as gardens, a vineyard and some rustic farms. The evenings are for a variety of dining experiences; from family run cafes to haute cuisine. The tour is 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. Mary has owned a small village house in Frayssinet-le-Gelat for seven years and has explored the tiny villages and towns that make up France's "best kept secret". She adores this region and will be ably assisted on the tour by Trish Hobbs and Dany Chouet formerly of the famous Cleopatra Guest House in the Blue Mountains. They now live fulltime in France.



#### A Note from Mary

We have tried to create an itinerary with a balance of walking, sightseeing, shopping, eating and soaking up the glorious atmosphere.



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When we have a lingering lunch we don't organise a big dinner so you can have the option of skipping a meal (most unusual in France) or just having a bowl of soup or a salad and omelette in the evening. If we are planning a slap-up dinner at night we try and keep the lunch simple - a picnic by the river or a small cafe meal. We don't start too early in the morning and we don't try to cram too much into every day. We want you to feel relaxed and have time to really absorb the delights of this wonderful region of France. Please feel free to contact me on [memdah@ix.net.au](mailto:memdah@ix.net.au) if you have any questions. I look forward to meeting you in Paris.  
Mary Moody

### further reading:

- ⇒ Insight Guide Southwest France
- ⇒ 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.
- ⇒ Lunch with Madame Murat (book and DVD)
- ⇒ Au Revoir, Last Tango in Toulouse and The Long Hot Summer

### Itinerary at a glance

<b>DAY 1</b>	Arrive in Paris and check into hotel. Group meeting
<b>DAY 2</b>	Guided tour of Monet's Garden, Giverny. overnight Paris (BL)
<b>DAY 3</b>	Train to Gourdon in the southwest overnight Gourdon (B)
<b>DAY 4</b>	Gourdon town tour and prehistoric caves. Overnight Gourdon (BL)
<b>DAY 5</b>	Day trip to Sarlat. Overnight Gourdon (BD)
<b>DAY 6</b>	Into the Dordogne. Chateau Marqueyssac. Overnight Gourdon (BL)
<b>DAY 7</b>	Belves farm tour and lunch at Ferme Auberge overnight Gourdon (BL)
<b>DAY 8</b>	To Monpazier and Chateau Biron overnight Gourdon (BL)
<b>DAY 9</b>	The gardens of Erignac, lunch at Pont de L'Ouyesse. Overnight Gourdon (BL)
<b>DAY 10</b>	To Prayssac dolmens, picnic lunch Belaye, dinner at La Recreation. Overnight Puy L'Eveque (BLD)
<b>DAY 11</b>	Walk from Goujenac to Frayssinet-le-Gelat. Lunch with Madame



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	Murat. Overnight Puy L'Eveque (BL)
<b>DAY 12</b>	To Rocamadour. Overnight Puy L'Eveque (BD)
<b>DAY 13</b>	To Cahors via Moissac overnight Cahors(BL)
<b>DAY 14</b>	To Bouziers and St Cirq la Popie with picnic Lunch. Dinner at Hotel Terminus. Overnight Cahors (BLD)
<b>DAY 15</b>	Market day in Cahors. Picnic lunch. Overnight Cahors (BL)
<b>DAY 16</b>	Sunday lunch at Conques overnight Cahors (BL)
<b>DAY 17</b>	Transfer to Toulouse. Trip concludes (B)

### detailed itinerary:

<b>DAY 1</b>	<b>Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b> Today is joining day in Paris. Make your way to the group hotel for check in. At 6pm Mary will meet you for a tour briefing over a glass of champagne in the hotel bar.
<b>DAY 2</b>	<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b> This morning we will be picked up by bus from Paris and taken to Giverney, the home and glorious garden of impressionist Claude Monet. The journey takes about one hour each way. We will explore the garden and the house interior including the very special kitchen. Lunch will either be in Paris or in Monet's village, depending on the timing of the tour. This is the most 'visited' garden in the world and the flow of numbers is strictly controlled to ensure we all have a fantastic experience. We will arrive back in Paris, thank goodness, in time for an aperitif. (BL)
<b>DAY 3</b>	<b>Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b> We will have breakfast in the hotel and be transferred to Gare D'Austerlitz. Our train departs around 1000 and our arrival into Gourdon is about 1545. We should take some food and water on the train, as the mobile food trolley that comes through is not very reliable. Fortunately there are excellent sandwich and coffee shops at the railway station. On arrival in Gourdon we will be taken to our hotel where we will meet Trish and Dany. In the early evening we will have a group get together over an aperitif for chat about the coming weeks. (B)
<b>DAY 4</b>	<b>Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b> 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. Mary will meet you at the hotel at 9am and take you on a relaxed town tour then 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 the region, dating back 25,000 years. After the caves we will have the first of our leisurely picnic lunches, meeting up with Trish and Dany by the beautiful plan d'eau (lake). After lunch we will lurch slowly back to Gourdon where the rest of the day is free for you to relax or to continue exploring the town. (B,L)
<b>DAY 5</b>	<b>Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>



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After breakfast a bus will arrive at the hotel and take us to Sarlat, the most celebrated town 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 then find a cafe or restaurant for lunch. Mary, Trish and Dany will be there to share their knowledge of this wonderful place. In the evening there will be a slap up dinner at the Hotel Bouriane. Mary will join the group and probably stay overnight!. Wine and drinks at own expense.(B,D)

### **DAY 6 Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

This morning after breakfast we will experience another heady drive into the Dordogne, following the river with its quaint villages overshadowed by fortified castles. We visit the Chateau Marqueyssac, famous for sculptured gardens, set high on a promontory with breath-taking views of the surrounding countryside. We will have lunch on the terrace of the chateau overlooking the view and in the afternoon visit local villages on the way to the fortified hilltop town of Domme. We then drive to the fortified hilltop town of Domme, which is famous for its views and narrow backstreets. Take your time to explore this very beautiful town that has most of its medieval wall intact. We return to Gourdon in the afternoon and the remainder of the day is free. (B,L)

### **DAY 7 Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

From Gourdon you will be driven through some beautiful countryside to Belves, which is the starting point of our farm tour. We will visit a variety of local farms and have lunch at a Ferme Auberge where the meal is served in the farmer's dining room. 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 to recover. (B, L)

### **DAY 8 Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

Today you will visit the bastide (fortified) town of Monpazier and the ancient Chateau de Biron. Monpazier 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 will allow time for exploring. The town is built on a grid pattern with all the wider streets returning to the town square that is in the centre. Trish and Dany will welcome us to their home, and prepare the most wonderful lunch. Afterwards, if capable, we will set off to Chateau Biron, which stands on a hillside and 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 9 Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

After breakfast the coach will take us to visit the spectacular gardens of Erignac surrounding a 17th century manor house. Set in 200 hectares, the gardens have been lovingly restored to their 18<sup>th</sup> century splendour. Sunday lunch is a steadfast French tradition in regional France, and we will be joining Dany and Trish for lunch at the famous Pont de L'Ouyse, enjoying the finest of regional cuisine and wines. After lunch, if we can still walk, we will toddle off to Chateau de Fenelon, one of the most dramatic castles in the Dordogne. The



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evening is for relaxing. (B,L)

### **DAY 10 Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2009**

This morning we will check out of our Gourdon hotel and travel to the rural township of Prayssac where we will be guided through the woods (near the Prayssac) to see the ancient dolmens, which are megalithic tombs dating back to 3000 BC. It's a fascinating insight into the early human history of the region. The bus will then take us to a spot where we can again walk through woodland to discover a partially ruined gothic watchtower known as Pestilac, which, again, has a compelling history. We will then be dropped at the hilltop village of Belaye, with dramatic views to the valley below, where we will meet Trish and Dany for a delicious picnic lunch. The afternoon will be free and in the evening a bus will take us to the village of Les Arques, home of the contemporary Russian sculptor, Zadkine. Les Arques has a famous restaurant - La Recreation - described 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. You will be spending the next 3 nights in Puy L'Eveque (B, L, D)

### **DAY 11 Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009**

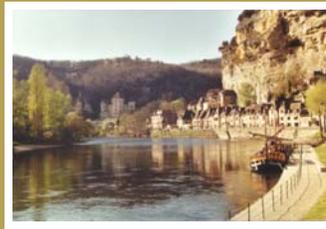
This morning you will be taken from Puy L'Eveque to Goujounac, a very pretty rural village where most of the buildings have been carefully restored. Mary will meet you and walk you from Goujounac through woodlands and past a small chateau to Mary's village, Frayssinet-le-Gelat. The village is famous for having been the site of a massacre during World War 2 and the memorial dominates the small town square. After a walking tour of the village Mary will take you to her cottage for an aperitif prior to lunch in the nearby village of Pomarede – the famous restaurant of Jeanne Murat and her daughter Sylvie. This is a five-course lunch over several hours and you will be driven back to your hotel to relax for the rest of the day. (B,L)

### **DAY 12 Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009**

Today is one of the tour highlights and we will travel by bus to an area known as the causee. We are heading 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 shop, where we can separate and find a place for lunch. In the afternoon we return to our hotel in Puy L'Eveque where we will enjoy dinner together. (B,D)

### **DAY 13 Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

This morning we will check out of our hotel in Puy L'Eveque and have a leisurely day meandering through villages and small towns along our way to Cahors. We will stop at Moissac and visit the beautiful church and cloisters and find a local restaurant for a simple lunch. Once in Cahors we will settle into our stylish hotel – The Terminus – and you will have the afternoon free to explore the medieval heart of the town, which was once the most important



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	economic and cultural centers in France. There are dozens of restaurants and cafes to choose from for your evening meal. (BL)
<b>DAY 14</b>	<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>
	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 just over an hour 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 picturesque village is an artist's colony with quaint medieval houses built against the side of the cliff overlooking the river. 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. The bus will drive us back to Bouzies for a picnic lunch with Dany and Trish beside the river. The afternoon is free and in the evening we will meet for a group dinner at La Ballandre, one of the best restaurants in the region. The meal is served in the traditional dining room of the Terminus Hotel. This will be an everlasting memory of your time in the Lot. Wine and drinks are not included. (B, L, D)
<b>DAY 15</b>	<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>
	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 cloisters and give a small talk on Cahors which traces its roots back to Celtic times. We will picnic under the famous Pont Vallentre and the rest of the afternoon is free to explore the township. In the evening you can wander and choose a restaurant for your evening meal. (B, L,)
<b>DAY 16</b>	<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>
	On your last day in The Lot the morning is yours to explore Cahors or to pack in readiness for tomorrow's departure to Toulouse. Late morning the bus will pick us up and take us to Conques where we will have our traditional farewell Sunday lunch at the delightful rural Auberge. In the afternoon you may like to visit the Musee de Resistance which is dedicated to the underground resistance fighters of WW2. It's a short walking distance from the hotel, and entry is free. (B, L)
<b>DAY 17</b>	<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>
	Transfer to Toulouse where trip concludes. Your World Expeditions consultant will be able to organise for your extension in France or for you to return to Paris and fly home. The possibilities are endless (B)

### inclusions

- 16 breakfasts, 11 lunches (a mix of picnic & restaurant), 4 gourmet dinners (does not include wine or 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.
- 16 nights accommodation in 3-4.5 star hotels on a twinshare basis
- All transfers and coach touring as listed in the itinerary



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- Train fare from Paris to Gourdon – 2<sup>nd</sup> 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: \$8120.00 AUD**

Note: Land only arrangements begin on Day 1 when you check into the hotel in Paris and end on Day 17 in Toulouse.

**single supplement: \$1990.00AUD**

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: \$9980.00 AUD**

This cost is based on a minimum of 14 paying passengers in twin share accommodation. If we do not reach the minimum number required to operate the tour at this price then the tour price will be \$10,390AUD based on a minimum of 10-12 full paying passengers in twin share accommodation.

The above price includes the land only arrangements as described above plus return economy flights from Sydney with Thai International Airways; one way 2<sup>nd</sup> class train fare Toulouse to Paris and one(1) night in Paris in twin share accommodation on 28/9/09. Note: Airport taxes and all other transfers not included – allow approx. \$690.00

The above price is contingent on fares being available in the booking class (Thai Airways V/Q Class) 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) details and instruction on getting to your Paris hotel

### pre & post tour accommodation

Additional accommodation in Paris (not outlined in the itinerary) and post tour accommodation in Toulouse is not included in the trip package. If you would like



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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](http://www.octopustravel.com.au)

[www.expedia.com.au](http://www.expedia.com.au)

### fast facts

<b>VISAS</b>	Visas not required for citizens of Australia, Britain, Canada, USA and New Zealand. For all other nationalities please contact the relevant embassy
<b>COUNTRIES VISITED:</b>	France
<b>SPECIALSIT GEAR REQUIRED</b>	None
<b>CLIMATE</b>	The trip runs in September 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.

### 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



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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.

***Thank you very much and we look forward to welcoming you in France!***