



An indulgent week in the

Dordogne: 16 – 22 May, 2020

France boasts so many magnificent gardens and the lush green Dordogne region in Springtime is a garden lover's paradise!

This peaceful pocket is a patchwork of verdant meadows and dark forests, quaint villages and gorgeous gardens. At its heart is Monpazier – our home base for the week. This 13th century *bastide* (fortified village) is considered the best preserved and most beautiful of all the bastides in the country. It's also a classified *Plus Beau Village de France*.

Monpazier's charm is in its time-worn honeyed stone houses, imposing arched village gates, its medieval oak-beamed corn-market in the central square, and its enticing artisan studios, galleries & workshops.

Enjoying the comforts of a classic French country house, Villa Ste Therese, immerse yourself in the heartland of authentic Perigourdine cuisine and soak up the stunning chateaux, picture-perfect villages, rich history and exquisite gardens of the wonderful Southwest.



Are you ready for a treat?

Classic French gardens are founded on the principles of order, symmetry and rich layers of green...in this tour of the Dordogne you get to see some of the finest examples. But this is more than just a garden wander.....

Each day will bring a vivid new discovery as we explore majestic medieval chateaux inside and out, picturesque *village fleuries* and breathtaking river valley vistas...sampling an abundance of delicious cuisine and local wines along the way.

DAY 1: SATURDAY –D

A warm welcome awaits you upon your arrival at Villa Ste Therese in the afternoon. If you're arriving via train or plane you will be met at Bergerac airport or train station by your host and driven to Villa Ste Therese. Over Welcome Drinks let's break the ice with other guests, and then enjoy dinner at home with your hosts.



DAY 2: SUNDAY –B, L, S

Each morning will begin with a traditional French breakfast. We're in luck with our timing, as today Monpazier hosts its annual *Foire aux Fleurs* - the ideal way to explore our beautiful village. Then we head to the 11thC Abbaye de Cadouin - a UNESCO world heritage site, famed for its perfectly formed cloistered garden. Order, symmetry and structure combine to create a tranquil setting ... ideal for medieval Cistercian monks to reflect and pray. After a traditional lunch in this pretty *village fleurie*, we spend the afternoon exploring the majestic Chateau des Milandes. Founded in 1489, this beautifully preserved Chateau has a wonderful story to tell, inside and out. Then it's home to the Villa to relax over a light supper.



DAY 3: MONDAY –B, L, D

Two very different gardens await us today. First, it's off to a Dordogne 'newcomer' in Cadiot - boasting ten striking garden rooms, featuring sculptures, hedges, arbours and over 100 varieties of peonies. This garden offers an eclectic mix of styles and plantings...perfect for a peaceful wander. We move from reflective to romantic, as we venture on to the world-famous 18thC Gardens of Eyrignac. After a light lunch in their restaurant, we explore its breath-taking formal avenues and vistas...truly a dream for garden lovers and photographers alike! Then enjoy an *aperitif* on our terrace at sunset, as dinner is served at home in the Villa tonight.

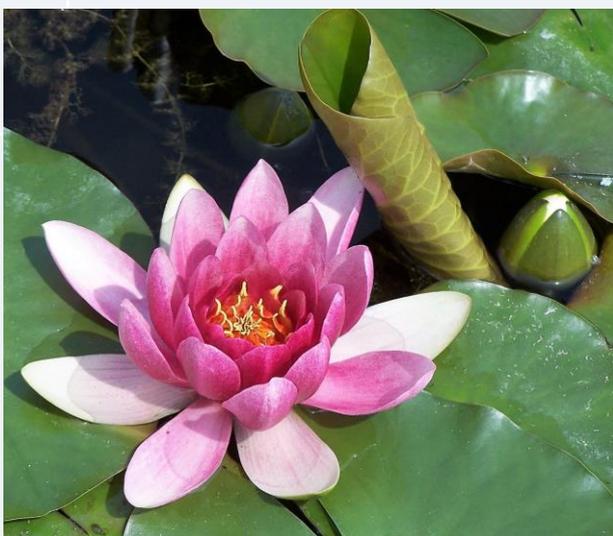


DAY 4: TUESDAY – *B, L, S*

Today, we head off for a day by the tranquil Dordogne River. Our first stop is the world-renowned Hanging Gardens of Marqueyssac, with its stunning century-old topiaried forms, offering spectacular views of the Dordogne from its high clifftop perch over the river. After a wander through these majestic gardens, we'll dine at a stylish Michelin-recommended restaurant overlooking the Dordogne in the ancient *Plus Beau Village*, La Roque Gageac. After lunch we enjoy a peaceful gabarre cruise on the Dordogne, taking in striking views of fairytale chateaux from the river. Then it's back to base for an easy supper.

**DAY 5: WEDNESDAY – *B, L, S***

After breakfast today we drive south, over the border and deep into the Lot valley. Here we find something really special: the water gardens where Claude Monet bought his nymphaeas each year to create his world-famous garden in Giverny. And it's those water lilies you can see to this day in his iconic paintings! Lunchtime is a visit to a local working farm near Monpazier - a treat of authentic Perigourdine recipes. Here it's all about the rustic potager garden - and what it produces for our lunch! Everything we eat will be grown, picked and preserved on this smallholding. After that, it's a slow wander home, through a couple of pretty nearby villages, to a relaxed, light supper.

**DAY 6: THURSDAY – *B, L, D***

No visit to France is complete without a trip to a village market... So after breakfast today, we shop! Let's head into Monpazier for the fun and bustle of the weekly market. Then it's on to a wonderful *al fresco* picnic lunch at the base of stunning Chateau de Biron, before taking in the beautiful sweeping vistas from inside its terraces and towers.

We return to Villa Ste Therese to relax and enjoy one last *apero* on the terrace ahead of our final evening together. Tonight we stroll into a lovely local restaurant in Monpazier to share a wonderful three course farewell dinner.

**DAY 7: FRIDAY – *B***

After breakfast, it's time to say farewell. Transfers are organised to Bergerac airport or train station if you need it, and then you are on your way, with many wonderful memories of a week well-spent in this little corner of French garden heaven!



PRICE & TERMS

Land content only - \$3,750.00AUD:

Note: Land only arrangements begin on Day 1 when you arrive at Villa Ste Therese on Day 1, up until your departure from the Villa on Day 7.

Single supplement - \$900.00AUD:

The tour price is based on two people sharing a twin or double room. If you are travelling as a single guest, we will do our best to twin-share you with someone of the same gender. If you prefer to occupy a room alone, please specify on your booking form. In that case, or if we are unable to match you up with another traveller, we are obliged to charge a 'single supplement'.

Deposits: The **First Deposit** of **\$1,000AUD** is non-refundable, payable within seven (7) days of booking application. A Tour Booking Form will be provided. On receipt of your completed and signed booking form and deposit (and once minimum group numbers have been reached), you will receive confirmation of your place on Tour. A **Second Instalment Payment** of **\$1,400AUD** is then requested by 1 December, 2019.

Balance: Final balance of **\$1,350AUD** is due in full (plus any Single Supplement if specified) by 20 March, 2020 (eight weeks prior to arrival date). Any bookings made after this date must be paid in full upon booking.

Tour Price Inclusions

- Transfers from/to Bergerac Airport or Train Station on Day 1 and Day 7
- Six nights accommodation in a twin/double room at Villa Ste Therese, Monpazier (unless Single specified)
- Six breakfasts, five lunches, three dinners, three suppers, as itemised in itinerary. We have a leisurely lunch or dinner planned each day, leaving the other mealtime free for you to choose your own dining options at your discretion. Light suppers are served at home each evening after our daily adventures.
- Wines will be selected & provided by your Hosts to complement all included lunches and dinners
- Aperitifs at the Villa - a selection of local wines, beers, soft drinks & mineral water
- All sightseeing activities, transfers & excursions including any entrance fees as itemised in the itinerary
- Complimentary tour gift for each guest
- Fully escorted by Tour Hosts

Tour Price Exclusions

- Airfares, airport taxes and charges
- Train fares, taxes & charges to reach Bergerac or the Villa
- Any tours, transfers, activities, meals, drinks, entrance fees etc not specified in the itinerary
- Travel Insurance and Visas
- Vaccinations and other health requirements as required
- Tipping, gratuities & portage
- Excess baggage
- Any items of a personal nature

Villa Ste Therese is a sprawling *maison de campagne* or gentleman's country house, built in the early 19th century. Authentically renovated in the local Perigourdine style, the Villa offers spacious and tastefully decorated bedrooms, each with its own ensuite bathroom, tranquil gardens, with large pool terrace, and stunning views of ancient Monpazier and the surrounding valleys.

Your Host Rosemary Vine is a certifiable, incurable Francophile – and proud of it! She has a background in hospitality and public relations, and took her French obsession to its natural conclusion when she bought Villa Ste Therese in Monpazier, with a dream to create the perfect welcoming home-base for guests to explore this magical part of the world.



