

THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL COMPANY

THE WALKING PARTY

ITINERARY FOR THE FIVE DAY DORDOGNE QUERCY

Price: £1020 Single Supplement: £230

Dates: 23rd – 27th October

Distance: 22 miles

Walking: moderately easy



“In May this countryside is full of earthly delights of new-mown scents and nightingale valleys, filled with the purring of turtledoves and fields so full of wild orchids that you can hardly walk without treading on them.” Brian Jackman, Daily Telegraph

James and Diana Tamlyn moved to their 18th century farmhouse in France 15 years ago, enthused by the romance and beauty of the area. James’ love of the flora and fauna, their combined fascination for the food, wine and local traditions and personal contacts make the week a special experience that you could not enjoy as an individual traveller.

The Dordogne is so well known throughout the world for its spectacular caves and scenery and gastronomy. We will be doing justice to this fame. You will visit Lascaux II and the gardens of Marqueyssac and have one of the best chefs of the region at Chateau des Baudry to cook for you. The area of south west France, known as the ‘Quercy’, is less famous but all the more beautiful with its calm limestone pastures and lofty Lombardy poplar valleys. It was given by Eleanor of Aquitaine to Henri d’Anjou in 1152, two years before he became Henry II of England, and its beauty and timelessness has changed little since. Not only that but it is still known today as being the gastronomic heart of France.

Highlights: Albi cathedral, Moissac Abbey, Orchids galore, Poppies, Castle of Bonaguil, Chateau Tiregand and Chateau Richard vineyards. Stunning walking.

Day 1 ARRIVAL After meeting up with James and the rest of the group at Toulouse airport you will be driven to the prettily restored sixteenth century manor house with an excellent chef; Bernard Philippe. This is French cuisine refined and beautifully presented. A very good wine list of wines from the South West as would be expected.. All bedrooms have bathrooms en suite and you will spend your first two nights here. There is a swimming pool. *Walk: 7 miles*

Day 2 WALK AND CASTLE A drive in the morning to Château Chambert. We set off by foot, with the donkeys and full kit and Daniel, for stunning views over the valleys of Jurassic limestone. We will pass through vineyards and tiny villages before arriving for a leisurely picnic with Diana beneath the shade of the orchard trees of Mademoiselle Goul. After lunch we visit the mighty honey- coloured castle of Bonaguil. This was a castle much admired by T. E. Lawrence. Much of it was built in the sixteenth century by Baron Berenger de Roquefeuil. We will join the vehicles to return to Le Vert. Tea and dinner at Le Vert. *Walk: 6 miles*

Day 3 LAVENDER AND ORCHIDS After breakfast at Le Vert we will drive back to St Matré and start our walk towards Chateau Figeac, a privately owned chateau where we will have a picnic again with Diana. .. and will walk through pastures littered with stands of orchids and wild flowers before visiting a local Lavender Distillery. Lavender Distilleries are a dying breed here in the Quercy and Maryse Theyvenet will explain to us how they obtain their oil. We will then carry on to Chateau Figeac for lunch. This is a charming small private chateau owned by one of the oldest families of the Quercy. After lunch we drive to Chateau des Baudry lying in the vineyards near Bergerac. stone chateau of Chateau des Baudry. This is in the heart of the Dordogne country and the home of one of my favourite cooks in the region. The Chateau has excellent cuisine and delightful hosts, Hélène and Francois. The bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms are large and wonderfully comfortable and all have fireplaces that can be lit. Your last two nights are spent here. There is a swimming pool. Dinner Chateau des Baudry. *Walk: 7 miles*



Day 4 PRE-HISTORIC CAVES AND TOPIARY GARDENS We set off after an early breakfast by car to get to the beautiful and highly important caves of Lascaux. These are probably the most important pre-historic caves in Europe and we will have a guided tour of Lascaux II before driving to Sarlat for lunch. In the afternoon we will visit the gardens of Marqueyssac. These beautiful gardens rest along a ridge and date back to the seventeenth century. As well as its astounding position it contains some of the most beautiful topiary. From here you see the most fabulous Dordogne scenery of towering castles and small river ports. After your walk around the gardens we return by car to Chateau des Baudry for our last night with Hélène and François. *Walk : 2 miles*

Day 5 ABBEY You leave in the morning for Toulouse airport. You will be driven to Moissac situated on the banks of the river Tarn where you will lunch in front of the fantastic Romanesque abbey. After lunch a talk about the tympanum admired so much by Kenneth Clark in his series ground-breaking 'Civilisation' where he assimilates the school of Romanesque sculptors to dolphins for their seemingly irrepressible energy. You will then continue by car for Toulouse airport.

NOTE: The itinerary is subject to change according to local conditions. All mileages shown are approximate.

**For further information and reservations please contact
Jane Robinson on 020 7386 4695**