



# Exploring Prehistoric Caves

and other delights in South West France with Schiele Explorers!



## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Private tours to the major pre-historic cave sites of Padirac, Rouffignac, Pech Merle, and Lascaux
- Boat ride on the Dordogne, and canoe ride through the Aveyron Gorge
- Private winetasting of varieties of Bergerac and Malbec wines
- Deluxe accommodations in four-star hotels, and fine dining
- Private air-conditioned motorcoach transportation
- Free time for extra sight-seeing, shopping or relaxing

Cave paintings at Lascaux



**This fall, embark on an unforgettable journey to experience the charming villages, geologic splendor, and rich archeological history of South West France.** Join Dr. Ann Tippitt

to explore the pastoral landscapes of the Dordogne and the Lot—a lost corner of France that time seems to have passed by. Beneath these dramatic landscapes dotted with picturesque chateaus, vineyards, forests and rivers, lies a more enduring footprint—that of Cro-Magnon who lived 40,000 years ago and whose cave dwellings litter the region. From our base in Sarlat-la-Canéda, we'll visit some of the most significant of these subterranean marvels.

Our journey south to Montaubon offers a more intimate view of this very rural and deeply rooted slice of France, home to plentiful culinary delights. Savor famous black truffles, lamb and delicate little discs of goat cheese called cabécou—all complemented with the region's delectable wines.

Join us!

September 19-28, 2019

Château de Beynac





# Daily Itinerary

View of Sarlat

Thursday, September 19

Flights from the US with arrival the following day.

Friday, September 20 **Bienvenue!**

Group flight arrives in Toulouse and transfer to Sarlat, our home for the next five nights and a town of serene beauty that you will long remember. After check-in, we enjoy a **welcome drink** at the 4-star Hotel Plaza Madeleine, followed by a **welcome dinner** in the heart of the historic city center.

Saturday, September 21

**Subterranean Wonders**

**Breakfast daily** at both hotels. The Dordogne and the Lot regions of France have hundreds of caves and this morning, we set out to tour one of the most famous—the Padirac Chasm. We'll travel by boat along a subterranean river, passing through underground caverns of stunning rock formations that will take your breath away! Then it's on to Rocamadour, a small cliff top village. After **lunch**, we'll tour Chapelle Notre-Dame, the site of the much-venerated Black Madonna. Late afternoon return to Sarlat and evening free.



left: Abbey of Cadouin

right: Black Madonna, Rocamadour

Sunday, September 22

**The Cave of the Hundred Mammoths**

Our destination this morning is the Grotte de Rouffignac—home to over 250 line drawings dating to the Upper Paleolithic period, the majority of them depicting mammoths. We'll explore the 8-kilometer long cave by electric train before heading to **lunch** in Les Eyzies, a pretty little village in the Dordogne's Vézère valley. Our return to Sarlat is via the 12th century Abbey of Cadouin, on the pilgrimage trail to Santiago de Compostella and a masterpiece of Romanesque religious architecture. Your evening is free.



## WHAT TO EXPECT

- Tours of four world-renowned prehistoric caves, with expert guides
- Deluxe 4-star accommodations
- 8 breakfasts, 5 lunches and 3 dinners, plus a welcome reception
- Private wine tastings
- Private boat ride on the Dordogne and canoeing through the Aveyron Gorge
- Private motorcoach transportation
- Plenty of free time!

Monday,

September 23

**Stone Sentinel of the Dordogne**

Today's excursion begins at the dramatic Château de Beynac, high on a rocky promontory. Our tour of the castle grounds offers magnificent views of the river and countryside, a deep dive across five centuries of French history. We'll enjoy **lunch** near the Château before our short drive to Rogue Gageac. Yellow houses with their traditional Périgord roofs line the narrow streets of this delightful village, where we'll enjoy a private boat ride on the river. Our late afternoon return to Sarlat and evening free.



Dordogne village

Tuesday, September 24

**Lascaux: The Sistine Chapel of Cave Paintings**

We head north this morning to the famed caves at Lascaux IV, where an immersive educational experience of the pre-historic paintings awaits us. The center features state-of-the-art experiential storytelling technology paired with a facsimile of the 20,000 year-old paintings. Your afternoon is free with lunch on your own before we gather together for **dinner** at one of Sarlat's fine restaurants.

Wednesday, September 25

## The Dappled Horses of Pech Merle

This morning we travel south, entering the northern tip of the Lot. Our first stop is the Pech Merle Cave, one of the most spectacular original cave art sites still open to the public. Its geology is as fascinating as the pre-historic paintings of spotted horses and bison. **Lunch** and a **winetasting** await us at the Malbec-producing vineyard Château du Cèdre near Cahors, capital of the ancient province of the Quercy. After our arrival and check in at the 4-star Abbaye des Capucins Hotel in Montaubon, your evening is free.

Thursday, September 26

## Nature in the Tarn-et-Garonne

This morning we set out on a walking tour of Montaubon, the capital city of the Tarn-et-Garonne *département*, with its graceful arcaded city square and houses made of rosy-pink brick. After a short **lunch**, we head to the Gorges d'Aveyron, a nature lover's paradise where we'll enjoy a canoe ride through a meandering gorge under towering limestone cliffs. Our late afternoon return to Montauban leaves your evening free for dinner on your own.



top: Caves of Pech Merle  
below: Canoe at Saint Antoine Noble Val

Friday, September 27

## Montaubon

Your day is free today to explore more of Montaubon's charm: perhaps a visit to the Natural History Museum, or the Ingres Museum, housing the works of the great French Neoclassical painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, born in Montauban. This evening we gather together for our gala **Farewell Dinner**, complete with a tasting of local wines.

Saturday, September 28

## Adieu La France!

Our tour ends after breakfast and hotel check-out and coach to Toulouse Airport for return flights home.



Ann is no stranger to adventure and enjoys sharing her love of travel through special trips hosted by The Schiele. In March 2017, she led a group of 47 to Norway and is excited now to explore the geologic and pre-history of the Dordogne in beautiful South West France. Ann has been with The Schiele Museum for more than 30 years, serving as Executive Director since 2005.

YOUR HOST, DR. ANN TIPPITT

*Itinerary is subject to change.*  
*Meals in **bold** are included in the price of the tour.*



## Tour Registration

**Tour Cost: \$4,240 per person, double occupancy, ground only.**  
Tour limited to 25 participants, or as hotel space allows.  
Schiele Society members are entitled to a \$250 discount.

**Single supplement \$490. Optional group flight: \$1,165, economy on Lufthansa.**

**Deposit: \$1,000 per person first come, first served.**  
Tax-deductible contribution to The Schiele included.

**Balance Deadline: Friday, July 19, 2019.** After that date, call for availability.

**Contact:** Elysabeth Utick of The Schiele, 704.836.0020 or [elysabethu@cityofgastonia.com](mailto:elysabethu@cityofgastonia.com) to reserve your place on the tour with a credit card deposit, or send a check made to The Schiele Museum for the deposit amount to: France Excursion, The Schiele Museum, 1500 E. Garrison Blvd., Gastonia, NC 28054. Registration materials will be made available online at [www.schielemuseum.org](http://www.schielemuseum.org).

**Questions?** Elysabeth Utick of The Schiele Museum or The Grand Tour at 800-727-2995 / [info@thegrandtour.com](mailto:info@thegrandtour.com).

The France Tour is organized exclusively for The Schiele Museum by

Paul Signac, Montaubon

