

## *Bordeaux Wine Region*

*12 Days / 11 Nights*

*12 unforgettable days in one of the most beautiful and famous regions of France!  
Medieval citadels, historical places, wine tasting, Barcelona – flamenco show!*



### *Day 1: \_\_\_\_\_ – Barcelona*

Arrival in Barcelona, transfer to a hotel in Barcelona, check-in and accommodation. After checking-in the rooms, free time in Barcelona or a walk in the Gothic Quarter, which is very picturesque and animated until late at night. Dinner can be served in one of the restaurants in Barri Gothic, or at the hotel

**Accommodation in Barcelona at 4\*\*\*\* hotel**

### *Day 2: Barcelona, Ole!*

Breakfast. City tour in Barcelona. You will see: **Sagrada Familia**, Gaudi's masterpiece, **New Camp Stadium**, **The Olympic Harbour**, **Gaudi Houses**, **The Spanish Square**, **Montjuic**, **Catalunya Square**. Free time in Barcelona for shopping or an **optional** visit to the "**Picasso**" **Museum**. In the evening, optional show of **flamenco**. In the southern part of the street "**La Rambla**", very close to the harbour, there can be heard the guitars and the rhythmic sound of the castanets. It is the usual place for the flamenco show, a tradition that has survived in this bar since 1968. It is said that it is the best flamenco show in the city. Each night there are 3 shows: 19:00, 20:30 and 22:00. You need booking.

Approximate prices: dinner and show 60 € / 75 \$;

a drink and show 35 € / 45 \$.

**Accommodation in Barcelona 4\*\*\*\* hotel**

### *Day 3: Barcelona – Perpignan – Carcassonne – Saint Pierre sur Dropt*

Breakfast. Departure for France, route Perpignan – Carcassonne – Toulouse – Duras. On the way to accommodation, short stop in the medieval cities of **Perpignan** and **Carcassonne**. An old site, dating back to the Romans, Perpignan is situated in the Languedoc-Roussillon region, and it was declared The Capital of Catalonian Culture in 2008. You will visit **Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Perpignan**, Roman-Catholic cathedral, national monument of France and **The Palace of Kings of Majorca**. We continue our journey to **Carcassonne** where we visit **the medieval citadel** and **the Marengo Bridge** named after the famous battle of Napoleon against the Austrians, in 1800. Lunch is served in Perpignan. Welcome to France! You will be greeted with a glass of wine and a local cheese tasting.

## Accommodation in Saint Pierre sur Dropt – "Aux Bardeche"

### *Day 4: Saint Pierre sur Dropt – Rocamadour*

Breakfast. Trip in the **Dordogne Valley** at the medieval citadel **Rocamadour** in the Midi-Pyrénées region. Rocamadour has always attracted visitors through its spectacular location, in a canyon of 400 meters altitude above an arm of the Dordogne river, but especially for its historical monuments and for **The Sanctuary of the Black Madonna**. Pilgrims from all over the world come here. Among them there have been kings, bishops, nobles. The city from the foothill of the monastic complex, traditionally dependent of pilgrims, now of tourists, lays on the lowest valley of the river, and it gave its name to a speciality of goat cheese that was awarded in 1996. According to the legend that explains how the city was formed, the name comes from Saint Amadour. You will visit **the monastic complex** and **the church**, where it is exposed the statue of Black Madonna, **the medieval citadel** and **the castle's park**. Free time in the citadel for a stroll between old houses, silent witnesses of so many pilgrimages, and for souvenirs. Lunch is served in Rocamadour.

On the way back you will visit the **Beynac Castle** built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by the barons of Beynac-Périgord. The Beynac Castle was the location for many movies, among which we mention: "The Visitors" in 1993, "D'Artagnan's Daughter", in 1994, "Ever After", in 1998 and "Joan of Arc" in 1999. The Beynac village, below the castle, has also served as location for movies. A town in the Dordogne department, Beynac-et-Cazenac is considered to be one of the most beautiful regions of France.

## Accommodation in Saint Pierre sur Dropt – "Aux Bardeche"

### *Day 5: Saint Pierre Sur Dropt – Duras – Bordeaux*

Breakfast. In the morning you will visit **The Duras Castle**, the 12<sup>th</sup> century, home of a branch of the Grimaldi family, princes of Monaco today, then a short coffee break in Duras. Departure for **Bordeaux**. Here you will visit The Catholic Cathedral **Saint-André de Bordeaux**, the chair of the Archbishop of Bordeaux-Bazas, national monument of France, that was established by Pope Urban the II<sup>nd</sup> in 1096. The present cathedral dates back to the 14–15<sup>th</sup> century, only the **Royal Gate** is from the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In Bordeaux you will also visit **The Stock Market**, **the Grand Théâtre**, **the Sainte-Croix Abbey**, built in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and destroyed by the Saracens, rebuilt under Carolingians, destroyed again by the Nomads in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, rebuilt in the following centuries for many times, the abbey preserves today the Romanesque style. Free time in Bordeaux.

**Suggestions:** The **Saint-Seurin** Basilica, the oldest church in Bordeaux, the 6<sup>th</sup> century, it contains crypts of the **Merovingian** and **Palais Gallien** families, and a walk on the main street "Rue Sainte-Catherine", the main commercial, pedestrian street of the city, full of restaurants, bars, shops and animation.

## Accommodation in Saint Pierre sur Dropt – "Aux Bardeche"

### *Day 6: Bazas – Saint Jean de Luz – Socoa – The Atlantic Ocean*

Breakfast. Departure for **St-Jean de Luz** and **Socoa** with a short stop in **Bazas**. The first stop will be in Bazas. Here you will visit **The Gothic Cathedral**, historical monument from the Unesco World Heritage. Ludovic IV has stopped in Bazas, at his arrival from Saint-Jean de Luz where he married Marie-Thérèse d'Autriche. Departure for St-Jean de Luz. Situated in **The**

**Gascogne Harbour, at the Atlantic Ocean**, between France and Spain, St-Jean de Luz is a famous Spa of **Côte Basque**. The city has known glory thanks to the Pyrenees Treaty signed by Mazarin a few months before the marriage of king Ludovic IV with Marie-Thérèse d'Autriche, the infanta of Spain, in 1600. The gate through which the royal couple came out was walled three years later after the marriage and today we can admire the inscriptions engraved on the wall. You will visit the church where the royal couple was joined into marriage, the temporary residence of king Ludovic IV, today's **L'hôtel de ville**, which is the City Hall. Free time for a stroll on the seafront, in town and to have a meal in St.-Jean de Luz.

**Optional, cruise in Biscaya Harbour–Cote d'Argent ~10 €.** Socoa is a small burg situated south of St-Jean de Luz, well-known for the **Socoa Fort** and for the small restaurants in the harbour. The Socoa Fort was built at the order of Henri IV and re-framed by Vauban, in order to protect St-Jean de Luz of the Spanish invasions. (Vauban was Marshal of France and the most important military engineer of his time. He was famous for his knowledge of fortification designs and for their destruction as well.)

#### **Accommodation in Saint Pierre sur Dropt – "Aux Bardeche"**

#### ***Day 7: St. Pierre sur Dropt – St. Emillion – Castillon la Bataille – Bergerac***

Breakfast. Departure for the medieval city of **St. Emillion**, in the **UNESCO Heritage** from 1999, with traces from prehistoric times, fascinating churches and ruins in Romanesque/Provencal style, that are lying along the narrow, steep streets. Here, the Romans have planted vineyards in the II<sup>nd</sup> century AD, in the location that was to become St. Emillion. In the IV<sup>th</sup> century the Latin poet **Decimus Magnus Ausonius** (ca.310 – 395) born in Burdigala (Bordeaux), was praising the fruits and the rich wine of the region. The city got its name from a monk, Emilion, a travelling confessor who got established in a isolated place/ hermitage dug in stone, in the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. The monks that followed him began the production and commerce of wine in the area. A visit with a local guide in **the underground-monolithic church**. Free time in St Emillion for coffee, wine tasting, shopping, but also to try the sweet favourite of "CANEL" region or the famous **foix gras–goose paté**. The city, like the entire region, is well-known for its wines and its goose paté or **foix gras**. Departure for **Bergerac** with a stop in **Castillon la Bataille** for lunch. Castillon was the place of the last battle of the 100 years war, "The Battle of Castillon". In memory of the battle, in 1953 the city changed its name from **Castillon-sur Dordogne** in **Castillon-la-Bataille**. Departure for Bergerac where you will visit the central square **Pélissière** and the statue of **Cyrano de Bergerac**, the symbol of the city. Free time for a walk in the medieval city. Dinner in Bergerac.

#### **Accommodation in Saint Pierre sur Dropt – "Aux Bardeche"**

#### ***Day 8: St. Pierre sur Dropt – Eymet – Monbazillac***

Breakfast. In the morning, departure for Eymet and Monbazillac. Visit in the picturesque, **medieval city Eymet**. Lunch can be served in Eymet, at an Italian restaurant, at a convenient price, situated right in the central square. The medieval city Eymet, situated south of Bergerac, is netled in a bight of the river Dropt, on a site that has been inhabited from prehistoric times. It used to be a walled city, founded by Alphonse de Poitiers, brother of Ludovic the Saint, in 1270, like many other walled cities in France, part of the defensive strategy against the English. Visited by tourists of all nationalities, over 12.000 a year, the picturesque location has the reputation of being the second house for the English, many English families have houses in the city and around it. As a

tourist, it is pure luck to hear English all over the city, though it seems strange in this beautiful part of France. Like the Latin poet Sidoine Appolinaire said 1500 years ago, 'The ones who live here, have a picture of the paradise'.

Departure for Monbazillac. Visit of the **Monbazillac Castle**, built in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, situated on top of a hill from where you can admire the entire Valley of Bergerac. The castle is a harmonious combination of military feudal architecture and the elegant Renaissance style. During the visit you will also see The Vine and Wine Museum, The Périgord Furniture Museum, The Museum of Protestantism and "the 1001 Castles from Périgord". With the entrance ticket for the museum you can visit a wine cellar that belongs to the Monbazillac domain, famous for its white and sweet wines. **Wine tasting at the cellar**. Here we will also find a wide variety of foix gras. The sweet wine of Monbazillac and foix gras are a perfect combination. If time allows it, we will go to another cellar for more wine tasting !!!

**Accommodation in Saint Pierre sur Dropt - "Aux Bardeche"**

### ***Day 9: St. Pierre sur Dropt – Toulouse – Albi and... Lautrec***

Breakfast. Today Toulouse and Albi. In the morning, departure for **Toulouse**, the fifth city of France in terms of population, also dubbed as „the rose city” or „the pink city”, thanks to the local, traditional architecture it has and the building materials that were used, brick and terracotta. These building materials were introduced by the Romans in the first century BC. In Toulouse you will also see: **Pont Saint-Pierre**, **Le Pont-Neuf**, the Roman relics from **Saint-Jacques Square**, near **Palais Niel**, **Place de la Trinité** and **Le capitole de Toulouse**. Departure for **Albi**, a city that is situated in the south-eastern part of the central mountain area of France. Albi is the city where the post-Impressionist painter Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec was born, in 1864. He was the son of the Count Alphonse-Toulouse Lautrec-Monfia, who came from a family of aristocrats that lived in the vicinity of Toulouse starting from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In Albi you will visit **Sainte-Cécile Cathedral**, situated on a rocky spur on the shore of the river Tarn, the cathedral is the largest edifice in the world built of brick. Two centuries were necessary to erect it, from 1282 to 1480, today it is one of the most visited cathedrals in France. Inside we can admire the French flamboyant gothic style. Then **Palais de la Berbie**, that shelters **the Toulouse-Lautrec Museum** from Albi, a museum that was dedicated to the painter who was born here. The Berbie Palace is a strong fortress from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, now residence of the Archbishops of Albi, situated in the centre of the city of Albi, in the vicinity of Sainte-Cécile Cathedral. Free time in Albi for dinner.

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### ***Day 10: St. Pierre sur Dropt – Cidabelle de Blaye – Cognac and Jarnac***

Breakfast. Today you will visit Cidabelle de Blaye, Cognac and Jarnac. The first visit today, Blaye citadel, monument on the Unesco World Heritage. Marked by the history of France, of illustrious characters, Blaye citadel invites you to discover the magnificent panorama over the widest **estuary** in Europe, **Gironde**. In Blaye you will visit **Porte Royale**, **Porte Dauphine**, **The Clock Tower**. Free time for coffee in the inhabited medieval city. Continuing our way to the region of cognac, Jarnac and Cognac. Jarnac is the birthplace of the cognac made by Courvoisier, that has its name, winner of many international prizes. The reputation of Courvoisier that it is the finest cognac, was confirmed by Napoleon III who gave the Courvoisier cognac the title of "Official Supplier of the Court" in 1869. This certificate is now exposed at **the Courvoisier Museum** in

**Jarnac.** In 1811 Napoleon visited the deposits of cognac in Bercy and was hosted by Emmanuel Courvoisier.

Legend has it that Napoleon I took many barrels of cognac with him on St. Helena Island, a very appreciated treat for the English officers aboard the ship, who named the drink "Napoleon's Cognac".

In Jarnac you will visit the Courvoisier museum and an old distillation factory, in order to see the process of obtaining quality cognac, based on tradition, and for cognac tasting. Departure for Cognac, a medieval city that carries the name of the region, attractive for its cobbled, narrow streets, for the elegant Renaissance facades. This is the place of the legendary drink that was created back in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The air you can breathe here is permanently scented by the ancohol vapours evaporated from the oak barrels deposited in the city, the aroma that refers to "the angel's gift". Famous companies in the world, such as Camus, Hennessy, Niartell, Otard, Prince Hubert de Polignac, Rémy-Martin, Courvoisier, and Renault – Bisquit, have their headquarters here. Each distillation factory has its own secret and unique process of mixture of different flavours. Lunch can be served in Cognac.

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### ***Day 11: St. Pierre sur Dropt – Perigueux – Limoges***

Breakfast. Today Perigueux and Limoges. In **Perigueux** you will visit: **Saint-Front Cathedral**, listed in the Humanity Patrimony, a step in the way of pilgrimage Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle, that was restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Paul Abadie and who got his inspiration from the construction of the Sacré-Cœur à Paris Cathedral, the medieval and Renaissance centre with Limogeanne street, **The House of Consuls** (ext) and **Vésone Tower**, vestige of a Gallo-Roman temple. Lunch can be served in Perigueux. Departure for **Limoges**, the place where a very famous porcelain has been produced since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, similar to the Chinese porcelain. The manufacturing was placed under the patronage of Count d'Artois, the brother of Ludovic XVI and later on it was acquired by the king, in 1784. After the Revolution, a private number of factories were established in Limoges, in the top remaining one of a businessman from New York.

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### ***Day 12: Au revoir France, bon voyage, à bientôt !***

Breakfast. Drive on the route A62/E72, I9, Duras – Foix – Barcelona. We pass the Pyrenees Mountains near Andora. Take-off from Barcelona for the flight home.



**Price: from 950 €**

Group of maximum 10 persons. Supplement SGL 250 €

**Price included:**

- Airport transfer – hotel – airport
- 2 accommodations with breakfast in Barcelona at a 4 star hotel (3 beds at request)
- 9 accommodations at "Aux Bardeche", with demi-pension (breakfast and dinner)
- Transport by private, modern minibus (with air conditioning), according to the program
- Services of an authorized guide who has been on this tour before
- Street fees and parkings

**Not included:**

- Entrance to the touristic objectives (museums, churches) and the local guides for these.
- Medical insurance and other personal acquisitions/ personal expenditures.
- Tips (driver/ guide).
- Additional meals and drinks.