



# ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION of SMITH COLLEGE

## ***Village Life in the Dordogne***

**September 13-21, 2007**

**DETAILED PRELIMINARY ITINERARY**

**Day 1, Sept. 13:** depart UNITED STATES

**Day 2, Sept. 14:** BORDEAUX / SARLAT-LA-CANÉDA, FRANCE

- . Arrive Paris (CDG)
- . Depart Paris (CDG)
- . Arrive Bordeaux (BOD)
- . Transfer to Sarlat-la-Canéda
- . Hotel de la Madeleine
- . Hospitality desk
- . Dinner (hotel - three-course)

**Day 3, Sept. 15:** SARLAT-LA-CANÉDA

- . Breakfast Buffet (hotel)
- . Depart on Sarlat-la-Canéda Walking Tour

Your exploration of Sarlat-la-Canéda features the Italianate townhouse of Étienne la Boétie, friend of Montaigne. Here you will appreciate its subtle blend of the flamboyant and subdued artfully rendered by medieval stonemasons. Also view the town's architectural centerpiece, the 16th century cathedral of Saint Sacerdos, the sublime Romanesque design of the Chapel of the White Penitents and the Place de la Liberté, where corbelled towers, steep pepperpot cappings and rich ocher walls surround you.

- . Return to hotel
- . Lunch (hotel - two-course)
- . Afternoon at leisure to experience the Sarlat Market
- . Lecture: "Architectural Preservation in Sarlat"  
(lounge) given by Philippe Melot

- . Welcome reception
- . Dinner (hotel-3 course)

**Day 4, Sept. 16: SARLAT-LA-CANÉDA / ROCAMADOUR**

- . Breakfast Buffet (hotel)
- . Depart for Rocamadour

The famed pilgrimage site of Rocamadour, a three-tiered city essentially carved into a sheer limestone cliff. Walk the 216 pilgrim steps from the lower level to the Chapel of Notre Dame, and behold the sacred Black Virgin and Child, a walnut carving over a thousand years old. You can also see a mysterious bell which, according to legend, rings of its own accord to herald a miracle, and the battle sword of Roland, the 8th-century hero of Christian France. The chapel is one of seven churches and a hilltop chateau which comprise a remarkable collection of medieval architecture. Also included will be a visit to the Musee d'Art Sacrée.

- . Photo stop at l'hospitalet
- . Arrive Rocamadour (upper)
- . Tour Rocamadour
- . Lunch (two-course) at Restaurant Beau Site
- . Depart Rocamadour
- . Arrive hotel
- . Dinner (hotel - three-course)

**Day 5, Sept. 17: SARLAT-LA-CANÉDA/CAP BLANC/LES EYZIES-DE-TAYAC**

- . Breakfast Buffet (hotel)
- . Excursion to Cap Blanc and Museum of Prehistory
- . Depart Hotel
- . Arrive Cap Blanc

. View this monumental frieze of sculptures and a human skeleton dating from 15,000 years ago. As Cro-Magnon man had often painted or engraved cave walls, at Cap Blanc they sculpted the entire images of the animals, over the entire walls of which some are life size. This feature makes the site totally original and unique. For this reason the site has been classed as a Historical Monument and entered by U.N.E.S.C.O. on the list of Human World Heritage sites.

- . Depart Cap Blanc
- . Arrive Les Eyzies

Les Eyzies de Tayac, the meeting place of the Vezere and Beaune rivers and where the first known bones of Homo Sapiens was discovered (specifically, just above the train station at a place called Cro-Magnon.) Learn more about these bones and other prehistoric discoveries at the National Museum of Prehistory, housed in the 16th century castle of the barons of Beynac. Peruse the extensive

collection of carved stone blocks, cave paintings and crude tools, some of the earliest artifacts of human civilization.

- . Tour the Museum of Prehistory
- . Depart Les Eyzies
- . Arrive Hotel
- . Lunch (hotel- 2 course)
- . St. Amand de Coly and St. Genies Villages

Travel north of Sarlat to the rolling wooded countryside of Perigord Noir. Tucked away in the fold of a small valley is St. Amand de Coly, it's old lauze roofed houses clustering around the impressive abbey church. This Augustinian abbey of yellow limestone is the most striking of Perigord's fortified churches. The highly elaborate defense system was designed to keep enemies at a distance, but also to drive them away should any forays be made into the church. Continue to St. Genies, one of the many beautiful villages of the Perigord Noir with its golden limestone house. Visit Chapelle du Cheylard, a small gothic chapel, filled with 14th century frescoes.

- . Return to the hotel
- . Dinner (hotel - three-course)

**Day 6, Sept. 18: SARLAT -LA-CANEDA/ LASCAUX II/ROUFFIGNAC CAVE**

- . Breakfast Buffet (hotel)
- . Morning at leisure
- . Lunch (hotel 2-course)
- .Lascaux II and Rouffignac Cave Tour
- . Depart hotel
- . Arrive Lascaux II

Just over fifty years ago, a quartet of schoolboys stumbled onto the Lascaux cave, repository of the most significant and beautiful works of art by prehistoric man. The original cave, for the sake of conservation, no longer accessible to visitors, has been exquisitely reproduced in Lascaux II. visit Lascaux II and delve into the world as it was 15,000 years ago. View cave walls graced with delicate drawings of long extinct aurch bulls, wild stallions and bison rendered in magnesium dioxide blacks and iron oxide yellows and reds.

- . Depart Lascaux II for Rouffignac
- . Arrive Rouffignac

For an even more authentic prehistoric experience, explore the Rouffignac cave, named the "Cave of a Hundred Mammoths" for its more than six miles of underground galleries and plentiful depictions of mammoths and other long gone species. You will also marvel at the cave's "giants' kettles"..smooth, round, dome

like rock formations formed by the swirling currents which originally formed the cave itself.

- . Depart Rouffignac
  - . Arrive hotel
  - . Dinner (hotel 3-course)
  - . Folk group presentation
- Los Cordillous del Buguo

**Day 7, Sept. 19: SARLAT-LA-CANDEDA/ PERIGUEUX**

- . Buffet Breakfast (hotel)
- . Depart for Perigueux (1.5 hrs drive)
- . Full Day Excursion to Perigueux

Transfer to Perigueux, the capital of the Dordogne Department and a long ago Gallo Roman city known as Vesunna. On arrival, enjoy a walking tour of the Old City, see homes dating back to the 4th and 5th centuries, visit the Cathedral of St. Front and the medieval streets surrounding it. As the back drop of your walking tour, experience the Perigueux market.

- . Lunch at a local restaurant.

Following lunch visit the Town Hall for a reception and Village Life Forum of local residents of Perigueux and the Perigord region. Continue on to the Vesunna Museum a new and unique museum which is built over the remains of a Roman villa.

- . Arrive hotel
- . Dinner (hotel- 3 course)

**Day 8, Sept. 20: SARLAT-LA-CANÉDA / BEYNAC CASTLE / DOMME**

- . Breakfast Buffet (hotel)
- . Depart for Beynac Castle & Domme

Arrive Beynac and visit the Chateau de Beynac the imposing medieval fortress of beynac-et-Cazenac, dramatically situated atop a towering limestone cliff, is the most regal of the Dordogne riverside chateaux. In the late 12th century, Richard the Lionheart and the Bynac Family waged a bitter war for the castle's intriguing (and eclectic) interior, admiring the monumental 17th century stairway, the wooden chimney sculpted with mythological figures and the 15th century frescoes of the Last Supper and Pieta.

-Depart Castle

Next board a gabare (19th century boats used for trade on the river) for a scenic cruise upriver towards the castle of Castelnaud. Note: operation of Gabare cruise

will depend on water levels. If unable to operate, guests will visit the Chateau de Maqueyssac (5 minutes from Beynac) overlooking the Dordogne Valley. Owed by the same family since 1692, the grounds of the Chateau are considered one of the great examples of French-style gardens in Perigord.

- . Lunch in the village of Beynac: Hostellerie de Malleville
- . Depart the village of Beynac
- Arrive Domme

Travel the meandering Dordogne to Domme, the most spectacular of the Perigord towns, a walled gem surmounting a limestone promontory. Approach through the 13th-century Tower Gate where two enormous semicircular towers hewn from limestone frame a classic Gothic-arched gate. Once inside, you will feel transported to a time of knights and nobility, barons and bishops. From Domme, you will have an unforgettable panoramic view: clusters of old pale stone houses topped by bright orange roofs yielding to the cliff's edge and a lush green horizon stretching for miles.

- . Free time in Domme
- . Depart Domme
- . Arrive hotel
- . Dinner (hotel - three-course)

**Day 9, Sept. 21: BORDEAUX / U.S.**

- . Breakfast Buffet (Hotel)
- . Transfer to Bordeaux Airport
- . Depart Bordeaux (BOD)
- . Arrive Paris (CDG)
- . Depart Paris (CDG)
- . Arrive U.S.

**Optional extension:**  
Bordeaux, France