

Sketchy Tours Quick Study Guide Summer 2012

This study guide contains brief introductions and links to many of the sites on the Sketchy Tours Summer 2012 itinerary. Everything here has been cut and pasted from referenced sites.

France, a complete profile from the U.S. Department of State:
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3842.htm>

Aquitaine is one of the 27 regions of France. Aquitaine consists of 3,150,890 inhabitants equivalent to 6% of the total French population.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aquitaine>

Dordogne

The department of Dordogne is located in the region of [Aquitaine](#), between the [Loire](#) valley and the High [Pyrénées](#) named after the great [Dordogne River](#) that runs through it. It roughly corresponds with the ancient county of [Périgord](#). Dordogne is the third largest department of France. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dordogne>

Périgord

The Périgord is a [natural region](#) and [former province](#) of [France](#), which corresponds roughly to the current Department of [Dordogne](#), now forming the northern part of the [Aquitaine région](#). It is divided into four regions, the Périgord Noir (Black), the Périgord Blanc (White), the Périgord Vert (Green) and the Périgord Pourpre (Purple).

The Périgord, one of the main battlegrounds of [Hundred Years' War](#) between the [French](#) and [English](#) in the 14th and 15th centuries, is also the land of 1001 [medieval](#) and [Renaissance castles](#) like [Puymartin](#), [Losse](#), [Hautefort](#) and [Beynac](#) situated mainly along the [Dordogne](#) and [Vézère](#) rivers. Other castles include: [Jumilhac le Grand](#), [Fénelon](#), [Biron](#), [Bourdeilles](#), [Castelnaud](#), Puyguilhem and [Rouffiac](#).
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C3%A9rigord>

The geography and natural resources of the Périgord make it one of the most unspoiled regions of Europe, and the newly created Parc Naturel Régional Périgord-Limousin aims to conserve it as such.

The area is noted for its [cuisine](#), more particularly its products related to [ducks](#) and [geese](#), such as [foie gras](#). It is one of the [truffle](#) areas of France, historically the most famous. Périgourdine wines include the famed [Bergerac](#) (red and white) and [Monbazillac](#).

Périgueux is a city in the [Dordogne department](#) in [Aquitaine](#) in southwestern France. Périgueux is the [prefecture](#) of the department and the capital of the region. It is also the seat of a Roman Catholic [diocese](#). There are 101 prefectures in France, one for each department

The name *Périgueux* comes from [Petrocorii](#), a Latinization of Celtic words meaning "the four tribes" – the [Gallic](#) people that held the area before the Roman conquest. Périgueux was their capital city.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C3%A9rigueux>

Perigeaux is also the [préfecture](#) (capital) of the Dordogne. Bergerac in the south and Sarlat in the east are the sub-prefectures. There are fine [Roman](#) ruins in Périgueux which have been restored and the whole area is known as the 'cradle of mankind' due to its wealth of [prehistoric](#) sites, of which the most famous prehistoric site is the painted cave of [Lascaux](#), whose depictions of [aurochs](#), [horses](#), [deer](#) and other animals (but not of humans) date back some 17,000 years.

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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C3%A9rigueux>

Occitan (English pronunciation: /ˈɒksɪtæn/^[4] Occitan: [\[uksi'ta\]](#) or [\[utsi'ta\]](#)), known also as *Lenga d'òc* (Occitan: [\[ˈlɛŋɡo ˈðɔ\(k\)\]](#); [French](#): *Languè d'oc*), is a [Romance language](#) spoken in [southern France](#), Italy's [Occitan Valleys](#), [Monaco](#), and [Spain](#)'s [Val d'Aran](#): the regions sometimes known unofficially as [Occitania](#). It is also spoken in the linguistic enclave of [Guardia Piemontese](#) ([Calabria](#), Italy). It is an

official language in [Catalonia](#), Spain (known as [Aranese](#) in Val d'Aran).^[6] Occitan's closest relative is [Catalan](#). Since September 2010, the [Parliament of Catalonia](#) has considered Aranese Occitan to be the officially preferred language for use in the Val d'Aran. The term [Provençal](#) (Occitan: *provençal*, *provençau* or *prouvençau*, IPA: [\[pruβen'sal, pruve'n'saw\]](#)) may be used as a traditional synonym for Occitan but, nowadays, "Provençal" is mainly understood as an [Occitan dialect spoken in Provence](#).

The long-term survival of Occitan is in grave doubt. According to the [UNESCO Red Book of Endangered Languages](#), four of the six major dialects of Occitan ([Provençal](#), [Auvergnat](#), [Limousin](#) and [Languedocien](#)) are considered "severely endangered", while the remaining two ([Gascon](#) and [Vivaro-Alpine](#)) are considered "definitely endangered" ("severely endangered" essentially means that only elderly people still speak the language fluently, while "definitely endangered" means that adults speak the language but are not passing it on to their children).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occitan_language

Bergerac is a French market town with a population of about 30,000 people. The town contains two statues of [Cyrano de Bergerac](#), subject of a famous [play of the same name](#) by [Edmond Rostand](#), though the actual Cyrano never lived in Bergerac. An old stone statue stands on Place de la Myrpe, facing Place du Docteur Cayla. A newer statue, unusual in that it is painted in colour and stands on a stainless steel pedestal, has been erected on Place Pelissiere.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bergerac,_Dordogne

Lalinde ([Occitan](#): *La Linda*) is a town in the [Dordogne department](#) in [Aquitaine](#) in southwestern France with a population of nearly 4,000 people. It lies on the [Dordogne River](#) and is enclosed within fortified walls. In its past, it was a strategically important military site; it suffered various sieges during the [Hundred Years' War](#) and again in 1562 and 1572 during the Wars of Religion. The train station was built in 1877 and the bridge over the Dordogne River in 1880.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lalinde>

Chateaux and Bastides

Bastides are a fortified medieval towns often adapted to the surrounding terrain built in [medieval Languedoc](#), [Gascony](#) and [Aquitaine](#) during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, although some authorities count [Mont-de-Marsan](#) and [Montauban](#), which was founded in 1144, as the first bastides. In an effort to colonize the wilderness especially of southwest France, almost seven hundred new towns were built between 1222 ([Cordes-sur-Ciel](#), Tarn) and 1372 (La Bastide d'Anjou, Tarn).

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bastide>

Domme ([Occitan](#): *Doma*) is a bastide town in the [Dordogne department](#) in [Aquitaine](#) in southwestern [France](#). It is sometimes called the "*Akropolis des Périgord*". Today a member of the association [Les Plus Beaux Villages de France](#) ("The Most Beautiful Villages of France"), Domme has two public spaces of medieval origin: the commercial *Place de la Halle* ("Market Hall Square") and the *Place de La Rode*, where the [breaking wheel](#) entertained the public. There were two other notable locations in the village: the fair and the [moneyer](#)'s house.

Beynac-et-Cazenac is a [commune](#) in the [Dordogne department](#) in southwestern France. once home of Richard the Lionheart. The medieval [Château de Beynac](#) is located in the commune. The village is classified as one of [Les plus beaux villages de France](#) (most beautiful villages of France)

Monpazier is a [commune](#) in the [Dordogne department](#) in [Aquitaine](#) in southwest [France](#). The village is a member of the [Les Plus Beaux Villages de France](#) ("The most beautiful villages of France") association.. Monpazier is a 13th century [bastide](#) town begun in 1285, founded and built by King [Edward I](#) of England, who was also Duke of Gascony. It was home to [Eleanor of Aquitaine](#) and [Richard II of England](#) for a time. Nearby is the Château du [Biron](#) and the [Dordogne River](#). The parish church of Monpazier is St. Dominique, built from the 13th through the 16th centuries.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monpazier>

Issigeac is a small [medieval village](#) that dates back to roman times, located in the [Périgord](#) and is approximately 20 km (12 mi) southwest of [Bergerac](#) in [Aquitaine](#) in southwestern [France](#). It is a commune of the [Dordogne](#) department.

A village with roots in [antiquity](#), today it is a quaint village with timbered houses circling the church and [Bishop's Palace](#) (17th century). The village is circular in plan with most buildings of medieval half-timbered style (most are original) and still retains much of its 13th-century walls. In 1438 it was pillaged by [Rodrigo de Villandrando](#).

The village is set in the midst of [wine country](#), close to the famous [Chateau de Monbazillac](#) and their famous sweet [dessert wines](#). Many other [wineries](#) can be visited including [Chateau Jaubertie](#).

Throughout the year the village hosts a number of festivals and events and has a thriving market on Sunday mornings, where many [gastronomic](#) delights are available as well as an exceptional selection of local wines, meats, fruit and vegetables brought directly to the market by their producers.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Issigeac>

Rocamadour (*Rocamadour* in [Occitan](#)) is a [commune](#) in the [Lot](#) [department](#) in south-western [France](#). It lies in the [former province](#) of [Quercy](#). Rocamadour has attracted visitors for its setting in a gorge above a tributary of the [River Dordogne](#), and especially for its historical monuments and its sanctuary of the [Blessed Virgin Mary](#), which for centuries has attracted [pilgrims](#) from every country, among them kings, bishops, and nobles.

The town below the complex of monastic buildings and pilgrimage churches, traditionally dependent on the pilgrimage site and now on the tourist trade, lies near the river on the lowest slopes; it gives its name to [Rocamadour](#), a small [goat's](#) milk [cheese](#) that was awarded [AOC](#) status in 1996. Walking tours are available offering spectacular views of this pictureaque place.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rocamadour>

French Cuisine,

[Bordeaux](#) is known for its wine, as it is throughout the southwest of France, with certain areas offering specialty grapes for its wines. Fishing is popular in the region for the cuisine, sea fishing in the [Bay of Biscay](#), trapping in the [Garonne](#) and stream fishing in the [Pyrenees](#). The Pyrenees also support top quality lamb, such as the "Agneau de Pauillac", as well as high quality sheep cheeses. Beef cattle in the region include the [Blonde d'Aquitaine](#), *Boeuf de Chalosse*, *Boeuf Gras de Bazas*, and *Garonnaise*. High quality free-range chicken, turkey, pigeon, [capon](#), goose and duck prevail in the region as well. [Gascony](#) and [Périgord](#) cuisines includes high quality *patés*, [terrines](#), [confits](#) and *magrets*. This is one of the regions notable for its production of [foie gras](#) or fattened goose or duck liver. The cuisine of the region is often heavy and farm based. [Armagnac](#) is also from this region, as are high quality prunes from [Agen](#).

Vinyards

Bordeaux wines

The history of wine production seems to have begun sometime after 48 AD, during the Roman occupation of [St. Émilion](#), when the [Romans](#) established vineyards to cultivate wine for the soldiers. Bordeaux is red (called "[claret](#)" in Britain), with notable sweet white wines such as [Chateau d'Yquem](#), dry whites, rosé and sparkling wines ([Crémant](#) de Bordeaux) all making up the remainder. Bordeaux wine is made by more than 8,500 producers or [châteaux](#). There are 60 [appellations](#) of Bordeaux wine.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bordeaux_wine

<http://www.bordeaux.com/us/vineyard/map>

Saint-Émilion

Saint-Émilion's history goes back to [prehistoric](#) times and is a [World Heritage site](#), with fascinating [Romanesque](#) churches and [ruins](#) stretching all along steep and narrow streets.

The [Romans](#) planted [vineyards](#) in what was to become Saint-Émilion as early as the 2nd century. In the 4th century, the [Latin](#) poet [Ausonius](#) lauded the fruit of the bountiful vine.

The town was named after the [monk](#) Émilion, a travelling confessor, who settled in a [hermitage](#) carved into the rock there in the 8th century. It was the monks who followed him that started up the commercial wine production in the area. This is a great place to take a short walking tour to see the cave where St. emilion made his home and understand the significance of the place. If you only take one walking tour this would be it.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint-%C3%89milion>

<http://www.saint-emilion-tourisme.com/uk/que-faire.html?idcat=1&idfiche=66>

Monbazillac is an [Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée](#) (AOC) for sweet white wine produced in the village of [Monbazillac](#) on the left bank of the [Dordogne River](#) just across from the town of [Bergerac](#) in [South West France](#). The AOC of Monbazillac was first established in 1936, but the area has a long history of sweet wine production. Only wine made from grapes grown in Monbazillac that are affected by the "[noble rot](#)" (*Botrytis cinerea*) can be sold under the Monbazillac designation. (Dry white wines from the same area are sold as [Bergerac](#) sec.)

Monbazillac is blended from three grape varieties, Sémillon, Sauvignon and Muscadelle, and is harvested manually over several selective 'tries' or passages where only the grapes affected by the famous and miraculous «[Noble Rot](#)» are chosen. The wine has a fabulous colour which deepens over time. It is an extremely elegant wine with dominant overtones of honey, acacia and peaches and hints of citrus fruits and crystallised 'Mirabelle' plums.

A **rosé** is a type of [wine](#) that has some of the [color](#) typical of a red wine, but only enough to turn it pink. The pink color can range from a pale orange to a vivid near-purple, depending on the grapes and wine making techniques. The name Rosé first arose in the 1980s around 1983, although it was commonly drunk before this date.

Rosette AOC wine is mainly blended from three different grape varieties - Sémillon, Sauvignon and Muscadelle. It is an unusual sweet white wine, extremely elegant, supple and round with a very pale straw

colour. It is defined by its very specific 'terroir' of exposed hillsides north of the Dordogne Valley.

Markets

The French market is an event not to be missed. On any given day there is a local market taking place to get fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese, bread, meat, flowers, watch the goings on and sketch.

These markets are local to the Chateau Les Landes. Each town and village have interesting places to visit as well:

Monday: Beynac, St Alvere (main truffle market), Les Eyzies

Tuesday: Beaumont, Bergerac (organic market), Brantome (July and August), Le Bugue, Riberaç, Tremolat

Wednesday: Biron, Cadouin, Bergerac, Cahors, Sarlat, Perigeux

Thursday: Lalinde (main market day), Domme, Monpazier, Mouleydier, Brive

Friday: Brantome, Bergerac, Brantome (all day), Sigoules, Le buisson, Souillac, Riberaç

Saturday: Sarlat, Lalinde (smaller market), Beaumont, Belves, Bergerac, Le Bugue, Bergerac, Perigeux

Sunday: Issigeac, Bergerac, Brantome, Couze, Creysse

Pre historic sites from the Palaeolithic era (The first sketchy tourists).

Les Eyzies

The centre of pre-historic studies is the small town of [les Eyzies](#), home to the newly rebuilt Museum of Pre-History, where 19th century archaeological investigations established the valley of the [River Vezere](#) as an unusually rich array of pre-historic sites dating back some 40,000 years. One of [UNESCO](#)'s World Heritage locations, the valley contains 147 [prehistoric sites](#) dating from the [Palaeolithic](#) era and 25 decorated caves.

Les Eyzies-de-Tayac-Sireuil ([Occitan](#): *Las Aisiás de Taiac e Siruèlh*) is a [commune](#) in the [Dordogne department](#) in [Aquitaine](#) in southwestern

[France](#). Les Eyzies-de-Tayac-Sireuil lies in the [Périgord](#) Noir area. This locale is home to the [Musée national de Préhistoire](#) (National Museum of Prehistory) and the area contains several important archaeological sites, including the [Font-de-Gaume](#), [Grotte du Grand-Roc](#) and [Lascaux cave](#) prehistoric rock dwellings. [Les Eyzies-de-Tayac](#) was designated a [UNESCO World Heritage](#) site in 1979.

In March 1868, the geologist [Louis Lartet](#), financed by [Henry Christy](#), discovered the first five [skeletons](#) of [Cro-Magnons](#), the earliest known examples of [Homo sapiens sapiens](#), in the Cro-Magnon rock shelter at Les Eyzies-de-Tayac. These skeletons included a foetus, and the skulls found were remarkably modern-looking and much rounder than the earlier [Neanderthal](#).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_Eyzies-de-Tayac-Sireuil

The **[Wolverine pendant of Les Eyzies](#)** is a bone [pendant](#) decorated with an engraved drawing of a [wolverine](#), probably from the cave of [Les Eyzies](#), [Dordogne](#), France. The pendant is from the late [Magdalenian](#) period and around 12,500 years old. It now forms part of the [Christy Collection](#) in the [British Museum](#), where it is on display in Room 2.

The excellent prehistoric museum at Les Eyzies has an entrance fee.
<http://leseyziesdetayac.com/the-new-national-prehistoric-museum/>
<http://eyzies.monuments-nationaux.fr/en/>