

Dordogne Valley

CONTACT

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RENTAL

\$1250 per week (AUD)
Sheets and towels etc for up to four people are included.
Electric heating, wi-fi and use of the phone for most calls (including international) is also included.
A 20 per cent deposit is required on booking, refundable if cancellation is more than three months before booking commences. Balance is payable one month before booking commences.

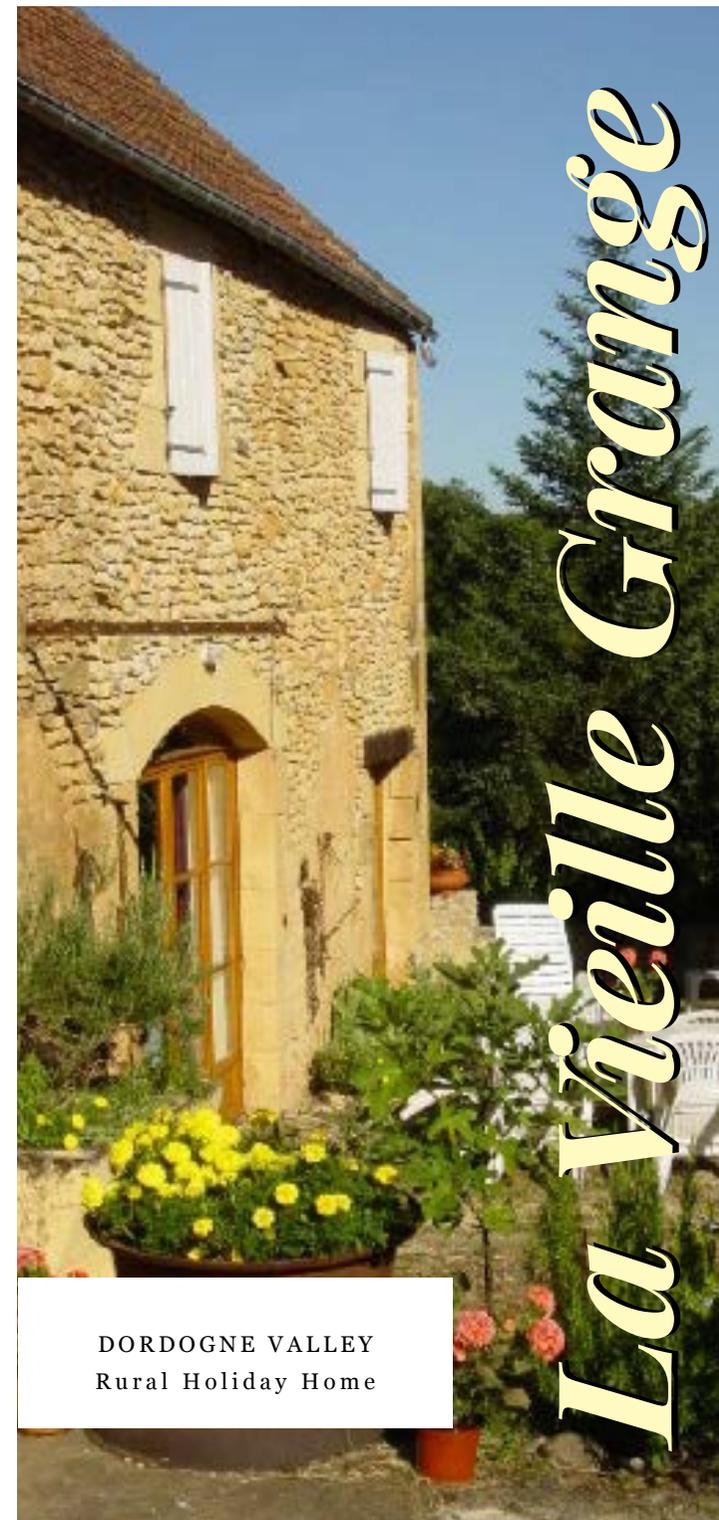
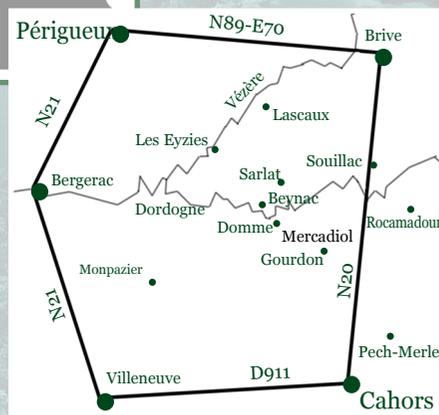
Discounts apply for longer stays: please enquire.

FURTHER READING

Stephanie Alexander stayed at La Vieille Grange while researching her book *Cooking & Travelling in South-West France* (Viking 2002), which we highly recommend as reference on the area. We also supply our own notes, compiled over 20 years.

SITUATION

The house is about four hours south of Paris on the A20 autoroute (exit Souillac). The nearest airports are Toulouse (two hours drive on A20), Bordeaux (three hours drive following the Dordogne), Bergerac (one and a half hours) and the Dordogne Valley, Brive airport (about 40 mins). Trains from Paris stop at Brive, Souillac and Gourdon. The house is approx 12-kms from Gourdon, 14-kms from Souillac and 20 kms from Sarlat.



DORDOGNE VALLEY
Rural Holiday Home

La Vieille Grange

THE REGION

La Vieille Grange is a restored and converted spacious stone barn in the hamlet of Mercadiol. It is just south of the Dordogne River, about 1.5 km from Château Fénelon, in one of the most beautiful and historic areas of southwest France. It lies at the southernmost edge of the Dordogne *département* in ancient 'Périgord Noir', between the wine regions of Bordeaux, St Emilion and Bergerac to the west and Cahors and Gaillac to the southeast. Within an hour or so's scenic drive are the prehistoric sites of the Vézère Valley – Montignac, Lascaux and Les Eyzies – Pech-Merle in the Lot Valley, the cliff-face pilgrim centre of Rocamadour, the bastide towns of Domme and Monpazier, and the spectacular Gouffre de Padirac with its subterranean river and boat ride. Along the river impressive fortress chateaux perch on clifftops; many, such as Beynac, Castelnaud and Montfort were fought over by Richard the Lionheart. Even closer to home are the stalactites and prehistoric paintings of the Grottes de Cougnac as well as the medieval towns of Sarlat (the 'truffle capital') and Gourdon.

THE HAMLET

The hamlet of Mercadiol is a charming hilltop cluster of half a dozen old farmhouses and stone barns lying either side of a rural lane in an area of traditional mixed farming. Through traffic is minimal and both the days and nights are peacefully quiet, with little more than the sound of birdcalls or in summer the distant music of a village 'en fête'. By night the stars are brilliantly clear. In spring and summer the roadsides and meadows are bright with wildflowers (primroses, cowslips, orchids, poppies). In winter a fall of snow is possible. It is an ideal place for walking and cycling. St Julien de Lampon, a village close to the Dordogne River and about 3.5 km from Mercadiol, has good shops



(pharmacy, bakery, butcher, two general stores), a weekly market (Thursday am), bank, post office, doctor, hairdresser and bar. Within easy reach by car are facilities for horseriding, swimming, tennis, golf and bicycle and canoe hire (summer), as well as, of course, fine eating and drinking.

THE HOUSE

La Vieille Grange is on the northern edge of the hamlet, with woods on one side and in the valley below. Entry is through a gate and across a grassy courtyard. Conversion work on the barn, the earliest parts of which

date from the 17th century, has been carried out to a very high standard with as much as possible of the original stonework and oak beams left exposed. It is now a comfortable holiday home offering self-catering accommodation (two double bedrooms, each with a single 'bedroom' on a mezzanine level above, another bedroom has two single beds). From the large back windows on each floor are tranquil views of valley meadows (east) and woodlands (north, and home of deer and red squirrel). There are French doors on both sides of the ground floor. Three sets to the south open onto a gravel terraced area and the courtyard which enjoys long hours of sunshine. On the northern side a set of doors opens onto another terrace – walled and partly covered – ideal for playing boules and with outdoor table and chairs. There is undercover parking in a timber barn adjacent to La Vieille Grange. The house has an electric hot water service and electric wall heaters throughout.



ACCOMMODATION

Entry Level

HALL Small table, coat hanging area, stairs up to first floor and down to ground floor.

LAUNDRY Washing machine, washing basin, iron and ironing board, drying rack.

WC Hand basin, WC.

Ground level

(Large tiled open-plan kitchen/dining/lounge area)

KITCHEN AREA Combination gas/electric cooker; fridge/freezer; dishwasher; fitted cupboards with crockery, cutlery, etc for 10; tiled worktops, pots, pans, coffee-makers; walk-in pantry, wine rack, food processor, etc.

DINING AREA Dining table with 6 chairs; walnut side board; some cookbooks, guidebooks and maps; TV (French channels and English) CD player and some CDs.

LOUNGE AREA Three sofas, pine chest/coffee table, large rug, extra dining chairs, standard lamp, phone.

First level

BEDROOM 1 Queen bed, chest of drawers, bookshelf with novels, standard lamp, phone; en-suite with WC, shower, hand basin, hair dryer. Large windows with views over valley (east) and courtyard (south). Mezzanine 1: two cots, table and chair.

BEDROOM 2 Two single beds, chest of drawers, bookshelf with some children's books. Large window with views over terrace and courtyard.

BEDROOM 3 One double bed, chest of drawers, bedside table, chairs etc. Large window with views over terrace and courtyard. Mezzanine 2: Single bed, bedside table.

MAIN BATHROOM Shower, bath, WC, hand basin.

WHAT TO BRING

Bring food, drink and items such as toilet rolls and washing detergent. Rental includes wi-fi, most phone calls (including international), heating, plus sheets, towels and tea towels for up to 4 people.

KEYS AND CHANGE OVER TIME

A key will be left for you at a prearranged place. Arrival time is normally after 4.00 pm Saturday; departure time is normally by 10.00 am the following Saturday.

