



Panel of the Horses, Chauvet Cave

FRIDAY  
MAY 20

## ARRIVALS INTO PARIS

Individual arrivals into Paris throughout the day.

Airport transfers arranged on request.

Check-in to the [Westin Paris Vendôme](#), Paris.

*The hotel is centrally located on the corner of Rue de Rivoli overlooking the Jardin des Tuileries and the Eiffel Tower. It is just a short walk to Concorde, the Louvre Museum and the Place Vendôme.*

Lunch and afternoon at leisure.

Welcome drinks and dinner at restaurant [Macéo](#) around the corner from the hotel.

Overnight: [The Westin Paris Vendôme](#), Paris.



Full buffet breakfast in the restaurant of our hotel.

Visit of the new [Museum of Man](#). Due to reopen in October 2015 after an extensive six-year renovation project.

*The original Museum of Man opened in Paris in 1937 and inherited items from historical collections created as early as the 16th century, from cabinets of curiosities, and the Royal Cabinet.*

*The newly renovated museum space will focus on collections of ethnology, anthropology and prehistory from 3.5 million years B.C to the present day: a synthesis of the sciences of the human being and his evolution. Highlights will include unique artefacts such as the Venus of Lespugue, one of the first Palaeolithic works of art, and the original fossils of Cro Magnon man.*

Lunch at [Chez Géraud](#).

After lunch we visit the [Elizabeth Daynes Atelier](#).

*Home and gallery of French sculptor and painter Elisabeth Daynès.*

Continue to [The Institute of Human Paleontology](#).

*Inaugurated in 1910, the Institute of Paleontology aims for "the progress of Science on any issue regarding the origin and history of fossil Man".*



*The institute's founder was none other than Prince Albert I of Monaco – someone keenly interested in the origins of man— both from a scientific and a philosophical point of view. After seeing the Paleolithic cave paintings at Cantabrie (Spain) in July 1909, and upon the advice of the Abbot Henri Breuil and of Marcellin Boule, a professor of paleontology at the Museum of Natural History, the prince decided to finance the institute, which he conceived as an independent entity with no ties to any other institution.*

Dinner at leisure.

Overnight: [The Westin Paris Vendôme](#), Paris.

Full buffet breakfast in the restaurant of our hotel.

Gather in the hotel lobby to transfer to the train station with our bags.

Depart: 8:42 a.m. Direct TGV to Angoulême. *2 hours 39 minutes.*

Arrive: 11:22 a.m.

Bags go separately to our hotel in Les Eyzies.

We transfer to the village of Sorges in the Perigord – home of the black truffle.

Lunch in Sorge at the Auberge de la Truffe.

Continue to the heart of the Vézère valley in the Dordogne.

***The valley is a mecca of prehistory - it contains about 15 major sites, all on the UNESCO World Heritage List.***

[Abri du Cap Blanc.](#)

***Cap Blanc shelter is one of the great masterpieces of the monumental art of sculpture of the upper Palaeolithic.***

*The bas relief sculptures of animals, mostly horses, are one of the finest examples of sculptured Palaeolithic art. One of the highlights of the frieze is a carved horse, the body of which measures over six and half feet in length. In the deposit in front of the carved panel lies the body (now a cast) of a young female. The archaeological deposit also revealed tools used to carve the animals.*

Continue to the [Font de Gaume.](#)

***Discovered in 1901, the Font de Gaume contains prehistoric polychrome cave paintings and engravings dating to the Magdalenian period.***

*One of the many highlights of the site is a frieze of 5 bison, where the artist(s) made use of the contours of the rock face to give shape to the painted bison.*





Late afternoon check-in to our beautiful hotel [Les Glycines](#) in Les Eyzies-de-Tayac. Our bags will be waiting in our rooms.

*A former 19th century coaching inn located in a large lush park setting featuring weeping willows, rose trees and poplars. The stylish guest rooms are spacious and offer all modern amenities.*



Dinner in the [hotel restaurant](#).

Overnight: [Les Glycines](#), Les Eyzies-de-Tayac.

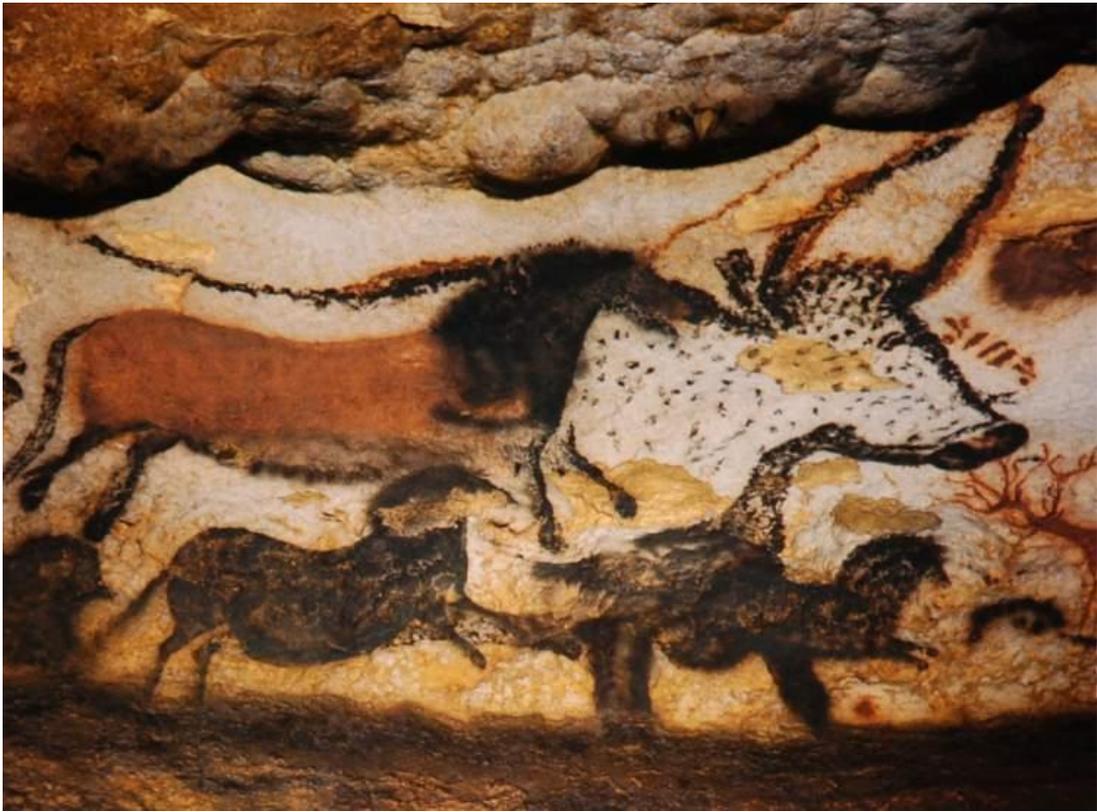
Full buffet breakfast in the restaurant of our hotel.

Transfer to the Lascaux cave site.



***The Lascaux cave has one of the most important groups of Paleolithic rock wall art, both by its number and by the exceptional quality of its works.***

*Lascaux II is a replica of the cave of Lascaux. Lascaux was discovered in September of 1940 by four teenagers, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel, and Simon Coencas, looking for Marcel's dog Robot. The cave was opened to the public in 1948. By 1955 some 1,200 visitors were visiting the site each day. The volume of traffic began to take its toll on the prehistoric art and Lascaux was closed to the public in 1963. The Ministry of Culture embarked on an intensive and expensive project to create a replica. Lascaux II opened to the public in 1983.*



*The replica contains the main sections of the cave, and provides visitors with an opportunity to see some of the very striking painted panels from Lascaux. The accuracy of the replica is measured in millimetres.*



*The [Lascaux IV project](#) is in line with the decades of reflections and initiatives focused on reconciling the safeguarding of a heritage that is unique for the history of humanity.*

Visit with Muriel Mauriac (Curator) and her team at the visitor center to understand the conservation project. Including a sneak preview at [Lascaux IV](#) due to open in June 2016.

*Members of the Snohetta team will talk about the architectural concepts behind the project and future development.*

Lunch on site at Lascaux.

Continue with visit of Lascaux before continuing to Rouffignac.



*Rouffignac is one of the largest prehistoric caves in Europe. The remarkable construction of this system extends for over 6 miles and offers huge corridors whose walls bristle with countless strangely shaped often red-colored flint nodules and ceilings punctuated with wide natural domes. In 1956, 260 prehistoric drawings and engravings dating from 13,000 to 14,000 years ago were discovered.*

Special visit of the [caves](#) complex by train with an on-site expert.

Transfer back to the hotel at the end of the day.

Dinner at leisure with plenty of suggestions from casual restaurants to fine dining nearby.



Overnight: [Les Glycines](#), Les Eyzies-de-Tayac.

Full buffet breakfast in the restaurant of our hotel.

Private closing-day visit of the [National Museum of Prehistory](#).

Welcome by Director followed by a guided highlights tour of the collection with a curator.

*Temporary exhibition schedule TBC.*

*Set up against the limestone cliffs overlooking the town of Les Eyzies is the National Museum of Prehistory. The museum was greatly expanded, and reopened in 2004 with a truly innovative and fascinating series of exhibitions that explore the early prehistory of humanity. Besides displays of stone tools, there are also a number of exquisite objects carved in bone and ivory on display, as well as reconstructions of extinct animals from excavated remains.*



Continue to the Madeleine shelter site in Tursac.

***La Madeleine*** is a rock shelter located in the Vézère valley. In 1926 the skeleton of a three year old child was discovered, with exquisite shell jewelry, dating from the end of the Magdalenian period.

*La Madeleine has three different levels of occupancy. The prehistoric rock shelter is at river level, the troglodyte medieval village half-way up the cliff and the medieval castle on the top of the cliff.*

*La Madeleine is the only site that has been inhabited for a period of 17,000 years without interruption.*

and

Grand Roc Cave and Laugerie-Basse



*The Grotte du Grand Roc is a marvelous natural cave found half way up a cliff face*

above the Vezere river. It is just a few kilometers from Les Eyzies and is right next to the Pre-historic shelter of Laugerie-Basse. Both the Grotte du Grand Roc and Laugerie Basse are classified UNESCO World Heritage Sites as part of the Vezere Valley classification.

Lunch in Laugerie-Basse.

Transfer 40 minutes to the [The Pech de l'Azé Sites I, II and IV](#).

Visit with Project Director of excavations, Harold Dibble. *Pech de l'Azé* (pronounced "pesh/de/lahz" as if the final accent was not present) is a cluster of four Lower and Middle Paleolithic



sites. They are situated some 50 meters off of the floor of a small, usually dry, valley that runs into the Enéa, a small tributary of the Dordogne River.

After our in-depth visit we continue to Sarlat-la-Canéda.

Early evening guided tour of the picturesque center of [Sarlat](#) and medieval architecture before dinner.

Dinner at leisure in Sarlat.

Transfer back to the hotel at the end of the evening.



Overnight: [Les Glycines](#), Les Eyzies-de-Tayac.

Full buffet breakfast in the restaurant of our hotel.

Transfer to [Cognac](#) caves near Gourdon – via the Roc de Marsal.

*Cognac has one of the finest examples of cave paintings in France, and was the first site at which radiocarbon dates were obtained for European Palaeolithic cave paintings. A sample was removed from a black dot made using charcoal and produced a date of 14,290 years ago. Samples taken from animal figures produced a range of dates between 23 and 25,000 years ago.*

*Cognac has a number of intriguing and enigmatic depictions. Of particular interest are the large paintings of megaloceros – an extinct deer. A very rare image is the so-called the ‘wounded man’ motif: a human figure has a number of lines drawn leading out from the body. These have been traditionally interpreted as spears sticking into the body. There are only three known examples of this image in European cave art, and there are two in Cognac.*

Roc de Marsal – excavations completed in 2010 and led by Harold Dibble.

Continue to [Pecche Merle](#).

Lunch in the village of Cabrerets by Peche-Merle.

Visit Peche-Merle caves after lunch.

*Since the discovery in 1922 archaeological research on the paintings has included how they were painted, what pigments were used and how some of the panels developed over time. It is a large cave, with over one mile of underground tunnels and caverns; the geology of which is every bit as interesting as the prehistoric paintings.*



*The most well-known panel depicts two black horses painted back to back, with a series of black dots that cover and surround the animals' bodies. The body of one of the horses is painted on the rock surface in such a way that the prehistoric artist used a natural feature on the rock face to suggest the horse's head.*



Continue to the beautiful town of [Domme](#) en route back to our hotel – perched on a high cliff and with an exceptional view of the Dordogne valley. One of the Plus Beaux Villages de France.

Brief visit before we continue back to the hotel.

Dinner of foie gras and other delicious Perigord specialties at restaurant [La Métairie](#) in Eyzies with invited guests.

Overnight: [Les Glycines](#), Les Eyzies-de-Tayac.



Full buffet and a la carte breakfast served at the lodge.

Today is a travel day. We depart the hotel at 9:00 a.m. for Montélimar.

We will stop for lunch en-route in Riom.

*Situated between the Auvergne Volcanoes and the Livradois Forez Regional Nature Parks.*

Continue to our hotel just outside Montélimar.

Late afternoon arrival. Check-into [Le Domaine du Colombier](#) – a beautifully renovated 14th century country house.

Time at leisure to settle in and relax.

Dinner in the hotel restaurant.

Overnight: [Le Domaine du Colombier](#), Montélimar.



FRIDAY  
MAY 27

CHAUVET

Full buffet breakfast in the restaurant of our hotel.

Depart for a day at [Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc](#) replica cave.

*Located in the Ardeche region of France, Chauvet cave survived for millennia before being discovered in 1994 and contains over 1,000 cave paintings dating to 36,000 years ago. The cave contains the earliest known figurative drawings in the world. The cave has had enormous impact on cave art research, as the cave had been sealed since prehistory and the archaeology of the caves inhabitants lay undisturbed on the floor.*

Arrival and welcome followed by full morning visit of the site with Jean Clottes.

Lunch at the site.

Return to Montélimar mid afternoon.

Time at leisure before dinner. Taste the famous [nougat](#), do some last sightseeing and shopping in [Montélimar](#) or start packing for your departure tomorrow.

Final dinner with delicious regional dishes at restaurant [Le Prieuré](#).



Overnight: [Domaine du Colombier](#), Montélimar.

SATURDAY  
MAY 28

DEPARTURES

Full buffet breakfast in the restaurant of our hotel.

8:45 a.m. Group transfer to Valence TGV station. 50 minutes. To connect with:

10:15 a.m. Direct train to Charles de Gaulle airport, Paris. Arrives 1 :02 p.m.