



# Gironde

Our guide on what to see, where to stay and eat in this region of wines, dunes, medieval towns and castles

## WHY GO?

Vineyards carpet much of the Gironde region (in the south west of France), and most tourists will spend time visiting some of its 10,000 or so châteaux. But Gironde won't just appeal to wine-lovers. Bordeaux is an attractive city with a fine blend of the modern and the historic.

Elsewhere, there are many fortified towns, picturesque ruins of castles and abbeys, and magnificent World Heritage churches. Prehistoric cave art and Roman relics also add to the historic delights, while Europe's highest sand dune on the wild Atlantic coast and the resorts around the Bassin d'Arcachon are also well worth a visit.

## GETTING THERE

### By plane

The following airlines fly directly to Bordeaux:

**Bmibaby** ([www.bmibaby.com](http://www.bmibaby.com)) from Manchester.

**British Airways** ([www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com)) from London Gatwick.

**Easyjet** ([www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)) from Bristol, Liverpool, London Luton.

**Flybe** ([www.flybe.com](http://www.flybe.com)) in July and August, from Belfast City, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and Southampton.

### From the airport

The €7 Jetbus runs every 45 minutes to the city centre and railway station. A taxi should cost around €35.

### By ferry/car

**Brittany Ferries** ([www.brittany-ferries.co.uk](http://www.brittany-ferries.co.uk))

Poole and Portsmouth to Cherbourg, Portsmouth to Caen and St-Malo, Plymouth to Roscoff.

**Condor Ferries** ([www.condorferries.co.uk](http://www.condorferries.co.uk))

Poole, Portsmouth & Weymouth to St Malo via the Channel islands, Portsmouth to Cherbourg.

**LD Lines** ([www.ldlines.co.uk](http://www.ldlines.co.uk))

Portsmouth to Le Havre, Newhaven to Dieppe, Dover to Boulogne and Dieppe.

**Norfolkline** ([www.norfolkline.com](http://www.norfolkline.com))

Dover to Dunkerque.

**P&O Ferries** ([www.poferries.com](http://www.poferries.com))

Dover to Calais.

**SeaFrance** ([www.seafrance.com](http://www.seafrance.com))

Dover to Calais.

If you are travelling to France in your own car or motorhome, you will need to equip it with a fluorescent jacket and warning triangle, and bring your UK driving licence and vehicle documents. A fine of approximately €90 is applicable if you fail to show these when stopped by the police. For more information, see [www.theaa.com/travel\\_advice](http://www.theaa.com/travel_advice) or [www.bisonfute.equipement.gouv.fr](http://www.bisonfute.equipement.gouv.fr).

### By train

It's possible to reach Bordeaux from London St Pancras by train via Paris or Lille. The total journey takes around seven to eight hours. Trips can be booked up to two months in advance – the cheapest return tickets we were quoted for June (non-refundable, Saturday night stay in France required) came to £167. Within France, there are also direct links to Bordeaux from Biarritz, La Rochelle, Limoges, Nantes, Poitiers and Toulouse. See [www.tgv-europe.com](http://www.tgv-europe.com) and [www.raileurope.co.uk](http://www.raileurope.co.uk).

### Tour operators

**Allez France** ([www.allezfrance.com](http://www.allezfrance.com))

**Brittany Ferries** ([www.brittany-ferries.co.uk/holidays](http://www.brittany-ferries.co.uk/holidays))

**Chez Nous** ([www.cheznous.com](http://www.cheznous.com))

**French Affair** ([www.frenchaffair.com](http://www.frenchaffair.com))

**French Life** ([www.frenchlife.co.uk](http://www.frenchlife.co.uk))

**French Travel Service** ([www.ft-s.co.uk](http://www.ft-s.co.uk))

## GETTING AROUND

### By car

**Avis** ([www.avis.co.uk](http://www.avis.co.uk)), **Budget** ([www.budget.co.uk](http://www.budget.co.uk)), **Europcar** ([www.europcar.co.uk](http://www.europcar.co.uk)), **Hertz** ([www.hertz.co.uk](http://www.hertz.co.uk)), **National** ([www.nationalcar.co.uk](http://www.nationalcar.co.uk)) and **Sixt** ([www.sixt.co.uk](http://www.sixt.co.uk)) all have outlets at Bordeaux airport and most also have outlets at Bordeaux' main train station.

We advise against having a car during your stay in Bordeaux. Arcachon and surrounding towns can get clogged with traffic, and you must buy a parking ticket in the town centre (€1 per hour, free on Sundays).

It's virtually impossible to drive within most of Saint-Emilion, so if you're staying in the town, get advice from the hotel in advance on where best to park.

### By public transport

In Bordeaux, you may not feel the need to take transport at all – most sights are grouped fairly closely. But the new tram system is excellent, with three intersecting lines. Trams run every 4-15 minutes, depending on the day and time of day until midnight (1am Thu-Sat). One ride=€1.40, a carnet of 5 tickets=€5.05, a day-long ticket=€4.10.

Trains go from Bordeaux to Arcachon, taking around 50 minutes and stopping en route at Le Teich and Gujan-Mestras – €9.60 one-way ([www.tgv.com](http://www.tgv.com)). Trains also link Bordeaux to Saint-Emilion (40 minute journey), although the latter's station is a couple of miles outside town.

Buses and coaches between towns are infrequent – an express bus from Bordeaux to Saint-Emilion takes 45 minutes and costs around €8 ([www.citram.fr](http://www.citram.fr)).

## By ferry

A 30-minute ferry crossing links Lamarque on the west side of the Gironde Estuary with Blaye on the east side. There are 4-6 daily crossings in low season, and nine a day in July and August. €13.30 per car plus €3.10 per person.

## THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Sights are listed here in the order shown in the July 2009 *Which? Holiday* magazine report.

### BORDEAUX

#### ■ Grand Theatre

Place de la Comédie

[www.opera-bordeaux.com](http://www.opera-bordeaux.com) (French only)

Admission one hour guided tour (in French) €6.50. Tours are infrequent – get times from the tourist office.

#### ■ Saint-Seurin Basilica

Place des Martyrs de la Résistance

Open Tue-Sat 8.30am-7.45pm,  
Sun 9am-1pm and 5pm-8pm

#### ■ Porte Cailhau

Place du Palais

Viewpoint: Admission €3

Open Jun-Sep daily 2pm-7pm

#### ■ Sainte-Croix church

Place Renaudel

Open Mon 2.30pm-5.30pm  
and Thurs 9.30am-12noon

#### ■ Pey-Berland belltower

Place Pey-Berland

<http://pey-berland.monuments-nationaux.fr>

Open Jun-Sep: daily 10am-6pm, Oct-May:  
Tue-Sun 10am-5.30pm

Admission €5 to climb the tower

#### ■ Museum of Aquitaine

20 Cours Pasteur

Open Tue-Sun 11am-6pm

Admission free, audioguide €2.50

#### ■ Museum of Decorative Arts

39 Rue Bouffard

Open Wed-Mon, 2pm-6pm

Admission free, audioguide €2

#### ■ Museum of Fine Arts

20 Cours d'Albret

Open Wed-Mon 11am-6pm

Admission free, temporary exhibitions €5

#### ■ Museum of Wine

41 Rue Borie

Chartrons

Open Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2pm-6pm

Admission €7 (includes two wine tastings)

#### ■ Museum of Contemporary Art

7 Rue Ferrère

Open Tue-Sun 11am-6pm (until 8pm on Wed)

Admission €5

### GIRONDE ESTUARY

#### ■ Gallo-Roman Villa Museum

Plassac

Open Apr-Oct 9am-12noon & 2pm-7pm

(until 6pm in Apr and Oct)

Admission €4

#### ■ Pair-non-Pair caves

Prignac-et-Marcamps

<http://pair-non-pair.monuments-nationaux.fr>

Open Tue-Sun, first tour at 10am, mid Jun-mid

Sep: 8 tours per day, rest of year: 4 tours per day

Admission €7

### SAINT-EMILION

#### ■ Belltower

Admission €1 (pay at tourist office)

#### ■ Tour du Roi

Open weekdays 2pm-6pm, weekends 11am-6pm

Admission €1

#### ■ Underground tour (Hermitage, Trinity

Chapel, catacombs, Monolithic church)

Admission €6.50 (pay at tourist office).

Tours (some in English) last about an hour

### ENTRE-DEUX-MERS

#### ■ La Sauve-Majeure abbey

La Sauve

[www.la-sauve-majeure.monuments-nationaux.fr](http://www.la-sauve-majeure.monuments-nationaux.fr)

Open Jun-Sep: daily 10am-6pm, rest of year:

Tue-Sun 10.30am-1pm and 2pm-5.30pm, last

entry 30 minutes before closing. Ask to borrow

a free guidebook and leaflet in English

Admission €7

#### ■ Rauzan castle

Open Jul-Aug: daily, rest of year: Tue-Sun

Admission €3

### BASSIN D'ARCACHON

#### ■ Arcachon

There are various summer boat tours around the bay that depart from the main jetties, and fishing trips that leave from the marina. Note that even the town's busiest beaches don't have sun loungers, parasols or pedalos for rent.

#### ■ Dune du Pyla

Open all year (steps are only in place Apr-Nov)

Admission €2.30 for 1hr car parking (or €3 for

the whole day)

#### ■ Le Teich Ornithological Park

Rue du Port

[www.parc-ornithologique-du-teich.com](http://www.parc-ornithologique-du-teich.com)

Open all year

Admission €7

#### ■ Lighthouse

Cap Ferret

Open Apr-Sep: daily, Oct-Mar: Wed-Sun

Admission €4.50

### SOUTHERN GIRONDE

#### ■ Château de Cazeneuve

Préchac

[www.chateaudecazeneuve.com](http://www.chateaudecazeneuve.com)

Open Jun-Sep: 2pm-6pm daily (Easter-May & Oct weekends only)

Admission €8 (tours only in French but booklet in English provided)

#### ■ Castle

Villandraut

Open Jul-Sep daily 10am-7pm, Easter-Jun

2pm-6pm

Admission €3.50 tour

## WINE

If you want to visit a *grand cru classé château*, you will usually need to book a visit in advance – this could be on the same morning or up to a month before. Staff at tourist offices or Maisons du Vin can phone estates to find out which are available to visit and can give local maps with estates marked. Fewer tend to be open at weekends. Note that while some châteaux will allow you tastings for free, others may charge you for this if you don't buy any bottles as a result, so it's worth clarifying at the outset.

Typical charges are €5-7 for a visit and tastings. Take a jacket or jumper for tours inside estates. For more information, visit [www.bordeaux.com](http://www.bordeaux.com).

At Saint-Emilion, we recommend taking Le Train des Grands Vignobles, a tourist train that gives an interesting bilingual commentary on the local estates during a 35-minute road tour past the vineyards (and the chance to hop off for tastings at a château). Cost: €6 ([www.visite-saint-emilion.com](http://www.visite-saint-emilion.com)).

## GOOD PLACES TO STAY

Unless otherwise stated, prices are for the cheapest double room, including breakfast and taxes, in Sept 2009 – each accommodation accepts Mastercard and Visa and is open year-round. Breakfast is usually optional, so you can save money by going to a supermarket or café instead.

### ARCACHON

#### ■ Le Dauphin

7 Avenue Gounod

Tel 0556 830289

[www.dauphin-arcachon.com](http://www.dauphin-arcachon.com)

It's 300 metres to the sea and town centre from this attractive 19th century villa hotel with a pool, in a tranquil, residential area. Climb the balustraded double staircase and you'll find a cosy lounge foyer and an appealing café-style breakfast room. The 50 rooms have small but neat bathrooms, often with marine motifs and

little balconies. Two are adapted for wheelchair users. As well as offering bicycles and a computer for free, the hotel arranges activities such as horse-riding and canoeing. **£99**

## BASSIN D'ARCACHON

### ■ Airotel Les Viviers

Claouey, Lege-Cap Ferret

Tel 0176767010

[www.airotel-les-viviers.com](http://www.airotel-les-viviers.com)

This vast family-friendly campsite near Le Four is set in a bay-facing pine grove, with plots criss-crossed by canals and clean, modern static 'motorhomes' with small bedrooms. Superior wooden chalets are roomier with verandas. The ground is mainly sandy and the shower blocks seem well-maintained. Plentiful facilities include tennis, a water slide and playground. Book in advance, unless you have your own motorhome. In high season, minimum stay of seven nights. Open March-November. **Static mobile home: £198; chalet: £355 (for four people, seven nights)**

## BAZAS

### ■ Le Domaine de Fompeyre

Route de Mont de Marsan

Tel 0556 259800

[www.monalisahotels.com](http://www.monalisahotels.com)

This inviting country house hotel about one km southwest of Bazas is set in lovely grounds, with great views to the town cathedral. The 50 rooms are bright and cheery with spacious bathrooms. Those in the annexe have better balcony views. The many mouth-watering, top-notch dishes at dinner may include beef fillet with ceps coulis. Facilities include an indoor and outdoor pool and tennis court. Suitable for families. **£93**

## BLAYE

### ■ La Citadelle

Place d'Armes

Tel 0557 421710

[www.hotellacitadelle.com](http://www.hotellacitadelle.com)

This upmarket hotel beside the old convent chapel is the only hotel within the citadel but has a low-key, unpretentious attitude. Sit out on the terrace under a pine tree for sweeping views over the Gironde estuary or just splash in the garden pool. Functional corridors lead to large rooms with plain furniture, good showers and a useful welcome folder. Go for a higher room for good views. The vast breakfast buffet choice includes heat-your-own crepes, brownies and even wine! Parking right outside the hotel. **£99**

## BORDEAUX

### ■ Acanthe

12-14 Rue Saint-Rémi

Tel 0556 816658

[www.acanthe-hotel-bordeaux.com](http://www.acanthe-hotel-bordeaux.com)

Right behind Place de la Bourse, this good value bolthole in the old town is very conveniently placed, though there's the chance of outside noise at night. Once beyond the dreary exterior,

there's a homely lounge-cum-breakfast room decorated with changing paintings. Standard rooms are adequately neat with small, clean shower rooms but little storage space. The renovated 'comfort' rooms are roomier and have air conditioning, unlike the standards. Breakfast is fairly modest. **£69**

### ■ La Maison du Lierre

57 Rue Huguerie

Tel 0556 519271

[www.maisondulierre.com](http://www.maisondulierre.com)

On a fairly quiet road west of the Grands Hommes 'triangle', this friendly guesthouse has a delightful courtyard terrace for summer breakfasts and a stylish charm throughout. There's no lift, so climb past appealing iron banisters and Belle Epoque-style lampshades to reach one of the 12 bedrooms – some of these (such as 14) are quite small with baths and basic furniture – the décor is warm and cheery. **£90**

### ■ Majestic

2 Rue de Condé

Tel 0556 526044

[www.hotel-majestic.com](http://www.hotel-majestic.com)

On a block diagonally opposite the opera house, the Majestic attracts music lovers to its 18th-century mansion. Manuscripts of symphonies, instrument ornaments and figurines of musicians adorn the elegant lobby which extends into a charming breakfast lounge. A spiral staircase leads to spacious bedrooms, some of which continue the musical theme with note-patterned carpets or conductor curtains. The standard rooms may have small shower rooms. **£91**

### ■ Seeko'o

54 Quai de Bacalan

Tel 0556 390707

[www.seekoo-hotel.com](http://www.seekoo-hotel.com)

Are you style-conscious and seeking a top-notch treat? Consider the cool, trendy luxury of this new snow-white hotel in the Chartrons district which is a short walk from a tram stop. It's a world of swivelling ladybird chairs, leaf-shaped dining plates and black and white bedrooms with ipod docks and sleek bathrooms. **£196**

### ■ Une Chambre en Ville

35 Rue Bouffard

Tel 0556 813453

[www.bandb-bx.com](http://www.bandb-bx.com)

Hidden away on a quiet central street, this charming, convivial B&B in an 18th-century building has just five unique appealing rooms. Artworks or antiques appear in some – we liked La Bordelaise with its shutters and old writing desk. Breakfast is at one long table and there's a book-exchange library. Across the street are two apartments, also artistically decorated. **£95**

## CAP FERRET

### ■ Hotel des Pins

23 Rue des Hommes

Tel 0556 606011

[www.hoteldespins.eu](http://www.hoteldespins.eu)

It's only a five minute walk to the waterfront from this small homely hotel which has plenty of character, antiques and 1930's memorabilia from the days when it was a ballroom. The 14 individual bedrooms often have an air of faded chic, with decorative bed headboards. You can even turn gypsy and sleep in the garden caravan! **£71**

## SAINT-EMILION

### ■ Palais Cardinal

Place du 11 Novembre

Tel 0557 247239

[www.Palais-Cardinal.com](http://www.Palais-Cardinal.com)

There's a refined but unpretentious ambience to this family-run hotel occupying the site of a 14th century palace by the old town's northern ramparts. Several of the 27 rooms overlook the secluded garden which features an old wine press and an inviting pool terrace. Inside, there's a cosy lounge and a stylish dining room – most public areas are imbued with warm golds and reds. The cheaper rooms are fairly small but with smart, traditional designs. The deluxe rooms are larger, more graceful and with a few antiques. One room is adapted for wheelchairs. The hotel serves wine from its own Grand Cru estate. **£109**

## SAINT-MACAIRE

### ■ Les Feuilles d'Acanthe

5 Rue de L'Eglise

Tel 0556 623375

[www.feuilles-dacanthefr](http://www.feuilles-dacanthefr)

Within the walls of the old town, this attractive honey stone building is fronted by a trio of Gothic arches. There's a Gallo-Roman style to the décor, with exposed stone walls and villa-style terracotta mosaics. The focal point is the beamed restaurant which serves a lovely three-course set dinner for €21 or dishes such as giant prawns flambéed in whisky. The gorgeous bedrooms sport rustic stone walls, terracotta floors, cosseting duvets and beams. One room is adapted for wheelchairs. Facilities include a spa, darts, and free but limited garage parking. **£86**

## GOOD PLACES TO EAT & DRINK

Regional specialities include oysters from the Bassin d'Arcachon, Pauillac lamb and Bazas beef. Restaurants are often closed on Sunday and/or Monday evenings. To save money, go for the set two or three course menus. Consider having your main meal at lunch, when these are cheaper still.

In Bordeaux, look out for Baillardran ([www.baillardran.com](http://www.baillardran.com)), a maker of vanilla *canelé* cakes with several outlets. They are sold in three sizes – a medium costs €1.20. Saint-Emilion's equivalent is the macaroon, a fluffy, sugary almond cake created centuries ago by nuns. Pay €6 for a box of 24 or €2 for one large cookie at La Moine on Rue des Girondins or nearby at Moulieraç.

## ARCACHON

### ■ Chez Diego

Near Jetée d'Eyrac  
Tel 0556 838446

It's no surprise that seafood is the main focus at this bay-facing restaurant near the Eyrac jetty. The catch of the day is on show in a tank, and dishes include sardines with peppers or a huge seafood platter. Our Menu de Bassin (€25) featured oysters that slipped down a treat, a perfectly grilled cod and dessert which was full of flavour. Mains €19-31. Most wines are pricey – often €25 for a bottle.

## BORDEAUX

### ■ Bar à Vin

Corner Allées Tourny and Cours du XXX Juillet  
Tel 0556 004347

<http://baravin.bordeaux.com>

Bordeaux has many wine bars, but this is the 'official' one, inside the city's Maison du Vin. The trendy décor features stained glass depicting wine production, and a bar counter tapestry of a mermaid under grape trees. Stewards advise which goes well with the snacks on offer – perhaps a plate of goat cheeses or a deli plate for €4.50 (smoked duck breast, chorizo). The subsidised wine menu (different châteaux every month) means glasses cost from €3 to €8 (for a Saint-Emilion Grand Cru).

### ■ Baud et Millet

19 Rue Huguerie  
Tel 0556 790577  
[www.baudetmillet.fr](http://www.baudetmillet.fr)

This friendly, low-key little place with just 10 tables specialises in cheese and wine. Under beams decorated with old jugs, pans and rustic tools, try dishes such as camembert tagine or gorgonzola-stuffed aubergine. Or the €23 buffet lets you choose from scores of cheeses in a dank, cool cellar. Wines by the glass range from €3.50 (Entre-deux-Mers) to €7 (Saint-Emilion).

### ■ Café des Arts

138 Cours Victor Hugo  
Tel 0556 917846

This historic brasserie with a roadside terrace makes a great lunch stop in between sightseeing or shopping. There's bygone charm aplenty with Art Nouveau lampshades, floral plasterwork and mosaic floor tiles. Welcoming, efficient waiters serve attractively presented (mainly meat) dishes such as duck confit, beef steak or pigs trotters in vinaigrette. A two-course lunch meal €11.50, mains are generally €11-€18.

### ■ Café Napoleon III

6 Cours du XXX Juillet  
Tel 0556 815226

Previously called Café de 4 Soeurs, this intimate eatery with huge mirrors sports much historic elegance. Surrounded by ornate woodwork (with tall, fluted pillars and neo-classical figures echoing the nearby opera house), smart waiters

serve dishes such as our delicious cep omelette with perfectly cooked chips. Two-course set menu with a glass of wine €22.

### ■ Le Bistro du Musée

37 Place Pey-Berland  
Tel 0556 529969

[www.lebistrodumusee.com](http://www.lebistrodumusee.com)

Wines are a speciality at this civilised but informal restaurant facing Saint-André cathedral, and the rough stone walls are lined with wine-themed quotes, bottles in niches and old vine trunks. Bottles are from €19 and should nicely complement simple dishes such as salmon rilette, roast lamb or grilled duck breast, although our white fish fillet and vegetables were rather bland. A two-course set meal is €13.50.

### ■ Le Petit Commerce

22 Rue du Parlement  
Saint-Pierre

Tel 0556 797658

Good-hearted staff help to create a friendly ambience at this constantly busy, no-nonsense seafood restaurant. Seating is pretty cramped but the interior – with dishes written on mirrors and a blackboard – opens out onto a street terrace. Tapas dishes include squid, shrimps and oysters, while main courses (€15-€22) may be sea bream, tuna steak or swordfish. Wines are good value (bottles from €12).

## BLAYE

### ■ La Citadelle

There's a retro mid-20th century touch to this elegant, modern restaurant where lamp globes hang from chains over well-spaced tables. Wine bottles line the shelves of the adjoining bar. The highlight, though, is its picture windows over the estuary – a superb scene to dine on well-presented dishes such as St Jacques scallops, asparagus on a bed of salmon or cod with mussels and tomatoes. The set menus are at three levels (from €25) and you might finish with a white cheese sorbet. See 'Good places to stay'.

## CAP FERRET

### ■ L'Escale

Jetée Bélisaire  
Tel 0556 606817

[www.lescale-restaurant.com](http://www.lescale-restaurant.com)

Maritime knick-knacks such as model boats, ceramic fish and old prints of liners adorn this restaurant which also has views of bobbing boats from its picture windows. For €25, your three-course dinner menu might be prawn risotto, then grilled sardines or side of lamb in garlic sauce, followed by *canelé* in a coffee sauce. Mains generally €10-€15.

## SAINT-EMILION

### ■ Le Bouchon

Place de l'Eglise Monolithe  
Tel 0557 246281

You can't get more central than this popular

restaurant, which has a terrace on the square overlooking the monolithic church. The €20 set menu only offers a choice of two dishes per course but we liked our salmon millefeuille topped with crème fraîche, red mullet and rich chocolate mousse. Starters may include foie gras or snails, while other main courses include lamprey in red Bordelais sauce or beef carpaccio. Most mains €13-25. Wine bottles range from €23 to a mere €2800 for a Lafitte Rothschild!

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### ■ Time difference GMT+1

■ **Phones** If calling from the UK, the international dialling code is 0033, then drop the initial 0 of the local number.

■ **When to go** May and June are pleasant times to visit, as are September and October (the wine harvest season). Accommodation will be more expensive and harder to find during local events such as the Jurade wine festivals (mid June and mid Sept) in Saint-Emilion.

■ **Language** Most people involved in tourism will be able to speak some English, particularly in Bordeaux and Saint-Emilion.

■ **Money matters** In this Factfile we have based any conversions from euros on a rate of £1=€1.15.

■ **Shopping** There is no shortage of wine stores in Bordeaux and Saint-Emilion. La Vinoteque de Bordeaux ([www.la-vinoteque.com](http://www.la-vinoteque.com)), next to the main Bordeaux tourist office, is a good starting point, ranging from €3.50 up to €35 for a bottle of *grand cru classé*. Also in Bordeaux, as well as the farmers' market every Sunday by the river in the Chartrons district, there are markets near St Michel Basilica (a flea market and stalls selling meat, honey and spices) and a nearby large indoor market (Marché des Capucins).

### Tourist information

■ [www.tourisme-gironde.fr](http://www.tourisme-gironde.fr)

■ [www.arcachon.com](http://www.arcachon.com)

■ [www.bordeaux-tourisme.com](http://www.bordeaux-tourisme.com)

■ [www.saint-emilion-tourisme.com](http://www.saint-emilion-tourisme.com)

In Bordeaux, the welcoming main city tourist office is at 12 Cours du XXX Juillet – there are also offices at 28 rue des Argentiers and at St Jean train station. The well-stocked, helpful Gironde tourist centre is nearby at 21, Cours de l'Intendance. The Bordeaux and Saint-Emilion tourist offices arrange a wide range of tours – for example, there's a walking tour of Bordeaux old town at 10am on most days (€8)

## GUIDEBOOK AND MAPS

■ Cadogan: *The Dordogne, Lot and Bordeaux*, £14.99 (ISBN 978-1-86011-354-3)

■ Everyman Map Guides: *Bordeaux and the Gironde*, £5.99 (ISBN 978-1841595047)

■ *Michelin Aquitaine map 524* (1:200,000) £4.99 (ISBN 978-2-06-713532-1)





# Photo Album

**A PERSONAL ACCOUNT** Jonathan Mitcham (pictured at Saint-Emilion) visited France's Gironde region in April 2009. Here is a selection of his trip photos...



**Above right:** Canele cakes at a Baillardran store in Bordeaux. **Centre right:** Steps aid the climb up the Dune du Pyla



**Above centre:** Chateau Margaux, a Premier Cru classé wine estate in the Médoc. **Centre:** Rauzan castle, dating back to the 14th century (as seen from the town church).



**Top:** Bordeaux: Notre Dame church; **Centre:** Saint-Michel basilica and Grosse Cloche; **Below:** Galerie Bordelaise



**Left:** The monolithic church and bell tower in Saint-Emilion. **Above:** World Heritage Bazaes cathedral, as seen from the Domaine de Fompeyre hotel.

For the full magazine report on the Gironde, see p46 of the July 2009 issue of Which? Holiday