



LA  
VILLA  
DE  
MAZAMET



SELF DRIVE  
DAY TOURS



**No matter if your stay at La Villa is for two days or two weeks, we know you will want to get a flavour of this beautiful part of France.**

To help you gain the most from your stay, we have written a series of eight self-drive day tours; designed to highlight what, we consider to be, are the “must see” places that you can visit from La Villa.

Each of our tours includes a map, detailed driving directions, suggested places of interest to see along the route and, where we have found one, a recommendation for a lunch-stop.

This leaflet gives a brief overview of each of the eight tours to help you choose, ask us for the full printed version of the tour(s) you would like to undertake. If you have a particular interest (be that vineyards or ancient châteaux) or a place you have in mind to visit, please ask us which tour(s) may best suit you. We have also given a list of the markets that take place each day of the week should you wish to combine your tour with the tastes, sights & smells of fresh local produce!

***Don't have a car?*** We are happy to suggest places that may be reached by train, bus, bike or on foot - and if you would like us to arrange a driver & car for the day to enjoy any of our tours, please do not hesitate to let us know.

***Please note that some seasonal opening hours may apply to certain attractions, activities & restaurants, please ask us for advice.***



## OUR SELF DRIVE SERIES

1. Albi, Cordes, Gaillac & Lautrec
2. Carcassonne, Limoux & Rennes les Château
3. Olargues and the Monts de Lacaune
4. Montagne Noire West, Lac St. Ferréol, Saissac & Montolieu
5. Montagne Noire East & the Minervois
6. Castres & Sidobre
7. Lisle-sur-Tarn, Rabastens & Lavaur
8. The Albigenian Bastides

Please ask us for the full printed version of the tour(s) you would like to undertake.

La Villa De Mazamet 4 rue Pasteur  
81200 Mazamet France t: +33 (0)5 63 97 90 33  
[info@villademazamet.com](mailto:info@villademazamet.com) [www.villademazamet.com](http://www.villademazamet.com)

## 1 ALBI, CORDES, GAILLAC & LAUTREC

**DURATION:** 180-200 km as a whole day tour,  
a shortened half day tour is also possible

This tour takes you to two “Les Plus Beau Villages du France” (most beautiful villages in France) and to a UNESCO World Heritage Site – all in one day!! You will discover one of the finest cathedrals in the world, one of Frances only working windmills, rolling hills of the northern Tarn and (in season) row after row of sunflowers.

## 2 CARCASSONNE, LIMOUX & RENNES LE CHÂTEAU

**DURATION:** 170-190 km as a whole day tour,  
a shortened half day tour is also possible

This is a half or full day tour taking you over the Montagne Noire, and into the UNESCO World Heritage Site of “La Cité” (in Carcassonne), then beyond to the ancient and mystical sites of Rennes les Bains and Rennes le Château.

## 3 OLARGUES, & THE MONTS DE LACAUNE

**DURATION:** 145 km as a whole day tour,  
a shortened half day tour is also possible

This tour will take in some stunning scenery of the Monts de Lacaune and Forêt doms. de l'Espinous, as well as the source of the river Agout and the mountain lake of Riviege. You will visit the medieval village of Olargues, set in a beautiful valley, and then rise 700 metres to the mountain village of Fraisse on the river Agout – passing from the department of the Tarn in and out of the Herault.

## 4 MONTAGNE NOIRE WEST, BASSIN ST. FERRÉOL, SAISSAC & MONTOLIEU

**DURATION:** 100 km as a whole day tour,  
a shortened half day tour is also possible

This tour takes in some of the villages to west of Mazamet that sit in the foothills of the Montagne Noire (which end at Revel) and up into the mountains themselves. You will see & discover medieval villages, Cathar ruins, lakes, market towns & stunning scenery.

## 5 MONTAGNE NOIRE EAST & THE MINERVOIS

**DURATION:** 180 km as a whole day tour,  
a shortened half day tour is also possible

This tour commences in the Valley du Thoré that runs from Mazamet towards Beziers and takes in a variety of scenery along the way – from mountain pastures to vineyards, medieval villages to the Canal du Midi. Plan your whole day around visiting to two key villages of Minerve and Caunes-Minervois.

## 6 CASTRES & SIDOBRE

**DURATION:** 120-140 km as a whole day tour,  
a shortened half day tour is also possible

This tour takes you through the dramatic scenery north of Mazamet in an area known as “Le Sidobre” and into the Monts de Lacaune – this is the most westerly part of the “Parc Naturel Régional de Haut Languedoc”. Le Sidobre is a plateau of granite, typified by deep river valley and forests that are littered by huge granite boulders, formed over thousands of years. The route allows you to stop & visit some huge pieces of rock that have been naturally carved by the elements into shapes like the “Trois Fomages”.

## 7 LISLE-SUR-TARN, RABASTENS & LAVAU

**DURATION:** 180-200 km as a whole day tour,  
a shortened half day tour is also possible

This tour covers the NW section of the Tarn, locally known as the ‘Le Pays des Cocagne’ and the main villages & towns that sit on the banks of the river Tarn and the river Agout. You will see the rolling hills and vineyards around Gaillac, bastide medieval villages and even a botanical garden.

## 8 THE ALBIGENSIAN BASTIDES

**DURATION:** 230 km as a whole day tour (you can also use this tour on leaving Mazamet for the Dordogne)

This tour takes you to the northern most part of the Tarn and the stunning “Bastide” (fortified) villages that played an important role in the Cathar history of our region. You will discover a number of “Les Plus Beau Villages du France”, marvel at how some of the villages and their fortified chateaux were ever built, as well as take in some of the most stunning scenery the Tarn has to offer.

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# LOCAL MARKETS

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## TUESDAY

Mazamet, Homps,  
Olonzac, Castres

## WEDNESDAY

Puylaurens, St. Pons,  
Bize-Minervois

## THURSDAY

Aussillion, Caunes-Minervois,  
Castres, Graulhet

## FRIDAY

Labrugière, Castres,  
Caune-Minervois,  
Gaillac, Limoux

## SATURDAY

Mazamet, Albi, Revel,  
Gaillac, Castres, Cordes -sur-Ciel,  
Lavaur, Lisle-sur-Tarn

## SUNDAY

Mazamet, St. Chinian,  
Gaillac, Graulhet

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*The majority of markets commence at 8am  
and finish by 12 noon. Ask us about the  
“Marche du Producteurs” that take place  
in during July & August in the area.*

