

COUNTRY & TOWN HOT HOUSE

JULY 2019 £3.90

BEST OF
H WORLDS

ATWALK
DUPLÉ

*rise of
h & Russo*

OCEAN
DIVE

*Watches saving
the world*

SILENCE IS
GOLDEN

The monk on a
mindful mission

PLUS

FRINGE
BENEFITS

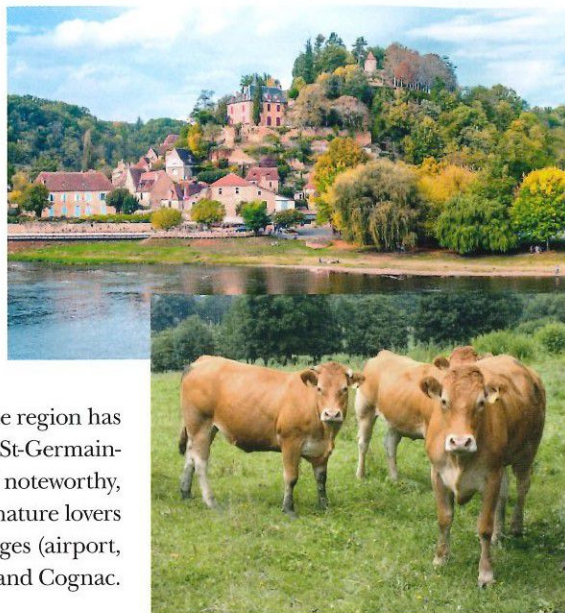
Let's move
to Edinburgh

Art of
TIME

WATCH SPECIAL

CHARENTE OR DORDOGNE?

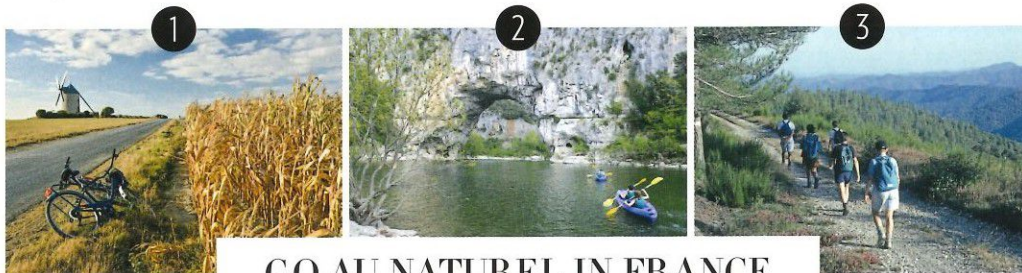
While tourists may head for the better-known Dordogne, British expats have long discovered the Charente Limousine region, where their numbers well exceed 20 per cent of the population, helping to keep schools open, houses occupied and traditions alive. With gently rolling hills, lush forests and fields of Limousin cattle, the region has fine Romanesque architecture. Confolens, St-Germain-de-Confolens, Brigueuil and Lesterps are all noteworthy, as are the Haute Charente Lakes, havens for nature lovers and water sports. The nearest towns are Limoges (airport, with flights from the UK), Angoulême and Cognac.



TRAVEL NEWS

THE HOTEL WIZARD

Fiona Duncan has a natural attraction to France



GO AU NATUREL IN FRANCE

My blissful time in the Charente made me long to rediscover the French countryside and outdoor life

(1) **Normandy** Just pop your bikes on the ferry to Dieppe for coastal scenery and D-Day beaches, or Cherbourg for the remote and lovely Cotentin Peninsula. Book your own accommodation or an organised tour. thechaingang.co.uk; biking-france.com (2) **The Ardèche** Perfectly suited to families. Kayak along the region's magnificent gorges and camp on the riverside. the-outdoor-experience.co.uk (3) **The Cévennes** Follow the GR70 Stevenson Trail, so-called after Robert Louis Stevenson, who walked across the Cévennes from Le Monastier in the Auvergne, with his donkey Modestine. These days, Modestine can be replaced with less troublesome forms of baggage transportation. sherpaexpeditions.co.uk

ON THE TRAVEL RADAR

PILLOW TALK

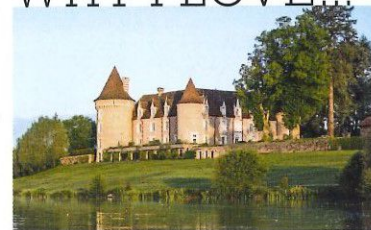
With the help of sleep experts and scientists, Danish designer Ann Sjøgreen Sanger has designed the brilliant zip-away Snooze travel pillow. Easy to compress, heaven to lay your head on. £39.99. snooze.world.com



FRENCH FANCIES

A new collection of boutique five-star hotels in Provence, St Tropez and Méribel has been launched by fashion and property entrepreneur Patrick Pariente and his two daughters. maisonspariente.com

TEN REASONS WHY I LOVE...



DOMAINE DES ETANGS, MASSIGNAC, FRANCE

1 Stepping into another world, one that's harmonious, calm and natural. 'You are going to paradise,' said the driver taking us from Limoges airport (40 minutes away), and he was right.

2 The 11th-century chateau, made gracious in the 19th century, and its brilliant modernist interiors by acclaimed designer Isabelle Stanislas, including amazing lighting...

3 ... With the art collection of owner Garance Primat that includes Picasso and Matisse.

4 Camille Muller's unconventional ornamental gardens, with lake views and sculptures by the likes of Richard Long...

5 ... And the spiral potager for the Michelin-starred restaurant, Dyades...

6 The Sothys spa in an old walnut mill: soothing massages and a couples' room set around the wooden mill wheel.

7 The dreamy 2,500-acre Charente estate: meadows, woods, wildlife, red-gold Limousin cows and seven lakes on which to row, fish and cycle past.

8 The huge attic playroom for adults and children: fancy dress, table football, billiards and much more.

9 The picnics: wicker baskets full of tempting delights.

10 Again - the peace, the understated luxury, the gentleness.

Doubles from €350. domainedesetangs.com

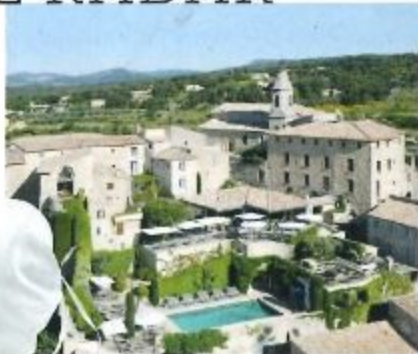


PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

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ESCAPE

EURO ZONE

The hottest places to summer in Europe, from island hopping in Greece to château sitting in France and drawn-out Spanish siestas. Edited by *Daisy Finer*

DANAI BEACH RESORT

HALKIDIKI

Greek culture is all about generosity and conviviality, and this little Aegean beauty embodies this from the moment you check in until the final 'yassou'. It's no surprise that the resort, on the northern peninsula of Halkidiki, is a family affair. Originally built as a modest family home, it's slowly expanded year on year – a true labour of love – to become the 64 suite, six-villa paradise it is today. Sprawling views, a private beach, award-winning wine cellar, and a cobbled lane of boutique shops make Danai feel like its own little

village, neatly perched on the Aegean sea. Cliffside fine dining at Squirrel (voted number one restaurant in Greece) maintains the warm and jovial hospitality felt throughout Danai, but for a big fat Greek knees-up, dine al fresco at Bachtsets. The tables are there to be danced on as much as they are to be eaten off of – don't worry, everyone does it. If you fancy a day trip, the resort's very own 82ft yacht is the perfect way to explore the Sithonia peninsula in style – not that you'll ever want to leave.

BOOK IT: Suites from £375.
danairesort.com



France



HÔTEL CRILLON LE BRAVE

PROVENCE

Perched on a ridge above a valley of vineyards, this boutique hotel looks towards Mont Ventoux – the toughest leg of the Tour de France. Its intimidating climb and terrifying descent is the subject of much debate among Lycra-clad bikers while they load up on pain au chocolat. The limestone buildings that once housed a 17th-century school, town hall and artist's studio are now en suite rooms with roll-top baths, Bamford shampoo and cream linen sofas arranged on flagstone floors. The hotel's spa is housed in a centuries-old, stone ex-stable. Quiet streets easily conjure the farmers who once led their horses into the vaulted stables where guests now gather for evening drinks. Restaurant La Madeleine takes flavours from Provence and the chef's native Brittany; the waiter's peregrination around the vast cheese selection becomes a soliloquy worthy of Racine. By day, guests read *Le Monde Weekend* by the pool, the mountain soaring above with a snow-topped peak even in summer. Now part of a small, family-run hotel collection called Maisons Pariente – worth keeping an eye on.

BOOK IT: From £306. crillonlebrave.com



The 1,600sq/m spa, with church abbey-inspired architecture and vaulted corridors, immediately imparts a sense of calm. The staggered hillside setting means that for once the spa isn't banished to the basement; instead, the treatment rooms benefit from natural light with sun-dappled private terraces for open air massages beneath ancient olive trees. The spa also houses a sauna, sensory showers,

LA BASTIDE DE GORDES

VAUCLUSE

Perched atop 12th-century fortifications on the edge of the hilltop village of Gordes is La Bastide de Gordes, a spa hotel with sweeping views of the Luberon valley and mountains. Arranged over ten floors, it is home to 40 rooms and suites, a Sisley spa, four swimming pools and three restaurants, including Peir, from acclaimed multi-Michelin-starred chef Pierre Gagnaire.

a compact gym and an indoor pool, which is open at one end to the Luberon valley. The highlight of this hotel has to be the outdoor pool edged with loungers, a perfect spot for taking in the unparalleled views. Classified as one of the prettiest villages in France, Gordes itself is a charming village with cobbled streets lined with shops selling the region's famed lavender honey.

BOOK IT: From £262.

labastidedegordes.airellescollection.com



PRICES ARE FOR DOUBLES PER NIGHT
B&B UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

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