

# FrenchHomestay.co.nz

an idyllic setting in the French Dordogne

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## The history

The house at le Maumasson, which lies on an ancient route to Santiago de Compostela, dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was built by the Feix dependency of the Knights Templar, an elite Christian Military Order whose stated mission was to protect pilgrims during their travels in the East. The Order was disbanded in 1312 by Pope Clement V under pressure from King Philip IV. The prevailing view is that the King, jealous of the Templars' wealth and power, concocted charges to bring them down and enable him to seize their property and financial resources. Much property, included the house at le Maumasson, was transferred to the Knights Hospitaliers.

The Knights Hospitaliers set up two hostels for leprosy sufferers: one for women at le Maumasson in the little house adjoining the main house and one for men at la Maladrerie in La Tour Blanche. The hostels were abandoned in 1700 and until the 1950s the property at le Maumasson was used for agricultural purposes.

Bought by a Parisian who dreamed of restoring the house where he had spent many happy childhood holidays, physical frailty sadly thwarted these dreams and the house was put up for sale.

Fortunately, the ending to the story is not a sad one. We have taken on the restoration of le Maumasson, a labour of love which has involved plenty of sweat, the occasional alarming moment, and an abundance of laughter and pleasure.

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## The owners

One thing is certain, it all began in Japan: a chance meeting between a Dutchman and New Zealand girl in a bar or on the tennis court, depending on whose version of the story you choose to believe. Thirty years, four continents and three children later, we are embarking on a new adventure which encompasses our love of France, people, good food and wine.

In the Happy Isles of Oceania, Paul Theroux wrote, 'Tourists will believe almost anything as long as they are comfortable'. During your stay with us, we will not only ensure that you are comfortable, but also that you are reliably and well informed about what to do and where to go!

## The region

The Perigord Vert, the greenest part of the Dordogne, is known for its truffles, foie gras, cepes, walnuts and escargots. The region offers a myriad of things to do – too many to list here, but we will be pleased to provide you with additional information either before or during your stay. The following is a selection of local activities and attractions.

\*More info on the Perigord Vert; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Périgord>

| <b>Sports</b> | <b>Picturesque towns</b> | <b>Markets</b>                  | <b>Wines</b> |
|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| swimming      | Brantome                 | Riberac - Friday                | Bergeac      |
| tennis        | Perigeux                 | Perigeux - Wednesday & Saturday | St. Emilion  |
| golf          | St Jean de Cole          | Brantome - Saturday             | Medoc        |
| walking       | Oradeur sur Glane        | Aubeterre - Sunday              |              |
| cycling       | Villebois-Lavallette     |                                 |              |
| horse riding  |                          |                                 |              |
| canoeing      |                          |                                 |              |

| <b>Grottes</b> | <b>Miscellaneous</b> | <b>Gardens</b> |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Villars        | Cognac               | Limodore       |
|                | Chateau de Mareuil   | Marqueyssac    |

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## How to get there

By air: Bergerac, Bordeaux

By TGV: Angouleme, Bordeaux

Car rental: Angouleme, Bordeaux, Bergerac

Info on airports:

- <http://www.bergerac.aeroport.fr/>
- <http://www.bordeaux.aeroport.fr/en>

Info on trains:

- [http://www.sncf.com/en\\_EN/flash/](http://www.sncf.com/en_EN/flash/)

Info on car rental:

- [http://www.europcar.co.uk/car-hire-ANGOULEME\\_RAILWAY\\_STATION.html](http://www.europcar.co.uk/car-hire-ANGOULEME_RAILWAY_STATION.html)
- <http://www.car-hire-bordeaux-airport.com/>
- <http://www.europcar.com/car-rental-FRANCE-BERGERAC.html>

## Contact information

If you would like to make a booking or need any further information please send us an e-mail. We will get back to you as soon as possible. Rein & Penny Putman Cramer

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