

★★★
POUR LE BELVÈDÈRE
AU GUIDE VERT
MICHELIN

Les jardins suspendus de
Marqueyssac

PRESS FILE

BELVÈDÈRE DE LA DORDOGNE

DORDOGNE

9 KM FROM SARLAT

PÉRIGORD



A GARDEN IN PÉRIGORD

A hidden treasure of Périgord Noir and the golden triangle of the valley of the castles, the hanging gardens of Marqueyssac cultivate history and nature with the same passion. Marqueyssac is the 3rd most popular tourist site in Dordogne, welcoming 200,000 visitors per year.

At the edge of a rocky spur that rises 130 metres above the Dordogne River, the Gardens of Marqueyssac, with the castles of Castelnaud and Beynac, is one of the most spectacular sites in Périgord Noir. From the top of the cliff, visitors can gaze upon centuries of history, landscapes and villages located on either side of one of the most beautiful rivers in Europe. Begin your exploration of the region of Périgord with Marqueyssac. The hanging gardens opened in 1997. Since then, they have been a constant source of inspiration and have kept their sense of place by focusing on the preservation and enhancement of

the site's architectural and landscape heritage.

ABOVE THE RIVER

Marqueyssac is first of all a beautiful silhouette that emerges from the bottom of the valley: a dense vegetation that continues on the ridgeline, cypresses and stone pines that rise into the sky, stone roofs and ochre-coloured stones, which all come to life once passed the garden gates.

Marqueyssac invites you on a journey through time and space: the Italian-style atmosphere, the elegance of 150,000 hand-trimmed boxwoods, the reminder of a 19th century naturalist,

the beauty of the unobstructed views towards the horizon and - from the Belvedere - an incredible panorama, crowned with three stars by the Michelin Guide in 2016.

CONTRASTS AND DEPTH

Marqueyssac is also and above all a unique multitude of landscapes cultivated according to the rules of art. It was awarded the "Remarkable Garden" label in 2004. Between Mediterranean vegetation and more temperate species depending on their exposure, the different parts of the gardens play together a natural symphony with various rhythms.



THE BELVEDERE

HEATHER HUT

ALLÉE DES ROMARINS
AND CHATEAU DE
CASTELNAUD

THE BASTION
IN DETAIL

CLIFF-TOP WALKWAY

ESPLANADE

Marqueyssac is thus always filled with contrasts and depth: from shadow to light, from wild to refined, from the undergrowth to the panoramic views of the landscape, from the straight paths to the winding labyrinths, from hints of colour to the polished tones of the boxwood, from romantic strolls to the most daring adventures.

FROM STROLL TO ADVENTURE

Marqueyssac is still a timeless world that, over its 15 hectares of parkland and gardens and along its 6 km of paths, has something special to

offer each visitor: a romantic walk, a botanical journey, an exciting hike full of surprises or an educational adventure for those who love to learn. Marqueyssac is finally a land of adventure and the perfect place to discover the sites in a whole new light: with workshops and events organised throughout the year, beginner rock climbing sessions in a natural environment or La Via Ferrata cliff climbing course, with games and exciting paths high above the ground... Welcome to the most popular garden in Périgord...

One Garden & THREE CENTURIES OF PASSION

Created in the 19th century on 17th-century terraces, the Gardens of Marqueyssac have stood the test of time while keeping their spirit intact. Since the beginning of the 3rd millennium and after major restoration work carried out in the park and on the castle, the gardens have been made whole again.

The end of the 20th century marked the revival of the Gardens of Marqueyssac, while the beginning of the 3rd millennium has given them a new sense of fullness. The park has been redesigned to reconnect it to its true essence, given to it by one of its greatest servants. The castle, whose façades and stone roof are listed as Historical Monuments, also gives off

a beautiful sense of fullness. After the park and its various facilities mobilized all the site's teams, the castle also underwent a successful restoration. After a 5-year project, its 700 square metre stone roof has been completely restored, in addition to the framework and the levels of the walls. Since 2016, it has been able once again to support the 500 tons

of stone tiles of this typical Périgord Noir roof.

INSPIRED BY A TRIP TO ITALY

A flashback to the splendour of the past, for a story that began in 1692 with Bertrand Vernet's arrival in Marqueyssac, the king's adviser during the siege of Sarlat. He established his



THE BASTION AT SUNSET



BELL-SHAPED HUT



WATERFALLS



TOPIARY

estate here and decided to transform the hill into a park and create vast terraces. To do this, he called on a man named Porcher, one of the best pupils of André Le Nôtre. But the gardens did not find their true style until 1861. On this date, Marqueyssac became the property of Julien de Cerval, who from then on became deeply attached to beautifying the grounds. On his return from Italy, where he defended the papacy in the Roman Legion of the Papal Zouaves, he brought back with him a real passion for gardens. Julien de Cerval planted 150,000 boxwoods, introduced in situ cypresses, stone pines and ivy-leaved cyclamens, built rock gardens and stone huts and gave the whole garden a certain Italian flare.

THE RENAISSANCE

In 1996, when it was acquired by Kléber Rossillon, the park of Château de Marqueyssac was still faithful to its original spirit, however, the vegetation

had run wild. Born in the neighbouring village of Beynac, grandson of Marius Rossillon (famous illustrator and creator of the Bibendum Michelin) and a heritage enthusiast, Kléber Rossillon had already restored the medieval fortress of Castelnaud and decided to take up a new challenge in Marqueyssac. Boxwoods were trimmed, spaces were returned to their original layouts, a waterway was created all the way up to the waterfalls, views were restored, boxwoods of the stronghold that had grown wild were trimmed back, the verdant clearings were redefined and finally the castle was restored with a new living room and Empire style furniture: Marqueyssac sparkles more than ever on the right bank of the Dordogne River

& A ROMANTIC PICTURESQUE GARDEN

Inspired by the passion of those who, over the centuries, gave them the configuration that they display today, the Gardens of Marqueyssac play with different styles and are influenced by the sun and the surrounding hillsides.

Anyone who walks through the gates into the hanging gardens of Marqueyssac must be ready for an extraordinary experience. It is more than just a simple stroll between neatly trimmed boxwoods and wild frescoes. The areas engulf each visitor with a multitude of sensations and feelings.

The origin of these areas goes back to the time of André Le Nôtre while the lines were softened under Napoleon III. Here, the Italian spirit provides beautiful hints of Tuscany

to create a perpetual contrast with the depth of endemic species. From the Bastion to the Belvedere, from the Grande Allée to the clear waterfalls, from the shade of the Allée des Arches to the Allée des Romarins... Marqueyssac stretches over 15 hectares and offers 6 km of pleasant strolls and romantic detours.

WILD BOXWOOD

Here, it is hard to avoid the boxwoods (*Buxus sempervirens*). There are approximately 150,000 box trees, neatly aligned in the heart of the vo-



.....
A PATH OF
THE BASTION

.....
ESPLANADE

.....
PANORAMIC VIEW OVER
THE VALLEY FROM THE
BELL-SHAPED HUT



lutes of the bastion or growing freely throughout the gardens. They can grow up to 10 meters high and defy the seasons as they keep their foliage all year round. The majority of the boxwoods of Marqueyssac were planted in the second half of the 19th century by Julien de Cerval and are trimmed by hand twice a year. The boxwoods of Marqueyssac have adapted to the soil of this rocky headland. They are highlighted on the Bastion in a multitude of small hills that respond to the natural depths of the valley and through the "Chaos", a contemporary and artistically unstructured vision of topiary art. The Gardens of Marqueyssac are a member of the European Boxwood and Topiary Society.

PLANT ART

Montpellier maples, evergreen oaks, junipers, strawberry trees, stone

pinus and cypresses dominate the southern side of the park with very Mediterranean accents. The colourful petals of the ivy-leaved cyclamens accentuate the surrounding area. On the opposite side covering the north slope, hornbeams and black locusts provide more Atlantic tints. The contrast between the elements is subtle: the foliage plays with shadow and light, the water flows over the rocks, as it has done for thousands of years, with depths changing according to the time of day and the seasons... in an ongoing show.

Whether it is trimmed and orderly or simply guided towards harmony, nature rejoices in Marqueyssac. From small footpaths and secret side roads to refined walkways and labyrinths, where children play and go as far as the verdant clearings, including the old Esplanade, the park

welcomes visitors into the heart of its beautiful gardens all the way to the horizon.

A SPECTACULAR VIEW

Thanks to their dominant position, the Gardens of Marqueyssac enjoy one of the most beautiful views of Périgord. The view from the Belvedere, where you can discover the panorama through binoculars, was awarded 3 stars by the Michelin Guide in 2016 and "well worth the trip". The view is absolutely extraordinary with, on both banks of the Dordogne River, some of the most beautiful villages in France and the most emblematic castles of the region of Périgord: Domme, La Roque-Gageac, Castelnaud-la-Chapelle, Fayrac, Beynac...

And those who were able to give their time and their heart to Marqueyssac were also able to create strategic stopping points over the centuries. The Chapel, the seat of the Pope (who would one day become Pius X), the Pavilion of Nature, the Poet's asylum, the sculptures of Alain de Cerval, the descendant of the creator of the gardens, rocks

chiselled at ground level stimulate curiosity and meditation while children have an irresistible desire to frolic.

.....
TRIMMING THE BOXWOOD
WITH CLIPPERS



Gardens, birds... AND A DINOSAUR!

To evoke the naturalist spirit of the 19th century, the Gardens of Marqueyssac pull out all the stops with a period diorama and a 150 million-year-old allosaurus.

Peacocks, the symbol of Marqueyssac, roam freely in the park and males readily fan their tails in public during mating season, while the pigeons remain safe and sound in their cages. 19th century dioramas show scenes of wildlife. Since the spring of 2017, the Pavilion of Nature, which overlooks the valley, now hosts a very silent but much more imposing resident. When Julien de Cerval returned from Italy, he, like many of his contemporaries, prided himself on a great interest in science. He was a member of the Périgord Agricultural Society. In 1861, he was awarded first prize for his collection of fruit trees and later joined the Périgord Archaeological and Historical Society (founded in 1874).

It is very likely that Julien de Cerval closely followed the work of English naturalist Charles Darwin and that "The Origin of Species", published in 1859, had a prominent place in the castle library. And while the ancestral past of the region of Périgord was being revealed little by little with the great prehistoric discoveries made in the Vézère Valley, the first dinosaur fossils had just been discovered on the other side of the Atlantic...

A DINOSAUR IN MARQUEYSSAC

This enormous carnivorous dinosaur inspires respect. It is 7.5 metres long, 2.5 metres tall and about 150 million years old. It remains, being the direct ancestor of the T-Rex, one of the most representative witnesses of the Jurassic era in Europe.

Discovered in 2013 in the United States and acquired in December 2016 by Kléber Rossillon, this specimen is exceptionally complete and is one of the rare allosaurus skeletons known to date to exhibit such integrity and state of conservation.

This dinosaur gives Marqueyssac a completely new dimension thanks to its scientific excellence and educational vocation relating to natural history.



Pavillon
de la Nature
(1861-1901)

Adventure IN THE GARDENS

Enjoyed by those who love quiet and contemplative walks, the Gardens of Marqueyssac are also unanimous among thrill-seekers.



THE VIA FERRATA

Getting as close to nature as possible by going off the beaten path, discovering the most popular gardens of Périgord through exciting trails and experiencing inspiring sensations reserved for the most adventurous visitors: such a fascinating invitation!

Adventure is everywhere and everything seems so big in the eyes of children. But Marqueyssac is also a huge playground for older kids and those who know how to keep their inner child alive.

LA VIA FERRATA DES RAPACES

CLIFF CLIMBING COURSE

This summer course is set up on the side of the cliff overlooking the

valley. It is closed during winter in order to respect the well-being of the place's legitimate inhabitants, namely migratory and non-migratory Eurasian wrens.

From mid-April to mid-November, and for everyone over the age of 8, come and enjoy La Via Ferrata des Rapaces cliff climbing course. It is 200 metres long and one of the most spectacular ways to discover the Gardens of Marqueyssac. The adventure includes hiking and climbing... with excitement guaranteed! You will be given a helmet and a harness before being attached to the continuous safety line for a safe and exciting opportunity to discover the valley. By taking hold of the rungs, pallets, beams and other projecting elements that have been attached to the cliff to help





CLIMBING WORKSHOP



ONE OF THE HUTS OF THE PLAYGROUND

you climb, adventure lovers discover the valley from a new angle, previously reserved for peregrine falcons and other residents of the rocky hillside.

BEGINNER ROCK CLIMBING SESSIONS

In the park, along the cliff-top walkway and just before the starting point of La Via Ferrata, rocky slopes have been specially equipped for beginner rock climbing sessions. The accreditation of the site and the qualifications of the certified instructors who supervise this activity reserved for children ages 6 and up guarantee the safety of young adventurers who wish to take on the cliff.

A COURSE BETWEEN THE TREES

In reaching the upper part of the gardens, a stone's throw away from the Belvedere, you will notice a fun path that winds high above the ground between the trees. Opened in 2017, the journey takes place in an open net near the squirrels.

FOR "NATURE LOVERS"

Wood, raffia, cardboard, paper, paint, pebbles, funny animals and games to follow the footsteps of the animals in the park: "Nature lovers" workshops will please both young and old alike. Here, everyone can make fun and decorative crafts, including masks, mobiles, frames,

weather vanes, dolls, origami, etc. using natural elements.

A GIANT EXPLORATION

For toddlers, everything in the garden seems so big! Special facilities designed especially for children offer them exciting adventures that involve exploring unknown lands... Playgrounds that require climbing, sliding, trudging ... Labyrinths of boxwood to get lost in until you reach the Esplanade, the hollow trunk of a hundred-year-old chestnut tree, huts perched in the branches of evergreen oaks ... Marqueyssac is somewhere between a giant playground and a brand new episode of a cartoon of which children are the heroes! ■



GARDENS TO ENJOY THROUGHOUT THE SEASONS



A romantic getaway in Périgord

Open every day of the year, Marqueyssac is the 3rd largest tourist site of Dordogne and the most popular garden in Périgord. Various events and activities are organised throughout the year and suitable for all ages.

The boxwoods, evergreen oaks and stone pines preserve the lush greenery of the Gardens of Marqueyssac whatever the season. The inhabitants of Périgord also love to visit these sites and often stand alongside visitors who come from all over the world to visit the gardens.

A stroll in the heart of winter, a family walk at the end of spring, good times with friends along the shaded paths during summer, a romantic evening for two with thousands of candles, fun (and safe) adventures for children: Marqueyssac is the perfect place for a stroll in any season and offers something for everyone all year round...

Easter in the gardens

Every year, families are invited to this wonderful event that brings joy to many children: On Easter Sunday and Monday, more than 6,000 colourful eggs are scattered in the paths, labyrinths and verdant clearings for one giant egg hunt full of fun and laughter.

Rendez-vous in the gardens

Marqueyssac naturally devotes the first weekend in June to the "Rendez-vous in the Gardens" event. On the agenda: meetings and visits with the gardeners of Marqueyssac and the opportunity to enjoy a summer evening preview showing with spectacular and musical animations while the gardens are lit with thousands of candles.

Marqueyssac's Candlelight Nights

It is the most beautiful and most romantic summer event... And it takes place every Thursday evening in July and August... After the last beams of the setting sun have finished caressing the boxwoods of the bastion... While darkness sets in gently over the valley... More than 2,000 candles and a multitude of light sources defy the twilight to make the Gardens of Marqueyssac shine under the stars.

A magical moment. On each side of the Dordogne River, some of the

most beautiful villages of France and the castles of the valley sparkle as well: Domme, la Roque-Gageac, Castelnaud, Fayrac, Beynac... Accompanied by the flickering flame of the candles, go on a romantic and mysterious stroll, be seduced by the charm of the shadows which play with the leaves of the trees and stop here and there to catch the notes of the pianist or those of the saxophone quartet, before being carried away by jazzy rhythms. And then, on the private terrace of the castle, the "Marraines Fées" (fairy godmothers), messengers on stilts coming from a wonderful world, mark the path that leads you to their universe...

Wood turner's workshop

The boxwoods that had to be cut during the restoration of the gardens, from 1996, never left the park. Jean-Pierre, the wood turner of Marqueyssac, gave them a "second life". Very popular with wood turners, sculptors and engravers who appreciate their gol-



WOOD TURNER



EGG HUNT

den colour and their fine grain that gives them a very soft polish, the boxwoods of Marqueyssac are used in many different ways. Objects made right in front of the visitors are displayed and sold in the gardens' gift shop.

Restaurant and tea room

With an amazing view of the valley, the arbour of the castle shades the tables available for lunch, a refreshing drink or a delicious scoop of artisanal ice cream offered on the menu full of classic and original flavours.

Gift shop/bookstore

For those who love books about trees, plants, gardens and nature - with bookshelves dedicated to children's editions - as well as those who love reading about customs, traditions and the art of living in the region or those looking for unique decorative objects, including a beautiful decorative boxwood collection... The gift shop/bookstore of Marqueyssac is a must!



PANORAMIC TERRACE
OF THE RESTAURANT



BOOK/GIFT SHOP

MARQUEYSSAC IN A FEW FIGURES



200,000 nature lovers visit Marqueyssac every year

22 hectares: total surface area of the classified estate

6 kilometres: for 3 separate walks linking the castle to the Belvedere

150,000 box trees : trimmed by hand and planted, for the grand majority, during the second half of the 19th century

10 kilometres: of boxwoods to trim, i.e. 2 hectares

360°: viewing angle over the Dordogne Valley from the Belvedere

130 metres: altitude of the hanging gardens from the Dordogne River

200 metres: distance to cross the cliff via La Via Ferrata des Rapaces

700 m²: total surface area of the roof of Marqueyssac composed of 70,000 stone tiles

500 tons: weight of the stone roof of the castle

48: total number of employees during high season, including 9 permanent employees (gardeners included) throughout the year.

150 million years: the age of the allosaurus of the Pavilion of Nature

365 days a year: the Gardens of Marqueyssac are open every day of the year

2,000 candles and 300 lights: lit every Thursday evening during summer for Marqueyssac's Candlelight Nights

3 tons: of artisanal ice cream eaten on average every year by visitors in Marqueyssac's restaurant/tea room

100 hours of work for the gardeners: to set up Marqueyssac's Candlelight Nights

2,500 items: displayed in the bookstore/gift shop of Marqueyssac

1,600 hats: sold in the gift shop every year

1692: the beginning of the history of Marqueyssac with the first landscaping projects on the rocky headland

1861: Julien de Cerval becomes owner of Marqueyssac and gives the gardens their Italian style

1996: Kléber Rossillon acquires the estate and starts a major restoration project

1997: on 23 March, the Hanging Gardens of Marqueyssac open their doors for the first time to the public

2015: renovation of the stone roof of the castle is complete after a 5-year project

2016: The Belvedere is awarded 3 stars by the Michelin Green Guide, "Marqueyssac is well worth the trip"

ABOUT MARQUEYSSAC



THE CLASSIFIED SITE OF MARQUEYSSAC INCLUDES... three centuries of passion for gardens, from 1692 to today.

ALTITUDE AND SURFACE AREA:

- 130 metres above the Dordogne Valley
- 22 hectares of parkland and gardens hanging above the valley

PANORAMA:

- A 360° panoramic view of the whole valley, over 10 kilometres and the most famous castles and sites of the Dordogne: Beynac, Fayrac, Castelnaud, La Roque-Gageac and Domme
- 3 Michelin stars awarded in 2016

THE CASTLE:

- built in the early 19th century
- a completely restored stone roof weighing 500 tons
- the living room, dining room and bedroom refurbished to the style of the time of Julien de Cerval.

WALKS :

- 3 stunning strolls along 6 kilometres of verdant pathways
- 2 waterfalls
- 2 verdant clearings
- large 500-metre pathway
- 4 terraces reminiscent of Italian gardens
- educational trail with 33 illustrated steps

THE FAUNA AND THE FLORA:

- 150,000 hand-trimmed hundred-year-old boxwoods
- a wild and romantic natural setting
- a dozen species of birds in the aviary
- 2 free-roaming couples of peacocks
- historic dioramas of wildlife in Périgord and a unique skeleton of a 150,000 year-old dinosaur displayed in the Pavilion of Nature.

FOR KIDS...

- a giant Easter egg hunt
- "Nature lovers" workshops
- a rock climbing wall (beginner lessons with an instructor)
- playgrounds: swings, playhouses, etc.
- educational activities for school children
- a 100-metre long net path, hanging in the trees

...AND FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY:

- a cliff climbing adventure course 200 m off the ground
- candlelight Evenings
- wood turner's workshop
- a permanent exhibition of sculptures in the park
- a bookshop with books on nature, gardens and Périgord
- gift shop with objects made of boxwood, jewelry and decorative items
- a photographic exhibition
- Marqueyssac "App" to download, with an interactive and fun map

EATERIES:

- a tea room in the castle with a panoramic terrace for refreshments, meals or snacks at any time
- a summer sandwich shop and creperie in the gardens

A DYNAMIC TEAM:

- 11 permanent employees: a team of receptionists, gardeners, guides and a wood turner, in addition to 39 seasonal workers

THOUSANDS OF VISITORS:

- the most popular garden in Périgord with nearly 210,000 visitors in 2019

Marqueyssac received the "Remarkable garden" label awarded by the Ministry of Culture and Communication in 2004. Marqueyssac is a member of the Aquitaine Park and Garden Association and of the European Boxwood and Topiary Society.

USEFUL INFORMATION 2021



INDIVIDUAL RATES:

FROM NOVEMBER 15th TO MARCH 31st

Adult: €9.90

Children (ages 10 to 17): €5

Children under 10: free

FROM APRIL 1st TO NOVEMBER 14th

Adult: €10.90

Children (ages 10 to 17): €5,50

Children under 10: free

“Friend of Marqueyssac” card (annual subscription) €25

Personal loyalty card (free): 3rd visit free

Combined tickets with château de Castelnaud (valid one year)

“CANDLELIGHT NIGHTS” EVENINGS:

Adult: €19,80

Children (ages 10 to 17): €9,90

Children under 10: free

GROUP RATES:

Group of adults: €7.50

Additional fee for guided tour:
package for €40/group

Secondary school group: €3.60

Primary school group: €3.20

Preschool group: €3

Guided tours in French and English,
booking required for groups and in high
season for private individuals.

Guide book: outside periods of guided
tours, a guide leaflet is given to each
visitor. This guide leaflet is available in
French, English, Dutch, German, Italian,
Spanish, Catalan, Hebrew, Brazilian
Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, Russian and
Braille.

Venues for seminars and receptions:
please contact us

HOW TO GET TO MARQUEYSSAC:

9 km south of Sarlat, 65 km from Périgueux
160 km from Bordeaux, 60 km from Brive
130 km from Limoges, 175 km from Toulouse

MEANS OF ACCESS:

By car: motorway A 20, A 89, N 936 and D 703

By train: Sarlat or Souillac railway station (30 km)

By plane: Brive

N 44° 49' 32" / E 1° 9' 53"



THE MARQUEYSSAC TEAM:

Owner

Kléber Rossillon

Company managing Director

Geneviève Rossillon

Site Manager

Nathalie Bapst

Head Gardener

Jean Lemoussu **Assisted by**

Christophe Kurzac

and by Nicolas Chabrier

Gardeners

Eric Boisserie, Florian Cegalerba,
Mickaël Kessar

Reception and Shop Manager

Nathalie Van Lanen **and** Marie-Pierre Doucet

Assisted by Olivia Jewell-Harrison

Tea Room Manager

Elyse Dupuis

Guide/Group Leader

Stéphanie Angleys

PRESS CONTACT:

**Press kit and copyright-free high definition pictures
Available on the website**

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