



Lot & Dordogne, France, 2012

Date: 5th – 12th May 2012
Date: 9th – 16th June 2012
Date: July 2012 (TBC)
Date: 15th – 22th September 2012

Cost: £250 excluding gas and travel (This may go up or down slightly depending on numbers & date)
Deposit: £125
Spaces: 4

"I put my regulator in my mouth and ducked my head under the water, the visibility was terrible, I couldn't see my hands, nothing but a milky vista filled my vision. I ran my hands down the root of a tree and let the air out of my dry-suit; just as I was beginning to consider that I had descended in the wrong place, or had perhaps moved away from the descent line, the water began to clear and a semi-circular dark opening loomed up at me. I flicked on my light, kicked my way gently into the little opening and I find myself in crystal clear water, in one of the most beautiful caves I have ever seen! But this is not Florida or Mexico, but southern France..." (Jason Pepper 2009)

We are going cave diving to this fabulous location, a venue that "has it all". This is a place not to be missed. We would be based at the Cave Diving Centre Lot. There will be 6 days diving.



Lot & Dordogne

The Lot and The Dordogne areas of France have an abundance of beautiful caves suitable for all levels of diving expertise, situated in glorious rural locations. Sites are mostly found on three rivers; The Dordogne, The Lot and Célé.

The Lot area lies in the northern extremity of the Midi-Pyrenees region, which stretches from the confines of the Dordogne Valley to the highest peaks of the Pyrenees, forming the heart of South-West France. Summer months temperatures can reach a high of 35+ degrees and are very dry, although it is not unusual to witness dramatic thunderstorms.

Cave divers from all over the world return to dive here year after year. We aim to make your visit an experience you will want to repeat; there is plenty to do for those non-diving partners, if they wish to come along...

Diving

With over 20,000 known caves, France is one of the premier cave diving areas in the world. One of the most interesting regions lies in the Southwest, around the rivers of Lot and Dordogne. Here you find a multitude of long and deep caves with mostly crystal clear water and relatively warm water, offering superb diving conditions.

The water temperature averages 14 degrees and the visibility normally varies between 5 and 30 metres.





We will choose appropriate sites based on dive qualifications, experience and environmental conditions conducting 2 dives per day. Those with the correct qualifications and experience are able to conduct their own explorations; otherwise I will be on hand to guide.

Some of the sites we hope will visit include: Emergence du Ressel, Trou Madame, Cregols and the Fontain de St George.

Kit

All standard scuba equipment and appropriate thermal protection (drysuits are recommended), plus at least 3 light sources, a supply of new batteries (good ones only please!), a primary reel and 2 spools. A helmet with fastenings for head torches is also a good idea depending on the site.



Ideally you will have a pair of twin 12's and sidemounts. If you have a stage brings it as there will be opportunity for deco. Back mounted twin 12's are good for the Ressel, Trou Madame and St George. While sidemounts would be the config of choice in the Truffe and the Cregols, perhaps even Trou Madame.

Carries to the sites are short but a couple of good haul sacks are definitely advantageous. Please bring a spare set of regulators per person (just in case of problems) as diving shops are non existent. The Cave Diving Centre Lot is only a place for filling bottles; there are no other facilities i.e. NO dive shop. So we need to take our entire anticipated dive needs/spares/etc...

Accommodation

There is a bit of driving between the venues but our anticipated accommodation is well placed from this point of view. Accommodation will be organised from Saturday to Saturday; so we need to try to arrive by Saturday lunchtime or early evening at the latest to get sorted that evening. The accommodation will be extremely well appointed with twin bed bedrooms, spacious living area, equally spacious equipment storage and a swimming pool. Bed linen and towel supplied.

Food is on a self catering basis plus and we can get an evening meal at the dive centre for about 20 Euro a night (which also includes wine and beer!) so, as we need to visit there to get our gas, it makes sense to take advantage of the excellent cooking on offer.



Gas

A Bauer Mariner compressor supplies the air to 5 banks of 3 to 4 50L 'J's, which are refilled while we spend the day diving. This is a 'self-fill' station and they do not fill your bottles for you. They do keep stock of Helium and Oxygen. We will blend all the gas ourselves. This helps to keep costs down...

Workshop - There is a small workshop at the back of the filling station with tools, work bench, computer with a blending programme, digital gauge, oxygen meter, ropes, first aid kit, spare seals, hose clips etc. for our use.



Travel

Channel Tunnel: Folkestone to Calais - approx £150 return per vehicle; once through the tunnel it is approximately an 8 hour drive to the area. Keep well clear of Paris!

Once we get the team together we can arrange and share transport, but I usually travel Folkestone to Calais on the Friday afternoon, travel to Rouen, stay over in a Formule 1 (approx £20) and complete the rest of the journey first thing Saturday morning, arriving mid afternoon on the Saturday.

Insurance

You will require **DAN insurance** N.B. check your insurance will be current as any incident in Europe is extremely expensive if not covered. You need to carry a "**European Health Insurance Card**" (info: www.nhs.uk). Each participant will have their own travel insurance covering medical Insurance, rescue, repatriation and Liability. For this we recommend Snow Card Insurance to cover a minimum of medical, rescue, repatriation and liability "Level 3" cover for caving and cave diving. For a single trip for 8 days this is approx £30 and Annual cover approx £90 (each trip not to exceed 31 days) (info: www.snowcard.co.uk)

Training

This trip is ideal for those wishing to train in cave diving. We will cover the knowledge and techniques of cavern/cave diving and describes the risks involved. Show you the principles of cave diving utilizing guide lines and increase your development in safe techniques and procedures for cave diving.

Courses available will be [Cavern Diver](#), [Introductory Cave Diver](#), [Cave Diver](#) and [Technical Cave Diver](#). The courses maybe completed in either [backmount](#), [sidemount](#), or [CCR](#) (check for details) configurations with all the theory and open water sections completed before we head to France.



Terms and Conditions

Booking

A deposit per person is required. The balance is to be paid no later than ten weeks before the trip starts. If you pay the deposit then you are responsible for paying the balance or finding someone to take your place. The trip is subject to min of 4 participants. In the event of not achieving this level of interest the deposit will be refunded.

Cancellation

If Diving Matrix has to cancel your booking for any reason we will refund your monies payment paid in full without further claim against us. If you cancel your booking it is up to you to find someone to take your space. Taking out holiday insurance to cover this and other possibilities is highly recommended and is your responsibility.

Cylinder test requirements

We will follow the guidelines as all UK dive centres, as such all cylinders are required to be in visual/hydro test (IDEST) and if requiring Nitrox, Trimix or O2 fills the cylinders and valves must also be O2 cleaned and in O2 service.

If a cylinder is not in test it will not be filled, and will hold no liability for any missed diving incurred as a result of cylinders being out of test.

Safety

Diving Matrix will not be responsible for any injury or accident caused to any person or persons arising from the use or presence of commercial and recreational diving equipment.

Insurance Cover

Diving Matrix do not accept any responsibility for loss of or damage to any personal items, e.g. diving and photographic equipment.

Weather

Diving Operations will always commence on the date stated no matter what the weather. If bad weather occurs Diving Matrix will make every attempt to get to a dive site but will not refund any of the fees.

Fuel surcharge

Diving Matrix reserves the right to charge a fuel surcharge if the price of fuel increases significantly.