This list was compiled in the hopes that you would find it useful in preparing yourself for departure or in continuing the learning experience after you return home.

Guide Books
A guide book will go a long way in answering many of your general questions about what things to do and where to eat during your free time. It will also typically provide a few words and phrases, sometimes a tip on pronunciation, and other useful things such as tipping guidelines, how best to obtain money, and maps.

Keep in mind that your St. Olaf hosts will not know the cities like the back of their hand. They are present to help influence the group experience, not to be an expert on tourism in each location. Thus, we recommend bringing a guidebook to help you make decisions about your free time.

What you probably don’t need from a guide book is a comprehensive list of hotels (since that is handled for you on this program) and lots of details on how to traverse the country by train and the like.

My favorite guide books, then, are the ones that focus on what is special about a place and provide opening hours, admission fees, and lots of pictures. They can all be found at a large book store, at the online equivalents (amazon.com, bn.com, etc.), or even direct from the publisher at their web site. My three favorites are:

Eyewitness Travel Guides by DK (Dorling Kindersley) – often with full country guides as well as pocket guides for individual cities

Fodor’s – they claim their Gold Guides are for “all travelers, particularly those who seek a good mix of the cultural and practical”

Insight Guides by Discovery Channel – one of the coolest channels on TV upholds its reputation with these guide books

~ Heidi Quiram, Director, Alumni & Family Travel

The following list was prepared by your program leaders, Rich and Wendy Allen.

Original work on the times and events of a defining period in the history of this part of France


Bordeaux

1. Bordeaux history from the French Moments site: https://frenchmoments.eu/bordeaux-history

2. Xtu Architects: La Cite Du Vin by Frederic Migayrou, Publisher Hyx Editions ISBN 9782373820027, available from Mcnally Jackson Booksellers or Wexner Center for Arts bookshop.
3. An inside look at La Cité du vin with 25 photos from USA Today:

Bordeaux and its wine country


Dordogne river valley and surroundings

Three mystery novels with lots of local color of the Dordogne region:

Prehistory and caves

1. Lascaux IV: The International Centre for Cave Art
   This url and its contents will prepare you for the new Lascaux museum we will visit.

   The following two books are in-depth scholarly texts, not too hard to read, and we recommend them:

Chateaux and Wars


The Hundred Years War A People’s History by David Green, Yale University Press 2014.

Villages and countryside

Three minutes of great aerial shots of Rocamadour

The following are four more mystery novels set in the countryside we will be visiting. Lots of local color, literally in the land and villages and figuratively in the personalities of the characters:


Note: All of the books we cite above seem to be available on Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

Telegraphic view of the history of the region and many of the sites we will visit.
The following is a sequence of urls, most of which are from the site: “North of the Dordogne.”

7. Font de Gaume: https://www.northofthedordogne.com/font-de-gaume.php
8. Saint-Leon-sur-Vezere, Dordogne – one of the most beautiful villages of France: https://www.northofthedordogne.com/stleonsurvezere.php
9. Visit Lascaux caves, Dordogne to see the world famous prehistoric paintings: https://www.northofthedordogne.com/lascauxcaves.php
15. Saint Amand de Coly, Dordogne village: https://www.northofthedordogne.com/saint-amand-de-coly.php
19. Dordogne in the middle ages; a time of fierce battles and conflicts: https://www.northofthedordogne.com/dordogne-middle-ages.php