



## Focus on... FRANCE

No wonder France is such a popular family holiday choice – the country is easily accessible by road, rail or air, is affordable, especially for accommodation, and offers a great variety of landscape, history, activities and fun for adults and youngsters alike. Oh, and let's not forget the child-friendly culture and delicious local food and wine.

The Dordogne, Languedoc-Rousillon and the Mediterranean are all favourite destinations – and for somewhere different,

try the Auvergne or Burgundy. Most accessible for family holidays is North West France, especially Normandy and Brittany. You'll find spacious countryside, Celtic traditions and every kind of seaside from unspoilt rocky coves to buzzing resorts with wide, sandy beaches.

For a budget alternative to a beach holiday head inland for a country house and explore a lac or plan d'eau, which cater for all ages with pedaloes, swimming, fishing and usually a stretch of lakeside sandy beach. And, of course, give most children a swimming pool in their own sun-filled back garden and they'll play happily all day.

You might decide to rent your own villa, farmhouse, chateau or even converted water mill in France – or join with another family or group and spread the cost of a large house like La Coutancie in the Dordogne, where everything is thought of so that you hardly ever need to leave. If you fancy a break from cooking, go to a gîte where the owner offers dinner – or choose all-inclusive, as at Le Castel, a luxury Normandy chateau where meals, play facilities and even some child care are provided.

An activity holiday is a great way to keep all members of the family amused and maybe learn new skills or make new friends. Theme parks are one of France's great attractions and Disneyland Paris, Futuroscope and Parc Asterix all offer a really good day out, as do



numerous water parks. Owners at some self-catering properties can arrange activities to suit everyone, from white water rafting to golf, table tennis to horse riding, mountain biking to canoeing.

Finally, do something different in France – fly the family into a city airport and stay in the centre of town or in quiet countryside handy for city visits. French cities offer a treasure trove of museums, shops, concert halls, fun attractions, rivers and street life – a great opportunity for everyone to improve their French language skills!

**French Connections** has holiday rentals, hotels, travel and regional guides. Call **01580 819303** or visit **[www.frenchconnections.co.uk](http://www.frenchconnections.co.uk)**