



PASSPORTED

MAGAZINE



UNDERCOVER FRANCE: WHERE TO STAY IN THE LANGUEDOC

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In February 2016, one of the Languedoc's most beautiful wine estates, Château St Pierre de Serjac, reopened following a two-year, 31-million euro renovation. A collaboration between winemaker Laurent Bonfils and hoteliers Karl and Anita O'Hanlon, Serjac charmed Passported scout Janet Mick when she visited this summer with her daughter—so much so that she added a stay at its sister property, Château Les Carrasses. Read on to find out what makes these two hideaways in France's undiscovered Languedoc region such a fit for families.

CHÂTEAU ST PIERRE DE SERJAC



BASICS

- This 19th-century chateau set within a vineyard in France's picturesque Languedoc-Roussillon region has an 8-room hotel and 36 self-catering houses and apartments designed for families, ranging from two to four bedrooms and many with private, heated pools.
- Get active: the resort's 100-ft main pool is heated from April to October for plenty of outdoor splashing, plus there's a clay tennis court, boules court, bikes of all sizes, table tennis, and a kids' club in July and August; recover at the spa, which has its own indoor pool.
- The property can be accessed from nearby regional airports or TGV (Beziers has a great rail connection to Paris and to Nice/Provence); the closest nonstop international flights come into Barcelona, a three-hour drive to the south.

BESTS

- Don't feel like cooking? Head to the chateau's restaurant and dine al fresco on the terrace (they'll also do takeaway if you prefer to eat at home); extra bonus, the freshly baked bread, croissants and pizza the front desk can deliver to your house; BBQ packs are also available.
- Parents get the best of both worlds, with family-sized spaces in the houses and apartments but the resort amenities mom and dad crave when they want some downtime (thank you kids' club and Cinq Mondes spa!).
- If you haven't explored this part of France, it's a less-discovered gem with stunning beaches nearby, canals for canoeing and barge trips, local markets, festivals, and charming restaurants, as well as engaging museums and aquariums for kids; vinophiles in particular should add to their list since wine at the estate dates back to Roman times, and the chateau's new winery is state-of-the-art (their first vintage was bottled this year).

BEDTIME

- The smallest room for a family of four is the reasonably-priced two-bedroom apartment in the new self-catering properties.
- Our favorite room within the chateau is the three bedroom La Maison des Bons, a suite spread over three levels with superb views, a fireplace for chilly fall nights and large soaking tubs.
- Babyproofing here goes above and beyond, with everything from high chairs and travel cots to bottle sterilizers and warmers, changing mats and pool alarms and gates provided for families.

BUTS

- Some rooms in the hotel are very small so you must rent a self-catering "house" on property for enough room for a family.
- You'll need to hit the markets to stock your kitchen if staying in one of the houses, but the concierge does offer "stocking" packages to have the basics ready upon your arrival.
- Housekeeping isn't daily in the homes, so you'll need to pay an extra fee if you'd like more regular tidying.