

# bordeaux: cradle of the “french paradox”

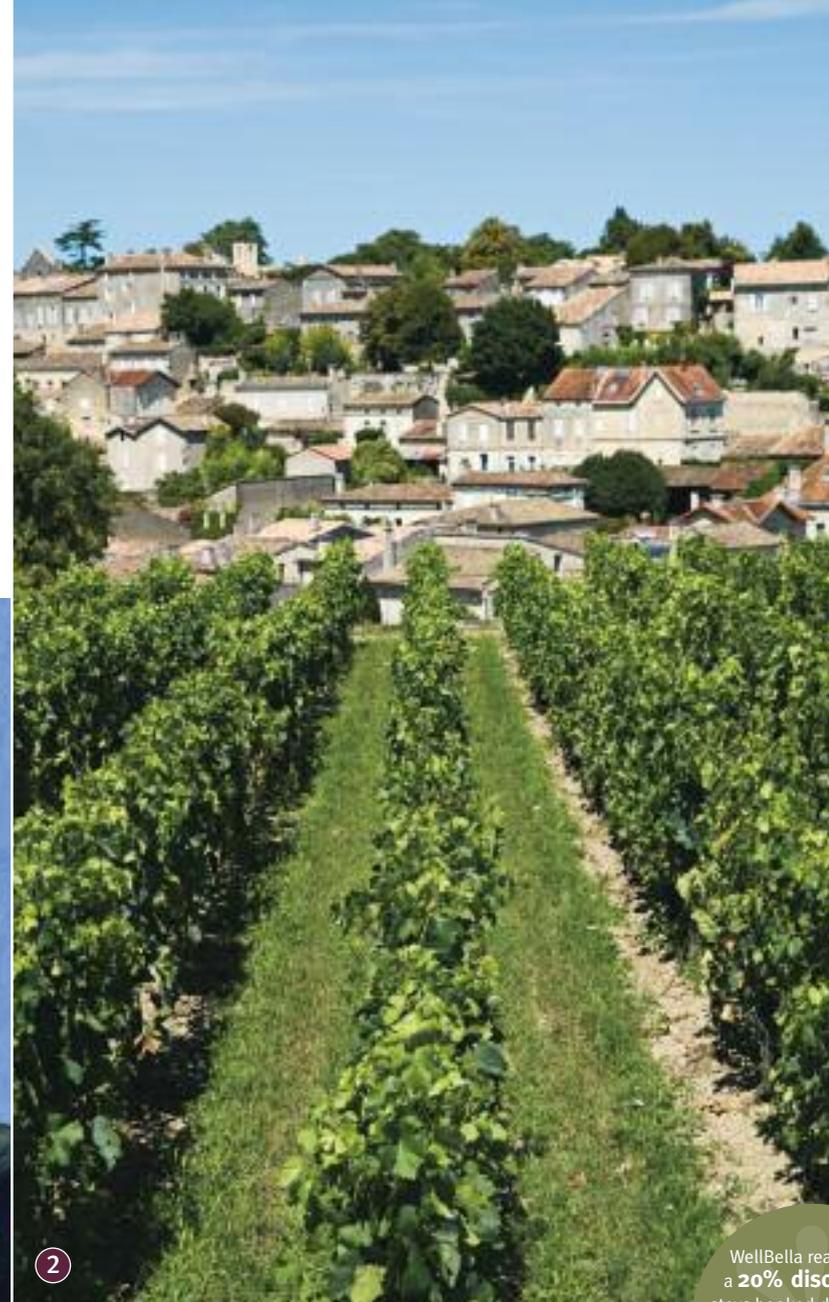
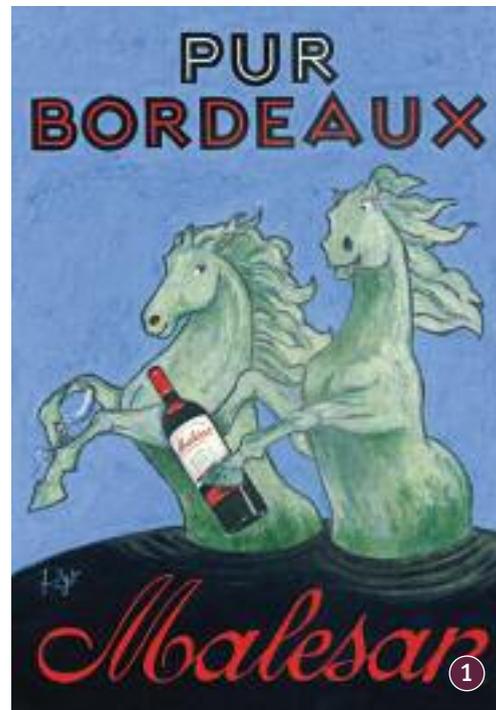
TRAVEL TO THE SOUTH OF FRANCE TO ENJOY NOT ONLY HISTORIC SIGHTS AND GREAT FOOD, BUT ALSO THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF FINE WINES.

If the French consume a diet that’s relatively high in saturated fats, why do they generally have a low rate of coronary disease? This question sums up what’s been termed the “French Paradox.” To answer the question, look no farther than a glass of red wine, which contains a compound called resveratrol. Scientists have found that red wines, for which the Bordeaux region is famous, have higher levels of resveratrol than white or blush wines. It’s no coincidence that the term “French Paradox” was coined by scientists at Bordeaux University.

Resveratrol, the anti-aging, antioxidant molecule that mimics a low-cal diet even while one is savoring a sinful morsel of foie gras, is reason enough for travelers to flock to Bordeaux. The 18th-century city and the famed wine regions that surround it simply add to the allure.

A visit to Bordeaux is a journey to two worlds: the river-port city of Bordeaux, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site cradling the second largest concentration of preserved historic buildings in France; and the famed wine-growing appellations that surround the city—Saint Emilion, Medoc, Margaux and Bordeaux, to name just a few that produce some of the world’s finest wines.

The cosmopolitan city of Bordeaux is a walker’s paradise where strolling tours are a popular activity, whether self-guided or led by a local guide. For its central location and its ultra-contemporary ambiance, the boutique hotel La Maison Bord’eaux is a smart place to call home while visiting the city. The hotel’s owners are viticultural insiders—they are members of a local wine-producing family—and can arrange private cellar tours for guests. The hotel’s well-stocked wine bar, Le Grand Cru, provides a tasty preview of the wine regions that surround the city.



1) Chateaux have unique posters, such as Malesan’s. 2) The Saint Emilion vineyards outside of Bordeaux. 3) Soil and climate determine the types of grapes grown in Bordeaux. 4) The city of Bordeaux is a walker’s paradise. 5) Les Sources de Caudalie provides luxury accommodations in the midst of an organic vineyard; 6) regional cuisine is served in its two restaurants.



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## Hey! While in town, check this out ...

When the Bordeaux vineyards beckon, you won’t have to travel far. A perfect base of operations is Les Sources de Caudalie, a spa-hotel set among organic vineyards on the grounds of a working winery (called a *chateau* in Bordeaux). Like many chateaux in the region, Les Sources de Caudalie has embraced the philosophy of growing grapes “in harmony with their environment”—eliminating use of herbicides and training vines to form their own defenses, and even using horse-drawn plows to protect against soil compaction.

After touring the chateau and its tasting room, you can immerse yourself in a grape bath. That’s right—a grape bath.

The Vinotherapie Spa specializes in unique treatments featuring everything that’s desirable about Bordeaux wine grapes, especially their anti-aging properties. At the spa, expect to

wear more wine (or rather grape and vine extracts) than you consume.

When you’re ready to sip your wine, the inn’s wine bar, aptly named Le French Paradox, pours an array of regional labels. And the inn’s two renowned restaurants offer chef-prepared cuisine featuring local ingredients in either a formal or an informal setting. If you’d like to learn a few secrets of French cooking (and the French Paradox) with ingredients grown and produced around Bordeaux, sign up for one of the hotel’s popular chef-taught cooking classes.

Ready for a regional chateau tour? The staff at Les Sources de Caudalie will see to your touring and tasting needs, including tours by bicycle or limousine, and every mode in between. Or, with a map, customize your own chateau tour.

With the many benefits of resveratrol, there’s no better destination than Bordeaux to immerse yourself in wine culture and learn more about the health benefits—right at the source. \*

WellBella readers get a 20% discount on stays booked directly with Les Sources de Caudalie, 7/1/2010 to 4/30/2011. Use promo code: WellBella.



For more pictures from our Bordeaux album, see this article at WellBella.com.

**BEST TIME TO TRAVEL:** Spring, summer and autumn have the best weather.

**WHAT TO PACK:** Suggested attire includes smart casual wear for city activities, active wear for exploring the countryside, and comfortable walking shoes.

**WHAT TO DO:** Take a guided walking tour of Bordeaux to learn about the city’s architecture and history. In wine country, go bicycling, golfing, hiking, take a Vinotherapie spa treatment and tour the wineries.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** In the city, La Maison Bord’eaux, LaMaisonBord-eaux.com, 011 33 5 56 44 00 45; room rates vary from 130 to 200 euros (about \$175 to \$270). In wine country, Les Sources de Caudalie, Sources-Caudalie.com, 011 33 5 57 83 83 83; high-season rates range by type of accommodation from 250 to 650 euros (about \$340 to \$880, see discount code).

**FOR MORE:** Bordeaux-Tourisme.com

**HOW TO GET THERE:** Bordeaux is located in southwestern France, with flights arriving at the international airport (BOD) daily from several U.S. cities.