



# best French châteaux

in the Dordogne to a  
 ndy, **Carolyn Boyd**  
 historic hotels

and tennis courts. In the chateau the 29  
 ight rooms come with iPod docks and  
 Occitane toiletries. Foodies can enjoy  
 e excellent Botaniste restaurant or the  
 p-up restaurant in the garden during  
 e summer months.

**Details** Doubles are from €220 (€170),  
 breakfast is €25 (00 33 2 31 51 25 25,  
 cheneviere.com). The ferry port of  
 en-Ouistreham is 40 minutes away

## 2 Château de Mercuès Lot

Wine lovers will adore the Château de Mercuès and its sensational wine cellar, which, along with the winery, is hidden away under the chateau's terrace. Sip the excellent vintages as you admire the breathtaking views across the Lot Valley. Its owner, Georges Vigouroux, is a pioneer of the malbec grape and has developed a new generation of cahors wines. The chateau dates from the 13th century and its rooms are a blend of modern decor with classic features, such as polished floors, wood panelling and antique furniture.



**Details** B&B doubles cost from €225 a night (00 33 5 65 20 00 01, chateaudemercues.com). Toulouse airport is 85 minutes away

## 3 Château de Riell Pyrenees

The spa at Château de Riell taps into the hot spring 150 metres below. Its thermal pool is set in an exotic greenhouse, while the bathing pools, used for water-based treatments, are set in green, ivory, black and amber marble. The hotel has 19 rooms and suites in the chateau and adjoining cottages, and the view of Mount Canigou will make your heart soar. ▶