

Interpretation of an article in LaDepeche on 19 May 2011, published at this web address: <http://www.ladepeche.fr/article/2011/05/19/1085400-vallee-de-la-dordogne-des-tours-operateurs-anglais-en-visite.html>

## **English tour operators visit the Dordogne Valley**

From 13-15 May, the tourism department of the Lot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) welcomed eleven British tour operators via the new flight between London City and Brive airport.

Although some of them already promote the Lot, especially Rocamadour and Cahors, the majority discovered the department for the first time. Certain tour operators specialise in nature activities (hiking, etc), luxury, wine tourism, or camping, and there were also some generalists.

Two-and-a-half days of visits were arranged, encompassing the whole department. Our guests could discover the charms of Souillac's abbey and old quarter; Martel, city of seven towers; Saint-Cirq-Lapopie; the caves of Pech Merle and Figeac. Also on the menu was a night discovery of the caves of Padirac, a mini-cruise on the Lot, and a visit to the Haute Serre winery near Cahors. In short, a true panorama of the best the Lot has to offer.

Concluding this program, a mini-workshop took place at Brive airport, where about fifteen professionals from the Lot [including Ludovic Hanks, representing SGCC] had the opportunity to promote their establishments to these British tour operators.

This initiative was organized in partnership with Atout France, CityJet (which underwrote part of the tickets), the regional tourism committee of the Midi-Pyrenees (financial partner for the tour and technology for the workshop) and the airport, who hosted the workshop.

The objective for the Lot CCI is to benefit from the new airport and its connections to London and to boost tour bookings to the Lot region among English tour operators. Initial feedback from the tour operators and the Lot professionals is very positive, according to one Lot CCI member. It seems that the Lot is a destination booked more and more by our English friends.

We should see confirmation of this good news in the coming months.