



BEST OF THE LOT

Ruth Wood is not the first person to be impressed by this restored manor house in the heart of Cahors wine country

A tingle of excitement surprised estate agent Peter Elias as he stepped through the arched entrance portal of this manor house in the Lot valley.

Professionally, he was keeping an open mind, but privately he was steeling himself for disappointment as experience had taught him that properties valued over €1m often failed to live up to their price tag. As he walked out into the graveled courtyard, though, and looked across the gardens and swimming pool to the rolling countryside, it dawned on him that this property might be different.

He was right. "It is, for me, the very best house that I have visited in all my years of selling houses in France," says Peter, who co-founded the agency Allez-Français with his wife Bridget 17 years ago. "I couldn't find fault in the workmanship or indeed in the taste of the owners, who have a superb eye for detail and harmony."

Quality and quantity

Set in more than eight hectares of beautifully maintained garden, meadow and woodland, the large four-bedroom manor house comes with barns, stabling for eight horses, a stunning swimming pool, two garages and a pigeonier gatehouse.

As well as a sense of seclusion, it offers

beautiful views over the Lot countryside thanks to its elevated position, and is just minutes from the shops and restaurants of Puy L'Evêque, a pretty riverside village 40 minutes west of Cahors.

As soon as he stepped into the vaulted entrance hall, Peter could tell the 17th-century house had been restored to the highest quality. Sure enough, the owners confirmed that they and local artisans had sourced natural stone, marble, slate, granite and wood both locally and internationally for the restoration work.

Character and comfort

Brimming with traditional features, the house has two living rooms, a formal dining room and a more relaxed breakfast room with a bread oven fireplace, plus a kitchen with polished granite work surfaces, an island unit of fine pippy oak and handmade units concealing the appliances. There is also a modern office and downstairs cloakroom, all above two large vaulted cellars.

"What did I love most?" says Peter. "That's hard to say, because truly, there is so much quality. You could say it was the beautifully appointed kitchen, with its superb worktops. Equally, you could highlight the superb reception rooms, with stone flag floors, or the vaulted ceilings, but at the end of the day it

was probably the eye for detail everywhere that makes this house so special – classy wrought-iron work, discreet floor lights set into the floor of the bread oven room. All this is before you venture upstairs via the magnificent stone staircase to discover four superb ensuite bedrooms. Each one is different, but oozes quality and comfort. Dreamland!"

As well as the four large ensuite bedrooms upstairs, there is a spare room and a library, all below a vast 250m² attic that could easily be converted into more accommodation, as could the two-storey pigeonier gatehouse.

Attached to the house are two stone barns with direct access to the house, currently being used as workshop and storage space. They contain loose boxes for eight horses and a vast rainwater storage tank which, along with a well in the grounds, is useful for watering the garden in summer months.

Whether the new owners of this magnificent house in the heart of the AOC Cahors wine region turn out to be a couple, a family, horse owners or entrepreneurs, Peter is willing to make one prediction. "They will be people who enjoy the good life." ■

The house is on the market for €1.395m
allez-francais.com



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