

Beat: Sports

TORCH RELAY OF OLYMPIC PARIS 2024 GAMES IS NOW IN HISTORICAL DORDOGNE PERIGUEUX-

STAGE 13, TORCHBEARER THOMAS CHINOIRS

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USPA NEWS - The flamboyant Dordogne area welcomed the Olympic Torch Relay for this thirteenth stage, from Bergerac to Périgueux. The high point was the visit to the archaeological site of Lascaux IV, where the collective fencing relay celebrated the most decorated French discipline in the Olympic Games in an exceptional setting. More than one hundred torchbearers took it in turns to carry the Olympic Torch through the department, including sporting personalities and members of the general public. Thomas Chinours, French youth shooting champion, lit the Olympic Cauldron at the beginning of the evening in front of a large crowd.

THE OLYMPIC TORCH ENCOUNTERS THE CULTURAL, NATURAL & GASRTONOMIC HERITAGE OF THE DORDOGNE

A visit to this department is guaranteed to awaken all the senses in an enchanting landscape. Bergerac, with its narrow streets with a medieval atmosphere and its half-timbered houses, was the first site visited on the day. In Saint-Aulaye-Puymangou, the Olympic Torch, perched on the slopes, overlooked the Dronne River from this atypical 12th century fortified town. This circuit is classed as one of the ten most beautiful trails in the Périgord area.

Later in the day, the Olympic Torch headed to Sarlat-la-Canéda, an ochre-coloured medieval town, as well as the ramparts dating back to the Middle Ages in Nontron, which boasts a tradition of cutlery making. The Olympic Torch illuminated the reconstitution of the famous prehistoric site at Montignac-Lascaux, before moving on to Agonac.

It finished its journey in Périgueux, the capital of the Périgord and a Gallo-Roman city renowned for its heritage, boasting 53 buildings listed as protected historical monuments, notably the Saint Front Romanesque cathedral, built in the 12th century and listed as a UNESCO world heritage site. The Tower of Vesunna, which is part of the remains of a Gallo-Roman temple, and the Périgord Museum of Art and Archaeology, the first museum created in the Dordogne in the 19th century, were also given pride of place on Wednesday 22nd May.

FENCING, THE UTLIMATE FRENCH OLYMPIC SPORT, TAKES CENTRE STAGE

On the one hand, there was fencing, the ultimate French Olympic sport, with the greatest number of podiums totalling 128 medals, and on the other, there was the Lascaux IV site, an essential venue in France's historical heritage, where the day's collective relay took place, making for an exceptional setting at the crossroads of these two worlds. Captain Paolo Bois-Rolet, a young swordsman heavily involved in his club as a fencer and referee, as well as devoted to passing on his passion, carried the Olympic Torch alongside 23 other members of the French Fencing Federation. Among them was Laurent Sabeau, who began this sport at a very young age at his grandfather's club in Bergerac, before setting up his own departmental club in 2012. Brice Perek, the first French light-sabre champion, a discipline which has received the backing of the French Fencing Federation, as well as Lisa Ferrandon, a club member who has gained self-confidence thanks to taking part in fencing, were also present. All the weapons used in the sport were represented, including the sabre, foil and epee.

Artistic fencing, whose aim is to stage choreographed fights presented in competition, also featured in this collective relay.

By carrying the Olympic Torch in Périgueux, Valérie Galli, a pioneer in women's fencing in France, once again contributed to the brilliance of this discipline. The two times team world champion was part of the first women's epee team in 1987, in a discipline in which women had previously been prevented from participating.

A RELAY UNDER TE BANNER OF SOLIDARITY & INCLUSION

Germain Pouch, a member of the association called "Vaincre la Mucoviscidose" (conquering cystic fibrosis) kicked off the stage in Dordogne, in Bergerac. Since her birth, this thirty-something has battled against this illness that mainly affects the lungs. Maryse Lajonie, the chairwoman of "P'tits Bouts", an association in support of children suffering from Cockayne's syndrome, took over from her. At the beginning of the afternoon, in Sarlat-la-Canéda, it was the turn of Anne-Sophie Bobovnikoff, director of the Fondation de

l'Isle, which promotes the values of adapted sport under the motto 'to each his or her own challenge', to take part in the relay. Annie Rubellin had the honour of carrying the Olympic Torch in Lascaux. She has been involved for many years as a volunteer with the Emmaüs charity that helps the underprivileged and is the chairwoman of the local branch in Brive.

Other personalities from the world of sport and athletes joined these everyday heroes, such as Brice Guyart, a team foil Olympic champion at the Sydney Games and individual foil Olympic champion at the Athens Games. Also with them were Laurent Jalabert, the former professional cyclist with 130 titles and victories, Gaëlle Mignot, a former member of the French women's rugby union team and current selector and coach of the women's national team, and Yoann Kowal, an international middle- and long-distance runner. Thomas Chinours lit the Olympic Cauldron in Place Tourny in Périgueux. The young shooter, who has recently joined the CREPS sports centre of excellence in Talence, has set his sights on qualifying for the Los Angeles Olympic Games.

Tomorrow, the Olympic Torch Relay will head to the Gironde department, offering a wonderful opportunity to discover the attractions of this region, world-renowned for its wine-growing treasures. The Olympic Torch will set off from Saint-Émilion, before heading for the racecourse in Le Bouscat, Libourne, the Cité du Vin and Lormont. The day will continue along a route between Mérignac and Pessac and then return to Libourne and the Plage des Dagueys beach, before completing the day in Bordeaux.

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