

Ask the agent

No one knows the area like a local estate agent. We asked **Paddy Gibbins**, of Artaxa Immo SARL, for the inside track on Gard and Hérault

How much would you expect to pay for:

- a detached property with land in good condition?

In Gard you could expect to pay in the region of €235,000, while Hérault is slightly cheaper at around €225,000.

- a three-bedroom townhouse?

In Gard this would cost around €175,000, and again Hérault is slightly cheaper at around €155,000.

- a renovation opportunity?

In Gard you could get a property to renovate from about €65,000 but if you want outside space you could expect to pay €90,000 upwards. In Hérault a property without land would cost about €45,000 while a property with a terrace would cost €70,000 upwards.

Is there a typical architecture or style in Gard and Hérault?

There is a mixture of properties here - in villages this includes stone period properties such as a *maison de vigneron* (a winegrower's house) or a *maison de maître* (18th-century bourgeois house), while there are villas on the outskirts of the villages. The stone



houses have many character features such as exposed walls and original tiles but lack outside space. The villas have the advantage of outside space but often lack character, they are usually built on one level and offer open-plan living.

Why do British people buy houses in Gard and Hérault?

They want to enjoy the Mediterranean climate and lifestyle and will often look here having been put off by high prices and overcrowding in neighbouring Provence. There are plenty of activities with lakes, mountains, the river and the Med all in close proximity. And of course the well-advertised 300 days of sunshine a year! Access is easy with direct flights from all over the UK.

What advice would you give to somebody who is thinking of buying in your area?

The time seems right. After static prices for a little while, we are increasingly seeing properties sell at their asking price or near to. The sales cycle has come down considerably over the last nine months, so while pricing offers good value there are signs that the market is hardening. I have just bought another property myself last month...

What tips would you give to help people settle into life in the area?

Learn French and accept that things are less dynamic in France. Don't try and understand why things happen; they just do, and often in defiance of all logic. Do business in person and not over the phone.

What are the specialities of the area?

The food is very diverse and rich, which stems from the mix of sea and mountains here. There are some very fine fish and seafood restaurants on the coast. Of course, the area is a massive wine producer and the quality of wine has increased considerably over the last decade.

Describe the area in five words?

Sun, sea, food, wine, vineyards.

What is your favourite corner?

I love the fact that on a Sunday morning it's as easy to take my family to the beaches as it is to take them into the hills for a hike. The food is great and wherever you are at midday there's always a good-value three-course meal near to hand.

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GARD & HÉRAULT is it right for you?

Property prices

Hérault has an average resale price of €215,000 and Gard of €188,500, making them the most expensive departments in Languedoc-Roussillon which has an average resale price of €180,000.



Weather

Languedoc-Roussillon is renowned for its dry and warm climate. Summers are hot with temperatures over 30°C with plenty of sunshine and winters are mild.

Activities

Located on the Mediterranean coast, Hérault and Gard boast stunning beaches and delicious seafood. Inland, the area is also a haven for wildlife with the Cévennes national park and the Camargue. The town of Nîmes was a major Roman town and their remains can be seen in the well-preserved amphitheatre, Maison Carrée and nearby Pont du Gard. Montpellier is a thriving city with elegant architecture to admire. There are also plenty of pretty villages to visit, with six Plus Beaux Villages.

FACT FILE



Region: Languedoc-Roussillon
Departments: Gard and Hérault
Capitals: Nîmes and Montpellier

✈ Ryanair operates flights from regional UK airports to Nîmes, Béziers and Montpellier and easyJet flies from London to Montpellier.

🚆 Eurostar to Paris and then TGV to Nîmes or Montpellier which takes three hours or three and a half hours respectively.

🚗 For driving times consult one of the many online route planners such as those at www.viamichelin.com, www.mappy.com and www.theaa.com.