



This substantial country home near Puy l'Évêque has enough room to live, laugh, love and work! (Let us see overlaid for more details)

Home from home office

What's stopping you buying that adorable bolthole in France? If it's work, why not pack the laptop and take the office with you, says **Julie Savill**?

Could you be a digital nomad? Is home where your laptop is? Admittedly it's not a possibility for everyone but if you can occasionally work from home then you should be able to occasionally work from France.

The idea of digital nomadism has grown massively since Covid with more and more people freeing themselves from the traditional constraints of nine-to-five work life and embracing their ability to escape traditional working arrangements and taking on 'work from home' positions.

"You will have to be disciplined and actually work while you're at your second home - even when the rest of the family isn't"

If you do decide this is an option for you there are a few things to consider. Firstly, that you will have to be disciplined and actually work while you are at your second home. That might seem obvious but have you considered how it will feel when the rest of the family is

heading out to a local château or lounging around the pool?

You might be able to adapt your days and get an early start and an earlier finish to the day. And at the very least you'll have your evenings free for socialising and those lovely long outdoor meals.

A couple of years ago we had what appeared to me to be the ultimate digital nomads come and horse sit for us. We had advertised on Trusted Housesitters and got an application from a couple in their 30s from Seattle. They spent their entire time travelling to different locations, both within the United States and throughout Europe hopping from one house sit to another.

So committed were they to the lifestyle that in six years of marriage, they hadn't got around to getting their own home, either owned or rented!



€185,000

NÉRÉ, CHARENTE-MARITIME

In an idyllic countryside setting, this property boasts four bedrooms, cosy interiors, an enclosed garden, a pool, a garage, a shaded terrace and a separate outbuilding. Near a lively village with easy access to Angoulême train station and the A10 motorway.



€249,950

CHÂLUS, HAUTE-VIENNE

This spacious three-bedroom stone house has an easy to maintain garden with a stunning heated swimming pool. Situated near the historic town of Chalus, with its shops and restaurants, and just 25 minutes from Limoges airport.



€339,200

DURAS, LOT-ET-GARONNE

This five-bedroom stone property is on a quiet road near Duras, less than an hour from Bergerac airport. It has a spacious open-plan layout, perfect for gathering, and the garden includes a children's area, a BBQ terrace, an orchard and a small paddock.



€370,000

SOUILLAC, LOT

In the heart of the Dordogne valley, this beautifully presented stone property offers delightful character features, seven bedrooms, an independent stone barn and a large garden with pool. Only five minutes from the motorway network and closest train station.

CASE STUDY 1 IT WORKS FOR ME!



We caught up with Tina Lawlock who has a holiday home in the Charente and brings her work on her holiday breaks.

A bit about you? I'm Tina, married, early 40s, three children (ages 25, 16 and 15), and a dog, Moina, who is a miniature schnauzer.

Where in France did you buy a property?

We bought originally in Vertou but are currently in the process of selling that and buying another house in Couture (both in the Charente).

What was important in that choice? Initially, we wanted to be in the village so we could meet people. Now we want more space, parking, a haven where we can unwind, away

from the rat race at home in the UK. We still wanted to be near friends we had made (French and English) so the second home needed to be not far away from the first.

How much time do you spend in France each year? We try to come out every six to eight weeks for a long extended weekend and then during the summer and Christmas for longer periods of time.

What sort of work do you do? I'm a child people officer.

Do you have a dedicated workspace in France or is it the kitchen table? I have been

lucky, even in our little village property I had an office and the new house also has a space I can dedicate to working.

Is it easy to manage working from France?

Yes, as long as I have access to wifi in the UK (I also work from home a couple of days a week so whether it's at home in the UK or at home in France, there is no real difference. Other than at the end of a working day in France I will be able to sit on the veranda and have an amazing view across the countryside.

What would your best advice be to someone wanting to do a similar thing?

Make sure you have a good internet connection and where possible a space where you can close the door on work at the end of the day so that you can disconnect. **What are the pitfalls (if any)?** That the time you have in France is disrupted by work!

DO YOU WANT TO WORK REMOTELY FOR YOUR UK/FOREIGN-BASED COMPANY WHILE ENJOYING LIFE IN FRANCE?

As part of your 90/180 permitted days?

Use an appropriate mobile phone 'Schengen 90/180' app to ensure you do not overstay past the 90 days

Up to six months

Visa VLS-T

More than six months or moving to France?

Visa VLS-TS*

VLS-T (visa long séjour - temporaire): A visa which allows the holder to enter/exit France at will for a period of between four and 12 months. It cannot be renewed in France and doesn't give the right to full residency outside its dates of validity.

VLS-TS (visa long séjour - titre de séjour): A visa which allows the holder to enter/exit France at will for a period of 12 months. It gives its holder the right to residency during its dates of validity. This visa can be renewed in France before expiration for a carte de séjour (titre de séjour).

*In all cases, you will need to make an annual tax declaration in France even if your foreign income is taxed in your country of origin. This might also affect your tax residency. Please seek advice from a tax professional on individual situations do vary.

CASE STUDY 2 WE MADE THE BIG MOVE



Whether you moved pre-break or hope to obtain a long-term visa to live and work there, it's good insight to see how it is working out for those based long term in France, such as Peter and Angelica.

A bit about you? We are both from London but prefer country life. We moved to the Devon countryside in 2015 and then to France in 2019. At the start, we were in Morbihan, Brittany, but moved down to the Tarn in 2021. Our son, Hami, was born in 2023 in Albi and we are raising him in France.

Tell us about your current location: We bought a property in the Tarn, in a little village called Sales-sur-Carou, which is half-way between the medieval towns Cordes-sur-Ciel and Montestós. We were looking for a property in the countryside with some character. It needed plenty of space, as we

both work from home plus some outside space, either a generous garden or some land. Our ideal was that the nearest towns were not overly developed with new-builds, and felt historic, but still retained some vibrancy and life. It was important to have basic amenities at a reasonable distance. Knowing that we wanted to have children, we were looking for somewhere in reach of a hospital, doctors and schools.

What sort of work do you do? Angelica: I manage a foot and ankle health clinic based in central London. **Peter:** I work as a software developer for an international company. Both of us work remotely from home.

Do you have a dedicated workspace in France or is it the kitchen table? We both work from home, moving between the kitchen island, living room, study or by the pool.

Is it easy to manage working from France? Angelica works UK office hours. The late start

is nice, but the later end of day can get a bit much in the winter! The French tax system and being an auto-entrepreneur can be tricky at times, but there is a lot of information online to help along the way.

What would your best advice be to someone wanting to do a similar thing? If you are able to make it work, either retaining your UK income or working/visiting in France, just do it! We have never looked back.

What are the pitfalls (if any)? If you are planning on being in the countryside, visit it in winter. Most cafes and restaurants near us close for the season, so be sure you are happy not having many options for where to go.

What would you do differently another time? Though we love the privacy, we have a fair amount of land to maintain. Having a house in the same setting but with the surrounding land managed by someone else would be ideal!

Read more property buying guides on [frenchpropertynews.com](https://www.frenchpropertynews.com)



€446,250

LIZANT, VIENNE

Magnificent stone property offering a large living space and a separate annexe which could be used for guest accommodation or a home office. Located just outside a small village, with easy access to Angoulême and Poitiers train stations and the A10 autoroute.



€785,000

CARCASSONNE, AUDE

Large five-bedroom family home with separate one-bedroom cottage. Stunning 360-degree countryside views, yet just a short drive or bike ride to the nearest amenities. Under 30 minutes from an international airport and well-connected to rail and road networks.



€997,500

BERGERAC, DORDOGNE

Graceful and imposing 18th-century family home set in 1.3ha of mature grounds, offering numerous light and spacious rooms, high ceilings and period features. Just a few minutes' drive from Bergerac, with its fabulous facilities and transport links.



€1,657,000

PUY L'ÉVEQUE, LOT

Family home with superb living room with stone fireplace, seven ensuite bedrooms and a separate two-bedroom apartment. The south-facing terrace overlooks spring-fed ponds and a beautiful staircase leads to the pool and jacuzzi. 30km from Cahors.

Wherever they were they kept to Seattle times for working which, in our home meant starting at 10pm and working through the night! That might feel a bit extreme but it gave them an incredible adventure and plenty of time in the afternoons and early evenings for exploring and relaxing poolside.

If they can make that work for them, then surely it's possible for most people to squeeze a few more weeks a year from their holiday home and maximise their enjoyment of their investment.

"Wifi speed is a big consideration - fibre is finding its way into small towns and villages across the southwest"

MAKING IT WORK

If you are already looking for a property, you might want to consider updating your wish list to accommodate working during your French breaks. Many people still like to be able to close the door to the 'office'

at the end of the day so the laptops and notepads aren't sitting there as a reminder all the time. If you can create the luxury of a home office, that's great. Otherwise, consider a dual-purpose room with a desk and either a bed or sofa

bed for guests so you get best value from the space. Wifi speed is a big consideration too; fibre is finding its way into small towns and villages all across the southwest. Put it on your list and ask your agent to check the availability and speed of internet connection at any property that looks like a serious contender. ■

Julie Seville is a director at **Beaux Villages estate agency** Tel: 0800 270 0101 (Freephone from the UK) 0033 (0)8 05 69 23 25 (France) www.villages.com