

Le Var

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Wine cooperatives of Var

EVENT

Mummies, the paths to eternity
at the HDE Var

A GEM

Verdon Cycling Tour

LIVING HERE

Méditerranée
Porte des Maures



The Département du Var YouTube channel

SIGN UP NOW!

All the latest
local news

Var
feature articles

Weekend
agenda

Contents

FRONT COVER:
The sandy beaches
of Bormes-les-Mimosas

PORTFOLIO > 2 - 7
IN FOCUS > 8 & 9
EXCURSION IDEAS > 11 - 16
READING SUGGESTIONS > 17 - 19
RECOMMENDED EXHIBITIONS > 20
VAR EXHIBITION CENTRE > 21 - 25
SEASONAL SUGGESTIONS > 26 & 27
TREASURES OF VAR > Méounes-lès-Montrieux > 28 - 30



31 VAR LEADING THE WAY

EVENTS / F1 French Grand Prix > 32 - 34
AT THE CUTTING EDGE / Destination Var network > 35 - 37
A GEM / Verdon Cycling Tour > 38 - 41
TRENDS / Seayouandi / Le sud atelier / Garage handshaping > 42 - 45
INNOVATION / Solar ovens by Solar brother > 46 - 48
SUCCESS STORY / Tarte Tropézienne > 49 - 51

52 ONLY IN VAR

LIVING HERE / Méditerranée Porte des Maures > 54 - 67
HERITAGE / Salernes flour mill > 68 - 71
SOMETHING DIFFERENT / Signed Bartholdi! > 72
OFF THE BEATEN TRACK / Wine cooperatives of Var > 73 - 87
REAL-LIFE STORY / The perfumer of Seillans > 88 - 90



91 FACETS OF VAR

ADVENTURE LOG / The coastal path from Ramatuelle to Saint-Raphaël > 92 - 105
ESCAPE / South beach at Port-Cros > 106 & 107
NATURAL AND FRAGILE / Rivers Jabron and Verdon in Trigance > 108 - 110
STYLE / Lilibille in Le Pradet > 111 & 112
FOCUS / Sport, Provence-style! > 113 & 114
LOCAL SPECIALITY / Bouillabaisse > 115 & 116
FOR FAMILIES / Le Freinet Heritage Conservatory in La Garde-Freinet /
Var Llamas in Six-Fours-les-Plages > 117 - 119
ARTISTIC VAR / Compagnie Souricière in Toulon > 120



WHERE TO FIND 'LE VAR' MAGAZINE? This magazine is distributed free of charge at public events. It is also available at the Hôtel du Département (county hall) in Toulon, the town halls, tourist offices and other outlets. It can be downloaded from the website www.var.fr - **TO SUBSCRIBE TO 'LE VAR' MAGAZINE** and receive your copy at home, sign up at var.fr/mon-abonnement

Publication Director: Marc Giraud - **Editorial Coordinator:** Philippe Vuyenne - **Editorial team:** Muriel Priad, Sabine Quilici, Jessica Chaine - **Photography:** Nicolas Lacroix, Samchedine Damen Debbih
First draft: Isabelle Cilichini, creation/graphic design/cartography/production monitoring; Back cover: Lionel Cartier - **Photo-engraving:** Graphic Azur
Printed by: Imaye Graphic, in 210,000 copies - Legal deposit on publication - ISSN: 2273-2659 - Production cost per copy €0.87 inc. taxes
CONSEIL DÉPARTEMENTAL DU VAR - Communications Department - 390 avenue des Lices - CS 41303 - 83076 Toulon Cedex - Website: www.var.fr - redaction@var.fr



is a trademark owned by the Département du Var



Portfolio

Much like the sun shining above, the sunflower is one of the icons of Var. Its optimal flowering period is mid-summer.







© Adobe Stock

Cicadas, the very symbol of Provence and of Var, emerge from the ground with the heat of summer.



The parasol, a summer essential that protects us on a sun-drenched beach, was first used by the ancient Greeks and Romans.



© Adobe Stock

Var, the world's leading producer of AOP rosé wines, is packed with wine estates and wine cooperatives that await your visit. The iconic summertime drink. Read our articles on pages 8 & 9 and 73 to 87.



Sun hats, a summer essential...

‘In the sun, that’s the thing!’

In Var, the sun warms both body and heart. Here, you can relish the luminosity that has inspired so many painters, poets, photographers and other artists. Under the sun’s nurturing rays, nature works her miracles, like the fields of sunflowers that make the Var landscapes even brighter, in a Van Gogh painting come to life!

Summer is also when the temperatures climb and the cicadas burst into song to resume their seasonal performance. Now is the time to find those parasols, sun hats, sunglasses and other summer accessories. Because that’s the thing, there’s nothing more enjoyable than sipping at a glass of rosé as you relax... in the sun! ■



FROM GRAPE... TO WINE



THE GRAPE

Rounded, sometimes elongated in shape, with colours ranging from pink to black and from yellow to light green, grapes, the fruit of the grapevine, grow on stalks to form bunches. Each grape is covered in a waxy film known as the bloom. The grape's fleshy interior is packed with juice and also contains the pips.

There are two categories of grapes: dessert grapes grown exclusively for consuming as fruit, and wine grapes which are cultivated specifically for wine-making.



THE VAR VINEYARD

Var has so many assets: the right climate, a variety of soils and grape varieties, and a terroir that's truly exceptional. In the four AOP (PDO) areas of the Var vineyard - Bandol, Côteaux Varois en Provence, Côtes de Provence and Côteaux d'Aix-en-Provence - wines are blended from a number of grape varieties.

The diversity of terroirs, grape varieties and microclimates results in wines of many types.

Rosé wine makes up 70% of production. Var is the world's leading producer of AOP rosé wines. Representing 25% of production, the red wines are also of good quality. The rarer whites account for just 5%. Each of the appellation areas produces wines of all three colours.



ORIGINS OF WINE IN VAR

Grapes were on Earth well before human beings. Grapevines grew in the wild. Prehistoric humans consumed grapes as far back as the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods, and kept grape juice in containers buried in the ground. It was only around 600 BC that the Phocaeans planted vines, in Gaul, when they founded Massilia. Then, in 200 BC, the Romans settled on Provence soils where they too began to cultivate vines. Vine cultivation was resumed during the Middle Ages, under the great monastic orders. Thoronet Abbey, for example, was among the major wine producers. The wine trade generated significant income for the monastic institutions. From the 14th century, the kingdom's great noble dynasties, public figures and grand officers of the royal army took over the management of the vineyards of Provence. That was the beginning of modern wine-growing methods in Provence as we know them today.



LE DÉPARTEMENT

presents

Les Voix Départementales

1st July > 27th August 2022



15 free
concerts **15** places

D83

BRUE-AURIAC
CARCÈS
FAYENCE
FLASSANS-SUR-ISSOLE
GARÉOULT
LA CELLE
LA ROQUE-ESCLAPON
NANS-LES-PINS
PIGNANS
POURCIEUX
PUGET-SUR-ARGENS
RÉGUSSE
RIANS
TAVERNES
TRANS-EN-PROVENCE

For more info go to www.var.fr



Les Voix **DÉPARTEMENTALES**



15 concerts by 15 different groups in 15 towns and villages.

That's what awaits you, from 1st July to 27th August, for this year's Voix Départementales, the summer tour of the Département du Var.



This year, Var will swing to the beat of jazz, rhythm & blues, and musical trends from across the world. Les Voix Départementales will stop to perform in 15 towns and villages of Var: Brue-Auriac, Carcès, Fayence, Flassans-sur-Issolle, Garéoult, La Celle, La Roque-Esclapon, Nans-les-Pins, Pignans, Pourcieux, Puget-sur-Argens, Régusse, Rians, Tavernes and Trans-en-Provence.

Since 2016, this concert tour of the French Department of Var has offered free, high-quality performances by nationally famous artists. Created by the Département du Var, the cultural event has enchanted tourists and locals alike, summer after summer. The venue for the opening night is the Abbey of La Celle, reputed for its outstanding acoustics. Following that, the concerts will take place in the centres of the towns and villages hosting the Voix Départementales tour.

For its first four years, the event's artistic focus was classical music. Since 2020, its musical direction has completely changed to explore a more international repertoire. This summer, the Voix Départementales concerts look set once again to liven up the atmosphere.



var.fr/culture/les-voix-departementales

Voix Départementales: THE 2022 LINE-UP



Bossazina



Cheeky Swinger



Ritournelles

► **1ST JULY AT 9PM**
ABBEY OF LA CELLE
Cheeky Swinger
 Notes of old

Charlène FERNANDEZ (vocals)
 Olivier LABROT (trumpet)
 Olivier DEBOURREZ (trombone)
 Laurent BIGNET (banjo)
 Serge BAUDRY (sousaphone)

Cheeky Swinger propose swing music from the thirties. The group performs revisited current pop songs and thirties-style renditions.

► **5TH JULY AT 9PM**
PUGET-SUR-ARGENS
 Square outside the Victor Hugo culture centre
The Spacesheeps
 Pop rock

Amandine HADECOUR (lead vocals)
 Thomas GANET (lead vocals, rhythm guitar)
 Thomas LORMAILLE (lead guitar, chorus vocals)
 Renald VILLECHENOUX (bass)
 Lilian MANTEAUX (drums)

The Spacesheeps are a group from Toulon who play pop rock and international pop music. Formed in 2019 by five students in current music from the TPM Conservatoire, they perform cover versions of songs by the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Téléphone, the Black Keys, Guns n' Roses, Pink and many more...

► **8TH JULY AT 9PM**
FAYENCE
 Outdoor theatre
The Po'Boys
 Mississippi Blues

Poupa CLAUDIO (guitar and vocals)
 Nico MOURARET (drums and vocals)
 Elie COQUARD (harmonica and vocals)

Between the guitarist's hypnotic mix of bass, rhythmic beat and melody, the harmonicist's rasping 'roots' sound and the drummer's effective strike, this trio are really something else and conjure images of cotton fields and the Mississippi river.

► **11TH JULY AT 9PM**
NANS-LES-PINS - Le cours
Joulik
 Roots

Mélissa ZANTMAN (vocals, accordion, percussions)
 Robin CELSE (guitar, oud, mandola, vocals, percussion)
 Claire MENGUY (cello, vocals)

Joulik are a vocal and instrumental trio who wander between revisited traditional songs and creative music from around the world. The voices blend harmoniously with the sounds of guitar, oud, cello, mandola, accordion and percussion instruments. A performance that carries the audience off in a mixed atmosphere somewhere between poetry and frenzy.

► **15TH JULY AT 9PM**
PIGNANS - place des Écoles
Dixie Cajun
 A journey to French Louisiana

Camille BRIANT (violin) - Pierre CAMMAS (piano)
 Jean-Pierre FARAGONI (guitar and vocals)
 Didier FRANCISCI (lead vocals, guitar and harmonica)

After taking to the stages from Nashville to Chicago and from Austin to New Orleans, Dixie Cajun entice their audience onto a melodic journey through blues, jazz and Cajun music. Guaranteed to carry you off!

► **19TH JULY AT 9PM**
GARÉOULT - place de la Mairie
Ritournelles Collectif
Guinguette Hot Club
 Guinguette Hot Club Community. French chanson and international music

Lison STEGER (guitar, vocals, ukulele)
 Marion LAURENT (guitar, ukulele, vocals)
 Yohan VELY (drums)
 Aurélien MAURICE (double bass)
 Olivier DEBOURREZ (trombone)
 Elina RODEVIC (violin) - Virginie DANG (flute)

Les Ritournelles, the Charlie's Angels of song from the Guinguette Hot Club community, perform well-known and more obscure numbers in French, Italian, Spanish and even Russian. Their slightly mad, reinvented repertoire will have you dancing the waltz, the swing, the cumbia or the kazachok!

► **21ST JULY AT 9PM**
FLASSANS-SUR-ISSOLE
 place Jean Jaurès
Cécile Messyas quintet
 Jazz beneath the stars with Cécile Messyas

Cécile MESSYASZ (vocals)
 Piero IANNETTI (drums)
 Eric MERIDIANO (piano)
 Fabien GIACCHI (double bass)
 Jean-Philippe SEMPÈRE (guitar)

Cécile Messyas, deemed one of the best French jazz singers, performs the great classics of the genre, as well as some rare gems from the French popular music repertoire. She is backed by a group of remarkable musicians. Jazz at its purest, blessed by a summer evening.

► **25TH JULY AT 9PM**
RÉGUSSE - Le cours
Makuz
 Latin-style ballroom music

Célia SEMPÈRE (vocals, percussion)
 Julien OSTY (electric bass, double bass)
 Rudy PICCINELLI (percussion, chorus vocals)
 Julien ORSINI (guitar, percussion, chorus vocals)
 Michaël HERBAUT (guitar, tres, percussion, chorus vocals)

The Latin-American group Makuz invites the audience to cross the South-American continent in a mix of Columbian cumbia, rhythmic Cuban salsa, energetic makossa and Hispano-American rumba.

► **28TH JULY AT 9PM**
TRANS-EN-PROVENCE
 place de l'Hôtel de Ville
Très Hombres - Around the world

Krys LEG (lead vocals, percussion)
 Jean DIEZ (guitar, ukulele, chorus vocals)
 Jean-Marc PRON (double bass)

These three musicians revisit French and international music in a humorous, groovy mix of tunes from the Balkans, Latin America and the Caribbean. Prepare for contagious, good-humoured merriment!

► **5TH AUGUST AT 9PM**
LA ROQUE-ESCLAPON
 place Maxime Perrimond
Harpyotime and the nightbirds
 Swing time

Lionel MOLIO (harmonica) - Ilona HANN (vocals)
 Didier DESSOLIS (guitar/vocals)
 David GORTHCINSKY (double bass)
 Sophie LAPORTE (drums)

Harpyotime and the Nightbirds perform a timeless repertoire reminiscent of the swing cabaret acts seen in Chicaco from the thirties to the sixties. Music lovers, bebop fans and lindy hop dancers will love this mix of tradition and modernity.

► **11TH AUGUST**
RIANS - place Saint-Laurent
Swing Box - Cotton Club

Caroline INDJEIN (vocals/bass)
 Thierry DURIEUX (vocals/banjo)
 Alexandre INDJEIN (vocals/drums)

Swing Box are a trio of close harmony singers who also play instruments. In a friendly party atmosphere, their original and highly varied swing jazz repertoire takes the audience back in time.

► **16TH AUGUST AT 9PM**
POURCIEUX
 place Victor-Joseph Chavet
Mau Mau Collective
 Happymusic

Pierre Marie CHAUDAGNE (drums)
 Aurélien MAURICE (bass)
 Frédéric LAUGIER (guitar)
 Fabrice LO CICERO 'MO' (vocals, guitar)

Mau Mau Collective put on a colourful performance that transports the audience to Kingston, Haiti or New Orleans. The group draw on a wide scope of traditional black music to which they add the

modern sounds of electro pop rock.

► **19TH AUGUST AT 9PM**
BRUE-AURIAC
Le cours Roux de Corse
The Cellar Cats
 From Ménilmontant to The Godfather

Vince VAHRAM (guitar, vocals)
 Mathieu ARNAL (guitar)
 Philippe MEGE (double bass)
 Sylvain THEROND (clarinette)

The Cellar Cats revisit the great classics of swing and French chanson. Including Nino Rota, Charles Trenet, Paolo Conte, Sydney Bechet, Django Reinhardt and many more, with cover versions in the purest of gypsy jazz traditions.

► **23RD AUGUST AT 9PM**
TAVERNES
 place de la Mairie
Franóters
Guinguette Hot Club Community
 French chanson
 and international music

Olivier TOUSSAINT (guitar, vocals, banjo)
 Sébastien TORA (guitar, vocals)
 Marion LAURENT (melodica, ukulele, vocals)
 Pierre-Marie CHAUDAGNE (drums)
 Philippe MEGE (bass)
 Olivier DEBOURREZ (trombone)
 Olivier LABROT (trumpet)

Franóters, a crazy group with a passion to share, from the Guinguette Hot Club community, perform cheeky cover versions of pop songs with a unique humorous twist: Brassens, Brel and Gainsbourg but also Les Ogres de Barback, Debout sur le Zinc, Rue Ketanou and Zoufris Maracas.

► **27TH AUGUST AT 9PM**
CARCÈS - place Emile Zola
Bossazina
 Brazilian music

Frédéric RÉGINE (vocals/guitar)
 Stéphane KARA (drums/percussion)
 David DUPEYRE (guitar)
 Nathalie SAINT-CROIX (flute as an extra)

Bossazina takes you on a musical journey to the heart of Brazil. They perform great classics of this country's popular music as well as their own songs, adding an original touch to the beat of bossa nova, samba, baião, funk and many other sounds. ■



© DR
 The Spacesheeps



© Delphine Cromel
 Joulík



© DR
 Très Hombres



© DR
 Franóters



© DR
 Mau Mau Collective



© Caillou

CHÂTEAUVALLON SUMMER FESTIVAL IN OLLIOULES

► From 22nd June to 30th July

This summer festival hosted by the Département du Var is held outdoors in the charming natural setting of Châteauvallon. It attracts prestigious well-known artists but also reveals upcoming talents. The entire artistic world comes together to offer an eclectic programme. Dance features heavily with performances, for example, by the Marseille National Ballet and the (LA)HORDE community, Rone at the turntables, the latest creation by Philippe Decouflé, Stéréo, or Roméo & Juliette by the Ballet Preljocaj. The musical line-up also includes headline acts such as Jane Birkin's tender rendition of her latest album, and guitar performances by Al Di Meola and Juan Carmona. The event's fabulous programme also features musicals, readings and conferences. And this year, the festival will also bring some unusual shows to some highly original venues, such as the Altiplano. chateauvallon-liberte.fr



L'AIR DU TEMPS IN LE THORONET

► From 22nd to 25th June

The second L'Air du Temps festival in Le Thoronet looks set to do the musical splits! Heritage music, festive music, international music, classical music, intellectual music, but also recitals, an artistic walkabout and a siesta to sound effects. That's the array featured in the 2022 programme of this wonderful festival taking place on the main square of the village and in the beautiful Thoronet Abbey, one of three Cistercian abbeys in Provence. "*Air du Temps aims to mix, to combine and to surprise, without excluding anyone, in order to encourage encounters and new discoveries... A popular and slightly provocative art and music festival that sets high standards*", the organisers explain. festivalairdutemps.com

BAYAMO IN LA SEYNE-SUR-MER► **From 7th to 30th July**

In La Seyne-sur-Mer, July is synonymous with Cuba, thanks to the Bayamo festival. This event, which is celebrating its 23rd occasion, is organised with the support of the Département du Var. The programme includes music, dance, exhibitions and a vintage car show. From 7th to 30th July, Galerie H is to host an exhibition. On 22nd & 23rd July, head to the Parc de la Navale for crazy live performances by Grupo Compay Segundo and other artists. Salsa dancers, take note! On 22nd, 23rd, 28th, 29th & 30th July, it's salsa & drinks time on Place Benoît Frachon, from 6.30pm to 8pm.

The festival will be rounded off in style on 30th July at the Parc de la Navale with a fabulous concert by Ludmilla Merceron. The Mytiliculteurs de Tamaris association are joining the party to serve meals from 7.30pm. **bayamo.fr**

**MIDI FESTIVAL IN HYÈRES-LES-PALMIERS**► **From 22nd to 24th July**

The Olbia archaeological site will be the venue for three evenings of concerts during the Midi Festival. To visit this ancient town located just a stone's throw from the beautiful Almanarre beach, join one of the guided tours organised every morning throughout the duration of the festival. International artists will be back on the stage of the Midi Festival, such as British rockers SQUID, Wesley Joseph, Ethan P. Flynn and the young band Sad Night Dynamite. In terms of French pop music, Fishback and Jacques are in the line-up. You'll also discover upcoming artists like the female duo Ottis Cœur and multi-instrumentalist Carlos Loverboy. On the event's sidelines, two evenings of electronic music will be held at the Circus and an afternoon at the Fondation Carmignac on the island of Porquerolles. **midi-festival.com**



SOIRÉES MUSICALES AT LA CELLE ABBEY

► From 27th July to 12th August

High-quality performances and the terroir of Var await you at the Abbey of La Celle for the 29th Soirées Musicales festival. This festival created by flutist

Philippe Depetris with the support of the Conseil Départemental du Var, attracts excellent artists year after year. Some of the evening performances will be delivered outside among the vines of the Coteaux Varois en Provence botanical conservatory, and others in the cloister of La Celle Abbey, a building with outstanding acoustics that's owned by the Département du Var. Each concert ends with a chance for spectators to taste the wines of the Coteaux Varois en Provence AOC. Just to give the festival an even friendlier atmosphere!

JAZZ IN BRIGNOLES

► From 28th to 30th July

Jazz and rhythm & blues ring out across Brignoles. Brignoles Jazz festival, with the support of the Département du Var, brings you once again this year some fabulous live performances. The fun starts on 28th July on Place Saint-Pierre with a major tribute to Duke Ellington that brings back, who brings back to life the glorious years of the Cotton Club and the legendary New York ballrooms. On 29th July, saxophonist Thomas Ibanez, accompanied by Jim Rotondi and his famous trumpet, deliver a concert that will already feel like one of the highlights of the festival. At 12 noon on Saturday 30th July, Irish musician Gerard Murphy will beautifully revive the music of Paul Desmond on Place du Palais de Justice. Last but not least, the group Latin Spirit will round off the final night by leading the audience into a rhythmic whirlwind of Latino sounds and jazz harmonies. jazzabrignoles.net



STRING QUARTET FESTIVAL IN CORDE IN THE FAYENCE REGION

► From 15th to 18th September

A key event on the Var cultural calendar, the Fayence region's Quartet Festival now ranks among the greatest chamber music festivals in Europe. Every year, world-famous artists are invited to perform in the nine perched villages of the Fayence region. Since its creation in 1989, the festival has attracted no less than 90 quartets to perform more than 200 pieces in celebration of over 70 composers. In 2016, the artistic management was entrusted to cellist Frédéric Audibert who was tasked with introducing this musical genre to a wider audience. quatuors-fayence.com



NOT FORGETTING...

MOKO FESTIVAL IN TOULON

► From 24th to 26th June

Free concerts of current music in the gardens of the Royal Tower. rockorama.fr

CELLO FAN IN CALLIAN

► From 8th to 11th July

The Cello Fan festival brings together around forty cello soloists from across the world to play the most beautiful musical pieces in the heart of the medieval village of Callian. cello-fan.com

RAMATUELLE FESTIVAL

► From 27th July to 12th August

27th, 28th & 29th July: Classical nights

1st August: Patrick Bruel

2nd August: François-Xavier Demaison - Di(x) vin(s)

10th August: L'école des femmes

12th August: Calogero

festivalderamatuelle.com

ENTRECASTEAUX CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL HAUT VAR

► From 16th to 24th August

Touring festival of classical music concerts, with high-quality performances by world-famous artists. festivaldentrecasteaux.fr

COMIC-BOOK FESTIVAL OF SOLLIÈS-VILLE

► From 26th to 28th August

In a festive atmosphere of togetherness, the world of comic books converges on Solliès-Ville. festivalbd.com

LE PRIX DES LECTEURS *du Var*

Until 16th October 2022, the Conseil Départemental du Var invites readers to take part in the Prix des Lecteurs du Var book awards. Every year, three publications are rewarded in three distinct categories: general literature, children's literature, and comic books. To learn more about the competing publications, some sixty readings, plays and creative workshops are organised across the region by the multimedia library of the Département du Var. The winners will be announced on 18th November 2022, the opening day of the Var Book Festival running until 20th November on Place d'Armes in Toulon.

GENERAL LITERATURE CATEGORY



◀ MINUIT DANS LA VILLE DES SONGES by René Frégny, published by Gallimard

"I had previously been a carefree traveller. I became a reader of the open road, as dreamy as ever but with book in hand. I read, leaning against every embankment in Europe, on the edge of vast forests. I read in stations, ports and motorway service areas, or when sheltering from the rain and wind in a barn or a boathouse. In the evening I would slide into my sleeping bag and, as long as I could see the page, read until the last rays of daylight." René Frégny's latest novel tells the story of a life of wandering and reading, a story that's

harsh and yet sensual, dark and yet bright. A chaotic life in which, at every perilous cornerstone, enlightenment is found through another new author.

▶ CHEF

by Gautier Battistella,
published by Grasset

Paul Renoir, the successful 62-year-old owner of a 3-star restaurant called Les Promesses, has just been elected 'world's best chef' by his peers. But one Monday morning, his body is found lying alongside the shotgun with which he has taken his own life. Astonishment. The world of gastronomy is in mourning. Why did this outstanding chef give up on life? Through the career of Paul Renoir and the people around him, Chef reveals the story of French cuisine since the Second World War. A declaration of love for a demanding profession driven by passion.



TO PARTICIPATE

All readers can join in!
After reading the selected books, simply deposit your voting form at one of Var's participating multimedia centres or libraries, or cast your vote directly via the website var.fr



◀ LE PASSEUR

by Stéphanie Coste, published by Gallimard

When you have, as Seyoum cynically puts it, "built trade out of hope", become one of the most active people smugglers on the Libyan coast, and have a brain devoured by drugs and alcohol, are you still capable of humaneness? That's the question that arises when an umpteenth convoy arrives, packed with people who are desperate to attempt the crossing. With this particular convoy his whole tormented past suddenly surfaces: his family destroyed by the dictatorship in Eritrea, scenes of torture, of escape, of imprisonment and of his lost love. Through the crossed destinies of these migrants and their tormentor, Stéphanie Coste gives us the wider story behind a traumatised continent.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE CATEGORY



◀ **LES DEUX GÉANTS**

by Régis Lejonc and Martin Jarrie, published by HongFei

Two giants walk on either side of a world that turns to the pace of their footsteps. Tirelessly, they walk and walk, each towards their own destiny, each with their own personality. Never do they see one another. When one is on this side, the other is on that side. Everybody knows this. That's just the way it is. But what would happen if one of them decided to walk in the opposite direction? Twenty years after its first release, Régis Lejonc's story, poetic as ever, finds a new lease of life alongside the beautiful illustrations by Martin Jarrie. Age 8 years and up.



◀ **L'ÉTERNITÉ**

by Mathilde Poncet,
published by
L'Étagère du Bass

Written and illustrated by Mathilde Poncet, *L'éternité* tells the story of a mysterious woman who lives well away from the village. Everything seems to indicate that she is a witch, even though she enjoys sculpture, gardening, and all sorts of other harmless activities. But because of the unfounded rumours, the disapproving villagers decide to banish her. To prove them wrong, she decides to follow one of the recipes from her book of spells and offers them... eternity. Age 5 years and up.



◀ **L'ENCYCLOPÉDIE DES OGRÉS**

by Denis Baronnet and Gaëtan Dorémus,
published by Actes Sud junior

Have you heard of the ogre of the woods? Or the blue ogre? Do you know what a baby ogre eats? Are ogres and humans related? More importantly, how do you protect yourself from a famished ogre, if you're unfortunate enough to meet one in the street? In this book designed like a fact-packed encyclopaedia, full of details about the lives of these hungry giants, author Denis Barronet offers answers to all of these questions. The humorous tone of this children's album is greatly enhanced by Gaëtan Dorémus' illustrations. A must-read for all ages! Age 7 years and up.

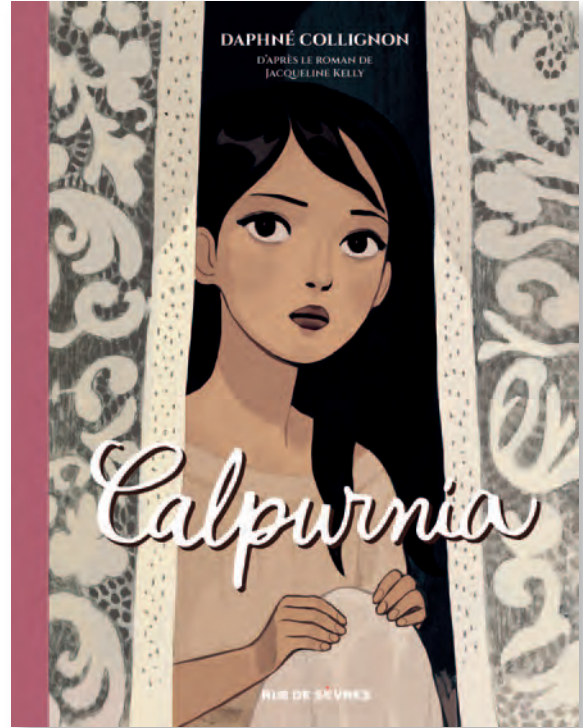
*Programme complet sur var.fr

COMIC BOOK CATEGORY

► **CALPURNIA L'INTÉGRALE**

by Daphné Collignon, published by Rue de Sèvres

Adapted from the novel by Jacqueline Kelly, this comic-book adventure by Daphné Collignon tells the story of Calpurnia Tate, who was 11 years old in 1899. In the heat of summer, she wonders about the behaviour of the creatures around her. With the help of her grandfather, a whimsical and unpredictable naturalist, she studies grasshoppers, fireflies, ants and opossums. Of a curious nature, she questions everything as she forges her personality in the company of her six brothers, rising to the challenge of being a girl at the dawn of the 20th century.



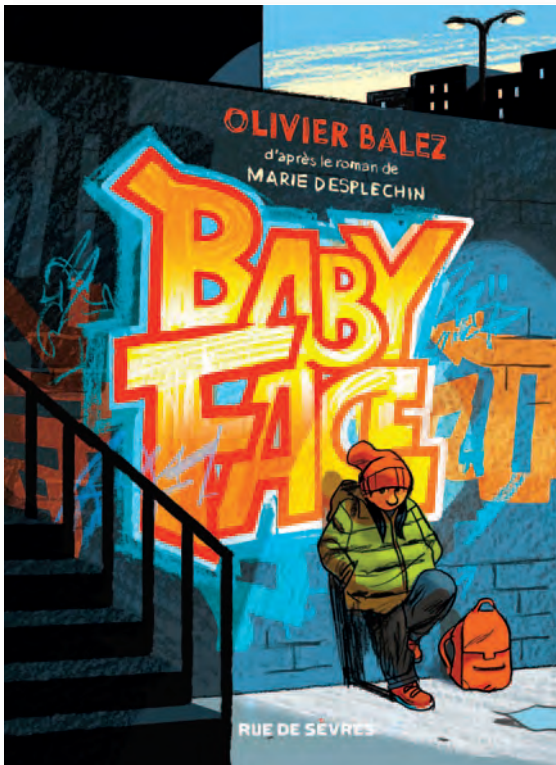
◀ **BABYFACE**

by Olivier Balez,
published by
Rue de Sèvres

Babyface is the story of Nejma. At school, nobody likes her. She's a loser, nasty, ugly and dowdy.

She even spits on the ground. But nobody ever

says anything, because they all know that you don't push to the limit a person who has nothing to lose. On the basis of this scenario by Marie Desplechin, Olivier Balez, author, press illustrator and artist, produces a comic book that deals with a number of topics, such as friendship and the right to be different.



► **CLARA ET LES OMBRES**

Andréa Fontana and Claudia Petrazz, published
by Bande d'ados

Some new starts are full of promise. For Clara, who has just moved with her father to Brattleboro, a remote village in the United States, the future looks rather dim. Luckily, she meets Robert, who introduces her to his small group of friends. They are on the same wavelength and find strength in numbers. But will they be strong enough to tackle the demons that haunt her, and those that inhabit Brattleboro? Clara et les Ombres is a sensitive and graphic novel about teenage concerns.





IN SEARCH OF THE MONASTERIES OF VAR

► Until 5th August

Département du Var Archives

Arches, columns, altars, stained-glass windows... These architectural and decorative features are what make Var's religious monuments so beautiful. They are everywhere, in each town and village of Var. The Abbey of La Celle is among the most iconic of them. This typical example of Romanesque art in Provence, a listed historical monument since 1886, has been the property of the Département du Var since 1992. There are other remarkable buildings too, like Thoronet Abbey, Sainte-Roseline Chapel in Arcs-sur-Argens and the Romanesque cloister of Saint-Léonce Cathedral in Fréjus. Keen to flaunt such gems, the Conseil Départemental du Var has designed a religious heritage trail that takes you exploring the mo-

nasteries of Var. This itinerary across Var was created under the GRITACCESS project in the scope of the Italy-France 2014-2020 European programme (MARITTIMO) and 85% financed by the European FEDER fund. Until 5th August 2022, the Monasteries of Var exhibition at the Département du Var Archives building offers insight into fourteen of these sites. Visitors follow a beautifully laid-out museum tour to admire some superb photographs of these buildings left by the Cistercians, Templars, Carthusians and Dominicans. **Département du Var Archives**, Chabran culture centre, 660 boulevard John Kennedy in Draguignan. From Tuesday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm. Free admission. Further details on archives.var.fr

LA ROSE ET L'OLIVIER

► Until 18th September

ABBAYE OF LA CELLE

La Celle Abbey, a gem of Romanesque art, property of the Conseil Départemental du Var, is exhibiting this summer the works of Barbara Luisi, an artist of international fame who is well-known in France for her photographs of landscapes and nudes that were on display in 2014 at the European photography centre in Paris. Inspired by this convent built in the 12th and 13th century, Barbara Luisi proposes a succession of sublime shots that exalt roses and olive trees, as well as the human body. Until 18th September 2022. La Rose et l'Olivier, an exhibition hosted by the Département du Var under the supervision of Jean-Luc Monterosso, former director of the European photography centre in Paris, is a study of the human body and the link that sometimes forms between its photographic representation and nature itself. Packed with history, this moving tour is described by the artist herself as "an allegorical composition. In nature, the rose represents beauty but also fragility and the ephemeral. At the other extreme lies the olive tree, a symbol of the Mediterranean basin that represents strength, fertility and immortality."

By varying the media for her creations - analogue and digital photographs, video material, printed silk and so on - Barbara Luisi brings a very personal touch to the refectory halls, the kitchen and the dormitory of La Celle Abbey, which has been restored by the Conseil Départemental du Var. At the heart of this poetic exhibition, the photographer, who is also a professional violinist, has installed her bed of roses. On a long piece of linen cloth draped over a monastic bed, twenty four photographs represent "the lost souls of the dormitory of La Celle Abbey". **Abbey of La Celle**, on Place des Ormeaux in La Celle Tuesday to Sunday, 10.30am to 6.30pm from June to August, and 10.30am to 5.30pm in September - Free, unlimited admission abbayedelacelle.fr - Tel. +33 4 98 05 05 05.



H D E V A R

MUMMIES

THE PATHS TO ETERNITY

10TH JUNE > 25TH SEPTEMBER 2022

THE SUMMER EXHIBITION
PROPOSED BY
THE DÉPARTEMENT DU VAR

- EGYPTIAN MUMMIES
- MUMMIES FROM ELSEWHERE
 - OCEANIA
 - AMERICA
 - ASIA
 - AFRICA
 - BRAZIL
 - NEW ZEALAND
 - PAPUA
 - NEW GUINEA
 - CAMEROON
 - BENIN
 - HAITI
- 3D RECONSTITUTION
OF A MUMMY
- THE CURSE
OF THE MUMMIES



  #hdevar

TICKET SALES hdevar.fr

Male mummy (in detail)

inv. 90002431, musée des Confluences (Lyon, France), © Olivier Garcin

In association with

L'Histoire

ARCHÉOLOGIA

Fascinating, captivating to some, horrifying and terrifying to others, mummies spark the curiosity of both researchers and the public at large. Apart from having been a symbol of eternal life in the popular imagination for thousands of years, they have also become a serious study topic for the scientific world. Through a multidisciplinary approach, the new summer exhibition entitled *Mummies, the paths to Eternity*, held at the Var Exhibition Centre in Draguignan, highlights the different ways in which mummies are depicted, their purposes, and how they can be useful to the living world. The exhibition is open from 10th June to 25th September 2022.

"In a scenographic tour that strictly observes the ethics and the cultural context of each piece, visitors discover an exceptional collection of mummified humans and animals, 'relics' of famous historic characters, and a whole multitude of objects associated with mummification techniques, funerary rituals and unexpected medical or artistic uses, as well as various iconographic documents, photographs and scientific works", explains Philippe Charlier, the exhibition curator and head of the research and education department of the Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac museum in Paris. He adds, "Not all Mummies come from Egypt, although that's probably the first place one associates with mummification. In reality, the deliberate preservation of dead bodies is a universal phenomenon present on every continent and in numerous civilisations. This exhibition reveals the latest progress made in expertise relating to Egyptian mummies, but also mummies from Asia, Africa, America, Oceania and Europe. It evokes their uses in everyday life medicines, as pigments for paint or as sculpture materials. But it also reveals that many kings of France were mummified. Literature, the cinema and pop culture are at last taking an interest in the imaginary realm of the mummy..."

Nearly 300 items are on display, thanks to contributions from the

Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac and Louvre museums in Paris, the Confluences museum in Lyon and various other museums in France and abroad, as well as private collectors. Some of the objects are being shown to the public for the very first time. *"It is absolutely vital that this knowledge spreads beyond the laboratory", states the curator. For some twenty years now, our expertise on mummies has made considerable progress. It is time for all this information to be made public, and that is the aim of this exhibition."*

Mummies, the paths to Eternity

Exhibition opens at the Var Exhibition Centre (HDE Var), from 10th June to 25th September 2022

1, Boulevard Maréchal Foch in Draguignan

From Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 7pm.

Full details and ticket sales online at hdevar.fr

Under the supervision of

Philippe Charlier, an exhibition catalogue,

Mummies, the paths to Eternity, has been produced and is on sale at the HDE Var. Retail price: €29



◀ **Fardo** (funerary package)

Fabric cover wrapped in several layers around the remains of a naturally mummified body, along with pouches, musical instruments and other belongings. Peru, c.1100 - 1450 BC.

Paris, Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac museum

Photo © musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac,

Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Patrick Gries / Bruno Descoings

THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition is laid out in six main sections spread over the three floors of the Var Exhibition Centre.

How mummies were used

This section reveals how mummy components were used in pharmaceutical and artistic practices. Various objects, pharmaceutical jars, tubes of paint and ancient books intended for apothecaries and doctors are on display. A painting by Alexandre Pau de Saint-Martin is exhibited here. Entitled *Vue de Caen*, it was painted with the remains of the mummified heart of Louis XIV.

Mummies from Egypt

A number of mummies, still intact, are presented here along with some ancient photographs and the reconstitution of a mummification table. Various display cases exhibit items from the mummies' post-mortem existence (bandages, amulets, embalming substances, canopic jars), demonstrating the symbolism of Egyptian embalming rituals. A specific area is devoted to the mummies of birds, crocodiles, snakes, mice and other animals

▼ The Tollund Man's left foot

L 19 x H 11 x W 8 cm
4th-3rd century BC
Mummified human remains (bog body)
Silkeborg Museum
© photo Ole Nielsen / SilkeborgMuseum



Mummies from elsewhere

Asia, Brazil, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Cameroon, Benin, Haiti... Mummification and embalming techniques were also used in the rest of the world. This section displaying photographs and genuine body parts aims to demonstrate the funerary rites of certain civilisations. It includes several mummy heads and mummified remains, the reconstitution of a Fali tomb from Cameroon, a South American mummy mask gallery, and various domestic objects that had been buried with them.

Mummies from Europe

Europe was no exception to the mummification phenomenon. The exhibition unveils some unique pieces such as the foot of the Tollund Man, one of the world's best-preserved mummies, the remains of Joan of Arc, or rather the Egyptian mummy fragments that were used in her beatification process, the remains of St. Luke's finger, a treasure from the cathedral of Sens, the plaque from the reliquary of the heart of Louis XIV, and the reliquary of the heart of Richard the Lionheart.

► Male mummy

inv. 90001265, Musée des Confluences (Lyon, France),
© Olivier Garcin





▲ Poster for 'The Mummy', a 1932 film starring Boris Karloff and Zita Johann
akg-images © Universal Pictures

▼ Mummified crocodile

Organic matter, linen bandages
Egypt. Late Period (672 - 332 BC)
Paris, Louvre museum
Photo ©Musée du Louvre, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Christian Décamps

► Postiche 'fardo' head

Mummy mask from
Pachacamac,
Wari civilisation, 500 - 1000 AD.
Photo © musée du quai Branly -
Jacques Chirac,
Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / image musée
du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac



Autopsy of a mummy

This section is split into two parts.

In one part, visitors use 3D glasses to view the constitution of a virtual mummy and the offerings it has received. In the other part, a scientific study of mummies is on display as well as the pharynx and voice of Henry IV, reconstituted from his mummified head. Visitors can then see an undamaged mummy from Peru, on loan from the Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac museum. This section ends with a 3D reconstruction of his face, based on the skull.

The curse of the mummies

The final section of the exhibition is filled with film posters, pop culture objects, comics, toys and books. The idea is to demonstrate how far the myth can be from reality, through famous productions such as, for example, the 1932 film *The Mummy*, starring Boris Karloff, and *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb*, a horror film dating from 1972. At the far end of the hall, a screening area rounds off the exhibition by projecting 8 to 10 minutes of film extracts on the topic of mummies coming back to life, and the fear and fascination that surrounds them.

EXHIBITION SIDE EVENTS

Conferences, guided tours of the exhibition itself, children's workshops, an escape game, storytelling tours and many more activities are being organised in connection with the exhibition.

For the entire cultural programme or practical information, visit hdevar.fr



INTERVIEW WITH PHILIPPE CHARLIER exhibition curator

Philippe Charlier leads the research and education department of the Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac museum in Paris. After carrying out autopsies for the justice system for 10 years, then working in prisons as head doctor while at the same time pursuing his anthropological work and archaeological excavations, he joined the museum on secondment in 2018. He is curator of the *Mummies, the paths to Eternity* exhibition.



© Jennifer Parpette

What led you to venture into the role of curator for the *Mummies, the paths to Eternity* exhibition?

A number of scientific specialisms based on fundamental and human disciplines - medicine, history, archaeology, anthropology and so on - all converge in the study of mummies. To learn about mummies requires an understanding of their different aspects, be they religious, ethnological or biological. As it happens, I have worked on the subject for over twenty years, and felt the need to make a résumé of the subject, so why not do so by way of an exhibition and an original catalogue?

This exhibition is announced as being a first. In what respect?

Many of the exhibited items have never before been put on public display. This is an opportunity to view for the first time, for example, the reliquaries of the hearts of Richard the Lionheart and Louis XIV, Pharaonic crocodile and snake mummies, and a 19th-century pedestal table made from mummy fragments, as well as various drawings and previously unseen manuscripts. One hall will be set aside for augmented reality displays, inviting visitors to put on a light headset for a virtual autopsy that involves taking a 3D journey inside a funerary package and unbandaging a South-American mummy.

What are the most remarkable items in the exhibition?

Perhaps the 19th-century painting of which a scientific analysis proves it was produced from the mummified heart of Louis XIV, or the attempted reconstruction of the voice of Henry IV based on his larynx which in turn has been reconstructed from his embalmed head, or maybe the incredible Peruvian mummy (fardo) from the Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac museum, whose secrets were unveiled by an X-ray analysis that even led to a very realistic reconstitution of his face!

What is your favourite feature of this exhibition?

I admit to being particularly interested in the Jivaroan shrunken heads, of which we now know more about how they were made, thanks to techniques borrowed from forensic medicine that helped unveil their secrets. A few are presented in this exhibition. Then there's the mummified foot of the Tollund Man (Denmark, 4th century BC), that I worked on several years ago. This is the first time it is being displayed in an exhibition in France. It comes from one of the best-preserved mummies in the world, discovered in a peat bog during the 1950s in an outstanding state of conservation.

Mummies are both fascinating and frightening. What role do they play in the popular imagination?

Mummifying is a way of fighting against time, of preserving a body that would

otherwise decompose naturally. So it is a path to eternity, even though that eternity is 'only temporary'... It therefore has a metaphysical purpose, but the rituals vary considerably from one place or period to another. Indeed, the body was not always opened up and the organs not systematically removed. Herbs, tar, salt and other added substances were not always used either. The exhibition takes visitors on a round-the-world tour of the different practices and reveals how populations take advantage of their natural surroundings to preserve the remains of their deceased with varying degrees of success. Yet this exhibition does not invite voyeurism. It simply shows what mummification is all about, placing each exhibit in its proper context. Not is it frightening, as it strikes a clever balance between surprising visitors and providing them with information.

We generally associate mummies with Ancient Egypt. Is mummification carried out in other civilisations?

That's just the point of this exhibition, to show just how universal mummification and embalming practices are. It is a widespread phenomenon shared by multiple civilisations. The exhibition shows that these funerary rituals also appear in countries where you wouldn't expect to find them, such as Cameroon, Papua New Guinea, Denmark and even France! ■



A PRODUCT

Cheeses from La Pastourelle

La Pastourelle farm is a cheese lover's heaven that was established in Châteaudouble in 1997. Here you'll find some forty varieties of cheese made from ewe's, cow's or goat's milk, or a delicious blend of two or all three. Virtually all of them are produced on the premises by the owner and cheesemaker, Catherine Fleury. On her thirteen-hectare farm she breeds dairy cows, sheep and goats. The daily milking sessions provide the milk used to make the different cheeses. All are made on the premises according to accepted standards and, above all, with passion. The house speciality is 'chèvre-fleur', a cheese which, as its name suggests, is made from goat's milk ('chèvre' = goat). This cheese is moulded in cloth and dipped in brine daily during the ripening process. Other varieties deserve to be known such as the ash-coated ewe's-milk cheese, the wild garlic goat's cheese, the peppercorn cow's-milk cheese and the moulded cheese with fig. These delights can be sampled at the farm where a few picnic tables are at the disposal of visitors. This farm welcomes visitors of all ages. Cheese on sale at the farm shop. Prices per cheese or per kilo, depending on the variety.

The farm is open 7 days a week from 8am to 1pm and from 3pm to 7pm. Unguided tours. You can also see the animals being fed at 5pm, and milked at 6pm. For further details visit ferme-de-la-pastourelle.com



AN OBJECT

creations by the Monnier studio

Julien Monnier has set up his studio in Aiguines, near the Escoulen woodturning school, where cabinetmakers from across the world deliver and receive training. He himself benefited from the institution's woodturning expertise and now teaches there.

"I like practical objects to be nice to look at", he states. Which is why he uses only noble wood, mostly from French sources. By using different varieties, such as maple, walnut, pearwood, ash and mulberry, each with its own natural vein, he can create some very original items. "Each curve and shape of an object is carved by hand", states Julien Monnier. "Woodturning is a creative profession. It is artistic work, no matter what item you're making."

In his shop, geometrically-shaped bud vases and spinning tops mingle with dice games, balancing games and corkscrews decorated with birds or penguins. Creations straight from the imagination of this artist who is happy to show visitors how he works in his open-plan studio and shop.

Atelier Monnier, 1, galerie artisanale in Aiguines.

Open daily from 9am to 7pm, except when the craftsman is out at an appointment. atelier-monnier.fr - +33 6 04 15 47 81. Bud vase €75



EVENT the 100th Bol d'Or race

More than just a race, the Bol d'Or is a whole event.

It has bikers and motorcycle enthusiasts flocking to the Paul Ricard race track to participate with family or friends. They come from across France and beyond, most of them staying for the entire three days to make sure they miss nothing of this great motorcycling celebration. No doubt about it, they'll be back this year to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Bol d'Or festival from 16th to 18th September 2022. Indeed, for the expected crowd of 60,000, this year's event promises to be even more spectacular, with an exhibition of around a hundred legendary machines that have taken part in the Bol d'Or since 1922 and the presence of motorcyclists who have left their mark on this race, not forgetting the fabulous concerts.

The exhibition village will also be a central feature, with about a hundred stalls selling motorbike gear and equipment, introductory sessions for children, road safety workshops and so on. In terms of sporting challenge, there will of course be the usual competition as well. Some sixty teams, both professional and amateur, are expected at the start line of this endurance race. From 3pm on the Saturday, for 24 hours the three motorcyclists from each team will take it in turns to race around the legendary circuit of Var to achieve the best possible ranking at this heat of the FIM world endurance championship. Last year's Bol d'Or winners were Gregg Black, Xavier Simeon and Sylvain Guintoli of the Yoshimura Sert Motul team.

As in previous years, two other races are also planned: the Bol d'Argent and the Bol d'Or Classic. The first is reserved for amateur bikers riding roadster motorcycles with medium engine power. On the programme for the Friday afternoon, this race is always very popular among the public. The second race, which is run just before the main competition, shines the spotlight on models marketed between 1960 and 1991 that are behind the reputation and the success of the Bol d'Or event. An opportunity to reminisce on the Castellet years, from 1978 to 1999, when the Paul Ricard circuit was the stage for many a mythical race. Since 2015, the Bol d'Or organisers have remained loyal to Var where the infrastructures allow the event to take place in optimal conditions.

Bol d'Or on 16th, 17th & 18th September 2022 at the Paul Ricard race track in Le Castellet.

Tickets can be purchased on the website [boldor.com](https://www.boldor.com)

Admission €58 - €78 - Free for children under the age of 10 years - Free motorbike park.

EXPLORING *Méounes-lès-Montrieux*

Where three mountain ranges meet, the village of Méounes-lès-Montrieux, soothed by the Lône, the Gapeau and other rivers, attracts lots of hikers. They know of its treasures, but others pass through without stopping, unaware of their existence. Yet the streets of this typical village of Var are well worth exploring.

Situated in the Gapeau valley, the village of Méounes-lès-Montrieux makes the link between Green Provence and the Toulon region. Traversed by the D554 road that runs between Toulon and Brignoles, it reveals its heritage gems only to those who stop there. And if you do take the time to explore along the river Lône that flows through the village, we guarantee you'll appreciate the well-preserved heritage and outstanding natural environment.

The origins of Méounes-lès-Montrieux date back to Prehistory. Indeed, prehistoric cut-stone tools have been found in many of the caves and caverns around the village. A Gallo-Roman altar stone dedicated to Jupiter has also been uncovered, a relic of this distant past that is now kept in the local council meeting room. But most of the historic vestiges date from the Middle Ages, like the ruins of the castle that once towered above the village. Built around 1190 on the hill of the Virgin, the castle was a village castrum with no official lord. It was protected within an outer wall and below, housing clustered around it. *"As you walk to the top of the old village, up to the statue of the Virgin, you can still see a few sections of wall and the end of the ramparts",* states

Jean-François Ledoux, an expert in Méounes heritage and chairman of the Association Syndicale Libre (ASL) des Arrosants (local water management organisation).

"The village didn't take on its current layout until after the Middle Ages." Along the narrow streets, it can be visited to the sound of trickling water, which is everywhere in the village centre. It flows in abundance in the three main rivers, the Gapeau, the Naï and the Lône. Riches that have always benefited the local inhabitants thanks to the construction of a network



that feeds the village's twelve permanently-flowing fountains and, until the 1980s, also supplied water to households. The network was also exploited by the village mills: an oil mill, a sumac mill, and a tanbark mill that ground the bark of evergreen oaks... *"It is difficult to say exactly how many mills operated in the village"*, Jean-François Ledoux continues. *"In the 1930s, there were still three mills in operation."* Lastly, multiple canals and an aqueduct carried water from the river Lône to irrigate the crops grown by local families. Even today, this system is still used to water the communal gardens. It is the village's unique location, at a meeting point between the Sainte-Baume, Pilon Saint-Clément and Montrieux mountains, that makes it such a pleasant place to cool off in summer. Nicknamed the *'Little Switzerland of Provence'*, it was awarded the official title of 'holiday resort' in 1921. At the time it had about a dozen restaurants, some of which were in the main village square where families would meet, as well as a few personalities who enjoyed getting together in the shade of the plane trees.

ANTIQUE DEALERS FROM FATHER TO SON

In the village centre is an antiques shop that has been handed down from father to son since 1966. *"It was founded by my grandfather, then taken over by my father, and now me"*, antiques dealer Franck Niccoletti tells us.



"Dating from the 19th century, this building was an old coaching inn, also called a posthouse. It provided stabling for horses and the coachmen slept at the inn on the opposite side of the road." The converted site's impressive dimensions and stone walls make it a fabulous venue for antiques exhibitions and displays of all sorts of 17th- and 18th-century furniture items, as well as tapestries, mirrors and other decorative items carefully selected for their authenticity. *"I love my work as it allows me to share my enthusiasm for furniture pieces, history, and the legacy left to me"*, adds the collector, as he proudly presents a superb antiphony collection, an extremely rare piece. *"It is a large liturgical book of Gregorian chants"*. 130 pages of vellum paper full of majestic dropped initials.



Nowadays, the square is dominated by the church of Saint-Eutrope. The splendid church interior, with its multitude of paintings, statues, stained-glass windows and other decorative items, can only be admired during weekly Mass or on Heritage Days, but the exterior is also well worth a look. The rather understated façade strikes a contrast, in fact, with the abundance of the interior furnishings. A distinguishing feature is the Latin inscription just above the stained-glass window of

the central nave: *Domus dei et porta caeli* meaning 'House of God and gateway to heaven'. But what really sets it apart is the church steeple, topped with a roof light featuring eight arches which in turn are topped by a dome under which the church bell is housed. From the church square, the history and heritage of Méounes-lès-Montrieux can be explored via a trail created by the local council in the process of the village's official recognition as a 'town of art and history'.

Follow this itinerary to admire the architectural gems of Méounes-lès-Montrieux, including Saint-Eutrope church, Saint-Michel chapel, the Quatre Saisons fountain on Place des Anciennes Ecoles, or the washhouse, Lavoir de la Croix. This peaceful village where 2,200 people live a pleasant existence, won't fail to appeal. ■



HIKING VIA THE CHARTERHOUSE

Méounes-lès-Montrieux is a hotspot for walkers and hikers. There are plenty of way-marked trails for short walks and long-distance hikes from the village. The most iconic of them include the 'Aiguilles de Valbelle' itinerary, whose interest is two-fold. By taking a section of the GR9 long-distance trail, you can reach the curious rocky spurs known as the 'Aiguilles de Valbelle' that suddenly emerge from the vegetation. But the trail also takes you right past Notre-Dame de Montrieux Charterhouse, a true architectural gem. About a dozen monks live in silent contemplation in this hermitage which is unfortunately closed to the public. As you pass by, however, you can admire the architectural quality of this 12th-century ensemble built on a sunny spot in an outstanding setting of lush greenery.

The itinerary starts at the car park just past the Gapeau river crossing on the D202 road towards Signes. A 13-km waymarked trail for intermediate hikers. You can also start in the village centre, making the climb to the Calvary from Chemin de Saint-Lazare until you reach the D202 road. Various leaflets on local walking itineraries are available at the town hall.

VAR LEADING THE WAY



EVENTS

**F1 French
Grand Prix**

P. 32 - 34

AT THE CUTTING EDGE

**Destination Var
network**

P. 35 - 37

A GEM

**Verdon Cycling
Tour**

P. 38 - 41

TRENDS

**Seayouandi /
Le sud atelier /
Garage
handshaping**

P. 42 - 45

INNOVATION

**Solar ovens
by Solar brother**

P. 46 - 48

SUCCESS STORY

Tarte Tropézienne

P. 49 - 51



LE CASTELLET

F1 FRENCH GRAND PRIX: *and they're off!*





On Sunday 24th July 2022, the world's best racing drivers will compete in the F1 French Grand Prix on the Paul Ricard circuit in Le Castellet. A key sporting event for motorsports enthusiasts.

This year's exceptional Formula 1 season got off to a great start on 20th March in Bahrain. With 23 races on the programme, new drivers and new technical regulations, the show promises to be up to the expectations of Formula 1 fans. They'll all be there on Sunday 24th July at the Paul Ricard race track in Var. A legendary circuit that's famous the world over for its exceptional layout and its red and blue run-off areas, at the cutting edge of innovation when the track was built during the 2000s. From the very first corners to the Verrerie 'S' bends and the great Signes curve negotiated at over 300 km/h, not forgetting the Mistral straight section, Lewis Hamilton, Charles Leclerc, Esteban Ocon, Max Verstappen, current world champion, and the other drivers are in for an adrenalin-packed race, as are the spectators.

For three days running, more than 60,000 people will attend the events or-

ganised around the Formula 1 French Grand Prix starting with the trials on Friday 22nd July. The flagship race on the Sunday is accompanied by a whole programme of other activities! Since 2018, despite a lost year due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, an exemplary collaboration between the Provence-Alpes Côte d'Azur regional council, the Département du Var, the Toulon Provence Méditerranée metropolitan council, the Var chamber of commerce and industry, the regional chamber of commerce and industry, the Nice Côte d'Azur metropolitan council, the Aix-Marseille Provence metropolitan council and the Sud-Sainte-Baume conurbation authority, made it possible, through a 'Grand Prix de France - Le Castellet' public interest group, to bring the French Grand Prix back to Var. The Conseil Départemental du Var joined this organisation without hesitation, in order to optimise the hosting of this world-class event. In 2021, it again officially promised support for this prestigious motor race for another three years. Through the Formula 1 French Grand Prix, Var is placed under the spotlight and watched by millions of television viewers. A chance to flaunt the drawing power of Var and its performance as one of the leading French departments in terms of tourism and high-level sporting events. ■

A FEW KEY DATES

1971. The first F1 French Grand Prix on the Paul Ricard circuit in Le Castellet is won by Jackie Stewart.

1983. Alain Prost wins his first race on the Var circuit. Three more victories follow in 1988, 1989, 1990.

2018. After a 10-year absence from France, the F1 French Grand Prix is back in Le Castellet. Lewis Hamilton wins the race.

2020. There is no F1 French Grand Prix, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2021. Max Verstappen wins the race in Var.



The Département du Var and Var Tourisme,
the French department's tourism development agency,
have just launched Destination Var.

This brand new professional network unites the tourism players of Var,
be they restaurant and café owners, wine estates,
holiday accommodation providers, tourist attractions,
activity providers or local producers.

They are selected for the quality of their product and their friendly hospitality.
They are the ambassadors of the Var way of life!

DESTINATION VAR, A WHOLE NETWORK OF VAR AMBASSADORS

How does it work?

Destination Var is a network that aims to unite the tourism players of Var in an effort to promote local regions and products as well as this French Department as a whole, to make Var an even more appealing destination right in the south of France! They offer consistent standards of hospitality, services and facilities that reflect the very identity of Var.

Who are the members of Destination Var?

Holiday accommodation providers, restaurants, cafés, bistros, attractions, sports and leisure activity providers, coach companies, car and bike rental companies, retail outlets, and local producers who open their doors to visitors.

What is required to become a member of the network?

Members must own a tourism-driven business in Var that complies with French legislation. Open from early April to late October as a minimum, they must carry a quality label, brand name, certification, rating or other official seal of approval.

They must also be present on the Internet via their own website, an online marketing platform, or an account on social media.

The Destination Var charter

Network members benefit from specific year-round advertising through national and international campaigns, dedicated communication tools and participation in special corporate events. In return, they undertake to promote Var by showcasing their region's cultural features and tourist attractions and encouraging the use of local distribution channels and products. They are also distribution outlets for Le Var magazine. ■

visitvar.fr



This logo displayed by members helps us identify Var's ambassadors.

THEIR STORIES



© La Jeannette

◀ RESTAURANT: LA JEANNETTE IN HYÈRES-LES-PALMIERS

Leslie Carratola used to be a tour guide. She organised excursions across Var, essentially foodie tours among local producers. In December 2019, when she and her partner, Marc Monguillot, decided to take over a restaurant on the Giens peninsula in Hyères-les-Palmiers, she knew she would be working in direct contact with the farmers of Var. "We opened La Jeannette in June 2020. It went without saying that we would aim to give pride of place to locally-sourced produce." Their restaurant menu lists ingredients from the producers with whom they work: chestnut cream from Collobrières, chickpeas from Rougiers, figs from Solliès, honey from Hyères-les-Palmiers, beer from the Îles d'Or, olive oil from La Londe-les-Maures, fish from the Mediterranean Sea, pork from Barjols, cheese from Châteaudouble, meat from upper Var, snails from

Le Pradet, local fruit and vegetables, and so on. "You can find anything in Var! And we wanted to take things further still; our tableware comes from creators located on the Giens peninsula and our soaps are made in Carqueiranne", emphasises Leslie Carratola. A meal at La Jeannette is the promise of pleasant moments of togetherness in a family atmosphere, as well as a chance to try dishes of high quality. In addition, a small grocery shop adjoining the restaurant sells all the products used in the restaurant kitchen. Once a month, from June to September, an evening concert by local artists is organised. This is exactly the spirit of the Destination Var network, that the restaurateurs joined without hesitation as soon as they opened. restaurant-la-jeannette.com

▶ GUESTHOUSE: le Mas Pinède in Lorgues

In a totally quiet spot just two kilometres from Lorgues town centre, Mas Pinède offers five guestrooms, table d'hôtes meals and a relaxation area. It was opened in 2016 by Pascal Daveze who was in search of a place that reflected his personality and was in line with his aspirations. "I have immense love for the heart of Provence and that's what I wanted to highlight. We have a central location here, just 30 minutes from the Verdon and also from the beaches. It's perfect!", he emphasises. What the owner of Mas Pinède likes best of all is being able to chat with his clients and offer them tips for their sightseeing trips and leisure activities. "I know Var very well and I believe it is my duty to help visitors get to know it too. This region has treasures by the thousand and my heart is set on sharing them!" So it was only natural for him to join the Destination Var network, for several reasons: "Firstly, for the network itself, an essential tool in our business. It is important to be able to interact with other tourism professionals. Secondly, Destination Var is totally in line with my ethos and my desire to showcase the region." lemaspinede.fr



© Le Mas Pinède



© Sea Adventure

▲ LEISURE: Sea Adventure in Six-Fours-les-Plages

Observing sea mammals off the Mediterranean coast is an activity that appeals to children and adults alike. Sea Adventure in Six-Fours-les-Plages is an operator boasting the High Quality Whale Watching seal of approval. This guarantees that the excursions take the animals' wellbeing and their environment into account. To Michaël Lucas, founder of this company in Six, "whale watching looks set to develop more and more as the closure of the marine reserves approaches. This activity needs to be regulated in order to protect the whales. Without rules, it can be disastrous and even dangerous." He works hand-in-hand with scientists to monitor and study marine mammals. He proposes this unique experience aboard a rigid inflatable boat accommodating 7 to 12 passengers: "I organise trips in small groups for a higher quality experience. It's like an off-shore safari. The three-hour trip takes you to observe the creatures from a naturalistic viewpoint." Michaël Lucas is mindful of the natural environment for which he has a passion. He enjoys taking visitors to see not only the whales and dolphins, but also other species such as turtles, sunfish and various seabirds. He loves his region and also organises sea trips with commentary. "Destination Var is an important network for the tourism players of Var. Firstly, it helps us establish contact with one another, whatever our line of business. Secondly, it offers both tourists and local inhabitants the guarantee of tourism-related activities that respect Var's identity and protect its natural environment, heritage and culture." sea-adventure.net

► ARTS & CRAFTS: La Patte du Métal in Vins-sur-Caramy

After spending several years in Paris, artist and metalworker Henri Ureta opened his workshop, La Patte du Métal in Vins-sur-Caramy, in 2018. He began his professional career as a boilermaker. He soon found himself producing works of art for the designers he had met. Since arriving in Var, he has been selling his own creations, decorative objects, lights and furniture items, but also railings and gates. "I also create made-to-measure pieces that perfectly meet my clients' expectations", emphasises this creator who has just joined Destination Var. "I'm in a small village with a population of 1,000. By joining Destination Var, I will gain in visibility and reach a wider clientele." Indeed, this network showcases its members, in particular at the events and trade fairs held across France and Europe. He also wanted to join the network for its spirit of togetherness and authenticity that reflected his own values. Because although his workshop is small, that doesn't stop him welcoming visitors, by appointment. "I like it when people come to visit, chat and take an interest in my craftsmanship." Recognised expertise that he exhibits at the Steyer & Prats art gallery in Fréjus. lapattedumetal.fr



© Hôtel des Deux rocs


▲ HOTEL: Hôtel des Deux rocs in Seillans

The Hôtel des Deux Rocs, a converted 16th-century farmhouse, has been run since 2005 by Julie and Nicolas Malzac in Seillans, listed among the most beautiful villages in France. The couple were soon convinced by the Destination Var approach: "It immediately made sense to us. For us, this new network is an advantage, it's going to give us greater exposure. We are located in the Var hinterland and have the impression that tourist behaviour has changed a little over the last two years. Holiday-makers now look for rural settings." The hotel has thirteen rooms and a restaurant that places the emphasis on the region's own produce and local distribution channels. The entire Malzac family lives here. "We take care of our clients just as we would look after our friends. We live on the premises with our family". The promise of togetherness! "We are used to advising our clients on cultural excursions and sightseeing trips. They frequently ask us what there is to see within 10 or 15 km of here. This means we can promote our region's events as well as the local produce." hoteldeuxrocs.com



© la Patte du Métal

VERDON. *cycling tour*

A photograph showing three cyclists from behind as they ride along a paved road that curves through a scenic landscape. The lead cyclist is wearing a pink top, the middle one a grey top, and the third, who is further back, is wearing a dark top and has red panniers on their bike. They are riding on a light-colored asphalt road. To their left is a low stone wall with some purple flowers. To their right is a line of green trees and bushes. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

Waymarked from this summer, the Verdon Cycling Tour stretches for 256 kilometres, including 193 km in Var. This itinerary takes you along the byroads of upper Var. It offers an alternative angle on the emblematic Verdon landscapes and villages, as you cycle at your own pace and explore at will.

Explore the Verdon a different way. Taking the time. Appreciating the scenery offered by the biggest canyon in Europe. Stopping whenever you feel like it. The Verdon Cycling Tour is an invitation, the promise of an alternative way to travel. On either side of the river, from Alpes de Haute-Provence to Var, it crosses many towns and villages and offers outstanding views over the lakes and gorges of the Verdon. Designed with cycle tourists in mind, this 256-kilometre itinerary is waymarked in both directions. The project was launched in 2013 at the initiative of the Vélo Loisir Provence association and the Verdon Regional Nature Park. Since then, both organisations have received technical and financial support from the two French Departments concerned, as well as help with the development and promotion of the destination from Var Tourisme and the Alpes de Haute-Provence Development Agency. The Conseil Départemental du Var has therefore become the project contracting authority for the Var section of the itinerary, funding two-thirds of the overall investment.

"We began by drawing up an inventory of cycling itineraries in the sector, as well as bike-friendly accommodation, facilities and services", explains Malo Le Meil, a 'Verdon Cycling Tour' organiser at Vélo Loisir Provence. *"It took a long joint effort with all the other partners to determine the best route",* states Odile Guillard, nature sports project manager for the Verdon Regional Nature Park.

The result is an itinerary that offers a whole host of possibilities. Seasoned cyclists can pedal non-stop for kilometres on end, while others may prefer to split their trip into several loops to cover over a few days. A popular practice among a new clientèle of holidaymakers keen to explore by soft modes of travel. Thanks to the many links between the Verdon Cycling Tour and other cycling routes such as the Eurovélo 8 itinerary, not forgetting the numerous towns located around the loop, you can forget the car and concentrate on the cycling. And although the itinerary is not recommended for young children, it can be followed without difficulty by occasional cyclists, especially as there are more and more E-bike rental outlets in the area. *"Our bikes with electrical assistance really flatten out the terrain",* says Bernard Claverie from the company Bee's. After opening a mobile rental outlet in the heart of the Verdon, he can also be found in Aups, since April 2022. *"The aim is to propose different types of bike, like hybrid bikes and mountain E-bikes, but also GPS terminals, saddlebags, etc."* Like many local tourist attractions, restaurants and accommodation, the bike rental outlet boasts the 'Accueil Vélo' seal of approval awarded to bike-friendly establishments. The promise of quality for those intending to take the Verdon Cycling Tour.



VERDON CYCLING TOUR KEY FIGURES:

Itinerary of **256 km** including **193 km** in Var

Linking up **31 towns and villages** including **21** in Var: Aiguines, Ampus, Bauduen, Bargème, Baudinard-sur-Verdon, Brenon, Châteauneuf, Châteaudouble, Comps-sur-Artuby, La Bastide, La Martre, La Roque-Esclapon, Le Bourguet, Moissac-Bellevue, Montferrat, Montmeyan, Régusse, Saint-Julien-le-Montagnier, Trigance, Vêrignon and Vinon-sur-Verdon

4 000-metre cumulated elevation gain

56 tourism partners with bike-friendly 'Accueil Vélo' accreditation. They guarantee a warm welcome and high-quality services and facilities that meet the needs of cyclists. They promise to provide you with documentation on cycling itineraries (maps, leaflets, brochures, practical guides, etc.), to offer advice to help you get the best out of your trip and information about cultural sites and local producers in the vicinity, as well as bike-friendly services and facilities such as bike sheds, repair kits and luggage forwarding by the network's taxis.

Offering a full range of solutions for cycle tourists, the Verdon Cycling Tour gives you the perfect excuse to explore the Verdon gorges and many other natural assets, cultural sites and heritage features. Whether you're cycle touring yourself or accompanying cyclists on the Verdon Cycling Tour, you'll be able to admire multiple landscapes and enjoy a host of activities along the way.



MONTMEYAN ONION FAIR

Every third Sunday of September, Montmeyan celebrates the village symbol, the onion. A host of activities are organised for the occasion. A chance to visit this village and the lower Verdon gorges nearby.

SWIMMING & WATERSPORTS AT LES SALLES-SUR-VERDON

The beaches of Les Salles-sur-Verdon offer a choice spot on the banks of the lake of Sainte-Croix. Here, there's something for everyone: swimming, canoeing, kayaking, pedalos and paddleboards.



THE RÉGUSSE WINDMILLS

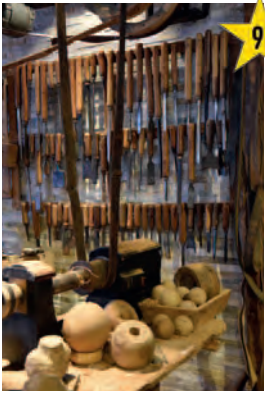
Included in the Historical Monuments list, the windmills of Régusse were refurbished in the mid-nineties. The mechanism in one of them, restored to working order, operates on certain days of the year. The other has been converted into a museum where a collection of ancient farming tools is exhibited.



AUPS,

a multi-faceted village oozing with character, is the truffle capital and the southern gateway to the Verdon gorges. An absolute must.





9

THE WOODTURNING MUSEUM IN AIGUINES

This fun, interactive museum with a modern touch plunges visitors into the history of this craft. It also hosts woodturning courses and workshops. museedestourneursurbois.com



8

THE MAGNIFICENT CORNICHE

This road between Trigrance and Aiguines has to be the most breathtaking on the entire Verdon Cycling Tour. It offers about thirty kilometres of superb viewpoints like the panoramic viewpoint of the Illoire pass.



7

BARCHÈME

Not only is this the smallest of Var's characterful villages, it's also the highest! With its cobblestone streets and castle ruins, it's well worth stopping to visit.



6

CHÂTEAUDOUBLE

Nicknamed the eagle's nest, Châteaudooble is another of Var's listed villages of character. Truly heaven for nature lovers and sports enthusiasts, it also has plenty of heritage gems waiting to be discovered.



5

AMPUS

From this village of character perched 600 metres above sea level, there are beautiful walks to enjoy in the Nartuby gorges.

LA VALETTE-DU-VAR

SEAYOUANDI, *eco-friendly* *swimwear*

Inspired by the biodiversity of the marine world, created from recycled and recyclable materials, including abandoned fishing nets retrieved from the Mediterranean Sea, the swimwear made by Seayouandi, a local brand, never fails to appeal. Marketed since spring, the pieces are designed by Cassandra Pucci, a young entrepreneur from Var who is committed to protecting the environment.

The ultimate summer essential. The ever-essential swimsuit is the ultimate fashion item. Especially in Var, where you'll need it everywhere between the river Verdon and the Mediterranean Sea. To Cassandra Pucci, who has lived in Var for several years after growing up in Brittany, her swimsuit is like *"a second skin"*. So when her entrepreneurial mind came up with the appealing project of creating a brand that reflected her personality, it was only natural for her to focus on this key item of her wardrobe. But not just any old how. Fond of the marine habitat, this young woman strives to associate her passion with her commitment to environmental protection.

Her determination resulted in the creation, in January 2021, of Seayouandi, a company specialising in swimwear made from recycled fishing nets. *"I was lucky enough to meet all sorts of people who have helped me since the very start of my project"*, Cassandra Pucci tells us. *"With their help, I've been able to take the time to find just the right support to bring my idea to fruition, especially for the design as-*

pects. I also had to find the right materials, suitable for swimsuits but also in line with my values." So the Seayouandi swimwear models took shape from a fibre that's both recycled and recyclable. The fibre comes from fishing nets abandoned in the Mediterranean Sea that are retrieved, broken down and woven into a textile that's perfect for swimwear.

"I focussed on creating four capsule collections with limited editions", the 27-year-old states. *The idea is that each pattern highlights and reflects the beauty of the marine environment."* To launch the marketing campaign, each of the summer 2022 capsule collections includes six different models, some for just relaxing in the sun, others that have been tried and tested by watersports fans. *"Former professional 10-metre diver Laura Marino, now a cliff diver, has tested the Seayouandi prototype swimwear models"*, says Cassandra Pucci. *"She wore them while diving but also for surfing and other watersports."* The added advantage of these eco-friendly swimsuits is that most of them, both one-piece models and bikinis, are also reversible. So you get two swimsuits in one. Just for the pleasure of changing at will throughout the summer. ■

About €150 per swimsuit. On sale at seayouandi-swimwear.fr



© des-sources-studio

SAINT-RAPHAËL

LE SUD ATELIER, *rings made in Estérel*

Rings and other items of jewellery designed and crafted the traditional way in solid silver, by Audrey Colchen. Resisting the passage of time, they bear names reminiscent of the capes, beaches and coves of eastern Var.



Dramont, Anthéor, Garonnette... Inspired by these iconic places of the Estérel region, the rings made by Le Sud Atelier are named after them. In her workshop in Saint-Raphaël, Audrey Colchen pays homage to these landscapes that she so loves by creating jewellery that reflects *“the ever-present sunshine that warms our skin, the majestic parasol pines standing along the coast and the coves where the red rock plunges into the azure-blue sea”*.

Her hand-crafted creations are mainly rings but she also makes earrings and necklaces, all in solid silver. They are designed to be worn and never removed. *“To me, a piece of jewellery tells a story. It has to be able to travel with us and to age with us”*, explains the creator who travelled to many countries, from Oceania to Latin America, before returning to this part of Var, where she grew up.

“It must stay with us from day to day, at the office or on the beach. Quite simply, it must stand up to the test of time. That is why I chose this precious material. Solid silver stays shiny as long as it is worn.”

Audrey Colchen forges and brazes her rings from silver plating or wire, before polishing them extensively to obtain fine, shiny pieces. Some of her creations are also set with gemstones like amazonite, onyx or howlite. They can be worn alone or together.

The rings can interlock with one another, be worn all on one finger, or matched up between different fingers of the same hand. A few rings for men have recently been added to the collection.

“I first came up with the idea of making my own rings after participating in a jewellery-making course. That’s when I realised this was the job for me”, says the young woman, a former tourist guide.

“I purchased the equipment and began training myself before following a proper course at a private jewellery-making school”, she continues. What had been nothing more than a pastime, a hobby, became in just a few years a full-time entrepreneurial venture. *“So I had to find a brand name, a meaningful name that had a connection with the place where my creations are designed and produced: Le Sud Atelier”*. ■

lesudatelier.fr

Jewellery on sale online and at La Petite Boutique in the Village of creative talents, 146 bd de Bazeilles in Puget-sur-Argens.

Prices range between €29 and €150.

Many different sizes are available to order.

BORMES-LES-MIMOSAS

GARAGE HANDSHAPING, *surfing Var-style*

Surf fashion is no longer the realm of boardsport enthusiasts.

Over the past few years, it has taken by storm the worlds of fashion and interior decoration, led by the likes of Chanel, Prada and other luxury brands that even include Tesla. In Var, a young board shaper* has settled in Bormes-les-Mimosas. He sells 'Mediterranean-made' boards.

* A craftsman who makes surfboards.



The adventure began 15,000 km away from France. Adrien Ventre, then a business school student, left to spend six months in Australia. This wakeboarding, snowboarding and skateboarding fan wasn't even a surfer. He tried surfing for the first time down under, and became hooked. When his partner, Nadia Agoun, joined him for two months, she too got into this sport that she now couldn't live without. Back in France, the two students continued surfing. *"That's when I discovered that the Mediterranean has waves",* confides Adrien, amused. *"It was then that I began to take an interest in surfboard design."* To him, the first lockdown was perhaps an opportunity. At the very least, it was a period during which he asked himself all the right questions about his future career. *"I said to myself that this was the time to make my own surfboard. And that's just what I did, in my parents' garage."* He purchased the necessary materials and Nadia got busy with her camera. *"I thought it'd be nice to be able to post on social media the different stages of making the board. It was advice from one novice to another. And it got great results. We instantly had our own community who really liked the concept",* explains the young woman. Very soon, Nadia wanted her own board too. Adrien made her one for her birthday. One thing led to another, he made a third board, then a fourth, and so on.

In September 2020, they decided to launch a crowdfunding campaign, which was very successful. They raised over €8,000, enough to finance a workshop and continue making surfboards. *"Because we received a few orders during the campaign. So Adrien was able to perfect his technique",* she continues. Their company, Garage Handshaping, was born!

At the end of their studies, they came to live in Bormes-les-Mimosas and set up a workshop in the garage at their house. While Adrien designs and makes the boards, Nadia takes care of the marketing and advertising. An important aspect that must not be neglected. In France there are only about sixty board shapers.



Most of them can be found on the Basque coast and are not very active on the Internet. *"I've been lucky enough to be able to put into practice what I learned at business school. That's been a real advantage. Digital technology has given Garage Handshaping a real boost. It has enabled Adrien to meet the right people and get tips from other shapers."*

Today, two years since they launched their venture, they have customers all over France. They have set up a showroom in a shop in Nice and have signed contracts with the sports brand Decathlon in La Garde. *"It's an incredible opportunity for people of our age!"* they declare in unison, still amazed by their good fortune.

To create his surfboards, Adrien works mainly with polyurethane. He uses two types, a standard polyurethane and another that's both recycled and recyclable, called polyola.

"It's a brand new material that only came out last November. Not many people are using it in France yet. It's completely eco-friendly", emphasises the young shaper.

After shaping the foam blank, he concentrates on decorating it with paint or dyed resin. He finishes with a layer of fibreglass and polyester resin to create the shell around the foam blank. Adrien has hundreds of different decoration suggestions. *"This artistic part of the work has no limits thanks to the mixes of pigments, paints, substances and techniques. Everything is done to order and anything is possible. For example, I can include gold leaf, a photo, flowers... anything works under resin."*

Garage Handshaping also do unique, made-to-measure boards. *"Each board can be adapted to perform on the types of waves that the surfer usually rides"*, he specifies.

Adrien can also make a board that matches your interior, in case you de-

cide to use it as decoration. This is a trend that's really taking off. It isn't rare to see a surfboard used as a bed headboard, a bedroom or lounge shelf, or a coat rack with the addition of hooks. They can also be used as a table, bar or bench. Anything goes! With Adrien and Nadia, you can also make your own surfboard. The couple organise courses in board shaping with accommodation options. Because they want to offer holiday-makers a real surf-related experience, showing them the best spots and natural settings of Var. *"We are proud of where we live and want to share our region with others as much as possible."* This is also why they have given each model a name that suggests the South: cicada, pastaga, mistral, lavender and, why not, olive! ■

garagehandshaping.com

CARNOULES

SOLAR BARBECUES

turn up the heat!

With over twenty years' experience in solar thermal energy, Solar Brother is the only European firm currently developing this technology. To promote their range of cooking appliances and other items, and offer them to the widest possible audience, the company chose Carnoules under the Var sun to install its solar energy development and demonstration site.



Do you remember? It was a lovely summer afternoon, on a beach in Var. With your crew, armed with a few pieces of dry wood or a sheet of paper and a magnifying glass taken from a drawer at your grandparents' house, you experimented with lighting a campfire with the help of the sun's rays. "We've all done it as a child, virtually every one of us! Sometimes with inconclusive results. Our aim is to recreate that experiment, to show people that solar power works", explains Gilles Gallo, born and bred in La Garde and founder of Solar Brother, the company he co-owns with his business partner, Gatien Brault, and his life partner, Corinne Mau.

"This is one of the reasons we decided to live in Var. Here in Carnoules, we came up with the idea of a solar energy development and demonstration centre where we can share and pass on our expertise in this field."

This ongoing, long-term project carries great meaning for Gilles Gallo and his team. "During my twenty years in this business sector, I've noticed that the main obstacle to solar thermal energy, as opposed to photovoltaic energy, is a lack of knowledge and trust. At Solar Brother, our main objective, in line with the Var project, is to encourage users to have faith in solar energy."

DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE

This is why the company, whose head office is still in Paris, took the decision to make their knowledge public. Hence, their marketed innovations are always accompanied by production plans and techniques that are made available online, free of charge. This means that anyone who's interested in a solar cooker can of course purchase one but can also, if they so wish, benefit from the entrepreneurs' techniques and tips posted on their website. "They'll have all the information they need to replicate the process at home and obtain the same results. The design and practicality may not be of the same standard, but the performance will."

SOLAR ACCESSORIES FOR ALL

Besides the cookery range at prices between €79 and €700, Solar Brother has also developed various accessories that can bring solar thermal energy to more households. Adults will love their fire lighters and solar chargers, while the children's solar cooker makes an original gift for the little ones. Perfect for familiarising households with this alternative energy source. These products can be found on the Solar Brother website but also in nearly 250 retail outlets in France that specialise in innovating technology or camping equipment..

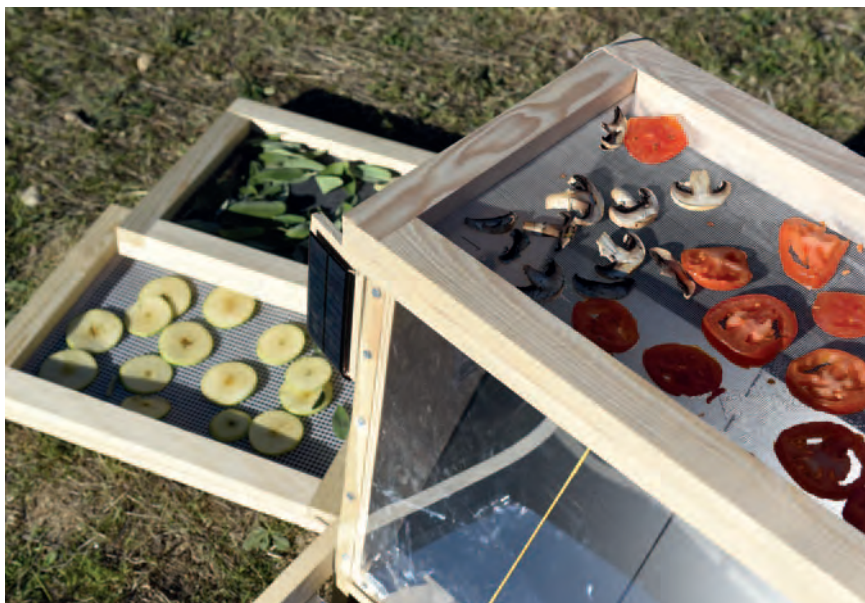
For optimum results, Solar Brother adopts the '3C rule': concentration, capture and conservation. *"This is the principle on which our solar cookers work, as do our innovations more generally"*, states Gatien Brault, engineer. *"It requires one or more mirrors to concentrate the sun's rays and raise the temperature of the container. The container must be dark-coloured, preferably black, to conduct the heat to the food being cooked. In other words, the colour black captures the rays and converts them to heat. Finally, the heat needs to be conserved long enough to finish cooking the food. This heat conservation is achieved mainly with the use of a glass pane or glass tube that creates a greenhouse effect."* With this technology, the Solar Brother engineers have developed various types of solar cooker, including Sunchef, a barbecue that can reach a cooking temperature of 250°C in just five minutes. This portable cooker takes just a few seconds to install and produces no smoke. No wonder it already has its fans, including a few professional cooks who benefit from a model adapted for restaurants. It can be used to cook a whole chicken but also vegetables, or even to bake bread! The only condition is that it has to be sunny. *"With this type of barbecue there's no danger of setting the surrounding vegetation alight"*, adds Gilles Gallo. *"This is another advantage of our ovens, which have a built-in eco-friendly dimension since they produce no smoke or CO2."* Besides disseminating knowledge, Solar Brother is also counting on building its reputation on ecological and socially responsible values. In the interests of environmental protection, the company uses only raw materials that are recycled or recyclable, and French-made. In terms of welfare and solidarity, it doesn't hesitate to do-



nate its ovens to charity. *"When I launched myself into this project, my goal was to embark on a venture that complied with certain ideals"*, Gilles Gallo continues. *"After working in finance, I needed to find a project that meant something to me. It was in Mali, during a humanitarian trip lasting several months, that the idea emerged."*

It takes years of research and development to carry an idea through to fruition. The Solar Brother brand was created in February 2016. Several Lépine medals and one fundraising campaign later, the company can be proud to employ a staff of about 10 people and to be the only European brand in this business sector. In 2021 this leading position was confirmed with a turnover of 850,000 euros. A target of 1.2 million euros has been set for 2022. To reach it, the team is considering all sorts of ideas, such as the development of a food dryer and a solar shower. ■

solarbrother.com



SAINT-TROPEZ

TARTE TROPÉZIENNE, *a well-kept secret*

Quality products, traditional expertise, a secret recipe and unbeatable taste. In Var, La Tarte Tropézienne is a real institution, created in 1955 in St. Tropez, as its name suggests. Close-up on this legendary dessert.

A spongy brioche. Two delicious creams rolled into one. Sugar crystals. Tarte Tropézienne is a delight for foodies of all ages. Although it has become a French patisserie classic, there is only one authentic recipe. It was created in St. Tropez in the 1950s. The pastry chef who made the original was Polish-born Alexandre Micka, who used his grandmother's recipe. Ever since, in Var and across France, the tart of St. Tropez has become a legend, associated with Brigitte Bardot and the film *'And God Created Woman'* that brought fame to the small fishing village of St. Tropez. Indeed, during the shooting of the film by Roger Vadim, this delicious cake conquered the actress's heart and, above all, her tastebuds. She enjoyed visiting the young Pole's shop on Place de la Mairie. That is where she first tried the dessert and became one of its die-hard fans. At the time it had no name, so she called it St. Tropez tart, and it is now known in France as La Tarte Tropézienne. From then on, every celebrity visiting St. Tropez, from Boris Vian to Juliette Gréco and from Daniel Gélín to Mouloudji, would follow BB's example and treat themselves time and time again. Faced with such success, the pastry chef opened a second shop in Cogolin, then a third in Sainte-Maxime. It was in Cogolin that Alexandre Micka got another lucky break. A stranger walked into his pastry shop and tried the delicious sweet treat. He



immediately asked a curious question of the pastry-maker: has the recipe been patented? Of course not! It was a family recipe. The stranger managed to persuade him to protect not only the recipe but also the name of the cake. So Alexandre Micka gave him the famous recipe in writing, a recipe that very few people know even today. One year later, in 1972, the stranger returned to the shop with proof that

the patent, the La Tarte Tropézienne trademark and the logo, virtually identical to the one used today, had been registered. That stranger was none other than the director of the French patent office, INPI (Institut national de la propriété industrielle).

Another encounter, in 1983, was to leave its mark on the success story of La Tarte Tropézienne, a meeting between Alexandre Micka and Albert Dufrêne. Albert Dufrêne had nothing to do with the patisserie trade. He was a hairstylist with a passion for motor-sports, and lived in Haute-Savoie. While on holiday in St. Tropez, he met the pastry chef, whose business was flourishing by then, and couldn't resist the offer to take it over. *"Alexandre Micka's search for a buyer had been fruitless. When they met, they were very much on the same wavelength. A complicity built up naturally between them. My father followed his gut feeling and he was right"*, confides Sacha Dufrêne, who is now in charge of the product development and marketing aspects of La Tarte Tropézienne.

The two men started working together. Albert Dufrêne spent weeks working day and night to learn the tough pastry-making trade in the company of Alexandre Micka. On 11th July 1985, they signed the contract for the sale of the business. Albert Dufrêne was now alone at the helm. He wanted to bring a little originality to the business while loyally following in his mentor's footsteps; he too kept the secret of the legendary tart and maintained the same high standards. Simultaneously, he developed the

company's business through a more diversified offering, renovated the existing shops and opened new ones in Le Lavandou, Cavalaire-sur-Mer and on the prestigious Place des Lices in St. Tropez.

The enterprising years that followed were also very rewarding. A catering service was created for the Renault F1 Team. This grew over time, first in motor racing, then in other sectors. The range of cakes and pastries expanded. Revisited with the addition of the famous cream, traditional cakes were transformed into a Tropez-style éclair, a millefeuille, a castel or a Paris-Saint-Tropez (local version of Paris-Brest cake). The bakery business was developed at the same time. The first production facility was also opened in Cogolin, to increase output without compromising on traditional methods. From 1998 onwards, new retail outlets were opened one after the other. In 2011, a brand new production site was built just a few metres away from the first. The new facility complied with the latest standards in terms of hygiene and quality.

La Tarte Tropézienne now boasts 28 retail outlets between Nice and Marseille. The latest to open can be found in the Milona market hall in La Crau. *"We work with partners who run the shops furthest away from us, mainly between Toulon and Marseille. All of our patisserie is produced at our Cogolin facility. The shops receive deliveries every morning. For maximum freshness, on the other hand, our bread is baked on the premises",* Sacha Dufrêne explains. *"We would like to open more shops, both in France and abroad. In 2020, we did a trial in the United States with a pilot outlet in Dallas. This allowed us to fine-tune our working methods, considering the thousands of kilometres between us. We're planning to open a shop in Geneva very soon. And we're thinking about other countries too. We have plenty of interest but we prefer to take things one step at a time, to ensure we maintain the quality of our products."* Because, despite the growing business and our capacity to adapt production processes to accommodate this increase, our watchwords are still high standards, expertise, traditional methods and perfect command. *"We want to offer optimum quality of course, not only for our star product, but also the rest of the patisserie range made at our production facility. We use excellent French-grown ingredients, locally-sourced whenever possible. That's what our reputation is built on!"* he emphasises. All year round, the pastry-making team, who are truly 'taste researchers', concoct new delights for customers to try, such as chocolate nests for Easter, Christ-

mas logs, St. Tropez hearts for Valentine's Day and special desserts for Mother's Day. Among the new products to die for are the Baby Trop', a macaron-sized adaptation of tarte tropézienne. It comes in different flavours: chocolate, hazelnut, lemon, raspberry, coffee, etc., and for each new season the company teams up with creators to design a dazzlingly modern packaging for these Baby Trop' cakes, including highly original collections signed Inès de la Fressange, the first to join the venture, Villebrequin, Le Chocolat des Français and even TitsUp, a young brand engaged in the fight against breast cancer.

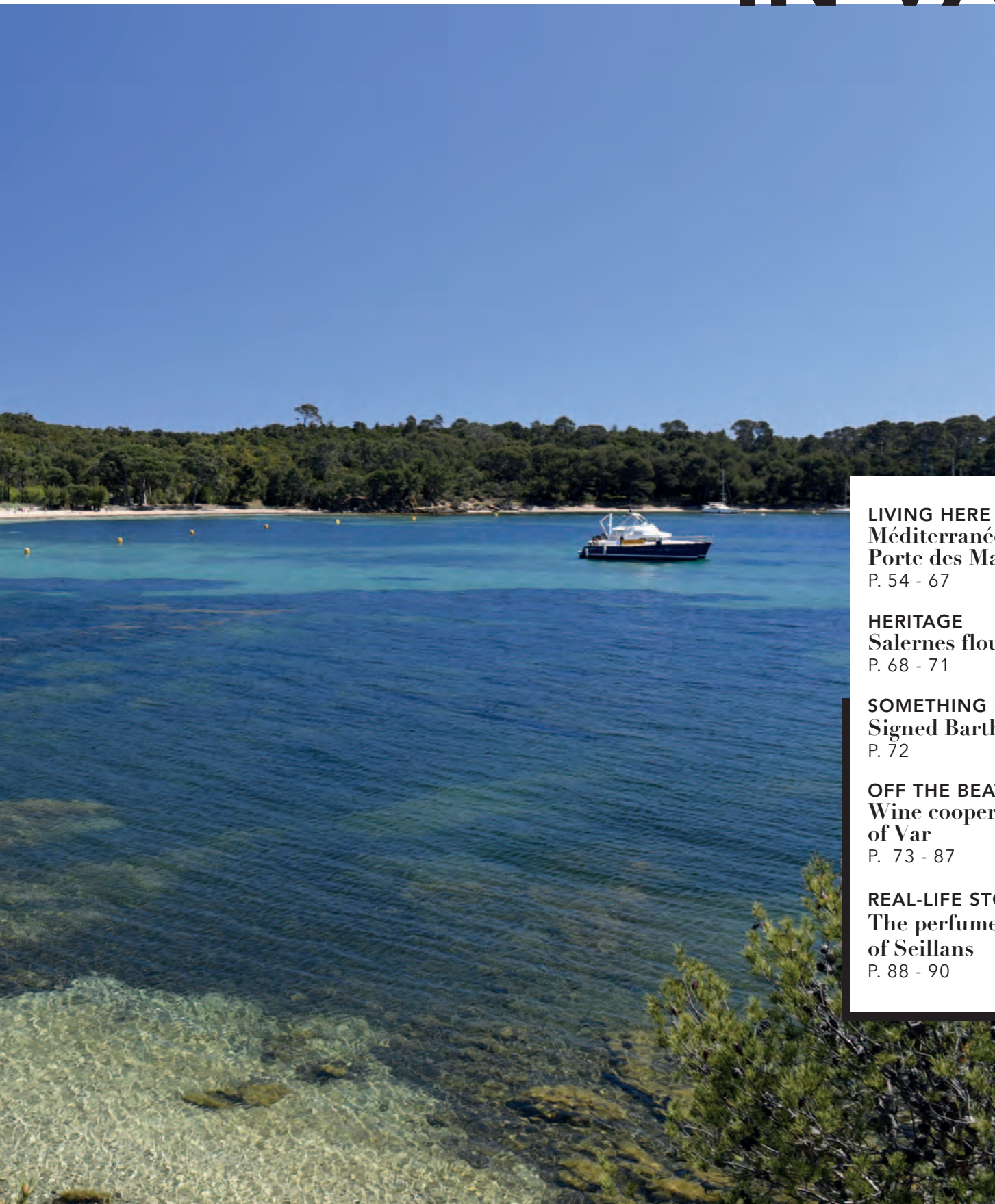
Keeping up with the times, La Tarte Tropézienne has been available for online order since 2016, with home delivery within 24 hours across France and in Monaco.

So sweet teeth throughout the country can treat themselves too. ■ latartetropézienne.fr





ONLY IN VAR



LIVING HERE
Méditerranée
Porte des Maures
P. 54 - 67

HERITAGE
Salernes flour mill
P. 68 - 71

SOMETHING DIFFERENT
Signed Bartholdi!
P. 72

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK
Wine cooperatives
of Var
P. 73 - 87

REAL-LIFE STORY
The perfumer
of Seillans
P. 88 - 90

Méditerranée PORTE DES MAURES



Attracting over a million visitors each year, the Méditerranée Porte des Maures region undeniably has tourist attractions galore and a choice living environment for its 44,000 inhabitants who benefit from a thriving local economy and an abundance of cultural and recreational activities to satisfy every preference. From the edge of the Plaine des Maures National Nature Reserve to the Mediterranean coast, the region covers **Cuers, Pierrefeu-du-Var, Collobrières, La Londe-les-Maures, Bormes-les-Mimosas and Le Lavandou**. Six villages, each with their own distinguishing features and multiple facets, yet united by the same energy and the same desire to showcase their other assets too. These six villages all have several things

in common: a showcased historical and architectural heritage, an unspoilt environment and outstanding soils that are ideal for crops. Indeed, cultivated land can be seen everywhere across the 428 square kilometres of the Méditerranée Porte des Maures region. Vineyards, in particular. Hectares and hectares of grapevines flourish in every part of this region, providing the ingredients for some well-known and reputed vintages. As proof of the quality of the wines produced here, the wine estates boast the Côte de Provence AOP ('appellation d'origine protégée', meaning 'protected designation of origin'), or a Maures, Méditerranée or Var IGP ('indication géographique protégée', or 'protected geographical indication'). Two of the region's villages have even lent their names to additional denominations under the

Côte de Provence AOP: La Londe-les-Maures and Pierrefeu-du-Var.

The landscapes of this part of Var are also shaped by olive and chestnut cultivation, horticulture and market gardening activities. Between the hills and the beaches, chestnut groves, olive groves, vineyards and forests offer a wide diversity of fabulous panoramic scenery. The finishing touch to this magnificent picture is a world-famous coastline dotted with the most beautiful beaches of Var. Here, you don't have to choose between land and sea. Méditerranée Porte des Maures is all about nature at the water's edge!

Feature produced in association with the Méditerranée Porte des Maures Intercommunal Tourist Office, Bormes-les-Mimosas Tourist Office and Le Lavandou Tourist Office.



▲ (1) **BRÉGANÇON FORT IN BORMES-LES-MIMOSAS.** Perched on a rocky spur some thirty metres above the sea, Brégançon Fort has been the summer residence of French presidents since 1963. A virtual tour of this listed historical monument is available at Bormes-les-Mimosas Tourist Office.

►(2) **LA VERNE CHARTERHOUSE IN COLLOBRIÈRES.** About thirty nuns of the order of Saint Bruno live and worship in La Verne, a monastery founded in the 12th century in the heart of the Maures mountains in Collobrières. A trail takes you to visit this historical monument designed for silent, solitary prayer.

►(3) **BEACHES OF LE LAVANDOU.** The 12 beaches of Le Lavandou stretch along the coast for 12 kilometres. Anglade, Pramusquier, Saint-Clair and Cavalière are just some of the beaches that invite you to relax, gaze out to sea and contemplate the îles d'Or.

►(4) **DOLMEN OF GAOUTABRY IN LA LONDE-LES-MAURES.** Gaoutabry is the largest dolmen in Var. Listed since 1988 as a historical monument, this fragile building has already been restored several times. Items uncovered during the excavations are exhibited at the Archaeology Museum of Saint-Raphaël.

►(5) **THE DIXMUDE IN PIERREFEU-DU-VAR.** Located on the outskirts of the village, this 14-metre-high wing-shaped monument was erected in remembrance of the 50 lost passengers of the Dixmude airship. On 18th December 1923, the Dixmude took off from Cuers-Pierrefeu airbase. During the night of 20th-21st December, it got caught in a storm and exploded off the coast of Sicily.

◀(6) **NOTRE-DAME DE SANTÉ CHAPEL IN CUERS.** Built at the end of the 19th century after Cuers was spared by the cholera epidemic of 1865, the esplanade of Notre-Dame de Santé chapel offers panoramic views over the village, the Barre de Cuers and Maures mountains.

◀(7) **MIMOSA.** Imported into France in the 18th century, the emblematic tree of Var, mimosa, can be admired along a 130 km road extending between Bormes-les-Mimosas in Var and Alpes-Maritimes. Every winter, the landscapes of the Méditerranée Porte des Maures region are lit up by its shimmering yellow flowers.

◀(8) **CHESTNUTS.** Celebrated every October during the Chestnut Festival in Collobrières, this nut is widely associated with the Maures mountains where it is harvested. As jam, chestnut cream, chestnut ice cream or simply grilled, chestnuts can be enjoyed in a multitude of ways that delight the foodies among us.

◀(9) **DIVING.** There are beautiful diving spots inviting enthusiasts to explore the seabed from the coastal villages of Méditerranée Porte des Maures. The multiple diving centres organise introductory lessons and exploratory excursions to observe the protected marine life.



6 TOWNS & VILLAGES

6 faces



▼ CUERS

With its narrow streets, fountains and washhouses, Cuers has all the typical charm of a Provence village, yet offers a modern living environment that's appreciated by the many families who live here. Stretching across nearly 1,000 hectares, the vineyard is another feature for which Cuers is famous, along with the local natural heritage.



► PIERREFEU

Clinging to the side of a rocky spur on the edge of the Maures mountains, this village, well-known for its abundance of wine estates and cooperatives, has lent its name to a terroir within the Côtes de Provence AOP area. This region is appreciated for its diversity of natural settings, ranging from vineyards to forests of oak and pine.



◀ LA LONDE-LES-MAURES

Tucked between land and sea, La Londe-les-Maures is a nature lover's heaven. From the coastal path to the Maures mountains, the varied landscape around this village can be explored on foot, by bike or even with snorkelling fins! It also boasts a wealth of historical heritage from its agricultural, then industrial past.



◀ COLLOBRIÈRES

This is officially one of Var's fifteen villages of character. A well-deserved distinction for this home of the chestnut that hosts an annual chestnut festival in October. Surrounded by vineyards and chestnut groves, the heart of the village has retained an authentic feel along its cobbled alleys. Just a short distance away stands the Charterhouse of La Verne, a monastery protected by its title of Historical Monument.



▲ BORMES-LES-MIMOSAS

Famous for being home to Brégançon Fort, the holiday residence of French presidents, the village of Bormes-les-Mimosas has many an asset. 22 kilometres of coastline, a medieval town centre packed with remarkable heritage features, highly original creations crafted by artisans, and much more. It has also been the 'mimosa capital', as the name suggests, since 1968.



◀ LE LAVANDOU

Nicknamed the 'town of dolphins', Le Lavandou seaside resort is reputed for its twelve sandy beaches of different styles. Throughout the year, its mild, temperate climate attracts holidaymakers as well as artists who have found inspiration here since the 19th century.

LAND *of nature and leisure*

In Méditerranée Porte des Maures, leisure activities often come hand-in-hand with nature. The coastal path and the foothills of the Maures massif may offer lots of hiking opportunities, but there are plenty of other fun things to do too! The sea invites you to try paddleboarding, kayaking, free diving, snorkelling or a boat trip to see the whales and dolphins, or you can stay on dry land with trail running, mountain biking, horse riding and many other sports activities. Here, you can enjoy a mix of cycling up the Babaou pass and observing the seabed on the Jardin des Mattes underwater trail. A whole plethora of high-quality, sometimes sensational experiences waiting to be enjoyed by all. A quick rundown of the region's iconic natural sites and must-try activities.



BASKING ON BEAUTIFUL BEACHES

Opposite the Îles d'Or, the beaches extend as far as the eye can see. From La Londe-les-Maures, via Bormes-les-Mimosas to Le Lavandou, how can anyone not relax on the beach to enjoy their share of the 2,800 hours of annual sunshine? Along some 40 kilometres of shores, the coves and beaches invite you to laze on their different sands and enjoy the good life. From the immense Argentière beach to the shady pine forest of Estagnol or the family-friendly beach of Saint-Clair, the iconic sands of Var are an ode to idleness, waiting to satisfy your desires in the most pleasant way possible. Among them, the nudist beach of Le Layet, located in the sensitive natural space of the Pointe du Layet in Le Lavandou, is a key spot on the Var coast. It offers magnificent views over the sea, the Maures mountains and Cavalière bay. The seabed here is truly remarkable, as is the flora that includes three nationally protected species.



EXPLORING SENSITIVE NATURAL AREAS

The 'espaces naturels sensibles' (ENS), sensitive natural areas managed by the Département du Var, are sites deemed in need of protection due to their quality of habitat, their environmental fragility, or the interest they hold for the public at large. Some are equipped to encourage visitors to learn about biodiversity as they explore or enjoy leisure activities. The ENS of La Brûlade in La Londe-les-Maures, for example, has play features for children and an arboretum with over 250 different trees. Still in La Londe-les-Maures, the Domaine de Tamary is traversed by a bridleway, near the Valcros golf course, while a park right in the town centre, the Jardin des Oliviers, invites you to unwind.

In Cuers, the Sainte-Christine ENS offers a plunging view over the sea and the farming plains. The Fe and Maraval ENSs in Collobrières are home to some of the iconic indigenous species of the Maures mountains. Besides the Pointe du Layet (see opposite), Le Lavandou is home to four ENS sites: Les Ferrandins - La Colle, Rouvière, Baou d'Enfer and Aire du Lac. Having been 80% destroyed by fire in 2017, Le Trapan in Bormes-les-Mimosas offers a typical example of a regenerated Mediterranean forest. Nature has now reclaimed her rightful place here and invites visitors to enjoy beautiful lakeside walks. Another local ENS is the Point de Gourdon site by the sea.

The Département du Var has published a brochure describing all of these ENS areas. It can be downloaded via var.fr



GOLF OR CRAZY GOLF?

Over a distance exceeding 500 metres, the Valcros golf course invites energetic golfers to play on the banks of the Maravanne river in a green haven of olive trees, oleanders and cork oaks. Managed by the Golf de Valcros sports association comprising 600 members, this 18-hole golf course extends across 50 hectares. On the premises, freelance golf teachers

offer tuition for beginners, one-to-one and group lessons. In a different atmosphere, Le Lavandou boasts a 3-hole beginners' course at the Golf du Grand Jardin. A stone's throw away, the exotic setting of the crazy-golf course is the perfect place to spend quality time with the family. Two 18-hole courses each with a different decor. The crazy-golf course is open from Wednesday to Sunday from 3pm to 8pm in June, and daily from 4pm to 8pm in July and August. Admission for 1 round: €10 per adult, €5 per child.

FLYING HIGH!

Why not take to the sky? From Cuers-Pierrefeu aerodrome, various organisations offer flights in small planes, microlights and gyrocopters. Just choose how you want to explore the area, and Var more widely, from the sky! Some flights accommodate people with disabilities, and flying lessons are also organised at the aerodrome.

DIVING!

Diving spots and shipwrecks among the most iconic of the Mediterranean Sea, such as the Spahis and the Hellcat, dives for levels 1 to 3, protected waters, a host of professionals waiting to guide you...

What more reason do you need to go diving in Méditerranée Porte des Maures?

From the coastal towns and villages, La Londe-les-Maures, Bormes-les-Mimosas or Le Lavandou, the diving sites are just a thirty-minute boat trip away.

Enquire at one of the many diving centres for a first diving experience or a guided dive.



A RIDE ON THE LITTLE TRAIN

At La Londe-les-Maures, climb aboard the little tourist train! Comfortably seated, you'll visit the village and discover its history. On a trip of approximately 45 minutes, the train offers an original way to visit the different districts, iconic sites and a few wine estates. Organised by the company Les Petits Trains, this trip can be rounded off with a visit to Le Lavandou, where you'll enjoy the coastline and its beautiful beaches.

Further details on les-petits-trains.com
Several return trips daily.

Fares from €4 to €7.50.



LAND *of heritage*

Provence villages full of picturesque alleys, coastal villages with an artistic or industrial past, a wealth of built heritage, monuments of remarkable architecture, magnificent spiritual venues, and much more. Méditerranée Porte des Maures is truly overflowing with heritage gems. Heritage that has shaped the very identity of each of the region's towns and villages.



BRÉGANÇON FORT AS SEEN FROM THE SEA

Brégançon Fort in Bormes-les-Mimosas, the summer residence of the presidents of France, arouses the curiosity of visitors. Head for the port of La Favière to see it from the sea. Latitude Verte invites you to board the O2, a hybrid electric boat, to sail silently around Cap Bénat, then Brégançon Fort. Besides providing the commentary, the skipper will also deliver all sorts of anecdotes and fascinating details.

Fares: €15.90 per adult, €10.90 per child aged 4-10 years, free for children under the age of 4. Further details on latitudeverte.fr



VISITING THE HISTORIC CENTRES OF CUERS AND PIERREFEU-DU-VAR

Cuers, with its Romanesque church, medieval gate, fountains, washhouses, Renaissance house and other buildings... All of these marvels can be seen on a guided tour organised by the intercommunal Tourist Office. This historical trail accompanied by anecdotes galore takes you to the chapel of Notre-Dame de Santé, which stands on the site of the old castrum. The slightly challenging walk takes two hours.

Price: €4, free for children under the age of 10. Sign up at the intercommunal Tourist Office. Tel. +33 4 94 01 53 10

Tucked against the outermost foothills of the Maures mountains, the village of Pierrefeu-du-Var stands out from the crowd with its strong Provençal character. History, art and tradition are the watchwords of this tour organised by the village Tourist Office. Walking shoes or trainers are compulsory to join this 1½-hour visit. Price: €3, free for children under the age of 12.

Sign up at Pierrefeu-du-Var Tourist Office. Tel. +33 4 94 28 27 30

LA VERNE MONASTERY IN COLLOBRIÈRES

Right in the heart of the Maures mountains, a few kilometres from the village of Collobrières, stands a sumptuous monument, the monastery of La Verne. Initially a Charterhouse, built on the site of an old priory, it was founded in 1170 and reborn as a monastery in the 1980s, after extensive renovation works. Its history spanning eight centuries is a troubled one. It was destroyed by fire, abandoned after being confiscated during the French Revolution, then pillaged, but the Charterhouse of La Verne has always survived. It was added to the Historical Monuments list in 1921. It wasn't until 1982 that La Verne became a place of worship again, when a group of monks settled in, followed, from 1985, by nuns from the Monastic Family of Bethlehem, of the Assumption of the Virgin and of Saint Bruno. From then on, with the support of the Monastic Family, the Historical Monuments organisation, the Département du Var, the Collobrières local council, the Amis de la Verne association and various benefactors, more consequential work was undertaken to refurbish the entire site. A trail takes visitors to see part of the monastery. The 12th-century Romanesque church is still the only part of the site where visitors and followers of Saint Bruno can share a moment of silence. Tel. +33 4 94 43 48 28 - bethleem.org



THE PROVENCE LANDINGS TRAIL

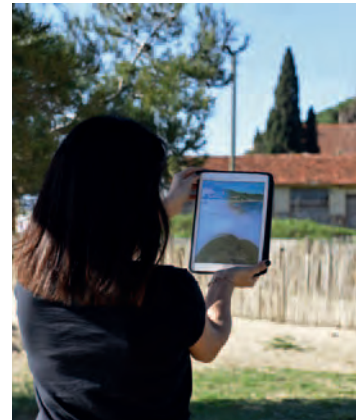
The intercommunal Tourist Office has created an itinerary on the theme of the Provence Landings. It visits key sites relating to the Liberation of some of the region's towns and villages. The 90-km trail can be covered in a single 3½-hour drive, or taken in stages. It leads you from town to village, unveiling the diversity of local military heritage dating from the Second World War.

Scan this QR code
for a straightforward tour
of the iconic sites
of the Provence Landings.



VIRTUAL WALKING TOURS IN THE HEART OF THE REGION

With Archistoire, you can learn all about the industrial past of La Londe-les-Maures or the architectural history of Collobrières. Developed by the Architecture, Planning and Environment Committee of Var, this free app can take you on an augmented-reality tour. It guides visitors by indicating the itinerary and suggesting 360° panoramic views combined with ancient photographs and postcards, and reconstitutions of architectural features that have since disappeared, as well as some quirky stories and previously unseen documents. Certain sites currently closed to visitors can also be seen on virtual tours. Available for free download on Google Play and Apple Store.



THE CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE COASTAL TRAIL

On foot or by bike, explore the 20th- and 21st-century architectural heritage of Bormes-les-Mimosas and Le Lavandou. Created by the Département du Var, the Contemporary Architecture Coastal Trail takes you to see La Rade Ensoleillée, a seaside holiday complex at La Favière beach in Bormes-les-Mimosas. The site was designed by Georges Candilis, an architect who had worked with Le Corbusier. In Le Lavandou, Alfred-Ludovic Henry's Hotel California, one of the town's most elevated buildings, plunges you into the atmosphere of 1950s California. In the Saint-Clair district stands Villa Théo, former home of Belgian neo-impressionist painter, Théo Van Rysselberghe and now converted into an art centre. Built in 1958 on a plot clinging to the cliff face, the villa Le Pin Blanc can be admired from the coastal path.

To find out more, download the free app, ArchXXL. It tracks your location when you are moving around on foot or by bicycle and sends you audio and visual information when you approach architectural sites.





LAND *of vineyards*

In the Méditerranée Porte des Maures region, vineyards extend for as far as the eye can see. They are everywhere, around all six of the region's towns and villages. The grape varieties, such as grenache, mourvèdre, syrah, carignan and cabernet-sauvignon, used to blend rosé, red and white wines, benefit from an outstanding climate, the Mediterranean sea spray and continental influences. The result is locally-produced wines with very special characteristics that are recognised by the Côte de Provence AOP (protected designation of origin) and the Maures, Méditerranée or Var IGP (protected geographical indication). Two Méditerranée Porte des Maures villages have even lent their name to additional geographical denominations within the Côte de Provence AOP terroir: Pierrefeu-du-Var and La Londe-les-Maures. Certain wines can be awarded these distinctions on the basis of precise criteria, such as the typology of the soils on which the grapevines flourish, or the grape varieties used in their blending. But whether or not they benefit from the Côte de Provence AOP or an IGP, all these wines share a common identity that you can familiarise yourself with during a wine-tourism experience that comes in various shapes and forms.

They offer an opportunity to contemplate in wonder the typical landscapes of this part of Var, where the vineyards stretch between the Mediterranean Sea and the Maures mountains. E-biking or horseriding along the vineyard trails, permanent and pop-up art exhibitions, tasting sessions and concerts are but a few of many possible suggestions. Almost as many possibilities as wine estates, some of which propose immersive experiences, educational walking tours, and even lessons in oenology. Step inside to stare in wonder at the old stone buildings, gardens, and ancient olive groves.

This built and natural heritage, often ancestral, rubs shoulders



with wine-making facilities that in some cases are ultra-modern. In summer, the wine cellars are also great places to take shelter from the heat. Captivated by the very distinctive smell of fermenting wine, visitors admire the enormous stainless-steel vats and the oak casks and barrels.

The special atmosphere of the wineries offers insight into the different stages of the wine-making process, the blending and the classification of the wines. Across the region, the wine cellars and estates invite visitors to learn about the profession of the winemakers who work with a passion. Some even propose grape-picking workshops, in which they demonstrate the gestures that have been passed down through the generations. An essential savoir-faire that is reflected in the quality of their exceptional terroir.

REGULATIONS FOR QUALITY

The designations AOP (protected designation of origin) and IGP (protected geographical indication) are both guarantees of quality. Wines bearing these indications are produced only from vines growing in specifically defined areas. In addition, they must comply with strict specifications relating to each designation. These include the grape varieties authorised for each one. In Méditerranée Porte des Maures, wines may qualify for the Côte de Provence AOP or the IGP distinction.

Within the AOP area, the additional geographical denomination for the terroir La Londe covers vineyards in Londe-les-Maures and part of Bormes-les-Mimosas. These areas produce powerful red wines, fresh and fruity rosés and elegant whites. The Pierrefeu designation covers Pierrefeu-du-Var of course, but also Cuers and part of Collobrières. These areas produce only red and rosé wines, with an average yearly production of 3,800 hectolitres.

All the wineries across the entire region, around Cuers, Pierrefeu-du-Var, Collobrières, La Londe-les-Maures, Bormes-les-Mimosas and Le Lavandou, can carry the Var, Méditerranée or Maures IGP. The promise of excellence and all the specific characteristics of the Var terroir.

LAND *of taste and tradition*

Here, local produce and traditional crafts take pride of place. Collobrières chestnuts are one of Var's areas of excellence. A multitude of oil farmers produce a Provence AOC olive oil. The three oil mills - at Cinq Ponts in Cuers, and at Domaine du Jasson and Domaine du Haut Jasson in La Londe-les-Maures, are open to visitors keen to learn about the history of oil production. Fishing remains a dynamic sector in the coastal towns, thanks largely to the fishermen's corporation of Le Lavandou. And when it comes to arts and crafts, some talented young creators rub shoulders with craftspeople who keep ancestral traditions alive.

CHESTNUTS FROM VAR

Var chestnuts are one of the region's icons. They are delicious grilled, candied or incorporated into creams and jams. They are produced in the Maures mountains and the town of Collobrières has become the chestnut capital, boasting 900 hectares of chestnut groves. The French often call them 'marrons' (horse chestnuts), but they are of course the edible kind.

For nearly 40 years now, the chestnut has been celebrated every year with the Chestnut Festivals held on the last three Sundays of October in Collobrières. For the 2022 festival to be held on 16th, 23rd and 30th October, the programme features local farmers' markets, arts and crafts, walks in the chestnut groves, and much more. Foodies will be able to visit the Confiserie Azuréenne in Collobrières, where candied chestnuts, chestnut cream, chestnut ice cream or chestnuts in syrup are just some of the delights prepared by the experts of this ancestral savoir-faire that goes back half a century. confiserieazureenne.com

Head for Cuers to visit La Provençale where you'll find a whole range of chestnut creams flavoured with rum, cognac, crushed hazelnuts or almonds, nougat pieces, candied orange and so on. Nine varieties are available. Treat yourself! provençegourmande.com



BOUTIS, ANCESTRAL CRAFTSMANSHIP

Included in the French list of intangible cultural heritage since 2019, the ancient technique of making boutis, traditional Provençal embroidered quilts, is often showcased in Pierrefeu-du-Var by the association Lei Roucas douè Bàrri. Every year since 2005, about 1,200 people have come together to share their stories and expertise relating to the ancestral boutis tradition. Previously handed down from mother to daughter, this passion is now shared between friends thanks to the association based in Pierrefeu.

leiroucasdoubbarri.eklablog.com

CREATORS OF BORMES-LES-MIMOSAS

In Bormes-les-Mimosas, with its charming, flower-festooned cobbled streets, ancient houses with pink and ochre tiles, and old stone walls, creators find an inexhaustible source of inspiration. Painters, sculptors, ceramicists, saddlers, glassmakers, engravers and even a milliner. More than fifteen creators live and work in this authentic medieval village.

OLIVES AND CITRUS FRUITS

The Domaine du Jasson in La Londe-les-Maures is a beautiful family-owned property with a rich agricultural past dating back to 1867. The ancient vineyard has been replaced by a 19-hectare olive grove of 3,900 trees.

Five olive varieties have been selected for the production of a range of oils: aglandau, bouteillan, cayon, picholine and grossane des Baux.

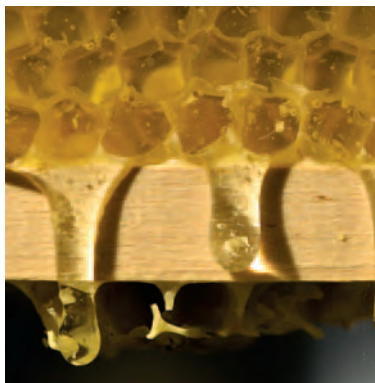
The olives are crushed by the estate's own mill. A wide range of olive oils is available. The Carra family, passionate oil farmers, have also developed the less usual activity of cultivating rare citrus fruits: yuzu, kumquat, Kaffir lime, citron, Key lime, Tahiti lime, grapefruit and many more.

"We've successfully combined our 2 different crops in a range of olive oils that we call Les Agrulives, obtained by crushing the olives together with citrus fruits from our greenhouse", the producers explain.

Guided tour every Thursday morning at 9.30am.

Price: €3 for adults, free for children.

Book ahead at the Tourist Office



A FAMILY OF BEEKEEPERS

In Bormes-les-Mimosas, the Boulet family keep their bees in a protected, unspoilt natural environment. *"Beekeeping is our profession and our passion. From breeding the bees to filling the jars with honey, we handle every stage of the process, as a family and with the greatest care",* assure these beekeepers of several generations. They produce various types of honey in line with the seasons and flowering periods: honey from the maquis of Bormes-les-Mimosas or the garrigue, or made from the flowers of acacia, lavender, chestnut trees, arbutus or even coriander. From June to September, they also propose free tours, with or without a guide, of their honey farm, La Butinerie. labutinerie.biz

MARKETS

BORMES-LES-MIMOSAS

- old village, Wednesday mornings
- La Favière, Saturday mornings from May to September
- Evening art & craft market in July and August, in the village on Tuesdays and at La Favière on Mondays

COLLOBRIÈRES

- Place de la Libération, Thursday and Sunday mornings

CUERS

- place de la Convention, Friday mornings

LA LONDE-LES-MAURES

- place de la Mairie, Sunday mornings

LE LAVANDOU

- place du Marché, Thursday mornings
- Cavalière, Sunday mornings from June to September
- organic market, Place Ernest Reyer, Sunday mornings from June to September

PIERREFEU-DU-VAR

- place Gambetta, Saturday mornings
- organic & sustainable farmers' market, Rond-point des Harkis, Wednesday evenings

NOT TO BE MISSED: ORGANIC MARKET IN PIERREFEU-DU-VAR

Local produce and free tastings along with musical entertainment and a warm, friendly atmosphere. That's what you'll find at the organic and sustainable farmers' market in Pierrefeu-du-Var. Over fifty stallholders who really care about the quality of their fare and about the environment, await you every Wednesday from 5pm to 9pm, until the middle of September. Children's workshops are also organised regularly at this market.

Organic market - Rond-point des Harkis in Pierrefeu-du-Var

LAND *of arts and events*



LA LONDE JAZZ FESTIVAL

Jazz and the wine terroir come together like magic in the fabulous La Londe Jazz Festival, created in 2009. In a unique setting under the pines at Argentière beach, against the backdrop of the Mediterranean Sea and the Îles d'Or, this festival backed by the Département du Var shines a spotlight on all the current trends of the jazz scene. Every time, it features a quality line-up. This year, from 4th to 7th August, the La Londe Jazz Festival kicks off at 7pm for four evenings of free concert performances. And to get the evening off to a great start, you can enjoy a pre-concert apéritif of Côtes de Provence La Londe AOP wines with nibbles based on local products. Full programme on lalandejazzfestival.com

LES SOIRS D'ÉTÉ IN LA LONDE-LES-MAURES

Gospel evening, Celtic evening, contemporary dance performance, world music concerts, the great jazz classics, the very latest French acts, meet-the-author sessions and open-air film screenings. The new festival, Les soirs d'été (literally, 'summer evenings') in La Londe-les-Maures takes place across the entire town from 11th July to 30th August to offer an eclectic programme that will appeal to all.



MIMOSA FESTIVAL

The towns and villages of the Méditerranée Portes des Maures region are reputed for their mimosa. Originating from Oceania, since 1968 this flowery tree has even lent its name to the village of Bormes-les-Mimosas. Every winter, it brightens up the whole region. Multiple celebrations are organised in honour of the mimosa trees. Le Lavandou and Bormes-les-Mimosas maintain a wonderful tradition of hosting floral parades which have become a key event of the Var winter. Tens of thousands of onlookers come to see the floats festooned with natural flowers and tons and tons of mimosa. Another event dedicated to mimosa: Mimosalia. Organised in Bormes-les-Mimosas on the last weekend in January, this event is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2022. The festival attracts over 70 exhibitors from all over France, including major nurseries specialising in mimosa varieties. Activities for children and conferences are organised throughout the weekend.

NOT FORGETTING...

►Le Grand Bleu, a new cinema in Le Lavandou

Le Grand Bleu, the fabulous new cinema complex that opened in Le Lavandou in May 2021, comprises three ultra-modern cinemas. Built with financial support from the Département du Var, it screens several films daily in 4K resolution. The varied weekly programme includes the latest releases, experimental films and children's films.

Info and bookings
on cinemasdulavandou.fr/grand-bleu

►Escapade Gourmande in Bormes-les-Mimosas

Food lovers take note: head for Bormes-les-Mimosas from 23rd to 25th September for the Escapade Gourmande food festival. Supported by the Conseil Départemental du Var, this tasty event invites you to prolong the joys of summer with some amazing culinary experiences. For this second event the programme includes a producers' fair, a cookery demonstration by local chefs, drinks to music, and cookery battles between friends or parent and child. The fun takes place non-stop at La Favière, between the sandy beach and the pine forest.
bormeslesmimosas.com

►The Bouchonnerie centre in Pierrefeu-du-Var

The Bouchonnerie centre in Pierrefeu-du-Var is a converted cork factory that now houses two auditoriums, the 345-seat Malraux hall and the Tonneaux hall. Created in the late 19th century, it produced between 150 and 200 million corks every year and employed around 200 staff. Production came to a halt in 1971 with the widespread introduction of plastic corks. Nowadays, it is one of the local heritage features and a culture venue with a varied programme.

►Nature Festival in Collobrières

Every spring, a celebration of nature is organised in Collobrières. The Nature Festival features a craft market, a farmers' market, art exhibitions, guided hikes and a photo rally on the theme of local biodiversity. Over the years, this event has become very popular among environment enthusiasts.



© Ville du Lavandou

THE PATROUILLE DE FRANCE OVER THE SEA

Once again this year, the pilots of the Patrouille de France acrobatic flying squad will take to the sky above the bay of Le Lavandou. Between 4pm and 5pm on 14th August, the team and their alpha jets will put on a high-flying performance for the benefit of a wide audience. The French Air Force will be on the seafront offering various activities and providing information.

STREET THEATRE FESTIVAL IN LE LAVANDOU

This two-day Street Theatre festival of puppets, fairy-tales and music transforms Le Lavandou into an open stage. Dozens of actors, street artists, poets, musicians and dancers take to the streets for an entertaining walkabout in the town centre and the port. Children and adults, tourists and locals all play along with the performing troupes' invitation to enjoy a real change of scene amid amazing sets and original costumes. On 22nd and 23rd October, expect two fabulous days of laughter, emotion and togetherness, with an added touch of magic and wonderment.

Further details on ot-lelavandou.fr



© Ville de Bormes-les-Mimosas

WHEN BORMES MEETS ARGENTINA

Fiesta, the international summer festival offers a whole weekend of shows and tango performances that fill Bormes-les-Mimosas with vibrant sounds from Argentina. A succession of shows, concerts, folklore and introductory lessons in zamba, chacarera and other dances, all on Place Gambetta and Esplanade du Château.

Information and bookings at the town hall
on +33 4 94 05 34 54 or
at asso.even@villes-bormes.fr

VILLA THÉO AND THE PAINTERS' TRAIL IN LE LAVANDOU

In the late 19th century, the Saint-Clair district of Le Lavandou attracted the likes of Henri Edmond Cross, Théo Van Rysselberghe, Paul Signac, Maximilien Luceneo and other impressionist painters. They stayed here during the period between 1892 and 1926, their artworks inspired by the luminosity and beautiful colours. The town has paid homage to the painters by creating a trail of 2.5 km featuring sixteen stands that present 19 artworks produced in Le Lavandou. It leads walkers to their homes, including Villa Théo, former home of the Belgian painter Théo Van Rysselberghe. Now a well-known art centre, the villa hosts two or three exhibitions every year. This lovely culture venue is sponsored by the Département du Var, which displays paintings here from its contemporary art collection during outreach exhibitions. To find all the latest news about Villa Théo, visit the website villa-theo.fr or check out the Facebook page



© R. Dupouy



ONLY IN VAR / HERITAGE

Salernes **FLOUR MILL**



Famous for floor tiles, ceramics and the Terra Rossa museum, the village of Salernes also boasts other heritage treasures waiting to be seen, including the flour mill. This 19th-century mill hasn't operated since 1955, but it is still in an excellent state of repair and open to the public!

In 19th-century Salernes, an industry developed in about fifteen factories and over forty ceramics workshops. Oil mills, flour mills, fuling mills, etc. were all supplied with water from the Saint-Barthélemy canal, a source located three kilometres north of the village. The Lèbre fa-

mily, who have been millers since 1550, came to Salernes in 1880 and purchased two of the three flour mills in the village. *"My grandfather, Eugène Léotard Lèbre, purchased two flour grinders in Salernes in the late 19th century",* Gaston Lèbre tells us. *"In order to boost production, he very quickly had some powerful water turbines installed. In 1928, his son, Fernand, who had taken over the business, decided to further modernise and mechanise the site to turn it into a fully-fledged flour mill."* Significant changes had to be made to the buildings. Following work that lasted four years, the flour mill of Salernes, AKA the Saint-Barthélemy flour mill, opened its doors in 1931. The building was extended and an upper floor added. Concrete silos were installed. The millstones were replaced by metal cylinders. A metal footbridge leading to the flour shop on the opposite side of the street was built to facilitate movement of the sacks of flour. The flour mill was fully equipped with modern machinery manufactured by the Parisian firm Teisset-Rose-Brault, a milling equipment specialist. *"With a*

sed from 50 to 75 quintals, the new flour mill was able to keep up with the accelerating production pace and the increasing demand for high-quality flour", emphasises Jean-Pierre Brachet from the André Taxil association in charge of promoting the heritage of Salernes. In 1892, the construction of a railway boosted the growth of industrial activities in Salernes. Wheat arrived by train from the port of Marseille. The flour produced here supplied not only the 42 bakeries in the surrounding area (Carcès, Entrecasteaux, Draguignan, etc.) but also others located outside Var.

"The flour mill remained in operation until 1955. After 34 years of service, it had become obsolete, too small, incapable of producing sufficient volumes to compete with the industrial flour mills that were emerging. Salernes flour mill was no longer viable. The milling rights were bought up in 1963 by the industry's professional fund (Caisse professionnelle de l'industrie meunière) and was disconnected from the canal a few years later", Jean-Pierre Brachet continues. It has never been operated since. However, it is still in perfect condition, as is all the machinery installed on the building's three storeys.





“I thought it was important to bring this site back to life and open it to visitors. It went without saying that it had to be saved”, confides Gaston Lèbre, who still owns the mill. So he submitted a request to the DRAC (regional directorate for cultural affairs) for the site to be protected. On 22nd October 2018, the entire flour mill and all its machinery were added to the French list of protected Historical Monuments.

Only one other structure of this kind exists in the south-eastern quarter of France, the flour mill of La Mure-Argens in Alpes de Haute-

Provence, which was converted into an ecomuseum in 2016. *“We would also like to create an ecomuseum here”,* Jean-Pierre Brachet announces.

“With this in mind, we have asked the Draguignan museum of art and popular tradition to lend us a few objects relating to flour production”, Gaston Lèbre continues. The owner has also signed an agreement with Salernes council to open the site to the public more often. Guided tours on the theme of Salernes’s industrial heritage are organised regularly. A qualified guide takes visitors to see three sites: the flour mill of Saint Barthélémy,

the old oil mill, and the Terra Rossa ceramics centre. Do not miss the chance to visit the flour mill free of charge on 25th and 26th June when it opens to the public for the European Heritage Days devoted to mills and milling. A great opportunity to discover this unique site in Var. ■

**Industrial heritage tour
with commentary: €10 per person.
Book ahead (compulsory)
by calling Salernes town hall
on +33 4 94 60 40 00.**

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

The flour production process follows three main stages: cleaning, grinding and sifting. The first stage, cleaning, is carried out after the wheat grains have been weighed. They are then sent to the winnow which removes the largest impurities, then the wheat brusher which gets rid of smaller dirt and dust particles. Finally, the wheat is soaked in water for 24 hours to remove any remaining parasites. The four converter grinders, the heaviest components of the machinery, are installed on the ground floor. They are used to crush the grain, transforming it into smaller grains known as wheat meal, which is then crushed into flour. The final stage, sifting, is needed to remove the bran. Salernes flour mill is fitted with three types of sieve: a sifter, a plansifter and a bolter. The flour is bagged up in different parts of the building.

SAINT-CYR-SUR-MER

SIGNED *Bartholdi!*

An unexpected surprise. In Var, a little piece of New York can be seen in the picturesque seaside resort of Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer. Right in the town centre, on Place Portalis, proudly stands a genuine replica of the Statue of Liberty. Here's the amazing story behind it.

In March 1913, to celebrate the arrival of running water in Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer the town council decided to install a copy of 'the statue of liberty lighting up the world', instead of the traditional fountain that was usually built as a reminder of the importance of water in such a dry region. A public fundraising campaign was launched to finance this exceptional operation. Anatole Ducros, a rich property-owner in Saint-Cyr, immediately sent a cheque to cover the entire cost. This angered the town's inhabitants, who felt deprived of the pleasure of contributing to the construction of their statue. That's the story behind the statue of Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer. It stands 2.5 metres tall, about the length of the index finger of the original statue in New York. It is made of cast iron and dazzlingly decorated by a fine gilt layer that covers the entire statue.

This is one of the rare copies designed by Bartholdi. Looking at it more closely, you can see the artist's signature on the base. Although there are a number of statues of liberty in France, very few have been authenticated.

WHEN THE STATUE OF LIBERTY DISAPPEARED!

In October 1986, Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer had plans to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of New York's Lady Liberty by hosting an American delegation in the presence of the Culture and Telecommunications Minister. The dockyard workers of La Ciotat tried to disrupt the event as a protest against the shipyard's planned closure. They decided to remove the Statue of Liberty of Var and hold it prisoner. One morning, the local people woke up to the very upsetting news that their flagship monument had gone! But in fact, the town council, warned of the strikers' intentions, had anticipated and placed the statue in a safe place until the day of the event. Since then, the Statue of Liberty has been returned to its rightful position in the town's main square. ■

ONLY IN VAR / OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

WINE COOPERATIVES *of Var*

Var boasts 39 wine cooperatives. They are all deep-rooted in the region and its history. Created as far back as 1906 with the opening of the Camps-la-Source cooperative, which has now disappeared, they are the legacy of a movement that encouraged the pooling of production tools and the sharing of wine-making methods that contributed to the wines' market success. The golden age of cooperatives in Var lasted into the 1970s. At the time there were about 90 cooperatives with a total of 25,000 members. They declined in the 1990s. Many of them closed down during that period, others merged to enable them to withstand the competition and develop new production techniques and marketing methods. Nowadays they are performing well with an annual wine production of some 670,000 hectolitres intended partly for the wine merchants but also for bottles that are sold directly by wine shops across Var and abroad. The majority are rosé wines, but the whites and reds also express the excellence of the Var terroir and the expertise of the winegrowers. Le Var magazine invites you to find out more through this presentation of wine cooperatives selected by the Var Federation of Wine Cooperatives. Happy reading.

WINE COOPERATIVES OF VAR

- **Le Cellier des Archers**
Rond-point du pont de l'Argens
Les Arcs-sur-Argens
cellierdesarchers.fr
- **Caveau Deï Bormani**
Quartier du Content
Bormes-les-Mimosas
caveaudeibormani.fr
- **Les Vignerons de la Provence verte**
Route d'Aix - Brignoles
vigneronsdelaprovenceverte.fr
- **Cave Fontaillade**
Avenue de Saint-Maximin
Brue-Auriac
- **La Cadiérenne**
Quartier Le Vallon - La Cadière-d'Azur
cadierenne.com

- **Le Moulin de la Roque**
1, route des Sources
RD82 - Le Castellet
la-roque-bandol.com

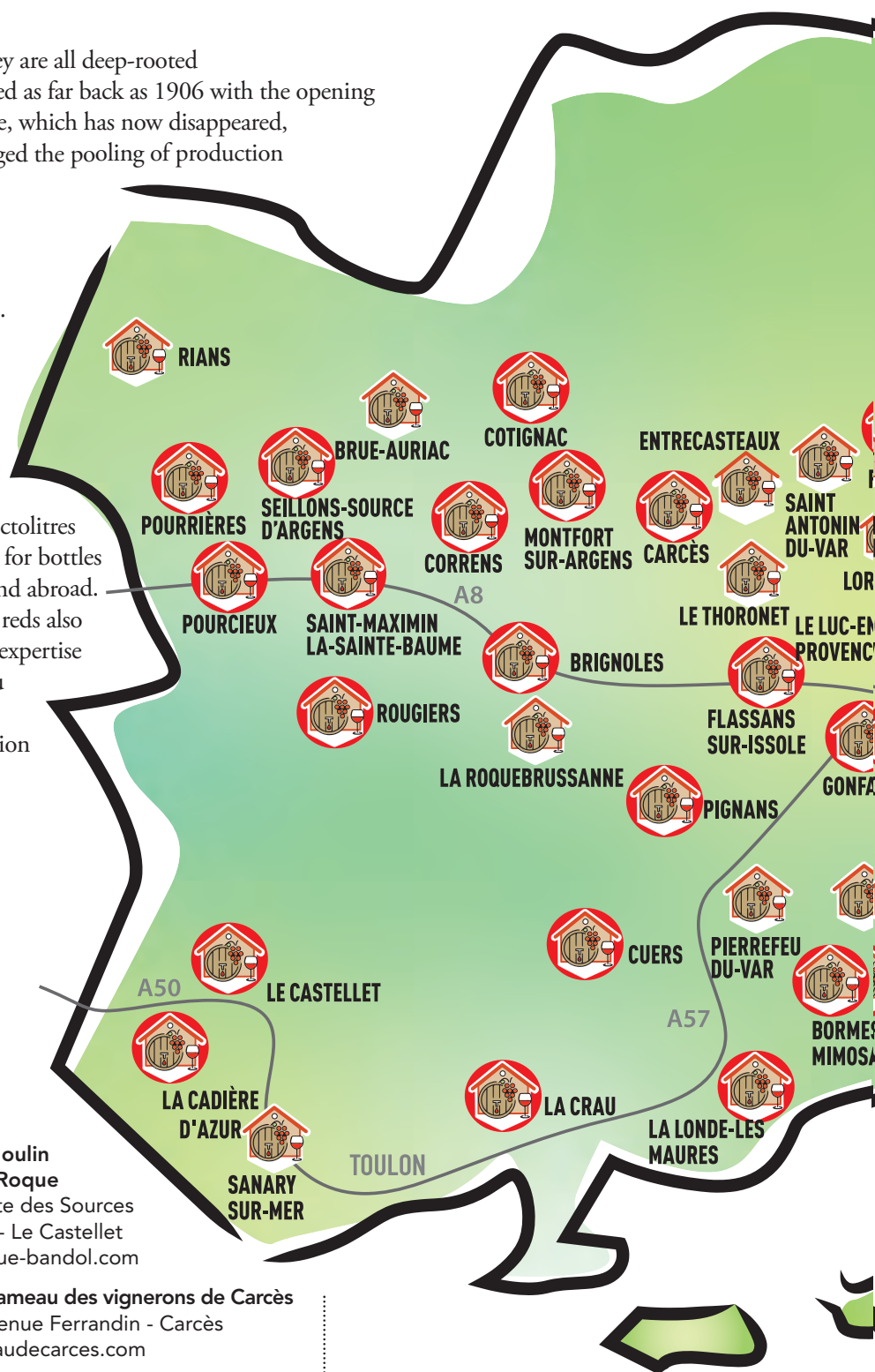
- **Le Hameau des vignerons de Carcès**
66, avenue Ferrandin - Carcès
hameaudecarces.com

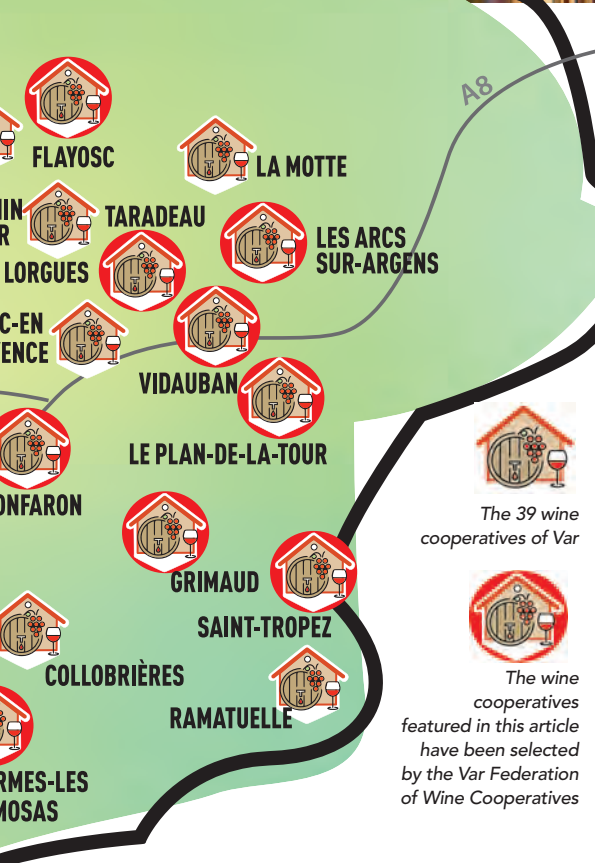
- **Les Vignerons de Collobrières**
Route de Pierrefeu - Collobrières
Page Facebook Les Vignerons de Collobrières

- **Les Vignerons de Correns**
Chemin de l'Église - Correns
vigneronsdecorrens.com

- **Les Vignerons de Cotignac**
1, rue Arnoux Borghino - Cotignac
vigneronsdecotignac.com

- **Le Cellier de La Crau**
85, avenue de Toulon - La Crau
cellierdelacrau.fr





The 39 wine cooperatives of Var

The wine cooperatives featured in this article have been selected by the Var Federation of Wine Cooperatives

FLAYOSC
LA MOTTE
TARADEAU
LES ARCS SUR-ARGENS
VIDAUBAN
LE PLAN-DE-LA-TOUR
GRIMAUD
SAINT-TROPEZ
COLLOBRIÈRES
RAMATUELLE

► **Terra Provincia**
505, bd Gambetta
Cuers - Page Facebook Terra Provincia

► **Les caves de l'Amiral**
Route de Saint-Antonin
Entrecasteaux - Page Facebook Les Caves de l'Amiral Officiel

► **Le Comptoir des vins**
Avenue Général De Gaulle
Flassans-sur-Issole
comptoirdesvinsflassans.fr

► **Le Cellier des 3 Collines**
Rond-point de Michelage
Route de Draguignan - Flayosc
cellierdes3collines.com

► **Les Maîtres vignerons de Gonfaron**
Route Nationale - Gonfaron
terresaileesdegonfaron.com

► **Les Vignerons de Grimaud**
36, avenue des oliviers - Grimaud
vigneronsdegrimaud.com

► **Cave des vignerons londaïs**
Quartier Le Pansard
La Londe-les-Maures
vignerons-londais.com

► **Cave coopérative La Lorguaise**
12, avenue des Quatre pierres
Lorgues - lorgues.free.fr

► **Les Vignerons du Luc**
Rue de l'Ormeau - Le Luc-en-Provence
lesvigneronsduluc.com

► **Les Caves du Commandeur**
18, rue du Moulin
Montfort-sur-Argens
caves-du-commandeur.fr

► **Les Vignerons de Saint Romain**
2 738, route de Bagnols
Quartier La Morette - La Motte

► **Les Vignerons de la cave de Pierrefeu**
Route départementale 12
Pierrefeu-du-Var
vignerons-pierrefeu.com

► **Cellier des Trois pignes**
La Berlière - Pignans
cellierdestroispignes.com

► **Les Vignerons du Plan-de-la-Tour**
721, route de Grimaud - RD 44
Le Plan-de-la-Tour
lesmarquets.com

► **Les Vignerons du Baou**
Rue Raoul Blanc - Pourcieux
vigneronsdubaou.com

► **Le Cellier Marius Caius**
47, Grand-Rue - Pourrières
cellier-marius-caius.fr

► **Vignobles de Ramatuelle**
597, route de Collebasse - Ramatuelle
vignoblesderamatuelle.com

► **Le Cellier de Mont Major**
Chemin des Herbes
Quartier Saint Esprit - Rians

► **Cave coopérative La Roquière**
36, avenue Saint-Sébastien
La Roquebrussanne

► **Les Vignerons de la Sainte Baume**
Les Fauvières - Rougiers
vignerons-saintebaume.com

► **Les Treilles d'Antonin**
107, D250 - Saint-Antonin-du-Var
Facebook Page: Les Treilles d'Antonin

► **Le Cellier de la Sainte Baume**
RD 560 - route de Barjols
Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume
celliersaintebaume.fr

► **Torpez - Vignobles de Saint-Tropez**
111, route des Plages - Saint-Tropez
torpez.com

► **Cave Saint André**
52, rue des Plaines de l'aire
Seillons-Source-d'Argens
cave-saint-andre.fr

► **Les Caves d'Azur**
130, route de la Gare - Sanary-sur-Mer

► **Les Vignerons de Taradeau**
Route des Arcs - Taradeau
vigneronsdetaradeau.fr

► **La Guilde des vignerons**
du Cœur du Var
20, boulevard du 17 août 1944
Le Thoronet

► **Les Maîtres Vignerons de Vidauban**
89, chemin de Sainte-Anne - Vidauban
maitres-vignerons-de-vidauban.fr

Alcohol can damage your health. Please drink responsibly.



The Var Federation's selection of wine cooperatives of the
BANDOL TERROIR

► **LA CADIÉRENNE
IN LA CADIÈRE-D'AZUR**

Created in 1929, La Cadiénne very quickly adopted a direct marketing strategy. *"In 1933, a vehicle was purchased for home deliveries whereas everyone else was selling to wine merchants and brokers. This activity gradually developed and, in the 1960s, three lorries were making daily deliveries of 10-litre demijohns to individual clients between Toulon and Marseille",*

the manager, Marc Jourdan, tells us. It was in the 1970s that direct sales began in tasting cellars. But for the sake of tradition, door-to-door deliveries to loyal customers continue even today. With 290 cooperative members across 610 hectares, La Cadiénne is the biggest producer of Bandol AOP wines. It also makes Côtes de Provence AOP and Var IGP wines. The business is split into three parts: wine merchants,

"which allows us to obtain Bandol wines that are not distributed through our own channels", large retailers, and the wine cellars of La Cadière- d'Azur and Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer.



◄ **LE MOULIN DE LA ROQUE,
FAMILLES ET DOMAINES,
IN LE CASTELLET**

The story of Moulin de la Roque is intricately linked to that of another wine cooperative, La Cadiénne in La Cadière-d'Azur. When it was created in 1950, it was a maturing facility for Bandol red wines from La Cadiénne. Because of this shared past,

most of its members are also members of La Cadiénne. Nowadays, the human element is what the Moulin de la Roque in Le Castellet is all about. *"This is why we have added 'familles et domaines' to our name",* announces the manager, Patrick Aledo. *"Our cooperative also has the particularity of having four wine estates among its members, which is quite unusual, especially for Bandol wines."* With 180 members spread across 300 hectares, Moulin de la Roque produces 80% Bandol AOP, 15% Côtes de Provence AOP and 5% Var IGP wines. *"Our first specialism is Bandol, especially red. But we have managed to adjust to demand and now produce a majority of rosé wines."* Moulin de la Roque is also well-known for hosting festive events, particularly during the summer season.

The Var Federation's selection of wine cooperatives of the GULF OF ST. TROPEZ



◀ TORPEZ VIGNOBLES DE SAINT-TROPEZ

This is the oldest wine cooperative still in business in Var. It was founded in 1908 by the town's sailors following their decision to invest in a vineyard. Nowadays, the wine cooperative of St. Tropez, known as Torpez - Vignobles de Saint-Tropez, has 133 members who cultivate 180 hectares of grapevines. Many of them are the sailors' descendants and they keep their grapevines in order to preserve their heritage and add value to their property. The cooperative has only half a dozen full-time winegrowers. Every year, they produce nearly 3,900

hectolitres of wine, mostly Côtes de Provence AOP and Méditerranée IGP rosé wines (about 75% of production), but also smaller volumes of red and white wines (20% and 5% respectively). In 2019, Torpez - Vignobles de Saint-Tropez was fitted with a new, ultra-modern wine cellar along with a very pleasant shop.

▶ LES VIGNERONS DU PLAN-DE-LA-TOUR

The wine cooperative of Le Plan-de-la-Tour is the latest addition to the cooperatives of Var. It was created in 1962. In this small village on the outskirts of the Gulf of St. Tropez, the winegrowers used to make their wine at home. The nearest wine cellars were in Grimaud or Vidauban but they weren't easy to reach. As techniques evolved, the winegrowers decided to pool their harvest and share the work. Les Foulours de Saint-Pons was born. The cooperative has since changed its name to Les Vignerons du Plan-de-la-Tour. Olivier Ode, the manager, explains that *"it needed a name that carried a message, that highlighted the region but also the wine-growing profession, of which our members should be proud."* A brand was also created, Les Marquets, to unite all the cooperative members in a quality approach. The wines produced here, of which 80% are rosé wines, are quite refreshing. Environmental standards have been elaborated to restrict the use of phytosanitary products.



◀ LES VIGNERONS DE GRIMAUD

A sparkling new wine cellar. A tasting room. High-end wine-making equipment. 1,000 hectares of vines. 270 members spread across 11 of the 12 towns and villages of the Gulf of St. Tropez. 5 million bottles produced per year. In Grimaud, the wine cooperative functions like a major estate. It is one of the only wine cooperatives in Var that has chosen to package and market its production directly. *"Since the cooperative's creation in 1932, its members have preferred this way of working"*, explains Pascal Etienne, who has been chairman of Les Vignerons de Grimaud for 18 years. Thirty full-time employees work in this great organisation. Here, the wine is never sold on tap, only by the bottle.

The rosé wines are pale and shiny and account for 95% of production. They are refreshing and generous on the palate. The whites are packed with aromas. A small volume are barrel-matured and woody. The reds are very powerful and have vanilla scents.



The Var Federation's selection of wine cooperatives around the massif of **SAINTE-BAUME**

► LES VIGNERONS DU BAOU IN POURCIEUX

31 members, all winegrowers by trade. In Pourcieux, the members of the Vignerons du Baou cooperative are all professional winegrowers. *"This is a major advantage for our cooperative's development"*, insists Franck Cagiati, the chairman. *"There's a real synergy between our members"*, some of whom are young winegrowers. The cooperative was created in 1912. In 2017 it was completely renovated and a wine shop was installed within the structure. Tours are organised regularly so that visitors can see this modern facility. The annual production of 20,000 hectolitres aims for wines that are as fresh as possible, and slightly acidic to allow them to age. 95% of this volume is sold by the tanker to wine merchants. The remaining 5% is sold only in the wine shop and to two restaurants in the village. Here, the emphasis is on quality thanks to the high standards demanded by a technician who oversees the entire vineyard.



▼ LA CAVE SAINT-ANDRÉ IN SEILLONS-SOURCE-D'ARGENS

Located in the heart of Seillons-Source-d'Argens, Cave Saint-André has 58 members spread across Aups, Barjols, Esparron-de-Pallières, Fox-Amphoux, Ollières, Pontevès, Saint-Julien-le-Montagnier, Vinon-sur-Verdon and, of course, Seillons-Source-d'Argens. This elevated terroir is in the northernmost part of the Coteaux Varois appellation area. A continental influence and the proximity of the Alpine foothills result in cold, harsh winters. This adds freshness and a wonderful acidity to the wines, which still retain a pleasant generosity that's typical of wines from the south. The entire vineyard is made up of small plots and boasts level 3 High Environmental Value certification. *"We offer our clients full traceability of our wines"*, emphasises Éric Lambert, chairman of the cooperative. And this year has brought a shower of medals! Gold and silver for many of the 2021 red and rosé wines in Coteaux Varois AOP and Var IGP.



► LE CELLIER DE LA SAINTE-BAUME IN SAINT-MAXIMIN-LA-SAINTE-BAUME

Located since 2012 on the outskirts of Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume, Cellier de la Sainte-Baume is the most modern wine cooperative in the Coteaux Varois appellation area. In its stainless steel vats holding up to 40,000 hectolitres, it produces 24,000 hectolitres of wine per year. Its sixty or so members are within a 15-kilometre radius around Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume. Some use traditional cultivation methods, others have adopted the 'high environmental value' (HVE) approach, while still others have transitioned to organic farming. Despite this disparity in cultivation techniques, they all strive to obtain the best wine possible. Hence, each batch is vinified under the chosen production method. The cooperative has also undertaken steps to obtain ISO 22000 certification specific to the agri-food sector.



◀ LES VIGNERONS DE LA SAINTE-BAUME IN ROUGIERS

A dynamic young chairman has just taken the helm at Les Vignerons de la Sainte-Baume, founded in 1912. Geoffroy Cottin proudly presents the wine cooperative which today has around sixty members: *"It's a small cooperative in production terms with an annual 12,000 hectolitres and a target of 15,000 in the near future. But it's also a cooperative that thinks big! It has won more awards than any other in Provence! It was initially created to produce a straightforward wine intended for local bauxite miners. Our members have kept this spirit alive. We produce simple, aromatic wines that reflect who we are."* Expertise, tradition and mo-

dernity are their watchwords. Renovation work is underway to allow them to increase production and further enhance the quality of the wine.

► LE CELLIER MARIUS CAÏUS IN POURRIÈRES

With 130 members, 900 hectares of grapevines and 50,000 hectolitres of annual wine production, Cellier Marius Caïus in Pourrières is one of the largest wine cooperatives in Var. *"We produce in volume, that's a given. But the quality is there too. Every year we win awards at agricultural fairs. This is recognition of an engaging job executed with enthusiasm"*, state the managers, not a little proud. As in most cooperatives of Var, rosé wines make up 95% of the production. *"But we sense a growing demand from consumers for white wines. Our winegrowers intend to adjust to this demand for the coming years."* A lovely easy-to-drink, low-priced range is available, but also more complex, well-rounded wines. In October 2021, the cooperative also began producing sparkling rosé and blanc de blancs wines made by the champagne method which, for the 2022 harvest, looks set to quickly evolve into the Provence method.





The Var Federation's selection of wine cooperatives in **DRACÉNE**

► LE CELLIER DES ARCHERS IN LES ARCS-SUR-ARGENS

Cellier des Archers in Les Arcs-sur-Argens produces a variety of wines ranging from the Méditerranée IGP to the Côtes de Provence AOP, including a rosé bearing the additional geographical designation Notre-Dame des Anges.

"With prices of between €5 and €9.20", states Julien Michel, the chairman. At the head of this cooperative with about sixty members, he has his heart set on enhancing the annual 12,000 hectolitre production.

"We have a number of terroirs with very different characteristics. To get the best out of them, we have established maps that help us to organise the grape harvest in sectors." To make these wines known to a wide audience, every Saturday Cellier des Archers organise a winegrowers' market outside the shop, as well as summer activities. For this summer of 2022, save two dates: Saturday 25th June for the Rockaïoli festival and Saturday 23rd July for the Soirée Arrosée event.



◄ LES VIGNERONS DE TARADEAU

Founded in 1924, the Vignerons de Taradeau wine cooperative has 34 members who cultivate 130 hectares across Taradeau, Lorgues and Les Arcs-sur-Argens. Its distinguishing feature is that red wines make up 42% of its total production. An exception in Var! "Our terroir is typically ideal for red wines. We offer reds of very good quality that age well", emphasises Vincent Galliano, the cooperative's chairman. The entire production of 6,700 hectolitres is sold directly in the two wine shops and in large and medium-sized retail outlets. We have one wine shop in Taradeau and another in Cogolin town centre. "It is a strategic marketing advantage to have an outlet in the highly touristic region of the Gulf of St. Tropez." Both shops have the same layout and include a fine-food section. "Besides wine, we sell local produce, craft beer, tapenade, olive oil and much more, including some exceptional products such as Japanese whisky. We have a product to appeal to every client."

► LE CELLIER DES 3 COLLINES IN FLAYOSC

Born of the merger of the cooperatives of Draguignan, Trans-en-Provence and Flayosc, Cellier des 3 collines produce approximately 8,000 hectolitres of wine each year. They are the result of the work of some fifty members who pick their grapes between late August and early September, as decided in

consultation with the cooperative's cellar master. 80 to 100 tonnes of grapes are harvested daily for vinification in barrels, oak casks or vats. Six to twelve months later, they become Côtes de Provence AOP and Var IGP wines. The wine cooperative also produces sparkling wines that appeal to a wide clientele who remain loyal to their wine shop in Flayosc. There they also find a multitude of local products such as foie gras from Var, cheese, eggs and olive oil.



▼ LA VIDAUBANAISE IN VIDAUBAN

Of the 25,000 hectolitres of wine produced at La Vidaubanaise, the wine cooperative of Vidauban, “*not a drop is sold on tap*”, states Max Alberto, who has been chairman for thirty years. “*All our wines are packaged, the equivalent of roughly two million bottles a year.*” Mostly Côtes de Provence AOP rosé wines,

of which nearly 60% are destined for the export market. “*This is good for our image and very rewarding for our members.*” For the last few years the members have been engaged in a High Environmental Value approach. “*Winegrowers have become aware of the need to protect the environment, more rapidly than I expected. 70% of our vineyards are now HVE3 certified, the highest level of certification for high environmental value.*” From the 2021 harvest, the Vidaubanaise wine shop proposes a new rosé wine matured in oak barrels, waiting to be tried in moderation.





The Var Federation's selection of wine cooperatives in the **SOUTHERN MAURES**

► LE CELLIER DE LA CRAU

Pooling resources is what cooperative work is all about. In La Crau, the cooperative's winegrower members have understood that since 1912. A few years after the cooperative's creation, during the war, they took this spirit of solidarity even further by allowing *"the wives of men who were not cooperative members to bring us their grape harvest"*, Renaud Pascal-Moussellard, manager of Cellier de La Crau tells us.

"Even today we are still seeing real commitment from our 85 members who all play a part in the running and development of this facility." A way of working that produces great results for the wines of this cooperative, with five medals in 2022 at the Paris 'Concours Général Agricole' (agricultural contest), three gold and two silver. Just reward for the work accomplished by the winegrowers on their 300 hectares of vines, by the staff of Cellier de La Crau and by the cellar master, Éric Terrieux.



◄ LA CAVE DES VIGNERONS LONDAIS IN LA LONDE-LES-MAURES

This year, Cave des Vignerons Londaïs, a real institution, is celebrating its one-hundredth vintage. *"It's an ageing landmark"*, says the manager, Éric Dusfourd, with a smile. But that doesn't stop it keeping up with the times and offering, besides wines of good quality, experiences that are highly appreciated by tourists. Here, Côtes de Provence AOP and Var IGP wines can be tasted at the property, *"a kind of wine centre thanks to our range of estate wines"*, but also during events and activities that attract lots of people every summer. *"We organise wine evenings and boat trips at dusk. For the latter we team up with the boat operator Les Bâteliers de la Côte d'Azur"*, says the manager. *"Participants enjoy our wines as they travel along the coast to Cap Bénat."* The boat trips are on Wednesdays in July and August.

► TERRA PROVINCIA IN CUERS AND PUGET-VILLE

Terra Provincia is the new name of the wine cooperatives of Cuers and Puget-Ville. They recently merged to unite under a shared identity but have kept the wine shops and wine-making facilities at both sites, to be “right where the vines are. To us this was essential, for our annual production of 60,000 hectolitres of wine, including 58,000 under the Côte de Provence AOP”, emphasises the managing director, Florian Lacroux. “We have 300 members whose vineyards are located mainly within the golden triangle between Cuers, Puget-Ville and Pierrefeu.” A terroir of gravelly, clay soils on which the grapes are picked very early, often as early as 20th August. They are harvested between 4 and 9 o’clock in the morning, to get the best out of the grapes and obtain high-quality wines. Among them, Quintessence, a Pierrefeu AOP wine made from selected vine plots, is a blend of mourvèdre and syrah for the red, and grenache and cinsault for the rosé.



▼ LE CAVEAU DEÏ BORMANI IN BORMES-LES-MIMOSAS

Founded in 1925, the wine cooperative of Bormes-les-Mimosas, Caveau deï Bormani, is one of the smallest in France. It has just ten members, who are united by a desire to shine a light on their terroir and their work. Their expertise adds to the value of the 70 hectares of vineyard where various grape varieties flourish, including

grenache, syrah, cinsault and rolle. In the winery, these are blended to make rosé, white and red wines, as well as a ‘gris’, that are sold directly at the property, by the bottle and, in some cases, on tap. Wines from Caveau deï Bormani, including two AOP ranges and two under the Maures IGP, are also served at some of Var’s restaurants.





The Var Federation's selection of wine cooperatives in
SOUTHERN VAR

► **LES VIGNERONS
DE LA PROVENCE VERTE
IN BRIGNOLES**

The Vignerons de la Provence Vertes wine cooperative was created in 2007 by the merging of the four cooperatives of Brignoles, Garéoult, Bras and Tavernes. Around 80 members contribute their grape harvest to produce an annual average of 26,000 hectolitres of wine. The busiest time of year is September, when a procession of tipper trucks carry the harvested grapes from a loading platform in each village to the cooperative in Brignoles. Sorted by grape variety, they are then transformed into a diverse range of wines. For several years they have been producing an oak-matured white wine from rolle and ugni blanc grapes, which appeals to many consumers. This wine can be purchased at any of the three wine shops, in Garéoult, Brignoles and Tavernes.



◄ **LE CELLIER DES TROIS PIGNES
IN PIGNANS**

The descendant of La Ruche and La Bourgade, two wine cooperatives founded in Pignans in the early 1900s, Cellier des Trois Pignes was created in the 1980s. A wine cooperative of about fifty members working on 200 hectares of vines. *"Over the last five years or so, we've been joined by many young people who are taking over their family vineyard"*, observes chairman Bernard Filisetti. *"They're picking up the torch and adding a refreshing touch of novelty and dynamism."* They are committing themselves for this terroir producing rosé wines that are *"very clear, with fruity notes and very pleasant to drink"*. 90% of these rosé wines benefit from the Côtes de Provence AOP and some carry the additional geographical denomination Notre-Dame des Anges. *"We're reaping the benefits of the quality of our work, in wines that express the typicality of the terroir"*, adds the chairman. *"All of this despite complications due to the late frosts of the last two years."*

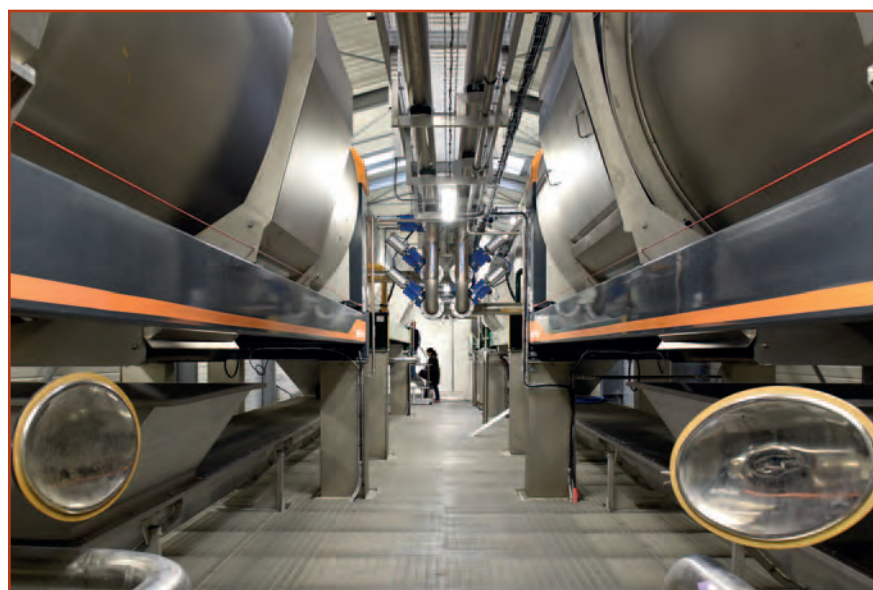
► LES MAÎTRES VIGNERONS DE GONFARON

Built in 1921 and inaugurated in 1922, the Maîtres Vignerons de Gonfaron wine cooperative is celebrating its 100th anniversary in style. They are marking the occasion with a new wine shop and a new commercial brand, Terres Ailées de Gonfaron. *“We wanted to refocus on our terroir, the local heritage, the notion of authenticity”,* explains Gérald Fons, the administrative and financial manager. *“The aim was to create an identity that reflects the spirit of the village and the commitment of the cooperative members.”* There are 125 of them, working with 580 hectares of vines, mostly grenache, cinsault, syrah and rolle. Here, the terroirs of Les Montauds, Les Schistes, Les Pélites and Les Terrasses de l'Aille come together, expressed in a range of wines with a fabulous variety of flavours. The wines come in red, white and rosé in Maures IGP and Côtes de Provence AOP with, in the latter case, Notre-Dame des Anges as an additional geographical denomination.



▼ LE COMPTOIR DES VINS DE FLASSANS IN FLASSANS-SUR-ISSELE

With 140 members cultivating 1,250 hectares of vines and an annual production potential of 65,000 hectolitres, Comptoir des Vins de Flassans is one of the largest wine cooperatives in Var. Created in 1912, it merged with the cooperative of Cabasse in 2005, then with that of Besse-sur-Issole in 2022. The latter had previously joined forces



with the wine cooperative of Saint-Anastasia-sur-Issole. *“Here, people have always managed to get along well when it comes to work. This is essential if we are to progress”,* thinks Laurent Rougon, chairman of the cooperative and also of the Var Federation of wine cooperatives. The result is an ultra-modern production facility that went into operation in 2021, following 3 years of study and 2 years of improvement work. The wines are made under the Côtes de Provence and Coteaux Varois en Provence AOPs and the Var IGP.

The Var Federation's selection of wine cooperatives in the CENTRE OF VAR

► LE HAMEAU DES VIGNERONS DE CARCÈS

Don't be fooled by appearances. From the outside, this cooperative in Carcès looks just as it did when it was created in 1910. But inside, it is almost completely different. *"We have a fabulous, very modern work facility"*, states Mathieu Combier, the wine cooperative's manager. *"We invest every year to maintain and update it, making adjustments in order to accommodate the technical aspect of the wines."* Here, a wonderful diversity of red and rosé wines have been produced for many years thanks to the different grape varieties and a climate that varies across the 540 hectares of cultivated vines, 95% of which are certified level 3 for high environmental value. As for the white wines, the cooperative has only recently found its 'identity' in this respect. *Our white wines had plenty of room for progress and we now produce some lively whites that we are very proud of as they are consistent with our terroirs."*



▼ LES CAVES DU COMMANDEUR IN MONTFORT-SUR-ARGENS

The name of this wine cooperative, Les Caves du Commandeur, is a nod to the Templar castle of Montfort-sur-Argens. It is showcased by an ultra-modern and beautifully decorated facility in Montfort-sur-Argens, built in 2013, a hundred years after the cooperative's creation. The wines produced here, Côtes de Provence AOP, Coteaux Varois en Provence AOP and Var IGP, are on sale at two other wine shops, in Brignoles and Salernes.

"We have a reputation for the quality of our wines", enthuses the cooperative's administrative and marketing manager, Pascal Fraychet.

Over the past few years, they have concentrated particularly on the white wines, continually striving to improve the range in which rosé wines take pride of place.

"We have the excellent facilities needed to make good rosé wines, for which it is vital that the temperature is strictly regulated throughout the process", he adds.



► LES VIGNERONS DE CORRENS

The Vignerons de Correns cooperative stands out from the crowd by making exclusively organic wines. This has been the case for a number of years now. *"We try to be as mindful of the environment as we can",* explains Julien Demonchaux, technical manager of this wine cooperative in Correns. *"Our vineyard is even certified for the biodynamic methods used here. In concrete terms, this means we implement virtuous practices, such as aligning our work with nature's cycles or using compost rather than organic fertilizers."* Another distinguishing fact is that the 50 members produce a higher percentage of red and white wines than average for Var. 20% of the 8,000 to 10,000 hectolitres of wine produced each year are reds. White wines account for another 20%. For the latter, the range has just been enhanced with a new wine named Lune Blanche, produced under the Var Correns IGP, a new regional designation introduced in 2021.



▼ LES VIGNERONS DE COTIGNAC

On clay and limestone soils, the cooperative's 50 members cultivate mainly cinsault and grenache vines. *"The terroir here is ideal for red wines",* specifies Richard Bellon, chairman of Vignerons de Cotignac. *"In its beginnings, the wine cooperative was particularly reputed for its red wines. People came from miles away to buy their red wine here."* Since then, as in most of Var's wine production, the percentage of rosé wines has overtaken by far.

The wine cooperative's staff remain determined to continue improving their wines to meet the demands of consumers. 20% of the production is sold directly at the property where you can also find a few of Var's specialities and the olive oil that's also produced here. What's special about this cooperative is that it brings winegrowers and olive farmers together. ■



THE PERFUMER

of Seillans



Created at the end of the 19th century, the perfume factory Les Parfumeries de Seillans completely changed the course of the village's history. Since the very start, its perfumes, essences and scented creams have been hugely successful, enabling the people of Seillans to save their village.

Perfume and the history of Seillans go hand in hand. In the 19th century, the marquessa de Rostaing, viscountess Savigny de Montcorps, was behind the opening of Les Parfumeries de Seillans. This prosperous industry closed down in 2010. Even today, the villagers still call her simply by her first name: Jeanne. That's how much affection they felt for her. It was thanks to her second husband, the marquis Henri Charles de Rostaing, that she first visited Seillans, a beautiful

perched village in Var. Indeed, the De Rostaing family owned the estate of Château de Neïsson. Soon after, she went to live there. She loved the pleasant way of life, far from the hustle and bustle of the city. She enjoyed spending quiet moments surrounded by fields. At the time, the region's economic activity was in crisis. The grapevines on which the village had built its wealth had been ravaged by phylloxera. Two other pillars of the local economy, olive trees and silkworms, had also been destroyed, the former by sharp frosts, the latter by pepper disease. Her enterprising spirit and her desire to help others led her to contribute to the village's recovery. In 1881, she decided to start growing flowers following advice from her friend, Alphonse Karr. She was indeed quite a socialite. Besides Alphonse Karr, she had amicable relationships with many other personalities including the likes of Jean Aicard, Guy de Maupassant and even Queen Victoria of England and Princess Clementine of Belgium! She received these prestigious guests on a regular basis, either in Seillans at the Château du Neïsson estate, or in her holiday residence in Saint-Raphaël.

"An immense effort got underway", explain Elisabeth Ducharlet and Jean-Michel Moutard, who have both carried out research on this exceptional woman and, in 2013, produced an exhibition on the subject in



Seillans. *"Seven hectares of the estate were completely cleared. Olive trees were cut down, tree stumps and shrubs removed. The land was tilled to a depth of one and a half metres."* Jeanne de Rostaing employed staff and had an ingenious irrigation system installed which, deemed a reference in its field, was awarded a prize by the Ministry of Agriculture. *"The land was ready, water was available, and Jeanne ordered her overseer, Henri Achard, to proceed with planting"*, the two specialists add. And so in 1882, some 140,000 jasmine plants, 45,000 violet clumps and 10,000 rose bushes were planted, along with geraniums, lavenders, irises and mint. At the same time, the viscountess visited the best factories, such as those in Grasse, where she met with qualified engineers and placed orders for the latest equipment. The first flower harvest was sold in 1883 to a certain Chiris, a perfumer in Grasse. From the second harvest, a decision was made to

handle not only the cultivation and harvest, but also the processing of the flowers. The factory Les Parfumeries de Seillans was born. Here, a whole range of products was developed by the Parfumerie de Seillans: eau de toilette, scented skin cream, soap, rice powder, etc.

An instant success, highly appreciated by the female clientele. The perfumery also specialised in processing raw materials into essences for leading perfumers, firstly Guerlain, then Chanel and Dior. To boost the growth of her company, the viscountess elaborated an innovative commercial strategy that relied on deliveries by the railway, universal exhibitions, advertising and the export market. Thus, in 1900, she expanded the factory to keep up with the renewed success. That same year, she won the 'Croix de Chevalier du Mérite' agricultural prize, then the 'Croix d'Officier du Mérite' award on 31st March 1905 and finally the 'Croix de Commandeur' on 10th December 1912. She also obtained medals at a host of international events including exhibitions in Liège, Milan, Vienna, Brussels and Paris.

The perfumery's creation and prosperity had an impact on Seillans, especially when electricity arrived in the village. In the early 20th century, the mayor decided to establish an electric power plant that would be fed by the river Neïsson, the perfumery's water source. The viscountess formally opposed the project. In 1902, an agreement was signed between the marquis and marquessa de Rostaing and the town council by which the couple would provide Seillans with free lighting for 25 years in return for the village refraining from using the river.



Jeanne de Rostaing was certainly an enterprising lady, but she was undeniably audacious and adventurous too. She was the first woman in Var to take a driving test. In her Renault nicknamed *L'Intrépide*, she left to explore the entire country. She was also a generous woman who reached out to other people. When the Great War broke out in August 1914, she simply decided to convert her factory into a war hospital. She installed an ambulance and a small, pop-up military hospital within the premises of Les Parfumeries de Seillans, and had it fitted to take care of the fifty soldiers who were treated there over a period of eighteen months. Her husband, René de Savigny, died on 6th October 1915. She could no longer afford to keep her ambulance. So she became a nursing major and, until 1919, worked at the Boulouris auxiliary military hospital in Saint-Raphaël. Her altruistic attitude and commitment to her country won her the Medal of the Nation's Gratitude in 1921. All the same, she never received compensation from the State for



her hospital. The viscountess found herself in financial ruin. During the conflict, the perfumery machinery was left outside to rust. At the age of 70, she had neither the financial means nor the energy required to restart her activity. So she decided to sell Les Parfumeries de Seillans to her friend, Eugène Feigel. For an income, she engaged her land and two homes in life annuity sales. She devoted the rest of her life to looking

after others, helping Seillan's villagers, veterans and war widows. She died on 12th December 1932.

From the 1930s, the perfumery met with renewed success when it was taken over by Chauvet, then later by Firmenich. It remained in business until 23rd July 2010. Today, above the village, the remains of the buildings of Les Parfumeries de Seillans are still visible. They are a powerful reminder of a glorious past once in full bloom. ■



To find out more about the life of this amazing woman, we recommend a book written by Elisabeth Ducharlet and Jean-Michel Moutard, *Une vie de parfumeuse* (life of a perfumer), on sale at tourist offices of the Fayence region. €18.

The book is based on a photograph collection found by Elisabeth Ducharlet, and on research conducted by Jean-Michel Moutard.

Our thanks go to Elisabeth Ducharlet for the photographs that accompany this article.

FACETS OF VAR

ADVENTURE LOG
The coastal path
from Ramatuelle
to Saint-Raphaël
P. 92 - 105

ESCAPE
Southern beach
in Port-Cros
P. 106 - 107

NATURAL AND FRAGILE
From Le Jabron to
Le Verdon in Trigance
P. 108 - 110

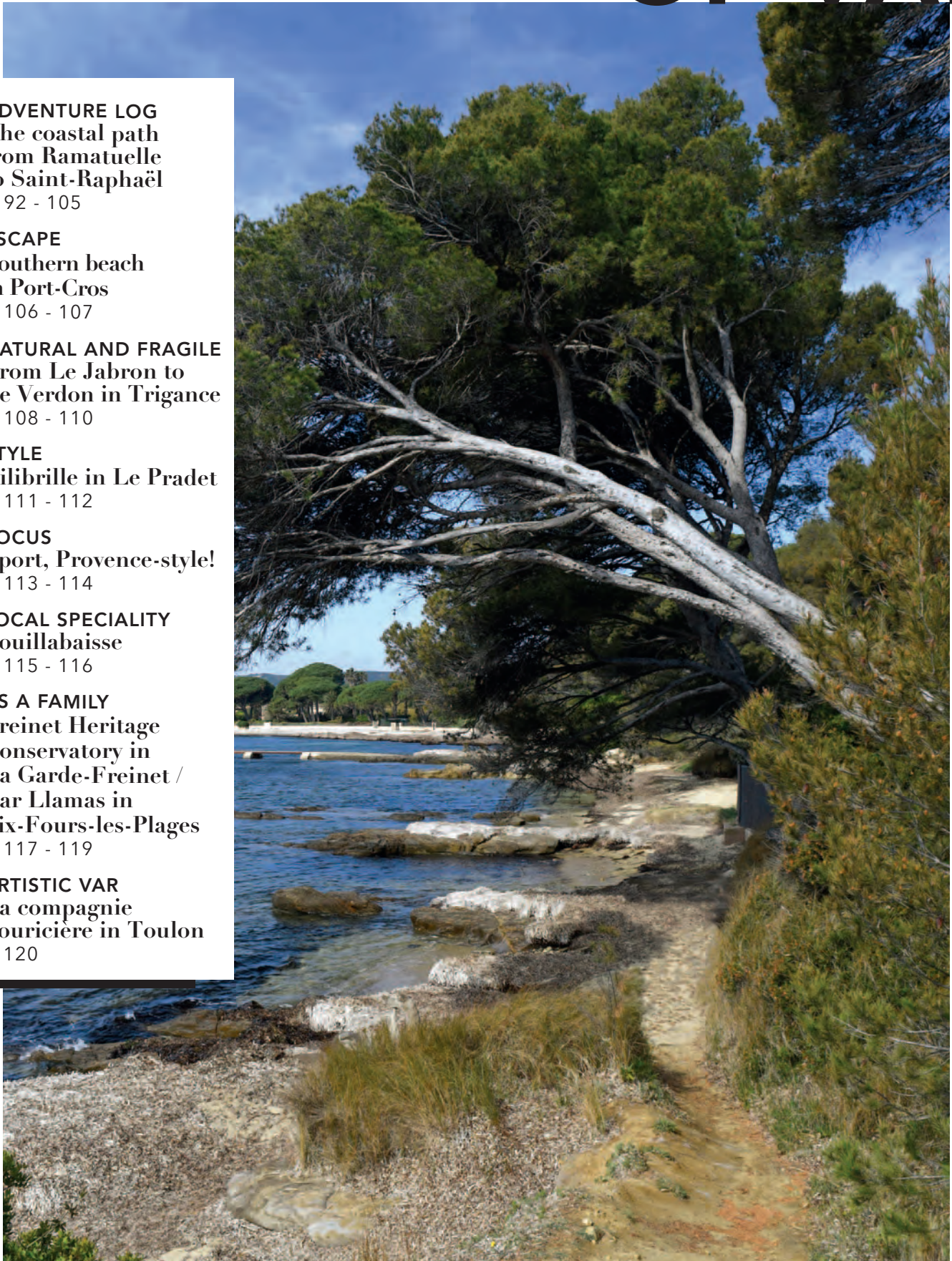
STYLE
Lilibrille in Le Pradet
P. 111 - 112

FOCUS
Sport, Provence-style!
P. 113 - 114

LOCAL SPECIALITY
Bouillabaisse
P. 115 - 116

AS A FAMILY
Freinet Heritage
Conservatory in
La Garde-Freinet /
Var Llamas in
Six-Fours-les-Plages
P. 117 - 119

ARTISTIC VAR
La compagnie
Souricière in Toulon
P. 120



FROM RAMATUELLE

Exploring the seafront along the coastal path is without doubt a sporting challenge, but also a unique adventure. Le Var magazine invites you to try this experience on sections that can be covered in a day or split into two parts, an ideal solution for families. As a follow-up to our adventure logs of summer 2017, Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer to Saint-Mandrier, summer 2019, Toulon to La Londe-les-Maures, and summer 2021, La Londe-les-Maures to Ramatuelle, this edition rounds off your exploration by guiding you from Ramatuelle to Saint-Raphaël.

Created under the First Empire, the coastal path follows the old customs trail, once used to foil smugglers and keep watch over the coastline. Nowadays, it is the haunt of hikers and power walkers. The 190-km trail unfurls between Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer and Saint-Raphaël. The coastal path is very exposed to weather damage and requires special attention every year. To carry out the maintenance work, the Conseil Départemental du Var offers financial support to the local council authorities who have seized upon this competence through an agreement with the State. From Ramatuelle to Saint-Raphaël, this Adventure Log guides you for 33 kilometres along a waymarked trail. For those who wish to split the trip into several days, Le Var has put together a selection of organised activities close to the itinerary. From sports activities to guided tours, each section of the itinerary is different. But walking in a natural environment requires you to observe a few safety rules. To find out what they are and obtain information about the state of repair of the coastal path or bad weather conditions that may mean access is prohibited, we strongly recommend that you ask at the local tourist offices (cf. Page 105).

TO SAINT-RAPHAËL

via the coastal path





FROM RAMATUELLE TO SAINT-RAPHAËL



THE COASTAL PATH

From Tahiti beach to the port of St. Tropez

Duration: 3½ hours **Distance:** 11.5 km

Level: easy **Waymarkers:** yellow

Starting point: Tahiti beach car park

End point: port of St. Tropez

THE ITINERARY

Your walk begins at the north end of Pampelonne bay, at Tahiti beach, and continues to Cap Pinet which marks the boundary between Ramatuelle and St. Tropez.

Along the way, on both sides of the cape, you'll come across some lovely sandy beaches. Continuing towards Pointe Capon, the path becomes slightly more challenging as you cross some rocky sections.

A track follows the coast and leads to the beautiful sandy beach of Les Salins. The walk continues to the cape of St. Tropez. Towards the beach of Les Canebiers, the shore is dotted with natural little rock pools. This is the rockiest part of the trail. You'll walk past some beautiful properties and even cross a private port. You'll reach Les Canebiers beach where there's a watersports centre. Here, you can rejoin the road to take a bus back to your starting point. Alternatively, head for the village. The path narrows and passes close to the villas. There are lots of places with steps leading down to the sea.

Les Graniers beach is the last beach before you reach St. Tropez. From a distance you can see the seaside cemetery and, above it, the citadel. If you prefer, you can take the path in the opposite direction, starting here and walking to Tahiti beach.



▲ THE FISH MARKET

Daily from 8am to 1pm, this is the place to go for good fresh fish. At St. Tropez fish market on Place aux Herbes, just behind the Tourist Office, you'll find local fishermen selling sea bream, sea bass, red mullet, scorpion fish, moray eels, octopus, spider crab and much more, all straight from the catch.

► STROLLING IN THE NARROW STREETS OF ST. TROPEZ

St. Tropez is also a great place to get lost in the town centre, where some magnificent heritage features await you. Explore the colourful squares and alleys to admire typical Provençal sites like Place des Lices, the authentic fishing port, the district of La Ponche, the Notre-Dame de l'Assomption parish church and its famous steeple built in 1634, the Vasserot washhouse and the Portalet, Vielle, Jarlier and Suffrenqui towers that surround the town.



► THE CITADEL OF ST. TROPEZ

A guaranteed leap back in time when you visit the citadel of St. Tropez and its maritime history museum. Since the 17th century, the citadel has towered above the town where, for centuries, it was the most important military building between Antibes and Toulon. Nowadays, a modern museum devoted to local maritime history occupies the keep. *“Because St. Tropez is proud of its rich seafaring past. In the 18th century, St. Tropez was the third biggest Mediterranean port after Marseille and La Ciotat”,* the museum managers emphasise. It opened in 2013 and showcases the daily lives of the men and women who, century after century, shaped the St. Tropez that we know today. It is one of the most visited cultural sites in Var, with an average 100,000 visitors per year.

Open daily from 10am to 6.30pm.

Admission €4 - free for children under the age of 12.



◀ THE SEASIDE CEMETERY OF ST. TROPEZ, A MUST-SEE

A place for remembrance, the seaside cemetery of St. Tropez can be found at the very end of the coastal path, overlooking the sea. It really is worth the effort, if only for the stunning view over the entire Gulf of St. Tropez. Since 1791, this has been the final resting place of the great families of St. Tropez, but also modest villagers, a few world-war heroes, various personalities and certain artists.

Among those buried



here are Pierre Bachelet, Eddie Barclay, Roger Vadim, Paul Signac and André Dunoyer de Segonzac. Some of the graves have surprising decorative features, others impress by their enormous size. The cemetery is very well kept and festooned with flowers. It has become a must-see for anyone visiting St. Tropez.



▲ PADDLEBOARDING, CATAMARAN SAILING, WINDSURFING, KAYAKING, ETC.

There's plenty of choice at St. Tropez Yacht Club. Located on Les Canebiers beach, the watersports centre proposes all sorts of activities during the summer season, including group and one-to-one lessons, intensive courses and summer camp activities. Whatever your level, from novice to expert, you can try different solutions, such as optimist sailing from the age of 6 years, dinghy or catamaran sailing, windsurfing or stand-up paddleboarding, as well as other new watersports that offer a whole new experience. With a windsurf foil, wing foil, catamaran foil or e-foil, you can enjoy the sensations of boardsports and flying rolled into one! The foil enables the board or boat to travel at high speed above the surface of the water. The club also organises educational excursions on the theme of environmental awareness and the marine habitat, with snorkel and fins or a subblue, a small underwater scooter.

Prices start at €20 per hour for a paddleboard or kayak, €15 for a windsurf board.

One-to-one lessons: €90 to €135 per hour for sailing, €130 to €200 for foiling.

An introductory 3-hour foiling package is available for €300.

Tel.: +33 4 94 97 12 58



ALSO WORTH A VISIT

The Département du Var created the Contemporary Architecture Coastal Trail to take you visiting local architectural sites of the 20th and 21st century, such as Le Latitude 43, a grand old hotel built by Georges-Henri Pingusson in 1932.

At the time, this avant-garde building was the biggest ever to be constructed in reinforced concrete. Added to the Historical Monuments list in 1992, it is open to the public on European Heritage Days, when visitors have access to the passageways. With the ArchXXL digital app, you can learn more about this unique building.

Scan the QR code to download it (cf. Article on Page 61).

▼ A LITTLE DETOUR TO VISIT THE MOST FAMOUS POLICE STATION IN FRANCE

France's most famous police station has become a museum! In St. Tropez, the 'Gendarmerie' and Cinema Museum invites you to visit the building that housed the local police force from 1879 to 2003. The site of course gives pride of place to 'The Troops of St. Tropez' and other films of the 'Gendarmes' series, and pays homage to Louis de Funès, Michel Galabru and other actors who starred in them. But it also shines a light on the importance of cinema in this town that exists somewhere between myth and reality. This lively museum tour is full of fun, interactive features cleverly laid out across three floors displaying over 3,000 items, photos, posters, models and much more. **Open daily from 10am to 6pm (7pm from 13th July to 1st September)** admission from €3 to €5 - free for children under the age of 12 years.



► GO ONE STEP FURTHER TO VISIT GASSIN

From Les Marines de Gassin, take the Sentier de la Mer, a footpath that leads you to the heart of the medieval village of Gassin, officially one of the most beautiful villages in France. This 4.8-km walk offers beautiful views over the Gulf of St. Tropez. It follows a lovely airy track under the shade of the pines and amid broom, oleander and other typical Mediterranean vegetation. Once in Gassin, head for the viewpoint indicator to admire a panorama that will take your breath away. You can then walk back the way you came.

Back at Les Marines de Gassin, why not go further along the road, Route du Bourrian, to visit a traditional jam factory and shop, La Maison des Confitures? Here you'll find over 450 different jams. Ranging from the most traditional

(strawberry, apricot, raspberry or quince) to more unusual jams (melon and vanilla, mojito, fennel and aniseed, champagne, coconut and ginger, etc.), they are all made by traditional methods by Virginie and Patrice Bonnant. The couple also sell various jellies and preserves.

**Open from Monday to Saturday
9.30am to 8pm.**

Prices start at €7 for a 250g jar.





FROM ROQUEBRUNE-SUR-ARGENS TO FRÉJUS



THE COASTAL PATH

From San Peïre beach to the port of Saint-Aygulf

Duration: 3½ hours

Distance: 11 km

Level: easy to moderate.

Waymarkers: yellow

Starting point: Arpillon car park

Starting and end point: car park at the port of Saint-Aygulf

THE ITINERARY

This part of the coastal path can be reached by heading for Saint-Raphaël from San Peïre beach. On reaching the seashore, you'll follow the itinerary between beaches and coves, sometimes on sand, sometimes through rocks where the path can be slippery in places. Steps have been installed to make it easier to negotiate certain sections. In some places you'll have to follow a section of road as parts of the trail are inaccessible. You'll pass Pointe des Issambres and Pointe de la Calle. Afterwards, the path is fairly easy and practically flat. It leads you into many more coves, then continues to Saint-Aygulf port and Pointe de Saint-Aygulf. Along its entire length, this hike is dotted with pleasant picnic spots in the shade of parasol pines.

▲ FUN IN THE WATER!

Here, on the multiple beaches located along the coastal path, there's no shortage of opportunities to enjoy the water! There's something for everyone, including paddleboards, snorkelling, flyboards, jet-skis, pedalos and tubing! And each year, the many activity providers find something totally different to propose. Enough to keep adrenalin addicts and sports fans happy, as well as the children. And to explore the hidden coves of this part of the coastline, head for the port of Les Issambres to rent out a boat for up to four people (no permit required). The boat rental company, Water Glisse Passion, also organises fishing, snorkelling and sunset drinks packages. Those who fancy observing the seabed instead can try their first diving session. Organised by Les Issambres diving centre, this activity can be enjoyed alone or with family or friends, for the brand-new and thrilling experience of observing the marine wildlife that inhabits the beautiful diving sites.

Fees apply for these activities. Enquire about prices directly with the activity providers. More details on esterel-cotedazur.com



◀ THE GALLO-ROMAN FISH RESERVOIR: A UNIQUE HERITAGE FEATURE

This part of the coastal path offers you a chance to admire a heritage gem, the Gallo-Roman fish reservoir of Les Issambres, in Roquebrune-sur-Argens. You'll find it right on your path, in a small, natural bay at Pointe de la Calle, south of Port Ferréol. This magnificently well-preserved structure has been a listed Historical Monument since 1939. Comprising three pools carved and built into the rocks, it sheds light on how the Romans, who loved seafood, caught their fish and kept it alive until it was eaten. They installed sluice gates which allowed them to renew the water held in these fish-trap reservoirs. The structure was probably associated with the Gallo-Roman villa dating from the 1st to the 3rd century AD, located nearby in the bay of La Gaillarde.



◀ ARÉCA PARK

Between Fréjus town centre and the sea, the Aréca park is well worth stopping to visit. Spread across 2.6 hectares, this sensitive natural area belonging to the Département du Var appeals for several reasons. It is a wonderful playground for children with its swings, slides and numerous other installations.

Above all, it is also a remarkable

landscaped park right in the town.

Here, ancient trees and exotic plants rub shoulders with the specific vegetation of the Mediterranean coast, including palm trees, oaks, pines and of course the winter-flowering mimosa. Many species of palm can also be admired here, such as phoenix canariensis, trachycarpus fortunei, brahea armata and washingtonia filifera.



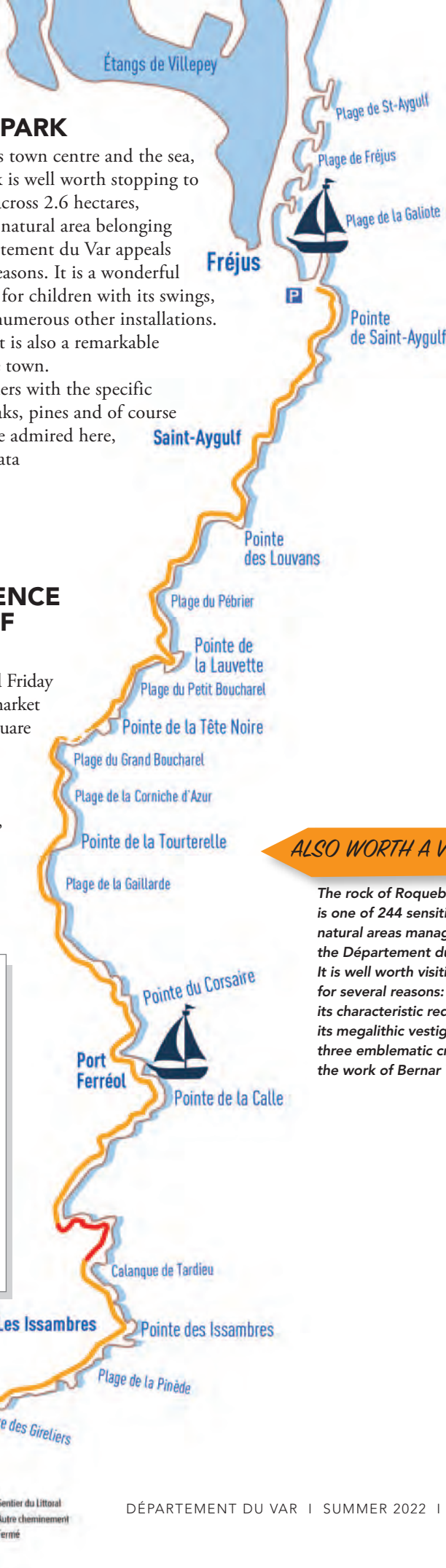
◀ FOODIE EXPERIENCE AT SAINT-AYGULF MARKET

All year round, on Tuesday and Friday mornings, a typical Provence market livens up Place de la Poste, a square in the Saint-Aygulf district. Fruit and vegetables, fish and Mediterranean specialties can be found alongside flowers, toys and clothing.

We love strolling in the market

aisles, tasting delicious local products and treating ourselves to one or two souvenirs of Var.

Tardieu cove



ALSO WORTH A VISIT

The rock of Roquebrune is one of 244 sensitive natural areas managed by the Département du Var. It is well worth visiting, for several reasons: its characteristic red colour, its megalithic vestiges and three emblematic crosses, the work of Bernar Venet.



◀ THE VILLEPEY LAGOONS

In Fréjus, freshwater mingles with seawater in the lagoons of Villepey, truly unique in more ways than one. This is one of the rare coastal wetlands of Var. Owned by the Conservatoire du Littoral (French coastal protection agency), this 272-hectare site, of which 61 hectares are permanently submerged, has been equipped to accommodate visitors. It comprises three distinct zones - dunes to the south between the lagoons and the sea, a wetland area, and a fairly wooded transitional landscape between the lagoons and the plain. This patchwork of habitats teems with remarkable bio-

diversity, especially in terms of bird life with over 220 species recorded. You may also come across reptiles, amphibians, fish and small mammals, and spot the precious plant species that are protected here. A number of observation hides, such as the lagoon observation tower have been installed, as well as various bridges, wooden walkways and information panels to guide visitors and help them appreciate, without disturbing, the wealth of fauna to be found here. An easy trail, ideal for a family walk, takes you around the lagoons in just over 2 hours.

▼ FOR MOUNTAIN BIKE FANS

There are some lovely mountain bike trails to be explore above Saint-Aygulf. Several loop itineraries take you near La Gaillarde woods and the François Léotard outdoor activities centre. These routes offer a wide variety of terrain, between roads, forest trails and single-track paths. You'll find mountain bike rental outlets at Les Issambres port and in Saint-Aygulf. For the less sporty, E-bikes are also available for rent. Enquire about prices directly with the bike rental providers. **More details on esterel-cotedazur.com**



► HEAD UPHILL FOR A REFRESHING BREAK AT POINTE DES SARDINAUX IN SAINTE-MAXIME

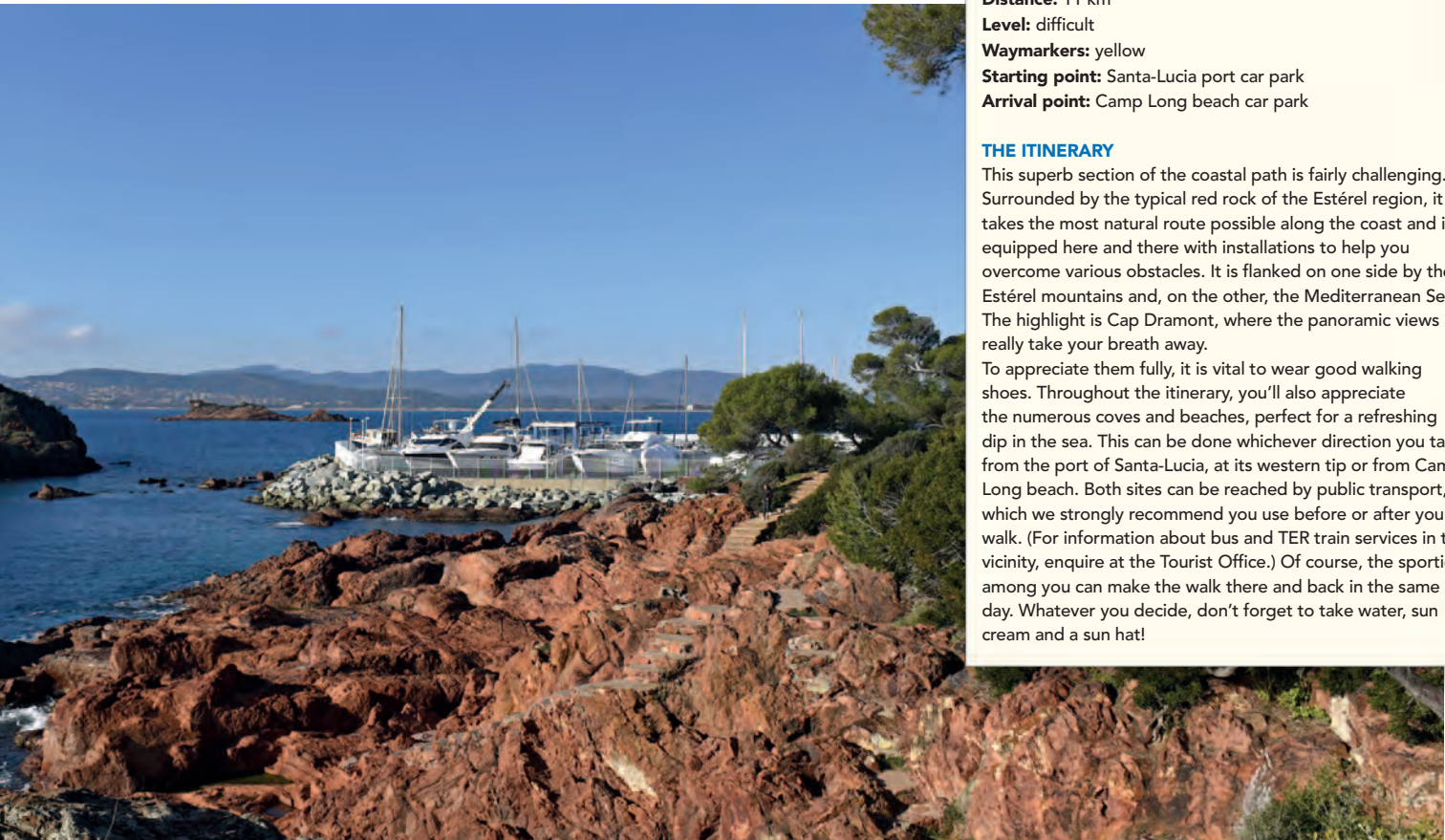
In Sainte-Maxime, a natural, wild peninsula called Pointe des Sardinaux, that the locals have nicknamed 'Little Corsica', is definitely worth a visit. Beyond its sheer beauty, this sensitive natural area managed by the Département du Var is packed with gems and curiosities. Halophytes typically found on the coast, such as sea spurge, rock samphire, silver ragwort and silverbush, grow here alongside other species sculpted by the wind, like lentisk, Mediterranean buckthorn and the common myrtle. The site boasts two small beaches, one facing north-east, near an old bunker dating from World War Two, the other at the south-western tip. These are covered by varying quantities of tide wrack, evidence of the flourishing marine life on these shores. Diving and snorkelling enthusiasts will have no difficulty exploring the abundant diversity amid the rocks. All of the Mediterranean's shallow seabed habitats are represented here, in an alternation of rocks, photophile algae and posidonia seagrass. Rarer still, fan mussels can also be seen here.

© Adobe Stock





SAINT-RAPHAËL FROM WEST TO EAST



THE COASTAL PATH

From the port of Santa-Lucia to the beach of Camp Long

Duration: 4 h 30

Distance: 11 km

Level: difficult

Waymarkers: yellow

Starting point: Santa-Lucia port car park

Arrival point: Camp Long beach car park

THE ITINERARY

This superb section of the coastal path is fairly challenging. Surrounded by the typical red rock of the Estérel region, it takes the most natural route possible along the coast and is equipped here and there with installations to help you overcome various obstacles. It is flanked on one side by the Estérel mountains and, on the other, the Mediterranean Sea. The highlight is Cap Dramont, where the panoramic views really take your breath away.

To appreciate them fully, it is vital to wear good walking shoes. Throughout the itinerary, you'll also appreciate the numerous coves and beaches, perfect for a refreshing dip in the sea. This can be done whichever direction you take from the port of Santa-Lucia, at its western tip or from Camp Long beach. Both sites can be reached by public transport, which we strongly recommend you use before or after your walk. (For information about bus and TER train services in the vicinity, enquire at the Tourist Office.) Of course, the sportier among you can make the walk there and back in the same day. Whatever you decide, don't forget to take water, sun cream and a sun hat!

▲ THE PORT OF SANTA-LUCIA

With its bars and restaurants along two kilometres of quayside packed with shops, Santa-Lucia port is a great place to unwind, before or after your walk along the coastal path.

▼ AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMMERSION IN THE PAST

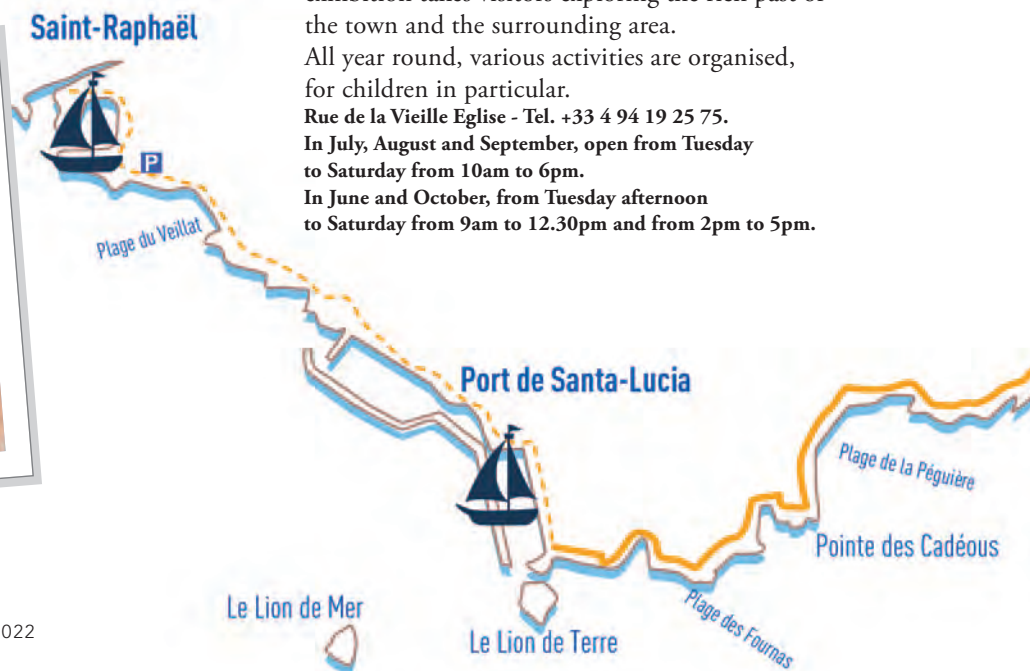
Installed in the presbytery of a Romanesque church, right in the heart of the old town, the archaeology museum of Saint-Raphaël is well worth a visit! Marine archaeology objects dating from Prehistory or the Middle Ages can be seen in the collections here, and a permanent exhibition takes visitors exploring the rich past of the town and the surrounding area.

All year round, various activities are organised, for children in particular.

Rue de la Vieille Eglise - Tel. +33 4 94 19 25 75.

In July, August and September, open from Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm.

In June and October, from Tuesday afternoon to Saturday from 9am to 12.30pm and from 2pm to 5pm.



► BELLE ÉPOQUE VILLAS

In the second half of the 19th century, Saint-Raphaël underwent radical change. As the village was connected to the railway network, the development of winter tourism attracted manufacturers, artists, business men and aristocrats, all keen to build their sumptuous villas that would serve as both holiday homes and reception venues. Between 1864 and 1914, more than 200 Belle Epoque villas were built as the town was transformed by major development works to improve the infrastructures and access roads. Most of these buildings are of neo-classical or Palladian style, but some feature Anglo-Norman or Victorian architecture. They are revealed by various itineraries.

Further details on saint-raphael.com



► THE TREASURE OF LE DRAMONT

Heading off from the port of Le Poussai, a picturesque marina at the foot of the Dramont district, will you be able to find the hidden treasure of Dramont? Ideal for children aged 6 years and up, this treasure hunt is an amusing walk on Cap Dramont, where the typical red rock of Estérel, called rhyolite, mingles with a rarer, blue rock known as esterellite. Armed with a map and accompanied by adults, their step-by-step mission is to search for clues and solve riddles all the way to the semaphore treasure.

Further details and bookings on experiencecotedazur.com



© Estérel Côte d'Azur Tourisme





▲ THE LANDINGS BEACH: STOP FOR A VIEW OF ÎLE D'OR

It was here on this vast stony beach that 20,000 American troops of the 36th Infantry Division from Texas landed on 15th August 1944. On the remembrance esplanade, at the entrance to the beach, a landing craft and a memorial stone pay tribute to the soldiers and remind us of this important historic date. This and nine other sites link up to form the remembrance path of the town of Saint-Raphaël. Closer to the sea, visitors can enjoy a picnic with family or friends on the vast pebbly beach. Children love swimming and snorkelling here, which makes it the ideal place for a refreshing break as you explore along the coastal path. Also, from the beach, you can admire Île d'Or, that enigmatic private island with the Saracen-style tower. It is said to be the tower that inspired Hergé, creator of Tintin, for his comic book named The Black Island.

► MIMOSA DELIGHTS

In summer, you won't see any mimosa in bloom but you can enjoy eating it! In Agay, chocolate-maker Didier Carrié has created a white-chocolate truffle flavoured with plant liqueur and lemon, rolled in crystallised mimosa powder and named Mimosa d'Agay.

These chocolatey delights looking just like mimosa flowers are made on the premises of the chocolate shop, Le Palet d'or.

Le Palet d'or chocolate shop,
170 rue de l' Agay in Agay
Saint-Raphaël.
Tel. +33 4 94 82 00 88



► MARKETS FOR LOCAL PRODUCTS AND SOUVENIRS

Before your walk along the coastal path, why not stop at one of the local markets in Saint-Raphaël to buy food with a local flavour for your picnic? All year round, daily from 7am to 1pm, a fish market is held on Place Kennedy.

Markets full of local produce, seasonal fruit and vegetables can also be found throughout the year, every Monday morning on Esplanade Saint-Jean in the Boulouris district, and on Wednesday mornings in Agay, on Place Gianetti. In July and August, a night market

is set up every Saturday and Sunday at 7.30pm on Boulevard de la Plage in Agay. There you'll find jewellery, craft items, soaps and much more.

► THE LOUIS DE FUNÈS MUSEUM

In Saint-Raphaël, accessories, video clips, drawings, costumes and all sorts of other items are on display in the Louis de Funès Museum, truly an Aladdin's cave for fans of this actor who passed away in 1983. Spread across nearly 400 m², over 350 pieces can be seen on a chronological tour that plunges visitors into the life and times of Louis de Funès. It unveils rare archives from the French national audiovisual institute (INA), including his first screen appearances, scripts with handwritten notes by the actor himself, letters, family photographs, a huge number of posters and all sorts of accessories, like the hat from Rabbi Jacob, the purse from The Miser, the wig from The Great Stroll, and a reconstitution of a Citroën 2CV.

Further details on +33 4 98 11 25 80 or at museedefunes.fr - Full admission price: €6 - Free for the under 18s. Until 30th June, open from Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm and Sundays from 10am to 12 noon and from 2pm to 5pm. From 1st July to 31st August, daily from 10am to 7pm (until 9pm on Thursdays). From 1st to 30th September, Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm and Sunday from 10am to 12 noon and from 2pm to 5pm.



WELL-INFORMED WALKING

Before your walk along the coastal path, to find out about accessibility or to book any of the suggested activities, pop into one of the region's tourist offices. An essential step in this Adventure Log!

► Ramatuelle

Place de l'Ormeau,
tel. +33 4 98 12 64 00
ramatuelle-tourisme.com

► Saint-Tropez

8, quai Jean Jaurès,
tel. +33 4 94 97 45 21
sainttropeztourisme.com

► Gassin

20, place Léon Martel,
tel. +33 4 98 11 56 51
gassin.eu

► Roquebrune-sur-Argens

La Gallery, ZA des Garillans
2540 RD, N7
tel. + 33 4 94 19 89 89
roquebrunesurargens-tourisme.fr

► Fréjus

249 rue Jean Jaurès
tel. +33 4 94 51 83 83 - frejus.fr

► Saint-Raphaël

place Charles Giannetti
tel. + 33 4 94 19 52 52
saint-raphael.com

► Or visit

visitgolfe.com
esterel-cotedazur.com



© Estérel Côte d'Azur Tourisme

▲ ADRENALIN GUARANTEED!

Via cordata is an all-natural trail somewhere between via ferrata and rock climbing. You'll follow and climb up a rope high above the sea, properly equipped with the appropriate safety gear. This is certain to get the adrenalin flowing, as the trail alternates sections through the rock and vertical faces. Further details and bookings on experiencecotedazur.com



Southern beach IN PORT-CROS

Located in a little bay just thirty minutes away from Port-Cros village, the south beach is one of the island's gems. The combination of virtually transparent water, fine sun-bleached sand and magnificent views offers swimmers a heavenly place to unwind.

Here in the heart of Port-Cros National Park, like everywhere else on the island, the seabed is protected. Cars and bikes are prohibited from this sanctuary, so to get to the south beach you'll have to travel on foot, via a dedicated footpath that can be rather steep in places. It is vital to carry water and wear comfortable walking shoes if you want to make it to the beach, then relax and enjoy.

In summer, you can reach Port-Cros by ferry or taxi boat. A number of boat companies make the crossing to the island from many different places in Var. The trip takes between 35 minutes and 1 hour. An island shuttle service is also available from Porquerolles (45 minutes) and Le Levant (1 hour).



TRIGANCE

FROM THE JABRON TO THE VERDON

*Exploring along
the river*

In the heart of the Haute-Provence National Geological Nature Reserve, the sensitive natural areas of La Fontaine, Pont du Sautet and Les Salaous are inter-connected by a hiking trail. This offers a pleasant walk along the banks of the river Jabron, via the village of Trigance, to the entrance to the Verdon gorges, revealing the wealth of heritage features and environmental gems of these Département du Var sites.

At the entrance to Trigance, a medieval village of upper Var, is where you'll find the sensitive natural area of La Fontaine. Managed by the Département du Var, this pleasant spot for the many families and hikers who come here for a rest or to share a picnic at the tables provided, boasts a remarkable biodiversity. Over a surface area of 8.2 hectares, it features three types of natural habitat: a hay meadow, where bees, ladybirds, butterflies and all sorts of insects take refuge; a hedge comprised of pear trees, privet and dogwood bushes offering shelter to various bird species that nest in and feed on them, and a riparian forest. The latter, which makes the link between the river Jabron and the hay meadow, features characteristic species that are tolerant of temporary rises in the water level, like white poplar, black poplar and pussy willow. By following the river Jabron to the point where it meets the river Verdon, on the boundary between Var and the neighbouring French department, Alpes de Haute-Provence, you'll visit two other sensitive natural areas, Pont du Sautet and Les Salaous. Passing via the village of Trigance, the Trigance to Carajuan bridge itinerary (cf. next page) of about eight kilometres links up these natural sites managed by the Département du Var.



SENSITIVE NATURAL AREAS (ENS)

Sensitive Natural Areas, or ENS ('Espaces Naturels Sensibles') are acquired by the Département du Var for their ecological wealth, by means of a specific development

tax (TAENS) levied on building permits applying to such natural areas. The 244 ENS areas of the Département du Var cover more than 13,600 hectares.

The Département du Var has published a brochure describing all of these ENS areas. It can be downloaded via var.fr



The Sautet bridge.

This easy, waymarked hiking trail follows a stony path with a few sections across limestone rock. Well exposed to the sun, it is bordered by boxwood hedges and Scots pines that offer some pleasant shady areas in summer. After walking for two kilometres, as far as the locality named Les Merlatières, it is possible - and recommended - to turn off onto the narrow path leading down to the Sautet bridge. This stone structure was built in 1787, its columns resting on the rocks on either side of the river. It straddles the river Jabron at a height of twenty metres, offering walkers a view over the gorges that the river has carved through the limestone rock. The surrounding natural environment comprises trees and xerophytes, plants that can withstand drought. This site has been one of Var's ENS areas since 2001.

From the bridge, walk back up to the main path to continue the walk to the Salaous sensitive natural space. This is where the outward part of the hike comes to an end, along with the Jabron which flows into the river Verdon here. On the left bank of the rivers, this 0.5-hectare Departmental site is an invitation to relax and contemplate. You can admire the Carajuan bridge amid the soothing sound of the water. Griffon vultures are frequently seen here in full flight. Identifiable by their bare necks, they live in groups in the Verdon gorges where they were reintroduced in 1999. ■

TRIGANCE TO CARAJUAN BRIDGE

A WALK TO CHECK OUT ON SPORTNATUREVAR.FR

The Département du Var is in charge of the region's spaces, sites and itineraries plan (PDESI) and walking and hiking routes plan (PDIPR). The purpose of these plans is to control the development of outdoor activities, ensure their durability and promote them while limiting their impact on the natural environment. With this in mind, the Département du Var has created a website, sport-naturevar.fr, and an app for tablets and smart-phones, Sport Nature Var, where you'll find over 100 ideas for hiking, mountain biking, diving, horseriding and other nature activities. In a single click you'll find just the hike for you, in the region of your choice, including the Trigrance to Carajuan bridge itinerary.

A FEW PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN WHEN VISITING THESE SITES

Some places along the banks of the Jabron and the Verdon offer access to the rivers. It is important to remember that the environmental code forbids you to build dams, however small, in the rivers as these are harmful to wildlife. Indeed, when submerged stones are moved to build a dam, this slows down the flow, causes the water to warm up and creates a build-up of sediment. This disrupts the life cycle and inhibits the movements of the small water invertebrates, molluscs and crustaceans that live in this habitat.

Be sure to wear suitable footwear, even though this is an easy itinerary. It is vital to carry a sufficient quantity of water and a sun hat.

Trigrance village.



LE PRADET

LILIBRILLE, *haute couture in Var*

Paco Rabanne, Dior, Ferré... Fashion designer Estelle Gravrand returned to Var after earning her stripes at top fashion houses in Paris. From her workshop in Le Pradet, she develops unique, made-to-measure creations and collections for her brand, Lilibrille.



It all began with a little girl named Estelle Gravrand, who enjoyed telling stories with her pencil. She had a spirited drawing style that set her apart from the other children. She loved sketching tall, slender figures with long, shapely legs. Her mother being a sculptor, she had rubbed shoulders with models at the studio from a very early age. And she sketched them. Paradoxically, Estelle was unaware of her own artistic talent. *"Right from Year 7, my art teachers were disconcerted by my drawings. They didn't think they should let me continue drawing like that. My sketches looked too much like comic strips. So I was convinced I was absolutely no good at drawing"*, the amused stylist confides. Fortunately, her parents believed in her, and her mother persuaded the teachers to let her keep her own style. And it suddenly all made sense when Estelle saw some sketches done by top fashion designers. She knew then which path she would take. She would enter the world of fashion design. After her baccalaureate, she went to Paris to study fashion, first at the prestigious ESMOD school, then the renowned Studio Berçot, a school at the cutting edge of creativity. *"Alongside my studies, I started working as a dresser at major fashion shows for Mugler, Montana, Paco Rabanne, Claudie Pierlot and many more."* She also did various internships, including one with Nelly Rodi, a leading consultancy that determines upcoming trends. *"Attending those meetings was interesting. Lots of people would sit around a table saying 'I want this for the coming season' or 'I think it should be stripes, stripes and more stripes... and checks...' It's a bit of a caricature, but they actually do create and determine trends. Of course, they take inspiration from the couturier collections. All the same, they are trained to sense, a whole year ahead, what is already actual, but has yet to be established as fashion."* She also did an internship at Paco Rabanne, where she sketched cocktail attire, accessories, bags and shoes. Her office was right next to that of Paco Rabanne's prêt-à-porter seamstress and pattern-makers. One day, they taught her what they knew. *"That was the lesson, the moment of pleasure and sharing, that remains with me even today. They taught me to create a toile* (mock-up pattern) that I still have now. It's a jacket toile that I reuse all the time."* At Dior,

she met Gianfranco Ferré, who was the artistic creation manager at the time. That meeting was to change the path of her career. *"I must say I don't really know how it happened"*, she says, still amazed. *"He spotted me in the corridors and said to himself 'I want to work with her'. I was only a trainee."* She suddenly found herself helping to prepare for fashion shows alongside the famous couturier and his entire staff. She stayed there for three years.

"The job of my dreams, I learned everything there. Mr. Ferré really taught me to create, to always push the boundaries and make everything beautiful." After her time at Dior, Gianfranco Ferré recruited her to assist his own brand's media stylist at all photo shoots with Linda Evangelista and photographer Steven Meisel.

Alongside these fabulous experiences, she also began to create her own garments. Her colleagues asked her to create for

them. *"I started making custom garments to order, mainly for weddings. At the same time, I returned to live in the south, for personal reasons, firstly in Marseille where I taught in a school. Then I came back to Var. That's when I launched my Lilibrille brand properly and organised my first fashion show at the Rocabella villa in Le Pradet."*

Estelle Gravrand now organises two fashion shows a year. They showcase her work and the themes of her collections, as well as her inspirations and aspirations. To prepare for each show, she treats it as a live performance, with musicians, actors and dancers, not forgetting sponsors such as La Ferme aux Cactus in Carqueiranne who provide the plant decor, and Sissou Coiffure in Hyères-les-Palmiers. But she also writes the script. Because she continues telling her stories, just as she did as a child. *"I create shows in which the models are aged from 4 to 65 years."* In fact, they



are not professional models, but her friends, her friends' children, and people she has simply met and instantly liked. Because the human aspect is her driving force, her nourishment. *"My work is about meeting people and designing clothes that make them feel good. They are the fruit of a relationship."*

Hence, in addition to her collections, she creates made-to-measure garments to order, unique items that may be painted or embroidered, often evening dresses or wedding gowns, but also jeans, tunics and other day-to-day wear. Lilibrille aims to offer haute couture and luxury fabrics at affordable prices, with romantic and rock'n'roll influences. *"My creations start at 150 euros. But the price does of course depend on the fabric, the cut and other factors. On average, an order generally costs about 250 euros."* Her 2022 spring & summer collection follows themes like the savannah, the jungle and bossa nova

jazz, but also includes a more classic component along the lines of Chanel. Never short of inspiration, she has diversified by creating a bodysuit range *"to feel beautiful at home during the lockdown periods."* She has also launched a scarf collection with an Italian creator she met during her time at Gianfranco Ferré, as well as cushions for the interior. The fashion designer still has plenty of imagination and ideas that come thick and fast from all directions. The promise of many more beautiful collections and creations. ■

Visit lilibrille.com to find out more about her world and her creations

*A toile is a first mock-up of a garment, assembled in inexpensive, undyed cotton muslin used for fitting purposes

SPORT, *Provence-style!*

In every town and village of Var, from generation to generation, people play 'boules'. After a hearty meal, there's nothing quite like a game of French bowls in the shade of the trees! Truly a way of life, this leisure activity is now also recognised as an organised sport with its very own national federation, competitions and champions!



In France, from north to south, the game of boules has always been popular. During the Renaissance, it was played even by nobles, as were the cup-and-ball game and real tennis. But in 1629, the game was forbidden by law. The ban, which wasn't properly observed anywhere in France, lasted until the French Revolution.

By the 19th century, each French region had its own version of boules. In the south, they play the Provence, or 'long' version of the game. Established in 1907, pétanque, now the most widespread version, is based on the original game played in Provence. The Provence game is played in motion, sometimes poised on one leg, on a 25-metre terrain, while in pétanque, both feet remain 'rooted' ('tanqué' in French, hence the name 'pétanque') and the terrain is only 12 metres in length. In the opinion of some players, like Roger Casini and Edmond Gibert, Var's local legends in this sport, *"the Provence version of the game is much more physical than pétanque. It's the boules equivalent of Formula 1 racing!"* Nowadays, pétanque and Provence-

style boules are both played all over the world. About a hundred nations belong to the International Pétanque and Provençal Game Federation chaired by Claude Azéma of France. The federation was created in 1958. At national level, pétanque has been recognised by the French ministry of sport as a high-level discipline since 2005. In Var, the sport's regional committee boasts over 5,000 members, including children as young as 7 years. But in fact hundreds of thousands of Var's inhabitants play boules on a regular basis. *"This is even more true of pétanque than of the long version. In France, everyone has played pétanque at least once in their life! In the driveway after drinks, or at the beach where the children play with plastic bowls, it is the ultimate popular game and now a fully-fledged sport"*, emphasises Marc Benintendi, chairman of the Var boules committee. Around twenty local championships are held every year in Var, some of which are selection heats for the French championships, over 250 pétanque competitions and as many for the Provence game. This momentum is also driven by the pre-

THE ESSENTIALS OF PETANQUE AND PROVENCE-STYLE BOULES

► **The bowls** have to be made of metal, have a diameter of between 705 and 800 mm, and weigh between 650 and 800 g. They must not be tampered with, modified in any way or differ from the approved bowls as certified.

► **The target ball**, also called the 'cochonnet', or jack, must be wooden with a diameter of 25 to 35 mm.

► **The game** is generally played until the score of 13 points is reached, but 11- and 15-point games are also accepted. It can be played in singles, doubles or triples.

► **The aim** is for the bowls to land as close as possible to the jack.

► **Pointing** is the technique of skilfully throwing the bowl to place it as close as possible to the jack.

► **Shooting** is throwing the bowl with just the right force to knock the opponent's bowl out of the way.

sence of many top players. Var has always been a land of champions. *"We're lucky enough to have the world's best players in Var, like Henri Lacroix and Dylan Rocher who have won the world championship 14 and 15 times respectively. They are both in the French team, current holders of the world title."*

Pétanque is very different to what it was ten years ago. The game has turned professional and has an official structure. *"This covers everything from the rules relating to clothing and equipment to the training of referees. There are now tools to check the bowls"*, confirms the chairman of the Var committee. *"Nowadays, the only recognition the sport has not achieved is inclusion in the 2024 Olympics, especially as France is hosting the Games. If pétanque becomes an Olympic sport in the future, it'll give us more opportunities for French medals!"* ■

WHY A KISS FOR FANNY?

To fanny is to lose a game without scoring a single point. The loser has to kiss the bare bottom of an object representing Fanny (painting, piece of pottery, sculpture, etc.), in public, the ultimate humiliation for any boules player!

LA BOUILLABAISSSE

The ultimate Provençal dish, bouillabaisse or 'bouille' as the locals call it, was considered for a long time as a 'poor man's dish', as it was made from unsold (or unsellable) fish from the catch. Nowadays it delights people from all walks of life, from the ports of Var to the best restaurants.

Nowadays it is often served with fish soup, but the original bouillabaisse of Provence was prepared in a stock flavoured with fennel and saffron, and cooked on a wood fire! That's what makes all the difference. It should be garnished with at least four different species of rock fish. Crustaceans can be added as well as cuttlefish. At every port in Var, a multitude of restaurants serve their own version of this traditional dish. They are all absolutely delicious. For readers of Le Var magazine, Raymond Viale, who in 1963 opened his restaurant, Les Tamaris, commonly known as Chez Raymond, on Saint-Clair beach in Le Lavandou, delivers a few precious tips for his bouillabaisse cooked over a wood fire. Over the years his restaurant has become a real institution.



Traditional Provençal bouillabaisse cooking over a wood fire.

His customers from all over France return again and again to enjoy his bouillabaisse made from a family recipe handed down by his father, who was already making the dish even as a child. *"In my recipe there's no soup base. It's a stock containing chopped onions, garlic, parsley, tomatoes, diced potatoes, saffron, quite a bit of olive oil, a little thyme, a bay leaf and fennel. Personally, I replace the fennel by a little pastis. Quantities are important!"* explains Raymond with a mischievous little smile, because he cannot specify the quantities that he simply guesses for his bouillabaisse. *"It's a question of habit!"* To the stock, which he prepares in the same pans used half a century ago by fishermen on the beach, *"I immediately add the moray and conger eel pieces and the cuttlefish, as these take a little longer to cook."* Before heating the pan, he also adds the fish with denser flesh, such as red scorpionfish. Because it takes lots of care and attention to cook bouillabaisse. Everything is timed so that the fish is cooked to perfection. A minute too long and it's overcooked! *"I use extra-fresh fish from the day's catch, including forkbeard, brown wrasse, weever, sea bream and scorpionfish. It depends on what the fishermen bring in on the day. I add pieces of spider crab or other crab for extra flavour"*, Raymond goes on. It needs to cook on a high heat.

DID YOU KNOW?

Why is it called Bouillabaisse?

Quite simply because when the stock ('bouillon' in French) boils it's time to turn down ('baisser') the heat to cook the fish:

"quand ça bout, on abaisse"

(when it boils, turn it down).

It gets very hot and *"when it starts to boil, eight good minutes later, the more tender fish are added. Finally, it just has to be plated up."* The fish and potatoes are arranged in a 'couasse', a platter made of natural cork from the Maures forest. The stock, bursting with spicy flavours, is served in a cast iron cooking pot. A feast for the eyes as well as the tastebuds! ■

LA GARDE-FREINET

PLAYING *with heritage*



Marius, Mélissa, Guillaume, Louise and their friends are really putting their heart into their work. Gathered in small groups in a community hall in La Garde-Freinet, they are working with a piece of leather under the watchful eye of leather crafts-woman Maëva De Sousa. After explaining to them where leather comes from and how this particular piece was obtained, she gives each child a piece of pre-cut hide and the tools they need to work it. These include embossing stamps that they use with a hammer to print their name on the leather and decorate it. A few hours later, they each leave with their own customised key-ring, decorated with stars or flowers, to keep as a souvenir or offer as a gift. *“Children of their age are often very receptive and their creativity leads to some lovely results. It’s nice to see them at work”,* the expert rejoices. *“I enjoy sharing my knowledge with them.”*

These shared moments of interaction - like hundreds of others each year - are

made possible by the Freinet Heritage Conservatory, a non-profit association and registered charity that has been showcasing the heritage of La Garde-Freinet and the Maures mountains for the last forty years. *“The association was created in 1979 during archaeological digs at Le Fort-Freinet, a medieval fortified village”,* explains Laurent Boudinot, manager of the Freinet Heritage Conservatory. *“The association had a different name then, but its purpose was the same, to promote and preserve this historical wealth. During the 2000s, an exhibition venue was opened, and more and more activities and demonstrations followed.”*

Various activities are organised by the association, especially educational workshops for children, with the support of many of Var’s businesses. *“Contacting people who have good command of their field, drawing on their expertise and their professional knowledge to offer real-life experiences, brings added value to our workshops*

Freinet Heritage Conservatory, a unique association in Var, strives to showcase and preserve La Garde-Freinet and, more widely, the Maures mountains. To increase awareness of the architectural heritage, natural sites and traditional crafts, the association organises courses, workshops and tours. Activities that appeal to both school groups and families.

and makes them unique”, says the organisation’s manager. *“With the help of some twenty partners, we are multiplying our skills and therefore the activities and excursions we can offer.”*

Between learning about honey making, cork harvesting, palaeography (study of ancient scriptures), the techniques to restore drystone buildings or to make cosmetics or household cleaning products, there’s something to appeal to every taste and age group! Treasure hunts have also been put together for unguided history tours of the village of La Garde-Freinet.

PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS

The museum always makes a good backdrop to the educational activities organised by the association. At its premises in the heart of La Garde-Freinet, officially one of Var's characterful villages, admission to the museum is free all year round. One area is occupied by an archaeology exhibition devoted to Le Fort-Freinet and the remains uncovered there. These are mostly ceramics and other day-to-day items like keys or belt decorations found at the site during various excavation campaigns. Another area is set aside for three permanent exhibitions relating to seasonal activities in the Maures region: sericulture, or silkworm farming, cork harvesting and chestnut cultivation. The silkworm's life cycle can be observed here, along with the properties of cork and the techniques used to process chestnuts after harvesting. Everything is explained by information panels to which photos have been added along with testimonies, tools and objects relating to these ancestral activities. For children, a snakes and ladders game adds a little fun to the museum tour. ■



RESTORATION SITES

As a member of the 'Rempart' network, the Freinet Heritage Conservatory also organises restoration works in which many volunteers of all nationalities take part during each month of September. Many of the volunteers who rally around to help preserve the local architectural treasures have nothing to do with the heritage renovation professions. "They are ordinary people, like you and me, who take a fortnight's holiday without their family to work for the public interest", explains Laurent Boudinot. "In return, they are lodged and fed, and get to visit Var." This additional activity proposed by the association has made it possible, for example, to rehabilitate part of the drystone wall terraces of the Miremer orchard. This fig orchard with 150 trees is located near a chapel on the Miremer hill. It spreads across 4,000 m² and features about 800 metres of dry-stone walls forming eighteen terraces. "This activity adds value to the orchard that grows at this unique site."

Heritage Conservatory

Saint-Jean chapel in La Garde-Freinet

Tel. +33 4 94 43 08 57.

Open all year round

from April to October, Monday to Friday

from 9am to 1pm and from 2pm to 5pm,

and Saturdays from 9am to 1pm

and from 2pm to 5pm.

Admission price depends on activities.

Some activities are free.

Under certain conditions, some activities

can be moved nearer to schools

on request. Further details,

full programme and bookings

on the website,

conservatoiredufreinet.org



© Conservatoire du patrimoine du Freinet

SIX-FOURS-LES-PLAGES

MEETING *the llamas*

Var Llamas, the only llama farm in Var, invites you to get to know these furry tylopodan mammals. An ideal activity for families that offers an original experience in the company of about fifty llamas.

Var Llamas, a farm in Six-Fours-les-Plages, resulted from a case of love at first sight. That's what Benjamin Leroy-Blanc felt for these domestic animals from America.

"It was at a zoo, about twenty years ago", the founder of Var Llamas tells us. He has had a passion for them ever since. A passion that has grown along with his farm and which he now shares with the public during the visits he organises. "I started rearing llamas at home. Then, in March 2015, I created Var Llamas to allow others to become familiar with them", he continues. "I was very lucky because people gave me their animals and from there I was able to develop my activity and breed some lovely stock at my farm." His beautiful herd is made up of about fifty long-haired llamas in shades of white, grey, speckled and piebald. Well-known for being very docile, the llamas are approachable and enjoy being stroked.

A number of experiences are on offer for families who come to visit the farm. From Friday to Sunday in July and August, each visitor can take an unguided tour at their own pace. To help you familiarise yourself with these tylopods, also called camelids, with their characteristic two-toed feet and soft foot pads, information panels can be



found around the enclosure. On prior booking, the farmer will also share his passion and expertise during the various workshops organised for both children and adults.

After an introductory talk and a few anecdotes about this domestic animal - such as why it spits - a grooming workshop, an introduction to hiking or an activity related to llama wool will soon have the children so attached to Soleil, Jane, Jules and Mafalda that they won't want to leave. The host's warm welcome and excellent explanations, along with the support of his partner, Aurélie, add to the quality of this original and instructive family excursion. ■

Var Llamas, 270, chemin de Courrens in Six-Fours-les-Plages.

NB: after summer 2022, the llama farm is moving to Carnoules. Before your visit, find out more on varllamas.com

Open all year round.

Unguided tours from Friday to Sunday: €6

€5 for children under the age of 10 - Free for the under 3s.

Guided tours by appointment only: €15 for participants and €5 for accompanying adults.

TOULON

COMPAGNIE SOURICIÈRE

On life's stage

“Drama, as I apprehend it, is the art of speaking. My sympathetic relationship to the theatre resides in words”, states Vincent Franchi, artistic director and stage director of Compagnie Souricière, the theatre troupe he created in 2008 in Toulon just after graduating with a vocational Master’s in dramatic works and playwriting from the University of theatre arts in Marseille. In 2012, for the first production of his career, he chose a text that struck a socio-political chord: Act by Lars Norén. “A play that looks at a multitude of societal questions through an intimate prism”, he says. “Not from a militant angle.” This is the troupe’s main focus: “to work with living playwrights whose relationship to the world is reflected in their plays, and whose texts raise the issues of today.” These include Lars Norén, Stéfano Massini, Alexandra Badéa and Dennis Kelly, whose adaptation of Our Teacher’s a Troll went down a storm with both the public and the profession. Staged at many theatres throughout the Sud Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur Region since January 2021, the play is on this summer’s programme at the Festival of Avignon.

The stage director is now working on an original creation. “I’ve called upon three young writers whose work I really love: Marilyn Mattéi, Amine Adjina and Guillaume Cayet, all aged about thirty”, he states. They’re each going to immerse themselves in a Grimms’ fairytale chosen by Vincent Franchi and rework it with a 21st-century twist.



© Photogobi

“This play, entitled *Et ils vécurent heureux* (And they lived happily), deals with fear, vengeance, love and obstinacy, among other things.” In what form? “I have no idea yet about the dramatisation because I’m not involved in this stage of the writing any more. It will all become clear on the stage set.” A set that’s often pared down in terms of space occupation, but with sound and light effects and video features. Because one of the main goals of the stage director is “to carry the audience into another world. Make them forget they’re in a theatre.” To do this, he of course relies on actors for whom his “fascination is absolute”. “My intuition guides my choices for each project, which is why there are different actors in each play. Even though I love working with some of them, I instinctively need to match the actor to the role.” Alongside his creative work for the

troupe, which is supported by the Conseil Départemental du Var and a member of Mozaïc, a local association that helps professional performers, Vincent Franchi is also a drama teacher. “I teach drama to adults and students in schools such as the Bonaparte high school in Toulon. This teaching work is very important to me, as I find it enriching.” He organises presentations, encourages open-mindedness and facilitates dialogue. As do the plays that Vincent Franchi appreciates. A live performance, in the “here and now”. ■

compagnie-souriciere.fr



LE DÉPARTEMENT

PRESENTS THE EXHIBITION

BARBARA LUI SI

LA ROSE ET L'OLIVIER



UNTIL 18TH SEPTEMBER 2022

PLACE DES ORMEAUX - LA CELLE - FREE ADMISSION

Tuesday to Sunday, 10.30am to 6.30pm from June to August,
and 10.30am to 5.30pm in September

Tel. +33 4 98 05 05 05 - abbayedelacelle.fr - [f](https://www.facebook.com/abbayedelacelle) #abbayedelacelle



MUMMIES

THE PATHS TO ETERNITY



10TH JUNE > 25TH SEPT. 2022 - DRAGUIGNAN

LE FIGARO

ARCHÉOLOGIA

L'Histoire

Ticket sales
hdevar.fr