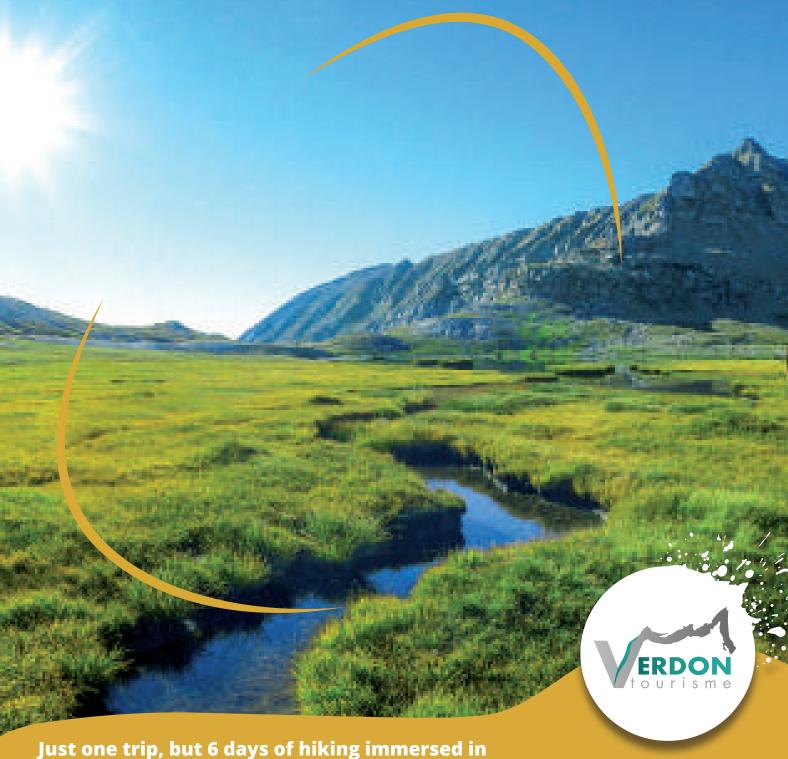


## **RETROUVANCE** HAUT VERDON - MERCANTOUR Long-distance hiking Escape to the magic of the Southern Alps!



fabulous landscapes and nights in unusual private accommodation



www.verdontourisme.com

### **Editorial**

Share, meet, marvel...

Here, far from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, every moment is an invitation to discover.

Our valleys are surprisingly diverse, where nature reigns supreme. From simple pleasures to unusual experiences and the latest trends, our destination has so much to offer! Let these pages inspire you.

This magazine is your guide to a journey into the heart of a magnificent landscape: from the Gorges du Verdon to the mountains above, from chestnut forests to lavender fields, the possibilities are endless. Our heritage, recognised by the Pays d'Art et d'Histoire label, opens doors to medieval villages, exceptional sites and authentic know-how. Local gastronomy, crafts and traditions are just some of the riches to be discovered. Whether you're a hiker, thrill-seeker or two-wheeler enthusiast, you'll find an endless playground here. There are so many possibilities, but the magic of the region can only be discovered on the ground.

See you soon for an unforgettable experience!

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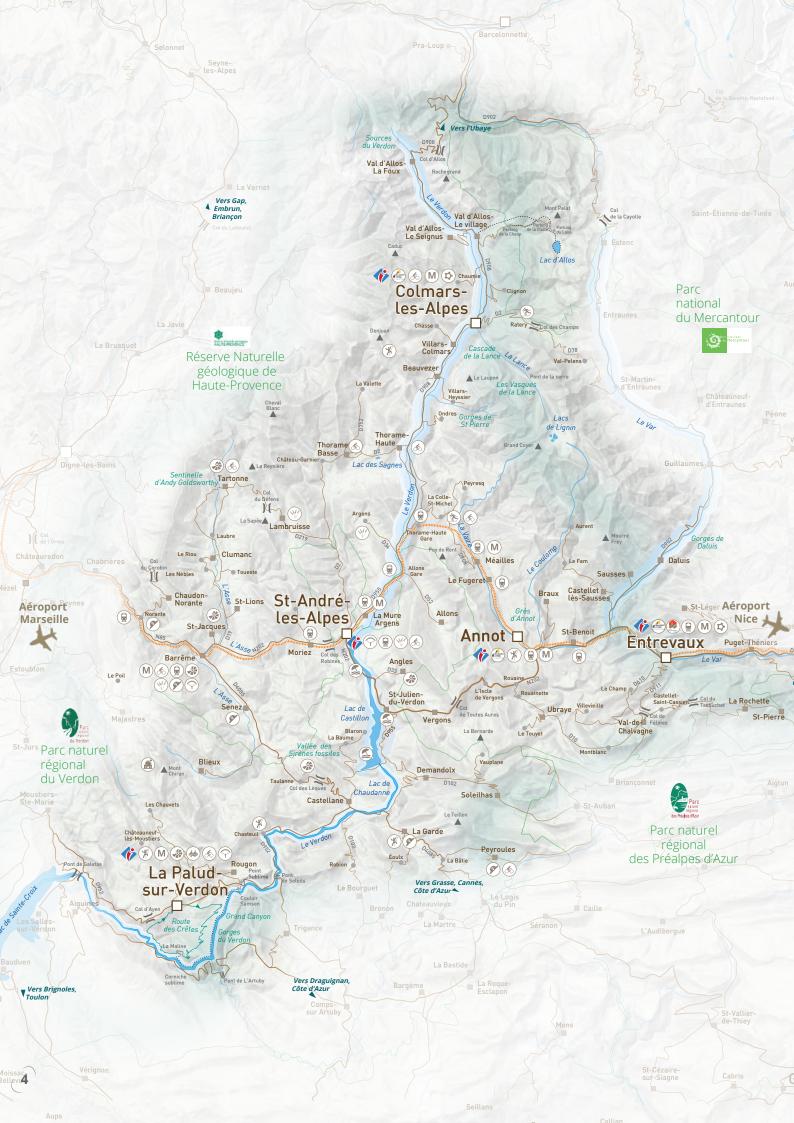
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### Legend



🍼 Sk

Nordic skiing

6 Mountain bike

Paragliding

White water sports

Beach

Astronomical observatory

Train station

W Lavander

Museum

🗱 Cité Vauban

Route Napoléon

Villages & Cités de Caractère

Plus Beaux Villages de France

Natural point of interest

Tourist office

Chemins de Fer de Provence

### How to come?



The Chemins de fer de Provence line links Nice to Digne-les-Bains and crosses our destination from east to west.

Chemin de Fer de Provence - www.cpzou.fr



From Marseille

- To La Palud-sur-Verdon: A51 then D952
- To Barrême: A51 then D4085

From Nice to Entrevaux: D6202

Please note: the passes Col d'Allos, Col des Champs and Col de la Cayolle are closed during the winter season.

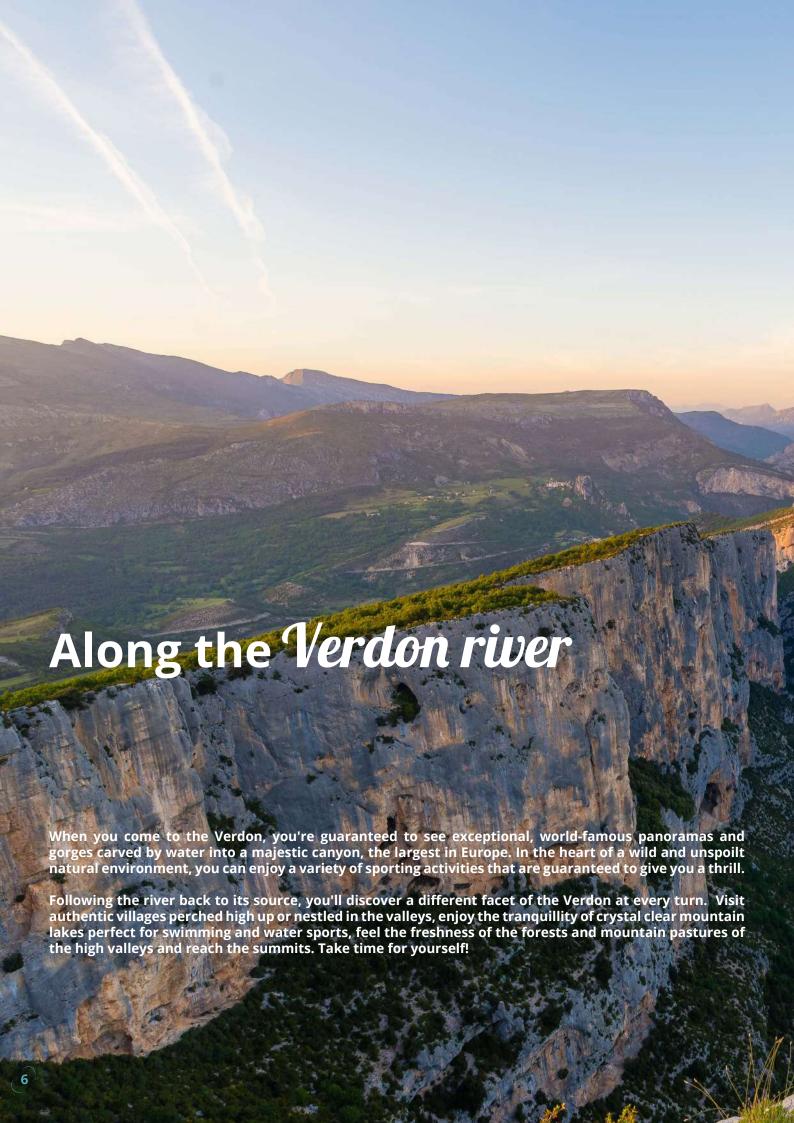


### By bus!

LER 51 - Nice -Digne LER 52 - Grenoble - Digne LER 450 - Riez - Castellane Ligne 675 - Nice - Entraunes

Réseau régional Zou - zou.maregionsud.fr







### The Verdon Gorges

Carved out by the millennia-old Verdon River, the Gorges du Verdon form the largest canyon in Europe, with breathtaking cliffs that can reach over 700 metres high: this masterpiece of nature is awe-inspiring and breathtaking.

Site in the process of certification Grand site de France

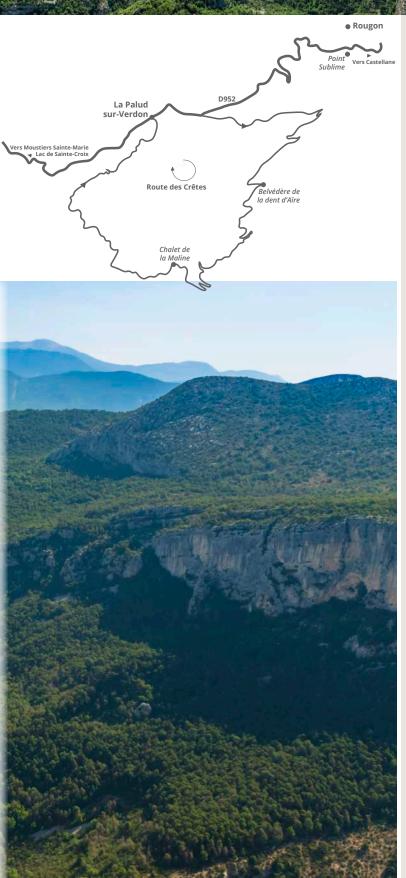
There are many ways to discover it. The viewpoints along the Route des Crêtes reveal its most breathtaking peaks. From Point Sublime, you can see the entrance to the Grand Canyon. For a closer look, the Blanc-Martel trail from La Palud-sur-Verdon is a must. Before setting off, take time to explore the village's narrow streets and visit the eco-museum. In Rougon, a wide view of the cliffs allows you to observe the fascinating aerial ballet of the vultures.

The Gorges du Verdon are part of the Verdon Regional Nature Park, an open book of geology, fauna, flora and history, offering a variety of landscapes and environments and a unique wealth of flora. These majestic limestone cliffs and emerald waters will leave you speechless.

2200 plut speiis







#### The route des Crêtes

**Q** La Palud-sur-Verdon

Open from late March to late November, this 23-kilometre loop offers majestic panoramic views of the cliffs on either side of the river. Each bend reveals impressive cliffs and the safe belvederes provide access to vertiginous peaks up to 700 metres above the waters of the Verdon.

To complete the route, you must travel clockwise, as the central section is one-way.

### **The Point Sublime**

A very easy 15-minute walk

Rougon

This belvedere can be reached by a walkway and offers a spectacular view of the couloir Samson , the gateway to the canyon.

The Verdon meanders 400 metres below this ten-metre wide gash between the Duc wall on the left and the Escalès cliffs on the right.

#### The Blanc-Martel trail

♀ From La Palud-sur-Verdon to Rougon

An emblematic trail in the Gorges du Verdon, it takes its name from Isidore Blanc and Alfred-Edouard Martel, the first to explore the canyon in 1905. It combines breathtaking views, aerial staircases and tunnels, offering a plunge into the heart of the deepest gorges in Europe.

This 16-kilometre one-way trip can be reached by the Blanc-Martel shuttle bus, which leaves from La Palud-sur-Verdon. It takes hikers to the Chalet de la Maline, the starting point of the trail. At the end of the trail, at Point Sublime in Rougon, the shuttle bus takes them back to La Palud-sur-Verdon.

Booking required on navette.parduverdon.fr



#### WATCHING VULTURES

Palvédère de la Dent d'Aire on the route des Crêtes

At 700 metres above the Verdon, this is certainly the most panoramic and breathtaking of all the viewpoints. Here you can see griffon vultures up close, depending on the season and their mood, of course! Their wingspan is impressive, but don't worry, they're harmless - they're scavengers.

Rougon

ightarrow Up to 2.70 metres wingspan

Rougon offers a wide view of the cliffs where the birds nest. Thanks to the thermal currents at the end of the morning, you can watch their majestic flight from the cliffs. Take your time and learn more about their lives and habits on a guided nature walk.



### LIFE AT YOUR FIN-GERTIPS

**Q** La Palud-sur-Verdon

The Gorges du Verdon and even more so La Palud-sur-Verdon are closely linked to Patrick Edlinger. It was this local climber who popularised free solo climbing and brought this little-known sport to the attention of the general public.

### VIEW OVER THE CANYON

Rougon

At the end of a winding road, nestled beneath the remains of its fortress, lies the peaceful village of Rougon. Its narrow streets and beautifully restored old houses still bear the imprint of the past.

Its geographical position offers breathtaking views of the Couloir Samson and Point Sublime. Rougon watches over the Verdon canyon like a sentinel over the gorges.



### A WALK TO THE **COULOIR SAMSON**

The Couloir Samson route takes you into the depths of the Gorges du Verdon, along the last stretch of the Blanc-Martel trail, to the Trescaïre towers viewpoint, overlooked by 400 metres of cliff.

It passes through two tunnels, the remains of an unfinished hydroelectric project. It offers a remarkable view of the Verdon river, home to the Apron du Rhône, a strictly protected fish.

> Please note that swimming is → prohibited from Castellane to the start of Lac de Sainte-Croix.





### **SWIMMING IN THE SAINTE-CROIX LAKE**

Dive into the crystal clear waters and relax as the white beaches of Lac de Sainte-Croix take on a Mediterranean feel during summer.

At the foot of the Galetas bridge, the view opens out over the lake and the entrance to the Gorges du Verdon. It's the perfect place to canoe or pedal a short section of the gorges, or to paddle, sail or windsurf across the lake.

Nearby are Moustiers-Sainte-Marie, a village world famous for its pottery, and Aiguines, famous for its woodturning. The latter is located at the start of the road on the left bank of the gorges and offers an exceptional view over the lake.



### **Best things to** do

Try out an electric bike

along the route des Crêtes

Visit the Maison des Gorges ecomuseum

in the château de La Palud-sur-Verdon

> Make a stop at the Maison de site to learn more about

the heritage of the Gorges du

at Point Sublime

Admire the sea of clouds in

the canyon an autumn morning

Watch the sunset over the

from the Galetas lookout point

### By the water

Upstream are the Mercantour mountains, downstream the horizon opens up to the famous Gorges du Verdon, and all around nestle a string of villages, their feet in the water or on the heights. The Alpine and Mediterranean influences, which are exceptionnaly rich in flora and fauna, are what make this area and the Verdon Regional Nature Park so remarkably diverse.

A surface area of 500 ha.

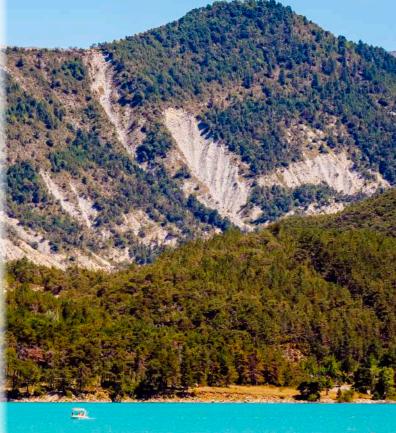
Here, man-made dams have transformed the impetuous Verdon torrent into two majestic lakes. These dams are used to generate electricity, irrigate farmland and supply the region with drinking water.

The lake Castillon is also a paradise for bathing and water sports. As for the lake Chaudanne, an ideal fishing spot, its beauty lies in its wild nature, far from the hustle and bustle.











### **Swimming and water sports**

Irresistible for its turquoise waters, the lake Castillon is easily accessible thanks to its three large, supervised beaches. It's the ideal place to spend a summer's day soaking up the Provence sunshine while the kids play in the water and enjoy the activities.

Sailing, waterskiing, wakeboarding, kayaking, paddle boarding and even rowing can all be enjoyed at the foot of the mountains, in the heart of the Verdon Regional Nature Park. Take a boat and discover the islets and secret coves that dot the 500-hectare of the lake Castillon!

### The art of fishing

Between mountain streams and lakes, the Verdon and its varied and exceptional landscapes are a fishing destination par excellence. Easily accessible, the lake Castillon and lake des Sagnes, with their picnic areas and shady siesta spots, are ideal for a family day's fishing.

Accessible fishing piers &

> Don't forget your fishing licence

For a moment of peace and quiet, there's nothing better than a boat trip on lake Castillon or the shores of lake Chaudanne, famous for its pike-perch and zander. But the queen of our crystal clear waters is the fario trout. Go in search of them in rivers and torrents, to the sound of water cascading over rocks, for a total immersion in nature.



### A CITY FULL OF CHARACTER



Overlooked by the Roc, an imposing limestone cliff, Castellane combines an Alpine character with the elegance of a Provencal town, with narrow streets and lively squares.

It's a base camp for white-water rafters, who come to test their mettle against the turbulent waters of the Gorges du Verdon, promising refreshing experiences and thrills in rafting, kayaking and hydrospeed.

Please note that white water activities in the Gorges du Verdon are regulated.

### Best things to do

Visit the Musée de la Minoterie (Flour Mill Museum) and its incredible machinery

in La Mure-Argens

- Read the time on the world's largest sundial on the Castillon dam
- Follow the Patrimoine et draperies route to learn about the history of the Verdon spinning mills

in Saint-André-les-Alpes

Find a quiet spot for a picnic by the

- in Angles ou
  in Saint-André-les-Alpes
- Take a walk to the abandoned hamlet of Ville for a view of the lake and the Castillon dam

in Demandolx

Discover Vergons, the village where

Jean Giono, the famous Provençal
writer, set his novel « The man who
planted trees »

### LAKES AND TEILLON FOOTHILLS LOOP



The smaller, less-frequented winding roads, such as the one that twists and turns towards Demandolx, a village built into the mountainside, are full of surprises. You should stop off at the mission cross to admire the splendid view over the Castillon and Chaudanne lakes.

On the way to the Vauplane mountain pasture, the chapel of Saint-Barnabé is well worth a visit before descending to Soleilhas, a village nestling on a flat spot in the valley.

A short excursion into the Alpes-Maritimes takes you through Saint-Auban before reaching Peyroules. Napoleon passed through here on his return from Elba. The Route Napoléon retraces his route through La Garde. Dominated by the 1,893-metre-high Teillon, this village was once a stronghold protecting Castellane.





### A BALCONY ON THE LAKE

Saint-Julien-du-Verdon

Seen from the south, the village looks like a peninsula. Its narrow streets, with their pink-orange facades, bear witness to its agricultural past, before its land was flooded by the Castillon dam. The view of the lake from the square is breathtaking.









### A WIDE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

Saint-André-les-Alpes

Whether on land, water or in the air, there are plenty of outdoor activities to choose from, all promising a breath offresh air. If you're mountain biking, the surrounding trails are great for the whole family, with the rich flora of the Verdon Regional Nature Park to be seen at every turn.

Pass through the picturesque narrow streets of the village before taking the fishermen's path to reach the beach and its activities. With your feet in the water, you can admire the ballet of the paragliders. And why not treat yourself to a two-seater flight to take in the sights?

A spectacular sight is guaranteed when the sails of the paragliders colour the sky!

### In the heart of our mountains

Deep valleys with sparkling waterfalls, steep slopes dotted with villages on the flats and larch forests make up the lower valley. Upstream, it opens onto the Sestrière cirque, dotted with lakes and crowned by high peaks. This is the birthplace of the Verdon.

This landscape between the Col des Champs and the Col d'Allos forms the eastern part of the protected and regulated heart of the Mercantour National Park. It is home to the golden eagle, marmots, chamois, ermines and ibex. It is home to a wealth and variety of fauna, flora and landscapes that are rare in Europe.

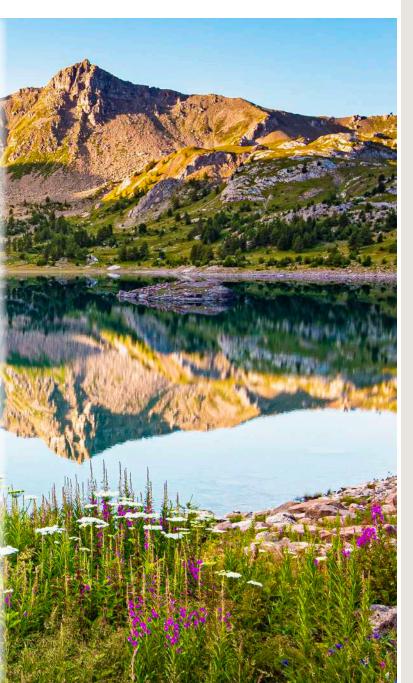
Bathed in Mediterranean light and shaped by the assaults of a glacier that retreated only 15,000 years ago, the landscape is dominated by the 3,051-metre peak of Mount Pelat. Between the strength of the mountains and the fragility of nature, its beauty fascinates and amazes.

\( \) 13500 hectores from the summits of the Southern Alps to the edge of the Mediterranean









#### The lake of Allos

A child of the glaciers of the Quaternary era, Europe's largest high altitude lake, with its turquoise blue waters, is an enchantment. Its surface, like a gigantic mirror, reflectsthesurroundingmountainsinperfectsymmetry. Situated in the protected heart of the Park, it can be explored on foot, and access to it is regulated to prevent the flow of hikers.

### Dazzling under the starry sky

At dusk, far from the lights of the city, the stars appear and the constellations take shape! Thousands of them sparkle in the clear skies of the Alpes Azur Mercantour Dark Sky Reserve. Nebulae and galaxies offer a fabulous spectacle. So turn off your lights and enjoy the simple pleasure of diving headlong into the stars.

> One of the world's 22 International Dark Sky Reserves

### On the road to the legendary Alpine passes

Discover these three legendary passes and savour the beauty of exceptional landscapes. The hairpin bends are legion and the roads narrow but panoramic.

At an altitude of 2,250 metres, the Col d'Allos, with its pastures, rock-cut road above the gorges and endless panoramas, is the gateway between the Verdon and Ubaye valleys. From Ubaye to the Var valley, take the Route des Grandes Alpes with its waterfalls, torrents and mountain lakes via the Col de la Cayolle.

Wild and magnificent, the Col des Champs is a vast mountain pasture linking the Var and Verdon valleys. You're sure to come across marmots, roe deer and chamois. In spring, the brilliant flora transforms the landscape into a symphony of colours.

> By car, motorbike or bicycle like the Tour de France riders



### PEYRESQ, AN AMAZING DESTINY

**?** Thorame-Haute

Perched on a rocky outcrop, this timeless hamlet overlooks the Vaïre valley. Its name is linked to Nicolas Fabri de Peiresc, the great humanist and scholar of the 17th century, who was close to Galileo.

Gradually depopulated until the middle of the 20th century, the village was reborn in the 1960s thanks to the efforts of Belgian academics. Today, scientists, mathematicians, botanists, and environmentalists from all over the world gather here every year for meetings, summer schools and conferences.

### Best things to do

Find great local produce at the Maison de Pays, located in one of the village's six former draperies.

in Beauvezer

Slow down and enjoy the tranquillity of winter's glittering landscapes.

in la Colle Saint-Michel and Ratery

Walk through the larch forest to the Coletta lookout for a panoramic view.

on the road to Col des champs

Join a guided walk to hear the powerful bellowing of the stag during the mating season

in autumn

Improvise a picnic by the lake des
Sagnes

in Thorame-Haute

### A PATCHWORK OF GREENS

#### • From Thorame-Haute to Allons

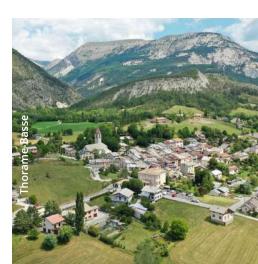
Take this route through an agricultural basin encircled by high mountains and the silvery thread of streams. Its colours range from the dark green of the forests to the pastel green of the mountain pastures, the soft green of the meadows and the blond of the cereal fields.

In Thorame-Haute, you'll discover the humpbacked Moulin bridge and the railway station with its pretty adjoining church

In Thorame-Basse, be amazed by the 12th-century frescoes in the chapel of Saint-Thomas, in the hamlet of Château-Garnier. Enjoy the gentle pace of life on the terrace of the village bistro. The banks of the Issole river offer a bucolic landscape, sometimes open, sometimes wooded, and the Ivoire valley, where Allons nestles, looks like the edge of the world.







#### THE CHASSE VALLEY

**Villars-Colmars** 

The stone houses of Villars-Colmars form a harmonious whole. But it's upstream that the village's secret lies: the Chasse Valley and its pretty hamlet. This deep gorge and its many adjacent valleys are a wilderness paradise to be discovered on horseback, on foot or even accompanied by a donkey.









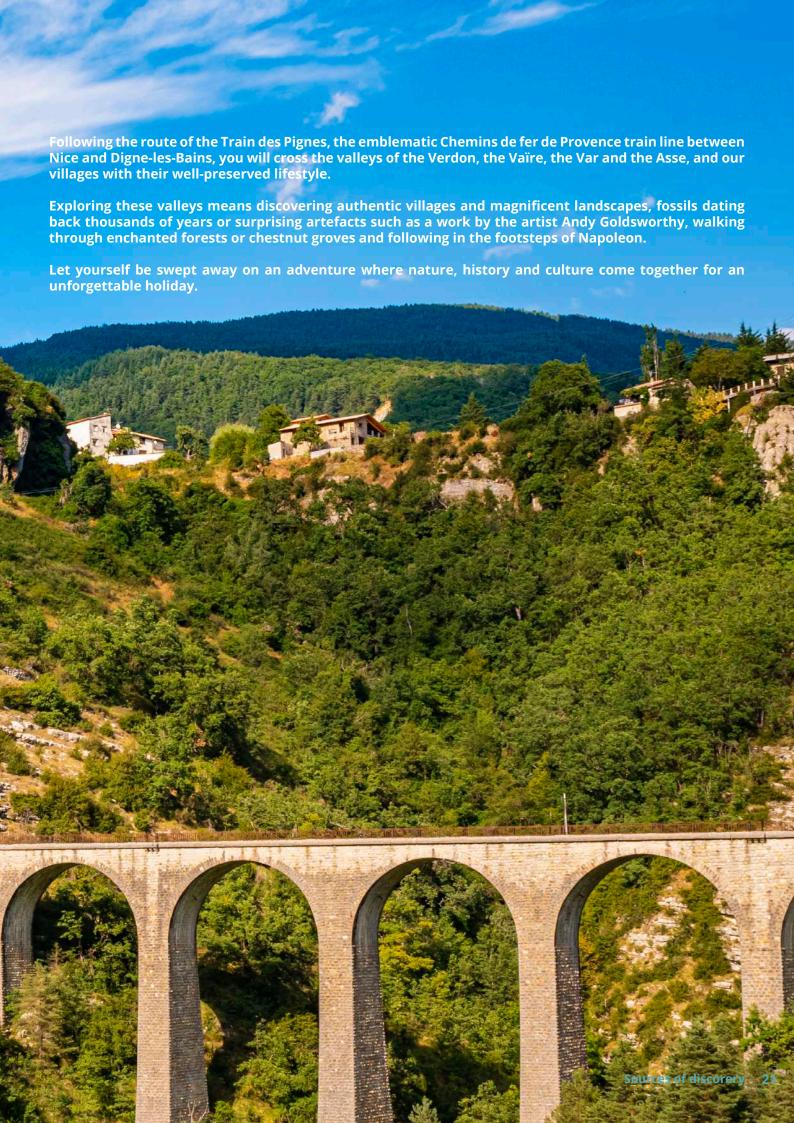
### A REFRESHING GETAWAY

**Q** Colmars-les-Alpes

Hidden in a cirque of dark rock accessible by a footbridge, the Lance waterfall rises up at the bend in the path, after a walk through the forest. Combining wilderness and accessibility, it's an ideal walk for the whole family.

In late spring or after the autumn rains, it offers a powerful spectacle. In summer, the cooler weather is much appreciated, and you may be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of the wallcreeper, a small cliff-dwelling bird.







### THE LITTLE COLORADO OF NICE Classified as a

**Q** Gorges de Daluis

With cliffs almost 300 metres high and an extraordinary wine-red colour, the Gorges de Daluis offer a landscape that is as spectacular as it is unusual. Carved out by the river Var in pelites deposited 270 million years ago, their colour is due to the oxidation of the iron contained in this rock.

The road that crosses them, cut into the rock, still uses some of the bridges and tunnels of the old tramway. The viewpoints, such as the Clue d'Amen and the Pont de la Mariée, offer sublime views.

### Best things to do

Choosing a picnic spot on the route

de Colle Basse

in Annot

Enjoy a panoramic view of Méailles and the finest engineering structures on the Chemins de fer de Provence line

on the road to
La Colle Saint-Michel

Climb the vertiginous staircase to the Pont de la Mariée lookout point to admire the Gorges de Daluis from above.

- Discover the oil and flour mills in Entrevaux
- Take the Train des Pignes à vapeur,

  a historic steam train from PugetThéniers to Annot via Entrevaux for a trip back in time.
- Admire the colours of autumn in the highest chestnut grove in France

in Le Fugeret

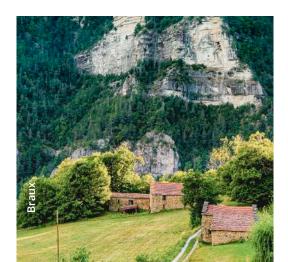
### IN THE SHADOW OF THE GRAND COYER

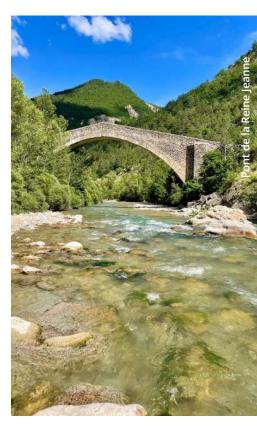
• From Méailles to Sausses

It's a series of villages in an arc in the shadow of the Grand Coyer, a vast protected mountain area, home to rare flora and fauna.

Almost all of them share the same sandstone and the highest chestnut grove in France, from Méailles, built on the edge of the cliff, with its bell tower with a polychrome tiled roof, to Fugeret and Braux, immersed in the chestnut grove.

From Annot, nestling in the valley, to Saint-Benoît and Castellet-les-Sausses, perched on their rocky promontory, to Sausses and its terraced houses overlooking the Var valley, these villages captivate visitors with their authentic charm and tranquillity.







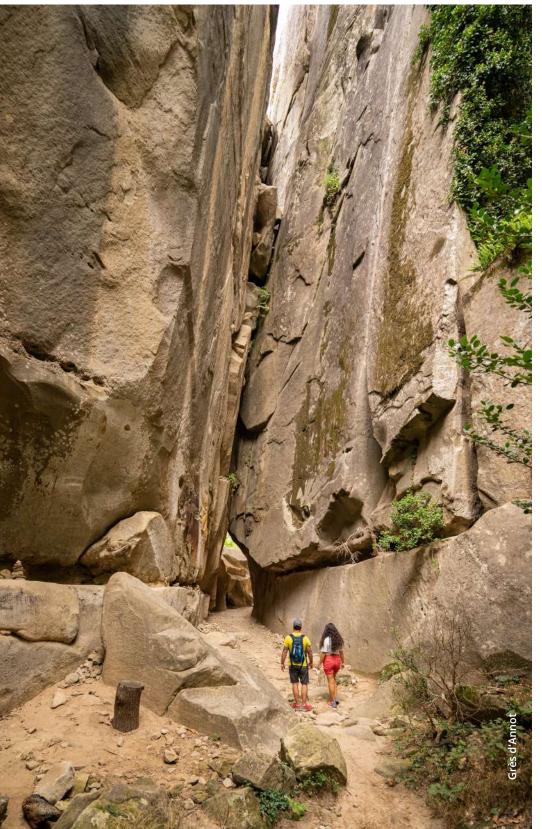
#### A NATURE BATH

**♀** From Ubraye to Saint-Pierre

It's a winding road that jumps from valley to valley, from Ubraye to Val-de-Chalvagne and its 17th century castle. Here a few houses, there an oratory and forest as far as the eye can see! The orientation table at La Rochette offers an exceptional view. The village of Saint-Pierre completes this route after a real soak in nature.









### HIKING IN LES GRÈS D'ANNOT

**Q** Annot

Imagine boulders that defy the laws of balance, arches, vertiginous viewpoints, rocks with shapes sculpted by erosion that lend themselves to all kinds of dreams, all set in a forest of pines and chestnut trees over a hundred years old: you're hiking in the Grès d'Annot.

These formations were formed by underwater avalanches of sand and mud 40 million years ago. Mineral and plant life, ancestral legends and a thousand-year-old habitat blend harmoniously here. It is even said that the sandstones have their own guardian... and that a king has his own room there.





### ALONG THE ROUTE NA-POLÉON

**♀** From Castellane to Chaudon-Norante

Taking the Route Napoléon means following a route that retraces a page of French history, the one taken in March 1815 by Napoleon I on his way to the capital. After Castellane and the impressive clues of Taulanne, the fifteen centuries of history of Senez are well worth a visit.

In Barrême, the Musée de la Distillerie (Distillery Museum) tells us that in the past, the village supplied lavender essence to the greatest perfumers. At Chaudon-Norante, fork off towards the Coldu Corobin to stay as close as possible to the historic route and enjoy an uninterrupted view of the Dignois basin.

### Best things to do

Learn the difference between true lavender, spike lavender and lavandin by visiting the distillery museum.

#### in Barrême

Visit the Second World War museum and sites linked to the Resistance: the hamlet of La Melle, birthplace of the Fort de France Maguis, and Laval Farm.

in Barrême, Blieux and Lambruisse

- Read Jean Giono's book 'L'Iris de Suze' to immerse yourself in the wilds of Mont Chiran.
- Admire the incredible collection of ammonites and other fossils
- in the Mairie de Barrême
- Cycle with your family in the Asse valleys

### ON THE BACK ROADS

#### • From Lambruisse to Moriez

The panorama opens up into a checkerboard of pale green, blonde and sometimes lavender-blue farmland. It is punctuated by wooded hills and grey or black marl with imposing peaks in the background. It's so peaceful you can just breathe! Discover Lambruisse, nestling deep in the valley, and the hamlets of Clumanc on either side of the Asse.

At Tartonne, the 12th century chapel of Notre-Dame-d'Entraigues and the Sentinel, a work by the artist Andy Goldsworthy, are perfect for a picnic in the shade. Saint-Lions and Saint-Jacques both offer beautiful views over the valley.

These peaceful landscapes also contain treasures that immerse us in the fascinating history of the earth. They lie within the boundaries of the Haute-Provence Geological Reserve, whose exceptional geological heritage illustrates 300 million years of the Earth. Moriez is home to a saltwater spring that has been exploited since more than 5,000 BC, and Tartonne is the site of the discovery of the skeleton of a plesiosaur, a marine reptile that lived around 100 million years ago.

Europe's largest geological nature

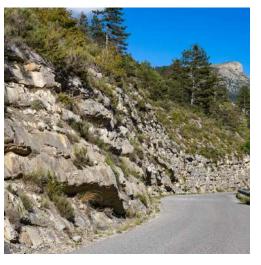




#### A SLICE OF TIME

**Q** Angles

Along the road leading to the village of Angles, you can see alternating layers of grey-blue limestone and banks of black marl. This is a stratotype, used as an international reference to define the Barremian geological stage. We stop to contemplate this 'slice of time' that corresponds to around... 5 million years of Earth's history!







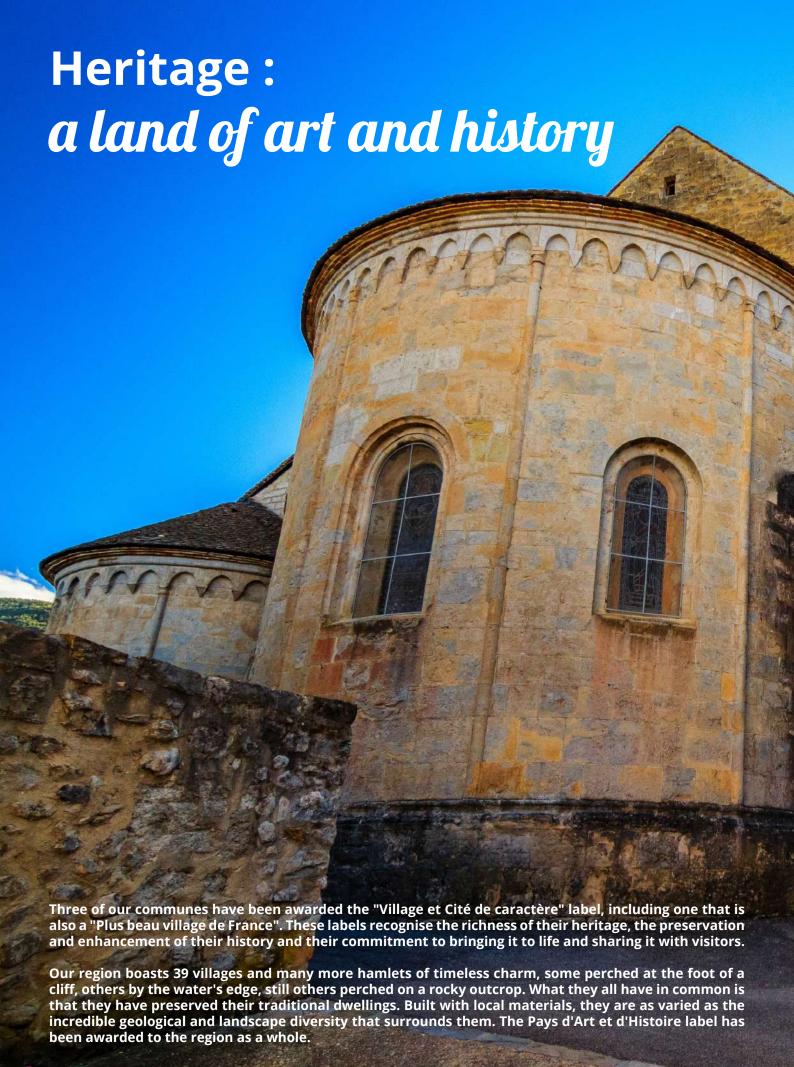


### A GEOLOGICAL TREA-**SURE**

Barrême

In the streets, at the bottom of the pond and on the paving at the entrance to the town hall, ammonites are everywhere in Barrême, and not by chance! The village gave its name to the Barremian, a geological stratum from the Cretaceous period, renowned for its fossils of these marine molluscs, which disappeared at the same time as the dinosaurs.

The village, located in the Haute-Provence Geological Reserve, attracts geologists from all over the world because of its wealth of characteristic fossils, the unrolled ammonites. Its museum boasts an impressive collection.





### Entrevaux, cité Vauban





A 360° view from the citadel

This 12th-century medieval village on the edge of the Alpes-de Haute-Provence region is entered via the royal gateway and its drawbridge over the river Var. Its ramparts, barracks and watchtowers have been preserved from its past as an ancient stronghold on the frontier of the Kingdom of France.

Every street corner tells a story

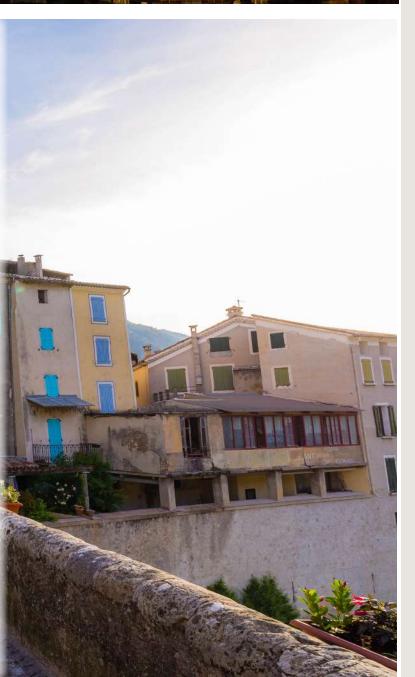
Its watchtower offers breathtaking views of the river through its loopholes. The narrow, winding streets reveal medieval shops, the cathedral, the bread oven and the clock tower. Its many small squares, where time seems to stand still, are an invitation to stroll.

Pass through the Porte de France or the Porte d'Italie to discover the terraces planted with olive trees that form the backdrop to this village overlooked by an impressive citadel perched high up on a rocky spur.









#### The citadel

A 30 min walk

Step back in time and imagine life in the castle keep, ' the old dungeons and the underground passages of this fortress perched 156 metres above the village.

Access is on foot only, via the cobbled path of nine zigzag ramps designed by Vauban in the late 17th century. From up there, a 360° panorama will reward your efforts!

### Notre-Dame de l'Assomption cathedral

Built between 1604 and 1667, it became part of the town's fortifications in 1692, on the orders of Vauban. Its crenellated bell tower served as a defensive tower. However, its defensive role was only a facade. Dare to push open the door!

The Gothic architecture combined with magnificent Baroque decoration is astonishing. Listed as a historic monument, it contains the reliquary bust of Entrevaux's patron saint, Saint John the Baptist.

### The parapet walk

Take a stroll along the fortifications' parapet walk, where you'll discover a number of exhibitions bearing witness to the history of those who have lived or passed through these walls.

#### Motorbike museum

Around a hundred two-wheelers, in perfect working order, are displayed simply resting on their crutches or hanging from the museum's picture rails like paintings by old masters. A must-see for lovers of fine motorbikes.



Discover the history of Entrevaux from the Gauls to Vauban with a guide along the narrow streets or on the way to the citadel.

### Annot, of sandstone and charm



An elegant town full of character, Annot spreads its houses at the foot of the Annot sandstone cliffs. Around it, cultivated terraces, rocky shelters and cobbled paths form a harmonious landscape. Built by man over the centuries, they invite you to take a stroll.

Wandering at random is the most pleasant way to explore the old town's maze of beautifully cobbled streets. You'll pass ancient stalls and doorways with carved lintels. Look up and you'll see crenellated watchtowers, mullioned windows and corbelled houses.

The streets are dotted with fountains and wash-houses and criss-crossed by canals that once powered mills and cloth factories. The Place du Coulet, where shows are held, has an amazing rock as a backdrop, while the Place des Moulins invites you to take a break in the shade of the ramparts. Everything here exudes the serenity of life.

Everywhere in the alleyways you can hear the sound of water.









#### Vers-la-Ville and the rock shelters

The chapel of Notre-Dame de Vers-la-Ville is reached on foot, along a cobbled path winding between ancient farming terraces. Nestling in the sandstone overlooking the village, it is surrounded by houses set against the rock.

This type of housing, which seems to be embedded between the rocks, some even forming the roof, is an original feature of the Annot landscape.

### The Train des Pignes steam train

Open carriages, varnished wooden benches, engineers in their warm blue uniforms, a blaring whistle... It's all there! From May to October, board the Train des Pignes steam train at Puget-Théniers station and step back in time on the Chemins de fer de Provence line.

The venerable locomotive travels at 20 km/h, giving you plenty of time to admire the scenery. At level crossings, motorists stop and wave, adding to the atmosphere of a timeless journey.

Retro atmosphere in winter with the Micheline', a railway carriage from 1936

### Regain museum

It's a place where objects come to life and tell the story of times gone by. The presentation of a facet of life in the past, which changes every year, arouses both curiosity and emotion.



Follow the guide for short tours or, for those who like to take their time, tours on the theme of water.

# Colmars-les-Alpes, sentinel of the Alpes



Colmars-les-Alpes is a former border town between Provence and Savoie, with a rich and tumultuous history and remarkably well-preserved military architecture. Surrounded by ramparts, it acquired its current appearance at the end of the 17th century, on the recommendations of Vauban, who recommended the construction of two redoubts overlooking the village: the forts of France and Savoy.

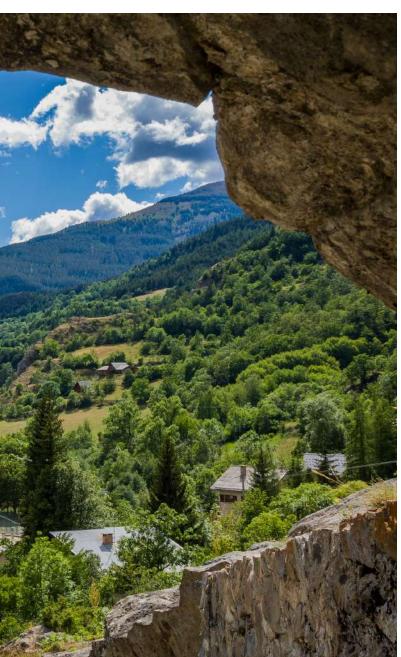
Here, heritage can be seen and touched, brought to life in the Maison-Musée or in the Fort de Savoie, with a spectacular immersive exhibition offering a captivating plunge into history.

Provencal and Alpine influences blend harmoniously in this village, which has been awarded the 'Cité Mistralienne' label. Its colourful houses adorned with sundials, squares and fountains stand side by side with larch shingle roofs, against a backdrop of the peaks and summits of the Mercantour National Park, of which it is one of the gateways.









#### Fort de Savoie and Fort de France

You'd almost expect knights to emerge from the two forts built at the end of the 17th century on the orders of Vauban. Standing on their rocky promontory, they watch over the entrances to the town.

Fort de France can be discovered by walking along the caponier, which is fitted with loopholes. A visit to the Fort de Savoie will reveal the watchtower and the extraordinary larch wood framework of the main armoury. In the vaulted rooms of the garrison, there are a number of exhibitions, including Le Récit de Vauban, a spectacular immersive exhibition.

Immerse yourself in history 4

### The Maison-Musée and the parapet walk

The Maison-Musée is a veritable treasure trove of memories. The 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space in the bourgeois house features reconstructions of life in days gone by.

The tour continues along the ramparts and bastioned towers, following in the footsteps of the garrison soldiers. Finally, the garden of a 17th-century master apothecary and his alchemist's shop provide an insight into the therapeutic plants used in the time of Louis XIV.

#### The larch

In the 19th century, a vast campaign to reforest the mountain was undertaken to combat erosion. This rich forest heritage led to the development of larch craftsmanship. Some buildings still have larch shingle roofs.



Visits in period costume or on new themes are offered in the company of a guide to discover all the facets of the rich history of Colmars-les-Alpes.

# Crafts, gastronomy, a unique know-how



In the Verdon, Vaïre, Var and Asse valleys, our know-how is much more than just a heritage: it's a reflection of our history.

Go back in time and visit the museums in Barrême and La Mure-Argens, following in the footsteps of our

traditions. Soak up the rhythm of the seasons as you discover pastoralism.

And savour the richness of a unique heritage: producers and craftsmen who celebrate the local produce.

From the workshop to the market, from the mountains to the plate, our valleys offer a journey where every discovery, every encounter, is an ode to authenticity and a taste for the real thing.





### **AUTHENTIC KNOW-HOW**

You'll discoveraliving craft, witness to a richhistory and constantly renewed creativity. Here, centuries-old traditions are more than just memories: they are the common thread running through an ever-changing heritage, carried on by passionate craftspeople. Each of their workshops tells a story, whether they're potters, ceramists, cosmetics makers, wool producers, cutlers or designers of wooden pens. An invitation to explore, to meet, and to leave with a piece of authenticity in your hands.

### DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE MILLS

#### The Musée de la Minoterie



The only one of its kind in the region, it is housed in an industrial flour mill built in 1902 in La Mure-Argens. This mill produced flour for 70 years! Today it reveals all the secrets of its impressive, perfectly preserved machinery.

#### The oil mill



Grown in terraces on the slopes of the town, the olive tree is an integral part of the landscape. And it's in the local oil mill that members of the olive-growing syndicate come to press the aglandau, a variety of olive that produces an oil with a powerful green fruity aroma.





### BREATHE IN THE AROMAS OF LAVENDER

#### **Q** Barrême

For decades, Barrême has been a major producer of fine lavender, supplying essential oils to the leading perfume houses in Grasse.

The Musée de la distillerie (Distillery Museum), housed in a distillery built in 1905, will awaken all your senses. It is dedicated to the surprising history of this factory and the distillation of fine lavender in the Grasse hinterland.

Today, in Saint-André-les-Alpes and La Mure-Argens, local producers continue to cultivate this quality lavender. They celebrate it at the Fine Lavender Festival of Haute-Provence.

Flowering occurs from early to mid-July to mid-August, depending on the weather





















# TRANSHUMANCE AND PASTORALISM AN AGE-OLD HERITAGE

You can hear their arrival from afar: sheep, ewes, goats and the grey donkeys of Provence announce their arrival with a concert of bells! From June onwards, the flocks of Provence head for the mountain pastures: this is the transhumance. They only return between September and November, before the mountains are once again covered in snow.

Listed by Unesco as a World Heritage Site in 2023, transhumance is closely linked to the Mediterranean geography and climate. The Amountagna theme trail in Villars-Colmars tells the story of this age-old practice, which is still practised in our valleys, often on foot, and to which the local people are very attached. Some shepherds even invite visitors to follow them for a day.

#### Our festive events

Agricultural fair at Saint-André-les-Alpes in September Revendran, Departure of the herds from the mountain pasture at Colmars-les-Alpes in October

Shepherds and shepherdesses festival at Thorame-Haute in octobre



# TASTY, AUTHENTIC FOOD, TO BE ENJOYED WITHOUT MODERATION!

Here, in this mosaic of contrasting, unspoilt terroirs, passionate men and women produce quality products.

Available in local produce shops, producers' shops and colourful market stalls, our local produce will awaken your senses and satisfy your craving for gourmet discoveries.

Let yourself be tempted by lavender or chestnut honey, creamy goat's cheese, fruit juice or chestnut cream. A slice of socca is the perfect accompaniment to an aperitif, and if you'd like to try lamb, a meat that is emblematic of our culinary traditions, secca or small spelt risotto, drop by one of our restaurants.







# WHERE TO FIND LOCAL PRODUCTS?

#### In local produce shops

The 'Maison de produits de pays des Alpes du Verdon' in Beauvezer and the 'Maison de produits de pays des Gorges du Verdon' in Castellane are two must-visit addresses that showcase many of the local products produced in the area.

## In establishments with the Pays gourmand label



They are restaurateurs or craftsmen who share the same spirit: to make the most of what our valleys have to offer, season after season. The "Pays Gourmand" cuisine of these restaurateurs is based mainly on local produce.

#### On the markets

- Monday in Barrême
- > Tuesday in Annot (1) and Colmars-les-Alpes
- > Wednesday in Saint-André-les-Alpes
- > Friday in Colmars-les-Alpes and Entrevaux (2)
- Saturday in Saint-André-les-Alpes and Saint-Pierre (3)
- Sunday in La Palud-sur-Verdon (2) and Villars-Colmars
- (1) except Whit Tuesday
- (2) from April to October
- (3) July and August





























#### A PATCHWORK OF LANDSCAPES

From a glacial lake to a field of lavender, along a track shaped by the transhumance, at the bottom of a narrow gorge where a torrent flows, or towards a small hamlet, our signposted hiking trails offer unique panoramas and sometimes lead to close encounters with wildlife.



The trails in the Haut-Verdon valley, carved out by glaciers, cross dizzying gorges and lead to waterfalls, high-altitude lakes and peaks up to 3,000 metres high. Between larch and meadows, the 'draille' join the huts in the middle of the mountain pastures.



From the open grasslands of the Teillon mountain pastures to those of Mont Chiran, from the bottom of the Verdon canyon to the viewpoints overlooking the dams and the Castillon, Chaudanne and Sainte-Croix lakes, the trails that criss-cross the Verdon Regional Nature Park offer some breathtaking scenery.

#### **Q** To the east

With its olive groves, thyme, broom, oak, beech and chestnut forests, this densely forested area lies between the Alps and Provence. Here and there, with deep valleys, cliffs and crags, it offers a wide variety of trails at altitudes ranging from 400 to 2,500 metres.

#### **?** To the west

Open valleys characterised by pastoralism, a succession of agricultural plots separated by hedges, robines and woods. Hikes lead to the imposing peaks that surround them or to discover the geological curiosities they hide.

Gullied slopes of black or grey marl

#### Our destination is:

over 1,600 km of signposted footpathsitineraries for all levels, from 2 to 22 km

→ 3 protected natural areas

>> 5 Natura 2000 protected areas

> natural reserves

less than 7 inhabitants per km²

yover 60% woodland





We chose a nice walk that's not *clafie de monde*. Before we set off, we check the weather forecast to avoid getting caught in a *raïsse*.

We bring plenty of water, a *goustaroun* and a *capéou* especially for the *pitchouns*. We're not keen on walking in *plein cagnard* in the early afternoon, so we prefer to have a *penech* on the shade.

Zou, join us on the trails!\*

\* We chose a nice walk that's not too crowded. Before we set off, we check the weather forecast to avoid getting caught in the rain. We bring plenty of water, a snack and a hat, especially for the little ones. We're not keen on walking in the scorching sun in the early afternoon, so we prefer to have a nap in the shade. Come and join us on the trails!

#### **CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE**

Everyone can choose their own pace and way of exploring this diverse destination, getting off the beaten track and exploring our valleys to discover their secrets.

There are hikes where you can push yourself to the limit, and those that take you to summits 2,000 or even 3,000 metres above sea level, for panoramic views of the region's mountain ranges.

Those that lead to a village or hamlet, a chapel in the middle of nowhere, a hut in the middle of a mountain pasture, where every step tells a story.

Others offer magical family moments such as an unexpected encounter with wildlife, a picnic by the lake or the pleasure of dipping your feet in the crystal-clear water of the torrent. You're guaranteed to fall asleep quickly at the end of the day!

Find all the walks in our maps, on

#### Pastorando: networked herds

With the Pasto Rando app, locate herds of sheep and guard dogs!

www.pastorando.com







#### MTB, A LAND OF ADVENTURE

With 650 kilometres of routes through an incredibly diverse landscape, the MTB area offers 51 signposted circuits to suit all levels of rider. Whether you're looking for quiet family rides or technical challenges with challenging singles and steep gradients, you're sure to find what you're looking for in this FFC-approved mountain biking area.

## Touring on TransVerdon and Chemins du Soleil routes

Our region is crossed by two of the top 15 mountain bike routes in France: the Chemins du Soleil from west to east and the TransVerdon from north to south. Varied, fun trails through the magnificent landscapes of the Mercantour National Park and the Verdon Natural Park.

## CYCLING, A PRIVILEGED PLAYGROUND

Sport cycling loops allow you to push yourself to the limit on the roads of the legendary mountain passes, like the Tour de France riders.

Cycle tours reveal the beauty of the countryside and the authenticity of the destination. And why not rediscover the feeling of freedom and adventure that comes with cycling on an electric bike? Bike maintenance and charging facilities are available throughout the region.



#### Accueil vélo certification

They provide accommodation, restaurants and hire services along the cycling and mountain-biking routes, offering a warm welcome and dedicated services so that you can pedal with complete peace of mind.

Find all the mountain bike routes on our maps, on sale in our tourist offices or on our website.

www.verdontourisme.com



# Off road trail running

#### **RUNNING ON OUR TRAILS**

The variety and beauty of the trails, the (relatively) gentle terrain and the weather conditions make our region ideal for trail running.

With more than 300 kilometres of marked trails for all levels and eighteen routes spread over the Val d'Allos, Haut-Verdon, Roc and Grès sectors, trail enthusiasts looking for a challenge and beginners wishing to discover mountain running in exceptional landscapes can all enjoy this sport.

#### **Events**

Trail du Teillon in Peyroules in May
Trail de Beauvezer in Beauvezer in June
Trail Hyèges Verdon in Hyèges in early July
Trail des Mélèzes in Colmars-les-Alpes in July
Trail des Châtaignes in Le Fugeret in October

# A vélo sur la route des Crêtes

#### **ITINERANCY**

## Grand Verdon, an exceptional trail route

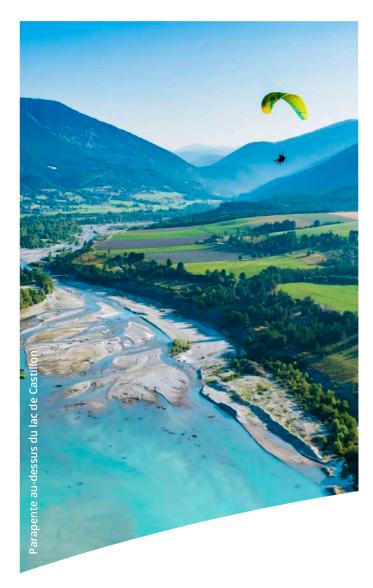
Grand Verdon is a trail that crosses the destination from the gorges to the sources of the Verdon. In keeping with ultra-trail standards, it's a challenging route that can be done in one go or as a 2-5 day tour.

#### Rail'n'trail, sport and heritage

Leaving from Annot station, take the Train des Pignes and come back trail running! An original concept combining sport and heritage on a loop full of discoveries.







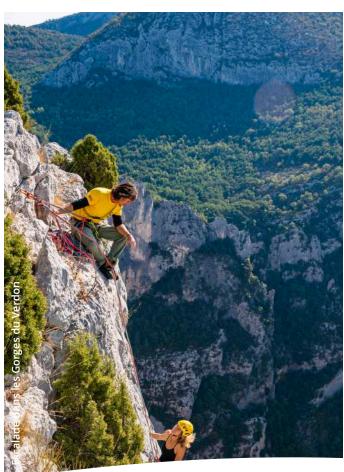
#### ZERO GRAVITY EXPERIENCE

A race up the slope to gain speed, the sail catches the wind... and off you go! Gliding through the air while admiring the immensity of the landscape gives you an incomparable feeling of freedom.

Lake Castillon, lavender fields, the Gorges du Verdon and Lake Sainte-Croix all pass beneath your feet. Paragliding is a unique way to discover the exceptional sites of the Verdon from the air!

Come and visit our schools in summer, but also in spring and autumn, for a first flight or a course. The feeling of lightness that comes with free flight is an unforgettable experience.

The Saint-André-les-Alpes flying site is listed 2
as one of the ten best in the world



#### FLIRTING WITH VERTICALITY

Q La Palud-sur-Verdon and Rougon

It's one of the most impressive and diverse climbing spot in France, if not the world! The cliffs of the Verdon canyon, over 700 metres high and of exceptional quality, have seen the development of over 1,500 routes in countless sectors. Long routes and easy routes that make you want to come back again and again...

Annot

With hundreds of boulders scattered through a chestnut forest and routes on sun-drenched cliffs, the sandstone site at Annot is a small paradise for climbers. There's a choice of bouldering, equipped routes and long "trad" routes on magnificent lines of cracks. A must for all climbers!

**♀** Villars-Colmars

The sporty routes on the Juan site plunge you into the alpine meadow, its larches and its mountain cirque.

**Q** La Garde

The cliff of Saint-Martin offer a wide variety of routes in terms of difficulty, gradient and type of hold.

# Break away, rediscover the magic of travel

It's time to discover a new way of travelling!

Here, the journey is not measured in kilometres travelled, but in moments experienced. Time slows down, and every moment is an invitation to soak up the beauty of the landscape and explore authentic villages. Immerse yourself in an unspoilt environment, far removed from everyday life, and reconnect with nature.



"Here is more than far, it's somewhere else"

J. Giono

Why not fulfil a childhood dream by staying in the La Fruchière or Marie-Louise chalets, lost in a larch forest? It's an opportunity to share unforgettable moments with family and friends. Accessible only on foot, these chalets offer simple comforts but the luxury of rediscovering the essentials, surrounded by the majesty of the mountains.



#### RETROUVANCE, DÉCONNEXION TOTALE

The name Retrouvance, a packaged-holiday offered by Verdon Tourisme, comes from the contraction of 'reunion' and 'roaming'. This 6-day, 5-night trek combines the pleasure of walking with immersion in little-known territories, accompanied by a mountain guide and a logistician who provides luggage transport and service from gîte to gîte.

At each stage, you'll discover new landscapes and taste new atmospheres. Sparkling lakes, crystal-clear springs, secret forests, mountain pastures and peaks over 3,000 metres high are just some of the natural wonders to be discovered on this tour.

Each evening, participants are accommodated in comfortable forest gîtes reserved exclusively for them. You'll be amazed when the sky is lit up with the most beautiful stars.



#### TREKKING ATMOSPHERE

Make the most of the itineraries that criss-cross our destination to a real adventure.

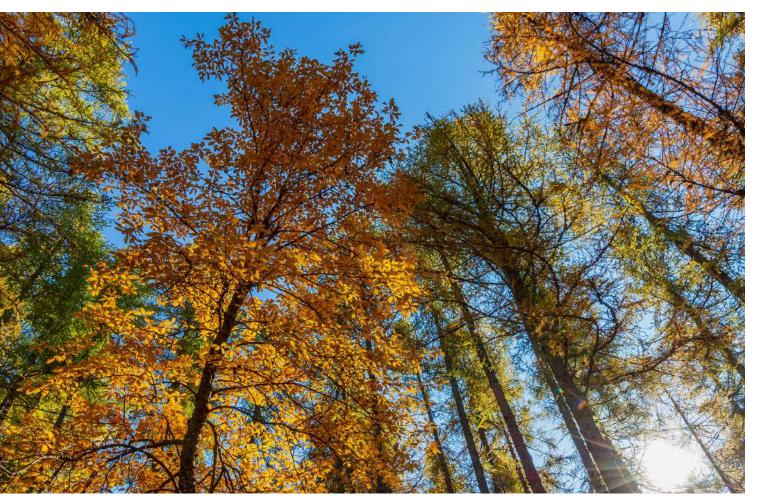
The GR® 4 takes you through Haute-Provence via the Gorges du Verdon du Verdon and some of the most beautiful scenery in the Entrevaux to La Palud-sur-Verdon.

From La Garde to Chaudon-Norante, follow the GR® 406, the itinerary of the 'Route Napoléon on foot' linking Grasse to Sisteron.

The Grande Traversée des Préalpes (GRP® GTPA) runs the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence from west to east in 9 days, including 5 to 6 days at our destination to join the GR® 4 at Entrevaux. With its many road and rail links, it can be split up as you wish.

The GR® 52A, with the evocative name Panoramique du Mercantour, runs from Colmars-les-Alpes along the southern border of the Mercantour National Park, through mountain ranges.

The GR du Pays de la Vaïre, which links all the villages in the valley in 4 days, is an itinerant loop trail. Similarly, the GRP® 'Tours du Haut-Verdon', which runs from Val d'Allos to Thorame-Basse, offers 2 to 3-day circuits.







# Forever autumn

#### The majestic colours of autumn

Autumn sublimates the luminous landscapes of the Asse, Vaïre, Var and Verdon valleys. As the days go by, the forests take on shimmering colours, creating a tableau vivant of incomparable beauty. Silence reigns, offering a unique opportunity to discover or rediscover the immensity of our natural spaces. Autumn is also the season to curl up in a blanket in front of an open fire.

#### Discover the bellowing of the stag

Between September and October, the forests resound with the sound of the stag's bellowing. This bellowing dominates our forests and is usually accompanied by the deafening sound of antlers clattering together. Deer often clash when other males from outside their group try to approach. With a guide, hikers and the curious can discreetly observe this fascinating ritual and better understand the lifestyle of the king of the forest.

#### The larch, the goldsmith of our forests

Once planted to cover steep slopes with a protective blanket of vegetation, the larch, an emblematic species of the Alps, lights up the heights of the Verdon before winter. From October until the first snowfall, the larch slowly turns golden yellow and is a delight to behold. It's always a much appreciated sight for locals and visitors alike.



# Winter getaways

#### "Tout schuss" in Val d'Allos



Discover skiing in the sunshine of the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence. The two resorts in Val d'Allos, La Foux d'Allos and Le Seignus, complement each other perfectly. Val d'Allos la Foux, at an altitude of 1,800 metres, has a large Espace Lumière ski area, culminating at 2,600 metres, thanks to a link with the Ubaye resort of Pra-Loup. It is one of the largest in the Southern Alps. Val d'Allos le Seignus offers 23 runs and a 900-metre vertical drop. Its snow front is surrounded by traditional dwellings and small residences.

Try ski touring and be the first to make the trail!

#### Two Nordic ski resorts to feel at one with nature

**♀** Colmars-les-Alpes and Thorame-Haute

Ratery 1700 is a full Nordic ski resort upriver from Colmars-les-Alpes, with slopes beneath centuries-old larch trees, while La Colle-Saint-Michel stretches across vast sunny plateaux between the Vaïre and Verdon valleys.







Festivals, get-togethers, concerts - the programme is packed! Each season brings its own set of not-to-be-missed events.

# In May

#### Annot à bloc, climbing event

**Q** Annot

Contest on natural boulders and entertainment for all in a festive and friendly atmosphere.

#### Salon des plantes

**♀** Moriez

The streets are transformed into open-air flower nursery.

## In June

#### **Festival Variations d'Entrevaux**

**P** Entrevaux

A jazz and classical musical rendez-vous.

#### Colmars 1700

**Q** Colmars-les-Alpes

Living in Colmars at the time of Vauban.

# In July

#### **Grand Rallye VTT TransVerdon**

**♀** In several villages in the area

A touring mountain bike adventure in the spirit of the official Grande Traversée route of the same name.

#### Annot d'antan

**Q** Annot

A journey back in time, from the 19th century to the Belle Époque.





**Q** Sausses

A great weekend of music, multi-style and eco-friendly, rich in quality and human encounters.

#### Fête de la lavande fine

**Q** Barrême

It's a celebration of "real" lavender, the blue gold of Provence, cultivated by a handful of local producers.

#### Fête de Faucon

Rougon

A gathering on Father Guy Gilbert's farm at the Bergerie de Faucon.











# In August

#### Fête Médiévale

**Q** Colmars-les-Alpes

Saltimbanques, stilt hikers, knights, jugglers and trainers invite you to travel through time.

#### Rencontres littéraires du Teillon **P**eyroules

Literary event with numerous writers. Interviews, reading spaces, exhibition.

#### **Festival Asse Arcadie**

In several villages in the area

Practitioners of early art music from around the Mediterranean and Europe share the fruits of their passion.





## In September

#### Journée paysanne

**Q** La Palud-sur-Verdon

Market, meal and entertainment.

#### Foire agricole

Saint-André-les-Alpes

A fair dedicated to sheep farming, a showcase for the rural world and the traditions associated with transhumance.



## and many more events to discover...



## In October

#### Les Automnales

**Q** La Palud-sur-Verdon

Two weeks of friendly entertainment.

#### Revendran

**Q** Colmars-les-Alpes

An event to celebrate the descent from the mountain pastures of the sheep herds, with meetings with the shepherds and accompaniment of the flocks.

## In November

#### Fête de la châtaigne

**Q** Le Fugeret

The village is celebrating the chestnut, emblematic autumn fruit, with a market, tastings and entertainment.

#### Continue the trip on

## www.verdontourisme.com

To help you plan your holiday, discover our accommodation, our activities, our visits, our events and everything else the destination has in store for you.









Dive into the heart of our destination!

Follow us and share your favourite memories #verdontourisme













# The tourist office Verdon Tourisme

Our team welcomes you all year round and offers personalised advice to help you organise the holiday that's right for you.

#### **Our tourist information desks**

#### **Q**Annot

40 place du Germe 04 92 83 23 03

#### **P**Entrevaux

24 montée de la Porte Royale 04 22 53 03 59

## Colmars-les-Alpes Ancienne Auberge Fleurie

Ancienne Auberge Fleurie 04 92 83 41 92

#### **Q**La Palud-sur-Verdon

Le Château 04 92 83 76 89

#### **Saint-André-les-Alpes**

1 place Marcel Pastorelli 04 92 89 02 39

#### **Our services**

#### **Ticketing**

Historic train tickets, show and concert tickets, fishing license, heritage visits

#### **Boutique**

Hiking and mountain biking maps, climbing guidebooks, books...

#### **Practical services**

Free Wifi, photocopies, bike charger

#### Our other brochures







Tourist map

#### City maps

Annot, Colmars-les-Alpes, Entrevaux La Palud-sur-Verdon, Saint-André-les-Alpes

## 28

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Give this magazine as a gift and help promote our destination, leave it at your holiday destination or drop it off at one of our offices.

#### IN OUR ONLINE SHOP

www.boutique.verdontourisme.com

#### **Book your activities**



Heritage visits and museum



**Show and concerts** 



**Stays** 

#### Prepare your stay



Hiking and mountain biking maps Climbing topos

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A full list is available on request from our Tourist Office reception desks. The Verdon Tourisme Intercommunal Tourist Office is registered as a travel and holiday operator under No. IM004220001 by Atout France.























