



destination Languedoc

Welcome to Hérault!



On ^{the} road

Discover the
routes of the
Languedoc



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direct access to the
Hérault, Le Languedoc
mobile app

RENDEZVOUS WITH THE TERROIR

Discover the natural riches and heritage of Languedoc 'À la carte'. And to make your visit even more exciting, head off the beaten track and explore **the seven destinations** that make up our special itinerary, '**a day, a terroir, our wines and flavours**'. Seven illustrated maps will guide you along the routes of our wine traditions here in Languedoc.



Cévennes
Pic Saint-Loup

Haut
Languedoc

Vignobles
Minervois Faugères St Chinian

Montpellier
Petite
Camargue

Béziers
Canal du Midi

Pays
Cœur
d'**Hérault**

Pays
de **Thau**
& Pays de
Pézenas



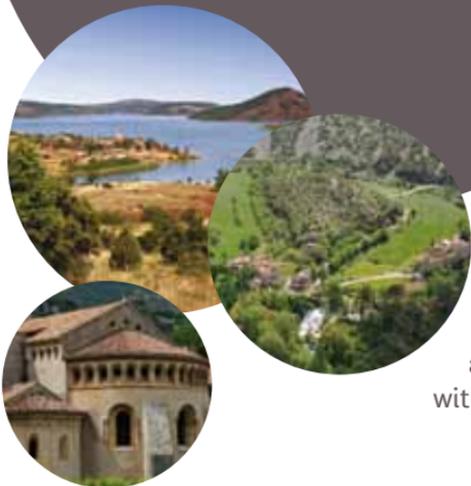
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Grands sites and Heritage



The Grands Sites de France® label encompasses France's most emblematic sites, the sites which bring her fame, get her noticed and celebrate her splendour. A mere 12 sites have earned recognition for their exceptional character but also their fragility and the need to preserve their authenticity. Today, Languedoc already boasts one Grand Site de France, with two others currently going through the qualification procedure.



GRAND SITE OF FRANCE®

The Gorges de l'Hérault and the village of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, one of France's Most Beautiful Villages, invite you to discover its mediaeval architecture. The 11th century abbey and the unspoiled wilderness of the gorges hold a promise of history and nature combined.



OUR GRAND SITES

Unfolding before your eyes are the unexpected scenery of **the Salagou Valley and the Cirque de Mourèze**, dressed in red sedimentary rock known as 'la ruffe', and a lake, where the vestiges of a drowned village peek from beneath the surface. The Cirque de Mourèze is a dolomite cirque, where erosion has left the landscape resembling a ruin, piled with columns and extraordinary, strangely-shaped rocks...



The Cirque de Navacelles, an ecological and geological marvel, shaped by ancient torrents over thousands of years, carries you down in the spiral of its natural amphitheatre, sandwiched between the limestone plateaus, or 'causses', of Blandas and Larzac. What a breathtaking view! This site is located on the perimeter of 'Causses et Cévennes', which recently earned World Heritage status.



Unesco World Heritage® Sites

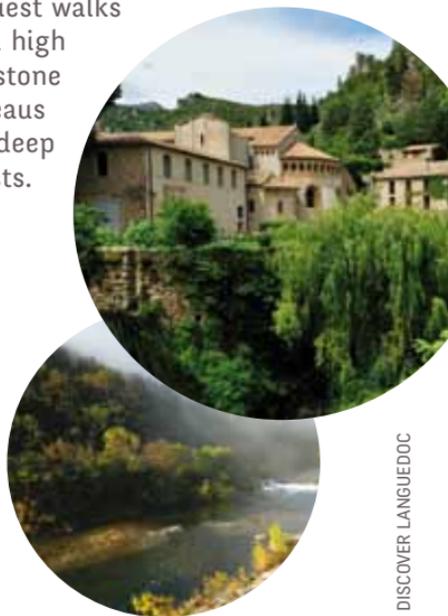


UNESCO's World Heritage® sites bear witness to our past. Crafted by Man or by Nature, these sites are priceless sources of life and inspiration, preserved for future generations. In Languedoc, three such treasures, considered as common heritage of humanity, await your visit.

 **Pierre Paul Riquet' Canal du Midi**, one of the most extraordinary feats of 17th century, stretches 240 kilometres from Sète to Toulouse. Its most remarkable sections are to be found in Hérault. By barge, bicycle or on foot, in the serenity of its lengthy history, the canal unveils its architectural riches and timeless landscapes before your eyes.

 **The Abbey of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert and the Pont du Diable (or 'Devil's Bridge')** are pilgrimage sites along the Way of St. James. The Abbey of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, built in the 11th century by William of Orange is an example of southern First Romanesque architecture. The Pont du Diable, poised above the Gorges de l'Hérault, is one of France's oldest bridges.

 **At Causses et Cévennes** the landscape consists of traditional Mediterranean arable and livestock farmland. Use the Lodève and Ganges access routes to reach the Cirque de Navacelles and one of northern Languedoc loveliest walks amid high limestone plateaus and deep forests.





OTHER REMARKABLE SITES

- D6** - Villeneuve-lès-Maguelone Cathedral & the Prévost and Arnel Lagoons
- E2** - City and Causses of Minerve
- E3** - The Fonserannes Locks & Canal du Midi
- C2** - The Massif du Caroux & Gorges d'Héric
- E5** - Lidos of Sète & Marseillan, at the Petit & Grand Travers (**C7**)
- D5** - The Massif de la Gardiole & the Thau Lagoon
- B6** - Pic Saint-Loup & the Hortus Mountain
- B5** - Buèges Valley
- D6** - Lagoon & Wood of Aresquiers
- C4** - Pic de Vissou



Heritage

Start with **Maguelone Cathedral** and the Prévost and Arnel Lagoons?

Farther west, discover the archaeological site and the **Oppidum d'Enserune** National Museum.

Nearby are the **Fonserannes Locks on the Canal du Midi**. And then there's the Cathar city of **Minerve** and the **royal factory** of Villeneuve, where sheets were made, founded by Colbert and with its architecture still intact. This journey through time will take you to the town of Agde, founded by the Phoenicians over 2,500 years ago, or farther still to Roman and Gothic architecture.

For aficionados of contemporary architecture, take time to visit Montpellier and the works of: Ricardo Bofill for the Antigone quarter, Jean Nouvel for the new Town Hall, Zaha Hadid for **Pierresvives**, city of knowledge and sport for all. And to round off this itinerary, make a stop at La **Grande Motte**, a city with pyramid-shaped buildings designed by Jean Balladur and recently designated 20th Century Heritage.



The Extraordinary Gardens

Follow in the footsteps of Paul Valéry and stroll through the venerable Jardin des Plantes, in the heart of Montpellier, and the garden of the Château de Flaugergues, where you can admire a rare collection of palm trees and bamboo plants. Be sure not to miss the contemporary garden of Saint-Adrien, planted in a mediaeval quarry or the ancient garden of Balaruc-les-Bains.



The Towns and Lands of Art & History

Lodève, an ancient episcopal city and a major textile industry centre until the nineteenth century, an open stage for the performing arts, has earned the designation Town of Art and History. After visiting the town's museum, its carpet factory (Mobilier National) and the priory of St Michel de Grandmont, make your way farther south towards **Pézenas**, a town famous for its art and history. There, stop at the Molière Theatre and take a wander through the art studios in the museums.



The Haut-Languedoc Regional Nature Park

Get away from it all in the Haut-Languedoc Regional Nature Park, buzzing with life and recognised for the value of its heritage and landscapes, where you can discover picturesque villages and nature at its most stunning.



France's Most Beautiful Villages

Languedoc boasts some of France's Most Beautiful Villages. Be sure not to miss **Minerve**, a besieged Cathar city perched on a rocky spur. And then there are **Olgues** and **Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert**, authentic mediaeval villages with a very special atmosphere.



The Caves of Hérault

Explore the outstanding underground world of the caves of **Clamouse** and **Demoiselles**. The rarity, delicacy and profusion of the concretions are among the finest in Europe. Less well-known, the cave of **Devèze** in the Haut Languedoc Regional Nature Park is well worth a detour. To the south of the Causse du Larzac, an underground safari awaits at the Label Cave.

Wine Tourism and Terroir



By 'wine tourism', we mean 'all the tourist and leisure activities dedicated to the cultural discovery of winegrowing, wine and terroir'... a kind of tourism that, here in Languedoc, speaks of our identity, deeply human and authentic in nature.

Lying between the coast and the foothills of the Cévennes and Larzac, our winegrowing country has been magnificently preserved, affording a geological diversity that has been exploited by winegrowers since the 5th century BC. And that is where we are taking you, on the route of France's oldest vineyards, to discover delights of sun-kissed wines and hearty cuisine.

Here, the wine resembles its terroir and, above all, its people. By traveling along, the Languedoc wine route, we will meet **'the Artisan Winegrowers'**. Through their history, their trade, their experience, shared over a patch of vine and a tasting session in the cellar, it is the entire lifeblood of the terroir that breathes... ardent and whole.

Our vineyards

Here, the entire department is bound to the rhythm of the wine. Envied by larger, more famous wine areas it is the specific characteristics of our terroir that have helped us create exceptional wines for the last 25 years: the ideal climate, the diversity of soils and grape varieties, well-preserved know-how and a dynamic research centre. Additionally, and this has been our particular strength, the diversity of our designations has nurtured the creativity of our winegrowers and the wealth of our range. 81% of our wines with an IGP classification (Protected Geographical Indication) and 12% labelled AOC (Protected Designation of Origin) bear witness to the quality and personality of our vineyards here in Languedoc.

Our AOC Wines

Strict and precise criteria define our Protected Designations of Origin: a certain type of soil, a particular geographical site, the use of traditional grape varieties and well-established know-how. Producing a host of vins doux naturels (muscats), Languedoc also takes pride in the character of its still dry wines.

Depending on your mood, **AOC wines from Languedoc** will take you towards wine routes that focus on designations such as **Faugères, Saint-Chinian or Minervois**. Or perhaps you'd prefer to sample fresh oysters accompanied by a **Picpoul de Pinet** on the shores of the Thau Lagoon. For your summer evenings, how about a **Pic Saint-Loup**, a **Grès de Montpellier**? Or perhaps **savour a Clairette du Languedoc AOC**.



Our IGP Wines

Our wines which have been classified as Protected Geographical Indication are redolent with the aromas of the garrigue, pine, cypress and olive trees; their freshness comes from the sea breezes blowing in from the coast. Creative wines, rich in grape varieties, they include, for example, the IGP **St-Guilhem-le-Désert, Côtes de Thongue, Côtes de Thau, a Vin de Pays de Bessan, or the Coteaux du Salagou**. We differentiate between IGP wines from Pays d'Hérault, IGP from Pays d'OC and those of the 'territoire' or 'territory'.

Alcohol abuse is dangerous to your health. Drink in moderation.

DISCOVER OUR AOC WINES

LANGUEDOC

Terrasses du Larzac
Grés de Montpellier
Picpoul de Pinet
Montpeyroux
Pic Saint-Loup
Saint-Christol
Pézenas
Saint-Saturnin
Saint-Drézéry
La Méjanelle
Cabrières
Saint-Georges-d'Orques

FAUGÈRES

SAINT-CHINIAN

Berlou
Roquebrun

MINERVOIS

Minervois la Livinière

CLAIRETTE DU LANGUEDOC

MUSCAT DE LUNEL

MUSCAT DE FRONTIGNAN

MUSCAT DE ST-JEAN-DE-MINERVOIS

MUSCAT DE MIREVAL



DISCOVER OUR IGP WINES

IGP PAYS

D'HERAULT WINES

Cessenon
Collines de la Moure
Coteaux de Bessilles
Coteaux du Salagou
Pays de Bessan
Pays de Caux

IGP TERRITOIRE WINES

Côtes de Thongue
Coteaux de Libron/Béziers
Coteaux d'Enserune
Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert
Haute Vallée de l'Orb
Côtes de Thau
Vicomté d'Aumelas

IGP WINES

'PAYS D'OC'



our wine centres

There is such an array of designations, geographical indications and grape varieties in the department that you may need some guidance when it comes to sampling them. Our wine centres will advise you not only on the wines you are discovering but also on some of our other gastronomic delights.

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our traditional local products



OLIVES AND OLIVE OILS

All year round, our olive oil producers welcome you for educational and gourmet tasting sessions with olives as the focus. **La Lucques**, an old local variety, has attractive notes of avocado and hazelnut.



OYSTERS AND SHELLFISH

Thau Basin and its fishing ports are the ideal destinations for a gourmet get-together in the company of aficionados of seafood, mussels au gratin and the sea air. **Bouzigues oysters**, a speciality of the Basin, take their unique flavour from the underground fresh water that flows through the lagoon's oyster farms.



CHEESES

Roquefort naturally springs to mind but perhaps not our **Pélarion AOC**. Yet this goat's cheese, typical of the region, adorned the best tables in ancient Rome.



TRADITIONAL LOCAL PRODUCTS

From the **sweet onions of Lézignan la Cèbe** to **Pardailhan turnips, Caroux cherries and Olargues chestnuts**, Languedoc abounds in traditional regional products. They can be purchased at our many markets and are used in local recipes.

You can recognise the sweet onion by its flattened, elongated top. It is in season from May to September. As for the Pardailhan turnips, try them caramelised in goose fat.

Whatever you do, don't miss the cherry season and be sure to sample the ancient varieties: blanche (white), bigarreau (a sweet cherry) and griotte (which has a more acidic flavour). And celebrate chestnut season by visiting one of the many local fairs in its honour.



Outdoor Leisure Pursuits



Hérault, le Languedoc: leisure at your leisure... a landscape replete with contrasts, made of mountains and canyons, lagoons and salt pans, dense forests and fine sandy beaches. Sporty types looking for an adrenalin rush and adventure-seeking families, a wonderful variety of leisure activities in the 'great outdoors' is here for your pleasure

Water Sports in the Méditerranéenne

For water enthusiasts all year long

Coastal lagoons, 100 kilometres of beaches, 19 pleasure harbours in the heart of holiday resorts, Hérault certainly has its sea legs... and sporty ones at that. From spring all the way through to autumn, water sports abound along the coast, keeping in time with gatherings and top events. Boardsports, rowing and sailing can be enjoyed whatever the season; only the family dip needs to wait for warmer weather.





CAPE ON THE COAST 'DIVERSITY'

As a spirited adventurer, go head-over-heels at the **Bay of Aigues Mortes** and the renowned resorts of Grande Motte, Carnon and Palavas-les-Flots: competition venues par excellence, fiefdoms of regattas, dinghies and yachts. Aficionados of surfing, windsurfing, kitesurfing, stand up paddle surfing and sea kayaking will also find plenty ways to use up their boundless energy here.

A change of scenery on the **shores of the Thau Lagoon**, farther west, where the atmosphere is one of strolling along the promenade in search of seafaring history and the know-how of the shellfish far-

mers. Go fishing in the heart of a remarkable ecosystem, where pink flamingos and seagulls squabble over the tranquillity of the spot. And then in **Sète**, try your hand at lateen sailing and traditional rowing.

Recognised as historical and architectural jewels, **Agde and Cap d'Agde** are home to every kind of tourism. And they remain a highly attractive destination for nature lovers. Go diving along the undersea trail at La Plagette, try your hand at surfing, marvel at the sight of the Languedoc water jousting tournaments or enter a rowing competition. Getting away from it all is guaranteed.

And now it is time to head away from the coast. You arrive at the **Canal du Midi**. A lazy sail on a barge is a must. Give yourself over to simple pleasures, soaking up the serenity and the poetry of this unique experience.



en route to the great outdoors



Another Languedoc awaits, a Languedoc of wide open spaces and, above all, new activities in the great outdoors. The captive scenery, with its chiselled relief, vibrant colours, at times almost supernatural.

You will be spoiled for choice: go mountain biking on the flamboyant lands of **Lake Salagou** or for a hike through **the Massif du Caroux**. Want to cool off? Answer the call of the **Gorges de l'Hérault** and go **canoeing or kayaking**. Still not enough adrenalin? Go **climbing** on the dizzy heights of the white cliffs of **Hortus**. Even more sensations? Take your first **glider flight** over the **Pic Saint-Loup**. Languedoc's natural attractions bring you emotion in its purest state.

wellness

Is your desire to get away driven by the need for rest and relaxation? Then spend your stay at the **thermal spas of Avène and Lamalou-les-Bains**, where moments of sheer bliss await. Or you could combine relaxation with sea air at the top thermal and wellness spa in **Balaruc-les-Bains**. Another good plan would be to enjoy the gentle pleasures of thalassotherapy in the unique city of **La Grande Motte**.



ALL YEAR ROUND...

...season after season, Languedoc adapts to suit you, your desires, your pleasures. Choose a programme that suits you and your rhythm to a tee, your very own personalised programme in Languedoc.

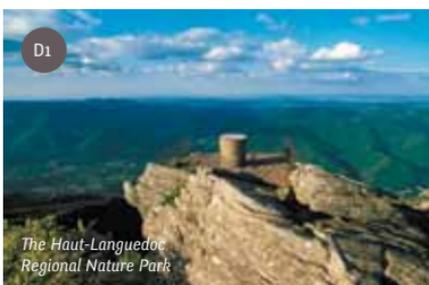




 destination
Languedoc
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**Grands sites
and Heritage**





D4

Petits pâtés de Pézenas



B6

Pic Saint-Loup



D5

Oyster farm in the Thau Basin



Traditional Languedoc mazet

Enotourism and Terroir

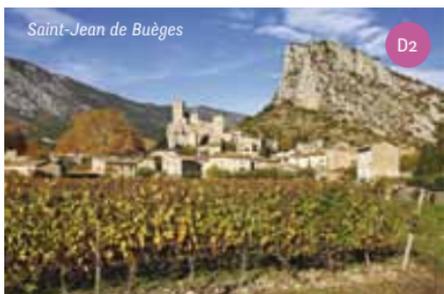


Grape picking



Marseillan

E5



Saint-Jean de Buèges

D2



A wander through the vineyards

Pic Saint-Loup

B6



Kitesurfing at Aresquiers

D6



Outdoor Leisure Pursuits

C2



Haut Languedoc

Descending the Hérault

B5



D5



The Rhône to Sète Canal

An outing on horseback



Sailing school



Adventure park



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 **Languedoc e-Greeters**



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