



# The Var

**OFF THE  
BEATEN TRACK**  
A 'ceramic' voyage  
from Salernes to Varages

**THE TRAVEL  
NOTEBOOK**  
5 itineraries going  
with the flow

**LIVING HERE**  
The Gulf  
of Saint-Tropez

**ANNIVERSARY**  
The Var Departmental Museum  
celebrates its 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary





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© Emmanuel Bertrand



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**WHERE TO GET YOUR COPY OF "LE VAR"?**: The magazine is distributed free of charge at many events and is also available at the Toulon Departmental Council, town and village halls, tourist offices... and is downloadable at [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr)

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# Portfolio

Classical music is the guest of honour every summer in Mazaugues.

**Nuits Musicales de Mazaugues** is an outdoor music festival at the foot of the mountain of Sainte-Baume that offers a programme of stellar quality. This year's festival takes place over five evenings, from 20 July to 7 August. [www.festivalmazaugues.com](http://www.festivalmazaugues.com)



© Provence Verte









© Théâtre In Situ

Set against the idyllic backdrop of Fort de la Bayard, with a programme of choice and great atmosphere, **Théâtre In Situ in Carqueiranne** has grown into one of the summer's top theatre festivals. Seven plays feature on the 2018 programme, from 30 July to 8 August. [www.carqueiranne.fr](http://www.carqueiranne.fr) section "Événements"



© Bayamo

100% Cuban, **Bayamo** at Fort Balaguier in **La Seyne**, presents not only music but every aspect of Cuban culture in exhibitions, dance workshops and talks. 14-22 July 2018. [www.bayamo.fr](http://www.bayamo.fr)





© Cyril Bruno - Festival de Ramatuelle

Red cushions in the sky are not an uncommon sight in Ramatuelle, having first appeared in 1985. Every year, the **Ramatuelle Festival** offers an eclectic programme that successfully combines theatre, variety, classical music and humour. Next edition: 1-11 August. [www.festivalderamatuelle.com](http://www.festivalderamatuelle.com)





For three days in April, **Hyères** will be a global epicentre of fashion and photography. The **International Fashion, Photography and Accessories Festival** will reveal the talents of tomorrow. [villanoailles-hyeres.com](http://villanoailles-hyeres.com)

© Chantapitch Wivatchakamol





Brignoles is set to jive to the rhythm of jazz from 26-28 July. Over the past 30 years, **Jazz à Brignoles** has hosted the greatest French and international jazz names. Free concerts on Place Carami.  
[www.brignoles.fr](http://www.brignoles.fr)

## *The Var – Festival Country*

**J**azz, world music, electro, classical music, theatre, dance, fashion –in the Var, numerous major cultural events take place at regular dates throughout the year. Festivals of national and even international fame make the summer evenings even brighter, the rich and diverse programmes attracting ever more numerous audiences. These events also help make the entire region an attractive tourist destination. The Var Department\* is a partner of many of them, with the aim of promoting culture within the Var and beyond. It supports festivals large and small and of every artistic genre as long as they are compatible with its cultural policy, clearly artistic in intent and strongly geared to audiences. Subsidies for festivals in 2018 will total around €750,000, or 12% of the Var Department's total subsidies for culture. ■

\* One of the 96 Departmental councils in France



# Perspectives

## ON NATURALIST DRAWING

► Until September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
Var Departmental Museum – Toulon

Of all the drawings and engravings found in the Chauvet cave in Ardèche, and produced over 35,000 years ago, almost half of them illustrate animals! Even today, the first children's books contain illustrations of numerous animal species! This goes to show how far representation of the living world is precious and important for our civilizations. To better appreciate this idea, the Var Department offers an approach which couples finesse and fine detail. Or, rather several approaches, shedding light on the species themselves but also on hu-

Tawny owl



© DeBesson 1859

mankind's vision of nature. Designed by the Var Departmental Museum, which celebrates its 130th anniversary this year (see page 43), the exhibition "Perspectives on Naturalist Drawing" explores the wide diversity of graphic representation found in the naturalist approach and its evolution. Combining art and science, the Departmental Museum brings together two worlds, one academic, where the act of drawing belongs to studio or laboratory, and the other, freer and more artistic, in the manner of traditional travel logs.

This perception of the living world, of biodiversity, real or fantasy, is part of the Var Departmental Museum's programming plan. Open to all and free of charge, activities include debates (Fridays 8/06, 6/07 and 24/08 in the afternoon), guided themed tours (16/06, 1/07, 15/07, 18/07, 21 / 07, 5/08, 18/08, 21/08, 26/08, 2/09 in the afternoon), animated family tours (24/06, 4/07, 31/07, 3/08, 11/08, 8/09 in the afternoon): bookings to be made on-site 30 minutes before the start of the activity. To prepare visitors for the exhibition, two field workshops called "Drawing on the spot",

allow participants to step into the shoes of naturalist illustrators at the Plan Departmental nature area in La Garde. On Sunday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at 2pm (+33 [0]6 85 70 68 81) and Sunday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, at 2pm (+33 [0]6 08 33 00 68). Telephone booking compulsory.

Free admission.

Var Departmental Museum  
Jardin du las - Toulon.

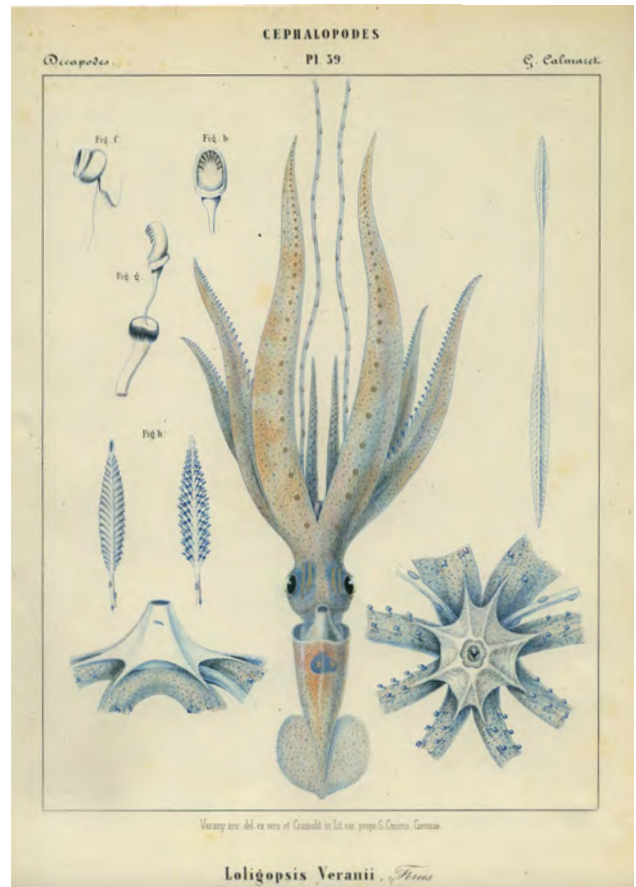
Open from Tuesday to Sunday, except holidays, from 9am to 6pm

Tel. +33 (0)4 83 95 44 20 - [museum.var.fr](http://museum.var.fr)



Mediterranean tree frog

Sébastien Hasbrouck



MHN de Nice - Ville de Nice





## TRIPS ON THE BANKS OF THE STYX

► **Until September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**La Celle Abbey**

**T**he Styx, the main River to Hell in ancient Greek mythology, has nurtured many a tale through time. Far from being pure mythology, the funeral rites of antiquity have left deep traces in the Var. The vestiges and practices of these rites are unveiled by the Department in a unique archaeological exhibition, which will run up to the Heritage Days in September. The exhibition explores the ancient and deeply rooted Roman belief that the soul is immortal. The vast majority of those alive at the time believed in the existence of a form of consciousness which was perpetuated after death. The tomb was therefore seen as a dwelling place for eternity. Furniture, ossuary, burial, and necropolis: many objects or funerary offerings dating back to Antiquity and discovered in the Var, provide information on the funeral customs of the era. Thus giving perspective to our own beliefs...

**Free admission - La Celle Abbey - Place des Ormeaux**  
**Open from Tuesday to Sunday, from 10.30am to 12.30pm**  
**and 1.30 to 5.30pm. Final entry, 30 mins. before closing.**  
**Tel.+33 (0)4 98 05 05 05 - [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr)**

Opening the funeral urn of tomb 71 at the Pauvadou necropolis in Fréjus

## EXAGGERATING FOR INVENTION

► **From July 13<sup>th</sup> to November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**Departmental Arts Center**

**Var Arts Center -Toulon**

**J**oana Vasconcelos revisits traditional clichés, armed with the ultimate weapon: humor. From stainless steel pots, cutlery, colored plastic molds, cork, azulejos, pieces of embroidery, and even sanitary tampons (!), the Portuguese artist diverts everyday objects to make singular, often monumental, non-critical works, related to the status of women. Exhibited at Versailles as well as in some of the world's greatest museums, her work at the Departmental Arts Center is centered on an installation with a strangely invading spirit: Valquíria (Valkyrie in French). The spotlight here is on textile creations, as well as some choice older pieces, darkly ironic and rarely seen in exhibitions before. There are also some iconic items, including crochet-enshrouded works based on the animal models of great Portuguese illustrator, Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro.

**Free admission.**

**HDA Var - 236, Boulevard Maréchal Leclerc - Toulon.**

**Open from Tuesday to Sunday from 10am to 6pm**

**Tel. +33 (0)4 83 95 18 40 - <https://hda.var.fr/>**

©Joana Vasconcelos *Blup*, 2002 Azulejos, hand embroidery, industrial fencing, MDF 210 x 150 x 100 cm  
 Collection Fleiss, Paris. Luís Vasconcelos/Courtesy  
 Unidade Infinita Projectos





# Read & VOTE

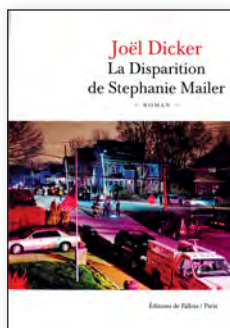
The Var Readers' Prize (Prix des lecteurs du Var) organised by the Var Departmental Council\* gives you a chance to vote for your favourite novel from a selection of 3 books for adults and 3 for young people – a great idea to get reading and to share what you read with friends and family this summer. After that, you can meet the authors at the Var Book Fair (Fête du Livre du Var) on 16, 17 and 18 November in Toulon.

\* One of the 96 Departmental councils in France



## THE BOOKS

### *Adult novel selection*



► **LA DISPARITION DE STÉPHANIE MAILER,**  
by Joël Dicker  
Éditions Bernard de Fallois

30 July 1994 in USA. The mayor of the small seaside resort of The Hamptons and his family are murdered. The investigation is led by a couple of young, ambitious and determined police officers who find the murderer, earning them praise from their hierarchy and a medal. But twenty years later, the journalist Stéphanie Mailer asserts that they arrested the wrong person. What really happened on 30 July 1994? After *La vérité sur l'affaire Harry Quebert* – which won several prizes including the *Goncourt des Lycéens* and the *Grand prix du roman de l'Académie française* and was adapted for television – this young Swiss author has produced another thrilling tale.



► **MASSIF CENTRAL,**  
by Christian Oster  
Éditions de l'Olivier

*"I don't say that Carl Denver had the intention of killing me. I'd say it was more a vague fear born of what I knew about Carl Denver and our past relationship."* Between Paul and Carl Denver, there is Maud – the woman Paul took from Denver and whom he has just left. Betrayal and disenchantment: two mistakes that Denver, a seemingly uncontrollable person, looks likely to make him suffer for. To escape this latent threat, Paul takes refuge in central France. With *Massif Central*, Christian Oster offers us one of his most gripping novels.



► **JOURS BRÛLANTS À KEY WEST,**  
by Brigitte Kernel  
Éditions Flammarion

In April 1955, Françoise Sagan, aged nineteen, is on a promotional tour of the United States for the American publication of *Bonjour tristesse*. Tired by the interviews and dinner parties, she shuts herself up in her hotel room. Tennessee Williams, who is busy proofreading *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, invites her to join him in Key West, where he lives. He is not alone: Frank Merlo, his lover, lives with him. Eight years later, just before his death in 1963, the latter decides to recount those two life-changing weeks in Key West. A beautiful novel about two giants of literature, brilliantly written by Brigitte Kernel.



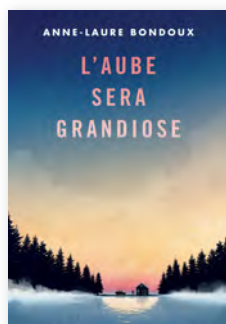
As part of the 2018 *Fête du Livre du Var* on 16, 17 and 18 November in Toulon, the Var Department\* is holding the Var Readers' Prize. The aim of this competition is to help readers discover not only different authors, but also novels that have received critical acclaim. It is a way of fostering reading through the Var network of public libraries or independent booksellers. Three novels will be competing in each of two categories: Adult and Young People. They will be made available to readers in the Var in local libraries all over the Department by the Var Public Library Service. The prize will be awarded at the Var Book Fair next November. Each winner will receive €1,000. In the run-up to the fair, there will also be events centred on the Readers' Prize in the participating libraries and bookshops, with 20 workshops for young people, 16 book-readings for adults by theatre companies, and 15 meetings with authors in 43 public libraries all over the Var.

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France

**VOTE!**

Readers can vote for their favourite work from 15 May to 11 October 2018. To do so, you can get the selection of books from your local library or bookshop and then cast your vote in a library or on the [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr) website

## Youth selection



► **L'AUBE SERA GRANDIOSE,**  
by Anne-Laure Bondoux  
*Éditions Gallimard jeunesse*

Winner of the 2017 *Prix Vendredi* (first edition of this prize for teenage literature) That evening, 16-year-old Nine, does not go to her school prom. Her mother Titania decides otherwise. She takes her daughter to an unknown destination, an isolated hut on the banks of a lake. It is time to reveal to her the existence of a carefully hidden past. During a narrative which is often funny and sometimes overwhelmingly tragic, Nine discovers an astonishing family story that immerses her in the 1970s, related in pithy and fluid style by Anne-Laure Bondoux.  
*Age 13 years and over.*



► **MISS POOK  
ET LES ENFANTS DE LA LUNE,**  
by Bertrand Santini  
*Éditions Grasset jeunesse*

Paris, 1907. Miss Pook is a witch. In the deceptive guise of a charming young girl, she is taken on by a rich Parisian family to look after Élise, age 10. Bertrand Santini enchants us with this poetic new fantasy tale full of humour, scattered with literary and cinematographic references and reminiscent of *Mary Poppins*, *Alice in Wonderland*, or the universe of Tim Burton. And as always with this author, the monsters are not who you might think.  
*Age 11 years and over.*



► **FIL DE FER,**  
by Martine Pouchain  
*Éditions Flammarion jeunesse*

In 1939, France declares war on Germany. Gabrielle, nicknamed “Fil de fer”, is forced to leave her village and flee through France with her family. During her tough and dangerous flight, Fil de fer meets a mysterious boy and falls in love at first sight. Who is this handsome young man who is never hungry or thirsty? A story of initiation interspersed with poetry and magnificently recounted by Martine Pouchain, this beautiful novel is full of nuances and surprises right to the very last page.  
*Age 13 years and over.*





LE DÉPARTEMENT

# Les Voix Départementales

3<sup>rd</sup> July to 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018

**D83**

LA CELLE  
CABASSE  
MÉOUNES  
LA GARDE-FREINET  
COMPS-sur-ARTUBY  
SILLANS-LA-CASCADE  
LE BEAUSSET  
CHÂTEAUDOUBLE  
ROCBARON  
FAYENCE  
AIGUINES  
ST-MARTIN-DE-PALLIÈRES

**12 free concerts**

**12 sites**

infos on [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr)

 DepartementVar  #departementduvar

EVERYWHERE, FOR EVERYONE, THE VAR, YOUR EVERYDAY PARTNER





# DEPARTMENTAL *Voices*

12 towns.  
12 concerts (free admission).  
3 companies from the Var. Once again this year,  
from July 3<sup>rd</sup> to August 29<sup>th</sup>, Var Department\* will hold  
the Departmental Voices tour.

Audiences will be able to enjoy events combining vocals with instrumental music, in the 2018 edition of the Departmental Voices! With a high standard of classical music, the concerts are organized and funded by the Var Department\*. Programmed artists are all Var musicians of national renown. The Var fosters an active cultural outreach policy, promoting culture for all, throughout the territory. For the second consecutive year, the inauguration of the tour will take place at the La Celle Abbey, owned by the Department and famous for its exceptional acoustics. Other events will be held in churches made available by the city councils, in public areas or in high-capacity outdoor theaters. ■

All concerts are free of charge, do not require reservation, and begin at 9pm.

For further information, please contact: +33 (0)4 83 95 18 79 or, [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr)

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France

## PRESENTATION OF CONCERTS

The Marie-Louise Duthoit ensemble, Alcibiade Minel or Bruno Robillard, and the Andrea Quartet offer audiences a tribute performance to Claude Debussy (1:15). In the anniversary year of his death, the concert entitled Claude Debussy and his era, includes the main works of this major representative of impressionist music. Melodies for soprano, string quartet and piano.

The Fractales Collective brings together artists who break the barriers of classical music. A lively vocal ballad, will transport audiences from Schubert to Gershwin, from Handel, Offenbach and Bernstein... The one-hour concert will enchant both music-buffs and novices alike. String quartet and soprano.

The vocal / piano recital of Manon Gleizes and Alcibiade Minel offers audiences a two-part musical journey; the exploration of happy sentiment, then tragic denouement. Musical journey: operatic arias and melodies, the hour-long concert, highlights the range of emotions that opera heroines convey: joy, sadness, passion, madness, love...

## PROGRAM 2018

### ► TUESDAY, JULY 3<sup>rd</sup>

La Celle Abbey  
Marie-Louise Duthoit (soprano)  
Ensemble, Alcibiade Minel (piano),  
and Andrea Quartet

### ► WEDNESDAY, JULY 4<sup>th</sup>

Cabasse, Republic Square  
Fractale Collective

### ► SUNDAY, JULY 8<sup>th</sup>

Méounes Church  
Marie-Louise Duthoit Ensemble,  
Alcibiade Minel, and Andrea Quartet

### ► WEDNESDAY, JULY 11<sup>th</sup>

La Garde-Freinet, Town Hall Square  
Fractales Collective

### ► SUNDAY, JULY 15<sup>th</sup>

Comps-sur-Artuby, St. Philomena Church  
Fractales Collective

### ► TUESDAY, JULY 24<sup>th</sup>

Sillans-la-Cascade, Le Bastidon  
Vocal / piano recital: Manon Gleizes  
and Alcibiade Minel

### ► FRIDAY, JULY 27<sup>th</sup>

Le Beausset, garden's Goubelet  
Vocal / piano recital: Manon Gleizes  
and Alcibiade Minel

### ► SATURDAY, JULY 28<sup>th</sup>

Châteaudouble, Church of  
Our Lady of the Annunciation  
Vocal / piano recital: Manon Gleizes  
and Alcibiade Minel

### ► SATURDAY, AUGUST 11<sup>th</sup>

Rocbaron, Saint Sauveur's Church  
Fractales Collective

### ► SATURDAY, AUGUST 25<sup>th</sup>

Fayence, Espace culturel Open-air Theater  
Marie-Louise Duthoit (soprano) Ensemble,  
Bruno Robillard (piano), and Andrea Quartet

### ► MONDAY AUGUST 27<sup>th</sup>

Aiguines, Saint-Jean's Church  
Marie-Louise Duthoit Ensemble,  
Bruno Robillard, and Andrea Quartet

### ► WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29<sup>th</sup>

Saint-Martin-de-Pallières, Church of  
Our Lady of the Assumption  
Fractales Collective



Summer in the Var is one long festival. The Mediterranean climate is such that numerous cultural events can be held outdoors. Throughout the summer season, towns and villages all over the Var play host to numerous artists covering every genre.

Here's a selection of events funded in part by the Var Departmental council\*.

\* One of the 96 Departmental councils in France

## ROCKORAMA IN TOULON

► 29 June-1 July



The independent, 100% electro rock festival, Rockorama, celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. And 'anniversary' means treats in store! Yelle, Corine, Mila Dietrich, Autobahn, La Fraicheur, Robots in disguise, Sofa Queen... an eclectic mix of artists, both French and foreign, are invited to this three-day festival. All the concerts take place in the gardens of the Tour Royale in Toulon and are free of charge. [www.rockorama.fr](http://www.rockorama.fr)



© Camille Desmé

## NÉOULES FESTIVAL ► 19-21 July

Run entirely by volunteer staff, Néoules Festival once again offers three days of concerts at Bastide de Châteauain. The festival opens on 19 July with an electro dub evening and, topping the bill, High Tone and L'Entourloop. Reggae music is guest of honour the next day, with singers Alborosie and U-Roy, among others. The closing evening is a fun rockfest with the Fatal Picards and their caustic humour, and Les Motivés! Camping facilities and daytime activities are available to festival-goers. As every year, live art performances and an arts and craft market also await visitors.

**Prices: €28 on the website, €30 at the gate, free admission for under 10s. 3-day pass: €75, €85 with a camping pitch (200 available). [festival-de-neoules.fr](http://festival-de-neoules.fr)**

## MIDI FESTIVAL IN HYÈRES

► 20-22 July



© DR

Étienne Daho tops the bill, but there will also be appearances by the revelation of the year, the young singer Juliette Armanet, as well as Baxter Dury and Flavian Berger. And let's not forget the festival's very *raison d'être* – discovering up-and-coming musicians, who include Halo Maud, Jessica83, Octavian, Aloïse Sauvage, Westerman, and others. A colourful programme is lined up for the 2018 MIDI festival. The first two evenings will take place on the Hippodrome beach in Hyères, where two stages will be mounted for the occasion. A marquee on Route Salins will be the venue for MIDI Night, starting at 11pm. The final evening will take place outside Villa Noailles, an enchanting backdrop for an event with surprises in store. **Prices: 3-day pass €65-€70, 2-day pass €55-€60, evening pass €10-€40.**

## Plus,

### JAZZ IN PORQUEROLLES

► 7-11 July

Concerts at Fort Sainte-Agathe at 9pm.  
Programme and reservations on  
[www.jazzaporquerolles.org](http://www.jazzaporquerolles.org)

### CALLAS ANCIENT MUSIC FESTIVAL

► 17-24 July

17: Fiesta Cubana, "Fuoco e cenere"  
19: Ararat "Canticum Novum"  
24: Orientalism at Court, "Hesperis"  
Callas Church, 9pm.  
Reservations on +33 (0)4 94 39 06 77  
or [www.callas-festival.com](http://www.callas-festival.com)  
ou sur [www.callas-festival.com](http://www.callas-festival.com)



© Kubilai Khan investigation

### CONSTELLATIONS FESTIVAL IN TOULON

► 13-16 September

**W**ith dance, music, in-situ performances, visual arts and

encounters with professional artists, **Constellations** offers inhabitants and visitors alike in the town of Toulon three days of meetings and exchanges with numerous confirmed or emerging artists, local or otherwise. Participative, ambulatory projects are also part of the programme. Organised by the Var-based contemporary dance company Kubilai Khan Investigations, this free festival is now in its eighth year.

In 2017, more than 4,000 people attended the 50-or-so shows scheduled for the event, which takes the form of an 'urban stroll' and occupies the entire town.

[www.kubilai-khan-constellations.com](http://www.kubilai-khan-constellations.com)

### 36<sup>th</sup> ENTRECASTEAUX FESTIVAL

► 16-25 August

**C**hamber music takes pride of place at this festival, which has earned its credentials over the decades. Vérignon, Cotignac, Pontevès, Fox-Amphoux, Sillans-la-Cascade and, of course, **Entrecasteaux** are the venues for this year's eight concerts, two of them on the fringe of the official programme, at Vérignon on 11 August and at Fox-Amphoux on 19 August. Classical music for all tastes, with Strauss, Brahms, Mozart, Beethoven and Ravel, as well as Satie, Poulenc, Bernstein and Gershwin, awaits festival-goers. The guest musicians include international artists as well as young talents just embarking on their career – a savvy mixture that explains the rich diversity of this superb event.

**You'll find the full programme and prices at [festivaldentrecasteaux.fr](http://festivaldentrecasteaux.fr)**



© Festival d'Entrecasteaux



**JAZZ IN RAMATUELLE** ▶ 16-20 August

The *Jazz à Ramatuelle* festival has offered a rich and eclectic programme with acclaimed, world-famous musicians for the past 33 years. But it also offers new gems – up-and-coming young artists, sometimes in an exclusive premiere appearance, not to mention the free fringe concerts before and after the evening concerts.



This year is no exception, with new artists, unlikely duos, one-off quartets, new creations and young talent to discover. Plenty of great surprises are in the pipeline, with artists such as Émile Parisien, Vincent Peirani, Manu Codjia, André Ceccarelli, Fred Hersch, Éric Mc Pherson, Laurent de Wilde and Fifi Chayeb, as well as hip-hop singer Sly Johnson and many others.

**Prices: €20-€40 per evening.**  
**You'll find the full programme at [jazzaramatuelle.com](http://jazzaramatuelle.com)**

**STRING QUARTET FESTIVAL IN PAYS DE FAYENCE**

▶ 13-16 September

Created in 1989, the *Festival de Quatuors à Cordes en Pays de Fayence* is now a firmly established item on Europe's chamber music agenda.

For its 30th edition, 30 concerts are scheduled throughout the year in the nine towns and villages that make up Pays de Fayence. But the culminating event will still be the festival itself, from 13-16 September. Legendary quartets, such as the Franco-Austrian Quatuor Mosaïques, the Czech ensemble Quatuor Prazak, and Quatuor Terpsycordes from Switzerland have been invited, but a number of young, up-and-coming musical ensembles, such as Quatuor Yako and Quatuor Cadences, will also be taking centre stage.

**Information, booking and prices at [quatuors-fayence.com](http://quatuors-fayence.com)**



## THE MUSICAL EVENINGS OF LA CELLE ABBEY

► 8 June-7 August



Owned by Var Département\*, La Celle Abbey has excellent acoustics. The musical evenings: “*Les Soirées Musicales de l’Abbaye de La Celle*”; have been organised every summer for the past 25 years by the association of the same name. This series of concerts has won its credentials over the years by virtue of a sophisticated, quality programme. To celebrate this 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, flautist Philippe Depetris, the event’s initiator, has programmed a number of prestigious concerts, on 8 June, 27 and 31 July and 3 and 5 August, with the Regional Cannes Orchestra, accordionist Richard Galliano, cellist Marc Coppey and pianist Mikhail Rudy. The final evening, 7 August, will feature Philippe Depetris and a host of other artists. Making the festival even more convivial, the concerts will be followed by a tasting of *Coteaux Varois en Provence* wines. If you love great music and produce from the Var region, this is for you!

Price: €25 (wine tasting included)  
 Subscription (6 concerts): €130  
[www.soireesmusicales-lacelle.com](http://www.soireesmusicales-lacelle.com)

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France



© Sébastien Boué / L'Équipe

## L'ŒIL EN SEYNE PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL AT LA SEYNE-SUR-MER

► 29 September-11 November

The 14<sup>th</sup> edition of the international photography festival, *L'Œil en Seyne* at Villa Tamaris in La Seyne-sur-Mer, presents an exhibition devoted entirely to sports photography. Organised in partnership with the newspaper *L'Équipe*, it gives the public a second chance to see some beautiful and well-known images, but above all to discover photos never published before. From the *Tour de France* cycle race to football, rugby, water sports and a whole section devoted to Olympic sports in the context of the Olympic Games to be organised by France in 2024, as well as less well-known disciplines, each photo represents one instant captured by highly talented photographers who have succeeded in immortalising the emotions of sport in combat, victory or defeat.

**Admission free.**  
**Open daily from 2pm to 6.30pm except Mondays and bank holidays.**  
[www.loeil-en-seyne.fr](http://www.loeil-en-seyne.fr)



© L'Équipe



# What's in my basket?



Each basket made by Carole Remy is unique. In her workshop "Les Chemins de l'Osier" at Solliès-Pont, she weaves baskets that are a mix of tradition and modernity. The tradition lies in the technique, which she learned at the Haute-Marne National Basketry School. The modernity lies in her practical, functional baskets, designed in line with today's fashion trends – such as this spherical model, which is made from different varieties of wicker and required 2h45 of manual work. Ideal for a stroll around the local markets this summer.

**Spherical basket, €48.**  
Les Chemins de l'Osier,  
15 rue Gabriel Peri  
à Solliès-Pont, by appointment on  
+33 (0)6 37 16 19 98 or by email:  
vannerielescheminsdelosier@orange.frou



## WINDMILLS AND MORE

Folklore and tradition take pride of place at the annual Windmill Festival, or *Fête des Moulins*, in Régusse. Held at the village's two windmills and in the village centre, it is an opportunity to rediscover the traditional techniques of mowing and milling wheat. Although windmills were restored in 1995, only one has a working mechanism. The other houses a museum of former tools. The Windmill Festival will be taking place from 3-5 August 2018. A guided tour and observation of the windmills, car-boot sales, a torchlit procession, fireworks, theatre and a folk parade are some of the activities lined up by the *Amis des Moulins de Régusse*, the association that maintains and promotes this centuries-old architectural heritage. 3-5 August. Full programme at [www.lesamisdesmoulinsderegusse.fr](http://www.lesamisdesmoulinsderegusse.fr)

## BRIDGING THE NORTH-SOUTH DIVIDE!

The Belgian national holiday has been celebrated every 21<sup>st</sup> July for the past twenty years in... Vinon-sur-Verdon! This popular event, which is organised by the village with the help of several local associations, began in 1996 on the initiative of a group of Belgian aviators who regularly visited the aerodrome at Vinon-sur-Verdon. Their celebration of Belgium's national holiday with the traditional meal of mussels and chips caught on with the whole village and beyond, and now attracts more than 3,000 people. Now, every 21<sup>st</sup> July, one tonne of mussels and 800 kilos of fries are served and savoured at the long tables set out on Esplanade Le Cours. And the restaurants serve the same menu! A dance band rounds out the evening.

Saturday 21 July. Price: €12 per portion of mussels and chips.  
More information at +33 (0)4 92 78 86 33.



## FROM EMAIL TO REAL MAIL!



Taking photos is so easy with smartphones. You can immortalise every moment – especially your holidays on the beaches or in the hinterland of the Var. But what then? PicInTouch, a Toulon-based start-up created by Alix Chambéron and her associate Thibaud Debaecker, posts your photos to your friends and family – all it takes is a simple email. To use the service, you simply subscribe to a package addressed to the intended recipient of your snapshots. For every photo you send by email, a few days later that person will receive a handwritten letter enclosing the image in 10x15cm format. More than 15,000 people already use this service that transforms your emails – into real mail! €29-€149 per pack of 20 to 100 photos.  
[www.picintouch.com](http://www.picintouch.com)



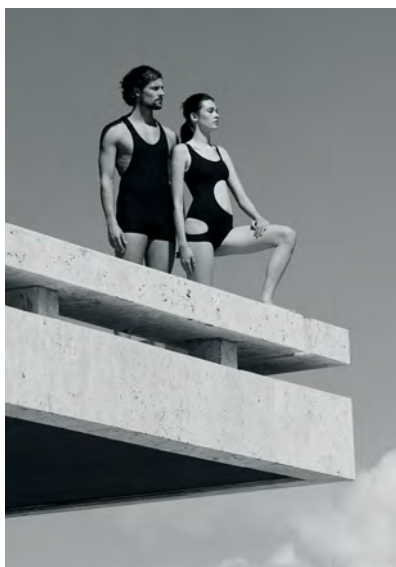
## DELICIOUS FISH SOUP



First made fifty years ago in Carqueiranne, the fish soup now trading under the name of Yvan & Grégory has found a new lease of life. Childhood friends Yvan Dhermand and Grégory Duvillard took over the company in 2016. Keeping the original recipe, they relaunched the soup with new packaging. Made from red gurnard, scorpionfish and whole gobies, bay leaf, thyme and other herbs, it can be served as a soup or used as a base for sauces. Simply delicious! Available in bottles or tins from numerous supermarkets and good food stores. €5-€6.

# A swimsuit

## MADE IN THE VAR



Vilebrequin is a reference luxury swimwear brand created in the Var. Now sold all over the world, these bathing outfits are still associated with the town of Saint-Tropez, where the brand's creator Fred Pysquel designed his first swimwear item – bathing shorts called 'Moorea'.

This year, the brand is innovating with a bold new swimsuit for men. Very different from the standard designs of recent years, this model is a tribute to Charles de Noailles who wore a similar model at his villa in Hyères in the 1930s. Extremely lightweight and available solely in black stretch fabric, it matches your every movement.

Price: €195. Available from Vilebrequin boutiques and at [www.vilebrequin.com](http://www.vilebrequin.com)

## IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS TODAY...

The 12th edition of the forestry festival *Fête de la Forêt et du Bòsc*, also called *Fête du Bois*, will take place from 7-9 September in La Martre. Organised by the Tourist Office of the Upper Artuby and Jabron Valleys, this festival celebrates wood in all its different forms, from construction to sculpture, marquetry and engraving, right through to a logging competition. Numerous activities are lined up during the three days of the festival, which draws more and more visitors every year to Espace Fontvielle.



7-9 September. Free admission. Refreshments available. [www.fetedubois.fr](http://www.fetedubois.fr)

## FÊTING FIGS

The now traditional *Fête de la Figue* will be taking place for the twenty-second successive year on the last weekend in August at Solliès-Pont. The organising committee has drawn up a packed programme in celebration of the sweet, melt-in-your-mouth Solliès Fig, the only fig in France to have earned AOC status. With rambles through the fig orchards, parades by costumed folk groups and brotherhoods and a market devoted to fig-based products, you're sure to get your fill of figs, in every shape and form!!

24-26 August. Free admission. Full programme at [www.fetedelafigue.fr](http://www.fetedelafigue.fr)







### CHICK PEAS, PLEASE!

In Rougiers, chick peas rule. They have been grown here since time immemorial and for a number of years have had their very own festival. On 9 September, the Chick Peas Brotherhood, which organises the event, will once again be celebrating this little pulse, a rich source of carbohydrate and vegetable proteins, in true style! On the programme are a craft market, demonstrations of mediaeval cooking and a scarecrow competition – not to mention the chick pea blowing contest, in which the contestants lie on a large tarpaulin and try to blow their chick pea as far as possible. Come along and join in the fun!

Sunday 9 September. Free admission.  
More information at +33 (0)6 13 09 89 95.

## Three shades of vinegar

Arnaud Ferraro makes three kinds of vinegar: red, white and rosé. Crafted at Grimaud from Var wines, each of the vinegars produced by this young winegrower has its own character and distinct flavour. The classic rouge has characteristic tannic, red-fruit notes, while the white offers a hint of hazelnut. As for the original rosé, it is surprisingly fresh and elegant, and ideal for seasoning summer salads. Only 300 litres of these vinegars are produced every year, making them a rare condiment – to be savoured.



€10.90-€14.90 per 50cl bottle. These vinegars are available only from certain retailers in the bay of Saint-Tropez or direct from the producer.  
Contact: [vinaigrerieferraro@orange.fr](mailto:vinaigrerieferraro@orange.fr)



### MECHANICAL CREATIONS

Pierre Arnaudet has been passionately interested in watches for as long as he can remember. He loves browsing antique shops for them, collecting, wearing and observing them. And he loves transforming them into original jewellery, as he has done since 2012. Starting with the mechanisms of old watches, he designs bracelets, necklaces, signet rings or cufflinks under the brand name of Art'Sénik Créations. The movements are mounted on metal, steel or zamak and embellished with precious stones. His aim is to create items of jewellery that are unique, but affordable – such as this necklace, made from a compass dial topped by a cogwheel and hematite, or these cufflinks, which highlight the rough beauty of the mechanisms. You'll find them at Ollioules, in the workshop boutique of Art'Sénik Créations.

One-off items. Necklace €38 and pair of cufflinks €28. Workshop boutique, 9, rue Gambetta, at Ollioules. Opening times on Art'Sénik Créations' Facebook page or [www.art-senik.com](http://www.art-senik.com)

© DR



# *Le Castellet,* **MEDIAEVAL & ARTISANAL**

Le Castellet, internationally famed for the Paul-Ricard motor-racing circuit, is also a mediaeval village where numerous artisans have opened workshops. With its hamlets, cobbled streets, artists and artisans, Le Castellet has lost none of its authenticity and is ranked among the Var's "Villages of Character".





Whatever your reason for going to Le Castellet, you can't fail to sense the Provençal atmosphere for which it is renowned locally, nationally, and even beyond France's borders. This typical village, which formed the backdrop for numerous scenes from the film *La femme du boulanger* (The Baker's Wife) made by Marcel Pagnol in 1938, is still the same as it was then. With its authentic stone-built houses and pretty squares, it is somehow reassuring, a place that has remained unchanged despite changing times. Perched up high on a rocky outcrop, it also offers magnificent views of the different hamlets and far beyond them, as far as the Mediterranean on one side and Saint-Baume on the other.

Visitors can enjoy the best-known and best-loved panorama from the *Trou de Madame* – literally, Madame's Hole. Legend has it that ladies watching for the return of their knights in the Middle Ages sat by this opening that afforded a view of the whole plain as far as the distant mountains. It is situated on "Battlefield Square" – *Place du Champ de Bataille* – not far from the castle, which today serves as the town hall. Built in the fifteenth century, Le Castellet castle has been the property of the municipality since 1969. After having belonged to numerous families, it was sold during the French Revolution and turned into stables and an oil mill. Perfectly conserved, its façades and defensive towers to the north and east are imposing. Just next door is the church of the Transfiguration of our Saviour, built in the twelfth century and extended in the eighteenth cen-



tury. Like the castle, it has been a listed building since 1939. One small detail is worth looking at. Just above the chancel, high up on the left, you can see a former opening, which was probably walled up during the French Revolution and through which the occupants of the castle came to attend church services.

The ramparts that surround the entire village and their two gates are also listed. The *Grand Portail* to the south and the *Portalet* to the east constitute to the two entrances to the fortified town. Inside, you walk on cobbled streets that look as if they have never changed. In fact, they date from just 2008-2010, when the municipality launched a

### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARCEL PAGNOL...

In 1938, Marcel Pagnol chose Le Castellet as the setting for his cult film, *La femme du boulanger* (The Baker's Wife). 80 years on, a trail has been created allowing you to retrace the story of the film and discover the places where the scenes were shot –from Place de l'Ormeau, the site of the school outside which the schoolteacher talks with Pétugue, to Place de l'Église, the setting for some of the film's most memorable moments, to the house of the baker's wife herself, since replaced by an art gallery. This work by Marcel Pagnol, which was inspired by a short novel by Jean Giono, has left an indelible mark on Le Castellet. "During filming, the actors came to eat at our house, with my parents", Suzanne, aged 93, recalls. "They were wonderful times." Plans of the trail can be obtained at the Tourist Centre on Rue de la Poste. +33 (0)4 94 32 79 13.





huge project to completely renovate the streets and squares of Le Castellet's historic centre. It received a subsidy of €300,000 from the Var Department to fund the work. The renovation work complete, they now reinforce the authentic air of this village which, over the years, has become a very popular showcase for numerous tradespeople and artisans. One such person is the engraver Gérard Pons, who set up shop on Place Saint-Éloi thirty years ago. *"This is where I earned my independence and freedom"*, he smiles. *"I arrived by some fateful chance and I never left. Having a shop front is a way of advertising what I do."* He loves talking about his profession to the numerous people who drop into his workshop as they stroll around the village. Whether paintings, cosmetics, jewellery or decorations, artists and artisans have found a place of choice in Le Castellet. *"It began in the 1960s, I think. My parents were weavers in the village, my uncle and aunt were potters... In fact, in my family everyone was either a shopkeeper or an artisan"*, explains Elsa Troglia, a jewellery designer in Le Castellet. She wouldn't have opened her boutique, called Miss Tinguette, anywhere else. *"For me, living here just went without saying"*, she goes on. *"My shop is open all year"*. A busy place during the summer season, Le Castellet does not go into hibernation in the winter. With some one hundred shops and numerous associations, Le Castellet is more than just a pretty picture on a postcard. It offers its inhabitants a pleasant quality of life that they gladly share, allowing thousands of tourists to enter its walls every year. ■

## ONE MUNICIPALITY, FIVE HAMLETS

Le Castellet is often cited simply for the mediaeval charm of its fortified main village, perched on a rocky outcrop. But Le Castellet is actually a number of villages, with more than 4,000 *Castellans* and *Castellanes*, as the inhabitants are known. Extending over 4,800 hectares, the municipality is made up of Le Castellet Village, Sainte-Anne, Le Camp, Le Brûlat and Le Plan. Each has its own atmosphere, the hallmark of an active social life in this *commune* that is a very popular destination for tourists to the Var. Le Plan, which was built on the site of a former Gallo-Roman villa, forms the commercial centre. The well-irrigated land – witness the fountain in the centre of the hamlet, which runs abundantly whatever the season – sustains numerous vineyards. The hallmark of Le Brûlat is its beautiful, spacious square, embellished by centuries-old plane trees that provide shade for the regulars. In Sainte-Anne, clumps of pine, vines and olive groves offer a gentle lifestyle that can be felt on the *boulevard*, where the players come together in winter and summer alike. Numerous wayside shrines are dotted along its roads and can be discovered during pleasant walks. Lastly, Le Camp is home to the Paul-Ricard Circuit, a veritable institution in the field of motor sports which this year will once again be hosting the Formula 1 French Grand Prix (see also the article about this event on pages 30 and 31).







LE DÉPARTEMENT


Le Var


FRANCE'S  
LEADING  
TOURIST  
DESTINATION



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# AHEAD OF THE FIELD



**HIDDEN GEMS**  
A centre of expertise  
for rosé wines  
in the Var

P. 26 to 28

**EVENT**  
The French F1  
Grand Prix returns  
to Le Castellet

P. 30 & 31

**OPENING**  
The Carmignac  
foundation,  
inside the island

P. 32 to 35

**TALENT**  
The Qwan Ki Do  
born in Toulon

P. 36 & 37

**CUTTING-EDGE**  
B2B cosmetics,  
the cosmetic  
revolution

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**A GREAT  
SUCCESS STORY**  
Julien Noble, from  
the Var to Hollywood

P. 41 & 42

**ANNIVERSARY**  
The Var  
Departmental  
Museum  
is 130 years old

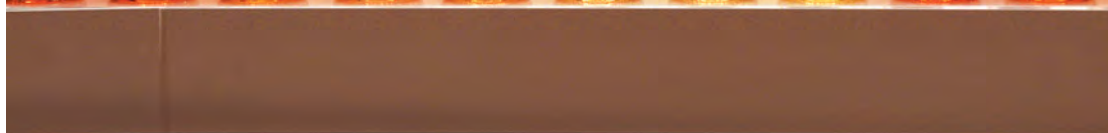
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**INNOVATION**  
Diving, triton-style

P. 46 & 47

**OFF THE BEATEN TRACK**  
Hens and Roosters

P. 48 & 49





# A CENTRE OF EXPERTISE, *for rosé wines in the Var*

The only body of its kind in the world, the Rosé Research and Experimental Centre (*Centre de recherche et d'expérimentation sur le vin rosé*) was established some twenty years ago in Vidauban. Since then, this tool – the brainchild of the winemakers themselves – has continuously provided all the expertise they need to guarantee their leadership in rosé wines.

If there was one star of the Paris International Agriculture Show, this was it: on the Var Department's stand, its rosé wines attracted thousands of visitors. Bottles lined up in their hundreds in every conceivable shade of pink sparkled and shone in the lenses of smartphones and cameras. They formed the outer "skin" of the stand held by the Var, which for its first participation in this major event had enlisted the help of three local partners – including the Rosé Research and Experimental Centre. *"For us it was a genuine opportunity to explain what we do and give visibility to the work we've achieved in the Var at Vidauban"*, says a delighted Gilles Masson, the centre's director. *"We also gathered a lot of data from tests and questionnaires handed out to consumers. We'll compare it with the data we obtain here."*



The only one of its kind in the world, the Rosé Research and Experimental Centre assists the winemakers of Provence in the crafting of their rosé wines. *“It’s a centre of expertise where we carry out studies, research, tests and experiments with the aim of improving the quality of the rosé and to enable our winegrowers to keep ahead”*, the director explains. *“It’s very varied work, covering everything from the vine to the table.”* Since 1999 and the inception of the Centre, know-how has improved with their help. From the date of the harvest to the harvesting method, grape temperature, fermentation and conservation, rosé production is a science that requires great technical skill *“It’s a wine where every minute, every metric counts”*, underscores Gilles Masson. *“It’s easy to drink, but very difficult to make.”* Because a rosé is neither a hybrid

wine, nor a mixture of red and white wines, nor a light red wine! It is a wine in its own right, made from white or red grapes. Its pink hue is the result of the brief maceration of the grape skins in the grape juice. Just a few minutes’ maceration is enough to provide the different hues that have been recorded in a colour chart – a reference for all things rosé, designed at Vidauban. The shades vary from garnet to redcurrant, coral pink, salmon, peach or litchi. But other factors also determine colour, depending on the vintage. Different research studies have been carried out, from terroir to bottling method, to try to understand, explain and master these factors. For that purpose, the Vidauban centre has an experimental winery which produces 300 pilot wines every year. Here, everything is miniaturised. Phenomena are studied at the small scale,

with great thoroughness and accuracy. The samples – around twenty bottles per study programme – then go to the laboratory for analysis. Around thirty parameters, such as alcoholic degree, aroma, acidity, sugar content, are measured, from which a product “ID” can be built up. All this data is then submitted to a panel of experts who taste each cuvee and note every nuance of flavour. Like the Vidauban centre, this panel has no equivalent in France or elsewhere. *“Back in 2005, we sought out professionals to create a group of experts capable of testing the wines from our experimental winery”*, explains Gilles Masson. *“Creating this panel was a necessity to add depth to our results. Thanks to their sensorial capabilities these people, whose role is vital for us, put the finger on tiny differences between the wines that a machine would be incapable of identifying.”*





kers of Provence who realised how special their wines were and had the idea of creating this tool”, relates the centre's director, who was recruited back at the start of the whole adventure to launch the project.

“Today, you can say they were visionaries.” Aware of the importance of this venture, the Var Department provided €380,000 in subsidies for the creation of the rosé research centre. Developed and inaugurated some years before the rush on rosé of the early 2000s, the

The Rosé Research and Experimental Centre took several years to acquire this expertise and then apply it. What was just a vague idea in the 1990s –that of investing in research and innovation to ensure the Var’s leadership in rosé production – is now an internationally acclaimed asset for the Var. “It was the winema-

institute, dedicated entirely to rosé, was there to assist the winegrowers. With this tool, they have a dependable means of crafting rosés of ever higher quality and always keeping one step ahead of competitors. Because while it is often imitated, the rosé of the Var has never yet been surpassed. ■

\*The Rosé Research Centre has the legal status of an Association under the 1901 Act and is made up of a number of bodies from the winegrowing sector. Its members are the Interprofessional Council of Provence Wines, the grower associations of AOCs Côtes de Provence, Coteaux Varois en Provence, Coteaux d’Aix-en-Provence, Bandol, Cassis, Palette, Bellet, Baux-de-Provence and Pierrefort and of the Vins de Pays du Var; the independent winegrower, wine cooperative and wine merchant federations; the Var and Bouches-du-Rhône Chambers of Agriculture; the Regional Chamber of Agriculture and the French Wine and Vine Institute.

## ROSÉS OF THE VAR

Several research projects have been conducted in the past few years to maintain diversity in the varieties used to produce rosé wines. The researchers at the Vidauban research centre focused on old grape varieties, varieties from elsewhere, and selected or hybrid varieties of the future. One particular focus was on a native variety called *Rosé du Var* or *Roussane du Var*. Abandoned by the winegrowers a few decades ago, the variety was studied for four years. That highlighted its qualities, in particular its finesse and lightness, which with the help of modern winemaking techniques could be brought out to better advantage. And perhaps they will be, if this grape once again becomes one of the authorised varieties for Côtes de Provence.





LE DÉPARTEMENT



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forest before  
it's too late

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## LE CASTELLET

# THE FRENCH F1 GRAND PRIX

## *returns*

**From 21 to 24 June,  
the Var hosts  
one of the most eagerly  
awaited sporting  
events of the year:  
the Formula 1  
French Grand Prix.  
After an absence  
of 10 years in France,  
the F1 World  
Championship  
returns to Paul-Ricard  
circuit at Le Castellet,  
a track lauded by  
the greatest drivers.**

**F**rom 21 to 24 June, the Var hosts one of the most eagerly awaited sporting events of the year: the Formula 1 French Grand Prix. After an absence of 10 years in France, the F1 World Championship returns to Paul-Ricard circuit at Le Castellet, a track lauded by the greatest drivers. The French Grand Prix, one of the most spectacular in the world? At least that's what one specialist on the subject says. *"The Paul-Ricard circuit can organise one of the best Formula 1 Grand Prix races in the world. It's a top-level track not only for the drivers, but also for the public"*, says Jean-Pierre Paoli. An expert in the field, the locally-born Paoli was, alongside Paul Ricard, organiser of the first Grand Prix in 1971, as director of the circuit, then a consultant for Magny-Cours and a driver. This view, which many share, will be confirmed in June. After 27 years of absence from the Var and 10 years from France\*, the French Grand Prix is back. The Var circuit returns with the presence of the most prestigious teams and a competition acclaimed by 500 million television viewers around the world. Awaited since 2012, when there was already talk of the French Grand Prix making its return to the World Championship calendar, it finally took a few more years to confirm the hosting of the competition in the

Var. Efforts have paid off to promote the assets of the Var track and the infrastructures surrounding it. But none of this would have been possible without the support of the local authorities, including the Var Departmental council\*\*\*, and their financial support. To manage the organisation of this international event, a public interest group has been created: the GIP Grand Prix de France - Le Castellet. The Var Department\*\*\*, as a stakeholder, quickly integrated the structure that brings together the Paca Region, the Metropolises of Toulon Provence Méditerranée, Nice Côte d'Azur Métropole and Aix-Marseille Provence, the South Sainte-Baume urban community, the regional and Var Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and

Excelis, the corporate owner of the circuit. It also pledged to contribute €2 million each year for 5 years to ensure the event's continued presence on the Var circuit.

Equipped with the latest generation safety concepts, found nowhere else in the world, the track and its surroundings have been modified for the return of the French Grand Prix. 6.9 million was invested in the entire site in 2018. The main work concerned the preparation of the 5.8 km sports track validated by the International Automobile Federation (FIA). It involved leaving room for braking and restarting, and creating overtaking stretches to offer a very technical course, alternating tight turns, straight lines and powerful curves. *"Adapting the track to today's Formula 1 without distorting it was the challenge of the 2018 version of the Paul Ricard circuit"*, comments track director André Rey. The blue and red run-offs, created in 2000 to ensure safety in the event of loss of vehicle control are still there. They give the Var circuit an unmistakable identity on the world scene! ■

[www.gpfrance.com](http://www.gpfrance.com)

[www.circuitpaulricard.com](http://www.circuitpaulricard.com)

\* Between 1971 and 1990, the Paul-Ricard circuit hosted the French F1 Grand Prix 14 times.

\*\* The last French Grand Prix was held at Magny-Cours in the Nièvre in 2008.

\*\*\* One of the 96 Departmental councils in France

  
FORMULA 1  
GRAND PRIX DE FRANCE 2018  
LE CASTELLET



VIVEZ  
LA FRENCH  
COURSE

21-24  
JUN 2018

■ ■ ■ ■  
CIRCUIT  
PAUL RICARD

INFOS : [GPFrance.com](http://GPFrance.com)

 Formula 1  
Grand Prix de France 2018  
Le Castellet 22-24 Juin





© Fondation Carmignac - Photo Lionel Barbe

## PORQUEROLLES

# THE CARMIGNAC FOUNDATION: *inside the island*

**B**ooking in advance is not only advisable, but strongly recommended! Because the Carmignac Foundation, which opened on 2 June on the island of Porquerolles, restricts admissions to 50 people per half-hour. More than just a protective measure for a newly opened centre of contemporary artistic expression, this move defends a whole mindset.

"Visitors should be able to remain alone in front of a work for the time it takes", states its director, Charles Carmignac. "The place justifies this approach and places the emphasis on intimate encounters with art. The island is not a random choice, it has to be earned. It takes a physical and mental journey to come here. The visit starts with the crossing." Indeed, the voyage begins on the other shore, at Hyères\*, where you take the boat to the island. Then you have to walk to the villa – 680 steps exactly, through the forest from the port of

**Following a five-year construction project to house its collection, the Carmignac Foundation on the island of Porquerolles opened to the public at the beginning of June. More than just a place devoted to contemporary art, the Villa and its gardens offer a truly sensory experience at the heart of the Port-Cros National Park.**

Porquerolles, enough time to weigh anchor, forget the daily grind and tune into another world. First of all, that of the Port-Cros National Park, which for more than 50 years has protected and promoted this fragile natural environment. And of course, that of art.

"The interesting thing on Porquerolles is how paradoxical it is: you distance yourself from the world to immerse yourself in it better. Coming here begs essential questions, because over and above the fact of being on an island, you're in a national park, which makes you think about the impact of mankind on our environment. The island is a balancing act between conservation and a strong influx of tourists, which is extremely interesting for a place devoted to art", underscores Charles Carmignac.

### A VISIONARY COLLECTION

Nestling at the foot of the forest, Villa Carmignac presents some of the artists

from the collection built up over the past 25 years by Édouard Carmignac. The businessman, who heads up one of the most influential financial asset management companies in Europe, has collected works by iconic artists such as Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Gerhard Richter, Jeff Koons and Jean-Michel Basquiat. But more broadly, the Carmignac collection brings together artists who represent, "a set of encounters, enthusiasms, moments in my life. These works are my scales, hung on the walls. Traces of thoughts and emotions", says Édouard Carmignac.

While pop art and American art from 1960-1980 make up most of the 300 acquisitions, there are also plenty of examples of up-and-coming young artists, conceptual photography and photojournalism. For this master of finance, by his profession an expert in anticipation, "art imparts information which is unique, even if that information is intangible or aesthetic, at the level of feelings and thoughts, which touches

our subconscious". His son Charles, himself a performing musician (see interview) continues this idea. "The collection shows the disequilibrium of a world that suffers simultaneously from feelings of lacking something and from saturation. Over and beyond this chronicle of the present, it reveals unfettered, incisive visions inspired by the contemporary world. Having a vision is no doubt a way of seeing things, but it's also seeing ahead. Artists sense, feel the world rather than describing it."

Previously viewable only by those who worked for the Carmignac company, the art collection, which is managed by the corporate foundation of the same name, is now accessible to the general public in the Var. Together with its gardens, the Villa on Porquerolles offers a dialogue between renowned artists and other, younger artists who put forward artistic propositions that are no less compelling. The 2018 inaugural exhibition bears the evocative title of *Sea of desire*.

## TOTAL IMMERSION OF THE SENSES

The sea and desire run through the entire visit –from the very moment you arrive near to the beach of La Cour-tade, where the collection is housed in a former Provençal mas that featured in the 1965 Jean-Luc Godard film, *Pierrot le fou*. Theoretically, we are in a former farmhouse. But in reality, the building has been completely redesigned. While the exterior has retained its viticultural and Provençal character, inside you are immersed in a totally different universe. Beneath an apparent pared-down simplicity lies hidden technical and architectural prowess. 2,000m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space have been created beneath buildings the footprint of which could not be extended. This huge works project and similarly huge investment have resulted in an exhibition itinerary in the shape of a rough cross which every now and again affords views of the vines. At the centre, the principal opening of the



Andy Warhol, *Mao*, 1973  
© The Andy Warhol Foundation for the visual Arts, Inc./Adagp, Paris 2017



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Fallen Angel*, 1981  
Acrylique sur toile / Acrylic on canvas - 167,5 x 198 x 3 cm  
© Collection Carmignac / The Estate of Jean Michel Basquiat/Adagp, Paris 2017

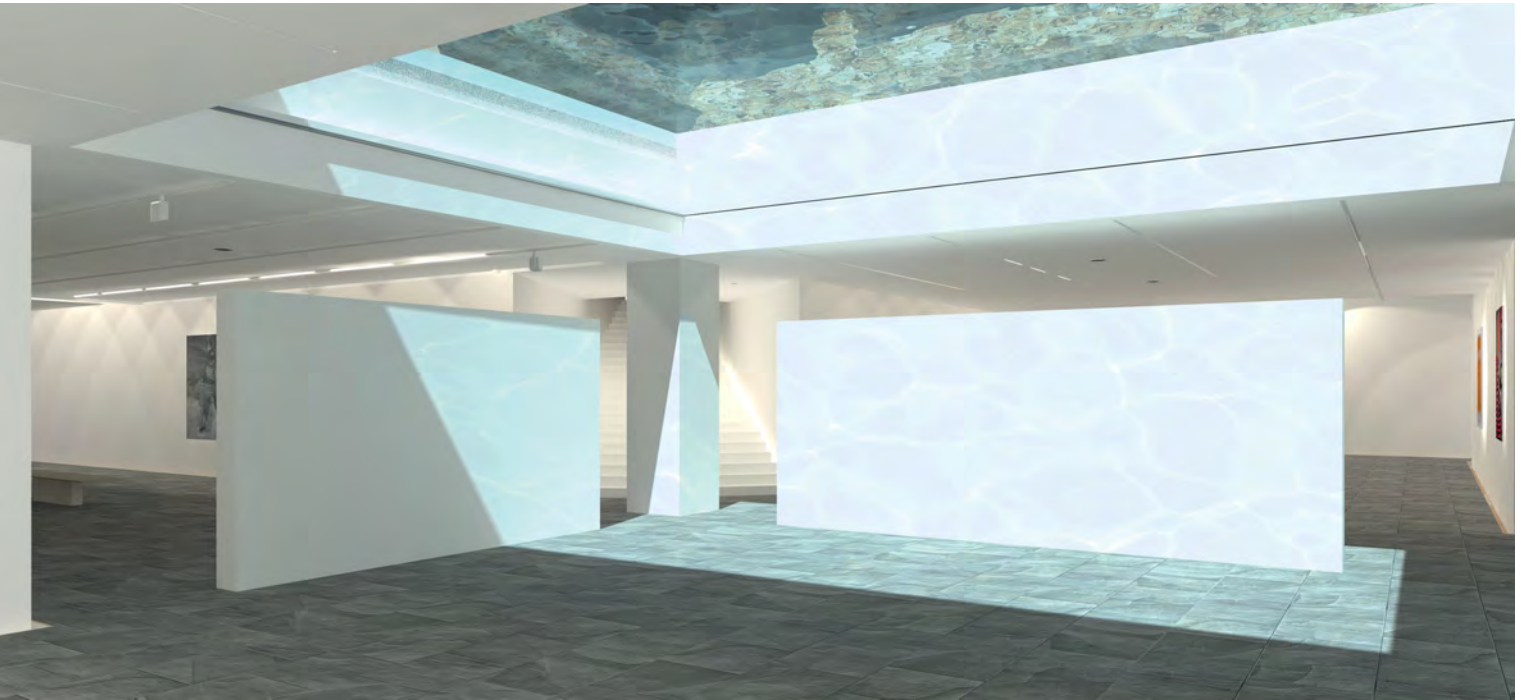


Roy Lichtenstein, *Collage for Nude with red Shirt*, 1995  
Technique mixte / Mixed medias  
99,5 x 82,5 cm  
© Collection Carmignac / The estate of Roy Lichtenstein New York/Adagp, Paris 2017

## THE GENIUS OF THE ISLAND

The desire to create an exhibition space open to everyone on Porquerolles came to Édouard Carmignac on the island itself. "It was the genius of the place that inspired this idea in him", recounts Charles Carmignac. Invited to the island many years ago for the marriage of Jean Rochefort and Françoise Vidal, to whose family the house belonged, he fell in love with the island and the edifice. With the family, he talked about buying the property one day to create a space devoted to the arts. The sale took place in 2012. "It's a lifelong project and one of human dimensions, the sole aim of which is to be shared", sums up its initiator, Édouard Carmignac.





© Fondation Carmignac

Glass and water roof at the heart of the exhibition space

exhibition area, a glass ceiling covered in water, bathes the rooms in vibrant, natural light. Visitors have the feeling of being not underground, but in water, immersed in a universal matrix where every kind of sensation is permitted.

To enter it, you first of all have to cross the bookshop with its magnificent view of the sea. You also have to comply with a ritual – removing your shoes to walk barefoot through the exhibition space, *"to feel the building's skin"*, explains Charles Carmignac. Back above ground, you have an opportunity to experience the equilibrium of this joint work by Nature and Man. The gardens highlight the endemic and pioneer species of the island. To the north and south of the Villa, sculptural works cohabit. The visit continues as far as the forest and its clearings, where the art display oscillates between installations, temporary works and live arts. Visitors can prolong the experience with a wine tasting in the adjacent vineyard. A dip in the sea, 200 metres further down, adds the finishing touch! The art of harmony...

\*or other towns during the summer season: Sanary, Toulon, Saint-Mandrier, Le Lavandou, Cavalaire, La Croix-Valmer, Saint-Tropez, Sainte-Maxime, Les Issambres, Saint-Raphaël.

**Open every day until 4 November,  
from 10am to sunset.**

**Rates: €5-€12 / free admission for under-12s  
and residents of Porquerolles**

**Reservations on: [www.fondation-carmignac.com](http://www.fondation-carmignac.com)**

## CHARLES CARMIGNAC

**With his father Édouard who created the collection, he shares the same intuitiveness, creativity and taste for art. The founder of a treasure-hunting company and the founding member and guitarist of the group Moriarty for the past 20 years, Charles Carmignac has been director of the corporate Carmignac Foundation since January 2017. He talks about the ambitious project he is orchestrating on Porquerolles.**

### **What were the challenges facing you with this project?**

We didn't make life easy for ourselves. We're on an island, in a national park, on a listed site. That created constraints. We weren't allowed to extend the building's footprint: the work had to be invisible from the outside. But for all these reasons, the constraints also created a very creative framework. They enabled us to come up with an original solution that blends in completely with the landscape. Seen from the outside, it still looks like a Provençal mas. But inside, the architectural outcome has increased the space by 2,000m<sup>2</sup>, hidden under the ground. We played on light, height, volumes and levels to confuse visitors' perceptions.

It's a magnificent project involving several architects: Atelier Barani designed it, then Agence GMAA adapted and extended it.

### What about the landscaping and environmental constraints?

In the gardens, the philosophy was to respect the local biodiversity which thanks to the work of Port-Cros National Park is so special and well-conserved, but also to preserve the agricultural character of the place... The landscaping was done by Louis Benech [who renovated the Tuileries Garden in Paris, the park of Chaumont-sur-Loire, the Rose Pavilion of Pavlosk Palace in Saint Petersburg, etc. – Editor's note]. There's such richness here! There's even a botanical conservatory for Mediterranean species and a seed library on the island. As a musician, I've learned to play with the accidental and unforeseen – that's what's interesting! For example, in the sculpture garden, we have a work that reflects. To prevent birds bumping into it, we've surrounded it with giant reed. We also took into account the problems of water and sewage on the island by creating cisterns to collect rainwater and our own micro sewage station.

### How many works from the collection are on view at the Villa?

Between 60 and 70, in addition to which there are works on loan from important private collections or international museums. We'll have a parti-

cular theme each year, with a curator to curate the collection. Dieter Buchhart, who specialises in Basquiat and Keith Haring, is in charge of the inaugural exhibition, baptised *Sea of Desire*. The name is inspired by the phrase inscribed on a painting by Ed Ruscha, which you can see at the end of the exhibition itinerary.

found here on Porquerolles. Other original works include creations by Miquel Barcelo or Jaume Plensa, for example.

### Why this ritual about the visit?

You can regard the visit as a kind of initiatory progression, whereby the ritual is one of the thresholds of passage.

It consists of two stages: you remove your shoes to come into contact with the floor of the building, and you drink a beverage made with plants to maximise your receptiveness.

### What have you done with your guitar?

(Laughs) The project actually takes a very musical approach. The itinerary I wrote when I arrived takes the form of a music score that lends rhythm to the collection, with more intense moments and other, calmer ones. Music is a sort of relationship of time: a note is only beautiful in relationship to those that precede and follow it.

The same thing applies to the way we present the works. This project strives to create links, between people, with living things. Porquerolles is an island of metamorphosis that can

offer visitors space for transformation, as has been the case for me. Beyond the exhibitions, the aim is to make it a place that will generate not only works, but also ideas: a place of creation and exchange. We don't want a foundation just set on an island. Which is also why it's crucial to involve the residents of Porquerolles in the project. ■



Charles and Edouard Carmignac  
© Fondation Carmignac – Work of Nils Udo, *Le Nid*, 2018

### Are there any original works on view?

Around twenty works were commissioned specially. They were purchased specifically for this place or created by artists who came specially for the purpose, like Cornelia Konrads. This German artist took her inspiration directly from the island and worked in residence, solely with materials she





The Var department, and more precisely Toulon, is the cradle of Qwan Ki Do!

This martial art, which combines Vietnamese and Chinese techniques, was created by Master Pham Xuan Tong in the early 80s.

An encounter with a wise man, faithful to his traditions and origins.

# THE QWAN KI DO

*born  
in  
Toulon*

At first glance, it is hard to imagine that this man, so simple and humble, is known and recognised throughout the world! Born in 1947 in Vietnam, to a French mother and a Vietnamese father, Pham Xuan Tong's life changed at the age of 9, when he crossed paths with Chau Quan Ky, a Taoist monk. This Chinese refugee had lived in Vietnam since 1936 and had run a martial arts academy there. He suggested to the boy's parents that he take him under his wing and teach him. *"He paid part of the school fees. It was a real chance for me. Joining a martial arts club was very expensive. And it gave me the opportunity to get a real education. There was no public school and private schools were overpriced!"* says Pham Xuan Tong. He then began a long and very tough apprenticeship, training several hours a day. *"We could no longer provide this kind of training to children these days. It was really hard and demanding, both physically and psychologically."* At 14, his great uncle also taught him Vietnamese fighting techniques, at which he turned out to be very good. At the age of 16, his master, Chau Quan Ky, entrusted him with teaching tasks: he became his assistant.

At the same time, he took part in numerous competitions, where he won a host of victories.

In 1968, everything suddenly changed, when his mother sent him to France. *"For me my departure was a real heartbreak! I even thought of running away and disobeying my mother. But she was only thinking about my future by sending me to Europe for higher education. I pulled myself together and left."* On arriving in France, in the Var, he began to teach martial arts in La Seyne-sur-Mer. Very quickly, he gathered more than a thousand practitioners around him. Thanks to this sudden fame, he quickly became known throughout the country and was joined by other masters in martial arts. That same year, he learned of the death of his master Chau Quan Ky. He also received his master's will, which designated him as the sole heir of the Sino-Vietnamese martial arts school. At the time, Vietnam was at war. In France, Vietnamese nationals were gathering and demonstrating for peace. The few martial arts masters present in France performed joint demonstrations to highlight the situation in Vietnam and call for a peaceful outcome. *"In 1972, we did several shows in major European capitals, including in Paris, where we were invited to the Espaces Verts Pierre Cardin and the Salle Pleyel, among others. Every time was a success!"* Very quickly, they decided to create their movement, Viet Vo Dao. *"On my initiative, we approached the French Judo Federation which helped us. We created a Vietnamese martial arts group."* Pham Xuan Tong was appointed Technical Director of the Viet Vo Dao Committee, and it was he who set up and wrote the program, framework and rules of the discipline. More than 5,000 people joined the committee!

In the late 1970s, Pham Xuan Tong felt the need to unshackle himself and lead his own movement. With the help of friends and students in his Toulon dojo, he created a new martial art – known as Qwan Ki Do, in honour of his former Chinese master. *"I called my sport Qwan Ki Do for two reasons. First, because it means 'the way of all energies'. And also to pay tribute to the man who gave me so much. His first name was Quan Ky. So Qwan Ki Do also means the way of Quan Ky! Without him, I wouldn't be here today."* In 1981, he founded the French Federation of Qwan Ki Do, and following that, the World Union of Qwan Ki Do, based in Milan, Italy. The years that followed earned him a worldwide reputation and he won many titles and records. For example, he was named an honorary member of the Academy of Sciences in Rome and awarded the Grand Prize of the Martial Arts Masters of Manaus (Brazil). He holds the world record for breaking ice blocks, smashing eight of them or 200 kilos with the edge of his hand... He is part of the organizing team of the Nuits des arts martiaux de Bercy, in which he regularly participates with well-known figures such as Jean-Claude Van Damme. *"For eight consecutive years, I made the poster for the event"*, he recalls with a smile. He travels the world taking part in numerous events, meeting the greatest figures in the world of martial arts, but also of cinema and show-business. At the same time, he developed his federation and gradually realised his master's dream. As competitions in Qwan Ki Do were becoming increasingly numerous, he was obliged, in 2012, to create a new structure, the International Qwan Ki Do Federation, whose headquarters is in Switzerland. It is recognised worldwide by



Tafisa, The association for international sport for all and SportAccord, the association of international sports federations. Little by little, all over the world, national federations are being created. *"Like in Mauritania, where the federation organises courses in the depths of the desert!"* Today, there are nearly 100,000 licenses worldwide. *"But in reality, there are many more practitioners because in many countries, they don't have the money to pay for their licence!"* All dream of participating, one day, in the course organised each summer by Master Pham Xuan Tong in Toulon, the cradle of Qwan Ki Do. ■



Making your own cosmetics will soon be just as easy as making a cup of coffee. Emuage, a connected machine invented by the B2B Cosmetics company from La Seyne in France, is designed to make tailor-made high-quality beauty products at home.

LA SEYNE-SUR-MER

**B2B COSMÉTICS,**  
*the cosmetic  
revolution*

In the coming months, the cosmetics world is about to undergo a sweeping revolution with the arrival on the market of Emuage. This machine is the only one in the world that can make all types of beauty products from home using water and organic plant substances. It looks and works a lot like a state-of-the-art coffee machine, so it's really easy to use. You just need to pour some water into the tank at the back of the machine and add three capsules of your choice. The first gives you the texture you want: a rich cream, a serum, a mousse, a water-based gel, an oil... The second is a capsule of active ingredients which can be hydrating, anti-age, soothing, antioxidant, tightening, whitening... Finally, the last capsule offers a choice of fragrances: musky, sweet, woody, floral, citrus... Unlike its competitors, Emuage doesn't just mix

different ready-made bases. The product is directly emulsified in an airless 30 ml bottle, ready for use after clipping in a pump. In just a few minutes, you get a shampoo, a day cream, an exfoliator or any other fresh and tailored beauty product. The different capsules offer a wide array of combinations.



Thanks to a QRCode system on the pods, Emuage automatically detects the process needed to create the desired substance.

The innovation was dreamt up by two chemical engineers, Grégoire Tutenuit and Julien Gros, at their premises in La Seyne-sur-Mer. In 2010, they opened Pôle Cosmétique, a cosmetics formulation and regulatory affairs laboratory. They expanded in 2012 with the launch of Cosméprod, a subsidiary that offers outsourcing services for the manufacture and processing of products. Before long, they wanted to innovate in the sector and, in 2014, de

cidied to set up a website offering their clients the possibility to create their own cosmetics online. *“We soon realised that we had to move into B2C - Business to Consumer. In other words, we wanted to address the consumers directly and not just the manufacturers as we’d been doing up to then”*, Grégoire Tutenuit told us. Gradually, the idea developed and with their engineering experience, they began to design Emuage. *“After the website, we wanted to take the idea further. We knew that 4% of people make their own cosmetics in their kitchen. But it was still a tiresome and time-consuming process. Today, consumers want to know what they’re buying, what they’re putting on their skin, how it’s made, etc. That’s why we wanted to offer a totally transparent process, mainly based on natural organic ingredients”*, Grégoire explained.





The pods are made from recycled products and can also be recycled themselves.

Last January, the B2B Cosmetics team, the company created to develop Emuage, attended the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, the world's biggest connected innovations trade fair. Emuage won the innovation Prize in the Fitness, sports and biotech category. It was an exceptional opportunity for this start-up from Var, which can look forward to a bright future: *"it's a springboard for us"*, Grégoire said. *"At the CES, we met and spoke*

*with the world's five leading cosmetics groups."* The final prototype of the machine is now in its last testing phase and production will begin very shortly. Emuage should be on sale by the end of the year for around €350. The pods will cost between €10 and €15 for a pack of 3. In the first instance, there will be a choice of three ranges: a natural organic range, a skin, face and body cosmetics range, and a shower range. "We already have big brands interested in having their own pods", he added, a highly promising start for the future business!

Will B2B Cosmetics remain in the Var? *"Oh yes, definitely"*, Grégoire told us. *"I was born in Toulon and my business partner used to come to the Var on holiday when he was a child. It's a really great place to live of course, but it's also in a strategic position between the Bouches-du-Rhône where COSMED, the association for SMEs in the cosmetics sector is located, and Grasse, the town of perfume."* The machines will be assembled in France, and the capsules produced entirely in La Seyne. They will be sold on the brand's website, [www.e-muage.com](http://www.e-muage.com).

Emuage is the future of cosmetics! ■



Grégoire Tutenuit and Julien Gros on their stand at CES, Las Vegas

**B2B Cosmetics**  
 254 chemin de la Farlède  
 83500 La Seyne-sur-Mer  
[www.e-muage.com](http://www.e-muage.com)

Born in Toulon, Julien Noble spent all of his childhood in the Var département. In June 2017, he became executive vice-president of one of the world's largest film production companies: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. Not to mention its youngest! A story in itself worthy of a script, that the main character told us about direct from Los Angeles.

**N**oble is not just Julien's surname. He also displays the nobility of those who stay true to their origins. His father was a technician who went on to become an engineer, his mother a nurse, his father-in-law a painter-decorator, and he has 9 brothers and sisters. The family has always lived in the Var between La Seyne-sur-Mer, Solliès-Pont, Hyères and Toulon. Before heading off to a working session with Steven Spielberg, he gave us a frank rundown of his life, his career, his attachment to the Var and his passion for the cinema.

**On 22 June 2017, you became the executive vice-president of Fox. It was also your 35th birthday. What do you remember about that day?**

It was a birthday I'll never forget! Exceptional in career terms, it was a really fantastic surprise. We'd been discussing it for a while, but it just happened to come through on my birthday. Generally speaking, employers don't pay much attention to birthdays. I was, and still am, delighted. It's a great recognition.

**You're in charge of communications and digital marketing at Fox. Can you tell us something about your daily routine?**

It's never the same, that's what's really exciting about the job. My role is to create campaigns to promote films in every country around the world. For instance, I might identify the best websites in each country to talk about the film. I might also work with the actors, directors and producers to create content such as videos to post on social media, or to show on TV or at the cinema to make people want to come and see the film.

# JULIEN NOBLE, *from the Var to Hollywood*



© Mick Mayhew



**What projects are you working on at the moment?**

*Bohemian Rhapsody*, an amazing film about Freddie Mercury which will come out in France in December 2018. I'm also working on *Avatar 2* which is due for release in December 2020. Generally, the marketing begins 2 to 3 years before a film is released. For very big productions, it might even be 4 or 5 years before. This preliminary work is important to decide how to position the film and which creative approach to adopt.

**Disney just bought Fox's entertainment department. You know the studio very well as you already worked there. Which of the films you worked on are you most proud of?**

It's true, before joining Fox, I worked at Disney for 7 years in France, Europe and the US. The very first animated film I worked on, *Wall-E*, with Pixar's little robot, made a big impression on me. But the turning point was *Frozen*, an absolutely beautiful animated film as well as the biggest commercial success, making 1.2 billion dollars at the box office. The biggest campaign I worked on was for the return of *Star Wars*. People had been waiting for it for so many years... when you're a film freak, it's just incredible!

**Was working in the film industry your ultimate dream?**

Yes, I've always wanted to work in the world of cinema, in the film industry or for the film industry. As a teenager, I'd go to the Pathé Gaumont Cinema in La Garde and the Raimu in Toulon 3 or 4 times a week to watch subtitled versions of foreign films with my father. It's always been what I wanted to do. After studying communications and marketing, I began my ca-

reer in the events department of a private radio, NRJ, then moved to a public TV channel, France 3. This helped me to build up my experience.

**You went to school in the Var before going to Aix and Paris. What do you remember about those times?**

They were fantastic times! I lived in the Sablettes district of La Seyne and attended the Léo Lagrange 2 school and the Collège l'Herminier. Then I got a science baccalaureate at the Lycée agricole in Hyères. When you grow up by the sea it's a really exceptional environment. I've kept in touch with most of the people I knew at that time. We try and meet up every time I go back to the Var to see my family. They're still part of my life.

**Many people see your career as exemplary...**

It's not exceptional. I worked a lot, but I also dreamt a lot. I met some wonderful people along the way who gave me a chance. Like the time I met Xavier Albert at a job interview when he was marketing director for Disney. After talking for 10 minutes, he decided to hire me, but just before I left, he asked me: *"You do speak English?"* I said: *"No"*. He insisted, addressing me informally: *"But you can at least get by?"* *"No, nothing at all"*. He said: *"That's a shame, the job was based in London"*. I said: *"Look, I'll work for you for free for 3 months in London. If I can't hold a meeting in English in 3 months' time, you fire me, otherwise you give me a contract"*. I went to London with two bags and no salary. I took a 10-hour a day intensive course for 3 weeks. And I got my contract. Nothing's impossible. I come from the Var and my parents have

absolutely nothing to do with the film industry – which is supposed to be a very closed shop. But if you listen, you'll never do anything! My parents had ten children. It wasn't always easy, but it's possible to get help, to get an education. There are organisations that can help. You need to have faith, to believe in yourself, to be willing to believe that you can make a difference. And above all, to stay who you are and not be afraid to take risks.

**Did the "Var Touch" help you in your career?**

Yes, a lot! The Provence culture, our way of doing things, is very different from the American way. We're very warm, and they really like that. In the US, it's all about business: time is money. I sit down and talk to the directors, the producers and the teams. I try to put some emotion... some life into things, just being who I've always been, a warm person from the Var. And they really like that. You know, the film is their baby. They've been working on it for 5, 7, 10 years even. I've been working on it for 2 years: I'm nobody. I take the time to show them I like their film, and that I want to take care of it.

**What do you most miss from the Var when you're in Los Angeles?**

My family and friends! It's a cliché I know, but it's true. And the Var sun. We have sun in Los Angeles, but it's not the same as ours in the Var region. And the food, there's just nothing like it! ■



TOULON

# THE VAR DEPARTMENTAL MUSEUM

## *is 130 years old*

**W**hat are 130 years compared to the ammonites that lived in the Var 100 million years ago? Surely at 130 years old, we are young in comparison to a herbarium created in the late 18th century? The Var Departmental Museum is celebrating its relative youth throughout 2018 with a range of events and innovations. More exhibitions, more family weekends, more social events... It's a busy year full of excitement for the Var Departmental Museum, located west of Toulon, in the heart of the Jardin du Las. Despite all the birthday fun, it doesn't lose sight of its main purpose -to amaze and astound young and old alike. The role of the Var Departmental Museum, which has been granted Musée de France status by the Ministry of Culture, is to preserve, restore, study and enrich its collections, while making them accessible to the general public. As such, it is responsible for devising and setting up outreach initiatives, with a view to sharing

Opened in 1888, the Var Departmental Museum is celebrating its 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, with a modern and open outlook. Everybody in the Var is invited to discover or rediscover it via a new website and numerous activities.





The Museum reserves: archives of the living

THE DEPARTMENTAL  
COLLECTION  
HOLDS OVER  
250,000 OBJECTS,  
ONLY 2000 OF WHICH  
ARE PRESENTED  
IN THE PERMANENT  
EXHIBITION.

the heritage and priceless content of its collections. *“These objects are brought to life through the eyes of the scientific and research community”, say the Museum’s directors. “Our role is to use these resources as a gateway to the culture of the natural world. To tell stories.”*

To this end, the Museum has a collection of 200,000 pieces. From botany to mineralogy, from palaeontology to geology, including mammals, reptiles, insects and amphibians, all the fields that make up life sciences and geoscience are represented in the museum. Only 2,000 are on permanent display in the Museum's exhibition galleries. A little over 500 m<sup>2</sup> is dedicated to the discovery of the Var from a scientific and nature-orientated point of view. Visiting the museum is free of charge and focuses on learning about and showcasing the heritage of the Var Department. This helps to combine the appeal of these collections to well-informed visitors, with the curiosity of a more family-oriented audience looking for



Ammonite *Acanthoceras* sp. (- 100 million years)  
from the Sélébran collection

## NOT TO BE MISSED THIS SUMMER...

- ▶ Tigers, lions, giant turtles, shells from overseas, sloths and "pique à loups" wolf pikes... See **collection items** that are usually kept in the archives, Sunday 22 July at 2.30pm and 4pm, Wednesday 8 August at 2.30pm and 4pm.
- ▶ How has the display of specimens changed at the museum over the years? The answer is presented using **exhibits** such as the Golden Jackal or the Blue Monkey, on Thursday 30 August at 2.30pm and 4pm, Saturday 15 September at 4.30pm and Sunday 16 September at 4.30pm.
- ▶ From old record books to digital management tools, the classification of **items to be inventoried** has evolved over the years. Focus on inventory work on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 September at 1.30pm.
- ▶ An 18<sup>th</sup> century seaweed herbarium, a Bonelli's eagle (1882) or botanists' archives... These rare **heritage artefacts** still hold mysteries to be discovered on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 September at 10am and 3pm and Wednesday 26 September at 2.30pm and 4pm.
- ▶ Dinosaurs will take you on a journey through ancient times in a talk about **fossils** on Wednesday 11 July at 3pm and 4pm.

**These small group sessions are accessible free of charge, although places are limited. You can register for them on the day at reception.**  
Full programme: <https://museum.var.fr>

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Var Departmental Museum has a scientific library of over 3,000 books on science, natural history and museology. It is very well stocked with works on the Var, Provence and the Mediterranean. These documents are accessible to everyone and are of particular interest to students and researchers who can consult them on request.



The museum in 1905.  
(at 113 Boulevard Maréchal Leclerc in Toulon)



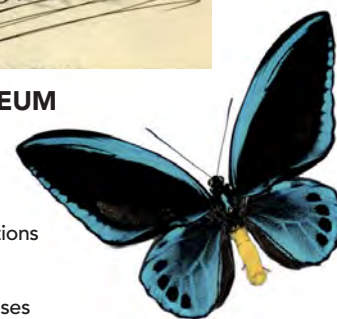
interesting facts and information about their local environment. The Var Departmental Museum is unique. There is no similar institution in metropolitan France managed by a Departmental Council, a distinctive advantage, making its Museum one of the most visited in France. Approximately 50,000 visitors pass through its doors each year.

A number of activities and exhibitions are scheduled for 2018 in order to attract both Var residents and tourists. Several small group sessions with a maximum of 30 people are planned on the theme of "130 years of items from the archives". This is an opportunity to discover some exceptional items from the Departmental collection, carefully stored in the Museum's archives. Items that have been collected or are to be inventoried, items for study or presentation, restored pieces, fossils or rare heritage artefacts... A scientific and cultural coordinator will be presenting them at these events that are open to everyone.

Exhibitions are also planned. The first, which can be seen until 16 September (see also page 8), presents naturalist drawings and their development through their two main movements: academic drawing and field drawing. The second, starting on 20 October, aims to highlight rare or unusual objects owned by the Museum. Most of these have never before been seen by the public. Finally, a photographic exhibition, outlining the Museum's activities, will be on display in the Jardins du Las, the museum's outdoor park.

### 5 KEY DATES FOR THE VAR DEPARTMENTAL MUSEUM

- ▶ **29 avril 1888.** Inauguration of the Natural History Museum, in the Toulon Town Library Museum.
- ▶ **1<sup>er</sup> juillet 2003.** The Museum became Departmental, but its collections remained the property of the town of Toulon.
- ▶ **21 octobre 2011.** The Department officially opened the new premises of the Natural History Museum of Toulon and the Var, in the heart of the Jardin du Las.
- ▶ **2012.** All of the Museum's collections were transferred to the Var Departmental Council.
- ▶ **2017.** The Museum changed its name to become the Var Departmental Museum.



In addition, weekends aimed at a more family-oriented audience will be on the agenda until December. Visitors young and old will combine fun with learning, strolling around the galleries and gardens of the Var Departmental Museum. A quiz will be held on Thursday 9 August, bringing together entertainment and science. ■

**Var Departmental Museum**  
(Muséum départemental du Var),  
737 chemin du Jonquet, Toulon.  
Tel. +33 (0)4 83 95 44 20.

**Free entry.**  
In summer, the Museum is open from Tuesday to Sunday, except on public holidays, from 9am to 6pm.



*Cytisus rai... erectis calycibus bracteas triplicis  
Cytisus glab... fl. lat. - 113-1 p. 373  
C. sessilifolius*







# DIVING, *Triton-style*

**D**iving into the world of silence. Truly. Without any noise, without parasitic bubbles. Such is the promise of Triton and its creators, Bertrand Hemard and Alexandre Fox. These two entrepreneurs the brains are behind a new generation rebreather, developed and assembled in Tourves, in the Var. Passionate about diving, sometimes to an extreme, they gave up everything to throw themselves into this project. *"In 2010, I wanted to change my work, do something else. So, I took the plunge and started thinking about this idea"*, says Bertrand Hémard, president of M3S (Multi Safety Support System). *"In January 2012, I created*

**M3S Directors  
Bertrand Hemard  
and Alexandre Fox  
created the Triton,  
an air rebreather  
that allows experienced  
divers to explore  
the seabed with  
new sensations.  
Unique in France and  
assembled in Tourves,  
this product  
is currently conquering  
the world diving market.**

*the company and six months later, Alexandre joined me in the adventure."* While Bertrand focuses on the development of the Triton and its production, Alexandre brings his management skills to the company. Together, they improve product design and perform numerous tests. They moved on from the trial phase in 2015, when they first began to market Triton.

But what exactly is the Triton? *"It's an air rebreather whose basic concept is very simple. It captures the CO2 you exhale and compensates your oxygen consumption with a small bottle. So you no longer need a large quantity of gas to stay under water, you breathe in a closed circuit"*, explains Bertrand

## WHAT IS A REBREATHER?

Hémard. *"It also makes it possible to free yourself from stops, which are a constraint in any dive."*

Although they were winners of the 2015 Var Terre d'Innovation Prize, created by the Departmental Council, in the "Best Innovative Project" category, the two partners did not actually invent the concept. *"This process has existed for a very long time"*, admits Alexandre Fox. *"A patent was registered in 1864 for this invention. What we brought to it are technical and practical improvements."*

The Triton is a ventral bag, very small and light – setting it apart from its global competitors. *"In France, we are the only ones to market this type of product. And no one in the world offers such an easily transportable rebreather"*, they say.

Alexandre Fox and Bertrand Hemard, the first test users of their underwater breathing machine, wanted to add performance and innovation. Easy-to-clean silicone pipes, an ultra-resistant Kevlar bag, and seams made in



The rebreather is a closed-circuit diving equipment. It enables the diver to breathe the air he exhales, without poisoning himself. For this, the recycler is equipped with a soda lime cartridge that retains the CO<sub>2</sub> that the diver releases and a small oxygen bottle that cools the gas mixture by regularly adding O<sub>2</sub>.

Alexandre Fox and Bertrand Hemard developed the Triton which offers up to two hours' autonomy under water



France by a military equipment manufacturer – all assembled in the Var... These high quality raw materials, assembled with great care, enable us to offer divers a reliable product. However, you must already have some diving experience to enter the world of silence.

Indeed, the Triton rebreather cannot be sold to anyone. The purchaser must, to be able to buy and use it, have received diving training with an air rebreather. And in order to receive training, *"the diver must have attained at least the second level of diving, with 20 to 25 hours of practice"*, says Arnaud Niel, head of the Eau Bleue diving school in Cavalaire, the only Frenchman to be qualified to train instructors able to use the Triton rebreather. In this capacity, he also initiates divers wishing to discover this practice and acquire the Triton rebreather. *"I recommend it for its lightness, ease of use and versatility. The Triton is suitable for recreational diving as well as deep or speleological diving"*.

As it weighs only 7 kg (without the oxygen cylinder or lime), the recycler does not encumber the divers. Neither underwater, nor while travelling. *"It counts as carry-on baggage"*, explain its designers. 130 machines costing between €5,000 and €7,000 have already been sold worldwide. Ready to set out to conquer the Indian Ocean, the two Var entrepreneurs have the wind in their sails and now intend to develop an international distribution channel. ■

Contact : [www.multi3s.com](http://www.multi3s.com)





From blue to brown and sometimes even black, with lots of white, the egg shells at the organic poultry farm *Poules et Coqs* (Hens and Roosters) in Figanières come in all kinds of colours. Not so much to catch the eye, but rather because of Bettina Bodin's fondness for old, forgotten breeds.

## FIGANIÈRES

# HENS *and*

Why eat brown-shelled eggs when those of the oldest French breeds are white? At Bettina Bodin's farm, the codes "*created by the food industry for the sake of profit*" as she put it, are being broken. As a result, her hens lay colourful eggs. "*I just wanted to bring back forgotten old French breeds and also have fun choosing hens that I find beautiful and even unusual*". Across her nineteen parks, visitors can choose like a king. Like the Crève-cœur, Henri IV's favourite hen, "*who loved it in poule au pot\* because it tastes a bit like guinea fowl*", the breeder explained to us. But don't get her wrong: Bettina Bodin doesn't breed chickens for their meat, but rather for their eggs and the sale of live birds over three months old. Because "*in the Var and the Alpes-Maritimes, there's no organic hatchery to supply professionals in the egg and meat sector*", she told us.



Following a professional retraining course, she set up her hatchery one year ago on a 2-hectare plot of land planted with downy oak trees.

"I wanted to build a family-oriented poultry farm on a human scale. And in the poultry sector in particular there are lots of improvements to be made", she added, "whether we're talking about animal welfare or animal feed. I decided to go organic with everything that it implies regarding feed, natural therapies, my chickens' well-being, etc.". Obviously, it also means choosing good breeds. She has 15 in total, mainly French breeds, but with three exceptions, one German, one American and one English breed.



Bettina Bodin an organic poultry breeder, with one of her favourite hens, Worwerk

# ROOSTERS

The Worwerk, Wyandotte, Creve-cœur, Sussex, Marans, Orpingtons, Brahma, Faverolles, Cream Legbar and Pekin birds can be found in large or dwarf varieties. In terms of character, "the docile and friendly Worwerk and Wyandotte hens are my favourites". For children, "the Pekin is ideal. Small and tame, they're even a bit clingy. Even toddlers can collect the eggs from the nesting boxes without any problem". The Brahma "is one of the biggest birds we have. They can weigh up to 6 kg. In comparison with its size, the eggs it lays are relatively small, around 60 gr. 'The English Cream Legbar' lays eggs with a bluish or sometimes olive-green tinge. It's quite an aggressive bird". The Marans, an old French breed produces "eggs that are a really

dark rust colour, sometimes even black". And what if we mixed the two breeds? "The eggs would be a kind of khaki colour." But there's no question of breeding hybrid hens: at Poules et Coqs. The organic feed is what gives the eggs their wonderful flavour. And when you fry the eggs, you can see the difference very clearly,

with a much brighter egg yolk and firm whites! ■

\*boiled chicken casserole

You can find Poules et Coqs at Figanières market on Tuesday and Sunday mornings.

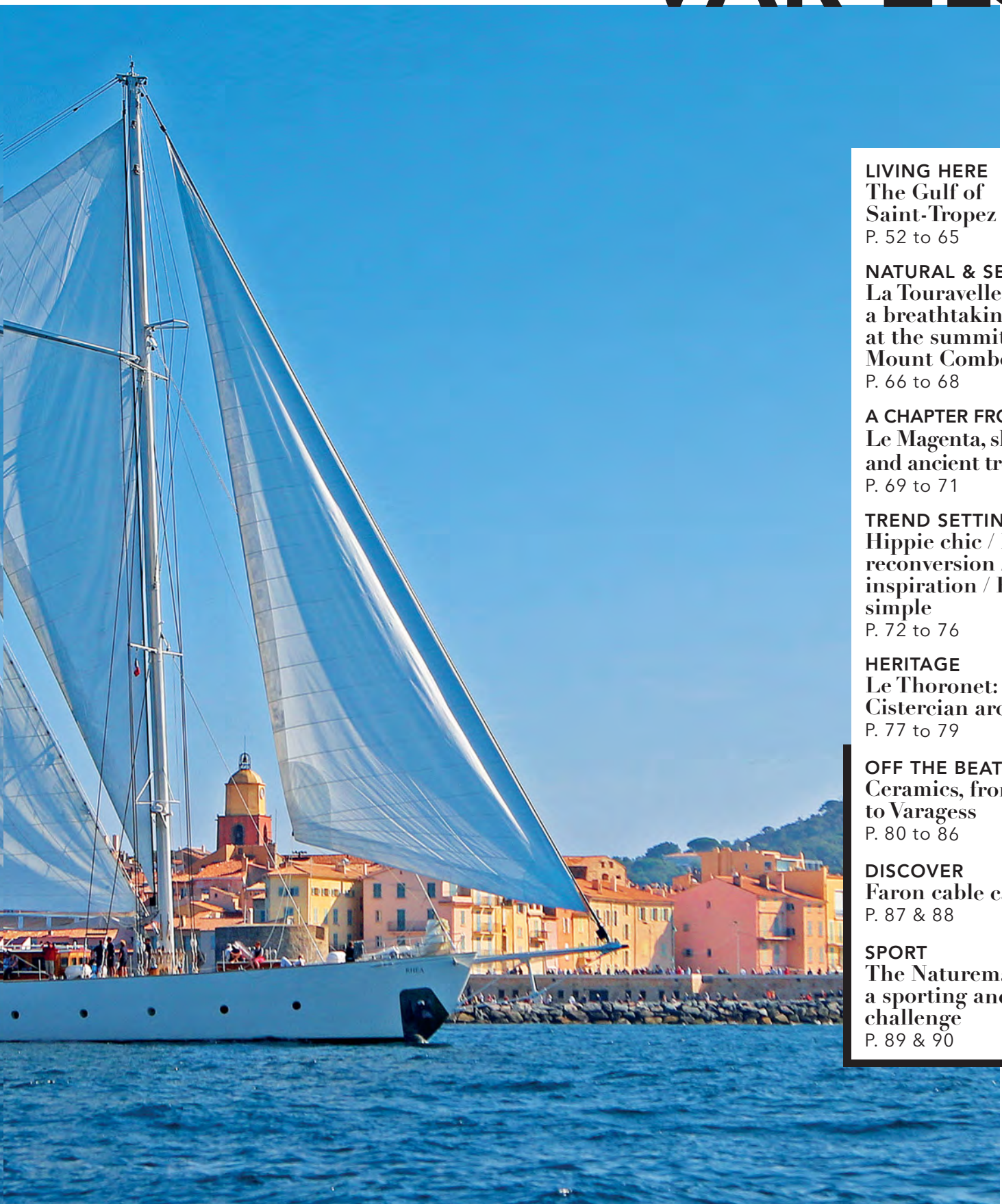




Event: Les voiles de Saint-Tropez



# NO VAR-ELSE



**LIVING HERE**  
The Gulf of  
Saint-Tropez  
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**NATURAL & SENSITIVE**  
La Touravelle:  
a breathtaking view  
at the summit of  
Mount Combe  
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**A CHAPTER FROM THE PAST**  
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**TREND SETTING**  
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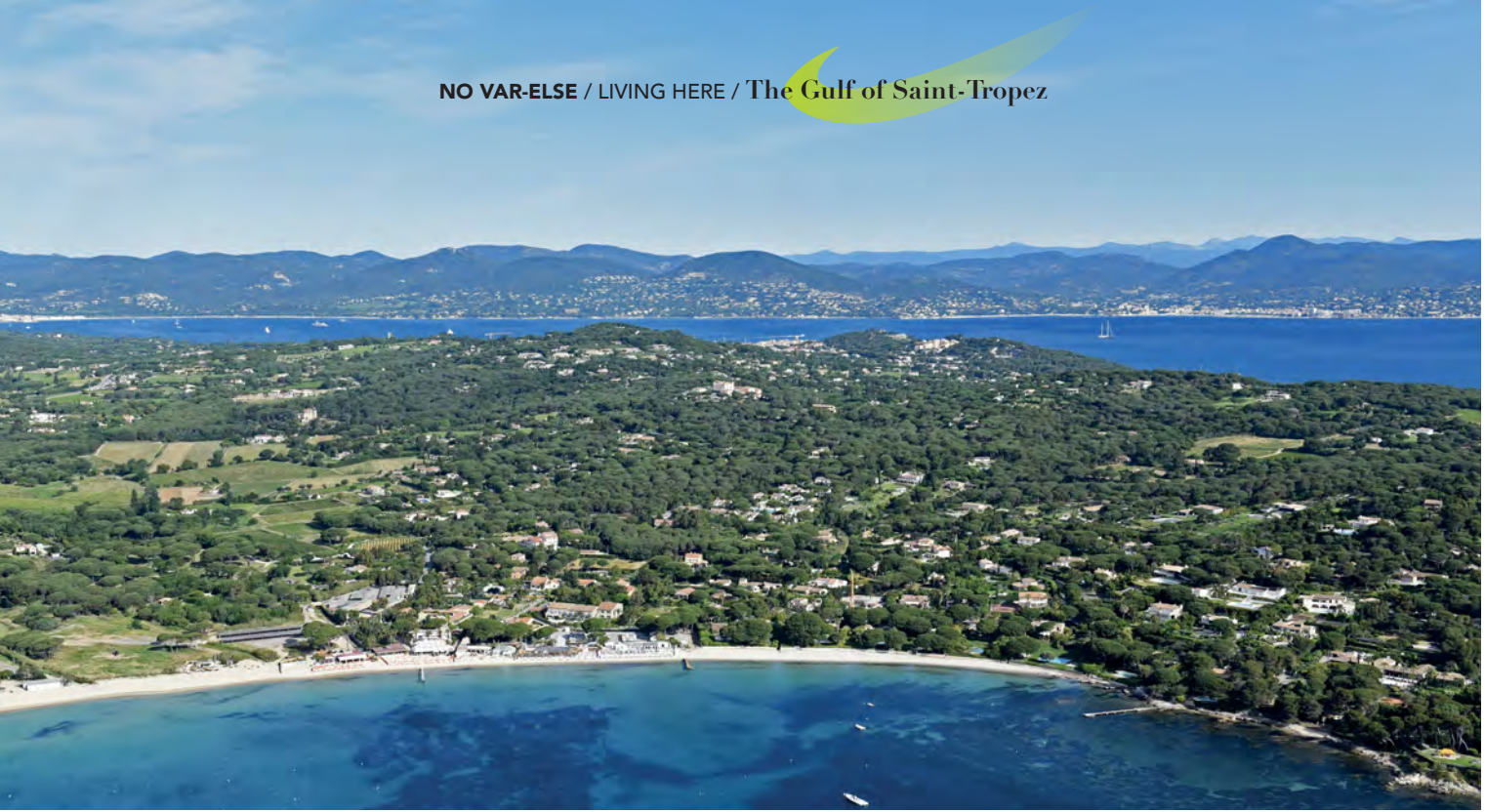
**HERITAGE**  
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# *The Gulf* **OF SAINT-TROPEZ**

Over the years the charisma of Saint-Tropez has put the spotlight on this area, which is a leading destination for international tourists. The unique nature of its 12 municipalities boasts varied landscapes with rolling hillsides in a Provençal hinterland and a coastline lined with popular seaside resorts.

"It's *the best of the French Riviera with a flavour of Provence*", explain tourism experts. Like the communities of the Côte d'Azur, the towns and villages of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez have managed to preserve their character by maintaining a well-protected environment. That environment attracts millions of tourists every year. The Gulf of Saint-Tropez has some 56,000 inhabitants in winter and over 300,000 in summer, not including day trippers: visitors are distributed over the period from Easter to October. It's the longest tourist season in France with

nearly 7 months of tourist activity. On closer inspection, 80% of high-end tourism is concentrated in Saint-Tropez, Ramatuelle and Gassin: 3 out of the 13 luxury hotels in France are located in Saint-Tropez. These towns also host dozens of prestigious international events. The Gulf has always attracted a host of artists, painters, writers, sculptors and celebrities... All of them drawn to its unspoilt natural environment offering an exceptional standard of living. It still bears the traces of a remarkable historical past, most notably prehistoric archaeological remains such as the dolmens and menhirs at Plan de La Tour

and Cap Taillat. Gallo-Roman villas and Roman fish ponds can still be seen in Sainte-Maxime. The medieval period is also well represented with numerous parish churches, chapels and fortified villages. The Gulf and its inhabitants are still very much in tune with their traditional customs. There are countless Provençal festivals and celebrations. Local craftsmanship is exported all over the world, including rugs and musical reeds from Cogolin and the Saint Tropez sandals worn by some of the world's most famous celebrities.

*Article edited with the Golfe de Saint-Tropez tourist office. More information at: [www.visitgolfe.com](http://www.visitgolfe.com)*





1



2



3



9

► **CAVALAIRE-SUR-MER BEACH (1)** heaven for anyone who loves the sea. Its bay is very popular with water sports enthusiasts and is also enjoyed by divers who are drawn to its remarkable locations.

► **THE SEASIDE TOWN OF PORT-GRIMAUD (2)** the second most visited place in the Gulf. Created by a visionary architect in 1966, it stretches over 90 hectares, with some 2,000 colourful fishermen's houses.

► **THE CITADEL OF SAINT-TROPEZ (3)** for the best views over the bay. This "pre-Vauban" citadel dating from the early 17th century houses the Saint-Tropez Maritime History Museum.

► **THE PAILLAS WINDMILLS IN RAMATUELLE (4)** were built between the 16th and 19th centuries. One of them was completely rebuilt in 2002. Now re-equipped with its mechanism, it can once again grind wheat.

► **THE MEDIEVAL CASTLE OF GRIMAUD (5)** classified as a Historic Monument, dates back to the 11th century. Destroyed after the Religious Wars and rebuilt in the middle of the 17th century, it was abandoned after the French Revolution. It has been undergoing restoration since 1980.

► **THE CHAPEL OF NOTRE DAME DE MIREMER IN LA GARDE-FREINET (6)** is set at the top of a hill which stands 402 metres above sea level. Halfway between La Garde-Freinet and Grimaud, it was rebuilt in the 19th century and boasts a panoramic view of the Maures mountain range and the Gulf.

► **CHÂTEAU DE LA MOLE (7)**, where Saint-Exupéry spent part of his childhood, has recently been bought by Patrice de Colmont from Club 55 on Pampelonne beach. He wants to turn it into an organic agricultural centre.

► **THE MENHIR DE PRAT BOURDIN AT PLAN DE LA TOUR (8)** was probably moved in modern times to serve as a boundary stone. Dating from the Neolithic period, it is evidence of the presence of man in this area during this period.

► **THE SQUARE TOWER IN SAINTE-MAXIME (9)** was constructed in 1520 by monks from the Abbaye du Thoronet. Sold in 1790 as a national asset, it was used successively as a stately home, defence tower, granary, prison, school, customs warehouse, and town hall from the Revolution until 1935. Protected as an Historic Monument, it now houses the local heritage museum.



4

© Emmanuel Bertrand



8



7



6



5

© Emmanuel Bertrand

© Emmanuel Bertrand



# 12 COMMUNITIES, *12 different facets*



© Emmanuel Bertrand



**GARDE-FREINET**, this isolated village in the forest, in the heart of the Maures massif has exceptional walks and stunning views.

© Emmanuel Bertrand



**LA MOLE**, the Gulf valley is also the starting point for a number of walks in the Dom forest.

© Emmanuel Bertrand



**COGOLIN**, the village of 4 seasons is ideally located between land and sea. It is home to a wealth of arts and crafts.



**LE RAYOL-CANADEL-SUR-MER**, a window over the Mediterranean, is perched on a strip of coastline. The village plunges into the crystal-clear water. Abundant nature awaits you, including the gardens at Domaine du Rayol.



**CAVALAIRE-SUR-MER**, with its beautiful sandy beaches and surrounded by a series of wooded hills, this seaside resort has been awarded the "France Station nautique" designation.



**LA CROIX-VALMER**, offers secluded coves, long sandy beaches, vineyards stretching right down to the sea and protected coastlines.



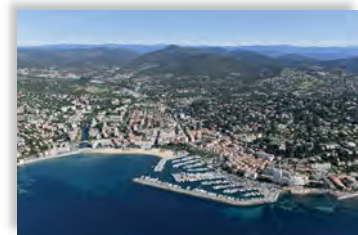




**LE PLAN-DE-LA-TOUR** and its Provençal village are surrounded by vineyards. It is flourishing in the heart of the Maures massif.



The two sides of **GRIMAUD**. On one side lies the stone-filled medieval village, on the other the seaside town of Port-Grimaud.



**SAINTE-MAXIME**, backing onto its marina, is the most populated seaside resort in the Gulf.



**SAINTE-TROPEZ**, the timeless legend, is of course famous the world over. The Town of Art, Culture and Traditions doubles its population by spring each year.



**GASSIN**, the watchtower of the Gulf, is located at the top of a steep hill. From here there is a circular view of the Maures mountains, the Gulf of Saint-Tropez and the îles d'Or beyond.



**RAMATUELLE**, a pretty well-preserved village, stretches from its rocky peak to its famous Pampelonne beach.



# SEA *and...*

The Gulf of Saint-Tropez boasts an exceptional natural heritage that is a key part of its identity and the quality of its lifestyle. The Maures massif encompasses 135,000 hectares of hills, valleys, rivers, scrublands and stretches of water. There is also over 50 km of Mediterranean coastline with several dozen beaches, coves and headlands. And in the middle lies a swampy area, on which the town of Port-Grimaud was born.

## THE DEEP BLUE SEA

Quayrolles, Rabiou, Togo, Sardinaux, Rubis... Names that divers dream of. Between the wrecks and drop-offs, no less than thirty sites attract thousands of scuba divers each year. This intense activity has led the towns in this area to look at the management of its sites in order to protect them in the long term. The Marine Observatory, an inter municipal scientific, technical and educational advisory organisation, was tasked with managing the diving sites. Mooring buoys have now been installed at twelve natural sites to prevent multiple moorings from increasing environmental damage. They are installed in mid-April and removed in mid-October. To meet demand, two sites are still operational all year round, Ramon Meumbru and Togo. To further raise public awareness, the Marine Observatory has created two underwater trails, featuring information boards on the flora and

fauna at Domaine du Rayol, Rayol-Canadel and La Croix-Valmer. Two more are currently under development, at Monterras in Ramatuelle and at Pointe des Sardinaux in Sainte-Maxime.

Download the map of these twelve natural sites from [www.observatoire-marin.com](http://www.observatoire-marin.com)

## MORE UNUSUAL

This type of sea excursion is seldom found anywhere in the world, except in Miami, USA. Leaving from the port of Saint-Tropez, five skippers are on hand to explore the villas of the stars, from the sea. Head to Cap Camarat to discover the luxury villas at Canoubiers Beach: summer residences of the rich and famous. Stéphane Léhembre is at the helm of the *Brigantin II*, "my parents first ran this one-hour excursion 30 years ago. My mother worked for the *Brigitte Bardot Foundation* in La Madrague and my father was a marine mechanic. Together they launched their maritime transport company. And when they bought a second boat my mother devised this excursion, which was in great demand". The "beautiful people" are every where in summer "we see them on their yachts every year, *Rihanna* and *Sylvester Stallone* are familiar faces...", says the skipper.



## ALSO

Given the vast extent of the water, there is a wide variety of nautical activities. From the most conventional, as practised in sailing schools, to the exciting Cavalaire where there is an abundance of motorised water sports. Featuring the spectacular Cavalaire race, the *Caval'eau jet* (jet ski), is organised in September and hosted by comedian Vincent Lagaf. A passionate enthusiast, he founded the first Flyboard Academy in France in 2015, Adrenaline Academy and organised the first European and World Flyboard Championships in Cavalaire. This world-famous stretch of water also hosts other high-profile international events such as the prestigious *Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez*, previously *La Nioulargue*. This rally of the most beautiful boats in the world with a mix of classic yachts and ultra-modern vessels will take place this year from 29 September to 7 October. And more than 3,000 sailors took part in the races at the *Giraglia Rolex Cup* last June on 250 yachts.



# LAND

## THE WONDERS OF NATURE

The Gulf of Saint-Tropez boasts an exceptional natural heritage that is a key part of its identity and the quality of its lifestyle. From the coastal path to the Maures massif, its hues of green are as rich as the many Mediterranean plants that comprise it. There is only one way to explore all its secrets: on foot. No fewer than 50 marked trails are available to walkers with the help of its local authorities. From ruins waiting to be discovered, like Fort Freinet (La Garde-Freinet), the dolmen of Briande Bay (Ramatuelle), the ancient Gallo-Roman fish ponds (Sainte-Maxime), the ancient villa of Pardigon (La Croix Valmer)... to simple yet stunning panoramic views, the Gulf of Saint-Tropez boasts a rich historical heritage. There are organised nature outings with a guide to explore the Maures mountains and the rocky coastline more closely. These walks have various themes: birdwatching with the Ligue de Protection des Oiseaux, investigating the insects that live in the scrubland, learning about flowers and herbs, or getting to the heart of an apiary... There are over 120 trips throughout the year.

More information can be found at [www.visitgolfe.com](http://www.visitgolfe.com)



## ALSO

You can also run a unique route taking in the seaside, vineyards, hills and scrubland without going along the coastal path. The **first Gulf of Saint-Tropez International Marathon** was held last March. A 42 km race starting from Sainte-Maxime and finishing in Cavalaire via Grimaud, Cogolin, Gassin, Saint-Tropez, Ramatuelle and La Croix-Valmer. For this first year, the 4,000 competitors had the choice between three types of distance: the individual Marathon, the 2 x 21.1 km and the team Marathon with 4, 6 or 7 team mates. In view of the scale of the event, the Var region decided to support the organisers, the Communauté de communes, by providing them with a grant of €30,000. The Gulf of Saint-Tropez is also a scenic setting for equestrian events. In Gassin, nestled in 30 hectares of countryside, Gassin stud farm, Saint-Tropez Polo-club has just been completely renovated. It hosts international tournaments from April to September attracting the best players in the world. A white dress code is of course mandatory. Pampelonne beach has hosted the **Longines Athina Onassis Horse Show** at the end of May for the past 5 years, one of the most important show jumping events in the world, sponsored by the Swiss watchmaker and coordinated by horsewoman Athina Onassis.

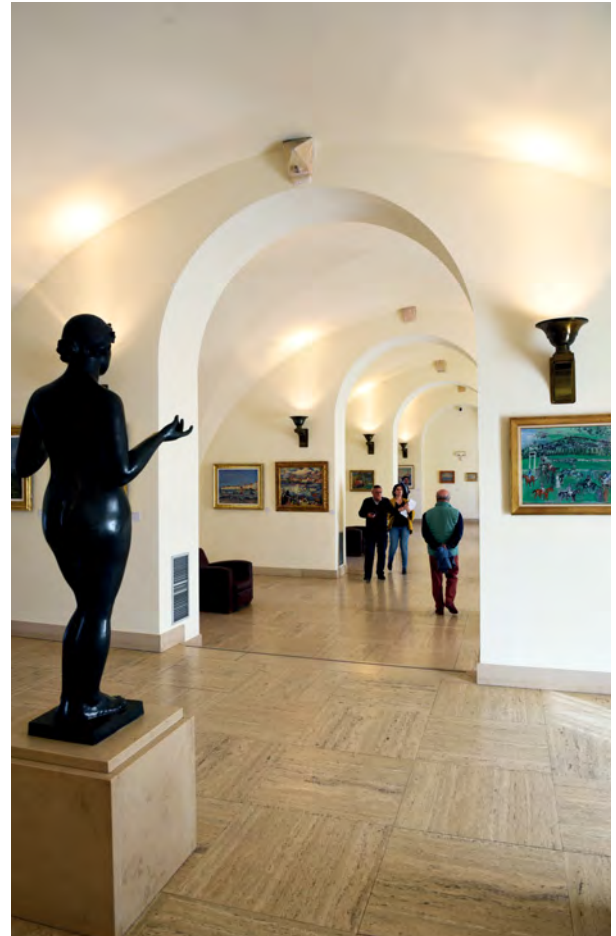




# LAND *of culture and heritage*

**C**ulture is everywhere in all 12 Gulf communities. Cinemas, libraries, media libraries, museums, cultural centres as well as internationally renowned festivals... The Rostropovitch Landowski inter-communal conservatoire, located in Cogolin and Sainte-Maxime, offers a wide range of programmes for dancers and musicians, both amateur and more experienced. In Cogolin, it shares its premises with the media library, which has a collection of over 40,000 documents. It organises very regular workshops and meetings with storytellers and authors. Several libraries and cultural centres also hold regular events throughout the year in La Croix-Valmer, La Garde-Freinet, Gassin and Saint-Tropez. A large number of artists, galleries, and art studios have taken up residence in the area. More than a hundred locations have been identified.

Major cultural events also make the Gulf famous. For 33 years now, **the Ramatuelle Festival** has been offering high quality evenings of theatre, humour and contemporary music in early August. It has become one of the major events of the summer season (see Portfolio p.5). (Read more p.59)



L'Annonciade Museum in Saint-Tropez



## SAINT-TROPEZ AND CELEBRITIES

Guy de Maupassant first visited Saint-Tropez in 1888.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, painters like Signac and writers like Colette used to visit the small town in Var. Other artists were soon seduced by his charm: Henry Matisse, Marquet, Manguin, Bonnard, Dunnoyer de Segonzac... Saint-Tropez became very fashionable in artistic circles. Picabia, Errol Flynn and Anaïs Nin were all visitors. After the war, new celebrities also made the city their own: Juliette Gréco, Daniel Gélin, Annabel Buffet... The beaches of Saint-Tropez saw the very first bikinis. Roger Vadim's film with Jean-Louis Trintignant and Brigitte Bardot *And God Created Woman* (see p. 64) introduced the Saint-Tropez fashion to the general public. This success was then repeated by the *Troops of Saint-Tropez* series in the Sixties as well as the "beautiful people" image presented by the locations. Today, the world's elite convene there in the summer months.

**Les Nuits du Château de la Moutte** in Saint-Tropez also offers an exceptional programme of classical and jazz music. The next event will take place from 1 to 13 August. Every summer, artists take to the streets of Grimaud for extraordinary concerts during the **Les Grimaldines** festival. There will be a performance every Tuesday from 17 July to 7 August, with Imany, Sinclair, Jehro and Michel Fugain set to appear.

The area also has a rich heritage. Parish churches contain unexpected treasures, with the oldest church, Saint-Michel de Grimaud, dating back to the end of the 12th century. Forts, castles and towers built over the centuries to protect the towns are another reminder of times gone by. La Garde-Freinet is home to the most impressive perched village, Fort Freinet\*.

Numerous museums dot the region. In Cavalaire, an archaeological exhibition showcases artefacts from the ancient city. Provençal folk customs and traditions are celebrated at the Heritage Museum in Grimaud, the Conservatoire du patrimoine du Freinet in La Garde-Freinet and the Tour Carrée in Sainte-Maxime. Sainte-Maxime is also home to the Phonography Museum which houses a unique collection unlike any other in Europe. However, Saint-Tropez boasts the greatest range of museums, with the Musée de l'Annonciade\*, which houses a permanent collection of masterpieces of French painting, the Citadel Maritime History Museum\* and the Museum of police and film.

\*Read our article on Fort Freinet (Le Var n°4 - winter 2017-2018), the Musée de l'Annonciade (Le Var n°3 - summer 2017), the Citadel Maritime History Museum (Le Var n°4 - winter 2017-2018) available to download from [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr)



### **CARRÉ IN SAINTE-MAXIME, THE CULTURAL HUB OF THE GULF**

Open daily, the Carré cinema centre is set over 5,200 m<sup>2</sup> and houses:

- 2 theatres (480 seats and 76 seats)
- a 100 m<sup>2</sup> media library
- a cinema with 3 screens

Every year, over 230,000 people take part in events organized by the centre, across all artistic disciplines: live performances, readings, visual arts...



### **CINEMA IN THE LIMELIGHT**

The most famous police station in France has become a museum! The Museum of police and film in Saint-Tropez welcomes the public to visit the building, which was home to the Saint-Tropez police force until 2003. The location was made famous with the film *The Troops of Saint-Tropez*, it celebrates the comedy and also pays tribute to actors such as Louis de Funès and Michel Galabru. In addition, this fun and interactive museum looks at the role of cinema in the town, between myth and reality. Many films have been shot here including *And God Created Woman* and *The Swimming Pool*. Iconic actresses Brigitte Bardot and Romy Schneider are also featured. A temporary exhibition is devoted to Animals and Stars, with photographs by Edward Quinn, until 19 January 2019. Since it opened in June 2016, the museum has welcomed more than 270,000 visitors. In summer it sees visitors 2,500 a day!

**Full price: €4 - Concessions: €2**

**free – under 12 years old**

**More information can be found at  
[www.saint-tropez.fr](http://www.saint-tropez.fr)**

To find out even more about film making in the Gulf, the Tourist Office has created a film trail in partnership with the Var Film Commission, which allows you to (re)discover these iconic films!

**More information can be found  
at [www.visitgolfe.com](http://www.visitgolfe.com)**



# LAND *of entertainment*



© Emmanuel Bertrand

Air shows, car displays, high-level sporting events, the Harley festival, and a shopping paradise too... The Gulf of Saint-Tropez offers a range of entertainment to suit everyone in a lively atmosphere. Dozens of events have an international reach and welcome an ever-growing audience!

## Sainte-Maxime Free Flight World Masters

The best aerobatic pilots in the world have been coming to Sainte-Maxime since 2011 for a spectacular air show. **The Sainte-Maxime Free Flight World Masters 2018**, on 14 and 15 October, will be held on the beach in the town centre and promises to be absolutely breathtaking. Aerobatics, duels, competitions between the best pilots, demonstrations and a variety of stunts... As well as a host of land-based entertainment like the SIRPA exhibition *Des Ailes et des Hommes* (Of Wings and Men) in the *Théâtre de la Mer* marquee and numerous stands. There will be fireworks on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm! Free. [free-flight.sainte-maxime.com](http://free-flight.sainte-maxime.com)

## Harley Davidson Eurofestival in Grimaud

Grimaud becomes the Harley Davidson capital from 7 to 10 June. Over 16,000 bikers from all over Europe gather in the heart of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez for the Harley Davidson Eurofestival. It features a varied programme including concerts on the giant stage set up on the beach, chopper demonstrations, a bike show, a customisation competition, a Harley village, and a giant parade winding along the roads of the Gulf! Every year, this event represents one of the largest tourist gatherings in the Var.

Price: from €36 to €100.

[harley-davidson-eurofestival.com](http://harley-davidson-eurofestival.com)



© Emmanuel Bertrand

## EXCEPTIONAL TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS

Tradition has maintained a prominent place in the events organized in the Gulf. **Cogolin** goes back in time for a weekend each year in April. *Les Médiévales* take the whole village back in time to the ages of sword tournaments, knights and noblemen... A whole world is recreated for the occasion. Visitors attend a medieval wedding, demonstrations of swordsmanship and vaulting, numerous shows... Saturday evening features a torchlight parade and late-night performances. [www.cogolin.fr](http://www.cogolin.fr)

From 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> May, tradition is in the spotlight in **Saint-Tropez** with *Les Bravades*. This religious and military celebration of the patron saint of the city, Saint Torpes, is an expression of local loyalty. In 68 AD, this high dignitary of

the house of Nero refused to renounce Christianity and was beheaded. This tradition goes back more than 460 years. It also celebrates the military defence of the town. For 150 years, sailors, fishermen and privateers from Saint-Tropez managed to ward off all attacks from both land and sea. Three days of celebration are organised for the inhabitants of the town as well as for visitors. But this party has a flavour of days gone by, get ready to jump into history! The festivities begin with an artillery salute, followed by religious and military processions. A great number of people dress either in traditional Provençal dress or in red and white - the colours of the city. These three days of remembrance are an important part of life in the town. [bravade-saint-tropez.fr](http://bravade-saint-tropez.fr)



© Emmanuel Bertrand

## Fight-Night à Saint-Tropez

Voted the best fighting event in Europe, Saint-Tropez **Fight-Night** will be welcoming thrill-seekers on 4 August at the Citadel. Now in its 6<sup>th</sup> year, the event combines glamour with mixed martial arts! It's a combination that never fails to deliver. The Citadel is transformed into a ring and welcomes the biggest international names in Thai boxing and kickboxing, including Jérôme Le Banner and Yannick Lidon in previous years. A number of world titles are awarded after the fights are all over. The evening is broadcasted worldwide on various television channels. A gourmet meal is served to around 1,500 spectators.

This event has already attracted many celebrities including Sylvester Stallone, Gérard Lanvin, Clovis Cornillac, Eric Judor...

[www.fightnights.pro](http://www.fightnights.pro)



© Emmanuel Bertrand

## Classic tennis tour in Saint-Tropez

Founded 8 years ago by Christian Bîmes, the former head of the French Tennis Federation, the Classic Tennis Tour brings together the world's tennis greats in Saint-Tropez every summer in July. Legendary former players and up-and-coming tennis players will all be in attendance. A temporary tennis court is installed on the town's harbour, providing spectators with an unobstructed view of the

breath-taking yachts. Five games are scheduled per day. Prices from €18 to €30.

[www.classictennistour.fr](http://www.classictennistour.fr)

## The great traders' sale of Saint-Tropez

This is one of the most eagerly awaited events of the year. From 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> Oc-

tober, the great traders' sale attracts several thousand people to the streets of Saint-Tropez for this 4-day event. They come from all over France to snap up a bargain. And everyone joins in, big name brands, luxury stores, individual craftsmen... The town is transformed into a giant department store, where good deals can be found on every corner, on every street. And this year, the event is celebrating its 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary! Not to be missed.

[www.saint-tropez.fr](http://www.saint-tropez.fr)



# LAND *of* *flavours and* *craftsmanship*

Pipes, musical reeds\*, rugs\*, sandals\*, ceramics... as well as wines, tarts, chestnuts, olive oil, goats' cheese...

The area of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez is one of the richest in all the Var in terms of arts and crafts and local products. Local artisans make the most of the riches of their natural environment, such as cane from Provence, heather and cork. They create unique accessories, some of them exported all over the world.

## WINE TRAIL

80% of the agricultural land in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez is dedicated to growing vines for wine. The land of rosé production, the region has no fewer than 33 wineries. To explore them, the Gulf of Saint-Tropez tourist office offers an oenological trail of 10 communes (Cogolin, Lacroix-Valmer, Gassin, Grimaud, La Garde-Freinet, La Mole, Le Plan-de-La-Tour, Ramatuelle and Saint-Tropez). 29 vineyard estates, independent winegrowers or Gulf cooperatives produce mainly under the names Vin de Pays and Côtes de Provence. Find the Provençal wine trail at [www.visitgolfe.com](http://www.visitgolfe.com)

## MARKETS

Hard to miss as there's one every day in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez. From the Provençal market, to the travelling market and even the covered market for rainy days... They all offer delicious local products, and some have real spe-

cialities on offer. Seafood lovers will enjoy the fish market at the port of Cavalaire, near the Place aux Herbes in Saint-Tropez or the fishermen's stall at Sainte-Maxime.

Sainte-Maxime (every day), Saint-Tropez (Tuesday and Saturday), Cavalaire (Wednesday), Cogolin (Wednesday)





and Saturday) and Marines de Cogolin (Friday), La Garde-Freinet (Wednesday and Sunday), Le Plan-de-La-Tour (Thursday), Grimaud (Thursday) and port Grimaud 1 (Sunday), Ramatuelle (Thursday and Sunday), Le Rayol-Canadel (Friday), La Croix-Valmer (Sunday).

## COGOLIN PIPES

If there's a silver cock engraved on your pipe, there's no doubt that it was made at Courrieu in Cogolin. Master pipemakers since 1802, the Courrieu family is the last to preserve this local craft. Certified by the État Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant (EPV) living heritage organisation, the factory practices an outstanding art form, as it did over 200 years ago. Following in the footsteps of the founder Ulysse, René and his son Thierry now run the show. Their secret: using a local raw material, old heather roots gathered in the Maures massif. It is the very best *"the heart of the product"*, explains René Courrieu and goes on to say *"this wood improves the flavour of any tobacco. It adds a honeyed flavour"* to the pipes that are cut, chiselled, sized, "sealed",



turned and then milled. To avoid tooth damage, Courrieu uses ebonite stems. Two thousand pipes are available in their shop/workshop: sculpted for collectors, as well as straight or curved classics. There's something for everyone. A guided tour of the workshop can help you choose the pipe for you.

**More information can be found at [www.courrieu-pipes.com](http://www.courrieu-pipes.com)**

## THE QUEEN OF TARTS!

A soft brioche filled with velvety cream and sprinkled with crunchy granules of sugar: 63 years after it was created by Alexandre Micka, the Tarte Tropézienne is still a resounding favourite. In 1955, Roger Vadim made *And God Created Woman* with Brigitte Bardot. The eighty members of the film crew had lunch every day at the de Colmont family home, the owners of a small bar on Pampelonne beach, which later became the famous Club 55. Bernard de Colmont served Bardot with a tart made by local pastry chef Alexandre Micka. *"She loved its deli-*

*cious sweetness and became an ardent ambassador for the dessert, she even suggested that Alexandre Micka could call it 'La tarte Tropézienne' and this pastry has certainly found fame!"* Patented since 1973, the recipe is a closely guarded secret. When Albert Dufréne took over from Alexandre Micka in 1985, the recipe was passed on to him handwritten on a cardboard pastry case. The cream in La Tarte Tropézienne is made in the greatest secrecy every day in Cogolin's laboratory. In addition to the traditional recipe, there are other flavours including chocolate, salted butter caramel, hazelnut, coffee and chocolate passion. It even comes with fresh raspberries...

**[www.latartetropezienne.fr](http://www.latartetropezienne.fr)**

\*Read our article on musical reeds (Le Var n°1 – summer 2016), Cogolin rugs, (Le Var n°2 Winter 2016-2017), sandals (Le Var n°1 – summer 2016) available to download from [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr)





Pampelonne beach at Ramatuelle

# LAND of nature

Against the backdrop of the Maures forest, coves, beaches and headlands alternate in the foreground. The landscapes in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez are truly magnificent. This nature is at the very origin of the legendary status of the destination. Painters have depicted it, sculptors copied its every detail, directors have used it to shoot films... very much in demand, it is unceasingly well-protected. A little detour through its most iconic locations.

## ET DIEU CRÉA LA FEMME / AND GOD CREATED WOMAN... ON PAMPELONNE BEACH IN RAMATUELLE

Roger Vadim's film *Et Dieu Créa La Femme* didn't just change Brigitte Bardot's life, it also unveiled Pampelonne beach in the town of Ramatuelle to the world. The director made no mistake when he first came here in 1954 and found this almost unoccupied 4.5 km stretch of white sand. 64 years later, 27 internationally renowned beach venues welcome several million visitors a year. *"In the peak summer season, the bay can welcome an average of 300 boats a day, one third of which are yachts more than 24 metres long"*, says Roland Bruno, mayor of Ramatuelle. It's not hard to understand the significance of its economic impact. But the beach and the seabed have deteriorated over time. And nobody wants to kill off this goose that lays such golden eggs. All the more so since 2003, *"the beach has been classified as a remarkable natural area which in theory doesn't allow any economic activity. But, thanks to the Gaïa amendment, the Coastlines Act has been modified. It allows the possibility of maintaining a sustainable local economy under certain very strict conditions. In response, the town has set up a management plan for the natural beach at Pampelonne which will take effect in the summer of 2019"*, explains the mayor before revealing its future appearance. *"Beach venues will be reduced from 27 to 23. Their architecture will be based exclusively on natural materials, wood for the most part, and will be in step with the issues of the 21st century. Of these, the ten that are installed on public maritime property will have to be dismantled for part of the year. On the other hand, the five built on private land and the eight located on municipal public property are not subject to this requirement."* As regards the sea, the town, supported by the Marine Observatory, will install *"around sixty ecological buoys to channel the mooring of yachts"*. A concierge service to welcome these famous "big boats" is also planned. A first for France! These are just some of the facilities and services that should make this famous beach at Pampelonne a natural paradise. *"It's going to be amazing"*, says Roland Bruno. The town will start demolition work next October, after Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, to hand over the 18 empty lots to their future operators on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 for a period of 11 years (until 2030).



## ALSO WORTH SEEING

### The Pointe des Sardinaux in Sainte-Maxime

You can almost see Brigitte Bardot on this beach, hair tousled, gently humming "La Madrague". In Sainte-Maxime, the Pointe des Sardinaux, a natural and untamed peninsula nicknamed "little Corsica" by the locals, is well worth a visit. Aside from its sheer beauty, this scenic spot, owned by the Var Department\*, is home to a host of curiosities and treasures. Salt-loving vegetation typical of the coastline (sand spurge, samphire and silver ragwort, Jupiter's beard) flourishes alongside plants sculpted by the wind, such as the mastic pistachio tree, buckthorn and myrtle. It has two small beaches: one facing northeast, near a former World War II bunker, the other at the southwest end of the point. They are covered with varying degrees of marine debris, indicative of healthy coastal sea life. The sea is home to many marine animals that thrive in the rocks. The seabed around the Pointe des Sardinaux offers all the habitats of the shallow Mediterranean seabed with rocks, photophilic algae and Posidonia meadows. Rarer still, there is some beautiful pearl oysters to be seen. There is a very interesting Roman fish pond, dating back to 125 BC, just a few metres away. Carved out of the rocks, two basins served as a supply of fresh fish and a storage place for sale.

### Les Pradels at La Môle

There are thirteen departmental Espaces Naturels Sensibles (ENS) open to the public in the Gulf, these are environmentally sensitive areas and include Les Pradels at La Môle, in the heart of nature. Outstanding sites due to their ecological quality, they are primarily made up of coastal or forest ENS. Every year, the region organizes free nature walks to visit some ENS sites, such as Les Pradels. This site can be explored from the banks of the Môle, surrounded by wet grasslands, floodplains and a gallery forest sheltering numerous rare species.

More information can be found at [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr)

\* One of the 96 Departmental councils in France





LE REVEST-LES-EAUX

# LA TOURAVELLE:

## *a breathtaking view*

The sensitive natural area of La Touravelle extends over 35 hectares from the foot to the summit of Mount Combe. Situated in the municipality of Revest-Les-Eaux, it is accessible via a number of footpaths, past pine forests and olive groves. Rising to more than 400m, it offers an outstanding panorama of the Mediterranean and the surrounding mountains.

**M**ount Combe is not the most frequented of the mountains around Toulon, perhaps because it is lower than Mount Caume, less easily accessible than Mount Faron and less well-known than the Coudon. And yet it is worth exploring for the plant and animal species that live there, the beauty of its conserved terraces and, above all, for the vast panorama it affords. From the summit, at 440m the view is breathtaking. This 360° vista takes in the Mediterranean, the Fort of Six-Fours, the Baou des Quatre Oures, Mount Caume, the Coudon and the Faron... The sensitive natural area\* of La Touravelle, which lies within the municipality of Revest-les-Eaux, was bought by the Var Department\* in 1982. Bordered to the north by the mountain ridge and to the east by the urbanised valley of Revest-les-Eaux, this natural haven extends over an area of 35 hectares. It is accessed from the residential district of La Ripelle or from the village centre along terrace-lined footpaths, through a forest of pine and olive trees. It is a family walk, which snakes up the hill and opens onto a large meadow, much appreciated by ramblers and school groups, which forms a huge playground, large enough to play ball games and tag, while also being an ideal, unspoiled place for picnics or siestas in the sun. Or all of those things! The vast plateau that forms the centre of the site lies

\* One of the 96 Departmental councils in France





## *at the summit of Mount*

not far from La Touravelle's two farms, witnesses to the herding and tree-farming activities that were practised here a long time ago. *"The people back then didn't settle here by chance"*, explains the manager of the site, who is employed by the Var Department. *"It faces directly south on a slope with plenty of water. Depending on the season, water runs everywhere. Some wells are still visible."* One of them is topped by a small wind turbine, of which only the mast is still standing. It enabled the water to be drawn up by the force of the wind. A "water mine" – a kind of horizontal well – can also be seen above the plateau.

The sensitive natural area of La Touravelle has plenty of other riches, too.



Amid the rockrose, holm and kermes oaks, rosemary and broom, some protected species are to be found. *Lavatera maritima*, a shrub that can grow to two metres in height, grows on the rocky limestone slopes of Mount Combe, as does *Scilla hyacinthoides*, with its pretty violet blooms clustered along a stem that can measure up to one metre in height. Cow soapwort, a pretty plant with pink flowers which is listed in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur catalogue of rare and endangered plants has also been found on this site and is now protected. These species need open spaces, which is why the vegetation on the meadow is cut back regularly, especially before the summer.





From the ENS at La Touravelle, view of the Mediterranean and Le Baou des quatre ours

La Touravelle is a place of rest for ramblers – and also for certain migratory birds. With a little luck, you will spot a Bonelli's eagle, a pair of which nest nearby, on Mount Caume.

Bats, reptiles, amphibians and butterflies also live here, bearing witness to the richness and diversity of this natural environment. In 2005, a forest fire burned the site and traces of the damage are still visible, in particular if you take the path

that arrives from Tourris, down the hillside to the foot of the Revest-les-Eaux dam. In this section, the olive trees suffered damage. But now, ten years later, they are springing back to life and occupying their old place. To maintain these numerous olive trees, the Department has signed an agreement with an olive-grower, who harvests the fruit. Another partnership concluded with the association *Zone Bleue* and its chil-

dren's home, *La Déferlante*, situated close to La Touravelle, will ensure that this natural space is maintained and protected by means of environmental projects. "*The idea is to create an educational area*", says the site manager.

With the same objective in mind, the Var Department council is considering ways of renovating the two buildings on La Touravelle. These former farmhouses, each measuring

250m<sup>2</sup>, have been empty for more than fifteen years and have fallen into disrepair. Access to them is currently prohibited, but they could be renovated by means of a professional integration project. In that case, a specialised enterprise would be commissioned to restore the building while training young people from the Var: the latter would receive an apprenticeship – and new job prospects. This would make Mount Combe the

most socially supportive of all the mountains in the Toulon area – one more reason to take a walk there. ■

\* Sensitive natural areas (SNAs) are acquired by the Var Department council for their ecological diversity, with funds from the Natural Area Planning Tax (taxe d'aménagement des espaces naturels – TAENS) on building permits. In 2018, the Var has a network of 246 SNAs covering more than 13,500 hectares.

### PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

There is no access for motor vehicles to the sensitive natural area of La Touravelle. Access is authorised only via the footpaths. Several routes lead to it, such as the path starting from the Tourris plateau via the Revest-les-Eaux dam. The simplest and shortest route is from La Ripelle, at the junction between the RD 46 and Chemin du Barrage as you enter Revest-les-Eaux. From there, you skirt the residential area taking the road to the dam, then the La Touravelle footpath, after which you enter the SNA. A footpath leads to the farmhouses. Another route is signposted from the village centre.

## TOULON

# THE MAGENTA, *shipwreck and ancient treasures*

During the night of 31 October 1875, the *Magenta*, a French Navy battleship moored in the bay of Toulon, explodes after a fire. No one is hurt. On board are hundreds of ancient artefacts. They come from ancient Carthage, the flagship Phoenician city in Tunisia, or from the Roman Empire, and include a statue of the empress Sabina, the wife of Hadrian.



INCENDIE DU MAGENTA DANS LA RADE DE TOULON. — Vue prise des quais. — (D'après le croquis de M. Séb.)

**T**he jagged coastline of the Var has been the scene of numerous shipwrecks since ancient times. Even so, the story of the wreck of the *Magenta* is a case apart. Firstly, by virtue of the vessel itself: in 1875, the *Magenta* - 100 metres in length, its wooden hull covered by 12 centimetres of steel, and with hybrid mechanical propulsion - is the largest ship of its kind ever built in France. Secondly, by virtue of the quality of its cargo: its holds are loaded with 46 crates containing 2,080 Punic steles and the statue of the empress Sabina (see insert) - a treasure hoard that divers then and in more recent times had difficulty finding, given the damage done to the battleship. Let us take a look back at this tragedy, which has still not yielded all its treasures

**Carthage, 6 December 1874: a find of thousands of antique artefacts.** With the aim of adding to its collections in the Louvre, the French Ministry of Public Instruction and the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* mandated the archaeologist Pricot de Sainte-Marie - then an interpreter at the French Consulate General in Tunis - to carry out an archaeological excavation at Carthage, the flagship city of the Phoenicians in Tunisia. Excavations were carried out north of the Tophet - a legendary necropolis - on several walls dating from the period of Roman rule. This is where the Carthaginians worshipped the patron deities of the city, Baal Hammon, the Lord of the Incense Altar, and Tanit. They sacrificed the first-born of the leading families to them. From the second century BC

onwards, only animals - sheep or rams - were sacrificed, as witnessed by the images decorating the 2,600 steles that were taken from the site. All carved in limestone, they were decorated and covered in inscriptions on one face only. But that was not all. The archaeologist also found one sheer marvel - a marble statue, 2.10m high, of the empress Sabina, the wife of the Roman emperor, Hadrian. Broken into 6 pieces, it was almost complete. *"The statue was erected around 127-128 AD in preparation for the festivities celebrating the last ten years of the emperor's reign. Analysis of the marble has enabled its origin to be determined as the quarries of Cape Vathy on the island of Thassos in Greece"*, stated the specialists, who rapidly identified it. It took nearly one year for the final batch of artefacts to be embarked on



the Magenta for Toulon. In total, 2,080 Punic steles and the statue.

**Toulon, 31 October 1875: a spectacular explosion.** The Magenta was moored in Toulon bay, facing the Vauban dock. Its cargo had not yet been landed. During the night, fire broke out at the rear of the vessel and despite the efforts of the crew could not be controlled. It advanced as far as the powder store. Around three o'clock in the morning, the frigate exploded. From the quayside, hundreds of Toulon inhabitants watched as it happened. The explosion was so powerful it blew out all the gaslights in the city. The Arsenal had to order 20,000 new panes of glass. The Magenta sank 12 metres

**Toulon, 27 April 1995: diving for the 'holy grail'.** *"I directed our search towards the Magenta's mooring buoy. I had read numerous official letters indicating that the wreck was located directly above that. We feared that work to construct the Vauban dock, which extended more than 1,500 metres into the sea, might have covered the wreck. But it was not the case",* relates the director of operations of the GRAN naval archaeology research group\*, Max Guérout. Created in 1982 and presided over by Captain Philippe Tailliez, Toulon-based GRAN was made up of a team of archaeologists, historians, specialists in diving and submarine operations, and experts in various other fields. After being contacted in 1993 by the archaeologist Jean-Pierre

Laporte to recover the rest of the Magenta's cargo, GRAN located the wreck in 1994. Max Guérout organised three archaeological excavations between 1995 and 1998. The Var Department council supported GRAN and helped fund operations. On 10 May 1995, after 13 days of diving, when hope was all but lost, the incredible happened. *"They were difficult dives due to the nature of the ship, which was armoured. Trying to find something beneath or among the armoured casing made the searches more complicated",* GRAN's diver and photographer Guy Martin explains as if it was yesterday. *"After staking out the area, we excavated a small zone of four by four metres, determined by Max Guérout. We used sucking apparatus, vacuum hoses, in the mud. It wasn't long before we were surrounded by the dust that was being thrown out, we were in complete darkness. So, we excavated blind. And then, under a steel plate, I touched a stone in a cavity one metre*

## SABINA OR VIBIA SABINA,

Born in 86 or 87 AD, Sabina was the grand-niece of the Roman emperor Trajan, and the daughter of Lucius Vibius Sabinus. In 112, she married Hadrian, who succeeded Trajan in 117. She was empress for 20 years, receiving the title of Augusta in 128. She was deified after her death in 136.

More on [www.archeonavale.org](http://www.archeonavale.org)

Opposite:  
Head of Empress Sabine, wife of Emperor Hadrian (born in 86 or 87 AD), exhibited at the Louvre Museum in Paris. Photo (C) RMN-Grand Palais (Louvre Museum)/Hervé Lewandowski

*deep. I put it to one side and continued excavating. I looked at the time on my depth gauge. I collected the stone I'd put to one side. And it was while I was returning to the surface, with the water getting lighter and the dust clearing from my find, that the stone turned into a face. I came out of the water brandishing Sabina's head in the air. We all went mad with joy",* relates the finder of the 'holy grail'. During the three excavation campaigns, seven sections of the Roman statue and 85 Punic steles or fragments dating from the second century BC were brought up from their armoured sarcophagus. Exhibited in the Louvre since 1997, Sabina's head is shown as it was found, blackened by the fire, next to the partly reconstructed statue. ■



Guy Martin with the 'Tête de Sabine'

deep, leaving its superstructures still visible. With the help of divers, the Navy retrieved part of the cargo, or nearly 1,500 steles. They had been placed at the fore of the ship and were relatively undamaged. Although some had been blackened by the fire, many were intact. However, no trace could be found of the head of the statue, part of the hips and a section of its clothing. The search was abandoned and the ship dynamited to free the passage.

*"After staking out the area, we excavated a small zone of four by four metres, determined by Max Guérout. We used sucking apparatus, vacuum hoses, in the mud. It wasn't long before we were surrounded by the dust that was being thrown out, we were in complete darkness. So, we excavated blind. And then, under a steel plate, I touched a stone in a cavity one metre*

\*GRAN is now celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary, with Max Guérout still director of operations. The association is presided over by Rear Admiral Bellot and Guy Martin is one of its vice-presidents.







Under the Aeternel brand,  
young creator Camille Masson designs  
high fashion swimwear. Each piece is unique.  
Her hippy chic, bohemian style, with a mix  
of knitwear and lycra, offers a truly romantic feel.

## THE AETERNEL, *hippie chic*

**C**amille Masson is a 24-year old with a bright future ahead! *"I first patented my trademark in 2015. But have been sewing since the age of 12"*, says the self-taught young woman. Her leitmotif? *"A passion for creation! Ever since I was young, I have been making clothes for myself and my girlfriends."* With such passion for fashion, her career seemed all cut out for her... but, not quite!! After graduating with a bachelor's degree, she started training as an occupational therapist, and then went on to work in a hospital: *"This is my second passion; I love my job and would not leave it for anything in the world"*, she smiles. And so, she decided to combine the two, spending her

days at the hospital and her evenings in her new boutique-workshop in Toulon. *"We opened up last February in the arts district of Toulon\* with my companion Steven."* Her swimwear takes pride of place amongst a selection of ladies wear. Two-pieces only, *"these are unique creations. My swimwear is all hand-made, and generally I combine two woven, knitted or embroidered materials. I have a preference for cotton thread which I like to crochet"*, before reassuring us: *"No, don't worry, you won't sink in one of my swimsuits! For greater comfort, and to prevent water absorption, crochet is used only on the tops, which are lined with lycra. The bottoms are made from lycra and include a hint of the material used for the top. This allows for quick drying"*. As for upkeep, it is quite simple *"machine-wash on a program for delicates"*. Her brassieres collection has a set of hooks and ribbon lacing in the back. A detail? Certainly not. Rather, the garments are made to be matched with one of her low-backed dresses. *"I like working with finesse."* Swimwear can also be matched with the kimono line *"light and flowing, to dress up any beach outfit"*. The final touch comes from one of the artist's bi-material bags, or a vintage hold-all, designed by Steven. ■

\*Read our article on the Rue des Arts in Toulon in magazine n° 4, Winter: 2017-2018

Aeternel 45, rue de Pomet,  
Arts district in Toulon.

Open from Tuesday to Saturday, from 10.30am  
to 7.30pm. Swimwear from €70.





**Chic industrial furniture designer Sarah Nebbati's creations do not go unnoticed. Entirely hand-made, or four-hand made, with boyfriend and colleague, Fabien, her furniture made from metal drums easily finds a home, both indoors and outdoors.**

**T**he concept: waste recovery. Her special touch: quality finishing. Her asset: bespoke design without any additional costs. Sarah Nebbati's creations are born of an encounter: with Fabien, her boyfriend, a jack-of-all trades and bodywork mechanic. *"We are indissociable"*, they confide. It all started just two years ago during a challenge. A graduate of Lille Visual Arts School, Sarah Nebbati is prolific. In the "recycle" spirit, all is inspiring. She draws furniture, he makes it: *"And initially, it wasn't easy"*, says Fabien. Walking by a metal drum one day, she said to him: *"If I draw a piece of furniture from this drum, do you think you could make it?"*. And as Fabien *"is always up for a challenge"*, he gave it his best shot. *"Sarah didn't know how to make such articles, so she didn't have all the constraints in mind, but after a few weeks, we got there."*

## *Luxurious reconversion* by **SARAH NEBBATI**

Today, she could almost do it on her own. *"I know how to cut the drums, to cut angles... Fabien trained me"*, she explains.

The designer is very inspired by round shapes, because she *"likes the softness they convey"*. She also likes mixing materials: *"We use oak for trays and seats; the wood is treated and can resist all kinds of weather conditions"*. Spray-painted, the gleaming furniture is perfect for outdoor use. She also produces items to order: *"a customer once requested a standalone washbasin for the garden"*. Today, she presents a collection of furniture and objects made from salvaged barrels. Chairs, tables, shelves, side tables, mirrors... *"My desk is a bestseller! I also adapt to customer ideas, and they can choose colors, but also part of the design. This one is equipped with a shelf with drawers, but I have also made some without drawers"*. Design may be important for this designer, but she never forgets functionality. *"Furniture must be beautiful, but also practical. That's why I like working directly with the customer to really understand what he/she is looking for."* Like artwork, each piece produced is signed by Sarah Nebbati. Beautiful, useful and accessible design is Sarah Nebbati's trademark... ■

Sarah Nebbati - Showroom, 184 rue Joseph Aubenas, 83600 Fréjus. Visit her Facebook page.

From €90 for a large salad bowl to €1,000 for a desk.



# LES IMPÉRATRICES, *wild inspiration*



Customized, dressed up, decorated, atypical, imposing and unique...

The Empresses buffalo skulls are true works of art, already seen in many exhibitions.

Let's meet Eliane and Clara Gay, a mother-daughter tandem, brimming with imagination and talent.

Everything began five years ago in a flea market. Mother and daughter, both visual artists, were strolling in search of inspiration. Clara set eyes on a buffalo skull, and *"I fell for it right away"*, she confides. She called over Eliane, her mother, to show her, fearing a negative reaction... but no! On the contrary, Eliane too found the skull quite fascinating. They bought it, as yet with no idea as to what to do with it. *"Clara totally fell in love with it, but it took us some time to start working on it"*, says Eliane. Then, one day, they started. They loved the matter and did not just want to paint on it. They wanted to create volume. They began timidly. They used glass beads. *"Then little by little, we saw the result starting to appear and liked it a lot. We decided to use other materials and then really started letting go!"*, recalls Clara, amused. And then the sky was the limit: leather, resin, jewels, gold paste, crystal, pins, Lego, gold leaf and even gun car-

tridges. Nothing could stop them. *"Everything inspires us, a trip, a movie, what we see in the street, on Internet... The main thing is how the material will react on the skull. How can we fix it so that it ages well? That's why we only use high quality products"*, explains Clara.

Each work is a unique piece, created by the pair's four hands, in their workshop in the family home town of Cuers. *"We would not know how to do otherwise"*, they say in chorus. Because they each feed off the imagination, inspiration and desires of the other. They swap ideas often, even though their creativity tends to go in the same direction. *"Every new skull is a new adventure, we cannot wait to discover it! Depending on our state of mind, it can take us up to two weeks or a month to complete, and we sometimes work for commissions, but that is rarer and more complicated."* The plain skulls come from Asia, and are all different: their size, their horns, their shape. Each piece inspires them in a particular way. Most of the time,



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they start with one idea and finish with something completely different.

Their greatest success: skulls with cartridges. *"We started with 22mm cartridges, and it was beautiful, powerful, the cartridges gave our work strength, and then we tried with 9mm, and it was even better! We then used different colors and our public loved it."* A very heterogeneous public; art-lovers mainly, but of all styles and ages.

And where did the name the "Empresses" come from? Initially, they did not have an artist's name. They had searched but come up with nothing. Then, Eliane wondered with a touch of humor: *"why not give ourselves a title of nobility?"* They were a little afraid that it might seem pompous and pretentious, but people seemed to like it and their entourage encouraged them. Since then, they have become The Empresses! After several exhibitions in the Var, including Hyères, Toulon, Saint-Tropez, but also in Marseille, Megève or Gstaad in Switzerland, their works are exhibited in Arles. They are also on sale at 8, rue Rabaton in the old city center of Hyères. Their goal is to be seen in as many art galleries as possible and to join a gallery in Paris. A dream set to come true very soon. Watch this space... ■



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Single edition, from €2,500 to €7,000, gallery price.

[www.lesimperatrices.fr](http://www.lesimperatrices.fr)



# LOU CREATION, *pure and simple*

Lou Creation is above all a family tale, with members Amelie, Marine and Kevin. Kevin and Marine are brother and sister while Amelie and Kevin are husband and wife. They are aged between 28 and 30 years old. They live in La Motte and have created an eyewear brand.

**D**rawing glasses and imagining tomorrow's trends has always been these young people's dream. A dream that came true in 2015. After optical studies and practical professional experience with various opticians, Amelie, Marine and Kevin decided to work together and to build a family business. In the Var, they launched their own eyewear brand, for men and women. "We wanted to use the creativity within us", they stress. Despite their young age, they quickly rose to the challenge. "Our entrepreneurial spirit and will to work together as a team took over! We were eager to show people our products", insists Kevin. This is how the adventure all started. In 2015, they produced a full range of sixty frames in two collections:

- **Lou Creation**, in stainless steel and acetate, a plastic which combines strength and comfort;

- **Lou Titanium**, in titanium, which offers the wearer elegance and solidity. Each model is available in a range of 4 to 13 colors.

Upon receipt of their first collections, they decided to attend the top two international trade exhibitions: Silmo in Paris and Mido in Milan. They stood out from the crowd with their fine, elegant, colorful, trendy, high quality products, all at very affordable prices. The brand quickly found its way into many optician stores in France. To ensure sound development, the three partners defined their respective roles: Marine in charge of sales for Southern France; Kevin in charge of production and

relations with foreign suppliers; and Amelie, in charge of logistics and accounting. However, they all continued to have a say in the creative process. They sit together around the computer and each adds their personal touch to the model. "We draw together. We all sit around a table and share opinions. We follow current trends, and always try to keep up with the latest fashions, especially in terms of color preference. For example, at the moment, the big trend is pink gold, you just can't miss it!", they explain.

In addition to their high quality products, they are known in the trade for their professionalism and seriousness. Lou Creation is growing steadily, and has sales reps located throughout France and in the French Overseas Territories. A sun protection range soon? "We have great demand for sunglasses too, but are not yet ready and able to assume production... one day the project will happen, that's for sure."

Lou Creation is a wonderful family adventure, and for these young Var citizens, the fulfillment of a precious dream. ■

Left to right: Marine, Kevin and Amélie



Lou Creation and Lou Titanium eyewear on sale at opticians.

Price: between €129 and €189

[www.loucreation.com](http://www.loucreation.com)



LE THORONET  
**A GEM**  
*of Cistercian architecture*

It is a humble and moving monument. 850 years after its construction, Le Thoronet Abbey still resonates with the genius of its builders. Echoes that captivate any sensitive visitor.



**T**ry to imagine the life of the community that founded and built this solid-looking monument back in the twelfth century, amid Mediterranean forest between Cabasse and Le Thoronet. Imagine the monks walking in the cloisters, their hoods over their heads, their faces lowered, their white woollen habits brushing the terracotta floor. Picture them sitting on the stone bench facing the deliberately sparse garden, renewing their tonsure seven times a year and, in the absolute silence imposed by their Order, enjoying the continuous sound of the water from the fountain. The only exception to the silence was in the parlour, located between the cloisters and the outer garden, where the brothers were allowed to speak to one another to distribute the day's tasks: gardening, animal farming, gathering wild plants, or copying manuscripts in the *scriptorium*. In the nearby chapter room, a chapter of the Rule of St. Benedict was read every morning. It was also the place where problems within the community were settled. Although a brief time was allowed here for talking, the sculpted forked tongue at the entrance was a reminder to all of its diabolical power. Imagine them again, these men who had given their life to God, pausing in their tasks for the eight daily common prayers. When evening came, they took their rest together in the large dormitory, each sleeping fully clothed on his straw mattress, protected from the devil by the father abbot in a cell at the entrance.

The setting in which the Cistercian monks of Le Thoronet lived is like the values that guided their lives: simple, strict and functional. The layout of the place was dictated by the organisation of community life: the buildings reserved for monastic life were placed on one side and those of the lay brothers, who helped with the manual work of the monastery, on the other. With Silvacane and Sénanque in the



Roman arcades in the Abbey cloisters

Bouches-du-Rhône and the Vaucluse, Le Thoronet is one of Provence's three sister Cistercian monasteries. Like hundreds of others throughout Europe, they spread the values of the Order founded several years earlier, in 1098, by Robert de Molesme at the monastery of Cîteaux near Dijon, then developed by Saint Bernard, the abbot of Clairvaux.

### HEADS AND MINDS FOR TOOLS

In 1136, a dozen monks were sent out to set up a new community in Provence. They did not settle at Le Thoronet straight away. They set up a first monastery 24 kilometres away, to

the east of Tourtour, on the passage of a Roman road: Florièyes Abbey. It was the very first Cistercian abbey in Provence. Was it the isolation that led the monks to prefer Le Thoronet? Or the opportunity of having land that was easier to cultivate? Was the geography more favourable for construction? Historians have put forward several hypotheses to explain why the seat of the abbey was transferred to Le Thoronet some twenty years later. What is certain is that in this narrow valley close to a river, the community found a site with all the primary materials they needed for building: wood, stone, clay and, of course, water. Construction began in around 1160. The trees were cut down. The best trunks were used in carpentry, the large branches for scaffolding and the rest of the wood for heating the oven to bake the tiles. The future cellar was built first, then the church. Around twenty monks and a few dozen lay brothers lived on the site. They were helped by journeymen, who supplied labour and know-how. They were the first inhabitants of the village of Le Thoronet. Some cleared the land, carried, set up and assembled; others quarried stone, cut blocks and dressed them with the utmost precision following lines traced according to the golden ratio. Construction continued until 1230.

The tools were basic, the work exhausting and discouraging by its vastness – but how useful and effective. The result is commensurate with the effort.

### A TREASURE OF LIGHT AND ACOUSTICS

Considered the most perfect example of Cistercian architecture before its evolution to the Gothic style, the Var abbey expresses the essence of the tenets preached by Saint Bernard: poverty, labour, isolation for inner peace, and also the quest for purity to foster the relationship between earth and heaven. For every architect, this monument is an architectural holy grail. Its purity and simplicity have inspired generations of architects. Le Corbusier, who visited the site in 1953, summed it up: *"Light and shadow are the loudspeakers of this architecture of truth, calm and strength"*. A statement that is magnificently illustrated by the photos taken by the photographer Lucien Hervé – some of which are conserved at the *Hôtel Départemental des Arts du Var*. Fernand Pouillon pays tribute to the genius of the place through the master-builder in his novel, *The Stones of the Abbey*. Even today, young architects eagerly flock to Le Thoronet. It is no rare occurrence to see, walking along the road, students from Japan – or elsewhere.

But you do not need to be an architect to admire this monastic complex, where 70% of the original buildings are still intact, to soak up the strength of the edifice and discover the tombs of the monks at the church's east end. The most striking part of the visit is the cloisters and, of course, the abbey church. The interplay of light lends grace to the stone and beauty to the lines. As for the acoustics, which for the Cistercians formed an integral part of their spiritual quest, in the vast nave they offer a divine echo of the voices of men that nine centuries of history have never silenced. This miracle is due to the hardness of the limestone rock used in its construction. And, very probably, to the amphorae incorporated into the vaulted roof to create an echo chamber effect. Bernard de Clairvaux said: *"If you wish to see, listen: hearing is one step towards seeing"*. That is certainly the best thing you can do at Le Thoronet. ■

70% of the original building has been preserved



### MORE THAN JUST AN ABBEY!

A listed historical monument since 1840 thanks to Prosper Mérimée, who saved the abbey after it had been left to rack and ruin following the French Revolution, the building was restored several times by the French government.

Today, it is managed by the National Monuments Centre, which organises tours, activities and cultural events. Highlights this summer include: Ballet Preljocaj (ambulatory shows on 23/06), Var's Musica (instrumental and vocal concerts on 17/06, 31/07), a mediaeval music festival (from 20-28/07), Les Voix Animées (a capella music on 18/08, 9/09 and 23/09), European Heritage Days (15 and 16/09).

Unusually for a national monument, the diocese holds a service in the abbey church every Sunday at 10.30am during the abbey's opening periods.

10am to 6.30pm every day until September.

Prices: €6.5-€8 / free admission for under-18s except groups.

Tel. +33 (0)4 94 60 43 96

[www.le-thoronet.fr](http://www.le-thoronet.fr)





# CERAMICS, *from Salernes to Varages*

Salernes made a name for itself with the production of the hexagonal terracotta tomettes, then with glazed tiles; Varages with that of faïence. Thirty kilometres apart, the reputations of both villages are being perpetuated by ceramicists who are renewing the genre. Here are some examples of their diverse range of products.



Water, clay and wood - these three resources, crucial to the development of the ceramics industry, are what Salernes and Varages have in common. And they were the point of departure for a venture that has taken the name of the two localities well beyond the limits of the Var.

In Varages, the faïence-making tradition dates back to 1695. The village, then a centre of pottery, converted to the production of faïence, which was very fashionable under Louis XIV, on the impetus of a Marseille merchant. This Mr. Fazende stopped over regularly in Varages on his way to buy faïence in Moustiers-Sainte-Marie in Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, where production had begun some twenty years previously. A canny man, he had a nose for the potential of the village, which had clay resources. He sent his nephew, Étienne Armand, as an apprentice to Saint

Jean du Désert, a reference in faïence manufacturing, in Marseille. Having completed his training, the latter founded Varages' first faïence factory. Two copies of his first items, dating from 1697 and 1698, are kept at the association-run Faïence Museum in the centre of the village – the originals belong to Sèvres Museum and a private collector. The artisan faïence-maker was followed by others. The first products were made exclusively in shades of blue; then ochre made its appearance, then polychrome. *"Generations change, the décors evolve"*, sums up William Hoffner, the president of the above association and himself a faïence manufacturer. Eight faïence factories were operating in 1780, employing around one hundred people, but the appearance of porcelain and the French Revolution struck a blow to production. The décors became simpler: in 1830 only four

painters remained. The ware became functional. In 1850, *faïence fine* made its appearance.

This used a different technique from the high and low-temperature colour techniques employed until then. In the twentieth century, production was industrialised. Several patents were filed to improve the production tools. Four factories remained open until 1980. They closed one after the other, the victims of foreign competition. *"Despite that, faïence has been produced in Varages continuously for 300 years"*, underscores William Hoffner. Two artisans are perpetuating this



William Hoffner, head of the Varages associative ceramics museum

## VARAGES FAÏENCE MUSEUM

12 Place de la Libération

Three floors on which you can view:

- The collections of dishes made in the village from 17th to the 20th centuries.

- The techniques, know-how and lifestyle of the faïence-makers of Varages.

Open in June and September from 2pm-6 pm Wednesday to Sunday; in July and August from 10am to 12pm / 3pm-7pm Tuesday afternoon to Sunday.

Price: €2.50 / free admission for under-12s.

Tel. +33 (0)4 94 77 60 39,

[www.musee-faïence-varages.fr](http://www.musee-faïence-varages.fr)

A ceramics festival is held every year on the second Sunday in August.

## TERRA ROSSA MUSEUM OF ARCHITECTURAL CERAMICS

Quartier Les Launes

On 3,000m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, you can view:

- The different stages in the industrial production of tomette tiles
- Works by local ceramicists
- Contemporary international works
- A collection of glazed tiles

Prices: €2.50-€5, free admission for under-12s.

Open in June and September from 3pm-6 pm on Mondays and from 10am-1pm / 3pm-7pm from Wednesday to Sunday, in July and August from 10am-1pm / 3pm-7pm every day except Tuesday.

Tel. +33 (0)4 98 10 43 90,

[www.terrarossalernes.fr](http://www.terrarossalernes.fr)



The Architectural Ceramics Museum in Salernes, Terra Rossa.

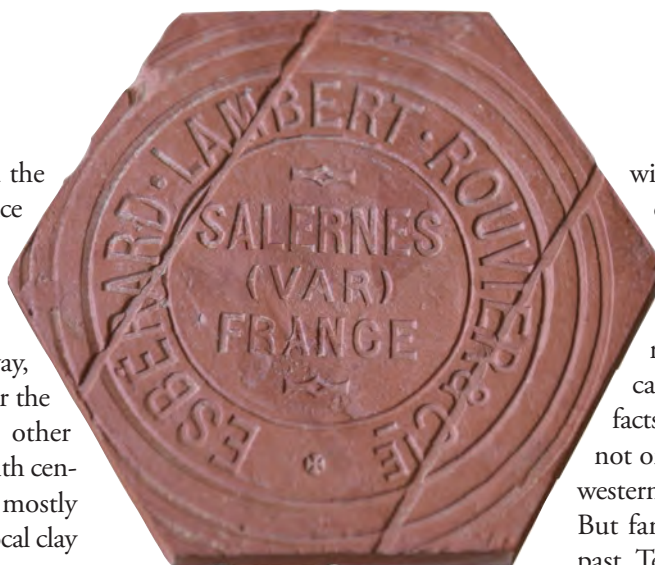


savoir-faire in the village, and the Faïencerie de Varages en Provence factory is still manufacturing.

### TOMETTES AND MORE

Less than thirty kilometres away, Salernes remains a reference for the production of tomettes and other tiles. At the end of the eighteenth century, the villagers, who were mostly engaged in farming, used the local clay to produce pottery for home use – a tradition that dates back to prehistoric times. But the red earth of Salernes soon offered a better market opportunity: terracotta for floors. Following the lead of the Cotte family, several artisans began producing a hexagonal floor tile in 1825. This was the famous Salernes tomette. *"The hexagon has the advantage of not losing its shape during baking, unlike square tiles, which can become rectangular or lozenge-shaped if the heat is distributed unevenly"*, explains Sophie Magnier, who is in charge of the Terra Rossa museum of architectural ceramics, which tells the history of tomette production.

The village, watered by the River Bresque and its tributaries, is structured around this production, which has become its trademark. Production was artisanal to start with, then industrial. Because resources were abundant. The surrounding forests – continuously replanted – supplied the necessary wood: 25 tonnes for each industrial-size batch, which lasted 7 days at 1,000°C! The village also had large deposits of clay to its east side as far as Villecroze. These deposits, a deep red owing to



their iron content, were created more than 50 million years ago when the area was covered by a large lake. The outstanding quality of the clay combined with the know-how of Salernes – as well as the surrounding villages – was acclaimed as far as South America and Africa, where this natural material brought comfort and freshness to the fine houses of those hot regions. At the beginning of the twentieth century, production was flourishing. In 1913, the village had 53 factories. Nearly 1,200 workers produced up to sixty million tiles a year. *"A figure which is probably an underestimation"*, asserts Sophie Magnier. *"Researchers from the CNRS national research centre recently told us that 400,000 million tiles would be closer to the mark."*

### KNOW-HOW ANCIENT AND MODERN

Since 2009, the municipal museum, designed in a former factory by the great architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, has celebrated the memory of this industry, which went into decline in the post-war years. More broadly, it bears

witness to an age-old tradition of ceramics, of which the Neolithic pottery, found between 1970 and 1990 by the pre-historian Jean Courtin in the nearby Baume Fontbrégoua cave, is an example. These artefacts are some of the oldest known, not only in France but anywhere in western Europe!

But far from dwelling solely on the past, Terra Rossa highlights the local ceramicists who are continuing this tradition. Six businesses still manufacture tiling in the village. *"They source their clay from the two quarries of Salernes and Villecroze, which are operated by Fabrique d'Argile de Salernes, a 'group of economic interest' business structure in which they are shareholders"*, says Sophie Magnier. The village and surrounding area are also home to around 15 potters, designers and artists who form the association *Autour de la terre*. Using ancestral techniques, all these ceramicists are reinventing the art of clay-working, perpetuating the fame of Var in this domain. They welcome visitors to their workshops, but also have a showcase in the Terra Rossa museum, which provides a wide scope for contemporary, international pottery design. Every year, top pottery experts are invited to give professional master classes, and every two years the Biennale de la Céramique exhibits works by great names in ceramic design. Next edition: 2019!

[View the video on var.fr](#)

### DON'T MISS:

On 30 June and 1 July, Les Grands Feux de Salernes: activities, pottery for beginners and lots to discover around 4 original kilns on the Saturday; giant sale of bowls and garden items on the Sunday by the potters of the Terre de Provence association. Free admission to the Terra Rossa museum. On 14 and 15 July, Salernes Potters' Market on the car park of Terra Rossa museum. Admission free.



## WHERE TO FIND THE CERAMICISTS\* ?

### VARAGES

- 1. La belle époque**  
Traditional faïence  
2 rue de la Paix - +33 (0)4 94 77 64 95  
[www.faience-belle-epoque-varages.fr](http://www.faience-belle-epoque-varages.fr)
- 2. La Faïencerie de Varages en Provence**, (see p. 86)  
28 rue du général de Gaulle - +33 (0)4 94 80 73 06  
[faïencerie-de-varages.com](http://faïencerie-de-varages.com)
- 3. Micheline Sadki** - Creative faïence  
Rue de la Paix - +33 (0)6 24 89 50 20

### SALERNES

- 4. Atelier Pierre Basset** - Tiles  
Quartier Les Arnauds - +33 (0)4 94 70 70 70  
[www.carrelages-decoration-basset.fr](http://www.carrelages-decoration-basset.fr)
- 5. Atelier MCO** - Pottery - Jewellery  
10 boulevard Paul Cotte - +33 (0)6 12 69 48 82
- 6. Atelier Vern** - Ceramic designs  
10 place de la Révolution - +33 (0)6 64 19 46 73  
[www.vernvagh.free.fr](http://www.vernvagh.free.fr)
- 7. Carrelages de Provence**  
Route de Draguignan - +33 (0)4 94 67 59 49  
[www.carrelagesdeprovence.com](http://www.carrelagesdeprovence.com)
- 8. Carrelages Emphoux**  
Quartier Saint Romain - Route de Draguignan  
+33 (0)4 94 70 62 83 - [www.emphoux.com](http://www.emphoux.com)
- 9. Carrelages Pierre Boutal**  
Route de Draguignan - +33 (0)4 94 70 62 12  
[www.carrelages-boutal.fr](http://www.carrelages-boutal.fr)

- 10. Céramic Lamerand** (see p. 86)  
20 rue Victor Hugo - +33 (0)4 94 70 63 46  
FB : CeramiqueLamerandPoterieDuChateau
- 11. Ceramosa**  
Mosaics - Frescoes - Decoration - Courses  
1337 route de Draguignan - +33 (0)6 60 07 93 37  
FB : Ceramosa.mosaïques
- 12. Créations Verdenet** - Pottery and frescoes  
Rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau - +33 (0)6 41 85 76 05
- 13. Gasoline** (see p. 84)  
54 rue Édouard Basset - +33 (0)4 94 67 07 44  
[www.gasolinecreation.com](http://www.gasolinecreation.com)
- 14. Louis Trichard Carrelages**  
Quartier Saint Romain - Route de Draguignan  
+33 (0)4 94 70 62 13 - [www.carrelage-trichard.com](http://www.carrelage-trichard.com)
- 15. Matthias et Sophie**  
Pottery - Decorations - Jewellery  
52 rue Édouard Basset - +33 (0)4 94 85 51 92  
FB : Matthias-et-Sophie-Poterie
- 16. Mosaïc'cœur**  
Roman mosaics - Courses  
16 chemin des Muriers - +33 (0)4 94 50 47 54  
[www.mosaiccoeur.com](http://www.mosaiccoeur.com)
- 17. Véronique Piotto/Vagalâme**  
Ceramic sculptures  
C/o Terra Rossa  
FB : Vagalâme - +33 (0)6 21 55 51 89

### VILLECROZE

- 18. Aurélie Mouret** (see p. 85)  
2 bis rue de France +33 (0)4 94 67 85 48  
[www.aureliemouret.com](http://www.aureliemouret.com)
- 19. Poterie du Soleil**  
Pottery - Courses  
Quartier Colombier +33 (0)4 94 67 52 42  
[www.poterie-du-soleil.com](http://www.poterie-du-soleil.com)
- 20. Atelier Karidwen SAS / Poterie Séverine Cuisset** - Pottery and ceramics  
1474 RD 560 - Quartier Les Cadenières  
+33 (0)6 76 76 56 61 - [www.latelierkaridwen.com](http://www.latelierkaridwen.com)
- 21. La Magie du Tour** - Courses  
787 Chemin des Espèces - +33 (0)4 83 11 63 41  
[www.lamagiedutour.com](http://www.lamagiedutour.com)
- 22. Mister Gum Bijoux** (see p. 84)  
rue de France - +33 (0)4 94 67 50 27  
FB : Bijoux-GuM
- 23. Alain Vagh Céramiques** (see p. 85)  
route de Draguignan - +33 (0)4 94 70 72 09  
[www.alainvagh.fr](http://www.alainvagh.fr)

### LORGUES

- 24. Philippe Plaisir** - Ceramic sculptures  
78 Chemin Louis Nardin - +33 (0)6 59 91 94 59  
[www.terrae-lumina.com](http://www.terrae-lumina.com)

### SILLANS-LA-CASCADE

- 25. Nathanael Van Bruaene**  
Glazed earthenware  
26 Grand rue - +33 (0)6 68 77 30 83

\*List not exhaustive



## No closet ceramicist ☉

Her panties sell like hot cakes! Anne-Laure Humblot's ceramics are bold and cheeky and definitely not for the closet. Portraits, dolls, pleated jugs, dented plates – there's no room for gloom or conformism at Gasoline. As with their creator, humour and the human touch are omnipresent. "What I love about this ancestral trade is that it's experimental, an alchemy, which lets human character show through", she says. A fine arts graduate but self-taught where ceramics are concerned, she works clay, sandstone or chamotte earth, proclaiming messages in her own signature style. More than just

know-how, this young ceramicist's works are the embodiment of a whole philosophy. "The support for my paintings is volume. I produce popular objects that I sell at popular prices. Not like paintings on canvas, that attain sky-high prices on the art market. I'm happy to be a woman, an artisan, in a consumer society that is heading in the opposite direction. I get lots of fun out of my creative work", she affirms. She also shares her commitment and good humour in the courses she offers. Gasoline - Salernes, 54 rue Édouard Basset - +33 (0)4 94 67 07 44 - [www.gasolinecreation.com](http://www.gasolinecreation.com)



## ☉ Inspired jewellery

For Guillaume Goisque, it all began at the age of 16 with his best friend Vanessa Vagh (see p.85), making hair slides from enamelled clay strips that they sold at markets. After two years studying fine art, and three in a school that taught

children's illustration, the ceramic jewellery virus finally claimed him for its own. A native of the region, he set up his own business in Villecroze in 2000. This artist and craftsman designs brooches, necklaces and bracelets whose attractiveness lies in the interplay of materials and colour contrasts. What are his sources of inspiration? They vary. After Africa, Japanese fabrics and Azulejos, this summer's designs are insect interpretations. "I heard that 80% of insects have gone extinct. It's a way paying tribute to them", he explains. It's a tribute you can buy for yourself or as a gift from his boutique workshop in the village centre, which is open all year round.

Mister Gum Bijoux – Villecroze, rue de France - +33 (0)4 94 67 50 27 - FB: Bijoux-GuM



Vincent Vagh

## ☺ Alchemy and harmony

The striking thing about Aurélie Mouret's artworks is their gracefulness. At Villecroze, just a few metres away from her brother Mister Gum (see p. 84), the ceramicist designs one-off pieces that breathe brittleness, strength and serenity. They are made in faïence, sandstone or porcelain using various techniques. *"I enjoy the design side, but what I really love is devising ways to go about producing the piece I've dreamed up,"* she tells us. Aurélie opted definitively for her vocation around the age of 40, prompted by a forced change of occupation. *"I took the jump in 2009. When I was little, I was friendly with a potter in Aups, where I grew up. The idea was always there in the back of my mind."* She trained at the ceramics school in Vallauris and spent one year at the workshop of a young artist before setting up her own. *"My approach is to purify forms while playing with contrasts. My aspiration is to allow the harmony and beauty to appear self-evident without being an objective."* And self-evident it is! You can discover them in her gallery at Villecroze and this summer in the Terra Rossa museum in Salernes.

Aurélie Mouret - Villecroze, 2 bis rue de France - +33 (0)4 94 67 85 48



## ☺ Tomettes revisited and glazed lava

Pottery-making runs in the Vagh family. Vincent and Olivier, who own a tile factory in Villecroze, are the fifth generation to perpetuate the know-how that was handed down to them by their mother, Jacotte, the heir to a long line of local tomette manufacturers. Their father, Alain, has been experimenting with shapes and colours for the past 50 years in what he calls his "Divagations". Their sister Vanessa designs original models, such as the padded-look *Chesterfield* tiles, and the *Délires de Vava*, jewel tiles made entirely by hand. As for Olivier's wife Véronique, she sells her own creations in her boutique in Salernes.

The two brothers complement one another: Vincent manages the business side, Olivier the technical side of production. *"Developing new decors and original products is crucial for moving forward"*, they say. So, what are their flagship products? Terracotta floor tiles of all kinds, including tomettes, of course. But also small trapezoidal tiles that can be laid in a circle and enameled tiles in a multitude of colours. The family business sources its raw material from the nearby clay factory, a 'group of economic interest' structure in which it is a shareholder. Another speciality is enameled lava for work surfaces, which requires high-tech processes to produce.

Alain Vagh Céramiques  
Villecroze, route de Draguignan  
+33 (0)4 94 70 72 09  
[www.alainvagh.fr](http://www.alainvagh.fr)





### ⌚ Tradition in the grand style

Ghislain Lamerand is a potter. But he is also one of the last artisans who produces enamelled tiles entirely by hand – nothing more normal when you work in Salernes. After training at the Poterie du Soleil in Villecroze, he decided 20 years ago to go independent and set up his own workshop, where he throws, shapes, glazes, bakes, exhibits and sells his pots. *"It's a creative trade that gives me plenty of freedom"*, he sums up. *"Every potter has their own little world. I work here with my wife, Sofi. I make functional, accessible, colourful pottery: crockery, everyday ovenware."* Most of his pieces are thrown on the wheel, made from the red clay of Salernes, *"even for white ware"*, he underlines. *"I love this natural clay to which nothing is added. It's not always the ideal clay for throwing. It's more difficult. It's a knack you have to acquire."* An intimate relationship, and one open to accidents and surprises. The same applies to his tiles, which he shapes by hand, paints and enamels with an uneven finish, the irregularities lending his creations soul and depth.

Céramic Lamerand & Sofi

Salernes, 20 rue Victor Hugo

+33 (0)4 94 70 63 46 - +33 (0)6 73 97 32 61

FB: CeramiqueLamerandPoterieDuChateau

www.sofiyannis.com



### 🕒 A colourful table

Yellow, pink, green, mole, blue, red... at the faïence factory in Varages, the choice of colours is overwhelming. And the bowls large and small, mugs, cups and plates range from the traditional, scalloped version to the more modern, smooth-edged designs. Both versions are available in a choice of 15 colours. The hardest thing is which to choose. *"We have 750 product references"*, we are informed by Véronique Blattner, Anna Bouffier and Alain Turrowsky. All three manage the business, which they acquired in 2009. These former employees of Manufacture des Lauriers, which had gone into receivership, set up their own cooperative business and baptised it Faïencerie de Varages en Provence, to keep the activity going in the village. Since then, this production tool has perpetuated the manufacturing tradition. *"Here, we only do the glazing, because the moulds for making the pottery blanks were sold to a company in Portugal before we acquired the business. We buy the bisque from them and decorate and fire it here."*

La Faïencerie de Varages en Provence,

28 rue du Général de Gaulle

+33 (0)4 94 80 73 06

faïencerie-de-varages.com



# *Faron* CABLE CAR

It feels like floating in the air: this is how people on the Mont Faron cable car usually describe the experience. This unique feature of the French Mediterranean coast takes you to the summit in 6 to 7 minutes.





**J**uly 1959. Louis Valéry Roussel, a real estate developer from Toulon, inaugurated the cable car he had just finished building. He undoubtedly had some projects on Mont Faron, and it was an original means of transport for his potential clients to reach their homes. Private management soon proved too expensive. And in the 1960s, the entrepreneur sold his cable car to the municipality of Toulon. At the same time, the town was looking to stimulate development around Mont Faron. And the tourist use of the Toulon cable car was born. To comply with the provisions of the Transport Law (Loti), the City created the Rédif (body to operate and develop tourism installations at Mont Faron) in 1982 to manage the cable car. But it gradually fell into disrepair due to lack of investment...

It was only in the 2000s that it rose from the ashes. Major works have been carried out: the two stations have been renovated to meet accessibility standards and new cabins have been unveiled. *"They were 30 years old and had reached the end of their lifespan",* explains Jérôme Navarro, Chairman of Rédif's Board of Directors. *"Some designers from Toulon\* responded to our call for proposals for the new cabins. They have managed to restyle them and give them a more contemporary look with larger, curved glass surfaces, while preserving the original feel."*

Today, the cable car is a must-see when visiting Toulon. As the departure station is located in the Sainte-Anne district, it doesn't cross the entire city, just the Faron district. But it's a delight to ride! A growing number of visitors have been drawn to the attraction: there were just 20,000 passengers in 2001 compared to 95,000 today. On arrival, the panoramic view of the most beautiful harbour in Europe is simply breathtaking. To attract even more tourists, modernization plans will be launched in 2018, including free wifi in the departure and arrival stations. Events are also organised all year round, and especially in sum-

mer. On 1st July, the whole of Faron will be celebrating the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of *Vivement dimanche*, an event organised by Rédif. All day long, there will be free game stalls, workshops and drawing competitions on the theme of Superheroes for young and old alike. The cable car will be offering reduced prices all day long. More highlights for summer 2018: the evening of 14 July will see spectacular fireworks at the harbour and on 25 August there will be a concert by the Var group Hifklub in the evening. Toulon clubs have also made the structure their own. It's not uncommon to see artists playing music to liven up the ride! ■

\*Atelier 360 restyled the Faron cable car cabins.

**The cable car is open daily from 10am to 7pm in June and September and from 10am to 7.45pm in July and August.**

**Note, the cable car closes in the event of strong winds.**

**Prices: Return €7.50**

**4 - 10 years old: €5.50**

**Group rates or daily passes are available. For more information call +33 (0)4 94 92 68 25**

**or visit [www.telepherique-faron.fr](http://www.telepherique-faron.fr)**

**There is a small free car park in front of the departure station but be aware that spaces are limited!**



### THINGS TO DO ON MONT FARON

The cable car leads to the summit of Mont Faron which is a wooded area of several hectares. There are many hiking and mountain biking trails to discover.

The Faron Memorial, dedicated to the landing and liberation of Provence (read our article in *Le Var* n°3 - summer 2017 available for download from [var.fr](http://var.fr)), was completely renovated and modernised in 2017.

The fauverie du Faron is also worth a visit. It is a centre for the conservation and breeding of wild animals that helps reintroduce them into the wild. [www.zoo-toulon.fr](http://www.zoo-toulon.fr).

There are also two restaurants at the top that are open to visitors.

### URBAN CABLE CARS IN FRANCE

Urban cable cars are a fashionable mode of transport and are becoming very popular. Only three towns in France have them: Grenoble, Brest and... Toulon. While the Brest one is newly constructed (in 2016) and is part of the public transport network, the ones in Grenoble and Toulon are much older, the former dates from 1934 and the Var cable car dates from 1959.

### THE CABLE CAR IN NUMBERS

1,437 m long. 2 cabins carrying a maximum of 17 people. 5 pylons.

115 m altitude at the departure point, 493 m at the arrival point. 21.6 km/h: average speed.

6 to 7 minutes trip time



# THE NATUREMAN VAR, *a sporting and human challenge*



© Natureman Var

It is one of the most beautiful triathlons in France if not the world! Since 2012, Natureman Var has played host to nearly 1,500 athletes from all over France and Europe to the Salles-sur-Verdon. With its blend of friendship, a spirit of sharing, respect for the environment and the chance to push yourself to your limits, this international competition attracts new fans each year.

With the Verdon, the largest canyon in Europe, as its backdrop, Natureman Var has become, over the years, a must for all lovers of thrills and grandiose landscapes, bringing together between 5,000 and 6,000 people, including runners, organisers, volunteers and companions. For the 2018 edition, the meeting is scheduled for 6 and 7 October at Salles-sur-Verdon.

Right from the start, the organiser, Eric Amatteis, wanted to make it more than just a sporting event. His aim was to help people discover a region and its heritage. *"The Verdon is one of the most beautiful triathlon sites in Europe. I used to come here very regularly to practise and I said to myself that I had to showcase it on an international level! 70% of the athletes who come to Natureman Var do not know*

*the area and many return outside of the competition, with family or friends."* In 2009, Eric Amatteis, already in charge of a triathlon in the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, decided to create an event in Salles-sur-Verdon, the ideal venue for such a competition. The first event was launched in 2012, with immediate support from local stakeholders and the Var Department\*. *"We wanted to bring together all*

\* One of the 96 Departmental councils in France





© Natureman Var

our partners around the event, but we also wanted to involve the region's inhabitants. That's why we organised several meetings before the first event to present our project to as many people as possible. We also did a lot of work with local hotels to keep them open until the date of the Natureman Var". The event relies on the Verdon Oxygène club and numerous volunteers who transmit positive energy to the runners. They get up to 300 every year! Éric Amatteis points out that: *"the Natureman Var is really a race apart. The athletes come with their families to spend the weekend in the Var. In addition to the sporting challenge, there's a very friendly and warm atmosphere that attracts the participants and their entourage"*. And to preserve this special spirit, the number of participants is limited: *"for safety reasons of course, but also to keep our event on a human scale, we never allow more than 1,700 participants per race"*.

### A TRIATHLON WITH A HEART

Every year, Natureman Var supports an association for children. In 2018, *La petite traversée pour Maé* was chosen. One euro will be donated per participant. This association works for children with Prader-Willi syndrome. *"It's about reaching and making as many people as possible aware of this cause"*, the organisers tell us.

### THE 2018 EVENT

Young or not so young, women or men, high level sportsmen or in leisure, Natureman Var is suitable for everyone!

2 km of swimming in the emerald waters of Lake Sainte-Croix, 90 km by bike on the legendary route of the Gorges du Verdon and 20 km of running in the heart of the countryside. This is the program that awaits the participants of the main race – the long distance run to be held on Sunday, October 7. On Saturday 6th, Natur'M, one of the new events of the year, offers a slightly less extreme programme. It includes a 1.5 km swim, a 48-km cycle and a 9.5 km trail. It can be run alone or in relays of 2 or 3 people. The Natur'kids is reserved for the youngest, aged 6 to 17. Four "animathlons" – non-timed recreational and sporting events – are laid on according to age groups, 6-8 years, 9-11 years, 12-14 years and

### 100% NATURAL

The whole Natureman Var team is very environmentally-aware.

*"We have a beautiful setting that must be respected."*

Hence the creation of a green patrol.

*"With our partner, L'Occitane, we decided to set up a team of volunteer athletes who run the race without being ranked."*

*They are there to make sure that the riders deposit their waste, for example empty bottles, in the dedicated areas or suffer a penalty. We are very vigilant on this point."* In addition, the Syndicat mixte du Haut-Var (SMHV) lays on additional weekend rubbish collection rounds.

It also installs dozens of selective sorting containers. For its part, the Var Departement\* finances the installation of about ten dry toilets.

\* One of the 96 Departmental councils in France

15-17 years. Each includes a swimming race and a run. Finally, Naturewoman has already attracted more than 200 women in 2017. It's the first long-distance event in Europe that's reserved for women. *"It's a race within a race"*, says Éric Amatteis. *"The women set off 25 minutes before the men. Our ultimate goal is to have over 500 women at the Naturewoman starting line. We realised that triathlon was becoming more women-friendly. And so, with this race, we have created a world reserved for women where they are showcased in sports. And they appreciate it!"*

Beyond the sporting side, an exhibition village highlights the event partners but also the craft industry and local gastronomy. Local products are also distributed during the refreshment breaks. ■

<https://natureman-var.fr>



# DISCOVERING THE VAR

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of fine machines

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Cotignac



# GOING WITH THE FLOW

A scenic landscape featuring a river in the foreground, a stone bridge on the right, and a large yellow building with a tower on a hill in the background under a clear blue sky.

Vins-sur-Caramy



Water shaped the Var region, carving out canyons, moulding the river banks and irrigating the plains. But the watercourse was also shaped by people, who constantly sought to control this indispensable, sometimes abundant – even destructive – and sometimes rare resource. It's impossible not to admire the ingenious solutions conceived by humans to optimise its use. The patiently constructed dry-stone walls on the hillsides, the irrigation systems, the spring water catchments, the fountains, mills and lavoirs or communal wash houses... The choice of crops that need less water, especially vines and olives, also helped to form the landscapes.

**D**epending on the periods and places, the Var has a very Mediterranean temperament that veers from one extreme to the other: either buckets of water or... none at all. Consequently, in the north and west of the department, there are aquatic resources in the chalky soil areas but far fewer along the littoral, apart from a few fragile alluvial aquifers around the lower Argens valley, the Gisle or the Gapeau. These geographical disparities, the rainfall that fluctuates from one year to the next, the constant uncertainty and the need for water that is always greater in summer at a time when less rain falls, have driven people to undertake ever more ambitious schemes to transfer the water from one place to another.

During Antiquity, the Romans managed to move water from the source of the Siagnole in Mons as far as Fréjus via an over 40 km-long aqueduct. More recently, the construction of the Provence Canal has taken water from the Verdon to the littoral in the Var region since 1964. In 2013, a 75 kilometre east-flowing extension was funded by the Var Department council to carry water to the different villages as far as Roquebrune-sur-Argens. Five artificial reservoirs were created in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at the same time providing multiple walking and leisure spots. Today, at least half of the region's drinking water comes from surface water (lakes, transfer systems and surface water), and the other half from groundwater (boreholes, spring catchments...).

Water deposits in the Var also include numerous temporary pools and wetlands that are home to specific plants and wildlife. Among the most emblematic of these are the salt marshes in Hyères and the Villepey lakes near Fréjus. Over 16,000 hectares of land is water-bound part of the year. To find out more about the local aquatic environments, you can visit the department-funded Maison de l'Eau in Barjols, or simply enjoy a walk along one of the paths that Le Var magazine has prepared for you.

#### VAR WATER IN FIGURES

- 260 million m<sup>3</sup> is collected each year from the Var, half of which is drinking water. In comparison, Sainte-Croix lake contains 760 million m<sup>3</sup>.
- Over 3800 km of waterways wend their way through the Var. The drainage basin of the Argens, the longest river in the Var, covers half of the department's surface area.
- There are 8 artificial lakes in the Var: Esparron lake, Quinson lake and Sainte-Croix lake on the river Verdon, Carcès lake, Saint-Cassien lake, Verne lake and Dardennes lake.



## FROM FLASSANS-SUR-ISSOLE TO VINS-SUR-CARAMY

# From one bridge to the next

### ► A HISTORY OF WATER IN FLASSANS

The village has 17 bridges spread across the various hamlets, as well as two old oil mills and a flour mill! The pace of village life has always been influenced by the Issole river. From the end of the Middle Ages, the inhabitants living around the hill fortress of Pontevès moved down to the plain to get closer to their crops... and the water. They first settled on a small mound to prevent flooding. More buildings followed, gradually moving closer to the Issole. In 1952, repeated flooding in the low-lying areas led to a bend in the Issole being diverted. It has to be said that the flow of water is extremely unpredictable. *"The Issole is like a Wadi"*, we were told at the town hall. *"It's a groundwater river that only flows when it's full. It might rain a lot, but as long as it doesn't fill the alluvial groundwater, the river bed stays dry. But there can also be considerable flooding."*

This is confirmed on the plaques near the hump-

back bridge, also called "the old bridge". Dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the bridge is our starting point for the visit to the old village with its wash houses or lavoirs and fountains. Nowadays, two sources are still active. One feeds into the Saint Michel lavoir. The other, the Colombier source, first pumped around 1400, is close to the old diverted branch of the river. The bridge at the end the trail was built to help Napoleon Bonaparte's troops cross the river. Legend has it that the future emperor stayed in the village during the Italian campaign.

### For walkers

- The family-friendly "Les Clèdes" trail goes up the river bed and the old branch of the Issole, just next to the village. Distance: 2.5 km. Time: around 40 minutes.
- The longer "Issole hamlets" trail takes you past dwellings, vegetation and crops that border the embankments. The return journey, which overlooks the valley, will take you past the ruins of a château – there is a free guided visit, but you need to book first. The site has a 360° panoramic view. Distance: 6.3 km. Time: around 2 hours. Free Topoguides are available at the town hall or can be downloaded at [www.flassans.fr](http://www.flassans.fr) and [www.coeurduvartourisme.com](http://www.coeurduvartourisme.com).



### Practical information

#### FLASSANS-SUR-ISSOLE

- **Where to park:** Les Grands Prés car park
- **Duration:** from 1 to 3 hours depending on the option chosen.
- **More information:** Flassans-sur-Issole town hall +33 (0)4 94 37 00 50 - [www.flassans.fr](http://www.flassans.fr)  
*Coeur du Var tourism*, in the Prècoumin district of Luc-en-Provence - +33 (0)4 98 10 43 59 [www.coeurduvartourisme.com](http://www.coeurduvartourisme.com)

#### VINS-SUR-CARAMY

- **Where to park:** The *Tilleuls* car park just before the medieval bridge. It's an easy walk from there to the village and the castle.
- **Duration:** 30 to 40 minutes from the bridge to the cave.
- **More information:** La Provence Verte tourist information office, Carrefour de l'Europe at Brignoles +33 (0)4 94 72 04 21 [www.la-provence-verte.net](http://www.la-provence-verte.net)

- **Distance between the two villages:** 22 km along the D13, then the RD 24. Duration: 35 minutes.





## COLOURS GALORE

To the west of the village, don't miss the emerald blue waters of the two lakes, remnants of old abandoned bauxite mines. They reflect the red of the surrounding cliffs in an astonishing contrast.



### ► THE FALSE MEDIEVAL BRIDGE IN VINS-SUR-CARAMY



Contrary to appearances, the so-called medieval bridge actually has little to do with the Middle Ages! In fact, the bridge that crosses the Caramy river below the village was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to link up with farmland to the south of the river and with Vins. The architecture was archaic even for its time, and the post renaissance or baroque construction borrows from Roman style. Built entirely of stone, and featuring three arches, it is a remarkable piece of architecture, and is listed as a historical monument. There are many interesting walks in the surrounding area, taking you through woods to the "Baume de Savoie" resisters' cave which was used to hide weapons during the Second World War. Four resisters from the Var were shot there by the Germans on 29 July 1944. You can also climb up to the village and its 16<sup>th</sup> century château that has been entirely restored by the present-day owners and enjoy the views of the picturesque village!



### The different stages

**Les Près protected nature reserve in Cabasse** belongs to the Department\* and lies on the edge of the river Issole, beside the RD 13. You can park at the entrance to the village when you arrive from Flassans. There are picnic tables and support bars to tether horses for riders using the *Équidécouverte* path. This 3-hectare flood-prone area features meadows and riverside vegetation characteristic of wetlands. The water here was tamed with a weir, ancient canals and floodgates.

**Sainte Suzanne lake**, more often called **Carcès lake**, can be seen from the bridge that crosses the tip of the lake. From there, you'll have a wonderful view of the 100-hectare artificial lake fed by the Argens, the Issole, the Caramy and the Bresque which supplies drinking water for the town of Toulon. It's possible to walk alongside the lake's 8-kilometre shoreline.

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France





## FROM ARTIGNOSC-SUR-VERDON TO SAINT-JULIEN-LE-MONTAGNIER

# Discover the Verdon another way



### ▶ ARTIGNOSC, ALONG THE WATER TRAIL

The Verdon is emblematic of the Haut Var. This natural boundary between the Var and the neighbouring department of the Alps of Haute-Provence is characterised by majestic landscapes. While its great canyon is renowned worldwide, the same cannot be said for many nearby villages which sprung up over the centuries around the river, harnessed by the people to satisfy their need for water. Artignosc-sur-Verdon is one such village, where a short walking trail leads to a well-preserved heritage site from the source of the Rancs through to Verdon. There are two separate loops that can make up one long walk. We suggest you begin your walk on the longest trail, where you can admire a wonderful panorama overlooking the Verdon.

Start from the centre of the village. After viewing the fountain in the *Place du Bicentenaire* together with the lavoir, the walk can begin. To the right of the lavoir, follow the road down towards the fields. Here, it's worth taking a short detour to your right to discover the *Font vieille*, the oldest fountain in the village. The medieval fountain and basin are perfectly preserved. Go back to the main road to continue along the *Chemin de l'eau*, signposted in yellow. At the fork in the road, take the path on your right. Walk alongside the fields until you reach the remains of the Vallefont mill, which used to operate in Artignosc. A sign explains how the flourmill worked and you can still see the grinding stone. Go back to the main road and enjoy the fragrance of thyme as you admire the river Verdon. Junipers, dwarf iris and clumps of boxwood also grow along the pathway... A purpose-made lookout point dominates the long gorge of the Verdon. The *Chemin de l'eau* gradually follows the river upstream towards the RD 471. There are several viewpoints to choose from: in the village of Saint-Laurent-du-Verdon, in the Mourre de Chanier, the highest point in the Verdon nature park, and on the beach at Artignosc, behind the bridge that crosses the river. After crossing the main road, you gradually climb up to the village, going over the hill of Aspé.

### The original idea

Inaugurated in 2001, the *Chemin de l'eau* is the result of a lengthy process managed by Daniel Daumas, former president of the Pays et gens du Verdon association, with the backing of the village of Artignosc, Var regional council, the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region and Verdon regional nature park. Well maintained and signposted throughout, the trail corresponds perfectly to the role envisaged by its designer, namely, to give as many people as possible the chance to discover its rural, industrial and environmental heritage. **More information:** [www.pays-et-gens-du-verdon.fr](http://www.pays-et-gens-du-verdon.fr)

### Practical information

#### ARTIGNOSC-SUR-VERDON

- ▶ **Where to park:** Parking below the *Place du Bicentenaire*.
- ▶ **Duration:** Between 1 h 30 and 3 hours, depending on what you decide to do.
- ▶ **More information:** a leaflet about the *Chemin de l'eau* is available on [www.artignosc-sur-verdon.fr](http://www.artignosc-sur-verdon.fr) +33 (0)4 94 80 70 04.

#### SAINT-JULIEN-LE-MONTAGNIER

- ▶ **Where to park:** Car park close to the lake.
- Price: €4 per vehicle per day (€6 with trailer and €2 for two-wheel vehicles).
- ▶ **More information:** Town hall of Saint-Julien-le-Montagnier - +33 (0)4 94 80 04 78. Before leaving, check up on fire risks and access to the forests on [www.var.gouv.fr](http://www.var.gouv.fr)

#### ▶ Trip between the two villages:

- 48 km via the RD 71, RD 30, RD 35 and the RD 8, then the *Chemin de la Chapelle*. You have to leave the Var for a short distance and go via Gréoux-les-Bains (04) to reach Saint-Julien beach. Duration: 1 h 15.



## ► SAINT-JULIEN BEACH, A JEWEL TO PROTECT

You have to work a bit to get to Saint-Julien beach. Surrounded by cliffs, it's like a jewel of the Var set in low alpine land. In effect, you have to go via Gréoux-les-Bains in the Haute-Provence Alps to get to this protected site at the edge of the Esparron lake. Go with the family or friends for a picnic beside the water, a fishing expedition or a ride on a pedal boat or an electric boat... The lake's emerald green water just invites you to chill out.



The steep riverbanks are completely unspoilt, concealing small creeks that can only be reached by boat. To protect the premises, the municipality of Saint-Julien-le-Montagnier has committed to major works in 2017. The catering areas have been moved. It is creating a new zone reserved for launching. Access is now limited and is no longer free. These measures were also taken as a way to regulate the traffic on the only road leading to the beach. Check first as the road is closed in the event of fire risk.



# FROM COTIGNAC TO SILLANS-LA-CASCADE, *fossils... and lifeblood*

## Practical information

### COTIGNAC

- ▶ **Where to park:** Parking at the *Jardin du Ferrailon*, next to the tourist information centre.
- ▶ **Duration:** To visit the village and the troglodyte dwelling, you'll need about half a day.
- ▶ **More information:** Map of the visit to the troglodyte dwelling and the village available at Cotignac tourist information centre, 475, route de Carcès, +33 (0)4 94 04 61 87. [www.provenceverte.fr](http://www.provenceverte.fr)

### SILLANS-LA-CASCADE

- ▶ **Where to park:** 8-mai-1945 car park or the Cours car park (fee-paying during the summer season).
- ▶ **Duration:** Around one hour.
- ▶ **More information:** You must keep to the pathway signposted from the carparks. You also need to have the right shoes as it can be quite slippery. It's forbidden to swim at the bottom of the waterfall.

- ▶ **Journey between the two villages:** 7,6 km par la RD 22.  
Durée : 10 minutes.



## ▶ COTIGNAC, WHERE THE WATER BECOMES ROCK

What would Cotignac be without its rock? The tufa rock cliff hasn't always been there though. It was formed 80,000 years ago from a natural process as the river Cassole flowed across from the plain to create a gigantic 400-metre wide waterfall. The chalky water gradually produced stalactites that merged together to form the grey and ochre rock. In 535, settlers diverted the watercourse in order to live there, first on its summit, and then, between the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> century, in the caves. The cave-dwellers built troglodyte shelters that were naturally hollowed out from the centre of the cliff face. You can still visit one of these caves from Easter until October.

*"It's the biggest troglodyte dwelling ever found around here. We think it could shelter around fifteen people",* Marion Cali from the Provence Verte tourist information centre explained. *"It was built in a natural cavity, closed off by a wall that had openings to let the light in."* One room was built on a lower level with a vaulted ceiling for better protection of the food supplies. At the back, you can see the entrance to an ancient gallery. *"The people dug out many underground passages to move from one dwelling to another more easily, as well as to hide",* the guide continued. Today, they cannot be visited for safety reasons.

The view from the rock is amazing. In the foreground you can see the roofs of Cotignac, with the Maures nature reserve on the horizon. You could spend hours on end contemplating the mesmerising landscape.

## Visiting Le Rocher

The visit costs €2 (free for children under 10). Once you've bought your ticket, you need to climb 90 steps before you reach the old troglodyte dwelling of Cotignac.

The visit is popular with families but is not recommended for anyone suffering from claustrophobia. In July and August, the site is accessible every day from 10am to 1pm and from 3pm to 7pm. Find out about the opening hours outside the summer season on +33 (0)4 94 04 61 87.





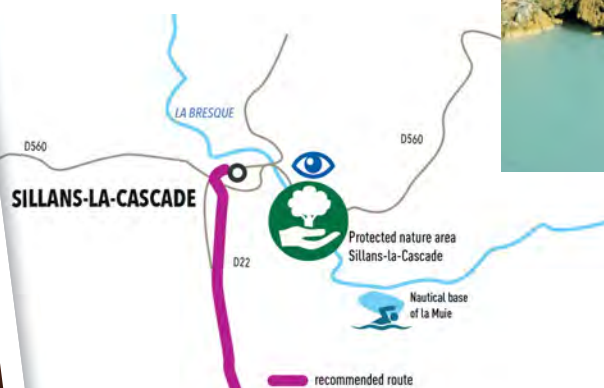
## ► THE MAGNIFICENT SILLANS-LA-CASCADE

After strolling around the village of Cotignac and getting something to eat on one of the many squares, it's time to set off along the RD 22 to Sillans-la-Cascade.

Here, you'll find the eponymous waterfall in a protected nature area which belongs to the Var Department council. To enjoy the incredible views, you need to park your car and walk for about twenty minutes along a path marked out by the Department\*. This will take you to a lookout area, opened in 2014, where you'll find the best viewpoint to enjoy the 42-metre wide waterfall. It's the Bresque river, whose limestone source is just a few kilometres upstream, which cascades down the cliff, giving the water its unusual milky blue colour. In the summer, around 1,000 people a day come to see this natural attraction.

After walking back in the opposite direction, why not drive a few more kilometres to Salernes? Here, you can swim in the natural lido of the Muie, fed by the Bresque river, a great way to cool down and a great end to a day spent discovering the area's amazing rivers.

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France



### A conservation area

The protected nature reserve of Sillans-la-Cascade covers almost 400 hectares. It was bought by the Var Department council in 1989, and access has been restricted since 2008. Rockfalls and landslides are frequent around the waterfall circus, where swimming is forbidden. To ensure the safety of visitors and preserve the site's beauty, a pedestrian trail and viewpoint have been installed by the Department\* at a cost of €400,000. The project will be completed in 2020, with a loop joining the right bank, and a second viewpoint situated below the level of the waterfall. Check whether the site is open by phoning the town hall on +33 (0)4 94 04 63 04, depending on fire risk.

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France

COTIGNAC



## FROM ARCS-SUR-ARGENS TO AMPUS

# Wild river and tamed source

### Practical information

#### LES ARCS-SUR-ARGENS

The Arcs base at the 4 Chemins roundabout. Every day from 9 am to 7 pm – last departure at 1pm. Price: €32. Phone +33 (0)6 64 59 39 16 [www.basedesarcs.com](http://www.basedesarcs.com)

#### VIDAUBAN

*Provence Aventure*, Chemin du stade. Every day from 9am to 8pm. Price: from €25 to €40 for half a day (possibility to rent for 1 h 30 or 2 hours). Phone +33 (0)4 94 73 60 98 [www.provenceaventure.com](http://www.provenceaventure.com)

#### LE MUY

municipal base of Louis Go, RD 25 (old road to Sainte-Maxime), Rabinon district. Monday and Saturday 1 pm-6pm, Tuesday to Friday 9 am-6pm, Sunday 10am - 5pm. Price: between €19 and €26 for half a day by boat (half price for under 12s). Possible to rent for one hour. Phone +33 (0)6 77 67 09 51 [www.ville-lemuy.fr/agenda-loisirs/base-nautique-louis-go](http://www.ville-lemuy.fr/agenda-loisirs/base-nautique-louis-go)

#### AMPUS

► **Where to park:** Car park at the bottom of the village if you arrive from Draguignan

► **Duration:** about 1 hour or more if you want to wander around the village. The *lavoirs* and *tournaou* circuit and the *Chemin de Croix* are free.

► **More information:** Tourist information point in Ampus, rue de la Bourgade - +33 (0)4 94 76 72 66. Intercommunal tourist information centre of Dracénie, 2, avenue Lazare Carnot, Draguignan +33 (0)4 98 10 51 05 [www.tourisme-dracenie.com](http://www.tourisme-dracenie.com)

► **Trip between the villages:** around thirty kilometres between Vidauban or Le Muy and Ampus via the RDN7, then the RD 24 and the RD 57; 25 km between Les Arcs and Ampus.

► **Duration:** 35 to 45 minutes.

### ► THE ARGENS RIVER, SPORTY VERSION

Flowing over 115 km from east to west, the river Argens is the longest in the Var and passes through 21 towns and villages. At the Arcs nautical base, you can book a 14 km descent by canoe or kayak that will take you down forty rapids over a particularly wild and little-known section of the river. The ride should take around 6 hours with breaks, combining strong sensations with fantastic landscapes. Among the most remarkable sections are the deeply etched gorges of Tournavelle, the national forest that runs alongside the river and the majestic, red stone Bagarrèdes. You'll be spellbound at each twist and turn of the river. A shuttle bus can take you back when you get to Muy. Children must be at least 12 years old.

The shorter descent from the *Provence aventure* base in Vidauban to Plainons lasts 2 hours. The 5 km route will take you on a wonderful incursion into the midst of exceptional nature with a couple of more athletic moments crossing two rapids of 1.8 metres! For enthusiasts who know what they're doing,



© DR



© DR

### ► THE QUIET VERSION

The Argens river trail is very family-oriented. Children from as young as 5 years old can come along if they know how to swim 25 metres. In Vidauban, the *Provence aventure* nautical base rents out 1 to 4-seat canoes and kayaks to explore the 1.5 km river, passing under the Roman bridge of Lorgues, near the ruins of the old mill in Astros with its huge, impressive porch. The beach at Gour is ideal for a picnic stop and a swim!

The Louis Go municipal base in Muy also organises trips along the river to explore the typical fauna and flora of the Maures plain. The sandstone cliffs of the rock of Roquebrune set the tone from the very first kilometre in the gorges of San Luen. Continue for another 4 km in an exceptional protected setting, either in 1 to 3-place canoes or kayaks or on a paddle board. All that's needed to enjoy the bucolic river atmosphere is the ability to swim.



## ► AMPUS AND ITS TOURNAOU

A real curiosity, the *tournaou* is a grindstone used for sharpening tools. While it was common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was rarely available for public use. Yet this is exactly what happened in Ampus, a village perched at an altitude of 600 metres, where a wonderful specimen bears witness to a community-based social organisation. Wood-cutters, blacksmiths, farmers who grew wheat on the plateau, and many others came here to sharpen their scythes, axes, knives and other sharp instruments. Located at the top of the village, the grindstone was activated by a waterwheel propelled by the flow from the Fontigon canal, whose source is over 7 km away. This water supply was designed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to turn the flour mill and made a significant contribution to the prosperity of the village. Apart from helping to process cereals, the canal was also used for the production of oil, drinking water for the villagers, and to irrigate their terraced fields and gardens and supply water for the *lavoirs*. From 1906, it was even used to produce electricity! Particularly well preserved and restored by the village, its legacy is clearly visible as you wander the cobblestone pavements and sinuous alleyways. Take care when you get to the rue *Rompecul* (break your backside!) which really lives up to its name and ends the circuit of *lavoirs* and *tournaou*!



## A picturesque Var village

On the other side of the *lavoirs* and *tournaou* circuit, after the church, the *Chemin de Croix* in Ampus pays tribute to the Var tradition of ceramics. 14 glazed stations are embedded in the rock on the site of the old feudal castle. Realized in the 1960s by Geoff Hindry, a former British Royal Air Force pilot who took up ceramics and moved to the village, the scenes are interesting for their very modern interpretation. The *Chemin de Croix* ends at a cave carved out by the water, where you can examine close-up the specific texture of the tufa stone. The panoramic view stretches from the Alps to the sea, revealing the roofs of Ampus, a village that holds the Picturesque Var Village label. Below, you can see the bridge that crosses the Nartuby river, which is cool even in summer!





## FROM ROQUEBRUSSANE TO COLLOBRIÈRES

# Natural and man-made heritage



### ► THE GRAND AND THE PETIT LAOUCIEN

These deserve a quick stop for their geological interest: the Grand and Petit Laoucien are in fact two sinkholes, round lakes formed from subsidence of the limestone soil located above some ancient caves. The water comes from the alluvial groundwater of the river Issole, and the depth varies with the seasons and draughts. While the Petit Laoucien can remain dry for several months, or even several years at a time, the Grand Laoucien is always full. It provides a wonderful round mirror of the sky, 30 metres in diameter! There can be up to 43 metres of water beneath its surface, and it is strictly forbidden to swim as the cliffs are extremely brittle. Legend has it that the Grand Laoucien became blood red after the terrible earth-

quake of Lisbon in 1755. The explanation for the legend lies in the red clay at the bottom of the sinkhole, suspended in the water by the repercussions of seismic waves.

#### Practical information

#### GRAND & PETIT LAOUCIEN / LA ROQUEBRUSSANNE

- **Where to park:** Along the RD 64, next to the Grand Laoucien. GPS: 43,330652 – 6,009666
- **Duration:** around one hour to admire the two sinkholes
- **More information:** *La Provence Verte* Tourist information centre Carrefour de l'Europe in Brignoles +33 (0)4 94 72 04 21 [www.la-provence-verte.net](http://www.la-provence-verte.net)

#### LE PARC PEIRESC / BELGENTIER

- **Where to park:** In the village.
- **More information:** The *Vallée du Gapeau* tourist information centre The château 1, rue République à Solliès-Pont +33 (0)4 94 28 92 35 [www.valleegapeau-tourisme.fr](http://www.valleegapeau-tourisme.fr)

#### COLLOBRIÈRES

- **Where to park:** Parking in the village.
- **Duration:** Between 1 h 30 and half a day, depending on what you decide to do.
- **More information:** Collobrières intercommunal tourist information centre, avenue Charles-Caminat, +33 (0)4 94 48 08 00.

- **From La Roquebrussanne to Collobrières** 50 minutes without stopping (48 kilometres) via the RD 554 that will take you past the valley of Gapeau.

### The walk

Between the Roquebrussanne and Garéoult, near the RD 64, the Grand and Petit Laoucien are part of a 3.9-hectare departmental protected nature site. You can join the Petit Laoucien, 500 metres away, by walking alongside the fields until you reach a path that goes round the vines. Less spectacular if it's dry – which often happens –, the little Laoucien is ecologically interesting for its fauna that is typical of temporary pools. You'll get the most from your walk by going around it in an easterly direction. Go back the same way or take the road just below it.



### ► FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PEIRESC IN BELGENTIER

Surrounded by fruit trees, Peiresc park in Belgentier, with its shaded tables and play area for children, is an ideal place for a picnic or quite simply a refreshing break on the way. Belonging to the Department\*, this natural space of 2 hectares lies beside the Gapeau river. It's a great opportunity

to discover the installations imagined around 1620 by the great humanist Peiresc, a native of Belgentier, to admire the majestic trees... and to visit the old village built around the river!

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France



## ► COLLOBRIÈRES, A HISTORIC NETWORK

The history of the village of Collobrières is closely linked to water; the water that flows in the Réal Collobrier river, around which the inhabitants settled in the Middle Ages; the water that, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, led to the installation and output from 17 cork factories; and finally, the water supply network that, from 1891 onwards, enabled all the villagers to live more comfortably. In fact, Collobrières was the first village in the Var to benefit from a network that provided water to the inhabitants from three fountains, eleven public fountains, twelve fire hydrants and a lavoir. Around fifty houses were subsequently supplied from the water reservoir, providing the population with comfort and modernity. The water which flowed through the streets and the squares of Collobrières was pumped from several springs, located over 9 km away, on the road to Gonfaron. Des Sauvettes and the well in Grèou, a cast iron network conceived by a *Ponts et Chaussées* university engineer and inaugurated in 1891 when two days of festivities were organised. Since then, the inhabitants have continued the tradition annually, although there's one slight difference... Now, on the day of the great celebration, it's not water that spurts from the fountain, but wine!

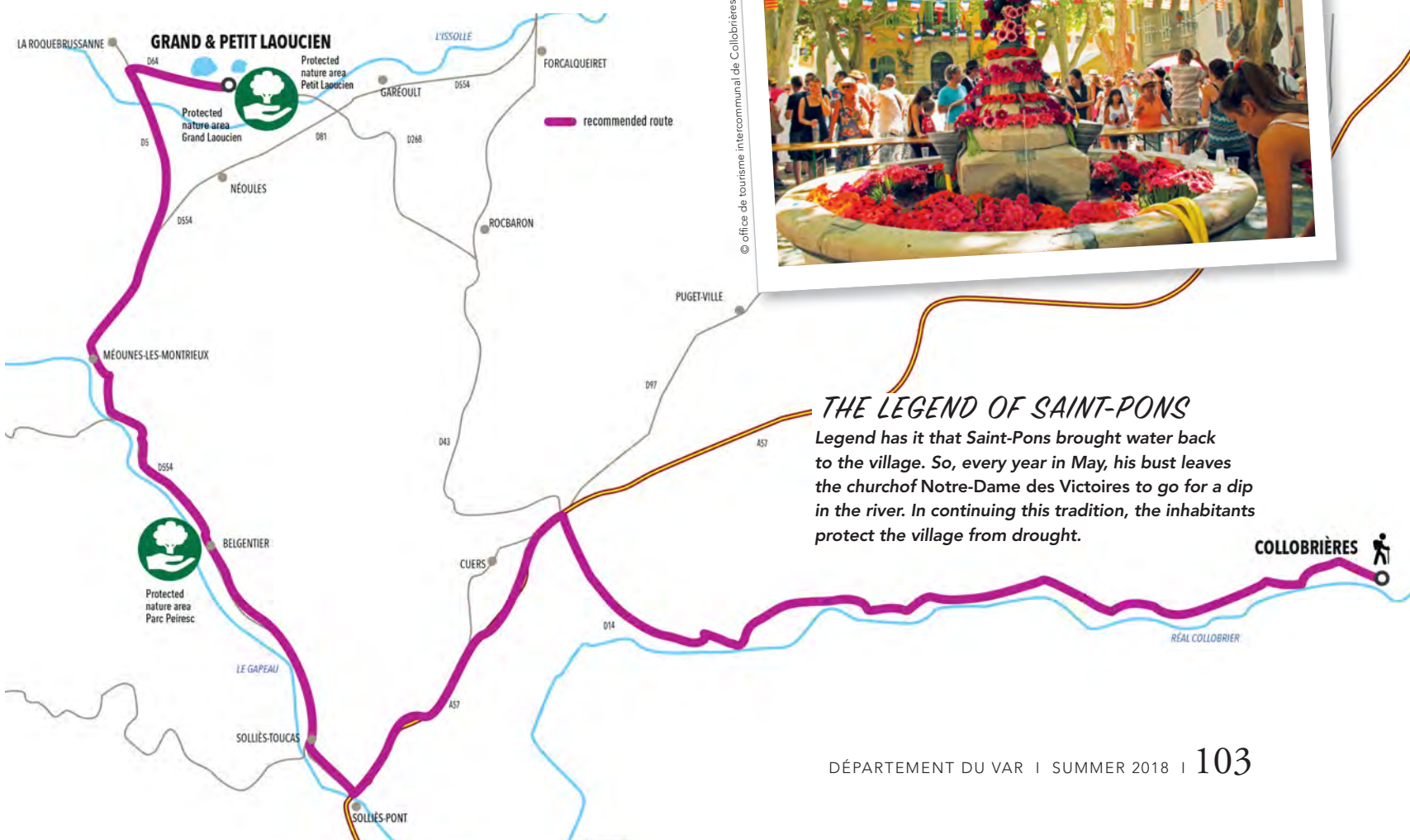
### The walk

A great way to explore the village of Collobrières is by strolling around its streets and squares in search of its fountains. There's no charge to go from the 12<sup>th</sup> century *Pont Neuf* to the *Place de la République*, nicknamed the 'Place de la Petite fontaine', or from the Place de la Libération to the Place Rouget-de-L'Isle, and the cobblestone streets get narrower and narrower as you get closer to Saint-Pons church. There were as many as 4 public wells in the *Place Rouget-de-L'Isle* in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, all supplied by the 24-metre deep well of the château!

Guided visits are organised every Wednesday at 6pm in June, July and August by the Monts et Merveyilles association in Maures. Starting point in front of the tourist information centre. Price: €10 (€6 for 12-18-year olds and free for children under 12).



© office de tourisme intercommunal de Collobrières



### THE LEGEND OF SAINT-PONS

Legend has it that Saint-Pons brought water back to the village. So, every year in May, his bust leaves the church of Notre-Dame des Victoires to go for a dip in the river. In continuing this tradition, the inhabitants protect the village from drought.

COLLOBRIÈRES



BARGEMON

# *Memories* OF FINE MACHINES

Dozens of typewriter models are exhibited at the small Museum of Mechanography in Bargemon – a place full of nostalgia for all those familiar with these machines that have now disappeared from our daily lives.

The disconcerting ease with which we type on computer keyboards, tablets or smartphones every day almost makes us forget that word processing software and spell checkers have not always been there. That before the advent and popularisation of computers, the cornerstone of office technology was not the computer screen but the typewriter. And yet remember... That clacking sound of the key being pressed, the sound of the carriage return or the smell of ink being printed instantly on the sheet of paper. All these sensations return instantly to the memory of those who knew them, as they pass through the doors of the Museum of Mechanography in Bargemon.

In the village's old baking ovens, the municipality guards a rare and precious collection it has owned since 2009. That year, it bought the entire collection of typewriters from Mr Préjean, a mechanographer in Draguignan. A real treasure composed of several hundred devices, French and foreign, the fruit of over fifty years of research. *"There are some very rare models exhibited here"*, says Alain Renvoyer, the municipal employee in charge of the museum. *"For example, we have a portable model from 1914, a Braille Pitch from 1899 and some very beautiful examples of calculating machines that work exclusively with gears."* In these machines, whose system was completely mechanical, almost everything could be repaired. This is often the reason why collectors and enthusiasts are interested in these objects. They like to dissect the mechanism to better understand it – to see these mechanical jewels from



Typewriters are exhibited in all simplicity in the former bread oven in Bargemon



the inside. But their external appearance is just as captivating. Some typewriters are worth a detour for their sheer beauty and the quality of the materials used.

One of the emblematic pieces of the Museum of Mechanography is a model of the brand *The World*, dating from 1886. It belonged to Gustave Eiffel and is remarkably well preserved. On this daisy-wheel typewriter, the characters are attached to the same component, in the shape of a circle, which must be turned to print each letter, one by one. It is exhibited alongside other devices with various mechanical systems. A drum machine, a cylinder machine, with one or three letters per lead, an index machine, a dial machine... There are a multitude of machines created between the years 1880 and 1970. For a century, the leading companies on the mechanography market constantly proved their inventiveness by creating ever more efficient mechanisms. The machines became more technical, more practical and lighter. From the *Lambert* of 1902 to the *Underwood* of 1923, including a *Japy*, *Olivetti* and *Remington*, the Museum of Mechanography showcases a wide range of these objects from the past.

This explains its fame among collectors, always eager to see and touch these rare models. Over the years, many of them have made donations to the municipality of Barge-

mon, which continues to expand its collection. In this small museum, a collector's landmark, only the most remarkable typewriters are on display, placed here and there on tables and shelves, without any particular arrangement. The others are carefully kept in a secret room. ■

**Practical info:**

The Museum of Mechanography is located on rue de la Prison in Bargemon. It is open to the public from Wednesday to Sunday, from 2 to 6pm.  
Tel: + 33 (0)4 94 47 81 73.  
Admission is free.



**CALCULATING MACHINES ALSO COUNT!**

The collection of the Bargemon Museum contains more than just beautiful typewriters. On the ground floor, the many models of calculating machines and cash registers are also well worth a visit. Like "La Nationale", a cash register dating from 1900 with different counters to record the number of trade exchanges, money inflows, and refunds. True concentrations of mechanical genius, the first calculating machines worked exclusively with gears. They allowed, for the most part, additions, subtractions, divisions and multiplications all to be carried out at the same time.



# Light SCULPTURES

**Christophe Raynal  
plays with certainties  
and materials.**

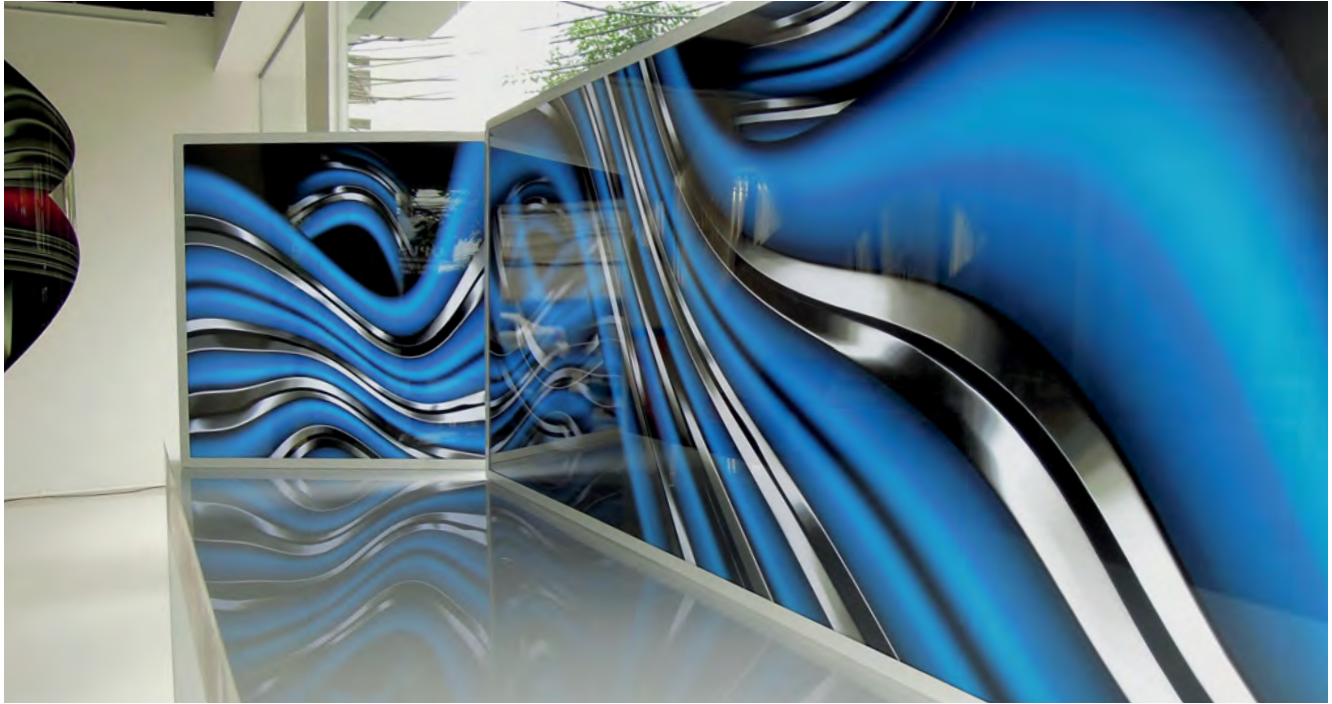
**After launching a collection  
of sets of metallic prints last  
summer decorating  
large buildings with  
concrete lighting,  
the designer-creator  
from Toulon continues  
to experiment. And is not  
ready to stop yet...**

**S**culptural, luminous, visual. Christophe Raynal's work is all of this at the same time. Almost human, his work lives in places where it feels at home. This son of Toulon breathes life into works which make a resounding impression. Since last summer, the designer has been working on the concept of luminous sculptures. *"The idea is not so much to make a light but rather a luminous object"*, he reveals. In his workshops, shared with fellow artist friends in Toulon and Cuers, he creates the moulds into which he pours concrete. He then sculpts, brushes, varnishes or lime-washes the material, playing on contrasts, mixing chrome globes with concrete to highlight imagined shapes. A self-taught artist, about fifteen years ago Christophe discovered his own, personal means of expression.

The creative adventure began in the Var, in Toulon, which he left on a whim at 15 years old. In his forties, caught up in a Parisian lifestyle which no longer suited him, and after working in musical production and setting up events agencies, he decided to make a fresh start in the South. He had considered moving to Marseille or Nice, but finally plumped for Toulon, the city of his roots. In partnership with a very creative young chef, he took over a restaurant at Mourillon. The decoration of the restaurant inspired him. *"I took pictures of food and utensils, splitting the images to put them on the walls. It was an interesting experience, an exploration of the visible and the invisible, on the perception of reality: how to make a mistake or interpret a situation. The existing elements are only suppositions. The world simply consists of 7 billion pairs of eyes watching and interpreting. Everyone has a say in what they decide to see and do. It all depends on one's individual view point."*







© CR Design

BluFluux light box – Bangkok exhibition

## A CHILD'S SOUL

This allegory of perception has been at the centre of his approach since this time. *"I want to be able to show the distortion of reality in images."* Initially, he printed his photographs of materials on steel, aluminium, mirrored metal and Plexiglas. Very quickly, the frame became deformed. Composition interacts with volume. After a first exhibition in France, in 2008, he left for New York where he spent 3 years. *"I immediately found a gallery and worked on a number of projects with interior designers"*, he explains. Projects keep on coming in the USA and elsewhere. The Andaz hotel on Wall Street, the Zabad restaurant in Beirut, the Portes de la Defense in Paris, the West Plaza hotel in Colombes, the Mirabeau residence in Monaco... are all graced with Christophe Raynal artwork. The adventure continues to the east of the planet, in Dubai and Bangkok, where he set up his own gallery in 2011. Personal events brought him back to Toulon in 2013. His partnership with manufacturers of designer lighting fixtures like the Var leader of the Oled Blackbody in La Farlède (see Var N°3 downloadable on var.fr),

for whom he became international consultant, marked a new phase in his career. *"It's another way of experimenting on things."* At the same time, he continued his own work. Last summer, saw the birth of his first luminous sculptures. *"After metal, I wanted to work with concrete, I first imagined lighting with a metal stand but the project gradually evolved. What is exciting in creation is constraint. I search for fluidity in*

*movement"*, he concludes. His productions, sold under the brand name CR design (from €300), are on sale at the Candela boutique in Carqueiranne and on the Empreintes website, specialized in arts and crafts ([www.empreintes-paris.com](http://www.empreintes-paris.com)). Single editions, they were all baptized by *Kune Komsa*, who boasts the soul of an eternal child. ■

[www.christophe-raynal-design.com](http://www.christophe-raynal-design.com)



© CR Design

Light sculpture Black series



# Maubois beach AT SAINT-RAPHAËL

The red rocks of the Estérel massif plunge into the deep azure-blue water below. Maubois beach, located at the foot of the Corniche d'Or in Saint-Raphaël, takes you to another world. With a mixed pebble and sand beach, it's the massif's largest cove. Access is limited by the lack of parking in summer, which means that only early birds will get a chance to lay their towels down here.





© INICO GOMEZ



# ORGANIC BLACK GARLIC, *a taste revelation*

Taking us into unami territory, the 5<sup>th</sup> flavour that enhances all others, a Japanese invention, black garlic has been slow-roasted in Seyne-sur-Mer in France for only two years. Here, France's first organic black garlic producer, Marc Muller, shares his trade secrets with us.

**S** beneath its dry white skin, the pods reveal their coal-tinted, slightly shiny colour. Black garlic is a very unusual food, discovered by the world less than ten years ago. Mid-way between unusual food and functional food, it sells at premium prices.

Needless to say, it's no easy task to define an unknown flavour. This much is certain: black garlic is not salty or sweet, nor acidic and certainly not bitter. At present, it is classified in the so-called unami 5<sup>th</sup> flavour category, that of a taste enhancer with health benefits.

First discovered in the northern part of Fukushima in Japan, turning white garlic into black garlic increases its health benefits tenfold. *"We obtained authorisation to write on our packaging: helps to maintain a healthy hepatic function, contributes to lowering temporary stress, contains antioxidants."* Marc Muller, the first producer of organic black garlic in France, told us. Based in La Seyne-sur-Mer, his company, Le bio d'Olivier, specialised in processing certified organic farming specialities from Provence, slow-roasts 12 tons of garlic a year. True to his Mediterranean nature, Marc Muller is adamant: *"This is not a new variety of garlic. Black garlic is indeed *Allium sativum*".* With China as the world's leading producer, the businessman has remained faithful to his food convictions. *"The original product is everything. You can't have quality food without quality products. Our organic*



*garlic is all AOP certified from the Drôme region of France."*

The producer also shared his secrets with us: *"We put our garlic on baking trays which are then placed in a special oven that balances the level of humidity and heat. We start with a very low heat, because you mustn't burn the garlic otherwise it loses all of its virtues. Although I speak about cooking, it isn't really, because we heat it to a maximum temperature of 63°C. It isn't fermentation either. More like the result of a slow caramelisation, better known as a Maillard reaction. Of the 45 days it's cooking, the first fortnight is the most important. I monitor it every day and adjust the levels. If we don't respect these, the garlic remains white and will be lost".*

Once this operation is finished, the black garlic is ready to be eaten. Marc Muller insists that *"it must be eaten raw, otherwise it loses all of its benefits"*. While its flavour is hard to define, its texture on the other hand melts in your mouth. Best eaten raw as it is, it can also be crushed into a sauce, a cream, or dissolved in olive oil... Chefs love it as a condiment. But Marc Muller doesn't stop here. He's cooking up another product: organic black shallot. More highly appreciated for its taste, *"fried in slices and served with Foie Gras, it's amazing"*, the former restaurant owner explained. Yet another explosion of flavours... ■

# BLACK GARLIC HUMMUS DIP

## A DELIGHTFUL SUMMER APERITIF

### INGREDIENTS:

400g of Rougiers\* chick peas, strained and rinsed,  
 3 soup spoons of tahini,  
 5 to 6 pods of organic black garlic,  
 2 soup spoons of organic lemon juice,  
 1/2 teaspoon of ground cumin, olive oil,  
 salt and pepper from the pepper mill.

### PREPARATION:

mix the chick peas with 2 pods of garlic. Add the tahini, lemon juice, salt, cumin and the olive oil. The texture should be rich and smooth. Finally, peel and finely chop the remaining pods of garlic. Mix these into the preparation. Serve chilled with vegetables cut into sticks, cherry tomatoes and finger slices of toasted bread... ■

\* See our article on the Rougiers chick peas in Le Var n°1 - summer 2016 downloadable at [www.var.fr](http://www.var.fr)





# MONSIEUR



Towns are fighting over Z style. He has a knack for capturing beauty with his colourful, elegant and uncluttered pictures. We meet local artist Richard Zielenkiewicz.

**You' re an illustrator, a graphic designer, you've produced works for television, advertising, comics, you're a jack-of-all-trades, which area have you been most passionate about?**

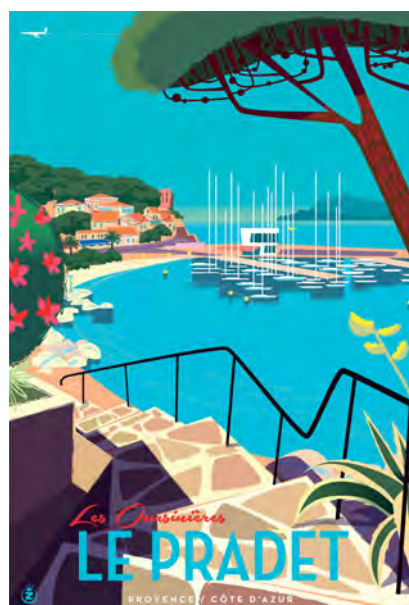
All of them. I need change, and sometimes I need to switch from one field to another. When my children were young, I was inevitably drawn to the world of early childhood. That's when I made my cartoons. Before I bought my house, I drew a lot of houses, because I was in the process of buying a place to live. Leafing through architecture magazines makes you want to, you understand it. Being more visual than abstract, I need to project myself into something. So I draw what I'd like, my dreams, my desires, my wishes... I draw here in the Var because I love the scenery, I love the people, I love the Mediterranean and I love Toulon.

**Today you are known and recognized for your colourful, simple, graphic illustrations inspired by design and architecture. Is that a fair description of your work?**

Yes it is pretty simplistic. I'm also influenced by Bahaus design, this modern post-war period, where the focus is on the essentials. And it turns out that nowadays with new technologies, we are returning to a graphic style that young people call "flat" design. Style reduced to the essential to move faster. By making a clean, colourful, figurative drawing, you make shortcuts to allow faster interpretation. It's paradoxical, because we would like more time to look at things, to be more contemplative and less involved in doing things. And alongside that, we draw images that are increasingly lean, effective, drawn, stylised, even symbolic, which summarise emotions. Emoticons are very similar to hieroglyphics. In my drawing I want to be original, but not on the fringe.

**Can you tell us about your drawing technique?**

At first, I always lay my ideas out flat by sketching them out in blue crayon on large A3 size sheets. Sometimes I just draw roughly to get the framing and proportions, and other times I do very polished



plans, with lots of detail. I could do it all on a graphic tablet, but I belong to a generation that still uses paper. Then, I scan my drawing before reworking it on computer. That's when I put the features back in and make it look right. Then comes the colour.

**What projects are you working on at the moment?**

I've just created the poster for a travelling exhibition that's touring the world on the Orient Express. I've created a 2 minute animated film for Tourisme Provence Méditerranée that you can now see for yourself online, and posters for the communes of La Londe-les-Maures, Port-Grimaud, Vichy... I'm also working on a campaign for the promoter of Avenue 83 in La Vallette, who was looking for a local illustrator. ■

#### **DISCOVER THE WORK OF MONSIEUR Z**

On posters and merchandising designed by Monsieur Z in local tourist offices, at the police museum in Saint-Tropez. In the Var, art prints are available from Erika and Armelle's *Comptoir des copines* in Toulon, and from the Galerie Lisa.



# TRANSHUMANCE,



## *a sight to behold*

**Every year, the shepherds and their flocks are a magnificent spectacle for locals and tourists alike as they leave for the summer. Around 15 June, thousands of sheep travel the roads of the Var to reach their mountain pastures.**

**S**till alive and well in the Var, transhumance is an age-old tradition dating back over 5,000 years. It consists of taking grazing animals to spend the summer in the mountains, so that they don't suffer the effects of hot weather or dry conditions. This practice already existed in ancient times. The Roman writer Pliny the Elder documents the presence in the mountains of "*thousands of sheep (who) come together from distant regions to graze*". In the Var, transhumance has continued to the present day. It is vital as there are no grazing areas in summer. Therefore, the animals have to be moved to their summer pastures in areas like the Alpes de Haute-Provence or the Hautes Alpes. However, this custom has evolved considerably. And there are few shepherds who still practice it on foot. Flocks are often now transported in cattle trucks, which can hold up to 400 animals.



IN SUMMER, TRANSHUMANCE  
IN THE VAR INVOLVES 50,000 EWES.  
90% ARE TRANSPORTED  
BY TRUCK.



**TRADITIONAL TRANSHUMANCE,  
ON THE VERGE OF EXTINCTION...**

Gilles Mistral, the last sheep farmer in La Garde-Freinet, is one of the last shepherds in Var to move his flocks in the traditional way, i.e. on foot. He and his 3,000 ewes travel more than 160 kilometres in eight days, from La Garde-Freinet to the Allos pass, where they spend the next four months. In a truck, it would take them under four hours. But for him, "travelling the road" on foot is of vital importance. "Out of passion", he says first of all. "The also because it's a fundamental part of our work as shepherds in Provence. Unfortunately, only 4 or 5 of us in the Var still do it like this", he says, wistfully. "My animals' best interests and welfare come first. They could struggle travelling by truck. By walking up, only covering about twenty kilometres a day, my sheep don't get tired and gradually adapt to the mountain climate. We prefer to walk at night or in the early morning, when it's cool. They rest in the daytime, when it's hot."

He has shared this journey over the years with his employees, friends and his 18-year-old son Guillaume. "We've been shepherds in this family for 9 generations from father to son! My son has been taking the sheep up with me since he was 12 years old. And he's going to be taking over from me. On foot! I also have friends who help me to look after the animals on the journey. They've been taking leave from work specially for about twenty years and wouldn't miss it for the world! I've also got 3 or 4 shepherds working for me. They spend the summer with the flock." The sheep dogs of Provence are also an essential element to the success of this migration. Transhumance requires very careful organization. A vehicle fitted with a flashing light leads the way, a second brings up the rear with a sign "Caution - Flock".

Gilles Mistral, one of the last shepherds in the Var to still carry out transhumance by foot





You have to plan ahead what route to take and all the stops for the flock to rest, eat and drink. *"Of course, we've got a regular, tried and tested route. But it's getting harder and harder. Mostly due to traffic."*

Transhumant flocks used to follow carraïres or cattle trails. Created in medieval times by the Counts of Provence, these stone paths were reserved exclusively for their use. To make it easier for the animals to

make progress, they could be up to 100 metres wide. As a result of urbanization, these carraïres have almost all disappeared. This means that they have to use tarmac roads, which can cause traffic problems, especially with large flocks like Gilles Mistral's. The people accompanying the sheep have to ensure that everything flows smoothly between the road users and the flock. *"We try to let the cars get through as quickly as*

*possible. But it can take about ten minutes and this can create tension."* That's rare though. People are generally quite cheerful about it and their curiosity gets the better of them.

### THE FLOCK PASSING THOUGH - A SHARED CELEBRATION

Inhabitants of the villages passed through are delighted to encounter a herd in transhumance, as are tourists. They admire seeing so many sheep on the road and watch the dogs working, they are specially trained to manage the herd. *"The departure of a transhumance is always a celebration. We're proud to show off our flock."* It's very popular in every village. Residents lean out of their windows to watch this white river that flows past at 2.5 km/h. Some even come to meet the sheep, share a coffee or a meal with the herders. Kids take pictures and selfies with the animals. *"There's still a lot of chatting and camaraderie. It's nice to be able to share these moments together. Now people know us in the villages we pass through. Some people have even become our friends and always look forward to seeing us!"*, explains Gilles Mistral, with a certain pride in his voice.

Villages in the Var still hold a Transhumance Festival. In Pignans, it was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, while in Bargême the event is planned for 3<sup>rd</sup> June and in Montauroux for the 10<sup>th</sup>. Activities include: discovering this Provençal tradition with a procession of a flock of sheep, pastoralism activities, shows and demonstrations, craft market with samples of local products... ■







## ROQUEBRUNE-SUR-ARGENS

# WATER SKIING, PEDALLING.. *and jumping in fresh water!*

Featuring water skiing, a water park, towed buoy, wakeboard and blob jump, among others, the Espace Aréna on Lake Perrin at Roquebrune-sur-Argens is a freshwater beach and water sports centre just two minutes from the town centre. It's a great place, created and run for the last twenty years by water-skiing instructor Laurent Gregoriou.

**S**omeone just had to come up with the idea and Laurent Gregoriou did! "I used to teach water-skiing at sea,

but the weather was often against us, making it difficult to go out." So, in the 1990s, he opened a water-skiing school on Perrin Lake. "We're right next to the town centre so we could give classes for schools and holiday centres, which we still do." The site is big: 50 hectares and expanding. Kayak enthusiasts in search of the wild can "leave the lake through a passage and then paddle to the incredible nature environment around Rocher du Muy", Laurent Gregoriou explained. Magnificent!

With the water temperature between 25° and 26°C in the middle of summer, adrenaline seekers are likely to prefer the activities on offer at the Aréna beach centre. As well as the usual pedal and paddle options, novelties in summer 2018 include "two themed water parks, one of which is designed for young children between 5 and 11 years old. The chil-

dren can use the floating platforms with slides, stairs, trampolines and so on". Here, the bravest can also try out the trendy new blob jump. "It's a huge air-filled cushion floating on the water. The Blobber sits down waiting for the jumper to jump from a platform at the other end." The catapult effect is inevitable. Obviously, the height of the jump will depend on the weight difference between the blubber and the jumper... "between 6 and 8 metres", he added. "The youngsters just love it!" the owner continued, before reassuring parents, "but we cater for everyone. We also have deckchairs for our customers". Because of course, lazing around is also an activity in its own right when you're on holiday! ■

**More information**  
Water glisse passion  
Espace de l'Aréna, Perrin lake  
at Roquebrune-sur-Argens  
[www.waterglisse.com](http://www.waterglisse.com)



## NANS-LES-PINS

## LASER TAG

*on horses  
and ponies*

The riding centre at Nans-les-Pins has carried off a crazy gamble: to offer horseback laser tag sessions thanks to its Équidrive touch reins, a homemade invention by Loïc Wulleman. We take a closer look at this unusual activity which combines manoeuvrability and dexterity.

After the Far West cowboys, make room for the intergalactic riders at Nans-les-Pins. Their mission is to save the Toupabo people from the contagious disease called Morevelitte. It's a long story that began with the invention of the Équidrive reins, a concept designed by Loïc Wulleman, the riding centre's manager. "16 years ago, my wife and I bought this 10-hectare racehorse training centre." The centre is well located at the foot of the Sainte Baume mountain ridge, but not close enough to big towns to be able to rely solely on a competition-based business. Above all, "we were instructors in mainstream riding centres with dressage activities, obstacle courses and so on, but they lacked the idea of leisure and pleasure linked to horses..." In Nans-les-Pins, an adjacent 40-hectare campsite meant that the riding centre could develop its leisure-focused riding activities. The gamble was a success as "we went from 20 riders to 300 over a 16-year period", Loïc Wulleman recalled. The key to their success lay in developing tools that made it very easy for beginners to steer their horses, giving riders immediate pleasure without the inevitable

technical mistakes that can lead to apprehension and tension on the reins. He began by inventing the Équidrive One and Color systems. "These reins can be held more easily as they have coloured loops that eliminate the problems of hand positioning, security and tension." The ingenious and practical system positioned him as a finalist in the Innovation trophy at the Paris Horse show in 2013. The tool, combined with the Équidrive concept learning method, promises "to turn you into a rider in just 15 minutes!" Today, 200 riding centres have the Équidrive label, even abroad: "We've exported our concept to China, Switzerland, Spain and Italy. We produce everything on-site at Nans-les-Pins. We've already sold 5000 reins". But this jack-of-all-trades then went even further. Annoyed that his son preferred a laser tag session to a show jumping lesson, he took up the challenge to combine the two. Drawing from the experience of his first invention, he designed new reins so that riders can steer intuitively with just one hand. "The Equidrive touch is like a kind of handlebar that provides intuitive steering with a colour code that's easy to remember, red to the left, green to the right and yellow in the middle..." Both novice and experienced riders can now ride through quarries or forests aiming their blaster at various targets equipped with receptors. From 2 to 77, whether on a pony or a horse, the different levels mean there are great gaming opportunities for all. After all, it's pretty easy to ride a horse! All that's left is to learn to shoot. ■

More information - Nans-les-Pins Riding Centre – Carraire Delvieux sud on +33 (0)6 76 12 22 25 [www.equinans.com](http://www.equinans.com)



# LA ROBE À L'ENVERS

## *Anchored in the Var*

"**Y**ou're still only a little boy to me, just like a hundred thousand other little boys, and I do not need you, and you do not need me either. For you, I am just a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes, but if you tame me, we will need each other. You will be unique for me, I will be unique for you..."

In the same way that Saint-Exupéry's little prince tames the fox, actress-puppeteer Elena Bosco tames the Var. "I arrived in Ramatuelle in 2010, wanting to settle down and anchor my artistic creation here. I feel further from the artistic network, but closer to the citizens. I made a clear choice to move away from an urban environment where it had become easy to promote my creations, to a rural setting, where it was necessary to convince people, to make them want to get on board this local project." Artistic director of *La robe à l'envers*, Elena Bosco decided to leave Paris, where she created her company in 2008, after a "flash of artistic and human awareness I no longer wanted to be caught up in city life, and so decided to create a quality, year-round cultural offer here".

Originally from Turin, Italy, she moved to Paris in 2001 to study comparative literature through an Erasmus exchange. Two years later, she joined Jacques Lecoq's International

Theater School. "The teaching method was just right for her, promoting body language and the importance of bodily expression", says the artist. "For us, a territory that creates nothing is a territory in need, so we started working together in the Var."



© Miliène Sabrie

If Elena develops her shows mainly from images, through a process of visual creation, Flore is more attached to writing and narration. They are complementary. Together, they have already created two pieces.

Based on Occitan tales and work with the local population, the first creation, *En-quête*, was born. "The idea was to play on the imaginary, to remember that storytellers, above all, narrate their daily life." In this show, intended for children from 7 years onwards, the relationship with the audience is very important. The same approach

was adopted with *Le fil des contes*, their second production, designed to be performed anywhere, and particularly in apartments, for an adult audience. "I tell the story of my arrival in the countryside through a character who has to find his bearings, I draw a parallel between everyday speech and the spoken word and invite the audience to create, at the end of the show, a collective story."

At the same time storyteller, actress and director, Elena Bosco also has other projects in mind and is always ready for a challenge. Last fall, she replied to a request by the Departmental council\* to offer book readings for Var citizens with books selected for the Var readers' prize (see p.10 & 11).

"For this project, I worked with Emmanuel Lefebvre, a musician, with whom I am putting together a new young audience show", details the artist. *Sur le fil* is the title and it will be a mixture of tales - and as always - puppets and theater objects. "This type of theater requires proximity with the audience." With wires, cables, ropes and pipes, she intends to build social bonds, just as she does with the Var, her new land of inspiration. ■

[www.larobealensvers.com](http://www.larobealensvers.com)

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France



# ATTENTION FRAGILE

## *The right to create*

Gilles Cailleau receives visitors under a big top, right in the middle of the playground of the school complex of Lorgues. His hair is tousled and his voice a little tired. He has just given the 660<sup>th</sup> performance of his company's historical show, *Le tour complet du cœur*. He has given the best of his art to a group of about 60 schoolchildren. That's Gilles Cailleau. He is one of those true, holistic artists who never stop.

Attention fragile is the name of the company he created in 1999 and which has been located in the Var since 2012. He loves to roam the area in his caravan, travelling from one town to another, from one collective project to another, but also from one artistic field to another. *"This company was born of my desire to take theatre to different places. What defines my work is not the artistic field but rather the relationship with the audience"*, says the artistic director, both actor and director of the theatre company. *"Depending on the themes I wish to develop, I will choose theatre, circus, or music... whatever art form I use, the main thing is to tell stories."*

His own world was shaken during a festive evening. As a specialist in 17<sup>th</sup>



century literature, he was all set to enjoy a fine academic career when, at the age of 22, he met a stage director. *"I asked if I could join his company, although I had no theatre training"*, smiles Gilles Cailleau. *"But he took me on board and I trained on the job for fifteen years."* Then came the desire to play differently, not to be in front of people but amongst them. The artistic director of the company then freed himself from the stage set. *"I went further and further in breaking down the traditional relationships between actor and audience, in order to build a relationship between players and spectators, because in the end, spectators are never just spectators."* In a yurt, a Moroccan tent or a simple circus ring surrounded by chairs, he sets out determinedly to meet people. Supported since the beginning by the Var Departmental council\*, and under contract with the Regional Cultural Affairs Directorate (Drac), Attention fragile works in partner-

ship with many cultural players of the Var. After having promoted an artist's residence and creation centre in Valletta for several years, Gilles Cailleau is, for the 2017-2018 season, associate artist with Théâtres en Dracé-

*"The idea is to invent together; to invent things that I cannot do elsewhere, and others that theatre cannot do without me."* In this context, he plans to create a new show, *Carmen*, in which he would like to integrate local assets and wishes. *"This is planned for 2019-2020"*, he explains. A local performance, requiring four months of immersion in a Var village, then, for the tour, mini-residences of the company, for three weeks each time, on performance sites. *"I like to plough the ground, to get out and meet people. When acting, it is necessary to enter a state of creation even before knowing what you are planning to do. Even if there is theatrical grammar, exercises to improve and enrich technique, you have to start somewhere. You cannot just wait to be sure of yourself to create. We all have the right to be in a state of creation."* ■

[www.attentionfragile.net](http://www.attentionfragile.net)

\*One of the 96 Departmental councils in France





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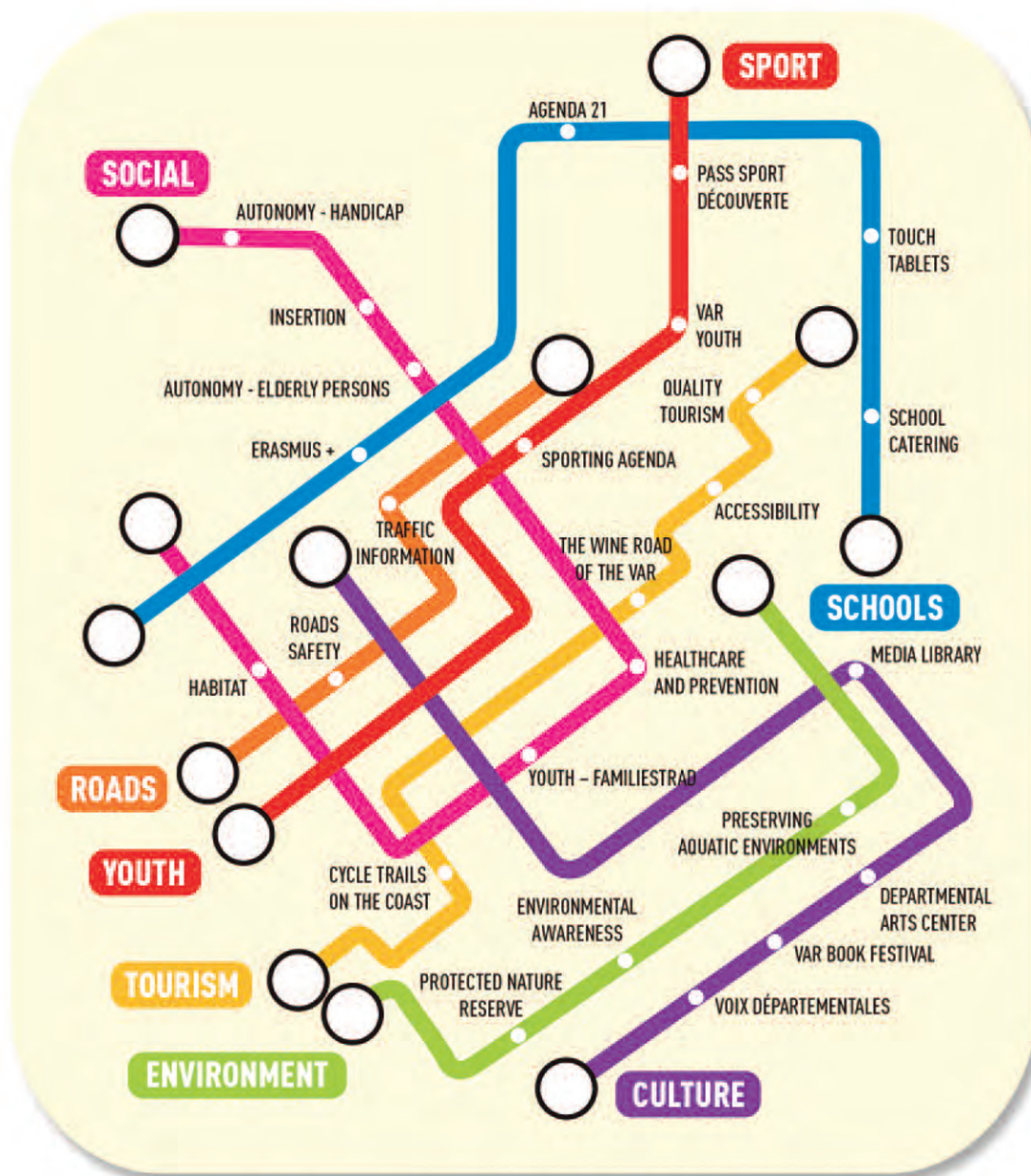
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