

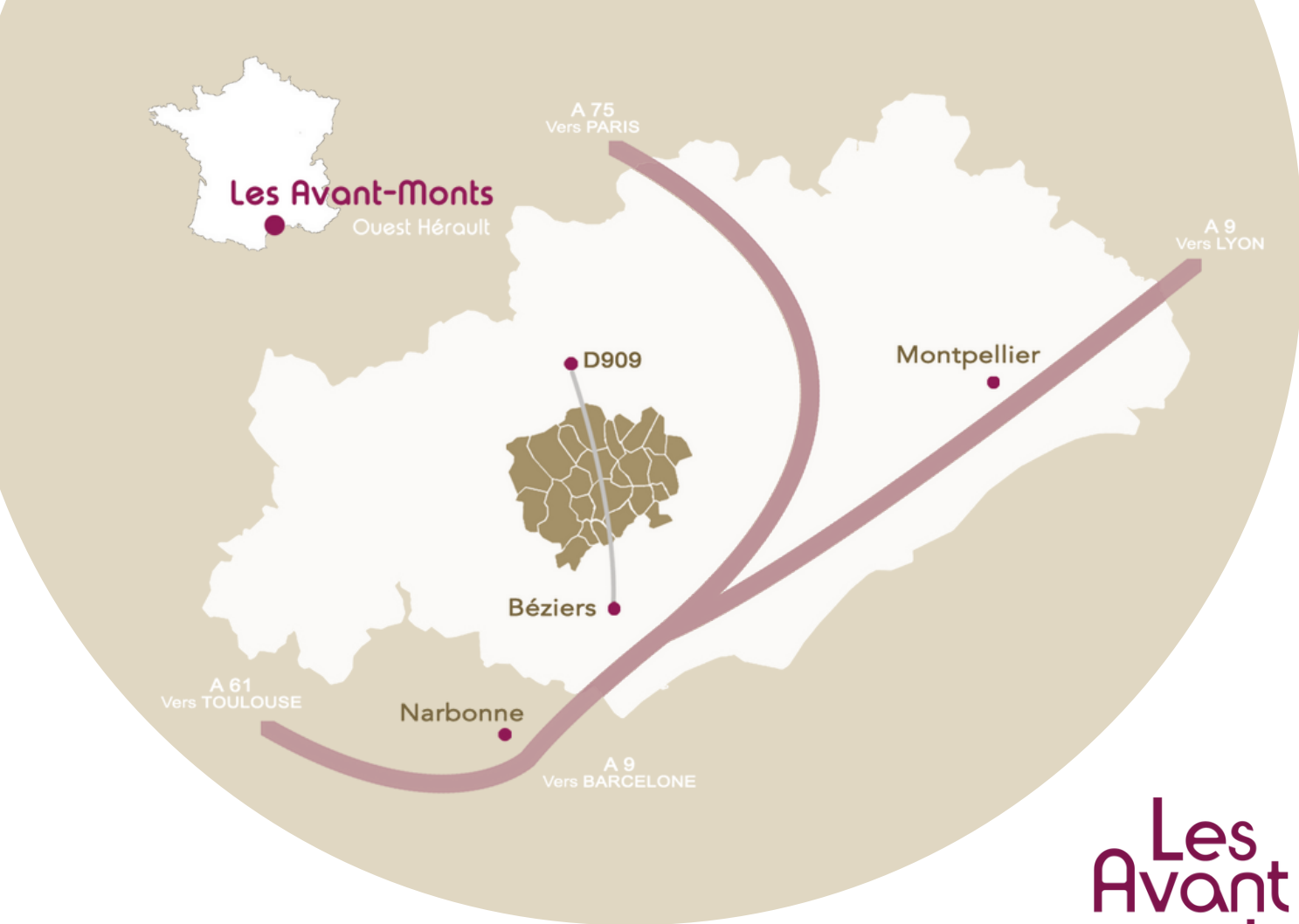


Destination Avant-Monts



Languedoc

Les
Avant
monts
OFFICE DE TOURISME



**Les
Avant
monts**
OFFICE DE TOURISME

Avant-Monts tourisme office

Magalas

Open Monday to Friday
9am to 12pm and 2pm to 6pm
04 67 36 67 13

Faugères

Every day from 15 May to 30 September
10am to 1pm and 3pm to 7pm
06 45 73 49 82

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Summary

4. 3 unForgettable atmospheres
5. 3 must-see viewpoints
6. The Faugères Windmills
8. Fancy a hike?
11. The Véloccitanie
12. The Château-Abbaye of Cassan
14. The hydraulic mills
16. The Font de l'Oli
18. The Flora
20. Art of dry stone
22. Villages with secrets
25. Words From acqui*
26. Car-free day in Faugères
28. Eco-actions on holiday
30. Family moments
32. Feet in the water
33. Key celebrations
34. Les Avant-Monts, patchwork of wine appellations
36. Gourmet pleasures
38. Some great addresses



Unforgettable atmospheres

Must-see sites

1. A Land of vines and wines

The Avant-Monts, located between mountains and plains, enjoy an exceptional location for viticulture. Our destination is home to a large number of appellations and denominations: AOP Faugères, AOP Saint-Chinian, AOP Pézenas, AOP Languedoc, IGP Cotes de Thongue, IGP Coteaux de Béziers.

The vines stretch for as far as the eye can see and shape the landscape into harmonious lines and curves. Here, you will voyage between the different terroirs and the wines unlocking the character of each of our appellations.



2. A Land of nature

The Avant-monts also has 400 km of hiking trails with different atmospheres. From the vineyard to the forest via the scrubland, each hike has its secrets. The fauna and flora, both Mediterranean and wild, are revealed in a range of colors and scents at every step.

An adventure on our side roads over a few hours or several days, the choice is yours.



Castle of Roquessels

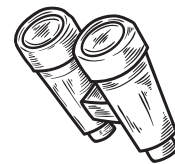


3. History of men and heritage

Over the centuries, villages have been built around strategic points : high up for defense, close to waterways for access to resources, at the crossroads of major trade routes and passages. We can still observe abundant historical elements illustrating these times of the past, some unique and surprising, such as the « piles » of Causses and Veyran, others more familiar, such as the village churches. Take the opportunity to wander around villages and travel back through the ages, as you walk.

Our most stunning views

Take a deep breath



Castle of Cabrerolles



Cabrerolles

Located due south on the slopes of a limestone spur and overlooking the village, the Cabrerolles castrum dominates the valley. A site not to be missed which combines hiking, heritage and outstanding views. Simply breathtaking !



Saint-Nazaire-de-Ladarez

The St-Etienne hermitage is perched at an altitude of 545m. An ancient place of worship steeped in history where you can revel in the absolute calm and observe the sunrise over the mountains and the plain.



Roquessels

Built on a rock in the 10th century, the chapel and the ruins of the noble castle will delight heritage lovers. A view overlooking the surrounding plain completes this majestic site.



The Fauçères Windmills

The love story of wheat and wind

A short history

Perched on a prominence at an altitude of 417m, the windmill and two other cylindrical towers watch over the landscape. An invitation to revery and curiosity.

These three mills were built in the 16th century, a time of cereal abundance in France, and operated by the Tramontane, a northwest wind that blows down to the Mediterranean coast.

Abandoned, the mills had deteriorated over the years. In 1829, the Rivière brothers, millers, took over the premises and restored one of the mills back into working order. In 1991, the Sauvegarde des Hauts-Cantons preservation association continued the work initiated by the Rivière brothers and launched the identical restoration of one of the mills.



Practical information

- Site with free access all year round
- Guided tours from May to September
- Parking near the site
- Picnic table on site

Access

By car via the D909 towards Bédarieux
Sign on the right after Fauçères

Contact

- 06 45 73 49 82
- moulinsdefaugeres@avant-monts.fr

From one of the towers, the orientation table reveals the secrets of the landscape.

The site offers you a 360° view of the plain blending with the lower mountains of the Massif Central. The view extends towards the sea where you can distinguish Sète and the Mont St Clair.

For the more interested, from May to September, listen to the words of an expert and opt for the guided tour. Enter the mill, observe the mechanism and follow your guide's comments and learn how the Rivière brothers worked on this site a few generations ago.



Things to do



1 Enjoy the 360° view

The stone etched orientation table reveals the details of the landscape and beckons you to discover the mountains and the plain.

2 Take the guided tour

Our guide will reveal all the secrets of how a windmill works and will tell you all the anecdotes of the previous millers.

3 Hire a kite

Try to tame the tramontana wind and feel all the currents forcing the sail. A guaranteed sensation of liberty !



The Faugères mills are also the perfect place for the whole family. Rent a kite, exercise your talent as a treasure hunter with the treasure trail, sharpen your brain with a memory game..., lots of activities for young and old that make for a full funpacked day.

You can even bring your picnic and enjoy a moment of respite in the shade of the trees before setting off again.

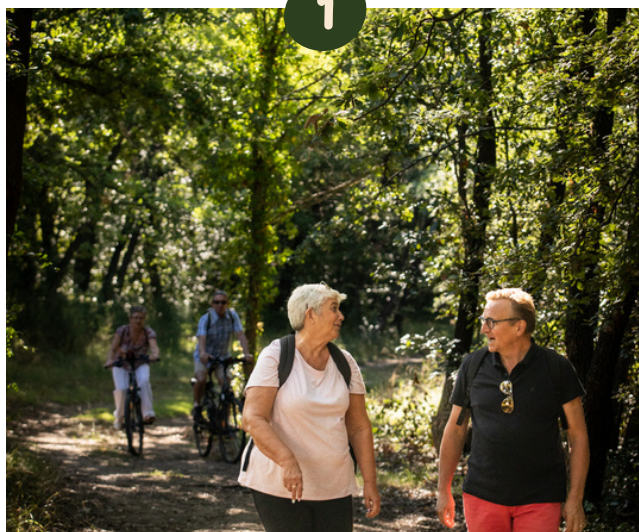


Fancy a hike?

Nature's call

Hiking is much more than just a sporting activity: it's an invitation to lose yourself in order to find yourself again, to marvel at the raw beauty of our environment and to reconnect with the very essence of exploration. Set off to discover new horizons and let yourself be enchanted by the magic of our trails.

Discover the diversity of our region's landscapes, from forests to plains, from garrigue to vineyards. With each step, you'll discover unique scents and landscapes. Be careful, you might fall in love!



9.3 km +170 m 2h45

Faugères, nature and culture Oenorando - Faugères

Discover the different facets of Faugères as you walk. Allow yourself to be seduced by the Mediterranean flora and the dry stone elements of the Mates Basses site, then the vineyards stretching as far as the eye can see. A few kilometers further, it's the turn of the village to reveal its charms to you.

An itinerary that will not leave you indifferent with its diverse atmospheres and a great way to discover the local wine heritage and history of this preserved territory.



13 km +279 m 3h45

The "granjots" Oenorando - Murviel-lès-Béziers

Discover the rich Murviellois heritage equated to vine growing. This route is set in a landscape of vineyards and pine forests and offers beautiful views of the Avant-Monts, the Caroux and the Espinouse. It is punctuated by « granjots », a real window into the past to when these small buildings were once the grower's second home.

In the heart of the AOP Saint-Chinian vineyard, discover the history of the emblematic cooperative cellar, soon to celebrate its 90th anniversary.

More information at
the end of 2024



3



15 km

+103 m

3h45

The Thongue and its slopes Oenorando - Abeilhan

Heading out from the cooperative cellar, set off for a long ramble on the wine-growing slopes of La Thongue and around numerous "pechs" (small hills) to discover landscapes shaped by man for vines.

You will set out to explore the IGP Cotes de Thongue vineyard. Each winemaker, depending on the terroir and his winemaking methods, personalises his wine. For several years, winegrowers have been engaged in sustainable development initiatives, particularly around water resources. Indeed, the Thongue River styles the landscape in the same way as the vines and holds a special place in the minds of each resident.



4



4.5 km

+140 m

1h30

The olive grove path Vailhan

Vailhan, mentioned in the 10th century, is a little corner of paradise for nature lovers. Between tracks and trails, this pleasant walk winds through green Mediterranean landscapes with a variety of preserved flora : holm oaks, arbutus trees, chestnut trees and wild heathers... From this untamed nature, striking views can be glimpsed over the sparkling Olivettes lake.

An ideal setting to relax and swim, it will also delight fishing enthusiasts and lovers of the great outdoors.

To summarise in a few words, it is a magical and wild location which has managed to retain all its authenticity, far from the tumult of the coast.



The toolbox



The Ma rando app

The app that allows you to prepare your hike and download the GPX track and the hiking map for all labeled routes.



The toolbox



The Suricate app

The app that allows you to report problems encountered during your hike: signage problems, fallen tree on the path, etc.



5



10.5 km

+63m

3h

The dovecotes Murviel-lès-Béziers

There are a number of dovecotes in Murviel, in the countryside, on the manors and in the village. They constitute a real originality.

This walk will guide you past the different shapes and sizes of these dovecotes, often imposing and topped with a weather vane, they signalled from afar the social rank of its owner. Their roles are multiple. If pigeons, from the times of Antiquity, have been primarily a source of food, their excrements, rich in minerals, serve as fertiliser.

6

The GR de Pays Minervois, Saint-chinian, Faugères

A great hike to savour

With 5 loops of 30 to 50km, the GR de Pays offers you a beautiful roam through the vineyards that shape our landscapes. Traverse villages with their typical character, taste local products and spawn unforgettable memories crossing fauna, flora and heritage. Accessible to everyone, whether you are a family or experienced hikers, the GR de Pays has something to offer for everyone.

On the Tour en Faugères, between hills and knolls, the vines of the Faugères appellation are omnipresent and provide hikers with scents of thyme, rosemary and lavender that they can find during tastings with winegrowers. From villages to castles, the surprise is always there...

On the Tour du Saint-Chinian au Faugères, enjoy a beautiful 50 km route through the Saint-Chinian and Faugères appellations. More physical than the other GR de Pays tours due to a greater difference in altitude, it will lead you to discover the Orb.



To ride a bike and get the wind in your hair

The Véloccitanie, a route of small pleasures

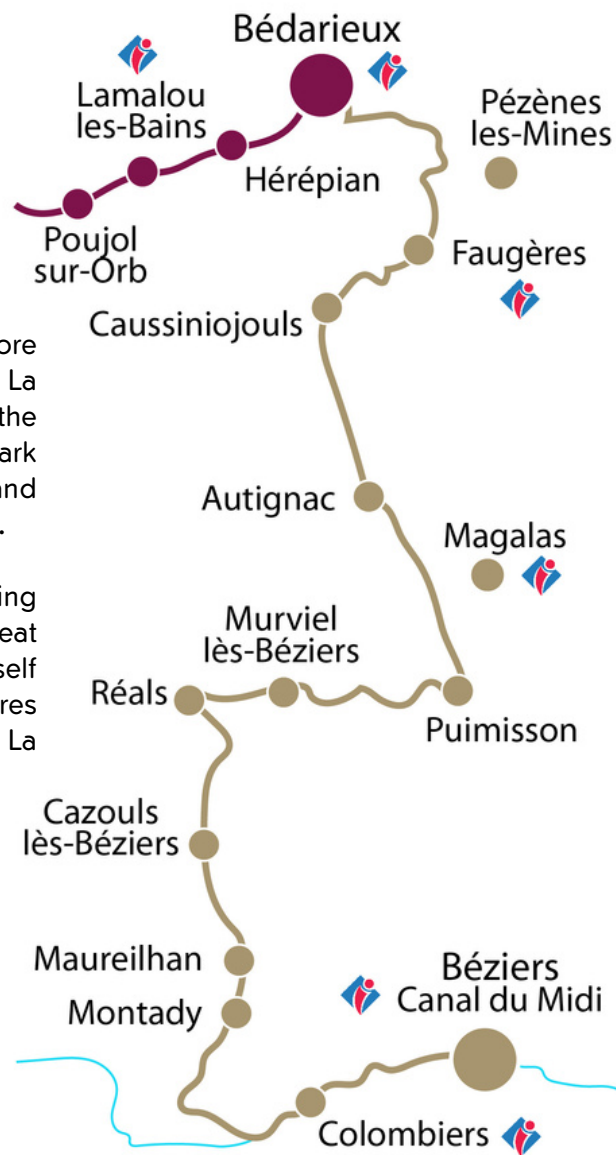
Take your time to discover new territories, new landscapes, explore nature in complete tranquility and safety, welcome to La Véloccitanie! This new cycle route connects the Canal du Midi, the landscapes of the Haut-Languedoc Regional Natural Park (vineyards, cliffs, forests, rivers, meadows, etc.) the PassaPaïs and the wine-growing plains of many renowned Hérault appellations.

Ultimately, you will ride on more than 200 kilometers of cycling trails from the Seuil de Naurouze to Béziers, discovering a great diversity of natural and cultural heritage; enough to treat yourself to a breath of nature. Pay attention to the small, simple pleasures along the way according to your fancies of the moment. La Véloccitanie is a cycling route with pleasurable experiences!

The +



The tourist office has been certified Accueil Vélo since March 2023 with e-bike charging point, luggage lockers, inflation terminal, dedicated documentation ! Cyclists, we will be at your service.



Château-Abbaye de Cassan

Little Versailles in Languedoc

A few kilometers from Roujan, the Château-Abbaye de Cassan is sighted, nestled in the heart of the vineyard and the rolling hills. Much more than a simple Romanesque building, it is an invitation to travel through time that is prompted. Composed of a 12th century Romanesque church, the last vestige of the priory and an 18th century palace, this site will steer you into the labyrinths of a history full of twists and turns. The little "Versailles of the Languedoc" is waiting for you.



This exceptional priory will transport you back in time to the era of Augustinian monks known for their commitment to simplicity and monastic life.

The Alquier de Corneilhan, a prestigious aristocratic lineage from the Biterrois region, founded the priory of Cassan in the 11th century for six clerics who had left the Cathedral Chapter of Béziers, then dissolute. The monks developed a spiritual center and an agricultural system there, establishing vineyards and productive agricultural land.

It would prosper for many years, navigating between direct protection from the pope and protection from the king. It was during the French Revolution that the monastery closed and then was sold to a deputy from Pézenas. It then took the secular name of "Château de Cassan".

Over the centuries, its eventful history has led to multiple transformations linked to its occupants as well as numerous episodes of devastation which transformed the estate, creating the majestic appearance that we know it today.

Don't miss this attractive building which bears witness to its monastic past while revealing the splendor of its Baroque era. During a visit, you will learn about its rich history by exploring the sumptuous rooms which whisper old stories, the architectural details which make this castle an invaluable gem of the region.



Practical information

Opening times :

From the Easter holidays (April) to the All Saints' Day holidays (October/November).

Visit the website for opening dates and times.

Guided tours for groups by prior arrangement
www.chateau-cassan.com - 04 67 24 52 45

The hydraulic mills

Turn, turn, little mill ...

Our destination has a number of rivers and streams irrigating the entire territory. The Libron, a small river, takes its source in Laurens and flows into the sea in Vias. The Thongue and the Payne are tributaries of the Hérault river. The river Orb borders the territory and three of its tributaries cross our territory. Strategically, people settled near this precious resource to construct mills.

Lenthéric mill

800m outside of the hamlet of Lenthéric, in the commune of Cabrerolles, lies an astonishing piece of heritage partly hidden by vegetation. It combines in the same spot a windmill and a watermill built near the Valignières and Montgros streams. We can only admire the inventiveness of the people who knew how to make the most of the meager resources offered by nature : two modest streams and a windy corridor.

A recent restoration of the mill has restored some of its former glory and allows passers-by, tourists or locals, to learn a little more about this place.

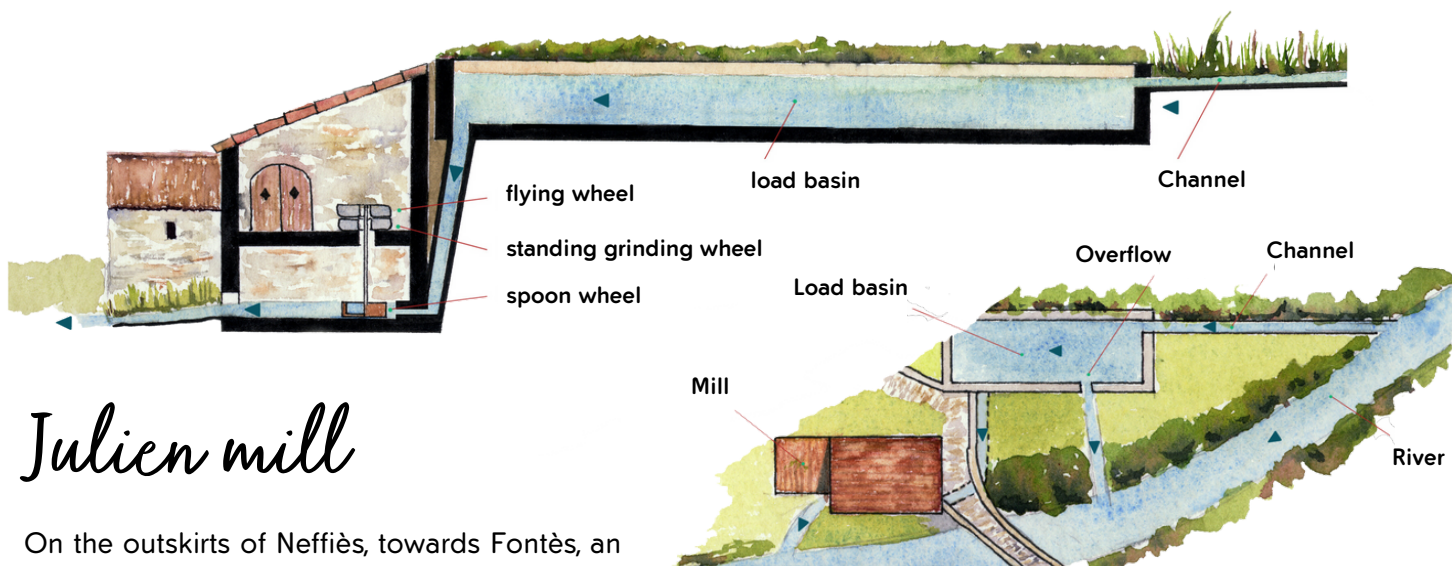
Moulins de la Resclauze

An aqueduct was built in the 1st century and was used to carry water from the Resclauze spring in Gabian to the town of Béziers. Around the 12th century, this same aqueduct was diverted to redirect the water : the bishops of Béziers commissioned the construction of the five superimposed mills of La Resclauze and a 2500 m³ basin fed by the source.

Each mill had a basin. When the first basin was full, the miller released the water, the powerful jet of which activated the millstone. Once the first mill was activated, the water circulated underground, reappeared on the surface and filled the basin of the second mill and so through to the fifth. These mills ceased operating in 1895.

In order to reconcile the operation of the mills with the village's drinking water supply and its use for watering gardens, a water regulation, predating the French Revolution, set the conditions for water distribution. The village of Gabian used the water after the operation of the mills. It circulated in the open air in streams to avoid being polluted and after passing the fifth mill, the water was diverted to a filtering meadow where it was made drinkable.





Julien mill

On the outskirts of Neffiès, towards Fontès, an old stone building with Romanesque rooftiles catches the eye. Backed by the Vaillette stream, its former function is given away by the imposing millstone leaning against its facade.

The ingenuity of the system allows water to flow from a mill pond overlooking the mill. The force of the flowing water turns the wheel which activates the millstone and then the water continues its course in the river.

Despite the engraving above the door which indicates 1696, the mill dates from before 1650.

Damaged by time, it is today the subject of particular attention by the public authorities. The roof, the door, the stairs were the subject of an initial restoration project. Others will follow so that this timeless place can retain its bucolic charm.



La Font de l'Oli

Oil and ingenuity

South of the village of Gabian and a few steps from the Thongue stream, a stone cabin, a network of galleries and two silt-covered ponds recall the distant memory of an extraordinary source :

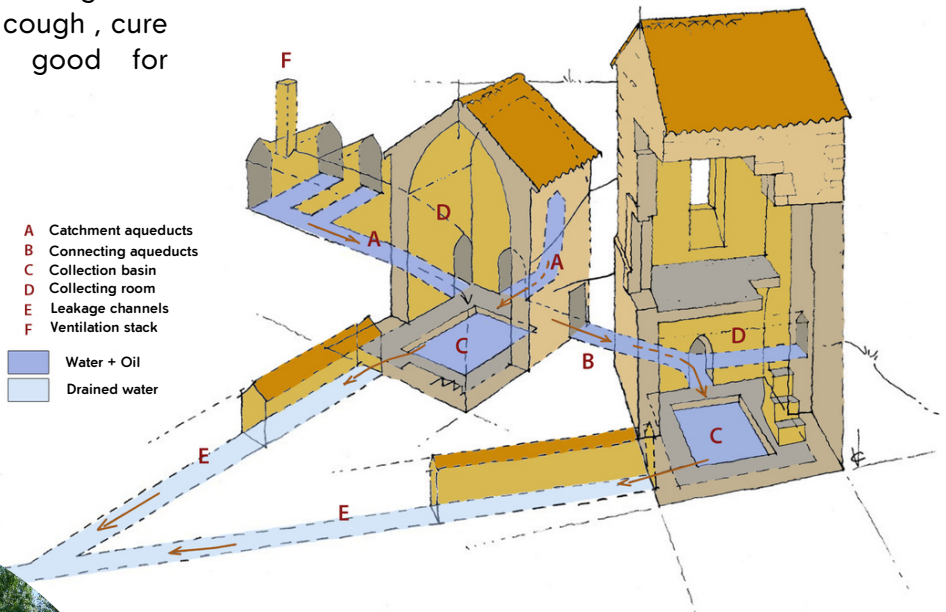
The Font de l'Oli - the Oil Source -, described in its time as "a marvelous fountain which enters into the scientific and natural history of the Languedoc, of France, of the Universe".

If oil has been used since ancient times, that of Gabian only appears in writings in 1605. A doctor from Montpellier, Esprit André, dwells at length on the many virtues of oil: relieving gout, cough , cure paralysis, spasms, colic. It's even good for children's worms!

In the second half of the 16th century, a bishop built a cabin whose vaulted basement contained a pond connected by a gallery to the spring catchment basin.

- A Catchment aqueducts
- B Connecting aqueducts
- C Collection basin
- D Collecting room
- E Leakage channels
- F Ventilation stack

Water + Oil
Drained water



The celebrity of Gabian oil reached its peak during this period. It didn't fail to be counterfeited (turpentine and tar). Its fame shone over France and neighboring countries for many years.

In 1815, the source began to weaken. Work would be undertaken in the following years to increase the flow but would eventually lead to its permanent drying up.

The name of Gabian continued to shine, particularly in the world of industry, when in 1924, another deposit was found less than 2 km from Font de l'Oli. It would deliver 24,000 tonnes of oil during its 25 years of operation. But this is another story ...





To go further

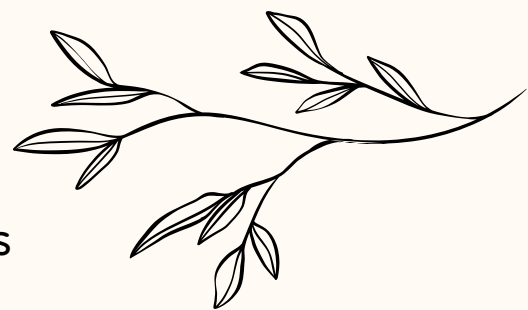
In 2024, a new tourist map and a new edition of the walking map are waiting to help you discover the wonders of our region.



Collect your postcards of the 5 routes of the GR® de Pays. Both a souvenir of your trip and a reminder of your hike, on your fridge or in your rucksack, the 5 must-have maps are available in our tourist offices.

The flora

From Mediterranean to mountains



Mint Nepeta

Nepeta cataria L.



Arbutus

Arbutus unedo



Rosemary

Rosmarinus officinalis



Wild fennel

Foeniculum vulgare



Thyme

Thymus vulgaris



Olive tree

Olea europaea var. *europaea*

Astonishing diversity

The fauna and scrubland fragrances are a tribute to the natural beauty of the Mediterranean regions, where the diversity of aromatic plants and wild life come together in a symphony of colors, scents and sounds characteristic of this luminous region.

The scrubland is also home to a variety of animals adapted to its hot and dry climate. You can come across lizards, snakes, birds as well as various insects and spiders there. Scrubland bushes provide valuable shelter for these creatures, while providing food and thus create a delicate balance within this unique ecosystem.

Open-air markets

Fill up on local produce

MONDAY



**Murviel
Lès-Béziers**
7h-13h
Place Parech

THURSDAY



Laurens
9h-12h
Place du marché

FRIDAY



Pouzolles
8h-12h
Promenade

WEDNESDAY



Gabian
8h-12h
Place du village



Neffiès
8h-12h
Place Jean Jaurès



Roujan
8h-13h
Place de la Mairie

SATURDAY



**Murviel
Lès-Béziers**
7h-13h
Place Louis Griffé



Magalas
8h-12h
Place de la Promenade



**St. Geniès
de Fontedit**
7h-13h
Cour Louis Philippe

SUNDAY



**Thézan
Lès-Béziers**
8h-13h
Place de la Mairie



**Thézan
Lès-Béziers**
8h-13h
Place de la Mairie



Find details of open-air markets and all
itinerant traders on our website



The dry-stone art

Rolling stones gather no moss

The dry stone technique is an emblematic characteristic of the rural landscapes of our region. In 2018 this art was classed as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

The masonry of the old shepherds' shelters called "capitelles" or "carabelles" are built with abundant limestone and shale stones sourced on site. These constructions served as refuges for shepherds, shacks for agricultural equipment or storage for crops. Clearing rocks to cultivate land or create grazing patches, farmers demarcated their plots by building seperative walls or low walls to retain the earth.

This technique, used for centuries, is the secret to the construction of these emblematic edifices. Their precise origin remains a mystery. It is believed that most of these capitelles date from the 18th and 19th centuries. Of all shapes and sizes, they all have in common the key to their balance : corbelling vault.

The "capitelles" of Faugères are patrimonial riches testifying to the know-how of the ancient builders. It consists of carefully stacking stones without using mortar and without a binder. This type of architecture demonstrates the adaptation of human kind to its natural environment.

Practical information

To participate in the dry stone workshop sessions run by a conservation association, rendez-vous every Tuesday and Thursday in the Vilavigne wine cellar carpark on the D909 just after Faugères.

Information and meeting times :

06 16 60 81 76
pierre vie@aol.com
www.pierre vie.com



Discover the capitelles

1

As you walk through the scrubland of Faugères on the slopes of Mont Marcou, meet these young ladies: Sylvie, Juliette or even Lucie, Florentine... these surprising cabins which look like stone igloos..

Things to do

2



Getting started with the technique

Try your hand at the magic of this ancestral technique and participate in the weekly drystone workshops with the "Pierres Sèches" association, safeguarding the traditional heritage of dry stone, registered with UNESCO since 2018.



In the heart of the villages

and all their secrets



Magalas,
Circular village

This neologism designates a typical example of Languedocian urbanisation to be found especially in Hérault, north of Béziers.

Founded 2 centuries before the rectangular shaped bastides of the south-west, these circulades organise their layout around a central core under the protection of a castle or a church, most often on a "pech" (small hill) dominating the surroundings. If there are around thirty in Hérault, we count no less than 10 in the Avant-Monts villages including: Fouzilhon, Magalas, Margon, Murviel, Puimisson, Puissalicon, Roujan, Saint-Geniès de Fontedit.



Fos and justice

To the north of the village, you can see strange remains, two stone pillars, positioned on a circular mound overlooking the village and the valley. These are "the gibbets or gallows, insignia of the power of the justice lords of Fos". The two pillars would have supported a horizontal wooden beam forming a U shape. This structure was used to hang those condemned to death and display their bodies as a warning to the living.

In feudal times, judicial power belonged to the lord. The lord arbitrated conflicts and had the authority to pronounce all kinds of sentences. The presence of such a structure is indicative of the importance of the lord.



Puissalicon
Village of seven hills

In the heart of the vineyard, the village is recognisable from afar by the imposing silhouette of its castle whose medieval bases are believed to date from the 13th century. Three centuries later, the building was transformed into a private residence by the family of the maréchal de Montpezat. A stone's throw from the castle, rue Saint-Guiraud bears the name of the second and most famous prior of Cassan, born in Puissalicon.

In the cemetery, below the village, stands a tower in the Lombard Romanesque style, a vestige of the old Saint-Étienne de Pézan church destroyed during the wars of religion. Look up and spy under the roof, an admirable frieze of seven arches in « Cordon de Charlemagne » design.

Murviel-lès-Béziers

A life-size tradition

Every summer from July the 14th to August the 15th, the streets of Murviel showcase the villages emblematic wine heritage through the "Petetas". These life-size rag and straw dolls that bring to life everyday activities, punctuated by nature and the rural working life of past generations.

Admire at the bend of each street, on balconies or on doorsteps, scenes representing everyday life, old trades, local traditions, children's games... Launched by a group of Murviellois residents in 1997, the "Petetas" celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2023 and unite all generations around a strong village identity.



Causses et Veyran,

Ingenious water transport

The work of Roland Haurillon carried out in 2015 helped to unveil the secret past of two enigmatic cylindrical pillars erected in the middle of a vineyard. We know today that they were part of an original water system which supplied water from the Robinets source to the villa of La Plecho.

Using the principle of the inverted siphon called "souterazi", this technique made it possible to replace aqueducts on arcades, which were very expensive, especially on uneven terrain. The technique consisted in releasing the air needed to pressurise the water and prevent too much pressure inside the pipes. The remains of this device are relatively rare in France. Listed as a Historic Monument since 1963, the Roman piles of Causses-et-Veyran constitute a precious insight to the Romans ingenuity.



Thézan-lès-Béziers, Don't be fooled!

A walk in this village will allow you to grasp its secret at first glance. Magnificent trompe-l'oeil can be found here and there. These murals were created between 2008 and 2019 by the artist Olivier Costa. Scenes from the past representing real events and real local people are illustrated here. There are still villagers who remember these events and the people depicted in these fresques.

A leaflet of the trompe-l'oeil trail is available at the town hall. In the meantime, head to the clock tower to view the most striking mural.



Roujan The gates of time

It was in the 8th century that the population gathered around a promontory protected by a primitive fortified enclosure. Roujan was cited in the 9th century under the name Rogani (red earth). At this period the village was centered around its medieval core and later, in the 14th century, protected, by a second wall pierced with 4 gates at the 4 cardinal points. Fortifications and ramparts are still visible in the village today.

The narrow streets reflect its past as a small citadel. To this day, of the four gates which once allowed entry into the city only three remain. Delve into this rich heritage with the illustrated circuit "The Gates of Time", a historical discovery in 9 stages. Enjoy your visit !



Margon and its castle



Nestled in the heart of the vineyards, the castle is built on the remains of a medieval building and stands majestically surrounded by a remarkable garden. The garden, with its classic "French" design and the structured aspect of Italian gardens, can be visited all year round and is adorned with different ornamentation depending on the seasons.

It is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful Renaissance castles in Hérault. A 17th century architectural marvel steeped in charm and history. Its imposing towers topped with pepperpot-crowns and its elegant facades invite you to explore its richly decorated lounges and discover the past of its former occupants.

Fouzilhon goes back in time and takes you to the Middle Ages. The majestic ramparts date from the 9th century. During feudal times, local lords converted their home into a veritable fortress to defend their lands. The rocky point dominating the valley naturally favoured the construction of this fortified castle. It was surrounded by ramparts and a double perimeter.

To this day, the remains are still perfectly visible and the castle chapel stands majestically over the village. If Fouzilhon is built on the circular model, it has the particularity of being ovoid in shape to better follow the curves of the rocky hill. Let your curiosity guide you through the alleys and stone steps to reach the top of the village.

The ramparts of Fouzilhon



Words from aqui* and melodic accents

Poutouner

To kiss
you can also do
"poutous" -
kisses

Avoir bonne maïsse

To be talkative
To be a loud-mouthed
blowhard

Rouméguer

To moan or complain
- or the French
national sport, a very
useful word on the
pétanque courts

Escamper

Throw it away -
this works for a
stone or a
"rougne"
(old thing)

Passejada

Pronounced *Passejado*
a walk
- for example on a
pech (a small hill)

Un ragout d'escoubilles

A ragout or stew -
Traditional family
recipe with meat and
vegetables made
with leftovers

Pèguer

to stick - it can
be a sticky kiss, the
sun that makes you
sticky or honey on
children's hands

Titoulet

Pronounced with
the final T
Handy for small
items whose names
you don't know

The charm of a region is also in its dialect. Listen carefully and behind the sunny accent you will hear some curious words. In the following we'll break down some of them for you.

*Words from here

A car-free weekend

In the land of Faugères



1 - A hike to understand wine history

An Oenorando® is a walking itinerary, approved by the Fédération de Randonnée, starting from an emblematic place: the winery. The idea? To bring hikers, wine lovers and winegrowers together around a shared passion: nature. Starting from the Vilavigne cellar, discover the Faugérois countryside as you go. Garrigue, vineyards, village and heritage - you'll be entering the secrets of a renowned terroir.

Full details of the Faugères oenorando on page 8.

2 - A gourmet and local break

For lunch or dinner, several options are available to you:

- The Damejane restaurant, the friendly setting and the dishes concocted with passion display the best of our produce
- The Arbre à pain bakery and the Empreinte bio butcher's shop offer everything you need for a gourmet picnic accompanied by a local wine

Two quality addresses, tested and approved, to delight your taste buds!



3 - A windmill, an emblem

The Faugères mills, perched at an altitude of 417m, overlook the landscape and intrigue the curious. Its position makes it the ideal place to enjoy a 360° view of the Biterois plain and the Caroux.

From May to September, diverse fun family activities are proposed. Ideal for recharging your batteries before setting off again for the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Details on page 6

Find all accommodation offers on the tourist office website



Eco-friendly vacation gestures

1 - I do not throw my waste into nature

Protect the environment, fauna and flora! Your waste disrupts fragile ecosystems and can contaminate water. Opt for recycling or use appropriate trash cans to preserve the natural beauty and biodiversity of our planet. Tip: keep a waste bag in your rucksack to be prepared for any eventuality!



2 - I consume local and seasonal

Favour local markets to buy fresh, seasonal produce, thereby supporting local farmers while reducing the carbon footprint linked to transportation. Find out about food production seasons to choose fruits, vegetables and products available locally, thus promoting more sustainable consumption.

Your holiday stay will be even better because you will have unearthed tasty and distinctive products!



3 - I explore but I respect

To avoid disturbing local flora and fauna, follow designated trails to minimise impact on the ecosystem. Avoid picking flowers or damaging plants.

Opt for eco-friendly activities such as hiking or eco-friendly tourism to preserve the natural beauty of the places you visit.



4 - I protect water resources

While on holiday, limit your water consumption by taking quick showers, turning off taps when not using them, and reusing towels. Bring water bottles rather than disposable bottles to reduce plastic waste and take your waste away with you and in doing so preserve this precious resource during your stay.

5 - I don't start a fire

Avoid lighting fires and prevent forest fires. Respect local restrictions and use designated areas for barbecues or picnics. In case of dry weather conditions, completely refrain from lighting fires to protect fragile natural zones.

With the family

For adventure

Between outdoor adventures, cultural visits and unique experiences, discover exciting activities to share with your family. Give yourself the opportunity to create memories and amaze your children at every step.

The Avant-Monts Tourist Office has got you covered with a selection of activities for young and old.

1. For the adventurous



Take your children on an epic adventure with our treasure hunts! Grab your riddle book and head to Puimisson to decipher the mysterious manuscript. Can you crack the code? Go to the tourist office to collect your reward.

To add to the fun, the winegrower's rucksack full of surprises and games awaits you. Armed with your picnic, have lunch in the countryside before setting off on new adventures.

A new treasure hunt coming soon!
Go to the tourist office or the website for the booklet.



2. For animal lovers



Do you love small animals as well as the big ones?

We've got just what you're looking for! Punctuate your stay with a few encounters and leave with a lifetime of memories.

Discover donkeys and their formidable role in history with Terr'An'Hom in Soumartre. Forest walks, discovering donkeys or hiking - there's plenty to choose from. The Angora goats at Ferme d'Auré in Roujan are waiting to show you their finest wool and how to use it to make mohair garments. The goats at Mas Rolland in Montesquieu will tell you all about how to make pélardon and other local milk-based products. After a visit to the farm, you can sample these products - a real treat for the taste buds!

If you prefer small animals to large ones, the Garrigues et Papillons garden in Gabian will take you to a totally unspoilt environment in the middle of nature to explore a magnificent educational and ecological garden. You'll be able to watch butterflies evolve in complete freedom.

Finally, the Avant-Monts apiary in Autignac will introduce you to the fascinating world of bees. At the end of the visit, you'll learn all about their way of life and how they make honey. You'll even be able to taste it! Perfect at snack time!



3. For thrill-seekers



To appeal to teenagers and children alike, here's a selection that's sure to rock!

For thrill-seekers, there are several options in one place. Head to Caussinioujoul. Try your hand at go-karting for a race worthy of Mario Kart. A stone's throw away, awake your competitive spirit and sense of adventure with a game of paintball in the forest. For the more adventurous, take off on a vintage moped on the back roads with Locamob. Thrills guaranteed for some and nostalgic memories for others!



4. And what if it's too hot?



Our beautiful region is synonymous with sunshine, and some days can be very hot. If that's the case, adapt your programme! Go to cool places. The swimming pool at the Laurens campsite is a delight for children. See the next page for more watering holes.

The nightlife here is festive and lively, and page 31 will tell you all about the night-time entertainment, markets and stargazing. Music, good food and entertainment - a winning cocktail for children and parents alike!

Dip in the water

Refreshing for the body and mind



The River Orb

At Murviel-lès-Béziers or Thézan-lès-Béziers, turn west to get closer to the Orb. This 135km-long river takes its source in the Aveyron and crosses the Hérault to flow into the sea at Valras-Plage. It borders the Faugères vineyards and flows through the Saint-Chinian one. It plays an important role in the terroir of these appellations.

A multitude of small beaches punctuate its banks, inviting you to enjoy a family picnic or even a siesta in the shade of the trees! To cool off, head to the canoe base at Réals for a paddle.

The Olivettes dam

When the sun is shining high in the sky, the concert of cicadas in the distance and armed with a picnic of local products, try sitting in the shade of the trees. This magical setting, little known and still wild, is an invitation for relaxation. After this break, you can take a dip or walk around the lake along the Olivettes hiking trail.

On the history side, the lake was created when the dam was built in 1986 to regulate the flooding of the Peyne, a tributary of the Hérault.

Swim at your own risk.

The +

Make an appointment with Bol d'air, bulle d'eau, and treat yourself to an afternoon of kayaking or paddle boarding on the lake! Fun refreshment guaranteed!

Xavier Gayrat - 06 71 68 88 53



Let's vibrate together

to the rhythm of our destination

Immerse yourself in the heart of Occitan culture during village festivals, vibrant with music and colorful traditions. You will live an unforgettable experience and you will meet authentic people who will welcome you with Languedoc conviviality. Don't be surprised if someone warmly talks to you !

May

Bread and Wind Festival

Activities, traditions, kite flying and local produce in the spotlight

July

Le Grand Saint-Jean

Winegrower's Festival around the Faugères appellation. Wine tasting, musical entertainment, encounters...

Les Transversales

Festival encompassing various artistic disciplines
Dance from around the world, singing, music, poetry...

Evening gourmet markets

Experience the Avant-monts through its local produce and enjoy your meal to the sound of some of the best local regional musicians

August

La nuit des étoiles

THE astronomical event of the summer
Discovering stars and constellations

Evening gourmet markets

Experience the Avant-monts through its local produce and enjoy your meal to the sound of some of the best local regional musicians



All the festivities and
their programs here



A patchwork of appellations

Les Avant-Monts, land of vines

Reflecting the image of France, the country of wine and the great renowned appellations, the Avant-Monts offers you a concentration of diversity spread over 25 towns and villages whether it be the grape varieties, the terroirs, the geology or the landscape. Each kilometer traveled will take you on an encounter of wines with unique characters. In the north of the territory, the AOP Faugères flourishes and in the west, the AOP Saint-Chinian. Discover to the south-east, the AOP Pézenas and the IGP Cotes de Thongue. In total, 4 AOP and 2 IGP combine to offer the best of Languedoc.

Faugères

The Faugères protected designation of origin is unique in Languedoc. Its soils, made up mainly of shale, are not very fertile, forcing the vines to take deep roots to survive. The attachment and keen attention paid to the environment is the hallmark of winegrowers and their Grands Vins de Nature.

The red wines offer silky tannins and scents of scrubland which provide breadth and complexity. The whites, for their part, express a freshness and minerality unexpected in Languedoc.

La Fine de Faugères, produced from the appellation wines, is the earliest regulated eau-de-vie in Languedoc (1948) and above all the only one to be distilled using a Charentais still.

A few wine estates

Domaine de Cébène

Faugères - 06 74 96 42 67

bchevalier@orange.fr - www.cebene.fr

Château La Liquière

Cabrerolles - 04 67 90 29 20

info@chateaulaliquiere.com

www.chateaulaliquiere.com

Domaine des Prés Lasses

Autignac - 04 67 90 21 19

info@pres-lasses.com - www.pres-lasses.com



Alcohol abuse is dangerous for health

Pézenas

The AOP Pézenas was born in 2007 and concerns exclusively red wines. Spread over 15 communes, the diversity of the terroir is one of the key words of this PDO, with a geology which includes shales, pebbles, limestone and sandstone. Aromas of forest fruits, garrigue and spices form an often complex bouquet, a powerful yet delicate palate.

The above-mentioned estates have been awarded the Vignobles et Découvertes label, guarantee of quality and a warm welcome for visitors. Find all our estates on our website .



Cotes de Thongue

The Cotes de Thongue vineyard is characterized by a series of small hills which punctuate the landscape to give it a character of its own. 23 municipalities in the Faugères/Pézenas/Béziers triangle form this IGP. The area has a rich built heritage with numerous 19th century wine castles. Red wines are fruity and supple or full-bodied and spicy depending on the vinification conditions. The white and rosé wines are balanced on fruit and elegance.



Languedoc

The AOP Languedoc vineyard extends all around the Mediterranean and owes its existence to the Greek and Etruscan settlers who planted the first vines here in the 11th century BC-JC. The AOP Languedoc produces a diversity of wines depending on the terroirs and thus present very distinct characters. They range from fruity, to drink young, to robust with recognized aging potential.

A few wine estates

Moulin de Lène

Magalas - 04 67 36 06 32
domaine@moulindelene.com
www.moulindelene.com

Saint-Georges d'Ibry

Abeilhan - 04 67 39 19 18
info@saintgeorgesdibry.com
www.saintgeorgesdibry.com

Saint-Chinian

This appellation has been recognized as AOP since 1982 for its reds and 2004 for its whites. Spread over 20 villages and separated by the Orb, it has two very different terroirs. The first, clay-limestone, produces fruity, supple and generous wines. The second, on sandstone and schist, gives the wines an elegant, dense and full-bodied profile. The vineyard is well protected from the rain by the majestic Mont Caroux.

A few wine estates

Château Coujan

Murviel-lès-Béziers - 04 67 37 80 00
chateau-coujan@orange.fr
www.chateau-coujan.com

Domaine Galtier

Murviel-lès-Béziers - 04 67 37 85 14
domainegaltier@wanadoo.fr
www.domainegaltier.com

Côteaux de Béziers

With its rich wine-growing past which has made it famous, the Biterrois region, bordered to the south by the Mediterranean Sea, brings together the winegrowers of the Coteaux de Béziers over more than 10,000 hectares. A passion that is passed down from generation to generation, in this terroir, emblematic of the history of French wines.

Gourmet pleasures

for all ages

1 - Charcuterie

Discover the local charcuterie but not only that! Several producers offer you a variety of meats and deli foods. Whether it is beef, lamb or pork, you will taste fresh products prepared on site by passionate farmers.



2 - The pelardon

Pélardon is a soft cheese made from non-pasturised, full fat goat's milk. Its shape is that of a small hockey puck.

Visit the farm, taste the cheeses and even meet the goats!



3- Honey

Honey is one of the flagship products of the Avant-Monts. Come meet our beekeepers and discover the world of bees. Visit, taste, purchase, young and old will enjoy it!

4 - The Languedoc lucque

Cultivated exclusively in Occitania and harvested by hand, Lucque is considered a unique crescent moon shaped olive. Nicknamed the "green diamond", the Luques olive is easily recognisable: a small stone, fine and tasty pulp. Present on the tables of the greatest French chefs, it is the gastronomic olive « par excellence! »



5 - The drinks

You will have no trouble finding a drink to accompany all these good things to eat! With us, you will be spoiled for choice. For the classics, discover our craft beer producer! The adventurous will find our local gins or the Fine de Faugères, an eau-de-vie made from wines of the same name.

For the "alcohol-free", unlock the many properties of pomegranate fruit juice. Syrups made from local plants, fruits or spices complete this selection.



Alcohol abuse is dangerous for health



6 - Saffron

If almost everyone has heard of saffron, did you know that it is actually the pistils of a flower from the crocus family? It blooms in autumn, revealing a superb purple color.

Saffron is also the most expensive spice costing €35,000 per kilo. A high-end product that subtly flavors dishes! It is also the essential ingredient to make your paella a success.



7 - Plant based and herbal

The scrubland is the ideal playground for harvesting a multitude of aromatic plants and making syrups, jellies, jams and other sweet foods.

Visit our passionate producers and find out more about these sugary pleasures. When sampling, close your eyes and try to guess the scent of the product you are tasting.

A beautiful souvenir to slip into your suitcase to take from our home to yours.

If your mouth is watering then here are all our good spots where you can buy these famous products. To offer as a gift or to keep for yourself, to enjoy during your vacation or later, there are lots of good reasons to visit our local producers.

If you are traveling light and cannot take back any gourmet souvenirs, go to the next page, you will find our great restaurants with menus full of local and seasonal products.



Favourite selection

A journey for your tastebuds

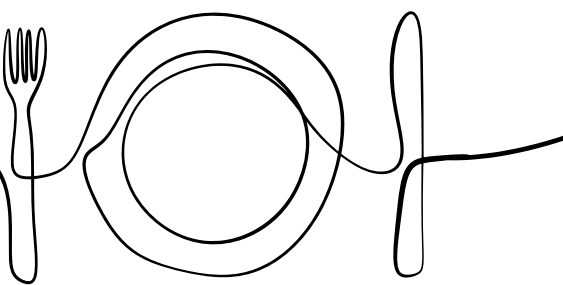
Whether you are on holiday, on a weekend trip or simply for pleasure, complete your sensory immersion with a touch of gastronomy. Here is a selection of good addresses, working mainly with local produce. In their own individual way, the chefs will reveal to you their vision of french cuisine, the region and their way of working with local products. A guaranteed journey for your tastebuds!



L'Abbaye Sylva Plana
Laurens

Winegrower's table and traditional cuisine. Wines from the estate à la carte. Very pleasant shaded terrace

04 67 24 91 67



*Le Chateau
Saint-Pierre de Serjac*

Puissalicon

Exceptional setting in a 19th century winegrowers stately home. French and Mediterranean cuisine.

04 67 80 76 00



All the Avant-Monts
restaurants here



*Le Relais
des Oliviers*
Faugères

Cosy restaurant with covered terrace. Seasonal menu, using local produce with finesse.

04 67 93 45 53



*Les Grands Vins
du Terroir*
Faugères

Wine bar and dining cellar. Tapas to share, local produce, wide choice of wines.

04 67 23 69 91



L'Abbaye Sylva Plana
Laurens

Winegrower's table and traditional cuisine. Pleasant shaded terrace

04 67 24 91 67



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OFFICE DE TOURISME

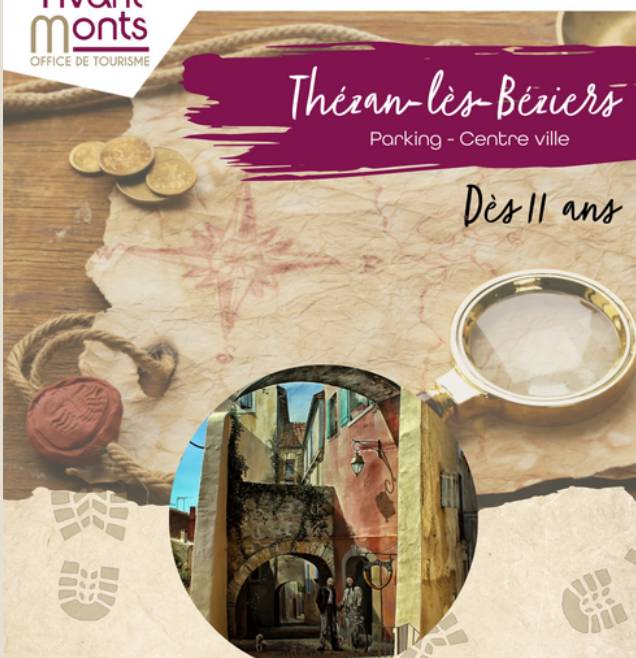
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