

CÔTE D'AZUR MONTAGNE



PRESS KIT
Nature
Côte d'Azur Highland and foothills
Summer 2013



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SUMMER 2013

THE PREMIUM EVENTS

Alpes-Maritimes Département is home to many sporting events in the mountain zone: mountain biking, trails, cycling, climbing, raids... all of these events are available on the site www.visitcotedazur.travel

TOUR DE FRANCE 2013

In 2013, two stages start from Nice (on 2 July) and Cagnes-sur-Mer (on 3 July).

The third greatest sporting event in the world, the Tour de France, created in 1903, is a 3-week race held in July and attracting the best cyclists of our time.

Between 20 and 22 teams of 9 cyclists line the roads of France and sometimes of neighbouring countries. The test, with a total distance of some 3500 km, covers about twenty stages.

12 million viewers of all ages line the routes to applaud the cyclists and make a real celebration within the sound of the celebrated Caravane Publicitaire.

3,500 million viewers follow the achievements of the cyclists in 190 countries.

New for 2013

Côte d'Azur: official holiday destination of the Étape du Tour

Thanks to the partnership between CRT Côte d'Azur and ASO (Amaury Sport Organisation), the Côte d'Azur is the official destination of the Étape du Tour from 2013 to 2015. Thus, a Côte d'Azur stand will be the entrance door to the village of reception for the anticipated 10,000 cyclists.

The 2013 Étape du Tour - a historical participation!

Never, during the first 20 publications of the Étape du Tour, has the excitement been as widespread or the demand as eager. Is it the prospect of following the routes of the 100th Grande Boucle in history that has attracted thousands of cyclists? Without doubt. However, the journey along this stage, 130 very tense kilometres with a never-ending sequence of difficulties, has also swayed them, as has the single site of departure and arrival, which considerably simplifies the logistics.

Entries for the 2013 Étape du Tour 2013 are now closed. More than 10,000 numbers have been allocated.

Race planned for 7 July 2013 in Annecy.

www.letapedutour.com/et1/FR/historique.html



TRAIL 6 - THE 6TH TRAIL NATURE 06 CHALLENGE, FEBRUARY-NOVEMBER 2013

This year, 11 routes are open through the volcanic rocks of the Estérel, the middle and high country, and its valleys... www.cg06.fr

This challenge has been designed to enhance the exceptional natural heritage that gives our territory its richness. It therefore attracts sports enthusiasts to demanding but high-quality routes.

From nature lovers wanting to benefit from the delightful surroundings, to accomplished sports men and women looking to perform and excel, everyone can find ways to spread their wings here.

The routes offered in 2013, include three new circuits:

- The Trail de Moulinet and Trail de Valberg have become part of the Challenge Trail Nature 06.
- The Trail Per Cami has returned to the Challenge Trail Nature 06.
- A second handtrail route is being developed on the Alpes-Maritimes Trail.

TIMETABLE 2013

- Sunday 10 February: Neiges Castérino trail

11 km / 250 m D+

www.trail06.com

- Sunday 14 April: Trail de Moulinet

21 km / 1,220 m D+

www.traildemoulinet.fr

Friday 26, Saturday 27, Sunday 28 April: Trail des Balcons d'Azur – Mandelieu - La Napoule

52 km / 2400 m D+ • 65 km / 2800 m D+

33 km / 1800 D+ • 18 km / 900 m D+

www.traildazur.com

- Saturday 25 May: Trail des Limaces Blausasc

25 km / 1100 m D+ • 15 km / 560 m D+

<http://speedlimaces.over-blog.com>

- **Sunday 23 June: Trail de Valberg**

46 km / 2600 m D+ • 20 km / 1200 m D+

www.valbergtrail.com

- **Saturday 29 June: the vertical kilometre – 1st Championships of France — Saint-Martin-Vésubie**

5 km / 1150 m D+

www.cg06.fr

- **Sunday 30 June: Trail de la Colmiane**

22 km / 1600 m D+

www.couriralacolmiane.fr

- Sunday 1 September: Trail Per Cami - Belvédère

26 km / 2100 m D+ • 15 km / 1750 m D+

www.aromsazur.com

- **Sunday 15 September: Trail des Alpes-Maritimes – Sospel**

45 km / 2700 m D+ • 25 km / 1400 m D+ • 13 km / 650 m D+

www.trail06.com

- **Sunday 13 October: Trail of Gorbio**

42 km / 2895 m D+ • 16 km / 900 m D+

www.asgorbio.com

- **Sunday 3 November: Trail des Baous — Saint-Jeannet**

32 km / 600 m D+ • 16 km / 800 m D+

www.traildesbaous.com

MOUNTAIN BIKING – THE TRANSVÉSUBIENNE – 17-19 MAY 2013

The Transvésubienne race covers 86 kilometres, starting from Nice, and is a mountain-biking challenges.
www.visitcotedazur.travel

THE 14TH MERCANTOUR RAID – 8 & 9 JUNE 2013

Sixth step of the National Multisports Raid Challenge

In 2013, the Mercantour Raid becomes a formal part of the National Multisports Raid Challenge and offers the chance to discover or rediscover the Castérino Valley, at the entrance to Parc National du Mercantour and the Valley of Marvels, in a series of 1-day or 2-day activities depending on the formula chosen.

The teams, consisting of two cyclists, will work completely independently during the trial. The team will progress from start to finish, with the means authorised by the Regulation.

The principle is simple: a start and finish with intermediate control points (PC), between which the teams will advance while managing their effort time and linking their activities. Neutralisation sections will be put in place to ensure complete safety for the workshops.

To manage the security of all the teams, hourly barriers will be installed on each section. Teams that arrive at these barriers beyond the time limit shall be redirected to an alternative route.

The itinerary will not be signposted (except on Sundays). The detailed road book will provide all the particulars for completing the route.

The two formulas proposed will enable everyone to venture into the 14th Edition at his or her level:

- **The Raid du Mercantour, for sportsmen with experience of multi-sport, lasting two days, with Saturday offering about 8 hours of demanding “VTT Orientation”, Foot Orientation Course and archery and shooting precision courses, and Sunday, at the splendid Sospel site, a mountain biking course with 1000m of chained D+ with a with 1000m of D+ also, with an overall duration of approximately 3h30 to enable the teams not to finish too late and have enough time to return.**

- **The RAID Découverte, for nature lovers wishing to discover the multi-effort collectively on a formula lighter than previous conditions, all on Saturday with VTT in chain, foot orientation, and shooting and archery workshops.** The duration of the test will be about 4 hours for the best teams. And if you are not too tired, you will have the opportunity to chain the next day with the M2-Race at Sospel.

www.trail06.com

IRONMAN – 23 JUNE 2013

3.8 km swim, 180 km on bikes and 42.195 km of speed walking.

50 qualifying places for 2013 World Championships 2013 in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii.

TRAIL NATURE - THE VERTICAL KILOMETRE – 1ST FRANCE CHAMPIONSHIP - 29 JUNE 2013

Distance: 5 km.

Difference in altitude (upwards): + 1150m (departure altitude 1000 m – arrival altitude 2130m).

Course time limit: 2h15.

Departure of 1st competitor: 0900 against the clock every 30 seconds.

Singly or in duo or four (joint team).

Departure will be in front of the Town Hall. Arrival will be judged at Cime de la Palu (2132m).

www.cotedazur-montagne.com / agenda / km-vertical-06_2838-ete.html

MOUNTAIN BIKING – FRANCE MB CHAMPIONSHIP AT AURON – 11-14 JULY 2013

These 3 days of competition open the door to athletes of descent, trail and cross-country, without forgetting team relays.

There are 1500 pilots, committed for 80 all-discipline teams all together in a village of 10,000 m², at Auron Station from 11-14 July next.

Thus, about 15,000 viewers are expected.

www.auron.com

POSTAL CARD, THE WHOLE PICTURE

CÔTE D'AZUR NATURE AND MOUNTAINS – THE WHOLE PICTURE

- **CÔTE D'AZUR MOUNTAINS: THE CONTRAST OF SEA AND MOUNTAIN**

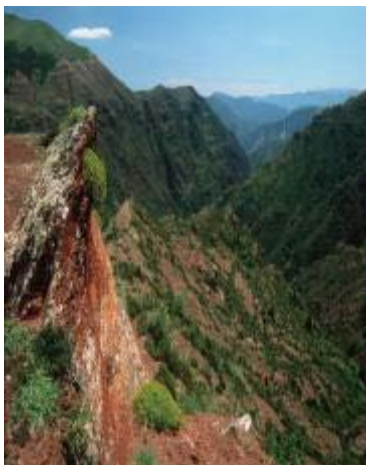
Alpes-Maritimes Département is the territory where the Alps drop spectacularly to the Mediterranean Sea! The peaks (up to 3000m) are just 90 minutes from the famous seaside locations.

www.cotedazur-tourisme.com



- **CÔTE D'AZUR MOUNTAINS: LANDSCAPES TO TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY**

Commune with these sites which remain the hidden treasures of the Côte d'Azur: the Valley of Marvels, the Lacs de Mercantour, the red rocks of Cians and Daluis, the mythical routes and the Col de la Bonette, and baroque religious heritage of the Roya Bévéra valleys.



Daluis Gorges



Roya Bévéra Villages



Col de la Bonette

@ CRT

- **CÔTE D'AZUR MOUNTAINS: ANIMAL TOURISM**

Unexpected animals on the Côte d'Azur? Find out how to observe fauna away from walking routes, strolls or animal parks: lammergeyers, wolves, bison, llamas...



@ Parc alpha – field Haut-thorenc

- **CÔTE D'AZUR MOUNTAINS: THE IDEAL COMBINATION BETWEEN SPORT AND NATURE**

Use Alpes-Maritimes as your “sports field” thanks to the many structured trails, mountain bike descent routes, white-water activities or other nature activities.



- **CÔTE D'AZUR MOUNTAINS: LIVE SHOWS IN THE HEART OF HIDDEN VILLAGES**

Visit the numerous free concerts scattered across the summer timetable of the middle and high country villages, with almost 400 shows put on Alpes-Maritimes General Council, without forgetting the Folies du Lac at Colmiane

www.soirees-estivales-cg06.fr



Côte d'Azur Nature and Mountains - three sites for families

LE BOREON - 4 activities on 1 site at Saint-Martin-Vésubie Suisse Niçoise

A few bends away from the village of Saint-Martin-Vésubie, Le Boréon offers multiple activities for a family day out in the open air!

- Alpha, the wolves' park - www.alpha-loups.com
- An artificial climbing site
- A walking spot
- A fishing site

Contact: Centre Nordique du Boréon – Tel. 33 (0) 4 93 02 33 69 – [boreon @ orange.fr](mailto:boreon@orange.fr)

Benefit from the infrastructure of **VALBERG** – a “Famille Plus” mountain station.

Here, everything is geared towards a real family holiday. Activities, infrastructure, animations, enclosures ... a paradise for families in mountain stations.

www.valberg.com

THORENC-ANDON in Préalpes d'Azur National Park

A few kilometres from Grasse, the capital of perfumes, the brand new Préalpes d'Azur National Park offers everything for families: cycling loops, multi-activities (walking, canyoning, underground walks), nature reserve ... Everything is brought together, every family will enjoy.

www.haut-thorenc.com and www.terredeslacs.com /

ALPES MARITIMES ON BIKE

CYCLOTOURISM

Shooting off on the bike for several days, alone or with friends or family, is still an unforgettable experience. To live it in Alpes-Maritimes leaves a memory that will never leave you.

NEW FOR 2013: CÔTE D'AZUR: OFFICIAL DESTINATION OF THE ÉTAPE DU TOUR.



• SPORTS LOOPS – THREE EXCEPTIONAL PRODUCTS

Stay

CROSSING ALPES-MARITIMES (SPORT CYCLING)

Don't know whether to choose sea or mountains? Here is a circuit designed to avoid having to make a choice! Starting from Barcelonnette, the City of the Mexicans, here are 3 days that take you through the best passes in the Grande Traversée des Alpes: Cayolle, Couillole, Saint-Martin, Turini, Braus...

A beautiful changing panorama of landscapes from mountains to sea.

80 to 110 km per day.

- Duration: 3 days

- Dates in 2013: 27-29 June, 11-13 July, 1-3 August, 15-17 August, 29-31 August, 19-21 September, 3-5 October

- Price: €325

Contact Vélorzons – Tel. 00 33 (0)4 76 45 99 29 – www.velorzons.com

Stay

GRAND TOUR OF MERCANTOUR (CYCLOTOURISM)

Designed for lovers of big passes, this exceptional route passes through a whole sequence of different landscapes: both lunar with the highest road in Europe and the Col de la Bonette, and Mediterranean with the Forests of Turini only 40 kilometres from the "Great Blue".

A total of over 9000m of drop in this programme of five legendary stages!

Through the Massif du Mercantour, the Italian border is crossed twice to allow a full view of the magic mixture of the Alps, the Italian Piedmont and the Mediterranean...

80 to 110 km per day, according to drop.

- Level: for a person cycling on road at least once a week on average over the year.

- Duration 5 days

- Dates in 2013: 9-13 June, 30 June to 4 July, 21-25 July, 18-22 August, 22-26 September

- Price: €545

Contact Vélorzons – Tel. 00 33 (0)4 76 45 99 29 – www.velorzons.com

Stay

CÔTE D'AZUR DES COLS (VAR AND ALPES MARITIMES)

During the slack season, when our bicycles are usually at rest, one region in France allows cycling to continue under gentle temperatures and a sun that is an extension of summer: the Côte d'Azur!

But look sharp, it's not a question of following the coast road, at least not all the time ... there are too many mountains in the background, small secret passes and little Provencal villages that it would be a great pity to miss.

Forming a loop around Nice, this route is cobbled together by locals for whom bikes are a year-round means of transport! Turn by turn, the area around Nice, the Pays de Vence, the massifs of Esterel and Maures, the Varois hinterland and Draguignan paint the background of this delightful and comfortable stay with nights in sumptuous hotels.

A restful stay because it's out-of-season, and calming because of the magnificent views of the "Great Blue", which are obviously part of the daily scenery...

- Dates in 2013: 21-27 April, 5-11 May, 2-8 June, to 8-14 September, 27 October to 2 November, 10-16 November, 1-7 December

- Dates in 2014: 23 February to 1 March, 2-8 March, 9-15 March, 30 March to 5 April, 20-26 April, 27 April to 3 May

- Price: €945

Contact VélORIZONS – Tel. 00 33 (0)4 76 45 99 29 – www.velorizons.com

• THE LOOPS DISCOVERED

A set of circuits is on offer to help you discover the villages, landscape and wealth of the department.

The circuits correspond to the tourism and sports practices which provide both families and sports lovers with a suitable choice.

THE CYCLE PLAN IN ALPES-MARITIMES DEPARTEMENT

The Cycle Tourism Plan aims to develop tourism in the middle and high-country of Alpes-Maritimes, through the implementation of a new tourist offer including dedicated events, within the framework of a three-year action programme (2011 to 2013).

37 operations are thus provided for in the plan, ranging from development of loops and bicycle routes to the design, promotion and marketing of tourist products of very high quality. These proposals are designed for all sections of the public: families, tourists and sportsmen, and comply with precise criteria for drops, mileage and levels of difficulty.

This selection of three routes offers routes through the heart of the very new natural Préalpes d'Azur regional park. Of a level higher than the family strolls, these loops are intended for cyclotourists rather than "tourists who cycle".

Here there is no place for performance; these "discovery" circuits immerse you in this magnificent territory around themes as diverse as gastronomy, geology and history.

BETWEEN VAR AND ESTERON

This little frequented route invites you to discover the Northern portion of Préalpes d'Azur Regional National Park and its small villages.

Type of bikes: road bicycles

Age: 14 years - distance: 36 km

Drop: + 920 metres - time: 1/2 day

Period: March to November

LA ROUTE DES CLUES

From perching villages to deep canyons, the "Route des Clues" located at the heart of Provence's limestone mountains, is a route exceptional for its richness of its natural and cultural heritage.

Start from: Roquestéron

Type of bikes: road bicycles

Age: 16 years - distance: 68 km

Drop: + 1287 metres - time: 1-days

Period: April to November

LES HAUTS-PLATEAUX

With an average altitude of 1000 metres, this route, demanding in the first few kilometres only, takes you through the heart of the high plateaux of the Préalpes.

Start from: Gréolières

Type of bikes: road bicycles

Age: 14 years - distance: 42 km

Drop: + 487 metres - time: 1 / 2 day

Period: April to October

• THE FAMILY LOOPS

The routes are currently equipped for family practice. Designed for a first road biking experience, some of these circuits should nevertheless be done on VTT or VTC. Short-distance and with a low drop, these loops will help you discover the rarely-visited Moyen-Pays of Alpes-Maritimes.

IN THE WESTERN PLAINS

Well adapted to young children, this circuit lets families pedal in an environment that you would not think belongs to the Côte d'Azur. The Plaine de Caille is a little paradise, carpeted with flowers of all colours during late spring.

Departure: Caille

Type of bikes: VTT and VTC:

Age: 6 years - distance: 6.5 km

Drop: + 50 metres - time: approximately 1hr30

Period: April to November

ALONG THE RIVER VAR

Just a quarter-hour from the coast, you enter a world mixing wild spaces and clear traces of human activity, passing the caprices of Var and using its energy use.

Start from: Lac du Broc

Type of bikes: all bicycles

Age: 6 years - distance: 6.6 km

Drop: + 30 metres - time: approximately 1h30

Period: all year

VILLENEUVE-LOUBET - THE FIRST CYCLOTOURISM CHALLENGE IN CÔTE D'AZUR

The Tourism Office of Villeneuve-Loubet is introducing the innovation of cyclotourism to its programme of activities. It allows families with children to discover the natural and cultural heritage and history of the area in an enjoyable way. This new activity borrows the "La Villeneuvoise" shared cycle and pedestrian network between Port Marina Baie des Anges to the Provencal village on the shores of Rives du Loup. Villeneuve-Loubet is genuinely the place to have fun as a family...

MOUNTAIN BIKING (VTT)

Wherever you go, nature is close by. As soon as you leave behind the built-up coastal area of the Côte d'Azur, stretching from Théoule-sur-Mer in the west to Menton in the East, you immediately find natural landscapes where it is a delight to cycle, free of the inconvenience of motor vehicles.

On forest routes, of course, with their wide surfaces and moderate gradients, you can take it in turns to ride in front, sharing experiences or enjoying friendly family rivalry.

But pathways or mule tracks can also attract mountain bikers with their twists and turns and felt covers, passing across forest floors, sweeping over crests and through passes, and crossing valleys and rivers.

• VTT SPACES LABELLED BY THE FFC

HAUTE ROYA VTT-FFC SPACE – TENDE / LA BRIGUE

20 routes of all levels - 382 km of marked paths – VTT hire.

Between France and Italy, at the edges of Parc National du Mercantour and of the Valley of Marvels, single and multiple tracks afford views of unique panoramas, forests and wet valleys. Away from the tracks, chamois, marmots and a multitude of birds of all kinds can be found.

SOSPEL VTT SITE

A VTT site very popular with international riders throughout the year. A Bike-park is open to all with an initiation area for children and technical areas for specialists. VTT school – hire – organised trips.

Tel. 00 33 (0)6 70 76 57 07 – www.espace-vtt-sospel.com

LEVENS - VTT-FFC SPACE, NICE COTE D'AZUR

The municipality of Levens with the Urban Municipality of Nice Côte d'Azur offers five VTT routes.

The first two routes, "Le Sargier" and "L'Arpasse" are in the Mont Arpasse Sector, the start points are at Cumba.

The three other routes, "Le Col du Dragon", "Le Férior" and "Le Tour of Férior" are in the Mont Férior sector, the start points are on Le Grand Pré de Levens.

These circuits are for confirmed mountain bikers. Map showing the routes available.

PEILLE – VTT-FFC SPACE, PAYS DES PAILLONS

A network of 20 pathways covering around 265 km. Sheer scale of landscapes, diversity of panoramas, wealth of natural and built-up heritage, rural and mountain areas, will leave you awestruck, relaxed and energised.

Info technical practices:

www.ffc.fr/com/popup/sites_vtt/pop_vtt.asp?sites?SVT_num=180&cu=009966&mypath=/a_vtt

• VTT IN STATIONS

AURON AND SAINT-ETIENNE-DE-TINEE

With its 1120 m of drop, the municipality of Auron / Saint-Etienne-de-Tinée offers over 55 km of descending routes with 16 all-level circuits to find in a grandiose natural setting.

The mountain-biking area is served by 3 mechanical lifts, including one release chair lift for optimum smoothness and comfort. An atmosphere of learning and controllability, with educational and fun modules, is proposed at the centre of the station, and wash points have been suitably developed.

www.auron.com

NEW FOR SUMMER 2013 — ISOLA 2000

This summer, for the first time, Isola 2000 is opening its routes to mountain bikers.

2 red routes runways are accessible via the Mercantour cable car, each more than 3000 m in length with 350 m of drop.

www.isola2000.com

ROUBION – VTT WITH ELECTRICAL ASSISTANCE

Roubion station is establishing provision of electrically-assisted mountain bikes to discover the carefully preserved curiosities and landscapes of Mercantour through forest routes and roads.

Roubion offer 14 descending routes, complemented by new walking routes for the whole family.

“Soft version”. Many trekking pathways are marked out between the village and the Col de la Couillole, and the chairlift at Buisses Station shall offers routes to mountain biking lovers Green and blue runways.

“Hard version”: Follow the routes taken by champions. With a descending mountain bike, Roubion offers you the thrills of descent, endure, cross country and sport trekking. The runways at all levels (blue, red and black) are served by a chairlift.

Ten long-distance circuits of 3-24 km.

www.roubion.com

LA COLMIANE

FFC=mountain-biking circuits of different levels of difficulty: total of 19 runways, 217 km of marked circuits, in Le Valdeblore and Mollières in Parc National du Mercantour.

For lovers of excitement: the Nicolas Vouilloz descending route and 6 descending runways served by the chairlift.

www.colmiane.com

CAILLE – LA MOULIERE – L’AUDIBERGUE

At 1400 m above sea level, the Plateau de la Moulière, located a few kilometres from the village, hosts the "Parc de la Moulière" created in July 2004, and the small family ski station of L’Audibergue. The "Parc de la Moulière" brings together, around the chairlift, a VTT centre with Bike Park, VTT hire, an adventure ride in the trees, and the "Via souterrata", unique in Europe.

VTT: 12 descent routes of all levels served by a chairlift. A very attractive and highly technical location. Open all weekends and public holidays in May, June and September, every day in July and August.

VALBERG – FAMILY PLUS

EVA: Valberg Adventure Space and pedestrian / VTT chairlift

The route, hidden in the forest between La Croix du Sapet and Parc des Sports, presents 3 levels of difficulty: suspended routes, tyroleans, monkey bridges, pendulum, pouli-poula, fixed and mobile beams, rope ladders, trapeze, smooth cord, giant-steps, skating, rope nets &c).

www.valberg.com

• VTT – THE EMBLEMATIC ROUTES

Les Chemins du Soleil – from Lake Geneva to Nice

The Chemins pass through the Préalpes of Thonon-les-Bains to end in a magnificent setting in the Alpes-Maritimes. From Lake Geneva to Nice by bike, with almost 800 km of marked and signposted pathways.

Two country routes are suggested:

- Rhône Valley to Southern Alps (Valence - Gap - Sisteron - Digne-les-Bains - Nice).
- Le Vercors to Provence (Grenoble - Sisteron - Digne-les-Bains - Nice).

In total, more than 1000 km of fully signposted routes, showing the natural and cultural wealth of the Massif.

The routes are great fun, with plenty of accommodation, and details on the website or topographic guides. Luggage can also be carried and accommodation reserved.

Recognised by the Fédération Française de Cycling (FFC), this long and beautiful VTT route is usually performed over twice 5-7 days. However, its sporting nature must not deter those used to gentler runs, because the many guest houses alongside the itinerary help increase the number of stages and thus provide time to discover, at a more affordable rate, the territory and its inhabitants, landscape and surprising heritages.

Contact: Grand Traversée des Alpes – www.grande-traversee-des-alpes.com

• VTT – A SELECTION OF FINE STAYS

Stay

LES PORTES DU MERCANTOUR

Welcome to the southern foothills of Mercantour, a paradise for Apline single track cycling.

The programme of this star circuit (semi-star for 4-day version), includes a flight over the verdant “Elephant’s Back” of the Head of the Giarons, the startling red soils of Raton, the panoramic crests of the Moulines, the superb larch forests, the brooding villages of Beuil and Roubion and, of course, the magnificent views of the mineral summits of Parc National du Mercantour.

Distance: 35-55 km per day depending on the profile.

- Drop: more than 1500 metres cumulative over the day
- Level: for a person enjoying good physical form and undertaking regular VTT at least half of the year (one trip per week minimum)
- Duration: 3 days
- Dates in 2013: 18-20 May, 21-23 June, 26-28 July, 23-25 August, 13-15 September, 4-6 October, 1-3 November
- Price: €295

Contact Vélorzons – Tel. 00 33 (0)4 76 45 99 29 – www.velorzons.com

Stay

WEEKENDS ENDURO VTT FANAS, BENEFIT OF DESCENT

7 days / 6 nights - between Tinée, Vésubie and Roya-Bévéra

Day 1: dinner, night and breakfast in local gîte

Day 2: departure in shuttle for Col de la Couillole above Roubion (1678 m).

Choice between several legendary routes:

- 100% Enduro as "around Le Lovet d'Ilonse (-1800),
- Les Balconies de la Vionene (-1770),
- Roubion, mountains and forests (-560)...

Day 3: shuttle to La Colmiane for route of choice:

- La Traversée du Valdeblore (-1880 m),
- Les Épingles du Viroulet (-1500 m),
- Les Millefontes, a thousand sensations (-1300 m).

Dinner, night and breakfast in local gîte at St Dalmas.

Possibility of overnight stay in double bedrooms in addition.

Day 4: Clans Multicolore: 24km / + 1400 / -2880m.

Free afternoon to enjoy, for example, the Spa at Résidence Adrechas, open to all (€10/person) or shuttle to La Colmiane station to enjoy bikepark.

Return to St Dalmas.

Day 5: departure by the Cime de la Colmiane to rise to about 2000m before returning to Lantosque (more than 1600m of happiness). Recovery in Lantosque, shuttle to Col du Turini, the celebrated route from Col de Turini Sospel.

Dinner, night and breakfast at Sospel.

Day 6: opportunity to enjoy the many routes offered by the Sospel VTT area.

Return to your accommodation.

Day 7: end of stay after breakfast

- From 4 persons.
- Period advised: June - September
- Price: €490/person (base 4 min)

Contact: www.cap-liberte.fr

ALPES-MARITIMES

ESPRIT TRAIL

SAINT-MARTIN – VESUBIE – STATION TRAIL

1st territory registered by the Fédération Française d’Athlétisme and first station of the Southern Alps trail.



The Trail Station® is a place 100% dedicated to the Trail, which offers routes and equipment to both beginners wishing to learn and be trained, and enthusiasts seeking a single place in which organise to refresher courses or whole weekends.

The Trail Station® is linked to a territory waiting for you to discover its best landscapes and best routes.

Equipment at Saint-Martin-Vesubie Station Trail:

- 13 rando trail routes
- 270 km of 100% natural runs
- 5 Trail workshops (km vertical, grass runway, short and long loops, shore)

[www.cg06.fr / cms / cg06 / upload / decouvrir-les-AM / FR / files / flyer-stationtrail-vesubie.pdf](http://www.cg06.fr/cms/cg06/upload/decouvrir-les-AM/FR/files/flyer-stationtrail-vesubie.pdf)

www.stationdetrail.com

TRAIL STAYS / ALLIBERT TREKKING

Stay

PREPARING FOR TRAIL IN LE MERCANTOUR

Organised stay, semi-itinerant, in gîte, without carrying
5 days / 4 nights / 4 days of travel

Combines the attraction of travel on foot and discovering nature. A stay designed for sporting lovers of wide-open spaces and fine landscapes. The programme offers training, equipment, dietetics, strategy of travel etc. Experience riding at night, not forgetting two days of itinerant trail for putting theory into practice and exploring the finest paths and landscapes of Parc du Mercantour.

Day 1: Saint-Martin-Vésubie – Mercantour. Participants meet at Saint-Martin-Vésubie and transfer to accommodation. Presentation of stay programme and equipment point. Departure on exit trail for the training. Dinner and evening at the gîte.

1hr00 / 1hr15 of trail routes 6 / 8km

Day 2: Panoramic Trail trip on Le Mercantour. The Boucle du Conquet loop is a strategic observation site in the heart of Mercantour and the high valleys of Boréon and Fenestre. During this trail, you can enjoy the magnificent views of the Mercantour valleys and summits. In the afternoon, exchange and discuss technical training, dietetics, tips and solutions. In the early evening, an easy night ride is offered.

+ 1050 m / -1050 m * 4hrs00 to 4hrs30 of riding, 18km + 1h00 night ride 6km

Day 3: Cruise raid in the heart of Parc du Mercantour, lasting 2 days. Very pleasant journey with superb retreats on the border crests of the High Boréon. The route is also made delightful by the regular presence of water, small valleys adjacent to the green areas of Boréon with, as its high point, the smooth Lac de Trécolpas (2150 m), niched alongside the high col of Pas des Ladres (2,448 m), the passage to the sanctuary of the Madonna of Fenestre.

Night in gîte.

+ 1450 m / -1450 m * 5hrs to 5½hrs of riding, 24km

Day 4: continuation of raid on one of the finest routes in Mercantour. The neighbouring Mercantour tops constitute an ideal objective for discovering the Massif. The run is made even more agreeable by the lakes, which tell the story of the ancient glaciation of the quaternary period. Night in gîte.

+1650 m + / - 1650 m * 6hrs00 to 6hrs30 of riding 25km

Day 5: end of stay after breakfast and transfer to Saint-Martin-Vésubie. Possibility of on-the-spot visit to the Alpha Centre. Park entirely dedicated to the knowledge and observation of wolves.

- Level 6: on average, rando-course six hours per day on pathways and / or around 1000 to 1500 metres of positive drop (more than 2000 metres in day) and / or 20-25 kilometres per day

- dates in 2013: Monday to Friday - 10/06 to 14/06/13 - 24/06 to 28/06/13 - 08/07 to 12/07/13 - 12/08 to 16/08/13 - 02/09 to 06/09/13

- Price: €485/person

Contact: Destination Merveilles – Tel. 00 33 (0) 4 93 73 09 07 – www.destination-merveilles.com

Stay

TRAIL, TRAVERSÉE MERCANTOUR & MERVEILLES

Free, looped, in gîte, without carrying

5 days / 4 nights / 4 days of travel

The routes of this trail lead to the most exceptional sites of this sector of Parc National du Mercantour, from Boréon to Gordolasque and the Valley of Marvels.

Day 1: according to arrival schedule, footing and acclimatisation starting from Le Boréon.

Dinner and night in gîte.

+ 250 m + / - 250 m * 10 km * 1h30 riding

Day 2: Trail day, Vallée du Boréon — Vallée de la Gordolasque. Discover Suisse Niçoise, between rhododendrons and light green larches. Cross your first col before descending back to the refuge. Leaving the imposing Gélas to your left, you will continue your journey to cross a second col, which will lead you to a modern gîte, comfortable and welcoming, in the Vallée de la Gordolasque.

+ 1550 M / - 1400 M * 20 km * 5hrs / 5½hrs riding

Day 3: Trail day, Grand Tour des Merveilles. From the col, which passes into the Valley of Marvels, you will see from afar the many glacial lakes which punctuate this magical area with their blue waters. Cross the Valley of Marvels and continue along the GR52 which will lead you along a superb route rich in lakes and, for the lucky ones, in animals, until you reach the recently renovated Refuge de Cessole. A final descent to continue, before returning to the comfortable gîte of the night before.

+ 1490 M / - 1490 M * 22 km * 5½hrs / 6hrs of travel

Day 4: Trail day, Vallée Gordolasque – Le Boréon. For this last day, a completely different landscape shows you the distant sea at far and a final view of the famous Franco-Italian peaks that have accompanied you all through the week. Descend to Le Boréon and the end of your stay in front of the Parc Alpha reception chalet. Night in gîte at Le Boréon.

+ 1050 M / - 1350 M * 18 km * 5hrs00 / 05½hrs riding

Day 5: Breakfast and end of stay. You can use this day for an on-the-spot visit to the Centre Alpha. Park entirely dedicated to the knowledge and observation of wolves.

- Period: between 15 June and 15 September 2013

Dates are subject to availability of accommodation at time of reservation

- Level 6: on average, six hours' rando-course six hours per day on pathways and / or 1000 to 1500 metres of positive drop and / or around 20-25 kilometres per day

- Price: €335/person.

Contact: Destination Merveilles – Tel. 00 33 (0) 4 93 73 09 07 – www.destination-merveilles.com

Stay

THE "MERVEILLES AT LARGE" TRAIL

Roya Villages and Valley of Marvels

Free, looped, in gîte, without carrying 5 days / 4 nights / 4 days of travel

The Merveilles trail is a route that fascinates with its diversity, luxuriant landscapes and wealth of historical heritage. Its mountain landscape, the freshness of a Mediterranean environment, a mystical route and its special surroundings provide a unique experience.

Day 1: according to arrival schedule, footing and acclimatisation from Tende, arrival at gîte.

250 m + / - 250 m * 10 km * 1½hrs of riding 6 / 8 km

Day 2: day trial, crossing from Tende to Castérino. From Tende you will travel to the hamlet of Casterino located at the foot of the Merveilles, following old livestock drove routes. The ascent of a summit with a panoramic view over Mercantour will add further delight to the route. Arrive at gîte for 2 nights in a renovated former mining building.

1400 m + / - 750 m * 19 km * 5hrs / 5½hrs riding

Day 3: trail day, the Merveilles loop. This is not the traditional way of approaching the Valley of Marvels. Here, the journey involves an initiation rite, a communion with the old times around 3,000 years before our era, where the shepherd peoples immortalised their pagan beliefs. Admire the surprising colouring of flagstones in green, orange, reddish or violet, caused by the changing forces of time. The Marvels, the water, the lakes, and the crossing of a high col all help classify this route as exceptional. Night in gîte.

+ 1050 M / - 1050 M * 24 km * 5½hrs / 6hrs of travel

Day 4: trail day, passing along the col route and the frontier forts of Casterino to Tende. The border crest of Col de Tende is a place loaded with history. It is also the easiest passage between the Piedmont and the Mediterranean. Magnificent panorama, with alternating pathways, roads and meadows... a truly memorable trail. Night in gîte at Tende.

1400 m + / - 1900 M * 25 km * 5hrs / 5½hrs of riding

Day 5: breakfast and end of stay. Opportunity to visit Tende, Haute Roya village, and its museum devoted to the Valley of Marvels.

- Period: between 15 June and 15 September 2013

Dates are subject to availability of accommodation at time of reservation

- Level 6: on average, six hours' rando-course per day on pathways and / or 1000 to 1500 metres of positive drop and / or 20-25 kilometres per day

- Price: €375/person.

Contact: Destination Merveilles – Tel. 00 33 (0) 4 93 73 09 07 – www.destination-merveilles.com

ALPES-MARITIMES

ESPRIT RANDO

The easiest way to visit a landscape or territory, alone, with family, with or without physical level. A moment of communion with wild fauna and flora and with the natural heritage. Alpes-Maritimes is more than 80% of territory protected through Parc National du Mercantour, a regional natural park in the Pre-Alpes d'Azur but also to the fifteen departmental parks. From the Alps to the sea, the Côte d'Azur boasts more than 6000 km of carefully maintained and signed pathways.

NORDIC WALKING – NEW FOR 2013

Whether crossing the Mercantour or overlooking the Mediterranean, Allibert Trekking is, for the first time this year, offering circuits in Alpes-Maritimes.

Stay

NORDIC WALKING ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR - BETWEEN NICE AND MENTON

Accompanied, in stars, in hotel, without carrying

5 days / 4 nights

A Nordic Walking stay which allows a fun approach to the Côte d'Azur, where the mountains plunge directly into the sea. Discovers wild capes bordered by immense pines in the heart of gardens of dreams, incredible aromas and dwelling-places of princes. After the exercise, the shallow inlets are a magnet for a swim or a picnic.

Day 1: reception and installation in hotel, for 4 nights. In the afternoon, depart for a Nordic Walking session. Meals and soirée.

Day 2: Beaulieu-sur-Mer – Villefranche-sur-mer. In the morning, Nordic Walking session with tour of capes. In the afternoon, continue this magnificent day by travelling to Villefranche. The small colourful ports, the turquoise waters of Cap Ferrat, and the charm of the arched streets of Villefranche-sur-mer. Return by train to Beaulieu at end of afternoon.

Day 3: Menton – Monaco – Monte Carlo. A second day along the sea. After a short train transfer to Cap Martin, Nordic Walking session. In the afternoon, follow the customs path that takes you to Monaco. The journey then takes you to the heart of Monaco. Visit to Monte Carlo visit and its Place and Palais. Return by train on Beaulieu at the end of the afternoon.

Day 4: Nice – Old Nice – Promenade des Anglais. After a short coach transfer to Nice, Nordic Walking session in the chateau gardens overlooking the Baie des Anges. In the afternoon, the route shows you the maritime resources of Old Nice and the Promenade des Anglais. Return to Beaulieu by train. Your guide will leave you at the end of the afternoon.

Day 5: separation of participants after breakfast. End of stay.

- Dates & prices 2013: from Monday to Friday - 27/05 to 31/05/13 and 21/10 to 25/10/13

Other dates and prices on request for groups consisting of 6 persons

- Level: Nordic Walking session 1½hrs to 2hrs per day on average on the road without drop. Gentle walk at discovery rate of 1h30 to 2h00 on average per day

- Accommodation: 4 nights in delightful hotel, in two-person room.

- Leader: qualified mountain guide and Nordic Walking instructor

- Number of participants: 6 persons minimum, 12 maximum

- Price: €575 per person (€595 per person for start on 27/05/13)

This price includes:

- * 4 nights in hotel, in two-person bedroom.
- * All meals, from dinner on D1 to breakfast on D5.
- * Guidance by State qualified mountain guide for 4 days.
- * Loan of sticks for Nordic Walking.
- * Transfer of participants provided for in the programme.

Contact: Destination Merveilles – Tel. 00 33 (0) 4 93 73 09 07 – www.destination-merveilles.com

A FEW BALADES TO SEE THE MOUNTAINS FROM THE SEA

- **FROM CAPE TO CAPE**

CAP MARTIN (3 KM)

45 minutes of typical vegetation along a seaside path. You are invited to follow in the footsteps of Nietzsche and especially Le Corbusier, whose architectural concept of the “Cabanon” can clearly be seen on this route. www.roquebrune-cap-martin.com

CAP D’AIL (3.6 KM)

A magnificent and inspirational path linking Plage de la Mala to Plage Marquet. This coastal walk of approximately one hour reveals the richness of the flora, the geology, and the architecture of “Belle Époque” villas.

www.cap-dail.com

CAP FERRAT (11 KM OF COASTAL PATHS)

2½hrs around for the Tour of the Millionaires’ Peninsula, a real haven of tranquillity with sumptuous villas. Do not miss the Promenade de la Saint Hospice (45 minutes) surrounded with Aleppo pine trees. Another path (around 1 hour) connects Anse Lilong to the Plage de Passable. Shallow inlets and limestone cliffs with luxuriant vegetation provide a backdrop to this walk.

www.saintjeancapferrat.fr

CAP D’ANTIBES (2.7 KM)

An exceptional coastal walk (about 1h30) along a wild, wave-battered stretch of coast. Bordered by Aleppo pines, this walk takes you to the Southern tip of the peninsula between Antibes and Juan-les-Pins and its sanctuary Notre-Dame de la Garoupe, revealing some of the finest panoramas of the Côte d’Azur.

www.antibesjuanlespins.com

- **THE ISLANDS OF LERINS**

The islands of St-Honorat and Ste-Marguerite form the archipelago Les Îles de Lérins off Cannes. The island of Saint-Honorat is separated from the island of Sainte Marguerite by a channel around 500 m wide, the ‘plateau du milieu’, or the ‘Friuli’. Saint-Marguerite is the greater of the two Islands. It covers 210 hectares, including 170 ha of forest, 700 m from La Croisette point.

Peace and rest in a 20-minute boat ride from the city of the most famous festival! Île-Saint Honorat and the Abbey of Saint-Honorat.

This monastery, founded in 410 by Saint Honorat, was one of the most important places of the 5th and 7th century Western Christianity for centuries. It now hosts a Community of Cistercian Monks producing liqueurs (Lérina) and wine.

The Community currently living at Lérins Monastery consists of 21 monks from varying cultural horizons.

Their way of life is communal, with days structured by prayer, work, studies and hospitality. All are part of a

congregation of monasteries, Lérins being the “mother house”. It is now possible to enjoy retreats in the heart of the monastery or simply walk there and enjoy dinner during a day on this Island.

Www.abbayedelerins.com

THREE EXCEPTIONAL MOUNTAIN ROUTES

- **THE VALLEY OF MARVELS – AN OPEN-AIR MUSEUM CLASSIFIED AS A HISTORICAL MONUMENT!**

This is the one of the most important prehistoric drawing sites in Europe, found on coloured stone slabs at the foot of Mont Bégo (2872 metres), the "ciappe". More than 100,000 engravings from the dawn of history have been discovered, 30,000 of these listed by Henry de Lumey, mostly dating from the Bronze Age.

Fontanalba, like the Valley of Marvels, is an exceptional open-air archaeological site, with thousands of prehistoric drawings listed. It is also a very pleasant and relatively easy walk, leading to several high-altitude lakes, the haunt of chamois and mountain goats.

→ *More info: The Departmental Museum of Marvels is situated at Tende.* It was opened in 1996 to highlight the exceptional archaeological wealth of this previously unexplored area. In it, find, on 1,000 m² of permanent and temporary exhibitions all on the original local engravings of the Valley of Marvels.

Characteristic of journey: Saint-Dalmas-de-Tende / 66 km from the coast. / Starting alt. 1380 m.
Climb + 1000 m + / descent -1000 m / duration 8hrs / difficulty average / period advised: June to October.
www.randoxygene.org/pge/rando_pe/poster_rando.php?Rando=60

- **L’AUTHION – THE HERITAGE OF WAR**

From the Napoleonic wars to the most recent worldwide conflict, the site of L’Authion, with its many ruined forts (Mille Fourches, Plan Caval plan, La Forca, Pointe des Trois Communes), recalls the tragic events of war that unfolded there. Today, a peaceful grazing area with an inspirational circuit, the Plateau de L’Authion is especially conducive to a family bike ride. The exceptional panorama throughout the journey provides views of the Eastern part of the Massif du Mercantour and the final foothills of the Alps, which plunge down to the Mediterranean. In return, a small detour by Vacherie de Mantégas offers a shady incursion into the Massif de Turini.

Characteristic of the journey: Bollène-Vésubie / 60 km from the coast. / Starting alt. 1604 m / length 15 km / climb + 500 m / descent -500 m / duration 2½hrs / difficulty sporting
www.randoxygene.org/pge/rando_vtt/poster_rando.php?Rando=9&heading=2&area=1

- **VALBERG – MONT MOUNIER (ASTRONOMY TOUR)**

In 1873, a team of researchers arrived on the slopes, taking notes on the suitability building a small observatory, which finally saw the light of day in 1893 through Mr Bischoffsheim. A few of its ruins still remain on Petit Mounier. The highest limestone massif in Alpes-Maritimes, Le Mounier is certainly the one of the best viewpoints of all the Southern Alps. This is also a botanist's paradise, with an exceptional flora that can easily be admired without being picked!

Characteristic of the journey: Valberg / 82 km from the coast. / Start alt. 1748 m / climb + 1100 m / descent - 1100 M / duration 6hrs / difficulty Alpine / advised period: July to October.

[www.randoxygene.org / page / rando pe / poster_rando.php?Heading = 1 & area = 1 & rando = 16](http://www.randoxygene.org/page/rando_pe/poster_rando.php?Heading=1&area=1&rando=16)

GR (GRANDES RANDONNEES)

GR4 - HAUTE-PROVENCE FROM GRASSE TO PONT-ST ESPRIT

This route follows the Southern Préalpes as far as the Gorges du Verdon. It passes across high limestone plateaux and carries you along rivers (Loup and Estéron) which have cut through the mountains to forming picturesque hollows and wild gorges. This route can be completed in 3-4 days depending on the length of the stages. Topo-guide of FF Randonnée: Ref. 401 "Haute Provence via the Gorges du Verdon".

GR5: LARCHE TO NICE

The GR 5 or European Grand Randonnée path E2 connects the North Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. More than 1500 km long, it starts in Rotterdam in the Netherlands and ends in Nice, France, passing through Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland. To travel along this path in the Alpes Maritimes is to cross in just a few days the celebrated tops of the Parc National du Mercantour, the preferred site of mountain goats, and chamois, coming eventually to the olive groves of the Nice hills bordering the Mediterranean Sea. It is also to find out how the diversity of landscapes and lifestyles is at the origin of the identity of a land, that of the former county (comté) of Nice. This route can be completed in 10-11 days depending on the length of the stages.

Topo-guide of FF Randonnée: Ref. 507 "Crossing the Mercantour"

GR52: VALDEBLORE TO MENTON

The GR 52 passes from North to South through Parc National du Mercantour to the Mediterranean at Menton. This route is the most alpine in Alpes-Maritimes, taking in celebrated passes such as Pas des Ladres, Pas du Mont Colomb and the crossing of many lakes and mountain refuges, and finally arriving against the blue background of the Mediterranean in Menton. It also takes you through the traces of our most distant ancestors in the Valley of Marvels, where 6,000 years the ancient people immortalised their beliefs on stone. This route can be completed in 10-11 days, depending on the length of the stages.

Topo-guide of FF Randonnée: Ref. 507 "Crossing the Mercantour"

GR52A – PANORAMA OF MERCANTOUR, FROM COLMARS TO COL DE TENDE

This evocatively-named GR runs along the southern boundary of Parc National du Mercantour through medium-height mountain massifs. This route is a trail of discovery of the high country through six different valleys: Colmars and its fortifications, the Val d'Entraunes and its pastoral scenery, Roure and its red rocks, Saorge overlooking the Roya Valley, and La Brigue, fiefs of the Lascaris family. This route can be completed 15 days depending on the length of the stages.

Topo-guide of FF Randonnée: Ref. 507 "Crossing the Mercantour"

GR653A – CHEMIN DE COMPOSTELLE, MENTON TO ARLES

The most recent our Grand Randonnée routes, the GR653a or Aurelian Way, running from Menton to Théoule-sur-Mer in the Alpes-Maritimes. Running parallel the GR51 from Menton to Gattières, it avoids the climb up the plateaux' edge to reach Théoule-sur-Mer via Vence, Roquefort-les-Pins and Mouans-Sartoux. It extends naturally from Arles via the GR653 and its variants to Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle by the Col du Somport. Beyond Menton, it allows onward travel to Rome via the Ligurian Way and then the ancient Via Francigena.

TO DISCOVER ALSO - THE VIA ALPINA

Along 5 international routes (from Monaco to Trieste on the Adriatic coast), through the eight lands of the Alpine Arch (France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria) there are 341 stages and more than 5000 km of pathways which are open to you to discover the natural and cultural heritage of the Alps. Perfectly marked out, with welcoming stage points offering gîtes and covered accommodation, these routes are not technically difficult and are accessible to all hikers. The Via Alpina passes villages in Alpes-Maritimes Département, including Peillon, Sospel, Saint-Martin-Vésubie &c.

FAMILY RANDO

RANDOLAND

It is not always easy to enjoy a walking route (balades or randonnées, walking or on bike) with children. To make these activities synonymous with pleasure and discovery, here are the Randoland circuits.

Intended for children aged 5 to 12 years, these circuits are designed as a track game.

There are questions waiting to be answered by observing and searching for traces of history in elements of natural heritage, historical, and children can rely on Inspector Rando to help them find solutions. For each circuit, three levels are proposed.

Each child finds a circuit suitable for their age: 4-6 years, 7-9 years or 9-12 years.

Circuit forms can also be downloaded free of charge on this site: www.cotedazur-tourisme.com

They are also available on the site www.randoland.fr and at tourist offices and reception points.

www.randoland.fr

FURET COMPANY

In the company of the cunning goblin Farfadet and his faithful sidekick Curiosou, you will explore the lesser known corners of the Pays de Grasse. municipalities of the country of fat. An exciting adventure awaits you with these 20 new games. From Escragnolles to Cipières, passing through Gourdon, Spéracèdes, Cabris and many other places, you finally solve the mysteries of the Pays de Grasse.

Games are suitable for children aged 6-13 years.

Find all the routes free of charge on the “Pays de Grasse Mysteries” or “Piste et Trésor” apps on iPhone and Android.

List of games:

Escragnolles, Cipières, Saint-Vallier-de-Thiey, Saint-Cézaire-sur-Siagne, Gourdon, Spéracèdes, Cabris, Bar-sur-Loup, Le Tignet, Grasse, Rouret, Reymeinade, Tournettes-sur-Loup, Opio, La Colle-sur-Loup, Auribeau-sur-Siagne, Mouans-Sartoux, Pégomas, La Roquette-sur-Siagne, Mougins.

www.furetcompany.com

ANIMAL TOURISM

**LLAMAS, BISON, WOLVES
AND COMPANY**

Each region has its secrets, and the Côte d'Azur is no exception, hiding within its land numerous and diverse unexpected species of animals.

- **SAINT-MARTIN-VESUBIE – ALPHA, MERCANTOUR WOLF PARK**



@ Parc alpha – St Martin Vésubie

The wish to tell the whole story of the recent and distant confrontations between man and wolf was the reason for the creation of Alpha, Mercantour Wolf Park. Alpha – the internationally recognised name for the dominant pair in a pack of wolves - is not just a reserve where wolves are held in captivity. It is an animal park located in a magnificent setting, which, with the originality of its scenery, has no equivalent anywhere in the world.

As a first step, the visitor attends three scenovisions®, lasting about 20 minutes each, whose compelling décor is located in renovated old stables (cow houses). These introduce a number of characters (shepherds, scientists and forest wardens), whose jobs bring them into contact with wolves, each for very different reasons.

Guided by one of those characters, an animal behaviour specialist, visitors will then meet the wolves in the second part of the park, having previously passed through the closed “initiation” area.

www.alpha-loup.com

- **BISON AND PRZEWALSKI HORSES - MONTS D'AZUR – THORENC RESERVE**

The Monts d'Azur reserve is a 700-hectare natural sanctuary for European fauna. A former hunting reserve, it hosts a particularly rich and varied fauna: chamois, deer, roe deer, golden eagle, black woodpecker, black grouse-lyre - in total, more than 500 species protected by some 20 international conventions.

Twelve centuries after disappearing from the Mediterranean Forests, the largest mammal of Europe has finally returned, with the European Bison of Europe once again spending happy days the plains and forests of Thorenc.

In 2005 and 2006, veterinarian Patrice Longour and his team brought back from the Forest of Bialowieza (Poland), their last European refuge, two groups of magnificent specimens. Simultaneously, Patrice Longour acquired several Przewalski horses from different European zoos for release in the Domaine du Haut Thorenc. This brave small horse, which adorns the walls of many Cro-Magnon caves, is the last remaining fully wild horse. Human have never succeeded in breaking it!

Possibility of accommodation on site: chambres d'hôte, bioclimatic house or summer lodges.

www.haut-thorenc.com

- **COL DE TURINI – THE LLAMAS OF MIRADOU**

Introduced over the last few years on the Col de Turini (1hr15 from Nice), the operation now counts more than ten llamas over 2 hectares, around a site known as Miradou, more than 1500 m above sea level at the entrance to Parc du Mercantour.

www.lesllamasdumiradou.com (accommodation available at Les Logis de la Source)

- **HORSE TREKKING**

Follow the traces of ancient mule trains or cattle droves to discover an amazing succession of landscapes and architectural curiosities in the Medium and High Azur country. Horse trekking offers unforgettable rides and true moment of sharing in protected natural sites.

[Http: // www.cg06.fr / FR / decouvrir-les-AM / decouverte-sport / Les-randonnees-guides-randoxygene / catalogues-interactive / Les-catalogues-interactive-randoxygene /](http://www.cg06.fr/FR/decouvrir-les-AM/decouverte-sport/Les-randonnees-guides-randoxygene/catalogues-interactive/Les-catalogues-interactive-randoxygene/)

- **DONKEY RIDING**

From Saint-Dalmas Valdeblore

Promenade in the Bois Noir (black wood). A walk near the village, in the shadows of the Bois Noir, to discover the delights of donkey riding. For beginners.

The Randonailles – from Saint-Dalmas Valdeblore to Rimplas

Gastronomic trekking with donkeys, in partnership with Pous’Café de Rimplas. Lasts 2 days.

Randonnée Molléroise - 4 days in the Parc National du Mercantour with waterfalls, lakes, a tour of the Vallon de Mollières where the wolf returned to France in 1992, chamois, marmots, mountain goats &c.

www.anesdeblore.fr

- **CANI-RANDO AT CASTERINO**

Cani-Rando is a trip guided by husky dogs led by voice and precise gestures. Fitted with a harness belt, the dogs are connected to the human by a long drop-lead connected in turn to a wide belt.

Helped by the pulling power of the huskies, you can travel huge distances without getting tired... almost!

This is an activity which offers a change for true sharing between dog and traveller. You will also discover the subtle relationships between the huskies within the pack. A day of discovering the pleasures of hiking and the relationship of affection between dog and human.

With Alain SIMON, professional musher, enjoy balades in Haute Roya, at the entrance to the Valley of Marvels.

www.sherpamerveilles.com

FULL NATURE ACTIVITIES

- **WHITE WATER**

Raft, canoeing-raft, kayak-raft, hot-dog, mini-raft, airboat, hydrospeed...
Without forgetting the delight of swimming in fast-flowing water!

- **CANYONING**

Jumps, twists and tobogganing. Canyoning offers a maximum of sensations in an exceptional environment, between clear pools and boiling cascades. The middle and high country of Alpes-Maritimes is home to 30 sites of the 70 listed, identified by their special technical interest and dramatic environment. Your holiday programme offers emerald green water, wild nature and a qualified guide.

- **VIA FERRATA**

Lovers of excitement should try the Via Ferrata, with its climbing routes, spiral steps, ramps and walkways all providing an exceptional adventure against a background of walls and rocky cliffs with a maximum of safety.

Securely lashed, at the heart of a dizzying landscape, you have all the sensations of a real daring alpine climb.

There are 7 Via Ferrata in the middle and high-country of Alpes-Maritimes:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Via Ferrata La Brigue | www.labrigue-tourisme.org |
| • Via Ferrata Escalè à Peille | www.peille.free.fr |
| • Via Ferrata Tende | www.tendemerveilles.com |
| • Via Ferrata from Baus de la Frema to La Colmiane | www.colmiane.com |
| • Via Ferrata Les Demoiselles de Castagnet, Puget-Théniers | www.provence-val-dazur.com |
| • Via Ferrata Les Canyons de Lantosque | www.via-lantosque.fr |
| • Via Ferrata Roubion | www.roubion.com |

- **CLIMBING**

From small cliffs heated by the midday sun to the dark mountains walls of the Massif du Mercantour, a wide variety of routes is available in *Alpes-Maritimes Département*. The diversity of massifs will enable you to enjoy walks of all levels to be chosen depending on the season. Excitement is guaranteed!

Here are few “must not miss” sites:

- The fine climbing sites in Parc National du Mercantour (to discover in summer): La Cougourde (2912 m), Madonna of Fenestre (2413 m), Le Gélàs (3143 m), Mont Clapier (3045 m), and Ténibre (3021 m).
- The broad range of routes suitable for beginners and training in the limestone Préalpes of Grasse and the Estéron, especially the Baou of Saint-Jeannet.
- The numerous limestone or gneiss cliffs in the Vallée de la Roya, which offer also some large mountain tracks accessible all year round: Les Mesces, Castillon, Sospel (Baou de la Nieya), Breil-sur-Roya, La Brigue and Tende (site of the Arimonda).
- Saint-Dalmas-le-Selvage: climbing on the Rocher de Junic. This grey limestone rock, which faces south and overlooks the village, offers a range of tracks in 2 sectors ranked 4a.
- Isola 2000 - Belvédère site: 10 equipped climbing routes from level 3 to 6a / 6b.
- Saint-Martin-Vésubie: mountain routes at the level of La Cougourde and Madonna of Fenestres. There are also two developed sites: Trou du Diable (44 tracks / 6b to 7b+ / limestone) and the site at Salèse (15 tracks / 3 + to 6a / gneiss).
- Belvédère, two climbing sites the entrance of Parc National du Mercantour: Cascade du Ray (6) and Les Dalles du Castellaras (12).

- Lantosque, network of routes referenced towards the hamlet of Saint-Colomban (23 tracks / 6a + to 7 / limestone).
- Between Entraunes and Estenc, a climbing site (4a + to 7 / limestone).
- Roubion, an attractive site restored in 2006, which includes some thirty routes from 3 + to 7b.

- **CAVING**

Alpes-Maritimes is rich in limestone mountains and underground caves: Plateau de Caussols, Montagne de l'Audibergue, Cheiron and plateaux de Saint-Cézaire (Grasse Préalpes).

In Roya Bévéra the Gouffres du Massif du Marguareis, which owe their reputation to the experiments of Michel Siffre, are very well known speleology to cave explorers. This is a very wild and demanding massif, definitely not for beginners...

Unexpected: Via Souterrata at Caille

The first planned via ferrata route underground, this route introduces the world of cave exploration through two sinkholes in Parc de la Moulière. Located at the base of the Montagne de l'Audibergue, and a limestone bastion of the Southern Préalpes, the site has a significant group of caves with a typical karst relief. Contact: 33 (0) 4 93 60 34 51 – www.lou-pais.com

- **IN THE AIR**

Alpes-Maritimes is a paradise for air activities (parascending, gliding, hang-gliding, speed riding, speed flying, kite and snow kite) throughout the year. Some of the best free flight sites are found in the department. The exceptional conditions, between sea and mountain, make this a place that cannot be avoided, with locations such as the world-famous Roquebrune-Cap Martin (winter only) and the sites around the Parc National du Mercantour (any time of year).

- **FISHING**

The Middle and High Alpes-Maritimes, with 97% of the 1200 km of water courses classified first category, are a delight for the lovers of sporting and technical fishing. Discover also the many mountain lakes and water areas.

In the Parc National du Mercantour, almost all of the lakes are regularly stocked by young fish (Vens, Millefonds and Merveilles Lakes), as well as the Lacs de Breil-sur-Roya, the snow lake in Isola, and Lac Thorenc.

Lac du Boréon at St-Martin-Vésubie offers a regulated recreational fishing course of 5 km and initiations to fly fishing and all other techniques.

Lac du Close de Maty at Valberg hosts trout fishing competitions.

The Vallée de la Roya-Bévéra is the kingdom of the brown trout, eel and crayfish (consult prefectural order for opening period).

- **PROVIDERS OF FULL NATURE ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED**

White water

Mathieu Bresson www.nicerafting.com

Canyoning

Pascal Richoux www.camp4.fr
Richard Martinez <http://destination-nature.vpweb.fr>
Laurent Boudier www.soleyo.fr
Yannick Obradovic www.funtrip.fr

VTT

Greg Germain www.1001sentiers.fr
Antoine Hospital www.mercantourvtt.com
Robin Zavala www.lespirogues.com

Hiking

Marc Berimi www.montagnes-merveillesazur.com
Fabrice Morel www.taos-evasion.com
Jean-Maurice Olivier Tel. 00 33 (0)6 61 93 10 51
Patrick Saglia www.destination-merveilles.com
Benedict Couvrier www.aubergedesbaous.com
Bernard Baldassare www.gite-marmottes.fr

All activities

François Cholet www.gitetonic.com
François Falconi www.royaevasion.com
Pascal Clementi www.odyseeventricale.com

Free flight

Gabriel Guirao www.imagin-air.fr

ECOTOURISM AND GREAT ESCAPES

MERCANTOUR ECOTOURISM - MERCANTOUR.ECOTOURISME@GMAIL.COM

An invitation to travel and meet the faces and landscapes of Parc National du Mercantour

These stays are designed for members of the Mercantour Ecotourism Association. Special attention has been given by the operators to the reception, which must be personalised, user-friendly and of high quality.

Specific work has been carried out on the accommodation to make it more environmentally friendly and integrate it into the landscape and local traditions.

Personalised accompaniment in small groups, by card only, allows an introduction to the maritime resources of each season close to an exceptional nature.

Inspired by the spirit of the place, these stays, mostly based on randonnées, promises to take right up close to the beating heart of the Vallée de la Vésubie, over paths and meeting places.

To find out more about the services of Mercantour Ecotourisme operators and programmes with details of each concept stay:

www.mercantour.eu

Heading "welcome and discovery".

Stay

THE LOOK, THE PEN AND THE PENCIL

4 days / 3 nights

Take the time to write or sketch the landscapes. Allow the history and tales of the Haute Vallée de la Vésubie to transport you. This stay is a chance to draw, attend a workshop, or enjoy a meal or circular walk.

- Period at St-Martin-Vésubie, from 9-12/05/2013, 17-20/05/2013 and 12-15/09/2013. At Val de Blore, from 21-24 or 28/09/2013

In the full week, with "guided tour + free" formula with additional module at end of week from Wednesday to Saturday

- Eco-tourist strengths: workshops for writing or drawing new perspectives on the territory: drawings and tales, warm and friendly welcome, access for disabled and served by public transport

From €350/person

Contact: www.taos-evasion.com

Stay

WELL-BEING AND SHARING ON THE LLAMA FARM

Make no mistake, the Col du Turini is a place of inspiration for working on the emotions. Spirituality, culture and gastronomy all combine together on Miradou Llama Farm. In their shelter, Christian and Philippe offer that trip with those slightly eccentric companions the llamas. Between user-friendly meals, relaxation sessions and short walks, they share their passion for local flora and the known or unknown history of this corner of the Alps which plunge to the sea. When evening comes, relax at the Logis de la Source, a delightful residence where each bedroom invites to travel.

From €495/person – From €350/person.

Contact: www.taos-evasion.com

Stay

FAUNA AND BIODIVERSITY OF MERCANTOUR

4 days / 3 nights (day 5 optional)

Live the experience of a naturalist, discovering wild fauna and flora in Parc National du Mercantour. Cover this wide area through hikes leading from the Alpine grassland of the Col of Turini to the glacial valleys of La Gordolasque, dotted with myriads of alpine lakes. Here, more than anywhere else, feel the breath of this wild place, and meet with chamois or mountain goats. Immerse yourself in the history of a mountain country by your naturalist guide. And for your rest, enjoy the comfort of the Hôtel des Chamois at Cold de Turini and Relais des Merveilles, gateway to La Gordolasque.

- Stay period: 27- 3 05, 10-13/06, 8- 11/07, 26-29/08, 26- 29/09, 10- 13/10

- Ecotourist strengths: discover on foot the vast fauna and glaciated landscapes, get close to nature. A warm welcome awaits you

From €430/person.

Contact: www.taos-evasion.com

Stay

MERCANTOUR AND MERVEILLES, THE PATH LEGENDS

6 days / 5 nights

Hike through the heart of the preserved territory of the Parc National du Mercantour in the company of a mountain guide, and play an active part in your stay.

The programme includes meetings with those working actively with the mountain: shepherds, park guards, refuge and gîte wardens, &c. Every day, discovers a topic related to the location and history of the valleys: the salt road and major Alpine routes, the drawings in the Valley of Marvels, the glaciers, the water and the lakes: sources of life, the life at the heart of the park: breeding and shepherding.

- Stay period: summer period

- Ecotourist strengths: observing wildlife, accommodation located in completely natural places, meals premises, discovery of the Mercantour landscapes

From €585/person.

Contact: www.destination-merveilles.com

THE GREAT ESCAPES

In the high country of Alpes-Maritimes, some sixty establishments are now qualified through the “Tourval Café” programme introduced by Alpes-Maritimes General Council. They have obtained one or more national quality labels of reputation: tourism, tourism & disability, Ecolabel green key. Certain establishments are also recognised as Bistrots de Pays, an identity which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. Routes christened “Great Escapes”, which sometimes cross national borders, offer ideas for stays to discover the other Côte d’Azur.

Here are a few proposals for stays to be shared, as a family or with friends...

CANOEING, RAFTING AND CANYONING

Theme: discover and become one with nature:

2 days / 1 night

Multi-activity stay at the heart of Mercantour and Vallée de la Roya. Descend the Roya in canoe-rafting.

Day 1: Canoe-raft descent

Sequence of rapids on 6 km of river. Very stable, the inflatable boat provides plenty of excitement and added emotion for all. Fitted with neoprene wetsuits, you will roll down the Roya rapids supervised by our upper-river guides. Canoe rafting is a real white-water sports delight.

Day 2: canyoning

Jumps, toboggans and slides all help you discover the beautiful canyons of Alpes-Maritimes. A truly aquatic route in a truly exceptional, well-preserved framework. An unforgettable adventure.

- Duration:

- validity: April / October

- Price: €155/person.

Contact: *Roya Evasion* – Tel. 00 33 (0)4 93 04 91 46 - e-mail: info@gite-Roya-mercantour.com

CANYON STAY

Theme: discover and become one with nature

2 days / 1 night

Stay in half-board eco-gîte in a chambre d’hôtes.

In the middle of the Maglia olive grove, on the heights of the village de Breil-sur-Roya at the heart of the Vallée de la Roya.

Day 1: Barbera Canyon, in a most delightful location, this is the most tropical of the canyons.

Sunlit cascades and basins, ideal for a first experience. Numerous easy jumps and twists are on the programme.

Day 2: Maglia Canyon

The most fun and most aquatic canyon in Alpes-Maritimes. Delightful surroundings with great sensations guaranteed.

Maglia, tops in canyons: tobogganing, jumps and twists.

The “must” in white-water sports.

- Price: €175/person

Contact: *Roya Evasion* – Tel. 00 33 (0)4 93 04 91 46 - e-mail: info@gite-Roya-mercantour.com

THE COUNTRY OF MARVELS

Theme: discover and become one with nature

4 days / 3 nights

Between the Mediterranean and Italy, the Vallée de la Roya rises from 180 to around 3000 m in altitude. This remarkable natural and cultural asset is home to many different activities suitable for all. Just two giant's steps from the Valley of Marvels, in Parc du Mercantour, are great and unspoilt landscapes with waterfalls and lakes, basins with emerald-green water, rich and diverse fauna and flora often found nowhere else. Lower down, visit the villages to find the maritime resources of a baroque culture still present in the buildings preserved.

Day 1: Access to Pieds à Neige and Merveilles via "Les Granges de Speggi".

Installation at Neige & Merveilles and dinner.

Day 2: Hiking in the Val de Fontanalbe via Baisse de Vallauriette.

Return to Castérino at 1600 - transfer to Neiges & Merveilles (Marker 85) and dinner.

Day 3: Sunrise over the Nauque followed by breakfast in the country

Return to Neiges & Merveilles.

Free to visit the village of Tende and Via Feratta at Tende. Dinner.

Day 4: Departure for the Canyon of Barbaira, Italy, 40 minutes away, to access the beginning of the route and 4h of descent on emerald-green water. End of stay at 14h.

- Price: from €454/person

Contact: Solange Viard – Tel. 00 33 (0)4 93 04 62 40 – -mail: nmvallauria@yahoo.fr

GREAT ESCAPES ESCAPE TO MERCANTOUR

Theme: discover and become one with nature

4 days / 3 nights

Day 1: Thursday. Welcome in Tende to discover the mysteries of the village of Tende.

Guided visits to the Museum of Marvels.

Meeting at Lake Mesces and installation in Neige & Merveilles gîte, dinner.

Day 2: Friday. Walking and visit to original at site of Fontanalbe; Access by Baisse de Vallaurette (accompanied hike).

Return via Castérino / transfer to Neiges & Merveilles and dinner.

Evening on theme of astronomy.

Day 3: Saturday. Walking and visit to original engravings at Valley of Marvels (guided hike). Dinner at Neige & Merveilles. Evening free.

Day 4: Sunday. Meeting at Village of La Brigue - guided visit to village and Heritage House.

Guided visits to Notre Dame des Fontaines sanctuary, also called the Sistine Chapel of Vallée de la Roya - end of stay.

- Price: €268/person

Contact: Solange Viard – Tel. 00 33 (0)4 93 04 62 40 – -mail: nmvallauria@yahoo.fr

IMMERSION IN NATURE - MONTS D'AZUR BIOLOGICAL RESERVE

Theme: discover and become one with nature

3 days / 2 nights

Day 1: arrival and welcome with a fresh drink. Installation in bedroom.

Guided foot safari. Search for and approach animals.

House drink followed by dinner served on terrace around wood-burning stove. Night there.

Day 2: Free morning. If requested, chance to participate in development works on the Reserve and current scientific studies. It is a good idea to wear stout clothing!

Lunch, or country-style packed lunch if requested, prepared by our kitchen staff.

The early afternoon is dedicated, according to choice, to continued work on the reserve or to a walk around the Castelleras overlooking the Valley of Andon-Thorenc. Superb panorama!

A second guided foot safari. Search for animals or their traces. Find footprints and markers, approach animals, discover flora, take photographs.

Day 3: Guided safari in calash. Search for and approach animals.

Visit to Thorenc village and lunch at the Manoir, free afternoon.

- Price: €248/person

Contact: Domaine du Haut-Thorenc, Hélène Thibaud - E-mail: contact:haut-thorenc.com

THE OTHER CÔTE D'AZUR

Theme: discover and become one with nature

4 days / 3 nights

Benoit & Corinne, a dynamic young globe-trotting couple, put down their suitcases in Saint-Jeannet a few years ago, in a pleasant and user-friendly place far from the tumult and heat of the Côte.

Benoit, with his guide's diploma in hand, discovered the countryside around Nice, away from the usual tourist paths. Corinne, an excellent cook, surprised people with her inventive and high-quality cuisine based on products local to this wine-growing area.

A region to discover: Saint-Jeannet, a small and peaceful village perched on the Riviera, surrounded by its famous baous, a climber's paradise, all just half an hour from Nice.

Day 1: arrival, visit to Nice and its marker, tasting at Saint-Jeannet vineyard.

Lunch: specialities of Nice, coffee break and tasting of Nice's best ice creams.

Return to Saint-Jeannet. Tasting in the vineyard.

Day 2: Les Gorges du Loup ("the wolf's gorges"). Picnic at Domaine des Courmettes, comprising a goat's cheese tasting session at the farm followed by visit to Florian confectionery shop.

Day 3: Hiking poles in the baous. Start of hike, ascent towards the top, discovery of local heritage. Top, descent to the village, visit with commentary to historic districts of Saint-Jeannet.

Day 4: departure.

- Price: from €440/person.

Contact: info@thefrogshouse.com

OTHER ADVENTURES

CÔTE D'AZUR TOURISM - ECOLOGES

THE GREEN ECOLOGE – LA COLMIANE

The best hotel in the high country. Has the theme of an ecolodge whose bedrooms have been created by the owner in a fresh and refined atmosphere using many forest materials or other objects to make the bedrooms incredibly warm and welcoming.

www.greenecolodge.com

DOMAINE DU HAUT-THORENC (THORENC)

The ecolodges: discover nature without leaving a trace!

Made of canvas, wood and stone, these five shelters, made to measure by the Style and Nature team, integrate fully in the countryside. Ecolodges are intended to provide an exceptional experience of life, similar to that of an African brush camp.

Plunge into the heart of wildlife in magical locations to better understand the images of nightfall or daybreak in the reserve!

Each ecolodge is equipped with two bed, a table, chairs, and a brush bathroom supplied by an additional 10 litres and a separate dry toilet.

Meals and breakfast are taken on the spot, around a lamp.

www.haut-thorenc.com

THE HIGH GOLF COURSES OF AURON AND VALBERG

AURON GOLF COURSE

A six-hole course.

Compact rustic mountain golf course, 6 holes, at 1600 m altitude in the heart of an exceptional natural area between firs and larches. Open only in the summer period, but with un restricted access.

This golf course has a practice area with 20 start points (10 covered) and a putting green and chipping to train in approach shots.

www.auron.com

VALBERG GOLF CLUB

A nine-hole course.

Altitude 1700 m, Panorama 360°.

Valberg golf club offers you a true mountain location with a true 9-hole course, 3 freely accessible training greens, and high-quality fairways and natural start point, with Alpine edge cutters. This 100% bio course offers a 360° panoramic view of Mont Mounier in Mercantour.

Www.valberggolfclub.com

MOUNTAIN GARDENS

ROURE ARBORETUM

Roure, a medieval village situated 1100 m up in the Vallée de la Tinée, has a mountain arboretum located at between 1000 and 1700 m, containing broadleaved and mountain conifers from all over the world with additional collections of its maples, ancient fruit trees, wild roses and houseleek, not forgetting the Chalet of the Tree with the carpotheque (collection of the fruits of resinous trees) and xylotheque (collection of woods use by cabinet makers). The cascades with birds provides a unique ornithological journey.

“Art and Trees”: the only European arboretum linked to art, it offers visitors the work of many artists who invest in this area in their spare time.

No-Made* brings together artists who escape the walls of the galleries and come together each year to create a theme defined in the world’s greatest outdoor picture rail – Roure Arboretum. Their creative successes combine sea and mountain, the customs pathways of the Villa Roc Fleuri Cap d’Ail (installation in September) and the mule train pathways of Roure arboretum (each first Sunday in October). The site is now the base camp of ‘No-made’; artists entrust their works to nature for the seasons, with snow, hail, rain, wind and sun to re-sculpt them in turn.

Prestigious ‘ambassadors’ precede each edition of ‘No-made’, including Ben, Jean-Michel Folon, Ernest Pignon Ernest, Valerio Adami, Ousmane Sow and Nicolas Lavarenne

* with reference to the ready-made of Marcel Duchamp.



Garden classified in national heritage and “remarkable label” garden.

SAORGE - THE MONASTERY GARDENS

The Sorge Monastery, a former Franciscan convent in baroque style, was completed in the mid-17th century. It is located in the upper part of the village, at 500 m altitude, and dominates the Vallée de la Bendola which projects into the Roya some 30 kilometres from the sea. Because of the hillside situation and the significant slope, the brothers configured the monastery garden in six terraces, supported by walls and arches and supplemented by pergolas for the vine and a small oratory. An entire water system, with basins and a wash house, complement the structure of this 3000 m² garden. Much of it is now devoted to production of soup provided to residents on retreat to write, thus perpetuating the tradition of the monks’ subsistence garden. The Mediterranean micro-climate, which tempers the rigours of winter (snow falls every year) allows a biodiversity of vegetables and aromatic, medicinal and culinary plants to be cultivated. A visit to Saorge Monastery, which is part of the National Monuments Centre, already includes a general overview of the garden. A thematic project is being implemented there: from ethnobotanical research work on culinary and medicinal plants from the Vallée de la Roya, the garden of Saorge Monastery, from 2010, offers a teaching tour of the monastery’s gardening practices and village traditions.

Guided visits to the garden are available on request. Information: 00 33 (0)4 93 04 55 55

www.monuments-nationaux.fr- www.saorge.com

TOURIST TRAINS

TRAIN DES PIGNES

Circulates between Nice and Puget-Théniers, the Train de Pignes is a traditional railcar that offers a tour of discovery of the Var Valley.

In 2011, the Train de Pignes celebrated its 100th anniversary.

THE TRAIN OF MARVELS

From Nice to Tende, discover on board the Train of Marvels one of the finest railway panoramas and enter the heart of the rich baroque heritage of Roya-Bévéra and Paillon valleys.

BISTROTS DE PAYS

The objective of Alpes-Maritimes Département's tourist policy is to improve the offer and tourist attraction in the territory, primarily in the middle and high country public authorities, in order to ensure a continuation of development and economic life up there.

On this basis, the General Council has undertaken, within the framework of the Alcotra programme for cross-border cooperation between France and Italy, within the Tourval Integrated Cross-Border Plan (PIT), to work in partnership with the Italian provinces of Imperia, Savona and Cuneo. The aim of this project is to support the local economy by enhancing the value of natural, cultural, agricultural and small-industrial wealth of the territories involved.

List of bistrots de pays in Alpes-Maritimes Département

[http://www.cotedazur-montagne.com/visits-Alpes Maritimes/Les-bistrot-of-country-06_1614.html](http://www.cotedazur-montagne.com/visits-Alpes%20Maritimes/Les-bistrot-of-country-06_1614.html)

New for 2013! Randos-bistrots (September-November 2013)

10 days will be offered based on a hike, an activity and a meal made from local wine-growing area products.

Timetable and details in the future.

GUIDES

All the latest on mountains and stays available at
www.visitcotedazur.travel

Become fans of Côte d'Azur Montagne

<https://www.facebook.com/cotedazurmontagne?Fref=TS>

Randoxygene guides

In the context of the Randoxygene guide series, a selection of walking routes, developed by the Departments of General Council 06, is proposed.

Alpes-Maritimes pathways offer a consistent series of markers representing more than 3000 engraved wooden posts and ground markings securing over 4000 km of pathways and hike routes on offer in the mountainous part of Alpes-Maritimes.

3 titles are published relating to the Middle and High Country as well as the coastal areas (60 routes each). This collection of guides is broken down as follows: practical guide, Via Ferrata, Hollows and canyons, VTT, randoraquettes, equestrian activities.



Vtopo 06

This is a comprehensive collection of the best VTT routes in the Alpes-Maritimes. Escapes of all levels from the coastal regions to Mercantour, for many years...

In the programme: 142 VTT routes in Alpes-Maritimes and 2,654 km of tracks described, mapped and prettily illustrated in 3 volumes.

Family: 45 routes for families, children and beginners

Initiates: 47 cross-country, all-mountain and hiking routes

Experts: 50 endurance, descent, free ride and raid routes



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