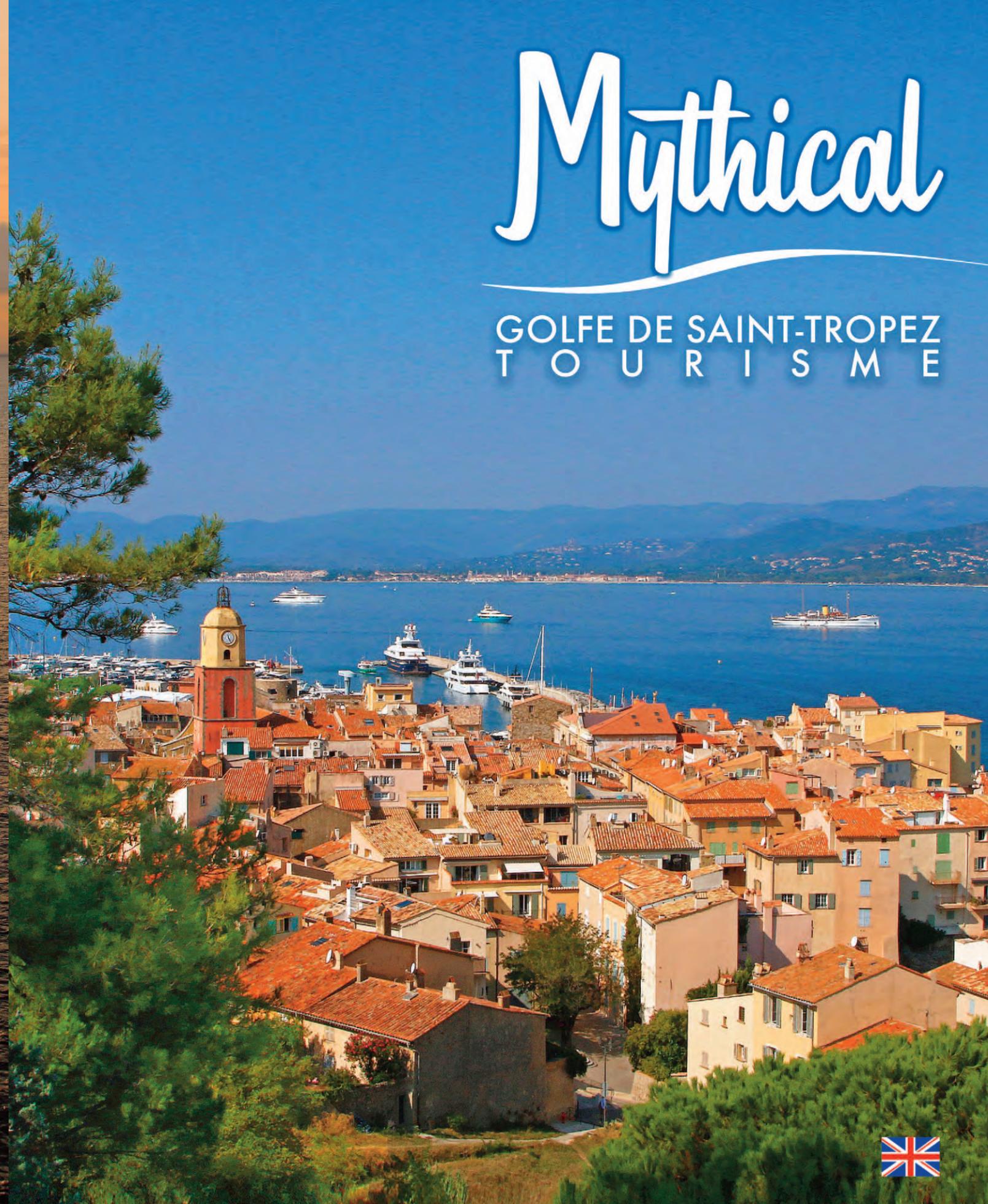




Mythical

GOLFE DE SAINT-TROPEZ
TOURISME





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GOLFE DE SAINT-TROPEZ

The blue, green, gold



The turquoise blue of the sea merges with a cloudless sky, the golden sun infuses the radiant hues of Provencal fabrics, the olive green colours the shutters that open onto an open sea...

“ Over the years this multi-faceted destination, buoyed by the diversity of Provencal villages and the lure of its beautiful seaside resorts, has become a leading light on the international tourism scene, lit by the aura surrounding the village of Saint-Tropez.

Yet it is also a geographical and historic entity of infinite beauty and hidden treasures, known as Le Freinet from the Middle Ages to the French Revolution. Today the catchment area extends 30km from north to south and 26km from east to west, focused mainly around the Bayon the edge of the Massif des Maures: 56,000 people live in the 12 municipalities that make up the Bay of Saint-Tropez.

The stunning landscapes you are about to discover in the dense forests, on the coast and in the bush are the scene of so many enchanting legends and stories. The vegetation growing in the crystalline soil of the Massif includes characteristic varieties of heathers, cork oaks and chestnut trees, alongside Mediterranean species like the majestic umbrella pines, and mimosa. This natural cover which is home to an abundance of wildlife to the delight of nature lovers: wild boar, foxes, birds of prey. The sheep, goats, cattle or donkeys maintained the bush on the Massif.

This preserved yet fragile area is blessed with a fascinating geology and privileged climate. Here the sky is azure blue with more than 300 days of sunshine a year. Its Mediterranean climate is temperate, with mild autumns, winters and springs being ideal times for walking and exploring. In summer, the heat is alleviated by a sea breeze. This privileged climate allows you to enjoy all the pleasures of the seaside for six months of the year. The coast is stunning: necklaces of coves and delightful beaches between impressive headlands, and a Bay which seems to surge up into the hills, close to seaside resorts, marinas and fishing ports whose reputation is second to none.

The Bay of Saint-Tropez has also been deeply affected by the past. Pre-historic man left his mark in the dolmens and menhirs and those from the Gallo-Roman period their villas, farmsteads and seawater fishponds; but above all it is the legacy of the Middle Ages, the picturesque perched villages, churches and Romanesque chapels, that most define our region.

As a result, many of the protected sites and buildings are classed as historic monuments. Locals here are deeply attached to their traditions, celebrated in the Bravades and Provencal festivals.

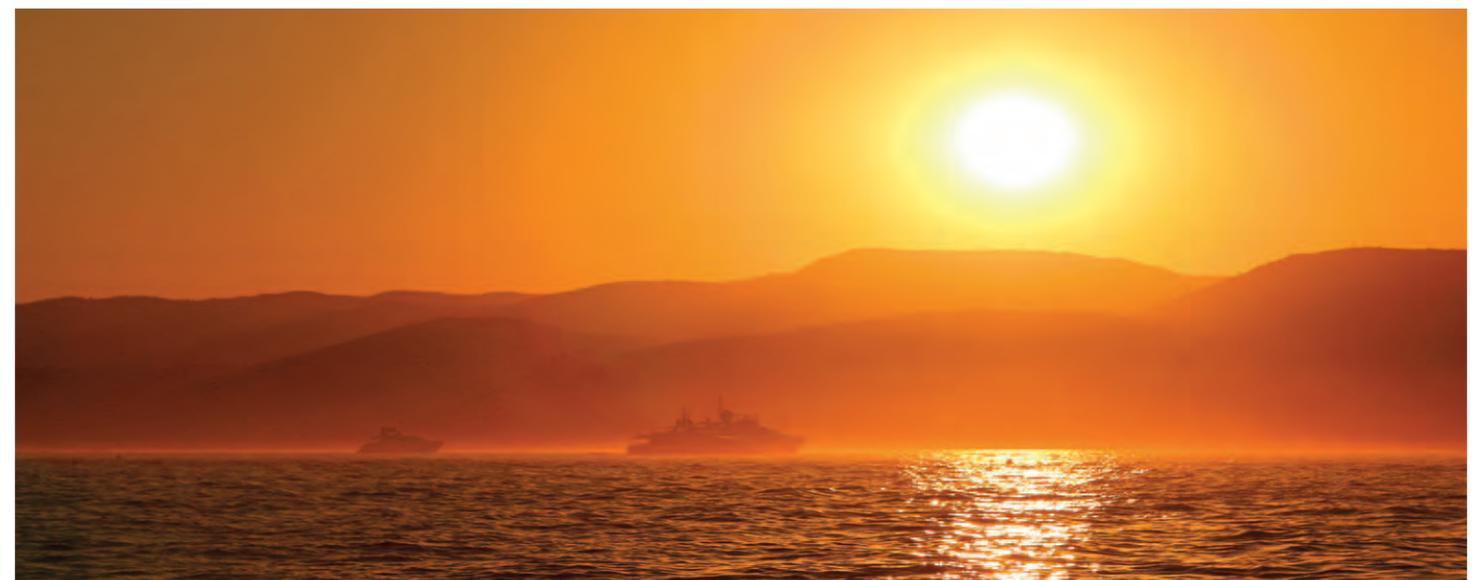
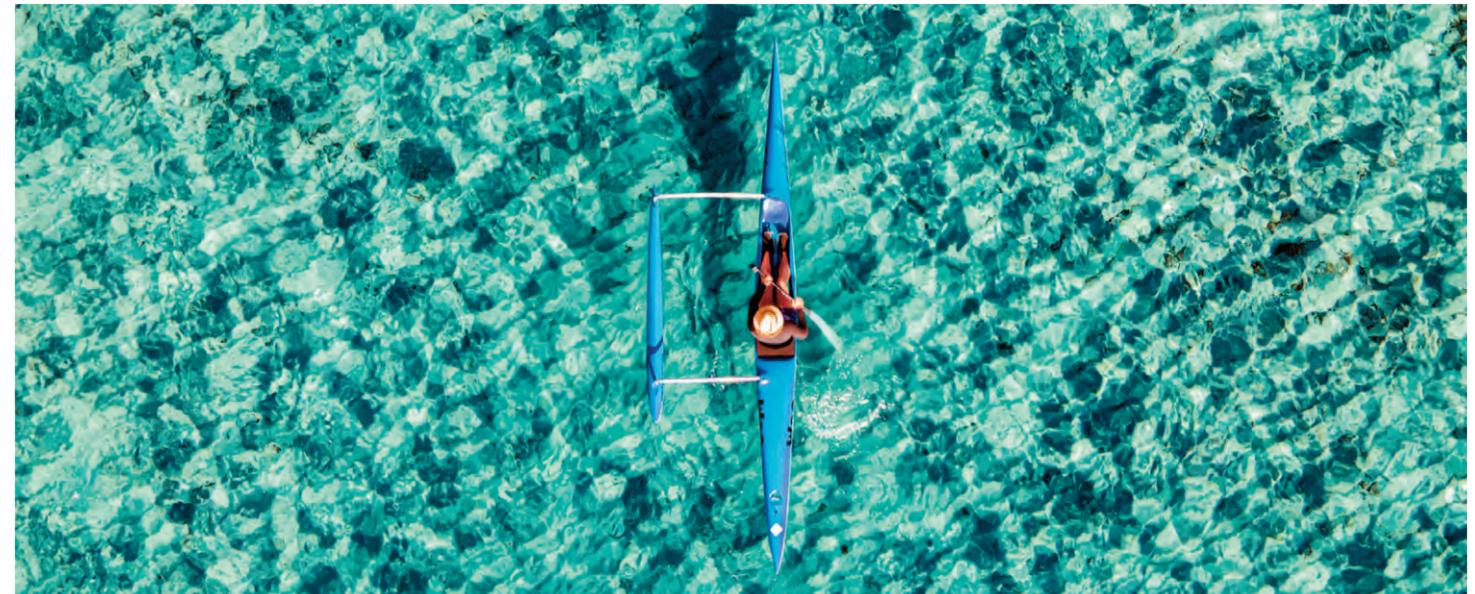
The 12 villages are also the scene of a multitude of prestigious and cultural events: art, music, theatre, sports and even society events, not forgetting the nightlife and memorable parties, with as the prelude beautiful sunsets over a bay awash with purple, pink and gold.

For the light here really is exceptional! It serves to perfect a natural setting of rare beauty, a territory enriched by its history and traditions, and a people who live and breathe the Provencal way of life. The magic of a moment is behind the myth associated with this destination; it has inspired the pens of writers, lent its palette of colours to painters, given sculptors their curves, supplied directors with scenery, brought out the talent in actors, and created legends. And all this before a growing media interest drew visitors from across the world, many of them celebrities who symbolise modernity and luxury, to a stage that has remained resolutely faithful to its roots. It's an alchemy that has withstood the test of time, going beyond the intermingling of worlds; a desire to be immersed in this welcoming land of contrasts, for whatever reason, yet always sharing the same passion: the Bay of Saint-Tropez.

As you browse through these pages and even more so during your stay with us, you too will recognise the ambivalence that makes this area so special: you are in Provence, in the Pays de Maurin des Maures, but also on the carefree Côte d'Azur. The people here love their region and enjoy life, so come and taste our bouillabaisse, the soupe de favouille (crab), the aioli, and ratatouille; enjoy our rosé wines, classic crus, honey, nougat and chestnuts, here where life moves to the rhythm of the seasons, beneath blue skies.

And remember, you are in the South. If one day someone says that in such and such a place there is dégun, don't look for a dégun, it simply means there is nobody there!

Bèn-vengu to our little corner of paradise on earth, welcome to blue, green, gold country.





Tourist Map Golfe de Saint-Tropez



Front cover : Bay of Saint-Tropez

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La Croix Valmer, Gigaro



Villages of Provence & Seaside resorts

In a protected environment, discover charming and picturesque villages, world-renowned seaside resorts, a great diversity of landscapes and architecture that gives a spectacular wealth to our territory. Between Provence and French Riviera, in the Var, 12 villages, 12 identities, but only one destination: the Bay of Saint-Tropez.

www.visitgolfe.com



CAVALAIRE-SUR-MER

Be happy all year long



Lined with fine sandy beaches protected by a circle of tree-covered hills, Cavalaire bay enjoys an exceptionally mild climate all year. This delightful yet lively resort has everything you could wish for to enjoy a family holiday, at your own pace, by the sea.

A paradise for sea lovers Awarded the France Station Nautique label, Cavalaire is a favourite spot for water sports enthusiasts. The magnificent bay offers the same rush of excitement be it for sailing, windsurfing, pleasure boating, jet-ski, flyboard or even the ULM hydro! It boasts some amazing diving areas also. From the harbour at the heart of the resort take a boat to the Iles d'Or, admire the sheer-sided inlets protected by the Conservatoire du Littoral or be lulled by the peaceful movement of the bay. And, of course, there are those simple pleasures like diving into a clear blue sea (qualité des eaux de baignade label), or lazing beneath the dappled shade of an umbrella somewhere on the 4km spit of fine sand.

Happy families Here happiness means being with the family, whatever the season: a nature walk overlooking the Mediterranean on the Fenouillet path, an outing at sea, or a game of pétanque in the village square. Cavalaire combines authentic past-times accessible to all: accommodation, great facilities and leisure activities, with everything designed for young and old alike. The resort was awarded the Famille Plus label, a measure of the quality of services on offer in this family-friendly environment.

Culture and sports all year round Superb facilities like the multi-media library with its 40,000 documents and first class exhibitions, or the cinema at the harbour, coupled with an eclectic program of events (theatre festival Tragos, Fête de la Saint-Pierre, Corso du Mimosa, Jazz Festival, les Scintillantes, the concerts "apéros scène"...) keep you entertained all year round. Not to mention the crazy cabaret evenings at the Casino and the Jackpots! Cavalaire is also famous for sports all year round with important events such as Caval'eau Jet, finish line of the famous Bay of Saint-Tropez Marathon.

A vibrant town centre What a pleasure it is to stroll along the Promenade de la Mer, on foot or rollerblades, or to relax with a glass of wine on a sunny terrace in between shopping sprees. Cavalaire has a wide range of shops to meet all your needs. In season as dusk falls, the streets come alive with music beneath the glow of multi-coloured neon lights to move onto one of the trendiest resorts on the Gulf to prolong this delicious itinerary.

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE From the Tourist Office, take Rue du Port. Start your walk by the harbour built in 1967 (restaurants, ice cream parlours, piano-bars and casino, ship chandlers). Take Rue du Cap to the market square, then Rue Pierre et Marie Curie, Avenue des Alliés (for shopping). Go through the porch at the bottom of Avenue des Alliés, to Place Benjamin Gaillard (and its pétanque pitches) in front of the Hôtel de Ville. Stroll along the Promenade de la Mer (shops and restaurants), then return by the footpath along the beautiful fine sandy beach.

INFORMATION

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THE MUSTS

- ▶ Weekly Provençal market (Wednesdays)
- ▶ Daily fish market (fresh from local fishermen).
- ▶ On the harbour, the Casino with slot machines, traditional games like English roulette, black jack...
- ▶ Archaeology site (exhibitions and site visits).
- ▶ The Landings' memorial, Lattre de Tassigny Esplanade.
- ▶ Media Library (exhibitions)
- ▶ Exploring the sheer-sided inlets (calanques) by boat, coastal path, day excursions.
- ▶ Ferry to the Iles d'Or and Saint-Tropez.

PANORAMAS

- ▶ Maison de la Mer : pretty view of harbour, bay and beaches.
- ▶ Le Belvédère : amazing view of the Iles d'Or and Cavalaire bay.
- ▶ On the heights of Montjean : remains of a Ligurian Oppidum, inhabited from the 6th to 4th century BC.
- ▶ Route des crêtes : exceptional view of the bay and headlands. Scent of eucalyptus, myrtle and strawberry trees.
- ▶ Maison Foncin, the "big white house" destined to become a cartography museum.
- ▶ Hidden and unusual : the little hamlet of Dattier.

A little history

Cavalaire (Heraclea Caccabaria) has its origins in a Roman port mentioned in Antonin's maritime guide for sailors in the Greek-Roman period. There are still some remains of Roman villas on the coast which produced and exported wine. Cavalaire belonged to the monks in the Pignans collegiate (13th AD) and from the 16th century to the house of Castellane, a powerful noble family from Provence. The port was functioning in the 15th century with fishermen's houses and stores, but from the 16th Cavalaire was sparsely inhabited. In 1895, construction of the Train des Pignes railway gave a boost to its development, and the municipality gained its autonomy in 1929. On 15 August 1944, it was the scene of the Provençal Landings. Later, tourism would flourish.

COGOLIN

Between earth and sea



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 Websites :
 Informations www.visitgolfe.com
 Reservations www.resagolfe.com



Ideally located between sea and land, Cogolin is a charming village with many facets; a detour into eternal Provence to meet our craftsmen, the ones behind our unusual cultural heritage, and not forgetting an open gateway to the sea.

A showcase for arts and crafts Near the boules square, peek through the windows of Manufacture de Tapis and listen carefully: you will hear the rhythmic murmur of the looms turning the ancestral expertise of the workers into unique rugs, carpets and floorcoverings. Two streets further on you have the opportunity to visit one of the most famous of Cogolin's pipe makers. These works of art carved out of briar wood are engraved by hand with a silver cockerel, the town's emblem. And what do we do in Cogolin with cane from Provence? We make reeds for saxophones, clarinets, oboes and other wind instruments. We could also mention glassware, antiques and local produce, and how can one resist - of all things - a tart: the famous tarte tropézienne, the one and only, a favourite with gourmets and made in Cogolin from a top secret recipe.

A rich heritage to discover The charm of this picturesque village is best discovered on foot, strolling through the streets to the top of the hill: arched passages, porches in serpentine or volcanic rock, the clock tower, Saint-Sauveur church and sundial, and all bear witness to a fascinating past. And if you push open one door? Try the Saint-Roch chapel which houses to see first class sculpture, painting and photography exhibitions. Then pull on your magical "seven league" boots and discover another side to the village, where nature is all around you. From the botanical footpath (Négresse district) to the Mole Valley, the bush in Hermitan to the vines on the Giscle, Cogolin hides her treasures well - and that's not all...

Cogolin: gateway to the Gulf For Cogolin is a municipality which extends as far as the sea; indeed it is home to one of the biggest harbours in the Gulf. The marina embraces Port Cogolin and the Marines, totalling 2,000 moorings, its quay lined with boutiques, boats for hire and restaurants. And then there is the beach at the end of the Gulf, with Saint-Maxime and Saint-Tropez as the backdrop facing each other to guard the entrance. Those who love the open sea can be found here for a swim. Others would prefer a stroll in optimist or in catamaran from the nautical base. In between, make a date with the water sports centre for a spin on an Optimist.

Culture in action Cogolin is an active town all year round, a subtle alchemy of cultures and lifestyles, with a range of events designed for a wider public. Take for example the "Foire Provençale", "trendy" concerts, dance shows, comedy, cafe with live theater "Le Lézard", summer festival "Terre-Mer", "Les Trail de Cogolin" or "Les Ruelles de Cogolin", or the meeting « Chopper and Co ». To note also the numerous concerts in the center Maurin des Maures, and the very attractive animations for Christmas and New Year holidays. Without a doubt, Cogolin is well worth a detour !

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE From the Tourist Office, go left into Rue Jean Jaurès; Place de la République, Hôtel de Ville and the memorial; take Rue du 8 mai 1945; Place de l'Abbé Toti, the church's Renaissance doorway is carved from serpentine, the other is bubbly volcanic basalt. After the fountain (serpentine basin), take Rue Nationale for the old village with its many porches; at n°46 a beautiful bourgeois residence (17th century) with serpentine porch. At the Portail Bas, turn left under the lava stone archway; Place Bellevue, then Rue du 19 mars 1962; and the second Saint-Roch chapel (19th), as the showroom on the right was the first Saint-Roch church (17th), later sold as national property and converted into a barn.



Les Marines



Marines beach

THE MUSTS

- ▶ **A stroll round the streets behind the town hall**; the first parish church was built in the 11th century; the current St Etienne and St Sauveur church has a central nave from the 15th, and on the left another one built in several stages during the 16th.
- ▶ **Saint-Roch Chapel, the Clock Tower** (Tour de l'Horloge), in front of which is the site of a drawbridge.
- ▶ Note the importance of **local craftsmanship** (reeds for musical instruments, pipes and carpets). Vineyards; and last but not least the coastline.

PANORAMAS

- ▶ **Place Bellevue**, with its orientation tableau where, on a clear day, there is a panoramic view of the village and Gulf of Saint-Tropez.
- ▶ **Rue des Moulins**, not far from an artists' studio, alludes to the five windmills that once existed in Cogolin.
- ▶ **On the coast**, from the harbour master's office in the Marines, uninterrupted views of the gulf and surrounding hills.

A little history

Legend has it that a boat from Pisa in Italy, bearing the body of the Knight Torpès, washed up in 68 on the shores of what is now Saint-Tropez. Then, along with its other unfortunate passengers, a cockerel and a dog, it ended up in a swamp surrounded by reeds; the cockerel flew off and landed in a field of flax. And so it was that the cockerel and the field became Cogolin, and the cockerel its emblem. Over the centuries, the village endured the history of Provence, the counts then the Wars of Religion.

GASSIN

The Gulf's watchman



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 Reservations www.resagolfe.com



Built on a steep hill, Gassin offers an exceptional 360° view of the Maures, the Gulf of Saint-Tropez and the Iles d'Or, stretching away across a picturesque landscape of vineyards and forests.

A renowned medieval village At an altitude of 200 metres, Gassin belongs to the exclusive Plus Beaux Villages de France club. A bell tower, town hall, post office and picturesque shops create the postcard image of a charming Provencal village. Yet Gassin has that extra soul that makes poets of us all, like the narrow cobbled streets, androuno in Provencal, serpentine porches, the stone facades of houses awash with bougainvillea, plumbago and Virginia creeper, all clustered round the church as if they don't want to slip down the slope. Then there's Place dei Barri, a superb balcony with famous restaurants, hundred-year-old Mediterranean hackberry trees, and below the intimate Hardy-Denonain botanical garden that watches over the Blessed Marie-Thérèse, with only a couple of Hermann tortoises as gardeners; here the Lys are black...

Outstanding vineyards Gassin has remained faithful to its viticulture. Seven vineyards protected by the nearby hills flourish on the plain or on the slopes, caressed by the soft southern light. These are ideal conditions for producing the grand crus of Côtes de Provence. The high point, the Route des Vins (wine route), is an opportunity to discover the history of these estates, before sampling their delicious wines.

The prestigious Haras Polo Club and Golf Club On the road crossing the Bourrian, just after the Maison des Confitures, an impressive gateway opens into the recently renovated Polo Club and magnificent grounds of Haras. Far from being an elitist club, this lovely venue is the scene of top level international tournaments that are open to the public, as well as prestigious private events.

A magnificent panoramic view From the orientation tableau, the azure blue sea stretches out over 240° of the 360°: you are definitely on a peninsula! It contrasts with shades of green in the vineyards, forest and Massif des Maures hills spread out over the remaining 120°, dotted with splashes of ochre-red tiles in the surrounding villages. In the distance, the legendary coastal road links the Gassin/Cogolin Marins marina to Saint-Tropez, with the sailing school and its catamarans beached on the shore under the quaint name "La Moune".

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE From the orientation tableau, follow the Promenade dei Barri tracing the line of the ancient ramparts (old Mediterranean hackberry trees); at the end, a panorama of the Hyères islands. Benedictines passage, Notre-Dame de l'Assomption church. Passage du Gué, Sarrazins gate, Rue Centrale, a pretty porch before the oldest part, the town hall (1584). Rue du Puits. Rue du Moulin (olive mill) and Androuno. Rue de la Treille, Rue du Troubadour Rollet de Garcin, Rue du Rompe Cuou, Rue Longue, Passage des Templiers... Free guided tours every Wednesday April to October.



THE MUSTS

- ▶ **In the village**, alleyways, cobbled streets, catades and archways; **Rue de la Tasco**, the highest in the village; **Androuno**, the narrowest (one person at a time!); **Rue Rompe Cul**, the steepest; **Porte des Sarrasins** (a portcullis is called a sarrasine).
- ▶ **The bell tower** (1558). ▶ **The Roman chapel** Notre-Dame de Consolation
- ▶ On the slopes of Gassin: **the Hardy-Denonain botanical garden**.
- ▶ **On the plain**, the AOC Côtes de Provence or Vins de pays **wine estates** (Château Barbeyrolles, Château Minuty, Domaine Bertaud Belieu, Domaine du Bourrian, Domaine Moulin Brulat, Domaine Cap Saint-Pierre, Domaine de la Rouillère and Domaine Tropez), all Master wine-makers on the Saint-Tropez peninsula.

PANORAMAS

The village is a panorama !

- ▶ **Orientation tableau** at Saint-Joseph: unique view of surrounding districts to the Estérel and as far as the Alps.
- ▶ **Place dei Barri** : view over the bay of Cavalaire and the Iles d'Or. Many viewpoints from the alleyways and passages.
- ▶ **Chapel of Consolation** for a Massif des Maures immersion; Moulins de Paillas for a panoramic view from an altitude of 325m.

A little history

The first known mention of Gassin dates back to 1190. The name, written Garcin or Gassin, is that of a person. In the early 14th century, there were around a thousand people living in his seignior. His land covered a bigger area than it does today having been nearly 6,500 hectares, reduced in 1929 by the detachment of Cavalaire-sur-Mer and again in 1934 by that of La Croix Valmer. The village was once enclosed by ramparts, barri in Provencal, which were used on occasions to build houses; remains of it can still be seen today. Gassin as a territory struggled to prosper due to lack of practical roads. Its development in the 19th century came from the plain, construction of carriageways and the railway.

GRIMAUD

The sea has its village



Flowers, stone, water... there is a sense of total harmony and completeness here. Grimaud combines all of the South of France's finest attractions: a stroll round a medieval village, a castle, a windmill, vineyards, beaches, and that rare pearl the waterfront town of Port Grimaud.

A village blessed by the gods The heart of this beautifully restored perched village has retained all its authentic character: cobbled streets, vaulted arches, bright pastel shutters on windows decorated with flowers, and splashes of bougainvillea. A tour of the village is a must to explore the churches and chapels that mirror a rich history, also found in the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires (ATP). The feudal castle, Château du Grimaud, on the hilltop guarded access to a territory (now the Gulf of Saint-Tropez) called "Le Freinet" from The Middle Ages to the French Revolution. The view from the top is unforgettable. After pausing for refreshment in a village restaurant, rendezvous at the Saint-Roch windmill, before strolling down to the ancient Pont des Fées ("fairies' bridge") to make a wish – remembering of course to keep it a secret !

The waterfront town of Port Grimaud It is impossible not to fall immediately under the spell of Port Grimaud, created in 1966 out of the imagination of a visionary architect, François Spoerry. Strolling along the quays, you will be entranced by the two thousand fishermen's houses topped with Roman tiles, their boats moored outside, and Venetian bridges linking small islands with their colonnades, retro street lights and bowls of flowers. Covering 90 hectares, this town on the waterfront with its labyrinth of canals is best viewed by boat – although you may need a map! When you add in the view from the modern church, the lively terraces, two weekly markets and all the water sports on offer from a large beach, you can appreciate why this exceptional place enjoys such an international reputation.

A celebration of culture In the village streets, the balconies of the castle up to the seaside, there is something on all year round. Be it in one of the many galleries lining the streets, contemporary art, painting and sculpture exhibitions, musical evenings, local traditions being celebrated, or the Festival de Musiques du Monde des Grimaldines, la Fête de la Lumière, Plage de Rock, Grimaud's cultural vocation is to highlight its rich historical heritage. And in the spring the Euro-Festival : 12 000 Harleys in the Bay, you imagine !

A benevolent nature Nature is all around you in a dazzling range of colours. From cork oak forests to fine sandy beaches, renowned vineyards to protected coves, from the massif to the sea linked by the plain and rivers, Grimaud offers a range of recreational activities. And for the contemplative souls among you, take time out to watch the daily metamorphosis of light, that red-pink-orange explosion in the sky at sunset with the medieval castle as a backdrop.

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE From the Tourist Office, take the lift to Place Neuve and the statuesque fountain celebrating the arrival of water pumped up from the plain. Head for Place Vieille and take Rue des Meuniers, then Rue des Templiers. From Saint-Michel church walk to the castle via Rue du Balladou. Descend via the chemin fléché, then Rue de la Treille and Rue du Baou. Chapelle des Pénitents, Rue de la Pompe (an old well). Walk up Rue du Gacharel and come back down under the porch to Place Neuve, visit the museum and return to your point of departure (circuit available at the Tourist Office).

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Cigales beach



Saint-Roch mill



Port Grimaud

THE MUSTS

- ▶ **Medieval castle** castle (historic monument); the façade of a Templars house, **chapels** (Saint-Roch, Pénitents blancs, Notre-Dame de la Queste on the plain), **church** (Saint-Michel) and way-side shrines scattered over the area; the Saint-Roch windmill; ATP museum (exhibitions all year), **pedestrian streets** (mullioned windows, doors framed in black lava or serpentine...).
- ▶ **Art galleries** and exhibitions at Beausoleil site.
- ▶ **Port Grimaud** (Petit Train tourist train: one-hour tour, April to October)

PANORAMAS

- ▶ **Château de Grimaud** : view of village, Gulf of Saint-Tropez and the Maures. The Pont des fées footpath.
- ▶ **Grimaud windmill** : fabulous view of the Maures and the plain.
- ▶ **Town hall esplanade**.
- ▶ **At Port Grimaud** : ecumenical church of Saint François (view of Port Grimaud and the bay of Saint-Tropez from the top).

A little history

Grimaud has a long history dating back to the Neolithic period. In the 11th century, its steep-sided location attracted the attention of the strategists. In 1058, a cartulary mentions the name "Grimaldo", so nothing to do with the Grimaldi family of Monaco (11th century). Its location on the Gulf of Saint-Tropez allowed them to control access from the north and the Massif des Maures from an early defensive occupation. During the 12th and 13th century, the Counts of Provence were lords of Le Freinet, and life revolved around agriculture. Until the 17th century, the castle was in control of the gulf, known in those days as "Golfe de Grimaud".

LA CROIX VALMER

Beautiful by nature

Cap Taillat



Discreet coves, long sandy beaches, vineyards down to the sea and protected headlands: La Croix Valmer offers an anthology of stunning landscapes and a proven commitment to protect the diversity of its environment for future generations.

A preserved paradise It is hard not to fall under the spell of this outstanding resort which slopes gently down to the sea. From the heights, the magnificent view covers the Maures and Estérel hills. In the woods, umbrella pines, mimosa trees, cork oaks and heathers provide a haven for protected species, (kestrels, the eastern bluebird, black-headed gulls...). Below, the coastline alternates between sandy beaches cradled in turquoise blue waters (Débarquement, Sylvabelle, Gigaro, Baie de Briande...) and rocky coastal roads harbouring protected coves (Vergeron, les Brouis...). The two jewels in this crown are Cap Lardier and Cap Taillat, accessed via the customs path. The Conservatoire du Littoral ensures these marvels are preserved to rival any international tourist destination. Two treasures coming back to life after the fire.

Quality of life Amazingly peaceful, away from the hustle and bustle, La Croix Valmer advocates quality of life for both its residents and visitors. The first Var commune to commit to sustainable development through Agenda 21, and boasting numerous labels (for the quality of its water, Blue Flag, tourism resort...), this destination pursues excellence to showcase a site where the environment is totally protected. The range of services are coupled with popular recreational activities - renowned dive sites, sailing, kayaking, beach volleyball, hiking trails on land or underwater. The invitation to relax is here all year round, with on the horizon the Port Cros National Park and Ile du Levant, accessible by boat from the Débarquement pontoon.

Wine tourism and walking through time A walk from the village to the sea is often through sun-drenched vineyards; the terroir of wine-producers passionate about their craft and proud to introduce you to excellent wines in their cellars, fruit of a mild climate all year round. More unusual, La Croix Valmer reveals an architectural heritage of great beauty, fabulous Belle Époque villas and hotels from the 19th century, but also many traces of a more distant past, including the Pardigon Roman ruins, the Napoleonic batteries at Lardier or the Provençal Landings' site.

A village with an ear for music Apart from the Provençal markets and nightlife, the children's shows and entertainment which are on all year round, in summer the family-oriented life of the village is lulled by the melodious harmonies of the Nocturnes Croisiennes or Festival des Anches d'Azur. These take place in the Forum Constantin, in a friendly cheerful atmosphere that is so characteristic of the welcome you can expect in La Croix Valmer.

A STROLL IN THE COUNTRYSIDE After visiting the village, take the car to the Gigaro beaches via Boulevard Tabarin. From the car park you can walk. Direction: Cap Lardier and Cap Taillat. The coastal path (marked in yellow) runs by the sea between dark mottled shale rocks and light sandy beaches. You reach Andati point by Brouis cove to find 300 hectares of aromatic bush and pine warblers, a little gem in one of the last gardens of Eden in the Var: honey-scented undergrowth, Aleppo and parasol pines, mimosa forest, rock-roses, tall heathers, prickly brooms and wild lavender. In winter look out for cormorants, gannets and swallows; in summer millions of cicadas: welcome to Provence by the sea !

INFORMATION

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Les Brouis



Débarquement beach



Gigaro beach



THE MUSTS

- ▶ In the village, the cross of Constantine the Great (1893), residential villas in the flared-style architecture of the last century; a weekly market; vineyards (Domaine de Chausse, de la Madrague, de la Croix).
- ▶ On the hill, "la maison des pères Saint-Esprit" (first historic hotel); glazed tiled roofs of neighbouring houses.
- ▶ The very picturesque, tree-lined road to Ramatuelle.
- ▶ Walking the three headlands in an area of natural beauty covering 350 hectares.
- ▶ The beaches (Débarquement, Sylvabelle, Héraclée, Gigaro, Bastide-Blanche...)
- ▶ Ruins of the Pardigon Roman villas, and Napoleonic batteries at Lardier

PANORAMAS

- ▶ **Route de la Corniche des Crêtes** : residential district on the edge of the Maures' forest. View point for the Gulf of Saint-Tropez and across Cavalaire bay, and down the Mole Valley if you go a little higher. In these woods, the ruins of Peinier farm (group of 18th century houses called "Ménages") near where a river emerges !
- ▶ **Route du Col** (between La Croix Valmer and Ramatuelle): panoramic view of the Iles d'Or and Gulf of Saint-Tropez.
- ▶ **All coastal paths** linking the three headlands offer sublime views.

A little history

The village owes its development to a winery (Domaine de la Croix) founded by silk industrialists from Lyon in 1882. The village, which was to be called La Croix, La Croix de Cavalaire then La Croix des Mimosas, became autonomous in 1929 and adopted the name La Croix Valmer in 1934. "La Croix" comes from a legend claiming that the Roman Emperor Constantine, on route to Rome in 312 to eliminate Maxentius, one of his rivals, saw a vision in the sky of a cross with the words In Hoc Signo Vincas (by this sign you will conquer). The resort's appeal as a tourist destination took off in the 1950s.

LA GARDE-FREINET

An island in the forest



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Whether you arrive from the Luc plain or the coast, a winding road will take you to La Garde-Freinet in the heart of the Massif des Maures : a Provençal village as discreet as it is picturesque and the starting point for many an unforgettable walk. Jeanne Moreau chose to live here and turned the spotlight on its charms.

A Provençal village The charm of La Garde-Freinet lies in the patina of time passed, like the houses of uneven stone and red tiled roofs which leave the valley and end up clinging to the hillside. You need to cross this maze of sloping streets, past ivy-covered houses, and to take narrow passages sometimes carved out of the rock, to discover a church or chapel, an old wash-house or spring water fountain. The village seems to have escaped the ravages of time; on the terraces of café-restaurants the days drift by peacefully for the occupants, waiting for the inevitable game of pétanque. On Sundays and Wednesdays the pedestrianized road hosts a Provençal market. Here the brand that goes into your basket is "made in..." with vegetables from neighbouring gardens, walnut bread from the bakery at the end of the street and crème de marron still turned by hand. In October, gourmets come from far and wide for the Fêtes de la Châtaigne to sample the marrons glacés, hot chestnuts, chestnut chip ice cream and other delicacies.

Discover a heritage Outside this festive period and that of the Bravade in May, the village's tranquil appearance hides a lively cultural scene that revolves around art galleries, intimate concerts and local craftsmen skilled in the trades of their ancestors and showcasing a rich heritage. If you still need convincing, just pop into the chapel of Saint-Jean, a national monument belonging to the Conservatoire du Patrimoine (heritage museum). We can tell you about Fort-Freinet, one of the village's early settlements perched on a rocky outcrop in the medieval period, the chapels of Saint-Clément and Miremer, or the mill of Adrech, or the history of cork, basketwork, beekeeping and even silkworms.

La Garde-Freinet - the nature resort La Garde-Freinet is the starting point for many walks, mountain bike trails and horse rides, with or without guide, which allow you to immerse yourself completely in the Massif des Maures. You get a better idea of the vastness of this green ocean from the orientation tableau overlooking the village, near a giant cross: from the Maures plain to Notre-Dame de Miremer, Plan de la Tour to Collobrières, Nature in all her glory and infinite shades of green lies before you. But it's not all green, especially if you take the Route des Crêtes, one of the most beautiful in the Var where you will discover the only stretch of white, a sparkling vein of quartz emerging from the shale: Les Roches Blanches. Welcome to the Massif des Maures, a kingdom of infinite panoramas.

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE From the Tourist Office, cross Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, follow Rue de l'Ormeau to reach Place du Marché and bandstand (1872), once home to a fish market. On the right: a wash-house (1812) and further on Place de la Vieille Fontaine. Head for Rue de la Vieille Caserne, then Place de la Vieille Mairie and the prison. Cross Place de l'Amour towards Rue St Joseph to find the old threshing area (Aire de Battage); keep on up to Aire de la Planète, starting point for hiking trails to the big cross and Fort-Freinet. Return to St Clément church built early 15th century (bell tower); from Place du Baou to Place Vieille.



THE MUSTS

- ▶ **Fort-Freinet** this fabulous natural listed site with moat cut into the rock has been renovated.
- ▶ **Saint-Clément Chapel** (revisited by Italian sculptor Di Teana in the sixties). Saint-Clément church.
- ▶ **In the village**: the picturesque streets and alleyways, old houses, weekly Provençal market, Place du Marché (site of former fish market), beautiful fountains and old wash-houses, art galleries, Conservatoire du Patrimoine (heritage museum with permanent and temporary exhibitions, including model of the original Fort-Freinet), Saint Jean chapel (exhibition space).
- ▶ **Hiking trails and mountain bike**
- ▶ **The Roches Blanches** (white rocks)

PANORAMAS

- ▶ **Fort-Freinet** : amazing look-out at an altitude of 450m, with panoramic view of the whole of the Mediterranean side of the Maures, the Argens plain and Provence Alps.
- ▶ **La Croix des Maures** : large cross above Fort-Freinet, with panorama and plunging view of the village.
- ▶ **Les Roches Blanches** : the highest point in the municipality at 638m: incredible scenery and view.

A little history

In the 10th century, there were three areas of settlement on land that is now La Garde-Freinet: Miremer hill, then called Miramar, around Saint-Clément chapel and lastly near the hamlet of Mourre. At the end of the 12th century, for safety reasons, these people moved up to live on Fort-Freinet hill. This majestic, impressive site reveals the remains of dwellings and a wide moat cut into the rock. For centuries it was mistakenly believed to have been a hideout of the Saracens who were in Provence in the 10th century. From the end of the 13th century, the inhabitants gradually moved down to a route linking the Maures plain to the Gulf of Saint-Tropez, on the site of the village now called La Garde.

LA MOLE

Welcome to a happy valley



On the edge of the Dom forest, time seems to stand still in La Mole valley which blooms to nature's rhythms. The starting point for many a long walk, the village does however have a few carefully guarded secrets to unveil...

An identity worth preserving La Mole may cultivate the tranquility of a small Provençal village surrounded by nature, yet it defends this advantage with passion, loudly proclaiming its autonomy. For although La Mole is often described as a gateway to the Gulf of Saint-Tropez' south-west, it really belongs to the Massif des Maures. An aerial view of the village, all but submerged in its beautiful green setting, only serves to confirm this assertion. The soul of this municipality is to be found in the motto engraved beneath the sundial of its magnificent little church: *souviens-toi de vivre* (remember to live). The original village and excellent restaurants have seen its population triple over the last few years with a successful extension, but that's as far as it goes. Nobody will encroach upon the forest path that leads to the discreet Sainte-Magdeleine chapel. And nothing may disturb the river as it winds its way between vines and roses: in La Mole nature reigns supreme, and the finest products available to you at the Sunday market.

An unforgettable panorama over a sea of green At the other end of the village, a remarkable chateau is proud to have seen Antoine de Saint-Exupéry grow up, the man who described these scenes with such joy in *The Little Prince*. Just opposite is an airstrip cut off by the stream which gives the village its name. Follow the bridge spanning a small road that crosses a beautiful plain, scene of the annual sheep and goats' transhumance migration into the hills, to the Niagara water park and slides amidst the pines, before it winds its way up to the Col du Canadel (pass). We hesitate to mention the breathtaking sea view in order to draw attention away from the village. We turn instead to gaze on this extraordinary valley, its road lined with renowned vineyards; to follow the sheep drovers' paths to the peaks and wild mountain streams; and to breathe in the aromas of humus, mushrooms and eucalyptus in a forest where horses run free. In the distance a splash of silver-blue emerges in this sea of green.

From the Verne Dam to the silence of the Chartreuse An oasis in the Massif des Maures hills, this is the Verne dam (built in 1991 of earth, clay and mica schist – height 42m, length of wall 235m). A large body of water fed by the Verne, a tributary of La Mole River, the dam is home to families of grey herons and cormorants, migratory birds in autumn and turtles in springtime who swim in the waterfalls watched by wild boars and foxes who come here to drink. You could be in the Alps. It is this site which provides fresh water to the salty communes of the Gulf. Although swimming and boating is not allowed, the path along the left bank leads hikers and mountain-bikers to the impressive Chartreuse de La Verne monastery (Carthusian), an historic national monument dating back to 1170 which has been immaculately restored by people who love this site.

A STROLL IN THE AREA From the church place, take the direction of Toulon. At 800 meters, turn right after the traffic light, then go straight on 500m and park your car next to the water treatment facility. To go to the water dam, we recommend the walkers to bring an adapted equipment, or for the others, you can take your mountain bike. You will enjoy walking or cycling on a large path for 2,5km. After these 2,5km, you will arrive at the water dam's gate, go further on 150m to reach it. You can either walk on or either around the dam. For the advanced, take the pathway on your left, located next to the flags. From there, you can reach the "Chartreuse de La Verne" monastery within 2 and a half hours. Be careful, if you decide to do this walk, don't forget your way back. The path along the water dam is stunning.

INFORMATION

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THE MUSTS

- ▶ La Mole chapel (private) in front of the airport.
- ▶ La Mole's parish church (19th) in the village centre.
- ▶ Sainte-Magdeleine church (11th) up on the hill – the castra and chapel are listed as regional heritage sites.
- ▶ The chateau (1km, direction Cogolin, a private estate visible from the road)
- ▶ International Airport of the Bay of Saint-Tropez Business, holiday and events flights.

PANORAMAS

- ▶ The Verne dam and road up to the Verne monastery.
- ▶ Le col du Canadel (267m) and the winding road up to a stunning view of Cavalaire bay and the Iles d'Or above Rayol-Canadel.
- ▶ Les Pradets (528m) for a panorama of the coast and the Maures coastal road with orientation table.

A little history

The first mention of La Mole as a territory dates back to 1008 in a cartulary charter from the Benedictine Saint-Victor of Marseille Abbey. The medieval village of Sainte-Madeleine was established to the west of the Maravielle plateau on a rocky basalt outcrop. From the end of the 12th century La Mole was partially included in the Chartreuse de La Verne abbey estate, founded in 1170. By the end of the 14th century the area was deserted. Several centuries later an attempt to repopulate it failed and it remained classified as uninhabited until the 1800s. In 1770, the seigniorship of La Mole was acquired by Emmanuel de Boyer de Fonscolombe, a knight and King's advisor in the Provence Parliament to Joseph-Jean-Baptiste de Suffren, marquis of Saint-Tropez and brother of the famous Bailli. The village as you see it today took shape during the 19th century.

LE PLAN DE LA TOUR

A village in Provence



Placed by a Divine hand into an amphitheatre of hills covered in trees and flowers, this remarkable village is surrounded by vineyards and blooms like a flower in the heart of the Massif des Maures. But don't be fooled - one hamlet hides many others...

“Benvenuto au Plan de la Tourre” From the Gulf of Saint-Tropez, a narrow road winds up through the cork oaks before swooping down to a plain and vineyards where the village has taken root. Acutely aware of the riches of its terroir, this typical and very lively Provencal municipality looks to the future and is determined to maintain its exceptional lifestyle in the heart of the Massif des Maures, a stone's throw from the sea. At first glance, this small town does not seem very big until you walk round the alleys discovering the church's campanile, fountains, the presbytery and wells of yesteryear. Beneath the plane trees in Place Foch, a Provencal market adds a lively splash of colour on Thursdays, and shops are open every day including Sundays. You can absorb the ambiance at “Quatre Chemins” on the bench. Plan de la Tour is a village in the south, a sibling.

No less than 25 hamlets ! Plan de la Tour is not a mere visit; it's a journey of discovery. Extending across quite a large area, the district boasts a unique feature for this region - 25 tiny hamlets scattered across the deceptively steep-sided hills. Each has its own character and way of life and it is always a joy to venture out in any season to seek out the pearls in this treasure trove of place names: Les Brugassières where the heather grows, Préconil, Vallauray, Vernet where the alder tree grows, Prat Bourdin and its menhirs, the Revest. Dotted about are numerous traces of the past dating back to prehistoric times.

Wild nature: land of discovery Would you like a preview? The Gorgues path is an easy walk accessible to all and gives you a taste of all that the commune has to offer: for example its vineyard, hamlets and two menhirs standing proud at a bend in the stream. There are footpaths criss-crossing the landscape, beckoning you to follow them. You can climb from the plain to the top of one of the many hills. You get a better idea of this world apart from San Peire, at an altitude of 416m: a paradise for hiking, mountain biking, horse riding or meditation... each to his own form of transport !

Traditions celebrated all year round Traditional festivals mark the eternal rhythm of the seasons; in March Corso floats covered in white heather, at the end of April plants and olive oil, the “Auto Retro Festival”, in May Saint-Pons blesses animals and all things agricultural during “fête de l'âne”, and in the summer months evening markets, dances and the Festival dans les Vignes performances. In September, when the grapes have already ripened on the vine, it's the turn of “vin cuit” (special wine) to be celebrated. It's Christmas time, as the hamlets put up their lights and prepare for the lantern parade and famous Grande Veillée when all the locals gather around the “cacho fue”.

A STROLL IN THE AREA From the Tourist Office walk down to Place Foch as far as Place de l'Oranger then take Rue Saint-Martin as far as the site of the old wells. Pick up Rue Pasteur and stroll round the back streets leading up to Place Clemenceau where the Mediterranean hackberry trees provide much needed shade to the church. Visit the open exhibition in the former presbytery before going through the porch to Rue de l'Horloge for a great view of the church's campanile. Return via Avenue du Général Leclerc as far as Foyer des Campagnes. For a longer stroll, explore the cobbled streets of the Emponse district several hundred metres on the right.

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THE MUSTS

- ▶ **Saint-Martin church** and its remarkable campanile, including the old presbytery, now partly divided into artists' studios and for exhibitions has been subject to a beautiful renovation in 2019.
- ▶ **The restored old districts** with cobbled streets.
- ▶ **Saint-Pierre chapel** and its large fig tree growing out of the stones.
- ▶ **The 25 hamlets** that make up the municipality.
- ▶ **The Prat Bourdin's 2 menhirs.** Follow the track by walk, pass the hamlet on 80 meters and then the ford. The first Menhir is located 40 meters above on the left side and the second one 70 meters away on the right.

PANORAMAS

- ▶ **The little hamlet of Forge** offers a delightful view of the village, vineyard and circle of hills that surround it.
- ▶ **And the road** as it swings round from one hillside to another offers some very characteristic images of the wild, often sparsely inhabited Maures hills.

A little history

The village of Plan de la Tour was created in 1792 as a break-away settlement of the eastern side of La Garde Freinet. The biggest hamlet at the time was Saint-Martin. In 1835, it grew to cover more than a thousand hectares of the western part of Sainte-Maxime. Man has been leaving tracks since the Neolithic era in the menhirs (see the Gorgues circuit) and dolmens. In the Middle Ages, the various seignories that made up the region belonged in turn to viscounts from Marseille, the Saint-Victor abbey, monks from the Lérins islands and in the 13th century to the Cistercians from Thoronet Abbey. The 25 hamlets in the municipality today represent the final phase of the reconquest of the territory in the 16th century by the Thoronet monks.

RAYOL-CANADEL-SUR-MER

A balcony on the Mediterranean



Imagine the Massif des Maures plunging into the crystal clear waters of the Mediterranean; between the two, having taken root on the coastal road and happy to enjoy this sublime view, a charming village with extraordinary gardens. There is such a paradise; allow us to introduce you.

A strip of land balanced between sea and sky The Route du Mimosa snakes along the side of the hill, winding its way for several kilometres through a landscape of infinite beauty. We have just passed the Foncin white house perched on a hill, when the Maures' coastal road begins above the old Provence railway line: a portfolio of images which will remain forever etched in your memory. Below, a succession of pristine coves and strips of sand delight those who love swimming and water sports. Their names are evocative: pointe du figuier (fig tree point), anse du petit port (little port cove), and the beaches of Rayol, Canadel and Pramouquier stretching as far as the sheer cliff face of Cap Nègre. Here the clear blue water is enhanced by thousands of mica particles that reflect the sun's rays, making the sea sparkle more than usual.

A health and seaside resort that takes you by surprise This small village has many treasures to reveal. The monumental shale stairway begins by the sea and takes you way above the Patec Pergola to the flag, the highest point in the municipality and symbol of freedom. Both are listed as regional heritage sites for their original architecture and breath-taking views. The church and chapel, on the edges of the village, are also worth a detour; the first for its unusual exterior and the second for its colourful interior, as well as the magnificent 19th century villas and the pretty little harbour of Canadel. As for recreation and restaurants, will you have time to discover them all ?

Jardin des Méditerranées The resort's reputation is intimately linked to that of the "Jardin des Méditerranées", as the landscaping à la Renoir is among the most beautiful on the Côte d'Azur. Make a journey in the open air through several hectares of plant species from five continents, suited to a Mediterranean climate: from Australian acacias to the agaves of Mexico, bamboos from Asia to New Zealand flax, palm trees from Chile to the carob trees of the Mediterranean – a guided tour is a must. And then there is the fascinating history behind the Domaine du Rayol, the creative workshops, guided tour, snorkelling in summer to explore the underwater fauna and flora, the gardener's organic coffee break. Look around you, breathe in the scents and dream on! This is a real Garden of Eden; how can one bear to be away from it ?

From the pass a 360° panorama that takes your breath away ! From the top! In fact it's impossible to imagine the surroundings without taking the twisty road up to the top of Col du Canadel, amidst the oaks, broom and strawberry trees which thrive even in the brown rocky terrain. At the top of the pass, a fabulous view described on the orientation table awaits you with the Hyères islands as the backdrop. "He who comes here one day, always returns" is the motto inscribed in gold on the municipality's crest.

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE From the Tourist Office, head for Avenue Mistral. Climb as far as the church. Reach the Patec Pergola and take the path to the monumental stairway. Go down as far as the road, cross it and pick up the stairs again, until you meet the earth road (former railway line). Go under the iron bridge and continue to Avenue des Belges. Pass in front of the Domaine du Rayol (Jardin des Méditerranées), take Avenue Rigaud to the junction, Avenue des Américains to the hotel "Le Bailli de Suffren". Go back up the stairs to Jean Aicard Square; return on Avenue Capitaine Thorel.

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THE MUSTS

- ▶ **Coves, beaches,** the underwater trail and endless walks on the old Provence railway line.
- ▶ **Domaine du Rayol,** for its fascinating history, its acquisition and resurrection thanks to the Conservatoire du Littoral; the Patec Pergola and its monumental steps, the memorials to the Africa Commandos buried in the national necropolis.
- ▶ **The commemorative plaque** to Sir Henry Royce (who stayed here from 1911 to 1931).
- ▶ **Canadel's chapel** and Rayol's church.

PANORAMAS

- ▶ **The Patec Pergola,** to realise that blue is a natural colour and not one dreamt up by a painter's imagination!
- ▶ **The Col du Canadel (pass):** close your eyes as you face the bay then open them suddenly! To prolong the enjoyment, take a hike along the Route des Crêtes, either towards Bormes or Cavalaire (when the route is open): a long tracking shot over a deep blue sea.

A little history

Until the 18th century, there was nothing: a wild coast impossible to access. And yet how beautiful. The arrival of the railway (1885) sowed the seeds for tourism in this region. It comprises five districts (Les Pierrugues, Dattier, Fenouillet, Rayol and Canadel) spread across 300 hectares. The "Terre de France" company was responsible for significant infrastructure work in the Rayol district: 35km of road, the village, stairs, gardens, hotels, the Patec Pergola, a jetty, etc. – the goal being to create a luxury estate. This district, created as an extension to La Mole (1925), became a health and seaside resort before attaining its independence in 1949 under the name Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer. Two memorials serve as a reminder that Canadel beach was the scene of the Provence Landings on 15 August 1944 at midnight.

RAMATUELLE

A jewel in the crown



Coiled on a hillside surrounded by stunning scenery, Ramatuelle village looks out over vineyards sloping down to Pampelonne beach. To the south, pine forests border pristine headlands of timeless beauty to complete the backdrop to this slice of Provence on the Côte d'Azur.

Discreet on the hill Ramatuelle is a village apart, cradled by nature. Its characteristic spiral shape seems to have been protecting it forever from the chaos of the outside world. As you enter the medieval heart of the village, the cobbled streets curve round as if to imitate the stronghold of a bygone era coiled around its chateau. Jasmine, bougainvillea and honeysuckle are nearly everywhere in this village, where the view stretches away to the sea or up to the hills and windmills of the Paillas mill. On Thursdays and Sundays Place de l'Ormeau and its charmingly authentic café comes alive with a colourful Provençal market. The attractive stone houses open their pastel shutters onto covered stalls of local crafts, produce and fine art galleries - enough to survive should the Barbary pirates return !

An incomparable coastline It is hard to imagine so many wonderful sights so close together! First a real gem, just 20 minutes on the coastal path from the picturesque Escalet coves, Cap Taillat which is a listed site protected by the Conservatoire du Littoral. Then a little detour of 100m via the Briande dolmen, proof that humans were here in Neolithic times, before the path to the Camarat lighthouse opposite bird island, home to colonies of gulls and cormorants. Then we have Bonne Terrasse bay, the final rampart before the legendary four-kilometres of sand that is Pampelonne. And what a beach! Forget the movie images with Brigitte Bardot or Louis de Funès, this nature area is one of the most beautiful beaches in Europe: a paradise for those who just want to laze on the sand or in the water. It is an economic force for the town with 21 beach establishments, all with a singular identity, but respectful of the new sustainable development scheme.

A land of festivals and entertainment Ramatuelle is the inner sanctum of numerous artists; we know for example that Gérard Philipe lived here. In 1985 the Brialy Festival was launched, named after its instigator Jean-Claude Brialy. Now called Festival de Ramatuelle, it welcomes artists who attract thousands of loyal fans every summer. The same goes for the Jazz Festival, and world or classic music. From April to October, the balmy days and nights have something new to offer: exhibitions, evening markets, concerts, Jumping Athina Onassis, nature walks or children's games, discovery of the mill - nobody is forgotten, with "Ramatuelle monte le son" or "Ramatuelle fait son cinéma" ! In every corner, this exemplary village manages to reconcile excellent events with an enviable quality of life and strong community spirit.

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE From Place de l'Ormeau (named after an elm planted in Henri IV's time to mark peace and his conversion to Catholicism), since replaced by an olive tree; to Notre-Dame Church; then under the arch to the old village; stroll up the narrow winding streets enclosed within the walls of the old ramparts. You come to Place Gabriel Péri, formerly Place du Château, a stately home altered in the 18th century by the noble Audibert family. Rue Victor Léon and the Saracens doorway. Walk up that road then down Avenue Clemenceau to the ASSDN memorial; then to the Sainte-Anne chapel (16th century) and cemetery where the actor Gérard Philipe is buried. Return to the village centre.

INFORMATION

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Label "Qualité Tourisme" 1st category
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Cap Taillat



Pampelonne beach



THE MUSTS

- ▶ **Notre-Dame church** (serpentine door, etc.); **the manor house** (village centre) with bronze door-knocker and wooden fireplace, arched doorways, fortifications; **the Saracens doorway** (hinges and portcullis slots); strolling round the alleyways (doorways and windows, some dating back to the 15th century); Rue du Clocher: **prison cells** from the Napoleon III era (a roof-less white building of round shapes).
- ▶ On the plain: **750 hectares of vineyards** and their estates.
- ▶ On the coast: **Pampelonne and Escalet beaches**; the coastal path; Cap Taillat and Cap Camarat

PANORAMAS

- ▶ **From the Paillas windmills** (active up to the 19th century - one was restored in 2002 and can be visited): panoramic view from an altitude of 325m of Cavalaire bay/La Croix Valmer on one side and Pampelonne beach on the other.
- ▶ **Col de Collebasse** : a picturesque route to La Croix Valmer through a lovely forest of oaks and parasol pines.
- ▶ **Above the village** : view of town hall and Boulevard du 8 mai 1945.
- ▶ **Rue Victor-Léon** : orientation tableau with view of village, Cap Camarat, the Estérel hills and the foothills of the Alps.
- ▶ **The lighthouse route**

A little history

The Ramatuelle area has been inhabited by Man since Pre-historic times, as the carved flints, polished axes and pottery fragments unearthed by the archaeologists testify. The origin of the name Ramatuelle remains a mystery although some believe it may be Arabic. The village is mentioned for the first time in the 11th century in a Saint-Victor de Marseille Abbey charter. It has retained its structure and medieval walls. In the Middle Ages, the parish church which at the time was called Notre-Dame du Pin was more or less where the town hall is today. The current church was built at the end of the 16th century backing onto the ramparts. A 14th century watch-tower was adopted as the bell tower. On 15 August 1944, Pampelonne beach played a role in the Provence Landings.

SAINTE-MAXIME

Elegant and familial...



Sainte-Maxime and the marina is a popular seaside resort in the Mediterranean, locked into the Massif des Maures by a vast area of woodland which extends well beyond the surrounding hills. The most populous town in the Gulf it is very welcoming and one of the liveliest in the area.

Sea, boats & sun... If you come from Issambres, you will not want to tear your eyes away from the vast blue stretch of water ahead. The waves break first on a rugged coastline, before reaching the beautiful sandy beach of Nartelle, popular with fans of watersports and swimming. At the far end lies Pointe des Sardinaux, a protected nature area facing a beacon out at sea and a well-known site for scuba diving. The three bays which follow symbolise the idealised image we have of the Côte d'Azur: lovely parasol pines in harmony with the coast road; a few hundred metres further on the marina with space for 800 boats, watched over by the church's clock tower; and the town centre's beach just a stone's throw away. Before this, over the landmark bowstring bridge and past the Club Nautique, you will discover all the attractions of the Croisette beach: to port, a carpet of smooth pebbles, to starboard hot sand, and aft diving into turquoise blue water.

Atmosphere guaranteed all year! Sainte-Maxime is a lively place all year round. You love shopping? You will be spoiled for choice with all the boutiques! You are active? Every kind of watersport is available (sailing, diving, boating, jet-skis, water skiing...), but you can also play golf, tennis, do all forms of hiking (mountain bikes, horse riding, walking), or stroll with the family in the Myrtes botanical garden. You love shows? We are already preparing the next ones in the Théâtre de la Mer and Carré Sainte-Maxime cultural centre, the finest in the Gulf. Interested in architecture - then the art deco circuit is for you; or in events - Free Flight, Var Rally and the Jet-Cup; or going out - the new waterfront's café terraces welcome you with music and the restaurants are legion. But that's before perhaps winning the jackpot at the Casino! Yes, atmosphere guaranteed in Sainte-Maxime, the station can be proud of its cultural programming.

Provence in the heart Sainte-Maxime likes to remind us of its Provençal roots; February celebrate the Mimosa and the votive festival in may invites you to find out more about the folklore and parade heralding the arrival of mimosa. We also celebrate Saint Peter, Saint John and the olive tree, as Sainte-Maxime is home to the largest olive grove in the Var. The very soul of Provence is revealed with just a few drops of this golden elixir on local seafood or produce from the land. There is a real sense of being at home here; and to guard this legacy the town takes part in quality initiatives like Famille Plus, guaranteeing a personalised welcome for children and parents, the Blue Flag for quality bathing water and it is a station classée de tourisme for the quality of the welcome. Of course you cannot leave the area without doing a tour of the mimosa forest. To get there head for the Col du Gratteloup via the new highway and take the picturesque route to Plan de la Tour; then another 2.6km to the parking area and start of the Catalugno path. It's another world: you will see a world blue-green-gold; it's wonderful!

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE Start from Promenade Simon Lorière to Avenue Général de Gaulle; turn right at Condroyer quay (little mermaid statue by local sculptor Jean Portal); go as far as the harbour master's office (architecture reminiscent of a ship). Come back via the shopping mall, cross Avenue du Général de Gaulle - Tour Carrée and opposite is the church (for its main altar and bell tower). Go up Rue Jean Aicard, then Rue Paul Bert and Montée de la Résistance to the covered market. Place du Marché (fountain by sculptor Gérard Zislin). Descend via Rue Courbet then Rue and Place des Sarrasins. Continue to Place Louis Blanc, Rue de Verdun and Avenue Jean Jaurès in the town centre; then Avenue De Latre de Tassigny and Casino beach (sports alley, Provence Landings memorial, gardens by the sea and Promenade Simon Lorière).

INFORMATION

Tourist office of Sainte Maxime :
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Reservations www.resagolfe.com



Croisette beach



Croisette beach



Nartelle beach

THE MUSTS

► **A stroll along Sainte-Maxime's seafront** which has had a makeover; shopping or having an ice cream or refreshments on a terrace. For a culture break, visit the Tour Carrée Museum to learn more about local traditions. Be sure to go through the old town especially for the architecture from the inter-war period (several buildings have the Patrimoine XXe Siècle label as being important legacies of the 20th century). Enjoy this break to breathe in the scent of spices, fresh fruit and vegetables, charcuterie & flowers in the market. For fish, head for the harbour and the local fishermen, for bric-a-brac the Marché Forain, Promenade Simon Lorière. If you need to unwind, aim for the Myrtes' botanical gardens, right there beside the sea where you can swim, relax and dream.

PANORAMAS

- **From the forecourt of the parish church,** is a lovely panorama of the whole of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez.
- **From the town hall's esplanade** (once a silkworm farm) a magnificent view.
- **From Tourelles Château** where Léon Gaumont lived;
- **From Pointe des Sardinaux,** pine woods ideal for picnics and diving to explore the marine wildlife.

A little history

Sainte-Maxime is named after a nun from Provence, a mother superior in the Callian monastery who lived in the 8th century. The saint is celebrated every year in May during the Bravade, a colourful local festival. Throughout the Middle Ages Sainte-Maxime was deserted. In the 15th century the monks from Thoronet Abbey, which owned the territory, concocted a plan to repopulate the area by allocating parcels of land. The project failed and it was not until the 18th century that Sainte-Maxime developed with houses being built by the sea, and the embryonic village and harbour began to take shape. The Toulon-St Raphaël railway built at the end of the 19th century boosted the economy and opened the way to tourism.

SAINT-TROPEZ

An enduring legend



One last bend in the road and the violet-pink village appears. The magic and fascination with this legendary village has not gone away. And as spring approaches, the soul of Saint-Tropez, village of art, culture and traditions reveals a lighter side.

A prestigious destination Like the celebrities who flock here in summer, drawn to this idyllic isle on a beautiful peninsula, Saint-Tropez is a star which in season unveils a host of sumptuous yachts, prestigious brands, luxury hotels, glamorous boutiques and fabulous cars. All compete for the attention of visitors marvelling at a surreal yet friendly merry-go-round. This authentic village will captivate those who love the sea or are history buffs or fans of culture and the Provençal lifestyle, many of whom prefer to come out of season. It is this ambivalence that lies behind the charm and special nature of Saint-Tropez, a leading light on the international tourist scene. The soul of Saint-Tropez thrives on a fusion of cultures.

An exceptional heritage Nature and history are part of the village's key attractions. From the Citadelle - home to the maritime history museum - you discover a sweeping panorama from Canebiers bay to Graniers beach and Salins, as far as Bouillabaisse. Then there is the emblematic purple and gold clock tower; the domes of the Miséricorde and convent chapels; fortification towers; and the elusive lighthouse flashes at sunset, over a bay that disappears into the open sea against a backdrop of snow-capped peaks in the Southern Alps. What a pleasure it is to walk the streets and squares, to be part of this convivial ambiance and be steeped in the fragrance of a Provençal market, before arriving at the legendary harbour and its mermaids via La Ponche.

Artists of light When he anchored here, Signac was instantly overwhelmed by the light: "I am not stopping over, I'm staying!" That was in 1892. He went on to preside over the fair for independent artists (Salon des Indépendants) that everyone dreamed of exhibiting in; young unknowns like Matisse, Marquet, Derain and Bonnard, all captivated by the light. Today the Annonciade Museum puts on superb exhibitions of their work. They would be joined later by esteemed writers like Maupassant, Colette, Eluard and Sagan. More unusual, the Maison des Papillons (butterfly museum) is also worth a detour. Another window opening onto this village that generates legends is the "musée du Cinéma et de la Gendarmerie": among others we need look no further than the saga of the gendarmes embodied by the inimitable Louis de Funes and Michel Galabru, the unforgettable Romy Schneider and of course the icon among icons, Brigitte Bardot, sublime in *Et dieu créa la femme*.

International events The sea is at the heart of it all: from Les Voiles Latines to the Giraglia Rolex Cup and the Sail GP, the Festival Armen to the Trophée du Bailli, the harbour and its bay are the scene of top level events like the flagship Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, the largest gathering of classic boats and modern racing yachts in the Mediterranean. The village also hosts many other wonderful festivals (piano, the Antipodes film festival, Château de la Moutte music festival), fairs (antiques, contemporary artists), the Paradis Porsche, the Mystères debates, Christmas festivities and the upmarket braderie clearance sale, not forgetting the traditional Bravade when Tropezians pay homage to their patron saint. How fortunate are those who were born into this earthly Paradise!

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE From Quai Jean Jaurès, arrive at the fish market (entrance to old village) then Rue des Commerçants, Rue du Clocher and Place de l'Hôtel de Ville; descend via Quai Mistral and Place Garezzio (Château Suffren and Tour Guillaume); on the right, the Jean Réveille jetty and Tour du Portalet (16th century), one of four towers enclosing the town with the ramparts. Arrive at Tour Vieille then under the archway of La Ponche, former entrance to the town; Place des Remparts, Rue d'Aumale, Place de l'Ormeau, Rue Jarlier and the tower of the same name. Then Rue de la Citadelle, Rue du Portail Neuf, Rue de la Miséricorde, Rue Gambetta and Place des Lices, famous for its pétanque players and Provençal market (Tuesday and Saturday mornings).

INFORMATION

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Bouillabaisse beach



La Ponche



THE MUSTS

- ▶ The harbour very early in the morning. Old La Ponche port.
- ▶ The parish church with bust of the patron saint and the organ, concerts on the last Sunday of the month.
- ▶ Annonciade Museum, Museum of Maritime History, Maison des Papillons (butterfly museum); Château Suffren and Guillaume tower; the Lavoir Vasserot; and the Citadelle; the mariners' cemetery (view over Canebiers bay); Château de la Moutte.
- ▶ The markets on Place des Lices, and the daily fish market.
- ▶ Several chapels (Convent, Sainte-Anne, Saint-Elme, Saint-Antoine, la Miséricorde...); the Jean Réveille jetty extended by the Red Lighthouse.
- ▶ Streets, tiny squares and andrones (very narrow alleyways).

PANORAMAS

- ▶ From the Sainte-Anne chapel, va sweeping view of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez as far as the Southern Alps and Ramatuelle bay.
- ▶ Jean Réveille jetty, ideal place from which to watch regattas.
- ▶ Foot of the Citadelle's ramparts, superb panorama of Saint-Tropez bay (favourite spot for watching the sunset).
- ▶ From the Terrace of "Le Sube" (view over the port).

A little history

Born in Pisa, Torpes was an army officer under Nero who converted to Christianity and refused to renounce his new faith. Under the emperor's orders he was decapitated, his body put in a boat with a dog and cockerel and abandoned at the mouth of the Arno. Legend has it that the Ligurian current carried the boat to the shores of the Gulf town of Heraclea, which took the name Saint-Tropez. In 1558, to defend the village against repeated attacks by Barbary pirates, the council formed a local militia led by a Town Captain, a decision ratified by the Kings of France. Agriculture, fishing, coastal then ocean-going shipping and naval shipyards would occupy most of the men in the area. It was not until the 19th and particularly the 20th century that artists, writers and filmmakers marked the beginning of a golden era heralding the town's burgeoning popularity as a tourist destination.



The Blue country

“ Here reigns a shade of blue
others only dream of, yet on the shores of Provence
it bathes reality in its aura ”

Colette



Prelude TO THE SEA

“ For a long time I dreamed of the day when I could see again the sea and sky united on the vanishing horizon. ”

www.visitgolfe.com

Dream beaches and creeks



Gassin, La Moune



La Croix Valmer

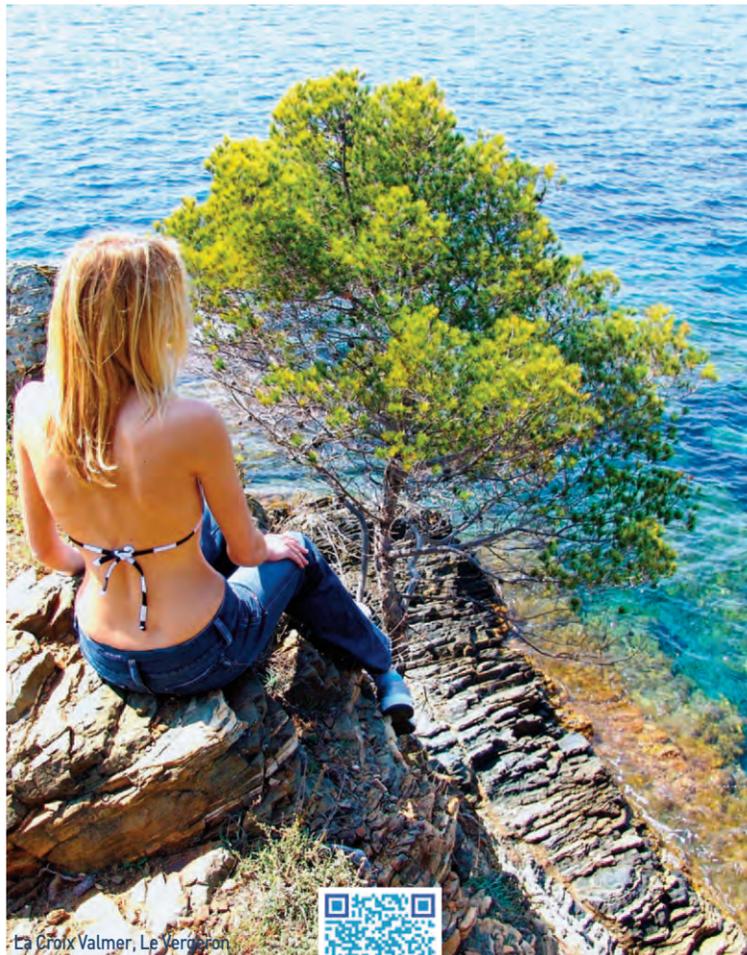


Rayol beach

Ramatuelle, Pampelonne beach



Turquoise blue dreams



La Croix Valmer, Le Vergeron



CAVALAIRE

Bonporteau beach

Amidst a big pine forest with eucalyptus, tamarisk and palm trees, a small cove surrounded by rocks.

Cavalaire beach

A long sandy beach where private (restaurant and sun loungers) and public areas alternate, and the water is crystal clear.

Pardigon beach

An amazing space: big sandy beach with volleyball pitches (free) - Lifeguard.

COGOLIN

Marines de Cogolin beach

Beautiful beach with giant palm trees at the end of the Gulf. View points for Saint-Tropez and Sainte-Maxime not far away

GASSIN

La Moune beach

A tiny beach with reeds for shade, and the only one run by this village. Relaxed and sporty atmosphere with sailing club.

GRIMAUD

Port Grimaud beach

Nothing but sand at the end of this beautiful Gulf - Dream beach for toddlers (water slide), plus pedal boats & sailing school.

Gros-Pin beach

Follow the seawall to the left: a Greek temple gives this beach a different character. Large sandy cove sheltered from the traffic.

Guerrevieille beach

Pretty sandy beach near car park. Clear view of Saint-Tropez and its citadel!

Les Cigales beach

With its lighthouse and picturesque bridge like a basket handle, this small beach is popular because of its unique and original setting.

LA CROIX VALMER

Débarquement beach

A big beach full of charm that played a key role in the Provence Landings - Access free - Small village with bars, restaurants and shops.

Vergeron beach

Sheltered paradise with limited towel space. Here everything is amazing: view, site, fauna, flora, quality of water, scenery ..

Sylvabelle beach

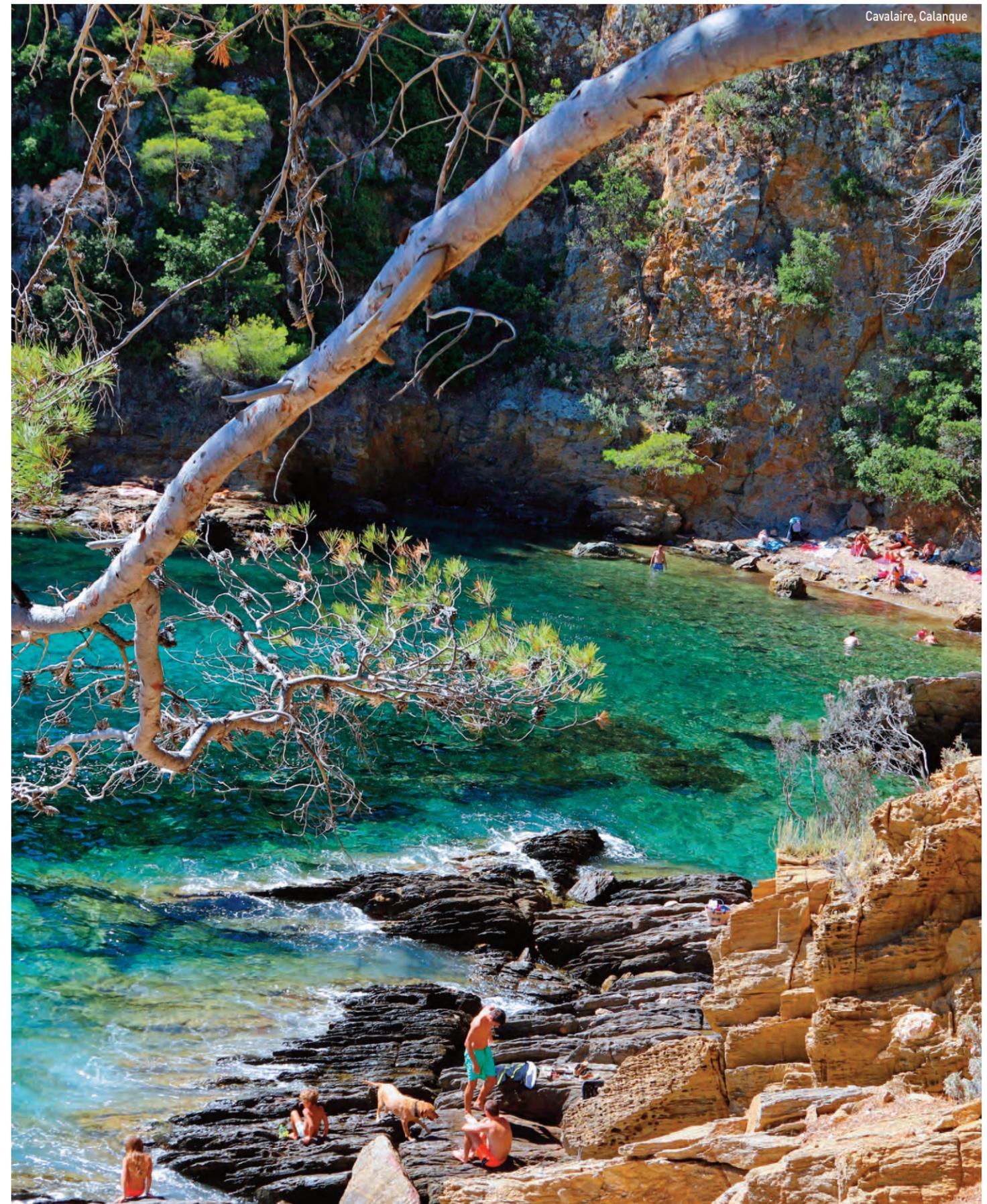
A peaceful lovely place for relaxing - No shade so bring a beach umbrella and water.

Héraclée beach

White sandy beach gently sloping into transparent water. Coastline is public and the beach private - Water games.

Gigaro beach

Large family beach of fine sand, with a marine path between rocky inlets - Fabulous sunsets!

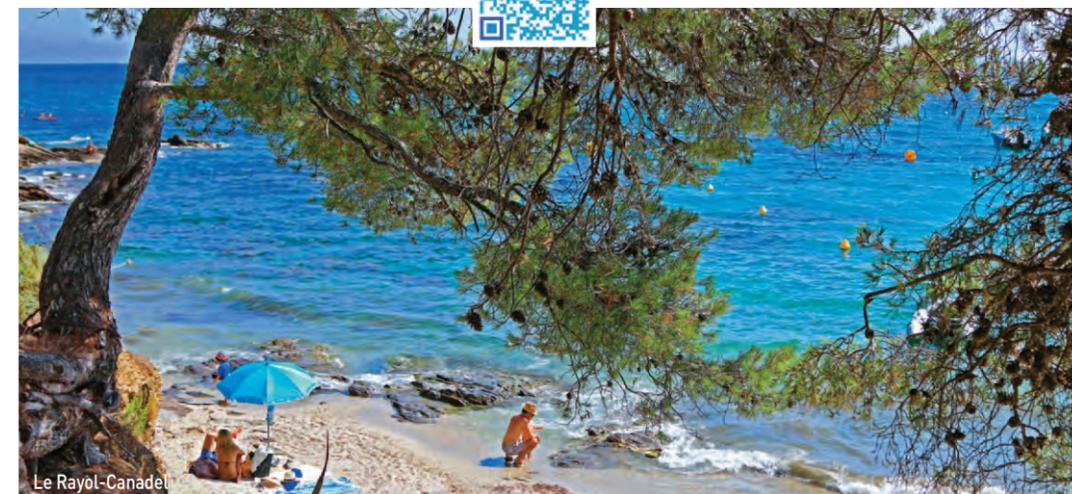


Cavalaire, Calanque



Sainte-Maxime

Indigo dream



LA CROIX VALMER (next)

Brouis beach

A slice of wilderness.
A paradise on earth when only migratory birds flocked here to admire the unusual flowers..

Cap Lardier beach

A listed headland with breathtaking views and endless walks. Too steep to swim here. Mosaic of landscapes and aromatic plants in the scrub.

La Briande beach

Only beach on the peninsular which is at the end of a vineyard. Turquoise water, fine sand, waves lapping, in full sun.

Cap Taillat beach

and unforgettable view.
Gulls soar and swoop from dizzying heights. Please note: the land is fragile.

RAMATUELLE

Escalet beach

Succession of delightful little beaches, coves and inlets of limpid water between polished rocks and golden sand - Mask and snorkel essential.

Cap Camarat

An "end of the earth" spot covered in a forest of pine and oak trees on rugged granite rocks sculpted by the elements.

Rocher-des-Portes

And Bird Island - Cormorants and black-headed gulls wheel about on the currents - Spectacular.

Bonne-Terrasse beach

Small sheltered cove popular with fishermen. Higher up is Eddy Barclay's old villa where the finest singers have performed.

Pampelonne beach

A legendary beach, the most famous in Europe. 4.5km in length in an area ranked "espace naturel remarquable". Ideal for swimming, sunbathing and recharging the batteries.

RAYOL-CANADEL

Rayol beach

A few steps down to feel the soft caress of sand between your toes; an intimate beach with a touch of the wilderness about it, a protected corner of the Var.

Canadel beach

At the foot of tree-covered hills, this long wide sandy beach faces the Iles d'Or, with just the lapping of the waves to disturb you !

Pramousquier beach

Golden sand beach where shale crystals are reflected in the turquoise blue Mediterranean sea.

Ultramarine dream



SAINTE-MAXIME

Croisette beach

If you love sea and sun, this long protected beach to the west of town is for you - Sand and pebbles to suit everyone !

Town center beach

A public beach in the centre of town. Convenient, easy access, fine sand.

Madrague beach

Beautiful scenery and peaceful with gently sloping beach into the sea - Some pebbles and rocks, but never too many people...

Pointe des Sardinaux

Please note: the area is fragile. Rocky point that has been rehabilitated and replanted, with picnic tables installed...

La Nartelle beach

Beautiful long stretch of sand - Building sandcastles highly recommended (bring bucket and spade).

Elephants beach

Takes its name from the famous Babar's Travels comic strip. Beautiful sand spit - Public beach. Water-skiing and jet-ski.

La Garonette beach

The furthest east of the Saint-Tropez peninsula. Public beach with lifeguard and parking. Nothing but golden sand...

SAINT-TROPEZ

Salins beach

Family beach popular with locals where you can catch crabs in the rock pools.

La Moutte beach

Following Chemin des Treilles de La Moutte, the sea is at the end - 300m of fine sand bordered by reeds ideal for a siesta .

Canebiers beach

A magnificent 200m stretch of sand. Family atmosphere. Public shower. Diving platform in the bay.

Les Graniers beach

This little cove has a natural, unspoilt side to it. Beautiful limpid sea - Sandy beach but pebbles in the water.

La Ponche beach

Two adjoining beaches at the foot of fishermen's houses along the oldest district of Saint-Tropez. Coarse-grained sand and pebbles.

La Bouillabaisse beach

Wide beautiful beach, facing into the bay opposite the Massif des Maures. Public and private beaches.





HARBOURS, MARINAS, YACHTS AND LIGHTHOUSES

On this glittering coastline it is not just about fun and relaxation. Indeed, the harbours and marinas are a driving economic force for Sainte-Maxime, Cogolin, Port Grimaud, Saint-Tropez and Cavalaire. Some even have boatyards that were valued by the captains of yesteryear as they are by the skippers of today. Sail boats, harbours, lighthouses, luxury yachts and marinas, welcome to the Théâtre de la Mer !

All along our coast harbours are strung out like Tom Thumb's stepping stones, making it easy to cruise from a bay to a gulf, the coast to an island, a buoy to a headland. In winter it is pleasant to stroll along the quays looking at all the boats or watching them having their hulls cleaned. From spring to autumn you can watch the comings and goings, while enjoying an ice cream or lemonade before returning home for dinner. Shops and yacht businesses stay open in the evening when the terraces come to life.



Saint-Tropez

At the southern end of our 12 municipalities is Cavalaire, the newest harbour with 1,200 moorings. Anchored in this fabulous bay, the marina offers a range of watersports (diving, deep sea fishing, sailing, jet skis, boating, etc.) excellent restaurants, shops nearby and a lively nightlife scene in summer when the town is not hosting quality nautical events. Sainte-Maxime is, like Saint-Tropez, the oldest har-

“ *Marinas at the heart of seaside resorts* ”

bour on this part of the Var coast. In the 17th and 18th century they loaded timber here from the Maures forests. Expanded in 1972, it can now take vessels from 5m through to 25m and has 780 moorings. The architectural design of the harbour master's office is in the shape of a ship. The marina is one of many attractions in this seaside town the seafront of which has been given a facelift. It is a lively resort and welcomes visitors all year round.



Cavalaire



Our Master Mariners

A word about a lesser known aspect of Saint-Tropez: from 1470 to the end of the First World War, six out of ten Tropezians earned their living from the sea. In the 19th century the village had a thriving merchant shipping industry as all equipment and goods were transported by sea on coasters and tartans. Numerous trades involved with the sea rubbed shoulders along the quays, and Saint-Tropez' boatyards were renowned. Some owners came from far and wide to have their vessels built here. Tropezians were fishermen but also Master Mariners who sailed the world's oceans. A very attractive maritime history museum has been dedicated to these men in the Citadelle.

AND THOSE BEAUTIFUL MARINAS !



During this promenade by the sea, one cannot ignore the end of the Gulf, an area that was once covered in marshland and today is home to elegant residential areas built round lovely marinas that integrate well into their environment. First the Marines de Cogolin, a 23-hectare complex with harbour master's office, fine sandy beach, watersports and lively restaurants. The Marines de Gassin also offers amenities and houses built around a shady square. Further on is Port Cogolin (private), a charming waterfront estate in the Provencal style built on the Giscle River (evening entertainment and restaurants). In total, more than 1,750 boats find refuge in these marinas, just opposite Port Grimaud.



Marines de Cogolin



Saint-Tropez

The Gulf: a favourite port of call for cruise ships

In the last few years the Gulf of Saint-Tropez has become a sought-after port of call for cruise ships, under the aegis of the "Var Provence Cruise Club" initiative, a body set up by the Chamber of Commerce to unite all the port authorities concerned. The Gulf, mainly Saint-Tropez, welcomes around 70 ships a year. Cavalaire is a stopover port too. The clientele is mainly German and Anglo-Saxon of which 50% leave their ship to explore the harbour and surroundings.

Port Grimaud world famous village on the water

This architectural masterpiece designed by François Spoerry will leave its mark on the 20th century. A neo-Provencal style underpinning its Mediterranean character extends across 90 hectares of former marshland and numbers 2,000 houses. Designed for people who love boats, the site includes 7km of ca-



nals, 12km of quays and three port areas which host the biggest concentration of boats and luxury yachts in our Gulf, totalling 2,350 moorings. To fully appreciate the extent of this labyrinth and discover the picturesque districts of this waterfront settlement, you can hire a boat or board an electric barge and do the circuit.



Phare Rouge memories...



In Saint-Tropez, the first lighthouse was called the Red Lighthouse and was built in 1866 at the end of the jetty. Converted to electricity in 1932, it was destroyed in 1944 then rebuilt, before being replaced by an identical structure during the last port renovation works. It watches over the 800 moorings in a harbour that hosts many exceptional events and remains deeply attached to its centuries-long maritime heritage. Meanwhile, the aura of this fishing village has taken a different turn to become a legend. No doubt its mirror would have many a tale to tell if the lighthouse did not have a duty of confidentiality !



Saint-Tropez, le Phare Rouge



Ramatuelle, Camarat lighthouse

“Highlights of Camarat”

Another picturesque lighthouse is the one on Camarat in the Ramatuelle municipality. The second highest in France due to the height of the light source (130m above sea level), it was an oil-fired lighthouse before being converted to electricity in 1946 and then automated in 1977. Its reach is up to 60km. On clear days you can sometimes see the shadow of Corsica in the distance. The lighthouse is to be admired from the outside, but the semaphore below, military property, is not open to the public. Be sure to make the most of your visit by taking the little path on the left to explore Cap Camarat and look at Bird Island.



UNDERWATER

Peaceful battles at sea ! Keelboats, dinghies, kayaks, jet ski, stand-up paddles, body-boards, wind-surfers, hobie-cats, Optimists, surf boards, catamarans – choose your weapon! The list is not complete by any means as there is an infinite variety of watersports on offer along our coast. Other ideas: water-skiing, banana boat rides, parachuting, the ski-bus, kite-surfing, wakeboarding, electric underwater scooters with Aquaglis, pedal boats, bare-foot, flyboard... Further more, Cavalaire has the Flyboard World record. The question is - will there be time to do all this before sunset ? Nothing's easier, click on "www.resagolfe.com"



Gassin, La Moune



Ramatuelle, L'Escalet



Cavalaire



Saint-Tropez, Les Canebiers

Leisure activities and the way the wind blows...

Alone in the world or accompanied ? French sailing schools and water sports outlets are well established in the Gulf. In optimum conditions using quality equipment, they can help you master any sport, from how to handle the rigs and accelerator or even rowing, to ensure you progress from beginner to the pleasures of doing it alone.

Individual lessons or complete courses are available, leaving you free to enjoy them in your own time and to be on the water as much as possible – it is an exceptional environment and the atmosphere is friendly. Some only offer rental, others outings with instructor (one hour, half or full day) and sometimes bivouac options. There are programmes to suit any level, for all the family, and motivational courses for those seeking any pretext to escape the city! How well we understand them !

Hotspots in the Gulf Windsurfing, kite-surfing and stand-up paddle purists know where all the best spots are on our coast: Guerrevieille, la Tour, la Nartelle, la Bouillabaisse, Héraclée, Gigaro, Pardigon... All year winds and currents are particularly well orientated for adrenaline junkies with troughs from the west up to 2.5m. At both ends of the season, and in winter, the Mistral that can gust up to Force 9 and the east wind which whips up the sea are always welcomed. There is no need to cross the oceans to indulge your passion. And for the rest of us, the spectators, what a pleasure it is to watch them.

Early in the morning, while some are recovering from their night out, dreaming of Bodhi (surfers' icon from Point Break), others have been up since sunrise, when the swell is already formed but the wind moderate, and are heading out to catch the wave. Is there also surfing in the Gulf, we hear you cry? Yes - and some fine waves at the Cigales, Gigaro, Nartelle, Pampelonne and Rayol Canadel beaches. Who would believe it apart from Brice from Nice?



Between Cavalaire and La Croix Valmer



Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez

PROMENADES ON THE SEA

“ This is above all the pleasure of being away from the coast, the impression of leaving to go round the world or discovering buried treasure on an island; choose your vessel and cast off from the quay...” ”

www.resagolfe.com



Saint-Tropez



Saint-Tropez



Cavalaire



Sainte-Maxime

Focus on the musts From Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer to Sainte-Maxime, a succession of harbours, quays and jetties invite you on an adventure. Close by and safe : Port Grimaud or the Marines de Cogolin or Gassin by electric barge! For the bolder ones: guided excursions in the bay, with La Pouncho, les Bateaux verts, le Brigantin and la Rose des vents. Further away: explore the coast or visit the calanques with Fiou Pelan. Offshore: no need to go as far as Hyères to reach the Iles d'Or - return day trips by boat also go from Port Grimaud, La Croix Valmer, Cavalaire and Sainte-Maxime. Sea air is guaranteed on the way to Port-Cros (marine national park), Porquerolles and Ile du Levant, but keep your eyes peeled. With Les Vedettes Iles d'Or, you may see dolphins, sperm whales, razorbacks or even pilot whales in the heart of the Pelagos Sanctuary for Mediterranean Marine Mammals, a protected zone covering 87,500 km² and subject of an agreement between Italy, Monaco, France and several municipalities in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez.

Something a little more unusual Enjoy discovering the depths from the glass-bottomed Aquascope trimaran that offer short excursions to view the seabed. Another original idea is a meeting with dolphins departing from Cavalaire or Sainte-Maxime. In search of something more romantic - sunsets aboard a giant catamaran or the Pouncho; or more adrenaline, offshore outings; or more convenient, 15 minutes from Sainte-Maxime to Saint-Tropez by shuttle or maritime taxi even at night in summer; more independent, hire your own boat with or without a licence (if you have no points!); or happier - this one is a secret we are willing to share but you need some puff to blow it up: an inflatable with two oars, and a fishing line trailing between your toes: land and sea have never seemed so beautiful!





THE SEA OBSERVATORY

Quayrolles, rabiou, togo, sardinaux, le rubis, so many dream names for the divers who frequent the mediterranean sea. These prestigious diving sites are only the emerged part of the uncountable submarine wealth located in the peninsula of saint-tropez. to preserve its beauty, the sea observatory, department of the association of municipalities, develops the diving sites, analyzes the quality of water, to raise the sailors awareness about the protection of the posidonia and invites the tourist to come to discover by themselves these submarine treasures.



Le Rubis

“The Great Blue”

The Mediterranean : 365 days a year
Dive into an ocean of bubbles with or without your oxygen bottles and discover a paradise that is very particular to the Mediterranean. They scuba dive practically all year round as the mild climate maintains sea temperatures at an acceptable level. Local divers but also foreigners, particularly from Central or Northern Europe are our best ambassadors.

Divers' paradise The Gulf is home to many underwater treasures that we have to respect; in their silent world we are the guests. These depths of extraordinary beauty are teeming with life or attached to rocks, undersea cliffs or rifts: red coral, multi-coloured gorgonians, all kinds of sponges and sea urchins, as well as many pelagic fish species: amberjacks, common dentex, barracudas, mackerels and sand steenbras, not forgetting the famous home-loving groupers. With or without bottles, there is no need to venture too deep to enjoy it. With more than 15 professional clubs (diving centres with French State-approved instructors, fully equipped boats and all the kit), allow them to guide you to the treasures of the deep in the Gulf, the wrecks or the living! Discover videos on our Youtube channel Golfe de Saint-Tropez Tourisme.

Amphibian surprises On our coast, along with Sainte-Maxime, Ramatuelle, La Croix Valmer, Saint-Tropez and Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer, Cavalaire-sur-Mer is one of Europe's top diving venues. Often referred to as the "Wreck Capital" in dive magazines it is a legend in the Mediterranean, with many wrecks that are particular to this area: merchant cargo or navy vessels that became stranded or were struck down (at a depth of less than 40m and 60m) like the Rubis (our photo), the Poursuivante and the Torpilleur. In all, over 70 superb dive sites have been identified by experts in the Gulf: the Dattier drop, Lardier cove, Moutte pyramid, Bailli cliff face, the sèche à huile or shark's tooth. Everything is here for an unforgettable experience.

Awash with flora Not so technical but equally spectacular is the fauna and flora a few metres deep. Underwater "hikes" are organised by the Domaine du Rayol and the Observatoire Marin, a body focused on the Gulf that combines science, technical advances and education to promote sustainable development on the Maures coast. Flippers, masks and snorkels are supplied and a guide takes you to see colonies of gorgonians, squid and fish unlike any other. Acutely aware of sustainable development, these specialists will explain the role played by Posidonia, one of five protected species on the French Mediterranean coast and in the Pelagos Sanctuary for the protection of Mediterranean marine mammals.



Saint-Tropez

SAILS & SAILBOATS

Hardly a weekend goes by when there is not a regatta being organised by one or

other of the yacht clubs on the vast body of water that forms the Bay of Saint-Tropez to the limit of the territorial waters. Some have carved out an international reputation, like the festival Armen, Dames de Saint-Tropez, the Voiles Latines, the Giraglia Rolex Cup, the Trophée Bailli de Suffren and the Voiles d'Automne, attracting sailors and spectators from all over the world. We could also cite the jet ski competitions in Cavalaire and Sainte-Maxime, the beach-to-beach swims that take place in summer, the stand-up paddle challenges, the Festival de la Plaisance.

However, the most prestigious event without a doubt remains Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, sees the world's most beautiful boats, from classic centenarians to the young Wally racers, come from all over the globe to race in the bay.

NAUTICAL EVENTS

Subject to the health situation

March

Armen Fest (Saint-Tropez)

April

Sainte-Maxime Jet Cup 2022 (Sainte-Maxime)

May

Dames de Saint-Tropez (Saint-Tropez)

Voiles Latines (Saint-Tropez)

Sup Race Cup Paddle (Sainte-Maxime)

June

Giraglia Rolex Cup (Saint-Tropez)

Bailli du Suffren Trophée (Saint-Tropez)

Les 400 nautiques (Saint-Tropez)

August

Swimming across Pampelonne (Ramatuelle)

September

Caval'eau Jet (Cavalaire)

Voiles de Saint-Tropez

Sainte-Maxime Jet Cup 2022 (Sainte-Maxime)

Sail GP (Saint-Tropez)

November

Voiles d'Automne (Saint-Tropez)

Find all events
on www.visitgolfe.com



Voiles Latines



Cavalaire, Flyboard



Sainte-Maxime, Jet Cup



The green country

“ From almond green to olive green,
the green of grapes to green anise,
the Massif des Maures
comes in every shade of green. ”



Amazing NATURE

“From coastal paths to the Massif des Maures, the blue of the Mediterranean to shades of green, ochre and grey inland, the Gulf of Saint-Tropez offers a variety of colours, aromas, tastes and sounds just waiting to be discovered.” ”

www.visitgolfe.com



La Garde-Freinet



Between Cavalaire and Rayol-Canadel

“Well hidden : discreet but busy wildlife”

The Massif des Maures is home to foxes, wild boar, deer, badgers, lizards, squirrels and the famous Hermann tortoise, the only species in France. Thousands of birds (the Petit-Duc owl, sparrows, blue rock thrushes, black-headed gulls, kestrels, seagulls, gannets, etc.) come here to nest; and then of course there is the distinctive, unforgettable sound of the cicadas in summer. So many species in such a closely defined area makes the Maures unique in France.

To get closer to this palette of sounds and colours, there are many guided outings you can do with the experts. For example you can go birdwatching with the LPO (Ligue de Protection des Oiseaux – bird protection society); or, armed with net, magnifying glass and map scrutinise the insect life (butterflies, caterpillars, beetles, spiders, dragonflies...), or admire the flowers (the heady scent of lavender, myrtle, culinary herbs like thyme, rosemary and oregano) but also you can even go into an apiary to experience the extraordinary social organisation of the bee. The Var forest has long been Man’s pharmacopoeia and larder !

GREEN DIAMOND

The Maures : a green massif all year round

The Gulf of Saint-Tropez has an exceptional natural heritage which is part of its identity and contributes to the quality of the living environment. The Massif des Maures covers 135,000 hectares of hills, valleys, rivers, woodlands and artificial lakes. These nature areas are fragile, rare or under threat. They embrace a remarkable biodiversity, a variety of landscapes and valuable plant species, giving the impression that this environment remains green all

year round : fifty shades of green.

Pines, cork oaks, chestnut trees, olive trees, strawberry trees, rock-roses, ferns, mimosa, brooms, heathers – it really is like a “miniature mountain” the name of which comes from Mauro meaning “sombre” in Provençal. This land, one of the oldest in Provence is also one of the best preserved. To go there is to fall in love, to observe, discover, feel and understand; and to want to protect it.



Le Plan-de-la-Tour



ROCKS



La Garde-Freinet

Massif des Maures is composed of ancient crystalline and metamorphic rocks (600 to 400 million years old),

Rocks for building

testimony to its extraordinary geological and mineral wealth. The rocks are not easy to cut and not suitable for building. Indeed only two types of rock have been tamed by Man: serpentinite, a blue-green veined rock more commonly referred to as serpentine, and basalt, a grey-black honeycomb lava rock. Both these subtly coloured materials have provided beautiful decorative and architectural elements that are very characteristic of the 12 villages in the cantons of Grimaud and Saint-Tropez: doors, windows, steps and other decorative features.



Cogolin

DOLMEN & MENHIR



Le Plan-de-la-Tour



Megaliths, mythical monuments, are characteristic of the Neolithic period between 4000 and 2000 BC. Dolmens or tables of Breton stone are megalithic burial sites, although we do not know the exact meaning behind the standing stones

Megaliths of Provence

These impressive and mysterious monuments immediately make one think of Brittany, but you may not know that archaeologists have uncovered around 50 dolmens

and the same number of menhirs in the Var.

At Ramatuelle, on Cap Taillat, a delightful coastal path they call "chemin des douaniers" or customs way, leads across Conservatoire du Littoral property to the dolmen in Briande bay. Excavated in 1935 and now restored it is presented in an educational way. At Plan de la Tour, there are two menhirs on the Gorgues path.



Ramatuelle



ON FOOT AT LIBERTY

Happiness is when you first set out on a path and start walking; to rediscover man's natural pace; to be in touch with the soil and feel the earth beneath your feet, the slope, and the fresh air in your lungs. It is to breathe deeply, approach and observe. So what can you see? Man came early to this region, and remains testifying to the fact are sometimes hard to find: Fort-Freinet (La Garde-Freinet), Briande Bay's Dolmen (Ramatuelle), Gallo-Roman fishponds (Sainte-Maxime), the old Pardigon Villa (La Croix Valmer) – there are more. The 50 marked trails maintained by the municipalities will never cease to surprise you. There is nothing to prevent you pausing by the wayside to peer into a living world among the grasses, around tree trunks and water courses. In the forest, the music is everywhere – just close your eyes and listen. Depending on the season keep your ears open for birdsong, animal noises, and the sound of trees and plants rustling in the wind.

With a good guide it's instructive To discover the hidden treasures of the Massif des Maures and this rugged coastline, you can sign up for a tour with a naturalist guide. Every year around 200 are offered for a symbolic fee, such as discovering the protected Cap Lardier, 350 hectares of outstanding nature: or the secrets of driftwood and the life of sand, or the maquis path and coastal plant life.

Unless you prefer creating your own portrait of a bird in a forest, imagine a large canvas stretched between two trees in a corner of nature. Before seizing your brushes, pens and colours, take time to look around you and be inspired - then take up your sketchbook.

After the winter rains, the colours change. Countless little streams appear, along with a wide variety of flora and fauna. Edible or medicinal plants, a fascinating world of small mammals, and life-giving pools and rivulets on the Maures plain, our territory is an endless source of inspiration for the guides who accompany you. Unless you follow them to see how they strip the trees in the cork capital or go on one of their nocturnal excursions to see the April Moon, the tawny nights will elude you. www.resagolfe.com



A land of unforgettable trails

And if you are looking for gold ! Over 300 million years ago, the Hercynian mountain-building movement as it formed led to the transformation of pre-existing rocks, trapping veins of minerals in the process. Over the millennia, these mountains were eroded down into the Massif des Maures as we see them today. Minerals were released and we can find them in the river beds and streams. If you know what you are doing, you may even stumble across some gold - a geological, biological and ecological meeting in our environment to seek the most precious element of all.



Le Plan-de-la-Tour



Grimaud, Pont des Fées



Cogolin

THE PARADISE FOR MOUNTAIN BIKE

How can we forget the first cycle tracks of the legendary Roc d'Azur? The world's most prestigious mountain bike challenge will remain forever associated with the trails that gave it life. Breathtaking scenery, up hills and down dales, with plenty of variety and 300 days of sunshine a year, if you are looking for a cyclist's paradise this is it!

If you don't want to lose yourself in the maze of trails that criss-cross our territory, famous riders from Tribe Sport Group/Pep's Spirit, accustomed to roaming the globe with the best, offer a variety of guided hikes in this mecca for mountain bikers on legendary paths to discover by electric mountain bike or grabel bike, the new fashionable discipline... And since we are talking cycling, it is difficult to overlook the superb road bike itineraries available, particularly out of season in the heart of grandiose scenery, or cycle tracks from Sainte-Maxime to Saint-Tropez or from Cavalaire to Gassin.



Gassin

Here in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez and Massif des Maures one thing is for sure: hikers, riders or cyclists, whatever your mode of transport you are the true nature lovers. www.resagolfe.com

The joy on two wheels



Col du Canadé

4 KNOWING HOOFS

The innovative Var "Équi'Découverte" equestrian network allows you to explore the Massif des Maures on horseback. Marked trails for riders of all levels, a network of suitable accommodation, riding centres, nature sites and cultural venues linked by itineraries are accessible to all – even by donkey, another member of the docile equine family. In fact it is in the hills around La Garde-Freinet and Le Plan-de-la-Tour (where there is the Donkey Fest) that you can hire a donkey to accompany you in all seasons for the various harvests, from Easter egg hunts to gathering figs or chestnuts.

Freedom to share...





Rayol-Canadel



Gassin

THE GARDEN ROUTE

Always free as a bird...

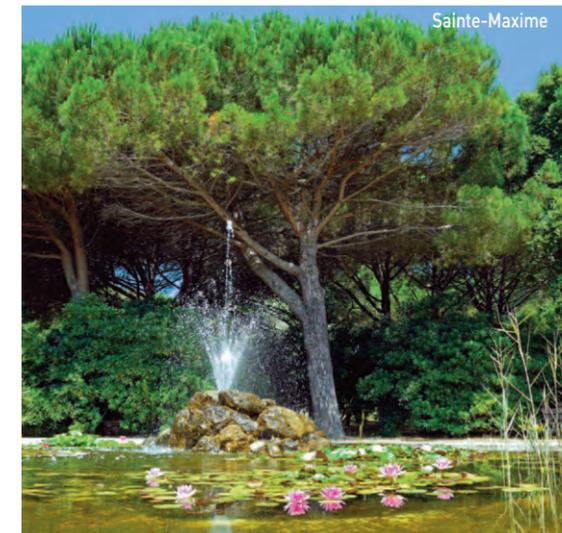


Jardin des Méditerranées The emotional jolt one experiences at the Domaine du Rayol can be attributed to the extraordinary view it offers of this rocky side to the Maures, the horizon only interrupted by the Iles d'Or. The story begins in 1910, and involves a Paris businessman, an Art Nouveau style residence and an ornamental garden, then the famous aircraft manufacturer Henri Potez who held amazing parties ! Now owned by the Conservatoire du Littoral to protect it from real estate speculation, the domain boasts 20 hectares of gardens designed by landscaper Gilles Clément to evoke the scenery and flora of regions with a Mediterranean type climate. It is open 365 days a year (guided tours, discovering a marine garden, events, concerts, library and a gardener's café) - a remarkable garden.

L'Hardy-Denonain Botanical Garden Beneath the ramparts of Place dei Barri, the slopes of Gassin accommodate the more intimate L'Hardy-Denonain garden: 2,500m² of shady terraces that Marie-Thérèse L'Hardy, who was passionate about botany, cultivated with loving care. A family garden that has earned the label Jardin Remarquable, it has 600 species. Everything is natural here; no automatic watering systems, no herbicides or pesticides. The plants are at liberty, as are the visitors - no entrance fee - and the two Hermann tortoises who roam this lush domain in the warm midday sunshine.

Le parc botanique des Myrtes On leaving Sainte-Maxime towards Grimaud, the garden is home to 60 species of plants, an ensemble of Mediterranean and exotic trees, including a fabulous collection of palms. There is so much to do here and points of interest: playgrounds, a small pond with water lilies and fish, a path of scented vegetation laid out for the visually impaired, and the possibility of guided visits for children age six and up. Ideal for exploring en famille and only 30m from the beach.

Le jardin de Gassin A quiet place, ideal for a relaxing moment. The garden has a rare rosary of a 300 range of ancient roses, which can be visited for free from May to September. Rose trees for sale all year round at the nursery. Training, seminary. Towards La Croix Valmer, 2 km from La Foux, on the right.



Sainte-Maxime



Gassin

La Mole, Verne Dam



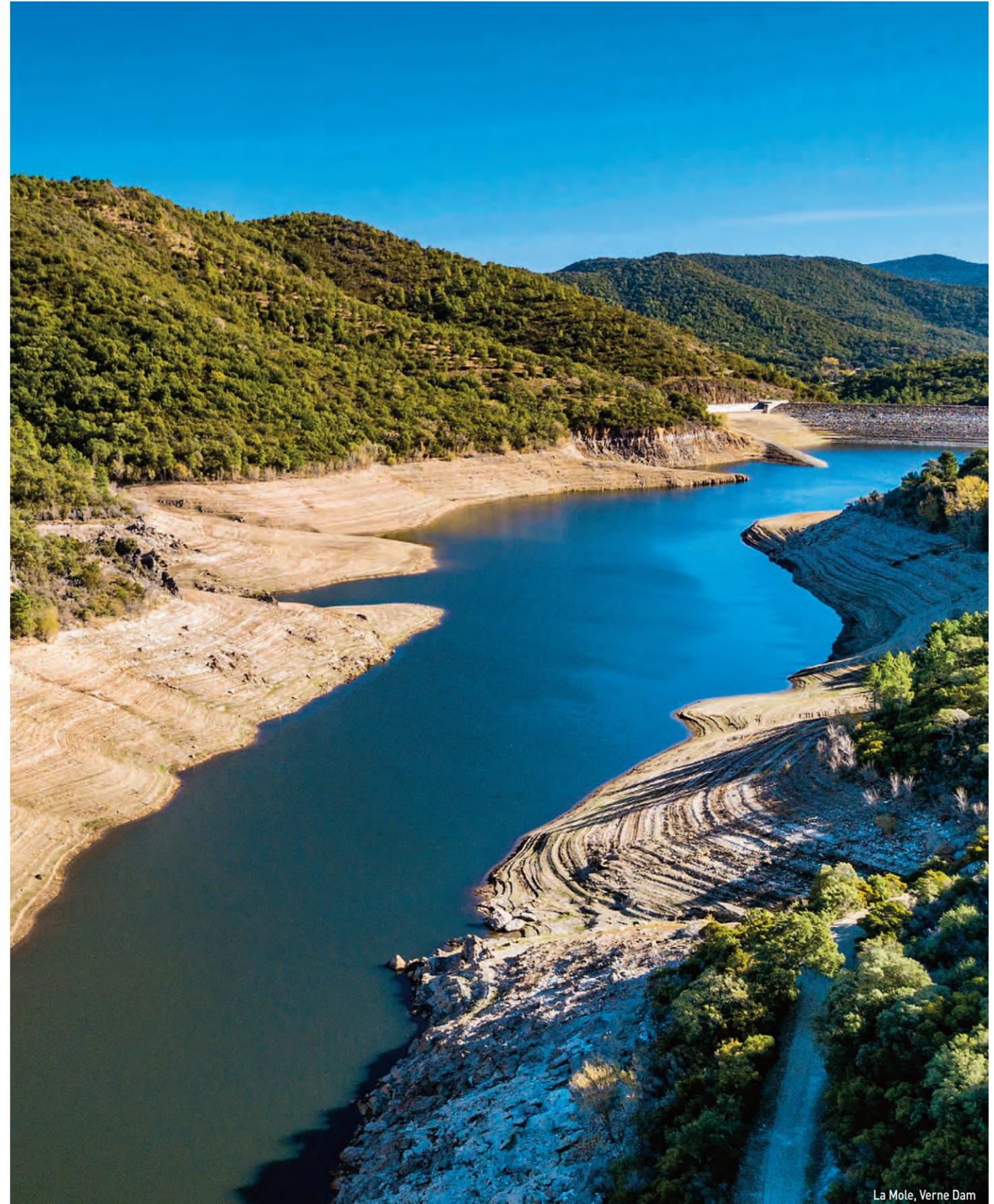
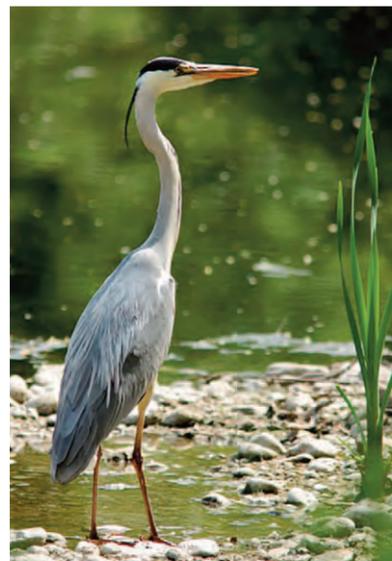
HOW SWEET IS SHE !

La Mole's Dam

8 million cubic metres of water in a rural setting Built in 18 months in 1991 and based on the "terrain" technique, the Verne or La Mole Dam supplies drinking water to people in the Massif des Maures and Gulf of Saint-Tropez. You may feel like you are in the mountains but it is only 10km to the seaside. From the church place, at 800 meters, turn on the right after the traffic light, then go straight on 500m and park your car next to the water treatment facility. You will enjoy walking or cycling on a large path for 3km. After these 3km, you will arrive at the water dam's gate, go further on 150m to reached it. The Dam offers an amazing view on the hills "Les Maures".

Unusual tenants In this beautiful landscape where fishing, swimming and boating are forbidden, nature lovers will appreciate the tenants who have settled here with their families – grey herons and cormorants who feed off perch, cabot and chub. In autumn you can see migratory birds and in spring the freshwater turtles (cistudes) swim under the waterfalls. Don't forget your camera!

Fabulous scenery There is another steep path (400m up and down on the Chemin des Moines), reserved for good walkers and mountain bikers: a circuit of just over 20km which leaves plenty of time to enjoy the scenery and contemplate an architectural holy treasure from the medieval era, La Chartreuse de la Verne. Founded in 1170 and consecrated in 1174, this first Roman church rapidly acquired 3,000 hectares of land (forests, pastures and cropland) thanks to numerous gifts and donations. In 1792, it was sold to the state. Proclaimed a historic national monument in 1921, it has been completely restored and today is home to a community of nuns living quietly surrounded by chestnut trees (see page 78).



La Mole, Verne Dam

HEAD SOUTH *in the Var...*



CHARTREUSE DE LA VERNE

► **40 mn from Gulf** One cannot go to the Gulf of Saint-Tropez without visiting Chartreuse de la Verne, as one might make a pilgrimage. Already at the end of the 19th century Guy de Maupassant in his journal *Sur l'eau* was writing about the Chartreuse de la Verne and its mysteries. Founded in 1170, this Carthusian monastery was built far from any settlements on the borders of the Toulon and Fréjus dioceses, in the heart of the Massif des Maures. Carthusian monks preferred "deserts", far from the madding crowd in places conducive to meditation. On foot by what they call the "monks' path" from La Mole, the ascent is tough but beautiful amidst chestnut trees and dense scrubland, the only sounds being that of the birds. By road from Cogolin to Collobrières, the journey is almost like a rite of passage. At a bend in the road, you see the monastery in the distance shrouded in autumn mist, as if poised on an ocean of green. The road is long and winding, zigzagging up and down until suddenly you are confronted with a large gate decorated in the blue-green veined serpentine taken from the quarries at La Mole. Going to Chartreuse de la Verne is to discover the authenticity of an uncompromising landscape: a first step in meditation, no doubt.



THE PREHISTORIC MUSEUM AND GORGES DU VERDON

► **1h30 from Gulf** Located in Quinson, in the heart of the Verdon, the Gorges du Verdon Museum of Prehistory presents the results of archaeological digs carried out in the Verdon for over 50 years. A trip back in time for all with its circuit of alternating scenes from everyday life in prehistoric times, interactive displays and original archaeological artefacts. Designed by the architect Norman Foster, the museum is one of the biggest Museums of Prehistory in Europe. A wonderful prelude to discovering the Gorges themselves, with the same extraordinary emerald green colour.



MENHIRS ON LAMBERT PLATEAU AT COLLOBRIÈRES

► **50 mn from Gulf** Everyone agrees: the two menhirs on Lambert plateau are the most imposing in Provence. Neolithic sentinels standing proud in the centre of this vast area, they are a subtle quasi-mystical link between the Prehistoric period and the present. Do not believe the fertile imaginations of cartoonists, Goscinny and Uderzo, as Obelix and the Gauls had nothing to do with it. These 3-metre-high upright stones were extracted, carved and transported from a quarry around 4,000 BC. The best time to see them is on a misty morning in the autumn by the Lambert path when a moody magical spectacle awaits you.

THORONET ABBEY

► **1h00 from Gulf** The Cistercian monastic order was established towards the end of the 11th century in reaction to the ostentatious opulence of some prelates. Harking back to the primitive Benedictine rule, it can be defined in three words: isolation, poverty and manual work. In the middle of the 12th century, Cistercian monks settled in Thoronet and started to build an abbey. It proved to be an incredible technical, human and spiritual challenge that ended up taking over a century to complete. Abandoned and sold during the French Revolution, Thoronet Abbey was rediscovered in the mid-19th century by Prosper Mérimée, the first inspector of Historic Monuments. As the result of numerous restoration campaigns, Thoronet Abbey was restored to its former austere beauty and is now one of the most visited historic monuments in the Var.



La Mole



Cogolin



Saint-Tropez



Port Grimaud



ephemeral SNOW

“ Sometimes in winter it snows for a few hours and turns the Gulf of Saint-Tropez white. ”





MARATHON INTERNATIONAL
DU GOLFE DE SAINT-TROPEZ

DIMANCHE
27 MARS 2022

MARATHON • 2 X 21.1 KM • MARATHON RELAIS
TRANS GOLFE : 18 KM
Sainte-Maxime -> Saint-Tropez

10 KM
La Croix-Valmer -> Cavalaire

marathondugolfedesainttropez.com

Logos: CÔTE D'AZUR, Communauté de communes Golfe de Saint-Tropez, AT-ILÉ, AIMS, and various local government logos.



**NATURE
EVENTS**

Subject to the health situation

January

- Wellness Fair (Sainte-Maxime)
- Ruelles de Cogolin, cycling race (Cogolin)
- Trophées des ruelles, cycling race (Gassin)

February

- Corso fleuris (Cavalaire)
- Mimosa fest (Sainte-Maxime)

March

- Cogolin Carnival (Cogolin)
- Spring fest (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
- International Marathon (Golfe de Saint-Tropez)
- La Gassoise, running (Gassin)

April

- Plants (Le Plan de la Tour)
- Granfondo, cycling race (Gassin)
- Triathlon (Saint-Tropez)

May

- Donkey Festival (Le Plan de la Tour)
- Grapevine and wine festival (Ramatuelle, La Croix Valmer)
- La Cavalairoise, pedestrian race (Cavalaire)

June

- Equi Country, equestrian gathering (Cavalaire)
- Meeting at the Gardens (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)

October

- Trail of Cogolin (Cogolin)
- Gondwana, autumn festival (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
- Duathlon, running and cycling race (Le Plan de la Tour)

December

- Open days Domaine du Rayol (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)

Find all events on
www.visitgolfe.com



Land of FLAVOURS

“ A sun-kissed land, Provence produces juicy fruit and vegetables bursting with flavour and aromas you will only find in this region. Herbs from the maquis (wild thyme, rosemary, bay leaves, sage...) come together with fish from the Mediterranean Sea (bouillabaisse) and meat from the hills (lamb, casseroles). The region is famous for its produce: an invitation for a gourmet tour ! ”



Cogolin



Saint-Tropez

MORNING HAPPINESS

Markets of Provence



Rayol

Markets in Provence tend to follow the seasons, so you will find tomatoes straight off the vine in summer and mushrooms galore in autumn. All the municipalities have their own weekly markets. They are picturesque and inviting, regular in some villages, occasional in others but always an opportunity to meet local producers whose products will delight your taste buds.

Every market is a bracing promenade among colourful stalls of particular fragrances; plump, multi-coloured vegetables, sun-soaked fruit, aromatic herbs and fish from the morning's catch. There are daily fish markets, including the fish auction down in Cavalaire harbour, every morning near Place aux Herbes in Saint-Tropez, and the fish stalls at the harbour in Sainte-Maxime - it's a veritable feast for the eyes before the palette.

Local produce and crafts Not a day goes by when there is not a market somewhere in the region. The table below lists all those in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez. Smaller in the winter months, they blossom and grow as the days lengthen. Some only offer local produce (fruit, vegetables, goat or sheep cheese, cold meats and salamis, soups, olives, jams, chestnut cream (crème de châtaignes), spices and flowers). Others also have stalls selling clothes, jewellery and crafts (lavender sachets, olive oil or honey soap, pottery, fabrics, etc.).



Grimaud

Monday

Sainte-Maxime : Capet Market and Covered Market (not in winter)

Tuesday

Sainte-Maxime : Covered Market
Saint-Tropez : Provençal Market

Wednesday

Cavalaire : Provençal Market
Sainte-Maxime : Covered Market
Cogolin : Provençal Market, Place Victor Hugo
La Garde-Freinet : Provençal Market

Thursday

Plan-de-la-Tour : Provençal Market
Sainte-Maxime : Regional produce Market
Sainte-Maxime : Covered Market
Grimaud : Place Neuve
Port Grimaud 1 : Provençal Market
Ramatuelle : Provençal Market

Friday

Marines de Cogolin :
from mid June to mid September
Sainte-Maxime : Forain Market
Sainte-Maxime : Covered Market
Le Rayol : from April to September

Saturday

Cogolin : Provençal Market
Sainte-Maxime : Covered Market
Saint-Tropez : Provençal Market

Sunday

Port Grimaud 1 : Provençal Market
La Croix-Valmer : Provençal Market
La Garde-Freinet : Provençal Market
La Mole : Provençal Market
Ramatuelle : Provençal Market
Sainte-Maxime : Covered Market

Every day

Les Halles de Saint-Tropez : Covered Market



SUNSHINE COLOUR



The specialities you find in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez also contribute to its reputation. Sweet or savoury, hot or cold, there is something for everyone whether you are a gourmet or gourmand - it may be a sin but you're on holiday ! So proceed if you wish with a meal in the natural order under an arbour. All is well with the world, the cicadas are in full voice, the heat is making your eyelids droop and to accompany your glass of pale anisette you reach out for the glistening green or black tapenade, spread on a crusty crouton - unless of course you prefer some equally delicious anchoïade on bread with a touch of olive oil. Welcome to Provence - you are forgive !

Specialties of the country **Melt in the mouth** Nearly everywhere in the Maures country you will be tempted by the many long-established little restaurants and



stores. Caviar of vegetables, aioli and other delicacies abound, although you may want to keep the fish soup or bouillabaisse for the evening (with the obligatory rouille, grated cheese and crusty croutons). Specialty breads are legion, to accompany a vegetable or herb tart, a tian or ratatouille. And to follow, cheeses from the hills, wrapped in three mesclun leaves with four or five pine nuts and walnut bread that simply melts in the mouth.



Succumb to sweet temptations No need to wait for Christmas and the traditional 13 desserts, in our corner of Provence we offer an improvised à la carte menu all year: câlins, patiences fraxinoises, black nougat, chocolates, macaroons, canistrelli, crock, palets, Sainte-Maxime specialities or the inimitable tarte tropézienne, all very local, often imitated but never equalled. Have you room for more or will you wait till tomorrow to prolong this feast? If you do, we can offer you a slice of lemon tart. Tomorrow morning, a spoonful of honey or jam (400 home-made varieties at the last count!) for breakfast will do it.

You want chestnuts ! Why did we not think about this earlier, this being chestnut country. They come in every shape or form under the Provencal sun: cream, puree, ice cream, glazed (marron glacé), hot chestnuts, in a liqueur - but it's all very light so don't worry. Salted, sugared, hot or cold, just enjoy them! And because chestnuts merit a festival, La Garde-Freinet is the place to be in October. On your return, try a restorative siesta under the arbour. In Provence the siesta is all part of the job.



Saint-Tropez,
La Vague d'or



CULINARY EVENTS

Subject to the health situation

February

Truffe & You (Grimaud)

March

Bio products fair (Grimaud)

April

Olive fest
(Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
Plants
(Le Plan de la Tour)

June

Saint-Pierre fest,
patron saint of fishermen
(Cavalaire, Sainte-Maxime,
Saint-Tropez)
Fest'Italia (Sainte-Maxime)

July

Pink day of Provence
(All the Golfe)

August

Mediterranean meeting :
musical evening / diner
(Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
Pesto soup and village fair
(La Garde-Freinet)

September

Grapevine and wine fest
during roman period
(Le Plan de la Tour)
Cooked wine fest
(Le Plan de la Tour)
Picking fest
(Sainte-Maxime)
Saint-Michel fest
(Grimaud)

October

Chestnuts fest
(La Garde-Freinet)

November

Olive oil fest
(Sainte-Maxime)

All events on
www.visitgolfe.com

SECRETS OF CHEF

4 people

Grapefruit sorbet

50cl of white balsamic vinegar
2 litres of grapefruit juice
1 litre of hassaku juice (Japanese citrus fruit)
250g of aloe vera
300g of Trimoline (inverted sugar)
15cl of syrup at 30° B
250g Miel de Fleurs (Provençal honey)
30cl shellfish oil
9 gelatine sheets

Grapefruit and shellfish vinaigrette

20g of honey
11g of ginger
5cl of lemon juice
4cl of grapefruit juice
6cl of lemon oil
6cl of shellfish oil
20g of Thai basil
2cl of shellfish consommé reduced
Xanthan gum

Grapefruit gel

2 grapefruit
73cl of syrup 30° B
Agar-agar

Stuffed king prawn heads

15g of shallots
4g of ginger
150g of gambon meat
13g of grapefruit confit
25g of tomato confit
35g of Vague d'Or fennel vinegar
2.5g of salt
0.5g of pepper
2g of Thai basil
2g of marjoram
King prawn consommé reduced
Shellfish oil

Grapefruit carpaccio

1 grapefruit

Finishing and presentation

4 king prawns (size calibre 4/5)
8 heads of brocoletti
125g of aloe vera
1 bunch of Thai basil
Shellfish butter
Shellfish oil

The recipe of Arnaud Donckele Chef of the year 2019 by Gault et Millau
hotel Cheval Blanc Saint-Tropez and its restaurant La Vague d'Or

Seared King Prawns with a grapefruit tang

Freshly cut brocoletti, citrus, basil and aloe vera au naturel, with a hassaku jus confection



Recipe

Grapefruit sorbet Reduce the vinegar by half. Combine all the ingredients in the recipe. Melt the gelatine in the microwave before adding to the mix. Leave to harden overnight and then put into a Pacojet beaker. Spin before serving.

Grapefruit and shellfish vinaigrette Heat the honey with the ginger, take it off the heat, cover and leave to infuse for 10 minutes. Deglaze with the citrus juice and whisk in the flavoured oils and consommé. Add the Thai basil and mix it in. Bind lightly with the xanthan gum..

Grapefruit gel Blanch the grapefruits. Peel them carefully and remove the pips. Mix the zest and pulp while it is cold, then cook for 5 minutes with the syrup. Pass it through Chinese muslin. Bring to the boil and add the agar-agar allowing 2g of agar-agar for 100g of liquid. Mix it all together.

Stuffed king prawn heads Cut the heads off the king prawns with a pair of scissors. Prepare the stuffing: in a sautoir pan, sweat the chopped shallots in shellfish oil with minutely cubed cut pieces of ginger ("brunoise" cut), then add the other ingredients, also cut into very small cubes. Season with salt, pepper and chopped herbs. Garnish the heads with this stuffing and roast them at the same time as the brocoletti.

Grapefruit carpaccio Remove the membranes, pith and pips from the grapefruit and cut into 12 carpaccio thin slices

Finishing and presentation Peel the king prawns. Cut the brocoletti so they have nice looking heads, roast in shellfish oil at the same time as the stuffed king prawn heads, just before plating up. Cut the aloe vera into cubes and remove Thai basil shoots. On a plate, arrange three slices of the grapefruit carpaccio. Add two heads of the roasted brocoletti and some of the aloe vera cubes. Sprinkle the Thai basil. Sear the peeled king prawns in a sautoir pan with shellfish butter and arrange one in the centre of the plate. Add a quenelle of sorbet. Serve the glazed vinaigrette separately.



Sainte-Maxime, Nartelle beach



Tartes Tropéziennes



Ramatuelle, Pampelonne beach

Lunch on the warm sand or dinner by the sea - your stay will not be long enough to enjoy all the beach outlets that pay homage to Mediterranean cuisine. This comprises mainly seafood enhanced with local produce, such as herbs, olive oil and lovingly prepared vegetables from the south, creating *Flavours by the sea* fragrant colourful dishes that you will not be able to resist.

The history of this tasty cuisine is linked to maritime activities (fishing and bouillabaisse) or hunting (game). It is widely promoted by chefs of both genders most of whom are committed to the origin and freshness of produce that favours local products. And even in the middle of February, sheltered from the breeze, it is not uncommon to see people lunching on the beach in temperatures nudging 20°C!



La Croix Valmer



Gassin

COGOLIN

Château des Garcinières

The Valentin family have been cultivating this magnificent 63-hectare estate, only 20 of which are under vines, for over 100 years. An avenue of majestic 400-year-old plane trees leads to the cellar and mansion built by the Cistercian monks in the 12th century on the ruins of a Roman villa. Two ranges of subtle wines with a variety of aromas and elegant colours.

► Access: from Cogolin to the Gassin/La Foux roundabout, 1.5km on your right.

Château Saint-Maur

Roger Zannier, the owner of the domain sets himself the challenge of making of this domain, one of the wine's references in Provence. The new cellar is situated in front of the former chateau and is really magnificent.

► Access: 800 m after the exit of the industrial park for small businesses of Cogolin, direction Collobrières.

Château Saint-Marc

A winding road (sign-posted with arrows) into the heart of the Massif des Maures hills and heady scented forest of oaks and chestnut trees, takes you to this magnificent property off the beaten track. Trained horizontally and trellised, the vines form a majestic avenue between the entrance to the property and the wine tasting cellar and shop.

► Access: from Cogolin or Grimaud, direction Collobrières, then 3km.

Domaine de la Giscle

What elegance and expression is to be found in this Moulin de l'Isle rosé, not to mention the complexity of the red to go with game or the atypical white (Rolle aged in large wooden casks) to accompany cheese (yes, white with cheese!) or a Mediterranean fish dish. The wine cellar is very modern, but the dimly lit vault exudes aromas of old wooden barrels. This is the countryside with donkeys, chickens and peacocks running about.

► Access: from Cogolin or Grimaud, direction Collobrières, then 5km after the Giscle bridge.

LA CROIX VALMER

Château de Chausse

At La Croix Valmer, in a superb setting at the heart of the finest terroirs on the Saint-Tropez peninsula, Château de Chausse encompasses 15 hectares of organically cultivated vines. The estate produces AOP Côtes de Provence (rosé, white and red) wines blending seduction, complexity and personality. Cellar tours: 11am to 3pm on request.

► Access: from the town centre in the direction of the school complex, 3.5km on your left.

Domaine de la Madrague

Resurrected in 2007 by Jean-Marie Zodo, the estate and its 17 hectares of vines extends across La Croix-Valmer and Gassin. The modern winery looks out over a vineyard steeped in history and rare authenticity. Its famous avenue of palm trees cuts through the vines down to the beautiful Gigaro beach. Its Premium Rosé is a rare find, vinified with some ageing in oak barrels.

► Access: from La Croix-Valmer, direction Gigaro, 5km on your left.

Domaine de La Croix

After extensive renovation work over a period of five years, this vast property (started in 1882) of 180 hectares has 90 hectares of Cru Classé vines grown under an environmental quality label. Renewing 80% of this maritime-influenced vineyard, preparation, restoration and replanting has paid off and the domain regularly wins top awards.

► Access: in La Croix-Valmer, take Boulevard de Tabarin, direction Gigaro beaches, 1.5km on your right.

GASSIN

Château Barbeyrolles

Régine Sumeire became famous for her Pétale de Rose, a blend of eight grape varieties to produce a delicate salmon pink colour and a subtle floral fruity bouquet. Handpicked grapes and all in harmony with nature, the rosés are elegant and the full-bodied reds intense (ideal with chicken liver pate and farcis).

► Access: 1.7km after La Foux roundabout, direction Ramatuelle, on your right on the RD61.

Château Minuty

Ideally located at the foot of the village, this vineyard (all trellised) boasts 90 hectares of vines. Provençal grape varieties, limited yields and respect for traditional agriculture (careful cultivation, handpicked grapes) have all played a part in the reputation of their Cru Classé they export which is found in the Gulf's best restaurants.

► Access: La Foux roundabout, direction Ramatuelle

Domaine de Bertaud-Belieu

Easily recognisable with its Gallo-Roman columns reminiscent of a small temple, this estate they say supplies the sacramental wine for mass to many churches in France. The 60 hectares of vines mainly produce rosé (75%) and some red (20%). Two outstanding wines from 13 grape varieties with ultra-modern techniques are regularly rewarded.

► Access: 1km after La Foux roundabout, direction Ramatuelle, on your left.

Domaine du Bourrian

Bought in 2014, the estate has undergone a total restoration while retaining the traditional spirit and vats that are over 150 years old. The first AOP Côtes de Provence and IGP vintage was released under the label "Organic Farming" in 2018.

► Access: 1.5km after La Foux roundabout, direction Gassin/Ramatuelle, then at the crossroads Gassin golf club on the right.

Domaine de La Rouillère

On 120 hectares of this property in the hills, 40 hectares of vines (85 plots) thrive in the Ramatuelle sunshine. In the fifties, Gérard Philipe used to help with the grape picking. The domain produces several rosés, whites and reds in an ultra-modern cellar ensuring top quality wines. Impossible to miss as there is a "wine drive" outlet, a small hut by the side of the road.

► Access: 2 km after La Foux roundabout, direction Ramatuelle on the RD 61.

Domaine Tropez

In the heart of green tree-covered hills inherited from his grandfather, Grégoire Chaix has installed massive steel vats that stand behind a bay window highlighting a concrete monolith by architect Rudy Ricciotti. Grapes are handpicked and sorted before maceration. Some of the more powerful varieties are aged in oak. Wines of every colour and very successful: here in Saint-Tropez.

► Access: between Gassin/La Foux roundabout and La Croix Valmer, 3km on the right.

Les Maîtres Vignerons de la presqu'île de Saint-Tropez

Set up in 1964, Les Maîtres Vignerons unites seven domains on the peninsula. Thanks to an efficient bottling process and excellent marketing, Maîtres Vignerons ensure their wines are regularly rewarded (Château de Pampelonne and Carte Noire). The members of staff in 'The Little Village' are very knowledgeable and helpful, warmly welcoming visitors for tastings and products from Provence.

► Access: Gassin La Foux crossroads, direction Grimaud/ Cogolin, 500m on your left.

AT THE HEART OF THE VINEYARDS

Through the vineyards

This is an invitation to discover original vineyards in a voluntary approach, and the independent wine producers or cooperatives in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez. Planted to produce the Vins de Pays de Var or the famous Côtes de Provence appellation, world leader for rosés, these wine cellars and estates are always more than happy to welcome you.



Find all the vineyards of the Bay of Saint-Tropez

GRIMAUD

Cave coopérative "Les Vignerons de Grimaud"

Its recent merger with the winemakers of Cogolin's cellar makes this the biggest cooperative on the peninsula completely renovated. Employing the most modern means of production (including two fully automated bottling lines), Les Vignerons de Grimaud offer a fine selection of wines from blends made with attention paid to the amount of sun each plot receives.

► Access: on the road linking Grimaud to Port Grimaud, just before the gendarmerie.

Domaine du Val de Gilly

Far from the hustle and bustle of the coast, where the Giscle carved out a vale on the south-facing slopes of Grimaud's hills, this 60-hectare estate of which 27 are under vines is a fifth generation managed domain. The Castellan family are regulars on the medals podium and have built up a loyal clientele who appreciate the expertise of these fine winemakers.

► Access: from Grimaud, direction Collobrières: don't cross the bridge above Giscle but continue straight on.

Les Clos Servien

Here we have 11 hectares of terraced vines on the Grimaud hills, below the road leading to La Garde-Freinet. At its head is Charles-Henri Servien who with training behind him runs this operation with passion. A silver medal in a Saint-Tropez rosés' competition for what was only his second vintage was just reward for his efforts. Rosés with a hint of peach and exotic fruit, spicy reds...

► Access: between Grimaud and La Garde-Freinet, near Tourre hamlet

LA GARDE-FREINET

Ultimate Provence

In the heart of the Massif des Maures, wines of character, created with care from small yields.

Wines strong on personality, elegant and classy, are produced in this magical place where gîte guests relish the taste of winding down and enjoying the sweet life.

► Access: from La Garde-Freinet, direction Cannel des Maures.

LA MOLE

Domaine de la Pertuade

A new domain situated on the road of the dam. The Domain proposes you 2 vintages: "L'Embrun" for the apéritifs and the "Cuvée du Domaine" more elitist, available in 3 colors; the blanc powerful, the rosé very delicate and the rouge (that you should forget during a few months to appreciate it better !)

► Access: first light to the right after the village, 1 km of road and track.

Domaine de Siouvette

On this old farm that belonged to the monks of Chartreuse de la Verne, they have been cultivating vines since before the French Revolution. Surrounded by cork oaks and heather, the domain extends across 20 hectares on south-facing slopes. Full sun coupled with a particular wind that blows through the valley produces delicate wines in all three colours: Domaine de Siouvette, Cuvée Marcel Galfard and Siouvette Le Clos.

► Access: from La Mole, in the direction of Toulon.

Domaine Murenes

Perched on a plateau at an altitude of 300m in the heart of the Massif des Maures, this secretive little domain (6 hectares) is isolated from everything "by its vocation"! A 5km long track takes you to the top of the hill where Rachel and Ivan Grese chose to settle away from it all to preserve their organic approach on an exceptional terroir. Award-winning wines, fixed price menus, welcomes groups (reservation required) – purists!

► Access: from La Mole, direction Rayol-Canadel, at the orientation tableau take the Route des Crêtes on the right and follow the signs.

LE PLAN-DE-LA-TOUR

Les Marquets Vignerons du Plan-de-la-Tour

Members of this cooperative cultivate 200 hectares of vines in an exceptional environment far from the maritime influences of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez. A combination of talents between the expertise of the wine growers and the house oenologist has given rise to some remarkable wines: the Marquets, Marjolis or Terrasses du Golfe. La Norade comes from a single plot in Carignan, a wonderful experience.

► Access: from the village, direction Grimaud.

RAMATUELLE

Vignobles de Ramatuelle

Set up in 1954 by a group of owners, Les Vignobles de Ramatuelle has 150 members since it merged with the Fréjus cellar, which adds up to 560 hectares in total. The medals won in prestigious competitions and regular selections in the main wine guides have given the 15 ranges of wine in three colours a reputation that goes way beyond these shores.

► Access: from the village, direction La Croix Valmer via Escalet

Château des Marres

The 27 hectares of vines of this Château produce a pale rosé with a fruity bouquet, two reds, Classique and Prestige, with firm tannins and hints of black fruit, and the latest addition to the range, a white to enjoy with all that is produced in Provence: anchoïade, tapenade, grilled fish or bouillabaisse. Regular award-winning vintages – sheer happiness!

► Access: from Saint-Tropez, take Route des Plages to Ramatuelle, 5km on your right.

Domaine la Tourraque

If heaven was on earth, it might resemble the point at the end of the peninsula between Cap Lardier and Cap Taillat, where this vineyard extends to the sunny bay of Briand. Eighty rolling hectares include 40 under vines and two olive groves, on a site where you will find nature intact, breathtaking scenery, award-winning wines and several wine-tourism formulas.

► Access: from Ramatuelle, direction Escalet, then follow the marked out itinerary.

SAINTE-MAXIME

Domaine des Beaucaus

In an idyllic setting facing the Gulf of Saint-Tropez, this domain enjoys exceptional climatic conditions at an altitude of 250m. The sun reigns supreme here while the sea breeze protects it from excessive heat in summer and too cold winters. Cultivation is traditional, well thought out and respectful of the environment. The wines are of excellent quality.

► Access: from Sainte-Maxime, direction Le Muy, then CD44 to Plan de la Tour, tourist route.

SAINT-TROPEZ

La Ferme des Lices

The only private vineyard in the Saint-Tropez district! Just a few hundred metres from the village centre, this outstanding vineyard has not succumbed to the pressure on land for development thanks to several individuals' love of the terroir: an agricultural engineer and expert in tasting who, with his partner, managed to convince neighbouring land owners: award-winning wines and an olive grove followed!

► Access: Clos des Vignes, Chemin de la Treille.

Cave coopérative de Saint-Tropez

Some 200 members are involved in producing and bottling wine from 200 hectares of vines that flourish under sunny skies in Saint-Tropez, Gassin and Ramatuelle. One of the oldest cooperatives in the Var producing mainly Provence rosé (80%), some powerful reds (15%) and generous whites. Plots are ideally scattered to produce a selection of choice wines. The new cellar has moved to the start of Route des Plages.

► Access: Route des Plages, at 1 km on the left from Saint-Tropez.



Le Plan-de-la-Tour



Cogolin



La Mole

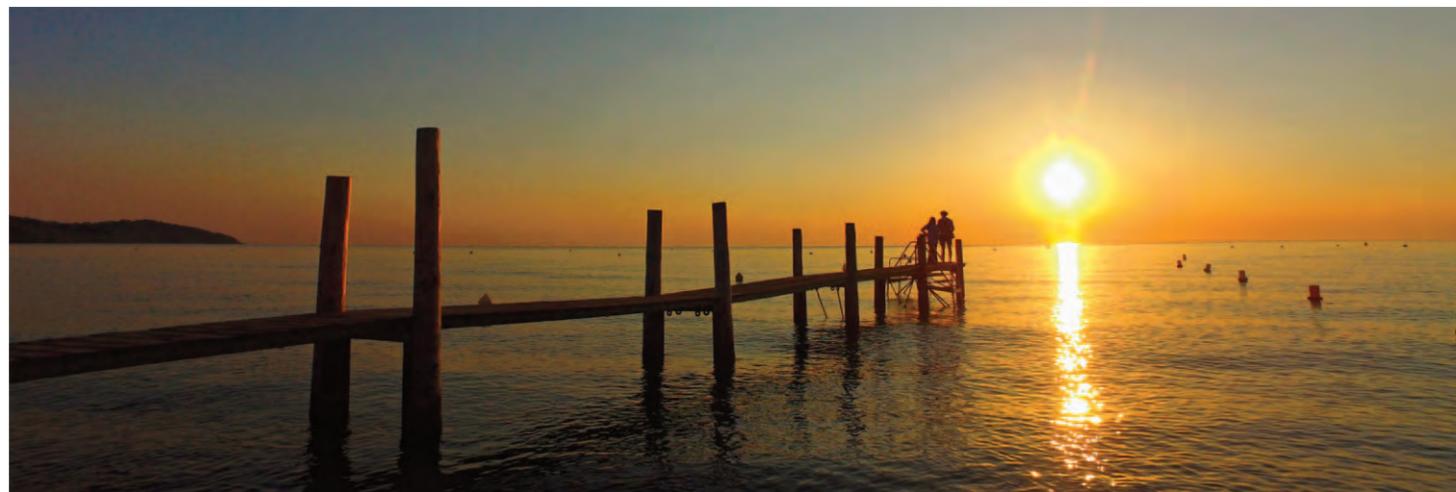
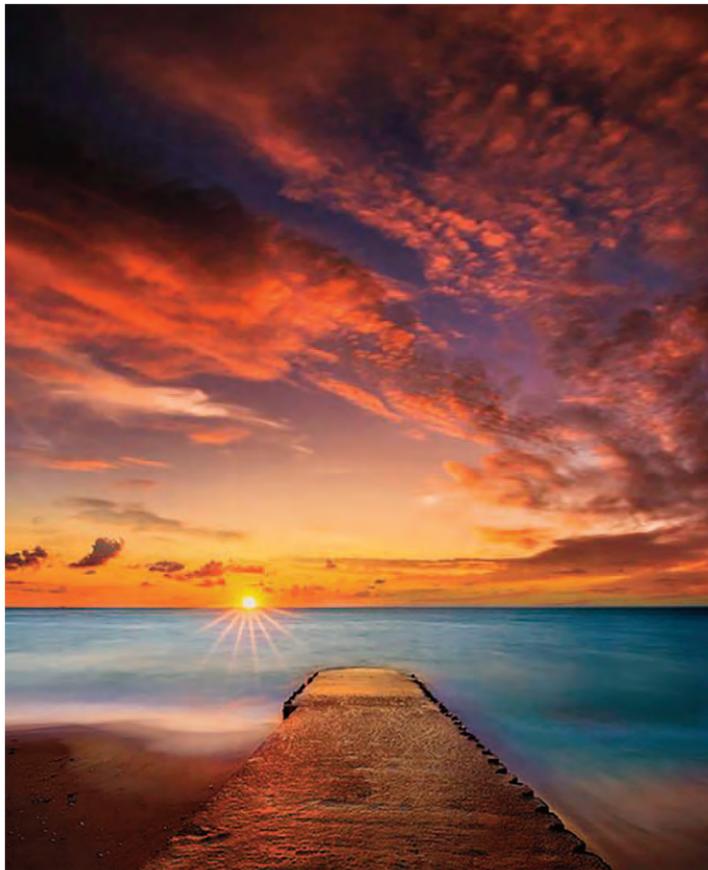
Discover
our partners
of the Provence
Wine Route





*The gold
country*

“ From dawn to dusk,
there are moments when a myriad golden
sparkles illuminate your inner light.. ”



SUNRISES
&
sunset





Cogolin

Heritage & CULTURE

“ On a corner of an alleyway, bend in the path, or under an archway, each new discovery brings its own rewards!

All our municipalities retain traces of a rich and eventful past, testimony to the different cultures and civilisations that have come and gone on our territory.

Yet culture is never a moment frozen in time; it thrives on the past to build the present and create a future. ”

Discover our short breaks on www.weekend-provence.fr

Sainte-Maxime



INNER LIGHTS

History of monuments

The nature of parish churches Under the old regime and even today the parish church is a symbol of life in our villages, as the places where we were born and live and to which we are deeply attached. The patron saint is honoured in Bravades, part religious, part pseudo-military festivals characteristic of eastern Provence. These colourful celebrations, when streets echo to the sound of music and musket fire, take place in May in Cogolin, La Garde-Freinet, La Mole, Sainte-Maxime and Saint-Tropez.

Grimaud



But honour where honour is due, you must first visit Saint-Michel in Grimaud, the oldest parish church in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez whose tower has been recently restored. This little masterpiece from the second Provençal Roman era dates back to the late 12th and early 13th century. It was built of granite from local quarries, giving it a beautiful colour which changes with the light. Very few alterations have been made to the church: they added a majestic clock tower in the 16th century and the north side chapel was altered to accommodate the vestry. In Cogolin, the nave in the church of Saint-Etienne and Saint-Sauveur dates back to the 15th century. The north side aisle was built one section at a time, depending on the financial resources of the community during the 16th century. Saint-Laurent church in Gassin and its bell tower were built in the 16th century and have an air of conquest about them as they dominate the landscape and take in the whole of the Golf of Saint-Tropez and Massif des Maures. The one in Ramatuelle is dedicated to the Virgin Mary and was built at the same time as the town's ramparts to save on a wall; in fact its clock tower was a watchtower in the 14th century. In the Middle Ages it was called Notre-Dame du Pin and was located roughly where the town hall is today. During the Wars of Religion at the end of the 16th century, the villagers were afraid it would be destroyed by enemy artillery overlooking the village and dismantled it to move it to where it is now.



Saint-Tropez

By the late 18th century, an expanding population led to new parish churches being built in La Garde-Freinet, Plan-de-la-Tour, Sainte-Maxime and Saint-Tropez. The latter had a church from the early 16th century that had become too cramped and unhealthy, and was in such poor condition it risked collapsing onto the faithful. Aware of the danger, the town councillors called in the experts and obtained the bishop's permission to build a new, bigger and safer building. But the parish priest, being obliged to pay a third of the expenses as was the custom showed tremendous ingenuity trying to prevent the work going ahead using counter-experts and even resorting to legal arguments. Eventually, the church was completed and remains a marvellous example of the Provençal Baroque style. The 19th century saw development and expansion of a new village, La Mole on the plain on the royal route. The church dates from the Second Empire and its facade has been restored in the colours of Italy.



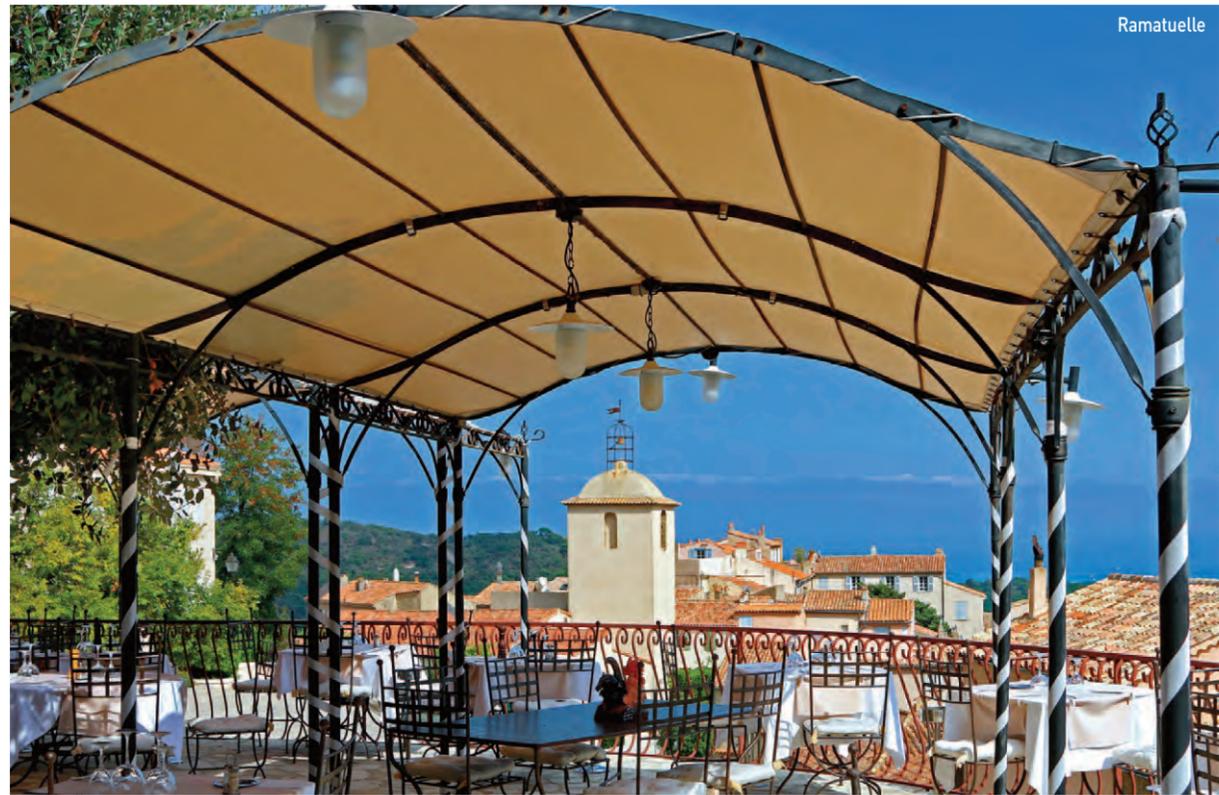
La Mole



Cogolin



Le-Plan-de-la-Tour



Ramatuelle



Gassin



Port Grimaud

Contemplative lives



Rayol-Canadel

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The birth of tourism and urban development by the sea in the 20th century led to several new villages receiving official recognition: Cavalaire in 1929, La Croix Valmer in 1934 and Rayol-Canadel in 1949. Of course all these communities built a place of worship, none of which lack charm.

The last ecumenical church to be built was the one at Port Grimaud, Saint-François, created by talented architect François Spoerry who in effect has built a bridge between the past and future that spans centuries. The architecture is sombre and meditative, illuminated by the radiant windows designed by Victor Vasarely.

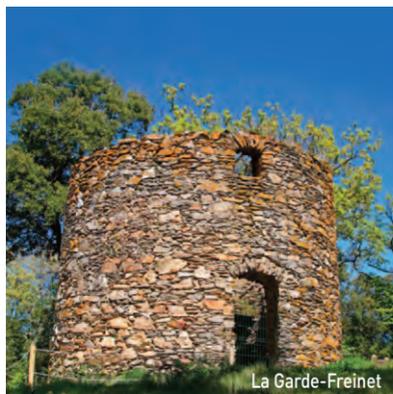
The churches in our villages, from the oldest to the most recent, are the most visited edifices in our region. They are living testimonies to the faith of our ancestors and worthy of all the visitors who come to admire the ancient stone and magnificent often golden interiors; a liturgical, cultural and artistic heritage of great quality.



Grimaud

WINGS FROM PROVENCE

“Windmills of the mind”



La Garde-Freinet

Mills are one of Man's great inventions to tame a driving force: be it the muscular strength of human hands or a donkey to power a small hand mill, or water to drive a wheel or turbine, or air to turn the vanes of a windmill. All these inventions are the fruit of centuries of ingenuity developed in order to survive.

In Provence, the windmill is popular because it reminds us of childhood, school and reading Alphonse Daudet's novella *Le secret de maître Cornille*. We have no idea how the windmill arrived here in the West but it is first mentioned in laws

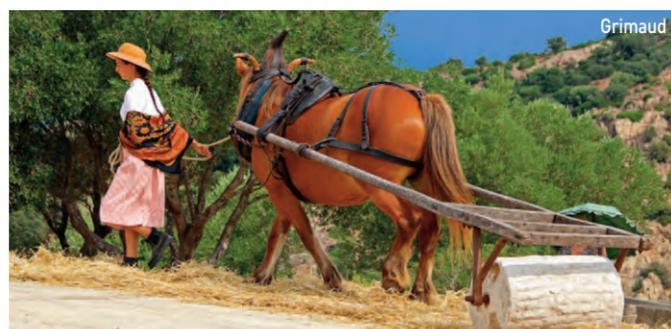
for the town of Arles in the middle of the 12th century. After that it spread throughout a large area of the Mediterranean basin. The windmills in Provence comprise a solidly built tower with

one-metre thick walls, about five to six metres high and topped by a wooden chapel like a Chinese style roof, which houses part of the mechanism inside and the vanes outside. Their popularity is due to the fact that rivers and coastal streams around the villages in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez do not flow very fast. The environment and climate is also more suited to windmills. In days gone by, every municipality had several to replace watermills that became redundant in the hot summer months due to lack of water.

When out walking, we can still see many windmill towers. Some have been left alone as reminders of the past when the vanes still turned, like the one in Gassin on the Coste-Brigade descent, or on the Moulin de Verdagne campsite in La Croix Valmer, the car park in the health centre or the Adrech mill in La Garde-Freinet which will be restored, with the "Loto du Patrimoine". Some have been developed or integrated into houses: in Saint-Tropez, Le Cheval Blanc converted a windmill tower on the shore into a bedroom which seems to be very popular with newly-weds! In La Garde-Freinet, Saint-Tropez, Ramatuelle etc., they many have been transformed into homes.



Ramatuelle



Grimaud



Gassin

Some districts have embarked on a major venture to revive their windmills. For example, in 1990 in Grimaud, architect Hubert Lemonnier restored the Saint-Roch windmill which probably dates back to medieval times. Today the mill stands proudly watching over the Pont-des-Fées valley, a stunning protected landscape which hides a treasure trove of flowers, shrubs and insects for the unsuspecting walker. In Ramatuelle, one of the Paillas windmills was restored in 2002 and can now function. Every year on European Heritage Day in September, the vanes turn if the wind is blowing. From the site of the Paillas windmills there is a splendid view of the plain and Pampelonne beaches on one side and Cavalaire bay and the Iles d'Or on the other. In La Garde-Freinet, the Adrech mill is being renovated. These mills play a role in the various spring festivals and can be visited simply by contacting the relevant Tourist Offices.

Lastly, this was an olive oil producing region which meant every village had several mills to crush the olives. In French they were called moulins à sang meaning they were driven by animal power normally an ass, a name derived from the Latin name for donkey *Equus asinus*. The olives were put into a stone tub and a donkey turned the circular stone that crushed the olives. The resulting paste was spread onto disc-shaped hemp or coconut fibre baskets then stacked under a press to obtain the oil. Grimaud's Musée des Arts et Tradition Populaire has an old olive mill where you can see the three "chapels" that contained the olive presses. The windmills of St-Roch in Grimaud, Paillas in Ramatuelle and the ATP Museum in Grimaud can be visited at any time of the year – just contact the local Tourism Office. The largest olive grove in the Var is located in Sainte-Maxime : La Pierre Plantée.





La Mole, castle (private)

FROM THE TOP OF MY FORT

For centuries, men have formed communities and sought to protect themselves from dangers arriving by land or sea. Thus it was in the Iron Age, several centuries BC that the Celto-Ligurian people built

broad ramparts of dry stone, earth and wood for shelter. The Romans called them oppida (oppidum in the singular) and there are many of them in our hills. Difficult to access, today most of them are on private properties. In the Middle Ages villages were mainly built on hilltops, one only has to look at the plain to the perched, protected villages of Grimaud, Cogolin, Ramatuelle, Gassin and La Garde-Freinet.

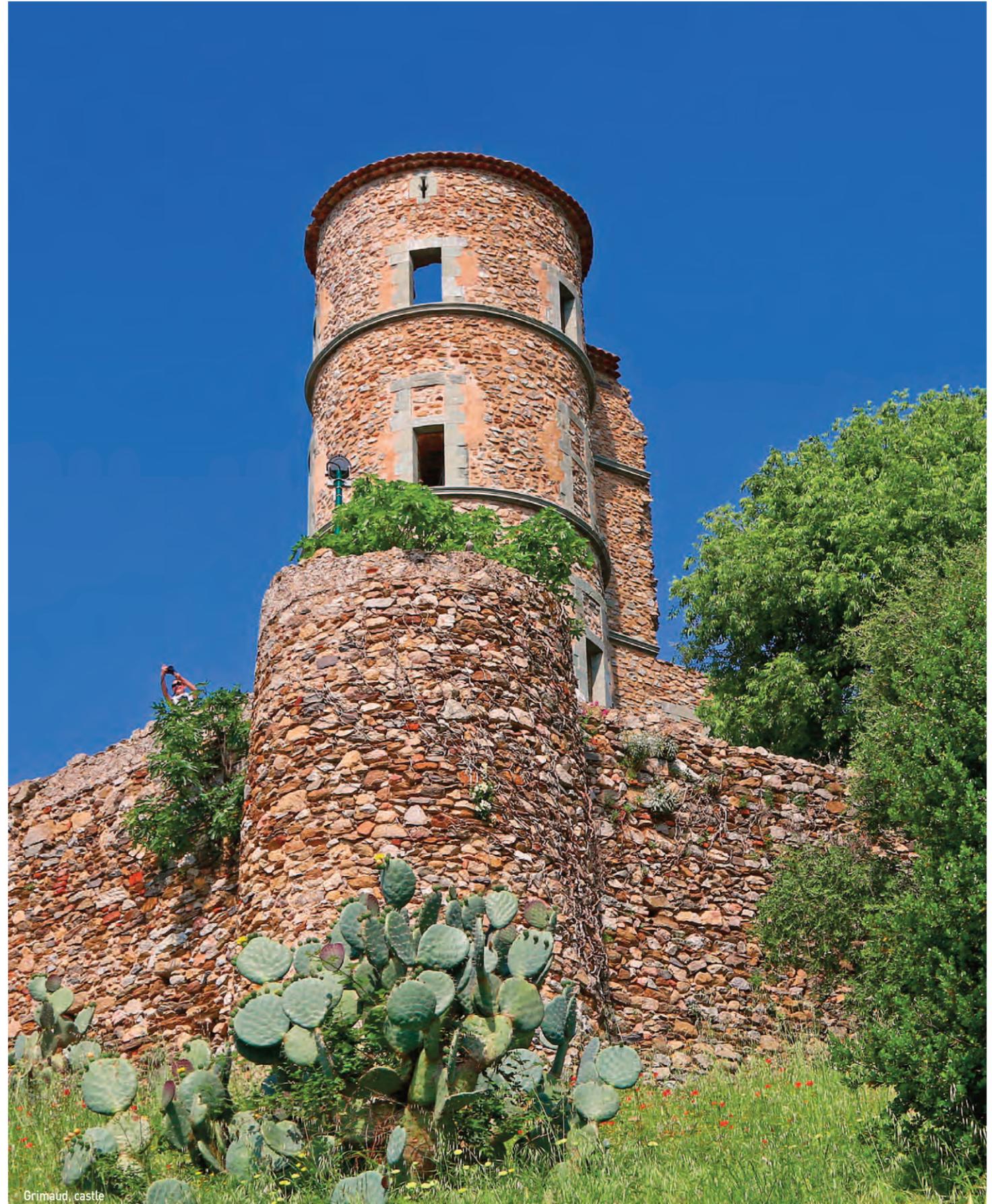
The most spectacular fortified village is undoubtedly Fort-Freinet overlooking La Garde. Houses and a wide ditch were carved into the rock at the end of the 12th century. For centuries it was mistakenly believed to have been a hideout for Saracens who came from Spain to stay in Provence in the 10th century. A visit is a must as the place is unforgiving yet also magical and evocative, with a sublime 360 degree view.

Le-Plan-de-la-Tour



“ Sheltered
by castles and
fortifications ”

Cogolin, Tour de l'Horloge



Grimaud, castle



Saint-Tropez, Citadelle



Gassin



La Garde-Freinet

Well sheltered

Castles like the one in Grimaud had a duty to defend the village but also to impress potential attackers and the local population. They were a symbol of the power of the seigneur (lord of the land). The latter signed all tenancy farming contracts and received the community's consuls there. In general, they did not live in their castles, preferring the comfort of a house in the village. In Sainte-Maxime, a broad tower built in the 16th century by the monks from Thoronet Abbey, which owned the land, surveys the coast and harbour. It houses the Tour Carrée museum dedicated to folklore and local traditions. In Saint-Tropez, the 15th century Suffren tower is part of the feudal castle. Within the urban environment, you can also see the four towers that made up the town's defences - Saint-Elme, Portalet, Vieille and Jarlier - built in the 16th and 17th century. Dominating the town is the Citadelle dating back to the early 17th century. The view of the sea and Gulf of Saint-Tropez is superb from the top of the keep.



CHAPELS & ORATORIES

The chapels in our villages reflect the strength and fervour of our ancestors' faith. Outside the parish church, villagers were proud of their chapels and built a lot of them. Saint-Tropez being wealthy, due to the maritime trade with Ottoman ports

“The soul of chapels and shrines”

of the East, had up to 15 chapels at one time. First we should mention the buildings that served as a church but being too cramped were replaced by a larger place of worship and became chapels. That was the case with Notre-Dame de la Consolation in Gassin and the Miremer and Saint-Clément in La Garde-Freinet, Sainte Magdeleine in La Mole, all medieval places of worship that were converted into chapels. Sometimes, the seigneur (lord) of the land initiated the foundation of a chapel: in Saint-Tropez, the Sainte-Anne chapel was probably built at the request of the Laurens and Grasse families; in Cavalaire the Castellane family, seigneur of Gassin from the 15th century

were behind the Annonciade chapel (mid-17th century) that was destroyed in the Second World War; in Grimaud in the 17th century a priest from La Garde-Freinet brought in enough capital to fund reconstruction of the medieval Queste chapel.



Le-Plan-de- La-Tour



Saint-Tropez



Sainte-Maxime



Gassin



La Mole



PEACE & SERENITY



Cogolin



Grimaud

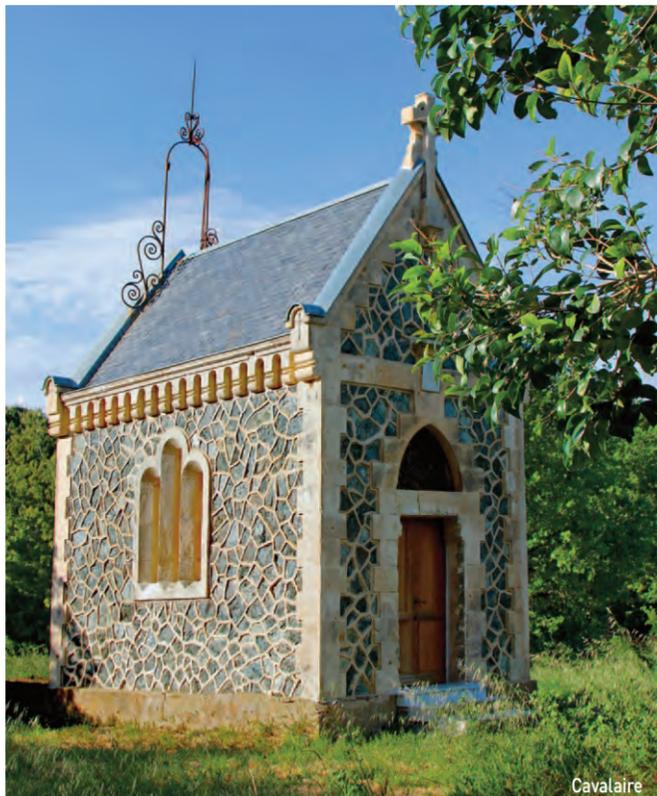
Brotherhoods, communities of pious laymen the goal being to help one another, played a key role, particularly the brotherhoods of Penitents who were behind the foundation of numerous chapels in nearly all our villages: in Saint-Tropez, the Miséricorde chapel, the Black Penitents headquarters, remained a place of worship but the Annonciade chapel, the White Penitents' brotherhood, has become an important museum for works by early 20th century painters; in La Garde-Freinet, the Saint-Jean chapel is now the Tourist Office, "Espace culturel des Amis de la Chapelle Saint-Jean" (cultural area) and Conservatoire du Patrimoine (heritage museum); in Grimaud, the White Penitents chapel contains liturgical furnishings of great quality; and in Cogolin there are the two adjoining Saint-Roch chapels, the oldest (17th century) has become a superb venue for modern exhibitions.

Brotherhoods linked to a trade also built chapels: in Saint-Tropez, the Saint-Eloi chapel (17th century), intended for the brotherhood of farriers, wheelwrights, goldsmiths, and other metal works is now a Protestant church. As for the Saint-Joseph chapel, seat of the brotherhood of building trades in the 17th century, it opens its doors for the Bravades and religious festivals that punctuate the life of the village.

All these chapels are simple yet beautiful gems that reflect the piety of the population in past centuries. They contain all manner of marvels: quality furniture and interiors for those that are still places of worship, and beautiful paintings, sculptures and objects in those that are now museums.



La Garde-Freinet



Cavalaire

Shrines are a more populist manifestation of religion. We see these small columns by the side of the road or path to protect travellers: in Saint-Tropez on the road to the Sainte-Anne chapel, in Grimaud in the Saint-Joseph district, on the old road to La Garde-Freinet, in the hamlet of Mourre etc. You must also not forget to lift your head to see all the small urban shrines, lodged in niches above entrances or on a wall. They have a more propitiatory role to protect the inhabitants of the house from any dangers: in Saint-Tropez there are at least 40, but you also see them in Cavalaire, Cogolin, La Garde-Freinet, le Plan de la Tour, Grimaud, Sainte-Maxime, La Mole, Gassin...

Shrines



Cavalaire



La Croix Valmer, L'Orangeraie

ARCHITECTURE

The Provençal coast before it was called the Côte d'Azur attracted the aristocracy and wealthy middle classes from the end of the 18th century onwards, who came to enjoy the mild climate and sunshine. One tends to forget that

Architectural trends

holidays by the Mediterranean Sea were initially taken in winter in Nice, Hyères and Saint-Raphaël. It was

not until after the First World War that summer tourism developed as people discovered the benefits of sea bathing, watersports and bronzed, muscular bodies.

Between the wars, this enthusiasm for the sea encouraged wealthy French and foreign middle classes to build beautiful villas here. Our region therefore became a veritable laboratory that allowed early 20th century innovators to express themselves and develop a quality modern architecture. In Saint-Tropez, from afar we see what looks like a large white ship set in a pine forest: this is Latitude 43 by the architect Georges-Henri Pingusson. Built in 1932, this avant-garde building was acclaimed worldwide as a work of pure beauty and functionality. Originally designed to be a luxury hotel, it had 110 rooms on a yachting theme with passages and porthole-shaped windows, an Olympic-size seawater pool, casino and tennis courts. It was converted into apartments in 1945 and is now a listed building (Monument historique). On the other side of the Gulf in Sainte-Maxime, we have the Arbois Hotel by René Darde opposite. Built two years later, the building is simple with pure lines overlooking the sea. It was awarded the Patrimoine XXe Siècle label as being an important legacy of the 20th century, as was the magnificent Palais des Sirenes by François Bret. The Tourist Office provides an itinerary to discover the architecture of this seaside resort. You also find many houses from this period in La Croix-Valmer along Boulevard des Villas or in Grimaud on the RD 559 in the Beauvallon district. Last but not least, built 50 years ago is the Port Grimaud marina development, internationally renowned for its refined yet easy-on-the-eye architecture and well worth a visit.



Sainte-Maxime, Les Tourelles



Sainte-Maxime



Saint-Tropez, Le Latitude 43

WATER, LIFE...

“The quest for water”

We all know how important water is throughout the Mediterranean. Fresh water is scarce and everyone needs to economise. It was not so long ago that they had to fetch water from the fountain, as running water was only for the privileged few.

All our villages have fountains. The water is usually fresh and of good quality. They were sociable places, where women came to fill their pitchers and gossip, sometimes insults were thrown but they rarely came to blows. Livestock also came to quench their thirst. The fountain in Place des Lices in Saint-Tropez is the most famous, and has been flowing since the 18th century. In Ramatuelle, Joseph Bernard, a dynamic mayor had one built in the square in 1905. In La Garde-Freinet, there is the old fountain (literally fontaine vieille) and a large circular fountain on Place Neuve. In Gassin, it was a well that supplied the village with water, while in Grimaud, the monumental fountain on Place Neuve is a symbol of progress and prosperity. You can also still find the old hand-pump fountains on street corners in Cogolin and Grimaud, or the more modest drinking fountains from the 19th century, a sign of progress and hygiene. Then of course there are the anonymous drinking fountains you come across when hiking, at a bend in the road in the middle of nowhere. Sometimes there is even a glass or receptacle with a cork in it so the walker can quench their thirst on hot summer days.

The old stone wash-houses (lavoirs) (Ramatuelle, La Garde-Freinet, Sainte-Maxime, Saint-Tropez, le Plan de la Tour, Grimaud) were another very sociable spot for the women of the village to gather and gossip. They even washed clothes here in winter when the water was freezing. Twice a year they did the bugade, a big wash, using ash collected from the fireplace. With the advent of the washing machine, wash-houses were abandoned. In Saint-Tropez, the Vasserot wash-house built in the 19th century is now a remarkable space for exhibitions. We still like meeting near fountains or lavoirs, to wash our hands or have a drink, or just to listen to the soothing sound of water flowing as it did in days gone by.



La Garde-Freinet



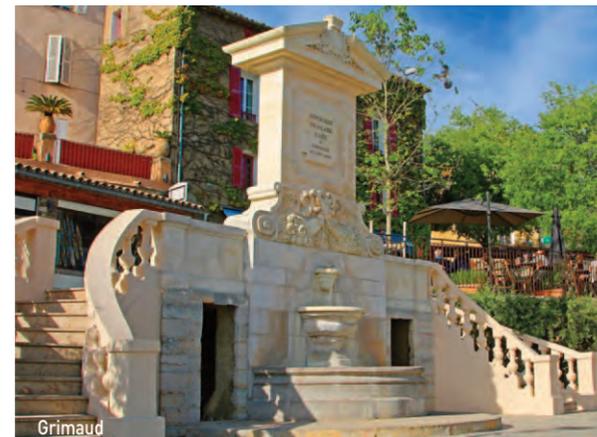
Saint-Tropez, Place des Lices



La Garde-Freinet



Cogolin



Grimaud



Le-Plan-de-la-Tour



Le-Plan-de-la-Tour



Saint-Tropez, Musée de l'Annonciade

UNUSUAL MUSEUMS

Avant-garde paintings In Saint-Tropez the Annonciade museum is a reminder that the peninsula was one of the most vibrant centres of avant-garde painting in the early 20th century, thanks mainly to Paul Signac who discovered this delightful little harbour in 1892. In addition to its permanent collections, the museum regular puts on magnificent exhibitions that attract thousands of visitors. In Saint-Tropez, the Maison des Papillons (butterfly museum) showcases an extraordinary selection (more than 35,000 specimens) of diurnal species in France, collected and mounted by the artist Dany Lartigue. You can also discover in the Citadelle, a maritime history museum will make you discover the real history of this city. And without forgetting the Museum "Musée de la Gendarmerie et du Cinéma" which will pay tribute to Louis de Funès, Brigitte Bardot, Romy Schneider and to all the fans of cinema, actors and directors who are in loved with Saint-Tropez and its beautiful Peninsula landscape. It is a huge popular success, this is the most visited museum in le Var. Find our cinema tour on www.visitgolfe.com

Halfway between Sainte-Maxime and Le Muy, the Musée du Phonographe et de la Musique Mécanique showcases a unique collection of 350 instruments retracing the history of the phonograph between 1830 and 1930.

THE MUSEUM OF MARITIME HISTORY

The museum of the Citadelle redraws the maritime activities of Saint-Tropez since almost 500 years. A huge success with 100 000 visitors per year. A striking scenography, initiatory routes available in 18 very instructive rooms, mixes great sound atmospheres, rare videos, interactive discoveries, collector's items, to evoke fishing, the coastal navigation, the shipyards, famous captains, navy boats, liners ... The museum shows the characters life whether famous or anonymous, who built the maritime history of Saint-Tropez, which is the third French port in the XVIIIth century. And then, when going out of the museum, what a view !"



Saint-Tropez



Testimony from the past

Nearly every municipality has its own museum or space dedicated to the traces, remains and events that left its mark on the history of their area. Some present their rural origins, others their religious heritage, others are based on milestones, iconic characters and even tell their maritim past.



Cavalaire, Maison Foncin



Saint-Tropez, Musée de la gendarmerie et du cinéma



Saint-Tropez, Maison des Papillons

Midnight august 14th 1944

Provence Landings Some 350,000 men, 2,120 vessels and 1,900 aircraft were engaged in this massive operation to liberate Provence, then the whole of France's South East in less than 15 days, that took place on the night of the 14th and 15th of August 1944. The Provence Landings mobilised the entire coast, and you will find memorials (Le Rayol, Cavalaire) and monuments (La Croix-Valmer, Cogolin, Ramatuelle, Saint-Tropez) where this historic event is commemorated on a regular basis. Impressive wrecks of warships sunk and aircraft brought down during these military operations are to be found just off our shores which today have become popular dive sites. Sometimes turrets from tanks wash up on our beaches after a winter storm, witnesses to these allied landings.

Archaeology and customs Cavalaire (Heraclea Caccabaria) has created an archaeological space showcasing objects from the often overlooked history of this ancient settlement, items from the Montjean sites (Iron Age), Pardigon (Roman era) and wrecks salvaged from the sea. In Grimaud, as in La Garde-Freinet, museums retrace the life and customs of these Provençal villages: cultivation of vines, forests and cork, silkworm breeding, household chores, clothing and Provençal customs of the early Massif des Maures inhabitants (Grimaud), and cork oak and chestnut tree cultivation (La Garde-Freinet). The other Provençal tradition is played on village squares: pétanque, the famous boules game.



Cogolin

FOLKLORE & TRADITIONS

Life in all the Gulf of Saint-Tropez villages is marked by religious feast days, Bravades and celebrations throughout the year..



CRAFTS & ANTIQUES

Unusual objects and valuable collections the craftsmen merit being included on this tour. In Ramatuelle, Atelier de Janny specialises in decorative porcelain, tableware, decorations and Provençal traditions. Just like Entre lin et coton (Cogolin) for hand-painted porcelain and Atmos'Verre (Cogolin), the art of mirrors which creates bowls, glass furniture and other original objects. On the road between Cogolin and Grimaud (direction Collobrières), the antiques district groups a good number of professionals who offer a wide selection of eclectic and often unusual objects. Finally we come to Saint-Tropez for the most spectacular and valuable collections.



“Made in Provence”



Pipes, reeds, wrought ironwork, glasswork, leather sandals, rugs, ceramics and more – you will be won over by the skills of our craftsmen and talented artists whose wares are exported all over the world. What would Provence be without potteries? There are many in our region and all original: in Ramatuelle or Gassin (Poterie Provençale Augier), in Grimaud (Poterie des 3 Terres and Poterie du Porche), in Cogolin (La Poterie de Cogolin) : garden pots, terracotta, glazed or decorated, handmade or not, and customized earthenware - feel free to indulge yourself! For ceramics, we recommend you call into one of the most famous (from Salernes). On Sunday morning, the flea market of Saint-Tropez bay, “the ‘puces’ on Thursday in Cogolin, the others garage sales in our villages and the Vintage exhibitions in Sainte-Maxime and Cogolin.



Cogolin

Lacey bell towers and wool carpets Not quite the same as a campanile, but the lace-like bell towers that crown most of our churches are wrought-iron, a highly developed skill in Provence. Several master craftsmen are at work in the Gulf producing authentic wrought-iron work, tailor-made, classic designs or purely creative (Hoogewys in Cogolin, Calvani in Saint-Tropez, Création Béatrice H in Ramatuelle). Softer but equally delicate handiwork in the form of wool rugs, carpets and floorcoverings emerge from the Manufacture des Tapis in Cogolin, founded in 1924. The method used dating back to 1880 is known as the basse lisse à bras with a Jacquard mechanism, named after the man who invented it in 1801 and which caused a revolution in weaving (not open to visitors).

Reeds, pipes and sandals The Mole valley’s micro climate is ideally suited to growing the cane from which they make reeds for saxophones, oboes and other wind instruments (Rigotti and Alain Ruiz in Cogolin); indeed these wafer-thin slivers of wood are exported to the world’s most famous jazz clubs! Another product of nature, this one carved out of the roots of white heath (briar wood) that flourishes in the Maures, are the pipes made in Cogolin (Charles Courrieu). Tanned leather used to produce leather goods has made the reputation of artisanal sandal makers (K. Jacques and Rondini in Saint-Tropez and a leather workshop in Grimaud).



Cogolin



La Garde-Freinet



Saint-Tropez



Cogolin



Cogolin



Grimaud



Grimaud



Sainte-Maxime, Le Carré



Jazz à Ramatuelle

EMOTION TO SHARE

Culture in motion

There are several readings of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez depending on if you prefer history, geology, folklore, fishing, sailing or nightlife. But culture is everywhere : dark rooms, libraries, culture centres and media libraries to nourish your interest. In Saint-Tropez's Bay we have a remarkable breeding ground of talents, the troops like: Les Tréteaux de Saint Tropez, Carpe Diem, le Proscenium and Les Tragos propose the numerous representations all year round.

Cultural centre in the Gulf The Carré Léon Gaumont (Sainte-Maxime) is undoubtedly the most versatile cultural centre in the Gulf. This 5,200m² complex unites under one roof two theatre halls,

485 and 80 seats (high quality multi-disciplinary programme: plays, dance, music, circus and digital arts, meetings with artists, workshops, etc.); a municipal media library of 1,000m² (lending books, comics, magazines, CDs & CD-ROMS, plus exhibitions, workshops, book readings and signings, etc.) and a cinema, the Pagnol Carré Léon Gaumont which has three theatres with digital sound and comfy club seats.

For young and old Cavalaire's media library organises a highly original programme of exhibitions. With a fund of 40,000 documents, half of which are new, this municipal space has a packed catalogue of videos, CD-ROMS, books, periodicals (newspapers & magazines) and brand new conference room. In the same premises as the Gulf's Rostropovitch-Landowski Conservatoire, Cogolin's media library is a hive of activities for young and old. In addition to loaning books, CDs and DVDs, it organises storytelling workshops, book signings, exhibitions. In La Mole, 50% of the population is registered at the media library.



Reading and writing workshops La Croix-Valmer (arts and culture centre and library), La Garde-Freinet (Saville library, library for young people and the municipal Jean Aicard library), Saint-Tropez (Charles Vildrac library for youngsters) and Gassin (library) are also meeting points for reading and writing workshops and other cultural activities, opening doors to self-knowledge as well as the world around us.



Sainte-Maxime, Le Carré



Cogolin, Les Médiévales



HERITAGE & RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

Subject to the health situation

May

- Petite Maïo (Sainte-Maxime)
- Saint-Maur Bravade (Cogolin)
- Votive Fest (Sainte-Maxime)
- Wool Fest (Grimaud)
- Saint-Clément Bravade (La Garde-Freinet)
- Saint-Pons & Donkey Fest (Le Plan de la Tour)
- Bravade, traditional fest (Saint-Tropez)
- Days of mills and milling (Ramatuelle)

June

- Spanish Bravade (Saint-Tropez)
- Saint-Jean fire (Grimaud)
- Saint-Jean fest (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
- Saint-Jean and Saint-Pierre fest (Cavalaire, Sainte-Maxime)
- Saint-Pierre fest (Saint-Tropez)
- Saint-Roch mill fest (Grimaud)
- Heritage & mills days (Ramatuelle)

July

- Sainte-Magdeleine fest (La Mole)
- Saint-Pierre fest (Le Plan de la Tour)

August

- Village fest, Saint-Laurent fest (Gassin)
- Saint-André fest (Ramatuelle)
- Village fest (La Garde-Freinet, Grimaud)
- Hamlet of La Mourre fest (La Garde-Freinet)
- Memorial festivities of 15th august (Sainte-Maxime, Saint-Tropez, Cavalaire, Cogolin)

September

- Provençal fair (Cogolin)
- Pilgrimage to Notre Dame de Miremer (La Garde-Freinet)
- European heritage days

December

- Christmas festivities in each village
- Mr. Codou Provençal nativity scene (La Garde-Freinet)
- Light fest (Grimaud)
- Foire aux santons (La Garde-Freinet)



Gassin, Villa Belrose

Prestigious DESTINATION

“ Mere mention of the name Saint-Tropez evokes a thousand and one images of this idyllic peninsula. Undoubtedly many prestigious establishments contribute to its image of luxurious elegance, well-being and relaxation. Shops, golf courses, spas, polo, luxury yachts, premium events, even fashion shows, have earned the Gulf of Saint-Tropez the title Capital of Luxury. ”

www.visitgolfe.com

Château de la Messardière



LUXE, PEACE AND PLEASURE

Luxury hotels and spas



In French palace is a label for the most luxurious hotels, but did you know that of the 31 listed in France, 4 are in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez? Also on this peninsula-island are no less than 22 five-star hotels and 21 with four stars. All would agree that the Gulf of Saint-Tropez offers a high level of accommodation and facilities for a sophisticated, demanding and international clientele. Primarily it is the quality of services in hotels on the peninsula which attract such a loyal and discerning clientele. There are very few chains here, each stands out in its own right and offers a personalised service. All enjoy an exceptional location, often in a shady park or on the slopes, with views of Saint-Tropez' bay or a beach or rocky stretch of coast, unless they are in the centre of famous villages where you don't need to use the car very often. www.visitgolfe.com





Ramatuelle, Pampelonne beach

“Close your eyes and forget everything...”

Personnel are trained to respond to the needs of their guests, to anticipate their desires and provide the best possible services to transform their momentary stay into a timeless memory. Rooms and suites, including presidential suites, have the latest mod cons in terms of digital connections and audio-visual equipment. Some feature the colours of Provence in their décor; others have gone for a more modern style, often designed by well-known interior designers and featuring quality materials and objets d'art, with spacious well-appointed bathrooms. Just close your eyes and relax...

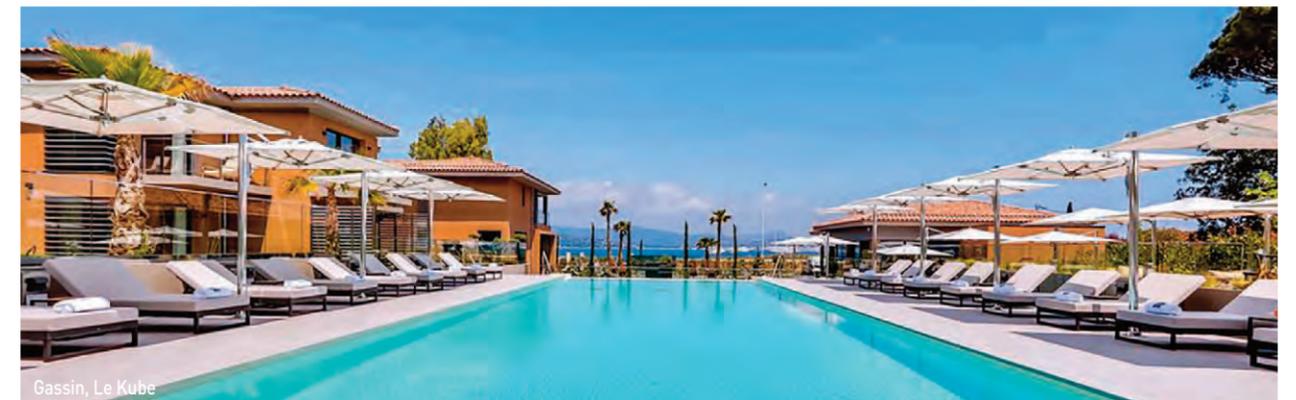
The sea as your backdrop, the sky your canopy In the Gulf of Saint-Tropez the sensual pleasures are there every moment of your stay. Romantic bedrooms, junior suites or apartments extended by wrought-iron balconies, with terrace, garden or

patio. Bougainvillea, pencil pines, neat rows of vines and olive trees add their touch of colour to the tableau. Everything is beautiful; it was designed that way! The sea is your backdrop, the sky your canopy; the blue sea reflected in your swimming pool and a spring fountain echoing the sound of the waves.

Multiple flavours All the pleasures of body and spirit would not be complete without good food. Many of these establishments employ the services of experienced, sometimes Michelin-star chefs who are amazingly imaginative when it comes to celebrating Mediterranean ingredients. They rival each other for originality to produce outstanding seasonal menus, with dishes that juggle herbs and spices in recipes of multiple flavours to delight even the most discerning palate.



La Croix Valmer, Lily of the Valley



Gassin, Le Kube

SPA

Relaxation, wellness and beauty. Comfort and well-being would not be complete without the addition of relaxation and beauty areas, gyms, access to a solarium or private beach and a range of tailor-made services (yoga, massage, treatment cabins, boat trips...). Here again, competent and dedicated personnel use their talents to give you unforgettable moments of relaxation. You will also find top quality facilities in several of the four-star hotels who, as well as providing huts on beautiful beaches, also have beauty and balneotherapy centres worthy of those in the world's greatest cities: only the outdoor decor changes to one of blues, greens and gold.

“Spas are in our nature”

As well as renowned spa brand facilities offered by hotels, there are specialised independent spas in nearly all the municipalities in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez. Private salons and spas offer a range of beauty and relaxation treatments (face, hands, feet, body), fitness regimes and manicures, water treatments, massages and modelling techniques to rediscover that sense of harmony. It is you who chooses between a Californian massage or energising therapy, a jacuzzi, hammam or sauna; unless of course you wish to try them all...





Sainte-Maxime, Gassin and Grimaud: three 18-hole golf courses, three courses combining technical skills with an enjoyable sport, three truly original greens as each is very different from the others. What they have in common is their proximity: two overlook the Gulf of Saint-Tropez with incredible views of the sea, while the other turns its back on the bay to offer you the rolling hills of the Massif des Maures.



Grimaud, Golf Up



Gassin, Académie Golf Country Club



Sainte-Maxime, Golf Blue Green

SWING GOLF

Grimaud : Golf Club de Beauvallon This 40-hectare course facing south and the sea is quite technical but not very long, alternating original fairways (85 years old, a pioneer in the Var!) and new well thought out fairways. It is easy to cover this course on foot which will delight those who find that too many courses require golf carts. Pro-shop, clubhouse, international clientele, competitions and experienced instructors.

Grimaud, Golf Up Golf Up is the ideal place to learn golf or perfect your skills, and above all just to enjoy yourself. It boasts a practice area with 45 slots, 3 boxes equipped with the latest technology for learners, an approach area, two putting greens, a compact 9-hole course and a pro-shop.

Sainte-Maxime : Golf Blue Green This hilly, fairly technical 72-par course is spread across 65 hectares of bush and cork oaks. It enjoys superb views of both the Mediterranean and Maures and Estérel hills and is in the heart of a prestigious residential estate. Aerial tee shots, banks and water features unfold over nine holes down towards Sainte-Maxime and back up to the clubhouse. Practice area, Pro-shop, putting green, courses and individual lessons.

Gassin, l'Académie Golf Country Club Although mainly reserved for members and locals living in Gassin, it does however open its doors to guests from some of the luxury hotels on the peninsula. The layout reflects the combined skills of Gary Player, Gery Watine and Thierry Sprecher to offer a 6,045m course as varied as it is technical in a fabulous setting. Pro-shop, clubhouse with restaurant and reception facilities for hosting prestigious events are on offer.



Haras de Gassin, Polo Club



Ramatuelle, Athina Onassis Horse Show



Grimaud, Hubsid Jumping

PASSION HORSES

Gassin, the Polo capitale

Created in 1998 on the initiative of Corinne Schuler, a passionate polo player herself, the Polo Club of Saint-Tropez in Gassin is unique in France. Covering 30 hectares in a lovely green setting, the Club has been totally renewed and organises international tournaments from April to September which attract the world's best players and their extraordinary horses.

Grimaud, Hubsid Jumping

This new luxury Haras in the plain of Grimaud is intended to host it all year round unique and prestigious competitions.

Ramatuelle, prestigious jumping

Every year in summer, the Longines Athina Onassis Horse Show brings together the best jumping riders of the world on the back beach of Pampelonne.



Saint-Tropez, La Ponche

*Fashion,
glamour and
shopping for
luxury brands*

Saint-Tropez is fashion! The Gulf's most famous village has long been seen as a destination at the forefront of fashion and beauty. However the shop windows and boutiques have evolved over the decades, a trend that is accelerating. Like the legendary designers of the fifties who were behind Vachon and Choses on the harbour, Saint-Tropez today attracts the biggest international brands, some of which are also in Sainte-Maxime, Grimaud and Cavalaire. And it is fair to say that the fabulous outfits and accessories on display are given a further boost by the presence here of the world's most beautiful women who wear them.

Premium brands Vuitton, Dior, Hermès, Rolex, Cartier, Dolce & Gabbana, Chopard, Breitling, Longchamp, Gucci and Lancel, the list goes on. The most prestigious names which grace the boulevards of the world's big cities are now part of the Saint-Tropez scenery. All these brands

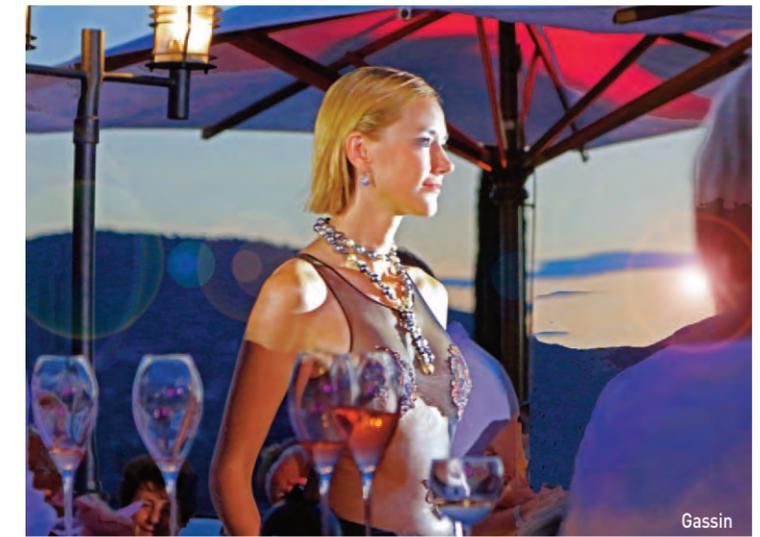
are keen to be associated with a glamour destination par excellence to ensure unrivalled visibility in summer when famous personalities and celebrities flock to our corner of the world. The resounding successes of the Chanel show on the harbour in 2011, the shooting of Longchamp world-wide campaign in Saint-Tropez, the regular shootings in the Gulf, such as the Victoria's Secret in Ramatuelle, are a perfect illustration.

Fashionable boutiques The peninsula's reputation, its luxury hotels, a largely protected environment, idyllic beaches and billionaire villas have attracted the world's biggest names in fashion to set up shop in the Gulf. Once a symbol of parties and a carefree attitude, today it symbolises luxury and brilliance. Place de la Garonne, Rue Gambetta, the quays by the harbour, Rue Allard and La Ponche are lined with trendy boutiques : such as the Tropezian sandals of the Rondini or K.Jacques houses, the Julie Vallotti dresses, the Titamala jewels ... Fashion is also taking shape day by day at Sainte-Maxime, Cogolin, Cavalaire. Yes, Saint-Tropez is also all about fashion.

Bay of Saint-Tropez for ever ! And it is not just about clothes, whether you are looking for jewellery, leather goods, shoes, accessories (watches, belts, hats), pens, cigars or beauty products Saint-Tropez, the shopping draw men, women and children like moths to a flame. They come in search of sports or trendy clothes, street-wear or beach-wear, glamour or collector's items, vintage or new; lines and products that are elegant and sensual : The beauty muth is eternal !



SPIRIT OF FASHION



Gassin



Saint-Tropez



Saint-Tropez



Paradis Porsche

ENGINES PASSION

Parade of the most beautiful cars
Apart perhaps from Monaco or Cannes, where else in Europe would you find a sea-side resort with such a concentration of rares cars in such a confined space? And while our favourite gendarme in front of the Sénéquier ensures they do not exceed the speed limit, the sight of the latest Ferrari, Porsche, Bentley, MacLaren, Aston Martin or Lamborghini parading slowly round the harbour, their gleaming exhausts roaring is a spectacle in itself. Unless of course you prefer their vintage models which also join in the parade like the Auto Retro Festival in Le Plan de la Tour...

And for the compétition, don't miss the "Rallye du Var" in November in Sainte-Maxime.

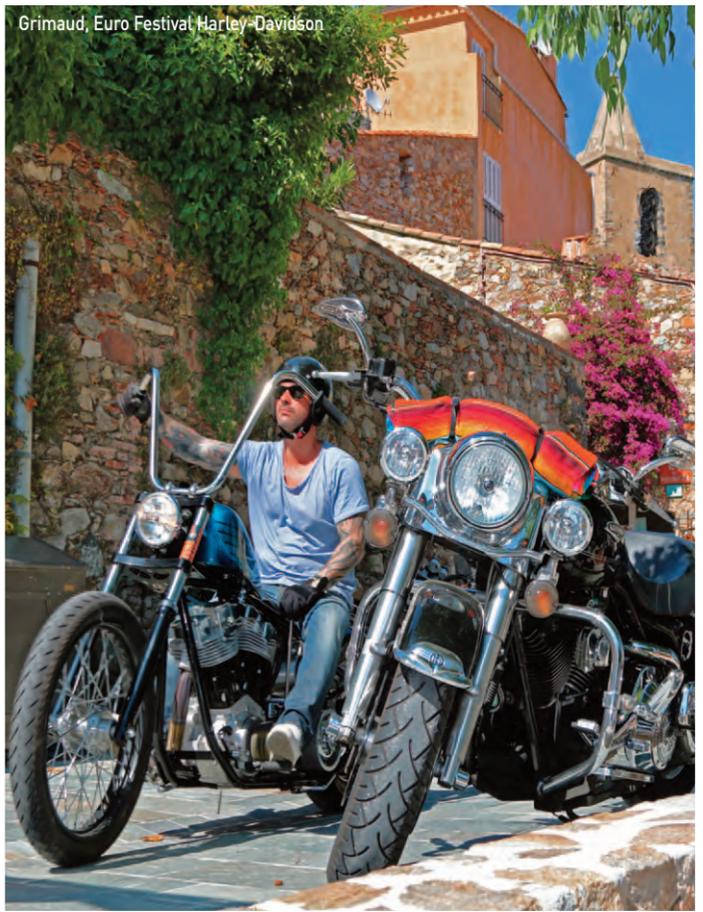
“The myth of Harley-Davidson”

“I don't need anyone on my H...” Between the Gulf of Saint-Tropez and the famous American brand it has been an enduring long-lasting love story. So many celebrities and ordinary people (one thinks of the song sung by Brigitte Bardot or the biking escapades of Johnny Hal-

lyday) have roamed the Gulf's road at the handlebars of their superb machines. The legend is at the Euro-festival – just try to

imagine 12,000 Harley Davidsons, the brand's biggest gathering in Europe, descending on Grimaud in May (subject to th health situation) ! Apart from the parades through neighbouring villages, the competitions and colourful stands, we must highlight the quality of the special "Prairies de la Mer" concerts held on a giant stage by the beach which attracts iconic bands like Status Quo, Bonnie Tyler, Europe, Simple Minds. A mega success in every sense of the word and one that is enjoyed by all...

Air shows Bay of Saint Tropez also welcomes an extraordinary aviation meetings: Free Flight in Sainte-Maxime in October and the Patrouille de France.



Grimaud, Euro Festival Harley-Davidson



Sainte-Maxime, Free Flight World Master

“Focus on Luxury Yachting”

The image of luxury is reinforced by all the beautiful big yachts in the harbour, at least those that are able to enter! Others have to be content to anchor in the bay. These lavish vessels, some with a helicopter on the roof much to everyone's admiration are an integral part of the Saint-Tropez landscape in summer. They have a well-established routine: departing for Ramatuelle's Pampelonne beach around 11am, returning to harbour late afternoon, reversing gently into their berth, hull brushing hull, watched by wide-eyed children and their parents amazed at having this level of luxury so close. As night falls, captains give way to the orchestras and sequins of private parties on deck, watched over by the Bailli de Suffren's statue.

Yet the mere presence of all this luxury should not mask the parallel economy it generates for the local community. From the boat building and maintenance yards, such as Rodriguez or Villanova of Saint-Tropez or Marines de Cogolin, to the year-round berths at Port Grimaud or Sainte-Maxime, the crews, private events presenting the latest models and the leisure exhibitions in the Gulf, not to mention the significant impact it has on night-life, restaurants, shops and the destination's image.

We cannot finish without a mention for the always impressive off-hore events that stop here, remembering the world championships of a few years ago. And finally we pay tribute to those legendary boats, smaller and all wood, the image of which will forever be associated with our destination. Yes, we are talking about Riva. Every year owners passionate about these little gems still gather in Saint-Tropez.



La Croix Valmer



Marines de Cogolin



Saint-Tropez



Saint-Tropez



Saint-Tropez

ARTISTS & RENOWNED GALLERIES

It all began in 1892 when Paul Signac discovered the Saint-Tropez peninsula. Bathed as it is in this exceptional light every day, it soon became a “branch of Montparnasse”. As president of Independent Artists, Signac brought in his wake many of the era’s most important artists, all of whom would make a pilgrimage to his villa “La Hune” in Saint-Tropez. Pointillism in particular followed. Neither light nor the attraction it has for artists has waned, and Saint-Tropez, the land that has made reputations, continues to inspire them.

“100 venues
no less !”

In all forms: studios, galleries, exhibition halls, workshops... Nearly 100 places where art is present are listed in the Gulf

of Saint-Tropez. Modern art, pictorial art, contemporary art, objects, photos, paintings and sculptures are on show in often remarkable spaces. Just stroll round the streets and alleys of our villages; there is not one without an art gallery for the enlightened amateur through to the most seasoned collector.



Sainte-Maxime

Land of culture Painters, writers, filmmakers, sculptors, stonemasons, potters, poets, photographers, painters of porcelain, silk or glass, and visual artists – they live on or regularly visit the peninsula while others come in search of inspiration. Some choose the sea and spray; others prefer the more destructively rugged elements of telluric forces in the hills. What is certain is that art is synonymous with the Var and an arts culture is anchored in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez: an ideal home for any discerning patron.



Maximilien Luce



Brigitte Bardot by Bob Zagury



PRESTIGIOUS EVENTS

Subject to the health situation

February

Valentine's Day

Sainte-Maxime on ice

May

Euro festival Harley-Davidson (Grimaud)

Athina Onassis Horse Show (Ramatuville)

Auto Retro (Le Plan de la Tour)

Printemps des antiquaires (Saint-Tropez)

Cavalaire Motors Show (Cavalaire)

Kids recreative days (Sainte-Maxime)

June

V Max Génération gathering (Cogolin)

July

Polo Competitions (Gassin)

Classic Tennis Tour (Saint-Tropez)

August

Côte d'Azur Polo Cup (Gassin)

Sales by local traders (Sainte-Maxime)

October

Paradis Porsche (Saint-Tropez)

Sales by local traders (Saint-Tropez)

Free Flight : aerobatics (Sainte-Maxime)

Saint-Tropez Classic : pedestrian race

Cinéma des Antipodes (Saint-Tropez)

Halloween (in all villages)

Univers vintage fair (Sainte-Maxime)

November

The Mysteries of the 21st Century (Saint-Tropez)

Rallye du Var (Sainte-Maxime)

December

Christmas festivities (in all villages)

Find all events on
www.visitgolfe.com



Saint-Tropez, Les Caves du Roy

Until the end of **THE NIGHT**

“ An evening out in a fine restaurant, sharing good times with friends, carried away by the music, dancing into the early hours, forgetting all your worries on a balmy Provençal night - there is a wide range of activities in the summer months, but not only then : nightclubs, bars, casinos, bowling alleys and cinemas are open all year round, not to mention concerts and festivals galore. “Night falls, nothing is certain, nothing awaits me, only adventure... ”



IN THE EVENING

A great evening usually begins with a good meal! And in the Gulf our restaurants are legion - between them the 12 towns and seaside resorts have more than 500 outlets offering a choice of Provencal or Mediterranean cuisine, typical French cuisine and even a range of foreign specialities. And then, of course, some starred chefs who will regale us ... Just scan your smart phone over the flashcode which will guide you to the best addresses on the last page.

“Atmosphere”



Whatever your preference there is something for all tastes: hushed or lively, an established restaurant or trendy eatery with dancing on the tables, by the sea or up in the hills, on the harbour or a picturesque square. You can even have a meal delivered directly to your door or your lovely yacht in the bay, complete with chef, waiters and orchestra – yes anything is possible! It's about getting into the mood before continuing your evening in style.



But which route will you take? The two casinos in the Bay of Saint-Tropez are at the east and west end of the territory, and of course are open all year round. As well as the many gaming formulas they come up with original ideas for special occasions, where you can dine and watch exotic shows, alone or with friends.

In Cavalaire, the Casino du Golfe which has been totally renovated has over a hundred slot machines and a hall dedicated to English roulette, Blackjack, Stud poker, Texas hold'em poker and Omaha poker. There are plenty of places in the restaurant and other rooms if you need some down time, and the cabaret puts on unusual themed shows. Ideally located on the harbour, the Casino has plenty of surprises and excitement in store, if you like the sound of hard cash hitting the trays! The Casino Barrière de Sainte-Maxime, between the shops and beach, has over 125 slot machines (video slots, mechanical slots, jackpot slots, video poker and electronic roulette), two English roulette tables, two blackjack tables and one boule. Add in the bar, the “Côté Plage” restaurant and the Joke-Club for an unforgettable evening in the bright lights.

“On route for the jackpot!”



LET'S DANCE

Night-Clubs

Cavalaire

Le Ka-va Club and Mambo Club
Themed party for the first.
Techno for the second.
On the port, open during
summer season.

Grimaud

Entourage Club
Disco integrated in the
Prairies de la Mer complex.
Cosy atmosphere with Chill & Sunn.
Open during summer season.

Sainte-Maxime

Le Joke-club
Casino Barrière Night-club.
Open all year round.

Saint-Tropez

Les Caves du Roy
It is the most famous club
in the Bay of Saint-Tropez.
Very selective.
Open from april to october.

L'Esqui Club Saint-Tropez
Little nightclub Dance,
House, RnB, disco,
electro and Happy Music
Open all year round.

Le Pigeonnier LP

Trendy fashionable little club.
Open all year round.

Le VIP Room

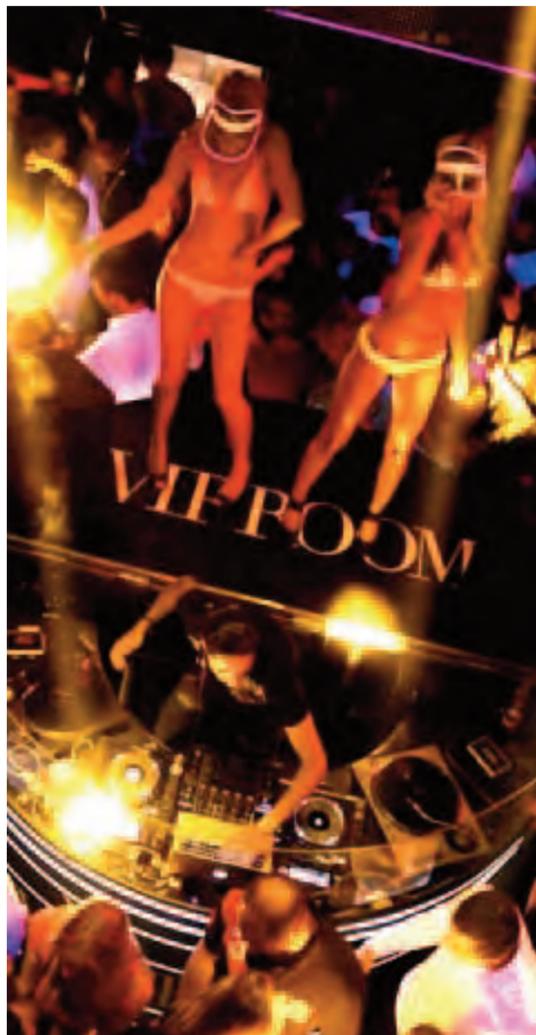
Jean Roch's nightclub,
exceptional program.
Open on July and August only.

Le Gaïo

The famous papagayo now the Gaïo,
offers its fusion
cuisine Peruvian-Japanese
before the night club.

We also dance

In the new places of restoration, which
are transformed from 23 pm to 3 am
into Bar-Cocktail-Dance :
La Rhumerie (Cavalaire)
le Long Bar (Port Grimaud),
Nikki Beach, Stefano Forever
(Ramatuelle),
l'Opéra, Le Quai, Tsar Folie's, Gioia,
Pablo (Saint-Tropez)...
and many other to discover on
www.visitgolfe.com, webpage "nightlife"



NIGHT FEVER



Music bars, cabarets and night clubs

Renowned for its nightlife, the Bay of Saint-Tropez opens the doors of its music bars, cabarets and night clubs at weekends all year round and every day in summer. Before or After? Until dawn? Make sure you remember it...

Piano bar, cocktail bar or lounge bar – there is a variety of venues where you can meet people for an aperitif before dinner or share a tapas listening to live music, or select a tasty dish off the à la carte menu. If you seek a relaxed ambiance (sometimes a little extravagant), upbeat mood, unexpected parties or cabaret shows, the range on offer is colourful, varied and often a surprise. And if as Sacha Guitry claimed with a big smile, "It is easier to seduce the evening before than the day after", then welcome to the world of glitz and glamour: in the heat of the night under the lights of the peninsula anything is possible.

Screens to change your universe Become a pirate, detective, star or even lovers for an evening... the Saint-Tropez peninsula is itself a film set. Dozens of films have been shot here; feature films, TV films, series ("Sous le soleil" and "Ephemera") and commercials. Several classics remain etched on the memory, such as Et Dieu créa la femme, La Piscine or Les Gendarmes. The Var Film Commission to discover in "La route du cinéma" on www.visitgolfe.com, helps pro-

duction crews who want to film in the Var. Our cinemas are well-equipped and offer the range (air conditioning in Cavalaire, art-house in Ramatuelle, Dolby digital sound in Saint-Tropez, 3D in Cogolin, a multiplex in Sainte-Maxime to name a few). And of course the unmissable event in October : Festival du Cinéma des Antipodes.

Crazy about bowling ! There is nothing like bowling for a different and fun evening with friends. A great striker or champion in the making? If you are a bowling fan then head for Grimaud, near the waterfront estate of Port Grimaud where Bowling du Golfe de Saint-Tropez will give you a chance to rack up some good scores, as you hurl the ball that weighs 2.7 to over 7kg! Open 7/7 the arena has eight computerized lanes for competition plus a bar, American billiards, games room.

Roller coaster or ghost train ? Azur Park is the one and only amusement park in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez in summer and you cannot miss it - La Foux roundabout at Gassin. From the Ferris wheel to the dodgems, a ghost train to mini-karting, candyfloss to toffee apples, there is everything here to entertain you: 25 big attractions, 15 children's rides, 25 shooting galleries, Ejection Seat, triple somersault in space and a roller coaster (the biggest in Europe!). Imagine not stopping – breathtakingly fast speeds and excitement guaranteed !



CONCERTS & FESTIVALS

In summer the cicadas do not only sing in the pine forests. Venues all over the peninsula (from theatres to outdoor venues, citadels to chapels) host top quality concerts, classical and jazz, musical evenings, world music nights and theatre festivals with internationally renowned artists and stars. They are always very popular.



Grimaud



Cavalaire



Cogolin



Ramatuelle

Subject to the health situation

All year round

- Arts du Rire comedy show, in all villages
- Soirées musicales, Grimaud
- Dimanches de la scène theater festival, Grimaud
- Escapades littéraires, Grimaud
- Musiques pour Dieu, Saint-Tropez
- Le Lézard, Café-théâtre à Cogolin
- Concerts at the Maurin des Maures reception hall, Cogolin
- Le Carré Sainte-Maxime cultural shows
Sainte-Maxime

May to june

- Printemps musical, Saint-Tropez

May

- Euro-Festival Concerts , Grimaud
- Rockavalaire & Tremplin de Jazz, Cavalaire
- Ascension pour Le Jazz, Ramatuelle

June

- Concerts au Balcon, Ramatuelle

July

- Nuits Classiques, Ramatuelle
- Judis de la Nartelle classical music,
Sainte-Maxime
- Escapade nocturne et littéraire, La Garde-Freinet
- Reconnexion Ramatuelle

August

- Les Rendez-vous de l'été, Cavalaire
- Les Anches d'Azur, festival de musique
La Croix Valmer
- Festival Jazz à Ramatuelle, Ramatuelle
- Festival de Ramatuelle, Ramatuelle
- Les Nuits du Château de la Mouette, Saint-Tropez

July & August

- Festival de Théâtre de Pardigon, Cavalaire
- Festival Terre Mer, Cogolin
- Les Grimaldines, street show and concerts, Grimaud
- Soirées Gala concerts, Sainte-Maxime
- Summer DJ'S Party, Sainte-Maxime
- Nocturnes Croisiennes, La Croix Valmer
- Soirées Romantiques, Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer
- Festival dans les Vignes, Le Plan de la Tour

September

- Caval'air Jazz Festival, Cavalaire

September & October

- Festival d'Automne, Saint-Tropez

Find all events on
www.visitgolfe.com



Cavalaire

MAGIC NIGHTS...

Quite simply magical: firework displays in the Gulf are fantastic - and numerous! The best pyrotechnical displays of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez are at the end of the year and middle of summer. In December and January the places to be are Cavalaire, Gassin, Sainte-Maxime and Saint-Tropez. In summer (14 July and 15 August), all the seaside resorts put on small or big displays set off from barges on the sea, with thousands of multi-coloured rockets in action for the really big displays. It is also not uncommon to see impressive fireworks at the end of opulent private parties or to close prestigious events.

“ Fabulous, like our firework displays... ”

Is it due to the Gulf of Saint-Tropez being an ideal backdrop showcasing our heritage? Or the near certainty that the evening will be mild or because people love this location? Or the quality of the light, even under the stars? Or that visitors from all over the world are enthralled? Fireworks in the Bay of Saint-Tropez are - quite simply magical!

As the imagination which becomes attached to a legendary destination !

To discover on our Youtube channel “Golfe de Saint-Tropez Tourisme” or on our others social medias, see page 156.

GOLFE DE SAINT-TROPEZ TOURISME

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Networks...*



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Gassin

Sainte-Maxime



GOLFE DE SAINT-TROPEZ TOURISME

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