

PROVENCE-ALPES-CÔTE D'AZUR

# WHAT'S NEW?

SOUTHERN FRENCH ALPES

Spring  
Summer  
Autumn  
2025

SOUTHERN FRENCH  
**alpes**





**A** little corner of France home to 5 million inhabitants, the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region welcomes tourists from the world over in all seasons, come to savour our rich heritage, buzzing culture, exceptional scenery between sea and mountain, enviable lifestyle, fine food and legendary hospitality..

A forerunner for the ecological transition, the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Council voted Europe's first "100% green" budget.

The Southern French Alps represents 40 % of our territory. This beautiful area is a genuine benchmark in sustainable tourism, with countless preserved natural areas (6 reserves including 2 national parks), pastoral traditions listed as UNESCO Intangible Heritage and eco-friendly agriculture. It is home to France's largest number of certified-organic farms.

A cradle of champions, the Southern French Alps is a haven for outdoor fans, with an endless choice of hikes, aerial sports, mountaineering and freshwater fun on our lakes.

Our mountains and valleys are a must-do paradise for cyclists keen to climb the iconic mounts of the Tour de France or tackle mythical long-distance mountain bike trails such as the Transverdon.

Active wellness, pure air, positive energy and a delightful way of life make this a favourite holiday choice for overseas and local tourists alike, with 4 out of 10 visitors originating from the surrounding areas.

More than just a mountain getaway, the Southern French Alps forms part of the region's three international destination brands, alongside Provence and the Côte d'Azur.

A haven of nature, sport, culture and peace, the Southern French Alps promises to astonish, with thrilling experiences and fascinating discoveries topped with an invigorating breath of fresh air.

**An invitation to get away from it all and recharge your batteries, whatever the season.**



**Renaud MUSELIER**  
President of the Provence-Alpes-  
Côte d'Azur Regional Council  
Deputy President of Régions de  
France

**François de CANSON**  
Vice President of the Provence-Alpes-  
Côte d'Azur Regional Council  
President of the Provence-Alpes-  
Côte d'Azur Regional Tourist Board  
Deputy President of ADN Tourisme



## **THE 2030 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC WINTER GAMES, HERE IN PROVENCE-ALPES-CÔTE D'AZUR!**

**The entire region is set to benefit from the  
dynamics of the French Alps 2030 Winter  
Olympics.**

Regional planning, sport and transport: the Olympic Winter Games are a genuine growth accelerator for our territories.

Thanks to them, we are building the mountains of 2050, by facilitating access, making winter sports more accessible to all and encouraging long-term respect for our alpine massifs in every season. These Olympic Games are also dedicated to our youth, inviting an entire generation to get involved, innovate and shine a light on Olympic values.

**If you liked Paris 2024, you'll love the French Alps 2030!"**



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# SOUTHERN FRENCH ALPES

## purealpes

TGV High-speed train stations

Airports

RIVERS

7 NATURE RESERVES

Main towns

VAL Valleys

MAJOR SKI RESORTS

VAL D'ALLOS } Espace  
PRA-LOUP } Lumière

LE SAUZE

SUPERDÉVOLUY } Le Dévoluy  
LA JOUE DU LOUP }

ORCIÈRES-MERLETTE 1850

LES ORRES

RISOUL } La Forêt  
VARS } Blanche

PUY-SAINT-VINCENT

BRIANÇON / SERRE CHEVALIER VALLÉE

MONTGENÈVRE

LA GRAVE

AURON

ISOLA 2000

VALBERG

VILLAGE RESORTS  
Nordic & Alpine skiing

NORDIC SKI AREAS

MOUNTAIN PASSES

PASSES CLOSED THROUGHOUT WINTER

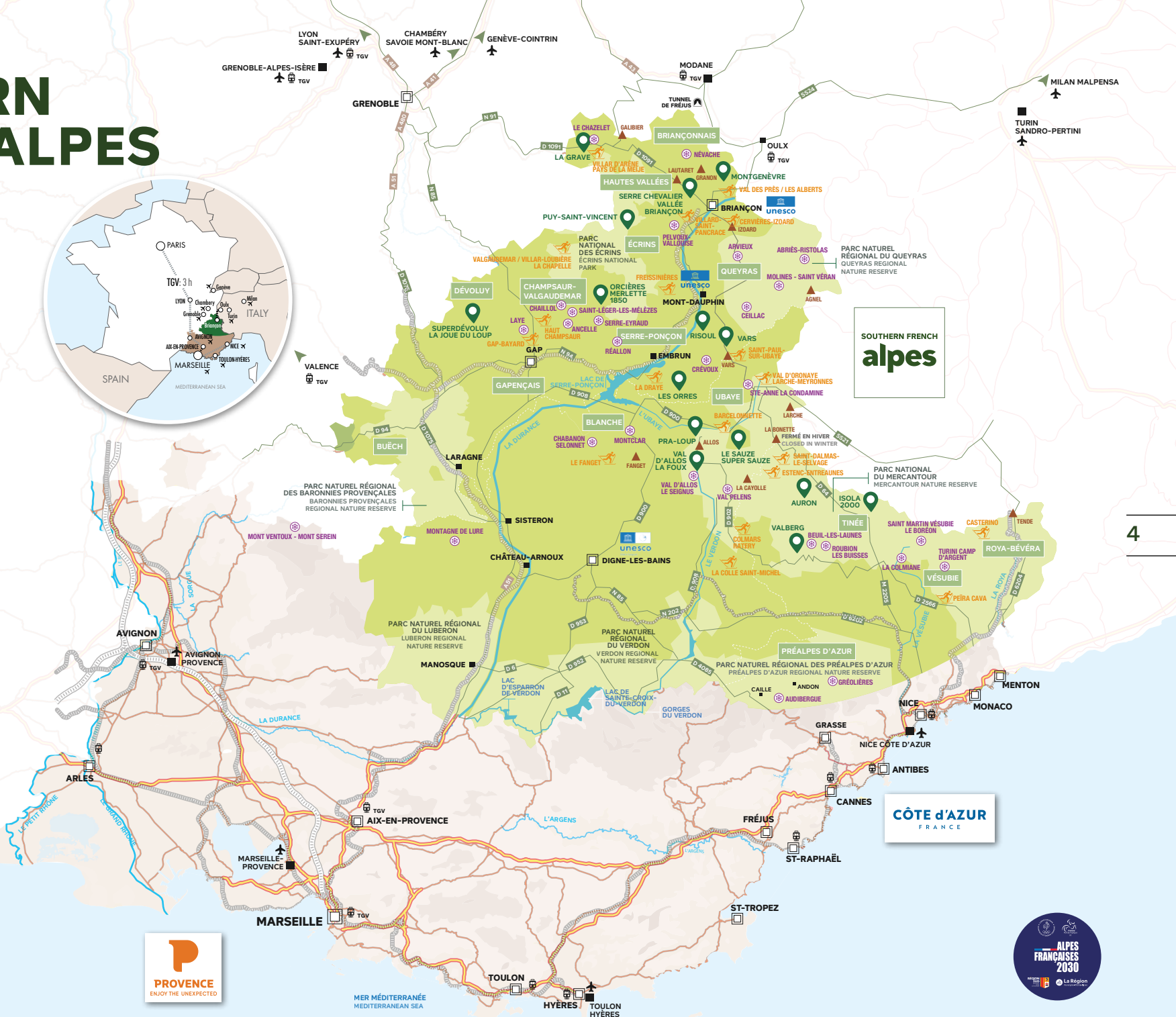
UNESCO World Heritage

Global Geoparks Network



HOW TO  
GET THERE?

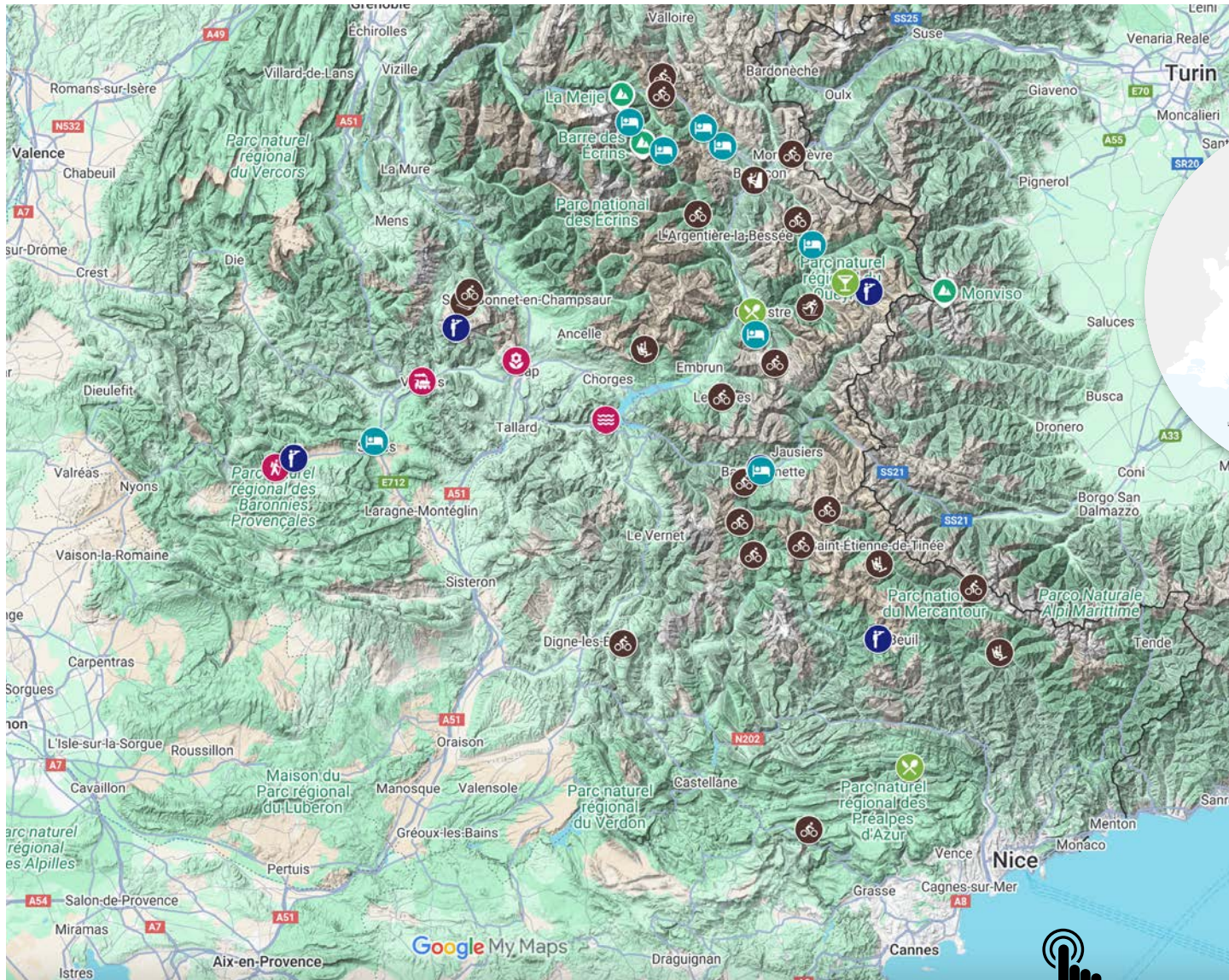
50 KM





# WHAT'S NEW?

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CLICK HERE



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© CRT

## MOVE







© Isola 2000

## PUMP TRACK

This palpitating **new pump track course** – Europe's highest –, featuring bumps and banked turns, is designed for mountain biking, BMX, skateboards and rollerblades. Situated just below the Isola 2000 reservoir, the course is open to all, free of charge.

→ [isola2000.com](https://www.isola2000.com)

**JUNE 22, 2025**

### PUMP IT UP PUMPTRACK FESTIVAL

A start-of-season festival honouring the new outdoor facility at the Isola 2000 resort. Free introductions to skateboarding and BMX, plus a heart-stopping show/demo inviting aficionados to admire champion performances.

EVENT

## MOUNTAIN KART

A cross between a go-kart and a sled, this three-wheeled vehicle promises a unique experience on the slopes. You can opt for a relaxed or adrenalin-spiked sporty ride.

The **new Vars Mountain Kart** whooshes down a 3-kilometre slope with a 350-metre drop from the top of the Chabrières telemix, with two courses available for beginners or thrill-seekers. Under 16s must measure at least 1.40 metres and be accompanied by an adult. The experience includes kart rental, a safety briefing and gear.

→ [www.vars.com](https://www.vars.com)

© OT Vars - Léa Scappini



© Alpine Coaster

## 4 SEASONS LUGE

A four-seasons activity *par excellence*, this toboggan on rails promises an enthralling ride at speeds of up to 45 km/hr.

The **new Dévo'luge** in Superdévoluy is a record-breaker, with a course measuring 1,565 metres, a 121-metre drop, 20 bends and a 360° spin on an 11.9% slope!

Opening scheduled mid-July 2025.

→ [www.ledevoluy.com](https://www.ledevoluy.com)





© CCGQ

## BIATHLON

Germany's national sport inspired by cross-country skiing, the summer version of this dual discipline combines rifle shooting with roller skiing or running.

Unique in the Southern Alps, **the new Ceillac 4 Seasons Biathlon** stadium, perched at an altitude of 1,650 metres, is opening to the public and clubs for the first time this summer. It features three roller ski courses (0.9 km, 1.5 km, and 2.5 km) and a 50-metre shooting range with fifteen 50-metre mechanical targets and ten 10-metre targets.

→ [lequeyras.com](https://lequeyras.com)

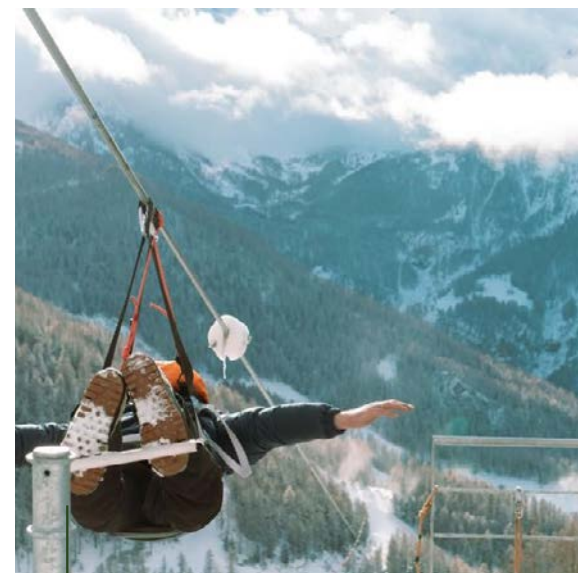
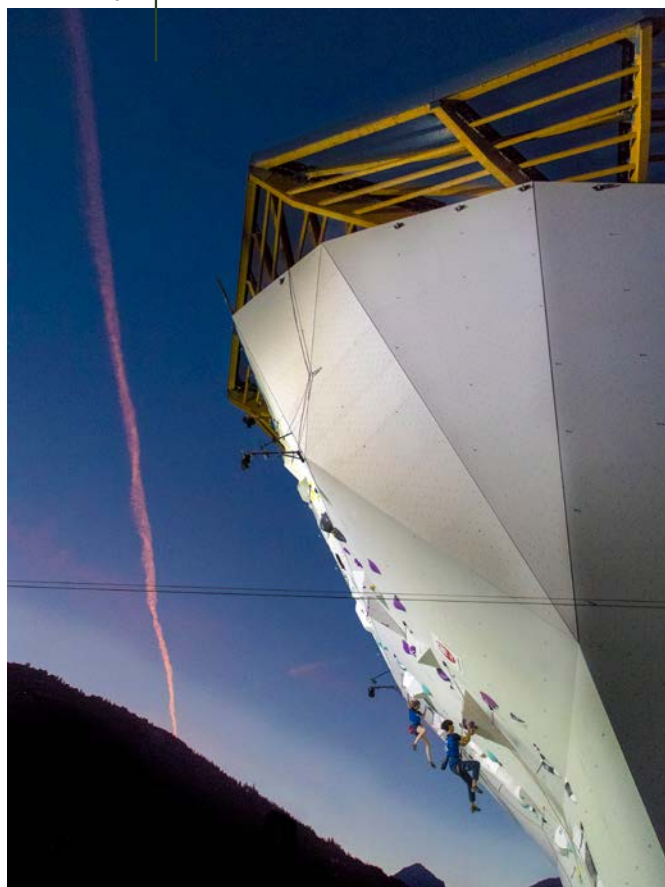
## CLIMBING

Enjoy a change from indoor climbing with the Southern Alps' thrilling routes snaking up the cliffs of Orpierre, Céüse, and the Verdon Canyon, topped with ground-level boulders for novices.

Appreciated for its design and year-round accessibility, the **new outdoor climbing wall in Briançon** boasts 80 routes of varying difficulty, plus a speed wall.

→ [www.serre-chevalier.com](https://www.serre-chevalier.com)

© P. Domeyne



© Tyrolienne Géante Speedline

## ZIPLINE

Slip into your harness and glide down from the mountain tops like a bird – with your eyes wide open to admire the scenery of course!

**Two new ziplines**, each measuring nearly 2 km in length and divided into two sections, are opening in **Auron** and **Les Orres** in summer 2025. **Colmiane-Valdeblore** remains the record-holder for the longest continuous zipline in France, at a whopping 1,879 metres. Palpitating!

→ [www.speedline-lesorres.com](https://www.speedline-lesorres.com)

→ [ete.auron.com](https://ete.auron.com)

→ [www.colmiane.com](https://www.colmiane.com)

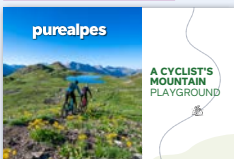


## DURANCE by bike

You'll soon be able to pedal along the **Durance River** from its source on the heights of Montgenèvre in the Southern Alps all the way to its confluence with the Rhône in Avignon, Provence. The Sisteron-Manosque stage, one of the high-Alpine stretches of the "Durance à Vélo" or V862 cycle route, is now ready to roll, with signposting on the section between Mallemort and La Roque d'Anthéron. When finished, the V862 is set to follow the course of Provence's largest river for an impressive 438 km! You can join the route easily from various train stations by road bike or mountain bike.

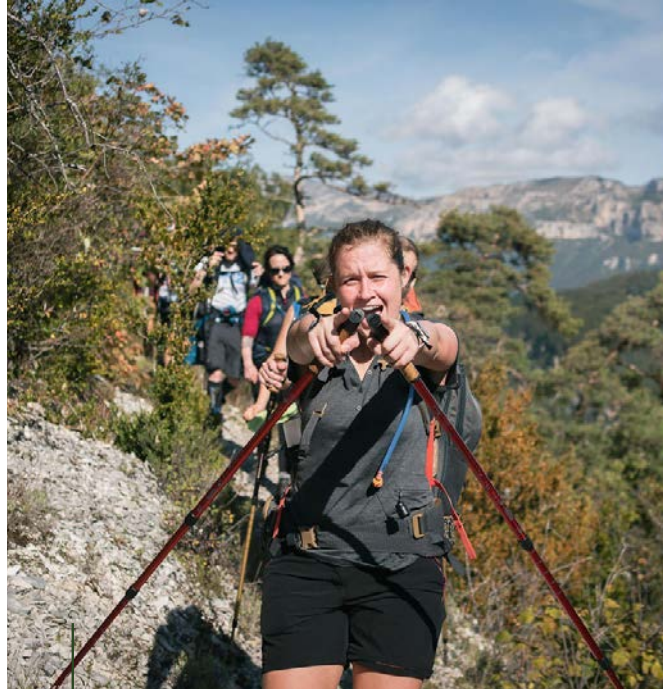
→ [laduranceavelo.fr](http://laduranceavelo.fr)

### MUST-READ



Our article  
**Cycling  
Highlights**  
page 14

© Cedric Tempier



© Alexandre Leroy

## MAD JACQUES TREK

Adventure lies off the beaten track, far from the madding crowds...

**The Mad Jacques Treks** are a great way to explore breathtaking new horizons and make new friends while camping out under the stars. And the 3-day adventure winds up in style with a party to remember, forging ties between locals and visitors. Learn to manage your backpack, tent, map and bivouac, and rediscover the nomadic lifestyle in return for a small fee - from €109 to €149.

→ [provence-alpes-cotedazur.com](http://provence-alpes-cotedazur.com)

### **EVENT** MAD JACQUES TREKS SOUTHERN ALPS

Trek Roya, **May 28 - June 1, 2025**  
Serre-Ponçon, **September 19 - 21, 2025**

## MY ADVENTURE NICE HIGHLANDS

Based out of Nice, "my Explore Bag" designs downloadable adventures for extra fun while you're exploring – and hiking around – the ski resorts and villages of the Nice highlands: Belvédère, La Bollène-Vésubie, Isola 2000, Saint-Etienne-de-Tinée, Saint-Martin-Vésubie and Valdeblore. €15, ideal for groups of 1-6 people.

→ [www.explorenicecotedazur.com](http://www.explorenicecotedazur.com)

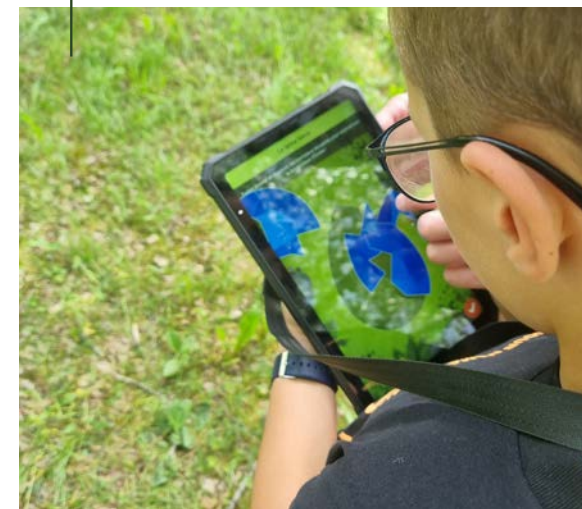
## EXPLOR GAMES

Dotted with clues and local curiosities, these digital outdoor detective games promise to awaken your inner adventurer!

**Explor Games® Val d'Allos.** Whatever happened to Clemenceau? France's famous figure was the inspiration for the "Odyssey of Clemenceau" adventure game, to be enjoyed on foot or by bike with family or friends. The seven mysteries and games featured on the (provided) iPad app lead adventurers to the four corners of the village of Allos and all the way to the lake. €20 per group.

→ [www.valdallos.com](http://www.valdallos.com)

© Office de tourisme du Val d'Allos



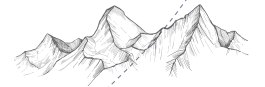


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## SLOW DOWN

10







© Alpes Photographies

## RURAL ENCOUNTERS

Learn how to milk cows and make cheese, pick up some delicious local farm produce, savour a meal and revel in unbeatable hospitality... Home to over 40% certified-organic land, the Southern Alps is one of France's leading organic destinations!

→ [www.bienvenue-a-la-ferme.com](http://www.bienvenue-a-la-ferme.com)

EVENT

**OCTOBER 1 – NOVEMBER 1, 2025**

### FESTIVAL BRIN DE CULTURE #18

Culture rhymes with agriculture at this delightful, yearly festival in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, when local farms open their doors to offer visitors a fabulous cultural line-up including shows, concerts, exhibitions, talks and tours.

## ALPINE BIODIVERSITY

With over 30,000 animal species and 13,000 plant varieties, the flora and fauna of the Southern Alps form remarkable landscapes and ecosystems. If you're a botany fan, don't miss a visit to the **Jardin du Col du Lautaret** and **Jardin Alpin de Gap-Charance**.

→ [www.gap-tallard-vallees.fr](http://www.gap-tallard-vallees.fr)

→ [www.jardindulautaret.com](http://www.jardindulautaret.com)

© P. Domeyne



**MAY TO END OCTOBER 2025**

### LA GRAINE, EN GRAND!

📍 **JARDIN ALPIN DE GAP-CHARANCE**

So little yet so mighty, the seed is a miracle of miniaturization! You'll find astonishing photos courtesy of Jean-Claude Cerre together with enamelled information panels dotted around the flower beds of the Jardin Alpin de Gap-Charance. A great family outing.

➡ [cbn-alpin.fr](http://cbn-alpin.fr)

EXPO





© Office de Tourisme Sisteron Buëch

## POSTMAN'S HIKE

The "Chemin du Facteur" crosses the path of potters, blacksmiths and wild plant gatherers – but despite its name, you're unlikely to come across anyone from the Post Office!

**The Chemin du Facteur** was used to take letters from Rosans to Ste-Marie-de-Rosans until 1925. This 13-km / 4.5 hour trail leads along a shaded path and crosses the hamlet of Raton and Col de la Fromagère-Pommerol before arriving at the village of Rosans, home to many talented artisans and craftspeople.

→ [www.sisteron-buech.fr](http://www.sisteron-buech.fr)

## 150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTHERN ALPS' FIRST RAILWAY LINE

A train arrived for the first time in Veynes, in the Southern Alps, in 1875, thanks to local engineer Adrien Ruelle, an employee of the **Paris-Lyon-Mediterranean Railway Company (PLM)**. Veynes is at the centre of the so-called "**Veynes Star**", serving Marseille to the south, Briançon to the north, Valence to the west and Grenoble to the (north-)east. It is a genuine technical feat, laced with steep uphill and downhill sections.

The arrival of the railway revolutionized life in the Southern Alps: normally trodden on foot, the transhumance (moving of flocks to their summer and winter pastures) could now be done by rail, while ice – much-needed to chill the pastis served on Marseille's Vieux-Port – could now arrive in a carriage...

Today, the station is served by Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regional express trains and the Paris-Briançon night train. Veynes will, of course, play a major role in planning and preparing the 2030 Winter Olympics in the French Alps..

→ [www.sources-du-buech.com](http://www.sources-du-buech.com)

**APRIL 25-27, 2025**

### FESTIVAL DU RAIL VEYNES, SOURCE DU BUËCH

EVENT

150th anniversary of the first railway line. This year's anniversary edition of the Railway Festival will be featuring various activities and entertainment at the "Ecomusée du Cheminot Veynois" ecomuseum, including a model fair and old steam train!

© Écomusée du Cheminot





# UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES OF WATER MANAGEMENT

**The construction of Serre-Ponçon dam in 1962** was an incredible adventure and genuine technical feat. It is one of the only "earth fill" dams in Europe, with a base spanning an impressive 650 metres. You can admire its architecture to the full from the stunning belvedere overlooking the lake and mountains.

The "Maison de l'Eau et des Energies" (Water & Energy Centre) offers visitors a fascinating insight into hydroelectricity production, renewable energy sources, the construction of the Durance-Verdon dams and challenges of water sharing through interactive modules, videos and touchscreens.

→ [www.serreponcon.com](http://www.serreponcon.com)

→ [www.museoscope-du-lac/en](http://www.museoscope-du-lac/en)

## MUST-READ



**Artisan & Company Tours in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur**

© Serre Ponçon

**MAY 31 – JUNE 1, 2025**

## DESCENTE DES RADELIERS

A fascinating historic reconstruction of ancient rafting traditions... Until the late 19th century, the Durance river was used to transport larch, spruce and pine wood loaded onto rafts 260 kilometres to the Mediterranean Sea.

→ [www.serreponcon.com](http://www.serreponcon.com)

EVENT



© Fabien Thibault

## STARRY NIGHTS

Stroll under the twinkling Milky Way, wish on a shooting star and gaze through binoculars or a telescope to observe nebulae, comets and planets. You won't find any light pollution here to spoil the show!

## MUST-READ



**Our article  
Reach for  
the stars**  
page 18



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VTT enduro © G. Baron

## A CYCLIST'S MOUNTAIN PLAYGROUND





Cycling is king in the Southern French Alps! Whatever your preferred style – road, mountain, gravel or BMX, with or without electrical assistance – the area's varied relief has something for every cycling occasion. Head out to roam green valleys, climb challenging slopes, revel in adrenalin-packed descents, tackle the Tour du Verdon or pedal along the stunning rocky balcony overlooking the Écrins glaciers.

## A MYRIAD OF MOUNTAIN PASSES

The mountain passes of the Southern Alps are as regal as the summits themselves. You'll find dozens of them here, in addition to the seven in the spotlight of the Tour de France.

### 📍 Col du Galibier 2,642 m

**Total climb:** 11.9 km (elevation gain 7.1%), then 17.7 km (elevation gain 6.9%). A giant lying between the Northern and Southern Alps.

**Elevation gain:** 1,239 m from Valloire  
Boasting a total of 64 Tours de France.

### 📍 Col du Lautaret 2,050 m

**Total climb:** 27.7 km from Briançon. 11.3 km with an elevation gain of 9.2%, sometimes 10%.

**Elevation gain:** 853 m.

### 📍 Col d'Allos 2,247 m

**Total climb:** 17.5 km from Barcelonnette, 22.50 km from Colmars-les-Alpes.

**Elevation gain:** 1,108 m. Average elevation gain 6.33%, %. Maximum 11%.

### 📍 Col de la Bonette-Restefond 2,802 m

**Total climb:** 24 km from Jausiers or Saint-Etienne-de-Tinée.

**Elevation gain:** 1,589 m.

### 📍 Col d'Izoard 2,360 m

**Total climb:** 19 km from Briançon (elevation gain 6%) or 15.9 km via Gorges du Guil (average elevation gain 6.89%)

**Elevation gain:** 1,174 m (from Briançon).

### 📍 Col des Gonds 2,347 m (VTT)

**Total climb:** 6.7 km from Montgenèvre.

**Dénivellation :** 519 m, average elevation gain 7.75%, Maximum 10.2%.

### 📍 Col de la Cayolle 2,326 m

**Total climb:** 29.1 km from Barcelonnette.

**Elevation gain:** 1,190 m. Average elevation gain 4.09%, Maximum 8.2%.

Col Agnel @ R. Fabregue



Cols-reserves-izoard @ C. Tempier



Grands cols Lautaret Galibier Izoard © P. Domeyne

**JUNE 28 – 29, 2025**

### LE DÉFI DES FONDUS DE L'UBAYE #23

Cyclists can enjoy tackling the mounts of Ubaye any time from spring through to autumn, but fanatics seeking the ultimate thigh-breaker will definitely want to sign up for the "Mad Challenge", consisting of 1 to 5 mountain passes or 7 climbs in a single day!

➔ [defidesfondus.fr](https://defidesfondus.fr)

**SUMMER 2025**

### "COLS RÉSERVÉS"

During the "Cols Réservés" operation held every summer in the Southern Alps, mythical mountain passes such as Izoard Allos, Galibier, Granon, Agnel, Echelle, Montée de Chabre and Pommerol are closed to traffic on certain mornings – and wide open to cyclists keen to test their limits in all safety. Saddle up!

➔ [Read more](#)

**JUNE 21 – 25, 2025**

### ALPS EPIC #10

An epic adventure in the wheels of the "Grande Traversée des Hautes-Alpes à VTT" mountain bike challenge.

➔ [www.alpsepic.com](https://www.alpsepic.com)

EVENT



## BREVET DES 7 COLS

Four hundred kilometres and an elevation gain of 7,200 metres... Athletes who manage to ascend the 7 mountain passes of Ubaye Valley are rewarded with a diploma and access to the very exclusive "Brevetés des 7 Cols" club. On the programme: classics such as La Cayolle, Allos, La Bonette and Vars, together with the lofty Sainte-Anne, Fillys and Pontis, offering exhilarating views over Serre-Ponçon lake.

→ [www.ubaye.com](http://www.ubaye.com)



Col du Noyer @ R. Fabregue

## "GRANDE TRAVERSÉE DES HAUTES-ALPES À VTT" (GTHA)

The ultimate mountain biking experience between La Grave-Villar d'Arène and Laragne-Montéglin, from the glaciers to Serre-Ponçon lake: 350 km and an elevation gain of 17,000 metres. France's highest long-distance trail demands a 7 to 10-day commitment.

→ [www.ubaye.com](http://www.ubaye.com)



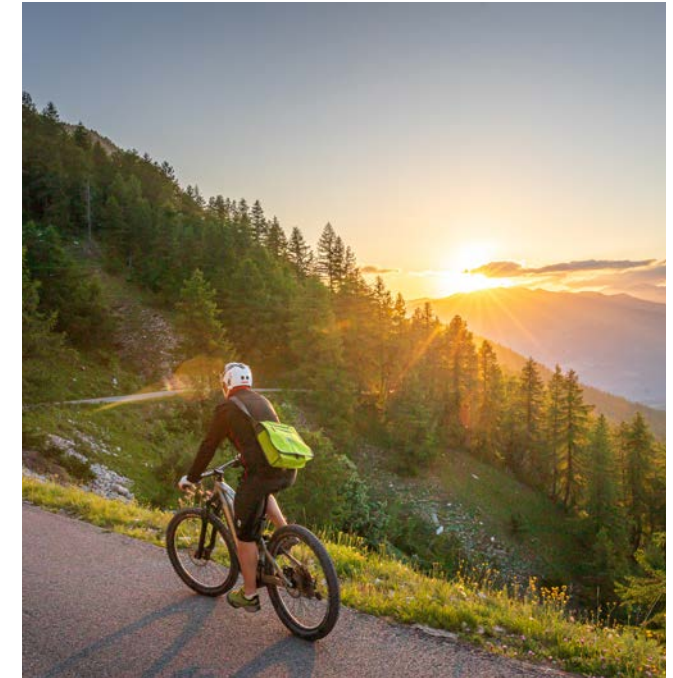
VTT grands espaces © G. Baron

## DURANCE BY BIKE

You'll soon be able to cycle along the river Durance all the way from its source on the heights of Montgenèvre to its confluence with the Rhône in Avignon. The Sisteron-Manosque stage – one of the high alpine sections of the "Durance à Vélo" V862 cycle route – has now been completed.

The stretch running between Mallemort and La Roque d'Anthéron is already signposted. The V862 will ultimately follow Provence's longest river over 438 km. Various train stations along the way allow cyclists and mountain bikers to join the route at any time.

→ [laduranceavelo.fr](http://laduranceavelo.fr)



© AD04 Adrien Noat

## LE TOUR DU VERDON

What better than a round trip for really getting to know a particular area? This sometimes-dizzy, 258-kilometre loop offers breathtaking views over the lower gorge of the Verdon Canyon and banks of the lakes of Sainte-Croix-du-Verdon and Esparron. Saddle up for four to seven days of pure magic.

→ [www.veloloisirprovence.com](http://www.veloloisirprovence.com)





Dévoluy © K.Kestler

## BIKE PARKS UNDER THE LARCH TREES

Whatever your preference – cycle touring or extreme sports, cross-country, DH, BMX Trial, X-Country or Freeride, with or without electrical assistance –, mountain bikes are resolutely at home in our massifs. A myriad of bike parks, sometimes accessible via the ski lifts, allow aficionados to practise their art in all safety and open the way to a great choice of fun or challenging red, black and blue slopes.

**SEPTEMBER 28 – 29, 2025**

### ENDURO DES TERRES NOIRES #6

MASSIF DES ALPES-DE-HAUTE-PROVENCE

After an almost two-year absence, this physically and technically-demanding race for experienced riders is back in the saddle. You can also sign up your kids for the "Street Race Kid".

➔ [endurodesalpes.com](https://endurodesalpes.com)

Here are a few examples:

#### 📍 DIGNE-LES-BAINS

The Terres Noires trail has placed Digne among the downhill world's top-ranking names. The EVO Bike Park, often listed among the world's top ten bike parks, offers nine tracks and is open in all seasons.

#### 📍 LA MOULIÈRE - CAILLE

Since 1992. Coveted by riders for the sea views from some of its 12 downhill tracks and two touring MTB tracks.

#### 📍 LE DÉVOLUY

7 beautifully-maintained tracks and 1 Northshore track, with a total of 50 km of downhill adventures and two entrances located at Superdévoluy and La Joue du Loup, in the stunning mineral landscapes of the limestone Dévoluy massif.

#### 📍 MONTGENÈVRE

On the Italian border. Its 8 tracks ranging from 2,450 to 1,860 m have made this park a benchmark. You'll find a wash and repair station there too.

#### 📍 LES ORRES

A fun, sporty and accessible playground at altitudes of 1,600 m to 2,600 m, sure to satisfy every MTB fan. The "Moniteur Cycliste Français" school provides training while the new "Pôle Sport Innovation" centre allows you to train virtually on an ultra-black slope at maximum speed.

#### 📍 PRA LOUP

The Clappe telemix serves 7 slopes of all levels, with a total of 18 km downhill runs and an elevation gain of 500 m. Beginners will enjoy the fun, free space, accessible via the Clapiers ski mat.

#### 📍 PUY SAINT VINCENT

The base camp of world champion Jordan Sarrou. Gazing out over the Barre des Écrins, this bike park featuring a family trail welcoming kids aged 5 years upwards and mini MTB bike park, is a must for your first family rides.

#### 📍 VARS

In 2023, Vars launched around 55 km of new electric mountain bike trails for cross-country enthusiasts including free charging stations, plus a new Downhill track, making a total of 125 km routes for all disciplines.

#### 📍 SEIGNUS VAL D'ALLOS

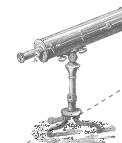
The Enduro pioneer and organizer of the Tribe 10 000, Val d'Allos offers mythical singletracks starting out at an altitude of 2,371 metres, crowned with dazzling panoramic views over Grande Séolane and Le Pelat at 3,051 m.





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## STARRY, STARRY NIGHTS





Revel in a festival of constellations and reconnect with the infinite beauty of the universe – the nightly show in the Southern Alps is worthy of an Academy Award! And the biggest stars of the astronomy world have been admiring it through their telescopes since the 19th century... The Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region is a forerunner in the fight against light pollution and the Southern Alps boasts one of France's six International Dark Sky Reserves, along with seven temples of astronomy.

© Patrick Domeyne



## THE HIGHEST OBSERVATOIRE DE SAINT-VÉRAN PAUL FELENBOK

📍 SAINT-VÉRAN , QUEYRAS

How about spending a night at an altitude of almost 3,000 metres, in an awe-inspiring face-to-face with the galaxies? You can have fun trying to spot the Saint-Vérán asteroid discovered here too, and the views of Mont Viso at sunrise are simply breathtaking. What's more, France's highest observatory boasts 150 clear nights a year...

How to get there: 3 to 5-hour walk from Saint-Vérán with a 900-metre altitude difference, in both summer and winter.

Price: €95/person – Not recommended for children under 14 years in winter (December to May).

→ [reservation.lequeyras.com](https://reservation.lequeyras.com)

**JULY 6-7, 2025**

**RENCONTRE EN CIEL PUR #6**

📍 SAINT-VÉRAN

**EVENT**

Spend a day in Europe's highest village and a night gazing at a stunning array.

➔ [lequeyras.com](https://lequeyras.com)



© Images et rêves - OTGQ



## THE MOST ICONIC OBSERVATOIRE BARCELONNETTE-MERCANTOUR

📍 BARCELONNETTE

This brand new Observatory invites visitors on a voyage back in time to the pioneering spirit of astronomers in the 1920s. The Father Josset telescope was built in 1929 for a British billionaire, and subsequently purchased by a missionary in China. A genuine jewel, open to the public, it is Europe's largest amateur telescope. The observatory also offers an educational trail dedicated to nocturnal fauna and biodiversity.

It is the first French "Station de Nuit" (Night Station) – a distinction recognizing quality amenities and educational value awarded by the French Astronomy Association – located in an International Dark Sky Reserve.

→ [obs-bm.com](https://obs-bm.com)



©OBM Yar

## THE MOST FUTURISTIC NOEMA SUR LE PLATEAU DE BURE (2,552 m)

📍 DÉVOLUY

A radio astronomy hub: twelve 15-metre diameter antennas on Bure Plateau, above Super Devoluy, allow enthusiasts to observe the birth of stars and galaxies. The antennas all point towards the same star or galaxy, simulating a giant radio telescope measuring 1.7 km in diameter.

**How to get there:** 4 hour climb approx. Tour of the maintenance hall, control room, computing centre and living quarters (please book in advance).

→ [visitesinsolites.cnrs.fr](https://visitesinsolites.cnrs.fr)



© Air libre prod

## THE MOST WIDE-REACHING OBSERVATOIRE DES BARONNIES PROVENÇALES

📍 MOYDANS

Welcoming amateur enthusiasts and professional astronomers alike, this observatory invites visitors to admire various extraordinary instruments operated by an astrophysicist (820 mm telescope, 1,140 mm Dobson).

On-site accommodation available in converted sheepfolds – aptly named Mars, Jupiter and Neptune – with views over Risou mountain. Observation session postponed free of charge in the event of cloudy weather.

A holder of the "Station de Nuit" label. Evening meal: €33 pp. Accommodation: €99 for two people outside summer (€121 in summer).

→ [www.obs-bp.com](https://www.obs-bp.com)



© Office de Tourisme Sisteron Buëch



## COMING SOON: VALBERG PLANETARIUM

📍 VALBERG

Valberg's future Maison Departementale de l'Environnement et de l'Observation (Centre for the Environment and Observation), scheduled to open in June 2025, is set to be a hub of local culture, knowledge-sharing and discovery. Its planetarium - the largest in southeastern France -, will be offering visitors fascinating insights into the night skies, topped with digital voyages through the nebulae... The centre is also scheduled to host many year-round cultural and scientific events.

→ [www.valberg.com](http://www.valberg.com)



© Wilmotte & Associés



© Wilmotte & Associés

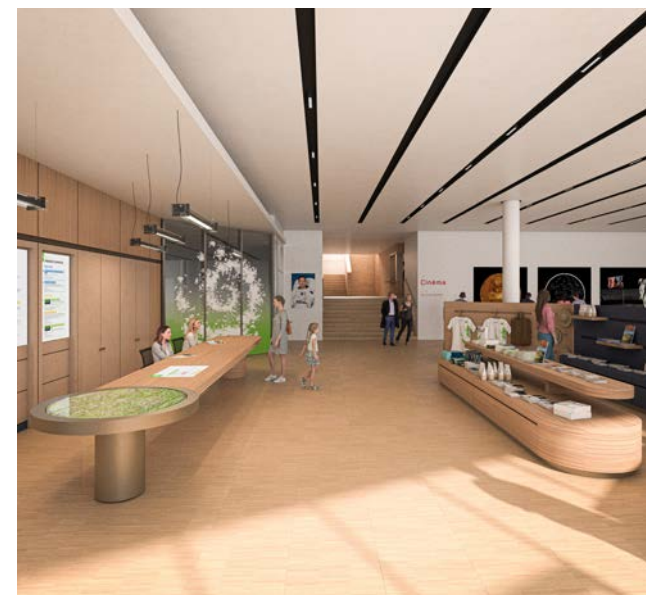
**AUGUST 22-24, 2025**

**FESTIVAL ASTRO #5**

📍 VALBERG

**EVENT**

An exciting line-up of night walks, planetarium shows, observation evenings, creative workshops and talks.



© Wilmotte & Associés



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© R. Van Rijn

## TERROIR





## BISTROTS DE PAYS®: A HEARTWARMING WELCOME!

Born in the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence area of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur in 1993, the Bistrot de Pays® network was created to support independent bistro owners and breathe new life into the region's villages.

Mission accomplished, the network is now well-established throughout the whole of France!

96% of Bistrot de Pays® establishments are satisfied with the label and confirm its positive impact on their business and reputation.

Contrary to what its name may suggest, the network promotes happy sobriety and slow tourism, inviting

visitors to ease up and enjoy the simple things in life. The Bistrot de Pays® patrons consider their eateries first and foremost as friendly places where people can get together and share travel experiences.

→ [www.bistrotdepays.com](http://www.bistrotdepays.com)



© Le Vieux Moulin



© Le Vieux Moulin

## LE VIEUX MOULIN

### 📍 LA ROQUE-EN-PROVENCE

Located 20 minutes from Gilette, the Vieux Moulin cafe-restaurant is set on the banks of the river Esteron, a gorgeous place to swim in summer. Newly-elected members of the Bistrot de Pays®, network, Laurence and Laurent Solbani serve fabulous cocktails or mocktails by the water. Their cuisine with an exotic twist is a delight, and many people travel up from Nice specially to sample their stews and knuckles of pork. The attractive and rather novel decor gives pride of place to thrifted treasures.

→ [www.bistrotdepays.com/le-vieux-moulin](http://www.bistrotdepays.com/le-vieux-moulin)



© Le Vieux Moulin



## LA DISTILLERIE DE SAINT-VÉRAN France's highest distillery!

📍 SAINT-VERAN

This new microbrewery, perched on a farm at an altitude of 2,040 metres in the hamlet of Chalp in Saint-Véran, is the highest in France – and even Europe. Claire and Laurent Démarets distil local plants and ingredients in their copper stills to obtain vodka, gin, eau de vie and other top-notch liqueurs. The low atmospheric pressure at this altitude is ideal for preserving aromas, explains oenologist Benjamin Galais.

→ [www.distilleriesaintveran.com](http://www.distilleriesaintveran.com)



© Stéphane Cadoret



## LA FROMAGERIE DURANCE One of the stars of our artisan tours!

📍 GUILLESTRE

Located at the foot of the fortified village of Mont-Dauphin, the Fromagerie Durance hosts live cheesemaking demonstrations on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. The Fromagerie makes artisan cheeses using raw milk, including delicious Fontu and Bleu du Queyras (Protected Designation of Origin certification pending), plus a wide range of other homemade delicacies.

→ [www.fromageriedeladurance.fr](http://www.fromageriedeladurance.fr)



© R. Van Rijn

### MUST-READ



### Voyage to the heart of our artisans

Home to many small businesses, Provence Alpes-Côte d'Azur overflows with small producers and artisans who delight in introducing visitors to their traditional know-how and outstanding produce.

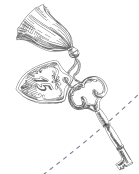


# purealpes



## HOSPITALITY AU NATUREL

25







## GÎTES DE FRANCE® - 70TH ANNIVERSARY

Gîtes de France is celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2025!

Recently voted France's favourite brand in the "private accommodation rental" category, Gîtes de France now boasts an impressive 58,000 lodgings, including gîtes, guest rooms, group gîtes, campsites, novel accommodation and City Breaks.

The adventure began in the Southern Alps, part of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, where the very first rural gîte opened in La Javie in 1951.

The National Federation of Gîtes de France (FNGF) was subsequently founded in 1955 on the initiative of Emile Aubert, a senator from the Bas-Alpes area.

Today, the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region remains a forerunner in the development of sustainable tourism labels and projects.

→ [www.gites-de-france.com](http://www.gites-de-france.com)

## BIODIVERSITY GITES



In 2023, Gîtes de France® launched the "Biodiversity" label distinguishing environmentally-friendly accommodation. The criteria include practises that favour fauna and flora, the promotion of local plants and varieties, information, and observation tools for local species (documentation, binoculars, etc.). The Biodiversity label is displayed on a discreet wooden panel.

Currently, 291 out of the 600 accommodation providers awarded this prestigious label are located in the Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur region.

→ [www.gites-de-france-hautes-alpes.com](http://www.gites-de-france-hautes-alpes.com)

## THE ECOGÎTE LABEL



The Ecogite label, a stringent environmental performance label recognized by ADN Tourisme, has been awarded to around sixty accommodation providers in Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur (out of 430 national holders). Instigated in 2005, the Ecogites® label by Gîtes de France® requires providers to respect a demanding set of specifications.

→ [www.gites-de-france.com](http://www.gites-de-france.com)



## GÎTE LE MOULIN DU PAROY

📍 SERRES - BARONNIES PROVENÇALES  
REGIONAL NATURE RESERVE

The only well-preserved mill of its kind still standing in Buëch valley, the Moulin du Paroy – a Gîtes de France “4 ears of corn” establishment – offers two guest rooms and a self-catering gîte for six people. Anja Mignard and her husband and beekeeper François have created a little museum documenting the mill’s uses over the centuries, including cloth fulling, walnut oil extraction and spelt grinding. Jean Giono used to stop over here on his way from Trièves to Manosque. The rooms overlook the Aiguebelle torrent, which joins the river Buëch further on, and the Sigottier cliffs coveted by rock climbers. The nearby Bâtie-Monsaléon airfield is a benchmark for free flight enthusiasts. Honey and propolis sold on site.

Double room from €95. Gîte for six guests from €160 per night.

→ [lemoulinduparoy.fr](http://lemoulinduparoy.fr)



© Anja Mignard

## HÔTEL RESTAURANT LA VILLA LORENZO

📍 BARCELONNETTE

Clothilde Chapuis, a trained cook who has worked at palaces in both Switzerland and France, defines herself as a pure product of the French hotel industry. She was due to fly to the United States when Covid hit. By chance, the valley’s old medical practice was up for sale at the time. Two years later, this 1895 Mexican villa complete with a monumental staircase, set in the heart of town, was restored to its former glory. The four bedrooms and top floor suite are beautifully curated with an eye for detail, from the Made in France mattresses to embroidered linens and local welcome products made with donkey’s milk. A digital tablet is available on request. You won’t find a TV or minibar in the rooms, but the lounge-come-bar invites guests to “Open the curtains and admire the mountains”. The ski resorts of Le Sauze and Pra Loup are just ten minutes away. And in the evening, you’ll find Clothilde hard at work in the kitchen.

Restaurant open Wednesday to Sunday, lunches and dinners, brunch once a month. Choice of three starters, three main courses and two desserts.

Rooms from €150, menu €45.

→ [www.villalorenzo.fr](http://www.villalorenzo.fr)



© Pierre Allaire



© Pierre Allaire



## HÔTEL-CLUB LE 1850, VACANCES LÉO LAGRANGE

📍 RISOUL

Vacances Leo Lagrange, an associative group promoting sustainable, social and family-oriented tourism, is returning to the resort of Risoul to take up the helm of the Hotel-Club Le 1850, located right on the snow front. The panoramic bar with fireplace, reception area and 140 rooms have been redesigned by Laurent Boaretto (Work is Over). Wood cladding, new indoor and outdoor signage, photos of the Hautes-Alpes and artwork spread throughout the establishment add to the cosy atmosphere.

N.B.: Prominent designer Charlotte Perriand (1903-1999) crafted the 140 red and white “cabin” bathrooms. Small but practical, these curiosities are now sought after by collectors worldwide. And you either love them or hate them! The hotel is currently studying how to preserve and improve them without spoiling their original design.

The auditorium can accommodate 250 people and the artistic director organizes high-quality, twice-weekly shows open to holidaymakers throughout the resort.

In anticipation of the “French Alps 2030” Winter Olympics, a major 2026-2030 refurbishment project is currently in the pipeline in the aim of making Le 1850 a benchmark for the group’s values. Around 60,000 people holiday at one of the nine Vacances Leo Lagrange clubs every year.

One week full-board 8 days/7 nights from €532 in winter and €546 in summer.

→ [www.vacancesleolagrange.com](http://www.vacancesleolagrange.com)



© Vacances Léo Lagrange

© Vacances Léo Lagrange

## CLUB MED RESORT SERRE CHEVALIER

📍 LA SALLE-LES-ALPES

Resembling a mountain hamlet, the Club Med Resort in Serre Chevalier has been completely refurbished by interior designer Laurent Maugoust, with pride of place given to wood and sundials. The emblems of Briançon valley inspire every space, right down to the custom-made headboards. With this €50 million investment, Club Med is reasserting its commitment to the Southern Alps.

The environmentally-friendly project is set to breathe new life into this iconic location at the foot of the slopes, with upgraded amenities and customer service coupled with improved energy performance. Reopening on December 15th, 2024.

→ [www.clubmed.fr](http://www.clubmed.fr)



© Club Med Serre Chevalier



## AUBERGE DE LA GRAVIÈRE

📍 ORCIÈRES MERLETTE

Basking on the banks of a lake, home to the Orcières Leisure Base, this delightful auberge complete with a large, sunny terrace is a haven for families. The thirteen spacious rooms with mountain views accommodate three to four guests.

Chef Mickaël Magdelaine concocts generous cuisine and guests are also free to use the communal barbecues. On-site activities include cycling, water slides and canoeing. Orcières town centre is just 10 minutes away on foot, and the three telemix cabins serving the ski resort of Orcières-Merlette - where you'll find Europe's longest zipline and mountain bike trails - are 4 km away.

Double room from €120 including breakfast.

→ [via.eviivo.com](https://www.eviivo.com)



© Auberge de la Gravière

## REGIONAL NATURE RESERVES, THE “VALEURS PARC” GUIDE

The 2024-2025 fourth edition of the “Valeurs Parc” guide to Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur’s regional nature reserves lists over 400 eco-aware offerings presented by 324 partners. Treats in store include accommodation basking in the heart of nature, small producers, gourmet eateries and discovery activities, i.e. everything you need to craft a magical getaway that cherishes our natural environment.

The guide also provides an overview of the specific characteristics of the nine regional reserves, as well as a selection of hiking and cycling routes from the [www.cheminsdesparcs.fr/en](https://www.cheminsdesparcs.fr/en) website.

The guide is available at [www.monreseaupro-pnrsud.fr](https://www.monreseaupro-pnrsud.fr) and the websites dedicated to each reserve.



© Thibault Blais



© Thibault Blais



# purealpes

**STAY**  
AT A  
MOUNTAIN  
REFUGE!





Originally created for seasoned mountaineers, our mountain refuges now attract many families and solo travellers seeking a peaceful and memorable stopover at the summit, topped with the promise of friendly rates, a well-earned dinner and a wake-up to a crispy breakfast baguette and the sound of frolicking goats!



© Marie Lachaud



© Sarah Grangeon

## ECO-FRIENDLY AND WELL-CONNECTED REFUGES OPEN FROM SPRING ONWARDS

### OPEN FROM SPRING ONWARDS

If you're a ski touring aficionado or simply want to awaken amid stunning mountain flora and fauna, you'll find plenty of refuges open from March 15th. Don't delay, book today!

### EVEN MORE ECO-FRIENDLY!

For example, **the Chamoissière** and **Alpe de Villar d'Arène** refuges in Ecrins National Park both operate using hydroelectric power. The **Adèle Planchard** refuge now boasts better insulation, solar and thermal heating, and is fitted with solar panels.

### BETTER CONNECTED

Good news for mountaineers, families and solo travellers who love life on the heights: the keepers in charge of the **16 refuges of Clarée Thabor – including the new Clôt des Vaches** – have got together to create a shared booking platform so you can plan your mountain adventure with ease!

→ [www.refugesclareethabor.com](http://www.refugesclareethabor.com)

You'll also find great offerings by Mercantour National Park and the French Federation of Alpine and Mountain Clubs (FFCAM) on the following website:

→ [itineranceubayemercantour.fr](http://itineranceubayemercantour.fr)



## REFUGE DU PAVÉ

📍 ECRINS NATIONAL PARK

**REFURBISHED.** Nestling inside a cirque glacier between Roche Méane and Pic Gaspard, above Lac du Pavé, this refuge perched at an altitude of 2,858 metres has just enjoyed a makeover.

Benefiting from a keeper for the first time in summer 2025, it offers access to the secretive Romanche valley, as well as Pointe des Aigles and Pic des Cavales. Seasoned hikers can access the refuge from the Pied du Col car park in Villar d'Arène, in about 4 hours. The keeper, Pauline Muller, has many a tale to tell, from the refuge's eventful history to the recent discovery of two never-before seen microscopic algae in Lac du Pavé. The Refuge du Pavé is one of 7 refuges in Écrins National Park bearing the "Esprit Parc National" quality label.

Keeper on site from June 15th to September 14th, 2025, half board full rate €65, bookings on the FFCAM website (French Federation of Alpine and Mountain Clubs).

→ [refugedupave.fr](https://refugedupave.fr)

→ [ecrins.alpes-refuges.fr](https://ecrins.alpes-refuges.fr)



© Sarah Grangeon

## REFUGE DU CLOT DES VACHES

📍 MONËTIER-LES-BAINS SERRE-CHEVALIER  
ECRINS NATIONAL PARK

**NEW.** Perched at an altitude of 2,250 metres in the sumptuous Cerces massif, Le Clôt des Vaches is Serre Chevalier valley's very first mountain refuge. Fitted with a larch wood facade, dry toilets and solar panels, it is a proud holder of the "Mediterranean Sustainable Building" label. Open 10 months out of 12 with a keeper, it can accommodate up to 30 people in small dormitories each sleeping 5 to 7. An easy educational trail dotted with 13 information panels accompanies walkers from the Pont de l'Alp car park (served by Briançon-Grenoble buses) up to the refuge in Le Lauzet, at an altitude of 1,709 metres. The views over the Écrins massif are breathtaking: aficionados can enjoy a foretaste thanks to the upcoming webcam.

→ [www.serre-chevalier.com](https://www.serre-chevalier.com)



© OT Serre Chevalier

## REFUGE DU GRAND ROCHEBRUNE

📍 QUEYRAS REGIONAL NATURE RESERVE

**A CHEF'S REFUGE!** After a stint alongside three-star chef Glenn Viel, Victor Castelli set up home at the Grand Rochebrune refuge, perched at an altitude of 1,840 metres in the hamlet of Souliers in Château Ville-Vieille, in the heart of the Queyras Regional Nature Reserve.

This charming wooden gîte, topped with a large, south-facing terrace, enjoys splendid views over La Font Sancte and l'Aiguille de Chambeyron. Victor and his partner Alix concoct simple yet flavourful and surprising fare such as a Queyras Blue Cheese Espuma with notes of toasted walnuts and a traditional blueberry tart with a twist...

→ [gitedesouliers.fr](https://gitedesouliers.fr)

→ [lequeyras.com](https://lequeyras.com)



© A. Grossan



**INTERNATIONAL GLACIER YEAR****📍 ECRINS NATIONAL PARK**

The United Nations declared 2025 as the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation!

Écrins National Park is proudly piloting the initiative for all of France's national parks, measuring and documenting glacier retreat and steering a series of projects and events aimed at raising awareness, including public scientific meetings, a photography exhibition launching in late June at the Park's information centre in Le Casset (Le Monêtier-les-Bains), a scientific symposium from December 2nd to 4th, 2025 in Bourg-d'Oisans, educational projects with local schools, training for holders of the "Esprit Parc National" quality label and a dedicated booklet.

➔ [www.ecrins-parcnational.fr](http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr)



© T. Blais

**THE BIGGEST  
REFUGE DU GLACIER BLANC**

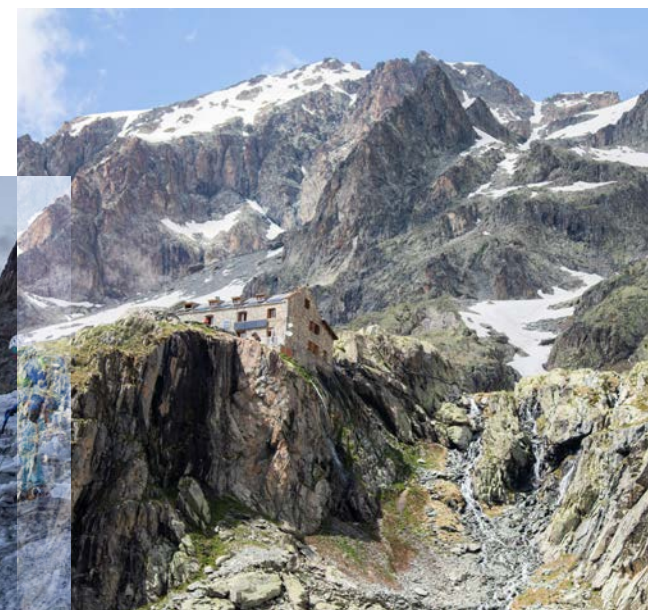
Poised at an altitude of 2,542 metres, the Refuge du Glacier Blanc features 140 beds nestled in its stone walls. It is the largest of the 130 refuges managed by the FFCAM (French Federation of Alpine and Mountain Clubs) and one of the most popular, so book early! The refuge offers a perfect vantage point for observing the Écrins massif's largest glacier, the Glacier Blanc. Today, it takes almost an hour to climb to the ice front, once so close. The hike is well worth your while - the route up to this majestic high mountain landmark inspires admiration and respect, and the view over Le Pelvoux is breathtaking.

The Glacier Blanc is one of five French glaciers currently monitored for glacial retreat as part of a campaign by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).

➔ [refugeduglacierblanc.ffcam.fr](http://refugeduglacierblanc.ffcam.fr)



© T. Blais



© T. Blais



# KEY FIGURES & DATA



**40%** of the region's surface area



**8%** of the region's population

**2<sup>nd</sup> French mountain destination**  
(15% of French mountain tourism)







**27.2** million overnight stays including  
**75 %** French **25 %** International tourists



**1.8** billion direct economic spinoffs

## Distribution of nights spent

 WINTER	<b>43%</b>
 HEART OF SUMMER (July/August)	<b>23%</b>
 SPRING	<b>16%</b>
 INDIAN SUMMER (autumn)	<b>18%</b>

Source: 2023 Tourism Survey - Regional Tourist Board /  
Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Council and local partners

➔ **Read more - Observatoire du Tourisme**

## ➔ PROTECTED AREAS

### ■ 6 protected areas

- Écrins and Mercantour national parks
- Queyras, Baronnies Provençales, Verdon and Préalpes du Sud regional nature reserves

### ■ 2 geoparks and national geological reserves

- UNESCO Haute-Provence Geopark
- Alpes Cottiennes Geopark

### ■ 26 lakes, including Europe's largest high-altitude lake (Lac d'Allos) and one of France's largest lakes (Lac de **Serre-Ponçon**)

### ■ Europe's highest village: Saint-Véran (2 042 m)

### ■ Europe's highest town: Briançon (1 326 m)

### ■ Breathtaking night skies:

- Alpes Azur Mercantour International Dark Sky Reserve (RICE)
- 5 mountain observatories: Barcelonnette-Mercantour, Baronnies Provençales, Saint-Véran in Queyras, Plateau de Bure in Le Dévoluy and the Valberg Planetarium.

## ➔ RENOWNED CULTURAL SITES

### ■ UNESCO: Briançon, Village Fortifié de Mont-Dauphin

### ■ Spiritual: Boscodon Abbey and its Forêt d'Exception® (exceptional forest), Embrun Cathedral, Notre-Dame-de-Laus Sanctuary, plus Baroque constructions such as Saorge Monastery and Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption Church in Saint-Martin-Vésubie.

### ■ "France's Most Beautiful Villages"

**label:** Entrevaux, Saint-Véran, La Grave, Saorgue, Coaraze, Sainte-Agnès, Gourdon

### ■ Novel: Barcelonnette and its historic ties with Mexico, Prehistoric cave paintings in the Vallée des Merveilles.

## ➔ RENOWNED SPORTS LOCATIONS

### ■ Whitewater/sailing: Durance / Guil / Ubaye rivers, Serre-Ponçon lake, Verdon Canyon, La Roya.

### ■ Aerial: Tallard, Saint-Crépin, Le Chevalet in Aspres-sur-Buëch and La Bâtie-Monsaléon, several paragliding/hang-gliding sites including the internationally renowned Montagne de Chabre near Laragne, plus Saint-Geniez near Sisteron, Le Cousson above Digne-les-Bains, Saint-André-les-Alpes, Plateau de la Chau in Montclar, Saint-Vincent-Les-Forts.

### ■ Climbing/Mountaineering: Le Caire, La Meije, Vallouise, Valgaudemar, Orpierre, Céüse.

### ■ Cycling: Mountain passes of Galibier, Izoard, Vars, La Bonette, Allos, Durance à Vélo trail, Grande Traversée des Alpes long-distance trail, Tour du Verdon.

### ■ Hiking: GR5, La Routo, Route Napoléon.

## ➔ THIS SEASON'S EVENT LINE-UP

## ➔ PUREALPES.COM



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EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

PHOTOS FROM THIS KIT

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**alps**

**CÔTE d'AZUR**  
FRANCE

✉ [presse@provence-alpes-cotedazur.com](mailto:presse@provence-alpes-cotedazur.com)

Check out our [Media Space](#) for the latest news, press releases, press kits, events, media libraries and video library.

N.B. Although great care is taken to ensure the information provided in this kit is correct, it is non-exhaustive and cannot be guaranteed.

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April 2025.