

# WELCOME

There are places that one simply passes through, and those that seep into one's very being. **Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur** is among the latter. Our pledge is simple: to ensure that the initial emotion becomes a lasting commitment, for the good of our visitors and inhabitants alike.

**François de Canon**

President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Tourist Board



- High-speed train (TGV)
- Regional express train (TER)
- Highway
- Main road
- Secondary road
- Waterway
- Airport
- Main port
- TGV train station
- Valley
- Major ski resort
- Exceptional natural area
- Exceptional monument
- Plus Beaux Villages de France® ("Most Beautiful Villages of France")
- UNESCO World Heritage

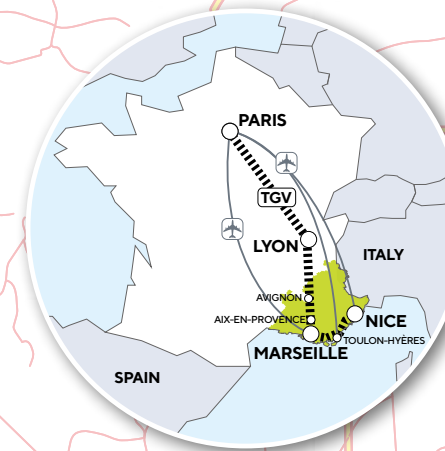
**MAIN CYCLE ROUTES**

- EuroVelo 8 - La Méditerranée à vélo
- EuroVelo 17 - ViaRhôna

Prepare your cycle tours at [francevelotourisme.com](http://francevelotourisme.com).

	2 400 - 4 000 m
	1 800 - 2 400 m
	1 200 - 1 800 m
	600 - 1 200 m
	0 - 600 m

50 km



HOW TO GET THERE?







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### 1 MONT VENTOUX

Nicknamed the “Giant of Provence”, this legendary mountain rising to an altitude of 1,912 metres is draped in a delightful palette of colours and atmospheres. A UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, it features a surprising blend of Provençal countryside and windswept lunar landscapes. The mysterious summit of this unique mount coveted by cyclists gazes out over blooming lavender fields in summer.



© V. Lucas - CRT

### 2 THE OCHRE TRAIL\*

Revel in a thousand and one shades of red, orange and yellow, bathed in the sunshine of Provence... Starting out from the hilltop village of Roussillon, in the heart of the beautiful Luberon, the Ochre Trail offers a choice of routes and is perfect for a family outing amid magnificent landscapes. Alternatively, set out to explore the wilder “Provençal Colorado” in Rustrel – simply spectacular.



© A. Mouton - CRT

### 3 CAMARGUE

A magnificent and astonishing wilderness unique in France, where Mediterranean Sea and Rhône River meet, Camargue is a paradise for nature, animal and bird lovers, dotted with lagoons and marshes where pink flamingos come to nest. Deeply attached to its traditions, Camargue offers endless leisure opportunities including birding and horse-riding, topped with delicious local cuisine and countless gems to explore.



© Fotolia

### 4 CALANQUES & CAPE CANAILLE\*

Sublime viewpoints and little coves lapped by crystal-clear waters await along the shores of Calanques National Park, at the gateway to Marseille. A paradise for scuba divers and rock climbers, overflowing with beautiful flora and fauna, the Calanques (coastal fjords) span 20 km between Marseille and the pretty port of Cassis, nestled under the dizzy cliff of Cape Canaille.



© P. Leroux - CRT

### 5 MONT SAINTE-VICTOIRE

Cezanne’s favourite muse, Mont Sainte-Victoire is an icon of the Pays d’Aix area. Forming a giant wave of dazzling white stone, this mighty mountain is truly dressed to impress. Take time to admire it from every angle on the many local walking and hiking trails – the perfect way to get to know the Aix countryside and nearby villages, steeped in Provence’s legendary lifestyle.



© iStock

### 6 PÉNITENTS DES MÉES CLIFFS

These strange and haunting rocky silhouettes rear their heads to a height of nearly 1,000 metres. According to legend, monks from Lure Mountain were turned to stone as a punishment for lusting after Moorish women during the Saracen invasions. In fact, the Mées rock formations are the result of erosion.



© AdobeStock

### 7 VERDON CANYON\*

Jaw dropping! Unique in Europe, this vast canyon unrolls dizzy panoramic vistas and viewpoints plunging down 700 metres... An official “Grand Site of France”, it is crossed by the translucent, emerald-green waters of the river Verdon. Adventure sports, including rock climbing, whitewater rafting, canoeing and bungee jumping, reign supreme here.



© Fotolia

### 8 GOLDEN ISLANDS\*

Whether you’re a fan of sailing, diving, snorkelling or simply enjoy a nice stroll, the aptly-named Golden Islands off the coast of Hyères are pure Mediterranean gems. Stunning and exotic, Porquerolles, Port-Cros and Le Levant boast turquoise waters, beaches of white sand, exceptional plant life and miles of signposted trails for walkers and cyclists.



© Fotolia

### 9 VAR BEACHES

The shores of the Var area are home to some of Europe’s most beautiful beaches, whether famous names or more intimate addresses steeped in wild, virgin scenery. Discover the sand or pebble beaches of Bandol, Saint-Tropez, Pampelonne, Bormes-les-Mimosas, La Londe-les-Maures, Porquerolles and more, perfect for a day out with all the family or quiet nap in the shade of umbrella pines.



© AdobeStock

### 10 ESTEREL HILLS

Explore the gorgeous “Corniche d’Or” coast road between Mandelieu and Saint-Raphaël, snaking its way through the astonishing, ragged red volcanic rocks of the Esterel hills. The view plunges down over a myriad of little islands and coves lined with umbrella pines. Rising up 600 metres, these protected hills swathed in forests harbour many walking and cycling trails.



© AdobeStock

### 11 CIANS GORGE

An impressive series of wild and beautiful sheer red cliffs carved by the powerful waters of the Cians river, forming a bizarre gallery of natural sculptures. Take time to roam the 25 km winding road above the gorge, promising a show to remember.



© AdobeStock

### 12 VALLEY OF WONDERS

Dotted with forests and lakes, the aptly-named “Vallée des Merveilles” in Mercantour National Park is famed for its prehistoric rock engravings. This awe-inspiring site, perched 2,000 metres above sea level, is a haven for walking, nature and history fans keen to discover the local fauna and flora while treading in the footsteps of our ancestors.



© T. Seray - CRT

### 13 COL DE LA BONETTE

Europe’s highest road, soaring to 2,802 metres in the heart of Mercantour National Park, Col de la Bonette forms a bridge between the Mediterranean and Southern Alps. Home to spectacular landscapes, it unveils breathtaking views from snowy peaks to superb vistas over larch forests. This mythical mountain pass – a regular highlight on the Tour de France – is very popular with amateur cyclists too!



© C. Marchand

### 14 SERRE-PONÇON LAKE

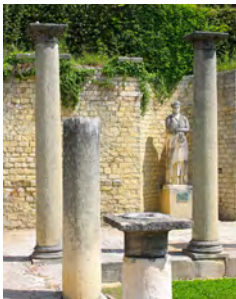
The river Durance weaves its way through a circle of stunning mountains and gushes into a 7,500-acre artificial lake – one of Europe’s largest reservoirs and a wonderful playground for water sports fans and adrenalin seekers. These beautiful landscapes are a slow tourism paradise too, inviting visitors to head out onto trails dotted with striking panoramic viewpoints.



© Fotolia

### 1 ROMAN THEATRE OF ORANGE

A remarkable witness to ancient times, this Roman theatre – the finest of its kind in Europe and a UNESCO World Heritage Site – is above all famed for its magnificent and astonishingly well-preserved stage wall. A show venue since Roman times, graced with exceptional acoustics, this monument welcomes visitors from the world over come to applaud “Les Chorégies” summer opera festival.



© C. Chilib - CRT

### 2 VAISON-LA-ROMAINE

Promising a genuine voyage back in time, Vaison-la-Romaine marks a major chapter in the history of Provence and its impressive heritage is well worth a visit. Today, medieval ruins and modern-day buildings rub shoulders in this landmark Roman town. History buffs will definitely want to put the Roman theatre and archaeological museum on their bucket list.



© Ph. Giraud

### 3 SÉNANQUE ABBEY

A marvel of simplicity, nestled in the arms of the valley for over 800 years, Notre-Dame de Sénanque is one of the finest existing examples of Cistercian architecture. This Romanesque masterpiece, tucked away in the heart of Luberon, is perfect for relaxing and strolling. The beautiful sight of lavender fields in bloom further exalts the site’s beauty in summer.



© DR

### 4 PALACE OF THE POPES

The official papal residence in Provence in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the majestic, medieval Palais des Papes – a combined fortress and palace – forms the beating heart of Avignon. Now an exhibition venue and sightseeing attraction, the courtyard of this UNESCO World Heritage site is magicked into an extraordinary stage for the annual Avignon Festival, a palpitating contemporary arts festival and highlight of the summer season, held throughout town.



© C. Luparini - CRT

### 5 ROMAN HERITAGE FROM ARLES TO SAINT-RÉMY-DE-PROVENCE

A must-do stopover, renowned worldwide for its UNESCO Roman heritage, Arles is home to many remarkable monuments including a stunning Roman Amphitheatre and Theatre, now a major performance venue. Poised at the entrance to Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, the Triumphal Arch and Mausoleum of the Julii nestle in a magnificent green setting near the Glanum archaeological site.



© Camore

### 6 COSQUER CAVE, MUCEM, RADIANT CITY

The city of Marseille offers an alluring blend of history and modernity. Cosquer Méditerranée is a perfect replica of the Cosquer Cave, an underwater prehistoric site hidden away among the coastal fjords or “calanques”. A contemporary architectural feat, the Mucem (Museum of European & Mediterranean Civilisations) lies next to the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Fort St-Jean. Just opposite, the 12-acre citadel Fort St-Nicolas, erected 360 years ago, gazes out over the city. Further on, Le Corbusier’s astonishing utopian living space baptized “La Cité Radieuse” (Radiant City) is now a UNESCO World Heritage site.



© AdobeStock

### 7 TOULON FORTS & BAY

An impregnable site, Toulon is home to one of Europe’s most beautiful natural harbours. Once a refuge for Greek and Roman ships, the Bay of Toulon is surrounded by many forts designed by Vauban, standing witness to the city’s rich military heritage and turbulent history. The vast bay, consisting of an inner and outer harbour, is dotted with no less than 24 forts, towers and batteries.



© AdobeStock

### 8 SAINT MARY MAGDALENE BASILICA

A place of pilgrimage, this basilica harbours the relics of Saint Mary Magdalene, who brought the Gospel to Provence. Provence’s largest Gothic-style religious edifice invites contemplation and reverence, before setting off in the footsteps of Mary Magdalene through the majestic Sainte-Baume forest, to the cave where the Saint lived as a hermit until her death.



© Fotolia

### 9 THORONET ABBEY

An ode to beauty and grace in the heart of Provence... Nicknamed “The Wonder”, Thoronet Abbey was built in the 12th century amid wooded hills. Functional and minimalist in design, it boasts exceptional acoustics. Its simple yet powerful architecture is famed worldwide as a remarkable example of Cistercian art.



© C. Duranti

### 10 ANTIBES FORT

Its terrace offers sweeping, 360° views over Antibes and beyond. Standing proudly on the Saint-Roch peninsula, the fort – now an icon of the town and listed monument harbouring a museum – was originally a defensive structure. Prolong the pleasure with a tour of the preserved grounds overlooking the old quarter and sea.



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### 11 NICE, THE BIRTHPLACE OF TOURISM

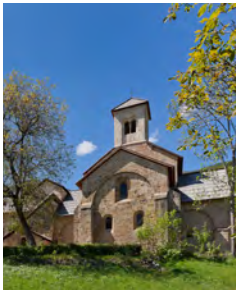
A UNESCO World Heritage site since 2021 under the title “Nice, Winter Resort Town of the Riviera”, this sumptuous city is coveted by English then Russian aristocrats from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its world-famed Promenade des Anglais, elegant Cimiez and Mont-Boron quarters, charming villas and hotels, and exotic vegetation, continue to uphold the legacy of a bygone era.



© AdobeStock

### 12 SISTERON CITADEL

Gazing down over the majestic Durance river, this impressive Citadel offers visitors a fascinating insight into Sisteron’s military history and the talent of Vauban, an ingenious architect who served under Louis XIV. Today the Citadel is a tourist attraction, also famed for its summer music and theatre festival “Les Nuits de la Citadelle”.



© B. Bodin

### 13 BOSCODON ABBEY

Boscodon Abbey was founded by monks from the Order of Chalais, seduced by the purity and harmony of this magnificent site. Now restored to its former glory, the abbey, tucked away in the heart of a vast fir and larch forest, has refound its original vocation as a place of worship. Another must see: the village of Embrun and its monumental cathedral overlooking Durance valley.



© M. Verdell

### 14 VAUBAN HERITAGE

A fascinating plunge into history in the heart of the Alpes! One of the world’s largest fortified mountain towns, designed by Vauban, Briançon nestles in a magical – and very strategic – setting. Another must-see: the fortified village of Mont-Dauphin, standing proudly above a valley crossed by the Guil and Durance rivers, just 30 km from Briançon. Both constructions are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

\*To optimize your tour experience and help preserve the local flora and fauna, we recommend visiting these exceptional natural sites in low season rather than July and August.