



# WINTERTIME IS PARTY TIME!

PROVENCE & CÔTE D'AZUR

2025-2026

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#COTEDAZUR

PROVENCE  
ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

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Pantonic - © OTC Antibes Juan-les-Pins

# WELCOME

**F**rance's leading region for tourism, flying the flag of three international destination brands - Provence, Southern French Alps and Cote d'Azur -, the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region proudly embodies the values of responsible, sustainable and profoundly human tourism.

A little corner of France blessed by the gods, home to 5 million inhabitants, our region welcomes millions of tourists from the world over every year, come to savour our rich heritage, diverse culture, beautiful scenery between sea and mountain, unrivalled quality of life, generous gastronomy and legendary hospitality.

What makes our region so special too is its unique energy in every season. Life never stops here: with major international events, world-renowned festivals, traditional celebrations anchored in our villages and seasonal happenings, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur is a buzzing region whatever the season.

## **In fact, Wintertime is Party Time!**

We're lucky enough to live in an exceptional place, so it's our job to live up to it. Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur is a forerunner for the ecological transition and was the first region in Europe to vote a 100% green budget reflecting our profound commitment. Every euro invested focuses on the climate emergency and the need to preserve our shared treasure: the environment.

Here, tourism isn't just a simple product, it is an encounter, an emotion, an undertaking. It respects our land, our traditions and the men and women who keep them alive. It is a vision we uphold every day, alongside our travel professionals, local authorities, inhabitants and all those who believe in a harmonious future, where development and conservation go hand in hand.

The world is changing and so is tourism. And the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region is determined to remain at the forefront of this new benchmark. Because we believe that beauty is only meaningful if it is shared - sustainably.

The Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Tourist Board Team





## PROVENCE, CÔTE D'AZUR WINTERTIME IS PARTY TIME!

Provence and the Côte d'Azur are absolute treats in winter.

Wintertime is when – according to the world's finest artists – the most beautiful shades of light caress the everchanging sea and sky. Beaches, islands, coastal footpaths, hills and forests await, while the gentle temperatures invite sport as well as elegance.

Less people also means friendlier prices and even more attention and kindness. Those who are lucky enough to experience winter here have the impression they are part of an insider's club open only to connoisseurs.

In days gone by, in rural Provence and Côte d'Azur, flocks were kept inside the sheepfold from November onwards and the fields and vines were left to rest. Winter was a season for cherishing the essential things in life; a season with a taste for the sacred, filled with the warmth of family.

Make way for Christmas, for festivities, dancing, singing and silence too... before the rebirth and rejoicing that comes with Shrove Tuesday. Mystical and carnivalesque, an ode to love and the senses, wintertime in Provence Côte d'Azur is a party to remember.



## ADMIRE A WALL OF FAME

October 18 – November 1, 2025

### Coul'Heures d'Automne: l'art urbain

📍 Antibes – Juan-les-Pins

The Côte d'Azur has its very own Wall of Fame! In **Antibes-Juan les Pins**, over a hundred facades, buses and even garbage trucks celebrate life in colour all year round. And a wall is available to artists keen to pay homage to their illustrious predecessors, including **Picasso**. Lasting two weeks, Coul'Heures d'Automne invites locals and visitors alike to attend live demonstrations by mural, graffiti and street artists. The festivities centre around La School urban and musical arts centre (laschool.fr).

[www.coulheures.fr/lemurdantibes](http://www.coulheures.fr/lemurdantibes)

#### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Have fun hunting down the urban art wall in Saint-Raphaël, admire designs by Sufyr in La-Seyne-sur-Mer and visit Toulon's arty quarter, the "Quartier des Arts". You'll find plenty of urban art and graffiti guided tours here too – especially in Marseille –, perfect for spotting Banksy's latest lighthouse! There's no season for art here, and art buffs truly are spoilt for choice. In fact, Nice is second only to Paris when it comes to municipal museums – and they're open all year round too of course, as are many other collections and galleries.

Côte d'Azur France Tourisme – © Ambre Fraticelli



## MASTER THE MOUNTAINS

November 21 – 23, 2025

### Festival de la Montagne

📍 Saint-Paul-de-Vence

Whether you're here to hike, run, pedal, climb or ski, winter in Provence Côte d'Azur is a genuine paradise for outdoor sports fans. Moreover, the old city walls of **Saint-Paul-de-Vence** gaze out over a magnificent playground: the peaks of **Mercantour de l'Argentera** and other **Southern Alps** summits cloaked in snow. Not forgetting the lower-altitude sacred mounts of **Provence, Ventoux, Sainte-Baume and Sainte-Victoire**. The joys of the mountains are just a stone's throw away and to help visitors appreciate them better, this three-day festival brings together mountaineers, sporting talents, ski instructors, paragliders and extreme skiers in the artistic town of Saint-Paul-de-Vence. Visitors enjoy a deep dive into such thrilling sports as ice waterfall climbing, ruisseling (climbing frozen streams), paragliding, dog sledding, mountain biking, freeriding and cross-country skiing, while picking up hot tips on the best high-altitude chalets where you can dine around a crackling fire. The traditional game of pétanque in front of **La Colombe d'Or** is a must too!

[www.saint-pauldevence.com/en](http://www.saint-pauldevence.com/en)

#### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Valberg, Auron, Turini, Isola 2000... Ten or so ski resorts are located just one hour from the Côte d'Azur, served by buses with friendly, frozen rates. Situated under 50 kilometres from Saint-Paul-de-Vence, Gréolières-les-Neiges is an authentic old mountain village inviting ski and snow fans to whoosh down the slopes against a backdrop of azure Mediterranean waters. Nordic skiing fans will love the vast expanses of snow dotted with forests at Dalmas-le-Selve. Fancy a shot of adrenalin? La Colmiane is France's longest zipline, measuring almost 2 km!

Olivia Parold – © OTC Antibes Juan-les-Pins



Saint-Paul-de-Vence – © Côte d'Azur France Tourisme

## PREP FOR CHRISTMAS

December 1 – 31, 2025

### Christmas Markets

Christmas lasts a whole 40 days here, from Saint Barbara's Day on December 4<sup>th</sup> to Candlemas on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. From late November onwards, Christmas chalets start popping up in every town centre. They're a great place to pick up some novel gifts and artisan creations to tuck under the tree, as well as everything you'll need for your traditional Provençal Christmas meals: the "Gros Souper" and thirteen desserts on December 24<sup>th</sup>, as well as Christmas Dinner and New Year specialities. You'll often come across Father Christmas himself passing through the markets on his sleigh too. Between **Hyères and Toulon, Les Hivernales in La Garde** is a delightful Christmas fair featuring an old-fashioned unicorn carousel, a giant "dance of the elves" and even a parade of dogs dressed in Christmas attire!

[provence-alpes-cotedazur.com/en/](https://provence-alpes-cotedazur.com/en/)

#### PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Even Father Christmas would need several lives to tour all the region's markets. Those of Salon-de-Provence, Aix-en-Provence, Brignoles or Carpentras are famous, but the seaside markets of Nice, Cannes, Cagnes-sur-Mer, Sanary, La Ciotat and Cassis brim with charm too. And of courses, antiques lovers won't want to miss the fabulous market in L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue.



© Ville de Sanary-sur-Mer



© C. Luparini

## PICK A SANTON

December 4, 2025 – February 2, 2026

### Foire aux santons

The idiot, the shepherd, the bohemian and the drummer... From December 4<sup>th</sup> to February 2<sup>nd</sup>, these traditional clay figurines measuring just a few centimetres are the stars of the show on Marseille's **Vieux-Port**. The city's **Foire aux Santons** has been around for 220 years – a world record! The traditional crib scene is alive and kicking too. These miniature villages adorned with santon figurines (from the word "santoun" meaning "little saint" in Provençal dialect), depicting the birth of Jesus in the stable, were found in every church in days gone by. Homemade crib scenes came a little later, at the time of the French Revolution. The various characters – the Virgin Mary, Joseph, the donkey, the ox and the Baby Jesus, are laid out on December 24<sup>th</sup>, followed by the Three Kings on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Genuine artists, our santon makers create new, extraordinarily expressive and sometimes astonishingly modern figures every year.

[provence-alpes-cotedazur.com/en/](https://provence-alpes-cotedazur.com/en/)

#### PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Enjoy a tour of the local santon workshops to see how these little clay figurines are made, from crafting the plaster mould to the final brushstrokes. Among the region's many santon markets, the Aubagne fair is particularly renowned: with its age-old pottery traditions, the town is now part of the European Route of Ceramics. Most fairs offer ready-to-paint clay models too, so you can have fun decorating them at home.



## STEP INTO THE NATIVITY SCENE

December 1, 2025 – January 5, 2026

### Circuit des Crèches

📍 Lucéram

Stone houses, old washtubs, fountains and town squares shaded with olive trees... Our traditional crib scenes are inspired by real local villages such as **Lucéram**, a hilltop village in the **Nice highlands**, standing under a 16<sup>th</sup>-century tower. Every winter, its old Gothic lanes adorned with red and gold harbour around 450 nativity scenes: the smallest is no bigger than a walnut, while the largest is a breathtaking ten metres in length! A signposted trail leads visitors from cellars to bread oven, ancient porches, shops, Chapelle Saint-Pierre and, of course, the **Musée de la Crèche** (Nativity Scene Museum).

[provence-alpes-cotedazur.com/en/](https://provence-alpes-cotedazur.com/en/)

#### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Get ready for some unexpected encounters at the “Ronde des Crèches” in the Forcalquier-Montagne de Lure area! Visitors will discover beautiful old collector’s santon figurines – listed monuments no less – with their costumes testifying to fashions in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. We also recommend stopping off in La Garde-Freinet, at the heart of the Massif des Maures hill chain, to admire the nativity scene adorned with over 4,000 characters and a few hundred sheep displayed under the old stone arches of Chapelle Saint-Jean.



Côte d'Azur France – Georges Veran

## GET LOST IN MUSIC

November 28 – December 7, 2025

### Sacrée Musique

What a great idea! Sacred music resonating throughout the region’s churches, exalted by candlelight... The association **Sacrée Musique**, and its patron Stéphane Bern, are the talents behind the year-round music line-up in **Fréjus**. And when winter comes around, they set about opening the doors to the town’s sacred sites, offering music lovers magical moments of sheer beauty and transcendence. In winter 2025, the initiative is spreading to the entire region, with 45 concerts scheduled from **Arles to Menton**, via **Brignoles, Manosque, Pertuis, Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume and Saint-Rémy-de-Provence**. The acoustics of each site, designed from the outset to magnify sound, promise an unforgettable immersion in choirs from Corsica and Sardinia, together with gospel music and solo performers from the **Toulon Opera House**.

[sacreemusique.com](https://sacreemusique.com)

#### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Provence boasts age-old Christmas singing traditions. Our “Pastorales” – a kind of nativity musical – tell the story of the birth of Jesus through the eyes of the region’s shepherds and country folk. Held in the four corners of Provence, the traditional “Chants de Noël” Christmas Carol tour features around 70 free concerts. Feel free to join in!



Fréjus, Villa Aurélienne – Balkanes et Yvan Cassar



Toulon Saint-Joseph – Gospel Philharmonic Experience



## TASTE THE NOUVEAU WINES

December 6 - 7, 2025

### Fête des vins

📍 Bandol

The intimate **AOC Bandol** is one of the region's oldest appellations and one of the most acclaimed too. The wines are crafted with the king of grape varieties, Mourvèdre, which produces character-packed rosés and reds. Bandol's fifty or so vineyards pan out in terraces, forming a natural amphitheatre standing over the Mediterranean Sea. The two-day Fête des Vins wine fair is held on the **port of Bandol**, facing **Ile de Bendor**. The village is a major stopover on the **Route des Vins de Provence** (Provence Wine Route), which you can, of course, enjoy exploring all year round. And if you thought all vineyards were alike, think again! In **La Londe-les-Maures**, for example – another must on this gourmet route – you'll be able to choose between a minimalist winery blending into the surrounding countryside (**Château Sainte-Marguerite**), an old mining site (**Château des Bormettes**), or an 18<sup>th</sup>-century chateau facing Ile du Levant (Le Bastidon). And those are just three of the possibilities within the **Vignobles de Provence & de Méditerranée** territory, a holder of **Vignobles & Découvertes (Wine & Discovery)** label.

[www.routedesvinsdeprovence.com](http://www.routedesvinsdeprovence.com)

[www.fete-des-vinsdebandol.fr](http://www.fete-des-vinsdebandol.fr)

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Reputed for its fabulous rosé wines, the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region also produces outstanding reds and whites and is the homeland of such famous AOCs as Chateaufort-du-Pape, Bellet and Cassis. On November 20th, Millévin d'Avignon will be celebrating the new Côtes du Rhône vintage – an unique opportunity to taste some nouveau wines just after the grape harvest while admiring a procession by the Commanderie des Costes du Rhône – the appellation's foremost wine guild – and revelling in delicious food and wine pairings.

## FOLLOW THE SHEPHERDS

Christmas Eve 2025

### Messe de Minuit & Pastorale

📍 Allauch & Les Baux-de-Provence

Midnight Mass is still widely attended on Christmas Eve. Some of the services are famous – like that of the little **village of Allauch**, once home to writer and director Marcel Pagnol. Mass is held at Notre-Dame-du-Château, offering magnificent views over the city of **Marseille**. But the most coveted midnight mass of them all, since the 16<sup>th</sup> century no less, takes place in **Les Baux-de-Provence**. Basking in the heart of the **Alpilles**, the village is perched on a rocky outcrop overlooking a valley planted with olive trees. Accompanied by fife and drum, traditional “Arlésiennes”, “Mireilles” and other costumed characters such as the “Bayle” (master shepherd) and his flock parade under the medieval citadel before entering the church. At the end of the service, the shepherd offers a newborn lamb to Baby Jesus. Jesus is described as the sacrificial lamb in the Old Testament and Midnight Mass remains firmly anchored in the region's pastoral traditions. Moreover, every November, the **Fête des Bergers et Traditions d'Istres** celebrates the transhumance on the fertile plain of **La Crau**. A river of sheep – nearly 3,000 animals – led by shepherds crosses **Istres** with a Carreto Ramado (large carts adorned with flowers) from **Saint-Rémy-de-Provence**, “guardians” (horseback herdsman) and folk bands. The celebration winds up with a Provençal mass in costume dress.

[en.istres-tourisme.com](http://en.istres-tourisme.com)

[www.alpillesenprovence.com/en/](http://www.alpillesenprovence.com/en/)

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Fichus, corsets, shawls, quilts, lace and “indienne” printed cottons... Visitors can admire all the beauty and delicacy of Provence and Arles' traditional costumes at the new Musée de la Mode et du Costume – Fragonard (Fragonard Fashion & Costume Museum) in Arles. The Hôtel Bouchaud de Bussy, restored by prized architectural firm Studio KO, invites enthusiasts to contemplate the history of fashion in Provence since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. And the story continues today: for example, the jeans worn throughout the world were first manufactured in Nîmes! The Ateliers de Nîmes continues to uphold the art of “Nîmes serge”, the ancestor of modern denim. The textile brands Souleïado in Tarascon and Brun de Vian Tiran in L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue also offer heritage spaces where you can learn all about their ancient know-how while admiring the latest collections.



## DIVE INTO THE MED

January 1, 2026

### New Year's Day Swim

Sea bathing is actually a recent invention! The Americans introduced the fashion in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. People came to the South of France and Nice, attributed the title of “**Nice, Winter Resort Town of the Riviera**” by **UNESCO**, for the gentle climate, azure skies and countless festivities... But swimming in the Med is a real delight whatever the season – and it's good for the body and mind too. Moreover, the Med doesn't ever get very cold: around 13°C in January. And of course, you can wear a wetsuit if needed. So, on the morning of January 1st, unless a storm is announced, head to the nearest beach for a fun dip in good company. You'll come out invigorated, purified and ready to tackle the new year!

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

### PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Water jets, swan-neck fountains, whirlpools and musical grottos: around the Mediterranean, you'll also find places to relax in warm water all year round. Seven thalassotherapy centres allow water lovers to top up on Vitamin D, trace elements, minerals – and good humour. And they all offer dream settings: Thalacap Camargue in Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer in Camargue or Thalazur Port Camargue next to the marina, Thalassa Sea & Spa Hyères on Giens peninsula, Thalazur Antibes on the heights of Antibes, plus various other seaside establishments in Fréjus, Les Issambres and Bandol. And why not alternate with the healing waters of Gréoux-les-Bains? The town's Thermal Spa dates back to Roman times!

## HOIST THE SAILS

Date to be confirmed

### Challenge d'hiver de voile

 Hyères

Sheltered from swell and high winds, the **Bay of Hyères** is the ideal spot for wintertime water sports. It's also the venue for the year's first three regattas organised by the **Hyères International Yacht Club**, including the French Sailing Federation's “Coupe des Rois Mages”. Around twenty sailboats measuring 8–12 metres take part in this breathtaking race between the islands of **Porquerolles** and **Port-Cros**, along Giens peninsula. A spectacular show that would be impossible in summer when the coastal waters are busy. And how about taking some lessons at the winter sailing school while conditions are perfect? You can also opt for an introduction to kitesurfing, kitefoiling or wing foiling at **Plage de l'Almanarre**.

[www.provencemed.com/en/](http://www.provencemed.com/en/)

### PROLONG THE PLEASURE

The Mediterranean coast is at its very finest before the summer rush, promising gentle sunshine, tranquil ports, secret coves, peaceful anchorages and the pleasures of coastal navigation. Not to mention the privilege of having a whole island to yourself – or almost: 30 minutes across the water from La Tour Fondue on Giens peninsula, Porquerolles is the largest of the four Golden Islands off the coast of Hyères, spanning seven kilometres of olive groves, pine woods and beaches of silver sand... Make the most of the Tourist Office's very friendly-priced winter package available from January to March, including the return boat trip, mountain bike hire, lunch and overnight stay at a three-star hotel.



Bain du jour de l'an – Saint-Raphaël Agay © Estérel Côte d'Azur



Hyères-les-Palmiers – © Fabrice Robert



## SHOP BY THE SEA

January 7 – February 3, 2026

### Winter Sales

Walking in the footsteps of **Provençal fashion designer Jacquemus**, who paved the way for a plethora of smart, audacious and eco-aware contemporaries, the region overflows with creativity and independent brands. Starting on January 7<sup>th</sup>, the winter sales are a great excuse to peruse the little boutiques that flourish in our town and city centres, as well as shopping malls such as **CAP3000** near **Nice**. A curvaceous architectural feat, designed to emulate Mediterranean waves, the mall harbours over 300 stores, together with Europe's largest pharmacy, many works of art, a 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> terrace gazing over the **Mediterranean** and around fifty eateries, including fifteen with sea views. In the heart of **Marseille**, **Les Terrasses du Port** also offers an exciting shopping experience to the sound of the waves, with views over the islands and distant horizon...

[en.cap3000.com](http://en.cap3000.com)

### PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Over a hundred major brands at mini prices, showcased in stylish shops swathed in warm colours, await visitors to the McArthurGlen Provence – the South of France's first designer outlet. The charming village of Miramas is located just a stone's throw from Etang de Berre, one of Europe's largest lagoons.



© C. Luparini




© DR

## WALK WITH THE THREE KINGS

January 11, 2026

### Marche des Rois, Epiphanie

 Aix-en-Provence

According to Christian tradition, the Three Kings arrived in Bethlehem on January 6<sup>th</sup> guided by a star, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for the Baby Jesus. Today, Balthazar, Caspar, Melchior and their camels, along with a cortege of angels, shepherds and country folk, parade through the centre of **Aix-en-Provence** every year, in a magnificent reconstruction of this historic event. Gifts are placed at the feet of Baby Jesus under the Romanesque arches of **Cathédrale Saint-Sauveur**, while **Cours Mirabeau** and **Place d'Albertas** echo to the sound of Christmas Carols.

### PROLONG THE PLEASURE

You'll also find processions of the Three Kings in Aubagne, La Ciotat, Salon-de-Provence, and the extraordinary Eglise Saint-Nazaire in Sanary-sur-Mer, adorned with Byzantine-style frescoes. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, Epiphany is celebrated in the region with the traditional Gâteau des Rois, usually a crown-shaped brioche decorated with candied fruit: cherries from Apt, lemons from Menton and melon from Cavaillon. Cavaillon melon is also one of the secret ingredients of our delicious "calisson" candies. The candying method originated in the Orient, so we can thank the Three Kings for inspiring this delicious sweet treat, now one of the region's gourmet icons.



© Cyrille Donnier



## PARADE WITH PINK FLAMINGOS

January 23 – 24, 2026

### Flamingo parade

📍 Pont-de-Gau

Widely found in the wetlands, reed beds and **marshes of Camargue**, flamingos don their flamboyant pink feathers in November, as a prelude to the mating season when – in a remarkable show of gender equality – males and females alike bow down, flex their wings and strut to the sound of a silent score. It isn't rare to find over two thousand flamingos dancing just a stone's throw from the hides dotted around the **Pont-de-Gau Ornithological Park**. Located under four kilometres from **Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer**, in the heart of the **Camargue Regional Nature Reserve**, this park hosts numerous tours and activities offering visitors a privileged glimpse of the flamingo's nuptial parade. Major photography brands are partners to the photography weekend on January 23<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, when people are invited to bring along their cameras to capture these beautiful birds in the magical winter light.

[www.parcornithologique.com/en/welcome.html](http://www.parcornithologique.com/en/welcome.html)

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Swans, birds of prey and waders flock to the South of France's wetlands as soon as the temperatures drop. So don't forget your binoculars! And Camargue isn't the only place you'll find migratory birds – over 70 species can be observed at Salin des Pesquiers, on Giens peninsula in Hyères. Ornithology enthusiasts also come to admire the Eurasian dotterel and extremely rare pin-tailed sandgrouse in the semi-arid meadows of Plaine de la Crau.



© E. Nove Josserand – Avignon Tourisme

## SADDLE UP

January 14 – 18, 2026

### Cheval Passion

📍 Avignon

Every local horse lover is familiar with this delightful meeting, celebrating the relationship between man and horse for the last 40 years and showcasing around a thousand horses of all breeds – Lusitano, Iberian, Icelandic, purebred Arabian or **Camargue**. From horse auctions to the discovery of equestrian trades courtesy of Filière Cheval Sud, equestrian tourism and cattle herding, there's something here for everyone. After the “gardians” (horseback herdsmen) parade, the event highlight is the Gala des Crinières d'Or, featuring dressage and acrobatics shows by world-class performers, topped with the pleasure of admiring the graceful horses roam free. Simply jaw-dropping!

[cheval-passion.com](http://cheval-passion.com)

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Camargue is a temple of horse riding and equestrian art, and Camargue's beautiful white horses are part and parcel of a lifestyle instilled with nature and freedom. Many ranches, such as Méjanes, offer visitors the opportunity to saddle up in all safety and roam the marshes and wetlands in the company of a local “gardian”. Some of the greatest equestrian artists live here, such as the famous acrobat Lorenzo, who now has his own Academy. Just down the road, in the Alpilles, Sébastien Fabre, chief guide at the Mas du Petit Roman, is a French and European champion of Team Roping – a rodeo technique popularized by the Navajo Indians.



## SAY IT WITH TRUFFLES

January 18, 2026

### Messe de la truffe

📍 Richerenches

A luxury winter gift, prized for its inimitably rich flavour gleaned deep down in the earth, the truffle is even better savoured fresh, grated into crunchy slivers. Over half of French truffles (the iconic *melanosporum*) come from the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region. And the **Richerenches truffle market** is considered as the world's largest, held every Saturday from mid-November to mid-March since 1923. Richerenches, an ancient city of the Knights Templar, is located inside the **Popes' Enclave**, the holiday residence of the **Popes of Avignon** in days gone by. The truffle mass on the third Sunday of January, just before or after Saint Antoine's Day (patron saint of truffle growers), is the highlight of the yearly festivities. A hamper is passed round after mass and the collected truffles are then auctioned off.

[www.richerenches.fr/richerenches-in-english.html](http://www.richerenches.fr/richerenches-in-english.html)



© Alain Hocquel



© ADT 13

## CLIMB ABOARD

February 2, 2026

### Bénédiction des navettes

📍 Marseille

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> every year, crowds gather at 5 a.m. on Marseille's Vieux Port (Old Port) to await the boat commemorating the arrival of the Gospel in Provence. The procession bearing Notre Dame-de-la-Confession, aka the black virgin, then heads towards the old ramparts of **Saint Victor's Abbey**. The priest blesses the green candles distributed at the start of the service then, after mass, the "navettes" made at the nearby boulangerie. These boat-shaped biscuits commemorate the arrival of the Saints, including **Saint Mary Magdalene**, on the shores of **Camargue**. Afterwards, it's time to head home to put away the crib scene and santon figurines until next year. Keeping the candle and biscuits until the following Candlemas is said to bring good luck!

[www.marseille-tourisme.com/en/](http://www.marseille-tourisme.com/en/)

## ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Or rather pre-empt it by taking part in the winter pilgrimage on the first weekend of December in Les Saintes-Marie-de-la-Mer (December 6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025), commemorating the discovery of the Saints' relics in 1448. The event includes worshipping of the reliquaries, a torchlit procession and solemn mass. Saint Mary Magdalene is said to watch over Provence, and the Chemin de Marie Madeleine, following in her footsteps, stretches from Camargue to the Sainte-Baume hills. This 248 km hike, ideally tackled in winter, is renowned for its beautifully contrasted scenery, with stretches running through garrigue and forest, as well as urban sections crossing Marseille.

## ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

You'll find lots of truffle markets in the region, for example in Carpentras or Aups, as well as a variety of events and celebrations in Rognes, Le Rouret, Callian, Grasse and Grimaud. You can also opt for a tour of a local truffle farm, tasting session or introduction to "cavage", i.e. hunting for the elusive fungus using a truffle hound.

In Manosque, the Barbe family invites visitors to delve into the secrets of the "rabasse" black truffle with its marbled veins, typically found in Haute-Provence. Near Vaison-la-Romaine, the Institut de la Truffe Plantin allows you to discover the different truffle varieties, gain insights into the alchemy between the fungus and its environment, and learn how to prepare and exalt it. Maison Plantin was founded in 1930.





© L. Chovelon

## SAVOUR SHELLFISH

Sundays, February 1, 8, 15 and 22, 2026

### Oursinades

📍 Carry-le-Rouet

Back in the day, the Romans loved feasting on the little yellow tongues of sea urchins, with their delicious iodine flavour. Nowadays, they are eaten sparingly: despite their fearsome appearance and spines, poaching and overconsumption has made them quite a rarity on our seabeds. **The Calanques (coastal fjords) of the Côte Bleue**, stretching for sixty kilometres between **Marseille** and **Martigues**, are their preferred home ground, and just a handful of licensed professionals are allowed to catch them in accordance with strict regulations from November to late April. Les Oursinades (sea urchin festival) brings foodies together on the port of **Carry-le-Rouet** on several Sundays throughout winter to enjoy a delectable (and eco-aware) taste of their favourite delicacy. And don't forget: you can buy chocolate sea urchins in Carry too! How to get there: the **Train de la Côte Bleue**, with its panoramic vistas over cliffs and calanques, takes you from **Marseille to Carry-le-Rouet** in half an hour. You can also stop off at **La Couronne, Niolon and Sausset-les-Pins**, or further on if you fancy exploring **Martigues**, the “**Venice of Provence**”.

[en.otcarrilerouet.fr](http://en.otcarrilerouet.fr)

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Winter is shellfish season! Oysters are at their plumpest during the colder months and you'll find plenty here, from Camargue oysters raised at the mouth of the Rhône, to the oyster farms of La Seyne-sur-Mer in the Bay of Toulon. If you want to craft a delicious platter, add some red mussels from Tamaris or rope-grown mussels from Camargue. And of course, Camargue tellin clams gathered in the sand or Mediterranean lobster for special occasions!

## NIBBLE A VIOLET

February 28 - March 1, 2026

### Fête des violettes

📍 Tournettes-sur-Loup

Ravishing and discreet, this little flower really packs a punch when it comes to scent. The **Tournettes** violet is grown organically on terraced plots from October to March. Bouquets of twenty-five flowers are arranged with leaves then carefully tied by hand so as not to damage the precious blooms. La **Bastide aux Violettes** teaches visitors all there is to know about the violet, from producer know-how to the birth of the Fête des Violettes, with its traditional flower parade and flower battle. Last but not least, candied violet petals are one of the specialties of **Confiserie Florian**, open to visitors, boasting rare expertise in the subtle art of flower nibbling...

[tournettesurloup.com](http://tournettesurloup.com)

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Violet leaves are used to craft some of the finest perfumes. Enjoy a visit to the workshops or factories of Fragonard, Molinard and Galimard in Grasse, or L'Occitane en Provence in Manosque, where you can learn all about a fragrance once considered a little old-fashioned - but now resolutely back in vogue.



© La Confiserie Florian

## CELEBRATE LOVE

February 14 – March 1, 2026

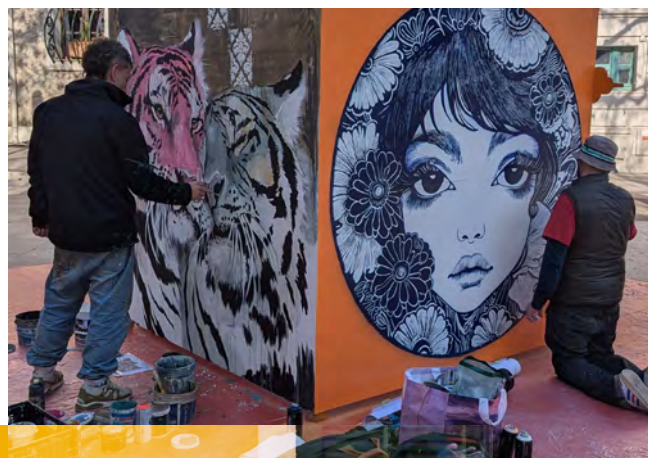
### Saint-Valentin, La Colle-sur-Loup

📍 La Colle-sur-Loup

And how about trying a little tenderness? Winter is a romantic season par excellence, with its quasi-deserted beaches perfect for roaming hand in hand, terraces for tanning gently in the sunshine and nature's first awakening just in time for Valentine's Day. Around February 14<sup>th</sup>, **La Colle-sur-Loup**, a pretty village next to **Saint-Paul-de-Vence**, becomes "La Colle-sur-Love". Write a love letter in chalk on the pavement before heading off to admire the posters and works of art on show at the Espace Rose de Mai, a former perfume flower cooperative. The rare **Rosa Centifolia** or May rose was grown here in bygone days – the perfect bloom for lovers.

[www.lacollesurloup-tourisme.com/en/](http://www.lacollesurloup-tourisme.com/en/)

© Dario Vella



© OT Mandelieu

## GO FOR GOLD

February 11 – 15, 2026

### Fête du Mimosa

📍 Mandelieu – La Napoule

Watch out, watch out, there's mimosa about! From December to March, its stunning golden flower clusters light up the local hills and shores. Located at the beating heart of the **Mimosa Route**, **Mandelieu-la-Napoule** hosts a five-day festival every year, inviting visitors to eat, dress, breathe and, of course, perfume themselves with mimosa. A full immersion! The Grand Corso flower parade on Sunday afternoon features dozens of floats swathed in yellow at the foot of **Château de la Napoule**. The Château itself, home to artist Henri Clews, is adorned with mimosa hearts. The Saturday parade runs from the Capitou historic quarter to Place de France, ending with a magnificent firework display in the bay. Also on the programme: processions, a children's carnival and the election of Miss Mandelieu. This joyful, popular event is open to all completely free of charge except for gallery seats.

[routedumimosa.com/en/infos-pratiques/brochure](http://routedumimosa.com/en/infos-pratiques/brochure)

## ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

From Bormes-Les-Mimosas to Grasse, the Mimosa Route stretches like a long, yellow ribbon between Mediterranean shores and forests. The 130-kilometre route is dotted with unexpected surprises, from France's most extensive acacia collection at the Pépinière Cavatore in Bormes, to discovery of mimosa art in the village of Tanneron, the mimosa ice-cream makers in Mandelieu and perfumeries of Grasse, where the golden clusters are transformed into elegant fragrances. Various fairs, exhibitions and flower parades celebrate this golden treasure in late January and throughout February.





© Soumaya Boussadoun

## ENJOY A VITAMIN BOOST

February 14 – March 1, 2026

### Fête du Citron®

📍 Menton

The Fête du Citron® lemon fair in Menton is a one of a kind event! Nowhere else is this sunny citrus fruit – excellent for health and guaranteed to add sparkle to your cooking and everyday life – celebrated with such enthusiasm. Set on the Italian border, the town of **Menton** on the **Côte d'Azur** is home to Art Nouveau hotels and palaces, a record number of gardens – and it even has its own lemon variety. Plump and juicy, the Menton lemon enjoys a PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) label. Born nearly a century ago, the **Fête du Citron®** is 24/7 celebration of citrus fruit. Floats adorned with lemons, oranges and grapefruit parade to the sound of brass bands and folk groups, while astonishingly inventive works of art created entirely from citrus fruit decorate the town. The Fête du Citron® is a great opportunity to stock up on vitamins, with farmers' markets, a gourmet fair, old-fashioned jam making, tours of citrus gardens such as La Citronneraie and fruit picking. Illustrious chefs including triple Michelin-starred Mauro Colagreco delight visitors with their culinary brio too.

[www.menton-riviera-merveilles.co.uk](http://www.menton-riviera-merveilles.co.uk)

## SHOP AT A MARKET

December 5, 2026

### Ce soir on soupe !

📍 Roquebrune-sur-Argens

Our magical markets don't rest in winter! With their stalls piled high with carrots, chard, cabbage, squash and celery, they remain as colourful as a painter's palette. Teamed with haricot beans, chickpeas and legumes, they simmer in the pot to offer warming soups. In **Roquebrune-sur-Argens**, if you buy a bowl of soup you can taste the other delicious fare on offer – soups, consommés and broths – to your heart's content. Our vote goes to La Louche d'Or, topped with a glass of mulled wine. All profits from the event go to solidarity initiatives. Ready to tuck in?

[www.roquebrunesurargens-tourisme.fr](http://www.roquebrunesurargens-tourisme.fr)

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Olives, vegetables and Herbes de Provence... Our markets overflow with irresistible goodies. Take along some loose change and a large hamper and make sure you visit in the morning, before midday. A few memorable markets: Toulon (Cours Lafayette) from Tuesday to Sunday, Moustiers-Sainte-Marie on Friday mornings, Apt and Arles on Saturday mornings, Le Lavandou and Martigues on Thursday mornings, Cassis on Wednesday mornings, Forville market in Cannes and Sanary-sur-Mer every day. Not forgetting the indoor markets (Les Halles) in Menton, Antibes or Avignon... This winter in Gordes you'll be able to visit Les Petites Halles, welcoming local producers and oyster farmers every Saturday with on-site tasting.

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

With a tour of the Riviera's citrus gardens! In Menton, the Palais de Carnolès is Europe's largest citrus conservatory, home to an impressive 130 varieties including bergamots, citrons and kaffir limes. And people come from far and wide to admire the stars of the show at the Jardin Botanique du Val Rahmeh, boasting mandarin and clementine trees as old as the garden itself – 150 years – together with an 80 year-old kumquat tree.

## EMBRACE THE CARNIVAL MOOD

February 11 – March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026

### Nice Carnival

📍 Nice

Attracting 400,000 spectators, the **Nice Carnival** is France's biggest carnival and the **Côte d'Azur's** foremost international winter event. And it's continuing to evolve: in 2025, the Carnavalina dedicated to families was a massive success. Women will be leading the way in 2026, with cries of "Vive la Reine!" ringing out during the float procession accompanied by street artists and musicians. Nice will also be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Queer Naval, the first queer carnival. The two-week bonanza will also feature a Carnival Village, the Grand Charivari on Rue Richelmi, Veglione's ball, a waiter's race, the Frenchy carnival and a plethora of mini carnivals in the city's various quarters. Good to know: people in full disguise enjoy free access to the parades. Tasty tip: **Ganses** are traditional doughnuts served at the Nice Carnival. Named after their knotted shape, they are perfumed with orange or lemon zest and sprinkled with sugar.

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



© Nathalie Dalmasso



© Ambre Fraticelli

## THROW SOME FLOWERS

February 15, 2026

### Combat Naval Fleuri

📍 Villefranche-sur-Mer

A flower battle in the heart of winter... Now that's an original idea! What's more, this one takes place on the water, in the **Bay of Villefranche**. Sheltered by the peninsula of **Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat**, a millionaire's paradise dotted with magnificent abodes, it is one of the **world's most beautiful bays**. It's also a hotspot for freedivers, with a deep canyon lying just one mile off the coast. The flower battle takes place in front of the Citadel, formerly a strategic location for the royal and imperial navies. Fishermen in traditional wooden fishing boats ("pointus") loaded with mimosa and carnations – nearly one tonne of flowers in all – throw armfuls of their precious cargo to onlookers, leaving a magnificent carpet of red and yellow petals behind at the end of the day.

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

## ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Our shimmering, world-unique flower battles mark the culmination of various festive events on the Côte d'Azur and have been a highlight of the Nice Carnival from its earliest days. The naval flower battle in Villefranche-sur-Mer was first launched in 1902 by illustrious winter holidaymakers including the Belgian King Leopold II and Gustave Eiffel. By why do they take place in the heart of winter, when most of Europe is devoid of flowers? It's all to do with our horticultural traditions! The region grows mimosa as well as anemones, violets, carnations and other early-blooming flower varieties.

## ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Northern France is world-famed for its carnivals but here in the South, we love a good party around the time of Shrove Tuesday too. Simply hop over to Saint-Tropez, Levens, Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat or Eze to find out for yourself! During the Snow Carnival in Saint-Étienne-de-Tinée, inhabitants throw handfuls of flour over the crowds. In Provence, Oreillettes are the traditional carnival fare: these delicate, crispy doughnuts are perfumed with orange flower water and sprinkled with icing sugar.

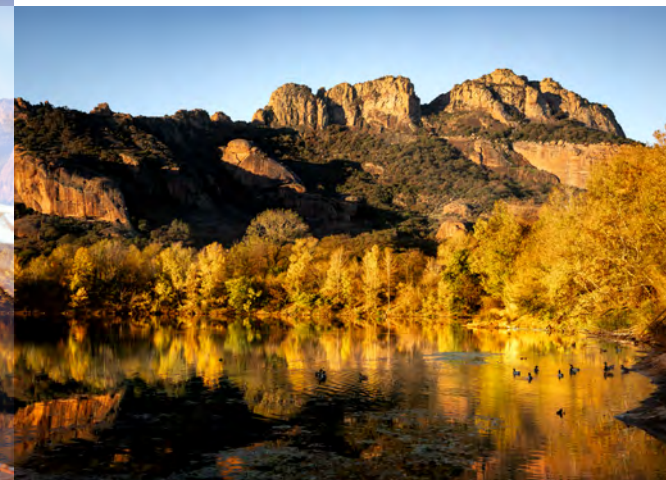




© Yael Boutroix



© Florian Moins



© Office de Tourisme

## TUCK INTO SOME CHOCOLATE

March 1, 2026

### Fête du chocolat et des gourmandises

📍 Roquebrune-sur-Argens

Roquebrune-sur-Argens enchants hikers and gourmets alike. You can reach the village's world-famed "Rocher de Roquebrune" – an impressive hulk of red rock rising to a height of 372 metres – from Arena lake. It takes about two hours to reach the three crosses crowning this mystical site, boasting endless views over the **Mediterranean, Southern Alps** and **Estérel** hills. The reward lies in the hilltop village too... A temple of chocolate, Roquebrune is home to the **Maison du Chocolat et du Cacao**, set inside an old church converted into a delicious museum. Three chocolate makers continue to practise their art at the foot of the 10th-century fortress and clock tower and you'll even find a fourth on the **Corniche des Issambres**, on the coast. The **Fête du Chocolat et des Gourmandises** overflows with fun and tasty treats, including candy necklaces, chocolate make-up and, of course, a contest for the best chocolate cake. The raffle is particularly popular – the lucky winner goes home with a chocolate **Rocher de Roquebrune** measuring a staggering one metre in length!

[www.roquebrunesurargens-tourisme.fr](http://www.roquebrunesurargens-tourisme.fr)

### ☀️ PROLONG THE PLEASURE

On Christmas Eve, there's never enough time to truly appreciate the thirteen desserts traditionally placed on the table, including nougat and "pompe à huile" (a sort of brioche made with olive oil and orange flower water). So why not take advantage of quieter periods to savour them to the full – and visit their talented makers. Watching nougat being stirred in a copper pot is a delight you can experience with all the family by visiting one of our artisan nougat makers, for example André Boyer in Sault or Silvain frères in Saint-Didier.

## PEDAL TO THE MED

March 8-15, 2026

### Paris-Nice Race

Created in 1933, the **Paris-Nice** is the first major European cycling race of the year. Various preparatory races precede it, such as the **Grand Prix La Marseillaise**, held on a Sunday in the last week of January, or the **Tour La Provence**. The **Race to the Sun** kicks off in the Paris region and end in **Nice** or on **Col d'Èze**. Twenty-two teams of seven riders take part in this 1,206-kilometre men's road race, part of the UCI World Tour. On March 14<sup>th</sup>, the day before the final stage, amateurs can hone their skills alongside pros at the **Paris-Nice Challenge**. And of course, you can cycle along the **Promenade des Anglais** all year round, or pedal on to **Villeneuve-Loubet** via **St-Laurent-du-Var** and **Cagnes-sur-Mer** on the new 14-km cycle path.

[www.paris-nice.fr/en/](http://www.paris-nice.fr/en/)

### PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Two long-distance cycle routes – the Via Rhona and Méditerranée à Vélo – allow cycling enthusiasts to pedal all the way to the Med. You can opt for an electrically-assisted bike of course, or let your thighs do all the work! Spanning 815 km, the ViaRhôna connects the mountains peaks and beaches – the Alps and Med – via the Rhône River. The sections between Beaucaire and Arles (19 km), and Arles and Port-Saint-Louis-du-Rhône (52 km), are particularly memorable. The EuroVelo 8 (EV 8) or Route de la Méditerranée connects Le Perthus in Occitania and Menton on the Côte d'Azur. It features various stages off the beaten track, crossing miraculously preserved countryside all the way to the sea at Mandelieu.



© J. Kelapogian otmnca



Louise Bourgeois © The Easton Foundation New York. ADAGP Paris, 2021  
R. Haughton - Château La Coste

### PROLONG THE PLEASURE

Art lovers won't want to miss the Maison Waldberg in Seillans, showcasing Surrealist works by Dorothea Tanning, or Fondation Hartung-Bergman in Antibes, exhibiting the shimmering, iridescent works of Anna-Eva Bergman. A giant spider – “Maman”, courtesy of Louise Bourgeois – is one of the icons of Château La Coste, a combined wine estate, arts centre and temple of gastronomy and hospitality, situated near Aix-en-Provence. Digne-les-Bains is the proud home of the Maison Alexandra David-Neel, the first Western woman to enter Tibet. A singer, writer, anthropologist and explorer, this colourful character's intelligence and free spirit continue to fascinate to this day.

## CELEBRATE FEMALE ARTISTS

March 8, 2026

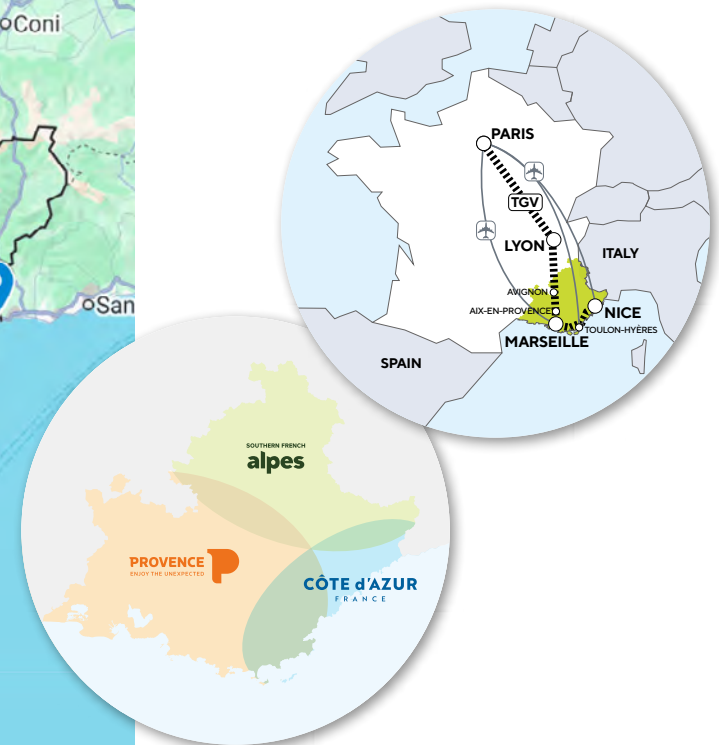
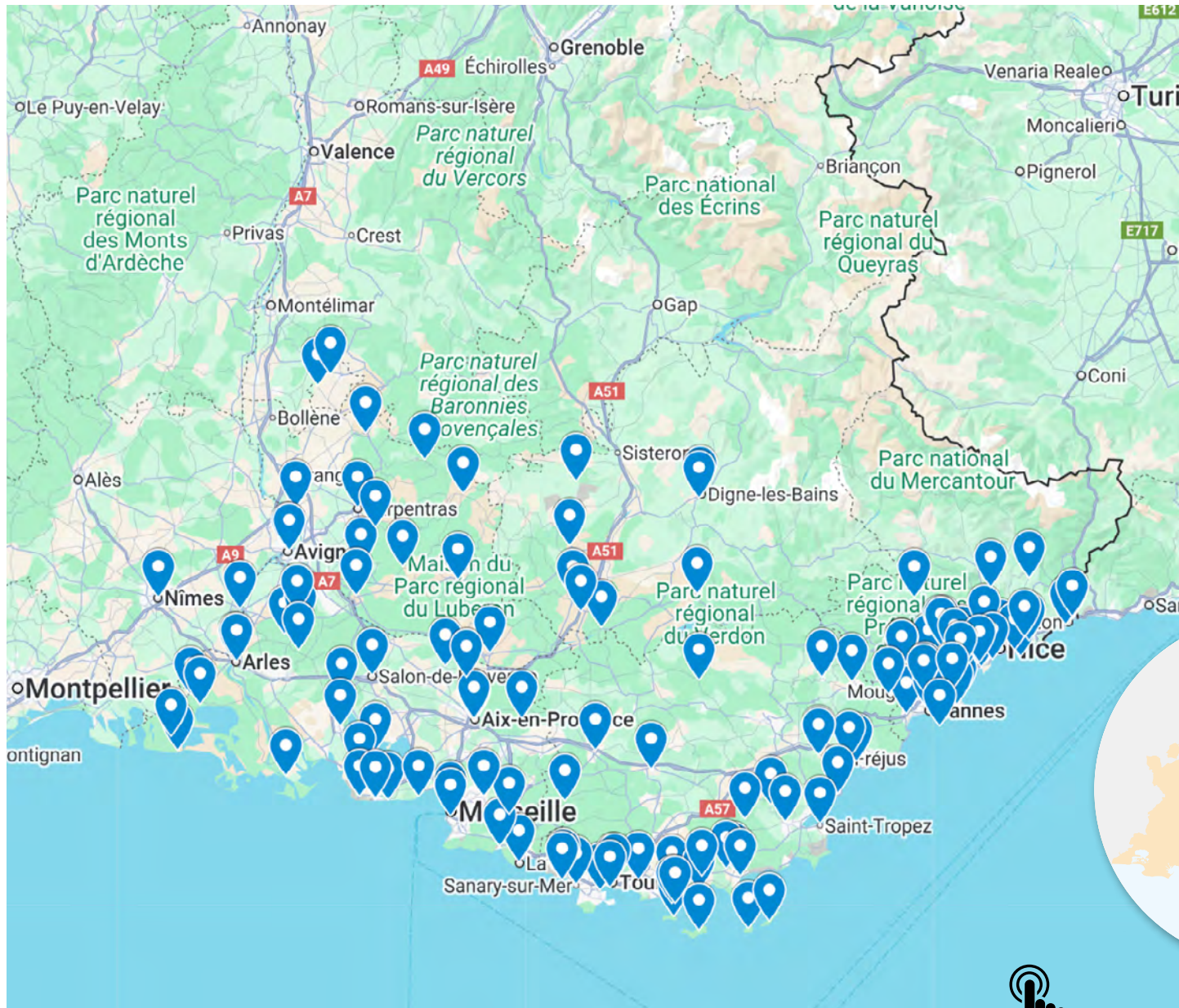
### Fête de la femme

 Mougins

International Women's Day is celebrated throughout the world – but perhaps even more so in **Mougins**! The village is home to a world-unique private museum – the **FAMM (Femmes Artistes Musée de Mougins)** – the first museum of its kind dedicated to female artists. Frida Kahlo, Berthe Morisot, Mary Cassatt, Leonor Fini, Louise Bourgeois, Leonora Carrington, Niki de Saint-Phalle and Nan Goldin rub shoulders with foremost emerging talents on the museum's four floors, featuring paintings, sculptures and magnificent art photography. Perched at an altitude of 260 metres, **Mougins** offers breathtaking panoramic vistas over the **Bay of Cannes** and **Lérins islands**, as well as **Grasse** and the **Prealps**. Its views, proximity to the coast and charming spiralling lanes have seduced many artists, as well as renowned chefs. Today, you'll find world-class eateries nestling inside its magnificent old bastides. Enjoy a short walk to Notre-Dame-de-Vie chapel to discover Pablo Picasso's last home.



# PROVENCE-CÔTE D'AZUR



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