



WELCOME TO 'VALLÉE' DE L'HÉRAULT



www.saintguilhem-valleeherault.fr

St-Guilhem-Le-Désert
Vallée de l'Hérault



ENTREZ DANS UNE VALLÉE DE LÉGENDES



The vallée de l'Hérault, much more than a valley!

A rocky world, white-water, radiant light, magnificent, protected landscapes.

A territory rich in history, studded with medieval cities, with Castellans and great abbeys on the Path to Santiago de Compostela where each village reveals a singular identity and invites you to discover it.

Here, between the fragrant scrub-land and famous vineyards, man has found his place: vine grower or potter, it perpetuates age-old traditions and skills.

It's an authentic land, colourful and animated, where the origins of many festivities can be traced back to the middle-ages evoking the most wonderful of its epic heroes and totem animals.

In Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, at the Devil's Bridge, along the ravines of the Hérault, in the shade of its 28 towers or on its markets stalls... allow the vallée de l'Hérault to fill you with wonder, come into a valley of legends!



'Grand Site de France Gorges de l'Hérault'

In 'vallée de l'Hérault'

'Grand Site de France': a jewel of culture in the heart of a natural setting

An absolute alchemy of nature and culture, the site is situated at the heart of remarkable landscapes. Set between the hills of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, the Hérault gorges and the Piemont de Languedoc, a vast sun-drenched landscape of vineyards, the river Hérault winds its course. The groove the river has created

over millennia and which fetches up to the 'pont du Diable', (11th century), offers to visitors a rugged landscape with gorges that frame the medieval town of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert and the Clamouse Cave.

It is at the heart of this ancient landscape, sculpted by the river Hérault between forest and scrubland, that Guilhem came to pray and meditate at the Combe de Gellone, and where he founded

Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, nearly 1,200 years ago. The site became a meeting place in medieval times with the establishment of the Saint James pilgrim's way to Santiago de Compostela.

This 'Grand Site de France' is a revitalization place of awakening senses and spirituality.

Site characteristics

10 municipalities:

Aniane, Argelliers, Brissac, Causse-de-la-Selle, Notre-Dame-de-Londres, Montpeyrroux, Puéchabon, St-Guilhem-le-Désert, St-Jean-de-Fos et St-Martin-de-Londres.

6,500 inhabitants / 21,000 hectares, of which 8,800 hectares.

2 monuments listed as World Heritage by **UNESCO**; two Natura 2000 sites.

TO TRANSFORM THIS VOLUME OF VISITS, WITH ITS POTENTIAL FOR DISRUPTION INTO SOMETHING OF VALUE

With 650,000 visitors per year in the 'Grand Site de France' in the 'vallée de l'Hérault', various protective measures would have little effect without concerted and comprehensive site management based on visitor flow, site restoration and improvements to visitor reception - all implemented by local efforts since 1991.

THE GUARANTEE OF QUALITY LABEL - A PROTECTED SITE INVOLVED IN SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT...

Having requested and obtained the 'Grand Site de France' label issued by the Ministry of Ecology for 6 years, the Communautés de communes of vallée de Hérault, Cévennes Gangeoises et Sumé-

noises and Grand Pic Saint-Loup and local interested parties have decided to continue their actions. They have committed themselves to the implementation of a management scheme in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

The management plan aims to control traffic flow, to manage, protect and enhance the natural and cultural heritage and to improve visitor reception in order that the site is no longer a victim of its own success.

Being both the showcase and driving force of the vallée de l'Hérault, the 28 communes of the Communauté wholeheartedly support the project of managing this classified site.

Since 2017, the 'Grand Site de France Gorges de l'Hérault' is also classified 'Grand Site d'Occitanie'.



Passerelle
desANGES

UNESCO classified sites



Chemins de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle en France
Inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en 1998

Since 1998, the 'pont du Diable' and the 'Abbaye de Gellone', iconic sites of the Arles way, and of the Saint James of Compostela way in France listed as World Heritage by UNESCO.

The 'pont du Diable' (Devil's Bridge) at the entrance of the gorges, and Gellone Abbey, situated in Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, were and are two essential steps for pilgrims coming from Montpellier on their way to Lodève and Toulouse. The abbey shelters a fragment of the True Cross and relics of Saint Guilhem, objects of worship for pilgrims passing through.

'Abbaye de Gellone'

Founded in 804 by Guilhem, the increasingly popular Gellone Abbey, was rebuilt from the 11th century. The architecture is characteristic of early southern Romanesque art. Both art lovers and the simply curious are seduced by the beauty of its architecture, decor, the purity of its lines and the diversity of art contained therein.

**The Tourist Office offers
guided themed tours
all year long.**



The 'pont du Diable' (Devil's bridge)

Built between 1028 and 1031 by the Abbeys of Aniane and Gellone who were in control of both banks of the Hérault river, the 'pont du Diable' is one of the oldest bridges existing in France, it's typically Lombardic style, testifying to the introduction of early Romanesque art in the region.

15 metres high and approximately 50 metres long, it consists of two main arches in full round and two secondary openings called, 'hearings' to facilitate the flow of water in flood periods.

The bridge, solidly anchored in rock, crosses the river at its most narrow point and marks the entrance of the Hérault gorges. It was classified in 1998 as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO as part of the French section of the Santiago de Compostela Way.

**Today it is an ideal spot
for swimming (supervised
in July and August) or
canoeing in the heart of the
Hérault gorges.**

The Legend of the 'pont du Diable'

The construction of the bridge was turning out to be long and difficult, as each night the Devil would come to ruin the work achieved during the day. So Guilhem made an agreement with him: that the Devil himself would build the bridge in three days! In exchange, Guilhem would offer him the soul of the first creature who would cross the bridge. Persuaded, Satan got down to work and the bridge was quickly finished. But a poor soul had to be found... Cunningly, Guilhem sent a dog across... Infuriated for having been fooled, the Devil tried in vain to destroy his work and in his frustration, threw himself into the waters of the Hérault, creating, as he did, the 'gouffre noir' (black abyss). This is why, in the middle ages, pilgrims and itinerants who passed over the bridge, always threw some pebbles in the river, in the hope of keeping the Devil at the bottom of the river.

Discover the villages of this classified 'Grand Site de France' In 'vallée de l'Hérault'



Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert

Ancient spiritual stopover on the Saint James of Compostela way, the medieval city of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert is an indispensable step during any visit to the Hérault valley. **Classified as amongst the most beautiful villages of France**, it stretches its alleys along the Val de Gellone, following the Verdus stream. The village is the perfect setting for **Gellone Abbey, an absolute jewel of early Romanesque art in the Languedoc.**

Montpeyroux

The Castellans, sentinel of Time Montpeyroux, an unusual location consisting of three distinct urban cores, is situated where the limestone plateau meets the plain. In the heart of a renowned vineyard, it enjoys a rich heritage including the **'castellas', exceptionally fortified structures** from the 13th century, which today still seems to stand guard over the Valley. From the entrance of the village or from the 'Chapel du Barry,' the ascent is easy. **A family stroll down the paths of history!**



Puéchabon

Circular Village from the Middle Ages, in the heart of the garrigue Puéchabon is a village in circular configuration built in the 11th



century around a long disappeared fort. The ancient castrale church of Saint-Peter is the oldest existant structure. Particularly well preserved, Puéchabon is a village set in the garrigue (scrubland) where holm oaks and olive trees rule. **Two kilometers from the village**, along a path, scented with thyme and rosemary, lies the romaneseque **chapel of Saint Sylvestre des Brousses, just waiting to be discovered and ideal for a picnic!**

Saint-Jean-de-Fos The potters village with glazed shimmers



St-Jean-de-Fos first came into existence in the 11th century along with the construction of the 'pont du Diable'. **Ceramic production** started in the 15th century and was at its peak in the 19th century. Today, numerous workshops continue this ancient skill. **Every year in August**, there is a potter's market, one of the **oldest and biggest** in France. Since 2011, Argileum, the house of the pottery

has opened its doors to offer you a unique insight into the heart of a historic tradition that's very much alive!

Aniane The city of Saint Benoît

Benoît d'Aniane, reformer of the Benedictine order, created the Saint-Sauveur Abbey in 782. The abbey prospered and more than 300 monks gathered at Aniane, before going to spread the Benedictine message throughout the empire. Destroyed during the religious wars, the abbey became alternately a textile mill, a prison and a reform school. **Today the abbey is undergoing an ambitious programme of restoration.** It remains the heart of this charming medieval village, renowned for the exceptional produce of its vineyard!



Reception at the pont du Diable

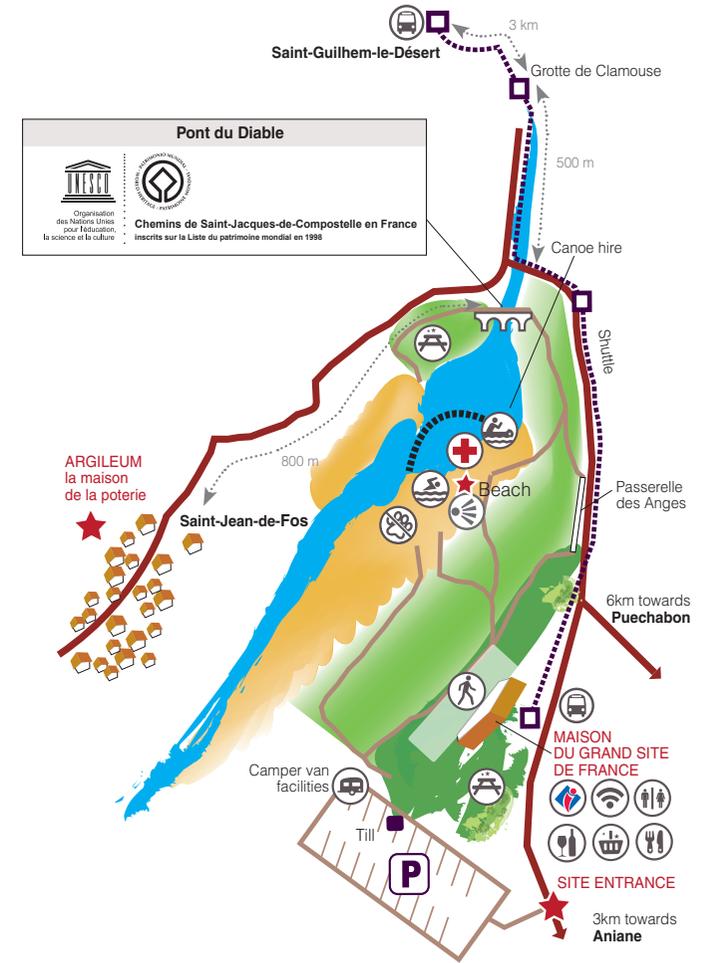
'Maison du Grand Site de France' facilities

- Tourist Office
- Free WiFi
- Sale of local and cultural products
- Wine tasting
- Brasserie du Terroir (restaurant)
- WC

Other services

- Picnic areas
- First aid post
- Canoe hire (summer season)
- Supervised beach (July and August)
- Free shuttles
- Camper van facilities
- Interpretive path
- View point from the bridge
- Dogs forbidden

- Road
- Beach access, pedestrian paths
- Supervised bathing zone
- Shuttle stops



Shuttles - timetable 2018

	From « maison du Grand Site » to Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert	From « maison du Grand Site » to Saint-Jean-de-Fos Argileum
April to June	Every day from 14/04 to 01/05 and from 05/05 to 13/05, every week-end and bank holidays from 19/05 to 30/06: From 11am to 7pm (every 30 min).	
July and August	Every day from 01/07 to 06/07: From 11am to 7 pm (every 30 min.) Every day from 07/07 to 02/09: From 10am to 9pm (every 15 min.) From 8:45 pm to 11pm (every 30 min).	Every day from 14/07 to 26/08 : From 10am to 7pm (every 30 min).
September	Every week-end: From 11am to 7pm (every 30 min).	
October and November	Every day from 20/10 to 04/11: From 11am to 5:30 pm (every 30 min).	



The villages of the vallée de l'Hérault

The authenticity and the southern charm



Arboras

On the first foothills of the Larzac plateau, this linear village situated on a hillside offers a magnificent panorama of the plain. By following the road which leads to the village, you arrive at Mont Saint Baudille (837m) the high point of the valley...

 *Old Bridge on the Rouvignous dating from the XVIIth century, passage onto the path of Santiago de Compostela.*

Argelliers

The village witnessed the birth, in 1908, of the famous poet Occitan Max Rouquette. Exploring the Hérault Valley along all its paths, is to take with you the keys of the journey...

 *Drinking trough les Plas.*

Aumelas

For almost 1 000 years, the imposing silhouette of the « Castellàs » (castle in the Occitan dialect) has pride of place on the Causse d'Aumelas in the magnificent landscape.

 *This must be discovered on foot: Family walking and hiking.*

Belarga

Belarga offers a place of relaxation on the banks of the Hérault which it dominates by six metres thanks to the quai of Font Pétourle.

 *The remarkable ruins of the medieval mill.*

La Boissière

In the heart of the scrub-land, the village whose name evokes the Box tree, is a group of hamlets and mas, ideal for family walks.

 *Parish Church, Saint-Martin de Valras, Fontaine place Négrou.*

Campagnan

This small medieval village was to be transformed by the creation of a railway line towards 1871 which would contribute to the expansion of the wine trade.

 *The small station still visible and very well preserved.*

Gignac

At the crossroads, the lively market town, rich in history and tradition is at the heart of the valley. The day of the Ascension, the Donkey Martin, totemic animal and protector of the village, is celebrated (Senibelet).

 *Church of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and way of the Cross, the facades of the heart of the town, market on Saturday morning,...*

Jonquières

A vine growing village in a T shape, typical of the villages in the lowlands.

 *The magnificent Castle of Jonquières remains private from the XVIIth century.*

Lagamas

Between vineyards and scrub-lands, this village centres around the Church of Notre Dame des Garrigues built in 1870.

 *The Siphon de Lagamas, the only construction on the Canal de Gignac built at the end of the XIXth century to combat phylloxera.*

Montarnaud

On the Path to Santiago de Compostela (GR 653) Montarnaud is a village of the scrubland rich in history.

 *The Castle and Romanesque Castral chapel Notre-Dame-du-Fort of the XIIth century.*

Plaissan

Typically Languedocian, this wine-growing village wraps around the old quarter which is called « Quartier Haut ».

 *Fontaine Roqueblave, walk up to the ruins of the Saint-Mamert Chapel.*

Popian

Headquarters of the only Carolingian Viguerie of the valley, the village also has the most ancient castle of the land, noted as early as 996.

 *The clock tower, the village oven, the wash house at Vannes de l' Aurelle.*

Le Pouget

Established on a « pioch » (Small Nipple) particularly characteristic of languedocian medieval towns, this circular village conceals treasures of medieval architecture.

 *The Dolmen of Gallardet is a monumental building, a rare relic of prehistoric civilizations...*

Pouzols

This charming village has a medieval toponym linked to water: Posol which means small well.

 *Saint-Amans church, beautiful surrounding gate, topped with a tower and an old belfry.*

Puilacher

Engraved into the heart of the wine-growing plain as a village of integral charm.

 *XVIIth century castle, extraordinary modern home with a monumental facade dating back to the beginning of the 1920s.*

Saint-André-de-Sangonis

In the heart of the valley, between vineyards and olive groves, the small town with its rich past is especially accessible.

 *The belfry and its enclosures, its fountains, its animal totem « Black Pig ».*

Saint-Bauzille-de-la-Sylve

Or the beautiful wooded place... Canals, « rieux », washhouses and fountains characterize this charming wine-growing village.

 *Unusual, The tower of Chappe (XIXth century), coded system of optical communication by semaphore.*

Saint-Guiraud

The village enjoys an exceptional perspective with views to a large part of the plain of the Hérault and the Mont Saint-Baudille.

 *Chapel of the Black Virgin (XVth century), trail to the rock of virgins.*

Saint-Pargoire

The circular village wraps around its church, making the design of a snail shell. The snail is, quite rightly, the totem animal of the small city as it saved them from the famine in the XVIIth century.

 *The Southern Gothic style church is among the most beautiful constructions of the Herault region of the end of the middle-ages.*

Saint-Paul-et-Valmalle

Lined with olive trees, almond trees and vines, the village was for a long time a stop-off on the road between Montpellier and Lodève.

 *Many capitelles (shepherd's shelter made of dry stones) which attest to the significant pastoral activity that the village was familiar with.*

Saint-Saturnin-de-Lucian

Located at the foot of the Larzac plateau, this wine growers village is dominated by the picturesque rock of the two Virgins, a real Belvedere on the valley.

 *The Trail of the wine of poets, a primitive and resounding walk!*

Tressan

Located on a hill surrounded by vineyards the village, formerly fortified, exudes a typically southern charm.

 *From the village, the beautiful views on the wine plain.*

Vendémian

Situated between plain and scrubland, Vendémian was the «capital» of the table wine grapes with its wonderful chasselas grape and its servants.

 *Like at Gignac, they still play a typically Languedocian ball game: the tambourin.*



Vallée de l'Hérault



Montpellier



-  Church
-  Castle
-  Abbaye de Gellone
-  Pont du Diable
-  Pottery
-  Classified one of the most beautiful villages in France
-  Tourist office Information
-  Classified Site
-  Patrimonial sites
-  Rambles/ starting points
-  Mountain bike circuits/starting points
-  Climbing site
-  Federal fishing course
-  Canoe
-  Supervised bathing (pont du Diable)
-  Tambourine
-  St James' way to Santiago-de-Compostela
-  Circular village
-  View point
-  Free WiFi
-  Power point Information
-  Digital touch terminals



 Classified site perimeter in 'vallée de l'Hérault'
 The 'Grand Site de France Gorges de l'Hérault' (10 communes, of which 6 are in the 'vallée de l'Hérault'). Also classified 'Grand Site d'Occitanie'.

A valley to discover!



All level hikes (9 PR, 2 GR, St James of Compostella Way with a 700 meter height difference. New: Family walk with treasure trails for the 4-12 year olds (Randoland fact sheet).

▶ **Randofiche and Randoland fact sheets are on sale at the Tourist Office or alternatively you can download them on the internet.**

A vast adventure playground

Revitalise yourself in the heart of a countryside sculpted by the Herault river!

The Herault valley offer a picturesque space, ideal for bathing, canoeing, kayaking, stand-up paddling and other extreme sports, climbing, horse riding or donkey trail, approved

mountain biking circuits as well as cycling routes for tourism.

Family Fun: the Clamouse cave and its educational workshops, Argileum (The House of pottery) and its pottery making workshops, the educational farm 'du Dolmen', soap box cars, the Astronomical Observatory of Aniane, etc...

Arts and Crafts

If each territory has its diverse range of crafts, the Hérault valley converts them by providing a backdrop to their inspired creations:

Potters, sculptors, designers, jewellery makers, art and creation gallery for children... artisans and creators of the Hérault Valley open their doors to you and unveil their expertise.

The world of Ceramics is the most represented; discover this world in the features of our villages' architecture or by devoting some time to visiting Argileum, the home of the pottery in Saint-Jean-of-Fos.



VILLE ET MÉTIERS D'ART

On the Path to Santiago de Compostela...

Since the Middle Ages, the road from Arles to Santiago de Compostela, or Via Tolosana, intersects the Hérault Valley. It continues between the scrubland and olive groves through Montarnaud and La Boissière, crosses over the Hérault Gorges to reach the Abbey of Aniane then that of Gellone by the Devil's bridge (GR653).



▶ This path of pilgrimage is busy nowadays with hikers in search of spirituality and adventure.

Sensational discoveries: all about Earth

**A short walk away from the 'pont du Diable',
Saint-Jean-de-Fos.**

The 'Grotte de Clamouse' caves

Spéléopark adventure, discover or rediscover what the underground world contains of most precious.

Clamouse is a major natural site of the Gorges de l'Hérault.

2018 : New introduction movie in ultra HD.

www.clamouse.com
tél. : +33(0)4 67 57 71 05



Argileum, the house of pottery

A few steps away from the 'pont du Diable' (Devil's bridge), this museum offers a complete panorama of the history of ceramics, an ancestral tradition in the St-jean-de-Fos village. Built in the oldest preserved workshop (19th century), the visitors travel through a fun and interactive panorama of the world of ceramics, discovering the different stages of glazed terra cotta pottery making, between mesmerizing techniques and gestures...

 **All year round, a program of activities and workshops is set up.**

DISCOVER ALSO the Argileum boutique, the different potters and their workshops in the village; whose varied and contemporary production sustains and animates a secular tradition.

OPEN from 07/04 to 06/07 and from 01/09 to 04/11

From Tuesday to Sunday from 10:30 am to

12:30 pm and from 2pm to 6pm

Closed on Monday, except on 21/05

From 07/07 to 31/08

7/7 from 10am to 7pm

February Holidays

From Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 12:30 pm and from 2pm to 5pm

Open all year for groups on booking
FREE ADMISSION first Saturday of each month

www.argileum.fr – contact@argileum.fr

Tel. : +33(0)4 67 56 41 96



An authentic wine region

Meet the wine makers who will share their passion !

Remarkable landscapes with a variety of soils which support the development of vintage wines (AOP terrasses du Larzac, IGP St Guilhem le Désert, IGP Vicomté d'Aumelas, Grés de Montpellier...).

Numerous wine cellars and wine estates welcome you all year round.

From April to November, you can go to the 'vinothèque' of the 'maison du Grand Site de France' at the 'pont du Diable' in Aniane, and taste 3 new wines each day. You can also join the wine tasting workshops or meet a local producer during one of the 'Rencontres avec un Vigneron' (July and August: program on our website).

Have a vineyard break in the 'vallée de l'Hérault' :

Thematic tours and activities, hikes, Wine Festivals, little train rides through vineyards, discover vineyard accommodations...



A wine break in the 'vallée de l'Hérault': **the essential guide of festivities and domains**, to discover our terroir, meet producers and taste their wines. Available at the Tourist Office.

Suggestions and best deals from the Tourist Office!

'Visa Loisirs' checkbook

Discount on your activities in the 'vallée de l'Hérault'. Always keep it in your pocket !

Randoland

Circuits boards, like treasure hunt, to stroll with children ! For 4-12 years old (only in french).

Guided tours

All year long, appreciate the story and legends of the 'vallée de l'Hérault'.

Competitions

Follow us on social networks and try to win one of our many prizes.



izi.TRAVEL

A personal guide in your pocket !

this ingenious free application turns your smartphone into an audio guide and takes you to discover Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert and the villages of the 'vallée de l'Hérault'. Download the tours specially developed by our guides on the izi.TRAVEL app (available on App Store, Google Play or Microsoft)



« Languedoc, Cœur d'Hérault », a « Vignobles et Découvertes » approved destination

Feast your eyes and senses on 'Languedoc, Cœur d'Hérault' rooted in France's oldest vineyard. The ever-present vineyard has sculpted landscapes dotted with olive trees, dry stone huts, traditional houses, dry stones walls and more.

The wine producers fly the flag for a Languedoc tradition: kindness and generosity.

Step into a wine cellar and meet passionate producers devoted to quality that involves:

- excellent products
- commitment to agriculture that protects the environment and biodiversity

- sharing age-old expertise to which they are intrinsically bound

This label aims to provide quality wine-based tours and services: winemaker accommodation, cultural sites, things to see and do, cellars, restaurants, natural sites, events and more.

Responsive service groups wanting to hear from you:

- Needs Analysis
- Bespoke programme creation,
- Selection of quality service providers.

Contacts :

04 67 57 00 03

visites.groupes@saintguilhem-valleeherault.fr



Find all our offers on our website (free download)

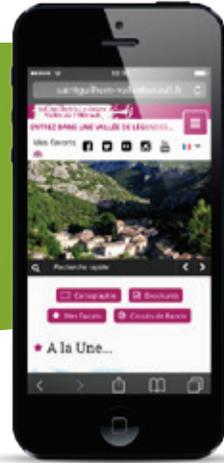
www.saintguilhem-valleeherault.fr

Subscribe to our monthly 'Agenda Mensuel des Festivités' (program of festivities)

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  [tourismesaintguilhem](https://www.instagram.com/tourismesaintguilhem)
 oti@saintguilhem-valleeherault.fr

GIGNAC

Reception 5/7 days and Head Office

3 parc d'activités de Camalcé
BP 46
34150 GIGNAC

tel. : +33(0)4 67 57 58 83

Group and Guided Visits

Tel. : +33(0)4 67 57 00 03

Opening hours

Monday to Friday from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and from 2:00 pm to 5:30 pm (closed on week-end and bank holidays)

SAINT-GUILHEM-LE-DESERT

Reception 7/7 days

2 place de la liberté

tel. : +33(0)4 67 56 41 97

Opening hours

October to March : from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm and from 2:00 pm to 5:30 pm / April to June and September : from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm and from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm / 7th July to 2nd September: from 9:30 am to 7:00 pm

MAISON DU GRAND SITE (pont du Diable)

Seasonal information center

(Open from 07/04 to 04/11, 7/7)
34150 ANIANE

tel. : +33(0)4 67 56 41 97

Opening hours

April, May, June and September :
From 10:30 am to 1:00 pm and from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm (week-end and holidays from 10:30 am to 6:00 pm) / 7th July to 2nd September: from 10:00 am to 7:30 pm /
October and November from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and from 2:00 pm to 5:30 pm



Chemins de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle en France
Inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en 1998

