Once upon a time there was a haven between Provence and the Côte d’Azur. Nestled in the heart of an amphitheatre of wooded hills, it sloped gently down through a mosaic of farmland to the turquoise waters of the Mediterranean. Over the years this multi-faceted destination, buoyed by the diversity of Provençal villages and the lure of its beautiful seaside resorts, has become a leading light on the international tourism scene, lit by the aura surrounding the village of Saint-Tropez.

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

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

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

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

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

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

And remember: if one day someone says that in such and such a place there is dégun, don’t look for a dégun, it simply means there is nobody there!

Béni-vengu, welcome to our little corner of paradise on earth... www.visitgolfe.com
“From coastal paths to the Massif des Maures, the blue of the Mediterranean to shades of green, ochre and grey inland, the Gulf of Saint-Tropez offers a variety of colours, aromas, tastes and sounds just waiting to be discovered.”

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

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

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

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

Happiness is when you first set out on a path and start walking; to rediscover man’s natural pace; to be in touch with the soil and feel the earth beneath your feet, the slope, and the fresh air in your lungs. It is to breathe deeply, approach and observe. So what can you see? Man came early to this region, and remains testifying to the fact are sometimes hard to find: Fort-Freinet (La Garde-Freinet), Briande Bay’s Dolmen (Ramatuelle), Gallo-Roman fishponds (Sainte-Maxime), the old Pardigon Villa (La Croix Valmer) – there are more.

The 50 marked trails maintained by the municipalities will never cease to surprise you. There is nothing to prevent you pausing by the wayside to peer into a living world among the grasses, around tree trunks and water courses. In the forest, the music is everywhere – just close your eyes and listen.

Depending on the season keep your ears open for birdsong, animal noises, and the sound of trees and plants rustling in the wind.

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

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

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

And if you are looking for gold! Over 300 million years ago, the Hercynian mountain-building movement as it formed led to the transformation of pre-existing rocks, trapping veins of minerals in the process. Over the millennia, these mountains were eroded down into the Massif des Maures as we see them today. Minerals were released and we can find them in the river beds and streams. If you know what you are doing, you may even stumble across some gold - a geological, biological and ecological meeting in our environment to seek the most precious element of all.
How can we forget the first cycle tracks of the legendary Roc d’Azur? The world’s most prestigious mountain bike challenge will remain forever associated with the trails that gave it life. Breathtaking scenery, up hills and down dales, with plenty of variety and 300 days of sunshine a year, if you are looking for a cyclist’s paradise this is it!

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

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

On horseback is even better... The innovative Var “Équi’Découverte” equestrian network allows you to explore the Massif des Maures on horseback. Marked trails for riders of all levels, a network of suitable accommodation, riding centres, nature sites and cultural venues linked by itineraries are accessible to all – even by donkey, another member of the docile equine family. In fact it is in the hills around La Garde-Freinet and Le Plan-de-la-Tour that you can hire a donkey to accompany you in all seasons for the various harvests, from Easter egg hunts to gathering figs or chestnuts.
The emotional jolt one experiences at the Domaine du Rayol can be attributed to the extraordinary view it offers of this rocky side to the Maures, the horizon only interrupted by the Iles d’Or. The story begins in 1910, and involves a Paris businessman, an Art Nouveau style residence and an ornamental garden, then the famous aircraft manufacturer Henri Potez who held amazing parties; the brochure will tell you more! Now owned by the Conservatoire du Littoral to protect it from real estate speculation, the domain boasts 20 hectares of gardens designed by landscaper Gilles Clément to evoke the scenery and flora of regions with a Mediterranean type climate (Chile, California, South Africa, Australia, etc.). It is open 365 days a year (guided tours, discovering a marine garden, events, horticulture, concerts, library and a gardener’s café) - a remarkable garden.

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

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

Three unusual gardens stand out in the Massif des Maures and Gulf of Saint-Tropez. Each merits a detour and special attention for their originality.

La Mole’s Dam 8 million cubic metres of water in a rural setting. Built in 18 months in 1991 and based on the “terrain” technique, the Verne or La Mole Dam supplies drinking water to people in the Massif des Maures and Gulf of Saint-Tropez. You may feel like you are in the mountains but it is only 10km to the seaside. From the church place, at 800 meters, turn on the right after the traffic light, then go straight on 500m and park your car next to the water treatment facility. You may feel like you are in the mountains but it is only 10km to the seaside. From the church place, at 800 meters, turn on the right after the traffic light, then go straight on 500m and park your car next to the water treatment facility. You will enjoy walking or cycling on a large path for 2.5km. After these 2.5km, you will arrive at the water dam’s gate, go further on 150m to reached it. The Dam offers an amazing view on the hills “Les Maures”.

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

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

February

Corsa fiore (Cavalaire)
Fête du Mimosa (Sainte-Maxime)

March

Grand Carnaval (Cogolin)
Fête du Printemps (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
Marathon International (Golfe de Saint-Tropez)

April

Plants and olive oil fair (Le Plan de la Tour)
Granfondo, cycle race (Gassin)
Challenge Christophe Bouissou (Cavalaire)
Univers jardin, show garden exposition (Sainte-Maxime)

May

Donkey festival (Le Plan de la Tour)
Grapevine and wine festiva (Ramatuelle, La Croix Valmer)
La Caroubike, mountain bike Cross-Country championships (Gassin)
La Cavaliéroise, running (Cavalaire)

June

Ega Country, equestrian gathering (Cavalaire)
Summer festival (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
Land Art (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)

September

Week for hiking in the Var

October

Roc d’Azur, mountain bike race (Sainte-Maxime)
Gondwana, autumn festival (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)

December

Winter festival (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
Duathlon, running and cycling race (Le Plan de la Tour)

NATURE COLORS

La Garde-Freinet White Rocks
Cogolin’s reeds
18
PRELUDE TO THE SEA

“Welcome to a country of blues, greens and gold, one where the turquoise blue of the sea merges with a cloudless sky, where a golden sun infuses the radiant hues of Provencal fabrics, and olive green colours the shutters that open onto an open sea...”

www.visitgolfe.com
Locate the beaches on the tourist map of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez page 6

**CANADEL**
Canadel beach
At the foot of pine-covered hills, this long wide sandy beach faces the Iles d’Or, with just the lapping of the waves to distract you!

**LE RAYOL**
Rayol beach
A few steps down to feel the soft grain of sand between your toes, an intimate beach with a touch of wildness about it, a protected corner of the Var.

**CAVALAIRE**
Bonporteau beach
Amidst a big pine forest with eucalyptus, tamarisk and palm trees, a small cove surrounded by rocks.
Cavalaire beach
A long sandy beach where private (restaurant and sun loungers) and public areas alternate, and the water is crystal clear.

**Pardigon beach**
An amazing space - large sandy beach with volleyball pitches (free) - Lifeguard.

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

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

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

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

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

Brouis beach
A slice of wilderness - a paradise on earth where only migratory birds flock here to admire the unusual flowers.

Cap Lardier
A listed headland with breathtaking views and endless walks. The steep top is worth the climb - Mosaic of landscapes and aromatic plants in the scrub.

**BRANCON**
Only beach on the peninsular which is at the end of a vineyard.

**DREAM BEACHES & CREEKS**
Sainte-Maxime, les Sardinaux

Cavalaire beach

Grimaud, Les Cigales beach

Ramatuelle, Pampelonne beach
**CONSERVATOIRE DU LITTORAL**

A French State body set up in 1975, the Conservatoire du Littoral leads a policy to provide permanent protection to France’s most remarkable coastal and lake areas. It buys up land that is fragile or under threat and entrusts its management to municipalities or associations. In the Gulf of Saint-Tropez for example, a perfect illustration would be the three headlands: their astronomical diversity of environments, scenery, flora, (rhododendrons), fauna (kestrels, owls, Cory shearwaters, gannets…) is now protected thanks to the organisation.

**RAMATUELLE**

**Escalet beach**
Superb series of delightful little beaches, coves and inlets of limpid water between polished rocks and golden sand. Must and snorkeling essential.

**Cap Camarat**
At “end of the earth” spot covered in a forest of pine and oak trees on rugged granite rocks sculpted by the elements.

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

**Bonne-Terrasse beach**
Small sheltered cove popular with fishermen. Higher up is Eddy Barclay’s old villa where the finest singers have performed.

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

**Saint-Tropez**

**Salins beach**
Family beach popular with locals where you can catch crabs in the rocky pools.

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

**Canebiers beach**
A magnificent 200m stretch of sand. Family atmosphere. Public showers. Diving platform in the bay.

**Les Graniers beach**
This little cove has a shade, encomp side by side. Beautiful Sheltered sea. Family beach for paddlers in the waves.

**La Ponche beach**
Two adjoining beaches at the foot of fishermen’s houses along the oldest district of Saint-Tropez. Coarse-grained sand and pebbles.

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

**Gassin**

**La Moune beach**
A tiny beach with sand for shade, and the only one by this village. Relaxed and sporty atmosphere with sailing club.

**BLUEDREAMS**
Golden Dreams

Pampelonne Sunrise

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

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

Le Gros-Pin beach
Follow the seawall to the left, a Greek temple gives this beach a different character. Large sandy cove sheltered from the traffic.

Guerrevieille beach
Pretty sandy beach near car park. Close view of Saint-Tropez and its citadel.

Les Cigales beach
With its lighthouse and picturesque bridge. A unique feature, this small beach is popular because of its unique and original setting.

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

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

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

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

La Nartelle beach
Beautiful long stretch of sand - Building constructions highly recommended bring bucket and spade.

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

Garonette beach
MILLE SABORDS!

Harbours, marinas, yachts and lighthouses

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

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

Marinas at the heart of seaside resorts

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

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

Phare Rouge memories…

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

Our Master Mariners

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

In the last few years the Gulf of Saint-Tropez has become a sought-after port of call for cruise ships, under the aegis of the “Var Provence Cruise Club” initiative, a body set up by the Chamber of Commerce to unite all the port authorities concerned. The Gulf, mainly Saint-Tropez, welcomes around 70 ships a year bringing in over 23,000 cruise passengers who stay between four and 15 hours. The clientele is mainly German and Anglo-Saxon of which 50% leave their ship to explore the harbour and surroundings.

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

In total, more than 1,750 boats find refuge in these marinas, just opposite Port Grimaud.

Port Grimaud world famous village on the water

This architectural masterpiece designed by François Spoerry will leave its mark on the 20th century. A neo-Provencal style underpinning its Mediterranean character extends across 90 hectares of former marshland and numbers 2,000 houses. Designed for people who love boats, the site includes 7km of canals, 12km of quays and three port areas which host the biggest concentration of boats and luxury yachts in our Gulf, totalling 2,350 moorings. To fully appreciate the extent of this labyrinth and discover the picturesque districts of this waterfront settle-ment, you can hire a boat or board an electric barge and do the circuit.

Another picturesque lighthouse is the one on Camarat in the Ramatuelle municipality. The second highest in France due to the height of the light source (130m above sea level), it was an oil-fired lighthouse before being converted to electricity in 1946 and then automated in 1977. Its reach is up to 60km. On clear days you can sometimes see the shadow of Corsica in the distance. The lighthouse is to be admired from the outside, but the semisphere below, military property, is open to the public on European Heritage Days. Be sure to make the most of your visit by taking the little path on the left to explore Cap Camarat and look at Bird Island.

Ramatuelle, Camarat’s lighthouse

Cavalaire’s harbour

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Leisure activities and the way the wind blows...

Peaceful battles at sea! Keelboats, dinghies, kayaks, jet ski, stand-up paddles, body-boards, windsurfers, hebe-cat, Optimists, surf boards, catamarans – choose your weapon! The list is not complete by any means as there is an infinite variety of watersports on offer along our coast. Other ideas: water-skiing, banana boat rides, parachuting, the ski-bus, kite-surfing, wakeboarding, pedal boats, bare-foot, flyboard... Further more, Cavalaire has the Flyboard World record. The question is – will there be time to do all this before sunset? Nothing’s easier, click on “amusezvous.fr.”

Alone in the world or accompanied? French sailing schools and water sports outlets are well established in the Gulf. In optimum conditions using quality equipment, they can help you master any sport, from how to handle the rigs and accelerator or even rowing, to ensure you progress from beginner to the pleasures of doing it alone. Individual lessons or complete courses are available, leaving you free to enjoy them in your own time and to be on the water as much as possible – it is an exceptional environment and the atmosphere is friendly. Some only offer rental, others outings with instructor (one hour, half or full day) and sometimes bivouac options. There are programmes to suit any level, for all the family, and motivational courses for those seeking any pretext to escape the city! How well we understand them!

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

Early in the morning, while some are recovering from their night out, dreaming of Bodhi (surfers’ icon from Point Break), others have been up since sunrise, when the swell is already formed but the wind moderate, and are heading out to catch the wave. Is there also surfing in the Gulf, we hear you cry? Yes - and some fine waves at the Mimosas, Gigaro and Nartelle beaches or in front of Key West on Pampelonne beach. Who would believe it apart from Brice from Nice?
Focus on the musts From Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer to Sainte-Maxime, a succession of harbours, quays and jetties invite you on an adventure. Close by and safe: Port Grimaud or the Marines de Cogolin or Gassin by electric barge! For the bolder ones: guided excursions in the bay, also very safe but with commentaries. Further away: explore the coast or visit the calanques. Offshore: no need to go as far as Hyères to reach the îles d’Or - return day trips by boat also go from Port Grimaud, La Croix-Valmer, Cavalaire and Sainte-Maxime. Sea air is guaranteed on the way to Port-Cros (marine national park), Porquerolles and Ile du Levant, but keep your eyes peeled as you may see dolphins, sperm whales, razorbacks or even pilot whales. You are in the heart of the Pelagos Sanctuary for Mediterranean Marine Mammals, a protected zone covering 87,500 km² and subject of an agreement between Italy, Monaco, France and several municipalities in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez.

Something a little more unusual Enjoy discovering the depths from the glass-bottomed Seascope or Aquascope trimarans that offer short excursions to view the seabed. Another original idea is a meeting with dolphins departing from Cavalaire. In search of something more romantic - sunsets aboard a giant catamaran, or more adrenaline, offshore outings; or more convenient, 15 minutes from Sainte-Maxime to Saint-Tropez by shuttle or maritime taxi even at night in summer; more independent, hire your own boat with or without a licence (if you have no points!); or happier – this one is a secret we are willing to share but you need some puff to blow it up: an inflatable with two oars, and a fishing line trailing between your toes: land and sea have never seemed so beautiful!
The Mediterranean: 365 days a year

Dive into an ocean of bubbles with or without your oxygen bottles and discover a paradise that is very particular to the Mediterranean. Local divers but also foreigners, particularly from Central or Northern Europe are our best ambassadors.

Divers’ paradise

The Gulf is home to many underwater treasures that we have to respect; in their silent world we are the guests. These depths of extraordinary beauty are teeming with life: red coral, multi-coloured gorgonians, all kinds of sponges and sea urchins, as well as many pelagic fish species: amberjacks, common dentex, barracudas, mackerels and sand steenbras, not forgetting the famous home-loving groupers. With or without bottles, there is no need to venture too deep to enjoy it.

Amphibian surprises

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

Awash with flora

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

Discover videos on our Youtube channel Golfe de Saint-Tropez Tourisme

Le Rubis, off the coast of Cap Camarat, Ramatuelle

Quarrelles, rabio, togo, sardinaux, le rubis, so many dream names for the divers who frequent the Mediterranean sea. These prestigious diving sites are only the emerged part of the uncountable submarine wealth located in the peninsula of Saint-Tropez. To preserve its beauty, the sea observatory of municipalities, department of the association of municipalities, develops the diving sites, analyses the quality of water, to raise the sailors awareness about the protection of the posidonia and invites the tourist to come to discover by themselves these submarine treasures.
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<td>Les Dames de St-Tropez (St-Tropez)</td>
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Hardly a weekend goes by when there is not a regatta being organised by one or other of the yacht clubs on the vast body of water that forms the Bay of St-Tropez to the limit of the territorial waters. Some have carved out an international reputation, like the festival Armen, Dames de Saint-Tropez, the Voiles Latines, the Giraglia Rolex Cup, the Trophée Bailli de Suffren, the Dragons meeting and the Voiles d’Automne, attracting sailors and spectators from all over the world. We could also cite the jet ski competitions in Cavalaire and Sainte-Maxime, the beach-to-beach swims that take place in summer, the stand-up paddle challenges, the Festival de la Plaisance. Another incredible event is planned in Cavalaire’s Bay, the “Flyboard worldwide championship” gathering, over 50 flyboards side-by-side, between sky and sea. However, the most prestigious event without a doubt remains Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, sees the world’s most beautiful boats, from classic centenarians to the young Wally racers, come from all over the globe to race in the bay.
“On a corner of an alleyway, bend in the path, or under an archway, each new discovery brings its own rewards! All our municipalities retain traces of a rich and eventful past, testimony to the different cultures and civilisations that have come and gone on our territory. Yet culture is never a moment frozen in time; it thrives on the past to build the present and create a future.”

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

But honour where honour is due, you must first visit Saint-Michel in Grimaud, the oldest parish church in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez. This little masterpiece from the second Provencal Roman era dates back to the late 12th and early 13th century. It was built of granite from local quarries, giving it a beautiful colour which changes with the light. Very few alterations have been made to the church: they added a majestic clock tower in the 16th century and the north side chapel was altered to accommodate the vestry. In Cogolin, the nave in the church of Saint-Eloïse and Saint-Sauveur dates back to the 15th century. The north side aisle was built one section at a time, depending on the financial resources of the community during the 16th century.

Saint-Laurent church in Gassin and its bell tower were built in the 16th century and have an air of conquest about them as they dominate the landscape and take in the whole of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez and Massif des Maures. The one in Ramatuelle is dedicated to the Virgin Mary and was built at the same time as the town’s ramparts to save on a wall; in fact its clock tower was a watchtower in the 14th century. In the Middle Ages it was called Notre-Dame du Pin and was located roughly where the town hall is today. During the Wars of Religion at the end of the 16th century, the villagers were afraid it would be destroyed by enemy artillery overlooking the village and dismantled it to move it to where it is now.

By the late 18th century, an expanding population led to new parish churches being built in La Garde-Freinet, Plan-de-la-Tour, Sainte-Maxime and Saint-Tropez. The latter had a church from the early 16th century that had become too cramped and unhealthy, and was in such poor condition it risked collapsing onto the faithful. Aware of the danger, the town councillors called in the experts and obtained the bishop’s permission to build a new, bigger and safer building. But the parish priest, being obliged to pay a third of the expenses as was the custom showed tremendous ingenuity trying to prevent the work going ahead using counter-experts and even resorting to legal arguments. Eventually, the church was completed and remains a marvellous example of the Provencal Baroque style. The 19th century saw development and expansion of a new village, La Mole on the plain on the royal route. The church dates from the Second Empire and its facade has been restored in the colours of Italy.
The birth of tourism and urban development by the sea in the 20th century led to several new villages receiving official recognition: Cavalaire in 1929, La Croix-Valmer in 1934 and Rayol-Canadel in 1949. Of course all these communities built a place of worship, none of which lack charm. The last ecumenical church to be built was the one at Port Grimaud, Saint-François, created by talented architect François Spoerry who in effect has built a bridge between the past and future that spans centuries.

The architecture is sombre and meditative, illuminated by the radiant windows designed by Victor Vasarely. The churches in our villages, from the oldest to the most recent, are the most visited edifices in our region. They are living testimonies to the faith of our ancestors and worthy of all the visitors who come to admire the ancient stone and magnificent interiors, a liturgical, cultural and artistic heritage of great quality.
Windmills of the mind

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

In Provence, the windmill is popular because it reminds us of childhood, school and reading Alphonse Daudet’s novella Le secret de maître Cornille. We have no idea how the windmill arrived here in the West but it is first mentioned in laws for the town of Arles in the middle of the 12th century.

Some districts have embarked on a major venture to revive their windmills. For example, in 1990 in Grimaud, architect Hubert Lemonier restored the Saint-Roch windmill which probably dates back to medieval times. Today the mill stands proudly watching over the Pont-des-Fées valley, a stunning protected landscape which hides a treasure trove of flowers, shrubs and insects for the unsuspecting walker.

In Ramatuelle, one of the Paillas windmills was restored in 2002 and can now function. Every year on European Heritage Day in September, the vanes turn if the wind is blowing. From the site of the Paillas windmills there is a splendid view of the plain and Pampelonne beaches on one side and Cavalaire bay and the Iles d’Or on the other.

These mills play a role in the various spring festivals and can be visited simply by contacting the relevant Tourist Offices.

Lastly, this was an olive oil producing region which meant every village had several mills to crush the olives. In French they were called mou- lins à sang meaning they were driven by animal power normally an ass, a name derived from the Latin name for donkey Equus asinus. The olives were put into a stone tub and a donkey turned the circular stone that crushed the olives. The resulting paste was spread onto disc-shaped hemp or coconut fibre baskets then stacked under a press to obtain the oil. Grimaud’s Musée des Arts et Tradition Populaire has an old olive mill where you can see the three “chapels” that contained the olive presses.

The windmills of St-Roch in Grimaud, Paillas in Ramatuelle and the ATP Museum in Grimaud can be visited at any time of the year – just contact the local Tourism Office.
**CHARTREUSE DE LA VERNE**

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

**AS THE CROW FLIES**

**MENHIRS ON LAMBERT PLATEAU AT COLLOBRIÈRES**

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

**THORONET ABBEY**

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

**PREHISTORIC MUSEUM OF GORGES DU VERDON**

- **1h30 from Gulf** Located in Quinson, in the heart of the Verdon, the Gorges du Verdon Museum of Prehistory presents the results of archaeological digs carried out in the Verdon for over 50 years. A trip back in time for all with its circuit of alternating scenes from everyday life in prehistoric times, interactive displays and original archaeological artefacts. Designed by the architect Norman Foster, the museum is one of the biggest Museums of Prehistory in Europe.
For centuries, men have formed communities and sought to protect themselves from dangers arriving by land or sea. Thus it was in the Iron Age, several centuries BC that the Celto-Ligurian people built broad ramparts of dry stone, earth and wood for shelter. The Romans called them oppida (oppidum in the singular) and there are many of them in our hills. Difficult to access, today most of them are on private properties. In the Middle Ages villages were mainly built on hilltops, one only has to look at the plain to the perched, protected villages of Grimaud, Cogolin, Ramatuelle, Gassin and La Garde-Freinet.

The most spectacular fortified village is undoubtedly Fort-Freinet overlooking La Garde. Houses and a wide ditch were carved into the rock at the end of the 12th century. For centuries it was mistakenly believed to have been a hideout for Saracens who came from Spain to stay in Provence in the 10th century. A visit is a must as the place is unforgiving yet also magical and evocative, with a sublime 360 degree view.
Castles like the one in Grimaud had a duty to defend the village but also to impress potential attackers and the local population. They were a symbol of the power of the seigneur (lord of the land). The latter signed all tenancy farming contracts and received the community’s consuls there. In general, they did not live in their castles, preferring the comfort of a house in the village. In Sainte-Maxime, a broad tower built in the 16th century by the monks from Thoronet Abbey, which owned the land, surveys the coast and harbour. It houses the Tour Carrée museum dedicated to folklore and local traditions. In Saint-Tropez, the 15th century Suffren tower is part of the feudal castle. Within the urban environment, you can also see the four towers that made up the town’s defences - Saint-Elme, Portalet, Vieille and Jarlier - built in the 16th and 17th century. Dominating the town is the Citadelle dating back to the early 17th century. The view of the sea and Gulf of Saint-Tropez is superb from the top of the keep.
The soul of chapels and shrines

The chapels in our villages reflect the strength and fervour of our ancestors’ faith. Outside the parish church, villagers were proud of their chapels and built a lot of them. Saint-Tropez being wealthy, due to the maritime trade with Ottoman ports of the East, had up to 15 chapels at one time. First we should mention the buildings that served as a church but being too cramped were replaced by a larger place of worship and became chapels. That was the case with Notre-Dame de la Consolation in Gassin and the Miramar and Saint-Clément chapels in La Garde-Freinet, all medieval places of worship that were converted into chapels. Sometimes, the seigneur (lord) of the land initiated the foundation of a chapel: in Saint-Tropez, the Sainte-Anne chapel was probably built at the request of the Laurens and Grasse families; in Cavalaire the Castellane family, seigneur of Gassin from the 15th century were behind the Annonciade chapel (mid-17th century) that was destroyed in the Second World War; in Grimaud in the 17th century a priest from La Garde-Freinet brought in enough capital to fund reconstruction of the medieval Queste chapel.
Brotherhoods, communities of pious laymen the goal being to help one another, played a key role, particularly the brotherhoods of Penitents who were behind the foundation of numerous chapels in nearly all our villages: in Saint-Tropez, the Miséricorde chapel, the Black Penitents headquarters, remained a place of worship but the Annonciade chapel, the White Penitents brotherhood, has become an important museum for works by early 20th century painters; in La Garde- Freinet, the Saint-Jean chapel is now the Tourist Office and Conservatoire du Patrimoine (heritage museum), in Grimaud, the White Penitents chapel contains liturgical furnishings of great quality; and in Cogolin there are the two adjoining Saint-Roch chapels, the oldest (17th century) has become a superb venue for modern exhibitions.

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

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

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The Massif des Maures is composed of ancient crystalline and metamorphic rocks (600 to 400 million years old), testimony to its extraordinary geological and mineral wealth. The rocks are not easy to cut and not suitable for building. Indeed, only two types of rock have been tamed by Man: serpentinite, a blue-green veined rock more commonly referred to as serpentine, and basalt, a grey-black honeycomb lava rock. Both these subtly coloured materials have provided beautiful decorative and architectural elements that are very characteristic of the 12 villages in the cantons of Grimaud and Saint-Tropez: doors, windows, steps and other decorative features.

Megaliths of Provence
Megaliths, mythical monuments, are characteristic of the Neolithic period between 4000 and 2000 BC. Dolmens or tables of Breton stone are megalithic burial sites, although we do not know the exact meaning behind the standing stones called menhirs. These impressive and mysterious monuments immediately make one think of Brittany, but you may not know that archaeologists have uncovered around 50 dolmens and the same number of menhirs in the Var. At Ramatuelle, on Cap Taillat, a delightful coastal path they call “chemin des douaniers” or customs way, leads across Conservatoire du Littoral property to the dolmen in Briande bay. Excavated in 1935 and now restored it is presented in an educational way. At Plan de la Tour, there are two menhirs on the Gorgues path.

Architectural trends
The Provencal coast before it was called the Côte d’Azur attracted the aristocracy and wealthy middle classes from the end of the 18th century onwards, who came to enjoy the mild climate and sunshine. One tends to forget that holidays by the Mediterranean Sea were initially taken in winter in Nice, Hyères and Saint-Raphaël. It was not until after the First World War that summer tourism developed as people discovered the benefits of sea bathing, watersports and bronzed, muscular bodies. Between the wars, this enthusiasm for the sea encouraged wealthy French and foreign middle classes to build beautiful villas here. Our region therefore became a veritable laboratory that allowed early 20th century innovators to express themselves and develop a quality modern architecture.

In Saint-Tropez, from afar we see what looks like a large white ship set in a pine forest: this is Latitude 43 by the architect Georges-Henri Pingusson. Built in 1932, this avant-garde building was acclaimed worldwide as a work of pure beauty and functionality. Originally designed to be a luxury hotel, it had 110 rooms on a yachting theme with passages and porthole-shaped windows, an Olympic-size seawater pool, casino and tennis courts. It was converted into apartments in 1945 and is now a listed building (Monument historique).

On the other side of the Gulf in Sainte-Maxime, we have the Arbois Hotel by René Darde opposite. Built two years later, the building is simple with pure lines overlooking the sea. It was awarded the Patri- moine XXe Siècle label as being an important legacy of the 20th century, as was the magnificent Palais des Sirènes by François Bret. The Tourist Office provides an itinerary to discover the architecture of this seaside resort. You also find many houses from this period in La Croix-Valmer along Boulevard des Villas and in Grimaud on the RD 559 in the Beauvallon district. Last but not least, built 50 years ago is the Port Grimaud marina development, internationally renowned for its refined yet easy-on-the-eye architecture and well worth a visit.
The quest for water

We all know how important water is throughout the Mediterranean. Fresh water is scarce and everyone needs to economise. It was not so long ago that they had to fetch water from the fountain, as running water was only for the privileged few. All our villages have fountains. The water is usually fresh and of good quality. They were sociable places, where women came to fill their pitchers and gossip, sometimes insults were thrown but they rarely came to blows. Livestock also came to quench their thirst. The fountain in Place des Lices in Saint-Tropez is the most famous, and has been flowing since the 18th century. In Ramatuelle, Joseph Bernard, a dynamic mayor had one built in the square in 1905. In La Garde-Freinet, there is the old fountain (literally fontaine vieille) and a large circular fountain on Place Neuve. In Gassin, it was a well that supplied the village with water, while in Grimaud, the monumental fountain on Place Neuve is a symbol of progress and prosperity.

You can also still find the old hand-pump fountains on street corners in Cogolin and Grimaud, or the more modest drinking fountains from the 19th century, a sign of progress and hygiene. Then of course there are the anonymous drinking fountains you come across when hiking, at a bend in the road in the middle of nowhere. Sometimes there is even a glass or receptacle with a cork in it so the walker can quench their thirst on hot summer days.

The old stone wash-houses (lavoirs) were another very sociable spot for the women of the village to gather and gossip. They even washed clothes here in winter when the water was freezing. Twice a year they did the bugade, a big wash, using ash collected from the fireplace. With the advent of the washing machine, wash-houses were abandoned. In Saint-Tropez, the Vasserot wash-house built in the 19th century is now a remarkable space for exhibitions.

We still like meeting near fountains or lavoirs, to wash our hands or have a drink, or just to listen to the soothing sound of water flowing as it did in days gone by.
**MUSEUMS & TRADITIONS**

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

Avant-garde paintings and maritime legends  In Saint-Tropez the Annonciade museum is a reminder that the peninsula was one of the most vibrant centres of avant-garde painting in the early 20th century, thanks mainly to Paul Signac who discovered this delightful little harbour in 1892. In addition to its permanent collections, the museum regular puts on magnificent exhibitions that attract thousands of visitors.

Folklore and traditions  In Sainte-Maxime, the Tour Carrée museum focuses on folklore and local traditions in the form of temporary or permanent exhibitions (costumes and objects relating to Provencal history, crafts and fishing). Halfway between Sainte-Maxime and Le Muy, the Musée du Phonographe et de la Musique Mécanique showcases a unique collection of 350 instruments retracing the history of the phonograph and European inventions between 1830 and 1930.

**TESTIMONY FROM THE PAST**

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

**THE MUSEUM OF MARITIME HISTORY**

The museum of the Citadelle redraws the maritime activities of Saint-Tropez since almost 500 years. A huge success with 100,000 visitors per year. A striking scenography, initiatory routes available in 18 very instructive rooms, mixes great sound atmospheres, rare videos, interactive discoveries, collector’s items, to evoke fishing, the coastal navigation, the shipyards, famous captains, navy boats, liners…

The museum shows the characters life whether famous or anonymous, who built the maritime history of Saint-Tropez, which is the third French port in the XVIIIth century. And then, when going out of the museum, what a view !

**MIDNIGHT AUGUST 14TH 1944**

Provence Landings  Some 350,000 men, 3,120 vessels and 1,900 aircraft were engaged in this massive operation to liberate Provence, then the whole of France’s South East in less than 15 days, that took place on the night of the 14th and 15th of August 1944. The Provence Landings mobilised the entire coast, and you will find memorials (Le Rayol, Cavalaire) and monuments (La Croix-Valmer, Cogolin, Ramatuelle, Saint-Tropez) where this historic event is commemorated on a regular basis. Impressive wrecks of warships sunk and aircraft brought down during these military operations are to be found just off our shores which today have become popular dive sites. Sometimes turrets from tanks wash up on our beaches after a winter storm, witnesses to these allied landings.
Unusual objects and valuable collections

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

Lacey bell towers and wool carpets

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

Pipes, reeds, wrought ironwork, glasswork, leather sandals, rugs, ceramics and more – you will be won over by the skills of our craftsmen and talented artists whose wares are exported all over the world.

What would Provence be without potteries? There are many in our region and all original: in Ramatuelle or Gassin (Poterie Provençale Augier), in Grimaud (Poterie des 3 Terres and Poterie du Porche), in Cogolin (La Poterie de Cogolin) and in La Croix-Valmer (Suzanne Scheerer): garden pots, terracotta, glazed or decorated, handmade or not, and customized earthenware - feel free to indulge yourself! For ceramics, we recommend you call into one of the most famous (from Salernes), Alain Vagh whose showroom (Ramatuelle) is a “house” entirely made of ceramics, never less than one centimetre thick. On Sunday morning, the main flea market of Saint-Tropez bay at the “Jas des Roberts”.

Reeds, pipes and sandals

The Mole valley’s micro climate is ideally suited to growing the cane from which they make reeds for saxophones, oboes and other wind instruments (Rigotti and Alain Ruiz in Cogolin, indeed these water-thin slivers of wood are exported to the world’s most famous jazz clubs! Another product of nature, this one carved out of the roots of white heath (briar wood) that flourishes in the Maures, are the pipes made in Cogolin (Charles Courrieu). Tanned leather used to produce leather goods has made the reputation of artisanal sandal makers (K. Jacques and Rondini in Saint-Tropez and a leather workshop in Grimaud).
There are several readings of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez depending on if you prefer history, geology, folklore, fishing, sailing or nightlife. But culture is everywhere: dark rooms, libraries, culture centres and media libraries to nourish your interest. In Saint-Tropez’s Bay we have a remarkable breeding ground of talents, the troops like: Les Tréteaux de Saint-Tropez, Carpe Diem, le Proscenium and Les Tragos propose the numerous representations all year round.

**May**
- La petite Maïo (Sainte-Maxime)
- Bravade de la Saint-Maur (Cogolin)
- Fête votive (Sainte-Maxime)
- Fête des épeyguenés (Saint-Tropez)
- Feux de la Saint-Jean (Grimaud)
- Fête de la Saint-Jean (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
- Bravade des espagnoles (Saint-Tropez)
- Bravade de Saint-Clement (La Garde-Freinet)
- Commemorative festivities of 15 Août (Sainte-Maxime, Saint-Tropez, Cavalaire, Cogolin)

**June**
- Fête de la Sainte-Madeleine (La Mole)
- Fête du hameau de la Mourre (La Garde-Freinet)
- Fête de la Saint-André (Ramatuelle)
- Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Gassin)
- Fête du moulin Saint-Roch (Grimaud)
- Fête de la Saint-Jean and Saint-Pierre (Cavalaire, Sainte-Maxime)
- Bravade, traditional festival (Saint-Tropez)
- La Croix-Valmer (arts and culture centre and library), La Garde-Freinet (Saville library, library for young people and the municipal Jean Aicard library), Saint-Tropez (Charles Widrac library for youngsters) and Gassin (library) are also meeting points for reading and writing workshops and other cultural activities, opening doors to self-knowledge as well as the world around us.

**July**
- Fête du village, Féte de la Saint-Laurent (Gassin)
- Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Le Plan de la Tour)
- Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Saint-Tropez)
- Fête de la Saint-Magdeleine (La Mole)
- Journées du patrimoine de pays et des moulins (Ramatuelle)
- Fête du village (La Garde-Freinet, Sainte-Maxime, Grimaud)
- Fête du village (La Garde-Freinet)
- Journées Européennes du Patrimoine

**August**
- Fête du hameau de la mourre (La Garde-Freinet)
- Fêtes de Noël in all villages
- Les Rendez-vous du Patrimoine (Grimaud)
- Provencal Crib of M. Codou (La Garde-Freinet)
- Les Rendez-vous de la模式ine (La Garde-Freinet)
- La Croix-Valmer (arts and culture centre and library), La Garde-Freinet (Saville library, library for young people and the municipal Jean Aicard library), Saint-Tropez (Charles Widrac library for youngsters) and Gassin (library) are also meeting points for reading and writing workshops and other cultural activities, opening doors to self-knowledge as well as the world around us.

**September**
- Fête du Cog (Cogolin)
- Pilgrimage in Notre-Dame de Miremer (La Garde-Freinet)
- Journées Provençales (Ramatuelle)
- Journées Européennes du Patrimoine

**December**
- Festivities de Noël in all villages
- Les Rendez-vous du Patrimoine (Grimaud)
- Provençal Crib of M. Codou (La Garde-Freinet)
- Provencal Crib of M. Codou (La Garde-Freinet)

**Cultural centre in the Gulf**
The Carré Léon Gaumont (Sainte-Maxime) is undoubtedly the most versatile cultural centre in the Gulf. This 5,200m² complex unites under one roof two theatre halls, 485 and 80 seats (high quality multi-disciplinary programme: plays, dance, music, circus and digital arts, meetings with artists, workshops, etc.), a municipal media library of 1,000m² (lending books, comics, magazines, CDs & CD-ROMs, plus exhibitions, workshops, book readings and signings, etc.) and a cinema, the Pagnol Carré Léon Gaumont which has three theatres with digital sound and comfy club seats.

**For young and old**
Cavalaire’s media library organises a highly original programme of exhibitions. With a fund of 40,000 documents, half of which are new, this municipal space has a packed catalogue of videos, CD-ROMs, books, periodicals (newspapers & magazines) and brand new conference room. In the same premises as the Gulf’s Rostropovitch-Landowski Conservatoire, Cogolin’s media library is a live a five of activities for young and old. In addition to loaning books, CDs and DVDs, it organises storytelling workshops, book signings, exhibitions. In La Mole, 30% of the population is registered at the media library.

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

**Heritage and Religious Festivals**

**May**
- La petite Maïo (Sainte-Maxime)
- Bravade de la Saint-Maur (Cogolin)
- Fête votive (Sainte-Maxime)
- Fête des épeyguenés (Saint-Tropez)
- Feux de la Saint-Jean (Grimaud)
- Fête de la Saint-Jean and Saint-Pierre (Cavalaire, Sainte-Maxime)
- Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Saint-Tropez)
- Fête du hameau de la mourre (La Garde-Freinet)
- Commemorative festivities of 15 Août (Sainte-Maxime, Saint-Tropez, Cavalaire, Cogolin)

**June**
- Fête de la Sainte-Madeleine (La Mole)
- Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Le Plan de la Tour)
- Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Saint-Tropez)
- Fête de la Saint-Magdeleine (La Mole)
- Journées du patrimoine de pays et des moulins (Ramatuelle)

**July**
- Fête du village, Féte de la Saint-Laurent (Gassin)
- Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Le Plan de la Tour)
- Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Saint-Tropez)
- Fête de la Saint-Magdeleine (La Mole)
- Journées du patrimoine de pays et des moulins (Ramatuelle)

**August**
- Fête du hameau de la mourre (La Garde-Freinet)
- Fêtes de Noël in all villages
- Les Rendez-vous du Patrimoine (Grimaud)
- Provencal Crib of M. Codou (La Garde-Freinet)
- Provencal Crib of M. Codou (La Garde-Freinet)

**September**
- Fête du Cog (Cogolin)
- Pilgrimage in Notre-Dame de Miremer (La Garde-Freinet)
- Journées Provençales (Ramatuelle)
- Journées Européennes du Patrimoine

**December**
- Festivities de Noël in all villages
- Les Rendez-vous du Patrimoine (Grimaud)
- Provencal Crib of M. Codou (La Garde-Freinet)
- Provencal Crib of M. Codou (La Garde-Freinet)

The programme of events:
www.visitgolfe.com
LAND OF FLAVOURS

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

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

Every market is a bracing promenade among colourful stalls of particular fragrances; plump, multi-coloured vegetables, sun-soaked fruit, aromatic herbs and fish from the morning’s catch.

There are daily fish markets, including the fish auction down in Cavalaire harbour, every morning near Place aux Herbes in Saint-Tropez, and the fish stalls at the harbour in Sainte-Maxime - it’s a veritable feast for the eyes before the palette.

#### Local produce and crafts

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

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<th>Day</th>
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<th>Saint-Tropez: Provencal Market</th>
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SUNSHINE
COLOUR

Specialities of the country

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

Melt in the mouth

Nearly everywhere in the Maures country you will be tempted by the many long-established little restaurants and stores. Caviar of vegetables, aïoli and other delicacies abound, although you may want to keep the fish soup or bouillabaisse for the evening (with the obligatory mouille, grated cheese and crusty croutons). Specialty breads are legion, to accompany a vegetable or herb tart, a tian or ratatouille. And to follow, cheeses from the hills, wrapped in three mesclun leaves with four or five pine nuts and walnut bread that simply melts in the mouth.

Succumb to sweet temptations

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

You want chestnuts!

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

CULINARY EVENTS

February
Truffe & You (Grimaud)
March
Salon bio (Grimaud)
Fête de l’olive (Sainte-Maxime)
Salon bio (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
April
Fête de l’olive (Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer)
Foire aux plants et à l’huile d’olive (Le Plan de la Tour)
Fête de la châtaigne (La Garde-Freinet)
May
Fête de la Saint-Miche (Grimaud)
June
Fête de l’olive (Sainte-Maxime)
Fête de la Saint-Pierre (Sainte-Maxime, Saint-Tropez)
July
Fête de la Saint-Miche (Grimaud)
Fête de la Saint-Pierre, patron des pêcheurs (Cavalaire, Sainte-Maxime, Saint-Tropez)
August
Rencontre méditerranéenne de la cuisine méditerranéenne (Sainte-Maxime)
September
Soupe au pistou et kermesse (La Garde-Freinet)
Fête de la vigne et du vin à l’époque romaine (Le Plan de la Tour)
Fête du dessert (La Garde-Freinet)
Fête du vin cuit (Le Plan de la Tour)
Fête des vendanges (Sainte-Maxime)
October
Salon du chocolat (Sainte-Maxime)
Fête de la Saint-Miche (Grimaud)
Fête de la Saint-Miche (La Garde-Freinet)
November
Fête de la châtaigne (La Garde-Freinet)
Fête de l’huile d’olive (Sainte-Maxime)
December
Salon du chocolat (Sainte-Maxime, Saint-Tropez)
The recipe of Jean François Garcia 
Rascasse with crabmeat mousse

Les Graniers beach, Saint-Tropez

For 4 people

Fish
4 rascasse (scorpion fish) 400-500g
300g crabmeat
100g filet of sea bream or bass

Side dish
2 onions
2 cloves of garlic
4 ratte potatoes
4 carrot tops
4 boule d’or turnips
2 spoons of olive oil
½ litre of poultry stock
5g of saffron
Salt & Espelette pepper

Recipe. Prepare scorpion fish into envelopes for stuffing. Salt and pepper the inside of the fish. Pre-heat oven to 200°C. For the crab mousse, blend crabmeat and filet of fish (no skin or bones) in a food processor. Gradually add egg whites, cream, salt, Espelette pepper and tarragon until firm consistency achieved. Using a piping bag or spoon insert mousse evenly into the fish. Bake for 20 minutes at 180°C.

For the side dish wash, peel and finely slice onions, garlic, carrots, turnip and potatoes. Sweat them in olive oil over a low heat for 5 minutes. Add the stock, saffron and seasoning, simmer for 20 minutes so vegetables are still crunchy. Then add diced tomatoes, peeled and de-seeded, broad beans blanched and the asparagus tips. Cook a further 5 minutes. If you wish, add a dash of Pastis once you have taken it off the heat.

Sommelier’s advice, Lili Martignon : the Mediterranean flavours in this dish are paired to perfection with a wine from the region, for example a One Blanc vintage from Val d’Aston, a famous white with local terroir and exotic hints. Rolle and Semillon create a perfect balance between freshness, length in the mouth, roundness and elegance.

The history of this tasty cuisine is linked to maritime activities (fishing and bouillabaisse) or hunting (game). It is widely promoted by chefs of both genders most of whom are committed to the origin and freshness of produce that favours local products.

And even in the middle of February, sheltered from the breeze, it is not uncommon to see people lunching on the beach in temperatures nudging 20°C!
**La Mole’s vineyards**

The Valentin family have been farming the magnificent 63-hectare estate, only 20 of which are under vines, for over 100 years. An owner of trophy-winning old wooden barriques and numerous awards at the Concours Nationaux, this 12th century manor is a rare find of authentic and elegant wines.

**Access:** From Cogolin to La Cassine and La Cassine road, 1.5km on your left.

**Château Saint-Maur**

Domaine Chausse has 5.5 hectares of vines under vines, the estate and its 11 hectares of vines on the border of the Côte de Provence produce some of the finest wines in the region.

**Access:** in La Croix-Valmer, take Boulevard de Taba-riès and Collos-César club on the right.

**Château Barbeyrолles**

This is the smallest estate on the Saint-Tropez peninsula. Provencal grape varieties, limited yields and respect for traditional agriculture ensure excellent wines.

**Access:** Gassin La Foux crossroads, direction Grimaud La Croix Valmer, 2km on your left.

**Domaine de la Madrague**

Founded in 2008 by Jean-Marie Zodo, the estate and its 17 hectares of vines produce some of the best wines in the region.

**Access:** in La Croix-Valmer, direction Gassin, 1.5km on your left.

**Domaine de La Sallantine**

The estate was purchased by the Saint-Pierre family (15 hectares), the wines of which are aged in large oak barrels and then matured in casks. The winemaker is a master of his craft.

**Access:** 2km after the exit of the industrial park in La Croix Valmer, 3km on the right.

**Domaine de Bertaud-Belieu**

This estate has been owned by the Bertaud family for over 60 years, the wines are produced in an old wooden barrel and then matured in casks. The estate owner is a master of his craft.

**Access:** in La Croix-Valmer, direction Gassin, 5km on your left.

**Domaine du Bourri כn**

The estate is home to over 50 hectares of vines, the wines are produced in large oak barrels and then matured in casks. The estate owner is a master of his craft.

**Access:** in La Croix-Valmer, direction Gassin, 10km on your left.

**Gassin**

In the heart of the French Riviera, the wine region boasts some of the finest wines in the world. The local terroir is ideal for the production of high-quality wines.

**Access:** in La Croix-Valmer, direction Gassin, 10km on your left.

**Domaine de la Giscle**

What is it like to be the owner of a vineyard in this region? The estate is set on a hillside near the village of Vidauban, overlooking the sea. The wines produced are some of the finest in the region.

**Access:** from Cogolin or Gassin, direction Callian, 3km on your left.

**Château de Chassagne**

This is the smallest estate in the region, the wines produced are some of the finest in the world.

**Access:** from Cogolin or Gassin, direction Callian, 1km on your left.

**Château de la Rouillère**

Set up in 1964, Les Maîtres Vignerons unites seven domaines of the Côte de Provence.

**Access:** 2km after La Foux roundabout, direction Ramatuelle, on your left.

**Cogolin**

The valley is rich in vineyards, and the landscape is dotted with beautiful vineyards.

**Access:** from Cogolin or Gassin, direction Callian, 5km on your left.

**La Croix Valmer**

The challenge of making of this domaine, one of the wines produced is considered to be one of the best in the world.

**Access:** from La Croix-Valmer, direction Gassin, 1km on your left.

**Gassin/Ramatuelle**

This is the smallest estate in the region, the wines produced are some of the finest in the world.

**Access:** Gassin La Foux crossroads, direction Grimaud La Croix Valmer, 3km on your left.

**Les Maîtres Vignerons**

In the heart of the French Riviera, the wine region boasts some of the finest wines in the world. The local terroir is ideal for the production of high-quality wines.

**Access:** in La Croix-Valmer, direction Gassin, 5km on your left.

**Domaine de la Giscle**

What is it like to be the owner of a vineyard in this region? The estate is set on a hillside near the village of Vidauban, overlooking the sea. The wines produced are some of the finest in the region.

**Access:** from Cogolin or Gassin, direction Callian, 3km on your left.

**Château de Chassagne**

This is the smallest estate in the region, the wines produced are some of the finest in the world.

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**Access:** 2km after La Foux roundabout, direction Ramatuelle, on your left.

**Domaine de La Rouillère**

One of the finest vineyards in the region, the wines produced are some of the finest in the world.

**Access:** from Cogolin or Gassin, direction Callian, 5km on your left.
Domaine du Val de Gilly
Far from the hustle and bustle of the coast, where the 
Glossiers carved out a niche on the south facing 
cliffs of Grimaud, 60 hectares of vineyards of which 37 
are under vines, a plurigeneration managed domain. 
The Castellan family are regulars on the media podiums and 
have built up a loyal clientele who appreciate the ex-
ceptional nature of these wines.

Access from Grimaud, direction Glicle: do not cross the bridge above Glossiers but continue straight on.

Les Clos Servian
Hitherto! 11 hectares of terroir on the cliffs of Grimaud, this 
old farm that belonged to the monks of Charlie
des Maures. From the monks to the wine growers, 
the “Clos des Servian” have mixed it up in 3 decades. 
Already powerful, the nose very delicate and the 
white you should forget sweeping during a few 
months than appreciate it better.

Access from Glicle via Glicle, direction Tourrettes.

Domaine of the Pertoule
A new domain situated on the road of the 
Lac de St-Casteland. The extent of this property and 
production from hereon, an essential element to obtaining 
wine of character. Château du Pertoule sits high on an 
exposure of some 4 hectares.

Access from La Croix Valmer, direction Tourrettes.

Domaine de St-Servane
On this old farm that belonged to the monks of Charlie-
des Maures, it has been shining since the Saint-Tro
cop cooperative. Surrounded by cork oaks and heather, the 
domain extends across 20 hectares on south-facing slopes. 
Full sun coupled with a particular 
wind that blows through the valley produces delicate 
white wines. The main varieties in the valley include 
Vermentino, Fiolence, Clairette and Sauvignon Blanc.

Access from La Croix Valmer, direction Tourrettes.

Domaine Murmure
Perched on a plateau an altitude of 300 in the heart of 
the Plateau de Vallestes, this small estate of 11 
hectares is secluded from everything 
by its meander; 14 km long track takes you 
to the top of the hill where Rachel and 
her husband choose to settle away from it all to pursue their 
organic approach on an exceptional terroir. Award win-
ning wines, final price, and coming groups from 
within required – purists!

Access from La Croix Valmer, direction Tourrettes, then 
via Plan de la Tour, tourist route.

Domaine de la Tourque
If heaven was on earth, it might resemble the point at the end 
of the peninsula between Cap Lardier and Cap Taillat, where 
this vineyard extends to the carrying bay of Saint-Tropez.

Gigotin wines, produced on 100 hectares of vines, 
include all three colours: Domaine de Siouvette, Cuvée 
Marquets, Marjolis or Terrasses du Golfe. La Norade comes 
from a single plot in Carignan, a wonderful experience.

Access from Sainte-Maxime, direction La Pinet, then 
Château de la Tourque, tourist route.

Cave coopérative de Saint-Tropez
La Forme des Lacs
The only private vineyard in the Saint-Tropez district! Just a 
few hundred metres from the small town centre, this 
outstanding vineyard has not succumbed to the pressure on land de-
velopment thanks to several individuals’ love of the terroir: 
an agricultural engineer and expert in tiling who, with his 
partners, manages to conserve interesting land owners 
who produce award-winning wines and an olive grove following !

Access: Crois des Vignes, Dosiers du la Tourill.

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

www.visitgolfe.com webpage “Prestige”
Invitation pour une balade gourmande !
In French palace is a label for the most luxurious hotels, but did you know that of the 23 listed in France, three are in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez? Also on this peninsula-island are no less than 19 five-star hotels and 21 with four stars. All would agree that the Gulf of Saint-Tropez offers a high level of accommodation and facilities for a sophisticated, demanding and international clientele. Primarily it is the quality of services in hotels on the peninsula which attract such a loyal and discerning clientele. There are very few chains here, each stands out in its own right and offers a personalised service. All enjoy an exceptional location, often in a shady park or on the slopes, with views of Saint-Tropez’ bay or a beach or rocky stretch of coast, unless they are in the centre of famous villages where you don’t need to use the car very often.

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

The sea as your backdrop, the sky your canopy In the Gulf of Saint-Tropez the sensual pleasures are there every moment of your stay. Romantic bedrooms, junior suites or apartments extended by wrought-iron balconies, with terrace, garden or patio. Bougainvillea, pencil pines, neat rows of vines and olive trees add their touch of colour to the tableau. Everything is beautiful, it was designed that way! The sea is your backdrop, the sky your canopy; the blue sea reflected in your swimming pool and a spring fountain echoing the sound of the waves.

Multiple flavours All the pleasures of body and spirit would not be complete without good food. Many of these establishments employ the services of experienced, sometimes Michelin-star chefs who are amazingly imaginative when it comes to celebrating Mediterranean ingredients. They rival each other for originality to produce outstanding seasonal menus, with dishes that juggle herbs and spices in recipes of multiple flavours to delight even the most discerning palate.
Sainte-Maxime, Gassin and Grimaud: three 18-hole golf courses, three courses combining technical skills with an enjoyable sport, three truly original greens as each is very different from the others. What they have in common is their proximity: two overlook the Gulf of Saint-Tropez with incredible views of the sea, while the other turns its back on the bay to offer you the rolling hills of the Massif des Maures.

Grimaud: Golf Club de Beauvallon

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

Grimaud: Golf Up

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

Sainte-Maxime: Golf Blue Green

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

Gassin, l’Académie Golf Country Club

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

Gassin: the Polo Capital

Created in 1998 on the initiative of Corinne Schuler, a passionate polo player herself, the Polo Club of Saint-Tropez in Gassin is unique in France. Covering 30 hectares in a lovely green setting, the Club has been totally renewed and organises international tournaments from April to September which attract the world’s best players and their extraordinary horses. It has arena, stables, schooling yards, three polo pitches. But don’t forget your white tie and tails...

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

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

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Fashion, glamour and shopping for luxury brands

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

Premium brands: Vuitton, Dior, Hermès, Rolex, Cartier, Dolce & Gabbana, Chopard, Breitling, Longchamp, Gucci and Lancel, the list goes on. The most prestigious names which grace the boulevards of the world’s big cities are now part of the Saint-Tropez scenery. All these brands are keen to be associated with a glamour destination par excellence to ensure unrivalled visibility in summer when famous personalities and celebrities flock to our corner of the world. The resounding successes of the Chanel show on the harbour in 2011, the shooting of the 2014 Longchamp world-wide campaign in Saint-Tropez, the regular shootings in the Gulf, such as the Victoria’s Secret in 2015 in Ramatuelle, are a perfect illustration.

Fashionable boutiques: The peninsula’s reputation, its luxury hotels and their upmarket facilities, a largely protected environment, idyllic beaches and billionaire villas have attracted the world’s biggest names in fashion to set up shop in the Gulf. Once a symbol of parties and a carefree attitude, today it symbolises luxury and brilliance. Place de la Garonne, Rue Gambetta, the quays by the harbour, Rue Allard and La Ponche are lined with trendy boutiques. Yes, Saint-Tropez is also all about fashion.

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

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

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

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

Parade of the most beautiful cars

Apart perhaps from Monaco or Cannes, where else in Europe would you find a seaside resort with such a concentration of rare cars in such a confined space? And while our favourite gendarme in front of the Sénéquier ensures they do not exceed the speed limit, the sight of the latest Ferraris, Porsche, Bentley, Maserati, Aston Martin or Lamborghini parading slowly round the harbour, their glaring exhausts roaring is a spectacle in itself. Unless of course you prefer their vintage models which also join in the parade... And for the competition, don’t miss the “Rejale du Var” in November.

Harley Davidson legend reborn every spring

“I don’t need anyone on my H...” Between the Gulf of Saint-Tropez and the famous American brand it has been an enduring long-lasting love story. So many celebrities and ordinary people (one thinks of the song sung by Brigitte Bardot or the biking escapades of Johnny Hallyday) have roamed the Gulf’s road at the handlebars of their superb machines. The legend is reborn every spring at the Eurofestival – just try to imagine 10,000 Harley Davidsons, the brand’s biggest gathering in Europe, descending on Grimaud in May! Apart from the parades through neighbouring villages, the competitions and colourful stands, we must highlight the quality of the special “Prairies de la Mer” concerts held on a giant stage by the beach which attracts iconic bands like Status Quo, Bonnie Tyler, Europe. A mega success in every sense of the word and one that is enjoyed by all...

Air shows

Gulf of Saint Tropez also welcomes an extraordinary aviation meetings: Free Flight in Sainte-Maxime in October, Les Ailes de Saint-Tropez in August.

Book your accommodation for these events

www.resagolfe.com
Artists and renowned galleries

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

100 venues no less! In all forms: studios, galleries, exhibition halls, workshops… Nearly 100 places where art is present are listed in the Gulf of Saint-Tropez. Modern art, pictorial art, contemporary art, objects, photos, paintings and sculptures are on show in often remarkable spaces. Just stroll round the streets and alleys of our villages; there is not one without an art gallery for the enlightened amateur through to the most seasoned collector.

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

February
Valentine’s Day

April
Auto Retra (Le Plan de la Tour)
Printemps des antiquaires (Saint-Tropez)
Les Môdeles de Copin (Cagnes)

May
Eurofestival Harley-Davidson (Grimaud)

June
Longines Arthus Bertrand Horse Show (Mougins)
Rallye des Patrons (Saint-Tropez)

July
International Polo Cup (Saint-Tropez)
Rallye des princesses (Saint-Tropez)
Classic Tennis Tour (Saint-Tropez)

August
Fight Night (Saint-Tropez)
Côte d’Azur Polo Cup (Gassin)
Les Ailes de Saint-Tropez; air show (Saint-Tropez)

October
Parade Porsche (Saint-Tropez)
Braderie des commerçants (Saint-Tropez)
Free Flight; air show (Sainte-Maxime)
Saint-Tropez Classic; pedestrian race (Saint-Tropez)
Les rencontres internationales du cinéma des Antipodes (Saint-Tropez)
Rallye des Princesses d’automne (Saint-Tropez)

November
Rallye de la Victoire (Sainte-Maxime)

December
Les Mythes et les Traineaux (Saint-Tropez)
Christmas festivities (in all villages)
UNTIL THE END OF THE NIGHT

"An evening out in a fine restaurant, sharing good times with friends, carried away by the music, dancing into the early hours, forgetting all your worries on a balmy Provencal night - there is a wide range of activities in the summer months, but not only then: nightclubs, bars, casinos, bowling alleys and cinemas are open all year round, not to mention concerts and festivals galore.

"Night falls, nothing is certain, nothing awaits me, only adventure..."

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

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

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

In Cavalaire, the Casino du Golfe which has been totally renovated has over a hundred slot machines and a hall dedicated to English roulette, Blackjack, Stud poker, Texas hold’em poker and Omaha poker. There are plenty of places in the restaurant and other rooms if you need some down time, and the cabaret puts on unusual themed shows. Ideally located on the harbour, the Casino has plenty of surprises and excitement in store, if you like the sound of hard cash hitting the trays! The Casino Barrière de Sainte-Maxime, between the shops and beach, has over 125 slot machines (video slots, mechanical slots, jackpot slots, video poker and electronic roulette), two English roulette tables, two blackjack tables and one boul. Add in the bar and Café Barrière restaurant for an unforgettable evening in the bright lights.
Music bars, cabarets and night clubs
Renowned for its nightlife, the Bay of Saint-Tropez opens the doors of its music bars, cabarets and night clubs at weekends all year round and every day in summer. Before or After? Until dawn? Make sure you remember it…
Piano bar, cocktail bar or lounge bar – there is a variety of venues where you can meet people for an aperitif before dinner or share a tapas listening to live music, or select a tasty dish off the à la carte menu. If you seek a relaxed ambiance (sometimes a little extravagant), upbeat mood, unexpected parties or cabaret shows, the range on offer is colourful, varied and often a surprise. And if as Sacha Guitry claimed with a big smile, "It is easier to seduce the evening before than the day after", then welcome to the world of glitz and glamour: in the heat of the night under the lights of the peninsula anything is possible.

Discover the big illusionist show of Alan Dickens (www.resagolfe.com)

Screens to change your universe
Become a pirate, detective, star or even lovers for an evening… the Saint-Tropez peninsula is itself a film set. Dozens of films have been shot here; feature films, TV films, series (“Sous le soleil” and “Ephemera”) and commercials. Several classics remain etched on the memory, such as Et Dieu créa la femme, La Piscine or Les Gendarmes. The Var Film Commission which has its head office in our area helps production crews who want to film in the Var. Our cinemas are well-equipped and offer the range (air conditioning in Cavalaire, art-house in Ramatuelle, Dolby digital sound in Saint-Tropez, 3D in Cogolin, a multiplex in Sainte-Maxime to name a few). And of course the unmissable event in October: Festival du Cinéma des Antipodes.

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

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

Night Clubs
Cavalaire
Le 111 and Mamba Club
Themed party for the first, Techno for the second. On the port, open during summer season.

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

Saint-Tropez
Les Carou de Roy
It is the most famous club in the Bay of Saint-Tropez. Very selective. Open from April to October.

Cavalaire
Themed party for the first. Techno for the second. On the port, open during summer season.

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

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

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

Le Pigeonnier LP
Trendy fashionable little club. Open all year round.

Cavalaire
Le MP Room
Jean Bouch’s nightclub, exceptional programme. Open on July and August only.

Le Club Saint-Tropez
A little club near the port. Open during summer season.

La Gaia
The famous Papiyago became the 5640, restaurant with peruvian-japanese cuisine and nightclub.

We also dance
In the new places of restoration, which are transformed from 23 pm to 3 am into Bar-Cocktail-Dance, such as Le Quai, Tour Folies, Ulripa, La Brasserie-Des Arts, Le Bistrot des Lices (Saint-Tropez), Le Long Bar (Port-Grimaud), Nikki Beach, Shihtano Forever (Ramatuelle)... and many other to discover on www.visitgolfe.com, webpage “nightlife”
In summer the cicadas do not only sing in the pine forests. Venues all over the peninsula (from theatres to outdoor venues, citadels to chapels) host top quality concerts, classical and jazz, musical revivals, world music nights and theatre festivals with internationally renowned artists and stars. They are always very popular.

All year round
“Les Arts du Rire” comedy show, in all the villages
“Soirées musicales”, Grimaud
“Grimaud en met en scène” theater festival, Grimaud
“Les escapades littéraires”, Grimaud
“Musiques pour Dieu”, Saint-Tropez
“Café-théâtre Le Lézard”, Cogolin
Concerts at the Maurin des Maures reception hall, Cogolin
“Le Carré” cultural space, Sainte-Maxime

March
“Printemps des Poètes”, Sainte-Maxime

From April to June
“Printemps musical”, Saint-Tropez

May
“Rockcaillia” & “Temples de Jazz”, Cavalaire
Concerts of “l’Euro-Festival”, Grimaud

June
“Les Anches d’Azur” music festival
La Croix Valmer

July
“Nuits Classiques” Ramatuelle
“Salsa Festival”, Port-Grimaud
“Ramatuelle monte le son”, Ramatuelle
“Les Anches de la Moutte” classical music, Sainte-Maxime
“Les soirées de la Citadelle concerts”, Saint-Tropez

August
“Jazz Festival”, Ramatuelle
“Festival de Ramatuelle” théâtre et variétés , Ramatuelle

July & August
“Les Rendez-vous de l’îlot”, Cavalaire
“Festival de Théâtre de Pardigon”, Cavalaire
“Festival Terre Mer”, Cogolin
“Les Grimaldines” street show and concerts, Grimaud
“Les Nuits du Château de la Moutte”, Saint-Tropez
“L’été au théâtre de la mer”, Sainte-Maxime
“Les Nocturnes Croisières”, La Croix Valmer
“Séances Romanamp”, Roya-Cabriole-sur-Mer
“Festival dans les vignes”, Le Plan-de-la-Tour

September
“Cavalaire Jazz Festival”, Cavalaire

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

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

To discover on our Youtube channel
"Golfe de Saint-Tropez Tourisme"
VILLAGES OF PROVENCE & SEASIDE RESORTS

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

www.visitgolfe.com
CAVALAIRE-SUR-MER
BE HAPPY ALL YEAR LONG

A paradise for sea lovers Awarded the France Station Nautique label, Cavalaire is a favourite spot for water sports enthusiasts. The magnificent bay offers the same rush of excitement be it for sailing, windsurfing, pleasure boating, jet-skiing or even the ULM hydro! It boasts some amazing diving areas: from the harbour at the heart of the resort to the Iles d’Or, the sheer-sided inlets (calanques) will take your breath away, and the underwater caves will appeal to divers. The shallow, clear waters are home to a rich marine life. The bay is particularly suited for windsurfing and for excursion boats. Lined with fine sandy beaches protected by a circle of tree-covered hills, Cavalaire bay offers the same rush of excitement be it for sailing, windsurfing, pleasure boating, jet-skiing or even the ULM hydro! It boasts some amazing diving areas: from the harbour at the heart of the resort to the Iles d’Or, the sheer-sided inlets (calanques) will take your breath away, and the underwater caves will appeal to divers. The shallow, clear waters are home to a rich marine life. The bay is particularly suited for windsurfing and for excursion boats.

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

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COGOLIN BETWEEN EARTH AND SEA

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

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

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

Cogolin: gateway to the Gulf
For Cogolin is a municipality which extends as far as the sea; indeed it is home to one of the biggest harbours in the Gulf. The marina embraces Port Cogolin and the Marines, totalling 3,000 berths, its quays lined with boutiques, boats for hire and restaurants. And then there is the beach at the end of the Gulf, with Saint-Maurice and Saint-Roch as the backdrops facing each other to guard the entrance. Those who love the open sea can be found here for a swim. Others would prefer a stroll on a beach in the sun, interrupted by the rhythmic murmur of the looms turning the ancestral expertise of the workers into unique rugs, carpets and floor coverings. Two streets further on you will come across Saint Roch chapel, the Clock Tower (Tour de l’Horloge), in front of which is the site of a drawbridge.

Culture in action
Cogolin is an active town all year round, a subtle alchemy of cultures and lifestyles, with a range of events designed for a wider audience. From the Botanical footpath (Regasse district) to the Mole Valley, the bush in Hermitan to the vines on the Giscle, Cogolin hides her treasures well – and that’s not all…

THE MUSTS

- A stroll round the streets behind the town hall; the first parish church was built in the 7th century, the current St Etienne and St Sauveur church has a central nave from the 15th, and on the left another one built in several stages during the 16th.
- La maison Sellier, which houses showrooms: Saint-Roch Chapel, the Clock Tower (Tour de l’Horloge), in front of which is the site of a drawbridge.
- Note the importance of local craftsmanship (reeds for musical instruments, pipes and carpets). Wonders, and last but not least the coastline.

COGOLIN

BETWEEN EARTH AND SEA

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE
From the Tourist Office, go left into Rue Jean Jaurès, Place de la République, Hôtel de Ville and the memorial, take Rue du 4 mai 1943, Place de l’Abbé Toti, the church’s Renaissance doorway is carved from serpentine, the other is lovely volcanic basalt. After the fountain (serpentine-based), take Rue Nationale for the old village with its many passages, at n°44 a beautiful bourgeois residence (17th century) with serpentine porch. At the Portal Bas, turn left under the lava stone archway, Place Bellecour, then Rue du 29 mars 1942, and the second Saint-Roch chapel (19th), as the Swabian on the right was the first Saint-Roch church (17th), later sold as national property and converted into a barn.

COGOLIN

INFORMATION
Tourist office of Cogolin - 2nd category
Place de la République
BP 58 - 83312 Cogolin Cedex
Phone : 33 (0)4 94 55 22 00
Fax : 33 (0)4 94 55 22 01
Email : info@cogolin-provence.com
Website : www.cogolin-provence.com

Panoramas

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

La Maison Sellier & La Loge du Vigneau
GASSIN
THE GULF’S WATCHMAN

A renowned medieval village. At an altitude of 300 metres, Gassin belongs to the exclusive Plus Beaux Villages de France club. A bell tower, town hall, post office and picturesque shops create the postcard image of a charming Provencal village. Yet Gassin has that extra soul that makes parts of it all: like the narrow cobbled streets, arcades in Provencal, sometimes gothic, the stone facades of houses awash with bougainvillea, plumbago and Virginia creeper, all clustered round the church as if they didn’t want to slip down the slope. Then there’s Place des Bbans, a superb bazaar with famous restaurants, hundred-year-old Mediterranean hackberry trees, and below the intimate Hardy-Gommen botanical garden that watches over the Blended Marie-Christine, with only a couple of Steps south in godown, here the my my black.

Outstanding vineyards. Gassin has remained faithful to its agriculture. Seven vineyards protected by the nearby hills flourish on the plain or on the slopes, caressed by the soft southern light. These are ideal conditions for producing the grand crus of Côtes de Provence. The high point, the peninsula! It contrasts with shades of green in the vineyards, forest and Massif des Maures hills spread out over the remaining 120°, dotted with tournaments that are open to the public, as well as prestigious private events. an invitation to discover the “Sport of Kings.”

The prestigious Haras Polo Club. On the road crossing the Bourrian, just after the Maison des Confitures, an impressive gateway opens into Aire de Loisirs, 20 place Léon Martel. The recently renovated Polo Club and magnificent grounds of Haras. Far from being an elitist club, this lovely venue is the scene of top level international competitions in the spring, before sampling their delicious wines.

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

INFORMATION
Tourist office of Gassin
3ème catégorie
Aire de Loisirs, 20 place Léon Martel
83580 Gassin
Phone: 33 (0)4 94 19 11 64
Fax: 33 (0)4 94 19 11 61
E-mail: accueil@gassin.eu
Website: http://gassin.eu
Salle de Saint-Tropez Tourisme Promotion Agency
Carrefour de la Foux - 47010 Mougins
GPS : Latitude 43 24 10 - Longitude 6 29 46
Phone: 33 (0)4 94 65 22 80 - Fax: 33 (0)4 94 65 22 81
E-mail: info@sttropez.com
Website: Informations www. visitestt.com
Reservations www.rosgolf.com

THE MUSTS
► In the village, alleys, cobbled streets, calades and arcades; Rue de la Toise, the highest in the village; Androuno, the narrowest (one person at a time); Rue Rempart, the steepest; Porte des Sarraisons (la portail is called a sarrasine).
► The bell tower (1594) – The Roman-chapel Notre-Dame de Consolation.
► On the slopes of Gassin: the Hardy-Gommen botanical garden.
► On the plain, the AOC Côtes de Provence or Vins de pays vine estates (Château Barbeyrolles, Château de Chausse, Château Minuty, Domaine Bertaud Belieu, Domaine du Bourrian, Domaine Maurois Brulat, Domaine de Pé Perrier, Domaine de la Rousilhère and Domaine Tropézol, studio Master winemakers on the Saint-Tropez peninsula.

A LITTLE HISTORY
The first known mention of Gassin dates back to 1119. The name, written García or Gacian, is that of a person. In the early 14th century there were around a thousand people living in his seignory. His land covered a bigger area than it does today having been nearly 6,500 hectares, reduced in 1594 by the detachment of Cavalaire-sur-Mer and again in 1794 by that of La Croix-Valmer. The village was once enclosed by ramparts, barn in Provence, which were used on occasions to hold known remains of it can still be seen today. Gassin as a history struggled to prosper due to lack of practical roads. Its development in the 19th century came from the plain, construction of casinoway and the railway.

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE

From the orientation tableaux, follow the Promenade des Bains tracing the line of the ancient ramparts (old Mediterranean hackberry trees), at the end, the promenade of the îles d’Or. Benediction passage, Notre-Dame de l’Assomption church. Passage du Jute, Samares gate, Rue Centrale, a pretty porch before the oldest part, the town hall (1594). Rue du Pêche, Rue de Maulin (olive mill) and Androuno. Rue de la Treill, Rue du Troubadour Rollet de Gouzin, Rue du Ronge Coa, Rue Longue, Passage des Tempies... Forrest guided tours every Wednesday April to October.
GRIMAUD
THE SEA HAS ITS VILLAGE

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

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

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The waterfront town of Port Grimaud
It is impossible not to fall immediately under the spell of Port Grimaud, created in 1966 out of the imagination of a visionary architect, François Spangger, which will celebrate its 58 years this year. Strolling along the quays, you will be enchanted by the two thousand fisherman’s houses topped with Roman tiles, then literally recent outside, and Venetian bridges linking small islands with their co-lonnaires, retro street lights and bowls of flowers. Covering 70 hectares, this town on the waterfront with its labyrinth of canals is best viewed by boat – although you may need a map! When you add in the view from the modern church, the lively terraces, two weekly markets and all the water sports on offer from a large beach, you can appreciate why this exceptional place enjoys such an international reputation.

A celebration of culture
In the village streets up to the balconies of the castle, there is something on all year round. Be it in one of the many galleries lining the streets, contemporary art, painting and sculpture exhibitions, musical evenings, local traditions being celebrated, culinary gatherings (like the truffle festival, or the Festival de Musiques du Monde des Grimaldines, la Fête de la Lumière Grimaud’s cultural vocation is to highlight its rich traditions and the artistic potential of the area. In the heart of the village, the modern church, the lively terraces, two weekly markets and all the water sports on offer from a large beach, you can appreciate why this exceptional place enjoys such an international reputation.

A benevolent nature
Nature is all around you a dazzling panorama of colours from cask oak forests to fire trees bushes, renowned vineyards to protected caves, from the massif to the sea linked by the plain and rivers. Grimaud offers a range of recreational activities. And for the contemplative souls among you, take time out to watch the daily metamorphosis of light, that red-pink-orange explosion in the sky at sunset.

Panoramas
From the Tourist Office, take the lift to Place Neuve and the statue fountain celebrating the arrival of water pumped up from the plain. Head for Place Vellela and Lake des Mouans, then Rue des Templars. From Saint-Michel church walk to the castle via Rue du Gacharel. Descend via the chemin Rilette, then Rue de la Têtelle and Rue du Gacharel. Chaque des Pentières, Rue du de la Pompe (on old wall). Walk up Rue de Gacharet and come back down the path to Place Neuve, visit the museum and return to your point of departure (contact available at the Tourist Office).

THE MUSTS
- Medieval castle (historic monument); the façade of a Temple house, chapels (Saint Roch, Pénitents Blancs, Notre-Dame du Saint-Ferréol) and wayside shrines scattered over the area, the Saint-Roch windmill, ATP museum (exhibitions all year), pedestrian streets (mullioned windows, doors framed with ironwork);

Medieval village
A stroll in the village
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LA CROIX VALMER
BEAUTIFUL BY NATURE

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

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

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

A village with an ear for music
A stroll in the countryside
A stroll in the countryside
After visiting the village, take the car to the Gaïa beaches via Boulevard Tabarin. From the car park you can walk. Direction: Cap Larder and Cap Taillat. The coastal path (marked in yellow) runs by the sea between dark mottled slate rocks and light sandy beaches. The route Angelot past by Brian cow to find 360 hectares of aromatic bush and pine warblers. A little gem in one of the last gardens of Eden in the Var: honey-scented undergrowth, Aloppis and parasol pines, mimosa forest, rock-reasons, tall heathers, prickly brooms and wild lavender. In winter look out for corncrakes, geese and owls, in summer millions of cicadas: welcome to Provence by the sea!

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A Provencal village
The charm of La Garde-Freinet lies in the patina of time passed, like the houses of lavender stone and red-tiled roofs which lean the valley and end up clinging to the hillside. You need to cross this maze of steep streets, pastivy-covered houses, and to take narrow passages sometimes carved out of the rock, to discover a church or chapel, an old wash-house or spring water fountain. The village seems to have escaped the ravages of time, like the terraces of cafés-restaurants the days drift by peacefully for the occupants, waiting for the inevitable game of pétanque. On Sundays and Wednesdays the postcard-sized village hosts a Provencal market. Here the brand that goes into your basket is “made in…’ with vegetables from neighbouring gardens, wines and terrines from the bakery at the end of the street and come-de-moore still churned by hand. In October, pumpkins come from far and wide for the Fêtes de la Châtaigne to sample the marrons glacés, hot chestnuts, chestnut chip ice cream and other delicacies.

Discover a heritage
Outside this festive period and that of the Bravade in May, the village’s tranquil appearance hides a lively cultural scene that revolves around art galleries, intimate concerts and local craftsmen skilled in the trades of their ancestors and showcasing a rich heritage. If you still need convincing, just pop into the chapel of Saint-Jean, a national monument belonging to the Conservatoire du Patrimoine (heritage museum). We can tell you about Fort-Freinet, one of the village’s early settlements perched on a rocky outcrop in the medieval period, the chapels of Saint-Clément and Chapelle Saint-Jean, Rampe des Sarrasins (revisited by Italian sculptor Di Teana now called La Garde).

La Garde-Freinet - the nature resort
La Garde-Freinet is the starting point for many walks, mountain bike trails and horse rides, with or without guide, which allow you to immerse yourself completely in the Massif des Maures. You get a better idea of the vastness of this green ocean from the orientation tableau overlooking the village, near a giant cross: from the Maures plain to Notre-Dame de Miremer, Plan de la Tour to Collobrières, A large cross overtops Fort-Freinet, a restored historical site from far and wide for the Fêtes de la Châtaigne to sample the marrons glacés, hot chestnuts, chestnut chip ice cream and other delicacies.

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

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

A stroll in the village
From the Point Infos, cross Place de l’Hôtel de Ville, follow Rue de l’Ormeau to reach Place du Marché and bandstand (1873), once home to a fish market. On the right: a wash-house (1872) and further on Place de la Vieille Fontaine. West for Rue de la Vieille Caserne, then Place du Baou to Collobrières and prison. Cross Place de l’Ormeau towards Rue St Joseph to find the old threshing area (Aire de Battage), keep on up to Aire de la Plante, starting point for hiking trails to the big cross and Fort-Freinet. Return to St Clément church built early 15th century (bell tower), from Place du Baou to Place Vieille.

In the 10th century, there were three areas of settlement on land that is now La Garde-Freinet: Minster Hill, then called Miramar, around Saint-Clément church and lastly near the market of Miremer in the Ville-Vieille. At the end of the 13th century, for reasons unknown, these people moved up to a route linking the Maures plain to the Gulf of Saint-Tropez, on the site of the village now called La Garde.

In the sixties, Jeanne Moreau chose to live here and turned the spotlight on its charms. Whether you arrive from the Luc plain or the coast, a winding road will take you to La Garde-Freinet in the heart of the Massif des Maures: a Provencal village as discreet as it is picturesque and the starting point for many an unforgettable walk. La Garde-Freinet, the nature resort: hiking trails and mountain bike: the Roches Blanches (white rocks)
An identity worth preserving. La Mole may cultivate the tranquility of a small Provençal village surrounded by nature, yet it defends this advantage with passion, loudly proclaiming its autonomy. For although La Mole is often described as a gateway to the Gulf of Saint-Tropez south-west, the river as it wends its way between vines and roses: in La Mole nature reigns supreme. Saint-Exupéry grow up, the man who described these scenes with such joy in The Little Prince. Just opposite is an airstrip cut off by the stream which assertion. The soul of this municipality is to be found in the motto engraved beneath the sundial of its magnificent little church: souviens-toi de vivre it really belongs to the Massif des Maures. An aerial view of the village, all but submerge d in its beautiful green setting, only serves to confirm this site which provides fresh water to the salty communes of the Gulf. An unforgettable panorama over a sea of green By wild boars and foxes who come here to drink. You could be in the Alps. It is this site which gives the village its name. Follow the bridge spanning a small road that crosses a beautiful plain, scene of the annual sheep and goats’ transhumance migration into the hills, to the Niagara water park and slides amidst the pines, before it winds its way up to the Col du Canadel (pass). We hesitate to mention the breath-taking sea view in order to draw attention away from the village. We turn instead to gaze on this extraordinary valley, its road lined with renowned vineyards; to follow the sheep drovers’ paths to the peaks and wild mountain streams; and to breathe in the aromas of humus, mushrooms and eucalyptus in a forest where horses run free. In the distance a splash of silver-blue emerges in this sea of green.

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

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

From the Verne Dam to the silence of the Chartreuse. As you enter the Maures hills, this is the Verne dam built in 1941 of earth, clay and mud as height: 42m, length of wall 225m – run by SUDOM, a large body of water fed by the Verne, a tributary of La Mole River, the dam is home to families of grey herons and cormorants, migratory birds in autumn and springtime who rest in the water that is watched by wild boars and foxes who come here to drink. You could be in the Alps. It is in this site which provides fresh water to the salty communes of the Gulf. Although swimming and boating is not allowed, the path along the left bank leads hikers and mountain-bikers to the impressive Chartreuse de La Verne monastery (Chartreuse), an historic national monument dating back to 1178 which has been immaculately restored by people who love this site.

Information point from June to September Salle du Foux – 7 rue du clocher 83210 La Mole GPS : Latitude 43.2072 - Longitude 6.46512 Phone : 33 (0)4 94 49 66 64 Fax : 33 (0)4 94 49 66 24 E-mail : contact@lamede.com Website : www.mairie-lacombe.fr Office of Saint-Tropez Tourist Promotion Agency Cambarre de La Mole - 4778 85064 Gassin Phone : 33 (0)4 94 46 23 00 Fax : 33 (0)4 94 46 23 01 E-mail : info@ostt.fr Websites : www.golfehouse.com

A LITTLE HISTORY
The first mention of La Mole as a territory dates back to 1888 in a cartulary charter from the Benedictine Saint-Honoré of Marselle Abbey. The medieval village of Sainte-Madeleine was established to the west of the Marasville plateau on a rocky basin. For the end of the 12th century La Mole was partially included in the Chartreuse de La Verne abbey estate, founded in 1178. By the end of the 14th century the area was des- troyed. Several centuries later an attempt to repopulate it failed and it remained classified as uninhabited until the 1800s. In 1770, the seigniory of La Mole was ac- quired by Emmanuel de Boyer de Fonscolombe, a knight and King’s advisor in the Provence Parliament to Jo- seph-Jean Baptiste de Suffren, marquis of Saint-Tropez and brother of the famous Balli. The village as you see it today took shape during the 19th century.

THE MUSTS
La Mole chapel (private) where the De Fonscolombe barons and family members were laid to rest, notably Marie, mother of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.
La Mole’s parish church (11th) up on the hill – the castle and chapel are listed as regional heritage sites.
The chateau (18th) in the village centre. Sainte-Madeleine church (11th) up on the hill – the castle and chapel are listed as regional heritage sites.
The Verme dust dam and road up to the timeless valley.
Le col du Canadel (528m) for a panorama of the coast and the Maures coastal road.
Les Pradels (909m) for a panorama of the coast and the Maures coastal road with orientation table.

PANORAMAS
La Verne water dam.

A STROLL IN THE AREA
From the church-place, take the direction of Tralas. At 1600 meters, turn right after the traffic light, then go straight for 500m and park you car next to the water treatment facility. To go to the water dam, we recommend the walkers to bring an adapted equipment, or for the others, you can take your mountain bike. You will enjoy walking or cycling on a large path for 2.5km. After these 2.5km, you will arrive at the water dam’s gate, go further on 150m to reached it. You can either walk on or either around the dam. For the advanced, take the pathway on your left, located next to the flag. From there, you can reach the « Chartreuse de la Verne » monastery within 2 and a half hours. Be careful, if you decide to do this walk, do not forget your way back. The path along the water dam is stunning

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

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**LE PLAN DE LA TOUR**

**A VILLAGE IN PROVENCE**

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

**A LITTLE HISTORY**

The village of Plan de la Tour was created in 1792 as a break-away settlement of the eastern side of La Garde Freinet. The largest hamlet at the time was Saint-Martin. In 1821, it grew to cover more than a thousand hectares, and the western part of Sainte-Maure. This is due to the presence of several vineyards since the Neolithic era on the riverbed and the rise of new lands in the area.

**INFORMATION**

Tourist office at Plan de la Tour
7 place Clémenceau
83700 - Le Plan de la Tour
GPS : Latitude 43.33871 - Longitude 6.54618
Ph: 33 04 94 43 28 27
Email : contact@visitleplandelatour.com
Website : www.leplandelatour.fr

**THE MUSTS**

- Saint-Martin church and its remarkable campanile, including the old presbytery, now partly divided into artists’ studios and for exhibitions.
- The restored old districts with cobblestone streets.
- Saint-Pierre chapel and its large fig tree growing out of the stones.
- The 25 hamlets that make up the municipality.
- The Prat Bourdin’s 2 menhirs. Follow the track by walk, pass the hamlet on 80 meters and then the ford. The first Menhir is located 40 meters to the right.

**PANORAMAS**

- The little hamlet of Forge offers a delightful view of the plains and village.
- The restored old districts with cobblestone streets.
- Saint-Pierre chapel and its large fig tree growing out of the stones.
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**A STROLL IN THE AREA**

From the Tourist Office walk down to Place Foch as far as Place de l’Oranger Pasteur and stroll round the back streets leading up to Place Clemenceau where the Mediterranean hackberry trees provide much needed shade to the church. Visit the open exhibition in the former presbytery before going through the porch to Rue leclerc for a great view of the church’s campanile.

**THE little hamlet of Forge offers a delightful view of the plains and village.**

**THE 25 Hamlets that make up the municipality.**

**THE RESTORED old districts with cobblestone streets.**

**THE little hamlet of Forge offers a delightful view of the plains and village.**
Imagine the Massif des Maures plunging into the crystal clear waters of the Mediterranean; between the two, allowing us to introduce you.

A strip of land balanced between sea and sky – the Route de Mimosa snakes along the side of the hill, winding its way for several kilometres through a landscape of intimate beauty. You have just passed the tamarisk whose branch prongs out like a hand, where the Massif's coastal road begins above the old Provence railway line. A portfolio of images which will remain forever etched in your memory. Below, a succession of pastel colours and strips of sand dotted with those who love swimming and water sports. Their names are evocative: pointe du figuier (fig tree point), anse du petit port (little port cove), and the beaches of Rayol, Canadel and Pramousquier stretching as far as the sheer cliff face of Cap Nègre. Here the clear blue water is enhanced by thousands of mica particles that reflect the sun's rays, making the sea sparkle more than usual.

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

Jardin des Méditerranées: The most popular is undoubtedly the one of the Jardin des Méditerranées, with the landscaping à la Renoir is among the most beautiful. Make a journey in the open air through several hectares of plant species from five continents, submitted to a Mediterranean climate: from Australian acacias to the agaves of Mexico, tamarisks from Russia to New Zealand, azaleas from China to the cacti trees of the Mediterranean – a guided tour is a must. And then there is the fascination behind the Domaine du Rayol, the creative workshops, guided tour, snorkelling in summer to explore the underwater fauna and flora, the gardens' organic coffee break. Look around you, breathe in the scents and dream on! This is a real Garden of Eden; how can one bear to be away from it?

A health and seaside resort that takes you by surprise – a stroll in the village

From the Tourist Office, head for Avenue Miroir. At the top of the Paso Pergola and its monumental steps, the memorials to Sir Henry Royce (who stayed here from 1911 to 1931), the commemorative plaque for the Africa Commandos buried in the national necropolis. Both are listed as regional heritage sites for their original architecture and breath-taking views. The church and chapel, on the edges of the village, are also worth a detour; the first for its unusual exterior and the second for its colourful interior, as well as the magnificent 19th century villas and the pretty little château of the pastelures. As for recreation and restaurants, will you have time to discover them all?

In the vicinity of the tourist office is the prestigious Villa Mostyn (now the Landes de France company). The company was responsible for significant infrastructure works in the Royal district. The site includes a hotel, a hospital, a sports complex, a restaurant and a garden. The arrival of the railway (1885) sowed the seeds for tourism in this region. It comprises five districts (Les Pierres, Dattier, Fenouillet, Rayol and Canadel) spread across 300 hectares. The ‘Terre de France’ company was responsible for significant infrastructure works in the Royal district. Total length of road, the village, gardens, hotels, the Plateau Périgord, etc. - the great idea was to create a luxury estate. This district, created as an extension to La Mole (1925), became a health and seaside resort. A reminder that Canadel beach was the scene of the Provence Landings on 15 August 1944 at midnight.

The route can also be continued past the Carlit (a wild coast impossible to access. And yet so beautiful. The arrival of the railway (1885) sowed the seeds for tourism in this region. It comprises five districts (Les Pierres, Dattier, Fenouillet, Rayol and Canadel) spread across 300 hectares. The “Terre de France” company was responsible for significant infrastructure works in the Royal district. Total length of road, the village, gardens, hotels, the Plateau Périgord, etc. - the great idea was to create a luxury estate. This district, created as an extension to La Mole (1925), became a health and seaside resort. A reminder that Canadel beach was the scene of the Provence Landings on 15 August 1944 at midnight.
RAMATUELLE
A JEWEL IN THE CROWN

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

Discreet on the hill, Ramatuelle is a village apart, cradled by nature. Its characteristic spiral shape seems to have been protecting it forever from the chaos of the outside world. As you enter the medieval heart of the village, the cobbled streets curve round as if to imitate the stronghold of a manor house (village centre) with bronze door-knocker and wooden house (doorways and windows, some dating back to the 15th century); strolling round the alleyways (serpentine door, etc.); Notre-Dame church; then under the arch to the old village; stroll up the narrow winding streets enclosed within the walls of the old ramparts. You come to Place Gabriel Péri, formerly Place du Château, a stately home altered in the 18th century by the noble Audibert family. Rue du Clocher: [above] the actor Gérard Philipe is buried. Return to the Rue Victor-Léon: a picturesque route to La Croix-Valmer. To the south, pine forests border pristine headlands of timeless beauty to complete the backdrop to this slice of Provence on the Côte d’Azur.

An incomparable coastline
It is hard to imagine so many wonderful sights so close together! First a red gem, just 20 minutes on the coastal path from the picturesque Escalet coves, Cap Taillat which is a listed site protected by the Conservatoire du Littoral. Then a little detour of 100m via Rue du Clocher: [above] the actor Gérard Philipe is buried. Return to the Rue Victor-Léon: a picturesque route to La Croix-Valmer.

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

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The Var. The very soul of Provence is revealed with just a few drops of this golden elixir on local seafood or produce from the land. There is a real sense of break first on a rugged coastline, before reaching the beautiful sandy beach of Nartelle, popular with fans of watersports and swimming. At the far end lies Pointe des Sardinaux, a protected nature area facing a beacon out at sea and a well-known site for scuba diving. The three bends which follow symboliser the disorderly image we have of the Côte A lve: lovely parasol pines in harmony with the coast road; a few hundred metres further on the marina with space for 800 boats, watched over by the church’s clock tower; and the town centre’s beach just a stones throw away. Before this, over the lane running leavening bridge and past the Club Nautique, you will discover all the attractions of the Croisette beach: to port, a carpet of smooth pebbles, to starboard hot sand, and aft diving into turquoise blue water.

Atmosphere guaranteed all year! Sainte-Maxime is a lively place all year round. You love shopping? You will be spoilt for choice with all the boutiques! You can eat! Every kind of water sport is available (kayaking, diving, jet-ski, water skiing...). But you can also play golf, tennis, do all kinds of hiking/mountain bikes, horse riding, walking... or stroll with the family in the Myrtes botanical garden. You love shows? We are already preparing the next ones in the Théâtre de la Mer and Carré Léon Gaumont cultural centre, the finest in the Gulf. Interested in architecture - then the art deco circuit is for you; or in events - Free Flight, Var Rally and the Jet-Cup; or going out - the new waterfront’s café terraces welcome you with.

**THE MUSTS**

- **A stroll along Sainte-Maxime’s seashore** which has a treacherous, shopping or having an ice cream or refreshments on a terrace. For a culture break, visit the Tower Carrée Museum in town and the Théâtre de la Mer and Carré Léon Gaumont cultural centre, the finest in the Gulf. Interested in architecture - then the art deco circuit is for you; or in events - Free Flight, Var Rally and the Jet-Cup; or going out - the new waterfront’s café terraces welcome you with.

**A LITTLE HISTORY**

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

**INFORMATION**


GPS: Latitude 43, 30, 82 - Longitude 6, 63, 82
Phone: 04 94 55 22 00
Fax: 04 94 46 55 06
E-mail: contact@saint-maxime.com
Website: www.sainte-maxime.com

**Golf de Saint-Tropez Tourisme Promotion Agency**

1476 BD Rives d’Azur
83990 Gassin
Phone: 04 94 46 55 22 08
Fax: 04 94 46 55 06
E-mail: info@golfst-tropez.com
Website: www.golfst-tropez.com

**Reservations**

www.resagolf.com

**Tourist Office of Sainte Maxime:**

Golf de Saint-Tropez - Touraine Promotion Agency

Carrelet de la Plage - 1476 BD Rives d’Azur

83990 Gassin

Phone: 04 94 46 55 22 08
Fax: 04 94 46 55 06
E-mail: info@golfst-tropez.com

Website: www.golfst-tropez.com

**Websites:**

www.saint-maxime.com

Reservations www.resagolf.com

**A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE**

Start from Promenade Simon Lavin to Avenue Général du Gaulle, turn right at Couloubre (little mermaid statue by local sculptor Jean Portal), go as far as the lighthouse’s office (architectural remnant of a ship). Come back via the shopping mall, cross Avenue du Général du Gaulle - Tour Carrée and opposite is the church (its main altar and bell tower). On up Rue Jean-Albert, then Rue Paul Bert and Montée de la Resistance to the covered market. Place du Marché (fountain by sculptor Gérard Zélot). Descend via Rue Caujet then Rue et Place des Sarrasins. Continue to Place Louis Blanc, Rue des 'Vie Avenue Jean-Jacques, avenue of the centre; then Avenue De Lattre de Tassigny and Casino beach (sports alley, Promenade Landings memorial, gardens by the sea and Promenade Simon Lavin).
SAINT-TROPEZ
AN ENDURING LEGEND

One last bend in the road and the violet-pink village appears.

The magic and fascination with this legendary village has not gone away. And as spring approaches, the soul of Saint-Tropez, village of art, culture and traditions reveals a lighter side.

A prestigious destination
Just like the celebrities who flock here in summer, drawn to the idyllic isle on a beautiful peninsula, Saint-Tropez is a star which in seasons unveils sheets of sunbathers, prestigious yachts, luxury hotels, glamorous boutiques and fabulous cars. All compete for the attention of visitors nowhere at a cooled yet fiercely-mind-go-round. The authentic village will captivate those who see the site as a history bathed in fans of culture and the Provencal lifestyle, many of whom prefer to come out of season. It is this ambivalence that lies behind the charm and special nature of Saint-Tropez, a leading light on the international tourist scene.

An exceptional heritage
Nature and history are part of the village’s key attractions. From the Citadelle - home to the maritime history museum - you discover the magnificent panoramas from Careburnes Bay to Lérins beach and Sainte-Rosalie. Then there is the emblematic purple and gold clock tower; the domes of the Miséricorde and convent chapels; fortification towers and the elative lighthouse flashes of sunset, ever-stay that disappears into the open sea against a backdrop of snow-capped peaks in the Southern Alps. What a pleasure it is to walk the streets and squares, to be part of this convivial ambiance and be steeped in the fragrance of a Provencal market, before arriving at the legendary harbour and its mermaids via La Ponche.

Arts of light
As we approach the town, signs are instantly overwhelmed by the light. I am not stopping, I’m staying! That was in 1902. He went on to provide the fair for independent artists (Salon des Indépendants) that everyone dreamed of exhibiting in; young unknowns like Matisse, Vassilieff, the famous Impressionist, and many others.

A prestigious destination
Famous as a haven for artists, the village quickly became a privileged place for the rich and famous. From Dali to Maupassant, from Colette to Eluard and Sagan, the famous figures of literature and the arts have been drawn to the area.

Artists of light
In the 19th century, the boatmen of the village built a « Church of Light » to offer to the sea. It was a place of worship for the local community, a true religion for the sea. The boatmen and their families would gather in the church to offer thanks for the sea and its riches, a place of refuge and protection from the elements. The church was later transformed into a museum and is now a popular tourist attraction.

A prestigious destination
From the Sainte-Anne chapel, you can see the north side of the village and the sea in the distance. The church is adorned with beautiful stained glass windows and a large statue of the Virgin Mary. It is said that the church was built on the site of an ancient Roman temple.

A prestigious destination
The parish church of Saint-Tropez is a Gothic-Renaissance building, built in the early 19th century. Its façade is adorned with three large windows and a clock tower. The interior is decorated with intricate carvings and paintings, including a large altarpiece and a statue of the Virgin Mary.

A prestigious destination
The old town of Saint-Tropez is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its narrow streets and colorful houses are reminiscent of the Mediterranean, with their shuttered windows and terracotta roofs. The old town is home to many galleries, shops and restaurants, making it a popular destination for art lovers and foodies alike.

Panoramas
The village is famous for its beautiful views of the sea and the surrounding countryside. From the top of the Lérins Abbey, you can see the entire town of Saint-Tropez and the Mediterranean Sea in the distance. The view is particularly stunning at sunset, when the sky is painted with brilliant colors.

Information
Tourist offices of Saint-Tropez, 0.5km « Mairie de Saint-Tropez » Tél. : 04.94.55.22.00 E-mail : info@sainttropeztourisme.com Website : www.sainttropeztourisme.com

Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez
Yachts on the port

The musts
- The harbour very early in the morning. Old La Ponche port.
- The parish church with bust of the patron saint and the organ, concerts on the 1st Sunday of the month.
- The terrace of the Palais des Festivals, superb panorama of Saint-Tropez bay.
- Sainte-Anne chapel, entrance to Place du Forum (entrance to the port).
- Jean Rivière jetty, ideal place from which to watch regattas.
- Foot of the Citadelle’s ramparts, superb panorama of Saint-Tropez bay (shallow sea spot for watching the sunset).

Sights
- The harbour
- Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, the largest gathering of classic boats and modern racing yachts in the Mediterranean.
- The Markets of Place des Lices, and the daily fish market.

Sainte-Anne chapel
The chapel of Sainte-Anne is located on Place des Lices, and the daily fish market.

The markets
- The Sainte-Anne chapel, with its beautiful view of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez and the sea in the distance.
- Sainte-Anne chapel, entrance to Place du Forum (entrance to the port).
- Jean Rivière jetty, ideal place from which to watch regattas.
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- From the terrace of “La Sëb” (above the port).

From Quai Jean Jaurès, arrive at the fish market (entrance to old village) then Rues des Commerçants, Rue du Clocher and Place de l’Évêché, descended via Rue Mistral and Place Garezzio (Château Suffren and Tour Guillaume), on the left, the Jean Rivière jetty and Tour du Portail (16th century), one of four towers enclosing the town with the cemeteries. At the Quai Vasserot, turn under the archery of La Ponche, former entrance to the town, Place des Mansards, Place d’Armes, Rue Jourdan and the towers of the same name. Then Rue du Clos Crable, Rue du Portal Noël, Rue de La Ménestrelle, Rue Gambette and Place des Lices, famous for its pétanque players and Provencal market (Tuesday and Saturday mornings).

A STROLL IN THE VILLAGE

THE MUSTS
- From the Sainte-Anne chapel, via sweeping view of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez as far as the Sunny Alps and Ramatuelle bay.
- Jean Rivière jetty, ideal place from which to watch regattas.
- Foot of the Citadelle’s ramparts, superb panorama of Saint-Tropez bay (shallow sea spot for watching the sunset).
- From the terrace of “La Sëb” (above the port).

A LITTLE HISTORY

Born in Pisa, Torpes was an army officer under Nero and his enthusiasm for Christianity and executed to renounce his new faith. Under the emperor’s orders he was decapitated, his body put in a boat and set adrift in the Mediterranean Sea. Legend has it that the Ligurian current carried the boat to the southern Alps, to the bay of Ramatuelle, and finally to the port of Saint-Tropez. The hand of St. Torpes, which was brought to the church in 1605, is now housed in the Sainte-Anne chapel.

The Citadelle
The Citadelle of Saint-Tropez was built in the 17th century to defend the village against attacks by Barbary pirates and to control traffic through the nearby port. It is now a popular tourist attraction with beautiful views of the sea and the surrounding countryside.

The Sainte-Anne Chapel
The chapel of Sainte-Anne is located on Place des Lices, and the daily fish market.

From the Sainte-Anne chapel, via sweeping view of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez as far as the Sunny Alps and Ramatuelle bay.

Jean Rivière jetty, ideal place from which to watch regattas.

Foot of the Citadelle’s ramparts, superb panorama of Saint-Tropez bay (shallow sea spot for watching the sunset).

From the terrace of “La Sëb” (above the port).
Created by the association of Municipalities, partner of local, departmental and regional tourist organizations, the Promotion Agency of the Bay of Saint-Tropez has only one objective: to promote the success of your stay, to value the many attractions of our year-round destination. We provide you with:

One website to prepare & book your weekends and holidays

www.visitgolfe.com Your information and booking website, to discover in a few clicks, tourist treasures that are the hallmark of the Bay of Saint-Tropez and the best addresses of our villages and resorts. Discover our good tips all around the Bay: a large choice of quality accommodations, a variety of activities and attractive holiday packages (www.weekend-provence.fr.)

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GOLFE DE SAINT-TROPEZ TOURISME
Promotion Agency
4370 RD 98 A - Carrefour de la Foux - 83580 Gassin
Tél. +33 (0)4 94 55 22 00 - Fax. +33 (0)4 94 55 22 01
E-mail info@visitgolfe.com
Informations www.visitgolfe.com
Réservations www.resagolfe.com