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PAGE 31

Outdoor Barbecue
**ALL THE KEYS TO
GET THE BEST GRILL**

PAGE 52

Travel & Discover
TUNISIA
TIMELESS & CONTEMPORARY

PAGE 38

DATE 2022 PUNTA CANA

DOMINICAN ANNUAL TOURISM
EXCHANGE - MAY 11/13 2022

PAGE 24

Luxury Sea Cruise
**THE SECRETS OF
SAUDI ARABIA**

PAGE 68

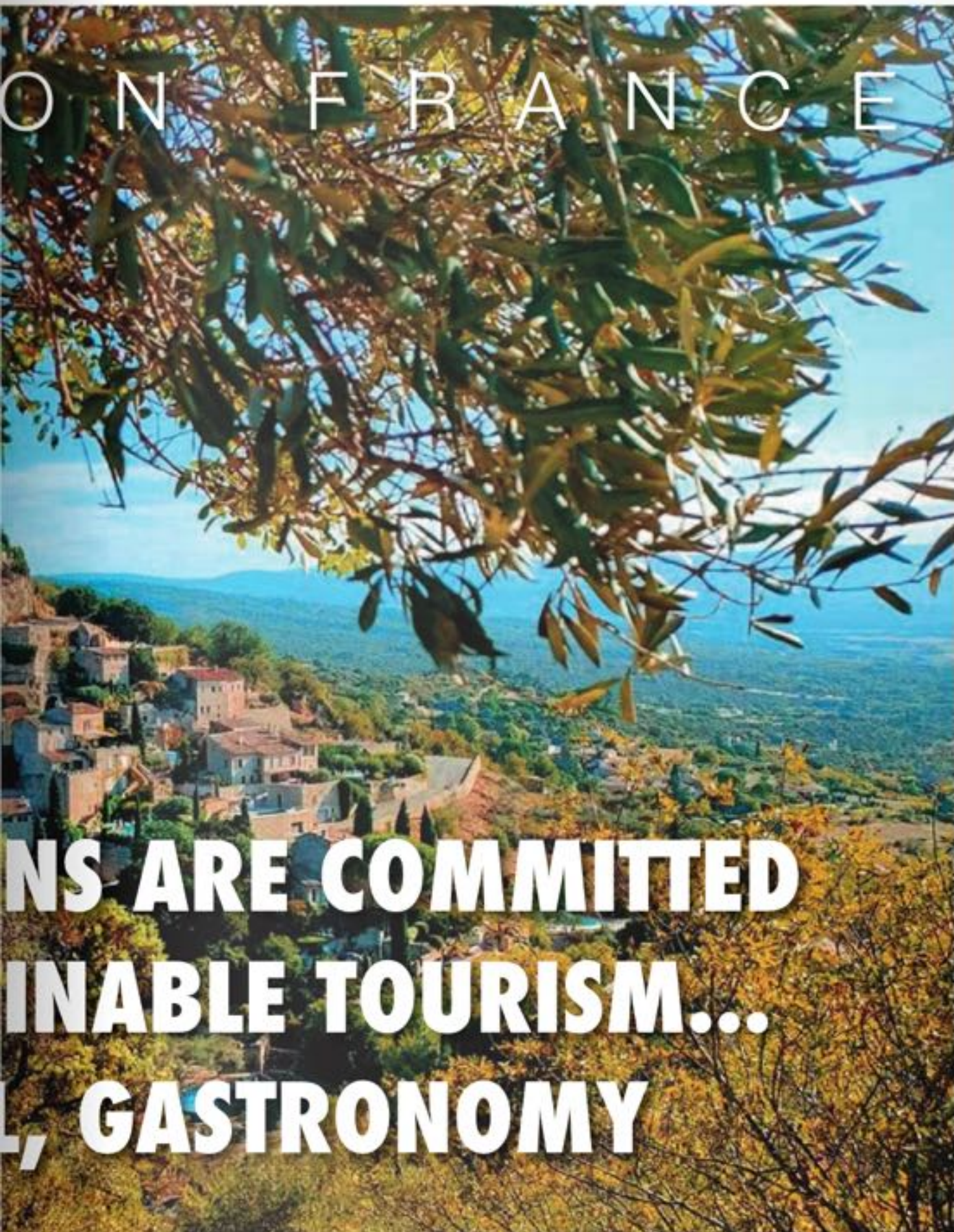
COVID-19 : VACCIN À BASE DE PLANTES 22 DATE 2022 À PUNTA CANA 24 AUSTIN ADVENTURES 26 FORT MYERS 28
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA 30 US VIRGIN ISLANDS 33 VIRGINIA'S MOUNTAIN LAKE 35 WASHINGTON DC FESTIVAL 36
TUNISIA TIMELESS & CONTEMPORARY 38 GOLFING IN THE BAHAMAS 50 ALL THE KEYS TO GET THE BEST GRILL 52
LE PRINTEMPS EN VIRGINIE 66 SAUDI ARABIA SECRETS 68 DESTINATION FRANCE 84 ST. MARTIN'S ORIENT BAY 96
VILLAGES IN ITALY ARE GIVEN NEW LIVES 98 OUTDOOR ESCAPE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE 104 PANAMA TOURISM 106
SPRING IN TENNESSEE 108 THE ISLE RESORT IN GREAT EXUMA 110 THE GERMAN EASTER LAMB CAKE RECIPE 114
MONTANA'S TRAVEL 116 LE TOURISME À JARDINES DEL REY ET LA HAVANE 120 AIR CANADA ET AEROMAR 122
MOAB THIS SPRING 123 DES AVENTURES AU COSTA RICA 124 LA CALIFORNIE : RITZ-CARLTON, LAGUNA NIGUEL 126





DESTINATION

**FRENCH DESTINATION
TO CULTURE, SUSTA
AND, ABOVE ALL**





FRANCE WANTS TO REMAIN THE WORLD'S LEADING TOURIST DESTINATION IN 2022

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& CARMEN CESPEDOSA

Translated from Spanish
GEORGES KAHY

86

One more year, and again in person, **Atout France** has held its Mediatour, an appointment with the press in which to present tourist, cultural, nature and events

news from different areas of the neighboring country. And this time the accent has been placed especially on everything that has to do with gastronomy. And it is no coincidence that the presentation, both in **Barcelona** and **Madrid**, has taken place in two outstanding restaurants and that a good part of it has been a wonderful showcooking by **Chefs Romain Fornell** and **Fran Vicente**.



Along the same lines, “Taste France” has been presented, an official brand dedicated to the promotion of French gastronomy and French products abroad. Producing good products, cooking, tasting, drinking and enjoying are part of French culture, and this is the space to talk about it. There are also at least two notable openings this year in France. The International City of Gastronomy and Wine in Dijon (famous for its mustard) will open on May 6 and is presented as a place to learn, taste, train in cooking and oenology, participate in masterclasses or conferences, enjoy the shops, restaurants, a 4-star hotel or attending movie screenings. Also this year from September, the “Cité des Vins et des Climats de Bourgogne” will open a network project, with three wine-related structures at three entry points to the Bourgogne wine region: Beaune, Macon and Chablis.

FIRST WORLD DESTINATION

France has felt the crisis of the pandemic like all the main tourist destinations, even so it received in 2021 just over 42 million

international visitors (Spain had about 31 million), less than half that in 2019, but it is still the main destination world tourism as in the last 30 years, and recorded revenues for this concept of about 35,000 million euros. In order to continue being so in the next decade, it has launched the “Destination France” plan, with the motto “What really matters”, endowed with 1,900 million euros, which aims to support the upturn in activity, the transformation of the tourism sector to through innovation and digitization and, above all, position France as the first sustainable tourist destination in the world.

Several Regional Tourism Committees, Tourist Offices, special spaces and carriers have shown their novelties for 2022 and, in line with what has been said, each one has made its own contribution to gastronomy with an idea that allows, in addition to culture and tourism, sustainable, France continues betting on that magic phrase that seems to define everything: **L'art De Vivre**. Here we highlight what seems best about each of these places in France and add a gourmet touch.

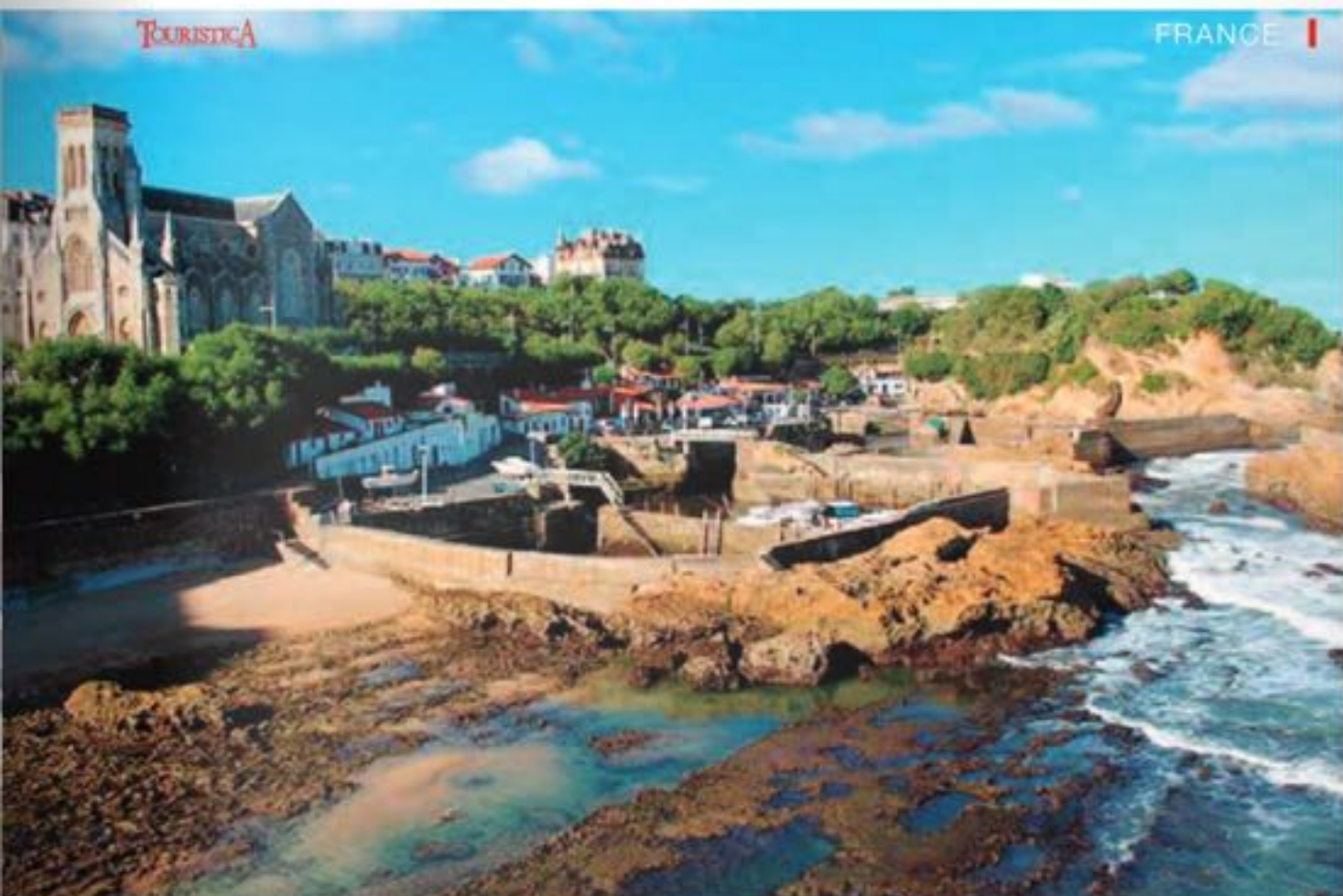


AVIGNON, HISTORY AND MODERNITY

To think of Avignon is to recall the city of the Popes and also its bridge, famous for its song and a **World Heritage Site**, but there is much more. Nestled in its original walls, it invites you to wander around and find many narrow streets that are witnesses of the past: chapels and churches, medieval buildings, private mansions from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. A true open-air museum! Art is everywhere. The city's museums offer an incredible variety of collections: from prehistory in the lapidary museum, through medieval painting in the Petit Palais, the Fine Arts in the Calvet museum, the impressionists in Angladon, the decorative arts in Vouland, up to contemporary art in the Lambert collection. All periods are represented. And the visit of the five municipal museums of Avignon is free for everyone. The shaded squares and terraces are places with a pleasant atmosphere.

<https://avignon-tourisme.com/en>

Invitation to eat. Since 2017, the Avignon Chefs Association has held a major event on the last Sunday of September, a fun and enjoyable time to share. On the banks of the Rhône, in front of the Pont d'Avignon and the city walls, a large gastronomic picnic attracts thousands of visitors to simply experience a warm and sweet moment. Installed on the fresh lawn, grandparents, parents and children savor the picnic baskets prepared by the Chefs and apprentices of the Avignon School of Hotel Management. They also offer a côtes-du-rhône wine bar, tastings of regional products such as olive oil, and a farmers' market to satisfy the hungriest.



BIARRITZ-PAYS BASQUE, TWO IN ONE

Two steps from Spain, the French Basque Country and its capital Biarritz is a postcard place, the ideal destination to unwind. Few destinations offer the luxury of being able to combine a morning walk in the mountains and an afternoon beach session. From the prestigious Biarritz to the Soule, wild and discreet, the French Basque Country boasts a perfect natural balance. Former fishing port and departure point for whaling, Biarritz has become an elegant and fashionable place where surfers and celebrities rub shoulders and is also the capital of thalassotherapy, appreciated for decades for its mild climate, and the benefits of sea water. Its neighbor Anglet is lined with eleven long beaches of fine sand that stretch for 4.5 km from the Biarritz lighthouse to the Adour river estuary. In Bayonne, located at the confluence of the Nive and Adour rivers, the busy quays that surround the market stand out, in the narrow and colorful streets that surround the cathedral, while on the coast the spirit of the ports and the sailors blows.

<https://www.biarritz-pays-basque.com>

Meat or fish? Both. If you like meat, you will be surprised by the tenderness of the lamb from the Pyrénées, as well as the firm character of the Bayonne ham or the Basque Kintoa pig. Axoa is a rustic stew made with beef and peppers, seasoned with the local spice, the Espelette pepper. Or perhaps you prefer the famous pipperrada accompanied by grilled Bayonne ham. As for fish, be sure to try the soft Banka trout or the original baby squid, in ink or grilled, the koskera hake –with asparagus, peas, clams and white wine– or the marmitako, a tuna stew with carrot, peppers and white wine. Cheese lovers should try the “ardi gasna”, an ideal sheep cheese with Itxassou black cherry jam. Put the finishing touch to the meal with the famous Basque cake, filled with cream or black cherry, a macaron from Saint Jean de Luz or a mamia (sheep curd).



LUBERON, HEART OF PROVENCE

This area of Provence, Luberon, is home to two of the most beautiful villages in France, Gordes Roussillon and Lourmarin, as well as a variety of little villages, both hanging and nestled among vineyards, white oak or olive trees, and the town of Cavaillon that offer infinite leisure possibilities. Nearby we find L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, a beautiful place in Provence where you want to stay and live. Walks or bicycle rides through orchards and vineyards, immersion in villages and antique shops, markets with colorful and tasty products, visits to the architectural and natural heritage with which to discover the traditions and savoir-faire that have forged the character of the area and of its people.

<https://luberon-tourisme.com/en/>

Les Sunset Vignerons. From July to mid-September, the so-called Sunset Vignerons take place every Tuesday evening, a summer event organized on the territory of four Tourist Offices: Luberon Cœur de Provence, Luberon Sud Tourisme, Isle-sur-la-Sorgue Tourisme and Pays d'Apt Luberon. The objective of these evenings is to propose a meeting between wine growers and small groups of people. The evening takes place on the estates and consists of a walk through the vineyards, a visit to the cellar and then a wine tasting accompanied by small dishes that constitute a perfect pairing that offers pleasant sensations to the palate.



EVERY YEAR'S TRIP TO NANTES

A cultural, artistic and creative city, the historic capital of Brittany also has an excellent quality of life for its inhabitants and visitors. Any time is a good time to go to Jules Verne's hometown, but when summer arrives (from July 2 to September 11, 2022) it's time for the Journey to Nantes, a playful and poetic festival that animates the entire city. Then, a green line, painted on the ground, runs through the center and brings together several essential elements of the history of Nantes with a large number of works of art. The Journey to Nantes (VAN) proposes an interpretation of global and transversal culture that encompasses both art, gastronomy, heritage, the environment and industry. Another opportunity to enjoy Brittany is "The modern journey through a secular country", a new itinerary of forty stages characterized by the same demand for uniqueness as those of the Voyage à Nantes. This itinerary is an invitation to offer a contemporary look at landscapes, cultural legacy and natural heritage. <https://www.levoyageanantes.fr/>

A responsible gastronomy. The VAN festival encourages responsible tourism practices, in particular in the restaurant and food sector. In fact, it has a gastronomic promotion service that defends with its actions local wine and agricultural production, as well as local trades and flavors. As a project based on the common good, the VAN festival transforms the city into a playground where citizens and tourists can share experiences. The VAN festival has conceived a collective game with the city's local promoters: a dozen cultural actors, 21 private actors and 102 merchants who are committed to building, creating, innovating, providing services... La Cantine is a place to share a have a good time and savor good dishes. This ephemeral restaurant was born in 2013 but has become a classic in every VAN. La Cantine is sheltered under a removable architecture inspired by greenhouses, open from spring to early autumn along the Loire, on the quays of the Île de Nantes, it has a bar and a restaurant with capacity for 300 people and a range of food with local products: free-range chicken, potatoes, native vegetables...

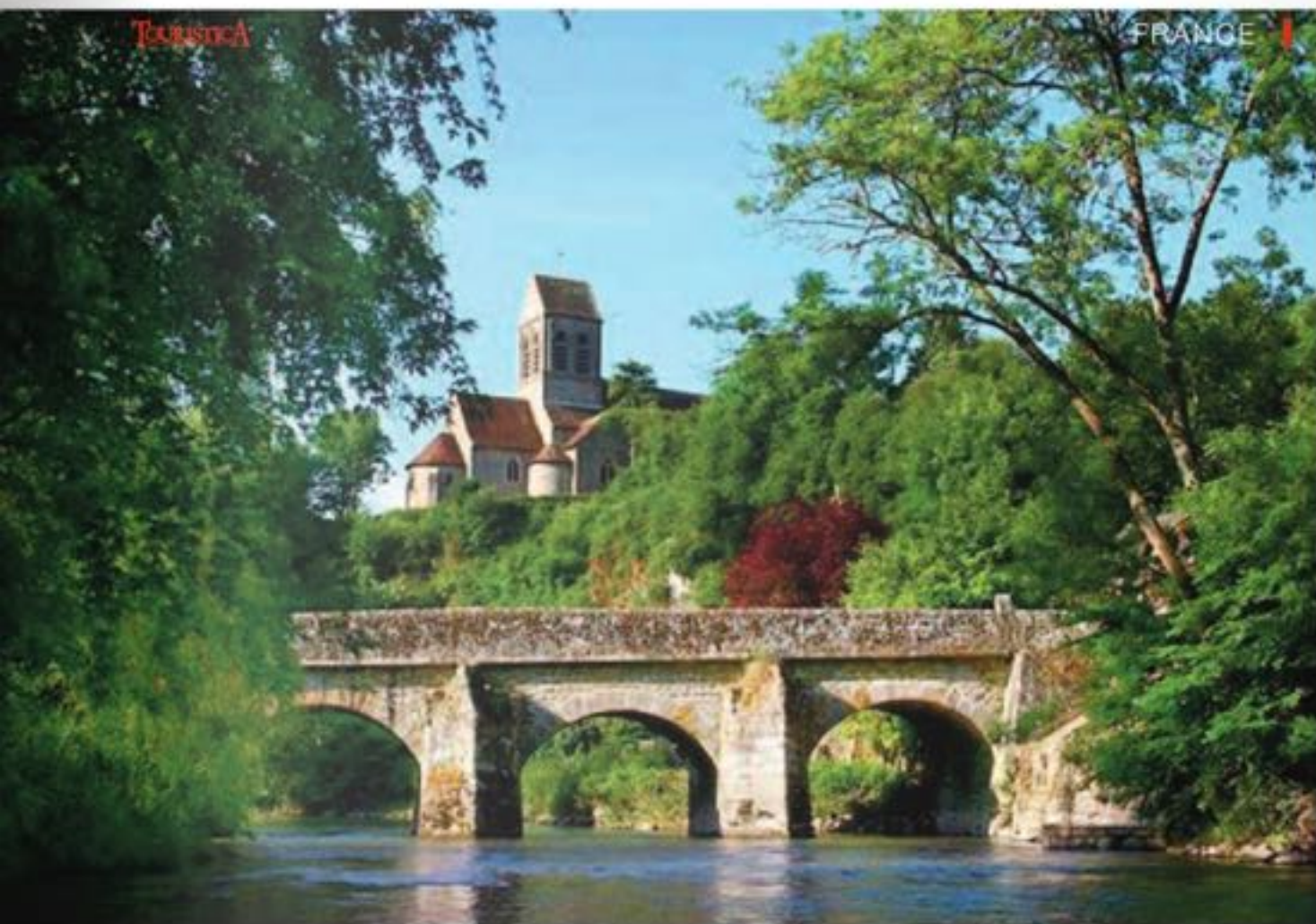


NICE, CAPITAL OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR

A Mediterranean city open to the sea and protected from the main winds by its mountains, Nice, France's fifth city and the country's second tourist destination, enjoys an exceptional micro-climate, which makes it a fabulous urban destination all year round. More than 300 hectares of parks and gardens adorn Nice, some of which have received "Remarkable Garden" certification, such as the Botanical Garden and the Phoenix Park. Immersed in light, Nice has always attracted and inspired international artists such as Matisse, Chagall, Dufy, Renoir, Cocteau... It has twenty municipal museums and galleries, in addition to a large number of private contemporary art galleries and artist workshops. In Nice, art is also in the streets: the city has long been a veritable contemporary open-air museum. The former slaughterhouse is also a center for artistic creation in Nice, "La Station". The Botox contemporary art network is today a reference on the Côte d'Azur.

<https://www.explorenicecotedazur.com/en/>

Cuisine Nissarde, respect for tradition. Nice cuisine is a reflection of the art of living and respect for regional products, always accompanied by the renowned olive oil and numerous aromatic plants. Nice cuisine follows the natural cycle of the seasons and festivities: in summer, main courses include a tomato salad with sauce and bread, stuffed vegetables, ratatouille and omelettes, the famous Nice salad, mesclun salad and courgette flowers, while during the winter cabbage, leeks, legumes, soups, baked sliced pumpkin and meat or fish stews take center stage. "Merenda e Goustaroun", the authorized street food label, created in 2017, reflects the local custom of eating outdoors. The picnic is practically an art here, and many recipes of Nice cuisine are totally adapted to this tradition.



NORMANDY, LAND OF INSPIRATION

Land of freedom, authenticity and sharing, Normandy stands out as evidence. Because of its history, it symbolizes peace; due to its "savoir-faire", it is projected throughout the world; Due to its immense natural spaces, it embodies a return to the origins. Normandy, land of inspiration, has always welcomed artists, impressionist painters and writers in its territory. Today, beyond the essential visits, it offers surprising outings, out of the ordinary and full of magic to turn holidays into a unique experience. In the heart of Normandy lies Lisieux, which is world-renowned for its UNESCO-honored Basilica dedicated to Sainte-Thérèse. In the nearby valleys, you will find small roads lined with Norman half-timbered houses, beautiful mansions, churches and castles out of time. Now also enjoy the famous Norman cheeses.

<https://www.normandie-tourisme.fr/>

Cider, cheese, fish... and more, Cider, calvados and camembert are the outstanding products of gastronomy in Normandy. But there are more jewels for the palate... Thanks to its climate and the richness of its meadows, Normandy offers an exceptional range of dairy products having several producers, well known among gourmets: Camembert de Normandie, Pont l'Évêque, Livarot, Neufchâtel, Crème and Beurre, without forgetting other jewels such as yogurts, creams, dairy desserts, and "teurgoule" (dessert based on rice pudding and cinnamon)... With 10 million apple trees that flourish in Normandy, the Norman fields are at the forefront of the production of the most prestigious products derived from cider, and with 600 km. of coasts, Normandy could only be a great marine region. Sole, turbot, whiting, mackerel or blond fish are some of the fish that gourmet palates can enjoy. Normandy is the first producing region of oysters, mussels, sea snails and scallops.



OCCITANIA, A REGION AND FOUR UNIVERSES

With its preserved natural spaces and impressive landscapes, an exceptional heritage and well-known lifestyle, as well as activities for everyone and everywhere, Occitania is in itself a little France, with its own accent and cherished customs. The region is bathed by the waters of the Mediterranean, from the Camargue to the Roussillon, along 220 km. with preserved beaches and a clean sea, a family atmosphere and nautical activities for everyone. In the south, along the Spanish border, the Pyrenees rise to more than 3,000m. To the east and north, the Massif Central adds more relief to Occitania, with the Aubrac and the Cévennes, whose mountains rise to 1,000 and 1,500 m altitude. Slow down, enjoy free time, switch to slow mode... it's possible in Gascony, Les Corbières, Larzac or the Dordogne valley. Finally, cities such as Toulouse, the capital of the region, and Montpellier, known among the French for their quality of life, are among the European capitals of urban tourism.

<https://www.tourisme-occitanie.com/>

Between land and sea, unforgettable flavors. Prepare to be delighted, as Occitania has a long and solid gastronomic tradition based on exceptional local expertise and noble products: foie gras, black truffle, Roquefort and, in the Mediterranean, the Bouzigues oyster, the Lucques olive from the Languedoc, the rice from the Camargue or even the anchovy from Collioure. Occitania has more than 250 products with seals of quality: from Quercy lamb to Nîmes strawberries, Pélardon cheese from the Cévennes... One must try unique specialties such as cassoulet, or the cabbage soup known as garbure and the sweet called miles in the Pyrénées, the aligot in Aubrac, and both regions share the tradition of the cake roasted on a spit. The Mediterranean coast will light up your palate with sunny notes with cod brandade from Nîmes, cargolada (grilled snails) or bull gardiane (stew). And of course, everyone knows the tielle (kind of round cake stuffed with crustaceans) from Sète and the Catalan cream.



LOIRE VALLEY, CASTLES AND MUCH MORE

Declared a **World Heritage Site** by UNESCO, the Loire Valley is the backbone of the Centre-Loire Valley region. The so-called "Valley of the Kings" is populated by an infinity of castles, 15 of them considered "Great Sites of the Loire Valley". The best way to get to know this land, in symbiosis with the environment, is to cycle through it thanks to the route the Loire by Bike, a 900 km itinerary that follows the course of the Loire, between vineyards and castles. To the south lies the Berry countryside, a place not so crowded but with much to offer: private mansions, secret gardens, vineyards world-famous or dynamic cities, as well as natural spaces such as the Brenne Regional Natural Park, and to the north of the region a different environment, both urban with Chartres and its World Heritage cathedral, and natural with the Eure valley, a intimate and authentic setting dotted with traditional villages such as Maintenon, famous for its castle and its unfinished aqueduct, a crazy idea of Louis XIV.

<https://www.valleedelloira-france.es/>

Gastronomy of kings. The Loire Valley also owes its fame to its art of living and its local gastronomy, inherited from an epicurean tradition considered today, and since the Renaissance, as a reference in the world. The Loire Valley invites you to (re)discover and savor all the charms of the region through its chefs, its local producers, its winegrowers, its emblematic products and its culinary specialities. Its horticultural fields provide excellent fruit and vegetables such as asparagus, Nantes lamb's lettuce, apples and pears... While the Loire offers excellent coastal fish, such as pike-perch and pike, the coastline abounds in good sea fish and seafood. Without forgetting the quality meat, such as the Géline de Touraine hen or the Rouge des Prés cow. And what about its cheeses, delicious and famous like few others: Curé Nantais, Sainte-Maure de Touraine, Selles-sur-Cher... Products enhanced with condiments also from here, such as saffron, Guérande salt or vinegar Orleans. **T**

