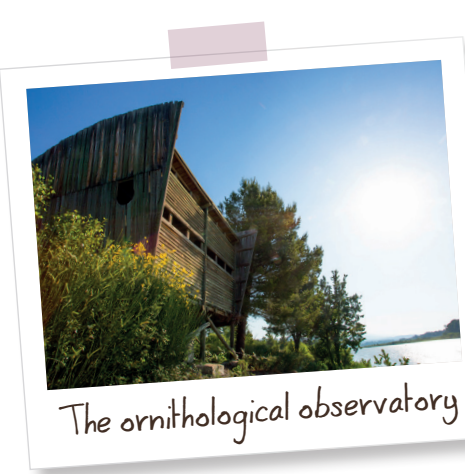


1 avenue des Bruillères
84360 Mérindol
Tél. 04 32 50 20 82
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THE CARAVANE FOOD TRUCK



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The ornithological observatory



The Mill at the Old Castle
Boudoire Frères



The Durance

Other sites to explore in Mérindol

The ornithological observatory:

Located on the bank of the Durance heading towards Pertuis, the observatory gives you the chance to spot around 240 species of birds - some resident, others passing through - in complete discretion. This little walk begins at the 'La Garrigue' space, a picnic spot and the starting point for a fitness trail.

For more information, please contact the tourist office.

The Mill at the Old Castle - Boudoire Frères:

An olive mill located in a 16th-century building. The property was purchased by the Boudoire family in the mid-20th century. At that time, stone millstones were still used to crush the olives. Today, the equipment is fully compliant with European hygiene and safety norms, while maintaining the utmost respect for the ancient manufacturing traditions. Every year, the mill crushes some 200 tonnes of olives, brought here by 800 local producers.

The mill is open to visitors.



Want some suggestions for walks from Mérindol?

1 Between Garrigue and Durance

4 KM - EASY

Starting point: the shady car park in the communal forest of La Garrigue.

To appreciate the considerable diversity of fauna and flora in this part of the Luberon, set off along the trail from 'La Garrigue', in the shade of the Aleppo pines, and walk across this garrigue vegetation that will delight the botanists among you. Drink in the breathtaking view of the river, the orchards and the water.

A detailed information sheet about this walk can be obtained from the tourist office and www.cheminsdesparcs.fr

From 1 July 1 to 15 September, access to the forests of Vaucluse is regulated by prefectural decree. If you want to go walking in the forest please call +33(0)4 78 31 77 11 or your tourist information office beforehand.



Your tourist information office

Cavaillon Branch

Place François Tourel - 84300 Cavaillon
contact@luberoncoeurdeprovence.com
+33(0)4.90.71.32.01

Lourmarin Branch

Place Henri Barthélémy - 84160 Lourmarin
lourmarin@luberoncoeurdeprovence.com
+33(0)4.90.68.10.77

Check our office opening hours on our website here:

www.luberoncoeurdeprovence.com

*You will find a tourist information office at Mérindol town hall.

BALADES À CHEVAL

ELEVAGE DU FACI
CISSOU et FABIEN

Dans un cadre familial venez découvrir à cheval ou à poney nos somptueuses balades dans le Luberon ou au bord de la Durance.

PROMENADES À PONEY
et en CALÈCHE

elevagedufaci.com - mazza.fabien@yahoo.fr

Mazza Fabien et Cécile
Éleveurs de chevaux et poneys
689 Les Bas Isclons - 84360 Mérindol
06 20 86 20 31 ou 06 83 93 55 77

Le Moulin à huile du Vieux Château date du XVIII^{ème} siècle. Il se trouve au cœur du village de Mérindol. Depuis quatre siècles, la fabrication d'huile d'olive se perpétue sous sa voûte chargée d'histoire. C'est la cinquième génération de la famille Boudoire qui perpétue la tradition. Particularité du Moulin : on broie les Olives à la meule de pierre.

On y propose trois catégories d'huile d'olive :

- Huile d'olive vierge extra tradition
- Huile d'olive vierge extra AOP
- Huile d'olive vierge à l'ancienne

MOULIN À HUILE DU VIEUX CHÂTEAU
8 Rue du Moulin à Huile 84360 Mérindol
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① Church of Sainte-Anne



② The Protestant Temple



③ La Muse (Museum of Waldensian History)



④ The Waldensian Memorial



Viewpoint indicator

Nestling alongside the mountain, Mérindol is a picturesque village surrounded by garrigue vegetation and olive groves. Its location between Durance and Luberon is ideal for visitors keen to explore the remarkable natural surroundings. Walkers will love it. The village is also known for its connections to the history of the Waldensians, a persecuted religious minority, who first settled here in the late 15th century. Entirely destroyed in 1545, the village of Mérindol remains, to this day, the guardian of a memory that has very much left its mark on modern-day Provence.

This document invites you to travel back in time from the present-day village to the ruins of Old Mérindol, guided by the most important local monuments. As you meander along the village streets, you can also admire many small architectural details (such as dates and inscriptions engraved on the stone) which will tell you the history of the sites and the religion.

① Church of Sainte-Anne

The Church of Sainte-Anne was built after the Waldensian episode. It dates back to the 1750s, when a permanent building replaced the wooden chapel built in 1667. The latter had become too cramped by that time, in light of the forced conversions caused by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The church fell into disrepair during the Revolution, before being restored and enlarged during the 19th century. The blond shell limestone façade is geometrical and sober in appearance. Its Saracen onion dome bell tower, unique in the region, soars above the village. The interior walls are covered with a light-coloured plaster, leaving only the main elements in red limestone visible: the arcades punctuating the bays of the nave, the arcades of the side chapels, the band encircling the nave and the choir at the base of the vault. The decorative elements include a number of works from the 18th and 19th centuries, among them two wooden altars, a Madonna and Child in polychrome wood and, on either side of the choir, a painting depicting Saint Anne and Mary and another depicting the Virgin in glory.

② The Protestant Temple

Over the course of history, the village of Mérindol has had a number of buildings devoted to Protestant worship. The first, built in the mid-16th century, was enlarged a century later and then destroyed in 1685. The remains of its bell tower can still be seen today at the corner of the Rue des Gascons and Rue des Écoles. This tower is referred to as the 'belfry'. The current temple dates from 1808. The decoration is sober, in line with the Protestant ideal. However, the layout of the hall used for the religious services reveals the excellent design of the space and its acoustics. The façade features a rudimentary bell gable, a portal topped

by a frieze, two semi-circular bays and a sundial. On the building's left-hand exterior wall, a panel made in 1998 recalls the significant dates of Protestantism in Mérindol. The building was last restored in 2006.

③ La Muse (Museum of Waldensian History)

La Muse is a space devoted to the memory of Mérindol's Waldensian past and, in a broader sense, to the Waldensian movement throughout Luberon. A themed library for use by students and researchers complements the exhibition hall. This cultural institution is run by the Association d'Études Vaudoises et Historiques du Luberon (Luberon Association for Waldensian and Historical Studies). It is located in an old sheep pen, itself built on landscaped grounds with a picnic area. One of the main long-distance hiking trails in the region (the GR 6) passes through it. See our website for the museum's opening times: www.luberoncoeurdeprovence.com

④ The Waldensian Memorial

The Waldensian Memorial stands on a rocky spur of the Petit Luberon, at the site of the old village of Mérindol, which has overlooked the Durance Valley since the first half of the 13th century. At that time, a town was gradually built and then fortified around a castrum, or stronghold. By the early 14th century, it had some 40 dwellings (around 200 inhabitants). The village was abandoned in 1348 in the aftermath of several decades of war and, especially, the Black Death epidemic that was ravaging a large part of Provence at the time.

From 1495 onwards, over a thousand Waldensian families from the Alps were invited to settle in Mérindol and in 16 villages across the Luberon. Essentially, the landowners were seeking ways of repopulating the countryside and bringing life back to their lands. At this time, people once again lived at the site of the castrum of Mérindol. The Waldensians came with their culture and, above all, their faith, inherited from Pierre Valo, a late-12th-century preacher from Lyon. He advocated an ideal of poverty, which he claimed was consistent with the Gospel.

In 1532, the Waldensians officially joined the Protestant Reformation of the synod of Chanforan. Having effectively affirmed their opposition to the Catholic Church by doing so, they were deemed heretics and increasingly persecuted until 1545. In April of that year, the Mérindol decree was applied by the Aix parliament, in the person of its president Jean Maynier d'Oppède, who decreed 'the complete extirpation of the said Waldensians and Lutherans'. As a result, some 3,000 inhabitants of the Luberon and Monts de Vaucluse were murdered in the name of their faith. As for the village of Mérindol, it was razed to the ground. The 17th century saw the development of what is now the present-day village of Mérindol at the foot of the rocky spur. In 1978, the Waldensian Memorial was inaugurated in the ruins of the castrum. Excavations were undertaken on the site in 1992. The vestiges found there include a wall over 1.2 metres thick that is believed to indicate the existence of a keep. Two more recent walls could be the remains of a small fort built in the mid-16th century. Pieces of ceramics dating from the 13th and 16th centuries were also found, they too bearing witness to the two main periods of the site's occupation.



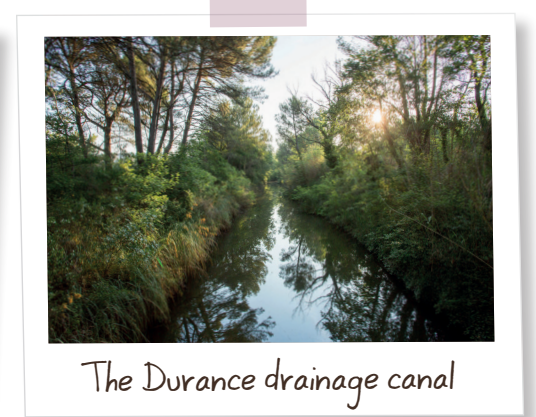
Saracen onion dome bell tower



The Durance Valley



Ruins of the old castle



The Durance drainage canal