



PUY-de-DÔME

THE AUVERGNE OF VOLCANOES

a volcanic destination
with high emotional potential!

2025 Press kit
Travels in the Puy de Dôme

PRESS OFFICER

Aurélia Maitre

06 13 63 98 78

aurelia.maitre@puy-de-dome.fr



1 Grand Site de France
Le puy de Dôme



2 UNESCO

- World Heritage Sites
- Chaîne des Puy - Limagne fault
 - Notre-Dame-du-Port in Clermont-Ferrand



3 winter sports resorts

10 Nordic areas



7 Blue Flag beaches



14 listed villages

- 2 "most beautiful villages in France"
12 small towns with character



392 short hiking trails



80 volcanoes

2 regional nature parks

4 national nature reserves



5 thermal spas

17 Sensitive Natural Areas

Puy-de-Dôme

A VOLCANIC DESTINATION FOR GUARANTEED
FUN, RELAXATION AND EMOTION!

sommaire

- 4 The contrasting landscapes of the Puy-de-Dôme: a journey to the 4 corners of the world!
- 8 A geological journey: Volcanoes, from top to bottom!
- 10 Rising above it all in Puy-de-Dôme: 10 breathtaking experiences!
- 12 Lakes
a walking or cycling itinerary out in the wide blue yonder
- 14 Town and city visits:
The Puy-de-Dôme: a "rolling stones" tour from Riom to Issoire via Clermont-Ferrand
- 16 Water towns: a dive into the art of living in Auvergne!
- 18 Travel through time:
A visit to a little-known land, the home of the Arverni people!
- 20 Nature and know-how:
when geography influences creation!
- 22 Culinary journey:
Products with character for a cuisine of contrasts and volcanoes

In the heart of the Auvergne region, just 3 and a half hours from Paris, the Puy-de-Dôme is a multi-faceted destination and a source of great emotions. And what emotions they are: the Chaîne des Puys - the Limagne fault, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the famous 1,465 metre-high Puy, or volcanic peak, that gave its name to the département, the Puy de Sancy - the highest in France: there's no doubt about it, the Puy-de-Dôme has volcanic DNA! But that's not all! The Puy-de-Dôme is much more than just a trip to the land of fire: it's a journey through geology, architecture and culinary delights, between mountains and valleys, where you can take in the sights and sounds, on foot or by bike, taking your time, and making the most of the area's extensive know-how and thermal baths!

XXL spaces, age-old techniques, local recipes and customs, protected areas, sensitive landscapes: the natural, cultural and human riches of the Puy-de-Dôme are uniquely precious. With limited tourist flows, activities based around geology and biodiversity, support for the local economy, the destination is committed to developing eco-responsible and sustainable tourism.

Take a pink garlic cure, see the volcanoes from a hot-air balloon, make paper in a mill, take care of your microbiota at Châtel-Guyon, wander through the little Colorado of Auvergne, explore the Gergovia plateau, discover Clermont-Ferrand, cycle through the heart of the volcanoes, photograph the Amazon, Auvergne-style... Whether it's summer or winter, with or without snow, the appeal of activities or landscapes, **the Puy-de-Dôme offers a range of experiences for guaranteed fun, relaxation and emotion!**

2025, THE YEAR OF THE BICYCLE!



The Tour de France is back again this year, exploring the landscapes and roads of the Puy-de-Dôme. On July 14, the département will host the 10th stage of the men's Tour de France between Ennezat and Le Mont-Dore. On the program: 163km, from the Plaine de Limagne, to the tough climbs of the Chaîne des Puys, to the mythic cols (Guéry, Croix Morand, Croix Saint-Robert) of the Sancy. On the women's side, on July 31, Clermont-Ferrand will be the starting town for the 6th stage of the women's Tour de France, heading for Ambert and the slopes of the Livradois-Forez.

The contrasting landscapes of the Puy-de-Dôme

a journey to the 4 corners
of the world!

THE PUY-DE-DÔME IS A REAL MOSAIC OF LANDSCAPES, WITH EACH VALLEY AND SUMMIT TELLING ITS OWN UNIQUE STORY IN A BLEND OF RAW NATURE AND GENTLE HORIZONS.

To the east, the Chaîne des Puys and the puy de Dôme offer a fabulous vision of volcanism in Auvergne , with its domes, craters and volcanic lakes. To the south, the more mountainous Massif du Sancy with the Monts Dore is characterised by steep peaks and breathtaking views. And let's not forget the mountains and intimate forests of Livradois-Forez and the villages of the Issoire region. Volcanic peaks, summits, waterfalls, verdant valleys, lush forests and high-altitude meadows: the diversity of landscapes in the Puy-de-Dôme is a window on the world!



PUY DE DÔME: the unclassifiable most famous volcano in Auvergne

The highest peak (1,465 m) in the Chaîne des Puys - Limagne fault tectonic belt and a UNESCO World Heritage site, the Puy de Dôme offers a unique view of a line of 80 volcanoes extending over 40 kilometres. The Panoramique des Dômes, with its many footpaths and cogwheel train, is both an extraordinary getaway and an intense experience.

LES MONTS DORE

a hint of Réunion Island

Summits, crater lakes, springs, forests - set in the heart of the Auvergne Volcanoes Natural Park, the Monts Dore form the second largest volcanic area in the Auvergne. Older than the Chaîne des Puys, they are made up of the volcanic massifs of Sancy, Banne d'Ordanche, Aiguiller and Adventif, divided by passes formed by glaciers and dominated by the Puy de Sancy at 1,886 m. The Vallée de Chaudefour and Chastreix-Sancy national nature reserves are also located in Les Monts Dore.

PUY DU SANCY: the highest (strato)volcano in France!

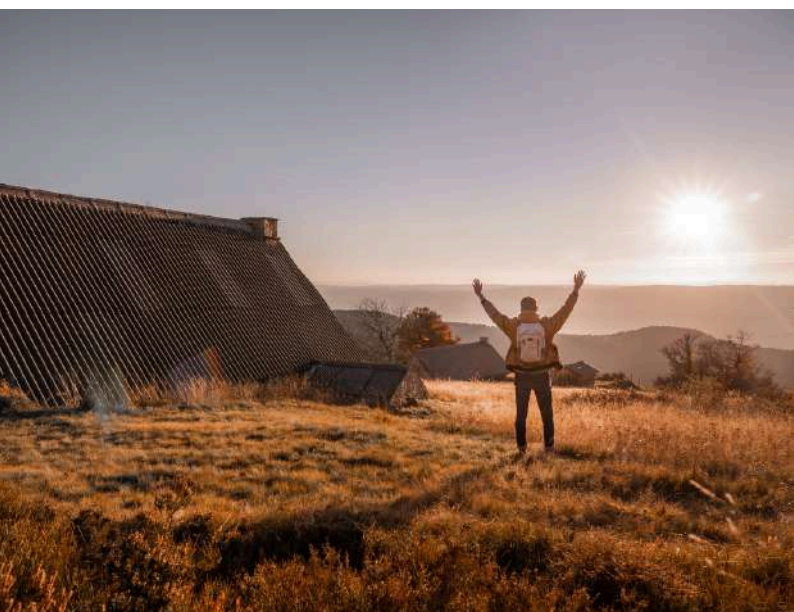
Surrounded by mysterious green valleys, the Puy de Sancy is one of the region's landmarks. Formed following the collapse of an ancient stratovolcano, it boasts a remarkable view over the unspoilt landscapes of the Monts Dore, Cézallier and the Monts du Cantal. At its foot, Le Mont-Dore is undeniably the most mountainous of spa resorts!



MONTS DU FOREZ:

the roof of the eastern Auvergne

It's an enchanting picture: far from the hustle and bustle of the world, little known to the general public, the Monts du Forez are dotted with undulating ridges rising to 1,640 m and deep forests. Here, the solitary moors of the Hautes-Chaumes and their jasseries (traditional small farms) form an authentic territory where you can reconnect with the essentials. Like a journey back in time, some can be visited to learn about the daily life of farmers in days gone by, and the ancestral skills that have shaped the area.



THE ROCKY PEAKS OF LEMBRON:

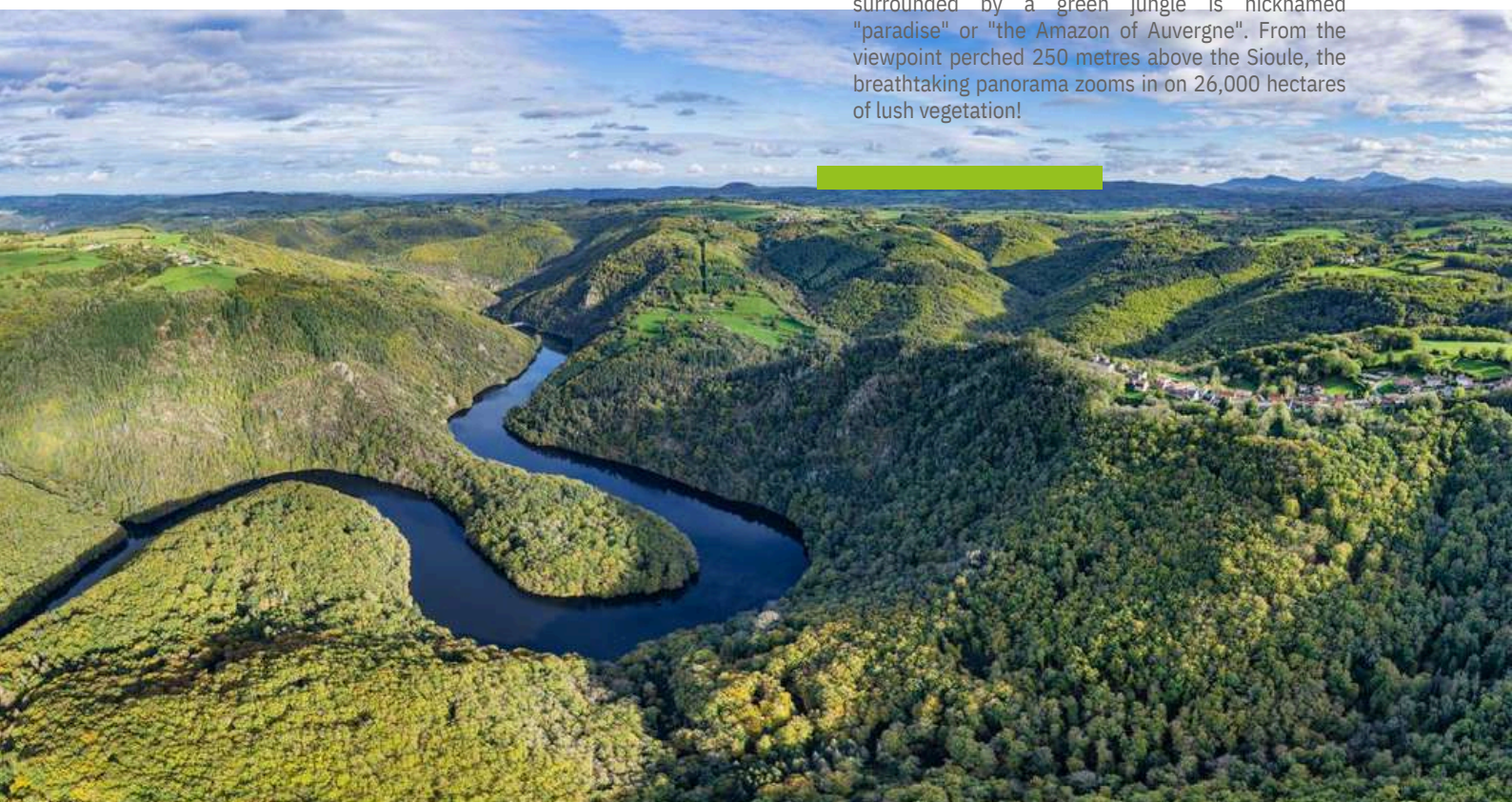
an air of Catalonia

In the south of the department, near Issoire, the rocky peaks of the Lembron carve bold silhouettes into the valleys. These rocky summits bear witness to the intense volcanic activity that shaped the area millions of years ago. These include the Pic de Nonette and the Pic du Brionnet with their spectacular views over the Limagne plain and the foothills of the Cézallier massif, and hilltop villages such as Usson, which is listed as one of the "Most Beautiful Villages in France".

THE QUEUILLE MEANDE

a postcard from Amazonia

The Sioule meanders through the landscape, creating enchanting curves and natural works of art. In Queuille, an immense blue and sinuous loop surrounded by a green jungle is nicknamed "paradise" or "the Amazon of Auvergne". From the viewpoint perched 250 metres above the Sioule, the breathtaking panorama zooms in on 26,000 hectares of lush vegetation!

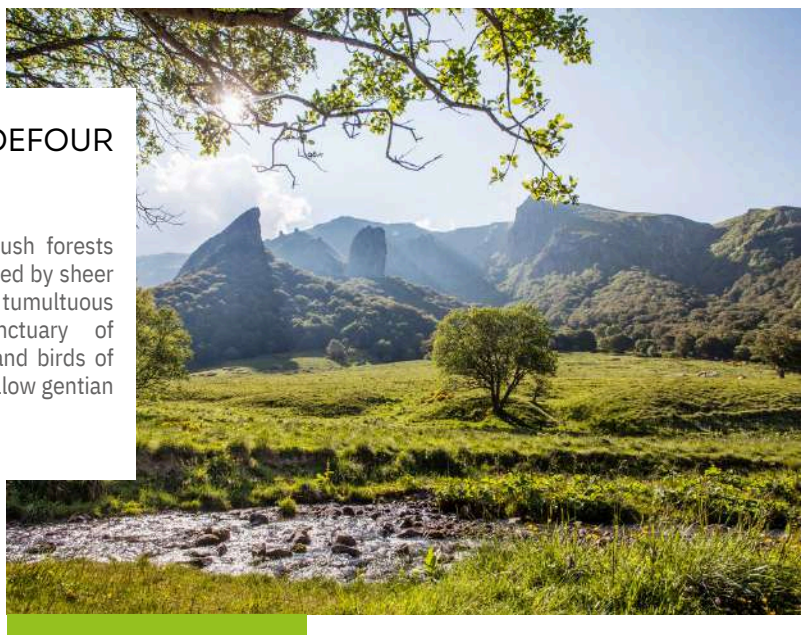




THE VALLÉE DE CHAUDEFOR NATURE RESERVE:

a close link with Laos!

With its waterfalls, crystal-clear streams, lush forests and high meadows, this glacial valley, bordered by sheer cliffs, bears witness to the region's tumultuous geological history. This incredible sanctuary of biodiversity is home to chamois, marmots and birds of prey, as well as rare plant species such as yellow gentian and arnica.



LES MONTS DU CÉZALLIER or is it Scotland?!

Nicknamed the "Land of Great Spaces", Les Monts du Cézallier are characterised by their infinite plateaux where the sky seems to stretch on forever. Halfway between the Sancy massif to the north and the Monts du Cantal to the south, and right in the heart of the Parc Naturel Régional des Volcans d'Auvergne, glaciers have shaped these plateaux into curves and humps, creating the perfect landscapes for the cows who live in these meadows dotted with small villages!



THE PLATEAU DU GUÉRY plateau with its Mongolian Steppe appeal

Forests, mountain pastures, a lake, the Guéry waterfall, volcanic spurs, wetlands, flower-filled peat bogs - at an altitude of 1,400 metres, this plateau boasts an exceptional diversity of landscapes, natural curiosities and 360° views of the massifs. Popular with hikers, the spot is also popular with film-makers: it was here that Asterix and Obelix: The Middle Kingdom was filmed.

A geological journey

Volcanoes, from top to bottom!

MAJESTIC VOLCANOES, SOARING PEAKS, BREATHTAKING CRATERS, CRYSTAL-CLEAR LAKES, MYSTERIOUS CAVES, FLAMING CLAY CHIMNEYS, SPECTACULAR FORMATIONS, IMMERSIVE LAVA FLOWS: MOTHER NATURE HAS BEQUEATHED THE PUY-DE-DÔME WITH A UNIQUE GEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND EXCEPTIONAL LANDSCAPES. WHETHER YOU HEAD UNDERGROUND OR STAY ABOVE GROUND, TAKE A GUIDED TOUR FOR A UNIQUE ADVENTURE AND A CHANCE TO LET GO!

UNDERGROUND

VULCANIA

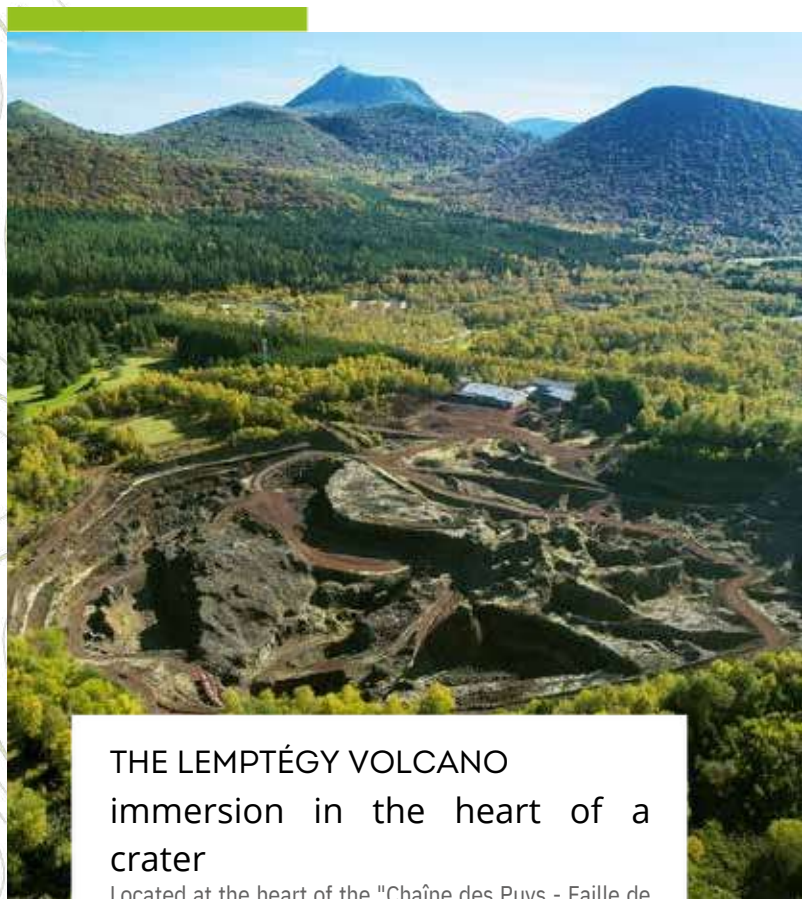
an interactive dive into the world of volcanoes

The only park of its kind in Europe, Vulcania is dedicated to the fascinating world of volcanoes and natural phenomena and is itself actually carved out of a 30,000-year-old lava flow! With immersive experiences, 5D films, interactive trails, scientific theatre and a captive balloon, the park brings the forces of the earth to life in life-size mode! **Bonus: its planetarium is the largest in France, and is perfect for furthering your understanding of our planet!**

THE GROTTÉ DE LA PIERRE IN VOLVIC: A MINERAL TREASURE TROVE

A former quarry gallery, the Grotte de la Pierre takes visitors back to the world of the quarrymen who helped to discover the source of Volvic's waters. Water games, lights, magical decor: for 1 hour 15 minutes, we follow in the footsteps of Jean Legay-Chevalier, an important stone quarryman in 1900.

Bonus: the Scénovision® tour under a vault of lava!



THE LEMPTÉGY VOLCANO

immersion in the heart of a crater

Located at the heart of the "Chaîne des Puys - Faille de Limagne" tectonic fault, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this unique natural site in Europe offers visitors the chance to discover the bowels of an open-air volcano, with a trail that reveals its structure, volcanic bombs and lava vents. **Bonus: the Volcano Awakens, a night-time event with breathtaking special effects!**



ABOVE GROUND

LAC PAVIN

a mysterious jewel

In the heart of the Monts Dore, nestling in the crater of an ancient volcano dating back almost 7,000 years, Lac Pavin is a natural setting at an altitude of 1,200 metres. Crystal-clear water, an almost perfect circle 800 metres in diameter, enigmatic beauty, a mysterious aura matched by local legends: this lake of volcanic origin has always inspired admiration and fascination. **Bonus: in summer and winter alike, take the 2.7 km hiking trail around the site, in the heart of a beautiful beech forest.**

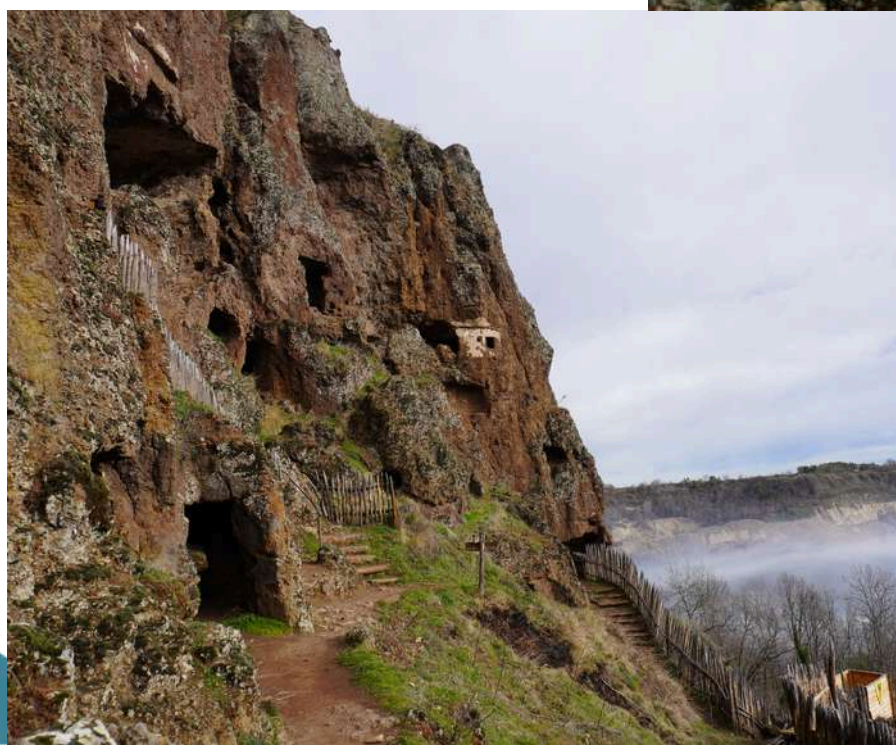
THE MONTELOUX BASALT COLUMNS a geology lesson!

Masterpieces of nature, the Montpeloux basalt columns were formed 18 million years ago, when lava cooled in columns. Standing 70 metres high like natural cathedrals, they stand proudly in a lush green setting, offering a breathtaking **panorama**. **The plus : the 200-seat theatre, in the heart of the crater, which hosts the Montpeloux Volcano Festival every year, with fantastic acoustics!**



THE FAIRY CHIMNEYS OF BOUDES: the little Colorado of Auvergne!

In the Vallée des Saints in Boudes, a small village surrounded by vineyards, the fairy chimneys are geological formations of red clay sculpted by erosion in flamboyant colours and astonishing shapes, creating a truly fairytale setting. **Bonus: the village of Boudes, famous for its wine, one of the most famous in the Auvergne!**



THE GROTTES DE JONAS

a troglodyte fortress in the heart of a volcano

Carved by man into the volcanic rock at Saint-Pierre-Colamine, the Grottes de Jonas tell a fascinating story of art, architecture and geology. Comprising a chapel with exceptional 11th century frescoes, a bakery with a bread oven, a castle and around sixty caves used as living quarters and storerooms, this troglodyte dwelling takes visitors straight back into the Middle Ages!

Bonus: dramatised medieval tours during the summer

Rising above it all in Puy-de-Dôme: 10 breathtaking experiences!



HIGH-ALTITUDE ADVENTURES ARE THE BEST WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE PUY-DE-DÔME AND PROMISE TOTAL IMMERSION IN THE GRANDEUR AND DIVERSITY OF ITS LANDSCAPES. IN A HOT-AIR BALLOON, PARAGLIDING, ON FOOT OR BY BIKE, THESE BODY-TO-BODY ENCOUNTERS WITH NATURE ARE ALWAYS EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEYS, WHETHER YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ADRENALIN OR CONTEMPLATIVE MOMENTS. BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH, HERE ARE 10 UNUSUAL SPOTS AND ACTIVITIES THAT BLEND ADVENTURE, NATURE AND WONDER.

BALLOONING OVER A CLUSTER OF VOLCANOES

The promise of a gentle, unique experience, a trip in a hot-air balloon takes you over the majestic volcanoes of the Chaîne des Puys or the sparkling waters of Lac Chambon as you float silently in the wind. Craters, cones, domes, massifs and lakes, a balloon ride is the perfect way to contemplate the exceptional beauty of the Puy-de-Dôme from the air.





TANDEM PARAGLIDING AND AEROBATICS

If you want to get up close and personal with the peaks of Auvergne, there's nothing like tandem paragliding with a paragliding instructor. The colourful fields of the Limagne plain, the curves of the volcanoes, the reflections in the immense lakes: the grandiose landscapes and geology of the Chaîne des Puys are revealed here in 360°!

PLAYING MASTER OF THE WORLD

from the panoramic tower
of Prabouré, on foot

Perched at the top of the Livradois-Forez mountains, the panoramic tower of Prabouré, in Saint-Anthème, is not just the perfect Instagram spot. At 32 metres high, it's also the starting point for France's biggest dry toboggan slide! Thrills guaranteed!

THE FADES VÉLORAIL

a bike ride perched high
above the Sioule river

A masterpiece of Belle Époque civil engineering, the Viaduc des Fades was the highest bridge in the world when it was inaugurated! "Saved" by Stéphane Bern's heritage lottery in 2019, it is now only accessible by electric Velorail from Les Ancizes station. A unique experience at a height of 133 metres, this escapade offers 7.5 km of descent, 3 cool tunnels, a breathtaking view of the Combrailles and lots of other excitement along the way!



5 OTHER WAYS

TO GET ON TOP OF THINGS!

THE SUMMIT OF PUY-DE-DÔME

with the Panoramique des Dômes

The Panoramique des Dômes electric cogwheel train offers an exceptional panoramic view of the volcanoes that make up the Chaîne des Puys and the Limagne fault, climbing to an altitude of 1,465 metres in just 15 minutes!

CHÂTEAU DE MUROL,

a 360° view of the Auvergne

At an altitude of 1,000 metres, this medieval fortress is perched on a volcanic promontory, providing a breathtaking views of the Massif du Sancy, the Jassat valley, Lac Chambon and the Auvergne volcanoes.



CHÂTEAU ROCHER

a natural mosaic at 600 metres above sea
level

In the heart of the Combrailles region, in a beautiful green setting, Château Rocher, a medieval military fortress, dominates the Sioule valley with spectacular views over the rugged landscape and the winding river below.

THE PERCHED CHAPEL OF THE PIC DE BRIONNET:

a spiritual climb that provides a complete
change of scenery

The Pic de Brionnet is well worth a visit: at an altitude of 927 metres, the little chapel that sits on a basalt peak overlooks the village of Saurier and takes in the whole of the Auvergne, including the Chaîne des Puys, the Sancy massif and the Couze Pavin valley.

THE CHURCH OF SAINT-NECTAIRE:

like a crown on Mount Cornadore

Considered one of the most beautiful Romanesque churches in the Auvergne, this church is perched on the heights of Saint-Nectaire overlooking the Couze valley and is illuminated by its 19th-century stained glass windows.

THE LAKES

of the Puy-de-Dôme

a walking or cycling itinerary out in the wide blue yonder

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THE LAKES TO TAKE YOU TO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SHORELINES IN THE PUY-DE-DÔME! NESTLING IN THE CRATERS OF VOLCANOES, OF VOLCANIC, GLACIAL OR TECTONIC ORIGIN, THEY ADD A COOL TOUCH TO ANY HIKE!

ON FOOT

short or long hikes, loops or themed walks, the Puy-de-Dôme is a real hiker's paradise!



THE TOUR DES LACS D'Auvergne

the most mineral/ 198 km

This emblematic long-distance hiking trail (GR®30) offers total immersion in the heart of the Auvergne countryside, through forests, high-altitude meadows and authentic villages, and follows a route that takes in 4 lakes.

Highlights: Lac Chambon with its natural beaches, Lac Pavin surrounded by dense forests, Lac d'Aydat - the largest natural lake in the Auvergne, and Lac de Guéry, which is famous for its mountain scenery and winter ice fishing.

THE DÔMES LOOP:

the most typical From 49 to 62 km

A veritable concentration of volcanoes over 2 to 3 days, this route allows you to discover the Chaîne des Puys with its sleeping volcanoes, "cheires" (solidified lava flows), forests and incredible panoramas.

The highlight: at an altitude of 1,465 m, at the top of the Puy de Dôme, the view over the 80 volcanoes in a row that make up the Chaîne des Puys.

VOLCANO WALKS AT SUNSET:

the most amazing! / From 5 to 6 km

In summer, the volcanoes that make up the Chaîne des Puys provide the perfect setting for unforgettable sunset hikes accompanied by passionate mountain guides. These 100% nature experiences give visitors the opportunity to discover the region's remarkable natural areas, from the Puy des Gouttes to the heights of the Châtel-Guyon spa, via the Coteau du Puy Saint-Jean in Artonne.

The reward: a chance to taste local products (Gapéron, charcuterie, etc.) from local producers and farms, while the sunset sets the Chaîne des Puys ablaze!





THE SANCY LOOP:

the most protected **From 39 to 85 km**

The route, which is divided into 3 loops of between 39 and 85 km, crosses the mountains of Auvergne, taking in unusual landscapes such as Lac Pavin and Lac du Chambon, the towns and villages of Le Mont-Dore, Besse and La Bourboule, and above all the Puy de Sancy, at 1,885 metres.

Bonus: crossing the 2 nature reserves of Chaudefour and Chastreix, real reservoirs of biodiversity and home to marmots and mouflons.

THE RED COW ROUTE:

the most dreamy **From 135 to 181 km**

An ode to contemplation, this 8-stage walk, with two alternative route options, takes in the unspoilt Cézaillier high plateaux between the Monts du Cantal and the Massif du Sancy. Villages, churches, abbeys, fountains, wash-houses, bread ovens and a rich vernacular heritage make this a journey totally unforgettable!

LA GTVA (grande traversée des volcans d'auvergne)

the most volcanic / **210 km**

NEW

A real adventure in the heart of the Auvergne Volcanoes Natural Park, the GTVA runs through the exceptional landscapes of the Monts Dômes, including the emblematic Chaîne des Puys-Faille de Limagne, the Monts Dore and the foothills of the Cantal massif, finishing in the Cézaillier. More than just a walking route, it's a way of reconnecting with nature and discovering the local intangible heritage in a whole new way!

BY BIKE

loops, greenways or cycle routes, the Puy-de-Dôme by bike combines majestic landscapes with a wide range of itineraries!

THE VIA ALLIER

along the river/ **120 km**

From the plains of the Limagne in the north to the typical hilltop villages of the south of the département, the Via Allier crosses the Puy-de-Dôme quietly over almost 120 km, ranging in altitude from 250 to 650 m. Following the course of the River Allier, the route, partly marked out as a greenway and mostly as a shared-use path, takes in Clermont-Ferrand, Chauriat, Busséol and Issoire, as well as the remarkable villages of Usson and Nonette.

THE GTMC

a legendary route in the heart of the volcanoes / **200 km**

In the Puy-de-Dôme, the Grande Traversée du Massif Central mountain bike route extends over more than 200km of signposted trails and is a challenge with a volcanic temperament! The Chaîne des Puys, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, villages built of Volvic stone, Romanesque churches, crater lakes, steppe landscapes... the wide open spaces make this one of the most beautiful sections of the GTMC, and one of the most accessible on an electrically-assisted mountain bike.



The Puy-de-Dôme, “rolling a from Riom to Issoire via Clermont-Ferrand stones” tour

FROM NORTH TO SOUTH, THE ULTRA-SOFT STONE HEART OF THE PUY-DE-DÔME SYMBOLISES ITS IDENTITY AND TELLS A STORY RICH IN CONTRASTS AND COMPLEMENTARITIES. THE BLACK STONE OF THE RIOM AREA GIVES WAY TO 50 SHADES OF GREY AROUND CLERMONT-FERRAND, TURNING INTO GOLD TOWARDS ISSOIRE. MINERAL/NATURAL, VOLCANIC-HILLY, BLACK-GREY-BLOND - THIS DIVERSITY REFLECTS THE GEOLOGICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL EVOLUTION OF THE REGION, MAKING THE PUY-DE-DÔME A DESTINATION WITH A UNIQUE HERITAGE.



IN THE NORTH

RIOM

a town sculpted in black stone!

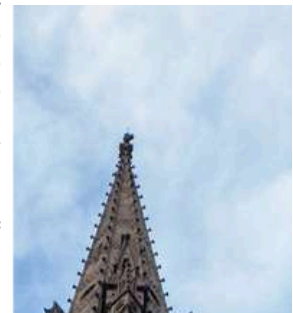
Resistant to compression, water, decomposition and frost, Volvic stone, which comes from the lava flows of the Puy de Nugère, quickly proved to be unrivalled as a building material. With more than 70 monuments protected as historical monuments, Riom, the former capital of the duchies of Auvergne, has a refined heritage and unique emblematic buildings in part thanks to this soft, regular material (the Maison des consuls, the Sainte-Chapelle, the Saint-Amable basilica, the Hôtel Guymoneau and the Musée Mandet). This mineral architecture, mixed with medieval, Renaissance and Gothic influences, can be appreciated from the top of the Tour de l'Horloge, from where the 360° picture postcard view shows a complex tangle of pink roofs and terraces, with Limagne to the east and the wooded hills of the Chaîne des Puys to the west.

IN THE CENTRE

CLERMONT-FERRAND

50 shades of grey!

Arkose in Gallo-Roman times, Volvic stone from the 18th century as well as tuff, basalt and trachyte: over the course of time and influenced by trends, several materials have been used in the development of the regional capital. Volvic stone, which is grey in colour with numerous small bubbles and feldspar, can be found in the mosaics of the Notre-Dame-du-Port basilica, on the whole of the Assomption cathedral, in the construction of the Hôtel Savaron and the Amboise fountain, and also on the famous Michelin star plaques! Medieval or Renaissance architecture, monumental buildings or sculptures, all in shades of that grey contrast elegantly with the luminous landscapes of the surrounding volcanoes. Industrial heritage, workers' housing estates and buildings with the Outstanding Contemporary Architecture label: the Clermont-Ferrand metropolitan area was recently awarded the Pays d'Art et d'Histoire label and has scheduled a number of events and outreach activities for 2025 based on its 20th century heritage.



IN THE SOUTH

ISSOIRE

a tall blonde without black shoes!

Colourful architecture, tiled roofs, a mild, sunny climate, the blonde Limagne stone that catches the light: Issoire definitely has a southern accent! It would be a serious mistake to visit the village without seeing the Abbey Church of Saint-Austremoine (the most decorated in the Auvergne region): this masterpiece of Romanesque art, whose light-coloured stone highlights the sculpted details, is unique in terms of its polychrome decoration. Recognised as the 'Most Beautiful Detour in France', the Tour de l'Horloge offers a unique view of the surrounding mountains: the Sancy massif, the Chaîne des Puys and the Cézallier.



Water towns

a dive into the art of living in Auvergne!

PROUST, BALZAC, THE GONCOURT BROTHERS, GEORGE SAND, COCO CHANEL AND THE MAHARAJAS OF INDIA ALL HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON: THEY ALL VISITED THE WATER TOWNS OF THE PUY-DE-DÔME!

And with good reason: 35 million years ago, geological faults allowed water to circulate at unprecedented depths, enriching it with the minerals that give each spring not only its curative properties, but also a unique history. Châtel-Guyon, La Bourboule, Royat-Chamalières, Mont-Dore or Châteauneuf-les-Bains: with their Belle-Époque heritage, volcanic landscapes and the age-old art of spa treatments, these destinations are an invitation to slow down, reconnect with yourself and explore all that unspoilt nature has to offer.

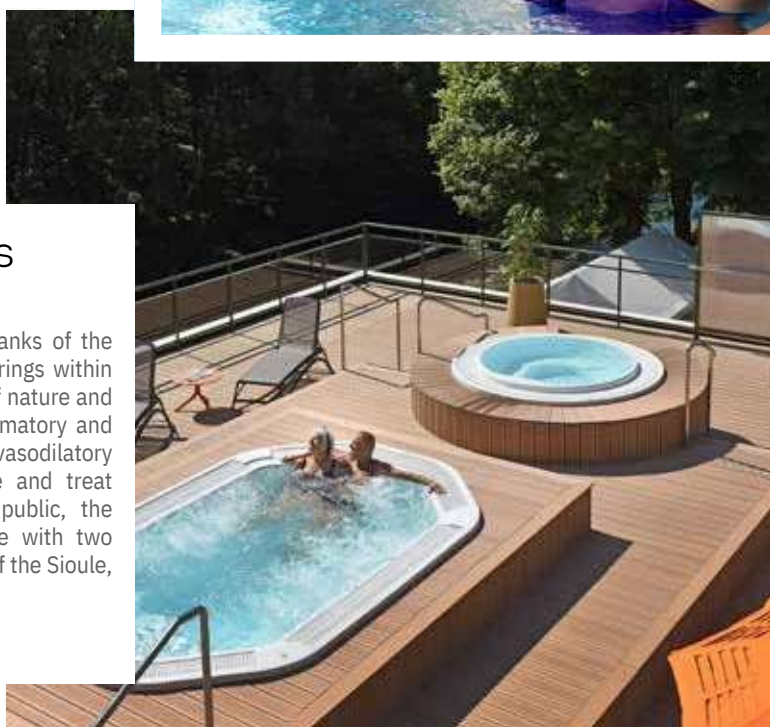
CHÂTEL-GUYON the most innovative

Located in the Parc naturel régional des Volcans d'Auvergne, Châtel-Guyon is the ideal destination for treating body and mind with its waters, which are rich in magnesium, silicon and trace elements. The Aïga Resort is an innovative 15,000 m² complex comprising a thermal waters centre dedicated to cures, a spa, a tourist residence, a nutri-gastronomic restaurant and a microbiota research centre.



CHÂTEAUNEUF-LES-BAINS the closest to nature

Set in a superb natural cirque on the banks of the Sioule, Châteauneuf-les-Bains has 25 springs within a 3km radius. Recommended for lovers of nature and tranquillity, the spa uses the anti-inflammatory and analgesic effects of its waters and the vasodilatory properties of carbon dioxide to soothe and treat rheumatic pain. Open to the general public, the "eSPaCe Sioule" features a roof terrace with two jacuzzis, a sauna and the lapping waters of the Sioule, which flows nearby!





ROYAT-CHAMALIÈRES

the most chic

The Goncourt brothers, George Sand, Sarah Bernhard, Colette, Stéphane Mallarmé and many others before them, including Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie, who gave the resort a boost in 1862, are among the famous people to have praised the merits of Royat-Chamalières! In addition to its Belle Époque heritage, it also boasts volcanic waters, which are rich in dissolved gases and are particularly prized for cardiovascular and rheumatological treatments. Its two wellness centres, Royatonic Bains & Spa and Les Thermes de Royat, offer a wide range of treatments for a complete getaway relaxing between the town and the volcanoes!

Top news: the 170th anniversary of the Thermes de Royat in 2025, with a host of festivities from 27 to 29 June.



LA BOURBOULE

the most family-friendly

Neo-classical, baroque and art deco styles: many buildings from the Belle Époque testify to La Bourboule's influence at the end of the 19th century. Set on the banks of the Dordogne, the resort is renowned for its waters, which have dermatological and respiratory properties, thanks in particular to a spring that emerges at 58° from a water table 80 m below the surface. A touch of the Orient in the heart of the Puy-de-Dôme region, the neo-Byzantine domes of the Grands Thermes house a majestic hall which provides access to a range of treatments dedicated to well-being and relaxation. **Bonus: spa treatments for children aged 18 months and over (respiratory tract) and babies aged 6 months and over (dermatology).**



LE MONT-DORE

the highest

Nestling at the foot of the Puy de Sancy, at an altitude of 1,050 m, Le Mont-Dore is famous for its hot waters (13 thermal springs!), which have been highly prized since ancient times for their relaxing and soothing properties. They're also the richest in silica in France! Inspired by the Caracalla thermal baths in Rome, the Le Mont-Dore thermal baths, some of which are listed Historic Monuments, boast neo-Byzantine architecture with polychrome mosaics and frescoes, a metal framework, domes, marble, Roman ruins and sculptures... Summer and winter alike, **this resort offers a unique experience, combining thermal treatments, outdoor sports and cultural discoveries.**

Travel through time

A visit to a little-known land, the home of the Arverni people!

HEAD FOR THE PUY-DE-DÔME TO PUT AN END TO PRECONCEIVED IDEAS ABOUT THE GAULS AND THEIR WAY OF LIFE! IT WAS HERE THAT THE ARVERNI, ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL PEOPLES OF INDEPENDENT GAUL, SETTLED FROM THE 7TH CENTURY BC UP TO THE ROMAN CONQUEST.

Plateau de Gergovie, Temple de Mercure, Oppidum de Corent and Musée de la Céramique de Lezoux: with their breathtaking scenery, historical remains and immersive experiences, these four sites form an itinerary worthy of a DeLorean, taking you back over 2,000 years in time to join the Arverni leader, Vercingetorix!



THE GERGOVIA PLATEAU: in the footsteps of Vercingetorix

Witness to Vercingetorix's epic defeat of Julius Caesar, this emblematic site and former capital of Gaul, boasts some exceptional archaeological remains. The dedicated museum offers a well-thought-out interactive trail taking visitors back over 2,000 years, with the story of the Battle of Gergovia and the daily life of the Arverni.

Nature: Gergovia is also a magnificent place to enjoy the view over the surrounding volcanic landscapes (the Chaîne des Puys, the Limagne plain, the Sancy massif), with discovery trails around the oppidum to help understand its strategic role. **Good to know: events and historical re-enactments take place regularly.**

THE OPPIDUM DE CORENT: in the footsteps of the Gauls

Located on a plateau overlooking the Limagne, 15km from Gergovia, this exceptional archaeological site reveals a monumental Gallic town centre. A signposted trail offers a glimpse of the way of life in the oppidum, organised around shops, workshops and dwellings. Hundreds of thousands of objects have been discovered here during major archaeological digs, particularly in the sanctuary, including weapons, tools, jewellery and traces of ritual banquets. A virtual tour and an audio tour complete the visitor trail.

Nature: extending over some fifty hectares, the Corent plateau has steep slopes overlooking the Allier. A 2-hour hike takes in the Oppidum, then a mini canyon hidden by vegetation, before descending to the winegrowing village of Corent and with its typical narrow streets.

Go a little further: Every summer, a guided tour gives visitors a better understanding of Corent's role in the Arverni network.



THE TEMPLE DE MERCURE: in the footsteps of pilgrims

Perched at the summit of Puy de Dôme, the Temple de Mercure, built in the 2nd century AD, is one of the Roman Empire's largest mountain sanctuaries. Like a journey through time, visitors are taken on a journey to the heart of the original temple thanks to a unique immersive virtual and augmented reality experience: from the theatre to the dedication room, where offerings were made to the god Mercury, and then onto the main terrace where sacrificial ceremonies were held.

Nature: the ruins of the sanctuary, magnificently integrated into the volcanic landscape, offer breathtaking views of the Auvergne volcanoes.

Top tip: picturesque, easy and quick (15 mins) access to the summit and the site thanks to the Panoramique des Dômes (electric cogwheel train).

THE MUSÉE DE LA CÉRAMIQUE IN LEZOUX:

in the footsteps of the Romans

A showcase for the archaeological sites of the Puy-de-Dôme, this museum focuses in particular on the Roman Empire's largest ceramic production centre, including terra sigillata. Pottery, tools, moulds: an immersive, interactive trail through modern, dynamic exhibitions lets you explore fascinating collections and discover the secrets of past civilisations, while interactive workshops introduce you to the techniques used by ancient potters.

Bonus: a fun approach for young visitors, with tactile, sensory and digital displays and a whole range of activities for families.



Nature and know-how

when geology influences creation!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO DEVELOP YOUR CREATIVE SOUL WHILE LEARNING ALONGSIDE THE BEST?

Water is an endless source of creation and fascination and acts as an invisible link between the geology of the land and human ingenuity: the water in the Puy-de-Dôme region powers the mills at Thiers and Ambert, petrifies objects at Saint-Nectaire and shapes lava stone. Whether for stationery, objets d'art or cutlery, it's much more than a resource: it embodies the deep-rooted link between a unique geography, shaped by a volcanic past, and age-old know-how. Take a guided tour and learn about the crafts that make the most of local natural resources!



THE KNIFE-MAKING WORKSHOP IN THIERS: cutting-edge craftsmanship!

The pitch: as the world capital of cutlery, Thiers' reputation is built on expertise dating back to the Middle Ages.

Traditional know-how: the town's cutlery industry is historically based on the presence of the river Durole: its rapid and constant flow fed the mills and grindstones of the cutlers. Local stone was used for sharpening, while hydraulic power drove the machines used in the forge.

Sharpen your senses: accompanied by a master cutler, visitors are invited to make their own Le Thiers© olive, oak or juniper knife, engraved with their name. This assembly workshop is also open to children aged 5 to 7, who can make a Le Thiers© spreading knife.

Did you know? Thiers is home to 80 cutlery companies, who together generate the most jobs in the town. More than 350,000 pieces of cutlery and tableware are produced every day.



LES FONTAINES PÉTRIFIANTES, OR PETRIFYING FOUNTAINS, IN SAINT-NECTAIRE:

the art of turning water into stone for 7 generations!

The pitch: The thermal springs at Saint-Nectaire are the source of a fascinating natural phenomenon: the petrification of objects.

Ancestral know-how: situated at the gateway to the Parc Naturel Régional des Volcans d'Auvergne, Saint-Nectaire benefits from a subsoil rich in thermo-mineral springs. Since 1821, the family business Les Fontaines Pétrifiantes has been using these springs to make decorative calcite objects. This process, known as petrification, transforms ordinary objects (leaves, flowers, sculptures) into veritable petrified works of art.

Unlock the secrets of production: take a journey to the centre of the earth with this museum and visit the Fontaine Pétrifiante, a surprising 14-metre-high waterfall, via an unusual and perfectly sourced visit! After a trip to the cave, the 52° hot springs lead to the creative workshops.

Did you know? Petrification is the result of ancient volcanic activity that enriched the region's water tables.



RICHARD DE BAS PAPER MILL: paper, scissors, stone!

The pitch: at the foot of the Forez mountains, the last paper mill in Auvergne has been producing a rare, flowery paper since the 15th century!

Unique expertise: for three hundred years, the Ambert region was the benchmark for paper that was used to print engravings and quality books. Located in the verdant valley of the Laga (once dotted with almost 400 mills!), the Richard de Bas mill still produces its handmade paper, in white, mottled, coloured or flowered versions, using spring water. Derived from rivers fed by the Livradois mountains, this exceptionally pure water is used to wash local plant fibres, produce a homogeneous pulp and guarantee premium quality paper.

Get your hands dirty: as a place to visit, learn and discover, the mill reveals its manufacturing secrets and offers workshops on how to make your own sheet of paper.

Did you know? In the 1950s, artists such as Picasso and Bernard Buffet exhibited their work on very special paper: paper from the Richard de Bas mill! It still produces diplomas for Unesco and the International Academy of Aeronautics.

THE ART OF LAVA

Painted, decorated and used on street signs and mountain signposts, as well as at entrances to "Métropolitain" metro stations in Paris and Michelin signs, enamelled lava is a traditional craft linked to the geology of the Puy-de-Dôme region. Cooling and shaping, enamelling, cleaning: many craftsmen offer demonstrations and introductory courses to find out about the important role of water in the creative process and take part in making an objet d'art!

Culinary journey

Products with character for a cuisine of contrasts and volcanoes

TRUFFADE, POTÉE AUVERGNATE, FRUIT PASTES, PETIT SALÉ WITH LENTILS, CHEESES, CHARCUTERIE, WINES, PINK GARLIC, BLUEBERRIES AND ANGELICA: THE SPECIALITIES OF THE PUY-DE-DÔME REFLECT THE SOUL OF THE AUVERGNE. FROM AUTHENTICITY TO CHARACTER, HERE'S A LOOK AT A REGIONAL CUISINE THAT'S REALLY SHAKING THINGS UP.

AUVERGNE WINES, VOLCANIC WINES! !

The region's ultra-fertile volcanic soils give rise to some exceptional vintages. Among them, **the Côtes d'Auvergne**, both varied and rich in character, offer an eruption of fruity and spicy flavours! **Clermont-Ferrand**, the nerve centre of the 800-hectare vineyards, is an excellent base from which to explore the surrounding hillsides and discover Chanturgue, a full-bodied red with a fine minerality that has been held in high regard for centuries. In **Riom**, a town of art and history surrounded by vineyards, the Madargue cru is renowned for its fresh, well-balanced wines. Finally, to the south of the appellation, in **Issoire**, the **Boudes** cru boasts particularly spectacular volcanic landscapes and full-bodied red wines with black fruit aromas.





Auvergne Cheeses: say... "Cheeeeeeeese"

With a lot of recipes: there are plenty of cheese-makers amongst the volcanoes! The cheeses they make reflect our heritage and owe their quality of flavour to an unspoiled environment, at mid-mountain altitudes, with pastures and meadows full of rich, aromatic flora! Whether it's **Saint-Nectaire**, with its ancestral know-how, **Fourme d'Ambert**, made at altitudes of between 600 and 1,600 metres, **Bleu d'Auvergne**, which takes its character from the volcanic soil on which it is produced, or **Gaperon**, which originated on the Limagne plain, Auvergne is a historic land of cheeses (including 5 Protected Designations of Origin) that have made its culinary heritage famous and diverse. If the Fourme d'Ambert is the queen of the "**Fourmofolies**", two days of festivities every August, the Saint-Nectaire is the idol of chefs like Patrick Séby, who even uses it to make panna cotta!



Billem Garlic: a rosy view of life!

It only turns pink once it's harvested, in July, and attracts thousands of fans to the annual fair. Cultivated in the heart of Auvergne's Tuscany region for 4 centuries, this full-bodied pink garlic owes its distinctive flavour to the Limagne soils scattered with volcanic ash. Widely acclaimed for its many health-giving virtues, the bulb can be eaten raw, cooked or fermented, eaten on a slice of bread or even made into a marshmallow. Its cultivation is also part of France's Intangible Cultural Heritage!

Top news: The Billem Garlic Fair, held every 2nd weekend in August

Oyé, oyé, oyé... garlic! garlic! garlic: this not-to-be-missed event, featuring 200 exhibitors and 60 traders, attracts nearly 20,000 visitors every year. A flea market, a competition for the most beautiful stalls, farmers' market, weaving workshops and recipes: as you wander through the narrow streets, past timber-framed houses and the remains of the medieval walls, the Foire à l'Ail is a complete immersion in Auvergne traditions!

Angelica: grass for angels!

Although Angelica is thought to have originated in the Himalayas, it has become an emblematic plant of the Puy-de-Dôme area thanks to Auvergne merchants who travelled to the Far East to buy spices! Here, the fragrant and medicinal angelica archangelica is used in syrups, jams, compotes, nougats, sweets and liqueurs, as well as in sweet and savoury dishes. But the local speciality, produced using sustainable farming techniques, is fruit leather, with its melt-in-the-mouth texture and subtle, slightly herbaceous flavours.



Restaurants in the Puy-de-Dôme, a gourmet break on the side of a volcano

Enjoy a truffade at the Buron du Col, a mountain inn at an altitude of 1401 metres in the Sancy massif, savour the chef's semi-cooked foie gras at the Auberge du Lac de Guéry, set against the Monts Dore, try the blueberry cake or the charcuterie platters at the Jasserie du Coq Noir on the Forez crests, succumb to the daring dishes of Adrien Descouls, chef of the panoramic Michelin-starred restaurant Origines, such as snail tortellini and beef marrow with pink garlic broth, or take a gastronomic trip around local and Asian flavours at l'Impulsif in Châtel Guyon: the cuisine of the Auvergne region provides a complete change of scenery, combining authenticity and creativity.

