

Puy-de-Dôme

tourist destination

press kit




PUY-de-DÔME
The Auvergne of volcanoes

*EACH DAY, A BREATH OF FRESH AIR
BLOWS ANEW THROUGH PUY-DE-DÔME*

LOCATION AND IDENTITY CARD



80 volcanoes in a row, including the giant puy de Dôme standing at 1,465 m

1 Grand Site de France: The puy de Dôme




7 Blue Flag beaches

5 hiking trail loops over several days



392 short hiking trails

1 new walking route crossing the Puy-de-Dôme and Cantal: the GTVA

2 regional nature parks



4 national nature reserves

14 villages classified as Plus Beaux Villages de France (The Most Beautiful Villages of France) and Petites Cités de Caractère (Small Towns of Character)



4 Pays d'Art et d'Histoire (Art and History areas of interest)

5 thermal spa towns

2 UNESCO World Heritage



Sites Chaîne des Puys - Limagne fault | Dame-du-Port church in Clermont-Ferrand



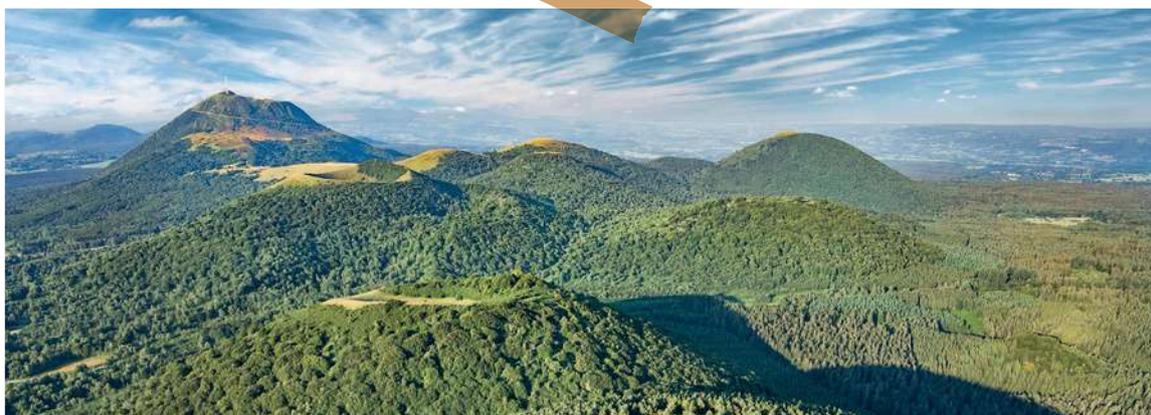
3 winter sports resorts

10 Nordic areas

24 Sensitive Natural Areas

THE PUY-DE-DÔME,

A VOLCANIC, VIBRANT AND REPLENISHING DESTINATION



In the heart of the Auvergne region, just 3 and a half hours from Paris, the Puy-de-Dôme is a **land of freedom** where every day offers something new. Here, nature expresses itself powerfully: dormant **volcanoes**, **panoramic peaks**, **crater lakes**, **plateaux** stretching as far as the eye can see... A multi-faceted destination, fuelled by volcanic energy.

Its **Chaîne des Puys - Limagne fault**, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, the emblematic puy de Dôme, a Grand Site de France®, and the majestic **puy de Sancy**, the highest peak in the Massif Central, form its deep-rooted identity. But beyond the volcanoes, this region reveals a thousand other wonders just waiting to be explored: **villages** with character, **thermal springs**, **gourmet expertise**, **cultural treasures** and a **heritage** dating back thousands of years.

In Puy-de-Dôme, you can walk, pedal, glide and fly. Slow down, breathe deep and rise to new heights in Puy-de-Dôme. **It's a land oozing experiences, be they geological, architectural, cultural, gourmet and spa.**

And because the Puy-de-Dôme blends nature and culture, you can also take the time to admire the wealth of **Romanesque churches**, from the abbey church at Issoire to the Notre-Dame-du-Port basilica, and to explore the treasures of **Clermont-Ferrand**, which has just been awarded the Pays d'Art et d'Histoire label.

Summer or winter, from dawn to dusk, the Puy-de-Dôme is a breath of fresh air and a succession of experiences to enjoy, day after day.

ARE YOU READY TO BE BLOWN AWAY?

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AN INVITATION TO ESCAPE

Travel / one single destination

The Puy-de-Dôme is a living mosaic of **contrasting** landscapes, with each valley and summit telling its own story blending the brute strength of the volcanoes and the infinitely gentle horizons. To the west, the **Chaîne des Puys** and its iconic **puy de Dôme** offer a spectacular insight into Auvergne's **volcanic history**, with perfect domes, dormant craters and high-altitude lakes with their changing reflections. Beyond, the **Combrailles** and its cliffs carved out by the river Sioule. Further south, the **Sancy massif** and the **monts Dore** reveal a prouder, steeper mountain range, with breathtaking panoramic views. To the east, the **grassy uplands** of the Livradois-Forez region unroll before your eyes in a series of quiet, pastoral landscapes as far as the villages of the Issoire region, radiant with Romanesque charm and blonde stone. Puy and peaks, waterfalls and forests, valleys and high meadows: **every landscape is a journey here.**

The Cézallier mountains

Endless plateaux and wide open spaces

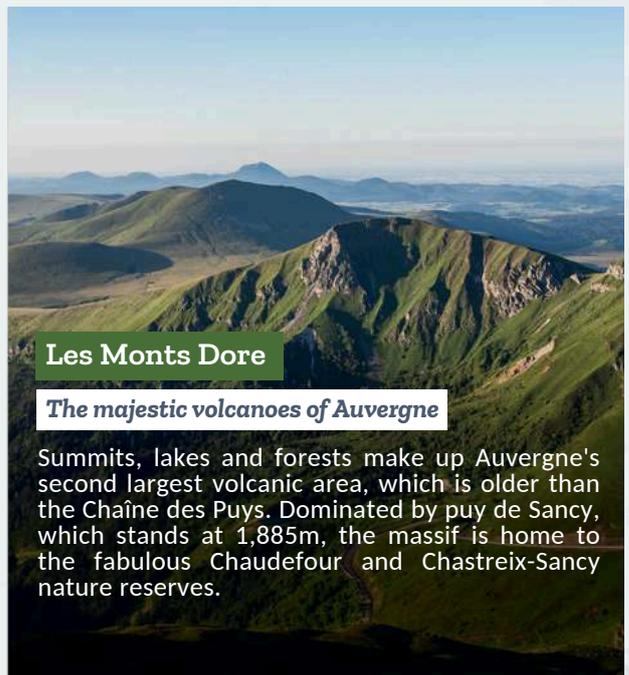
Known as the "Land of Great Spaces", the Cézallier mountains offer vast plateaux shaped by glaciers, home to herds of cattle and a handful of villages in the heart of the Parc Naturel Régional des Volcans d'Auvergne. A moonscape!



Les Monts Dore

The majestic volcanoes of Auvergne

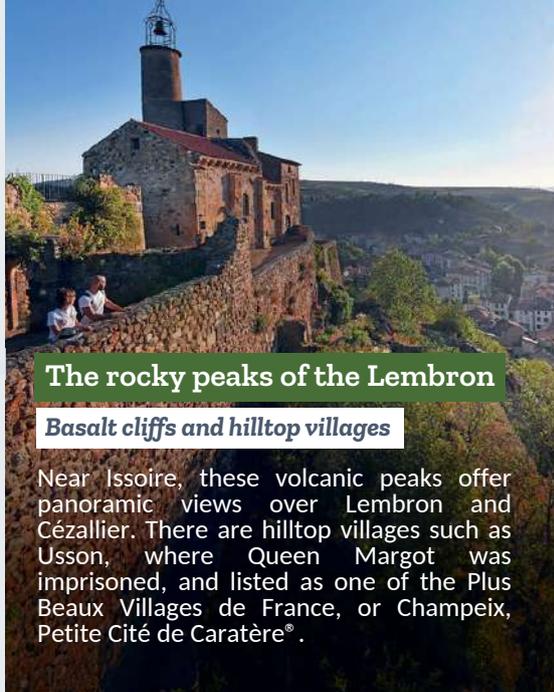
Summits, lakes and forests make up Auvergne's second largest volcanic area, which is older than the Chaîne des Puys. Dominated by puy de Sancy, which stands at 1,885m, the massif is home to the fabulous Chaudefour and Chastreix-Sancy nature reserves.



The Chaudefour valley

A natural refuge

Waterfalls, streams and high meadows make up this glacial valley. Chamois, marmots and rare plants such as yellow gentian thrive here in a wild and unspoilt setting. The site bears witness to the region's tumultuous geological history.



The rocky peaks of the Lembron

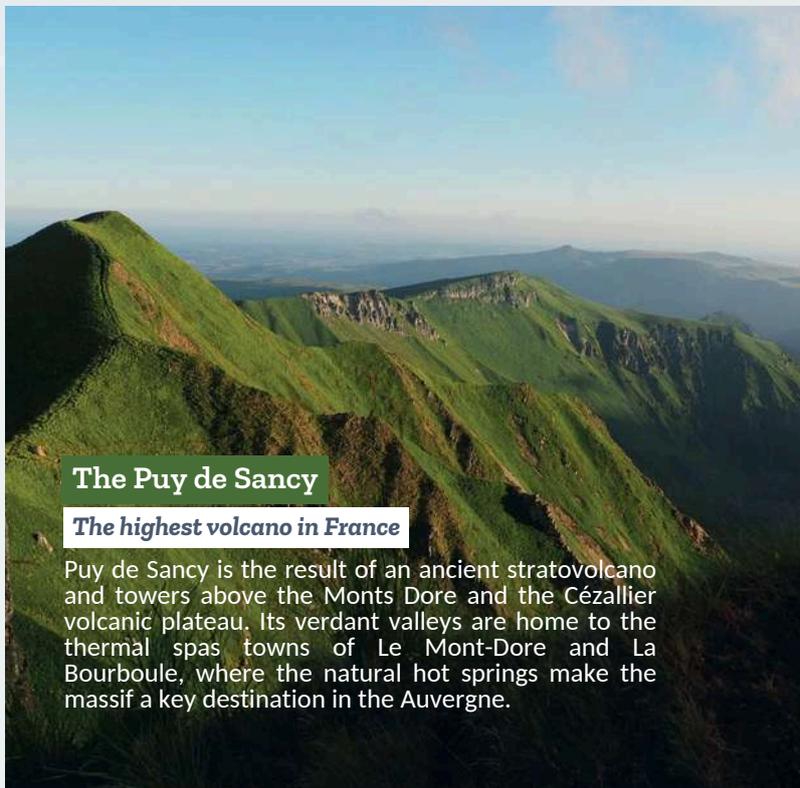
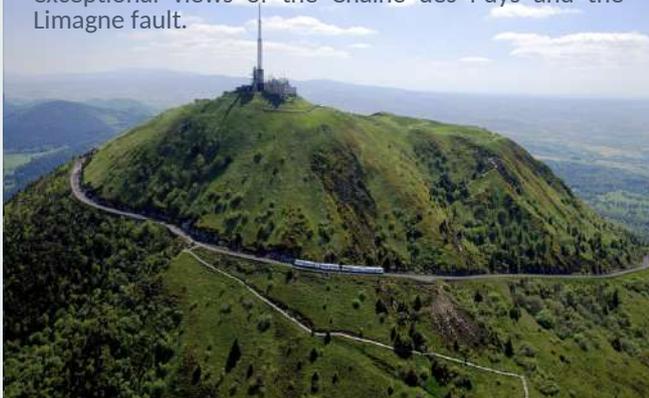
Basalt cliffs and hilltop villages

Near Issoire, these volcanic peaks offer panoramic views over Lembron and Cézallier. There are hilltop villages such as Usson, where Queen Margot was imprisoned, and listed as one of the Plus Beaux Villages de France, or Champeix, Petite Cité de Caractère®.

The Puy de Dôme

The iconic volcano

At an altitude of 1,465 m, the puy de Dôme offers a unique panorama of 80 volcanoes lined up from north to south. Accessible via the Panoramique des Dômes electric cogwheel train, it combines hiking with exceptional views of the Chaîne des Puys and the Limagne fault.



The Puy de Sancy

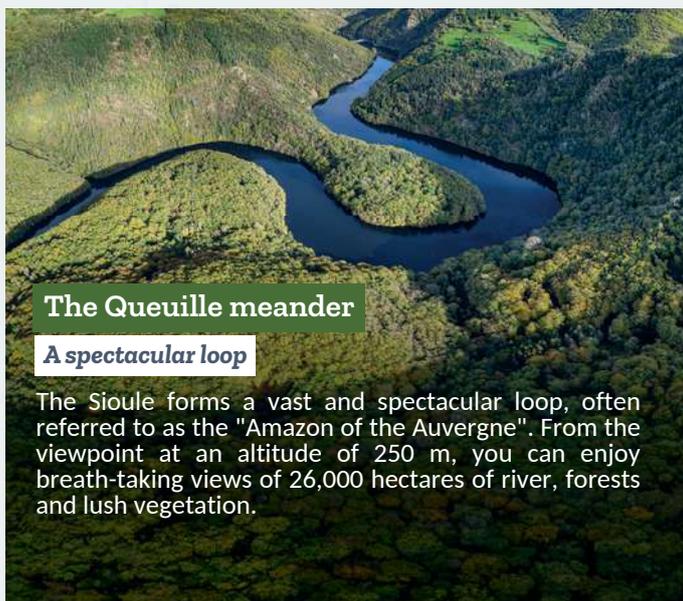
The highest volcano in France

Puy de Sancy is the result of an ancient stratovolcano and towers above the Monts Dore and the Cézallier volcanic plateau. Its verdant valleys are home to the thermal spas towns of Le Mont-Dore and La Bourboule, where the natural hot springs make the massif a key destination in the Auvergne.

The Forez mountains

Ridges and traditional jasseries

Less well known, these mountains rise to 1,631m with rolling ridges and deep forests. The uplands are dotted with jasseries (typical small farmhouses), revealing their pastoral heritage and charming landscapes.



The Queuille meander

A spectacular loop

The Sioule forms a vast and spectacular loop, often referred to as the "Amazon of the Auvergne". From the viewpoint at an altitude of 250 m, you can enjoy breath-taking views of 26,000 hectares of river, forests and lush vegetation.

Rise above it all in Puy-de-Dôme

10 EXPERIENCES TO TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY !

Flying, overlooking the relief, is the ideal way to read the topography and geology of the Puy-de-Dôme. Activities at altitude allow you to appreciate the variety of landscapes and nature at its best: hot-air ballooning, paragliding, walking or cycling - these experiences all offer a different approach to the terrain, whether you're looking for sporting thrills or a moment of fulfilment and calm contentment.

BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH, DISCOVER 10 UNUSUAL SPOTS AND ACTIVITIES

COMBINING ADVENTURE, NATURE AND PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

1. Fly over the volcanoes in a hot-air balloon **Auvergne from the air**

Floating in a hot-air balloon, you'll fly over the volcanoes of the Auvergne - craters, domes and lakes - at sunrise or sunset. The silent flight lasts one to two hours in an unforgettable blend of calm and thrilling sensations between sky and earth, with the Sancy and Cantal massifs - or beyond - on the horizon. Come on board for an exceptional experience, where the sense of calm sets the geological beauty of the area off at its very best.

2. Tandem paragliding **Flirt with the summits**

If you want to get up close to the peaks and enjoy a 360° panorama, tandem paragliding is a must. In tandem with an instructor, fly over the colourful fields of the plain, the Limagne fault, Clermont and its conurbation, and the harmonious curves of the volcanoes for a unique and spectacular view of the UNESCO World Heritage site.

3. Panoramic tour of Prabouré
Soar... then slide!

Located in the uplands of the Livradois-Forez region, in Saint-Anthème, the Prabouré panoramic tower extends 32 metres into the sky. A veritable balcony overlooking the mountains, it is also home to France's largest dry slide. A contemplative ascent and an adrenalin-fuelled descent guaranteed!



4. Velorail des Fades
Suspended walk above the Sioule

As a masterpiece of civil engineering, the Fades viaduct was the highest bridge in the world when it was inaugurated. "Saved" by the heritage lottery in 2019, it can now be explored by electric Velorail from Les Ancizes station. On the programme: 7.5 km of descent, 3 refreshing tunnels, a breathtaking view over the Combrailles... and a good dose of thrills 133 metres above the ground!



5. At the top of the Puy de Dôme
With the Panoramique des Dômes

This electric cogwheel train takes you to the top of the Puy de Dôme in 15 minutes, at an altitude of 1,465 metres. An exceptional view over the volcanoes of the Chaîne des Puys and the Limagne fault awaits you at the summit. Open all year round for a summer and winter experience.

6. Château Rocher
Breathtaking view of the Sioule

In the heart of the Combrailles region, this former military fortress dominates the Sioule valley. At an altitude of 600 metres, the view reveals a contrasting natural landscape, with cliffs, forests and meandering rivers.

7. Château de Murol
A fortress perched on a rock face overlooking puy de Sancy.

Clinging to a volcanic promontory at an altitude of 1,000 metres, this medieval castle offers spectacular views of the Sancy massif, the Jassat valley, Lac Chambon and the Auvergne volcanoes. Historical events and immersive tours take visitors back to the time of the Knights of Murol.

8. Pic de Brionnet chapel
An unbeatable view that has to be earned

Perched at an altitude of 927 metres on a basalt peak, this chapel overlooks the village of Saurier. The Holy Grail: a panoramic view of the Chaîne des Puys, the Sancy massif and the Couze Pavin valley. A peaceful spot that lends itself to a contemplative break after the climb.

9. Saint- Nectaire church
A jewel perched on Mont Cornadore

Overlooking the Couze valley, it is one of the most beautiful Romanesque churches in Auvergne and stands out with its elevated position and the light cast by its 19th-century stained glass windows.

10. The Hautes Chaumes du Forez
A plateau that will take your breath away

At an altitude of over 1,200 metres, these uplands offer exceptional views of the Forez massif and the Auvergne volcanoes. These windswept high-altitude meadows are dotted with thatch-roofed summer farms and are perfect for walks away from the "major trails", allowing you to enjoy the great outdoors to the full.



A GEOLOGICAL JOURNEY VOLCANOES FROM TOP TO BOTTOM!

Discover a unique landscape in the heart of the Puy-de-Dôme. The dormant volcanoes of the Chaîne des Puys, iconic craters such as Puy de Dôme and Pariou, and crystal-clear volcanic lakes such as Lake Pavin and Tazenat. Explore caves dug by ancient man, frozen lava flows forming basalt organs and geological curiosities such as the blazing orange clay chimneys in the Vallée des Saints. Breathtaking panoramas, hikes on the peaks and underground explorations... experience an authentic adventure that gets right up close to the volcanic history of the Auvergne. Prepare to be amazed!

- UNDERGROUND -



Vulcania

Enjoy an immersive adventure at the heart of the volcanic world!

Vulcania is Europe's only park dedicated to volcanoes and natural phenomena and is set in a real 30,000 year-old lava flow. Interactive attractions, immersive experiences, 5D films, scientific theatre, a tethered balloon... here, the forces of the earth come to life on a life-size scale to make learning fun and exciting!

BONUS

Don't miss *Les Diables des Volcans*, a spectacular film projected onto one of the biggest screens in Europe. It pays tribute to Maurice and Katia Krafft, the legendary volcanologist couple who travelled the world to film the most impressive eruptions and share their burning passion.

PROJET : Vulcania has announced a new investment plan called "Olympus 25". Between 2026 and 2030, it will invest €25 million, with the aim of attracting 450,000 visitors a year by 2030. The main new feature is the opening, in 2028, of an eco-lodge themed around the park's universe.

The grotte de la pierre in Volvic

A journey to the heart of volcanic rock

Carved out of a lava flow, this former quarry transports visitors into the day-to-day life of the stonemasons who fashioned the famous Volvic stone... and revealed the spring from which Volvic water was born!

Water features, lighting and sound effects transform the visit into a unique sensory experience. For 1 hour 15 minutes, we follow the story of Jean Legay-Chevalier, a major figure in quarrying the stone at the beginning of the 20th century.

BONUS

An immersive scénovision® under a real vault of lava, but also a rare opportunity to touch and understand Volvic stone in the very place where it was extracted. A site where industrial heritage, geological discovery and underground magic come together.



The maison de l'améthyste

Discovering the Auvergne's purple treasure

Located between the Cézallier and the Livradois, the Maison de l'Améthyste reveals the history of this purple stone, which is found widely in the region. In a former mining village, retrace the volcanic veins where these deep purple crystals were formed millions of years ago. Exhibitions, introductory gemmology workshops and field trips help visitors to understand how amethyst has carved out a place for itself in the identity of the Auvergne region.

BONUS

Take home your own stone, found during a guided outing. And don't forget to try out B.A.S.I.L.E. the Interactive and Educational Sandbox: use your fingertips to create and shape real mountains, volcanoes, lakes and valleys.

The Lemptégy volcano

A unique exploration in the heart of an open-air volcano

Right at the heart of the UNESCO-listed Chaîne des Puys - faille de Limagne site, the Lemptégy volcano offers an experience unlike any other: actually descending inside a real volcano. A guided tour, on foot or aboard an electric train, reveals its geological structure, its volcanic bombs yes, those large blocks of lava expelled from the crater, its lava chimneys and the traces of past eruptions. This is science in action, visible at every step.

BONUS

The awakening of the volcano, an immersive night-time show with special effects and monumental projections that bring the volcano back to life all summer long... thrills guaranteed!



- ON EARTH -

Lac Pavin

A volcanic jewel with unfathomable waters

In the Monts Dore, Lac Pavin lies in the perfectly circular crater of an ancient volcano formed almost 7,000 years ago. Lying at an altitude of 1,200 metres, its water is both dark and crystal clear, and its mysterious beauty is the stuff of local legend.

It is the only meromictic lake in France, a phenomenon whereby the deep waters never mix with the surface layers: a rare phenomenon that intrigues scientists and fascinates visitors.

BONUS

A 2.7km hiking trail leads around it, through a superb beech forest that adds the perfect finishing touch to this fascinating setting, with the mountain ranges as a backdrop.



The Montpeloux Organ Pipes

An open-air volcanic cathedral

Eighteen million years ago, lava solidified here into immense basalt columns. Today, these organ pipes, nearly 70 meters high, form a spectacular setting, like architecture sculpted by fire. Nestled in a lush green environment, they offer a striking panorama where geology and poetry meet.

BONUS

An exceptional natural amphitheater, set in the heart of the crater, hosts shows and concerts in the summer. Thanks to the unique acoustics of the volcanic walls, each performance becomes a sensory experience of its own... a true meeting point between nature, culture, and emotion.

The basalt columns of Usson

An unexpected geological landmark!

On the slopes of the Puy d'Usson, immense basalt columns stand tall, like a mineral cathedral. Formed by ancient volcanic flows that cooled millions of years ago, the columns have been shaped over time into vertiginous prisms, perfectly aligned, which seem to support the village and its perched church.

Their impressive geometry tells the tale of an encounter between fire and time: the frozen lava, fractured into pentagonal or hexagonal columns, bears witness to the intense volcanic past for which the Auvergne is so well-known.

An accessible path leads to the summit, offering an exceptional 360° panorama: the Chaîne des Puys, the Livradois-Foréz mountains and the wine-growing hillsides of the Côtes d'Auvergne®.

BONUS

An intimate and even romantic setting in the charming village of Usson, one of the Plus Beaux Villages de France. It was once the home of Queen Margot.

Les grottes de Jonas cave system

A man-made troglodyte fortress in the heart of a volcano

At the gateway to the Sancy, these caves carved out of volcanic rock are an exceptional combination of engineering, architecture and geology. The site features a chapel with remarkable 11th-century frescoes, a bread oven, a castle and around sixty caves which were used as living quarters or storerooms. Every nook and cranny reveals the ingenuity of the former inhabitants in transforming stone into a genuine living space. A captivating insight into everyday life in the Middle Ages!

BONUS

In summer, dramatised medieval tours bring the site to life, sharing their passion for the story of those who shaped this incredible troglodyte complex.





WALKING IS TRAVELLING

WALKING DAY AFTER DAY: BREATHE, ESCAPE, RECONNECT

In the Puy-de-Dôme, hiking is much more than a leisure activity: it's a philosophy. Here, people walk to escape the day-to-day, to reconnect with themselves, to breathe. In these volcanic lands, shaped by fire and softened by time, hiking becomes the art of experiencing the land and reading its history.

EASY-TO-ORGANISE WALKING HOLIDAYS

What makes the experience so accessible? Adaptability at every level. Thanks to a network of stopover accommodation and various services (luggage transport, picnic baskets...) everyone can organise their stay at their own pace, over several days. Gentle progress is the order of the day here: set off with peace of mind, knowing that your luggage is taken care of, progress at your own space, enjoy the scenery without restraint, make a diversion through a village, enjoy a Saint-Nectaire cheese on the farm...



The Dômes loop

Walking in the heart of world heritage

49 or 62 km | 2 to 3 days

This is undoubtedly one of the most emblematic routes in the Puy-de-Dôme. The Dômes loop winds its way over sixty kilometres around the famous Chaîne des Puys - Limagne fault, a UNESCO world heritage site.

Over two or three days, this hike takes you into the heart of a volcanic landscape that is unique in the world: 80 rounded volcanoes lined up over 40 kilometres, with their perfect cones, mossy forests and frozen lava flows.

BONUS

beech forests | gentle slopes | pastures | sleeping craters | breathtaking views over the Limagne plain and the Sancy massif from the summit of Puy de Dôme (1 465 m)



The red cow loop

An ode to contemplation

135 or 181 km | 8 to 11 days

With its name that may raise questions, the Tour des Vaches rouges, or red cow loop, is an invitation to slow down. Between 135 and 181 kilometres long, this route winds its way across the high plateaux of the Cézallier, a region suspended between the Sancy massif and the Cantal mountains.

Here, nature reigns supreme. Easy to medium in terms of difficulty level, this is the perfect opportunity to get away from it all and enjoy a simple, balanced break on the wild high plateaux of the Auvergne.

BONUS

meadows as far as the eye can see | mountain pasture farms | tranquil rivers | herds of Salers red cows | traditional villages | heritage



The Sancy loop

Pure Auvergne

39 or 85 km | 2 to 6 days

Further south, the Sancy loop invites you to immerse yourself completely in the Sancy massif, which is more mountainous, rockier and wilder. Available in three versions (from 39 to 85 km), it offers a variety of landscapes that symbolise the richness of the Puy-de-Dôme region: crater lakes (Pavin, Chambon), waterfalls, deep forests, lush green valleys and mountain towns such as Besse, Le Mont-Dore or La Bourboule.

This is a demanding but accessible high-altitude hike that rewards every effort with a raw emotion: that of direct contact with nature, with no filter.

BONUS

2 Sancy national nature two reserves | summit of Puy de Sancy, highest point of the Massif central at 1,885 with its breathtaking panoramic views over the Cantal, the Cézallier and the Chaîne des Puys.



The GTVA (Inaugurated in 2024)

3 summits for a large-scale adventure

210 km | 11 days

For experienced walkers or those seeking a challenge, the Grande Traversée des Volcans d'Auvergne (GTVA) is an adventure in its own right.

This 210-kilometre route runs north-south through the Parc Naturel Régional des Volcans d'Auvergne, linking 3 emblematic peaks in succession: Puy de Dôme, Puy de Sancy and Puy Mary.

BONUS

volcanic ridges | Le Guéry and Aydat high altitude lakes | must-see villages built of lava stone like Orcival with its lava stone basilica | the infinite pastures of Le Cézallier.



1 DAY 1 HIKE

Seven different areas for exploring the Puy-de-Dôme
Walking is second nature in Puy-de-Dôme. Every trail tells a story, the story of volcanoes, lakes, forests and villages. Whether on your own, with family or with an enthusiastic guide, hiking is a way of life, a way of experiencing the landscape in a different way.

1. FAMILY

The Enval gorges:
Nature for children (Enval).
3 km | 1 h 30 | 110 m D+ | Easy

This trail is the perfect way to introduce young children to the pleasures of walking. The path winds its way through a green setting of undergrowth, bridges and waterfalls. There are signs along the way to stimulate children's curiosity, encouraging them to recognise animal tracks, observe ferns and listen out for the birds. Accessible and fun, this walk proves that adventure and education go hand in hand.

2. CONTEMPLATION

The Guéry plateau:
The kingdom of silence (Orcival).
14 km | 4 h 30 | 550 m D+ | Moderate

From the high slopes around Lac du Guéry, the eye stretches out over immense horizons. Roches Tuilière and Sanadoire, deep forests, high-altitude pastures: here, nature exudes freedom.

The path crosses the plateau, undulating between lakes and mountain pastures, offering a succession of spectacular views.

At midday, the light illuminates the relief, and in the evening, the sky ignites behind the volcanoes. It's easy to see why the emotion of this place inspires so many photographers and painters!



3.

HERITAGE**Puy de Corent:****Walking in the footsteps of the Gauls****(Corent).****6,5 km | 2 h | 220 m D+ | Easy**

Each stone tells a piece of history here. The Corent plateau was once the base of a major Arverni oppidum. Remains of temples, houses and public squares have been found, testifying to the presence of a prosperous city before the arrival of Rome.

The climb to the Puy de Corent is a gentle one, and from the summit, the view extends over the Limagne region, with the Chaîne des Puys as a backdrop. This trail is a real journey back in time - you can imagine the ancient markets, the smoke from the workshops, the life that teemed here over two thousand years ago. A great way to combine walking and memory.

4.

SPORTS**Fontaine Salée:****The mountain challenge** (Picherande)**16.5 km | 5 h 15 | 590 m D+ | Difficult**

This is a tour for those who love effort and thrills. The trail winds its way through the glacial valley of the Fontaine Salée, between peat bogs, beech forests and high-altitude meadows. You cross footbridges, walk alongside streams and then gradually climb up to access the slopes of Sancy. Your breath is short and your muscles ache a little, but the reward is immense: a 360° panorama, wild landscapes and the rare feeling of being alone in the world. Here, the mountains of the Auvergne reveal themselves in all their natural wonder and glory. A walk that will delight your legs... and your soul.

5.

WILD NATURE**Jassy:****The solitude of the great outdoors****(La Godivelle).****14.5 km | 4 h 15 | 315 m D+ | Moderate**

On the edge of the Cézallier, the La Godivelle plateau unfurls its silent expanses. Taking in glacial lakes and open grassland, the Jassy trail offers a complete change of scenery. The landscapes here are almost Nordic with the wind, wild grasses, low-angled light.

Occasionally you come across a Salers cow (or "red cow"), a soaring falcon and an abandoned buron. Time seems to stand still. Walkers in search of unspoilt nature will immediately feel at home here. This is Auvergne in its purest form: wild, sincere and grandiose.



6.

POINTS OF VIEW**From the meander to the viaduct:****The Amazon of Auvergne** (Queuille)**10 km | 3 h | 260 m D+ | Moderate**

From the viewpoint, the Sioule forms a perfect meander, winding through the forest like a ribbon. The trail then descends to the river, skirting the shady banks before climbing gently back up to the viaduct. This walk is photogenic, accessible to all, with nature is on display in all its splendour. The setting is reminiscent of the Amazon, but we're actually in the Auvergne: proof that exoticism can be just a stone's throw away.



7.

TRADITION**Selling wares along the trail:****In the footsteps of the Forez mountain pedlar****(Valcivières).****9.5 km | 3 h | 282 m D+ | Moderate**

Between Haut-Forez and Livradois, this circular trail pays tribute to the pedlars of yesteryear, who criss-crossed the mountains to sell their wares. The path crosses forests, clearings and high meadows, dotted with "jasseries", summer farms where cheese was made throughout the summer. The atmosphere is peaceful, disturbed only by the tinkling of cowbells. In the summer months, the landscape takes on the colours of the wild flowers. Walking here means reconnecting with the simple things and life and the rural heritage of the Puy-de-Dôme, which is still very much alive.

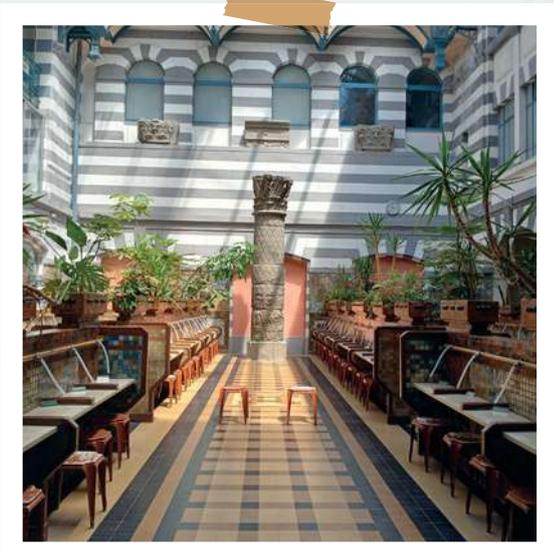


SPA TOWNS: THE RESTORATIVE ART OF LIVING

Proust, Balzac, the Goncourt brothers, George Sand, Sarah Bernhardt and the Indian maharajas...

They all have one thing in common: they have visited the spa towns of the Puy-de-Dôme. **These spas**, born of the fire of volcanoes and the science of man, are the perfect embodiment of the French approach to well-being. Here, the waters have been bubbling for 35 million years, laden with minerals from the heart of the earth. Each has its own personality, its own temperature, its own promise of healing or rebirth. From **Royat-Chamalières to La Bourboule, from Châtel-Guyon to Mont-Dore, not forgetting Châteauneuf-les-Bains**, these spa towns combine **Belle Époque heritage, volcanic landscapes** and contemporary spa pleasures.

What they all have in common is that they offer a breath of fresh air and a moment where time stands still, an experience that is simply there to be enjoyed.



LE MONT-DORE

The mountain town

At an altitude of 1,050 metres, nestling at the foot of the Puy de Sancy, Le Mont-Dore combines thermal baths and mountains.

Its 13 hot springs are among the richest in silica in France and have been renowned since ancient times for their relaxing properties.

The neo-Byzantine thermal baths, inspired by the baths of Caracalla, impress with their mosaics, marble and listed domes.

Visitors don't just come here for treatment - they come to breathe, hike, ski or contemplate the peaks.

CHÂTEAUNEUF-LES-BAINS

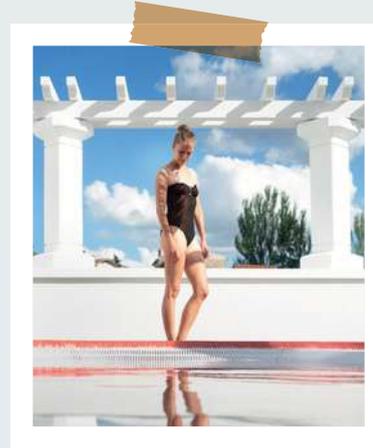
The nature town

Nestled into a wild setting, Châteauneuf-les-Bains extends along the Sioule, a crystal-clear river that winds its way between cliffs and forests. Nature reigns supreme here. Its 25 springs, spread over three kilometres, provide water with renowned anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties.

The thermal baths use the richness of natural carbon dioxide to soothe joint pain and stimulate circulation.

To extend the pleasure, head to the eSPaCe Sioule, an open-air spa with panoramic jacuzzis and a sauna overlooking the river.

Relax to the sound of the lapping waters of the Sioule, surrounded by steam, minerals and silence: a unique experience!



CHÂTEL-GUYON

The innovative town

At the foot of the volcanoes, Châtel-Guyon is a pioneer.

Known for more than a century for its waters that are rich in magnesium, silicon and trace elements, it combines tradition with cutting-edge research.

The jewel in its crown is the Aiga Resort Thermal, a 15,000 m² complex combining medical thermal baths, a wellness spa, a hotel residence, a nutrigastronomic restaurant and a centre for research into intestinal microbiota.

The spa park is a lush green setting where you can enjoy a soothing stroll before arriving at the magnificently restored theatre, which brings Belle Époque elegance back to life through shows and events.

ROYAT-CHAMALIÈRES

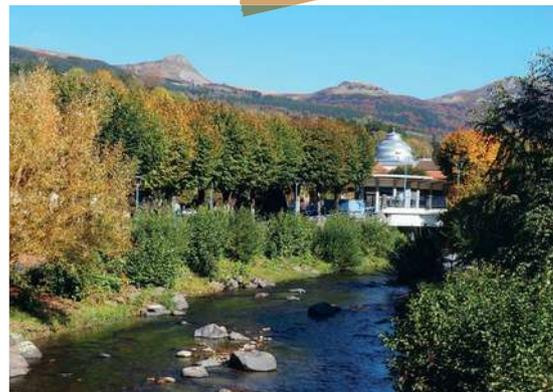
The chic town

Royat-Chamalières is a resort of elegance. Napoleon III, the Empress Eugénie, Sarah Bernhardt, Colette and the Goncourt brothers all made it their holiday destination. The city has retained its Belle Époque charm, while remaining resolutely modern.

Its volcanic waters are rich in dissolved gases and are renowned for their cardiovascular and rheumatological benefits.

But it's the refined atmosphere that really appeals: between the Royat thermal baths and the Royatonic Bains & Spa complex, the experience alternates between treatments, hammams and thermal pools overlooking the volcanoes.

In 2025, the resort celebrated the 170th anniversary of the Royat thermal baths, a symbol of a spa industry that is still very much alive.



LA BOURBOULE

The family-friendly town

On the banks of the Dordogne, La Bourboule combines Belle Époque charm with a warm ambience.

A family-friendly resort, it is renowned for its warm waters, taken from a depth of 80 metres, which are good for the skin and respiratory tract. It welcomes children from 18 months and even babies from 6 months, a rarity in France.

The Grands Thermes complex is decorated with mosaics and colonnades and has undergone a major renovation, with a bright lobby, premium spaces and improved energy efficiency. A renovation that sets this Auvergne spa gem off at its best.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE ARVERNI, AN EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE

Forget the clichés about the Gauls and head for the Puy-de-Dôme, cradle of the Arverni, one of the most powerful nations in Gaul before Rome. They shaped this volcanic and fertile land until the Roman conquest from the 7th century BC. Today, with its ancient sites, breathtaking panoramas and innovative museums, the Puy-de-Dôme has a rich and surprising historical heritage.

In the footsteps of Vercingetorix **A journey 2,000 years back in time**

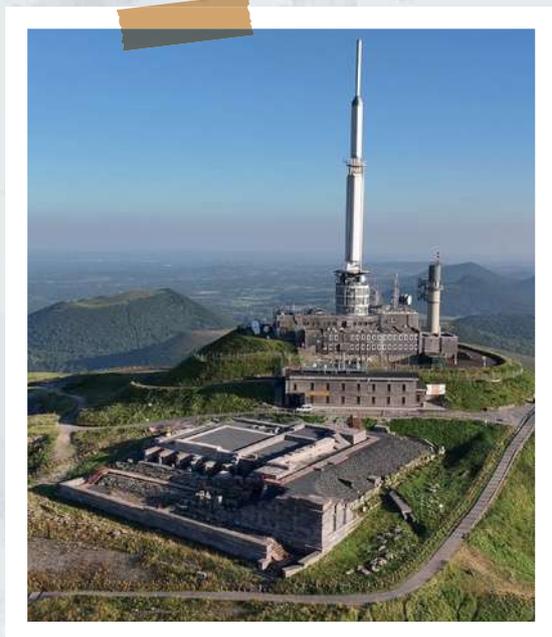
Four major sites - the Gergovie plateau, Mercury's temple, the Corent oppidum and the Lezoux ceramics museum - form a unique historical journey, between Limagne and the dormant volcanoes. Landscapes as far as the eye can see, Gallo-Roman remains and immersive experiences: history comes to life here.



7. The Gergovie Plateau **In the footsteps of Vercingetorix**

Gergovia, the site of Vercingetorix's victory over Julius Caesar, was a strategic Arverni capital. The interactive museum tells the story of this legendary battle and life in Gaul through models, archaeological objects and digital displays.

The site also offers majestic panoramic views over the Chaîne des Puys. Events and re-enactments are held throughout the year.

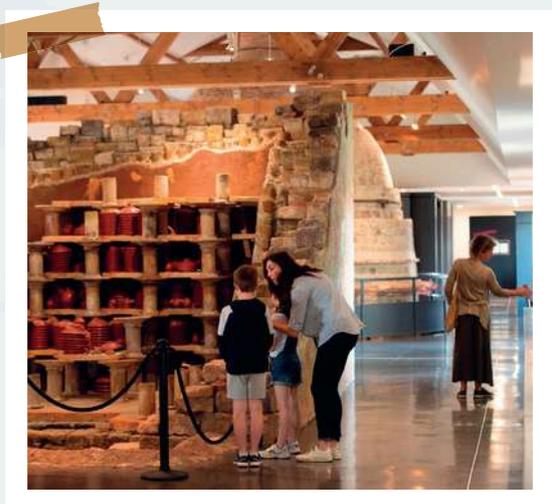
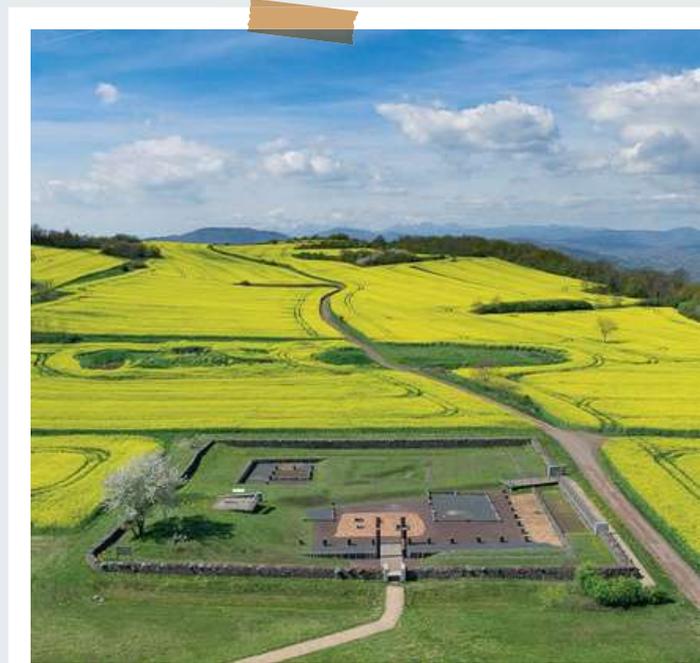


2. Mercury's Temple
A sanctuary at the summit of the volcanoes

At the summit of the Puy de Dôme, this 2nd-century Roman-Gallic sanctuary overlooked one of the Empire's major roads. Augmented reality brings the temple to life for visitors with statues, rituals and pilgrimages. The Panoramique des Dômes train makes it easy to access this viewpoint.

3. The Corent oppidum
The Gallic town rediscovered

This vast plateau was a political and religious centre, as well as a key area for crafts. Excavations have revealed traces of intense activity: workshops, shops, ritual banquets... A discovery trail and digital content immerse visitors in the daily life of a people whose lifestyle was far more refined than we might imagine. Walks and viewpoints complete the visit.



4. Lezoux ceramic museum
Roman know-how

Lezoux was the largest centre for the production of terra sigillata in the Roman Empire. The ancient workshops at Lezoux exported their terra sigillata wares throughout the Empire, from the shores of the Mediterranean to the Germanic provinces. The museum reveals the extent of this industry through a sensory and fun tour with hands-on exhibits, modelling workshops, multimedia displays all providing a gateway into the Gallo-Roman economy and way of life.

BONUS

Guided tours on board the Archéobus

Gergovie, Gondole, Corent... These emblematic sites of the region inhabited by the Arverni extend over several hectares and form one of the most remarkable archaeological complexes in France. The Archéobus is the practical way to explore them all easily, taking you to these historic sites, all within a 7km radius. Each journey is guided, with stories, anecdotes and keys to understanding the life of the Arverni people, between cities, rural areas and battlefields.

IN STONE AND IN COLOUR:

EXPLORE THE CONTRASTING HERITAGE OF THE FOUR
PUY-DE-DÔME AREAS RECOGNISED FOR THEIR ART AND HISTORY

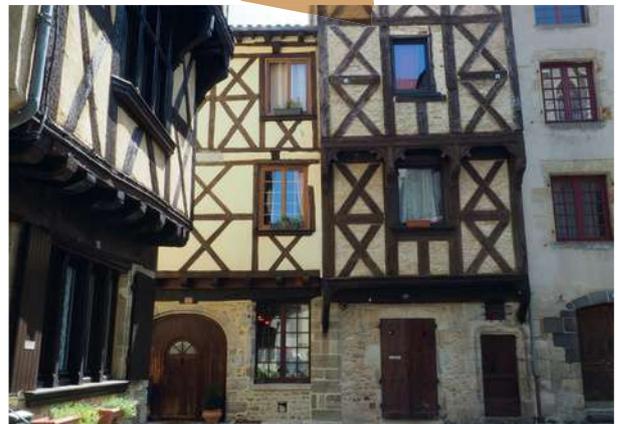
From north to south, the Puy-de-Dôme reveals both its **mineral and living sides**, which are symbolic of its identity and bear witness to a **history rich in contrasts**. The **black stone of Riom's volcanoes** gives way to the shades of grey of Clermont-Ferrand, before finishing with the **golden tones of Issoire and Billom**, visible in the half-timbered houses and cobbled streets.

Black, grey, blond... this palette tells the story of the region's geological and architectural evolution, making the Puy-de-Dôme a destination with a unique heritage, enhanced by the Pays d'Art et d'Histoire, which showcase towns and villages through their stonework, streets and monuments.

Billom Community

A medieval trading town that tells its own story.

Billom's **cobbled streets, half-timbered houses** and **picturesque market** tell the story of its medieval past. A bustling commercial centre in the Middle Ages, the town and surrounding area are nicknamed the Tuscany of the Auvergne after the gentle rolling countryside and picture-postcard panoramas. The region is full of majestic châteaux, a testimony to its rich heritage, and every year it celebrates the Garlic Fair, honouring the traditional pink, sweet and aromatic **garlic**. The Pays d'Art et d'Histoire label promotes this unique **heritage**, where farming traditions, crafts and Gothic architecture are an invitation to immerse yourself in local history and life.





Issoire

Romanesque art at the southern gateway to the Auvergne

Issoire's appeal lies in its **abbey church of Saint-Austremoine**, a jewel of **Auvergne Romanesque art**, and its rich past as a medieval trading centre, with thriving **markets** and **fairs**. The ruins of **fortresses** such as **Usson** and **Nonette**, village forts built to defend themselves, pleasure castles and wine-growing villages reveal the area's history. The region has also preserved its terraces and pailhats for growing **vines** and fruit trees, as well as the headframes of the coalfield, evidence of past industrial activity. With its lively alleyways, **colourful facades** and **panoramic views** over the surrounding hills, **Issoire** invites you to explore a thousand years of history, a blend of monumental heritage and cultural landscapes.

Riom Limagne et Volcanoes

An outstanding heritage

A former **magistrature town**, Riom boasts **sumptuous town houses**, sculpted grey lava stone facades and harmonious formal gardens. The town combines culture with majestic volcanic landscapes. And to admire the line of volcanoes that make up Chaîne des Puys from a spectacular angle, climb the **"clock tower"** for a truly spectacular view. The strength of Auvergne's heritage is underlined by the grey stone of its monuments.



Clermont Auvergne Métropole

History at every step

(Awarded the Pays d'Art et d'Histoire label in April 2024)

Castles, ancient bridges, wine estates, industrial and contemporary architecture: each monument tells the story of **Clermont**. The buildings in volcanic grey stone or blonde stone reveal the geological wealth of the area. The city's treasures include: the **UNESCO-listed Basilica of Notre-Dame-du-Port** and the iconic Volvic stone **Cathedral of Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption**.

Its industrial heritage, and in particular that linked to **Michelin**, allows visitors to discover the fascinating history of innovation and local industry, through emblematic sites and interactive experiences such as the Michelin Adventure. The 20th century buildings, whether Art Deco, Modernist or Brutalist, also illustrate modernity and urban development in the city over the years.

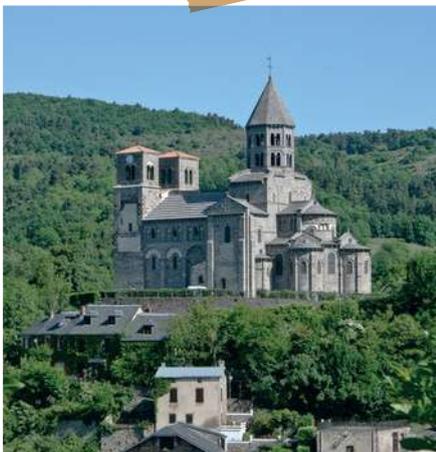
PROJECT: Michelin Innovation Park - Cataroux

MICHELIN Innovation Park - Cataroux is an ambitious project which aims to **transform Michelin's historic industrial site** into an innovative district, driving economic, social and cultural dynamism. As a project of general interest, it demonstrates Michelin's deep attachment to its city and region.

The PIC, Europe's largest coworking/coliving space, contributes to this by offering a collaborative space for entrepreneurs and innovation players, encouraging exchanges and the emergence of projects. Work commenced in 2021 and will continue until 2030. **From 2029, the Quartier des Pistes will be an attractive place to live**, combining discovery, leisure, restaurants and public spaces.

GOURMET AND CREATIVE ESCAPES

IN VILLAGES WITH LOTS OF CHARACTER



The flavour and magic of water at Saint-Nectaire From exceptional cheese to age-old springs

Discover Saint-Nectaire, an emblematic village in the Puy-de-Dôme region, famous for its tasty, soft unpasteurised cheese, produced using traditional methods that are the pride of the region. Stop off at a local producer to taste these authentic cheeses and chat with passionate craftsmen.

The village is also famous for its **petrifying springs**, where mineral-laden water transforms stones and plants into surprising limestone curiosities. These natural formations offer a unique spectacle, a symbol of the Puy-de-Dôme's rich volcanic geology.

Dominating Saint-Nectaire from its basalt peak, the Romanesque church is a major church in the Puy-de-Dôme region and a real eye-catcher. Built in the 12th century, it boasts magnificent sculpted capitals and a panoramic view over the valley.

With its tasty products, nature and architecture, Saint-Nectaire is the perfect getaway.

BIRTHDAY

In 2026, Horizons "Arts-Nature" in Sancy celebrates its 20th anniversary!

For two decades now, this event has been inviting visitors to discover **contemporary works in the heart of nature**, from mid-June to the end of September. The originality of the project lies in the creation of **ephemeral works of art specially designed for the massif**: the artist is inspired by the place, an act that is just as important as the work itself. For this anniversary edition, a participative work will be part of the creations. **More information on www.horizons-sancy.com.**



Getaway to Boudes:

Between vineyards and the Auvergne Colorado

Enjoy a delightful day at **Boudes**, in the heart of the **Côtes d'Auvergne vineyards**.

Start with a walk through the **Vallée des Saints**, a sensitive natural area famous for its red clay **fairy chimneys** and the mineral-rich Bard salt spring. The winding paths, dotted with these astonishing formations, offer a surprisingly Mediterranean setting.

Continue with a tasting of **Côtes d'Auvergne** wines. The aromas of the local grape varieties and the winemakers' knowledge and passion make this stopover an unforgettable experience for wine lovers.

Then wander through the wine-making village of **Boudes**, before visiting the **château at Villeneuve-Lembron**. Built at the end of the Middle Ages, it features large vaulted stables 25 m long, decorated with Renaissance frescoes depicting knights, jousts and mythological scenes that are among the best preserved in France. A day where nature, history and art come together to create the perfect getaway.

Cheese or stationery:

Ambert, the land of cheese and paper

Located in the heart of the **Livradois-Foréz Nature Park**, Ambert has an authentic feel, with lush green mountains, deep forests and a historic quarter dotted with timber-framed houses. The town combines a history of craftsmanship and gastronomy: the famous **Ambert cheese** stands alongside the unique **Richard de Bas paper mill**, the last witness to a time when there were almost 400 mills in the valley. At the mill handmade paper is available in a range of original colours, textures and compositions, and visitors can take part in workshops to discover all the secrets of how it's made.

The 7km **Chemin des papetiers** winds its way along streams and through villages, recounting the history of the French paper industry. The walk ends at **La Manufacture d'Images**, an arts centre dedicated to printmaking and paper, with silkscreen, lithography and typography workshops.

You won't want to miss Ambert's round town hall, the only one of its kind in France, which houses exhibitions and a weekly market.

EVENT

LES FOURMOLFOLIES

A market of local produce, free concerts, chef demonstrations and tasting sessions at Fourmolfolies every first weekend in August.



Thiers:

At the heart of global birthplace of cutlery

Between steep gorges and craftsmen's workshops, Thiers embodies an industrial and creative Auvergne where it's good to sharpen your senses. A stroll through the sloping streets with their half-timbered facades and covered passageways reveals the town's historic charm, punctuated by craft shops and **contemporary exhibitions** at **Le Creux de l'Enfer**, a former wasteland reinvented as an art centre, which reopened in 2025 after two years of renovation. Of national interest, it symbolises the cultural revival of Thiers.

Cutlery is still the key focus, with **museums**, demonstrations and traditional shops dotted around the town. At the century-old Robert David boutique, you can **take part in a knife assembly workshop**. Choose the blade and handle (olive, oak, juniper), assemble and engrave your own **Le Thiers© knife**.

The valley of factories, along the Durolle river, offers a walking trail dotted with industrial histories (paper mills, tanneries, cutlery) while the Coutellia festival celebrates the art of metalwork in a blend of tradition and innovation.



UNEXPECTED PUY-DE-DÔME: ADVENTURES OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Take a breather, get away from it all or experience something new? Immerse yourself in experiences off the beaten track, in the heart of the Auvergne. With animal encounters, unspoilt landscapes and unusual activities, treat yourself to a break away from it all and fill up on freedom, thrills and nature.

Get up close to endangered species (even at night)

Parc Animalier d'Auvergne

Nestling on the edge of the Cézallier mountains, the Parc Animalier d'Auvergne aims to **become the world's first park entirely dedicated to endangered species by 2028**. A strong mission that combines conservation and an immersive experience for all visitors.

Meet snow panthers, red pandas, wolverines, tigers, Amur panthers, takins, Tibetan black bears, Rothschild's giraffes, Hartmann's zebras, primates, two-toed sloths, pygmy hippopotamuses, cheetahs and 350 other rare and endangered animals ! The Park also has educational areas with **workshops and interactive games**, the experience can be extended at the **Manoir des Rêves Sauvages**, an unusual "very wild" hotel nearby, or with **La Tête dans les Étoiles**, where you can sleep in the heart of the park, opposite giraffes, tigers and panthers, and contribute to the protection of species (100% of the price is donated to associations supported by Play for Nature).



Become a musher for half a day

Chalet des Sibériens

Experience the adrenalin of the extreme cold at the **Chalet des Sibériens**, where you can drive a team of 2 or 4 dogs on the snow-covered slopes (or not) of the massif. After a presentation of the dogs and equipment, you take control of the sled (or go-kart), learn to manage speed, braking and turns, and discover the balance needed to control the pack. Every move counts: anticipating a fall, staying focused, feeling the dynamic of the dogs... **The experience is an intense cocktail of sensations and pure pleasure**, blending speed and wild nature.

Supervised by passionate **professionals**, this immersive half-day provides an insight into the life of a **musher**, the complicity with the dogs and the opportunity to enjoy the snow-covered landscapes like never before. Every bend reveals the beauty of the Livradois mountains, and every acceleration provides a unique thrill.



Stroll along the high pastures and plateaux From Forez to the Supeyres pass

At an altitude of 1,300 metres, on the border between the Loire and the Puy-de-Dôme, the **Jasserie du Coq Noir** welcomes hikers and gourmets for a unique experience. A fully preserved former mountain pasture farm, the stone and thatch building houses a restaurant, museum, concert hall and entertainment area. On the ground floor, the old cowshed and cheese cellar tell the story of everyday life in the mountain pastures, while upstairs under the thatched-roof, the museum illustrates the fascinating story of the women and children who came here in the summer.

Accompanied by local guide Anthony, visitors can discover **the Forez high plateaux on walks** through the wild flowers. Each plant and each fragrance is described in detail, awakening the five senses. The walk ends with a piece of Fourme d'Ambert cheese and a glass of local blueberry syrup, a surprising and delicious pairing.

The jasserie also offers themed walks, culinary workshops and concerts, and serves traditional meals prepared with quality local produce. Nature, gastronomy and culture join forces here to create an authentic and unforgettable day in the Haut-Forez.

Experience adventure in the Stèle forest Biathlon and nature

Between forest and snow-covered plateaux, halfway between La Tour-d'Auvergne and the spa towns of Mont-Dore and La Bourboule, **the Stèle forest** is a unique playground for outdoor enthusiasts. In summer and winter alike, the **biathlon area**, the only one of its kind in the region, offers a wide range of activities all supervised by qualified ESF instructors. After learning how to shoot a laser rifle, participants complete a series of laps of the track, combining precision and endurance in a fun, friendly atmosphere.

The afternoon continues with a **walk on snowshoes** or on foot through the fir trees and snowy (or green) clearings, where the silence and the beauty of the landscapes offer a true natural spectacle, with the Auvergne fauna as a discreet spectator.

To extend the experience, **the Cabanes des Volcans**, perched among the fir trees, offer unusual accommodation with a panoramic terrace, heating, breakfast delivered and the option of a jacuzzi in the trees. Facing the mountains, the combination of adventure and well-being makes this a rare, magical and restorative break.



Glide over the Auvergne in a balloon

Just imagine yourself floating in the rays of the sun, suspended in the **basket of a hot air balloon** whilst the Chaîne des Puys below you stretches to the horizon, revealing craters and domes, and a shimmering **Lac Chambon**. The forests have grown over the ancient lava flows, and with a bit of luck, you'll catch sight of some of the wild animals who live here. An unforgettable experience.

Organised by Auvergne Volcans, flights are by reservation only and take place at sunrise or sunset, with balloon baskets able to transport from 2 to 10 passengers. You'll take part in preparing for the flight, from inflating the balloon itself to installing the basket. A gentle take-off, a soft landing in a willow basket and thrills guaranteed!

With volcanic panoramas, lakes and craters, each flight is a magical break from reality and a unique aerial adventure to experience in Puy-de-Dôme.



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