

explorons ensemble

l'auvergne

Touristic guide

les

gorges de l'allier

LE PAYS OÙ LA NATURE PREND SA SOURCE

gorges-allier.com
tourisme-brioudesudauvergne.fr


LE SECRET LE MIEUX GARDE D'AUVERGNE

Historic villages

Arlempdes

A picturesque village dominated by one of the first castles on the banks of the Loire. The remains of the medieval fortress stand like a sentinel over the Gorge.



Pradelles

A stone's throw from Lake Naussac and Haut-Allier, this ancient stronghold was an important stopover on the Régordane route linking Auvergne to Languedoc.



Blesle

Its rich religious past once made Blesle famous: the seat of a Benedictine abbey for women of noble origin, the town developed during a large part of the Middle Ages. Take the time to explore the different districts of the town to discover the vestiges of its past with its rich architectural heritage from the 16th, 17th and 19th centuries.



Auzon

With its rich historic past, this town is characterized by its old cobbles and its Romanesque collegiate church with medieval wall paintings.





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Discover the rich heritage of the smaller villages in **the Allier Gorges**.

Lavaudieu

This village on the banks of the Senouire, is built around an old Benedictine abbey. This delightful haven of peace, with remarkable buildings, is home to the only intact Romanesque cloister in Auvergne.



Chilhac

Chilhac is really an exceptional site, a village perched on a majestic basalt flow which dominates the Allier river. Wander through the narrow streets of the old fortified village, with its typical houses from a wine-growing past, around its Romanesque church and Christian Guth paleontological museum.



Lavoûte-Chilhac

With its remarkable location in the centre of a horseshoe bend on the river Allier, and dominated by its 18th century priory buildings, Lavoûte-Chilhac is classed as one of the Most Beautiful Villages in France.
Maison des oiseaux.

Discover our villages

From the granitic plates of Margeride to the valley of Allagnon or the old volcanos of Le Devès, the territory of the Gorges de l'Allier offers a remarkable variety of landscapes and a patrimonial richness out of the commun run. Each one of our villages shows a particular character resulting from geology, relief, vegetation and action of the man who craved it. From a romanesque church to a medieval castle, from giant stairways to dolmens, the legends and the flavours flow. We invite you to discover the multiple facets of our inheritance.

To get information on sites to visit, please contact our local Tourist offices (see page 3) and ask for the « laissez-vous conter... » books or the Pays d'art et d'histoire du Haut-Allier activity program.

Around Auzon

CHAMPAGNAC-LE-VIEUX 12th to 16th centuries church with 15th century reliquary and romanesque doorway. Castel and pigeon house in Durbiat. Freshwater lake | Tree climbing

LEMPDES-SUR-ALLAGNON Romanesque church with sculpted capital and corbel, 17th century Lady of Pity. 19th century semicircular shape market. 18th great arch bridge. Old water mill over the Béal. Maison de la vie rurale.

SAINT-HILAIRE Romanesque church with sculpted capital.
Distillerie huiles essentielles.

Around Cayres-Pradelles

LE BOUCHET SAINT-NICOLAS 19th century church. Hunter's house with sculpted decorations (private). Bouchet's lake, protected natural site : natural lake in a middle of a caldera surrounded by a dense forest. Foot pathway around the lac du Bouchet with tactile pictures and maps for blind people to discover geology and local legends, beach. Legendary healing cross at La Chevre.

SAINT-JEAN-LACHALM

12th century church with multicoloured tiled belfry. Séjallières 15th century castle (private). Voie Bollène : ancient romanesque way. panoramic views of the the gorges of the Allier river and panoramic table. Via ferrata.

Around Langeac

CHANTEUGES 12th century Abbey rebuilt during the 15th century, romanesque capitals, stalls. 15th century Santa Anna Chapel, called « de l'Abbé ». Cloister's remains. Rural heritage. La Gravière: beach on the river Allier, adventure playground.

LANGÉAC 15th century collegiate church, 15th century wood craved multicoloured Statue of the Entombment, 16th century stalls. Sainte Catherine's monastery with chapel and Bienheureuse Mère Agnès reliquary. « Historial Agnès de Langeac »; « Maison du Jacquemart » with wall paintings, craved wood 17th century ceilings. Panoramic tables at Mont Saint Roch and Lestival. « Maison de la Béate » several rural heritage in Jahon. White water sports | Tree climbing.

PEBRAC Imposing building of an old abbey built in 1062 by Sir Pierre de Chavanon. 15th century Church with wall paintings. Treasure room, ritual items, 15th century multicoloured wood crib.

PRADES Village built between granitic and basaltic rocks, overhanged by the imposing « Roche Servièrè » (Remarquable natural site of 97 m height) which shows the impressing power of nature. Volcanic prisms and rocks. Romanesque church with wall paintings. Feudal castle remains.

SIAUGUES-SAINTE-MARIE 14th century feudal castle remains (private). Panoramic table with vaste panoramic view at La Durande, 1299m. Close to the village: Limagne's maar, former peat bog in a caldera.

SAINT-ARCONS-D'ALLIER Perched village sheltering an unusual broke up hotel (Relais et Châteaux). Old mill on the Fioule. 14th and 15th centuries Church. Former priory, 15th century tower, wrought iron cross, french gardens.

SAINT-JULIEN DES CHAZES 15th century church with 12th century statue of Our Lady enthroned. 18th century remains of the Chazes abbey. Basaltic prisms. The stram Légal waterfall. Romanesque chapel Notre Dame des Chazes.

Around Lavoûte-Chilhac

ALLY 12th century church. Ally's 1000 m height's tableland is known for its wind machine park (the biggest in France with 26 wind machines). 5 wind mills recently restored of which 2 can be visited. Old silver and antimony mines . Panoramic view.

CHILHAC Old medieval burg encircled by fortification walls (14th, 15th and 16th centuries), overhanging the Allier river, built on one of the last lava stream of the Deves mounts. Towers and doorways of the old castle. Romanesque church rebuilt. Vintner houses. Paléontology museum. 19th century suspension bridge over the Allier river.

SAINT-CIRGUES Towers and remains of the old Mercoeur's castle. 13th century church with 14th and 15th centuries wall paintings. Octagonal bell tower.



Around Paulhaguet

CHAVANIAC-LAFAYETTE 14th century castel where was born « Marquis de Lafayette », rebuilt during the 20th century, « Jardin remarquable ». Botanical conservatory.

DOMEYRAT Romanesque church with sculpted capitals. 14th century remains of the castel with 16th century wall paintings. Medieval bridge over the Senouire river.

Around Saugues

AUVERS 19th and 20th centuries Church. Auvers the burg where the famous Gévaudan beast has been killed. There you can see its bronze statue craved by Philippe KAEPPÉLIN and visit the Maison de la Bête and its exposition.

Mont-Mouchet: In the middle of the Margeride granitic mounts, this historical site of résistance reminds us of the tragic events that took place during the second world war. The museum shows several testimonial documents and a great collection items. The Mont-Mouchet is the highest mount of the Margeride (1497m) and has a fantastic panoramic view (panoramic table at the mountaintop).

CHARRAIX 19th century Church with 16th et 18th centuries wall paintings. 19th century granitic cross. Bounou's rock, the old Rochelaure's castel remains built on a granitic tore. Besque's waterfall.

CHANAILELLES

Church with imposant wall belfry. Statue of the Blessed Virgin enthroned. 15th century craved cross in the cimetry. Farmhouse « du Sauvage ». Saint Roch's fountain in l'Hospitalet.

ESPLANTAS Castel with a 13th century circular donjon. 15th century church with wall belfry.

SAUGUES 13th century « Tour des Anglais ». Collegiate church with 12th century Statue of the Blessed Virgin enthroned and 16th century Lady of pity in coloured wood. « Chapelle des Pénitents Blancs » (procession every Maundy Thursday).
St Bénilde diorama.
Musée Fantastique de la Bête du Gévaudan.
Lainerie du Gévaudan | Moulin au fil de l'eau | Lake | Wake-board | Horse riding.

Around Blesle

LÉOTOING

A fortified site, distinguished by the towering remains of the 13th-14th feudal castle (private). In the village, discover former winegrowers' houses, renovated terraced slopes, and an old village gateway. At the top of the village, the Romanesque church has medieval wall paintings. The "Leper" chapel has exhibitions and a model of the village.

Around Brioude

BRIOUDE

This exceptional small town is classed as one of the Prettiest out of the way small towns in France (*Plus Beaux Détours de France*) and also as an Arts and Crafts town (*Ville et Métiers d'art*). As well as its arts and crafts shops, the historic centre has houses dating back to the 13th century, half-timbered houses from the 15th century, and other historic town houses and ecclesiastical buildings from the 17th and 18th centuries. Saint-Julien's Basilica is the largest Romanesque church in Auvergne, and has been awarded the top ranking 3 stars in the Michelin green guide.

LAMOTHE

This is a fortified medieval village with gateways. Among things to see are the medieval castle, remodeled in the 17th century (private; visit by appointment at 04 71 76 41 16), old winegrowers' houses, and other old houses. At Cougeac, once a center for navigation on the Allier, discover the ruins of the St-Laurent chapel, and a dyke against the floods of the Allier. The local flora and fauna are typical of flood-prone areas, and include many protected species such as mallards, grey herons, and reed beds. Geological and geographical features include the (extinct) Garenne volcano, the basalt quarry of the Greises volcano, the Pré-Caillé meander, and the red sandstone of the Côte-Rouge, not to mention arkosic sandstone, old coal mines (closed) and former red clay quarries near the tile factories.

SAINT-ILPIZE

The imposing remains of the fortress of the Dauphins d'Auvergne stand on a rocky outcrop dominating the village and the valley below. At the heart of the castle

stand a tower and a Romanesque chapel. The 14th century parish church, just outside the castle, has 15th and 16th century wall paintings. Below the castle, an impressive 19th century suspension bridge spans the Allier. There is a waymarked short hike starting from the Mairie, taking visitors up to the castle (free entry) with a return via the historic village. The hillsides around St Ilpize were once all terraced, and some of these terraces have been renovated as a historic vineyard, on the road leading down from the castle. The village of Tapon has an old chapel and many old houses..

VIEILLE-BRIOUDE

Another traditional wine-growing village. The wine-growing heritage is illustrated by the large 7 ton wine-press and the small wine-growing museum and garden. Next door is the 12th century Romanesque St-Vincent's church and its treasure. Opposite stand the Priory and the former Notre Dame church. An impressive early 19th century stone bridge carries the main road over the Allier with a single span arch of 54 m. From the bridge can be seen the remains of the Vayron aqueduct. Outside the village the river is held back by the Bageasse barrage. There is also a historic 12th century leper colony (private - restaurant) beside a 15th century hump-backed stone bridge over the Senouire. Other sîçtes to discover include megaliths in Védrières and 17th century crosses, old winegrowers' houses and vineyard cabins in each village.



VILLE ET MÉTIERS D'ART

Brioude

est devenue la première ville de Haute-Loire à intégrer le réseau des villes labellisées « Ville et métiers d'art ». Une reconnaissance qui arrive au terme d'un important travail effectué conjointement par Mathias Cazin, coordinateur de l'Hôtel de la Dentelle et la Ville de Brioude, afin de répertorier les techniques et les savoir-faire d'excellence que compte Brioude et son territoire.

bouger

white water sports and swimming

The gorges de l'Allier territory offers a broad choice of activities around water. From the tumultuous waters of the Allier, supplied by the Naussac dam, to the sumptuous landscapes of the gorges de la Loire full of legends, and the astonishing crater lake of Le Bouchet, you will always find a program adapted to your wishes in rafting, kayak, canyoning, or quite simply for swimming.

hiking

With more than 2500 km of trails and marked paths, including the famous santiago de Compostelle pathway, and robert Louis stevenson pathway, you will discover an environmental, cultural and patrimonial richness.



other sports

one of the advantage of this vast territory is to be able to combine white water sports or hiking with other activities like a stroll on « Velo-rail » (cycle on railway at 1000m high), climbing on volcanic rocks, or defy the gap and boost your adrenaline on treetops or on the edge of a bridge. Bike, Mountain bike.



Art and crafts

Any artist dreams to live in a place filled with richness and inspiration like the Gorges de l'Allier. This is why today they come to share their passion with you".



markets & fairs

Wander through the hearts of our villages

Flea markets, garage sales, fairs... For information about one-off events, visit our tourist offices or their websites.

Weekly markets, farmers' markets and local craft markets...

The gorges de l'Allier territory is a generous and welcoming land where one cultivates user-friendliness and hospitality. Rustic and authentic flavours, tradition and folklore are found in the products of this region.

Balsac | Saint-Géron

Lively country market in summer on Monday evenings.

Blesle

Lively country market in summer every Friday evening.

Brioude

A substantial weekly market every Saturday morning throughout the year. In July-August lively craft market in the historic center every Thursday evening.

Champagnac-le-Vieux

Weekly market on Friday mornings throughout the year. On Wednesdays at 6 p.m. from July 1 to August 31, craft and local farmer' market.

Chilhac

In July-August, summer market on Wednesdays from 6:00 p.m.

La Chomette

An organic and local farmer's market every Tuesday throughout the year, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m, extended until 10 p.m. in summer.

Costaros

Weekly market throughout the year, Monday mornings.

Landos

Weekly market throughout the year, Tuesday mornings.

Langeac

Weekly markets throughout the year, Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Lavaudieu

Country market in summer on Wednesday evenings.

Lavoûte-Chilhac

Weekly market throughout the year, Fridays from 5:30 p.m. Sunday morning 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in July and August.

Lempdes-sur-Allagnon

Weekly market throughout the year, Tuesday mornings.

Mazérat-Aurouze

Every first Saturday of the month from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., farmers' market at Moulin.

Paulhaguet

Weekly market throughout the year, Monday mornings.

Saint-Beauzire

Summer market on Friday evenings on the square: entertainment, refreshment bar and food stalls.

Saugues

Throughout the year, market on Friday mornings. Livestock market at the covered market on Monday mornings (cattle) and Friday mornings (sheep).

Siaugues-Ste-Marie

Weekly market in the town centre, on Sunday mornings throughout the year . Livestock market at the covered market.

Villeneuve-d'Allier

Small market throughout the year, Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.





Gorges de l'Allier

gorges-allier.com

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Brioude

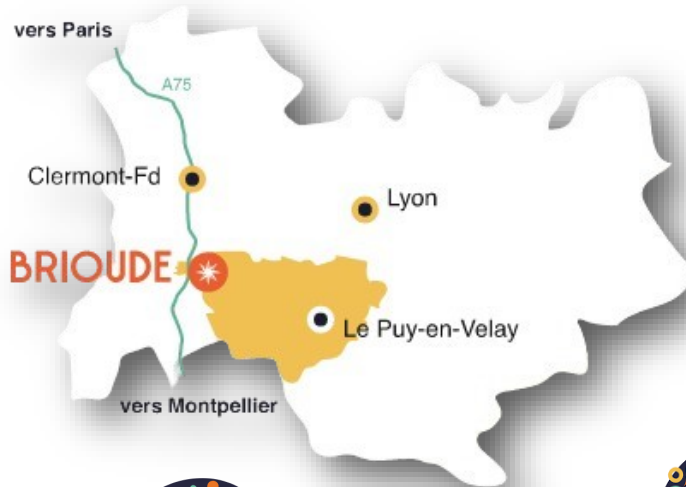
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Lavaudieu

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To find out more, do not hesitate to cross the door of the tourist offices. There you meet lovers of the area who will give you the benefit of their informed advice.



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