

TOURISM ALBUM #6

Excursions

en Deux-Sèvres

ALONG THE RIVERS

MAJOR SITES

CYCLING ROUTES





Thouars



Zoodyssée

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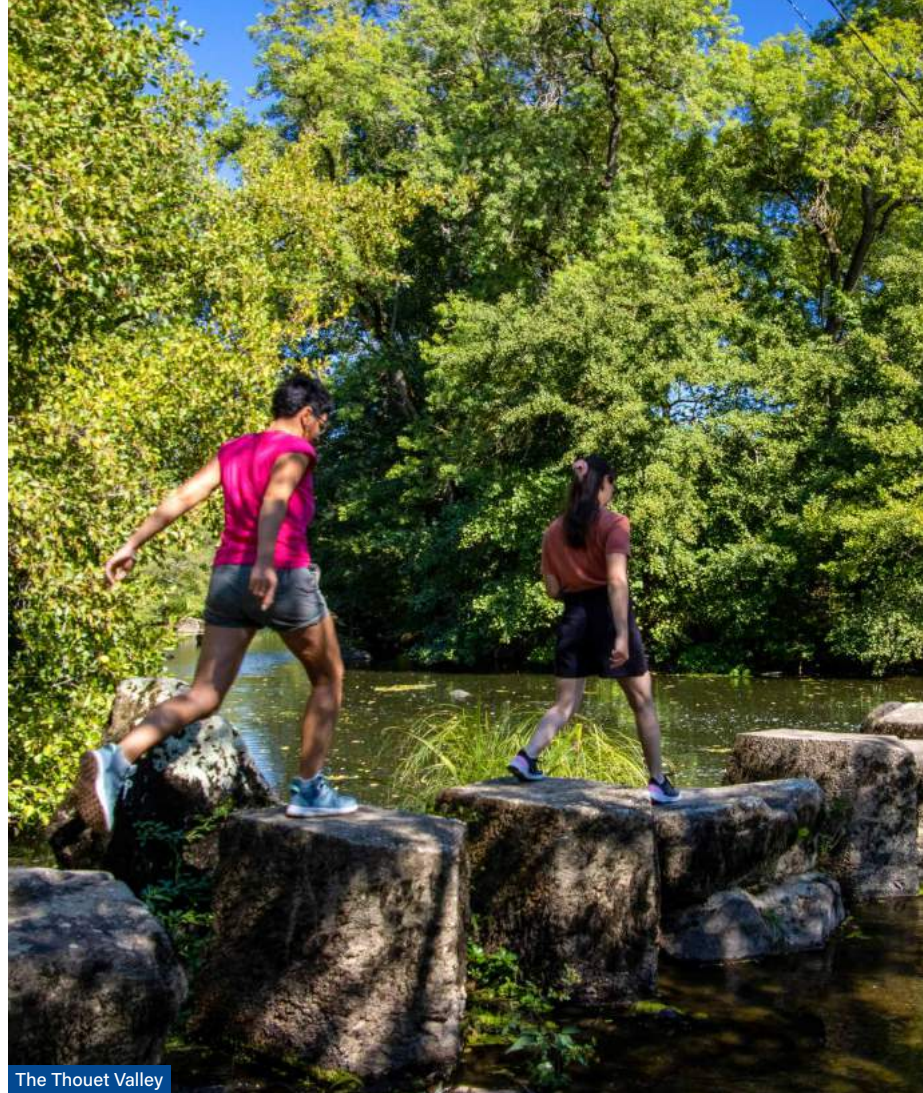
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The Sèvre Nantaise



Zoodyssée



The Thouet Valley



Parthenay



Celles-sur-Belle



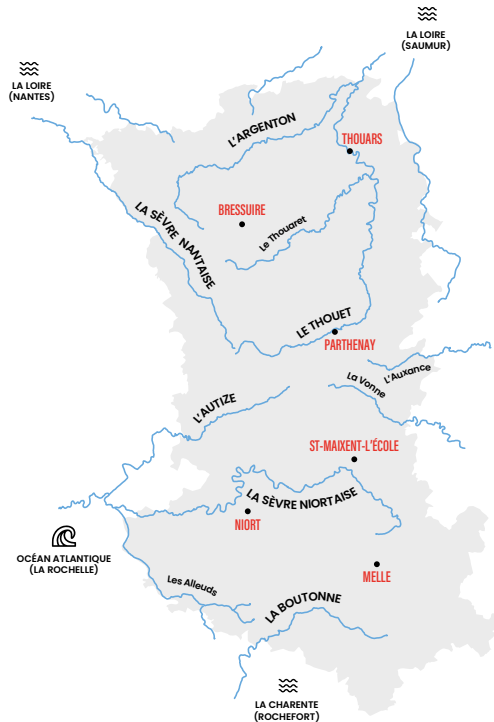


The Marais Poitevin

DEUX-SÈVRES ALONG THE RIVERS

Water is part of the identity of Deux-Sèvres. It gets its name from two of the region's main rivers, the Sèvre Niortaise and the Sèvre Nantaise. Springs, lakes, rivers and the Marais Poitevin, which is France's second largest wetland after Camargue, give the landscape a unique character. From the plunging valley of the Argenton to the quiet banks of the Boutonne, there are great opportunities for walking through the historic towns and villages and wonderful natural areas.

It's your turn to discover them...







Excursion
along the
Thouet



The Thouet, a tributary of the Loire, emerges in Gâtine, not far from the source of the Sèvre Nantaise. Its exceptional natural heritage has attracted people from all times, who have built architectural treasures along the valley. Medieval towns, churches and bridges from the Romanesque period, mills, fords and villages with golden stones can be seen at every bend of the river.





A CLOSER LOOK AT

Parthenay



The "Little Carcassonne of the West" is without doubt our favourite place to visit. Arriving via Rue du Faubourg Saint-Paul sets the tone. You can embrace the whole historic district which dominates the Thouet. It's a rather spectacular view! The old medieval town's architectural identity, the narrow alleys and cobbled streets, the timber-framed houses, the ramparts and imposing gates feel like you are going on a journey through time. A few small cafes, shops and quality restaurants complete the picture!



Picnic SPOT

PARTHENAY LEISURE CENTRE

In the morning, take a quick walk through Parthenay's medieval streets and market to buy tasty products and fresh bread for a picnic. At lunchtime, enjoy the view of the lake and the children's playground and at the end of the afternoon, go to the nearby Gatineo aquatic area.

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY...

The town of Parthenay was founded around the year 1000, and from the 12th century it was a place of passage for pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela, who entered the town via Faubourg Saint-Jacques. At the beginning of the 13th century, with the help of the King of England, all of the town's fortifications and the castle were built. During the French Wars of Religion between 1562 and 1568, the town was besieged and burnt down. Today, the numerous remains, the religious heritage, and the medieval houses of the Vau Saint-Jacques guarded by the monumental Saint-Jacques gate, have earned Parthenay the status of "Pays d'art et d'histoire" (City of Art and History).





CHEMIN CREUX DE L'ORÈRE

Hike

9km

Grand-Chevreau Town Hall
Vouhé

Take the sunken paths that criss-cross the Orère and Baraudière valleys through authentic villages and meadows where sheep and Parthenaise cattle graze. From the hamlets with centuries-old houses to the shady paths, the impressive trees and views of the Gâtine will be sure to move you.

randoeuxsevres.fr



JARDINS DES HISTOIRES

Pougne-Hérissou

Located in Pougne-Hérissou, known as the Navel of the World, the Jardins des Histoires is a special, poetic, slightly offbeat place. Here, the trees and rocks tell stories, as if they are bustling with inner life! Stay a child at heart and let yourself embark into the imaginary world of this relaxing park where it's good to recharge your batteries among the abundance of vegetation.

www.nombril.com





JARDINS DU GUÉ

📍 *Lhoumois*

Nestled on the right bank of the Thouet, this floral garden is split up into seven themes. You can wander from the travellers' garden to the garden of time, via the gourmet garden or the garden of love... It's the perfect way to enjoy a relaxing break in touch with nature, while taking advantage of the proximity of the Thouet to continue the walk and the magic.

www.jardinsdugue.eu



Les
grands
sites

MOUTON VILLAGE

📍 *Vasles*

One of the sweetest places in Deux-Sèvres!

Mouton village is the first park in France to welcome around twenty breeds of sheep from all over the world, in a natural area with more than 4,000 trees. The space has an LPO refuge status (French League for the Protection of Birds). Jacob sheep, Blackface and Somali to name just a few... Armed with an audio guide on your smartphone, you can explore the world of sheep and enjoy a sweet break while watching the lambs being fed.

www.moutonvillage.fr





LAC DU CÉBRON

📍 *Saint-Loup-Lamairé*

You can take part in environmentally friendly activities here such as fishing, light sailing (windsurfing, dinghy sailing, catamaran sailing), hiking or cycling, all of which helps you to better understand this fragile nature.

To make the most of the area, you can pitch a tent at the campsite or rent a small wooden hut.

www.lacducebron.fr

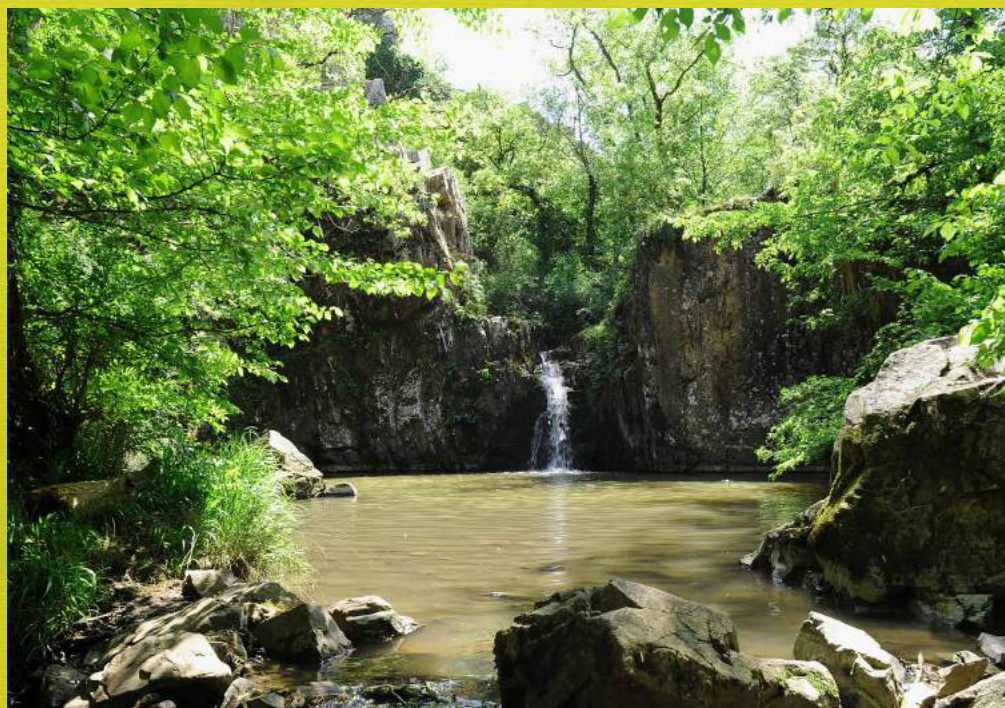




VALLÉE DU PRESSOIR

📍 *Saint-Jacques-de-Thouars*

The narrow and steep Vallée du Pressoir is a picturesque site which leads to the Pommiers waterfall, protected since 1932 and nestled at the foot of the high cliffs. This valley is renowned for its rich natural heritage, which can be discovered through a 2.5km hiking path which has some remarkable views of the site and its nearby environment. Long known for the diversity of its sometimes-rare flora, you can spot the Early Star-of-Bethlehem and the Monkey Orchid. Goats graze there, which helps with the site's natural maintenance.





Saint-Loup-Lamairé



Airvault

PETITES CITÉS DE CARACTÈRE®

📍 Airvault, Saint-Loup-Lamairé and Oiron

The villages of Airvault and Saint-Loup-Lamairé are two charming and close-by *Petites Cités de Caractère*® which are nice to have a stroll around. The Airvault market is held on Saturday mornings under the covered market hall, and it's a pleasure to shop and chat with the traders. You can enjoy wandering through picturesque narrow streets to discover the heritage, including an underground fountain, Art Nouveau house, abbey, medieval bridges and much more.

In Saint-Loup-Lamairé, you will find magnificent timber-framed houses from the 15th and 16th centuries, narrow flower-filled streets and the majestic castle which watches over the water. Nestled in a loop of the Thouet river and surrounded by wooded hills, Saint-Loup is renowned for its cooperative dairy which has been producing goat's cheese since 1894.



A little further north, Oiron is another striking Petite Cité de Caractère®. In the tradition of the Loire castles, the impressive Château d'Oiron, built in the 16th and 17th centuries, houses a collection of contemporary art that you wouldn't expect to find in this rural village. It's well worth a visit!



LAND OF FESTIVALS

Le Jazz bat la campagne

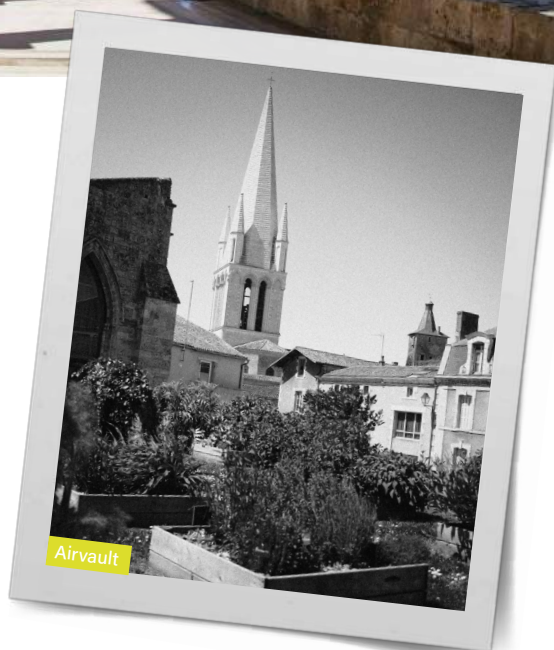
Terri' Thouars blues

De Bouche à oreille

Le Festival des jeux...



Find all the festivals along the Thouet at www.deux-sèvres.fr



Château d'OIRON

*Les
grands
sites*

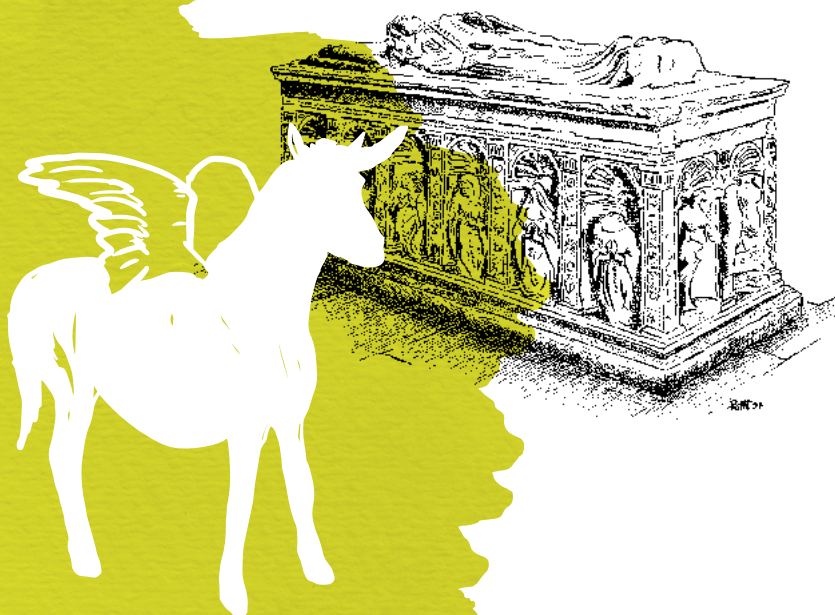


📍 *Plaine-et-Vallées*

The Château Renaissance d'Oiron welcomes you to an authentic setting which houses a collection of contemporary works in keeping with the cabinets of curiosities. A bewildering experience!

Considered the most southern of the Loire castles, the Château d'Oiron has always had an artistic focus. Inspired by the monument's historic collections, the "Curios & Mirabilia" collection was created especially for the Château d'Oiron. The works in all the rooms appeal to our senses, to make us actors and make the tour full of surprises. A thrilling exchange between contemporary and historical works, architecture and ancient decor.

www.chateau-oiron.fr





A CLOSER LOOK AT



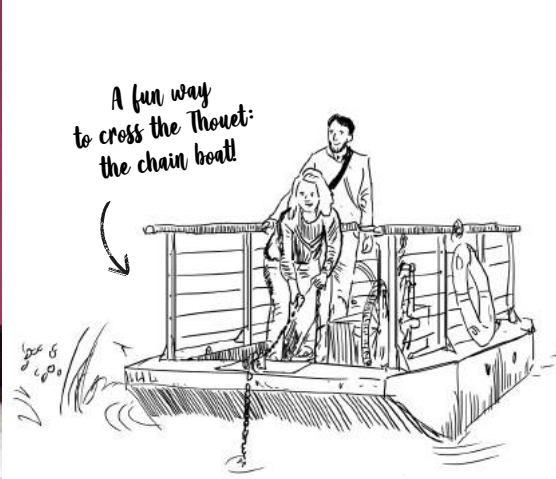
Thouars



From the Romanesque churches to the grand townhouses, via the ramparts, medieval houses and the majestic Château des Ducs de la Trémoille, the town of Thouars has a lot to offer visitors in terms of the quality and quantity of its architectural heritage. From the Chouans bridge, the view over the medieval city is an invitation to wander through the steep cobbled streets that lead to the old town. To discover the inside of a 19th century grand townhouse, visit the Henri Barré museum, built in 1862 in the heart of the town's historic district. It has preserved part of its interior design and its charm as a collector's house.

Running the length of the Thouet river, the town of Thouars is the ideal setting for canoeing or kayaking. Starting from Prairie des Ursulines, sailing on the calm waters of the river along the old town and the Château des Ducs de la Trémoille, you can appreciate its heritage from a different point of view than a walk.

www.thouarscanoekayak.fr



Picnic SPOT

FACING THE CHÂTEAU DES DUCS DE LA TRÉMOILLE

For a royal picnic, sit down on the banks of the Thouet, facing the castle. The Pré Chambert path, in Saint-Jean-de-Thouars, has the most beautiful views of the monuments in the gorgeous town of Thouars, to which it is linked by the Chouans bridge.



THE CENTRE RÉGIONAL RÉSISTANCE ET LIBERTÉ

This cultural space is based on the events of the Second World War, on the acts and actors of the Regional Resistance from 1933-1945, to perpetuate the values of the Resistance, to understand and question the society which surrounds us, to understand and live its freedom.

www.crrl.fr

Dinner's ready!



THE PARTHENAISE

The Parthenaise cow takes its name from the town of Parthenay in the Deux-Sèvres region. This rural, exceptional breed is unmistakable and today produces quality Label Rouge meat, recognised by professionals in the sector thanks to the work of passionate breeders in Deux-Sèvres.

WINES OF THE THOUARSAIS REGION

Thouarsais is a renowned vineyard area, located at the gateway to Nouvelle-Aquitaine and south of the Loire Valley. Thanks to outstanding geological diversity, unique grape varieties in PDO Anjou, such as Chenin, Cabernet or Gamay and in PDO Saumur are cultivated on nearly 20 vineyards. Talent and knowledge are two keywords that characterise the work carried out by our winegrowers, resulting in exceptional vintages.

Tagine-style beef stew

Serves 4

2 hours

- 800g of Parthenaise beef chuck or shoulder
- 2 onions
- 50g of Ras el Hanout
- 250ml of white wine
- 250ml of veal stock
- Seasonal vegetables

In a casserole dish, sweat the onions, add the meat to colour it, and then the spices. Add the white wine, reduce and add the veal stock. Leave to cook over a low heat for around 40 minutes. Finally, add the vegetables that have been cooked beforehand. Simmer for another 10 minutes (the vegetables should remain crunchy). Adjust the seasoning if necessary and serve hot in a tagine or a terracotta dish.

Recipe

Restaurants

LE 12

Airvault

LE SENTIER DES SAVEURS

Parthenay

HÔTELLERIE SAINT-JEAN

Saint-Jean de Thouars

LE CAFÉ DES ARTS

Thouars

LE RELAIS DU CHAPEAU ROUGE

Saint-Loup-Lamairé

Markets

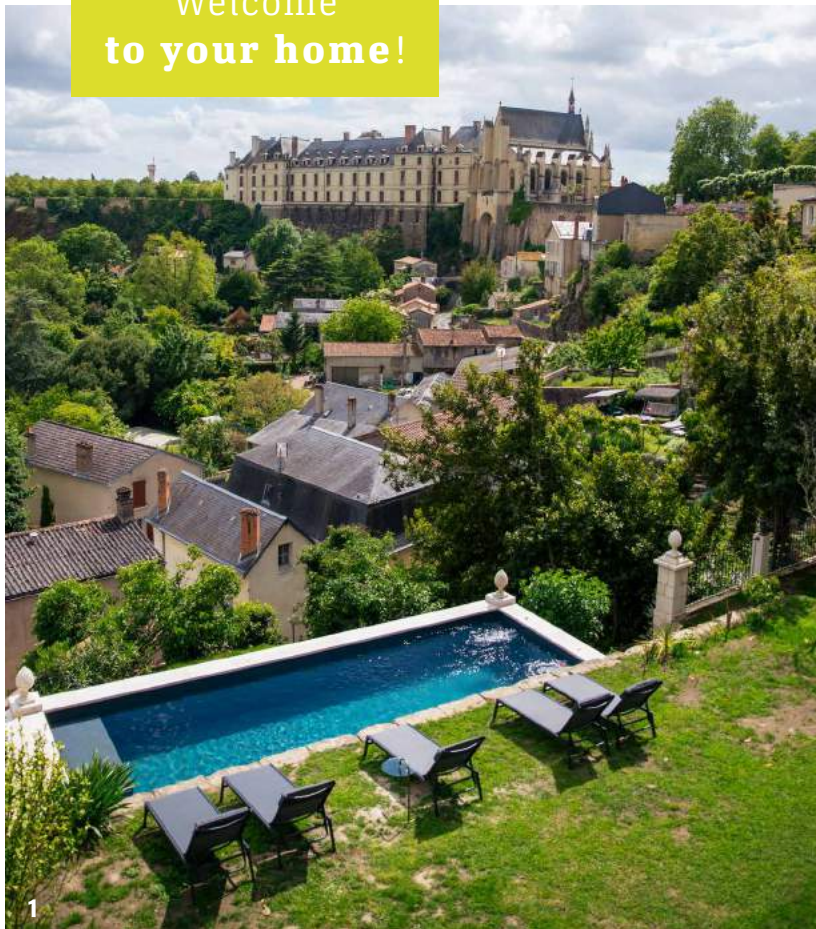
THOUARS

Every Tuesday and
Friday morning
From 8am-12.30pm

PARTHENAY

Every Wednesday and
Saturday morning
From 8am-12.30pm

Welcome
to your home!



1 AU PETIT THOUARS

📍 Thouars

"A magnificent setting. You feel like you're among friends... and you want to come back!" - Valérie



2 GÎTE AU BOOM CŒUR

📍 Tourtenay

"The gîte is nicely decorated, the setting is wonderful, in a small and very peaceful village. A total change of scenery!" - Hélène

3 GÎTE DE L'ANCIEN PRESBYTÈRE

📍 Saint-Martin de Sanzay

"In terms of history, it's a very nice place. Peace, calm, relaxation. Nothing better for recharging your batteries over the weekend." - Martin

A scenic view of a river with a small waterfall, surrounded by lush green trees and a golf course in the background. The river flows from the left towards the right, with a small waterfall in the foreground. The water is clear and reflects the surrounding greenery. The background shows a well-maintained golf course with several trees scattered across it. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Excursion
along

the Argenton



The Argent and Dolo rivers give rise to the Argenton, whose steep, rocky valley between Thouars and Bressuire is full of good surprises for families and lovers of unspoilt countryside. Many natural sites to visit and some of the most popular activities in Deux-Sèvres make it an ideal place to stay as there is something for everyone!



OUR SELECTION: Places to stay Restaurants Picnic

LAND OF FESTIVALS Sensitive Natural Area (ENS) Places of interest Camper van area



MUSÉE ECOLE DE LA TOUR NIVELLE

📍 Courlay

The Musée Ecole de la Tour Nivelles is one of those places that tells us about the past and that still seems to be inhabited by our ancestors. In this old school, with the clogs, the wooden desks and the blackboard, we feel like we are part of the cast of War of the Buttons!

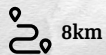
www.tournivelle.fr





BOIS DES CHÈVRES

Hike



8km



5km to the south of Nueil-Les-Aubiers on the abandoned D33

Bois des chèvres is a place steeped in history. Two battles between the Vendean insurgents and the Republican troops took place here in July and October 1793. Although the insurgents no longer hide there to mount ambushes, hikers can admire the freshness and the views.

randoeuxsevres.fr

LAND OF FESTIVALS

The Highland Games
(every two years)

Bouillez !

Rise and fall

Voix et danses...



Find all the festivals
along the Argenton at
www.deux-sevres.fr



SÈVRE AUTRUCHE AND MAZE

Courlay

A free visit to the ostrich park lets you get close to the largest bird in the world in complete safety and to get to know the different species, each as impressive as the next. Throughout the maze of hornbeam hedges, you can have fun answering the riddles and investigate to find the way out.

sevre-autruche.fr





A CLOSER LOOK AT



Bressuire



For a city walk, head to Bressuire, a dynamic town and stronghold of the northern Deux-Sèvres. Dominated by the 11th-century castle built on a hillside overlooking the old village centre, the capital of Bocage Bressuirais is crossed by the Dolo, a sub-tributary of the Loire. You can enjoy a break in the sun in the sculptors' orchard, a beautiful and unusual park. There is a discovery trail which means you don't miss any of the most beautiful views and heritage along the streets of the town, from the Saint-Cyprien chapel to the Romanesque church of Saint-Sauveur-de-Givre-en-Mai, via the station district and the Chaize lake.



Picnic SPOT

VALLÉE DU NAY

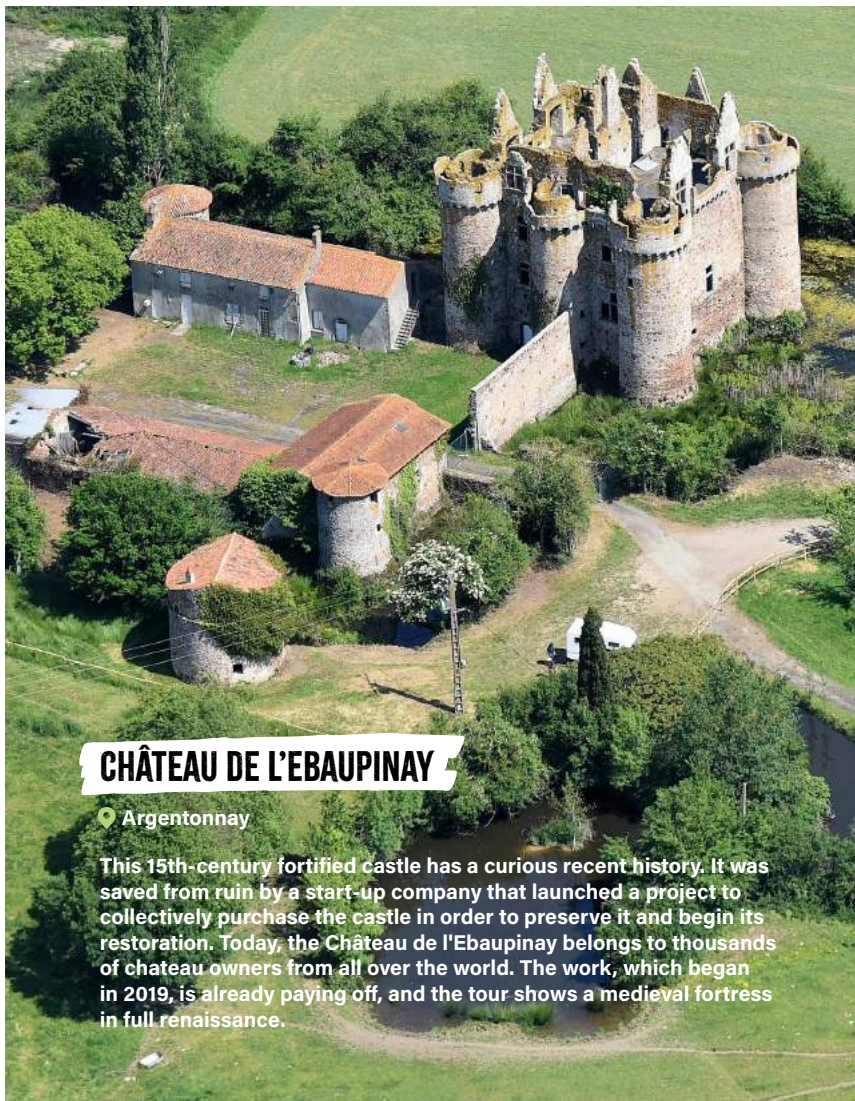
15km west of Bressuire and 1.5km north of the village of Le Pin, there is a pond nestling in the Vallée du Nay. A picnic area with a playground and the start of walking trails make this a great place to spend a day in the fresh air.

HIKING WITH A DONKEY

📍 Bressuire

An experience that can be funny, calming, affectionate and moving. Children are sure to fall in love with their donkey and have a great time accompanying it on the greenway around Bressuire.

www.savon-lait-anesse.com



CHÂTEAU DE L'EBAUPINAY

📍 Argentonay

This 15th-century fortified castle has a curious recent history. It was saved from ruin by a start-up company that launched a project to collectively purchase the castle in order to preserve it and begin its restoration. Today, the Château de l'Ebaupinay belongs to thousands of chateau owners from all over the world. The work, which began in 2019, is already paying off, and the tour shows a medieval fortress in full renaissance.

LAC D'HAUTIBUS

📍 Argentonnay

This 7-hectare artificial body of water, surrounded by woods and hills and dominated by the ruins of the old Château d'Argentonnay, is classified Natura 2000. Surrounded by the pretty Hautibus bridge and the old Cadoret bridge, there is an aquatic centre with water sports activities like canoeing/kayaking and pedalos. The Terra Aventura route "*Prochain arrêt, la cache*" (Next stop, the hideout) lets you discover the village's places of historical interest as well as two of the three Sensitive Natural Areas (ENS) in the commune.



 A Polaroid-style photograph of a roller coaster car filled with people, moving along a track. The car is purple and yellow. In the background, there are large blue letters that appear to say 'Vallee'. The photo is set against a light blue background that features a large, stylized ice cream cone graphic on the right side.

 A CLOSER LOOK AT

LE PARC DE LA VALLÉE

A family theme park with rides for all ages, shows, new attractions every year and shady places to rest and have picnics. What will be your favourite attraction? The pirate ship, the spinning cauldrons, the volcano, the activities in the water park... ?

parcdelavallee.fr



PASSERELLE D'AUZAY

📍 Argentonnay

In the heart of the steep valley of the Argenton, the Passerelle d'Auzay site is testament to the evolution of nature and landscapes. There are watermill ruins and the miller's house to be discovered on this former flour mill site. These buildings have been restored as playgrounds and discovery areas surrounded by diverse meadows, rich in remarkable flora and fauna. Along the way, you can walk under the cover of trees and over a wooden footbridge to a green theatre and the story tree. An 8km hiking trail "Entre ponts et passerelles" (Between bridges and footbridges) extends the discovery to both banks of the Argenton and to the village via the Romanesque Hautibus bridge.

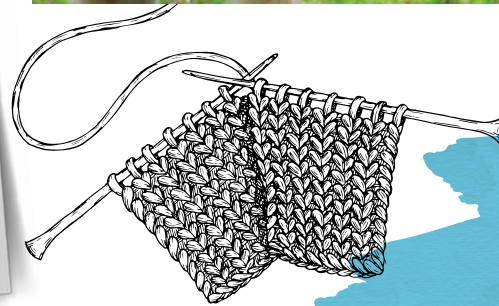


LA PETITE FERME D'ALPAGAS SANZAY

📍 Argentonnay

A unique place full of sweetness. In the morning, you are introduced to the herd and can see the animals' breakfast rations being prepared. Then you can have a picnic with the young alpacas, go for a walk with them in the village and even give them kisses! These animals are very sociable and affectionate.

www.lapetitefermedalpagas.com



Did you know?

Soft, silky, resistant, light and insulating, alpaca fibre combines all the qualities to give the weaving a luxurious and extremely refined result. As soft as cashmere, warmer and more resistant than wool, it is now considered as the ideal fibre by many brands.

Dinner's ready!



Restaurants

LE RELAIS DES DEUX TOURS

📍 Bouillé-Saint-Paul

LE MOULIN DE LA SORINIÈRE

📍 Nueil-les-Aubiers

AUBERGE DES FONTAINES

📍 Bressuire

Markets

BRESSUIRE

Every Tuesday and Saturday morning
From 8am-12.30pm

Recipe

Lamb shoulder, French pain d'épices and winter squash

More info and recipes at www.agneau-poitou-charentes.com

Serves 4

5 hours

- 1 Poitou-Charentes PGI shoulder of lamb
- 1 winter squash
- 4 slices of pain d'épices
- 500g of mandarin oranges
- 500ml of mandarin juice
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 sprigs of thyme
- Onions

Place the Poitou-Charentes PGI shoulder of lamb, herbs and garlic in a casserole dish, and leave in a warm oven for 2 hours. Take the casserole dish out of the oven and add the slices of pain d'épices, the sliced winter squash and the quartered mandarins. Season and, if desired, add a spice mixture. Put back in the oven, covered, for 2 hours at 180°C. Once the lamb is done, deglaze with the mandarin juice and add the sliced onions. It's ready!



LAMB

The region of Deux-Sèvres is a breeding land and the 6th largest producer of lamb meat in France. Poitou-Charentes lamb has an PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) which guarantees the link between the land and traditional know-how; the **Label Rouge farm lamb "Le Diamandin"** is the result of an industry approach producing high-quality meat, particularly in terms of taste.

Welcome
to your home!



1 LA MINAUDIÈRE

📍 Nueil-les-Aubiers

"A really charming place, quiet, with quality facilities and a generous breakfast. In short, just beautiful!" Emmanuelle

2 COTTAGE DU GARLAI

📍 Bressuire

"Very friendly staff, very quiet and pretty cottage. Breakfast is also very good. It really is the best for a relaxing time and a change of scenery." - Stéphanie

3 DOMAINE DES ROCHES BLANCHES

📍 Le Pin

"An outstanding place, surrounded by century-old trees. A great wealth of landscapes: meadows, woods, ponds, gardens and much more." Blaise

A lush green forest scene featuring a stream that flows over large, moss-covered rocks. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding trees and sky. Sunlight filters through the dense canopy of green leaves, creating a dappled light effect on the forest floor. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Excursion




along

*the Sèvre
Mantaise*



The last large tributary of the Loire, the Sèvre Nantaise begins in La Gâtine, near Beugnon and Neuvy-Bouin. Between rolling hills and granite blockfields, the river calmly winds through lush landscapes, acting as a natural border between Deux-Sèvres and Vendée, before flowing into the Loire river in Nantes.



OUR SELECTION:  Places to stay  Restaurants  Picnic

 Sensitive Natural Area (ENS)  Places of interest  Camper van area



LE JARDIN DES CHIRONS

📍 Largeasse

Imagine a garden made of huge round granite rocks, sometimes covered in moss, sometimes piled up. Here we call these rocks Chirons. One of them, called **Rocher Branlant**, can sway under the strength of your arms despite weighing several tons. It's not necessarily a question of strength but of the right technique and angle. It's a great playground and a must-see in Largeasse.

L'ÎLE DU LEYDET

📍 Saint-André-sur-Sèvre

In summer, there's nothing like enjoying a bit of fresh air on the water: canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding or even cycling, there are various activities to enjoy. Adventure awaits. You can meet cows and find a shady spot for a picnic, now that's a real holiday!

ileduleydet.wordpress.com



A CLOSER LOOK AT

CHANTERMERLE ADVENTURE PARK

You will love this leisure park which is the largest in Deux-Sèvres. Children and adults alike can enjoy treetop adventure courses, ziplines, open-air laser tag and treasure hunts. A sure-fire good time, sometimes with a touch of adrenaline. Legs should not tremble when crossing rope bridges, climbing rope ladders or cycling a few metres between two trees!

www.parc-aventure-79.fr





RUISSEAU DES FOUGÈRES

Hike

 5km

 *Place de la République
(Monuments aux Morts)*
Le Busseau



The valley of Ruisseau des Fougères cuts through the Bocage du Busseau. The village's alleys and sunken lanes lead to a preserved built and natural heritage: the church of Notre-Dame and its octagonal bell tower, the water feature of the Ruisseau des Fougères, the fountain and the Granges pond, dwellings and châteaux etc.

randoendouxsevres.fr



PESCALIS, NATURE AND FISHING CENTRE

 Moncoutant-sur-Sèvre

In the hollow of green hills dotted with ponds, Pescalis is a paradise for "no kill" fishing. With your fishing licence in hand, you can tease carp, zander, black bass or roach. This nature resort also has some nice surprises in store for the whole family. With the numerous fishing stations you can fish by day or night, from the water's edge or by float tube. Whether you want to learn or improve, lessons are given by fishing guides between April and October.



MAULÉON, PETITE CITÉ DE CARACTÈRE®

Proudly standing on a rocky spur on the borders of Deux-Sèvres, Maine-et-Loire and Vendée, Mauléon hides architectural treasures and beautiful views over the bocage and the Ouin valley. The ramparts rise out of the ground at the corner of every street, a constant reminder of the town's capacity to bravely overcome the torment of the French Wars of Religion and the looting.

To discover the history of the town and its past as a leather city, there is a choice between the classic tour and a Terra Aventura tour which adds a playful touch. At the recently redesigned L'Abbaye museum, each area teaches us more about the Bocage, the Vendée Wars, beliefs and customs etc. The interactive exhibitions and the mysterious engraved rocks of Les Vaultx are fascinating.



*Les
grands
sites*

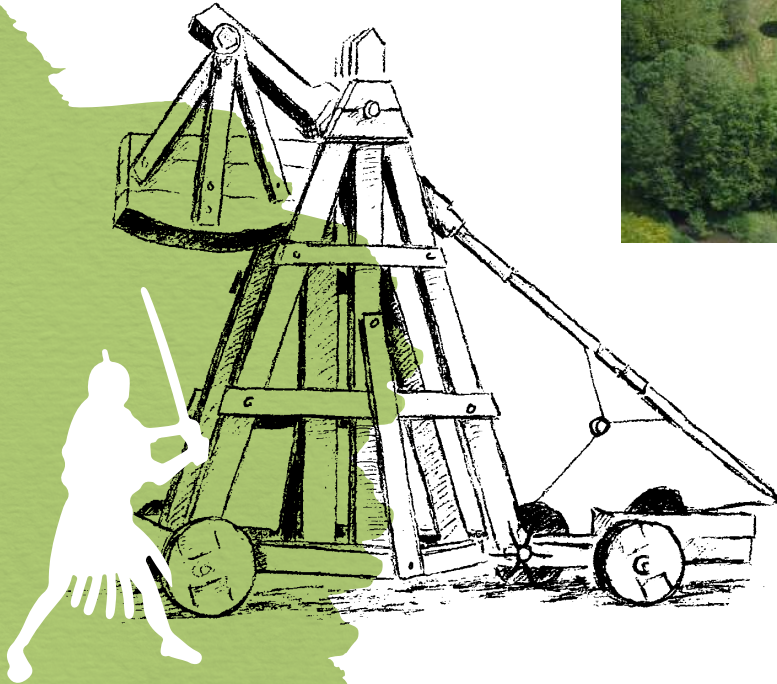
Le château de SAINT-MESMIN



📍 *Saint-André-sur-Sèvre*

Standing along the Sevreau, a tributary of the Sèvre Nantaise which once filled the moats, the Saint-Mesmin fortified castle has watched over Poitou and Deux-Sèvres for more than six centuries. Visiting Château de Saint-Mesmin is a journey through local history, in a medieval fortress that played both a military and residential role.

www.chateau-saintmesmin.com



Down with the poisoner!



The new great puzzle at Château de Saint-Mesmin is a landscape game where you unmask the poisoner of Pierre de Montfaucon, the lord of the castle. Use your common sense, observation, cooperation, insight and above all a good measure of humour!

Dinner's ready!



THE APPLE

Gâtine apples are a real tradition. Rustic and particularly tasty, they are enjoyed as an eating apple but also in juice. The local variety, the Reinette Clochard, is naturally preserved.

The Bressuire brand *Cœur de Pomme* was awarded a silver medal at the *Concours Général Agricole 2023* for its pure apple juice.

La Grimolle Poitevine (Apple Pie)

Recipe

Serves 6-8

1 hour

- 8 tablespoons of flour
- 6 tablespoons of sugar
- 5 tablespoons of oil
- 2 whole eggs
- 5 good apples
- ½ glass of water
- 1 packet of baking powder (11g)

Mix sugar, flour, oil, eggs, baking powder and water in a bowl.

Add the apples, cut into pieces.

Place in a hot oven (pre-heated to 210° or gas mark 7).

Leave to cook for 25-30 minutes.

Once cooked, leave to cool down before removing from the mould.

Restaurants

LA TERRASSE

📍 Mauléon

L'ATIP'I'K

📍 Moucoutant-sur-Sèvre (Pescalès)

LA P'TITE NOISSETTE

📍 Vernoux en Gâtine

Markets

MAULÉON

Every Saturday morning in the covered market and Place du Château.

From 8am-1pm

Welcome
to your home!



1 MALO LEONE

📍 Mauléon

"Spacious house and perfect facilities for a stay with friends in a region rich in occupations."
Bertrand

2 BULLE BELLE NUIT

📍 Argentonny

"I had a great stay in this bubble. It was very unique. We were able to enjoy the beautiful scenery and the sunset, followed by a starry sky as if we were sleeping under the stars."
Aurélie

3 CÔTÉ KOTA

📍 Vernoux-en-Gâtine


"Pascale is very caring and attentive to her clients. We would 100% recommend."
Mireille and Loïc

Your **insta'** *excursions*






Share your experiences

 [tourismedeuxsevres](#)

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 [deuxsevres_tourisme](#)

1. @Ellamarmara / 2. and 3. @franck_instag / 4. @philippeboussion
5. @OrlukPhoto / 6. @_Valentin.rb / 7. @terres_denvol



Excursion

along

the Autize



The Autize valley, a Natura 2000 site, begins at the heart of the Gâtine. It first flows along the apple fields, then continues its course towards the south-west of the region to join the Sèvre Niortaise in the Marais Poitevin. On a walk along the banks of the Autize, lucky walkers may catch a glimpse of a diving otter or the bluish colours of a Rosalia longicorn.



OUR SELECTION: Places to stay Restaurants Picnic Sensitive Natural Area (ENS) Places of interest Camper van area

THE COLLEGIAL

📍 Saint-Marc-la-Lande

The most prominent flamboyant Gothic building in Deux-Sèvres. It's a listed historic monument with its main interesting points being its façade, its south side and the richness of its sculpted decorations, stone lacework and beautiful gargoyles.

The garden of medicinal plants and the adjoining conservatory orchard are a haven of peace and are an opportunity to take very pretty photos with the commandery in the background.

The commandery is a magnificent building, probably a former hospital, which hosts interesting exhibitions and a small shop selling local products.

www.maison-patrimoine.fr





PIGEONNIER DE POUZAY

📍 Béceleuf

This is a remarkable and very surprising duo. Having lost its roof, the dovecote housed a seed and allowed it to grow until it reached the light. The dovecote and the hundred-year-old oak tree that has grown in its centre are like a united and inseparable old couple. Now it seems to be the tree's turn to protect the dovecote by covering it with a thick coat of vegetation.



DEUX-SÈVRES IN A VAN

📍 Coulonges-sur-l'Autize

In a van, a converted truck, a camper van... have a good night's sleep in the countryside. Between Coulonges-sur-l'Autize and Saint-Pompain, Sylvie welcomes you to her farm where you can take part in milking goats and taste delicious cheeses.

www.lesfromagesdesylvie.fr

"A wonderful stopover in this superb fold in the countryside. Four XXL pitches with donkeys, sheep and geese for neighbours."

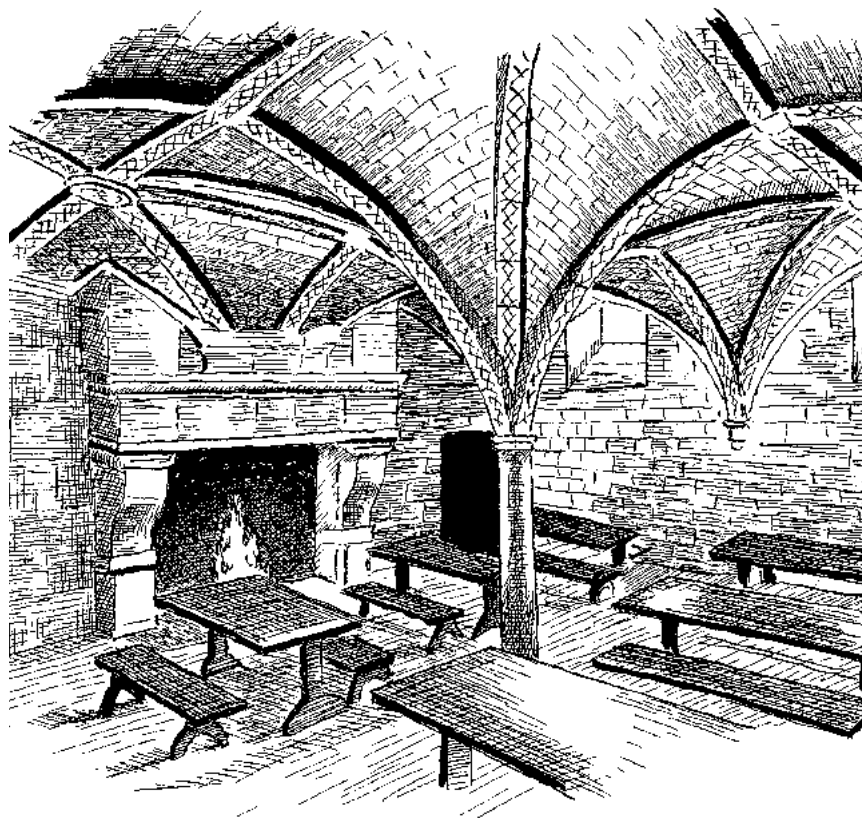
Check out the list of places to park: tourisme-deux-sevres.com

CHÂTEAU RENAISSANCE

📍 *Coulonges-sur-l'Autize*

Listed as a Historic Monument, it is one of the finest examples of Renaissance architecture in Poitou. The superb, vaulted kitchens with their monumental fireplaces have seen many illustrious characters pass through, such as King Charles IX of France, Catherine de Medici, Henry III of France and Queen Margot.

Enjoy a visit to the village of Coulonges-sur-l'Autize, criss-crossed by pretty streets lined with majestic residences, and take a trip to the market, located in the beautiful covered market halls and well-stocked with local produce.



 **Picnic SPOT**

THE CASTLE GROUNDS

You will particularly like the grounds for the shade provided by the large trees, some of which are recognised as "Remarkable Trees of Deux-Sèvres." Take advantage of being very close to the castle to visit it inside and out, including the vaulted cellars.

LA MARBRIÈRE

📍 Ardin

Situated on the edge of the Armorican Massif and the Aquitaine Basin, Ardin once produced marble stone. This former quarry has been listed in the inventory of sites of geological interest in Poitou-Charentes since 1998. The site's characteristics supported the intervention of the CREN for its preservation.

This marble quarry is one of the environments that have become too rare in the Deux-Sèvres region. Hidden at the gates of the bocage, the marble deposit exploited between the 18th century and 1950 contains numerous fossils that bear witness to a marine origin dating back some 360 million years.



RESTEZ DE MARBRE

4KM/1-2 HOURS



LA VIRÉE DE L'AUTIZE

Horseback riding

📏 28km



Car park (Carrière des cavaliers de l'Autize) on Rue de la Vigne au Puits Ardin

Let yourself be guided by the course of the Autize, on the hilly paths. Get to know the Val d'Autize through numerous fords, woods and views. On your way, you will have the opportunity to admire many castles and lodgings, to take a break near the washhouses and to go down the charming alleyways.

randoendeuxsevres.fr



A CLOSER LOOK AT

CAVING

While the tours "above ground" are very interesting, Deux-Sèvres has a few gems hidden underground. The Champdeniers underground river, for example, is a one-kilometre route where you can explore the horizontal tunnels that lead to beautiful cavities. There are also much more technical routes reserved for experienced athletes.

emergence-speleo.com/speleo2sevres

[AceteauSpeleoCanyon](#)



Dinner's **ready!**

Restaurants

LA TERRASSE DE L'AUTIZE

📍 Ardin

ASTORE

📍 Allonne

LES TERRASSES DU LAC

📍 Secondigny

Markets

COULONGES-SUR-L'AUTIZE

Every Tuesday and Saturday morning
From 8am-1pm

The famous Broyé du Poitou (Shortbread)

A recipe by David Seguin, Chef at L'Adress in Bessines.

More Pamplie butter recipes at www.laiteriedepamplie.com

Recipe

Serves 6-8

1 hour + 2 hours rest

- 250g of Pamplie unsalted butter at room temperature
- 400g of flour
- 200g of icing sugar
- 1 egg
- 6g of fleur de sel
- Sunflower oil
- For the topping: 1 egg

In a mixing bowl, mix the unsalted butter and icing sugar until you get a white and homogeneous mixture. Then add the flour and fleur de sel. Finish with the egg. Wrap the dough in cling film and leave to rest for 2 hours in the fridge.

Spread the crushed dough on a baking sheet about 1.5cm thick and cut out a circle 20cm in diameter. Beat the egg for the topping and brush the top of the dough. Preheat the oven to 180°. Using a fork, score the dough and then bake for 15-20 minutes.

Leave to cool and enjoy.



PAMPLIE BUTTER

The Laiterie Coopérative de Pamplie produces butter in a traditional barrel churn, something which hasn't changed since 1905. It has a range of butters that use Charentes-Poitou PDO butter, with a fine and exceptional taste. They are available as unsalted, half-salted, fleur de sel and salt crystals, for the mass market and creamers and cheese makers, as well as a range dedicated to catering, bakery and pastry professionals.

Welcome
to your home!



1 LE PETIT PARADIS

📍 Coulonges-sur-l'Autize

"Quite simply a paradise, as the name suggests!
A perfect place to chill out." - Manu

2 LOGIS DE LA MÉLISSIÈRE

📍 Xaintray

"Very pleasant swimming pool, charming owner, delicious dinner, very tasty breakfast. To sum up in one word, delightful!" - Domi

3 LE MOULIN DES EFFRES CAMPSITE

📍 Secondigny

"Green, family campsite, small swimming pool with slide. Quality snack bar. In July, the Parthenay games festival is worth going to see" - Marina



Excursion

along

*the Sèvre
Niortaise*



The Sèvre Niortaise begins in Sepvret, between Melle and La Mothe-Saint-Héray. The river stretches for 158 kilometres, carving out elegant curves around the edge of Saint-Maixent l'École and Niort, irrigates the Marais Poitevin and ends its long course in the Atlantic Ocean, opposite l'île de Ré.

-  LAND OF FESTIVALS
-  Places of interest
-  Camper van area
-  Petites cités de caractère®
- OUR SELECTION:**
 -  Places to stay
 -  Restaurants
 -  Picnic
-  Sensitive Natural Area (ENS)



*Les
grands
sites*

the Tumulus
OF BOUGON



**NEW THINGS ARE
COMING TO THE MUSEUM,
TO CELEBRATE ITS
30TH ANNIVERSARY!**

A prehistoric-artistic wall to have a go at cave painting with the hands, a stone maze and much more.

Bougon

The Tumulus de Bougon burial site has historical importance for Europe. Travel back in time with our ancient ancestors, the very first Neolithic farmers, who built these six monumental tombs 6,000 years ago.


A museum has been established by the outdoor necropolis to shed light on the Neolithic era. Discover technologies such as stone polishing, weaving and pottery which appeared as humans adopted a sedentary life.


www.tumulus-de-bougon.fr



**AROUND
THE BURIAL SITE**

Hike

 13km

 Tumulus museum
car park

The path crosses small bridges and walkways which lead you to the Bougon mill and cheese dairy, to the door of the Saint-Pierre Romanesque church and to the Dolmen de la Pierre Levée. You will also be able to see several family cemeteries which testify to the prohibition of the burial of protestants in parish cemeteries, during the French Wars of Religion.

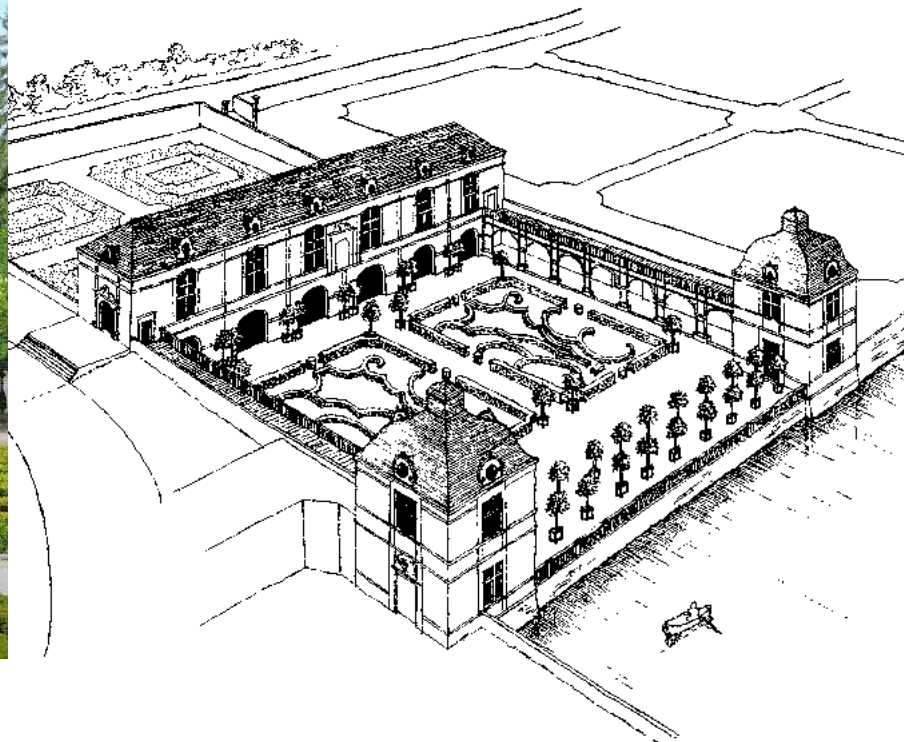
randoendeuxsevres.fr





PETITES CITÉS DE CARACTÈRE®

Mothe-Saint-Héray can be proud to have an orangery, built by the master mason of Richelieu and later complemented with a canal and a French-style garden. This village seems to be enjoying good times, casting its footbridges over the Sèvre Niortaise which fed the Abbé mill. The mill still has a working mechanism which can be visited.





SAINT-MAIXENT-L'ÉCOLE

This town is surprising with its military buildings due to the presence of the national school of non-commissioned officers and its older heritage, such as the abbey and its cloister or the medieval timber-framed houses. Going down towards the Sèvre Niortaise, the vegetation gives another, more rustic, feel to the town. The quays are covered in flowers. To mix things up and discover Saint-Maixent and its surroundings from another point of view, you can rent canoes.

www.canoe-kayak-79.fr/saint-maixent-canoe-kayak

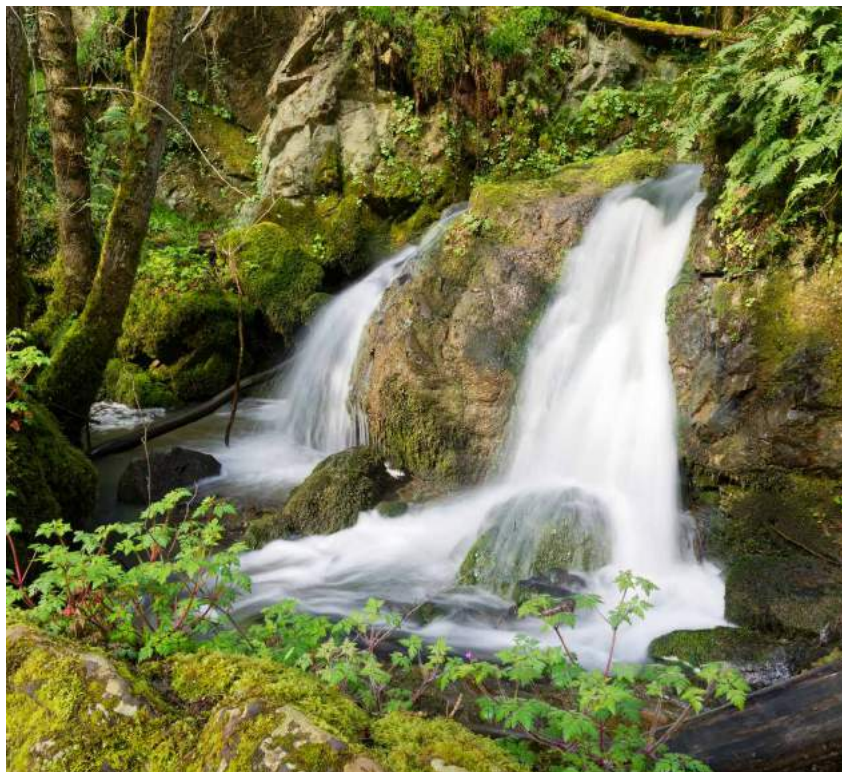
A CLOSER LOOK AT

MUSEUM OF PROTESTANT POITOU

 *Beaussais-Vitré*

You can dive into the history of the Huguenots thanks to the guided tour and the scenography based on the story. The Desert and secret assemblies period is striking, and the footpath allows you to witness this turbulent past.

www.museepoitouprotestant.com



LE PUIITS D'ENFER

 *Exireuil*

A short hike, on a path that leads to the heart of nature, along a stream and its waterfall. This is what you can find in Exireuil, at the Puits d'Enfer. You can take a Terra Aventura route or simply walk to the small waterfall. When it's hot, you'll appreciate the wooded surroundings at the water's edge. It's a prime spot for a picnic.

ÉTANG DU LAMBON

📍 *Lambon*

In a hilly and wooded environment, Étang du Lambon is great for taking part in outdoor sports and fun activities: water sports, mountain biking, treetop adventure courses, archery, beach volleyball, fishing etc. There are many things to choose from and fun things to do and the many hiking and mountain bike routes mean you can discover the area's richness, between stories and landscapes, springs and washhouses.



FLEUR D'EAU GARDEN

📍 *Cherveux*

A little wild, nature has free rein and stands alongside artistic works scattered throughout the grounds. You may feel like you are in an open-air museum. A place conducive to rejuvenation and walking.

www.parc-deuxsevres.fr



 A CLOSER LOOK AT

The Cherveux lake

LES ACCROS

Les Accros is 8 tree climbing courses of different levels and two giant ziplines that cross the lake. What's better than getting a breath of fresh air and having fun with the family by touching the treetops. And for even more fun, you can also treat yourself to a game of outdoor laser tag, where there are plenty of obstacles and hiding places.

www.lesaccrosacherveux.com



WOOD WAKEPARK

To practice wakeboarding, wakeskating, water skiing, paddleboarding or simply to relax by the lake, head to Wood Wakepark 79 at Cherveux - Saint-Cristophe lake. Daredevils, whose boldness is matched only by their search for sensations, can try tricks on the water. Others can test their balance on a paddleboard or enjoy ice cream on the terrace!

www.woodwakepark79.com





CHÂTEAU FORT DE COUDRAY-SALBART

📍 Échiré

The drawbridge, the crossbows, the corridor inside the walls, the towers... everything is well preserved, and the guided tour is fascinating. The factual reconstructions and events help you to immerse yourself even more in the medieval atmosphere.

www.coudraysalbart.fr



LAND OF FESTIVALS



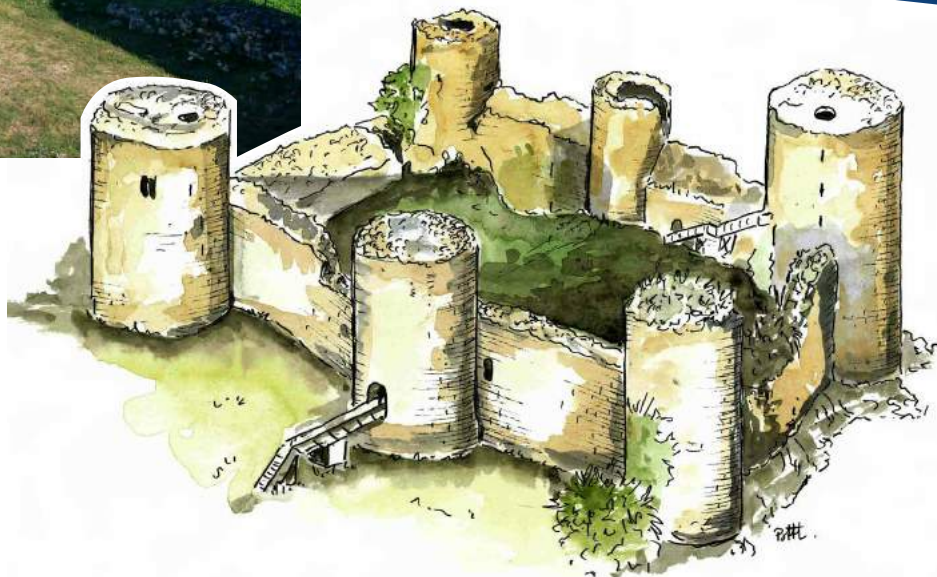
← La 5^e saison

Très grand conseil mondial
des clowns (every two years)

→ Traverse !

The International Ornithological
Film Festival (FIFO)

Find all the festivals along
the Sèvre Niortaise at
www.deux-sevres.fr

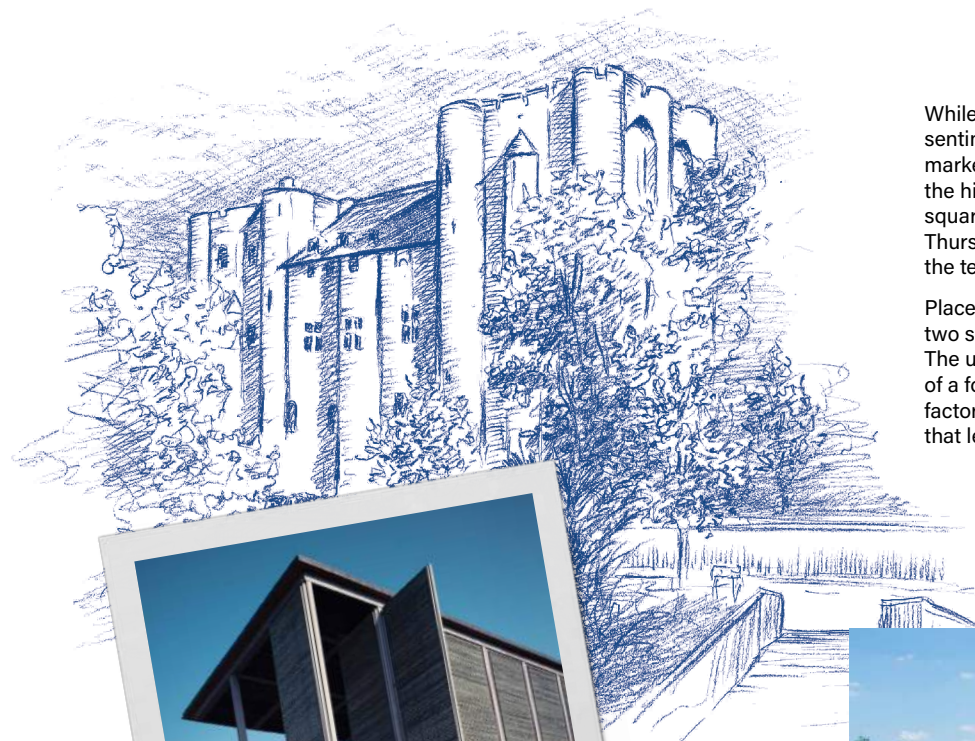




A CLOSER LOOK AT



Niort



While the double Donjon d'Aliénor d'Aquitaine (a keep), historic sentinel dominating the Sèvre Niortaise, and the Baltard-style market buildings are the town's two heritage landmarks, the historic centre is full of beautiful residences, small shady squares and remarkable monuments. On big market days, Thursday and Saturday, the town centre is particularly busy and the terraces, which are places to meet and share, come alive.

Place de la Brèche, a vast green space guarded by the town's two symbolic dragons, is the centre of part of the entertainment. The urban park, Port Boinot, is the result of the reconversion of a former industrial wasteland of chamois and glove-making factories. It forms a natural link between the town and the quays that lead to Marais Poitevin.



NIORT

Museums

*Les
grands
sites*





The Donjon is a symbolic building in Niort which was built from the 12th century onwards. It has been listed as a Historic Monument since 1840. A permanent exhibition retraces its history since its construction by Henry II of England, husband of Eleanor of Aquitaine. It also houses ethnographic and archaeological collections and has one of the most beautiful views of the town from its crenellated terrace.

The Bernard d'Agesci Museum was established in 2006 in the first high school for girls built in the academy. It's a working, open museum which houses collections ranging from fine arts to natural history, including the conservatory of education. Courses from the Louvre School are taught there.

musees.niortaglo.fr



Dinner's **ready!**

» ECHIRÉ BUTTER

The jewel in the crown of French gastronomy, Echiré PDO butter is known and recognised worldwide for its quality and its rare gustatory elegance. It is available on 5 continents, in 29 countries, including 2 shops "Maison du beurre" in Tokyo and "Marché au beurre" in Osaka.

Recipe

Petit Niortais à l'angelique (Angelica & almond biscuits)

A recipe from the kitchen staff of the Praheq high school.



For 16 biscuits

1 hour + 12 hours rest

- 2 tablespoons of angelica jam from Marais Poitevin
- 200g of almond powder
- 2 tablespoons of Niort angelica liqueur
- Brown sugar
- 1 whole egg
- 60g of crystallised angelica
- 30g of icing sugar

Finely dice the angelica and let it macerate with the liqueur.

Mix the icing sugar with the egg white to make a cream. Add the almond powder and knead by hand to get a fairly firm dough. Add the angelica and its liqueur, the jam and mix. Form small rolls, dust with brown sugar, and leave to rest for at least 12 hours.

Cook on a baking tray covered with greaseproof paper at 200°C for 12 minutes (adjust according to the thickness of the rolls).

Leave to cool to enjoy.

Restaurants

RESTAURANT DES HALLES

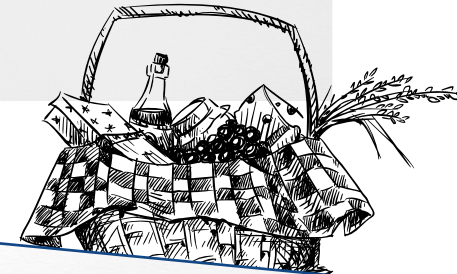
📍 Pamproux

L'ATELIER

📍 Saint-Maixent-l'École

GRILL DU MOULIN

📍 Azay-le-Brûlé



Markets

NIORT

Every Thursday, Saturday
and Sunday morning
From 8am-1pm

Welcome
to your home!



1 LE MOULIN DE LA CORBELIÈRE

📍 Sainte-Néomaye

"It's a haven of peace, a magical place. The garden is incredible with its islands and small bridges. A gite that's well worth a visit." - Alexandrine

2 LE LOGIS DE SÈVRES

📍 Niort

"A superb stopover on the Vélo Francette... A perfect bed and breakfast, lovely memories of our stay in Niort." - Jean-Pierre

3 LE LOGIS SAINT-MARTIN

📍 Saint-Maixent-l'École

"Very warmly welcomed. Good restaurant. Very competent staff. Recommended." - Michel



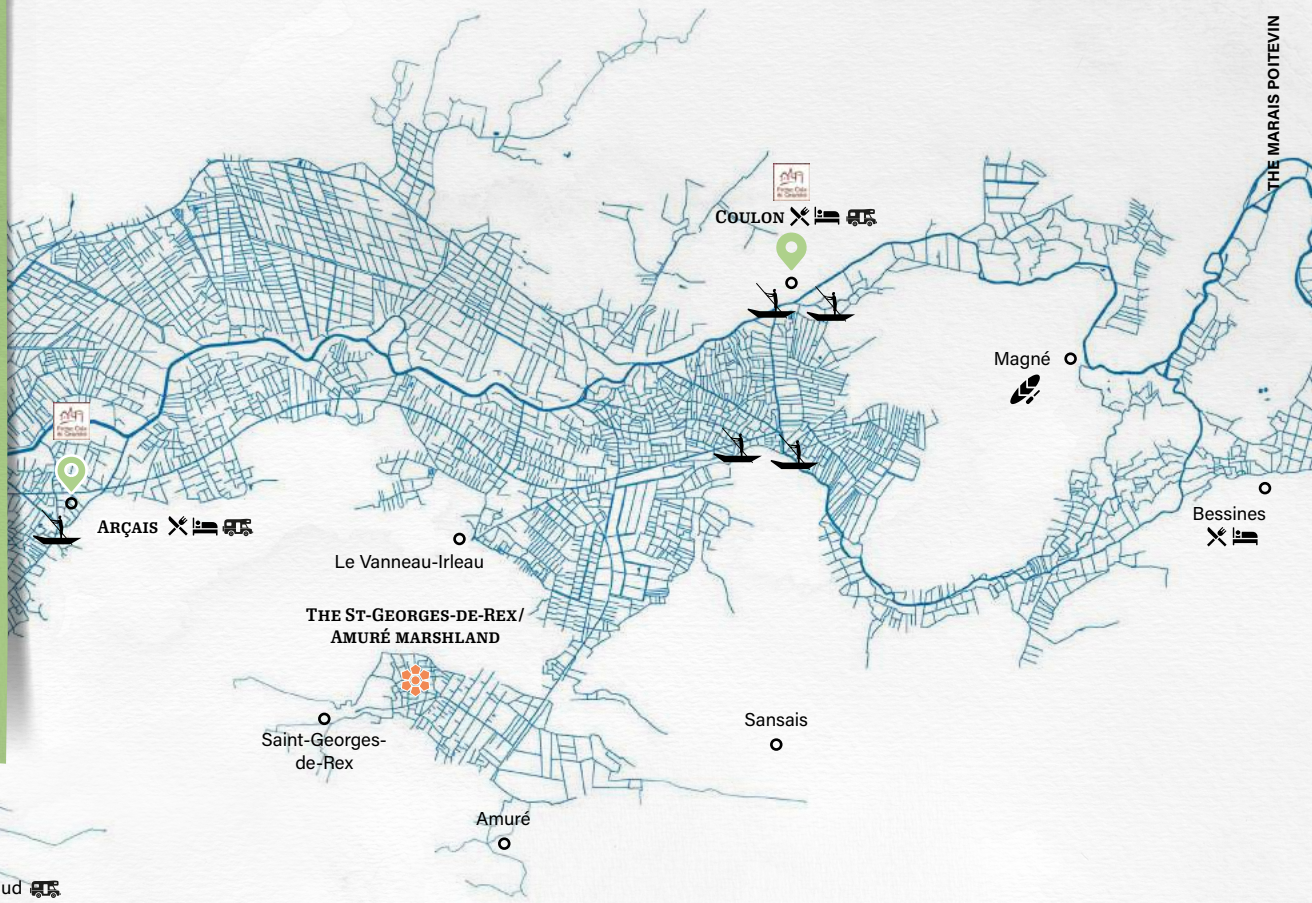
Excursion

in

Marais Poitevin



The Sèvre Niortaise is the main watercourse of Marais Poitevin. After Port Boinot and the Comporté lock in Niort, it disperses into several shaded canals which delight visitors looking for walks on or beside the water. Marais Poitevin is the second largest wetland in France, after Camargue. It has been designated a Regional Nature Park and a Grand Site de France.



Mauzé-sur-le-Mignon

OUR SELECTION: Places to stay Restaurants Picnic

Sensitive Natural Area (ENS) Places of interest Camper van area Landing stages Paddles Petites cités de caractère®

UNUSUAL ACTIVITIES

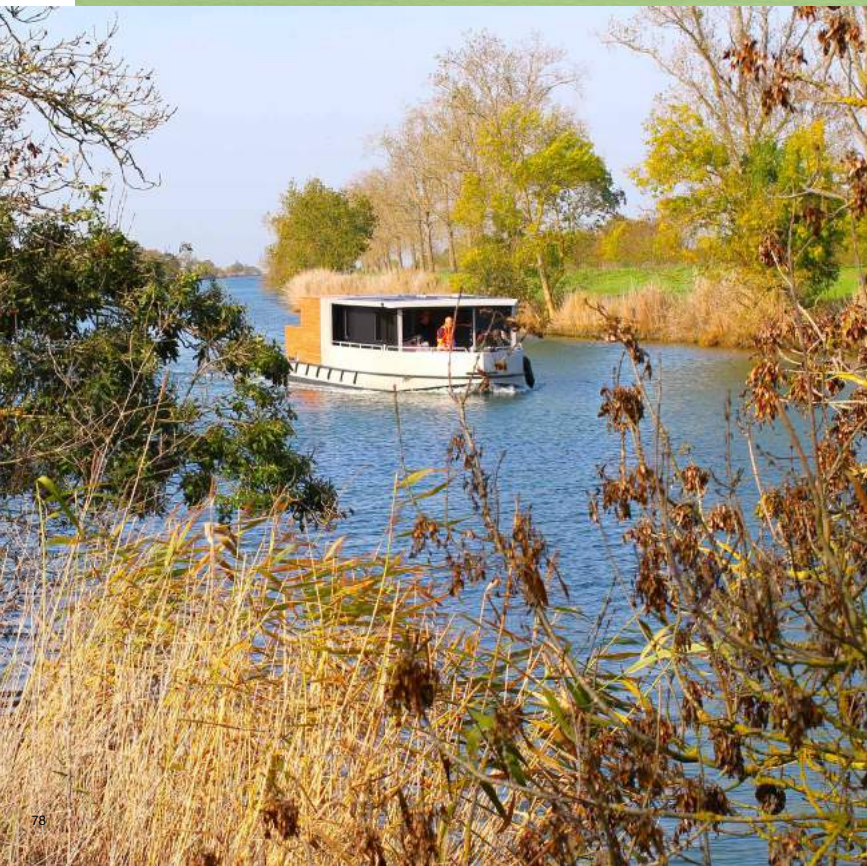


CAST OFF IN MARAIS POITEVIN!

Be among the first to sail on the Sèvre Niortaise, from Niort to Marans, via Green Venice. Discover the river and the market gardening villages over a hundred kilometres. Get on your bike to cycle along the white paths, cross the maze of canals by boat, sit on the terrace of a good restaurant... That's the schedule for your next holiday sorted!

Equipped with an aluminium hull, solar panels and a bow thruster for easy manoeuvring, the electric craft can accommodate up to 8 people. There are all the comforts on board, from the sun lounge with relaxation beds to the BBQ... and even a fishing rod for a 100% local meal.

www.aaboutdumarais.com





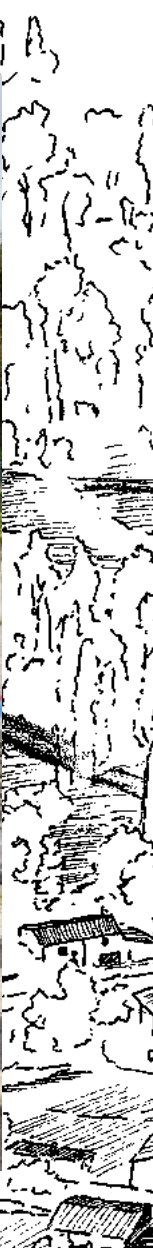
LIVE AT ONE WITH NATURE THANKS TO BUSHCRAFT!

Erect a tepee, cut wood, make a shelter, build a fire, protect yourself from bad weather and talk about the natural environment. This is what Bushcraft or "The Art of Living in the Woods" is all about: relearning the basic acts of living at one with nature and gaining certain ancestral skills.

www.team-naturall.com



Arçais



PETITES CITÉS DE CARACTÈRE®

Arçais and Coulon

The first thing that strikes you about the *Petites Cités de Caractère*® of the Marais Poitevin is the omnipresence of water. Known as trenches, narrow or channels, these canals, with a network as complex and connected as the mesh of a net, are the very identity around which the villages have been built. For a long time, the johnboat, a flat-bottomed boat, was the only means of transport to get around in the marsh and access the houses.

In Arçais, the characteristic houses in Rue de la Garenne are built on the hillside. The rooms intended for living are on the street side and water access is through the back of the house where the rooms related to farming are located. In the port, the reproductions of wooden cranes, which were used to hoist poplar tree trunks onto the quays, and the storage warehouses at the foot of the houses, are reminders of the village's thriving activity in the 19th century.

Strategically located between Niort and the Atlantic Ocean, Coulon has developed since the Middle Ages. Customary law and wharfage tax collected at the time of goods being transported on the Sèvre Niortaise contributed to the development of the village which then expanded. The small canals have been filled in to become narrow streets and therefore access the houses more easily. The Marais Poitevin visitors centre tells the history of the town and the Marais Poitevin.

EXPLORING THE WILD MARSHLAND

Hike



12km

Place de la mairie
St-Hilaire-la-Palud

Marais Poitevin, developed by humans since the 12th century, is one of the richest wetlands on the Atlantic coast. During this tour, you will discover the old tile factory which used to use clay from the marsh until the 1980s, the wet marsh dotted with poplar groves and the rich flora: flowering rush, yellow iris, meadowsweet, common comfrey, and valerian.

randoendouxsevres.fr



Coulon



📍 Coulon

In the heart of the village of Coulon, the Marais Poitevin visitors centre is located in the Maison de la Coutume, the former residence of the customary law tax collectors who levied taxes on goods transported on the Sèvre Niortaise. A must visit to discover all the secrets and subtleties of the largest marshland in the west of France. How did it come into existence? Where does the water come from? Why and how were the canals dug? Young and old, curious and passionate: you'll find all the answers to your questions about the mysterious Green Venice here.

www.maison-marais-poitevin.fr

Les
grands
sites

The MARAIS POITEVIN visitors centre





Ornithological park

THE BIRDS OF MARAIS POITEVIN

📍 *Saint-Hilaire-la-Palud*

This animal park is a typical example of Green Venice where you can discover over 90 species of migratory birds, temporary inhabitants of the Marais Poitevin. Learn about their different characteristics and anecdotes displayed on information panels. A treasure hunt for kids, zookeeper activity, landing stage and restaurant all make for a great day out with the family.

www.oiseauxmaraispoitevin.com

Get in the water!

BOAT AND CANOE TOURS

Breathe, enjoy... listen to the silence. If you move away a little, all you can hear is the lapping of the oars on the water, a coypu swimming, birds singing. Sailing around the Marais Poitevin is much more than just a boat trip. It is a journey to the heart of biodiversity where you can learn all about these unique wetlands in France, shaped by humankind and the tides.

There are landing stages offering guided or unguided boat trips, canoe hire, tours at dusk and dawn... a thousand ways to discover the Green Venice.

Find all the landing stages at

www.tourisme-deux-sevres.com





BALANCING ON THE MARSHLAND

Combine sport and togetherness by paddleboarding on the canals. The calm waters of Marais Poitevin are perfect for this activity. Keep your balance, open your eyes wide, listen to the beating heart of nature... this is Deux-Sèvres!

Pontlevispaddle.wixsite.com





THE SAINT-GEORGES-DE-REX/AMURÉ MARSHLAND

This marshland is made up of a multitude of small plots defined by a large network of waterways, bordered by rows of pollarded ash trees. A union between land and water which encourages biodiversity and provides a postcard landscape, typical of Marais Poitevin. Various walking routes from 2.5 km to 6 km, a picnic area and the Goron port promise beautiful discoveries, as you walk along the footbridges, meadows, woods and reed beds in this part of the marshland which is off the beaten track.



DONKEY HIKE

📍 Saint-Georges-de-Rex

An original idea for a family walk, at one with nature: go hiking with a donkey on the Marais Poitevin paths. Your sweet and docile companion will lead you on a marked out and shaded 4km circuit.

destination-ducoqalane.fr



Picnic SPOT

THE MARAIS POITEVIN CANALS

Take a boat, a basket filled with fresh bread and seasonal salad and go for a picnic on the Marais Poitevin canals. Because a touch of originality can change everything and turn your day into something unforgettable!



DO YOU WANT TO REACH FOR THE SKY?

Change your point of view by flying over the meandering Sèvre Niortaise and the maze of canals of Marais Poitevin with the Atlantic ocean in the background. The marshland villages, the towns, the houses and castles can all be seen from a new angle.


www.terres-denvol.fr

www.montgolfiere-sensation.com

Dinner's ready!

ANGELICA

From the same family as parsley, carrot and aniseed, angelica is the star of Deux-Sèvres. Legend has it that this plant was brought to the people by the archangel Raphael to relieve them of their miseries and defeat the plague, hence its nickname "the herb of angels". Cultivated since the 17th century in the walled gardens of monasteries for its medicinal virtues, it has since won over pastry chefs for its aromatic virtues. A symbol of the Niort region and Marais Poitevin, crystallised angelica flavours local pastries. It can be eaten as simple sticks, jam, liqueur or as a decoration on chocolate sweets.

 **ANGELICA FESTIVAL**
14 May in Bessines



Roasted veal fillet in its own juices with creamed mojette white beans

A recipe from chef Jean-Paul Guenanten of Le Central restaurant in Coulon.

Recipe

Serves 4

2 hours

- 700g of veal fillet
- 200ml of full-bodied veal juice
- 600g of mojette white beans
- 100g + 20g of butter
- Confit tomatoes
- 50g of crystallised lemon
- 50ml of olive oil
- 100g of cream
- Salt and pepper
- 1 onion
- 1 carrot
- 1 bunch of rosemary

Cook the white beans in the traditional way, drain them and mix with the cream.

Prepare the veal and make a full-bodied jus with the trimmings, carrots and onion. Reduce and mix with 20g of butter. Strip the rosemary from its stem. Mix the crystallised lemon with the olive oil, salt and pepper.

Fry the veal in 4 medallions keeping it pink in the middle and serve with the confit tomatoes, white beans and lemon to taste.

Restaurants

LE CENTRAL

 Coulon

MA GOURMANDISE

 Arçais

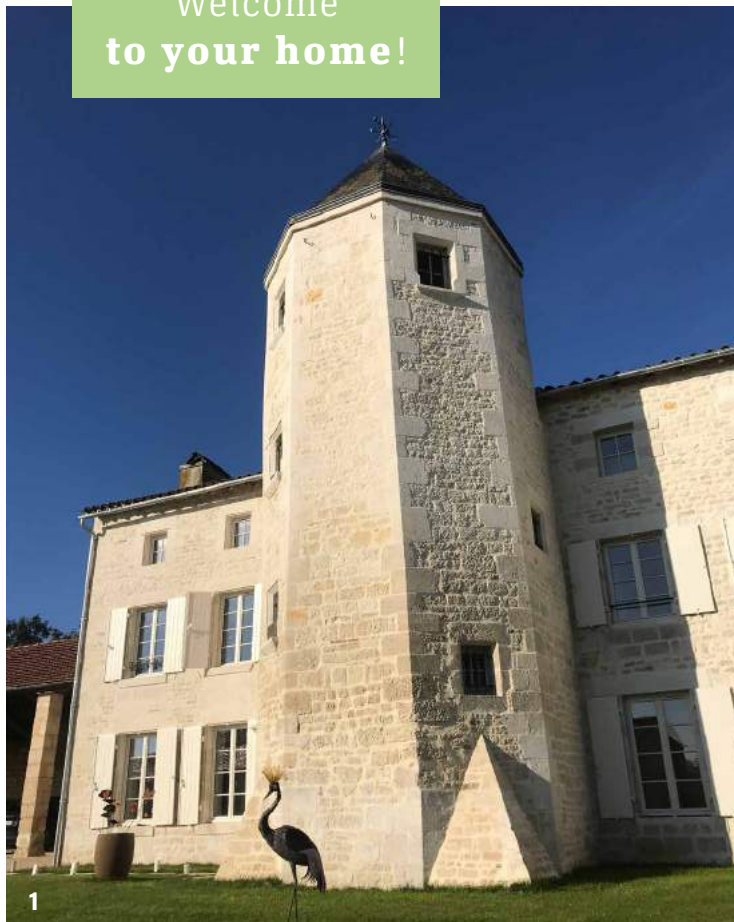
AUBERGE DE L'ÉCLUSE

 Coulon

LA TUILERIE

 Bessines

Welcome
to your home!



❶ LOGIS DE PIERRE LEVÉE

📍 Bessines

"The building is gorgeous and tastefully restored. The hosts are very welcoming and give good advice for tours." - Béatrice



❷ MINOTERIE DE MAUZÉ

📍 Mauzé-sur-le-Mignon

"A wonderful weekend spent with friends. A completely timeless place, with great hosts." - Lili

❸ DOMAINE DE L'ANGÉLIQUE

📍 Arçais

"A delightful break. A beautiful place, a perfect cosy cocoon!" - Florence



Excursion
along
the Boutonne

A tributary of the Charente, the Boutonne starts at the heart of Chef-Boutonne, whose name etymologically means "head of the Boutonne". Used as a communication route in the Middle Ages, the Boutonne crossed the ancient Argenson forest, of which the Chizé forest remains.

Beauvoir-sur-Niort

LE GRAND BOUSSEAU (ENS)



ZOODYSSÉE



Brioul-sur-Chizé
Chizé

Villiers-sur-Chizé

Secondigné-sur-Belle

Séligné

Périgné

Vernoux-sur-Boutonne

Brioux-sur-Boutonne

Mazières-sur-Béronne

Luché-sur-Brioux

Chérigné

Sompt

CHEF-BOUTONNE

CHÂTEAU DE JAVARZAY

Sauzay-Vaussais

CELLES-SUR-BELLE



LA TALLE À TEURTOUS



MELLE



OUR SELECTION: Places to stay Restaurants Picnic



LAND OF FESTIVALS



Sensitive Natural Area (ENS)



Places of interest



Camper van area



Petites cités de caractère®

PETITES CITÉS DE CARACTÈRE®

📍 Chef-Boutonne, Melle and Celles-sur-Belle

Birthplace to industrialist Jean-François Cail in the 19th century, the town is named after the Boutonne waterway whose source is located in the centre, right under the washhouse in Rue de la Fontaine. Apart from the washhouses, Chef-Boutonne has many other attractions including Saint-Chartier church, built in the middle of the 12th century and a listed historical monument, next to the Renaissance Château de Javarzay.



Chef-Boutonne

Picnic SPOT

LA BARBETTE IN SOMPT

A river beautifully named La Somptueuse which flows into the Boutonne, three washhouses, a chapel and a dwelling, a green lawn... what more could you ask for to sit down and get the picnic out? During a 12km hike taken from the village of Tillou, the setting is perfect for taking a break.



Melle

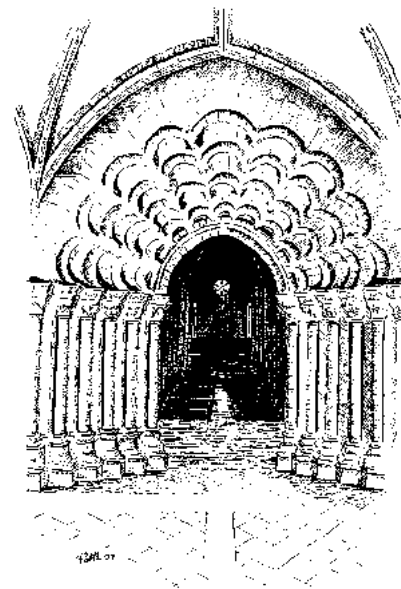


Celles-sur-Belle

Melle is a little gem with no less than three impressive Romanesque churches, including the Saint-Hilaire church, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a stopover on the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela. Following the Discovery Trail, you will go from one church to another, passing through the arboretum, the Baltard-style market halls, Art Nouveau houses, washhouses, and the silver mines of the Frankish kings, which are a must-see in Melle.

From Melle, you can walk or cycle to Celles-sur-Belle along the Ruban Vert (9km). You will arrive at the 17th century Royal Abbey, which overlooks the Belle valley and the French-style gardens, before catching sight of the abbatial church set against the conventual buildings. In addition to the obvious attraction of the Abbey and the abbatial church, the valley and village of Verrines-sous-Celles are also worth a visit.

www.abbaye-royale-celles.com



LAND OF FESTIVALS

Les Estivales d'ArtenetrA

Boulevard du jazz

Festival au village...



Find all the festivals
along the Boutonne at
www.deux-sèvres.fr



Les
grands
sites

Château

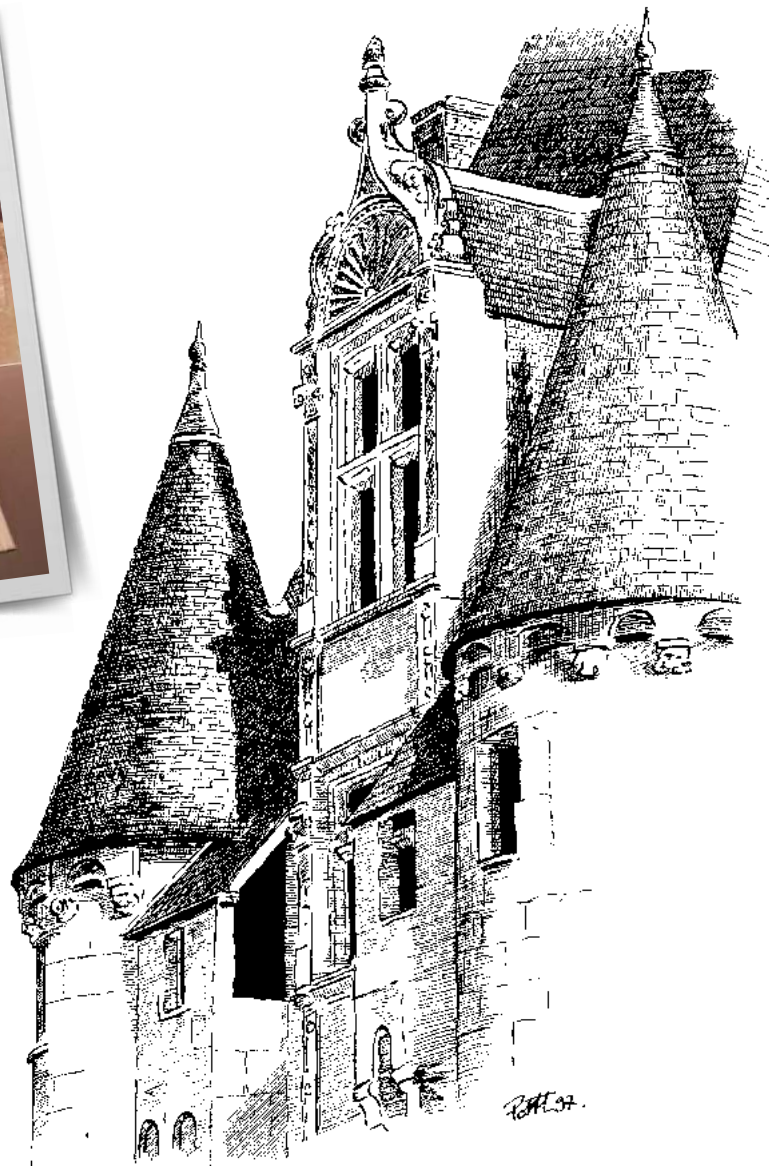
de JAVARZAY



📍 *Chef-Boutonne*

Built around 1515, the Château de Javarzay blends medieval foundations with Renaissance details. It is one of the first castles of the Renaissance in Poitou. Listed as a historical monument, it has recently been given a new museography which includes an interactive tour based on human ingenuity. The area surrounding the castle is splendid and is perfect for a picnic in the shade of the impressive trees in the park around the pond.

www.chateau-javarzay.fr





LA SOMPTUEUSE

Hike

12km

Place de l'église
Tillou

Between two charming villages, the resurgence of an underground stream heralds other springs, wells and spring-fed washhouses. Clear and pure water, houses and beautiful residences accompany you and provide lovely views along the way.

randoeuxsevres.fr



SILVER MINES

Melle

The largest silver mines in the Carolingian empire made Melle rich from the 7th to the 10th century. Components of silver galena, lead was used to cover buildings, pipes and crockery; silver was used to make the kingdom's coins. The film and current facilities show us all stages in producing coins, from the first extraction of the ore to the final minting of a coin.

www.mines-argent.com





LA TALLE À TEURTOUS

📍 Celles-sur-Belle

This funny name refers to a very old chestnut tree, located at the crossroads of several roads just outside Celles-sur-Belle. Its huge, tortured trunk is open, so that you can get inside, and imaginary creatures can be found in its folds, depending on the angle from which you look at it.

The

ZOODYSSÉE

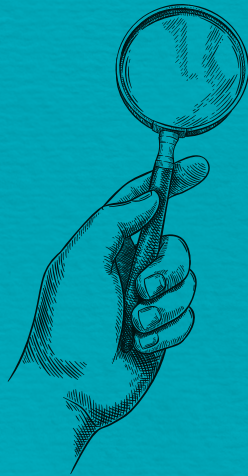
animal park

*Les
grands
sites*





For the park's 50th anniversary, after the opening of the mini-farm, we are continuing to innovate with the creation of a treasure hunt in the park's paths for budding young Sherlocks, dramatised walks, and more human-animal encounters...



📍 Villiers-en-Bois

At Zoodyssée, you have a date with the large and small animals of Europe. In the protected setting of the Chizé forest, come and meet bears, arctic foxes, reindeer, wolves, lynxes, snowy owls, bison, vultures, flamingos and many more.

For a close-up experience of the animals, the "Zookeeper for a day" activity lets youngsters take part in the daily activities of a zookeeper. This is a good way to raise awareness of protecting and conserving species, which is Zoodyssée's main job.

www.zoodysee.fr



LES GRIFFES DE CHIZÉ 3KM/1-2 HOURS





Zoodyssée



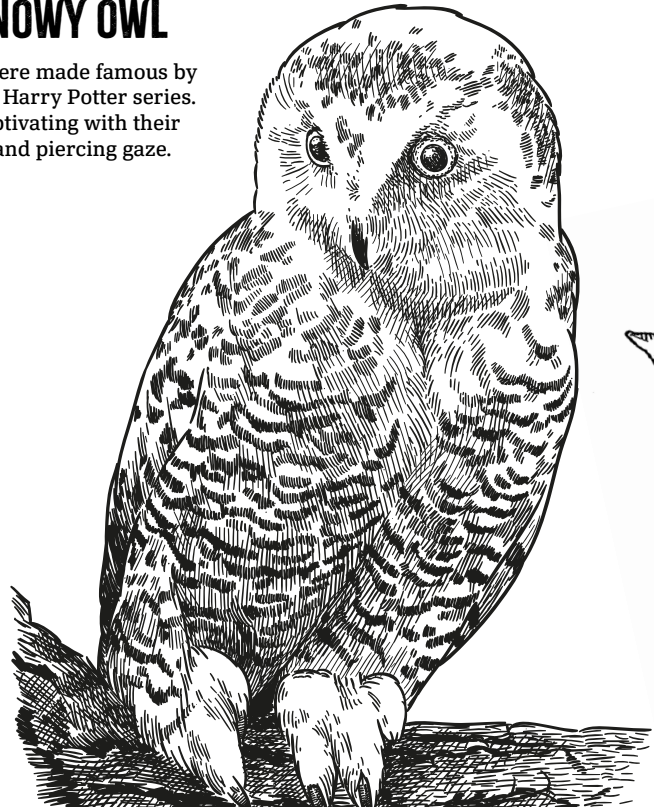
THE STARS OF THE PARK!

THE WOLF

The wolf observatory has unobstructed views of the vast enclosure. Wolves completely disappeared from France during the 20th century but reappeared in the southeast in 1992.

THE SNOWY OWL

Snowy owls were made famous by Hedwig in the Harry Potter series. They are captivating with their white coat and piercing gaze.



A CLOSER LOOK AT

Zookeeper for a day

Very committed to species protection and conservation and animal welfare, Zoodyssée organises awareness-raising activities. Visitors can join a zookeeper for a day and help them take care of the animals. A great idea to get close to the stars of the park and all the other Zoodyssée residents.





Human/animal encounters

In summer, go and meet the educational activity leaders to find out the whole truth about snakes, attend feeding time for the sea otters and the vultures, learn all about deer and much more.

THE BEAR

Although this king of the mountains is clumsy-looking, it is nevertheless a good walker, a strong swimmer, a keen climber and an excellent hunter. It hibernates from November to March, but always sleeps with one eye open...



SEA OTTER

The sea otter is playful, messing around with pranks and aquatic displays. It's a protected species on the increase, which is gradually recolonising Europe's waterways.



THE LYNX

The lynx is a protected species which is very rare in France. It has been part of a reintroduction programme in the Vosges.

Dinner's ready!



Stuffed Poitou kid with green garlic and baby new potatoes

A recipe from chef Eric Caillon of Les Glycines restaurant in Melle.

Recipe

Serves 4

2 hours

- ½ kid (ask your butcher to bone it)
- 5 tablespoons of mustard
- Oil, salt and pepper
- 30g of butter + 50g
- 3 bunches of green garlic (spring)
- 2 glasses of white wine
- ½ glass of wine vinegar
- baby new potatoes from Île de Ré

Prepare the stuffing with the offal: mince the kid liver and sweetbreads, add salt, pepper and half the green garlic.

If you can save the bones, make a stock with the bones, onions, carrots, thyme and bay leaf. Moisten with water and reduce, add a little veal stock.

Lay your boneless kid half flat, cut the shoulder and thigh to spread them evenly and add the stuffing. Season and close like a joint, tie up and brown in a casserole dish with salt, pepper, thyme and bay leaf. Once browned, brush with mustard, put in the oven at 140° for 25 minutes with a little butter and water.

Blanch the potatoes for 25 minutes and add them to the casserole dish with finely chopped green garlic. Brown, deglaze with white wine and wine vinegar, and leave to cook for 15 minutes, then add your reduced stock.

Once cooked, wrap your joint in tin foil to rest for 10 minutes before slicing your portions and serving.

CHEESE

Deux-Sèvres is the largest manufacturer of goat products in France. Chabichou, Mothais sur feuille, Bûchette, boxed or pyramid goat's cheese are the most common cheeses found on the table. Chabichou, which has had a PDO since 1990, could soon be joined by Mothais sur feuille, which, still accompanied by its chestnut leaf and already a gold medallist at the Concours Général Agricole 2023, is also aiming for PDO by the end of the year.

Restaurants

LES GLYCINES

📍 Melle

LE BELVEER

📍 Beauvoir-sur-Niort

Markets

MELLE

Every Tuesday and Friday morning
From 8am-12.30pm

Welcome
to your home!



1



3

1 GÎTE LA MARCELINE EN POITOU

📍 Chef-Boutonne

"An address to be kept, a gem to be preserved. Everything is perfect!" - Jocelyn

2 LE LOGIS DE CANTEAU

📍 Mazières-sur-Beronne

"This house has everything you need to feel at home. Perfect for meeting up with family or friends." - Bernard

3 LE GRAND CHÂTELIER

📍 Melle

"A very refreshing stay in this cosy, comfortable and carefully renovated gîte in a remarkable setting!" - Nina



MAJOR CYCLING ROUTES

La Vélo Francette

Coming from Ouistreham to La Rochelle, this cycle route crosses the Deux-Sèvres over 160km through the fabulous Thouet Valley and the legendary Marais Poitevin.

www.lavelofrancette.com

La véloroute 93

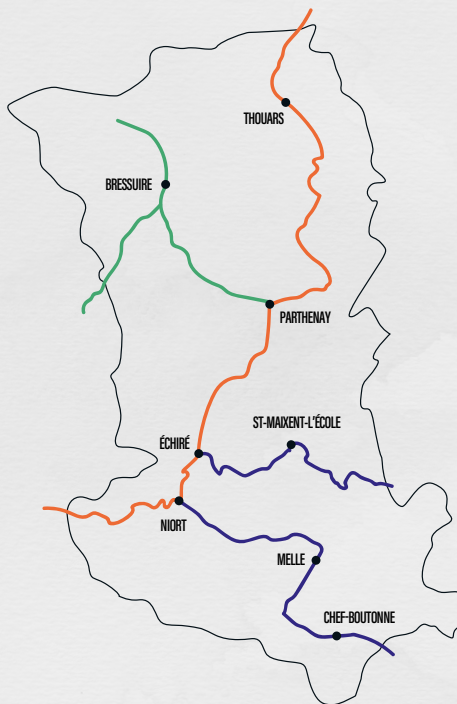
On leaving Niort, this route is perfect for visiting Celles-sur-Belle, Melle and Chef-Boutonne which are all recognised as Petites Cités de Caractère®. It continues to Lake Vassivière.

La véloroute 94

Following the course of the Sèvre Niortaise from the centre of Niort, this cycle route leads to the Château de Coudray-Salbart, to Saint-Maixent-l'École and the Museum of the Tumulus of Bougon, then onto Argenton-sur-Creuse.

Greenways

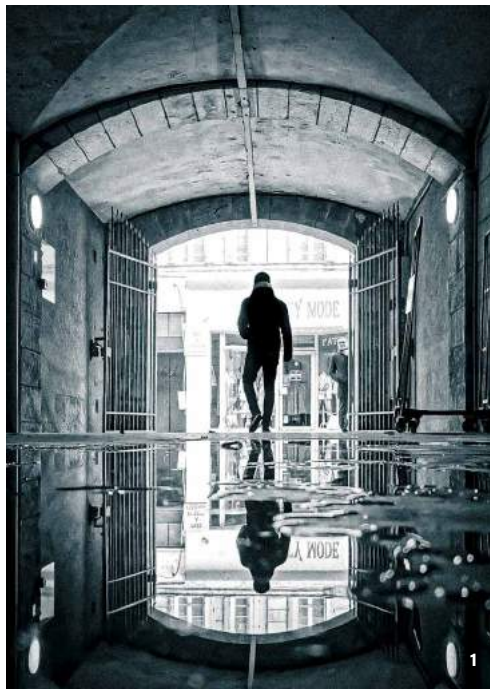
Three greenways lead from Bressuire to Parthenay, Neuil-les-Aubiers and the Argenton valley. Switching gears all the way to adjust to the ups and down, stop for a minute to take in the remarkable natural surroundings.



You can discover every nook and cranny on the eight cycle routes and greenways that cross the region.



Your **insta'** *excursions*







3



Share **your** experiences

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1. @Thierry79 / 2. @vincent.bardu / 3. @philippeboussion / 4. @Zellie350

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE



Need information to plan your stay in Deux-Sèvres?

Accommodation, food, places to visit, advice to put the finishing touches to your getaway...

Niort-Marais Poitevin

Vallée de la Sèvre Niortaise

Port Boinot, 1 Rue de la
Chamoiserie - 79000 Niort
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 24 18 79

niortmaraispoitevin.com

Arçais

Place de l'église - 79210 Arçais
(seasonal opening hours)

Coulon

Place de la Coutume
79510 Coulon
(seasonal opening hours)

Point info

Saint-Hilaire-la-Palud

2 route de Niort
79210 Saint-Hilaire-la-Palud
(Brochures available
in the post office)

A single number
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 24 18 79

La Gâtine

osezlagatine.com

Parthenay - Gâtine

Palais des congrès
22 bd de la Meilleraye
79200 Parthenay
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 64 24 24

Airvaudais - Val du Thouet

48 rue des Halles
79600 Airvault
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 70 84 03

Airvaudais - Val du Thouet

Place du Dr Bouchet
79600 Saint-Loup-Lamairé
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 64 82 45

Val de Gâtine

4 place du château
79160 Coulonges-sur-l'Autize
Tel. +33 (0)6 22 88 67 21

Relais touristique

Val de Gâtine
Rue des Antonins
79310 St-Marc-la-Lande
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 63 43 31

Le Pays Mellois

2 place Bujault
79500 Melle
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 29 15 10
decouvertes.paysmellois.org

Le Bocage Bressuirais

6 place de l'Hôtel de Ville
79304 Bressuire
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 65 10 27
tourisme-bocage.com

Mauléon

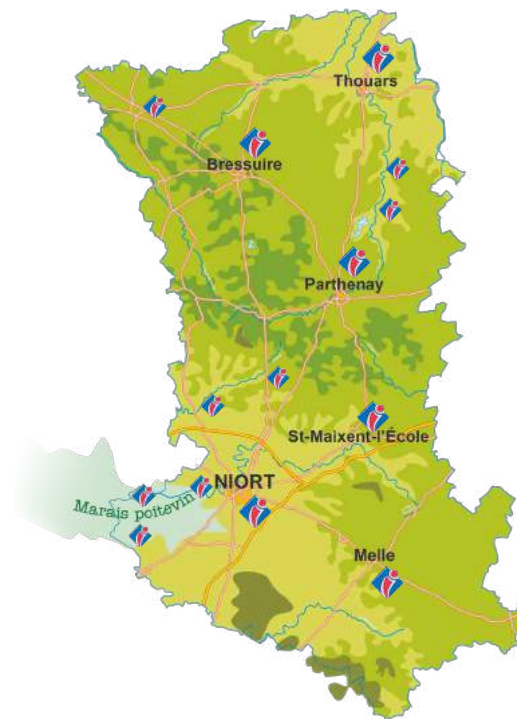
Place du Dr Bouchet
79700 Mauléon

Le Haut-Val-de-Sèvre

n°Ante 1, rue Denfert Rochereau
79400 Saint-Maixent-l'École
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 05 54 05
tourisme-hautvaldesevre.fr

Le Thouarsais

32 place Saint-Médard
79100 Thouars
Tel.+33 (0)5 49 66 17 65
maisonduthouarsais.com



PREPARE YOUR TRIP TO DEUX-SÈVRES AT

tourisme-deux-sevres.com

With practical information about attractions,
activities, places to stay and eat, events,
packages and top tips.



English version « Excursions in Deux-Sèvres »
Prepare your visit at
tourisme-deux-sevres.com

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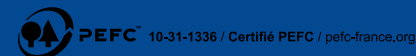
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www.tourisme-deux-sevres.com

