# TOURIST ROAD MAP

### ATLANTIC LOIRE VALLEY

Press Kit 2021











'3000km of bike tracks to enjoy' | E T | | |

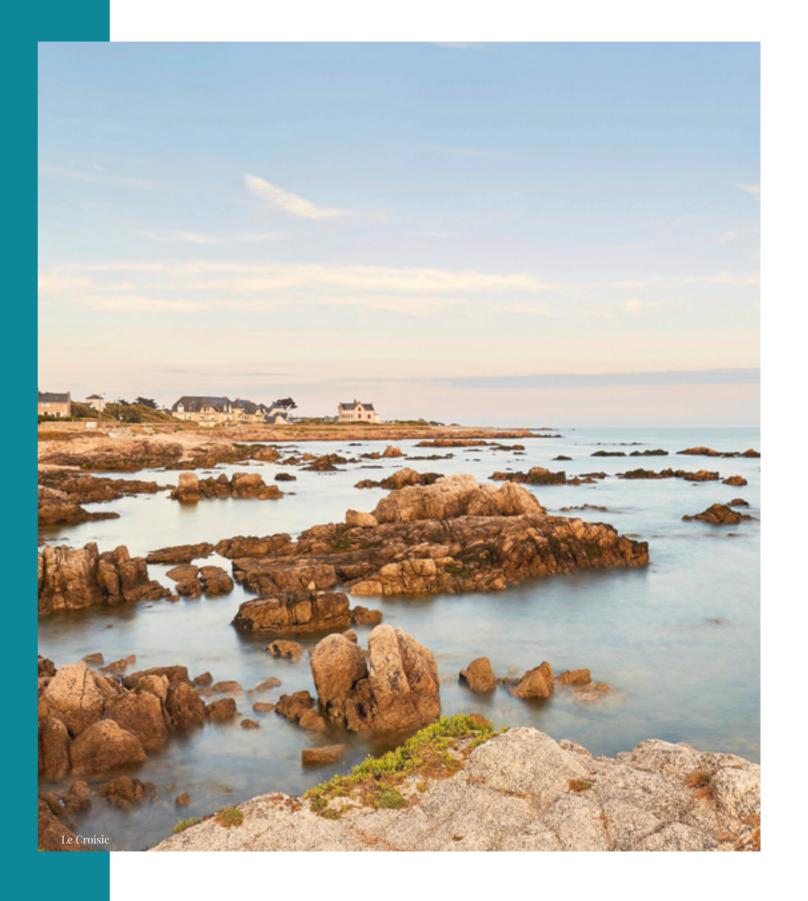
Discover the joys of water sports'

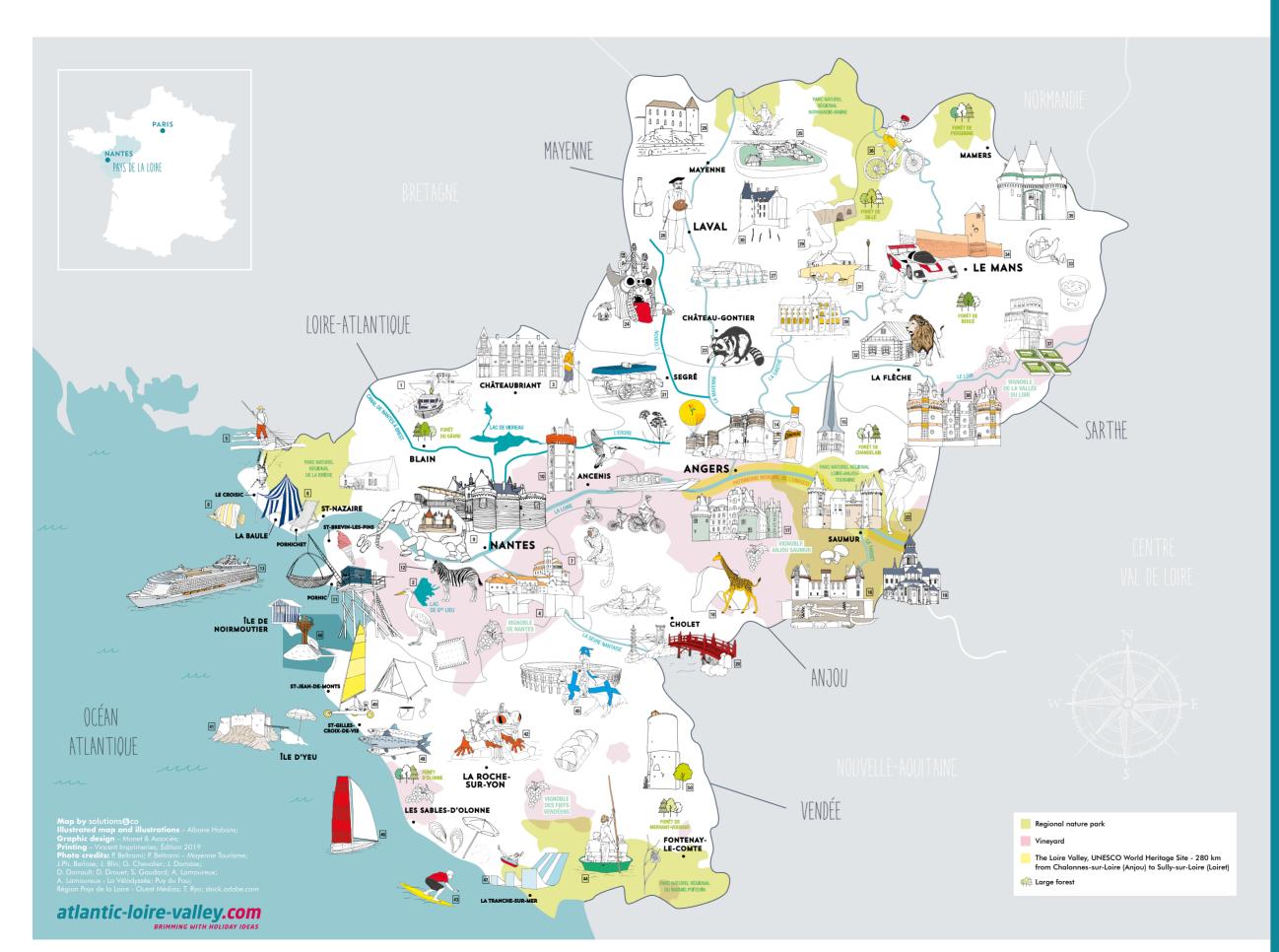
'Holiday, E TOUR sample produce, and dine in wine country'

in a natural setting'

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# TOP VISITOR

#### LOIRE-ATLANTIQUE (44)

- 1 **Blain** Château & Nantes-Brest canal 2 **Bouaye** Maison du Lac de Grand-Lieu

- 2 Boudye Maison au Lac de Grand-Lieu
  3 Châteaubriant Château de Châteaubriant
  4 Clisson Italianate town,
  Château & Domaine de la Garenne-Lemot
- 5- **Guérande** Salt marshes
- 6- La Baule Bay
  7- La Boissière-du-Doré Boissière-du-Doré Zoo
- 8- Le Croisic Océarium sea life centre
  9- Nantes Machines de l'île & Ducs de Bretagne Château
- 10- Pays d'Ancenis Château d'Oudon

- 11 Pornic Fishing huts
  12 Port-St-Père Planète Sauvage
  13 Saint-Nazaire Atlantic & Escal'Atlantic shipyards

#### ANJOU (49)

- 14- **Angers** Angers Château & Cointreau distillery 15- **Baugé** The twisting steeples of Baugeois
- 16- **Brézé** Brézé Château
- 17- Brissac Brissac Château
  18- Doué-la-Fontaine Biopark and troglodyte houses
- 19- Fontevraud-l'Abbaye Fontevraud Abbey 20- Le Choletais Maulévrier Oriental Park 21- Pays de Segré Mine Bleu (slate mine)

- 22- **Saumur** Cadre Noir & Saumur Château

#### MAYENNE (53)

- 23- Château-Gontier Refuge de l'Arche
- 24- Cossé-le-Vivien Robert Tatin Museum
- 25- **Jublains** Jublains Gallo-Roman Archaeological Site 26- **Laval** Naive Art Museum Le Douanier Rousseau
- 27- River trips & towpath

- 28- Mayenne Carolingian palace 29- Saulges Caves, canyon and Prehistory Museum 30- Sainte-Suzanne Château and town with

#### SARTHE (72)

- 31- Asnières-sur-Vègre Town with remarkable
- 32- **La Flèche** Zoo and Safari Lodge 33- **Le Breil-sur-Mérize** Domaine de Pescheray
- 34- Le Mans The 24 Hours of Le Mans -
- Old Town (Cité Plantagenêt) Papéa Park 35- **Le Perche Sarthois** La Ferté-Bernard
- 36- Mancelles Alps
- Château de Poncé-sur-le Loir gardens
- 38- **Vallée du Loir** Le Lude Château 39- **Vallée de la Sarthe** Solesmes Abbey

#### VENDÉE (85)

- 40- **L'île de Noirmoutier** Le Bois de la Chaise Le Gois
- 41- **L'île d'Yeu** Old castle
- 42- La Roche-sur-Yon and the Machines on Napoleon Square 43- **La Tranche-sur-Mer** - Surf spot 44- **Marais Poitevin** (marshlands)
- 45- Les Epesses Puy du Fou
- 46- Les Sables-d'Olonne Vendée
- Globe & Sables d'Olonne Zoo 47- **Moutiers-les-Mauxfaits** Indian Forest & O'Gliss Park 48- Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie - Sardines
- 49- Saint-Jean-de-Monts Sand yachting
- 50- **Vouvant** Town with remarkable

# The 1001 FACETS OF ATLANTIC LOIRE VALLEY

With its high-quality tourist services and wide range of outdoor activities, Atlantic Loire Valley is more than ever a perfect get-away-from-it-all destination, not far from home, for 2021. By car, bike, foot or boat, the region reveals its 1001 facets, kilometre after kilometre.



#### **250km**

OF LOIRE RIVER, INCLUDING 75KM REGISTERED ON THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST



#### **450km**

OF ATLANTIC COAST AND TWO ISLANDS (YEU AND NOIRMOUTIER)



215km
OF BEACHES



375km
OF NAVIGABLE
RIVERS



3,000km
OF MARKED,
SAFE BIKE
TRACKS



040 ACCUEIL VÉLO® POINTS



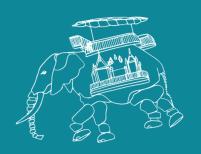
3<sup>rd</sup>-ranking FRENCH AOC VINEYARDS



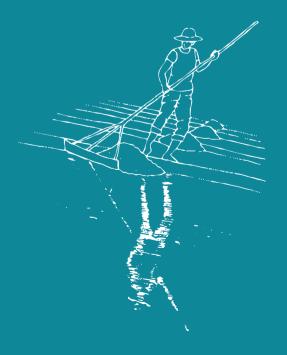
4
REGIONAL
NATURE PARKS



43 CHARMING TOWNS



# ATLANTIC LOIRE VALLEY HIGHLIGHTS





#### MACHINES DE L'ÎLE (44)

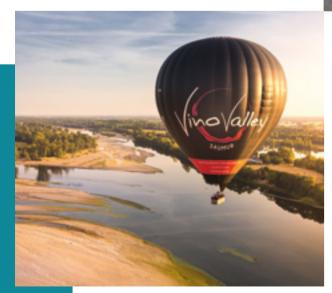
The Machines de l'île, Nantes' pride and joy, welcomed a new arrival in February: a bug-eyed chameleon has come to keep the other extraordinary animals company! The collection includes a monumental elephant, majestic heron, giant ant and sloth.

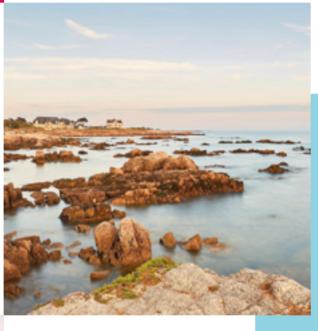
www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

# CROISIC'S RUGGED COASTLINE (44)

Since 1999, the Croisic peninsular has been part of a coastal improvement scheme and boasts a protected wild coastline dotted with sea-sculpted creeks and granite caves. These wonders can be admired from around 7km of marked coastal paths for a total get-away-fromit-all sensation.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com





#### LOIRE RIVER HOT-AIR BALLOON RIDE (49)

Departing from Saumur, the hot-air balloon rides are a magical and unforgettable experience and the perfect way to see Anjou's most beautiful landscapes. The extraordinary tour takes in the region's famous châteaux with the Loire River as a stunning backdrop.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

#### FONTEVRAUD ABBEY AND ITS NEW MODERN ARTS MUSEUM (49)

Fontevraud's new modern arts museum should open early 2021 after several lockdown postponements. The 1,700m² museum is housed in the Abbey's former stables and will host no less than 900 works of art. The collection, donated by Léon and Martine Cligman, includes sculptures, antique objects, and paintings by renowned artists such as Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Edgar Degas.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com





#### POINTE DU PAYRÉ (85)

The cliffs, dunes, foreshore and forests at the unmissable geographical site at Pointe du Payré are ideal for coastline walks and for discovering protected flora and fauna which are registered on the Natura 2000 programme. Walkers will enjoy exceptional panoramic views of the estuary, a rugged coastline and the well-known Veillon beach.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

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#### SAINTE-SUZANNE CHÂTEAU AND THE CIAP (53)

The medieval town of Sainte-Suzanne, surrounded by ramparts and perched on a rocky outcrop overlooking the Erve Valley, is thought to be one of France's most beautiful villages. The Château is famous for having resisted repeated attacks from William the Conqueror between 1083 and 1086 and has been home to a Centre for the Interpretation of Architecture and Heritage (CIAP) since 2009. The Centre is dedicated to researching the multiple facets of Mayenne's heritage.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



For lovers of the great outdoors and slow tourism the Poitevin marshlands regional nature park, in southern Vendée, is ideal. The park runs boat rides, bike rides and walks in a protected setting which was awarded the Grand Site de France (emblematic French landscapes) label in 2010. Visitors can discover the park's maze of canals, lush nature, and its remarkable historical heritage, including Maillezais' abbeys - Nieul-Sur-l'Autise and Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

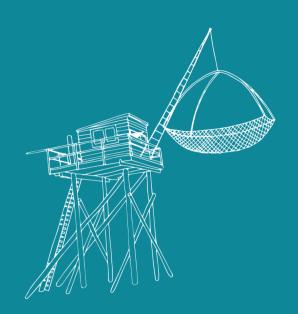




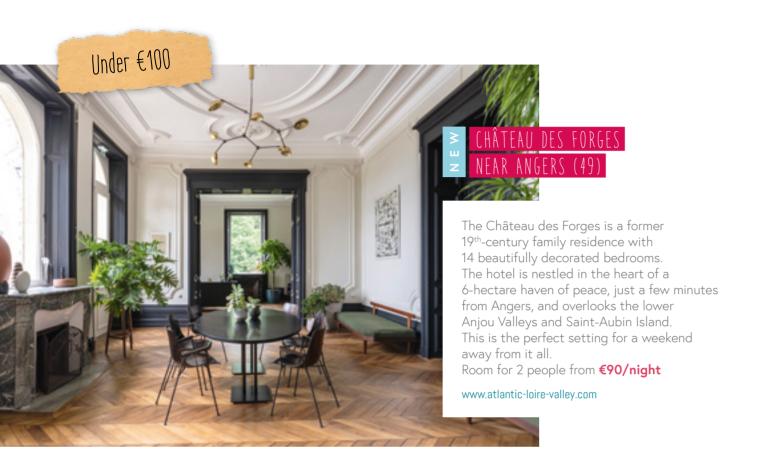
#### CITÉ PLANTAGENÊT (72)

Visiting Le Mans' historic quarter is like travelling back in time. With its cobbled streets, Roman wall, half-timbered houses and famous Romanesque-Gothic Saint-Julien cathedral, the historic centre still to this day tells the story of the Plantagenêt dynasty's influence on the city at the end of the 12th century.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



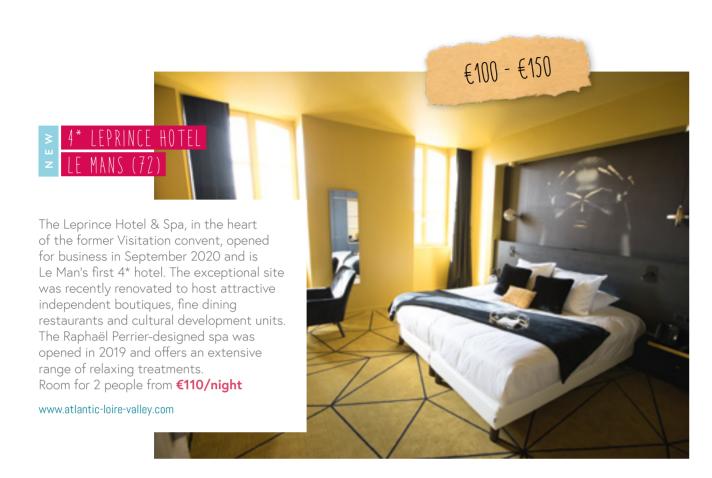
OVERNIGHT STAYS
IN ATLANTIC
LOIRE VALLEY

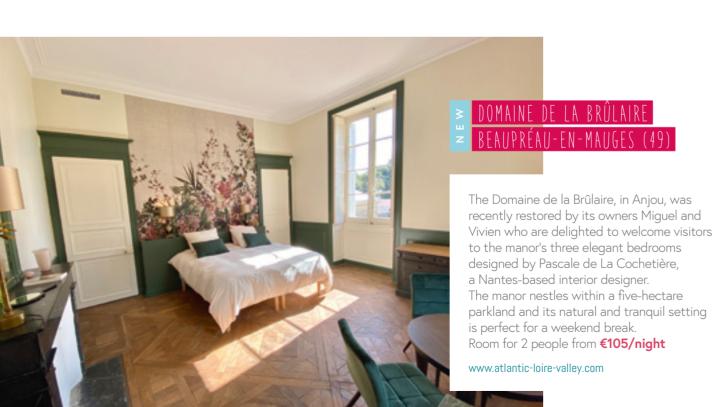




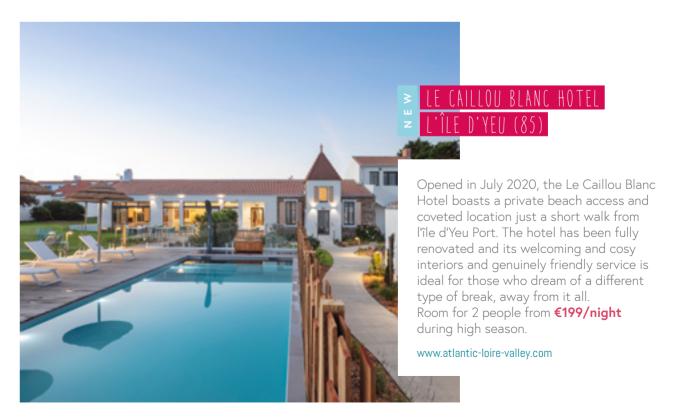
















## VÉLOBUISSONNIÈRE

The Vélobuissonnière bike route, which links Atlantic Loire Valley's established bike routes - Loire à Vélo, Vélodyssée and Vélo Francette - was opened in summer 2020. From Alençon to Saumur, Le Mans and La Flèche, the 250km-bike route will delight all cyclists as it winds along quiet, natural pathways, through charming villages and varied countryside. Vélobuissonnière's rural and timeless bike routes reveal Sarthe and Anjou treasures, from the Alpes Mancelles to the Loire River banks and its vineyards, the Cité Plantagenêt's half-timbered houses, the Château de Saumur and Malicorne ceramic workshops. Cyclists are able to switch off as they take in the Loire region's natural heritage and architecture.



The Vélobuissonnière is connected to the Véloscénie, Vallée du Loir, La Loire à Vélo and Vélo Francette bike routes so that cyclists can continue their travels in Atlantic Loire Valley and beyond!



#### Why was this new bike route created?

The Vélobuissonnière is the result of a joint initiative between Maine-et-Loire, Orne and Sarthe départements (counties), with the support of Atlantic Loire Valley Regional Council, to give the V44 greenway a specific and unique identity. The V44 now ranks among the main French tourist bike routes.

#### What are its plus points and characteristics?

The 250km-long Vélobuissonnière bike route connects Normandy to the Loire Valley and crosses no less than two French regions (Atlantic Loire Valley and Normandie), three départements (counties), (Orne, Sarthe and Maine-et-Loire), two regional nature parks (Normandie-Maine and Loire-Anjou-Touraine) and two UNESCO World Heritage sites (Loire Valley and Alençon needle lace-making).

After taking in Alençon's famous needle lacemaking, bike tourists can then wind their way through the Alpes Mancelles before stopping in Le Mans to visit its unique Roman walls. The route then goes on to follow the Sarthe towpaths, cuts through the heart of the Loire-Anjou-Touraine regional nature park and its vineyards, before finally ending in Saumur, a city of art and history renowned for its château overlooking the Loire River.

#### Who is this route for?

Vélobuissonnière, a timeless, pastoral and idyllic bike route, is perfect for all nature and heritage lovers. It is marked out by around 20 Accueil Vélo®-certified (French quality service guarantee for cyclists along bike routes) establishments and is easily accessible by public transport.

For more information: www.lavelobuissonniere.com





22









2 hrs
20 28.5km - Starting point: Talmont-Saint-Hilaire
Beginner

RICHARD THE LIONHEART TRAIL,

BETWEEN JARD-SUR-MER AND TALMONT-SAINT-HILAIRE (85)

The "ça roule avec Richard Cœur de Lion" circuit is part of an extensive thematic bike route project devised by the Vendée Grand Littoral district planning authority to combine an enjoyable bike ride whilst exploring natural heritage and local culture. The 28.5km route stretches from Talmont-Saint-Hilaire to Jard-sur-Mer and takes cyclists along the iconic Richard the Lionheart's footsteps. Richard the Lionheart was behind the creation of Lieu Dieu Abbey in Jard-sur-Mer and the Talmont Château fortifications.

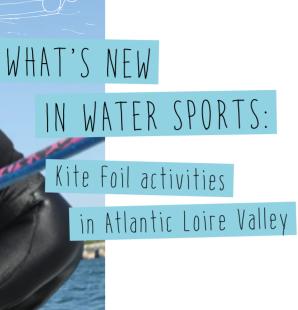
www.vendeegrandlittoral.fr











#### Kite Foil For all - OHANA SURF

Kite foil for all is coming to Atlantic Loire Valley!

Kite foiling, or gliding above the water's surface, is perfect for extreme sports fans. Ohana Surf, in Les Sables-d'Olonne, has come up with a new kite foiling technique for beginners where they are towed by a boat with a crossbar - anyone can try it out and "fly" over the sea for the first time!

Kite foiling activities are fully supervised and safety procedures adhered to so that participants can safely enjoy the experience from their very first session.

Sessions start from **€65/person** 

For more information: www.ohanafoil.net





With e-kite foiling, the sport of the moment, surfers fly above water levels up to 40km/h thanks to an electric surf equipped with a propeller and a wing. Aventure Nautique opened the first river e-kite foiling school in France in June 2020 to teach beginners about the finer points of the sport.

#### How did this adventure begin?

"I was already running several family activities like boat rentals with no licence, canoes and paddles, but I wanted to be able to offer something a bit different, more in the extreme sports category. I'd already been kite foiling for a while so it wasn't hard to make my mind up."

#### What does your offer include?

"Whether the person is a total beginner or an experienced kite foiler I always offer an accompanied first session to teach them how to use and control their kite foil. I'm always beside the person, either in my boat or on my kite foil."

#### What happens during a first session?

"Each session lasts about 1 hour 15 minutes with 45 minutes in the water. For the first session, we usually start with a short chat to assess the person's strengths, weaknesses and concerns, if there are any, followed by a short theory session about how kite foils work.

Then we head to the water where we get to grips with the equipment and then very quickly start to fly, just briefly, to learn to take off and land.

With kite foiling, we start off lying down, then on our knees, then standing for those who are comfortable with it."

## What sensations does e-kite foiling bring?

"On the water, it works like an electric surf board at low speed, so anyone can try it. When you fly, the e-kite foil gives you this amazing feeling of being elevated and gliding above the water."

#### Can anyone try e-kite foiling?

"Despite what people think, e-kite foiling is for all and everyone has a great time, regardless of their level."

Jacques Despierres Aventure Nautique Manager, La Suze-sur-Sarthe

Over 18s only
Sessions start from **€75/person** 

For more information: www.aventurenautique.fr



#### CANOE OR STAND-UP PADDLE TRIP ON THE SARTHE RIVER WITH TERRE ACTIV' (72)

Terre Activ's leisure centre in Juigné-sur-Sarthe (Sarthe Valley) runs water activities for families or groups. The Centre is a Vogue&Vague member (a collective initiative to increase water sports activities in Atlantic Loire Valley) and is ideal for beginners. Terre Activ also runs one-hour outings to learn how to stand-up paddle and half- or full-day canoe trips for one to four people. There's no better way to visit the Sarthe or the majestic Solesmes Abbey than from the water!

Beginners stand-up paddle, 1 hr session from €8 2 hr canoe ride from €18 1 free child's ticket for 1 purchased adult ticket www.vogue-et-vague.fr

DISCOVER THE DELIGHTS OF CRUISING

IN MAYENNE WITH CANOTIKA (53)

From April to October, Canotika runs half- or full-day multi water sports beginner sessions for families in the Château-Gontier marina. There's more than enough to do and water and slow tourism enthusiasts will be able to sign up for 4 to 8 hours on the Mayenne River to try out canoe-kayaking, stand-up paddles, dugout canoes, pedalos and electric boats. That little extra... A picnic lunch of local products is included in the price.

Family rate, 4 to 6 people: **€60 to €90 half day** Family rate, 4 to 6 people: **€92 to €138 full day** 

www.vogue-et-vague.fr





# THE REPORT OF THE PROPERTY OF

# TRY OUT WATER SPORTS WITH ATLANTIC WAKE PARK (85)

Atlantic Wake Park, a Vogue&Vague member (a collective initiative to increase water sports activities in Atlantic Loire Valley), is a water sports centre in the centre of Aiguillon-sur-Mer (Vendée). The Centre's vast body of sea water is perfect for children over 6 to learn how to water ski or wake board. There are a few fun water circuits for the more competitive participants. For accompanying adults and those who are looking for quieter activities, the seven-hectare Centre includes a beach area, a terrace with a panoramic view, and stand-up paddle and pedalo hire.

www.vogue-et-vague.fr

L'Aiguillon-sur-Mer

Find out more about the available water sports here: www.vogue-et-vague.fr



CATAMARAN TRIP, DEPARTING FROM SAINT-NAZAIRE WITH MOUETTE AND SEA (44)

Enjoy safe sailing with Mouette and Sea's catamaran trips. The catamarans leave from Saint-Nazaire with skippers on board. The trips are both the chance to take to the sea and discover the harbour city, beautiful views of the Loire estuary and Atlantic coast beaches from the water

Children over 3 accepted 2.5-hour discovery tour from **€27€/adult** and €20/child up to 14 years

www.vogue-et-vague.fr



www.sarthetourisme.com

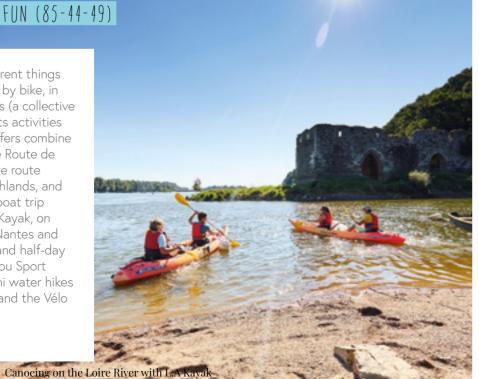




#### BIKE AND KAYAK DOUBLE THE FUN (85-44-49)

Because there are so many different things to see and do, be it by water or by bike, in any given region, Vogue&Vague's (a collective initiative to increase water sports activities in Atlantic Loire Valley) family offers combine water sports and bike rides! The Route de Sel in the Vendée is a canoe/bike route which takes in the Vendée marshlands, and the Original Vélo Tour is a bike-boat trip in the Poitevin marshlands. L.A. Kayak, on the Loire River banks between Nantes and Angers, also organises fun full- and half-day bike-kayak trips for families. Anjou Sport Nature in La Jaille-Yvon runs mini water hikes for all along the Mayenne River and the Vélo Francette bike route.

www.francevelotourisme.com



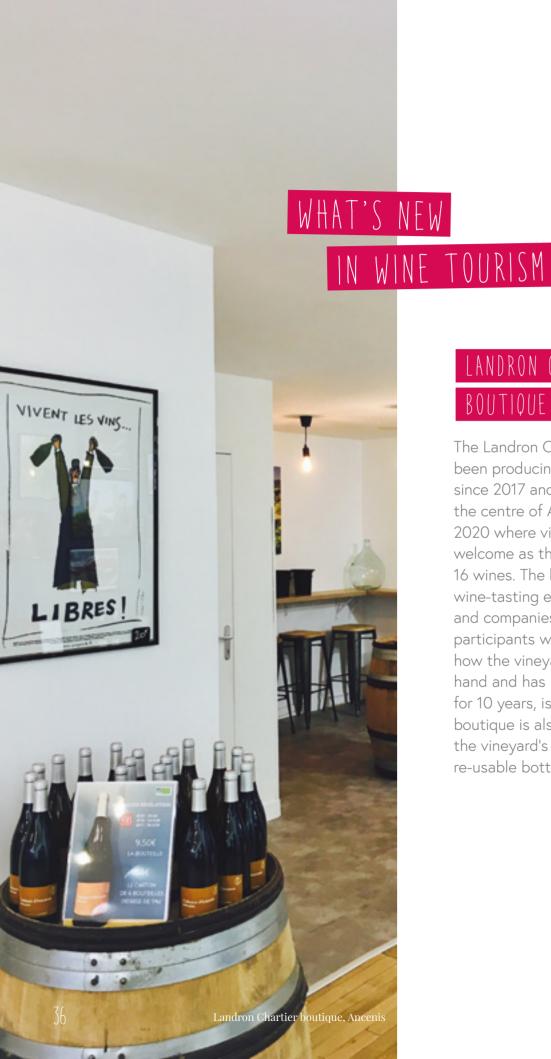
STATIC CRUISES AT THE AU BORD DE LOIRE CAMP SITE,

Ever thought of cruising without leaving dry land? The 3-star Au bord de Loire camp site in Gennes village offers static cruises in refurbished sailing boats and catamarans and is ideally situated on the Loire à Vélo and Vélo Francette bike routes. Bathô, a Nantesbased start-up, is behind this original idea of converting disused sailing and pleasure boats into original tourist accommodation. Bathô was awarded the 2020 ESS ecology transition prize for its sustainable, eco-friendly and collective initiative.

Overnight stay from **€65 for 4 people** 

www.enpaysdelaloire.com







The Landron Chartier vineyard has been producing wines in Saint-Géréon since 2017 and opened its boutique in the centre of Ancenis on 1 December 2020 where visitors are given a warm welcome as they taste the vineyard's 16 wines. The boutique will be running wine-tasting evenings for individuals and companies in spring 2021 and participants will learn more about how the vineyard, which harvests by hand and has been certified organic for 10 years, is run. The eco-friendly boutique is also a collection point for the vineyard's washable and infinitely re-usable bottles.



#### How did this adventure begin? What made you open a boutique?

"The vineyard has been operating since 2002 but it's in Ligné. We took over the running of the vineyard in 2017 and moved to Saint-Géréon to a bigger production site. But that meant we no longer had a sampling area where we could welcome customers. The idea of opening a boutique in Ancenis town centre began to take shape so we created a friendly place to meet and share our passion for, and vision of, our trade with our customers."

#### What makes your boutique so special?

"We have set up a sales point in the boutique where we promote our 16 wines. There is also a regional map to help customers understand the different types of soil, vines and wines. We also have a wine-tasting area so that customers can sample our wines as we explain how we work to them. We are setting up another wine-tasting area in the cellar for themed evenings, corporate and private events.

As for the vineyard itself, we have been reducing our environmental impact for years and began the shift to organic production in

2009. We are also in partnership with Bout' à Bout', a Nantes-based organisation, which is part of a glass bottle deposit and reuse system in Atlantic Loire Valley. This means that our customers can bring their empty bottles back to the boutique or the cellar, then Bout' à Bout' collects and cleans them so that we can use them over and over again."

#### Who is the boutique for?

"At the vineyard, our distribution channel is mainly geared towards independent wine merchants and restaurant owners, and a large percentage of export. We created the boutique because we wanted to become more customercentric and introduce customers to the region's wines which are known for their diversity."

Anthony Godicheau, Sales Manager for private individuals, associations and companies

Open Tuesday to Friday from 10:00 to 13:00 and 15:00 to 19:00, and Saturday from 10:00 to 19:00

For more information: www.landronchartier.fr

#### IJITY WHITE WINES AND HISTORIC HERITAGE IN THE LOIR VALLEY (72) The Vallée du Loir stands between Château-du-Loir. La Chartre-sur-le-Loir and Ruillé-sur-Loir and is renowned for its stunning pastoral scenery, vineyards, castles, gardens and second-to-none fruity white wines. The 16km Vignoble de Jasnières route leaves from Chartre-surle-Loir and is perfect for a family bike trip and visiting a host of art galleries, antique shops and craft workshops. The "Belles demeures et vignobles en Vallée du Loir" (elegant mansions and vineyards in the Loir Valley) circuit from Prieuré de Vauboin to Manoir de la Possonnière stretches across 57km of bike routes and roads and is ideal for visiting the region's typical historical buildings. www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



# MINI TRAIN RIDE, CHALONNES-SUR-LOIRE VINEYARDS (49)

For more than 30 years, visitors have been able to take a 1 hour and 15-minute guided mini train tour of the Chalonnes-sur-Loir vineyard on the corniche angevine. The mini train leaves from the Tourist Office and begins with a presentation of Chalonnes and its banks along the Loire River. As the tour continues up along sunny hillsides past beautiful Layon villages, visitors are given a breath-taking view of the Loire Valley. The tour explains how vineyards are run and presents the region's AOC (controlled designation of origin) wines.

Starting from €7.50/adult €4.50/children aged 5 to 12 years

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com





PRIEURE LA CHAUME VINEYARD, SOUTH LOIRE VALLEY (85)

The Prieuré La Chaume vineyard is the Loire Valley's most southern vineyard and was opened in 1997 after Christian and Sylvie Chabiran dared each other to try to set up a vineyard on the former island of Vix, in the Poitevin marshlands. The vines are planted on superficial limestone soils with ammonites from the Triassic period, in the heart of the Fiefs Vendéens designation. The vines produce fine, bold, organic wines sought after by the world's finest dining tables. Sylvie and Christian are also art lovers and organise cultural events to explain the wine making trade through art.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

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Jasnières vineyard - Loir Valley



In 1974, the Mourat family settled in Mareuilsur-Lay for its schist and rhyolite Fiefs Vendéen soil. Before this date, the family produced wine on lle de Ré then worked as wine merchants in Les Sables-d'Olonne. Forty years later, Jérémie now runs three organic vineyards and has developed an extensive wine tourism offer. In partnership with the recently-opened Maison Desamy restaurant, the vineyard organises 7km to 20km discovery bike, and electric car, tours which include a gourmet picnic and wine tasting at the foot of the Moulin Blanc!

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



From the Fiefs Vendéens to Anjou and Saumur, not forgetting the Nantes vineyard and the Loir Valley, the Routes des Vins du Val de Loire (Loire Valley wine trails) fully reflect the diversity of Loire Valley wines and the region. The day- or week-long routes, which may be taken by bike, foot or car, are designed to let tourists take their time in sampling the region's different vintages and learn about the wine producers' love for the region. Regardless of whether tourists prefer dry or fruity wines, prestigious or rare vintages, or if they are wine enthusiasts or just curious, there will be something for everyone on the Routes des Vins du Val de Loire!

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



Valérie, a former teacher, decided to move to Layon Valley after falling in love with the region and its magnificent landscapes which beat to the rhythm of its vineyards. After an initial successful experience in a local vineyard, Valérie decided to combine her love of teaching with that of oenology and founded Les Vignes selon Val, her own micro-company in 2016. Valérie runs no less than six guided 4km to 8km hiking tours about vines and wines and each hike ends in a welldeserved wine-tasting session!

e de Bois Mozé - Coutures

Hikes start at €28/person

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com









#### How did this adventure begin?

"Three years ago, after 30 years in the French and international fishing and aquaculture sector, my son Etienne and I wanted to shift to oyster farming. Because we're from Noirmoutier it was easy for us to move to the island and buy up a small oyster cabin in 2019. The cabin is ideally set in the marshlands in the middle of clearings and ponds. We wanted to set up oystersampling and the concept very quickly took off, both with local residents and tourists."

## What makes your boutique so special?

"The strength of our concept is based on our stunning setting and fresh produce because our oysters are fished and opened directly in front of our customers who then can taste them immediately. The oysters are literally taken from the water and put on the tourists' plates!

We are also able to tell our customers about our trade, and oysters, and explain the different production phases. We also propose shellfish tasting, for example clams, winkles and prawns."

#### Who is your produce for?

"We target all food lovers who place quality above quantity. Most of our production is destined for tasting and restaurants but we also have stands at a few short-circuit sales points in the region. For city dwellers who crave oysters throughout the year, we also run a Chronofresh delivery service across France."

René et Etienne Adrien, Oyster farmers and Cabane d'Adrien owners in Noirmoutier

For more information: www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



#### LA SPIRULINE DE FINFARINE (85)

Spirulina, a micro-organism, has been around for millions of years but has only recently become much sought after because of its high vitamin and nutrient content. After graduating with a PhD in marine ecology, Barbara decided to retrain and start producing spirulina in Poiroux on the Vendée coast. Every Wednesday Barbara welcomes visitors to her aquafarm and tells them how spirulina is produced and harvested and that it can be taken in tablet form or added to recipes as sprigs, for one- to three-month long treatments.

www.spirulinedefinfarine.com



LA CHAISE ROUGE FARMHOUSE INN

La Chaise Rouge, in Ombrée d'Anjou, north-west Angers, is an original concept combining culture and agriculture in a natural and friendly environment! There's something for everyone, be it organic farming, country inn and restaurant, riding school, teaching farm and even a theatre. For almost 30 years, the inn and the Patrick Cosnet Theatre Troupe have been welcoming visitors year-round with meals and entertainment, workshops and evening events all topped off with local, traditional cuisine. Families and groups can take guided or free tours of the farm during the day.

Farm visits from **€4/person** Evening meal/show from €35/adult and €20/child

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

#### LE SAFRAN DE LA CÔTE DE JADE (44)

In Saint-Père-en-Retz, between groves and the Atlantic Ocean, Caroline started producing saffron after she tried a recipe and fell in love with this subtle yet powerful spice. Her saffron production started off as a personal project, but grew over the years to become Safran de la Côte de Jade! Caroline regularly runs guided tours where visitors learn about saffron's secret virtues and sample cakes and drinks made with saffron.

Visits last 1 hr and 30 mins, from €6/adult

www.safran-cote-de-jade.fr



Les Deux Sabots farm, a family-run business with 200 cows, was founded after a Dutch Francophile couple fell for a former dairy farm in Sarthe. The discovery farm is open to visitors on Wednesdays and Thursdays for crepemaking workshops and guided tours of the farm and the dairy factory. From April to November the farm also runs "meadow cafés" where visitors can savour a delicious afternoon cuppa in the middle of the fields...with the cows!

Visits from **€7/person** Crepe-making workshop from €10/person Meadow café from €3/person

www.lesdeuxsabots.com

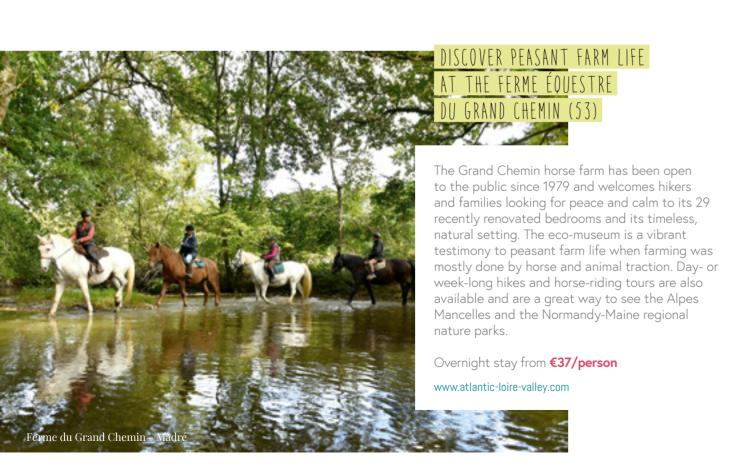


#### L'ASINERIE DE LA RIVIÈRE, GREZ-NEUVILLE (49)

Every summer since 2004, Lydie and Stéphane Fillodeau have been welcoming visitors to their organic donkey farm on the Mayenne towpath between Grez-Neuville and Le Liond'Angers. There are around 20 Baudet du Poitou donkeys on the farm and visitors are welcome to watch the donkeys being milked, and visit the shop where shampoos, soaps, creams and other cosmetic products based on donkey milk, known for its hydrating properties, are available for purchase.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com







ATELIER AND COW'S

ELEGANT AND COSY GÎTES (72)

In the very centre of Sarthe countryside and

right next to Le Mans, Marité and Jean-Maries' gîtes are just the ticket for tourists seeking a peaceful, authentic break. The dairy is also home to three fully-renovated and tastefully decorated gîtes. It's the perfect place to get away from it all and switch off! Couples, families and groups of friends will enjoy discovering Sarthe and its hidden treasures. Marité, a DIY enthusiast, also runs an ecofriendly creative boutique and sewing and knitting workshops.

Cottage for 7 people from **€290/weekend** www.atlantic-loire-valley.com







# SHORT STAY IDEAS IN ATLANTIC LOIRE VALLEY



# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

NANTES CITY BREAK (44)

#### ON BOARD THE RIVIÈRE **HOUSE CARPE DIEM**

The charming, 5-bedroom Rivière House Carpe Diem barge on the river Erdre is the perfect setting for those who want to get away from it all and relax, just a few minutes from Nantes city centre.

www.carpediem-nantes.fr



#### VACARME RESTAURANT

Tourists will love the warm and welcoming atmosphere Sarah and her partner Damien have created. Sarah serves up dishes based on fresh local produce accompanied by organic, natural wines which are carefully selected by Damien. The modern bistro's attractive prices and creative cuisine is the perfect address for foodies and street food adepts!

www.lestablesdenantes.fr





What to see/do

#### **VISIT NANTES** BY BIKE WITH **BIKE'N TOUR**

Departing from the Tour de Bretagne, tourists will enjoy discovering Europe's Green Capital's highlights by electric bike. The tour takes in Bouffay, the medieval district, the river Erdre banks, Royal and Graslin squares and the famous Machines de l'île. The enthusiastic tour guides organise welcome breaks, with local wine and produce tasting, for tour participants.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



Where to stay

#### **INSOLITES DE JSK**

Tourists can take their pick from a wide choice of original and comfortable accommodation options - transparent bubbles; wooden cabins; chalets; and caravans - for a relaxing and surprisingly original stay in the heart of the Alpes Mancelles.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



Where to eat

2 hrs and 40 mins

2 hrs and 30 mins

€ \{205/person appr

@ 2 days

#### O'PASSAGE BAR RESTAURANT. SAINT-LÉONARD-DES-BOIS

At the centre of the Alpes Mancelles and a short walk from the Sarthe River, O'Passage serves delicious traditional dishes made from local ingredients, platters to share, and an impressive wine menu. The restaurant's natural setting is perfect for an after-lunch or after-dinner stroll.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

What to see/do

#### VISIT LE PARADIS **DE LA CHARNIE** TEACHING FARM

Right next to La Petite Charnie forest, visitors to Géraldine's farm are welcome to meet her alpacas, ponies, rabbits and other four-legged friends.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com





#### PARC HOTEL & SPA, **CHÂTEAU-GONTIER**

In the centre of Château-Gontier, set in a large parkland with 100-year-old trees, Anne-Laure and Olivier welcome visitors to their exquisitely renovated 19th-century mansion. A spa and pool are the cherry on the cake of this perfect relaxing getaway. The sportier visitors will enjoy the tennis courts and gym.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

Where to eat

#### DOMAINE DU MOULIN, CHENILLÉ-CHANGÉ

The Table du Meunier serves refined, gourmet cuisine in the centre of a charming village on the banks of the Mayenne River. Local products are the highlight of this traditional, friendly restaurant.

www.domaine-moulin.fr





What to see/do

#### MAYENNE RIVER CRUISE FOLLOWED BY A LA VÉLO FRANCETTE BIKE RIDE

The captain of the Duc des Chauvières takes visitors on cruises to visit Château-Gontier and its surroundings. Once the boat has docked, the trip may be continued with a refreshing 23km bike ride along the Mayenne River banks on the Vélo Francette bike route to Chenillé-Changé.

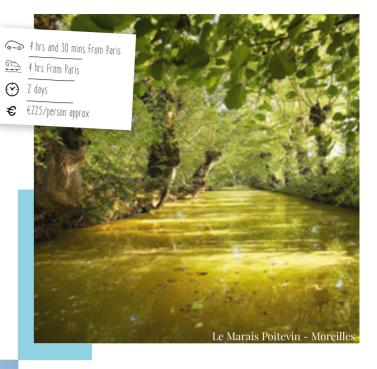
www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



## Where to stay CHÂTEAU **DE MOREILLES**

This former abbey, in the middle of the Poitevin marshlands near Fontenay-le-Comte, is welcoming, elegant and intimate. The Château's fireside candlelit meals and private spa evenings make it the perfect choice for a romantic break.

www.chateau-moreilles.com



Where to eat

#### **AUBRAIE** RESTAURANT, PEAULT

This charming address in a large leafy park beside a river guarantees total relaxation. Every Sunday, the Aubraie cranks up the music and guests are encouraged to dance to the accordion.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com

#### What to see/do

#### MOURAT VINEYARD BIKE TOUR AND GOURMET PICNIC IN THE VINES

Jérémie Mourat organises country bike rides in his 122-hectare vineyard followed by a gourmet picnic at the foot of a mill. This original tasting event is perfect for learning about Fiefs Vendéen wines from a different angle.

For more information, turn to page 40.

www.atlantic-loire-valley.com



#### **BRIMMING WITH HOLIDAY IDEAS!**

WWW.ATLANTIC-LOIRE-VALLEY.COM





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Notes



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Gîte à la ferme L'Atelier and Cow - Atelier couture  ${\hbox{$\mathbb C$}}$  P. Beltrami

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Le Paradis de la Charnie  $\hbox{@}$  Maxime Guillon - Sarthe Tourisme

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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