



# VISITVAR

Provence - Côte d'Azur

## The Var, Live an infinite experience

2018  
**PRESS  
BOOK**

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**VISITVAR**

Provence - Côte d'Azur



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# WELCOME TO THE VAR!

The Garden of the Med... What better way to describe the Var's beautiful scenery and protected natural areas, weaving their stunning web around the local towns and villages, shores and inland countryside. Our Vins de Provence and Bandol vineyards have hoisted us to the top of the podium for rosé wine production, while at the foot of the Verdon Canyon, black truffles reign supreme over the food markets. During the first months of the year, our woods and countryside bathe in the heady scents of Mimosa. And our orchards and gardens offer up the sun-packed fruit and vegetables that go to make the colourful, flavourful dishes tirelessly reinvented by our star-rated Chefs and traditional cooks.

This magnificent garden is the meeting place of Provence and the Côte d'Azur – an historic encounter that has earned the destination its international acclaim. Our Mediterranean climate lights up this rich and unique alliance with dazzling sunshine in every season, promising unbeatable well-being throughout the year.

France's leading tourist destination after Paris, offering an incredibly diverse palette of activities, the Var is a place where everything is possible. Readily-accessible via the main highway and railway networks, it is also located between two of France's largest airports and is home to three international airports: Toulon-Hyères, Saint-Tropez in La Môle and Le Castellet. The Var's many assets haven't escaped the eagle eye of event organisers either: after the Tall Ships' Races and America's Cup, the French Formula 1 Grand Prix will be returning to the Paul Ricard race track in Le Castellet next June 24th.

This year's brand-new Press File invites you to discover and live out the Var's infinite array of experiences. Enjoy!



**Françoise DUMONT**

*Vice-President of the Var Area Council*

*President of Var Tourisme*





**VISITVAR**

Provence - Côte d'Azur



# THE VAR, A FLAGSHIP DESTINATION



# THE VAR, A FLAGSHIP DESTINATION



## TOURISM IN THE VAR

### Var key tourism figures\*

#### France's leading destination after Paris

- > 8.25 million stays
- > 1.07 international stays
- > 63.6 million overnight stays
- > 45% overnight stays in commercial accommodation
- > Average holiday duration 8 days

#### Tourism, a vital economic springboard for the area

- > €53.90 – average expenditure per person per day (€43.50 for French visitors and €105.70 for overseas visitors)
- > €1,660 – average holiday budget for a family of 4
- > €3.4 billion – annual tourism-related income
- > €12.6 million income in visitor's tax generated for local towns
- > Over 32,300 direct and indirect jobs generated by tourism, i.e. 9% of the Var's total employment

## A FEW MARKERS



#### Over 300 campsites including:

- 73 three-star campsites;
- 72 four-star campsites;
- 14 five-star campsites.

#### Over 500 hotels including:

- 3 palaces;
- 26 five-star hotels;
- 55 four-star hotels;
- 149 three-star hotels.

### An uptrend in accommodation

- > Camping is the Var's leading commercial accommodation choice, with over 134,000 beds, i.e. 50% of commercial beds, making it one of the area's top tourist assets. This sector accounts for over a quarter of commercial overnight stays in the Var every year.
- > The hotel sector offers 35,600 beds, i.e. 13% of commercial beds and around 11.1% of commercial overnight stays in the Var every year.

### Open for business!

#### La Reine Jane in Hyères, a different kind of hotel

14 rooms x 14 designers = 14 worlds! This astonishing hotel is committed to offering every guest a unique experience. In 2018, this place apart will be inaugurating its new restaurant "La Reine Jane", featuring innovative lines and moods inspired by the Med... Not to be missed!

Read more



[www.lareinejane.fr](http://www.lareinejane.fr)

#### Hôtel des Roches Rouges in Saint-Raphaël

Situated in Agay, between Cannes and Saint-Raphaël, this hotel benefits from a unique waterfront location facing Ile d'Or island on the unspoiled shores of the Estérel Hills. Lost between sea and pine trees, the hotel and its grounds have undergone major refurbishment work to restore the site's former glory and make the very best of its exceptional setting. Open since 2017, it features 50 five-star rooms, two saltwater pools and two restaurants.

Read more



[www.hotellesrochesrouges.com/fr](http://www.hotellesrochesrouges.com/fr)

#### Grand Hôtel des Sablettes in La Seyne-sur-Mer, prestige and nostalgia

The latest creation of the Pins Penchés family group, this four-star hotel complex set on the waterfront on Plage des Sablettes is set to breathe the new life back into the old-fashioned elegance of tourism in days gone by, with a very contemporary twist.

Read more



[www.ghsplage.fr](http://www.ghsplage.fr)

\*The "Pôle de l'Observatoire - Var Tourisme" will be pleased to provide details on key figures, sources and other detailed documents: [c.gardy@vartourisme.org](mailto:c.gardy@vartourisme.org)



Photo: Les Cabanes du Varon - Flayosc • Credit : © Var Tourisme / Les Cabanes du Varon

### Novel accommodation

The Var is currently seeing a wave of novel accommodation! We have listed some of our top picks on the [visitvar.fr](http://visitvar.fr) website, including:

- > **Les Cabanes du Varon (Hobbit trees and dens)** in the midst of a miniature donkey and animal farm in Flayosc.
- > **La Terre des Soleils in Trigance** offers a **mongolian yurt and Indian teepee**, set in the majestic scenery of the Verdon.
- > **La Roulotte de Clotilde (gypsy caravan)** in Bargemon, on the Hilltop Village Route in a beautiful area, is coveted by nature and tranquillity-seekers.
- > The **School Bus (Crown Supercoach)** at Parc de la Grande Lauzade in Le Luc, converted into a motorhome.
- > The **Sommibus - "bus-hotel"**, based in Carnoules, offers 18 beds and toilets so you don't have to get behind the wheel after a festive night out.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/sejourner/hebergements-insolites/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/sejourner/hebergements-insolites/)

### A complete transport network

Strategically positioned between 2 of France's largest airports (Nice-Côte d'Azur and Marseille-Provence) and home to two international airports including Toulon-Hyères, the Var is served by Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur's 3 largest airports and runs direct flights to around 200 national and international destinations. The Var also offers leading edge, international-level infrastructures for business aviation.

Its railway network and 4 TGV (high-speed train railway stations) - Toulon, Les Arcs-sur-Argens, Saint-Raphaël and Hyères - offer fast and easy access to France's main cities and beyond. 8 TGV trains run daily between Paris and Toulon in under 4 hours and the Lyon-Toulon trip takes just 2 ½ hours.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/planifier/venir-et-se-deplacer-dans-le-var/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/planifier/venir-et-se-deplacer-dans-le-var/)



### TOULON-HYÈRES AIRPORT

[www.toulon-hyeres.aeroport.fr](http://www.toulon-hyeres.aeroport.fr)

8 direct flight destinations

New: scheduled flights to Roissy Charles de Gaulle and seasonal flights to Copenhagen in March/April 2018

### GOLFE DE SAINT-TROPEZ AIRPORT DE SAINT-TROPEZ

[www.sainttropez.aeroport.fr](http://www.sainttropez.aeroport.fr)

3 direct flight destinations in summer

### LE CASTELLET INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

[www.aeroportducastellet.com/fr](http://www.aeroportducastellet.com/fr)

Business aviation



## Cruises

The Var's endless Mediterranean shores make it a magnificent stop-off for cruise passengers: it is home to no less than 12 cruise ports welcoming 230 cruise calls and around 330,000 passengers in 2017.

### The "Cruise Friendly" Label - a winning initiative

Created by the Var Provence Cruise Club, the "Cruise Friendly" label was rewarded at the Seatrade Cruise Europe fair in Hamburg in September 2017, when the VPCC was nominated as a finalist (out of 100 candidates) in the new "Marketing Initiative of the Year" category of the Seatrade Cruise Awards, alongside the prestigious cruise line Holland America Lines.

The label's objective: to win cruise passenger loyalty, offer surprising experiences, prompt a desire to return and leave passengers with unforgettable memories of their stay in the Var.

326 of the Var's retailers and tourism professionals have been awarded the "Cruise Friendly" label: 137 in Toulon and La Seyne, 76 in Bandol, 22 in Saint-Raphaël, 40 in Sanary and 51 in Hyères. All are committed to honouring the label's charter and are open during cruise calls, speak English, promise a smiling welcome and offer a free gift or discount voucher.

Other towns will be joining the "Cruise Friendly" initiative next year: St-Tropez, Le Castellet, Bormes-les-Mimosas and Le Lavandou.

Read more



[www.varprovence-cruise.com](http://www.varprovence-cruise.com)

### The Var is also:

- > Around 6,000 km<sup>2</sup> surface area
- > Over 400 km of shores and 7 water sports resorts
- > Over 2,500 hours of sunshine annually
- > Over 1 million inhabitants spread over 153 towns
- > Around 90 Tourist Offices and tourist information bureaus





Photo: Les gorges du Verdon • Credit : © Var Tourisme / Olivier Simon

## COMBINING EXCELLENCE AND EXPERIENCE

Shouldered by its exceptional natural assets, rich heritage, historic sites and traditions, the Var is continuing to write its history with the women and men of today and draw the face of a singular, contemporary and lively destination. We do our utmost to offer visitors a warm welcome and high-quality, varied travel experience. The Var is committed to excellence and pays particular attention to curating the success of every "encounter" – an approach designed to meet the new expectations of today's tourists. Although the idyllic vision of sun-soaked Mediterranean shores will always spark holidaymakers' imagination, we must now personalize our invitation and nourish the demands of hyper-connected, overstretched and always-active tourists for unexpected and palpitating new experiences.

Our objectives? Fulfil our promises by guaranteeing excellent services and seeking out multiple experience providers to surprise, seduce and win the loyalty of visitors – and encourage them to live out every facet of the Var!

Our destination is a place to be lived, felt and relished. It knows how to use its charms to solicit emotion and endearment.

### Quality, a constant priority

The Var has been committed to a global quality policy for many years and is constantly promoting and upgrading every sector of its tourist industry, while ensuring tourists benefit from a faultless welcome and services wherever they are staying. All services and infrastructures steered by the Var are quality-assured in the framework of various projects, trademarks and national labels.

#### "Qualité Tourisme™" – trustworthiness in a nutshell!

Created by the French Minister for Tourism, this national label monitors the continuous improvement of all tourist industry sectors and traveller satisfaction through a rigorous list of pre-defined criteria.

The Var's "Qualité Tourisme™" initiatives are steered by the Var Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Var

Tourisme, who currently accompany numerous travel professionals. The label has already been awarded to 141 accommodation structures, 77 restaurants, 18 leisure and recreation providers, 8 cultural sites and 19 local producer and artisan tours.

#### Specific markers for environmental quality

Environmental conservation is a priority and numerous labels have been developed to reward travel professionals operating an environmentally-friendly policy: Clé Verte, European Ecolabel, Hôtel CERT, Bienvenue à la Ferme, Agriculture Biologique, Bistrot de Pays, etc.

In addition, 257 of the Var's producers and local produce sales outlets have been awarded national labels or local trademarks in recognition of their trustworthiness.

#### Regional and local initiatives

The Var has taken various additional initiatives intended to further guarantee its services and honour the special requirements of certain tourism sectors. In addition to numerous quality-certified establishments, the Var also caters to reduced-mobility visitors with the "Tourisme & Handicap" label and takes part in regional initiatives such as the "Route des Vins de Provence" wine route.

### "QUALITÉ TOURISME" LABEL: THE 7 MAIN CRITERIA

- Personalized welcome
- Use of local resources
- Comfort
- Information and communication
- Cleanliness
- Staff competence
- Customer focus

## A new identity and a new website

### Three logos and a single visual identity

Heading up France's leading tourist destination, "Var Tourisme" began a major makeover in 2017 under the impetus of its President Françoise Dumont, in the aim of uniting the Var's various territories, improving their visibility and promoting their multidimensional tourist attractions. We have reinforced our presence on social networks and are now easy to follow thanks to the #VisitVar hashtag, reiterating the infinite experiences visitors can live out in the Var. Var Tourisme's logo has also had a facelift and renamed its strategic committee, now Think Var – the first think tank dedicated entirely to tourism development.



Var Tourisme's new visual identity was unveiled in October 2017 at the Palais Neptune convention centre in Toulon. Attended by local MPs and travel professionals, the official presentation was also a chance to reveal Var Tourisme's new, digital-focused communication strategy.



**"VisitVar, Live an Infinite Experience":** our new slogan sets the tone for Var Tourisme's brand-new public website, developed around the "Var Experience" theme.

Offering an emotional and personal dimension, the website focuses on visitor experiences. Functional and contemporary, it has been designed first and foremost for smartphone and tablet use to satisfy current demand. It features "must-do" land and sea attractions, villages, sites, monuments and museums. Thanks to an interactive map and special widgets, visitors now benefit from easy information access and bookings in just a few clicks.



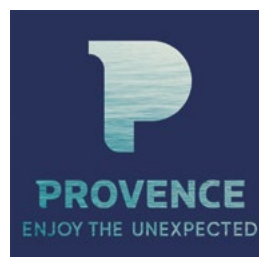
## The Var, where Provence and Côte d'Azur Meet

The Garden of the Med, where Provence and the Côte d'Azur join hands, the Var overflows with passion, authenticity, history and modernity. Natural and urban landscapes live side by side here in total harmony. It embodies both the inland beauty of Provence and legendary azure waters of the Mediterranean Sea, as sought after today as they were in the early 20th century.

As such, Var Tourisme is a financier of the "Contrat de Destination Provence" agreement and partner to the "Côte d'Azur France" trademark.

### "Contrat de Destination Provence"

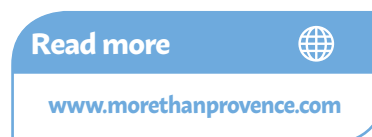
Provence is one of the 20 French destinations selected by the French State in 2015 to benefit from a "Contrat de Destination". The "Contrat Destination Provence" is led by the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Council and Bouches-du-Rhône Tourisme.



It is co-financed by the Vaucluse, Var and Alpes de Haute Provence areas, together with the Provence's main tourist offices (Toulon-Provence, Saint-Tropez, Provence Verte, etc. in the Var). Var Tourisme is part of the "Contrat Destination Provence" steering committee and takes part in its various working groups.

The "Contrat de Destination Provence" is designed:

- > To promote the magic of Provence worldwide
- > To shine the spotlight on what makes the "Provence experience" so unique and strike up a dialogue and genuine relationship with potential visitors
- > Unveil every aspect of the destination, from the most expected to the most unexpected.





## Côte d'Azur France

**CÔTE d'AZUR**  
FRANCE

The "Côte d'Azur France" trademark launched in 2017 by the Côte d'Azur Regional Council also relates partially to the Var coast, with common denominators including: bathed in sunshine, joyful, rejuvenating, colourful, beautiful, sensual, awakening of the senses, warm, human, international, forward-moving, dynamic, active, creative, multi-faceted, unexpected, novel, proud of its southern traditions, heritage and history and with a rich cultural, gastronomic and linguistic heritage that has withstood the passage of time.

The Var is intrinsically linked to the image of the Côte d'Azur; a bond that throws an additional and beneficial spotlight on the area.

Read more



[www.marque-cotedazurfrance.com](http://www.marque-cotedazurfrance.com)

### The Formula 1 Grand Prix returns to the Paul Ricard race track in Le Castellet

#### MOTOR SPORTS ARE ONE OF THE VAR'S HUBS OF EXCELLENCE WITH:

- > 2 race tracks:  
Paul Ricard race track in Le Castellet  
Circuit du Var race track in Le Luc
- > Presence of the Oreca group (Sports marketing and event organiser, Oreca stable, etc.)
- > Innovative specialist firms (design, driving schools, etc.)
- > A 63 year-old event: the "Rallye du Var"
- > 2 major motorcycling events:

**2018:** 82<sup>nd</sup> edition of the "Bol d'Or", bringing together 60,000 spectators and the finest international teams at the Castellet race track.

**June 7th-10th, 2018:** Harley-Davidson Eurofestival

**June 24th, 2018** will mark the return of the Formula 1 Grand Prix to Le Castellet! Fully refurbished for the occasion, the Paul Ricard race track inaugurated in 1970 will be proudly welcoming this prestigious event once again next year. Set to attract over 66,000 spectators, the event's economic spinoffs for the region are estimated at 65 million euro.

The Paul Ricard race track is famed worldwide and its location benefits from a large tourist capacity.

Over 66,000 spectators are expected for the 2018 event, including one-third overseas visitors. The average length of stay is estimated at 4 days, i.e. over 250,000 overnight stays, plus the Grand Prix teams themselves, i.e. 3,000 people staying for an average of 5 days.

Spectator and staff expenditure is estimated at 36 million euro, excluding tickets, with organisational costs estimated at 6 million euro. Total short-term economic spinoffs for the region are estimated at 65 million euro.

Overseas spectators represent the highest potential value creation for the region and will also have a direct impact on business for Marseille-Provence and Toulon-Hyères airports (freight and passenger traffic) and Le Castellet and La Môle-Saint-Tropez airfields, welcoming VIP passengers.

Var Tourisme's President Françoise Dumont is delighted to see the Grand Prix returning to the Paul Ricard race track; the event's international reach is truly excellent news for the local economy, employment and tourism.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/DIARY/temps-forts/grand-prix-de-france-de-formule-1](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/DIARY/temps-forts/grand-prix-de-france-de-formule-1)

### Heralding the film stars of today

Saint-Tropez is taking centre stage again with the creation of a new international film festival running from **April 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018** – an event designed to put the spotlight on actors and actresses playing their first major role. The festival's artistic director is Vincent Perrot, shouldered by patrons Claude Lelouch, Patrice Leconte and Danièle Thompson for this first edition.

### Other major 2018 meetings

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Flower parades</b> in Bormes-les-Mimosas, Carqueiranne, Cava-laire-sur-Mer, Cogolin, Draguignan, Le Lavandou, Ollioules, Roquebrune-sur-Argens, Saint-Raphaël and Sainte-Maxime. The most famous is the Bormes-les-Mimosas parade on the last Sunday of February. Celebrating its 80th anniversary next year, it is one of the world's oldest flower parades | End February 2018                       |
| <b>Marathon du Golfe</b> de Saint-Tropez  | March 23rd-25th, 2018                   |
| <b>Joutes Musicales de Printemps</b> (music festival) in Correns  | Whitsun – late May – early June 2018    |
| <b>Verdon Canyon Challenge</b>  | June 2018                               |
| <b>Jazz festivals</b> throughout the Var  | July-August 2018                        |
| <b>Festival de Ramatuelle</b> (theatre, song, comedy)   | August 2018                             |
| <b>Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez</b> (regatta)   | Early October 2018                      |
| <b>Roc d'Azur mountain bike festival</b> in Fréjus  | October 2018                            |
| <b>Fêtes de la Châtaigne</b> (chestnut fairs) in Gonfaron, La Garde-Freinet, Les Mayons, Pignans and, according to year, Toulon, Tanneron and Camps-la-Source   | Late October 2018                       |
| <b>Rallye du Var</b>  | November 2018                           |
| <b>Fête du Millésime des Vins</b> de Bandol (wine fair)   | 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of December 2018 |

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/DIARY](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/DIARY)



**VISITVAR**

Provence - Côte d'Azur



# THE VAR, NATURELLEMENT!

# THE VAR, NATURELLEMENT !

A LIFE-SIZE OPEN-AIR THEATRE SET FACING THE SEA, HOME TO SEVERAL SITES RANKED BY THE TELEGRAPH AMONG THE "30 PLACES IN EUROPE YOU MUST SEE IN YOUR LIFETIME" (JULY 2015), THE VAR PROMISES A PERMANENT, BREATHTAKING SHOW ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE OF HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS...

**With its strikingly-contrasted palette of colours, vegetation, soils, reliefs and perspectives, set off by generous Mediterranean sunshine over 300 days a year, the Var's natural heritage is genuinely exceptional. Home to such majestic backdrops as the Verdon Canyon and Artuby river, the Sainte-Baume, Estérel and Maures hills that fold and unfold to form ever-changing decor, Argens river quenching the thirsty soil from West to East and shores harbouring countless treasures, the Var offers holidaymakers an infinite variety of experiences and emotions, inviting them to revel in the joys of nature in every season and write their own exciting script, filled with magic and adventure.**

## A FEW KEY FACTS



- Highest point: 1,714 m Mont Lachens
- 3 main hill chains: Estérel, Maures, Sainte-Baume
- 2 Regional Nature Reserves  
+ 1 National Park (land and sea)
- 1 National Nature Reserve
- 30 Natura 2000 sites
- 400,000 hectares of wooded areas
- 600 km rivers
- 3,000 plant species
- 230 beaches and coves
- Around 30 parks and gardens
- France's most varied vegetation
- France's top horticultural producer
- France's 2<sup>nd</sup> most-forested area (70% of the Var)
- France's 2<sup>nd</sup> leading area for nature reserves, with over 13,450 hectares classified as "Sensitive Natural Areas"





Photo: Le Massif des Maures • Credit : © Var Tourisme

## BREATHE

**The Var's natural treasures are a limitless source of well-being. Simply open your eyes, take in the scenery and experience the joy of simply being present**

Whether you're at the summit of Mont Lachens, in the heart of chestnut forests and cork oaks in the Maures hills, lapping up the views over the Bay of Toulon from Mont Faron, roaming the hillsides, gardens or vines, with your feet in the water or nose to the wind, nature is everywhere here, in every shape, form and perfume, its colours glorified by the Mediterranean sunshine.

### THE HERMANN TORTOISE IS MOVING!

The Maures plain offers a particularly nurturing environment for the endangered Hermann tortoise and has been home to the "Village des Tortues" (Tortoise Village) in Gonfaron since 1988. This educational centre, dedicated to preserving the species, was moved to Carnoules in June 2017 and now features an outdoor itinerary, 400 m<sup>2</sup> greenhouse, exhibition room, museum, aquatic area and guided tours, offering visitors a fascinating introduction to this endemic species found in the Maures hills.

### Hill chains

The Var's 3 main hill chains all have very different characteristics.

To the West of the Var, at an altitude of over 1,000 metres, lie the rocky ridges of the Sainte-Baume hills, covered with an ancient forest that lends it a totally unique and priceless botanical value. Bathed in a very spiritual aura since Saint

Mary Magdalene's legendary retreat in a grotto and said to have been protected by gods and kings from time immemorial, this astonishing heritage site and cathedral of plant life now shelters under the wing of the local authorities and various environmental initiatives, prompting the recent creation of France's 52<sup>nd</sup> Regional Nature Reserve.

### ACCESS TO THE VAR'S HILL RANGES

A public awareness and information tool designed to reduce the risk of forest fires, the A.L.A.R.M.E. plan provides real time information on forest access according to weather conditions.

The Prefecture publishes an updated map every day before 7 p.m. for the following day, stipulating the danger level for each hill range and restrictions to forest access, traffic and parking when necessary.

See the map: <http://www.var.gouv.fr/acces-aux-massifs-forestiers-du-var-a2898.html>

Further to the East, the Maures hills span almost one quarter of the Var, from the highest ridge rising 780 metres over the inland countryside to the curvy edge winding its way around the coast. The history of mankind has forged the shape of these hills, with their hot, sunny face laden with cork oaks and cooler, moist slopes where sweet chestnuts abound. Home to 26 villages, silent forests and offering truly breathtaking views, the Maures hills are a genuine treasure trove for those who venture there.

Separated from its neighbour by the Argens river, the Estérel hill chain rises to an altitude of 618 metres. Alternating ragged peaks, ravines and rocky outcrops, its flaming red porphyry rocks sprawl all the way down to the sea. Maritime pines still grow here, but arid



scrubland prevails. These wild and striking stony landscapes form the visual identity of the Var's eastern section.

Other landmarks forming the Var's characteristic relief include the curious "Rocher de Roquebrune" - a rock formed out of lacy red sandstone -, the Tanneron hills and their slopes laden with mimosa and so-called "Monts Toulonnais" (Mounts of Toulon) including Mont Faron, offering stunning views over the Bay of Toulon.

Last but not least, don't miss the Var's highest lookout post during your stay! Set to the North-East, Mont Lachens rises to an altitude of 1,715 metres and boasts unbeatable views over 5 French departments, from the Southern Alps to the Med.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/terre-et-mer/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/terre-et-mer/)

## Coast

**From the long beach of Les Lecques in Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer to Cape Roux plunging down onto the Estérel's Corniche d'Or coast road, the Var's coastline overflows with treasures! Its 400 kilometres of beautiful shores alternate fjords nestling among pine trees, wild coves and beaches of white sand or pebbles, rubbing shoulders with steep slopes, peaks, cliffs and ledges. From breathtaking landscapes to protected areas, marinas, seaside resorts, ports, little fishing harbours, coastal footpaths and sightseeing routes, the Var has something for every sailor-at-heart, nature lover, marine life aficionado, sports fan and curiosity-seeker.**

## Islands

The Var's Mediterranean seascapes are dotted with glorious islands where you can take a dip in an idyllic, picture postcard decor... Our golden sands, translucent turquoise waters, waterside pine woods and magnificent sea beds are absolute musts!

**Porquerolles:** this paradise measures 7 km in length and 3 km in width! After a few hours lazing on the beach lined with pine woods, opt for a tour on foot or by bike to lap up the sheer beauty of this little island.

**Port-Cros:** more mountainous than Porquerolles and covered with Aleppo pines and evergreen oaks, this island - the smallest in the archipelago - is also definitely the wildest, home to exceptional marine life protected by a land and sea National Park.

**Le Levant:** this island lies to the East of the archipelago and is famed for its 80-hectare naturist site.

**Presqu'île de Giens:** the ancient island of Giens is joined to the mainland by two long arms of sand - a double isthmus - home to the highly-coveted Almanarre and La Capte beaches. The former saltmarshes, located between the two arms, are now a bird reserve.

Further West you will come to the Embiez and Ile de Bendor archipelago, now managed by the Paul Ricard foundation.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/autour-de-leau/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/autour-de-leau/)

Photo: Plage de galets au Dramont - Saint Raphaël • Credit: © Var Tourisme / Nico Gomez





Photo: Plaine des Maures • Credit : © Var Tourisme / Olivier Lanfranchi

## Preserved areas

### Plaine des Maures National Nature Reserve

Over 5,000 hectares of the Maures Plain were declared a Nature Reserve in 2009. Unique in France, this area harbours an exceptional biodiversity and wide variety of natural habitats sheltering both heritage and threatened species.

### Port-Cros National Park

Created over 50 years ago (1963), Port-Cros National Park administrates the Porquerolles National Mediterranean Conservatory and is Europe's oldest Marine Protected Area. A combined land and sea-based park spanning Port-Cros and Porquerolles, it covers 1,700 hectares of land and 2,900 of sea.

The small isles of Bagaud and La Gabinière are classified as nature reserves and are part of the "Pelagos Sanctuary", created to protect the Mediterranean's marine mammals.

The Park also harbours a fascinating historic heritage and the remains of 5 forts stand witness to its former defensive role.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/terre-et-mer/iles-d-hyeres/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/terre-et-mer/iles-d-hyeres/)

### Verdon Regional Nature Reserve

Spanning the Var and Alpes de Haute-Provence areas, the Verdon Regional Nature Reserve is home to 46 towns and villages. Its identity is forged around the impressive Verdon Canyon, forming a natural frontier between the two French Departments. A major tourist attraction, the park is committed to preserving and embellishing its natural, built and human heritage in the framework of a sustainable and responsible tourism policy. France's "Grand Canyon" – a giant rocky chasm up to 700 metres in depth where green waters flow – is a spectacular site, unique in France. The lower area of the canyon, home to the tranquil lakes of Esparron, Artignosc and Montmeyan and vast, turquoise lake of Sainte-Croix, are also musts while you are visiting this part of the Var. A bridge between the scenery of the Alps and Mediterranean, it is home to a wealth of flora and fauna and heralds the landscapes of Pays de l'Artuby, deeply marked by the culture of the Southern Alps.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/terre-et-mer/gorges-du-verdon/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/terre-et-mer/gorges-du-verdon/)

## PROTECTED AREAS

### Port Cros National Park

#### Flora:

602 land-based species  
500 seaweed species.

#### Fauna:

144 bird species  
180 fish species

## A land of flowers

The Var's gentle climate and diverse soil nurture our unique and highly-varied Mediterranean vegetation, boasting a vast palette of colours and fragrances marking the seasons as each variety comes into flower.

### Mimosa

The year kicks off with dazzling little yellow pearls lighting up the sky and filling the winter air with their heady fragrance... From mid-January to March, Mimosa covers the local slopes, valleys and hillsides from the Corniche des Maures and Estérel coast roads to the Tanneron hills. A drive along the Mimosa Route in winter resembles a prelude to spring. This enchanting acacia swathes the 130 km linking Bormes-les-Mimosas to Grasse in the Alpes Maritimes with its tempting fragrances and offers up a multitude of wonderful surprises whether you're touring by car or visiting a local park. A genuine ode to the senses

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/  
le-terroir-et-ses-produits/mimosa/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/le-terroir-et-ses-produits/mimosa/)

### Orchids

If you're seeking more pleasures, simply visit the orchid greenhouses in Roquebrune-sur-Argens. At the foot of Roquebrune's impressive rock, 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> of heated greenhouses and a laboratory dedicated to in vitro orchid growing allow visitors to discover the various growing stages of this spectacular plant: an experience bathed in exoticism to prolong summer, warm up the chilly December days and light up the heart of flower lovers all year round

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/le-terroir-et-ses-produits/producteurs-  
produits-terroir/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/le-terroir-et-ses-produits/producteurs-produits-terroir/)

### Parks & Gardens

Set at the four corners of the Var, our parks and gardens offer a wonderful insight into the talent of the local gardeners and landscape artists, together with a taste of faraway climes and glimpse into the fascinating stories surrounding their origins.

The Var's official "Remarkable Gardens" include the "Jardin des Méditerranées" in Le Rayol. Set on a ledge over the sea, this domain, managed by the "Conservatoire du Littoral" (French Coastal Conservancy), owes its unique character to gardener and botanist Gilles Clément - the creator of this astonishing voyage through the Mediterranean climates of the world - and promises an extraordinary sensory experience in every season. "Les Jardins de la Commanderie de Peyrassol", a magnificent vineyard in Flassans-sur-Issole, were recently awarded the "Remarkable Gardens" label (2017) for their unique open-air itinerary comprising a botanical exhibition and contemporary art collection, throwing bridges between nature and art. The town of Hyères also boasts an exceptional natural heritage and is home to three delightful municipal parks. Don't miss the "Jardin de la Cascade" in Villecroze; a stunning waterfall gushing out of the cliff face over the famous Troglodyte caves lying below, or "Domaine d'Orves" park in La Valette. This tour of the Var's fragrant floral heritage wouldn't be complete without evoking the village of Figanières and its astonishing collection of over 300 aromatic plants, or the "Jardin de Baudouvin", paying tribute to Provence's ancient gardening traditions.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/visites/parcs-et-jardins/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/visites/parcs-et-jardins/)

Photo: Fleurs du Var - le mimosa - Credit: © Var Tourisme / LCI

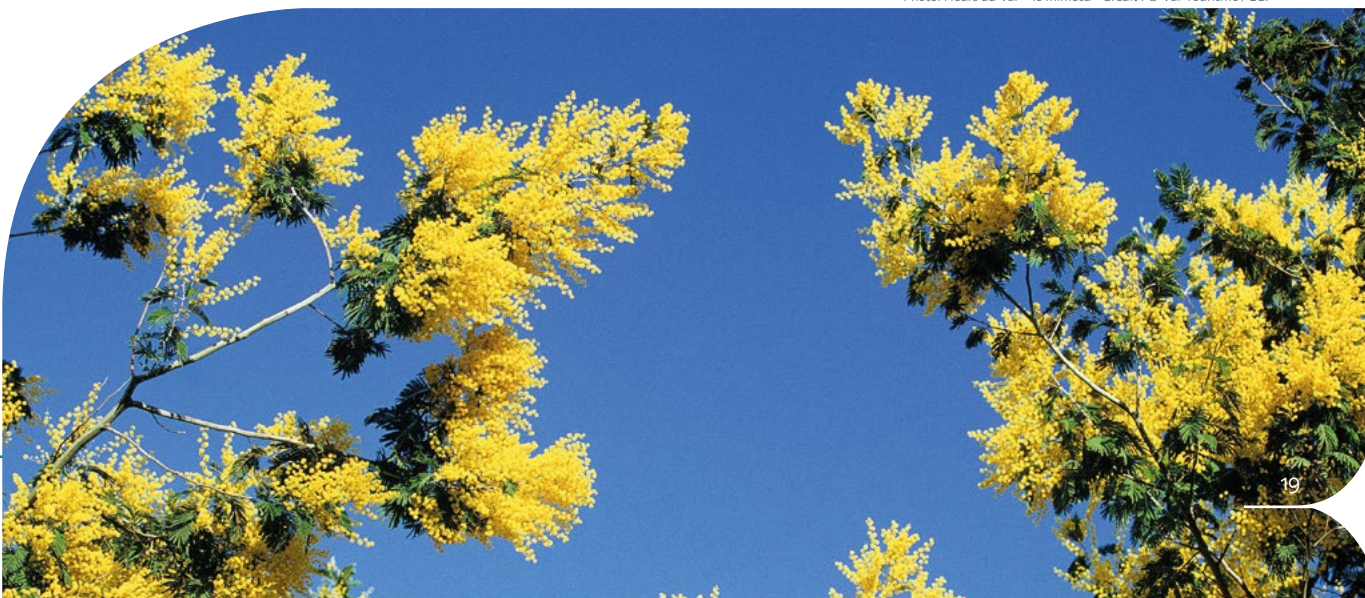




Photo: VTT dans l'Estérel • Credit : © Var Tourisme / Nico Gomez

## GET MOVING!

**Whether you prefer to pedal, roll, run, climb, walk, trot or gallop, we have a great choice of activities to get you on the move!**

**The Var's very varied scenery, vast choice of amenities and recreation, and high-quality instruction and itineraries, make it the perfect playground whatever your chosen leisure activity.**

### Walking in the Var

Offering different but equally gorgeous landscapes in every season, our vast network of footpaths criss-cross their way from the hinterland to the coast and are a guaranteed way to get back on top of the world!

Whether you fancy a quiet stroll, sporty hike or family walk, just pick your pace and path! The Var is home to a truly endless choice of signposted itineraries, including 800 km of official long-distance footpaths and several hundred kilometres of shorter routes! This "walker's web" also includes a little-known but superb 138-km section of the Way of Saint James

stretching from Rome to Compostela in Spain, also part of the "Mediterranean Arc" running along the sea from Italy to Morocco.

The gorgeous Coastal Footpath (Sentier du Littoral), formerly used by Customs Officers to look out for smugglers, alternates sporty sections and beach breaks. Measuring over 200 km in all and spanning both the continent and islands, it is the perfect way to enjoy an invigorating walk while lapping up the views over the Med.

Please note that nature reigns here and despite the care and attention of the local towns, wind and water can damage certain sections of the footpath. You can find out more from the local tourist offices.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/rando-a-pied/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/rando-a-pied/)

## Freewheeling

With a huge variety of flat and hilly landscapes to choose from, cycling is obviously one of the favourite local sports, guaranteeing a great workout for sporty cyclists and great views if you prefer a more relaxed pace

Opt for a tour of the Estérel hills, wine safari in the vines, wander through Palayson forest or rail-biking with all the family amid the luscious greenery of Provence Verte... In short, a thousand and one news ways to discover the Var's natural treasures.

### THE COASTAL CYCLE PATH

Part of the National Cycling and Green Route Project, this path is set to run all the way from Six-Fours-les-Plages to Saint-Raphaël on completion:

- > **Crossing 20 towns**
- > **Length 92 km**
- > **77 km clean site**  
(no motorized vehicles allowed)

The Var offers 2 bike parks located in Tourves and Garéoult, as well as a nature site (9 signposted itineraries) on Siou-Blanc plateau in the heart of rural Provence. Mountain bikers will love the renowned trails located between Hyères and the Verdon Canyon. The coastal cycle path following the ancient railway line has also been entirely refurbished and now offers a super variety of scenery.

### "LE VERDON À VÉLO" (VERDON BY BIKE)

Set up by the association "Vélo Loisir Provence" in conjunction with its professional partners – all members of the "Accueil Vélo" cyclist welcome charter -, this network caters to every need of cycle tourers, including top addresses for accommodation, repairs and hire, luggage transport, guides, specialist travel agents and tourist offices, for a guaranteed successful cycling holiday!

#### Two top itineraries:

Plateaux du Bas-Verdon (57 km)  
and Barrages du Verdon (65 km).

#### Read more:

<http://www.veloloisirprovence.com/fr/verdon>

#### Read more

[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/velo/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/velo/)

## Riding into the sunset

Get back to nature, make friends with a trusty steed and enjoy a true change of scenery and wonderful trek into our heritage far from the madding crowds... The Var's "Equi-découverte" horseback itineraries are designed to combine the pleasures of riding and exciting tour discoveries. The network offers signposted bridle paths, riding schools and selected accommodation for both novices and seasoned riders.

If you're a confirmed rider, the Maures Plain is perfect for an exhilarating and romantic gallop in the footsteps of the legendary bandit "Maurin des Maures". Conjuring up images of the African Savannah, this picturesque plain is bathed in a magical atmosphere. From the hidden pathways of the Verdon foothills to rocky ridges with sweeping views over the Med, the Var simply overflows with magnificent backdrops for a tip-top trek.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/a-cheval/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/a-cheval/)



Photo: Chevauchée dans le massif des Maures - Credit: © Var Tourisme / Nicolas Lacroix



## Golfing: see you at the 19<sup>th</sup>!

The Var is a magnificent playground for golfers and you can prolong the experience with a delicious choice of après-golf activities. So see you at the 19<sup>th</sup> hole! The area benefits from a truly impressive choice of courses on all types of terrain, with layouts designed by such renowned international architects as Pete Dye & son, Dave Thomas, Donal Harradine, Trent Jones Sr and Michel Gayon, offering golfers infinite changes of scenery and exciting combinations: Golf & Spa, Golf & Wine, Golf & Lifestyle, etc.

Try out your swing against a backdrop of azure-blue Mediterranean waters in Sainte-Maxime before savouring a refined meal at a star-rated table or celebrate a birdie on beautiful Golf de Frégate with a glass of fine wine at the vineyards of Bandol... Cheers!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/golf/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/golf/)

### Provence Golf Pass

Designed for visiting licensed golfers from outside the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, the Provence Golf Pass encourages players to try out a wide variety of courses from the Mediterranean to the Southern Alps – an ideal way to get your fill of golf while enjoying gorgeous scenery and a dip into our unbeatable lifestyle.

Including 3 or 5 green fees sold at a set price, the Provence Golf Pass opens the doors to 19 regional golf courses, including 7 in the Var.

### Côte d'Azur Golf Pass

Initiated by the Grasse Tourist Office, Côte d'Azur Regional Council and a network of certified partners, the Côte d'Azur Golf Pass is a made-to-measure pass offering a choice of two or four 9 or 18-hole courses. It features 9 Var-based courses.

## A YEAR-ROUND GOLFING DESTINATION!

- > 13 x 18-hole courses
- > 4 x 9-hole courses
- > 3 drive ranges with compact courses or practise greens
- > 2 chains: Blue Green, Open Golf Club

**Fun facts:** Founded in 1895, "Golf de Valescure" is the Var's oldest golf course and the 5<sup>th</sup> oldest course in France. (Architect Harry Colt)

## JUMP IN!

**Immerse yourself in a holiday filled with nautical pleasures and surf on a wave of countless possibilities! Whether your preference goes to salt or freshwater, the Var has a host of surprises in store to quench your thirst!**

### Freshwater

The Var is generously laced with lakes and rivers that have carved out its characteristic face. The sublime landscapes of the Verdon or Argens are a genuine paradise for a relaxing waterside holiday. Opt for an electric boat ride on Sainte-Croix lake, fun pedalo tour of Saint-Cassien lake, or canoe trip down the Argens or Verdon rivers – a wonderfully peaceful way to explore the area's shores, silent creeks, caves hollowed into the limestone and hilltop villages perched along the way. Our freshwater havens are also home to many French Fishing Federation sites, where novices and seasoned fishermen alike can enjoy a spot of trout or pike fishing.

### KICK OFF THE YEAR IN STYLE!

Take a dip on January 1<sup>st</sup>!

#### 2017-2018 meetings:

- > **Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer:** January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 at 10.30 a.m., Plage des Lecques
- > **La Seyne-sur-Mer:** December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 11 a.m., Plage des Sablettes (on-site registration from 10 a.m.)
- > **Toulon:** January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 at 11 a.m., Plages du Mourillon (festivities from 10.30 a.m.)
- > **Carqueiranne:** January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 at 11 a.m., Plage du Pradon
- > **Bormes-les-Mimosas:** January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 at 3 p.m., Plage de la Favière
- > **Sainte-Maxime:** December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 at 11 a.m., Plage du Centre-Ville
- > **Saint Raphaël - Agay:** December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at noon, Plage d'Agay

### Saltwater

As you might imagine, the Var's choice of nautical activities is as diverse as the coast itself – there truly is something here for every age and taste, whatever the season! Whether you're here for fun, thrills or just to enjoy the scenery, the choice is endless: the snorkelling trail from Portissol to Sanary – a genuine bonanza of magnificent Mediterranean fish –, sunset over the sea on a stand-up paddle board, introduction to sea kayaking, flyboard backflips, jet ski, waterskiing, tow tube or easy-going pedalo

If you're seeking thrills and spills, the Mistral wind will become your best friend here: Almanarre beach is a mythical international wind and kite surfing spot and the area is home to a plethora of sailing schools inviting you to hop on board a sailboat, sailing dinghy or catamaran.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/autour-de-leau/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/autour-de-leau/)

Scuba diving is without a doubt one of the Var's star leisure activities; the area is internationally acclaimed for its magnificent dive sites, astonishing sea beds where marine flora and fauna abound in a preserved environment dotted with ancient wrecks and exceptional weather conditions, offering divers access to our 3 main dive sites all year round! Not forgetting exceptional infrastructures and amenities, top-quality clubs and instruction and a variety of snorkelling trails. Yes, the Var is a stellar choice for diving fans, whether you prefer to dabble on the surface or plunge into the depths.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/autour-de-leau/plongee/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/autour-de-leau/plongee/)

### DIVING IN THE VAR

#### 28 dive sites

3 main areas:

- > Les Embiez and Cap Sicié
- > Hyères islands and Port Cros National Park
- > Bay of Cavalaire, Saint-Raphaël and Cap Dramont.



Photo: Plage des îles d'Hyères - Credit : © Var Tourisme / Hyères Tourisme

## UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

**Whether you're here to beat the competition or simply looking for an adrenalin shot, the Var is also a haven for adventure and extreme sports lovers. So, up for the challenge?!**

Test your limits with the many challenges featured all year round in the Var's exciting sports diary. The "Verdon Canyon Challenge", "Ultra Trail Mont-Blanc", "Nature Man Var" triathlon and new "Marathon du Golfe de Saint-Tropez" promise some fine performances.

### Dizzy pleasures

Concentration, agility, flexibility and endurance are the keywords for these exciting sports guaranteed to take you sky-high. The Var is home to many breathtaking views but beware, you'll need to pluck up courage to earn them!

Our incomparable experiences include abseiling on the orange-yellow limestone routes of Vallon Sourn, climbing on the flaming red cliff faces of Cap Dramont in the Estérel hills, bungee jumping from Artuby bridge and treetop adventure courses. Magic memories guaranteed!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/toutes-les-activites-nature/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/terre-et-nature/toutes-les-activites-nature/)

### Head in the clouds

What could be better than a bird's eye view over this immense expanse of land between sea and mountain?

Opt for a guided tour of the Var in an ultralight, gliding in Fayence, or an introduction to paragliding - our airborne adventures promise to give you wings!

### AERIAL SPORTS IN THE VAR

The Var's excellent meteorological conditions make it ideal for aerial sports. The area offers:

> **6 paragliding sites**

> **10 microlight sites**

> **2 international gliding centres:** Fayence-Tourette (reputed for its thermals) and Vinon-sur-Verdon







Photo: Plage de La Croix Valmer - Credit: © Var Tourisme / Olivier Simon/ LCI

## DAYDREAMING

**Holidays are all about simply taking time too. Time to look, soak in, share, let go and revel in a new lifestyle!**

Step out, step off the beaten track, stroll along the lanes, soak up the sun on the beaches, settle down on the rocks and savour the charm of these welcoming landscapes

### Sites & Panoramas

Among its many seductive surprises, sure to capture the heart of every wanderer and traveller avid for new experiences, the Var is home to some of the most stunning views you'll find anywhere: the awe-inspiring Mont Lachens (the "rooftop of the Var") rising to 1,715 metres and boasting 360° views, Sainte-Baume hill range, Malmont hill in Draguignan, Col du Canadel in the Maures hills, the summits of the Estérel hills and Bargème, a tiny village perched in the skies of the Haut Var area. Don't miss Notre Dame du Mai chapel nestling in Janas forest in Six-Fours-les-Plages, Place Saint Sébastien in Mons (in very fine weather, you can see all the way to Corsica!) and the impressive "Rocher de Roquebrune" rock. Last but not least, let's not forget Mont Faron and its sweeping vistas over the Bay of Toulon – "Europe's finest bay" in the words of Vauban. Even if the passage of time has remodelled the landscape, the view from the top is a must!

### Beaches

White sand? Grey sand? Or red pebbles? Sheltered, with amenities or naturist? Wild or "sun lounge-aperitif-restaurant" style? With car park or far from the madding crowds? Doing nothing isn't as simple as it sounds! The Var's abundant choice of beaches requires a little planning if you want to know the best place for a siesta, picnic, swim or stroll

From the idyllic scenery of L'Estagnol to the mythical Plage de Pampelonne, little cove of Port d'Alon to the golden sands of Sanary, Almanarre windsurfing spot in Hyères to Cavalières in Le Lavandou or La Pascade in Saint-Raphaël, it's not easy to take your pick!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/autour-de-leau/plages/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/autour-de-leau/plages/)

## NEW IN 2018

**Creation of France's 52nd Regional Nature Reserve.** The Sainte-Baume Regional Nature Reserve project launched in 2009 was approved by the French National Council for Nature Protection and French Minister for Ecology and Solidarity in October 2017.

**Marathon du Golfe de Saint-Tropez.** From March 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, the Gulf of Saint-Tropez will be the stage for one of the Var and Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur region's top sporting events: a 42-km marathon from Sainte-Maxime to Cavalaire via Grimaud, Cogolin, Gassin, Saint-Tropez, Ramatuelle and La Croix-Valmer.

Initiated by the Bay of Saint-Tropez Metropolitan Area and organized by Azur Sport Organisation, this first edition is a must for running aficionados!

Read more



[www.marathondugolfedesainttropez.com/fr/](http://www.marathondugolfedesainttropez.com/fr/)

## QUALITY FOCUS

- > **Equi'découverte:** Network created by the Var Area Council - 450 km of signposted bridle paths
- > **Label FFE Fédération Française d'Équitation (French Riding Federation):** 53 official clubs
- > **Fédération Française de Cyclisme (French Cycling Federation):** 1 national mountain biking site: "Hyères - Iles d'Or"
- > **Qualité Tourisme** golf courses
- > **1 Famille Plus** golf course
- > **Blue Flag:** 12 Var towns and 15 ports
- > **Remarkable gardens:** 12

## "#VISITVAR: LIVE AN INFINITE EXPERIENCE"

### Holidays for every age

Holidaying with grandchildren is a special moment you want to be both fun and unique! The Var offers a vast palette of recreation for all the family, just kids, or just you!

Get ready to take home some precious memories!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-famille/vacances-pour-petits-et-grands/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-famille/vacances-pour-petits-et-grands/)

### A land of surprises

How about a different kind of weekend break with all the family? Perfect for a birthday or party, getting away from routine and recharging your batteries, the Var offers a great choice of novel lodgings and thrilling activities to remember.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-famille/cap-sur-linattendu/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-famille/cap-sur-linattendu/)

### Underwater treasures

If you're a diving fan, you probably set a week by every year to discover a new diving destination. This year, choose the Var and live out an exceptional diving experience with our special "wrecks" programme around the Iles d'Or and Cavalaire. Take the plunge now!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-solo/merveilles-sous-marines-1/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-solo/merveilles-sous-marines-1/)

## DIARY

**Mimosalia:** It's time to go mellow yellow for the year's first major event celebrating the Var's emblematic flower - the Mimosa - and featuring a fascinating array of collector, rare and unusual plants. This new edition will be welcoming organic farmer and militant ecologist Pierre Rabhi, founder of the Colibris movement, who will be introducing the public to agroecology. A new approach to gardening and nature, with expert advice, various activities for children and adults, 80 exhibitors and a very fragrant, festive atmosphere.

January 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>,  
2018 in  
Bormes-les-  
Mimosas

Bormes-  
les-Mimosas:  
February 25<sup>th</sup>,  
2018

### Mimosa Fairs

Sainte-Maxime:  
February 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>,  
2018

Tanneron:  
February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

### Festival Galathéa in Hyères

March 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>,  
2018

### Fêtes de saison du Domaine du Rayol

At every change  
of season

### Natureman Var

October 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>,  
2018

### Festival de la plongée du Var (Var Diving Festival)

September and  
October

Photo: Plage de Saint Cyr sur Mer - Credit : ©Var Tourisme / Noé Interactive





**VISITVAR**

Provence - Côte d'Azur



# THE VAR, **HISTORY IN MOTION**

# THE VAR, HISTORY IN MOTION

THROWING BRIDGES BETWEEN ART AND HISTORY, TODAY AND YESTERDAY, THE VAR IS MARKED BY THE PASSAGE OF THE MANY ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS WHO HAVE CARVED OUT ITS DESTINY. YOU WILL LOVE DISCOVERING OUR TRADITIONS, SECRETS AND HERITAGE CELEBRATIONS, TRAVELLING BACK IN TIME AT A BAROQUE CONCERT IN A ROMANESQUE ABBEY, ADMIRING THE AVANT-GARDE DECOR OF A VILLA OVERLOOKING THE SEA AND WRITING YOUR OWN CHAPTER IN THE VAR'S MAGNIFICENT HISTORY.

## REMEMBRANCE

**Many artists, scientists and patrons have crossed paths here over the centuries. A land of hospitality and shelter, the Var pays homage to the talented men and women at the origin of our buzzing cultural life.**

Countless famous figures have lived in and loved the Var: the German intellectuals that took shelter in Sanary with Thomas Mann, Var-born poet Jean Aicard, author of the romantic adventures of Maurin des Maures, who now has his own museum in La Garde, Gérard Philipe, whose grave can be visited in Ramatuelle, Jean Cocteau who stayed in Toulon, Aldous Huxley, who wrote Brave New World at La Gorguette in Sanary and the living legends of today in Saint-Tropez the list is simply too long to write!

## Portraits

### Paul Ricard

Paul Ricard was fired with a passion for creation. This master businessman founded a company with a very avant-garde social policy, invented global communication and hoisted the drink named after him to world leader.

A visionary and humanist, he invented the notion of corporate patronage. He created exhibition spaces to promote young artists, while his love of nature and the sea led him collaborate with Alain Bombard and sponsor Alain Colas and Éric Tabarly.

Three of his firms set up ambitious projects in the Var, contributing to the destination's attractiveness: new facilities on Ile de Bendor island in Bandol, the port and oceanographic institute on Ile des Embiez and the prestigious race track located in Le Castellet, hitting the headlines this year with the return of the French Formula 1 Grand Prix in 2018.

## A FEW FACTS



17 "Musées de France",  
1 national museum, total of over 80 museums

2 towns and 1 area bearing  
the "Town of Art & History" label

4 villages awarded the  
"France's Most Beautiful Villages" label

340 historic monuments.

Photo: Le château d'Entrecasteaux - Credit: © Var Tourisme / Pascale Fluchère



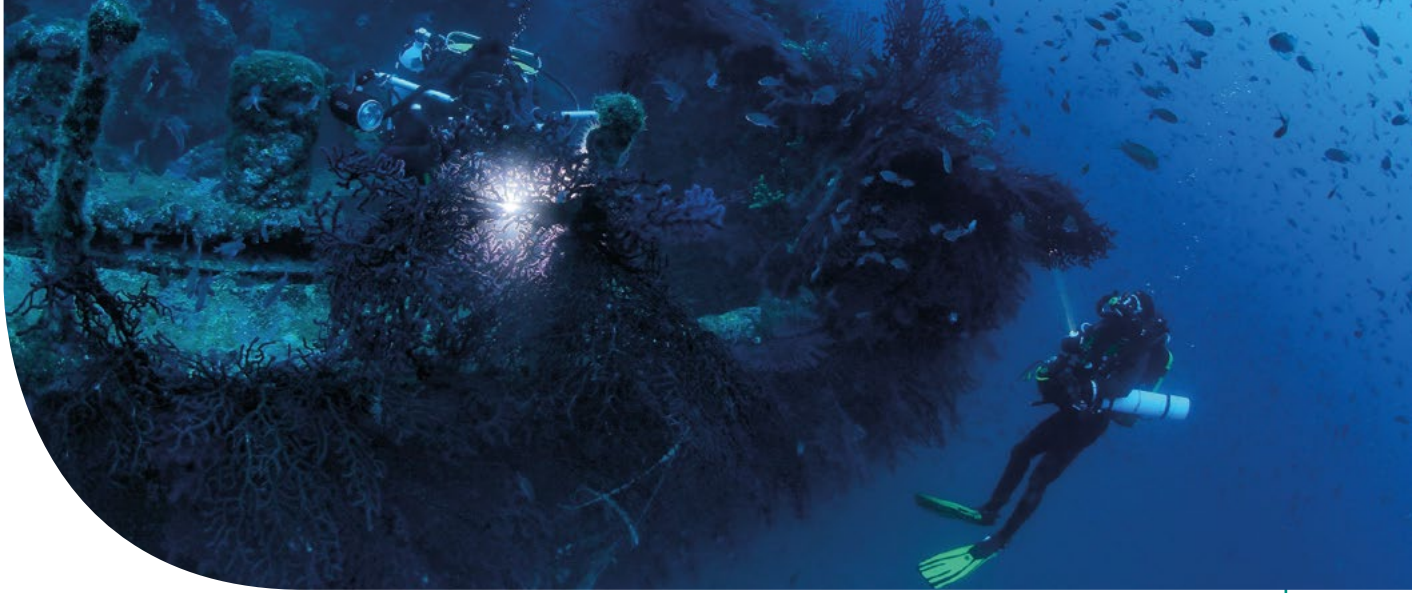


Photo: Plongée sur une épave - Credit : © Var Tourisme / Nicolas Barraqué

### Captain Cousteau

Is it really surprising that the emblematic Jacques-Yves Cousteau elected the Var coast – a scuba diving paradise – as his place of residence? The famous oceanographer spent part of his life at his villa "Le Baobab" in Sanary, now the home of his son Jean-Michel Cousteau. In 1942, the world-famed Captain shot the first underwater film (18 minutes at a depth of 18 metres!) on Ile des Embiez, with his friends P. Tailleux and F. Dumas, fondly known as the "Les Mousquemers". The work of this impassioned trio can be admired today at the Frédéric Dumas museum.

#### Read more



[www.sanarysurmer.com/Decouvrir-la-ville/La-Mer/Cite-historique-de-la-plongee/Les-Mousquemers](http://www.sanarysurmer.com/Decouvrir-la-ville/La-Mer/Cite-historique-de-la-plongee/Les-Mousquemers)

### Max Ernst

The creator of the strange bird "Loplop" finally came to rest on planet Seillans in the Var area.

With over 100 lithographs, etchings and engravings by Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning, this collection retraces the life of the couple in Seillans from 1964 to 1976. Acclaimed as one of the greatest representatives of the Surrealist movement, Max Ernst finished his life and work in the quiet setting of this pretty hilltop village. You can admire his famous bronze statue "Le Génie de la Bastille" on Place de la République - the village square so dear to him.

#### Read more



[www.seillans.fr/pageLibre00011dd2.aspx](http://www.seillans.fr/pageLibre00011dd2.aspx)

### Allied Landings

The collective memory of the 20th century's most painful events continues to live on, all the way down to the deepest depths of the sea. The scuttling of the French fleet on November 27th, 1942 and Allied Landings of August 15th, 1944 on the beaches set below the Maures hills and in Saint Raphaël, are unforgettable chapters in the history of WWII.

Now celebrated for their sea and sun, the beaches of Le Lavandou, Rayol-Canadel, Cavalaire, Ramatuelle, Sainte-Maxime and Saint-Raphaël still echo to the sound of American infantrymen and tanks, shouldered by the Var's fervent Resistants.

An absolute must for every history lover keen to understand this little-known event, the "Mémorial du Débarquement et de la Libération de Provence" allied landings museum in Toulon, inaugurated in 1964 by General de Gaulle, has just been fully refurbished.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/decouvrir/au-fil-du-temps/debarquement-de-provence/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/decouvrir/au-fil-du-temps/debarquement-de-provence/)

### THE 6 ALLIED LANDINGS BEACHES

- > Plage du Canadel
- > Plage de Cavalaire
- > Plage de Pampelonne
- > Plage de la Nartelle
- > Plage du Dramont

## A land of tradition

### Christmas traditions

The Var's identity is anchored in a solid foundation of still-thriving traditions handed down by our ancestors. Christmas in Provence is certainly one of the most colourful experiences on the calendar.

The celebrations kick off on December 4<sup>th</sup>, when Saint Barbara's wheat is planted. The next day, it's time to head to the nativity plays in the streets of certain villages, visit the finest crib scenes, purchase "santon" figurines from the local market stalls, prepare the traditional three white tablecloths, "gros souper" Christmas Eve dinner and traditional 13 desserts. The winter nights are lit up with pretty illuminations and heritage celebrations throughout the Var.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/DIARY/temps-forts/noel-en-provence/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/DIARY/temps-forts/noel-en-provence/)

## Trends

### Myths and icons

A bronze sculpture of Brigitte Bardot signed by Milo Manara was installed in front of the "Musée de la Gendarmerie et du Cinéma" film museum at the entrance to Saint-Tropez in October 2017. This graciously curvy naked silhouette offers a fine tribute to the artist who won the world's heart in Roger Vadim's mythical film "And God Created Woman", hoisting Saint-Tropez and its stars (including Jean-Louis Trintignant) to eternal fame...

This little fishing port has managed to cultivate a reputation for bling, luxe, chic and film fame while maintaining its intrinsically Provençal character. And the town is getting ready to unveil some new talents with the creation of a brand-new movie meeting, "Les nouvelles étoiles du Cinéma": an exciting addition to the area's rich film history you can learn all about with the new Route du Cinéma Movie Route, located around the Gulf of Saint-Tropez.

#### Read more



[www.golfe-saint-tropez-information.fr/fr/les-routes-du-cinema/les-films-daujourd'hui](http://www.golfe-saint-tropez-information.fr/fr/les-routes-du-cinema/les-films-daujourd'hui)

### Vintage Var

Toulon's city centre is currently undergoing a facelift with the arrival of the very original "Rue des Arts". The city's former Rue Pierre Sépard has enjoyed a total makeover for the pleasure of both local inhabitants and tourists, who can now enjoy this gorgeous new space dedicated to art, lifestyle and artistic creation. The street is home to concept stores, art galleries, artist and designer studios, designer and craft boutiques and bars, offering a buzzing atmosphere by day and by night. Don't miss it if you're seeking an offbeat shopping experience or looking for trendy pieces. A contemporary treat, combining chic and charm.

#### Read more



[www.ruedesarts.fr/](http://www.ruedesarts.fr/)

Photo: Musée du cinéma à Saint Tropez • Credit: © Var Tourisme / JL Chaix ville de Saint Tropez





Photo: Exposition à la Villa Noailles - Hyères - Credit : © Var Tourisme / Lothaire Hucki

## DISCOVER

**The Var's heritage dates back many centuries! From the days of Ancient Greece to the contemporary era, testimonials to Europe's great architectural, societal and religious movements are everywhere to be seen here!**

### Sites and Monuments

#### Chateaux & Forts

The Var is home to a host of must-see sites still standing witness to the civilian architecture and defence systems erected here since the Middle Ages, including many forts and chateaux dating from various eras and harbouring a rich and tempestuous history...

Standing over Vallée de la Bresque, Château d'Entrecasteaux is bathed in a unique atmosphere; its elegant box tree beds stand out amid the spontaneous beauty of the surrounding landscapes. Also situated in the Provence Verte area, Château de la Verdrière was largely-redesigned in the 18th century and is now one of Provence's most beautiful stately homes.

In addition to the many forts set around the Bay of Toulon or on the Iles d'Or islands off the coast of Hyères, don't miss a visit to Brégançon Fort on the coast of Bormes-les-Mimosas; in addition to its strategic location, this fort is now the official residence of the French President.

#### Religious heritage

The Var's religious medieval architecture includes several Romanesque masterpieces, such as Thoronet Abbey: a jewel of Cistercian art with its sober, powerful silhouette, the Episcopal buildings in Fréjus and La Celle Abbey, now home to an arts centre. The Basilica in Saint-Maximin – Provence's largest Gothic construction – and Chartreuse de la Verne are absolute musts too.

#### Religious sanctuaries in Provence Verte

The Provence Verte area is home to three places of pilgrimage bearing the "Sanctuaires en France" label:

Sainte Marie-Madeleine Basilica in Saint Maximin, Notre-Dame de Grâces Sanctuary in Cotignac and Saint Mary Magdalene's Grotto in Plan d'Aups.

Provence Verte is a member of the "Villes Sanctuaires en France" association, committed to bringing together French tourism and religious sanctuary representatives. The association was also at the origin of ATOUT FRANCE's "Tourism & Spirituality" working group, which aims to promote its members worldwide.

#### Read more



[www.la-provence-verte.net/decouvrir/index-villes-sanctuaires.php](http://www.la-provence-verte.net/decouvrir/index-villes-sanctuaires.php)

Photo: Exposition à l'Abbaye de la Celle - Credit : © Var Tourisme / Nicolas Lacroix





## "Villages of Character" & "France's Most Beautiful Villages"

From the green waters of the Verdon to the azure waves of the Med, the Var's landscapes rise and fall in a maze of hills and mounts, where men sought welcome shelter in bygone days. The area is home to a myriad of little villages – ancient medieval strongholds – perched on rocky outcrops, crouching in valleys, nestling at the foot of cliffs and clinging to the hillsides...

### Villages

The Var's ancient villages all have their own unique character. A treasure trove of hushed lanes, porches, steep climbs, whispering fountains and elegant bell towers clasp singing bells, they tell a different story and offer a different experience every time. Their charm is truly endless in every season, whether in the dazzling summer sunshine or soft light of autumn! Discover the rooftops of Cotignac from its Troglodyte caves carved into volcanic rock, gaze down on gardens lined with hackberry trees in Gassin, revel in our genteel lifestyle on the shaded squares of La Cadière d'Azur, Le Castellet and Bormes, enjoy daydreaming in the paved lanes of Seillans, or contemplate Provence from the heights of Tourtour...

The originality of these beautiful sites lies in their magnificently

varied vistas, ancient chapels, churches, châteaux, food markets and many unusual little museums, such as the mechanical data processing museum in Bargemon.

### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/plus-beaux-villages/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/plus-beaux-villages/)

### Popular Heritage

The identity of the local landscapes is also marked by their rural heritage, in particular the area's famous "restanques". These traditional dry stone walls, the fruit of monumental work by farmers to develop crops grown on terraces, adorn and carve out the local relief from the coast to the hinterland.

The exceptional concentration of 21 ice wells in the Sainte-Baume hills – another unique specificity of the Var – stands witness to a major industry that survived until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/decouvrir/au-fil-du-temps/petit-patrimoine/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/decouvrir/au-fil-du-temps/petit-patrimoine/)

## TOURING

**The Var offers a truly fabulous choice of tours for all ages and tastes. Our museums, collections, art centres, exhibition venues and interpretation centres will delight curiosity-seekers and offer welcome shelter from the summer heat and winter rain!**

### Museums and exhibitions

From academic hubs to contemporary, interactive layouts, the Var's museums offer an eclectic choice of excursions catering to every interest and include novel tours, biographical collections, heritage sites and historic frescoes... A multitude of fun and captivating ways to explore the pathways of science and art.

**Saint-Tropez alone is home to 4 museums**, including the Maritime History Museum set inside the Citadel overlooking the port: one of the Var's foremost tourist attractions welcoming over 100,000 visitors every year! A success owed to the gripping story of the life of sailors and the glorious past of this Mediterranean port. Don't miss the town's "Musée de la Gendarmerie et du Cinéma de Saint-Tropez": a nod to Louis de Funès' hilarious film saga and a fitting introduction to the

birth of cinema and its movie stars in Saint-Tropez. "Musée de l'Annonciade" on the port showcases a superb collection of Fauvism, Nabi and Pointillist works conjuring up memories of Paul Signac's stay in the town with his artist friends and offering a fine tribute to Provence's envied quality of light. Also on the colour theme, the "Maison des Papillons" butterfly museum is another original and surprising feature of the town.

**"Musée National de la Marine" (National Naval Museum) in Toulon.** A living tribute to the town's naval base, this museum retraces the history of the French Navy and Toulon's military port – the Mediterranean's largest! The museum also hosts a range of enriching cultural activities on the naval theme.

### EXHIBITION

Musée de la Marine, Toulon

**July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018:**  
**"Chanouga et l'Aborigène Blanc"**



Photo: Musée des Gueules Rouges à Tourves • Credit : © Var Tourisme / Davil Latour

### "Musée des Gueules Rouges" in Tourves

For many years, the Var occupied poll position in the aluminium industry thanks to its vast bauxite deposits. The extraction of this mineral, coveted in the last century for its alumina content, covered the faces of the miners with red dust. Nicknamed the "Red Faces", the miners became the symbol of a moving story that forged both human lives and the natural landscapes. The museum offers a precious tribute to this era, together with a fascinating insight into its geological, technical and scientific facets.

### "Musée Terra Rossa" in Salernes

This architectural ceramics museum in Salernes pays tribute to a town famed for its magnificent traditional earthenware and in particular the area's beautiful "tomette" hexagonal red floor tiles.

Spanning over 3,000 m<sup>2</sup>, this magnificent museum was designed by acclaimed contemporary architect and designer Jean Michel Wilmotte inside an ancient tile factory. Terra Rossa features a variety of permanent exhibitions: archaeology, including Europe's oldest ceramics dating back 7,000 years and an exceptional collection entitled "Le Monde Carré" (Square World) brought together by Benoît Faÿ, with over 2,000 decorated tiles manufactured between the Middle Ages and 20th century. Two showrooms present current creations by local factories and potters, showcasing the creative potential of this time-honoured material.

### Musée des Troupes de Marines in Fréjus

History, Science & Technology, military art and traditions and human adventures. The collections, archives and iconographic documents on show at the Naval Troops Museum illustrate the captivating history of France's colonial and naval troops, from the Richelieu era to current day.

## EXHIBITIONS – HDA VAR

- > October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018:  
**"Moebius"**
- > February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018.  
**"Des villes et des hommes"**, featuring the collection of Florence and Damien Bachelot.
- > July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018:  
**"Chanouga et l'Aborigène Blanc"**

### "Musée de l'Artillerie" in Draguignan

Basking in a brand-new layout designed by architect Rudy Ricciotti, this museum retraces the history of French artillery from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to current day and features magnificent collections of weaponry and uniforms.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/musees/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/musees/)

## Modern art centres and galleries

With its tireless creativity and innovative spirit, the Var offers modern art lovers endless touring ideas, with a host of exciting contemporary invitations in every town and village.

### Art Centres

**Villa Noailles in Hyères.** A stunning illustration of 1920's modern architecture, designed by Mallet Stevens, this avant-garde villa was awarded the unique "National Arts Centre" label in Spring 2017. Proudly upholding the spirit of its creators, Villa Noailles remains resolutely committed to art in every shape and form. This dynamic meeting place is the venue for several festivals throughout the year.

Read more



[www.villanoailles-hyeres.com/festival-2018/](http://www.villanoailles-hyeres.com/festival-2018/)

**Centre d'Art Contemporain de Châteauvert.** Opened in 2014, this contemporary arts centre is set in luxuriant green surroundings in the Provence Verte area and features a 650 m<sup>2</sup> exhibition space and sculpture garden.

Read more



[www.facebook.com/cac.chateauvert/](https://www.facebook.com/cac.chateauvert/)

**HDA Var:** l'Hôtel Départemental des Arts – Centre d'Art du Var in Toulon. This hub of modern art offers an exciting programme, committed to mirroring the issues of contemporary society.

Read more



[www.hda.var.fr/](http://www.hda.var.fr/)

### Art Galleries

You'll also find art galleries around every corner in the Var. Throwing bridges between art and nature, these talent-spotters can even be found in the area's remotest areas. Magical encounters await you along our country lanes, in the heart of the vines and in winding village streets ...

### Galerie le Hangart

Located in Draguignan, this ambitious gallery gives centre stage to up-and-coming artists and offers an exciting year-round permanent exhibition, together with a space dedicated to art rentals for private individuals and businesses!

### Galerie Cravéro

Part of Le Pradet's project to boost the town's cultural dynamism, this delightful and very active municipal gallery benefits from the magnificent natural setting of Parc Cravéro: a beautiful park filled with veteran vegetation, combining art with a pleasurable stroll.

### Galerie Beddington Fine Art

Set inside an impressive 18th-century mansion house on the ramparts of Bargemon, this gallery, run by Guy and Michèle Beddington since 2000, offers a stunning backdrop to an eclectic pick of works from the world over. Their sculpture garden, adorning a seven-hectare olive grove, can be visited by appointment throughout the year.

Photo: Au cœur des vignes - Flassans sur Issole - Credit: © Var Tourisme / Noé Interactive / JB David





## PARTY TIME!

**When summer arrives in the land of chirping cicadas, we know it's time to get singing too! Our natural scenery offers the finest of concert halls and many summer festivals take place under the stars. But of course, our typical southern party spirit means the Var offers a tempting line-up well beyond the summer season!**

### Travel the Var to the sound of music

Every year, the Var vibrates to the uplifting sounds of Jazz, for the greatest pleasure of aficionados from the world over. From Brignoles to Porquerolles and the Verdon to Ramatuelle, from the greatest classics to high-flying impros, a flurry of festivals vie for top place on the talent podium, while impassioned musicians cross paths in La Seyne-sur-Mer all the way into November at the Fort Napoléon Jazz Club.

Enthusiastic audiences get together every year to celebrate an out-of-the-ordinary musical holiday in style, with events such as the "Joutes Musicales de Correns" - a festival upheld for over 20 years by "Le Chantier" Music Creation Centre in the Provence Verte area - inviting visitors to discover a host of talents from around the globe.

Taking place in 2018, the 28<sup>th</sup> "Rencontres Internationales du Thoronet" is a world-renowned medieval music festival welcoming ever-bigger audiences every year: the programme has now spread its wings and features concert venues throughout the Var.

And there are plenty more surprises in store for music lovers, such as Toulon's "Music Festival Classics and Symphony Orchestras" at the city's Opera House, or in Fayence, the venue for the "Musique en Pays de Fayence" international string quartet festival.

### A movie hub

The Var welcomes film directors and crews from all over globe and its locations are acclaimed worldwide - our natural scenery offers a magnificent open-air backdrop for film shoots.

Founded over 25 years ago, the Var Film Commission facilitates the work of producers and film crews and promotes the Var to both the national and international film and audiovisual industry.

Inspired by the United States, where film commissions are widespread, the Var Film Commission was formed in 1991 to respond to producers' special needs and simplify the movie-making process. It was the first of its kind in France.

Read more



[www.filmvar.com/](http://www.filmvar.com/)

## NEW IN 2018

### Château de la Verdère

After a series of refurbishment campaigns since 2003, Château de la Verdère is now a model of conservation, spanning 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> of buildings, with no less than 365 doors and windows! The Château's magnificent former interior mouldings have now been restored with infinite finesse and the site will be open to the public from summer 2018.

Open from August 1<sup>st</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (from March 15<sup>th</sup> for groups).

### The New Mont Faron Memorial in Toulon: commemorating the Allied Landings and Liberation of Provence

Entirely renovated in 2016 and re-opened to the public in March 2017, this museum is one of the French Defence Ministry's 9 official memorial sites, featuring the latest historical research combined with cutting-edge technology, allowing visitors to re-live the Allied Landings in Provence and events of Summer 1944. Set at the top of Mont Faron, it is also a great opportunity to lap up breathtaking, panoramic views over the Bay of Toulon. The famous Faron cable-car, inaugurated in 1959, now offers visitors attractive, updated cabins.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/decouvrir/au-fil-du-temps/debarquement-de-provence/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/decouvrir/au-fil-du-temps/debarquement-de-provence/)

### New "Musée du Garde Champêtre" in Bargemon

A museum entirely dedicated to the history of rural policemen and novel encounter with this now-extinct local figure who watched over our countryside in days gone by...

### Archistoire - A New App for Touring Toulon

Launched in September 2017 by the CAUE (Var Architecture, Town Planning and Environmental Council) this new, bilingual app is a great way to explore the city. Focusing on architecture and enriched with augmented reality technology, "Archistoire" leads visitors in the footsteps of Toulon's captivating heritage (smartphone app).

Read more



[www.archistoire.com/](http://www.archistoire.com/)

## QUALITY COMMITMENT

- > Villages de caractère du Var (Var Villages of Character): 11
- > Les plus Beaux Villages de France (France's Most Beautiful Villages): 4





## "#VISITVAR : LIVE AN INFINITE EXPERIENCE"

### Soothing Provence

Relax and unwind Var-style for a whole week – there's nothing like it for getting back on top of the world! Enjoy a romantic "nature & lifestyle" week with your loved one, exploring the hilltop villages of the Pays de Fayence area, drinking in the local heritage and savouring relaxing strolls.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/douceurs-provencales/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/douceurs-provencales/)

### Weekend with friends in Saint-Tropez

Don't miss the magnificent "Voiles de Saint-Tropez" regatta in October: a breathtaking show of sumptuous sailboats topped with a festive atmosphere on the port and in the streets of Saint-Tropez. And if you want to get away from the hubbub, why not opt for a soothing wander along the coastal footpath. A tempting programme indeed!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/entre-amis/week-end-entre-amis-a-saint-tropez/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/entre-amis/week-end-entre-amis-a-saint-tropez/)

### "Les Joutes Musicales de Printemps" in Correns

A musical weekend with friends before the summer holidays? Sounds like a smart idea! Jump in – the Var's many music festivals are always fun and enriching!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/entre-amis/les-joutes-musicales-de-printemps-a-correns/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/entre-amis/les-joutes-musicales-de-printemps-a-correns/)

## DIARY

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Fêtes de la Lumière et de Noël (Christmas celebrations)</b> in Saint Raphaël   | December 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2017 - January 7 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 |
| <b>Les Tripettes de Barjols (heritage celebration)</b>  | January 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2018                                  |
| <b>Festival international du film maritime d'exploration et d'environnement (International Maritime Film Festival)</b>                                      | February 1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2018                 |
| <b>Festival International de Mode et de Photographie (International Fashion &amp; Photography Festival)</b>   | April 26 <sup>th</sup> and 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2018               |
| <b>Design Parade</b>  | June to September 2018   |
| <b>Classiques du Festival de Musique &amp; Concerts Symphoniques de l'Opéra (Music festival classics and symphony orchestras)</b> at the Toulon Opera House | September 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2017-May 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2018.   |
| <b>Musique en Pays de Fayence (International string quartet festival)</b>   | Late September   |
| <b>Noël-Santons (Nativity figurine fair)</b> at the Couvent Royal   | December 2018  |

Photo: Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez - Credit: © Var Tourisme / John Henri Walz





**VISITVAR**

Provence - Côte d'Azur



# THE VAR, GOURMET & GENEROUS



# THE VAR, GOURMET & GENEROUS

A SUNNY PLACE MAKES SUNNY FOOD!  
THE FAVOURS OF OUR CLIMATE  
GO ALL THE WAY TO THE PLATE,  
OVERFLOWING WITH THE PERFUMES  
OF PROVENCE AND MEDITERRANEAN  
SEA SPRAY...

**The Var's traditional cuisine is a genuine voyage through olive groves, vineyards, orchards, fig orchards and chestnut woods. It offers up an infinite variety of sun-ripened fruit & vegetables, translucent green olive oils you can taste at the local mills, freshly-caught fish on the quaysides, aromatic herbs and flowers. Voilà, the Var is all that and more - a delicious menu for your holiday!**

## A FEW FACTS



96 towns host a food market at least once a week

"Huile d'olive de Provence" AOC olive oil

"Figue de Solliès" AOC figs -  
75% of national production,  
i.e. 2,500 metric tons per year!

"Miel de Provence" Protected Geographical Indication

France's leading fig producer

France's leading honey producer

France's 3rd leading truffle producer

## SAVOUR

Southern cuisine is a genuine lifestyle! Succumb to temptation, devour with your eyes, breathe in the fragrances and savour to the full as you contemplate the sunset over the sea or sunlight peeking through the leaves of a bower. And as every true connoisseur knows, the siesta is all part of the programme!

### Star-rated tables

The fruit of a generous soil, our local produce offers a symphony of flavours, directed by our maestro cooks. The Var is home to many inspired chefs, all interpreting these gifts of nature in their own way, honouring the local terroir and revisiting tradition with brio for the greatest pleasure of gourmets.

The Var is home to many restaurants and eateries referenced in major food guides such as the Michelin and Gault & Millau, and their track record stands witness to the Var's gastronomic excellence (See Quality insert). The prestigious "Maîtres Restaurateurs" network is also very present in the Var, with 60 establishments reflecting the profession's commitment to fresh, seasonal and faultless-quality cuisine.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/a-table/restaurants/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/a-table/restaurants/)

Photo: Restanques et oliviers - Credit: © Var Tourisme / LCI





Photo: Produit du terroir - Figuier • Credit : © Var Tourisme / Nicolas Lacroix

## Specialities

Provence's dishes are always sprinkled with the characteristic accent of the South. In and around the Var, the local cuisine comes in a myriad of sun-drenched recipes: Provencal stew, grilled fish, Soupe au Pistou, Aioli, Anchoïade, Ratatouille and Artichoke Barigoule. Tradition continues to stand guard over each area's heritage and the Var has its own legacy of delicious specialities!

For example, Toulon's "Cade" is called "Socca" in Nice and "Panisses" in Marseille! This chickpea pancake seasoned with salt and pepper (or sugar) and baked in the oven is still sold at the local markets, just as it was in olden times. Savour it hot as you roam the market stalls in Toulon or Sanary, the atmosphere makes all the difference!

Our "Tarte Tropézienne" is a genuine institution in the food world. And that's no exaggeration! It is the story of an encounter between two delicious creams and a moist sponge in Saint-Tropez in 1955 that gave birth to a unique dessert (now patented), an emblematic, three-storey store with a restaurant and an online sales network... In short, an empire!

## "Levardesgastromomes.com"

"Le Var des gastronomes, les bonnes tables du département du Var" is a precious little tool that allows you to hunt down a restaurant, chef or list of top addresses in every town in just a few clicks. But it's also a mine of smart information and advice on the Var's restaurants and gourmet addresses. A specialist in the latest news from the restaurant and gastronomy world, freelance journalist Marie Tabacchi heads up this blog with passion, promoting authentic, character-filled cuisine made with local produce and defending establishments whose dishes are home-made and high-quality. An unbeatable source of information if you're preparing a stay or seeking out a recipe to impress your friends, this flavourful site should definitely be in your favourites!

Read more



[www.levardesgastromomes.com](http://www.levardesgastromomes.com)

## MARKET SHOPPING

**Provence's cuisine is the natural expression of a land bathed in sunshine and swept by the Mistral wind and sea spray. Forming a bridge between the Mediterranean and Southern Alps, the Var cultivates its own unique culinary character – the fruit of a diverse soil and relief – with a profusion of colourful produce bedecking the local market stalls.**

Here's a short list of succulent, must-have ingredients.

### Local produce

#### Figs

This emblematic Mediterranean tree, anchored in the local landscapes and culture of Provence, has set up home in the Var. France's leading producer, the area accounts for over 70% of national fig production. Fig growing is especially predominant in the Vallée du Gapeau to the South-West of the Var thanks to a conducive geology and weather conditions: the town of Solliès-Pont was awarded the "Figue de Solliès" AOC label in 2011 for its delicious "Violette de Solliès" fig, unique in France.

## Olive oil

Olive groves are everywhere here on the terraced hillsides or down in the plains and are one of Provence's most endearing symbols. No less than 32 varieties of olive are grown in the Var, some of which, like the "Belgentiéroise" (a long, green olive with firm skin, excellent for cooking), can only be found here! Our infinite variety of flavourful olive oils are produced in 142 towns out of a total of 153!

Three out of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region's 5 AOC oils are grown in the Var: "Huile d'Olive de Provence", "Huile d'Olive de Haute-Provence" and "Huile d'Olive d'Aix en Provence", in recognition of the Var's high-quality and extremely diverse production.



### "Oliveraie départementale" in La Farlède

Home to veteran olive trees, some of which are over 650 years old and feature remarkably broad trunks, this domain is reminiscent of an exhibition of very ancient sculptures. Forged by winds and droughts, its trees offer a magnificent testimonial to history.

### Olive oil mills and farms

The Var is home to France's largest concentration of olive oil producers and mills, with 41 mills, including 25 cooperative and municipal mills. Although some mills are resolutely modern, others have remained traditional. Some offer guided tours of the mill and olive farm.

**Mill tours:** the ancient Partégal oil mill in La Farlède, Flayosquet mill in Flayosq, "Moulin de Callas" and its ancient oil mill, now a museum.

Many of our modern mills also offer fascinating guided tours, such as Domaine de Taurenne (including a tour of the olive farm) in Tourtour, the Gervasoni mill in Aups, Moulin du Haut Jasson in La Londe-les-Maures, Le Clos Saint-Martin in Roquebrune-sur-Argens and many more.

Lovers of Provençal history and traditions will enjoy the **Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires folk museum in Draguignan**, where you can learn all about olive growing and life in the Var in days gone by. The museum also features magnificent old mill equipment.

## Honey

Reputed throughout the world, our honeys are the fruit of the Var's unique botany and benefit from the "Miel de Provence" Protected Geographical Indication. They owe their unique aromas to our highly-diverse Mediterranean flora and, especially, the aromatic plants (over 200 varieties) that thrive on Provence's hard and arid soil.

Honey production depends entirely on flowering seasons, with rosemary honey from around the Sainte-Baume hills in early Spring, followed by white heather honey, then chestnut honey from the Maures hills, heralding summer and its river of lavender honey. Purple heather honey comes in Autumn, followed by an original little touch at the gateway to winter: arbutus honey produced in the Maures hills.

## Sweet chestnuts

The beautiful chestnut groves covering the hillsides of the Maures hills have been intensively farmed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century; at the time, chestnuts from the Maures were sold throughout France and even exported to Europe! Although this activity no longer sets the pace of life as it did in bygone days, it remains the Var's sole chestnut-producing area and has maintained its prestigious reputation.

Awarded the "Village of Character" label, Collobrières, capital of the Maures hills and unrivalled capital of the chestnut, celebrates its heritage every autumn along with every town and village in the vicinity - Gonfaron, La Garde-Freinet, Les Mayons and Pignans - with the "Fête de la Châtaigne" chestnut fair. Make way for roast chestnuts! But this fruit has more than one trick up its sleeve: candied, roasted, creamed or puréed (to name but a few), it remains one of our most emblematic products.

## Truffles

A genuine perfumed diamond, the truffle is a source of endless pleasure and enchantment. Its very special woody flavour is a delight to the palate. Most of our delicious "Tuber Melanosporum" black truffles grow in the Haut Var-Verdon area, home to many truffle growers, while Aups, considered as the truffle capital, proudly sports a "Maison de la Truffe" truffle centre and is the venue for a major truffle market during the harvesting season.

## Saffron

Saffron is obtained by extracting and drying the pistils of the "Crocus Sativus" plant. It is produced manually and requires rigorous work and an adapted climate. In short, it is the fruit of passion and sunshine! This red gold grows naturally in the Var and in autumn, the saffron fields in Sillans-la-Cascade, Trans-en-Provence, Bagnols-en-Forêt and Aups are tinted with purple.



Photo: Retour de la pêche • Credit : © Var Tourisme / Noé Interactive

### Spirulina

The seaweed of vitality and well-being! This blue micro-alga, grown in fresh water, is also part of the Var's palette of health foods. An ancient and once-forgotten product, it has now been hoisted back to its former prestigious status thanks to various campaigns promoting its many properties. "Spiruline de Fréjus" is now a trademark and intrinsic part of the Argens Valley's economic fabric.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourez/le-terroir-et-ses-produits/producteurs-produits-terroir/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourez/le-terroir-et-ses-produits/producteurs-produits-terroir/)

The Var is now home to 3 permanent "Marchés de Producteurs de Pays", located in Le Pradet, Toulon and Le Beausset. Three additional towns welcome farm markets in summer: Cuers, Lorgues and Les Salles-sur-Verdon.

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourez/le-terroir-et-ses-produits/producteurs-produits-terroir/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourez/le-terroir-et-ses-produits/producteurs-produits-terroir/)

### Markets, short channels and quality

The Var's treasure trove of home-grown produce abounds on the stalls of our legendary food markets, where elders, neighbours, regulars, tourists and, of course, producers rub shoulders! The protocol? Look, compare, natter and fill your wicker basket, before heading off for a coffee break

These delightful meeting places also encourage short distribution channels and are quality, local and organic-oriented: a trend that is now a prerequisite for our "Marchés des Producteurs de Pays" farm markets. These certified markets - genuine Gardens of Eden - were initiated by the locals Chambers of Agriculture in response to a strong drive to promote local farming and offer high-quality seasonal produce grown using environmentally-friendly techniques.

### Little fishing ports

What about the sea? The day's catch is an even shorter distribution channel! The Var is home to many small ports where you can watch the boats come in and see the fishermen setting up their still-wriggling stalls and shouting out the merits of their scorpion fish, sea bass, sea bream, porgy fish and sardines - a treat for strollers and cooks alike.

Many of the local fishing ports continue to celebrate the fishermen's patron saint on **Saint-Peter's Day in late June - early July**. In bygone days, the boats stayed at the quayside for 3 days during this celebration and it was a time when local fishermen repainted their boats, stretched out their nets... and enjoyed a game of boules! A traditional procession still crosses the local villages to the sea; a statue of the saint is placed in a decorated rowing boat and blessed with water and flowers. In the evening, an ancient wooden boat is often burnt, while traditional "pointu" fishing boats, festooned with lights for the occasion, parade along the coast.

## BON APPÉTIT!

**It doesn't take long to find out that understanding Provence's gastronomy isn't just about sitting down to eat. Food in Provence is a genuine experience!**

Gastronomy here is part and parcel of our lifestyle. That's why we encourage visitors to tour the local landscapes, meet with producers and chat with restaurateurs to work up an (educated) appetite! Gastronomy in the Var is a whole philosophy.

### Cookery classes

What better way to learn about Provence's culinary specialities than a hands-on experience?! Premium produce, endless fabulous markets and talented chefs – we have all the ingredients for a dream cookery class! You'll find plenty of classes on offer in the area, in particular L'Hostellerie Bérard, hosting Provençal cookery classes at its beautiful nearby "Bastide des Saveurs", Château de Berne, where you can become a chef for a day, or hosted by local women at Régusse village hall. Not forgetting the "Institut Gastronomie Riviera" in Seillans and restaurant La Colombe in Hyères.

### Recipes

Every cook agrees on this point: the main secret to a successful recipe is the quality of the produce! You just have to make the right choices. You don't need to be a star-rated chef to pull off a truffle brouillade, ratatouille, tapenade or anchoïade, or invite your friends round for a Soupe au Pistou or Aioli. And why not attempt a Fig Pistou or try your hand at the traditional "Souper de Noël" Christmas Eve dinner?

You'll find a great choice of typical Var recipes on our website!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/a-table/cote-cuisine/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/a-table/cote-cuisine/)

### "Bistrots de Pays", an ode to tradition

Head out to meet our local producers and bistro owners and savour the Var from the root to the tip! Our "Bistrots de Pays" network is an original concept designed to mobilize establishments located in rural areas. Visitors can push open the door to a bistro to get useful advice on local curiosities and culinary specialities, join in a musical event, or enjoy a story-telling evening. And of course, you'll always enjoy delicious food made with local produce there!

Photos: Cours de cuisine à La Cadière d'Azur • Credits: © Var Tourisme / Noé Interactive / JB David





Photo: Bienvenue chez les producteurs varois - Credit : © Var Tourisme / David Latour

## NEW IN 2018

### Opening of the 8<sup>th</sup> Bistrot de Pays

"La Merenda", a new "Bistrot de Pays" establishment in La Martre, opened its doors in June 2017. Professional restaurateur Pascal Fornarésio is strongly committed to the "Bistrots de Pays" charter and shares its values.

The local network is continuing its onward march in 2018, with various projects scheduled in the villages of Vins-sur-Caramy, Châteaudouble and La Bastide.

## "#VISITVAR: LIVE AN INFINITE EXPERIENCE"

### MICHELIN GUIDE

New star-rated eateries in 2017:

Le Jardin de Benjamin –Lorgues

L'Olivier - Bastide de Saint-Tropez

La Palmeraie - Chateau Valmer

### Swing & Lifestyle Week

If you're a golfing fan who enjoys romantic culinary adventures too, a golfing week in the Var is a must! On the programme: relaxing rounds of golf, tours of the local vineyards with Côtes de Provence grand cru tasting, spa treatments and Provençal cuisine.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/semaine-swing-et-art-de-vivre/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/semaine-swing-et-art-de-vivre/)

## QUALITY COMMITMENT

- > Michelin and Gault & Millau guides
- > "Maîtres Restaurateurs" establishments
- > "Bistrots de Pays" establishments: the Var is now home to 8 certified bistros
- > "Bienvenue à la Ferme"

"Bienvenue à la Ferme" is a national label based on 4 criteria:

Farm produce, local produce, farm accommodation and farm activities.

The Var is home to 41 producers and 8 tasting venues, auberges and function spaces sporting the "Bienvenue à la Ferme" label, together with 10 lodgings and 13 farm tours and educational farms.

Photo: Saveurs ensoleillées - Credit : © Var Tourisme / CIVP / F Milo



**The Var is home to 155 Michelin star-rated restaurants and 198 Gault & Millau-rated restaurants**

**Michelin 2017 ratings:**

- > 3 stars: 1 restaurant, La Vague d'Or, Saint-Tropez
- > 2 stars: 1 restaurant, Le Restaurant Christophe Bacquié in Le Castellet
- > 1 star: 15 restaurants
- > 1 plate: 83 restaurants
- > Bib gourmand: 15 restaurants

**Gault & Millau ratings:**

- > 5 chef's hats: 1 restaurant- La Vague d'Or, Saint-Tropez
- > 4 chef's hats: 1 restaurant- Le Restaurant Christophe Bacquié in Le Castellet
- > 3 chef's hats: 8 restaurants
- > 2 chef's hats: 31 restaurants

**A picturesque coastline**

How about treating yourself to a little pampering on the Var coast? We offer a great choice of relaxation and well-being, topped with discovery tours and recreation redolent with the flavours of the Med.

**Read more**



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/un-littoral-de-charme/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/un-littoral-de-charme/)

**DIARY**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Journée de la truffe noire d'Aups (Truffle Day)</b>  | January 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2018                             |
| <b>Fête de la Transhumance (Herd Translocation)</b><br>in Vinon-sur-Verdon  | May   |
| <b>Fêtes de Saint Pierre (Saint Peter's Day)</b> at the local fishing ports: Bandol, Sanary, Saint-Mandrier, le Lavandou, Cavalaire, Saint-Tropez, Saint Raphaël... | End June  |
| <b>Fête de la figue (Fig Fair)</b> in Solliès   | End August  |
| <b>Fête de l'olive (Olive Fair)</b><br>in Ollioules   | End September   |
| <b>Fête de la Châtaigne (Chestnut Fair)</b> in Collobrières, Gonfaron, La Garde-Freinet, les Mayons ou Pignans  | October   |
| <b>Fête du miel (Honey Fair)</b><br>in Les Arcs-sur-Argens  | October   |
| <b>Fête du coing (Quince Fair)</b><br>in Cotignac   | October   |
| <b>Salon Autour du Vin (Wine Fair)</b><br>Dracénie area   | October   |
| <b>Truffle market</b>   | Every Thursday from November 15 <sup>th</sup> - early March |

Photo: Saveurs de la mer - Credit: © Var Tourisme / David Latour





**VISITVAR**

Provence - Côte d'Azur



# THE VAR, A STORY OF VINES, WOMEN AND MEN



# THE VAR, A STORY OF VINES, WOMEN AND MEN

ANCHORED IN THE VAR'S LANDSCAPES FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL, THE VINE IS PART AND PARCEL OF OUR IDENTITY. OUR WINES HAVE ADOPTED THE LOCAL TEMPERAMENT TOO: FRIENDLY, PASSIONATE AND OVERFLOWING WITH SUNNY FLAVOURS

**Vines are everywhere here, stretching along the jagged shores, into Arc and Argens valleys, adorning the hills, clinging to rocky soil and nurtured by our generous sunshine. But the Var wouldn't be the thriving wine growing area it is today without the commitment of the local vineyards, wine cooperatives and cellars, where you can enjoy a delicious tasting session and sip elegant rosé wines chilled to perfection... Cheers! Our wine growing expertise is acclaimed worldwide.**

## A FEW FACTS



### Appellations :

AOC AOP - "Bandol" => 1,480 hectares

AOC AOP - "Coteaux Varois en Provence"  
=> 2,633 hectares, 127,900 hectolitres, 90% rosé

AOC AOP - "Côtes de Provence", 90% rosé

AOC AOP - "Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence", 82,5% rosé

IGP (Protected Geographical Indication) –  
Vins de Pays du Var

### Rosé wine :

France's leading producer of rosé wines

900,000 hectolitres of AOC rosés

350,000 hectolitres "Vin de Pays" rosés

Export: 40 million bottles in 2016



Photos: Coteaux ensoleillés - Credit: © Var Tourisme / LCI



Photo: 3 robes - Credit : © Var Tourisme / CIVP / F Milo

## MASTER WINE GROWERS

**The success and quality of this ancient terroir relies on the work of the men and women who have nurtured our soil, built the dry stone terraces where our vines now flourish and dedicated themselves to furthering research and wine making techniques, leading to today's spectacular transformation of this traditional industry and the Var's international reputation as a wine growing hub.**

### Appellations

The Var prides in its high-quality wines, as witnessed by the presence of 4 AOC wines out of the 9 grown in Provence as a whole. National recognition of these various terroirs is now topped with the prestigious European AOP (Protected Designation of Origin) label. Although the "Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence" and "Côtes de Provence" appellations spread beyond our frontiers, the "Coteau Varois de Provence" and "Bandol" wines are grown solely in the Var; created in 1941, the Bandol appellation is one of France's oldest. Many terroirs also benefit from the "Vins de Pays du Var" Protected Geographical Indication.

These various distinctions pay tribute to the character of our wines, blended using our typical grape varieties. Around a dozen different types of grape go to forge the identity of the Var's wines, including the evocatively-named "Mourvèdre" – the emblematic grape of the Bandol wines –, "Bourboulenc", originating entirely from Provence, or "Tibouren", exclusive to the Var!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/caves-et-vins/vins-de-provence/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/caves-et-vins/vins-de-provence/)

### A lion's share of rosé

The "little Provence rosé" of bygone days has definitely grown up! Now considered by many to be on a par with France's illustrious grands crus, our rosé wines have matured and gained notoriety over the years thanks to the passion and professionalism of our growers, who have gradually mastered the techniques needed to make top-level rosés. The Var's "Centre du Rosé" association is committed to continuously improving the quality of our rosés through research and trials. Now the world's leading producer of rosé wines, the Var sports its rank – a fitting reward for the work and perseverance of its growers – with pride!

Consumer preferences have evolved too and rosé wine has become a must-have both in France and overseas: consumption has actually tripled in the last 25 years! Today's rosé wines have overturned old codes and conventions and are instilled with a taste of freedom, making them the perfect partner to the holiday mood!

Photo: Part belle au rosé - Credit : © Var Tourisme / CIVP / F Milo



## TASTING

**It's all about robes and bouquets! A tasting session is a wonderful opportunity to get to know more about local wine growing and the secrets of the trade and decode the aromas, colours and fragrances of our wines, while enjoying a chat and delicious glass! Bottoms up!**

### Cellars, domains and producers

Whatever their appellation, the Var's wines are crafted with tender loving care by growers whose know-how has often been handed down through generations. Whether modest domains, reputed châteaux or cooperatives, all merit a visit and tasting session – naturellement!

Beyond their palette of flavours, each wine has its own a fascinating story to tell – a story of men and women, ancient stone bastides and pathways winding through the vines.

#### The Var, home to 3 "Maisons des Vins" wine academies

**Maison des Vins des Côtes de Provence** in Les Arcs-sur-Argens. This reputed academy features a modern visitor's centre and wine collection boasting 750 references you can sample at the tasting cellar, open every day.

**Maison des Vins de Bandol** in Le Castellet. Welcoming a wide public of both amateur wine buffs and connoisseurs and

harbouring a variety of exceptional vintages, this new centre in Bandol is entirely dedicated to tasting. It also features a delightful, contemporary shop.

**Maison des Vins des Coteaux Varois en Provence** at the Abbaye Royale in La Celle. This stunning site fittingly reflects the values of the Coteaux Varois en Provence appellation: authenticity, quality and tradition. In addition to a wine introduction and tasting area, the Maison des Vins also features a model vineyard and conservatory, set in the Abbey cloister and grounds.

### The feminine touch

Formed in 2008 by Valérie Rousselle, owner of the Château Roubine and Sainte-Béatrice vineyards in Lorgues, the association "Les Éléonores de Provence" brings together women growers, sommelières, chefs and business owners in the birthplace of French wine, convinced of the unique value of Provence's wine growing heritage. These fervent ambassadors of our traditions and lifestyle are committed to handing down their knowledge and promoting our regional appellations both in France and overseas, defending high-quality work and finished products, honouring culinary traditions and cultivating the art of good living

Aurélie Bertin, owner of Château Sainte Roseline in Les Arcs-sur-Argens and Château des Demoiselles in La Motte took over as President in 2017 and continues to fly the flag of this regional initiative with the elegant and feminine touch that so fittingly typifies Provence's vineyards.

Photos: Vignes au pied des Maures - Credit: © Var Tourisme / Olivier Lanfranchi Cœur du Var Tourisme





Photo: Quand l'art s'invite dans les vignes - Credit : © Var Tourisme / Noé Interactive / JB David

## JUST STROLLING

**Harbouring a multitude of terroirs, vineyards and cellars, along with appellations and vintages to satisfy the most demanding connoisseur and welcoming restaurants, the Var is a haven for holidaying wine buffs. Wine is a destination unto itself here and visitors from around the world come to learn about working the vines, meet with our passionate wine growers, attend our wine fairs and test out our succulent wine & food pairings.**

### Wine tourism

The Var is a Wine Tourism paradise! And it's not just about tasting. Wine lovers can dig deep into the world of wine growing and its unique atmosphere here. So yes, of course you'll get to taste – but you'll also get to party, chill out and roam the local landscapes: our wine tourism experiences are truly infinite!

Sleep in the heart of the vines, enjoy a walk, bike ride or horse ride through the vines, opt for a guided tour of the local cellars, take part in a tasting workshop or sign up for a specialist interest day with an expert guide. There are a thousand and one ways to delve into the wine world and share some simple, cheering moments around a glass of wine in the Var!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/caves-et-vins/autour-du-vin/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/caves-et-vins/autour-du-vin/)

### Networks and tours

#### Route des Vins de Provence

If you're looking for an easy way to explore the Var's wine growing heritage, opt for the "Route des Vins de Provence" crossing the region's vineyards from the gateway to Camargue all the way to Nice. 342 domains and wine cooperatives in the Var are partners to this friendly initiative. The Route isn't a simple road: it offers a myriad of touring possibilities – a thousand and one itineraries bathed in sunshine and charm leading to listed sites, hidden châteaux, welcoming cellars and gourmet pleasures, so every visitor can invent their own dream tour.

Read more



[www.routedesvinsdeprovence.com/](http://www.routedesvinsdeprovence.com/)

#### "Art et Vin"

A dialogue between genres... The "Art & Vin" initiative was born out of a desire to throw bridges between the worlds of the arts, wine and tourism. The "Vignerons Indépendants" (Independent Wine Growers) group organises artistic and wine tourism activities throughout the year, including various events, talks, concerts and shows, but the highlight of the programme is a series of exhibitions held at various vineyards every summer from July 1st to August 31st. Selected by the wine growers themselves, the guest artists transform their wineries, cellars, grounds and vines into pop-up art galleries for the greatest pleasure of art and wine lovers alike.

## NEW IN 2018

**Les Jardins de la Commanderie de Peyrassol.** This stunning vineyard in Flassans-sur-Issole was recently awarded the "Art & Vin" label for their fabulous itinerary: a combined open-air museum, botanical exhibition and modern art collection offering a delicious and surprising blend of art and nature.

**A new website for "Vins de Provence".** After reworking its visual identity in early 2017, the "Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins de Provence" (Provence Wine Council) is continuing to upgrade its communication tools with a new website launched in September 2017, providing a high-performance "Vins de Provence" showcase designed in line with the current positioning and values of Provence's wine industry: style, friendliness and modernity.

Read more



[www.vinsdeprovence.com/fr](http://www.vinsdeprovence.com/fr)

The CIVP also launched the **1<sup>st</sup> edition of the collection "Adventures in Provence"** for primary schools at the start of the 2017 / 2018 school year, aimed at raising children's awareness of their local environment and the region's wine growing specificities through education and knowledge-sharing on the themes of heritage, expertise and traditions. Provence's wine growers are also dedicating time to the younger generation by welcoming school groups as part of the "Adventures in Provence" initiative, encouraging them to play a part in handing down the region's cultural and economic riches.

**International Rosé Day.** Kicking off at Saint-Tropez's famous Citadel on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 at 7 p.m., simultaneously with 12 cities worldwide including Paris, Hong Kong and New York. A fabulous event and absolute must for your 2018 diary!

## QUALITY COMMITMENT

**The "Route des Vins de Provence" brings together over 440 regional wine growers and wine cooperatives, all committed to quality and hospitality.**

### "Vignobles & Découvertes" label

The "Vignobles & Découvertes" (Wine & Discovery) national label has been awarded to 3 areas in the Var: Provence Verte, Dracénie and Sud Sainte Baume. This label brings together 150 professionals all committed to sharing their wine growing expertise with visitors through a variety of services. The label covers wine cooperatives, vineyards, accommodation in the heart of the vines, restaurants specializing in food & wine pairing or offering a menu focusing on local produce, together with a selection of remarkable heritage sites, activities and events designed to offer visitors a fun and varied insight into local treasures and know-how.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/caves-et-vins/vins-de-provence/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/savourer/caves-et-vins/vins-de-provence/)

## "#VISITVAR : LIVE AN INFINITE EXPERIENCE"

### Vineyards and peaceful walks

Holidays are made for relaxing and unwinding. To get back on top of the world, opt for a Lifestyle discovery holiday in the Var countryside, featuring beautiful B&Bs, wine tasting at stunning vineyards, peaceful scenic walks and cultural tours.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/domaines-viticoles-et-randonnees/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/domaines-viticoles-et-randonnees/)

### Romantic escapades

The Var is the perfect place for a romantic getaway! We promise a unique, unforgettable and unbeatably relaxing delve into our legendary lifestyle, with a menu of charming hotels, pretty little village boutiques and voluptuous spa treatments!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/escapade-en-amoureux/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/escapade-en-amoureux/)

## DIARY

**Bacchus (Wine Fair)** in Toulon March

**Just' Rosé**  
International Rosé Festival  
[www.just-rose.com](http://www.just-rose.com) Early Mai

**Art et Vin (Art & Wine)** July, August

**Fête des vendanges (Grape Harvest Festival)** in La Cadière, Montfort... August

**Fête du raisin (Grape Fair)** in Fréjus August

**Le salon Autour du vin (Wine Fair)** in Draguignan October

**La fête du millésime (Wine Fair)** in Bandol December



**VISITVAR**

Provence - Côte d'Azur



# THE VAR, ANCIENT KNOW-HOW AND KNOWLEDGE-SHARING...

Photo Artisanat d'art - Credit: © Var Tourisme / Pascale Fluchère

# THE VAR, ANCIENT KNOW-HOW AND KNOWLEDGE-SHARING...

OUR THRIVING ARTS & CRAFTS TRADES ARE A LEGACY OF ANCIENT EXPERTISE HANDED DOWN THROUGH THE GENERATIONS. THE VAR IS A FERTILE BREEDING GROUND FOR TALENTED CRAFTSMEN AND PASSIONATE ARTISANS, WHO CONTINUE TO STAND GUARD OVER THEIR IMMATERIAL HERITAGE.

**Our craft products are the fruit of time-old techniques and continue to use traditional methods that are often closely-guarded family secrets! The Var's studios and workshops stand witness to the artistic drive and prowess behind this flourishing and many-faceted industry.**

## A FEW FACTS

The Crafts sector in the Var accounts for 35,997 businesses, i.e. a quarter of total Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regional craft businesses

2 towns awarded the "Ville & Métiers d'Art" craft label

19 businesses open to the public, plus craft and designer workshops and studios.

39 regular arts & crafts markets

Photos: Atelier - Credit: © Var Tourisme / Métiers d'art du Var





Photo: Travail du bois - Credit : © Var Tourisme / Escoulen Aiguines

## THE SURPRISE FACTOR

**The list of craft trades still in existence is virtually endless. Some are forgotten or little-known, while others have kept resolutely up with the times. Specializing in ceramics, wood turning, "santon" figurines, photography, mosaics, visual arts, wrought iron, stringed instruments, stained-glass windows, brasswork, nativity scenes, pipes, confectionery, soaps, sandals or hats, all blur the lines between artistic creation, artisan manufacturing techniques and traditional trades.**

### Arts & Crafts

Arts & crafts comes in many shapes and forms in the Var - both artistic and utilitarian -, but are first and foremost committed to traditional values such as the use of local materials: our emblematic olive wood, clay used for the tiles and earthenware decorating our ancient country houses and iron used for Provence's typical bell towers...

#### Wood

Olive is the most coveted of all the local woods, but other varieties such as boxwood and cade also call for patience and unique know-how. The local markets offer up a magnificent array of hand-crafted wooden objects used every day in the kitchen, such as salad bowls, cutlery and pestles & mortars. The Var is home to numerous wood workshops, located in Aups, Fayence and Aiguines.

Reeds for wind instruments are one of the Var's heritage crafts, with a variety of reputed firms located in Ollioules Cogolin, Le Lavandou and Pierrefeu. A festival is even dedicated to them every year in Hyères!

#### Clay

The local craftsmen continue to mix, knead and whittle clay to make everyday objects such as tiles, pottery, earthenware and our traditional "santon" figurines. Some towns owe their international fame to clay: Salernes' legendary "tomette" floor tiles (little hexagonal red tiles) are still coveted by decorators and traditionally used in Provence's country houses.

The "santon" figurine is another regional speciality. Born in Marseille in the late 18th century, these little, hand-crafted, hand-painted characters have become emblems of Provence throughout the world.

"Santon" figurines are still manufactured today in respect of tradition, combining ancient know-how and closely-kept workshop secrets.


#### Wrought iron

Another typical example of Provençal lifestyle, wrought ironwork is very present in the Var's architecture. A story of finesse, these works of art embellish grids and balconies with scrolls and lace... The Var is still home to many master ironmongers.

Photo: Précision du geste - Credit : © Var Tourisme / David Latour







### Producer and artisan tours

Aimed at introducing visitors to the Var's traditional economy and know-how, these tours focus on working businesses boasting a special heritage, with producers and artisans opening the doors to their production or exhibition site and giving away some of their time-honoured secrets. Several labels have now been created to promote businesses that continue to perpetuate traditional techniques anchored in our history and visitors enjoy an original and sometimes offbeat activity programme, unveiling a very authentic and still-thriving facet of the area. Opt for a backstage tour of a master pipe maker in Cogolin or venture into the "Sandale Tropicézienne" workshop – these unique, all-leather sandals were first produced in 1927!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/visites/artisanat-metiers-art-et-visites-entreprises/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/visites/artisanat-metiers-art-et-visites-entreprises/)

### A tribute to ancient trades

Although much of our rich artisan heritage has been handed down through the generations, some, such as the ice wells of the Sainte-Baume hills that formerly supplied ice throughout the region, has now disappeared. Happily, the cork trade (cork was harvested from oaks in the Maures hills), is experiencing a rebirth today. A new adventure on the cards? Our local museums offer a precious testimonial to these ancient trades and include the "Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires" folk museum in Draguignan and specialist-interest museums such as the "Musée des Tourneurs sur Bois" (Wood Turners' Museum) in Aiguines, "Maison de l'Olivier" (Olive Museum) in Provence Verte and private collection of Château de l'Aumérade in Pierrefeu, exhibiting no less than 1,800 "santon" figurines! Among these many charming and instructive excursion ideas, the "Maison de la Céramique Architecturale Terra Rossa" ceramics museum in Salernes remains a must.

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/musees/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/les-incontournables/musees/)



Photo: Précision du geste • Credit : © Var Tourisme / David Latour

## BARGAIN HUNTING

**Roam the local workshops, rummage around car boot sales, pound the pathways of the local craft markets and hunt down some antique bargains. You're sure to take home some unique souvenirs of your holiday in the Var!**

### Craft markets

The charm and value of our local craftwork resides in its craftsmanship. Unique and evocative, each object harbours a little piece of the Var and a reminder of your holiday, encounters with local artisans at their workshops and our buzzing, colourful craft markets!

Summer is a paradise for arts & crafts lovers, with many markets in Saint-Raphaël and Fréjus, together with a host of evening markets lighting up the summer nights and a variety of designer and creative markets now regular guests at major events such as the "Fête de l'Olivier" in Ollioules. In winter, you'll find Christmas Markets and "Santon" figurine fairs in most of the local towns and villages.

### Craft Tours

Committed to a quality policy based on know-how, fine craftsmanship, expert knowledge of their trade and a desire to promote it, many of the Var's artists and craftsmen now open the doors to their workshops. Backed by the Var Delegation of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur "Chambre de Métiers et de l'Artisanat" (Chamber of Trades), the "A la découverte des métiers d'art" craft tours initiative aims to promote the Var's top arts & crafts addresses.

The campaign - to be renewed in 2018 - gives visitors a chance to meet with authentic and unusual artisans and artists all year round, discover their unique creations and succumb to the temptation of that must-have piece!

Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/visites/artisanat-metiers-art-et-visites-entreprises/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/se-divertir/visites/artisanat-metiers-art-et-visites-entreprises/)

## WATCHING & LEARNING

Our artisans are devoted to perpetuating and promoting their ancient skills and many open their doors to the public to share their knowledge, little secrets and burning passions... So why not treat yourself to a different kind of holiday and enjoy an immersive experience in the Var?!

The village of Aiguines is still home to several traditional wood turners, together with a museum dedicated to the trade and training institute - the "Ecole Escoulen" -, which hosts woodturning courses. Located throughout the Var, our quality-certified "Découverte des métiers d'art" craftsmen host year-round guided tours and workshops. The "European Artistic Crafts Days" also encourage workshops to invite the public to discover a myriad of different trades, while villages such as Mons offer a special craft itinerary.

Read more



[www.escoulen.com/](http://www.escoulen.com/)

Photo: Précision du geste • Credit : © Var Tourisme / David Latour



## NEW IN 2018

### Arts itinerary in Hyères

Home to many beautiful monuments, such as Saint-Louis Church, Saint Paul's Collegiate Church, Parc Saint-Bernard and its Mediterranean gardens, Villa Noailles and a Tower of the Knights Templar, this history and culture-packed town now features a signposted itinerary highlighting Hyeres' astonishing architectural, plant and urban heritage. Scheduled to include around 40 boutiques on completion, the itinerary is also a great opportunity to discover the local know-how and artistic talent. Over thirty premises have already been bought up and rehabilitated. A painter, upholsterer and pearl farmer were among the first to open shop.

#### Read more



[www.hyeres-tourisme.com/equipement-loisir/parcours-des-arts/](http://www.hyeres-tourisme.com/equipement-loisir/parcours-des-arts/)

### Designers in Bormes-les-Mimosas

Safeguarding the ancient know-how behind our traditional arts & crafts is a priority in Bormes-les-Mimosas. The village is home to many talented craftsmen - potters, ceramists, painters, wrought ironmongers, fashion designers, saddlers, seamstresses and sculptors - all flying the flag of history and innovation and keen to share their expertise and passion with visitors.

#### Read more



[www.bormeslesmimosas.com/fr/voir-faire/documents/Web-GuideDesCreateurs2017.pdf](http://www.bormeslesmimosas.com/fr/voir-faire/documents/Web-GuideDesCreateurs2017.pdf)

## QUALITY FOCUS

- > "Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant" Living Heritage Label:
  - JPW Group (lighting designer in La Seyne)
  - Les Pipes de Cogolin
  - Atelier Impression (Lithography in Fréjus)
  - Rigotti (manufacturer of reeds for wind instruments in Cogolin)
  - K Jacques (manufacturer of "Sandales Tropéziennes" leather sandals, founded in 1933)
- > Ville & Métiers d'Art (Arts & Crafts Towns): Ollioules and Fréjus
- > "Qualité Tourisme" label: 19 local producer and artisan tours

## "#VISITVAR : LIVE AN INFINITE EXPERIENCE"

### Weekend in the autumn sunshine (well-being and lifestyle in Collobrières)

An invigorating weekend break to recharge your batteries before winter, with a gorgeous B&B, spa and jacuzzi, Indian summer sunshine, a hike in the Var countryside, restaurant in Collobrières and tour of a chestnut grove. What better way to get back on top of the world?!

#### Read more



[www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/week-end-au-soleil-dautomne/](http://www.visitvar.fr/fr/experiences/en-couple/week-end-au-soleil-dautomne/)

## DIARY

**Le Printemps des Potiers  
(Pottery Fair)** in Bandol

March 30<sup>th</sup>-  
April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**Les Journées Européennes  
des Métiers d'Art  
(European Artistic Crafts Days)**

April 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>

Photos: Marché artisanal nocturne - Credit: © Var Tourisme / Nico Gomez





V I S I T V A R . F R



*VisitVar is the destination brand of Var Tourisme, the Var's Tourism Development Agency appointed by the Var Regional Council to plan and develop tourism promotion by observing touristic activity, coordinating stakeholders and assisting in the marketing of tourism products.*