EXPERIENCE THE LOIRE VALLEY



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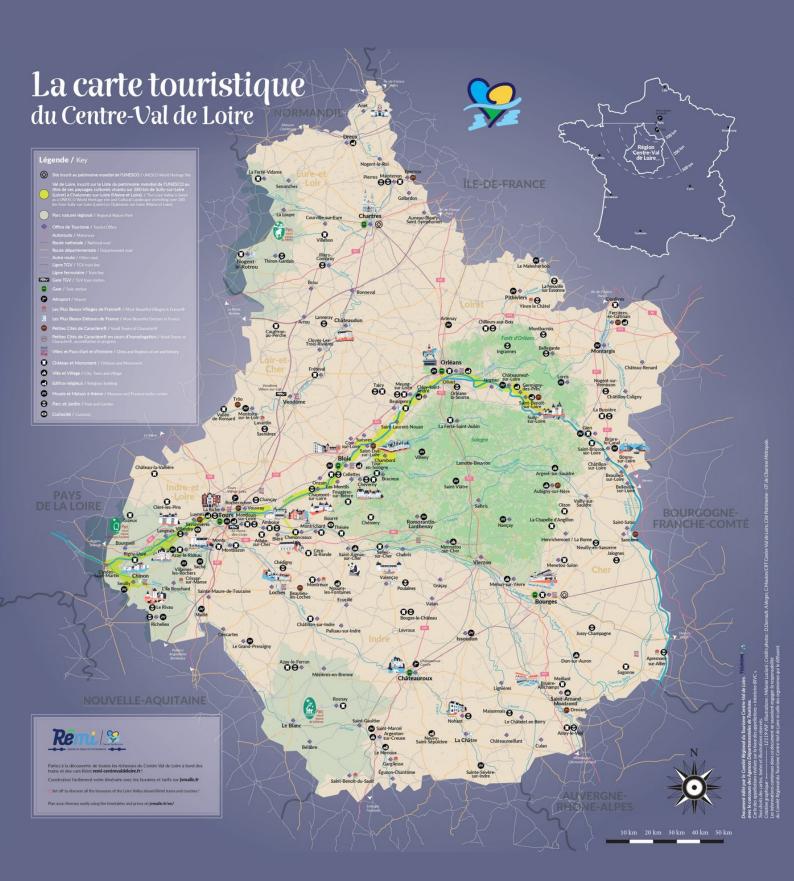
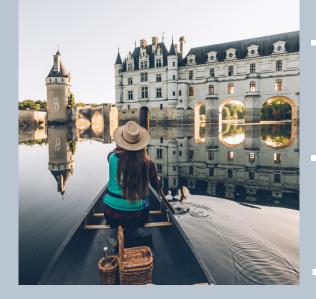


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US

CELEBRATE THE CENTENARY OF TINTIN'S CASTLE

In **1922**, the **Château of Cheverny** became the very first private château in France to open its doors to the public. This makes 2022 the 1**00th anniversary of its opening**. It's a wonderful occasion to (re)visit the Château of Cheverny, which was the inspiration for Hergé when drawing Marlinspike Hall, Captain Haddock's residence ! <u>www.chateau-cheverny.fr</u>

FOLLOW AGNÈS SOREL, THE INFLUENCER

The **Royal City of Loches** is celebrating the **600th anniversary** of the birth of Agnès Sorel, favourite of King Charles VII, who gave her the domain of Loches. To mark the occasion, the site has created the **exhibition** "*Agnès Sorel, l'influenceuse*" (*Agnès Sorel, the* influencer) to better understand the role and influence of the "Lady of Beauty" in the kingdom's politics and society. <u>www.citeroyaleloches.fr</u>





REDISCOVER GAME OF THRONES IN CHINON

"Rois et reines en armes, entre réels et fiction(s)" (Kings and Queens in Arms, Reality and Fiction(s)) is the name of the new exhibition at the Royal Fortress of Chinon honouring all kings and queens, both real and imagined. Come and see historic armour and relics, as well as props from cult movies and TV series like Conan The Barbarian and Game of Thrones. Because even now, these royals figures continue to inspire. <u>www.forteressechinon.fr</u>

EXPERIENCE A PEDAGOGICAL CONSERVATION WORK SITE IN AMBOISE

In the Saint-Hubert Chapel at the Royal Château of Amboise lies Leonardo da Vinci's tomb. Wide-reaching restoration work has begun on the 15th-century Gothic façade. The work site has been designed to be educational. It is open to the public and displays the expertise of artisanal carpenters, plumbers, sculptors and stone-cutters, who use the traditional, non-mechanised techniques from the Flemish master craftsmen of the time. The works are scheduled to last two years. www.chateau-amboise.com



LEARN



DIVE INTO THE UNIVERSE OF LEONARDO DA VINCI

The Château of Le Clos-Lucé has created a new 500 m² visitor space: the "Leonard de Vinci, peintre et architecte" (Leonardo da Vinci, painter and architect) galleries. The exhibition is fun and interactive, shining a spotlight on the research undertaken by the Italian genius into mathematics, urban planning and architecture with video games, 3D movies and models. On the ground floor, an immersive, audiovisual, video-mapping spectacle delves into the details of the Mona Lisa, Lady with an Ermine and da Vinci's other masterpieces and preparatory sketches. www.vinci-closluce.com

ENTER FRANCE'S LARGEST CATHEDRAL

In 2022, Saint-Etienne Cathedral in Bourges is celebrating the 30th anniversary of its inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Located in the very centre of the city, the building features a rare collection of 13th- and 17th-century stained glass, as well as the oldest astronomical clock in France. With five portals, it is also the largest cathedral in the country. www.bourges-cathedrale.fr



BECOME A RENAISSANCE WOMAN OF POWER

The **Royal Château of Blois**, favourite residence of seven kings and ten queens of France, is offering an exhibition based on three of its former residents: Catherine de' Medici, Diane de Poitiers and Marguerite de Valois. Titled "*La Renaissance des Femmes*" (The Renaissance of Women), this exhibition highlights the power - sometimes restrained, marginalised or even forgotten - of these **three iconic Renaissance figures**. <u>www.chateaudeblois.fr</u>

Over 5 000 km of bike paths





900 km from Cuffy to the Atlantic Ocean

From June to September, specially developed trains with 50 to 83 spots for bikes will offer transport for cycle tourists. Free service on reservation. And all year round, bikes can be taken for free in regional trains. www.loireavelo.fr



New accommodation

Hôtel Ferdinand in Tours

A cosy. 3-star hotel with a chic, welcoming atmosphere, perfect to explore the city centre by foot after a day's cycling. www.ferdinandhotel.fr

"L'Echappée Belle" guesthouse

Two stunning rooms, a large property, pool and hammocks, all just 300m from the Loire. The owners also offer meals. www.lechappeebelle.eu

Camping des Pâtis / Wild Bed

Classic camping spots as well as bivouac tents, lodges and tiny houses in this Clef Verte-labelled campground, next to Amboise. www.wildbed.fr



New bike rentals

- Tours Rouelib : www.rouelib.eu
- Tours Tours de Roues : www.loireavelo.fr/tsft/toursde-roues-tours
- Chaumont-sur-Loire Station Bees www.stationsbees.com
- Orléans Vélo Val de Loire : www.velovaldeloire.com



New agencies

Cycle touring agencies as well as bike rentals

with fleets of several hundreds of bikes :

- Rando Vélo : www.randovelo.fr
- Cheverny Voyage : <u>www.cheverny-</u> voyages.fr





Guinguette de Combleux

Located 30 minutes' bike ride from Orléans, this open-air cafe offers local products and craft beers, as well as electric boat rental on the Orléans Canal, www.locationbateau-orleans.com

La Capitainerie in Meung-sur-Loire

This open-air cafe is the departure point for traditional Loire boat rides in Meung-sur-Loire. It features a breathtaking view and simple menu, using local products. www.coeur2loire.com

Over 5 000 km of bike paths



LA SCANDIBÉRIQUE ®



\mathbf{F} 1 700 km from the Belgian border to the Spanish border

This new route passes through incredible sites, like the town of Montargis known as "the Venice of Gâtinais", small villages along the Loiret river, and the Briare canal-aqueduct with a jaw-dropping panorama over the Loire. It then connects to La Loire à Vélo and offers views of eight of the twenty-three biggest Loire Châteaux. www.scandiberique.fr

450 km from Paris to Mont-Saint-Michel

For summer 2022, organisation Cinécyclo and La Véloscénie are offering a travelling film festival. The concept : pedal to power the projector, which will screen documentaries and animated movies. It's good for the planet, plus an opportunity for cycle tourists to meet local residents ! www.veloscenie.com

LA VÉLOSCÉNIE ®





L'INDRE À VÉLO ®

300 km from Bréhémont to the source of the Indre

This route goes through undulating landscapes, overlooking the Indre Valley and vast countryside plains, as well as major sites such as the Royal City of Loches and the Château of Azay le Rideau.

New website in English : <u>www.indreavelo.fr</u>

New accommodation : Le Prieuré de Relay This former outbuilding of the Abbey of Fontevraud has been very well preserved and tastefully restored, offering a night's stay where time stands still. www.prieurederelay.com

TASTE

SIP A DRINK AT VILLA MONIN



Monin syrups are exported all over the world, but Bourges is their birthplace. In 2022, a building will be dedicated to them: Villa Monin. This exhibition space offers a cabinet of curiosities around flavours and aromas, an immersive tour of syrup production, cooking classes and workshops led by Thierry Finet, former Michelin chef, as well as a syrup tasting bar. For even more deliciousness, a space at the Villa has been dedicated to the Bourges confectioner, Daniel Mercier, who has developed a chocolate-themed tour. www.villamonin.fr

AWAKEN YOUR SENSES AT CAVES AMBACIA

Located opposite the Loire, in the **historic heart of Amboise**, Caves Ambacia has a whole new look ! These **16th-century troglodyte caves** are specialised in conserving old vintages. A sensory tour drawing on all five senses and a 3D video makes the visitor come on an **immersive journey** into the world of wine. At the end of the tour, people can live a moment of sharing and indulgence at a **grocery store with high-quality, local products and troglodyte bistro**. <u>www.caves-ambacia.fr</u>





VISIT THE GIEN MUSEUM OF FAIENCE WORKS

Gien faience can be found on the finest tables, but not everyone knows the story and manufacturing processes of this high-quality product. **200 years ago**, the factory was established in **Gien**. For this anniversary, the Museum of Faience Works has been entirely **redesigned**, **renovated and modernised**. Walk back through the factory's history via **exceptional pieces** and discover how the way people eat has had a huge influence on **tableware**. <u>www.gien.com</u> TASTE



DISCOVER THE TOURAINE-CHENONCEAUX AOC

Château of Chenonceau offers **wine-themed walks** through the gardens and vines of the château, where the first vine stocks were planted by Catherine de' Medici in 1550. The guided tour starts in the **sweet-**

Dômes, with a **tasting** of white and red wines from the Touraine-Chenonceaux AOC. <u>www.chenonceau.com</u>

smelling flower gardens and finishes in the Cave des

PICNIC SURROUNDED BY SANCERRE VINES

His grandfather was a **vine-grower** and his grandmother had a goat farm. So, it's only natural that Vincent Grall now works with grapevines, carrying on **vine-growing traditions**. With pride in his terroir, he and his wife offer **personalised tastings** and **unique moments to be experienced in the middle of the vines**, featuring iconic products like Crottin de Chavignol and Croquets de Sancerre. <u>www.grall-vigneron-sancerre.com</u>





COOK AND TASTE AT LA GRANGE AUX SAVOIR-FAIRE

Here, **between Blois and Amboise**, roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty. **Learn** to knead bread and brioche, be introduced to **vegetarian cuisine**, discover the techniques of lactic acid fermentation, brew your own beer or cook zero waste! There are many **workshops** available, including in English. And to extend the **DIY experience**, you can even stay there in the recently opened accommodation ! <u>www.lagrangeauxsavoirfaire.fr</u>

DID YOU KNOW ?

Valençay is the only PDO in France, and therefore the world, with a double appellation - for both cheese and wine !

MEET



Richard Williams, aka Tony

Nature guide in Brenne

My name is Richard, but here, people call me Tony. I am originally from Wales, and this year will make 40 years since I started working for the **Visitor Centre of the Brenne Natural Park**. Since I was a little boy, I have been passionate about birds and biodiversity, and now I work as a **nature guide**. In Brenne, **migratory birds can be observed** peacefully. The conditions are optimal and the birds magnificent. Up to **116 varieties** can be observed, it's incredible ! I guide **nature walks all year round**, and each time, it is a real pleasure and a unique experience. <u>www.parc-naturel-brenne.fr</u>

Paul-Olivier Claudepierre & David Matheron

Directors of Martin Pouret

We are the directors of the Maison Martin-Pouret, **master vinegar makers in Orléans since 1797**. In the Renaissance period, Orléans became THE **French capital of vinegar**. Until the 19th century, it produced 80% of France's vinegar. Nowadays, Maison Martin-Pouret is **the only company to carry on this ancestral expertise**. We sell our products to many Michelinstarred restaurants in France and all over the world. We will be delighted to welcome you to our boutique, located **a stone's throw away from the Orléans Cathedral**, for a tasting of our products. See you there ! <u>www.martin-pouret.com</u>

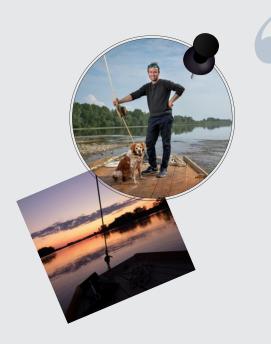


Eric Louis

Vine-grower in Sancerre

I cultivate **35 hectares of vines** with love, passion and respect for nature. This domain is a **family affair**, founded in 1860 by my greatgrandmother Pauline. In fact, my family has been **making wine for four generations** ! In 2020, the domain launched the process of converting to **organic agriculture** to preserve biodiversity. Tour the cellar, taste our vintages, visit our PDO Crottin de Chavignol **goat farm**, stay in our gite accommodation, and more... We have put everything in place to provide you with a **unique experience at Domain Eric Louis** ! <u>www.sancerre-ericlouis.com</u>

MEET



Aurélien Turpin Loire boatsman

I'm Aurélien, and the Loire has been my playground for over ten years! I grew up in Chaumont-sur-Loire, and this is where I created my company *Moments de Loire* last year. My idea is to not only offer guided tours along the river, but what I really want is for people to enjoy a unique experience, a moment that they will remember for the rest of their life. It could be eating a gourmet lunch on an island of the Loire, taking off in a hot-air balloon from the river, staying in a bivouac, taking a fishing trip with a professional fisherman, and more. Anything is possible, provided that it respects the river and its biodiversity, of course ! www.momentsdeloire.fr

Caroline Laigneau Co-owner of château of Le Rivau

My name is Caroline and I am both a **farmer and château-owner**. The vegetables I grow can be found in the soups sold at the boutique or in the dishes at the **two Château restaurants**, La Table des Fées and Le Jardin Secret - the gastronomic venue. I want all visitors in the Château to experience a unique moment, a sort of **return to nature** and to the fundamentals. Take a stroll in the gardens, discover the **modern works of art outside and inside**, or stay in the **4-star hotel** established in the former stables, for a timeless, peaceful and restful moment. <u>www.chateaudurivau.com</u>





Maximilien Lheureux

Manager of Guinguette de Chartres

My name is Maximilien Lheureux and I am the manager of the **Guinguette de Chartres**, also known as "**La Petite Venise**". For 75 years, many generations of Chartres residents and travellers from all over the world have come to share relaxing and joyful moments on this little piece of land nestled **on the banks of the Eure river**, in the middle of town and **along the Véloscénie**® **bike path**. At Guinguette de Chartres, you can enjoy a meal, have a drink, rent one of our **boats** or attend an **outdoor concert**. www.laguinguettedechartres.fr

SMELE



CELEBRATE THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL GARDEN FESTIVAL

In 1992, the **Regional Domain of Chaumont-sur-Loire** organised the first edition of the International Garden Festival, a true **Iaboratory for contemporary landscape creation**. In 2022, the 30th edition of this festival promises even more innovative blooms, audacious creations and unique materials. <u>www.domaine-chaumont.fr</u>

DISCOVER WILD PLANTS

Observe, identify, pick, smell and taste the wild plants growing in the forest or on the banks of the Loire with Gregory in Touraine and Nathalie in the Loiret. During a **botanical stroll**, the **eco-guides** will explain the virtues of different plants, detail their uses and properties, and can even offer to cook them at the end ! www.valdeloire-ecotourisme.fr www.mercilaloire.com





SMELL CITRUS FRUITS IN VILLANDRY

The **Château of Villandry** is known for its **Renaissance gardens**, with its well-defined, stylised forms. But what's less well known is its **collection of orange and mandarin trees**, which leaves the greenhouses when spring arrives. It's the perfect time to discover all the gardens at the Château of Villandry, including the **vegetable garden**, the Sun Garden, the Simples Garden and the Ornamental Garden. And it's worth nothing that **no pesticides have been used at all in the gardens** for **10 years now** ! www.chateauvillandry.fr

SMELL THE LILAC AT DOMAINE DE POULAINES

Push the door of the **Domaine de Poulaines** and step into the secret world of Valérie, the owner. 30 years ago, when she bought the Domain, she made her passion into her job. Nowadays, you can admire the **sweet-smelling, themed gardens and an exceptional arboretum**. And all around are the Renaissance manor and outbuildings, which have been transformed into a gite, artisanal boutique and tea room. **Everything is local and organic**, with some products even coming from the domain's orchards and vegetable gardens. <u>www.domaine-poulaines.com</u>





SEE LA VIE EN ROSE IN CHÉDIGNY

Chédigny is a **small Touraine village** that transforms into a true **rose paradise** each spring. Over 1,000 rose bushes, 1,500 bulbs and around 100 shrubs give Chédigny a unique atmosphere, **France's only "garden-village"**. <u>www.chedigny.fr</u>

CRUISE



PADDLE DOWN THE LOIRE AND ITS TRIBUTARIES

Rent a **kayak or canoe** and paddle for an hour, a day or even several days, to discover the best spots in Centre-Val de Loire, **peacefully and at your own pace**. This activity offers **unique perspectives** - on the Loir, you will go past the foot of the **Château of Châteaudun**. On the Eure, you can float through **the city of Chartres** and admire the UNESCO World Heritage-listed cathedral. On the Loire, you can enjoy the **flora and fauna** as well as views of **Sancerre**, a small village nestled on a rocky spur and known all over the world for its wine. And on the Cher, you will go right underneath the arches of the **Château of Chenonceau**, and for the more daring among us, some rental agencies even offer bivouacs !

RENT A LICENSE-FREE BOAT

On the **Briare Canal**, **Orléans Canal** or **Cosson Canal** which goes by the Château of Chambord, there's no risk of capsizing! The lack of current allows for lovely family outings in **2 to 12-person electric boats**. <u>www.chambord.org/fr/agenda/activites-de-loisirs</u> <u>www.canalous-plaisance.fr</u> www.location-bateau-orleans.com





CLIMB ABOARD WITH A BOATMAN

With their experienced eyes, **boatsmen** know how to distinguish between local bird species, beaver tracks or various freshwater fish. They share their **knowledge and expertise with passion during traditional Loire boat outings**. They will also fondly tell **stories of the Loire fleet**. And to enjoy every moment even more, you can even enjoy your **picnic with your feet in the water**, respecting the rules for wildlife protection of course!

www.valdeloire-france.com/balades/itinerantes/baladessur-la-loire

DREAM

ENJOY AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE AT THE CHÂTEAU DE BEAUGENCY

The new owners of Château of Beaugency have made this history-soaked place a **centre for digital art** without equal in France. The architect and visual artist couple aimed to display architectural heritage from another angle, through **immersive**, **innovative and creative experiences**. It's a one-of-a-kind place in Centre-Val de Loire! <u>www.chateau-beaugency.com</u>

STROLL THROUGH CITIES FILLED WITH LIGHTS

Chartres and Bourges both have UNESCO World Heritage-listed cathedrals, but also incredible night-time trails. **Chartres en Lumières** is a **light and sound show** that is unique in Europe, offered for free every night of the year between April and January, illuminating 23 historic buildings in the city centre. In **Bourges**, **Nuits Lumières** lights up seven iconic monuments with colourful designs. The trail is intuitive, all you need to do is follow the little blue lights connecting one site to another. <u>www.ville-bourges.fr/site/nuits-lumiere</u> www.chartresenlumieres.com









CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS IN THE CHATEAUX

Every year in the Châteaux, presents and surprises abound in a programme of **magical events**. Façades that shine with a thousand lights, rooms decorated with holiday colours, countless Christmas trees, huge mangers, moments of indulgence and more... Each château is decorated with a specific theme: the Château of Azay-le-Rideau has opted for the theme of indulgence and tableware, and the **Château of Langeais** for lights and illuminations. The month of December is a great opportunity to **discover the Châteaux in a different way**. STAY



FLEUR DE LOIRE IN BLOIS

In 2022, **2-Michelin star chef Christophe Hay** is opening his new establishment, "Fleur de Loire" in Blois. Located on the banks of the Loire, this **5-star hotel has 44 rooms, including 11 suites with views over the river** and the city, as well as a gastronomic restaurant, bistro, patisserie stand, pool and Sisley spa. It's a project in line with the chef's values: **quality, local products and creativity**. <u>www.fleurdeloire.com</u>

PARENTHÈSE TINY HOUSE

Treat yourself to a getaway where time stands still in the middle of the **Orléans Forest**, at the brand new Parenthèse tiny houses in the Loiret. Each one **blends perfectly into the environment** and is **thoughtfully decorated by selected artists**. Options are available such as breakfast included, aperitif baskets and electric mountain bikes to explore the 55,000 hectares of forest. www.parenthese-tinyhouse.fr





HOTEL & RESTAURANT AT DOMAIN OF CHAUMONT-SUR-LOIRE

The **regional Domain of Chaumont-sur-Loire** has opened a **charming hotel** with 39 suites, a restaurant that seats 50 and an exhibition space. The special feature of the suites is that they have modular alcoves that are open to the outdoors, to **maintain a connection with nature and plants**. The hotel was created by **architect Patrick Bouchain**, the person to whom we owe Le Lieu Unique in Nantes and Le Channel à Calais.

LE MANOIR LES MINIMES IN AMBOISE

After renovation work, Le Manoir les Minimes has been awarded a fifth star and now offers a grocery-bistro service, called "Les Minimes Gourmets". The idea is to offer clients local products and wines that they can take away and enjoy. The rooms all have different views, some over the Loire and others over the Royal Château of Amboise! www.manoirlesminimes.com





LES TRÉSORIÈRES IN TOURS

Tours now has its own **5-star hotel** ! Les Trésorières is an intimate hotel located in the **gastronomic heart of the city**, **Les Halles**. The 21 rooms offer an unbeatable view over the Place des Halles or even the Tour Charlemagne and Saint-Martin Basilica. The little interior courtyard is a true haven of peace and the vaulted cellar has been transformed into a **relaxation space with spa, hammam and sauna**. <u>www.les-tresorieres.com</u>

PHOTO LIBRARY



Download all the images here :

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NS4Bwv6_l4tuNbUpZ5tpokl9YMRLXs5n?usp=sharing

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