

Press kit 2024

Haute-Garonne Tourism



PHOTO SPOTS



DIARY DATES



ON CAMERA



TRIPS

HAUTE 
GARONNE
TOURISME

L'Accent nature

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Published by the Comité Départemental du Tourisme de la Haute-Garonne.
Publishing director : Didier Cujives, Jean Micoud. Editorial: Laetitia Soula. Design: Atelier Agiteo. Photo credits: CDT 31/ Léo Arcangeli, Marc Barbaresco, Loïc Bel, Manuel Huynh, Arnaud Späni, Nicole Jeymet, French Wanderers, Laetitia Soula, JJGelbart, L. Binet, Adobe Stock. Traduction : Sandra Haurant. Document printed by Reprint, an Imprim'vert company – Paper FSC Cocoon Silk 130g and 250g. Print run: 200 copies. Published January 2024.

This document has been produced in line with eco-design principles and is part of Haute-Garonne Tourisme's sustainable approach. It uses coated paper made from 100% recycled fibers, certified FSC® Recycled, and vegetable oil-based inks. A standard format and appropriate weight have been chosen to reduce paper cutting and waste. Printed by a local printer with ISO 14001 and Imprim'vert certification. The choice of graphics and fonts has been made with ink volumes in mind. Efforts are made to optimise document transport and distribution, as well as recyclable or recycled packaging materials. Please recycle this document after use.



Haute-Garonne Nature in Focus

Haute-Garonne is made for sustainable tourism. This is a place for slow travel, where it makes sense to take your time and let nature reveal its many treasures.

The Pyrenees, the undulating countryside of the Lauragais, the green hills of the Comminges, the banks of the Garonne, Pays Tolosan and the stunning scenery around Volvestre. Haute-Garonne has it all.

Le Routard published Haute-Garonne Destination Nature in 2023, a guidebook dedicated to sustainable tourism in every corner of the region. The climate emergency means we must all think about our impact on the environment, and make changes to how we live and how we travel.

Today, tourism needs to be sustainable, and it needs to support local organisations and develop local networks. That way, we can ensure Haute-Garonne is a destination that looks after its environment and nurtures its biodiversity.

Visitors are more demanding than ever, and I want to exceed their expectations. That's why I am committed to progress, and to getting our approach just right.

So, head away from the beaten track and begin your journey in Haute-Garonne; you'll be enchanted.

Didier Cujives,
President of Haute-Garonne Tourisme



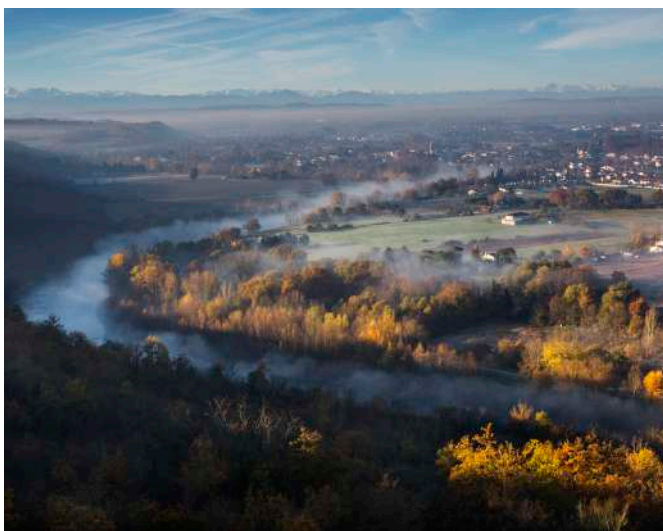
The unmissables

Toulouse is a cultural, historic and scientific hub, and the festive capital of the southwest of France. The city stands at the crossroads of countless cycling and hiking trails, and on the banks of the mighty Garonne and the peaceful Canal du Midi, which flow through the centre of the city. Explore the region by foot, bike or boat, or head for the giddy heights of the Haute-Garonne Pyrenees. Visit the exceptional Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges and Valcabrère, on the Way of St James, and the vineyards of Fronton. There is so much to discover in this bewitching part of France, midway between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

The Canal du Midi in the Lauragais

Follow the Canal du Midi on foot, by bike or by boat. This jewel of southwest France is a Unesco World Heritage site and an engineering masterpiece, punctuated with engineering structures and constructions as it meanders through the bucolic countryside of the Lauragais. Part of the Canal des Deux Mers, linking the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, this section stretches from Toulouse to Sete. The manmade lake at Saint-Ferréol in Revel is home to Le Réservoir, a museum dedicated to the Canal du Midi, its origins and its 17th century creator, Pierre-Paul Riquet.

+ www.canal-du-midi.com
www.lereservoir-canaldumidi.fr



The Garonne

After making its way across the Pyrenees in the legendary Trou du Toro chasm and waterfall in Spain, this great river flows through Haute-Garonne from south to north. Slow and calm in some stretches, the Garonne boasts an incredible biodiversity, and is home to a Natura 2000 conservation site. But it has its tumultuous side, too, attracting plenty of adrenaline-seeking visitors who come for white water rafting and kayaking over the rapids. And there's a stunning Regional Nature Reserve at the confluence of the Garonne and Ariège rivers, where alluvial forests flourish and birdwatchers can spot wagtails and storks, or the blue flash of a kingfisher darting over the water.

+ www.rnr-confluence-garonne-ariege.fr



Toulouse

Exuberant and fun, laidback and romantic, Toulouse can be whatever you want it to be. The country's aerospace hub and gastronomic capital of the southwest has *art de vivre* completely nailed. Wander through the old town, a designated Remarkable Heritage Site, with its warm, flamboyant colours, stroll along the banks of the Garonne at Place de la Daurade or Port Viguerie, or through the many parks, the Jardin des Plantes or the Jardin Japonais, the riverside Prairie des Filtres or the left bank's peaceful Jardin Raymond VI.

+ www.toulouse-tourisme.com



Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges and Valcabrère

Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges and Valcabrère boast an impressive heritage. The cathedral of Sainte-Marie and the Saint-Just-de-Valcabrère basilica are listed by Unesco as key stages on the Way of St James. Set against the backdrop of the Pyrenean foothills, this is the starting point for many walks and hikes. Join the GR® 861-Via Garona, the GR® 78-Voie du Piémont or the cycle trail along the Garonne.

The Pyrenees

From the foothills to the summits, the Haute-Garonne Pyrenees welcome hikers, mountain bikers, cyclists, skiers, white water thrill-seekers and rock climbers. Explore Luchon, Aspet, le Cagire, or Saint-Béat, the gate to the Spanish Val d'Aran. Not forgetting the magnificent mountain lakes of Oô, Espingo, Portillon, Lac Vert and Lac Bleu. The ski resorts of Le Mourtis, Luchon-Superbagnères, Peyragudes and Bourg d'Oueil have plenty to offer in summer and in winter.



The vineyards of Fronton

A historic winegrowing area, the *appellation* of Fronton covers around forty independent winemakers and a cooperative cellar. Here the Negrette, a unique grape variety, creates local wines that are elegant, structured, aromatic and floral. Come for the wine-tasting, short walks or longer hikes through the vines, or to enjoy the festivals. You'll find passionate winemakers, beautiful vineyards and handsome châteaux along Fronton's wine route.

+ www.vins-de-fronton.com



Top 10 experiences in Haute-Garonne

Explore the biggest cave network in France

Revered by speleologists the world over, the Felix Trombe cave network in Arbas is the longest underground network in France, with 117km of tunnels and 57 entrances. Discover the spectacular underground landscapes, from the Henri Morte cave to the Trou du Vent, or the Pierre chasm. Laurent Maffre from Cocktail Adventure offers introductions to caving and vertical caving taster sessions with instruction on rope techniques. Take a daytrip, or opt for an overnight, underground stay.

 www.cocktailaventure.fr

Flying high: paragliding in Superbagnères

Ready for take-off? Leaving from the Superbagnères ski resort, 1800m above sea level, take to the skies with a paraglider for unbeatable views of the Pyrenees and the Pic d'Aneto. Feel the thermals, upward currents of air, lift you high above the mountains. Take a seat and fly

with your instructor over peaks with more than 1000m of vertical drop. A few steps are all it takes to launch and to land, and you'll even have your hands free for photos. An exhilarating and unforgettable experience.



'Bellow of the Stag' mountain walks

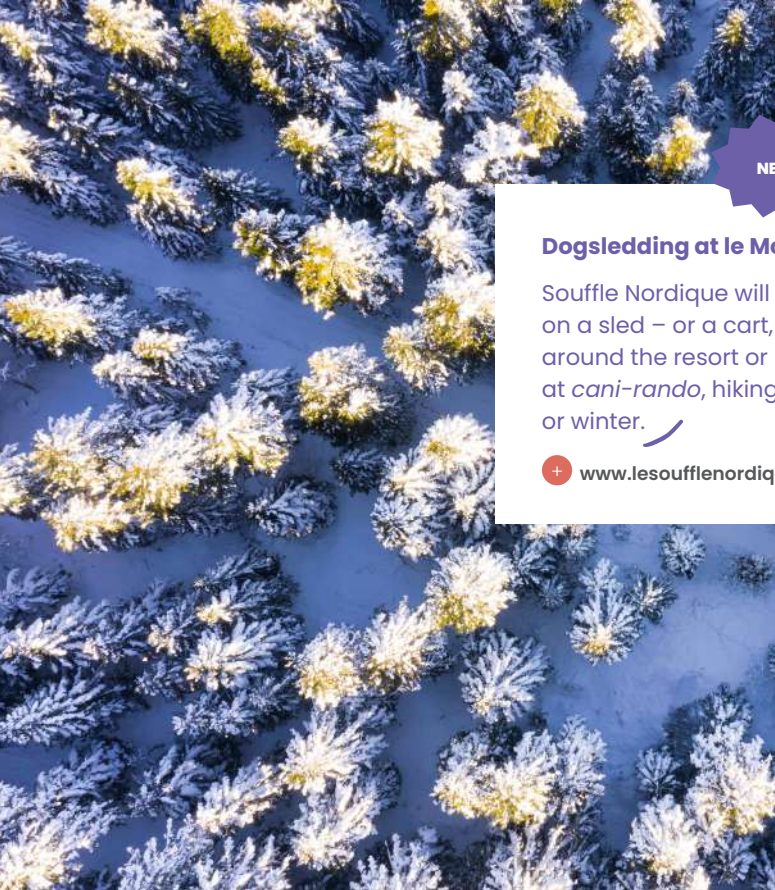
Join a mountain guide for an original and moving encounter with nature on a 'bellow of the stag' walk. In the autumn months (September to mid-October) the distinctive call of the stag rings out across the mountains as he attempts to attract a mate. The sound is impressive, and so are the stags; these are the largest wild mammals in France, weighing up to 250kg. Follow your guide in the tracks of these majestic animals in the Oeuil valley or near Aspet, and listen out for the deep bellow of the stag.



E-scoot away

Amarok Ride offers an off-road e-scooter adventure in Montclar-de-Comminges. With the e-scooter's powerful but quiet engine, you'll roam across fields and forests on a route to suit your level, led by a professional guide. Amarok Ride has mapped out 200km of trails and knows all the secret paths in this rolling countryside. You can also try a quad or an electric motorbike to explore the countryside between the Garonne and the Ariège.

 www.amarok-ride.fr



NEW

Dogsledding at le Mourtis

Souffle Nordique will take you on a dogsled trip with Siberian Huskies. Venture out on a sled – or a cart, when there is no snow – to explore the incredible landscapes around the resort or in the forest of Cardeilhac, in the Comminges. Or have a go at *cani-rando*, hiking while towed by a dog. An unbeatable adventure, summer or winter.

+ www.lesoufflenordique.fr

Among the vines in a classic French car

Rent a classic 2CV in Domaine Roumagnac for a fun way to explore wine country. Just north of Toulouse, this vineyard in the tiny hamlet of Raygades in Villematier organises wine tourism activities and fun events all year round, and carries the official 'Vignoble & Découvertes' label.

+ www.domaineroumagnac.fr

In training for the Olympic Games

France is hosting the Olympic Games in 2024, and this is the perfect spot to try out some of those Olympic sports – like mountain biking in Aras, archery at Lac de Géry, or canoeing on the Garonne. The French Outdoor Archery Championships take place from 17 to 19 May 2024, with les Archers de Mongiscard and more than 800 competitors. In October 2024, don't miss the Canathlon, on the Canal du Midi, a multisport event including mountain biking, canoeing and running, leaving from the Moulin de Nailloux, and finishing with festivities at Lac de la Thésauque.

La Galerie des Robinets au Réservoir à Revel

The Reservoir, Canal du Midi museum located at Saint-Ferréol lake in Revel, invites you to discover its underground gallery (reopening in April 2024): La Galerie des Robinets, highlighted with light and sound for a magical visit.

+ www.lereservoir-canaldumidi.fr

Toulouse Golf Club where the greens are greener

Tee up at the Golf Club of Toulouse, a golf club with an eco-friendly approach to the sport. Awarded the 'Golf for biodiversity' silver label in 2022 for management of water and environmental preservation, the club is green in more ways than one.

+ www.golfclubdetoulouse.fr



Cassoulet cookery classes

The Auberge du Poids Public in Saint-Félix-Lauragais is a veritable local institution, and winner of the best Toulousain cassoulet in the world in 2022. Even better – it offers cookery classes. Sign up to discover the secrets to creating this emblematic traditional dish, the culinary pride of the southwest of France.

+ www.auberge-du-poids-public.fr



And breathe...

Nature, fresh air and a chance to get away. Ecotourism is at the forefront of our offering in Haute-Garonne, where forests flourish, gardens grow and gites and chambres d'hôtes invite you to stay a while and enjoy it all. Switch off and relax into eco-friendly travel. Forget the car, travel sustainably and get back to nature in these calm, quiet corners of Haute-Garonne.



Nature and forest

Take a deep breath and relax in the forests of Haute-Garonne. There's the Fôret de Bouconne, in Montaigut-sur-Save, the forests of Cierp-Gaud and Vallée du Ger, near Sengouagnet, on the Spanish border, as well as the Fôret de Montbrun-Bocage in the Volvestre area, or the Jouéou arboretum in Bagnères-de-Luchon. Guided tours and workshops let you follow animal tracks, identify bird calls or learn to cook with wild plants. Try out sports at the forest activity

centres, wander along walking trails or power along mountain bike tracks. These spaces provide a precious refuge for wildlife, too; you may see warblers in the trees and hawks hovering overhead, or catch sight of squirrels, wild boar and deer. At the heart of the Buzet-sur-Tarn Forest, you'll find the Maison de la Biodiversité, with free entry to all. In Haute-Garonne, you'll discover wild woodland spots at the Gorges de la Save, in the north of the Comminges.



On the water at Saint-Ferréol

Motor-free activities, on or off the water, provide plenty of fun at Lac de Saint-Ferréol's La Calypso sport and leisure space. Watersports fans can rent a pedalo, paddleboard, canoe or wing foil, while landlubbers can explore the century-old pine forests on an electric or standard mountain bike. There's beach volleyball, football or badminton in the sports zone. Once you've built up an appetite, settle in at the lakeside restaurant, Les Ondines, for brunch or oysters.

+ www.espacesportetnature-stferreol.com

The route to wellness

Haute-Garonne has two thermal resorts ready to welcome you, in Luchon and in Salies-du-Salat.

As well as classic thermal treatments, there are dedicated wellness and stress-relieving cures, as well as a jacuzzi, sauna, hammam and massages. The Salinea spa is in the centre of the spa town of Salies-du-Salat, unusual because of its saltwater springs.



tips  **for trips**

NEW

The La Mouline gite in Cintegabelle

La Mouline is just 40km south of Toulouse. Once a watermill, now a gite, this historic building stands at the heart of the superb parklands of the Domaine de Secourieu in Cintegabelle. The gite offers complete comfort, with cool shady terraces, a private Nordic bath, massages and more. The gardens are listed as historic monuments and are home to a very special giant plane tree, classified as a 'remarkable tree' by special French commission. Take a guided tour with Dominique Espagno to find out more.

+ resa.hautegaronnetourisme.com



NEW

The Thermes de Luchon are home to the most sulphurous hot water springs in the Pyrenees, and spring 2024 will see the opening of **a brand-new recreational area** for wellness and sports.

+ www.thermes-luchon.fr

Leave a lighter footprint

Join the hiking trails and activity spots using the extensive bus and rail network, and leave the car behind.

A few ideas:

- The Confluence Garonne-Ariège nature reserve is accessible by bus. Hop off at Portet-sur-Garonne and take the ferry (check travel times and dates before you go).
- Pibrac station, take the 'Sur les pas des pèlerins' (in the footsteps of pilgrims) hiking trail.
- Muret station: start of the Garonne et Panoramas hike; visit the Musée de Clément Ader et les Grands Hommes, a 10-minute walk.
- Longages Noé station : the Sabatouse watersports centre, a 20-minute walk.
- Carbonne station: start of the Trans-Garona cycle path to the border of Spain.
- Auterive station: Auterive Adventure, the treetop adventure course, a 20-minute walk.
- Martres-Tolosane station : Musée de la Faïence, ceramics museum, a 10-minute walk.
- Saint-Gaudens station : The Centre d'Art Contemporain (in the Saint-Jacques chapel) less than a 20-minute walk.
- Montréjeau Gourdan-Polignan station : Aquaparc Comminges, 20-minute walk.
- Castelnau-d'Estrétefonds: starting point for the Balade entre les vignes (walk among the vines).
- Luchon station (take the SNCF bus from Montréjeau station): in summer, shuttle busses to the Vallée d'Oô; summer and winter, cable car access to the Luchon-Superbagnères ski resort.
- Venerque Le Vernet station: kayak with Venerque Eaux Vives, less than a 20-minute walk.
- Toulouse Matabiau station: direct access to the city centre.
- Toulouse Montaudran: La Halle de la Machine et L'Envol des Pionniers, 10-minute walk.

C'EST NOUVEAU!

Venerque : hiking trail accessible by train

Less than 30 minutes from Toulouse, take the train to Venerque to join the new *Passerelles entre Rives et Balcons* hiking trail (5.3km, 1h30). This trail crosses the Pech plateau, as well as woodlands, communal gardens and the centre of the village. Take in the incredible panorama of the Pyrenees and the Ariège valley, and look out for wild orchids along the way.

Gardens & châteaux

Haute-Garonne has an impressive natural, architectural and historical heritage, and is home to numerous châteaux and gardens. The Château de Laréole, jewel of the renaissance, boasts formal gardens and a nature trail through an ornamental park that is home to a number of protected plant species, an orchard and vines. The Château de Bonrepos Riquet, with its orangery and historic structures, such as the grotto and the icehouse dating back to the 17th century. You can also see the experimental basins used by Pierre-Paul Riquet in 1655 as he explored ways to feed water

into the future Canal du Midi. From the feudal castle of Montespan, of which only the keep and a tower and remnants of the crenelated ramparts remain, take in the spectacular views of the plains of the Garonne and the Pyrenees. And visit the curious gardens of the Château de Merville, home to the largest hedge maze in Europe; or the Château de Valmirande in Montréjeau, where you'll find an arboretum, chapel and stables, all listed as historical monuments. Finally, the botanical gardens, A Fleur de Montagne, in Melles, with more than 1,200 species of Pyrenean plants.

tips 
→ for trips

A night in the château

Château de Jean is a gîte 15km north west of Toulouse. Set in a château that was destroyed and then rebuilt in the 16th century, it is steeped in history and comes complete with a pool, private terrace, barbecue and walking trails around the 25-acre grounds.

+ resa.hautegaronnetourisme.com



Le château Lamothe

A luxury guesthouse in Baziège, in the heart of the Lauragais, this château dates back to 1720 and has a number of guestrooms, a suite and an apartment. There's a pool, jacuzzi, boules pitch, as well as a gym and games room. The gîte also serves meals to guests.

+ resa.hautegaronnetourisme.com



Our recommendations

From Gites de France 

Le Domaine d'Escons

Le Domaine d'Escons welcomes guests in a beautifully renovated 18th-century farmhouse in the working forest of Saint-Sulpice-sur-Lèze, 40km south of Toulouse. This farmstay comes with *table d'hôtes* meals, a relaxation area with pool, boules pitch, and bicycles for guests, as well as an organic mushroom patch, vegetable garden, fig trees, chickens, and sheep. Not forgetting Taïga, the great Pyrenean patou dog.

Bioclimatic house

La Joline, a wooden gîte in Montastruc-de-Salies, a bioclimatic, ethical and ecological building, designed to limit energy consumption, offers uninterrupted views of the Pyrenees. Reservation is via Haute-Garonne Tourisme.

+ resa.hautegaronnetourisme.com

Dolce et Cabane

Sleep in a treehouse, 5m off the ground, in Bérat. There's a jacuzzi, sauna and hammock. A unique and luxurious place to stay.



In the trees

A beautiful, modern house built among the ash, oaks and weeping willows, this gîte offers guests every comfort, with a pool, Nordic bath, terrace, air-conditioning, a wide screen TV, games and a wood-burning stove.

Gîte Le Cabanon

A romantic hideaway to the south of Toulouse. Stay in a little private house on the grounds of the Tarda property in Mauressac, near Auterive, with its wooded garden, saltwater pool and boules pitch.

Le Lauraguel

This gîte and guesthouse in Mourvilles-Hautes, close to Revel, is right in the middle of the Lauragais countryside, with a pool, beautiful winter garden and heaps of comfortable, rustic charm around the open fire

+ www.lauraguel-gite.fr

Les Insolites d'Eljie

Perfect little wood cabins in the middle of pristine forest in Moncaup, in the Col des Ares area. Get back to nature in the Comminges, central Pyrenees, where your neighbour is the Pic de Cagire mountain.

+ www.lesinsolitesdeljie.jimdo.free.com
Tel : +33 6 79 58 14 17



La ville ROSE



Toulouse is the beating heart of the southwest; a natural, cultural, gastronomic, scientific and economic hub and is quite literally at the crossroads of countless hiking trails and cycle paths. Awarded Unesco City of Music status in 2023, Toulouse will mark the 20th anniversary of the death of Claude Nougaro, one of its famous sons, in 2024.

Up in the air

The aerospace capital of the world, Toulouse has long been at the forefront of the industry. The invention of the first aircraft, attributed to Clément Ader at the end of the 19th century, the planes built by Pierre-Georges Latécoère in his factory in Montaudran, and by Emile Dewoitine, the epic saga of the Aeropostale airline and the birth of Airbus, have all put it firmly on the map. Explore its impressive history at the Envol des Pionniers museum in Toulouse and the Aeroscopia museum at Blagnac, where you can admire a collection of planes on the tarmac and climb aboard Concorde. For the secrets of outer space, head to the Cité de l'Espace.



C'EST
NOUVEAU!



LuneXplorer at the Cité de l'Espace

A realistic immersive experience, unique in Europe, the LuneXplorer opened in November 2023 at the Cité de l'Espace. Experience a moon mission as though you were an astronaut, feeling the phases of acceleration, take-off and landing on the moon from inside your space capsule.

www.cite-espace.com

A feast of culture

A city of festivals, culture and the arts, Toulouse is home to some important museums and exhibition spaces: the Fondation Bemberg in the Hôtel d'Assézat (reopens February 2024); the Museum les Abattoirs, le Château d'Eau; the Musée des Augustins (reopening partially this summer, and full reopening planned for Autumn 2025), and the Dôme de la Grave, which has been transformed into a cultural space.

Just a few of the events to look out for: the 'Double Je' exhibition on artificial intelligence will open at the Quai des Savoirs on 3 February 2024; "Cathares : Toulouse dans la croisade" opens at the Musée Saint-Raymond and the

Couvent des Jacobins from 5 April 2024 to 5 January 2025. "Spirou in the torment of the Shoah," an exhibition that explores the Shoah through the pages of a comic book, will be at the Musée départemental de la Résistance et de la Déportation until 2 March 2024.

The Halle aux Grains, Zénith, Cinémathèque, Opéra National du Capitole, Halle de la Machine and Bikini provide venues for music, the performing arts, theatre, dance, and circus arts.

Among the architectural riches of Toulouse, don't miss the Capitole, a working City Hall, where you can visit the sumptuous Salle des Illustres (free entry).

The new Urban Opera of the Machines



From 25 to 27 October 2024, La Machine returns to Toulouse city centre with a new show. The outdoor performance follows the success of the first opus, "Le Gardien du Temple," in 2018, which was watched by 900,000 people across the city over four days. This new urban opera, "La Porte des Ténèbres" (The Dark Portal), again stars Asterion the Minotaur. Expect to be astonished as this outsized spectacle takes over the streets once more



THE PASSING OF THE OLYMPIC TORCH

Once ignited in Greece, the Olympic torch will embark on a journey around France, ending in Paris for the start of the Olympic Games. The torch will pass through Toulouse on 17 May 2024.

Parks and recreation

Find nature in the heart of the city on a walk through Toulouse's parks and gardens. The Jardin des Plantes, Jardin du Grand Rond and Jardin Royal, all connected by footbridges, make a beautiful triptych. For something a little different, try the parc de l'Observatoire on the heights at Jolimont, the Jardin Japonais at Compans Caffarelli, the Coulée Verte trail at Amidonniers, the Jardin Raymond VI in Saint-Cyprien, the Jardins du Muséum at Borderouge (parc de la Maourine), the park de la Reynerie or Prairie des Filtres on the banks of the Garonne. On sunny days, you can finish your journey by hiring a little electric boat on the Garonne or eating tapas on the decks of the Horizon restaurant barge.



tips → for trips



La Tour du Capitole

Spend a night in the tower of a historic building, right in the bustling centre of Toulouse. Tucked away in the pedestrian quarter, a stone's throw from Place du Capitole, this three-floor circular apartment has all the charm of Toulouse brickwork and is accessed by a stone spiral staircase with 110 steps. With uninterrupted views across the city's rooftops, it's a cosy, unusual and romantic place to stay.

+ resa.hautegaronnentourisme.com



View of the dome of La Grave

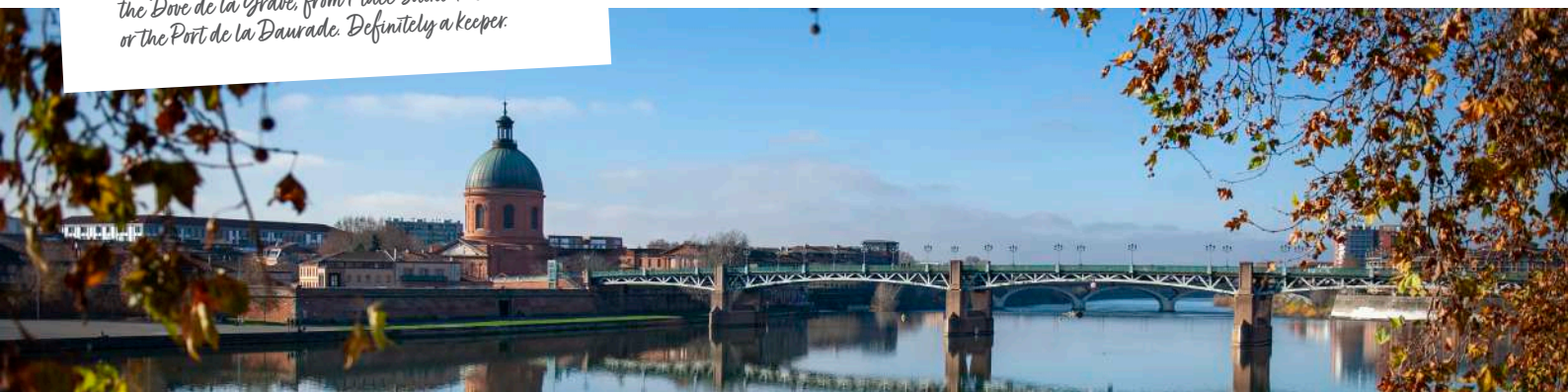
One of the city's most enchanting, and emblematic, views, overlooking the banks of the Garonne and the Dove de la Grave, from Place Saint-Pierre or the Port de la Daurade. Definitely a keeper.



THE MARATHON IS BACK

The Toulouse Métropole Run Experience Marathon is back on 10 November 2024 – the first event since 2019.

+ www.toulouserunexperience.fr





Hiking in Haute Garonne

Explore our Grande Randonnée (GR®) hiking trails. From **Toulouse to Luchon**, over the plains, up hills, down into valleys, and all the way to the Pyrenees (**GR®86**); the **Via Garona** along the river, connecting Toulouse to Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges on the Way of St James (**GR®861**); from Roquesérière to Toulouse, the Haute-Garonne section of the **Conques-Toulouse** trail (**GR®46**); and the **Voie d'Arles**, from Revel to Toulouse, a stage of the Via Tolosana which follows the Canal du Midi through the plains and hills of the Lauragais (**GR®653**). Experienced hikers can take the route from Melles to Oô, with its breathtaking **Pyrenean** panoramas (**GR®10**), and the town of Bagnères-de-Luchon, midway between the Atlantic ocean and the Mediterranean. Or take the **voie du Piémont Pyrenéen** from Portet-d'Aspet to Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges, following the Way of St James along little-used natural footpaths (**GR®78**).

+ www.randohautegaronne.com

Follow the bear

Apatura offers mountain hikes following in the footsteps of Pyrenean bears. Your guide is Comminges naturalist Jean-Pierre Daffos, member of the Réseau Ours Brun, a network of observers who keep track of bears in the region. Feeding, reproduction, hibernation, habitat, protection, living alongside humans: get the answers to all your questions about these endangered creatures, now back in our mountains to stay.

+ Tel : +33 6 75 62 13 59
www.apatura-randonnee.jimdosite.com

The dovecote hike of Cadours

Take a closer look at one of characteristic landmarks in Haute-Garonne: the pigeonier or dovecote. Leaving from Cadours, over this hilly route you will see the dovecote at la rue des Fossés and its pigeon holes, as well as those of the villages of Grès, Château de Drudas, Lamoth, Cox and Puységur. A walk through Toulousain countryside with some stunning viewpoints.

Riverbank walk from Gragnague

Set off from the charming little village of Gragnague, join the banks of the river Girou, and pass the remains of an ancient windmill, on this easy 8km walk.



Les chemins de la liberté

During World War II, and at other times, the Pyrenees provided pathways to freedom, allowing refugees to flee fascism and persecution. The memories of this recent past live on in the headstones and ruins left behind. Follow in the footsteps of the resistance fighters, dissidents, escapees and refugees from the Retirada at Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges, Marignac, Melles, via the col du Portillon, Hospice de France, the port de Balès, the valley of Oueil, towards the Hautes-Pyrenees and as far as Bausen or Bossòst in Spain.



NEW

Pony trekking (5 days, 4 nights)

Saddle up with the Cavalcagire equestrian centre for an adventure on horseback over five days and four nights, covering 95km along forest and mountain trails. Leaving from the village of Saleich, you will cross the valleys of the Arbas and the Ger, as well

as the col de Larrieu and the Paloumère massif. Alternatively, you can ride a donkey with the Ferme d'Oulan Bât. Get ready for starlit nights and superb panoramas.

Shorter treks will be on offer in 2024.

+ More information: Office de Tourisme Cagire Garonne Salat (Aspet).
Tel : +33 51 61 94 86 51 —www.opyrenees.fr



Florise Ordronneau

Learn about edible plants on foraging hikes

Mountain guide Florise Ordronneau organises hikes in the forest of the Cagire, the Pic de l'Escalette, Le Mourtis and the Paloumère massif, for all ages and people with reduced mobility. She leads themed hikes on foot, with snowshoes, or Nordic walking with poles. Find out about edible wild plants and their properties, such as nettles, ribwort, or garlic mustard; Florise will give you recipes for black bryony, dandelion, and wild garlic. A wonderful way to taste nature.

+ Contact : Gentianes et Marmott'ons (Juzet-d'Izaut)
Tel : +33 6 88 42 00 73

TOPO-GUIDES AND THE HIKER'S CHARTER

Find all the hiking trails on the Haute-Garonne Tourisme website and through topo-guides, to see all the waymarked paths, in the mountains or the countryside, and for all levels. The Hiker's Charter (*Charte du randonneur*) outlines recommendations for a successful hike (weather, equipment, markings, safety and more).

+ www.randohautegaronne.com



NEW

A new guide with more than 400 trails on foot and by bike.

Running wild Trails

13 January 2024
Le Trail nocturne des roi (night run)
Villemur-sur-Tarn

+ www.coursedesrois.jimdofree.com

10 February 2024
L'Échappée Belle des Galopins
(Cabanac-Cazaux)

+ www.lesgalopinsducagire.fr

4 May 2024
Trail du Mourtis

+ www.traildumourtis.fr

30 June 2024
Trail des Trois pics

+ www.les3pics.fr

5 — 7 July 2024
Luchon Aneto Trail

+ www.luchonanetotrail.fr

7 September 2024
Trail du Cagire

+ www.lesgalopinsducagire.fr

6 October 2024
Trail du Cassoulet de Verfeil

+ www.trailducassoulet.fr

NEW

La Boucle du Dagour

Explore the hills of the Lauragais with the Boucle du Dagour, a waymarked trail leaving from the church at Prunet and following a stream that takes you to the lake at Bourg-Saint-Bernard (8km, approx. 2 hours).

Pedal Power

Get to the heart of the Haute-Garonne on the cycle paths and hiking trails that crisscross the region, from the Trans-Garona to the Canal des deux Mers. On foot or by bike, Haute-Garonne will take you on a journey you won't forget.



Our cycle paths

La Trans-Garona

Leaving from Marquefave, following the Garonne, and ending at the Spanish border by the Val d'Aran, the development of this 130km cycle path has been a major project. The Trans-Garona route is an extension of existing cycle routes (the Val d'Aran network, the crossborder section between Chaum and Marquefave) and winds through picturesque villages like Saint-Martory, Martres-Tolosane, Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges and Saint-Béat-Lez.

+ See the route at www.randohautegaronne.com

La voie verte Val'Aigo

This former railway between Bessières and Bressols has been transformed into a 30km cycle path through the Tarn valley. The perfect way to visit the historic town centre of Villemur-sur-Tarn, where you can rent vintage bikes. Stop to picnic at La Magdelaine-sur-Tarn or join the Véloroute Vallée and the Gorges de l'Aveyron.



In 2024, Val d'Aigo is hosting events as part of Mai à Vélo (May by bike).

+ More information: www.maiavelo.fr

The Canal des Deux Mers



NEW

Stretching 750km between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, the Canal des Deux Mers offers a spectacular ride, from Gironde estuary at Royan all the way to Sète (V80). This long cycle path follows the Canal de Garonne and the Canal du Midi and crosses seven different départements.

+ www.canaldes2mersavelo.com

Find the new illustrated tourist map of the Canal des Deux Mers à Vélo, with its different sections and must-see sites.

La voie verte de la Rigole de la Plaine

This section of the Véloccitanie V84 national cycle route takes you down a pleasant, shady track by the river, leaving from Revel and going to the lake at Saint-Ferréol and Lenclas (17km).

+ www.randohautegaronne.com





CYCLOSPORTIVE LA LAPÉBIE

The 33rd edition of Cyclo sportive la Lapébie takes place on 2 June 2024, with a start line at Bagnères-de-Luchon, and three looped routes from 68km to 129km. The events hub will be at the casino in Bagnères, where there will be a giant paella and plenty of activities).

+ www.pyreneeschrono.fr

The Pyrénées Comminges mountain biking zone

Mountain bikers will have a blast at Pyrénées Comminges (VTT n°119) mountain bike zone, accredited by the Fédération Française de Cyclisme. Some 600km of waymarked tracks await around Aspet, Arbas, Saint-Béat and Barbazan. Try out cross country, enduro and gravel bikes; take the mountain pass routes or ride the pumptrack at Arbas. With around 30 tracks for all levels, this is a paradise for two wheels.

+ Information on the Espace Vélo Nature Val Camins : www.valcamins.fr



The new track flow trail La Palombière

In the Col de Larrieu forest, find the new 3 km flow trail with its bends, bumps, road gaps and its natural bottleneck. Freeride full of sensations!

Atelier Rebié

Atelier Rebié, creators of specialised cycling luggage, is in Estadens, at the foot of the Larrieu mountain pass. The workshop makes, repairs and personalises all kinds of cycling accessories, including bags, backpacks, washbags, water bottle holders, t-shirts and adventure kits. It's all 100% handmade, local and can be made to measure.

+ Contact: Aymeric Boudières - +33 31 33 04 09
www.atelier-rebie.fr

Stop off at the Château de Saint-Martory

Near the legendary mountain passes (or cols) of the central Pyrenees, the Château de Saint-Martory welcomes cyclists from around the world who come to attempt the stages of the Tour de France. Cycling champion Chris Gutowsky is a consultant here, offering expert advice on off-the-shelf cycling holidays.

+ www.saintmartory.com



Signage and sustainable tourism

The council of Haute-Garonne is experimenting with bio-based and compostable signs on the mountain passes at Superbagnères and the Col des Ares. Made in France from hemp and biopolymer (instead of plastic), the signs point to natural sites, cycle tracks and footpaths. A first in France, the new signs are another step towards sustainable tourism.

The Véloraïl in Lauragais

The Véloraïl du Lauragais at lac de Lenclas, in Saint-Félix-Lauragais, is a 7km cycle path along a former railway, winding through woodlands, wheat fields and sunflowers, with the Pyrenees as a backdrop.

+ www.veloraïldulauragais.fr



TOUR DE FRANCE

The 111th edition of the Tour de France, 29 June to 21 July 2024, will be in Haute-Garonne on 14 July 2024, for one of the most impressive Pyrenean stages: Loudenvielle to Plateau de Beille. A chance to discover three legendary mountain passes in the département, the Col de Peyresourde, de Menté and de Portet d'Aspet.

+ www.letour.fr

On the water

Get ready to enjoy some of the most spectacular spots in Haute-Garonne: the tree-lined banks of the Canal du Midi, the lakes and waterfalls of the mountains, or the rapids of the Garonne. All aboard for an aquatic adventure!

Boat trip on the Canal du Midi

Cruise along the Canal du Midi, Unesco World Heritage site, flowing some 360km from Toulouse to Sète. Navigate the waters alone or with a guide.

+ www.canal-du-midi.com



Magnificent lakes

The lakes of Haute-Garonne can provide rest and relaxation, or fun and games. At lac de la Thésauque you'll find the Aquaparc Lauragais, while Saint-Ferréol is home to sports and nature centre La Calypso. In Volvestre, try wakeboarding at Source Wake Park on lac de Barbis in Carbonne and the activity centre at the lac d'Auzas. Then there's lac de la Gimone, on the border between Haute-Garonne and the Gers, with its floating park. Or try informal outdoor dining at the Guingette de Jojo et Paulette at lac de Laragou on the edge of the Tarn. Head to lac de Montréjeau (with Pavillon Bleu status for clean water) for the Aquaparc Comminges, or lac de Géry at the foot of the Pic du Gar, or climb up to the fabulous lakes and mountains of the Pyrenees.

tips for trips

La péniche Dondon

This unusual gite on the luxury Dondon barge is ready to host you for a relaxing stay on the water. Find it moored at the Emborrel lock on the Canal du Midi at Avignonet-Lauragais.

+ resa.hautegaronnnetourisme.com



Whitewater sports

If rafting, kayaking, river boarding or canyoning float your boat, Haute-Garonne is your ideal destination. Flowing wild and impetuous at the foot of the Pyrenees, the Garonne challenges you to grab your paddle and get on the water.

Natura Quest

Granhôta has launched a new outdoor escape game called Natura Quest at the kayak centre in Clermont-le-Fort.

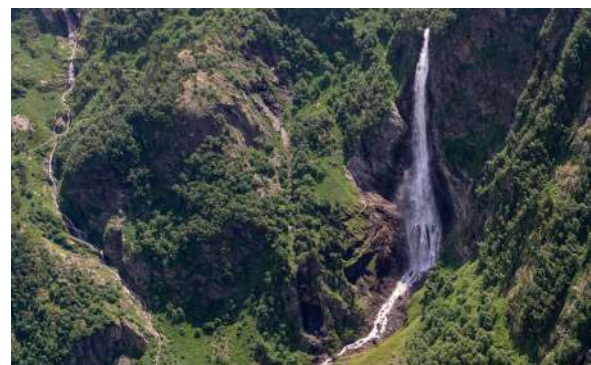
+ www.granhota.fr



La Garonne

So poetic that local chanteur Claude Nougaro sang about it, it's little wonder the Garonne gave its name to our *département*. Find out all about the river, from fishing and leisure to transport, commerce and industry at the Maison Garonne in Cazères, which hosts numerous events, workshops, exhibitions and excursions.

+ www.maisongaronne.fr



The waterfalls at Luchon

The area around Bagnères-de-Luchon is overflowing with waterfalls, like the Cascade de l'Enfer in the Lys valley, the Cascade Sidonie, accessible from Saint-Mame, the Cascade du Parisien or the waterfalls at the lac d'Oô, an hour's walk from the Granges d'Astau. The Petit Train Luchonais will take you for a ride with a stop at the Cascade de Juzet

on camera

Unusual discovery of the Garonne

In ancient times, crossing a river was done by a ferry, a boat guided by a ferryman, the boatman. For an unusual outing, take a ferry on the Garonne: that of Portet-sur-Garonne, which connects the city center at Parc du Confluent, or that of Fauga to reach the Aouach chapel, south of Muret.



The highest bridges

Pont Neuf means new bridge, but this is actually the oldest in Toulouse, dating back to 1632; visit the pont du Diable in Gensac-sur-Garonne; the iron Eiffel-style bridge at Boussens; the Pont de Bourse over the Mouillonne in Auterive; the magnificent three-arched 18th century bridge at Saint-Martory, listed as a Historic Monument, or the pont de Save in Grenade. As for the Pont du Roi, it will take you all the way to Spain!



The Lajous bridge in Rieux-Volvestre

Protected as historical monuments, the Lajous bridge, in Rieux-Volvestre, dates from the 17th century. Located near the Church of the Nativity of Mary, it is made of bricks and crosses the Arize.



Water jumps at the Aquaparc Lauragais

The activity centre at the Lac de la Thésauque (Nailloux), run by Aquaparc Lauragais, has a new draw for adrenalin seekers. Try out its fifteen or so water slides and jumps, the inflatable waterpark, splashpark for little ones, as well as pedalo, canoe and paddleboard rental.

+ www.aquaparc-lauragais.fr





Itinerary ideas

Follow our favourite itineraries to get to the heart of the diverse Haute-Garonne, on the water, in the mountains or among the vines.



Along the Garonne

Follow the Garonne from village to village, stopping at **Fos**, **Saint-Béat** and **Fronsac**, then **Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges** and **Valcabrère** (Unesco World Heritage site) and Labroquère; paddle your canoe as far as **Montréjeau**, visit the château de Valmirande and explore **Saint-Gaudens**, capital of the Comminges. Admire the magnificent 18th century three-arch bridge at **Saint-Martory**; head up to **Martres-Tolosane**, famous for its ceramics, Cazères, home to the Maison Garonne, and **Carbonne**. From **Parc du Confluent**, where the Ariège and Garonne meet, take the ferry at **Portet-sur-Garonne** and wander the wild riverbanks at **Lacroix-Falgarde**. This itinerary ends in **Toulouse**. Visit the Espace EDF-Bazacle by the river, and take the footbridge from port Vigerie to the Jardins Raymond VI.

The Canal du Midi in the Lauragais

Stop off at **Port Lauragais** and the Maison de la Haute-Garonne, head up to **Avignonet-Lauragais**, **Renneville**, **Villefranche-de-Lauragais**, with a detour to **Saint-Rome** to admire its unusual houses (listed historic monuments). Continue to **Montesquieu-Lauragais** and the lock at Négra; on to **Ayguesvives** and the lock at Sanglier, then **Nailloux**, **Montgiscard** and the windmills of **Montbrun-Lauragais**. Then head to Port Sud in **Ramonville** and Toulouse's Port Saint-Sauveur and the Canal de Brienne.

The climbs of the Tour de France

Some of the finest passes and climbs – or cols – are right here. From **Luchon**, star of the Tour de France, go to **Port de Balès** and the **Col de Peyresourde**. Climb towards **Superbagnères** and the Col du Portillon, past the Sidonie falls, then on to **Saint-Béat** and the **Col de Menté**. Follow the Col du **Portet-d'Aspet**, the **Col des Ares** and end your journey at the orientation table at Antichan-de-Frontignes.





Accueil Chemin de Compostelle accommodation



Maison des Trois Chouettes in Sepx, L’Affenage in Saint-Pé-d’Ardet and La Caubure in Labarthe-Inard now have the Accueil Chemins de Compostelle label, awarded to pilgrim accommodation on the Way of St James.

The vineyards at Fronton

From **Vacquiers**, head to **Bouloc**, **Villeneuve-lès-Bouloc** and hilltop village of **Castelnau-d’Estrétefonds**. On to the Maison des Vins in **Fronton** at the Château Capdeville, then **Villaudric** with its spectacular Tarn valley views, then **Villematier**, **Bessières**, the forest of **Buzet** and the pretty village of **Paulhac**.

Around Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges and Valcabrère

Visit **Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges** and **Valcabrère**, stopping places on the Way of St James with their own exceptional heritage, the chasm of Lespugue, **Saint-Pé-d’Ardet**, **Sauveterre-de-Comminges**, the old springs at **Barbazan**, then head to Labroquère and the lake at **Montréjeau**.



THE MEDIEVAL FEAST OF SAINT-JACQUES

In summer, Luchon, Saint-Béat and Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges mark the medieval feast of Saint-Jacques with a torchlit procession and fire show.



FESTIVAL DU COMMINGES

Summer 2024 marks the 44th edition of the Festival du Comminges, where you can experience classical, sacred, baroque, and contemporary music concerts in exceptional historic surroundings.

+ www.festival-du-comminges.com



Marc Penavayre

For the love of vines

The Domaine Plaisance Penavayre in Vacquiers is a family affair. Marc Penavayre runs a 64-acre vineyard with his father, Louis, and his son, Thibaut. They use sustainable and biodynamic methods, and the vineyards’ website offers virtual sommelier service.

+ www.plaisancepenavayre.fr



On 22 March 2024, the restaurant and hotel **Le Candide** will open its doors at Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges. A beautiful stone house with 15 bedrooms and outdoor terrace.

+ www.hotelcandide.com



Innovation at the archaeological museum at Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges

New digital features, displays and programme of events for 2024 at the archaeological museum of Saint-Bertrand.

La Résidence, edicated to rural innovation

La Résidence workspace has set up home in a former farmhouse, now a positive-energy eco-building. It offers training and co-working spaces, and you can stay here, too: one of its 12 bedrooms is reserved for pilgrims.

+ www.la-residence.com

Haute Garonne

from above



Scale new heights and expand your horizons. From the Pyrenees to the Comminges, from the Lauragais to the Tarn Valley, Haute-Garonne has some truly breath-taking panoramic views

The chapel at the Bout du Puy in Valentine

Between the Comminges and the Pyrenees, near Saint-Gaudens, you'll find the village of Valentine and the Bout du Puy footpath, surrounded by woodlands. Climb up to the chapel of Notre Dame du Bout du Puy and look out from the sanctuary dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The view across the village of Valentine and lac de Sède is spectacular.

The mountain ridges of Superbagnères

Leaving from the resort of Superbagnères, go past the Crabioules and Arnesquens chair lifts and follow the path along the mountain ridges. Right in front of you stands the Pic de Céciré, and an exceptional the view of the Luchonnais summits and the valleys below.

Artigue

Not far from the Spanish border and Bagnères-de-Luchon, the little rural community of Artigue is perched at an altitude of 1,230m above sea level. The hamlet, which sits on the GR®10 hiking trail, has around 30 inhabitants. From its belvedere overlooking the mountains of Superbagnères you'll find the stunning view of the Luchon valley and the Pyrenean peaks.



The hilltop village of Montjoire

On the Lauragais side of Haute-Garonne, the hilltop village of Montjoire provides 360-degree views of the Tarn Valley. A beautiful panoramic walk will take you over the fields and up to the crest of the hill..

Saint-Félix-Lauragais

From the hilltop village of Saint-Félix-Lauragais, at the top of a ridge that overlooks the Revel plains, admire the views of the Montagne Noire and the Pyrenees.



The Fête de la Cognac takes place at Saint-Félix-Lauragais on Easter Sunday, 31 March 2024, with a costume parade, demonstrations of heritage crafts and medieval wares and an ancient traditional challenge, mât de cognac, where contestants attempt to climb greased pole to reach prizes suspended at the top.



Le donjon d'Aurignac

Climb the steps to the Count of Aurignac's castle, a medieval marvel perched at the top of the village. From its keep, look out at uninterrupted views of the foothills of the Pyrenees and the Gascon hills.





The belltower at Revel

In the main square of the town of Revel stands a fabulous 14th century market hall. It's still in use today; the town's market sets up here each Saturday. The bell in market hall's tower dates back to 1834 chimes the hour for the town. The Tourist Office organises tours, and visitors can climb the 80 steps to reach the top for the views across the rooftops, the Lauragais, and the Montagne Noire.

Clermont-le-Fort

Perched atop a cliff overlooking the Ariège river, 20km from Toulouse, the little village of Clermont-le-Fort boasts panoramic views of the Pyrenees in the distance and the wild, meandering river below. Hungry? Stop off at Lâ-Haut Bar & Miam for traditional cuisine in cosy retro décor.

The rooftops of Toulouse

Scale the heights above Toulouse in the Parc de l'Observatoire on the hill at Jolimont, or the rooftop bar of Mama Shelter hotel, or Ma Biche sur le Toit on the roof of Galeries Lafayette department store. Head up to Pech-David with its leisure centre, or climb aboard the Téléo, the longest urban cable car in France (3km) which links Oncopole to Paul Sabatier university in just 10 minutes

Orientation tables

You'll find some spectacular viewpoints at the orientation tables around Haute-Garonne. Superbagnères and Bastion des Frontignes at Col des Ares (Antichan-de-Frontignes) in the heart of the Pyrenees; the orientation tables at Montréjeau, Saint-Gaudens, Montmaurin, Saint-Martory, Belbèze-en-Comminges on the hill at Pédégas, from the top of the keep at Aurignac or in Martres-Tolosane (the orientation table of Cassagnau). Or find the viewpoint at Castéra in Montesquieu-Volvestre. In the Lauragais, look for those at Calvaire de Cintagabelle, Camont and Avignonet-Lauragais. Finally, there are those in Clermont-le-Fort above the Ariège river or Plateau du Pech in Venerque.





Our traditions and festivals

Haute-Garonne loves fine food and festivities, and our traditional festivals have brought communities together since the dawn of time. Village fêtes, vineyard celebrations, traditional celebrations of the land and the mountains, these festivities are the life and soul of the *département*.

Les fêtes du Brandon

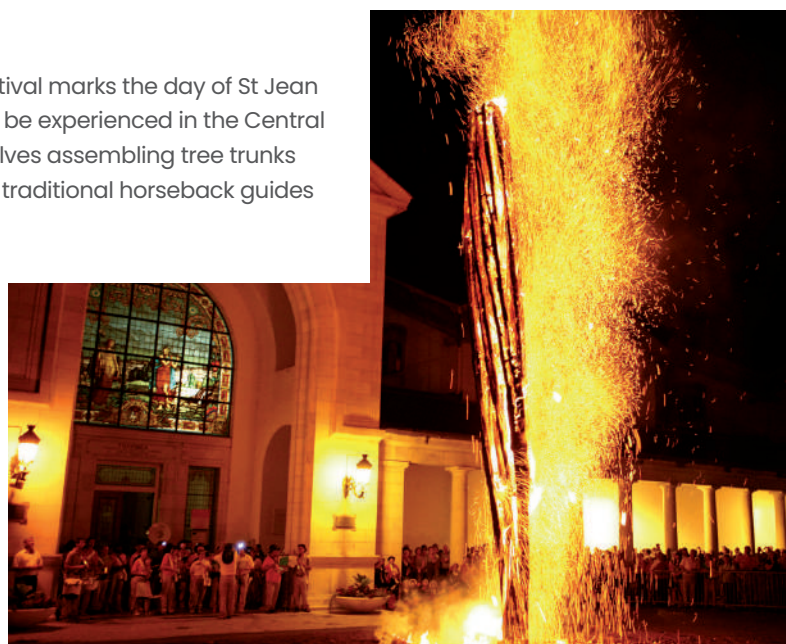
Awarded intangible heritage status by Unesco, the Brandon festival marks the day of St Jean on 21 June, for the summer solstice. This ancestral fire ritual can be experienced in the Central Pyrenees, in Luchon and surrounding villages. The Brandon involves assembling tree trunks which are burned at nightfall. Expect folk music, fire-eaters and traditional horseback guides to form part of the celebrations.

The Fête des Fleurs in Luchon

Luchon en Fleurs takes place in the last week of August. A 120-year-old tradition, the streets of the town come alive with activities, events, entertainers, brass bands, percussionists, a waiters' race, the 'Miss Fleurs' contest, pyrotechnics and a procession of traditional horseback guides. Don't miss the parade with its flower-covered floats and the battle of the flowers – some 400,000 flowers are used over the four days of this colourful, fragrant festival.

The Fête de la Saint-Vidian in Martres-Tolosane

In May, on Trinity Sunday, the Sunday after Pentecost, Martres-Tolosane celebrates the feast day of St Vidian. With its origins in the 8th century crusade between the Christians and Saracens, the festival involves a re-enactment of the battle of St Vidian, costume parades, cavalcades and a procession.



The giant omelette of Bessières

On Easter Monday (1 April 2024) in Bessières, the *Confrérie des Chevaliers de l'omelette géante* (Brotherhood of the Knights of the Giant Omelette) invite you to join them for an unusual meal. No fewer than 15,000 eggs are used to make an omelette in a pan that measures 4m in diameter. There's other entertainment on offer, too.

www.omelettegeante.fr

La Foire aux Capons in Saint-Julia-de-Gras-Capou

This little Lauragais village, known for producing capon, invites visitors to join villagers in December for a traditional fair. Saint-Julia-de-Gras-Capou unites producers of capon and other specialities, as well as craftspeople, for this popular village festival, one hour outside Toulouse.





The transhumance wins intangible heritage status

In 2023, the practice of transhumance, the seasonal herding of animals up to the summer pastures, won Unesco intangible cultural heritage status. Join the transhumance in 2024 as the sheep are taken up to their Pyrenean summer grazing spots in May, from Villeneuve-lès-Bouloc to Château de Launaguet. Come along in June when the herds leave Boutx for l'Escalette or follow the horses of the Cavalcagire stables when they leave from Aspet.

La Fête du Pré de la Fadaise

Bourg-Saint-Bernard, to the east of Toulouse, invites you to the Fête du Pré de la Fadaise on Whit Monday. This large, festive event in the Lauragais can trace its origins back over eight centuries to the Albigensian Crusade. A rural festival with performers, concerts and a village dance. Come along and admire the parade, with its flower-trimmed floats, cavaliers, musicians and fireworks.

La Fête des Candelous in Avignonet-Lauragais

The Fête des Candelous takes place on the night of the first Monday in June, with a candle-lit pilgrimage and religious procession in honour of Notre-Dames-des-Miracles. The festival traces its dark beginnings to the crusades against the Cathars when, in 1242, the Albigensians from Monségur came at nightfall to massacre the members of the inquisition at the town court.

La Fête du Grand Fénétra

The Fête du Grand Fénétra takes place in Toulouse over the last weekend in June or the first weekend in July. Music, dance and song, from France and overseas, are centre stage. Participants wear traditional costumes and take part in a procession, taking over the city's squares with colourful performances and lively dances.

La fête du Papogay

From the end of April to the beginning of May the Fête du Papogay takes over the little town of Rieux-Volvestre. This unique festival centres around the shooting with bows and arrows of a parrot (made of wood and metal) perched at the top of a 45m mast. Whoever makes the parrot fall with an arrow will become the king of the Papogay. The festival takes place over several days, with dancing, costume parades and other festivities.



Family travel

Whether you want good honest fun, educational activities, sports or festivals, there's plenty for families in Haute-Garonne.

Cool down and burn energy

- The Parc du Confluent in Portet-sur-Garonne
- Lakes and activities centres
- Château de Merville maze and gardens
- Theme parks, adventure playgrounds and treetop challenges (Natura Games in Castelmaurou, Tepacap in Rieumes, Pyrenées Hô in Cierp-Gaud, Auterive Adventures and more)

Animals and wildlife

- The African Safari and zoo at Plaisance-du-Touch
- AnimaParc in Burgaud
- The Rucher des Anes beehives at Rieux-Volvestre
- The Tortoise refuge at Bessières
- The Ferme de Courneillac, angora goat farm, at Belbèze-en-Comminges
- The Atao stables in Buzet-sur-Tarn
- The Cinquante educational farm in Ramonville

Festivals for all ages

- Ecran Jeunesse and the TV festival in Luchon, February
- Dance, circus arts and theatre festival, Saint-Gaudens, April
- Luluberlu festival in Blagnac, May
- APY'Ours in Montréjeau, June
- 31 Notes d'été in August across Haute-Garonne
- The Fabulous Festival in August, Villemur-sur-Tarn
- Jazz sur son 31, October, across Haute-Garonne
- 3 Air's festival, October, Villemur-sur-Tarn
- Marionnettissimo, November, Tournefeuille
- La Cinématèque Junior en fête, children's film festival, Toulouse, December

OLYMPIC TORCH IN HAUTE-GARONNE

The Olympic Torch will be in Haute-Garonne on 17 May 2024, ahead of the Paris Olympic Games. It will cross seven towns: Colomiers, Luchon-Superbagnères, Muret, Revel, Rieux-Volvestre, Toulouse and Villemur-sur-Tarn, with host of sporting and cultural events to celebrate its arrival.

 www.paris2024.org




Fun and educational

- The Cité de l'Espace and the Envol des Pionniers in Toulouse
- Balcon des Etoiles in Latrape
- The Village Gaulois in Rieux-Volvestre
- Archaeological sites at Montmaurin
- The Aurignacien museum in Aurignac
- The 'viti rando' walking trail at the Maison des Vins in Fronton (leaving from Vacquiers)

on camera

Aqua hiking in the Pyrenees

Mountain guide Nathanaël Roussel takes hikers old and young (from age four) on 'aqua hikes' in the Pyrenees (Sengouagnet); part hike, part storytelling, part canyoning. .

 **Contact: Va Nu Pieds – +33 6 08 67 46 04**
www.wildbow-arcsauvage.e-monsite.com

Visit a wind and sun farm

Learn about wind turbines and solar power in Avignonet-Lauragais, the first place in France to combine the two renewable energy sources (from age seven).

Grind your own flour at Brignemont

The windmill in Brignemont, built in 1740, opens for visitors in summer. This listed historic building has 16m sails and enormous millstones. Using ancient methods, you can mill your own heritage flour.

 www.moulindebrignemont.com



Grab a selfie with the famous Minotaur at the Halle de la Machine in Toulouse. Then take another on the Carré Sénart carousel, as you whirl round on the back of one of its strange moving creatures.





Haute-Garonne cuisine

Haute-Garonne is famous for its hearty cuisine and has a wealth of traditional local dishes and fine produce. Discover our protected appellations, our fine quality produce and our tastiest local specialities.

Our specialities

The duck is king in Haute-Garonne, where foie gras and magret are stars of the menus, but cassoulet and Toulouse sausages get equal billing. In Luchon, there's pétéram, a dish made with tripe, mutton feet and calf's caul, cooked for three hours. Or pistache luchonnaise, a kind of cassoulet, made with mutton and Tarbais beans. Millas from Lauragais, similar to polenta, is made from cereals and can be sweet or savoury, fried or as a galette. Purple garlic from Cadours is grown, and cooked, with great local savoir-faire. Then there are local cheeses, tripou (a tripe-based dish), Occitane omelette or a garlic soup called tourin. For the sweet tooth, Toulouse violets are used in all kinds of creations like candies, ice cream and liqueurs, while Montréjeau's speciality millasson is a flan made with orange flower and lemon.



on camera → camera

Toulouse à Table

The Toulouse à Table festival takes place across Haute-Garonne. Buzet-sur-Tarn welcomes around 700 guests for a banquet, while Martres-Tolosane organises a big traditional Comminges meal, and food trucks and gourmet raffles are set up across the area. If a slap-up lunch is your thing, the Château de Villaudric offers lunch in the courtyard. And for sporty types, there's a hearty meal after the trail du Cassoulet race in Verfeil.

+ www.toulouseatable.org

Our six appellations and quality labels

Top quality produce requires skill and care, and Haute-Garonne is proud of its producers. Among our *appellation d'origine protégée* (AOP) (protected designation of origin) products is **the purple garlic of Cadours, black pork from Bigorre and the wines of Fronton. Both Pyrenean lamb and Tarbais beans** have the status of *indication géographique protégée* (IGP) (geographic indication protected). **Gascon cattle** have the 'Label rouge' quality award. Sustainability and quality are at the heart of our agriculture.



FÊTE DE L'AIL VIOLET IN CADOURS

A whole weekend in late August is dedicated to celebrating the purple garlic of Cadours, with a farmers' market, craft stalls and activities, a soap box race, old-fashioned threshing, a parade and an equestrian show.

Traditional markets

Grenade, Aspet, Saint-Lys, Carbonne, Luchon with its famous gâteau à la broche, a sweet cake baked on a spit, or Revel, one of the 100 most beautiful markets in France. Whether in historic market halls or in the open air, our markets embody the friendly, food-loving spirit of Haute-Garonne.



FRUITS OUBLIÉS EN FÊTE IN RIEUX-VOLVESTRE

The town of Rieux-Volvestre is throwing a party for forgotten fruits, dedicated to heritage varieties and traditional orchard fruits d'autrefois.

Wine and celebration

- **'Fronton, Saveurs & Senteurs'** end of August
- **'Musique en vignes dans le Frontonnais'**
- **The commandery of master winemakers in Fronton**, an important section of the *Confrérie Bachique*, or brotherhood of winemakers, meets in Fronton around January/February to celebrate St Vincent, patron saint of wine.

Wine tourism and family fun

- **Treasure hunt:** solve the clues while exploring Cépet and Castelnau-d'Estrétefonds, to find the hidden treasure.
- **Walking trail:** stroll along footpaths among the vines of Domaine Plaisance Penavayre in Vacquiers and Château Boujac in Campas. A free and accessible visit.
- **Nomad'e-Trott offers all-terrain electric scooter** trips, for a fun and unusual way to explore the vineyards around Fronton.
- On summer evenings, a host of events form the **Bienvenue Chai les Vignerons** programme in vineyards around Fronton. Chat to winemakers about their craft, and take part in themed tours, or discover the myths and legends of the night sky with a starlit walk.

Chocolat Dardenne

Traduction

Ludovic Dardenne a créé la chocolaterie Dardenne en 1897 à Bagnères-de-Luchon. Aujourd'hui installée à Ausson, labellisée Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant, production Bio et Commerce équitable, cette entreprise centenaire vous accueille dans son musée attenant à la boutique.

+ www.chocolatdardenne.com

Le Fournil Résistance in Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges

Sourdough bread made with slow fermentation and heritage flours and baked in a traditional woodfire; la Louise, la Colette, La Frida – all the breads are named after women in tribute to the feminist fight. This unusual bakery, created by Tulip Santène, offers workshops where you can learn the art of traditional baking.

+ www.fournil-resistance.fr



La Maison des vins in Fronton

Almost 140 winemakers, both independent and in cooperatives, make Fronton's AOP wine. Their wines are known for their unique grape variety, la Négrette. Head to the Maison des Vins et du Tourisme du Vignoble de Fronton to find out more about this special local produce. Accredited with the *Vignobles* and *Découvertes* label for wine tourism, it offers themed visits, guided tours and tastings.

+ www.vins-de-fronton.com



9 Michelin-starred restaurants

Haute-Garonne is home to nine Michelin-starred restaurants, while many others have accreditations from Tables & Auberges de France, Bib Gourmand, Gault & Millau, Bottin Gourmand and Maître Restaurateur.



Dominique Bouchair

Fromage Napoléon takes over the world

Fromages du Mont Royal is a family-run business with four generations of experience, exporting its cheese as far as Australia and Japan. Dominique Bouchair, currently at the helm, holds the prestigious title of *Meilleur Ouvrier de France*, awarded to the most skilled craftspeople in the country. Visit the shop at Estancarbon, near Saint-Gaudens, or buy online. The star of the show is Napoléon Commingeois, a firm cheese that melts in the mouth.

+ www.fromage-napoleon.com

Some light refreshment ...

The Prairies des Glaces at Ferme des Bardis in Buzet-sur-Tarn is home to brothers Francis and Alain Tégou, creators of artisanal dairy ice creams. Also in Buzet, you'll find craft brewery Pépouze, while more craft beers are on offer at the Kavaï brewery in Villemur-sur-Tarn.



The tavern of the old station from La Magdelaine-sur-Tarn

Want an unusual setting? Discover the guinguette bistro which opened in the old La Magdelaine-sur-Tarn station. A vast park, a varied menu, generous food and a family atmosphere: this authentic place preserves the character of the station from 1885!

+ www.lagare-magdelaine.fr

on camera

Make your own cheese

Curdling, draining, shaping, salting, ripening – take part in a cheesemaking workshop where the farmers share their savoir-faire.

Ferme de Couledoux in Boutx-Couledoux, at the foot of the Cagire mountain. Find out about the Tarentaise dairy cows, and how mountain cheeses are made.

See the whole process, from the early morning milking to the creation of a traditional tomme cheese. Find out about acidification processes used for fromage blanc and other products and visit the cellars and the rest of the farm.

+ www.fermedecouledoux.fr - +33 6 63 90 34 11

Ferme Les Bessous with its herd of 500 dairy sheep and around 100 lambs, makes around 20 tonnes of cheese a year. On offer are cheesemaking, tours of the cellars, sheepfolds and milking room, and tastings.

+ www.bessous.odoo.com - +33 6 34 18 85 54



Local talents

With ceramics, blue woad dyes, stained glass and marquetry, it's clear that arts and crafts are alive and well in Haute-Garonne, where ancient skills are blended with innovative creative initiatives.

Ceramics in Martres-Tolosane

Martres-Tolosane, renowned for its characteristic ceramics, has a unique place in French heritage. Immersion in tin-based enamel gives the clay its opaque whiteness, while firing at 980°C is done using the ancient *grand feu* (big fire) technique. Visit the Musée de la Faïence (Ceramics Museum) in the old town – recently named one of France's Small Towns of Character. .

The marble quarries at Saint-Béat

Saint-Béat is known for the marble cut from its Jurassic limestone rocks; its quarries have been in operation since antiquity. Marble from Saint-Béat can be found in the Château de Versailles and the Louvre, among others.



FESTIVAL DE LA SCULPTURE ET DU MARBRE IN SAINT-BÉAT

For three weeks in July, Saint-Béat and its surroundings play host to the Festival of Sculpture and Marble. For 20 years, this event has unlocked the secrets of marble. Did you know there are several varieties? Pure white, turquoise, green, as well as black, yellow and red. Events take place from 6 to 27 July 2024.

Blue par Nature and Terre de Pastel

To celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2023, Bleu par Nature, part of the Terre de Pastel group, announced the creation of a seven-acre domain dedicated to the woad (pastel) plant. Set to open in spring 2025, it will include a 5-star hotel and spa, gastronomic restaurant run by Toulouse's Michelin-starred chef Guillaume Momboisse, a training centre and cultivation land for these precious plants.

The group planted the first woad fields in Labège a decade ago, where it opened its first spa, museum and craft boutique offering workshops to learn how to use

the blue dye – there are also shops in Toulouse and Albi. Woad, or pastel, is on Unesco's intangible cultural heritage list, and comes from a native Occitan plant (Latin name *Isatis tinctoria* L.,) known as the dyer's plant. Its flowers are yellow, but its leaves are used to create a blue pigment found in a large range of beauty products, cosmetics, as well as clothing and homeware.

+ www.bleuparnature.com
www.terredepastel.com



Stained glass in Montréjeau

The Atelier Vitrail de Mont-Royal in Montréjeau designs, makes and restores stained glass. Maryline Delous, the founder, and Francisco Grivalja work with private individuals, professionals, public authorities, cultural spaces, châteaux and hotels.

Collaborating with a network of craftspeople in the region, from artistic ironwork to marble sculpture, they also produce Art Nouveau and Art Deco, contemporary and classic pieces.

+ www.atelier-vitrail-delois.fr



Furniture making in Revel

Since the 19th century, the medieval bastide town of Revel has been renowned as the capital of furniture making and marquetry. Thanks to its excellent craftspeople, cabinetmakers, engravers, ironmongers, rug makers and other decorative artists, the town has earned special *Ville et Métiers d'Art* status. Uncover the secrets of heritage crafts at the Musée du Bois et de la Marqueterie (MUB), a centre for contemporary art.

Revel has also been recognised as a Centre for Rural Excellence, and it continues to preserve artisan skills through its specialist arts and crafts school, Institute des Métiers d'Art & l'Artisanat (Imara), and its professional lycée dedicated to crafts, woodworking and furniture making, as well as its active creative crafts communities.

+ www.museedubois.com

LE PRINTEMPS DE L'ARBRE IN REVEL



Don't miss the second edition of the Printemps de l'Arbre, from 10 February to 29 May 2024 at the Musée du Bois et de la Marqueterie (MUB), or the pop-up Christmas craft market.

Screen printing in Aspet

Iris Delvalle is a screen print artist based in Aspet. At her studio, Dahu Edition, you can find beautiful paper objects, decorations, lights, fashion accessories and jewellery. All her handmade products are eco-friendly (inks without solvent, recycled papers, reused materials). Learn screen printing techniques on fabric or paper at one of her workshops.

+ www.dahuedition.com

La Maison de la Haute-Garonne in Port-Lauragais

Open seven days a week, all year round, Maison de la Haute-Garonne in Port-Lauragais sells tasty local delicacies as well as crafts made by local artists: pottery, jewellery, woad-dyed textiles, and pieces by the cabinetmakers of Revel and the ceramicists of Martres-Tolosane.



Pierre Saint-Martin

The carillon bells of Aspet

Pierre Saint-Martin has something of an unusual job. He is the official carillonneur at the church of St Martin in Aspet, in the Pyrenees, where he plays the beautiful 16-bell carillon, the pride of Aspet. A little 14th century door leading him to his workplace, and the first bell in the tower was founded in Aspet in 1823, and the largest, which has been named Martine, weighs a tonne. Pierre Saint-Martin plays the music of André Bouéry, 19th century musician and poet who created an original repertoire especially for this unusual instrument (*Chansons gasconnes du sonneur d'Aspet*, or Gascon songs for the ringer of Aspet, 1872). You can hear the carillon ring out in the streets of Aspet on market days (Wednesdays and Saturdays), at midday, on Sundays for mass, and every evening in December during the Christmas period.

+ More information:
Office de Tourisme Cagire Garonne Salat
www.opyrenees.fr

Pyrenean peaks



Summer and winter, the Haute-Garonne Pyrenees welcome visitors in search of nature and a lungful of fresh, clean air. Our four ski resorts propose activities for all.

Our four ski resorts

Le Mourtis

Family-friendly Le Mourtis in Boutx has 20 slopes, 23km of skiable pistes and 10 ski lifts. Come for trails through the forest, dogsledding with Le Souffle Nordique, pony trekking with the Equi'Boutx equestrian centre, or Nordic walking with Pyrénées Liberté.

+ www.haute-garonne-montagne.com

Peyragudes

A ski resort spread over two sides of the mountain, Agudes and Peyrasourde, there are 51 slopes, 18 lifts, and 60km of pistes. Peyragudes is accessible via the Skyvall cable car, linking Loudenvielle and the foot of the slopes at Peyresourde. The resort is equipped to offer disabled skiing.

+ www.peyragudes.com

tips for trips

Gîte Le Grand Tétrás in Boutx Le Mourtis



A large wooden chalet, a covered terrace and views over the mountains: the Grand Tétrás, at the entrance to the resort of Le Mourtis, has all the comforts you need, including a garden room, outdoor plancha grill and a boules pitch.

+ resa.hautegaronnetourisme.com

Luchon-Superbagnères

With 30km of slopes, 28 pistes, 14 lifts, and a cable car linking the town to the resort, Luchon-Superbagnères will wow you with its mountain ridges and altitude restaurant, complete with 360° views.



The new panoramic cable car

Launched in 2023, the new express cable car service at Luchon-Superbagnères, with 58 10-person cars, takes eight minutes to rise 1200m from the town of Luchon to the resort's summit. The new valley-to-summit service makes it easier to reach the slopes and hiking trails.

Bourg d'Oueil

In the valley of the Oueil, known as the valley of the deer, this little resort (5km of skiable pistes, with seven slopes), is perfect for beginners and families. There's a new snowshoe hiking trail, and the picturesque Barousse valley, accessible by the Balès pass, has an impressive panorama of 'Les 3,000 Pyrénéens'.

+ www.haute-garonne-montagne.com

film idea

Avalanche training

Former rescue worker in the gendarmes mountain rescue team, Philippe Legrand leads training sessions on avalanche search and rescue, with rescue dogs, detectors and probes.

+ **Contact : Pyrénées Liberté**
www.pyreneesliberte.com

On the trail

of the Romanesque frescos
Explore the Romanesque churches of Haute-Garonne in the Oueil and Larboust valleys, veritable historic monuments, and the frescos and murals hidden away in numerous chapels. The church at Montsaunès, the Commandry of the Knights Templar; the church of Saint-Pierre de Saint-Pé-d'Ardet or Saint-Aventin-de-Larboust in Saint-Aventin. Take a journey to the heart of medieval Christianity.

18 summits above 3,000m tall

Haute-Garonne counts 18 peaks at above 3,000m. Known as 'Les 3,000 Pyrénéens,' these giants are concentrated around the Luchon massif; the highest, le pic de Perdiguère, measures 3,222m.



TRIATHLON DE LUCHON

The 3rd edition of the Triathlon de Luchon takes place on 8 June 2024. The starting line for the swim, cycle and run race is at lac de Badech and this year the finish line is in Superbagnères. An incredible challenge in the heart of the breath-taking Pyrenean mountains.

+ www.triathlondeluchon.com

tips for trip



A trip to the heart of the Pyrenees

Gite Maison de la Lionne in Bagnères-de-Luchon : spacious and bright, this gite can welcome up to 15 people. With its stunning façade in Pyrenean stone, large private garden and coworking space, it has charm and practicality.

Gite Arza Mendi in Jurvielle: this quiet, cosy holiday house, hidden away in a Pyrenean village, can sleep 15, and there's plenty of room around the fireplace.

The Espingo refuge: after leaving the Granges d'Astau, it's around a 2h30 hike via lac d'Oô to the refuge d'Espingo. It has six dormitories and sleeps 60 (when a guardian is on site). The view from the terrace across the cirque d'Espingo and the lake is spectacular. If you want a challenge, carry on towards lac Saussat and lac du Portillon.

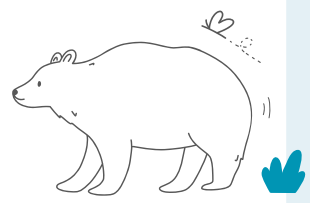
+ www.refugedespingo.ffcam.fr



Le pays de l'ours

There are currently around 80 brown bears in the Pyrenees. Pass by the bear memorial in Melles on the lookout for the "lord of the Pyrenees", an emblematic species of Pyrenean heritage. «Le Pays de l'ours» Association, based in Arbas, offers naturalist walks and mountain hikes on the theme of bears.

+ www.paysdelours.com



Lots of activities

- Downhill and touring skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing
- Sledding, airboard, zip line, mountain scooter
- Torchlight descent, igloo construction, snow groomer ride, balneotherapy
- Donkey rides, horse riding, sled dog rides, cani kart
- Motocross, mountain bike, mountain bike, fat bike
- Via ferrata, climbing, paragliding
- Mountain lakes circuit
- Unusual outing to the Péquerin footbridge (suspension bridge at the gates of Luchon)



La Grange de Mayrègne :

This stunning converted barn in the Vallée d'Oueil is a piece of paradise. Built from wood and stone, it has giant picture windows offering spectacular uninterrupted views of the valley and the Luchon peaks.

+ resa.hautegaronnnetourisme.com

Le refuge de Vénasque

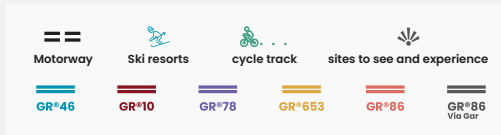
The mountain refuge at Vénasque, well-known to mountain lovers, has been completely rebuilt. Two hours walk from the Hospice de France, it is now self-sufficient in energy and waste treatment, and has carefully controlled water use. Offering homemade meals, it's an ideal place for a digital detox.

+ www.refugedevenasque.ffcam.fr

Lac de Badech

A free supervised swimming zone has been set up at lac de Badech, near Bagnères-de-Luchon (open 1pm – 6pm in summer).

Haute-Garonne



2000 heures de soleil par an



Traduction

6 309 km² de superficie
19 % montagne,
39 % de coteaux,
42 % de plaine



Traduction



18 sommets
et 4 stations de ski
Luchon-Superbagnères,
Le Mourtis, Bourg d'Oueil, Peyragudes

And...

12 stations vertes
(Recognised nature and environment destinations)

Villemur-sur-Tarn, Saint-Béat-Lez, L'Isle-en-Dodon, Rieux-Volvestre, Revel, Montréjeau, Cazères, Bagnères-de-Luchon, Boulogne-sur-Gesse, Aurignac, Martres-Tolosane and Grenade-sur-Garonne

2 Pavillons bleu awards for clean swimming
Lac de Montréjeau, Port Saint Sauveur on the Canal du Midi in Toulouse



39,200 jobs in tourism
(15% of all employment)
9 million tourists a year
30 million daytrippers a year



7 Unesco World Heritage sites:

- The Canal du Midi and the dam at Saint-Ferréol
- Hôtel-Dieu Saint Jacques in Toulouse
- The Brandon tradition in the central Pyrenees (feu de la Saint-Jean)
- Saint-Just de Valcabrière basilica, Valcabrière
- Sainte-Marie cathedral in Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges
- The Transhumance



La cité de l'espace
The most-visited site in Haute-Garonne with more than 400,000 visitors a year



- 12 Natura 2000 conservation sites
- 15 Espaces Naturels Sensibles Forêt de Buzet, château de Laréole, etc.
- 27 hébergements "Clef verte" sustainable accommodations 3rd highest number in Occitanie
- 38 Tourisme & Handicap accessible sites
- 43 Accueil Vélo cyclist sites
- 15 Villes et Villages Fleuris, towns and villages in bloom

haute-garonnetourisme.com



Share your experiences at **#TourismeHG**
and follow us at **@tourismehg**

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