

THE GREEN WAY

in Haut
Languedoc

Passàpais®



CONTENTS

The Regional Natural Park of Haut-Languedoc.....	4-5
The Passapais, a geographic view.....	6-7
On the path of our ancestors	8-9
Towers & castles	10-11
The Castres-Bédarieux railway line.....	12-13
Paths of religion.....	14-15
The working path	16-17
Water in Haut-Languedoc	18-19
Fauna-Flora.....	20-23
Sites for sore eyes	24-25
Home made.....	26-27
Sector : Mazamet - Labastide.....	28-29
Sector : Sauveterre - Riols	30-31
Sector : St Pons - Colombières.....	32-33
Sector : Mons - Bédarieux.....	34-35
The brand products of the Park.....	36
How to use the Green Way	37-39
The Green Way signposts	40-41
Map	42-43
Contact details	44





EDITORIAL

Baptized « Passapaïs » (pronounced « Passopaïs »), which means in occitan « A pass to travel around the country ». The Passapaïs is a Green Way in the Park of Haut-Languedoc, following the old railway line between Bédarieux and Mazamet and representing nearly 80 kilometers of pathway. A path devoted to all forms of non-motorised hiking, on foot, horseback or biking. It's also accessible to people with disabilities and an ideal way for young children to discover and improve their biking or equestrian skills. More than just a simple route, it provides a key to discovering this area on a real human scale. Use this natural energy to fill up all your senses! This travel log is also an album full of images and possibilities of fresh exciting discoveries: history, geography, patrimony, nature, local products,... So many ideas of escapades and adventure to fulfill your stay, be it a day, a week or more. You might be the quiet country walking type or the energetic jogger, the easy going cyclist or the long distance performer, alone or with family or friends, this guide would like to be your passport to many new discoveries. The way is open,... enter and explore all it has to offer!

Daniel Vialelle, Président
du Parc naturel régional du Haut-Languedoc

Marie Passieux, Elue en charge de la voie verte
du Parc naturel régional du Haut-Languedoc



HIKE, EXPLORE, BE AMAZED... IN THE HEART OF NATURE IN THE REGIONAL NATURAL PARK OF HAUT-LANGUEDOC

Benvenguda al Parque natural regional de Lengadòc Naut !

The Regional Natural Park of Haut-Languedoc was established in 1973. It includes 118 municipalities and their 90 000 inhabitants. It lies over the last of the southern foothills of the Massif Central, covering a part of western Hérault and the east of the tarn region: it's here that the two Midis meet!

THE PARC QU'ES AQUÒ ?

A Regional Natural Park is an inhabited rural region, recognized on a national level for the exceptional value and precarity of its landscape and patrimony.

The vocation of a Regional Natural Park is to establish a policy of economic, social and cultural development, based on the protection and value of its patrimony and its natural environment.

One of the peculiarities of the Regional Natural Park of Haut-Languedoc is that it is divided by a watershed line. Rivers and streams flow down to the Atlantic Ocean to the west of this line while it flows into the Mediterranean Sea on the eastern side. This is a strong element in the identity of Haut-Languedoc meaning that it benefits from a triple climatic influence: Atlantic, mountain and Mediterranean, providing an exceptional botanical and biological diversity in extremely different landscapes, from the mysterious charm of the oak forests to the many colored plants and flowers heralding the beginning of the scrublands...



BETWEEN MAZAMET AND BÉDARIEUX, WITHOUT TAKING THE ROAD!



Baptised 'Passapais' (pronounced 'Passopais'), which in Occitane means 'Cross country', the Green Way of the Haut-Languedoc crosses the watershed between Courniou-les-Grottes (Hérault) and Labastide-Rouairoux (Tarn). It's a pathway from the Hérault to the Tarn, and from a Mediterranean climate to an Atlantic one in Région Occitanie.

From Mazamet to Bédarieux, the Green Way 'Passapais' enables you to cross more than 75 km in total security and without being bothered of noise.

'Passapais' is also marked by many marvellous stages rich in new discoveries: the castle of Maréchal Soult-Berg, the textile museum in Labastide-Rouairoux, "the Fileuse de verre" cave and the National Museum of caving in Courniou, the Prehistoric Museum in Saint-Pons-de-Thomières, the village



of Olargues, which has merited the label 'Most beautiful villages of France', the spectacular gorges of Héric and Colombières, the viewpoints on the Caroux, the Maison des Arts in Bédarieux... For a trip of a few hours, some sport or simply take in the air of the low mountain ranges of the Haut-Languedoc, discover a landscape of vineyards, forests, prairies, rivers and streams, tunnels and bridges of the Eiffel style... You are on the right track!



The Green Way crosses the Regional Natural Park of Haut-Languedoc from one side to the other following the path of the old railway bordering the mountain near Montpellier-Castres and the path of the three valleys where we can find the Thoré, the Jaur and the Orb rivers. When the pathway crosses the administrative line between the Tarn and the Hérault passing through a tunnel of nearly 800 meters under the Fenille Pass, it goes under the watershed thus linking the oceanic slopes to the slopes of the Mediterranean sea and so earns the nickname 'Passapaïs'.

From a geological point of view, diversity is the key word: all along the Green Way we come across clay, schist, limestone, marble and gneiss. Not forgetting the karstic wealth of the subterranean world and the granite often used in many works of art.

A surprising variety of climates, a mosaic of landscapes! Lined with ash and Holm oak trees in the Tarn, the pathway crosses a copped landscape dominated in the south by the Black Mountains and in the north by the rolling hills of the Anglès plateau.

peat bog



THE WATER THE MEETING OF


Towards the Tarn
then the Garonne and
finally the
Atlantic Ocean
in the
Gironde estuary



SHED LINE THE TWO MIDIS



In the Hérault, it's the chestnut groves, the Holm oak forests, the scrubland and the vineyards which take over... going as far as the palm trees of Lamalou-les-Bains and Bédarieux!

TO READ:  *Le Parc naturel régional du Haut-Languedoc*
Santiago Mendieta et Alain Baschenis - Lavour, éd. Privat, 2013.
Available at the 'Maison du Parc' and in bookshops



Cistus with sage leaf



Towards
the Mediterranean
and Valras beach

Holm oak
evergreen

MEDITERRANEA SEA



ON THE PATH OF OUR ANCESTORS

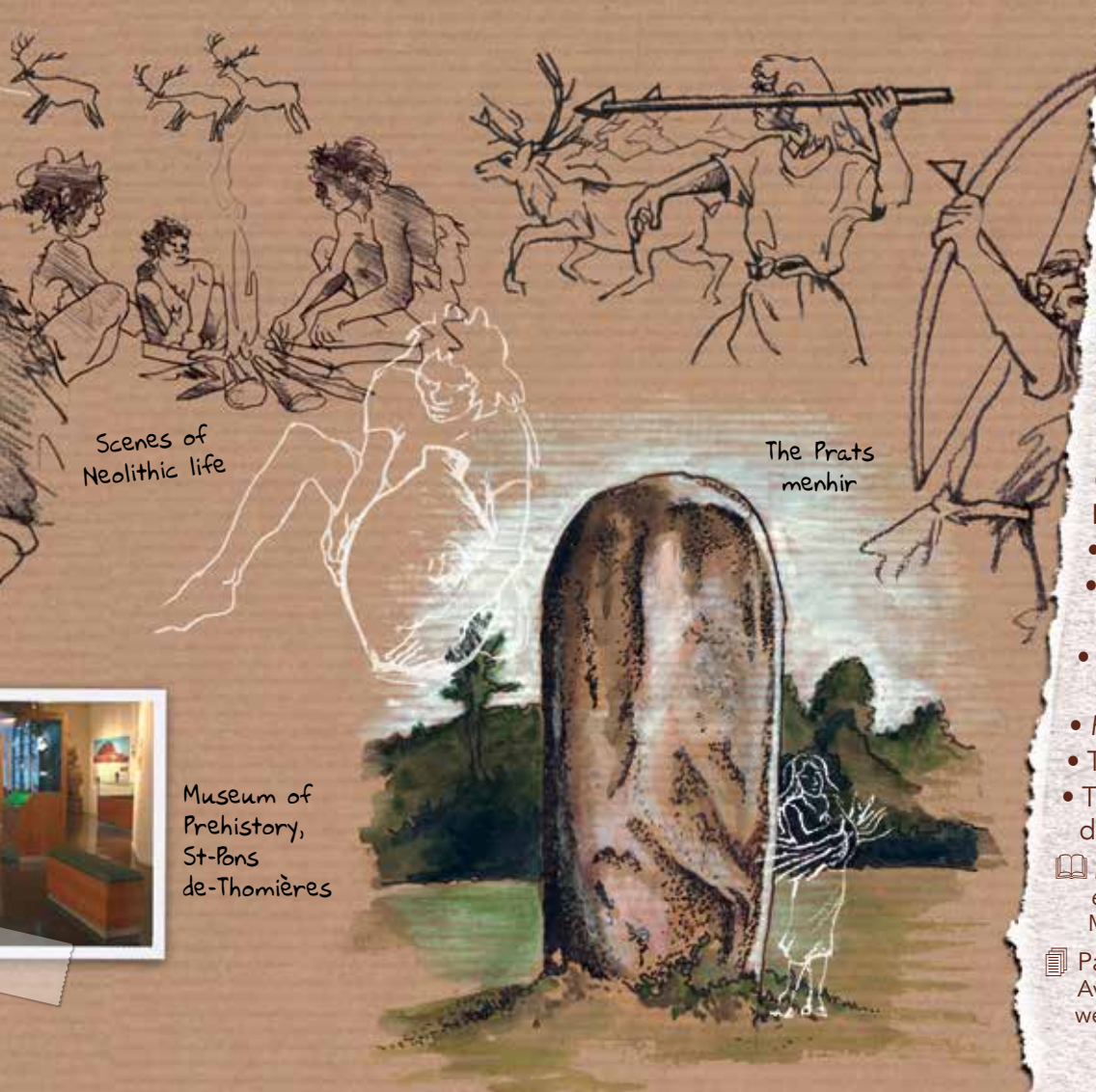
Lo camin dels ancians

At the beginning of the Neolithic Age, people arriving from the Alps settled along the Jaur valley establishing themselves over a broad territory. Baptized 'Saint-Poniens', this people are gifted with a huge dynamism and bring with them a culture and a know-how. Besides their agricultural skills, animal husbandry and craftwork, these people assert real artistic talents and erect standing stones, menhirs in the likenesses of male and female personalities, important in local community life, this being one of the first appearances of European statuary. You can discover these works of art in the area surrounding the Green Way, as well as dolmens and menhirs, testifying to the presence of this ancient civilization.



The Gante dolmen





MUST VISIT


Near the Green Way

- The menhir of the two sisters at Lacabarède
- Museum of Prehistory, St-Pons-de-Thomières to discover the history and the remnants of the Saint-Ponienne culture discovered in the caves of Haut-Languedoc.



Other sites to explore further. Inquiries at the Tourist Offices

- The Prats menhir at Mazamet
- The Pierre Pause menhir (*Pèira Pausa*) at St-Amans-Soul
- The dolmen of Plo de la Gante at Labastide-Rouairoux
- *Pèira Escrita* at Olargues
- The dolmen of Ichis at Prémian
- The dolmens of St-Vincent, d'Olargues (*Raspailac*)

 *Les statues menhirs saint-poniennes en Haut-Languedoc*, G. Rodriguez, Montpellier, a2c Edition, 2009.

 Patrimony document n°26 - Available at the 'Maison du Parc', on their website and in Tourist Offices.



TOWERS AND CASTLES

A l'entorn dels castells

Built to be lived in, but also to protect from the aggressor: it was a permanent problem for the inhabitants, be it the powerful Lord or the simple villager. The many remnants of towers and castles, fortified villages, simple fire and watch towers tell their own story of the region's long and bloody history: the crusade of the Albigeois, religious wars or Richelieu's destructions. Nearer to our time, once peace was restored, the castles abandoned their military aspect to become homes for the nobility, gentlemen's manors or houses of prestige.

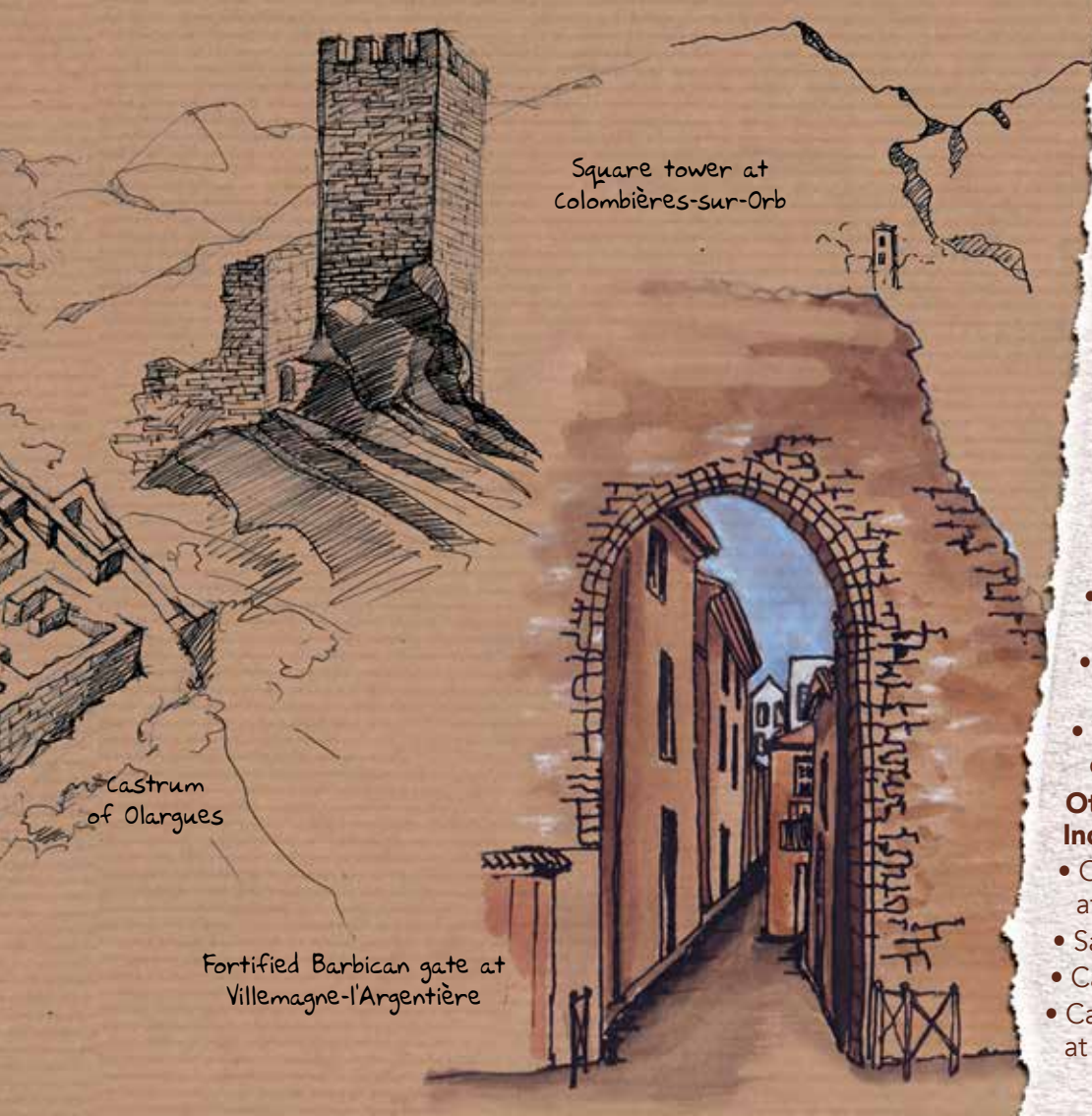


Valtoret Castle

A reconstitution
of the Castrum
of Olargues



© Frédéric Mazenod, Conseil Général de l'Hérault



Square tower at
Colombières-sur-Orb

Castrum
of Olargues

Fortified Barbican gate at
Villemagne-l'Argentière

MUST VISIT

Near the Green Way

- Valtoret Castle at St-Amans-Valtoret
- Fortified country house at St-Amans-Soult
- The *Nòstre Sénher* gateway and the remnants of the fortifications at St-Pons-de-Thomières
- The Castrum of Olargues

Going further away

- Hautpoul (near Mazamet)
- The Gaillergues tower at St-Vincent-d'Olargues
- Castellars of Olargues-le-vieux at St-Julien
- The square tower at Colombières-sur-Orb
- The Mirande tower and fortified Barbican gate at Villemagne-l'Argentière

Other sites.

Inquiries at the Tourist Offices

- Castle Maréchal Soult at St-Amans-Soult
- Sauveterre castle
- Campan castle at Anglès
- Castle of the Counts of Thézán at Pujol-sur-Orb



THE CASTRES-BÉDARIEUX RAILWAY LINE

Lo tren Castras-Bedarius

The creation of the railway line Bédarieux-Castres from 1860 to 1880, required the construction of a number of bridges and viaducts in marble or steel and many tunnels to tame the wild and rugged countryside. The railway line would enable Castres to be linked to Montpellier in less than 3 hours, before being closed to the public in 1972 and to goods transport in 1986. Downgraded, followed by the removal of the tracks, the line was gradually acquired by the departmental Councils of the Tarn and the Hérault. Today the old track and its many works of art, remnants of it's short-lived history as the Bédarieux-Castres railway line, has found a new vocation, that of the Green Way, Passapaïs.

Carrel bridge
at Lamalou-les-Bains



Level crossing house
at Colombières-sur-Orb



Bédarieux station

One of the
many tunnels
on the Passapi's

Bridge style Eiffel
at Olargues



Along the Green Way

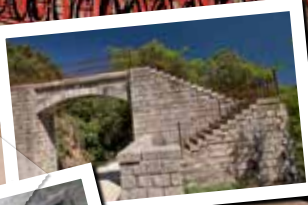
- The Gautard bridge at Bout-du-Pont-de-l'Arn
- The Fenille tunnel to Labastide-Rouairoux at Courniou-les-Grottes, 766m meters long
- The Colombier viaduct at Courniou-les-Grottes
- The Ponderach viaduct at St-Pons-de-Thomières
- The Ardouane Bridge at Riols
- Eiffel style bridge at Olargues
- Arched gallery at Poujol-sur-Orb
- The Carrel bridge at Lamalou-les-Bains
- Lamalou-les-Bains station
- Bridge over the Mare at Villemagne-l'Argentière.

Also many other tunnels, works of art
both big and small...
all the way along the old railway line



Patrimony document: n°33

Available at the 'Maison du Parc', on their website
and in Tourist Offices.





PATHS OF RELIGION

Dralhadas de fe

Popular fervor, the devotion of a people is seen in the traces left impregnated into the landscape. A fearless bell tower or a modest cross at a crossroad, a pilgrim's path, impressive church organs or discreet chapels on some little known path, devout worshippers or musical events tell this long story of belief and faith to those who would listen.

MUST VISIT

Near the Green Way:

- Octagonal bell tower at St-Amans-Soult church
- The cathedral at St-Pons-de-Thomières
- The Virgin of Mercadal and the Caminade church at Prémian
- The St-Laurent church and the old Commanderie of the Hospitallers of St. John at Olargues
- Roman priory at St-Julien
- Roman church at St-Pierre de Rhèdes at Lamalou-les-Bains
- St-Martial church at Hérépian

Church of
St-Pierre de Rhèdes
at Lamalou-les-Bains

St-Pons-de-Thomières
cathedral



Stairway of the
Commanderie of
the Hospitallers
of St. John
of Jerusalem
at Olargues

Church of
St-Amans-Soulh

Church of
Villemagne
l'Argentière

St-Julien Priory

Going further away

- St-Roch chapel at La Voulte at Mons-la-Trivaille
- Ste-Colombe chapel at Colombières-sur-Orb (fresco Jacques Bruguier)
- Churches and abbey at Villemagne-l'Argentière

📖 Patrimony documents: n°29 and 30
Available at the 'Maison du Parc',
on their website and in Tourist Offices.



Organ in the cathedral
of St-Pons-de-Thomières

Fresco
in the chapel
Ste-Colombe

THE WAY OF THE ORGANS

Mazamet: 3 Cavaillé organs:

- Churches of St-Sauveur and Notre Dame
- Temple of Oratoire

• St-Pons-de-Thomières:

- The Jean-Batiste Micot organ in the cathedral (historical monument)

• Olargues:

- Organ at the Church of St-Laurent

• Bédarieux:

- Organ Puget in the church of St-Alexandre
- Organ Don Bedos in the Temple (MH)
- Organ Cavaillé in the church of St-Louis (MH)

Organ
in the church of St-Louis
at Bédarieux



THE WORKING PATH *Lo camin dels mestiers*

Here the sun, the vines, the fruits of the earth, there, the water, the wood, the stone, the wool, the hides... The two Midis meet, one that looks towards the Mediterranean and the other towards the ocean, both providing important natural resources. Man has patiently adapted to the elements, tamed the natural energies and refined his gestures over time. Professions, employment, production, the know-how and a job well done. The precious memory of these trades and crafts is preserved here. How to illuminate the past to understand the present, it's the lesson of non delocalised resources.



Chestnut production
from Courniou-les-Grottes
to Lamalou-les-Bains



Spinning
and the wool
industry





Vine production
from Olargues to Bédarieux



The bell foundry
at Hérépian



MUST VISIT

Near the Green Way

- The 'Follow the current' hike from Mazamet to Hautpoul
- The Postman's path in the Haute-Vallée du Thoré
- The textile museum in Labastide-Rouairoux (Musée de France)
- The Art and Marble circuit at Saint-Pons-de-Thomières
- Museum of Arts and Popular Traditions in Olargues
- Museum of the bell and the cowbell at Hérépian (Musée de France)



Going further away

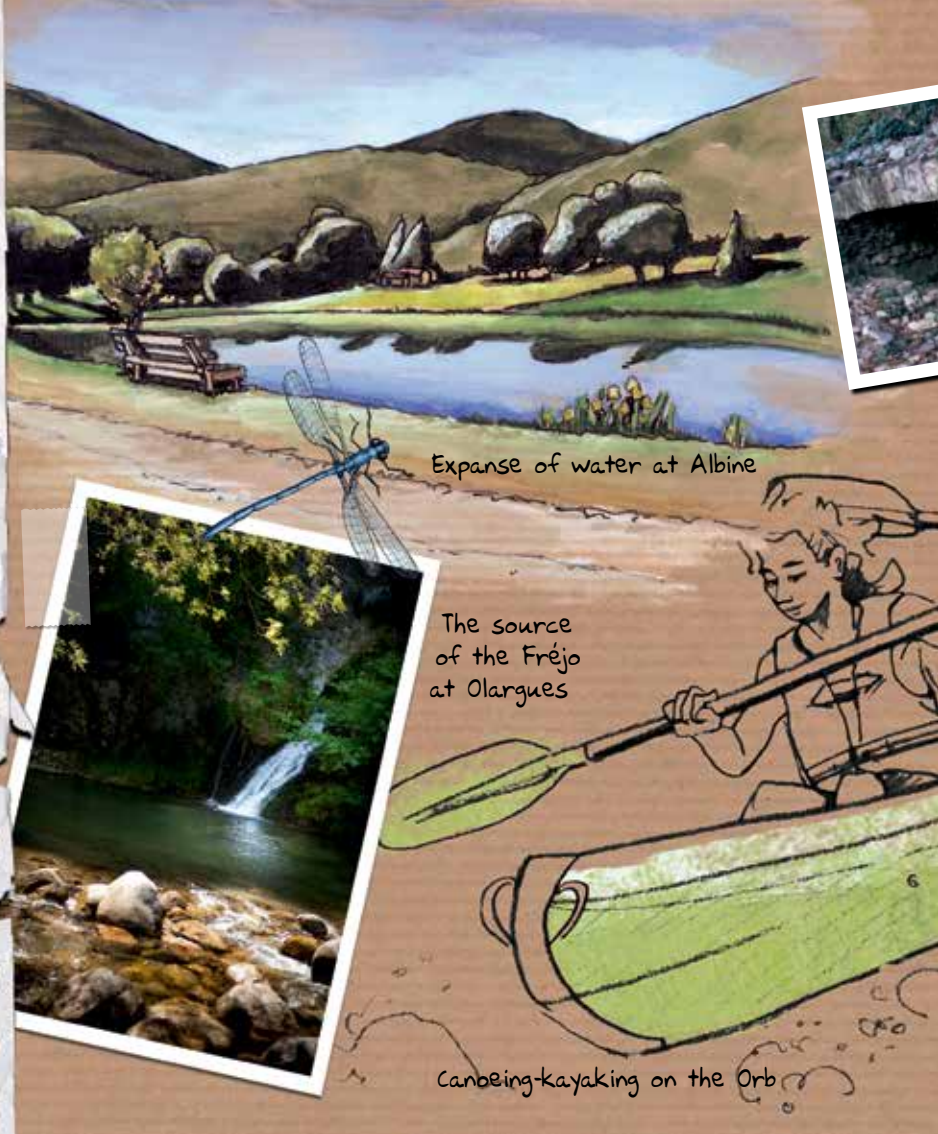
- Space dedicated to the blacksmith's trade at the Théron à Colombières-sur-Orb
- 📖 Patrimony documents: n° 38, 40, 42
Available at the 'Maison du Parc',
on their website and in Tourist Offices.



WATER IN HAUT-LANGUEDOC

De bona font

The Haut-Languedoc was born under the sign of Water, ascendant source. The high altitude forests capturing the snow and the clouds, forming peat bogs (sagnes) where small gurgling brooks emerge, hesitating along the watershed line before deciding which way to flow and become torrents. Formerly this resource was used for irrigation: béals, pesquières... Today this water appears in many forms: Hydropower, dams, pleasure lakes, canoeing-kayaking, balneology, mineral waters and Spas. The Haut-Languedoc goes with the flow!



Expanse of water at Albine

The source
of the Fréjo
at Olargues

Canoeing-kayaking on the Orb



The spring source of the Vernière at Lamalou-les-Bains



Terrace fountains of the Albine at Colombières-sur-Orb



The gorges of Héric and of Colombières

Balneology at Lamalou-les-Bains



MUST SEE

Near the Green Way

- The Puech Balmes path at St-Amans-Valtoret
- The expanse of water at Albine
- The source of the Jaur at Saint-Pons-de-Thomières
- The spring of the Fréjo at Olargues
- The gorges of Héric at Mons-la-Trivalle and the gorges of Colombières
- Canoeing-kayaking on the Orb at Mons-La-Trivalle
- Balneology at Lamalou-les-Bains





THE FAUNA La fauna

It's the very definition of a crossroads: everybody ends up there! The Regional Natural Park of Haut-Languedoc, where three climatic influences meet - Atlantic - Mediterranean - Mountain - offers an exceptional biological diversity: 170 remarkable animal species, nearly 250 species of birds amongst whom 120 are habitually nesting in the Park, 26 species of bats out of the 33 known to live in France... The Park is the home of a great number of endemic species, rare and protected.



Oaktree
Jay



Red headed
magpie



Black swift



Bat



Black
redstart



Roe deers

Hoopoe



Stone
marten



Common
genet



Rainbow
trout



Blue dragonfly

Salamander





FIND OUT MORE

Books and leaflets:

📖 *Les Oiseaux du Parc naturel régional du Haut-Languedoc*
JM. Cugnasse,
éd. du Rouergue/PnrHL, 2001.
Available in bookshops

📖 *L'Aigle royal : biologie, histoire et conservation dans le Massif Central*
B. Ricau et V. Decorde. éd. Biotope,
'col. Parthénope', 2009. in bookshops

Leaflets, technical pads and books of the Park

Available at the 'Maison du Parc' or on their site www.parc-haut-languedoc.fr

- Leaflet: *Où voir les oiseaux dans le Parc naturel régional du Haut-Languedoc ?*

In french and english

- Carnet oiseaux
- Les espèces emblématiques du HL
- Les rapaces nocturnes du H-L
- Les rapaces diurnes nicheurs du H-L
- Les hirondelles et martinets du H-L
- La migration des oiseaux en H-L
- La chevêche d'Athéna du H-L
- Les posters "Espèces emblématiques protégées" et "les rapaces diurnes et nicheurs"

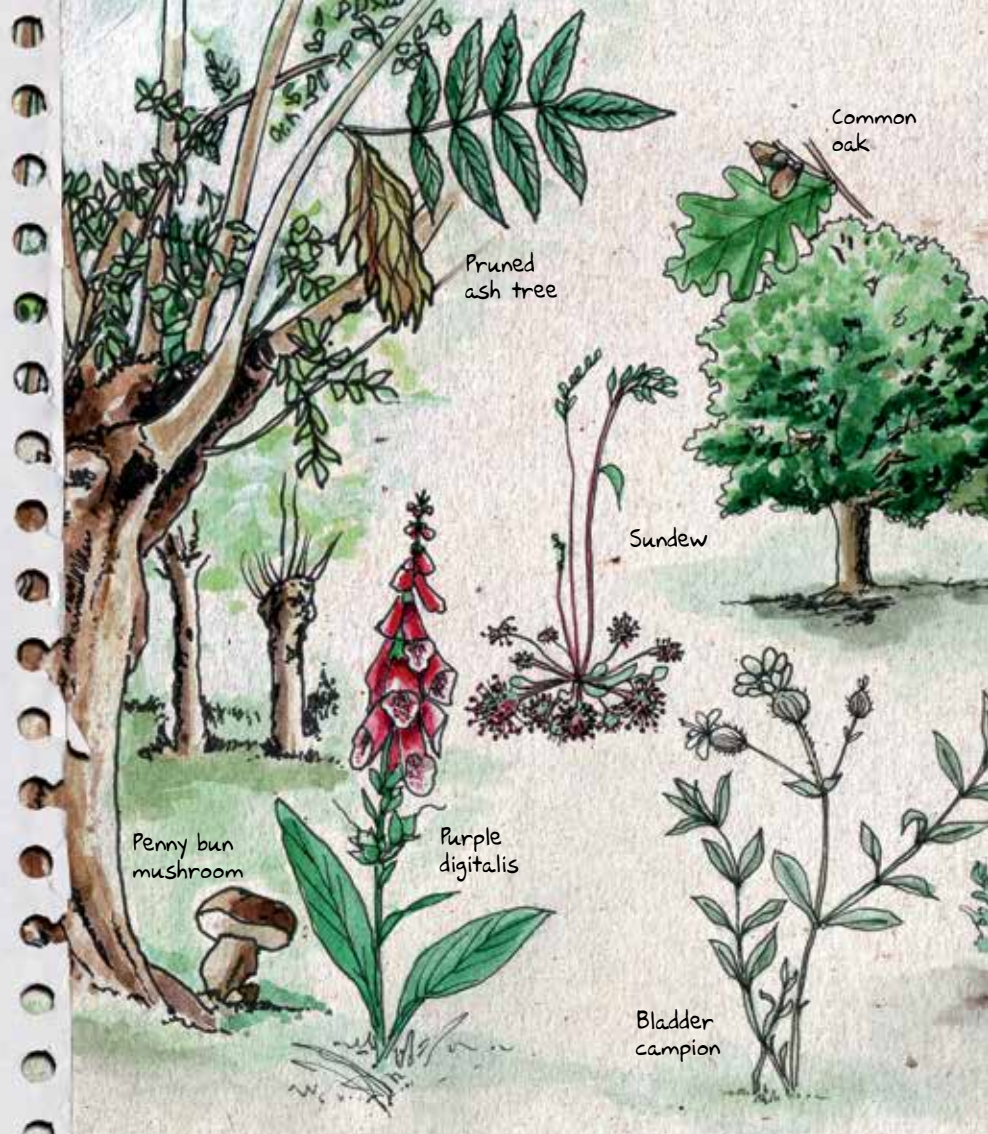
Must visit

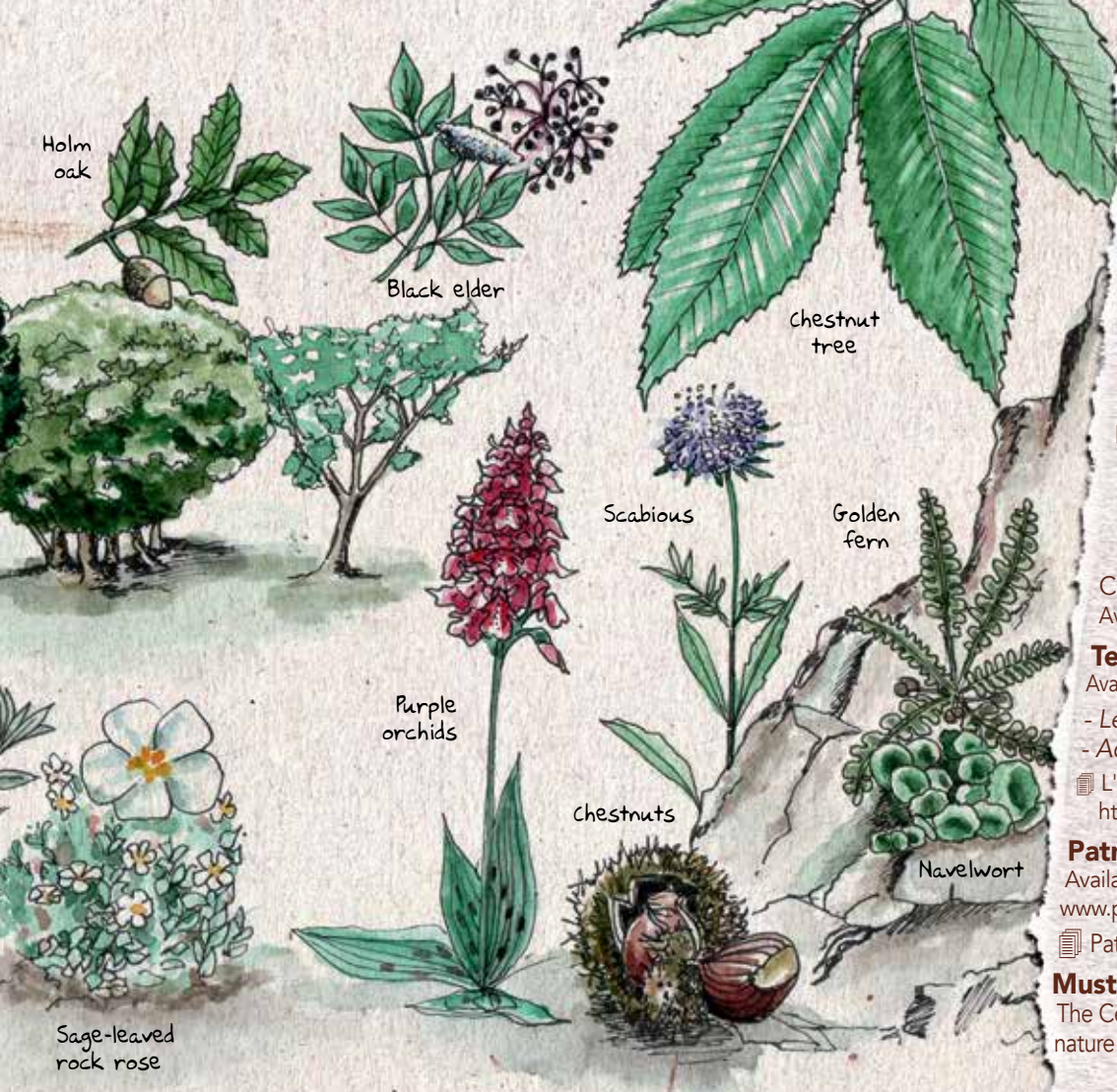
The Cebenna Center in Olargues who organize nature walks, and show a 3D nature slideshow



THE FLORA La Flòra

From obscure rocky undergrowth, to sunny pathway embankments, from Mediterranean homes to Atlantic ones... Little by little, blown and scattered by the wind, flowing along bubbling streams, carried unknowingly by beast or planted by man, it's in this natural mosaic which is the The Regional Natural Park of Haut-Languedoc, that more than 2500 varieties of flowers come together! Some of them being specific to the region covered by the Park and thereby considered as protected species on a National and European level.





Holm oak

Black elder

Chestnut tree

Scabious

Golden fern

Purple orchids

chestnuts

Navelwort

Sage-leaved rock rose

FIND OUT MORE

Books edited by the Park

📖 *A la Découverte de la flore du Haut-Languedoc*
P. Durand - éd. du Rouergue/PnrHL, 2004. Available in bookshops

📖 *Un siècle de botanique en Haut-Languedoc*
F. Andrieu et J. Salabert, 2011 éd. Biotope, 'coll. Parthénopé'. Available at the 'Maison du Parc'

📖 *La Flore du Parc naturel régional du Haut-Languedoc*,
J. Salabert et Ph. Durand, naturalia publications/PnrHL, 2014

At the 'Maison du Parc' and bookshops

CD-Rom : *Les Orchidées du HL*

Available at the Rieumontagné research center

Technical notebooks of the Parc

Available at the 'Maison du Parc' or on the website

- *Les espèces emblématiques du HL*
- *Accueillir la nature au jardin*

📖 L'herbier numérique du PHL :
<http://herbier-numerique-haut-languedoc.fr/>

Patrimony documents

Available at the 'Maison du Parc', on the website www.parc-haut-languedoc.fr, and tourist offices

📖 Patrimony documents n° 10 to 13, 15 to 18

Must visit

The Cebenna Center in Olargues who organize nature walks, and show a 3D nature slideshow



SITES FOR SORE EYES!

Miradas e miradors

Rich pastures and murky forests, vine covered hillsides and hidden lakes, southern villages and high perched hamlets, craggy rocks and deep canyons, confronted with this multitude of landscapes, the eye just doesn't know which way to turn! At the heart of this natural environment preserved as in a village which has managed to conserve it's identity, each turn of the pedal reveals a new discovery, each discovery becoming a new journey.





MUST SEE

Fantastic landscapes and picturesque villages

- Pic de Nore: view of the Black Mountains
- Landscapes, peat bogs and pastures of the Thoré valley, in the Tarn
- Viewpoint indicator at Courniou-les-Grottes
- The subterranean discovery center and 'grotte de la Fileuse de Verre' at Courniou
- Terrace cultivations to be found in typical villages and hamlets in the Jaur and Orb valleys
- The village of Olargues
- Views from the Caroux
- The Caroux gorges: 'Gorges d'Héric' and 'Gorges de Colombières'
- The town of Lamalou-les-Bains and its 'Belle Epoque' architecture
- The pic of Tantajo at Bédarieux...



HOME MADE Gostós e espitalièr

The Haut-Languedoc, a land to live the good life, a countryside which breeds a good appetite! The producers here have taken full advantage of the sun and the resources of the earth to propose a rich and varied range of local products. All year round, the fairs, festivals and markets invite you to discover a whole range of authentic tastes and flavors. It wouldn't be a bad idea to prepare bags on the bikes and fill them up with plenty of good things!

Park Brand produce

- Apple juice, honey, chestnuts, meat, fruits and vegetables,...see p.36

Wines of 'Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée' (protected designation of origin)

- AOC St Chinian
- AOC Faugères
- AOC Muscat St-Jean-de-Minervois
- AOC Minerve



Apple or pear juice



Ewe's, goat's or cow's cheese



Wines AOC St Chinian, AOC Faugères, AOC Minerve
Wine Muscat AOC Muscat St-Jean-de-Minervois





Bread made with chestnut flour



Local beef, veal and lamb...



Honey and produce of the hives

Markets/fairs/festivals

- Weekly markets:
Mazamet, saturday and sunday
Labastide-Rouairoux, thursday
St-Pons-de-Thomières, wednesday and sunday
Olargues, sunday
Mons-la-Trivalle, thursday and sunday (summer)
Poujol-sur-Orb, thursday
Lamalou-les-Bains, tuesday, thursday, saturday
Hérépian, saturday
Bédarieux, monday and Organic markets saturday morning.
- Numerous producers markets in the summer. Consult the web sites of the tourist offices
- Organic fair the 15th August at Olargues
- Each season, discover the many festivals and traditional fairs: 'Pork', 'Chestnut', 'Cherry', 'Garden'...

Books edited by the Park:

- 📖 *Éloge culinaire de la châtaigne*
M. Chabran - Nîmes, PNR des Monts d'Ardeche, 2005.
Available at the 'Maison du Parc'
- 📖 *Saveurs et jardins du HL* - M. Amir et J. Albarel - éd. du Rouergue/PnrHL, 2009.
Available at the 'Maison du Parc' and bookshops
- 📖 4 free leaflets of tasty recipes:
Chestnut, Beef, Pardailhan Turnip, Muscat of St-Jean-de-Minervois
- 📖 Patrimony documents n° 48, 49 and 50 and 15 to 18. Available at the 'Maison du Parc', on the web site and in the Tourist Offices.

MAZAMET > LABASTIDE ROUAIROUX..... 23 KM





SAUVETERRE > RIOIS

25 KM





ST PONS DE THOMIÈRES > COLOMBIÈRES S/ORB 24 KM



MONTS DE L'ESPINOUSE

Caroux 1091m

Les gorges d'Héric

Les gorges d'Albine

Les gorges de Colombières



ST-VINCENT
D'OLARGUES

OLARGUES

ST-JULIEN

MONS-LA
TRIVALLE

ST-MARTIN
DE-L'ARÇON

Gorges d'Albine
Gorges de Colombières

Gorges d'Héric

Gorges d'Albine

Gorges de Colombières

LA COSTE
D'ARÇON

LA POMAREDE

COLOMBIÈRES
SUR-ORB

VIEUSSAN

Orb



MONS-LA-TRIVALLE > BÉDARIEUX..... 22 KM







PREFER THE BRANDMARK PARK® VALUES !

TOGETHER

COMMIT FOR

You can find Values Park® brand in all The Regional Natural Parks of France.

This distinctive sign, which is exclusively reserved for some products and services from 53 regional natural Parks, makes the Parks' commitment for a different model of society real, based on a harmonious territorial development on all aspects : social, economic and environmental.

Values Park allows us to choose an ethic and eco-responsible consumption.

Nowadays, you can :

- enjoy eating meat, trout, fruits, vegetables, aromatic herbs, honey and dairy products
- practise some activities in the middle of nature
- sleep in touristic accomodations
- visit museums and cultural sites

carrying the Values Park of Haut-Languedoc® !

Find Values Park stamped products on :

www.parc-haut-languedoc.fr

or you can also follow the brand news on « Valeurs Parc naturel régional du Haut-Languedoc » Facebook page.



**To prepare your journey,
please ask touristic maps of
the Haut-Languedoc Park at
the maison du Parc and in
Tourist offices as well
as the website**

www.parc-haut-languedoc.fr



A MANAGED
DEVELOPMENT
BY MEN AND
FOR THEMSELVES



LANDSCAPE,
BIODIVERSITY
AND NATURAL
SPACES PROTECTION
AND DEVELOPMENT



PROMOTION
OF LOCALS
RESSOURCES

OUR VALUES ARE YOURS



DID YOU KNOW?

A GREEN WAY is a route in its own right, indicated by official signposts and dedicated exclusively to non motorized hiking and riding: pedestrians, cyclists, horseback riders and rollers, depending on the sites and their surfaces.

A 'VÉLOROUTE'

Is a route shared by a number of pathways with low circulation (less than 1000 bikes a day) and with reasonable gradients (around 5%). Some French cycling routes are more than a thousand kilometers long!

There already exists a network of cycling routes on a European scale, the **'EUROVÉLOROUTES'**.

THE GREEN WAY, USERS MANUAL

ADVICE FOR USERS

This green way is dedicated exclusively to non motorized travel: pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders. However, the stabilized surface does not allow the usage of rollers and is less suitable to the fine tires of road bikes. Other than that, electronic wheelchairs of people with a reduced mobility are welcome as are bikes with electronic assistance (VAE).

To park your car, use the specially equipped car-parks marked out by arrows. The green way is a friendly and privileged space where the highway code is respected and applied. Remember in the case of an accident involving a third party, the insurance company will always look to establish who is responsible.

Be especially careful: in certain sections (crossing certain villages), the green way loses its status because the route is shared by other users, in particular motorized. In this case the speed limit is reduced to 20 km an hour for all users. At the beginnings and the ends of the way, these crossings are marked



by official highway code signposts (see page 40).

Avoid picking flowers and plants, often situated in fragile areas, and fruits which obviously belong to somebody. Fires are forbidden. For all your rubbish, use the bins and containers put at your disposal... or take it home with you.



Even though many sections of the way are shady, it's recommended to cover your head, especially in the summer, and to drink plenty of liquids. You've forgotten your water bottle? No problem, there are welcoming cafés in each village!

The tunnels are generally well lit. However it's still a good idea to have a small torch somewhere in your bag, just in case the lights are out.

This green way is our common and shared property. We are all co-responsible. If you notice a degradation, a problem (tunnel lights broken, fallen tree...), indicate the problem at the nearest tourist office.



ADVICE FOR PEDESTRIANS

Common sense as indicated in the code of the route (article R 412-36) imposes us to walk 'towards the danger', that is to say close to your left hand side of the road in the direction you are walking in. Don't forget that the speed of a cyclist is much faster than that of a pedestrian. If you are stopped somewhere and in a group, be sure to leave the way clear for other users. Markers show the kilometers, starting at the point 0 at the Mazamet-Aussillon station. In the case of an incident, this can be useful to indicate just where you are situated on the way. They also allow joggers to test their stopwatches!



DOGS

The walker is responsible for his or her dog. Certain sections of the green way cross animal breeding areas: respect the tranquility of the herds by respecting the fencing. Certain municipalities have already taken measures to oblige

people to keep their dogs on leads. But careful! In certain cases, a lead too long can be more dangerous than the animal itself!

CHILDREN

The green way is an ideal route for a family walk, it's also an opportunity for young children to learn the first rudiments of Traffic Rules: learn the meaning of signposts, keep on the trajectory, indicate any changes of direction, not stopping in the middle of the way and paying attention to the other users are the first essential rules for the children to discover.



DISABILITIES

Special efforts have been made to enable access and use of the green way for people with reduced mobility.

However, the way is not entirely accessible.


HORSE RIDERS

The green way is dedicated to walking. Trotting and galloping are for-



bidden. For security reasons and path maintenance, harnesses, caravans... are not authorized without special and limited permission (local festivals, market fairs...).

CYCLISTS

A pedestrian travels 3 to 8 times slower than a cyclist. Avoid surprising him! The golden rule: priority to the slowest. In all cases, it's useful to signal one's presence with some sort of noise or a 'hello'. A cycling day out can be spoiled by a flat tire. It's useful to learn how to repair one by yourself: a rubber patch, an air tube or an aerosol tire inflator. There are bike specialists in the nearby area and some tourist offices are equipped with bike repair kits (see opposite page ). The water bottle is an essential part of your equipment. As for a helmet, they're not compulsory and only protect the head, but are recommended. It's also useful to remember that the green way is for casual travel and is not a racing circuit.





« PassaPaïs, Professionals' Network » is an organization which was created at the end of 2015 with the aim of sharing this specific route to most people, but also to develop some services along this green way and to contribute to the thinking of all developments as well as the idea of connecting this green way to other bikeways in order to make the pleasure lasts longer. This organization brings together users, organizations and waterfront professionals of the Green Way. In order to prepare your staying in the best conditions, please contact the Green Way members.

www.voieverte-passapais.pro



Useful app to download in order to have your route on the Green Way. Download it on your smartphone



@PassaPaïsPro

RENTAL AND REPAIR



2X2 ROUES



BOUT-DU-PONT-DE-L'ARN

Zac De La Castagnalotte

05 63 97 16 27

2x2roues@orange.fr

>VTC - Electric cycles - repair kits - child or luggage trailers



STATION U

ST-PONS-DE-THOMIÈRES - 74 av. de la gare

04 67 97 13 55

uexpress.saintpons@systeme-u.fr

> VTT - VTC - repair kits - child or luggage trailers



VÉLO CAROUX HAUT-LANGUEDOC

MONS-LA - TRIVALLE - Station service RD908

04 67 97 64 42 / 06 45 12 52 50

velo-caroux.fr

>VTT



CYCLABLE HAUT-LANGUEDOC

LE-POUJOL-SUR-ORB

6 place de l'Imbaisse

04 67 95 02 71 / 06 17 32 67 02

haut-languedoc@cyclable.com

>VTT - VTC - Electric cycles - repair kits - child or luggage trailers



CYCLES HORIZON Olivier Denizot

BÉDARIEUX - 13 avenue Abbé Tarroux

04 67 95 34 25 - cycleshorizon@neuf.fr

>VTT - VTC - Electric cycles - repair kits

TOURIST OFFICES



OT Mazamet Montagne noire

Tél. : 05.63.61.27.07

www.tourisme-mazamet.com



OT de la Haute-Vallée du Thoré

Reception: Labastide-Rouairoux

T: 05.63.98.07.58

www.tourisme-hautevalleeduthore.com



OT Minervois-Caroux

(de St Pons à Colombières s/Orb)

Reception: St-Pons-de-Thomières,

T: 04 67 97 06 65

Reception: Olargues, Mons-la-Trivalle

T: 04 67 23 02 21

www.minervois-caroux.com



OT Grand Orb

(du Poujols à Bédarieux)

Reception: Lamalou-Les-Bains

T: 04 67 95 70 91

www.ot-lamaloulesbains.fr

Reception: Bédarieux

T: 04 67 95 08 79

www.grandorb.fr

Inform point: Hérépian, le Poujol-s/Orb, Villemagne-l'Argentière



St-Pons
et Mons



LEGEND :



Bike repair kits



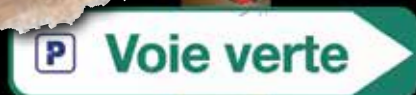
Patrimony documents of the Park



National quality
Label for bike tourism
accommodation

SIGNPOSTS

The green way is punctuated by numerous signposts. Know how to recognize them!



Direction to
a car-park



The path
continues



Beginning and
end of the
Green Way



A plan of the
Green Way in
the car-park



Number of exit

Kilometer
marker



Cycle Tourism
entreprises
association



Village
entrance



Site
access



Municipality
limit



Village
access



Walking and
hiking marker PR



Marker
exclusive
for
Mountain
bikes VTT

Shared
route,
speed
limited



No comment



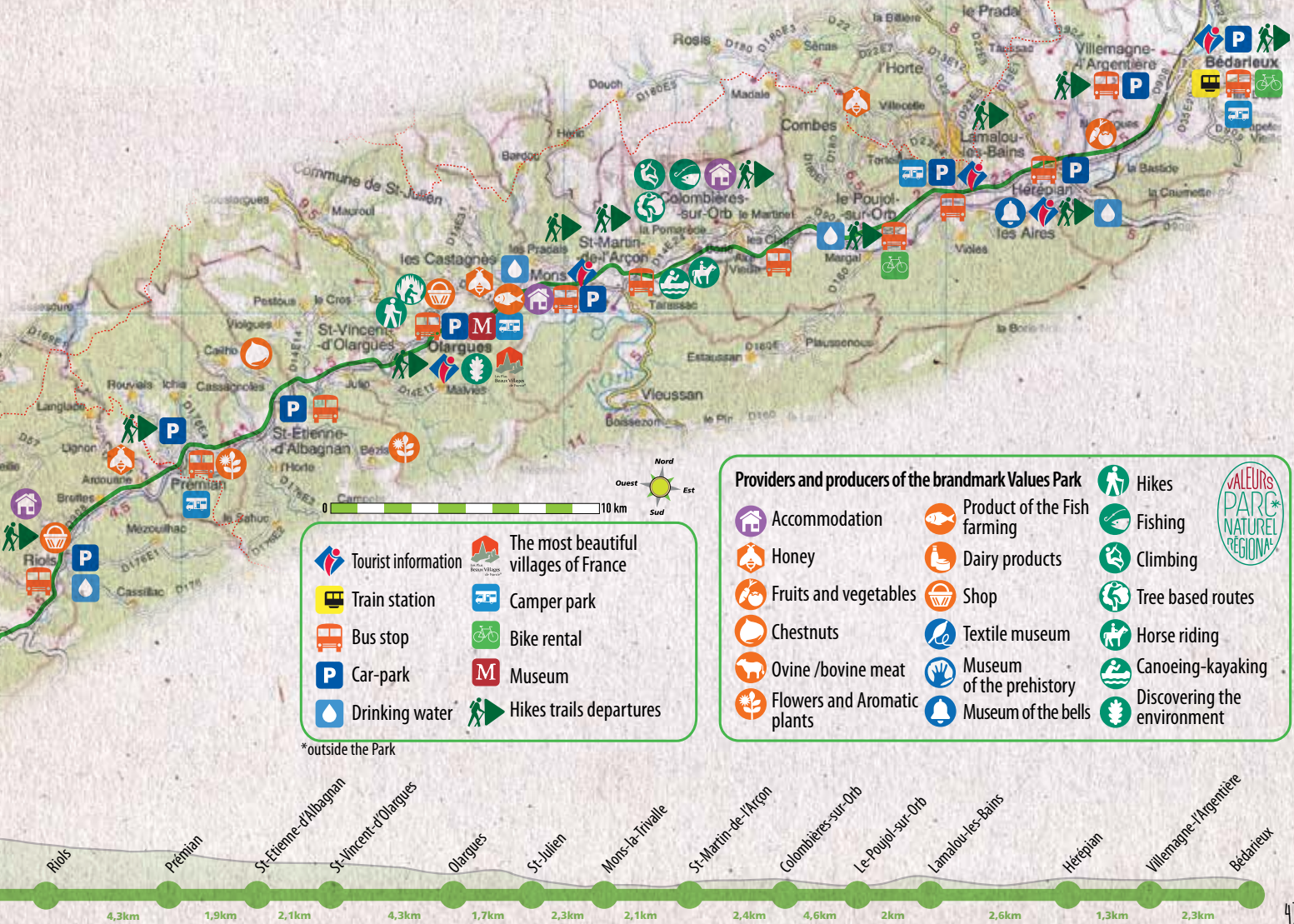
All motorized
vehicles
forbidden



Dangerous
descent
for cyclists
also

ACCESS MAP TO THE PASSAPAI'S







Author: Alice Mélin
Gérard Bastide
Graphic conception
and illustrations:
Véronique Bianchi
and Cécile Meignant
Printing:
Maraval (Courmieu-34)
Translation: Steve Thomas



Illustrations :
©CM et VB

Pictures : ©DR - PNRHL –
A. Guillaumet / C. Libessart
Colorescence – O. Octobre
Cécile Meignant
Véronique Bianchi
Marieke Hazard
Map p.42-43 ©IGN

EDITION 2019



PARC NATUREL RÉGIONAL DU HAUT-LANGUEDOC

1 place du Foirail
BP9 - 34220 ST-PONS-DE-THOMIERES
Tél. : 04 67 97 38 22 - Fax : 04 67 97 38 18
E-mail : accueil@parc-haut-languedoc.fr
Site : www.voiesvertes-hautlanguedoc.fr

