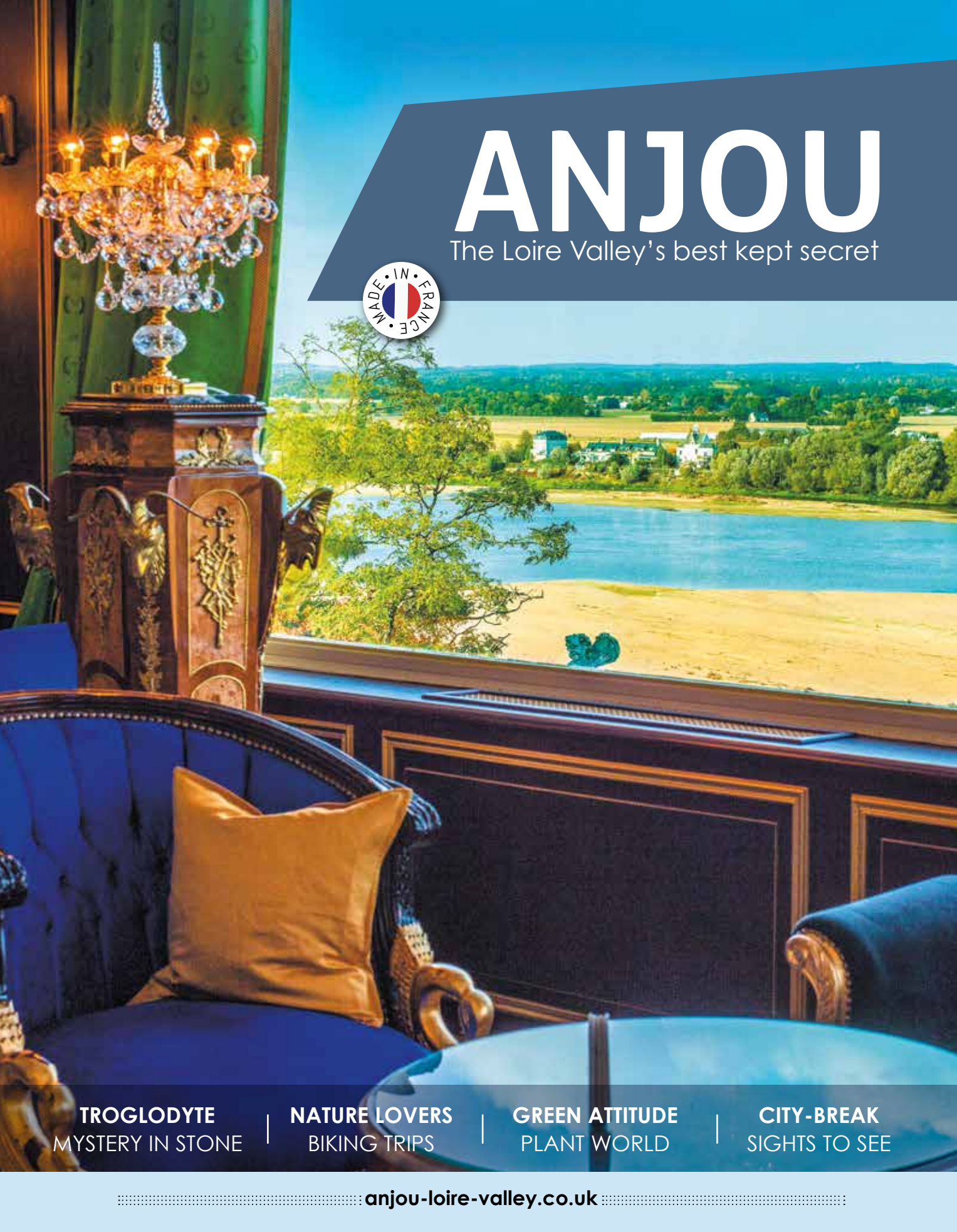


ANJOU

The Loire Valley's best kept secret



TROGLODYTE
MYSTERY IN STONE

NATURE LOVERS
BIKING TRIPS

GREEN ATTITUDE
PLANT WORLD

CITY-BREAK
SIGHTS TO SEE

HOW TO GET TO ANJOU

Just 1.5 hours from Paris, 1.5 hours from the Atlantic Ocean, at the heart of the Loire Valley, head to Anjou to discover France's best kept secret.



Where am I?
Where to go?



HIGHWAYS

- **Paris/Le Mans/ Angers** (A11 - 300 km)
- **Lille/Angers** (A1/11 - 500 km)
- **Strasbourg/Angers** (A4/11 - 780 km)
- **Lyon/Angers** (A89/71/85 - 650 km)
- **Bordeaux/Angers** (A10/83/87 - 350 km)
- **Nantes/Angers** (A11 - 90 km)
- **Tours/Angers** (A85 - 125 km)



DIRECT HIGH-SPEED TRAINS CONNECTIONS

- **Paris Montparnasse** > Angers (1h30)
- **Paris Roissy-Charles-de-Gaulle** > Angers (2h30)
- **Lille** > Angers (3h30)
- **Lyon** > Angers (4h)
- **Strasbourg** > Angers (4h15)



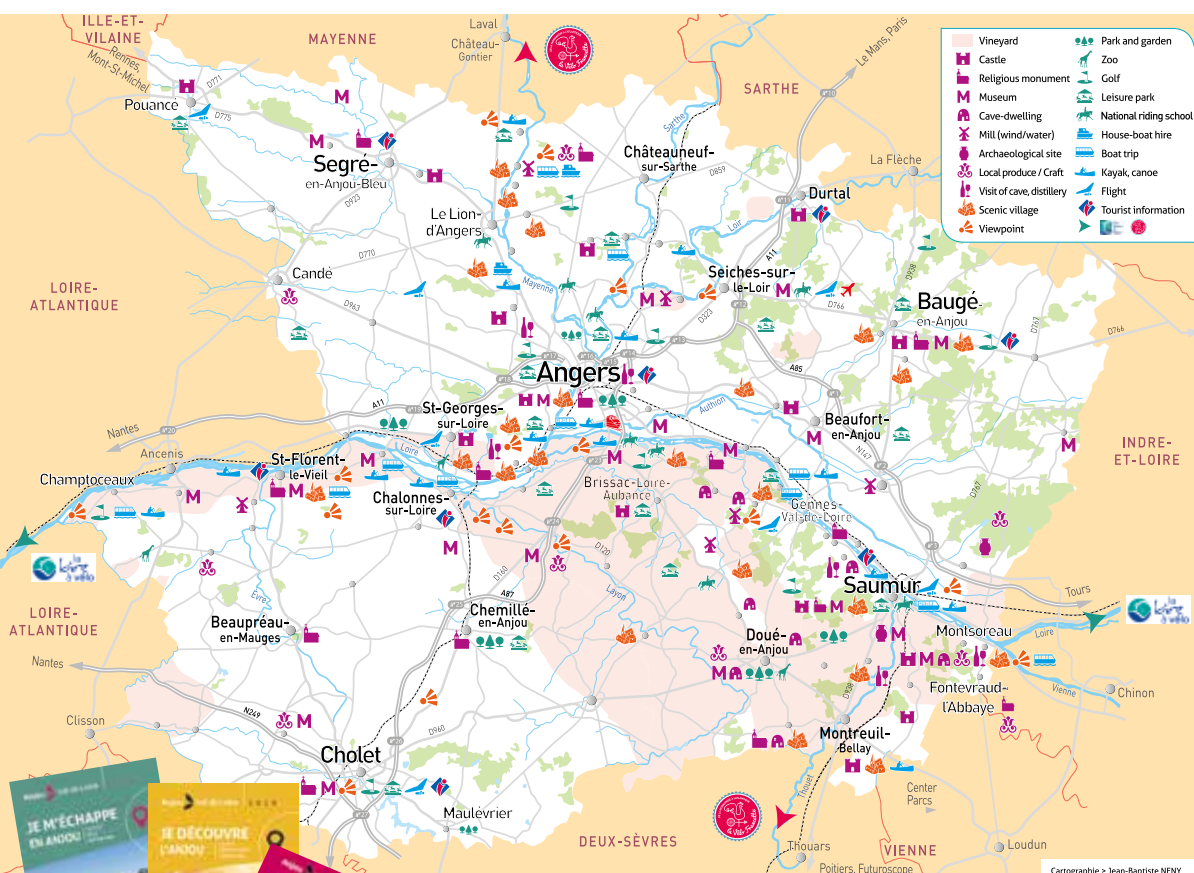
AIRPORTS

- **nantes.aeroport.fr**
- **angersloireaeroport.fr**



FERRIES

- **Portsmouth/ St-Malo or Caen** (St-Malo/Angers 230 km)



anjou-loire-valley.co.uk

#Jaimelanjou

DÉPARTEMENT DE MAINE-ET-LOIRE
anjou

France.fr

atlantic-loire-valley.com
BRIMMING WITH HOLIDAY IDEAS

DISCOVER SOME FACTS ABOUT ANJOU.

160
SITES AND VENUES
TO CHOOSE FROM
welcoming 2.9 million visitors
every year



106 784
HOTELS, CAMPSITES,
ROOMS FOR RENT



1/3 OF OUR VISITORS
COME FROM ABROAD
the majority come from the UK,
Holland, Belgium and Germany

The tourist industry employs around
13 000 PEOPLE
The annual turnover amounts
to approximately €9,11 M



SUMMARY

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5 GOOD REASONS to visit ANJOU

ITS LOCATION Just 1.5 hours by high-speed train from Paris and 1.5 hours from the Atlantic Ocean... Anjou is one of France's hidden gems and a must-see location in the Loire Valley. **ITS CHÂTEAUX** were once the meeting places of Kings, Queens and courtesans, a royal history that you can now discover by visiting these exceptional buildings. **ITS RIVERS** On the banks of the Loire, Maine, Mayenne, Oudon, Sarthe, Loir and Thouet rivers, you feel a greater sense of freedom as the water flows by. Hop on a bike, hire a boat and take things slowly. **"DOUCEUR ANGEVINE" OR THE QUIET AND PEACEFUL LIFE** Writer Joachim du Bellay wrote a poem about it. Anjou residents live by it and there is nothing better than an evening spent at a «guinguette» restaurant on the river Loire to fully understand its meaning. **ITS COLOURS** The reflections of the Loire, the flowers in the gardens, the softness of the stone... its many nuances were inspiration for the painter Turner and continue to captivate visitors to this day.

YOUR ANJOU TO-DO LIST



CHOOSE BETWEEN THE TALLEST CHÂTEAU IN FRANCE AND THE MOST UNUSUAL

Anjou has 1,200 châteaux and just as many other attractions for you to discover.



EXPERIENCE A UNIQUE CITY BREAK IN ANGERS, with its sweet nature & historic secrets. Listen out for the sounds of horses' hooves in Saumur or try a spot of shopping in Cholet.



LEARN HOW TO TASTE ANJOU-SAUMUR WINES

from a winemaker or a talented chef, accompanied by a gourmet meal.



SEE THE LOIRE DIFFERENTLY

Experience the river by canoe, hot air balloon or bike. There are endless ways to discover one of Europe's last wild rivers.



EXPLORE THE MARKETS

Live like a local and fill up your shopping baskets whilst chatting to the vendors. Head to the Bouchemaine market near Angers on a Sunday to stock up on supplies for a perfect riverside picnic.



ENJOY A ZEN MOMENT IN GARDENS, with your family at Terra Botanica. Declare your love in the magnificent setting of the Maulévrier oriental park.



SPEND A NIGHT IN AN UNUSUAL LOCATION

and get away from it all: try a night underground in a troglodyte hotel, on an island in the Loire or in a B&B inside one of the most magnificent castles in France.



©David Darault

Les Caves de Marson



©Sébastien Gaulard

Gennes-Val-de-Loire



©David Darault

La Route du Sel, Le Thoureil



Enjoy responsibly
©Dominique Drouet

Champtoceaux

ALL YOU NEED IS LOIRE

Set your sights on the horizon, feel the wind in your hair,
and get ready to explore 130 km of glorious nature in Anjou!



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



World
Heritage
Convention



©Dominique Drouet

St-Florent-le-Vieil

©Sébastien Gaudard

St-Mathurin-sur-Loire



La Ménitré

©David Darault
©David Darault

Mediterranean garden - Ste-Gemmes-sur-Loire

A shimmering jewel alongside which historical and architectural treasures have been built, the Loire fascinates and appeals to us, even if it is sometimes wild and impetuous. In Anjou, the river is even classified as a Unesco World Heritage site up to Chalonnes-sur-Loire. Many activities are on offer to help visitors explore the river.

ALL YOU NEED IS LOIRE



©Sébastien Gaudard

Montsoreau

Nothing beats lazing on the banks of the river, listening the sounds of the water and the birds in the trees. But for those with boundless energy who prefer to stay active, the simplest solution is to hop on a bike. On the banks of the river, **Loire à Vélo®** and **Vélo Francette®** follow the same route between Saint-Mathurin-sur-Loire and Angers. Along this section, the blue of the slate mines in Trélazé echo beautifully the blue reflections of the waterway.

For more stunning colours and landscapes, head off for a walk along **La Route de la Loire**: this signposted trail passes through villages that perch on the banks of the royal river and promises to offer a great view. **A hot air balloon** trip is a must for getting a 360 degree shot: whether at sunrise or sunset, when the sun's rays skim the surface of the water and the sky is illuminated with colour, all the beauty of these gentle Anjou landscapes is revealed.

And finally, you can only really get to know the Loire by taking a trip on it: choosing your vessel depends on which era you prefer as **canoes** and **stand up paddle boards** navigate the river's waters alongside traditional **gabare boats**. In the past gabares were used to transport goods on the river; today's gabariers continue to raise the sails on these flat-bottomed boats for intimate cruises on the Loire and exploring its islands. There are around fifteen passenger-boats on the river, perfect for a short break to reconnect with nature.

At Rêves de Loire, Alain Gillot and Patricia Kennedy have transformed their tow boat into a cruise ship: these two nature lovers organise photo trips, bike and other original moments as Patricia, who is american, explains...

I am an American, but I have adopted Anjou as my home, my bond with the Loire has become very strong. I have an almost spiritual bond with this river and all the different atmospheres it creates, it is like a companion in my quest for inner peace. We also organise well-being trips which combine meditative navigation and yoga stop-offs.

▶ revesdeloire.fr



Patricia Kennedy on board Rêves de Loire

©David Darrault

FABULOUS VINEYARDS

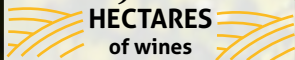
3RD
WINEMAKING
REGION
in France



2 MAIN GRAPE
VARIETIES:
Cabernet Franc for red wines
and Chenin for white wines



21,400
HECTARES
of vines



27
APPELLATIONS:
white red, rosé, dry, sweet,
sparkling... Everything you need
for a fabulous wine collection.



179
MILLION BOTTLES
produced every year



6 WINES AND
VILLAGES THEME
ROUTES OF ANJOU



17%
EXPORT
Majority markets:
Germany, Belgium, USA



WINES WITH A VIEW

After a few words with Liv Vincendeau, you can sense the energy and passion of this woman who has made Anjou her home. Born in Germany, Liv founded her business and moved to the Corniche in the Loire hills at Rochefort-sur-Loire, just a few kilometres from Angers. She spoke to us about the vines she cares for, watches over and improves as manager of the estate, with the help of occasional seasonal workers.



Enjoy responsibly

1 estate,
1 ecological commitment

Liv Vincendeau

©Joëlynn Clair

“I arrived in Anjou in 2000 at harvest time as a trainee winemaker-oenologist. I had done an initial course in Alsace and wanted to change vineyards; an opportunity came up in Anjou and I jumped on it. Today, I wouldn't leave for anything in the world. I took over these vines and founded my estate in 2014 so of course, I've put down my roots here. But I love so many other things about Anjou. The main theme is the Loire and its landscapes. The river creates a very specific atmosphere and the same goes for its climate too. There are four clear seasons here without the changes being too brutal. They don't call it the quiet and peaceful life for nothing. I find that the air here is also very pure, with a touch of the ocean. You breathe well and live well here! My family and I also enjoy the other riches Anjou has to offer: the beautiful city of Angers, the extensive cultural programme, visits to châteaux with their fairytale landscapes. After wine, my other passion is horse-riding and I'm really spoilt in Anjou. I've discovered this world watching the Cadre Noir shows in Saumur. Finally, I think that Anjou is perfectly located. We're 90 minutes from the ocean and really close to Paris. In my business, that's a real advantage. In the morning, I'm out amongst the vines and in the afternoon, I can go and meet customers in Paris. We are connected but living in a very well-preserved environment.

My estate has 7 hectares (which is pretty small for Anjou): a combination of 4 hectares of vines, 2 hectares of hay and 1 hectare of woods and hedges dedicated to biodiversity. I chose an organic approach from the very beginning. We Germans learn about ecology when we're toddlers. Today, I mostly produce sparkling wines: 3 Crémant de Loire and 2 Anjou Blanc made with Chenin grapes. I sell all my wine in bottles: 20% exported to Norway, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland and soon Germany, I hope. There is a growing trend towards the international market. The Chenin grape is quite well-known and is all the rage; people like discovering it. Sparkling wines are also appealing. My wines travel far, all the way to the most famous wine merchant in Manhattan, but they are also available in local restaurants where local dishes go very well with Anjou wines.

The customers who come to see me on the estate, French and foreign, really enjoy the surroundings and the closeness with the Loire river. Finally, the very French notion of terroir needed to be explained and enhanced each time. It's almost a magical word. There is a lot of the land or “terre” in it, land which I deeply respect. And this terroir is what we attempt to reveal through our work as winemakers. With finesse and precision, strength and passion.

➤ domaenevincendeau.com

”

THE WINES AND VILLAGES ROUTES IN ANJOU

IN ANJOU, 6 ROUTES TRAVERSE MAJESTIC VINEYARDS AND PRETTY VILLAGES COVERING BETWEEN 51 AND 90 KM.

Each of these itineraries has a different character. Uninterrupted views of the Loire river, visits to troglodyte caves or a photo opportunity at Château de Montreuil-Bellay... Strolling, chatting and shopping in the villages... What's important is to take time to enjoy the experience. The journeys are full of wonderful discoveries and great flavours to enjoy! What's more, these routes can be taken by bike or by car!

Tasting Anjou wines

Grape varieties, weather conditions, the hard work of men and women... The terroir of Anjou-Saumur involves a clever combination of elements that create fresh, fruity and often full-bodied white wines and fruity, structured and delicious red wines.

➤ **WITH BEEF FROM MAINE ANJOU:**

Anjou-Brissac

➤ **WITH FISH FROM THE LOIRE:**

Saumur-Blanc

➤ **WITH CRÊMÉT D'ANJOU** served with a sharp raspberry coulis:
a Brut Rosé Crémant de Loire

➤ **WITH FOIE GRAS:** Coteaux-du-Layon

Daily Mail

NOVEMBER 2018 - OLLY SMITH

"If you're looking for value balanced with quality choose the Loire Valley for your festive fizz.

Saumur Brut is my overall pick thanks to limestone soils with cellars dug from the chalk to mature the wine in perfect natural conditions."



VALLEY OF THE KINGS

1,203 castles and manors

Most of which are still used as homes.

Discover some of our true gems.

Also consider Angers, Baugé,
Le Plessis-Macé, Le Plessis-Bourré,
Montreuil-Bellay, Montsoreau, Saumur...

**The tallest
in France**



CHÂTEAU DE BRISSAC

1936

Nearly 4 centuries after laying the first stone, the château opened its doors to the public. It was one of the first in the Loire Valley to do so.

Known as the Giant of the Loire Valley with 204 rooms over 7 floors and its peak reaching 48 metres high. This extravagance does not distract Marquis and Marchioness de Brissac - the same family who has owned the castle since 1502 and who work all year round to restore this chateau and host events with visits are organized throughout the year. Explore the caves under the castle, visit the magnificent rooms stroll through the elegant gardens particularly in the spring, visit the theatre or a secret underground passageway!

➔ chateau-brissac.fr



Larissa de Brissac was born in Austria to a Hungarian father and a Canadian mother. She spent part of her youth in London at the Royal Ballet before marrying the Marquis de Brissac. They live in Brissac with their four children.

What is your first memory of Brissac?

The first time I came to Brissac it was dark and everything was illuminated. I remember the grandeur and beauty of it and felt so very small looking at such a majestic building.

What is your favourite thing about Brissac?

I was always very touched by the fact that King Louis XIII stayed at Brissac for the signature of a peace treaty with his mother, Marie de Médicis in 1620.

I love walking in the gardens. My husband created a very romantic promenade. The old kitchens with the 200 copper saucepans are truly astonishing.

Finally, I have soft spot for my first room here which overlooked a theatre door. I was sleeping a short walk from the stage which for me, having spent my life on stage, was really moving.

1772

A Marshal of France, commander of the armies of King Louis XV, built this wonderful castle that offers quintessential French elegance: an interior richly embellished with fabrics, indiennes and silks.

The most intriguing



CHÂTEAU DE BREZÉ

Considered one of the most intriguing castles of the Loire, partly due to its underground fortress, with 4 km of steep sloping galleries dating from the Middle Ages... This magnificent chateau is built in the heart of a vineyard, no less. Its rich history dates back to the mid-fifteenth century at least, when the castle was fortified. A castle above, and a castle under!

➔ chateaubreze.com

1063 (first mention of its existence)

This listed historical monument welcomes visitors to discover some of the largest known underground medieval bakeries in France, with their imposing fireplaces and chimneys.

King René, Duke of Anjou was a contemporary of Joan of Arc. A great traveller, fan of literature and art and garden lover, he was also the king of Naples, Sicily and Jerusalem.

1808

The château was visited by Napoleon I and Josephine de Beauharnais. Napoleon is rumoured to have declared "Finally, I have seen a château in France!"

The most elegant



CHÂTEAU DE MONTGEOFFROY

A jewel of the 18th century in the heart of Anjou, between Angers and Saumur. Chic elegance and precious original furniture, this is a private château in a remarkable state of preservation. The kitchen reveals its superb collection of 260 pieces of brass and pewter. Don't miss the beautiful park.

➔ chateaudemontgeoffroy.com

The most academic



CHÂTEAU DE SERRANT

Just a few kilometres from Angers, Serrant is famous for its incredible library: a treasure trove of 12,000 ancient works in a very well-preserved Renaissance building. In 1749, an exiled Irish family, the Walshes, bought Serrant, in particular protecting the Château from the eventualities of the French Revolution. Today, it is the property of a Belgian family, Prince and Princess de Merode.

➔ chateau-serrant.net



NEW IN 2020
opening of the Museum
of Modern Art

Works from some of the most important 19th and 20th-century artists such as Toulouse-Lautrec, Vlaminck, Degas, Van Dongen, Delaunay, Richier, Derain and more can be found among the sizeable donation from collectors Martine and Léon Cligman.

WAYS to discover ROYAL FONTEVRAUD ABBHEY

First a spiritual site then a prison, today Royal Fontevraud Abbey is a historical and cultural site that is home to memories of the past and initiatives for the future.

Founded in 1101 by Robert d'Arbrissel, the abbey was a pioneer of its time. It was run by women for 7 centuries with 36 abbesses often from the upper echelons of aristocracy managing this mixed gender abbey (another new idea for the time) and taking care of the surrounding land. Discover the deep soul of the abbey... Here are 5 ideas of things to do on the estate's 13 hectares.

#1

IMAGINE MEETING ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE

She is the Abbey's emblematic figure. Queen of France then England, Eleanor of Aquitaine forged a particular bond with the abbey that lasted her entire life. She came here to manage the kingdom's affairs after the death of Henry II, and moved here to live out the last few years of her life. Passionate about art and literature, you can imagine her enthralled by a book, reading in the shade of the cloister. Today, the determination and spirit of this powerful woman is still palpable in the abbey church, where her recumbent statue lies next of those of her husband, one of her sons, and daughter-in-law.

#2

ENJOY A TWILIGHT DINNER IN THE HEART OF THE CLOISTER

The elegant procession of the abbey's sisters has been replaced by that of the waiting staff. The abbey is home to a fine dining restaurant with the kitchens meticulously run by Michelin-starred and Bocuse d'Or award-winner, Thibaut Ruggeri. Beauty is combined with wonderful flavour in every plate and each dish celebrates uncluttered, contemporary cuisine with ingredients from the abbey's very own kitchen garden.



Eleanor of Aquitaine 1122-1204

WHAT A VISIONARY WOMAN!

- She is the only woman to have been Queen of France (through her first marriage to Louis VII) and Queen of England
- She was the wife of Henry Plantagenet (Henry II), Count of Anjou and King of England
- She was the mother of Richard the Lionheart and John Lackland, the future kings of England
- Passionate patron of the Arts, a politician, a restless traveller, a woman of remarkable influence on her own era and on future times as well

IT IS SAID THAT SHE WAS...

- Rebellious
- Cultivated
- A clever politician
- Free

#3

APPRECIATE GENUINE SILENCE FOR ONE NIGHT AT THE HOTEL IN THE PRIORY

The standard of comfort has changed but the spirit of the place remains. 54 cosy and comfortable rooms welcome visitors for a peaceful night's rest. Before slipping into bed, enjoy a night-time stroll through the abbey returned to its silent state. Magical and enchanting.

#4

GO TO A CONCERT OR AN EXHIBITION

Share Eleanor's artistic passion and enjoy work by artists from the area. Sculptors and painters regularly exhibit their work here. The Abbey's cultural programme includes debates, conferences and more entertaining events like music evenings and even escape games!

#5

FIND INSPIRATION WITH YOUR TEAM

Company directors are charmed by the intimate and welcoming feel of these majestic surroundings. For a seminar or convention, there are several areas that can be turned into meeting rooms, including the elegant refectory. A grand and timeless venue, perfect for sharing the best ideas.

CITY STORIES

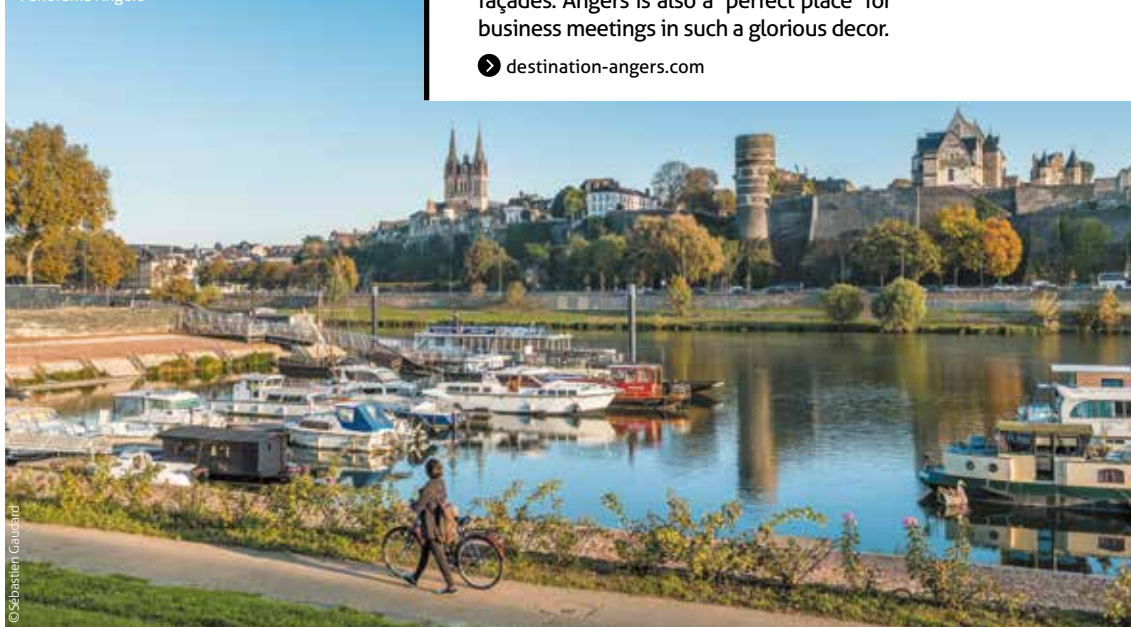


Tenture de l'Apocalypse,
Château d'Angers

Angers,
Place du Ralliement



Panorama Angers



GREEN ANGERS

In Angers, visitors are surprised by the vast medieval fortress when wandering around the town centre: 17 towers, ramparts, delightful gardens and a world-famous tapestry ensure that this building is justifiably renowned. The town has evolved around the castle, creating such pleasant living conditions that today Angers is recognised as the leading French city "où il fait bon vivre", or where it is good to live. The many parks, gardens, greenery and vegetation throughout the city play a role in creating this pleasant atmosphere: it is perfect for going for a run, enjoying a picnic or indulging in an ice-cream in the shade. Don't miss out on the excellent gastronomy in one of the many local restaurants, it is definitely a highlight of the Angers experience. Exhibitions and events can be found all over Angers, which has a very active cultural center. Visitors never tire of wandering through its streets, looking upwards to contemplate the Haussmann buildings, the regularity of which is sometimes interrupted by a few Art Deco façades. Angers is also a perfect place for business meetings in such a glorious decor.

➔ destination-angers.com

A duo of tapestries
The "Tenture de l'Apocalypse", the most important medieval tapestry in the world (100m long), is shown in the Château d'Angers. The "Chant du Monde", a contemporary version designed by Jean Lurçat, is displayed in the Hôpital Saint-Jean (12th).

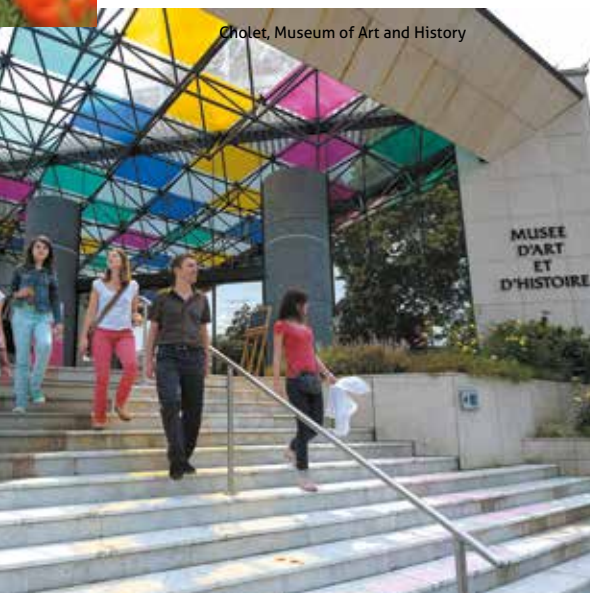


The skylines of Angers and Saumur can be recognised by their castles, built in two different styles that are emblematic of these cities steeped in art and history. As for Cholet, the city also boasts a charming mix of styles and eras.

AMAZING CHOLET

Cholet is located an hour south of Angers, a few kilometres from the Vendée region and the famous Puy du Fou historical theme park. Today its factory outlet stores not only make it a top destination for keen shoppers, but its extensive textile industry heritage is very much in evidence. Since the 17th century, many weavers have been attracted to the area by the linen and hemp that flourish in its fertile soil. Weaving related jobs are an important part of its history and a Cholet icon stands out amongst all the creations: the red and white handkerchief, which is perfect for adding a touch of French style to any outfit. The beginning of the 20th century witnessed a decline in weaving and manufactures focussed their skill and expertise on shoes. Today, there are two museums related to this epic history. A word of warning, however, you might very well want to restock your wardrobes after visiting! And whilst we're on the subject of style, don't miss out on the conservatory at the Musée d'art et d'histoire (and take the time to visit the Morellet modern gallery too!): designed by Daniel Buren, it plays with light and colours to great effect. Finally, enjoy a drink at Place Travot in the town centre.

➤ ot-cholet.fr



Cholet, Museum of Art and History

STYLISH SAUMUR

The castle exudes a completely different kind of elegance and proudly dominates the Loire. After a pretty photo from the bridge, head back into the town centre for a coffee in Place Saint-Pierre, where the colourful half-timbered houses embody the purest of French tradition. The other national symbol for which Saumur has become the standard-bearer is equestrian art. At the Cadre Noir (the French riding academy), ecuyers, or instructors, pass on centuries-old equestrian skills with rigour and grace. Several guided tours invite visitors to explore behind the scenes at this long-standing institution. The shows themselves are very poetic. Visitors cannot help but admire the evident complicity that unites the horses and riders and impeccable choreography. Finally, don't hesitate to leave the city centre to visit the Saumur wine region, famous for its white wines and for producing delicious Fines Bulles wines (Crémant de Loire). Amidst their vines, wine producers explain their work, present their wines and grape varieties and offer tasting sessions. For an even more unique experience, try a tasting in a troglodyte cellar.

➤ saumur-tourisme.com



©Alain Laurin/Cadre noir ifce

David Gomez is Columbian and was inducted as an écuyer, or instructor, at the Cadre noir at the end of 2018.

It is an enormous source of pride for me who arrived in France about fifteen years ago. After following Advanced Equestrian Training, an international training course organised by the Cadre noir (the French Equestrian Academy) and reserved for horsemen from overseas, I returned in 2005.

Anjou appealed to me just as much as the Cadre noir: nowadays, having lived in both the south-west and the east of France, it is my favourite place. I love the Anjou style of architecture, particularly the beautiful local tuffeau, or Loire limestone, houses. When I cross the bridge spanning the Loire, I can see the castle: it's superb, I feel as if I am on the coast. And finally, whilst I was previously a lover of Bordeaux wines, I now appreciate the Anjou-Saumur wines just as much.

➤ ifce.com

Château de Saumur



©Renaud Puy Photography

A WONDERFUL WAY OF LIFE

FRENCH VILLAGES

Keep your eyes peeled for signs indicating these villages along your journey. They all have their own, unique charms and offer perfect opportunities to have coffee or wander through their narrow streets and discover their historical heritage. Our selection of favourites...

If you had to choose only one village, we would suggest Montsoreau: the embodiment of the good life, and THE prettiest village in the département, having won the Plus Beau Village de France prize! Its majestic château provides a breathtaking view of the river; it is home to the world's largest collection of works from the Art & Language movement. You can also stroll through its floral little streets and discover astounding troglodyte dwellings. Every second Sunday of the month, the riverside enjoys a particular kind of hustle and bustle as excited bargain-hunters invade the quays where 80 stalls are set up, selling old books, lace, antiques, furniture and more. Will you find a bargain at the Montsoreau flea market?

Along the banks of the Loire, you can explore other villages with character (with the Petites Cités de Caractère label), like the enchanting Thoureil with its white stone façades. Further west of Angers, you can wander through the alleyways of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil, then carry on to Mont-Glonne for a splendid view over the whole valley.

Another Petite Cité de Caractère acclaimed for its dry white wine, Savennières is a village with outstanding heritage, including a centuries-old vineyard providing marvellous walks and fine wine-tasting.

With fine examples of the world-famous troglodyte dwellings, Turquant is memorable for its remarkably intact, restored site, where a Village des Métiers d'Art features artisans working their skills among the rocks: a journey back in time revealing some amazingly modern aspects.

Listed as a Village de Charme, the "charming village" of Chenillé-Changé offers all the appeal of river life. Lying on the leafy banks of the Mayenne, it is a gem worth seeing, where you can enjoy a pleasant moment admiring the boats moored alongside.

With its Plus Beaux Détours de France label, Baugé-en-Anjou is "well worth the detour", with the region's most legendary château. A visit soaked in history close to a remarkable forested area with 400 km of waymarked trails.



© Sébastien Gaudard

Vieil-Baugé

Christine and Charles Appleton are your hosts at the Vieille Douve Manoir, in the medieval village of Le Bourg d'Irre.

We first came to this area in 2002 when we bought a holiday home in Le Bourg d'Irre. We fell in love with the village straight away. The "Anjou Bleu" area is so very similar to the area in Suffolk where we used to live! We are 40 minutes away from the River Loire and the vineyards. Also we are within 20 minutes of the Mayenne River. We have now been open nearly 5 years. Initially, we had four bed and breakfasts. Last year we finished the first barn and converted it in to an indoor swimming pool, pool table room, games room and a salle which can hold 24 people. This year we are converting the 2nd barn into 3 gites. When guests stay with us they like the tranquillity of the place and if they want to they can fish in one of the 3 lakes. We offer table d'hotes dinner. You can have English, French, Spanish, Dutch, Americans all round the table but they manage to communicate with each other with the help of a glass of Anjou wine.

▶ lemanoirdelavieilledouve.com



© SoMa Renault

A court that is not quite flat, a ball that is not quite round and slippers? The surroundings may be surprising but this is the right equipment for a round of "Boule de Fort", a traditional game that is part of Anjou's DNA. The court is 22 metres long and 6 metres wide and the more tactical players will try to aim straight. But this game has its heart elsewhere: being together, sharing, playing and perpetuating tradition...these are the priorities of today's players.

Although the precise origins of this tradition are obscure, it seems to have evolved from this English game, now popular throughout the Loire region.

© Stéphane Corin

SURPRISING TROGLODYTES

In the end, setting up underground was the nicest way to live: some residents have done so for centuries, and Anjou has many troglodyte homes and shops. Inside their shelters carved into rock, artisans, artists, restaurant owners and hoteliers are ready to provide experiences you'll remember for a lifetime!

For over 10 centuries, the inhabitants made use of the shelly sand and tuffeau stone, these creamy coloured rocks created by a succession of continental and lacustrine deposits. The **Château de Brézé** gives nothing away, but its cellars cover nearly a kilometre of gallery corridors. At **Rochemenier**, the troglodyte village has two old farms and an unusual underground chapel. The best plan is to enjoy these naturally air conditioned spaces when the sun is at its hottest. In Coutures, the painter and sculptor **Richard Rak** exhibits his works in his gallery/workshop dug into the rock. A real trip! For art fans, come and admire the **Mystère des Faluns** at Les Perrières: an enchanting spectacle with sound and light projections in the ribbed caves nearly 20 metres high that retrace the 10 million year-old story of this site. Finally, the **Bioparc-Zoo at Doué-la-Fontaine** is home to over 1,200 animals and the only troglodyte zoo in the world. The majestic giraffes with their spotted hides stand tall in front of the beige walls of former quarries: a tone-on-tone spectacle that evokes intense emotions.

Worth it
for the surprise!

Boule de fort

© Sébastien Gaudard

Bioparc de Doué-la-Fontaine



©Jean-Claude Hermance

ANJOU VÉLO VINTAGE

JULY / SAUMUR AND SAUMUROI

Oh those Frenchwomen with their elegantly fitted outfits! Ahhh those Frenchmen with their braces and berets... but do they really dress like that? Since its first edition, this retro event has attracted great numbers of bike and nostalgia fans. With notes of swing and blues in the air, we're off on one of the fun itineraries along the banks of the Loire taking in châteaux, cellars, cave dwellings and delicious food and wine tastings.

➔ anjou-velo-vintage.com



Anjou Vélo Vintage

©Christophe Gagneux - Pixm

LET'S SHARE!

Anjou is in the news all year round

- ➔ **Carnaval de Cholet** - mid April
- ➔ **Festival d'Anjou** - June / Château du Plessis-Macé and other places in Anjou
- ➔ **Festival Musical Durtal** - June / Château de Durtal
- ➔ **Saveurs Jazz Festival** - July / Segré-en-Anjou
- ➔ **Rose Days** - July / Doué-en-Anjou
- ➔ **Grandes Tablées du Saumur-Champigny** - beg. August / Saumur
- ➔ **Accroche-Cœurs** - September / Angers

See more

➔ anjou-loire-valley.co.uk

GRAND PRIX RÉTRO

JULY / LE PUY-NOTRE-DAME

Can you hear the engines purring and the drivers egging each other on? Over the weekend, a rally and a speed trial bring together pre-war racing bikes and cars and pre-1950 sidecars too. The speeds may be limited but the adrenaline runs high in this charming village near the vines.

➔ grandprixretro-puynotredame.com



©Les Garennes

MONDIAL DU LION

OCTOBER / LE LION D'ANGERS

On a magnificent estate, the best and most beautiful horses compete in this exceptional event, from dressage to show jumping and cross-country. Every year, the racecourse hosts the longest obstacle race in the world.

➔ mondialdulion.com



Enjoy a mulled wine and find the perfect French gift for under the tree

- ➔ **Large Christmas market** with events in November at the Château de Brissac
- ➔ **Soleils d'Hiver** in December in Angers
- ➔ **Christmas in December** at Fontevraud Royal Abbey
- ➔ **Christmas market and living nativity scene** in December at Cholet...



Grand prix rétro

©Philippe Bernard

OPERA DE BAUGÉ

JULY-AUGUST / BAUGÉ-EN-ANJOU

They began by hosting artists in their own garden in 2002. Now, this opera festival founded by John and Bernadette Grimmett has grown and is very similar in its bucolic, elegant style to the international Glyndebourne Festival. Today, you will find premium artists performing in welcoming, rural surroundings.

➔ operadebaugé.fr



Quernons d'ardoise

©Jean-Sébastien Evraud



Enjoy responsibly

90% of Cointreau's sales are export sales, primarily to the US, where cocktails are particularly popular.



Pommes tapées

©B. Cordon

SPECIALTIES TO BE RELISHED!

Opening the door to a master chocolate and pastry maker's shop is a bit like stepping into the set from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. **Quernons d'ardoise** reign on the counter. Adorned with a blue coating, which reflects the blue of the Anjou slate roofs, these treats consist of almond and hazelnut caramelised nougat and are perfect with a cup of coffee.

There is no question of your glass being empty for long, Saint-Barthélémy-d'Anjou close to Angers is the birthplace of the **Cointreau** family. This orange-peel based spirit has reinvented itself and can be found in all kinds of cocktails in trendy bars. Recently a Cointreau-based range of tea also became available.

Anjou has other sweet specialties which will no doubt be joyfully received by your friends. Try a jar of "**pommes tapées**" (troglodyte specialty), which are apple-based dried fruit. Traditionally the apples are peeled, dried in an oven and then "tapped" using a mallet to flatten them and preserve them.

To surprise your guests (or mother-in-law), why not prepare a **Crêmet d'Anjou** using whipped cream, whipped egg whites and a little sugar. The icing on the cake? Enjoying it with a summer fruits coulis. Bon appétit!

APPETISING ANJOU

WHAT TO PUT IN YOUR BASKET?

- Fruit and vegetables from the Loire Valley: asparagus, PGI Cuisse de Poulet shallots, apples, Doyenné du Comice pears, strawberries and more
- Button mushrooms grown in Saumur's underground galleries
- Rillauds, pieces of pork belly cooked in lard, which can be eaten cold or at room temperature
- Eels and fish from the Loire River
- PDO Maine-Anjou beef, Maulévrier squab
- Combiere liqueurs and Giffard syrups...

Did you know?
All our products feature
in the main kitchens
of our six Michelin star
chefs every day.



©Sophie Reynaud

Crêmet d'Anjou

ANJOU LOVES GREEN



**ANGERS IS THE N°1
“GREEN” TOWN
IN FRANCE:**
no one is more than 500 metres away
from a green space

Jardins du Puygirault at St-Hilaire-St-Florent



©Christophe Gagneux / Pym

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**BEAUTIFUL PARKS
AND GARDENS IN ANJOU:**
a tribute to colour and fragrances



45,000

**HECTARES OF
SPECIALISED BOTANICALS:**
fruits, flowers, perennials...



€2.2 BILLION

planned investment in
Research and Development
through the Vegepolys Valley,
the headquarters of which are in Angers



Angers, the place for plants to be!

Based in Angers, the Community Plant Variety Office is a European organisation. Its main mission is to manage the intellectual property rights associated with valid plant varieties throughout the EU. A way of supporting and guaranteeing the profitability of investments in plant research and innovation on a larger scale.



GARDENS WORLD TOUR

Was it King René's love for plants and flowers that he brought back from his Mediterranean travels? Was it the quality and diversity of the soils? Or was it his ambition to support a more sustainable world? Whatever the real reason was, Anjou today is the capital of all things green. Journey to the very heart of this land regularly nicknamed "the garden of France", which also borrows inspiration from international influences.



THE GLOBETROTTER: TERRA BOTANICA

The first European garden dedicated to plants. It hosts over 300,000 visitors every year and introduces them to plants and flowers from all 5 continents. There are many games and attractions to discover during your visit like the iconic balloon that flies over the gardens. Between the butterfly house, the 2,000 orchid species and the Dynamic 4D Adventure, you can spend a day full of surprises at Terra Botanica as you cultivate your eco-conscience: the gardens have a great collection of helpful tips for natural gardening.

📍 terraborotanica.fr

THE PRESTIGE OF FRENCH GARDENS: THE ANGERS CHÂTEAU GARDENS

The Angers Château is very impressive with its huge towers and ramparts... but leave the stone behind and focus on the plants for an equally amazing discovery. The gardens are a fitting translation of King René's passion in his time: a plant and flower enthusiast, he introduced the apricot tree, anemones and the rose of Provins to Anjou. Several separate gardens elegantly and gracefully decorate the approach to the château, as does the garden: yew trees, lawns and box trees interlock in a precise geometrical design. Our favourite is the terraced gardens inside the fortress itself.

📍 chateau-angers.fr



Les Chemins de la Rose



© Sébastien Gaudard

ENGLISH CHARM: CHEMINS DE LA ROSE

In tribute to the emblem of our friends across the Channel, the Chemins de la Rose is a showcase for 13,000 roses in an English garden that covers 4 hectares. Some love red and only red, others swear by the fragrance alone... The rose, an allegory for love, is venerated here in all its colours, shades and perfumes. Doué-en-Anjou is considered the rose capital and you will definitely find a rose bush that will soon be flowering in your own garden.

➔ lescheminsdelarose.com



© Florence Kéren

Maulévrier gardens

JAPANESE ZEN: MAULÉVRIER ORIENTAL GARDENS

Take a few steps inside the Maulévrier Gardens - created at the end of 19th century and you will instantly feel calmed and soothed. After a short stroll in the shade of trees pruned into clouds and the white cherry blossom... you'll be transported to another land. Organised in the purest tradition of the Japanese garden, combining the worlds of plants, minerals and water, these gardens release gentle and balanced vibrations and demonstrate a quest for high aesthetics. You will find it difficult to leave...

➔ parc-oriental.com

THE QUEST FOR WELLNESS: CAMIFOLIA

The benefits of camomile for relieving everyday symptoms and chronic pain are known the world over. Welcome to Chemillé-en-Anjou, the birthplace of this medicinal plant. Some 550 other species of plants are grown around the 3-hectare garden for the delight of visitors and to support scientific research. The region is known for its plant production, in particular its medicinal plants.

➔ jardin-camifolia.com



Camifolia

© EPC Théau, Jardin Camifolia

SLOW TIME

© Sébastien Caudard

THE QUINTESSENTIAL IN SLOW TRAVEL

Get on your bike!

For those of you whose bike is your best friend, whether you're at home or on holiday, and who love the sense of freedom you get from cycling... welcome to Anjou. There are several paths along our many rivers for curious cyclists to explore.

On Vélo Francette®, take the Mayenne towpath and discover luxury bourgeois homes and lockmasters' cottages: the types of accommodation may vary but it all has a certain style! The easy path is perfect for kids too. On the banks of the Loire, Loire à Vélo® has tons of surprises. Between Montsoreau and Saumur you will find astonishing troglodyte sites. Just below Angers, stop off at the Île de Chalonnnes, the Loire's largest inhabited island. Take the time to explore, and don't be surprised if you come across some asparagus or melons growing in the fields. On this island, the hamlet's residents enjoy life at its own pace. Carpe Diem & Slow Life: happiness guaranteed.



SLOW TIME

Anjou has 275 km of navigable rivers, 2 marinas in Grez-Neuville and Chenillé-Changé, a superb port with terraces in Angers... and a daily speed of 8kph!



© Pascal Beltrami - La Vélo Francette

Chenillé-Changé

THE ULTIMATE IN SLOW TRAVEL

Cruising!

Prepare yourself for a journey as gentle as a sunrise on a summer's morning, topped off with a hint of adventure as you take the helm of your vessel. As a couple, a family or with friends, take possession of your very own houseboat at Chenillé-Changé or Grez-Neuville marinas. From these little villages with their slate-coloured roofs, head for Angers. Surprise the wildlife hiding in the grass on the banks as you slowly sail by, wave to cyclists on the Mayenne's towpaths and keep your ears open for the sounds of Anjou's traditional open-air restaurants ("guinguettes") by the water's edge.

It's the perfect place to relax!



©Golf de Baugé

Another favourite...

It is described as the most beautiful golf club in Anjou... In Baugé, the hilly course has a technical par-72 course of 6,504 yards. Players enjoy the natural hazards, the impeccably maintained course and these holes that often resist every effort. But let the green surroundings keep you cool and focused.

➤ golf-bauge.fr



Here are 4 rituals to experience slow living and all its benefits

- Listen to the birds singing while you take a nap near the Loire
- Stroll into town through the morning mist to buy a baguette (and snack on the crispy end!)
- Enjoy a different sunset over the Loire every evening
- Spend a zen afternoon, walk through vineyards or a fragrant garden



©Oliver Boule

Ann-Louise de La Poype is a former journalist (born in England, has lived in New Zealand and Australia). She now manages the communication for her husband's family owned golf course, accommodation and restaurant Anjou Golf & Country Club.

25 minutes from Angers, the Anjou Golf & Country Club covers around a hundred hectares. The 18-hole course weaves between old oaks and lakes, designed by English architect Frederick Hawtree. "When François first introduced me to Anjou in the early 1990's by bicycle I was struck by the history of the region. One of my first memories is of visiting the Plessis-Bourré chateau. A guide pointed out where revolutionary guards had hacked at the Bourré coat of arms above one chimney mantel. This is literally history you can touch and feel. Anjou Golf sits on what was once farmland. Little deer peacefully cross the fairways in the morning giving a settled, calm atmosphere to this beautiful environment. It's a great site to welcome groups for a day or for a week. The barn has been transformed into a 20-room accommodation while the farm house now offers three larger self-catering apartments for families or golfers. The "Maison Bleue" sleeps 12 people and the swimming pool makes it even more attractive for a summer stay. Our golf pro Guillaume is available for golf lessons and for beginner classes. The restaurant serves classic French food for lunch. Its sunny terrace has a fantastic view over the 18th green."

➤ anjou-golf.com

SLOW TIME

Nicols

A COMPANY, A JOURNEY

Meet Nicols, a company founded in 1986 as part of an industrial group specialised in the transformation of plastic materials, a key operator on Anjou waterways. Initially, the company consisted of a shipyard based in Cholet. But very quickly Nicols developed its activity managing nautical bases and boat rentals. A triple-layered skill-set which has made them a key player in river-based tourism for more than 30 years.



©Sebastien Gaudard

Grez-Neuville



©Sebastien Gaudard

Grez-Neuville

Today more than 600 Nicols boats have come out of the shipyard in Cholet, including 300 which are rented out and travel up and down the navigable waterways of Europe. 25 nautical bases, including Grez-Neuville in Anjou, are managed by the company or affiliated renters.

Nicols boats are recognised as being easy to handle (no license is required to operate them), as well as for the comfort and level of innovation they offer. In 2018 Nicols launched the Sixto Green, which is the first boat on the market with 100% electric propulsion.

➤ nicols.com

Corinne Dufaud, sales director

70% of our customers are from overseas, and the vast majority of these are German and Swiss who are much more aware of issues around respecting the environment.

The demand has come from them and also reflects a certain logic, since river tourism is largely based on the use and preservation of a natural setting.

The Sixto Green boat is a real success. Of the customers who have used this boat since its first season, 100% would recommend this kind of electric boat and encourage the Nicols Yacht shipyard to continue developing electric boats.

Coco Chanel
was born in Saumur

► She spent the first years of her life here and made her first steps to becoming a great fashion icon. People say that her **ICONIC BLACK ROBE** is inspired by outfits worn by the **CADRE NOIR** de Saumur.



THE MANY GEMS OF ANJOU

Fashion, business, sport...
Anjou has a world class reputation

OVER THE TOP

► A land of innovation, Angers is part of **FRENCH TECH** and is recognised as a **SMART CITY**. It is home to 7,000 jobs and 900 businesses specialised in the digital and electronics sectors.

► **ANGERS**: a passport to the future with 2 universities, 15 higher education institutes, 40 000 French and foreigners students.

► **BODET** has been designing and making watches and timepieces for 5 generations. Based in Cholet, it charmed the organisers of the Olympic Games in London and other events all around the world.

► **LONGCHAMP** had a workshop in Segré-en-Anjou. In 2018, Vuitton created 250 jobs at Beaulieu-sur-Layon.

► **RUDY GOBERT**, basketball star and pivot for the **UTAH JAZZ NBA TEAM** and **FRENCH TEAM**, was coached in Cholet.



BIKE TOUR OF THE CELLARS

Lovely and cool in the cellars beneath the Thouet hillside, the sparkling wines from the Bouvet-Ladubay Estate are pampered by expert cellar-masters before releasing their wonderful aromas. To discover this hushed environment and immerse yourself in the secrets of making sparkling wine, hop on a bike and cycle through the 8 kilometres of cellars with a guide. Naturally, the tour finishes with a tasting - ideal for lifting your mood!

➔ bouvet-ladubay.fr



ALL ABOARD FOR A RIVER CRUISE

If you are looking for inspiration, take a breather on a Loire River cruise with its 360° views of fabulous landscapes. On a wooden "tow", a traditional Loire barge, enjoy a very gentle river experience. The sail is raised, the oars are used but the current does the work and there is never any need to rush... 10/10 for well-being! Boats depart between Montsoreau and Champtoceaux.

➔ anjou-tourisme.com

HOW TO BE THE COOLEST FRIEND / PARENT / BOSS

Our best experiences to share
and have fun



TWO STYLES FOR A UNIQUE VINTAGE TOUR

Offer yourself a glamorous escape in a vintage car or embrace the crazy 1960's in a camper van! Choose your style of vehicle and explore the charming little roads of Anjou. You'll never want the journey to end!

➔ loirevintagediscovery.com-retroemotion.fr



CANOE DOWN THE LOIRE RIVER

The last wild river of Europe, the Loire can only be tamed by those who don't mind getting wet! After a short briefing, get your life-jacket grab your paddle and you're ready to go! Sail down the river and immerse yourself in the nature, it's a perfect change of scenery. Another absolute must are the camping packages. Camp on the river bank and set off as the sun rises over the horizon. Perfect for a team-building exercise!

➔ anjou-loire-valley.co.uk



GET YOUR ADRENALIN PUMPING ON A MOUNTAIN BIKE

Excitement guaranteed with the Layon Loop, a 2h30 ride with your guide, Nicolas. On the programme: slightly uneven terrain to be carefully negotiated, panoramic views you can pause to enjoy and a delicious tasting of local produce. It will be a hard task getting your team home after all that!

➔ sensationvtt.net



LEARNING FRENCH LIKE VICTORIA, CROWN PRINCESS OF SWEDEN

It's impossible not to fall for Bradley Cooper when he speaks French! If you dream of doing the same, you'll be pleased to read that many travellers from overseas come to perfect their French in Anjou's universities. Angers also regularly hosts international conventions, organised in the recently renovated Convention Centre.

➔ destination-angers.com

Bouchemaine



© Sébastien Gaudard



HOTEL ROCAMINORI IN LOURESSE-ROCHEMENIER

If you are looking to surprise your other half, this is the ideal place. Built in wonderful caves, the hotel rooms are like something from another world. We love the nooks and recesses of the rooms cut into the stone, the white sheets bathed in warm sunshine that create a comforting, cocoon feel. Silence, softness and romance are the key words for a stay here. An underground passage directly connects the hotel with the restaurant, also troglodytic, which offers traditional dishes like fouaces, little bread rolls baked in the oven.

➤ rocaminori-hotel.fr



CHÂTEAU DE L'EPINAY IN SAINT-GEORGES-SUR-LOIRE

Last winter 2018, Athena Montuoro took over the reins of this 20-room hotel that was refurbished by her parents, only 15 minutes from Angers. Her ambition is to offer her guests the most zen and ecological experience possible. The latest well-being development: an entirely organic breakfast, a natural swimming pool treated with plants and yoga lessons too. We love the Italian flair of the chef, originally from San Remo. The menu of the Orangerie, the Château's restaurant, brings Italy and Anjou together. A crêmet d'Anjou is on the menu along with bruschetta and ricotta tortellini... a wonderful combination.

➤ chateauepinay.com

PLACES TO BE



ISLE VERTE 4-STAR CAMPSITE IN MONTSOREAU

After a few miles walking or cycling, all you want is a good shower... And this campsite near Saumur pampers its sporty (and not so sporty) guests with its "Bivouac" tents. Built on stilts and overlooking the Loire River, they have all the basics you need. For a little extra, treat yourself to a breakfast basket and enjoy it as the sun rises just in front of you.

➤ campingisleverte.com



4-STAR CHÂTEAU-HOTEL DE NOIRIEUX IN BRIOLLAY

This Relais & Châteaux destination, overhanging the Loir river, is a real find. As you pass through the iron gates and drive up the long drive, you'll immediately understand why. This château is built from tuffeau stone (typical of the area) and everything about it screams elegance. From the immaculate interiors to the gastronomic dishes prepared by the head chef and the restorative treatments provided in the well-being spa. Simple luxury is also reflected by the rooms in the former manor house.

➤ chateaudenoirieux.com





TERRA BOTANICA.fr

Les jardins extraordinaires - Angers

 **First theme park about plant in Europe**
Discover more than 500 000 exceptional botanical species from around the world. From the creation of Human life to the great explorations, between fascinating gardens and tropical greenhouses, live a very emotional moment. With family or friends, live your own experience through shows and attractions for children and adults !

Angers Anjou Val de Loire

Route d'Épiniard - CS 80809 - 49106 ANGERS CEDEX 2
contact@terrabotanica.fr
www.terrabotanica.fr

