

In the mood for
Sainte-Victoire

LEGEND

		Mountain Peak
		Picnic Areas
		Parking
		No Swimming
		Panoramic Viewpoint
		Museum / Interpretation Center
		Mining Site
		Guide Tour
		Swimming pool
		Equestrian Welcoming Spot
		Road Cycling



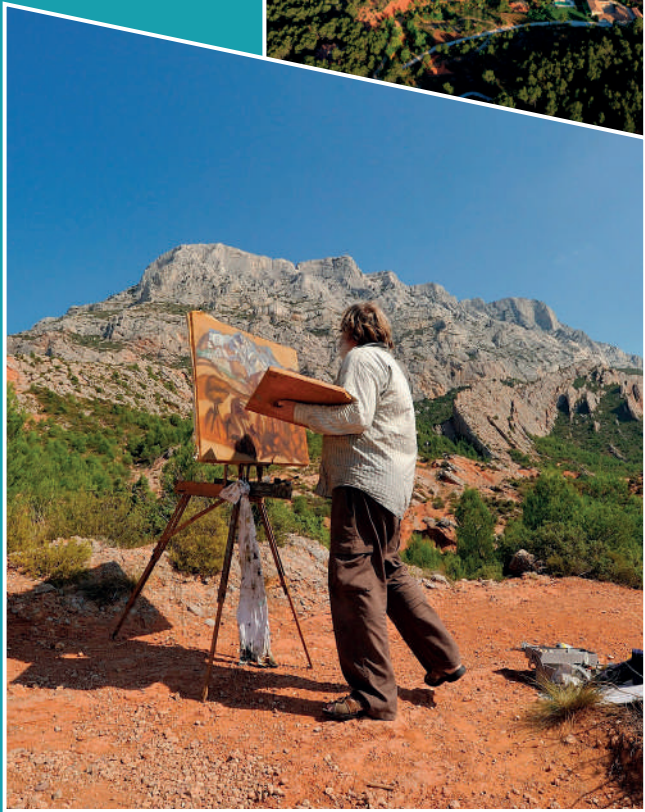
In the mood for Sainte-Victoire

Formed 15 million years ago, the mountain of Sainte-Victoire with its imposing white limestone cliffs dominates the Arc Valley. A patchwork of villages, farmland, industry and hills, presented here is an itinerary of some 90km along which to discover the Provençal way of life, its colours, scents and savours, always overlooked by the solitary figurehead of Sainte-Victoire. This guide takes you to the heart of this landscape. It will initiate you into everyday Provence, that of the inhabitants, artisans, producers (of cheese, honey, wine, saffron and cereals), restaurant and guest-house owners anxious to share their love of and respect for this place.



Sainte Victoire, a tower of inspiration

Sainte-Victoire rises high, like a gigantic limestone wave surging up from the red earth and prickly green garrigue, sitting proud above the Provençal countryside and the vines scattered over the Plateau du Cengle. Who's more famous? Cezanne, the internationally-renowned artist or Sainte-Victoire and its landscapes that he painted more than 80 times? Countless photographers, painters, directors and artists have captured the image of this mountain where the light and colours change all day long. They size themselves up to this cliff face and its countryside, toying with the splendour of a mountain small enough to paint, film or photograph in its entirety on a simple scrap of paper.



A collection of Mediterranean species

Why not explore Mont Sainte Victoire and the surrounding hills? The sheer range of scenery, plants and animals is really worth finding out about. These untouched swathes of land are home to a unique range of forest, farmland and upland landscapes forming an environmental mosaic full of flowers and animal life that belongs to the European Natura 2000 network.



Mediterranean forests, a treasure for

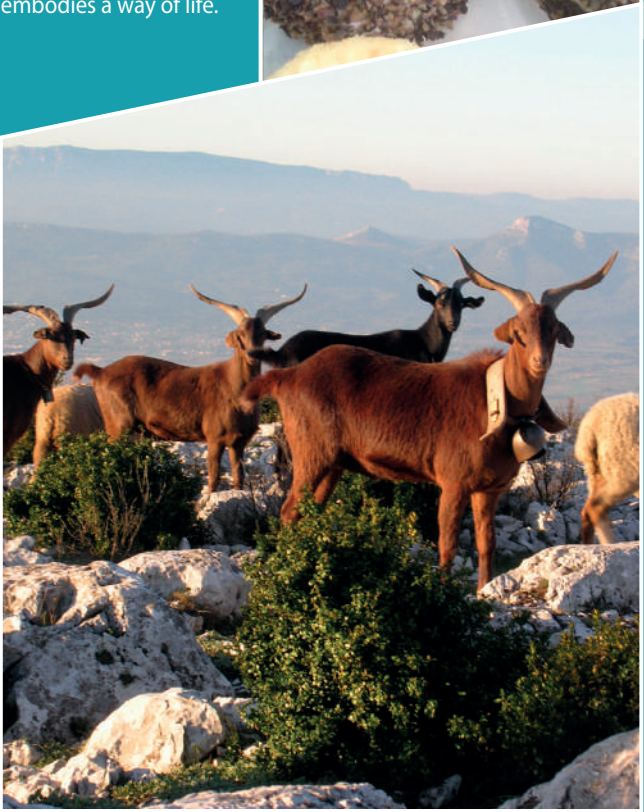
safekeeping

Mediterranean forests are a key feature of the Provençal countryside. The youngest examples are mainly pinewoods while older forests are dominated by Holm Oak which was grown for centuries to heat houses and ovens. Forests and woodlands are home to a large number of discrete and protected animals, such as owls, bats, mice and insects, but they also serve as grazing routes for flocks of goats and sheep. They perform a vital social role as well as being a natural space on the outskirts of an urban area with nearly 2 million people. Social and landscape functions aside, they are, first-and-foremost, a fantastic reservoir of biodiversity which certainly makes them worth protecting.



From livestock herding to gastronomy

Livestock herding dates back to Neolithic times and has left its mark on the landscape, the garrigue and pastures, where specific animal and plant species have developed. These typical Mediterranean environments are packed with amazing views combining fields, forests, garrigue and natural grassland, set against the backdrop of Sainte Victoire. Herds of goats and sheep graze on exquisitely aromatic thyme, rosemary and marjoram that gives their milk and cheese such unique character. These farming techniques constitute a heritage to be maintained and passed on. Here, harvesting, producing and sharing embodies a way of life.



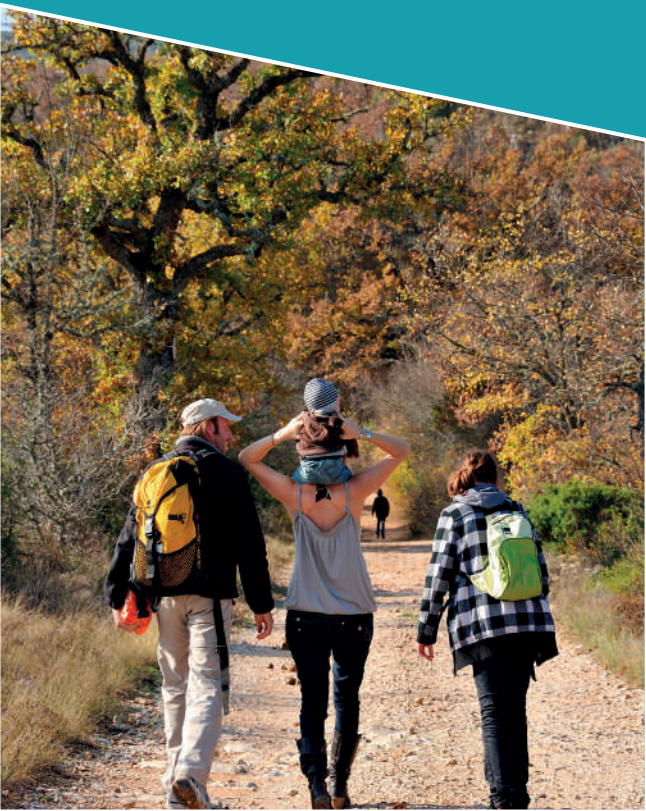
The network of EmbleMatic Mediterranean Mountains consists of nine complex living mountains located around the Mediterranean Sea, in France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Albania. The respective territories are working together on common challenges: Preserving patrimonial values from endogenous and exogenous threats Sharing positive experiences and good practices Increasing international recognition

EmbleMatic Ecojourneys are nine routes of experiential slow tourism across hinterland areas of European Mediterranean Mountain regions. By enjoying these journeys, visitors have a chance to explore the areas' singularities and the activities offered by local providers. These are journeys where nature and culture meet, and the experience with body and soul is such that it generously conveys the emblematic character of the territory.

Useful information

Where to eat ? Where to meet local producers and craftsmen ?
You will find all the useful information on this eco-itinerary at the following tourist offices :
Fuveau - 5 Cours Victor Leydet - 04 42 50 49 77 - www.fuveau-tourisme.com
Gardanne - 31 Boulevard Carnot - 04 42 51 02 73 - www.tourisme-gardanne.fr
Trets - Place Nelson Mandela - 15 avenue Mirabeau - 04 42 61 23 75 - www.trets.fr - tourisme
Gréasque - avenue de l'Ancienne Gare - 04 42 69 72 16
All the contact details (restaurants, lodging, producers and craftsmen) are on www.fuveau-tourisme.com on Emblematic tab.

Restrictions on access to open countryside
In Provence, fire is a real hazard for the forest and users. This is why the following are prohibited in the open countryside: camping, lighting fires, smoking. Access to the open countryside is subject to restrictions from 1 June to 30 September. To find out the latest information on a daily basis, go onto the Provence Tourisme website at: www.myprovence.fr/enviedebalade



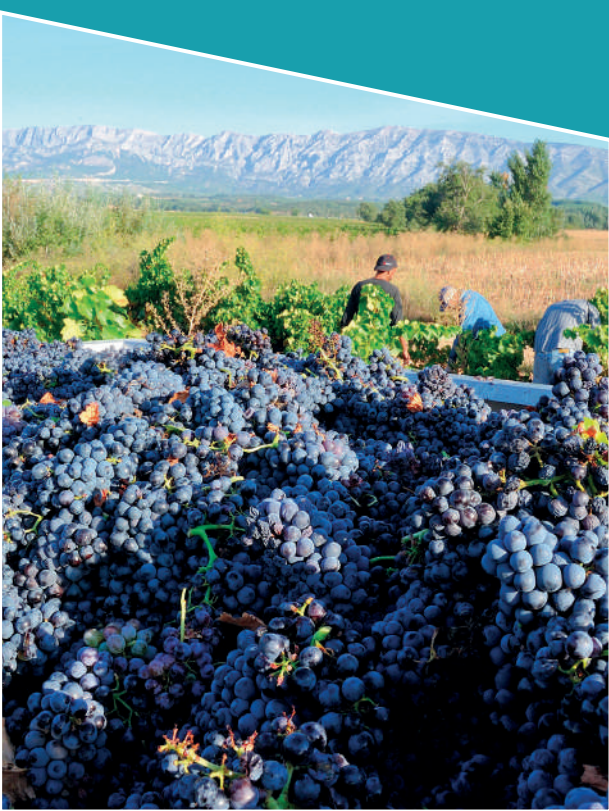
Environmentally responsible players

The eco-tourist routes in the EmbleMatic project are aimed at promoting the local know-how of restaurants, guest houses, artisans and producers committed to sustainable development. To guarantee eco-friendly practices by the socio-professionals promoted under this programme, these players have been mobilised in favour of sustainable development, then have joined a joint assessment of their practices based on simple indicators, resulting in a qualification for them. But the process does not stop there: all are invited to pursue their efforts as part of a continuous improvement process.



Nectar of the gods

Legend has it that Good King René (1409-1480) "would drink no other wine than the rosé of Puylobrier", although nowadays he would be referring to "Côte de Provence Sainte Victoire". The local limestone-rich, stony, sandy-clay soils are well-drained and ideal for growing vines. Also, the climate here is slightly more continental, so the grapes ripen a little later than in other areas of Provence, but these challenging growing conditions nurture the fruits to develop their aroma. At harvest time, there's a subtle interplay between the grapes and the winemaker. They draw the best from the berries, stalks, and the temperature, while the cellar master and their team craft the nectar of the gods.



Olive oil, an age-old heritage

Olive oil enchants a salad and is used to make the famous Savon de Marseille soap, but that's not all. For the people of Provence, it's part of everyday life. Olive oil is an elixir, whether you use it to whisk up an aioli, knead into your pastry dough for a Christmas Gibassier, concoct a hair mask or ward off any cardiovascular problems. One litre of quality olive oil contains nothing more than 5 to 6 kg of pressed olives, plus lots of love from both owner and tree. Olive trees grow in very poor soil, tolerating drought and extreme heat. If they freeze, new branches sprout from the trunk and produce more fruit a few years later, making them a symbol of eternity.



Provence, a tailor-made beekeeping paradise

Flowers bloom from January to October in Provence. As a result, the bees work hard for up to 10 months of the year, collecting nectar to feed the colony, making and storing honey for their winter reserves and gathering pollen to feed their larvae. The nectar, which gives the honey its flavour and taste, comes from Rosemary in March and April, Thyme in May, Lavender in July and Savory in August and September. These tenacious, hardy plants grow on poor, dry soils and produce small quantities of highly-concentrated nectar. This is why honeys from Provence are so flavoursome, fruity and colourful.



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