

Vendée

Get your fill of
new sensations





editorial

NATURAL VENDÉE...

What a beautiful nature Vendée has!

A coastal nature, with an exceptional shoreline.
An island nature, with our emblematic islands.
A nature of hedged farmland inland, with its
typical landscape. A marshland nature also, with
its canals and distinctive flora and fauna...

In Vendée, Nature presents itself to us in multiple forms,
sometimes calm and serene, sometimes wild and lively.
This nature, between land and water, is for everyone
an exceptional playing field for enjoying our leisure
activities. Water, such a precious asset to preserve,
enables a wide range of activities, for young and old
alike. In the waves or on the calm beaches of a lake, on
freshwater rivers or offshore to enjoy the wind. Between
swimming and boat tours, paddleboarding or surfing
sessions, Vendée offers a wide choice of possibilities.

On land, you can also choose between many activities to
satisfy your leisure desires. Walking, horse riding or cycling
tours, hiking for the more seasoned, but also geocaching,
fishing, or wildlife and flora discovery... Vendée provides an
exceptional setting for your activities during the holidays.

That's why Vendée and its nature are the ideal place
for simple holidays and a return to the essentials. Our
tourism professionals will know how to welcome you,
advise you, and accompany you throughout your stay
and each of your activities. So, come and enjoy Vendée!

Vendée Sensations

Contents

LIVELY
THE COASTLINE p. 8

CHARMING
THE ISLANDS p. 10

UNEXPECTED
PASSAGE DU GOIS p. 12

EXOTIC
SOUTHERN VENDEE p. 14

BEAUTIFUL
THE BOCAGE p. 16

ENRICHING
PUY DU FOU® p. 18

SOOTHING
SOFT MOBILITY p. 20

ENERGIZING
CYCLING p. 22
HIKING p. 24

INVIGORATING
WATER SPORTS p. 26

CAPTIVATING
HISTORY p. 30

INSPIRING
HANDICRAFTS p. 36

DELICIOUS
GASTRONOMY p. 38
Meet **Alexandre Couillon**, Chef of La Marine*** restaurant in Noirmoutier, awarded three Michelin stars in the 2023 Michelin Guide.
Portrait of the **three new Chefs** from Vendée who have been awarded a star in the 2023 Michelin Guide.
The Wine route

WELCOME
TO VENDEE
HOSPITALITY p. 44

EXPERIENCE
ENJOY p. 46

Vendée is all that!



Vendée Sensations

Production: March 2024 - Legal deposit with the Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Brochure produced by Vendée Expansion
33, rue de l'Atlantique - CS 80206
85005 La Roche sur Yon Cedex
Tel. 02 51 44 90 00 - Fax 02 51 62 36 73
Société anonyme d'économie mixte with capital of €3,037,045 - RCS La Roche sur Yon 546 650 169B - Registration no. IM085130001
info@vendee-tourisme.com
APE Code: 4299Z

Publication manager:
Guillaume Jean, in his capacity as Chairman and CEO of Vendée Expansion

Project management: Karen Allétru - Éléonore Fourré - Stéphanie Juvénal
Vendée Expansion Tourism Department

Graphic and editorial design -
Copywriting - Layout
13912-MEP
02 38 63 90 00
Graphic design and layout: Claire Duprez and Typhaine Cognée-Marast

Cover photograph: Thierry Ryo

Non-contractual document.

All rights reserved, registered trademark, reproduction prohibited.

Despite all the care taken in its production, this document may contain printing errors for which Vendée Expansion cannot be held responsible. Rates shown in the brochure are applicable in 2024.
Rates subject to conditions - See general or special conditions of sale directly with each advertiser.

Intellectual property rights:
Agence Scoop communication and Vendée Expansion are the owners of all intellectual property rights relating to the Sensations Vendée 2024 magazine, or hold the related usage right. You may not under any circumstances reproduce, modify, transmit, publish, adapt on any medium whatsoever, by any means whatsoever, all or part of the Sensations Vendée magazine without the prior written authorization of Vendée Expansion. Any use of all or part of the Sensations Vendée 2024 magazine or its content (photographs, editorial content, etc.) not previously authorized by Vendée Expansion for any reason whatsoever, may result in any appropriate action being taken in order to put an end to the disturbances observed, in particular an action for infringement. For any re-use of one or more elements of the magazine please contact Vendée Expansion (contact details above).

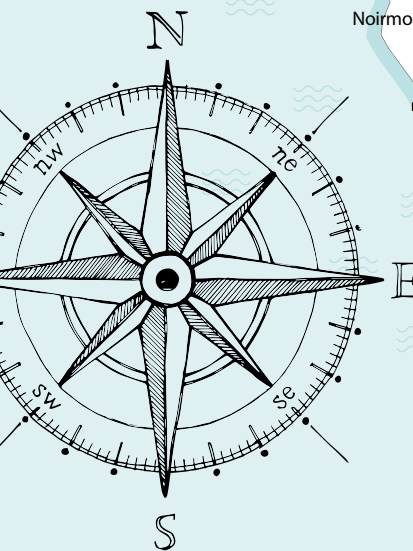
Alcohol abuse is dangerous for your health, or should be consumed in moderation.
For your health, eat at least five fruits and vegetables a day.

Photo credits: Pierre OLLIER, Simon BOURCIER, Alexandre LAMOUREUX, Julien GAZEAU, Marine d'Alex, François BOIZOT, Patrick TRÉCUL, Aurélien CURTET, Martin SYLVOS, Studio Laure, Verrerie Desjarigues, Faïencerie Nistar, Laurent DUPONT

Printed in France with vegetable-based inks or environmentally-friendly paper (PEFC).
Print run: 5,000 copies.

Not to be thrown away.





At a
glance

-  Tourism offices
-  Medieval Castle
-  Town of Art and History
-  Towns
-  Remarkable gardens
-  Picturesque villages
-  City and Crafts
-  New towns

LIVELY The Coastline

A breath of fresh air

With its 280 kilometers of coastline, including 140 of fine sandy beaches, the wild coast of Vendée has many attractions. From the Northern tip of the island of Noirmoutier to the Aiguillon Bay in the South, 18 renowned seaside resorts such as Saint Jean de Monts, Saint Gilles Croix de Vie, Les Sables d'Olonne, and La Tranche sur Mer, over 90 beaches, fishing ports, and numerous marinas line the ocean's edge. Between vast beaches, spectacular cliffs, intimate coves, and wild rocky coasts, the coastline of Vendée is a paradise for tourists.



The *Conche beach* in Longeville sur Mer, labeled "Pavillon Bleu" and accessible for people with disabilities.



CHARMING

The islands

Off the Vendée coast

Yeu Island and Noirmoutier Island.. Two gems of Vendée for a complete change of scenery!

The first, Yeu Island, offers you its preserved and wild landscapes, with an extraordinary coast to explore by land or sea, its ancient castle or its houses with blue shutters, its nature, and its very specific way of life... Yeu Island embodies the spirit of the open sea.

The second, Noirmoutier Island, offers you its wild creeks, its typical villages, and its lively fishing ports, its pretty white houses, its castle, its famous Bois de la Chaise wood, its salt marshes, and its unusual Passage du Gois which only reveals itself at low tide... A rare island, a treasure to be discovered with family, friends, or a loved one.



Noirmoutier island and its distinctive landscape seen from the sky

© François Boizot

UNEXPECTED Passage du Gois

For a holiday like no other

Looking for original activities or visits? Vendée is full of surprises! Why not try, for example, to cross the Passage du Gois? This 4.2 kilometer-long mythical road is the longest submersible causeway in Europe. It connects Beauvoir sur Mer to Noirmoutier Island and attracts numerous visitors every year.

The *Passage du gois*
between Beauvoir sur Mer
and Noirmoutier island





EXOTIC

Southern Vendée

Discovering Green Venice

Nestled between land and sea, the Marais Poitevin is an exceptional site. Labeled as a Regional Natural Park and a Major Site of France, it takes many forms. On one side, the dried marshes and the Aiguillon Bay, and on the other, the wet marshes crisscrossed with multiple canals. To discover all its treasures by rowing boat, use one of the piers along the canals that traverse this natural area of 100,000 hectares. Take the opportunity to make a detour through Fontenay le Comte: listed as a City of Art and History, it houses architectural jewels dating back to the Middle Ages.

The pier of *Maillezais*
Abbey seen from the sky,
under an autumn light



BEAUTIFUL

The Bocage

Going green

The Haut Bocage and Bas Bocage, both territories boast a rich heritage: with a granitic landscape of rolling hills, the Haut Bocage includes castles, mills, the Mont des Alouettes hill peaking at 232 meters, and... the famous Puy du Fou®! Less hilly, the Bas Bocage distinguishes itself with its rivers such as the Boulogne, the Yon, the Vie, and the Lay.

Le Moulin de la
Roche on the
banks of the
Sèvre Nantaise in
Tiffauges



Les *Epesses*
in the heart
of the Bocage

ENRICHING Puy du Fou®

**The best theme
park in the world**

The success of Puy du Fou is undeniable!
In 2023, it even broke its attendance
record by welcoming more than 2.6 million
visitors. Come and discover its immersive
historical shows, unique in the world.
Embark on a grand journey through time at
Puy du Fou and experience great emotions
during unforgettable shows amid nature!

© Martin Sylvos

SOOTHING Soft mobility

Tourism in a different way

Electric scooters or Mehari cars, horse riding, pedestrian or cycling tours, canoeing, kayaking... Slow tourism is gaining momentum in Vendée! Why not opt for one of these gentle modes of travel to organize a sustainable trip, more respectful of the environment?

The Payré channel
in *Talmont*
Saint Hilaire





ENERGIZING

cycling

On your marks, get set, pedal!

With nearly 1,800 kilometers of cycle paths, Vendée is a dream region for cyclists. To support its cycling policy and remain innovative in the field of alternative modes of transport, actions such as the "Accueil Vélo" label have been implemented, offering cyclists tailored services. So, are you ready to embark on the Vélodyssée or the Vendée Vélo Tour, the latest cycling attraction?



Le Marais Breton Vendéen
45,000 hectares of wet meadow

ENERGIZING

Hiking

The must-do walks in Vendée

Throughout the seasons, wander on foot, by bike, or even on rollerblades along kilometers of arranged hiking trails. The Marais Breton Vendéen, with its 45,000 hectares of wet meadows, salt marshes, and freshwater marshes; the Mervent forest with its magnificent viewpoints; the Jaunay lake with its lush vegetation... Vendée abounds with varied landscapes!

The lake in the
Mervent forest



INVIGORATING Water Sports

Mouth-watering water sports

Vendée is a paradise for water sports and nautical activities. Whether in, on, or by the water, a myriad of activities awaits you. Surfing, kitesurfing and windsurfing, bodyboarding, sailing... With numerous schools to coach you along the coastline, you can discover or perfect these practices safely. Swimming in the ocean or in the lakes of the region, boating or stand-up paddleboarding, water parks and leisure parks enhance the wide range of activities from which everyone can choose according to their tastes and desires!



Weekend Idea

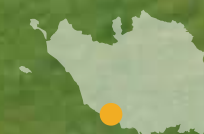
NAUTICAL WEEKEND
IN THE AREA OF SAINT
JEAN DE MONTS

From €125/person

2 days/1 night

Spend a weekend
getting initiated

Les Sables
d'Olonne



Activities between land and sea

Fresh or sea water, for everyone and for every taste!



© Alexandre Lamoureux

Swimming in the Ocean

With a coastline stretching over 250 kilometers, Vendée's beaches will charm those who love beach tourism and vast spaces. Whether it's the Ladies' Beach in Noirmoutier, Conches Beach in Longeville-sur-Mer, or the Great Beach of Les Sables d'Olonne, there's a spot for everyone!

In fresh water

Fancy a swim and basking in the sun? Lakes Chassenon or Touchegray and their leisure parks offer an idyllic setting for some well-deserved rest.

- > Leisure park of Lake Chassenon in Xanton Chassenon
- > Leisure park of Touchegray in the area of Chantonay

Rowing Boats In the heart of Green Venice

With its canals, ditches and water channels, the Marais Poitevin will reveal all its secrets to you. Onboard a rowing boat (with or without a boatman), discover an exceptional natural site home to preserved fauna and flora.

- > Different landings in the Marais Poitevin: Abbey pier in Maillezais, Green Venice pier in Mazeau, Autize pier in Saint Sigismond, Grenouille Bleue in Damvix, Capucines Pier in Maillé.

Kitesurfing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, towed tubing, land sailing... Vendée is the perfect spot for water sports, both for beginners and the more experienced.

Water Parks Guaranteed laughter

Breathtaking slides, wave pools, whirlpools, paddling pools... Atlantic Wake Park and O'Gliss Park will delight both young and old for a few hours or a full day. Come and enjoy the fun of swimming in a playful way!

- > Atlantic Wake Park in Saint Hilaire de Riez
- > O'Gliss Park in Le Bernard

"I'm driving!"

Located in the heart of the city of Saint Gilles Croix de Vie, P'tits Mousses' park offers a unique experience with its famous electric boats. Your little one can help you steer a mini fireboat or police boat. And become a captain for a day for real at the leisure park of Mervent, where lake boats await you for a peaceful ride on your chosen course!

- > Les P'tits Mousses in Saint Gilles Croix de Vie
- > Leisure park of Mervent



Speed Sports

For thrill seekers

Established in 2004, the Jet Explorer water sports venue is a true benchmark. Jet skiing or towed tubing: set off to explore the coast of Les Sables d'Olonne! With Water Fun, dive into the water with a wide choice of buoys: seated, lying down, banana, flyfish.

- > Jet Explorer in the port of Les Sables d'Olonne
- and in Port Bourgenay in Talmont Saint Hilaire
- > Water fun in La Tranche sur Mer

Sailing Sports Carried by the wind

The Fort Saint-Pierre water sports center, labeled "French Sailing School," organizes courses and trips regularly: windsurfing, land sailing, catamaran... Any preference?

- > Water sports Center Fort Saint-Pierre in Noirmoutier Island
- > Water sports Center in Notre Dame de Monts
- > South Vendée Water sports Center in La Faute sur Mer

Prefer to propel yourself out of the water? Kitesurfing is the ideal water sport! There are many learning spots in Vendée.

- > Mouv'nkite School in Barbâtre
- > Kitesurf Vendée in La Faute sur Mer
- > Ocean Players on Veillon Beach in Talmont Saint Hilaire

And for those who literally want to take off into the air, why not try parasailing?

- At 50 meters above the water, you'll enjoy breathtaking views of the ocean!
- > Parachute Sablais in Les Sables d'Olonne

Sliding Sports

Paddleboarding

ON A LAKE... A booming sliding sport for several years, this ancestor of surfing has Polynesian origins. Fancy a little initiation? It's an activity to enjoy with family or friends that will create unforgettable moments.

- > Leisure park of Lake La Chausselière in Montaigu
- > Cano'Évasion on Lake Jaunay in Landevieille

... OR IN THE SEA? Vendée's paddleboarding experts offer courses or training for all levels. Ride the waves and improve your skills safely with trained and state-certified professional instructors.

- > Water sports Center in Saint Jean de Monts
- > Paddle Adventure in Talmont Saint Hilaire

Surfing

EMBRACE THE "SURF ATTITUDE"

There are numerous surfing spots in Vendée. The more experienced can conquer the waves in Les Sables d'Olonne or Longeville sur Mer. Beginners might want to take a few lessons first.

- > Octopus School in Les Sables d'Olonne
- > Keep Cool Surfing in Brétignolles sur Mer
- > Manu Surf School in Longeville sur Mer

Kayaking and Canoeing

FOR NATURE LOVERS

In the heart of the forest, the leisure park of Lake Mervent is paradise for kayak and canoe enthusiasts. These activities are supervised by qualified sports educators.

- > Leisure park of Mervent
- > Caval Kayak on Yeu Island

Let Vendée enchant you...

Vendée boasts several towns with exceptional historical heritage, like here in Fontenay le Comte. Visitors of the city center are immersed in the Renaissance era. Vendée also has 9 "Petites Cités de Caractère" (Small Towns of Character): Noirmoutier en l'île, Apremont, Mallièvre, Mouchamps, Pouzauges, Mortagne sur Sèvre, Vouvant, Foussais-Payré, and Nieul sur l'Autise. This distinction is awarded to small towns and villages with remarkable architectural and landscape heritage.

CAPTIVATING History

Belliard Square in
Fontenay le Comte,
certified "Ville d'Art et d'Histoire"

Vendée A land of history

Vendée's identity has also been shaped by its history. Ancient history, full of key events across the ages and of figures whose fame has far exceeded borders and oceans.

Did you know?

Today unmissable, the name "Vendée" was chosen in 1790 to designate the department but selected by default. Originally, two rivers, the Grand and Petit Lay, were chosen to name the new administrative division. However, the possible play on words with the two "ugly" rivers (in French, "laid") led to the choice of the Vendée river, although much smaller, in order to spare the sensibilities of the territory's elected officials.

FOCUS ON



Eleanor of Aquitaine 1122 (or 1124) - 1204

A high-profile historical figure, Eleanor of Aquitaine played a significant role in medieval Europe. Born in Nieul sur l'Autise, she was the heiress to the counts of Poitou and dukes of Aquitaine. She first married Louis VII, King of France, granting Nieul sur l'Autise the status of royal abbey. She later married Henry II Plantagenêt, future King of England. In 1157, she gave birth to Richard the Lionheart, who, as a hunting enthusiast, often returned near Talmont Saint Hilaire or La Roche sur Yon.

CAPTIVATING VENDEE

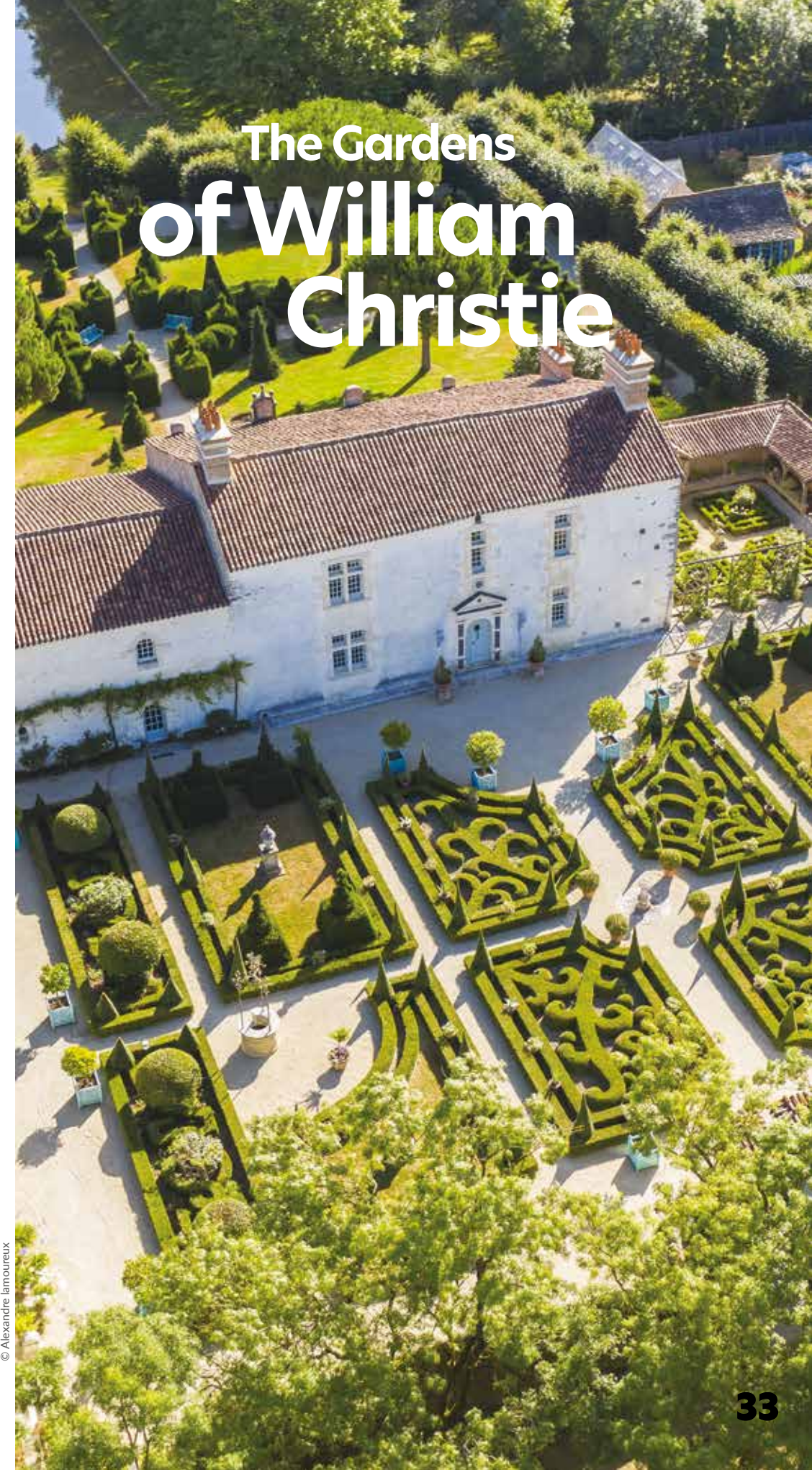
A remarkable garden in the heart of Vendée

In 1985, William Christie fell in love with an estate in Thiré, in Vendée, where he set about creating a garden from scratch.

Since then, he has created not just one garden, but a succession of remarkable and eclectic spaces, inspired by the art of gardening as it reached its apogee in France and Italy in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Now recognised as a "Remarkable Garden" and listed as a Historic Monument, this exceptional 12-hectare site is at the heart of the Les Arts Florissants - William Christie Foundation project.

The Gardens of William Christie



The most beautiful sites to visit... Wonders to discover!



8

TOP-RATED CULTURAL SITES

Abbaye de Nieul sur l'Autise ①

This outstanding architectural pearl in the heart of a small town recognized for its boundless character has been enhanced by unique restoration projects. Founded in 1068, the abbey enjoyed the protection of the Dukes of Aquitaine and was given the status of royal abbey in 1141 by Aliénor d'Aquitaine, then Queen of France.

Abbaye de Maillezais ②

The Maillezais abbey is the biggest historical site in the poitevin marshes. It is a splendid example of architecture dating back to Roman, Gothic and Renaissance periods. Its majestic ruins stand proudly in the centre of a beautiful natural setting.

Haras de la Vendée Equestrian centre ③

With a rich, unrivalled cultural and equestrian history, set in 4.5 hectares of grounds right in the heart of La Roche sur Yon, the Haras de la Vendée offers equestrian trick-riding shows blending humour, costumes and different themes.

Cité des Oiseaux ④

La Cité des Oiseaux is a natural bird sanctuary and one of the largest inlying wetlands areas of the Vendée. All is revealed in a new outdoor photo exhibition.

Prieuré de Grammont ⑤

Richard the Lionheart ordered the foundation of this priory for the Grandmont order at the end of the 12th century. Visit at dusk when the torches and candles are lit for musical events on summer evenings.

Historial de la Vendée Historical museum ⑥

Would you like to know more about France? Travel back through 7,000 years of the history of France and Vendée in this modern museum with original architecture!

Logis de la Chabotterie ⑦

This important historical manor played a role at the end of the Wars of the Vendée during the French Revolution. It is also a former dwelling which demonstrates the peaceful country lifestyle enjoyed in the 18th century. With furnished rooms, a geometric walled garden and established grounds, this residence still breathes life with delicately rustic charm.

Château de Tiffauges ⑧

Relive the history of the largest medieval fortress in western France with live shows, a 3D film and real-life crossbow shooting. The fortress also boasts the biggest collection of war machines in the world!

More information on nossites.vendee.fr



Tourist attractions in Vendée

Route du Sel salt marshes

Embark on a canoe trip (2-16 seats) in Sallertaine through the Marais Breton Vendéen to discover the old salt marshes. Explore the magical maze of water with a guide or at your own pace. If you feel adventurous, wild camp for a couple of days.

Château des Aventuriers amusement park

This fun and instructive amusement park offers adventures for all ages: carry out an investigation with a tablet, solve riddles, explore the forest, visit the castle, play in inflatable toys and test your dexterity with games.

Natur' Zoo in Mervent

Nestled in the heart of the Mervent forest, 6 minutes from Fontenay le Comte, the zoo is home to 300 animals who live a happy and peaceful life in the expansive wooded grounds. The daily life of the lions, lemurs, bears and giraffes is a non-stop action-packed show which transports you to distant lands!

Château de Talmont

Richard the Lionheart's incredible 11th-century listed fortress takes you back in time to life in the Middle Ages, with historic, shows and nocturnal events. Don't miss the Halloween party!

Grand Défi adventure park

Choose from a tree-top adventure park, paint ball, galactic laser, disc golf, orienteering, pony rides... can you take anymore? This adventure park set in vast natural grounds provides all you need in the way of fun activities.

Centre Minier de Faymoreau

Are you daring enough to relive a 100%, mining adventure as the region's "black faces"? This museum will surprise you... its immersive journey starts out from "the changing/hanging room", then into the lamp room before going down into the reconstituted mine, where an exhibition concludes your journey.

Château de Terre Neuve

Discover this splendid Renaissance building, overlooking Fontenay le Comte, a town recognized for its art and history. Observe exceptional ornamental details like the gilded suns of Chambord, the sculpted stone box-beam ceilings and the alchemist's fireplace.

Vendée Miniature

One of the most beautiful miniature villages in France, and what's more... From the church to the windmill, not forgetting the shops and the train station: each object is hand-made!

Zoo des Sables

Atlas lions, giraffes, Amur leopards, monkeys, red pandas and giant anteaters...over 500 rare and exotic animals live in this lush natural environment dedicated to studying and protecting biodiversity. Lovers of fauna and flora will be enthralled!

Parc de Pierre Brune

Set in the heart of the Mervent Forest, this leisure park offers numerous outdoor activities for the young and old alike. Countless fun packed activities to enjoy with the family or among friends.

Explora Parc adventure park

In the magnificent forest of Saint Jean de Monts, this activity park has 8 tree-top adventure courses with a range of difficulty for different levels of thrills. And why not push your limits and try it at night?

Maison de la Meunerie

Discover the authentic, rural site of the Maison de la Meunerie. In the company of the baker, the washerwomen, the mill owner, his daughter and even the cat, an interesting story reveals the history of bygone days.

O'Gliss Park water park

This giant 6 ha water park is divided into 5 amazing and fun-filled areas with thrills and spills on crazy slides and in inflatable-ring rivers for a fabulous day with friends or family.

O'Fun Park adventure park

In the heart of the forest, this park has 5 different areas for thrill seekers and their friends or family: water jump, tree-top adventure course, paint ball, fun zone, Duel Arena. For daredevils of all ages!

Les Salines boat rides

Venture on a boat trip into the heart of the salt marshes or explore the historical park to learn all about the history of salt with mysteries and games. Discover observation points, cabins and the secrets of salt workers...

INSPIRING

A bubble of relaxation

a few kilometers
from Puy du Fou®

Created by Nicolas Pasquier in 2010, the Savonnerie des Collines, an artisanal soap factory, produces natural soaps and cosmetic products 100% made in France. Discover its bright shop with an industrial ambiance.

Handi crafts

Donkey or goat milk soap, solid shampoo, body milk, face cream, and even laundry soap flakes... you're sure to find something you'll love at the Savonnerie des Collines! Here, all products are made with the utmost respect for the environment and the skin. The soaps are made from quality vegetable oils, without palm oil or animal fat. The fragrances come from Grasse, and the pigments (natural!) are of mineral origin. For more mildness, the Savonnerie des Collines also uses donkey and goat milk from local farms. Ideal for sensitive skin!

A unique visit into the world of soap

Looking for an original activity for the family? The Savonnerie des Collines offers a tour* of the factory through an animated journey called "once upon a time, there was soap". An opportunity for young and old to interact and discover a unique know-how.

* Adult prices: €3.50, child (5 to 13 years old): €2. The visit is free for children under 5.

"All products
are made
with the utmost
respect for the
environment
and the skin."

Savonnerie des Collines

2 les Rochettes 85590 Saint Mars la Réorthe
02 51 57 63 47

Open Monday to Friday: 9am-12:30pm/2pm-7pm
Saturday: 9am-12:30pm/2pm-6:30pm
www.savonneriedescollines.com

Craftsmanship in Vendée: the excellence of traditional know-how

With a unique know-how, Vendée's artisans contribute to the attractiveness and influence of their territory. Focus on two of them: the Art Glassworks of Bourgenay and the Nistar Earthenware.

The passion for glass

Stéphanie Desjariges, when did you take over the reins of the Art Glassworks of Bourgenay?

We've always been passionate about this craftwork which requires patience, technique, and precision. We took over the Art Glassworks of Bourgenay in 2009. My partner had already worked there in the past and knew the former glassmaker well.

What can we admire in the shop adjacent to the workshop?

I make vases, flasks, and many other unique pieces. Like my partner, I have been a glassblower for about twenty years. About three years ago, I started exploring the technique of lampworking for making spun glass jewelry. Near the shop, the workshop offers demonstrations of blown glass where you will discover all the secrets and mysteries of this magical material!

Do you also offer workshops?

During school holidays, we organize introductory workshops to glass blowing for children. Guided by our glassblowers, they can blow their own bubble and engrave their name on it (price: €30). So, are you ready to try the experience?

Art Glassworks of Bourgenay

Rue des Forges 85440 Talmont Saint Hilaire
02 51 33 80 09



© Verre de Desjariges

Nistar Earthenware: the named bowl is not Breton but truly from Vendée!

Who hasn't drunk their morning hot chocolate from their personalized bowl? Handmade and painted since 1936, this famous bowl, easily recognizable by its "ears," is the work of Yves and Marcel Boutain, who draw from their environment and their story the subjects of their pottery decorations. When on holiday on Vendée's coast, don't miss the chance to bring back this lovely souvenir in your suitcase!

Nistar Earthenware

2 rue de l'Étoile de Mer 85800 Saint Gilles Croix de Vie
02 51 55 35 66



DELICIOUS

Some ideas
for a stay?

GASTRONOMIC STAY IN
SOUTHERN VENDEE

From € 115 per person
2 days/1 night

Enjoy gourmet moments during a
dinner featuring Vendée's terroir
flavors and a visit to a vineyard.



Gastronomy

While Vendée is renowned for the
beauty of its landscapes, it has
also forged a true culinary identity
over time. Brioche, tourteuseau,
préfou, moquette, ham, Noirmoutier
potatoes, Challans poultry,
oysters, roussepinette aperitif,
wines from the Fiefs Vendéens...
the specialties are numerous and
to be enjoyed without moderation!

Did you know?

Nine restaurants in Vendée are listed in the Michelin Guide: La Marine*** in Noirmoutier, Restaurant Jean-Marc Pérochon* in Brétignolles sur Mer, Les Genêts* in Brem sur Mer, La Robe* in Montaigu, La Table du Boisniard* in Chanverrie, and La Chabotterie* in Montréverd. They are joined by Les Reflets*, La Maison Desamy*, and L'Abissiou*.

* source 2024 Michelin Guide



© Laurent Dupont

© Laurent Dupont

"A marine and vegetable cuisine, of the living, in the moment"

Chef of the gourmet restaurant La Marine on the island of Noirmoutier, Alexandre Couillon is not one to boast even though 2023 has been a year of success. Judge for yourself: winning a third star in the prestigious Michelin Guide, elected chef of the year by his peers, a third place for La Marine in the ranking of the 1000 best restaurants in the world, and, finally, a promotion to the rank of Knight of the Order of Merit for him and his wife Céline: "It's above all the story of a couple, who decided to settle in 1999, against all odds. It was a bit of madness. The first star obtained in 2007 confirmed our choice to continue our efforts. We want to highlight the value of work."

Unique flavors

For chef Alexandre Couillon, it was hard to imagine at the beginning that a restaurant in Vendée, let alone on the island of Noirmoutier, would one day become triple-starred! "It took us time to understand the specifics of the island and the profession. Today, we have our own garden of 4,000 square meters. The menu is written each morning based on arrivals and the day's harvest. We go to the fish market on the port every morning to select the best fish. La Marine has twenty covers and about ten people in the kitchen who work only with fresh and seasonal products," he adds.

A collective recipe for success

The hallmark of chef Alexandre Couillon is a marine and vegetable cuisine, of the living, in the moment, which could not be done anywhere else but on the island of Noirmoutier. "We are very proud to be from Vendée. This territory has a lot of resources and quality artisans in all fields. Our success is only possible thanks to the combination of all these talents who work with us daily serving the restaurant's quality."

La Marine***

3 rue Marie Lemonnier
85 330 Noirmoutier en l'Île
alexandrecouillon.com

Vendée on the plate

What do Nathan Cretney, Simon Bessonnet, and Boris Harispe have in common? These three new chefs won the famous star at the 2023 Michelin star ceremony!

Les Reflets, a colorful cuisine

Run by chef Nathan Cretney and his partner Solen Pineau, the establishment claims an "accessible and uncomplicated" gastronomy that honors the beautiful products of the region and their producers. The warm decor (soft colors and exposed stones) invites you to taste. Comfortably seated at your table, you can (re)discover a nice selection of dishes that will enchant your taste buds.

Les Reflets*

227 rue Roger Salengro 85000 La Roche sur Yon
09 83 25 83 71
www.restaurantlesreflets.fr

La Maison Desamy, a refined address

Located in a Napoleonic-style building dating from the 1860s, this restaurant has three rooms and accommodates up to 35 covers. Decorated with care (the original cement tiles have been preserved and the Mareuil rock on which the house was built is present across one of the rooms), the establishment is run by chef Simon Bessonnet, who offers quality cuisine made from seasonal and local products, as well as a wine list that evolves nicely with the seasons.

La Maison Desamy*

2 rue Hervé de Mareuil 85320 Mareuil sur Lay Dissais
02 51 52 69 43
www.restaurant-maisondesamy.fr

L'Abissiou, between port and beach

A few steps from the market hall, Notre Dame de Bon Port church, and its historic quarter, L'Abissiou welcomes you in the convivial setting of a typical Sables d'Olonne house. You will enjoy elegant cuisine that showcases terroir products and seasonality. Trained alongside the greatest chefs, Boris Harispe takes you into his world and lets you discover his cuisine tinged with emotion. He is also accompanied by Mélanie Roussy, who will be pleased to advise you in your wine choices.

L'Abissiou*

81 rue des Halles 85100 Les Sables d'Olonne
09 86 36 42 29
www.labissiou.fr



the Wine route



①
DOMAINE DES GARENNES
BREM SUR MER

②
DOMAINE SAINT NICOLAS
BREM SUR MER

③
DOMAINE DES GRANGES
BREM SUR MER

④
L'ORÉE DU SABIA
BREM SUR MER

⑤
DOMAINE LUX EN ROC
BREM SUR MER

⑥
DOMAINE ÉRIC SAGE
BREM SUR MER

⑦
DOMAINE DE LA BARBINIÈRE
CHANTONNAY

⑧
VIGNOBLES MOURAT
MAREUIL SUR LAY

⑨
FABIEN MURAIL
LA COUTURE

⑩
LES VIGNOBLES JARD
ROSNAV

⑪
DOMAINE DE PIERRE FOLLE
ROSNAV

⑫
DOMAINE DU HAUT-BRILLOUET
LE TABLIER

⑬
VIGNOBLES MERCIER
VIX

⑭
DOMAINE COIRIER
PISSOTTE

LOCAL

products



WELCOME
TO VENDÉE

The good life

In addition to its history, gastronomy and landscapes, Vendée is renowned for the warmth and enthusiasm of its people. You'll immediately fall under the spell of this warm and engaging population!

The keys to accommodation in Vendée

Hospitality

Welcome and hospitality are not just empty words in Vendée. These are the key values that guide tourism professionals in their day-to-day work to ensure your satisfaction. Open-air hotels, traditional hotels, vacation residences and villages, gîtes and bed & breakfasts... all types of accommodation are available throughout the region. You'll be spoilt for choice!

Book your accommodation:
in-vendee.com



Bed and Breakfast En Kate
d'une Pause à *Talmont*
Saint Hilaire

© Simon Bourcier

© Simon Bourcier

10 UNIQUE EXPERIENCES to enjoy in Vendée



Experience #1 Freedom of the great outdoors

Vendée is all about experiencing the freedom of the great outdoors and breathing in the sea air from its exceptional protected natural sites.

To the north, a mysterious path leads from Fromentine to the island of Noirmoutier: the mythical Passage du Gois. A submersible road over 4km long. Be careful not to be caught out by the tide, as the road is only open for 3 hours!

In Talmont Saint Hilaire, the Payré estuary is a unique natural sanctuary with preserved flora and fauna and has been awarded the Pavillon Bleu (Blue Flag label).

Further south, located in the new community of L'Aiguillon la Presqu'île, lies the Pointe d'Arçay, a sandy spit covering 1,035 hectares and 6km in length. This paradise for birds overlooking the ocean is a delight to explore.

Experience #2 An enchanting getaway on our two islands

Take the passage du Gois or the bridge to the delightful "Île aux mimosas" (Noirmoutier, with its beloved mimosa trees), renowned for its famous "Bonneotte" potato with its unmistakable flavour, salty aftertaste, and a hint of walnut aroma.

Discover Noirmoutier's wealth of treasures as you wander through its narrow streets, or amidst its salt marshes, holm oak forests and long stretches of sand.



With its secluded coves and white houses decorated with colourful shutters, the island of Yeu is a timeless paradise.

Located 17km from the mainland, it only takes half an hour by boat from Fromentine to reach the island. You can explore the island by bike at your own pace (a recommended means of transport). L'île d'Yeu is an ideal place for a relaxing break.

Experience #3 A maritime stop-over in Saint Gilles Croix de Vie

Saint Gilles Croix de Vie, a friendly, authentic seaside resort ! Listed as a "Remarkable Site of Taste", its fishing port is renowned for its famous sardines, making it the leading sardine port on the Atlantic coast. Founded in 1887, the resort is also renowned for its "La Perle des Dieux" canning factory. The "Atelier de la Sardine", part of the canning factory, is dedicated to the subject. It comprises 3 areas: a museum, an art gallery, and a shop.

Many restaurants propose sardines on their menus all year round. From the simplest recipes to gourmet dishes, sardines come in all kinds of forms (marinated, grilled or in rillettes).

Every year, this maritime town celebrates the opening of the fishing season for its favourite fish: this event is called the "Printemps de la sardine".

Experience #4 An unusual excursion to the heart of the Marais Poitevin

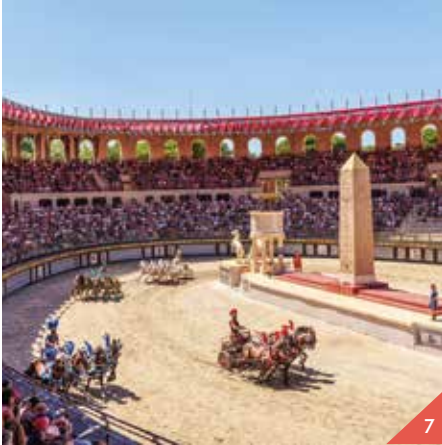
The Marais Poitevin, a natural regional park bearing the "Grand Site de France" label, is widely known as the Green Venice.

Nearly 800km of the canals, lined with pruned ash trees (frênes têtards), can be explored on board a "plate", a traditional, flat bottomed marsh boat. A perfect way to peacefully sail through the Marais Poitevin canals. The park's ecological diversity makes it France's second-largest wetland area, after the Camargue.

Experience #5 Travel back in time exploring some of the quaint little villages

From the coast to the marshes and then to the bocage, the Vendée has 10 "Petites Cités de Caractère": a label that honours villages with a remarkable architectural and landscape heritage.

Apremont, Mouchamps or Pouzauges are among them, reflecting the diverse identity of the Vendée. Mortagne sur Sèvre and Noirmoutier have been recently added to the list.



Experience #6 Daydreaming on board a legendary train

From Mortagne sur Sèvre to Les Herbiers, it is possible to travel on board a steam train.

The Chemin de Fer de la Vendée Association invites you to enjoy a romantic lunch in an authentic restaurant carriage and experience firsthand, the classic lifestyle of the Great European Express trains.

As you cross the viaducts, you can admire the view over the Sèvre Valley. The trip is narrated and offers more entertainment.

Experience #7 Puy du Fou® - Pure emotion

Voted on several occasions the world's best theme park, Puy du Fou offers a real journey through time, from Antiquity to the 20th century.

With over 60 spectacular shows featuring special effects unlike any other in the world.

New in 2023: Le Mime et l'Etoile, which celebrates the Belle Epoque and pays tribute to the beginnings of the 7th art, the cinema. The show uses a huge reverse tracking technology to recreate the original black and white style of a period piece. There are no filters or effects between the spectators and the stage, with real characters in real sets.

Experience #8 Life in a castle

For cultural and heritage enthusiasts, Vendée is packed with medieval castles to visit.

For lunch or an overnight stay, several of them also open their doors, and offer a totally relaxing experience in a luxurious, historic setting.

The Chateau du Boisniard, for example, the only 5-star hotel in Vendée, welcomes guests into a sumptuous location. It has a gourmet restaurant that will delight your taste buds.

The Château de la Flocellière, near Puy du Fou, welcomes visitors from all over the world, thanks to its history dating back to the 11th century.

To experience life in a chateau in the Vendée, is to immerse yourself in an enchanting and fascinating backdrop.

Experience #9 A bucolic walk through Vendée's vineyards

The Wine Route also passes through Vendée!

Vineyards open their doors to wine-lovers and curious visitors who wish to discover (and taste) local wines.

The AOC Fiefs Vendéens appellation refers to 5 regions where wine is produced from noble grape varieties. The mild climate combined with the winemakers' skills gives these wines a unique character and subtle aromas.

At the Domaine Saint Nicolas, Thierry Michon & sons have been using biodynamic viticulture since 1993, an organic farming method that uses no additives and respects the environment.



Experience #10 A gourmet break at Michelin-starred restaurants

A rain of stars on Vendée!

Alone among the greats, Alexandre Couillon is the only chef to win the unique 3rd star awarded in the 2023 edition of the Michelin Guide. His restaurant "La Marine" located in Noirmoutier, attracts diners from far and wide.

It features local, seasonal produce from land and sea. One of the restaurant's signature dishes is the Erika oyster, an oyster marinated in a squid ink-based stock sprinkled with Italian bacon. This dish is a reminder of the oil spill caused by the tanker Erika in 1999.

The 9 chefs from Vendée are now showing off their star(s) and, above all, making the region proud.



#envendee

in-vendee.com