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clermont
auvergne
tourisme



VOLCANOES AND TOWNS

2023

press kit

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PROFILE

21 towns come together to form the greater area of Clermont Auvergne Métropole. A natural land that stretches from the volcanoes of the Chaîne des Puys to the banks of the Allier River

Major tourist sites: the Panoramique des Dômes train, Vulcania, Volcan de Lemptégy, Aventure Michelin, ASM Experience, and the Archaeological Museum of the Battle of Gergovia

A population of 147,000 in the city limits of Clermont-Ferrand

40,000 French and international students

University of Clermont Auvergne (UCA): more than 170 courses of study

7 grandes écoles

The volcanoes of Auvergne are right nearby, an exceptional natural heritage at the heart of our collective identity.

The greater area includes the Chaîne des Puys - Limagne Fault, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that encompasses the towns of Orcines and Saint-Genès-Champanelle

Birthplace and headquarters of Michelin, a world leader in tyres

Alongside the Massif Central region, Clermont-Ferrand is a candidate city for the 2028 European Capital of Culture

The world's largest international short film festival

The Zénith d'Auvergne concert venue and two convention centres: Polydome and Grande Halle d'Auvergne

3,000 public and private researchers

An economic, academic, cultural, and sports capital, the greater Clermont-Ferrand area covers more than 30,000 hectares with a population of nearly 300,000

1 Grand Site de France®, the Puy de Dôme volcano

6 museums including 3 with the Musée de France label

A Scène Nationale theatre La Comédie de Clermont

The National Orchestra of Auvergne

The spa town of Royat-Chamalières

1 concert hall with the Musique Actuelles label La Coopérative de Mai



MAJESTIC NATURE

**The Chaîne des Puys - Limagne Fault
is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2018.**

MAJESTIC NATURE

HIKING

The **Chaîne des Puys - Limagne Fault** tectonic arena, a **UNESCO** World Heritage Site, is a one-of-a-kind backdrop. This string of 80 volcanoes extends for over 45 km and boasts countless hiking trails for all levels.

A Grand Site de France®, the **legendary Puy de Dôme volcano** is the greater area's most iconic symbol and easily accessible by shuttle. The summit can be reached on foot or aboard the **Panoramique des Dômes** rack railway. A breathtaking 360° view awaits at the top, as well as the vestiges of a Gallo-Roman temple dedicated to Mercury, and of course the many paragliders enticed by the horizons of this 1,465 m peak.

For a trek through the volcanoes of the Chaîne des Puys, the Boucle des Dômes circle hiking route follows more than 49 km of marked paths for a 2-to-3-day journey through magnificent landscapes and panoramas.



© Hémis

TWO GREEN LUNGS FOR A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

The greater Clermont-Ferrand area boasts all kinds of outdoor activities, in all seasons and for all ages. The surrounding environment is the perfect setting: Auvergne's historic capital is surrounded by two "green lungs", the **Auvergne Volcanoes Regional Nature Park** and the **Livradois-Forez Regional Nature Park**. These areas feature exceptional natural heritage, with dormant volcanoes, crater lakes, desert plateaus, and forests as far as the eye can see.

Less than 30 minutes from the buzz of urban life, these wide-open spaces have endless possibilities to explore, perfect for lovers of the great outdoors and outdoor activities.

WILD WATERS

The many lakes of the area, like Aydat and Chambon, are perfect for taking a dip, going paddleboarding, or setting off in a canoe, all easily accessible from Clermont-Ferrand. To the east of the city, from Pont-du-Château to Cournon, the **Allier River** is also a prime spot for water sports and fishing. An integral part of the greater Clermont-Ferrand area, it's considered one of Europe's last **wild rivers**, quietly meandering through green landscapes. A simply relaxing experience!



© Instagram@deal.etim

The Via Allier, a picturesque new itinerary for a rejuvenating cycling holiday

The 455-km route follows the Allier River from its confluence with the Loire near Nevers all the way to Langogne in Lozère. Also known as the Auvergne Cycle Route, it begins near the famous Bec d'Allier, where the Loire and Allier rivers meet, and where the Via Allier crosses the famous Loire by Bike itinerary. **The route then makes its way south alongside the river**, passing by countless treasures all the way to the top of the Allier Gorges, near the source nestled in the Cévennes Mountains. The Via Allier crosses the Puy-de-Dôme department for 117 km, at an elevation between 250 and 650 m. This part of the itinerary is separated into 5 sections of 20 km each.



© Hémis

MAJESTIC NATURE



VULCANIA AND VOLCAN DE LEMPTÉGY

Opening of the largest planetarium in France

A one-of-a-kind theme park in Europe dedicated to the science of volcanoes, natural phenomena, and the Earth in space, **Vulcania** announces the opening of **France's largest planetarium** in 2023. Over 20 attractions and experiences are on offer at the park, to learn more about the mysteries of our planet all while having fun. Not-to-be-missed: Namazu, an earthquake-themed roller coaster, ranked Europe's best new attraction!

Volcan de Lemptégy is an open-air volcano that was used as a quarry after World War II, and today is a paradise for scientists. The site is a real-life history book on the volcanoes of Auvergne, and **15 lodges** are opening on the slopes of the volcano this year. A holiday and a timeless experience!



Recognised as **iconic tourist sites** of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region for 2022-2028 alongside around 20 others, Vulcania Park and Volcan de Lemptégy are right across the street from each other: the chance to spend an entire day discovering volcanoes.



SPAS AND WELL-BEING IN ROYAT-CHAMALIÈRES

Taking the waters in Royat

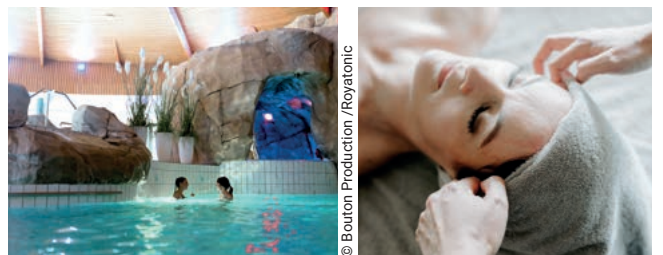
The spa resort of Royat-Chamalières lies between towns and volcanoes. Spagoers come back year after year to enjoy the benefits of the waters in an unspoilt setting, with the charming Belle Epoque heritage so characteristic of spa towns. Built starting in 1850, Royat boasts remarkable heritage reflecting **the golden age of spas**: baths, a casino, former palaces, and villas.

Valvital has taken over the management of the resort, and renovations are planned for the next few years. The 13,300 m² spa area will be completely redesigned (shop, café and library, residential hotel, and more).

Two spaces dedicated to spas and well-being:

- **Royatonic Baths & Spa**, a fun spa centre with 30+°C water from the volcanic depths of Auvergne: spa, outdoor and indoor lagoons, hot tub, hammam, bubble beds, water games, and more.
- **The Spa of Royat** offers spa treatments with Royat thermal water.

These generous treatments are favourable for cardiovascular and rheumatic diseases.



A museum on a plateau: a historic and picturesque site

At the gateway to the greater area lies the legendary Gergovia Plateau, the site of the epic battle of 52 BC between Vercingetorix, the unifying leader of the Gauls, and he who would later take the title of imperator, Julius Caesar. The view is stunning from atop the site, the result of violent volcanic eruptions. Recognised as **a historic and picturesque heritage site**, Gergovia was an oppidum (fortified town) of the Avernii for nearly 70 years. This battle between the armies of Vercingetorix and Julius Caesar was a major episode of the Gallic Wars. Its history is presented at the **Archaeological Museum of the Battle of Gergovia** with an interactive itinerary that immerses visitors in world of the Gauls.

+ more info: musee-gergovie.fr



MORE THAN 2,000 YEARS OF HISTORY

Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption
Gothic cathedral
Place de la Victoire
Clermont-Ferrand

MORE THAN 2,000 YEARS OF HISTORY

A CITY WITH TWO HEADS

Clermont on one side, Montferrand on the other. These two rivals were long-time hostile neighbours. It took two royal edicts to force the towns into a union under the name “Clermont-Ferrand”. Today, **Montferrand** is a charming neighbourhood of **Clermont**. Its heritage is a testament to its medieval past, with its remarkable residential buildings and its perpendicular layout inspired by the bastides of southwest France.



TWO MASTERPIECES OF THE MIDDLE AGES

It's a symbol of Clermont-Ferrand, towering over the top of Rue des Gras with two 90 m tall spires built by the architect Viollet-le-Duc. The lava-stone **Gothic cathedral** has a unique charcoal-grey colour. This material is the signature of the city, used in many of the buildings in the historic districts. On the other side of the colour spectrum is the arkose sandstone of the **Notre-Dame-du-Port basilica**, a masterpiece of Romanesque art and a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** as a part of the Way of St. James.

A FOUNTAIN STROLL

Water flows generously throughout the land, with the Bedat, Tiretaine, Artière, and of course the Allier, one of the last wild rivers in Europe. There are also a great many fountains to explore, each one revealing its charming secrets, whether on a little square, in the corner of a village, or in the centre of a park. Made of Volvic stone, bronze, or ornate cast iron, these fountains form an aquatic path that makes for a pleasant summer stroll.

The not-to-be-missed **Amboise Fountain** is one of the oldest in France (1515) with magnificent carved decorations from the Renaissance.



The Vignoble et Découvertes distinction for Côtes d'Auvergne AOC wine in the Puy-de-Dôme

The **Puy-de-Dôme** department, particularly the Côtes d'Auvergne AOC area right outside Clermont-Ferrand, has just been awarded the **Vignoble et Découvertes** label, recognising the territory as a tourist and wine destination. This label is the result of development efforts and the creation of tourist products in the region through a varied and diverse offer.



Culinary heritage

Clermont-Ferrand and its greater area are brimming with **quality restaurants** serving homemade, local, and diverse specialties. Here, foodies can taste cuisines from around the world! Fresh tomme cheese and potatoes are the main ingredients of **truffade**, the reward of choice after a long day in the fresh air (alongside Auvergne potée of course).

Auvergne is also famous for its five **PDO cheeses** (Saint Nectaire, Bleu d'Auvergne, Cantal, Salers, and Fourme d'Ambert), its charcuterie, and its quality craft beers.

MORE THAN 2,000 YEARS OF HISTORY



© Aventure Michelin

MICHELIN'S IMPACT

Michelin and the city of Clermont-Ferrand are intricately linked. The town's industrial heritage includes the famous tyre test tracks: two towering slides built in the 1920s. **Aventure Michelin** is an immense and fun interactive space for all ages, where visitors can relive the epic history of the company, the story of its iconic mascot (Bibendum), and Michelin's passion for innovation. A not-to-be-missed visit for the whole family!

WINE HERITAGE

Auvergne's wine traditions are experiencing a resurgence, with heritage to explore in the winegrowing villages of the greater area. The town of **Aubière** has nearly 900 underground wine cellars, a unique collection in Europe. **Châteaugay**, one of the five local appellations of Côtes d'Auvergne AOC wine, boasts remarkable natural caves that testify to both the economic and cultural importance of wine in the area.



© Hémis



© Clermont-Auvergne Tourisme



OBJECTIVE: EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE IN 2028!

Clermont-Ferrand, alongside Massif Central, is a candidate for the title of 2028 European Capital of Culture (the next year when the title will be awarded to a French city). **The decision comes at the end of 2023.**

Clermont-Ferrand became determined to earn the title starting in 2015. Now, alongside Massif Central and with several projects and partnerships, the bid is bringing together the local industries and the diverse population, using all available resources to obtain this prestigious title.

CLERMONT-FERRAND AND MASSIF CENTRAL ON THE MAP OF EUROPE!

A European Capital of Culture is a city chosen by the Ministry of Culture and then by the European Union. The distinction began in 1985, and since then, 50 cities have been crowned, including 4 in France: Paris in 1989, Avignon in 2000, Lille in 2004, and Marseille in 2013. In addition to Clermont-Ferrand, there are 8 other French candidate cities for 2028: Amiens, Bastia, Bourges, Montpellier, Nice, Rouen, and Saint-Denis.

This bid for the title of **European Capital of Culture** is also a unique opportunity to enhance the identity and specificities of the territory and to renew its image at the regional, national, and of course the European level through inter-cultural cooperation.

MORE THAN 2,000 YEARS OF HISTORY

AN ERUPTION OF CULTURE IN A LOGO



The renowned artist, creator, and designer Jean-Charles de **Casteljac** was entrusted with the design of the application logo. He created the **Volcamour**, a metaphor for the emergence of positive energy and sharing, expressed through the union of colours of hearts gushing from a volcano.

L'ÉTONNANT FESTIN, A CULINARY COMPONENT OF THE BID

This gamble of an event will hold its 4th edition on September 17, 2023! Culinary journalist **Eric Roux** is at the origin of this festive food gathering that invites locals of the greater area to explore cooking stands with gastropub food, local and international specialties, Michelin-starred chefs, and more. Vegetables, seeds, wine, beer, and other local products are on sale, too. The last edition had **107 participants** and brought around **18,000 people** to stroll under the sun and “taste the landscape”, to quote the organisers’ poetic saying.

SEVEN CULTURAL SITES

- 1 **Roger-Quilliot Art Museum (MARQ)**. In the historic centre of the Montferrand district, this museum’s collection extends over five floors with paintings, sculptures, and decorative arts from the medieval period through the 20th century.
- 2 **Bargoin Museum**. Its archaeological collections immerse visitors in the history and territory of the Arveni people. Department of textiles from outside Europe. International Extraordinary Textiles Festival (FITE).
- 3 **Henri Lecoq Museum**. Since 1873, this science museum has been exploring the natural heritage of the area, just a stone’s throw from Lecoq Park.
- 4 **Resistance, Internment, and Deportation Museum**. It recounts all the events of World War II in Auvergne.
- 5 **Regional Fund for Contemporary Art**. In 2023, the FRAC moves to the former site of the fine arts school, an 18th century corn exchange in the heart of Clermont.
- 6 **Hotel Fontfreyde** photography centre. Remarkable exhibitions from contemporary artists.
- 7 **Batallerie Museum** in Pont-du-Château. From the 16th to the 19th centuries, Pont-du-Château was the main port in the area. This museum testifies to the region’s rich river past.

2023 MAJOR EVENTS + more info: clermontauvergneturisme.com/agenda/

International Short Film Festival from 27 January to 4 February

Vidéoforms 38th edition of this hybrid and digital arts festival from 16 March to 2 April

Tour de France (men’s and women’s) from 9 to 12 July and 23 and 24 July

Les Arts en Balade from 26 to 29 May: 115 sites and 180 artists for the last edition

Nuées Ardentes at the foot of the Puy de Dôme from 16 to 18 June

Europavox Festival from 30 June to 2 July

Art’Air Festival, hiking, gastronomy, shows, and concerts. July

Les Contre Plongées in July and August

European Heritage Days 16 and 17 September

L’Étonnant Festin 17 September

Jazz en Tête festival. October

Trans’urbaines. November

Musiques Démesurées festival. November

November

Travel notebook Forum November



The Pascaline

Throughout 2023, the city celebrates the **400th anniversary of the birth** of Blaise Pascal. The events are part of Clermont-Massif Central’s bid for the 2028 **European Capital of Culture**, placed under the patronage of the ministries of Culture and Higher Education. A man of science and faith, Pascal was born in Clermont in 1623 right near the cathedral. He marked his century and history for years to come, linking the human and fundamental sciences. The bonds between **the illustrious thinker** and his hometown can be seen throughout the city with vestiges, monuments, and designations. He also has a considerable presence in the collections of the area’s libraries and museums.

Main highlights:

- Inaugural conference with Cédric Villani 13 January
- Pascal, a Resistant and a Prophet colloquium from 23 to 25 March
- The Mysteries of Pascal exhibition from 16 June to 15 October (Roger-Quilliot Art Museum)
- Arts and Sciences Village from 31 May to 4 June (Place de la Victoire and the historic city centre)
- Birthday commemorations on 19 June: official launch of the stamp bearing the portrait of Blaise Pascal and a musical reading by Marie-Christine Barrault

+ more info: clermontauvergneturisme.com/patrimoine-historique/blaise-pascal/

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EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS

Tour de France in the spa resort
of Royat-Chamalières
in 2020

EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS



Excellence in sports is present throughout the greater area, both in the countless members of the dynamic local sports clubs and in the European elite teams of **Clermont Foot** and **ASM Rugby**. Many champions hail from the area, including pole vaulter Renaud Lavillenie and figure skater Gabriella Papadakis, an Olympic **champion** alongside her partner Guillaume Cizeron. Every year, major national and international sports competitions take place in first-class venues: X-Athletics (28-29 January), the France Élite **track and field** competition (18-19 February) and the All Star Perche pole vaulting meeting (25 February).



CLERMONT-FERRAND HOSTS THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TOURS DE FRANCE IN JULY!

July is an exceptional month for cycling fans, and **July 2023** will be sensational for our territory! Two Tours de France and four stages will take place in and around Clermont-Ferrand, **with starts, passages, and finishes at iconic sites**: climb to the top of the Puy de Dôme, crossing the Chaîne des Puys - Limagne Fault, Vulcania, and Place de Jaude.

The arrival of the Tour de France is very big news, especially with **the legendary ascent of the Puy de Dôme**, which hasn't happened for 35 years. As Christian Prudhomme, the director of the Tour de France explains, *"the road continuously turns right. It's a snail of a climb with a nearly constant 12% slope. It doesn't exist anywhere else. [...]"*

ON THE PROGRAMME FOR THESE SIX EXCEPTIONAL DAYS

Men's Tour de France from 9 to 12 July

- Sunday, 9 July: **Climb to the summit of the Puy de Dôme.**
- Monday, 10 July: **First rest day** of the 2023 Tour de France in Clermont-Ferrand.
- Tuesday, 11 July: **Stage 10 Vulcania - Issoire** (167 km), crossing the Chaîne des Puys - Limagne Fault.
- Wednesday, 12 July: **Stage 11 Clermont-Ferrand - Moulins** (180 km on flat terrain).

Women's Tour de France 23 and 24 July

- Monday, 23 July: **Stage 1 Clermont-Ferrand - Clermont-Ferrand** (124 km). Passing through Pont-du-Château, Durtol, and Chamalières.
- Monday, 24 July: **Stage 2 Clermont-Ferrand - Mauriac** (148 km). Start on Place de Jaude, passing through Saint-Genès-Champagnelle.

CYCLING TREKS STARTING IN THE GREATER CLERMONT AREA

Grande Traversée du Massif Central (GTMC): a 1,380 km mountain biking trail from Morvan to the Mediterranean!

- ▶ In 2018, the **GTMC mountain biking trail** was reborn with a new course of nearly 1,400 km. From the mountains and lakes of Morvan, the itinerary begins towards the splendid and little-known landscapes of Massif Central, climbing through the volcanoes of Auvergne, crossing the Cévennes National Park and the immense plateaus of Grands Causses before reaching the beaches of the Mediterranean Sea.
- ▶ **From Clermont-Ferrand (historic starting point) to Volvic**: From Clermont-Ferrand, it's a gradual climb towards the Chaîne des Puys and its 80 volcanoes. With the Puy de Dôme on the horizon, there are contrasting landscapes to explore.
- ▶ **From Laschamps to Murol**: The GTMC mountain biking itinerary continues its route from Laschamps to Murol with the Sancy Mountains in view.

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