

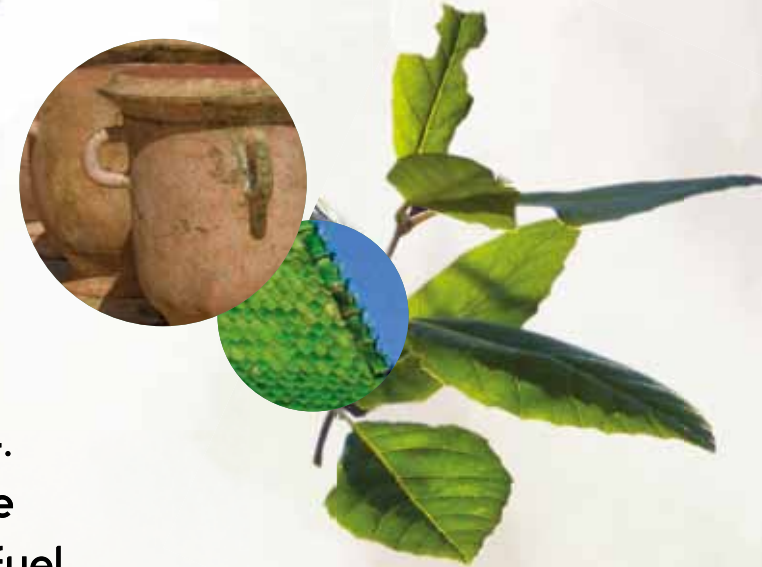
Where routes AND DESTINIES COLLIDE

Midway between Gellone Abbey and Aniane Abbey, the Pont du Diable has always been a crossing point for pilgrims, flocks of sheep, pottery, traders, monks... And today, people from different backgrounds and cultures still meet here as they come to admire the scenery, swim or enjoy a picnic.



SAINT-JEAN-DE-FOS, POTTER'S VILLAGE

The village of Saint-Jean-de-Fos was first mentioned in 804. It developed in the 11th century, thanks to the building of the Pont du Diable. The availability of water, clay and wood for fuel contributed to the development of the pottery industry from the 15th century onwards. Glazed ceramics, for decorative or construction purposes, were mainly produced to meet the needs of the local peasant population. The trade had its heyday in the 18th century. Argileum - the pottery centre, which has witnessed it all, will tell you the whole story...



TWO FRIENDS, TWO ABBEYS



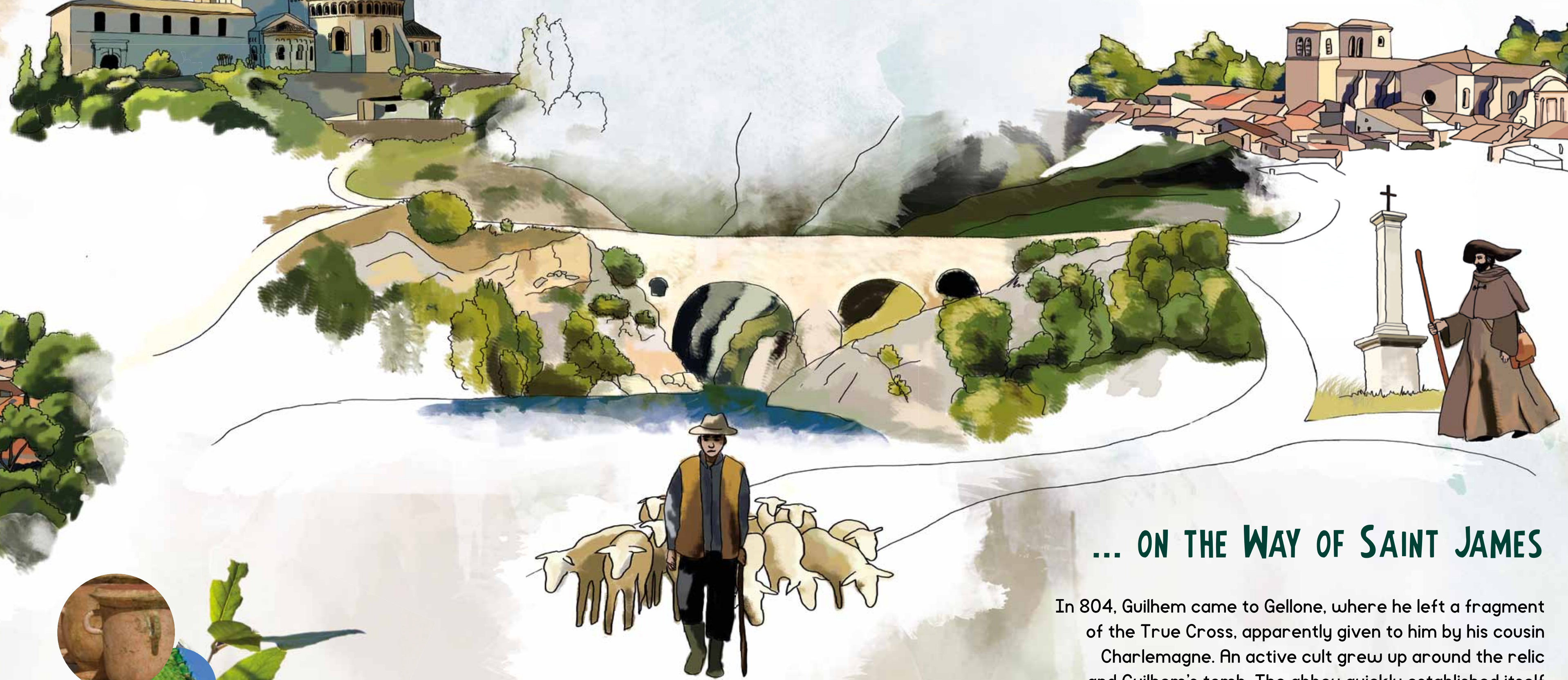
SAINT GUILHEM

Guillaume was the grandson of Charles Martel and the cousin of Charlemagne. In the Frankish language, his name *Whilhelm* means: *whil* = will and *helm* = helmeted head, in the sense of someone in command. In the Occitan language, he was known as *Guilhem*. The Count of Toulouse and Duke of Aquitaine, he distinguished himself in many military campaigns including the siege of Barcelona in 801. In 804, he met his childhood friend Benoît d'Aniane again and founded an abbey in the Gellone Valley, endowing it with material assets and land. At the end of his military career, he settled there in 806 and dedicated himself to monastic life until his death in 812.



Saint BENEDICT OF ANIANE

Wittiza was the son of Figulfe, the first Visigothic Count of Maguelone. He spent his childhood alongside Guillaume at the court of King Pepin the Short. During a military expedition to Italy, his brother had a miraculous escape from drowning. Wittiza, therefore, devoted himself to monastic life. He had Aniane Abbey built in 782 and he revised the Rule of Saint Benedict instituted by Saint Benedict of Nursia in the 6th century. The rule regulates the lives of monks. He took the name Benoît d'Aniane in homage to the saint. In 814, the new emperor Louis the Pious charged him with the task of reforming all the monasteries in the Carolingian Empire.



SHEEP PATHS...

The shepherd walks by, the sheep graze, the dog barks... the flocks moving in transhumance to the pasture land of the Causses and the Cévennes used to stop for refreshment beside the river. For hundreds of years, shepherds and their flocks created and maintained the scrubland and the paths. They contributed to the rich landscapes of the Saint-Guilhem hills.

** inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List under the designation of agropastoralism*

... ON THE WAY OF SAINT JAMES

In 804, Guilhem came to Gellone, where he left a fragment of the True Cross, apparently given to him by his cousin Charlemagne. An active cult grew up around the relic and Guilhem's tomb. The abbey quickly established itself as an important stop on the road from Arles to Santiago de Compostela. The Pilgrim's Guide, written in the 12th century, recommends a visit to Gellone to venerate the two relics.

