

Welcome!

ACCOMMODATION AND CONSERVATION

Successfully welcoming hundreds of thousands of visitors every year whilst protecting natural and cultural heritage - that is the challenge facing this remarkable site.

A Grand Site de France

In 2010, the "Saint-Guilhem-le Désert - Gorges de l'Hérault" site was awarded the "Grand Site de France" label.

Awarded by the state, this label recognises sustainable management and conservation in a high-profile listed site which attracts large numbers of visitors. To obtain it, sites have to carry out restoration and development work.

Its action programme, which focuses on sustainable development, involves managing visitor numbers, providing eco-friendly transport options, creating visitor centres (such as the Maison du Grand Site de France), restoring cultural heritage, protecting natural environments and landscapes, showcasing local products, etc.

FACT FILE: ST-GUILHEM-LE-DÉSERT GORGES DE L'HÉRAULT GRAND SITE DE FRANCE

Area: 10,000 ha

5 communes: Aniane, Montpeyroux, Puéchabon, Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert and Saint-Jean-de-Fos.

Managed by: The Vallée de l'Hérault local authorities

Visitor numbers: 650,000 per year

PASSERELLE DES ANGES

Safe and accessible paths and a footbridge. It was designed to be "a needle in the landscape" (Rudy Ricciotti)

THE MAISON DU GRAND SITE



Partly buried, with a green roof and wooden shutters, its Intercommunal Tourist office welcomes visitors between Easter and the end of October...

PARKING

Created in a former gravel pit, the car park has 450 spaces, including 20 for campervans.

SHUTTLE BUSES IN SUMMER

Free shuttle buses to St-Guilhem-le-Désert and St-Jean-de-Fos (potters' village) - 2 stops close by

A wide range of environments

1 River and riparian forest

Forming an important ecological corridor, they are home to a wide biodiversity: eels, fish (chub, perch, etc.), dragonflies, bats, otters, kingfishers, grey heron... The riparian forest protects the riverbanks from violent floods, purifies the water, etc.

2 Grassland

Sunny open environments are vital for the survival of many different species and are popular pollination sites. Meadows provide a perfect habitat for birthwort, butterflies, reptiles...

3 Oak grove

Around the Mediterranean, the shade of oak trees provides a cool environment for a large number of species: passerines, reptiles, forest insects, mammals... A forest pond is also home to frogs and dragonflies.

4 Pebble beach

It looks like a mineral desert, withstanding the violence of floods, yet it is still home to plants suited to this type of environment (Welsh poppy, etc.)

- ▶ The medieval village of St-Guilhem-le-Désert and Gellone Abbey
- ▶ Argileum - the pottery centre. The fun-filled tour of the authentic old pottery workshop in Saint-Jean-de-Fos tells the story of an age-old tradition and of the men who kept it alive.

- ▶ At the far end of the gorges, the Grotte de Clamouse or 'Cathedral of time', will amaze you with its limestone curtains and other splendours.

For more information about the Hérault Valley, pay a visit to the Maison du Grand Site de France.

Places to explore (nearby)

A SITE WITH INTEGRATED FACILITIES

Situated at the heart of the Grand Site de France, the Pont du Diable visitor centre is there to welcome you, provide you with information, help you find a place to park, offer free shuttle buses for tourists in summer (to ease congestion in the Hérault Gorges) and footpaths. The beaches are supervised in summer. Ces aménagements ont été réalisés avec un fort souci d'intégration paysagère. Can you spot them amid the scenery?

FACT FILE: THE PONT DU DIABLE SITE/ THE GRAND SITE DE FRANCE VISITOR CENTRE

Area: 10 ha

Managed by: The Vallée de l'Hérault local authorities

Visitor numbers: 260,000 per year

