



Fenêtres sur
les patrimoines

DISCOVERING THE CLERMONTAIS

The Grand Site Salagou-Cirque de Mourèze

www.destination-salagou.fr

Welcome to the Clermontais, Pays Cœur d'Hérault.

The Communauté de Communes du Clermontais takes an active part in promoting its patrimony, a vector to its history and cultural identity.

This little guide offers you the occasion to discover the natural patrimony and the monuments and buildings of its community members in key locations such as the Grand Site Salagou-Cirque de Mourèze.

Have a good time and see you very soon !

The Salagou Valley, situated just over 24 miles north-west of Montpellier, has one of the most beautiful landscapes in France. A very varied geology has created unique landscapes from the sharp red colour of the ruffe, to the black basalt of the ancient volcanoes and the white of the dolomite rocks of the Cirque de Mourèze. All these colours give the Grand Site its unique diversity.

A GREAT SITE

A magical place, the result of geological evolution and shaped by agricultural workers for centuries, the Grand Site Salagou-Cirque de Mourèze offers everyone its spectacularly arid and lunar landscapes which contrast with the stretch of the lake Salagou's water and a remarkable Mediterranean biodiversity. It is managed by a syndicated group (Syndicat Mixte) that takes care of almost 24 711 acres. This project to protect the land brings together the Council of the Department of the Hérault, the Communauté de Communes du Clermontais, the Communauté de Communes du Lodèvois et Larzac and the Communauté de Communes du Grand Orb.

Registered since 2003 under the law of 1930 for the beauty of its landscapes, the area launched into a "Grand Site Venture" in 2010 for improving the reception of the public to an exceptional region, unusual but fragile. Designated a special protection zone Natura 2000, it shelters remarkable wildlife. A management plan with 3 great objectives was drawn up :

- Protection of the countryside, a guarantee of sustainable development ;
- Forge links around a unique history ;
- Protection and enhancement of the great agricultural and geological landscapes.

In 2017, the committee of the Ministry responsible for Ecological Transition accepted the project and programme of the Grand Site venture 2016-2020.

A few miles away are some of France's other emblematic landscapes to discover with **the Grand Site de France du Cirque de Navacelles and the Grand Site du France du Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert/Gorges de l'Hérault.**



The volcanic mountain of the Sure

A GEOLOGY BOOK OPEN TO THE SKY

The Grand Site du Salagou-Cirque de Mourèze is geologically an exceptional site. The *ruffe* with its atypical red colour is characteristic of our region thus making it unique. Its geological treasures attract numerous researchers and geologists who will find here different geological eras. In the radius of a few miles you can go from red *ruffe* to the limestone dolomite rocks of the Cirque de Mourèze with its white and green landscapes, to the black volcanic rock and ancient lava flows, and, finally, to the limestone foothills of the Massif Central.

A story of climate and continent

The deepest layers of the *ruffe* were formed 295 million years ago, while the surface layers were formed 250 million years ago. From the end of the primary era, in the Permian time, there was just one single continent called Pangaea. A mountain range of several thousand miles long that emerged on the continent was initially situated on the Equator before it drifted towards the Northern tropic. At the time, the actual site of the Salagou was situated almost 5000 miles further south, at the level of present-day Senegal. A hot and dry climate set the conditions for the minerals to rapidly disaggregate. The climate was characterized by long periods of drought

then short periods of rain with the apparition of marshland and water holes. When those periods came to an end, the heat and the evaporation of water resulted in the drying out of the mud. It is from that time that numerous animals left traces of their existence, notably in Mérifons on the Lieude site.

The dolomite of the Cirque de Mourèze

The Cirque de Mourèze is constituted of sedimentary terrains from the second era like the plateau of the Larzac. The dolomites are a mixture of calcium carbonate and magnesium carbonate. The chemical erosion of the water on the carbonates took place in a very irregular manner thus giving them their very particular forms. Torrents of water allowed the softest parts of the rock to separate exposing the big blocks of stone which had become real statues reaching for the sky. The stone is a bit effervescent to acid and more or less crumbly. It comes from huge deposits in the seas from the second era. The dolomite was subject to erosion by water, wind, hot and cold and the physiognomy of the Cirque evolving every year.

The *ruffe*

The *ruffe* (sandstone with very fine grains of silica surrounded by iron oxide) was formed by the sedimentation of mud (sand and clay), as a result of wear and tear from the erosion of the surrounding mountain ranges (roughly an altitude of 19,685 ft). Rain carried away this mud which had oxidised giving it a red colour. The mud settled over millions of years. Today, these old mountains have completely eroded. The streams and the rivers have carried away the *ruffe*. At the foot of the massif, a basin had filled with red mud which gradually compacted. At the centre of the basin, the depth of the red and grey *ruffe* is estimated to be 6178 ft. The slow and constant natural drop of the bottom of this basin explains the phenomenon. The *ruffe* was covered by the sea in the Mesozoic Era, leaving behind the *limestone* and *dolomite* which forms the present-day landscapes. At the start of the Tertiary Era, the basin was once again raised and folded; it was at this time that the Pyrénées were formed.



If you look carefully, here and there you will be able to see ancient water marks on the *ruffe*, and notably on the slopes. The direction of the folds shows where the current and the wind came from, which was very strong at the time! It is also possible to see numerous dried-out fossil plaques, the vestige of ancient marshlands.

The Paleontological Slab of la Lieude: witness to the origins of life

Discovered during roadworks some time ago were the traces of pre-mammalian reptiles that lived here 250 million years ago. The animals had physical similarities to the mammals of our day. However, 95 % of the species of that time no longer exist. Our species descends from some of the survivors, animals that were here long before the dinosaurs made their appearance 40 million years later, at the beginning of the second era. Traces of those pre-mammals were also found in South Africa and in Asia, which confirms the existence of only one continent. Discovered near the site of la Lieude were some 950 footprints grouped in 15 to 20 kinds of different species of pre-mammals, and perhaps other animal species living at the time.



VOLCANOES IN THE SALAGOU VALLEY

The volcanic period dates only from 1,5 million years ago. Among the vestiges of this period are the *necks* of Roque and Malavieille [the obstructed chimneys] and the dykes [ancient lava flows]. This volcanic activity was a result of the formation of the Alps. The lava, which made its way up through the terrestrial cloak followed natural cracks and settled in the valleys. Arriving under pressure at the surface, it cooled, hardened and the tenderest parts eroded causing the basaltic flows to elevate. The peaks of the Sure, Cébéro and Auvergne hills are thickly covered with basalt.

They were at the origins of the valleys covered by lava and referred to as inverted relief. Hot water springs appeared during bore holing (especially in the village of Puech) and is proof of the volcanic activity at a low level.



The dyke



NECK AND DYKE OF LA ROQUE

The *neck* was a point of eruption, a basaltic chimney. The volcano would have sent out a vertical lava flow which spread into the *ruffe* (dyke), erosion would have allowed the flow to come into existence. To this day a piece of the lava forming the Sure mountain still remains, not forgetting that at the time of the volcano, the neck and the Sure were one. The erosion of the *ruffe* allowed the basalt to emerge. The lava rose to 1200°C but cooled rapidly in contact with the *ruffe*. Its decompression caused the formation of gas which is why bubble traces can be seen. Get close to this neck with a compass and you'll be surprised to see it moving.

Why ? The rock contains magnetite (iron). The iron oxide crystals, similar to magnets, were solidified by the cooling of the lava rising through the terrestrial cloak. The direction of these crystals shows the course of the terrestrial magnetic field at the moment of eruption (which is short-lived), different to those in our day. If you look attentively at the rock, you will see nut-sized pieces called *peridotites* or *olivines* because of the green of their colour – which were snatched from the terrestrial cloak and brought to the surface during eruption. Basalt columns were thus formed during the slow cooling of the lava. These vertical prisms bear a close resemblance to organ pipes, hence their name.

A RIVER THAT BECOMES A LAKE: THE SALAGOU

The river Salagou comes from a spring in the mountain pass of Merquière in the municipality of Brenas and receives water from streams when there is heavy rain. In the summer, it can dry up. It runs through the municipalities of Merifons, Salasc, Octon, Liausson, Celles, Lacoste, and after a course of over 11 miles it flows into the river Lergue. The Salagou valley stretches out over 8 miles.

Why is there a lake here ?

The idea of building a dam in the Salagou Valley dates back to many years. Traces were found of a project in 1860 in the village of Celles, as flooding from the river Salagou had always been feared by the valley's inhabitants. Crops were plentiful, but floods and summer droughts made agriculture difficult. The inhabitants wanted to keep the winter surplus of water to re-use in the summer, by using *béals* (small canals), reservoirs... However, it was not until the 1950s, a century later, for such a project to become a reality. Jean Bene, Chairman of the General Council of the Hérault, was in charge of the project. His aim was to diversify agriculture in the area through irrigation. In the early 1960s, the overproduction of wine-growing led to a number of surveys to convert a part of the vineyard area into fruit production. Lots of water was needed to irrigate the 98 842 acres in the Hérault valley. During the surveys, interest in fruit production gradually declined as other regions by this time had taken over. Furthermore, the department suffered from a deficit of water for agriculture, the river Hérault did not meet the demand. It also regularly caused much damage during impressive autumn flooding. In order to remedy the situation a decision was made to build a dam.

THE DAM

Initially the idea was to build a dam to the north of the village of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, on the river Hérault. Ultimately, the valley of the Salagou was chosen after numerous surveys. Building work started in the middle of the 1960s. This type of construction was rare and costly with numerous engineers working on the project. The right kind of geological environment to build it had to be found (impermeable rock). Work was started with a 29 year old engineer called Claude Seeli, who supervised the worksite. Impoundment (filling of the water) took place between 1969 and 1971. It was much quicker than predicted by the engineers, as the winter of 68-69 was particularly rainy. So quick, that the lake still has some telephone posts, bridges, trees, grapevines and little walls engulfed in the waters. Since then, the dam fulfils its mission of limiting flooding and in periods of drought it allows the rivers Lergue and Hérault to "swell" their riverbeds so as to continue irrigation in the valley.

Construction was entrusted to CNABRL (a national development company from the Bas Rhone and the Languedoc), now called BRL (Bas-Rhone Languedoc). The dam is built in "**basalt concrete face rock fill**". The work had to be delayed because of weather conditions (autumn flooding). During which a water bar of almost 10 ft high had been observed, causing much material damage, but happily no victims.

A heritage booklet on the dam is available at the Tourist Office.



Seen from the plateau of Germane

Some dates

1960 : request for a declaration of public utility was made and the commencement of land acquisition by mutual consent, or expropriation.

1964 : beginning of the work.

1965 : a project for irrigation canals leading to the valley of the Hérault covering a surface area of 4942 acres was planned with a starting date of the network in 1968. This project was never to be realized for economic reasons.

1969 : impoundment (filling of the water).

1971 : level 139 reached. (In 1996, it was decided by the General Council that this would be the reservoir's maximum level).

1985 : a micro power plant of 240 kw was built.

Some figures on the dam

Surface area of catchment basin : 47² miles

Height of dam : 204 ft

Maximum height in the water retainer : 178 ft

Area of the retainer : 1853 acres

Length of the dam wall : 1171 ft

Width of the dam wall : 24 ft

Length of its base : 656 ft

Total volume of basalt rocks : 28 251 733 cu ft

Total weight of basalt rocks : 1 650 000 tons

Reservoir's capacity at level 139 : over 4 237 million cubic feet filled in three years

Cost of construction : £ 62 352 897 million

The lake Salagou and its dam and its shores belong to the General Council of the Hérault.



A capitelle (a dry stone dwelling)

A PLACE OF NATURE AND AGRICULTURE

Agriculture and animal breeding

Before the filling of the lake Salagou, the plain was used for agriculture and animal grazing. The landscapes were different; the valley of the Salagou had been shaped according to agricultural development and the way of life. After the filling of the water, agriculture had to adapt and change to this new environment. It is still possible to see ancient dwellings, capitelles in Occitan, dry-stone shelters that were used by shepherds and peasants in days gone by. Currently, about twenty farmers live in the region of the Grand Site which allows it to pursue its destiny of old times. The wine-growing is booming too with numerous wineries and wine-making estates.



The plain of Octon

A VARIED COUNTRYSIDE

The Grand Site has many different kinds of landscape :

- The plain with an agricultural mosaic made up of vines, cereals and olive trees ;
- The lake and the reliefs which surround it are composed of open landscapes and a strong agricultural presence : animal-breeding with sheep, goat and cow herds ;
- The plateaus that dominate the Salagou Valley. Many small heritage features to be found: *restanques*, terraces bordered by low walls of dry stones and *capitelles* ;
- The upper valley with multi-faceted complex landscapes (Lieude, Malavieille).

You can find our regional produce (AOC Pelardon, Roquefort, Carlencas chick peas, honey, wine...) in the local farm product shops in Clermont l'Hérault and Lodève.



A spotted lizard

FAUNA AND FLORA

The Salagou Valley and the cirque de Mourèze are Natura 2000 registered sites. The mosaic of landscapes includes a great diversity of habitats, home to large numbers of plant and animal species, including 21 bird species protected by European laws: the Eagle Owl, Bonelli's Eagle, the Ortolan Bunting, the Dartford Warbler, etc. There are also other more common animal species, such as the Ocellated Lizard, the Montpellier Snake, the Mediterranean Tree Frog, the Eurasian Eagle Owl, the Hoopoe, etc.

This natural area is typical of very dry environments. The ground, practically bare of vegetation, is in direct contact with the sun and the light, generating all the richness of the Mediterranean biodiversity. Today, as a result of the decline in agriculture and the increase in Aleppo pines, these environments are getting cut-off, becoming covered over with scrub and vegetation, and losing their specific features, by making

the emblematic landscape of the Grand Site seem ordinary.

There are four different plant environments: the *ruffe* with some isolated plants, bare ground, *garrigue* and lastly the forests. Some of the plant species to watch out for are: Pubescent oak, Holm oak, Kermes oak, Montpellier maple, Hackberry, Arbutus, Laurustinus viburnum, Box, Cypress, Juniper, Thistle, Thyme and Rosemary.

Also to be seen is the Spanish broom, with its beautiful yellow fragrant flowers. In former times, this plant was used to weave a very solid cloth from which sheets, teacloths and tablecloths were cut.

On the shores of the lake are reed beds, great breeding grounds for plants and animals, as well as poplars, willows, ash, water irises.

The fish in the lake are carp, pike, zander, perch, bream, roach, American crayfish, small shellfish, most of them introduced by humans.

The birds around the lake are: the Great Crested Grebe who lives there all year round; the Great Reed Warbler which returns from Gabon in May to nest in the reed beds; the Great Cormorant which comes back from the north to spend the winter there – and also Gulls, Herons, Coots, Common moorhens, etc.



Iris nains

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

Traces of human settlement from the Bronze and Iron ages have been discovered in some of the surrounding villages, especially Octon, with the astonishing presence of small dolmens dating from 5,000 years BC. In Roman times, a major road ran through the valley linking the Mediterranean, via the port of Agde, to the Aveyron (Millau). Vestiges of Roman bridges and ceramic pottery were found by local archaeologists. In the middle ages, Lieude and the Castle of Lauzières served as a toll between two parishes and the plain and the mountain. The valley also sits between Lodève, ancient bishopric and major textile centre, and Clermont l'Hérault dominated by its castle, which was in its heyday an important economic centre for cloth industry and table grapes. These two towns have provided much work for inhabitants in the valley.

The villages

Around the lake are many charming and picturesque villages and hamlets with a multitude of colours to welcome you in a magical and restful environment. The villages are not randomly placed. Habitations found place on a terrace between the fertile lands of the plain, allocated to crops, with the more arid land of the mountains for animal breeding.

Several types of villages are to be noted: Octon, Salasc and Celles are examples of villages built in the plain. Liausson, is a hilltop village dominated by its eponymous summit; Brenas, has hamlets and farms; Lauzières and its ancient castle, is a hamlet abandoned in the 19th century in favour of Octon. There are also numerous small grouped habitations like Saint Frechoux, Mas de Carles, Lieude, Grange Montagne and Roques, built around ancient farms.

The buildings in the villages of the Salagou

The houses are grouped together to create a tight-knit mass of buildings. The ground floors were destined for shops or animals and agricultural activities. The first floor reserved for accommodation, and the attic used for storing food. Around these houses were public spaces: squares and gardens.

The houses often encroach on public space, with external staircases, terraces, balconies, loggias, courtyards and gardens surrounded by dry-stone walls.

In the centre of the most ancient villages, the houses were built one to another for safety reasons: for example in Liausson, the old streets and their medieval-style houses with external staircases, porches in small streets, exposed stone walls. In the 19th century, the city houses were more ordered with classical-style facades and less on top of each other. Stately houses had roofs with three or four slopes, overhanging *frieze* (*genoise*), balconies, staircases, shaded courtyards and big sheds on the ground floor.

Terraced houses are also mentioned, like the stately houses of wine-makers, which were built side-by-side, but with the same architectural principles.

Other types of houses are also to be noted: little one-room dwellings (*mas*) and barn-style sheds found in the countryside.

The houses show stones of different colours, when they have not been rendered. Present-day urban development is changing the appearance of these villages, but a landscape and architectural charter allows them to preserve their identity.



A typical street in Salasc



The village fountain



Liausson

Liausson: village on the hilltop

Liausson, the only village to have a panoramic view over the lake Salagou, is dominated by Mont Liausson (1 715ft). A 3-hour hike (leaving from the car park in front of the Town Hall) will take you there and back. At its summit is a splendid and astonishing view over the lake Salagou and the Cirque de Mourèze. Also to discover, are the vestiges of a 12th century hermitage.

When in the village, visit the communal fountain washhouse, the church dating from 1860 constructed on the site of the ancient castle and the narrow streets and houses built on the old ramparts. Just over half a mile away, visit the hamlet of La Grange Montagne, an ancient 17th century farm.

Salasc: the village of water

Salasc is one of the few villages in the valley to have been built after the construction of a church. Its development was thanks to the water that flows in abundance, a rare phenomenon in this area. Also, it is not perched on a hilltop like Octon or Liausson. Salasc preserves traces of ancient fortifications around its church. The old bread oven, as well as the small irrigation canals (*béals*), used mainly for watering the gardens and crops, are still visible. A quadrilateral of houses forms a wall around the church of Saint Génès (12th -17th centuries). Surrounded by moats, it acted as a stronghold to protect the villagers during the Hundred Year Wars (14th and 15th centuries) and the religious wars of the 16th century.

The village has continued to develop from the 16th century to its present-day form: with the village fort built against the church and the suburb aligned along an ancient trading route linking Clermont and Bédarieux. It was a road used for the transferring (*transhumance*) of animals. Farmers took it to travel to market in Clermont l'Hérault, mentioned since the 12th century. The herds often took a break in the village for water and green pastures. The clock in the church dates from 1902 and still functions like a cuckoo! It was installed to harmonize the time as there were many disputes over watering times (rules for using the *béals*): apparently no-one had the same time. A walk starting from the school along the footpath of the *béals* is worth discovering. On the road leading to Octon, another discovery is an old wheat mill among the vineyards.



Octon

Octon is situated between the plain and the mountains. It is a must for hikers on their way to the chapel of Notre Dame de Roubignac in the hamlet of Valarèdes, set in the hills overlooking the village, or looking towards the 13 Toucou dolmens and the menhir. These two walks for all the family leave from the square. In the centre of the village which is always very lively, there are beautiful multi-coloured buildings, the school and the wine cooperative. The church of Saint Etienne dominates Octon which is surrounded by eight hamlets, the oldest of which was referred to in the 10th century.



The castle of the Lauzières family (private)

The old hamlet of Lauzières and the remains of its castle bear witness to the glorious period of the Lords of the Lauzières family. These imposing ruins recall that the feudal power was in the hands of this powerful family which ruled over the Salagou plain. In the 13th century, there was a fortress with a fortified wall and a sentry walk... At the end of the 15th century, the political context being more settled, heavy fortifications were no longer needed. The Lords of Lauzières transformed their castle to make it more comfortable. At the same time they started having more prestigious positions gradually losing interest in their castle up until it was sold in 1650. Standing on a small promontory directly on the *ruffe*, the castle was built with local materials and stone. Below the platform, the ruins of the village lean closely to the foot of the fortress. Up until the end of the 19th century it was occupied and still preserves some attractive elevations dating from the end of the Middle Ages and the Modern era.



The chapel of Saint Pierre

Mérifons and La Lieude

This village dispersed in hamlets has unique treasures such as the paleontological slab of la Lieude. Since Antiquity, la Lieude has been the converging point of two roads, one coming from Octon, and the other from Salasc, to make just one that leads to the watershed of the river Orb coming through the Merquièrre mountain pass. Lieude comes from *leude*, meaning the tollgate which marked the separation point between the bishoprics of Lodève and Béziers. Isolated from the rest of the village the chapel of Saint Pierre boasts a building in multi-coloured stone. It was first mentioned back in the 10th century and modified in the 15th century. Lastly, the *castellas* of Malavieille stands on a rocky volcanic spur, a symbol of the middle ages and feudalism in the valley.

Brenas and its agricultural hamlets have refreshing mountain air to offer, just a few minutes from the wine-making plains with beautiful panoramic views and the church of the Assumption of Notre Dame.

Celles was a just a village in the plain before the dam was built, but with the filling of the water, it became the emblematic village of the lake Salagou. There for all to appreciate its beauty. The buildings appear to emerge from the lake's waters; the changing lights illuminate the colourful stone of the walls. As Celles was destined to be submerged when the dam was built, the village was emptied of its inhabitants. Today, the menace of increasing the water level to a higher degree has been lifted, but the hamlet has remained abandoned. Nonetheless, about 30 inhabitants have progressively reinstalled themselves in the village. Other rehabilitation projects are today under appraisal. In 2010 the General Council gave



Mourèze

back "the keys" to the municipality of Celles for a future renaissance of the village.

Mourèze

On the other side of the majestic Mont Liausson is the village of Mourèze which is in the centre of a 170 million year-old dolomite circle. Erosion has created strange and often familiar shapes in the rock. A visit to the cirque via the yellow-marked circuit will take 1-4 hours until you reach the top of Mont Liausson where the view over the lake is breathtaking.

Also to discover in the village is the church of Sainte Marie and the Park Courtinals where numerous traces of prehistoric habitations have been discovered

A blue-marked circuit starting at the car park will allow you to discover in 45 mins the heritage of the village.

A heritage booklet about Mourèze is available on request at the Clermont Tourist Office.



Nautical activities

TO SEE ALSO

On the north side of the lake, enjoy a walk or a mountain bike ride and discover the basalt columns and the *capitelles* (dry stone shelters), the plateaus of Auvergne and Germane and the chapel of Notre Dame de Clans and its annual pilgrimage in August.

A lively and welcoming region

Sporting activities :

The lake Salagou is the perfect place for mountain biking, with many circuits for all the family. Marked circuit hiking trails of 1-4hrs with different levels of difficulty will allow you to discover the diversity of the landscapes of the Salagou and the Cirque de Mourèze. Other sporting activities are also available on the lake Salagou such as: windsurfing, canoeing, sailing or pedal boating and in the surrounding area there is paragliding and rock-climbing. Fishing is authorised if you have a licence, however, thermal-powered boats are prohibited. Outdoor sporting facilities can be found on the shores on the Clermont side and the hamlet of the Vailhés on the Lodève side. In the summer, horse trekking and the rental of mountain bikes is possible.



Mountain Biking circuits

For all additional information about sporting activities and our professional partnerships – accommodation, restaurants ... contact the Tourist Offices and the seasonal antennas at Octon, Mourèze and the lake Salagou.

On the Internet :

www.grandsitesalagoumourze.fr
www.masdesterreroles.asso.fr

DISCOVER THE GRAND SITE SALAGOU-CIRQUE DE MOUREZE DIFFERENTLY

■ **Rando Cards for around the lake Salagou and Mourèze**, several itineraries for hiking labelled FFRandonnée34, to use when discovering the history, patrimony and local produce.

- **Parc Courtinals, Mourèze**
Duration : 1hr
Distance : 1.2 miles
Level of difficulty : easy to average
- **Cirque de Mourèze**
Duration : 3hrs
Distance : 4.9 miles
Level of difficulty : average to difficult
- **Liausson**
Duration : 3hrs
Distance : 4.3 miles
Level of difficulty : average to difficult
- **Lake Salagou**
Duration : 3hrs
Distance : 4.9 miles
Level of difficulty : average to difficult
- **Pathway from the béals to Salasc**
Duration : 2hrs 30 mins
Distance : 3.1 miles
Level of difficulty : average
- **Notre Dame de Roubignac to Octon**
Duration : 3hrs
Distance : 4.9 miles
Level of difficulty : average

Available in the Tourist Offices of the Clermontais or download from internet site : www.clermontais-tourisme.fr

■ **Mountain Hiking Card** : several Mountain Hiking circuits to use around the lake Salagou and in the Clermontais.

Available in the Tourist Offices of the Clermontais or download from internet site : www.clermontais-tourisme.fr

■ **The « Liausson - Salagou Randoland » Card** is a fun circuit made out to be a paper chase to accompany children of 4-12 years while discovering the area. On the trail, the clues are elements of the architectural, historic or natural patrimony (inscriptions, dates, geometric shapes, 100-yr old trees, etc) allowing the enigmas of the site being visited to be resolved.

3 levels available for children of 4-6 yrs / 7-9 yrs and /9-12 yrs to learn more about what they have started to learn in their classrooms, while playing at the same time

Duration : 2hrs 15 mins

Distance : 2.5 miles

Level of difficulty : easy

Available in the Tourist Offices of the Clermontais or download from internet site : www.clermontais-tourisme.fr

■ **The booklet « These walls that talk to us »**, takes an unprecedented stroll into geological times so as to understand more about the rocks used to build and decorate the habitations, squares and monuments. Making the walls talk is walking in the Clermontais villages while observing the old facades, roads and narrow footpaths, the cul-de-sacs, the way the doors and windows are framed and the engraved porches. It means becoming aware of how useful rocks have been to mankind in the construction of buildings that shelter, protect and house

On sale in all the Tourist Offices in the Clermontais.

■ **Guided tours with the Tourist Office's official visitor's guide.** Explore the richness of the natural patrimony and architecture of the Clermontais and take a plunge into the history of a land that has character.

Information and Reservations :
04 67 96 23 86 ou tourisme@cc-clermontais.fr

Other places to see nearby

NÉBIAN AND ITS COMMANDERIE DES HOSPITALIERS
CANET, ON THE BANKS OF THE HÉRAULT RIVER
CEYRAS, BETWEEN VINEYARDS AND THE LERGUE RIVER

Tourist offices

TOURIST OFFICE DESTINATION SALAGOU

Accueil de Clermont

Place Jean Jaurès
34800 CLERMONT L'HÉRAULT
Tél. +33 (0)4 67 96 23 86

Maison du Grand Site de France Salagou - Cirque de Mourèze

Route de la Dolomie
34800 MOURÈZE

OPEN DURING SUMMER

Our tourist office at Lake Salagou as well as our mobile information points at the wine cellars of Cabrières and Fontès, at the Clermontais Aquatic Centre, at the Destination Salagou outdoor recreation centre and at the Octon library

tourisme@cc-clermontais.fr

www.destination-salagou.fr

 OfficeTourismeClermontais

 ot_clermontais

 destinationsalagou



Information

COMMUNAUTÉ DE COMMUNES DU SALAGOU CŒUR D'HÉRAULT

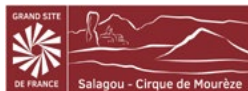
Espace Marcel VIDAL
20 av. Raymond Lacombe
34800 CLERMONT L'HÉRAULT
Tél. +33 (0)4 67 88 95 50 - accueil@cc-clermontais.fr
www.cc-salagou.fr



Communauté de communes du
CLERMONTAIS

GRAND SITE DE FRANCE SALAGOU-CIRQUE DE MOURÈZE

11 cours de la chicane
34 800 Clermont l'Hérault
Tél. +33 (0)4 67 44 68 86
www.grandsitesalagoumourzeze.fr



Text : Office de Tourisme Destination Salagou, service Patrimoine du Salagou Cœur d'Hérault

Photo credits : CCC - Eric Brendle - Philippe Martin - Kelous - Claude Seeli

Printing : JF Impression Design: CCC

Thanks : Association « Le Mas de Terres Rouges » - Philippe Martin - Charles Fadat - le Syndicat Mixte du Grand Site Salagou-Cirque de Mourèze