



The Camargue is a large wetland in the Rhône delta. It is exceptionally diverse in its flora and fauna, its scenery and the culture of Provence in all its historical grandeur.

Whether you are interested in nature or in the traditions of the Camargue, we can give you the information you need to appreciate the park, bearing in mind its vulnerability.

Visiting museums or natural features, between the sea and the pools, on foot or on horseback, following the tourist routes or relaxing on the beach - you can organise your visit according to your preferences, while also respecting the quality of your surroundings.



Professionals commit to sustainable tourism in the Camargue with the « Valeurs Parc naturel régional » brand

Owned by the Ministry of the Environment, « Valeurs Parc naturel régional » is a brand to help foster sustainable development in local areas. It promotes local products and human-scale tourist businesses, local economy players who respect the specific features of the area and its environment.

SITE TO VISIT

- 5 Home of rice (Maison du riz)**
www.maisonduriz.com - +33 (0)6 31 03 40 11
- 13 The Pont de Gau bird park (Parc ornithologique du Pont de Gau)**
www.parcornithologique.com - +33 (0)4 90 97 82 62
- 18 Flamingo reproduction site (Bureau des Guides Naturalistes)**
www.guide-nature.fr - +33 (0)6 95 90 70 48
- 29 Marais du Vigueirat**
www.marais-vigueirat.reserves-naturelles.org - +33 (0)4 90 98 70 91

HORSE TREKKING

- (by reservation)
- 6 Bergerie d'Alivon**
www.bergeriealivon.com - +33 (0)6 03 54 10 94
 - 7 Domaine Paul Ricard**
www.mejanes-camargue.fr - +33 (0)4 90 97 10 62
 - 15 Mas de la Grenouillère**
www.hotel-equitation-saintes-maries.fr - +33 (0)6 80 25 68 58
 - 26 Domaine de Beaujeu**
www.domainebeaujeu.fr - +33 (0)9 64 18 90 33
 - 27 Mas de Valérieole**
www.masdevalerieole.com - +33 (0)4 90 97 10 41
 - 29 Mas Saint-Germain**
www.massaintgermain.com - +33 (0)6 16 92 34 98

WINE MAKERS

- 4 Hôtel-restaurant** Le Flamant rose**
www.leflamantrose.com - +33 (0)4 90 97 10 18
- 5^e Gîtes Mas de la Vigne**
www.masdelavigne.com - +33 (0)4 90 97 11 29
- 11 Hôtel-restaurant**** Mas de Calabrun**
www.mas-de-calabrun.fr - +33 (0)4 90 97 82 21
- 12 Chambres d'hôtes Mas de Bouvet**
www.camargue.fr/site/masdebouvet - +33 (0)6 12 13 59 02
- 14 Gîte Mas Farola**
www.masfarola.camargue.fr - +33 (0)6 20 68 14 07
- 15 Hôtel*** Mas de la Grenouillère**
www.hotel-equitation-saintes-maries.fr - +33 (0)4 90 97 90 22
- 19 Chambres d'hôtes Un nid en Camargue**
www.gites-de-france.com - +33 (0)9 73 16 04 68
- 23 Hôtel-restaurant**** Mas de Peint**
www.masdepeint.com - +33 (0)4 90 97 20 62
- 28 Chambres d'hôtes Mas de la Forge**
www.masdelaforge.fr - +33 (0)4 90 97 00 76
- 31 Gîtes Mas Saint-Germain**
www.massaintgermain.com - +33 (0)4 90 97 00 60

BULL HERDING

- (by reservation)
- 3 Manade Mailhan**
www.manadejacquesmailhan.com - +33 (0)9 74 56 51 89
 - 7 Manade Paul Ricard**
www.mejanes-camargue.fr - +33 (0)4 90 97 10 10
 - 9 Manade Clauzel**
www.manadeclauzel.com - +33 (0)6 10 66 02 12
 - 10 Manade Cavallini**
www.masdepioch.com - +33 (0)4 90 97 50 06
 - 23 Manade Jacques Bon**
www.masdepeint.com - +33 (0)4 90 97 28 50
 - 25 Manade Blanc**
www.manade-blanc.fr - +33 (0)6 87 01 43 08

Cultivated land

20% of the Camargue is used to grow rice. The water taken from the Rhône for this purpose desalinates the soil to a certain depth, and the rice fields are also home to nesting birds such as the heron. They are flooded in April and allowed to dry out in September for the harvest.



Freshwater marshes and reed beds

These are common in the upper Camargue and on the banks of the Rhône. Water plants such as bullrushes, cane and reeds are abundant in the marshes, which are used for hunting and, in summer, pasturage. They provide shelter for nesting and wintering birds. Reeds (« sagno », in Provençal) are cut in winter by the « sagneurs ». They are used as a roofing material.

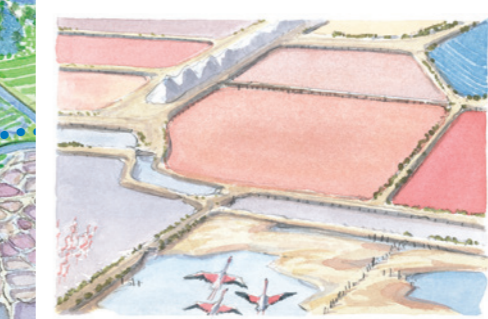
The salt plains (« sansouires ») and meadowlands

Salt plains are a feature of the lower Camargue. Their salt content is so high that only a few plant species such as glasswort, saltwort, obione and static can survive there. They are prone to periodic flooding, and in summer are marked by white traces due to the presence of salt. Meadowland occupies only small, fragmented areas in which the effects of salt are less obvious.



The salt ponds

These are to be found along the sea. In reality they are lagoons that have been adapted to maximise their salt concentration. The salt ponds are extensive and rich in invertebrates, which makes them an important source of food for birds, and in particular the flamingos, which spend most of their time there.



NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES (presented overleaf)

- 1** Camargue produce shop (Maison des produits de Camargue)
- 2** Museum of the Camargue (Musée de la Camargue - Park reception area)
- 5** Home of rice (Maison du riz)
- 8** Home of the Camargue Horse (Maison du cheval Camargue)
- 13** The Pont de Gau bird park (Parc ornithologique de Pont de Gau)
- 17** La Gacholle lighthouse (Phare de la Gacholle)
- 18** Flamingo reproduction site (Étang du Fangassier)
- 20** The Salt works observatory
- 21** Domaine de la Palissade
- 22** The Saint-Louis Tower (Tour Saint-Louis)
- 24** The Camargue National Nature Reserve (La Capelière)
- 29** The Vigueirat marshes National Nature Reserve
- 30** The Scamandre Regional Nature Reserve

The ponds and lagoons

The shallow ponds of the lower Camargue are separated from the sea by a sandbar. They are more or less salty, and communicate with the sea via sluice gates. They provide a refuge for birds and fish, and play a major role in water management.



The beaches and dunes

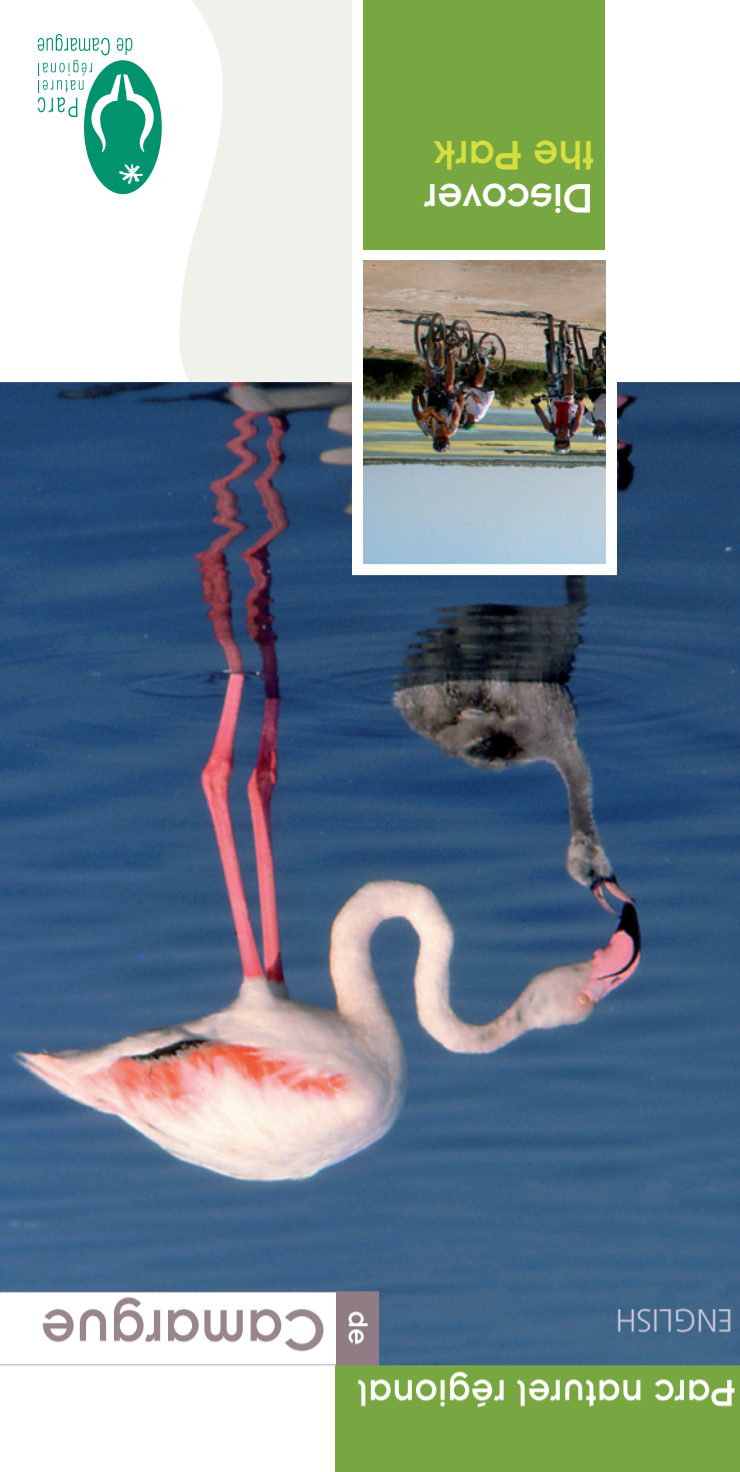
The Camargue has some 50 km of beaches. Outside the perimeter of the protective dykes - and thus subject to the caprices of the sea - the coastline is in a permanent state of change. The dunes are inhabited by spectacular flowering plants and a number of rare insects.



- Viewpoint
- Tourist path (by bike / by car)
- Discovery route for pedestrians and cyclists (closed to cars)
- Cycle path ViaRhôna
- Boundary of the Camargue Regional Nature Park



DISTANCES BETWEEN THE MAIN TOWNS :	
Aigues-Mortes - Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer	30 km
Aigues-Mortes - Arles	42 km
Arles - Salin-de-Giraud	37 km
Arles - Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer	37 km
Arles - Port-Saint-Louis	36 km
Albaron - Salin-de-Giraud (par bord du Vaccarès)	40 km
Salin-de-Giraud - Port-Saint-Louis (via bac de Barcarin)	5 km



Discover the Park

de Camargue Parc naturel régional ENGLISH

Parc naturel régional

de Camargue



Beaches and reed beds, rice and wheat, the salt ponds and the Mediterranean - the Camargue Regional Nature Park is multifarious.

It is also France's only nesting site for the flamingo, its world-famous emblem. And then there are the bulls, horses, beavers, owls, gulls, terns, herons and wading birds.

Born out of a struggle between river and sea, the Camargue, in biological terms, is one of Western Europe's richest regions, and an important stopping-off point for migratory birds as they go back and forth between Europe and Africa.

The Camargue is a subtle blend of contrasts, both entrancing and ever-changing. It reveals itself in a multitude of ways, depending on the time of day and the season. There are always surprises in store for the visitor. Enjoy your visit...

A new life is being invented...



The natural heritage

The Camargue National Nature Reserve (Réserve naturelle nationale de Camargue)

With its 13 000 hectares of ponds, lagoons and salt plains at the heart of the Camargue, the Camargue National Nature Reserve is among Europe's largest wetlands. It extends out to the shore, and takes in vaccarès lake. It is totally protected, and its visitors will discover some real treasures, notably 237 species of birds in pristine environments.

17 La Gacholle lighthouse (Phare de la Gacholle)

One of the starting points for a tour of the sea dike : 20 km of pathways for pedestrians or cyclists (but not cars). Although the dunes themselves are out of bounds, the sea is accessible via marked paths. The birds include gulls, terns and flamingos. Exhibition on the subject of the Camargue coast, and an observatory. Opening times : school holidays, public holidays and weekends, 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. Admission free.

24 La Capelière

La Capelière is the Information Centre of the Nature Reserve, where you can walk a 1,5 km trail that crosses a patchwork of Camargue habitats. There are 4 hides including 2 equipped with telescopes to get closer to the wildlife of the marshes, an exhibition, and a shop for nature lovers.

C 134 de Fiélouse - Arles - Tél. +33 (0)4 90 97 00 97 camargue-rn@espaces-naturels.fr - www.snpn.com/reservedecamargue Opening times : 1 April to 30 September, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, and 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm ; 1 October to 31 March, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, and 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm (except Tuesdays). Closed on 25 December and 1 January. There is an admission charge. Labelled « Tourisme et Handicap ».

13 The Pont de Gau bird park (Parc ornithologique de Pont de Gau)

Here you can observe birds in a natural environment of 60 hectares. And there are 7 km of paths that link up the marshes, ponds, reed beds, meadowlands, salt plains and irrigation channels. The diversity of habitats is matched by that of the birds themselves, both sedentary and migratory, and much has been done to facilitate the observation of flamingos, herons, storks, egrets, teals, sparrows, wading birds and raptors.

Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer - Tél. +33 (0)4 90 97 82 62 contact@parcornithologique.com - www.parcornithologique.com Opening times : April to 30 September, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm, and 1 October to 31 March, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. There is an admission charge. Labelled « Tourisme et Handicap » and « Park brand ».

18 Flamingo reproduction site (Étang du Fangassier)

For more than 20 years, the Camargue Regional Nature Park has been managing the only site in France where flamingos reproduce, at Fangassier, owned by the Conservatoire du Littoral. The Bureau des Guides Naturalistes, in partnership with the park, the Office de Tourisme in Arles, the Tour du Valat and the Conservatoire du Littoral, organises visits, during the nesting season, to one of the western Mediterranean's largest flamingo colonies.

Étang du Fangassier - Salin-de-Giraud. Opening times : 1 April to 30 September. By reservation only, in the Arles and Salin-de-Giraud tourist Offices, fee charged, tél. + 33 (0)4 42 86 89 77 or + 33 (0)6 95 90 70 48. ot-arles@arlestourisme.com - www.guide-nature.fr - Labelled « Park brand ».

21 Domaine de la Palissade

Here you will find ponds and lagoons that communicate with the river and the sea, and unique landscapes with a rich variety of flora and fauna. The aquatic environment provides a remarkable habitat for fish and birds. Walking and riding discovery trails with hides, an exhibition room and guided activities.

Salin-de-Giraud - Tél. +33 (0)4 42 86 81 28 palissade@parc-camargue.fr www.palissade.fr

Opening times : February and November, wednesday to sunday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ; March to mid-June and mid-September to end October, every day from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ; Mid-June to mid-September, every day from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. Closed in December and January, 1st May and 11th November. Equestrian initiation sessions take place from the start of April to October. There is an admission charge.

29 The Vigueirat marshes National Nature Reserve (Les Marais du Vigueirat)

There is a range of different landscapes : flood plains, salt plains, ponds and woods, and the Camargue's largest reed beds. An environment teeming with life, with thousands of birds, 4 herds of bulls and Camargue horses : 15 km of paths built on piles, thematic boardwalk trails and guided tours for young and old, on foot, by horse & cart and on horseback/poney.

Mas Thibert - Tél. +33 (0)4 90 98 70 91 visites.mdv@espaces-naturels.fr www.marais-vigueirat.reserves-naturelles.org - Opening times : 15/01 to 20/12, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm. Trails open-access and guided visits (reservations necessary). There is an admission charge. Labelled EMAS and « Park brand ».

30 Scamandre Regional Nature Reserve (Réserve naturelle régionale de Scamandre)

This typically Mediterranean wetland is exceptional in its biodiversity. A number of remarkable bird species nest close to the reception area itself. There are 9 species of heron, and the majority of France's glossy ibises. Protected species include the European pond turtle.

Route des Iscles - Gallician - Vauvert - Tél. +33 (0)4 66 73 52 05 contact@camarguegardoise.com - www.camarguegardoise.com Opening times : tuesday to saturday, 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. Closed on bank holidays. Free admission (reservation required for groups).

8 Home of the Camargue Horse (Maison du cheval Camargue)

Find out about the Camargue horse breed, its history, the way it is raised, its involvement in the management of natural areas, etc. by means of a guided walking tour in the heart of the Mas de la Cure estate.

Mas de la Cure, Chemin de Bardouine - Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer (in front of the Castle of Avignon) - Tél. : +33 (0)4 90 97 76 37 contact@masdelacure.org - www.maisonduchevalcamargue.com Guided visit by reservation only, fee charged, all year for groups (12 people min.) and from May to September, wednesday and friday from 10:00 to 11:45 am for individuals.

20 The Salt works observatory

The Giraud salt works, near the mouth of the Grand Rhône, covers 6 000 hectares and produces various compounds that are used by the chemical industry, including 340 000 tonnes of sodium chloride a year. The Salt works observatory is on the road.

Between Piémanson and Salin-de-giraud

22 The Saint-Louis Tower (Tour Saint-Louis)

This tower provides an exceptional view of the Camargue, including the Saint-Louis canal, the mouth of the Rhône and the salt ponds. It was built in 1737, for use as a lookout post and a lighthouse. It is now a classified historic monument, and houses the Office de Tourisme, along with a permanent exhibition of the largest ornithological collection in the Camargue, and temporary exhibitions.

Quai Bonnardel - Port-Saint-Louis-du-Rhône - Tél. +33 (0)4 42 86 01 21 contact@portsaintlouis-tourisme.fr - www.portsaintlouis-tourisme.fr Opening times summer : monday to friday, 9:00 am to 12:00 am, and 1:30 pm to 5:00 pm. The opening hours are extended during the tourist season. There is an admission charge.

The main features of the Park's natural and cultural heritage are to be found on the map overlaid ; sites indicated in orange have the « Valeurs Parc naturel régional » brand.

Some of the Camargue's animals



Pond turtle (Emys orbicularis)



Common scarlet-darter (Crocotethys erythraea)



Black-winged stilt (Himantopus himantopus)



Pied avocet (Recurvirostra avosetta)

Some of the Camargue's plants (to admire, but not touch)



Sea daffodil (Pancratium maritimum)



Strawflower (Helichrysum stoechas)



Sea lavender (Limonium narbonense)



Annual saltwort (Salicornia annua)

To explore the Camargue

Walking and cycling tours

The Camargue Regional Nature Park offers 14 walking or cycling discovery tours within its borders, in order to observe the full diversity of Camargue landscapes : from the vineyards in the north to the beaches in the south via the salt meadows and marshes. Starting in Arles, Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer or Port-Saint-Louis-du-Rhône, the tours are arranged thematically so as to give you all the keys to understanding this exceptional area.

Pack available in French, English and German. On sale at Arles and Port-Saint-Louis-du-Rhône tourist offices, the Museum of the Camargue and the Vigueirat Marshes. Can be downloaded from : www.parc-camargue.fr/itineraires.html

Where to watch birds ?

Nearly 2/3 of the birds observed in Europe can be seen in the Camargue, which makes it a popular place with ornithologists, both professional and amateur. Discover the booklet « Where to watch birds in the Camargue Regional Nature Park », which tells you 11 good sites for bird watching, and more generally for observing Camargue plants and wildlife. In addition to the descriptions of each site and the species to be seen there, the booklet highlights outdoor activities, restaurants and accommodation situated close to the sites ; most of which are committed to sustainable tourism.

Booklet available in French and English from tourist offices and heritage and cultural sites, or can be downloaded from : www.parc-camargue.fr/where-to-watch-birds-in-the-camargue.html

Biosphere Reserve

Since 1977, the Camargue has been designated by UNESCO as a « Biosphere Reserve » covering the whole biogeographical delta of the Rhône. This designation involves the setting up of a sustainable development project whose results are assessed every 10 years. The project concerns the conservation of natural areas, support for human activities in harmony with the environment, including sustainable tourism, and also backs research and awareness-raising about the Camargue's exceptional biodiversity.

www.mab-france.org/en/

The cultural heritage

1 Camargue produce shop (Maison des produits de Camargue)

Direct sale of Camargue products and craftsmanship. House built with ecological materials.

Rond point du Mas du Sonnailler - RD570 - Route des Saintes-Maries - Arles Tél. +33 (0)4 90 49 15 26. Opening times : tuesday to saturday from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm and 3:30 to 7:00 pm

2 Museum of the Camargue (Musée de la Camargue)

This museum provides an indispensable introduction to the territory, from a societal viewpoint. The permanent exhibition « Le fil de temps... le fil de l'eau » (The flow of water, the flow of time, in the Camargue) shows how, on this island formed by the Rhône and the sea, change can be deep and rapid, and people constantly have to adapt to their environment in order to live and work there. At the start of the 3,5 km discovery walk there is an observation point in wood, created by the artist Tadashi Kawamata, from which the visitor can look out over the surrounding landscape. Temporary exhibition. Bookstore and shop.

Mas du Pont de Rousty - RD 570 - Arles - Tél. +33 (0)4 90 97 10 82 musee@parc-camargue.fr - www.museedelacamargue.com - Open every day except 01/01, 01/05, 25/12 and week-ends from 22/12 to 31/01 ; 1 April to 30 September, 9:00 am to 12:30 pm and 1:00 to 6:00 pm / 1 October to 31 March, 10:00 am to 12:30 pm and 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Labelled « Tourisme et Handicap ».

5 Home of Rice (Maison du riz)

The Rozière family, rice growers in the Camargue for 5 generations, welcome you to their farm, where they have created a visitor centre about rice-growing. The visit includes a trail with small rice fields, an exhibition room with information panels, a demonstration of the rice whitening process, and a tasting session on request. Local produce shop.

Mas de la Vigne, Albaron - 13200 Arles Tél. +33 (0)6 31 03 40 11 - maisonduriz@orange.fr www.maisonduriz.com - Open every day from April to end November, from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm 2:30 to 6:30 pm.

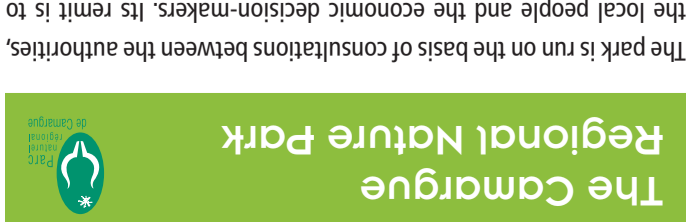
Some advice for visitors

- Remember that the dunes are sensitive areas.
- When walking round the park, remain on the paths. Do not stray onto private property.
- No fires or barbecues !
- Respect the wildlife, and avoid making unnecessary noise.
- Park only in designated areas.
- Between May and October, don't forget to bring mosquito repellent, sunscreen and water.

Some figures

- Three towns
- > Arles
- > Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer of which 489 are protected, either nationally or worldwide
- > Port-Saint-Louis-du-Rhône
- Population : 10 848 inhabitants
- Area : 101 200 hectares
- Coastline : 25 km
- Highest point : 4 metres above sea level
- are to be found in the Camargue !
- Animal and plant species (not including invertebrates) : 5 700,
- of which 489 are protected, either nationally or worldwide
- Migrating birds : 150 000 each year.
- Three quarters of France's bird species, half of its freshwater fish species, and a quarter of its plant species are to be found in the Camargue !

Its multidisciplinary team is responsible for the protection of nature and the cultural heritage. It also provides facilities and information for visitors. It works to improve the quality of life of the local population, with support for agriculture and tourism. It emphasises sustainable development, and supervises the « Valeurs Parc naturel régional de Camargue » brand.



The Camargue Regional Nature Park



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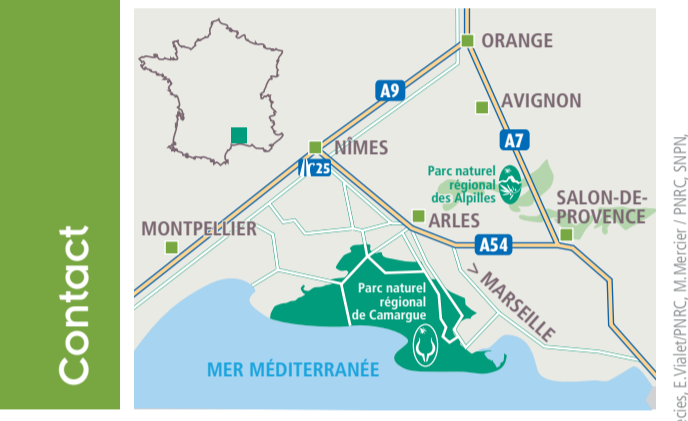
TOURIST INFORMATION

OFFICE DE TOURISME D'ARLES
Accueil centre-ville
 Esplanade Charles de Gaulle - 13200 Arles
 Tél. +33 (0)4 90 18 41 20
Accueil Salin-de-Giraud
 Rue Tournaire - 13200 Arles
 Tél. +33 (0)4 42 86 89 77
 www.arlestourisme.com
 ot-arles@arlestourisme.com

OFFICE DE TOURISME DES SAINTES-MARIES-DE-LA-MER
 5 avenue Van Gogh
 13460 Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer
 Tél. +33 (0)4 90 97 82 55
 www.saintesmaries.com - info@saintesmaries.com

OFFICE DE TOURISME PORT-SAINT-LOUIS
 Tour Saint-Louis - Quai Bonnardel
 13230 Port-Saint-Louis-du-Rhône
 Tél. 04 42 86 01 21
 www.portsaintlouis-tourisme.fr
 contact@portsaintlouis-tourisme.fr

CAMARGUE REGIONAL NATURE PARK
Musée de la Camargue
 Mas du Pont de Rousty - 13200 Arles
 Tél. +33 (0)4 90 97 10 82
Domaine de la Palissade
 13129 Salin-de-Giraud
 Tél. +33 (0)4 42 86 81 28
 www.parc-camargue.fr - musee@parc-camargue.fr



Contact

