



Edition 2024

Loches

Touraine - Châteaux de la Loire

GUIDED TOURS

EXCURSIONS

SHORT BREAKS

Brochure for groups

Loches®

Touraine - Châteaux de la Loire

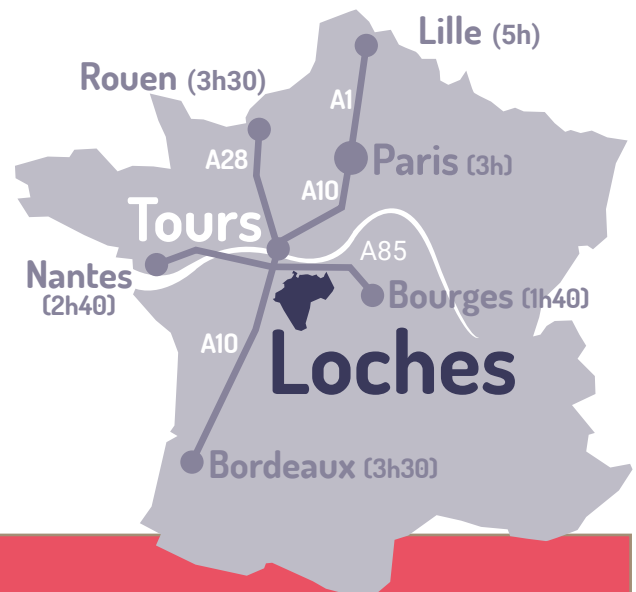


Welcome to Loches Touraine Chateaux de la Loire !

In the Loire Valley, close to Amboise & Chenonceau, an unspoilt **Touraine** awaits you. **Loches, city of 'Art & History'** immerses the visitor in a journey to the heart of 1000 years of history.

The villages of **Montrésor** - labelled «Most Beautiful Villages in France» - and **Chédigny** - the first village in France to be awarded the «Remarkable Garden» label by the Ministry of Culture – will share their secrets with you....

Further south, the Creuse and Claise valleys, with their numerous beautiful villages, have an air of the Perigord set in the Loire Valley, including **foie-gras production** and a **Prehistory museum** !



This brochure contains our suggestions for excursions and short breaks specially designed for groups, which can be tailored according to your wishes. We have preselected quality partners for you in order to facilitate the organisation of your clients' stays and stopovers on our territory.



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YOUR GROUP CONTACT :

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Top visits for groups



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Visits around Loches



2H



45 max

GUIDED TOUR OF THE TOWN OF LOCHES:
«A THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY».



2H



25 max

«THE MEDIEVAL FORTRESS» GUIDED
THEMATIC TOUR



2H



20 max

«LOCHES IN ALL SENSES»

Loches, **an exceptional historical town**, offers you a life-size panorama through the eras from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Commented by your personal tour guide, the visit takes you beneath the historic gateways of this Renaissance town, and through narrow cobbled streets up to the ridge of the medieval fortress.

Overlooking the town, **the medieval fortress of Loches** is one of the best preserved in Europe. With the tour guide, you will visit the fortified ramparts and discover the monuments that have been part of the fortress for over a thousand years. You will also enjoy privileged access to **the terrace of the Royal Gate**.

Discover a monument blindfolded, play with the facades, walk with **your head in the clouds...**

Come and touch, smell, look at and enjoy heritage in a playful and quirky way! Whether with family, friends or colleagues, **awaken your senses** during a sensory visit. More than just a simple visit, it is an unforgettable experience and a completely different way to discover Loches.

Map of Loches



Visits of our monuments



ROYAL CITY OF LOCHES - SELF GUIDED or GUIDED TOUR

Travel back in time and discover one of the most beautiful fortified cities in France and Europe! **The Keep**, which is approximately 36 metres high, is one of the most imposing of its time, and one of the best preserved. Discover this unique medieval monument, which was a residential and defensive fortress and then, at the end of the Middle Ages, a state prison. You will be astonished by the underground passages and the discovery of King Louis XI's prisoners' cage.

The Royal Lodge, a renowned landmark in the history of France, was a favourite residence of the Valois dynasty. It was also home to Joan of Arc, Agnès Sorel and Anne of Brittany.



NOËL AU PAYS DES CHÂTEAUX IN THE ROYAL TOWN OF LOCHES

Every year, the **spirit of Christmas, magical and joyful**, transforms the **royal residence** and the **keep**. It is through a staging dedicated to a **traditional fairy tale** that the «magic» of December is brought alive. An enchanted atmosphere guaranteed for young and old!

Loches and the Royal Town's monuments

ADD A MONUMENT TO YOUR VISIT !

- 1 : I choose my guided tour
- 2 : I add my choice of monument
- 3 : I get my personalized visit

Town and the keep for a journey back to the early middle ages...

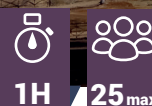
Town and the Lansyer museum for an artistic visit...

To be adapted according to your personal preferences!



SAINT-ANTOINE CHURCH AND GALLERY

An authentic church-museum, **Saint-Antoine's church** has been completely restored including the works of art it houses. The adjoining gallery, which bears the same name, beautifully completes this ensemble thanks to its two paintings known as «**Les Caravaggio de Philippe de Béthune**» (bought from Caravaggio, a 17th century Italian artist, by Philippe de Béthune), as well as the remarkable 15th century triptych by Jean Poyer and variety of ecclesiastical objects.



LANSYER HOUSE MUSEUM : STEP INTO THE HOME OF THE LANDSCAPE PAINTER

A pupil of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, Gustave Courbet and then Henri Harpignies, Lansyer is regarded by his contemporaries as **one of the best landscape painters**. He is a true testament to his time. His modern approach, **similar to those of the Impressionists**, led him to paint natural or architectural landscapes with great finesse.

Visits around Beaulieu-lès-Loches



BEAULIEU-ON-THE WATER

Water is omnipresent in Beaulieu, due to its canal created around 1500. Discover the importance of this resource during the period when Beaulieu was **a powerful monastic town**. No fewer than 5 mills were in operation on the Indre during that era. The tour continues with a visit to one of them: the «Moulin des Mécaniciens» (Mechanics' Mill) which, after having served as a tanning mill from the 16th century, was transformed at the beginning of the 20th century to take on a new function (see below visit to the Mill).



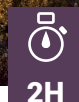
FROM STONE TO ABBEY

Pushing the door to the Abbey open you will discover **the recently restored bell tower, which reaches a height of 64 meters**. This is also where the tomb of the greatest military builder of the time, **Foulques Nerra**, is supposedly located. The legend around this dark character will astonish you. The visit continues in the park where part of the ruins of the Romanesque choir can still be seen. Your guide Marie-Claire will also take you to the Grandes Caves so that you can appreciate where the stones that were used to build this monument were extracted from.



VISIT TO THE MECHANICS' MILL

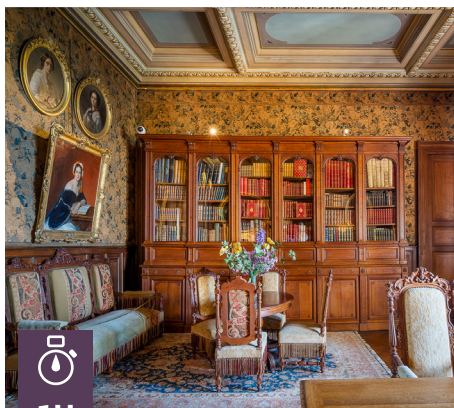
The Mechanics' Mill is a hidden treasure, which will delight and surprise you at the same time. Take a walk through the atypical Viantaises garden before changing universe, as you open the metal door, to discover **Beaulieu's canal**. It is in this charming setting that the Mechanics' Mill was established in the early 20th century. Today this magical site is run by passionate volunteers who through the tapping sounds of the machines and the wheel, help you relive the experience of life gone by.



BEAULIEU-LÈS-LOCHES : SMALL CITY, LOTS OF CHARACTER

Be transported back in time as you discover **Beaulieu, the capital of Southern Touraine** some 10 centuries ago. Explore the architectural heritage of the town, including the Abbey, which is a real eye-catcher and clearly visible from Loches, as well as beautiful properties, **the Templars' house, Agnès Sorel's house, the leprosarium and Saint-Laurent's Church** – exterior visit.

Visits around Montrésor



1H

MONTRESOR CASTLE – SELF-GUIDED VISIT OR GUIDED TOUR

An essential landmark of this characterful village is **the castle of Montrésor**, with its double facets: the imposing remains of the 11th century fortress founded by Fulk III Nerra and the Renaissance castle itself. This privately owned and inhabited castle, surrounded by a romantic park, houses **an exceptional collection of early Italian paintings**. It has been owned by a Polish family since 1849 and its interior is an authentic testimony to the French Second Empire enhanced by a **Slavic influence**.



1H30



35 max

VISIT THE VILLAGE OF MONTRESOR LABELLED «ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES IN FRANCE»

Discover **the legend of Montrésor**, the history of the village and the prominent figures who have influenced the area. Your experience will be enhanced by visiting the Halle des Cardeux Hall (former wool market) and its Gemmail Museum (2 - p.12), the Chancellor's residence, Branicki Street with its old houses and the Saint-Jean-Baptiste collegiate church. Finish your visit with a stroll along **the Balcons de l'Indrois** where you will enjoy a panoramic view of the castle..



1H

THEMED VISIT OF MONTRESOR

Montrésor invites you to relive its history... Let your costumed guide take you on a timeless and burlesque stroll through **one of France's most beautiful villages**.

Optional: Dress up as a lord, princess, monk or a peasant and join the tour in character! Costumes available at the **'Salle des Costumes'**.

For visits in a foreign language an interpreter will be needed.

Indre and Indrois valley



0H45

CHARTREUSE DU LIGET - SELF-GUIDED VISIT OR GUIDED TOUR (recommended)

This is one of the very first 12th century European **Carthusian monasteries**. Built in 1180 by Henry II Plantagenet, King of England, it is the only representation of the Carthusian order in Touraine.



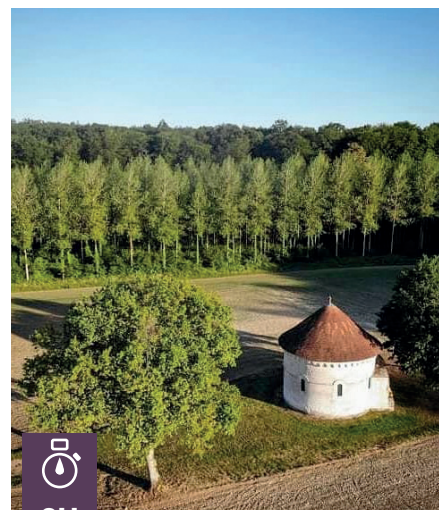
1H



45 max

THE CORROIRIE CHATEAU-MONASTERY

Discover the daily life of the **Carthusian brothers** who chose to share their life between prayer and work for the benefit of the community. The buildings are reminders of those activities: **the church, cellar, mills and hemp kiln** are still visible. A wealth of history to discover!



2H

LOCHES NATIONAL FOREST HISTORY TOUR

Discover **the majestic history of the royal forest of Loches** and that of the Carthusian brothers during a guided walk of 4 km. Included is a visit of the **Saint-Jean du Liget chapel**, the **Corroirie chateau monastery** and the **Chartreuse du Liget**. Flexible itinerary.

GROUP VISITS NOT TO BE MISSED

Chédigny, Indre and Indrois valley



2H

FLORAL WALK IN CHÉDIGNY

Accompanied by Alain Biard, a passionate botanist, you will discover the first village in France to have been awarded the «**Jardin Remarquable**» ("Remarkable Garden") label by the Ministry of Culture. During a picturesque stroll, you will learn about the history of the village and appreciate the precious advice shared by the gardener. **An absolute highlight for garden lovers:** 1000 rose bushes and more than 4000 perennials are planted throughout the village. For visits in a foreign language an interpreter will be needed.



1H30



50 max

CORMERY ABBEY

The Abbey of Cormery is situated between Tours and Loches and was built between the 11th and 12th centuries. It still has **its belfry porch, beautiful vaulted rooms in the former cellar, gatehouse, monks' refectory** (one of the largest and best preserved in France), and also in the Virgin Chapel. The visit ends in the heart of the rose garden adorning the important remains of the cloister, which have recently been restored.

Creuse and Claise Valley



1H30

GRAND-PRESSIGNY PREHISTORY MUSEUM - SELF-GUIDED VISIT OR GUIDED TOUR (no extra charge)

Visit this exceptional **Prehistory museum** which houses rich archaeological collections from the Palaeolithic period to the Bronze Age: the real jewels are the «livres de beurre», which translates as 'pound of butter' because of the similarity to a slab of butter, and the exceptional long flint blades from the 3rd millennium BC.



2H



40 max

THE ALBERT BERGERAULT GREAT INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Colette and her brother Jean open the doors of the Bergerault family business, which has been awarded the status «Living Heritage Company». Discover the **unique musical instrument** created by their father, Albert Bergerault, a real one-man orchestra. An exclusive demonstration.

Secret castles in the Southern Touraine



2H30



20 max

BETZ-LE-CHÂTEAU CASTLE AND UNDERGROUND PASSAGES

You will find beautiful 11th century vestiges as well as a tower whose restored summit is accessible by a 15th century staircase that has never been modified. However, it is the **underground tunnels** which really stand out!

Wander through a network of 250 metres of underground passages to discover this labyrinth. Good shoes and a sweatshirt are mandatory; it's 14 degrees Celsius all year round!



2H

BRIDORÉ CASTLE

Its 30-metre high keep (with latrines!) offers **one of the highest vantage points in Southern Touraine**. A unique example of military architecture with its remarkable caponiers, the fortress, a major site during the Hundred Years War, has welcomed three kings of France: Charles VII, Charles VIII and François I. **Take a tour of this important medieval military architecture site.**



2H



20 max

GRILLEMONT CASTLE IN LA-CHAPELLE-BLANCHE-SAINT-MARTIN

The castle suddenly appears, **like something out of a fairy tale**, in the heart of a forest surrounded by vast meadows and lakes. **Discover the history of this castle**, which was at one time a fortress, property of King Louis XI's advisor, a prison and finally a private residence since the 18th century.



1H30

LA GUERCHE CASTLE (from mid-June to mid-September) – GUIDED VISIT

Marvel at the riches of this beautiful site on the banks of the Creuse - **a remarkable example of 15th century building techniques**. The guided tour of the vaulted cellars, the prison, the reception rooms and the courtyard offers **a beautiful escape through the history and stories** of this unmissable castle.



2H

CHÂTEAU DE SAINT-GERMAIN À SAINT-JEAN SAINT-GERMAIN

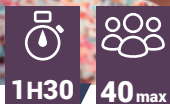
A room with **a splendid roof structure in the shape of an inverted ship's hull**, a square 10th century keep with machicolations from which the rolling countryside of the Indre valley can be admired: welcome to Saint-Germain castle.

Gourmet themed visits



THE ORIGINAL MACAROONS FROM CORMERY ABBEY

Taste the delicacy elaborated in the 8th century by the monks: **The «Macaroons of Cormery» which are the oldest-known macaroons in France.** Many legends have been written about the origin of the creation of this biscuit, because of its round shape and the hole in the centre. **Pascal Debaud will tell you the fascinating story of this delicacy which is now being exported as far as Japan.** Demonstration and tasting.



REVIVAL OF THE VINEYARDS AT THE DOMAINE DE LA GRENAIÈRE

Experience Montrésor's unique vineyard, the Domaine de la Grenadière. The vines had disappeared from Montrésor's landscape but they are now reappearing in the village. Replanted in 2014, they produced their first harvest in 2018. The winegrower and maker, Thierry Touratier, will share his adventure with you: the revival of Montrésor wine. At the vineyard you will be able **to taste his first wine production accompanied by other local specialities.** Tour of about 1.5 km.



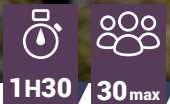
GOURMET WINE TASTING

Alison Clément from the Domaine des Folies Douces offers a wine tasting experience **in the historic setting of the Chartreuse du Liget or the Corroirie château-monastery.** This young winegrower, whose vineyard is located close to the monuments, in the former Clos des Chartreux, will introduce 4 to 6 of her organic wines.



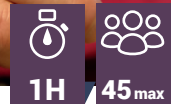
CADEAU ET CHOCOLAT CHOCOLATE SHOP IN MANTHELAN (17 KM FROM LOCHES)

From the origins of chocolate to his work in the laboratory at Manthehan, **Frédéric Renard, master chocolatier,** shares his knowledge about this essential product, accompanied by tastings and live demonstrations.



VISIT A GOAT FARM IN BEAULIEU LÈS LOCHES

Discover a farm specializing in **goat breeding.** **A tasting of goat's cheese,** including the famous Sainte-Maure-de-Touraine, will follow the guided tour.



VISIT - HALLARD CONFECTIONERY

Jérémy Couton, an artisan confectioner, welcomes you and **reveals his secrets.** A demonstration of how to make lollipops and berlingots followed by a tasting session awaits you.



SECRETS AND LEGENDS IN THE NATIONAL FOREST OF LOCHES (GUIDED VISIT)

Considered to be one of the most beautiful oak forests in France, **the National Forest of Loches** has many surprises in store for you. Your ONF (National Forestry Office) guide will not only explain the way this area is managed, but also share stories and legends that make this forest unique..

FOR VISITS IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AN INTERPRETER WILL BE NEEDED

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY: PLEASE CONTACT US



NATURE IN THE SOUTH TOURAINE

In addition to its rich architectural heritage, **nature is also in abundance in the South Touraine**. The perfect 'playground' for both **ramblers and cyclists** to explore. From the majestic alleys of the national forest of Loches to **classified and protected sites** (Espaces Naturels Sensibles), and not forgetting numerous wetlands with their dense fauna, a wealth of nature awaits you.

Whatever the season, on your own or with a professional guide, come and discover the naturel beauty of the South Touraine





NOT TO BE MISSED

between Castle and gardens

from*
€400

DAY 1

LUNCH in Loches in a traditional restaurant.

AFTERNOON



GUIDED TOUR OF THE TOWN OF LOCHES : «A THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY».

Loches, an **exceptional historical town**, offers you a **life-size panorama** through the eras from the **Middle Ages to the Renaissance**. Commented by your personal tour guide, the visit takes you beneath the historic gateways of this **Renaissance town**, and through **narrow cobbled streets** up to the ridge of the **medieval fortress**.

HOTEL

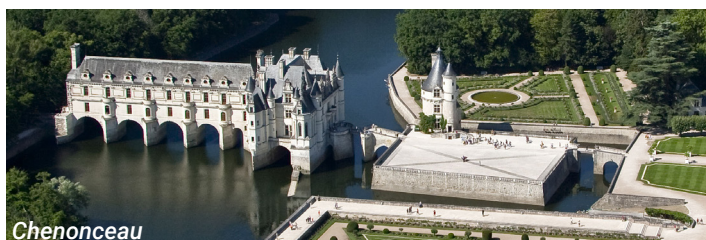
Check-in late afternoon to a **3*** hotel in Loches** - dinner (starter/main course/dessert) and overnight stay

DAY 2

MORNING



SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF CHÂTEAU DE CHENONCEAU
5 prominent **female figures** have influenced the estate, including **Diane de Poitiers** and **Catherine de Médicis**. Discover the most elegant and feminine of all the **Loire châteaux**.



Chenonceau

AFTERNOON



CHÉDIGNY

Accompanied by Alain Biard, a passionate botanist, you will **discover the first village in France to have been awarded the «Jardin Remarquable»** ("Remarkable Garden") label by the Ministry of Culture. During a picturesque stroll, you will learn about the **history of the village** and appreciate the **expert advice shared by the gardener**. An absolute highlight for garden lovers: **1000 rose bushes and more than 4000 perennials** are planted throughout the village. **Interpreter needed**.



SOAK UP THE STUNNING VIEW OF THE PRIEST'S GARDEN WHILE ENJOYING A SNACK

DAY 3

MORNING



1H30

MONTRESOR

« PLUS BEAUX VILLAGE DE FRANCE »

Discover the legend of Montrésor, the history of the village and the prominent figures who have influenced the area. Your experience will be enhanced by visiting the **Halle des Cardeux** (former wool market) and its **Gemmail Museum**, the Chancellor's residence, Branicki Street with its **old houses** and the **Saint-Jean-Baptiste collegiate church**. Finish your visit with a stroll along the **Balcons de l'Indrois** where you will enjoy a **panoramic view of the castle**.



Montrésor

LUNCH in Loches in a traditional restaurant.

AFTERNOON



1H

MONTRESOR CASTLE

An important landmark of this characterful village is the **castle of Montrésor**, with its double facets: the imposing remains of the **11th century fortress** founded by Fulk III Nerra and the **Renaissance castle** itself. This privately owned and inhabited castle, surrounded by a **romantic park**, houses an **exceptional collection of early Italian paintings**. It has been **owned by a Polish family since 1849** and its interior is an authentic testimony to the **French Second Empire** enhanced by a Slavic influence.



1H30

WINE TASTING AT LA GRENADIÈRE

Experience Montrésor's unique vineyard, the **Domaine de la Grenadière**. The vines had disappeared from Montrésor's landscape but they are now reappearing in the village. The **winegrower and maker**, Thierry Touratier, will share his adventure with you: **the revival of Montrésor wine**. At the vineyard you will be able to **taste the wine production** accompanied by **other local specialties**. *Interpreter needed.*

DAY 4

MORNING



1H30

SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF CLOS LUCÉ IN AMBOISE

Discover **Leonardo da Vinci's final home** and experience the private life of **one of the world's greatest geniuses**. Visit his private quarters and wander through the extensive gardens, a unique open-air museum.

LUNCH at Clos Lucé in the Renaissance restaurant, « **Auberge du Prieuré** ».



Clos Lucé

AFTERNOON



1H30

SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF THE CHÂTEAU D'AMBOISE

This palace was **home to the kings of France during the Renaissance** and is the **final resting place of Leonardo da Vinci**. The Royal Château of Amboise is an **architectural masterpiece** suspended between heaven and the Loire.



Amboise castle

***PRICE:**

**€400 based on double room
in low season**



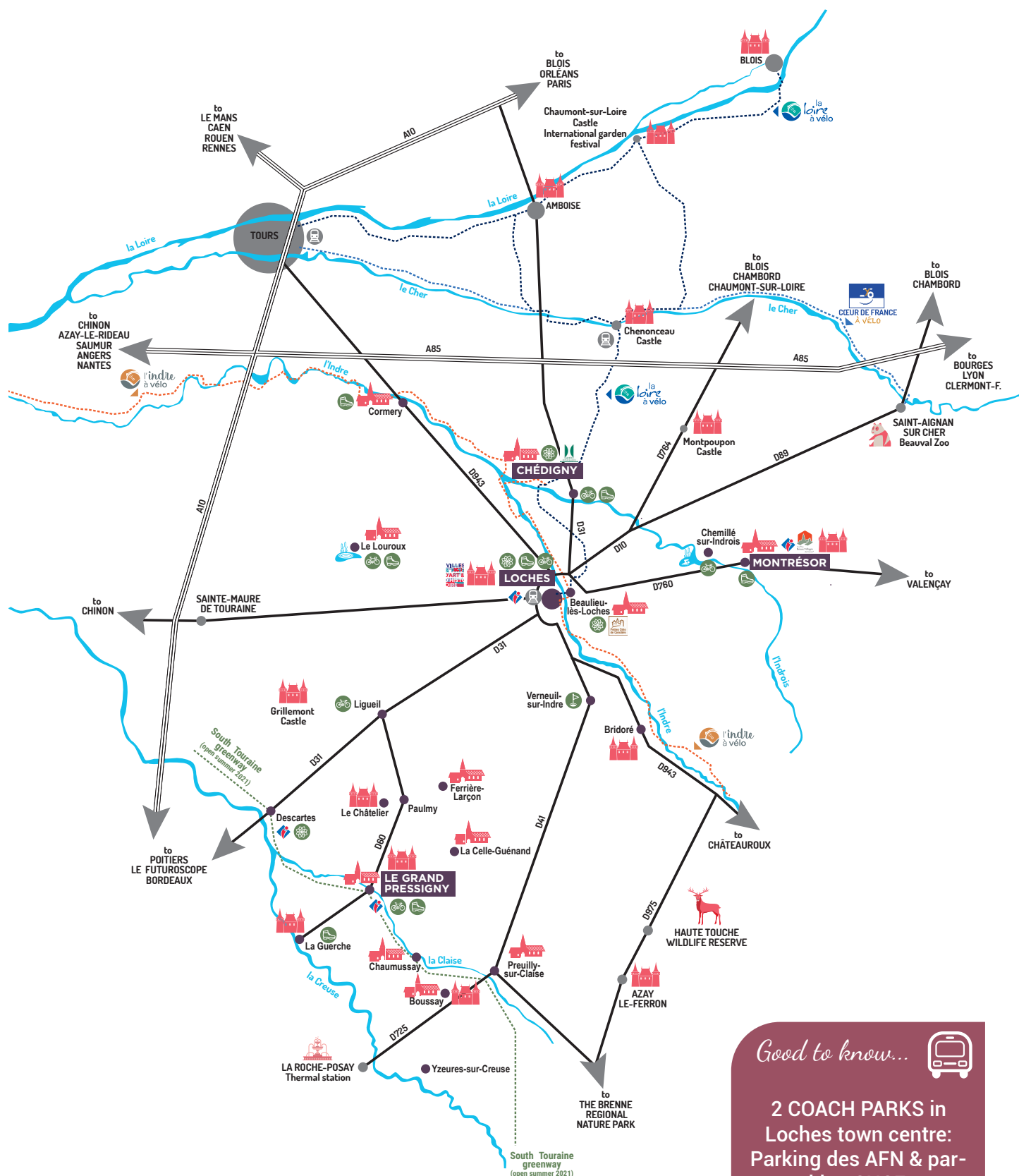
1- (page 5) Histopad: this concept, allows the visitor to be immersed in the heart of history. The visitor scans a terminal equipped with a visual recognition system and then simply turns the tablet in different directions to discover the location reconstructed in 360°. An icon, resembling a magnifying glass, may appear on the screen to highlight various points of interest, accompanied by an explanatory text. Available in FR + EN + DE + NL + ES + IT + RU

2- (page 7) Gemmail: it is an art form that was conceived in the 20th century, close to stained glass, using the superimposition of glass fragments where the shape is determined by the artist's hand, and where, thanks to the transparency, the light penetrates the colour.

3- (page 8) You may visit the village free of charge at any time, the flowering period is from the end of April to the beginning of October.

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Léonard De Serre - Loïc Lagarde - Marine Desfontaine & Olivier Châble - OT Loches TCL

Secret treasures of the Loire Valley



Good to know...



2 COACH PARKS in
Loches town centre:
Parking des AFN & parking SNCF.

For coach hire in our area,
please ask our
advisers for information.



Paris
1H45



Tours
50min

Châteauroux
1H

Poitiers
1H30

Le Mans
2H

Orléans
2H

Nantes
2H30

Paris
3H

Bordeaux
3H30



Loches[®]
Touraine - Châteaux de la Loire



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#artdeflaner

