



GARDEN VISITS

Enchanting tales...



The people of Auvergne were looking to compete with nature itself when it comes to living surrounded by imposing landscapes. In the towns, on the hillsides, and beside the châteaux, they have sunk their hands into the soil and let their imaginations run free; and these imaginations have proved fertile. Rose and apple tree collectors, essential oil and dried flower producers, landscape gardeners, artists and others **have shaped every park, kitchen garden and mediaeval garden with a unique history**. Every visit is also an encounter. Just walk through that gate.

Jardin de Bassignac



An extraordinary garden, Cantal.

Château de Villemont



French-style garden, Puy-de-Dôme.

Arboretum de Balaine



Botanical and flower garden, Villeneuve sur Allier.



Taking you by surprise!
Bassignac (Cantal)



Strolls and relaxation at the
Balaine (Allier) arboretum

TEXTILE WHIMS

Michèle Dalon, weaver, artist and gardener, tends to combine her activities together. She collects textile and dyeing plants. In her **Jardin Délirant (exuberant garden)** in Bassignac (Cantal), she also sows her own fancies, "strange and useless things": woollen flowers, dressed up trees, and colourful hallucinations appear according to their creator's whims. Open all year round; textile design lessons take place regularly.

PIONEERING

Different garden, different story. In 1804, **Aglaë Andanson**, daughter of the first naturalist to explore Senegal, set up home in the little Château de Balaine, which she had received as a wedding gift. She restored areas of wasteland, planted a kitchen garden, then spent years creating a park, acclimatising plants and experimenting with horticultural techniques. She founded what is today France's oldest privately-owned botanical park: the **Balaine Arboretum**, in northern Allier.

"Pailhats", an old Auvergne method of growing plants on terraces supported by low, dry stone walls, come back to life in Courgoul"

REBORN

In northern Limagne, a Renaissance château has been reborn from its ashes. Following a fire and forty years of neglect, **Villemont** has been saved from destruction by a dozen company heads, who established a foundation to restore it, which was a unique operation of its kind. Its restoration means that this French-style park is now open to visitors. On the border of the Cézallier lies the Château de **Courgoul**, a municipality of 74 residents, nestled in a depression formed by a steep gorge. An association has breathed life back in to the pailhats which used to rise in terraces on the south-facing slopes. Volunteers and employees cleared five hectares of grounds and replanted fruit trees, vines and herbs. This association now sells its jams, hosts events in summer, and opens the gardens to the public throughout the year.

FIND OUT MORE

- 147 gardens to visit in Auvergne
- 9 remarkable gardens

Full list at:



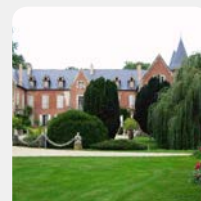
Gardens of the
Massif Central



Parks and gardens
in Auvergne



Le Jardin Délirant
in Bassignac



Balaine
Arboretum