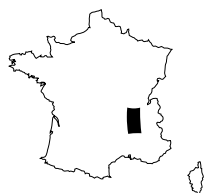


# Lyon & the Rhône Valley



Gourmets, eat your heart out: Lyon is the gastronomic capital of France, with lavish piggy-driven dishes, delicacies to savour, and a bounty of eating spaces. Be it an old-fashioned bistro with checked tablecloths and slipper-shuffling grandma or smart, minimalist space with state-of-the-art furnishings and chic city-slicker crowd, this French cuisine king thrills. Throw two mighty rivers, majestic Roman amphitheatres and elegant Renaissance architecture into the pot and the city will have you captivated. Most travellers turn up here unexpectedly (for business or en route south from Paris), are pleasantly surprised and instantly yearn to return.

Plumb at the crossroads to central Europe and the Atlantic, the Rhineland and the Mediterranean, the Rhône Valley has been the envy of many a soul for centuries. Ensnaring the Rhône River on its 813km-long journey from Lake Geneva to the Mediterranean, the valley forges downstream from Lyon past Gallo-Roman ruins at Vienne (of jazz festival fame), nougat-making workshops in Montélimar and an extraordinary wealth of centuries-old Côtes du Rhône vineyards from which some of France's most respected reds are born.

Design-driven St-Étienne with its no-frills airport is a handy gateway to this region. For action-seeking souls, the green 'n' wild Gorges de l'Ardèche, which bring the River Ardèche tumbling to the gates of Provence and Languedoc, promise adventure by the kayakload.

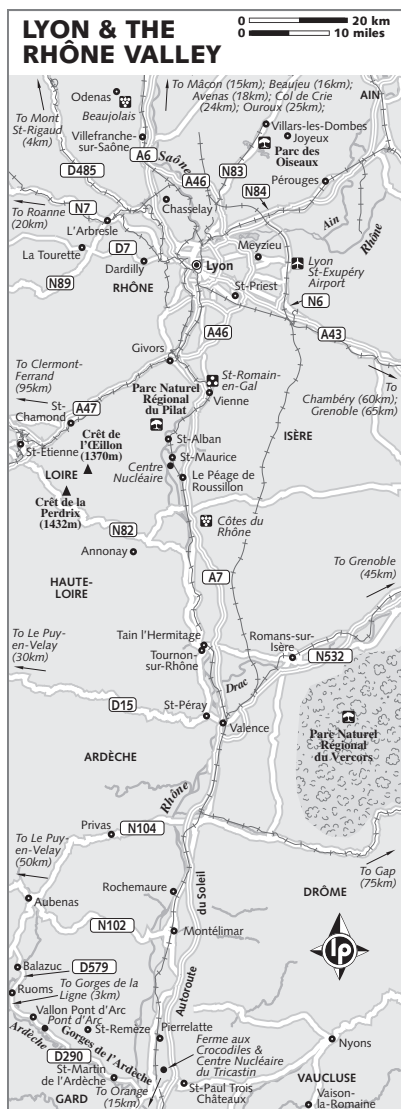
## HIGHLIGHTS

- Breakfast on oysters and a glass of crisp white Côtes du Rhône on a pavement terrace in village-like **Croix Rousse** (p503)
- Stroll the city: gorge on medieval and Renaissance architecture under the beady eyes of gargoyles and other cheeky stone characters in **Vieux Lyon** (p501) and cool down afterwards in Daniel Buren's polka-dot fountains on the **presqu'île** (p502)
- Enjoy twinkling views of **Fourvière** (p502) lit at night; next day hike (or ride the funicular) up the 'hill of prayer' for a stunning panorama of the city and its two rivers
- Feast on trotters, ears and other piggy parts in a traditional Lyonnais **bouchon** (p508)
- Learn the secret of French cuisine with France's only female three-starred Michelin chef at Anne-Sophie Pic's state-of-the-art cookery school in **Valence** (p519)
- Revel in the romance of a bygone era: pedal from A to B, eat frogs' legs and sleep in a 1920s *roulotte* (traditional caravan) in wine-rich **Beaujolais** (p517);
- Overdose on outdoor action in the racy white waters of the **Gorges de l'Ardèche** (p520)



■ POPULATION: 5,646,000

■ AREA: 43,698 SQ KM



## LYON

pop 467,400

Commercial, industrial and banking powerhouse for the past 500 years, grand old Lyon (Lyons in English) is the focal point of a prosperous urban area of almost two million people, France's second-largest conurbation where international police agency Interpol has

been headquartered since 1989. Outstanding art museums, a dynamic cultural life, a busy clubbing and drinking scene, not to mention a thriving university and fantastic shopping, lend the city a distinctly sophisticated air.

Green parks, riverside paths, a wonderfully successful city bicycle scheme and a historical old town sufficiently precious to be protected as a Unesco World Heritage Site ensure a bounty of discoveries – on foot or bicycle – for the first-time visitor, while adventurous gourmets (particularly those with a penchant for piggie parts) can indulge their wildest gastronomic fantasies in a dining scene that is chic, sharp and savvy.

## History

In 43 BC the Roman military colony of Lugdunum (Lyon) was founded. It served as the capital of the Roman territories known as the Three Gauls under Augustus, but had to wait until the 15th century for fame and fortune to strike: with the arrival of moveable type in 1473, Lyon became one of Europe's foremost publishing centres, with several hundred resident printers contributing to the city's extraordinary prosperity. By the mid-18th century, the city's influential silk weavers – 40% of Lyon's total workforce – transformed what had already been a textiles centre since the 15th century into the silk-weaving capital of Europe.

A century on, Lyon had tripled in size, boasting a population of 340,000 people and 100,000 weaving looms (40,000 of which were in the hilltop neighbourhood of Croix Rouse). A weaver spent 14 to 20 hours a day hunched over his loom breathing in silk dust, two-thirds were illiterate and everyone was paid a pittance. Strikes in 1830–31 and 1834 only resulted in the death of several hundred weavers.

In 1870 the Lumière family moved to Lyon, and sons Louis and Auguste shot the first moving picture – of workers exiting their father's photographic factory – in 1895. Cinema's birth was an instant winner.

During WWII some 4000 people (including Resistance leader Jean Moulin) were killed and 7500 others deported to Nazi death camps under Gestapo chief Klaus Barbie (1913–91), the 'butcher of Lyon'. Nazi rule ended in September 1944, when the retreating Germans blew up all but two of Lyon's 28 bridges. A Lyon court sentenced Barbie to death in absentia in 1952





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and again in 1954, but it was not until 1987, following his extradition from Bolivia (where he had settled after WWII), that he was tried in person in Lyon for crimes against humanity and sentenced to life imprisonment. The 72-year-old died in prison three years later.

## Orientation

The city centre is on the Presqu'île, a 500m- to 800m-wide peninsula bounded by the rivers Rhône and Saône. Public squares (north to south) include place de la Croix Rousse in the quarter of Croix Rousse; place Louis Pradel, just north of the opera house; place des

Terreaux; place de la République, attached to pedestrianised rue de la République; vast place Bellecour; and place Carnot, just north of Gare de Perrache, one of Lyon's two main-line train stations. The other station, Gare de la Part-Dieu, is 1.5km east of the Rhône in Part-Dieu, a commercial shopping centre dominated by a pencil-shaped tower nicknamed *le crayon*.

On the Saône's western bank, Vieux Lyon (Old Lyon) is sandwiched between the river and the hilltop area of Fourvière.

Lyon comprises nine arrondissements (suburbs); the arrondissement number appears after each street address in this chapter.



## Information

### BOOKSHOPS

**Badiane** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 41 18 00; www.badiane.fr; 1 place Bellecour, 2e; 📄 Bellecour; 🕒 2-7pm Mon, 10am-7pm Tue-Sat) Culinary and gastronomic bookshop with astonishing selection of titles on food, wine etc; cooking courses, demonstrations and food and wine tastings.

**Decitre** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 26 68 00 30; 6 place Bellecour, 2e; 📄 Bellecour) English-language fiction, travel guides and maps.

**Raconte-Moi La Terre** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 92 60 22; www.raconte-moi.com; 38 rue Thomassin, 2e; 📄 Cordeliers; 🕒 10am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) Travel bookshop.

### EMERGENCY

**Police Station** (Commissariat de Police) 5 place Sathonay, 1er (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 11 87; 📄 Hôtel de Ville); 47 rue de la Charité, 2e (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 42 26 56; 📄 Perrache or Ampère)

**SOS Médecins** (☎ 04 78 83 51 51) Medical emergencies.

### INTERNET ACCESS

**Planète Net Phone** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 39 72 41; 21 rue Romarin, 1er; 📄 Hôtel de Ville; per hr €2; 🕒 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 2-7pm Sat) Cheap access in a cheap phone centre.

**Raconte-Moi La Terre** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 92 60 22; www.raconte-moi.com; 38 rue Thomassin, 2e; 📄 Cordeliers; per hr €4; 🕒 10am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) Stylish surfing on several terminals in the 1st-floor café of this travel bookshop; free wi-fi for laptop users.

### INTERNET RESOURCES

**www.bullesdegones.com** (in French) Exhaustive guide for families: what to do with the kids (up to 12 years) in and around Lyon.

**www.lyon.fr** Official city website.

**www.lyonblog.fr** One-stop shop (in French) for 300 blogs about Lyon.

**www.lyonresto.com** Restaurant listings (in French) with reviews, videos, menu prices and ratings for food, atmosphere, service, quality and quantity.

**www.petitpaume.com** City guide (in French) written by local university students.

**www.rhonealpes-tourisme.com** Regional tourist information site.

### LAUNDRY

**Cool Waters** (Map pp498-9; rue Terme, 1er; 📄 Hôtel de Ville; 🕒 6am-9pm)

**Laverie de la Fresque** (Map pp498-9; 1 rue de la Martinière, 1er; 📄 Hôtel de Ville; 🕒 6am-10pm)

### MEDICAL SERVICES

**Hôpital Édouard Herriot** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 08 20 08 20 69, 04 72 10 73 11; www.chu-lyon.fr, in French; 5 place d'Arsonval, 3e; 📄 Grange Blanche) Emergency room open 24-7.

**Maisons Médicales de Garde** (☎ 04 72 33 00 33; www.gardemedicale.com, in French; 🕒 8am-midnight Mon-Fri, noon-midnight Sat, 8am-midnight Sun)

**Pharmacie Blanchet** (☎ 04 78 42 12 42; 5 place des Cordeliers, 2e; 📄 Cordeliers; 🕒 24hr)

### MONEY

**AOC Exchange** (Map pp498-9; 20 rue Gasparin, 2e; 📄 Bellecour; 🕒 9.30am-6.30pm Mon-Sat) Currency exchange.

### POST

**Post Office** (Map pp498-9; 10 place Antonin Poncet, 2e; 📄 Bellecour)

### TOURIST INFORMATION

**Tourist Office** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 77 69 69; www.lyon-france.com; place Bellecour, 2e; 📄 Bellecour; 🕒 9am-6pm)

## Sights

### VIEUX LYON

Old Lyon, with its cobblestone streets and **medieval and Renaissance houses** below Fourvière hill, is divided into three quarters: St-Paul (north), St-Jean (middle) and St-Georges (south). Facing the river is the grandiose **Palais de Justice** (Law Courts; Map pp498-9; quai Romain Rolland; 📄 Vieux Lyon).

Lovely old buildings languish on **rue du Bœuf**, **rue St-Jean** and **rue des Trois Maries**. Crane your neck upwards to see gargoyles and other cheeky stone characters carved on window ledges along **rue Juiverie**, home to Lyon's Jewish community in the Middle Ages.

On tourist-busy rue St-Jean, the **Musée des Miniatures et Décors du Cinéma** (☎ 04 72 00 24 77; www.mimilyon.com, in French; 60 rue St-Jean, 5e; 📄 Vieux Lyon; adult/4-15yr €7/5.50; 🕒 10am-6.30pm Tue-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun) provides an unusual insight into the making of movie sets and special effects achieved with the use of miniatures. Fans of *Star Trek*, *Terminator*, *Titanic* or *Perfume* (based on Patrick Süskind's novel) will particularly enjoy it. A couple of ghoulish exhibits (parents, watch out for the black curtain) are not suitable for young children.

Partly Romanesque **Cathédrale St-Jean** (Map pp498-9; place St-Jean, 5e; 📄 Vieux Lyon; 🕒 8am-noon &

### CITY SLICKER

The **Lyon City Card** (1/2/3 days adult €19/29/39, 4-18yr €5/15/20) covers admission to every Lyon museum and the roof of Basilique Notre Dame de Fourvière. It also includes a guided or audioguided city tour organised by the tourist office, a river excursion (April to October) and 10% off Cyclopolitan cycling tours and Le Grand Tour (p506).

The card, sold by the tourist office and some hotels, allows unlimited travel on buses, trams, the funicular and the metro; it also yields 10% discount in selected shops.

2-7.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon & 2-7pm Sat & Sun), seat of Lyon's 133rd bishop, was built between the late 11th and early 16th centuries. The portals of its Flamboyant Gothic facade completed in 1480 are decorated with 280 square stone medallions. Don't miss the enchanting chimes of the **astronomical clock** in the north transept at noon, 2pm, 3pm and 4pm daily.

The **Musée Gadagne** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 42 03 61; www.museegadagne.com, in French; place du Petit Collège, 5e; 🕒 Mieux Lyon; 🕒 11am-6pm Wed-Sun), in a 16th-century mansion built for two rich Florentine bankers, was at the time of writing set to reopen and house a local-history and puppet museum.

### FOURVIÈRE

Over two millennia ago, the Romans built the city of Lugdunum on the slopes of Fourvière. Today, Lyon's 'hill of prayer' – topped by a basilica and the **Tour Métallique** (Map pp498-9), an Eiffel Tower-like structure built in 1893 and used as a TV transmitter – affords spectacular views of the city and its two rivers. Footpaths wind uphill but the funicular departing from place Édouard Commette is the least taxing way up; a return ticket costs €2.20.

Crowning the hill – and proffering a stunning city view from its terrace – is the 66m-long, 19m-wide and 27m-high **Basilique Notre Dame de Fourvière** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 25 86 19; www.fourviere.org; 🕒 7am-7pm), a superb example of the exaggerated enthusiasm for embellishment that dominated French ecclesiastical architecture in the late 19th century. Free organ **concerts** (🕒 6pm 2nd & 4th Sun of the month Sep-Jun) are fabulous for lapping up its magnificence. Otherwise, one-hour **discovery visits** (€2; 🕒 several

times daily Mon-Sat Apr-Jan) take in the main features of the basilica, crypt and so on; **rooftop tours** (adult/under 12yr €5/3; 🕒 2.30pm & 4pm daily Jun-Sep, 2.30pm & 4pm Wed & Sun Apr, May & Oct, 2.30pm & 3.30pm Wed & Sun Nov) climax on the wonderfully stone-sculpted roof. An unparalleled city panorama unfolds from the **Tour de l'Observatoire** (Observatory Tower), should it ever reopen again following much-needed restoration. Between 2008 and 2011, €5 million in all will be ploughed into preserving and restoring the basilica.

Fourvière treasures, including works of sacred art, are showcased in the **Musée d'Art Religieux** (☎ 04 78 25 13 01; 8 place de Fourvière, 5e; 🕒 Mieux Fourvière funicular station; adult/under 26yr €6/4; 🕒 10am-12.30pm & 2-5.30pm daily), host to some worth-the-trip temporary exhibitions alongside its permanent collection.

Artefacts found in the Rhône Valley are displayed in the **Musée de la Civilisation Gallo-Romaine** (Museum of Gallo-Roman Civilisation; Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 38 39 30; www.musees-gallo-romains.com, in French; 17 rue Cléberg, 5e; 🕒 Mieux Fourvière funicular station; adult/18-25yr/under 18yr €3.80/2.30/free, Thu free; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun). Next door the **Théâtre Romain**, built around 15 BC and enlarged in AD 120, sat an audience of 10,000. Romans held poetry readings and musical recitals in the smaller **odéon** next door.

### PRESQU'ÎLE

The centrepiece of Presqu'île's beautiful **place des Terreaux** (🕒 Hôtel de Ville), 1er, is a 19th-century fountain made of 21 tonnes of lead and sculpted by Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi (of Statue of Liberty fame). The four horses pulling the chariot symbolise rivers galloping seawards. The **Hôtel de Ville** (Town Hall; Map pp498-9) fronting the square was built in 1655 but given its present ornate facade in 1702. Best of all is Daniel Buren's polka-dot 'forest' of 69 granite fountains embedded in the ground across much of the square. When the fountains are on, join the kids in a mad dash as the water dances up, down, disappears for a second and gushes back again – fabulous fun on hot summer days.

Nearby, the **Musée des Beaux-Arts** (Museum of Fine Arts; Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 10 17 40; www.mba-lyon.fr; 20 place des Terreaux, 1er; 🕒 Hôtel de Ville; adult/under 18yr €6/free; 🕒 10am-6pm Wed, Thu & Sat-Mon, 10.30am-6pm Fri) showcases France's finest collection of sculptures and paintings, outside Paris, from every period of European art. Its **cloister garden** is a great picnic venue. Pick up stylish, art-

driven jewellery pieces and other souvenirs in its upmarket **Boutique du Musée** (21 rue Paul Chenavard, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ 10am–6pm Tue–Fri, 10am–7pm Sat).

Lyon's neoclassical **opera house** (Map pp498–9; 1 place de la Comédie, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville), built in 1832, is topped with a striking glass-domed roof by top French architect Jean Nouvel. Boarders and bladders buzz around the fountains of **place Louis Pradel**, surveyed by the **Homme de la Liberté** (Man of Freedom) on roller skates, sculpted from scrap metal by Marseille-born César (1921–98).

West of place des Terreaux, well-known Lyonnais peer out from the seven-storey **Fresque des Lyonnais** (Map pp498–9; cnr rue de la Martinière & quai de la Pêcherie, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville), a mural featuring loom inventor Joseph-Marie Jacquard (1752–1834), Renaissance poet Maurice Scève (c 1499–c 1560), superstar chef Paul Bocuse and the yellow-haired Little Prince, created by Lyon-born author Antoine de St-Exupéry (1900–44).

South along the quay, inspired contemporary art installations fill the white space of **La BF15** (☎ 04 78 28 66 63; www.labf15.org; 11 quai de la Pêcherie, 1er; **M** Bellecour; admission free; ☎ 2–7pm Wed–Sat), a cutting-edge riverside art gallery.

The **Musée de l'Imprimerie** (Printing Museum; Map pp498–9; ☎ 04 78 37 65 98; www.imprimerie.lyon.fr, in French; 37 rue de la Poulallerie, 2e; **M** Cordeliers; adult/concession/under 18yr €3.80/2/free; ☎ 9.30am–noon & 2–6pm Wed–Sun) focuses on a technology established in Lyon by the 1480s.

Extraordinary Lyonnais silks are showcased at the **Musée des Tissus** (Textile Museum; Map pp498–9; ☎ 04 78 38 42 00; www.musee-des-tissus.com, in French; 34

rue de la Charité, 2e; **M** Ampère; adult/16–25yr/under 16yr €6/3.50/free; ☎ 10am–5.30pm Tue–Sun). Next door, the **Musée des Arts Décoratifs** (Decorative Arts Museum; Map pp498–9; with Musée des Tissus ticket free; ☎ 10am–noon & 2–5.30pm Tue–Sun) displays 18th-century furniture, tapestries, wallpaper, ceramics and silver.

Laid out in the 17th century, **place Bellecour** (**M** Bellecour) – one of Europe's largest public squares – is pierced by an equestrian **statue of Louis XIV**. From here, pedestrianised **rue Victor Hugo** runs south to place Carnot and Gare de Perrache.

South of Perrache, across Pont de la Mulatière next to the confluence of the Rhône and the Saône (see the boxed text, below), is the well-thought-out **Aquarium du Grand Lyon** (off Map pp498–9; ☎ 04 72 66 65 66; www.aquariumlyon.fr; 7 rue Stéphane Déchant, La Mulatière; adult/under 12yr/under 1m tall €13/9/free; ☎ 11am–7pm Wed–Sun, 11am–7pm daily during school holidays). Bus 15 links it with place Bellecour.

## CROIX ROUSSE

Soulful **Croix Rousse** (Map p504; **M** Croix Rousse), a hilltop quarter with its own village crier (p506), quietly buzzes north up the steep *pentès* (slopes). Famed for its bohemian inhabitants and lush outdoor food market, it is historically known for its silk-weaving tradition, illustrated by the **Mur des Canuts** (off Map p504; cnr bd des Canuts & rue Denfert Rochereau, 4e; **M** Hénon), a fresco painted on the side of an apartment block. Following the introduction of the mechanical Jacquard loom in 1805, Lyonnais *canuts* (silk-weavers) built workshops in this quarter with large windows to let in light and hefty wood-beamed ceilings

## LYON'S MOST EXCITING URBAN SPACE

... is the **Lyon Confluence** (www.lyon-confluence.fr), the spot where the Rhône and the Saône meet south of Gare de Perrache. An industrial wasteland for decades, the riverside site – suddenly prime real estate – is the focus of a €780-million rejuvenation project.

Watch this space for the incredible **Musée des Confluences** (off Map pp498–9; Confluence Museum; www.museedesconfluences.fr), a spacey science-and-humanities museum housed in a futuristic steel-and-glass transparent crystal topped by a floating 'cloud'. Inside, three of the 10 vast exhibition areas will grapple with eternal questions like 'Where do we come from?', 'Where are we going?' and 'Who are we and what are we doing?'. Remaining spaces will hone in on hot issues of the future – cloning, genetically modified organisms, global warming, biotechnology and so on.

Prior to the museum's grand opening in 2010, sneak previews of its future collection can be enjoyed in situ at the **Local d'Information du Musée des Confluences** (☎ 04 78 37 30 00; 86 quai Perrache, 2e; ☎ tram line 1, Montrochet stop; admission free; ☎ 1–6pm Wed–Sat, 10am–noon & 1–6pm Sun).

Two auditoriums, café, restaurant, shop and riverside garden will complete the ambitious cultural ensemble, the creation of world-famous Austria-based architecture agency Coop Himmelbl(l)au.



more than 4m high to accommodate the huge new machines. These workshops are chic loft apartments today.

During the bitter 1830–31 *canut* uprisings, triggered by low pay and dire working conditions, hundreds of weavers were killed. Learn about their labour-intensive life and the evolution of Lyon's silk industry at the **Maison des Canuts** (Map p504; ☎ 04 78 28 62 04; www.maisondescanuts.com; 10–12 rue d'Ivry, 4e; ☺ Croix Rousse; adult/student/under 12yr €6/3/free; ☞ 10am–6.30pm Tue–Sat, guided tours 11am & 3.30pm), a museum with a boutique selling silk; and the riveting **Atelier de Passementerie** (off Map p504; ☎ 04 78 27 17 13; www.soierie-vivante.asso.fr; 21 rue Richan, 4e; adult/student €4/3; ☞ 2–6.30pm Tue, 9am–noon & 2–6.30pm Wed–Sat, guided visits & loom demonstration 2pm & 4pm Tue–Sat), a workshop, run by the Soierie Vivante association, that functioned until 1979.

Silk, stained glass and other visual arts are the soul of the galleries and workshops that come and go the length of **Montée de la Grande Côte** (Map p504; ☺ Croix Rousse), a walkway linking Croix Rousse with place des Terreaux, 1er. Several more tiny galleries stud the eastern end of rue Burdeau, 1er (Map pp498–9; ☺ Croix Paquet).

Hidden Croix Rousse gems include **place Bertone**, a leafy square that doubles as an open-air stage for music, theatre and other ad-hoc street entertainment in summer; and the **Jardin Rosa Mir** (off Map p504; 83 Grande Rue, 4e; ☺ Croix Rousse; ☞ 3–6pm Sat Apr–Nov), a walled garden decorated with thousands upon thousands of seashells.

## RIVE GAUCHE

Lyon's graceful 117-hectare **Parc de la Tête d'Or** (off Map pp498–9; ☎ 04 72 69 47 60; bd des Belges, 6e; ☺ Masséna; ☞ 6am–11pm mid-Apr–mid-Oct, to 9pm mid-Oct–mid-Apr), landscaped in the 1860s, is graced by a lake, botanic garden with greenhouses, rose garden and zoo. In summer rent boats, ride ponies, take a twirl on a fairground ride or watch a puppet show. Buses 41 and 47 link it with metro Part-Dieu.

The park's northern realms sit snug against the brick-and-glass **Cité Internationale**, designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano to host the G7 summit in 1996 and developed a decade later with the Roman-inspired **Salle 3000**, an amphitheatre and congress centre baptised in 2006. Equally cutting edge are the temporary exhibitions and permanent collection of post-1960 art in the **Musée d'Art Contemporain** (Museum of Contemporary Art; off Map pp498–9; ☎ 04 72 69 17 17; www.moca-lyon.org; 81 quai Charles de Gaulle, 6e; adult/18–25yr/under 18yr/family €8/6/free/10; ☞ noon–7pm Wed–Fri, 10am–7pm Sat & Sun).

The WWII headquarters of Gestapo commander Klaus Barbie (p497) from 1942 to 1944 houses the evocative **Centre d'Histoire de la Résistance et de la Déportation** (CHR; Map pp498–9; ☎ 04 78 72 23 11; 14 av Berthelot, 7e; ☺ Perrache or Jean Macé; adult/student/under 18yr €4/2/free; ☞ 9am–noon & 2–5.30pm Wed–Fri, 9am–6pm Sat & Sun). Multimedia exhibits present the history of Nazi atrocities and the heroism of French Resistance fighters.

Cinema's glorious beginnings are showcased at the **Musée Lumière** (off Map pp498–9; ☎ 04 78 78 18 95; www.institut-lumiere.org; 25 rue du Premier Film, 8e; ☺ Monplaisir-Lumière; adult/under 18yr €6/5, audioguide €3; ☞ 11am–6.30pm Tue–Sun), 3km southeast of place Bellecour along cours Gambetta. This film-buff must is inside the art-nouveau home of Antoine Lumière who moved to Lyon with sons Auguste and Louis in 1870 and shot the first reels of the world's first motion picture, *La Sortie des Usines Lumières* (Exit of the Lumières Factories) in one of their factories here on 19 March 1895. Today classic films are screened in the **Hangar du Premier Film** (see p514) – the film



## TRABOULES

There's more to parts of Lyon than meets the eye. Beneath the city in Vieux Lyon and Croix Rousse, dark dingy *traboules* (secret passages) wind their way through apartment blocks, under streets and into courtyards. In all, 315 passages link 230 streets and have a combined length of 50km.

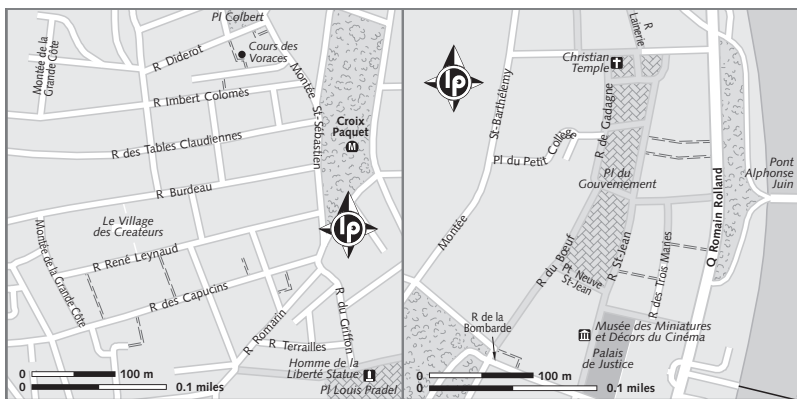
A couple of Vieux Lyon's *traboules* date from Roman times, but most were constructed by *canuts* (silk-weavers) in the 19th century to facilitate the transport of silk in inclement weather. Resistance fighters found them equally handy during WWII.

Genuine *traboules* (derived from the Latin *trans ambulare*, meaning 'to pass through') cut from one street to another, often wending their way up fabulous spiral staircases en route. Passages that fan out into a courtyard or cul-de-sac are not *traboules* but *miraboules*.

Vieux Lyon's most celebrated *traboules* include those linking 27 rue St-Jean with 6 rue des Trois Maries; 54 rue St-Jean with 27 rue du Bœuf (push the intercom button to buzz open the door); 10 quai Romain Rolland with 2 place du Gouvernement; 17 quai Romain Rolland with 9 rue des Trois Maries; and 31 rue du Bœuf with 14 rue de la Bombarde.

Step into Croix Rousse's underworld at 9 place Colbert, crossing *cours des Voraces* – renowned for its monumental staircase that zigzags up seven floors – and emerging at 29 rue Imbert Colomès. Other *traboules* in this fashionable quarter include those linking 1 place Colbert with 10 montée St-Sébastien and 9 place Colbert with 14bis montée St-Sébastien; and the plethora of passages on rue des Capucins: at Nos 3, 6, 13, 22 and 23.

The tourist office distributes a free map of Croix-Rousse and Vieux Lyon marked up with all the *traboules* alongside interesting courtyards, building facades and staircases.



set for *La Sortie des Usines Lumières* – that somehow escaped demolition when the rest of the Lumière factories were bulldozed in the 1970s.

Nearby, the **Mur du Cinéma** (Cinema Wall; off Map pp498-9; cnr *cours Gambetta* & Grande Rue de la Guillotière, 7e; **M** Guillotière), a painted wall, re-caps Lyon's marvellous cinematic story in still-image form.

The **Grande Mosquée de Lyon** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 76 00 23; [www.mosquee-lyon.org](http://www.mosquee-lyon.org); 146 bd Pinel, 8e; **M** Laënnec; ☎ 9am-noon Sat-Thu), 5km east of Presqu'île, fuses traditional North African

architecture and calligraphy with contemporary Western styles.

## NORTHERN SUBURBS

Vintage cars are showcased inside a 15th-century château 11km north of Lyon along the D433. Motoring enthusiasts can stroll over Hitler's Mercedes, Jean-Paul II's Renault Espace, 50-odd motorbikes, bicycles and other historical modes of Lyonnais public transport at the **Musée Henri Malartre** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 22 18 80; [www.musee-malartre.com](http://www.musee-malartre.com), in French; 645 rue du Musée, Rochetaillée-sur-Saône;

adult/under 18yr €5.30/free; ☎ 9am-6pm Tue-Sun Sep-Jun, 10am-7pm Jul & Aug). Take bus 40 or 70 to the Rochetaillée stop.

## Activities

**Rollerbladers** ([www.generationsroller.asso.fr](http://www.generationsroller.asso.fr), in French) hook up on place Bellecour for a mass scooter around town every Friday at 9pm for beginners (12km, 1¼ hours) and 10.30pm for speed fiends (25km, 1½ hours).

Silky smooth **cycling paths** run beside both rivers; see p516 for bike hire.

## Tours

The tourist office has audioguides and runs English-language **walking tours** (adult/8-18yr €10/5) of Vieux Lyon and Croix Rousse. Tiny and/or tired feet might prefer the pedal-powered Presqu'île tours run by **Cyclopolitain** (☎ 04 78 30 35 90; [www.cyclopolitain.com](http://www.cyclopolitain.com), in French; 30-/60-min tour 2 people €18/25; ☎ 10.30am-7pm Mar-Jul & Sep, 3-7pm last 2 weeks Aug, 10.30am-5.30pm Oct-Dec).

With **Le Grand Tour** (☎ 04 78 56 32 39; [www.pariscityrama.com/fr/visiter\\_lyon](http://www.pariscityrama.com/fr/visiter_lyon); adult 1-/2-day ticket €17/20, 4-11yr 1 or 2 days €8; ☎ 10am-6.30pm Apr-Oct, 10.45am-5pm Nov-Mar), passengers can hop on and off the open-top double-decker bus as they please.

From April to October, **Navig'inter** (☎ 04 78 42 96 81; [www.naviginter.fr](http://www.naviginter.fr), in French; 13bis quai Rambaud, 2e; ☎ Bellecour or Vieux Lyon) runs **river excursions** (adult/under 10yr €9/5.50; 1 or 1¼ hr) from its **dock** (Map pp498-9; 3 quai des Célestins, 2e; ☎ Bellecour or Vieux Lyon). Advance bookings are essential for its **lunch and dinner cruises** (Map pp498-9; 23 quai Claude Bernard, 7e; ☎ Ampère or Guillotière; adult/under 10yr from €44/25).

### THE VILLAGE CRIER

Gérald is his name, Gérald Rigaud... And he's an institution in Croix Rousse where he stands up and shouts all about it at the bohemian quarter's very own Speakers' Corner on place de la Croix Rousse each Sunday at 11am. In between political rants about Sarkozy et al, the highly entertaining village crier, an actor by trade, reads out love letters, poems, riddles and other community messages left for him in shop letterboxes or his own electronic mailbox (ministeredesrapportshumains@yahoo.fr). Spot him pedalling around Croix Rousse on his bike, megaphone in hand, flat black hat on head.

### DIP INTO NATURE

Observe the night sky, birdwatch, build a wooden cabin or discover virgin forest with a nature-discovery *sortie* (outing) organised by **Nature et Découvertes** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 38 38 74; 58 rue de la République, 3e; ☎ Bellecour) – the pick of the crop when it comes to green activities in and around the city.

## Festivals & Events

**Les Nuits de Fourvière** (Fourvière Nights; [www.nuitsdefourviere.fr](http://www.nuitsdefourviere.fr), in French) Open-air concerts in Fourvière's Roman amphitheatre from early June to early August.

**Biennale d'Art Contemporain** (Contemporary Art Biennial; [www.biennale-de-lyon.org](http://www.biennale-de-lyon.org)) Art Biennial, from July to September in odd-numbered years.

**Biennale de la Danse** (Dance Biennial; [www.biennale-de-lyon.org](http://www.biennale-de-lyon.org)) Month-long Dance Biennial, held in September in even-numbered years.

**Fête des Lumières** (Festival of Lights) For several days around 8 December, Lyon is lit up by the marking of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Sound-and-light shows are projected onto the city's most important buildings (place des Terreaux is a key venue) and everyone puts candles on the window sills.

## Sleeping

Sleeping is sweet: be it riverside Renaissance mansion or historic college fusing old-fashioned nostalgia with hard-hitting design, there is something to suit every taste and budget. The tourist office–run **reservation office** (☎ 04 72 77 72 50; [resa@lyon-france.com](mailto:resa@lyon-france.com)) has a list; book online at [www.lyon-france.com](http://www.lyon-france.com).

## BUDGET

**Auberge de Jeunesse du Vieux Lyon** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 15 05 50; [lyon@fuj.org](http://lyon@fuj.org); 41-45 montée du Chemin Neuf, 5e; ☎ Vieux Lyon; dm incl breakfast €16.60; ☎ reception 7am-1pm, 2-8pm & 9pm-1am) The main draw of this superbly located hostel above Vieux Lyon is the sweeping city views from its garden and terrace. Dorms sleep two to seven people.

**Hôtel Le Boulevardier** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 48 22; 5 rue de la Fromagerie, 1er; ☎ Hôtel de Ville; s/d/tr €49/51/62, s/d with shared shower €40/42) A jazzy number, Le Boulevardier is an excellent-value hotel above a bistro and jazz club of the same name. Decor is as colourful and eclectic as Cédric, the charismatic Lyonnais behind this alluring act.

**Hôtel Iris** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 39 93 80; hoteliris@freessurf.fr; 36 rue de l'Arbre Sec, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; s/d/tr €50/60/72, s/d with shared bathroom €40/42) The location of this colourful dame in a centuries-old convent couldn't be better: its street brims with hip places to eat and drink. For a taste of authentic Lyonnais architecture, ask for a room reached via the open-air staircase.

**ourpick Hôtel de Paris** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 00 95; www.hoteldeparis-lyon.com; 16 rue de la Platière, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; s/d from €48/62; 🚿 📺) This fantastic-value hotel resides in a 19th-century bourgeois building in central Lyon's shop-packed heart. The funkier rooms sport a retro 1970s decor with chocolate-and-turquoise or candyfloss-pink colour scheme. Check the latest best places to dine with charismatic owner and energy bomb Claude Chevanne.

**Hôtel de la Marne** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 07 46; www.hoteldelamarne.fr; 78 rue de la Charité, 2e; **M** Gare de Perrache; s/d/tr/q €51/57/73/81) A real charmer, this Perrache hotel has 23 rooms, some of which open onto a sky-topped courtyard. Blue carpets, slate-grey paintwork and three white walls are uniform features. But throw in a fuchsia wall and a sweet collection of individual pictures and knick-knacks and you have a delightful place to stay. Yes, the reception desk is a vintage hot-air-balloon basket. Wheelchair access is available.

**Hôtel St-Vincent** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 27 22 56; www.hotel-saintvincent.com, in French; 9 rue Pareille, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; s/d/tr €55/65/75; 🍷 Sep-Jul) High-beamed ceilings, giant-sized windows, a couple of old stone walls and original wooden floors make this three-floor, 32-room hotel a fine place for lapping up authentic Lyonnais atmosphere. Free wi-fi.

## MIDRANGE

**Hôtel des Célestins** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 56 08 98; www.hotelcelestins.com; 4 rue des Archers, 2e; **M** Bellecour; s/d from €62/68; 🍷 reception 7am-10pm; 🚿) A stone's throw from 18th-century Théâtre des Célestins, this cosy hotel is surrounded by designer boutiques. The priciest rooms face the theatre, the cheaper ones a quiet courtyard.

**Hôtel St-Paul** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 13 29; 6 rue Lainerie, 5e; **M** Vieux Lyon; d €66-74, tr €83; 📺) With its classic oyster-grey facade and line-up of large symmetrical windows, this bijou hotel in the old town has enjoyed a renaissance in recent years. Its 20 rooms might be too *bijou* for some tastes, but its value for money is a dead cert. Free wi-fi.

**Hôtel du Simplon** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 41 00; www.hoteldusimplon.com; 11 rue Duhamel, 2e; **M** Perrache; s/d €71/100) With its heart-warming measure of old-fashioned charm and chivalry, the well-run house of Madame Alix Reverchon is enchanting. A loyal clientele seeks out its 37 individual rooms year after year, but why the cherries everywhere? *Reverchon* is a type of cherry.

**Hotelo** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 39 03; www.hotelo-lyon.com; 37 cours de Verdun, 2e; **M** Perrache; s/d/tr from €79/90/97) Our hot choice around Gare de Perrache, this striking newbie with a refreshingly contemporary design is simple, stylish and well thought out. Studios have a kitchenette and one room is perfectly fitted out for disabled travellers. Wheelchair access is available and there's free wi-fi too.

**ourpick Collège Hotel** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 10 05 05; www.college-hotel.com; 5 place St-Paul, 5e; **M** Vieux Lyon; d €110-140; 🚿 📺) What style this college hotel has, although those with a dislike of white might not appreciate it. With reception decked out in warm, cosy ochre tones, the white minimalism of the bedrooms is quite dazzling. Enjoy breakfast on your balcony or in the *salle de classe petit déjeuner* (breakfast classroom), bedecked like a classroom of a yesteryear. A roof-terrace garden tops off this refreshingly different hotel.

## TOP END

**ourpick Le Royal** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 57 31; www.lyonhotelleroyal.com; 20 place Bellecour, 2e; **M** Bellecour; d around €150-250; 🚿 📺) 'Home away from home' is the philosophy of this timeless visiting card, in business since 1895. Recently

## CAMPING INDIGO LYON

Fancy a bijou wooden chalet between trees or a green plot of shade to pitch up on? Then head out of town to **Camping Indigo Lyon** (☎ 04 78 35 64 55; www.camping-indigo.com; Porte de Lyon, Dardilly; tent/adult/2-7yr €9.90/4.40/3, 5-person chalet per night/week from €50/210; 🚿), a campsite founded on mountains of strict environmental respect. Open year-round, it rents five-person chalets and mobile homes that sleep two to six, and sports loads of family fun in the shape of an outdoor pool, kids' paddling pool, playground and so on.

redesigned from top to toe, it envelopes guests in an elegant family-residence environment with stylish *salons* (lounges), an unusual open-plan kitchen and only the best in fabrics and furnishings. Rates vary wildly depending on date and availability.

**Cour des Loges** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 77 44 44; www.courdesloges.com; 2-8 rue du Bœuf, 5e; **M** Vieux Lyon; d/ste from €240/510; ♿ ♻️ 🚻 🚰) Four 14th- to 17th-century houses wrapped around a Vieux Lyon *traboule* (secret passage) make this an exquisite place to stay. Individually designed rooms woo guests with Philippe Stark bathroom fittings and a bounty of antiques and carefully preserved historical features. Italianate loggias and spiral staircases add a twist to public areas.

## Eating

Memorable dining is guaranteed. This is the French gastronomic capital after all, with a flurry of big-name chefs behind a sparkling

restaurant line-up that embraces all genres: be it French, fusion or fast you want, Lyon has it.

Cobbled **rue Mercière**, **rue des Marronniers** and the northern side of **place Antonin Poncet** – all in the 2nd *arrondissement* (metro Bellecour) – are chock-a-block with eating options, pavement terraces overflowing in summer. Near the opera house, **rue Verdi**, 1er, is likewise table-filled.

## BOUCHONS

Watch out for **La Mère Brazier** (Map pp498-9; rue Royale, 1er; **M** Croix Paquet) to reopen near the opera house – at the time of writing, chef Mathieu Vianney was reinventing the mythical 1930s restaurant that earned Lyon its first trio of Michelin stars in 1933.

**Comptoir-Restaurant des Deux Places** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 95 10; 5 place Fernand Rey, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; lunch/dinner menu €15/28; 🍷; lunch & dinner Tue-Sat) Red-and-white checked curtains, an

## GO LOCAL

A *bouchon* might be a 'bottle stopper' or 'traffic jam' elsewhere in France, but in Lyon it's a small, friendly bistro that cooks up traditional city cuisine.

Kick-start what will surely be a memorable gastronomic experience with a *communard*, an aperitif of red Beaujolais wine and *crème de cassis* (blackcurrant liqueur), named after the supporters of the Paris Commune killed in 1871. Blood-red in colour, the mix is considered criminal elsewhere in France. When ordering wine, don't ask for a wine list. Simply order a *pot* – a 46CL glass bottle adorned with an elastic band to prevent wine drips – of local Brouilly, Beaujolais, Côtes du Rhône or Mâcon. Price: €9 to €12.50.

Next comes the *entrée de tablier de sapeur* (literally 'fireman's apron', but actually meaning breaded, fried tripe) or *salade de cervelas* (salad of boiled pork sausage sometimes studded with pistachio nuts or black truffle specks) perhaps. Hearty main dishes to sink meat-mad fangs into include *boudin blanc* (veal sausage), *boudin noir aux pommes* (blood sausage with apples), *quenelles* (a lighter-than-light flour, egg and cream dumpling), *quenelles de brochet* (pike dumplings served in a creamy crayfish sauce), *andouillette* (sausage made from pigs' intestines) and *gras double* (a type of tripe). If none appeal, bite into some *pieds de mouton/veau/couchon* (sheep/calf/piggie trotters) instead.

The cheese course usually comprises a choice of three things: a bowl of *fromage blanc* (a cross between cream cheese and natural yoghurt) with or without thick whipped cream; *cervelle de canut* (literally 'brains of the silk-weaver'), which is *fromage blanc* mixed with chives and garlic that originated in Croix Rousse and accompanied every meal for 19th-century weavers; or a round of local St Marcellin ripened to gooey perfection by the legendary Mère Richard for three generations. Desserts are grandma-style. Think *tarte aux pommes* (apple tart) or *fromage blanc* (again) with a fruit coulis dribbled on top.

Little etiquette is required in *bouchons*. Seldom do you get clean cutlery for each course, and mopping your plate with a chunk of bread is fine. If the tablecloth is paper, that's where the bill will be totted up.

In keeping with tradition, most *bouchons* don't accept diners after 9.30pm and are closed weekends (although this is slowly changing) and the entire month of August. Advance reservations are essential.



**B&Bs**

Slowly but stylishly, *chambres d'hôtes* are making headway in Lyon. A trio of umbrella organisations have B&Bs in and around Lyon on their books, easy to view and bookable via the internet: **B&B Lyon** (☎ 04 72 32 02 74; www.bb-lyon.com); **Chambres Lyon** (☎ 04 72 13 99 35; www.chambreslyon.com) and **Gîtes de France** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 77 17 50; www.gites-de-france-rhone.com; 1 rue Général Plessier, 2e; M Perrache).

The belles of Lyon's B&B ball:

- **Artelit** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 42 84 83; www.dormiralyon.com; 16 rue du Bœuf, 5e; M Vieux Lyon; d incl breakfast €150-250) A reflection of the artist who runs this three-room *chambre d'hôte*, Artelit is a soulful place to sleep with centuries of history behind every last nook and cranny. 'Reception' is the workshop-cum-shop of Lyonnais photographer Frédéric Jean.
- **Lyon Guesthouse** (☎ 04 78 29 62 05, 06 07 37 45 32; www.lyonguesthouse.com; 6 montée Lieutenant Allouche, 1er; M Croix Rousse; s €60-75, d/tr/q €85/105/120) Perched on the *pentès* (slopes) of Croix Rousse, this B&B with prime views of Fourvière is the creation of art collector and gallery owner Françoise Besson (www.francoisebesson.com). Its three rooms are modern and minimalist, breakfast is a wholly organic affair, and the art gallery's collection hangs on the crisp white walls.

old-world interior crammed with antiques and a menu scribed in black ink contribute to the overwhelmingly traditional feel here. Its pavement terrace beneath trees on a quiet village-like square off place Sathonay is particularly idyllic.

**Chez Georges** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 30 46; 8 rue du Gare, 1er; M Hôtel de Ville; lunch menus €18 & €25; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat) One of the most respected *bouchons* with a flurry of guidebook entries to prove it, Chez Georges got its name in 1951. Service is endearingly familiar, despite the vaguely upmarket feel this one has.

**Chez Paul** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 35 83; www.chezpaul.fr; 11 rue Major Martin, 1er; M Hôtel de Ville; menus €19 & €23.50; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri May-Jul, lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat Sep-Apr) Another red-and-white-checked-tablecloth place with modern-day Lyonnais *mère* (mother) – 62-year-old Josiane – in the kitchen, Paul's Place is memorable: the sugar cubes spiked in a fiery pea-green alcohol served as a digestive after coffee are tongue-numbing.

**Café des Fédérations** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 26 00; www.lesfedeslyon.com, in French; 8 rue Major Martin, 1er; M Hôtel de Ville; lunch/dinner menu €19.50/24; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri) B&W photos of old Lyon speckle the wood-panelled walls of the city's best-known *bouchon* where nothing has changed for decades. Feast on *caviar de la Croix Rousse* (lentils dressed in a creamy sauce), followed perhaps by an *andouillette* (sausage made from pigs' intestines) doused in a mustard sauce.

**Chez Hugon** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 10 94; 12 rue Pizay, 1er; M Hôtel de Ville; menu €22; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri) The original 1937 interior is a real blast from the past at Madame Hugon's place.

Two new kids on the *bouchon* block already praised for their traditional but less stomach-heavy, more creative *bouchon* cuisine:

**Magali et Martin** (☎ 04 72 00 88 01; 11 rue Augustins, 1er; M Hôtel de Ville; 2-/3-course menu €17/19; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri) No secrets here: peep into the third of the trio of large glass windows fronting this fantastic eating space to watch the chefs in action.

**Le Bouchon des Filles** (☎ 04 78 30 40 44; www.lebouchondesfilles.com; 20 rue Sergent Blandan, 1er; M Hôtel de Ville; menu €25; ☺ dinner Thu-Sat, lunch Sun) Ode to the legendary culinary *mères* of 1930s Lyon, run by two *filles* (daughters) no less.

**FRENCH**

**Brasserie Léon de Lyon** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 10 11 12; www.leondelyon.com; 1 rue Pléney, 1er; M Hôtel de Ville; 2-/3-course menu du jour €22.80/26, entrée/plat/dessert du jour €7/14.80/5.80; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Sun) In keeping with dining trends, legendary Lyonnais chef Jean-Paul Lacombe has turned his Michelin-starred gastronomic restaurant into a soulful brasserie – same 1904 decor, similar culinary products, more affordable prices.

**Le Canut et Les Gones** (off Map p504; ☎ 04 78 29 17 23; 29 rue de Belfort, 4e; M Croix Rousse; plat du jour €9, lunch/dinner menu €15/35; ☺ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat) The culinary experience at this retro bistro is as promising as its mustard-yellow facade with mint-green window frames suggests. The

crowd is hip and local, and the food a creative mix of local and French.

**Le Potager des Halles** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 00 24 84; www.lepotagerdeshalles.com, in French; 3 rue de la Martinière, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; plat du jour €9, 2-/3-course lunch menu Tue-Fri €13/15, dinner menus €32 & €35; ☺ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat) The decor is nothing to write home about but the cuisine at the Market Hall's Vegetable Garden is an impassioned ode to seasonal produce. Franck Delhoum is the magician in the kitchen.

**Brasserie Georges** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 56 54 54; www.brasseriegeorges.com; 30 cours de Verdun, 2e; **M** Perrache; breakfast €11.50-14, menus €20-25, seafood platters €36.50-66; ☺ 8am-11.15pm Sun-Thu, 8am-12.15am Fri & Sat) In fashion since 1836, the sheer size of this brasserie with 1920s art-deco interior takes your breath away – it can feed 2000 a day! Food is a mix of onion soup, mussels, sauerkraut, seafood and local specialities.

**Thomas** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 56 04 76; www.restaurant-thomas.com; 3 & 6 rue Laurencin, 2e; **M** Ampère; starters/mains €13/19, lunch/dinner menu €17/39; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri) Only the best products is a prerequisite for dishes served at this twinset ode to good food: ingenious chef Thomas Ponson gives taste buds the choice between formal dining or more casual fare in his tapas-inspired wine bar, Comptoir Thomas, opposite.

**Le Bec** (☎ 04 78 42 15 00; www.nicolaslebec.com; 14 rue Grolée; menus €68 (lunch only), €118 & €158; ☺ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, closed three weeks in August) Best to experience the extraordinary cuisine of Lyon's hottest chef (opposite) in the company of friends who share the same tastes as you – menus are

only served to an entire table. Given the price tag, clientele is predominantly business.

Also recommended:

**La Cantine des Sales Gosses** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 27 65 81; www.la-cantine-des-sales-gosses.com; 5 rue de la Martinière, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; starters/mains/desserts €9/15/7; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Sun) Near the Martinière indoor food market.

**Bistro Le Casse Museau** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 00 20 52; 2 rue Chavanne, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☺ lunch Tue-Sat, dinner Thu-Sat) Slurp Côtes du Rhône in the company of a retro-clock collection and weathered floor tiles.

## OTHER

**Toutes les Couleurs** (Map p504; ☎ 04 72 00 03 95; 26 rue Imbert Colomès, 1er; **M** Croix-Paquet; plat du jour €9.50, 2-course menus €13 & €16.50, 3-course menus €18, €21 & €25; ☺ lunch Tue-Fri, lunch & dinner Fri & Sat) Vegetarians in France for a while will be in seventh heaven at this 100% authentic *restaurant bio*. Its exclusively vegetarian, season-driven menu includes *végétalien* (no eggs or dairy products) and gluten-free dishes. No cow's milk here – only soya, almond or rice milk.

**Oblik** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 30 14 97; 26 rue Hippolyte Flandrin, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; plat du jour €9.50, menus €12, €15 & €23; ☺ 10am-3pm & 5pm-1am Tue-Fri, 5pm-1am Sat) Red banquette seating, six-odd tables, free wi-fi and an eclectic choice of music make this small space one of Lyon's most atmospheric. Food is unstartling but the vibe is contagious; come 11pm the place morphs into a jam-packed bar.

**Fubuki** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 30 41 48; 17 rue Gentil, 2e; **M** Cordeliers; lunch menus €10.50-15.50, dinner menus €19-46; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Tables are *chauf-*

## COOK YOUR OWN LUNCH *Nicola Williams*

It might sound like a raw deal, but the cooking workshops over lunch at **L'Atelier des Chefs** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 92 46 30; www.atelierdeschefs.com; 8 rue St-Nizier, 2e; **M** Cordeliers; ☺ 11am-7pm Mon-Sat) are inspired – and a snip at €17.

The day I turned up at 1pm, stomach rumbling, eager beaver to don the white apron, I spent no more than 15 minutes chopping and slicing, another 15 stirring over a trendy stainless-steel stove, and a delightful half-hour or so around a shared table with new-found friends and a welcome glass of red, tucking into the result of my endeavours – a chorizo-spiced chicken fillet served on a bed of baby spinach and *poivronnade* (red peppers, leeks and tomato fried with garlic, thyme and bay leaf).

Not only that, chef Stéphane Ranieri had already made dessert for us, the coffee came with a startlingly green kiwi-and-lime macaroon and I left, head reeling with the dozens of tips and tricks cleverly peppered throughout the one-hour session: adding salt to the leeks at the start of frying prevents them burning; peeled peppers cook quicker and are easier to digest; to ensure a moist chicken, pan-fry it skin-down fast until it sticks then flip it over, pour in boiling water and let it gently simmer... Food for thought indeed.

### CHALK & CHEESE: JOSIANE CHANAUX & NICOLAS LE BEC

From slurping oysters at the market to salivating for hours over a 12-course feast too pretty to eat, dining in Lyon satisfies. So is this, the city with a riot of piggy-driven dishes in its soul and a backbone of offal and other ghoulish parts, France's gastronomic capital?

In the kitchen at Chez Paul (p509) Josiane Chanaux, a 62-year-old buxomly figure with red nail varnish and large jewellery, cracks the whip with the same formidable ease as Mère Brazier, Mère Filloux and other 'mothers' (who made Lyon's culinary reputation) did in the 1930s. Formal training? No way! This is a woman who has spent a lifetime behind a gas stove and knows a thing or two about making tongues wag with her staunchly traditional Lyonnais cooking.

'I've been in the restaurant business for almost 45 years, starting as a waitress and gradually moving into the kitchen. My favourite time of day – 7am, before anyone else arrives, when it's just me and my saucapans', says Josiane, whose typical morning might entail boiling up *tête de veau* (calf's head to you and me), preparing a wintertime *blanquette de veau* (mushroom, cream and white-wine veal stew) or a summertime tomato-and-olive equivalent.

'The spirit here is *familiale*. People come to eat as if at home or at their parents' house', she adds. 'Chez Paul's *tablier de sapeur* is particularly popular. Most *bouchons* serve it with a thick sauce similar to tartare sauce; I make it with a creamier sauce.'

Then there's Nicolas Le Bec (see Le Bec opposite), a high-flying, travel-mad 30-something who wouldn't be seen dead with an *andouillette* (sausage made from pigs' intestines) in his oven or wearing whites (this highly stylised chef wears black). His self-named Lyon restaurant with magic mirror in one room (allowing privileged diners to peep in his kitchen) scooped a Michelin star within months of it opening, and the much-vaunted dynamo is now all out to democratise fine dining with his lounge bar and laid-back eating space Espace Le Bec at St-Exupéry airport that opened in mid-2008, and a ground-breaking drinking and dining venue planned for the Confluence (p503) in 2009.

'My cuisine is a product-driven cuisine. It changes every month and is seasonal – it is what nature proposes' – says Nicolas Le Bec, charmingly boy-next-door, astonishingly humble and nowhere near as suave as most photos of him in the media suggest. Friends lucky enough to spend a couple of hours with him in a **cooking workshop** ([www.espace-lebec.com](http://www.espace-lebec.com); €60) rave about his infectious passion, energy and muck-in attitude in the kitchen.

'Travel is my biggest inspiration. Discovering the market, the market cuisine, the street cuisine of a place – that's the interesting part', says Le Bec, who isn't known for one signature dish. Rather, he constantly plays with different combinations, playing around with green asparagus in spring, tomatoes in summer, mushrooms and anything else autumn cooks up in October and so on.

Josiane Chanaux, aka Chez Paul, and Nicolas Le Bec, the chalk and cheese of Lyon's culinary scene: lunch at both to understand the full force of this city's extra-special gastronomy.

*fantes* (heated) – literally – at this highly rated Japanese restaurant where traditionally dressed chefs armed with very big knives chop and cook a sizzling fiesta of grilled and raw fish before your eyes. Book ahead to snag a hot seat.

**Yinital G&G** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 42 14 14; 14 rue Palais Grillet, 2e; 🍴 Cordeliers; menus €19.50, €27 & €32; ☞ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat Sep-Jul) Taste buds are kept on the move at this ode to design – a minimalist space with low-hanging table lights, an open kitchen and a world cuisine that throws a pinch of European in the wok alongside Asian. Good vegetarian choice.

**L'Ouest** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 37 64 64 64; [www.bocuse.com](http://www.bocuse.com); 1 quai du Commerce, 9e; 🍴 Gare de Vaise;

starters/mains around €15/20; ☞ lunch & dinner) With the emphasis at The West being island (any island) cuisine, chefs trained by legendary Lyon chef Paul Bocuse cook up everything from king-prawn spring rolls with fresh mint and saffron-spiced crab soup to wok-fried Asian cod and straightforward roast fish in a state-of-the-art open kitchen. Decor is minimalist, avant-garde and includes a vast wood decking space outside overlooking the Saône.

Also recommended:

**Azur Afghan** (Map p504; ☎ 04 72 39 66 19; 6 rue Villeneuve, 4e; 🍴 Croix Rousse; meat/veg menu €18/15; ☞ 8-11pm Tue-Sat) Afghan hidey-hole with floor cushions, low tables and authentic Afghan food.

## WANT TO DO LUNCH OR BRUNCH?

Head to the indoor market, Les Halles de Lyon (opposite), for a sit-down lunch of local produce at one of the many stalls, lip-smacking *coquillages* (shellfish) included, or try one of our top picks:

- **Pain & Cie** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 38 29 84; 13-15 rue des Quatre Chapeaux, 2e; 📍 Bellecour; salads €3.50-14.50; 🕒 7am-10.30pm Mon-Sat, 7am-7pm Sun) Join the crowds for a well-topped *tartine* (thick toast with topping), meal-sized salad or weekend brunch (€9 to €21).
- **Jim-Deli** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 38 31 67; 14 rue des Quatre Chapeaux, 2e; 📍 Bellecour; starters/pasta €8/15; 🕒 lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Half of this Italian duo serves panini to take away; the other half carpaccio, pasta, salads and other Italian dishes emblazoned with an Italian Mama stamp of approval.
- **Neo Le Comptoir** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 30 51 01; www.neolecomptoir.com, in French; 21 rue du Bât d'Argent, 1er; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; salads €8-15; 🕒 11am-3pm or 3.30pm daily Sep-Jun, Mon-Sat Jul & Aug) Pick and mix your own salad and while it's being tossed, decide which room you fancy eating in at this refreshingly different eating space with lime-green-and-pink walls in a bourgeois town house. Weekend brunch.
- **Café 203** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 66 65; 9 rue du Gare, 1er; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; lunch menu €13, plat du jour €9.20; 🕒 7am-2am) One of the city's busiest addresses, Parisian-styled 203 is great for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a drink. It became a national celebrity in 2008 when it flounced France's blanket smoking ban, only to eventually give in several hefty fines and the threat of closure later. Its tables – plastered in images of stubbed-out fags – shout defiance.
- **Giraudet** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 77 98 58; www.giraudet.fr, in French; 2 rue Colonel Chambonnet, 2e; 📍 Bellecour; 🕒 11am-7pm Mon, 9am-7pm Tue-Sat) This sleek *quenelle* (flour, egg and cream dumpings) boutique off place Bellecour has a bar where you can taste both the Lyonnais speciality and unusual homemade soups (eg watercress, curry, broad bean and cumin). It runs another lunch bar at Les Halles de Lyon (opposite).
- **Le Café Épicerie** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 77 44 40; 6 rue du Bœuf, 5e; 📍 Vieux Lyon; 🕒 lunch & dinner Thu-Mon) Ignore the fact that this trendy eating space with pavement seating in Vieux Lyon is attached to one of the city's most romantic hotels; it's one of old Lyon's most stylish lunch spots.
- **Gd Kfé de la Soierie** (Map p504; ☎ 04 78 28 11 26; place des Tapis, 4e; 📍 Croix Rousse; 🕒 7am-1am daily) Plop down on a Fermob chair outside this timeless café on a Sunday morning when the Croix Rousse market is in full swing and you'll love this hilltop quarter forever. Zinc bar is one of many original features at this retro café, perfect for lapping up local atmosphere.

**Le Tiafé** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 27 85 88; 14 rue René Leynaud, 1er; 📍 Croix Paquet; lunch menu €17; 🕒 6pm-1am Tue-Sat) Cameroon cuisine opposite Le Village des Createurs (p515).

**Alyssaar** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 29 57 66; 29 rue du Bât d'Argent, 1er; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; menus €17-26; 🕒 dinner Tue-Sat) Cheap cheerful Syrian.

## CAFÉS

Cafés spill across place des Terreaux and the lower flanks of Vieux Lyon in summer. December to April, Croix Rousse café life revolves around oyster and white-wine breakfasts shucked outdoors on crisp sunny mornings.

**Café Cousu** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 98 83 38; www.café-cousu.com; Passage Thiaffait, 19 rue René Leynaud, 1er; 📍 Croix Paquet; lunch menu €7; 🕒 8am-8pm Tue-Fri, 10am-9pm Sat, 11am-6.30pm Sun) This *bijou* concept café wedged between fashion designers in Le Village des Createurs (p515) entices a hip lunchtime crowd with its wholly home-made soups, tarts and cakes. Weekend brunch €10.

**Grand Café des Négociants** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 42 50 05; 2 place Francisque Regaud, 2e; 📍 Cordeliers; 🕒 7am-1am) Affectionately called Les Négos locally, this café-cum-brasserie with mirror-lined walls, impeccable service and a pavement terrace beneath trees has been a favourite meeting point with Lyonnais since

1864. Look for the gargantuan shocking-pink flower pot out front.

### QUICK EATS

Rue Ste-Marie des Terreaux and rue Ste-Catherine, 1er (metro Hôtel de Ville) are lined with cheap-eat Chinese, Turkish and Indian joints.

**Best Bagels** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 27 65 61; 1 place Tobie Robatel, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; bagel menus €2.90-4.90; ☎ 11.30am-10pm Mon & Tue, 11.30am-11pm Wed-Fri, 9.30am-11pm Sat, 11am-2.30pm Sun) Filled or frosted bagels, coffee to go and other American delights are doled out at this bagel bar and grocery store.

**Matsuri** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 27 83 06; www.matsuri.fr, in French; 7 rue de la Fromagerie, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) For a stylish instant-eat, duck down on a bar stool at this bright sushi bar and pick from the colour-coded plates of raw fish (€3 to €6) that glide past on a conveyor belt.

**Ninkasi Opéra** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 37 74; www.ninkasi.fr, in French; 27 rue de l'Arbre Sec, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; salads €6-9, burgers €5.20; ☎ 10am-1am Mon-Thu, 10am-3am Fri & Sat, 6pm-midnight Sun) If meaty burgers or fish and chips is your cup of tea, this microbrewery grub stop is for you. DJs spin tunes on Saturdays, and film screenings, live bands etc fulfil its Sunday-evening entertainment pledge.

### SELF-CATERING

**Les Halles de Lyon** (off Map pp498-9; 102 cours Lafayette, 3e; **M** Part-Dieu; ☎ 8am-7pm Tue-Sat, 8am-2pm Sun) The city's legendary indoor food market. Buy a round of impossibly runny St Marcellin (€2.60) from legendary cheesemonger Mère Richard or a fat knobbly Jésus de Lyon from pork butcher Collette Sibilia.

Lyon has two **outdoor food markets**: Croix Rousse (Map p504; bd de la Croix Rousse, 4e; **M** Croix Rousse; ☎ Tue-Sun morning); Presqu'île (Map pp498-9; quai St-Antoine, 2e; **M** Bellecour or Cordeliers; ☎ Tue-Sun morning).

### Drinking

The bounty of café terraces on place des Terreaux, 1er (metro Hôtel de Ville) buzz with drinkers all hours. English-style pubs serving €5 pints are clustered on rue Ste-Catherine, 1er, and in Vieux Lyon: firm favourites open daily until 1am include the **Albion** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 33 00; 12 rue Ste-Catherine, 1er), **Smoking Dog** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 38 27; 16 rue Lainerie, 5e) and Irish **St-James** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 36 70; 19 rue St-Jean, 5e).

**Barberousse** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 00 80 53; 18 rue Terrailles, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ 7pm-3am Tue-Sat) The busiest time of day at this student-loved shooter bar, one of a handful of nightlife venues on back-alley rue Terrailles, is between 8pm and 10pm when its flavoured rums are downed *sur le pouce* (on the cheap). Cinnamon, chestnut, violet or rhubarb and caramel...the choice is exotic.

**Ké Pêcherie** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 26 25; quai de la Pêcherie, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ 7am-1.30am) Trendy with an older set, this Saône-side space spans the whole spectrum of drinking: daytime café, late-afternoon lounge bar, post-work aperitif and heaving music venue.

**Andy Walha** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 30 54 48; 29 rue de l'Arbre Sec, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ 11am-3am) Warhol inspires the pop-art decor at this cocktail bar where a beautiful set quaffs champagne, cocktails and elderflower cordial well past midnight. Food too: smoked salmon, foie gras (fattened liver) and gourmet half- or full-sized mixed platters (€14/26).

**Soda Bar** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 06 50 25 55 44; www.soda-bar.fr, in French; 7 rue de la Martinière, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ 6pm-1am Mon-Wed, 6pm-3am Thu & Fri, 8pm-3am Sat) Spirited bar staff juggle bottles between drinks (called 'flair bartending' apparently) at this contemporary cocktail bar with an exotic drinks menu. Step behind the bar Monday night and learn how to shake your own.

**Le Bar** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 31 51 08; 10bis rue de la Bourse, 1er; **M** Cordeliers; ☎ 6pm-midnight) Its name is a pallid reflection of the minimalist steely interior and chic cocktails for which it's known.

**Le Voxx** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 33 87; 1 rue d'Algérie, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ 8am-2am Mon-Sat, 10am-2am Sun) Less fashion-conscious than its cocktail-fuelled contemporaries, the Voxx gets packed with a real mix of people, from student to city slicker.

**Johnny's Kitchen** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 94 13; www.myspace.com/johnnyskitchen; 48 rue St-Georges, 5e; **M** Vieux Lyon; ☎ noon-1am daily) A young carefree crowd spills onto the street at this busy pub in St-Georges where Johnny dishes up Irish and burger-shaped world cuisine, art by local artists, televised sport and great music – bands jam for free in its *cave* (cellar).

**Broc Café** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 40 46 01; 2 place de l'Hôpital, 2e; **M** Bellecour; ☎ 8am-1am Mon-Sat) This laid-back café-bar with a pavement terrace oozes a certain *je ne sais quoi*. It serves



reasonably priced food, its retro interior is decked out à la second-hand ('*broc*' is short for '*brocante*', meaning second-hand or jumble) and its student crowd oozes street cred – a great drinking choice any time.

**La Bistrot fait sa Broc'** (Map pp504; ☎ 04 72 07 93 97; 1-3 rue Dumenge, 4e; 📍 Croix Rousse; 🕒 5pm-1am Mon-Sat) A hip lime-green and candyfloss-pink facade greets punters at this retro wine bar where no two chairs match and the furniture is constantly rearranged. Bands occasionally play here.

**La Fée Verte** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 32 35; www.lafeeverte.fr, in French; 4 rue Pizay, 1er; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; 🕒 9am-2am Mon-Wed, 9am-3am Thu & Fri, 10am-1am Sat & Sun) Hit the Green Fairy (as in the bar, not devilish old absinthe) for a drink in a steely setting, set alive with live bands come dusk. Steel aside, furnishings are a predictable green.

**modernartcafé** (off Map p504; ☎ 04 72 87 06 82; www.modernartcafe.net; 65 bd de la Croix Rousse, 4e; 📍 Croix Rousse; 🕒 11.50am-1.50am Mon-Fri, 3.30pm-2am Sat, 11am-2am Sun, shorter hours in winter & rain) Retro furnishings, changing art on the walls, a pocket-sized beach with deckchairs, free wi-fi, weekend brunch and a clutch of music- and video-driven happenings make Croix Rousse's art bar one cool place to be.

Also worth a visit:

**Comptoir de la Bourse** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 41 71 52; 33 rue de la Bourse, 1er; 📍 Cordeliers; 🕒 7.30am-3.30am Mon-Sat)

**Karma** (☎ 04 78 92 86 20; 37 rue de la Bourse, 1er; 📍 Cordeliers; 🕒 10am-1am Fri, 3pm-1am Sat).

## Entertainment

The scene is dynamic. Listings guides include weekly publication **Lyon Poche** (www.lyonpoche.com, in French; at newsagents €1); free weekly **Le Petit Bulletin** (www.petit-bulletin.fr, in French), available on street corners; and quarterly **Scope** (www.progrescope.com, in French), distributed with local daily **Le Progrès** (www.leprogres.fr, in French).

Tickets are sold at **Fnac Billetterie** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 08 92 68 36 22; www.fnac.com/spectacles; 85 rue de la République, 2e; 📍 Bellecour; 🕒 10am-7pm Mon-Sat). For half-price same-day theatre tickets, try **Le Kiosque Théâtre** (16 place des Terreaux, 1er; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; 🕒 12.30-7.30pm Tue-Sat; commission €3).

## CINEMAS

Nondubbed films are the staple diet of **CNP-Terreaux** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 08 92 68 69 33; 40 rue du Président Édouard Herriot, 1er; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; tickets €7.50).

**Hangar du Premier Film** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 78 18 95; www.institut-lumiere.org; 25 rue du Premier Film, 8e; 📍 Monplaisir Lumière; tickets regular/special screenings €6.80 & €8.30) shows films of all genres and eras. From June to September, the big screen moves outside.

## LIVE MUSIC

**Furib' Arts** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 00 26 41; www.myspace.com/lefuribart; 60 rue St-Georges, 5e; 📍 Vieux Lyon; admission free-€4; 🕒 3pm-1am Tue-Sat) Tune into a local band at this grungy cellar bar loved by a loyal set. The size of the crowd will tell you where the band is from.

**Le Bastringue** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 06 70 15 81 39; http://lebastringue.free.fr, in French; 14 rue Laurencin, 2e; 📍 Ampère; 🕒 8pm-1am Tue-Sat) In a similar vein, this *bar à vin associatif* hosts an eclectic choice of sounds and events – Afro blues, acoustic rock, games evenings etc.

**Hot Club de Lyon** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 39 54 74; www.hotclubjazz.com, in French; 26 rue Lanterne, 1er; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; admission €9-12; 🕒 9pm-1am Tue-Thu, 9.30pm-1am Fri, 4-7pm & 9.30pm-1am Sat Sep-Jun) A nonprofit musical landmark since 1948, Lyon's premier jazz club stages live jazz concerts and a weekly jam session (4pm to 7pm Saturday).

**Ninkasi Gerland** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 76 89 00; www.ninkasi.fr, in French; 267 rue Marcel Mérieux, 7e; 📍 Stade de Gerland; 🕒 10am-1am Mon-Wed, 10am-2am Thu, 10am-3am Fri, 10am-4am Sat, 4pm-midnight Sun) Drink beer, listen to DJ beats and jive to bands with a frenetic crowd at this microbrewery near the stadium.

**Le Transbordeur** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 93 08 33; www.transbordeur.fr, in French; 3 bd de Stalingrad, Villeurbanne) Take bus 59 from metro Part-Dieu to Cité Inter Transbordeur stop, to get to Lyon's prime concert venue. Located in an old industrial building, it is on the European concert-tour circuit and draws international stars.

## NIGHTCLUBS

Track new offerings at www.lyonclubbing.com, www.lyon2night.com and www.night4lyon.com (all in French).

**Le 42** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 35 05; www.le42.com, in French; 42 quai Pierre Scize, 9e; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; 🕒 midnight-4am Wed-Sat) Of the clutch of riverside bars and clubs on quai Pierre Scize, the 42 stands out for its atmospheric setting – an old beamed family home.

**F & G Bar** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 00 99 13; 20 rue Terrailles, 1er; 📍 Hôtel de Ville; admission free-€10; 🕒 4pm-

**GREEN PICK: VEG PATCH ON WHEELS**

Take two food-mad students, a bicycle and the pick of the morning's fresh seasonal market produce and what do you get? **Potager City** ([www.potagercity.fr](http://www.potagercity.fr), in French; 4-5kg fresh fruit or veg €14.90; ☎ 9am-9pm Mon-Fri), a fruit-and-veg-on-wheels service that shops at markets and delivers by bicycle to your home or hotel in central Lyon. *Potager* means 'vegetable patch' or 'garden'.

3am Tue-Sat) F & G – Filles et Garçons (girls and boys) – is a hot bet with Lyon's 20-something crowd that piles in from the surrounding bars on this dead-central party street.

**La Chapelle** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 23 95; 60 montée de Choulans, 5e; **M** Perrache; admission Mon-Thu free, Fri & Sat €10-20; ☎ 6pm-2am Mon-Wed, 6pm-5am Thu-Sat, closed Tue winter) 'Open-minded' and 'a garden of Eden' are labels the Chapel wears. Set in the chapel of a 16th-century château surrounded by a vast green park (to which the drinking 'n' dancing spills), the setting is unique. Decor: art deco and age-old. Music: house and techno.

**La Marquise** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 61 92 92; [www.marquise.net](http://www.marquise.net), in French; 20 quai Victor Augagneur, 3e; **M** Guillotière; admission free-€15; ☎ 7pm or 8pm-11pm Thu, to 5am Fri & Sat) Step aboard this 'good vibes generator', aka a concert club moored on a barge where DJs belt out an ear-popping barrage of electronic, hip hop, breakbeat, boogie, soul and rap.

**Le Cube** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 17 29 84; 115 bd Stalingrad, Villeurbanne; admission free; ☎ 7pm-5am Thu-Sat) The Cube is just that – a glass box where the Lyonnais jet set flock to eat, drink and jive the night away. House reigns at this trend temple.

In the hip Gare de Brotteaux quarter, start at **ApériKlub** (☎ 04 37 24 19 46; 13-14 place Jules Ferry; **M** Brotteaux; ☎ 6.30pm-3am Wed-Fri, 8.30pm-4am Sat) and end at **First Tendency** (☎ 04 37 24 19 46; 13-14 place Jules Ferry; **M** Brotteaux; admission free; ☎ 11pm-5am Thu-Sat). Dress sharp for both.

**SPORT**

When at home, national football champs Olympique Lyonnais (<http://olweb.fr>) kick off at the **Stade de Gerland** (off Map pp498-9; Gerland Stadium; ☎ 04 72 76 01 70; 353 av Jean Jaurès, 7e; **M** Stade de Gerland), a 40,000-seater stadium built in the 1920s. Match tickets are sold online and at

club boutique **Planète OL** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 49 49; cnr rue de Jussieu & rue Grolée, 2e; **M** Cordeliers; ☎ 10am-1.30pm & 2-6pm Tue-Sat).

**THEATRE, DANCE & CLASSICAL MUSIC**

**Opéra de Lyon** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 08 26 30 53 25; [www.opera-lyon.com](http://www.opera-lyon.com), in French; place de la Comédie, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ mid-Sep-early Jul) Opera, ballet and classical concerts.

**Maison de la Danse** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 78 18 18; [www.maisondeladanse.com](http://www.maisondeladanse.com); 8 av Jean Mermoz, 8e) Contemporary dance. Take bus 23, 24 or 25.

**Auditorium de Lyon** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 95 95 95; [www.auditorium-lyon.com](http://www.auditorium-lyon.com), in French; 82 rue de Bonnel, 3e; **M** Part-Dieu; ☎ Sep-Jun) Home to the National Orchestra of Lyon; workshops, jazz and world-music concerts.

**Théâtre Le Guignol de Lyon** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 92 57; [www.guignol-lyon.com](http://www.guignol-lyon.com), in French; 2 rue Louis Carrand, 5e; **M** Vieux Lyon) Traditional puppet theatre.

**Shopping**

On the Presqu'île, mainstream shops line rue de la République and rue Victor Hugo. Upmarket boutiques and big-name design houses stud parallel rue du Président Édouard Herriot, rue de Brest and the trio of streets fanning from place des Jacobins to place Bellecour.

More big-name fashion designers are clustered between art galleries and antique shops in **Quartier Auguste Comte**, an exclusive quarter south of place Bellecour around rue Auguste Comte, 2e.

For cutting-edge work by local, just-known or yet-to-make-their-name designers, browse the fashion boutiques in **Le Village des Createurs** (☎ 04 78 27 37 21; [www.villagedescreateurs.com](http://www.villagedescreateurs.com); Passage Thiaffait, 19 rue René Leynaud, 1er; **M** Croix Paquet; ☎ 2-7pm Wed-Sat).

**Centre Commercial La Part-Dieu** (off Map pp498-9; **M** Part-Dieu; ☎ 9.30am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) is Lyon's vast indoor shopping centre.

For fans of markets there's a riverside **Book Market** (Map pp498-9; quai de la Pêcherie, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ 7am-6pm Sat & Sun) and **Crafts Market** (Map pp498-9; quai de Bondy, 5e; **M** Vieux Lyon; ☎ 9am-noon Sun).

**Getting There & Away****AIR**

Flights to/from European cities land at **Lyon-St-Exupéry Airport** (off Map pp498-9; ☎ 08 26 80 08 26; [www.lyon.aeroport.fr](http://www.lyon.aeroport.fr)), 25km east of the city.

**BUS**

In the Perrache complex, **Eurolines** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 56 95 30), **Intercars** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 20 80) and Spain-oriented **Linebús** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 41 72 27) have offices on the bus-station level of the Centre d'Échange (follow the 'Lignes Internationales' signs).

**CAR & MOTORCYCLE**

Car-rental companies have offices at Gare de la Part-Dieu and Gare de Perrache.

**TRAIN**

Lyon has two main-line train stations: **Gare de la Part-Dieu** (off Map pp498-9; **M** Part-Dieu), 1.5km east of the Rhône, and **Gare de Perrache** (Map pp498-9; **M** Perrache). A handful of local trains stop at **Gare St-Paul** (Map pp498-9; **M** Vieux Lyon) in Vieux Lyon. Buy tickets at all three stations or at the **SNCF Boutique** (Map pp498-9; 2 place Bellecour, 2e; **M** Bellecour; ☎ 9am-6.45pm Mon-Fri, 10am-6.30pm Sat).

Destinations by direct TGV include Paris' Gare de Lyon (€61, two hours, every 30 to 60 minutes), Lille-Europe (€80.20, 3¼ hours, nine daily), Nantes (€89.20, 4½ hours, five daily), Beaune (€21.60, 2¼ hours, up to nine daily), Dijon (€28.50, 2¾ hours, at least 12 daily) and Strasbourg (€52.80, 5¼ hours, five daily).

**Getting Around****TO/FROM THE AIRPORT**

**Satobus** (☎ 04 72 68 72 17; www.satobus.com) links the airport with the centre every 20 minutes between 5am or 6am and midnight. Journey time is 35/45 minutes to Gare de la Part-Dieu/Gare de Perrache and the single/return fare (€8.60/15.20) includes one hour's travel on

public transport; kids aged four to 12 years pay half-fare.

By taxi, the 30-minute trip between the airport and the city centre costs around €40/55 during the day/between 7pm and 7am.

**BICYCLE**

Pick up a pair of red-and-silver wheels at one of 200-odd bike stations dotted around the city and drop them off at another with Lyon's hugely successful **vélo'v** (☎ 08 00 08 35 68; www.velov.grandlyon.com, in French) bike-rental scheme. The first 30 minutes are free and the first/subsequent hours cost €1/2 with a *carte courte durée* (a short-duration card, costing €1 and valid for seven days) and €0.50/1 if you buy a *carte longue durée* (long-duration card, costing €5 and valid for one year). Buy either card with a credit card from machines installed at bike stations: central stations are located in front of the town hall on bd de la Croix Rousse, 4e (Map p504; metro Croix Rousse); beside the opera house (1er; Map pp498-9; metro Hôtel de Ville); and opposite Cathédrale St-Jean on place St-Jean (5e; Map pp498-9; metro Vieux Lyon). A city map showing every station and cycling path is posted at each station.

Less leg work is required with the chauffeur-driven tricycles with soft roofs operated by **Cyclopolitain** (☎ 04 78 30 35 90; www.cyclopolitain.com, in French; ☎ 10.30am-7pm Mar-Jul & Sep, 3-7pm last 2 weeks Aug, 10.30am-5.30pm Oct-Dec). Pick up a *cyclo* at several points around the city, including place Bellecour, or order one by telephone; they cost €2 per person per kilometre.

**WINE TASTING**

Our trio of addresses guarantee to swirl, sniff and sip:

- **Harmonie des Vins** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 98 85 59; 9 rue Neuve, 1er; **M** Hôtel de Ville; ☎ 10am-2am Tue-Sat) Find out all about French wine at this stylish wine bar with old stone walls and contemporary furnishings. Tasty food fills the place at lunchtime.
- **Le Wine Bar d'à Côté** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 28 31 46; www.cave-vin-lyon.com, in French; 7 rue Pléney, 1er; **M** Cordeliers) Furnished like an English gentlemen's club with leather sofa seating, and a library of reference books including every *Michelin Guide Rouge* from 1965 to 1980, this cultured wine bar is a treat. Thematic evenings must be reserved in advance. Look for the Harley parked on the street, in front of its wine shop, La Cave.
- **Saint Just: Caviste pas Pareil** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 06 80 47 21 09; www.myspace.com/lesaintjus; 76 rue St-Georges, 5e; **M** Vieux Lyon; ☎ 5-9pm Thu-Sat) The alternative space for *dégustation* (tasting), this far-from-mainstream hideout runs fun and relaxed wine-tasting workshops (€18) or otherwise invites punters to sit back and indulge in an oenological *grand tour* (€7).

## GAY & LESBIAN LYON

The city has its fair share of venues; free monthly newspaper *Hétéoculte* is a one-stop shop for finding out what's on where, as are the **Forum Gai et Lesbien de Lyon** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 39 97 72; www.fgllyon.org, in French; 17 rue Romarin, 1er; **M** Croix Paquet; ☎ 6-8pm Tue-Fri) and **ARIS** (Accueil Rencontres Informations Service; ☎ 04 78 27 10 10; www.aris-lyon.org, in French; 19 rue des Capucins, 1er; **M** Croix Paquet). Lyon's **Lesbian and Gay Pride** (www.fierte.net, in French) hits the streets each year in June.

Gay bars include **Le Forum** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 19 74; 15 rue des Quatre Chapeaux, 2e; **M** Cordeliers; ☎ 5pm-1am Sun-Thu, 5pm-3am Fri & Sat) and **La Ruche** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 37 42 26; 22 rue Gentil, 2e; **M** Cordeliers; ☎ 5pm-3am). After hours, don your dancing shoes at gay nightclub **Le New York Le Medley** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 78 38 23 96; 19 rue Childebert, 2e; **M** Cordeliers; admission free; ☎ 10pm-5am Wed, 11pm-5am Thu-Sat).

The website [www.lyongay.net](http://www.lyongay.net) is an online gay guide to Lyon.

If you want to pedal yourself but need a spurt of electric power, rent a three- or seven-gear Swiss-made electric bicycle with 2kg battery (good for 30km) from **Zone Cycable** (Map pp498-9; ☎ 04 72 77 83 40; www.zonecycable.com; 3 rue du Vieil Renversé, 5e; **M** Vieux Lyon; ☎ 9.30am-noon & 2-7pm, closed Sun Dec-mid-Apr). Book bikes (€6/20/40 per hour/day/weekend) and guided bike tours (3½ hours, €39) in advance.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Buses, trams, a four-line metro and two funiculars linking Vieux Lyon to Fourvière and St-Just is run by **TCL** (☎ 08 20 42 70 00; www.tcl.fr, in French; 5 rue de la République, 1er; **M** Bellecour; ☎ 7.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon & 1.30-5pm Sat). Public transport runs from around 5am to midnight.

Tickets valid for all forms of public transport cost €1.50/12.50 for one/carnet of 10 and are available from bus and tram drivers and machines at metro entrances. Tickets allowing unlimited travel for two hours/one day cost €2.20/4.40 and a Ticket Liberté Soirée allowing unlimited travel after 7pm is €2.20. Time-stamp tickets on all forms of public transport or risk a €40 fine.

In this chapter, the nearest metro stops for sights, hotels etc are mentioned right after the street address and indicated with a metro icon, **M**.

## TAXI

Taxis hover in front of both train stations, on the place Bellecour end of rue de la Barre (2e), and at the northern end of rue du Président Édouard Herriot (1er).

**Allo Taxi** (☎ 04 78 28 23 23; www.allotaxi.fr, in French)  
**Taxis Lyonnais** (☎ 04 78 26 81 81; www.taxilyonnais.com, in French)

## NORTH & WEST OF LYON

Cosmopolitan Lyon is ensnared by green hills, lakes and vineyards.

### Beaujolais

Hilly Beaujolais, 50km northwest of Lyon is a land of streams, granite peaks (the highest is 1012m Mont St-Rigaud), pastures and forests.

The region is famed for its fruity red wines, especially its 10 premium *crus*, and the Beaujolais *nouveau*, drunk at the tender age of just six weeks. Vineyards stretch south from Mâcon along the right bank of the Saône for some 50km.

At the stroke of midnight on the third Thursday (ie Wednesday night) in November – as soon as French law permits – the *libération* (release) or *mise en perce* (tapping; opening) of the first bottles of cherry-bright Beaujolais *nouveau* is celebrated with much hype and circumstance around France and the world.

In **Beaujeu** (population 1904), 64km northwest of Lyon, there's free Beaujolais *nouveau* for all during the **Sarmentelles de Beaujeu** – one big street party.

For details on wine cellars where you can taste and buy wine, contact Beaujeu's **tourist office** (☎ 04 74 69 22 88; www.aucoeurdubeaujolais.fr; place de l'Église; ☎ 10am-noon & 2.30-6pm Wed-Sun). Ask for its list of the many *chambres d'hôtes* mushrooming in this nature-rich area.

Exploring Beaujolais by **mountain bike** is uplifting, its gentle hills being suitable for the least experienced (or even the laziest) of cyclists. Fifteen routes (230km) are detailed in the topoguide *Le Beaujolais à VTT*. **Walking** the area's many footpaths is equally delightful.

## Pérouges & La Dombes

Film star **Pérouges** (population 850), a yellow-stone medieval village too perfectly restored, lures day trippers like crazy in spring and summer.

They flock there to stroll its cobbled alleys, admire its half-timbered stone houses, ogle at the weary old **liberty tree** planted in 1792 on place de la Halle and wolf down *galettes de Pérouges* (sweet tarts, served warm and crusted with sugar) and cider. Buses link the village, 27km northeast of Lyon on a hill, with Lyon's Gare de Perrache.

Northwest is **La Dombes**, a marshy area whose hundreds of *étangs* (shallow lakes), created from malarial swamps over the past six centuries by farmers, are used as fish ponds and then drained so crops can be grown on the fertile lake bed. The area, famed for its production of frogs' legs, attracts lots of wildlife, particularly waterfowl. Observe local and exotic birds, including dozens of pairs of storks, at the **Parc des Oiseaux** (☎ 04 74 98 05 54; www.parcdesoiseaux.com, in French; adult/6-14yr/under 6yr €13/10/free; ☎ 9am-7pm), a landscaped bird park outside Villars-les-Dombes on the N83.

Lunch local at **La Bicydette Bleue** (☎ 04 74 98 21 48; www.labicydettebleue.fr, in French; menus €11-35; ☎ lunch & dinner Thu-Mon, lunch Tue), a family affair 7.5km southeast of Villars-les-Dombes in Joyeux, renowned for its *grenouilles fraîches en persillade* (fresh frogs' legs in butter and parsley). It also rents out bicycles (bikes/tandems per hour €4.50/8, per half-day €12.50/20) to explore the lakeland. Cyclists can pick from 11 mapped circuits, 12km (one hour) to 59km (four hours) long.

## ST-ÉTIENNE

pop 175,500

No doubt about it: down-to-business St-Étienne, an industrial hub 62km southwest of Lyon, is dreary. But it does have one redeeming feature.

Enter St-Étienne's **Musée d'Art Moderne** (MAM; Modern Art Museum; ☎ 04 77 79 52 52; www.mam-st-etienne.fr, in French; rue Fernand Léger, St-Priest-en-Jarez; adult/12-18yr/under 18yr €4.50/3.70/free, 1st Sun of month free; ☎ 10am-6pm Wed-Mon), with its internationally renowned collection of 20th-century and contemporary paintings, sculptures and photographs. Tram 4 (direction Hôpital Nord) links it with the centre. The cutting-edge **Biennale Internationale Design** (www.citedudesign.com), a design fair hosted every two years in November, is the city's other big drawcard. The next is in 2010.

The **tourist office** (☎ 04 77 49 39 00; www.tourisme-st-etienne.com; 16 av de la Libération; ☎ 9am-1pm & 2-7pm Mon-Sat, 9am-noon Sun Apr-Sep, 9am-1pm & 2-6pm Mon-Sat, 9am-noon Sun Oct-Mar), 1km southwest of the train station, has accommodation details.

**St-Étienne International Airport** (☎ 04 77 55 71 71; www.saint-etienne.aeroport.fr) is 12km northwest of the city. Hourly trains link St-Étienne Châteaureux with Lyon (€9.40, 50 minutes).

## DOWNSTREAM ALONG THE RHÔNE

South of Lyon, vineyards meet nuclear powerplants – not the most auspicious juxtaposition, but worth a stop for Lyon-based day trippers or the southbound.

## Vienne

pop 30,600

This one-time Gallo-Roman city, now a disappointingly average town 30km south of Lyon, appeals most to aficionados of the Romans

### GREEN BEAUJOLAIS

Tap into green Beaujolais with **Billebaudez en Beaujolais Vert** (☎ 04 74 04 77 07; www.billebaudez.com, in French), a group formed by local farmers, cheese-makers, oil producers, artists and so on to promote the nature-rich region in which they live and work. Through the organisation tourists can, among other things, visit local farms, fish, horse-ride, paint, participate in a fruit harvest, learn about bee-keeping – or sleep in one of a trio of romantically furnished *roulottes* (traditional gypsy caravans) from the 1920s and 1950s at **Les Roulottes de la Serve** (☎ 04 74 04 76 40; www.lesroulottes.com; La Serve, Ouroux; d incl breakfast €47-60, heating per night €3-5; ☎ Apr-Nov). Run by traditional caravan-maker Pascal and his hippie wife, Pascaline, the B&B is amid fields, while showers, toilets and breakfast (and optional evening meal) are provided in the main farmhouse. Follow the road from Avenas to the Col de Crie for 5km, and at the La Serve crossroads, head to Ouroux; after 100m turn right down the track signposted *chambres d'hôtes en roulottes*.



## NUCLEAR TOURISM

Nuclear tourism enjoys a twist at the **Ferme aux Crocodiles** (☎ 04 75 04 33 73; www.lafermeauxcrocodiles.com, in French; adult/3-12yr €11/7; 🕒 9.30am-7pm Mar-Sep, 9.30am-5pm Oct-Feb), a crocodile farm, 20km south of Montélimar near Pierrelatte, where 350-odd grouchy Nile crocodiles slumber in tropical pools heated by a neighbouring nuclear powerplant.

The **Centre Nucléaire du Tricastin** plant has four 915-megawatt reactors, sufficiently productive to heat 42 hectares of greenhouses and 2400 local homes. Nearby, the **Centre Nucléaire de St-Alban-St-Maurice**, 20km south of Vienne on the Rhône's left bank, has two pressurised water reactors rated at a mighty 1300 megawatts, enough to supply the needs of Lyon 10 times over.

or jazz fans: its two-week **jazz festival** (☎ 08 92 70 20 07; www.jazzavienne.com, in French) in June is famous.

The Corinthian columns of the **Temple d'Auguste et de Livie** (place Charles de Gaulle) in the old town, built around 10 BC to honour Emperor Augustus and his lovely wife Livia, are superb. Across the river in St-Romain-en-Gal, the excavated remains of the Gallo-Roman city form the **Musée Gallo-Romain** (☎ 04 74 53 74 01; www.musees-gallo-romains.com, in French; 2 chemin de la Plaine Gal; adult/18-25yr/under 18yr €3.80/2.30/free, 1st Sun of month free; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun).

Savour great town views from the **Belvédère de Pipet**, a balcony with a 6m-tall statue of the Virgin Mary, immediately above Vienne's fabulous **Théâtre Romain** (☎ 04 74 85 39 23; rue du Cirque; adult/under 18yr €2.30/free, 1st Sun of month free; 🕒 9.30am-1pm & 2-6pm Apr-Aug, 9.30am-1pm & 2-6pm Tue-Sun Sep & Oct, 9.30am-12.30pm & 2-5pm Tue-Sat, 1.30-5.30pm Sun Nov-Mar). The vast Roman amphitheatre, built around AD 40-50, stands majestically on the hillside and is a key jazz-festival venue.

Gen up on guided walks, festivals, markets and other activities at the **tourist office** (☎ 04 74 53 80 30; www.vienne-tourisme.com, in French; 3 cours Brillier; 🕒 9am-noon & 1.30-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-noon & 2-5pm Sun Sep-Jun, 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm Sun Jul & Aug).

## SLEEPING & EATING

**Auberge de Jeunesse** (☎ 04 74 53 21 97; mjcvienne.auberge@laposte.net; 11 quai Riondet; dm €9.30, sheets/breakfast €2.80/3.50; 🕒 reception 5-8pm Mon-Thu mid-Sep-mid-Jun, 5-9pm daily mid-Jun-mid-Sep) Vienne's 54-room riverside hostel is a two-minute strut south of the tourist office. Call ahead to make sure someone is in when you arrive.

**Hôtel de la Pyramide** (☎ 04 74 53 01 96; www.lapyramide.com, in French; 14 bd Fernand-Point; s/d from €190/200; lunch menus €61, dinner menus €106-161; 🍴 restaurant Thu-Mon; 📺 📺 📺) Overlooking La

Pyramide de la Cirque (a 15.5m-tall obelisk that in Roman times pierced the centre of a hippodrome), this apricot-coloured villa with powder-blue shutters is a four-star haven of peace. French chef Patrick Henriroux creates in the kitchen with lobsters, foie gras, black truffles, scallops and other seasonal gourmet treats.

Run-of-the-mill eating options abound along cours Romestang and cours Brillier.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

Trains link Vienne with Lyon (€5.90, 20 to 32 minutes, at least hourly), Valence (€15.30, one hour, at least hourly) and Valence TGV station (€11.40, 40 minutes, at least hourly).

## Towards Valence

The **Parc Naturel Régional du Pilat** spills across 650 sq km southwest of Vienne and offers breathtaking panoramas of the Rhône Valley from its highest peaks, Crêt de l'Éillon (1370m) and Crêt de la Perdrix (1432m). The Montgolfier brothers, inventors of the hot-air balloon in 1783, were born and held their first public *montgolfière* (hot-air balloon) demonstration in **Annonay**, on the park's southeastern boundary.

The north section of the Côtes du Rhône wine-growing area stretches from Vienne south to Valence. Two of its most respected appellations, St Joseph and Hermitage, grow around **Tain l'Hermitage** on the Rhône's left bank.

One or two trains an hour link Tain l'Hermitage with Valence (€3.60, 10 minutes) and Lyon (€12.60, 50 minutes).

## Valence

pop 64,900

Several Rhône Valley towns claim to be the gateway to Provence, including Valence, complete with quaint old town and a crunchy,

orange rind-flavoured shortbread shaped like a Vatican Swiss guard to commemorate Pope Pius VI's imprisonment and death in Valence in 1799. Fancy a bite? Ask for *un suisse* in any pâtisserie.

Vieux Valence is crowned by the **Cathédrale St-Apollinaire**, a late-11th-century pilgrimage church (thus the ambulatory), largely destroyed in the Wars of Religion and rebuilt in the 17th century. Allegorical sculpted heads adorn **Maison des Têtes** (57 Grande Rue), a blend of Flamboyant Gothic and Renaissance from 1530. The main commercial streets are rue Émile Augier and Grande Rue. Get the full lowdown from the **tourist office** (☎ 04 75 44 90 40; www.tourisme-valence.com; 1 bd Bancel; ☎ 9.30am-12.30pm & 1.30-6pm Mon-Fri, until 5pm Sat Sep-May, 9.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri Jun-Aug) at the train station.

Anne-Sophie Pic (b 1969), the only female chef in France with three Michelin stars, reigns over Valence gastronomy. Her culinary creations form the backbone of upmarket **Hôtel des Senteurs** (☎ 04 75 44 15 32; www.pic-valence.com; 285 av Victor Hugo; d €280-310, ste €400-880, menus €30-150; ☎ Feb-Dec; ☎ ☎ ☎), a century-old inn run by her family for four generations and oozing style, alongside a couple of stunning restaurants – the bourgeois **Restaurant Pic** (menus €110 & €195) and more affordable **Le 7** (menus €17 & €28). Real fun for lunch are the 1½ hour hands-on cookery sessions held Tuesday to Friday at Anne-Sophie's latest creation, **Scook** (☎ 04 75 44 14 14; www.scook.fr; 243 av Victor Hugo; half-/full-day course €95/230), a cutting-edge cooking school where food-lovers can learn a couple of tricks of the trade. Lunch sessions (€45) involve cooking two courses, then tucking into them *sur place* (in situ).

From the central train station, Valence-Ville, there are trains to/from Montélimar (€7.70, 23 minutes, five daily), Lyon (€15.30, 1¼ hours, 12 daily), Avignon (€21.40, 1¼ hours, four to six direct daily) and Grenoble (€14.40, 1¼ hours, nine daily). Many stop at Valence TGV Rhône-Alpes Sud station, 10km east.

## Gorges de l'Ardèche

The serpentine River Ardèche slithers past towering cliffs of mauve, yellow and grey limestone, dotted with vegetation typical of the Midi-Pyrénées, as it makes its way from near **Vallon Pont d'Arc** to **St-Martin de l'Ardèche**, a few kilometres west of the Rhône. Eagles nest in the cliffs and there are numerous caves to explore. One of the area's most famous features is the **Pont d'Arc**, a natural stone bridge created by the river's torrents.

About 300m above the waters (which can be canoed) of the gorge is the **Haute Corniche** (D290), which affords a magnificent series of *belvédères* (panoramic viewpoints). It turns into a huge and chaotic traffic jam in summer. On the plateaux above the gorges, typical Midi villages (eg St-Remèze) are surrounded by garrigue, lavender fields and vineyards.

From Vallon Pont d'Arc, the scenic D579 takes cyclists and motorists northwest to **Ruoms**; across the river, the D4 snakes wildly along the **Défilé de Ruoms** (a narrow tunnel of rock) and the **Gorges de la Ligne** for 8km. From Bellevue, head north for 2km on the D104 to Uzer, then east on the D294 to pretty village **Balazuc**.

From Balazuc the D579 leads northwards to **Aubenas**, from where a multitude of scenic roads fan into the surrounding countryside. This is chestnut land, where the dark-brown

## AN ARCHITECTURAL PILGRIMAGE

It is only for hardened fans of architecture, 'it' being a far-from-pretty futuristic concrete priory. But with the signature of modern-architecture icon Le Corbusier (for more, see p65) behind it, stark **Couvent Ste-Marie de la Tourette** (☎ 04 74 26 79 70; www.couventlatourette.com; adult/12-18yr/under 12yr €8/6/free; ☎ guided tours 10.30am, 3pm & 5pm Mon-Sat, 3pm & 5pm Sun Jul & Aug, 2.30pm Mon-Fri, 10.30am, 2.30pm & 4pm Sat, 2.30pm & 4pm Sun Sep & Oct, 3.30pm daily Nov-Mar), 30km west of Lyon in La Tourette, lures a prestigious set into its lair. Inhabited by white-robed Dominican monks, the working monastery can be visited by one-hour guided tour.

From Lyon's Gare de Perrache (10 daily) and Gare St-Paul (20 daily) in Vieux Lyon, trains go to L'Arbresle (€6.80, 45 minutes), 2km north of La Tourette, from where you can call ☎ 04 74 26 90 19 for a taxi or walk (around 25 minutes). By car, follow the westbound N7 or more scenic D7 from Lyon.

### AS NUTTY AS NOUGAT

There is just one sweet reason to stop in Montélimar – nougat.

Produced in the otherwise ordinary town, 46km south of Valence, since the 17th century, *nougat de Montélimar* took off after WWII when holidaying motorists on their way to the French Riviera stopped off in the Rhône-side town to buy the sweeter-than-sweet treat to munch en route.

Traditional Montélimar nougat consists of at least 28% almonds, 25% lavender honey, 2% pistachio nuts, sugar, egg white and vanilla. Nougat varies in texture (more or less tender), honey taste (more or less strong) and crispness of the nuts. Some nougats are coated in chocolate and others have fruit (try the one with figs), but traditional Montélimar nougat is quite simply off-white.

A dozen nougat producers offer free tours of their factories; pick a small (rather than an industrial) confectioner, such as Le Gavial or Le Chaudron d'Or. The **tourist office** (☎ 04 75 01 00 20; [www.montelimar-tourisme.com](http://www.montelimar-tourisme.com); allées Provençales; 🕒 9am-12.15pm & 2-5.30pm Mon-Sat) has details.

Montélimar is on the train line linking Valence-Ville (€7.70, 20 minutes, five daily) with Avignon-Centre (€12.30, 50 minutes, hourly).

fruit is turned into everything from *crème de châtaigne* (a sweet purée served with ice cream, crêpes or cake) to *bière aux marrons* (chestnut beer) and *liqueur de châtaigne*, a 21% alcohol-by-volume liqueur which makes a sweet aperitif when mixed with white wine. Buy a bottle at the **Palais du Marron** (☎ 04 75 64 35 16; 10 cours de l'Esplanade) in **Privas**.

### WHITE-WATER SPORTS

Bomb down the Ardèche in a canoe or kayak at the **Base Nautique du Pont d'Arc** (☎ 04 75 37 17 79; [www.canoe-ardeche.com](http://www.canoe-ardeche.com); rte des Gorges de l'Ardèche; 🕒 Apr-Nov) in Vallon Pont d'Arc. A half-day descent (8km) costs €13/9 per adult/seven- to 12-year-old; longer one-day trips up the river are also possible.

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