

HOW TO GET THERE

By air:
Direct Ryanair service from London Stansted to Rodez or Bergerac and from Dublin to Rodez: www.ryanair.com
Direct Flybe Service from London Gatwick (or Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh...) to Bergerac: www.flybe.com
To get to Cantal, rent a car from Rodez or Bergerac Airports.

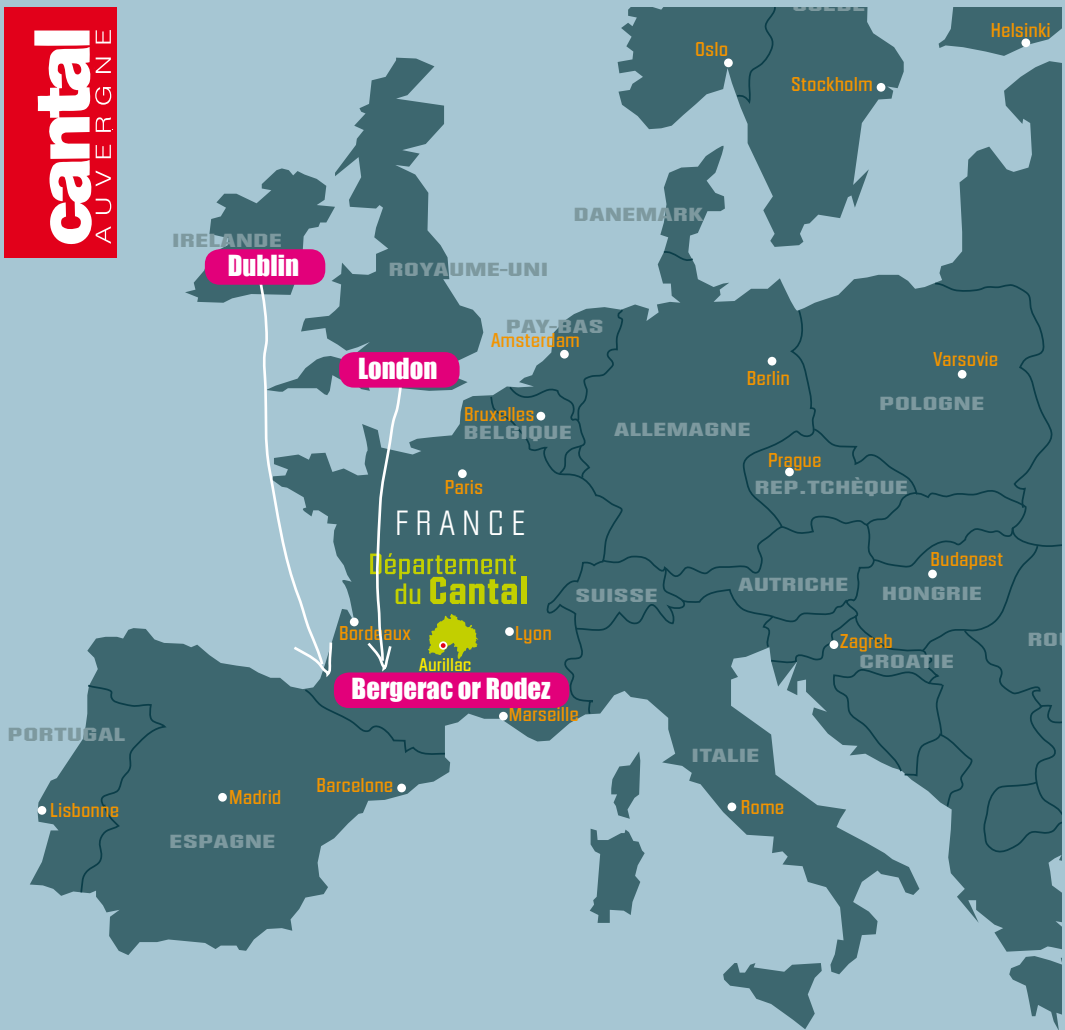
By road:
A75 motorway (Clermont-Ferrand – Montpellier) junctions 23-31
A89 motorway (Bordeaux – Clermont-Ferrand)
D920 from Rodez to Saint-Flour

To find out more about the area – things to see and places to stay – or to make a reservation visit:

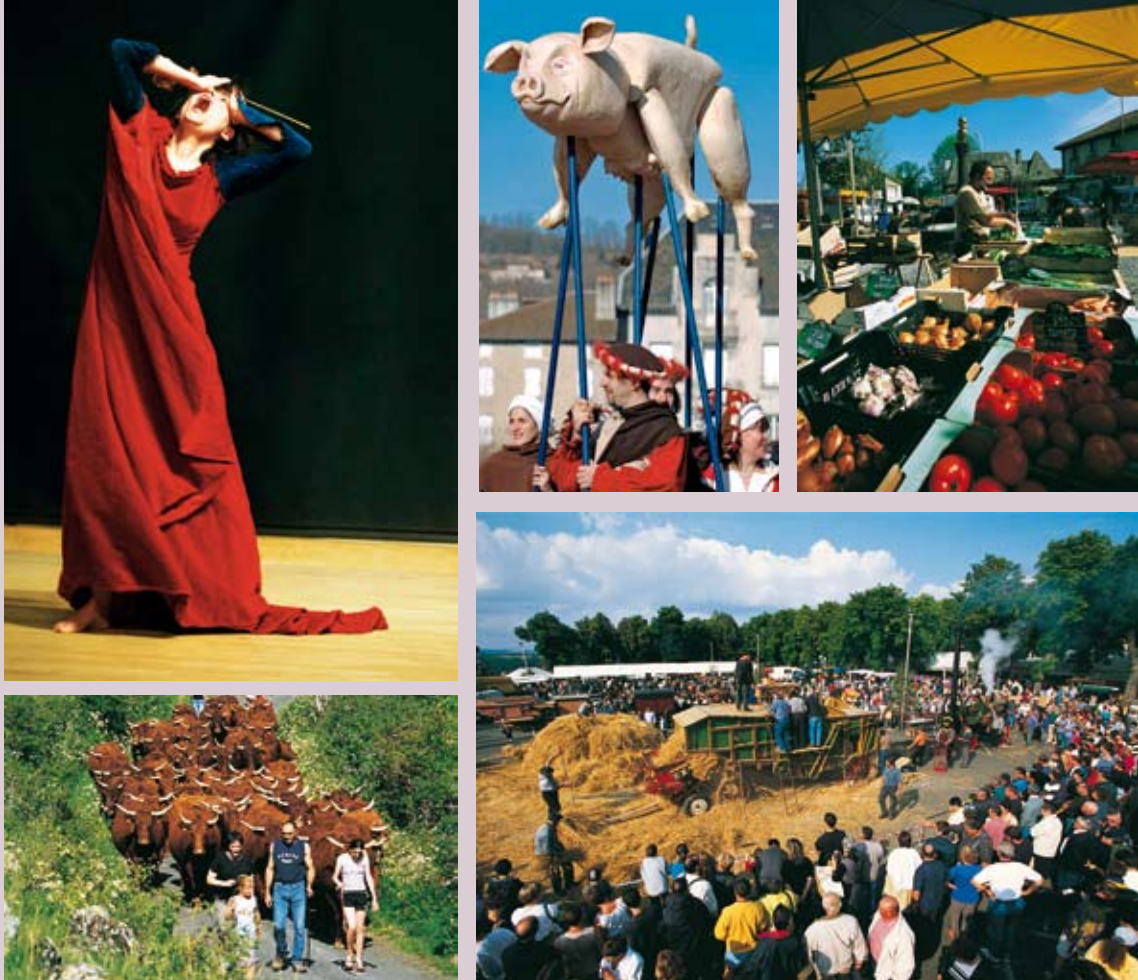
www.cantaltourisme.fr

or call (English spoken):

Phone number +33 (0)471 605 821



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WHAT'S ON IN CANTAL ?

Throughout the year, Cantal hosts a dazzling diversity of fêtes, fairs and festivals. From cultural celebrations built around jazz, dance, music, circus arts and local history to more active outdoor pursuits from walking and mountain biking to sailing and cycling. Elsewhere, numerous brocante markets attract antique hunters on the lookout for bargains, curios and that elusive treasure. Perhaps the most important of all the Cantal festivals is **the International Festival of Street Theatre**. This spectacular celebration, which attracts groups of performers from all over the world, takes over the town of Aurillac at the end of August each summer. **Across Cantal the passage of the seasons is celebrated by an array of festivals and 'fêtes de terroir' as well as simple village markets that are so evocative of all that's best about life in rural France.**

In winter, there's the Fête du Cochon and later, as the spring sunshine starts to warm the pastures, the focus turns onto Aubrac cattle and the Easter beef festival. In the monts de Cantal, springtime means the release – and tasting – of 'La Legendaire', a wine kept at altitude in a stone 'buron' throughout the winter. Later in the month, the Fête de l'Estive heralds the arrival of summer and visitors can take the chance to follow the cattle herds as they make the gentle journey up to their summer pastures on the mountains.

The advent of summer signals the start of a flood of markets and fairs across the region. The traditional Festa del Pais at Saint-Flour and the Fête du bleu d'Auvergne in the gentian lands in the month of August. And in village after village, there are regular Marchés de Pays – organic produce markets usually followed by relaxed picnics and outdoor dances.

As summer gives way to the vivid colours and flavours of autumn, Cantal celebrates its traditional culinary heritage at the Cornet de Murat. And as the year winds down, particularly in the Châtaigneraie area welcome all the fruits of autumn, chestnuts, pumpkins, apples, walnuts, as well as those magnificent wild mushrooms.

For a complete programme of events, please go to: www.cantaltourisme.fr

ACTIVITIES & SHORT BREAKS

Cantal is just tailor-made for visitors to explore in their own way and at their own pace. There's so much to discover: so much to see and do. The spectacular yet fragile beauty of the landscapes, the hills and mountains, the lakes and rivers and the historic towns and villages. Walking, cycling, sailing, fishing, canoeing, and a whole host of things to do for all the family. And with a plethora of gites, chambre d'hotes, friendly hotels and rustic auberges, you're never far from a warm welcome and a comfortable place to lay your head.

There's also a wide range of inclusive short breaks designed to give you a special taste of all that's best in Cantal. Here's an idea of what's on offer...

Enjoy the great outdoors

Accompanied walking holidays: 8 days/7 nights full board from €465/person staying in a gîte-hotel.

Unaccompanied walking break: 4 days/3 nights from €99/person staying in a gîte d'étape.

Snow-shoe walking break: 7 days/6 nights full board from €420/person in a gîte-hotel.

Cyclotouring from €45/person/night half board staying in a 2* hotel.

Indulge yourself

Gourmet get-away: 3 days/2 nights half board in a 2* hotel from €79/person.

Weekend 'Legendaire': 3 days/2 nights for just €379 per couple. Join the gourmet celebrations around the spring launch of Le Legendaire – an Auvergne wine that has lain buried in a stone cottage throughout the winter.

An intense programme of pampering and relaxation: 3 days/2 nights half board from €140/person.

New for 2008!

Caleden is a new thermal spa complex in the old spa town of Chaudes Aigues. Relax in the natural warm waters and take advantage of innovative treatments and state of the art equipment including hydromassage jets, bubble beds, Jacuzzi, counter-current swimming, waterfalls, sauna and Turkish bath. Open from July to November: times vary according to season. Adults from €12,50 for 2 hours. Caleden in Chaudes-Aigues.

www.caleden.com

Call 0826 96 15 15* (* €0,15/min) English spoken.

www.cantaltourisme.fr



COME ALIVE, COME TO CANTAL

cantal
AUVERGNE



The département of Cantal is an undiscovered treasure of central France: **a vivid emerald in the crown of the Auvergne.**

Life in Cantal is played out against a landscape of immense natural beauty. The rugged moorland of Aubrac, the rolling hills and woodland of La Châtaigneraie and La Margeride, scenic river valleys with dramatic waterfalls and gorges, the green pastures of the Pays de Salers and, over looking them all, the volcanic mountains of the monts de Cantal.

For visitors, **this tranquil beauty** makes Cantal the perfect antidote to the stresses and pressures of the modern world. It's an ideal destination for walking, climbing, mountain biking, horse riding, canoeing, fishing and generally enjoying the great outdoors. Or, if you prefer, **you can always just relax** and let the sights and sounds of Cantal recharge your batteries.

So come and explore Cantal. You'll find a land of crystal waters and mountain air. Medieval villages, ancient churches and majestic chateaux. Forests that shelter elusive chamois, marmot and wild boar. Pastures where gentian and orchids grow amid the wild flowers. A land where time is measured not by the hands of the clock but by the unfolding of the seasons.

Take a deep breath and come alive.



HISTORY & HERITAGE

The cultural history of Cantal is there to see in the changing architecture of its buildings : from the simplest stone cottage to the grandest country estate.

The colourful stories of 12 of the greatest houses of Cantal unfold along the Route des Châteaux d'Auvergne. Among the châteaux open to the public are Auzers with its Napoleon interiors ; Trémolière with its magnificent parks and orchards ; dramatic Pesteils overlooking the Cère Valley ; Sédailles, unique example of Troubadour architecture, and stunningly beautiful Val whose six towers are reflected in the Lac de Bort. For more information, visit www.route-chateaux-auvergne.org.

There are also rare jewels among the Romanesque churches and cathedrals of Cantal. In particular, the great golden altar at Bredons has an ornate brilliance, while the painted tiled ceiling of the church of Cheylade is quite simply stunning.

The culture of Cantal is also there to see in the busy market places of its towns and villages, such as beautiful Salers and Tournemire, both classified among the Plus Beaux Villages de France, and the historic town of Saint-Flour, valued Pays d'Art et Histoire.

And above all, this cultural heritage is given life by the skills and traditions of its people and through seasonal fêtes and festivals that are celebrated today as they have been throughout the centuries.

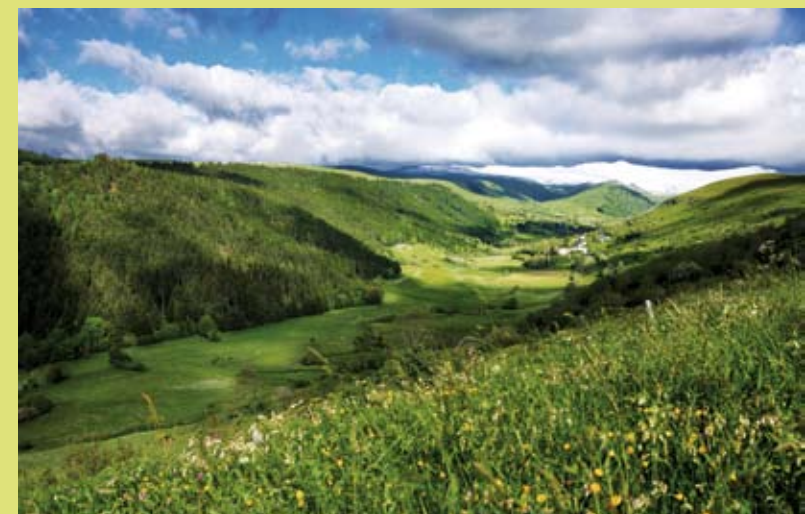
FROM TERROIR TO TABLE

Cantal cuisine is built around the best produce of its own terroir. Rich, simple food based on the finest local ingredients.

A wide variety of charcuterie: hams, fritons, pates, terrines and sausages. Game from the hills and woodland with seasonal hare and rabbit, quail, venison and wild boar. Rustic breads and pastries, nuts, oils, jams and honeys. Famous Gentian liqueur, eaux de vie distilled from plums, raspberries, blackberries, blackcurrants and chestnuts. The green pastures of Cantal are home to cattle – above all the magnificent rich red Salers cattle with their lyre-shaped horns, famous both for their beef and their milk. And in Auvergne, milk means cheese: dense golden roundels of Cantal and Salers, soft creamy Saint-Nectaire fermier, and the rich tangy blues, Fourme d'Ambert and Bleu d'Auvergne.

Perhaps the best way to understand the region's cheeses is to follow the 'Route des Fromages AOC d'Auvergne' easy to follow with its distinctive brown road signs. Not only does the route des fromages take in some of the most beautiful Cantal countryside and ancient villages, it also lists some 50 cheese makers who welcome visitors to look around their farms and dairies and cellars and to learn about their produce. To find out more, go to www.fromages-aoc-auvergne.com.

Across the region you'll find numerous traditional auberges where regional specialities are prepared using age-old recipes and the best of local produce. There is also a wide selection of hotels and restaurants specialising in fine dining, many of them offering sumptuous gastronomic menus at prices that won't break the bank.



NATURE

Cantal is dominated by the spectacular Monts de Cantal – southern part of the Massif Central mountains.

Lying within the [Parc Naturel Regional des Volcans d'Auvergne](#), the Monts de Cantal were originally formed as part of a vast volcano which was later shaped by ice-age glaciers. The six main peaks, from angular Puy Griou (1690 m) to towering Plomb Cantal (1855 m), form an immense circle marking the vestiges of the ancient volcanic crater.

Though not the highest peak, the undoubted icon of the Monts de Cantal is the sharp pyramidal summit of Puy Mary. Classified as a Grand Site de France, the walk along the ridgeway path to the top of Puy Mary is rewarded with a simply unrivalled panorama into no less than 12 glacial valleys that radiate star-like from the summit.

On your own, or with a guide...

Cantal is proud to boast a team of mountain guides who organise all manner of sorties and excursions throughout the year. Their knowledge and understanding – not only of the landscape but also of the region, its history and its people – can add so much to your visit. What's more, they are dedicated to ensuring your complete safety and offer a choice of itineraries designed to meet the needs of everyone from the beginner to the keenest walker.

The choice is yours. On foot, by mountain bike, with donkeys; on land or water; by day or by night; for two hours, for a week; alone, with the family or in a group. Come and learn the secrets of the mountains.

Many of Cantal's chambres d'hotels, gites and hotels are set up to meet the specific needs of walkers and cyclists. Look out for the Rando plume and gite d'etape signs. Programmes, activities and locations: **+33 (0) 471 605 821*** (* 0,15 €/min) or go to www.cantaltourisme.fr

WINTER IN CANTAL

When the winter snows cover the great plateaux and the glacial valleys, Cantal really earns its reputation as “the land of wide open spaces”. With wind-blown snow drifts and ornately patterned ice falls, the countryside comes to resemble an arctic wilderness. So for a totally different winter activity, visitors can now experience the thrill of walking through this stunning winter landscape on snow shoes or cross-country skis. And in the evening, make their way to a friendly village auberge where a roaring wood fire and a warming glass of vin chaud await their safe return.

WINTER SPORTS

During the winter months, attention shifts to Le Lioran, leading ski area of the Auvergne. With 22 lifts and an 80-place cable car taking skiers up to the 1856 m Plomb du Cantal, Le Lioran has more than 60 km of pistes to suit all abilities, as well as a beginners area right in the heart of the village. There is also an extensive network of snow cannons that ensures coverage of the main runs into the resort. In addition to the alpine pistes, Le Lioran also has 100 km of marked cross-country skiing trails, a half pipe and a big air for snow boarders, dog sled rides and an indoor ice-rink. There is a flourishing ski-school, and children will also find giant inflatables and trampolines set out below the nursery slopes. A Ski France 'P'tits Montagnards' resort, Le Lioran is an ideal family destination.

Cantal also has a number of smaller ski resorts dedicated to nordic winter sports. Here you'll find a more laid-back approach, with activities like cross-country skiing, guided snow-shoe expeditions, dog sleds and ice skating.

