

## Whether looking at it from below in the plains or walking inside its remparts, Lacoste possesses an inimitable charm – its simplicity.

### In few word...

Lacoste, built on an ancient site at the foot of a limestone ledge, enjoys an exceptional location. It is well exposed to the sun, protected from the Mistral winds and near a large perennial water source.

The village's reputation is partly due to the exceptional quality of the soft, light-colored limestone extracted from its stone quarries, and partly to its agricultural activities, which combine to generate a thriving community.

Having undergone the calamities of the 14<sup>th</sup> century “experienced by the whole region – pestilence, wars, plundering – the village of Lacoste was re-inhabited by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the Vaudois (Waldensees) migrating from the valleys of the High Alps. The Vaudois' adoption of the reform in 1532 became the pretext for the destruction of the village in 1545 by an expedition under the orders of the Parliament of Aix.

It is interesting to note that Lacoste, unlike its neighboring localities, was in Provence, connecting it to the French Crown as of 1481. The Comtat Venaissin gained this status only after the Revolution in 1789.

**Lacoste is a place filled with history and its heritage inspires many local and visiting artists.**

**Population :** 421 inhabitants

**Area :** 1 100 ha

**Altitude :** 300 mètres

**Inhabitants :** Lacostois / Lacostoises

**Market :** Tuesday morning on the church square from May to September

**Celebrates of the village :** last weekend in July

Lacoste visit on foot. Free car parks (GPS : N 43°50'6 – E 5°16'19)

Lacoste is located at the heart of the **Luberon Regional Natural Reserve** and is part of this exceptional natural landscape and architectural heritage.

### To discover, to visit, to see...

Le Château - The Castle

Beffroi - Belfry (1550)

Place de l'ancien Temple – Place of

Les remparts - The ramparts (14<sup>th</sup> century)

Eglise Saint-Trophime - Church (12-13<sup>th</sup> century)

the ancien protestant temple

Portail de la Garde - Portal Guard (14-15<sup>th</sup> century)

Calvaires - Calvary

Rue Basse

Portail des Chèvres – Portal Goats (14-15<sup>th</sup> century)

Temple – Protestant temple (19<sup>th</sup> century)

Rue Saint-Trophime

Lavoirs - Laundries

Rue du Four

Place de l'Église – Place of the Church

Café de France (19<sup>th</sup> century)

### The Castle

The castle - whose occupation goes back to the time of the Gallo-Romans (archaeological clues indicate this) - overhangs the village. Belonging to the Simiane family until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was bequeathed in 1716 by Isabelle Simiane to her cousin Gaspard Francois of Sade, Lord of Saumane and Mazan, grandfather of the Divine Marquis, Louis-Aldonse Donatien. In 1766, Sade begins the restoration and the embellishment of the building but he makes only brief visits for Lacoste. Plundered and destroyed in the Revolution, this last one is sold to the Marquis de Rovère. In 1816, his widow sells the castle in ruin... without doors, windows, nor chains and partially covered with roof, to Pierre Grégoire, farmer and this one to a mason of Lacoste, Cyprien Jean. The Castle is then demolished and its materials are reused in certain houses of the village.

Of 1952 up to his death, André Bouer, professor of schools, becomes an owner and dedicates his life to his restoration.

In 2001, Pierre Cardin buys the Castle and begins a big work of consolidation and reassurance of the site. Since, the court of the Castle and its adjacent careers welcome, every year, a Festival of music and theater. In summer, you can visit the apartments of the Marquis de Sade and discover furniture from the private collection of Pierre Cardin, works of contemporary art selected by the designer and enjoy beautiful views from the terraces of the Castle on the Calavon valley.

### The Cedar Forest

Located on the Petit Luberon, the communal Cedar plantation of Lacoste covers 207 hectares. It is composed of Cedrus Atlantica (cedars of the Atlas Mountains). In 1861, seeds collected in the Middle Atlas of Algeria were planted with little means by foresters and inhabitants. This forest is one of the most beautiful in Europe. To discover its flora and fauna, a botanical trail has been laid out on the crest of the Luberon accessible by road of the Forest following the D36 to the exit of the village of Bonnieux (towards Lourmarin).

From the car park at Valmasque in Lacoste, you will find many marked trails (D106).

And recently, with the support of the Community of communes Pays d'Apt-Luberon, the Luberon Regional Natural Reserve and the communes of Bonnieux, Lacoste and Puget-sur-Durance, a new trail allows now the access to this emblematic natural site for people with motor, visual, hearing or mental disabilities.

A main loop in undergrowth of 1 200m and 5 fun educational interpretive areas offer everyone the opportunity to experience the beauty of the landscapes, the pleasure of being in the woods, the rich fauna and flora in this emblematic natural site.

### The Stone quarries and Louis Malachier

Near the Castle, lived in the stone hut at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Louis Malachier, a miller and sculptor of genius. He was a modest man whose only ambitions were to be free to dream and work with his beloved stones. Lacoste was the perfect place to fulfill his dreams and provided him with raw materials to shape. At that time, exploitation of the stone quarries were flourishing and Lacoste counted many quarrymen.

Discover also the **two laundries of the village of Lacoste**, one along the road of Bonnieux and the second in the lands near the road of Goult, just before the hamlet of Saint Veran.

## We propose to you a guided walk in the historic center of the village of **Lacoste**.

\* Start from the **Saint Trophime Church** (12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century), sepulcher of the Lords of Lacoste, descendants of the powerful Simiane family. It is a complex edifice which has been repeatedly revised.

The Romanesque parts are still visible in some places.

The actual entrance, in the south façade is the result of a reconstruction in the 17<sup>th</sup> century which replaced the Romanesque portal. Enter and admire...

\* On leaving the place of the Church, take the **paved street** going up towards the Castle, passing under the **Portail de la Garde - Portal Guard** (14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century) rebuilt at the same time as the surrounding village wall in second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

After the defended entrance crossing by a square tower topped by a decorative breteche, the first facades illustrate the superposition of periods and architectural styles.

On your right, a **damaged medieval portal** underwent restoration at a later time and still contains some of the village's first written decrees partially engraved in the rock.

\* We point out, since the 1970's, the presence of a school of art created by a painter Bernard Pfriem who fell in love with the region, Lacoste and its inhabitants. It taken since 2002 by **Savannah College of Art and Design**, an American university of arts located in Georgia and since 2012 in Hong Kong. Today, the campus in Lacoste welcomes between 60 and 80 students each three months to study arts, architecture, photography ... and many artists exhibit at the gallery Pfriem.

Rewarded by UNESCO for its work in heritage conservation, SCAD has restored many of the iconic buildings in the village.

\* Higher, on your left, we can imagine a **Romanesque arched portal** with decorations. The beautifully made of this piece reflects the high status of the owner having his home near the village entrance.

\* Continue to the **Belfry** (1550), and walk along the 16<sup>th</sup> century medieval-inspired facades and gardens created on the sites of ruined houses. Cover of a Campanile in recent times, the Belfry marks the entrance of the lordly space, the castle core. Protected by its own barrier, the area is vast and contains, around the Castle, terraces and pits partially cleared in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

\* Take the street under the Campanile which takes you to the **viewpoint** and the Castle. The **Castle** of Lacoste, restored, retains a ruin form aspect and historical interest.

We can still discern the original entrance remodeled by the current access.

This access was protected by a high leveled device and accessible from a ramp carved into the rock.

The high façade contains old foundations but must be dated 15-16<sup>th</sup> century and the result of the various extensions mentioned in texts between 1406 and 1559.

Outside the south tall tower was built in 1613 by Claude Simiane on the ruins of a round tower.

All underwent improvements conducted from 1765 by the Marquis de Sade.

On the side of the platform, where the curtain was completely rebuilt in the 20<sup>th</sup> century on medieval remains preserved at the gate.

Moat protect access to the site that leads to a front yard and the residential part of Castle.

Bypassing the west façade can appreciate the quality of the enclosure of the village adjoining the castral and lively perimeter of archers and an elegant corner tower.

From this place, there is a **splendid panoramic view** of the Mont Ventoux, the Luberon and other hilltop villages...

\* Down on the plain, look at one of the jewels of this exceptional territory : **Maison Basse**, the former hostelry and the Castle carriage house.

\* Return down by the same street under the Campanile and continue to go up to the **Portail des Chèvres - Portal Goats** (14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century) which opens to the south and constitutes the highest entry into the village.

This access includes more ancient artifacts, but had been recomposed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as indicated by the round tour furnished with fire hydrants.

\* Turn back and continue to the **rue du Four**, go back near the Campanile and turn right at the corner of the **ancienne boulangerie** to the **place de la Mairie** passing several houses from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a few of which contain some of their original internal organization.

Continue 200m up on the road towards the **Temple** (19<sup>th</sup> century), now the village hall. On its facade, a panel traces the history of Vaudois in the region.

\* Return down to the **place de la Mairie** and the **rue Basse**. Immediately you cross the small **place de l'Ancien Temple**. The Temple - once used as the communal hall - was destroyed at the order of Louis XIV in July 1665.

In this place, you have again an exceptional view of the **plain**.

This landscape has the advantage of delivering an image conform to an old historical reality for centuries and whose human and economic organization remains visible.

Beyond and on your right, private passages down under the old ram parts (14<sup>th</sup> century).

One of them has a beautiful Romanesque entrance surmounted by a decorative drip. This noble door is characterized by its original keystones to grips reminiscent copies of Buoux Fort and the Old Oppède.

**Let your curiosity be your guide.**