

# MOUSTIERS<sup>★</sup>

*Sainte-Marie*





# SOMMAIRE

INTRODUCTION

3

5

PROVENÇAL VILLAGE  
RICH HERITAGE

TAKE A STROLL THROUGH THE  
NARROW STREETS OF THE VILLAGE

7

9

THE LAND

CRAFT

11

13

EVENTS

HOW TO GET TO MOUSTIERS ?

15



# INTRODUCTION

Since 1981, Moustiers-Sainte-Marie has been listed as one of **France's Most Beautiful Villages**. Church, ramparts, chapels, aqueduct, fountains, the combination of water and stone, the pastel tones of tiles and tufa, all combine to create a homogenous and vibrant architectural ensemble. The gentle way of life here naturally encourages visitors to respect, appreciate, discover and protect the area. The work of the land, carried on for centuries, is the link between the village's history and its future. Today, Moustiers has a population of around 700.

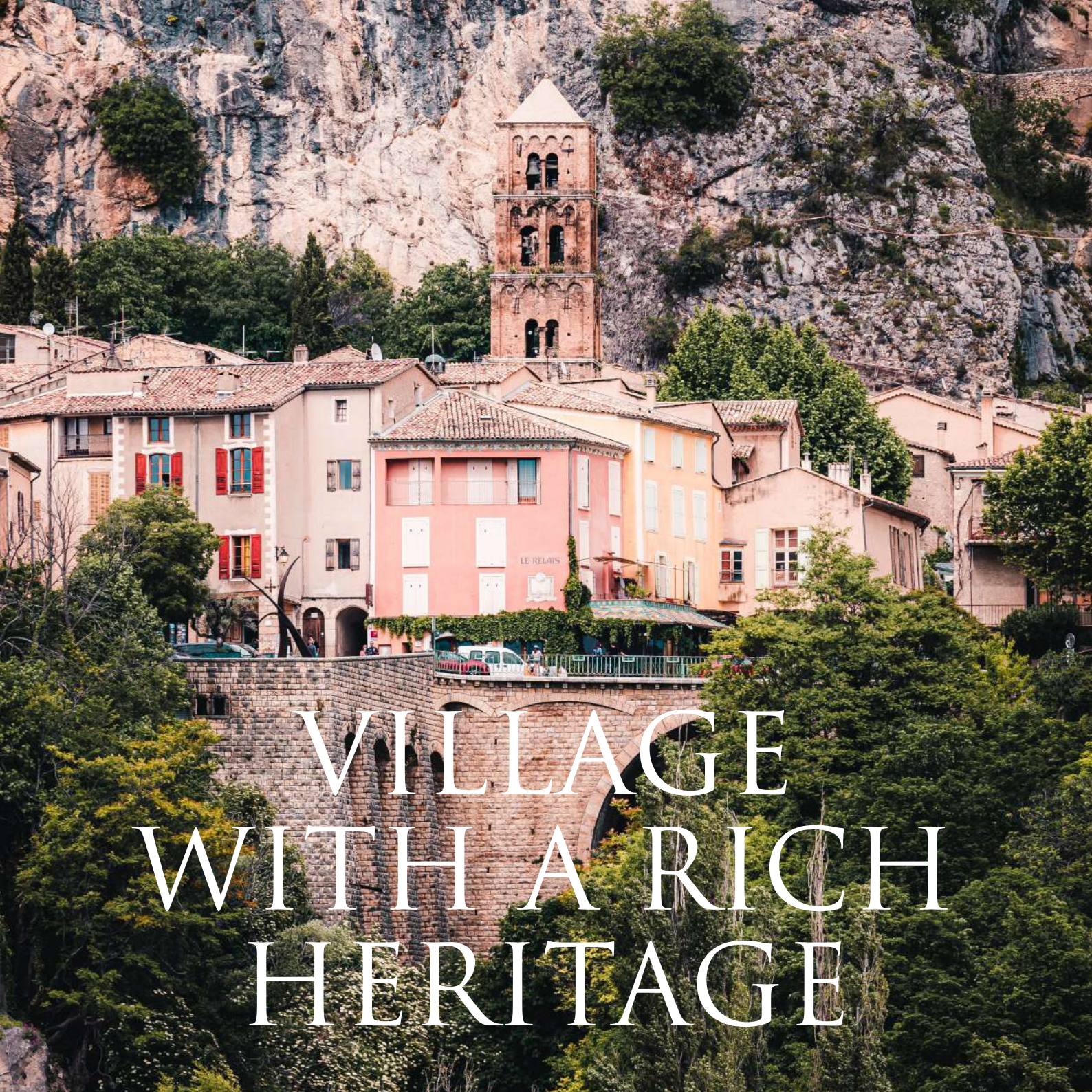
Moustiers-Sainte-Marie is part of the **Parc Naturel Régional du Verdon**, which straddles the Var and Alpes de Haute Provence départements. The park covers 46 communes and encompasses seven major landscapes. This diversity of ecosystems has given the park a rich and varied natural heritage: vultures, bats, chamois, roe deer and endemic flora. The head office of the Verdon Regional Nature Park is located in the municipality.

Moustiers-Sainte-Marie is also part of the **l'UNESCO Géoparc de Haute-Provence**. This UNESCO nature reserve covers 60 communes in the Alpes de Haute-Provence département. Numerous natural and geological sites allow you to discover the last 300 million years of the Earth's history.

The geographical location of Moustiers-Sainte-Marie is remarkable. The village is just 3 kilometres from the entrance to the **Gorges du Verdon**. Europe's largest canyon, the 50-kilometre Gorges stretch from Castellane to Lake Sainte-Croix, reaching depths of 700 metres in places.

**Le lac de Sainte-Croix**, France's third-largest man-made lake, is just 5 kilometres from the village. It covers an area of 2,200 hectares (10 kilometres long and 2 kilometres wide). The Sainte-Croix dam holds back 760 million cubic metres of water, providing electricity to nearby towns and villages. It is also a major tourist attraction, offering a great place to swim and take part in various water sports.

**The Plateau de Valensole** with its countless lavender fields, is 10 kilometres from Moustiers-Sainte-Marie. Depending on the season, it takes on different aspects: the snowy peaks and almond trees in flower in March give way in July to the changing mauve of the lavender and the gold of the wheat. The area is world-famous, **tourists from all over the world** flock here during the lavender flowering season to admire its beauty.



VILLAGE  
WITH A RICH  
HERITAGE

Traces of human presence in the Moustiers area date back to the Cro Magnon era, **30,000 years ago**. Settlement intensified during the Bronze Age, with Ligurian tribes occupying the surrounding plateaux and building fortified settlements (oppidas).

But it was in the **5th century** that the present-day village really began to be occupied: the **monks of Lérins** settled in the tufa caves and founded a monastery in the 6th century. This ecclesiastical presence gave rise to the name Moustiers-Sainte-Marie (Monasterio in the Middle Ages).

The village has two listed buildings.

Its parish church, called **Notre Dame de l'Assomption**, was built between the 12th and 14th centuries. It combines Romanesque and Gothic styles and was listed as a historic monument in 1913. Its 12th-century Lombard bell tower is one of the most beautiful in Provence. **Chapelle Notre Dame de Beauvoir** was built between the 12th and 16th centuries and was listed as a historic monument in 1921. It is partly Romanesque and partly Gothic. The chapel is well known for its «suscitations». In the 17th century, stillborn babies were brought back to life in the chapel during their baptism, thus gaining access to heaven.



DISCOVERING  
OUR HERITAGE



# GUIDED TOURS OF THE VILLAGE

Accompanied by a tour guide, the Tourist Office offers **themed tours** of the village's narrow streets and squares, suitable for all ages. There are 3 themes on offer:

## *Tour of the old town centre*

Duration 1h30

During this tour, visitors will discover the history of the village, as reflected in its remarkable monuments (the parish church, **the mysterious legend of the star** hanging over the village and the Chapelle N.D. de Beauvoir). You'll also learn about **the traditions** that are still very much a part of the local heritage and, last but not least, the richness of this area, marked by its proximity to major natural sites (Gorges du Verdon, Lac de Sainte-Croix, Plateau de Valensole).

## *Tour of the old town centre + climb to the Notre-Dame de Beauvoir chapel* Durée

Duration 2 hours (for groups only)

**A good level of fitness** is recommended for this tour. You'll need to climb the 262 steps to reach the Notre-Dame de Beauvoir chapel. Good shoes are essential, as the steps are slippery.

## *Adapted visit for children: duration 1 hour (from 5 to 12 years old)*

On request only (school groups)

During this visit, **children will discover the main points in the history of Moustiers and its heritage** parish church, Notre-Dame de Beauvoir chapel, village star, etc.). Through discussion and questions, they will learn what Moustiers earthenware is, what the wash-houses were used for, how our traditional Diane festival is held and many other details about our village.



DISCOVERING  
OUR HERITAGE

# VISIT MOUSTIERS

A **mobile application** to highlight the village's heritage **is now available and can be downloaded free of charge**. Two routes are possible. One for adults, the other for children.

The application is available in French and English.

With this application, the Tourist Office and the Mairie de Moustiers-Sainte-Marie invite you to discover the must-sees of the village, at your own pace and in complete peace of mind. Thanks to the many visuals, **you'll discover how the village has evolved**, from ancient times right up to the present day.

Download the app :



The Tourist Office has set up two **discovery games for children**. The idea is to have fun discovering the village and its heritage. In the form of a treasure hunt or photo rally, children have to answer riddles and follow **Estello**, the magic star, on a fun tour of the village.



STROLLING  
THROUGH  
THE NARROW  
STREETS OF THE  
VILLAGE

The ascent to the Chapelle Notre-Dame de Beauvoir is a must-see in our village. From the rue **Marcel Provence**, signs will lead you directly to the ascent to the chapel. The climb takes between 15 and 20 minutes. Be careful on the slippery steps.

Take time to contemplate the **fourteen stations of the Stations of the Cross**, which were later decorated with earthenware tiles by Simone Garnier, one of Marcel Provence's first decorators, in the 1950s.

From the **Chapelle Notre Dame de Beauvoir**, you can enjoy views over the rooftops of the village, the Sainte-Croix plateau and the Lac de Sainte-Croix.

When you reach Place de l'Église, in the centre of the village, go through the small porch just past the **Church of Notre Dame de l'Assomption**. You'll find yourself on Rue de la Diane, an alleyway that leads down to Place du Couvert. Lose yourself in these narrow streets and get a feel for the village's history. Take rue du Courtil and you'll come to a lovely little square beneath the olive trees. Here you can sit and contemplate the cliffs towering above you. Opposite this square, you'll find a wash-house where you can cool off, especially in summer. Then, above the fountain, you'll notice an earthenware plaque in tribute to **Pierre Clérisy**, one of the first master faience makers in Moustiers-Sainte-Marie at the end of the 17th century.



THE LAND

In terms of food, there are around **twenty restaurants, a patisserie and bars** to cater for gourmets and connoisseurs of fine dining, brasseries and local cuisine. **From traditional inns to gourmet restaurants**, you'll have a vast choice to discover the delights of the region.

One of our restaurants has recognised labels: The **Bastide de Moustiers** has one star in the Michelin Guide and is part of the Les Collectionneurs label. In 2024, La Bastide de Moustiers was awarded the Michelin Green Star, a sign of its commitment to sustainable gastronomy.

The village is also home to a large number **of food artisans**. The terroir of Moustiers-Sainte-Marie is exceptional: you'll find the whole of Provence in the work of the craftsmen who transform the raw materials into exceptional products. From artisanal ice creams, biscuits and olive oils to lavender honey and Made in Moustiers beer, there's a whole range of delicacies to tantalise your taste buds.

Every **friday morning**, the village is decked out in shimmering colours and tantalising scents. The stalls of **the Provençal market**, are brimming with mouth-watering local produce. Taste markets and farmers' markets are also organised from time to time throughout the year.



CRAFTS



Moustiers is not only a magnificent village, it's also a place that has always had a close and special relationship with **arts and crafts**. Moustiers earthenware is the finest example of this. This centuries-old craft has contributed to the international renown of our commune.  
(cf: press kit on Moustiers earthenware).

Today, there are seven earthenware workshops in Moustiers-Sainte-Marie, keeping alive this art form that developed in the 17th century. Visitors to the **Musée de la Faïence** can find out more about the history of this craft over the centuries.

There are around **twenty craftsmen** in the commune. Ceramists who know how to work the clay, an art glassmaker who magnifies stained glass windows, an art cutler who excels in his creations, a painter who illuminates the beauty of Provence with her paintings, an artist who brings life to his cutting cards...



# THE EVENTS

### *Saturday 11 May - Relay of the Flame*



A unique and festive event as part of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, with a programme of activities for young and old!  
A day of sporting activities for all ages and abilities, not forgetting a lively musical parade in the heart of the village.

### *18 and 19 May 2024: Moustiers TouKkoleurs*



Moustiers is celebrating Senegalese culture for the second year running. A whole weekend of entertainment awaits you!

### *Summer 2024: Moustiers celebrates*



All summer long, Moustiers is celebrating! Concerts, fireworks, markets, flavours and night markets, musical walks, open-air cinema...

### *1 and 2 August 2024: Comedy Festival*



2 days of shows where laughter and good humour will be the watchwords!

Gil & Ben are doing us the honour of returning to the Place de l'Eglise to present this Festival of Humour! This year, G r my Cr deville and Erick Baert are our guests for these two exceptional evenings!

***From 31 August to 8 September 2024: Notre Dame de Beauvoir patronal festival***



From 31 August to 8 September 2024, the patron saint festival of Notre Dame de Beauvoir in Moustiers-Sainte-Marie!

***October 2024: Pottery market***



Pottery market on Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 October 2024: a real tradition in Moustiers for everyone to enjoy!

***From 1 December 2024 to 5 January 2025: December in Moustiers***



Throughout December, an exhibition and sale will be held in the Galerie de l'Ancien Presbytère. Come and discover this exhibition, which showcases the work of all our local artisans, as well as that of guests from the region! You'll find plenty of original ideas for your end-of-year gifts!

***But also: the European Night of Museums, numerous exhibitions at the Galerie de l'Ancien Presbytère, exceptional concerts in the Church of Notre Dame de l'Assomption...***

Find all the events in our diary: [www.moustiers.fr](http://www.moustiers.fr)



A hiker is seen from behind, walking along a dirt trail on a rocky mountain slope. The trail is bordered by a low stone wall on the right. The landscape is rugged with grey rocks and patches of green and yellow vegetation. In the distance, more mountain ranges are visible under a clear sky.

COMMENT  
SE RENDRE À  
MOUSTIERS ?



### By car

There are **two options** on the A51 motorway (Aix en Provence-Sisteron):

- Exit 17: Vinon sur Verdon - Cadarache direction Gréoux, Riez, Moustiers (D952).
- Exit 18: Manosque follow signs for Digne-les-Bains via Valensole, Puimoisson, Moustiers.

A8 motorway (Nice, Côte d'Azur) :

- Exit 36: Draguignan, via Aups, Les Salles-sur-Verdon, Moustiers.



### By regular bus service ([zou.maregionsud.fr](http://zou.maregionsud.fr))

Bus stations in the region :

Marseille 130 km (1h45) 04 91 08 16 40

Aix-en-Provence 97 km (1h30) 0 800 713 137 (free call)

Manosque 47 km (50 min) 04 92 87 55 99

- Marseille - Gréoux - Riez line 67
- Riez - Moustiers - Castellane line 450
- Manosque - Gréoux - Riez line 132
- Nice - Sisteron (par Castellane) line 31



### By plane

Marseille Provence airport: 126 km (1h45)

[www.marseille.aeroport.fr](http://www.marseille.aeroport.fr) • 0 820 811 414  
(0,12cts/min)

Nice Côte d'Azur airport: 138 km (2h)

[www.nice.aeroport.fr](http://www.nice.aeroport.fr) • 0 820 42 33 33 (0,12cts/min)



### Car hire

Manosque, Digne-les Bains, Aix-en Provence, Marseille, Nice.



### By train

Nearest stations: Manosque 46 km (50 min), Aix TGV 115km (1h30),

Marseille Saint-Charles 130 km (1h45).

TER/ SNCF 0800 11 40 23 (freephone).

TER : Marseille - Briançon via Manosque line 13  
[www.ter.sncf.com/paca/](http://www.ter.sncf.com/paca/)

- Digne: Chemins de Fer de Provence (Train des Pignes)  
04 92 31 01 58  
[www.trainprovence.com](http://www.trainprovence.com)



### By taxi, transport of people and luggage

Taxi de l'Etoile - All-distance transport, transport to and from stations, airports and buses stations, airports and buses, transport for walking tours.

04 92 74 66 87 - 06 07 37 33 78 - [taxi.etoile@wanadoo.fr](mailto:taxi.etoile@wanadoo.fr)

# MOUSTIERS<sup>★</sup>

*Sainte-Marie*

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