

NATURE | GASTRONOMY | BOATING | RESPONSIBLE TOURISM | NEW | AGENDA

LA ROCHELLE

PRESS KIT **2021**

holidays-la-rochelle.co.uk





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New! What's new



Responsible, sustainable
or social commitment



DESTINATION
La Rochelle

A UNIQUE TASTE OF THE GOOD LIFE



Ideally located on the Atlantic coast between Nantes and Bordeaux, 2 hr 30 from Paris Montparnasse and near numerous French and European cities thanks to the increasing service provided by its airport, La Rochelle is yours to discover all year round!

With its prestigious architectural heritage, it's great to stroll around the Old Port and historic centre of La Rochelle to discover its many treasures: arcaded streets, half-timbered houses, mansions and other secret dead ends just waiting to be discovered.

A city steeped in history, then, but perfectly anchored in its time: Grand Pavois, Francofolies, International Film Festival... There are countless events and trade fairs that have become well established in the city for many years. A few days in La Rochelle are all it takes to realise how resolutely dynamic it is.

With unforgettable trips to the islands of Ré, Aix and Oléron with their exceptional views, La Rochelle can also be discovered by sea. With more than 4500 berths, Minimes Marina is now one of the largest harbours in the world, and its nautical assets are an invitation for all sailing enthusiasts.

Since the end of the 1970s, La Rochelle has been a pioneer in the field of urban ecology and sustainable mobility. With some 230 kilometres of cycle routes, La Rochelle is a wonderful playground for cycling fans.

La Rochelle thus offers a successful marriage between its shops and its historic heart, the flavours and colours of its markets, the Old Port and its terraces, the fine restaurants, some of them gastro with 2 Michelin-starred chefs and a rich, eclectic nightlife... All this helps make up the unique atmosphere of La Rochelle.

In figures

4 million visitors per year



1st A marina on the Atlantic coast



70 km of coast



230 km of cycling facilities



600 "yellow" self-service bikes



270 km of hiking trails





5 GOOD reasons TO COME TO LA ROCHELLE

1

Exceptional historical heritage

La Rochelle is a thousand-year-old city with a rich and diverse heritage, a testimony to its history, changing tastes and cultural influences from Europe and across the Atlantic. La Rochelle is an open-air museum, from its Épinal-like Old Port framed by its iconic towers to the heart of the city: cobbled streets, arcades, houses with their half-timbered walls and slates, rich facades of carved stone from the 16th century, sober houses from the 17th, grand shipowners' houses from the 18th...

2

A festive cultural melting pot

Praised for its quality of life, its salty air, as well as its lively quays, La Rochelle and its Old Port form a unique festive and cultural melting pot!

Cultural destinations, event venues, contemporary creations, artists in residence... La Rochelle promotes the expression of all genres and provides the daily setting for numerous performances and a rich and eclectic programme.



(c) Aurele Bossan

3

The pure, salty air

For those who love lazing on the beach or long walks along the coastal paths, experienced sailors or contemplative passengers, La Rochelle offers lots of water-based experiences to enjoy. With a mix of places to visit and exceptional views, new experiences are guaranteed!



4

Cuisine that's full of flavours

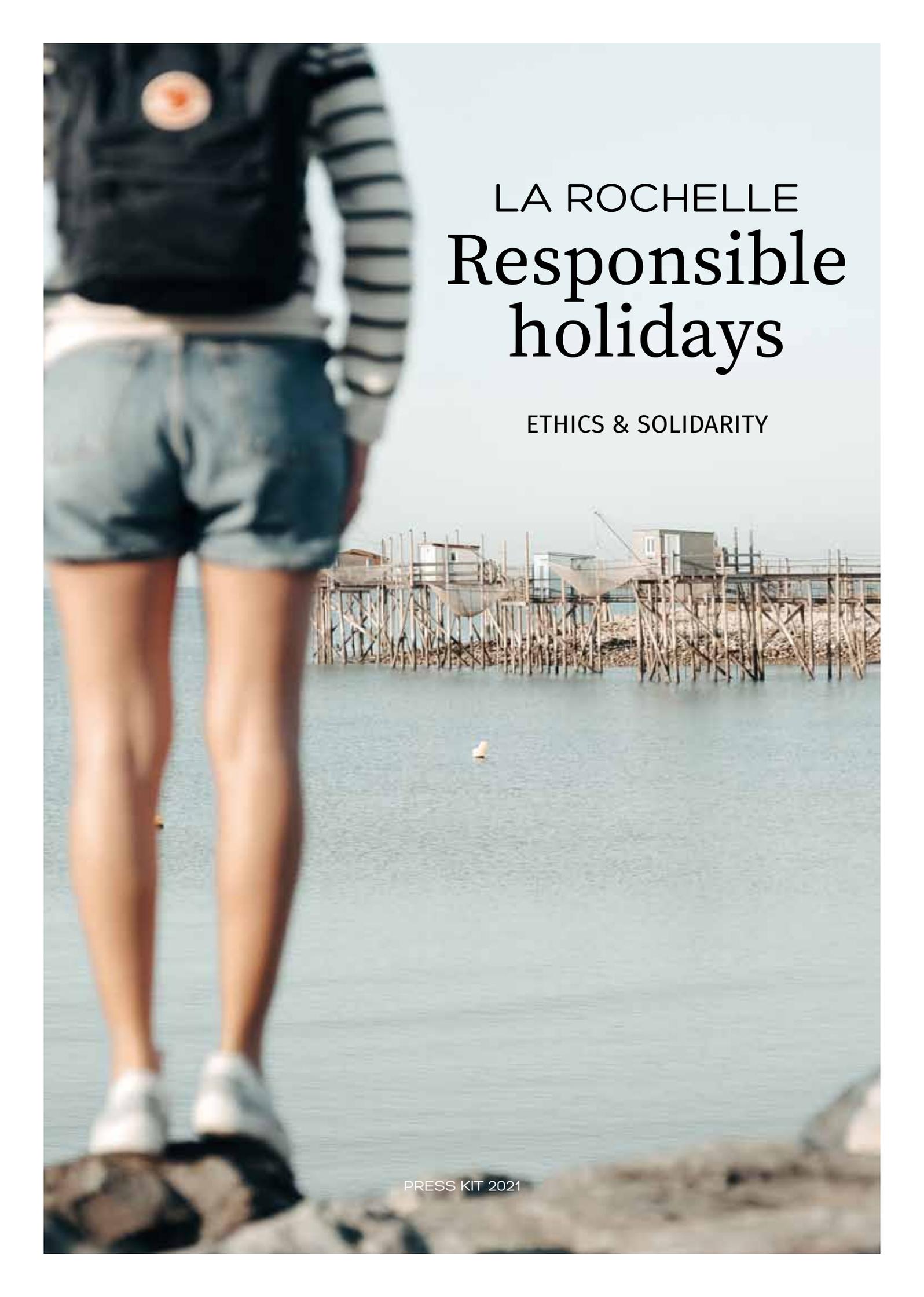
From market stalls to restaurant tables, you can taste the local produce in bistros, oyster bars, classic or gastro venues! La Rochelle is a real playground for those who love gastronomy, with its 2 Michelin-starred chefs: Christopher Coutanceau (Restaurant Coutanceau***) and Nicolas Durif (l'Hysope*).

5

The way of life in La Rochelle

La Rochelle stands out for its innovative mobility policy. From the famous yellow bikes to the electro-solar sea buses that take you from one port to the other, here people take the time to enjoy their surroundings. More than just a trend, the people of La Rochelle have made it a way of life to enjoy to the full.





LA ROCHELLE
**Responsible
holidays**

ETHICS & SOLIDARITY



For sustainable, responsible tourism, we must start with a region that's committed to this transition. And that's something La Rochelle has understood for a long time. A region committed since the 70s to preserving the environment and the quality of life, the city today aims to become the 1st carbon-neutral region by 2040 thanks to its project "La Rochelle Zero Carbon Region*" (LRZCR).

La Rochelle stands out for its innovative mobility policy. From the famous yellow bikes to the electro-solar sea buses that take you from one port to another, the people of La Rochelle take the time to enjoy their surroundings. The city and its metropolitan area boast nearly 230 kilometres of cycle paths, making it easier to get around by bike.

In 2021, 4 new-generation APTIS 100% electric buses will complete the Yélo network fleet. Built by the

La Rochelle company Alstom, they have a range of 250 km and emit no particles. This action is part of the ambitious LRZCR programme.

At a time when no one can dispute the impacts of climate change on the environment, lots of stakeholders in La Rochelle are committed to the route to responsible, sustainable tourism. This positive transition involves preserving natural environments, local consumption, use of the circular economy and implementing solidarity initiatives. As well as raising awareness among visitors, through education and goodwill, to highlight our impact on the environment and initiate changes to our lifestyles.

*More information on the LRZCR project:

larochelle-zerocarbone.fr



Écologîtes For holidays with zero waste



Lucille welcomes holidaymakers all year round to her haven of peace located in a quiet area between the Old Port of La Rochelle and Minimes Beach. She chose to transform her townhouse into two apartments and a studio which have been awarded the Clef Verte label. Inside, second-hand furniture, recycled decoration, handmade cosmetics and household products, second-hand household appliances ... and outside, a large garden of 630m² managed naturally, without pesticides, using a permaculture approach. Lucille makes a point of raising travellers' awareness of the environment: guides (waste sorting, green and local venues for shopping, etc.) and shared spaces (library, toy library, material library and laundry room) are made available to them for an authentic experience and unique holidays!

lesecologitesdelarochelle.fr



Estrella Lab Small floating laboratory of humanity



Aboard the Estrella Lab, her magnificent 18-metre-long sailboat, Olivia Watinne continues to take on new challenges. An adventurer and traveller at heart, she lost the use of her legs in an accident, but has managed to really push herself and bounce back. Today, she continues to dream of adventures and help people realise their dreams aboard her "little floating laboratory of humanity", completely redesigned for people with disabilities. Supported by the "Hissons L'Étoile" association and Olivia Watinne, the Estrella Lab aims to promote access to sailing and allow disabled people to fully experience the joys of navigation. From April to September, she offers sea trips in the La Rochelle straits. Alone or with others, disabled or not, she invites all those ready to share her passion for adventure and pushing your limits

estrellalab.com



The Peak Adventure for all



The Peak is an indoor adventure park offering climbing, a fun climbing facility, aerial courses with a 43-metre zip line and a caving area. The routes are adapted for people with reduced mobility. Able-bodied people can also try out the wheelchair routes and share the same adventure together. Accessibility for all to these sports practices is the spearhead of this sensory adventure space. Accredited trainers welcome visitors to this space covering 1250m² where sharing, transmission, mutual aid and development are the key words!

thepeak.fr



Cabanes Urbaines Cité collaborative



A former climbing hall, The Roof has become Les Cabanes Urbaines, Cité Collaborative (Urban Cabins, Collaborative City). The founders dreamed of a place of cooperation and social innovation, to "live better together", and that's what they've done. This first "third-place" in La Rochelle combines a co-working space, restaurant, participatory vegetable garden, health space, yoga, slacklining, not to mention the climbing wall. In addition to this cooperative desire, there's a sustainable dimension. The Cabanes Urbaines form part of the transition to a low-carbon, resilient system, through the building as a whole but also in its day-to-day management.

lescabanessurbaines.fr



Écho Mer Eco-citizen walks



Since 2001, the association has worked to protect the oceans and increase its initiatives. Echo Mer upcycles materials, particularly waste from maritime activities (sails, neoprene, oyster baskets, etc.) to make bags and accessories, sold in the shop on the edge of the Bassin des Chalutiers. The products come from the circular, solidarity economy. The association has chosen to work in partnership with a prison centre and an organisation to help disabled people find work.

To raise awareness of protection for the marine environment, Echo Mer, in partnership with La Rochelle Marina, also offers free eco-citizen walks around a basin in the Old Port (from April to October). Open to all, you can discover the history of sailing in La Rochelle while becoming more aware of environmental issues. For those who so wish, it's possible to add action to your words by joining the team of volunteers to clean the port of its waste using nets.

echo-mer.com



La Rochelle Aquarium celebrates its 20th anniversary



In 2021, La Rochelle Aquarium is celebrating its 20th anniversary! It's an opportunity to retrace the history of its commitment to protecting the oceans and raising public awareness.

"Dreaming and Understanding the Sea" is the mantra that's driven the Aquarium from the outset. Over the years, new spaces have enriched its exhibition to continue making visitors better aware of the marine world. In 2009, a space was dedicated to jellyfish, in 2012 it was the European Atlantic coast in the spotlight, ending in 2016 with the opening of the Gallery of Light.

La Rochelle Aquarium's missions are numerous: awareness raising, preservation and breeding. The team of biologists already has several breeding successes to its credit, including that of yellow crescent angel fish in 2020. A European first!

In the Aquarium's basement is the Centre for Study and Care for Sea Turtles. Each year, in early summer, sea turtles that have recovered and are fit to return to the ocean are released. Since 2001, 146 individuals have been saved thanks to the work of its staff and have returned to their natural environment.

aquarium-larochelle.com



Restoration of the Marais de Tasdon (marsh) the new blue carbon

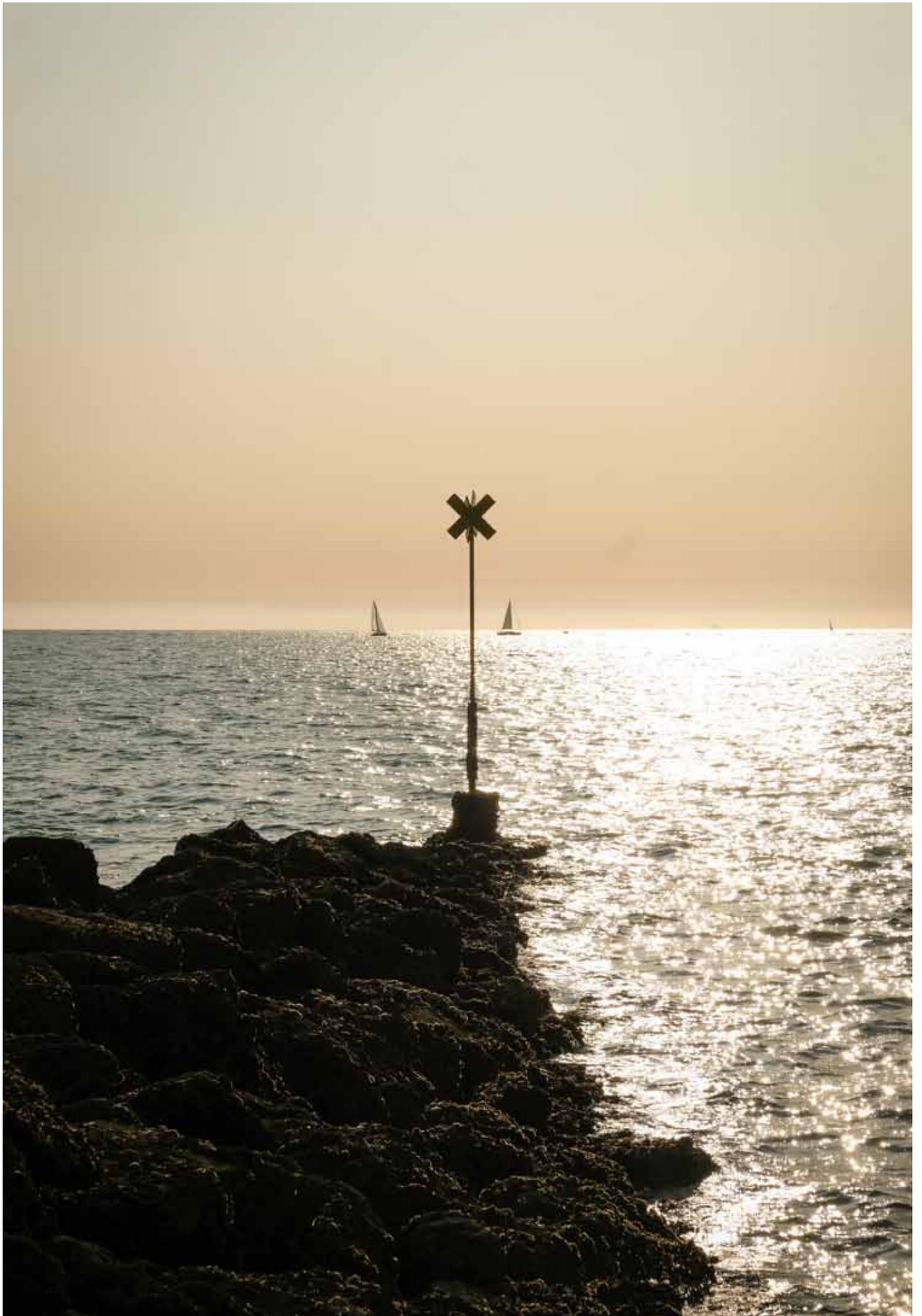


Located on former salt marshes, the Marais de Tasdon is an area of natural heritage of great environmental and heritage richness that must be preserved. Located less than 2 km from downtown La Rochelle, it covers 124 ha, including 82 ha in the Natural Zone of Ecological, Faunistic and Floristic Interest (NZEFFI). The restoration project, which began in 2019, aims to recreate the link between marsh and sea and protect biodiversity. Reconnecting this marsh to the sea will allow the return of species typical of these environments: eels, sole, mullet ... the marsh will then regain the appearance and population of a small area of coastal water.

For its reopening in spring 2021, more than 10 km of walkways will be created, so people can better see the 154 species of birds and 330 plant species that inhabit the marsh. The marsh is also home to 30 sheep who maintain the area while respecting the environment. This is the first attempt at urban grazing in La Rochelle.

Other initiatives to discover:

- ▶ Three-Michelin-starred chef Christopher Coutanceau's commitment to sustainable fishing: **page 21**
- ▶ The Climat Océan exhibition at the Maritime Museum: **page 52**





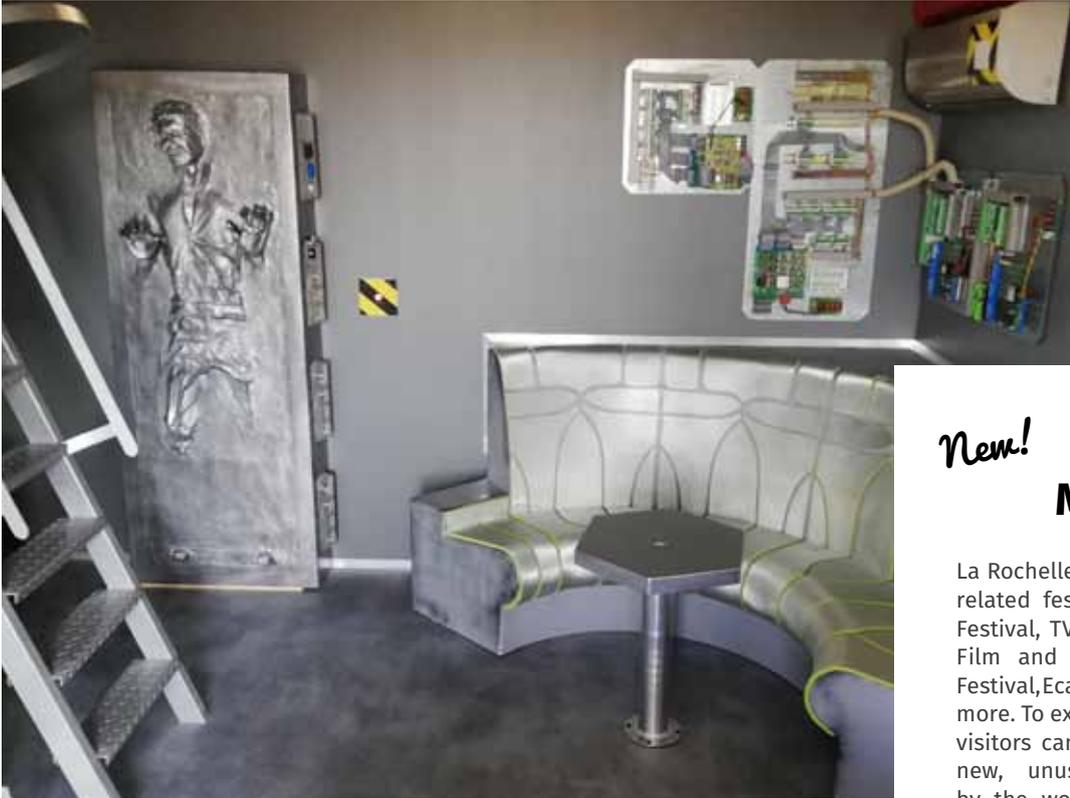
LA ROCHELLE
Accommodation

A MIX OF REFINEMENT AND ORIGINALITY

WHAT'S NEW*New!***La Villa
Grand Voile**

In April 2020, triple-Michelin-starred chef Christopher Coutanceau opened his own Relais & Châteaux hotel, "La Villa Grand Voile". In this former shipowner's house, located in the heart of the old town of La Rochelle, twelve rooms with outstanding facilities welcome visitors. In keeping with his restaurant, the chef offers his guests a timeless interlude where luxury and elegance are the order of the day. To round off a wonderful stay for the comfort of guests, a garden planted with palm trees and a heated swimming pool have been added to the numerous à la carte services.

villagrandvoile.com



New! **Le Making-Of**

La Rochelle is known for its many film-related festivals: La Rochelle Cinema Festival, TV Fiction Festival, Adventure Film and Book Festival, Ecran Vert Festival, Ecales Documentaries and many more. To extend the experience further, visitors can now book into this brand new, unusual guesthouse inspired by the world of great films, halfway between La Rochelle and Rochefort. The owners offer two family rooms, one with a "Harry Potter" theme and the other "Star Wars". Each room is interactive and offers special effects, for total immersion.

A new room is under construction, on the theme of "Avatar".

lemakingof.com



THEY'RE GETTING A MAKEOVER



The Maison
des Ambassadeurs

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Maison des Ambassadeurs, formerly Résidence de France, underwent a very fine transformation in 2020. Today, this new hotel pays tribute to the French ambassador and adventurer Albert Bodard, with its assertive style, elegant decoration and refined cuisine. The 5-star hotel, with its beautiful entrance under the arcades of the historic centre, is located on the estate where Albert Bodard had taken up residence, between the palace of Louis XIII and the old covered market.

maisondesambassadeurs.com



The Masqhotel

★★★★

A few steps from the Old Port, this hotel from the CosyHotel group was completely renovated in 2020. Here, you'll discover a whole new world full of exotic reminders, like an invitation to travel. The rooms have been redesigned for a warm and relaxing feel. The "L'Ouvrage à Cornes" lounge-bar and co-working space will satisfy customers for both business and tourism stays.

[masqhotel.com](https://www.masqhotel.com)



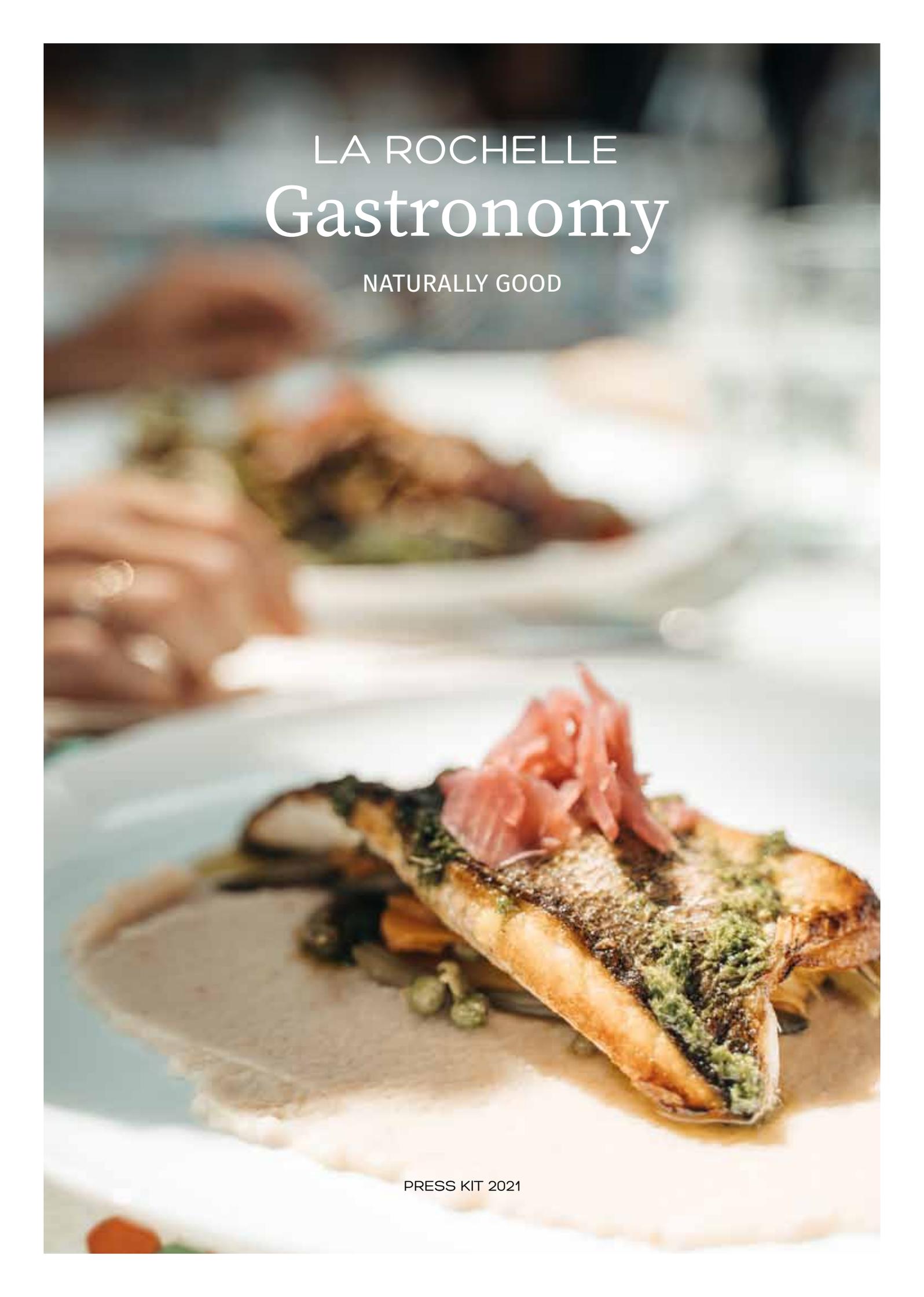


La Tour de Nesle

★ ★

Who has never dreamed of opening their shutters and waking up to an incredible view of the Old Port and its majestic towers? Located on the Old Port of La Rochelle, this elegant two-star hotel enjoys this remarkable location. Since 2019, the rooms and common areas has been renovated. Its strength? Offering an ideal location and quality comfort at affordable prices.

hotel-la-tour-de-nesle.com



LA ROCHELLE
Gastronomy

NATURALLY GOOD

PRESS KIT 2021

THE UNMISSABLES THE STARS OF LA ROCHELLE



Christopher Coutanceau



On 27 January 2020, Christopher Coutanceau was awarded his third star at the Michelin Guide ceremony. The flagship establishment of La Rochelle had proudly displayed its 2 stars since 1986, then under the leadership of chef Richard Coutanceau and his wife Maryse.

Passionate about the sea and a sailor since his earliest childhood, Chef Christopher Coutanceau is a fervent defender of sustainable fishing and no-waste cooking. In his eponymous restaurant, he and his partner Nicolas Brossard get on with the job.

coutanceaularochelle.com

L'Hysope



Nicolas Durif, chef at the restaurant l'Hysope, was awarded his 1st star in the Michelin Guide in 2018. He invites his guests to savour sophisticated cuisine, imbued with his childhood in Alsace and his speciality ... hysop (an aromatic plant) from which the restaurant takes its name. This refined, original regional cuisine can be enjoyed in the warm atmosphere of his restaurant, opened in 2015, in the village of La Jarrie, 20 minutes from La Rochelle.

lhysope.fr



WHERE TO ENJOY A GOOD SEAFOOD PLATTER?



La Yole de Chris

In summer 2018, Christopher Coutanceau opened a second restaurant, adjoining his first eponymous starred restaurant: La Yole de Chris. Located on Concurrency Beach, facing the ocean, this marine bistro offers friendly seafood cuisine, where you can enjoy seafood and fish from the auction in La Rochelle.

layoledechris.com

Le Panier de Crabes

Located on the very pretty Place de Fourche, in the quiet, bohemian "Saint-Nicolas" district, the Panier de Crabes offers generous platters of seafood. Crab, langoustines, oysters, periwinkles and whelks can be enjoyed in the shade of the foliage of a gigantic tree, away from the bustling life of the historic centre.

f @Lepanierdecrabes





New!

L'Auberge Paysanne des Marées

Located not far from the Port de Plomb in Nieul-sur-Mer, a coastal village north of La Rochelle, this new address offers an authentic experience in an oyster-farming atmosphere. With the marshes as a backdrop, the inn, labelled "Accueil Paysan", offers seafood, fish, Charente-Maritime cheeses and desserts produced on Île-de-Ré. A special mention for the oysters that come directly from where they're harvested on Île-de-Ré. These oysters are natural and wild, raised in the open sea. As for the fish, they come straight from the tank of Mobby Dick, a fisherman from Port du Plomb.

f @Auberge-Paysanne-des-Marais

Le Comptoir Saoufé

This unusual, friendly oyster bar is located in the heart of the historic town, on the Petite Rue du Port. Mary and Cyril welcome customers to "make themselves at home" and share their passion for the Charente region's produce. On the menu, seafood products (oysters, salmon, shrimps, whelks, sea urchins etc) or products from the farm (ostrich, snail, foie gras and so on) selected from local producers and artisans only!

lecomptoirsaoufe.com



Coquillages et Crustacés

Away from the crowds, in the small village of Houmeau, on the edge of its picturesque little fishing port, you'll discover a wonderful red and black wooden cabin. With its terrace by the water and view of the Port du Plomb and the ocean, Coquillages & Crustacés offers travellers a real breath of fresh air during their meal. On the menu, seafood, of course: oysters, seafood platter, seafood dishes, fish burger, stuffed clams, crab...

Coquillages & Crustacés, a place to discover as much for its cuisine as for its natural, invigorating setting.

coquillagesetcrustaces.com



L'Océan la Cabane

Located near Aytré Beach, l'Océan la Cabane provides visitors with a simple welcome and a view of the bay. When summer comes, the ideal is to enjoy a good seafood platter down by the sand. To complete this moment of togetherness and relaxation, the kitesurfers put on a show, offering an elegant choreography with their sails.

locean-la-cabane.eatbu.com

CRAFTSMEN AND KNOW-HOW

La Rochelle Central Market

La Rochelle's market takes place in the 19th-century "Les Halles" in the heart of the Old Town. Wednesdays and Saturdays are big market days. The stalls extend into the neighbouring streets. It's the essential place to give in to the temptation of the local produce. There's an entire aisle dedicated to seafood products: sea bass, cuttlefish, sardines, shrimps, oysters and mussels...

Some traders have been on the market for several generations, such as Chez Mèlie, which has been setting out its stall since 1891!



The Taste Trail

Every summer, the tour guides from La Rochelle's Tourist Office offer a gourmet walk to discover the flavours of the region, in the heart of the iconic La Rochelle market.

Here, visitors can meet local artisans and producers who are passionate about their work for discussions over a tasting of their products. The tour continues in the historic centre and its food shops. A perfect mix of cultural visit and tastings.

larochelle-tourisme.com





New!

Angoulins smokehouse



It's in an old oyster hut in Angoulins that Claire and Vincent chose to set up their small laboratory for artisanal fish smoking. Depending on the time of year and the fishing, the species vary between sea bass, sardines, cuttlefish or stone bass, to mention but a few. What do they have in common? They all come from local, responsible fishing.

Claire and Vincent sell their fish direct, but also offer tastings. On fine days, a few tables set up under a shady sail welcome customers to a natural setting in the heart of the oyster marshes. In this warm atmosphere, Claire always takes time to chat with customers and explain this artisanal know-how and the importance of consuming responsible fishing.

Their plus point: edible seaweed, harvested by hand by Claire on the Charente coast, is sold in the shop. An opportunity to try new flavours.

fumoir-angoulins.fr

Criollos Chocolatier

Created in 2004, the Criollos Chocolatier boutique has since become a real institution in La Rochelle. Located in the heart of the historic centre, this place is a must for true chocolate lovers looking to really awaken their senses.

Thomas Pontacq is a committed craftsman. He is a member of the "Club des Chocolatiers Engagés", a label that supports cocoa producers and defends a sustainable, quality cocoa industry. He also promotes short circuits and local products such as cream from Poitou Charente and AOC Surgères butter.

His speciality? "Pavés de La Rochelle®". A nice reference to the history of the town of La Rochelle and Rue de l'Escaie, whose cobblestones (pavés) come from the ballast of boats from many countries, reminders of the heyday of the merchant city.

criollos.fr





New! **Cognac
Normandin-Mercier**

At Domaine de la Péraudière, the Normandin-Mercier family welcome visitors in person for a tour of their cellars and the distillery, with a gourmet ending: the tasting of different Pineaux and Cognacs! Since 1872, five generations have followed each other and contributed to the production of prestigious Cognacs and Pineaux des Charentes. Today, it's Edouard Normandin's turn, owner and current cellar master, to perpetuate the art of ageing and blending the most refined brandies from Grande and Petite Champagne.

In December 2020, the Normandin family brought to the surface of the Atlantic Ocean 24 decanters of a batch of Cognac from Petite Champagne from a great vintage (1976), which they had immersed there fourteen months earlier. The result: bottles beautifully decorated by the sea and contents with subtly iodised aromas. These bottles will be on sale to collectors and connoisseurs.

normandin-mercier.fr

New! **A marine cognac
created by
Christopher Coutanceau**

In January 2021, triple-Michelin-starred chef Christopher Coutanceau, head sommelier and co-owner Nicolas Brossard and Fanny Fougerat, winemaker and distiller of the Cognac appellation, met on Île-de-Ré to start experimenting with a cognac aged in barrels whose wood was dried by the ocean. These three lovers of their sea and wine-growing regions went on to produce 1140 bottles bearing the effigy of Restaurant Christopher Coutanceau.

But before getting there, the first step of this new cuvée involved placing staves (made by Tonnelleriede Jarnac) by the sea, on the Henry oyster production site. They aged there for a full year, soaking up the sea air. The aim then was to transmit these interesting maritime influences to the brandy. To date, the experiment has not yet been completed and the cognac that comes from this process will be completely new!
See you in 2022.

coutanceaularochelle.com



© Synmaps



La Rochelle Fishing Port

This is where it all starts. Every day, several species of fish and crustaceans are landed on the pontoons of the Fishing Port, heading for auction where fishermen, fishmongers, wholesalers and retailers rub shoulders. These seafood products are then shipped to the many restaurateurs in La Rochelle or end up on the market stalls.

Want to witness this know-how for yourself? In La Rochelle, you can! The team from the Fishing Port invites the curious to go behind the scenes by attending an auction of seafood products. Warm clothing and closed shoes are required to see the various facilities at the auction and trace all the stages of fish transportation.

The Fishing Port offers other activities, such as learning to lift off fish fillets like a fishmonger or a visit to the Fishing Port facilities which ends at Moules Brothers for a tasting of mussels.



Moules Brothers Interview with Benoit, Mussel Farmer

His garden is the sea. Coming from four generations of mussel producers in Esnandes, Benoit Durivaud cultivates this famous farmed mussel, raised on stakes. "Historically, this method was born in our Charentais straits", the mussel farmer explains. "The supply of water from the small rivers that mingle with the ocean in our bays promotes a certain sweetness and abundant nourishment that our shellfish filter. They like it here and acquire their orange-yellow flesh colour and fine flavour, neither too salty nor too iodised. This results in a smooth, pleasant-tasting product which is sufficient on its own. We don't have to add anything to it, even though some local recipes, such as mouclade, are delicious", adds our noble representative of this flagship product of the La Rochelle region.

port-peche-larochelle.com
moulesbrothers.fr



PIZZA PLOTE - Crédit photo : Mélanie Chaigneau

Le Guigne Chèvre

What would a Charentais table be without goat's cheese? In Vêrines, Ferme du Guigne Chèvre opens its doors* to visitors and eagerly shares the art of moulding and maturing in the heart of the goat farm, which has nearly 450 goats. A wide selection of quality cheeses is yours to discover and, above all, taste. Their specialities: guigne frais, "sur feuille", crottin, pyramide, carré and petit guigne.

* the tour of the goat farm is free

routedesfromagesdechevre.fr/sarl-le-guigne-chevre

A woman with shoulder-length brown hair, wearing a light-colored sweater and dark blue jeans, is walking away from the camera down a long, narrow stone-paved walkway. The walkway is flanked by a series of stone arches supported by columns. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The overall atmosphere is one of historical charm and architectural beauty.

LA ROCHELLE Heritage

A STROLL AROUND TOWN



The Old Port an icon

The Old Port is a must when you visit La Rochelle, whether for a day, weekend, week or even a lifetime! A true blue lung in the heart of the old town, it's the jewel of this maritime city. Its lively quays offer visitors a moment of relaxation to stroll around a breathtaking setting where ages intermingle. It's true that life here is in full swing: bars and terraces on the Duperré and Valin quays, restaurants at the foot of the majestic towers, a craft market in the shade of the trees in the Cour des Dames and the comings and goings of cruise ships at sea!

The city has been working for several years to bring out the best of its Old Port, which is now completely pedestrianised. The main focus is therefore on walkers and cyclists, who'll love the calm and serenity of its surrounding area.

The Towers of La Rochelle

ST NICHOLAS' TOWER

A true urban keep and palatial residence facing the ocean, this military building symbolises the power and wealth of La Rochelle. 42 metres high, its architecture revolves around a maze of stairs and corridors built into the thickness of the walls.

CHAIN TOWER

Gateway to the Old Port, the Chain Tower monitored ship movements, port traffic and collected fees and taxes.

LANTERN TOWER

The last medieval lighthouse on the Atlantic coast, 70 metres high, topped by an octagonal Gothic spire, the tower has served throughout history as a lighthouse and prison. This prison function explains some 600 pieces of graffiti by British, Dutch and Spanish privateers.

tours-la-rochelle.fr





The Old Town, an open-air museum

For lovers of history and old buildings, a walk through the centre of La Rochelle is like stepping back in time. From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, from the 17th to the 20th century up to modern times, La Rochelle offers up all the richness of its heritage in the open air in the heart of town. Churches, cathedrals, a temple, arcaded streets, half-timbered houses, large shipowners' mansions, beautiful bourgeois residences ... the architectural diversity of the buildings in La Rochelle is a mark of all the cultural influences from Europe and across the Atlantic that the city has experienced.





The quirky **Saint-Nicolas** district

A real village within the city, this former fishermen's quarter is very popular with the people of La Rochelle. Its cobbled streets and tree-lined square, its houses nestled under ancient arcades and its little village feel give it a charm all its own. Now the "bohemian" district, it houses thrift stores, art galleries, bookstores, designer boutiques, grocery stores and small restaurants with intimate terraces. It's the ideal district for a "Made in La Rochelle" shopping stop and relaxing break.



Gabut district Stronghold of La Rochelle's street art



Recognisable by its colourful Scandinavian-influenced wooden houses and surrounded by lakes, this popular former fishing village is known for its lively life. It's home to restaurants, cafes, art galleries and even bicycle rental companies. But above all, there is the Gabut wasteland which comes alive every summer. A space loved by graffiti artists and fans of street art, whose walls reveal the multiple talents and graphic richness of this urban art.

L'Encan The renaissance of a district

In 1995, the Fishing Port was relocated from the Bassin des Chalutiers to new, more modern infrastructure in Chef-de-Baie. The site then changed its look due to the impulse of political choice, to turn towards culture and tourism. A Congress and Exhibition Centre was created in the old completely refurbished fish market, craftsmen took possession of the former fishmongers' huts to set up their workshops and sell their creations and the land-based installations of the Maritime Museum were built at the end of the Bassin des Chalutiers. La Rochelle Aquarium would open at the edge of the Bassin des Grands Yachts in 2000.



Maritime Museum

Ships to visit, a maritime heritage to experience! The museum offers three visitor areas to immerse yourself in the heart of the maritime world. On land, under the colourful pavilions, the maritime history of La Rochelle is retraced through several exhibition rooms. Following on from the old auction house, a collection of small pleasure boats, unique in France, is on display there, as well as the large temporary "Climat Océan" exhibition. On the water, you'll find a wonderful heritage fleet, including the iconic France 1, a former meteorological frigate. The public can come aboard to "experience" and understand the history of the various ships and what they do. On these same quays, exceptional private classic yachts can be seen from the pontoons.

museemaritimelarochelle.fr

More info on the "Climat Océan" exhibition on page 52



La Rochelle Aquarium

A unique journey to dream and better understand the sea! Born from a family passion for the marine world, La Rochelle Aquarium is one of the largest private aquariums in Europe. Today, the 3rd generation is taking over the baton of this wonderful institution which every year welcomes nearly 800 000 visitors, allowing the financing of numerous scientific research projects and activities to raise public awareness about the preservation of biodiversity.

aquarium-larochelle.com

LA ROCHELLE Shopping

OUR "MADE IN LA ROCHELLE" WISH LIST

1.

Deckchairs **EspritVoiles**

Design and manufacture of bags and accessories in marine canvas. Sylvie designs and creates all these models in her workshop in La Rochelle. An eco-responsible company full of positive energy, the objective is zero waste.

espritvoiles.fr

2.

Knives **Farol**

Artisanal manufacture of marine knives since 1996. The company is labelled "EPV" (Entreprise de Patrimoine Vivant/Living Heritage Company) for its unique know-how and innovations in making knives.

farol.fr

3.

Baskets **Matlama**

Manufacture of bags and baskets with daring designs using unusual, durable materials: oyster bag, boat sail, pool cover... All these original models are designed by Marina Richer in La Rochelle and manufactured in limited series.

matlama.fr

4.

Tide calendar **Atelier SerreJoint**

Emeline, a graphic designer, and her partner, who farms a salt marsh on Île-de-Ré, live to the rhythm of the tides and the salt harvest. Together, they create the tide calendar, designed and screen printed by Emeline herself. In 2004, she founded her studio and the tide calendar became her flagship project.

atelierserrejoint.com

5.

Plates **Alma Mater Céramiques**

The Alma Mater Céramiques workshop-boutique is a design office dedicated to local clays, as well as being a workshop for creating everyday objects and tableware in a modern, refined, pared down style. Aliénor also teaches modelling and turning there during workshops. In her studio shop, you'll find beautiful crockery sets, vases, bowls and very thin cups, pleasant to the touch and in the colours of the Atlantic coast.

atelialmamaterceramiques.com

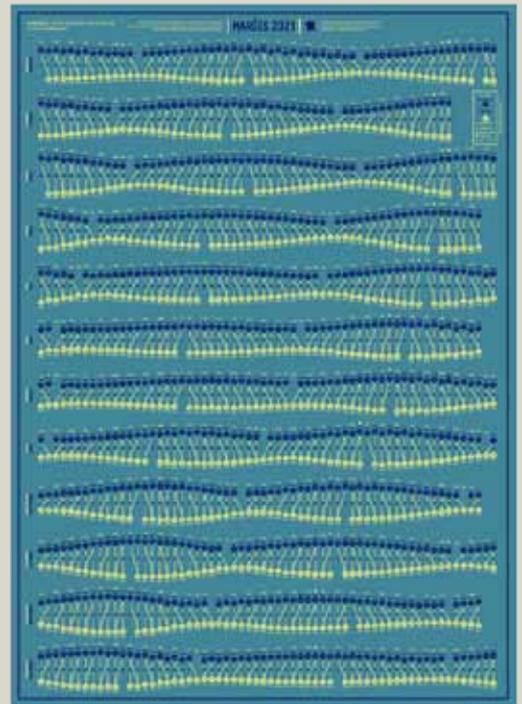
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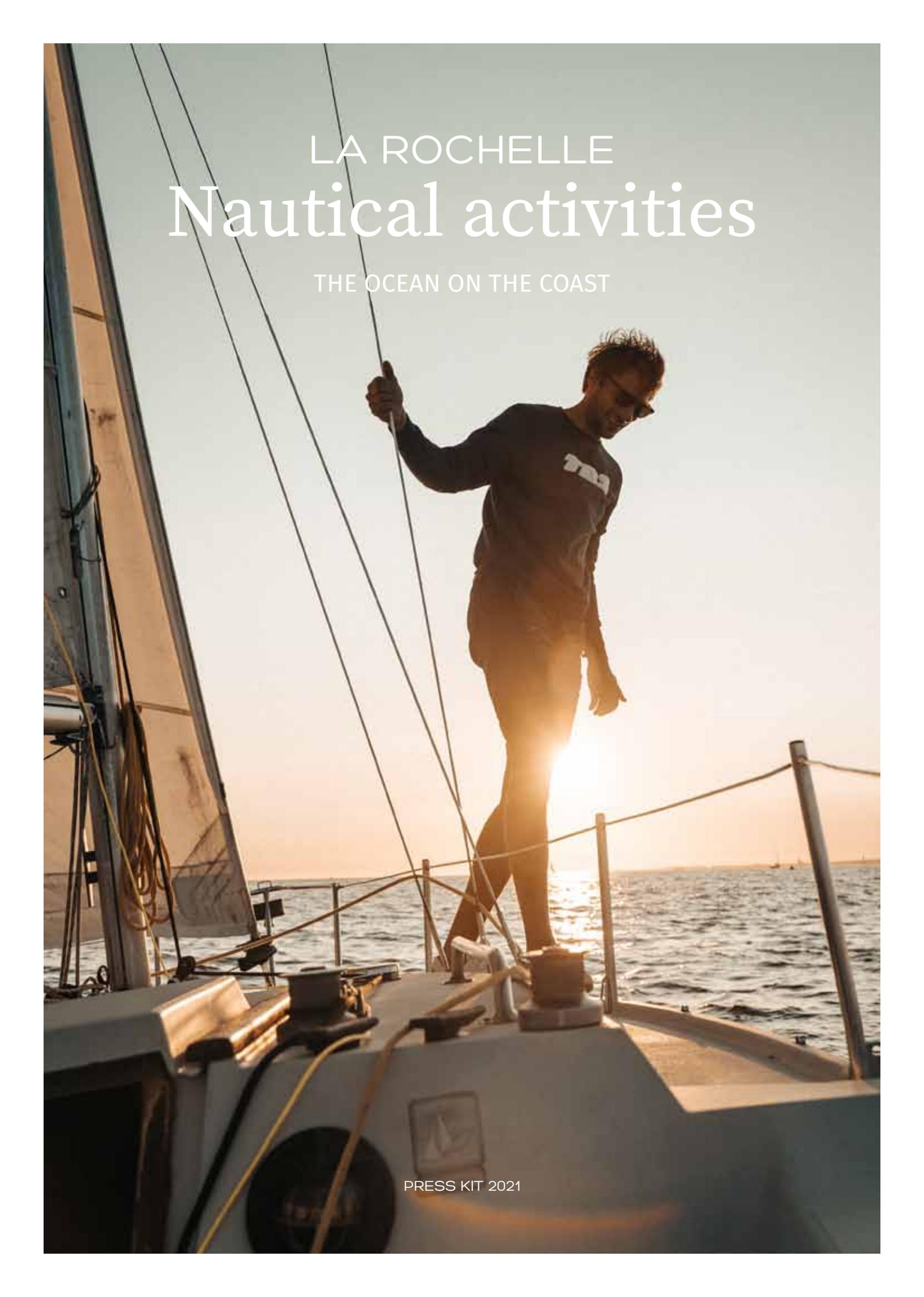
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4.

5.



A man in a dark wetsuit and sunglasses stands on the deck of a sailboat, holding onto a rope. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow over the ocean. The sailboat's rigging and mast are visible on the left side of the frame.

LA ROCHELLE Nautical activities

THE OCEAN ON THE COAST

Coastal trip by paddleboard

Located at the edge of La Platère Beach in Angoulins, the Nautical Centre enjoys both a protected bay next to the sea and a closed basin that's perfect for beginners. The stability of these wide paddle boards makes it a sport that's accessible to everyone. The Nautical Centre offers this type of paddling trip along the coast, as far as the port of Loiron to the south or for a tour towards the Pointe du Chay and its marshes to the north.

cnangoulins.com



Yoga Paddle with the girls to recharge your batteries

For a relaxing moment with the girls, it's all happening at Glow Yoga: girly atmosphere guaranteed with their pink boards!

Inspired by California, yoga paddle is a way to relax while toning your body in preparation for summer! The objective: follow the instructor's lead and string the postures together... without falling in the water!

glowyoga.fr

WEIGH ANCHOR & SAIL FROM ISLAND TO ISLAND

From the Old Port of La Rochelle, visitors can set off on an extraordinary trip: with a mix of unforgettable places to visit and exceptional views, new experiences are guaranteed. By cruise ship, catamaran or sailboat, there are many possibilities on offer. For children, nothing could be better than a sea trip to the famous Fort Boyard, at the crossroads of the islands of Aix and Oléron! La Rochelle is also the ideal place to discover sailing. Take a day to learn to tame the winds aboard a sailboat or, for the youngest, a week of sailing lessons aboard the little optimist dinghies.



Kelone

Bertrand, captain of the sailboat "Kelone, the most beautiful boat in the world" as he likes to call it, shares his passion for sailing during a sea trip lasting a few hours or several days. Using the power of the wind, a wonderful renewable energy, he invites you to (re)discover the pleasure of sailing.

kelone.fr

Mer Belle Évènements

A former offshore racer, Fabien Clauw has taken part three times in the Solitaire du Figaro and in numerous international crewed championships.

A passionate skipper, he takes his apprentice sailors out on the waters of the Breton Straits, as well as through his novels. A writer and novelist and 2016 laureate of the Académie de Marine Française, he is the author of a saga of maritime adventures "The adventures of Gilles Belmonte".

merbelleevenements.com



Kapalouest

A morning's discovery heading out towards the islands, an afternoon adventure around Fort Boyard or even dinner out in the open sea at sunset, Kapalouest promises wonderful moments at sea in the Charentais straits aboard its 16-metre-long catamarans.

An unusual trip out? It's possible to book a trip aboard the Columbus, the legendary sailboat of the Vendée Globe which was also used by the WWF and Sea Shepherd for their awareness-raising campaigns.

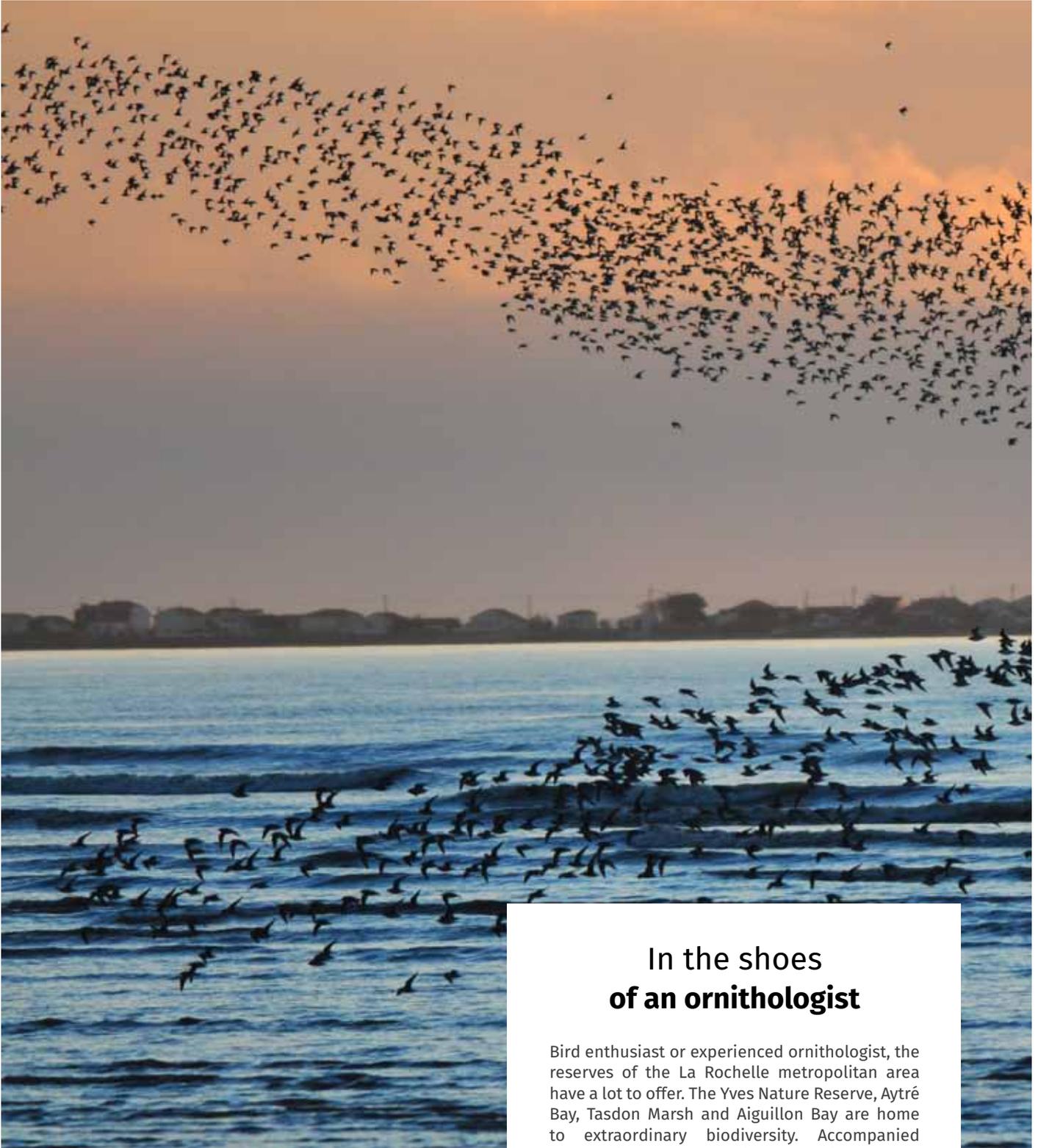
kapalouest.com

LA ROCHELLE Nature outings

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS 2021

PRESS KIT 2021





In the shoes of an ornithologist

Bird enthusiast or experienced ornithologist, the reserves of the La Rochelle metropolitan area have a lot to offer. The Yves Nature Reserve, Aytré Bay, Tasdon Marsh and Aiguillon Bay are home to extraordinary biodiversity. Accompanied by a guide from the Bird Protection League (LPO), you can observe the different species of migratory birds that inhabit the mudflats while they regain their strength to continue their long migratory journey. The LPO offers various nature outings and activities for families.

poitou-charentes.lpo.fr



Trip to the end of the world

Head out to sea and let yourself be carried along by the ocean spray ... that's what La Rochelle's coast offers travellers who need a change of scenery. Head to Parc des Pères, located in the Minimes district in La Rochelle, for a refreshing stroll by the sea. Crossed right through by a pedestrian path shared between walkers, cyclists and joggers, this park with its southern vegetation offers an incredible balcony on the sea. On a sunny day, it's even possible to see Fort Boyard hidden between two silhouetted boats. This walk leads to Minimes Beach and its "Lighthouse at the End of the World". Inaugurated in 2000, it's an exact replica of the one located on Staten Island in Argentine waters, off Cape Horn, made famous by the novel by Jules Verne, published in 1905.

lephareduboutdumonde.com



Take it easy along the Rompsay Canal

Far from the crowds, head for the calm, soothing waters of the canal. This odyssey of greenery can be discovered on foot, by bike and especially by canoe. 24 km long, it's dotted with remarkable points, leisure and picnic areas, and follows the routes of La Vélodyssée® and La Vélo Francette®, to the delight of cyclists. A real breath of fresh air just a few kilometres from central La Rochelle.



**Rent a “carrelet”
for a 100% Charentais
experience**

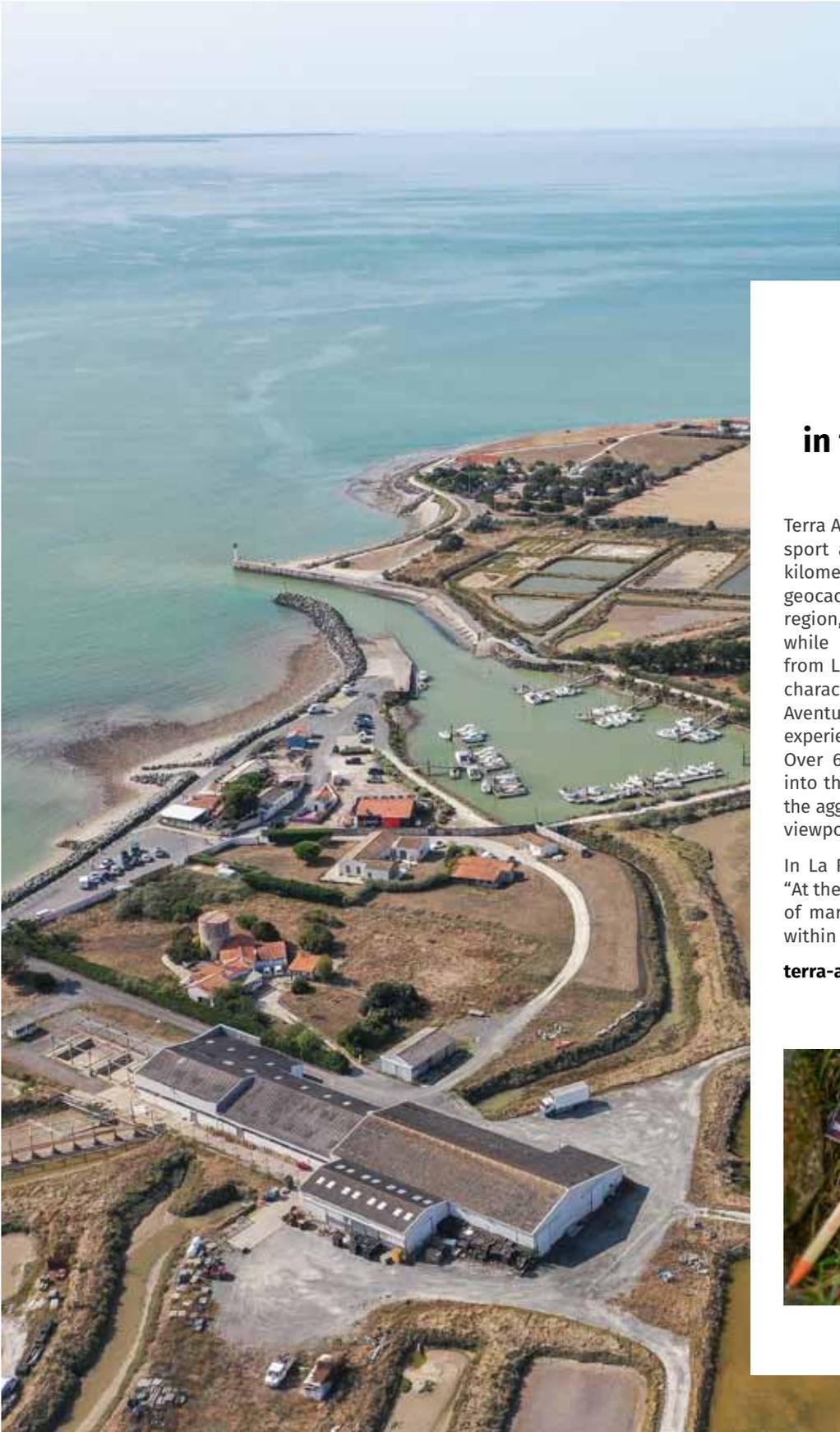


Typical of the Charentais coast, “carrelets” are fishing huts whose pontoons jut out over the sea so that fishermen can lower their large square nets into the water and bring up all sorts of species: eels, shrimp, sole etc, depending on their luck and the season. So for fishing, or just to spend a day with friends, the carrelets of Esnandes and Angoulins are available for hire for one tide (around €50).

Angoulins: cnangoulins.com

Esnandes: maison-baiemaraispoitevin.fr





Terra Aventura a treasure hunt in the heart of natural landscapes

Terra Aventura is an original walk combining sport and culture, a treasure hunt a few kilometres long, based on the principle of geocaching, which lets you discover the region, the local heritage and its anecdotes while having fun! Just a few kilometres from La Rochelle, Zarthus (one of the little characters who populate the world of Terra Aventura) awaits visitors at Houmeau to experience the "Pearls of Plomb" adventure! Over 6.5 km, the route takes adventurers into the heart of the natural landscapes of the agglomeration to discover some beautiful viewpoints.

In La Rochelle, another route is available, "At the towers of La Rochelle", on the theme of maritime heritage and must-see places within the city.

terra-aventura.fr



LA ROCHELLE & ITS URBAN AREA ON TWO WHEELS



Here, the bike is king: from north to south and west to east, with 2 cycle routes and more than 230 km of cycle facilities, the urban area is open to holidaymakers on two wheels! Whether you like to travel along the seafront from port to port, or prefer to go green by heading up the Romsay Canal, anything is possible by bike.



TOP TIP:

Plan your route on the free Loopi app for a safe journey. The app offers bike enthusiasts the opportunity to discover lots of circuits to do in the area. Once your route is chosen, all you need to do is let yourself be guided by the integrated GPS (available offline). The app also offers a route planner which recommends the best route, focusing on biking roads and cycle paths.

balades.larochelle-tourisme.com





La Vélodyssee©

This cycle route is the French part of Eurovélo-route no.1, which runs from Norway to Portugal. In Charente-Maritime, its route extends over 150 km. Easy, safe, marked out and dotted with unmissable treasures, it's accessible to all at any pace.

N°33 "L'ÉCHAPPÉE BUCOLIQUE"

(the Bucolic Getaway)

Between La Rochelle and Marans

25.5 km - 2hr30

Intermediate level

The plus points: the Marans Canal, its locks and vegetation hanging over the water

No.34 "L'ÉCHAPPÉE GUSTATIVE"

(the Tasty Getaway)

Between La Rochelle and Châtelaiillon-Plage

14.3 km - 1hr30

Family level

The plus points: the Belle Epoque villas of Châtelaiillon-Plage, the village of Boucholeurs, seafood tastings, the Ocean and its salty sea air

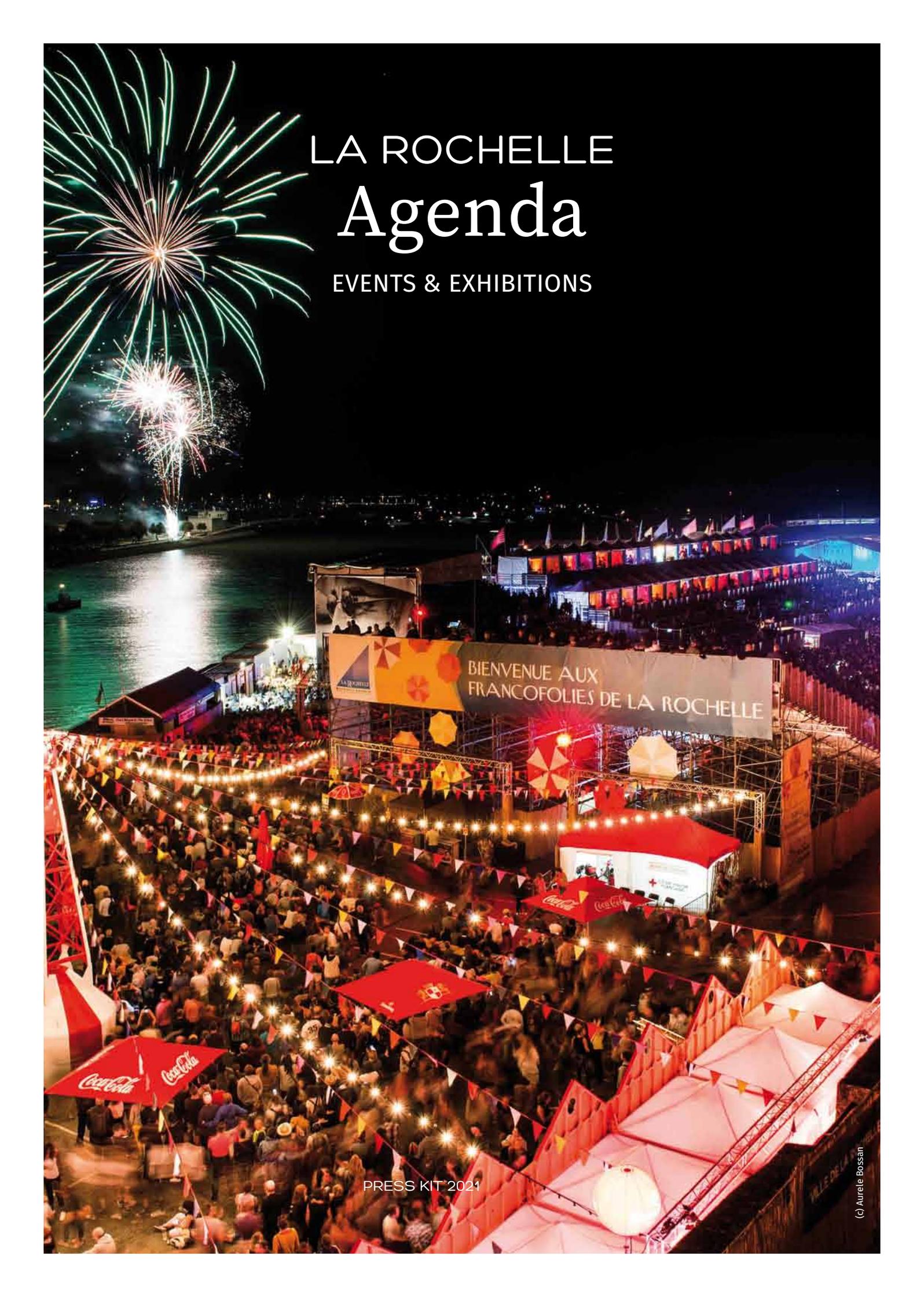
lavelodyssee.com

La Vélofrancette©

This 630 km long cycle route links the English Channel to the Atlantic from the city of Caen in Normandy as far as La Rochelle, for a 100% natural journey to discover the sweet flavours of France. It joins the Vélodyssee at the Marans Canal and ends its route at the foot of the Towers of La Rochelle.

lavelofrancette.com



An aerial night photograph of a large festival. In the upper left, several bright green and white fireworks burst against the dark sky. Below them, a large crowd of people is gathered on a waterfront area. A prominent banner in the center reads "BIENVENUE AUX FRANCOFOLIES DE LA ROCHELLE". The scene is illuminated by warm lights, including strings of small lights and large red umbrellas with the Coca-Cola logo. In the background, a long row of colorful flags is visible along the waterfront.

LA ROCHELLE Agenda

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

PRESS KIT 2021

THE BIG EVENTS



25 June to 4 July

La Rochelle Film Festival

festival-larochelle.org

 @festivallarochellecinema



10 to 14 July

Francofolies de La Rochelle

francofolies.fr

 @francofoliesdelarochelle



15 to 19 September

Festival of TV Fiction

festival-fictiontv.com

 @festivalfiction



28 September to 3 October

Grand Pavois La Rochelle

grand-pavois.com

 @GrandPavois



15 to 21 November

International Adventure Film and Book Festival

festival-film-aventure.com

 @festivalaventurelarochelle



28 November

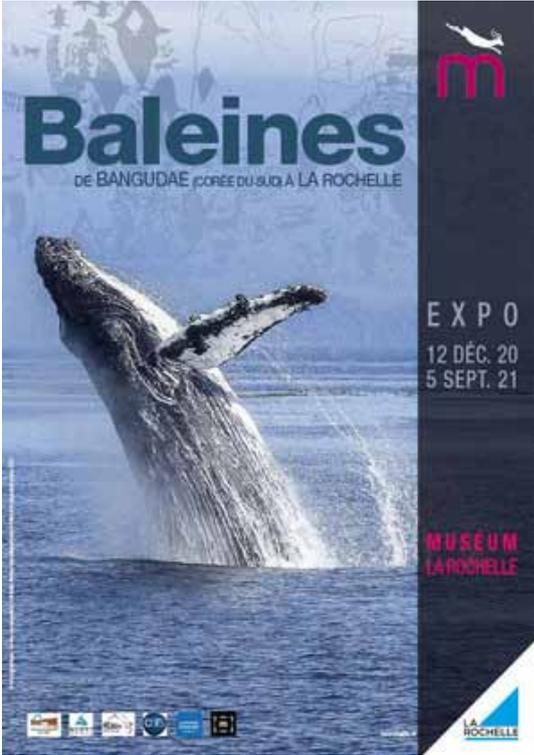
La Rochelle Marathon

marathondelarochelle.com

 @marathonLR

This information is subject to change due to the current health situation.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS



WHALES, FROM BANGUDAË TO LA ROCHELLE

**NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
12 December 2020 to 5 September 2021**

Whales occupy a big place on our blue planet! The exhibition invites you on a dive with these fascinating animals. Here, you can discover the diversity of these animals called "whales", travelling the world to explore the unique connections that link them to different peoples around myths and representations, observing the prehistoric engravings of whales at Bangudaë, a Korean site unique in the world, and finally understanding how the Museum of La Rochelle and the laboratories of La Rochelle University continue to advance our knowledge of these "monsters of the sea".

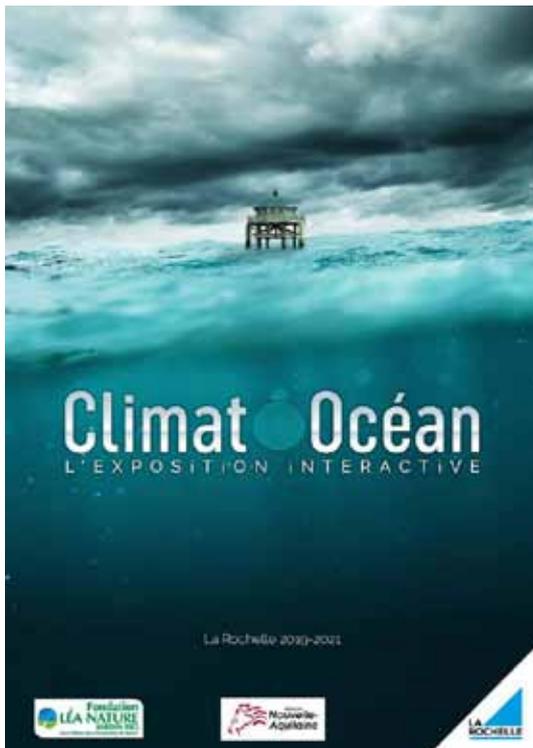
This exhibition is in partnership with Ulsan Museum, South Korea.

museum.larochelle.fr





(c) Julien Chauvet VLR



CLIMAT OCÉAN

MARITIME MUSEUM

9 November 2019 to 31 October 2022

The first major exhibition devoted to the ocean and its leading role in climate creation! Fun, scientific and engaging, it provides the keys to understanding the mechanisms of climate regulation and gradually increases the depth of visitors' experience, understanding and action to create an astonishing aesthetic sensation. Conceived in partnership with a scientific committee, it alerts the public and mobilises people's conscience.

Over 300m², it takes the visitor into a little-known, lush world for a unique experience. From the Atlantic coasts to the Pacific Islands, from the atmosphere to the depths of the abyss, we discover, among other things, the birth of a tornado and rising sea levels, thanks to innovative devices and interactive animations.

museemaritime.larochelle.fr

climat-ocean.fr





LA ROCHELLE

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holidays-la-rochelle.co.uk

