

#VoyageOccitanie



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*If you are running late, please inform the contact person indicated in the program below.*

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**Canal du Midi** : With its 328 works of art and a unique landscape shaped by man, the canal du Midi is a true gem boasting an outstanding natural and built heritage. The technical feat of its excavation in the 17th century is a remarkable civil engineering achievement. This is why it has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1996. A genuine link between the lands it passes through, the canal bears witness to successive eras and leaves an astonishingly diverse legacy of intangible heritage. Discover the history of the canal du Midi through anecdotes and by visiting and experiencing the must-see sites along the waterside!

**History** : Designed in the 17th century by the engineer Pierre-Paul Riquet at Louis XIV's request and inaugurated in 1681, the canal du Midi runs for 240 kilometres and connects Toulouse to Sète, on the shores of the

Mediterranean. An exceptional work of art, considered to be the largest construction site at the time (thousands of workers at work for 14 years), the canal du Midi opened a prosperous page in the history of river trade in the south of France by allowing goods, wheat, to pass from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic without going around the Iberian Peninsula since the Garonne was then navigable downstream from Toulouse to Bordeaux. Nowadays, with the canal de Garonne, cruise ships no longer sail on the river to Langon (on the outskirts of Bordeaux).

#### More information about the Canal du Midi:

- [Major sites – the source of the canal du Midi](#)
- [UNESCO](#)
- [The Canal du Midi by boat](#)
- [Canal du Midi -Béziers](#)

#### Saturday 19 August

Arrival of the group (5 people) in Toulouse

Suggestions:

- **Hôtels** situated on the central Place du Capitole:

- Ibis Styles Toulouse Centre Capitole - [www.ibis-styles-capitole.com](http://www.ibis-styles-capitole.com)
- Le Grand Hôtel de l'Opéra - [www.grand-hotel-opera.com/fr/](http://www.grand-hotel-opera.com/fr/)

- **Restaurant**

- if the weather is warm, I'd suggest the "guinguette" **Turbine** (a trendy outdoor summer bar/restaurant) with the best view on the river Garonne – 11 Quai Saint-Pierre - [turbine-bazacle.fr/](http://turbine-bazacle.fr/)
- if the weather is cold, I'd suggest the classy brasserie **Le Bibent** (since 1848) – good food and the interior is classified historical monument – 1 place du Capitole - [www.bibent.fr](http://www.bibent.fr)

#### Sunday 20 August

→ Please note that the locks are open from 8h to 12h30 and from 13h30 to 19h.

10h00 Arrival of the last group member in Toulouse airport

10h45 Transfer from Toulouse airport to Le Boat in Castelnaudary with the transport company RUBAN BLEU – Djelloul CHENA

*Toulouse airport–Castelnaudary: 70 km – 50 minutes*

Free visit of Castelnaudary (the group can leave their luggage at Le Boat)

- Suggestion: Lunch at the restaurant Le Centre et Lauragais - 31 Cour de la République, 11400 Castelnaudary - [www.le-centre-hotel.fr/](http://www.le-centre-hotel.fr/) situated 900m – 11 minutes away from Le Boat.

15h Check in at Le Boat in Castelnaudary:

- Installation in the boat and sailing instructions with a skipper

# Canal du Midi

**From Castelnaudary to Port Cassafières  
20-27 August**



- While part of the crew is settling on the boat, the other part can buy groceries 10 minutes away (by foot) in the city centre at the Spar. Make sure you have enough provisions for a lunchtime on board on Monday.

16h30-18h30

Begin sailing to **Castelnaudary → Villepinte: 15 locks - Approximately 4.5 hours**  
Sail as far as you can / wish

Diner on board

Night along the canal

## **Monday 21 August – Villepinte → Villesèquelande**

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08h-09h Breakfast

09h-12h Continue sailing to **Villepinte**

12h Lunch suggestion : Les Deux Acacias - 23 route départementale 6113, 11150 Villepinte  
Phone : [+33 4 68 94 24 67](tel:+33468942467) - Mobile : [+33 7 49 14 86 35](tel:+33749148635) - [Web](#)

13h30-16h30 **Villepinte → Bram: 3 locks – 2h**

If the timing allows: **Villepinte** is a nice place to take out your bikes and enjoy the beautiful canal scenery on two wheels.

**Bram:** If the sailing schedule allows visits:

- **Bram village** is a quiet village built on a circular plan with a 13th century church at its heart. A pleasant walk or cycle along a pretty tree-lined avenue will take you directly to the village - [WEB](#)
- **Eburomagus** (Museum of archeology) - 2 avenue du Razès, 11150 BRAM - [WEB](#)
- **Les Essar(t)s, arts and culture** - Avenue Georges Clemenceau, 11150 BRAM - [WEB](#)

**Bram → Villesèquelande: 1 lock - 1h40**

3 dîner suggestions:

- L'Île aux Oiseaux, Port de 11150, Bram - [04 68 24 53 66](tel:0468245366)
- Cuisine d'ici et là, 2 avenue de la Malepère, 11150 Bram - [+33 4 68 78 68 83](tel:+33468786883) – [WEB](#)
- Le Clos Saint Loup, 69 avenue du Razès 11150 Bram, Phone [+33 4 68 76 11 91](tel:+33468761191) Mobile [+33 6 14 28 15 39](tel:+33614281539) - [WEB](#)

Night on board in Bram

## **Tuesday 22 August – Villesèquelande → Carcassonne**

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08h-09h Breakfast

09h-12h **Villesèquelande → Carcassonne: 5 locks – 3h**



Site de Montpellier (siège)  
64, rue Alcyone - CS 79507 - F-34960 Montpellier Cedex 2  
Tél : +33 (0)4 30 63 84 20 - [contact@crtoccitanie.fr](mailto:contact@crtoccitanie.fr)  
N° SIRET 83203965000013 - APE 7990Z

Site de Toulouse  
15 rue Rivals - CS 78543 - F-31685 Toulouse Cedex 6  
Tél : +33 (0)4 30 63 84 20 - [contact@crtoccitanie.fr](mailto:contact@crtoccitanie.fr)

- 12h-13h30 Lunch suggestions close to the canal, area also called the Bastide Saint-Louis:
- Chez Fred, 31 boulevard Omer Sarrault, 86 rue Albert Tomey, 11000 Carcassonne - [+33 4 68 72 02 23](tel:+33468720223) - [WEB](#)
  - Le Jardin en Ville, 5 rue des framboisiers, 11000 Carcassonne - [+33 4 68 47 80 91](tel:+33468478091) - [+33 6 48 48 68 60](tel:+33648486860) - [WEB](#)
  - Le Verre d'Un, 2 rue de Verdun, 11000 Carcassonne - [+33 4 68 71 43 99](tel:+33468714399) - [WEB](#)

**Carcassonne** : Visit the Medieval City of Carcassonne - [WEB](#). Go by foot or take a taxi. Step into a fairytale: You'll see it appear in the distance like a vision, crowning a hill in the midst of the vineyards. [Carcassonne](#), its **52 towers** and 3km long double city wall **encapsulates how everyone imagines a medieval town. UNESCO listed it in 1997** and you're invited to the party to celebrate its 1000 years of military architecture. Enter through the Narbonne gate. Walk around the town, soak up the buzzing restaurants and boutiques, stop in the 12th century **count's château** built by the Trencavels and visit **Saint-Nazaire Basilica**.

- 13h45 Meeting at the Cité Tourist Office, at the entrance to the Medieval City, 21 Rue Cros Mayrevieille, 11000 Carcassonne with Séverine Jung for a visit of the outer fortifications of the City, the streets and the Basilica of Saint Nazaire with a tour guide. Duration 1h30. No entry planned in the Château Comtal.

- 20h Diner suggestion in the Cite:
- La Barbacane (Michelin-star gourmet restaurant), Place Auguste-Pierre Pont, La Cité, 11000 Carcassonne - [+33 4 68 71 98 71](tel:+33468719871) - [WEB](#)
  - Auberge des Lices, 3 rue Raymond Roger de Trencavel, La Cité, 11000 Carcassonne - [+33 4 68 72 34 07](tel:+33468723407) - [WEB](#)
  - La Table de Franck Putelat (2 stered Michelin restaurant), 80 chemin des Anglais 11000 Carcassonne - [+33 4 68 71 80 80](tel:+33468718080) - [WEB](#)

Night on board in Carcassonne

### Wednesday 23 August – Carcassonne → Puichéric

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- 08h-09h Breakfast
- 09h-12h **Carcassonne → Trèbes: 7 locks – 3h - Refill water and/or fuel if needed.**
- 12h-13h30 Lunch suggestions:
- Le Quai, 6 bis rue Pierre Curie, 11800 Trèbes - [+33 9 73 68 97 60](tel:+33973689760) - [WEB](#)
  - 2 rue du moulin, 11800 Trèbes - [+33 4 68 78 97 57](tel:+33468789757) - [+33 6 31 63 09 79](tel:+33631630979) - [WEB](#)

**Trèbes:** If the sailing schedule allows visits:

- Domaine des Pères (Olive oil Producer) - [WEB](#)
- Domaine de Cantaluez (Wine tasting) - [WEB](#)

14h30-16h **Trèbes → Marseillette : 3 locks, 2 h**

**Marseillette:** The village sits on a rocky outcrop between the River Aude and the Canal du Midi. Research suggests that the village was inhabited as far back as 2000 BC, during the Bronze Age, under the name of Villacano.

16h-19h **Marseillette → Puichéric : 8 locks – 2h40**

**Puichéric:** Situated in the heart of the Aude department, between Carcassonne and Narbonne, Puichéric, known as "The Venice of the Minervois", is a commune crossed by three rivers: the Canal du Midi, the Aude and the Rigole. Its main activity is wine growing.

Diner on board  
Night on board in Puichéric

#### **Thursday 24 August – Puichéric → Somail**

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08h-09h Breakfast

09h-11h **Puichéric → Homps: 7 locks – 3h - Refill water and/or fuel if needed**

On the way, at **La Redorte**, don't miss the "Epanchoir de l'Argent Double", a listed historic monument. The Vauban's design construction begun in 1677 and was completed in 1694, it allows the canal du Midi to drain off its overflow of water into the river Argent-Double.

**Homps:** If the sailing schedule allows visits:

- Maison des Vins du Minervois, 35 quai des tonneliers, 11200 Homps - [+33 4 68 91 29 48](#) - [WEB](#)

11h30-13h30 **Begin sailing Homps → Paraza: 4 locks – 2h20**

Lunch suggestions:

- La Guinguette, Rue de la fontaine fraîche, 11200 Argens-Minervois - [+33 4 68 41 51 96](#) - [+33 6 17 74 29 25](#) - [WEB](#)
- La Terrasse du Port, Avenue du port, 11200 Argens-Minervois - [+33 6 02 17 11 89](#) - [WEB](#)

Continue sailing to **Paraza**

16h **Paraza :** Wine tasting at Château de Paraza : 1 rue du Viala, 11200 Paraza - [+33 9 64 33 37 43](#) - [+33 7 78 19 16 41](#) - [WEB](#) – About 500meters - 4 minutes on bike – 8mn by foot

17h30 **Paraza → Le Somail: 0 locks – 1h10**



Diner suggestions:

- L'Ô à la bouche, 4 allée des Cyprès, LE SOMAIL, 11120 GINESTAS - [+33 4 68 46 00 09](tel:+33468460009) - [WEB](#)
- L'Escale du Somail, 65 allée de la glacière, 11120 SAINT-NAZAIRE-D'AUDE - [+33 4 68 42 22 61](tel:+33468422261) - [WEB](#)
- Auberge du Somail, 1 chemin de halage, LE SOMAIL, 11120 SAINT-NAZAIRE-D'AUDE - [+33 4 68 70 71 02](tel:+33468707102) - [WEB](#)
- Le Comptoir Nature, 1 chemin de halage, LE SOMAIL, 11120 SAINT-NAZAIRE-D'AUDE - [+33 4 68 46 01 61](tel:+33468460161) - [WEB](#)

Night on board in Le Somail

### Friday 25 August

08h-09h	Breakfast
09h-10h30	<p><b>Le Somail:</b> Visit of Le Somail and the famous library.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The village: In the Minervois region, the hamlet of Le Somail is like a little paradise, and even today it's still steeped in the atmosphere of the 17th century. A rich history, but a place that's not stuck in the past. <a href="#">A little history</a>: The Canal du Midi was completed in 1682. The port of Le Somail was built as a mooring place (hence the name "Somail", which comes from the Old French word for "sleep"). For travellers on mail boats, it was an important rest stop between Toulouse and Sète.</li><li>• Librairie Ancienne (The old librairie) : 28 allées de la glacière, Le Somail, 11120 Saint-Nazaire-d'Aude</li></ul>
11h-12h30	<p>Begin sailing <b>Le Somail → Capestang: 0 locks – 3h</b></p> <p>On the way, don't miss the lowest bridge along the Canal du Midi</p> <p>Lunch on board</p>
14h-15h30	<p><b>Capestang → Tunnel de Malpas – Colombiers: 0 locks – 1h30</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Capestang</b>, literally the "cap de l'étang" / "cape of the pond", owes its name to its strategic position at the head of an ancient lagoon. Don't miss out on its exceptional heritage: first and foremost, the collegiate church of Saint-Etienne, as beautiful as it is imposing, but also the château and its 15th-century painted ceiling.</li><li>• <b>Tunnel de Malpas</b>: The Malpas tunnel is the one and only tunnel on the entire length of the Canal du Midi, between Toulouse and Marseillan. Passing under the hill of Ensérune, it is the symbol of Pierre-Paul Riquet's obstinacy. At this point, the canal was facing the hill. How was the canal to be built? Tempers flared. And a veritable cabal was organised: horsemen rode to Paris to ask Jean-Baptiste Colbert (minister of finances of Louis XIV) to intervene. Against all the odds, in just eight days a test gallery was cut through the crumbly sandstone of the hill and secured by a cemented vault. Pierre-Paul Riquet had won, and the road to Béziers was open.</li></ul>

• **Colombiers:** is a charming little town where life is good. The gentle sunshine gently bathes its river port on the Canal du Midi. The intimacy and serenity of the setting literally seduce you from the moment you arrive. This feeling of well-being will stay with you all day, whether you're cruising on the Canal or strolling through the town centre.

If the sailing schedule allows visit: **Discover the church of Saint-Sylvestre and Sainte-Colombe:** As soon as you arrive in the historic heart of the village, you'll quickly realise that Colombiers has been around for centuries. Agriculture, winegrowing: even today, local life is dedicated to the land.

Surprisingly, there are also traces of the Visigoth people. Enter the church. The earliest traces of a religious building date back to the early Christian period. What a surprise! It's unusual and good to know. The village also has a small Romanesque church that has withstood various invasions. It is still intact. A pleasure to behold!

Diner suggestions:

- Le Bistrot de Colombiers, 19 avenue de Béziers, 34440 Colombiers - +33 4 67 62 63 96 - [WEB](#)
- Au Lavoir (guide Gault Millau, Michelin), rue du Lavoir, 34440 Colombiers - +33 4 67 26 16 15 - [WEB](#)

Night on board in Colombiers

### Saturday 26 August

07h-08h Breakfast on board

08h Go through the Fonséranes locks : 9 locks

• **The 9 locks of Fonséranes:** This spectacular water staircase, a major structure on the Canal du Midi, was Pierre-Paul Riquet's gift to his hometown. L'Octuple (8 locks, 9 successive basins), built between 1676 and 1680, spans a height difference of 21.50 m over a length of 300 m. The refurbished and modernised site reopened to the public on 1 July 2017. Traditional buildings such as the Coche d'eau - now the Maison du Site, with Tourist Office, screening room for an exceptional film, shop and panoramic restaurant - and the lock-keeper's house have survived to this day.

Lunch suggestion:

- Le 9 – Le restaurant des 9 écluses - <https://www.le9.fr>

**Fonseranes → Béziers: 2 locks 40 mn**

• **Béziers:** Crossed by the River Orb, surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea and the Languedoc wine-growing plain, Béziers will win you over. Experience a gentle journey through time: from Roman times with its ancient amphitheater and arenas, to the memory of medieval villages and the Albigensian Crusade, its Saint Nazaire cathedral, and Allées Paul Riquet.



Destination  
**Occitanie**  
Comité Régional du Tourisme

## Canal du Midi

From Castelnaudary to Port Cassafières  
20-27 August

- In Béziers, you will cross the Orb River by the beautiful canal bridge which enables boats on the Canal to cross the river easily.

**Béziers → Port Cassafières: 3 locks – 2h30**

- **Port Cassafières /Portiragnes:**

Between the sea and the Garrigue, stroll through the narrow streets of this charming southern village. Discover its old stones and its 12th-century church in the company of Arnaud, guide and lecturer.

Diner suggestions:

- La Gibrine, Place du bicentenaire, 34420 Portiragnes - [04 67 00 32 70](tel:0467003270)

Night on board in Port Cassafières

### Sunday 27 August

Morning      Check out between 9h-12h

**We hope you enjoyed your stay!**

This press trip was organised in partnership with the Occitanie Regional Tourisme Board, Aude Tourism, Hérault Tourism, we thank you for mentioning our sites in your future articles:

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N° SIRET 83203965000013 - APE 7990Z

Site de Toulouse  
15 rue Rivals - CS 79543 - F-31685 Toulouse Cedex 6  
Tél : +33 (0)4 30 63 84 20 - [contact@crtooccitanie.fr](mailto:contact@crtooccitanie.fr)