



# Discovery Guide CASTRES Tarn



# CONTENTS

PRESENTATION	03
HERITAGE WITH PASSION	04-09
MUSEUMS WITH PASSION	10-11
PARKS & GARDENS	12-13
SPORTS & WALKS	14-15
HIGHLIGHTS	16-21
THE 'SMART' TRAVELER : VISIT THE MARKETS, THE ESSENTIALS	22-23
USEFULL ADRESSES	24-25
MAP OF THE HISTORICAL CENTRE	26-27

## CASTRES

*WAITING FOR YOU TO EXPERIENCE,  
DISCOVER AND LOVE...*

Castres is a stop-over along St. James's Way and its development was centered around the Saint-Benoît abbey in the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

Birth place of Jean Jaurès, the city abounds with treasures such as the Goya museum, located in the ancient "Palais Épiscopal," which is the first museum in France, after the Louvre, to exhibit Hispanic art.

Castres, city in bloom, has many parks and gardens, notably the Bishop's Palace Garden designed by Le Nôtre, which has been classified as "Jardin remarquable."

The alignments of the façades of the houses along the Agout River are reminders of the city's first vocation linked to the textile industry.

Old, privately-owned hotels, vestiges of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, are testament of the historical richness of Castres.

Resolute, authentic and active, today Castres is at the centre of the Greater Castres-Mazamet area.

Traditionnal know-how mixes with more recent activities, like mechanics, pharmaceuticals and cosmetology...







# LANGUEDOC'S LITTLE VENICE

## THE HOUSES ALONG THE AGOUT 1

Brightly-colored houses, with corbelled façades and basements immersed in the river, have earned Castres the nickname of “Languedoc’s little Venice”. The first houses along the Agout river go back to the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

For centuries they served as workshops for tanners, “chamoiseurs” and parchment-makers who used the water from the river to work the skins. The basements and sinks were found below, above the dryers or “soleilhou,” between the two living floors.

Faithfully restored, they are a photographer’s joy and provide a link to centuries gone by.

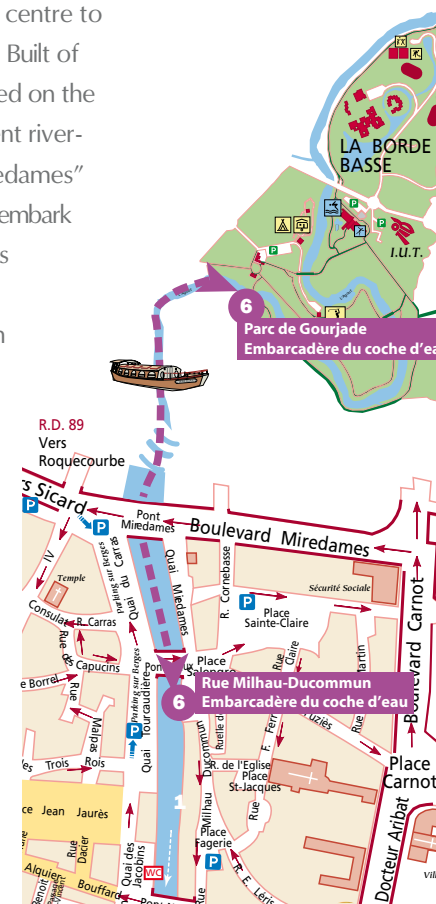
## 6 Riverboat “Le Miredames”



Shuttle boat runs from May until mid-October, and up to seven boat trips a day during the holiday period.



This is without doubt the most original way to discover the banks of the Agout river. Navigating from the town centre to Gourjade Park. Built of wood and based on the model of ancient riverboats. “Le Miredames” Riverboat can embark to 60 passengers aboard a poetic boat ride. From here passengers can disembark at Gourjade Park and wait for the next shuttle boat for the return journey.



## 8 Municipal theatre



This is a very beautiful, Italian-style theatre inaugurated in 1904 and designed by the architect Joseph Galinier, a student of Garnier. The interior layout mirrors the “Opéra-Comique” theatre in Paris and its “trompe-l’œil” dome dedicated to classic tragedy is quite eye-catching. High place of creativity and artistic representation, the theatre offers a yearly program of the very highest quality.

› *Municipal theatre,  
Place de la République  
free entrance*



## FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE BISHOPS IN CASTRES...

### THE BISHOP'S PALACE 7

A majestic, classic-style building, bordering the Agout river, the Bishop's Palace was inaugurated in 1673 by the bishop of Castres, Monseigneur de Tubœuf. The belfry, vestige of the 9<sup>th</sup> century Saint-Benoît abbey, is housed within its walls. Classified as an historical building, the former bishop's palace was designed by Jules-Hardouin Mansart, one of the architects of Versailles and now houses the "Hôtel de Ville," as well as the Goya museum, the Hispanic art museum.

The building faces the Saint- Benoît cathedral built between 1678 and 1718 on the initiative once again of Monseigneur de Tubœuf. Initially, what would have been one of the biggest cathedrals in France was humbly reduced in size after the bishop's death in 1682.

### St. James's Way



renovation of the fountain in the Fagerie square, located near the Saint-Jacques Villegoudou church. Here the 14th century porch bell-tower catches our eye.

(dating from 1764 and rebuilt by Joseph Kern in the 80s). A place of worship, the church opens its doors occasionally to the public for cultural events.

› Rue Victor Hugo



Castres is located on one of the four main pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela, the Tolosane route, also known as the Arles route. In fact, since 864 when the relics of Saint-Vincent were brought (lost in our time), the city has remained one of the minor pilgrimage routes to Compostela. The shell, the emblem of pilgrims, is still present on several monuments in Castres. It was the guiding reference during the

### 4 Notre Dame de la Platé



Notre-Dame de la Platé church, listed as a Historical Monument in 1987, possesses an extraordinary organ

### L'Albinque, St Jean- St Louis church, Pierre-Fabre square



In the heart of the Albinque district, in Pierre-Fabre square, we find the covered market, built in 1868 and inspired by the Baltard Pavillion built in Paris in 1853. It faces St-Jean St-Louis church.



# IN THE ERA OF THE "CHAMBRE DE L'ÉDIT"

## L'HÔTEL DE NAYRAC 10

During the reign of Henri IV, the establishment of the tribunal of the "Chambre de l'Édit," with the arrival of numerous magistrates, marks the beginning of a period of prosperity, to which numerous private hotels are testament.

"L'Hôtel de Nayrac," is one of the most beautiful examples.

Combining bricks and stones, the building showcases a remarkable harmony between its corbelled turrets, lattice bays around the door of honor and the oculus of the door used as the vanishing point... It's a beautiful architectural feat worth admiring.

## 12 Hôtel de Viviers



This was the city's most beautiful private mansion in the 16th century. Built by Monseigneur de Rozel, the lawyer of the "Chambre de l'Édit."

› Rue Chambre de l'Édit

## 9 Hôtel Jean Leroy



Built at the beginning of the 17th century, this private mansion is noteworthy due to its corbel-angled turret and brick corbelling.

› Rue Chambre de l'Édit

## 11 Hôtel de Poncet



Outstanding due to its caryatids bearing a Renaissance loggia enhanced with four ionic pillars, as well as its ramped, red-iron staircase.

› Rue Gabriel Guy

## 4 The carillon of N.D. de la Platé



Boasting 34 bells, the carillon of N. D. de la Platé has not stopped ringing since its installation in 1847. Free concert the first Sunday of every month.

› Rue de la Platé

Walk through the streets, going from square to square...



The perimeter of the old fortifications has provided Castres' old city centre with its coat-of-arms name. Strolling through the streets and the cobbled backstreets, we find vestiges from the medieval city to the prosperous 17th century: timber-framed houses in Pélisson square, the Cordeliers tour, the Henri IV passage and vestiges of old ramparts on Tolosane Street... Around Jean- Jaurès square, in the heart of the city centre, a number of little squares pleasantly punctuate this historical walk: **Gabarrou square, Flaubert square, Jean-Bouffard square, Fagerie square...**



# THE FIRST HISPANIC ART MUSEUM IN FRANCE, AFTER THE LOUVRE

## THE GOYA MUSEUM 7

This museum provides a unique vision of the works of great Spanish masters from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to present day: **Goya, Velázquez, Pacheco, Miró, Picasso.**

The hispanic vocation of the museum has been determined by the legacy to the Town of Castres, in 1894, by Pierre, son of Marcel Bruguiboul, a painter and collector from Castres. His gift of three Goya canvases became the first in its Hispanic collection.

In 1949, the prestigious additions from the Louvre confirmed this Hispanic orientation. Since then, the political acquisition led by the City and the museum enables this remarkable collection to be regularly enriched. The purchase of the Gaudi de Joan Miró series concretized his desire to promote 10<sup>th</sup> century art.

## Jean Jaurès National Center and Museum

3



The Jean Jaurès museum provides a chronological and thematic journey of discovery and comprehension of the life and commitments of the great orator **born in Castres on 3 September 1859.**

Worried about economic and social issues of his time, Jean Jaurès quickly became the spokesperson for the working class bringing his eloquence and quill to the service of social improvements. He is also one of the first to have challenged the colonial politics of France.

Pacifist by conviction, he was assassinated on 31 July 1914. The Jean Jaurès museum organizes numerous temporary exhibitions throughout the year.

› *Place Pélisson*



## Museum Night



Once a year, for Museum Night in May, the Goya

museum and the Jean Jaurès museum offer free admission to the public. Special events are organized in connection with the temporary exhibitions of the moment.

## 21 Archéopole



The Archeological Research and Study Centre hosts a permanent exhibition dedicated to the discoveries made in the Castres area. The exhibition is frequently updated with discoveries made from excavation digs and from explorations in progress.

› *Gourjade Park*





# A REMARKABLE GARDEN DESIGNED BY LE NÔTRE...

## BISHOP'S PALACE GARDEN 13

In the heart of the monument district is the Bishop's Palace Garden, extending between the Town Hall and the Municipal theatre. It's an extraordinary example of a 'French' garden, in the pure tradition of 17<sup>th</sup> century classicism.

With its play on perspectives and its boxwood embroidery around the pond, it showcases the creations of André Le Nôtre, Louis XIV's gardener.

The Bishop's Palace Garden has been classified as "Jardin remarquable" since 2004.

## 15 Frascaty Garden



Along the boulevard des Lices, this square was created in the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the implantation of an elm grove and then replaced in 1865 by a public garden. It is located very near to the "Hôtel Beaudecourt", the name of a very old family of bankers and merchants from Castres, which today houses the 8th Marine Infantry Parachute Regiment's garrison mess.

## Gourjade Park

› voir page 15

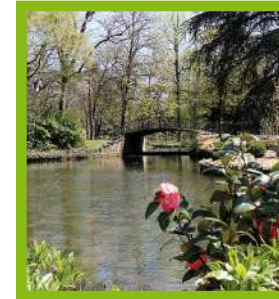


## 17 Briguiboul Villa and Park



The park and beautiful 19<sup>th</sup> century villa belonged to the Briguiboul family. It surrounds a cedar grove, including one listed among «the Remarkable Trees of Tarn Landscape» inventory and that is thought date back to the Napoleonic era. In the Villa park, two very beautiful statues catch the eye : "Le Fauconnier," replicates the piece by Marcel Briguiboul and "La Petite Fille au chat," by the sculptor Gaston Toussaint. Painter and collector of enlightened art, Marcel Bruiguiou is at the origin of hispanic art at the Goya museum.

## 14 Mail Garden



This English style garden, with a poetry enriched ambiance, takes its name from an ancient rug from the "jeu de mail," (mallet game) the ancestor of croquet and golf. It provides a privileged setting for a walk or stroll. Around its pond, its fountain and its artificial island, we find a particularly rich collection of wood varieties and rare oaks, maples and chestnuts. The oldest trees in the garden, in particular the oaks and an Osage-Orange, were planted at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



## CASTRES, THE LAND OF RUGBY...

Castres lives at the rhythm of its Top 14 club, Castres Olympique, 2018 winner of the coveted Brennus-Shield trophy !

It's a club that wears its town's white and blue colors with pride. Its members and the town's inhabitants both uphold its values of altruism, respect and courage.

### 20 Gourjade golf course



At the centre of Gourjade park and encircled by the Agout valley, is a superb nine-hole golf course that has been beautifully integrated into the historical beauty and nature of the site.

### Gourjade Park



53 hectares of greenery for pleasure and relaxation! Ping-pong tables, roller rink, fishing, walks or mountain bike rides and children games.

### Hikes

23 24 25



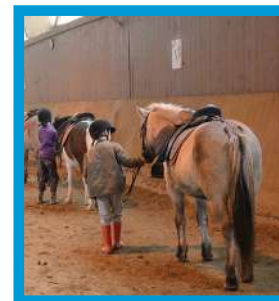
- St. James's Way (El Camino de Santiago), GR 653, the Arles route.
- Green Way "chemin des Droits de l'Homme", the old Castres-Albi railway track – Depart from bd Magenta (44 kilometres, one way).
- Lacaune's Little Train Path that goes along the Chemin des Fontaines (78.2 kilometres).
- The Tourist Office offers numerous hikes, in particular in the Pays d'Autan. It's also an opportunity to discover the granitic mountain of Sidobre and the giant, unusual rock formations.

### 18 Archipel pool and ice-rink



Sliding down, swimming and have fun !  
On a 5 hectares area, this sportive center includes an ice-rink and a swimming pool with 3 pools.

### 22 Borde Basse municipal equestrian center



The equestrian center is ideally situated in the Borde Basse area which consists of 160 hectares.



# THE MAIN EVENTS IN CASTRES...

Throughout the year Castres has numerous events: flea markets, flower markets, seasonal and cultural shows... Here is a list of the main must-see events !

## Carnaval Vénitien March

Once a year, in March, Italy comes to Castres for three days to celebrate Venice and its festive traditions. This event features parades, shows, an Italian food market and, of course, some fantastic Venetian masks and costumes.



## The Festa sull'acqua

March

Opening the Venetian Carnival, the Festa sull'acqua offers a one-of-a-kind on-water show. From the Agouts banks, discover a parade of boats going down the river, with intriguing and colorful silhouettes on-board. A family-friendly show, where dance, circus arts and lights come together in one magical event.

Free show - Family-friendly







### The Extravadanses Festival July



Flamenco, contemporary dances, hip-hop... the Extravadanses Festival showcases dance in all its forms! With well-known dance companies and talented local dancers, this Festival offers over 20 high-quality shows each year.

Free shows - Family-friendly

### A portée de rue Festival July



Mid-July, classical music fills the streets as open-air concerts are held in different landmarks of the city center. Each year, the A portée de rue Festival welcomes some world-renowned musicians for everyone to enjoy.

Free concerts - Family-friendly

### Couleurs du monde Festival August



All the colors of humanity in its cultural diversity... Couleurs du monde celebrates the many traditions and folkloric dances of the world, from Africa to Asia, from Peru to the Philippines. Enjoy over a week of colorful shows to discover other countries and their culture.

Free shows - Family-friendly



### Christmas Market

December

The must-see event of the Christmas holidays, Castres' Christmas market is simply magical. Visit the artisans market, with its many gift ideas, and enjoy the scenery! Animated displays, Santa's elves, a snow-covered enchanted forest... this event has all the makings of a magical moment for everyone.

Free events, including parades, musical entertainment and games for children, are scheduled throughout December. Be sure to enjoy a hot drink and to grab a bite to eat while you are there.

Free entertainments - Family-friendly







### Les Fresques de lumière December

The Fresques de lumière is a sound-and-lights display with a twist, as this special event showcases Castres' history in all its luminous glory. At dusk, some of the most iconic landmarks of the historical city center come to life, to tell their stories... An enchanted show where architecture and magic meet. Free concert - Family-friendly



### Back to School Concert First Friday of September

Every September, the Back to School Concert is the ideal event to celebrate the end of summer and discover some of the new faces of the French music scene.

Free concert - Family-friendly

### Les Dimanches de la brocante

Browse the stalls of the open-air flea market held four times a year, in Jean Jaures Square. Vintage furniture and clothing, books, dishes... There is always something special to be found.



### Flower Market May



Each year, at the beginning of Spring, a flower market is held for two days in Gourjade Park. It is the place to be for all plants lovers!

### Local farmers market Every Tuesday night from mid-June to August

If you love good food and traditional French cuisine, you are in for a treat at the farmers market, held on Pierre Fabre Square. Fresh fruit and veggies, cheese, pastries, charcuterie... Locals farmers are here to show you their specialties. Come and share a plate full of French delicacies and a bottle of good wine with your friends and family!





# THE MARKETS...

Here, good living goes with gastronomy !  
 Another way to discover the city is to discover its specialties by seeking out local producers in the city...  
 Here's a brief look at some of the must-see food markets.



**Food market,**  
 Tuesday, Thursday,  
 Friday and Saturday  
 From 7 a.m to 1 p.m  
 › *Jean-Jaurès square*  
 Wednesday, from 7 a.m.  
 to 1 p.m.  
 › *Lameilhé square*



**Noctambio Castres,**  
 Organic market every  
 Thursday  
 From 4 p.m to 7.30 p.m  
 › *Pierre-Fabre square*



**Foie-gras market,**  
 Foie gras, ducks...  
 Saturdays 6 a.m to 1 p.m  
 From mid November until  
 mid-April  
 › *Quai Tourcaudière*



**Albinque covered market**  
 From 7 a.m to 1 p.m – from  
 Tuesday to Sunday and on  
 public holidays.  
 › *Covered market*  
*Pierre-Fabre square*

## LOCAL SPECIALTIES

“Nougatine” from Castres is nougat made with almonds covered in icing sugar and egg white, called “glace royale” .



Tarn saffron. This plant with many qualities has been cultivated in the Tarn since the Middle Ages. It is used to season food and beverages and it is also famous for its medical properties. A precious product to discover again !

# THE ESSENTIALS...



**1 The Houses along the Agout**



**13 Bishop's Palace Garden**



**10 Hôtel de Nayrac**



**7 Goya Museum**



**3 Jean Jaurès Museum**



**6 “Le Miredames” Coche d'eau riverboat**  
 from May to October  
 evening trips in July and August



**Jean Jaurès square**



**Gourjade Park**



**Information****Castres-Mazamet  
Tourism Office  
Castres Main Office**

2, Place de la République  
Tel. +33 5 63 62 63 62  
accueil@tourisme-castres.fr  
www.tourisme-castres.fr  
Opening hours :

**January to June and Sep-  
tember to December :**

Open from Monday to  
Saturday from 9:30 to  
12:30 am and from 2:00 pm  
to 6:00 pm. Sundays and pu-  
blic holidays from 9:30 am to  
1:30 pm. Closed on Sundays  
from September to June  
(except important events).  
Closed on 1/01, 1/05, 1/11,  
11/11 and 25/12.

**July and August:**

Open from Monday to  
Saturday from 9:30 am to  
1.00 pm and from 2.00 pm

to 6:30 pm. Sundays and  
public holidays from 9:30  
am to 1:30 pm

**Town Hall**

Rue de l'Hôtel-de-Ville  
B.P 10406  
81108 Castres Cedex  
Tel. +33 5 63 71 58 58  
mairie@ville-castres.fr  
www.ville-castres.fr

Town of Castres Face-  
book page.

Open weekdays from  
8:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.,  
1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

**Administrative  
assistance for  
new arrivals (AVF)**

28, passage Henri-IV  
Tél. +33 5 63 59 46 70  
www.avf.asso.fr

**TOURISM OFFICE****PASS TOURISME EN VILLE**

This pass gives you free entry to the Goya and Jean Jaurès museums  
and best discounts for cultural, sports leisure events and parking.

**VISITS AND DISCOVERY OF THE TOWN**

The Tourism Office organizes themed visits that allow you to  
explore the town's historical center. More information at

[www.tourisme-castres.fr](http://www.tourisme-castres.fr)

**Culture****Goya Museum**

Hôtel de Ville  
Tel. +33 5 63 71 59 27  
Open from 9 a.m. to 12  
p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 6  
p.m. (5 p.m. from Oct 01 to  
Mar 31 and 10 a.m. on Sun-  
days and public holidays).  
July and August: every day  
from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Closed on Mondays (except  
July and August) and on  
Jan 01, May 01, Nov 01,  
and Dec 25.

**Jean Jaurès National  
Center and Museum**

2, place Pélisson  
Tel. +33 5 63 62 41 83  
Open from 10 a.m. to 12  
p.m. and from 2 p.m to 6  
p.m. (until 5 p.m. from Oct  
01 to Mar 31). Closed on  
Mondays (except in July  
and August), Sundays from  
October 01 to April 30 and  
on Jan 01, May 01, Nov 1,  
and Dec 25.

**Municipal theatre**

Open from 9:30 a.m. to  
12:30 p.m. and from 2:15  
p.m. to 6 p.m. (4 p.m. on  
Saturdays). Closed on Sun-  
days and public holidays.

**Archéopole**

Gourjade Park  
Avenue de Roquecourbe  
Tel. +33 9 66 41 15 56  
Open from Tuesday to Fri-  
day and every two weeks  
on Saturdays : from 2 p.m.  
to 5.30 pm (except Sun-  
days and public holidays).  
Free entrance.

**Sports and leisure****Le Miredames  
riverboat**

Jetty on Rue Milhau-Du-  
commun and Gourjade  
Park. Runs from May to  
mid-October.

**Gourjade campsite**

Gourjade Park  
Avenue de Roquecourbe  
Tel. +33 5 63 59 33 51

**Gourjade Golf  
course**

Avenue de Roquecourbe  
Tel. +33 5 63 72 27 06  
Open every day from  
8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.  
(from May to September  
until 7:30 p.m.) including  
public holidays, except  
Dec 25 and Jan 01.

**L'Archipel - Swim-  
ming pool - Ice rink**

Avenue Georges-Pompidou  
Tel. +33 5 63 62 54 00

**Equestrian Center**

La Borde Basse  
Tel. +33 5 63 35 02 08  
Open from Monday to Sa-  
turday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
including public holidays.

**Public transport****Urban transport**

*Libellus - Free transport  
within town*  
9 bus lines within Castres  
CACM – Le Causse  
Espace d'Entreprises  
Tel. +33 5 63 71 80 00

**Multimodal  
exchange center :  
Tarn Bus Agency**

Avenue Albert-1<sup>er</sup>  
Tel. +33 5 63 51 25 69

**SNCF Train Station**

Avenue Albert-1<sup>er</sup>  
8 daily connections with  
Toulouse. For train schedule,  
ticket information and assis-  
tance call : 3635 (€0.34/min  
from within France)

**Taxis**

*Allô Taxi Castres*  
Tel. +33 5 81 12 71 27  
*Taxis Castres*  
Tel. +33 5 63 59 99 25  
www.taxiscastres.fr

**Castres-Mazamet  
Airport****Le Causse**

Tel. +33 5 63 70 34 77  
Flights to Paris and Bastia  
**Hop! airline**  
Tel. 0892 70 22 22  
(€0.34/min from within  
France)

**Castres/Toulouse  
Blagnac Airport**

Get picked up at your  
door ! Service 24/7

**Eco-shuttle**

Tel. +33 5 67 33 93 23

**Executive roadlines**

Mobile +33 6 95 71 08 84  
Tel. +33 9 50 86 63 74

**EMERGENCY  
TELEPHONE  
NUMBERS**

**AMBULANCE : 15**

**Police : 17**

**Castres Police station :**  
+33 5 63 71 58 55

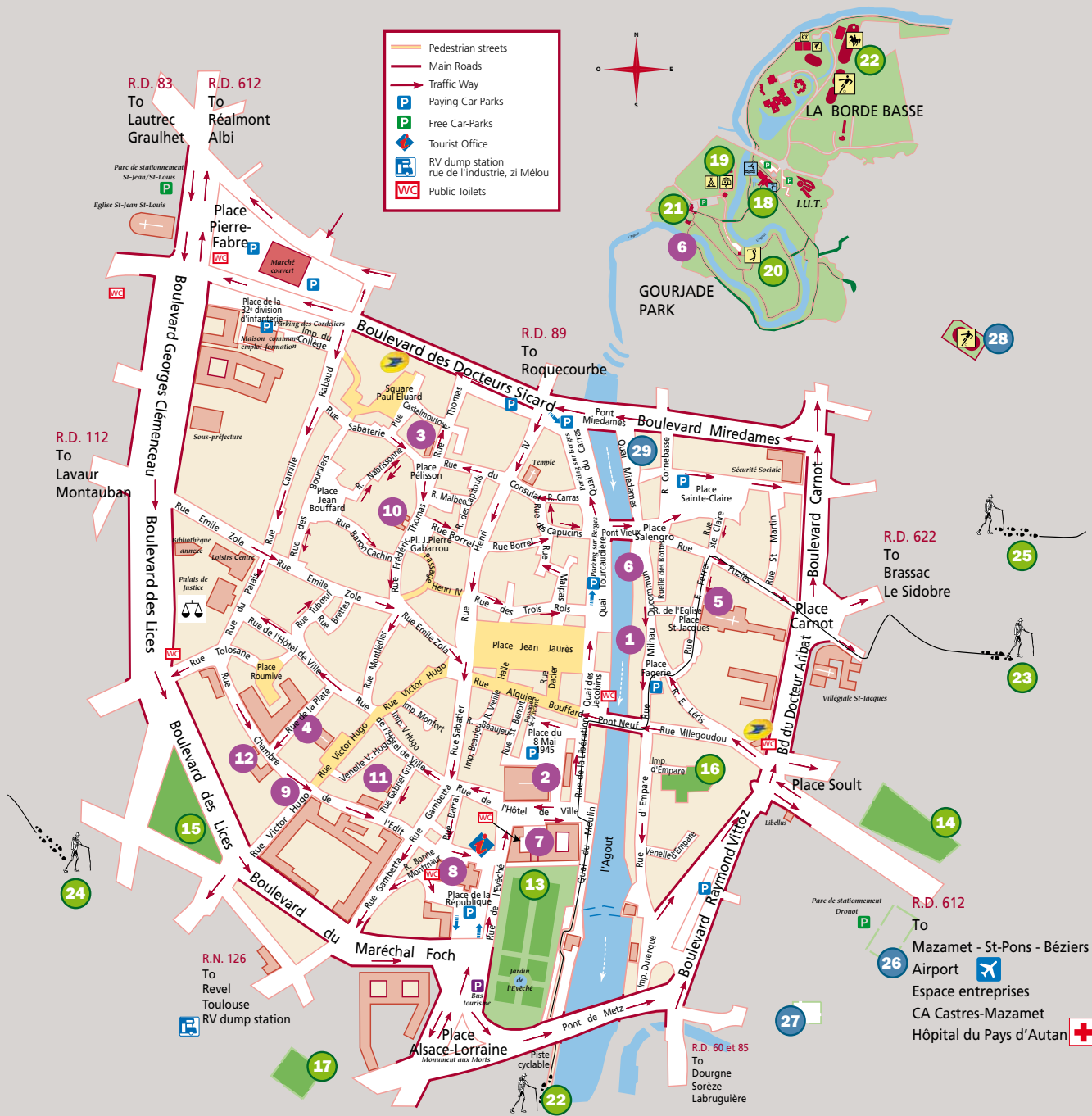
**Fire services : 18**

**Anti-Poison center :**  
+33 5 61 77 74 47

**Pays d'Autan Hospital**  
**6, av. de la Montagne Noire :**  
+33 5 63 71 63 71

**On-call doctor : 3699**

**European Emergency  
Number : 112**



## LOCAL HERITAGE SITES

- 1 Houses along the Agout
  - 2 Saint-Benoît catheral
  - 3 Jean Jaurès National Center and Museum
  - 4 N-D-de-la-Platé Church (under restoration) - Carillon (access "rue de la Platé")
  - 5 Saint-Jacques de Villegoudou, Church
  - 6 Coche d'eau, river boat jetty (for the Le Miredames riverboat)
  - 7 Town Hall and The Goya Museum (1<sup>st</sup> floor)
  - 8 Municipal Theatre
- 17th-century private hotels :*
- 9 Hôtel Jean Leroy
  - 10 Hôtel de Nayrac
  - 11 Hôtel de Poncet
  - 12 Hôtel de Viviès

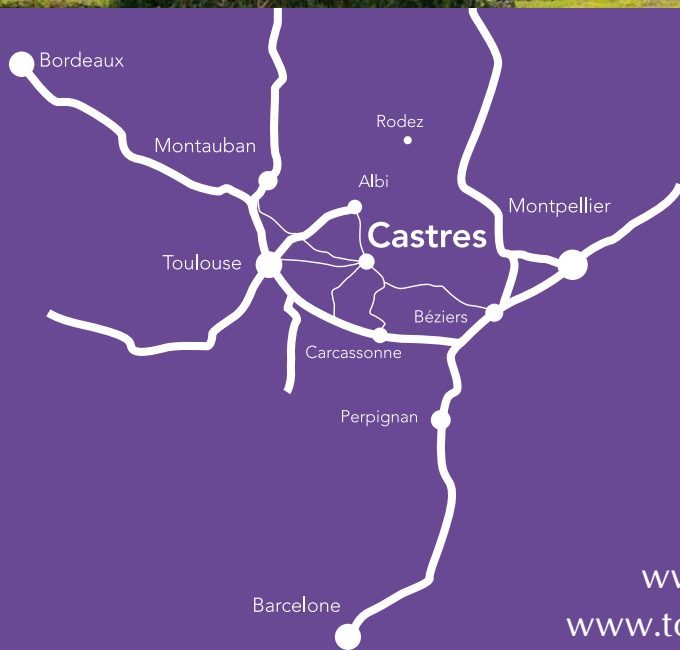
## GARDENS

- 13 Jardin de l'Évêché (Bishop's Palace Garden)
- 14 Mail Garden
- 15 Frascaty Garden
- 16 Empare Garden
- 17 Briguiboul Villa and Park

## GOURJADE PARK & HIKING TRAILS

- 18 L'Archipel (swimming-pool, ice rink)
- 19 Campsite
- 20 Golf course
- 21 Archéopole
- 22 Equestrian center
- 23 St. James's Way (El Camino de Santiago)
- 24 Green Way (chemin des Droits de l'Homme)
- 25 Chemin des fontaines
- 26 Gérard-Philippe concert hall
- 27 Lo Bolegason umltimedia music center
- 28 Pierre-Fabre stadium
- 29 Cinema





[www.ville-castres.fr](http://www.ville-castres.fr)  
[www.tourisme-castres.fr](http://www.tourisme-castres.fr)  
Facebook Ville de Castres

