

Excursions in the neighbourhood

By Anna-Clara af Ekenstam

Below you will find a selection of excursions from Rabiega. There are of course many more activities to do and interesting places to visit. You are welcome to the reception desk with any questions you might have. We are more than happy to advice on excursions, organizers and restaurants or whatever questions you might have.

Dracénie

Domaine Rabiega is located in Dracénie which is a collective name for the area around Draguignan and the 23 small towns that surround it. Here you will find picturesque small towns, vineyards and fantastic nature areas with the opportunity for a variety of outdoor activities. Everything from hiking, biking, swimming and kayaking to more fast-paced and challenging sports such as rafting, bungee jumping and climbing.

Below we have listed some towns and villages in Dracénie worth a visit.

Draguignan

With its 40,000 inhabitants, Draguignan is the capital of Dracénie. The city was formerly the capital of the Department of Var, which can be seen in the magnificent city hall, Hôtel du Ville. In the older parts of Draguignan, the medieval heritage is noticeable and here you will also experience the old-fashioned Provençal charm.

Draguignan is an old military town and it still has one of France's largest infantry and artillery schools. Today, Draguignan is being developed into an IT hub for the south of France.

Anyone interested in military history can visit the Artillery Museum. There is also a museum of folklore and traditions in Provence. The old bell tower with its large iron bell offers a fantastic view of the surroundings.

If you want to visit the local market, you should visit on Wednesday or Saturday morning (approx. 5 km from Rabiega)

Lorgues

Southwest of Rabiega you will find the small Provençal town of Lorgues. Until the end of the 19th century, Lorgues was the center for production of olive oil wine and flour. Today, the city is a popular tourist destination, and the market held every Tuesday and Friday (in summertime) morning is known as one of the best in Provence.

Lorgue's city center is made up of winding alleys lined with colorful little townhouses so typical of Provence and intersected by small squares with trees and fountains.

Those who like chocolate can visit the Chocolaterie Lisandre chocolate factory. (approx. 10 km from Rabiega)

Sillans la Cascade

Sillans la Cascade is known as one of the most beautiful waterfalls in France. It is 42 meters high and plunges into an emerald green "pool" of water. From the village, with the same name as the waterfall, it is about 20 minutes walk. Sillans la Cascade can be combined with a visit to the Gorges du Verdon and Moustiers-Saint-Marie. (approx. 26 km from Rabiega)

Salernes

Salernes is known as the "ceramic city" of southern France. Here the traditional hexagonal terracotta tiles "tomettes" are made. You will find them on the floor in many old houses in France. But Salernes is also known to be the oldest area in Western Europe for the manufacture of ceramics. Ceramic finds have been made in the area, which are over 7,000 years old. Even today, both tomettes and ceramics are manufactured here. In Salernes you can also visit the Terra Rossa ceramics museum. (approx. 19 km. from Rabiega)

Tourtour

Tourtour is listed as one of the most beautiful villages in France and the central parts of the small town date from the Middle Ages. The atmosphere in the village is very Provençal. Around the picturesque village square, Place des Ormeaux, there are several cafes and restaurants and next to the square the villagers play Petanque. In summer there are often concerts in the square. Tourtour is called "Le village dans le ciel" – "The village in the sky", It is easy to understand when you admire the view of the surroundings from the church. Also do not miss to take a turn on the street Le Lavoir which offers a nice view of the roofs on the villages houses and the surrounding area. Saturday and Wednesday are market day (small market). (approx. 17 km from Rabiega)

Chateaudouble

Chateaudouble is a medieval town located like an eagle's nest at the top of a cliff 525 meters above sea level. The village is named after the two castles that lay here. The ruins after them are still to be visited. The village offers fantastic views and during the summer evening concerts are often given from the Place du Beausoleil square at the top of the village. (approx. 20 km from Rabiega)

Moustiers-Saint-Marie

Moustiers-Saint-Marie is a "picture-perfect" picturesque little village located right next to the Gorges du Verdon. It is listed as one of the most beautiful villages in France and is perfect for a lunch break when visiting the Gorges du Verdon. It is always lively in the village and there are several restaurants and cafes. In high season, it can be good to book a table in advance.

In the time of Louis XIV, King of the Sun, Moustiers was known for the manufacture of faience porcelain and there are still several small studios selling hand-painted faience porcelain.

Do not miss to go up to the Chapel Notre-Dame-de-Beauvoir. The small chapel that sits on the cliff high above the village. You can reach it via the stairs that start at Chapel Sainte-Anne and the cemetery to the right of the small river gorge that divides the village into two parts. (approx. 56 km Rabiega)

Aups

The town of Aups is best known for the truffle market which is held here every Thursday morning during November to February. The usual market is all year round on Wednesday and Saturday mornings (approx. 26 km from Rabiega)

Trans-en-Provence

Trans-en-Provence once had a large silk production but the city is best known for its olive oil production. At the beginning of the 20th century, there were no less than 20 olive oil presses here. Here are many historic buildings preserved and you can walk on the so-called Himalayan bridge and on the walking path that runs along the river and the waterfall that is here. (approx. 8.8 km from Rabiega)

Bargème

Bargème is the highest village in the department of Var. It is located at 1,097 m above sea level and is classified as one of the most beautiful villages in France. The village is a bit remote but is very beautiful to visit. It is built around the castle Chateau de Sabran de Pontaves. The castle was built in the 13th century and even though it is now in ruins, it is still impressive where it is located at the top of a cliff. (approx. 46 km from Rabiega)

Les-Arcs-sur-Argens

Les Arcs has been inhabited for 2,500 years. Today, the city is best known for its wine production. The medieval part of the city called La Parage is surrounded by a ring wall and has been carefully renovated and is now a Les Arcs tourist attraction. Here is also the Chapel Sainte Roseline which includes a mosaic by Chagall and some statues by Giacometti.

Les-Arc-sur-Argens is located near the large mountain chain Massif des Maures where there are several hiking trails and historical relics. From Les Arcs you can also rent a bike and follow the cycle path "La Vigne á Velo" to Chateau Sainte Roseline, 4.5 km. (approx. 13 km from Rabiega)

Market days

Market days are festivity days in Dracénie. Scents, colors and discussions fill the market stalls. It is also a perfect time to stroll in the towns and villages and discover the richness of Provence.

Monday: Flayosc

Tuesday: Lorgues, Figanières

Wednesday: Draguignan, Salernes

Thursday: Les Arcs sur Argens, Le Muy, Bargemon

Friday: La Motte en Provence, Lorgues from May to October (producers market)

Saturday: Draguignan, Callas, Clavières, Taradeau, Montferrat

Sunday: Le Muy, Vidauban, Salernes, Trans en Provence, Ampus

Nature and outdoor life

Gorges du Verdon

A visit to Europe's Grand Canyon, the Gorges du Verdon, is a must when in the area. It is breathtakingly beautiful with the acutely deep limestone cliffs that extend vertically down to the light blue river that meanders 700 meters below. The ravine is a very popular excursion destination and here you can hike, paddle, fish, climb and do rafting.

If you have time, you can drive the winding 130 km around the gorge. Expect at least 4 hours of driving. Here and there along the road there are lookout points that offer spectacular views. One of the most popular is Point Sublime near Rougon. Here is also the popular shorter, but no less winding, drive Route de Crêtes which starts just east of the small village of La Palud-sur-Verdon. It is a narrow one-way tour that offers magical views but which can be a challenge for anyone afraid of heights. (about 48 km to Pont de Galetas from Rabiega)

Hiking in the Gorges du Verdon

Sentier Martel, named after the first person to explore the Gorges du Verdon, runs 17 km from Point Sublime to the Chalet de la Malin and is a fantastic hike, if you are not afraid of heights. The hike can also be shortened to just over 6 km by starting from Chalet de Malin and going down to the river and then hiking back the same way. Regardless, hiking shoes, plenty of water (min 2 liter) and a lunch bag are a must. It gets hot in the ravine and it is steep up and down. From Chalet du Malin you can take a shuttle bus or taxi back to Point Sublime.

Canoeing and rafting

Most people who paddle into the ravine do so from the Pont de Galetas bridge. There you can rent a canoe or paddle boat for 1-2 hours and paddle a bit into the ravine. The resilient one climbs on one of the rock outcrops that line the river and throws itself into the light blue water.

The upper part of the ravine between Allos and Saint André is popular with experienced canoeists during late spring and early summer.

The river above the ravine below the town of Castellane is popular all year round (except in winter) with canoeists at all levels.

Further down the ravine it is current and rocky and a challenge even for the experienced canoeist. (About 48 km to Pont de Galetas, about 59 km to Castelane from Rabiega)

Lac Sainte-Croix

The Verdon River flows into Lac Sainte-Croix on the Pont de Galetas. The lake, which is 10 km long and 2 km wide, is artificial and was created in 1974 when a dam was built to take care of the water in the Verdon River.

You can drive around the lake and there are several beaches. The largest are located at the small town of Sainte-Croix-du-Verdon on the east side of the lake, the old town of Bauduen on the south side and at Les-Salles-sur-Verdon east of the lake. Sainte-Croix-du-Verdon offers beautiful views of the lake and has several small restaurants. Bauduen is a

charming little village with a beautiful promenade. Les-Salles-sur-Verdon lacks historical interest as it was built in 1974 when the old village of the same name is "buried" underwater in Lac Sainte Croix (about 40 km to Bauduen, about 49 km to Sainte-Croix-du-Verdon from Rabiega) .

The Lavender Route

If you visit Rabiega in June-July, a visit to the Valensol Plateau is recommended. Then the famous lavender fields bloom and offer views that take the breath away from most visitors. Ask the reception where to go pending on richness in flower and harvesting. (about 60 km from Rabiega).

La Vigne á Velo / Vingård by bike

The cycling trail La Vigne á Velo stretches about 24 km from Les Arcs-sur-Argens via Draguinan to Chateaudouble.

The Mediterranean coast

The coast below Domaine Rabiega is one of the most beautiful along the entire riviera. It is adorned with picturesque small towns with sandy beaches, dark red cliffs and green pine trees. For those who are craving jetset life, of course, Saint-Tropez attracts.

Fréjus

Estérel is the collective name for the coast around the Massif de l'Estérel, the Estérel Mountains. Here you will find Fréjus, the city with heritage as far back as Roman times. Stroll through the city's historic center and take a dip in the Mediterranean. (approx. 35km from Rabiega).

Saint-Raphaël

Saint-Raphaël is located just east of Fréjus. Here you will find no less than 10 sandy beaches that stretch along 35 km of the coast, (about 38 km from Rabiega).

Sainte-Maxime

Sainte-Maxime is the city where the Swedish royal family has a summer house. Here you can swim on sandy beaches or on the small peninsula La Pointe de Sardinaux or as the locals say "La petite Corse" "Little Corsica". Here are small natural sandy beaches between rocks and trees that protect from the sun. The peninsula is located exactly where the coastal road turns around the headland towards Saint-Raphaël, (about 38 km from Rabiega).

From Sainte-Maxime there are also ferries to and from Saint-Tropez, the islands off Hyères and Cannes and sightseeing tours along the beautiful coast.

Market every Friday morning and flea and antique market (brocante) Wednesdays. In summer, outdoor concerts, both classical and modern, are often given under the stars.

Saint-Tropez

The small port city that for decades has attracted the world's jet set with its unique blend of luxury and bohemian lifestyle requires no further presentation. If you want to go here in the summer, you should think about starting early in the morning, the small road that leads to the city is quickly filled with cars. A good alternative may be to take the ferry from Sainte-Maxime, (approx. 52 km from Rabiega).

If you want to swim on the famous sandy beach Pampelonne which is located just southwest of St-Tropez, you should also start well in advance. At Pampelonne there are both private beaches and beach areas that are open to everyone. The private beaches are popular both among sunbathers and for lunch so you need to book a sunbed / table, (approx. 56 km from. Rabiega).

During the summer there are outdoor concerts held in Saint-Tropez - "Nuits de la Chateau Moutte" and at "Citadelle"

La Corniche d'Or

La Corniche d'Or, the golden coast is a 30km long road that runs along the coast with the red Estérel cliffs on one side and the turquoise blue Mediterranean on the other. The road was inaugurated in 1903 and connects Sainte-Raphaël with Cannes. Do not miss to stop and swim in one of the small coves along the road between Agay and Théoule-sur-Mer.

There are many hiking trails of varying length and difficulty both in the Estérel Massif and along the coast, so-called Sentiers Littoral. Remember to bring water even on short hikes during the summer.

Vineyards to visit around Rabiega

There are many wineries in the area. We have listed some below. They are all open for visits, but the times can vary over the year, so we advice you to check the opening hours before you head of.

- Château Sainte Roseline - Les Arcs sur Argens
- Château Saint Esprit - Draguignan
- Domaine du Dragon - Draguignan
- Château Roubine - Lorgues
- Château Maïme - Les Arcs sur Argens
- Château Rasque - Taradeau
- Château d'Astros - Vidauban
- Château La Martinette - Lorgues
- Château Mentone - Saint-Antonin-du-Var
- Domaine du Jas d'Esclan - La Motte
- Chateau de Berne - Flayosc