



PONT DU GARD

PRESS KIT

NATURE AND CULTURE

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural
Organisation



Pont du Gard:
listed as World
Heritage since
1985

GRAND SITE



DE FRANCE

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INTRO

In spite of the pandemic and the subsequent economic crisis, the Pont du Gard continues to look to the future and proposes **getting back to basics**. The "basics" concern both nature and culture.

The Pont du Gard has **been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985** and was awarded the **"Grand site de France"** label **in 2020**. With these two labels, the **EPCC** (*Établissement Public de Coopération Culturelle* - Public Institution for Cultural Cooperation) is laying the foundations for a sustainable approach to the protection of this monument and its landscape.

This crisis has demonstrated our ability to take decisions and act together. Our society must **go back to basics** in order to give greater meaning to the word "common". The Pont du Gard is where nature meets human genius.

It's a place for reflection and for the emergence of proposals on key issues, such as **the fight against global warming, the protection of biodiversity, water, cultural practices and the Mediterranean. World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world.** Thinking, acting and taking the time to reflect are all necessary today, in a world that no longer leaves any room for argumentation, the confrontation of ideas and half measures.



At the heart of public policies lie challenges that require everyone to rethink the way they look at an area. It's now impossible to ignore what links people in the same area. **Getting back to basics** means ensuring that the local inhabitants and their living environment take centre stage.

The geographical location of the Pont du Gard, at a crossroads of three major regions and at the heart of the Mediterranean arc, contributes to the rich economic activity of this extensive territory. The Pont du Gard is a unique heritage site in the middle of an equally precious **natural setting**, that must be preserved and protected.

The tourism of tomorrow will inevitably include a new way of understanding the place of visitors, the range of attractions and services they expect and the experience to be had.

"Getting back to basics" at the Pont du Gard is to contemplate, to take time and to appreciate these simple moments, which forge a fleeting link between the lives of the visitors and that of this monument. The Pont du Gard conveys identity and universal values, characterised by strength, unity, humanity and life.

THE PONT DU GARD

20 CENTURIES OF HISTORY

THE TIME OF CONSTRUCTION AND USE

Built by the Romans between 40 and 60 A.D., the Pont du Gard is the main feature of the ancient Nîmes aqueduct and one of the most prestigious relics from antiquity.

RUNNING WATER FOR ALL IN THE FIRST CENTURY AD

Built by the city fathers of Nemausus (Nîmes) at the height of its urban development in the first century AD, the ancient aqueduct of Nîmes provided running water to all the city's inhabitants for almost 5 centuries. The pure and fresh water supplied the fountains installed in all the streets of the city, the thermal baths, the gardens, the fulling industries and the private dwellings of this Gallo-Roman city.

EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE

The water captured at the Eure spring, at the foot of the town of Uzès, travelled by gravitational force for 50 km over the natural terrain. The total gradient of this aqueduct is one of the lowest known for a Roman aqueduct: 12.27 m, i.e. an average of 24 cm/km for an average flow of 20,000 m³ per 24 hours (during the optimal period of the 1st and 2nd centuries, the daily flow rate was 35,000 m³). This colossal civil engineering structure took almost 15 years to build. The Pont du Gard alone was built in just 5 years.

THE TECHNICAL PROWESS OF THE ROMAN ENGINEERS

The Pont du Gard features a rare arrangement of three superimposed bridges, consisting of 6, 11 and 35 arches respectively. The opening in its central arch broke all records at the time with a span of 24.50 m. Made of local stone, molasse-limestone, it testifies to the prodigious technical skills of the Roman engineers and appears to be the work of specialized workers from the country.

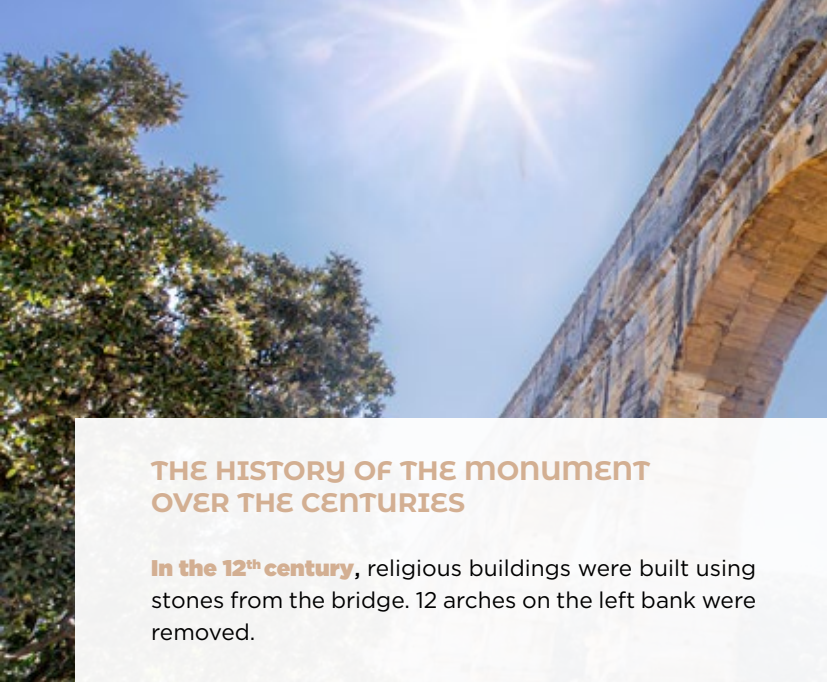
ABANDONMENT

Poorly maintained from the 3rd century onwards and suffering from numerous limestone deposits that reduced the flow of water, the aqueduct was abandoned at the beginning of the 6th century.



THE NÎMES AQUEDUCT:

- Length: **50 km**
- Altitude of the source in Uzès: **71.25 m**
- Altitude of the water tower in Nîmes: **58.95 m**
- General elevation gain: **12.27 m**
- Average channel slope: **25 cm/km**
- Overhead structures: **17**
- Tunnels: **3, Sernhac (2) and Nîmes**
- Known regulation basins: **2**
- Distribution basin (castellum): **1**
- Percentage of canal underground: **90%**
- Average flow rate: **250 to 400 L/s or 35,000 m³ / day**
- Average water speed **between 0.7 and 1m/s**



THE HISTORY OF THE MONUMENT OVER THE CENTURIES

In the 12th century, religious buildings were built using stones from the bridge. 12 arches on the left bank were removed.

In the 14th century, due to traffic linked to the very famous Beaucaire fair, a passage for carts was built at the middle level of the Pont du Gard.

In the 16th century, the craftsmen of the Compagnons du Tour de France adopted the practice of paying homage to ancient architecture. When departing, they would leave their mark behind. At the end of the century, restoration work was carried out to repair the damage caused by cart traffic.

The 18th century saw the construction (from 1743 to 1747) of a road bridge next to the façade under the supervision of the engineer Henri Pitot.

In the 19th century, Prosper Mérimée, the first Inspector of Historic Monuments, had the Pont du Gard included in the first list of major historic monuments in France (1840). Two restoration campaigns followed (from 1842 to 1845 and then from 1855 to 1859) which saved the monument from deterioration.

In the 20th century, from 1936 onwards, the major changes linked to tourism gathered pace. The passage of vehicles over the road bridge was causing vibrations that threatened the structure. 310 tonnes of cement were injected into the sensitive areas.

In 1959, a campsite was set up below the inn on the right bank, marking the beginning of a period of development that did not really respect the site.

In 1985, the Pont du Gard was listed as a Unesco World Heritage Site, and plans for a cultural facility on the site began to be considered.

In 1998, the Pont du Gard development project was adopted (through a Declaration of Public Utility) putting an end to the disorganised degradation of the site.

In 2000, the redeveloped site opened, marking the beginning of a new era.



THE MONUMENT IN ITS NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Situated in a natural area comprising 165 hectares of landscapes listed under the 1930 Law on the Environment, this stone colossus offers itself up for admiration by all visitors in an pedestrian-only environment dedicated to walking. The site proudly displays its various facets, much to the delight of lovers of archaeology, history, geography and nature.



THE SPIRIT OF THE SITE

This restored and protected site now enjoys a certain harmony, in keeping with the beauty of the features present: the stone of the surrounding rock mass, the waters of the Gardon and the Mediterranean vegetation. In this vast, sensitive heritage area, you can also see the remains of the aqueduct, the stone quarries used to build the bridge, the traces left by man in the agricultural areas on the limestone plateau and two 19th century buildings.

ARCHAEOLOGY

On the left bank of the Gardon, the Romans dug an open quarry 600 m downstream from the monument which produced the limestone blocks used for the building work. Recent excavations have made it possible to reconstruct the techniques used to extract and lift the blocks. The excavated ancient quarry face is not open to the public.

Many remains still exist. Nine of the seventeen engineering structures forming part of the aqueduct are located within the 165-hectare Pont du Gard site, including bridges, culverts and tunnels. They are accessible by footpaths maintained by the teams from the Public Establishment managing the site.

MEDITERRANEAN FAUNA AND FLORA

Two biotopes co-exist at the Pont du Gard, the riparian forest on the banks of the Gardon and the Mediterranean scrubland on the limestone plateau. **The vegetation is characteristic of the Mediterranean climate**, growing on dry soils dominated by limestone in high and low scrubland. The holm oak is the dominant species here. The kermes oak, white oak, terebinth pistachio, white rockrose, juniper and rosemary are the other main species. **The proximity of the river favours the presence of a specific type of fauna, including** beavers, kingfishers, and bats in the caves carved out by underground run-off water. The Bonelli's Eagle can sometimes be seen soaring over the Gardon Gorges (one of the few remaining pairs in France).

Molasse-limestone

Although crumbly by nature, this shell-based rock, which is about 15 million years old, hardens over time, as shown by the exceptional longevity of the Pont du Gard

2000, A NEW LOOK

ACTION TO PROTECT AND DEVELOP THE PONT DU GARD SITE: PRESERVING THE PONT DU GARD, THE MOST VISITED ANCIENT MONUMENT IN FRANCE.

After inclusion on the World Heritage List by UNESCO in 1985, in anticipation of a new influx of tourists, the Département du Gard decided to develop the site around the monument to ensure its long-term protection.

CONDITION OF THE SITE IN 1985: ALARMING FINDINGS

An analysis of the visitor numbers and the state of degradation of the site gave serious cause for concern. At the time, the site was already receiving more than one million visitors a year, including 6,000 to 10,000 daily summer visitors. There were no reception facilities, and no cultural or tourist information. The road traffic comprised of cars, buses and trucks (up to 3,500 on some summer days) still passed through the building. The scattered, unsupervised car parks were visible from the monument (30 m), the access roads were saturated, and the average visiting time was less than an hour. There was also a lack of historical awareness and little economic benefit for the region. For all of these reasons, the local authorities planned an in-depth protection and development initiative, which was launched in 2000.

A LONG-TERM PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

After several abandoned projects, an initiative to protect and develop the historical and ecological site of the Pont du Gard was launched in 1995 by the Département du Gard. The scientific, technical and economic studies carried out by the project's participants and the multidisciplinary group of scientific experts resulted in the drafting of the general idea for the project.

An initiative based on three principles:

- Environmental and heritage protection,
- The quality of the visitor reception experience,
- Local economic development.

The conceptual themes of the project:

- Developing the site in keeping with the spirit of the area, protecting and enhancing the natural environment,
- Creating 'Discovery Areas' to help people understand the site's history,
- Respecting local practices.



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THE CHALLENGE was to develop a high quality, top-of-the-range cultural attraction, worthy of a monument listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, while respecting the local habit of visiting the Pont du Gard for a picnic, a swim or a stroll.



In 1998, road traffic was banned and work began. This included the restoration of the 165-hectare site, the redesignation of damaged landscapes, the removal of all visual pollution, the construction of reception and information buildings for the public, shaded parking areas away from the bridge and a pathway to the monument. Sheltered cultural areas were designed.

REORGANISATION OF THE SITE INTO THREE AREAS

A balance was sought between living spaces, including indoor cultural activities, on 43 hectares near the bridge, and activities for relaxation and discovery in the natural environment on 72 hectares along the route of the aqueduct, surrounded by an almost impenetrable 50-hectare forest.

A multidisciplinary scientific team:

*archaeologists, historian,
ethnologist, architect,
geographer, botanist,
hydrologist, landscape
historian...*

A CULTURAL PROGRAMME COVERING ALL THE THEMES INHERENT TO THE SITE

The cultural programme defined in 1997 by the multidisciplinary scientific team led by the archaeologist Jean-Luc Fiches, director of research at the CNRS, focused on "Man, stone and water in the Mediterranean region". This approach extended beyond simply discovering the ancient monument to encompass all the themes of the site.

THE ARCHITECTURAL RESPONSE: A FOCUS ON MODERNITY

The design of the reception and public information buildings, which also house the cultural areas and the promenade linking the two banks and the Pont du Gard, was entrusted to an eminent architect, Jean-Paul Viguier.

DISCREET ARCHITECTURE

The architectural style is resolutely contemporary and respectfully discreet in relation to the site. The built-up areas are incorporated into the living space around the Pont du Gard. Two buildings, which cannot be seen from the bridge (500 m from the bridge), are built on the left and right banks of the Gardon.

TWO INTEGRATED BUILDINGS

On the Left Bank, the 10,000 m² building with its minimalist architecture is two-thirds underground, with its enclosure only protruding 4 metres above the ground. A large, open-air central square, protected by white canvas, offers visitors reception, ticketing, shop, bistro and other basic services. This building houses the 4500 m² of museum space (Museum, Ludo, Cine, temporary exhibitions) as a prelude or complement to any visit to the site.

On the right bank, a 1400 m² building, set in a former quarry, whose shape it follows and integrates, includes a reception area and facilities for conferences and seminars.

THE LANDSCAPED PROMENADE LINKS BOTH BANKS OF THE RIVER

To ensure a link between the different areas and the bridge, the architect designed a programme to rehabilitate the old road, which forms the main structural element for visiting the site and now becomes a pedestrian walkway. Visitor flows converge there, with outdoor features along the way, including the landscaping, signage, furniture and lighting.

The outdoor furniture was designed by the Belgian designer Maarten Van Severen.

LANDSCAPING FOR PARKING AREAS

The parking areas respect the surrounding landscape thanks to their landscaping by Laure Quoniam (landscape architect). On the left bank, the car park with a capacity of 800 vehicles features low dry stone walls and Mediterranean tree plantations. The Right Bank car park, with its tall riverside vegetation, has a capacity of 600 cars.

“It is a silent architecture” explains the architect Jean-Paul Viguier. “To avoid any confusion about the construction period” the buildings are subject only to the “skilful, correct and magnificent interplay of volumes assembled under the light”.

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TWO PRESERVED 19TH CENTURY BUILDINGS

A former post office, dating from 1865, opposite the monument on the right bank, has been renovated by the architect Hervé le Stumm. It now houses the restaurant “Les Terrasses du Pont du Gard”.

“Le Vieux Moulin” on the left bank was acquired by the Département du Gard in 2014. It is currently undeveloped.

THE PONT DU GARD SITE, COVERED BY THE “GRAND SITE DE FRANCE” LABEL

After the restoration of the whole site in partnership with the local authorities, the Pont du Gard site was awarded the “GRAND SITE DE FRANCE” label in 2004 by the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development. This label was renewed in 2011 and in 2020. This label concerns sites classified as environmental sites, of great renown, essentially if natural in character, with a high level of tourist traffic, and for which the managers have demonstrated an approach focused on quality and sustainable management, succeeding, according to precise and restrictive criteria, in reconciling the reception of tourists, local life and protection of the natural environment.

PONT DU GARD

THE DISCOVERY AREAS

Indoor and outdoor discovery areas to understand and appreciate the site's history.



LUDO (PLAY AREA)

A play area for children aged 5 to 12.



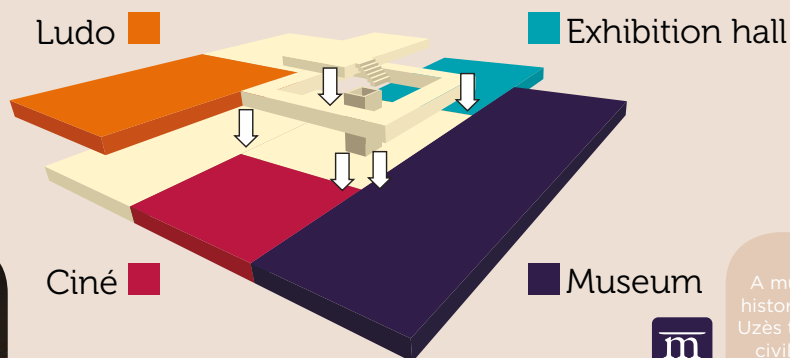
THE MAIN THEMES COVERED IN THE DISCOVERY AREAS

- The Roman way of life
- Water management
- The history of the ancient aqueduct and Nîmes
- The construction of the Pont du Gard
- The ancient quarry and related techniques
- Archaeology
- History
- Observing nature
- The Mediterranean landscape
- Learning to look



EXHIBITION AREA

Art and science exhibitions related to the themes of the site.



CINÉ (cinema room)

The most beautiful images of the Pont du Gard



MUSEUM

A museum focusing on the history of the aqueduct from Uzès to Nîmes, on the Roman civilisation of the city and on water.



THE MEMORIES OF THE GARRIGUE ROUTE

An open-air discovery trail in a rediscovered Mediterranean landscape.



THE MEMORIES OF THE GARRIGUE ROUTE

In the shadow of the great bridge, the Mediterranean scrubland remembers its past... On the limestone plateau on the left bank, since 2003 the site has hosted an open-air exhibition, "Memories of the Garrigue", an authentic journey through the region with a discovery trail through 15 hectares of restored farmland that highlights the landscape and the work of man over thousands of years.

AN ANCIENT LANDSCAPE, ONCE ABANDONED THEN RESTORED

Hidden away from the monument, a 15-hectare area was home to several generations of farmers for centuries. This area and the forty plots of land that comprised it were left abandoned with the agricultural decline of the mid-20th century. Led by a team composed of a specialist in Mediterranean landscapes, Véronique Mure, a scenographer, Raymond Sarti, and a landscape designer, Philippe Deliau, a rehabilitation project was undertaken in 2000 as part of the initiative to enhance the site. The landscaping has been upgraded and marked out, the paths lined with dry stone walls, the capitelles restored, and the hedges and the meadows mown...

THE SCENOGRAPHIC TOUR: THE LANDSCAPE SHARES ITS MEMORIES

The designers sought to revive what, until the 19th century, was the very essence of the Mediterranean landscape, shaped by men who cleared the land, tore stones from the ground, built walls with their hands, farmed, exploited the holm oak or grazed sheep. In order to do this, using the many traces left by the past, they brought fallow land back into use, including plots of wheat, olive trees or vines abandoned since the middle of the 20th century, and then created an unguided poetic or educational walk with the help of an accompanying booklet for visitors to the Pont du Gard site. The philosophy of the project was to allow the landscape to speak for itself rather than to design a demonstrative 'encyclopaedic' visitor trail.

The scenographic features are not overbearing, with general information at the beginning of the tour on the climate, the soils, the formation of the garrigue, (scrubland), a model of the route, then along the paths the visitor is guided very discreetly by surveyor's rods and 'Petit Poucet' stones.

Several hectares of land were cleared, and 300 olive trees, 144 fruit trees, 70 truffle oaks and vines were replanted.



"Each cultivated or uncultivated plot, each wall, each hedge and each path, carries meaning and expresses the history of this area".

Véronique Mure, designer of the Trail

THE THREE MAJOR THEMES OF THE WALK: AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, PASTURES

Walking along the 1.4 km route, the visitor will be inspired by three main themes linked to the Mediterranean landscape: agriculture and the permanence of crops based on vines, cereals and olives; the forest and all the activities linked to it: charcoal from holm oaks, truffle gathering, game hunting and pastoralism.

Accompanying these major themes, visitors can discover the speculative cultivation of mulberry trees and a garden of useful plants... A viewing point with a viewpoint indicator provides visitors with an extensive view across the site, and in particular the Gardon gorges and the Roman aqueduct.

The Roman engineers who built the Pont du Gard are considered today as creators of heritage and as artists. The farmers who developed the scrubland close to this great monument are the artists who shaped the surrounding landscape.

THE MUSEUM

The 2500 m² museum, a multimedia interpretation centre, designed in 2001 and called "The history of the Pont du Gard and the Roman aqueduct of Nîmes" is the cornerstone of the cultural attractions at the Pont du Gard site.

"THE HISTORY OF THE PONT DU GARD AND THE ROMAN AQUEDUCT OF NÎMES"

This unique centre on Roman multidisciplinary engineering successively presents Roman society in the city and its links with water, the challenges of the construction of the aqueduct and the building work, all the different engineering structures that made up the aqueduct, in addition to artistic, technical and scientific representations of the Pont du Gard since the Middle Ages.

More than 15 years of multidisciplinary archaeological and scientific research on the Pont du Gard and its site are presented to the public thanks to modern transmission media: full-scale reconstructions, artefacts, models, maps, videos, multi-screen images, programmes, theatrical and sound effects, virtual tours and computer programmes, prepared by some of the great names in museography.

A journey through time. Like a Roman road, the museum trail is marked out with multimedia explanations in 4 languages (French, English, German and Spanish) enabling everyone to explore it at their own pace. The sound design created by Louis Dandrel suggests the sounds of a Roman city including the thermal baths and a construction site with several hundred workers.

The Museum's itinerary compares the accounts of those who helped write the history of the aqueduct and the bridge: historians, architects, stonemasons, engineers and artists, etc. It offers visitors the freedom, depending on the time they have available, to wander through a very different world or to go still further and to immerse themselves in it completely, improving and testing their knowledge while having fun. In doing so, they discover a genuine work of art whose construction testifies as much to their remarkable technical and architectural know-how as to the refined civilisation of the city and its relationship to water.

2,500 M2 DEVOTED TO THREE MAIN THEMES

1 - THE GALLO-ROMAN CIVILISATION OF THE CITY AND WATER

The Roman Empire's policy of expansion that brought the work to life. The city was given a new name, continuing the policy pursued by Emperor Augustus during his reign (27 B.C. to 14 AD. In the year 50 AD, in Transalpine Gaul (Narbonne) and particularly in Nîmes, thanks to the new water supply system the precious, life-giving water flowed into Nemausus (the Gallo-Roman name for Nîmes).

Water, a way of life and a valuable public service. This resource was not only linked to vital needs, it signified the prestige that the city sought for itself, following the example of its model, Rome; it provided the means for a certain art of living practised in public (thermal baths) and in private places (domus); it allowed the city's leaders to pursue a policy of public service (water was made available to all, free of charge, in the fountains in the city's streets).

30,000 m³ of water arrived each day in the public fountains, thermal baths and domus (homes). In the first large room of the Museum, a multi-screen show allows you to immerse yourself in the daily life of Nemausus and to admire the ancient monuments still standing. The inhabitants go about their business and speak in Latin, as water flows into the fountains... This world is reconstructed life-size, with details of the pipes, taps, drains, etc., as well as the usual domestic objects of the time, including buckets, jugs, basins, etc. An interactive and educational model of a magnificent 500 m² Domus of Pompeii makes it possible to understand



Duration of the visit

- 1 to 3 hours

General public

- from 8 years old



Two contemporary works of art have been commissioned from artists for the museum:

A huge wall of silk-screen prints by Burles and Rubaglia focuses on the bridge's arches.

"Aqua Luminis", the wave of light, by the visual artist Jean-Louis Lhermitte, symbolises the memory of water.

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the functioning of the peristyle houses, where gardens, basins, bathrooms and water-heating systems were supplied with running water under pressure from the aqueduct. Traditional activities such as laundries and dye works, and of course the thermal baths, also drew large quantities of water for their operations.

2 - THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE STRUCTURE, THE AQUEDUCT AND THE BRIDGE

Spotlight on the aqueducts of the Roman world.

Comfortably installed in the alcoves of a "radio theatre", the visitor listens to a conversation between the water curator in charge of Nemausus and his nephew. He tells him about the decision-making process, the financing arrangements and the implementation of a regional planning project of this kind. An educational feature that helps us to understand the Roman capacity and organisation of the time to carry out large infrastructure projects and their innovative techniques. On a large illuminated relief map, with the help of various features the visitor can discover the route of the aqueduct over its 50 km length as well as the main places where the materials used for the construction site were extracted, such as stone, sand and wood. Further on, a huge map lists some fifty Roman cities in the Mediterranean basin,

Director of the multidisciplinary committee of scientific experts:

Jean-Luc Fiches

Curators of the exhibition:

Martine Thomas-Bourgneuf & Christian Cazin

Project manager:

Lydia Elhadad

Set design:

Christian Leconte & Geneviève Noirot

Sound design:

Louis Dandrel

equipped with aqueducts to bring in water to supply their populations.

A colossal project. The most spectacular aspect of the construction site theme is the full-scale reconstruction of part of the quarry, a section of the canal, and two arches of the third level of the Pont du Gard. At various scales, the presentation shows life on the construction site, the men and trades involved, the know-how and the tools, with the aid of monitors, interactive terminals, dioramas, models and bas-relief sculptures enabling the public to better understand the complexity, the aesthetic choices of the architects and the technical innovation of a work of art which is not limited to the Pont du Gard alone, but concerns the whole of the 50 km stone pipeline, which is buried for over 90% of its length. Extracts from a "sword and sandals" film are compared with experiences from a recent restoration project on the Pont du Gard, and contemporary technical drawings with ancient illustrations.



In a reconstructed laconicum, the visitor can take a break and listen to texts by famous Roman writers (Seneca, Petronius). On the multimedia screens, he can take a virtual tour of a Roman house or explore the water circuit.

The operation of the ancient aqueduct of Nîmes.

The visitor finds himself facing a giant high screen. It invites you to leave the site and to fly over the route of the aqueduct from the source in Uzès to the castellum divisorium (water tower) in Nîmes, providing an opportunity to really appreciate the extent of the system and to see the other bridges and technical features. Around a large map on the ground, the **"circle of models"** presents the twenty or so overhead structures that make up the aqueduct in their original state. In the side galleries, the abandonment of the canal is covered, with the appearance of limestone build-up preventing the flow of water. **Visitors can discover the scientific investigations carried out since 1985, along with accounts from those involved.**

3 - THE PONT DU GARD AND ITS REPRESENTATIONS THROUGH THE CENTURIES

In the last part of the exhibition, the visitor discovers

"You know that this monument, which was only a simple aqueduct, rises majestically in the middle of the deepest solitude; the soul is thrown into a long and deep amazement. The Colosseum in Rome barely plunged me into such deep pensiveness".
Stendhal
Memoirs of a Tourist, 1838.

- Number of years under construction: **5 years**
- Total volume of stone: **evaluated at 21,000 m²**
- Total mass of stone: **estimated at 50,400 m²**
- Weight of a large block: **up to 6 tonnes (max)**

"the second life of the aqueduct" and the multiple representations of the Pont du Gard. After its initial use as an aqueduct, the Pont du Gard suffered the ravages of time, but also looting for the construction of religious buildings in the Middle Ages.

From the Renaissance onwards, the bridge became something of an ideal, reaching its peak in the 19th century. It became a model that inspired poets and writers as well as architects, painters, engravers, lithographers and photographers. Famous writers such as Mérimée, Stendhal, Rousseau and Dumas have all succumbed to the magic of the bridge. Their works illustrate the fascination that the bridge has held for artists, from the first engravings through to James Turrell's light show in 2000. An alcove marks the passage of the Compagnons du Devoir who left their mark in stone. In the 17th century, a road bridge designed by an engineer of the Enlightenment period, Henri Pitot, was added to the first level of the bridge. The scholars' galleries complete the last part of the exhibition: the engineers' gallery tells the story of the restoration of the Roman canal in response to the needs of an expanding city (surveys, plans, engravings from the 17th and 18th centuries), while the architects' gallery offers an overview of repairs and restorations from the Middle Ages to the present day.

LUDO (THE PLAY AREA) FOR 5-12 YEAR OLDS

Welcoming young people and schoolchildren is a priority. Ludo is the centrepiece of the educational activities for young people at the Pont du Gard. A playful, educational and invigorating world for children.



A LIFE-SIZE BOARD GAME

In this 600 m² area designed under the direction of museographers from the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, young visitors aged 5 to 12 are invited to take part in a variety of discovery trails and games. The children can enjoy their visit as active, unrestricted participants in the whole experience. Nothing is imposed on them. They get to handle, experiment with and discover the resources made available to them.

FOUR THEMES ARE EXPLORED:

- **Travelling back in time:** using role-playing games, the child becomes a Gallo-Roman schoolboy, counts in Roman numerals, goes shopping in ancient times, and enters a *domus* and an *insula*.
- **Taming the water:** how does it circulate in the natural environment, what are the means used to control it? Fun, hands-on activities help the child to understand these physical phenomena.
- **Searching for the traces of the past:** using an accurately reconstructed excavation site, the young visitor understands that it is not enough to simply

LUDO (the Play Area)

- Project Manager:
Christine Lavaud-Duclos
- Set design:
Marie-Laure Mehl
- Duration of the visit:
about 1 hour

scratch the ground to make discoveries. This is a comprehensive process.

- **Observing nature:** observe, learn to recognise and respect your environment, discover the real inhabitants of the site, including the trees and animals... These are some of the objectives of this discovery area.

ALICE AND TOM ACCOMPANY THE CHILDREN

The child discovers fun atmospheres and colours accompanied by two little characters, Alice, a playful little girl and Tom the rabbit. The aim of this discovery area is to arouse curiosity and prepare children to understand the site.

CINÉ

"A BRIDGE ACROSS TIME"

A 15-minute documentary film is shown in the left bank building, further adding to the permanent cultural attractions at the Pont du Gard.



A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO AND SUMMARY OF THE SITE VISIT

"A Bridge Across Time" invites the visitor to travel from one era to another to discover the very long life of this monument, in the company of an unusual guide, Lili, a dragonfly created from computer-generated images. Using beautiful images of the bridge, mainly filmed from the air, this film provides the main information needed to understand the history of the Pont du Gard. An essential prerequisite before or after visiting the Bridge.

Produced entirely in high definition digital imagery, without audio commentary, it is screened in a loop in the 300 seat auditorium. The shots combine video images, educational illustrations, animations and chronological references.

CINÉ

- **Film: Hurricane:
Benjamin Cellier**
- **Suitable for all audiences:
children, parents, French
or foreigners.**

THE TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

As part of its cultural activities, the Pont du Gard public establishment produces or co-produces temporary exhibitions related to the site's themes, which are based on content related to the cultural aspects of "Water, man and stone in the Mediterranean environment".



TEMPORARY SCIENTIFIC, OR ARTISTIC EXHIBITIONS

Each year, one or more temporary exhibitions of scientific and artistic culture, scheduled alternately, are hosted in the "Jean-Luc Fiches" temporary exhibition room in the Left Bank building (600 m²).

1 • MAJOR SCIENTIFIC EXHIBITIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN HELD AT THE PONT DU GARD:

- "Gardons, Gardon" on the theme of wild water;
- "Water for all", or the challenges of this vital resource in the world, in co-production with the Cité des Sciences in Paris;
- "In the countryside in Roman times" recalls rural Gallo-Roman life in Roman times.
- "À l'œuvre et à l'ouvrage", an exhibition exploring the architecture of Rudy Ricciotti, Shigeru Ban and Patrick Bouchain and the works of the engineer Michel Virlogeux.
- "Ma terre première pour construire demain" designed by the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, was presented on the site in 2012.

- "Gaulois du Nord, Gaulois du Sud, une expo renversante " designed by Universcience and the Pont du Gard.
- "What's new in the Middle Ages?" which aimed to deconstruct preconceived ideas about the Middle Ages, an exhibition co-produced by INRAP and the Cité des Sciences.
- "Fire: taming, understanding and fighting fire", designed by Universcience.

2 • THE SITE IS A VENUE FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ART EXHIBITIONS:

Solo exhibitions: Ousmane Sow, Claude Viallat, Albert André, Jacques Gorde, Joseph Koudelka, Charles Stratos, Pierre Parsus in 2017. Exhibitions focusing on several artists: Deleuze, Viallat, Seytour, regional exhibitions of contemporary art: "La Dégelée Rabelais", "Casanova forever", "Ulysse Pirate" with the FRAC and the Languedoc-Roussillon region.

EVENTS

The events and cultural activities aspect is a major component of the Pont du Gard site. The aim is to make the site a living place of memory and artistic creation where artists and associations for all art forms can express themselves through fun and festive events for the general public.



LIGHT SHOW JUNE TO AUGUST

The thousand-year-old monument is illuminated at dusk, offering the public a magnificent moment of contemplation. A work offering a wealth of perspectives, lights and colours, in which graphic or symbolic images interact, collide, overlap and relate to each other.

SUMMER NIGHTS UNDER THE STARS IN JULY AND AUGUST

Sound and light show by Groupe F

A magical end to the evening with a video mapping projection on the Pont du Gard.

What a great way to leave with powerful images you'll always cherish! The monument is transformed by a succession of pictures, offering a moment of pure fantasy and poetry for a family adventure under the stars. Every evening during the summer at the foot of the Pont du Gard, Right Bank.





AND THERE'S MORE...

Mediation workshops for families during each school holiday:

- thematic tours of the remains, the history of the landscape
- mosaics, games, storytelling

Leisure activities around the river in summer.

**See all the events at
www.pontdugard.fr**

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The principles behind the cultural and artistic events are:

- Unique events in an exceptional location
- An eclectic approach, reflecting the diversity of the site's audiences
- The generosity of the highly affordable prices
- Universality in keeping with the site's status as a World Heritage monument

*The Pont du Gard Site is present on the main social networks:
Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest*

RECEPTION SERVICES FOR GROUPS

The site offers a reception service for adult and school groups as well as business tourism services.

SCHOOL GROUPS AND YOUNG AUDIENCES

The Pont du Gard site is an attractive destination for schools. It aims to be a place of discovery and learning, combining all the pleasure of learning and understanding with that of relaxation.

Specific educational programmes

Since 2000, in partnership with the French Ministry of Education, a dedicated educational service has been running a specific educational programme for young people within the framework of their schooling and extra-curricular activities, supervised by two seconded teachers. Teachers have the opportunity to carry out preparatory work beforehand, proposed by the educational service.

A multidisciplinary site

Focused on the core cultural aspects of the site, "Water, Man and Stone in the Mediterranean", the themes at the Pont du Gard, both indoors in the museum areas and outdoors, are both rich and numerous, including history, archaeology, Roman civilisation, architecture, engineering, the environment, the life and earth sciences or languages.

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A dedicated group booking service responds to all your questions or requests on 04 66 37 51 10 or by email: reservation@pontdugard.fr

ADULT GROUPS

Adult groups are an essential component of the site's audiences. The business development managers carry out marketing and prospecting activities in France and abroad and study specific solutions to meet all requests.

The tour packages are flexible. They can be adapted to the different requirements of professional clients, from a brief visit of just a few hours, with or without catering, to a full day including the discovery of cultural areas, a lunch break and the light show in the evening. The range of groups hosted here is wide. It covers both international visitors making an express visit to the South of France and members of works councils or associations.

BUSINESS TOURISM SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

The Pont du Gard site has developed a range of business tourism services since 2005, with a large part of the building on the right bank being devoted to this activity. It offers companies all the facilities they need to organise their event in a prestigious and unique location.

The Congress Centre, 400m from the bridge, welcomes corporate events all year round: congresses, conventions, general meetings, seminars, etc.

The site has two auditoriums (230 and 300 seats with integrated control rooms), meeting rooms equipped with plasma screens, plenary conference rooms, sub-committee rooms and large outdoor areas.

The site has already hosted many public and private French and international organisations.

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**A department dedicated to the organisation of business events responds to all requests on 04 66 37 50 81 or by email: seminairescongres@pontdugard.fr
Website dedicated to business tourism: www.pontdugard-business.com**

More than 60,000 schoolchildren: are welcomed at the Pont du Gard site each year, making it one of the top destinations for young people in the region.

WELCOMING VISITORS SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC

The site is multilingual: French, English, German, Spanish.



GUIDED TOURS

Thematic guided tours and tours of the Roman canal on the 3rd level of the Pont du Gard are offered all year round (information and ticket office at the Reception).

THE SHOP

To get the most from your visit, you can do a spot of shopping at the Pont du Gard, in the shop on the Left Bank.

THE PONT DU GARD RECEPTION/ INFORMATION POINTS

A reception/information/ticketing point is located at the entrance to the buildings on each bank.

SERVICES

The site now offers the public all the services they need to enjoy their visit with complete peace of mind: supervised parking areas, sanitary facilities, wheelchair access, mailboxes, etc. Information is available in four languages.

DISABLED ACCESS

The site is accessible to people with all disabilities, and wheelchairs are available on request.

PARKING

Tree-lined, supervised parking areas are planned on both banks for buses and private cars 500 m from the bridge on the left bank (800 spaces) and the right bank (600 spaces).

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**Wifi access is also available
to our visitors.**

CATERING, A NEW EXPERIENCE

The onsite eateries propose a range of snacks, sandwiches and traditional restaurant meals. The restaurant "Les Terrasses" housed in a former post office on the right bank was completely redeveloped in 2020 and offers an authentic and elegant décor. The other catering outlets have also been given a facelift, for the comfort of our visitors.



LES TERRASSES

Located opposite the Pont du Gard, on the right bank, Les Terrasses offers diners a timeless atmosphere, with a breathtaking view of one of the most beautiful monuments of the Roman Empire. The restaurant Les Terrasses proposes a gourmet menu, created using the region's finest products.

New interior fittings. From the small private lounge with a fireplace to the lounge room with a view of the bridge, not forgetting the bar with its chic bistro look, the restaurant Les Terrasses has been revamped, to offer you a mouthwatering break facing the monument.

New contemporary, comfortable and cosy furniture combined with an elegant décor give the establishment a warm, plush atmosphere.

One of the most beautiful terraces in the South of France, in the shade of hundred-year-old plane trees, with a breathtaking view of the highest Roman bridge

in the world. It offers a restaurant and a bistro area open all day for homemade snacks, ice cream and refreshments.

Telephone reservations: +33 (0)4 66 63 91 37

LES PETITES TERRASSES

Located on the right bank of the river, this establishment offers fast food at any time of the day. A sandwich shop, salad bar and ice cream parlour, Les Petites Terrasses offers a wide selection of homemade delicacies to eat in or to take away.

THE PONT DU GARD BISTRO

Located on the left bank, this new eatery had a makeover in 2021. The Bistro offers a snack bar, pancakes, ice cream and soft drinks.

THE EPCC PONT DU GARD INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT

Since 2003, the Pont du Gard site has been managed by an EPCC (*Etablissement Public de Coopération Culturelle* - Public Establishment for Cultural Cooperation), an organisation involving the State and the local and regional authorities. It brings together complementary stakeholders: the state, elected representatives, socio-professionals and scientists. This management method (as per the Law of 2002) allows for greater flexibility and responsiveness.



ONE OF THE FIRST AND LARGEST EPCCS IN FRANCE

The EPCC Pont du Gard was one of the first to be created in France in 2003. With 25 members, it is also among the largest. This status gives the Pont du Gard site an economic and social status equivalent to that of the Louvre (Établissement Public du Grand Louvre) and Versailles (Établissement Public du Musée et du Domaine National de Versailles).

THE EPCC, AN ORIGINAL AND INNOVATIVE STATUS

The status of "Public Establishment for Cultural Cooperation" offers the choice between a public establishment of an administrative nature or a public establishment of a commercial and industrial nature. The latter was chosen by the Pont du Gard site. This status gives it real management flexibility.

This new management method for public cultural services seeks to:

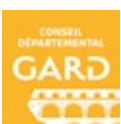
- Institutionalise partnerships by bringing together the different stakeholders involved in the running of a cultural project. The cultural aspects of the planning contract between the State and the region constitute an initial level of organisation upstream of the partnership. The EPCC is its operational management body.

Composition of the Board of Directors of the EPCC Pont du Gard (24 members):

- 8 departmental members
- 4 regional members,
- 3 mayors,
- 3 representatives of the State,
- 4 specially qualified individuals,
- 2 EPCC staff members.

- To have a management system adapted to the specific cultural aspects and an autonomous structure, including: autonomy of creation, because the initiative to launch EPCCs is the sole responsibility of the local authorities and inter-municipal structures; autonomy of management because the EPCC has its own budget; autonomy of operation, with a board of directors comprised of representatives of the State and the local authorities (member structures), specially qualified individuals and staff representatives.

The implementation decree of 11 September 2002 defines the respective tasks of the Board of Directors and the President as well as the special status of the Director. The statutes also provide for a cultural and scientific council and thematic committees.



TOURISM RESEARCH DATA

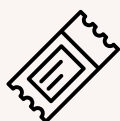
The Pont du Gard is the most visited ancient monument in France and welcomes many types of visitor throughout the year.

In 2017, it set up a Visitor Research Unit to analyse the number of visitors to the site and to gain a better understanding of its visitors, such as where they come from, their expectations and their visit route.

In 2019, a customer survey was conducted during the summer and in 2021, the Site was a pilot for the Herit Data project aimed at setting up a digital platform to collect and monitor tourist flow data, in partnership with the Occitanie Region.



KEY VISITOR DATA FOR 2019



848,187
visitors
through the ticket office



+ 27,000
visitors
in 2019



+ 30,000
admissions
for under 18s



145,000
young
people
on family visits



61705
students
welcomed



22% of
pupils
accompanied
by a facilitator
during the visit



CUSTOMER AND SATISFACTION SURVEY

In 2019, a survey was carried out during the summer involving 1525 visitors to the Pont du Gard, which made it possible to determine their profile and characteristics.

In the sample

51.3 %
were women

48.7 %
were men

Among these people

46.1 %
were between
46 & 65 years old

30.4 %
were between
31 & 45 years old

Only

7.5 %
were young
people between
21 & 30 years old

1.5 %
20 years old
or younger

Nationality of visitors

61.4 %
were French

38.6 %
were from abroad

Origin of visitors

26.2 %
of the French people
were from the Occitanie region

18 %
came
from the Gard department

15 %
came
from the Auvergne
Rhône Alpes region

8.1 %
came
from Nouvelle Aquitaine

9.3 %
came from
from the Ile de France

The majority of
foreigners came
from the United States,
Germany or Belgium.

USEFUL INFORMATION

The site is accessible 7 days a week, all year round, with variable opening hours depending on the season. The cultural areas, shops and restaurants also have variable opening hours.
Detailed information and timetable available on the timetable/price list sheet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For added comfort during outdoor summer events, we recommend that you bring: a hat, sunglasses, cushions, tablecloths and towels, etc.

INFORMATION OR RESERVATIONS

Groups

- **Tourism professionals**
+ 33 (0)4 66 37 50 24
- **School/adult groups**
+ 33 (0)4 66 37 51 10
- **Tel. Restaurant reservations for groups**
+ 33 (0)4 66 37 51 10

- **Sales department:**
reservation@pontdugard.fr

Business tourism

- + 33 (0)4 66 37 50 81
seminairescongres@pontdugard.fr

The general public

- **Information**
+ 33 (0)4 66 37 50 99
- **Reservations for the restaurant Les Terrasses**
+ 33 (0)4 66 63 91 37
- **Information**
contact@pontdugard.fr
- **Official website and online ticketing**
www.pontdugard.fr

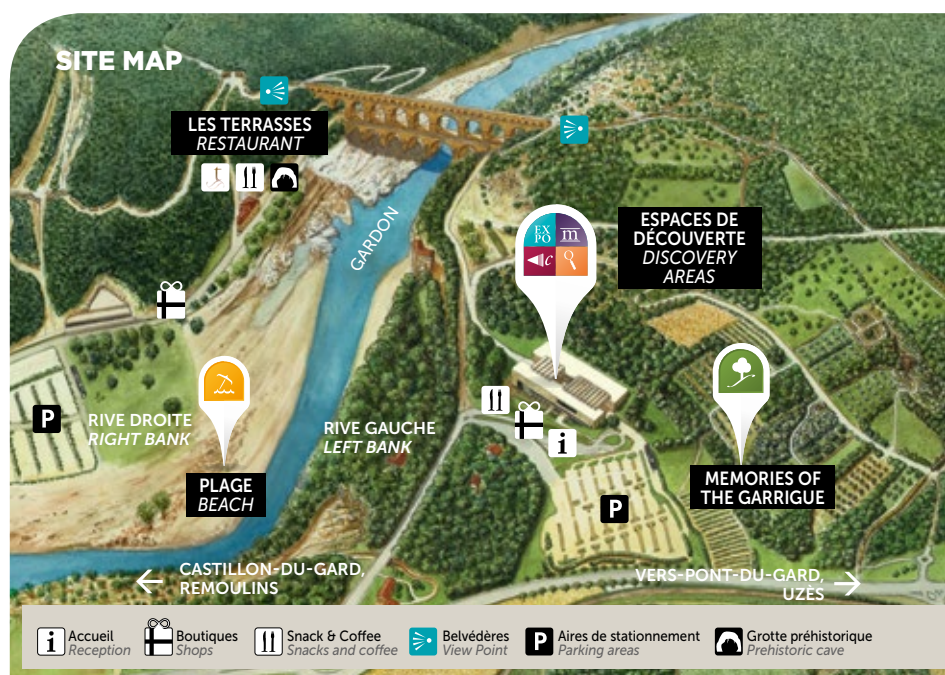
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ADDRESS

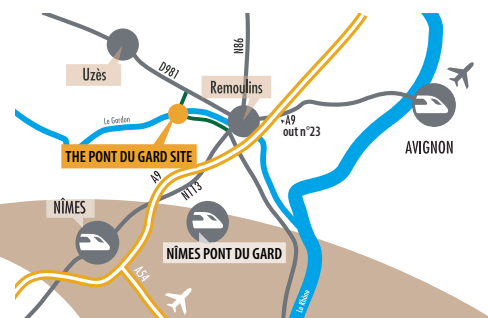
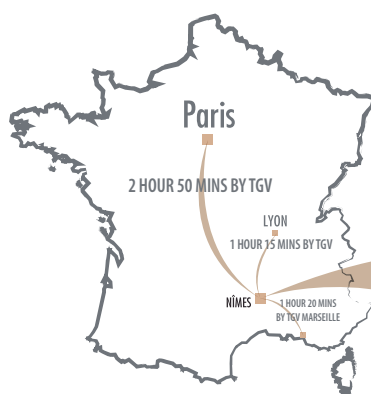
Site du Pont du Gard

La Bégude

400, route du Pont du Gard
30210 Vers-Pont-du-Gard



GETTING THERE



The Pont du Gard site is located between Remoulins (RN100) and Vers-Pont du Gard (D 81).

Two possible options for access:

- Left bank
(Vers-Pont-du-Gard)
- Right bank (Remoulins)

Nîmes: 27 km

Avignon: 21 km

These towns are served by national and international air and rail links.

Nîmes-Pont du Gard: 20 km

TGV Paris-Nîmes: 2 hours 50 mins



PONT DU GARD

NATURE AND CULTURE

PONTDUGARD.FR



Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture



Pont du Gard
Inscrit sur la Liste
du patrimoine mondial
en 1985

GRAND SITE



DE FRANCE

Design & creation 100% - Photo credit: R. Spring

SITE DU PONT DU GARD

La Bégude

400 route du Pont du Gard
30210 Vers-Pont-du-Gard
Tel + 33 (0)4 66 37 50 99

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