

The journey will cross the central part of the Massif Central by various railway lines built during the second half of the 19th century (Clermont-Ferrand / Nîmes and Neussargues / Béziers). Technical feats, like tunnels or bridges, allow the traveler to pass from 358 (starting point in Clermont-Ferrand) to 1153 meters of altitude (Lioran station), through deep valleys and high plateaus. You will discover the landscapes of the Massif Central from another angle and at the speed of a mountain train. These landscapes also correspond to famous terroirs for the production of cheeses (AOC Cantal, Saint-Nectaire) and other agri-food products that will be presented to you during the lunch tasting.



European Landscapes for Quality of Life?

Field Trip

Travel by train between Clermont-Fd
and Mende to discover landscapes
and local products of the Massif Central

Field Trip # 6

10:00 **Appointment at Clermont-Ferrand train station: tasting of IGP Auvergne fruit paste**

10:35-12:20 **Clermont-Ferrand to Le Lioran by the TER train n° 871209**

During this trip, we will cross the south of Limagne and the small Limagne, following the Regional Natural Park Volcanoes of Auvergne on our East (depending on the weather, we may see the highest point of the Massif Central, the Puy de Sancy, 1,885 meters) and following the valley of the Allier, and that to the station of Arvant.

We will cross the Allier river several times: the most spectacular crossings are beyond Arvant towards Nîmes. As a specialist of railway structures in the Allier valley, Jean-Michel DELAVEAU will present rail as landscape elements. From Arvant, the railway takes the direction of the West and is part of another landscape: first the deep valley of Alagnon, then mountains. We will reach finally Neussargues then Le Lioran, highest point of our trip.

We will stop just before the tunnel called Lioran, dug in a volcanic rock and which allows to go from the valley of Alagnon (Loire watershed) to the valley of Cère (Dordogne watershed).

On the trip between Neussargues and Le Lioran, and then during lunchtime at Le Lioran station, we will have a lighting on the southern landscapes of the Regional Natural Park of the Auvergne Volcanoes by Ghislaine PRADEL, former agent of the Park, mayor of Neussargues-en-Pinatelle, president of the community of communes of Hautes-Terres and departmental Councilor of Cantal.

12:30-13:30 **Lunch at Lioran station**

14:03-16:15 **Travel from Le Lioran to Marvejols**

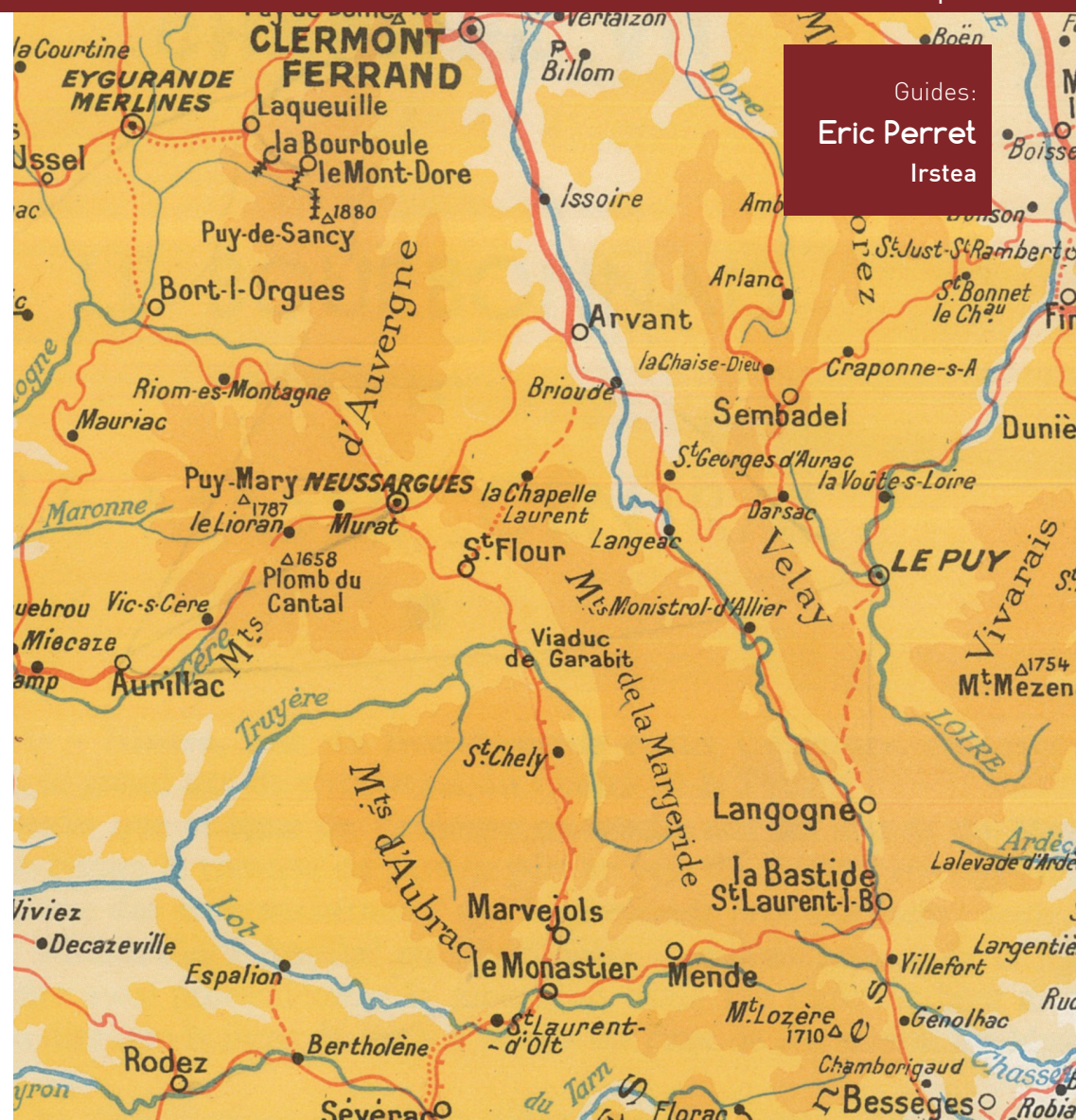
- TER train n° 873840 to take the Le Lioran / Neussargues line to Clermont-Ferrand (departure at 14.03 - arrival at 14.44 with only one stop)
- The intercity train No. 15943 for Béziers to make the last part of the journey (departure at 14:35 - arrival at 16:15 with 3 stops)

On this last part, we will pass on the viaduct of Garabit (length of 565 meters) which was built by Gustave Eiffel and which spans the valley of the Truyère more than 122 meters above this river.

The line will a plateau (between 600 and 1000 meters). From Saint-Flour-Chaude-Aigues station (754 meters), we will contemplate the city of Saint-Flour with its cathedral, built on a volcanic spur. During this journey of more than 1 hour and 30 minutes, we will draw on the work of Jean-Pierre Desfontaines on landscapes to do some practical work. The speed of the train on this section is between 60 and 80 km / h, making it possible to take the time to differentiate different types of landscapes. The result of this practical work will be posted in Mende to share our observations with our colleagues.

16:30 **Trip by Bus to Mende**

Waiting for the bus that will take us to Mende and for the bravest, we can walk and discover the village of Marvejols



Lunch contact: Lioran Station (15300 Laveissière)

Guide in charge of the trip: +33 (0) 6 82 90 43 25

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