

# Monaco > Brignoles

Sunday July 5<sup>th</sup> • Stage 2 • 187 km

## Region

### ● Provence - Alpes - Côte d'Azur

The Region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, situated in the extreme south-east corner of France, encompasses six counties: the former counties of Provence, Nice and part of the Dauphiné. Bounded by the Mediterranean, flanked by the Italian border and by mountains in the East, PACA boasts outstanding assets as a tourist destination, enjoys exceptional amounts of sunshine and lays claim to an assorted and delicious selection of local produce (wines, oils, fruit and seafood). This is why it is the leading tourist destination for French holidaymakers and the second most popular tourist destination for overseas visitors, after Paris. The region plays host to an estimated 35 million tourists each year. Its pleasant surroundings and vibrant character have also always been immensely popular with painters and artists.

A very urban area - counting four cities with a population of over 100,000 inhabitants: Marseilles, Nice, Toulon and Aix-en-Provence (Avignon is not far behind) - it is also the fourth most populated region in France with 4.5 million inhabitants.

In addition to tourism, ultra-modern industrial activities and cutting edge technologies - Sophia-Antipolis and Cadrache - are gradually replacing more traditional industries, notably shipbuilding - Marseilles, la Ciotat, Toulon - and the region's agricultural sector continues to expand and improve in quality.

Website: <http://www.regionpaca.fr/>

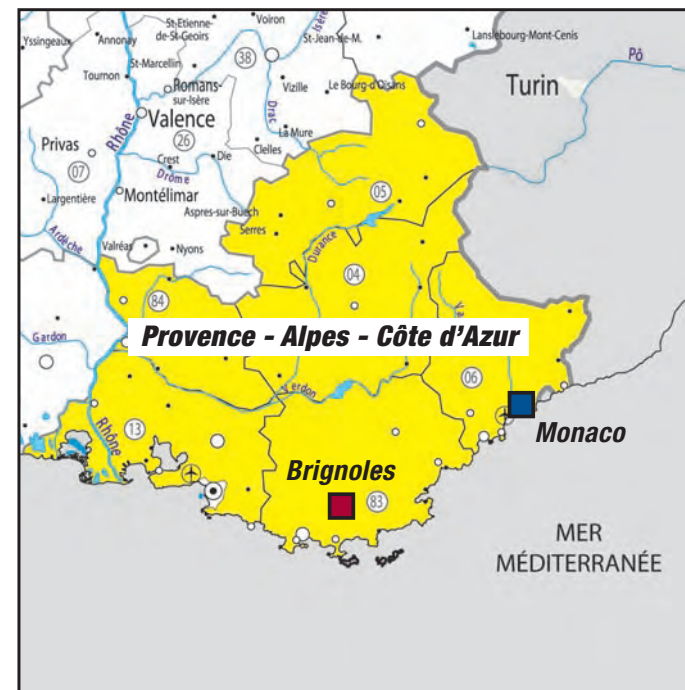
## County

### ● Alpes-Maritimes

Prefecture: Nice  
Sub-prefecture: Grasse  
Population: 1.2 million  
Website: <http://www.cg06.fr/>

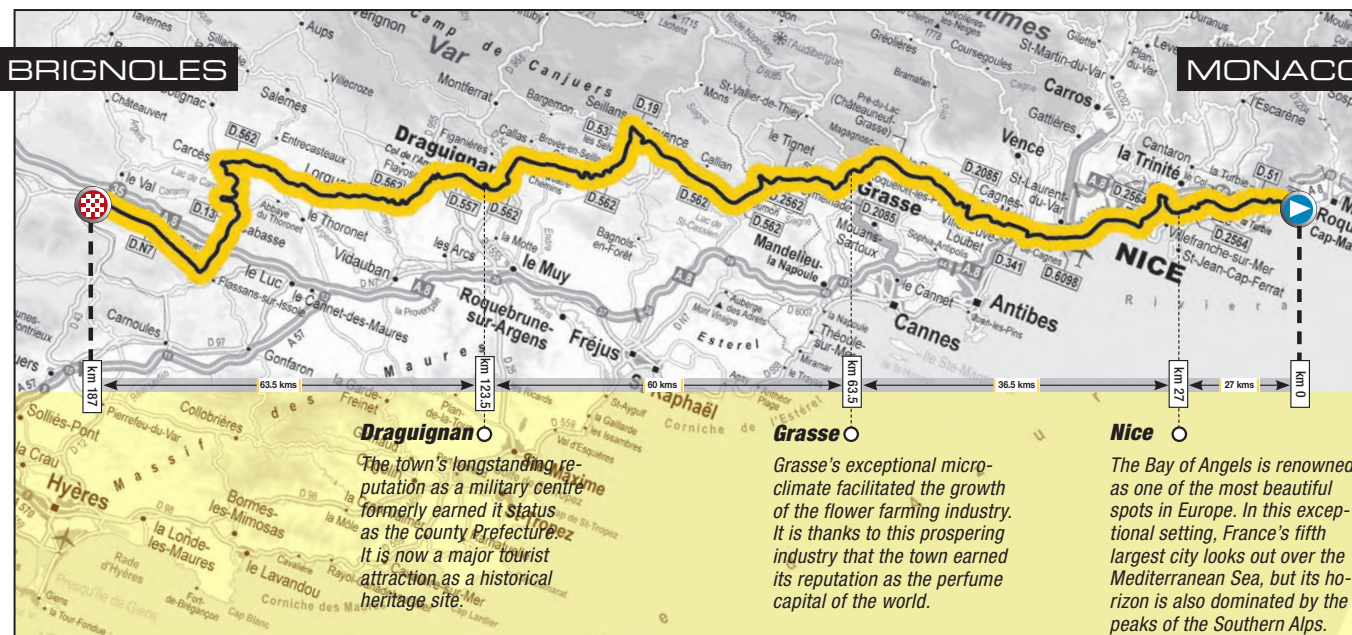
### ● Var

Prefecture: Toulon  
Sub-prefectures: Brignoles, Draguignan  
Population: 985 000  
Website: <http://www.var.fr/>



## 2009 Stages

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21



### The Tour pays a visit to...



Benjamin Catenet

**Benjamin Catenet**, Director of the Barbaroux Golf Club, one of Europe's most prestigious golf courses, situated in the commune of Brignoles.

"In Brignoles, I'm lucky to live in a more preserved environment in comparison to the Alpes-Maritimes and Bouches-du-Rhône regions. There's only one major city in the county of Var, Toulon, and wilder, untamed landscapes. In Haut-Var, I particularly like going to Correns, France's first completely organic village, famous for its white wine. I stop off here to have a drink. There are many monuments, like Fort Gibron. A few kilometres away, the Sourn Valley is a magnificent spot, with its craggy cliffs, crisscrossed by the river Argens. It is home to a very rich and varied flora and fauna. Caramy Square in Brignoles, shaded by its many plane trees, and totally renovated two years ago, is a focal part of

the town with its bars and its restaurants. Brignoles is also a medieval city that has conserved a large part of its ramparts and exceptionally beautiful churches.

On a day to day basis I reside at the Barbaroux golf club, which was voted the finest course on the French Tour by the players in 2007. The surrounding area is home to a superb variety of flora and fauna with pine trees, white oaks and Holm oaks. I regularly go mountain biking as the area is ideal for it. Indeed, many of our guests are cyclists. During the 2007 Paris-Nice, we even received two cycling teams, the Caisse d'Epargne and the Française des jeux. Staging the Tour de France, which will pass right in front of the golf course, will focus considerable publicity on the Var centre; it's usually the coast that is in the spotlight: Sainte-Maxime and Saint-Tropez".

- Introduction
- **Departure town**
- Along the way
- Arrival town

## 2009 Stages

1 2 3

4 5 6

7 8 9

10 11 12

13 14 15

16 17 18

19 20 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

## Monaco today:

### A major player in sustainable development

The Principality's spectacular development together with its condensed surface area make Monaco one of the world's most densely populated States. This distinction motivates the Government's policy dedicated to the preservation of the natural heritage and the marine ecosystem and the restriction of pollutant waste products.

Green spaces represent 20% of the surface area in the Principality.

The Oceanographic Museum, inaugurated in 1910 by Prince Albert I, "the Scientist Prince", symbolises the campaign to preserve the marine environment. Its aquarium houses a magnificent collection of 6,000 fish, from the Mediterranean and tropical seas, occupying 90 seawater tanks.

In 1992, at the Rio Conference, Prince Rainier III pledged his support in favour of sustainable development. The evolution in the choice of modes of transportation in the city is marked by a desire to promote environment friendly alternatives. By creating the Monaco Prince Albert II Foundation in June 2006, the new sovereign is continuing in the same vein as his predecessors.



Oceanographic Museum (photo : centre de presse de Monaco / Charly Gallo)

- **Population:** 32,000 (natives known as Monegasques)
- **Surface Area:** 2 square km (2<sup>nd</sup> smallest State in the world after the Vatican)
- **Economy:** chemistry, cosmetology, commerce, tourism
- **Local celebrities:** Prince Albert, Princesses Caroline and Stéphanie, Léo Ferré
- **Sports clubs:** AS Monaco football team
- **Festivals:** International Circus Festival, Monte-Carlo Television Festival, Monte-Carlo Comedy Film Festival
- **Local fare:** fougasse (wheat pancake), pissaladière (pizza with onions, anchovy fillets and olives), petits farcis (stuffed vegetables)
- **Local saying:** "With God's Help"
- **Website:** <http://www.monaco.mc/>

## ▶ MONACO

### Monaco and cycling

Monaco will play host to the Tour de France for the sixth time. For the 17<sup>th</sup> time the race will be launched from outside France. Starts from the south are rare: four in total, and only one from the south-east, from Nice, in 1981.

The Tour visited the Principality for the first time in 1939. After the war years, in 1946, Apo Lazaridès triumphed in a race of five stages, the Monaco-Paris, which heralded the return of the Tour a year later. In the 1950s, finishes in the Principality crowned Dutch riders Jan Nolten and Wim van Est then Raphaël Gémiani. And in 1964 the finish of the 9<sup>th</sup> stage, Briançon-Monaco, was the backdrop to one of the epic Anquetil versus Poulidor battles. The Norman rider was the first to arrive on the cinder track of the original Louis II stadium. Poulidor drew level with him to battle for the sprint. However, upon crossing the finishing line he stopped riding whilst another lap of the finishing circuit still remained and Anquetil raced on. Poupou finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the stage, leaving victory, and in particular the one minute bonus, to his rival. Soon after, Jacques Anquetil won his 5<sup>th</sup> Tour in Paris... 55 seconds ahead of Raymond Poulidor.



Anquetil - Poulidor sprint on the old Louis II stadium track - (photo : Presse Sports)

## 2009 Stages

1 2 3

4 5 6

7 8 9

10 11 12

13 14 15

16 17 18

19 20 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

- **1191:** The Germanic emperor Henri VI entrusted the sovereignty of Monaco to the Genoese. In 1215, the construction of a stronghold on the Rock was embarked upon.
- **1297:** Disguised as a Franciscan monk, François Grimaldi penetrated the stronghold and seized control. This earned him his “sly” nickname.
- **1489:** The King of France and the Duke of Savoy recognised the independence of Monaco.
- **1509:** After two centuries of an ongoing struggle with the Grimaldis, Genes surrendered Monaco.
- **1612:** Monaco became a Principality, under Honoré II.
- **1793:** Monaco was annexed by the members of the National Convention and renamed Fort Hercule.
- **1815:** Monaco was placed under the protectorate of the King of Sardinia.
- **1861:** Via a treaty with France, Monaco was recognised as an independent state, but lost Menton and Roquebrune, towns that voted to be joined to France.
- **1863:** Prince Charles III authorised casinos, which were to bring prosperity to the town.
- **1869:** Direct taxation was abolished.
- **1911:** Monaco became a constitutional monarchy. First Monte Carlo car rally.
- **1929:** First Monaco Grand Prix.
- **1949:** Rainier III acceded to the throne.
- **1982:** Accidental death of Princess Grace.
- **1993:** Monaco was admitted into the United Nations.
- **2005:** Prince Albert succeeded his father, as Albert II.

2009  
Stages

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

▶ MONACO

One of the world's G8 in terms of sport

Regularly cited for its palaces and its casinos, the Principality's pole position in the world of sport is often forgotten. Few countries can boast an international level football team, the most famous rally in the world, a Formula 1 Grand Prix, some of the most renowned athletics and swimming meetings worldwide, a legendary tennis tournament, international federations and multiple conferences, but also a wealth of less glittery though just as prestigious events in the domain of sailing, show jumping and beach volley. If a G8 (group of 8) existed in the world of sport, the Principality would be part of this group.

In fact, this "small State" is fortunate to be governed by a sovereign who is an avid sports fan! It is not by simple coincidence or by precedence that Prince Albert is a member of the International Olympic Committee. A genuine Olympian, His Highness participated in four editions of the Winter Olympics as a pilot in the Monaco national bobsled team. A highly skilled judoka, he is also the ardent defender of a spectacular and unfairly eclipsed sport: the modern pentathlon. Without offending sensibilities, it can be affirmed



Monte-Carlo Master - (photo : Presse Sports)

that HSH is probably the most sportive Head of State currently in office. His father Rainier III, from 1949 to 1950, and his grandfather, Prince Pierre, from 1950 to his death in 1964, were already members of the IOC. On his mother's side, the sporting fibre is also developed as Princess Grace's father, John B. Kelly, was no less than Olympic rowing champion in 1920 in Anvers, and Albert's Uncle, John Junior, was bronze medal winner in the Melbourne Olympic Games in 1956, again in rowing.

**THE OCEANOGRAPHIC MUSEUM**

*This exceptional museum of marine sciences, opened in 1910 by its founder, Prince Albert I, is reputed worldwide for its collections, in particular its aquariums including the famous "Shark Lagoon", inaugurated in 2001.*

**THE EXOTIC GARDENS**

*Inaugurated in 1933, these contain several thousand "succulent" plant varieties. Within these gardens, 60 metres underground, visitors can discover the rooms of the prehistoric Observatory Cave. The Exotic Gardens also house the Prehistoric Anthropology Museum. Boasting a wealth of burial artefacts from Monaco and the surrounding area, this museum, founded in 1902 by Prince Albert I, presents the major steps in the history of humanity.*

sightseeing...

## 2009 Stages

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

## Along the way...

### ALPES-MARITIMES (06)

In the far south-east of France, situated along the Mediterranean, next to the Italian border in the east, Alpes-Maritimes, the French Riviera and its hinterland boast an abundance of exceptional tourist treasures that are famous world wide.

The county boasts a prestigious coastline as well as rugged landscapes right down to the sea. Here, the Alps and the sea merge into one.

Less than an hour's journey time by car separates the sea from the mountains and the area counts several ski resorts (Auron, Isola 2000). Benefiting from 320 days of sunshine per year, an exceptional climate is one of the major assets of a region whose 1.2 million inhabitants earn a living essentially from tourism.

Tourism aside, a highly developed service sector represents a significant part of the economy of Alpes-Maritimes: 76, 2% of the working population. The public buildings and works sector is another highly developed sphere of the county's industrial fabric, glowing with innovation and leading the way for tomorrow in Sophia Antipolis, where a large high-tech science, IT - communication university project is being developed, and at the Cannes Mandelieu space engineering centre, the biggest centre for the manufacture and testing of satellites in Europe and the largest industrial centre in the county.

### LA TURBIE - km 8.5 Pop. 3,200

A pretty medieval village perched above the Principality, at the summit of a pass well-known to riders of Paris-Nice, La Turbie is notably famous for the Trophy of the Alps, a colossal Roman monument that towers high above the Mediterranean.

The Trophy of the Alps was erected in the years 6 to 7 BC in honour of the Emperor Augustus, adopted son of Julius Caesar, to commemorate his victory over 45 Celto-Ligurian tribes that refused to submit to Roman authority.

Gigantic in its original proportions - the statue of Augustus that topped the monument stood 49 metres high - the edifice was damaged and practically dismantled over the centuries. Its stones were notably used to build the Saint Michel church in La Turbie.

Classified as a listed monument in 1865, the edifice was restored at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century at the initiative of the then Mayor of the town, Philippe Casimir, and the American multimillionaire Edward Tuck.

The stones used to build the monument were extracted from the local quarries, one of the cornerstones that forged the town's reputation and which can still be visited today. La Turbie - AS Monaco's training

ground - is also famous for a laurel plant, which fired the imagination of the poet Théodore de Banville and led to the composition of his most famous poem (Ode to the Laurel of La Turbie).

### COL D'ÈZE - km 13.5

A traditional finish on Paris-Nice, the Col d'Èze has never been climbed on the Tour de France. A first time event hence for this 12 kilometre ascent that has witnessed the victory of some of cycling's finest champions: Eddy Merckx, Joop Zoetemelk, Sean Kelly, Stephen Roche and Jean-François Bernard.

### NICE - km 27 Pop. 350,000

Sweeping majestically around the curve of the bay known as the Bay of Angels, at the mouth of the river Paillon, Nice is the fifth largest city in France and the second largest city in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region. Its urban conglomeration is also the fifth largest in France, with a population of close to 900,000.

Nestled between the sea and the mountains, the economic capital of the French Riviera boasts a wealth of exceptional natural assets. Tourism, commerce and admin are the mainstays of the city's economic

## 2009 Stages

- 1 2 3
- 4 5 6
- 7 8 9
- 10 11 12
- 13 14 15
- 16 17 18
- 19 20 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

## Along the way...

fabric. On a national level Nice boasts a hotel accommodation structure and facilities second only to Paris, and the city accommodates 4 million tourists yearly.

Nice is a university city and an important conference centre; it also boasts France's third busiest airport.

Historical capital of the county of Nice, the city, whose name is probably derived from the Greek word *Nikaiä* (victory), was for a long time a part of Provence before reverting to the House of Savoy in 1388 and, later, the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia. Nice only became a permanent part of France in 1860.

Native celebrities are many in number, but particular mention must be made of Giuseppe Garibaldi, the Father of modern Italy, the writers Guillaume Apollinaire and Max Gallo, and artists Henri Matisse and Marc Chagall, both of whom have museums in the city devoted to their work.

In the cycling arena, Nice is particularly renowned as the finish of Paris-Nice, the Race to the Sun, since 1933.

Louis Nucera's birthplace also staged a finish of the Tour de France 35 times between 1906 (victory for René Pottier) and 1981 (Bernard Hinault won the prologue). All of cycling's pre-war – and pre-paid vacation! – legends won here: Nicolas Faber, Octave Lapize, Firmin Lambot,

Philippe Thys, but notably Nicolas Frantz, who triumphed three times in a row in 1926, 1927 and 1928, winning the Tour in these last two editions of the race.

### CAGNES-SUR-MER - km 39 Pop. 49,000

A pretty medieval village nestled around its castle - and listed as a historical monument in 1948 - Cagnes-sur-Mer, thanks to its most illustrious resident, the artist Renoir, has become a major seaside resort and tourist attraction on the French Riviera. Its racecourse completes the renown and reputation of this little town located halfway between Nice and Cannes.

Cagnes is a name of Ligurian origin that signifies "settlement on a rounded hill-top".

Cagnes was a former Celto-Ligurian town and in the 14<sup>th</sup> century naturally became a frontier town bordering the counties of Nice and Provence, which brought prosperity but also pillaging and conflict to the town.

The town reached its peak of glory under Louis XIII when Jean-Henri Grimaldi transformed his fortified castle into a fine palatial residence frequented by all the important and influential figures that passed through the region.

Its decline continued right up until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was at this time that the Father of Impressionism, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, settled in Cagnes. He lived here from 1903 until his death in 1919, in a house that is now home to the Renoir Museum. Following his example, many artists and celebrities flocked to Cagnes-sur-Mer and settled in the old hill top city, Haut-de-Cagnes: Foujita, Yves Klein, Soutine, but also Georges Simenon and the singers Mouloudji and Georges Ulmer.

In the space of fifty years Cagnes-sur-Mer racetrack, opened in 1952, has considerably developed and is today the largest racecourse in southern France.

### GRASSE - km 63.5 Pop. 49,000

Towering over an ancient commercial route, the city of Grasse was founded in the middle Ages on a volcanic hill called the Puy. The town's name may be derived from this: Grand Puy = Grassum Podium (Big Hill).

Beset like the rest of the region by the conflict between the counties of Nice and Provence, Grasse expanded considerably in the Middle Ages thanks to its leather and tanning industry, which

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

# Monaco > Brignoles

Sunday July 5<sup>th</sup> • Stage 2 • 187 km

## Along the way...

gradually oriented the city's active trading towards France, to the detriment of its more ancient trading partners, like Genoa and Pisa.

The progressive decline of the tanning trade was compensated for by the birth and rapid development of the perfume trade, which appeared in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the new fashion for perfumed gloves. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century this traditional craft trade, thanks to a growing flower farming industry facilitated by an exceptional microclimate, formed the basis of an affluent industry that experienced a phenomenal expansion. This booming development continued throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the industrial revolution. Perfumeries adopted new techniques and production premises were transformed (Chiris Factory). Today, Grasse is the major industrial centre of the French Riviera, producing two-thirds of France's natural aromas, both for the food industry and perfumes.

The city is today the perfume capital of the world. With a turnover of 600 million euros, it employs over 2,700 people. Grasse staged a finish of Paris-Nice in 1952 and a win for Louison Bobet.

### SEILLANS - km 95.5

Pop. 9,000

Officially listed as one of the most "beautiful villages in France", Seillans boasts an extremely rich historical, cultural and architectural heritage. It is a medieval village with its Saracen Gate, feudal castle, 12<sup>th</sup> century church, its labyrinth of cobblestone streets and multiple fountains in small squares shaded by huge plane trees that are centuries old.

Seillans is equally renowned for its famous former inhabitant, the surrealist painter Max Ernst who lived here for the last twelve years of his life. In 1994, his wife, Dorothea Tanning, donated a bronze sculpture to the village, "le Génie de la Bastille", to be seen in the place de la République, along with lithographs of her husband and herself. The first floor of the Maison Waldberg accommodates all of these works.

In 1970 the town staged a finish of Paris-Nice, which crowned Eddy Merckx.

## 2009 Stages

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

## Along the way...

### VAR (83)

Var has the well-known particularity of being named after a river that no longer flows within its boundaries, since the district of Grasse was attached to the Alpes-Maritimes region. Situated within the ancient county of Provence, it boasts 420 km of coastline, and hence draws flocks of tourists eager to visit its many world famous seaside resorts - Saint-Tropez, Saint-Raphael, Le Lavandou, Bandol.... but it is less widely reputed as the most wooded county in France: 62% of its territory is covered in forests. Tourism is of course the principal industry here, but agriculture – fruit, flowers, wines – of excellent quality, flourishes well in the region’s superb hinterland. Haut-Var and the 37 communes that have joined together to form the association La Provence Verte (Green Provence) propose an extremely varied and comprehensive tourist offer combining sports activities and promotion of regional tourism. A rich and varied heritage – Saint-Maximin Basilica, Sainte-Baume, perched villages, castles and abbeys, small ports – incites visitors to abandon the beaches or to visit the Var outside the busy summer months. Industry – shipbuilding, the French navy and an important sector of the public buildings and works sector – is being restructured, notably in Toulon, the county Prefecture since 1974, when it was moved back to Toulon from Draguignan.

### DRAGUIGNAN - km 123.5 Pop. 35,000

Formerly the Var Prefecture, this rapidly developing city has been transformed, within the space of a few years, from an administrative and military centre to a tourist destination, with a dynamic cultural scene, and a superbly treasured historical heritage.

Beautiful plane tree-lined avenues surround the old city that is well worth strolling around at length in order to explore the porches, ancient houses, carved doorways and many squares, which all have their particular story to tell (Herb Square, Observance Square, Cros Square...).

Mentioned for the first time in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Draguignan developed at the bottom of a hill which is now dominated by the Clock Tower. Legend has it that in the 11<sup>th</sup> century Saint Hermentaire slew the dragon that reputedly gave its name to the town: the story attracts pilgrims to the town.

Draguignan was to prosper under the protection of the Counts of Provence and found its true vocation in 1834, with the construction of the first military barracks. Whilst industry and agriculture declined, Draguignan thrived as an administrative and military centre, selected as the Var Prefecture instead of Toulon, accused in 1793 of treason with England. In 1974, the

Prefecture was moved back to the large naval port, but Draguignan still hosts the law courts, county administrative offices and various military establishments.

In 2000 Draguignan hosted the finish of a stage of the Tour that was won by Jose Vicente Garcia-Acosta. The town has also staged eight finishes of Paris-Nice, won each time by sprinters, and the Tour of Haut-Var.

### CABASSE - km 167 Pop. 1,700

This Haut-Var village is celebrated among cycling fans as it was for a long time home to Jean Dotto, who owned vineyards here. The “winegrower of Cabasse” participated in 13 editions of the Tour de France and won a stage in Aix-les-Bains in 1954. Jean Dotto is notably renowned for his victory in the 1955 la Vuelta. He also won the Dauphiné Libéré twice, in 1952 and 1960. He died in 2000.

## 2009 Stages

1 2 3

4 5 6

7 8 9

10 11 12

13 14 15

16 17 18

19 20 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

## 🍷 BRIGNOLES

### Brignoles today

#### La Provence verte (Green Provence)

In March 1995 13 Var communes that were part of the Tourist Association for the regions of Sainte Baume, Brignoles and Val d'Argens decided to create an inter-communal tourist information office. Named La Provence Verte, it promotes tourism in the region and respect of the natural environment. Today 37 communes are now part of La Provence Verte, which has established its headquarters in the Brignoles Tourist Information Office.



View of Brignoles - Photo : service de communication de Brignoles

#### Nicolis Urban Development Zone

Created in 1984, the Nicopolis development zone is today Var's most extensive urban settlement area, spanning 202 hectares including 90 in a preserved environmental zone. Nearly sixty companies have settled on this site, creating some 1,400 jobs. Activity is notably dedicated to platforms for mass marketing.

#### Red Mine Museum in Tourves

The idea of a bauxite museum, named the "red mine museum" was launched more than ten years ago and should succeed thanks to the endeavours of former miners, associations and financing of the project by the County of Provence Community of Communes. Indeed, for more than one hundred years, up until 1914, Var was "world leader" in bauxite mining, employing several hundred miners. The museum will be housed in the former corporation basement in Tourves and hopes to attract 20,000 visitors yearly.

- **Population:** 17,000, natives known as Brignolais (m), Brignolaises (f)
- **Economy:** service sector, wine growing
- **Local celebrities:** Joseph Parrocel and Frédéric Montenard (painters), François Just Marie Raynouard (academician), Joseph Lambot (inventor of reinforced concrete), Jean-Jacques Marcel (footballer)
- **Sports clubs:** AS Brignoles (football)
- **Festivals:** Wine Fair (in April), Jazz Festival (20 editions), Medieval Festival
- **Local fare:** la pistole (dried plum)
- **Labels of approval:** headquarters of La Provence Verte, capital of central Var
- **Website:** [www.ville-brignoles.fr](http://www.ville-brignoles.fr)

## 2009 Stages

1 2 3

4 5 6

7 8 9

10 11 12

13 14 15

16 17 18

19 20 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

## 🏆 BRIGNOLES

### Brignoles and cycling

This being the south-east, football remains the flagship sport in Brignoles. One of the town's clubs, AS Brignoles, hence dominated the regional league in the 1970s and remains one of the area's top clubs. Brignoles is also the birthplace of Jean-Jacques Marcel, who played in 44 matches with the French national football team, participating in the 1954 and 1958 world cups. Marcel, who played for the Sochaux, Marseille, Toulon and Racing clubs, even captained the French team in 1960.

Brignoles has never before played host to the Tour de France, and it was on the occasion of the start of a stage of Paris - Nice in 2007 that the idea for this finish was launched. At the origin of this venture, Alain Escudier, President of the Roue d'Or in Brignoles, sees his dream become reality. This stage, which finished in Cannes, crowned Luis Leon Sanchez.



Southend landscape - Photo : ASO

- **241 BC:** Construction of the Via Aurelia route that runs close to Brignoles.
- **1056:** Brignoles was ceded to the monks of the Saint Victor Abbey in Marseilles.
- **1264:** The construction of the Palace of the Counts of Provence was completed.
- **1502:** The first Assembly of the Parliament of Provence was held in Brignoles.
- **1579:** When Hubert de Vins refused to pay the taxes demanded by the town, the inhabitants destroyed his house and chopped down 18,000 plum trees in his orchards. This was the end of Brignoles plums, which had brought wealth to the town. Ten years later, De Vins had his revenge by laying waste to the town before reselling his land for a small fortune. This incident was part of the bloody period of the history of Brignoles.
- **1790:** Over 300 Provençal towns and villages attended a meeting and signed a pact of alliance and mutual aid in Brignoles.
- **1921:** First wine fair, still organized today.
- **1975:** Brignoles became sub-prefecture of the Var once again, after a brief spell as Prefecture during the Revolution.

2009  
Stages

- 1 2 3
- 4 5 6
- 7 8 9
- 10 11 12
- 13 14 15
- 16 17 18
- 19 20 21

- Introduction
- Departure town
- Along the way
- Arrival town

BRIGNOLES

Saint Louis de Brignomes, the eternal hostage

Born in Brignoles in 1274 in the Palace of the Counts of Provence, Louis of Anjou had an eventful life and just as an eventful death. The son of Charles II and great-nephew of the “grand” Saint-Louis, he was shunted around from castle to castle in his childhood before being held as a hostage with his two brothers in 1288 in Moncade castle, near Barcelona, and then in Tarragone, in exchange for their father’s freedom. For this unusual act of filial sacrifice Louis de Brignoles was venerated and canonized

as the patron saint of prisoners and hostages. Freed in 1295, he was appointed Bishop of Toulouse by Pope Boniface VIII but died in Brignoles two years later, whilst on his way to Rome and not quite 24 years old. According to his wishes, his body was taken back to Marseilles in 1318 and buried in the convent of the Friar Minors, rue Tapis Vert, close to the courtyard that was later named after him.

Saint-Louis’s journey was far from being over, however, as his saintly relics were fought over: his brain went to the Santa Chiara convent in Naples, his mitre and his gloves remained in Brignoles; the rest was sent to Marseilles.



The Palace of the counts of Provence - Photo : service de communication de Brignoles

In 1423, Alphonso of Aragon besieged and destroyed Marseilles. He seized as trophies the chain that closed the entrance to the Old Port and the relics of Saint-Louis. And so the eternal hostage returned to Spain... The chain still adorns a wall in Valencia cathedral, but in 1956 the Levantine city restored two of the saint’s vertebrae to Marseilles... which, on display in Saint-Ferréol church, quai des Belges, were stolen in 1997! No-one can say where the vertebrae of our unfortunate saint now lie; a saint who died of exhaustion and seems condemned never to rest in peace

THE PALACE OF THE COUNTS OF PROVENCE

In 1264, Charles II, the Count of Provence, and his wife Mary of Hungary, completed the construction of their new palace. It was the custom for the Countesses of Provence to give birth here. In 1945, the palace became “the Brignoles regional museum”.

LA CELLE ABBEY (2 km from Brignoles)

Founded by the monks of the Saint-Victor Abbey, it was for a long time a convent for the daughters of noblemen of Provence. Today Alain Ducasse has restored and converted this hostelry into a prestigious and gastronomic restaurant.

BARBAROUX GOLF CLUB

Located in the heart of Provence, it is considered one of the most beautiful golf clubs on the French Riviera. It is moreover listed as one of the Top 50 European golf courses in Golf World magazine.

sightseeing...