

## The Bay of Angels and the Mercantour

Far from urban constructions, we engage on the coastal path. Just 200 meters walk to leave the urbanized areas and find ourselves facing the Bay of Angels with Nice at its eastern end. Overlooking the bay, appears the Mercantour chain, foothills of the Alps, dominated by the summit of Gélas, which rises to 3143 m. This opposition of relief between sea and mountain is at the origin of the name of our department.

### 1 · The tip of the Garoupe

The lighthouse of the Garoupe  
On the other side of the cove, we observe the Garoupe lighthouse. This monument rises to the top of the Garoupe plateau at a height of nearly 103 metres. With a luminous intensity of over 2,300,000 candelas, this lighthouse is one of the most powerful on the Mediterranean coast. Its light rays reach 60 km at sea and nearly 100 km for aircraft. At its feet is the chapel of Notre-Dame de la Garoupe which houses many ex-voto sailors. On the other hand, a natural area of 9 hectares, the Bois de la Garoupe, property of the Conservatoire du littoral houses a green oak forest. This site is open to the public and can be visited all year round.



## A threatened floristic wealth

The tip of the Garoupe is full of an incredible diversity of floristic species. This narrow, heavily frequented area is home to almost half of the protected plant species present on the coastal trail. These include the Passerine Hirsute (Thymelaea hirsuta), a shrub with small fleshy leaves in the form of imbricate scales, particularly adapted to drought, as well as the thornyspurge (Euphorbia spinosa) forming small groves close to the ground. These protected species are monitored specifically on the trail.

### 2 · The beard of Jupiter

The beard of Jupiter (Anthyllis barba-jovis) or silver shrub is an endemic and protected plant of the French Mediterranean coast, which can exceed 2 meters high. It owes its name to its fluffy leaves, allowing it to capture the humidity of the night and isolate itself from the heat of the day. At the end of spring, it has beautiful white inflorescences.



### 3 · A natural garden

A real natural garden has found refuge in the crevices of the rock. It is mainly made up of the marine cristus (Crithmum maritimum) with deep roots in the soil and the sea lavender (Limonium cordatum) with sublime purple inflorescences, often compared to a «bonzai» by its small size. This nationally protected species has small, cushion-shaped leaves to resist wind and drought. Finally, these two species are often accompanied by the maritime cinerary (Jacobaea maritima) with beautiful yellow inflorescences and which owes its name to its ash-colored leaves. These species have been able to develop adaptive capacities to the particularly aggressive coastal environment because it is very mineral, poor in fresh water and beaten by salt spray.

### 4 · A meadow of seaweed bordered by water

Let us look down and discover life at the foot of these cliffs where a meadow of seaweed finds its place. The cystoseire (Cystoseira amentacea), composed of brown twigs from 20 to 40 cm, forms a vegetal belt with water. Due to its sensitivity to pollution, this alga is a biological indicator of water quality. Cap d'Antibes is home to the largest population of cystoseire in the department.

### 5 · Anemomorphosis tree

What is this tree of strange shapes? What gardener came to prune it like this? Yet it is well known by all. This is the Pine of Aleppo (Pinus halepensis), common in the Mediterranean, which, subject to the physical and climatic conditions of the environment, developed with a particular morphology, called «flag». The strong prevailing winds cut its branches towards the interior, and the salty spray limits the development of young shoots. Totally shaped by the wind, it creates a vault for all hikers along the coastal path.

### 6 · A ubiquitous avifauna

Along the trail, extend your ears or watch the horizon, you can observe many species evolving on our coasts. The Great Black-backed Gull (Larus michahellis) and the smaller Black-headed Black-headed Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) are present all year round. In summer, we find the common tern (Sterna hirundo) and in winter the caugek tern (Sterna sandvicensis). These two species with white plumage are also called sea swallows because of their slender bodies. Their bill colour differs: orange for the first and black for the second.

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Claw (Carpobrotus acinaciformis)  
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Examples of actions on the coast:  
still present on the coast.  
preservation of these exceptional natural spaces  
the implementation of a management plan for the  
of 13627 ha, it is 98% marine and 2% terrestrial. The  
Coastal Trail is entirely part of the Natura 2000 area.  
Located in the heart of the French Riviera, it  
conceals an incredible marine and terrestrial  
biodiversity strongly threatened. Covering an area  
of 13627 ha, it is 98% marine and 2% terrestrial. The  
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The trail of «Tire-Pool» would take its name from the constant presence of the sea wind on the cape that disturbs visitors.  
At the beginning of the 20th century, this coastline was occupied and partly privatized by the residents of the villas. The Littoral Act made it possible to reclaim this space and reopen it to the public.

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Accessibility:  
The trail is accessible from the free parking of the Garoupe (avenue André Sella) or from the entrance of the villa Ellenroc (avenue Mrs Beaumont). Go through the gate to the right of the villa gate. The City Bus No. 2, Fontaine stop, takes you a few metres from Gandolphe Tower Avenue (see map). This family hike is a 5 km loop that takes about 2 hours. It is advisable to wear comfortable shoes.  
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Natura 2000 - Cap d'Antibes and Lerins Islands

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Information: TIRE-POOL Trail  
The Urban Civil Protection Service of Antibes informs you that in case of an accident, call 112 or 18. If you do not have a telephone network, move.  
It is important to inform the fire fighters of the area in which you are located by means of the marking on the ground represented by colored cereals.  
Do not confuse with marking the path

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## 7 · A spectacular rock

Shortly before the viewpoint, in a lunar landscape finely cut by erosion, the limestone takes on a pinkish colour and in places reveals spectacular coloured motifs (red, yellow, orange, purple). These traces are evidence of volcanic hydrothermal formations that percolated through limestone cracks and deposited in concentric layers about 25 million years ago.

## 8 · The viewpoint: a breathtaking view

### Pelagos Sanctuary

In front of you lies the «Pelagos shrine», a maritime area of 87,500 km<sup>2</sup>, which is the subject of an agreement between Italy, Monaco and France for the protection of marine mammals that frequent it. Seven species of cetaceans come to find refuge and food, which is almost 50% of the species present in the world! The most common and visible from the coast are the blue and white dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*) and the two sea giants: sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) and orqual (*Balaenoptera physalus*). The Mediterranean Sea is full of mysteries, which it sometimes lets you discover; open your eyes wide, you may have the chance to see them!

## The Lerins Islands

On your right, we observe the archipelago of the Lerins Islands. These islands of unsuspected natural wealth are also full of mystery and legend.

In the foreground, the imposing Île de Sainte-Marguerite with its fort at the north end, where lived from 1687 to 1698, a famous and enigmatic prisoner, the man with the iron mask. This island has an integrated biological reserve that you can visit after a boat trip from Juan-les-Pins or Cannes.

In the background, Île Saint-Honorat has been able to safeguard its monastery since the beginning of the 5th century through the ages and a tumultuous history. It still hosts a congregation of monks growing vines, olive trees and aromatic plants and producing wines and liqueurs.

In the background, these islands are dominated by the Esterel massif, which provides a flamboyant landscape during sunsets.



## The Castle of La Croë

The Croë castle is an exceptional residence of 2000 m<sup>2</sup> on 7 hectares of land that extend to the sea. Built in 1927 by architect Armand-Albert Rateau in the Victorian style for an English aristocrat. It has a very strong resemblance to the castle of Bagatelle located in the Bois de Boulogne. Between 1938 and 1949, the Duke of Windsor, former King Edward VIII and his wife Wallis Simpson lived there and held sumptuous receptions. It has been owned by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich since 2004.

## 9 · The cove of silver False

According to a legend, the Cove of False Money owes its name to the counterfeiters who settled there in the 19th century. Counterfeiters used a cave, accessible by boat to hit counterfeit money. Today, the presence of yachts and sumptuous buildings on the cliffs gave it the name of Billionaire Bay.

## La Villa Eilenroc

On your right, you can see the column façade of the villa built between 1860 and 1867 on the plans of Charles Garnier for Hugh-Hope Loudon, former governor of the Dutch East Indies. He baptizes her «Eilenroc», anagram of Cornélie, the first name of his wife. In 1982, Hélène Beaumont (1895–1988) bequeathed this property to the City of Antibes. This 11-hectare heritage is home to an olive grove and a rose garden of 1,000 plants. It is possible to visit this site, inquire by phone on +33.(0) 4.93.67.74.33.

## Posidonia, a protected marine species

Often mistaken for a marine alga, Posidonia, a distant cousin of the iris, is a flowering plant that has adapted to marine life. It forms large Posidonia herbaria which appears as dark spots on the bottom. These underwater meadows represent the lung of the Mediterranean. They also play a key role in marine biodiversity as they serve as food, refuge and nursery for many species such as large mother-of-pearl, seahorse and saupe. In addition, its dead leaves run aground on our coasts and can form large clusters called Posidonia benches that play a vital role in maintaining beaches in the face of marine erosion.