

These little roads are rarely taken so you can easily drive slowly in order to discover this typical landscape called "bocage" which means criss-crossed by hedges, trees, walls.

Go through the hamlet of Tressagne and take the D60 on your left towards Pontarion. At Villevegoux, turn right and go through Le Grand Chiroux to join the D940. At the junction, turn right then left towards Masmangeas. Drive down to the lake.

7. If the weather is good, stop to have a swim in the fresh water of the lake (patrolled by a lifeguard in summer, prohibited the rest of the year) and enjoy the calm all around...

Take the road to Sardent (left). In front of the church square, turn left. Stay on the road until you arrive at the junction of the D940a. Turn left and at the junction after La Vacheresse, turn right towards Janailiat.

You can stop at the memorial at Combeauvert which commemorates the massacre of 31 soldiers on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June, 1944.

At Janailiat, take the road towards Bosmoreau on your left, turn left after the church and then turn right. After crossing the stream, follow Bellesauve. Go through the village, continue along the road...

8. You can admire a view of Janailiat and then, on your right hand-side, some fantastic panoramic views which even include the tops of the Monts de Blond in Haute Vienne...

At the junction after Le Monteil, turn left towards Pontarion. Turn right towards Thaurion, then turn right towards Les Gorges du Thaurion, go down to the bridge.

9. Walk along the path which will tell you the story of an old bridge and will enable you to discover the Gorges du Thaurion, the moors etc...

Continue on your way, turn left, go through the village of Mas to get back to Pontarion.

## "Rolling stone" tour/ 26 km

Discovering what gives the area its identity: stone. In our woods, our fields, everywhere... outcrops of granite abound: sites of legends, peopled by fairies, devils or saints... that have been exploited by the quarrymen and stonemasons from Creuse or Italy.

**1. Masgot:** The village of Masgot is unique for its granite sculptures.

The self-taught sculptor, François Michaud drew his inspiration from what was around him: the characters, nature or typical architectural elements from the XIXth century.

He embellished his properties creating his own unique world. Masgot is dedicated to stone. Courses, exhibitions, audio-tours, geocaching are available here. More details: 05.55.66.98.88.

At the junction, turn left towards Ahun. After the small lake, turn left and go through the villages of Le Puy, Les Ribières, Durazat and Masson.

**2. Le Donzeil :** In the village, the first building on your left is the old school, built in 1863. A gallo roman marker which used to indicate the 31 leagues to Limoges sits in the playground (one for 34 leagues is situated in front of the church at Moutier d'Ahun). It was renovated to celebrate the centenary of the Revolution in 1889 and the bicentenary in 1989. Le Donzeil is one the few communes to have celebrated the centenary.

Turn right. At the junction, after the lake, turn left then right towards Drouillette. Enter the village and turn left towards La Terrade.

**3.** Your attention will be stuck by animals made of reinforced concrete which overlook the landscape. Perched on stone blocks, a wild boar, a fox, a monkey, an eagle or even a crocodile keep watch. It is around the little lake, on the right and lower down than the road that in 1967 and 1981, the wildlife artist's father created a leisure park ("l'étang fleur") with whatever was available.

This used to be the destination of many creusois when out walking relatives and friends. Children and adults alike enjoyed the sketches: La Fontaine's fables, Picasso's goat, Blue Beard...

Turn left after Lavaud and continue on the road until you reach Maisonnisses. Turn in front of the church, and then continue on towards Sardent. Turn right towards La Jarrige and "Le fauteuil du diable" (« the devil's armchair »). Park at the small car park on the left; climb upwards on your right.

**4.** The chaotic granite outcrop is a natural phenomenon due to erosion from ancient times. This outcrop of rocks, one of which has a large cavity is known as the devil's armchair.

It is said that on Christmas Eve, at the first stroke of midnight, the stone rises up to show the devil's treasure. At the twelfth stroke, hey, presto, it is said that the devil close up, and all the riches and any potential robbers disappear for another year! The devil is said to watch over his treasure from his armchair on top of the piles of stones!

Go back to the road, turn right towards Sardent.

**5.** A stele in memory of Doctor Vincent, "the doctor of the poor" famous for his generosity and his devotion to duty stands in the church square. Italian stonemasons who arrived in the 1930's and made kerb stones especially for Paris, cut the letters of the commune's name to make a unique balustrade! Sculpted brackets can be seen under the cornice of the XIIIth century's church.

Go up through the village via Dr. Jalot's street (D50), to the cemetery and turn right towards Le Mont. Park at the car park of "Les Pierres Boutelines".

**6.** Sardent : The stonecutters noticed this site but it was not exploited because the granite was in their view, of poor quality. This chaotic granite outcrop is linked to the legend of St Martial, the first bishop of Limousin.

Go back to the road and continue your journey. After the junction of "Les Caurades", park and take the path on your right.

**7.** The site of Château-Merie is unique in that it links the stonecutters' work to the legends. The most surprising thing is that the stone with the shape of a tortoise was never cut by these men. It has often been thought that these phenomena were manmade. Some of the stones support each other in equilibrium or move when pressure is put on a specific point. Often, these blocks have a name related to their vocation, their shape or their history.

Return to the junction of the D940. If you turn left, you will be heading for Guéret, for Pontarion and Bourgneuf if you go right or straight ahead to Ahun.

## Practical information

For more information: [www.ahun-creuse-tourisme.fr](http://www.ahun-creuse-tourisme.fr) and [www.rando-loisirs-creuse.com](http://www.rando-loisirs-creuse.com)

Roads are sometimes narrow:

- Drive at a safe speed and keep right!
- Take a map or a sat-nav.

Enjoy the shady roads, discover a centuries-old tree, an unusual village, a chaotic granite outcrop abounding in legends... Submerge yourself into the heart of our heritage! In this country of water and stone, enjoy discovering our buildings and learn how to read our ancient and modern history from these walls...

And to enjoy our landscapes on foot, hiking guides on the Creuse Thaurion Gartempe area are on sale at the tourist information office in Ahun or at town halls. Many other documents are available to make your stay as enjoyable as possible.

*Although a lot of attention has been paid to the information given here, the Tourist Office cannot be responsible for possible mistakes.*