

## PRESS FILE

# LA CIOTAT

## Gateway to the Calanques National Park



Tourist Office Of La Ciotat

## Press File

LA CIOTAT

HISTORY OF A CITY

La Ciotat and the sea have always been tightly linked together. La Ciotat was certainly founded in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. by the Greek, sailors, and trades people who founded Marseille in 2600 B.C. The Celts, who were settled in the “oppidums” in the hinterland, moved towards the coast. The remains of Roman sarcophagi from the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Century and of an urban cemetery, are witnesses to the Roman occupancy until the 5<sup>th</sup> Century.

During the decline of the Roman Empire, Citharistas Portus (la Ciotat), a very active and prosperous harbor, was taken over by various invaders such as the Barbarian and the Saracens whose lootings and attacks forced the population on the coast to shelter in the oppidums of Césarista (Ceyreste) and to abandon the port in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century.

Public security was brought back in 1300 with the look-out institution enabling both the fishermen to move back and the city to prosper once more. In 1429, La Ciotat got permanently separated from Ceyreste.

One century later, the city was surrounded by fortifications and La Ciotat's harbor was as active as Marseille's, although in 1600, during the Middle East settlements era, La Ciotat's harbor became even more important than that of Marseille.

This was followed by a two-century long decline until the setting of Messageries Impériales (*Imperial Messengers*) which will become Messageries Maritimes (*Maritime Messengers*) in 1857. This initiated the construction of the shipyards that lasted until 1988.

Nowadays, the city lives upon a diverse economy: tourism, yachting, and high-tech industry.



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### LA CIOTAT

#### OUR CALLING CARD

La Ciotat belongs to the Aix –Marseille-Provence Metropolis.

Population: 36.044

Area: 12.7 mi<sup>2</sup>

Latitude: 43.1740230 Longitude: 5.6042770 Location: 43°10', AN 05°36,7<sup>E</sup>

Altitude from 0 to 1292 feet

Coastline: 12 miles, 4 miles of which are beach area

Climate: 340 sunny days a year.

Average temperatures in: Spring: 19°C Summer: 26°C Fall: 15°C and Winter: 12°C

Twinning with 4 cities in Europe: Torre Annunziata (Italy); Bridgewater (United Kingdom); Singen (Germany) and Kranj (Slovenia).

Public transport: 14 city bus lines - 18 taxis - 2805 parking places - 12 parking places for coach buses.

4 ports - 1764 dockyard parking places - 537 hardstand places

Labels:

Ville Fleurie (*Flowered City*): 3 flowers

France Station Nautique (*French Watersport Resort*)

Tourist office and Lumière Beach are certified for accessible tourism

Marque Qualité Tourisme (*French Quality Tourism Certification*)

Station Classée de Tourisme (*Classified Tourism Resort*)

### LA CIOTAT

#### HOW TO GET HERE

Marseille-Provence International Airport : 31 miles

Train station: regional and national lines (high speed trains from Marseille St Charles Station) and the A50 Highway to Marseille towards Spain and North of Europe, as well as towards Italy via Toulon

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### LA CIOTAT

#### IN FIGURES

With the development of industrial and commercial areas, along with the Pole Nautique and a growth in tourism, the city has been experiencing a renewal in its economy for several years now.

Each year, almost 750.000 visitors come to La Ciotat.

Today, La Ciotat has 13 hotels, 6 of which are three-star establishments, which makes up 345 rooms in total.

There also are 3 camping sites in the city, providing 259 places and 351 Mobile-Homes bungalows.

4 tourist residences representing 225 flats and studio flats in total

34 furnished accommodations, 3 bed & breakfast and 100 restaurants complete the assortment.

### LA CIOTAT

#### A UNIQUE SCENERY

From Mugel and Figuerolles coves to Saint Louis Point, La Ciotat exhibits a diverse scenery.

The two coves, in the west part of the city, belong to the chain of Calanques that stretch along the coast until Marseille. The two coves in La Ciotat are geologically very interesting due to their different shapes and colors. Mugel Park, is the region's botanical park that provides the most shade and is only a few yards away from the sea.

In the south the old port, the ancient city, and the beach area come together to create the typical small town character of a Provençal village.

In the East, the landscape turns softly into cornices and small inlets whilst the hills in the north offer walking trails in a wild environment.

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A CITY WITH CHARACTER

Wandering past the buildings' colorful facades or relaxing in the restaurants and bars of the old port makes people come back for more. The ancient city has remained genuine with its alleys, chapels, and town squares that hold so much history.

LA CIOTAT

YOURS TO DISCOVER

The urban development has not encroached upon the landscape, leaving natural sites intact such as Route des Crêtes, the panoramic route across hills and cliffs, or even Mugel and Figuerolles coves that have maintained their sought after natural side.

A boat trip from the old port takes our visitors along the Calanques up until Marseille and past Europe's highest maritime cliffs.

Ile Verte, a paradise for rabbits and birds, is only a short boat shuttle ride away from the Ciotat bay. There, visitors find themselves in a perfectly wild and natural environment on this only wooded island in the region.

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A LAND OF INVENTIONS

The Lumière Family owned a holiday home in La Ciotat. The brightness of the local scenery made them choose to shoot the first movies in the History of cinema here, "*The Arrival of a Train in La Ciotat Station*" being the most famous one.

The Eden Theatre, the oldest still existing cinema venue in the world, was completely refurbished in 2013 during the Marseille Capital of European Culture project.

The Pétanque game was invented in La Ciotat in 1910 when Jules Lenoir, who suffered from rheumatism, play his favorite game, Boules, without moving around on the playing field... and La Pétanque was born.

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CENTERS OF COMMERCE

Athélia is La Ciotat's hub for high-tech industry that host companies over 198 acres, generating 6.500 jobs. The Nautical Station on the marina welcomes more and more luxury yachts on over 84 acres, creating 700 jobs.

Many centers of commerce have developed, also hosting renowned French companies such as Crédit Agricole, Darty, Esprit, Etam, and Camaïeu amongst others.

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A SUMMER IN LA CIOTAT

La Ciotat beckons with 340 sunny days a year and a unique coastline.

Beaches here only have a slight dip, which families and young children find very attractive, and they are guarded from June to September. They are equipped with showers and in 2011, the first European non-smoking beach was launched, making La Ciotat a European frontrunner in that respect. In 2012, a beach reserved for dogs was made available.

The athletes won't miss out since every watersport and team sport can be enjoyed here.

Swimming in the coves where the water takes its brightest and most typical Provençal colors is always an exciting experience.

During the day, the picturesque markets offer a nice diversion from activities while bars and restaurants show their liveliest side by night.



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THE OTHER SEASONS IN LA CIOTAT

In spring, the BOAT SHOW (Les Nauticales) takes place in March/April.

In summer, the MUSIC FESTIVAL followed by the JAZZ FESTIVAL are a pure delight for music lovers.

In October, the city jumps back in time for a whole weekend, attracting up to 100.000 visitors. "IL ETAIT UNE FOIS 1720" (*Once Upon a Time 1720*), is the HISTORICAL FESTIVAL that commemorates an episode of the Great Plague in this region.

Finally, in winter, the city gets ready for the celebration of Christmas with all its local traditions: Christmas cribs, carnivals, parades and markets harmoniously blend the secular and the religious together.

The weekly Provençal markets, the flower market in spring, exhibitions, concerts and a rich theatre program are proof that LA CIOTAT can be enjoyed all year long.



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## LA CIOTAT CONTACT

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Open all year round  
During summer everyday:  
Mon-Sat 9:00 – 20:00  
Sunday & public holidays 10:00 – 13:00  
In winter:  
Mon- Sat 9:00-12:00 & 14:00 – 18:00

