

The exceptional historical heritage of the village of Tautavel and its natural charm make it a unique touristic place.

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the discovery of the skull of the Man of Tautavel in the Caune de l'Arago, the Tautavel Museum suggests you discovering the fascinating world of the prehistory and introducing you to the study of our origins through a cycle of visits, conferences, excursions, animations and other summer celebrations.

## **AN EXCEPTIONAL HISTORICAL HERITAGE**

Tautavel, it is at first the place steeped in history which shelters a unique archaeological heritage. The European Center of Prehistoric Researches which it shelters, the museum of Prehistory and its numerous resources, as well as the nearness of the cave where the excavations take place from April to September, make it an exceptional place for the visitors avid to discover their origins and to learn more about the fascinating world of the prehistory.

### ***40 years ago : the discovery of the Man of Tautavel's skull***

In **1971**, the discovery of the Man of Tautavel (dated **-450 000 years**) by the teams of Professor de Lumley aroused the will to create a scientific and cultural pole. This audacious bet activated a tremendous development of the municipality and brought it a fame and an unprecedented attractiveness.

The Man of Tautavel was 1m60 high and was twenty-year old. This *homo erectus* had all the characteristics of the European first individuals : a running away forehead, a roll over orbits, high cheekbones and advanced jaw. If he did not master the fire yet, he was an excellent hunter. His hunt territory extended over what corresponds at present to the Corbières and to the plain of Roussillon. We can think that he had chosen the site of the Caune de l' Arago for its privileged situation: he could dominate the valley, his source of water and consequently his preys there.

### ***The Tautavel Museum of Prehistory : a place dedicated to the discover of our origins***

Troughout 21 rooms (that is to say more than 2000 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition galleries), the Museum of Prehistory invites you to meet the Man of Tautavel, **the oldest man found on the French ground**. The Museum of Prehistory presents its exceptional collections with modern means of museography so that this distant past becomes understandable for all.

### ***A lively visit in several languages***

The individual receivers bring to the visitors clear and educational explanations in each of the museum rooms. In period of excavation (from April to September) is settled a digital connection with the cave to live directly the discoveries of the archaeologists.

### ***Reconstructions on full scale***

Thanks to faithful reconstructions of prehistoric scenes, visitors can plunge into the heart of the valley of Tautavel and make a fabulous journey among human beings, animals and landscapes. A real-scale reconstruction of the Caune de l' Arago enables to dive into the authentic housing environment of this ancestor. A multimedia show presents a hunting scene 450 000 years ago.

Since 2004, the Museum of Tautavel pursues its big program of museographic evolution intended to improve the quality of the welcome of foreign customers but also to satisfy the expectations of visitors always more demanding in access to the information and in scientific and cultural techniques of mediation. The visitor can therefore enjoy using numerous tools which will allow him to take advantage of the whole museum, such as:

- the multilingual audio-guide
- the signalling system
- the tactile objects (as well as labels in Braille)
- the " space sapiens "
- the dioramas

With the annual 75.000 visitors, the Tautavel Museum keeps being the **most visited archaeological museum in France**. From 2012, the support of communities will allow the implementation of the cultural and scientific project for a museographic revolution giving a good place to the new technologies, restoring to the Museum of Tautavel its place of European leader.

All these resources as well as a successful service of animation in perpetual evolution, make Tautavel Museum an major actor of the region, for the tourism as well as to make the access to the culture easier for more and more individuals.

## **A SUMMER IN TAUTAVEL : A WHOLE VILLAGE LIVING IN ACCORDANCE WITH PREHISTORY**

Summer in Tautavel - placed this year under the sign of the **40th anniversary of the discovery of the Man of Tautavel** – is a very pleasant season for the visitors who can take advantage of numerous animations, conferences, visits and celebrations around the theme of prehistory. These activities will allow them to discover this period of the history in a completely new way between leisure activities, meetings with the researchers and cultural visits.

### ***Numerous activities of discovery***

Throughout the summer the village around the museum lives at the rate of the prehistory.

**All after noons**, prehistoric animations are proposed to the visitors.

**Every day**, the children can play a "**Treasure hunt**" which allows them to obtain a present and an archaeologist's diploma.

**Every Wednesday** is proposed " One day in the Country of the Man ", a hiking on the subject of prehistory and botany (on reservation)

Handy : the visit of the museum (non-stop 10H-19H) the morning allows to take advantage completely of various workshops after noon. Good plan: the access to the cave where the archaeologists search is free. Commented visit of the cave is free on Wednesdays.

### ***Parties for the Prehistory***

On **July 6th**, visitors will come to meet the archeologists: they will discover the construction site of excavations of the Caune de l' Arago, an internationally recognized construction site-school which welcomes every year students of national and international Master's degrees.

On **July 9th** will take place the inauguration of the center of interpretation about the first inhabitants of Europe.

The high point will take place **from 19 to 20 July** and **from 9 to 11 August** with the 20<sup>th</sup> **Celebrations of the Prehistory**: visitors can learn about various prehistoric techniques (make of the fire, to cut stone tools, to make some music, to discover the prehistoric cooking), or discover stands of local products, as well as exhibitors of minerals and fossil. A prehistoric meal will punctuate every party.

On the occasion of the remembrance of the discovery of the Man of Tautavel, the archaeologists of the research center propose some " **Meetings around the Man of Tautavel**" on **July 21st and 22nd**. In this occasion, the original human rests, among which the skull of the Man of Tautavel, will be presented, as well as projections of movies, conferences, visits of the construction site of excavations...

Finally a **free show**, " On the Tracks of the man of Tautavel " mixing theater, sound and light, will be presented.

### *Head in the stars*

The municipality of Tautavel also organizes its Fourth **Festival of Astronomy from 4 till 7 August**, recognized since then as one of the most important in Europe.

This festival is completely **free** and addresses **all the public**.

Mediators specialized in astronomy will lead the observations of the sun (during the day) and the night observations. During the day the various workshops, conferences, and the sessions in the planetarium will delight everyone.

A big **tombola** will allow to win astronomic instruments of quality.

The **conferences** will take place in an open-air theater, under the starry sky and the lights of the village of Tautavel will be partially switched off to protect the sky from the light pollution.

After the last evening conference, there will be a meeting on the ground of observation where hundred of glasses and telescopes wait for the public up to the night end.

### **AN ESCAPE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE**

To complete your journey in beauty, there's nothing like the discovery of the other face of Tautavel, that is to say of a small village of Catalan Corbières, in a charming wine valley where winds a river, in 25mn of the PMCA center.

### *An oasis in the middle of the garrigue*

Just 3 km far from the village, at the feet of the "Caune de l'Arago", the yard of the **Verdouble**, a small river of Corbières, sees its bed widening and creating a piece of heaven. This shaded oasis, surrealist image in the heart of a dry landscape, is the ideal place for a **refreshing idleness**. Since the strike of pebbles, visitors will have the possibility of seeing archaeologists who sort out and classify the numerous day discoveries.

### *The sentries of the past*

If in Tautavel, the inhabitants rather tend to date their heritage in hundred of thousand years, they neglect not nevertheless to indicate to the visitors the rich vestiges of less distant past : the **ruins of the feudal castle** which become confused with the rocky spur dominating the old village, whereas higher "**Torre del Far**" former tower always watches over Corbières the sea. In the entrance of the village a small chapel built on a former Gallo-Roman site opens you the door on the valley of Tautavel.

### *A unique ground*

If the **vineyard** had to grow only in a place, it would be certainly in the valley of Tautavel, as the climate and grounds are convenient to it. The vineyard is therefore an essential part of the natural landscape of the valley. Moreover the main economic activity of Tautavel is the vine growing. Cross the door of a fresh vault, you will fall undoubtedly on a wine grower who, on the occasion of a tasting, will communicate with you the passion of a unique land.

### *Tautavel, land of artists*

If in 2002, the famous poster designer **Raymond Moretti** chose the site of Tautavel for his monumental fresco, it is not a fate. Meanwhile, a lot of his most remarkable works had for inspiration the prehistory and Tautavel.