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Contacts :

Office de Tourisme Le Lac de Vassivière
Auphelle
87470 Peyrat le Château
www.lacdevassiviere.com

Relations presse:

Laurence Puissant
l.puissant@lacdevassiviere.com
07 57 17 79 11

Direction :

Frédérique Oudot
ot.direction@lacdevassiviere.com
07 56 27 40 33

de LAC de VASSIVIERE

Naturally unmissable !

Press Folder
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Vassiviere lake

Naturally
Unmissable !

Take a breath at one of the most significant Lakes in France, in the middle of the Millevaches Regional Natural Park in the Limousin !

1,000 hectares of pure water, 45 km of sedentary shores, exhilarating nature, a **Canadian atmosphere** with unusual landscapes.

You will be amazed by the countless changing shades of colours you will appreciate in each visit. The nature continuously changes and you will always be surprised by the **incredible beauty of Vassiviere's seasons**.



Vassiviere area is situated in a **protected environment** surrounded by a green and undulating landscape between 400 and 900 metres above the sea level. It presents a hilly scenery and offers many different landscapes: vast water zones, peat bogs, forests, inspiring blockfields for legends...

Some advice !



The weather changes often ! Don't forget to pack a swimsuit, a raincoat, a t-shirt but also a jumper and your boots ! Spring and autumn are renowned for their mildness and their distinctive colours, so don't forget your camera and your hiking boots. And finally, in winter you may wear gloves and scarf to go for a walk and enjoy the snow-covered landscape.

Vassiviere is an exceptional area to have an outdoor, cultural or relaxing stay in the countryside.

The lake is perfectly situated in Nouvelle Aquitaine, in the cross between Haute-Vienne, Creuse and Corrèze departments.

It allows you to discover, **in less than an hour, the most significant touristic places from Limousin** : Limoges (porcelaine), Aubusson (Tapestry), Brive (Collonge la Rouge), ...

It's the paradise of nautical and outdoor sports : fishing, sailing, swimming, water-skiing, horse-riding, hiking, mountain-biking ...



It's much more than a lake, it is also the Limousin mountains' charm, peat bogs, granite villages made by builders from the Creuse, a rich culture and heritage and many different and interesting visits. You are invited to discover this preserved site, where ancestral know-how still exists.

> [Discover the video](#)



Once upon
a time ...

Landscapes suggest, the Vassivière lake has always been here.

In fact, it is **one of the biggest reservoir in France**.

Situated at about 650m, **the lake was created the day before Christmas in 1949** in the Maulde's basin. The Maulde, a tributary of the Vienne, wasn't large enough to fill up the basin. A network of dams, canals and tunnels was built in order to change the course of other streams and get enough water to guarantee the **energy efficiency of the hydroelectric project**.



In 1976, people didn't spend their holidays in the country. Pierre Ferrand, mayor of Royère de Vassivière and councilor of La Creuse, had a **visionary idea** ! He decided to create in this place a tourist and preserving area around the lake.

Rural tourism in Vassivière was born.



Today, the main functions of the lake are :

- > **Electrical energy production,**
- > **flow regulation of the Vienne,**
- > **Civaux hydroelectric plant cooling (Vienne),**
- > **Irrigation,**
- > **tourism.**

Main dates

- > **08 December 1966**
Creation of SY.MI.VA for tourism development
- > **1970-1974**
Sewage system around the lake
- > **1971-1972**
Roads around the lake
- > **1972-1980**
The creation of the first tourist accommodation

Key figures :

- > **Shore length 45 km**
- > **Lake surrounding road 24 km**
- > **110 million m3 of pure water**
- > **Altitude 650 m**
- > **1945: the beginning of the construction of the dam**
- > **1946: the construction of the work starts in Auchaize**
- > **1950: end of filling up accommodation**
- > **1951 : commissioning of the first turbine**

Specificity

The dam, the hydroelectric plant and the water intake are not on the same place. The dam is situated in Auchaize (Royère de Vassivière), the water intake is at the Crozat Port (Peyrat le Château) and the hydroelectric plant is 7 km from there, in Le Mazet (Peyrat le Château). The water is carried from water intake to the plant through a 2,585 m gallery and a 610 m penstock (pikes). So, it **doesn't resemble the industrial dam**.

Regular checks are compulsory and **the last emptying was in 1995**. In those days the lake was emptied for 6 weeks.

Nowadays, these checks can be carried out using modern remote technology.



Did you know ?

The name "lac de Vassivière" was given due to the old owners of what at the present are the island of Vassivière and a part of the submerged lands under the lake.

The rebuilding efforts of the French postwar economy finally became a reality in the region. This big construction site promoted employment, especially for families, whose houses were engulfed by the river. This was the main source of revenue during the post-war years.

Outdoors activities

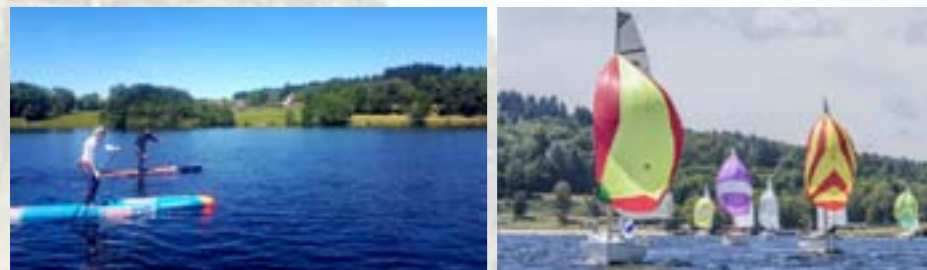
Vassivière area offers a vast range of activities both on and off the water

Breathtaking sensations, aquatics or outdoor activities, active leisure time or relaxation. Share events or challenges between family or friends...

Here, you can breathe out and enjoy a laid back atmosphere in a quiet and natural environment. **1000 hectares of pure water for aquatic fun**

Water is present all around the Vassivière lake : streams, rivers, ponds and lakes spread their blue hue across the land. This precious element is an essential resource for life.

Water sports lovers, make your choice ! The lake opens the possibility of sailing, catamaranning, windsurfing, water skiing, canoeing, paddleboarding and even 'tubing ... It's a technical lake for sailing and there are important regattas every week-end from April to October.



It's a nice sports field for **national outdoors and nautic sports events** such as :

- > 4 & 5/05 **XTerra Nouvelle Aquitaine** : Trail and Triathlon off road
 - > 02/06 **"Swimrunman Vassivière"** : this event that combine sports, nature and aid between two athletes. It offers a kids race and 3 distances races including one long, qualifying for the Word Cup which attracts the participation of international competitors.
 - > 22 - 23/06 **«Tour du Lac pédestre »** a traditional running and Nordic walking around the lake
 - > 06 /07 **«Les 10 heures de Vassivière : Endurance paddle and kayak»** : it's a competition where teams paddle for 10 hours non-stop around the lake. It's a unique competition in France & support from **French ultra longdistance sup paddle championship**
- Vassiviere area is also a **pleasant atmosphere for just relaxing with your family in one of the 5 supervised sand beaches in summer**. They offer good equipment : children 's playground, canoe and paddle hiring, snacks and entertainments (concerts, fest...)in summer.

Vassivière : one of the 5 best spot for carnivore fishing in France

Splendid landscapes, courses, splits, wild islands, the Lake Vassivière is appreciated by fishermen and is recognized as one of the richest in carnivores in France.

A responsible and durable expansion plan aims at positioning the lake as one of the best national spots of the carnivores fishing season : **pikes, pike perches, poles** are waiting for you on the edge or in a boat.

It is also a lake for carp fishing with 7 spots



It's possible to discover or progress in fishing techniques on a boat or a float tube with **fishing instructor guides**. For any enquiries please contact Jean François, Karl or Cédrick..., they are specialists of our lake and they can give you very good advice

> [Know more](#)



Did you know ?

For boaters or fishermen, Vassiviere offers good public equipment : 6 marinas with 350 anchorings with water and electricity , 4 free nautical lift. Also, the lake offers 2 speed areas to practice motonautic sports.

Your new **home port** in Nouvelle Aquitaine.

A huge natural play area

Practice your favourite sport in an exceptional environment, where water and forest abound.

It is surrounded by pine, larch, oak and chestnut trees forests as well as moors and peat bogs.

In Vassivière anybody can do their favourite outdoor sports : hiking, orientation, horse-trekking, mountain bike riding, hiking with a pack donkey, cycling on the quiet little roads...



Did you know ?

The Syndicat «le lac de Vassivière», E.D.F. and the Littoral Conservatory aimed to promote the lake's natural heritage combining efforts and financing to preserve it. Together, they try to give back the original landscapes with pastoralism. Flocks of sheep graze the moor during the season and so, open the landscapes !

The whole activities will certainly allow you to discover our natural ressources, the heritage and the secrets from the region : participate in the local festivals to move the sheep from one pasture to another, doing a night canoe excursion to observe the nocturnal fauna with a guide as well as going mushroom picking !



You will realize that **protected environment is already a reality here in Vassivière**.

Enjoy the pure fresh air and the nature through the 300 km marked paths :

> The **« SENTIER DE RIVES »** : 30 km shore path around the lake for hikers and mountain bikers winding through the rainforest to the moorland. This original path crosses the dam, granite bridges or original stilt paths and bridges over wetlands. Don't worry if you are not a top athlete : there are shorter shore path variants too, and you can stop on each beach to have a swim or a drink in a beach bar in summer.



> 250 km of local paths or PR's and a 65 km Regional Paths or GRP's a 4-days-long distance footpath. (path-cards available at the Tourist Office or on the web-site [Rando Millevaches](#))

> La Lande du Puy de la Croix : an interpretation trail to understand our landscapes.

> **Geocaching « Terra Aventura »** to enjoy nature with your friends or family ! It's a modern family treasure hunt with a smartphone.



Shuttle boats :

3 boats criss cross the lake from April to September : you can go for a walk and take it when you want to. You can also cross the lake to visit Vassivière island or change of beaches.



& Culture Visites

Our country is rich in authenticity, culture, surprising and unexpected cultural encounters... Let yourself be carried away by a vastly unusual Vassivière !

Here you can **walk, swim or ride** a bike but you can also **dance, laugh and clap**, you can eat and learn, you can **explore and share human experience** with local people.

Here, your body and your mind will be completely in harmony. You can **unwind, relax and enjoy a laid back atmosphere in a quiet and cultural environment** witch surprises the visitors.

The rich cultural heritage in the villages is in stark contrast to the contemporary art centre or modern exhibitions.

Must see ! the Quenouille discovery and Utopia, a tour of land-art works in the Vassivière country.

The quiet atmosphere of nature is in stark contrast to all the entertainment offered to you every day in season : concerts, cultural festivals, traditional village fetes and markets, typical fetes such as :

> Lively **markets of local producers**

> **«Fête de la Saint Amour»** : It's the big family celebration of the lake with a splendid fireworks display every August 9th

> **«La fête de Nedde»** : 3 days the first week-end of August, is a typical village fete with floats decorated with flowers, a torch-lit procession, family entertainment and traditional meal.



> **«La fête du 15 août »** in Royère de Vassivière where an ox grilled on a spit attracts crowds. Here is a firework display and you can enjoy a meal and entertainment with friends and family

> **«La fête de la Myrtille»** : blueberries are one of the most popular fruits in Plateau de Millevaches, and you can buy them this day or pick them directly in the orchard

> Exhibitions

> **All the agenda here**



The discovery of the lake makes sense when you go on a cruise ship or go for a walk with your family on the Vassivière island. Adi Milles Tour, a little boat ride with a commentary let you discover the lake's history while you sail from a wild cove to a headland full of fir trees surrounding one of the biggest island.

Favorites !

You can also take part with Vassiviera in a guided tour on dam to understand background of the lake and the hydroelectric production.

The Resistance Museum, situated in Peyrat le Château is a testimony of the acts of the Colonel Georges Guingouin and the role of women during the war which raged around the Limousin .



They are also **perfect places** which have been selected because of their specific particularities **to experience and share exciting adventures with the whole family**, from grandparents to grandchildren, including the parents !

The large choice of activities fits all ages and levels.
> **Land-art workshop for children** with the contemporary and landscape art Center

> **Parc d'arbre en arbre** : let's do something different ! Why wouldn't you run and jump across the forest from tree to tree ?

> **Les ânes de Vassivière** : why not try hiking with docile donkeys in the Millevaches Natural Park or listen to donkey stories near a stream ?

> **La Cité des insectes** : explore the fascinating world of insects and learn things about them in the insects garden or in the interactive exhibition. There are lots of insects entertainments throughout the whole season.

Vassiviere Island

Must see : visit Vassivière Island

International Art and Landscape Center, Sculpture Wood, Bread Oven, Geocaching, Orientation, Botanical Garden, local products and crafts shop, entertainment ... Vassivière Island is contrasting, surprising, magical, cultural, contemporary and authentic.

It's a concentration of Vassivière on an island.



In the middle of this huge extension of water rises a 77 hectare island. It's unique in France and it's a fantastic example of harmony between the traditional heritage and the contemporary XXI century architecture... You can have a walk between the agricultural domain of the Vassivière family (formed by its castle and farms, that was a village and their principal residence in the past) next to the International Centre of Art and Landscape and modern Sculpture Wood.

> **Discover the video**

In contrast, the art center was built in 1989 and it's one of the most important work from the architects Aldo ROSSI and Xavier FABRE.

From the top of the lighthouse you will fly through its mountainous landscape where the greenness will give way to the warm autumn colours, before dressing itself with snow to explode with a mantle of flowers in spring.

The Sculptures Wood, one of the most important places in France, promises you some surprises with its famous collection of works spreads through thirty hectares. Throughout this path, you will discover many pieces from French and foreign artists. (Free access). The castle hosts international artists for residencies.



It's also a nice place to enjoy with friends or family

Wandering around its long paths, geocaching Terra Aventura a high-tech treasure hunt with a smart-phone, orienteering...

Events :

> **«La Fête Nationale des Simples»**

It is the most important national exhibition of producers of aromatic and medicinal plants in France

> **«Le festival interculturel du Conte, Paroles de conteurs»** : At the end of august Vassivière Island transforms itself rapidly into a live stage for one week. National and international storytellers give performances in forests, fields, and in the festival village all day and all night. This festival is a exceptional, human and cultural experience for adults, children, professionals and amateurs. (In Auphelle this year)



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Did you know ?

The Island is pedestrian. You can access on foot : a 20 minutes walk about 1 km (Free access all the year).

You can also cross the bridge with a little train or board from Auphelle or Broussas on a shuttle boat from April to September .

Crédit photos :

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