



# LA THUILE

AOSTA VALLEY





Grand Assaly

Slope 3 – Franco Berthod

La Thuile







## AOSTA VALLEY

# LA THUILE

### BETWEEN MYTH AND LEGEND

On hearing the name “La Thuile” for the first time, most likely the legendary Island of Thule, which Greek explorer Pytheas spoke of in his writings, will spring to mind. It was a fertile land of ice and fire dominated by nature and so extreme that it quickly nourished forbidden dreams and fervid hopes.

The similarities between the town in the Aosta Valley and this myth go beyond a name: the Alpine location is also a magnificent place where earth, air and water mingle to give life to incomparably beautiful landscapes.

Find full updated information on sites of interest (opening times, details, initiatives...) by visiting [www.lovevda.it](http://www.lovevda.it) »





## IN THE MOST RUGGED LANDS

It's certainly the astonishment it arouses in visitors that never lets them forget La Thuile. This enchanting verdant basin at the foot of the Little Saint Bernard Pass sprinkled with villages resembling posies of flowers, full of shady forests, roaring waterfalls and rushing streams is deemed the wild side of Mont Blanc.

To all effects, it could be compared to an untameable foal with a leafy mane and sky - blue coat of streams, galloping through mountains that reach 3,000 metres: a creature that can only be calmed by the icy touch of its keeper – the Rutor glacier. Look into its eyes and you'll see swirling perennial snows

and blue-streaked lakes, listen to its breath and you'll hear rustling meadows on cool summer evenings or the moon's silent song during the coldest of nights.

But it's not only the wonders of nature that will astonish you at La Thuile: each step you take on its soil will allow you to retrace the footprints of ancient warriors and wayfarers who, over the centuries, have traversed the Little Saint Bernard Pass for trade or battle, leaving behind permanent traces of their passage. Mysterious stone circles that whisper to the stars, burly fortifications wrapped in foliage, glittering

mines set among trees and colourful gardens – you'll encounter numerous testimonies of the past.

Some items have found a home in charming museums, such as the collection of art and handicraft at Musée Maison Berton. Others, which you can admire while queuing to purchase a lift pass - the one that gives you access to a hundred and fifty kilometres of ski runs in both Italy and France - are on show in the open air.

La Thuile lacks nothing: not even the title "chocolate town", nor wartime hideaways crammed with wheels of Fontina, nor snow barricades that line roads in winter like

the walls of an ice fortress. If at first sight this valley should appear modest, quiet and inoffensive, remember what you actually have before you - an apparently mild and reserved gem that conceals all the power of the mountains.



*Bonjour,  
I'm Michelle,  
your guide!*

Welcome, I'm Michelle!  
Nice to meet you!  
Here's your padded suit, here  
are your helmet and poles.

Pardon? Why am I wearing this  
outfit? Simple – because I'm  
a ski instructor! Want to know  
how I became one?

Well, when La Thuile coal  
mines closed down in the  
60s, the young people had  
to invent themselves a new  
profession... They just lifted  
their gaze towards the snowy  
mountains and instantly saw  
the path that lay ahead!

Now fasten your boots and  
get ready, I'll show you around  
this wonderful land and its  
world-famous ski runs!



La Thuile Ski School is a veritable institution: it was founded in 1964 and has over sixty instructors, some of whom are world-class skiers or federal coaches specialising in different events. The school has bases both in the town centre and on the runs – in Les Suches at a height of 2,200 metres.

SKI  
SCHOOL



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*Michelle*  
your guide





Ski lesson





La Thuile





# NOT TO BE MISSED

INTERNATIONAL SKI AREA, MOUNTAIN BIKING, RUTOR WATERFALLS, LITTLE SAINT BERNARD, SAN CARLO PASS AND LAKE ARPY





NOT TO BE MISSED



## ESPACE SAN BERNARDO INTERNATIONAL SKI AREA

A WHITE BRIDGE SPANNING THE ALPS

A freezing desert of ice scattered with sparkling white dunes and painted shades of winter-sky cobalt: this is Espace San Bernardo, one of the largest ski areas in the Aosta Valley. Its 150 km of runs reach over the Italian border as far as the French resort of La Rosière.

This spectacular ski area is renowned for its panoramic and thrilling pistes, in particular, Franco Berthod black run, which has staged important international competitions such as the Women's and the Telemark World Cup.

« Ski acrobatics  
La Thuile



## MOUNTAIN BIKING: ENDURO AND DOWNHILL

2,600 METRES OF ADRENALINE



Adventurous trails of disarming beauty wend their way among rugged meadows and jagged rocks, overlooked by sparkling glaciers and granite peaks. As soon as the first flowers begin to bloom, mountain bikes appear, practising jumps, tricks and breath-taking descents.

Riders are invited to this awesome bike park that boasts over 220 km of Enduro and Downhill trails located in a natural setting of unequalled magnificence. Served by two lifts, this bikers' paradise annually hosts some of the most important world-class competitions.

Enduro Word Series »  
La Thuile





NOT TO BE MISSED

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## RUTOR WATERFALLS

THE GIANT'S BREATH

These waterfalls resemble water steeds that gallop endlessly, raising spray on which frothy rainbows shatter; they're among the most amazing natural spectacles in La Thuile. A triumph of roaring energy gushes from one of Aosta Valley's emblematic glaciers – the Rutor – and makes three staggering drops down rock gorges and tree copses.



From wood and metal bridges it is possible to view the falls from unusual angles while, concluding their descent, the waters give life to a frothy stream known as the Dora del Rutor.

« Waterfall from above  
La Thuile



## LITTLE SAINT BERNARD

### WATERSHED BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

Being a crossroads for wayfarers, warriors and tradesmen, this Alpine pass connecting Italy and France is a place of transit par excellence. It is a fascinating blend of history and nature where the relics of countless peoples in transit are still preserved. These include the Salassi people's ancestral cromlechs that observe the mysteries of the universe and greet the summer solstice with magic plays of colour, but there are also remains of ancient Roman glory, a medieval hospice scarred by wars that occurred over the centuries, and Chanousia - a lush Alpine botanical garden which is a blooming, late nineteenth-century treasure...



Cyclists at the border »  
La Thuile





NOT TO BE MISSED

## SAN CARLO PASS AND LAKE ARPY

MIRROR OF THE SKY

The footpath from San Carlo Pass to Lake Arpy is considered one of the “ musts ” of the Aosta Valley.

The road from La Thuile to San Carlo Pass meanders upwards through broad, sunny valleys and immense oceans of flowers, entralling the gaze with views of the Mont Blanc range. The easy path from the Pass to the lake leads through larch and spruce woods and is suitable for everyone. At the end of the path you will come across an infinitely graceful lake whose waters mirror the Grandes Jorasses in a series of clear-cut reflections you will be compelled to photograph.



« Lake Arpy  
and Mont Blanc Range  
San Carlo Pass





Ski touring



# A DAY, A WEEKEND, A WEEK

## HOW TO ORGANISE YOUR VISIT

With so much to see and do in La Thuile the temptation to stay a few days longer is almost irresistible.

Where to go? What to see? Here's some advice on how to get the most out of your holiday and turn it into a genuine travel itinerary. You can customize the recommended itineraries - feel free to include or remove any visits according to your time schedule, interests and spur-of-the-moment decisions!

24  
HOURS

1 day

48  
HOURS

2 days

168  
HOURS

1 week

Ascent to Les Suches »  
La Thuile





## RECOMMENDED VISITS

LA THUILE  
IN ONE DAY

## DAY ONE

## 1 Summer

Begin the day at Little Saint Bernard Pass (1A), where you can admire remains dating back to Roman times: the mansio, a stretch of the Roman Road to Gaul, a small temple and a column dedicated to Jupiter.

Stop to see the mysterious cromlech, then the medieval hospice and museum, and lastly take a walk around Chanousia botanical garden (1B). In the afternoon, take a trip to Rutor Falls (1C), an immense and striking waterfall fed by Rutor Glacier.

## 2 Winter

Have a whole day's fun skiing in Espace San Bernardo international ski area (2A), from here you can cross the border to the French resort of La Rosière (2B), and savour a delicious gourmet lunch on the pistes.

In the evening, jump at the chance of a snowmobile or snowcat ride to dine in one of the many high-altitude venues (2C) that afford views of wonderful snowy scenery lit up in the moonlight.



RECOMMENDED VISITS

# LA THUILE IN A WEEKEND

## DAY TWO



Summer



Winter

Put on your hiking boots and set out on an excursion to Lake Arpy (3A) through woods and verdant valleys. On reaching these placid waters that reflect the image of Mont Blanc, keep walking a little further as far as enchanting Colle della Croce (3B), alternatively, turn back and, from Colle San Carlo, take the footpath to Tête d'Arpy (3C), which affords a spectacular panorama.

After an outdoor picnic, devote the afternoon to an MTB or e-bike tour in La Thuile's enthralling bike park (3D).

Choose one of the nine snowshoe trails (4A) that meander across the ski area and immerse yourself in La Thuile's rugged countryside: itineraries ranging from easy, average or demanding allow you to explore the territory from a different and fascinating perspective.

Spend an afternoon unwinding at Pré-Saint-Didier's rejuvenating spa (4B), an oasis of pleasurable wellness nestling amongst Europe's most incredible mountains.





# LA THUILE IN A WEEK

## 5 MORE DAYS

1

### Nature

Wondrous sights and marvels

Chanousia Alpine Botanical Garden **(1A)**, Comba Thuillette **(1B)**, Comba Sozin **(1C)**, Valley of Petosan and Doline **(1D)**.

2

### Outdoors / summer

The proud beauty of the mountains

Rock climbing **(2A)**, ascent to Rutor **(2B)**, Bellacomba lakes **(2C)**, mine trails **(2D)**, LTH fitness itinerary **(2E)**, Lake Verney **(2F)**, pony trekking **(2G)**.

3

### Culture and traditions

A glimpse of bygone life

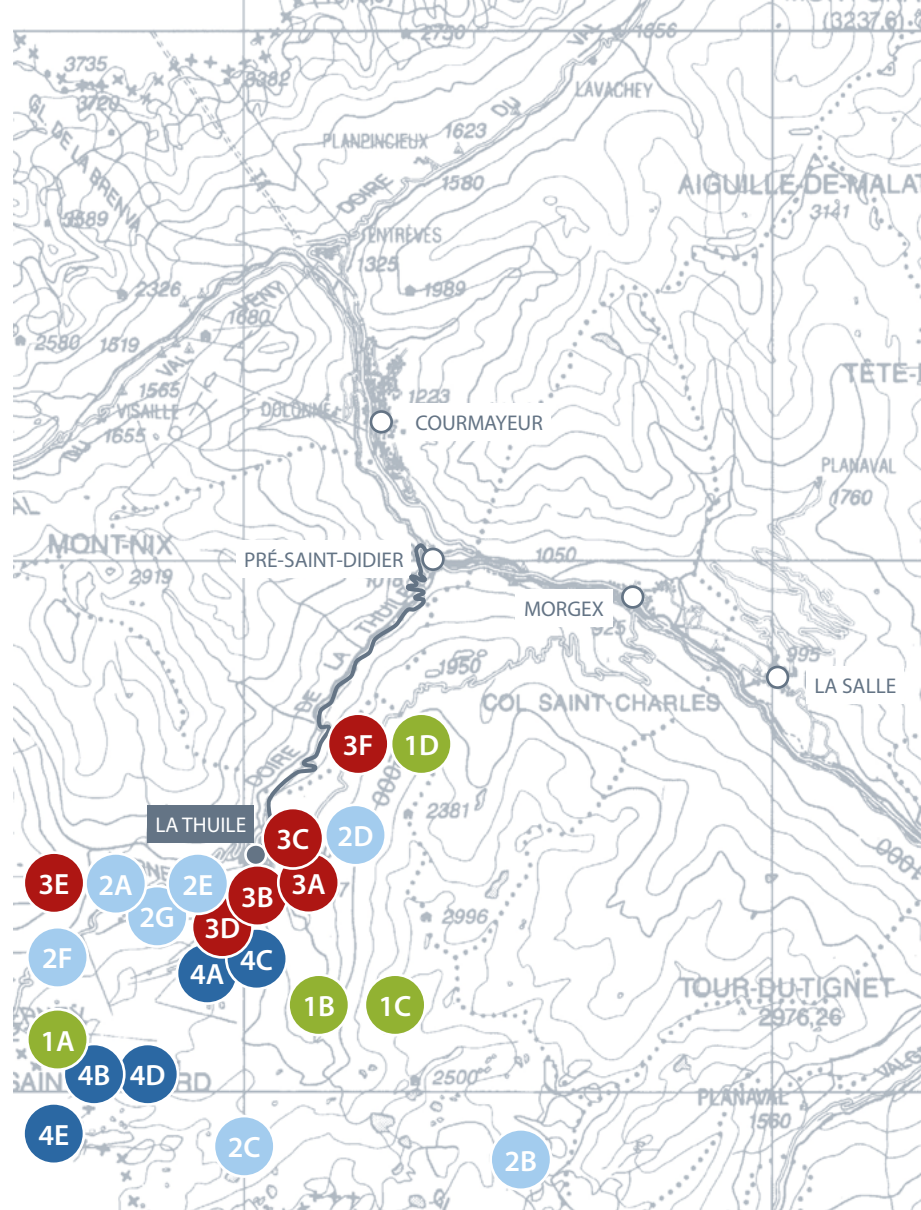
Religious itinerary exploring chapels **(3A)**, Maison Musée Berton **(3B)**, open air exhibition of mining buildings **(3C)**, Funivie Piccolo San Bernardo open air exhibition **(3D)**, Orgères archaeological site **(3E)**, Prince Thomas entrenchments **(3F)**.

4

### Outdoor / winter

The irresistible appeal of snow

Departure point of fat bike trails **(4A)**, heli skiing from Little Saint Bernard Pass **(4B)**, cross-country skiing **(4C)**, snowkiting **(4D)**, snow park on the French side **(4E)**.







Mountain bike





Espace San Bernardo



# THEMATIC FOCUS

NATURE, OUTDOOR, FOOD AND WINE,  
CULTURE AND TRADITIONS,  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES





# UNSPOILT SITES

SLIGHTLY MEEK, SLIGHTLY UNTAMEABLE

It's known as the wild side of Mont Blanc and when you're here you'll soon realise why. The valley of La Thuile is one of those places of rare beauty where the mountains show their purest, most wild and rebellious nature. It immediately enraptures with its sinuous mountain streams, enchanted lakes and luxurious glades, then it unleashes vertical walls, ominous sinkholes and powerful waterfalls into which all the force of nature is concentrated.

It's a land of contrasts where graceful landscapes alternate with forceful masses of rock to create such an all-consuming union that it will be hard not to fall in love with it.

Grandes Jorasses »  
La Thuile



## LAKE ARPY

Inhabited by rowdy marmots and frolicking chamois, this is a site to visit on foot or by bike. From here you can admire that immortal colossus that dominates the skies of Europe – the Mont Blanc range.

SAN CARLO PASS



## THE VALLEY OF PETOSAN AND DOLINE

Welcome to Petosan, a small village coiled in the green embrace of a glade overlooked by the Grandes Jorasses peaks. Don't miss the sinkholes not far away – intriguing limestone formations into which the water... disappears!

LATHUILE



## LAKE VERNEY

You can't claim to have been to La Thuile if you haven't admired this majestic lake speckled with blue and encircled by a crown of fabulous peaks. It lies at a height of 2,088 metres and is one of the largest in the Aosta Valley.

LITTLE SAINT BERNARD



## "CHANOUSIA" ALPINE BOTANICAL GARDEN

This magnificent garden withstands the snowfalls to continue blooming every summer. It was founded by Abbot Pierre Chanoux, who devoted his life to offering everyone the chance to learn about and protect the diversity of Alpine flora.

LITTLE SAINT BERNARD





# PURE ENERGY

NO LIMITS

In La Thuile sport is the order of the day. Not only because the town hosts high profile competitions every year, such as the Women's and Telemark World Cup in winter, and the Enduro World Series in summer, but also (and especially) because it's possible to enjoy a multitude of sports on its evocative heights.

So, be ready for quiet walks interspersed with exciting excursions, pony treks out into the countryside alternated with climbing sessions. If you're a snow fan then you'll just be spoilt for choice with skiing, heli skiing, snow kiting and snowshoeing!

Downhill Ski World Cup »  
La Thuile

LA THUILE  
Valle d'Aosta

# Home of quattr



Audi FIS Ski World Cup

## ASCENT TO RUTOR

This exciting excursion among forests, lakes and waterfalls to one of the most extraordinary glaciers in the Aosta Valley takes two days with an overnight stop at Deffeyes mountain hut.

LA THUILE



## CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Sun-kissed snow, hooded woodlands, silent expanses framed by the mountains – if you love cross-country skiing then don't miss Arly plain and the area lying around Arpy.

LA THUILE



## SNOWSHOEING

Nine itineraries varying in difficulty lead across the valley through pristine trees, mysterious sinkholes and pure white ice giants.

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## HELI SKIING

A spectacular adventure across powdery snow ridges and hair-raising descents that are waiting to be explored like islands in a white ocean.

LA THUILE



## SNOWKITING

Who says you can only surf at the seaside? At Little Saint Bernard Pass waves of fresh snow are waiting for you to sail over them with your kite!

LA THUILE

## SNOWPARK

Fling yourself into giddy acrobatic tricks and have fun on rails, kickers and the Fun Slope – drop into La Thuile and La Rosière snowparks!

LA THUILE





## LES SUCHES OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOL

It's summertime. Close your eyes and imagine plunging into the warm water of a pool overlooking the alabaster reaches of a glacier.

LA THUILE



## HORSE RIDING

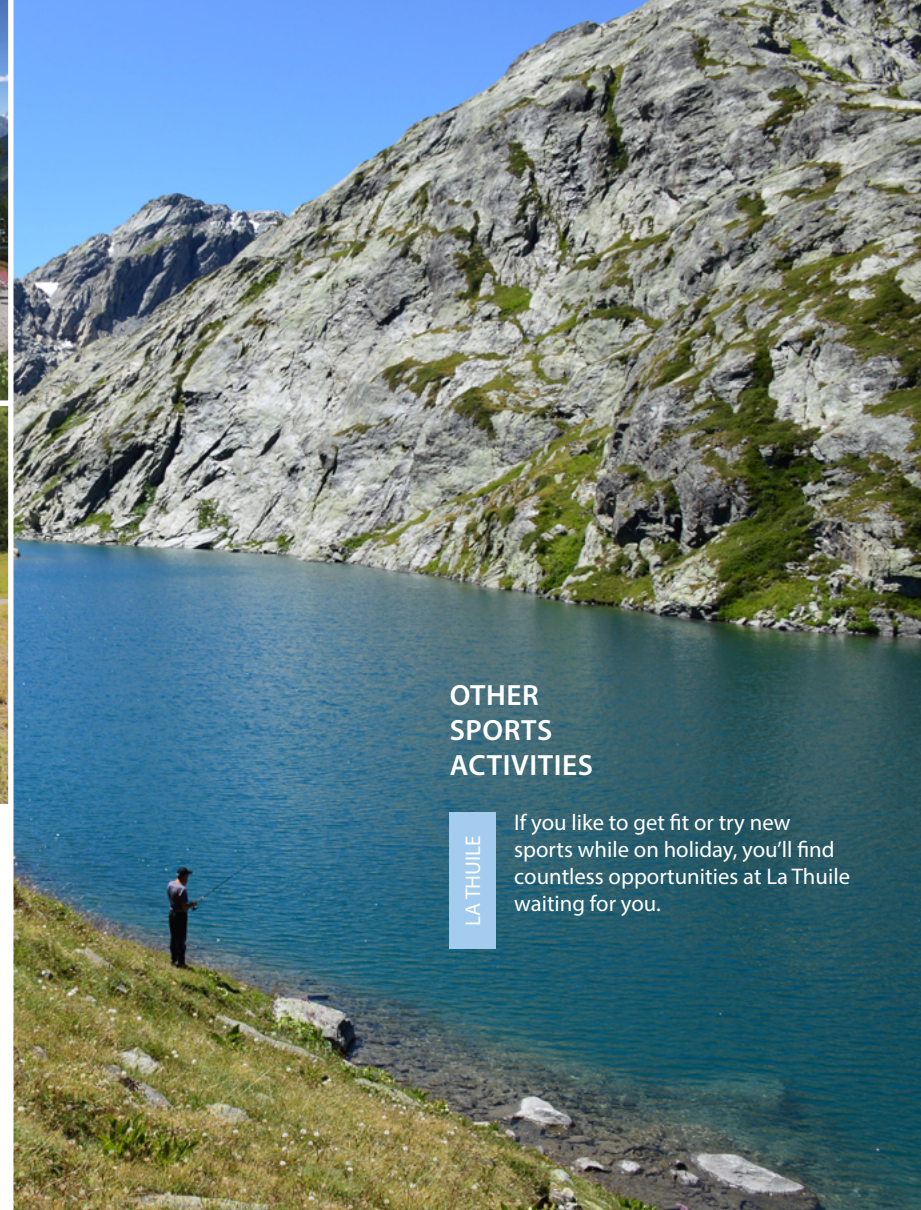
Horse rides, child-friendly pony treks, riding lessons and horse-drawn carriage rides – you can find all these at La Thuile equestrian centre!

LA THUILE

## CLIMBING

Whether you prefer climbing indoors or outdoors, at La Thuile you'll find both alluring crags that abound in history and fun artificial walls.

LA THUILE



## OTHER SPORTS ACTIVITIES

If you like to get fit or try new sports while on holiday, you'll find countless opportunities at La Thuile waiting for you.

LA THUILE



# DELICIOUS INSPIRATION

## DESIRE FOR FLAVOUR

If you find it impossible to resist the subtle, inebriating, mouth-watering fragrance of chocolate then you'll have to keep your appetite in check because La Thuile is... the town of chocolate par excellence! It was awarded this prestigious title in 2009 and boasts sweet fondues, exquisite chocolate bonbons, generous Easter eggs and an unusual delicacy for which it has become famous throughout Italy – the tometta.

Outwardly, this extraordinary masterpiece reminds you of an Alpine cheese, but the flavour releases a delicate explosion of savour: soft milk chocolate, crunchy Piedmontese hazelnuts, enticing gianduja that melts in the mouth. You mustn't miss this treat, especially not at snack time!

Tometta »  
La Thuile





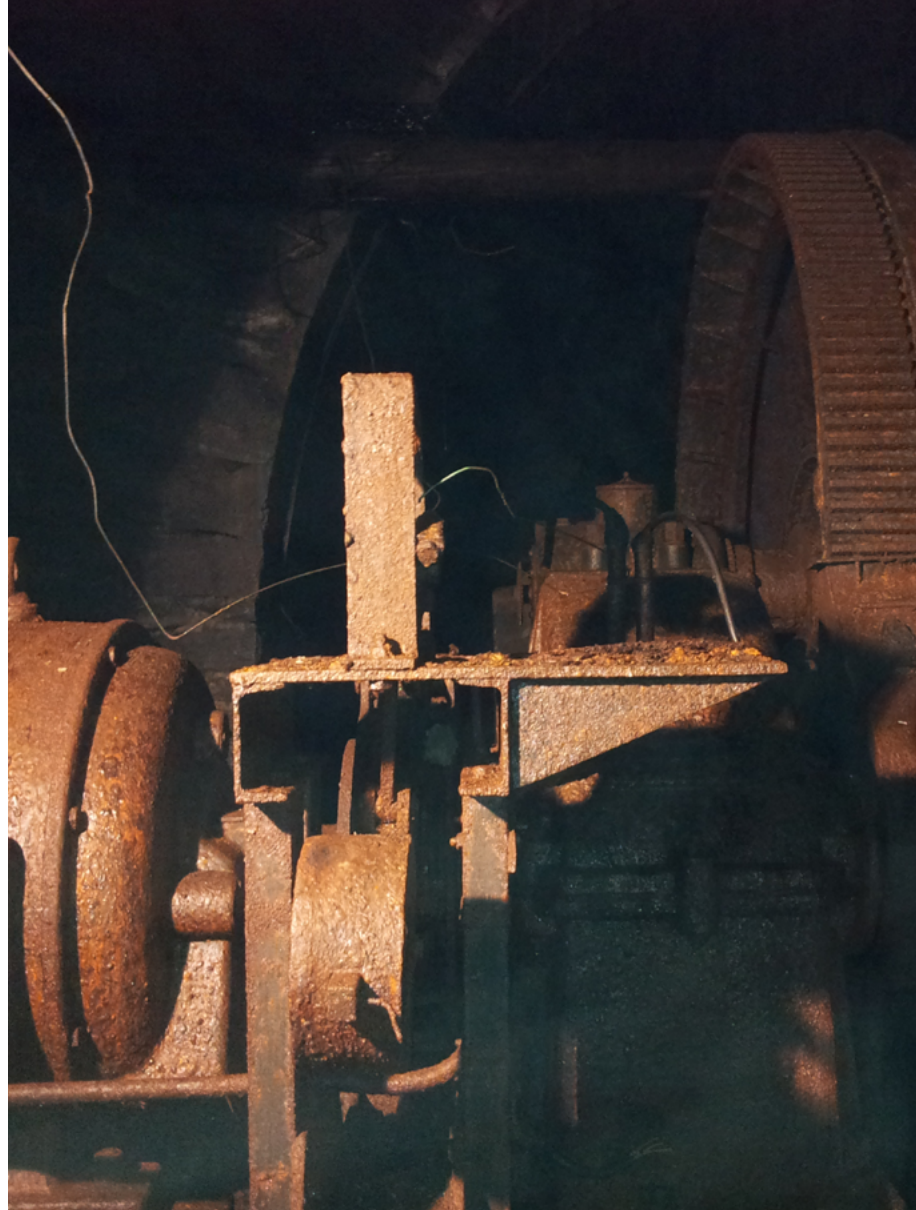
# HISTORY ROLLS ON

## ECHOES OF THE PAST

Although La Thuile is a small town, you'll be amazed by the historical-cultural wealth it safeguards.

It's a land of transit that has witnessed an interchange of peoples harbouring a thirst for conquest; among snowy pinnacles and dishevelled meadows lie paths leading backwards through the centuries: dusty tunnels where miners once dug untiringly; old chapels clinging to the mountainside above two thousand metres; museum exhibitions and archaeological excavations recounting the lives of those who here took their first steps towards greatness ...

Old mines »  
La Thuile



## TOUR OF THE MINES

Follow the railroad tracks as they disappear into the woods, among gloomy tunnels and abandoned miners' carts, along the road that leads to the bowels of the earth...

LA THUILE



## LITTLE SAINT BERNARD HOSPICE MUSEUM

An interesting museum where you can admire intriguing archaeological finds and view exhibitions illustrating the absorbing history of Little Saint Bernard Pass.

LITTLE SAINT BERNARD



## CHURCH OF SAN NICOLA AND VILLAGE CHAPELS

Set out and discover the spiritual guardians of La Thuile - its nine chapels - then visit the Church of San Nicola, but pause to take a look at its legendary crucifix.

LA THUILE



## MAISON MUSÉE BERTON

Over 4,200 books, hundreds of pieces of furniture and items of handcraft, not to mention paintings, sculptures and drawings – this is what you'll discover in quaint house-cum-museum Berton.

LA THUILE



## EXHIBITION OF THE HISTORY OF ESPACE SAN BERNARDO CABLEWAY

La Thuile's first cableway opened in 1968: read the exhibition's illustrative panels to learn about the history of the lift system.

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## ORGÈRES ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE

This is a journey back in time among ancient pottery dating to Roman times, the ruins of a mysterious medieval building and a defensive nineteenth-century outpost.

LA THUILE



# NO ADULTS ALLOWED

## NATURALLY FUN

There are few things more pleasurable in the world than playing on a swing and letting your gaze wander among rock titans and handfuls of clouds shaped in the most imaginative and curious manner.

If you want to feel what it's like firsthand, then spend a summer in La Thuile: there are no fewer than six playgrounds to choose from in which you can let loose on slides, climbing frames and seesaws.

In winter drop into the snowpark where you'll find bewitching inflatables and magic carpets then, on New Year's Eve, don't forget to take part in the awesome midnight procession – genuine enchantment spiced with hot chocolate and joyful music!

Hiking at Petosan »  
La Thuile







Deffeyes Hut



# IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME

Get ready to make an extraordinary holiday even more out of the ordinary...



## SUMMER SOLSTICE AT LITTLE SAINT BERNARD PASS

An evocative occasion to greet the arrival of summer and to enjoy the play of natural light as it illuminates the ancient cromlech at sunset.

JUNE

## MOUNTAIN BIKE COMPETITIONS

Enduro World Series, Internazionali d'Italia and Junior Series Cross Country: three spectacular appointments with the best of mountain biking.

JUNE - SEPTEMBER



## FÊTE DES BERGERS AND PASS' PITCHÜ

A double festival shared with neighbours from Savoy to celebrate trade, folklore and traditions, bringing to life Little Saint Bernard Pass.

AUGUST



## NEW YEAR'S EVE TORCHLIGHT DESCENT

The alpine guides' torchlight descent is one of the most spectacular events held on New Year's Eve. As they descend on the World Cup runs, the torch illumination creates a magic atmosphere.

DECEMBER

Valle d'Aosta  
EVENTS

Download the app!





Federica Brignone on Slope 3 – Franco Berthod





**SKYWAY: A REFUGE ON TOP OF THE SKY**

Skyway is one of the most impressive cable cars on earth and an extraordinary feat of engineering that carries passengers to a height of almost 3,000 metres – a stone's throw from Mont Blanc peak.



**SHOPPING IN COURMAYEUR**

The capital of Valdostan fashion, where you can devote your time to frenetic shopping among international designer labels, luxury brands, famous restaurants, perfume boutiques and the latest fashion garments.



**LA SALLE AND MORGEX VINEYARDS**

Europe's highest white wine comes from here: a "heroic" grape variety grown at an altitude of 1,200 metres that produces a wine fearless of snow or ice and which internalises all the purest Alpine aromas.

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