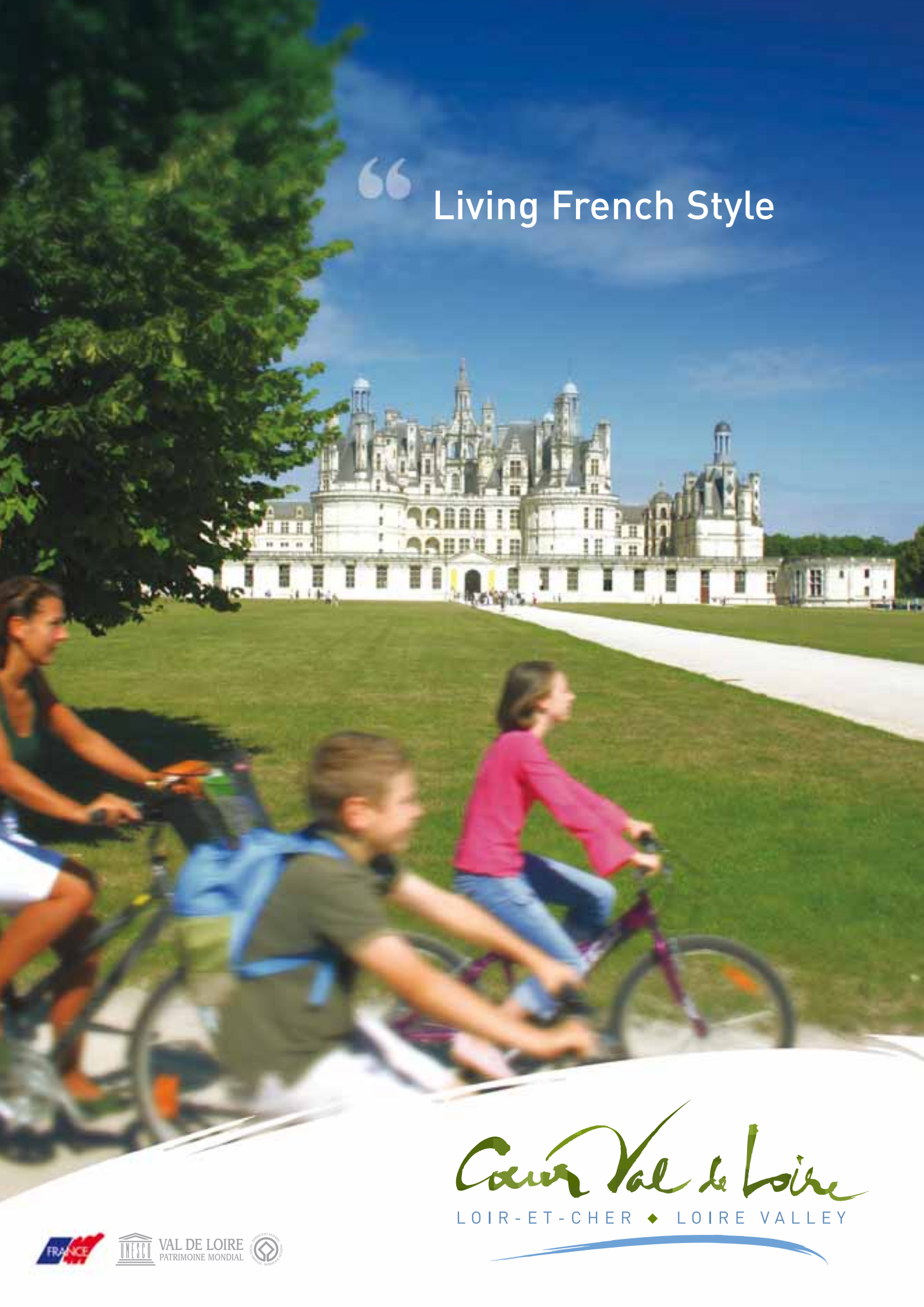


“ Living French Style



Cœur Val de Loire

LOIR-ET-CHER ♦ LOIRE VALLEY



VAL DE LOIRE
PATRIMOINE MONDIAL







Cœur Val de Loire
LOIR-ET-CHER • LOIRE VALLEY

Renown to the kings, nourished by the river, put together by forests and gardens, the Heart of the Loire Valley is a treasure chest of exceptional patrimony, promising an unforgettable stay...

The Knights Templar headquarters in the Perche



days and weekends. Imagine a horse drawn carriage from the Perche passing slowly in front of a manor, a Knight's Templar headquarters... not far from there, you can discover the Loir Valley, its' charming villages and interesting troglodyte homes.

Take advantage of the calm, and the reflecting sunlight on the river. The Loire Valley and its châteaux invite you to discover the centuries past and their parks and gardens with their hint of modern times.

Meditative, sports oriented, and all together interesting... The Heart of the Loire Valley adheres to all types of rhythms. It's a mosaic of ambiance with so many possibilities and places to discover by taking advantage of its' different regions.

Uncover the mysteries of Sologne's forests, marshlands, and moorlands. Here you will benefit from walking around the many ponds that lead to unexpected châteaux.

The Essence of a Quality French Lifestyle

The Heart of the Loire Valley invites you to its' cradle of greenery not far from Paris. Its rich landscapes held in a well-preserved natural setting add to the charm of the French Royal residences. Allow yourself to give into the new type of theatrical entertainment for your holi-

Troglodyte homes in the Loir Valley



Savor the local products along the way on the Cher River. The vineyard roads lead to wine caves and vineyard homes, where local cheeses are tasted on freshly baked bread.

A vineyard in the Cher Valley



The Loire River invites you to accompany it for a long exploration of our region. The river baths in natural landscapes and is classified as a world historic site by UNESCO. This wild river acts as a source of authenticity and serenity.





“Land of Genuine
Countryside”

The Heart of the Loire Valley is one destination, with numerous possibilities...



“Land of Eternal History

Kings, painters, and poets fell under the charm of this region leaving their marks along the passage of time.



Historians and history lovers are astonished by the amount of historic patrimony found here. Strolling through the heart of the Loire Valley is like turning the pages of a history book. The dimensions of which are great, and long to be discovered.

The Portrait Gallery of the Château of Beauregard



Witnessing Centuries Past

At the gateway of Sologne lies a pinnacle forest where Chambord, the best-achieved dream of François I awaits your visit. Discover Blois, a city constructed like an amphitheater around the Loire River. The city's château demonstrates real

The Château of Blois

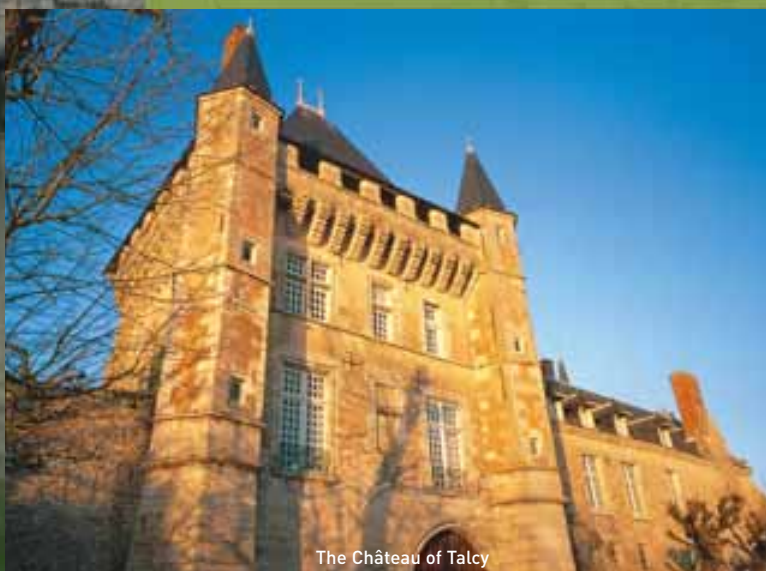


genius in architecture. It dates back to the Middle Ages and accomplished additional wings up until the Golden Age of France. On the other side of the river, the Château of Cheverny witnesses the art of French aristocracy and the societal traditions that still exist today. Finally, at the edge of an English style garden and dominating the Loire River, the Château of Chaumont-sur-Loire shines brighter than anything else in the area.

The Château of Cheverny



**Walking the Path of Ronsard
(The French contemporary of Shakespeare)**
Here numerous sites harbor the shadow of the poet. For instance : Le Manoir de la Possonnière, Ronsard's birthplace, and the Château of Talcy, the home of his muse Cassandre, of which inspired the famous line of poetry, "Mignonne, allons voir si la rose..." (Beauty, shall we see if the rose...)



The Château of Talcy

The medieval city of Montrichard



The Château of Le Moulin



At an earlier time in history, politics and religion were intimately tied together, the proof is in our architecture. The Knights Templar headquarters in Arville takes you back to that time, the time of the crusades. In Vendôme, it's the bell tower of the Trinité abbey that still dominates the city. In Blois it's the steeples of Saint-Nicolas that continue to rise above the city buildings. Further south, at Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher it's the Roman collegiate. Finally throughout Sologne, the churches have unique porches built in front of them from that period of time and are not to be missed!

The artistic and historic city of Vendôme



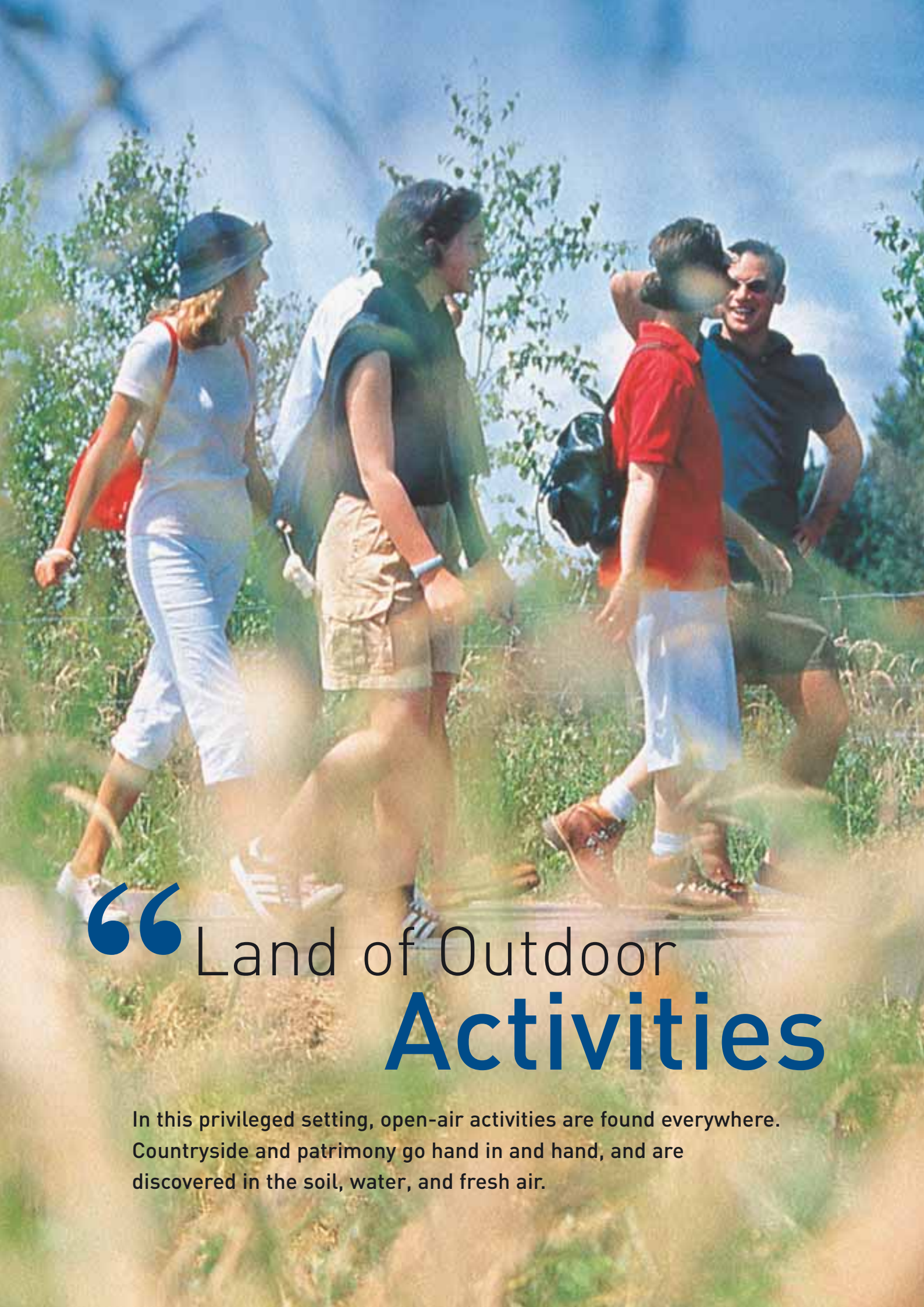
Side by side with the internationally renowned masterpieces and other historic trademarks of the region lie the medieval cities of Montrichard and Mennetou-sur-Cher. They are discrete but they can be just as enticing. However more intimate, are the Châteaux of Beauregard, Chèmery, Fougères-sur-Bièvre, Le Moulin, Troussay, and Villesavin.

Whatever you do, don't hesitate to open doors. Rare and delicate frescos and mural paintings can be found in the churches throughout the Loir Valley, but only if you take the time to look. Thanks to the work of specialists, the majority of them have been restored.





The Heart of the Loire Valley: cultural richness at the palm of your hand



“Land of Outdoor Activities

In this privileged setting, open-air activities are found everywhere. Countryside and patrimony go hand in and hand, and are discovered in the soil, water, and fresh air.



Take a swing at golf, swim a little, pedal your bike, sail down the river, go horse-back riding, or take a long walk outside- everything is possible for those who wish to take advantage of the all welcoming and well preserved nature in the Loir-and-Cher.



The Good Life Enjoying a Recreational Holiday

Hikers can follow the trails from the Perche region to Solgone: don't worry there is a trail for everyone. The all-apparent nature reveals itself in the forests and alongside the many ponds. Alone or with friends, come and discover the faun and flora of the region. Mount your bicycles and hit the trails of "La Loire à Vélo" (Loire Valley by bike). Where you can ride along



the riverbanks and criss-cross the picturesque villages on your way. The itineraries of "Châteaux à Vélo" (Châteaux by bike) harmoniously marry patrimony and sport for a perfect mix of indoor and outdoor activities! Do you know how to ride a horse? Don't forget to take advantage of the long romantic riding trails in the Perche region.

Why not discover the Loire River marine life by taking a seat aboard one of our flat-bottom boats. Maybe you would prefer a tour on the Cher River. Better yet maybe you would prefer to canoe down the river yourself. If not, you may try the option of an unforgettable hot-air balloon ride over the Loire region.

The Heart of the Loire Valley is an inexhaustible source of opportunities!

La Loire à Vélo (Loire Valley by bike)
Les Châteaux à Vélo (Châteaux by bike)
The bicycle leads to everything...particularly everything of great interest in the Loire Valley. Follow the river, or see the enchanted countryside by taking the well-marked and secured routes that intertwine the small villages with the marvelous Châteaux. It's a habit of ours to mix life's little pleasures with our cultural heritage!





The wine routes cross those of the manors and châteaux where one finds the true spirit of the Loire Valley. Stop-off at a village café-terrace, eat at a fine restaurant, or picnic along the riverbank. Remember to take the time to live well, “like the French,” every moment you can.

The Savors are an Echo of the Land

Sweet or savory, they will shock your taste buds! Each village has a specialty to taste and to bring back home with you. Discover the farm products from the Perche, wash down your culinary dishes with a



glass of our Coteaux du Vendômois and let them dazzle your taste buds. Pursue your gourmet journey with a glass of crisp and light Touraine wine or with the distinct taste of Cour-Cheverny wine. Continue on... The colors of the vineyards give the allure of the gourmet pleasures yet to come. The little goat cheeses of the Cher Valley, the strawberries and white asparagus of Sologne along with its game meat add a special flavor to your stay.

Continue living the good life... by biting into a tarte Tatin (upside down apple pie) caramelized to your liking, or crunch one of the Solognates cookies... the ones we hope you will bring back in your suitcase!

The Heart of the Loire Valley turns your senses inside-out.

There are two important rendezvous not to miss: The first being the weekend of “Touraine Primeur” (Weekend of the First Touraine Wine of the Year) and the second being “Les Journées Gastronomiques de Sologne” (Gourmet Lover’s Weekend of Sologne) in Romorantin-Lanthenay. Both of them take place at the end of the tourist season in November.





“Land of Tasteful Treasures

The secret is: enjoy yourself and taste all the pleasures we can offer you. The wine and cheese of this region should be nominated part of our living patrimony. They form a perfect match and complement each other's aromas and tastes.



“Land of Sharing

Hospitality is a tradition in the Heart of the Loire Valley. Our inhabitants love to share this small portion of France with you and to put on their finest to show you its' exquisite beauty.

The Otter-Show at the ZooParc in Beauval (Saint-Aignan)



Open arms: whether one chooses a countryside inn or the splendor of an accommodation with historic value... open your eyes and soak up all the beauty of the cities and villages around you and allow them to charm your imagination.

Time to Spend as a Couple or as a Family

Festivals and events create a rhythmic lifestyle in the Heart of the Loire Valley: this type of culture is really alive and it adds to the beauty of the area. Every summer, sites of historic importance provide special events in order to help you experience this history. Join the many visitors that haste every year to see the "Festival International des Jardins de Chaumont-sur-Loire" (International Garden Festival of Chaumont-sur-Loire) which is now an international reference. The gardens change every year. Music is equally represented during the tourist season. Most importantly, the gastronomy is concluded every season by yet another gourmet delight! Hunting and

fishing along with these other traditions make up the scene of activities we will be sharing with you as part of the real traditions of the Heart of the Loire Valley.

What about events for children? They are treated like royalty in Loir-and-Cher! Bring them to see the white tigers and African elephants, or the birds of prey and otter shows at the ZooParc of Beauval. Also help them discover "La Maison de la Magie" (House of Magic) or go with them to see the exhibition on TinTin... and they will remember it for the rest of their lives.

The sound and light show at the Château of Blois



A sensational experience guaranteed in the Heart of the Loire Valley

The International World Folkloric Festival of Montoire-sur-le-Loir



The International Garden Festival of Chaumont-sur-Loire



In our region, we don't garden in vain. Our passion is explained by the International Garden Festival of Chaumont-sur-Loire and in the more than 15 sites open every summer throughout our communal boundaries that are dedicated to "Jardins Passions" (Passionate Gardens) for everyone to enjoy.



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Photos pages 2 and 3: Château of Chamoumont-sur-Loire; page 5: Ponds in Sologne; page 6: Château of Chambord; page 9: Château of Villesavin; page 13: vineyard home in the Cier Valley; page 14: « Les rendez-vous de l'été » concerts in the courtyard of the Trinité abbey of Vendôme.

Coeur Val de Loire

LOIR-ET-CHER ♦ LOIRE VALLEY

LOIR-ET-CHER



COMITÉ
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