



DOSSIER DE PRESSE

ROUTE DU MIMOSA 2025 - 2026

THE MIMOSA ROUTE

130 KM PERFUME TRAIL TO EXPLORE THE COTE D'AZUR IN WINTER

Every year, when Europe is in the grip of winter, the Côte d'Azur lights up with the colours of the sunniest of winter flowers. It's Mimosa season, the sunny tree from Australia that transforms the Côte d'Azur and Provençal hills into a wave of light and fragrance. To celebrate this ephemeral show, a unique tourist trail has been created on the Côte d'Azur: the Mimosa Route, 130 kilometres connecting Bormes-les-Mimosas to Grasse in the Var and the Alpes-Maritimes.

A sensory route that allows travellers to progressively discover a rich heritage between the Maures, Esterel and Tanneron mountain ranges, Provençal villages, exotic gardens, events, derived products, shows, *corsos* [Provençal parades]... and panoramic Mediterranean views. More than just a journey, this is a sensory experience in which colour, aroma and light combine.

A JOURNEY IN 8 STOPS

Bormes-les-Mimosas, a flower-decked village with picturesque narrow streets and the starting point for the Route.

Rayol-Canadel sur Mer, with its Domaine du Rayol and its Mediterranean gardens, including the Australian district and its varied mimosas.

Sainte-Maxime, a spa resort with sunny winter fragrances, which also boasts a *corso*.

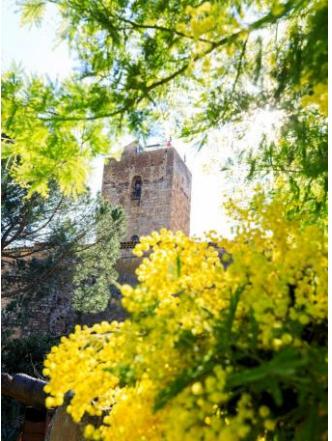
Saint-Raphaël, between the coastline and the flamboyant Esterel.

Mandelieu-La Napoule, the true "Mimosa Capital", where the golden flower is reigns supreme in February.

Tanneron, the eponymous village located in the heart of the biggest mimosa forest in Europe.

Pégomas, famed for its crops destined for the perfume industry.

Grasse, an olfactory apotheosis.



THE TANNERON MOUNTAIN RANGE

The Tanneron mountain range is located across two departments: the Var and the Alpes-Maritimes. It extends over approximately 5,200 hectares and houses three municipalities on the Mimosa Route: the village of Tanneron and the towns of Pégomas and Mandelieu.

It is known for being home to the largest mimosa forest in Europe, with approximately 200 hectares growing wild and cultivated. The main species found there is *acacia dealbata* (known locally as the “winter Mimosa”), in the following varieties:

Gaulois: robust tree with dark green foliage, with a bountiful array of sulphur-yellow flowers from the end of January to March.

Mirandole: Large light green leaves, and bunches of flowers in a bright pure yellow from the end of December until February.

Rustica: mentioned as the third variety, suited to the well-drained and dry, acid soils of the mountain range.

The mimosa, originally from Australia and introduced in the 19th century, has become the olfactory and botanical signature of the mountain range. Nicknamed the “Côte d’Azur’s yellow gold”, its perfume-laden flowering period from December to March (with a peak in February) is an indicator of the region’s winter landscape: spring in the middle of winter.

In addition to the mimosa, the mountain range is host to other species typical of the Mediterranean garrigue: eucalyptus, cork oaks, maritime pines, rockrose and strawberry trees.

The Tanneron mountain range is an extremely fragmented land. Over 80% of the range’s wooded area is privately owned. Most holdings are small family properties or large woodlands. The rest comprises municipal and state forests. The main protected area is the Grand Duc municipal forest (approximately 93 hectares), managed in particular by the ONF (*Office National des Forêts* = the French national forestry office)

Mimosa cultivation developed quickly in the Tanneron mountain range thanks to its suitable gentle climate, and its acidic, well-drained soils. The very start of the 20th century saw the appearance of the first commercial farms, from where the first bouquets were shipped to Europe from the Cannes-La Bocca railway station in wicker baskets.

The two world wars weakened mimosa cultivation, but it remains a symbol of identity: local festivals and flower markets are the spearheads of tourism, to attract visitors in the winter.





 **LA ROUTE DU
Mimosa**

PRÉVENTION
MESSAGE À L'ATTENTION DES RANDONNEURS
MASSIF DU TANNERON

Bienvenue dans le magnifique massif du Tanneron, territoire emblématique du mimosa !

Afin de préserver ce patrimoine naturel et les activités locales, il convient lors de promenades et randonnées de respecter quelques règles essentielles à la protection et la préservation des sites :

- **RESPECT DES PROPRIÉTÉS PRIVÉES :**
 - Ne pas entrer sur les parcelles sans autorisation.
 - De nombreuses zones sont des terrains privés ou dédiés à la production florale.
- **NE PAS CUEILLIR DE MIMOSA :**

La cueillette du mimosa, même à la main ou avec un outil, est interdite sur les parcelles de production.
- **PIQUE-NIQUE INTERDIT SUR LES PARCELLES :**

Merci de ne pas pique-niquer dans les zones de culture, des aires aménagées sont prévues à cet effet.

**MERCI DE VOTRE COMPRÉHENSION ET DE VOTRE RESPECT
POUR CET ENVIRONNEMENT UNIQUE ET SES ACTEURS LOCAUX**

12 QUESTIONS ASKED ABOUT THE MIMOSA

1. What is the mimosa's flowering period?

The winter mimosa (*acacia dealbata*) flowers between December and March, with a peak in February. Depending on the weather conditions (cold, rain, drought), it may begin earlier or go on longer. Some 120 species of mimosa have been identified by botanists. The Mandelieu mimosa arboretum in the Emmanuelle de Marande park is unique in France, boasting around 100 of these, whereas Pépinières Cavatore, in Bormes-les-Mimosas, houses the national collection.

2. What is the Tanneron?

The Tanneron is a range of hills located in the Var and the Alpes-Maritimes, opposite the Mediterranean. It is here that the largest mimosa forest in Europe can be found (of which approximately 200 hectares are cultivated). In addition to its forest and farming areas, it houses the eponymous village and the towns of Pégomas and Mandelieu.

3. Can you find mimosa elsewhere in France? Is the Tanneron the only place it is grown?

Mimosa can be found in other Mediterranean regions, on the Biarritz coast and even in Brittany. These are ornamental mimosas, but the main European production is in the Tanneron mountain range.

4. What mimosa species can be found in the Tanneron and when do they flower?

Acacia dealbata – “Winter mimosa” (Gaulois, Mirandole and Rustica varieties) → flowering from December to March.
Acacia retinodes – “Ever-blooming mimosa” → small flowers possible all year round, with a peak in the Spring. Several other ornamental acacias are planted in gardens, but the heart of the mountains remains the winter mimosa.

5. Is the mimosa invasive? Who manages the mimosa areas?

Originally from Australia, the mimosa reseeds easily and colonises the Mediterranean forests, sometimes in competition with local species. Its management is the responsibility of private owners (80% of the mountain range), who maintain or cultivate their plots. Grafts are the alternatives for controlling the spread of the mimosa. In public areas (such as the Grand Duc forest or the Esterel mountain range), the ONF oversees the regulation in conjunction with municipal departments.

6. Is it possible that the mimosa won't flower in winter?

It's rare, but it is possible. A prolonged frost may burn the flower buds of species that are beginning to bloom. However, considering the varieties that flower consecutively, the species follow on from each other. Overall, the mild climate of the Tanneron guarantees regular flowering every winter.

7. Can you cut mimosa when walking in the Tanneron?

No, it's prohibited. The mimosas are owned (privately or publicly). Wild harvesting is considered to be theft or pillaging. To buy it, you need to visit the producers, local markets or florists.

8. Mimosa and perfume.

The mimosa has been used in the perfume industry since the 19th century. A “mimosa absolute” is extracted (especially in Grasse), highly prized for its powdery, floral and honeyed notes.

9. Is mimosa edible?

The flowers are non-toxic and sometimes increasingly used as culinary decorations (syrups, confectionery, madeleines, craft liqueurs: pastis, kir, cocktails, jellies, chocolates, pastries, ice creams). Caution: mimosa contains tannins and alkaloids. It must only be eaten after specialized preparation.

10. Where can you buy mimosa? Can it be ordered online?

On the Côte d'Azur: local markets (Tanneron, Mandelieu, Pégomas, Grasse), florists, mimosa festivals.
In France: florists offer cut mimosa in season (January-March). Several local producers in the Tanneron sell online and ship their bouquets throughout France.

11. How do you keep cut mimosa in a vase?

Use a clean vase and lukewarm water.
Lightly crush the ends of the stems to promote absorption.
Add a small sachet of cut flower conservator (such as Chrysal).

12. Top tips!

Seen in the press > Tip from the journalist Philippe Collignon: put a spoon of sugar and a drop of bleach into the water to prolong the life of a mimosa bouquet in the vase.

TERMS

Mimosist:

Someone who grows, harvests and sells mimosa, often within a horticultural or craft setting.

The term is used above all in the Mandelieu-La Napoule and Tanneron regions, the birthplace of the mimosa in France.

Forcing house:

Workshop in which plants are forced, i.e. their flowering is stimulated thanks to the heat and humidity. Mimosists use forcing houses to make the mimosa flower in the middle of winter, especially during the carnival or European market periods.

Glomerulus:

Small inflorescence in a compact ball, formed from groups of flowers. The mimosa's yellow flowers group together in spherical glomeruli, giving this appearance of "golden pompoms".

Acacia:

This botanical genus encompasses over 1,000 species of trees and shrubs, of which several are called "mimosas".

Dealbata: botanical abbreviation for *acacia dealbata*, also known as winter mimosa. A species originally from Australia, introduced into Europe in the 19th century. This is the most widespread variety on the Côte d'Azur, with its balls of yellow flowers and its silvery foliage.

Little Green:

Cultivated mimosa variety, known for its light green branches and scented flowers.

Mirandole:

Term used in local horticulture to designate an ancient mimosa variety that is more rustic and floriferous.

Ever-blooming:

Mimosa variety capable of blooming several times a year, not just in winter.

Allows for prolonged flower production, suited to continuous sales.





LA ROUTE DU MIMOSA

TOURISME

BORMES LES MIMOSAS – KILOMETRE 0

In Bormes les Mimosas, the mimosa is not just a flower, but a true art of living. The town adopted the name "Bormes les Mimosas" in 1968, in homage to this flower that is omnipresent in the village and on the plains.

THE CORSO FLEURI: 14 & 15 FEBRUARY 2026

The emblematic event in Bormes les Mimosas, the *CORSO fleuri* [flower parade] at the end of February every year attracts thousands of visitors who have come to celebrate the beauty of the mimosa and flowers in general. Created in 1920, this flowery meeting is the oldest *CORSO* on the Côte d'Azur, and is an exceptional occasion.

With 12 tonnes of yellow sprigs and 80,000 fresh flowers used to decorate around 10 floats, the *CORSO* is the result of the enthusiastic work of Bormes inhabitants. The preparations, which start as of October, combine creativity and well-kept secrets... The theme of each float will only be revealed on the day of the parade!

Inspired by 17th century traditions, when the nobility exhibited their flower-decked carriages, the *CORSO* developed to become a popular festival celebrating the arrival of Spring. Chariots drawn by donkeys have given way to tractors. The mimosas from the hills are now supplemented by anemones, daisies or carnations, grown in the Var.

HIKES UNDER THE MIMOSA BANNER

Trapan Lake > Surrounded by hills dotted with mimosas, this short hike follows a marked trail along the lake, perfect for enjoying magnificent viewpoints over the Mediterranean.

Maures mountain range > This offers a large variety of hikes for everyone, with trails that vary in length and difficulty. The hills are covered in yellow thanks to the flowering mimosas, whereas in summer, the shade of the stone pines and oaks accompany walkers to the rhythm of the cicada's song.

Notre Dame de Constance > This hike in the heights of Bormes, via the Oratoires circuit, leads to Notre-Dame de Constance, a heritage site perched 324 metres above sea level. Surrounded by mimosas and bountiful countryside, the trail generates viewpoints over the Bay of Bormes, one of the prettiest in the world, the Hyères islands and the surrounding golden hills.

GARDENS TO VISIT

Gonzalez Park is a truly lush green setting measuring almost 5,000 m², located on a hill overlooking the village of Bormes les Mimosas. This exotic garden offers viewpoints over the Mediterranean Sea and the surrounding area. In particular, you can see mimosas, palm trees, sugarbushes, bottlebrushes and eucalyptus. It is also a place of learning. From January to May, guided tours are arranged to explore the history of the mimosa and plants, as well as their origins and particularities.

Pépinières Cavatore houses the national collection of mimosas (almost 250 varieties) and a unique arboretum in France with 120 different species. This family run nursery perpetuates local know-how with an environmentally friendly approach. Production, in a greenhouse measuring over 1,000 m², is performed locally, without the use of pesticides. It reflects a commitment to sustainable practices. In addition to their arboretum, the nursery offers a wide selection of mimosa plants, suited to various climates and soil types.

Visitors can also discover the growing and maintenance methods, highlighting the importance of this winter flower to the regional floral heritage. With its variety and responsible production, Pépinières Cavatore is establishing itself as an essential location for celebrating and preserving the beauty of the mimosa.

FESTIVALS AND CORSOS

Mimosalia - the art and passion of plants: 24 & 25 January 2026

Organized every year at the end of January, *Mimosalia* is the event for plant and garden enthusiasts. This unmissable occasion celebrates rare plants, botanical collections and, of course, the mimosa, the season's king. More than just a plant market, *Mimosalia* invites visitors to commit to a sustainable future and puts forward solutions that respect both nature and mankind.

Collector and specialized nurseries offer their most beautiful specimens for sale: Mediterranean shrubs and perennials, cacti and succulents, climbing plants, fruit bushes, bulbs, etc. A chance to discover a remarkable botanical and horticultural diversity.

The event offers an interactive path around 10 themed centres, ranging from agroecology to water management or renewable energy. Events,

demonstrations, participatory workshops and a conference cycle invite the public to discover concrete and accessible solutions for a more sustainable way of life.

In addition to the stands, *Mimosalia* offers conferences and workshops run by experts, allowing you to broaden your knowledge of the mimosa and many other subjects.

Did you know? Bormes les Mimosas now has its own rose, created by Fabien Ducher, the heir to a line of rose growers going back six generations! Its yellow colour pays homage to the town's famous mimosas. One of Fabien's ancestors took 13 years to create the "Soleil d'Or" [Golden Sun], the first yellow rose in 1898!

SHOPPING AND TASTY TREATS

Oeufs mimosa [devilled eggs] with a twist at *Le Mimosa Restaurant* and *Mimosas sur le Toit*. Decorated with 5,000 mimosa branches, *Mimosa sur le Toit* offers a unique atmosphere, where the Mediterranean fusion cuisine sublimates each dish.

Mimosa ice cream, a speciality of Claire and Jean Philipe at *Boudoir*.

Mimosa jelly, perfect for accompanying your breakfasts or desserts at *Le Comptoir Provençal*.

Mimosa syrup, an artisanal confection from *Le Comptoir Provençal* is also available at the *Maison du Bonheur* shop.

A mimosa cocktail at *Le Mimosa Restaurant* and the "Mimorose" at *Le Bellevue*.

Exclusive mimosa liqueur, syrup and beer (from mid-February) at *Comptoir Provençal*, perfect for prolonging the experience at home or as a gift.

SOUVENIRS & PERFUMES

Savonnerie de Bormes: mimosa-scented soaps, room fragrances, body lotions and shower gels.

French hand-crafted mimosa candles from *Douceurs Célestes*, an authentic creation that diffuses the delicate and sunny fragrance of this famous flower to enhance your interiors.

Refined collection of perfumes, soaps, eaux de toilette and plant-based candles, in collaboration with a master perfumer from Grasse, in the *Maison du Bonheur* store. *La Poterie Provençale*, where candles, soaps, room fragrances and eaux de toilette are all available with a mimosa scent, true tributes to this emblematic flower.



RAYOL-CANADEL SUR MER – KILOMETRE 15

Le Rayol-Canadel sur Mer was created in 1925 from the extension of La Mole. This Mediterranean gem bloomed, becoming an autonomous town in 1949. Today, it has three districts: Rayol, Canadel and Pramousquier, which elegantly share four km of coastline, between the hills and blue horizons. Here, the Corniche des Maures plunges into the deep blue of the Mediterranean and offers a unique view of the Iles d'Or.

From January to March, the mimosa illuminates the landscapes and decks the Domaine de Rayol, the Mediterranean Garden in a thousand golden hues. There, plants from all four corners of the world converse in silence, whereas the majestic panorama opens up at the Col du Canadel. The village also invites you to explore: its fine sandy beaches, the cycle path along the route of the old railway, perfect for walking or cycling, the monumental staircase, the Patec pergola, Rayol church and the steles of the African Commandos that highlight a period in history.

SHOPPING AND TASTY TREATS

The Tourist Information Centre shop offers several items, and in particular 3 "Mimosa" products: a perfumed and flowery candle, a scented diffuser and a Mimosa textile fragrance (produced by *Maison Hanoja*)

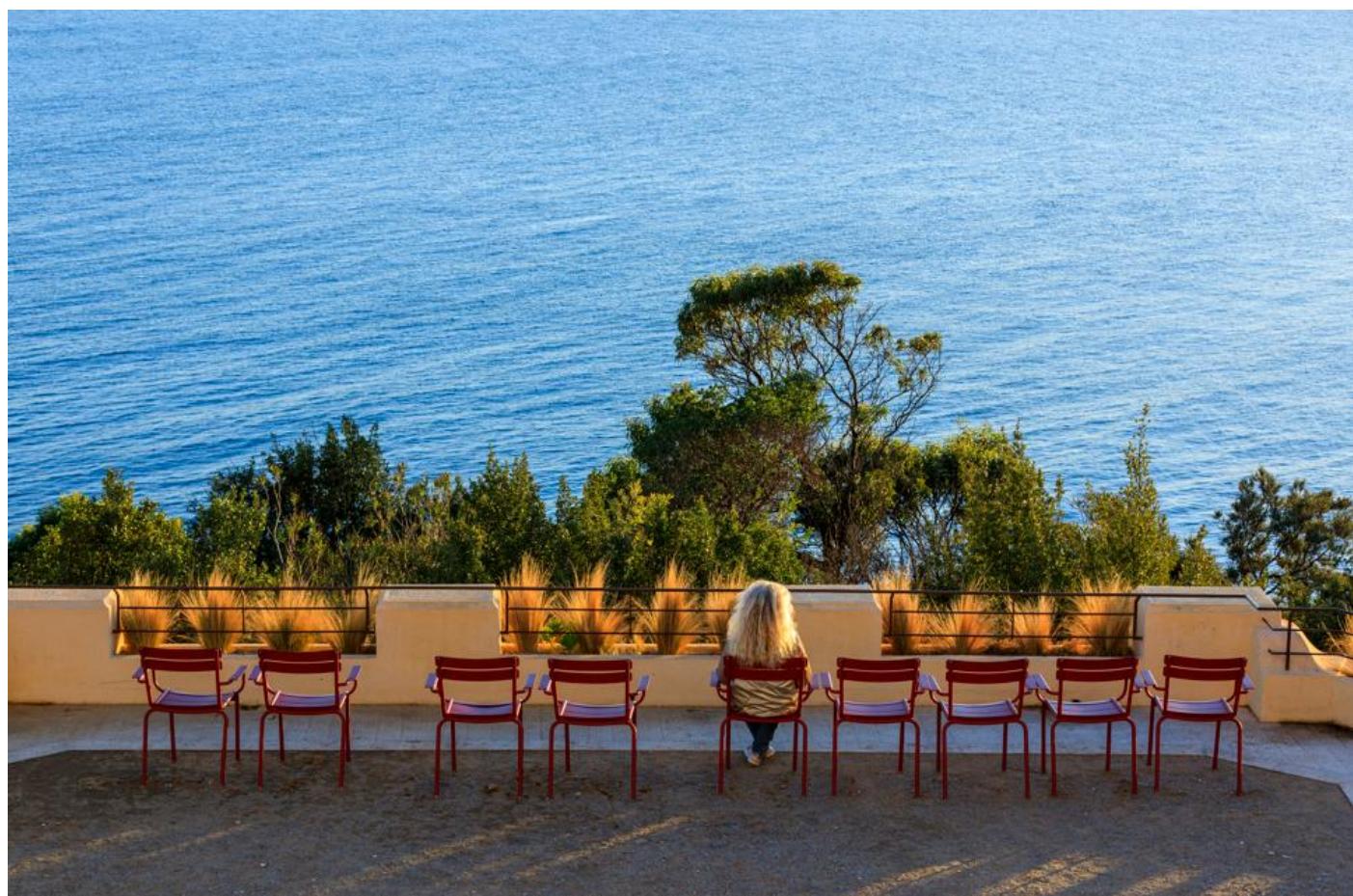
La Librairie des Jardiniers [Gardeners' Bookshop]. The largest "nature" bookshop in France, with free independent access at the entrance to the Domaine du Rayol gardens, offers mimosa-based works, decorative items and souvenirs.

Within the Domaine du Rayol gardens, you can enjoy original and tasty recipes created by the team at the *Café des Jardiniers*. On the menu during the mimosa season: main dishes, desserts, ice creams or home-made drinks with a touch of mimosa - a treat for the eyes and the tastebuds.

GARDEN TO VISIT

Designed by Gilles Clément, the *Jardin des Méditerranées* [Mediterranean garden] is an invitation to travel through the world's landscapes (California, Chile, South Africa, Australia, the Mediterranean basin, the Canary Islands) and landscapes from a more arid or subtropical climate (Mexico, Asia, New Zealand, subtropical America).

Self visit or guided tour every day.



SAINTE MAXIME – KILOMETRE 42

Sainte-Maxime is a family destination. Its 11 km of Mediterranean coastline contributes to making it a haven of tranquillity between land, sea and Provence. The authenticity of Provence can be seen here in its houses with their old-fashioned tiles, its typical market offering regional produce, its lively shopping streets, its architectural heritage and its art of living. Its Mediterranean coastline lends itself to beautiful walks, at the pace of the sea spray and changing seaside light. A stone's thrown from the coast, the Maures mountain range is conducive to a getaway: a mosaic of protected landscapes where cork oaks, stone pines, strawberry trees, mimosas and fragrant rockrose rub shoulders. In this unique environment, the destination offers a wide range of sporting and leisure activities suited to all ages. Sainte-Maxime cultivates the art of entertaining through a rich and varied programme of events throughout the year: festivals, concerts, exhibitions, trade fairs and even sporting events.

FESTIVALS AND CORSOS

Mimosa Corso - Sunday 1 February 2026

Floats decked out in mimosa and fresh flowers, musical groups and all sorts of foot parades added to the battle with confetti and mimosa sprigs guarantee a joyful and festive atmosphere through Sainte-Maxime town centre.

Promenade A. Simon-Lorière – 2:30 p.m. – Stands: €7, free in the arcades

Bookings: www.sainte-maxime.com

UNMISSABLE SITES AND VIEWPOINTS

The panoramic Deffend trail, with its spectacular and panoramic views over the Mediterranean Sea, the Esterel mountain range and the Gulf of Saint-Tropez, promises an unforgettable hike through protected natural landscapes.

A natural peninsula, the Pointe des Sardinaux is a true haven of peace. In the shade of the oaks and pines, strolls along the water's edge invite you to explore the splendours of the Mediterranean flora and fauna in a wild and protected landscape. From stone pines to Mediterranean flora, green crabs to sea anemones, terns to laughing gulls, it is conducive to the art of contemplation!

The historic symbol of Sainte-Maxime, the Square Tower finds its origins at the start of the 16th century. Built on the initiative of the monks from Thoronet, it served as a guard tower, prison, hayloft, courthouse, town hall and school. A listed historic monument since 29 August 1977, it currently houses the *Maison des Traditions*. Within the heart of this living history site that combines heritage, memory and cultural transmission, Sainte-Maxime invites you on a true journey through time by way of its guided tours.

The “Modern Architecture and Heritage” discovery trail through these sites in Sainte-Maxime reveals secrets, stories big and small, and multiple anecdotes. A unique experience for those who are curious and enthusiastic about architecture.

SHOPPING AND TASTY TREATS

The Tourist Information Centre shop offers a wide range of “mimosa” products.

.Succumb to the delicacy of the mimosa: subtle syrup, infused jelly and biscuits offering an original and sunny touch to gourmet breaks.

.Extend the sensory experience: perfumed candles, delicate soaps and room fragrances diffuse the floral mimosa scent to recreate the unique atmosphere of the Côte d’Azur at home.

.Take away a piece of the land thanks to the mimosa plantation gift box.

. “La Muscadine” chocolate shop offers a range of chocolates with delicate notes of flowers and mimosa. 7 rue du Commerce - 83120 Sainte-Maxime - 04 94 96 46 12

PROGRAMME

Immersion in the “Belle Epoque” - Wednesdays 11, 18 & 25 February and 4 March 2026 (9:30 a.m.). From the second half of the 19th century, the mimosa was introduced by the grand winter hosts on the Côte d’Azur, for where it became the symbol. As of the 1920s, a young, joyful and festive middle class chose their winter and summer quarters in Sainte-Maxime. The destination attracted an artistic clientele who built or bought villas. The small agricultural village, then became a highly prized spa resort, cultivating a unique architectural style, neo-regionalism, invented and tested here by young architects that the entire region would soon fight over...



Saint-Raphaël, a listed resort at the edge of the Esterel mountain range, wins you over with its protected coastline and contrasting landscapes. Its 34 km of coast leads from the town centre to the secret coves of Boulouris and up to Agay harbour and the legendary Ile d'Or [Golden Island]. The Corniche d'Or, carved into the red rock, overlooks seabeds of exceptional transparency. However, the Esterel is also admired for the land, with its lush green valleys and volcanic hilltops.

In winter, the mimosa blooms here in a multitude of golden pompoms. Its fragrant flowers colour the valleys and contrast with the mineral sparkle of the rocks. This ephemeral and bright spectacle offers a natural poetic picture for nature and hiking enthusiasts.

FESTIVALS AND CORSOS

Carnival Weekend in Saint-Raphaël

Saturday 7 & Sunday 8 March 2026

Over two days, both young and old are invited to the party.

Saturday: children's carnival and nocturnal parade.

Sunday: grand Carnival parade beside the sea. Majestic floats, sparkling costumes, spectacular performances, and confetti and flower battles carry the public away in a festive, family atmosphere.

EXPLORE

.The Notre-Dame de la Victoire Basilica and the Belle Epoque villas: erected opposite the sea, the basilica guides the visitor to the trail of villas perched on the centre's high ground.

.The old town: the authentic heart of Saint-Raphaël, perfect for setting off on a quest for local produce, visiting the Museum of History and Underwater Archaeology and, of course, climbing the 129 steps of the medieval San Rafeu Tower for a 360° view.

.The Corniche d'Or: famous route along the Mediterranean, where the Esterel plunges majestically into the sea, between red rocks, coves and turquoise waters.

The Ile d'Or: small emblematic island off the coast of Cap Dramont that proudly displays its crenelated red-rock tower.

.Agay Harbour: a natural gem, appreciated for its family beach and its setting between the sea and the red rocks.

.The coastal path and Boulouris coves: a steep and wild path, it houses hidden little corners with clear waters, perfect for hiking, bathing and snorkelling.

.Cap Dramont: a listed natural site with its path leading to the summit and its spectacular view over the Ile d'Or.

.Cap Roux and the Esterel mountain range: a paradise for hikers and mountain bike enthusiasts spanning over 30,000 hectares; its trails reveal forests, volcanic rocks and unforgettable panoramic sea views.

.Louis de Funès Museum: a unique location dedicated to the great French actor, retracing his career through personal items and cult extracts.

MIMOSA 2026.

. Hiking: discover the Esterel mountain range on foot through a mimosa-themed guided tour of the Péguières Lakes. With Rando Paca: on Wednesdays 4, 11, 18 & 25 February 2026 at 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

. Excursion in the Esterel: explore the mountain range and the mimosas with an experienced guide! They will lead you through the most beautiful flowery sites of the Esterel, on foot or in a minivan, to admire the mimosa in these unique volcanic landscapes. The added extra? A mimosa confit tasting during the walk!

With Passion Estérel. From 9 February to 2 March from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. or from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

. Mimosa coach trip: set out to explore the mountain ranges in flower. Set out via the Corniche d'Or towards Mandelieu and the Tanneron mountain range, the largest mimosa woodland area in France.

ADDRESS BOOK.

Le Palet d'Or: after working for over 20 years as a pastry chef with major famous chefs such as Marc Veyrat, Jacques Maximin and Bruno de Lorgues, Didier Carrié took on the challenge of creating his own company, an experience that the talented pastry chef was still to add to his belt. It was love at first sight that led him to purchase a small handcrafting factory in Agay (a few kilometres from Saint-Raphaël), where he produces original creations such as "The Agay Mimosa": a white chocolate truffle rolled in crystallized mimosa powder...

Taste Gourmet, the extremely fine delicatessen. Arnaud Schmidt welcomes his clients in his gastronomy hotspot to have them discover his local recipe, the "Saint-Raphaël Spread" - a hummus base with confit lemon

zest and a hint of mimosa - or even his mimosa pastis, created with the great Maison Ferroni in Aubagne. Most recently: the Mimosa syrup perfect for Provencal Kir made with rosé wine!

The Tourist Information Centre shop in Saint-Raphaël Saint-Raphaël Tourisme offers you a varied and sunny range of "mimosa" products: syrup, mimosa jelly, candles, soaps, gift boxes, perfume diffuser, postcards and magnets.



MANDELIEU-LA NAPOULE - KILOMETRE 108

The seaside town of Mandelieu-La Napoule displays a certain chic and relaxed easy living on the Côte d'Azur France. Discreet, and on a human scale, it is in the heart of an exceptional region between the Mediterranean, the Esterel and the Tanneron Forest, irrigated by multiple canals that criss-cross its districts and bordered by the bucolic banks of the Siagne. Sport takes pride of place here all year round due to its history, since it was the aristocracy that imported the elegant sports at the end of the 19th century. With regard to heritage, the Château de La Napoule, as located on the Mediterranean coast, displays its ochre colours at the foot of the Esterel, not far from one of the oldest golf courses in France, the Old Course Mandelieu created in 1891 at the wish of Grand Duke Michael of Russia. The Riviera Golf de Barbossi, created in 1991, exhibits some twenty contemporary works on its course, thus skilfully combining sport and art. Mandelieu-La Napoule is also the very first nautical destination on the Côte d'Azur. The future is green, as the development projects wish to be environmentally friendly in order to protect a certain art of living all year round: Nature and well-being are Mandelieu-La Napoule's two priorities.

Mandelieu, the mimosa paradise: winter sun on the Côte d'Azur

Mandelieu is also the Mimosa Capital and during its flowering period, which runs from December to the beginning of March on the hills of the Tanneron, the Tourist Information Centre and its partners offer a mimosa-themed programme: events, pop-up installations and creative workshops, walks and trips, tours of forcing houses and the arboretum, sweet treats, perfumes and decorations, etc.

Mandelieu has been celebrating the mimosa since 1931!

For 95 years, Mandelieu has been celebrating the mimosa, notably through the Mimosa Festival that, every February, offers inhabitants and visitors a festive, popular and joyful programme comprising a parade, corso, events, mimosa distributions, a grand banquet, fireworks, concerts, children's carnival, etc. A shared festival over 5 days throughout the town: from Capitou, the historic mimosist district to Place de France, up to the seaside, which, opposite the spectacular Château de La Napoule, hosts the unmissable *corso fleuri* on the Sunday afternoon.

MIMOSA FESTIVAL 2026 > THE CARNIVAL OF CARNIVALS!

In 2026, the Mimosa Festival will take place from 11 to 15 February with the theme: the Carnival of Carnivals. The floats that will meander through the town on the evening of Saturday 14 and the afternoon of Sunday 15 will highlight the festive spirit of the 12 iconic carnivals across the world: Rio (Brazil) and Venice (Italy) of course, but also: Mardi Gras in New Orleans (USA), Goa Carnival (India), Dia de los Muertos (Mexico), Barranquilla in Columbia, Oruro (Bolivia), Cape Town (South Africa), and the Chinese New Year festivities are also evoked. Europe will be represented by the Basle Carnival (Switzerland), without forgetting France: the Dunkirk carnival, highlighting the historic links between the Ch'tis and Mandelieu. Lastly, a nod will be made to 2 Côte d'Azur events (Nice Carnival and the Lemon Festival in Menton).

UNIQUE IN FRANCE: A MIMOSA ARBORETUM

Within the Emmanuelle de Marande Park, in the Mimosists' district, an arboretum extends over nearly 10,000 m². More than one hundred mimosa varieties have been planted along a promenade in the park, dotted with signs detailing the main characteristics of each species. It also houses an open-air exhibition called the MIMOSA SAGA, which traces the history and development of mimosa growing, from its cultivation to the forcing and conditioning techniques.

EXPLORATION, WALKS, SHOPPING AND SWEET TREATS.

. Guided tour of the forcing house with tasting of mimosa-based products and a mimosa bouquet offered

. Discover a farm: ride up to the estate in a 4x4, breakfast, guided tour of the mimosa farm and the forcing house, bouquet offered

. Hike in Mimosa Country with Philippe Dejoux; . Mimosa and Perfume Excursion (with a stop at the Reynaud Forcing House + a stop at the Fragonard Flower Factory)

Mimosa diffuser creation workshop with Maison Hanoja at Pépinière Rubino

Guided tours of the Mimosa arboretum, etc (Programme still to be defined)

FIRM FAVOURITES:

nunshen, the elevated tea brand - TEA No. 11 – ROUTE D'OR is a green tea with mimosa flowers, born of a meeting between the Chef Christian Sinicropi, holder of two stars in the Michelin Guide for 17 years, and Carine Baudry, the Sourcing and Creation Director at Haute Manufacture de Thés nunshen.

“Douceur de Mimosa” PERFUME is a feminine fragrance, the composition of which results from the elegant blend of ingredients: a few green notes and cardamom are married with the gourmet and woody scents of the tonka bean and amber. The more tender and sweet aromas of white musk, enlivened with a hint of spicy sandalwood, harmonize with the more feminine and oriental notes of jasmine and powdered heliotrope with a brand-new Mimosa harmony. Signature eau de parfum: “Mandelieu, Douceur de mimosa” perfume - a fragrance by Galimard 1747

SWEET TREATS. Our artisan caterers and ice cream manufacturers offer mimosa-based dishes.

Chef Nicolas Decherchi will therefore offer a Mimosa Tart at the *LE REPERE* restaurant in La Rague Port; *LOUISE*, established on Avenue Henry Clews - opposite Port La Napoule - offers a mimosa trio all year round (Ice cream - Macaron - Miniature Yule Log).

TABLE ARTS. A collection of plates, dishes and bowls by Catherine Sinicropi, ceramic artist.



TANNERON - KILOMETRE 112.

This is the easternmost town in the Pays de Fayence and in the Var department itself. Its mountain range has the most mimosa flowers, with its true "yellow forests". It is the largest mimosa woodland in France, whether cultivated or wild! Nestled into hills planted with mimosa, eucalyptus, strawberry bushes, flower crops, heathers, olive trees, pines, sweet chestnuts and cork oaks, the town of Tanneron comprises 22 hamlets spread across its territory.

Mimosa cultivation, over the entire Tanneron area, is now the most beautiful jewel of this endearing town. These fragrance-filled little downy balls of a sparkling yellow are beautiful to see in their natural environment.

FESTIVALS AND CORSOS

MIMOSA FESTIVAL - Sunday 25 January 2026
A Provencal and craft market, various different events, Provencal folk dance demonstrations, a *corso fleuri* and wide distribution of mimosa.

THE ESSENTIALS

L'Oustaou dòu païs, the mimosa and agriculture house
> Located in the heart of the village, mimosa-related tools and knowledge are put under the spotlight, telling the tale of an active agricultural past in the town. Workshops are organized on some Fridays.

Site of Saint-Cassien-des-Bois > A chapel, a 12th century rectangular tower and a flour mill under restoration, beside the Siagne river.



La Maison du lac of Saint-Cassien and the Pays de Fayence > Located in the town of Tanneron, it is home to a store selling local products and an exploration area with the theme "along the waterside", and thus also presenting the mimosa cultivation.

MIMOSA 2026.

>The Friday workshops at *l'Oustaou*:
Friday 20 and 27 February: €10 per person, free for under 18s. On booking.

>Guided walks with a naturalist guide in the heart of the mimosas

Saturday 24 January / Saturday 14, 21 & 28 February
Sunday 8, 15 and 22 February and Sunday 1 March

>Meet the producers: Augier forcing house in the Valcros District. Open to the public for sales and exhibitions of mimosa bouquets, no site visits.

ADDRESS BOOK.

.Oustaou dòu païs: boutique selling local products from the Tanneron region and mimosa derivatives, such as mimosa syrup from Tanneron, soaps and candles manufacture by local craftspeople.

.Les Petites Choses boutique: honey, mimosa marshmallow, and local products.

.Les P'tits pains d'autrefois bakery: mimosette, capilotade (olives and mimosa), and mimosa jelly

.Chez JB: local products, olive oils, mimosa jams and jellies.

PEGOMAS – KILOMETRE 115

In Pégomas, the mimosa enchants our sense of sight and smell, and homage is paid to it. Grown on the Tanneron hills, it is taken care of, time is devoted to it; in short, it is honoured. The Mimosa Garden houses 11 varieties.

The last weekend in January worthily celebrates the first sprigs. Pégomas has the pleasant and colourful image of a vacation spot. You need to stop here to discover its true, beautiful and multi-faceted nature.

PROGRAMME

Saturday 31 January: Mimosa evening in Pégomas.



GRASSE - KILOMETRE 130

Between the Alps and the Mediterranean, the Pays de Grasse opens itself up as a land of poetry and light. Its villages, akin to secret backdrops, exude the gentleness of past times: old stones bathed in sunlight, silent chapels, mills and perfumed gardens. Grasse, the capital of perfume, history and memory, puts its soul into its museums, the grace of its cathedral, the majesty of its episcopal palace and the discreet elegance of its private mansions. In the heart of its picturesque narrow streets and its little squares decorated with fountains, those walking discover a mysterious and enveloping city. Each step resonates like a declaration of love for beauty and well-being.

THE ESSENTIALS

VILLE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE [Art and History Town] > Let Grasse tell you the tale, in the company of a tour guide. Guided tours all year round to discover the heritage.

INTERNATIONAL PERFUME MUSEUM > A place of living history, this museum tackles the history of perfume in all its different aspects: raw materials, manufacture, industry, innovation, trade, design, marketing and use.

DISCOVER THE 3 PERFUME COMPANIES OF GRASSE: Fragonard, Molinard and Galimard.

Guided tours, workshops and shopping, and the CIRIER [chandler] in AURIBEAU-SUR-SIAGNE.

SWEET TREATS

MAISON DUPLANTEUR CHOCOLATE MAKERS

From the cacao tree plantation to tasting, Maison Duplanteur controls all the production stages. This internationally renowned company places great importance on the origin and quality of its products. In the shop, you can discover unprecedented chocolates, bars, barks and the evocative use of flowers in its chocolate compositions, in which the mimosa blossoms every year.

CONFISERIE FLORIAN IN GRASSE

Founded in 1949, Confiserie Florian in Gorges du Loup is nestled between the impetuous torrent of the Loup Gorge and the hilltops of the Grasse hinterland. With furnishings dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, it elegantly combines tradition and sweet treats.

WORKSHOPS, WALKS AND OBSERVATIONS

From January to March, the Pays de Grasse plays host to the famous Route d'Or and offers pretty walks along the Siagne from Auribeau-sur-Siagne to Pégomas.

THE PERFUMED PATHS: new for 2025

Take the "Perfumed paths" to open yourself to unique experiences: plunge into the soul of the Pays de Grasse, where harvesting, distilling and transforming perfume plants leads to the refined art of olfactory composition; awaken the senses in the heart of the mimosas

www.paysdegrassetourisme.fr/imaginons-votre-sejour/chemins-parfumes-unesco/





**LA ROUTE DU MIMOSA
GALERIE DE PORTRAITS
LES MIMOSISTES**

Julien Cavatore, the largest French mimosa collection

“The mimosa is neither just the small yellow balls in February, nor solely the Mirandole and Gaulois often cultivated for cut flowers...” Julien Cavatore is an operator in the Mimosa chain, and to be precise, in Bormes-les-Mimosas, the emblematic gateway to the Mimosa Route where, since 2012, the quadragenarian has been heading up a nursery specializing in growing and selling this tree. However, it is not just any other garden centre. The famous establishment is a true open-air natural museum. The guardian of the botanical temple to this tree belonging to the “acacia” genus, it actually holds the only national collection protected by the CCVS ([French] *Conservatory of specialized plant collections*). This includes no less than 250 species and varieties, often from Australia. Quite a performance when we know that approximately 1300 are known in the world... Julien Cavatore gives you the opportunity to come and discover this plant of copious subtleties with your own eyes, having developed the tour of a spectacular arboretum (in French, English or Spanish). Here, up to 120 different species and varieties rub shoulders in the open land. Between two plants and explanatory panels, amblers, enthusiasts of beautiful plants and collectors will walk, perhaps unsuspectingly, on the land of a company created in 1981 by his father. Yet again, is a wonderful family story of shared passion. *“My father learnt how to graft from my granduncle. He started by grafting around fifty a year, then it took off,”* explained Julien Cavatore, *“to specialize in the mimosa at the end of the 1980s. We sold up to 25,000 of them per year to professionals across France before the competition, especially from Italy, caused production to drop in the 2000s.”* Despite that, business has not come to a halt. The new generation has continued along the path and has left its own footprint there. The “collection” mimosas are produced from grafts, seeds and layers. Most of the production, performed in the nursery, is certified “Plante Bleue” [Blue Plant] and “Fleurs de France” (Flowers of France). A member of the Australian Native Plants Society, the establishment, which boasts a greenhouse measuring 1,000 m², currently sells 75% of its plants to private individuals and 25% to professionals. Its teams regularly travel to specialized trade fairs and plant festivals. This nursery is the uncontested French reference in the production and sale of mimosas.

BORMES-LES MIMOSAS

Lisa Vescovi, a new generation in the fields.

The mimosa is athletic. That couldn't work out better - Lisa Vescovi is a master of both. Aged under thirty, she is a symbol of a new generation of mimosists who are establishing themselves in a profession that many believed was doomed to disappear. *"I studied for five years to become a PE teacher, and then I had Covid and did some soul-searching,"* she confides. *"I didn't want the production to be lost; my cousins didn't intend to take over the reins. Someone had to carry on. Plus, it's something I've always liked".*

The young woman therefore changed track to follow in the family footsteps that began in the 1920s. At that time, her great-grandparents, Jacques and Eléonore Vescovi came to the Tanneron mountains. They quickly purchased land and started plant production, which was beginning to shoot up in the region. Two of their three children, Fernand and Jean, succeeded them. Then Jean's children took up the baton in turn: Patricia, who is still working, Patrick and Daniel (Lisa's father). Each generation has passed on to the next their know-how and the tricks of the trade, as well as the old forcing house that is still in great shape. While the correct transfer of skills over time is one thing, operating, marketing and managing a farm and surviving in a treacherous branch thereof is another. Lisa Vescovi decided to go back to college in order to earn a *Brevet professionnel de responsable d'entreprise agricole* (BPREA = French professional diploma in farm management), which she did by way of an apprenticeship under her father. Since November 2023, she has been responsible for four hectares on which eucalyptus is also grown. Unlike many of her colleagues, the farmer plans to give preference to the mimosa, *"although it's harder to work,"* she says, *"it will be more profitable as less people are doing it."*

To succeed in her "gamble", she isn't hesitant in overturning the classic economic model by, in her own way, moving away from only selling to wholesalers *"who too often pull the prices and quality down".* *"While I was taking lessons at the ADFPA [agricultural college] in Gap, I made my journeys worthwhile by selling bouquets directly to florists. Word of mouth has worked. In the end, I have slowly focused myself on direct sales to these businesses. They currently represent 80% of my activity",* she explains. Her unabashed choice, however, requires major efforts in terms of marketing and an active approach to stores. Work and time for a good cause. Lisa Vescovi believes this flower has a future that is just as radiant as its

THE TANNERON MOUNTAIN RANGE

bright yellow glomeruli: "There really is something that can be done with mimosa, and people love it!"

Benoit Augier, the strength of a family heritage

The terrible freeze of 1985 that ravaged the Tanneron's mimosas? Benoit Augier remembers it as if it were yesterday.

"I was six years old. I heard my father tell my mother that we'd lost everything," he relates. Four decades later, his eyes mist over when remembering this family scene. It's a reminder that the job of a mimosist hangs by a thread, subject to nature's whims. Proof too that the story can be a good one, despite the difficulties. *"They didn't throw in the towel,"* he remembers. *"They grew strawberries, which Mum would go and sell at the entrances to the Grasse factories, crazy business. And then things took off again..."*

While the fourth generation of the Augier family currently continues the mimosa tradition in the Var, it was their great-grandfather, Augustin Augier, who started everything in the 1920s after being demobbed from the First World War due to a mutilated hand. *"He was born on 8/8/1888, and the first three letters of his first name are the same as the first three of his surname. He was born under a lucky star; everything he did worked"*, says his great-grandson, who established his own farm in 2000, following on from his grandfather Gaston and father Rémy, which whom he founded a joint venture in 2007.

The Augier saga is a story of shared passion. And of innovation. Augustin Augier, along with the son of the postman from the neighbouring town of Auribeau-sur-Siagne, who was a chemical engineer, actually invented the industry's the first modern forcing house in 1926, powered by coal (instead of wood). It was replaced by a new oil model in 1962.

In the beginning, the mimosa was sent to the Halles in Paris for making bouquets and for use in the perfume industry. With the rise of aviation, the plant was exported to Norway, Sweden and England. The operation expanded from generation to generation: the cultivation of eucalyptus began in the 1960s thanks to his grandfather, Gaston, then a conditioning line was purchased in 2012 by Benoît Augier, to the great astonishment of his father.

Today, the family operates 23 hectares with a dozen seasonal workers. The annual production of 20 tonnes is destined for bouquets. The flowers are sorted on site, bagged for the wholesalers, and then delivered to the flower markets in Hyères and in the Netherlands. Meanwhile, the fifth generation, with Nicolas, Benoit

Augier's son (who has been honoured by the Médaille Agricole [Order of Agricultural Merit], like his father and great-grandfather), is getting ready...

Cécile and Fabien Reynaud, natural lush mimosa

Leafing through the family photo albums in Pégomas, Cécile Reynaud dives into the memories. And stops, smiling broadly, at a picture of a flower-decked float: sculptures of the Olympic rings and the Grenoble Olympic Games vase of 1968 teeming with yellow pompoms. This was for the Mimosa festival in Mandelieu. It wasn't that long ago when all's said and done. Almost six decades later, the flower that some have nicknamed the "winter sun" remains the core of Reynaud's trade, the third generation of mimosists since the latter half of the 1920s. Back then, Léontine Reynaud, the grandmother, started production by relying on land purchased by her father. The goods were sold first and foremost for decorations, locally, as well as in the Halles in Paris and at the "Old London Market" (modern day Covent Garden). Demand took off after the Second World War. Foreign lands even started to have their eyes on this bright plant. A new cycle began. Jean-Paul and Renée Reynaud, the parents of Cécile and her brother Fabien, took over the business at the start of the 1970s. Internationalization was growing, with imports from the Netherlands. *"At that time, the demand for eucalyptus appeared, importers needed additions for their bouquets. That's how it all started, this plant is part of the mimosa economy, and is not just harvested in the winter"*, states Cécile Reynaud, who launched into this full time in 2005 after *"losing herself in commerce"*. After his horticultural studies, her younger brother Fabien also created his own farm. With their parents still working, they own 25 hectares, of which 16 are planted half by eucalyptus and half by mimosa, mainly destined for the French market. Fabien Reynaud is now the representative of the Mimosa Grower's union in the Alpes-Maritimes (at the side of Michel Lovera for the Var).

The Reynauds have a rare trademark in the profession: they do not condition the flowers in weight and standardized bouquets like many other mimosists. They offer a raw product, without plastic packaging. The mimosa goes directly from the field (where it is gathered in bunches) to large buckets, and then via the forcing house, or not), before being shipped, mostly to Rungis. *"It is no longer handled a dozen times like before; we've gotten rid of all that. Our clients have a raw material, less standardized, that they can work in*

they own way”. After a little loss of interest in the 1990s due to competition from flowers coming in from everywhere, all the time, the Côte d’Azur industry has regained its footing according to the grower. “*It’s the seasonal plant par excellence. Consumers have become aware, especially since Covid, with a true appetite for local flowers that don’t disappoint.*”

Stéphane Reynaud, a floral dive into forcing

The job of a mimosist loves the difference and is never reluctant to attract profiles that are as surprising as they are brave. That’s the strength of this industry. It probably explains in part why, come what may, it survives the crises and difficulties that time continues to throw at it. In Pégomas, Stéphane Reynaud is an illustration of this. This trained virologist didn’t plan to find himself heading up the family business created by his great-grandfather Alexandre Rey in the 1920s, followed by his grandfather Raoul Reynaud, and subsequently taken over by his father Francis Reynaud. Except that... Theory didn’t resist the reality of a passion that may well be part of the family’s DNA. “*I should be working at the Pasteur Institute in Lyon. They’re still waiting for me. While I was obtaining my diploma as a sampler, I spent a season on the farm in 1999 with my father. I liked it, and I stayed there to help him and, in 2007, I took over the reins of the company*”, he points out.

He currently cultivates 10 hectares of mimosa that is distributed across the globe through flower wholesalers. It is hard and “tiring” work, he concedes, in which things run on elbow grease and sweat. “*In order to have a top-quality end product, we condition everything by hand*,” he explains. “*You need a lot of sorting for the mimosa to be offered: when you cut the branches, when you collect it, when you separate the bundles in the room, when you size it to 60-70 cm, when you weigh it, when you put it in plastic bags, when you get these out the following morning to ship to the wholesalers...*” The result of this XXL sorting? According to him, you need to collect at least 60 tonnes in order to produce between 30 and 40 tonnes. “*It’s an extremely fragile plant. If you miss a stage, it doesn’t work. You need to be born into it, otherwise it’s really complicated. I’ve been doing this job for 25 years and I’m still learning...*”.

Learning, sure. But also being discovered. His company has chosen to open itself up to the outside world. On the Mimosa Route, it is in fact one of the rare operations that is also structured to organize real tours, sometimes up to five or six buses per day at the

height of the season. Consequently, tourists can, over the course of twenty-five minutes, discover one of the biggest old-fashioned forcing houses in the department, “*seeing us really work*”. A floral immersion into the mimosa matrix. Everyone leaves with a bouquet and can find multiple derived products on site, such as honey, confits, mustard or perfumes. Stephane Reynaud believes that this diversification activity based on tours managed by his sister Dorothée Reynaud is “*something that is starting to grow; people are going to come here more and more*”, certain that a good touch of tourism in the mimosa world is a future tool.

Jean-Baptiste Ristorto Trabaud, tourists in the fields

Strolling there is a worthwhile endeavour. After two kilometres of a difficult track and wild corners through the splendid forest on the Tanneron mountain range, welcome to the land of Jean-Baptiste Ristorto Trabaud. Let your gaze wander towards the horizon and the Alpine foothills of the Côte d’Azur. Now you are finally ready to discover the estate of the young 24-year-old who cultivates approximately 5 hectares of mimosa with his partner Alice Sortet.

This farmer recently joined the ranks of the new generation determined to have the mimosist’s trade continue (and to change it up in their own way). He has an unusual profile. He finished his master’s degree at the Skema international business school and then, in 2021, started full time in the profession, on his grandparents’ land.

“*I started just like that, without a plan, in order to earn a little money. I came every weekend, during the holidays, sometimes in the morning before going to school. I said to myself, why not take over their business, but I preferred to have something to fall back on*”, Jean-Baptiste Ristorto Trabaud confides.

Clearly, nothing is left to chance. This land, with characteristics that are so favourable to growing the yellow pompoms and eucalyptus, were acquired by his grandmother Lucienne Trabaud and her husband in 1990. After planting new trees, the couple was rapidly able to sell its production in a cooperative, destined for the Netherlands. The start of a wonderful story that skipped a generation while waiting for the young blood to pick up the secateurs and reopen the farm.

With a view to his studies and his young age, Jean-Baptiste Ristorto Trabaud logically started a modernization operation. “*We started with the local wholesalers, then the florists directly, and the*

Netherlands, by delivering in refrigerated lorries,” he explains. “A little of the wild mimosa also goes to the perfume industry.”

The young man has one driving belief: opening to the general public. He organizes tours on site, relying, in particular on a 4x4 association to accompany the public up to the farm. “It’s an addition,” he says. “We welcome people with a breakfast, tell them our family’s story. They see our work, the forcing house, the fields, over the course of an hour and a half. They can take part; we give them bouquets.” The touristic focus of this SME is just in its infancy. “We want to build on this; it’s a dream. I love talking about the trade, even though I haven’t been doing it for long.” One way, he asserts, “to change things up” and for the visitors, who sometimes come from far afield, to calmly lead to greener pastures.

Alix Abello, mimosa 2.0

It’s just a step from bikini collections in Brazil and catering in Mandelieu to.... fields in Pégomas. Or almost. Alix Abello “saw a bit of action” before taking over the farm created by his grandfather (who worked there into his 90s) and granduncle. The return to his promise land was doubtless part of the natural order of things. “I grew up there; I was always following my grandfather around. There is a sort of continuity, a dynamic of taking up the torch that skipped a generation”, the quadragenarian confides. This former pupil at the horticultural college in Antibes has therefore continued the work built by hand by his ancestors.

“The story goes that ten of them set off from the bottom of the hill to tear down the oaks and pines using the plough. They slept for three to four hours per day. It took them a year to set it up, plant, etc.” he relates. Today, the farmer has about ten hectares, one third of which is mimosa, giving an annual harvest of 30 tonnes, picked with the help of around ten people during the season. A large part is sent to the perfume industry, in compliance with very strict specifications. The rest is exported to the Netherlands for bouquets.

However, Alix Abello is exploring other paths that aim to modernize the offer based on this plant, which he considers “to be the number 1 ecological plant, without parasites, no need for pesticides and no watering.” In partnership with the great chef Christian Sincropi, formerly with two stars at the Hotel Martinez in Cannes, he is working to design a brand new “mimosa vintage” tea. “We separate it *glomerulus* by *glomerulus*. Then we dry it and lightly refine it,” he

specifies, “before creating a combination with shaded teas. When you drink this tea, you move through the smell of the leaves and roots of the earth of this very individual mountain range.”

One way of many to give the industry an additional boost. An upmarket move too “with this flower that is very complicated to work with.” While the producer acknowledges “being further and further away from what his grandfather did,” he believes the very essence of his roots remains: “to me, the mimosa is not just a flower, it’s a living heritage, present in the memory and heart of our elders. Yesterday, it was admired for its beauty and fragrance, tomorrow, I’m convinced it will continue to surprise through new creations, especially with perfumes or cuisine”. Indeed, times change. The “mimosa 2.0” era has begun.

Thomas Trintignac, the former sports coach following in the footsteps of his grandfather

The call to the open air won out. Drawn by agriculture, he wanted to work the land. To be in the countryside and amidst the trees. This has been a fact since 2022. Thomas Trintignac is a young, “self-taught” mimosist and is proud to be so. However, he hasn’t really walked the path. “I have a master’s in physical preparation,” he explains. “Little by little, I left coaching and started in agriculture, never to leave it again...” Today, the 30-something and his wife Clara Dufau work approximately six hectares on the Pégomas lands, in the Alpes-Maritimes, and more recently in Tanneron in the Var. Between the two of them, they harvest approximately four tonnes a year.

The mimosist started to write his future in the yellow pompoms with the plots belonging to his grandfather Julien Abello, who “purchased his first farm in the 1950s, where he worked with the mimosa, and was also one of the first to plant eucalyptus.” Thomas Trintignac learnt the job as he went along. First by watching. Then by listening. Before experimenting. “With regards to the irrigation system, I’d seen it all by frequently visiting the farm when I was a teenager,” he confides. “As for pruning, it was my grandfather who showed me when I took over the land. He was 95. My mother also helped me.”

The couple’s production mainly departs for wholesalers, for use in decoration. However, direct sales to private individuals are growing steadily, thanks to the support of social media. Even if this plant can sometimes play up when the climate meddles with things (pushing the couple to diversify with a project to grow herbs), there is no question of chucking out the

mimosa, he assures: "I started in agriculture due to a love for it, it's my family's history, I'm sticking to it and I want to develop it."

He even has an action plan for the future. Up to now, he has practically only grown the mirandole, with its early flowering. He will shortly also have the gaulois astier. "The trees are 60-70 years old. They were planted by my grandfather because, at the time, a huge amount were sold at Christmas before red and white became fashionable for this holiday. The idea is to change our ideas with later varieties", argues Thomas Trintignac. More than ever, he is convinced that the mimosa represents "a plant of the future, a winter flower, beloved, leading to greater tourism in the region."

Florian Picheny, the child of a mimosa nurseryman

"My childhood was the hill, the mimosa, clearing the land, etc.". In January 2024, at the age of almost 40, Florian Picheny decided to restart the operation begun by his maternal grandfather, Jean Lanza. "He died when I was nine. One day my grandmother told me, 'it's a shame, you were little when he died, otherwise you would have continued together.' This sentence stayed with me," he explains. However, Florian Picheny took another path, spending fifteen years in construction, far from the fields. Yet, after his divorce, he shook things up and "decided to have a second lease of life and do what (I) wanted to do." He then got down to clearing the land of about 1.5 hectares in Mandelieu, on the Tanneron mountain range. And is counting on making a name for himself in the industry by becoming a mimosa nurseryman. "My grandfather cultivated the ever-blooming varieties, and he grafted gaulois and sainte-hélène. He sold them. I want to do like he did as I don't have enough volume at this time to make a living from the flowers." The project in its infancy. He is therefore preparing his ever-blooming mimosa (retinodes) seeds that will then be grafted onto a parent rootstock. The goal is to produce plants of multiple varieties such as the gaulois, sainte-hélène and covenyi for private individuals, and maybe for professionals. The business plan "for this risky gamble", he admits, will grow to the rhythm of his successes and with what nature wishes to grant him. In the meantime, he is relying on an ancestral, and who knows, possibly innate craft, training himself on the job, as is often the case in this profession: "I taught myself to graft, using my grandfather's knife. The

results aren't pretty yet, but they work and will get prettier!".

Patrice Pelazza, the tradition of mimosa from Mandelieu

In the heart of the town of Mandelieu, his workshop with a vintage feel, where the agonies of time have wrought no change, is worth the journey alone to him. A little higher up on the Tanneron mountain range, on the Alpes-Maritimes side, Patrice Pelazza grows mimosa in the long tradition of a trade very often passed down through the family. The farmer thus follows in the footsteps of his great-grandparents, who came from Piedmont in Italy. They began the adventure at the start of the 20th century with the moutteana, which can flower in December, before all the other varieties. "Madeleine, my great-grandmother was a visionary. She bought the land, and her husband, Antoine, my great-grandfather, started cultivating it. Without them, we wouldn't have all this," he confides. "Madeleine was the chief. She created the Pelazza family," grins Guy, Patrice Pelazza's father. The business grew over the years. After the Second World War, his grandfather Antoine, used to working in the fields ever since he was boy, took over the reins and saw English clients fall in love with the mimosa. It's a force of nature. The conditioning for the flowers has changed with the times. Its moved from wicker baskets (made in Mandelieu) to cardboard boxes, to now end up with plastic buckets and bags containing bouquets weighing 200 grammes. Mechanisation has arrived. Guy installed a cold room in the business in 1970. His son, Patrice Pelazza joined the operation in 1994, after his military service and training as an electrician "as a back-up plan". Three generations are currently working there together. The goods - mirandole and gaulois planted since the frost of 1956 - departs to two wholesalers in France and Italy. The future? It's certain it will change again, but always with yellow flowers, in addition to eucalyptus: "the idea is to expand the industry as many of the old mimosists have given up and I like working with this plant." A comfortable return to the estate's origins, when the mimosa wrote the story of the Côte d'Azur.

Michel Lovera, a spokesperson for the profession

He's imposing. Stoutly built with a voice that carries... Michel Lovera is an unmissable figure among the mountain range's mimosists and eucalyptus producers, as the chair of the Tanneron farmers union (which boasts some fifty or so members). A historic structure

that fell out of use before being relaunched in 2016. Also elected to the Var Chamber of Agriculture, he strives to change the game in a profession that has seen its glory days, but still too often remains neglected by institutions. *"I go to bat to have this forgotten business recognized by the agricultural world,"* he explains. *"Since we restarted the union, it's gotten better."* The fight is for very real things: *"we don't have any Insee or APE codes. I'm in the process of trying to remedy that. There is aid, grants that are not allocated to us as we aren't referenced!"*

Like his colleagues, Michel Lovera is part of a long tradition. Everything started by a meeting in 1996 with the woman who would become his wife. He was the son of a market gardener, she the daughter of a mimosist. *"In the 1990s, market gardening had fallen flat with the arrival of Spanish and Italian goods, etc. We were longer managing to sell our goods, yet we had ten hectares of open fields and two hectares of greenhouses. I told my father: I'm quitting!"*

His father-in-law was looking for someone to do the harvest. So, he offered to join them. *"That's how I got started in mimosas. He retired, we took over the farm in 1999 and we have grown, going from seven/eight hectares to 15."* In the beginning, his in-laws sold the yellow flower here, there and everywhere by wagon, departing from the freight station in Cannes La Bocca. In the summer, they also produced fruit and had a campsite on one of their fields. *"There, one day, they met the manager of a Dutch bank who knew the manager of a flower market in the Netherlands. He put them in contact. They were then able to send the mimosa over there..."*. Since this time, the Loveras are still expanding their production on the Dutch market, *"by auction, without an intermediary"*. They stopped growing mimosa years ago, but produce eucalyptus, in branches calibrated to 40 or 60 centimetres. This much demanded foliage is sent to two other clients: a specialized wholesaler, and another who creates bouquets sold in supermarkets. The Tanneron is everywhere.





LA ROUTE DU MIMOSA PRATIQUE

MANDELIEU-La NAPOULE
Km 10



Photo credits: Camille Moirenc

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