



Belle-Ile en-mer

*The biggest island of
Brittany*

BRETAGNE[®]

Tourist information centre of Belle-Ile-en-mer

Quai Bonnelle 56360 LE PALAIS

 +33 (0)2 97 31 81 93

 <https://www.belleileenmer.co.uk/>



Table of contents

<i>Key figures</i>	1
<i>A life apart</i>	2
<i>A protected ecosystem</i>	3&4
<i>History & heritage sites</i>	5
<i>Sarah Bernhardt</i>	6
<i>Gastronomy</i>	7&8
<i>Sea spray recipes</i>	9
<i>Ponant islands</i>	10
<i>Activities & relaxation</i>	11
<i>Land of creation</i>	12
<i>Access & contacts</i>	13



Key figures

Surface area: 85.6 Km²; 20 Km long x 9 Km of width.

Average altitude : 40 m ; highest point:71 m.

Distance from the continent : Le Palais/Quiberon : 15 Km (8 miles).

Population : 5 563 islanders, 5 100 secondary residents

120 villages, 4 municipalities, 1 community of municipalities... and 140 associations.

Natural sites: 350 hectares held by the Conservatoire du Littoral ; 350 hectares owned by the Conseil Général du Morbihan ; 17 312 hectares (24% on the land) of Natura 2000 sites

Local life : 5 schools, 2 middle schools, one hospital and one EHPAD (retirement home), firemen, SNSM, post office, multimedia library, police station, aerodrome,...



Activities-Events

- 4 big natural sites
- 2 ports (Le Palais and Sauzon, **625** spots)
- **58** beaches(**7km** of beaches of which 2 beaches that are monitored during summer ; Donnant and Herlin)
- **85.3 km** of coastal paths (following the GR 34 ; 4 days by foot, cliffs up to 50 meters high, total difference in height of 2000 meters)
- **12** nautical activities establishments- sport areas: sportifs : golf, tennis, tree climbing,...
- **10** big events: music, performing arts, trail race,...
- **1** auditorium open all year round (Salle Arletty, 322 places), **1** cinema
- **3** museums
- **1** thalassotherapy establishment and **11** well-being providers



Mobility

- **400 000** visitors through maritime crossings
- Maritime links: Le Palais/Quiberon : all year round, 5 rotations, up to 16 during the peak period. From Vannes, Port Navalo, La Turballe, Le Croisic,
- Car disembarkation : **30 000/year**
 - 4 car rental companies for **450** cars in the car park
 - **9** bike rental companies (of which **4** offering motorcycles)
 - **1** aerodrome with **2 800** passengers per year
 - **1** autocariste (**120 000** passengers on the Belle-Ile Bus network on the 5 lines, running from april through october)
 - **130 km** of cycle routes (**1 000** traditional bikes or electric bikes for rent)



Attendance

- **418 515** visitors in 2018
- **40%** out of the entire annual frequentation (including secondary residents, visitors on a trip, and day visitors)
- **1.5 million** of commercial and non commercial overnight tourist stays



Tourist accommodation capacity

- **28 474** tourist beds (of which 33% commercial beds)
- **13** hotels, **10** campsites, **6** collective accomodation, **1** holiday village, approximately **38** guest rooms, **486** furnished accomodations, 4 european ecolabel hotel establishments



Catering and shops

- **49** restaurants
- **12** restaurants recommended by the Michelin guide
- **89** shops **2** supermarkets, open all year round
- **4 markets** et **1** shop for local producers
- **35** farms and **12** professional fishermen

*source: according to the key figures of the Communauté de Communes de Belle-Ile-en-mer (community of municipalities)

Did you know ?

More than 65% of the hotels and campsites are 3 or 4 stars rated resorts

Belle-île-en-mer

A life apart



Separated from the shore and, as the local inhabitants the "bellilois" would say, "from france" by approximately 8 miles, wide of 9 kilometers and extending on 20 kilometers, the biggest Brittany island deserves its renown. Its 5500 year-round inhabitants, spread all over the 4 municipalities, are aware of their privilege.

Fallen for the charms of the atypical and wild landscapes, tourists not only rush to walk along the white sand beaches but all year long to appreciate and observe the change of seasons. The sights are never quite the same and there's always something to discover, leading you every time to go home with starry eyes.

Belle-Ile, become an islander for the span of a moment

From the Quiberon's coast, on a clear day, you can guess the island's outlines and the smooth shadow of its coasts, faraway and mysterious, drawing out one's explorer soul. Getting on that boat towards unknown lands, it's also leaving all the everyday stress on the dock and arriving in the haven of peace that Belle-Ile is.



It's not sufficient to see Belle-Ile, you have to live it. Being an islander, if only for a short stay, it's accepting to cut yourself off from the rest of the world and try to put yourself in the shoes of the inhabitant. Knowing that Belle-Ile is not only a tourism island living from its beaches but also a rural island where agriculture has always been present. This particularity brings the inhabitants of the municipalities and 120 villages closer and make them united, as proof of that peculiar relationship we can talk about the 140 associations all across the island.



The freedom to lose your bearings

The new visitor could find himself lost facing the lack of a thorough signage, as it would not fit in the island's authentic landscape, and its natural beauty is preserved by this choice. But there's no reason to be scared, as it's an occasion to meet people, as the bellilois will automatically reassure and guide the lost tourist. Getting lost in the many streets and the small villages will also allow you to make some nice discoveries, in the course of a road, the discovery of a beach we didn't get the chance to see, or a pretty house made of traditional stones which we would have missed if we weren't looking for directions. One thing's certain, the welcome will be simple and all so warm wherever you go on the island.

Did you know ?

Do you know the 7 intercommunal values of the tourism ? If not, you can find them on our website

A protected ecosystem

A very special place, to protect in accordance with a responsible tourism

Between land and sea, Belle-île is home to a pretty vast terrestrial and marine biodiversity. We estimate that we can find 60% of the department's plant species on the island, of which we can find 2 patrimonial species, which are the sorrel of the rocks and the omphalodes littoralis. The Atlantic climate of the island, makes the weather softer than in the rest of the department. Thanks to the very cool climate, with temperatures rarely under 0, the island fosters 196 out of the 265 southern species of the Brittany plant life on its own, which is an indicator of its Mediterranean character.

The tourist information centre of belle ile encourages the visitors in the use of a cheaper and more environment-friendly transport by suggesting solutions to move "smartly". Which entails the suggestion to hike, use a bike or some other eco-friendly transport like the use of electrical cars or the public transportation "belle-île bus".



➔ Look up the booklet on how to move about smartly:
<https://www.belle-ile.com/belle-ile/brochures>



From the protected coastal dunes to the 250 hectares of dry seaboard moor (**wandering calluna**), the numerous varieties of mushrooms, the grass and vegetation growing in the cracks of the rocks and that you can find on the cliffs, or the plants growing nearby the beach like samphire or obione, you can discover a total of 29 protected species on top of the 70 others listed as rare or threatened species in Morbihan. Such as **plantain holosté** (protected on a regional scale), the gadeceau carrot, different sorts of orchids, the cuscute de goudron, linaira radicante (all of them protected on a national scale). The flora is completed by a vast animal population, and in particular birds (such as seagulls and cormorants). We can't forget in that list: the green lizard (protected on a European scale), the **black bee** or again the many butterflies and other species of batrachians for example, which are much more difficult to notice because of their small size. You can find our valuable natural resources deep in the sea with its submarine prairies, sheltered in the maërl beds (one of the most diversified marine ecosystems in Europe, which can be compared - thanks to the richness of its diversity- to the tropical coral) as well as the most important population of French **barnacles**

Did you know ?

You can only fish barnacles a few times a year since it's a protected species

Adherence to Natura 2000; Belle-île recognised on a European scale

Faced to some major issues and a territory in necessity of a particular and regular attention, was made the choice of an ecosystem management policy. The Conservatoire du Littoral and the Conseil Général du Morbihan made an alliance to acquire approximately 350 hectares, so the largest part of the island be recognised as a Natura 2000 site.

The mission consists in the acquisition of some coastal plots, damaged or threatened by the urbanisation, to change them into restored and equipped sites so that they become, once again, welcoming and passable sites for the visitor. All of this while respecting the natural balance and wanting an equal quality of living for men and nature alike. The visitors can in that stance, "snorkel and vagabond" in the new Maison du Littoral, located close to the Sarah Bernhardt museum, as well as in the Maison phare des Poulains (lighthouse), where it's possible to discover an exposition on the management of the natural areas. The lighthouse is also known for being self-sufficient in energy thanks to the solar panels installed on its roof.

Let's recall that our island is loved mostly for its wild landscapes and its environment. In order for the island to stay this touristic territory where you can breathe some nice fresh marine air, we should preserve it together, so that, you, dearest visitor can better come back next year



Protected natural areas, taken care of regularly

In charge of the care of the natural spaces, the Communauté de Communes de Belle-Ile and the specialised team made of 17 coastal guards, have the following missions: the follow-up of the protected species, brush clearing and planning of the 85 kilometres of coastal paths, the fight against invasive plants, the laying of ganivelles to restore and protect the dunes, the manual cleaning of the beaches, the transplantation of plants for the maintenance of very famous sites during summer, the experimentation of new management methods,...

The CPIE-Maison de la Nature is the association which completes these actions and swings into action to raise awareness among the tourists, so they understand the necessity of the protection of the island's biodiversity. The headquarters are located near the bus station and you can reach for any additional information you may need. The association also raises awareness among the amateur sailors and the nautical professionals, about the coastline's conservation and the improvement of the harbour waters' quality for example. The island's natural resources imply a strict environmental policy and eco-friendly activities in order to protect and respect the nature you come to admire here.

Did you know ?

The service providers "Committed by nature" have signed a charter of good environmental practices with the Community of Communes of Belle-Ile-en-Mer

*protected, rare or threatened species, or of scientific or symbolic interest (check the natura 2000 website : <https://inpn.mnhn.fr/site/natura2000/FR5300032?lg=en>)

*Permanent Centre for Environmental Initiatives

History & heritage sites

A marvellous and inspiring history

Due to its strategic maritime position, its freshwater reserves and agricultural resources, Belle Île was continually coveted, threatened (by pirates but also by the enemies of France; the English and the Dutch) and then occupied before being attached with the rest of Brittany to the Kingdom of France in 1532

Artists, inspired by its beauty, such as the painter Claude Monet in 1886 or the writer Gustave Flaubert in 1847, made it famous. The main economic activity of the island, until then essentially coming from agriculture and fishing, another kind of activity was added, from 1882 with the arrival of the Quiberon's railway, which enabled the start of the seaside tourism as we know it today.

The Citadelle Vauban

In 1573, the King worried about the island's lack of defences. The citadel, which was at that time a fort belonging to the monks of Quimperlé, was handed over to Albert de Gondi in order for him to fortify and transform it into a real fortress. Vauban will renovate it later under the reign of Louis XIV. The citadel that we know today, after restoration, receives 40,000 visitors annually.



The urban city wall and the forts

The urban city wall, designed by Vauban, was built by military prisoners in the 18th century. These prisoners will later be replaced by Communard prisoners as well as political insurgents. During the same period, 14 forts with crenelated terraces were built along the coast of the island.

The lighthouses and semaphores

In 1825, the same prisoners built the foundations of the Grand Phare, located in Kervilahouen. Overlooking the island at 52 meters, its 247 steps lead to the Fresnel lens, which weighs 2.4 tons. At the ends of the island you can find 2 other lighthouses, the Phare des Poulains (built in 1867) and the Phare de Kerdonis (built in 1879), located in the municipalities of Sauzon and Locmaria respectively. The Pointe du Talut semaphore is the only one out of the four original semaphores that is still functional to this day, it communicates regularly with offshore vessels and also establishes meteorological records.

The menhirs

Only a few vestiges remain from the Neolithic period. The main stone of the island is schist, it is a very friable stone that does not make the construction of menhirs easy. The rare megalithic vestiges are the menhirs (which are found in the vast majority of Brittany, menhir means "long stone" in Breton): "Jean et Jeanne", located on the road to Sauzon, with a nice legend around their story* as well as the "Sainte-Anne" stone, located on the road to Locmaria.

Did you know ?

ean et Jeanne were star crossed lovers who got changed into stones



Sarah Bernhardt

Dive into her particular world

Sarah Bernhardt, a quirky character

Henriette Rosine Sarah Bernhardt (her birth name) was born in **1844**. Daughter of a young Dutch woman of Jewish faith (who became a courtesan to earn money), nothing predestined this child, born out of wedlock, to such a glorious destiny. Sarah Bernhardt lived with a nanny in Brittany until she was 7 years old, she would only speak Breton there. She then was educated in the Grands Champs convent in Versailles. It's in this convent that she played her **first role**, the **angel Raphael**, in a religious show. This first theatrical performance before the Archbishop of Paris attracted some attention. She was considered wearing the veil, but during a family council, when she was 15, the Duke of Morny, half-brother of Napoleon III, suggested that she enter the **Conservatoire**. However, even if Sarah was a good and motivated student, the roles granted to her over the next two years will not be covered with success.

She then adopted her famous motto "**Quand même**" ("**finally!**"), which she will use everywhere in her correspondence. The duke will use his connections again to make Sarah enter the **Comédie Française**. Her first "moment of glory", if you can call it that, was, thanks to a scandal. Indeed, during a ceremony of homage to Molière, she had invited her sister, who tripped over the velvet train of a famous actress of the time "Mlle Nathalie". This one had a very bad reaction facing Sarah Bernhardt's younger sister. Sarah, standing up for her sister, slapped her. Refusing to apologize, she later handed in her **resignation**.

Her life being so rich in experiences, she could be the main character of an adventure novel. Very eccentric, and endowed with a strong personality, she is **avant-garde and a pioneer**: she was the first to free herself from **corsets**, promulgated the **Art Nouveau**, **Cinema** and launched the **autograph's** trend. Her adventures and her success will lead her to be one of the first to **tour internationally** (Australia, the Sandwich Islands, South and North America, Russia, Egypt and Europe). She is described as a **collector of wild animals and men**, is said to have traveled the world dressed in the costume of Phaedrus, and it is said as well that she slept in a coffin to remember the fatality of her mortal fate beyond the fame she gets (this, after the death of her sister Jeanne, addicted to morphine).

A committed woman

During the war against Prussia, she organised and opened a **hospital**, she took care of the soldier **Ferdinand Foch** and offered him her lodge, and she also found a large apartment to accommodate the wounded. She is considered to be the embodiment of patriotism. She did not put up with injustice either, she sided with **Dreyfus** and pushed Zola to use his fame to take a stand in the debate, and write "J'accuse". Her attitude earned her insults from the anti-Dreyfusards during her shows and forced her as well to close her theatre for a few days since fights had become too frequent. Her **refusal to play in Germany** for many years was also proof of her patriotism: in January **1914**, she was awarded the **Legion of Honour**.



In **1916** she played at the **Theatre des armées** for the soldiers of the front. She created a filmed documentary "ceux de chez nous" (literally "our people") to highlight the French culture decry by the Germans. She then enlisted in the theater of the armies, while being disabled (she amputated her painful knee) and would always end her shows with a cry "aux armes!" which she followed with La Marseillaise. In **1917**, she made a propaganda film called "**mères françaises**" ("**French mothers**") in which she played the role of a mother who lost her son in the war. Sarah returned to America to convince the public opinion to join the war and thus come to the aid of France. The United States joined in war soon after her tour. People adored her **bravery** and her **patriotism** during her shows, especially considering her old age.



Did you know ?

Her grave was supposed to be the Basse Hiort rock

Sarah Bernhardt

.....in Belle-Ile

7

"The first time I saw Belle-Île, I saw it as a haven, a paradise, a refuge. At the windiest end I discovered a fort, a place especially inaccessible, especially uninhabitable, and especially uncomfortable. And which, for those reasons, enchanted me".

In 1894, Sarah, then in the beginning of her 50s, arrived on the island with her friend the painter **Georges Clairin**. Their private driver led Sarah Bernhardt and her friends to the Pointe des Poulains where Sarah Bernhardt found herself face to face with this fort; gray, isolated and, all in all, not very appealing. She fell in love with it and the note attached to the door "fort for sale, talk to the lighthouse keeper" led her to buy it that day. Being an artist, she will feel forced to renovate the fort completely, will decorate the walls with woodwork in the intention of making the place warmer and more welcoming, and she will also install large bay windows to let in a better light, worthy of the greatest painters. In 1896, she will spend her **first holidays in that fort**.



Soon enough, she found the fort to be too small, and decided to build the **Villa des 5 parties du monde (the 5 parts of the world villa)** as a holiday home for her family. This name was given to the villa in reference to her travels all over the world; she in that sense decorated each bedroom on the theme of a visited continent. Afterwards, this villa of the 5 parts of the world was renovated into a museography. The **audio guide** lets you hear her voice, recorded by Edison and long referred to as the "**golden voice**". A studio was built in the garden of the fort for her artist friends. The studio had a room for her dear friend Clairin who was able to paint there but also to bathe in seaweed he brought back from the beach; it marks the start of **thalassotherapy** and the acknowledgement of the benefits of the sea and its products. Unfortunately, only the foundations of the building remain today. The **Villa Lysiane** (in honour of her granddaughter) will be built in 1897, and she will set up a dormitory upstairs to accommodate her friends. The villa is now the **Espace Nature (green space)**, where you can find a shop with books and postcards. The Communauté de Communes de Belle Ile en mer (federation of municipalities) and the Conservatoire du Littoral have decided to keep its spirit of "villa des amis" (friends villa) by renovating it into a **reception desk** for visitors, and have also renamed it "Espace Nature" in order to exhibit the rare or even unusual natural species that can be found on the island such as the black bee, barnacles, maërl beds,....

The Phare des Poulains, present on the island since 1868, was rehabilitated in 2000. The lighthouse was reorganised and repainted to create an exhibition in the main room, on the management of natural spaces. Solar panels have been installed on the roof of the lighthouse, while helping keep the wild aspect of the place and make the lighthouse more environmental-friendly. It is inaccessible at high tide, with this in mind, each visitor needs to make sure to read the **tidal schedules** before going there, otherwise they can find themselves stuck around the lighthouse and forced to spend a night under the stars.

In order to convey the tragedian's enthusiasm for the stage, and to keep the spirit of the place, artists are invited regularly. Artists working in the music scene with the **Plages Musicales de Bangor (Musical Beaches of Bangor)**, tales with the **Contes de l'Usage du Monde (Tales from the Use of the World)**, as well as commented walks on the site. She was an animal lover, and continued to expand her property in order to have her own farm, which was later redeveloped and is today the **Golf de l'extrême**.

Sarah was very loved across the island. She was very involved in the island's life and would always offer her help when she could. During the 1911 winter, while the island suffered through a lot of storms which stopped the fishermen from going fishing offshore. Sarah was already back in Paris when she heard about their struggle to find food. She decided to build a **cooperative bakery** to feed the people in need. To fund this project she organised a charity gala in her theatre. The opening of this bakery will stay in the islanders mind for a long time. She will also help the Société Centrale de Sauvetage, and was also there for the launch of the Sauzon **lifeboat**. On top of everything, she offered a **wedding dress** to her brave postwoman who would bring her the newspaper multiple times a day.

Did you know ?

Sarah Bernhardt spent 30 summers in Belle-Ile

Belliloise gastronomy

Local products for traditional plates with an incomparable taste

Enjoy fresh local products produced here on the island. Their quality is evident, especially seeing that there isn't much intermediate transport involved. The vegetables are cultivated in the land, and the livestock grazes peacefully in the island's meadows. All the products: cattle meat with a label guaranteeing their quality, pork meat products, soil vegetables, honey, goat's cheese or sheep's milk, pastries, sweets, crepes, fishes and seafood platters, beers, and other alcohols, are produced here and transported right from the field to your plate in respect of the project "vers une stratégie alimentaire à belle île en mer" (towards a food strategy in belle île en mer), implemented in 2018 by the CPIE (permanent centre of initiatives for the environment).

A generous and authentic island

Indulge in the numerous specialties, meet the producers, cheese makers, biscuit makers, confectioners behind the products you love. Visit the breweries, distilleries with an inimitable expertise. Stroll through the island's markets, on the pretty Bangor square on Sunday morning, or as soon as you get off the boat with the Le Palais market taking place every morning. Go shopping in the local sales area "au coin des producteurs" (at the producers' corner), open on Fridays and Saturdays, in order to participate in the activity of the island's farmers by buying their products, directly from their island based production.



Marine savours and land of spray

Every day, fishermen bring back many varieties of fishes, seafood, shellfishes and crustaceans out of their fishing nets, lobster pots and fishing lines (bass, red tunas, Pollack, blue ling, red mullet, sole, lobster, velvet crab, crab and spider crab). Taste the barnacle, a crustacean only very rarely found in Europe, and found in great quantity Belle île en mer (indeed, the island is home to the largest European population of this crustacean). In Belle île, we practice sustainable agriculture and follow a traditional model of extensive production* with sale in short circuits, in accordance with the Plan Agro-Environnemental et Climatique de Belle île (Agro-Environmental and Climate Plan of Belle île)*, supported by the Community of Communes of Belle île and implemented in 2016. It is estimated that there are about 40 farms in Belle île, exploiting half of the total area of the island and divided between milk producers, sheep and cattle breeders. The island cattle feed in meadows crossed by the wind, carrying the smell and the taste of the spray. The Belle-île lamb, although it cannot be qualified as a "pré salé" lamb (salt marsh lamb) since the sea does not cover the meadows as it does in the Mont Saint Michel, benefits from a unique designation "agneau du large" (offshore lamb), used to describe a meat with an unrivalled taste, only possible thanks to the exceptional oceanic climate of the island. As for the beef, it was also awarded a designation "viande bovine des embruns" (bovine meat from the spray). If the occasion arises, you are kindly invited to taste the "poule aux krassens" (hen with krassens), a Belliloise specialty made with savoury donuts cooked in sauce.

Delight in the discovery of all the flavours of the island!

Did you know ?

On Belle-île you can assist to the goat's milking, visit an apiary,...

*Extensive agriculture is an agricultural system which consists in the adaptation to the natural conditions of the region. It optimizes the potential of the environment despite its low agricultural potential. In this sense, it excludes the use of chemical inputs, watering and drainage. ** See the Plan Agro-Environnemental et Climatique de Belle île (Agro-Environmental and Climate Plan of Belle île): <https://www.ccbi.fr/medias/2020/03/PAEC-Belle-Ile-ok.pdf>



Sea spray recipes



• Cooking barnacles (to be enjoyed as an aperitif-fishing is prohibited in July and August): a quarter of an hour in a large bowl with a little water and a little pepper.
• Cover and stir often.



Hen with krassens*

Preparation: 30 minutes

Cooking: 1 hour 10

For 4 to 6 persons

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 big hen and its offals • 200 g of bacon • 1 carrot • 4 onions • 1 glass of white wine • 2 bay leaves • 1 sprig of thyme • 3 tablespoons of oil • 50 g of butter • Salt, pepper | <p>Krassens (savory dough donuts):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150 g of flour • 2 tablespoons of heavy cream • 2 eggs • 1/2 glass of milk • 1/2 sachet of baking powder • 50 g of butter • 6 drops of Viadox • Fine "fleur de sel" or ground salt |
|---|--|

In a casserole dish, brown the bacon, chopped onions, giblets and carrot, peeled and cut into small pieces in the oil. Reserve. Rinse the casserole dish. In the hot butter, brown the hen, turning it regularly. Add the ingredients reserved previously as well as the bay leaf and thyme and some salt and pepper. Cover and let simmer over low heat for 10 minutes. Wet with wine and cover with 1 L of water. Simmer 45 minutes, covered.

Prepare the krassens. Combine flour and baking powder in a large bowl. Add the eggs one by one, the milk, the melted butter and the crème fraîche. The dough should be firm and supple. If necessary, add more flour. Pour in the Viadox. Season with salt and pepper and leave it to rest for 10 minutes. Cook the krassens 20 minutes before the hen is finished cooking. Boil 3 L of salted water in a Dutch oven. Form the krassens using two tablespoons and immerse them in water. Carry out this operation several times so that the krassens do not stick together. The krassen is cooked when it rises to the surface. Drain. Arrange the dish with the chicken pieces, the sauce and the krassens.

*Taken out of the Carnet de cuisine de Belle-île written by Soisick Boulch and published by Le télégramme

Far breton

For 6 persons

- 200 g of sugar
- 250 g of flour
- 6 eggs
- 1 L of milk
- 10 cl of rum
- 150 g of prunes
- 20 g of butter (salted of course; you are in Brittany)

Mix the eggs and sugar in a bowl until the mixture turns white. Add the flour and mix until there are no more lumps. Then pour in the milk and rum and stir so that the paste mixes with the milk. After having buttered the mold, pour the dough and incorporate the prunes then bake for 1 hour at 180 ° C. Let the far cool down to room temperature and serve it in the evening or chilled the next day.

Did you know ?

The pleuric is an herb that grows on the island's coast, you can use it in your plates

Ponant Islands

The association "Les îles du ponant"

The association "les îles du ponant" brings together socio-professional officials and councillors from the islands. Board members represent the islands in the local authorities.

Its ambition is to offer a **future to the islands of the Atlantic and the English Channel**.

The primary objective is "the **maintenance of territories** which shelter active and attractive island communities"

There are a total of **15 Ponant islands**, spread over the Channel coast and the Atlantic coast, which represents **18 municipalities** within the association. On these islands there are **16,000 year round inhabitants** for about **3 million visitors per year**.

The islands all have in common:

- a population living there year round
- a territory not connected to the mainland by a bridge or a submersible road
- a local authority status (generally a municipality)



Triple objective:

- Introduce the specificity and identity of the islands by relaying their issues on departmental, regional, national and European level
- Support island communities while they carry out their missions and strengthen their capacity for action
- Provide a place for debate and exchange on the challenges of development, organisation and protection of islands



10



The island savoir-fair

Savoir-faire des îles du Ponant is a young association made of companies and island communities. This association is present all year round on the islands. The purpose of this association is to **support the local economy and island entrepreneurs** by affixing a **blue logo** on island products, representing the **Savoir-Faire des îles du Ponant trademark**, it's a proof of quality and ensures the authenticity of the island's good or service.



SAVOIR-FAIRE
DES ÎLES DU PONANT

Belle-Île counts **11 companies** in its members:

- Rêveries de l'île, glass maker (Sauzon)
- A l'îlot Carton, guest rooms (Locmaria)
- Pierre Mouty, graphic designer (Bangor)
- Hôtel La Désirade (Bangor)
- Biscuit factory La Bien Nommée (Le Palais)
- Festival Lyrique de Belle-île (opera festival)
- Les savons de Belle-île (Le Palais) (soaps)
- Atelier-galerie Patman (Locmaria) (art gallery)
- Fluid, verrerie (Le Palais) (glass factory)
- BO Glass studio, verrerie (Locmaria) (glass factory)
- JBH Création, artiste peintre (Sauzon) (painter)

Did you know ?

Belle-île-en-mer is the biggest Ponant island with its 85,3 Km²

Activities & relaxation

Belle île, place of relaxation and sport closer to nature

Relaxation, leisure and iodine adventures

Belle-Île-en-Mer is a place of relaxation and rejuvenation, far from daily stress and also home for numerous activities:

- Sailing, surfing, stand up paddle, snorkelling, kayaking, fishing trips
- Horseback riding, Tree climbing, tennis, fencing, golf, Skate park, inflatable structures (Ty Park), Bookstore, modeling workshop, plastic arts lessons, Cinema, Theater, Yoga, Watsu, massage, airplane ride over the island, garden tours, farm visit, educational visit to a beehive
- Surfing on the beach of Donnant
- Sea trips, cruises to the Houat and Hoëdic Islands
- Cycling or hiking on the many coastal paths
- Throughout the year, the CPIE - Maison de la nature organises trips on the theme "nature and discovery".



Hiking

Hiking is undoubtedly one of the best ways to discover Belle-île. The 85 kilometres of coastal paths (GR 340) allow you to do a complete tour of the island in four or five days and to discover the island while appreciating the view of the wild landscape with its cliffs and other beautiful natural places.

Beaches

Belle-île is a schist plateau - a stone very sensitive to erosion - hollowed out by 148 valleys. The jagged coastline, made up of a succession of peaks, small islands and caves, alternates between high cliffs and 58 beaches or coves of fine yellow sand.

The Golf de l'extrême

It's the first golf course in France to be partner of Natura 2000. In their opinion, the protection of the fragile coastal environment is essential and the maintenance carried out by a "green keeper" all year round. The Belle-île golf course is characterized by a 14-hole golf course extending on 55 hectares along the coast, including the n° 2 with its famous green overlooking the ocean!

The only ponant island to offer a Thalasso

Facing the sea and the wild coast, the thalassotherapy centre and spa offered in the Hotel Castel Clara, Relais & Châteaux, offer high quality cures and treatments.

Did you know ?

Every year, "belle île en trail" is organised on the island for all trail lovers



Land of creation

Events and festivities all year round

Belle-île-en-Mer has been and remains a source of inspiration for many artists, poets, painters, writers and actors. All have stayed or come here, attracted by its wild beauty, pure light, breath-taking landscapes and fascinating atmosphere.

Discover the most beautiful natural sites of the island, and retrace the footsteps of the artists who were inspired by them

"I am in a superb land of savagery, a heap of terrible rocks and an incredible sea of colours; Finally, I am very excited, although facing some great difficulty, because I was used to painting the Channel and I had necessarily my routine, but the Ocean is quite another thing", wrote Claude Monet, in a letter to Gustave Caillebotte.

"It's sinister, devilish but superb and I don't think I will be able to find such a thing anywhere else", he also said about the Aiguilles de Port Coton. Claude Monet painted Belle île and its wonders for a long time, there are a total of 39 of his paintings of the island.

Later, the painters Henri Matisse, Constantin Kousnetzoff, Maurice Halay, and John Peter Russel also fell under the spell of Belle-île and its palette of green blues and contrasts..While traveling across the island, take detours and the trouble of meeting the artists established in Belle-île and their work: ceramics, painting, glassware, cabinet making ... Visit the many workshops on the port of Le Palais but also on the port of Sauzon as well as scattered all over the island.



1 2

Concerts, festivals, meetings, recitals...

Constantly bustling with activities, Belle-île offers many long-awaited festivals and concerts in steeped in history heritage sites.

- Thus, the Citadelle Vauban hosts in July and August the festival "**Lyrique en Mer**" which, for more than 22 years, has been presenting to the public international lyrical artists through renowned operas, in unusual sets!
- The **Festival du Théâtre au Bord du Champ**, an open-air live theatre and art festival taking place from mid-July to mid-August.
- In July, the "**Plage Musicale en Bangor**" a chamber music festival, offers about ten concerts in various renowned sites: the Pointe des Poulains, the Grand Phare ...
- **The Festival de Bangor** in August boasts a wide range of artists.
- **The Compagnie Vindilis** and its troupe of 75 islanders offer theater lessons and internships, organises theater cafes, ambulatory shows throughout the year, as well as summer plays.
- **The Festival "Belle île on air"**, a contemporary music festival, open to all and eco-responsible, takes place over two days in August in the Bois du Génie (Le Palais).

Traditional and contemporary music concerts in the ports of Belle-île also form a large part of the cultural activity of Belle-île, throughout the seasons.

To know all about the future events:
<https://www.belle-ile.com/faire/agenda>

Did you know ?

The Donnant beach was Arletty's favourite, she gave her name to an auditorium in Le Palais

Access & contacts

Sea crossings: Le Palais / quiberon: 5 round trips per day in low season, up to 16 in high season. And from April to October from Vannes, Port Navalo, Croisic, La Turballe to Le Palais

Find all the information on the means of access (pleasure boats, train, plane, bus lines, and taxis) to Belle-Ile-en-mer on our website www.belle-ile.com, in the section "stay" and "How to get to Belle-Ile-en-mer" "www.belle-ile.com rubrique "organiser" et "venir à Belle-Ile"



Find the booklet "belle-ile without my car" in the section "our brochures" and "without my car"



Belle-Ile tourist information centre
www.belle-ile.com - 0297318193
Press contact: Karine Piquet -
direction@belle-ile.com

Photographic credits

We would like to sincerely thank the photographers who made the illustration of this press kit possible.

©Arnaud de Wildenberg, ©CCBI,
©Clarisse Jonneau ©CRTB,
©Emmanuel Bertier,
©Erwan Amice, ©Fany Sabatier,
©Gregory Stephant,
©Loup Samzun, ©Philippe Dannic,
©Pierre Mouty, ©Stéphane Chanclu
©Tania Gueraïni ©Bathilde Chaboche