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# Naturally Unmissable !

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

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

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



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

## Some advice !



*Don't forget your swimsuit, your raincoat and your boots for your summer holidays ! Spring and autumn are renowned for their mildness and their distinctive colours, so don't forget your camera and your hiking boots. And finally, in winter you may wear gloves and scarf to go for a walk and enjoy the snow-covered landscape.*

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

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

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

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



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



# Once upon a time ...

**Landscapes suggest, the Vassivière lake has always been here.**

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

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



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

**Rural tourism in Vassivière was born.**



Today, the main functions of the lake are :  
Electrical energy production, flow regulation of the Vienne, Civaux hydroelectric plant cooling (Vienne), irrigation, tourism.

## Main dates

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

## Key figures :

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

## Specificity

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

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

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



## Did you know ?

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

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



# A huge natural play area

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

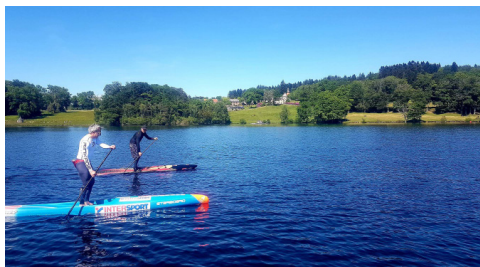
breathhtaking sensations, aquatics or outdoor activities, active leisure time or relaxation. Share events or challenges between family or friends...

Here, you can breathe out and enjoy a laid back atmosphere in a quiet and natural environment.

## 1000 hectares of pure water for Aquatic fun

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

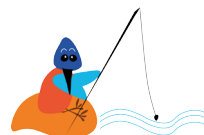
Water sports lovers, make your choice ! The lake opens the possibility of sailing, catamaranning, windsurfing, water skiing, canoeing, paddleboarding and even 'tubing ... It's a technical lake for sailing and there are important regattas every week-end from April to October.



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

- > June "**Swimrun Vassivière**" : this event offers 3 distances including one long (26 km running 5 km swimming) which attracts the participation of international competitors.
- > June «**Tour du Lac pédestre** » a traditional running and Nordic walking around the lake
- > July «**Les 10 heures non-stop d'endurance paddle**» : it's a competition where teams paddle for 10 hours non-stop around the lake. It's a unique competition in France

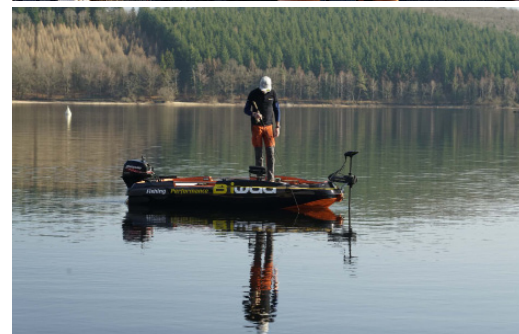
Vassivière area is also a pleasant atmosphere for just relaxing with your family in one of the 5 supervised sand beaches in summer. They offer good equipment : children's playground, canoe and paddle hiring, snacks and entertainments (concerts, fest...) in summer.



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

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

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



Discover or progress in fishing techniques on a boat or a float tube with fishing instructor guides, they are specialists of our lake and they can give you very good advice !

- Carp fishing: 7 spots on Lac de Vassivière, but also on the lakes of Faux-la Montagne and Mont Larron.
- Trout and grayling anglers: the wild rivers and streams of the Plateau de Millevaches are the kingdom of the Fario trout.

- **Mercury fishing Cup** : French championship by boat in november  
4 free launches - including Auphelle and Broussas, accessible all year round.

## Did you know ?

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

Your new home port in Nouvelle Aquitaine.



## Discoveries



• **Adi Milles Tours** : Taste tours with commentary along the river. Ideal for discovering the lake. Franck invites you to sample a selection of local specialties, sip a drink as you sail, and tell you all about the history of the lake. (12 places max.)

**Broussas** +33 6 36 12 25 41 - [adimillettours@gmail.com](mailto:adimillettours@gmail.com)

• **Alain Nature Bateau** : embark on a shaded 10 m<sup>2</sup> wooden floating terrace, equipped with table and chairs, and enjoy a moment of idleness or fun, a picnic or a bucolic moment along the water. **Masgrangeas** - [nature-bateaux.fr](http://nature-bateaux.fr) - +33 6 24 76 76 85



### «Vassiviera, a unique experiential concept !

Facing the lake, an original and surprising venue brings together four universes highlighting Limousin heritage, culture and gastronomy :

• **Le Barrage**: an adventure game combining escape-game and sensory experience, unusual and immersive, where fiction meets reality in a setting inspired by the Vassivière dam !

• **Le sentier des légendes** : a treasure hunt along a

trail of artistic landscape creations, to unravel the secrets and mysteries of local legends.

• **Two treasures hunts** by canoe and in partnership with CKE.

• **Tours of the factory and dam** ! Turn fiction into reality and discover the history of the Vassivière hydroelectric works and the unique daily lives of the EDF teams !

• **L'Encas Local** : relax, eat good, 100% local food and taste new flavours; a moment of relaxation with a splendid view over the lake. The sunsets from here are magical !

**VASSIVIERA** - **Auphelle** - +33 5 87 07 04 53 - [vassiviera.fr](http://vassiviera.fr)



## Learning is fun !

With your family some associated places of interest that have been selected because of their specific particularities. They are **perfect places to experience and share exciting adventures with the whole family**, from grandparents to grandchildren, including the parents ! The large choice of activities fits all ages and levels.



• With **Terra Aventura®**, walking becomes fun! This is where the adventure of this fun, high-tech treasure hunt begins. Put on your sneakers, borrow your parents' cell phones and motivate them! It's off on one of six routes around the lake to collect the Poi'z si rigolos

• To create, invent... **The Centre International d'Art et du Paysage** de l'île de Vassivière offers creative experiences through workshops linked to the current exhibition, or the creation of a land-art work using elements found in nature.



• Like a trapper, discover the lake's typical flora and fauna from island to island on a treasure-hunting canoeing adventure. **Canoe Club Eymoutiers-Vassivière**

• Climb the monkey bridges and zip lines and fly from tree to tree in a lakeside forest at **Vertige Accro**. How high do you dare to climb ?



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

• **La Cité des insectes** : explore the fascinating world of insects and learn things about them in the insects garden or in the interactive exhibition.





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

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

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



### Did you know ?

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

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



You will realize that protected environment is already a reality here in Vassivière. Here we practice pastoralism and maintain the land with a flock of 250 ewes.

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

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



- **250 km of local paths** or PR's and a 65 km Regional Paths or GRP's a 4-day long distance footpath. (path-cards available at the Tourist Office or on the web-site <https://rando-millevaches.fr>)

### • Exceptional panoramas

A few climbs and the lake reveals its nuggets:

> **Table d'orientation de la Lande du Puy de la Croix** : an interpretation trail to understand our landscapes.

> Around the cairns of the **Presqu'île de Chassagnas**, a unique 180° view

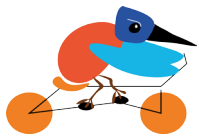
> **Le Puy du Rocher**, one of the highest peaks in the department

> Orientation Table **sentier des poètes**, which opens up views as far as the Sancy massif.

### Shuttle boats :

They criss cross the lake in summer. You can go for a walk and take it when you want to. You can also cross the lake to visit Vassivière island or change of beaches.





## On the way !

- **La Vélidéale**

This new bike route starts from Royère de Vassivière, close to our inland sea, and reaches the Atlantic at the port of Saint Nazaire. This 675 km-long cycling adventure is resolutely optimistic, committed and multi-faceted, linking 5 regional nature parks and numerous sensitive areas. It is open to local encounters, those that make life more beautiful. To extend the itinerary, the Vélidéale is connected to the Tour de la Creuse à vélo and La Vagabonde in our département. In all, more than 10 other cycle routes are involved.

- Other cycle routes, such as **La Creuse à vélo** (327 km), or “**Vélo et fromage**”, pass through Vassivière, reminding us that we are indeed in cyclo land!

### Did you know ?

When you cycle along the circumlacustrine road beside the lake, you're on the “**Raymond Poulidor**” Circuit des Légendes. This itinerary is dotted with signs evoking the great names in cycling who discovered Vassivière when they took part in the Tours de France between 85 and 95. Tip: if you have time, take the southern part of the lake where the views are clearer.



## Vassivière Island

### You should visit Vassivière Island when you come here

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

**Must see : it's a concentration of Vassivière on an island.**



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

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

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

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

+33 5 55 69 27 27 - [ciapvassiviere.org](http://ciapvassiviere.org)





## A summer of artistic encounters !

### «Les arts en l'Île»

June 14 - September 15, 2025

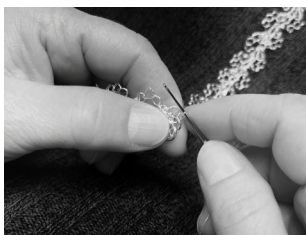
A journey through the works of the art center, the Vassivière Island and regional know-how!



An ephemeral exhibition and sales gallery, set up on the Island, celebrates the creativity and authenticity of the talents of New Aquitaine's arts and crafts artisans.

Pieces in leather, glass, ceramics, wood, wool and much more... A whole range of products reflecting exceptional know-how are on display and offered for sale at prices accessible to all. Artisans share their stories and their love of their craft, reinventing age-old techniques to create exceptional products.

A project run by the Pôle des métiers d'art du Limousin, in partnership with the Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine, the Chambre Régionale de Métiers et de l'Artisanat, the CIAP Île de Vassivière and the Syndicat le Lac de Vassivière.



## Did you know ?

The Island is pedestrian. You can access on foot - a 20 minutes walk about 1 km (Free access all the year). You can also cross the bridge with «Electrical Golfette de l'Île» or board from Auphelle or Broussas on a shuttle boat in summer.



## Paroles de conteurs - Storytelling festival - 30th edition

August 16. to 23. - Auphelle

Listen, love, stroll, aperitif, picnic, bath, siesta, watch... A journey into the fantastic, the illusory, the unreal, the unconscious, sharing words by and for all... A journey where words awaken dreams, travelers flock, the curious get lost and dreamers find their way. The storytellers, magicians of tales, fan the embers of wonder and light fires in souls. More than eighty events punctuate your days and evenings! [www.paroles-conteurs.org](http://www.paroles-conteurs.org)



## Saint Amour's day

August 9. - Auphelle

Take a look at the calendar: this date is no coincidence, it's Saint Amour's Day. It's a symbolic day on which we want to offer you a great family, convivial and festive moment, under the sign of

happiness and sharing, to keep many stars in your vacation memories.

The Saint Amour Festival has become a key event in the identity of the Vassivière region. What could be nicer than celebrating love in all its forms with lovers, family and friends in an idyllic setting on the shores of Lake Vassivière ? This eagerly-awaited festival will awaken your five senses all day long, until late at night.



## Programm

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

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

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

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

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

- **«Folie les mots, le Festival»** : theatre, reading out loud outside on the road, in the homes and gardens of local people and in the bars of Faux la Montagne
- **«L'été des simples» on Vassivière Island** : the meeting place for producers of aromatic and medicinal plants
- **«Fête de la Myrtille»** : blueberries are one of the most popular fruits in Plateau de Millevaches, and you can buy them this day or pick them directly in the orchard
- **«Faites des Bergers»** : The sheep and pastoralism festival
- **«La fête de Nedde»** : 3 days the first week-end of August, is a typical village fete with floats decorated with flowers, a torch-lit procession, family entertainment and traditional meal.



## More Info

### Photos Video



Watch our videos on our youtube channel  
[Office de Tourisme Lac de Vassivière.](#)



#Lacdevassiviere et #Vassiviere  
Instagram [lacdevassiviere](#)

### Infos



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Lac de Vassiviere tourisme - Pêche au pays de Vassiviere

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