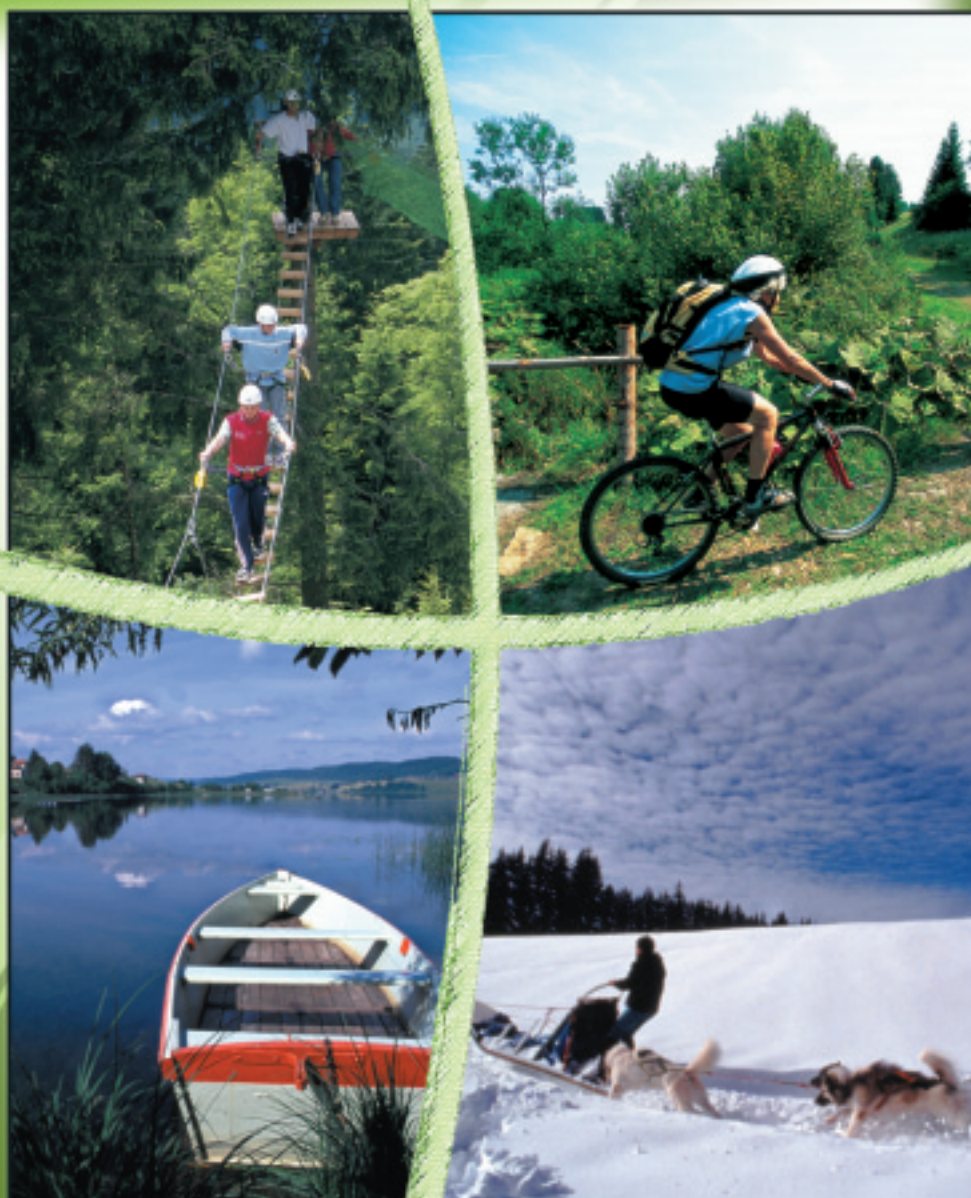


# Press Brochure

## Outdoor leisure pursuits



*Désirs d'authenticité*

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# Outdoor leisure pursuits

Nature at its most beautiful, generous and diverse... Inviting you to share and discover this unique experience. This is where Nature affords and Man avails... Avail yourself of the bountiful resources, immerse yourself completely in the region. Breathe the fresh air, feel the gentle breeze, listen to the sounds of nature, taste the multitude of local dishes - savoury, sweet, smoky or creamy and last but not least, take in the living colours of the Franche-Comté region - A truly expressive, sensual and colourful experience. A palette enriched by generosity and a willingness to offer the best, whoever the visitor is and whatever they require.

The Greens of the vast plains, the forests and the Regional Parks. The Blues of the water running

throughout the Franche-Comté region: Rivers, Lakes, Waterfalls and Canals... White, for the snow on the mountains. Gold like the leaves in Autumn. The colours give a rhythm to the landscape... and accompany the walker through their adventures, whether they be peaceful, sporting or the search for new sensations. This is where an encounter with nature can take a myriad of forms and heights - as if to reflect the landscape of the region itself with its varied landscape - perfect for rest or play.

Welcome to the temple of Nature Preserved. Welcome to a world where the best still exists. Welcome to a universe overflowing with energy and willingness - The willingness to seduce, the willingness to share and the willingness to speak...

**I\_ Outdoor pursuits**

P.3

On foot  
On horseback  
Cycling and Mountainbikes  
Circular tours :  
*Cycling tours of the Franche-Comté region*  
*The "Grandes Traversées" of the Jura*  
*The forts of Belfort - on foot or by mountainbike*  
*The banks of the Saône*  
Mountain Guides

**II\_ On the water**

P.8

Flyfishing  
Waterborne tourism  
Watersports :  
*Canyoning - Canoe-kayak - Sailing*  
*Bathing and leisure centres*  
Caving

**III\_ In the air**

P.12

Ballooning  
Paragliding, Flying, Hang gliding, Parachuting,  
Microlights, Gliding

**IV\_ Relaxation  
and sensation**

P.14

Golf courses and swingolf  
Adventure Sports :  
*Karting - 4x4 - Assault Courses*  
*Climbing - Via ferrata*  
Open air activities:  
*Mazes - Summer Toboggan - Roller skating*

**V\_ Winter and  
snow sports**

P.17

Cross country skiing & skating  
Downhill skiing  
"Joëring" skiing  
Snowshoes  
Dog sleds  
Ski resorts

**VI\_ Useful Addresses**

P.22



1. Trekking

# Trekking...

*On foot, on horseback or by bicycle, for pleasure or sport, trekking has found its home.*

The undulating landscape, grandiose with its alternating valleys and peaks, mountains and plains. The Franche-Comté region's landscapes are the essence of aesthetic perfection. The vistas are painted in a kaleidoscope of ochres, blues, greys and greens, highlighting the various routes and altitudes. A trekker is never really alone - surrounded by such flora and fauna and reassured by the comforting sound of the ringing bell towers. A landscape that not only reassures, but also helps point the way, sharing the serenity of nature in all its rich, immense and genuine splendour.

## On foot

For sport or for contemplation, the hiker will discover, in the Franche-Comté region, a multitude of sources for inspiration. The numerous routes are suitable for all levels of experience and ability. The landscapes are intercut by prepared paths, leading the hiker into unique and original encounters with nature. A universe to discover in complete freedom, or accompanied by a guide, depending on the individual's wishes.

Franche-Comté has more than 7,000 kilometres of prepared footpaths. From the "Haut-Doubs", village to village, from the GR5 to the pathways of the "Grande Traversée" of the Jura, hiking trips are a veritable encounter with nature. The variety of the landscapes, the richness of the peoples and their regional culture, circular routes suitable for day-walks, or even better, a week's hiking, with the added bonus of it being possible to organise the transportation of your baggage from one comfortable 'gite' to another! The 'Mont d'Or' mountain range in 'Le Doubs' hides an exceptional and varied natural history - offering hikers wide-open natural reserves in amongst alpine farms and pine forests. The region is also home to one of the largest natural medium-altitude forests in western Europe.

Needless to mention the Regional Nature Reserve of the 'Haut-Jura' with its extreme rarity. The mountains and gorges are intercut by strips of forest and prepared footpaths. Three different circular routes complete the offer with the GR5 and GR9 for 4 to 6-day hiking trips. The

'Haute-Bienne' and the "Haut-Jura Sud" circuits and last but not least the 'Valserine' circuit, culminating on the 1,717 metre high 'Crêt de la Neige'.

Les Rousses - a four-village ski resort on the Swiss border has all the advantages of a structured ski-resort with leisure facilities and accommodation for all. The lakes with their exceptional vistas, the botanic trails - in particular the geological trails, the Les Rousses ski resort is laid out as the perfect family holiday location - convivial and authentic.

The Franche-Comté region has unequalled forest cover and, because of this, is an excellent destination for Orienteering exercises with numerous permanent circuits, suitable for all levels of expertise.

To the north the plateau of the 'Mille Etangs' (Thousand Ponds) is a land of glittering pearls to dazzle the eyes of the passing hiker! Just a few steps away is the Regional Nature Reserve of the 'Ballons des Vosges', with its large number of paths - making it the perfect location for walking. The 'Ballon d'Alsace' - the highest point in the Vosges, at 1,250 metres above sea level, being the literal highpoint of this mountain range - marked by its glacial history. In Montbéliard there are some 50 circular footpaths throughout the countryside, from the banks of the Doubs river to the peaks of the Jura range... paths for discovery, orienteering courses, short or long walks... the multitudinous riches of the Franche-Comté region are there to be discovered by the inquisitive hiker.

## On horseback

They are warm, friendly, peaceful and courageous... They accompany nature lovers on their journeys, lighten their loads. They show the way, trotting on at the speed required. Steeds for one or several days' trip. Journeys take on a whole new look from the back of a horse.

The numerous equestrian centres, farms and stables throughout the four departments are bound to be able to offer you the type of journey you are seeking. Whether they be accompanied or solo rides, one-off or part of a structured holiday in a Gite or Farm-hostel open throughout the year, as is, for example, the 'Grand Huit' in the Jura or the Equestrian circuit in the Haute-Saone.

An original alternative to horseriding would be a trip in a horse-drawn carriage... who hasn't dreamed of a romantic or family journey in a horse-drawn caravan, or even

dreamed of a western adventure in a covered wagon, pulled by the strong and courageous horses of the Franche-Comté region?

The people of the region really believe that the pack-donkeys of the region are much gentler than anywhere else... its not difficult to believe once you've been on a trip with such a docile and friendly animal! With or without guide, the trips can be organised from farms or gites, accompanied by a donkey to carry your luggage... and your little ones!

The routes are organised around programmes lasting from 1 to 8 days, depending on individual taste or your hunger for adventure - to conquer the territory of the Franche-Comté region!

## Cycling and Mountain bikes

The Franche-Comté region is perfect for cycling. The plains and valleys spread as far as the eye can see, alongside the canals, on the banks of the lakes - paths have been opened up to cyclists. Trips are just as attractive in the mountains... even if they are a little more difficult! The mountain bike is in its element - whatever its rider's wishes.

The Franche-Comté region has more than 3,500 kilometres of prepared tracks, with peaceful paths under refreshing woods. From time to time the happy rider will come across incredible viewpoints across the distant mountains, from the 'Ballon d'Alsace' to the 'Haute Combes du Jura'.

For the sportier visitor there is a permanent track down the Métabief - designed especially for sensation seekers.

A little further on, between Métabief and Les Rousses, the mountain-biking zone passes through pastures, gorges and valleys. Waterfalls dot the landscape and provide welcome resting points, the forests are statements of mystery and shadows...

The French Cycling Federation's Official Guide currently includes nine mountain-biking sites in the Franche-Comté region, each of which is set up to offer the highest quality of welcome and allows the cyclist to discover many kilometres

of prepared tracks. Val Foncine, Ornans, Métabief, Val de Morteau, la Grande Traversée du Jura, Les Monts de Gy, the Les Rousses ski resort and many other sites are there to be discovered by the cyclists - with their pastoral tracks and new horizons.

For those who dream of adventure, of discovery, of exploration and the wide open spaces, a mountain guide can help you discover the beautiful trackways of the Jura Mountains - escapades of between 3 and 9 days for groups of adults or children. An original way of mixing sporting pleasure, authenticity and contact with nature.

If the cycle is a particularly suitable method for discovering the area - it is simply because nature has imposed itself, in all its force, throughout the Franche-Comté region. For a complete novice to the world of mountain biking or for a seasoned veteran, the 'Grande Traversée du Jura' is the circuit 'par excellence'. Known the world over by the initials GTJ, the route takes the rider through the Gorge du Doubs to the Jura Mountains. Internationally renowned, the route covers some 400 kilometers and offers a multitude of discoveries and stopovers for real gourmets.

# Circular tours

## Cycle tours around the Franche-Comté

Cycle tourism is, by definition, a mode of transport open to all, in all seasons, in all locations, solo or as part of a group. The Franche-Comté region offers a number of routes, to be completed, depending on circumstances, in one or more stages. Topographical guide maps or pocket maps... Orientation and information tools are available for each department.

On the programme - The northern section of the Jura summits, a circuit of 6-days in the very heart of the natural world. Falcons, Chamoix and Marmots accompany the traveller through a journey that concludes in the heart of the valley of Le Joux after a magical evening in a farm hostel. The tastes and traditions of the Jura being an important part of the experience.

A longer trip is possible, over 6 days, through spectacular scenery, around the Arbois, discovering the magnificent Abbeys dominating a landscape of vineyards, the panoramic views of the Hautes Combes - which shelter some remarkable sites, the lakes of the Haut Jura - notably the valley of Joux with its two lakes, the southern Vosges at medium altitude - to discover the peat-lands and their Juniper bushes, or even the fortified line around Belfort - a unique opportunity to visit some magnificent restored fortresses... ..

Mountains, vineyards, lakes, flower-strewn plains, the heritage of the middle ages, the world is enriched by the multiple opportunities open to a cycling tourist hungry for nature.

## The "Grandes Traversées" of the Jura

In addition to Nordic skiing and mountain biking, the "Grande Traversée" of the Jura is now also accessible to hikers.

Known the world over as the GTJ, the track offers exceptional contact with the nature of the mountains of the Jura region. Discovering the Grandes Traversées is also about discovering the diversity of the flora and fauna, the strengths of the traditional architecture and finally the heart of a preserved environment and a living mountain. Covering a distance of some 400 kilometres, the hiker can choose his or her diversions along an internationally

renowned footpath. From the 'Gorges du Doubs' to the Jura Mountains, the itinerary evolves at the rhythm of the footpath. Around 90 high-quality accommodation sites are available along the route, specialising in offering facilities for hikers and walkers. Opportunities to taste authentic pleasures in a friendly atmosphere and to meet the people who's greatest pleasure is to share their love and understanding of their region.

The complete GTJ: 7-days journey for the experienced mountain biker.

## The Belfort forts

The route around the various forts, on foot or using a mountain bike, covers some 90 kilometres of track and the history of the Belfort region. It includes a circular tour of the town - to discover the neighbouring forts. Following prepared footpaths the hiker has the choice of two distinctly different routes: the transversal route - following the course of a number of marshes, accessible to walkers and mountain bikers and the Forts route - also accessible to all, offers walkers relays by public transport to lighten the load.

The Fort de la Miotte, Front du Vallon, Fort de la Justice, Château de Belfort, Fort des Basses-Perches... these fabulous buildings punctuate this voyage through time, providing a welcome excuse for a pause.

The architectural and cultural heritage of the region is based upon nature, which fixes the rhythm of the walker, encouraging the curious spirit to learn about the history of the region. The complete loop can be completed in 5 days on foot, or 2 days when riding.

## The Banks of the Saône

For those who love walks along the water's edge, paths have been prepared along 60 km of the banks of the Saône, revealing appealing villages - the architectural richness of which is only matched by the conviviality of their inhabitants. Between Port-sur-Saône and Gray, the

"Rives de Saône" route follows an old towpath, restored for tourists. The Saône itself is a paradise for fishermen, home also to some twenty species of rare birds and is an important staging post for migratory birds.

## Mountain Guides

Throughout the Jura Mountains, professional Mountain Guides organise exceptional hiking opportunities in complete security. Because they understand the landscape so well they make the perfect guides for a voyage of discovery into the hidden world of the Franche-Comté region.

From the mountain tops to the hidden waterfalls, they will guide the walker through a voyage of discovery. With a choice of 'à la carte' routes, no need to carry backpacks, suitable for small groups wanting to 'experience' the Franche-Comté region.

A weekend free? - There are organised walks in the Les Rousses region, including an ascent of the Colomby de Gex - accompanied by the Chamoix!

A short break? - Try a route through the Jura vineyards to "la Saline Royale d'Arc" and Senans or discover the Haut Jura Regional Nature Reserve - assisted by a pack-donkey.

The Mountain Guides are capable of organising hiking trips, mountain biking, snowshoeing and canyoning expeditions.

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## 11\_ On the water

# On the water

***The greens, blues, pinks & greys of the water... the colours of the natural world it creates and maintains.***

## Flyfishing

The region is recognised by experts as the perfect location - with 30 of the top 100 sites in France.

Pure, clean, fish inhabited waters, classified as some of the "most beautiful rivers in France", attract the fisherman to the region !

Le Doubs, la Loue, le Dessoubre, l'Ain, l'Ognon and la Bienne... the rivers and torrents crossing the wild landscapes of the Franche-Comté region are veritable corners of paradise for fishermen, both novices and professionals. La Loue and Le Lison are particularly good for trout fishing, their waters providing unequalled fishing. The wild landscape surrounding the Ain river and the dense population of European Perch make it a particularly interesting river to fish.

A genuine geological curiosity, the "Plateau des Mille Etangs" (Plateau of a thousand Ponds) is the jewel of the

The Franche-Comté is a land of water. Water plays an invaluable role in the life of the region whether it be part of Leisure, Work or Sport. The majesty and sumptuousness of the water in all its blues, pinks, greens and greys - the colours of the surrounding natural world the water creates and maintains...

Watersports are a particularly abundant resource throughout the Franche-Comté region, proof of this can be seen in the following paragraphs, just a few examples of the many watersports and activities available.

Haute-Saone region with its charming deep and dark waters. Saint-Point, the third largest natural lake in France, with, on its waters, a thousand and one fishing boats trailing whitefish or pike lines, searching for the salmonidae of the mountain lakes.

Then onwards to Malsaucy, 40 hectares of ponds, home to more than 200 species.

Pike, Trout, Grayling, Pike-perch and Whitefish are just some of the species that populate the numerous watersources and rivers throughout the region - bringing joy to fishermen searching for a quality fishing holiday.

In this land of rivers, fishing has found its capital, Omans, with its unique museum (the only one in France), dedicated to re-tracing the history of fishing and its practices.

***Brochure available in French or German.***

## Waterborne Tourism

Cruises, Waterborne hotels or Houseboats... everything is possible on the multitude of watercourses crossing the region.

Whilst boat cruises, with commentaries, along the Doubs are excellent for discovering a number of towns during a single outing, renting a vessel is itself a particularly original adventure.

The Saône and the Doubs are the two main arteriers running through the region, feeding canals, now fitted out for pleasure cruising.

With pauses for locks and stopovers under bridges, river navigation is a whole new way of discovering the towns and riverbanks of the Franche-Comté region.

A great number of organisations have been set up to help you raise the anchor on a fascinating holiday, whether it be as a family or for a romantic adventure...

***Brochure available in French, English or German.***

# Waterborne activities

## Canyoning

Longevilles Mont d'or and Les Rousses offer a particular brand of aquatic journey: a technical-based approach with ropes and harnesses to help you cross the waterfalls!

Abseiling, sliding, jumping and sensations are on the programme during a day's canyoning in the heart of the

gorges cut into the limestone walls by the high mountain torrents. Beautiful, wild, immense, hidden... only the bravest can discover!

## Canoes and kayaks

Having such wonderful water resources, the Franche-Comté region has a dynamic and sportive nature perfect for the practice of canoeing or kayaking! The Loue, that mysterious and capricious river, is perfect for voyages through the lush countryside.

The lazy meandering of the Saone attracts lovers of peace, quiet, flora and fauna. The Doubs, Ognon and Ain with their pure, gushing waters are perfect if you let yourself drift with the current, discovering havens of peace,

populated by rare species of bird. Finally, the 81 lakes, covering 5200 hectares, including the notable Lac Saint-Point, the third largest natural water feature in France and the Vouglans sur l'Ain reservoir, the second largest artificial lake in France.

Calm waters, rapids, torrents, sills... follow one after another along a route accessible to all... as long as you know how to paddle and swim!

## Sailing

With its amazing number of bodies of water throughout the territory, the region has numerous sailing clubs for centreboarding, catamarans, windsurfers, etc... for excursions, short trips, regattas and all levels of challenge.

The valleys of Le Doubs and L'Ognon, the Saint-Point lake near Pontarlier, the Chalain, Vouglans and Rousses lakes

and the Lac de Faivre Vesoul, the Champagny basin, the Malsaucy ponds and finally the Forges ponds near Belfort all sites that cry out to be discovered and bring you the opportunity for adventure.

## Bathing and Leisure Centres

The region has a particularly varied choice of water-based leisure facilities. Basins, lakes, ponds, rivers, waterfalls... the choice mirrors the variety of the regional resources.

The vast majority of beaches are not only set up for bathers but are also monitored. The leisure facilities are numerous and are an excellent friendly location for a family holiday.

The 'Ludolac' water park, on the edge of a lake, specialises in water games and covers nearly three hectares - offers a comprehensive choice of leisure facilities - tobogganing, water canons, waterfalls, bathing, waterjets, etc...

Aquaparc Isis, with its lush green surroundings and its location, close to the town of Dole, is renowned for its art and history and is blessed by numerous and varied water sports: river rapids, hot spring baths, waterslides, olympic pool, toboggan, etc... all the ingredients needed for a refreshing holiday.

The Lagoons in Chalain, the lakes around Bonnal, Malbuisson or Vouglans, the ponds around Forges, Osselle, Huanne-Montmartin... all excellent areas around the Franche-Comté region specially organised to help you get the most out of those hot summer days.



## Caving


There are more than 9000 swallow-holes and caves dotted around the region!

Oddly enough, the underground world is home to a remarkable heritage, with access to a network of caves covering many kilometres.

This hidden world gives access to a highly diverse set of situations, ideal for practising caving: karstic phenomena,

underground rivers, shafts, etc... a multitude of reasons to try out this unique environment.

Again, there are organisations throughout the whole region set up specially to welcome cavers, both novices and experts, with an excellent guide network.





III\_ In the air

# In the Air...

*Franche-Comté from the air... green, blue, golden, twinkling... the region mirrors the colours of the open sky, for an original voyage of discovery rich in sensations !*

## Flying for fun

Travel by air over the Franche-Comté region - let yourself be blown by the winds, crossing the hills and valleys, surmounting the highest peaks and discovering the amazing colours of this diverse region. The sky over the Franche-Comté region is home to a thousand airborne pleasures.

The flying clubs in the region offer a year-round service, providing lessons, tourist flights or first flight experiences - helping you discover the pleasures of flying for fun.

Le Doubs and the region of Belfort have all the facilities required for an adventure by balloon. The burners roar, the balloon inflates and the balloon gently drifts up into the sky. Dogs bark, and the multi-coloured steed gently drifts over a landscape that suddenly seems completely different. The view from sky to earth is never the same, the changing light, the unique route of each and every flight... all these factors make a balloon flight an unforgettable, unique and sensational experience.

## Ballooning

## Paragliding

Hanggliding, paragliding, gliding, parachuting... welcome to the air above the Franche-Comté - go with the wind for some unforgettable emotions.

The air is an essential part of the discovery of the region, creating the movement needed for progress, actively participating in the experience by giving of its energy: and man has evolved under a sky he has come to understand, a unique and original experience.

The air is pure and the landscape it dominates a perfectly painted image. The curves of the mountains add character to the plains, the water softens the valleys, the forests adorn the prairies, the villages take their place alongside the natural resources... all seems perfectly harmonised, a genuine masterpiece of inestimable value.

## Microlight

## Parachute

## Free Flight

## Hang Gliding



# **IV - Relaxation and Sensation**



# Relaxation and Sensation

## Golf courses and Golf Swing Courses

With a region as green as the Franche-Comté it is clear that it is the perfect place for playing golf. The Saint-Claude club, for example, offers a nine-hole mountain course with bunkers and water features. The Par 33 course is surrounded by forests with an incredible view over the valley and its surroundings. Open air and covered practice areas, putting greens... The Le Rochat club, near the Les Rousses lake provides an agreeable landscape with valleys and watercourse. Four kilometers from Lons-Le-Saunier is the Val de Sorne club, with its 18 hole course over a lush green and wooded landscape... The peaceful world of the Jura is the perfect place for a day's golf in the heart of nature.

In Le Doubs, the golf club and hotel - "Le Château de Bournef" is dominated by the majestic château, still inhabited by the family of the Marquis de Moustier. A deer park, covering some 80 hectares surrounding the château has been transformed into an 18-hole, Par 71 course. The golf course itself is one of nature's jewels. Close to Besançon, the La Chevillotte golf club has been

constructed amidst a magnificent, lush green park of some 200 hectares. Last but not least, to the north, 10 kilometres from Montbéliard is the Pruneville club with its relaxing 18-hole course.

To play a round of golf and enjoy the magnificent view over the Alsacian plains and the Black Forest one cannot do better than the Rougemont-Le-Château course. For a more intimate experience, the 18-hole course, covering 40 hectares, in Luxeuil-Belleuve is open all year round. In total, the Franche-Comté has 14 golf courses, meeting all the possible needs of any lover of the sport.

In Montenois, in Le Doubs, the golf swing course in the valley of La Rupt is located in a shady, lush green park, with a course covering over 3000m, 18 holes and a Par 72. Discovering the pleasures of Swing is aided by qualified instructors. "Les Jardins de l'étang", in Haute-Saône, offers an 18-hole, Par 72 course, covering 15 hectares.

## Adventure Sports

### Karting

In Septfontaine in Le Doubs, the senses vibrate to the rhythm of screaming engines! Adult or child, anyone can pilot (not just drive!) a kart with its incredibly responsive engine. Acceleration, Spins, Braking, Side-slip... Sensation seekers have found the perfect place to experience extreme fun!

### 4x4

Discover the region whilst experiencing an adventure... in a 4x4! Ideal for shared experiences as a family or amongst friends, the vehicle will lead you through kilometres of unexpected terrain, accompanied by a guide to assure your safety.

Juracing kart, in Moirans-en-Montagne, also offers a track of over a kilometre in length, for experts in high-speed driving and controlled skids.

The leisure centre in Rochejean, close to Métabief, gives one the opportunity to try out "Dévalkart" (Off-road karting), day and night!

Throughout the year, in all seasons, the pleasure of extreme driving can be experienced along, among other places, the 40 kilometres of prepared tracks around the villages in the heart of the valley of the Loue River. An original idea for a unique day out!

## Assault courses

Here, the forest is omnipresent. In addition to peaceful walks through the trees, the forests are also home to numerous, more dynamic and adventurous activities! Rope ladders, Tyrolean, Nepalese or Andean crossings, inverted ladders, jungle swings, trapeze and nepalese bridges... Various progressive workshops and activities are available to give the audacious a moment of adventure. Day and

night the adventures continue on your chosen site.

Sensation after sensation, whether one is launching oneself from a tarzan vine or in an extremely uncomfortable position hanging above a river, along the ramparts or in the middle of a pine forest...

## Climbing and Via ferrata

Via ferrata amongst the cliffs of Nans sous Sainte Anne or climbing on the Ornans rockfaces? The sport of climbing can be practiced everywhere, whether it be on natural faces or artificial climbing walls. The crags and rockfaces of the region call out like sirens to climbing enthusiasts!

The cliff faces are often greater than 40 metres high, requiring multiple pitches to reach the summit along a single route. The potential risk of this sport is monitored by qualified guides and monitors. The activity can thus be attempted without risk and is open to all those who love vertical faces.

## Open air games

### Mazes

From the age of the Pharaohs! 4 hectares of fun - work your memory and sense of orientation... and don't be afraid of getting lost!

In Pouligny, in Le Doubs, "Ludale Parc" has three separate mazes open to the public: The Labyrinth of Isis for children of 4 to 7 years old, the Labyrinth of Osiris for the pre-adolescents do discover, in company with Bes, the God of

Children and finally the Labyrinth of Horus, a real challenge for all who would dare!

The three labyrinths are completely soundproof, the only change to an ancient game... Come and share an unforgettable moment surrounded by a legendary civilisation.

### Summer Toboggan

Métabief, the home of cross-country skiing, a model of lush plentitude during the summer months: even in summer one can practice the sport of tobogganing here,

with two 600 metre long tracks intertwining through pasture and wood. From 6-years upwards, the whole family can try out these specially designed tracks.

### Roller skating

Permanant tracks - 3.5 km long: les Hôpitaux Vieux (La Saigne). 21 km of tarmaced track along the old railway line linking Vesoul and Fontenoy les Montbozon.

La **Trans'roller**: A nordic atmosphere is guaranteed along this track running from Pontarlier, Malbuisson and Mouthe

in the Haut-Doubs region. 34 km of skating awaits the participants each year in September, along a course following the course of the valley... for fun and games.



**V - Winter sports**

# Winter sports

The Mountains of the Jura have become one of the most popular destinations in France. The mountain range is perfect for numerous leisure activities, open to all. For all ages and all physical conditions the mountains of the Jura offer access to the perfect conditions for a person's first outing on snow. The ideal location for both learning and improving, for both downhill and cross-country skiing.

Further to the north, the Southern Vosges range, a range of wide open spaces, hides 2 authentic ski resorts: the Ballon d'Alsace and the Planche des Belles Filles. The Ballon

d'Alsace, a renowned national site, classified a protected zone since 1982 due to its landscape and environment, is located in the heart of the Regional Nature Reserve of the Ballons des Vosges. The generous natural surroundings of the Vosges range invites one to discover a multitude of sporting activities. In winter there is alpine skiing, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing to create a memorable experience in a snowy forest. The location has the perfect climate and all the advantages of a region blooming with healthy, regenerating activities.

***... Fantasy permeates the atmosphere, among the Chamoix, the dog sleds and the horses there are hundreds of kilometres of pistes constructed by the inhabitants of the mountains.***

## Cross country skiing and skating

The mountains of the Jura, so rightly acclaimed for the quality of cross-country skiing, are justified in having the reputation of such sites such as Mouthe and Chapelle-des-Bois.

There are numerous ski slopes, bearing the names of the region's Olympic and World champions. From agreeable loops like "Les Lacs" across the peat-land or in the wide Liadet valley - perfect for a first outing. An impression of completeness and calm, the sensation of leaving on a voyage of discovery invites the skier to continue onwards, to find an alpine lodge. The more sporting can try cross-country skating, adopting the style of a skater to cover even more ground!

The slopes of the nordic resorts in La Planche des Belles Filles and the Ballon d'Alsace in the Southern Vosges range have a total of 45 km of tracks covered by the appellation "France Ski de Fond". Numerous routes are available for lovers of the sport to discover a mountain range hiding a multitude of mysteries and facets!

The emblematic GTJ, or "Grande Traversée du Jura" is the reference for circuits in the Franche-Comté region. Its exceptional route covers more than 200 kilometres of

prepared and marked out tracks, punctuated by villages, places to eat and accommodation for the night.

Three or four thousand entrants for a single race of 76 kilometres: The "Transjurassienne" is the largest cross-country skiing competition in France. the equivalent of the famous Vasaloppet in Sweden, alongside it in the Worldloppet rankings, the race takes place on the third Sunday in February and is the nordic event of the French winter season.

Open stages take place every Sunday. The most prestigious being the 'Envolée nordique' in Chapelle-des-Bois, which, in early February, is fought over by teams of two, bringing friendship and companionship to the forefront of sporting values. The "Ronde du Crêt Monniot in Montbenoît", the "Marathon des cimes franco-suissees" in Fourgs, the "Valski" in Morteau, the Franco-Swiss Marathon in Pontarlier/Le Larmont, the "Marathon du Truchet", the "Randonnée des chalets"... are all races attracting lovers of the sport to the region to celebrate together the white magic of the Franche-Comté region.

## Alpine skiing

At the heart of the Doubs range, in the centre of the Jura mountains is a nordic zone spread over an area between Les Fourgs, le Mont d'Or and Mouthe, offering an excellent choice of skiing: summits, plateaux, lakes, gorges. Unique landscapes amongst which one can glide through the Franco-Swiss snow.

The quality of Nordic skiing in the Haut-Doubes is based upon tradition and the excellent environment... Upon clubs, extended families open to all and granting everyone the chance to express their love of skiing with numerous ski "stadiums" of the highest quality, slopes which are both training grounds and chances for amateurs to discover the wide open spaces and to mix with, even if they don't know it, the medal winners of the future.

From the top of the highest peak in the Doubs departement - the Mont d'Or at 1,463 metres above sea level one can see, in the distance, the entire chain of the Alps, from Valais to the Mont Blanc range. Around three hundred peaks at ones feet! The impressive ski jump in Chaux-Neuve is open all year round for both professional and amateur skiers to practice.

In the Haut-Jura region is the "Station aux 4 villages", the "Les Rousses", a resort of gentle slopes offering a vast area of skiable snow with over 39 ski lifts. Looking for originality? Take in the slopes of both Switzerland and France without passing a customs post! Forests, plateaux, peaks and valleys are all part of the landscape, with, as a bonus, a splendid view over the Alps and the city of Geneva. Numerous types of ski passes allow the skier to journey, in a single day, from village to village across the middle of this magnificent, protected zone. The connection between the ranges of La Dôle (Switzerland) and Jouvencelles (France) has created an international ski resort of around 500 hectares.

At the meeting point of three regions, Alsace, Lorraine and Franche-Comté, the Ballon d'Alsace invites skiers to escape onto its 14 runs, going from green to black. A snow garden for the children lets families enjoy their favourite sport whilst their children play in complete safety. For those who want to discover the pleasures of skiing a little more slowly, the sweetly named resort of the "Planche des Belles Filles" has three draglifts giving access to 5 pistes, suitable for all levels.

## Jöëring skiing

Jöëring skiing (or towed skiing) is similar to the Scandinavian Pulka (where a skier is towed by a dog), the only difference is that here a horse replaces the dog. However, comparisons should stop there, it must be said that this sport is not one you can improvise. It requires an excellent sense of balance; the skier guides the horse using long reins and uses techniques linked to both skiing and

towing. Rarely practiced in France, Jöëring Skiing has long been part of Les Rousses, in Foncine-le-Haut, Métabief-Mont-d'Or, Monts Jura and the Combe d'Abondance. For example, the equestrian hostel in Combe d'Abondance will teach the sport to all those who love nature, horses and skiing. New sensations guaranteed!

## Snowshoes

The snowshoe, a tool once used by trappers on the hunt for furs, has nowadays become one of the most popular of Nordic activities.

Snowshoeing is a peaceful form of winter hiking. The walker feels like a genuine explorer, ready to conquer the immense white spaces he finds before him. When trying this out "off-piste" or to learn more about the local flora and fauna it is advisable to employ the services of a guide. However, there is a network of rolled paths and prepared tracks suitable for all levels to try out the sport in complete safety and freedom.

The perfect compromise between pleasure and relaxation of the spirit is to take the "special snowshoe" circuits available in around a dozen of the stations. These circular routes, from 4 to 8 kilometres in length, are specially prepared, rolled and completely safe. A highly educational sport as it helps one to recognise, for example, the tracks of wild animals or rare plants, but also lets one relax in the natural surroundings.

## Dog sleds

With its landscape comparable to that of the Canadian North, the Haut-Doubs is the perfect territory for a dog sled. Siberian Huskies and Alaskan Malamutes are proud to share a dream with their 'masters for a day'.

So, a visit to "Odyssée Blanche", the Arctic Dog Park in the valley of the Mouthe in Chaux-Neuve, cannot be missed! This isolated farm, on the edges of the forest, has some forty arctic dogs. One of the best teams outside of the lands of the north. Helping feed the pack in the evening is a real treat. The "Odyssée Blanche" offers the chance to find out all about the life of a dog pack and its social and hierarchical organisation with tours of the Dog Park and through exhibitions and videos.

To teach you how to drive the sled whilst discovering these marvellous views and admiring the work of the dogs there are numerous professionals willing to offer various formats of dog sled rides: the teams of Adam's Nordic Adventure, "le Rêve des neiges", "les Jurachiens", "l'école comtoise des mushers" and the Pulka team (with 10 km of pre-prepared tracks)... The perfect way of becoming a 'musher' in just half a day!

## The Ski Resorts

Whenever one talks about winter activities one thinks about winter sports resorts... And yet again the Franche-Comté region is lucky enough to have preserved its villages with their convivial inhabitants, the infrastructure is excellent and the activities varied.

In the very heart of the European continent the mountains of the Jura hide, at their feet, many charming little villages for accommodation. Cross-country and alpine skiing, tobogganing, dog sledding, snowshoes... All the winter sports are accounted for!

The Hautes Combes, a genuine mountainous zone at an altitude of over 1000 metres is the highest habitable zone in the Jura range. Its nine villages; along the frontier of the Jura and Ain departments; are part of the Regional Nature Reserve of the Haut-Jura. The "Station des 4 villages", nowadays more commonly called "Les Rousses", has exceptional snow cover for more than 120 days per year. Its ski slopes, covering 7400 hectares, offer high-quality skiing

for all levels of expertise, lovers of cross country or downhill alike. Lovers of alpine skiing and the newer sports are not forgotten either, with more than 40 km of track. The station of 'Métabief' in Le Doubs offers a veritable cocktail of activities for the whole family, all within an authentic atmosphere.

In the mountains of the Southern Vosges, the stations of the "Ballon d'Alsace" and the "Planche des Belles Filles" are ideal locations for family holidays. The "Planche des Belles Filles", on the border of Haute-Saône and Belfort, links downhill and cross country skiing in a wooded environment of untamed nature. The "Ballon d'Alsace", a nationally classified and protected site, is the meeting point of three regions: Lorraine, Franche-Comté and Alsace... An excellent opportunity to discover their differing cultures, architecture and beauty, in addition to the generous nature of their inhabitants!

## VI\_ Useful Addresses

# Useful Addresses...

## **Comité Régional du Tourisme de Franche-Comté (Regional Tourist Board)**

" La City " - 4, rue Gabriel Plançon - 25044 Besançon Cedex  
Tel. : 03 81 25 08 08 - Fax : 03 81 83 35 82  
Website : [www.franche-comte.org](http://www.franche-comte.org) – E-mail (public) : [crt@franche-comte.org](mailto:crt@franche-comte.org)

## **Maison de la Franche-Comté**

2, Boulevard de la Madeleine - 75009 Paris  
Tel. : 01 42 66 26 28 - Fax : 01 49 24 96 56  
E-mail : [mfc@franche-comte.org](mailto:mfc@franche-comte.org)

## **Les Grandes Traversées du Jura**

Espace nordique jurassien - 15 et 17, Grande Rue - 39150 Les Planches en Montagne  
Tél. : 03 84 51 51 53

## **Office de tourisme de Métabief - Mont d'Or (Tourist Information Office - Métabief - Mont d'Or)**

25370 Les Hôpitaux Neufs  
Tel. : 03 81 49 13 81 - Fax : 03 81 49 09 27  
E-mail : [ot@metabief-montdor.com](mailto:ot@metabief-montdor.com)

## **Office de tourisme des Rousses (Tourist Information Office - Les Rousses)**

BP 8 - 39220 Les Rousses  
Tel. : 03 84 60 02 55 - Fax : 03 84 60 52 03

## **Ligue cyclotourisme (The league of cycle tourists)**

4, rue du Stade - 70000 Vesoul  
Tel. : 03 84 76 14 27

## **Groupement du tourisme fluvial en Franche-Comté (Franche-Comté Watersports Association)**

6, rue de Chalezeule - 25000 Besançon  
Tel. : 03 81 88 71 38 - Fax : 03 81 80 93 17  
e-mail : [gif.fc@wanadoo.fr](mailto:gif.fc@wanadoo.fr)

## **Ligue Franche-Comté canoë-kayak (Franche-Comté canoe-kayak Assoc.)**

4, rue brosses - 25000 Besançon  
Tel. : 03 81 85 01 78

## **Maison nationale de l'eau et de la pêche (National Fishing Centre)**

36, rue Saint-Laurent - 25290 Ornans  
Tel. : 03 81 57 14 49 - Fax : 03 81 57 19 81  
E-mail : [mnep@wanadoo.fr](mailto:mnep@wanadoo.fr)

## **Syndicat national des accompagnateurs de montagne du Jura (site internet) (National Union for Jura Mountain Guides (Website))**

### **Parc naturel régional du Haut Jura**

Maison du HautJura - 39 310 Lajoux  
Tél. : 03 84 34 12 30 - Fax : 03 84 41 24 01  
E-mail : [parc@parc-hautjura.fr](mailto:parc@parc-hautjura.fr)

### **Parc naturel régional du Ballon des Vosges (Regional Nature Reserve - Ballon des Vosges)**

Château-Lambert offices  
Website : [www.parc-ballons-vosges.fr](http://www.parc-ballons-vosges.fr)  
Tel. : 03 84 20 49 84 - Fax : 03 84 20 48 42  
E-mail : [info@parc-ballons-vosges.fr](mailto:info@parc-ballons-vosges.fr)

### **Comité Régional d'Équitation (Regional Committee for Equine Sports)**

52, rue de Dole - 25000 Besançon  
Tel. : 03 81 52 67 40

### **Les Hautes Combes**

Information points for the Hautes-Combes  
Tel. : 03 84 41 27 01 (Lajoux) - Tel. : 03 84 42 72 85 (La Pesse)

### **Syndicat Planche des Belles Filles (Planche des Belles Filles Assoc.)**

Lieu dit Planche des Belles Filles - 70290 Plancher les Mines  
Tel. : 03 84 23 62 11

### **SMIBA (Ballon d'Alsace - Joint Union)**

2 bis, rue G. Clémenceau - 90000 Belfort  
Tél. : 03 84 28 12 01 - Fax : 03 84 21 21 95