

For 1 to 10 participants of all ages. Average duration : 1h30

To play, you will need a QR code reader on your smart phone, which you can download for free on Google Play for android, or from the Apple Store for iphones.

Rules

Find the 4 numbers that compose the code to open the key box you will find at the end of your adventure.

The starting point is located at :

23 rue du Vieux Pressoir, where you will find this sign :



Good luck !





 Start

 Finish



Follow the "Chemin des Oliviers" Trail markers



It's in 1352 that **Nicolas de la Jugie** settles in the castle of La Livinière, along with his father Jacques, after purchasing the lordships of Ferrals-les-Montagnes and La Livinière, two years before.

Nicolas was born in the Limousin region, in the hamlet of La Jugie, located in the Eyrein parish, near Rosiers-d'Égletons.

He is the son of Jacques de La Jugie and Guillaumette Roger. Nicolas is an avid hunter, he used to hunt in the Avignon region, where he lived with his uncle Clément VI since 1342.

In those days, lords were assisted by their "Piqueur". A "Piqueur" is the man who leads the hunting dogs.

He takes care of the dogs, makes them hunt for his lord and organizes the hunting outings for the lord.

He's a trustworthy man, and the success of the lord's hunting outing depends on him. That is what will bring food to the lord and his entourage.

Nicolas de la Jugie's "piqueur" is **Pierre de La Livinière**, who's direct heir is the largest olive oil and olive producer in La Livinière.

Now climb up our magnificent Roman Calade (stone lined trail), to take in the history and feel the soul of this place...think about those who, for centuries, have climbed up and down this same calade, some of them having had the chance to look at the magnificent castle of La Livinière and its two sets of ramparts.

The word « calade » comes from the Occitan « calar » which means "coming down", from the Gallic root « cal » which means "stone", or from the Latin « callis » which describes a narrow pedestrian trail.

Nowadays, a calade represents a trail on a hillside that is paved with stones. These stones were used to break the flow of water during hard rain events, in order to preserve the trail and avoid the sliding of the dirt and the formation of holes.

When at the top of the calade, enjoy the fabulous view of our medieval village.

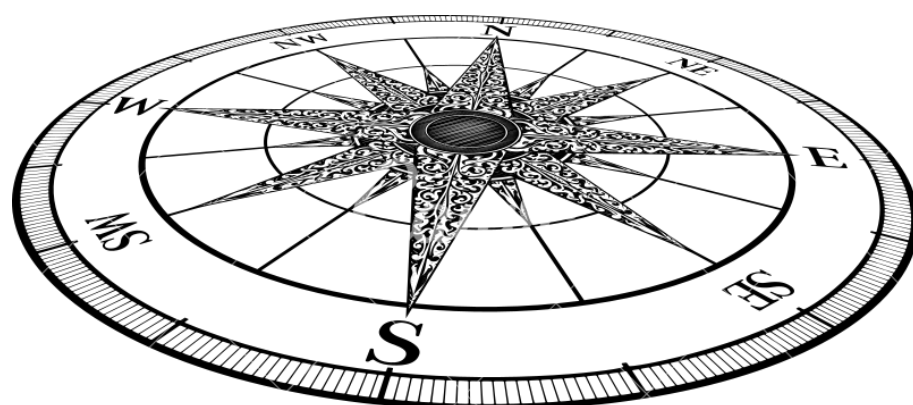
Dating back to the 11th century A.D., the St-Etienne church looks like no other on French soil. In 1102, Bertrand, bishop of Narbonne, gave the Saint-Etienne de Cella Vinaria church to the abbey of Saint-Pons. It was, originally, the old chapel of the castle dedicated to Saint-Sauveur.

Of the 11th Century A.D. Roman style church, remains only the lower part of the apse which was elevated during the 15th Century A.D. The square clock tower contains two sets of twin openings on two levels. It was later covered with a beautiful stone cupola (17th Century A.D.).

According to the legend, the design of the clock tower was brought back by a knight, on his way back from the crusades.

It's in the St-Etienne church's St-Blaise chapel that **Nicolas de la Jugie** is buried, with **Pierre de la Livinière**, buried next to him...a symbol of the friendship and fraternity the two men had.

Continue on the trail for approximately 50 meters, below the almond trees.



Nowadays, it's « **Petit Pierre** », descendant of **Pierre de la Livinière**, who marks and beautifies the landscape with his olive orchards and his preservation of the dry stack stone cultural heritage.

The tradition of dry stack stone building appeared in eastern Languedoc at the end of the Neolithic period, and ended at the beginning of the 20th Century A.D.

We find it in the walls that border our trails, in the small shelters (capitelles) built here and there, in the building of ramparts and houses, in the building of enclosures, but also in the making of tools such as millstones and millstone bases that were used to press olives to make oil used for multiple purposes.

Look for the oil press stone base from the Roman era...we call it here « le bénitier ». This rock pierced three times to form a key hole, is a Roman pediculus, which is the base of an olive press, remain of the local ancient olive growing culture.

On the wall facing the stone base, you will find your first clue. Make note of it...this is your first of a series of four numbers which will allow you to open the keybox at the end of your adventure.

The use of olive oil in the Middle Ages is linked to religious ceremonies and its production is taxed directly from the harvest. In the 17th century A.D., olive orchards are more numerous than wheat fields or vineyards. The olive oil is exported to Switzerland, Germany or Great Britain. A royal decree makes it the exclusive fat that can be used in the making of soaps. Olive oil is also used in the processing of wool and leather, both flourishing industries in the **Montagne Noire (Black Mountain)**.

Written mentions of a predominant olive growing culture in the Minervois region as well as its presence in day to day life are found starting in the 18th Century A.D. . At that time, each village had its own olive press which belongs to a private individual or to the community. It is said that La Livinière had two.

Continue your adventure on the Olive Tree Trail, following the **green trail markers** 

Take some time to admire the magnificent and numerous "capitelles" along the way, timeless witnesses of a century's past rural life. From "pierre en pierre" (stone to stone), landscapes are designed and shaped with wild olive trees, olive orchards, Spanish brooms, vineyards and other cypress.

The olive tree variety that grows wild in our area is called "oléastre". Greeks and Romans, as soon as the 6th Century B.C., established the farming of the olive tree in our region along with that of grape vines.

It's the Goddess Athena (**Minerva** for the Romans) who first grafted a wild olive tree, according to Greek mythology. It is by "giving birth" to this tree, the essence of life, that she allegedly gained the favors of the Gods, in front of Poseidon during the creation of Athens. **From Minerva to Minervois**, there is only a short step.

Notice the **dry stack stone walls** that surround the vineyards...a lot of them were erected to channel sudden water flows created by hard rains from Mediterranean meteorological episodes. They are of exceptional quality and act as witnesses to the local rural expertise.

You are now arriving at the transition between two vineyards, symbolized by a **wood bridge**, in the heart of a small valley. Not far from here, the legend tells us, was a Roman clay roof tile and wine amphoras manufacture.

Find here the second number for the code, located knee high for an average size adult.

Continue your adventure on the Olive Tree Trail, by following the green trail markers. 

Close to a stone wall or near a capitelle, take the time to pause for a few minutes. Close your eyes. Listen to the breathing of the men and women who took out of the ground all those stones, one by one, to be able to plant it. Imagine them building stone by stone all those walls and shelters, without any mortar. **Put your hands on thoses stones and listen...**

Here, transforming the land to be able to grow things took a tremendous amount of work. You had to retain the soil on hillsides and remove the larger stones from the soil... The stones taken from the land were used as building material for a variety of projects. Walls, retaining walls, shelters, houses, terraces and so many more hand made ingenious constructions such as rabbit catchers or wells..the use of dry stones combines ingenuity, patience and expertise...

A true link between nature and men, they tell the story of **those who shaped the rural land of the Minervois**.

A few minutes later, through vineyards and trails, still following the green markers, you will arrive at the "Pujol" olive orchard.

Over to your right, you can see the **Alaric** mountain, the **Corbières** mountains, and, on a clear day, you can even see the majestic **Canigó** mountain.

Back to the local and regional olive growing history. In 1754, it is written that La Livinière produces 80 "charges" of olive oil which are taken to Carcassonne. Harsh winters in 1709, 1721, 1755 and 1766 yielded a massive lack of fruits and a lot of trees were seriously damaged. Successive hard freezes, the emergence of new grain based oils for consumption and oil for lighting, competition from other olive oil producing regions, the beginning of commercial exchanges with Italy and Spain, and the emergence of grape growing, marked the decline of the olive oil production in the Languedoc region at the end of the 19th Century A.D.

After a new rise in the interest for olive oil during World War II, the year 1956 was fatal to the olive farming industry in the Languedoc region : temperatures brutally dropped to -20°C in the early spring; 95% of the orchards are destroyed and very few mills will survive the losses.

Symbol of the sunshine, of our "art de vivre" and of the Mediterranean climate and way of life, the olive tree is finding its place again in the Minervois. Languedoc-Roussillon is today the second largest producer of France, behind the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, with an important increase of the growing surfaces in the Aude and the Hérault départements.

Olive oil is a pure fruit juice, since only the oil contained in the fruits is extracted using a mechanical process. It takes between 4 and 11 kg of fruits to obtain one liter of oil, depending on the variety.

You will find the third number of the code, on the ornithological habitat located behind the educational kiosk...be careful in case someone would be home. 

Continue your adventure on the Olive Tree Trail, following the green trail markers. 

Enter the last olive orchard on the Olive tree Trail...the **Viala orchard**. This orchard belongs to our famous « **Petit Pierre** », whose ancestor, remember, was **Pierre de la Livinière**, Nicolas de la Jugie lord of La Livinière's "piqueur". When Pierre was (truly) little, he spent a lot of time with his grand-father who would teach him everything he knew about nature, grapevines and olive trees. He loved climbing up into the oldest olive tree of the orchard, located below, at the other end of the orchard.

Go and pay that tree a visit...you will easily recognize it, with its magnificent trunk naturally hollowed.

In that hole, Pierre would insert a stone to easily climb it. From up there, he would observe his grand-father talk to the olive trees, like only a man full of wisdom, knowledge and love for nature could do.

It is from him that « Petit Pierre » learned everything...it is from these unequalled moments that the rural transmission of traditions was perpetuated. Close your eyes and imagine the happiness and the intense pride that this child feels while observing and listening (to) his grand-father, this profound feeling of a love and admiration without end that will never fade, and that will later be shared with future generations.

Now go back to the educational kiosks, at the top of the orchard. Somewhere on the signs, you will find the answer to the next question, which will give you the last number of the code.

What is the greatest percentage of olive flowers that will turn into fruits during the "nouaison"?

You now have all four clues (figures) which compose the **code** to open the key box located behind one of the educational kiosks.

Put in the code...and open the box...

Scan the QR code located in the back of the box and close the box with the QR code still inside. Please mix up the code on the box before leaving.



Photo clue





Thank you!

We hope you had a great time while discovering our story inspired by real characters. Our region is magical and magnificent, and Florir loves to showcase it through our treasure hunts, our walking trails and our festivals and other workshops. Florir is composed only of volunteers.

To support our efforts and our projects, please consider becoming a member or making a donation by scanning the following QR code:



Your contribution helps us to continue providing quality events, helps us maintain our hiking trails, and helps us develop new projects linked to nature, the preservation of the environment, biodiversity & wellness, as well as showcasing our beautiful local heritage.

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