



Origins :

In the Tertiary period, Le Malzieu was a lake which, after the water receded, became an empty basin. The erosion carved the Verdezun gorges where the Truyère river passes through. The presence of numerous flint tools shows tracks of the stone age. The megalithic civilisation is represented by the "Pinjo Chabre" menhir near Mazeyrac (on the road to La Garde), and the "Puor Negro" menhir next to Julianges.

Gallo-Roman period :

There is some evidence of the Gallo-Roman period in Le Malzieu and around it, by pieces of pottery, old tiles and even walls... Walls, towers and underground tunnels reveal the existence of a Celtic oppidum in Verdezun. This oppidum, due to its high location and panoramic view, was the first fortress settled in this area. The Romans established their settlements on the surrounding hillsides.

The Middle Ages :

During this period, the walls, towers, gates and underground tunnels, forming the town of Le Malzieu, were built. Le Malzieu became a fortified town and a city with its own judges. This is revealed by the Governor's house and tower, and the Clock Tower (La Tour de l'Horloge), built in the 11th century and where the prisoners were kept.



The 16th century :

In the 16th century, during the French Religious War, Le Malzieu was besieged by the Huguenot Captain Mathieu Merle. He went inside the center of the city on the 17th of November 1573, crossing a passageway, nowadays called "le Trou de Merle". He destroyed the church and killed 14 priests in a dead-end street now called "la Sanguinerie". Merle left the town in 1576 and the church was rebuilt in 1582.



The 17th century :

The plague devastated Le Malzieu killing 85% of the local population. Plague victims were buried in a cemetery near the village of Fantoubette where there is now a crucifix. In 1632, to fight against the disease, an apothecary called Jean Conché burnt every affected house for decontaminating the town. But a terrible fire destroyed a large part of the city. After this fire, the reconstruction has provided some houses with magnificent granite doorways surmounted by triangular pediments.

A map of 1648 and scallop shell carvings on church walls show Le Malzieu like a stage on the pilgrim route between Le Puy and Santiago de Compostella.



The 18th century :

Between 1764 and 1767, in Le Malzieu and across the North of Lozère countryside, Haute-Loire and Cantal areas, the "Beast of Gévaudan" (*La bête du Gévaudan*) made numerous attacks. This gigantic animal appeared suddenly and attacked women and children, killing about a hundred people. The death of the twelve-year old Marie-Jeanne Rousset was recorded in Le Malzieu town hall. Several hunting parties were organised to bring this terror to an end. On the 19th of June 1767, during a hunt ordered by the "Marquis d'Apcher" in the Ténazeyre Forest, Jean Chastel killed the Beast. He caught the Beast in "Sogne d'Auvers" next to the Mont Mouchet. Many writers have been inspiring and creating legends of The Beast Of Gévaudan, for centuries. Nowadays nobody yet knows what the Beast really was...

Tourism Office Margeride en Gévaudan

Tourism information office of Le Malzieu

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La Lozère,
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Historical Tour



Le Malzieu-Ville

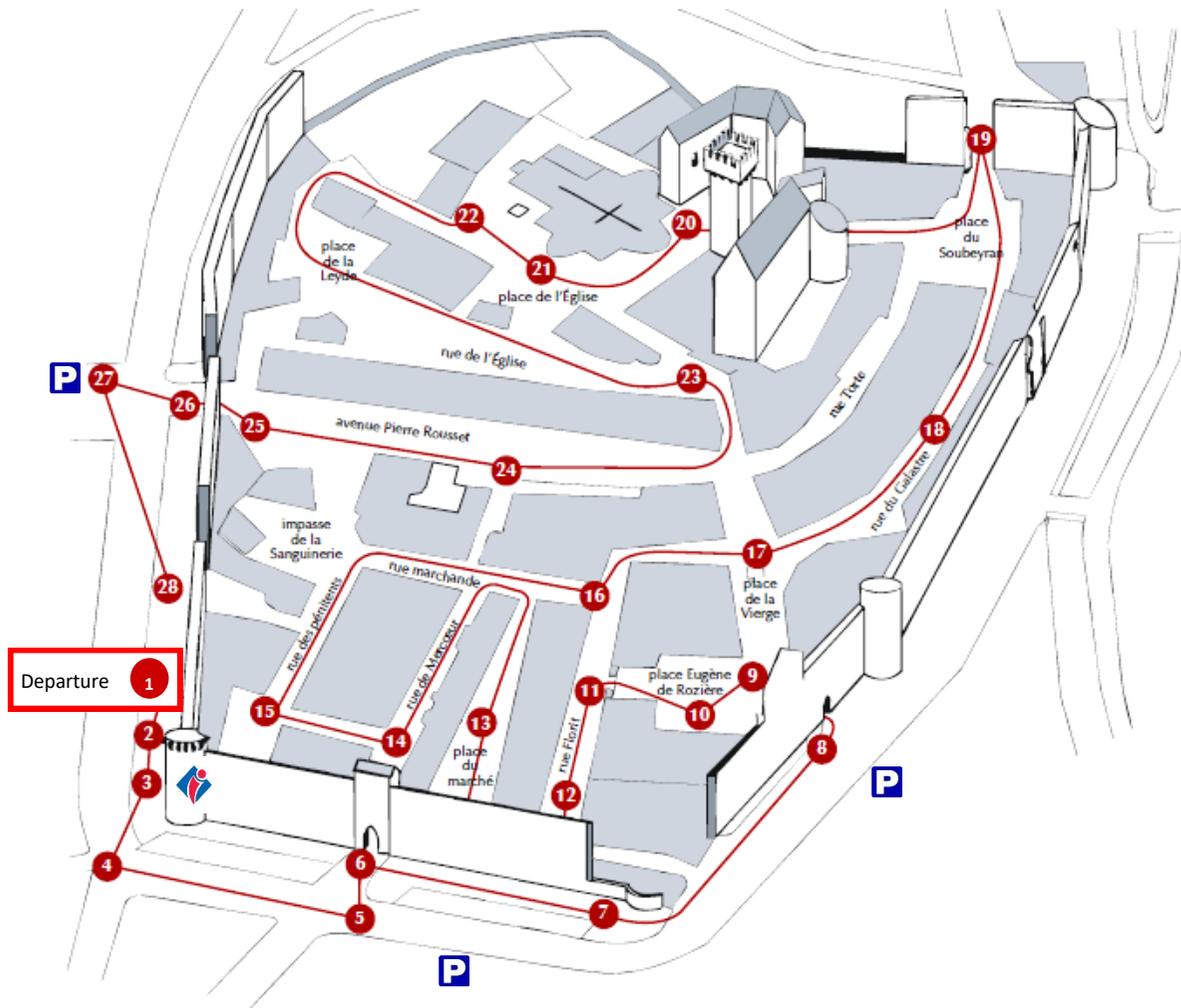
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In the heart of the medieval Malzieu

An immersion in a thousand-year-old village, gradually revealed by reading information boards of the tour. A stroll where every precious landmark gives testimonies of a medieval city (vestiges of city gates, ramparts, towers, mansions, old stalls...), city that was an important feudal stronghold of the Mercoeur family.

A visit that aims toward the present time, some famous figures of this city ... and the History of France. A tour through a maze of cobblestone streets of a city which deserves its name of "Pearl of the Valley".



- 1 Start / Town hall - *Départ / Mairie*
- 2 Former Penitents chapel - *Ancienne chapelle des Pénitents*
- 3 Tourist Office / Bodon's tower - *Office de Tourisme / La Tour de Bodon*
- 4 *Hôtel de la croix blanche*
- 5 Travellers hotel - *Hôtel des voyageurs*
- 6 The high gate - *La porte haute*
- 7 The medieval surrounding wall - *L'enceinte médiévale*
- 8 The Merle hole - *Le Trou de Merle*
- 9 Robert de Flers (1872-1927)
- 10 Former Ursuline convent - *L'ancien couvent des Ursulines*
- 11 Family house of vice-admiral Jacques Choupin
- 12 An 17th century house - *Maison du 17^{ème} siècle*
- 13 Market place - *Place du marché*
- 14 Pierre de Mercoeur street
- 15 *Place des Olliers*
- 16 Measuring rod of drapers - *L'Aune des drapiers*
- 17 Family house of Eugene Thomas Louis Marie de Rozière
- 18 Galastre street
- 19 Soubeyran's gate - Caminos de Santiago - *La porte du Soubeyran*
- 20 Fort "Entiq"
- 21 Saint-Hippolyte Church - *L'église St-Hippolyte*
- 22 General Bertrand Louis Brun de Villeret
- 23 Governor's house and tower - *Maison du Gouverneur*
- 24 Guy de Chaulhac, or Guy de Chauliac
- 25 General Louis d'Aurelles de Paladines (1804-1877)
- 26 Drolog's gate - *La porte des Drologs*
- 27 Fairground - *La place du Foirail*
- 28 Former school and municipal building - *Cité Jean Boulet*