

the international
resources centre
of thermal heritage

Vichy



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The European Project "Sources of Culture : the Cafés of Europe" (SOURCE)

The Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central is proposing this European project in partnership with the European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA), a network already recognised by the Council of Europe, in the framework of the European Culture Programme 2007-2013, whose objectives are cultural cooperation and intercultural dialogue.

The SOURCE project is developing from May 2013 to April 2015, and is inspired by a wealth of history and cultural heritage.

The SOURCE project is made up of four strands:

- **The Cafés of Europe:** discussions on the future of spa towns organised through a series of prestigious round tables called "Cafés of Europe", linked to large-scale cultural festivals taking place in the towns.
- **Festivals:** the spa towns as sources of creativity. The objective of this operation is to spread awareness among European citizens of the rich variety of festivals and exhibitions to be found in the spa towns of Europe..
- **At the Sources of Europe:** an interactive novel entitled "At the Sources of Europe" has been written and illustrated via social media, and retraces the journeys of four figures who frequented the spa towns of Europe.
- **The International Thermal Heritage Resource Centre:** an international centre for documentation on thermal heritage, created to preserve documents and oeuvres both old and new, online and in hard copy (documentation, iconography, bibliography, website list, human resources directory, etc.).

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The city of Vichy has been proposed as the International Resource Centre of Thermal Heritage. It is an integral part of the municipal multimedia centre's Heritage Collections, where is also located the Valery-Larbaud Museum-Library, and the Regional Collection.



1. Documentation : books, brochures, press items. . .

Particular effort has been made towards the current heritage collections: local (Vichy) and regional (Auvergne) documentation. There are around 800 volumes, whose references can be consulted in the Multimedia Centre's online catalogue:
www.ville-vichy.fr/accueil-mediatheque.htm

Furthermore, the Multimedia Centre conserves the library of the former Société des Sciences médicales, founded in Vichy in 1884. In this library are around 700 works and 10 reviews, mostly dating from the 19th Century and first third of the 20th Century, on the subject of thermal activity. These documents will be given priority so as to make them also viewable on the Multimedia Centre's online catalogue.



2. Iconography: prints, postcards, architectural, plans...

In the Multimedia Centre's preserved collections of iconography, a large part of the documents are more or less closely related to the spa's thermal activity: prints depicting the springs or 19th Century thermal establishments, publicity posters illustrated for the spa, or architectural plans.

Prints and posters have been computerised and digitised. However, only a very small amount of the Percilly-Brière company's architectural plans have been processed yet. These constitute a primordial resource for information on the Vichy region's thermal heritage. The Multimedia Centre's collection has also just been enriched by the collection of Dr Cousseau, providing 8,000 more postcards to process.



3. Acquisition of documents

In terms of acquiring documents (textual or iconographical), priority is given to those concerning thermal heritage, with a view to completing existing collections. Purchases focus on works in French on French thermal resorts, and in particular those from the Auvergne region, as well as foreign-language works on the spas of the countries concerned (with the exception of specialized medical works).

4. Bibliography: list of existing works and studies

The composition and a regular update of a bibliography dedicated to European thermal heritage is in production and will be posted online.

5. website list: list of useful websites

The composition of a list of websites dedicated to European thermal spas and particularly to their heritage is in production and will be posted online.

6. Directory: list of human resources

A human resources list for the thermal heritage field for the 25 European EHTTA partner thermal spas is being produced and will be posted online in order to create synergies between researchers from all countries.

more information:

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THE ROUTE OF SPA TOWNS IN THE MASSIF CENTRAL

www.villesdeaux.com

The Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central was created in 1998 under the impulse of the Massif Central DATAR (Delegation for Land Planning and Management, and Regional Action), and the desire of the mayors of thermal towns to bring about a tourist network dedicated to spa towns. The Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central brings together 18 spa towns spread out over 5 regions (Auvergne, Bourgogne, Limousin, Rhône-Alpes and Midi-Pyrénées) and 9 departments (Allier, Ardèche, Aveyron, Cantal, Creuse, Loire, Nièvre, Puy-de-Dôme, Saône-et-Loire): Bourbon-Lancy, Bourbon-l'Archambault, La Bourboule, Châteauneuf-les-Bains, Châtel-Guyon, Chaudes-Aigues, Cransac-les-Thermes, Evaux-les-Bains, Meyras / Neyrac-les-Bains, le Mont-Dore, Montrond-les-Bains, Néris-les-Bains, Royat - Chamalières, Saint-Honoré-les-Bains, Saint-Laurent-les-Bains, Saint-Nectaire, Vals-les-Bains and Vichy. It is through focusing on the promotion of the specific characteristics of the spa towns that the Association has built its development strategy. First of all, it has encouraged the emergence of a new well-being product on a scale across the Massif Central region, accompanying structuring projects of thermo-recreation and rehabilitation centres and developing their marketing towards travellers. Since 2008, the Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central has focused on the other tourist aspect of the thermal towns, namely their thermal heritage. This promotional approach aimed at defending common cultural values is now in full force. 3 years ago, the Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central set itself on a European approach, becoming an associate member of the EHTTA. Today, 5 Massif Central spa towns (Vichy, le Mont-Dore, Royat-Chamalières, Châtel-Guyon and La Bourboule) are now also EHTTA members.



THE EHTTA (EUROPEAN HISTORIC THERMAL TOWNS ASSOCIATION)

www.ehtta.eu

European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA) is a network that was created in Brussels in 2009, composed of 25 member spa towns (including Evian in France, Baden Baden in Germany, Bath in the United Kingdom, Ourense in Spain, Acqui Terme and Montecatini Terme in Italy, the Karlovy Vary region in the Czech Republic, Budapest in Hungary and Bursa in Turkey) situated in 11 European countries, all possessing an emblematic architectural heritage and whose mineral water's healing properties are recognised on a European scale. The Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central is an associate member of EHTTA.

The objectives of this European network consist of obtaining recognition of the innovative and cultural characteristics of the European spa towns from the European Union, with a view to developing their tourist activity in the framework of a new plan encouraging the cross-border tourism of "Destination Europe". EHTTA encourages the development and economic restructuring of thermal towns, and safeguarding their cultural heritage through the exchange of experiences and best practices on a European level.

Collectively, the member towns of EHTTA are an integral part of the Cultural Route of Historic Thermal Towns, one of the 26 cultural routes recognised by the Council of Europe (under the same title as the cultural route known as the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes).