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With a wealth of underground hot springs, a Mediterranean climate that preserves biodiversity, the cultivation of ancestral produce - both local and from further afield - and its unique location between the Mediterranean and the Pyrenees, this French department offers a wealth of beauty resources and the promise of reinvigorating experiences.

### Thermal hot springs:

Thermal spas that offer wellness and treatment breaks of varying duration (see wellness press file)

### Thermal plankton



Thermal plankton is grown on-site at the Saint-Thomas Spa and is an essential and regenerating ingredient in the beauty products that are sold under the Thermanence brand. Thermal plankton was discovered in the 1950s and was first used by the Biotherm brand under its founder Jeanine Marissal. She was convinced of the benefits of this marine active ingredient, and so she added thermal plankton extract from the springs of the Molitg-les-Bains mountains to her formulations. In the 1990s, Biotherm biologists reproduced this extract in the laboratory.

### Spirulina



Spirulina, also known as 'blue-green algae', is spiral-shaped cyanobacteria of aquatic origin and measures 25 to 50 thousandths of a millimetre. It grows in aquaculture in brackish (slightly salty) water at a temperature of between 20 and 35°C. Spirulina is rich in iron, vitamins A and B12, vitamins B, E and trace elements, and spirulina flakes provide 100% of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of iron, vitamins A and B12. Spirulina contains 50 to 70% of rich and digestible proteins (8 essential amino acids), omega 6, group B vitamins, vitamin E and trace elements. 4 producers (Chant de l'Eau in Fuilla, Belle Spiruline in Prades, Spiruline du Roussillon in LLupia, Alg'ethic in Torreilles) supply this super food rediscovered in the 20th century by Belgian botanist Jean Léonard.

## MEDIA RELATIONS OFFICE

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## PYRÉNÉES MÉDITERRANÉE EN PAYS CATALAN

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## Essential oils produced throughout the department



Of the 63 producers in the PPAM (perfumed, aromatic and medicinal plants) sector, which is divided into two branches (fresh and dry plants), 28 producers grow thyme, rosemary, lavender, verbena, helichrysum, and savoury for essential oils. These are obtained by distillation, the principal method of production which consists of mixing the plants in a vat, heating the mixture and allowing the resulting steam to cool. The vapour condenses to become a liquid. This liquid then settles at the bottom of the container leaving the essential oil to form. On top, there is the distilled plant water, known as hydrolat, which is sold as such. There are two distilleries in the department as well as a mobile collective processing workshop in Theza: the Floraluna distillery with two stills of 500 and 125 litres, and the Quintessentiel distillery with two copper stills of 80 and 150 litres. The Quintessentiel association, which has a large collection of Damask roses, organises discovery and picking days on Fridays during the season (prior booking required).

There is also Phytotagante, a company specialising in the production of plant extracts for cosmetics, perfumery and aromatherapy, which imports its raw materials from all over the world.

## Gemmotherapy



A recent branch of phytotherapy which uses buds for treatments by macerating them cold in solutions of water, alcohol and glycerin according to the method developed by Dr Pol Henri. The results are similar to those of phytotherapy and the use of plant stem cells allow for the maximum possible benefits. Available since 2020.

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## Abies Lagrimus



Claude Sarda, a native of the region, is based in Sahorre, in the Canigou mountains. He gathers Abies Alba pine cones in summer, the basic ingredient of the syrup. He uses the syrup to make an organic range, including pine balsamic glaze, 2 types of pine vinegar, pine pepper, floral pearls, 2 liqueurs and the latest innovation, Pyrenean *fleur de sel*. Food and health products that have been enriched with the latest addition to the range: birch sap.

## Sylvotherapy



Sylvotherapy practices are also known as 'forest bathing'. In Japan, forest bathing is even recognised as a medical practice, known as Shinrin-Yoku. According to its followers, the benefits include feeling better overall, learning to harmonise with your surrounding environment, improved physical and mental health, learning to share emotions and better respect the planet. And finally recognising that all living species are dependent on one another.

A Mediterranean diet, regular exercise in the vast natural playground of the Pyrénées-Orientales and pure, invigorating air are all essential for a smooth, serene and sustainable journey through the ageing process.

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