

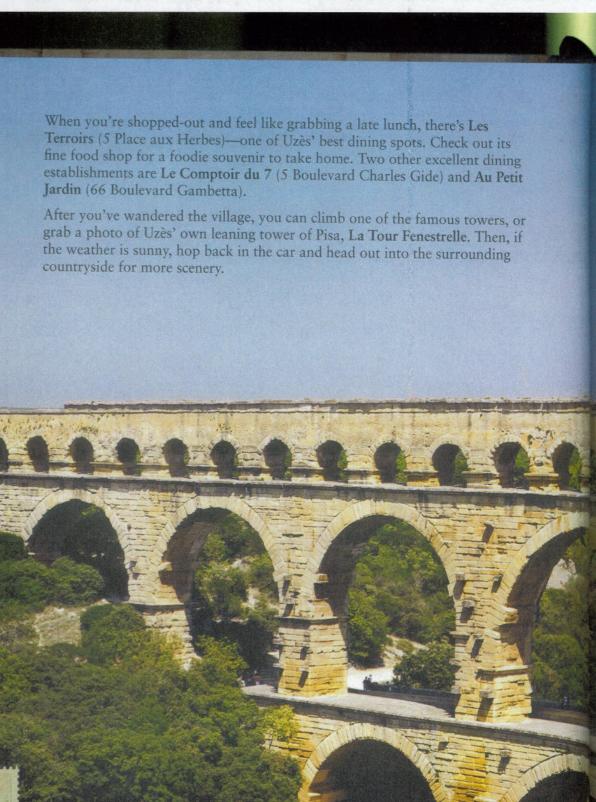
Uzès, with its high towers and narrow medieval streets, is a place lost in time. It's almost as if it were built on the back lot of a Hollywood studio to resemble a fairytale French village. But I assure you, it's not. It's authentic Provence.

Uzès may be small (population 8,300), but makes up for its size with architecture that is pure theater. You can see the skyline long before you reach it. The town's lofty towers strike a dramatic note, while soaring buildings such as La Tour Fenestrelle offer an architectural exclamation mark.

But all tours of Uzès must begin at the heart of this heavenly destination: the arcade-lined Place aux Herbes. (Have you ever heard of a more evocative name for a town square?) This is where most things happen in Uzès. One of the most colorful Saturday markets in the South of France is held here every week. It's frenetic, so if you can't abide crowds go to the smaller Wednesday version instead. This is the place to stock up on fabulous food, including olives, cheese, olive oil, vegetables, and fragrant herbs—some of the best ingredients for a great French meal.

There are also some wonderful cafés here for a leisurely brunch in the sun, such as Café de l'Oustal. Once you're caffeinated, and have checked out the comestibles, make for the streets. The pretty, pedestrian-only streets of Uzès' center offer beautiful boutiques selling gorgeous women's wear and luxury goods—much more upscale than you'd imagine from a country town miles from Paris. The side streets leading off from Place aux Herbes hide many of the more interesting and sophisticated shops. Their stylish creamand-gray façades add to the experience.





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