

**A vivre en Anjou**  
**ANGERS-SORTIE N°16**  
**Direction Cantenay-Epinard**



# TERRA BOTANICA



## Press kit

**ANGERS**

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## PRESS KIT

### Terra Botanica, the park of the great adventure of plants...

***The park Terra Botanica in Angers has opened since April 2010. Exclusive, it is the first theme park dedicated to plants. The whole family is invited to live an extraordinary adventure in the heart of the Anjou region.***



The result of 10 years of reflection, this project, initiated and implemented by the Maine-et-Loire Departmental Council under the instigation of its President Christophe Béchu, will have taken 2 years to be brought to fruition. The men and women, companies, architects, landscape and scenographic designers involved in the process of bringing the project to life have lived a truly unique experience, sowed with challenges to ensure that in 2010 TERRA

BOTANICA will open its gates to the world. Their adventure is expressed in the 15 000 m<sup>2</sup> of glasshouses and buildings which house cinemas and activities, the 25 000 m<sup>2</sup> of aquatic areas, the 60 000 m<sup>2</sup> of gardens, the 275 000 plants including more than 1 000 “remarkable” trees and 400 subjects considered to be “exceptional” due to their size or age, all of which shape the park. All this, with one priority: to protect as many species present on the site as possible by bringing it back into shape after years of neglect.

### ... at the heart of Anjou

The adventure began back on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1998 when Christian Gaudin, the then first vice-president of the Maine-et-Loire Departmental Council and President of the Departmental Committee of Tourism, first put forward the idea of a plant-themed amusement park. Christophe Béchu, on becoming president of the Maine-et-Loire Departmental Council in 2004, gave second wind to the project, with a strong political will to transform the dream into reality. After years of studies and research, December 2005 marked the first turning point. Thierry Huau, a landscape architect and the park’s designer, gave local councillors a virtual tour of the 11 hectare site. And some weeks later, at the opening of the “Salon du Végétal” horticultural

trade fair, the name of the park was finally revealed: TERRA BOTANICA! Two years passed and construction work finally began in February 2008 with the aim of opening in spring 2010.

If for over 10 years, the Anjou region has embraced the idea of this first plant-themed amusement park, it is because no other place, historically or geographically, could be home to TERRA BOTANICA. Anjou is an area renowned since the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century for its impressive array of plant species and its extensive horticultural skills. Today its France's leading horticultural region and home to numerous nursery gardens, landscape designers, specialised research laboratories, professional organisations, benchmark events...



This network, unique in Europe, of companies and agricultural, horticultural and wine-growing research and training centres was recognised as a competitive cluster with worldwide reach in July 2005, confirmed in 2008. Végépolys' mission is to make the Pays de la Loire a worldwide benchmark region for creation and innovation in the areas of food, health, well-being, landscaping, living environment and sustainable development.

Anjou is also the leading European producer of hydrangeas; the leading French producer of medicinal plants, apples, blackcurrants, cucumbers, radishes, potted plants, bedding plants, bulbs, ornamental horticulture, flower and vegetable seeds and dahlias; the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest French producer of outdoor roses and the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest French wine-growing region with 29 *appellations d'origine contrôlée*.

The Departmental Council has always been an active participant in the development of Anjou as a European centre of horticultural excellence with, as its showcase, this unique concept.

## The first “edutainment” theme park

Designed to respect the environment and nature, TERRA BOTANICA responds to our increasing desire to go back to basics and gain a better understanding of our surroundings. TERRA BOTANICA is thereby bringing a new concept to the leisure market by inviting visitors to discover the universe of plants through highly original interactive activities which are both fun and educational. Visitors will set off on an extraordinary journey to explore 4 universes structured around the following themes: Sought-after, Generous, Mysterious and Domesticated plants. In a single location, it will now be possible to discover all aspects of plant life (historical, geographical, economic, symbolic, scientific, and aesthetic) in all its shapes and forms.





## The creators of Terra Botanica

### **Christophe Béchu, at the heart of Terra Botanica**

Christophe Béchu, then deputy mayor of Avrillé responsible for communication, eagerly welcomed the announcement in December 1999 by the Maine-et-Loire Departmental Council of its project to create a plant-themed amusement park. Deputy Mayor of Avrillé in charge of town planning in 2001, Departmental Councillor of the Canton of North-West Angers the same year, then president of the Departmental Council of Maine-et-Loire as of 2004, he was elected MEP in June 2009 where he currently sits on the agricultural commission. Working in the interests of the Anjou horticultural sector, Christophe Béchu actively supports Végépolys, the international competitive cluster. He has therefore always been a fervent champion of the ambitious project to create a theme park devoted to plant life which aims to be fun as well as scientific and educational. President of the SAEML TERRA BOTANICA (*Société Anonyme d'Exploitation Mixte Locale TERRA BOTANICA*) for 2½ years, he handed over the baton to Jean-Pierre Chavassieux in June 2009. He continues to follow with keen interest the development of TERRA BOTANICA which he sees as the locomotive of "Green Anjou".



### **Jean-Pierre Chavassieux, a green-fingered President**

Mayor and Departmental Councillor of Maulévrier since 2001, the political career of Jean-Pierre Chavassieux has been very much focused on the horticultural sector. He was behind the initiative to revive the Oriental Park of Maulévrier which he managed. The management of these Japanese gardens which immediately caught the public's imagination becoming the 5<sup>th</sup> most visited site in Maine-et-Loire, provided him with a wealth of experience in the horticultural sector and the running of tourist sites. In June 2009, he was therefore the natural choice to succeed Christophe Béchu, President of the Departmental Council of Maine-et-Loire, to the head of SAEML TERRA BOTANICA of which he had been vice-president for 2½ years. Committed to the development of Maine-et-Loire, he has always been a keen supporter of this project which highlights the savoir-faire of the horticultural sector. Displaying total confidence in the face of such a mammoth challenge, Jean-Pierre Chavassieux advocates a strong marketing communication around TERRA BOTANICA, the 1<sup>st</sup> European theme park completely devoted to plant life.



### **Thierry Huau, nature's orchestrator**

A renowned town planner and landscape architect, only Thierry Huau, designer of the TERRA BOTANICA park, could bring to life the history of the plant world in Anjou. Director of the design consultancy Interscène, he is the landscape architect responsible for developing this huge expanse of land. This designer whose creations have already caused a stir across 5 continents, notably in countries such as Lebanon or Japan, has succeeded in making this colossal project a reality.



A true nature lover, Thierry Huau has fully embraced this adventure, with the desire to unveil the diversity of plants which surround us in a park midway between a Renaissance garden and the Garden of Eden. His programme integrates four themes (Generous plants, Mysterious plants, Sought-after plants and Domesticated plants) bringing to life all aspects of plant life: symbolic, historical, geographical, economic, scientific and aesthetic.

TERRA BOTANICA is the first European park entirely devoted to plant life, displayed in a fabulous setting including a collection of plants of unparalleled magnitude: remarkable and exceptional trees, large-size plants as well as the whole breadth of horticultural production of the Anjou region.

### **Frédéric Ravatin, scenographer among the plants**

The project management group in charge of the project includes the landscape-architect Thierry Huau from Interscène, Françoise Lenoble-Prédine in charge of the programme and thematic content and finally Frédéric Ravatin, director of Créatime and responsible for the scenographic presentation, the design of the activities, the development of the games as well as the decor. Often working with museums, Frédéric Ravatin was immediately won over by this incredible challenge to take Man back to the very heart of nature and to remind him of all of nature's virtues. He



stamped his own style on the scenography blending natural elements with theatre and cinema techniques in order to bring the symbolism of the plants to life. Throughout the universes of the Generous plants, Mysterious plants, Sought-after plants and Domesticated plants, Frédéric Ravatin integrates special effects into a setting of lush vegetation, transporting the visitor back to the time of world explorers. In a symphony of water, vegetation and light, the animations and decor of the various sets tell the history of plants from the dawn of time to the present day.



## Key dates in the plant adventure

### **1998**

On 26<sup>th</sup> June 1998, Christian Gaudin, first vice-president of the Maine-et-Loire Departmental Council and President of the Departmental Committee of Tourism, put forward a project for a plant-themed amusement park in Anjou. The Departmental Council launched the project's first feasibility studies.

### **1999**

On 26<sup>th</sup> April 1999, the Maine-et-Loire Departmental Councillors voted on the plant-themed park project. The candidate towns for providing the location for the park had until 26<sup>th</sup> November to hand in their application, with the decision being taken in December. During this time, the Departmental Council launched a call for tenders (definition contract) to select the team in charge of designing the park. By November, 10 towns had presented their applications to accommodate the park and on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1999 the Maine-et-Loire Departmental Council chose a site near the towns of Angers and Avrillé.

### **2000**

In April, the park's website was put online. On 24<sup>th</sup> July, a design consultancy group formed by COTEBA was chosen to develop the plant-themed amusement park. The first briefing took place on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2000.

### **2001**

On 5<sup>th</sup> April 2001, a draft report was presented to the Departmental Council.

### **2003**

In the spring, a consultation was held with the inhabitants of the Anjou region to gather their opinions. More than 17,000 households returned the questionnaire providing a wealth of information and ideas.

### **2004**

At the instigation of Christophe Béchu, elected eight months previously as President of the Departmental Council, the decision was taken to go ahead with the plant-themed amusement park project on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

## 2006

On 23<sup>rd</sup> February, the name of the park was finally unveiled at the opening of the “Salon du Végétal” horticultural trade fair: TERRA BOTANICA. In April, the first 228 exceptional trees were reserved through the call for tenders by the Departmental Council for the contracts for growing and providing the park’s plants. The *terraborotanica.fr* website was launched in May. The following month, the application was made for planning permission to build TERRA BOTANICA, with 60 000 m<sup>2</sup> of gardens, 25 000 m<sup>2</sup> of ponds and 15 000 m<sup>2</sup> of glasshouses and buildings.

## 2007

The definitive draft design of TERRA BOTANICA was presented on 2<sup>nd</sup> March at the Angers “Salon du Végétal”. The same month the Société Anonyme d’Exploitation Mixte Locale TERRA BOTANICA was selected by the Departmental Council to manage the park. The company is made up of a public-private partnership of 15 shareholders with a Board of Directors made up of 17 members. In September, the planning application for the construction of the whole park was finished and submitted for examination.

## 2008

Construction began in February when around 100 companies and 350 people got to work on the site. On 5<sup>th</sup> November, the first 9 trees were planted.

## 2009

On 17<sup>th</sup> February, Thierry Huau and Jean-Pierre Chavassieux (Vice-president of SAEML TERRA BOTANICA) presented the park, its gardens and its activities at the “Salon du Végétal”. In June, Jean-Pierre Chavassieux was named President of SAEML TERRA BOTANICA. The same month, the public finally discovered the restaurateur chosen to be at the helm of the park’s restaurant: the Michelin star chef Pascal Favre d’Anne.

## 2010

Opening of the TERRA BOTANICA park on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April, the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of the spring holidays for schools in the Nantes region.

N.B: **SAEML TERRA BOTANICA shareholders:** Maine et Loire Departmental Council, Angers Loire Métropole, Towns of Avrillé and Angers, Comité d'Expansion du Maine-et Loire, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Departmental Committee for Tourism, Angers Loire Tourisme, Végépolys, Bureau Horticole Régional, Angers Expo Congres, Club Destination Anjou, Caisse d’Epargne, Crédit Agricole, Caisse des dépôts.

# TERRA BOTANICA

Vivez en Anjou la grande aventure du végétal



## PRESS KIT





## Sought-After Plants

Travelling back in time to when plants were synonymous with riches, we come to the universe of Sought-after Plants. At that time, plants were sought for their amazing properties and botanists were adventurers who travelled the world in search of extremely rare species to bring back to Europe.

In this section of the park, the visitor hops from island to island and criss-crosses continents in the footsteps of explorers such as Humbolt and Bonpland in search of spices, plants and exotic territories in the hope of uncovering botanical treasures, prize wares.

The whole journey of plants is told here: the traveller plunges into the 18<sup>th</sup> century and sets off for mysterious and far-off lands such as the bamboo plantations of Asia or the Louisiana Bayou. As visitors pass from garden to garden they are treated to radically different animated sets and decor. They're transported thousands of miles to unknown lands exuding exotic scents and mystery.



## ***The trading posts of the world (C1)***

Before embarking on the epic botanical journey it would seem appropriate to call in here and discover the wares brought back from faraway lands: tea, coffee, tobacco, cocoa, spices, textiles, etc. All these goods which seemed so exotic back in the 18<sup>th</sup> century but which are now commonplace in our daily lives.

## ***The storyteller (C2)***



Plunged into the atmosphere of the great maritime and scientific expeditions, the visitor ambles through a port and meets a pirate for whom the ocean holds no secrets. The thrilling stories told by this seafarer transport his listeners to the wild shores of the Americas and the Indies.

The *dry dock*, used for repairing ships, will welcome visitors for their picnic breaks.

## ***The docks of 5 continents (C3)***

In a glasshouse, the travellers pass along gangways through the docks of a port. Exploring the interior of containers just unloaded from the ships, they discover scenes from different regions of the world and music from overseas. Visitors can really start to taste adventure!



## ***The Great Explorations (C4)***

This film invites the public to experience a crossing of the Atlantic in search of the New World, alongside Alexander von Humbolt, the famous 18<sup>th</sup> century naturalist and explorer and Aimé Bonpland, a renowned botanist. Immersed in the lively atmosphere of the ship, visitors will sail through violent ocean storms before dropping anchor off the Venezuelan coast.

Amazing special effects and scenery make this show as true-to-life as possible. The spectators sit down at the bow of the boat, and a water curtain replaces the traditional projection screen.

Charles Berling (*Nelly et Monsieur Arnaud, Ridicule, L'homme de sa vie*) and Stéphane Freiss (*Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis, Betty Fisher et autres histoires, Le Grand Rôle*), play the roles of Aimé Bonpland and Alexander von Humboldt respectively.

But the adventure does not stop there! Barely pausing for breath after this "real life" adventure, the spectators "disembark" in a vast tropical glasshouse, South America, and cut a pathway through the luxurious vegetation to reach the camp of Aimé Bonpland, at the heart of the Orinoco jungle.

## ***Impressions of Asia (C6)***

Bamboo has been used since the dawn of time for its many different properties in the fields of construction, decoration, writing, textile, etc. To discover the history, origin and uses of this giant grass, the visitor goes deep into a magnificent bamboo field where a few surprises await.

## ***Of capes and spices (C7)***



A role-play activity taking visitors from island to island with the challenge of bringing back some precious spices! Visitors set off on the trail of the West Indian Company to discover Africa and Asia. Madagascar, Pondicherry and Mauritius provide perfect stopover points. In this challenge, children and parents must bring back cloves and nutmeg from the Mollucas (an Indonesian archipelago) as well as pepper and ginger from Asia. In Africa, they harvest melegueta pepper, or the “grain of

paradise”. The setting for this adventure features three galleons run aground on islands in the middle of banana plantations and palm trees.

## ***Images of the Americas (C8)***

Weaving through the islands and the mist, the visitor explores the Louisiana Bayou, a true paradise of aquatic plants and flowers overhung by immense trees with rather astonishing expressions. This discovery trail features bald cypresses, the emblem of the state of Louisiana whose exposed roots can reach up to 1½ m above the surface.

## ***Botanical stopovers (C9)***

In 1707 the first garden of medicinal plants was created at the instigation of the doctors of Angers. This period marks the beginning of the cultivation of these plants in the Anjou tradition. In order to pay homage to these species, botanical staging posts have been recreated. In these gardens, visitors learn about the history of the plants by following each stage of the process to acclimatise the species which were once brought back to Europe from the islands. They are invited to take the time to observe, to dream, to smell and to wander through the essences of Central Europe, China and Mediterranean countries.



## Generous Plants

In the universe of Generous Plants, the highlight of the visit is a trip down a river, crossing through the rich natural heritage of Anjou. During the course of this bucolic journey, visitors rediscover the ancestral savoir-faire of France's leading horticultural region, by following in the footsteps of those who recognised that plants were a natural resource, essential for life.

The visitor is transported to the land of the medicinal plants, vines and traditional trades of a unique region, a testimony to the special relationship between Man and plant. In this area, we plunge into the past of flowers and plants, escaping the confines of history, to discover the different roles that they play in our daily lives.



## ***The Shops (G1), the Market Place (G4) and the Grandmothers' alley (G3)***

Before entering the heart of the Generous Plants universe, the visitor is invited to soak up the atmosphere of the area by ambling around the apothecary, greengrocer, and bakery, next to the market square. In each of these shops, medicinal plants, cereals, fruit and vegetables take centre stage. Strolling along *Grandma's alley* visitors can rediscover the recipes based on natural ingredients used by our ancestors.

## ***The vegetable garden (G2)***



Through a series of games and activities, the public learn more about the techniques and skills involved in growing vegetables.

Water-based activities, an automaton show with a delightful conversation between a mole and a spade and musical beehives all provide fun and educational entertainment for budding gardeners.

## ***The Botanical Odyssey (G5)***



A trip to the heart of the land of vines and roses, the Route of King René pays homage to the Anjou region. A voyage of discovery highlighting the passion of King René (King of Naples and Sicily, Duke of Anjou and Count of Provence) for agronomy and wine growing, this area testifies to the age-old tradition of Anjou: the acclimatisation of plants from overseas. A Garden of poetry and dreams... A universe of colours, perfumes and sounds to discover in a boat meandering along a

stream or on foot. Taking centre stage are the rose, which is probably one of the oldest flowers, and the vine, the custodian of dreams, travel and authenticity.

## ***The words of oaks (G6)***



Magical fables, myths and legends surrounding the plant world are narrated by an ancient speaking oak tree. The wise old tree takes listeners back to the times of druids and witches.

This welcoming and protective forest elder invites the public to sit down on its branches for a few moments of relaxation.



### ***The plant theatre (G7)***

A film full of poetry narrating the magical, epic history of the tulip, the rose and the hydrangea. From the pharaohs of Egypt to Japan, passing through the Pays de la Loire, fragrance diffusers provide spectators with a multi-sensory experience. Vanessa Demouy (*Classe Mannequin, Central Nuit, Le Marquis*), plays the lead roles of Cleopatra and a geisha.

### ***The nature theatre (G8)***

An area of relaxation and meditation invites visitors to sit down and contemplate the surrounding nature. This garden is made up of various stone walls of colours symbolic to Anjou. The white alludes to the tuffeau (limestone rock), the black to the schist (slate) and the red to the clay used by Anjou potters.

### ***The Roi René circuit (G9)***



A quiz on the region of Anjou inside a rose-covered structure, an enigmatic round-table discussion, mysterious silhouettes, 8 questions and several answers ... but who holds the solution?

To find out, the players must work their way around the table to find the member of the society who holds the key to the mystery.

### ***The orchard (G10)***

Peace and tranquillity guaranteed on this stroll through an ornamental orchard.



## Mysterious Plants



The Mysterious Plant area is a real scientific laboratory where visitors discover all the secrets of plants through fun and entertaining activities during which they uncover the hidden side of plants: their history and their mysteries.

By going deep inside trees and plants, the explorers learn how photosynthesis works and what exactly DNA is. From the flowers, through the branches, right down to the roots, the whole plant is examined under the microscope. By going right to the heart of cells and back to the origins of life on Earth, the Mysterious Plants area is an invitation to embark on an extraordinary voyage of discovery.

In an adventure set at the dawn of time, before the age of agriculture and before Man, visitors rediscover the characteristics which distinguish plants from other living beings. As they walk through the tree tops and the kingdoms of senses, they uncover the first plants used by Man as well as plants with surprising properties or virtues.

## ***Journey to the centre of the plant [4D] (M1)***



Certainly one of the most thrilling attractions due to its technology and multiple sensations. In a 4D cinema in the form of a giant magnolia tree trunk, TERRA BOTANICA visitors follow the journey of a drop of water which travels from the roots up to the leaves of a tree.

Reduce to the relative size of a cell and strapped into their seats, the visitors discover exactly what happens inside a tree by experiencing live the phenomenon of photosynthesis. Immersed in a previously invisible and unexplored world, they are confronted with unexpected falls, strange creatures running under their feet, humidity...

## ***Tell me how it grows ? (M2)***

To understand plant DNA, plant reproduction, photosynthesis or pollination, children are invited to observe and then reproduce what they have just witnessed, testing their skills through a number of hands-on activities. Alone or in groups, they can have fun handling over-sized plant cells, a butterfly or a leaf.

## ***Paleobotanists (M3)***



Children take on the role of a paleobotanist and head off in search of precious plant fossils.

In the sand, and under an excavator's tent, they can have fun identifying the origin and the name of their finds which enable them to retrace the main stages of the evolution of the plant kingdom.

## ***The roots of life (M4)***



A geyser, insect noises, the cries of wary lizards, a dragonfly hovering near a herbivorous dinosaur... Visitors will tingle with excitement and a certain amount of apprehension as they enter a forest quite unlike any other: a forest which lets them travel through time and space to the prehistoric era. Along a torrent, they discover their amazing destination and the elements surrounding them.

An opportunity to learn all about the universe of flora and the history of plants from long-gone eras which have left countless traces of their existence in a wide variety of forms.

## ***The treetop trail (M5)***



High up in the trees and through the branches, visitors set off in giant pedal-driven “nut shells”.

In search of the unknown, they can admire the tree tops and discover an unexplored world.

## ***The forest trail (M6)***

A multi-sensory trail magically whisks visitors away to the fascinating universe of the forest. This tunnel of greenery invites young and old alike to discover the world of wood through a number of educational activities.

## ***The plant ogre (M7)***



Visitors are certain to be astounded when they plunge into the mouth of a monstrous looking plant to discover amazing, phosphorescent, carnivorous, foul-smelling plants... before setting off on more adventures in a maze.

## ***Colour Bath (M8)***

Among all the plants useful to man, there are those which, since ancient times, have been used to prepare colorants and dyes, known as dye-plants. Hundreds of species, such as the indigo plant, turmeric, saffron or henna provide a whole pallet of natural colours used in painting as well as dyeing, cosmetics or the food industry.

To discover these exceptional plants, visitors arrive in a garden where the different colours derived from plants are represented by dyed textiles suspended on wires

## ***The labyrinth of the senses (M9)***

A truly sensory maze where disorientated visitors can awaken all five senses through plants and play areas.



## Domesticated Plants

With its activities and discovery trails, the Domesticated Plants area invites visitors to learn all about the magical world of horticulture and landscaping.

Deep in the heart of natural and farmed habitats, both unexpected and spectacular, they learn how, over centuries, horticulturists and landscapers have been able to tame and exploit this magnificent potential. Taking turns to be both actors and spectators visitors will discover the savoir-faire of the professionals, as well as the passion and skills used to adapt the plant, reproduce it and prevent it dying out.

For while these plants may appear fragile, they nevertheless display an amazing ability to adapt and evolve. Travelling through various gardens and spaces, children and adults alike uncover amazing secrets, defying the most inhospitable environments and extreme climates to discover the most exceptional plants.



## ***The challenge of extremes (A1)***



*What impact is the climate having on plants, what is their capacity to adapt?*

After an audiovisual show containing more than a few surprises, visitors are plunged into the most extreme environments. In a giant glasshouse, they cross the Arctic, the tropical jungle and the most arid of deserts where every plant evolves in order to adapt to the demands of a complex climate.

In all, four areas reconstituting different climates (hot, cold, humid, dry), enable visitors to observe in life-like conditions plants which thrive in a moist atmosphere (orchids, ferns...), tropical plants (liana, philodendrons...), desert plants (Cacti...) and cryptophytic plants (those which need cold to develop: asters, lichen). A unique experience unveiling out-of-the ordinary plants.

## ***Land of contrasts (A2)***

Four fascinating gardens crossed by a small stream, highlight the natural resources of the Anjou region such as the tuffeau and slate.

## ***Surprise resources (A3)***



Water lies at the heart of TERRA BOTANICA. An immeasurable and essential resource, it is crucial to raise public awareness of the importance of good water management. With this aquatic activity, children will learn through play, the principles of irrigation. With the help of a wind turbine, their mission is to draw water, which they then have to transport along a circuit of containers in order to water the garden.

## ***Horticultural practices (A4)***

Grafting, propagation by cuttings, layering, dividing... This trail offers visitors the chance to understand horticultural practices and discover gardeners' magic tools. But it is also an opportunity to unveil the work carried out in nurseries and by horticulturists to create new varieties of flowers.

## ***Oriental lands (A5)***

Understanding and visualising the effect of man on nature is the aim of this trail which whisks visitors off to Asia. On one side they see rice fields, on the other, flowers. What is the difference between the two landscapes? By entering the bamboo huts situated on each side of a bridge, the visitor understands that the first is nothing other than vegetation exploited by man, whilst the second, the same terrain, has been left to nature.

## ***Innovating means wining! (A6)***

Aimed at younger visitors, this game demonstrates innovative horticultural practices and how best to exploit the garden's natural resources. Armed with a wheelbarrow and a shoulder bag, children set off to tackle some of the botanical enigmas which gardeners face on a daily basis. For each solution found they win balls which are collected and converted into a reward.

## ***The strange trail (A7)***



This highly original trail is guaranteed to astonish and intrigue budding botanists by revealing these phenomena of nature, plants which stand out due to their age, size or species.

Visitors cannot fail to be amazed as they stroll through the naturally unusual green chambers.

## ***Selection (A8)***

Inquisitive visitors can discover the meticulous work of plant breeding, a major challenge for horticulturists. From the pollen collection to the harvest, how is a plant born?

## ***Gardeners' portraits (A9)***

Through a show which presents the work of horticulturists in a variety of fields, the audience can learn all about this highly professional and fascinating universe.

## ***The abandoned hothouse (A10)***

Carried by the wind across gardens and the countryside, plants pay no heed to borders. Only man has the power to take the upper hand with regard to this wild, nomadic nature.

This garden invites the public to visit a landscape under glass which has been left abandoned and untended by man.

## ***Mediterranean terraces (A11)***

This trail takes visitors across slopes planted with Mediterranean trees and through the *garrigue*.

## ***Viewpoint huts (A12)***



A childhood dream, an object of desire brought to life by these cubes in every colour of the rainbow. From inside each hut, the visitor can glimpse a weird and wonderful view of the world. Surrounded by a mist straight out of a fairytale, the visitor stops, looks and listens to the story of “The leek who loved disco music”, or “The worm who wanted to see the sea” and the tale of “The gardener who was not afraid of giants”.



## A business centre at the heart of the foliage

**From May 2010, TERRA BOTANICA has opened its gates to companies wishing to organise all types of events in a setting quite unlike any other in Europe.**

All year round, the business centre offers a wide range of modular facilities with a unique backdrop of plants ideal for all types of business events: seminars, meetings, management committee meetings, conventions, exhibitions, conferences, annual general meetings, receptions, etc.

### **A particularly natural building!**



The innovative architecture of the business centre meets major environmental concerns (wooden cladding, green walls, etc.). The energy equipment has been designed with the aim of keeping energy consumption to a minimum: natural light, air conditioning through night-time ventilation, etc, in keeping with the park's environmentally responsible approach.

This area is the ideal venue for holding an event in harmony with nature. At the heart of Europe's 1<sup>st</sup> park entirely devoted to plant life, mixing work and leisure, nature and adventure, authenticity and technology is now possible.

## Naturally professional facilities

Seminars can be held in the centre's amphitheatre. Equipped with a giant screen and excellent acoustics, it can hold up to 325 people.

Four rooms are also available:

🌿 Room 1: 87 m<sup>2</sup>

🌿 Room 2: 87 m<sup>2</sup>

🌿 Room 3: 105m<sup>2</sup>

🌿 Room 4: 137 m<sup>2</sup>

The 350 m<sup>2</sup> reception hall is ideal for organising various gatherings such as cocktail evenings.

The business centre boasts a private garden and terrace stretching over 3 500 m<sup>2</sup>. The perfect places to take a break or enjoy a cocktail, they lend a note of charm and distinction to business meetings.

The events area, 8 000 m<sup>2</sup> of uninterrupted lawns, is situated on the edge of the Mysterious plants and Domesticated plants sectors. The ideal place for holding large events requiring marquees, tables, stands, etc.

And to ensure that business meetings, seminars and training sessions are synonymous with relaxation and conviviality, TERRA BOTANICA is able to open up some of the park's exceptional sites for cocktails or meals. A tailor-made package to match the customer's specific requirements can also be drawn up. Such packages may include events held in the large tropical glasshouse or the spice trading posts (Sought-after plants area), for an unforgettable reception surrounded by exotic and luxurious vegetation or in a universe symbolic of the adventures of famous explorers.

## A tailor-made service

All the technical equipment (video projector, sound, IT, etc.) required for business meetings is available on site and can be adapted to the customer's needs.

Moreover, the Business Centre offers a catering service to suit all types of requests (meal trays, buffets, cocktails, lunch, dinner, etc.).

Finally, whenever TERRA BOTANICA is open to the public, guests of the business centre can recharge their batteries by visiting the park and its numerous attractions and activities.



## Practical information

### OPENING DATES AND HOURS

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#### OPENING PERIODS

- Every day from 9<sup>th</sup> of April to 30<sup>th</sup> of September and from 20<sup>th</sup> of October to 2<sup>nd</sup> of november
- From Thursday to Sunday in **October**

#### OPENING TIMES

- From **10.00 am** to **6.00 pm** in April, May, June, September, October and November
- From **10.00 am** to **7.00 pm** in July and August

### EASY ACCESS

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**By the road:** A11 (Nantes-Paris), exit n° 16 (free way) in the direction of Cantenay-Epinard.

**By train:** 15 minutes by car from Angers TGV railway station.

**By plane:** around 1¼ hours from Nantes-Atlantique international airport

#### JOURNEY TIME

• Nantes	: 1 hour
• Rennes	: 1 hour 30 min
• Le Mans	: 1 hour
• Tours	: 1 hour 20 min
• Paris	: 2 hours 30 min

## **PARKING**

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The car park is free and open from 9am to 8pm, and can hold:

- almost 650 cars
- 30 campervans (daily only)
- 25 coaches

## **SERVICES**

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- Toilets
- Left-luggage lockers
- Cash machine (after the entrance)
- Pushchair hire
- First aid post - infirmary
- Areas reserved for schoolchildren in each sector
- Baby changing area in the toilets
- Free Wi-Fi connection in the Business centre foyer

## **DISABLED VISITORS**

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- Loan of wheelchairs

The trails and attractions have been designed to enable people with reduced mobility to access.

## **SHOP**

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Comfortable and pleasant to walk around, a shop covering over almost 500 m<sup>2</sup> sells products linked with the park, plants and the Anjou region including souvenirs, craft products, clothes, food, plant-related products and all kinds of fun and educational toys and objects, sourced mainly from local environmentally-responsible suppliers.

It also gives visitors a chance to discover the savoir-faire and the character of the region as well as providing details of accommodation, visits and outings in Anjou. A tourist information point in the shop provides up-to-date news on activities and events taking place in the region.

## FOOD AND DRINK

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There are several food and drinks outlets dotted around the park:

- at the entrance : drinks and snacks in the Terra Botanica café,
- several picnic areas accessible close to the dry dock and the theatre-in-the-green,
- the restaurant Veri Fraich.

At the heart of the park, the restaurant overseen by Pascal Favre d'Anne (a renowned Michelin star chef from the Anjou region) offers visitors high-quality food, in a fun, plant-themed setting in keeping with the park's overall approach. The restaurant seats 420 (including the terraces), is open non-stop from 11.00 am to 7.00 pm and uses mainly locally-grown produce.

With vast experience gained alongside renowned chefs such as Marc Veyrat, Pascal Favre d'Anne has created a type of fast food with character which gives the restaurant its originality and turns it into an attraction in its own right.

For example, the chef has created:

- The "vegetal" menu for **€9.90** incl. taxes: a complete meal consisting of a sandwich, chips or salad, and a drink
- The children's menu is made up of a sandwich or chicken nuggets, chips or salad, and a drink for **€6 incl. tax.**

At the "greengrocer" style salad bar customers can choose from an original variety of TERRA BOTANICA-inspired side dishes.

Inside the restaurant or on the terrace, customers can savour their meal at the water's edge, in a very natural setting: wood, iron, plants, refreshing and lively colours...

The entertainment has not been forgotten either: customers can watch the food being cooked over the wood fire, the meat being grilled and the salads being prepared - who better than the customers themselves to judge the freshness of the ingredients?

**The restaurant is open during the opening hours of the park.**

## WHERE TO STAY? WHAT TO DO IN ANJOU?

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The public is invited to enquire with the Anjou Departmental Committee for Tourism as well as at the information point in the shop inside the Terra Botanica park.

### Comité départemental du tourisme de l'Anjou

Place Kennedy

BP 32147

49021 ANGERS cedex 02

Tel.: +33 (02) 41 23 51 51

Fax: +33 (0)2 41 88 36 77

[infos@anjou-tourisme.com](mailto:infos@anjou-tourisme.com)

<http://www.anjou-tourisme.com>

Open from Monday to Friday: 9.00 am - 12.30 pm and 2.00 pm - 6.00 pm


## INDIVIDUAL PRICES


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**NORMAL** €17.50 incl. tax

**CHILD** (4 – 12 years old) €10.00 incl. tax

**FAMILY** (max. 5 people) €50.00 incl. tax

 2 normals and 2 children

 2 normals and 3 children

 1 normals and 4 children

### CONCESSIONARY PRICES

 Students, disabled people, unemployed... €13.50 incl. tax

**SEASON PASS NORMAL** €45.00 incl. tax

**SEASON PASS NORMAL** (renew) **NEW** €40.00 incl. tax

**SEASON PASS CHILD** (4-12 YEARS OLD) **NEW** €25.00 incl. tax

## GROUP PRICES

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**NORMAL** €13.50 incl. tax

**CHILD** (4 – 12 years old) €9.00 incl. tax



## Data sheet

### Parties involved

- Owner: Maine-et-Loire Departmental Council
- Owner's representative: Sodemel
- Design consultant - Landscape design – Scenographic presentation: Interscène Thierry Huau
- Scenographic presentation: Créatime, Frédéric Ravatin
- Project manager: Coteba
- Architects: Edifices Architectes, Jean de Gastines, Jean-Louis Marin
- Programme, content and thematic coordination: Terroirs de demain
- Planting: Marcel Villette, ISS Couëron (44), Edelweiss (49), ISS Paris
- Operator: SAEML Terra Botanica - President: Jean-Pierre Chavassieux

### The park

- Total area: 17 hectares - car park, access road, visitor area and maintenance areas
- Visitor area: 11 hectares of visitor area
- Gardens and landscaped areas: 6 hectares
- Aquatic areas: 2 hectares
- Pathways: 1.5 hectares
- Glasshouses and Buildings: 1.5 hectares

### Plants

- 367 exceptional trees (leafy and conifers)
- 560 exceptional tree ferns, bamboos and palm trees
- 5 500 tropical trees and bushes
- 510 rosebushes
- 1 350 naturally shaped trees
- 5 300 large bushes and hedge plants
- 16 000 bushes
- 520 climbing plants
- 420 vine stocks
- 16 000 m<sup>2</sup> of perennials and grass plants
- 2 600 m<sup>2</sup> of riverbank and aquatic plants
- 7 500 m<sup>2</sup> of annuals and bulbs
- 1 700 m<sup>2</sup> of green walls

### Some figures

- Total budget: €94 million excl. tax (actualization includes)
- Estimated annual knock-on effect on the economy outside the park: €8 million
- Jobs: 30 permanent jobs and 50 seasonal posts will be created by SAEML TERRA BOTANICA.

### Photo credits

**Gaëlle Arnaud** - photographer for all images (except concept image); **Jean-Pierre Salle** - the water droplet (concept image, restaurant, business centre); **Alain Leray** - the extreme glasshouse, amazing resources, the challenges of breeding, the paleobotanists, the roots of life, how does it work, cape and spices, the botanical staging posts, Anjou in bloom, restaurant, business centre; **Nicolas Groult** – winning through innovation!, the extraordinary vegetable garden, journey to the centre of the plant; **Patrice Mugnier** - myths and legends and the seafaring storyteller