Villandry
Château & Jardins

Château et Jardins de Villandry
37510 VILLANDRY
00 33 (0)2 47 50 02 09
www.chateaufvillandry.com
There is a place that attracts us forever.
We go there again and again,
to breathe in that timeless air and look out for new things:
Villandry with its 6 hectares of gardens
laid out in the shelter of a hillside on the Loire,
A beautifully simple, simply beautiful Renaissance castle…
a place full of harmony.
Whether or not you are familiar with Villandry, come and explore
the smooth changes that have been made since 1532…
# Summary

## Festivities in 2015

### Events

#### The year of Francis I in the Loire Valley and Villandry

- Francis I celebrated in the Loire Valley
- Francis I celebrated in Villandry

#### The Appointments at Villandry

- Nights of a Thousand Fires, Friday 3 and Saturday 4 July
- Kitchen Garden Days, Saturday 26 and Sunday 7 June

#### National Events

- Meeting in the Gardens, Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 June
- European Heritage Days, Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September

### Exhibitions

- "The thousand silent lives of a painter-gardener", Gérard Fally
- "Renaissance Gardens of the Loire Valley", 1498-1540
- "From Saint Petersburg to the Gardens of Villandry", collective exhibition

## Castle and gardens

- Villandry past and present
- A living and furnished castle
- A focus on the gardens over the centuries
- The six gardens at Villandry
- Lawn tennis Wimbledon style
- A turning point: going organic in the gardens
- Gardens of Villandry in figures

## A family visit

- Activity booklet "Le sortilège de Jean Le Breton"
- The maze
- A playground for children

Press contact: Pauline DEJOB – pauline.villandry@orange.fr – 00 33 (0)2 47 50 02 09
A site with certifications

The Qualité Tourisme certification  p 24
Others distinctions and certifications  p 24

The shops

La Boutique du Château  p 25
La Boutique du Jardinier  p 25

La Doulce Terrasse

Restaurant and tearoom  p 26
Room rental and caterer  p 27

Practical information

Rates  p 28
Schedules  p 28
To get here  p 29


**Festivities in 2015**

1515-2015, year of Francis I

**Saturday 11 April : opening of the Francis I year at Villandry**
- Inauguration of the Francis I room in the keep
- Exhibition of original comic strips of *Francis I*
- Concerts/chats by the Compagnie Après un rêve
  - Usual rates apply

**Events in 2015**

**Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 June : Meeting in the Gardens**
- Meet us in the gardens
  - Usual rates apply

**Friday 3 and Saturday 4 July : Nights of a Thousand Fires**
- The garden lit up with candles and a spectacular firework display
  - Special rates: adults €9.50 / youth €7.50 / children under 8 free
  - For people who have visited the castle or the gardens during the day: €3 surcharge

**Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September : European Heritage Days**
- Meet the region’s artists and artisans
  - Usual rates apply – but free for under 18s

**Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 September : Kitchen Gardens Days**
- When visitors can meet the Villandry gardeners
  - Usual rates apply

**Exhibitions in 2015**

*Included in the visit to the castle*

- "The thousand silent lives of a painter-gardener"
  - Gérard FALLY’s paintings
    - From 14 March to 2 June

- "Renaissance Gardens of the Loire Valley, 1498-1540"
  - In cooperation with Alix de Vienne and the CESR of Tours
    - From 6 June to 22 September

- "From Saint Petersburg to the Gardens of Villandry"
  - Collective exhibition of Russian painters
    - From 26 September to 15 November
Events

The year of Francis I in the Loire Valley and Villandry

Francis I celebrated in the Loire Valley

On 25 January 1515, Francis I was crowned King of France in Reims Cathedral, succeeding Louis XII. He became one of the most powerful sovereigns in Europe but had to face two great adversarial kingdoms during his reign: the kingdom of England ruled by King Henry VIII and, in particular, the empire of Charles V. A great traveller, Francis I journeyed throughout France and Italy, not only to find out more about his kingdom but also to be seen by his subjects. He was passionate about art, particularly Italian Renaissance art, which he introduced and further developed in France. Francis I ordered numerous works from the artists he invited to his country, for example, Leonardo da Vinci. Architectural undertakings proliferated around the king and his entourage. The châteaux in Amboise, Blois, Chambord and Villandry are all evidence of the artistic resurgence in the Loire Valley in the 16th century. Francis I left an exceptional legacy behind him. Today, he is considered the most iconic monarch of the French Renaissance.

Half a millennium later, the Loire Valley and many of its sites have decided to come together to commemorate the anniversary of this king of France, whose presence still resonates in the collective memory of his country. In addition to the 11 monuments from the Châteaux de la Loire network, such as the châteaux in Amboise, Chambord, Blois and Villandry, other associated monuments will take part in these activities. And the cities will not be outdone, as many of them will also be participating in this event. Coordinated by the Mission Val de Loire, this undertaking will need a concerted effort on the ground and will highlight the dynamic nature of the network.

The rich, cultural season ahead will depict the different sides of Francis I: warrior king and knight, benefactor and bon vivant. He was also a "builder king" and a "manager king". Themed visits, exhibitions, concerts, shows, workshops and even conferences will be held in the Loire Valley throughout the year. A remarkable collection of events to suit all ages and all tastes!

More information on these events can be found at: http://francois1er.org/
Francis I celebrated in Villandry

**Built by Jean Le Breton, finance minister to Francis I, the château was visited by the king on 22 January 1536.** Villandry has a strong connection to the anniversary commemorations for this iconic Renaissance monarch. Throughout the year, visitors will be able to enjoy a number of different events related to Francis I and his period of history.

**Inauguration of the Francis I room in the keep**

The major event of these 500th anniversary celebrations will take place on Saturday 11 April in the afternoon. After several months of work, the Francis I room will be inaugurated.

Located in the keep, this new visitor space will house a number of different **historical and artistic exhibits** from the period, including a tapestry of the Field of the Cloth of Gold that depicts the meeting between Francis I and Henry VIII, and a bust of Francis I.

The Francis I room will also host a temporary exhibition of **original comic strips of Francis I** (by Reynald Secher, Guy Lehideux and Serge Fino) that have just been released. Finally, to bring the day to a close several **concerts/chats** by the compagnie Après un Rêve will take visitors back to the era of Francis I, following in his footsteps through the imagination of 19th century composers.
"Renaissance Gardens of the Loire Valley", 1498-1540

In conjunction with the inauguration of the Francis I room and in collaboration with Alix de Vienne, the art historian, the Château de Villandry will host an exhibition on the Renaissance Gardens of the Loire Valley from 6 June to 22 September. More information on this exhibition is available in the "Exhibitions" section

Renaissance Concert during the "Nuits des Mille Feux"

For 16 years, lovers of beauty and poetry have been flocking to the Mille Feux candlelight spectacular. The Renaissance is the star of the show in 2015. As they stroll around, visitors can stop by the pond and listen to a concert of Renaissance music performed by the Doulce Mémoire ensemble. More information on this concert is available in the "Events" section

Launch of a new book on Villandry

The year of Francis I is the perfect time for a new publication: Villandry, un château au cœur de l'Histoire de France (Villandry, a château at the heart of French history). Its author Edouard de Vienne, Chairman of the Friends of Villandry, recounts the history of the site from the year 1000 to the modern day. La Renaissance, a pivotal period in the château's history, is a particular focus of this publication.
THE APPOINTMENTS AT VILLANDRY

Nights of a Thousand Lights
Friday 3 and Saturday 4 July

For 14 years now, the "Mille Feux" have been attracting lovers of beauty and poetry. For two evenings in a row, the gardens will be lit up by 2,000 candles and brought to life by musical entertainments… Imagine how different it can be!

Open exceptionally at night, the gardens are bathed in light and you can wander up and down the paths of Villandry at twilight. And when the sun sets, the 2,000 candles sparkle in a blaze of glory.

As they stroll through the gardens, visitors can stop by the pond to listen to a concert of Renaissance music performed by the Ensemble Doulce Mémoire. This fairy-like tour ends with an incredible firework display reflected in the pond, justly known as the "water mirror". Not until midnight will the visitors return home, delighted and completely dazed by such a magnificent show, very, very far from the traditional “son et lumière” [sound and light] displays.

Special rates apply:
Adults: €9.50
Reduced rates: €7.50
Children under 8: free
For those who have visited the gardens or the castle during the day: €3 additional fee.
Kitchen Garden Days,
Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 September

During the Journées du Potager, Villandry's gardeners will reveal their expertise and know-how to the general public. All visitors are invited to meet them, whether keen gardeners or complete novices!

On the agenda: workshops, demonstrations, guided tours, artisan markets and entertainment for all ages!

Visitors can taste freshly squeezed apple juice made on-site the old-fashioned way, and children can explore the gardens dressed in multicoloured hats for the day, then take an enchanted ride on the vegetable merry-go-round. At the end of the day, children and parents alike will leave the gardens bewitched by the amazing shows and activities they have experienced.

The activities are included in the admission price for the gardens.
The National Events

Meeting in the Gardens
Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 June

During the Rendez-vous aux jardins, a range of activities brings the gardens to life. On this occasion, Villandry will give pride of place to a stroll through the gardens. The site is inviting choristers from the Central Region to fill the gardens with a varied repertoire of French and polyphonic songs so that visitors can enjoy a musical stroll. The choirs will be scattered around Villandry, wherever they see fit to wander.

During this weekend there will be guided tours of the gardens and promenades in horse-drawn carriages. Villandry also has a remarkable grass tennis court on which visitors can test their skills of lawn tennis with the help of a tennis coach. The repotting workshop and "tips and tricks" for clever and eco-friendly gardening will also be available for children and their parents in the Kitchen Garden.

For this event, the usual rates will be maintained.
European Heritage Days
Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September

For the third consecutive year, Villandry is honouring the region's artists and artisans. Enshrouded in the various rooms in the château, they will be presenting their crafts and their work, and conversing with visitors about their skills that are so vital to preserving our heritage. Interior decorators, antique furniture restorers, painting restorers, master glass-blowers and more besides; all these crafts keep the old traditions alive and enable us to restore and maintain our ancestors’ work even today.

To make these days out even more enjoyable, guided tours of the gardens and horse-drawn carriage rides will also be offered to visitors.

As Villandry is a private castle, the usual rates will be maintained but for this occasion, admission is free for children under 18.

Passage of the Touraine-Loire Valley Marathon

On Sunday 20 September, Villandry will welcome the 2nd Touraine-Loire Valley Marathon, which enjoyed great success in 2014. The runners will discover the gardens of Villandry as they run around the kitchen garden, before heading to Tours. Visitors will see something out-of-the-ordinary and the kitchen garden will have a ringside seat at this event!
"The thousand silent lives of a painter-gardener"
Gérard FALLY

14 March to 2 June 2015

For Gérard Fally, painting is like a religion. Not a day goes by without him painting, observing and capturing the light in all its intensity. This requires all his attention as he needs to find that "decisive moment" when colour and canvas meet to create the perfect still life. However, this term is not appropriate when we talk about this artist's work. He prefers the Flemish expression "silent life". When you see the work of Gérard Fally, you enter this "silent life", which is intense and simply beautiful.

His passion for nature and for his kitchen garden are evident in the "silent lives" that he paints so candidly, with fruit, flowers and vegetables as his models. Keen on authenticity, he grows ancient varieties of vegetables and reproduces their ephemeral details with a high degree of realism. The light explodes, the colours suffuse and the canvas becomes a stained-glass window.

His subjects are very much alive with their scars, flaws and other qualities. He presents his canvases in such a way they seem to speak the same language: conference pears, bunches of asparagus, elaborately constructed piles of lemons... They all allow us to look with new eyes at the fruits, flowers and vegetables we have known since forever.

Gérard Fally, a graduate of the École des Arts Appliqués and the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, is also a keen traveller and gardener. In his notebooks, he has a magnificent collection of paintings of the gardens of Villandry. Despite the grandeur of the setting, every flower and every vegetable he immortalises is rich in detail and colour.
"Renaissance Gardens of the Loire Valley"

1498-1540

from 6 June to 22 September 2015

As the centuries have progressed, the shape and use of the gardens have gradually evolved: medieval gardens, Renaissance gardens, "French-style", "English-style"... Medicinal plant garden, decorative kitchen garden, ornamental garden... The Loire Valley, celebrated as the "Garden of France", has a wide variety of parks and gardens waiting to be discovered.

During the Renaissance the garden became an inseparable part of the château: it got larger and closer to the monument itself. Designed in keeping with a medieval garden, its main inspiration was the Italian Renaissance. Like architecture and art, gardens had a beneficial effect on transalpine relations during the Italian Wars, when Charles VIII became king.

This exhibition/event, held in the Loire Valley as part of the year of Francis I, is being organised by the Château de Villandry and Alix de Vienne, curator of the exhibition. The châteaux in Amboise, Blois, Bury (Loir-et-Cher) and Villesavin will all take part. The Cité de l’Architecture et du Patrimoine (Museum of Architecture and Heritage) at the Palais de Chaillot is also contributing to this exhibition by lending a model of the château and gardens of Bury, symbols of Renaissance innovation.

This exhibition will allow visitors to envisage the evolution of gardens from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance and the influence of Italian gardens in the Loire Valley from 1498 to 1540.

Designed by Jean Le Breton in the 16th century and redesigned by Joachim Carvallo at the beginning of the 20th century, the gardens of Villandry will naturally take centre stage at this exhibition. After exploring the Renaissance Gardens of the Loire Valley, a stroll through the gardens of Villandry will be the perfect way to end the exhibition and you will appreciate them even more!
"From Saint Petersburg to the gardens of Villandry"
Collective exhibition of Russian painters

from 26 September to 15 November 2015

During the Meeting in the Gardens event in June 2014, the gardens of Villandry played host to a group of Russian artists from the Saint Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts, brought together by Galina Stepanova's "Saint Petersburg Artist" art gallery. This came about thanks to Anna Filimonova, a Russian artist who has lived in France since 1992 and who likes to act as ambassador for her compatriots. This event was an opportunity for three painters to immortalise the gardens and the château on canvas with astonishing speed.

To continue this partnership, Villandry will present a new exhibition of Russian painters. For several months the "Saint Petersburg Artist" gallery and Galina Stepanova, owner of the magnificent Maryino Manor near Saint Petersburg, have been welcoming prospective artists for this exhibition. The results of these open-air events and exhibitions will be announced in spring 2015.

The three winning artists from this competition will come to exhibit their work at Villandry. The public will discover Russian and French gardens through the eyes of these painters, providing different perspectives of the two cultures and two ways of designing gardens. They will be at the exhibition launch, which will take place during the Journées du Potager, and will bring the gardens to life – with the kitchen garden as the grand finale – with their expertly placed "brush strokes" on canvas.

For more information visit: http://en.usadbamaryino.ru/
Castle and Gardens

VILLANDRY PAST AND PRESENT:
THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF AN EXEMPLARY REBIRTH

In ancient times: a Roman villa, the "Villa Andrick", occupied the site.

In the Middle Ages: a fortress was built. It was here in the keep in 1189 that the "Paix de Colombier" was signed, in which Henry II Plantagenet, King of England, came before the King of France, Philippe Auguste, to acknowledge defeat.

During the Renaissance: Jean le Breton, Finance minister under King Francis I, bought the estate in 1532 and in 1536, on the site of the old fortress, built a Renaissance castle, although the keep remained. The architectural style of the Renaissance castle was a precursor of Anet and Fontainebleau and later became the Henri IV style.

From the Classical Period to the 20th century: In the 18th century, the property came into the hands of the Marquis de Castellane who wished to bring it up to the levels of comfort in vogue at the time and therefore had a number of modifications made to both the interior and the exterior.

The castle remained in the family until the Revolution, but then had a succession of owners from a wide range of horizons, who took little interest in its future, or indeed its upkeep. At the same time, the gardens were also altered in line with the current trend for all things English: the Renaissance kitchen garden was destroyed to transform the whole estate into a large, English-style park.

---

1 The name of Villandry in the Middle Ages
Very early in the 20th century: Everything changed in 1906. Joachim Carvallo, of Spanish origin, and his American wife Ann Coleman bought the site. This marked a turning point, for them and for the castle: Joachim and his wife gave up their career in science, converted to the Catholic faith and devoted their fortune to restoring the monument. Joachim was a cultivated man, with a passion for botany, architecture and Spanish art. In the first few years, the couple concentrated on restoring the stones, and gradually the place recovered its soul... But very soon (in around 1908), Joachim Carvallo began to restore the castle to its Renaissance style, which meant bringing back the Renaissance garden in the place of the romantic English park. And so began the great adventure of restoring the grounds by recreating the four levels of terraces and each of the gardens: the decorative vegetable garden, the garden rooms and the water garden.

Today his great-grand-son, Henri Carvallo, heads Villandry.

A LIVING, FURNISHED CASTLE...

The castle often suffers in the shadow of its magnificent gardens... And yet it is really worth a visit!

The castle is a friendly, welcoming family place, in which visitors can easily see themselves, and where it is pleasant to just wander round.

Today there are some fifteen rooms to visit, each one different from the next, furnished in a harmonious style and decorated with taste.

Visitors will no doubt enjoy the fact that fresh flowers are placed in all the rooms.

In addition to the tour, there is a fine collection of Spanish paintings that visitors can see in each room and especially in the main gallery.

The tour ends with the Oriental room, which leaves no one indifferent for the beauty of its imposing ceiling.
The **Oriental room** was restored from floor to ceiling. The latter, in Mudejar style, dates back to the 15th century. Originating from Toledo, it is made up of over 3,600 pieces of wood. In addition to the aesthetic and technical prowess that it represents, the ceiling is a magnificent testimony to the cultural and religious syncretism in Spain after the restoration of Christianity which lasted from 718 to 1492: you can see the famous scallop shells, Franciscan knot and the eight-pointed Arabic star. Also on display in this room are Arabian artefacts and four beautiful paintings showing episodes in the life of the Marquis Michel-Ange de Castellane, the owner of Villandry in the 18th century, who was also a brilliant diplomat, ambassador of Louis XV between 1741 and 1747 with the Ottoman sultan, Mahmud I. These paintings from the Van Mour School and dated 1742 show the customs and etiquette at the Ottoman court in the 18th century.

All this is enhanced by a silk brocatelle hanging on the walls, with exclusively designed motifs, woven by the Maison Roze, a silk manufacturer based in Tours since the 17th century.


## Spanish painting collection

Villandry castle has a magnificent display of a collection of mainly **Spanish works dating back to the 17th century**, considered as the golden age of Spanish art. This collection was begun by Joachim Carvallo, who was passionate about Art, history and spirituality. It was in fact the size of this collection that led him to decide, with his wife Ann Coleman, to buy "a large house in the country" to display his art treasures.

Today, in spite of the inheritances which have seen the departure of some of the largest works to our national museums, including the Louvre, visitors to Villandry can admire nearly a hundred works of art.
The current owner, Henri Carvallo, is endeavouring to reconstitute this collection, by purchasing the works which were part of the initial collection owned by his ancestors.

Renovation and lighting work was carried out in the gallery in early winter 2013. The walls and ceiling were looking tired and cracks were beginning to appear, so they were repainted over the course of a month. At the same time, a new lighting system for the paintings was installed. This consists of LED spotlights, which are more economical (using 20 times less electricity!), do not damage the paintings and provide a pleasanter light for admiring the paintings in the collection.

A FOCUS ON THE GARDENS OVER THE CENTURIES

XVIe century

This was when the Renaissance castle was built by Jean le Breton. Thanks to archaeological digs, we know today that there was a decorative vegetable garden at the time, right next to the castle, such as those you can see in the illustrations of the Plus Excellents bâtiments de France, a work by Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, a brilliant Renaissance architect. This conviction was consolidated by the recent discovery of an 18th century blueprint which proves the existence of two terraces, one cultivated as a vegetable garden and the other as an ornamental garden.

XVIIIe century

At this time, Villandry became the property of the Marquis de Castellane who, from 1760 onwards, extended the gardens begun in the 16th century. For this, he bought plots of land from the villagers extending right up to the church. He thus created a fine classic French style garden. A third level of terraces was added to the vegetable garden – situated between the church and the castle, and the ornamental garden.

On this last terrace, he created a pond in the shape of a Louis XV looking glass.
XIX\textsuperscript{e} century

The property then fell into the hands of the Hainguerlot family, and the gardens underwent considerable change: they were transformed into a romantic English style park. This type of grounds became fashionable in the late 19th century under the impulse of the Romantic Movement, and required much less maintenance than a French style garden. It was presumably for both these reasons that the Hainguerlot family decided to change to a landscape of winding paths, curves and clusters of trees and shrubs.

Early XX\textsuperscript{e} century

Between 1908 and 1918, the new owner of Villandry, Joachim Carvallo devoted himself to restoring the Renaissance gardens. Why did he do this? Because he believed that the Renaissance castle – which he restored to its original beauty – should have the right gardens.

He therefore set about gathering the necessary information: first he led archaeological digs in the gardens and found the vestiges of base walls and pipes which enabled him to re-site the decorative vegetable garden. Then he consulted two important literary sources in particular: Les Plus Excellents bâtiments de France and the Monasticon Gallicanum which gave him an idea of what Renaissance gardens were like.

He also consulted old blueprints, like that of the Marquis de Castellane and the Napoleonic land registry, which helped him in his quest.

And today…

The gardens have once again been extended with the creation of the Sun Garden in 2008. This was created on a fourth terrace, from a sketch left by Joachim Carvallo
THE SIX GARDENS AT VILLANDRY...

There are a total of six gardens at Villandry.

The Villandry gardens are laid out in a succession of terraces, and each garden has its own strong identity and aesthetic principles:

- At the lowest level is the **decorative vegetable garden**, which has to feed the household, but not just in any old manner: it has to be quite simply magnificent as it is situated just next to the castle. Made up of nine squares of identical size but with different motifs inside, it covers an area of almost one hectare. There are two planting schemes per year: the spring scheme from March to June and the summer one from July to October.

The vegetable gardens originate way back in the Middle Ages: monks at the time laid out their vegetables in geometric shapes. The many crosses in the garden remind us of this affiliation, as do the standard roses which symbolize the monks digging their vegetable squares. The second influence is Italian, and gives the monastic vegetable garden its decorative elements: fountains, pergolas and flowerbeds. These two movements, combined by the French gardeners in the 16th century, gave rise to the decorative vegetable garden.

- On the intermediary level are the **ornamental rooms** designed as outside reception rooms: these are a natural extension of the castle rooms and are planted with tall boxwoods and flowers whose motifs are the timeless subjects of conversation: love, music and religion.

- On the third level are **the water garden, the herb garden and the maze**.

交替 The water garden, surrounding a fine pond intended to be the mirror reflecting the sky, is designed as a place for meditation. It is also a marvellous water reserve for watering the gardens.
The maze, with its long, winding paths, but containing no difficult pitfalls, symbolises man progressing serenely and smoothly towards God.

Finally, the herb garden, just like the vegetable garden, supplies all the plants necessary for family life: medicinal plants, aromatic plants and herbs.

Finally, on the last level, you can enjoy the brand new sun garden

The most recent of the gardens, the sun garden, is a place to dream and get away from it all. The plants are cleverly placed in a delightful impression of disorder, which of course is only an impression. 80 years after the completion of the gardens, Henri Carvallo made news at Villandry in 2008 by creating the Sun Garden.

He commissioned the design – from a sketch by his ancestor Joachim – and the creation to Louis Benech and Alix de Saint-Venant.

The Sun Garden observes the same general principles of organisation in all the gardens at Villandry and forms a cloister of greenery, with lime trees and hornbeam, and comprises three rooms:

The sun room, the central part of the garden, where there is a pond in the shape of the sun, the eight-point star designed by Joachim Carvallo, and beds of perennials in various hues of orange.

The cloud room where the grassy paths form triangles winding in and out of the roses and blue-hued shrubs.

The children's room with open-air games and crab apple trees.

Lawn Tennis Wimbledon Style

The old tennis court in the gardens of Villandry was renovated in the spring of 2010 in the pure Wimbledon style. The gardeners have once again shown proof of their skill and today you can admire an almost unique spot in France: a splendid "high tech" lawn tennis court, which every month, is de-thatched, reseeded, mown and relined. In addition to the joy it gives to tennis players of all levels, the spot also reveals another aspect of the gardens: as a place for
games and competition, with a sporting attitude to boot. The spot is visible to the public and is open to experienced and amateur players during some of our events:

Meet us in the Gardens and the European Heritage Days in particular.

**A TURNING POINT: GOING ORGANIC IN THE GARDENS**

Since his arrival at Villandry in 2009, the head gardener, Laurent Portuguez, has had one thing in mind: to make the magnificent Villandry gardens organic.

The first efforts focussed on the kitchen gardens, where the working methods have been entirely rethought, with the motto “observe to anticipate and anticipate to avoid using chemical treatments”. For the team of gardeners, this is no mean task: in addition to a new work organisation, certain tools have appeared in the sheds, and each gardener has to keep a close watch on all the plants to prevent pests and diseases.

Here are a few concrete examples of what has been done since 2009 in the gardens:

**Stop pesticides**

All pesticides have been eliminated from the gardens and replaced either by parasitic or predatory auxiliaries or by nematodes, which feed on diptera larvae (flies, etc.).

For example, native predators of the lime might have been introduced following the recommendations of the university technology and skills transfer unit Innophyt specialising in organic methods of preventing the spread of lime mite, which cause discoloration and leaf fall in the lime trees in the Villandry gardens. These natural predators are being introduced in controlled conditions so that they eventually become permanent residents of the gardens.

Finally, since we have stopped using chemical insecticides, insects hitherto naturally present have started to come back in the kitchen garden, and many of the natural enemies of aphids (green or black fly), such as syrphus flies, green lacewings, and parasitic wasps, are present and are at work to attack these pests.
In addition, four beehives were installed on the south terraces of the gardens in spring 2010.

**The natural fungicides**

At the same time, we are fighting against fungus borne leaf diseases without using synthetic treatments: by stimulating the natural defences of roses, vines and fruit trees with treatments using minerals, trace elements, essential oils, slurry and decoctions to strengthen the plants and make them more resistant to disease.

**The organic fertilization**

Chemical fertilisation has been eliminated and has now been replaced by organic fertilisation, in the form of compost comprising a variety of granules supplying nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. All the fertilisers can be used in organic farming but require several targeted applications as and when needed to avoid the soil becoming impoverished.

The elimination of the chemical fertilization was with few changes:

- **Changes in growing methods:** multi-tined spades are now used to preserve the activity of the bacteria contained in the tope 10 to 15 centimetres of soil. Unlike ordinary digging, it avoids burying this microscopic life 30cm under the surface. Hoeing is also done more frequently to make the watering more efficient.

- **Changes in the choice of plants:** introduction of plants, seeds and growing composts with “organic farming” certification. So the spring and summer planting schemes are now fully organic.

**The weeding**

We no longer use glyphosate or any other anti-germinating treatment. The whole site is weeded traditionally with tools such as wheel-mounted hoes and harrows... and some very patient gardeners! This year we are experimenting with thermal weed control and a natural weedkiller based on acetic acid.
For lawns: scarification removes straggly growth and the use of Verti-drain aerates the soil, improving the quality of the lawns and encouraging faster growth without chemical treatment.

The green waste management is outsourced to a specialised company which has a composting centre.

**GARDENS OF VILLANDRY IN FIGURES**

- **52 km of boxwood** are pruned twice a year, in May and August. About 300 hours are required just to prune the small box hedges in the kitchen gardens.

- **115,000 flower and vegetable plants** are planted out in the kitchen gardens or the garden rooms. About half the plants are prepared by the gardeners in the castle glasshouses (seeds are sown and seedlings planted out, etc.).

- **2 planting schemes each year,** established aesthetic and agronomic criterias:
  1. from March to June
  2. from July to November

- **1,016 lime trees** spread all over the property are pruned every winter. This takes a team of four men two months to complete, i.e. 1,100 hours of work, in addition to the 400 hours of work to prune the vines, rose bushes, pear and apple trees.

- **196 topiary yews**, pruned twice a year, in June for the first ornamental room, and in October for the second one.
A family visit

At Villandry families receive a special welcome.

A fun and intelligent way of understanding the gardens thanks to the interpretation stations which encourage parents and children to discuss.

Eight stations give plenty of information about the plants, the gardens, and also the way the site has changed over the centuries, completed by two stations.

One of this new stations explains the landscape and in particular Villandry and the Loire Valley, showing the continuous occupation of the area since the Neolithic period.

The other is a fun presentation of the responsible water management in the gardens.

ACTIVITY BOOKLET "LE SORTILEGE DE JEAN LE BRETEN"

Only in French

This booklet is given to children aged 7 to 12 at the ticket office. It provides a tour of the gardens in the form of a treasure hunt.

The children plunge into the gardens, pass through the forest, get lost in the maze, explore the kitchen garden and the Love Garden in
a quest to save the builder of the Château de Villandry from an evil spell! Parents will love
the historic and cultural content.

Observation, reflection and logic, but also relaxation and pleasure, are the order of the
day!

**THE MAZE**

The hornbeam maze provides fun and games
for the whole family as they set off not to
look for the way out but to reach the hut in
the middle.

The maze is inspired by the Christian religion
and symbolises man’s earthly passage, and
his quest for human and spiritual
enlightenment and elevation.

**A PLAYGROUND FOR THE CHILDREN**

Located in the continuity of the Sun Garden, this space dedicated to children is conducive
to a relaxing time for all ages.

"Discover Villandry" for schoolchildren

To make it easier for schoolchildren to visit Villandry, we are offering schools various
educational packages: a **self-guided tour of the château and gardens** and a **guided tour of
the gardens** and **workshops** can be booked by teachers. Teachers will also be provided with
educational information on the gardens of Villandry.
A site with certifications

THE QUALITÉ TOURISME ACCREDITATION

Since 2006, Villandry had been part of a discussion on quality in the Loire Valley, conducted together with a number of tourist sites in the region and the Touraine Departmental Tourist Board. Villandry Castle and two other sites in Indre-et-Loire received their certification at the end of 2009. Since then a number of other sites have joined us... Quality accreditations are progressing and becoming well established in the Loire Valley!

In January 2013, the Château de Villandry was awarded a renewal of the Qualité Tourisme accreditation for three years.

OTHER DISTINCTIONS & CERTIFICATIONS

- The gardens have been awarded the "Refuge LPO" certification by the League for the Protection of Birds in 2013. Villandry is the first castle to obtain this label.

- The gardens were the first green space in the Centre Region and the first of the castles of the Loire Valley to receive the "Label Eco-Garden" in 2013.

- The gardens were acknowledged by the "Loire à Vélo" association in 2009

- In 2005 the gardens were designated by UNESCO as an "Ambassador Site" for the Loire Valley, and placed on the UNESCO World Heritage List

- In 2004 the gardens were awarded the "Jardin Remarquable" certification by the Culture and Communication Ministry

- The chateau and the gardens were listed as a "Historic Monument" in 1934 and are founder members of the "Demeure Historique", an association of the owners of private listed monuments

- www.tripadvisor.fr

  TripAdvisor is the greatest travel review site listing no less than 35 million different points of views about hotels, restaurants, attractions, museums...

  In 2014, Villandry was awarded the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence 2014. It ranks second among the castles of the Loire, with a score of 4.69 / 5, just behind Chenonceau.
The shops

**LA BOUTIQUE DU CHÂTEAU**

Cards, books and guides, souvenirs and gifts, books about nature and children's games.

**LA BOUTIQUE DU JARDINIER**

Decorative objects for house and garden, books, gifts, plants, clothes inspired from the garden and tools.

*Here are some books on sale in the shop:*

- **Le Château de Villandry et ses jardins**
  
  This book gives a brief history of the castle and its various gardens and a calendar of work done in the gardens.
  
  Editions Valoire-Estel, 48 pages

- **Les jardins de Villandry**
  
  A beautiful book that shows the gardens in a poetic, yet well-documented light, including the new organic methods.
  
  Words by Sonia Lesot; Original photographs by G. Lévêque.
  
  Editions Ulmer, 96 pages

- **La collection Carvallo au Château de Villandry**
  
  A catalogue presenting the art collection of the Carvallo family, including reproductions of paintings and accompanying commentaries.
  
  Editions Le Livre d’Art, 64 pages

- **Louis Benech, douze jardins en France**
  
  This book presents twelve gardens created by Louis Benech in France, including the Sun and Cloud garden at the Château de Villandry.
  
  Words by Eric Jansen, photographs by Eric Sander, Published by Gourcuff Gradenigo.
La Doulce Terrasse

RESTAURANT AND TEAROOM

This restaurant, which also has a tearoom, shows the gourmet side of the castle!

The menu changes with the seasons, depending on the vegetables from the kitchen garden.

All the dishes are made with regional produce and served with wines from the Loire Valley, selected with great flair.

In short, it is a friendly, original restaurant that combines good tasting food with good taste in decoration: the presentation of the dishes is amazing and the use of spices and herbs, surprising!

Prices: Menus start at 16 euros. But you can also just have one of the "tartines du potager" (kitchen garden sandwiches), a selection of dishes, homemade pies or traditional ice creams... or, on the contrary, treat yourself to a whole gourmet menu.

Non-stop service from 9:30am to 7pm

Bookings:
+33(0)2 47 50 02 10

La Doulce Terrasse is selected by the Michelin Green Tourist Guide, features on the TripAdvisor site, and heads the list of restaurants at Villandry.
ROOM RENTAL AND CATERER

For a number of years, the Marquis de Castellane room has been available for hire by companies, where they can enjoy the magical setting of the gardens for their seminars and business meals.

The orangeries are also available for gala evenings for example.
Practical information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATES 2015</th>
<th>Chateau &amp; Gardens (2:00)</th>
<th>Only Gardens (1:00)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>€ 10</td>
<td>€ 6,50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth*</td>
<td>€ 6,50</td>
<td>€ 4,50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups (15 people minimum)**</td>
<td>€ 8</td>
<td>€ 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audioguide (version adulte ou enfant)</td>
<td></td>
<td>€ 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Free for children under 8 years
(*): Young people aged 8 to 18, students under 26 years with up to date cards
(**): Group: minimum of 15 paying visitors – 2 free tickets per group

Pass gardens one year: € 25

Opening:
The gardens are open every day, all year round, from 9:00 am, until nightfall.
The castle is open at 9:00 from 7 February to 15 November 2015 and during the Christmas holidays.

GARDENS
- from 01/01/2015 to 6/02/2015
- from 07/02/2015 to 28/02/2015
- from 01/03/2015 to 28/03/2015
- from 01/04/2015 to 30/06/2015
- from 01/07/2015 to 31/08/2015
- from 01/09/2015 to 30/09/2015
- from 01/10/2015 to 24/10/2015
- from 25/10/2015 to 15/11/2015
- from 16/11/2015 to 31/12/2015

CHATEAU
- from 01/01/2015 to 04/01/2015
- from 05/01/2015 to 06/02/2015
- from 07/02/2015 to 28/02/2015
- from 01/03/2015 to 28/03/2015
- from 01/04/2015 to 30/06/2015
- from 01/07/2015 to 31/08/2015
- from 01/09/2015 to 24/10/2015
- from 25/10/2015 to 15/11/2015
- from 16/11/2015 to 31/12/2015

* Last tickets sold

** Last chateau entry 30 minutes before closing

General contact information:
Château et Jardins de Villandry
37510 VILLANDRY
Tel.: 00 33 (0)2.47.50.02.09 - Fax: 00 33 (0)2.47.50.12.85
info@chateauvillandry.com
www.chateauvillandry.com

Press contact: Pauline DEJOB – pauline.villandry@orange.fr – 00 33 (0)2 47 50 02 09
There is indeed a rich variety of activities available at Villandry:

In addition to the tours with information leaflets and guided tours in French, the site offers:

- guided tours for groups in foreign languages: English, German, Spanish and Polish.
- a conference and reception room where companies can enjoy the magnificent setting of the gardens and have their lunch in perfect conditions of comfort, peace and quiet.
- tours with audio-guides in French, English, German, Italian and Spanish
- the site also offers a tour specially adapted for children comprising eight interpretation posts in the gardens and a visit with audio-guides for the younger visitors.
- a Villandry smartphone app available for free in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish on Apple Store and Google Play.

To get here: now, with the A85 motorway, Villandry is just half an hour from Chenonceau!

If you're coming from Paris:
- by car (240 Km): A10 junction 24 (Joué-lès-Tours) then A85, towards Saumur, junction 8 (Villandry)
- by train from Montparnasse station (55mn) then take a taxi from Tours or Saint-Pierre-des-Corps station (20mn)

If you're coming from Nantes:
- by car: A11 then A85 junction 8 (Villandry)
- by train (90mn) then take a taxi from Tours or Saint-Pierre-des-Corps station (20mn)

If you're coming from Tours:
- by public transport: the "Fil Bleu" shuttle runs every day
- and... by bike! Follow the "Loire à Vélo" route (15 Km)