

Vallauris, town of clay

The pottery-making traditions of Vallauris date back to the start of the Christian era. In Gallo-Roman times, large deposits of fireclay were already being used to make bricks and pots. In the 16th century, the town was ravaged by the plague. However, 70 families from the surrounding area of Gênes later repopulated it, among which were several potters. At the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, the arrival of the railways led to a boom in the industry.

The depression of the 1930s and the use of other, more appropriate materials such as aluminium, cast iron and stainless steel marked a shift away from pottery-making for cooking purposes and led to the development of decorative pottery-making in the 1940s. This developed in particular due to the arrival of the Massier family (end of the 19th, beginning of the 20th century), with the introduction of coloured enamels and lusterware. It was Picasso's arrival in 1946 and the wonderful work that he created in the Madoura workshop that Vallauris' reputation as a centre of pottery-making for cooking purposes, finally gave way to that of a town in which artists and crafts people worked side by side.

These days, as in the past, you will find on show in Vallauris examples of decorative pottery, one-off pieces and work by such great names as Capron, Collet, Derval, Portanier, Roy, Musarra, Valentin, Boncompain, Koenig, Valkoff, Sassi-Milici, Marais, etc. as well as pottery for cooking purposes and a large variety of decorative objects.



Pottery-making life in Vallauris is punctuated by permanent and temporary exhibitions, which show to what extent this activity is valued both in terms of heritage and contemporary creative trends.

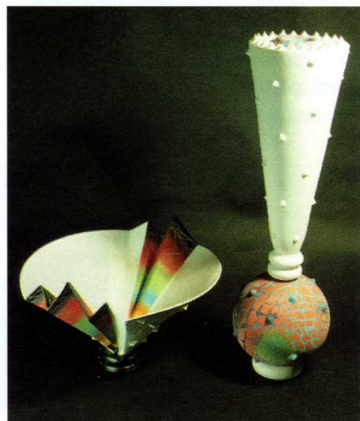
CASTLE MUSEUM

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS

As rich as they are varied, these collections display art deco and art nouveau ceramics from the beginning of the last century, pieces produced during the 1950s in Vallauris and contemporary pieces by artists from countries that won prizes during the International Ceramic Biennials.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

- The Biennial exhibition: Since 1968, Vallauris has held an exhibition of contemporary ceramics.
- Outside the Biennial: themed exhibitions focusing on one particular artist or period.



Andrea Hylanos 1992 (Australie)



Roger Capron



Design Roger Tallon

E4 VALLAURIS DESIGNERS

Every year, on the initiative of the Ministry of Culture and local authorities, two designers are invited to work in the workshops in Vallauris, whose work was based on functional ceramics.

The initiative marks an unprecedented collaboration, combining potter's know-how with the creative flair of the designer. Exhibition every summer from July to October at the chateau-musée



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE CRAFT OF THE POTTER

F4 POTERIE MUSEUM

A pottery enthusiast has built a potter's workshop as it would have been at the start of the last century. The visit centres on the different stages in pottery production: preparation of the clay, glazes, throwing, firing in a wood-fired kiln and decoration. Also on show are pieces from the beginning of the last century and an original exhibition of ceramics made in the 1950s, not forgetting the wax replicas made by the Grévin Museum. See a Picasso that seems larger than life and also on display is some of the early work produced Honoré Camos, an artist from Provence and native of Vallauris, which show his beginnings as a decorator. Pottery Museum - rue Sicard Tel. 04 93 64 66 51 - Open daily from May to September, from 9.00 to 12.00 and from 14.00 to 18.00; 14.00 to 18.00 out of season. Closed on Sunday.

Admission: 3 € (Adults) and 2 € (children)

Poteries jaspées, coll. Musée

A DESIRE FOR QUALITY CONTROL

In 1998, the Union of Potters met to discuss production issues which led to the creation of a charter for quality which contains the following key points:

respect for the production process; the desire to sign, authenticate and market objects produced throughout the town; the need to develop Vallauris' reputation for quality and know-how by improving, support, advice and management, etc.

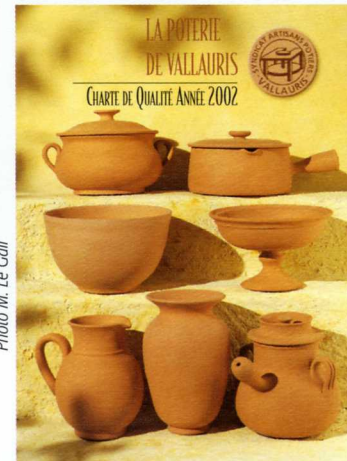


Photo M. Le Gall

A leaflet containing a list and details on the signatories is available from members and the Tourist Office.



Gilbert Portanier - Square vase, 1999

CERAMIC EXHIBITIONS

Every spring an exhibition offers people the chance to see pieces created by the potters of Vallauris on recurring themes: casserole dishes known as 'pignates', pots made on the potter's wheel, tea and coffee receptacles, etc.

VALLAURIS EXPO

This exhibition is open to all kinds of exhibitors whatever their chosen form of expression: traditional and contemporary ceramics, artwork, glasswork, and much more.

F4 Espace Grandjean - Avenue de Stade Every summer from July to September, open daily from 10.30 to 12.30 and 15.00 to 19.30. Free Admission

