





## A little history

Since ancient times, the waters of the Sorgue have provided the power for numerous factories. The first use was probably for wheat mills, before specialising in wool and silk. Spinning and weaving were first carried out by hand by small farmers, who then brought their fabric to L'Isle for fulling and treatment in mills or «paradou» powered by the waters of the Sorgue. But little by little, these mills began to increase their activity with spinning and weaving. In the 13th century, the sheets known as «blanquets» that were manufactured in L'Isle were highly appreciated. These were the sheets to cover beds that are the equivalent of our blankets today. Sixty-two paddle wheels have been identified on the various branches of the Sorgue. The record belongs to Sorgue de l'Arquet, the branch of the Sorgue that passes through the centre of town. Seventeen wheels were once in operation along its 527 metres of length. Towards the middle of the 19th century, the 17 silk and wool mills were in daily activity and employed 297 workers, according to a report dated 28 September 1855.



# L'ISLE SUR LA SORGUE

## THE PADDLE WHEEL TRAIL

— — Opposite the church, follow Rue Danton until you reach Rue Théophile Jean, called the street of the wheels (1), where there were 17 wheels a few years ago.

**1 The Victor Courtet Wheel**  
In 1832, a royal decree accorded the authorisation to use this wheel for a silk and wool mill.

**2 The Hospital Wheel**  
This wheel supplied the hospital with water.

**3 The Crosset Wheel**  
Its owner received the royal decree to use the wheel for wool carding in 1828.

— — Turn right, go up Cours Victor Hugo, follow Quai Clovis Hugues to Rue du Docteur Tallet.

**4 The Valébrègue Wheel**

**5 The Tourelles Wheel**  
The construction of this wheel was granted by royal decree in 1832.

**6 The Lices de Villevieille Wheel**  
The authorisation to operate this wheel was granted by royal decree in 1818.

**7 The Minimes Wheel**  
Built by the Minimes brothers to provide their convent with water.

— — At the end of Quai Clovis Hugues, turn right into Rue du Dr Tallet.

**8 The Quai du Nord Wheel**

**9 The Portalet Wheel**

— — Take Rue du Docteur Tallet, go past the Arquet canal and around Notre Dame des Anges, the unique baroque collegiate church. Go past the Tour d'Argent on Place F. Buisson and continue in the direction of Place Rose Goudard as far as Quai Jean-Jaurès.

**10 The Hôtel de Palerme Wheel**

— — Cross the small bridge on Quai Jean Jaurès. Continue along the garden until Esplanade Robert Vasse.

**11 The Ribère Wheel**  
This wheel belonged to the Roze family for thirty years before it

was regulated by royal decree on 19 February 1843.

— — From Esplanade Robert Vasse head toward Cours Anatole France, then return to Esplanade Robert Vasse, cross Benoît bridge and continue along Quai Rouget de Lisle.

**12 The Milhe Wheel**  
This wheel was regulated by decree in 1828. It belonged to G. Milhe, miller.

**13 The Giraud Wheel**  
The authorisation to operate this wheel was granted in 1821 (for the irrigation of a garden).

**14 The Porte d'Avignon Wheel**  
The old wheel of the garden of the nuns of Sainte-Elisabeth, who built this beautiful noria wheel to water their gardens.

— — Head in the direction of Fontaine de Vaucluse, go along Avenue du Partage des Eaux for 2 km (approximately 20 minutes on foot).

**15 The Partage des Eaux Wheel**  
It is here that the Sorgue divides into two branches for the first time. A visit to the green pearl of L'Isle sur la Sorgue is a must.

## Services offered

Guided visits for groups year-round on request (history and heritage, the flora and fauna of the Sorgue, etc.). Scheduled visits from June to September (the summer activities brochure is available at the Tourist Office and on the website).

## Opening hours

From 1 April to 30 September, Monday to Saturday, 9 am - 12:30 / 2:30 pm - 6 pm  
Sunday from 9 am to 12:30 (9:30 am to 1 pm in July and August).  
From 1 October to 31 March, Monday to Saturday, 9 am - 12:30 / 2 pm - 5:30  
Sunday from 9 am to 12:30 pm

