

= Cubzac @-@ les @-@ Ponts =

Cubzac @-@ les @-@ Ponts , also referred to as Cubzac , is a commune of the Gironde department in Aquitaine , a region in southwestern France . Located 20 km southwest of Bordeaux , it is a crossing point of the river Dordogne . Cubzac has three bridges , one designed by Gustave Eiffel .

During the Middle Ages , Cubzac served as a watchtower through the Four Sons of Amon castle . Different means of crossing the river in Cubzac have historically been used , from pontoon bridges and horse @-@ powered ferries to steel and concrete bridges . Part of a vibrant wine region , Cubzac has several wine castles , including the Terrefort castle . It has developed its own sparkling wine , in what is now called the Café de Paris . The limestone quarries of Cubzac supplied for the typical white constructions found in Bordeaux and its region . Cubzac has two Monuments Historiques ; the first is a painting in a church , the other is the ruins of the Four Sons of Amon castle .

= = Geography = =

Cubzac is located about 20 km northeast of Bordeaux , on the north riverbank of the Dordogne . Several transport networks converge in Cubzac to cross the river . These include the A10 motorway , the N10 trunk road and the Bordeaux @-@ Nantes railroad . The LGV Sud @-@ Ouest , a high @-@ speed railway line running between Tours and Bordeaux , is in the process of being build . Cubzac has an elevation ranging from 1 m to 42 m , the highest points being limestone cliffs dating from the Oligocene epoch , some of which have been used as source of stone . In oenological terms , Cubzac is near the appellations d 'origine contrôlée (AOC) côtes de Bourg and Fronsac , with its own wine castles .

= = Population = =

= = Climate = =

Cubzac 's climate is oceanic , part of the Dfb group in the Köppen climate classification . Periodically , the river Dordogne causes flooding . Nowadays Cubzac is protected by a dam , but is still vulnerable to flooding during high tides and strong winds . Flooding occurred last in the 1999 Martin and 2010 Xynthia storms . The 1999 storm destroyed many trees from the Terrefort castle park . In 1708 , a temperature extremum of -15 ° C caused the river and vineyards to freeze .

= = Administration = =

Administratively , Cubzac @-@ les @-@ Ponts is a commune part of the Aquitaine region , the Gironde département , the arrondissement of Blaye and the Saint @-@ André @-@ de @-@ Cubzac canton . The current mayor of Cubzac is Alain Tabone . As of 2010 , he has six assistants and thirteen advisors .

= = Economy = =

In 2007 , 890 inhabitants were professionally active , the unemployment rate for the population between 15 and 64 was 6 @, @ 7 % for men and 10 @, @ 0 % for women , and the average net taxable income was ? 21 593 . Of the 310 jobs available in Cubzac , only 34 @, @ 9 % were given to its inhabitants . On January 1 , 2010 there were no hotels and no camping sites in Cubzac . Agriculture in Cubzac is mostly dedicated to vine , corn and hay . In 2000 , 244 ha of Cubzac 's land was farmland , representing 25 % of the total 987 ha .

= = History = =

The first traces of settlements in Cubzac date back to the Magdalenian epoch . Those were discovered in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries , with scrapers , chisels , nuclei , and harpoons found . Cut and polished axes , arrowheads , scrapers , awls and flint strikers , and a few fragments of pottery from the Neolithic epoch are plentiful in Cubzac , especially on the mound of the " Four Sons of Amon " . A very large bronze deposit for making weapons was found from the time of the Bronze and Iron Ages . The town was mentioned in the Roman epoch as a surveillance post . Already , crossing the river Dordogne was done at Cubzac . The town has been reconverted through the centuries . The territory was occupied from the 6th century BC by a Bituriges Vivisques tribe . The village was occupied in 1250 by Simon de Montfort , 6th Earl of Leicester . The centre of Cubzac is built on a small hill that dominates the Dordogne valley .

The village has developed from the domain of Cupitius , a wealthy landowner of the Gallo @-@ Roman era , from which the name Cubzac derives .

= = = Ancient crossing methods = = =

The first ferries crossing the Dordogne were flat @-@ bottomed boats driven by oars or keelboats driven by a sail . The passage was very risky and accidents occurred , especially during high tides and storms . From 1754 , a cable ferry crossed the 550 m wide river . The cable lay above the waters and stretched obliquely to the current . In 1821 , the cable ferry was replaced by a two @-@ part ferry powered by a carousel of twelve horses . The horses set in motion gears which in turn powered a large paddle wheel . In good weather , the crossing time was improved to 30 ? 45 minutes , but in bad weather the trip remained uncertain .

The decision to establish a bridge in Cubzac is taken by Napoleon Bonaparte on 30 January 1812 and February 3 , 1813 . The bridge was originally to be completed in 1820 . However , Cubzac 's first bridge was a suspension bridge for which construction works started in 1834 , under Louis @-@ Philippe I. Works lasted four years , and public inauguration occurred on August 17 , 1839 by the Duc and Duchesse of Orleans . The bridge had cost an estimated 3 million gold francs , was 545 m long and had 5 bays . Shortly after its construction , the pillars sank about one metre . During its 30 years of existence , it withstood storms despite the large amplitude oscillations caused . However , on March 2 , 1869 a large storm , causing oscillations of more than two metres , partially destroyed the bridge and rendered it useless . Ancient methods to cross the Dordogne were reinstated . At first , barges and steamboats were used . Then , starting from October 1870 , a large steam tub was used , measuring 21 m by 13 m . To cover the expensive construction costs , a toll was levied for the first 27 years .

= = Current bridges = =

= = = Eiffel bridge = = =

When the suspension bridge fell in 1869 , the idea of a new bridge was discussed at length . The initial project dates from 1875 , which proposed that the new bridge had accompanying rail tracks , and that it be built on the remaining foundations of the suspension bridge , using scaffolding . Actually , given the height of the bridge and the river 's depth and current , scaffolding is almost technically impossible to implement . In the final project from 1878 , a jetting alternative was offered , despite very few companies mastering the technique at the time . The problem of fitting rail tracks , which was later abandoned , delayed the project .

In 1873 , masonry works had started on the right bank . In 1879 , Gustave Eiffel , who had waited more than ten years for a positive response to his project , took in hand the large undertaking in Cubzac , which finished in 1883 . The Cubzac bridge is the most important roadwork by the Eiffel company . It necessitated 3284 tonnes of metal , measures 552 m , and is divided in eight bays .

The parapet consists of iron braces rather than solid walls , alleviating the structure . The company manufacturing the iron pieces later provided those used for the Eiffel Tower .

As the Allies landed in Normandy , the German troupes , in their escape , partially destroyed the Eiffel bridge using explosives . Starting from August 21 , 1944 , all traffic on the bridge was restricted for the retirement of the German troupes . On 28 August 1944 , as the last soldiers passed , German engineers arrived in bicycles and fitted explosives which detonated at 9 : 20pm . Three of the eight bays had fallen in the waters and the North abutment was seriously damaged . The delicate repair works where operated by the company Anciens Ets Eiffel with the help of the Entreprise Générale Industrielle du Sud @-@ Ouest , which coincidentally was directed by Jacques Eiffel , the grand son of Gustave Eiffel . For this reason , the bridge is sometimes called " the twice Eiffel bridge " .

The bridge is now part of the Route nationale 10 which runs between Hendaye and Paris . Both viaducts to the bridge date from 1839 and each measures approximately 250 m . Over time , large settlements occurred , causing serious disturbances in the masonry and requiring the replacement of many vaults in 1880 , 1903 and 1934 .

= = = Railway bridge = = =

The rail bridge was constructed by Lebrun , Dayde and Pile by the compagnie Deyle et Pillet . Its style resembles that of the adjacent Eiffel bridge . It was commissioned by the Chemins de Fer de l 'État for the Chartres @-@ Bordeaux line , and the construction lasted from 1884 to 1885 . Inaugurated in 1886 , it is 561 @,@ 60 m long above the Dordogne are divided in eight bays . The rails are 21 @.@ 80 m above the highest waters . The bridge is made of iron pillars fitted in braces . Despite being younger than the Eiffel bridge , the construction necessitated more funds and effort . The constructions hidden under water and earth make up the bulk of the value and volume of materials used . Foundations only total to 57 @,@ 800 cubic meters . Even though less damaged than the Eiffel bridge , it also sustained damage from German bombing on the same day . The reconstruction works ended June 15 , 1946 , taking less than two years to complete .

= = = Motorway bridge = = =

In 1957 it was decided to study the implementation of a bridge to relieve the old Eiffel bridge which allowed only one lane per direction , and cutback on traffic jams . From 1957 to 1963 various solutions where studies . In 1971 the construction works were tendered and given to the company Campenon @-@ Bernard @-@ Europe . The works should have lasted only two years but where completed in 1974 . The new motorway bridge made of reinforced concrete , having relieved the traffic jams , was celebrated on radio , and by the song " Ne partez pas en vacances , ne partez pas ! " (Do not , do not go on holiday !) by Pierre Perret . In 2000 , the bridge was doubled to 2x3 lanes .

= = Sights = =

= = = Saint @-@ Julien church = = =

The Saint @-@ Julien church is named after Julian the Hospitaller , patron of Cubzac . Julian is a legendary saint destined to kill his parents , and informed about his destiny by a stag . He fled to escape his fate , but the prophecy realized nonetheless , and he became a hermit , helping people cross a river . One day , the Christ arrived to announce his pardon . From the Middle Ages to the French Revolution , the town would have been called Saint @-@ Julien @-@ de @-@ Cubzac . The church is made of limestone and underwent important modifications in the 19th century , when in particular the steeple was rebuilt . The façade , however , still contains Roman remains . The church holds an 18th @-@ century painting of the Baptism of Christ , classified Monument

historique in 1913 . The church is surrounded by a cemetery which was excavated in August 1978 by archaeologists under the direction of Richard Boudet . Coins dating from the time of Francis I , Henry III , Henry IV , Louis XIII , Napoleon III and Victor Emmanuel were uncovered . A gold Merovingian signet ring bearing the Christian symbol Ichthys was also discovered under many potsherds .

= = = Four Sons of Amon castle = = =

At Cubzac , on the high rocky shoreline overlooking the Dordogne , and in the town centre , are the ruins of the castle " des Quatre fils Aymon " within ordinary houses . The entrance of the fortress is flanked by the remains of two towers . These few stones are however extraordinarily rich in history and legend . First off , the castle did not belong to the four sons of Aymon who lived , perhaps , the time of Charlemagne . It was built and rebuilt in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries . It was the seat of the lordship of Cubzaguais . In 1206 , John Lackland , the king of England and youngest son of Eleanor of Aquitaine , took revenge of the king of France Philippe Auguste , who accused him of treason and deprived him of his fiefs , by engaging in miscellaneous abuses . He stormed the castle of Cubzac , and destroyed it . It is a brief English victory . The lordship returns to the French , and is attributed to Simon de Montfort , 6th Earl of Leicester , son of the terrible and bloody winner of the Albigensian Crusade . He built a new castle deemed impregnable , on behalf of the King of England , with double walls , and yet it is the one for which ruins remain . He was sacked by the Gascon barons revolted against Simon de Montfort . Half sacked , it served as a stately home , until moving to the lordship Bouih . The legends say that the two mediaeval castles have erected on the site of a building dating from the Carolingian period , which nothing remains . The Four Sons of Amon castle was registered as a historic monument in 1938 .

= = = Terrefort @-@ Quancard castle = = =

Positioned atop a hill dominating Cubzac @-@ les @-@ Ponts and Saint @-@ André @-@ de @-@ Cubzac , the Terrefort @-@ Quancard castle is a wine property and family house . The main building is a limestone rectangular body of living area , covered with slate for the roof . The surrounding grape vines , most of which are Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot , span approximately 70 hectares of land . Various vestiges remain , including a wash for linen and horses , and a wind @-@ mill for flour .

During its history spanning seven centuries , the castle was owned by a succession of seven families . One of the owners , the count Lafaurie of Monbadon , peer of France , was a catalyst to the construction of the Eiffel bridge . In March 1891 , the Quancard brothers Jean and Eugène bought the property for 110 000 francs , and the Quancard family remains the last owners . The purchase came after a severe phylloxera outbreak , causing the death of over half of French vineyards , devalued the property . The land area was covered mostly with rock until the Quancard brothers used explosives to remove it , and large amounts of clay @-@ limestone soil , known to be beneficial for the wine produce , was brought to replace it .

The Quancard family has played a role in the life and history of Cubzac @-@ les @-@ Ponts . Firstly , Jean Quancard was elected by absolute majority as mayor of Cubzac on May 15 , 1892 and remained in office for 27 years . Also , a fair , organised annually from 1936 to 1939 for its success , supported restoration work for the Saint @-@ Julien steeple and provided financial help to the priest . Finally , the owners periodically host events , including expositions , family weddings and family reunions . The last family reunion , from May 2006 , saw approximately 200 members of the Quancard family .

= = = Wine caves = = =

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries , the mound of Cubzac was slashed all around to provide stone for Bordeaux 's construction and the ballast of some river banks , creating deep

excavations in the limestone . In 1898 , André Cousteau , uncle of the researcher and ecologist Jacques Cousteau , started using the caves to make a sparkling wine based on traditional Champagne @-@ making techniques . The wine , treated in a closed tank , bottled , and kept neck down many months at constant temperature , became bubbly and had its impurities accumulate near the cap . Once this deposit was removed , the bottles were resealed by force , and the corks muzzled . In 1920 , the Cousteau property was sold to the Société Anonyme Gay @-@ Mousse . In 1966 , the caves were entrusted to Monsieur Lateyron who , one year later , created the Café de Paris .

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