

# FONTENILLE

HÔTEL • RESTAURANTS • VIN • CENTRE D'ART





## DOMAINE DE FONTENILLE

Their eyes may look tired, but their expressions are serene as Frédéric Biousse and Guillaume Foucher proudly look upon their dream come true. Under the warm sun of the south of France, Domaine de Fontenille has been brought back to life: after one and a half years of work and an investment of over 10 million euros, this bold gamble has paid off. The magnificent restored house, sitting proudly in its grandiose grounds, shows off all its finery and is ready to greet delighted visitors.

In the pretty and little known village of Lauris, roughly 25 minutes from Aix-en-Provence and 5 km from the tourist hub of Lourmarin, the 35 hectares of vineyards which make up the Domaine de Fontenille stretch across countryside planted with olive trees and cherry trees and carpeted with vineyards, against a backdrop of chalky mountains with the Durance river as a landmark.





## A LARGE-SCALE PROJECT FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL SITE

**F**rédéric Biousse and Guillaume Foucher were men in a hurry. The former CEO who reigned over a fashion empire (SMCP group: Sandro Maje Claudie Pierlot) and the owner of one of the sexiest galleries in Paris led a hectic Parisian life, where the days flew by at breakneck speed and time-out was barely existent.

**"It was time to move on in our lives, to put the intensity of our Parisian lives to one side and to switch over to a different pace, where time passes slowly, with the seasons".** The call of the land was logical, if we consider the family traditions linked to farming and the childhood memories spent in the countryside of these two men who felt the need to "refocus".

Their quest for an ideal, mainly focused on wine ("the most obvious symbol of the humility of the weather and the land"), began in Tuscany before finally ending in Fontenille, a famous wine-growing estate, but an estate in crisis,

based around a house built between the 16th century and the end of the 18th. A highly symbolic site for the region's elders who, at some point in their life, have all celebrated a marriage or another happy event at the Domaine.

The initial project for a wine-growing estate was naturally kept, but the desire to create a venue in their image also emerged, through the motivation to transform the house into a venue that reflected them, while respecting its identity and foundations: an exceptional hotel-restaurant with respect for tradition but enhanced with modern touches blending seamlessly into this dream-like décor. Frédéric Biousse and Guillaume Foucher commissioned the architectural transformation of Domaine de Fontenille and building of the cellar to **Alexandre Lafourcade**, an expert in restoring Châteaux and an eminent connoisseur of the Provence region. They preserved the interior design of the house, which they did themselves.





## DOMAINE DE FONTENILLE: A LIVING DREAM

**A**pon arrival at the Domaine, the view of the grounds, («as big as seven football pitches») sets the tone, along with a feeling of dizziness: avenues of majestic cypress trees (there are nearly 250), clusters of laurels and Laurustinus, of lavender, olive trees, hydrangeas, roses (over 1,200 on the entire Domaine!), irises, etc. A garden of colours and scents where visitors can suspend time. The gaze moves over to wide, impeccably mown lawns, which extend into vineyards as far as the eye can see, undergrowth and the tiled roofs of the village of Lauris. And, in front of the house, a large pool where carp and goldfish frolic. **A postcard of the Provence dream.**

Entering the house is like taking a leap back in time. The original cachet has been preserved, enhanced with modern touches here and there. The entrance sets the tone: at the bottom of intense blue walls, reminding us of Klein, an oak reception desk rises upwards, supported by wooden shelves where illuminated bottles take pride of place. A perfect summary of the philosophy of the venue...

**The 17 rooms and suites** are naturally up to the same standard: vast, bright and most with windows opening onto the grounds, they share certain decorative elements. Walls and general colours in shades of grey, beige and taupe, small antique busts, solid wooden headboards, noble parquet flooring, 19th-century photos, soft sofas, extra-large bathrooms, etc. Materials of wood, glass and iron mix effortlessly, exuding gentle harmony...

Details are what make the difference. Here, the difference is a permanent signature: who else can boast of putting ancient-style bathtubs on feet in most of the bathrooms? A form of luxury which is not ostentatious, but marked with a seal of discreet elegance. It is impossible not to mention the successes of **Patricia Urquiola** (Mutina brand), whose sandstone tiles in insightful harmonies, colours and geometric shapes impart uniqueness on the design of the bathrooms. It is also unimaginable not to mention the influence of Guillaume Foucher, whose Parisian gallery has partly been exported to Domaine de Fontenille



in the form of contemporary photos which decorate the interior of the rooms: works by **Laurent Millet**, **Todd Hido**, **Ethan Murrow** and **Anne-Lise Broyer** brighten up (or shake up?) the very British-style decoration of the rooms. Unique. The ambition of the owners when they drafted their project was to create a unique venue:

*"We wanted a 19th-century house, in its original state, but lifted with contemporary art blending seamlessly into this exceptional décor. A bold combination, but one which reflects us».* A statement which is impossible to contradict...

As uniformity is far from being a given at Domaine de Fontenille, some rooms stand out with their characteristics, such as those with a mezzanine, ideal for families, or those with a private terrace. And guests who are well-being enthusiasts can enjoy **the extra-large swimming pool** (8x20m), the **steam room** or the **Jacuzzi**.

**A level of elegance and refinement where everything must be perfect**, as the new hotel owners explain: *"We knew exactly what we wanted. We have travelled a lot and frequented numerous establishments, being very demanding when it comes to quality. We have set ourselves the same exacting requirements with this adventure".*







## THE REBIRTH OF A GREAT WINE-GROWING ESTAE IN THE LUBERON

**D**omaine de Fontenille had been ailing for several years and its years of splendour were far behind it. Once recommended by specialised publications, it was finding it hard to remain consistent in terms of quality. Taken over by Frédéric Biousse and Guillaume Foucher, the Domaine has undergone a rejuvenation: **in the process of converting to organic farming**, its wines are remarkably crafted (in new stainless steel and concrete vats and barrels) under the leadership of the oenologist and agricultural engineer **Laurence Berlemont**, who has a new cellar and more recent wine-making techniques.

Tasting the rosé instantly takes you on a trip to Provence: with aromas of apricots and dried fruits, it is full on the palate with a flavoursome finale where the Shiraz deliciously highlights delicate notes of raspberry. The white wines are also worthy of praise and have the advantage of offering a wide range of emotions: dry and smooth when they combine Grenache, Clairette and Vermentino; a more buttery and complex taste when the Vermentino is the sole grape variety, vinified in a new barrel. As for the reds, they have been particularly well cared for and reveal the quintessence of everything Shiraz can provide.





## CONTEMPORARY GASTRONOMIC CREATIONS AND DISTINCTIVE BISTRO

**W**ith a keen eye and fast hand, **Jérôme Faure** cannot hide his enthusiasm: the 30-something chef left his home region of Dauphiné (and his Michelin star gained at the Hôtel du Golf restaurant in Corrençon-en-Vercors) to create, alongside Frédéric Biousse and Guillaume Foucher, the gastronomic offering of Domaine de Fontenille. A daring but thrilling gamble for this chef whose creativity is unbridled and precision well known, who has built a flawless career (**one star** in 2008, Jeune Talent **Gault et Millau** 2011, Grand de Demain **Gault et Millau** 2013).

"Here, I'm like a child who goes to Disneyland every day. The region is extremely attractive, I work in a setting that's the stuff of dreams and the range of products proposed to me is very interesting". Travelling through Provence, clocking up miles of road, Jérôme Faure took the time to meet producers who fed his inspiration and helped him build a menu that is as

disconcerting as it is exciting: "The other day, I found a great bee-keeper and some young people who have an amazing organic vegetable garden. They managed to make me cry with an exceptional pineapple tomato", he admits, still moved.

The **Champ des Lunes**, the gastronomic restaurant at Domaine de Fontenille, has become his new playground. Customers can watch him at work on two different menus behind large windows which separate the dining room from the kitchen. His cuisine is free, spontaneous and generous, and the bold contemporary creations fit in brilliantly with the spirit that predominates at Domaine de Fontenille:

"**Tarbouriech** oyster from Etang de Thau, broccoli and kumquat, Parmesan and botargo", "**Deer back** in gentian liqueur, cooked rosé on the barbecue, cauliflower, cinnamon and Medjool date», "**6-hour steamed apple**, fromage blanc and local honey mousse, walnut

liqueur, Vercors meadowsweet ice cream". A festival where flavours intermingle, textures compliment each other and colours harmonise with each other as if on an artist's canvas. This is great art.

The second menu is surprisingly radical: In fact, it is an ode to fruits, vegetables, flowers and cheeses, which Jérôme Faure brings together in vertiginous arrangements:

"**Puy Ste Reparade** egg filled with flowers, herbs, jasmine sabayon", "**Butternut squash** cooked on the barbecue, goats cheese, Granola, local honey and Peruvian tarragon", "**The Carrot** freshened up with blood orange and orange blossom, cow's milk curd, Calisson d'Aix ice cream". The titles are as surprising as the combinations.

And as art and comfort are also on the menu, note the chairs by **Charles & Ray Eames**, the tables and chairs by **Jean Prouvé**, and the outdoor furniture by Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec from the Swiss furniture maker **Vitra** or the remarkable work of **Patricia Urquiola**

on the walls, partly covered in ceramic sandstone("Dechirer" for Mutina).

The gastronomic selection at Domaine de Fontenille also offers a bistro, La Cuisine d'Amélie, with a short menu concocted by Jérôme Faure allowing clients to savour a few of the chef's signature dishes (including his divine "skirt of beef left in whisky and then grilled, chestnuts"), etc. **at competitive prices!**





## WHY DOMAINE DE FONTENILLE IS A UNIQUE ESTABLISHMENT

**F**irstly because Guillaume Foucher and Frédéric Biousse have a **fertile imagination** and as art is omnipresent at Domaine de Fontenille, summer is partly devoted to it: and are concerned with making their Domaine an exceptional destination (eco-tourism trend, responsible luxury), multiplying projects and initiatives.

For example, children are indulged and soaked in a real countryside atmosphere: discovery of the **organic vegetable garden, donkey walks**, and, the ultimate enjoyment: **collecting eggs from the chicken coop!** Their parents (and other customers!) can hire **convertible** cars and meander through the Luberon, or they might prefer to partake in **canoeing** on the Durance or enjoy long **horse rides** (with the animal proudly sporting a shirt with the Fontenille logo, patiently waiting for you to hop on in front of the Domaine gates!). Everything is available to make the customer feel happy and spoiled thanks to an array of sports or activities related to the Domaine's nature (enthusiasts can become initiated in the joys of wine with classes).

And as **art** is omnipresent at Domaine de Fontenille, summer is partly devoted to it:

**Open-air cinema, concerts and contemporary art exhibitions**, because the true advantage of the Domaine is its art centre, with temporary exhibitions (3 to 4 per year) of plastic artists: collective, themes or monographic.

The links which unite the two owners with the world of contemporary art and museum institutions ensure quality programming which is unique in the region.

**Fontenille will also be a prestigious Residence for young composers** and develop partnerships with the Festival International d'Art Lyrique d'Aix-en-Provence or the Festival International de Piano de la Roque d'Anthéron.

**The art centre extends into a splendid vaulted hall**, which will host some of the concerts mentioned, but which above all will be ideal for conferences and weddings.

We told you, it's exceptional...







DOMAINE DE FONTENILLE

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04 13 98 00 00

[www.domainedefontenille.com](http://www.domainedefontenille.com)

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**Standard room**

from €180 to €240 € *depending on the season*

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**Standard room with view of grounds**

from €240 to €290 € *depending on the season*

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**Superior room with view of grounds**

from €270 to €330 € *depending on the season*

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**Executive room with private terrace**

from €290 to €350 € *depending on the season*

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**Executive room with view of grounds**

from €300 to €370 € *depending on the season*

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**Duplex room with view of grounds**

from €340 to €410 € *depending on the season*

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**Amélie de Savornin suite**

from €350 to €420 € *depending on the season*

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**Alphonse de Savornin suite with private terrace**

from €370 to €450 € *depending on the season*

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**Breakfast**

€19

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**Le Champ des Lunes menu**

€36 / 98

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**La Cuisine d'Amélie menu**

€27 / 32

Press Contact:

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