

Our tips for visiting La Cotinière and its port on the Ile d'Oléron



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By Floriane

La Cotinière is a charming fishing port on the west coast of the Ile d'Oléron. We think it's one of the island's must-visit villages, with its lively port, fish market and pretty craft stores.

We're currently living on the Ile d'Oléron, and we'd like to share some of our best addresses with you. Here's our selection of things to do in La Cotinière during your stay on the Ile d'Oléron.

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What to do in La Cotinière

Stroll along the harbour

One of the island's main activities is fishing: the port of La Cotinière is France's 7th largest fishing port, and the largest in Charente-Maritime.

We recommend taking a stroll around the harbor to watch the small boats, and perhaps witness the return of the fishing boats. You can watch the bustle of activity around the **fish auction**. This will give you an authentic insight into local maritime life.

Guided tours are available to learn more about the **port's assets** and the **various fishing techniques**, and some tours also include a visit to the fish auction.

The best thing to do when you're in the port of Cotinière is to sample a **delicious ice cream** from the **Angelys** ice cream parlour, sitting on one of the benches facing the port. You'll probably come across us doing the same thing as you!

Tour times and prices are available from the island's various tourist offices. Out of season, 1 visit per week is organized on average.

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Visit the fish market

The fish auction is the place where seafood products are sold by **auction**. During the high season, and once a month the rest of the year, you can attend **morning guided tours** of the newly renovated fish market.

These tours will give you an insight into how the auctions work, and how the fish are sorted, classified and sold. An instructive experience to discover what goes on behind the scenes of artisanal fishing.

For early risers, watching the fish being unloaded can be an emotional experience. You'll see the hustle and bustle of sailors unloading fish, and the efficiency of the chain that brings them to market.

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Discover the day and night markets in La Cotinière

During the school vacations, the port of La Cotinière is one of the liveliest spots on the island of Oleron. To sample local produce and discover local specialities such as Marennes-Oléron oysters or the famous salted butter caramels, take advantage of the markets held regularly in the village.

It's also the place to discover and exchange with **local craftsmen**, where you can find quality souvenirs: jewelry, decorative objects, textile creations... In high season, the market **takes place every morning**, and a **night market** with a foodtruck is organized every week.

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The beaches of La Cotinière

The beaches at La Cotinière aren't the best for swimming, but there are a few pleasant spots where you can sunbathe, near the church.

If you're looking for beaches with stretches of white sand as far as the eye can see, you can head south of the fishing port to the **Matha beach**, which is swimmable at high tide. The beach is easily accessible by bike. We recommend the large and beautiful **beach of Vert Bois**, a few kilometers south of La Cotinière. One of the most [beautiful beaches on the island of Oleron](#), in our opinion!

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Discover Saint-Nicolas church

This little church is well worth a visit. Take a moment to admire its construction and, why not, cool off on a hot summer's day.

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Explore the island by bike from La Cotinière

The island of Oléron is criss-crossed with cycle paths that will take you through a variety of landscapes.

We think that La Cotinière is a good base for your stay, as several cycle paths pass through the village. From La Cotinière, a track leads north to the Chassiron lighthouse, passing through the small villages of **Domino** and **Chaucre**. The same track leads to the **southern beaches**, and finally another cycle path takes you to the village of **Saint Pierre d'Oleron**.

Where to eat in La Cotinière?

- **La Sardinnerie**: the ideal restaurant for eating fresh products from the fish market opposite the harbour.
- **Fishmongers**: at the Halles (opposite the port), several fishmongers offer fresh fish direct from the fish auction. It's an opportunity to have the freshest seafood for your meals.
- **La Lumineuse**, in La Cotinière, is a **cannery** made in Oléron! For the different products, they favor local fishing as much as possible. Manufactured on site, our products contain no additives, colorants or preservatives.

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Which hotel to stay at in La Cotinière?

On the island of Oleron, things to do and see are spread out over the whole island. We therefore advise you to choose a central accommodation to be able to go to the different points of interest easily.

The best place to stay is on the **coast near La Cotinière**, you can easily access one of the great beaches of the wild coast and you can enjoy the many night activities in high season.

With ocean and pool view

[Hôtel Île de Lumière in La Cotinière](#), ideally located, with **ocean** access and just a few minutes' walk from La Cotinière's bustling **fishing port** . The seaside decoration, with its soft and restful colors, immediately brings a spirit of vacation in the sun. Located on the west coast, **the central location** will allow you to easily visit both the south and north of the island. Free parking + breakfast. In short, go for it!

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Photo Hotel Île de Lumière

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[See rates and availabilities for l'île Lumière hotel](#)

Which campsite to stay at?

Camping les Flots Atlantique village: we tested this campsite with our **motorhome**. It's ideally located south of the fishing port of La Cotinière on the coast near Dolus-d'Oléron and La Péronche beach. If you go kitesurfing, part of the beach is reserved for this activity.

It's a family [campsite on the Ile d'Oléron](#), on a human scale, with direct access to the ocean, by a small footpath, which offers **bungalows, tents, chalets** for rent. An ideal choice at a low price.

Family campsite: [Ostrea campsite](#) in the south of the island on the oyster route

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We had a **lot of fun** writing this article about this island that we love and know (almost) by heart. We'd like to thank our family and friends who have given us invaluable advice, and we'll be updating this article regularly since we're regular visitors.

[Discover our article on the island of Oléron](#)

If you enjoyed reading it as much as we did writing it, feel free to give it 5 stars below!

We wish you an excellent stay in Oleron ! Feel free to leave us a **quick note** or **5 stars** below, to tell us if you're planning this trip, to ask any questions you may have, here or on [Instagram](#), we'll get back to you with great pleasure.

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