

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested ideas



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By Floriane

We've been living on the Ile d'Oléron for 5 years now, so we're starting to get some ideas for outings with children. We've tested the island in high summer, out of season, when the sun is shining, when it's raining, with a very small child, then with a child who runs around, climbs, wants to ride a bike, bodyboard, play treasure hunts and finish the day with an ice cream.

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The Ile d'Oléron is a really easy family destination, which is why we settled here.

If you're looking for **things to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children**, we've put together a list of our favorite activities, those we recommend to friends when they come to visit us, those we often do with our daughter, and those we save for rainy days or school vacations.

Sommaire détaillé

- [Our must-do nature activities on the Ile d'Oléron with children](#)
 - [Take advantage of Vert Bois beach to introduce children to bodyboarding and surfing](#)
 - [Go to Boyardville beach, our family-friendly beach](#)
 - [Take a boat trip to Fort Boyard from Boyardville](#)
 - [Test foot fishing at low tide](#)
 - [Climb to the Chassiron lighthouse and run through the gardens](#)
 - [Take a bike ride on Oléron's cycle paths](#)
 - [Explore the Prés Valet park in Saint-Georges-d'Oléron](#)
 - [Discover the Port des Salines with your family](#)
- [Children's activities on the island of Oleron](#)
 - [Take the P'tit Train from Saint-Trojan to Maumusson](#)
 - [Birdwatching at Marais aux Oiseaux](#)
 - [Go to Parc Myocastors in Dolus-d'Oléron](#)

- [Discover Les Ânes d'Oléron](#)
- [Explore the island with Tèrra Aventura](#)
- [What to do on the Ile d'Oléron when it's raining with children?](#)
- [Villages and ports to explore with children](#)
- [Where to eat and snack on the island of Oleron with children?](#)
- [Where to eat and snack on the island of Oleron with children?](#)
- [Where to sleep on the Ile d'Oléron with your family?](#)
- [Our map of things to do in Oléron with children](#)

Our must-do nature activities on the Ile d'Oléron with children

Take advantage of Vert Bois beach to introduce children to bodyboarding and surfing

If you follow us on Instagram, you've probably seen the name of this beach come up more than once. Vert Bois beach is a bit like our "glisse" beach on Oléron. Here, we're on the ocean side, with an immense wild beach, dunes, waves, the occasional wind, and the sensation of facing the Atlantic in large format. It's one of our favorite beaches on the island, especially at the end of the day, when the light gets softer and the kids can play in the sand while we watch the sunset.

It really is the ideal beach for introducing children, and even older ones, to the joys of bodyboarding and surfing when conditions allow.

The beach slopes down quite gently, so the waves and foam take a long time to unwind before arriving on the sand. To begin with, this is reassuring: children can catch their first small waves in very little water, feel the board go under them, and do it again and again, without immediately being in a sea that's too deep.

When the waves are small, regular and not too powerful, it's great for introducing them to the thrill of surfing. Our daughter loves it, but we're always careful: we keep an eye on the conditions, stay close to her and avoid days when the ocean is too rough.

Before you go, take a look at the following websites [Surf Forecast](#) for wave

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested ideas

forecasts and [Tide Info](#) for tide times. It makes all the difference with children. A beach can be perfect at one hour and much less convenient two hours later.

□ **Practical info:** Vert Bois beach, Dolus-d'Oléron / Le Grand-Village-Plage. Free access, bike and car parking nearby. The beach is supervised during the summer season. Best for children already at ease in the water, always between supervised areas in season and with real vigilance on waves, currents and baïnes.

Just a few minutes' walk away, we recommend [Hôtel Le Vert Bois](#).

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

Go to Boyardville beach, our family-friendly beach

A second beach option that we love with children: Boyardville beach. It's one of the most convenient family beaches in Oleron. It's on the mainland side, so the sea is often calmer here than on the west coast beaches.

Before our daughter could swim, this was one of our favorite beaches. It's the ideal beach for a leisurely swim, playing in the sand, watching Fort Boyard in the distance and enjoying this large beach bordered by the Saumonards forest. It's typically the beach we recommend when you come to Oleron with young children and want to avoid the powerful waves.

After a swim, we recommend a stroll to Boyardville harbor. It's a simple but pleasant stroll, especially at the end of the day when the atmosphere becomes gentler. In summer, we recommend arriving early, as this is a very popular beach for families.

□ **Practical info:** free access, nearby parking, supervised bathing in season in certain areas. Ideal with young children for a quieter swim on the east side of the island.

Take a boat trip to Fort Boyard from Boyardville

Seeing Fort Boyard from the beach is one thing. But approaching it by boat is something else again.

For children (and adults) familiar with the show, there's always a touch of magic in watching "the real Fort Boyard".

Although you can't visit it from the inside, seeing it from the sea is still impressive. The fort seems to stand in the middle of the water, massive, mysterious, almost unreal.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested ideas

Departures are from Boyardville harbor, making it easy to combine a boat trip with a stroll around the harbor or a swim on the beach. A number of local companies offer boat trips around Fort Boyard, with different formats to suit all tastes: boat tour, guided tour, longer cruise or sailboat trip.

For our part, we recommend a trip with [Compagnie Interîles](#), which we've already recommended in our article on the most beautiful beaches on the Ile d'Oléron. The cruise lasts around 1.5 hours, allows you to get as close as possible to the fort, and is an activity that appeals to children and adults alike.

From Boyardville, it's also possible to plan an outing to **Ile d'Aix**, often including a trip around Fort Boyard. Our daughter did this as part of a school outing, and it's a great idea for a family day out if you want to discover an island without cars, with a real end-of-the-world feel.

□ **Practical info:** departures from the port of Boyardville. Expect to pay between €20 and €35 per person, depending on the company, duration and season. Reservations recommended during school vacations and summer.

📍 [See availability for the boat trip to Fort Boyard.](#)

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What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

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ideas

Test foot fishing at low tide

Fishing on foot is the quintessential Oleron activity. At low tide, children love to turn over small pebbles, watch for crabs, look for shells, walk in puddles and discover a whole little world that you can't see at high tide. It's free, simple and turns a trip to the water's edge into a real exploration.

We advise you to bring boots or water shoes, a bucket, a landing net, and above all to check the tide times before setting off. Here again, **Marée Info** is our first port of call. You'll also need to respect size limits, authorized quantities and prohibited areas. You'll find all the information you need on the [lodde association](#) website. With children, the idea is not necessarily to fill a basket, but rather to observe, learn and enjoy.

□ **Practical info:** free activity. Easy spots: Passe de l'Écuissière in Dolus-d'Oléron, around Pont d'Oléron, Boyardville depending on tides. Always check tide times and local rules before going.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

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ideas

Climb to the Chassiron lighthouse and run through the gardens

The Chassiron lighthouse, in the very north of the island, is one of the great classics to visit on Oléron with children. Firstly, because the place has that little “end of the world” effect that we love. Secondly, because children often enjoy the challenge of the steps. There are 224 of them to climb before reaching the top, with a 360° view of the ocean, the Pertuis d'Antioche, Ile de Ré, Ile d'Aix and sometimes even Fort Boyard in the distance.

After the climb, we like to take our time strolling through the compass rose gardens. Children can walk, observe the plants, run around the paths, and you can extend your walk to the coast to see the old fish locks at low tide.

□ **Practical info:** [Chassiron lighthouse](#), Saint-Denis-d'Oléron. Count around €4 to €5 per adult, around €3 for children aged 6 to 12, free for under 6s.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

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ideas

Take a bike ride on Oléron's cycle paths

Cycling on Oleron is one of the best ways to discover the island with your family. There are over 160 km of cycle routes, making it possible to do small, easy loops, or to cross a good part of the island for the more motivated. With children, we recommend keeping to reasonable distances and planning regular breaks: a beach, an oyster hut, an ice cream, a bench in the shade... it always works. ☐

Among the portions we particularly like with children :

- **Between Vert Bois and Saint-Trojan-les-Bains:** this is one of our favorite stretches, as it passes through a large part of the forest (blue trail). It's pleasant in hot weather, shadier than other itineraries, and you really feel cut off from the road.
- **Between Grand-Village-Plage and Le Château-d'Oléron:** it's also a very pleasant route, crossing the marshes for birdwatching and avoiding much of the traffic (in orange).
- **Between Boyardville and Saint-Denis-d'Oléron:** this is a great section for discovering the north-east of the island. There's just one road section, dotted on the map, so you'll need to be a little more careful with children. But the rest of the route is really pleasant.
- **Between Plage des Huttes and the Chassiron lighthouse:** this is one of the wildest stretches. Arriving at Chassiron really gives you the impression of being at the end of Oléron.

☐ **Practical info:** cycle paths all over the island. Free access if you have your own bikes, rental available in several communes. Count on around €15 to €30 a day for a classic or electric bike, depending on the model and the season. To help you plan your trip, take a look at the official map of cycle paths on the island of Oleron. It's a great way to find out which sections are dedicated, which are shared and which are on roads.

[Le Clos des Baigneurs, in Dolus-d'Oléron](#), is just a few meters from the cycle path.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

Explore the Prés Valet park in Saint-Georges-d'Oléron

The **Prés Valet park** in Saint-Georges-d'Oléron is a place we visit regularly. It features a large leisure area around a lake, with a beautiful wooden playground, a large zip line, a ping-pong table, a great skate park, a fitness trail and picnic areas.

We like this park because it's multi-age: little ones can play, older children can go to the skate park or try out the sports course, and parents can enjoy the wooded waterside setting. In season, there are also small electric boats (for a fee).

□ **Practical info:** the Prés Valet park is located in Saint-Georges-d'Oléron. + Guiguettes des Prés Valet in summer.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

Discover the Port des Salines with your family

The [Port des Salines](#), in Grand-Village-Plage, is a great place to show children a different side of the island.

There's also an eco-museum, which is a great way to learn more about **the work of the salt worker and the history of salt production on the island**. The tour is fairly straightforward and visual, and helps make sense of what you see outside in the marshes.

□ **Practical info:** Port des Salines, 34 rue des Anciennes Salines, Le Grand-Village-Plage.

Children's activities on the island of Oleron

Take the P'tit Train from Saint-Trojan to Maumusson

Take the P'tit Train from Saint-Trojan to Maumusson

The [P'tit Train de Saint-Trojan](#) is a classic with children. The route is really fun: it passes through the forest, skirts the landscapes of the south of the island, then arrives at the wild beach of Maumusson, inaccessible by car and where swimming is

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested ideas

forbidden. The activity has a slightly retro feel that always works well with families.

We recommend that you plan a picnic at Maumusson beach to enjoy the scenery, then stop off at **Gatseau beach** on the way back. It's the perfect place to swim in a great environment, more sheltered and very pleasant with children.

□ **Practical info:** departure from Saint-Trojan-les-Bains station. Allow around €13 per adult and €10 per child aged 4 to 12.

Birdwatching at Marais aux Oiseaux

The **Marais aux Oiseaux**, in Dolus-d'Oléron, is an activity that we do regularly with our daughter, and over several seasons. And that's what makes it so interesting: you never see exactly the same thing at different times of the year. In spring, there are often babies, and of course, with children, it works very well.

The site is easy to visit on foot, with a discovery trail, observatories, educational panels and plenty of birds to observe in a very tranquil setting. You'll come across storks, ducks, waders, birds of prey and birds in care, depending on the area you visit.

What we also like is that the site has a real mission to protect wildlife. The Marais aux Oiseaux is both an educational discovery site and a departmental rescue center

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested ideas

for wild animals in distress.

□ **Practical info:** [Le Marais aux Oiseaux](#) is located at Les Grissotières, 17550 Dolus-d'Oléron. It costs around €5 per adult. Remember to pick up the little guide with the treasure hunt for children at reception.

[Le Clos des Baigneurs, in Dolus-d'Oléron](#), is located next to the bird marsh and the Myocastors park.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

Go to Parc Myocastors in Dolus-d'Oléron

Right next door, the [Myocastors Park](#) is a great activity for young children. They come here to discover myocastors and other animals, in a simple, easy-to-navigate setting.

□ **Practical info:** Parc Myocastors, route des Grissotières, Dolus-d'Oléron. Cost around €13 per adult and €9 per child. Free on-site parking.

Discover Les Ânes d'Oléron

[Les Ânes d'Oléron](#), in Chéray, is one of the softest activities to do with children. Our friends PA and Amandine ([doudous passe-partout](#)) tried it out for us with their 2 children. You can visit the educational farm, get up close to the animals and, depending on the package, take a donkey ride on a secure trail.

□ **Practical info:** Les Ânes d'Oléron, Le Placin, Chéray, Saint-Georges-d'Oléron. Farm visits and donkey rides according to packages.

Explore the island with Tèrra Aventura

To discover Oléron in a different way, **Tèrra Aventura** is always a good idea with children who love treasure hunts. Simply download the free [Terra Aventura](#) app.

On the island, you'll find the North Course,

- “**Lost in Oléron**”, around Saint-Denis-d'Oléron: a fairly long 11 km loop, best done with motivated children, teenagers or by bike.
- “**Le Petit Train des Z'Artistes**”, in the south of France at Saint-Trojan-les-Bains, which lets you discover the village in treasure hunt mode;

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron when it's raining with children?

Even when the weather doesn't cooperate, there's always something to keep the kids busy on the Ile d'Oléron. We often keep these ideas on hand for those grey days, chilly mornings or late afternoons when we need a dry activity.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested ideas

- ♥ **Le Ludocafé in Dolus-d'Oléron:** this is clearly **one of our favorite local spots**. Admission is free, there are play areas for toddlers, children and families, and it's easy to have a good, dry time. We go there to play on site, borrow games, drink a coffee and let the kids enjoy a place that's really designed for them.
- **Iléo in Dolus-d'Oléron:** this is the island's swimming pool/water park option. We often go there with our daughter, especially when we want a change from the beach or when the weather is uncertain. Off-season, the indoor pool is already great fun, and in summer, the outdoor areas with slides, water games and paddling pool are great fun for the kids. The **entrance fee is a little high**, so watch out for special offers. Nearby, there's also the recently inaugurated Dolus wooden playground and skate park.
- **The Eldorado cinema in Saint-Pierre-d'Oléron:** this is a simple outing that can easily save a rainy day. What's more, the cinema is right in the center of town, so you can easily follow it up with a snack.
- **The Maison éco-paysanne at Grand-Village-Plage** is a great cultural alternative for children. Discover traditional Oleron housing, eco-construction, materials and life in the past, with a family trail, hands-on activities and occasional vacation workshops.
- **The Musée de l'île d'Oléron:** but it is currently closed for renovation, with a planned reopening in 2028.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

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ideas

Villages and ports to explore with children

As well as the big activities, there are plenty of villages and small ports where you can simply enjoy a stroll with the kids.

- **Le Château-d'Oléron:** surely one of the easiest villages to visit with children. You can stroll around the citadel, go down to the colorful huts, watch the craftsmen at work, visit the playground and take a ride on the **old manual merry-go-round** (free) located at the harbor huts.
- **La Cotinière:** always a good idea with children. Take a stroll along the harbor, then grab an ice cream at **L'Angély**. Older children can also take part in guided tours of the fish market, depending on the season.
- **Saint-Trojan-les-Bains:** we love the old-fashioned seaside resort atmosphere. You can walk along the seafront, look at the villas, have a snack, join the **P'tit Train de Saint-Trojan** or continue on to Gatseau.
- **Saint-Denis-d'Oléron:** a good base for exploring the north of the island. The main attraction is of course the **Chassiron lighthouse**, but you can also take a stroll along the harbor, eat an ice cream, play mini-golf or go to the Boirie beach with its colorful huts.

[the Hôtel Île de Lumière](#) is ideally located in La Cotinière

Where to eat and snack on the island of Oleron with children?

When it comes to eating out with children on the Ile d'Oléron, we've got a few sure-fire favourites.

- **Le Zorba**, in Château-d'Oléron, is a perfect family guinguette with children, thanks to the playground right next door. The same concept can be found at **La Guiguette des Prés Vallet**.
- **Frits de Mer**, on the port du Château, is great for fish and chips in a very pleasant setting.
- **Café de la Plage** is one of our kid-friendly favourites, with its terrace under the pine trees and a play area in the sand for children.
- **Bella Ciao**, in Saint-Pierre, is a safe bet for pizza.
- **Dinette du Pêcheur**, in the **port of La Cotinière**. This is a new seafood **street food** address, featuring homemade **lobster rolls** and seafood

sandwiches.

Where to eat and snack on the island of Oleron with children?

When it comes to eating out with children on the Ile d'Oléron, we've got a few simple, practical sure things:

- **Le Zorba**, in Château-d'Oléron: a perfect family guinguette with children, thanks to the nearby playground. There's a similar spirit at **Guinguette des Prés Valet**, in Saint-Georges-d'Oléron, with the park right next door.
- **Frits de Mer**, on the port of Château-d'Oléron: top for fish and chips in a very pleasant setting, without the formality of a classic restaurant.
- **Le Café de la Plage**: one of our favorite kid-friendly spots, with its terrace under the pine trees and an area where kids can play in the sand while we enjoy our meal.
- **Bella Ciao**, in Saint-Pierre-d'Oléron: a safe bet for pizza, practical when you want to keep things simple with children.
- **La Dinette du Pêcheur**, in the port of La Cotinière: a new seafood street food address, featuring homemade lobster rolls and seafood sandwiches. Perfect for a quick bite to eat while strolling along the port.

And for a snack, we've also got a few addresses up our sleeve:

- **L'Angélys**, in La Cotinière: a must for ice cream after a stroll along the harbor. It's simple, but works every time with children.
- **La Crêpe au Mètre**, on the port of La Cotinière: a great place for a snack, with crepes, waffles, homemade churros and takeaway ice creams.

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested
ideas

Where to sleep on the Ile d'Oléron with your family?

- If you're looking for self-catering accommodation, [Le Clos des Baigneurs](#), in **Dolus-d'Oléron**, is centrally located for easy access to the island's beaches, Iléo, Marais aux Oiseaux, Vert Bois or Le Château-d'Oléron. [More info and reservations for Clos des Baigneurs](#)
 - If you want a hotel with a swimming pool and easy access to the beach, with family rooms, [the Hôtel Le Vert Bois](#) is ideally located on the ocean side. [More info and reservations for Hôtel le Vert Bois](#)
 - If you prefer to be close to the port and the atmosphere of La Cotinière [the Hôtel Île de Lumière](#) is a good option. For a more natural stay or on a more controlled budget. [Information and reservation for the hotel Île de Lumière in La Cotinière](#)
 - **The Ostrea campsite** in the south of the island is convenient, especially for trips to the oyster route, La Baudissière and Château-d'Oléron. [Information and booking for camping Ostrea](#)
- **Practical info:** prices vary greatly depending on the season. In summer, family accommodations go fast, especially near beaches. We recommend booking early for

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested ideas

July-August, or aiming for June/September if you can travel outside school vacations.

Photo Hotel Île de Lumière

Our map of things to do in Oléron with children

To help you organize your day, the ideal thing to do is to group all these addresses together on a map: easy beaches, rainy activities, walks, ports, kid-friendly restaurants, accommodation and excursion departures. With children, it's easy to see what's nearby and avoid crossing the island three times in one day.

For example, you could easily organize a day around Boyardville, with its beach, Fort Royer and Fort Boyard outing. Another day around Château-d'Oléron with citadel, cabins, playground and restaurant. Or a day in the south with Port des Salines, Grand-Village, Vert Bois and Saint-Trojan.

If you're planning a stay on the island, you can also read our other articles on

What to do on the Ile d'Oléron with children? Our family-tested ideas

organizing your vacation in Charente-Maritime :

- [What to do on the island of Oleron? Our complete guide](#)
- [The most beautiful beaches on the island of Oleron](#)
- [Our favorite cycling routes on the island of Oleron](#)
- [What to do in Rochefort with children](#)
- [What to do in La Rochelle Our ideas for visiting the city](#)
- [Where to sleep on the island of Oléron? Our favorite accommodations](#)

We wish you a wonderful stay on the **island of Oléron!** Feel free to drop us a **line** below to let us know if you're planning this trip, ask any questions here or on [Instagram](#), and we'll get back to you with great pleasure.

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0 avis (0/5)

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