

## Gorges de Galamas

Located between the towns of Saint-Paul-de-Fenouillet and Cubieres-sur Cinobles, the gorge is one of the most spectacular natural sights, in the region. The gorge is classed as a "protected natural site". Created over ten's of thousands of years by

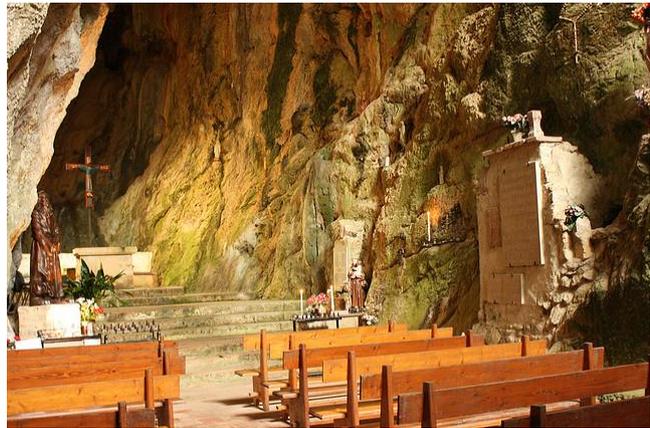


the L'Adly river by eroding the limestone, the river is fed by numerous hot springs along its length. Its really worth exploring the gorge by foot, rather than driving, simply because the drive is quite challenging. The road is tightly hairpinned and bumpy, and includes some steep sections, and in places, is very narrow, barely wide enough for two cars pass each other. Also in the summer it does become very busy. If you

do choose to drive, there is as a car park, with will allow you access to the Ermitage St Antoine-de-Galamus via a rugged footpath. Since the 7<sup>th</sup> Century the natural grotto's have been a refuge for hermits. They built their cells and lived in prayer and abstinence, and then died. The monks placed the site under the protection of St.

Anthony

The chapel, originally a single cave was built following the "miracle" of 1782 in which many villagers of Saint-Paul-de-Fenouillet were saved from an outbreak of "sweating sickness" (a kind of gangrene where you sweat a lot) through the protection of St Anthony. It is now huge and offers tranquil shade to visitors. Many of the Phoenician juniper bushes that can be



seen clinging to the rocks overlooking the stairs down to the courtyard are over 500 years old

The site was redeveloped in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the Franciscans monks, and it subsequently became a place of pilgrimage the for the people of Occitan on Easter Monday, and on Whit Monday for Catalanian's

There is also a small, but lovely museum is St. Pauls, with exhibits show local Arts, Culture, Popular Tradition, Archaeology, Minerals and a coin collection.

The ground floor is dedicated to life in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, with a unique collection of old tools, used by farmers and craftsmen, mainly in wood and ironwork. Upstairs the 17<sup>th</sup> century magnificently decorated stucco room house's an interesting archaeological collection, and also works by local artists