

Beat: Lifestyle

## The VALRHONA CITE DU CHOCOLAT - A Truly Exceptional Project

Originated in 2006, Expanding in 2016

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**USPA NEWS** - The idea behind the Cité du Chocolat started in 2006 following several educational Events introduced by Valrhona, including the 'Destination Chocolat' Exhibition in 1992. This Touring Exhibition generated more than 500,000 visitors. Valrhona realized that it would be a good idea to open its doors...

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In 2016, Valrhona unveiled a new Exhibition Site on the first floor, covering more than 700 m2. The ambition is to take the visitors to a full journey, from cocoa beans to the creations of pâtisseries, chocolate making factory, chocolate coating production line... A real immersion into the world of chocolate designed for chocolate lovers and enthusiasts of all ages.

From the beginning of the project, the scenography was based on research into the way visitors interact with each other, the five senses and the different activities on offer. The common theme is : taste, movement and subject matter. The Cité du Chocolat was designed as a continuation to the historical chocolate making building.

Having been located in the Train l'Hermitage town center for 90 years, Valrhona decided to move its chocolate making production out to the edge of town... These days, Valrhona is an international business, but is one which attaches great importance to its Drôme and Rhône-Alpes Region roots. This increasingly renowned tourist spot was designed as a means of making the Region more dynamic and now features among the network of 'must-sees' in the local and regional area.

Valrhona also invests in the region's large-scale projects such as the creation of the Cité de la Gastronomie in Lyon and Valence planned for the coming year. These locations will speak for themselves in terms of gastronomy and French Art de Vivre having the main aim to promote transition, exchange and creation...

- The Ground Floor :

\* The Recipe Bar, with here the visitors playing around with an immense range of chocolate flavours.

\* The Chocolate Factory where visitors can understand how the master roasters, conchers and assemblers transform the raw material into a product with well-balanced and fine aromas.... The look behind the scene.

\* The Sensory Studio where you can find out about the raw material called chocolate and to reacquaint yourself with all five senses... Whether it is white, dark, blond or milk, chocolate contains infinite variations in flavour, shape, colour and texture that never cease to amaze.

\* The Chocolat Farms (new activity) giving the sensation of a real journey back to the origins of chocolate. Secrets are revealed one by one (know-how, repeating age-old processes...)

- The New Floor :

\* Signature Valrhona : telling its story by way of an Exhibition and Signature Film... Developed using cult objects and previously unreleased stories told by those who have been part of and are still part of the company.

\* L'Ile O Petits which is a recreational area especially for young visitors, where they can read, draw, play on touch pads, interact with each others...

\* The Dulcey Lab which is totally dedicated to pâtisserie and boast the latest equipment, enabling to share recipes, skills and passion for chocolate with a chef from Valrhona.

\* The Chef's Kitchen Lab which provides the opportunity to come and meet those who enhance chocolate on a daily basis (pâtissiers, chocolate makers, bakers and restaurant chefs).

\* Chocolate Immersion Room with a brand new Film 'Le chocolat Vivant' (the living chocolate).

- Workshops :

\* Discovering Workshops : Tasting session with comments, cacao pod opening, introduction to tasting...

\* Pastry Workshops : 1 h 30 min. 'Skills' Workshops and 30 min. 'Express' Workshops offered in the Dulcey Lab.

\* Free activities are also on offer at different times of the day.

(...)

Source : Press Trip at La Cité du Chocolat with CEO Franck VIDAL

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