Rice-growing has been an important activity in the Camargue since after WWII. The paddies are irrigated with fresh water and then drained, allowing farmers to use land which is very salty. Yearly farm activities start in spring when the paddies are levelled off. The rice is sown at the end of April; by May it has grown higher than the surrounding water and will be harvested in September-October. During that period a Rice Festival (“Prémices du riz”) takes place in Arles and Salin-de-Giraud.

The Camargue horse

The Camargue horse belongs to a very old race only officially recognized in 1978; it may be a descendant of the Solutré prehistoric horse. It measures about 1.4 m high at the withers, is brave, strong, and hardy. Its hide, dark when it is born, becomes definitely light grey around the age of 4. It is raised in the Camargue and lives on large stretches of pasture land. The horse is not only the cowherd’s companion, but also a working tool indispensable for raising bulls. It is also used by tourists for horse-back rides.

The “Tour du Valat”

The “Tour du Valat” is a private research center created in 1954 and not open to the public. It covers 2400 ha of land and works in favor of promoting and preserving Mediterranean wetlands.
**How to get there**

- From Arles, follow signs for Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, then for Salin-de-Giraud via Route D36 and stop in Le Sambuc. Park your car in the village beside Route D36.

**Extension to visit the rice museum**

The R68 will take you to the rice museum (reservations necessary – 04.90.97.29.44) by following the trail called the “Draille de la Commanderie”. Then you must go left on D36.