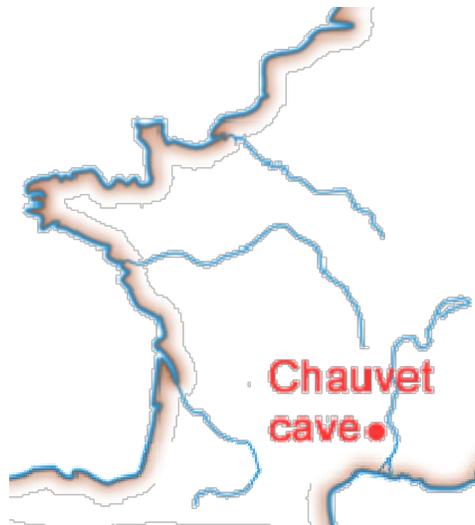


The Cave Paintings of Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc

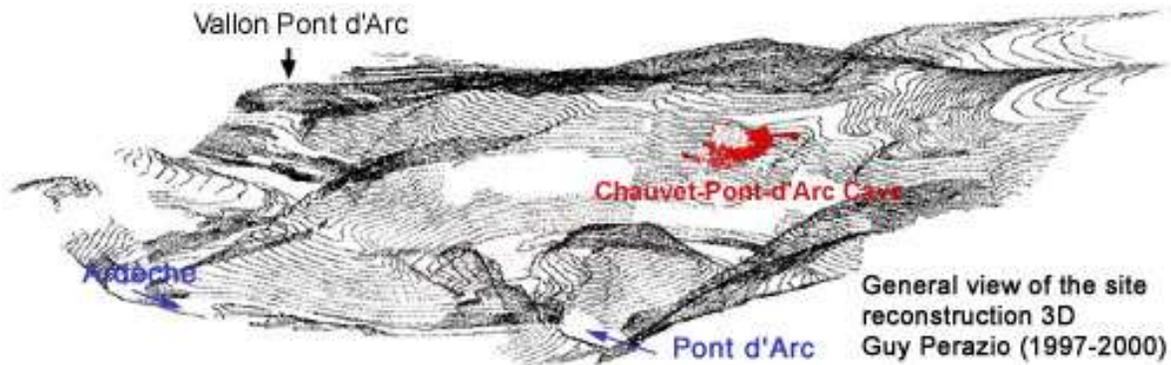
Map of Prehistoric Cave Paintings in Europe



Map of the Chauvet Cave in France



Topographic Map of the Pont-d'Arc Region



Discovery of the Cave Paintings from Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc

On Sunday, December 18, 1994, Jean-Marie Chauvet led his two friends, Éliette Brunel and Christian Hillaire, on the toward a set of near by cliffs. They noticed a faint breeze coming from a small opening at the end of a small cave. This attracted his attention and he now wanted to satisfy his curiosity. All three had a passion for exploring caves. It was late in the afternoon and the small opening into which they penetrated was already known since it was situated very close to a popular hiking trail. But there, behind the fallen rocks, they were sure there was something more...

They dug a passage, crawled through it, and soon found themselves at the edge of a larger shaft. They did not have the equipment necessary to continue. By the time they got back to their cars, that night is was very late. The next day they gathered up the essential tools needed and returned to their discovery. They descended with their ladder back into the cave and discovered a vast chamber with a very high ceiling. They progressed in a single file line toward another chamber as big as the first one, and there admired the geological wonders that surrounded them. They also saw animal bones scattered on the floor. They explored almost the entire network of chambers and galleries, and on the way back out, Éliette saw an amazing sight in the beam of her lamp: a small mammoth drawn with red ochre on a rocky spur hanging from the ceiling. "They were here!" she cried out, and from that instant they began searching all of the walls with great attention. They discovered hundreds of paintings and engravings.

Source: *The Cave of Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc*. French Ministry of Culture and Communication. 6 April 2012
<<http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/arcnat/chaudet/en/>>.

Cave Paintings from Chauvet-Pont-d’Arc

Inquiry/Prediction Chart

Answer the first two questions on your own. Next, compare your answers with a partner and talk about them. Finally, work together to use your prior knowledge to answer the last three questions about caves. Be prepared to share your predictions with the class:

Cave Paintings from Chauvet-Pont-d’Arc		
How were the cave paintings discovered?		
Why did the people who found them go into the cave?		
Use your prior knowledge to help you describe caves and make some predictions:	What are caves like?	
	Why would the original artists have painted in a cave?	
	Why might cave paintings last longer than paintings out in the open?	