



## Sunshine fabrics

An hour from Perpignan along a picturesque route, the textile mill in the border village of Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans (Eastern Pyrenees) has been weaving cloth since 1873. And to weave, you need a loom. Eighteen years ago Françoise and Henri Quinta took over "Les Toiles du Soleil", the last textile mill in Roussillon. They now create fabrics in glowing stripes for table linen, canvas deckchairs and furnishing. The mill continues a tradition that is several centuries old, Catalan craft weaving having begun at the end of the 19th century, when Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans became the village of the espadrille. The textile mill was set up by the Sans & Garcerie families who became associates. At that time, only small widths of woven fabric were required to supply the nearby workshops with the canvas and soles for espadrilles.

During the forties, the company branched out into household linen, but fifty years later, the activity was already dying out. The mill was on the point of closure when it was finally bought up by Françoise and Henri Quinta, keeping nine of its employees. A life-saver for the village and one which spared the mill from imminent extinction. Today, "Les Toiles du Soleil" produces two hundred different items. Its fabrics carry the Catalan colours around the world. No fabric, even the plain material, is dipped in a dye bath: only the thread is dyed and it takes a thousand of these to produce certain widths of cloth. The brand has five exclusive boutiques in Japan and has recently opened a store in New York. In addition to its Paris shop in rue du Bac, in the very chic 7th arrondissement, it is on display in many hotel-restaurants in the region, at La maison Quinta in Perpignan, and at a certain Maison Pic in Valence, which has three stars in the Michelin guide.

**Les Toiles du Soleil, avenue Jean-Jaurès,  
in Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans. Tel. 04 68 39 50 02**