

## SAINT-MAXIMIN

### VISITS OF THE TOWNS AND VILLAGES ADVISED BY THE TOURIST OFFICE OF PIERRE SUD OISE ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES

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#### **Saint-Maximin**

Considered as the capital of stone since 2000 years, Saint-Maximin shelters several open-pit and undergrounded quarries that are abandoned or still in activity.

A wide valorization project of this stone heritage incited in creating the public establishment of cultural cooperation "Maison de la Pierre du Sud de l'Oise" located in the center of the town. Just near this, la "Galerie du Front de taille" (working face gallery) is edified and receives expositions and diverse animations. At the top of this, a belvedere said of the "Four à chaux" shows us a sublime panorama on places around.

Watch the church beginning to be built in 1540, recently restored and observe the virtuosity and the richness of its new stained-glass windows. Before to end the visit, pass by the Sainte Barbe ponds situated along the Oise banks.

On the left bank, next to the lock, Gallo-roman vestiges dating from 51 before JC to 275 after JC including the quay of a fluvial harbor and also a work of stone cutting, were remade in the 70s. Using the stone said from Saint-Leu could be authenticated in the architraves of a roman forum of Paris or in a pillar of Nautes set up by responsible for fluvial transporting for the Tibère Emperor from 42 before JC to 37 after JC. The transport of the local stone by fluvial way permitted to use it beyond the alley and mainly in Paris. The Oise was already and still is a navigable stream. There still is a loading dock along the Oise in Saint-Maximin. The Lecieux enterprise exploiting stones and gravels use this loading dock every day.

#### **The Church**

It is part of the historical monuments since 1926. It houses modern stained-glass windows representing the work of the stone and also the Patron Saints: Sainte Barbe and Saint Blaise. On the central window are drawn the four liturgical seasons of the year: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Halloween.

#### **The Trou du Tropique**

At the crossing of several undergrounded or aerial quarries, this site is characterized by a cave-in in bell. It deals with the collapse of the superior mass forming an empty circle in what we can apperceive the sky; from each side of the Tropique, you can see numerous entrances of quarries including some of them that were converted in troglodytic habitations.

Up to there, little trains in tip trucks called "decauvilles" rolled on a narrow way that connected the stop to the stones.

#### **La Maison de la Pierre**

In this place you could practice several playful and original activities in what you will be able to discover the stone heritage. This stone that has an excellent quality was used to build local monuments, but also to build a part of the Parisians'! At the departure of the central site "Maison de la Pierre du Sud de l'Oise", you will discover an unusual and unexpected universe through visits of underground and open-pit quarries. The stone sculpture will reveal your artistic talents and you will enjoy a unique moment by being on contact with the stone. You will discover a rich and sometimes hidden heritage through stalking. And thanks to geological animations you could discover some of the many fossils composing the South of Oise stone.

#### **Botanic path of the Larris Mound**

The Larris mound is essentially artificial and partly constitute by the vestiges of the hillside quarries and by elevations due to the extraction of Daubin quarry's lime stones.

### **The Four à Chaux**

Just at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and all along the 19<sup>th</sup>, the most unfit stones for the construction were transformed into lime. The one going out from the Saint-Maximin ovens was nearly exclusively used in the confection of lime mortars or in the preparation of lime milk whose rule was to recover the houses' walls. For the production to be regular we had to have an ovens battery at the same place. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were five lime ovens; only one is conserved. The making of the lively lime took long time because stones had to pulverize themselves.

Process: prepare the ovens alternating coal, wood and stone seams. Let it get cooked during 72 hours at 1000 degrees. Empty the ovens by the "gueulard", the hole at the top of the oven.

### **The Sainte Barbe pond**

It is formed by the presence of alluvium aggregates thrown by specialized enterprises. Near from there, you can observe the processing site of these materials. The aggregate is a mineral resource much researched composed of sand and gravels. Thanks to it, we can build our own houses and roads. Fishing is the principal activity in this pond. Waterfowls like coot macroule and Great crested grebe often find a place to live there to rest during migrations, to feed and reproduce.

### **The climbing wall of the Larris**

An industrial site can be reconverted on many ways. Here, the Ouaché and Corpechot society accepted an old working face to be used as a climbing wall to please the climbers. The abandoned quarries' working faces are as interesting as our mountains' cliffs. On this way, Saint-Maximin developed by cooperation with climbing clubs, a trajectory of more or less easy ways. As a climber, you can find there flat takings on joints between layers or vertical grips: natural cracks or provoked by working machines.

### **Walking paths**

Distance: 8.5km

Duration: 2h00

Average difficulty (small difference in height)

Yellow marking (right direction – turn on the left – turn on the right – wrong direction – post)

Departure of the "In the footsteps of the builders..." walk

Token n°2 on demand

It is a loop that connects Saint-Leu d'Esserent to Saint-Maximin. It testifies the hard work of quarrymen, the one of stone-cutters, as well as builders'. It also presents other activities like the production of beet sugar, the wine growing before the wreak havoc of phylloxera, the transport over the Oise river, the thermo-electric power station... It tells the history of the monastic enclosure, of the Saint Nicolas priory church and the one of the Benedictine Monks who lived there.

It shows everything about la Grande Jacquerie dating from the middle of the 14th century as well as the editing of the V1 bombs during the Second World War and about the bombardments taking place after this...

### **Useful addresses:**

### **For more information:**

**Opened from Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 12.30 pm and from 1:30 pm to 5:00 pm**