

# ARLES

9 CITY STROLLS AND  
TOURS : THEMES TO  
DISCOVER **ARLES**  
AND ITS REGION



# Arles, more than 2000 years of history

The city of Arles is more than 2000 years old. From a Greek trading post to a Roman colony, capital of the Empire, it was also an important early Christian metropolis. From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance the city was a rich agricultural center. Arles is rightly considered to be one of the capitals of Provence. The fortunes of history have permitted the city, which is also the capital of the Camargue, to acquire a wide and extraordinarily rich architectural heritage.

From Julius Caesar to Frederic Mistral and from Jacques Réattu to Vincent van Gogh, it has always attracted unforgettable men. Its varied and partially unknown heritage is fascinating to discover. After visiting Arles, who can forget the Roman sculptures exhibited in the contemporary architecture of the archaeological museum, the splendor of Saint Trophime's cloisters, the classical elegance of the City Hall, the photography collections, the drawings and paintings by Picasso at the Réattu Museum?

The buildings and town houses of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, built with art and originality by the inhabitants of Arles, are like gems in an urban landscape which has kept its past charms while opening toward the future. Yes, on the Luma Campus will soon open an experimental cultural complex at the Railroad Repair Shops park, visible from afar thanks to the high symbolic building designed and clothed in metal by the famous international architect Frank Gehry.

The city of Arles is doubly honored on the UNESCO world heritage list for its cultural wealth « Arles, Roman and Romanesque monuments » and as part of the cultural itinerary « Santiago de Compostela routes in France ». The label "City of Art and History" which it has received shows that the city has developed a true policy of activities in its monuments for both visitors and inhabitants of Arles. But Arles is also a contemporary city with its archaeological collections installed in a glass and concrete museum designed by Henri Ciriani, the Rhone River dikes redesigned and restored. Beside the Luma campus, which is transforming and renewing the Railroad Repair Shops Park, will soon appear the future National Photography School, the work of Marc Barani.

# FIVE THEMES TO DISCOVER ARLES DURING NINE CITY TOURS

## World heritage



« Arles, Roman and Romanesque monuments » and « Santiago de Compostela routes in France ».



**City stroll 1** : Discover the monuments on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

**City stroll 2** : The Arles archaeological museum and the Roman monuments.

**City stroll 3** : From Saint Trophime's to the Alyscamps cemetery, a medieval tour.

**Santiago de Compostela, the Arles Route.**

## Vincent Van Gogh

**City stroll 4** : The sites that inspired the painter, including the Arles Vincent van Gogh Foundation and the Réattu museum (city center).

**Tour 5** : Visit the Langlois Bridge (called the Van Gogh Bridge) (outside the city center).

## Renaissance and classical

**City stroll 6** : The Réattu museum and the treasures of the Renaissance and Classical periods.

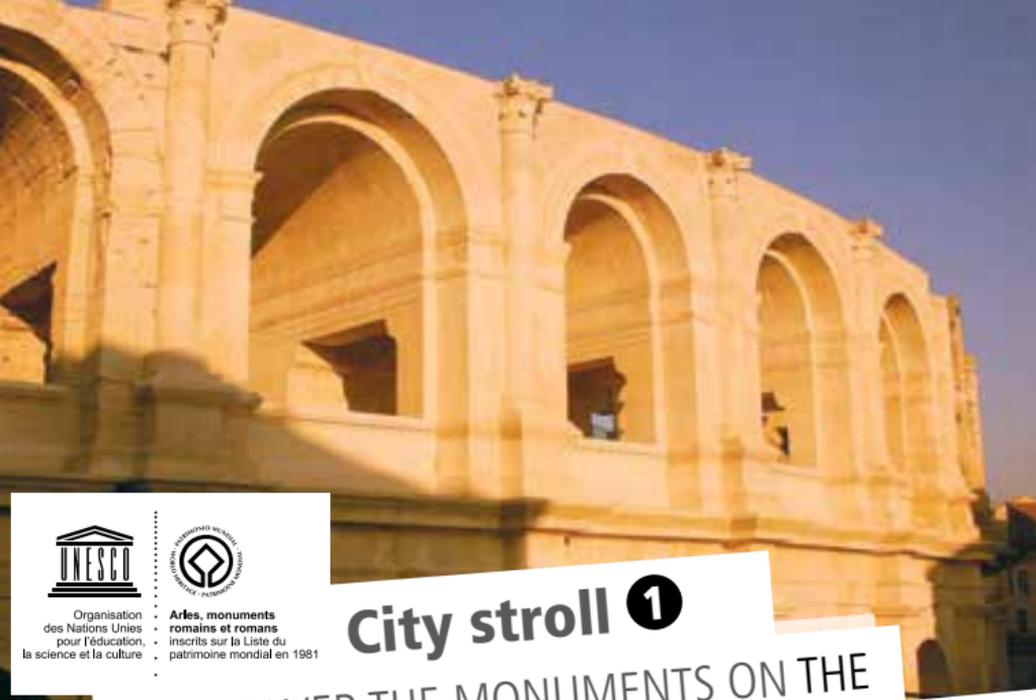
**City stroll 7** : A random sampling of town houses in the old city center.

## Contemporary Arles

**City stroll 8** : Architecture and heritage of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

## Around Arles

**Tour 9** : The « musts ».




Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
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la science et la culture



Arles, monuments  
romains et romans  
inscrits sur la Liste du  
patrimoine mondial en 1981

# City stroll 1

## DISCOVER THE MONUMENTS ON THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST

- You only have a few hours to visit Arles ? Choose this half-day stroll. You will be able to discover the 8 major monuments of Arles, all of them listed on the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage list. In the old city center, begin by visiting the Roman amphitheater (also called the Arles arena) and the Roman theater nearby. From there head for St. Trophime's church and cloisters, near the City Hall and the fountain with its granite Roman obelisk.
- Discover (entrance through the vestibule of the City Hall) the mysterious cryptoportico (underground foundations of the Roman Forum which has disappeared today). Then head for the Baths of Constantine, beside the Rhone River, near the Réattu Museum. Finally, leave the old city center for the Alyscamps, a Roman and medieval burial ground, that inspired the painter Vincent van Gogh.
- Remember that numerous remarkable remains have been discovered during archaeological excavations. The most remarkable are now visible in the collections of the Arles archaeological museum (Musée Départemental Arles Antique). This museum was built beside the former location of the Roman circus.

To be included on the World Heritage list, sites must have an exceptional universal value and satisfy multiple selection criteria. The world heritage compact sees to it that their qualities are maintained and preserved. Only a few sites in France have been honored on this select international list. Arles is one of the rare European cities having multiple listings, for our cultural properties "Arles, Roman and Romanesque monuments" and "Santiago de Compostela routes in France". In France only forty-odd sites have been mentioned on this very exclusive list.

### And beyond Arles

A branch of the Santiago de Compostela route between Saint-Gilles (in the Gard department, 16 km away) and Arles goes through the city. The Santiago routes are listed by UNESCO. Don't miss going into the Camargue (Camargue Museum 11 km from the city). The Camargue has also been listed by UNESCO as part of our nature heritage.



## THE EIGHT MONUMENTS LISTED ON THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST



### The Roman Amphitheater



Built at the end of the first century AD, the amphitheater (136m x 107m) could house about 21 000 spectators (only 12 500 today) who watched games and fights. Today bull shows are regularly organized.



### The Roman theater



Built a century before its illustrious neighbour, the amphitheater, the Roman theater in Arles was located at the heart of the Roman city. Today it has once again found its original function and offers varied shows during the summer season.



### Saint-Trophime's church and cloisters



The cloisters were built beside the church of the same name. The first two Romanesque corridors date back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and two other corridors were added in the 14<sup>th</sup> century in the gothic style. The sculptures, which have recently been restored, are of exceptional quality.



### The cryptoportico (and the remains of the Roman forum)



Like all Roman cities, Arles had a large forum which has disappeared today. We can still go down and walk through the underground corridors.



### The Baths of Constantine



The baths were very popular public places, indispensable for the comfort of urban life in Roman times. Partially excavated, the baths of Constantine date back to the beginning of the 4th century.



### The Roman walls



The city was surrounded by ramparts during the Roman period. Various remains are visible along the boulevards.



### The site of the Alyscamps



Of the immense Roman and medieval necropolis, there remains a romantic site composed of a Romanesque church, chapels and a walkway lined with sarcophagi created in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the Friars Minor.

Other major sites exist in the city. The early Christian cathedral, the Roman circus located near the archaeological museum (Musée Départemental Arles Antique) (a 20' walk on foot south along the Rhone River dike), and the Verrerie excavations (Trinquetaille quarter) where archaeologists have recently discovered Pompeian wall frescoes. The site has not been opened to the public yet, but guided visits are occasionally organized.



## City stroll 2

### THE ARLES ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM AND THE ROMAN MONUMENTS

➤ This Roman walking tour starts or finishes at the Museum. The visits to the Roman monuments are completed and enriched by visiting the museum. And visiting the museum makes you want to see the monuments where a large number of the objects exhibited have been found. To walk to the museum, or on the contrary to walk toward the old city center, follow the Rhone River dike. This stroll will help you understand all that this river, the most majestic in France, brought to the Roman city : the port of Arelate and two bridges of boats bringing together the two sides of this "double city".



#### Le musée départemental Arles antique (Arles archaeological museum)

It exhibits the best of the Arlesian archaeological collections, dating from the prehistoric period up to the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. You can admire a remarkable collection of sculptural masterpieces dating from the period of the Emperor Augustus and found in the Roman theater, as well as the famous collection of Roman and early Christian sarcophagi. They are exhibited lined up as in the Alyscamps cemetery. The museum also houses an archaeological research center and a laboratory for mosaic restoration. Outside you can visit Hortus, a Roman-inspired garden, where children's games are organized.

➤ Among the rich collections installed in the resolutely contemporary architecture of the building, don't miss the famous bust of Julius Caesar, the treasures found in the Rhone River and the spectacular 31-m long Arles-Rhone 3 barge.



➤ The Roman Arles tour begins (or ends depending on your schedule) at the Arles archaeological museum. It will take you at least a half-day to visit the monuments and see the museum collections. The "musée bleu" (a nickname given to the building by the inhabitants of Arles) is located outside the city center, near the remains of the Roman circus where the chariot races took place. Free parking on the site. You will need 20' to reach the city center on foot, but once there the Roman monuments are very close to each other. A free shuttle bus ("navette" called ENVIA line "A-Le musée") will take you from the SNCF train station to the city center and the museum.

#### Rome in Gaul ?

Arles received the nickname « Little Rome in Gaul ». Established in 46 BC by Julius Caesar, Arelate owed its good fortune to its location on the Rhone River. Heavy sea-going vessels had to unload their merchandise coming from all the colonies around the Mediterranean Sea. To be transported to the northern provinces, it had to be transferred to lighter river boats. From its past as a major city governed by Roman law, active from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, the city has inherited a remarkable group of Roman monuments.



### **The Roman theater** 20 to 10 BC.

It was built at the top of the « Hauture » section. It was a favorite venue for shows in Roman times and still fills the same function today.



### **L'amphithéâtre (the arena)** around 80 AD,

21 000 spectators could be seated on its stone seats. Today it is used for bull shows.

Actors in the arena help you relive the gladiator fights. All summer long and during parts of the spring and fall, the city heritage service organizes different activities for the public in the Roman and Romanesque monuments. They are included in the price of your entrance ticket. Detailed information available at the Tourism Office.

**The Roman circus**, 150 AD, near the Arles archaeological museum. Hidden in a vast wasteland, it has only been partially excavated. Up to 20 000 spectators came here for chariot races.

**Roman Forum temple columns**, 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Place du Forum (facade of the Nord Pinus Hotel). They are the only remains above ground of the Forum, the administrative, economic and religious center of the Roman city.



**The cryptoportico**  underground corridors of the Forum, 30 to 20 BC. Entrance through the vestibule of the city hall. These underground corridors, very well preserved, held up the colonnade that framed the central square of the Roman Forum.



**The obelisk**  150 AD. The « lion » fountain on the square in front of the city hall. Made of granite from Turkey. It decorated the central wall in the Roman circus. It was brought to the square in 1676 in honor of a visit by Louis XIV.



**The Alyscamps**  10' on foot from the city center. This Roman necropolis was located outside the city walls. The scenery visible today with a surprising line-up of sarcophagi along a shady walkway dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.



**The baths of Constantine.**  4<sup>th</sup> century AD. Roman public baths of which the hot baths (caldarium) remain.

## **Archaeological excavations**

The Roman theater was richly decorated with marble statuary. Successive excavations have led us to discover some exceptional pieces such as the colossal statue of Augustus or the famous Venus of Arles, given to King Louis XIV and preserved in the Louvre. Within the last ten years, underwater excavations have permitted archaeologists to find a group of archaeological pieces of great scientific value in the waters of the Rhone. Most of them (the bust of Caesar and the 31m-long ASR3 barge) are visible in the museum. More recent excavations have brought to light Roman frescoes similar to those of Pompeii. They are unique in France.

**Outside of Arles** (11 km), going towards Fontvieille, don't miss the remains of the aqueducts and the Roman mill at Barbegal.

## City stroll 3

### FROM SAINT-TROPHIME'S TO THE ALYSCAMPS, A MEDIEVAL TOUR

From the 4<sup>th</sup> century on, a Christian community in Arles met in a first cathedral near the city ramparts which was rebuilt in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Constantine was the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity. He turned Arles into an imperial city. At one time it was the primate city of Gaul. The cathedral was transferred to a new location near the Forum, known from the 9<sup>th</sup> century on.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century Saint Trophime's church and the religious buildings around the cloister were built. Nearby were numerous churches and convents, of which the most famous is that of Saint Cesarius. During this period of economic expansion, Arles received pilgrims going towards Santiago de Compostela by the Via Tolosana. The Alyscamps graveyard became one of the largest cemeteries in the Western world, around the tombs of the Arlesian martyr Genesisius and the holy bishops.



#### **Saint-Trophime's church and portal**

Erected at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Saint Trophime's portal is one of the most beautiful examples of the Provençal Romanesque style, strongly influenced by Roman architecture. The portal is admirably preserved, not having been destroyed during the religious wars. Since the 12<sup>th</sup> century diverse pollutants resulted in the accumulation of dark deposits of up to 1 cm in depth. Restoration using micro-abrasion has allowed these crusts to be removed without altering the surface of the stone. The rebirth of this monumental architecture has revealed an astonishing rainbow of colors in the materials, and a sculpture of exceptional quality.

► The Romanesque tour in the city of Arles is the most fragmented. Even though Saint Trophime's (a church which is still consecrated) and its cloisters are located in the old city center, you must also visit the Hauture and Roquette sections and the Alyscamps cemetery. If you are courageous you can follow the Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage route through Arles (marked with the Santiago logo). The city was home to many convents and religious congregations and is covered with old churches most of which have received other uses (bank, shop, exhibition hall...). An exhibition space is dedicated to the rare liturgical vestments of Saint Cesarius and his lovely ivory belt buckle.

#### **Saint Trophime's cloisters**

12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Decorated with superb Romanesque sculptures, the corridors joined the buildings where the canons of the cathedral lived.

► Shows for families are visible in July, August and during school vacations in several of the Romanesque monuments. They are included in the price of your entrance ticket. A detailed program is available at the Tourism Office (04 90 18 41 20).

#### **Palace of the Podestats**

12<sup>th</sup> century. Plan de la cour (behind City Hall). The Arles town hall during the Middle Ages. The mayors of the time were called "podestats".



### **Entrance to the Grand Couvent**

15<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the Hauteure section, rue du Grand Couvent. The arch corresponds to the entrance to Saint Cesarius' abbey until the French Revolution.

### **Saint-Jean-de-Moustier's chapel and Saint Blaise's church**

12<sup>th</sup> century. Rue Vauban. They were part of Saint Cesarius' convent, the first convent for women in the Western world, founded by Bishop Cesarius in the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Notre-Dame-de-la-Major church**

12<sup>th</sup> century. A Romanesque building where the « Gardian » Festival takes place each year. To the west the Cordeliers steeple, the only Gothic steeple remaining in Arles, and to the east, the Alpilles hills and the Crau plateau.

► To the left of the church don't miss the panorama over the city of Arles, the Rhone River and the surrounding countryside where the « Montagne des Cordes » stands out, with the Alpilles hills in the background.

### **Courtyard of the Saint-Luce Commandery**

15<sup>th</sup> century. Rue du Grand Prieuré. Large medieval house which belonged to the Knights of Malta.

### **Dominican (preacher friars) church**

15<sup>th</sup> century. Quai Marx Dormoy. It is the largest religious building in the city. Built in the Southern Gothic style, the church has a single nave and five bays framed by lower side chapels.



### **The Alyscamps cemetery**

This Roman cemetery continued to be used during the Middle Ages. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Benedictine monks built a monastery here and the elegant Saint Honorat's church, with its many-windowed lantern tower.

► Careful, most of the Roman monuments were partly reused and converted during the medieval period. This is the case of course with the Alyscamps, but also with the Roman theater and amphitheater. The amphitheater was reinforced with three medieval towers on the top level. A tower was created in the Roman theater. It is visible from the Summer Garden (Boulevard des Lices).

### **And beyond Arles...**

Don't miss a visit to Montmajour Abbey (6 km) with beside it (private access but visible from the road) the Holy Cross Chapel, a marvel of pure Romanesque architecture, or Saint Gabriel's (11 km from Arles on the road to Tarascon), one of the numerous rural Romanesque chapels miraculously preserved among the olive orchards. On the Rhone River in Tarascon (24 km) can be seen the imposing castle of the Counts of Anjou and Provence. Built between 1400 and 1435, it was a fortress and residence for the last count, known as King René, an artist and scholar prince. The castle of Les Baux de Provence (24 km) is also a must.



## City stroll 4

### THE PLACES THAT INSPIRED THE PAINTER VINCENT VAN GOGH

Including the Arles Vincent van Gogh Foundation  
And the Réattu museum

Vincent van Gogh arrived in Arles one day in February 1888. Thus began a period of intense and passionate work in the light of Provence. In the painter's life his stay in Arles is his most productive period for both paintings and drawings ; about 300 works done in the space of 15 months. In May 1889, Vincent left Arles for the asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence leaving his name forever linked to that of Arles.

➤ Your stroll centered on Vincent van Gogh's work begins (or finishes as you prefer) at the Tourism Office. It includes the Arles Vincent van Gogh Foundation and the Réattu Museum which possesses in its collections a letter from the painter. A first half-day stroll on foot in the streets of Arles will allow you to recognize some of his most famous paintings thanks to reproductions on enamelled lava easels placed near the spots that he painted. Then, with a means of transportation, a second itinerary is suggested outside the city.

#### Vincent van Gogh's Letters

The first letter from Vincent to his brother is dated August 1872. The last, unfinished, was found in the painter's pocket after his suicide in July 1890. Vincent never stopped writing to his brother Theo. These letters are essential proof of his constant lucidity and demanding nature. The Reattu Museum exhibits a letter (recently acquired) sent by Van Gogh to Gauguin.

#### The Arles Vincent van Gogh Foundation

It is housed in the Léautaud de Donines town house (15<sup>th</sup> century). The Foundation offers a unique approach to Vincent van Gogh by exploring how his work and his thinking correspond to today's artistic creation through temporary exhibits. This resolutely contemporary approach is confirmed with the integration into the building itself of two permanent works by Raphael Hefti and Bertrand Lavier. All year long, thanks to partnerships with public and private collections, the Foundation presents one or several of Vincent's works compared to works by contemporary artists.

**The Reattu Museum**  (museum of fine arts, modern and contemporary art); Exhibits a letter by Vincent van Gogh. None of the artist's work remains in the region except this precious hand-written letter addressed to the painter Paul Gauguin in 1889. The city was able to acquire it thanks to the generosity of some inhabitants of Arles.



➤ Des panneaux reproduisant chacun de ses tableaux sont placés à l'endroit supposé où van Gogh a planté son cheval.

**Terrasse de café, le soir, place du forum**  Septembre 1888, [Otterlo, Kröller-Müller]. Place du Forum. Le décor du café actuel est une réplique du célèbre tableau.

**L'escalier du pont de Trinquetaille**  Octobre 1888. Juste après le pont de Trinquetaille, (le pont ancien), quai de la Roquette, rive gauche du Rhône.

**La nuit étoilée sur le Rhône**  Septembre 1888 [musée d'Orsay]. Quai du Rhône, près de la gare SNCF devant l'embarcadere des bateaux de croisière fluviale.

**La maison jaune**  (La maison de Vincent) Septembre 1888 [musée van Gogh, Amsterdam]. Au nord de la place Lamartine. Van Gogh a logé dans une célèbre chambre qu'il a peinte par ailleurs. Cette maison a été détruite par un bombardement en 1944.

**Les Arènes d'Arles** Décembre 1888 [Ermitage, Saint Petersburg]. Près de l'amphithéâtre romain, en haut du grand escalier, à droite.

**Les Alyscamps**  l'automne Novembre 1888 [Otterlo, Kröller-Müller]. van Gogh a représenté l'allée des sarcophages en automne. Se rendre à pied sur le site de cette nécropole prend 10'. La reproduction se trouve au bout de l'allée à gauche.

**L'entrée du jardin public à Arles**  Septembre 1888 [Washington, Phillips Collection]. À l'entrée du jardin public situé à gauche en remontant le boulevard des Lices, en face le Monument aux morts.

**Le jardin de l'hôpital d'Arles**  Avril 1889 [Winterthur, coll OR]. Espace Van Gogh. Le jardin actuel s'inspire fidèlement du tableau.



## Tour 5

### LE PONT DE LANGLOIS (KNOWN AS THE VAN GOGH BRIDGE) outside the city center

**The Langlois bridge with Washerwomen**  March 1888 [Otterlo, Kröller-Müller coll.] Route du Pont de Langlois (2 km outside the city going towards Port Saint-Louis du Rhone). A bridge absolutely identical to the one in the painting has been bought and erected to the south of the city.

➤ Vincent van Gogh painted the Langlois bridge three times. Located near the Rhone River, at the beginning of the Arles-to-Bouc canal, this bridge and the lock-keeper's lodging beside it were destroyed. The city has acquired an identical bridge and installed it outside the city near another lock-keeper's house further South. You can reach it by car, on bicycle or by bus. The bridge is located 3 km from the city center on the Port Saint-Louis du Rhone road. Follow signs for Barriol, then at the roundabout take the second exit. You can also go there by taxi or pedicab.

#### Other subjects painted by the artist

It would be too long to list all the subjects and landscapes painted in and around Arles. This search for subject matter is suggested by his painting (lost during World War II) of the painter on the road to Tarascon (North of Arles). And the countryside, the orchards and the fields which surrounded Arles in 1889 have since disappeared. From Montmajour Abbey to the boats on the beach in Les Saintes-Maries de la Mer, Van Gogh set up his easel everywhere.



## CITY CENTER



10 min



15 min



30 min



## LANGLOIS BRIDGE

Find all necessary information at  
the Tourism Office website

[www.arlestourisme.com/fr/le-circuit-van-gogh.html](http://www.arlestourisme.com/fr/le-circuit-van-gogh.html)

► By reading Van Gogh's correspondence, we are able today to follow his travels in and around Arles. He arrived at the Arles train station in February, on a snowy day. And he found a lodging next door at the Ginoux café, on the Place Lamartine, from where he left to rent his famous yellow room. The café and the room were both destroyed by Allied bombs in 1944. From there he often took the road to Montmajour lined with tall plane trees (to the north of Arles, called the Tarascon road). Along this road in June and July can be seen fields of sunflowers, bright yellow flowers that he painted on several occasions.

Beyond Arles (25 km), beside the Roman site of Glanum and the Antiques, it is possible to visit a faithful reproduction of the room where the painter lived when he was interned at Saint-Paul de Mausole. That was where he painted his famous *Starry Night* (currently at the MOMA, New York).

### Vincent van Gogh and astronomy.

Provence is famous for its clear summer nights. Van Gogh, an astronomy fan who had studied Camille Flammarion's popular astronomy books, knew how to find the constellations and the location of stars. He was fascinated by the huge whirls of the galaxies. In April 1888, he wrote to his brother Theo : "I need to do a starry night with cypress trees or, perhaps, over a field of ripe wheat."

Vincent van Gogh stayed in Saint Rémy until May 1890. He then went to see his brother and nephew in Paris before joining his friend Doctor Gachet in Auvers-sur-Oise. In this small town, near Paris, the artist spent the last days of his life and painted his last paintings. Vincent and Theo, who died a few months after his brother, are buried side by side in the Auvers-sur-Oise cemetery.

Learn about the European Van Gogh Route, giving you the possibility of visiting the different sites where Van Gogh lived and where his works are exhibited.

[www.RouteVanGoghEurope.eu](http://www.RouteVanGoghEurope.eu)

## City stroll 6

### THE REATTU MUSEUM AND THE TREASURES OF THE PERIODS RENAISSANCE AND CLASSICAL

After a period of recession at the end of the Middle Ages, the city renewed with prosperity during the middle of the 16th century. The clock tower (1555) was built to be later integrated into the City Hall built in the 17th century. The houses of Arles, tall and narrow, squeezed together inside the city walls. Town houses were built around little courtyards, adorned with rich decoration. Important families had town houses in the city, and farms ("mas") in the Camargue or the Crau, on vast estates from which they procured their wealth. A 92-ha conservation area protects this heritage.



#### Réattu Museum

15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Rue du Grand Prieuré. Great Priory of the Knights of Malta. The building housed the studio of the painter Jacques Réattu (1760-1833). It is now the municipal fine arts and contemporary art museum, with rich classical and modern collections. Picasso offered 57 drawings to the museum, with the help of Lucien Clergue who assisted the museum in acquiring an exceptional photography collection. The Réattu Museum also exhibits Zadkine, Richier, a collection of sound art and the Knights of Malta collection.

➤ The view over the Rhone River from the rooms of the museum opening onto the dikes, and Réattu's magnificent grisailles, remain engraved in the memory of visitors.

#### The City Hall

Built by Jacques Peytret and Jules Hardouin Mansart after the failure of numerous other projects, the Arles City Hall owes its fame to the daring flat vault covering its remarkable vestibule. The vault is formed by two perpendicular barrel vaults of unequal width and basket-handle lunettes typical of this masterpiece.

#### Republic square

At first made up only of the small squares in front of St. Trophime's and St. Anne's, it was enlarged in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and again in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Because of the quality of the stone architecture surrounding it, it is a busy place as soon as warm weather arrives. The fountain in the center is topped with a Roman obelisk. The Turkish-granite column comes from the Roman circus and was erected on the square in 1676 in honor of the visit of King Louis XIV.

#### Forum square

Close to the City Hall, this lively and shady square is a meeting place for lunch, particularly during the bullfights. This is where executions took place in the Middle Ages and the square later became the "Men's Square" : landowners came here in the morning to hire day laborers for farm work.



**Saint Anne's church** 17<sup>th</sup> century. Place de la République. Built as a parish church, it became an archaeological museum before being used as a space for temporary exhibitions.

**Archbishop's palace** 17<sup>th</sup> century. Place de la République. The street facade was rebuilt in 1786 by Mgr. Du Lau, the last archbishop of Arles.

**Charity chapel** 18<sup>th</sup> century. Boulevard des Lices. Beside the Jules César hotel. It was part of the Carmelite convent, located outside the city walls.

**Espace Van Gogh** Rue du Président Wilson. Former Holy-Spirit hospital founded in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It has today become a cultural space and multi-media library for the city. Vincent van Gogh was treated here. The garden and the colors of the facades were faithfully restored according to the painting done in 1889 by Vincent van Gogh.

**Trinitarian Chapel** 40 rue de la République. It was part of the Trinitarian monastery founded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Nave 17<sup>th</sup> century, facade 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Museon Arlaten** (closed for renovation until 2019), 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Rue de la République. Formerly the Laval-Castellane town house, then a Jesuit high school. Frederic Mistral created here his grand museum of Provençal culture.

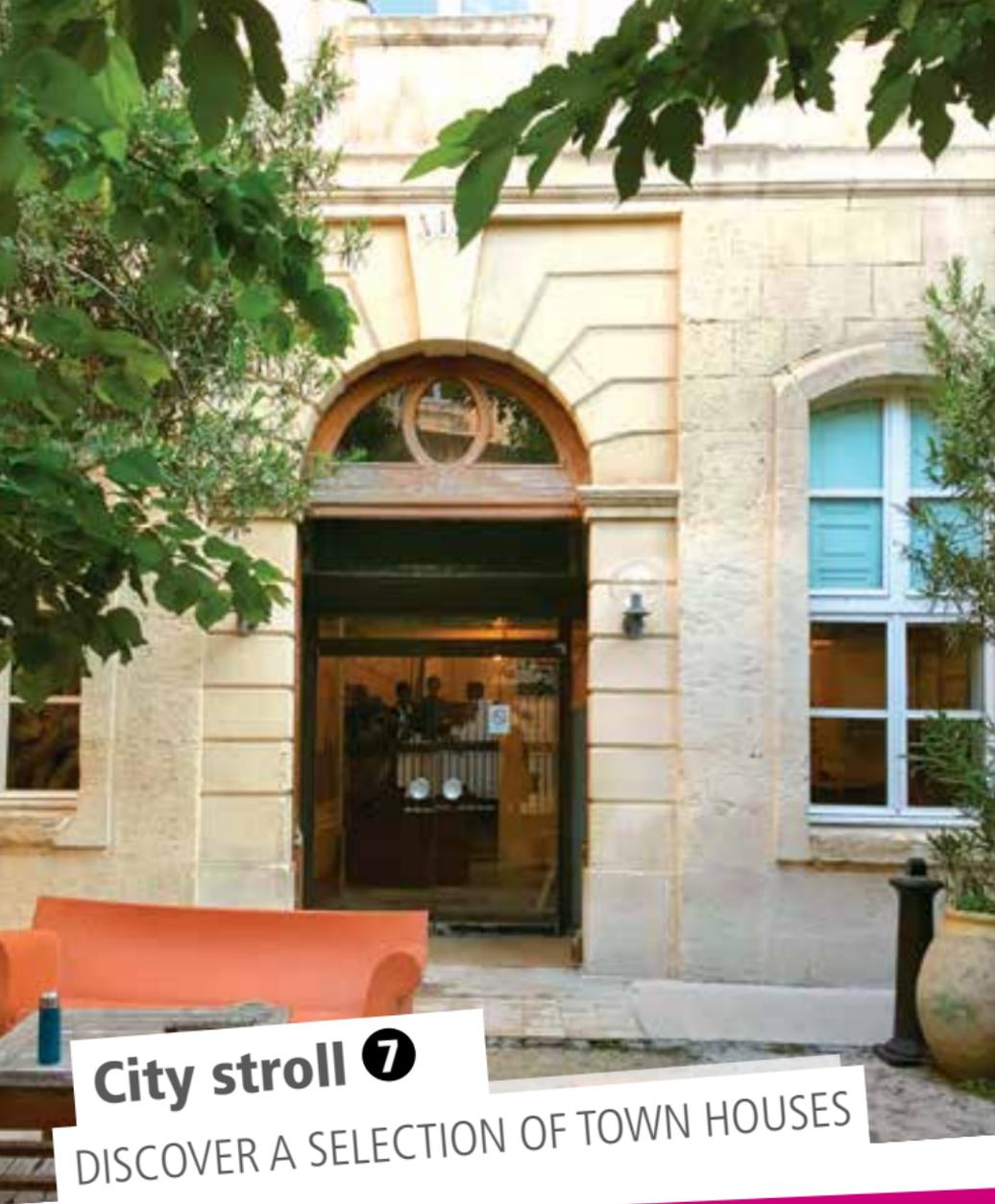
**Saint Martin du Méjan church** 17<sup>th</sup> century. Quai Marx Dormoy. A parish church until the French Revolution, it is today used as a concert and exhibition hall run by the Méjan Association.

**Saint Julien's church** 17<sup>th</sup> century. Rue du 4 septembre. It has a wide classical facade.

**Cavalerie Gate.** Place Lamartine. The North Gate in the city wall, its two towers were rebuilt at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century

**Amédée Pichot Fountain** 1887. Rue Amédée Pichot. The decoration by Balze, an Arlesian painter, is composed of painted ceramic tiles. It represents the allegory of Poetry, from a painting by Raphaël. Amédée Pichot was a writer and translator. It was his son who used his own money to erect this little fountain topped with this painting in honor of his father.

➤ This itinerary is a bit longer than the others. The elegant buildings, protected as Historical Monuments, were built during these two periods and are scattered throughout the city. The City Hall (don't forget to look up in the wide vestibule), the Reattu Museum and the curious Amédée Pichot fountain are easy to find. You will of course stop on the two main squares in the old city center (République and Forum). Then, as you stroll, watch for the little plaques of enameled lava fixed to the facades of all these architectural treasures.



## City stroll 7

### DISCOVER A SELECTION OF TOWN HOUSES

The front door and the facade of these town houses were carefully designed and the best architects and masons competed to decorate them. The lodging traditionally has three stories : the ground floor (occupied by the commons) is topped by the first floor with a high ceiling and tall windows or decorated balconies. The help lived under the eaves.

**Lauzière town house** 17<sup>th</sup> century. 42 rue de la République. Its narrow facade and round-arched door are decorated with two fluted spiral columns in the Mannerist style.

**Laurens de Beaujeu town house**, 23 rue de la République/rue Tour du Fabre. A large door, dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, marks the main entrance to this town house. It is typical of the doors designed by Michelangelo and popularized in 1631 in a Treatise on Architecture by Pierre le Muet.

**Méjanès town house**, 31 rue de la République. Its facade is remarkably sober. A son of this family was a three-time consul (mayor) of Arles. The family bequeathed a considerable number of books which permitted the creation of the famous Méjanès library in Aix-en-Provence.

**Icard Duquesne town house**, 18<sup>th</sup> century, 19 rue de la République. On the first floor, this facade is decorated with wrought-iron balconies.

**Perrin de Jonquières town house**, 18<sup>th</sup> century. 17 rue de la République. On the ground floor, the windows are topped with segmentary arches, decorated in the center with mascarons representing faces in a bucolic setting. The roof gutter has gargoyles in the form of grotesque masks.

**Léautaud de Donines town house**. End of 15<sup>th</sup> century, modified later. Today the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, Place Honoré Clair and Rue de la Liberté. All of the upper level of the building, with its crenels, false decorative machicolations and gargoyles, gives it a medieval defensive appearance.

**Barrème town house**, 17<sup>th</sup> century. 1 rue Frédéric Mistral. The Barrème town house is a tall building with four levels. The roof perches atop a cornice decorated with modillions. The valances under the window sills have a particularly refined sculptural decoration.

**Vernon town house**, 18<sup>th</sup> century. Rue Vernon. The Vernon town house has a wide facade typical of the private architecture of the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Arles. The numerous round-arched windows, perfectly aligned, the large door with its elegant walnut mouldings form a sober and perfectly harmonious whole.

**Castillon town house**, 17<sup>th</sup> century. 20 rue des Arènes. The facade of the building is sober and majestic. On the right hand side are still visible the large windows with their imposing stone frames topped with triple decorative keystones. The facade, with its heavy cornice, is framed by massive quoins.

**Town house of the Amazons**, 16<sup>th</sup> century. Corner rue Balechou and rue des Arènes. The facade is decorated with fluted pilasters and transom windows which have now been closed up. Its owner decorated it with Roman sculptural remains.

**Quiqueran de Beaujeu town house**, 18<sup>th</sup> century. 16 rue des Arènes. This town house was built like the grand Parisian town houses of the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with a main body framed by two protruding eaves around a courtyard. Its main facade is particularly elegant and composed of four levels, topped by a wide pediment. Today it houses the National Photography School.

**Donines town house**, end 16<sup>th</sup>-beginning 17<sup>th</sup> century. 4 rue de la Bastille. The Roman influence is visible in the decoration. The facade is remarkable with a double frieze between the first and second floors. It is a copy of the frieze above the arches on the outer wall of the Roman theater. The first frieze is Doric, the second Corinthian.

**Courtois de Langlade town house**. 2 rue de la Calade, Today housing the Sub-Prefecture. After the Revolution in 1804 this town house became the Institution Montravail, named for a former superior artillery officer.

**Cays town house**. Corner rue du Cloître and rue de la Calade, housing the Sub-Prefecture today. When Louis XIV came to Arles in 1660, the Duke of Anjou resided in this elegant and sober town house.

**Bouchaud de Bussy town house**. Today the Saint-Trophime Hotel, Rue de la Calade. One of the nicest town houses in the city attributed (without proof) to Peytret and Mansard, the architects of the City Hall. The decoration on the facade was inspired by it.



## City stroll 8

### ARCHITECTURE AND HERITAGE CENTURIES OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> AND 21<sup>ST</sup>

If Arles is first and foremost a city of heritage and culture, it has also made itself a reputation in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The bridges and sections destroyed by bombing at the end of World War II have been rebuilt (in Trinquette and the Cavalerie section). But contemporary architecture can also be found. Ten buildings in Arles have received the 20<sup>th</sup> century heritage label and one of them, the Joseph Imbert Hospital, is protected as a Historic Monument. The restructuring of abandoned industrial complexes and the help of philanthropists have offered the city an unprecedented opportunity to call on famous contemporary architects for important projects.

**The Espace Van Gogh**, rue Président Wilson (Denis Froidevaux and Jean-Louis Tétré, architects). The former Arles hospital, where Van Gogh was treated, was rehabilitated after the opening of the new Joseph Imbert Hospital located outside the city center. The garden was redesigned and the space transformed to house, among other things, the city multi-media library, university classrooms and exhibition halls.

**The Arles archaeological museum** (Musée Départemental Arles Antique). Avenue de la 1<sup>ère</sup> division française libre, Presqu'île du cirque romain (Henri Ciriani, architect). Ciriani not only designed museum buildings in the form of a triangle, he also imposed an elegant and meticulous museum layout. The deep blue glass facades have given the building the nickname "musée bleu".

**Joseph Imbert Hospital** (ZAC Fourchon) (architect Paul Nelson). The Arles hospital represented, at the beginning of the 1970's, the latest in hospital research in France. Paul Nelson (1895-1979) was one of the first students in Auguste Perret's studio (famous for his use of reinforced concrete).

**The Rhone River dikes**. Following the disastrous flooding of the Rhone in 2003, the dikes were cleaned, consolidated and in some cases heightened. On both the right and left banks, wide walkways along the river have been created.

**The Arles Vincent van Gogh Foundation**. Rue du Docteur Fanton (Guillaume Avenard and Hervé Schneider, architects; colored light installation by Raphael Hefti). The former town house which had later housed the Banque de France has been transformed into exhibition space. The gate is a work by Bertrand Lavier.

**The Saint-Pierre-de-Trinquetaille church.** Place Saint-Pierre (Pierre Vago, architect). The sober geometric church is decorated with lovely contemporary stained glass windows signed J.-L. Perrot and A. Manessier.

► The Rhone cuts the city in two. On the right bank, the Trinquetaille section is already the beginning of the Camargue. From the Trinquetaille dikes, the stroller has a lovely view of the old city center. The silhouettes of belfries and towers in the sky stand out against the sunlight. A viewpoint indicator has been installed on the Quai Saint-Pierre, located on the right side of the Trinquetaille bridge. You can reach it by heading for the cemetery and the remains of the Roman bridge of boats.

**The former SNCF repair shops park** Entrance on Avenue Victor Hugo. This former Arlesian industrial site functions as a cultural platform for the different activities of the LUMA Foundation.

LUMA Arles is composed of six buildings : the Great Hall, a historical building renovated by the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region in 2007 (Henri Rivière and Alain Moatti, architects), five other buildings rehabilitated by Annabelle Selldorf (The Forge, the Machine Shop, the Training Center, the former administrative building) and the new Resources building, designed by Frank Gehry. It is 56 m high and has 15.000 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space. The central element, a glass rotunda suggesting the arena, will house space for presentations or exhibits, archives, a library, offices and meeting rooms. It will open its doors in 2019.

The entire campus will be located in a landscaped park created by Bas Smets, inspired by the unique landscapes that surround Arles, the Camargue, the Crau and the Alpilles hills.

Across the street, the new home of the National Photography School (Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie), the only university-level school in France dedicated uniquely to photography. The new school, designed by the architect Marc Barani, will be inaugurated in 2019 and participates in the cultural and urban renewal of Arles.

## Outside the city center...

**Salin de Giraud.** Your first surprise will be finding in the middle of the Camargue this village of red bricks with symmetrical streets lined with working-class housing, also called the "corons" (mining town) of the South. This industrial city was built by Solvay and Pechiney from 1856 on for producing salt and transforming it into soda. The village, populated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by immigrants from all over Europe and the Balkans looking for work, was built in two separate quarters, each associated with a factory, according to a very precise hierarchy, from the workers' dwellings to the houses of foremen and engineers.

To the south of the village, near the Piémanson beach, a lookout deck has been created : the piles of salt and the pink color of the Salins du Midi salt flats will delight you.

The Piémanson beach is a haven of tranquility located 12 km from the village, boasting a range of colors from the blue of the sky and the sea to the white of the sand and foam. This never-ending tongue of fine sand continues for almost seven kilometers, on the west side of the Grand Rhône.

Beauduc is one of the nicest spots for kitesurfing in France and known for its « telline » fishing : this small local shellfish is served in typical restaurants. Magic and wild, Beauduc is synonymous with true liberty : you will have the feeling of being at the end of the world. At the far end of the beach the shed hamlet still exists, built with miscellaneous second-hand materials.



## Tour 9

### AND AROUND D'ARLES...

➤ You have a car and you want to go outside the city ? The town of Arles is the largest in surface area of all of France. It is also the capital of the Camargue.

**Montmajour Abbey** (on the road to Fontvieille). Located northeast of Arles, it boasts an exceptional architectural group. It includes a pre-Romanesque building, Saint-Pierre's hermitage, a crypt unique in Provence, a Romanesque abbey church and cloisters (12<sup>th</sup> century), built by the Benedictine monks in the middle of the swamps that they worked to drain. Beside the abbey is the Holy Cross chapel (12<sup>th</sup> century), a pilgrimage destination. The abbey was reformed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by monks from the Congrégation de Saint-Maur, and enlarged in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with a second monastery located on the west side. It was sold as state property during the French Revolution and used as a stone quarry.

**The Camargue museum** (on the road to Les Saintes-Maries de la Mer, at Pont de Rousty, 11 km from the city); Installed in a former sheep barn, this ethnographic museum exhibits collections about life in the Camargue. The exhibit "Afloat in time, afloat on the water" informs about the history of men and water in the delta, and questions the future of agricultural spaces and animal farming, as well as that of protected birds. A rich collection, completely digitized, of photographs by Bouzanquet and Naudot can be consulted on the premises.

#### Three natural spaces

The territory of Arles, a true golden triangle as far as biodiversity is concerned, includes three remarkable natural spaces : the hills of the Alpilles Regional Nature Park to the north, the Camargue Regional Nature Park to the south, and the Crau, a desert-type steppe partially irrigated and farmed to the east. The city is distinguished by the presence of the Rhone which flows through the city center before outlining the Camargue.

➤ These natural spaces are open to the public with discovery trails accessible all year round.

**Pont de Rousty**, 11 Km (Camargue Regional Nature Park) and the Camargue museum.

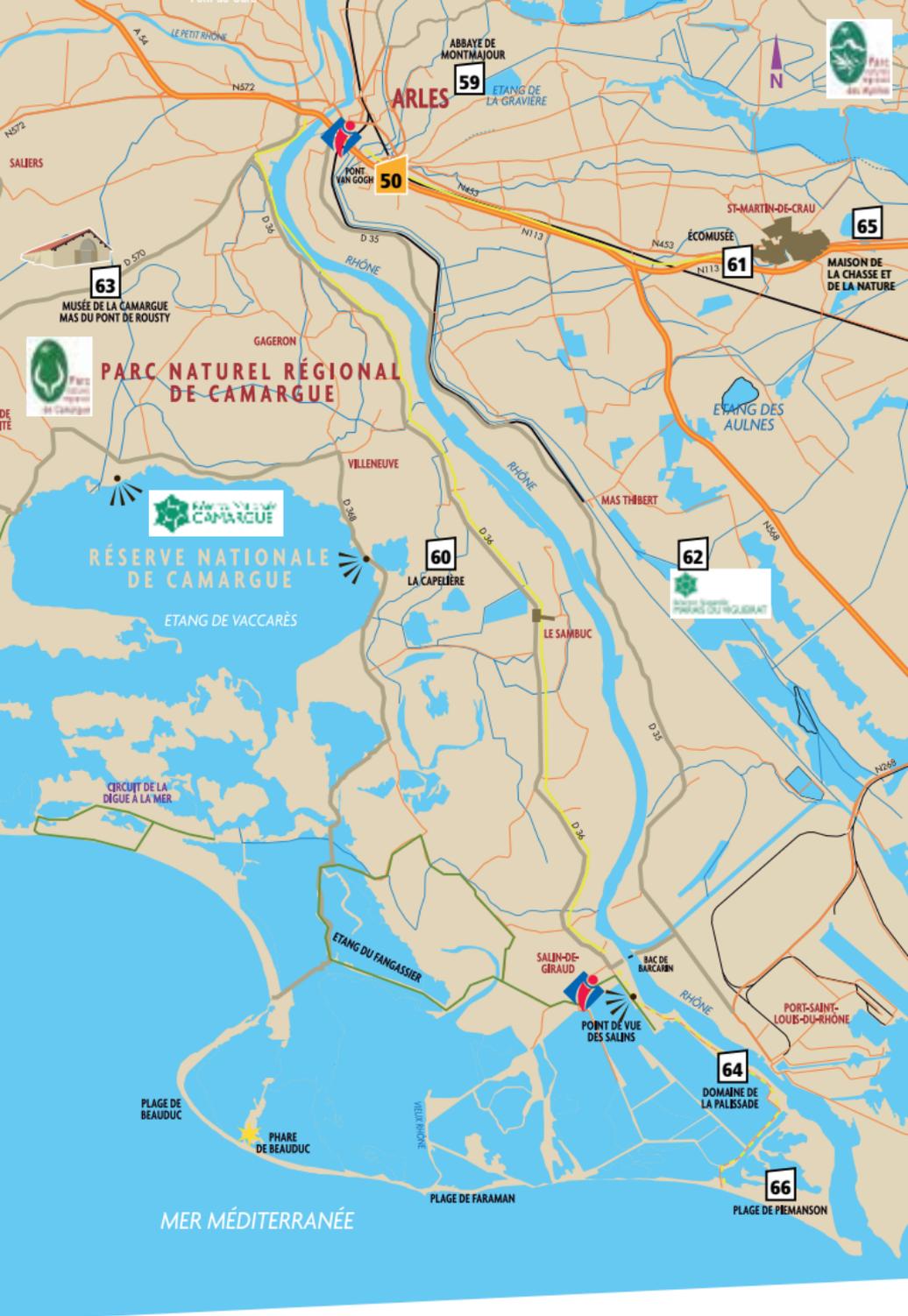
**La Capelière**, 23 Km (Nature Preserve) on the shores of the Vaccarès pond.

**La Palissade**, 45 Km (Conservatoire du Littoral) at the mouth of the Grand Rhone.

**Les Marais du Vigueirat** (the Vigueirat swamps), 26 Km (Conservatoire du littoral) between the Crau and the Camargue.

**L'Écomusée de la Crau** in St Martin-de-Crau (18 Km) organizes visits to the remains of Roman sheep barns in the Arles Crau.

**Swimming in the summer at Piémanson**, the Arles beach (48 km, take road to Salin de Giraud) and at Beauduc.



SITES	TOURS	
	5	9
59 Montmajour Abbey		<input type="checkbox"/>
60 La Capelière		<input type="checkbox"/>
61 Ecomusée de la Crau (eco-museum)		<input type="checkbox"/>
62 Les Marais du Vigueirat (swamps)		<input type="checkbox"/>
63 Camargue Museum		<input type="checkbox"/>
64 La Palissade		<input type="checkbox"/>
65 La Crau		<input type="checkbox"/>
66 Alpilles Regional Nature Park		<input type="checkbox"/>
67 Camargue Regional Nature Park		<input type="checkbox"/>
68 Piémanson beach		<input type="checkbox"/>
50 Langlois bridge with washerwomen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
70 Pont de Rousty		<input type="checkbox"/>

SITES		TOURS								
		1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8
01	Alyscamps cemetery									
02	Roman amphitheater									
03	Joseph Imbert hospital									
04	Charity chapel									
05	Trinitarian chapel									
06	St. Jean du Moustier chapel and St. Blaise church									
07	Roman circus									
08	St. Trophime's cloisters									
09	Courtyard of the St. Luce Commandery									
10	Cryptoportico									
11	Dominican (preacher friars) church									
12	St. Trophime's church and portal									
13	Notre Dame de la Major church									
14	St. Julien's church									
15	St. Martin's church									
16	St. Peter's church in Trinquetaille									
17	St. Anne's church									
18	Entrance to the public park in Arles									
19	Trinquetaille bridge staircase									
20	Espace Van Gogh									
21	LUMA Foundation									
22	Arles Vincent van Gogh Foundation									
23	Amédée Pichot Fountain									
24	Bouchaud de Bussy town house									
25	Courtois de Langlade town house									
26	Barrême town house									
27	Castillon town house									
28	Cays town house									
29	Donines town house									
30	Lauzière town house									
31	Méjanès town house									
32	Vernon town house									
33	City Hall									
34	Town house of the Amazons									
35	Icard Duquesne town house									
36	Laurens de Beaujeu town house									
37	Perrin de Jonquièrè town house									
38	Quiqueran de Beaujeu town house									
39	Yellow house									
40	Arles Archaeological Museum									
41	Reattu Museum									
42	Arlatan Museum									
43	Starry Night over the Rhone									
44	Obelisk									
45	Archbishop's Palace									
46	Podestas' Palace									
47	Former SNCF Repair Shops Park									
48	Place de la République									
49	Place du Forum									
50	Langlois bridge with washerwomen									
51	Cavalerie gate									
52	Grand convent entrance arch									
53	Rhone River dikes									
54	Roman Ramparts									
55	Saint Honorat's									
56	Café terrace in the evening, Place du Forum									
57	Roman theater									
58	Baths of Constantine									

## World heritage



### City stroll 1 :

Discover the monuments listed on the UNESCO world heritage list

**City stroll 2 :** The Arles Archaeological Museum and the Roman monuments

**City stroll 3 :** From Saint Trophime's to the Alyscamps cemetery, a medieval tour

 Santiago de Compostela, the Arles route

## Vincent Van Gogh

**City stroll 4 :** The sites that inspired the painter, including the Arles Vincent van Gogh Foundation and the Reattu Museum (city center)

**Tour 5 :** Visit the Langlois bridge (called the Van Gogh bridge) outside the city center

## Renaissance and Classical tours

**City stroll 6 :** The Reattu Museum and the treasures of the Renaissance and Classical periods

**City stroll 7 :** A random choice of town houses in the old city center

## Contemporary Arles

**City stroll 8 :** Architecture and heritage of the 20th and 21st centuries.

## Around Arles

**Tour 9 :**  
The "musts"







# How to discover the heritage monuments of Arles

To facilitate your stay, the Tourism Office sells a combined ticket (one entrance per site) at a special rate :

\* **The “Pass Liberté”**, valid one month, allows you to visit your choice of 4 monuments, one monument-museum (the Réattu) and one other museum.

\* **The « Pass Avantage »**, valid six months, permits you to discover all the monuments, the monument-museum, and all other Arles museums.

## \* **Guided tours**

(information at the Tourism Office)

**You can also buy brochures, practical guidebooks, and rent audio guides in different languages.**

**And of course we also recommend our mobile phone apps :**





# ARLES

- All of the historic city center listed by UNESCO as part of our world heritage;
- A city of famous men: Julius Caesar, Van Gogh, Picasso, Lucien Clergue, Christian Lacroix, Frank Gehry...
- N ° 28 on the New York Times list of the top 52 world cities not to be missed
- The city of photography with an international festival and the French Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Photographie
- A city with 4 foundations: the Arles Vincent Van Gogh Foundation, the Arles Luma Foundation, the Manuel Rivera-Ortiz Foundation and the soon-to-come Lee Ufan Foundation
- Over thirty contemporary art galleries.

## **2000 years of history and profoundly turned toward the future.**

To discover Arles just head for the Tourism Office! There you can purchase the “monuments passes”, valid for 1 or 6 months to visit 6 monuments and 3 museums. You can also find there advice for your stay, theme visits for all types of visitors, your tickets for scheduled activities, information on how to use the mobile application Arlestour...

[www.arlestourisme.com](http://www.arlestourisme.com)

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**Arles  
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2,00 €

