



La Ramée private mansion

Half-timber house

Sculpture - Art Nouveau House

Beauregard manor

Montlouis-sur-Loire through the centuries

Montlouis-sur-Loire is a city made of a plateau open onto the Cher and Loire valleys. Combining harmoniously an historical urban Centre and a rural landscape marked by the vineyard, it is composed of many hamlets spreading around its town Centre.

Mentioned for the first time in the sixth century by the historian Grégoire de Tours as the **Mons Laudium**, the name of the town has often changed. It was during the 9thC and 10thC, the place of a « viguerie », an administrative and legal centre under the Carolingians. In the 12thC, the city was named **Mons Laudatus**, after the family name Laudacius, a rich Roman man living in the upper part of the town. In the 14th-15thC, the town was called **Montloué or Montloé** and « **La Voirie- de-Montlouis** ». It was then, under Amboise administration and it became a « châtelainie » in 1523 -by the merging with two other fiefs, the one of Thuisseau on the Cher valley side and of the Tertre (Husseau). Today, the latter hamlet is the most important because it gathers the wine production of Montlouis-sur-Loire.

In the 18thC, the city was part of the Marquis of the Bourdaisière's property and became, in 1768, the property of the Duke of Choiseul. In 1793, the name of **Mont-Libre** was adopted. In that post-revolutionary period, city names with religious or royal connotations were modified; and "Louis" was changed into "free" for the French « libre ». The town was eventually named **Montlouis-sur-Loire**, by the town councillors, on August 13th, 1920.

A wine growing land, Montlouis-sur-Loire is renowned for its still and sparkling wines. Vineyards date from the Middle Ages in the surroundings of Tours. The appellation was created in 1938 and covers 380 ha of Chenin blanc, or Pineau de Loire. Before 1938, all the wines grown South of the Loire River were called Vouvray.

Inhabited by 2 710 people in 1954, the city has seen its population increase massively in the 60s-70s. There are now more than 11 000 inhabitants.

The city has succeeded to adapt itself thanks to rational urbanization and meets the needs of its inhabitants. It has kept its identity and created the concept of "*a small town in the countryside where it is pleasant to live*". Every September its heart pounds, at the rhythm of its internationally renowned Jazz Festival.

goods, particularly in the cellars dug in the rock. Paved paths taking down to the harbour were used by washer-women and fishermen. The Loire River was used for navigation and wine industry ; it permitted the commercial development of the town. On the way fish from Nantes, wool from Spain, slates from Trélazé (49) and salt were unloaded ; on the way back wood and coal from Auvergne, forge and cast from Vierzon, corn from Beauce and wines from Touraine. There was also a call for all the passengers going to Roanne and Orléans... The railway replaced, in the middle of the XIXC, river transportation.

14 Beauregard manor

Built in 1888 by Antoine Jules Dubois, we can access to this manor through an underground path. This dwelling which style is characteristic of the end of the XIXC has replaced a wine house.

Also worth discovering...

The vine yard, the hamlets, Bondésir Island, La Maison de la Loire, La Bourdaisière castle.

in brick and limestone. The Art Nouveau, artistic and architectural movement (end of the XIXC) was inspired by nature and stresses curves, creativity, presence of colours and rhythms. As main representants of L'Art Nouveau, we can quote Hector Guimard who devised the famous entrances of the Parisian underground stations. **N° 8-10** : Former perfume shop of Father Faure, both a chemist and an engineer developed there, between 1910 and 1920, a laboratory of flowery products, some coming from his own garden. **N° 4** : Former Hôtel des Voyageurs.

N° 2 : Art Nouveau House showing a front adorned with, in its center, a big diamond in coloured ceramic from which comes out a lotus flower. In addition two sculpted faces of Chinese characters, one laughing, and the other one weeping.

12 Former Loire harbor

The main harbour in Montlouis-sur-Loire was situated place Coutemanche. In the XIXC, it was bordered by two buildings and was probably a place to store

10 The dyke and the ferry

The dyke is here inhabited and of medieval origin, planned in the XIV and XVc. Between the path and the Loire River were private gardens. In 1525, King François 1st gave the inhabitants a « *free of charge* » passage on the Loire River. From 1820 a grant was given to ensure the crossing on a carriage, a flat boat. The ferry allowed reaching the horse post house of la Frillière in Vouvray. It was, at that time, the only passage on the Loire River between Tours and Amboise before the building of the railway bridge in 1846.

11 The Albert Baillet wharf

This wharf is named after the former owner of the Ramée, the amateur painter who had left a huge sum of money to the town. **N° 36** : La Ramée private mansion, registered in 1973 on the Historical Monuments List. In the style of Renaissance like the Presbytery, it was built with a quarry limestone application and not with dressed stones. **N°29** : House from the XVIIIc. **N°25** : Half-timber house from before the XVc. **N°11** : Art Nouveau House,

Let us tell you about **Montlouis-sur-Loire**, Town of the Loire Touraine, Region of art and history ... in the company of a guide-lecturer approved by the Ministry of Culture.

The Heritage animation department

The heritage officer coordinates the various initiatives taken by the Loire Touraine, a region of art and history. All year round it offers entertainment features for inhabitants, for schoolchildren and for tourists.

Information and bookings

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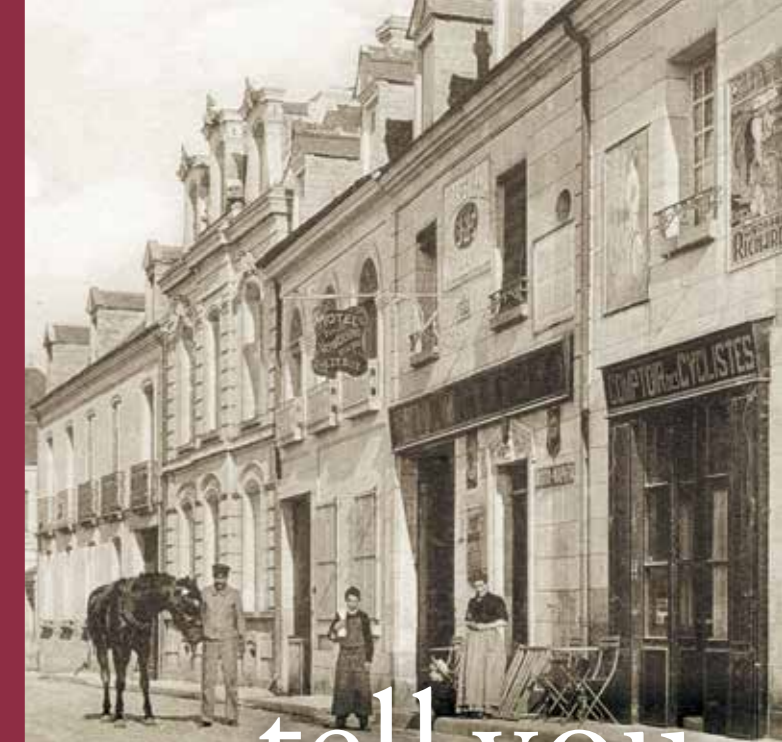
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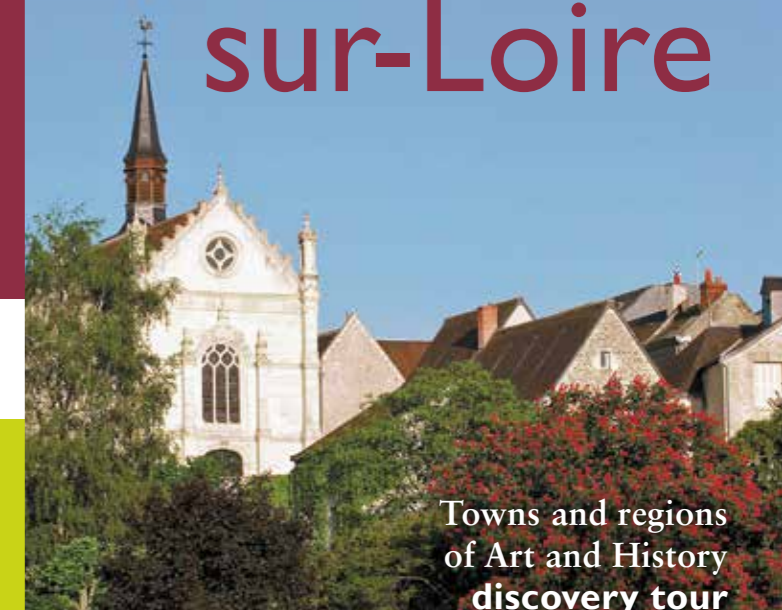
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let us tell you
Montlouis-sur-Loire



Towns and regions
of Art and History
discovery tour



The Loire River

1 The Val de Loire Park

The Val de Loire Park laid out in 2010, reminds that Montlouis-sur-Loire is part of the 160 towns of the Val de Loire, a site registered in 2000 on the World Heritage List of UNESCO. This new opening emphasizes the exceptional surroundings where Montlouis-sur-Loire is settled. A favorable geographical situation combined with an 8-km-long rocky promontory provides a privileged position along the Loire River before its confluence with the Cher.

2 The Viguerie Garden

This place creates a link between Montlouis centre and the Loire River, between the inhabitants and their river. Its name refers to the status the town had as a viguerie in the Middle Ages. This mineral garden provides an unobstructed view of St Laurent church. Built straight above the hillside on the ruins of a chapel dating from the end of the 5thC, it was ordered by St Perpet, bishop of Tours from 461 to 491. Its situation has always provided a protection from the Loire flows. The church was adorned with massive buttresses to support its northern collateral laid out at the end of the XV^eC, beginning of the XVI^eC.



3 Saint Laurent church

The original building was replaced at the end of the XI^eC-beginning of the XII^eC by a one-nave church from which still remains the basis of the bell tower and the choir. The church apse has Romanic bays in full round arch framed by colonettes in feuillagé capitals and a ledge decorated with sculptured modillons. In the XV and XVI^eC, the church was enlarged northward and southward with 2 collaterals and chapels were added to the choir. In the XIX^eC, important works were engaged : in 1838 the bell tower was heightened ; from 1870 to 1873 the diocesan architect G. Guérin had ribbed vaults settled on the nave. The inscription « République Française » was added on the front in 1881. In 1902, Father Brisacier, an architect, continues the restoration. On the left gable a graffito of a sailing barge can be seen, a marinier ex-voto dating from the end of the XVII^eC. The church is also adorned with stained-glass windows from the XX^eC. One of them illustrates the bombing of Montlouis-sur-Loire Bridge in May-June 1944, work by the glass-master Fournier.

The railway bridge

Montlouis-sur-Loire viaduct is situated on the Paris-Orléans-Tours itinerary, permitted by the 1842 law. Then, a young engineer, Romain Mandière, is named in

Tours to realize a 383-meter-long bridge in masonry. It was built with local materials : Lussault quarry stone, wood from Amboise forest, iron from Berry and castings from Pocé-sur-Cisse foundries. The work was completed in 1844 and used in 1846. In 1870, 3 arches on the left riverside were destroyed by the French army to prevent the Prussians' coming into Tours. They were rebuilt 6 months later. In June 1940, 3 arches were destroyed again to counter the German advance. Between 1943 and 1944, the bridge was unsuccessfully bombed 23 times by the Americans. In the end it was totally destroyed by the British air force in August 1944. Its rebuilding was over in 1946, with 2 extra arches. Using the original foundations, the new bridge is built in reinforced concrete covered with stones to preserve its initial aspect.

4 The town hall

Originally, the one-room Town Hall, called « room of the City hall » had no permanent place. The meetings were organized in different places according to the owners' availability. They were often the Mayor or the Secretary. In 1836, the Town Council decided to buy a house in the town centre so as to create a Town hall and 2 schools (boys and girls). The building from the XIX^eC was adorned with



Saint Laurent church



The town hall



The Presbytery



L'Épine fleurie cellars

2 brick chimneys and 2 round dormer windows. The present façade dates from the 1874 restoration. In 1881, the room of the Town Hall is enlarged and new rooms are built after the schools have been rebuilt in nearby buildings. It was enlarged again in the forties and in 1984 ; the building has been refit from 1991 to 1995.

5 The "ruelles" (Small streets in the old centre)

The centre provides, along its narrow small streets (A.Garantie, Petit Passage, Bellevue path), a pleasant walk up to the Presbytery.

6 The Presbytery

The Presbytery, registered as a « Historical Monument » in 1927, was a mansion dated from the XVI^eC. The achievement in dressed stone is precious at a time when buildings were mostly half timbered. In 1813 the cadastre

already mentioned the name of « Presbytery ». The building was mostly rebuilt in the XIX^eC thanks to Baroness Angellier's generosity, lady of La Bourdaisière castle and the prefect's wife. At the beginning of the XX^eC, scheduled for realignment, its gable was suppressed ; its chimney was entirely raised on the other crawling of the roof. The work is typical of the art of Renaissance.

Bellevue

Bellevue path offers a pleasant walk because of its numerous openings on the Loire River and its sceneries. The valley scattered with sandy beaches and wooded islands make a remarkable and emblematic entity gathered by 3 elements : the river and its wide spaces, the buildings along the Loire and the scenery opened on vineyards.

7 L'Épine fleurie

The property was purchased in 1926 by the architect

Victor Laloux (1850-1937) to make his residence in Touraine. Prix de Rome in 1878, he is the deviser, in Tours, of the station, of St Martin basilica, of the Town Hall ; in Paris, he conceived the Orsay Station. Here, helped by one of his pupils, Maurice Boille, he transformed the former farm, dated end of XVIII^eC into a country-style villa. He enjoyed saying he had the best Touraine scenery ! This property was also owned by another famous character : Michel Debré, de Gaulle's Prime Minister from 1959 to 1962 and also Mayor of Amboise. His wife, Anne-Marie Lemaesquier was donated this property by her godfather, Victor Laloux. It was called le Chemin Tourné because, previously a 67 m town path, it was sold to ensure Debré's security and thus obliged the people to make a turn.

8 L'Épine fleurie cellars

This domain, enclosed by walls, shows an adornment recalling the importance of wine activity (encrusted bottle bottoms, grapes in stone or iron, a sculpted barrel). The main building is a XVIII^eC former small farm. The sharecropper did not pay a rent but gave a part of his crop to the owner.

9 Caves

88 million years ago, the Turonienne Sea withdrew, leaving a very thin mud at the origin of the tufa, quite characteristic of the Loire Valley. Natural cavities became homes as far as in the Middle Ages. Two factors helped the development of caves : the exploitation of limestone and wine industry. The conduits of the chimneys come out of the plateau. Abandoned in the XX^eC, this housing is becoming attractive again.