



1 - Mermaid House, rue du Pont-de-Mayenne (Laval Heritage)

2 - Grande Rue (Laval Heritage)



LAVAL, A THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY

Laissez-vous conter Laval, Ville d'Art et d'Histoire ...

en compagnie d'un guide-conférencier agréé par le ministère de la culture. Le guide vous accueille. Il connaît toutes les facettes de Laval et vous donne des clefs de lecture pour comprendre l'échelle d'une place, le développement de la ville au fil de ses quartiers. Le guide est à votre écoute. N'hésitez pas à lui poser vos questions.

Laval appartient au réseau national des Villes et Pays d'Art et d'Histoire

Le ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, direction de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine, attribue l'appellation Villes et Pays d'Art et d'Histoire aux collectivités locales qui animent leur patrimoine. Il garantit la compétence des guides-conférenciers et des animateurs de l'architecture et du patrimoine, ainsi que la qualité de leurs actions. Des vestiges antiques à l'architecture du 21^e siècle, les villes et pays mettent en scène le patrimoine dans sa diversité. Aujourd'hui, un réseau de 202 villes et pays offre son savoir-faire sur toute la France.

À proximité

Coëvrons-Mayenne, Angers, Le Mans, Rennes, Vitré, Fougères, Saumur, Nantes, Guérande, Dinan, Fontenay-le-Comte, la Vallée du Loir, le Vignoble nantais et le Perche Sarthois bénéficient également de l'appellation Villes et Pays d'Art et d'Histoire.

Contact :

Laval Patrimoine
Ville de Laval
Maison du Grand Veneur
14 rue des Orfèvres
53 000 Laval
Tel : 02 53 74 12 50
patrimoine@laval.fr
www.patrimoine.laval.fr

Maquette et impression :

Imprimerie municipale, ville de Laval

Crédits photos :

Service Patrimoine



Imprimerie municipale de Laval - Papier 100% recyclé/bleu clair végétal



Laval Patrimoine



LAVAL, A THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY

From the 11th century, the lords of Laval were allied with noble families from Normandy, Brittany and Anjou. They controlled the river. They used it as a means for economical revival and, on its banks, they developed at the end of the Middle Ages linen laundering and exported to American colonies. This renewed prosperity led to growth of suburbs and suburban hamlets. The economic pinnacle of the town occurred in the 18th century, thanks to the textile industry. During the 19th century, the river was canalised. Quays were built as well as a large east-west thoroughfare to improve the Paris-Rennes link. In 1855, the construction of a railway viaduct completed the major works policy, such as the Theatre (1830), the Town Hall (1831) and the Museum of Fine Arts (1899). After a slight decline in population, prosperity came back during the Glorious Thirty (1945-1975). Rural exodus and arrival of a population from north Africa led to the development of new districts in surrounding areas.



Detail of the departmental railway station (Laval Heritage)

1 GARE

Erected in the middle of the 19th century when the rail came up to Laval, it was bombed out by the Allies raids in summer 1944. The station was rebuilt after WW2.

2 OFFICE DE TOURISME

This old railway and tram station was open in 1900. On its Art Nouveau front, you can read the names of the towns served by this small train.

3 PLACE JEAN MOULIN

Located next to the new main road and built by order of Napoleon 1st, it's home of Mayenne Préfecture built on the foundations of an old convent.

4 RUE DU PONT DE MAYENNE

It's the only route to go from Paris to Brittany and reach the Old Bridge which was the only one to cross over the river Mayenne. You can see houses with very well-restored fronts.

5 ÉGLISE SAINT-VÉNÉRAND

With its front topped by an antique triumphal arch, it's the masterpiece of Laval Renaissance period.

6 VIEUX-PONT

Dating from the Middle Ages, the Old Bridge used to shelter houses. About 150 years ago, quays are developed on both sides of the river. The new St-Julien hospital is built with a Roman-Byzantine style chapel, inspired by the Sacré-Coeur in Paris. On the left, you can see the recently restored Laundry-Boat. In the distance, the steeple of Avesnières Basilica thrusts up into the sky.

7 GRANDE RUE

Around a fountain, beautiful timber-framed houses show the property dynamics at the end of the Hundred Years War. At number 28, the Maison du Pou Volant (House of the Flying Louse) accommodated the needy. Dating from 1423, it's one of the oldest houses of the town.

8 MAISON DU GRAND VENEUR

Built in 1554, the House of the Master of the Royal Hounds testifies of the prosperous linen trade during the Renaissance.



Engoulant in Pont-de-Mayenne Street (Laval Heritage)



Detail of a bay in the Old Castle (Laval Heritage)

9 RUE DES ORFÈVRES

This street recalls the memory of the Goldsmith's Guild whose traditional skills are acknowledged and famous up to Versailles Court.

10 LA PLACE DE LA TRÉMOILLE

This square has been the heart of the town until the beginning of the 19th century. You can see a Renaissance gallery which became the Courthouse during the French Revolution. At that time, the guillotine is set up in front of la Bazoche House, one of the few examples of the 17th century architecture in Laval. From the square, you can see la Trinité Cathedral.

11 VIEUX-CHÂTEAU

Towards 1030, Guy de Dénére built a motte castle on this spot. 200 years later, it's replaced by a stone fortress overlooked by its famous keep, considered to be the oldest in France. Used as a prison during the Revolution, it has been home of the Museum of Naive and Outsider Arts since 1967, paying tribute to the famous painter, le Douanier Rousseau.

12 RUE DU PIN DORÉ

In this street, you can see a sculpture made by a local artist, Bertrand Gobron in 1991. Made of wood and stone, it recalls the buildings of the historic town centre.

13 RUE DE LA TRINITÉ

This street shows remarkable half-timbered houses dating from the end of the Middle Ages, such as the Hotel de Clermont, with symbolic statues on its front.

14 PORTE BEUCHERESSE

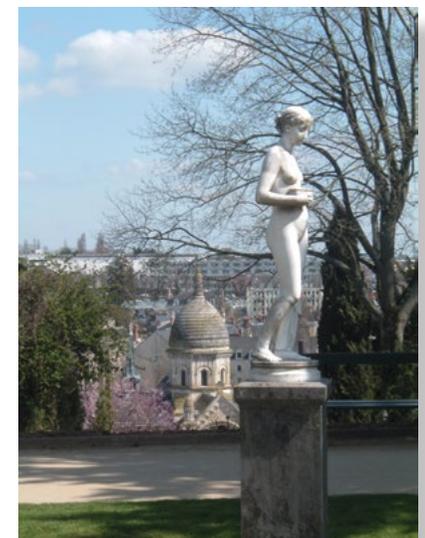
It's a medieval defensive structure with two towers, a narrow arched path and walls with arrow-slits and topped with machicolations. In 1844, the building was birthplace to the world-wide acknowledged father of Naive Art, Henri Rousseau.

15 PROMENADE ANNE D'ALÈGRE

The promenade follows the old moats of the south walls which protected the town in the Middle Ages. It's named after a Laval countess who was one of the mistresses of King Henry IV.

16 JARDIN DE LA PERRINE

The terrace offers a beautiful view of the town and the river. Very popular among Laval people, this botanical park gives visitors the opportunity to discover many exotic species, such as sequoia, cedar and ginkgo biloba. A small square provides the setting for Douanier Rousseau's grave.



Psyché, a sculpture by Hubert Lavigne (Ville de Laval)