

# i Information on the Sights

## NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Saint-Germain Castle  
Tel. : 01 39 10 13 00  
Open everyday except Tuesday from 10am-5:15pm  
From 1 May to 30 September: Saturday, Sunday  
and bank holidays from 10am-6:15pm  
Full price ticket: 6 € • reduced price: 4,50 €  
Free under 26 years old, for students  
and the first Sunday of each month.

## MAURICE DENIS COUNTY MUSEUM THE PRIORY

2 bis rue Maurice Denis  
Tel. : 01 39 73 77 87  
Open from Tuesday to Friday from 10am-5:30pm  
Weekends and bank holidays until 6:30pm  
Closed : 1 January, 1 May and 25 December  
Full price ticket: 4,50 € • reduced price: 2,50 €  
Free under 26 years old,  
and the first Sunday of each month.

## CLAUDE DEBUSSY MUSEUM

38 rue au Pain  
Tel. : 01 30 87 20 63 (for information)  
Open from Tuesday to Friday from 2-5:45pm  
(Nov.-Feb.: from 2:30 to 5:15)  
Saturday from 10am -12:45pm and from 2-5:45pm  
(Nov.-Feb.: 10:30am-12:15pm and 2:30-5:45)  
Free entrance

## GARDENS AND TERRACE OF THE STATE PROPERTY

Close to Saint Germain Castle  
Open every day.  
Winter hours : 8 am -5pm, Summer hours: 8am-8pm  
(until 9:30pm in July/August)  
The opening hours (which vary each month)  
are indicated on the entrance gate to the park.  
Free entrance

## TOURIST OFFICE\*\*\*

**High season** (March to October)  
Monday and Wednesday:  
from 2-6pm  
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday  
from 10am-1pm and from 2-6pm  
Sundays and bank holidays  
from 10am-1pm  
Except: 1 May  
  
**Low season** (November to February)  
Monday and Wednesday:  
from 2:30 to 5:30pm  
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday  
from 10:30am-12:30pm and from 2- 5:30pm



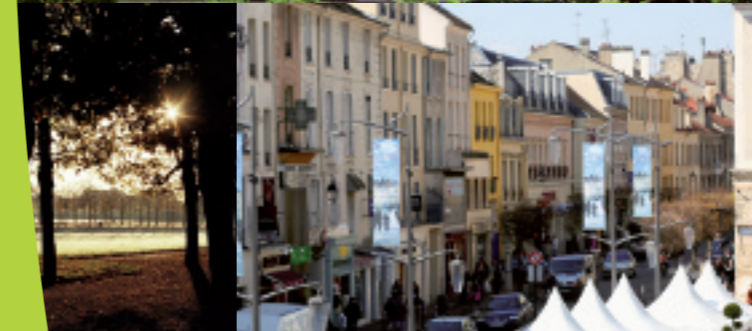
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# Saint-Germain-en-Laye, A Royal City, Yours to Discover



**S**AINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE IS ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING, HISTORICAL CITIES IN THE PARIS AREA. IT HAS BEEN FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE KEPT MUCH OF ITS ORIGINAL URBAN LAYOUT, WHICH DATES BACK TO THE MIDDLE AGES. ITS WINDING ROADS AND ALLEYS WILL TAKE YOU ON A HISTORICAL JOURNEY BACK IN TIME.

*A warm welcome  
to all of you  
who have come  
to discover our city!*

Emmanuel LAMY  
Mayor of Saint-Germain-en-Laye

### Tourist Office\*\*\*

Maison Claude Debussy  
38, rue au Pain  
78100 SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE  
Tél. : 01 30 87 20 63  
info@ot-saintgermainenlaye.fr  
www.ot-saintgermainenlaye.fr



Yvelines  
Conseil général



**1. French Gardens**

The gardens were completely redesigned between 1662 and 1674, by Le Nôtre, who created the Boulingrin (Bowlinggreen), the Grand Parterre (the Great Flowerbed), and the Jardins de la Dauphine (The Dauphine's Gardens).

**2. Grottoes Vineyards**

Cross the English gardens, which will take you back to the Small Terrace and you can admire the view overlooking the 1,850 grapevines: two varieties of grapes compose a "pinot noir", carrying on a 13 century old tradition.

**3. Viewpoint Indicator**

Situated at the height of 84 meters, which offers a breathtaking view of the West of Paris.

**4. The Terrace.**

From 1668 to 1675, Le Nôtre created a set of gardens near the two castles: le château-vieux (the old castle) under the reign of François I (1494-1547) and le château-neuf (the new castle) under the reign of Henri IV (1563-1610). This new castle and its gardens were demolished towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Le Nôtre finished off the construction with a terrace 30 meters wide and 2,400 meters long. The wrought iron railing was put up between 1857 and 1871.

**5. The English Oak**

Location: Near the Half Moon (Demi-Lune)

It was at the foot of this oak tree, and in front of a statue of the Virgin, that Jacques II Stuart (1689-1701) would come to pray. He lived in exile in Saint-Germain-en-Laye until his death and is buried in the Church.

**6. The François I<sup>er</sup> Oak (Francis I)**

Parcel 204, following the "path of the shrines" itinerary marked in blue. The tree was to the left, right before the 9-road junction.

This was one of the oldest trees in the forest and it

carried the name "François I<sup>er</sup>" because he was an avid hunter and undoubtedly passed in front of this oak on his way to his hunting meets at his lodge built at the Muette. This area of the forest, called "le Petit Parc" (The Small Park), was completely enclosed by François I to protect the royal children from wolves and thieves while strolling in the gardens.

**7. The English Garden**

In 1845, the railroad line was extended straight through the Grand Parterre (Great Flowerbed) and the station was set up in front of the castle on the site of the ornamental basin designed by Le Nôtre. The English Garden, created out of a part of the forest on the request of Louis Philippe, was a welcome addition to the changes.



*For further information on the State Property (Domaine National), several documents are available for purchase at the Tourist Office:*

- **Guide book on "trails and shrines"**
- **State Forest maps and booklets**



**Kings and Sovereigns at Saint-Germain-en-Laye**



**Louis VI le Gros**

Towards 1122, the king had a fortress built on the wooded plateau "Laye" which dominated the loop of the Seine.

**Saint-Louis**

The castle's chapel was built in 1238 at the request of Saint Louis (Louis IX) and predates the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris by a few years.

**Charles V**

The castle's dungeon is the only feature remaining from medieval times and all that is left of the 14<sup>th</sup> century fortress which burnt during the 100 years war.

**François I<sup>er</sup>**

The Château-Vieux (old castle) was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century at the request of Pierre Chambiges who used the existing foundations, including the chapel. Several salamanders (the king's emblem) evoke his presence throughout the castle. His "Renaissance style" can be easily distinguished in the courtyard.

**Henri II**

Henri II had "le Château-Neuf" (New Castle) and its gardens built at the end of what is now the Terrace, which was completed by Henri IV. The Henri IV Pavilion is all that remains of the "Château-Neuf", which is now a hotel and restaurant.

**Louis XIII**

The king commissioned the paintings which decorate the castle's chapel. One can view works of Poussin, LeBrun, Simon Vouet, and Stella.

**Louis XIV**

Born and christened at the "Château-Neuf" on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1638, Louis XIV made the Old Castle his main residence from 1666 to 1681. In 1682, Jules



Hardouin Mansart was put in charge of adding 5 corner pavilions to allow for more visitors.



He was also commissioned to carry out the construction of the "Château du Val".

**Louis XV**

The Church, commissioned by Louis XIV in 1683, was built with its back to the castle. In 1765, Louis XV had the church "disoriented" by Potain (churches at that time faced east); it was not completed until 1827.



**Napoléon I**

A boarding house for young girls was founded by "Madame Campan", a former lector to Marie-Antoinette. Her most famous pupil was Hortense de Beauharnais. Madame Campan was put in charge of the first orphanage of the Legion of Honour by Napoleon, founded in Ecoen. During the Emperor's reign, the castle was converted into a school for the National Guard from 1809 to 1812.

**Louis XVIII**

He created the "Gardes du Corps", (assuring the safety of the royal family), which often trained at the Royal Riding School, in an equestrian training center built in 1816 and measuring 50 by 18 meters, with an impressive timber roof frame resembling the inverted hull of a ship.



**Napoléon III**

In 1862, he created the museum of Celtic and Gallo-Roman Antiquities in the Château-Vieux (Old Castle) which was restored by the architect Eugène Millet in 1867.

## 📷 Tourist Sights and Museums

Plan on one entire day to visit all of the sights

### A. The Chateau-Vieux (the Old Castle)

The chateau was built at the request of François I (Francis) by Pierre Chambiges, who used the pentagon-shaped foundations of a fortified castle which was built in the XIV century by Charles V. Chambiges incorporated the chapel commissioned by Saint Louis in 1238. François I and the successive kings stayed there frequently. Louis XIV was born on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1638, in the Château Neuf (New Castle) of which little remains, and set up his main residence in the existing chateau from 1666 to 1681.

From that day on, Saint-Germain-en-Laye became the seat of the royal government. The overall layout of the town centre dates from that period. Napoléon III had the Chateau Vieux restored by Eugène Millet, who demolished the pavilions which had been added by Louis XIV. In 1867, the Emperor created the Museum of Celtic and Gallo-Roman Antiquities, which is housed within the castle walls.

### B. The National Museum of Archaeology

The collection of the National Museum of Archaeology traces the life of man in France from the beginning of time right up to the Middle Ages. Today, the museum houses the world's largest collection of prehistoric art and one of the richest archaeological collections in Europe. Nearly 30,000 artefacts are on display, one of the most noteworthy items is the famous "Dame de Brassempouy" ("Lady of Brassempouy" which is a tiny sculpted head).

### C. The Church

The present building was consecrated in 1827. Just like the two previous ones, it was built on the site of the small priory. Its patron saints are St Vincent and St Germain, to whom our city owes its name since the beginning of the XI<sup>th</sup> century. The top of the church steps offers a panoramic view which stretches from the Chateau's flowerbeds to the "Jardin des Arts", where the very modern Alexander Dumas Theatre is located.

### D. The Claude Debussy Museum

This is the first museum in France dedicated to one of the greatest composers, (1862-1918) whose innovative work marked a major step in the history of music. On display at the composer's birthplace, you will find some of his personal belongings and historical documents pertaining to his life, his work and his artistic affinities.

Between September and June, look for regular musical programs here.

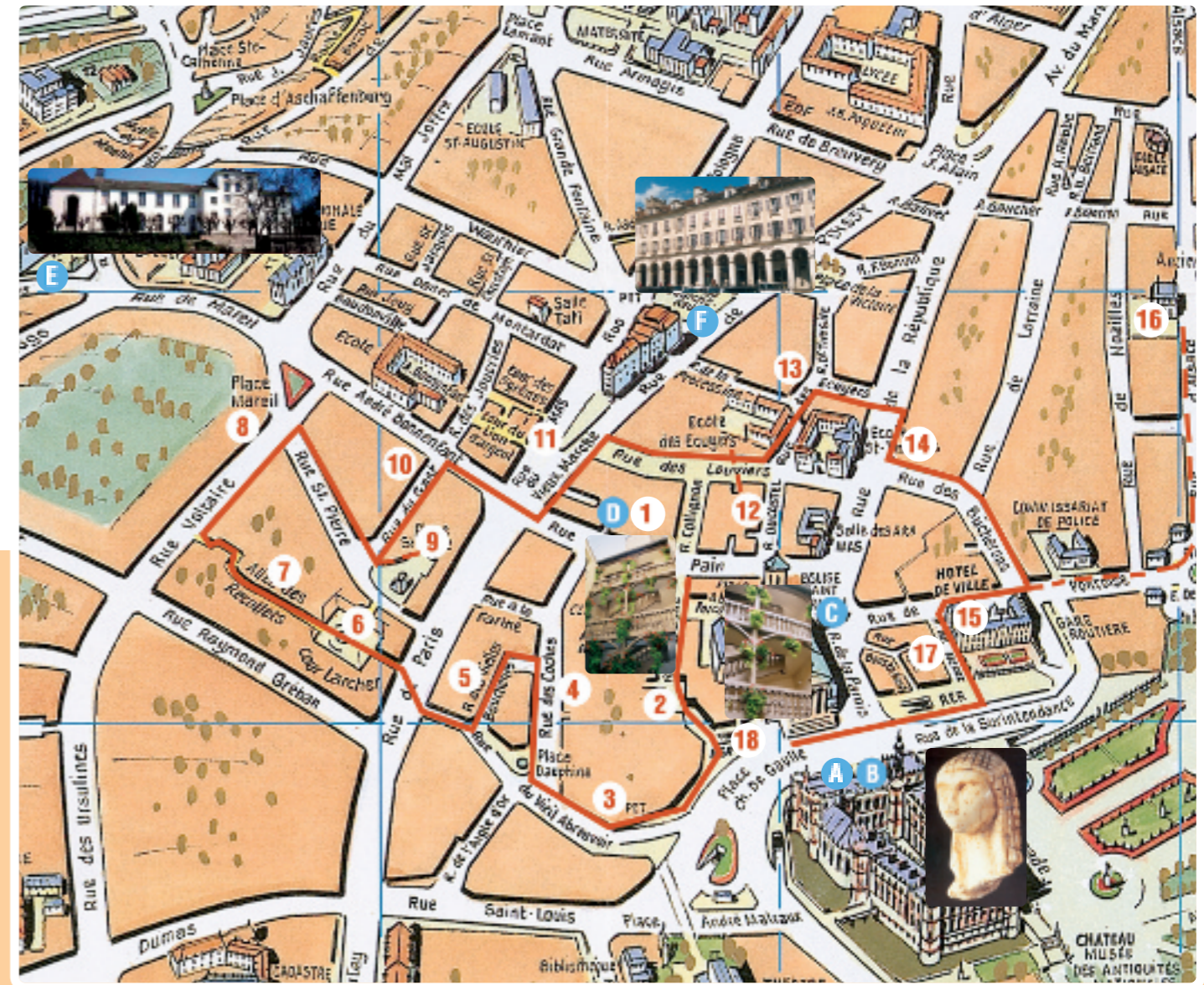
### E. The Maurice Denis County Museum – the Priory

The museum founded in the former home of Nabis school Painter Maurice Denis (1870-1943) holds his works, as well as a collection of symbolist and post-impressionist artwork from the Pont-Aven School (Brittany). You will discover the paintings of Paul Gauguin, Emile Bernard, Paul Sérusier, Pierre Bonnard, Edouard Vuillard, Paul Elie Ranson and more.

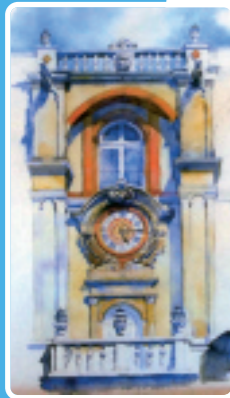
### F. The Arcades

Built in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these houses (1820 for the arcades) form a harmonious whole. The covered wheat and flour market was once located on the opposite side of the square. Built in 1770, it was replaced by the post office in 1911. The present day "New Market" held on this location since 1776, replaced the old cemetery, which was relocated further west. The market square has remained the heart and life of

the city ever since, especially on market days: Tuesday, Friday and Sunday mornings.



During our walk "Historical Dwellings of Saint-Germain-en-Laye", you will discover the Hôtels de Villeroy, de Guise, de Créquy, de Soissons (Saint-Thomas de Villeneuve Institute) and the present-day Town Hall, set up in the Hôtel de la Rochefoucauld after a great deal of restructuring. The other buildings called "hôtels" are either mansions or more modest dwellings occupied during the 17<sup>th</sup> century by aristocrats or "residential properties," built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century replacing "hôtels" which in the meantime had disappeared, as for example the "Soubise" or the "de Conti" hôtels located on the Place du Château.



# Historical Dwellings



Time of walk : 1 1/2 hours

## 1. Starting Point: Tourist Office

#38, rue au Pain

This house dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with an extra floor added in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Like many of the more modest dwellings of the town centre built at that time, it is made up of two buildings separated by a courtyard. **Points of interest: a well which adds a charming touch to the courtyard, along with a magnificent wooden staircase which leads up to the Claude Debussy Museum, birthplace of the composer in 1862.**



## 2. Rue de la Salle

The name "la Salle" is the name of several commanding officers (governors) of the castle in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.



## 3. Rue du Vieil Abreuvoir

Called "Abreuvoir" for the large drinking trough which dates as far back as 1547 and which was once located at the top of the street, just opposite the castle. It was demolished in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to facilitate local traffic.



#24: The hôtel called "de la Feuillade" belonged to Jean Bertrand de Masgontier, the king's personal valet (1708).

#23: The mansion called "Hôtel de la marquise de Maintenon": This very modest dwelling was built after 1643 and purchased by Madame de Maintenon in 1680. The balcony was added in 1880.

#22: The "Hôtel du duc de Montausier": This 17<sup>th</sup> century mansion, which has undergone many alterations during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, belonged to the Duke de Montausier (1610-1690) the dauphin's private tutor.



## 4. Rue des Coches (coach street)

#17: The "Hôtel de Guise" is a perfect example of the mansions of that period called "hôtels" which all contained a courtyard in front and a garden in the back. Rebuilt in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was believed

to belong to Henry de Guise, the grandson of "Scarface".

## 5. Rue des Vieilles Boucheries

"Old Butcher's street": This narrow passage contained the meat market from the Middle Ages up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

## 6. Cour Larcher

The entrance can be found between 40 and 42 on the rue de Paris. The old houses were built over vault-roofed cellars, remains of the Maison-Dieu (Charity Hospital) founded by Regnault, King Philippe Auguste's former archer in 1225.



## 7. Allée des Récollets

In 1620, at the request of the parish priest and a group of villagers, Louis XIII gave up the land containing the remains of a 13<sup>th</sup> century hospital on condition that the religious services of St-Eloi be maintained.

## 8. Rue Voltaire

#2: The "Hôtel de Fieubet": The house was enlarged and embellished by Gaspard de Fieubet, personal advisor to Louis XIV and the queen's chancellor. He acquired the house in 1670 and resold it in 1693. A second floor was added in 1790.



## 9. Rue Saint-Pierre

Point of interest : Hôtel de Navaille  
In 1970, the fountain known as "de Colbert" was disassembled and taken from the street "de la Surintendance". After the RER was built in 1988, the fountain was reassembled on the square by the city. The back part of this alley is very interesting with its variety of houses and roofing.



## 10. Rue du Gast

This street was named after an eminent family of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. One of the family members was a hunting procurator during the reign of Henry IV, and another one was a forest officer during the reign of Louis XIV.

#6: The façade contains a small niche which holds a statue of Saint Christopher. Just opposite, a wrought iron

railing, which replaces the old wall, opens onto a view of the gardens of the "Créquy Hôtel" (mansion between the courtyard and garden). The entrance can be found between 10 and 12 rue de Paris. The 17<sup>th</sup> century hôtel was restructured and enlarged in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and again in 1799.



## 11. Rue du Vieux-Marché

Francis I (François 1<sup>er</sup>) ordered the establishment of fairs and markets on April 13, 1528. The first covered market was built at his request in 1543, thanks to which local trade and commerce flourished. He created what was once called "le Grand Carrefour", at the present day junction of the rue au Pain/ de Paris/ du Vieux Marché.

## 12. Rue des Louviers

At the top of 34 impasse des Louviers a niche holds a statue of St Peter. The word "Louviers" may have originated from a deformation of the word "louveter" (wolf hunters), or may have derived from cloth merchants from the city of Louviers, who sold their goods at the Saint Germain markets.



## 13. Rue des Écuyers (Equerry street)

On the facade situated opposite the school, on a blue and gold background, you will see the cradle of the coat of arms given by Louis XVIII to mark the birth of his ancestor Louis XIV.



The "rue des Ecuers" will lead you to the "rue de la République" which is lined on both sides by buildings dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The bottom of the street offers a profile view of the Saint Germain Church.

## 14. Rue des Bûcherons (Lumberjack street)

Before taking this street, take a minute to turn around and admire the façade decorated with a peristyle of four ionic



columns crowned with a triangular-shaped pediment. This chapel was built in 1788 by Antoine François Peyre for the **St Thomas de Villeneuve Institute**, an educational institution since 1698. The entrance is situated at 15, rue des Louviers: "Hôtel de Soissons", with the classic layout - a courtyard and garden - built for Eugène Maurice, Duke of Soissons and his wife Olympe Mancini (1639-1708).

#10: Traces of the "hôtel de Reims", Residence of Cardinals Barberini and le Tellier in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

#7: Traces of the "Petites Ecuries du Roy" (The king's small stables).

## 15. The Town Hall

In 1842, the town hall was set up in the "Hôtel de la Rochefoucauld" which was built in 1788. The room used for wedding ceremonies has kept its classic appearance since the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1895).

## 16. Hôtel de Noailles

This lavish dwelling was the home to the three dukes of Noailles, governors of Saint Germain until the Revolution. It was built at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, by Hardouin Mansart on a 40 hectare estate. Restructured in 1836, a passageway was made through the central part of the building. The two wings still exist today, situated at 10 and 11 rue Alsace. Mozart stayed here in 1778.

## 17. Rue Roger-de-Nézot

#9: Built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the "Hôtel de Bontemps" lodged Alexander Bontemps, the 1st valet to the Sun King. To see: Wooden carriage gateway and paved courtyard.

Continuing along the gardens of the State Property (Domaine National), you will see the castle, which houses the National Museum of Archaeology, then on to the church across from it until you reach the André Malraux Square.

## 18. Last stop: Place Charles de Gaulle

Just across the street you will discover two magnificent residential properties built between 1754 and 1758, replacing the "Conti" and "Soubise" hotels.

The variety of facades that you have just discovered during this walk provides a general insight into our history that can be read like the beautiful pages of the "History of Saint-Germain-en-Laye".

