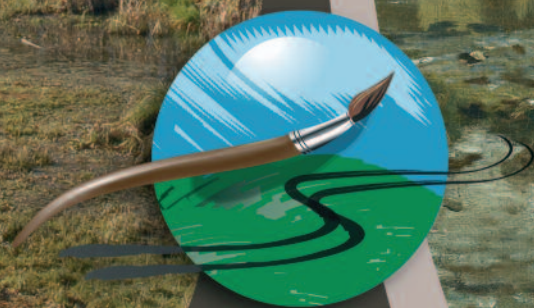


GUIDE

Landscapes, Painters and Artists...

*Take a trip in and around
the region of Crémieu and discover
the "Pays des Couleurs"
(The Land of Colours)*



A circuit of the Rhone in the Dauphiné region...

... a region with many different facets.

Found towards the north of the Department of Isère, the circuit of the the Rhône in the Dauphiné region has a significant landscape diversity consisting of hills, plateaus, plains and valleys. The heart of the territory is marked by a limestone plateau with a mosaic of prairies, forests, crops and dry grasslands. On the East border by rocky cliffs can be seen; this territory has a softer and hillier topography.

This region is also closely linked to the presence of the Rhone River, a former border between the Dauphiné and Savoy, enemy territories in the middle ages. Today, the river marks the departmental limit between the Ain and Isère. The natural environment grew and developed due to the dynamics of the River (Islands, marshes...) and today presents a remarkable biodiversity.

From the beginning of the 19th century, many landscape painters and artists came to the region to paint nature. On the lookout for picturesque subject matter and luminous landscapes, large numbers of painters choose the Crémieu region and its surroundings to setup their easels.

It was a real hangout for artists and hundreds of them roamed throughout the area from the middle of the 19th century right until the beginning of the 20th century.

Exploring the landscapes of the Crémieu region and the “Pays des Couleurs”, is like voyaging into space or taking a journey through time.

Imagine if you could retrace the steps of those painters who after years of intense searching discovered an environment perfectly suited to their work - beautiful and welcoming, picturesque and wild. This region first became known due to its proximity with Lyon, and then by a word of mouth. It is a region that is conducive to the work of an artist and therefore artists were able to produce drawings, studies and paintings there which were later exposed on the picture rails of the Parisian Salons and further afield outside of the Paris region. It was in this way that they made a name for themselves and at the same time made known the area of Crémieu, Optevoz or Morestel.

In a France where the industrial revolution was upsetting the old way of doing things, it is important to keep in mind that the Crémieu region and the “Pays des Couleurs” were perfect places for many landscape painters - and for as many men and nature lovers who simply desired to admire the region or simply paint it as well.

*Nathalie Servonnat-Favier
Art historian*

Nathalie Servonnat-Favier, an Art Historian, wrote a Master's thesis on the retreats of painters in the towns of Crémieu and Morestel during the 2nd half of the 19th century at the University Lyon II in 1986. This work was partly published in the Rasier Exhibition catalogue, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon in 1996.





— You are about to discover a thematic tourist route. This incredible 80 km journey will help you discover those picturesque landscapes that inspired so many painters of old.

Cr During the trail, you will find six signs "gateways" just like those villages that left their mark on the painters of old: Optevoz, Crémieu, Hières-sur-Amby, Morestel, Brangues and Corbelin. They will help you learn more about the heritage of the different towns and region.



Two landscape reading tables can be found at Crémieu and Morestel. You can carry out a marked urban trail by following the map proposed in this booklet.



As you discover the trail, you will find ten stone stops that are also numbered. These correspond to a double page of this booklet and also to a place immortalised by one or more artists in the trail.



So, during your trip, make sure you look out for those signs 'Parking' associated with trail 'Painters and landscapes'.



The Tourist Offices are at your disposal for further information.

Be sure to respect the rules of the Highway Code.



Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot (1796-1875)

Corot was a Painter who could be described as halfway of neo-classic tradition and halfway of modern landscape tradition. He was close to artists from the school of Barbizon. He loved travelling and wandered through the French provinces drawing and painting scenes of nature. In 1852, he spent time at Crémieu with his friends Daubigny and Ravier.

Camille Corot, Nadar photography.



François-Auguste Ravier (1814-1895)

Ravier was originally from the Lyon area and then chose to settle and live with his family in the Dauphiné region, first at Crémieu and then in Morestel from 1867. He loved painting landscapes and left behind him a rich legacy. For almost fifty years, he painted the landscapes of the Crémieu region and further afield using the opportunity he had to develop different methods of representing light.

Portrait de Ravier by Louis Janmot (1814-1892), taken from the album "Sixty-one drawings. Ravier", under the direction of Félix Thiollier, Lyon, 1888.



Charles-François Daubigny (1817-1878)

Daubigny was part of the Barbizon school of the painters and is truly considered as one of the precursors of Impressionism. In 1849 he made his first trip to the Crémieu region. 'La vanne d'Optevoz' (The Sluiceway at Optevoz) and the lakes of Gilieu and Bas were among his favourite subjects.

Charles Daubigny, A photograph by Nadar, 1865.



Jacques Barthélémy alias Adolphe Appian (1818-1898)

Barthélémy made the acquaintance of Corot and Daubigny who left a lasting impression on both his career and his work. He painted and exhibited many landscape paintings from Crémieu, Optevoz, Creys and Morestel. As from 1870, he regularly stayed in nearby the Bugey region.

Adolphe Appian, Fonds Sylvestre, Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, (Lyon Town Library 1891.



Charles Rouvière (1866-1924)

As early as 1883 Rouvière was a student at the École des Beaux-Arts of Lyon. He started out his career working as a cartoonist for a Lyon silk factory. He later roamed the Crémieu region from 1877, his favourite subject matter being rural landscapes and agricultural life.

Charles Rouvière, private Collection.

painters found in and around Crémieu...



Claude-Marie Reignier (1870-1954)

Fascinated by painting from an early age, he became a student of François Vernay, a master painter of landscapes and still life from Lyon. As early as 1930, he spent most of the time in Morestel travelling through the countryside to work solely on nature art.

Claude-Marie Raja, photography collection taken from the Journal de la Masion Ravier, No. 1, 1996.



Philippe Tassier (1873-1947)

As a student at the École des Beaux-Arts de Lyon as early as 1888, he made many trips to the Crémieu region that he had always loved. He also even refused to sell his paintings from the villages of Crémieu and Optevos. Between 1908 and 1912, he travelled around and about photographing different regions of Brittany.

Philippe Tassier sitting on the left with inhabitants of Optevos



Abel Gay (1877-1961)

Abel Gay was an industrialist who had a real passion to paint. He spent his spare time painting the landscapes around Lyon or in the department of Ain. He was a great admirer of Ravier and bought a house in Morestel and stayed in the region right up until the end of his life. The 'L'étang de Roche' was one of his favourite places to visit and paint.

Abel Gay around 1910, a photograph taken from a private collection, Journal de la Maison Ravier, No.1, 1996.



Joseph Romagnol (1893-1981)

A student of Claude-Marie Raja, Romagna knew and painted all aspects of his hometown and its surroundings. He set up in 1969 at Morestel a 'Arts and Culture' fair open to regional artists.

Joseph Romagnol.



Marion Cartier-Claudé (1911-1994)

As Paul Claudel (Daughter-in-law) by, Marion Cartier spent a lot of time at the Château of Brangues well into the 1950s. She was able to spend time painting, inspired by the landscapes of the Dauphiné region.

Marion Cartier and Paul Claudel (Paris-Match, 1953).



A postcard from the beginning of the 20th century

Les gorges de la Fusa

The limestone plateau of the Crémieu region contains numerous natural springs in which streams can be found. Located at the South exit of Crémieu, the gorges of the Fusa constitute one of these canyons.

A view of Crémieu by Ravier

Ravier used to setup his easel towards just before the city gates, near the meadow of Minssieux and painted Crémieu from this

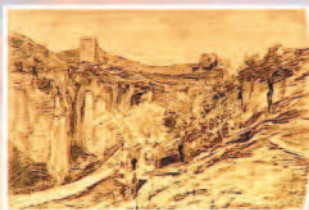


A view of Crémieu, watercolour on paper, Collection Ravier.

angle. The Delphinal Castle, the Church of the Augustinians and the Saint Hyppolyte can also be seen in the background.

Les gorges de Tortu by Daubigny

Charles Daubigny used to stay at the Ecu Inn when he came to stay at Crémieu. The fortifications and the path leading towards les gorges de Tortu to reach Dizimieu inspired this charcoal drawing.



Landscape, trees on the slope of a ravine, Charcoal drawing, Musée du Louvre.

Medieval fairs at Crémieu



Since 2002 every year the town of Crémieu people get dressed up for two days in September. It is an event completely devoted to the middle-ages with parades, street shows and a medieval market for both young and old alike.

Medieval, 2007 edition, The Tourist Office, Crémieu.



The Saint Hyppolyte climb, Tourist Information Office Crémieu

The fortifications

Covering almost 1300 meters, the fortifications nearly enclose the whole city. Dated from the 14th century, they superseded those of the 12th century which were too narrow. In 1417, the State census of the walls mentions five doors which allow access to the city: The mills, the South law, the Mazet (direction Lyon) to the West, Martinas and the Molari to the North and the ND de Reclus to the East.

Stop 1 Crémieu to Station 2 The Etang de Bas 8.5 km

As you leave Crémieu, follow Sicieu on the right onto the D52.

At Sicieu, turn left and follow the D52 towards Optevoz.

After you go past the Town Hall, take a left towards the stadium. Park in the stadium car park and take the trail on the right for 300m, and you will arrive at Stop 2.



Crémieu, midway between Art and History

Right from the beginning of the 12th century, Crémieu played a major role in the heart of the Castellany of the Tour du Pin. One can find 1000 years of history closely entwined in the many preserved medieval buildings of the region. In the 19th century, several landscape painters chose this town as their base for exploring art work in the region.

Riverside in the town of Crémieu

*Gustave German, A paper bistre print,
The royal monastery at the Museum of Brou,
Bourg en Bresse.*

Gustave Allemand (1846-1888) for example, undertook engraved etching of different scenes of Crémieu. This print shows the Bell Tower of the Augustin Church located along the walls of the side of the current day courtyard of the Baron Raverat. The ramparts are separated from the main shaft by a stream and the Vaud River which can be seen in the foreground. The house wives of old were able to wash their clothes in this small stream as Crémieu did not have its own Lavoir (wash-house) at that time. On at very end of the 19th century did the town build a nicely sized Lavoir which can be as you leave the town heading towards the Gorges de la Fusa.



- 1) Porte de la Loi,
- 2) Portail du clos des Augustins,
- 3) Ensemble de maisons à échoppes des XVI^e, XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles,
- 4) Ensemble de maisons de commerçants des XVI^e, XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles,
- 5) Maison à échoppe, XV^e-XVI^e siècle,
- 6) Maison urbaine, XV^e-XVI^e siècle,
- 7) Portail provenant de la chapelle des Pénitents du Confalons, fer forgé vers 1715,
- 8) Cloître (XVII^e siècle) du couvent des Augustins,
- 9) Ancien couvent des Augustins, XIV^e au XIX^e siècle,
- 10) Eglise des Augustins, XIV^e-XV^e siècle et 1^{re} moitié du XVI^e siècle,
- 11) Maison de rapport, XVIII^e-XIX^e siècle,
- 12) Maison Patrat, XVI^e siècle,
- 13) Maison à échoppe, XVI^e-XVIII^e siècle,
- 14) Hôtel de Chaponnay, XVII^e-XVIII^e siècle,
- 15) Maison urbaine, XVI^e siècle,
- 16) Porte des Moulins, XIV^e, détruite au milieu du XIX^e siècle,
- 17) Halle, XV^e siècle,
- 18) Demeure urbaine, XVI^e siècle,
- 19) Maison Guichard, XVI^e-XIX^e siècle,
- 20) Maison peinte, XVI^e-XIX^e siècle,
- 21) Maison Bert de Saint Baudille, XVIII^e-XIX^e siècle,
- 22) Ancienne église Saint-Jean, XVI^e-XVII^e siècle,
- 23) Hôtel de la Poype Saint-Jullin, fin XV^e-début XVI^e siècle,
- 24) Maison Garajoud, dite du Colombier, XV^e-XVI^e siècle,
- 25) Remise,
- 26) Ancienne cure, XVII^e siècle,
- 27) Maison urbaine, XVII^e-XVIII^e siècle,
- 28) Maison urbaine, fin XV^e-début XVI^e siècle,
- 29) Maison urbaine, XVII^e siècle,
- 30) Ancienne auberge de l'Ecu de France, fin XV^e siècle,
- 31) Maison urbaine, XVI^e siècle-XIX^e siècle,
- 32) Porte du Reclus, détruite au milieu du XIX^e siècle,
- 33) Sentier Saint-Hippolyte,
- 34) Porte Neuve ou François 1^{er}, agrandie en 1536,
- 35) Emplacement de l'atelier monétaire au milieu du XVI^e siècle,
- 36) Maison consulaire ou du Reclus, XVII^e siècle,
- 37) Maison urbaine, XIV^e-XVIII^e siècle,
- 38) Chapelle de l'hôpital Saint-Antoine, XIV^e-XV^e siècle,
- 39) Porte de Quirieu, XIII^e-XIV^e siècle
- 40) Maison de Martinas, dite des Trois Pendus, XII^e-XVI^e siècle,
- 41) Maison urbaine, XIV^e-XVI^e siècle,
- 42) Couvent des Visitandines, XVII^e siècle, boiserie de la pharmacie, 1715,
- 43) Maison de vigneron, XVI^e-XIX^e siècle,
- 44) Maison des Ursulines, XV^e-XVI^e siècle,
- 45) Porte de Martinas, XIV^e siècle et Poterne Mulet, XVI^e siècle,
- 46) Maison urbaine, XIV^e-XVI^e siècle,
- 47) Couvent des Ursulines, milieu XVII^e siècle,
- 48) Maison Ferrand, XVI^e siècle,
- 49) Château des Dauphins, XII^e-XIII^e siècle, restauré début XX^e siècle,
- 50) Porte de Lyon, XIV^e siècle,
- 51) Demeure urbaine, XIV^e-XVII^e siècle,
- 52) Enceinte de Saint-Hippolyte, XII^e-XIV^e-XVI^e siècle.



Station 1 Crémieu vers Station 2 Etang de Bas 8,5 km

As you leave Crémieu, follow Siccieu on the right onto the D52.

At Siccieu, turn left and follow the D52 towards Optevoz.

After you go past the Town Hall, take a left towards the stadium. Park in the stadium car park and take the trail on the right for 300 m, and you will arrive at Stop 2.



Over time, Crémieu developed between the hills of Saint-Laurent to the Northwest, overlooked by a stately castle and Saint-Hippolyte in the East where once stood a Benedictine Priory. Trail makers are available if you wish to go in the search of monuments and other notable buildings. The traces of a medieval society can be seen within the promenade and buildings: merchants stalls, wine houses, hostels, monetary workshops, consular and urban houses, convents, churches... These places have inspired painters from the Crémieu region, including François-Auguste Ravier, Adolphe Appian, Hector German and many others.

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Stop No.2

ENS étang de Bas



Nature Reserve – The Etang de Bas
The Etang de Bas is part of a broader and diverse nature reserve. Wetlands, dry grasslands and woods are all closely intertwined. Several species are protected, such as the Purple Heron or Utricularia (commonly and collectively called the bladderworts).

Utricularia australis, Jérôme Carlin, GC38

The Lower Lake by Terraire



"The lower lake by Terraire" Oil painting private collection

Clovis-Frédéric Terraire (1858-1931) was a painter from the school of Lyon. The cows drinking here at the lower lake at the foot of the cliffs can be clearly identified as being Ravières. By the middle of the 20th century, grazing had been abandoned. Nature and forest once again begin taking over again the wastelands.

"Blanchisseuse au bord de l'eau" by Corot

Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot liked painting peaceful landscapes that he made alive using mainly female subjects. Here, a washerwoman is washing her clothes at the edge of the "Etang de Bas".



Optevoz, a washer woman at the water's edge, oil painting, Musée du Louvre

The evolution of the landscape



Etang de Bas (The Lower Lake), Philippe Popoff, 1971

This photograph was taken in 1971 from the cliff tops of Ravières. A dense forest covers most of the edge of the pond today making it almost impossible to see the rocks.



Limestone statue, "Musée-Maison du patrimoine" at Hières-on-Amby

The statue of the Senator

A limestone statue was discovered in a vineyard of Siccieu-Saint-Julien-Carisieu, around 1860. Exhibited at the Museum of Hières-sur-Amby, it comes from a mausoleum in the region belonging to the owner of the land. This man in a Roman Toga could be a Gallo-Roman dignitary or a local Aristocrat who served in the Roman administration.

Stop 2 "Etang de Bas" to Stop 3 Hières-sur-Amby 13 km

Go back to the stadium car park retrace your steps until you reach the Town Hall at Siccieu. Take a right. At the next small crossroads, continue towards the right towards Crémieu, Annoisin-Chatelans. At the (next crossroads, go towards Chatelans on the right. After 5 km, you will arrive at Chatelans, the musée de la lauze. Continue straight on towards Hières-sur-Amby on the D52. At the crossroads, the Tuile lake can be found on the right. Turn left towards on the D52A Hières-sur-Amby and proceed to the village centre: Place de la République.



NEXT SECTION OF THE

The 'Etang de Bas' (Lower Lake), nature and inspiration (Siccieu)

The Etang de Bas (The Lower Lake) can be found in the town of Siccieu-Saint-Julien-Carisieu. It is a nature reserve that harbours a remarkable variety of fauna and flora. It was initially developed though to store and provide water for the local mills in the Valley and for fish farming.

La grande vallée d'Optevoz

Canvas oil painting, Musée-Château de Compiègne



Charles-François Daubigny was introduced very early on to painting thanks to his father. His style moved away from classical landscape painting and when he settled in Barbizon in 1843 he learned about painting in direct contact with nature. By 1852 he stayed in the Crémieu region with his friend Camille Corot and devoted himself to the representation of his favourite theme: water. Here, this canvas oil painting entitled «La grande vallée d'Optevoz» represents the 'Etang de Bas' in a view taken from the hiking trail which leads to Gilieu. The Ravières cliffs go right down to the lake and are visible even that today even though they are hard to make out under the forest cover.

The Larina cliffs by Reignier
Claude-Marie Raja, a painter from Lyon, used to visit regularly Morestel right from 1930. The iconic cliffs at Hières-sur-Amby apparently struck up his interest and he painted numerous representations of them. It can be noted that the different elements of the landscape have not really changed since that time.

The cliffs at Hières-sur-Amby, a canvas watercolour, private collection

Le Val d'Amby by Rouvière

For one of his first paintings in the Crémieu region, Charles Rouvière chose le val d'Amby as his subject matter. The cliffs can be clearly seen but above all the thick vegetation bordering the Amby River can be seen.

Le Val d'Amby, oil painting, private collection

Le Val d'Amby by Tassier

This fresco, projected on a wall of the Inn at Optevoz is a representation of the 'le val d'Amby' in the light of dusk. 'La maison forte' of Brotel is found up on a rocky outcrop on the left. You can almost imagine a person walking up the path along the river by its left bank. Today, the road is on the right bank.



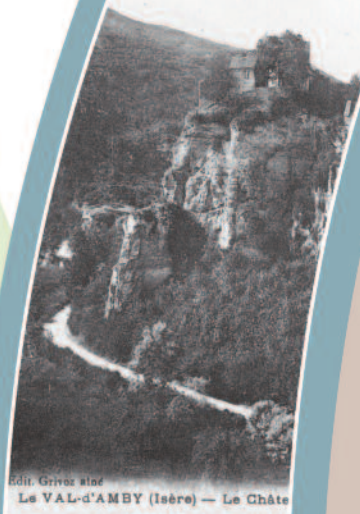
Val Amby, a fresco, Auberge des peintres, Optevoz

The cliffs of Hières



A postcard from the beginning of the 20th century

The Larina plateau has always been an emblematic part of the region's landscape, as seen in this old postcard. The tip of the plateau is also nicknamed the "sphinx".



A postcard from the beginning of the 20th century

La maison forte of Brotel

Suspended on a rocky outcrop overlooking the Val of Amby, 'la maison forte' of Brotel was built in 13th century. The buildings were organised around a courtyard: a quadrangular House, a chapel, a Dovecote and other outbuildings. This property was acquired in 1938 by Édouard Herriot who was kept under house arrest until 1942 by the Vichy Government.

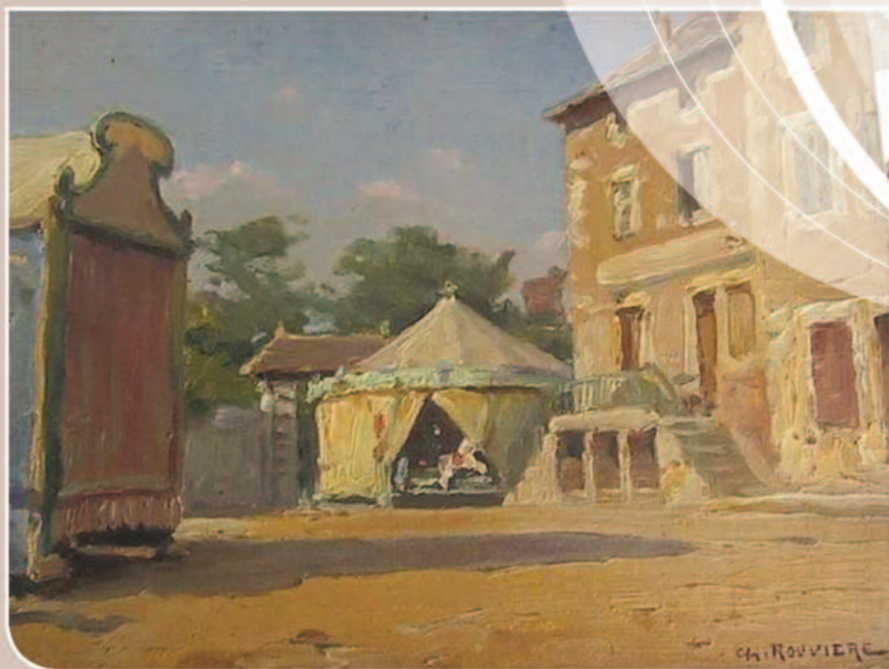
Stop 3 Hières-sur-Amby to Stop 4 La vanne d'Optevoz 5.9 km

Make a U-turn and go back down to the bottom of the village by the same road. At the war memorial, continue on your right onto the D52A, towards Optevoz. After 5.9 km, a car park can be found on your left opposite the lake.



The village rolls right down onto the left bank of the Rhone River. A port can be seen in the hamlet of Saint-Étienne showing that a large industry goods transport system was once in operation doing operations such as extracting stones from the quarries.

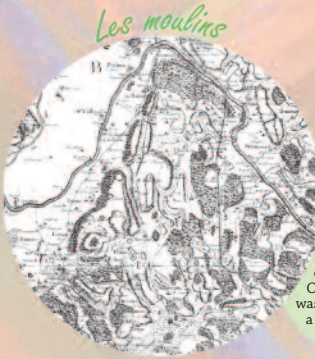
Le Carrousel,
Charles Rouvière, oil painting, private collection.



Here in the town square of Hières-sur-Amby Charles Rouvière painted the carnival opening. This student who studied at the École des Beaux-Arts of Lyon began his career as a draughtsman for the Lyon silk factory and landscapes were his favourite theme. He painted largely in the Crémieu region and more notably in Optevos. The carousel is located here just in front of the large town hall park gate at Hières-sur-Amby. The buildings haven't really changed in this little town square and the restaurant can still be seen with its doorstep and its double staircase.

Stop No. 4

Les moulins



Mills

The Crémieu region was unique in that a number of different lakes provided water for several mills that were in service for different purposes. The Val d'Amby possessed two wheat Mills, one at Thuile and the other at Ollier with its lock. The latter was probably destroyed during a flood in 1888.

Map of Cassini, Crémieu Region

La vanne (Sluice-gate) by Jacques Gay



Vanne d'Optevoz, oil painting, Optevoz collection

Jacques Gay (1851-1925), who was from Voreppe, near Grenoble, entered the École de Beaux-Arts de Paris (Paris Art School) in 1878. Like many artists, the sluice-gate of Optevoz inspired his painting.

The Thuile mill

This mill was located downstream from the lock gate of Optevoz. Wheat was milled into flour using water power that was kept in the lake and channelled through a canal pound which was regulated by a lock gate to keep the blades turning.



A postcard dating from the beginning of the 20th century

The evolution of the landscape



A postcard dating from the beginning of the 20th century

This old postcard shows what remains of the old mill of the "gobilles" with today's road to the right. In the past it was mainly used for grazing and the rocky surfaces are today covered largely with vegetation.



A postcard from the beginning of the 20th century

The Val d'Amby factories

The rich rock calcium carbonate found in abundance locally lends itself well to the production of hydraulic lime. In this manner these factories operated continuously from 1893 to 1978. Several production sites were set up in the Val d'Amby: The ovens and quarries of Optevoz, the factory of la Thuile and d'Amby, and the factory and warehouse of Hières-sur-Amby.

Stop 4 the Optevoz sluice-gate to Stop 5 Optevoz 1.1 km

At the exit of the car park, turn to the left.

At the stop sign on the right, enter the village and park next to the Church.



NEXT SECTION OF THE

The Sluice-gate at Optevoz

On the outskirts of Val d'Amby, the ruins of several old buildings can be found. A former wheat mill is clearly mentioned in the deeds of Optevoz in 1702. In the 19th century, marble blasting balls, used in cement mill stone crushers were also manufactured there.

La Vanne d'Optevoz,
by Charles-François Daubigny, oil painting, The Louvre Museum



The Thuile sluice-gate is one of the most famous subject matters from Optevoz. It was made public by Daubigny at the universal exhibition of 1855. The artist later accomplished many other variations of this theme. «La Vanne d'Optevoz» kept at the Louvre Museum was painted in 1859. As a knock on effect of Daubigny, Courbet, Appian, Beauverie, Jacques Gay and many others represented the same subject matter using oil paintings.

Stop No. 5



Hotel Giroud, a postcard dated from the beginning of the 20th century

A brawl at the Café Giroud

In 1894, Louis Giroud, pub owner in Optevoz, died following a fight with a certain Mr. Chatel, a servant living in the town. The painter Philippe Tassier shared with us this experience.

Le chemineau by Rouvière



"Le chemineau", an oil painting, private collection

Charles Rouvière portrays here a hiker at the crossroads of the roads of Val d'Amby and Optevoz. The term "chemineau" (wanderer) may designate an itinerant worker or hobo. In the background, the village wash-house can be distinguished.



The Optevoz wash-House found at the entrance to the village, "Musée-Maison du patrimoine" at Hières-on-Amby

The Optevoz wash-House

Found at the entrance of the village, this wash-House is a fine example of local architecture: walls erected from stone rubble using lime mortar a flagstone roof supported by an oak frame. It is fed by a stream that comes from one of the springs of the Amby River.

L'étang de Bas by Tassier

A mural painting by Philippe Tassier. This painting can be viewed at the "Tauberge des peintres" at Optevoz. The lower lake (Siccieu) surrounded by forested hills and rocky spurs is portrayed here by the painter.



L'étang de Bas, The painter's Inn, Optevoz

L'Auberge des peintres



The Painter's Inn houses two murals paintings "Distempered works" by Tassier. Located originally on the 2nd floor, in 1998 a restorer led the task of moving the mural paintings to the ground floor.

Removing the mural paintings, Optevoz

Stop 5 Optevoz to Stop 6 Morestel 17 km

Facing the Church, turn left toward Courtenay on the D140A. Enter Courtenay 5.7 km, and cross the village. At the crossroads, turn right towards Lancin on the D140B.

Enter Lancin and follow the D522 on the left towards Arandon. Then take a right onto the D1075, heading towards Morestel. Continue to Morestel. Follow the D517 towards the town centre and where you park in the market car park.



Optevoz, where painters once dwelled

Located on the plains of the region of Crémieu, the village of Optevoz has been inhabited since the Bronze Age. In the 19th century, limestone mining and agriculture were the main activities of the region. At that time, the village was visited by numerous landscape painters.

**Remembering
Saint
Catherine,**
Pachot d'Arzac
Oil on canvas
painting,
Private collection



Paul Pachot of Arzac (1844-1906) often stayed in the Crémieu region. His work, "Souvenir de la Sainte-Catherine" testifies to him being present Optevoz as early as 1886. This wood oil painting is a representation of the village square on carnival day as people celebrated the centenary of the parish Bells. The Church that can be seen behind the autumn silhouette of the famous basewood tree was later destroyed to make room for a new building built between 1892 and 1893. Pachot d'Arzac who loved colour makes use of beautiful shades of colour here. Different shades of grey and blue were used to enhance the bright colours.



A postcard dating from the beginning of the 20th century

The village positioned up on the rocks and surrounded by two lines of ramparts and accessible by the Saint-Symphorien gate and the Murine gate grew and developed next to the Castle. The Tower, a classified building, overlooks the town.

A perfect perspective of Morestel by Romagnol



Joseph Romagnolo, A painter from Morestel was very much taken up by the history of the city. His legacy contains the book *A Vision of history*, a book illustrated with pen-and-ink drawings.

The Lake of Levaz

Found in the South of the city, the Lake Levaz reflects both the changing sky and Sun together hand in hand.

It was in Morestel that Ravier painted his most recent works.

Sunset on the pond of Levaz, circa 1880, watercolour on paper, Collection Maison Ravier



Coucher de soleil sur l'étang de la Levaz, vers 1880, aquarelle sur papier, collection Maison Ravier

"Le pont", an autumn landscape

The Earth was wearing a red dress heralding the beginning of autumn. The Colours reveal all the poetry of an intangible world bathing under a veil of light.

"Le pont", an autumn landscape, watercolour on paper, collection Maison Ravier - Angèle Servonnat, 1997



"Le lavoir" of Morestel under a blazing sky
 An oil canvas painting marouflaged onto a wood panel, Collection Maison Ravier.

Le lavoir (Wash-house) of Morestel by Ravier

Taking the stairs which led him past a succession of terrace houses below his house, Ravier would reach the town wash-House which he loved painting as the sun would set. « Some days I think that no else saw or felt what I could see and feel ».

Stop 6 Morestel towards Stop 7 Roche 2.2 km

Make a U-turn. At the roundabout, go towards Creys-Mepieu onto the D16. After 2 km, as you leave the hamlet of Thuile, take a left following the 'Chemin de Roche Plage'. Continue on your left until you reach the car park.



Morestel, a town where painters dwell

Morestel has been a major hub since Revolution times and today is right at the heart of the economic and tourist industry of the Pays des Couleurs (Morestel region). With its numerous small lakes and wonderful light it became an ideal spot for many painters.

A Portrait of Ravier by Louis JANMOT (1814-1892)

*From the album
"soixante et un dessins
de F.-A. Ravier. (Sixty-
one drawings by F.-A.
Ravier)", Lyon, 1888.*

The painter's house's courtyard found in Morestel

A canvas oil painting, Collection Maison Ravier.



François

Auguste Ravier

was born in Lyon
on the May 4th,
1814. His parents

would have wanted him to
become a lawyer but in his heart
of hearts he was an artist. He
would stay regularly at the
Auberge de L'ecu at Crémieu and
invited many others painters
including Daubigny and Corot in
1839 into the region. They used
to set-up their easels together in
the valley of Optevoz to paint. In
1867, Ravier permanently settled
on the heights of Morestel and
soon discovered the treasures of
the light that could be found

there. Being financially independent he was spend time to paint and exploring new
Technics and he was really a forerunner to the Impressionist painters. He died on June
26, 1895 and was buried in the town cemetery.

- 1) Départ de la visite
- 2) Porte Saint-Symphorien
- 3) Ancien couvent des Augustins
- 4) Eglise
- 5) Seigneurie de Morestel
- 6) Mesure à tissus
- 7) Château
- 8) Maison à boutique
- 9) Fontaine
- 10) Place Grenette
- 11) Maison Ravier
- 12) Des toits
- 13) La Muette
- 14) Porte Murine
- 15) Charpente en bois
- 16) Ancien hôpital Jacques le Majeur
- 17) Inscriptions latines
- 18) Remparts
- 19) Mairie

At the corner of Grenette square, the Maison Ravier opens its doors to all who wish to enter within. The souvenirs of this painter who lived in the town for twenty-eight years of his life are kept inside. Ravier found near his house numerous sources of inspiration: the wash-House roof of Morestel and the fiery skies that can be seen above the surrounding ponds.



i Information available at the Tourist Office

 Urban trail

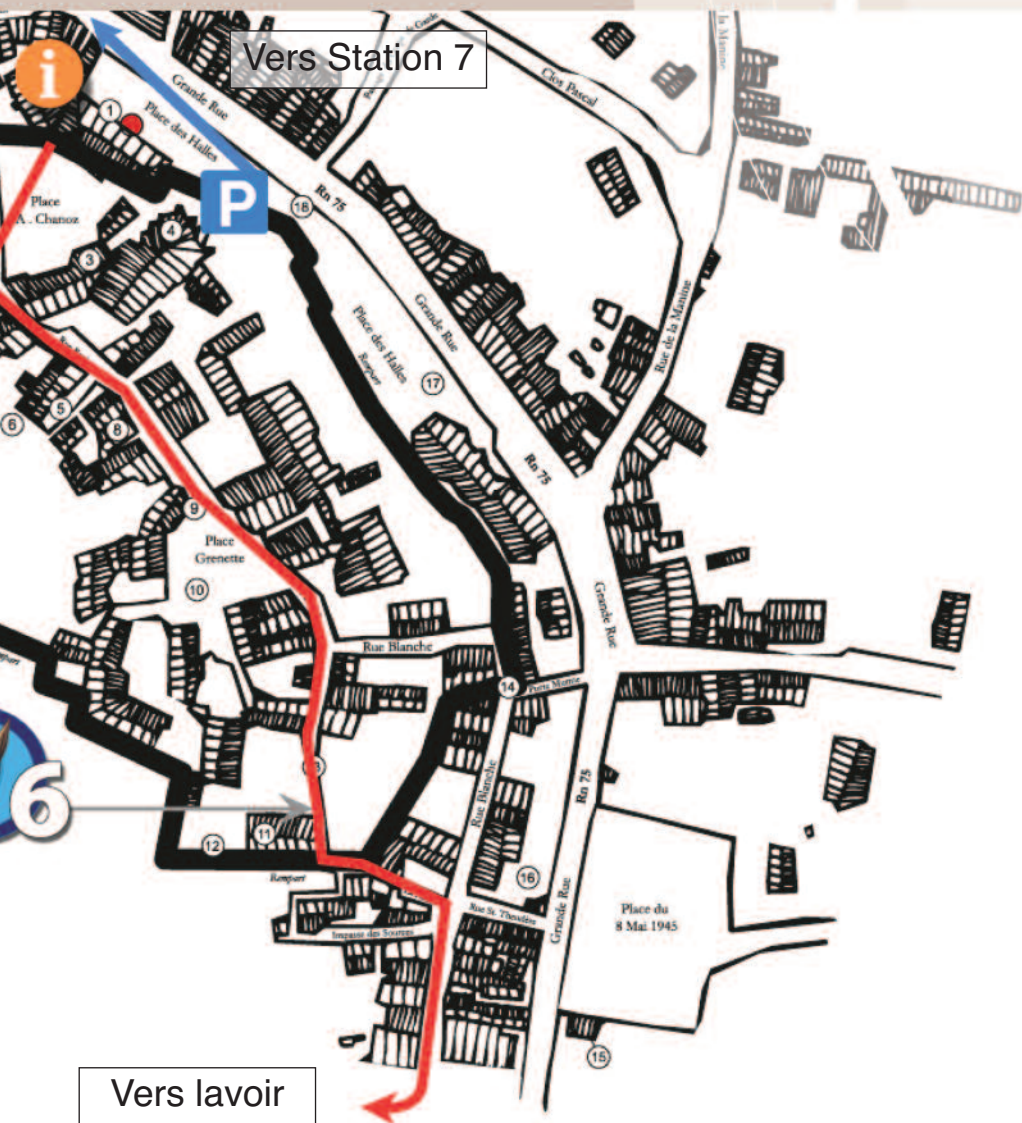


Stop 6 Morestel to Stop 7 Roche plage 2.2 km

Make a U-turn. At the roundabout, go towards Creys-Mepieu on the D16. After 2 km, as you leave the hamlet of Thuile, take a left following the 'Chemin de Roche Plage'. Continue on your left until you reach the car park.

A heritage trail map of Morestel

Let the charm found in this old town captivate you. As you start wondering through the town, you will discover the Church, the medieval tower and an incredible view; a rich heritage kept for you as well as its many exhibition areas.





Roche Plage
Nicknamed "Roche Plage (Roche Beach)" in the 1940s, until the end of the 20th century, this small lake becomes a pleasure zone attracting bathers from Morestel and the region of Lyon.

Postcard from 1947, Mrs. Béjuit, Morestel

The mill



The mill at Roche first began operating in 1380. A Gristmill: (flour, wheat and barley) it was still in operation into the 1950s.

A Postcard from 1947, Mme Béjuit, Morestel

L'étang de Roche by Abel Gay

Abel Gay was an industrialist who devoted all his leisure time to painting. He was helped and advised by painters such as François Guignet and Léon Garraud. Following in the footsteps of Ravier whom he so highly esteemed, l'étang de Roch became one of his favourite subjects.



The Save River

La rivière la Save



Running down 18 km from Sablonnières to Brangues where it then flows into the Rhone river, the Save River supplied eight towns with water as well as the local mill.

At the mouth of the Save River at Brangues, Marie-Noëlle Richez

Stop 7 Morestel to Stop 8 Malville 8.6 km

Make a U-turn. At the give way sign, take a left towards Creys on the D16. Cross Daleigneu, arriving at Creys after 4.6 km. At the entrance of the village, go left towards Malville on the D16. Enter into Malville after 7.7 km. Turn right at the Rue du Vivier then at chapel left onto the Rue du Courray. Continue until the end of the road and then turn right at Chemin du Port, until you get to the car park.



Martin-pêcheur, Jérôme Carlin, CG 38

A remarkable natural heritage

The lake and its surroundings are home to a variety of protected species such as the European Beaver, the Kingfisher or the fawn Dragonfly.



L'étang de Roche (Morestel)

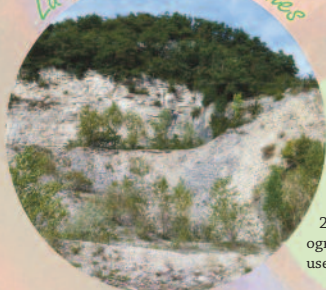
Found in the hamlet of Thuile to the North of Morestel, this unspoiled location won the hearts of many painters who found there excellent subject matter for their works. It was also a renowned spot for recreation and Sunday family outings.

Etang de Roche, François-Auguste Ravier

An oil painting on wood, Collection Maison Ravier, Angèle Servonnat, 1997



Auguste Ravier drew and regularly painted the l'étang de Roche and its surroundings. The representation of light remained the main theme of his works. By using a cross-hatch painting style, his works dissolve the different elements found in a landscape resembling a more abstract style. Ravier preferred suggestion rather than atmosphere to detail the surrounding landforms. Under his brush, the air vibrates and encompasses everything, rocks, water and mills. Tirelessly, he transcribed in its infinite variations the effects of light on a landscape.



Carrière des Briches, Dominique Dubois

The Briches quarry

Located on the heights of Creys, the Briches quarry was operational until the beginning of the 20th century extracting lithographic stone which was used for printing.

Stop No. 8



Défilé de Malarage, Mayor of Creys Mepieu

Malville Chapel

This chapel dedicated to St. Anne was built in the 15th century. This rectangular building with its flat apses and Gothic Bay houses murals dates from the 15th century.

Malville Chapel, Dominique Dubois.



Castle of Mepieu



Mepieu Castle, Dominique Dubois

Built by the family of Groslee in the 15th century, this castle has been restored on numerous occasions ever since the 19th century. It contains three towers, a watch tower and a corps de logis (main building); all of them are covered in tiles.

Le défilé de Marlage

As you reach the hamlet of Malville you will see that the Rhone River bed narrows and measures only 30 metres in width at the Défilé de Marlage. In 1599, a duel took place on the island of Malville between the duke de Créqui and his son-in-law Lesdiguières and Dom Filipino de Savoie, the illegitimate son of the Duke of Savoy. The latter, seriously injured was taken to castle of Merieu but later died from his injuries.

Les étangs de Creys by Adolphe Appian



L'étang Neuf, Adolphe Appian, engraving, 1864, B.N.F. (Nation Library of France)

Jacques Barthelemy recounts that Adolphe Appian engraved etchings of the l'étang Neuf and l'étang de Frignon. L'étang Neuf is visible on the left side of the road on the D16, before arriving at Daigneu coming from Morestel.

Stop 8 Malville to Stop 9 Brangues 10.4 km

Turn back until the Chapel and, retrace your steps. At Creys, head towards Morestel on the D16. At the exit of the village, turn left, towards Gouvoux on the C6. At Grand Gouvoux, turn right into the main street of Gouvoux after 7.4 km. After 8.2 km, take a left onto the D60 towards Brangues. As you enter the village, you will find the castle of Brangues. Cross the village and turn right onto the D60A, towards Morestel until you reach the car park just as you leave the vi



Creys, a mixture of history and rivers...

At Creys, the landscape is characterised by a hilly terrain and a natural diversity of environment. The presence of the Rhone River of course reinforces this richness. The 'Défilé de Malarage' is a major attraction. The location of the town found at the edge of the Dauphiné region is clearly seen by the presence of numerous defensive buildings.

Harvest time at Malville,
Joseph Romagnolo, canvas oil painting, 1951, private collection



Joseph Romagnol was an artist who could be described as a 'Jack of all Trades' due to the fact that he was also a storyteller and musician. It is with his master and friend Claude-Marie Reignier that he perfected the art of painting. He particularly liked the city of Morestel where he was born and of which he painted many different scenes. In 1969, he set up an «Arts and Culture» fair. He did however enjoy travelling the countryside and here we can see a landscape at Malville. This harvested field can be seen directly next to Rhone River, at the end of the road Chemin du Port, close to the 'défilé de Malarage' and not far from the chapel of Malville too.



Paul Claudel and Brangues

It was during his daily walks in the country that Paul Claudel slowly turned into an author who loved describing the landscape around him:
"At the edge of the park in front of this dreamer, a row of Populus trees, similar to a row of dancers at the Opera were swinging back and forth, drinking in a paradise of colourful fields, roads and mountains." Journal, T.2, 1969, Page 869, La Pléiade.

Paul Claudel in the park castle grounds of Brangues, Paul Claudel archives.



The Church at Brangues by Marion Cartier-Claudel

Marion Cartier, wife of Pierre Claudel, with whom she had six children, stayed for long periods the Claudel's house at Brangues well into the 1950s. The landscapes of the Dauphiné region were for him a source of inspiration for a long period.

Village, an oil painting, private collection



Aerial view of Brangues, Studio campaign - Duplan

The château of Brangues

Built in the 14th century, the castle of Brangues located in a 17 hectare park is found at the entrance of the village.

It was acquired by Paul Claudel in 1927. The burial place of the writer can be accessed by a path indicated outside the property.



The château of Brangues Mère Immaculata, Astre

Le pont de Groslée



Pont de Groslée, Marie Noëlle Richez

Suspended up on the Rhone River between Brangues and Groslée, this bridge was completed in 1912 and replaced the cable ferry. Partially damaged during the Second World War, the bridge deck was renovated in 1977.

An Urban Trail
With its rich cultural heritage rooted in the works of Stendhal and Paul Claudel, the trail at Brangues sends you on a journey to discover the village through seven different steps and which also can be seen on a landscape map. The themes that are explored will help you discover the Rhone region, its landscapes, local architecture and famous personalities of the village.

Stop 9 Brangues to Stop 10 10.4 km

Continue along the road. At the intersection, take a left, towards Le Bouchage on the D33. Stay on the D33 and leave Le Bouchage found on your left. Take the D40B, towards Les Avenières on the right after 11.2km you will arrive at les Avenières. At the roundabout, follow Veyrins on the D40 on the right. Continue until the next roundabout heading towards Veyrins on the left on the D40. After 17.6 km, you will arrive at Veyrins. At the roundabout, take the D1075 left towards Corbelin. After km 19.5, you will reach trail marker 10. Enter in the courtyard of the birthplace of François Guiguet, a car park can be found there. You are in a private property so please respect the area.



Brangues, a village famous for its literature

The village of Brangues found on high ground looks over an alluvial plain which is subject to flooding from the Rhone River. The rural landscape is characterized by a rammed earth wall building style typical of the Dauphiné region with its 4 sided sloping roofs or 2 sided stone roofs.

A view of Brangues

Elisabeth de Virieu, a lead pencil drawing, private collection



Elisabeth de Virieu (1857-1919) was the daughter of Godefroy de Virieu and Gabrielle de Quinsonas. She spent her youth in the Dauphiné region in between the castles of Brangues and Merieu. At the end of the 1880s, she married Thibault de Robien, with whom she had eight children, six daughters and two sons. They died during the First World War but she continued drawing. This graphite drawing represents a village scene of Brangues in 1874 and is taken from a book of her sketches. It shows a real love of art and a real talent for observation.



A Magnanerie in the grounds of Champ Levey,
Heritage Museum Hières sur Ambry

Corbelin and the King

The magnaneries (silk farms) of Corbelin had a very good reputation. It would seem even that Louis XIV would have liked his stockings to have been made from the silk from Corbelin and Vézeronce!



LA MOTOCYCLETTE DE L'ELITE
350 - Phase Guiguet-TyC (moteur) - 500

The motorcycle of the elite

Corbelin, 'the town of silk'.



A factory where Donat stayed, postcard from the
beginning of the 20th century

Right from the 17th century, Corbelin acquired Magnaneries breeding silk worm for the silk factories of Lyon. Weaving factories were created employing a large workforce: Donat from 1847, La Romatière from 1883...

The Guiguet family

The name Guiguet brings to mind straight away the word Art and the paintings of François. However, two of his nephews also became famous thanks to their inventiveness. During the First World War, Joseph shined as a fighter pilot in the fighter pilot unit 'Escadrille des Cigognes'. As for Marcel, he developed in 1929 with the help of his brother Joseph, a revolutionary motorcycle prototype, M.G.C. (Marcel Guiguet et Compagnie).

François Guiguet, a painter of tradesmen

The tradesmen of his family were always a source of inspiration for François Guiguet. He acquired the art of captivating the movements of workers in action, seen here in the portrait of a Carpenter.



Carpenter, black stone and white
highlights on beige paper,
Corbelin collection

Natural heritage



Purple Heron, Jérôme Carlin, CG38

Corbelin has several wet protected areas with protected species such as the Purple Heron and the white-clawed crayfish.

Stop 10 Corbelin to Morestel 11 km

Feel free to return to Morestel to visit the numerous exhibitions on display.



Corbelin, a village full of both art and industry

Originally an agricultural hub, this village developed due to the numerous tissue factories (filatures) that were found there. Some buildings such as the Town Hall and its tower or public school bear witness to this rich industrial past.

The birthplace of Grimaud,
François Guiguet, canvas oil painting, Corbelin collection



François Guiguet was born in Corbelin in 1860. His artistic vocation could be clearly seen right from an early age and by the age of 16 he was already showing his works to Ravier who lived in Morestel at that time. He became his first teacher and helped him to enter the École des Beaux-Arts de Lyon. Guiguet completed his studies at the school of fine arts in Paris and then settled in Montmartre. His Parisian life did not prevent him from returning to his home village where he found many sources of inspiration: his nephews and nieces, the family workshop and its craftsmen at work and women about their daily business... This canvas oil painting represents his birthplace in the village of Grimaud, a building typical of local architecture with its four sided roof.

A regional development project.....

The tourist office of the Rhône in Dauphiné (SYMBORD) has been working for many years to develop and preserve local heritage.

The Rhône Alpes region through a development project (CDRA) brought into being this tourist trail which tells the tale of both painters and of their landscapes. The SYMBORD is composed of 44 communes, two larger groups of communes: The Crémieu region and the Pays des Couleurs.

This local heritage is very rich due to the number of its remarkable diverse aspects. An inventory was undertaken in 2010 and 2011 to collect information about local assets. Around 30 sites have now been restored by this venture. Different tourist development projects have been undertaken to allow you to discover the territory, its history and its landscapes.

It is in this context that the project "Landscapes, Painters and Artists...Take a trip in and around the region of Crémieu and discover the "Pays des Couleurs" was brought into being. If you want to discover more about the region, a number of other tourist routes exist. Please feel free to contact the tourist office for any further information.

This project, backed by the SYMBORD, was brought into being by the Maison du Patrimoine (Heritage house) at Hières-sur-Amby and la Maison de la Pierre au Ciment (Cement Museum) at Montalieu-Vercieu.

Contact :
SYMBORD : www.symbord.fr

We particularly would like to thank the all the different partners involved in the project, communes and larger groups of communes, all of the members of the Work Group and all others who have participated actively in the realisation of this project.



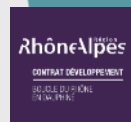
Organisations :

- Brangues, village de littérature,
- François Guiguet.

Employees and other resources :

- Nathalie Servonnat-Favier,
- Jocelyne Deplanche,
- Georges Pillaz,
- Isabelle Lazier,
- Benjamin Balme,
- Madam Béjuit,
- Madam Cheylanb.

*And the
financial
support of
the Rhône-
Alpes Region
and the
Conseil
Général de
l'Isère.*



To learn more...

Tourist information

Maison Ravier - Morestel

04 74 80 06 80 www.maisonravier.fr

This exhibition space presents the works of François-Auguste Ravier and also those of François Guiguet.

Office de Tourisme de Morestel

04 74 80 19 59 www.morestel.com

Tourist information center at Crémieu

04 74 90 45 13 www.tourisme-cremieu.fr

Office de Tourisme de Montalieu-Vercieu Vallée Bleue

04 74 88 49 23 www.tourisme-montalieuvercieu.fr

Avenières Tourist office/Veyrins-Thuellin

04 74 33 66 22 www.otlesavenieres.fr

"Musée-Maison du patrimoine" at Hières-on-Amby

04 74 95 19 10 www.musee-larina-hieres.fr

Maison de la Pierre au Ciment (Montalieu-Vercieu)

04 37 06 10 71 www.maisondelapierreauciment.fr

Espace Claudel-Stendhal (Brangues)

04 74 80 32 14 www.claudel-stendhal.com

Protected areas..



The thematic trail 'Painters and landscapes, on the roads of the Isle Crémieu and the Pays des Couleurs' will allow you to discover a variety of different preserved natural environments. Belonging to a group of protected natural areas, these remarkable sites offer a home to an environment rich in diverse flora and fauna. The Conseil général de l'Isère is committed in partnership with certain towns to the preservation of these sites. Management and conservation operations are conducted, and also actions for the discovery of the local natural heritage.

Here are the sensitive natural spaces that you will find along your route:

- Le site de Larina sur les communes de Hières sur Amby et d'Annoisin-Châtelans,
- Le Val d'Amby à Optevoz,
- L'étang de Lemps sur les communes d'Optevoz et de Saint-Baudille-de-la-Tour,
- L'étang de Bas à Siccieu-Saint-Julien-Carisieu
- Le méandre du Saugey à Brangues.

Please respect the environment.

A circuit of the Rhone in the Dauphiné region...

... a region with many different facets.

Found towards the north of the Department of Isère, the circuit of the the Rhône in the Dauphiné region has a significant landscape diversity consisting of hills, plateaus, plains and valleys. The heart of the territory is marked by a limestone plateau with a mosaic of prairies, forests, crops and dry grasslands. On the East border by rocky cliffs can be seen; this territory has a softer and hillier topography.

This region is also closely linked to the presence of the Rhone River, a former border between the Dauphiné and Savoy, enemy territories in the middle ages. Today, the river marks the departmental limit between the Ain and Isère. The natural environment grew and developed due to the dynamics of the River (Islands, marshes...) and today presents a remarkable biodiversity.

From the beginning of the 19th century, many landscape painters and artists came to the region to paint nature. On the lookout for picturesque subject matter and luminous landscapes, large numbers of painters choose the Crémieu region and its surroundings to setup their easels.

It was a real hangout for artists and hundreds of them roamed throughout the area from the middle of the 19th century right until the beginning of the 20th century.