

« La dame à Bougival » d'Auguste Renoir

Seeing the Sights

The Islands and the quay Rennequin Sualem

Red circuit

Ille de la Chaussée

Where you will find the municipal park and the local sports ground. There is a boat stop under the Bougival-Croissy bridge.

The « Machine de Marly »

Commissioned by Louis XIV to provide water for the gardens of his palaces at Marly and Versailles. The Machine de Marly was erected from 1681 onwards, on request of Minister Colbert, by architect Arnold de Ville who unsurprisingly claimed as his own the ambitious project designed by another man-Rennequin Sualem. Rennequin Sualem was an itinerant genius who devised a means of conveying water up a steep hill through a complex system of wheels, pipes and pumps. Fourteen wheels, each measuring 14 metres in diameter took up the entire stretch of the Seine at this spot, communicating their movement through connecting rods to pumps placed higher up.



The buildings which remain today are the 18th century home of the foreman, the mending workshop and the Louis-Philippe building, last remnant of the second Machine de Marly, which housed five fuelled wheels, each measuring 14 metres in diameter took up the entire stretch of the Seine at this spot, communicating their movement through connecting rods to pumps placed higher up.

The Locks and the Ile de la Loge

The plans to build a second Machine de Marly, under Charles X and later Napoleon III was closely linked to the urgent need to restore river transport to Bougival and the surrounding area. This was achieved by the construction of a lock. Situated between the Ile de la Loge and the Ile Gaucher, the old lock dates back to 1850. In order to keep up with the increasing pressure on the river's infrastructure, additional locks were installed from 1870 to 1883.



Town centre and the Saint-Michel Neighbourhood.

Green circuit

Berthe Morisot's House

The house is currently a medical centre. When Berthe Morisot lived here, her garden (see picture) stretched as far as the Dronne. They were used to extract lime for limestone facades. Some of the pictures which were to become so evocative of her style.



The chalk and limestone quarries

This type of quarry was common in the area which is very healthy. The 17th century witnessed the levelling of the quarries in Bougival. They were used to extract lime for limestone facades. Some of the quarries were later used for growing mushrooms or as cellars for storing wine.

The Cemetery

Many famous historical figures are buried at Bougival: the Countess of Boussy d'Anglas, the writer Emile Richou and the satirist Paul Ivoi amongst others. Many of the 1870 war veterans such as François Debergue were laid to rest in Bougival's graveyard.



Race Jules-Edouard Couturier

A Short History of Bougival

Along the curving banks of the river Seine, just 17 km west of Paris, nestled in the valley of the Dronne, lies the village of Bougival.

Bougival is situated between the hilltop village of Louveciennes and the picturesque wooded hill of La Jonchère known as the « Impressionists' Hill » due to the numerous visits paid to that spot by many famous impressionists at the end of the 19th century.

The origins of Bougival.

In Roman times, a road which linked Paris to Rouen ran through the village, along the banks of the river, and a small hamlet developed on this site, known to locals as « La Chaussée ».

« La Chaussée » became « La Chaussée Charlevarne », a site famous or notorious until 1778 for its Leprosy Hospital: the largest in the country, known as Sainte-Madeleine de Charlevarne. The name Charlevarne may well be linked to the fishing industry which flourished in the middle-ages in and around Bougival. Indeed, king Charles Martel had a fishery built on the banks of the river Seine where Bougival now stands, and this became known locally as « la vaine de Charles » or Charles' fishery ».

Higher up, on the hill which faces the church, was the small hamlet of « Saint Michel de la Haussaye », which appears to have been a settlement in pre-historic times since a large number of flint arrow heads were discovered there. From the Chaussée Charlevarne, one could use a lane which led upward onto the hill towards Louveciennes. This was a much used route, known as the « Chemin du Harlet » after the cart horses (chevaux de haras) which were led daily up to the fields in Louveciennes. Also originating on the Chaussée Charlevarne was the oldest of Bougival's streets, « la grande rue du Harlet » (now known as the rue du Maréchal Joffre) which ran south towards La Celle and Versailles.

In the mid 13th century, the village of Bougival passed from the Lord of Marly into the hands of the Lord of Passy, and it was used regularly in exchanges of land between nobles in the area. The Margus Joseph de Mesmes, Lord of La Chaussée from 1716 onwards officially became proprietor and landlord of Bougival in 1774. His motto « Triumpe de Mesmes » and his coat of arms have remained those of Bougival to this day.

The Reign of the Sun King.

In the mid-17th century, Bougival was a quiet village of 500 inhabitants. The lives of these 500 people were to change tremendously. The ambitious and visionary Louis XIV launched an extraordinary project - the construction of a large machine which would literally convey water from the river Seine several miles away, to the fountains and gardens of the palaces in Versailles and Marly. It was a challenging project, not least because the water would have to be transported 150 metres up a steep hill. In 1675, Louis' famous

minister Colbert, approached the Belgian architect Arnold de Ville and commissioned him with the project in Bougival. Arnold de Ville immediately sought the help and advice of a fellow Belgian Rennequin Sualem, who, though a more itinerant carpenter, single-handedly designed and supervised the construction of the « Machine de Marly ».

This spectacular and complex design of pumps, pipes and wheels effectively transported water to Louis XIV's palaces. If you visit the Church, be sure to seek out the commemorative plaque which was unveiled in memory of Rennequin Sualem, the « inventor » of the « Machine de Marly » and of his wife Marie Noëlle.

The machine may have been hailed by many as the Eighth Marvel of the world, but for the people of Bougival it was a source of great disruption and trauma. The grinding noise of the machinery was unbearable and river transport was badly affected since part of the river had to be closed off. As a consequence of all this, the fisheries were ruined and the once thriving little port of Charlevarne was closed down. Of the original machine, there is little left: an 18th century building, and a small red brick construction dating back to Napoleon III. It was in 1887 that the machine ceased to be exploited and was demolished and replaced by a series of other machines. These subsequent machines were finally demolished in 1968.

The Industrial Revolution

It was in 1838 that the building of locks on the river Seine permitted river transport on a stretch of the river that had hitherto been impracticable. The river Seine rapidly became a popular means of communication and transport between Paris and Bougival. The steady flow of barges and steam boats became so intense that Bougival was forced to build two new locks in 1883 to keep up with the rising pressure on the river's infrastructure.

Despite the rapid changes brought about by the opening stages of the industrial revolution, the population of Bougival remained firmly agricultural with farming, wine growing and horticulture making up the bulk of the population. Nevertheless, the ongoing economic growth in the early 19th century did lead to an enhanced interest in development of the local quarries originally used in the 17th century. These produced building stone, chalk stone and slates. Also new on the local scene were the laundries and the cotton manufacturers which employed many local women.

1837 witnessed the opening of the first railway line between Paris and Le Pecq with a stop at nearby Rueil-Malmaison for the villages of Bougival. These dawn carriages, the « omnibus » or horse-drawn ancestor of the train, and later the steam engine (1847) all contributed to making the surrounding countryside accessible to former city-bound Parisians in search of bucolic escapades.

Bougival was not spared during the 1870 war against Prussia and many villagers fled south before the Prussian invasion. They decided to stay on and face the hardships imposed by them at the occupying forces. François Debergue, a local gardener attained the

status of war hero through his acts of resistance and defiance towards the Prussians. He repeatedly sabotaged the telegraph lines to prevent the local Prussian garrison from communicating with their headquarters based in Versailles. He was tried and executed by the Prussians on the 9th September 1870.

Bougival's Golden Age

In the closing decades of the 19th century, French society was subtly transformed. The incipient consumer society increasingly sought new types of leisure-outputs to the country, new sports and forms of entertainment. Thus Bougival became a popular destination for Parisians seeking fresh air and outdoor entertainment. There were many restaurants and hotels on the banks of the river Seine as well as popular balls in the summer months. Every year, regattas and rowing competitions were organized on the Seine, while the Casinos in Bougival and Rueil attracted many punters.

Not surprisingly many artists were drawn to this picturesque little village. They sought inspiration in its dreamy riverbanks and its rolling hills. Turner was one of the first artists to celebrate Bougival in his work. Then followed Corot and François, Monet, Renoir, Sisley and Berthe Morisot all worked in Bougival, often painting on the banks of the river Seine, depicting the ephemeral beauty produced by rays of sunlight dancing on the water.

There is a consensus amongst art historians that Bougival was in effect the birthplace of impressionism. Vanneek and Pansens followed, and the tradition of artistic creation became firmly and endearingly attached to the village of Bougival.

Many intellectuals, composers and scientists were also attracted to the quaint and peaceful little village. Some even found inspiration for work that were to bring them fame and lasting recognition. Georges Bizet composed Carmen in his riverside home. Jean Turgenev moved to Bougival to be near his muse, Pauline Viardot while Alexandre Dumas spent some time in Bougival with Marie Duplessis who was the inspiration for his novel « La Dame aux Camélias ».

Nowadays, Bougival is still a beautiful and discreet retreat for many famous French artists, singers and artists. But above all it is the home of thousands of « Bougivalais » who take pride in the peaceful atmosphere, cultural diversity and exceptional heritage of their village.

We hope that your visit to Bougival will prove pleasant and memorable and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

Bibliography:

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- « Histoire de Bougival » by Adrien MAQUET
- « Bougival en images » by Daniel ROBERT, Marie-Josée BOSSET, and Françoise Bessard du Parc.

Opposite the Machine de Marly, in the park

T4: The Road from St Germain to Marly, quay Rennequin Sualem to Bougival

Painted in 1872 by Alfred Sisley.

The original is in the **San Antonio Museum in Texas**.



T5: Barrage de la Machine dite de Marly

Painted in 1876 by Alfred Sisley.

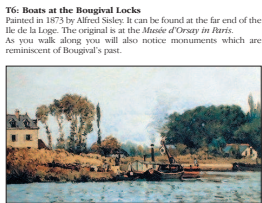
The original belongs to a private collector.



T6: Boats at the Bougival Locks

Painted in 1873 by Alfred Sisley. It can be found at the far end of the Ile de la Loge. The original is at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

As you walk along you will also notice monuments which are reminiscent of Bougival's past.

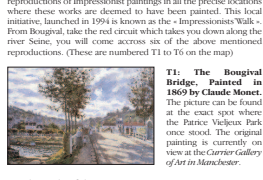


The Impressionists' Walk

See Red circuit

From the village of Carrières sur Seine through to Croissy, Chantou, Louveciennes, Bougival, the Impressionists' Walk will find reproductions of Impressionist paintings in all the precise locations where these works are deemed to have been painted. This local initiative, launched in 1991 is known as the Impressionist Walk.

From Bougival, take the red circuit which takes you down along the river Seine, you will come across six of the above mentioned reproductions. (These are numbered T1 to T6 on the map)



T1: The Bougival Bridge, Painted in 1869 by Claude Monet.

The picture shows the bridge, the « omnibus » or horse-drawn ancestor of the train, and later the steam engine (1847) all contributed to making the surrounding countryside accessible to former city-bound Parisians in search of bucolic escapades.

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T2: The Banks of the Seine

Painted by Berthe Morisot in 1883. It can be seen on the Ile de la Chaussée. Opposite the quay Clémenceau, at the foot of a former pile of the old bridge. The original is in the **Odéon Museum**.

T 3 : A Restaurant at Marly le Roi Painted in 1905 by Maurice Vamack.

Situated on the quay Rennequin Sualem, on the D 113. The original is in the **Orsay Museum** in Paris.



Lavoir

Rue Gabriel Péri

Walk downhill and turn right, you will come across an small former open air public washing-house or « lavoir ». Virtually unique in the Paris area, this washing-house has the particularity of being virtually motionless in its interior. It is now housed but in the past it was kept full and clean by spring and rainwater. A small chapel erected in 1846 stood on the corner of the rue de la Vallée. It was dedicated to the worship of St Michael or « St Michel » who was believed to have protected the inhabitants of the village from Norman invasion. The chapel was rebuilt over the centuries but was finally destroyed in 1796.

The Townhall

126 Rue du Maréchal Joffre

Formerly a private home, this building standing here used as a townhall in 1903. In the garden, you will notice a large sculpture of the « Eagle of Waterloo » by the sculptor Jean-Léon Gérôme. It was originally on show in the artist's own garden but was transferred here after his property was destroyed by the explosion of a barge in 1944.

The Church Notre Dame de l'Assomption

Place des Combattants

The church was built during the first half of the 12th century and was restored at the end of 19th century by Lucien Magne, who was one of the architects who designed the Sacre Coeur in Montmartre. The Church Spire is officially grade listed. The church is situated near the altar which dates back to 12th century. The baptismal fonts are from the 16th century and the altar, carved in gilded wood date back to the 17th century. In the left transept you will find Rennequin Sualem's epitaph. On the right hand side, there were several vineyards in this area, and local vinegrowers lived in the pretty cottages clustered round a small village square. Beneath the outdoor staircases, discreetly concealed, were the entrances to the large cellars where barrels were stored.

Charles Havas's House

74 rue du Général Leclerc

The man who founded the very first media agencies died there on 21st May 1958.

The Villa Viardot « Les Fresnes »

16 Rue de la Croix aux Vents

The famous opera singer, Pauline Viardot, sister to the equally famous « Malibran », settled here with her husband in 1874. The house was known as « Les Fresnes » and belonged to the Russian novelist Ivan Tourgueniev. The Viardots hosted prestigious literary salons - here for the intellectual and artistic elite of fin de siècle Paris. More recently, this was the home of popular actress Gaby Morlay.

Ivan Turgenev's Datcha

Parc de la Villa Viardot

The Datcha was built in 1874. The Datcha has since become a museum devoted to Ivan Turgenev's life and works. The museum organises a number of temporary exhibitions and concerts which strive to recreate the creative atmosphere of 19th century « Salons ».



The home of George Bizet

5 Rue Ivan Tourgueniev



In his riverside home, where he spent his final years, George Bizet composed « Carmen », undoubtedly the most famous of his operas. He died in this house on 3rd June 1875, barely three months after the first performance of « Carmen ».

George Régnauld's Home

9 Rue Ivan Tourgueniev

George Régnauld saw himself as the « last of the impressionists ». This didn't stop him becoming the first president of the Tourist Information Office in Bougival.

The Pavillon de Blois

17 quai Georges Clémenceau

This group of buildings is all that is left of the large estate that once belonged to Madeleine de Blois, the daughter of Louis XIV and Madeleine de La Vallière.

Le Camélia

7 quai Georges Clémenceau

This restaurant was given the name « Le Camélia » in memory of the courtesan Marie Duplessis, immortalized by Alexandre Dumas in the « Dame aux Camélias ». In the 19th century, it was only one of many restaurants that could be found along the banks of the river Seine. It became internationally renowned when it was taken over by Jean Delavigne.

The Château de la Jonchère

10 Côte de la Jonchère

In the early 18th century, Gérard de la Jonchère, Lord of Vaucresson acquired a farm which was refurbished and embellished, effectively turning it into a stately home. Many famous politicians stayed there: Adolphe Thiers who was the first President of the third Republic, Count Tolstoi, the Russian ambassador, Also Prince Richard Metternich, ambassador of Austria, and son of the Chancellor. The emperor Napoleon III and his wife Eugénie often visited Prince Metternich in Bougival. Clémence Marie, daughter of Richard Metternich was born at the Château on 27th June 1870 and was christened there. The Château is now a private property.

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