



GREEN TOUR

“VARZY, HISTORIC CENTER” (1h00)

① In the 5th century, **Saint Germain, 6th Bishop of Auxerre**, inherits the fiefdom of Varzy and donates it to Auxerre Cathedral. The town will remain under the influence and the protection of the bishops of Auxerre until the French revolution.

Located at the border of the bishopric, **Varzy** suffers from the conflicts between neighbouring lords and is damaged a number of times. Consequently, circa 1000, the bishops of Auxerre build fortifications with four town gates. These were aligned with what are now the facades of the houses of Jacques-Amiot Street. They were restored and mighty towers added in the 13th century.

② **Alfred Garcement's house:** Pierre Alfred Garcement (1842-1927) studied in Varzy collège, before joining "Les beaux Arts", the famous Parisian fine art school.

The Franco-Prussian war of 1870 brought him back to the Nivernais where he remained for the rest of his life. A number of his works are on display in Clamecy, Nevers and Varzy museums, as well as in the Louvre museum in Paris.

► Not far away is the **Rex Barrat's** café (1914-1974), another "varzycois" painter who started his career at the early age of ten in his neighbour Alfred Garcement's workshop. The hallmark of Rex Barrat's painting is his stroke: systematic and vertical, it brings the surface to life. A number of his works are on display in Varzy museum.



Rex Barrat, *La noce à Varzy* © Musée Auguste Grasset

③ **House of services:** in 1882, the town council undertook the building of an elementary school for girls whose education had previously been in the charge of Sisters of La Charité Chrétienne in Nevers. The school for girls merged with the elementary school for boys in 1967 and moved out of the school building, whilst the secondary school moved to the new building on Saint-Saturnin Boulevard in 1998. After major modification works, this house became the House of services in 2009, regrouping the cultural centre, charities and the "Communauté de Communes" (administrative group of towns and villages). Evidence of the original role of the building can still be seen on the pediment.

④ At the corner of a property is **the Isoard Tower** - or Irouard tower (foundation of the 13th century). This is the only remain of the fortifications which were demolished at the beginning of the 17th century.

⑤ **Castle of the Bishops of Auxerre:** A dwelling is built around the year 900, and then converted into a castle. Circa 1204, an Episcopal Palace designed to resist assaults is constructed. Following a number of building works, the castle is abandoned and neglected during the French religious wars (second half of the 16th century). During the French Revolution, like most church properties, it is sold as a "Bien National" (National Property).

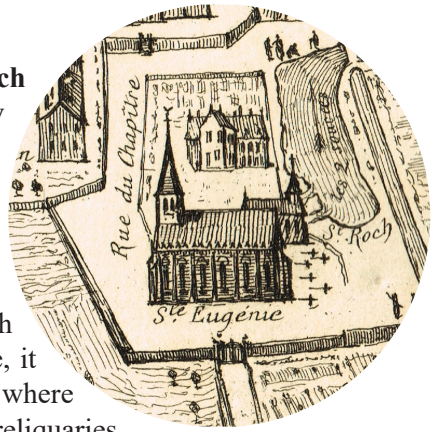
► From 1929 to 2005, it is home to **"Jaques Amiot" summer camps**. In 2008, the town of Varzy becomes the owner of the castle (registered as National Heritage).



⑥ **Maison du "Service des Eaux" (Water Utility House) and, not far away, the Electricity Department House, and the railway:** In 1897, the town develops its own power and drinking water supply network. In 1870, the railway is extended from Laroche to Clamecy and seven years later, from Clamecy to Nevers, along the Sauzay and Sainte Eugénie valley. This railway is disused since 1990.

⑦ **Vestiges of the former collegiate Church of Sainte-Eugénie:**

There are hardly any remains but some structural work and the supports of the buttresses, one of which you can see at the crossroads. Erected in the 5th century by Saint Germain, Sainte-Eugénie collegiate church was first reconstructed in the 10th century and then entirely rebuilt in the 12th century. Situated close to the Episcopal castle, it was a site of pilgrimage and great devotion where faithful visitors came to see its treasures (reliquaries, statues, paintings...). When sold as a "Bien National" (National Property), the structure was entirely rebuilt except for its bearing walls which were kept.



⑧ **Vestiges of the Chapel of Saint Roch** (left): the Chapel of Saint Roch was located at the Eastern end of the Northern aisle of Sainte Eugénie Collegiate Church. Only a few well preserved blind arcades and colonnettes have been kept in today's structure. The Chapel covers the springs of Sainte-Eugénie and Saint Roch that supply the wash house with water.

⑨ This vast **wash house**, in use until the sixties, was the only water point of the walled settlement. It had 4 different purposes: wash house, drinking trough, foot bath to wash and cool down horses' legs and canal for downstream tanneries. Its water was thought to have several virtues. It helped fight hearing loss and gave spirit to those without it. The canopies were added in 1772 and extended in 1893.



⑩ On your right is the building that was home to the "**petites écoles françaises**" (education for boys).

► In 1856 a **museum** opens here and develops into a "cabinet of curiosities" under the direction of Auguste Grasset, its curator from 1862 to 1879. In 1993, the museum is moved to its current location, on Town Hall Square (see photo opposite).

⑪ **Rex Barrat's School** is the former outbuilding of the teacher training college built in 1901.

⑫ **The Teacher Training College of the Nièvre Department** was active from 1861 to 1941. Following German occupation and then the reception of refugees, it became an apprentice training centre in 1946, then a vocational college. In 1998 a new building was added and it became the "lycée-collège du Mont Châtelet".

⑬ **The former abattoirs** (1863): Made of two houses for the main attendant, six slaughtering cages and some annexe buildings, they were in use until 1 April 1975. Today it is the administration centre of the Lycée-collège, but the two bull heads sculpted on the front wall remind us of the original use of the building.



⑭ **The Church of Saint-Pierre-Es-Liens** (Listed National Heritage, 1225-1280): Its construction at the level of the wash house and the water table caused major structural issues at the time of its erection. This explains its massive and narrow look (17 m).

► Discover: Reliquaries of the Collegiate Church of Sainte-Eugénie (LNH) and the altarpiece "the martyrdom of Sainte-Eugénie".

⑮ **André Marie Jean-Jacques Dupin**, known as Dupin The Eldest, undisputed legal expert and respected politician, was born in 1783 in Varzy. A 2 meter high statue of him by varzycois sculptor Émile Boisseau was unveiled on the 29 August 1869.

⑯ **Market Place**, located in the heart of the town, was the area regrouping all the buildings representing the Bishop's power (court leet, prison, market, four banal, salt storehouse...).

... An audio-guided french version of this tour is available with the free application **GUIDIGO**.

Also available for **Clamecy** (16 km away), **Entrains-sur-Nohain** (18.5 km away) and for the geological site of the **Basseville Rocks** (20.6 km away).

... "**Heritage Thursdays**": guided tours of Clamecy available every Thursday in summer at 10 am or at 3 pm (3 different themes). Information and registration at Clamecy Tourist Office.

... "**Clamecy by night**": 3 guided walks are organised in July and August at 9 h 45 pm on Fridays

... July/August: **guided tours of Varzy and some local villages are organised.**

... **Child-friendly**: *Randoland*: free recreational activity booklets are available at Clamecy Tourist Office.

Continue the experience by visiting Clamecy with your smartphone :



Guidigo

**Tourist Office of
Clamecy Haut Nivernais**
03 86 27 02 51



FLOTTEURS FM 91.1Mhz

*** **Spécial enfant** : *Randoland* : livret de visite ludique de Clamecy à retirer gratuitement à l'Office de tourisme.



- 1 La seigneurie de Varzy
- 2 Alfred Garcement et Rex Barrat
- 3 L'ancienne école communale de filles
(Maison des services)
- 4 La tour Isoard
- 5 Le château des évêques d'Auxerre
- 6 La maison du «service des eaux»
et celle de l'électricité
- 7 Les vestiges de l'ancienne collégiale Sainte-
Eugénie
- 8 Les vestiges de la chapelle Saint-Roch
- 9 Le lavoir
- 10 Les petites écoles françaises
et l'ancien musée de Varzy
- 11 L'école Rex Barrat
- 12 L'école normale d'instituteurs de la Nièvre
- 13 Les anciens abattoirs
(lycée du Mont-Châtelet)
- 14 L'église Saint-Pierre-Es-Liens
- 15 Dupin Aîné
- 16 La place du Marché

- 1 La porte de Marcy
- 2 L'ancienne huilerie
- 3 L'auberge de la Séverie
- 4 L'hôtel de l'Écu
- 5 La mairie
- 6 Les armoiries de la ville
- 7 La maison natale des frères Dupin
- 8 La rue Traîne-Boyaux
- 9 L'hôtel des Gouverneurs
- 10 L'hôtel du Monarque
- 11 La maison Dourneau
- 12 L'hôtel-Dieu
- 13 La citerne
- 14 Les Petites Promenades
- 15 Le monument de la déportation
- 16 La statue de la Sainte Vierge



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