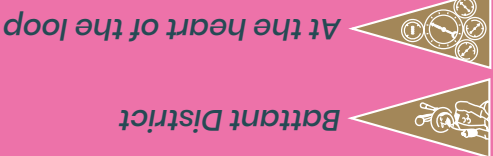


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For information:



There are two other urban trails to discover the city of Besançon:

As possible, there are tools and services at your disposal: City of Art and History brochures, digital applications, mp3 commented walks, guided tours given by professional expert guides and much more.

Réalisation Agence RHODOSIANE

6/ CITÉ DES ARTS

In 2006, the Grand Besançon Urban Community and the Franche-Comté Region came together in a joint project: to create a building for the discovery and practice of art. The councils decided to acquire the land and the former commercial port, now industrial waste land, in order to build a place dedicated to art. They chose architect Kengo Kuma to draw up the plans for the building which was opened in 2013.

They had to take into account the frequent flooding from the Doubs river, when designing the building, and include a protective wall.

The Cité des Arts houses the Regional Conservatory of music, dance and theatre, the Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) and a restaurant-tea room which is run by the "La Furieuse" association. Concerts, exhibitions and shows are held all year round at this unique venue, with a priority for associations and with solidarity in mind.



Detour towards the Rodia, on the other side of the river (not on the marked trail)

The name of this concert hall (modern music) comes from the French word Rhodiacéta, which is the name of an old fabric factory located on the shores of the Doubs river, a part of which has been converted into an urban park. In the 50s-60s, the Rhodiacéta factory was the biggest producer in France of synthetic yarn: the leader in polyester fibre as they had the monopoly here, and second for nylon. At its peak, the factory employed over 8,000 people.

From the large terrace area of the Rodia concert hall, there is a superb view over the Citadel.

Here is also the "Friche Artistique de Besançon" (artistic waste land), which is a place used for live entertainment and graphic arts shows and cultural events, such as the opening evening for the International Music Festival and the Festival Détonation, in September. This natural area is perfect for outdoor sports and so it is also used for sports events and competitions such as "Le Trail de Forts" in May, or the "Festival Grandes Heures Nature" outdoor event!

5/ LA CITADELLE DE BESANÇON

The Citadel of Besançon is a remarkable example of 17th century military architecture. It covers almost 12 hectares and is one of Vauban's masterpieces, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

It is built against a superb landscape and overlooks the old town in a meander of the Doubs, from over 100 metres above, with breath-taking panoramic views.

This Citadel really is a unique place in that it houses three museums which are certified "Musées de France": the Museum of Resistance and Deportation, the Museum of Franche-Comté and the Museum with various rooms dedicated to animals. Several different areas have been set up for visitors, including the Naturalium which is an exhibition hall for biodiversity.

Rock nesting birds choose the city of Besançon and the Citadel, and in particular the escarp wall above the Rivotte district and the cliff overhanging it, to build their nests. The main species found here are the Peregrine Falcon, the Common Kestrel, and the Goosander (species of duck). The capital of the Franche-Comté region is also the home to the biggest known nesting population on any waterway in France.



Besançon Casino and the Centre Dramatique National Besançon are situated nearby.

In 1830, the development project of the Doubs shores opposite Saint-Paul Windmill was launched. The land was owned by the millitary at the time and it was necessary to wait until 1841 for the project to officially go through. It required a branch of the Doubs to dry up. The project was achieved in 1843, and many of the species which were traditionally planted in the 19th century were found here.

8/ PROMENADE MICAUD

The port is located at the foot of Saint-Paul Windmill. Boats are stored here for the winter the rest of the year, but priority is given to pleasure boats passing through in the summer season.

In the high season, there is a lounge area with refreshments and can easily access all types of land, even the most inaccessible!

Since March 2019, the city council has also invested in sheep! They are used to maintain the grasslands in the urban areas, sometimes even at the heart of the city centre!

This is a one-of-a-kind project in France, because it is focused on a unique approach to urban farming, not necessarily on local traditions.

The City of Besançon has launched a programme of grazing lands for goats in order to stop the land here becoming fallow.

Why goats? For simple reasons: they graze on pretty much all vegetation and can easily access all types of land, even the most inaccessible!

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9/ LE MINOTAURE

This monumental seven-metre-high fountain was built at the foot of the Robert Schwind bridge in 2001.

On days of exceptionally high tide, the Minotaure statue seems to float the Doubs. Water gushes from the fountain intermittently.

In Greek mythology, a Minotaur is a fabulous monster which is half-human, half-bull. It was born from the love between Pasiphae (King Minos's wife) and a white bull sent by Poseidon. Minos locked the Minotaur away in the labyrinth.

The surrounding area: Mountain or the Doubs valley. There are a lot of breath-taking landscapes along overlooking the city, and some amazing viewpoints up on the hills.

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Management and conservation of natural areas

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Besançon Urban trail Along the Shores and Remparts of the Doubs river

1/ QUAI VAUBAN

In 1691, construction works began on either side of the Battant bridge, on the left shores. Vauban was against this as he only wanted to build a simple rampart here.

Today, the quayside is an animated area where locals love to go for a wander as a family, stopping for a break on the benches along the way.

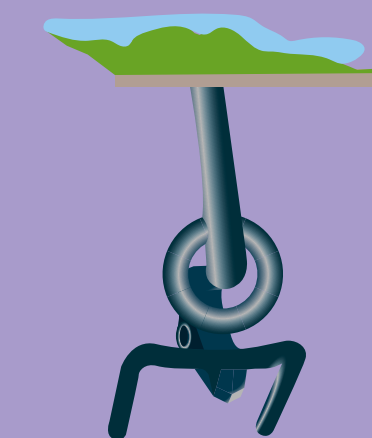
Cordeliers Bastioned Tower

These towers are a truly remarkable innovation from Vauban. The first bastioned towers alongside the city walls in Besançon were built from 1687. They have got two firing levels and are smaller than a bastion: the upper level is open and the lower one to shelter the canons from shots raining down from the neighbouring high ground. This tower is believed to have been finished in 1691.

See explanation of bastioned towers: "Cordeliers Bastioned Tower"

This tower was built into the rock, on the river bed, between 1687 and 1691.

Open your eyes: informative signs on some of the heritage sites will give you some extra information about the history. Most of them are translated into English.



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