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

The City of Besançon has been given the "City of Art and History" Label and the Vauban fortifications are listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. This city has a lot to offer in terms of architecture and heritage, covering over 2,000 years of history. Since the founding of a Gallic Oppidum (fortified town), the city has developed over the centuries to become a major military, religious, economic and cultural hub.

The City of Besançon is also located in the midst of a particularly remarkable natural environment combining the river, limestone rock, cliffs and carved anticlines. The loop formed by the Doubs river fascinates people of all ages, and there is a lot to discover here.

This urban trail will delight nature-lovers and is also dotted with fabulous heritage sites! In 2018, Besançon was actually named French capital for biodiversity.



#### **GROUND SIGNS**



Starting instructions plate of the three urban trails



Arrows to follow

#### MAP LEGEND





Departure and arrival locations



Must-sees along the way



Local must-see events



Vauban Fortifications



Departure for short hiking trails



Playground



Water fountain / WC



Tram station near the departure



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





breath-taking landscapes along the Doubs valley. There are a lot of outdoor activities in Besancon or overlooking the city, and some traip), waiking traiis over the hills, trail running paths, cycle tourism routes and the Eurovélo 6 Nantes-Budapest Route, take you into the heart of the countryside in very little time. You will discover some amazing view the city to the countryside in just a few minutes! From the city centre (departure points noted on the map), walking trails over the hills, noy in Besançon, you can go from

environment! to our exceptional natural

Melcome

unique approach to urban farming, not necessarily on local traditions. This is a one-of-a-kind project in France, because it is focussed on a used to maintain the grasslands in the urban areas, sometimes even at the heart of the city centre! (see the Battant District urban trail) graze on pretty mach all types Graze on pretty mach all types Mhy goats? For simple reasons: they The City of Besançon has launched a programme of graz lands for goats in order to stop

### vation of natural areas management and conser-Municipal pastoral

ne Iove between Pasiphae (King Minos's wife) and a white bull sent y Poseidon. Minos locked the In Greek mythology, a Minotaur is a fabulous monster which is half-

the fountain intermittently. on the Doubs. Water gushes from the Minotaur statue seems to float On days of exceptionally high tide, masterpiece by artist Jens Boettcher. cast in eight tonnes of bronze, it is a of the Robert Schwint bridge in 2001, high fountain was built at the foot This monumental seven-metre

MICAUD 9) LE MINOTAURE 8 PROMENADE

loop of the Doubs. Or for the more oods take visitors around the scover the city from the wate

ι α α νειλ bjeasaut οι της city! : 12 α νειλ bjeasaut οι της city! tormerly the lock master's office) d lounge area with refreshments in the harbour master's office

passing through in the summer for the winter the rest of the year, but Paul windmill. Boats are stored here Port of Saint-Paul windmill a lot of fish swim in this river.

The port is located at the foot of Saint trout, sheatfish, eels, etc. They can trout is located at the foot of Saint trout, sheatfish, eels, etc. They can trout is located at the foot of Saint trout, sheatfish, eels, etc. They can trout is located at the foot of Saint trout, sheatfish, eels, etc. They can trout is located at the foot of Saint trout, sheatfish, eels, etc. They can trout is located at the foot of Saint trout tr

channels which held the water demolished. A lock was then built that the old windmill would be Doubs which is canalised), meaning Rhone and the Rhin (a part of the - the future canal connecting the was built for the Monsieur cana it. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a towpath 1689, Vauban built a bastion around a branch of the Doubs. In around Saint-Paul Abbey windmill straddle:

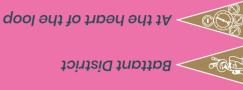
**Bastion of Saint-Paul** 

7/ ÎLE SAINT-PIERRE

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

professional expert guides and majka, guided tours given by applications, mp3 commented Art and History brochures, digital services at your disposal: City of as possible, there are tools and To make your visit as interesting

# 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 the river bed, between 1687 and 1691. 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.

# 2/ PROMENADE **CHAMARS**

Chamars is the shortened version of "campus martii", or "champ de mars". In the Middle Ages, this area was used as pastures and the town's windmill was also found here. This area became a public walkway which was redeveloped between 1770 and 1778 by local architect Bertrand, who turned it into one of the most beautiful public walkways

#### **Marais Bastioned Tower**

See explanation of bastioned towers: "Cordeliers Bastioned Tower"

**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.



# 3/ GARE D'EAU

In 1826, it was decided to open up an inland waterway facility in Chamars, to link the Rhône canal to the Rhin (a part of the Doubs which is canalised). The building work was done between 1827 and 1833. However, until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was not much activity coming through this waterway facility. This was because a harbour had been built in Rivotte, which was able to welcome all the boats coming down the canal! Later, once the tunnel was built under the citadel, the waterway facility was no longer used at all.

The waterway facility and the shores of the Doubs are now places to come and relax, to observe and contemplate the natural environ-ment and the wildlife found here. he magnificent views over

As soon as the weather gets

#### The City Bastion

The city's windmill was built on a little island on the shores of the river in the Middle Ages, and Vauban decided to surround it with a bastion, canal, meaning that the windmill would no longer be used; the bastion which at the time was called the city windmill bastion, became a sea consequently changed to "The City Bastion" (Bastion de la Ville).

## 4/ TUNNEL FLUVIAL SOUS LA CITADELLE

The first building works for this waterway tunnel under the citadel were concentrated on the upper section of the rock, and the second removed the lower section. In March 1881, the rock had been completely tunnelled through. On the 30<sup>th</sup> March 82, the underground section was led with water and on the 30<sup>th</sup> April the tunnel was opened.

ple come here especially to see Doubs. As you enter the waterwa



# 5/ LA CITADELLE **DE BESANÇON**

The Citadel of Besançon is a military architecture. It covers almost 12 hectares and is one of Vauban's World Heritage Site.

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# .. #

Franche-Comté are situated nearby

Besancon Casino and the Centre

lanted in the 19th century were

pecies which were traditionally

achieved in 1843, and many of the

he Doubs to dry up. The project was

go through. It required a branch of

until 1841, for the project to officially

rime and it was necessary to wait

was owned by the military at the

In 1830, the development project of the Doubs shores opposite Saint-Paul Windmill was launched. The land

Dramatique National Besança

1t is built against a superb

This Citadel really is a unique place with various rooms dedicated to 🔥 Here is also the "Friche Artistique animals. Several different areas de Besançon' (artistic waste land), have been set up for visitors, which is a place used for live including the Naturalium which is an exhibition hall for biodiversity.

Rock nesting birds choose the Goosander (species of duck).
The capital of the Franche-Comté

# Detour towards the Rodia, on the other side of the river

the biggest producer in France of

From the large terrace area of the Rodia concert hall, there is

entertainment and graphic arts as the opening evening for the International Music Festival and the This natural area is perfect for such as "Le Trail de Forts" in May, or the "Festival Grandes Heures Nature"

# 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 This tower was built between 1687 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 (FRAC) and a restaurant-tea room at this unique venue, with a priority ᄎ All around the city, along the riverbanks, there are seating areas flow past. On the other side, you can see Bregille hill and dry grassland and bushes.

#### **Bregille Bastioned Tower**

and 1689 and is the only tower to provide flanking for the Rivotte tower the Saint-Paul mill. At the end of the

Today, the tower houses recording studios and training professional musicians.





