



WALKS IN MORLAIX

BAIE DE MORLAIX

#PLOGASNOU #LOCQUIREC #MONTSDARREE
#CARANTEC #MORLAIX BRETAGNE



Fall in love with Morlaix as you explore its hidden alleys and passageways, following one of two trails. Starting from Maison Penanault, both trails lead to the 1st level of the viaduct.

The 'Heart of the Town' trail, in blue, leads you through the must-see sites of the town centre.

The '3 Hills' trail, in orange, takes you upwards between Morlaix's three old parishes, separated by two rivers.

● THE HEART OF THE TOWN

about 1h30 hours on foot

● THE 3 HILLS

about 2h30 hours on foot



MAISON PENANAULT

(From the late 1500s and early 1600s)

At 10 Place Charles de Gaulle, you'll find a stone townhouse featuring shale from Morlaix and granite from Île Callot and Île Grande. This house showcases the trading wealth of the town in the late 1500s and early 1600s, which helped to develop and enhance the quaysides. Perhaps because it was built onto an earlier structure, the house includes a tower that appears to survey the harbour, a look-out that has been incorporated into the newer building to include the staircase. Maison Penanault has undergone several transformations, most significantly between 1782 and 1834. The roof structure is in the form of an upturned boat and, although it's an urban manor, its construction is very similar to that of an aristocratic residence. The gardens extend over some 4000 m² and are terraced to accommodate the steep slope behind the house

that rises above the courtyard carved into the rock. Positioned for the best of the weather, these gardens would once have yielded plenty of fresh produce for the household. Nowadays, this building is open to everyone, housing the Tourist office, a permanent exhibition ('Listen to the tales of Morlaix Bay') and temporary exhibitions, as well as workshops and guided visits all year round.



THE VIADUCT

This majestic structure is made of granite from Île Grande. It was built between 1861 and 1864 during construction of the railway line linking Paris and Brest, and French engineer Fenoux drew up the plans. The result is impressive: 292 m long, 58 m high, 14 upper and 9 lower arches, and 11,000 cubic metres of stone. The Rennes-Brest line opened in 1865. You can walk across the 1st level: access via Venelle de la Roche or Venelle aux Prêtres.

3 ● ● ●

THE ESPLANADE DU CALVAIRE

A wonderful viewpoint, accessed via the alleyways Venelle aux Prêtres, Venelle du Créou and Venelle Auguste Ropars, then the street Hent Coz.

4 ● ● ●

THE CHURCH OF ST-MELAINE

The priory of St-Melaine was founded between 1149 and 1157, after a donation by Guyomarc'h III, Lord of Morlaix. The church was constructed at the end of the 1400s by the architects of the Beaumanoir family. In 1879, the lantern was replaced by a spire in wood covered by zinc. The church contains some fine carved beams and statues from the 1400s to 1800s, as well as an organ by Englishman Thomas Dallam, restored in 1971.

5 ● ● ●

HÔTEL DIT FRANÇOIS DU PARC

A magnificent residence built from granite schist in the 1500s and 1600s and remarkably restored in 2010-2011. The *logis* is essentially a large square pavilion flanked by a turret. The main building features a round-arched door framed by two fluted columns with capitals and architraves, topped by a triangular pediment. The square pavilion is in turn flanked by a turret with a granite dome.

6 ● ● ●

RUE ANGE DE GUERNISAC

Count Ange de Guernisac gave a considerable sum of money to the town in 1878 to build a theatre and create the Musée des Jacobins. The facades of the half-timbered houses from the 1400s were covered in slate from the Arrée Mountains. The rue Ange de Guernisac is a pedestrianized street with restaurants, artists and artisans.

7 ● ● ●

THE CARMELITE FOUNTAIN

This fountain from the 1400s is at the foot of the former church of Notre-Dame des Fontaines. Responding to calls from local people, the Carmelite Friars came to Morlaix in the 1600s, following a serious outbreak of plague.

8 ● ● ●

THE MUSEUM OF MORLAIX

Place des Jacobins. The museum is located in part of the Convent of the Jacobins, whose church, founded in 1230, is the oldest in the town. The convent was started in the 1200s, and has a rose window

dating from the 1400s. Confiscated at the time of the Revolution, the convent was used as a barracks, and then became the headquarters of the archaeological society of Finistere. Since 1887 it has housed the Museum of Morlaix: the first curator was Edmond Puyo, mayor of the town. The museum is undergoing a complete renovation, so the Jacobins site is currently closed.

9 ● ● ●

THE QUARTER OF ST-MATHIEU CHURCH OF ST-MATHIEU

There was a church on this spot as far back as the 1100s, dependent on the Abbey of St-Mathieu-en-Finistere. In the 1400s, the locality of St-Mathieu expanded, so a larger church was built, then rebuilt again in the 1800s. It has, however, kept the original tower, which was one of the first in Renaissance style in the region. The church contains a gilded-wood statue dating from the late 1300s, which opens to reveal the Trinity and painted scenes from the New Testament. This statue, from the region of Cologne, was ordered by the Brotherhood of the Trinity, a syndicate of weavers in Morlaix. The church also has a fine Jules Heyer organ (1874).

10 ● ● ●

THE CHÂTEAU SQUARE

An exceptional viewpoint over the town. The medieval château was dismantled at the end of the 1500s following the Wars of the League between the strict Catholics and the royalists who supported the French King Henri IV. Follow the rue des Vieilles Muraillles and rue Edouard Corbière* to rejoin the rue du Mur. *Édouard Corbière: director of a company of steamboats between Le Havre and Morlaix, also a novelist and father of the poet, Tristan Corbière.

11 ● ● ●

LA PLACE ALLENDE HOUSE OF THE DUCHESS ANNE

A half-timbered house dating from around 1530, with its gable end on the street. The interior layout is typical of Morlaix homes of this period, with a manorial main room, monumental fireplace and a 'Pondalez' staircase. To continue your visit, take the Grand'Rue.

12 ● ● ●

LA GRAND'RUE

Half-timbered and corbelled houses from the 1400s. The facades are adorned with statues of saints. The houses of Grand'Rue were inhabited

by very rich merchants in the linen industry.

13 ● ● ●

LA MAISON À PONDALÉZ

9 Grand'Rue. A half-timbered house from the 1500s. Monumental granite fireplace and spiral staircase with wooden walkways within a vast central space.

14 ● ● ●

N° 14 GRAND'RUE

Number 14 Grand'rue, also known as the House Pouligen, was built as part of a development including numbers 12 and 16 after the main street was opened in 1492. Listed as a supplementary monument in 1994, it is cited in many books discussing the history of Brittany and the renaissance period. Its monumental Gothic art - consisting of its balustrades, its pantry and its carved pole - now belong to the Art Museum of St. Louis in the United States.

15 ● ● ●

LA RUE DE L'HOSPICE, THE RAMPARTS

Remains of the ramparts from the walled town of the 1500s. Morlaix was then enclosed by walls that reinforced the natural defences created by the two rivers. The walls were dismantled in the 1600s and 1700s. All that remains is this section in Rue de l'Hospice. Continue along the Rue de Brest to reach the Theatre of the Pays de Morlaix.

16 ● ● ●

THEATRE OF THE PAYS DE MORLAIX

Count Ange de Guernisac left part of his fortune to the town of Morlaix, making it possible to order this beautiful Italianate theatre from a company in Lyon (Diosse and Son). Impressively, the theatre was built in a year and inaugurated in 1888. After several years of closure for refurbishment, this magnificent theatre reopened its doors on 12th December 2002. It has been classified as an historic monument since 1998.

17 ● ● ●

RUE LONGUE

In years gone by, the Rue Longue de Bourret was the only way to access Brest via Rue du Poulfanc and the Barrière de Brest. From the 1500s, merchants began to set up shops and homes along this street. Attractive Renaissance-style houses were built, with brightly coloured doors and Doric columns, either smooth or

fluted, all proving the wealth of the residents of that time. The dates of the buildings were often noted on the exterior, as with the 'Maison du Temps Perdu' at number 24, which dates from 1682. This is a beautiful building of dressed stone that was once used as the Town Hall.

18 ● ● ●

LAVOIR COLLOBERT

This cool little corner dates from the 1700s and its 'lavoir' wash-house is fed by a natural spring. Morlaix used to have several wash-houses where local washerwomen came from daybreak onwards, in aprons and head-dresses of local style, bringing their dirty laundry, ashes from the fire, and a block of Marseille soap. As well as being a place for serious work, the wash-house was literally the fountain of all gossip, which the women enjoyed wholeheartedly!

19 ● ● ●

L'ÉGLISE ST-MARTIN

The church of Saint-Martin des Champs was founded in 1128 and struck by lightning in 1771, then rebuilt from 1775 to 1788, in Doric style. Rich stained-glass windows were added, as was the current tower with its domed steeple, dating from 1850. Inside, you'll find a vast nave that is largely lit by the stained glass windows that line the sides.

20 ● ● ●

CHAPELLE DES ANGES VIEWPOINT

The Notre-Dame des Anges Chapel was built in 1954 as a memorial to the bombing of the Viaduct that took place on 29th January 1943, which killed 80 people including 39 children and a nun from the Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes school. Designed by M. Heuzé, this rectangular building has no steeple. The chapel was consecrated on 3rd February 1957. In the chancel is a fresco showing the Virgin Mother surrounded by angels, some of whom are carrying small children.

21 ● ● ●

PLACE DES OTAGES

A tragic event unfolded here on 26th December 1943, two days after an attack on the German Troop quarters in Rue du Brest. Sixty locals aged 15-40 were rounded up and gathered here before being deported to concentration camps such as Buchenwald; 'otages' means hostages.

22 ● ● ●

THE BANDSTAND

The bandstand was offered to the town of Morlaix by Auguste Ropars in 1903. Open to all music-lovers, this convivial space continues to give choirs, brass bands and musical groups the chance to entertain passers-by.

23 ● ● ●

MAISON TRISTAN CORBIÈRE, THE MORLAIX POET

Number 21, Place Charles de Gaulle. Tristan Corbière was born in Coat-Congar on 18th July 1845. His delicate health meant that his dream to become a sailor would never come to fruition. He replaced his birth name of Édouard-Joachim with the far more evocative 'Tristan' so that his full name created the French phrase TRISTE EN CORPS BIÈRE, meaning 'sad, in a coffin-like body'. His only poetry collection - 'Les Amours jaunes' - published in 1873 received no critical acclaim until after his death, when French writer Verlaine dedicated a chapter to him in his essay 'Les Poètes Maudits'. Corbière died in Morlaix on 1st March 1875 and was placed in a family tomb at Saint Augustin graveyard. Time has finally brought his works to light and allowed his talent to be recognized, including a Corbière postal stamp inaugurated in Morlaix on the 4th of March 2011.

24 ● ● ●

BUSTE DE CHARLES CORNIC JEAN-PAUL FRÉOUR

Bust in Chauvigny limestone (1947). Charles Cornic was born in Morlaix on 5th September 1731. At a very young age, he became a ship's apprentice on his father's boats and sailed the seas, rapidly gaining a reputation as a privateer. Aged 19, he entered into the Royal Navy and established a brilliant career, envied by the officers of the Grand Corps and admired by the people of Morlaix who still remember him fondly. He personally invested in creating a map of the Rade de Morlaix and its markings. Here on Square Weygand, the bust of Cornic is turned towards the sea, and he

watches over everyone happily sailing.

25 ● ● ●

FONTAINE DES ANGLAIS

On a July day in 1522, when the Morlaix nobility were gathered in Guingamp and the merchants were at a fair in Noyal Pontivy, the English attacked the town, burning and pillaging houses and churches alike. Alerted about the massacre, the Morlaix people came back and attacked their attackers in Styvel Woods. It is said that the spring here 'flowed with the blood of the English'. To reach the old Manufacture factory on the other quay, you can take the floating footbridge - please cross carefully.

26 ● ● ●

THE PORT

Morlaix Port was prosperous from the 1400s to the late 1600s thanks to trade, the transport of linen cloth, and the activities of corsairs in the 1700s. Today it is a well known marina.

27 ● ● ●

THE QUAY OF LÉON LA MANUFACTURE

The King's architect Jean-François Blondel designed the Manufacture (Tobacco Factory), built between 1736 and 1740. The factory expanded between 1830 and 1848, and had a further growth-spurt from 1852 to 1870: new constructions such as cast-iron uprights and iron roof-structures, along with mechanical transformation. Steam-power arrived, and new machines were installed to grate the tobacco. Between the two wars, the workshops grew from 12,000 m² to 27,000 m². In 1929, a three-storey building was erected with a framework and floors in reinforced concrete. The 1930s saw the final developments, with impressive roof-structures in reinforced concrete. Since 2020, the 'Manu' has become home to contemporary art and culture, including the SEW, the art association Moyens du Bord as well as a new Science Centre. •

Traduction by : Annaliza Davis



Morlaix Tourist Office

Maison Penanault
10 place Charles de Gaulle
+00 33 (2) 98 62 14 94
morlaix@tourisme-morlaix.bzh