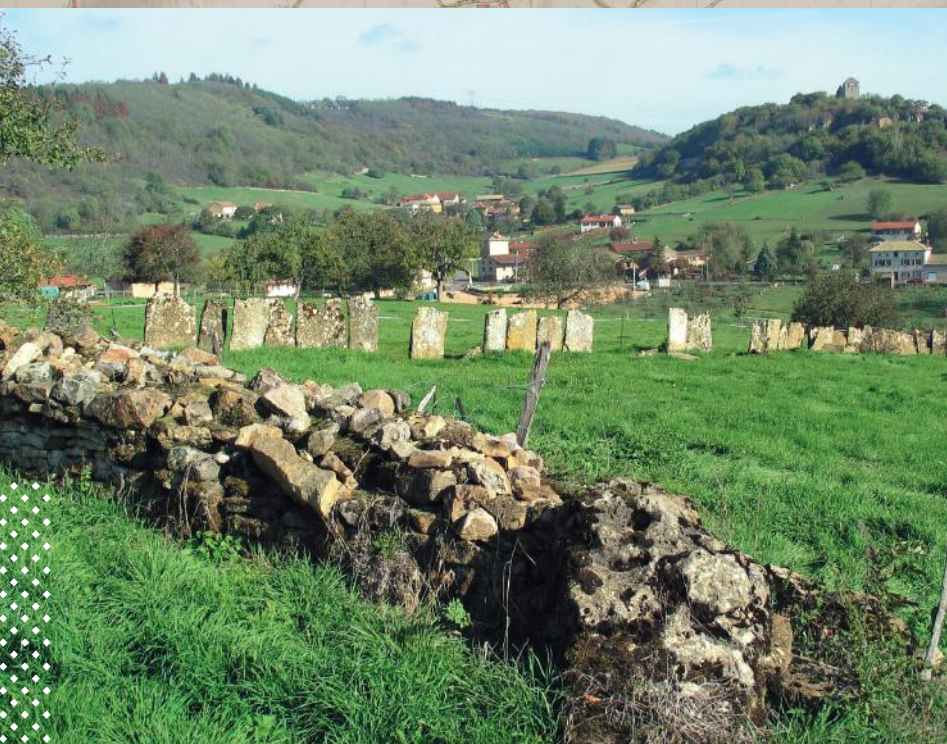


ITINERARY

CHÂTEAU

PAYS D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE ENTRE CLUNY ET TOURNUS



VILLES
& PAYS
D'ART &
D'HISTOIRE

THROUGH THE COUNTRYSIDE



STORY OF STONES: GEOLOGY

Mountains, valleys, rocks, woods, a few vineyards, this is how Château was defined in the *Directory of Saône-et-Loire municipalities* in 1863. This overview reflects the balance and the harmony of a landscape that strikes all those who are lucky enough to visit or live in this small village in Saône-et-Loire.

In the municipality, the dominant relief corresponds to granitic lands, which are more than 360 million years old. The maximum altitude of the municipality is 555 metres (Mount Gremoi). Major faults connect this granitic base with the Bajocian limestone to the east. The granite is usually found well below these limestone deposits of the Secondary Era, which settled on the bottom of a shallow sea between about 130 and 65 million years ago. The fractures at the origin of the faults correspond to the after-effects of the Alpine uplift between 30 and 5 million years ago. The Saône basin collapsed, giving rise to the Bresse region. The entire Mâconnais region suffered the consequences...

THE CHÂTEAU BRECCIA

The Château karst, which has been severely dismantled by erosion, contains several

caves. During the construction of the departmental road in the 1860s, an important paleontological deposit was unearthed in the quarry area. The excavation of the Château breccia rediscovered by A. and J. Argant in 1968, led to the collection of fossils of large carnivores from the Middle Pleistocene (around 600 000 years ago), dominated by *Ursus deningeri*, an ancestor of the cave bear that overwintered in the upper caves. Great felines such as *Panthera spelaea fossilis* (an ancient form of the cave lion) and *Panthera gombaszoegensis* (the European jaguar), as well as an ancestor of wolves (*Canis mosbachensis*) also entered these caves.

AN EVER-CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Until the middle of the 20th century, the juxtaposition of different soils favored mixed farming on the ploughable soils and the maintenance of the forest on the less fertile slopes. Vineyards played a large role, despite the phylloxera crisis at the end of the 19th century, after which they were largely replanted. The crops that were gradually abandoned were replaced by pastures or fodder plants. Cattle breeding has become the main activity of the remaining farms.



AS THE WATER FLOWS

The granite is altered on the surface over several meters due to erosion over a long period of time. The granitic sand ('cran'), a permeable sand, allows water (rain, snow) to infiltrate. The compact granite at the base acts as a barrier and the water flows downhill. A series of karstic networks, made possible by the limestone zones, allow water from Mount Gremoi to reappear over a great distance: Vernay spring, Cas spring, Saint-Laurent spring. This geology explains the varied landscapes of Château and the location of the village and its hamlets.

IN THE HEART OF A VALLEY

You must discover the village from the road coming from Buffières by the Pontot pass (D165): the gentle and steep shapes according to the nature of the rocks, the human-sized dimensions of the relief, the wide opening of the valley towards the south, where the waters join the Grosne valley. Everything is balanced and contributes to the charm of a panorama that you will never get tired of admiring.

To the west, it is structured by small streams that have cut deeply into the granite slopes and join the Repentir. This perennial stream

favours the development of the 'swamp', home of the sedges and the dropwort. Along the banks, the pollarded willows are disappearing, due to their old age. The alders, on the other hand, maintain their elegant and slender silhouette along part of its course. The bottom of the valley has always been occupied by fat meadows, delimited by hedges. The bocage is still alive in Château...

THE LIMESTONE PLATEAU OF LA GARENNE

Going up this main valley, you arrive at the small limestone plateau of La Garenne surmounted by the church, bordered by small steep cliffs. Wild land dominates with blackthorns, wild dog rose and Sainte-Lucie cherry. But on the well exposed slopes to the south of the quarries, vegetation has Mediterranean affinities (wild madder or red valerian for example). In the spring, you can also admire a profusion of flowers that mix the red of the common cow-wheat, the yellow of the rock rose, the blue of the viperine and other plants that are discreet but just as beautiful to discover.

At Roche, a large grassy plateau dry and stony, a lawn has been preserved. The Carthusian pink and some orchids grow there.



3

1. Vernay spring, collecting the waters of Mont Gremoi

© A. and J. Argant

4. Red common cow-wheat and yellow rock rose, at the bottom of the plateau of La Garenne

© A. and J. Argant



4

2. Vineyards in the early 20th century

© coll. part.

3. Terrestrial salamander

© A. and J. Argant

5. Repentir stream

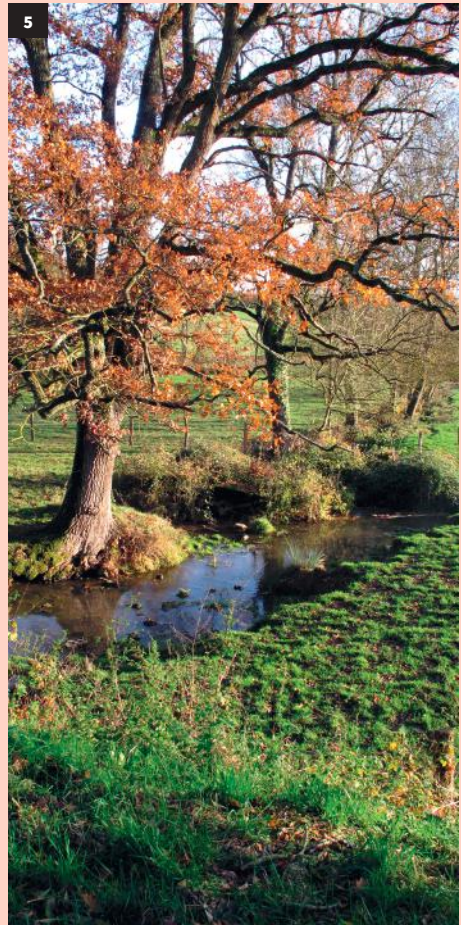
© M. Puthod

A WOODED LANDSCAPE TO THE WEST

In contrast, to the west, the granite slopes are becoming wooded. The oak forest tops the summits, accompanied by beech, hornbeam, ancient plantations of chestnut trees and now conifers. The deciduous undergrowth offers its richness: lily of the valley and holly in abundance, mushrooms... You may be lucky enough to spot roe deer and wild boar.

RICHNESS OF THE FAUNA

Outside the forest, the numerous bushes and coppices are home to a variety of fauna. Let's mention a few species, which, without being rare, remain discreet: the green and yellow snake, the Aesculapian snake, the green lizard, the lesser kestrel, the hen harrier, the hoopoe, the heron, the weasel, the terrestrial salamander, the yellow-bellied toad... There is also a wide variety of insects, which testifies to the good biological health of the commune, which is classified as a Natura 2000 site.



5

THROUGH THE CENTURIES



ANCIENT HUMAN OCCUPATION

The human presence is attested, since Paleolithic and Neolithic times, on the territory of the current commune of Château by discoveries of cut flints. For the Gallo-Roman period, Roman tiles, masonry and coins have been found in Les Noyers. The oldest coin is a small bronze portraying Emperor Augustus (27 BC to 17 AD). A coin of Constantine I (307 to 337 AD) was found at Le Nière. Merovingian monolithic sandstone sarcophagi (5th-8th centuries) were found on the Garenne plateau and in the hamlet of Borde.

FROM MIDDLE AGES TO WARS OF RELIGION

Few sources are available to historians for the Middle Ages... In 878, King Louis the Beggar gave the canons of the cathedral of Saint-Vincent de Mâcon a castle and a church dedicated to Saint Martin. At the gates of the sacred ban of the abbey of Cluny, this castle had an important defensive position on the Garenne plateau by controlling and defending the pass giving access to Cluny, on one side and the Charolais, on the other.

In the 16th century, during the French Wars of Religion, the castle was demolished. All that remains today are the ground traces of

the dry-stone rampart and the dungeon. This dungeon was an imposing square defence tower, which became the church tower in the 19th century. It retains vestiges of its judicial function: two cells, with latrines, closed by doors locked from the outside and pierced by a wicket to pass food to the prisoners.

THE REVOLUTIONS OF THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

The population was relatively large in the 18th century, with more than 700 inhabitants: ploughmen, farmers, winegrowers, labourers and craftsmen (who were the first to disappear during the rural exodus). But the French Revolution brought about changes at the very end of the 18th century. The municipality was created in November 1790. In 1791, the church property, declared national property, was sold at auction. In 1792, Château changed its name to a more revolutionary one and became La Combe for only a few years.





1. Merovingian sarcophagus, reused as a drinking trough, in the hamlet of Saint-Léger

© M. Puthod

2. Coin of the Roman Emperor Constantine, found in a vineyard in the hamlet of Nière

© A. and J. Argant

3. Saint-Martin church, connected to the medieval tower

© A. Mazuir

In the 19th century, a major effort was made to equip and modernize the municipality. An optical telegraph tower, called the Chappe telegraph, was built on one of the Château's ridges, allowing official dispatches to be transmitted by signal. The church was enlarged and the cemetery moved in 1848.

Between the 1860s and 1880s, work intensified and set the current framework for the monumental landscape: construction of washhouses to facilitate access to water, construction and maintenance of public buildings such as the school and the town hall. In order to open up the village, the D165 and D152 roads were built to facilitate trade.

20TH CENTURY, FROM SORROW TO RENEWAL

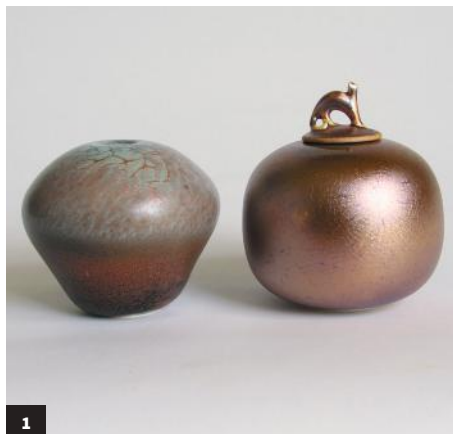
During the First World War, the commune lost 23 soldiers who died for France, while others returned wounded. To honor them, a war memorial was inaugurated in September 1922. A few years later, the Second World War again affected the commune. The men of the village were mobilized. Most remained prisoners for five years and one was killed at Sennecey-le-Grand.

A WELL-PRESERVED VILLAGE

As a rural village, Château retains the diversity of its ancient human occupations in its habitat. Sometimes modernized, many of the winegrowers' houses still have their typical Mâcon gallery, which protects them from the cold. Dovecotes stand at the corners of the galleries. Sometimes the houses are hidden by stone gates, reminding us of their age thanks to dated door keys.

Granite, karst... The geological wealth of Château has allowed men to use stone to develop their territory. In the fields, you can see the murgers resulting from the removal of stones from the land. Stones planted straight into the ground act as boundary stones for pastures. The cadoles built into the thick walls are still numerous, particularly on the Roche plateau where the farmers and winegrowers working the land away from their homes took shelter.

FLAVORS AND CRAFTS



A PLACE FOR CRAFTSMEN

Clay is a material that has always been used at Château and still is today... On an old tile factory site, in the hamlet of Cadoles, the ceramists Jean Girel and Valérie Hermans have built a house-studio near a clay quarry which provides the raw material for their creations. Master of art, listed in the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage by the French Ministry of Culture, Jean Girel combines in his work Western knowledge with Asian tradition. Valérie Hermans, practicing Chinese painting and calligraphy as well as ceramics, draws her inspiration from Nature. It makes her creations elegant and refined.

DYNAMIC ASSOCIATIONS

In Château, you never get bored! The Amicale de Château regularly animates the village with festive events. The Intercommunal Club of the 3rd Age brings together the elderly of the communes of Château, Mazille and Sainte-Cécile. The activities are diverse: from the more traditional ones such as games and snacks, to carpooling excursions to discover the region's treasures. In addition to its traditional activities, the Hunting Society offers discovery sessions on the different

hunting methods and reduces the damage caused by wild boars, foxes and coypu through targeted actions. It shares its meals, which are always very lively, with the inhabitants and friends of the members!

FOR CULTURE AND HERITAGE LOVERS

For book lovers, the village library is enriched each year with several hundred books. For patrimony lovers, the association Château Patrimoine organizes projects aimed at enhancing the heritage of the village and the valley of Repentir. Villagers, local residents and tourists discover a diverse heritage through regular events such as photo competitions, exhibitions, concerts, visits to the cells and the dungeon, etc.

FOR SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS

Discovering Château also involves more sporting activities! Hiking trails cover the whole of the commune. Running enthusiasts meet up in spring for the La Châtelaine trail, organized by the Amicale, which has become a must for sportsmen and women in the region. For a gentler pace, the Serenat association runs weekly relaxation yoga classes for people looking for better balance.



The classes are open to the inhabitants as well as to neighboring residents.

PRODUCERS WHO RESPECT THE LAND

After sport, why not eat some cheese? Thanks to the Poitevin goats that run around the fields, the producer La Chazère offers raw milk goat cheese sold directly at the farm and on the market in Mâcon.

Château has several farms: cattle, sheep or horse breeding, market gardening. Respect for the rhythm of nature is at the heart of Vincent Masson's work on biodynamic farming, a method of agriculture that guarantees the health of the soil and plants to produce healthy food.

At Domaine Saint-Laurent, since 1992, farmers have been keeping the land alive and producing organic vegetables, dairy products and meat. The Châtelains buy the products directly from the Domaine's farm or at the weekly market in Cluny.

HAPPY TOURISTS...

There is everything you need to be happy in Château! Tourists can find a variety of accommodation. Several gîtes offer a beautiful view of the village and the church.



1. Works of J. Girel and V.Hermans
© J. Girel and V.Hermans

2. Trail run 'La Châtelaine'
© R. Dufour

3. Grain production in Domaine Saint-Laurent
© Domaine Saint-Laurent

5. Raw milk goat cheese by La Chazère
© La Chazère

FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER



A BERLINGOTTE AND DANJIN

The war memorial was dedicated on September 22, 1922. It is located on the former Tithe Square, the heart of Berlingotte... which is also the village centre. Nearby, in Danjin, you can see the old village inn. The word 'aubergiste' (innkeeper) can still be seen on the wall of the gallery protected by the roof canopy. Opposite, a washhouse was built between 1875 and 1877, filled by the Danjin spring. The tank of the nearby drinking trough, dug out of a walnut tree trunk, has been dated between 1330 and 1439. It is the oldest drinking trough in Château and probably even in the Mâconnais!

B LE NIÈRE AND LA COMBE

Heading towards Le Nière, you quickly reach the town hall. This building, once divided into a boys' school on one side and a town hall on the other, now hosts the community hall, which has been enlarged onto the teacher's garden and the library. Le Nière, one of the oldest hamlets in the village, is a group of old farms and renovated winegrowers' houses. Two flywheel pumps installed on wells have been preserved. A little away from this district, an original washhouse is installed on the bed

of the Combe stream coming from Pontot; the work tables placed across the bed thus form a water reservoir.

C BUILLET

Towards BUILLET, a public weight reminds us that the animals were weighed before being sold. In this hamlet, you can find both winegrowers' houses and master's houses. One of the latter, with a dovecote, is built in the middle of a park planted with horse chestnut trees. The hamlet has preserved dated door keys, an 18th century gate, a well between two houses with two doors and two coping stones. At the former girls' school, now a communal building, a well can be seen embedded in the wall of the road next to the house. In a meadow in the direction of Nantin stands a square dovecote. On the sloping road to 'Les Cas', on the left, you can see the site of a cistern storing water from a spring tapped higher up, next to the 'Clos Giloux', which is the last evidence of Château's winegrowing past.

D LES NOYERS

The hamlet of Les Noyers is the last one close to the town and contains a main house dating from the 17th and 18th centuries,



with outbuildings and a dovecote. In 1849, it became the property of Théodore Chavot, public prosecutor and historian of the Mâconnais region, who was mayor of Château.

E RHODES

Leaving Les Noyers, you come across the old road that used to lead from Château to Bergesserin, which today is a path offering a superb view of the Repentir valley. The tarmac road leads to the hamlet of Rhodes, whose woods were renowned in the 19th century. It was said that a stone would rise at midnight mass to reveal money, but that it was necessary to leave before it fell or you would be immobilized! The name of this hamlet is said to recall the presence of a former commandery of the Knights Hospitallers.

FROM CADOLES TO LA GRANGE, VIA SAINT-LÉGER

The area has a typical agricultural habitat. The tile-making facilities once established at Les Cadoles **F** to exploit the quality clay layers are now ruined.

In Saint-Léger **G**, the water supply was a problem until the installation of running water in 1965. The Fortune washhouse built in 1881,

the small fountain and the nearby drinking trough are reminders of this time. Everything was good for creating watering holes, even a Merovingian sarcophagus!

THE GARENNE PLATEAU AND LE VERNAY

Accessible from the road by steps built in front of the quarries, the plateau of La Garenne bears the church of Saint-Martin **H**. From there, the view over the valley is remarkable, with Mount Saint-Rigaud and the pointed summit of Tourvéon on the horizon. The bell tower, the former tower of a vanished medieval castle, covered with lava, has dungeons and a room on the first floor. The former presbytery (now a private property) has kept the mark of the past with an old altar table leaning against the wall. The former access road to the castle, a very beautiful path lined with dry stone walls, joins Les Granges **I**.

Below, in the hamlet of Vernay **J**, the washhouse with its spring and an outdoor drinking trough, built in 1875, are the starting point of the Repentir stream.



4

THE HAMLETS 'ABOVE'

These hamlets are isolated dwellings or larger groups of dwellings, which are spread out near the ridges. Amongst them, we should mention the forestry house at the edge of the wood, a 19th century building which housed the forest warden and his family and enabled him to keep an eye on part of the state forest and the communal woods.

Further on, to the north, we can find the hamlet of Les Granges **(K)** and the nearby hamlet of La Brosse **(L)**, a group of old farms and more recent dwellings, whose service roads are lined with dry stone walls.

At the pass leading to Cluny, a wrought iron cross placed in an enclosure indicates the entrance to the property of the Château de Saint-Laurent **(M)**, a beautiful 19th century building built in a valley overlooking the Grosne valley to the east. Finally, towards the south-east, at the foot of the Roche plateau which bears the remains of a windmill, is the hamlet of Borde **(N)**. It is also accessible via the Gorlière, where there is a renovated farm belonging to the neighbouring Mazille Carmelite monastery.



5



6

1. Climbing vine, on a winegrower's house

© A. and J. Argant

2. View of the hamlet of Buillet

© M. Puthod

3. Enclosed field with stones

© C. Creutz

4. Dry stone cabin

© A. and J. Argant

5. Wash house in Saint-Léger

© M. Puthod

6. Windmill

© A. Mazuir

► Dovecote in the field

© M. Puthod



LET YOURSELF BE TOLD

A WALKING PATH

At the car park in the village, notice the raised stones, one of the characteristics of the landscape. Not far away, the Danjin wash house is worth a few steps.

Once you have passed the town hall **1**, climb up to the limestone plateau of La Garenne. After walking along an old quarry and the remains of ramparts, you come to the church, the site of the vanished castle. As you walk around it, a resting place awaits you, offering you a superb panorama, from the Repentir valley to Mount Saint-Rigaud, that you can discover thanks to a viewing table.

The path continues along the narrow road overlooking the hamlet of Le Vernay. On its hillside you will see low dry-stone walls and cadoles, tiny enclosed huts.

From the Granges cross, you reach Montaisé **2** and then the large grassy plateau of En Roche **3**. Murgers and cadoles are reminders of ancient stone-pulling practices. From the ruins of the old mill, you have a true 360° view. After a dive into the undergrowth, you cross the hamlet of Borde and its old winegrowers' houses. You then cross the Repentir river before going up to the Grange.

To the hamlet of Cadoles B **4**, the walk continues in the heart of the bocage, with its perspective of low hedges.

From Cadoles A **5** you reach the Saint-Léger stream, which flows through the undergrowth in thick moss and lichen. The horizon widens in the direction of Rhodes **6**.

After Les Murs **7**, as you climb up to Les Crêts **8** on a hedged path, your eyes are drawn to a wide view of the village, the Grosne valley and beyond.

Then the path enters a deciduous forest, and leaves it at the Col du Pontot **9**. Following the GR76C through the wood to La Frenille **10**, you come close to Mont Gremoi (555m). From Les Granges **11**, the dry-stone walls of the steep path lead you to Montaisé **12** and then to La Brosse **13**. You go down to Le Vernay and the hamlet of Le Buillet and pass the public weight before reaching the car park in the village.





● Breakways' starting point

From vallons to hamlets
 Distance : 13,5 km - Time : 4h30
 Level : Easy

Around the plateau
 Distance : 3,5 km - Time : 1h
 Level : Easy

Crossing the Repentir river
 Distance : 8,75 km - Time : 2h30
 Level : Easy

Mountains, rocks
 Distance : 11 km - Time : 3h30
 Level : Easy

CHATEAU
 0 100 200 300 400 500 m
 source : RGE IGN

**« THERE THE HILLSIDE PURSUES THE HILLSIDE WHICH RECEDES,
AND THE VALLEY, VEILED WITH VERDANT CURTAINS,
IS HOLLOWED OUT LIKE A BED FOR THE SHADE AND FOR THE
WATERS.»**

Alphonse de Lamartine - *Les Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1830)

The label “**Ville ou Pays d’Art et d’Histoire**” is assigned by the Minister of Culture after advice from the Conseil national des Villes et Pays d’Art et d’Histoire. It refers to territories, municipalities or groups of municipalities which, aware of the challenges of the use of their architecture and heritage by inhabitants, engage in an active process of knowledge and mediation.

The **architectural and heritage animation service**, led by the architecture and heritage facilitator, organizes several activities to allow the discovery of the riches of architectural and heritage sites by its inhabitants, young and old, and by its visitors with the help of professional tour guides.

Information

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In partnership with the municipality of Château



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Layout: L. Gouaille, PAH
using DES SIGNES studio Muchir
Desclouds 2018

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