

Arles, spiritual capital of Provence, is rich in Roman sites thanks to it becoming Julius Caesar's crack 6th Legion's place to retire. But it was how one person saw that place back in 1888 that transformed the world of Art.

In February 1888, Vincent van Gogh hopped off the train at Arles and over the next year, he produced some of his most famous works of art. Below is a stroll which takes in most of the van Gogh-related sights and if you want to get a pre-stroll flavour, how about watching [this short video](#) or reading this [article](#).



Strolls

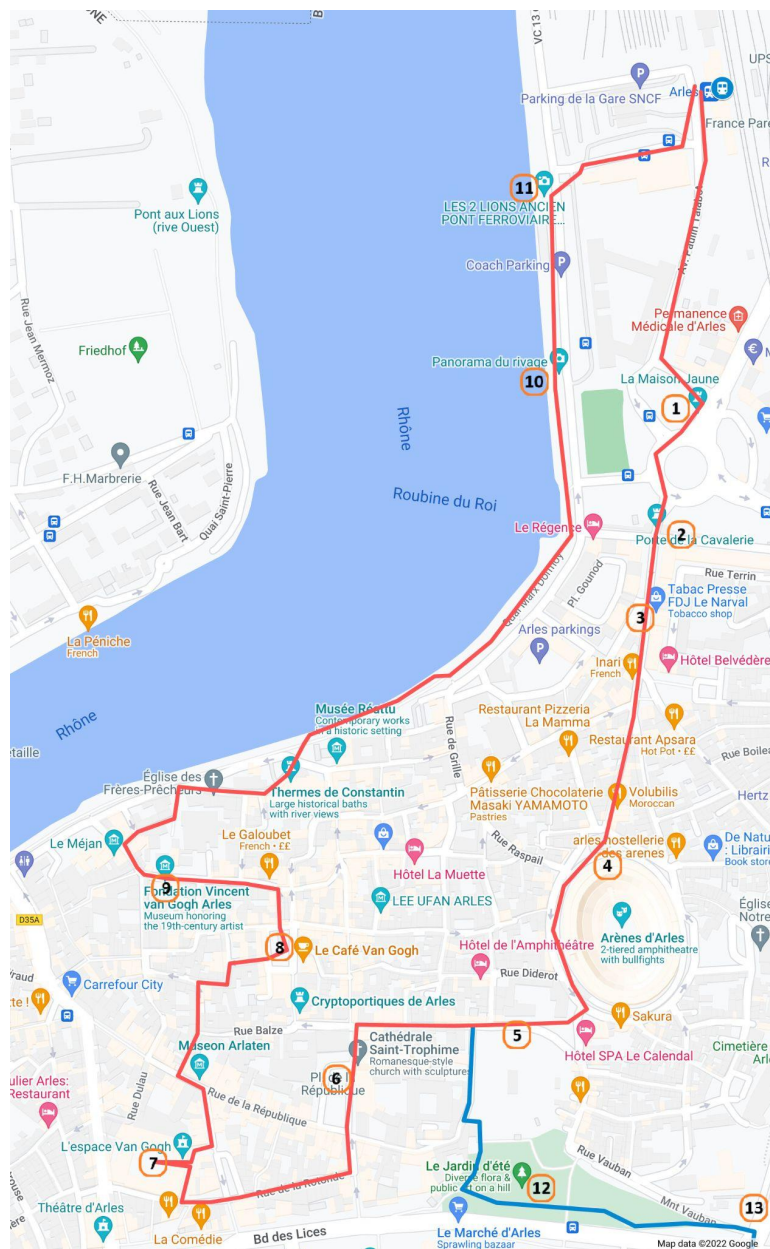
- [**A wander around van Gogh's Arles \(3K red\)**](#)
- [**Alyscamps extended walk \(1K blue\)**](#)
- [**van Gogh bridge extended walk \(5km green\)**](#)

Interactive Map

Here is a [link to a map](#) that can help you find your bearings.

A wander around van Gogh's Arles (3km red)

This stroll takes us around some of the key sites of Arles and places that inspired Vincent van Gogh to create around a picture a day. Why not see if it brings the artist out in you too?



- 1 La Maison Jaune
- 2 Porte de la Cavalerie
- 3 Amédée Pichot fountain
- 4 Arles Amphitheatre
- 5 Roman Theatre of Arles
- 6 Place de la République
- 7 L'espace Van Gogh
- 8 Place du Forum
- 9 Fondation Vincent van Gogh
- 10 La Nuit Étoilée
- 11 Two lion former railway bridge
- 12 Le Jardin d'été
- 13 Tour des Mourgues

Let's leave Arles station and walk down Avenue Paulin Talabot to the roundabout which is where Vincent van Gogh lived with Paul Gauguin for an intense couple of months.

The Maison Jaune (Yellow House) (1) has long gone but there is a sign showing where it was and what it looked like - and at least there's a yellow supermarket nearby.



Location of Maison Jaune (by Google)



Maison Jaune by van Gogh



Supermarché Jaune

Walk through the *Porte de la Cavalerie* (2) with its solid towers which have had several makeovers over the centuries. The *Cavalerie* were the Knights Templar who set up shop here.



Porte de la Cavalerie (2)



Fontaine Amédée Pichot



Fontaine Amédée Pichot - detail

Going down Rue de la Cavalerie (3), you reach a fork in the road with a grand fountain (Fontaine Amédée Pichot) which was installed the year before Vincent arrived and contains an artwork by Paul Balze. It's worth stopping to look at the picture, an allegory on poetry in the style of Raphael. This is what most people thought of as proper art when Vincent was here - it's hardly surprising Vincent struggled to sell anything.

Take the left fork along Rue Voltaire and continue to the impressive Arena (4), unless you've come from Nimes, in which case the *quite* impressive arena. Vincent only painted the arena from the inside and even then, the building itself wasn't what interested him.



Arena



Spectators in the Arena - van Gogh

Walk around the right-hand side of the Arena past the souvenir shops selling lavender and van Gogh tote bags and you'll find the Roman theatre (5), just a little way up Rue Port de Laure. This place takes a bit more imagination and the site was used as a source of stone for the city's walls after the Romans had left.



Roman Theatre

From here you could take the extended walk (see [Alyscamps extension](#) below) to see two places that shaped Vincent van Gogh's work.

Alternatively, take the Rue de la Calade, which passes in front of the theatre, and continue down this narrow street before taking a left turn down Rue de l'Hôtel de Ville to the Place de la République.



Rue de la Calade



Place de la Republic

In the Place de la Republic (6) is the Hotel de Ville and it's here that every three years a new Reine d'Arles (queen of Arles) is presented to the public.

La Provence

Prestigieuses reine d'Arles et demoiselles d'honneur

Jeudi 14 novembre 2019

Au soir de la remise des prix de la finale du trophée des As, dans les arènes d'Arles le 13 octobre dernier, Naïs Lesbros était très émue. La 23^e Reine d'Arles et ses trois demoiselles d'honneur: Lucie Barzizza, Amandine Sabatier et Laura Bernabé, venaient de traverser pour la dernière fois la piste de l'amphithéâtre dans le cadre de leurs fonctions. Le 1^{er} mai prochain sera en effet élu un nouveau règne. La passation de pouvoirs ne se fera réellement que pour la fête du costume, le dimanche 5 juillet. Les candidates peuvent actuellement, et depuis mardi, retirer les dossiers d'inscription. Ils seront à rendre au plus tard le 31 décembre à minuit.

L'élection fera suite à des présélections qui auront lieu les 28 et 29 mars dans l'hôtel Arlatan, établissement historique retrouvé pour cet exercice, et sous le regard avisé d'un jury, non encore connu, composé de sept personnalités. Marie-Claude Robles, présidente de Festiv'Arles, est en train de le former.

Avant cet été, et la passation de pouvoir, l'actuel règne sera mis à l'honneur, comme il le mérite, dès ce week-end. Samedi soir, en salle d'honneur de la mairie, à 18 h 30, sera présenté le calendrier de la Reine et de ses Demoiselles d'Honneur. Il est cette année co-signé par Clément et Patrick Trouche.

L'opus, intitulé *D'ombro e de*



Le 1^{er} mai prochain, et pour trois ans, un nouveau règne sera élu par un jury composé de sept personnalités. Il succèdera à celui formé autour de Naïs Lesbros.

/PHOTO V.F.

lume (d'ombre et de lumière), est édité par les éditions Sanssouire. Il s'agit d'un ouvrage original en noir et blanc. Dans son souci constant d'ouverture, Marie-Claude Robles a accepté le

challenge. Mieux, elle a saisi l'opportunité d'un travail original, pour tisser de nouveaux liens et partenariats. Ainsi, dans la foulée du calendrier, c'est à Provence Prestige que les photogra-

phies en noir et blanc vont aussi être exposées. "Nous avons trouvé auprès des membres de la CCI beaucoup de bienveillance vis-à-vis du costume et autant de passion que ce que nous pouvons

avoir" se satisfait la présidente. Le partenariat avec la chambre consulaire avait débuté avec la présence de Naïs Lesbros au salon de l'agriculture, et se poursuit donc. Dans une salle du palais des congrès décorée avec soins, des photographies inédites vont être présentées. Une séance de dédicaces aura lieu le 22 novembre en soirée, en présence du 23^e règne d'Arles et des auteurs.

Festiv'Arles a tissé pour cette année d'élection des liens aussi avec les Rencontres de la photographie. Le festival débutant cette année le lundi 29 juin, il croisera l'édition 2020 des Fêtes d'Arles. "Avec Sam Stourdzé et Aurélie de Lanlay nous nous sommes entendus sur ce calendrier. Nous avons tout intérêt à ouvrir notre maison. Les Rencontres ont même passé une commande particulière à Cécile Wanko qui va suivre les coulisses de l'élection du 24^e règne. En ce début de mois de juillet, tout le monde va se croiser, et c'est une excellente chose!" s'enthousiasme la présidente.

Avant, il sera question aussi, samedi 23 novembre à 18 h 30, d'offrir une conférence. Intitulée "Il y a 150 ans, naissait le Marquis Folco de Baronceil Javon", elle sera animée par Béranger Aubanel, arrière-petit fils du Marquis, en salle d'honneur de la mairie.

Julie ZAOUI

Reine d'Arles - Queen of Arles

Since 1930, Arles has been choosing its own queen, based on her knowledge of Provençal culture, language, long hair and ability to ride side-saddle behind a horseman. Alas, royal wedding enthusiasts will be disappointed as she must remain single for the duration of her reign.

The Place is also home to the compact Cathedral, dedicated to Arles' first bishop, Saint Trophime. It has a great fantastic Romanesque facade that seems to have been sculpted by someone who was happy to depict any scene as long as it involved lions.



Cathedral



Obelisk + Phrygian cap

Saint Anne's church opposite might seem like an excess of churches for a small square and that's exactly what the Republican authorities thought in the 19th Century turning it into a museum for pagan art. These days it's just used for temporary exhibitions. In the centre of the Place is a Roman obelisk - a 4th Century import from Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey).

When it was placed here in 1676 during the reign of the Sun King Louis 14th, it was topped with a golden globe. During the revolution that was replaced by the favourite headwear of the revolutionaries - a Phrygian cap. Then during the empire, it was changed to an eagle and so on through each phase of France's turbulent 19th century. These days, it's just been left as a bare point.

Cross the square and go down Rue Jean Jaurès and take the first right onto Rue de la Rotonde (which continues into Rue Molière). After about 200 metres there's a rather imposing looking building from the outside, but friendlier (and more yellow) on the inside.

This was the old hospital, the Hotel Dieu, where Vincent was treated. Now it's been renamed L'Espace Van Gogh (7) and you can take a look inside. Turn right just before the Espace up Place Félix Rey.

The courtyard garden is kept to look as it did when Vincent painted it.



Espace van Gogh (Hospital courtyard)



Hospital courtyard - van Gogh

Let's leave L'Espace van Gogh and wander through the lanes to another place painted by Vincent.

Continue up Pl. Félix Rey and then turn left onto Rue du Président Wilson. At the end turn left onto Rue de la République.



Place Félix Rey - Google



Rue du Président Wilson - Google

Then take the first right onto Rue Frédéric Mistral. At the end turn right onto Rue Barremes and then take the first right onto Rue du Forum which leads to Place du Forum (8).

The pride of place in the Place is the statue of **Frederic Mistral** - the Nobel laureate and Provençal's favourite poet who kick started the movement to promote Provençal culture and language at a time when France was becoming increasingly uniform.



Frederic Mistral



Cafe van Gogh



Cafe terrace at night

While there may be a special place in the locals' hearts for Mistral, there's a special place in their wallets for Vincent van Gogh. You'll find a recreation of the iconic 'Cafe Terrace at Night' on the opposite side of the square.

The next stop is **Fondation Vincent van Gogh** (9), where there's always one of his paintings together with the works of new artists. Facing 'Le Café Van Gogh' go to the left-hand side of the square and take Rue des Thermes. At the end turn left onto Rue du Dr Fanton and the Fondation is 100 metres up the street on your left.



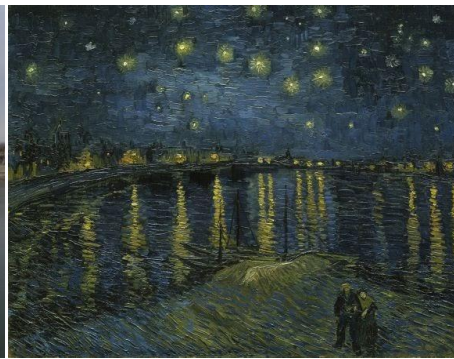
Fondation van Gogh

After you have finished there, continue along Rue du Dr Fanton until you have reached the banks of the Rhone. I've marked a slightly more wiggly route on the map if you want to look around some more of the back alleys.

Turn right and wander along the banks of the River Rhone and see if you can spot where Vincent painted 'La Nuit Étoilée' (starry night) picture (10). I wonder what Vincent would have made of these fishermen and their catch?



Rhone



La Nuit Étoilée

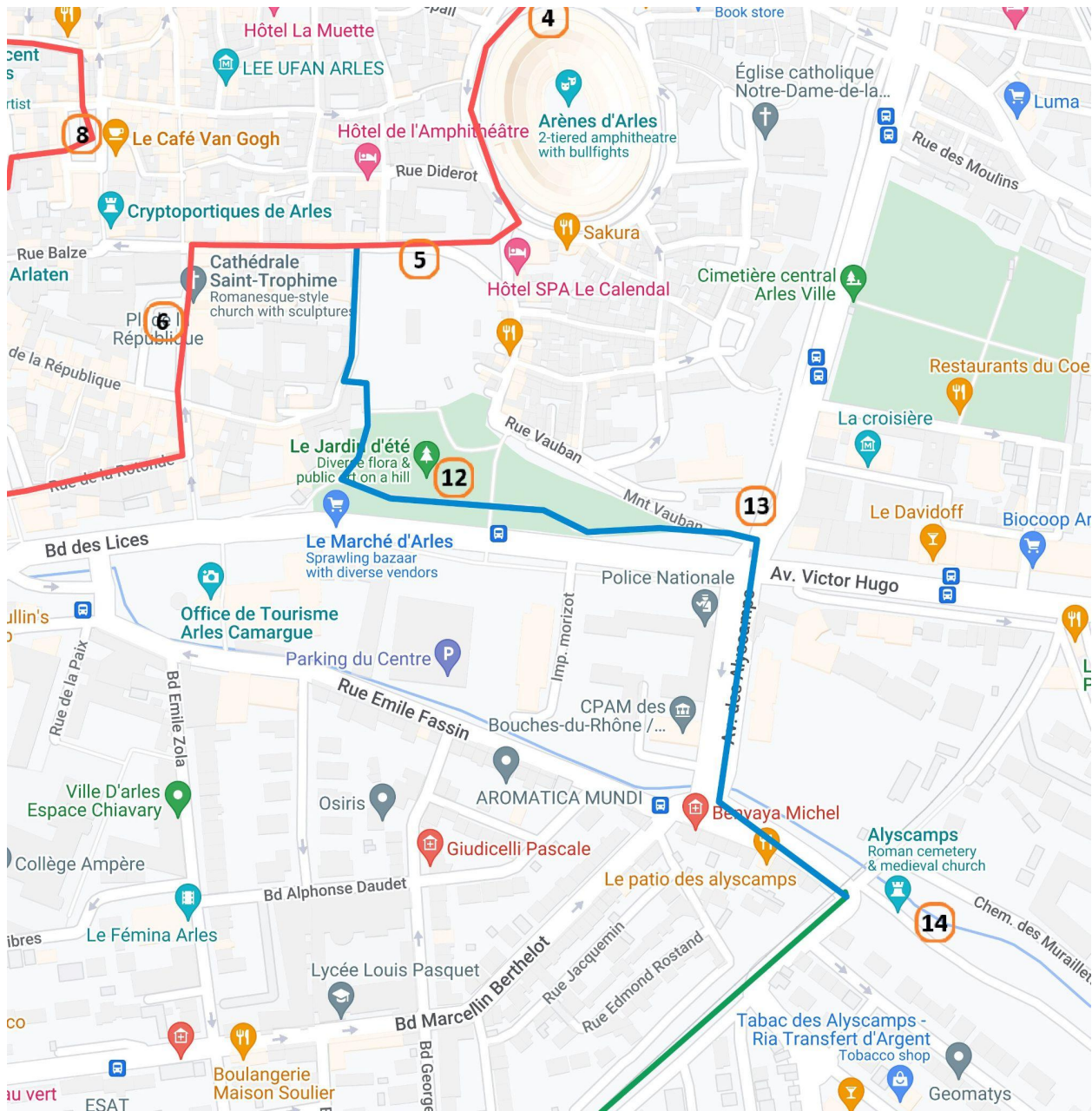


Fishing in the Rhone

Carry on along the banks until you reach the remains of the grand two lion railway bridge (11). The road to the station is on your right.

Alyscamps extended walk (1km blue)

This walk will take you to the old roman cemetery and is where Vincent brought Gaughin to paint together.



There are further two sites that help bring van Gogh's time in Arles to life. Let's start where we left off at the Roman theatre.

Head down the Rue du Cloître. There's a footpath through to the park on the left just before the archway, but if it's closed for any reason you can always follow the road around to the front entrance to the park.

Vincent used to visit and paint in the Jardin d'été (12), getting inspiration from nature (and the people who promenaded). Signs have been put up at the key places along with a map, so it's

easy to take yourself on a tour and try to match up what Vincent painted with what you can see now.

Vincent also visited another public space, with a long history, which you can visit next. Leave the park at the far end and turn right down the Avenue des Alyscamps - but before you do, take a peek left to see one of the towers that made up the city walls, the Tour Morgue (13).

Follow the Avenue down the hill and to the left, or follow the canal path if you prefer. At the end is the Alyscamps, the Roman necropolis (14). Alyscamps is local Provencal for Elysian Fields (a.k.a Champs-Élysées), the place where the good and the brave of Roman society went to after death.

When Gauguin arrived in Arles to stay with Vincent in September 1888, this is where they first went to paint.



Alyscamps



There's a striking difference between their paintings. Which place would you rather be?



Gauguin

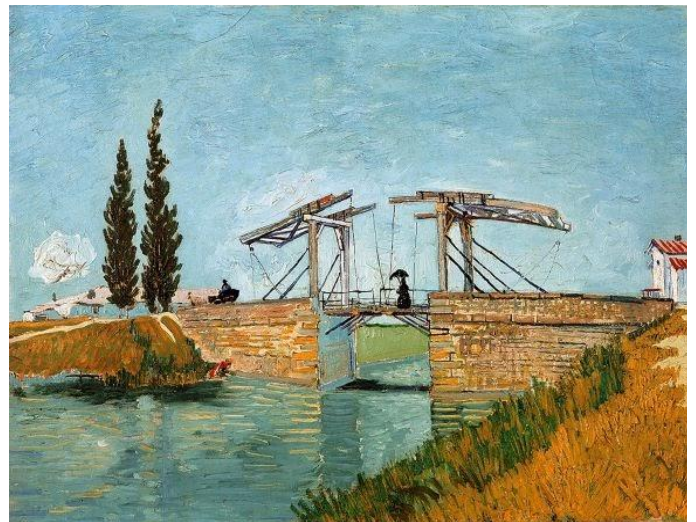
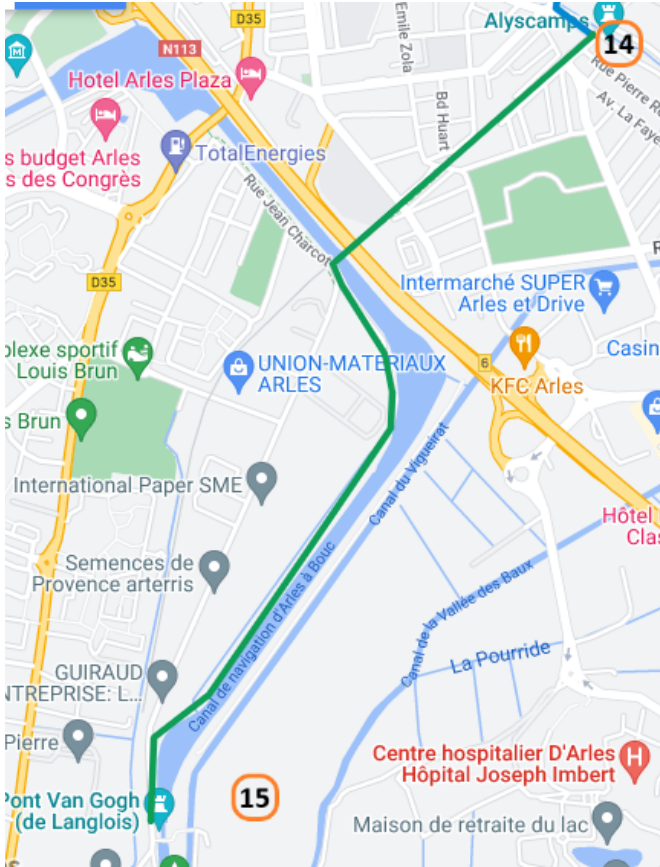


Van Gogh

When you have finished here, you can either retrace your steps and pick up the red trail at the Roman Theatre, or walk a further 5 km to the van Gogh bridge (green route on map)

van Gogh bridge extended walk (5km green)

This is a chance to walk to a replica of the bridge Vincent van Gogh painted and see some more countryside beyond the centre of Arles.



If you want to see one of the iconic little swing bridges Vincent painted, you may want to follow this extra extension to a re-creation of the bridge that featured in his pictures. Unfortunately the originals have now all gone.

With the Alyscamps behind go left down the disused train track. Once you've crossed the canal turn left down the slope, go over both crossings and down Rue Jean Charcot (which merges into Rue Gaspard Monge) with the canal on your left. After about 1.5 km you'll come to the bridge. (15) Then retrace your steps.