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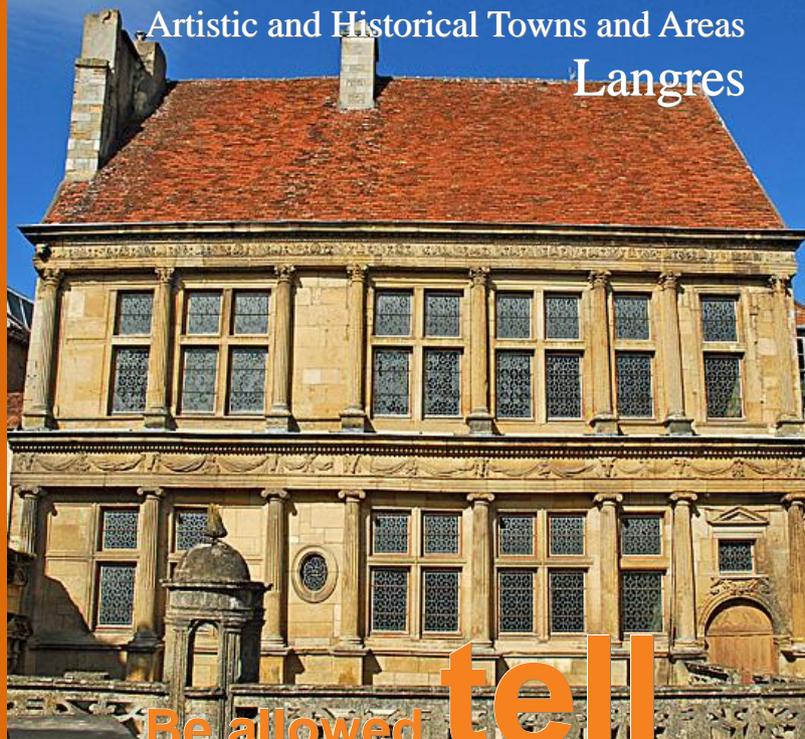
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near

Dijon, Besançon, Chalon-sur-Saône, Dôle, Bar-le-Duc, benefits from the naming Cities of art and history.

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## Artistic and Historical Towns and Areas Langres



# Be allowed tell Langres intramural

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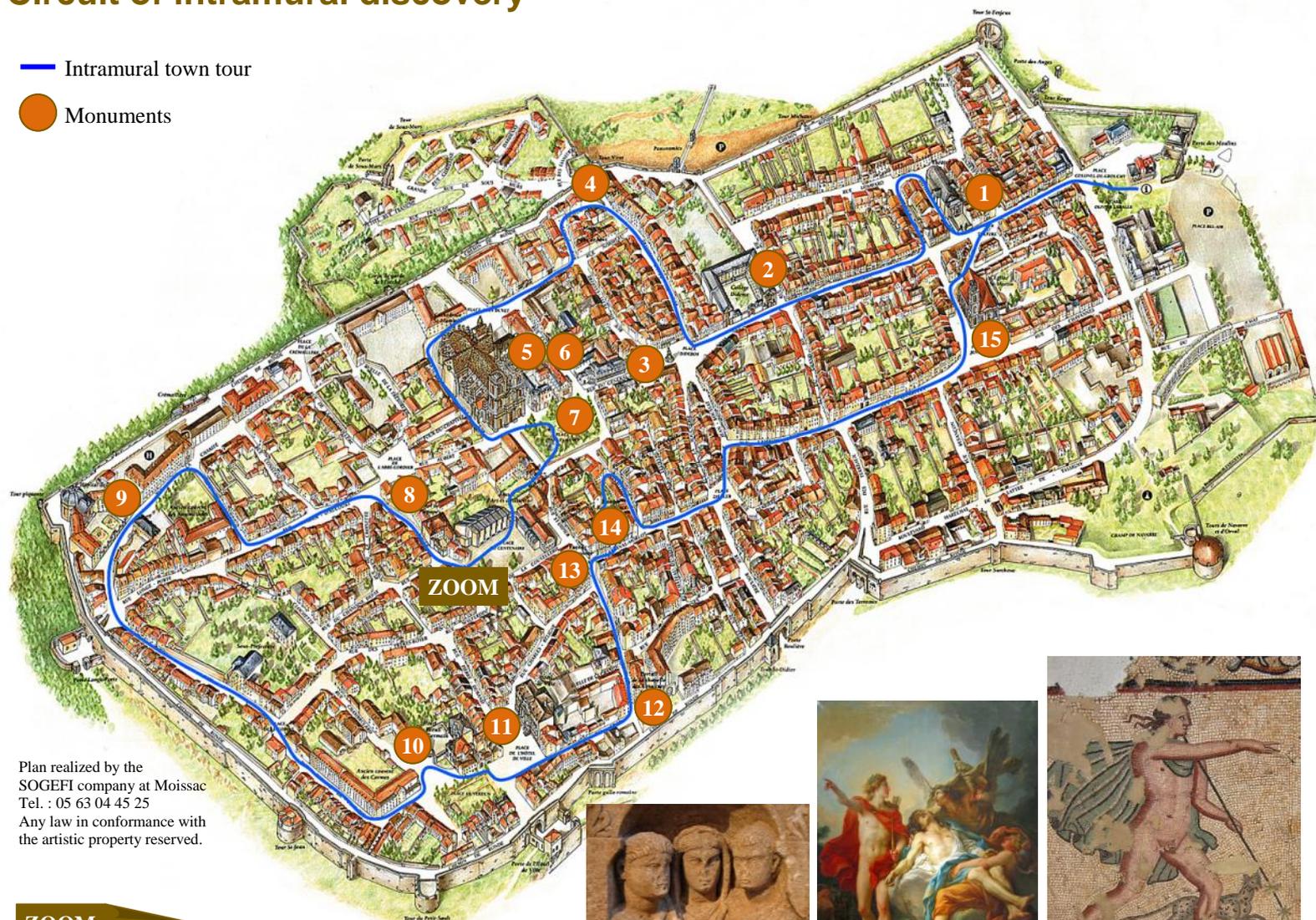
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# Circuit of intramural discovery

— Intramural town tour

● Monuments



Plan realized by the SOGEFI company at Moissac  
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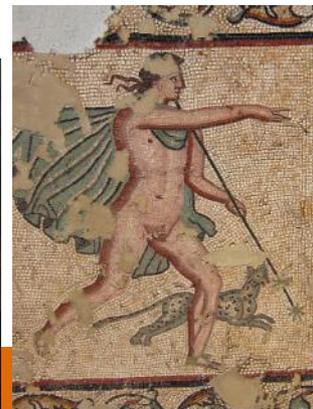
## ZOOM

### Museum of Art & History

(St Didier side)

The vestiges of the St Didier chapel, built at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, are now included within the modern buildings of the museum. Founded in 1838 it was the initiative of a learned group at the heart of the young 'Historic and Archaeological Society of Langres'. It made possible the bringing together, conservation and exhibition, of many ancient remains which building work in the citadel and the modernisation of the ramparts had brought to light. The first building in the Haute Marne to be classified as a Monument Historique (in 1840), there remains only the choir, the square of the transept and one bay. It is in this chapel that the relics of the town's patron saint were kept and worshipped. Since the creation of the Museum of Art and History in 1996, the Beaux-arts collections complete the initial archaeological collections.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the town demolished a block of houses (today place du Centenaire) in order to build a covered market. It was built in cast iron and was mostly lit by wide windowed bays. It was partly taken down in 1956 in order to allow the construction of an imposing water tower which supplied new housing built to the south of the city. The market finally disappeared in 1988 at the time of the construction of the Museum of Art and History. Completed in 1996, the museum echoes its surroundings: its curvature reflects the layout of the streets whilst the windows articulate its facade following a rhythm which reflects the narrow width of nearby houses. Here are conserved and exhibited the richest archaeological and Beaux-Arts collections of the region.



## Former Chapel of the Oratorians

1

1676. Converted into a theatre in 1838

In 1616, Bishop Sebastien Zamet asked the Oratorian congregation to direct his seminary, there to prepare priests for the diocese. In return he gave the new arrivals land and the buildings of the former Saint-Amâtre priory situated in the southern part of the town. The chapel was not consecrated until 1676. Of sober dimensions, layout



and decoration, the main doorway is framed by an Ionic portico above which is a pediment.

The chapel was transformed into a theatre in 1838 after having been abandoned during the revolution. Exterior decoration pays homage to this new use: masks, musical instruments and scores are seen on the pediment.

Completely renovated in 2000, the theatre can seat 250 people.

## Former Jesuit College

2

Called to Langres in 1621, the Jesuits established their college on this site 30 years later. Situated at the heart of the town, this establishment could receive up to 200 students, notably from Langres and its surroundings. In 1746 the buildings were destroyed by fire, and a new college was built on the site soon after. The new building was completed in 1770, but the Jesuits were not to see their new college as they were expelled from the kingdom in 1762.

In the form of a "U", this huge building, conceived for study and prayer, has its southern facade built on the former ramparts of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It is separated from Place Diderot by a surrounding wall, whose gateway is surmounted by an allegory of instruction, by the local sculptor Antoine Besançon. The wings of the building frame this wall with, to the right, the facade of the chapel. Conceived as an enormous rearedos, the profuse decoration of its pediment with clouds, sunbeams and cherubs' heads is surprising. The fire pots crown and complete this baroque decor.

## Place Diderot

3

The former Place Chambeau has for a long time backed on to the fortifications of the Late Empire. Before the building of the current rue Leclerc in 1612, the former Gallo-Roman cardo (on a north-south axis) stopped here. Denis Diderot was born here at number 9, in 1713. Born into a family of cutlery makers, he studied at the nearby Jesuit College before leaving for Paris at the age of 15. An eclectic and prolific author, he wrote within many different genres, including philosophy, novels, theatre and as an art critic. Denouncing intolerance and rejecting the authority of traditional morality, he struggled, with

others, for the triumph of reason and universal human happiness. His brilliant and surprisingly modern work, remains "l'Encyclopedie". Diderot was to be, with d'Alembert, the unremitting master of this work of human knowledge for more than two decades. 1884, the centenary of his death, became the occasion to rebaptise the square in his name and to raise a statue to him. The work of Frédéric Bartholdi, the statue rests on a pedestal, which lists the principle collaborators of the encyclopaedic project.

## Half-timbered house

4

Many houses in Langres have inherited from the medieval period their relatively narrow fronts and many storeys, as well as their residential and artisan functions. In order to keep up with the times, many facades giving on to the streets would be modified during the following centuries. With its wooden framework, this house is an exception. Its different functions are clearly superimposed: the two cellar levels for stock, the ground floor in stone served as the craftsman's workshop, the floors above as living space.



## Saint-Mammès Cathedral

5

Begun in 1150 and completed at the end of the century, the St Mammès Cathedral was the centre of a vast diocese situated between the Champagne and Burgundy regions.

It was to be the last major building in the lineage of the Romanesque abbey of Cluny, which was built at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Situated at the crossroad of different artistic influences, the Cathedral combines with great harmony a Romanesque style of decoration and concept of volume with early gothic innovations. The construction of the vault on intersecting ribs, a first in the region, allowed the nave to have a greater width and superior lighting than in other Clunian buildings.

Rebuilt in 1768, the imposing neo-classic facade is made up of two towers framing a forward central body superimposed by a pediment. Two monumental statues representing the Synagogue (on the left) and the Church (to the right) extend the pediment. The three levels are articulated by either columns or pilasters of the respective orders, Doric, Ionic and Corinthian. During the revolution certain features of the decor had their initial meaning changed. Thus, above the north door (to the left), the mitre and bishop's cross have been transformed respectively into a Phrygian cap (headgear typical of the Revolution), and a licitor's (officer to a roman consul) weapon.

## Cathedral's cloister

6

At the heart of the religious quarter, the former canonical area, the cloister bears witness to the importance of the Chapter. The community of Canons, which elected the Bishop, formed a collective domain both rich and influential. The cloister was originally formed by four galleries surrounding a garden. It was a closed place of meditation, and burial, for the canons. The gothic galleries were vaulted with intersecting ribs and were decorated with capitals of buds or leaves. The bays giving onto the garden had stone tracing as in a church window, which were still visible at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Above the southern gallery was a loft space for storage of tithes; likewise that of the east (rebuilt in 1748) housed the Chapter library.

During the revolution two of the galleries were destroyed. After several changes of use the remaining structures housed a primary school until 1980. Following major restoration, the municipal library 'Marcel Arland' was opened here in 1987.

Since 1991 the central court has been the showcase for a modern work of art by Francois Bouillon, called "Y d'If". Like a reliquary from earlier times, the well in the middle houses a piece of yew shaped as an Y. This letter, the convergence of three directions, can symbolise the Trinity or purity. The spiral, evoking infinity, is punctuated by numerous Y's as one gradually moves away from the centre.

7

## Caisse d'Epargne

1904

In 1903 the town acquired a former canonical house, situated at the feet of the Cathedral. In order to create a home for the Caisse d'Epargne, a competition to find an architect was launched. Part of the project was to put in order one side of the Place Jeanne Mance, to free up the south side of the Cathedral and allow direct access to the cloister. The competition winner, Dijon architect Charles Danne, made the most of the new building's situation at the corner of the square to accentuate its imposing character. The abundant decor is a compilation of former styles (Renaissance, Baroque and Classical).



## 8 Piétrequin House known as de Piépage

At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, construction of the first private mansions began in Langres, which coincided with the growth of a bourgeoisie in the service of the monarchy. Certain families, having acquired administrative responsibilities, consequently climbed the social ladder and wished to record this success in stone. Thus, in 1613 Philibert Piétrequin, lieutenant general of the royal bailiwick of Langres, had this house built.

Situated between courtyard and garden, the residence is in the form of an “L”. Ornamented by a frieze of fruit and gargoyles, the cornice still echoes the Renaissance, while supplanted by the sobriety of classicism. A surrounding wall, which preserves the intimacy of the courtyard, is ornamented by a majestic gateway dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## 9 Hospital of the Charité

In 1638, faced with the plague, Bishop Sébastien Zamet instituted the “confrerie de la Charité” (Charity Fraternity), whose mission was to save the “poor sick”. This new institution was given the responsibility of a hospital set up in several houses close together on this site.

A fire in 1770 allowed the building of a new and more functional hospital. Established following the plans of Nicolas Durand, architect responsible for administrative buildings in Champagne, the new hospital is formed of two wards linked to a central chapel by two wings. Here were the rooms reserved for the ill. The lateral wards were equipped with a room for convalescents, a pharmacy and an operating theatre. The whole allies symmetry with monumental scale around a courtyard forming an enclosed garden. The circular chapel, which is the central building of the ensemble, has a neo-classical decor of high quality. The sculpted decor, by local sculptor Antoine Besançon, underlines the vocation of the buildings. The pediment of the chapel shows la Charité welcoming orphans, whilst the pillars framing the doorway, represent Medicine (taking the pulse) and Surgery (cataract operation).

## 10 Du Breuil of St-Germain Mansion

In 1576 Sébastien de Valtier de Choiseul acquired a large piece of land and had built a private mansion. The ensemble is endowed with a watchtower overlooking the square and has a bossed base. The facade giving on to the courtyard is symmetric. The decor is essentially focused on the door, which has a plethora of mannerist themes much in the spirit of the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. With pitted and diamond faced bosses, horns and vases of plenty, arched pediment and lions muzzles the doorway becomes more important than its size merits. Around 1770 Philippe Profilet de Dardenay transformed the perpendicular wing and gave it a new facade, using the proportions of the Renaissance wing, with a central section, which is emphasised by being brought gently forward, French windows, a circular window and a pediment. Two garlands of flowers, two busts on corbels and a medallion in terracotta, perhaps representing the owner, complete the decor. A surrounding wall and gateway were added at this time. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Du Breuil

de St-Germain family added dormer windows, originally from other renaissance buildings.



## 11 Town Hall

In 1581, after two centuries of existence, the local council acquired a large gothic dwelling, in the place du Marché-aux-Blés (present-day place de l'Hôtel-de-Ville). In addition to local administration the new Town Hall was home to the courts, and, later, the prisons of the royal justice. As a result of a fire in the latter, a completely new building was begun in 1774. This new town hall, designed by Nicolas Durand, architect general to the Champagne, took on and managed the former functions of the previous town hall. In addition the royal prisons were rebuilt behind the building. The central element, rythmed by an imposing colonnade and capped by a pediment, constitutes the major accent of the facade. This escaped the fire that ravaged the rest of the building in December 1892. On the pediment the emblem RF (Republique Française) replaced the hacked out royal arms at the time of the Revolution; the angels were kept, however, to carry the Republican écu!

## 12 Former Chapel of the Ursuline

### Convent 1670-1680

The Sisters of Saint Ursula arrived in Langres in 1613 and they had for vocation the education of young girls, and the care of elderly residents. The community originally occupied a private dwelling on the rue de la Tournelle, before having built a more functional convent in 1631. The chapel would not be finished until the end of the century (around 1670 – 1680). The gateway, although in very poor condition, still suggests a heavy decorated section, with twinned columns, niches, winged cherubs and interlaced emblems. In 1818 the building became a barracks and in 1974 two thirds of the building were demolished in order to make space for a residential building.

## 13 Renaissance Façade (rue St-Didier)

This facade, which is almost square, rises on three levels, each being decorated by twin columns supporting a frieze. The layout of the orders is conventional: Ionic for the ground floor, Corinthian for the first floor and composed for the second. The frieze of the first floor shows an assortment of musical instruments and shields.

The latter are inspired by those which crown the Gallo-Roman arch, a reminder of the extent to which the Renaissance was influenced by antiquity. The ground floor was altered at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the removal of the central doorway replaced by a new carriage entrance corresponding with the axis of the street.

## 14 Renaissance House

Built around 1550 this residence of very high quality is composed of two buildings, one which gives on to the street, the other on to the garden, and which are linked by a lateral corridor which leads to a spiral staircase. The basement kitchens are located on the garden side giving on to a lower courtyard. Underneath this courtyard there is a rainwater cistern, whose water was drawn from a well topped with a small dome.

The facade has a complex rhythm of two levels with an alternation of large and narrow bays. The small columns of the Ionic and Corinthian orders articulate each level whilst accentuating the relief of the ensemble. The stone transoms and mullions of the windows are a part of the layout of the facade. Profuse and varied, the upper frieze made up of vegetal ornaments contrasts with the sobriety and the orderliness of the lower frieze, which is composed of bovine skulls. The door, in a closed arch topped by an opening and a triangular pediment, is decorated by a garland with a lion's muzzle and rams' heads.

## 15 The Church of Saint-Martin

Recorded from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the priory of St Martin was initially outside the town walls. This quarter would not be fully integrated (by the extension of the walls) into the town until the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. The present church is the result of several building campaigns, from the 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. From the first period dates the choir and the majority of the bays of the nave. From the end of the mediaeval period dates the hanging keystone of the nave.

The fire of 1725 was the occasion to transform the building, part of which was the doubling of the side-aisles in the gothic style of the originals. The Langres architect, Claude Forgeot, reserved his most creative work for the facade. Symmetric and sober, the focus is on the surroundings of the doorway which is set forward and decorated in the Ionic order, and capped by an arched pediment. The single bell-tower does not, however, conform to this symmetric rigour; had Forgeot a second tower in mind? The tower is 52 metres high with four distinct levels. The first respects the sobriety of the facade, the second is blind and is confined by pilasters with Corinthian capitals. The third, open with bays equipped with soundboards (for the bells) has pilasters with composite capitals. The ensemble is rounded off by a campanile, richly decorated by fire pots and pilasters, of which the lower parts are transformed into corbels.

