

# CASTLE ISLAND (ÎLE DU CHÂTEAU)

Presence of beavers and several burrow areas at the confluence of the Saône and Doubs rivers.



The island is a strategic site for reclaiming the former territories of the otter and serves as a stepping stone in its progression from the Rhône.



Large bird population including at least 25 nesting species. The tree sparrow, visible in the photo, is part of it.



Presence of numerous bat species in forested areas as well as around the large building.



## DID YOU KNOW ?

The Castle Island is a **SENSITIVE NATURAL AREA** (Espace Naturel Sensible). Entirely wooded, it is a strong landmark in the landscape and possesses undeniable historical and natural value. It serves as a habitat, refuge, and landmark for biodiversity.

# PÔCHOUSE

This dish originated in the 16th century at a time when fishermen, known as "pôchoux" in the dialect of Verdun, prepared it with fish from the Saône and Doubs rivers, and cooked it with white wine from the hillsides of Bragny-sur-Saône.

## DID YOU KNOW ?

Since 1949, this gastronomic heritage has been celebrated by the Pôchouse Brotherhood, which currently boasts over 3,500 Knights and Commanders spread across France and around the world.



"Verdun" is of Celtic origin: "Verdunum".

"Ver" would signify ford, passage, or interrupted river, or alternatively dwelling on water.

"Dunos" carries the meaning of high place, stronghold, and by extension, that of fortress.



# CEREALS CROPS

Verdun-sur-le-Doubs is surrounded by vast agricultural plains where cereal fields, mainly wheat, barley, and corn, dominate the landscape.

These cereal plains play a significant role in local agriculture, contributing to the agricultural production of the region. There is also an agricultural cooperative housing large grain silos used to store crops before their processing or shipment to other destinations.

In Verdun-sur-le-Doubs, it is common to see large barges loaded with cereals, ready to sail down the Saône and the Rhône before reaching other destinations, both within France, across Europe, or internationally.

## DID YOU KNOW ?

The grain silos at Verdun-sur-le-Doubs are the first first cooperative silos in France.

WHEN ?  
1930



DURATION : 45 MIN  
DISTANCE : 2 KM

the tracks of the  
Verdun fish

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## 1 PLACE DE LA LIBERTÉ

On 12 June 1944, the Resistance company Loulou shot dead 13 German sappers in Sermesse. The next day, the occupying forces reacted and demanded to know where their comrades were. The entire population gathered in the Place de la Liberté under machine-gun fire.

## 2 THE DOCK

In the 16th century, the boatmen, raftsmen, and "pôchoux" (Verdun dialect term for fishermen) of Verdun-sur-le-Doubs prepared the dish called "pôchouse." The recipe has endured, thus conferring the title of "capital of pôchouse" to Verdun-sur-le-Doubs.

### 3 SAINT JEAN'S CHURCH

This church was partially demolished in 1591 by Héliodore de Thiard to facilitate the defense of the besieged city during one of the Wars of the League. The nave is covered by a barrel vault reminiscent of the overturned hull of a ship.

#### 4 SAINT-JEAN' BRIDGE

Saint-Jean' bridge was built in 1810 on the site of an old wooden drawbridge.

This bridge leads to the building of the former town hall, constructed in 1684. It features a gauge that recalls the numerous significant floods.

## 5 GADAGNE'S HOTEL

16th-century hotel, heavily renovated, whose tower is named after Marguerite de Busseuil, heroine of the 1592 siege and wife of Héliodore de Thiard, governor of Verdun. It belonged to the Gadagne d'Hostun family, one of whose members, Gaspard de Gadagne, was appointed governor of the city by Henri IV in 1593.

## 6 MARGUERITE DE BUSSEUIL & HÉLIODORE DE THIARD

During the religious war between Catholics and Protestants, Héliodore de Thiard defended the city in 1592. With 250 men under his command, Héliodore de Thiard bravely faced his enemy in a fierce struggle.

His wife, Marguerite de Busseuil, then 19 years old, insisted on participating in the defense of the city and positioned herself on the ramparts, from where she distributed powder to the soldiers.

Unfortunately, a spark ignited a barrel of powder next to the countess, who died instantly. Despite his grief, her husband Héliodore managed to save Verdun and brilliantly resumed the offensive by besieging Chalon, which was in the hands of the Catholic League.

## 7 THE STATUE OF THE VIRGIN

Looking up at the corner of Quai du Doubs and Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, one discovers a niche housing the Statue of the Virgin on the facade of this 18th-century house. It commemorates the shipwreck of October 9, 1765, when 31 grape harvesters who were traveling to Bragny-sur-Saône on an overloaded ferry perished in the Saône.

## 8 PLACE DE L'HÔTEL DE VILLE

The place de l'hôtel de ville once hosted a grand castle built in 1770 by Marquis Louis-Henry de Pons. It is described as very rich, as evidenced by some statues or motifs preserved at the Denon Museum in Chalon-sur-Saône.

Behind it stretched a large French-style garden. It was destroyed in the early 19th century, and only a few foundations and cellars testify to its existence.

## 9 THE ALDERMEN'S TOWER

Topped by a pepperpot roof, it dates back to 1420 and illustrates the past of Verdun-sur-le-Doubs at a time when the fortified town was one of the key places in the region.

## 10 THE FORMER NOTRE DAME DE PITIÉ CHAPEL

Located at number 8 Rue Marguerite de Busseuil, the Notre Dame de Pitié Chapel was built in 1450 by the Lord of Agey. His coat of arms can be found engraved in stone on the façade of the building.

This chapel served as a place of prayer, especially during floods when residents could not reach the Saint-Jean's church.

## DID YOU KNOW ?

A legend surrounds this ancient chapel, where the heart of Marguerite de Busseuil is said to be buried...

## 11 FRANCOIS FERTIAULT STREET

Born in Verdun-sur-le-Doubs in 1814, François Fertiault was a writer and poet. He was a Knight of the Legion of Honour and Dean of the Société des gens de lettres. He wrote several collections of poems about Verdun at the end of the 19th century. He died in Paris in 1915, aged one hundred.

## 12 GRANDE RUE STREET

Founded in 1855, the Béjot pharmacy has remained intact since it ceased trading in the 1960s. At the end of the 19th century, this cobbled street was home to many shops and craftsmen. Some of them have left a reminder of their work, as at no. 30, where you can see a compass and a square, symbols of the journeymen, engraved in the stone.

### 13 ALLEYWAY OF BEAUTIFUL THOUGHTS

This little alleyway, located between the town hall and the rue de l'Égalité, has been taken over by local residents, who have worked hard to restore it. It has become a pleasant place to stroll, where you can read quotes and thoughts on slates as you go.

## 14 THE MEDIEVAL HOUSE

Located at No. 4 rue de l'Hôpital, this 13th-century half-timbered house has one of the most remarkable facades in Old Verdun.

## 15 THE CELLARS OF THE HÔPITAL STREET

In front of every house are the cellar hatches. At the time, these cellars were the preferred place for weavers because of their humidity.



Textile materials such as linen or wool are easier to work with when they retain a certain degree of moisture.

## 16 CHAMBERAN'S HOTEL

The former «Hôtel de Chamberan», built at the end of the 17th century, was later bequeathed to the town to be used as a hospital. It has two beds for men and two for women. Its architecture is inspired by Flemish and Dutch architecture, with crenellated gables.

## 17 THE PETIT DOUBS RIVER

With the development of river tourism and the arrival of foreign boats in the years 1960s-70s, the Petit Doubs was cleaned up and developed as a base for hire boats without a licence. Since this activity ceased, the Petit Doubs has (re)become a paradise for recreational fishing.

## 18 THE ARTISTIC MURAL

The mural in a house on the other side of the Petit Doubs shows the personalities who have shaped the history of the commune: Héliodore de Thiard (top left), Marguerite de Busseuil (to his right), François Fertiault (bottom right), and Jean-Pierre-Abel Jeandet (bottom left), a man of letters, doctor, member of several learned societies and mayor of Verdun-sur-le-Doubs in 1871.

## 19 THE HOUSE OF THE LAST ALDERMAN

At no. 1 in the rue des quais du Petit Doubs stands the house of Doctor Claude Panier, also known as the The House of the Last Alderman.

On its façade is an inscription recounting the great flood of 25 January 1910, which reached 8.35 m.