



TEXT IN ENGLISH

*Dear visitors,*

*Our village of Saint-Saturnin-lès-Apt is rich with its varied historical, cultural, religious and natural heritage which can be discovered at the heart of the village itself, but also in its 29 hamlets and along its 20 hiking trails maintained by the association ARPS, mainly in our natural areas, part of which benefits from protection status: nature reserve, Natura 2000 site etc...*

*Saint-Saturnin villagers are pleased and proud to make you discover the numerous elements of this heritage, but also to make it live. This is the reason you are invited to take part in the many lectures, shows, concerts and traditional festivals organized in the village and in the many local association activities which are held all along the year. Thank you for respecting this heritage (beware of fires!) and for helping us maintaining it in good state and highlighting it for future generations.*

***Commune of Saint-Saturnin-lès-Apt***

## **HOW TO ENJOY THIS DISCOVERY TOUR**

This tour invites you for a journey through time to discover the medieval village of Saint-Saturnin-lès-Apt, starting from the mill, the landmark of the village.

From the 10th century to today, the village has witnessed on its territory all the great events and the changes in the country, survived plague epidemics, wars, political troubles or bandits' attacks, which forced it to complete five successive enlargements of its remparts. It also constantly tried to increase and secure its water resources. While walking, you will be able to identify and recognize the traces of these events and appreciate the historical, architectural and religious heritage passed on by our elders.

From this sign, we invite you to enjoy the breathtaking view of the Luberon, the plain of Apt and the Monts de Vaucluse, to see the threshing floor and the old lime kiln and visit the restored mill and the small eco-museum located in the wingless mill in front of you (open each weekend of July and August). Then turn left towards the northeast on path n°0 named « Les Moulins» (marked with green dots by ARPS) which will lead you above the dam and to the castle chapel, the two first stations of this tour.

If after seeing the 13 stations of the discovery circuit, you have a little time left, you can take a look at the fountain and the « Léouze » washhouse located to the east of Place Gambetta (take the « rue du lavoir »). Further you can see the « Rieu neuf » washhouse (take the « chemin Ripert de Montclar» along the school and the swimming-pool, turn right and take the « chemin du Moulin à Huile», then turn left and take the « chemin du Rieu neuf »).

To return to the « Moulins » car park, take « rue Blanche Gaillard » then « place Gambetta » then rue « Albert Trouchet ». From « avenue Victor Hugo », turn right and go up « rue de la Combe» for a few meters, then go under the porch on your left and take the alley which goes up towards the mills.

The QR Code on every sign gives you access to the Municipality's website where you will find a translation of the text of each panel in Esperanto and other languages and to more detailed explanations in French. Most of the information used to design this circuit comes from the book by Émile Obled et Michel Wanneroy «Saint-Saturnin-lès-Apt, Histoire, Société, Patrimoine ».

## **LIST OF SIGNS**

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- 2 : Remparts and village of the 11th and 12th centuries
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### **1. «AIGUIERS» AND DAMS**

Water is an essential resource for humans and their herds. In the mountains, inhabitants found it in a few springs and, through runoffs, in the « aiguiers » (rocky rainwater collectors carved with gutters leading to a waterproof reservoir, sometimes protected by a dry stone « borie » : 160 « bories » and 87 « aiguiers » have been identified in Saint-Saturnin-lès-Apt).

To increase water resources, the rock under the Castle was drilled (1763) and a first retention built across the Combe to supply the Matheron fountain. In 1768, the rock under the Catafau was drilled (tunnel at the foot of the large dam) to bring the water to the Mourre watertank .

After two overflows (1780 and 1835), the retention was raised and strengthened. Considered dangerous, this dam was doubled in 1902 by a second 14 meter dam, built immediately downstream. After the repair of several leaks, it was equipped with an overflow in 1904. Containing 11 800 cubic meters, it supplied most of the watertanks, fountains and lavoirs until the arrival of drinking water networks in 1953.

### **2.REMPARTS AND VILLAGE OF THE 11<sup>TH</sup> AND 12<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES**

The village of Saint-Saturnin appeared as early as 960 AD in official texts, mentioned as a «Castrum » (fortified village) as early as 1006. These fortifications protected inhabitants from Saracens who launched frequent raids in Provence until 972 AD, particularly in the Apt region in 869. They destroyed Agnane from where twelve survivors may have been the first permanent inhabitants of Saint-Saturnin.

The remparts show a remarkable apparatus in chevrons (herringbone shapes) so-called « à la sarrazine ». Their towers have disappeared, except that of the Portalet. Two watertanks subsist, one at the Catafau and the other in the dungeon of the castle.

In the 12th century, houses were built to the South-East on the lower Roque, requiring the enlargement of the walls and the addition of new gates: the gate of la Roque (or of Viramont) and the gate of Rome (or of the Alps). Only the Saint-Etienne Priory and its cloister remained outside the remparts. The South-

Eastern tip of Catafau, more lightly defended, will be used later as a cemetery: Pons Arbald and Pons Pulverel, first lords of Saint-Saturnin, are thought to be buried there.

### **3. CASTLE CHAPEL**

The castle chapel was erected on the remains of a roman building and of a Paleochristian church (6th century) whose altar was discovered in the ground. It is dedicated to Saint Saturnin, first bishop of Toulouse and martyr of the 3rd century. Of Romanic style, it was built in the 11th and 12th centuries in a dungeon in which it only occupied the south-eastern part (arrow slits still visible). Consecrated as a parish church in 1056 (engraved dedication), it lost this statute in 1306 and deteriorated. At the end of the 17th century, White Penitents ensured its preservation: it was extended to the whole dungeon, then provided with a bell, a pulpit and a platform. It was restored to worship in 1671.

During the plague of 1720, it was used as an infirmary and quarantine. The Baroque altar, surmounted by the painting of the Descent from the Cross (today hung on the wall of the gallery), dates from the 18th century. The Calvary and the stations of the Cross outside date from the 1820s. The former well was transformed into a basin and linked to the dungeon watertank in 1842.

The chapel was classified as a historical monument in 1921 and restored in 2000. For years, villagers have celebrated there the Ascension and Saint-Saturnin's Day.

### **4. THE MIRACLE OF SAINT-SATURNIN-LÈS-APT**

Rosette Tamisier, a 34-year-old woman with fragile health, liked to pray in the castle chapel in front of a painting above the altar representing the Descent from the Cross of Jesus Christ. From November 1850 to February 1851, seven years before the apparitions in Lourdes, she saw the various wounds of Christ bleeding six times in front of hundreds of people. The mayor, the «sous-préfet», the «préfet», the archbishop and many others observed the phenomenon without being able to demonstrate the deception. The case had a national echo, and thousands of devotees and curious flocked to Saint-Saturnin, dividing opponents and partisans of the miracle.

Following the complaint from the archbishop who had concluded to the lack of a miracle, Rose was tried by several courts, among which the Court of Appeal in Nîmes, and sentenced for «contempt of objects of the Catholic worship» to six months in jail and a 16 francs fine, which she was not able to pay, so her sentence was extended by six extra months. The Church excommunicated her until she recognized she had lied, which she never did. She died at the age of 82 without making herself heard of.

### **5. REMPARTS AND VILLAGE OF THE 13<sup>TH</sup> AND 14<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES:**

In 1363, the States of Provence ordered the restoration of the county's fortifications. A third line of remparts was erected including the new faubourgs between the church and the gate of the Aiguiers, the only entrance to the village. From 1214 to 1408, the village, whose ownership was shared between the Pope and the King, with the « Rue Droite » (today « rue du Théâtre ») as a boundary, was run by two co-lords. During the 100-years war (1337-1435), the fortifications equipped with walkways, protected the villagers from the looting of Englishmen, «tuchins » and highwaymen. They allowed the agricultural, economical and demographical development of the village... interrupted by the black plague of 1348, which decimated half of the population.

Coming down from the castle by the stairs along the sepulcher with recumbent figure, the «chemin de Basse Roque », then the « rue des Pénitents », one can see the apse of the White Penitents' chapel (where the first municipal and cantonal elections in Saint-Saturnin were held in 1790) and, on the car-park, the remains of a wine vat, of the first communal oven and traces of dwellings and shops.

## **6. REMPARTS AND VILLAGE OF THE 14<sup>TH</sup> AND 15<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES**

The fourth enlargement of the remparts dates from the years 1430s: the inhabitants and the emigrants from neighbouring destroyed villages, received permission to settle outside the old walls. The high houses of the new faubourgs (like those sheltering today the presbytery and the new communal oven built in 1715), formed a rempart without access to the outside: their doors and windows were indeed added much later.

In the 15th century, the « Matheron » gate and the « Rabaille » gate (or gate of the Remparts) which closed the street of the Remparts (today's rue Pasteur), now gone, used to give access to the fields. The « Lices » gate (1435) surmounted by the Clock Tower (gone as well) which sided the church, linked the old village with the western faubourgs and the « Auvergne » gate with the district of « Les Baux » (to the west of the «Aiguier » gate).

## **7. FOUNTAINS, WATERTANKS AND LAVOIRS**

The underground water was collected thanks to draining galleries (water mines) carved on mountain sides and brought among other places to the fountains of Guby (quoted as early as 1006), of the Three Fountains, of Saint-Maurin, of Perréal and of Bourgane, among the most wellknown ones. Individual or collective watertanks gathered rainwater falling on rocks or roofs: those of the Castle and of the Catafau, the watertank-well of the gate of the Aiguier (14th century) and, later, those of the Clock Tower (1665) and of the Hospice (1835) fed by the waters from the « Combe ». The waters from the springs, the watertanks and the dam were directed, thanks to small aqueducts, to the village fountains and lavoirs:

- the « Matheron fountain » (1784), which supplied villagers until the arrival of drinkable water, the fountains of the « Plumé » street (1842), of the «Placette » (1853), of the « Chemin Neuf » (1869);
- four lavoirs in the village, among which the fountain-lavoir of « Léouze » (1835), the fountain of the Cours (1841), the one of the « Petit » (1903) to day at the « Place de la Fraternité » and south of the village the lavoir of « Surgens »;
- the fountain bollards at the « Gendarmerie » and «rue du Caire » (1904).

## **8. EARLY CHURCH**

Today's «Saint Etienne » church was built on the spot of the former Saint Etienne de Crau roman church from the 11th century, originally a priory with a cloister attached to the Benedictine abbey of Montmajour (north of Arles). This church, ceded to the Pope in 1306, had become the parish church in 1349, replacing the castle chapel.

Integrated within the remparts in 1360, it went through diverse enlargements between the 14th and the 17th century. In 1435 the «Porte des Lices» was attached to it, which was surmounted in 1559 by a square tower bearing a clock.

Under the impulsion of abbot Grand, the municipality had the medieval church, its 21-meter-high bell tower, the Clock Tower and the Juiverie demolished, and had the Mourre watertank and the Matheron fountain moved to build the current church in 1858.

The work brought to light graves of notables and a crypt now destroyed, whose pillars reused elements of sarcophagi and Gallo-Roman stelaes. The Apt Archaeological Congress of 1862, moved by this destruction, suggested a more respectful approach to projects.

## 9. TODAY'S CHURCH

In today's «Saint-Etienne» church, consecrated in 1862 in honor of Mary Immaculate, one can admire the mural paintings of the chancel (Holy Family, Christ in majesty, Coronation of the Virgin) painted in 1897 by Charles Barbentan (decorator of the Montmajour Abbey), an 1817 organ restored many times, a polychrome wooden Calvary from the 14th century and a beautiful carved walnut pulpit.

There are several old statues (including Saint Roch invoked against the plague, and Saint Anthony the Great, protector of domestic animals) and many reliquaries, particularly those of Saint Anne, grandmother of Christ, and Saint Radegonde: the latter, wife of King Clotaire, son of Clovis, is thought to have stayed in 570 on the hill of Perréal (i.e. royal step), while coming to consult Saint Césaire of Arles on the rule to be given to the monastery of nuns of Holy Cross which she founded in Poitiers.

At the top of the bell tower, a provençal carillon of 11 bells is animated every Sunday.

The inscriptions « *RF* » (French Republic) and « *Liberté-Égalité-Fraternité* » (Freedom, Equality, Fraternity) painted on the pediment, date from the secularization of the state under the Third Republic: the pediments of 119 French churches, among which ten in Vaucluse, still carry the motto of the Republic.

## 10. TOWN HALL AND ARISTOCRATIC HOUSES

The common house (town hall) was bought by the first municipality, elected in 1790. The door and the pediment were made by Alexis Poitevin, regional sculptor (1764-1816).

The « Rue de la République » (successively named «rue de la Gravière », « Grande rue » then « rue de l'Eglise » and « rue de la Mairie ») is bordered by houses remarkable because of their front doors. Three of them are registered in the Historical Monuments' Inventory: at n°3, a house built by François de Bermond, Lord of Vachères, in 1725; at n°7, a house, built between 1743 and 1750, with a porch sculpted with a fauna mask surrounded by the territory's fruit productions, whose coat of arms (scraped during the revolution period) belonged to the Ripert de Monclar family; at n°22, the house bearing Atlanteans, built by Jacques Ripert, whose 1764 iron-wrought balcony is supported by two statues.

One can also find beautiful front doors on «rue Blanche », « rue Henri Pascal », « rue de l'abbé Pierre Mathieu », and a Virgin above a door of the old «Hostel-Dieu ».

## 11. REMPARTS AND VILLAGE OF THE 16<sup>TH</sup> AND 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES

The village densifies in the 16th century: a new faubourg in the south-west at the « Gravière », elevation of the buildings and occupation of reserved military spaces along the remparts. The roman church is enlarged with two extra naves at the expense of the cloister. During the fifth fortification enlargement was built the Saint Joseph Gate (or Petit Gate 1597) which served the « rue Droite des Gravières », become « Grand Rue » in the 18th century, allowing the inclusion within the protected area of the neighbourhoods of the «Gravières » and of «Matheron ». This gate (at the location of the present panel) was demolished in 1782.

During the wars of religion (1562-1598), Saint-Saturnin and Apt were two allied Catholic strongholds against Huguenots present notably in Buoux, Ménerbes, Gargas and Rustrel. In 1574, during the siege of Saint-Saturnin, the legend says that the village survived thanks to a goat-herder who had the idea of tying candles to his goats' horns and to make the goats stroll along the platform of the castle at midnight to give the besieging Huguenots the illusion that it was too well defended to be attacked.

## **12. PLACE GAMBETTA**

The weekly market of Saint-Saturnin is held here on tuesday mornings. In the past, the right to hold a market, an important element of economic development, was awarded to Saint-Saturnin by Queen Jeanne, countess of Provence (1365), Henri III (1583) and Louis XIII (1630), then abolished and re-established before the 1789 revolution, to disappear again in 1793.

The statue of Joseph Talon, to the west, reminds of the ingenuity of a farmer, born around 1760 on the commune, who set up a method for enriching and multiplying truffle oak trees. His secret, only disclosed in 1810, posthumously earned him the agricultural merit award.

It's on the « Place Gambetta » that every year, the villagers of Saint-Saturnin commemorate a particularly painful event of their history. Indeed, on the 1st of July 1944, fourteen people were shot on the territory of Saint-Saturnin by the german 8th Company of the third Regiment of the Brandebourg Division. Erected in 1945, on the eastern part of « place Gambetta », the « Mur des Fusillés » (Wall of the Executed) pays tribute to the resistant men and women, to the young people refractory to Compulsory Labor Service (Service du Travail Obligatoire, STO) and to the refugees who died that day.

## **13. FROM THE HOSPICE WATERTANK UNTIL THE ARRIVAL OF DRINKABLE WATER**

The Hospice watertank (1835) is the largest watertank of the village. With a capacity of 600 cubic meters, i.e.500 litres for each of its 1200 inhabitants, it was supplied by the Combe dam and was intended to store water until the dry season. In 1839, it was equipped with a hand pump.

This construction quickly proved insufficient and the population complained from « *the pathetic situation it endured every summer following water shortages* » making « *living conditions particularly difficult* » and preventing farmers, craftsmen and traders from working normally: on the 23th of July 1945, a petition was adressed to the Mayor to ask «*for an urgent drinkable water supply* » ... which was set up in 1953.

On the other side of the street, the former « Hostel-Dieu » (or hospice) welcomed ill people and Compostelle pilgrims replacing the former house which served as a hospital within the remparts until the middle of the 16th century. The basrelief, above the door, represents Saint Jacques (Saint James) covering with his coat pilgrims, ill and maimed people. The inscription reminds the death of Jehan de Ripert de Monclar, who made the hospice his universal legatee in 1616.

*Texte traduit par Marc Richardot*