

SAINT-OMER

In life, I want...
#paysdesaintomer



Some key dates in the history of Saint-Omer

- 7th century AD:**
The Abbey of Saint-Bertin is founded at the initiative of Bishop Audomar (also known as St. Omer). At this time, the city is known as 'Sithiu'.
- 10th century:**
The city of Saint-Omer adopts its modern name, in homage to Bishop Omer, its founder.
- 10th-13th century:**
The city thrives and grows thanks to the cloth trade.
- 1214:**
Following the Battle of Bouvines, Saint-Omer, which had been Flemish, becomes for a while a French city.
- July 1340:**
Siege and battle of Saint-Omer. This battle is one of the first in the Hundred Years War, which raged between the French, the English and the Flemish.
- 1477-1677:**
The city of Saint-Omer is the subject of several struggles for its possession between France and the Netherlands.
- 1553:**
The Abbey at Thérouvanne is destroyed by Emperor Charles V.
- 1677-1678:**
Siege of the city of Saint-Omer by Philippe of Orléans, younger brother of King Louis XIV (March-April 1677) and Treaty of Nijmegen signed (1678), Saint-Omer officially becomes French.
- 1792:**
Abbey of Saint-Bertin destroyed. This is a consequence of the French Revolution, which forbids religious orders. The ruins become a quarry for the construction of new buildings.
- 1834:**
Town hall with on-site Italian-style theatre built. This building, designed by the Parisian architect Lefranc, is built using stone from the former Abbey of Saint-Bertin.
- 13 May 1943:**
Shelling in rue d'Arras causes the death of 115 people.
- 5 September 1944:**
The city of Saint-Omer is liberated from German occupation thanks to Polish troops and local resistance groups.
- March 2000:**
The Regional Natural Park of the Caps and Opal Marsh is created to protect the region's natural and cultural heritage.
- 28 May 2013:**
The Saint-Omer marsh is labelled by UNESCO, thus becoming the first biosphere reserve north of Paris.
- 15 July 2018:**
Saint-Omer residents take to place Foch to celebrate the victory of the French side in the football World Cup.

- 1 The Cathedral:**
"It's certainly the emblematic building of our city. Like all Saint-Omer natives, I am very attached to our Cathedral of Notre-Dame. My favourite part is its astrolabe...how its mechanism works is a mystery." - Laura
- 2 The ruins of Saint-Bertin:**
"This is the old heart of the city, as Saint-Omer was built around it almost 1000 years ago! I like coming here when the weather is nice to enjoy the gardens." - Laura
- 3 The Station:**
"Saint-Omer's railway station was built in 1904 and restored in 2019. I often go there with friends to attend workshops and digital training courses." - Laurette
- 4 The Public Park:**
"It's the green lungs of the city! Saint-Omer residents regularly go there for a stroll. This park was created after the city's ramparts were dismantled at the end of the 19th century." - Valentin
- 5 The Saint-Omer Municipal Library:**
"This is the finest library in the Pas-de-Calais department, and one of the oldest. I love going, because its "private club" atmosphere feels timeless." - Anaïs
- 6 The Sandelin Museum:**
"This is a converted former townhouse from the 18th century. In summer, I like strolling through its French formal gardens." - Anaïs
- 7 The Maison du Marais:**
"There is an exhibition area about the history of the marsh and a tasting area where you can sample local products. You can also take a tour of the Saint-Omer marshes on board a traditional local boat known as a bacôve." - Sarah
- 8 The Motte-and-Bailey Castle:**
"During the 18th century, this was a military prison. Today, the castle has become an artists' residence and a cultural location. Festivals and events are organised here." - Sarah
- 9 The Moulin à Café Theatre:**
"This is the old Saint-Omer town hall, built in 1834. It has a theatre under its dome. I regularly come here to watch the performances." - Laura
- 10 The Saint-Omer Brewery:**
"The Saint-Omer brewery was founded in 1866 and markets its beers all across the world. You can even visit it at certain periods." - Marie
- 11 The Jesuit Church:**
"An impressively large church that will make you look up! A sacred architectural gem in the city of Saint-Omer, freshly restored in 2017. I often go there to see exhibitions and events." - Valentin



the ENriCH team

Laura Schrive, 23
I come from Saint-Omer. A big fan of history and architecture, as well as a lover of good beer.

Favourite place: **the Duchenot tavern**, the perfect place for lovers of local beers.

Marie Louchart, 25
I'm from Helfaut. I like travelling and discovering new cultures!

Need to take a little break? Try the best pancakes and waffles in town at **La Fringalette**. You can also have a meal, with pizzas, pasta, chips and more on offer.

Valentin VANDENBERGHE, 18
I am a student in Saint-Omer. I like learning new things and travelling. I love new technologies and music.

The Spey River is the perfect spot for having a good time. It has a wide choice of drinks and a friendly atmosphere typical of the North of France.

Sarah Singer, 23
I live in Saint-Omer. I like sport and creative activities, especially sewing and scrapbooking.

Aux Merveilleux sells meringues garnished with whipped cream. The 'Merveilleux' is a traditional sweet pastry from the North of France, the recipe for which was perfected by Fred Vaucamps in 1985. A real treat!

Laurette Royer, 22
I'm from Nordausques. I love going to the restaurant in Saint-Omer, and photographing the countryside in Clairmarais.

The Maison du Marais is one of my favourite places. I love going there to try out local products, take a boat trip in a bacôve through the marshes and admire the scenery, and above all to spend time with my family or friends there.

Anaïs Bouchez, 18
I come from Saint-Omer. I am very fond of discovering new cultures and new countries.

My favourite: **the Jesuit Chapel**, not only for its historic beauty but also for the wide range of activities it offers for all ages. There are exhibitions, shows and even concerts! This Chapel has a new surprise in store every weekend!

The 3 squares and shopping streets of Saint-Omer city centre have restaurants, bars, shops, a cinema, the Tourist Information and Convention Office and more.

Getting to Saint-Omer

By plane/By TGV

The closest airports are Lille (Lesquin), Brussels (Zaventem), Charleroi (Brussels South), Beauvais, Paris (Charles de Gaulle) and London.

There are fast trains (TGV, Eurostar, Thalys) or shuttles that run to the train stations of Lille (coming from Brussels, Charleroi, Paris or London), Arras (coming from Paris) or Calais Fréthun (coming from London or Brussels).

By TER regional train

From Lille, Arras and Calais, there are regional trains (several trains run every hour at peak times) to Saint-Omer station. The journey takes around 50 minutes from Lille, 30 minutes from Calais and 1 hour 20 minutes from Arras. Saint-Omer train station is close to the city centre (10-15 mins by foot).

By car

Saint-Omer is close to several major motorways: the A26 (Calais-Reims), the A25 (Dunkirk-Lille) and the A16 (Dunkirk-Amiens-Paris).

Getting around in Saint-Omer

By bus

There are several bus lines for getting around the centre and conurbation of Saint-Omer. mouveo.ca-pso.fr

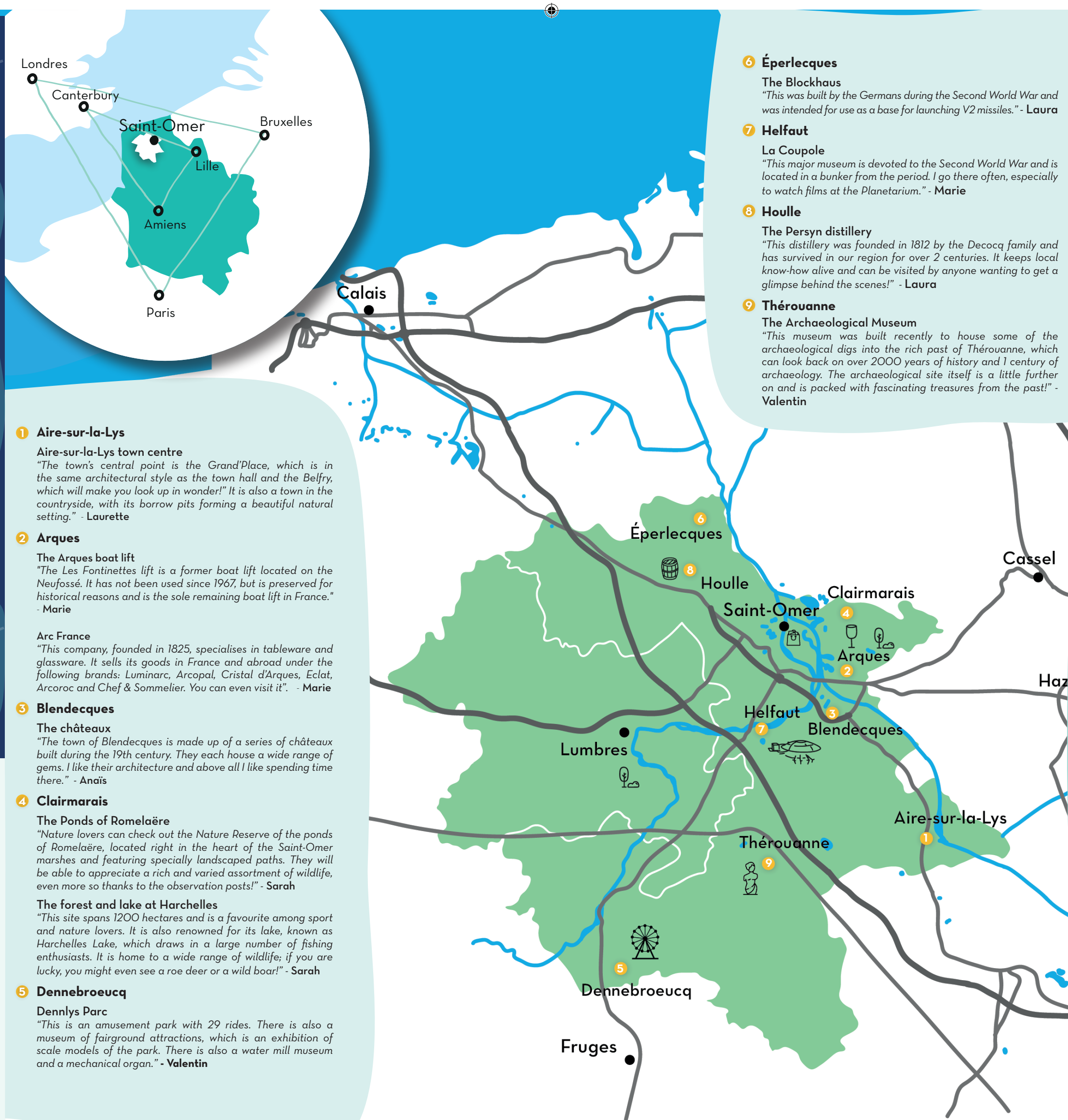
By bicycle

You can hire conventional and electrically assisted bicycles from the Saint-Omer Tourist Information and Convention Office.

This map was created as part of the ENriCH "Reveal YouropEaN Cultural Heritage" project, which is cofinanced by the "Europe for Citizens" project supported by 6 partners from 5 European countries (Hungary, Estonia, Slovenia, Austria, Germany and France).

Enrich aims to raise awareness amongst generations Y&Z (ages 16-25) of cultural heritage at a European level. The goal is to promote European cultural heritage among young people and to facilitate intercultural/intergenerational dialogue at a local and European level on the heritage and future of Europe.

This map is the fruit of the collective labours of a group of young inhabitants of the Saint-Omer region who took part in the ENriCH project in order to present the region to their peers.



1 Aire-sur-la-Lys

Aire-sur-la-Lys town centre

"The town's central point is the Grand'Place, which is in the same architectural style as the town hall and the Belfry, which will make you look up in wonder!" It is also a town in the countryside, with its borrow pits forming a beautiful natural setting." - Laurette

2 Arques

The Arques boat lift

"The Les Fontinettes lift is a former boat lift located on the Neufossé. It has not been used since 1967, but is preserved for historical reasons and is the sole remaining boat lift in France." - Marie

Arc France

"This company, founded in 1825, specialises in tableware and glassware. It sells its goods in France and abroad under the following brands: Luminarc, Arcopal, Cristal d'Arques, Eclat, Arcoroc and Chef & Sommelier. You can even visit it!" - Marie

3 Blendecques

The châteaux

"The town of Blendecques is made up of a series of châteaux built during the 19th century. They each house a wide range of gems. I like their architecture and above all I like spending time there." - Anaïs

4 Clairmarais

The Ponds of Romelaëre

"Nature lovers can check out the Nature Reserve of the ponds of Romelaëre, located right in the heart of the Saint-Omer marshes and featuring specially landscaped paths. They will be able to appreciate a rich and varied assortment of wildlife, even more so thanks to the observation posts!" - Sarah

The forest and lake at Harchelles

"This site spans 1200 hectares and is a favourite among sport and nature lovers. It is also renowned for its lake, known as Harchelles Lake, which draws in a large number of fishing enthusiasts. It is home to a wide range of wildlife; if you are lucky, you might even see a roe deer or a wild boar!" - Sarah

5 Dennebroeucq

Dennlys Parc

"This is an amusement park with 29 rides. There is also a museum of fairground attractions, which is an exhibition of scale models of the park. There is also a water mill museum and a mechanical organ." - Valentin

6 Éperlecques

The Blockhaus

"This was built by the Germans during the Second World War and was intended for use as a base for launching V2 missiles." - Laura

7 Helfaut

La Coupole

"This major museum is devoted to the Second World War and is located in a bunker from the period. I go there often, especially to watch films at the Planetarium." - Marie

8 Houlle

The Persyn distillery

"This distillery was founded in 1812 by the Decocq family and has survived in our region for over 2 centuries. It keeps local know-how alive and can be visited by anyone wanting to get a glimpse behind the scenes!" - Laura

9 Thérovanne

The Archaeological Museum

"This museum was built recently to house some of the archaeological digs into the rich past of Thérovanne, which can look back on over 2000 years of history and 1 century of archaeology. The archaeological site itself is a little further on and is packed with fascinating treasures from the past!" - Valentin

Cultural calendar

February-March:

Funfair:

There are a host of different rides for thrill-seekers and plenty of sweet stalls.

April:

"Hungry Color":

This event is a festive and colourful expression of solidarity and features artists and DJs!

May:

"Sous les pavés l'art":

The eccentric and zany street arts festival in Saint-Omer.

June:

Music Festival:

A large number of small concerts, DJ sets and open stages in the different town squares of Saint-Omer.

"L'été en Fête":

Every year, a French star comes to Longuenesse to give a free show to an appreciative audience!

The Saint-Omer "Ch'ti délire":

11 km of madness, with a course dotted with natural obstacles or ones created by the organisation. It is a real "obstacle course" that is fun and friendly to run, climb and crawl your way through!

July:

Jaaz Festival:

This festival's programme is aimed at bringing jazz culture to the general public.

Youth Festival, Arques:

Every year, this concert draws in over 20,000 spectators for a wild evening of all the latest hits from modern artists.

Gaulish meal, Moule:

Enjoy a good meal in a friendly, musical atmosphere with a dancefloor, inflatable features and pony rides.

Saint-Omer fireworks:

Thousands of people attend this traditional event on 14 July every year to celebrate France's national day.

Nautical procession.

This annual flowered procession on the water is unique in the North of France. Thousands of people watch the floats from the banks of the Aa canal in Haut-Pont.

September:

Beer Festival:

Regional produce and brewers' village, musical entertainment, Beer Bike rides, giant puppet and brass band parades... Everything you need for a great weekend dedicated to the star of the show: beer!

European Heritage Day:

These Days are perfect for visiting the heritage of Saint-Omer, with some locations opening specially.

October:

NAME Festival:

This electronic music festival, which takes place in some of the most iconic heritage locations in Saint-Omer, promises a moment to remember.

November:

Circus of Generosity:

A fantastic circus show that offers wonder and laughter for young and old alike without breaking the bank, with shows over a 3-day period.

December-January:

Christmas Market:

Christmas Market, Christmas lights, Ferris wheel, pyrotechnics show, mascots, Christmas parade... all the magic of Christmas in one place.