

Giverny

Giverny is a small French village 80 km to the west of the capital city Paris, within the valley of the river Seine and the northern region of Haute-Normandie. The village is best known as the rural retreat of the Impressionist painter Claude Monet (lived 1840-1926).

Understand

Monet moved to Giverny in 1883 with his family, including a mistress and 8 children, living and painting here until his death in 1926. The village surroundings and the gardens of his house formed a great part of the inspiration and subject matter for his paintings. It was after the move to Giverny that Monet began his famous *Séries* of paintings, repeatedly rendering haystacks, cathedrals and water lilies from his garden pond in his own unique Impressionist style.

Get in

By car

Take the A13 from Paris to Bonnières, then the D201 to Vernon where you cross the river Seine- look for signs....

By train

Take the train from Paris Gare St-Lazare to Vernon (journey time 45 minutes; see SNCF, then take a taxi or bus (€4.00 return ticket) to the village. The bus service is timed to link with the train and a combined ticket can be obtained at Gare St-Lazare.

<http://www.voyages-sncf.com/leisure/fr/launch/home/>

By bus

Bus and minibus trip from Paris to Giverny on half day tour and to Giverny and Versailles on full day tour, are operating everyday except Monday (closing day of Giverny Monet gardens). <http://giverny.org/tour/>

Get around

See

It is always best to **arrive early** in Giverny in order to avoid the throngs of bus-driven tourists who arrive later in the morning and keep coming all day....

- **Monet's House** (*Fondation Claude Monet*) 84 rue Claude Monet, tel 02 32 51 28 21, open April-October Tu-Su 10 am - 6 pm, wheelchair access available - the house is quietly eccentric and highly interesting in an Orient-influenced style, and includes Monet's collection of Japanese prints. There are no original Monet paintings on the site - the real drawcard, is the gardens around the house - the water garden with the Japanese bridge, weeping willows and water lilies is now somewhat iconic. Monet's house has the obligatory gift-store attached, designed to help you part with your money in exchange for all manner of things Impressionist.
- the **Musée d'Art Américain Giverny** 99 rue Claude Monet, tel 02 32 51 94 65, open April - November Tu-Su (Th-Su in November) 10 am - 6 pm, under 12s free, wheelchair access available - this small museum features American artists influenced by Impressionism and has a good program of temporary exhibitions
- The **Natural Mechanical Museum** 2 rue Blanche Hoschedé-Monet, Phone: 02 32 21 26 33. 27620 Giverny. Association under 1901 law, founded by the **Guillemard** brothers: Jean-pierre, René and Gérard currently run restorations and exhibitions with the help of an enthusiasts team who devoted their time and known-how to the Patrimony preservation. The museum origin is a private collection of steam internal combustion engines; founded in 1955 by the **Guillemard** family a GIVERNY resident's since generations. Former threshing entrepreneur and blacksmith ADOLPHE Guillemard has transmitted to his children his know-how and passion for the vintage mechanics. Along years, purchasing, donations of engines pile-up awaiting for the needed parts or just a time to restore. Since 1982 the number of collected items increased due to closing of workshops, factories or mills. The preservation of these engines was a rescue task, numbers of testimonials items already gone. In 1990 the collection find home in the actual local where the engines are in permanent show, installation of the **Carels 1908** diesel engine weighting 28 tons keep the team busy for months on overhauling and restoration; it becomes in 2003 the world bigger old running diesel engine.

Do

It is recommended to be guided to make most of your visit of Claude Monet's house and garden at Giverny.

If you come from Paris, you may use a bus or minibus tour that will include a guide for the visits. <http://giverny.org/tour/>

If you come on your own, you can book a private guided visit in English proposed every weekday from Tuesday to Friday morning and evening (on appointment only). <http://giverny.org/guide/>

If you are feeling energetic, try hiking one of the nature trails that wind through the hills above Giverny. The panoramic views of the village, the Seine valley, and the neighboring town of Vernon are quite stunning to see unfold beneath you. Two of the area's trails start at a signboard behind the city hall, found just up Rue Blanche Hoschedé-Monet. Make sure you're wearing sturdy shoes or boots and are in relatively good shape, as some sections of the trails up in the forested hillsides can be very challenging. Water and insect repellent might also be good ideas, depending on the weather. Information on other scenic hiking trails can be found at the Office of Tourism in neighboring Vernon.

The nearby Forêt de Bizy is also a lovely place for a picnic or a nature walk, and is a good way to get away from the throngs of tourists that one sometimes sees in Giverny.

Eat

There is a small restaurant attached to Monet's House (beware tourist trap prices and overcrowding) and a few reasonable options in the village. On a fine day, bringing a picnic lunch with you might be a better option - walk up out of the village along some of the small lanes for a change from the crowds.

Sleep

There are a number of bed & breakfast options in the village and surrounds. There's probably not enough in Giverny, however, to warrant a night over. This village - or many others along the Seine valley nearby - could provide an ideal base for further exploration in the Haute-Normandie region of northern France.

Get out

In order to complete the Monet experience, travellers might like to visit the neighboring town of Vernon, (castle, medieval streets, Museum with paintings by Giverny artists, including Claude Monet, 17th-19th c. mansion and much more) or journey on / back to Paris, or to Rouen and the Seine valley, where they can see further examples of his work at various venues.

For more info see: www.wikipedia.org

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