



WALK

IN COSNE-COURS-SUR-LOIRE

LET YOURSELF BE GUIDED BY
BOURGOGNE
COEUR DE LOIRE
THE TOURIST OFFICE



Tour itinerary

~ Distance 2 km • Estimated time 1h15 • Available to all



2~Walk in Cosne-Cours-sur-Loire



Tourist Office
Start and finish



Tour itinerary



Other option
to avoid stairs



Town Hall
Place du Docteur
Jacques Huyghues
des Étages



Loire
Museum
Place de la Résistance



Churches



Free parking
without time-limit



Marketplace
Lots of delicious
local products on Wednesday
and Sunday mornings



Main shopping
streets



Water closet

The HISTORY of Cosne is very old...

The site has been inhabited since prehistoric times, but it was the Celts who (in the 5th century BC) gave it its first name, Condate.

Translated as “confluence”, it perfectly reflects **the city's enviable geographical location**, at the intersection of the Loire and Nohain rivers.

In the 5th century AD, the town came under the authority of the Bishop of Auxerre: the latter and his successors then constantly reaffirmed their power against that of the Counts of Nevers, owners of Cosne's castle.

The town took the name of **Cosne-sur-Loire** in the 15th century but was renamed in 1973 following its association with the village of Cours.

~ Now that the scene is set...

THE TOUR CAN START!

1 The LOIRE Palace

Undeniably, the building in front of you dominates its surroundings!

It must be said that it was built to house a court and that its monumental architecture is intended to impress and establish the authority of justice. Moreover, several “darts” have slipped into its façade: this ornament evokes, in its downward direction, punitive lightning and thus perfectly fits the vocation of the place.

The building (*inaugurated in 1864*) is also marked by **a style associated with the reign of Louis the 13th**.

Inside, one must imagine, in place of the current vestibule, a room called “*des pas perdus*” (“lost steps”) where litigants paced up and down while waiting to be heard by the judges!

~ Reach the Loire quays by passing the Herentals garden (*alongside the Loire Palace on the right*).



“Once on the quays, you can catch sight on your right of “Princesse de Loire” (“Loire's Princess”), gabarre built in 2013 by the association of Gabarriers du Haut Val de Loire.”

2 The suspension BRIDGE

For centuries, ferrymen and their ferries allowed men, cattle and goods to travel on this arm of the Loire, but no bridge project saw the light of day between the Gallo-Roman era and the 19th century!

In 1832, a suspension bridge finally connected the two banks. It was replaced, at the dawn of the 1930^S, by a reinforced concrete bridge better suited to automobile traffic but destroyed during the bombing of June 16, 1940. The current bridge was not inaugurated until 19 years later.

~ Pass under the bridge and take the first small alley on your left (*before the house number 4*). Continue straight on “rue des Mulets” and at the end of this street, turn slightly right before entering the fortified walls.



Swimming in the Loire is prohibited particularly because of its strong current and numerous watering holes!

3~Walk in Cosne-Cours-sur-Loire



3 The REMAINS OF THE CASTLE and the old jail

In the 13th century, stone ramparts replaced the old wooden palisades and, in place of a simple mound surrounded by ditches, the octagonal enclosure of the castle of the Counts of Nevers was built.

From then on, the latter and the bishops of Auxerre (*lords of the city since the 5th century*) never ceased to quarrel to defend their respective rights. At the same time, what could be more normal when we know that the counts of Nevers were responsible for the guard of the city but that the town of Cosne, its fortifications and all its taxes belonged to the bishops...

But what did the site look like?

A patrol path ran along the surrounding walls, while at each corner stood a tower. The keep and chapel, which also stood here, unfortunately left no visible traces. Originally, the ground was much higher and you can see this by looking up at the only gate tower that remains standing (*yes, look carefully: you can see the trace of an old door*).

In the 1850^s, the city wall was partially demolished to allow the construction of the new jail. **On the city side, it has a two-towered façade that evokes the architecture of a castle, while it appears before you as a long nave ending in an apse** (*on each side of which the cells were distributed*). Beware that this plan, inspired by religious architecture, was intended to symbolically contribute to the redemption of the prisoners.

~ Exit through the other large door and cross the street at the pedestrian crossing on your right.

~ Once in the small square:

4 The former AUGUSTINIAN CONVENT, currently the Loire Museum

I concede that it takes a little imagination!

The Congregation of Reformed Augustinians settled here in 1616. The building that now houses the museum is built from various reused elements and stones, which also explains some rather surprising architectural details and a few irregularities.

A short journey through time: Around you, brothers dressed all in black are busy. Some head towards their large garden (*extending almost to the current quays*) while others go directly into the city to mingle with the locals and carry out the missions of preaching and service to the poor that are those of the mendicant orders. Later, these men of the Church all gathered in the chapel on your right.

Let's take a closer look.

It's hard to guess that the Augustinians of Cosne were buried here, isn't it? Especially since this ancient place of worship had the strange peculiarity of facing West. This notable difference compared to most of the churches of Christendom is probably explained by the fact that the Augustinians were particularly keen to preach the good word to the inhabitants, to turn very directly to the Cosnois (*especially when we know that, on the other side of the Loire, were the Protestants of Sancerre*).

As you might expect, the façade is not original: four masks were sculpted during its renovation in 1862 to show that the place had then been converted into a theatre!



Psst...

Don't forget to visit the museum!

Discovering its collections on the Loire and the Fine Arts is a must for anyone who wants to discover our region!



Caryatids decorate a window of the building! These are female statues dressed in tunics evoking ancient Greece and serving (*like columns or pilasters*) to support an element of an architectural construction.



~ Head towards the covered passage at the back of the square and, just before entering it, look to your left. Take the covered passage.



5 The MODELS of the Loire Museum

One of the models you can see represents a barge. A small detail: the rudder you can see at the stern of the boat (which should be called a "piautre" for the sake of accuracy) operates at an oblique angle and thus demonstrates a desire to copy **Viking ships!**

~ Turn right and go over the footbridge. Then turn right and go down to the platforms through the parking entrance in front of you. Turn left.
Pssst... You can also follow the dotted line on the map.



6 ~ Walk in Cosne-Cours-sur-Loire

6 The QUAYS of Loire

If you had come to Cosne in the distant past, you would have seen several lines of boats parked in front of you. The quays you are standing on were built thanks to the forges that stood in place of the parking lot you have just crossed (be patient, we will tell you more very soon 😊).
Keep your eyes open: On your right, you can see two double flights of stairs. They were used to facilitate the transport of coal from the ship to the hall located on the platform opposite (on part of the current parking lot).

Several flood marks are on your left.

Problem: the stone placed horizontally at the bottom of the pylon was added after the various lines were engraved. As a result, you have to subtract its height to see the actual level reached by the water.

Finally, you can't miss the immense anchor in front of you. It was forged in Cosne in 1861, fished out of the port of Rochefort by the American army a century later, and weighs no less than 2,580 kg.

Impressive, isn't it?

Look even further into the distance: you can see the Paris-Orléans bridge (which you can explore by rail bike) and the Butte de Sancerre.

~ Take the large stairs on your left and continue straight ahead.
Pssst... You can also follow the dotted path on the map.



7 The FORGES of La Chaussade

Today, few traces remain of the prestigious past of Cosne's forges: the beautiful gate you will encounter on your left is one of them.

Founded at the end of the 17th century and developed by Pierre Babaud de la Chaussade, the great industrial center formed by these forges owed its fame to the orders of the Royal Navy. These orders included the forging, welding, and assembly of anchor components for warships, as well as the manufacture of chains, armor plates, nails, and cannonballs.

Moreover, the old nail factory (converted into a residential house) is located on the other side of the street.

All these products were shipped on the Loire and transported to the arsenals of Rochefort and Brest.

It was the English philosopher John Locke, in particular, who mentioned these Forges in his logbook, which he wrote during his trip to France between 1675 and 1679, immersing us in the Cosne of November 1678.

It was during a stopover between Pouilly-sur-Loire and Gien that Locke discovered the forges and their importance to the king, noting its optimal location in relation to Donzy's iron mine.

~ Move forward a little further to discover the next step of our journey.



“ Here at Cosne the king has a forge for Ankers & an other for musquets & pistols, etc. 'Tis a convenient place for it, there being an Iron mine & worke at Donzy, three leagues up upon de litle river that falls here into the Loire. John Locke ”

7 ~ Walk in Cosne-Cours-sur-Loire

8 SAINT-AGNAN's church

Built between the 11th and 12th centuries (*on the site of a small place of worship dedicated to Saint Front*), this Romanesque church was part of a Benedictine priory.

Over the centuries, it suffered considerable damages:

In 1726, a fire destroyed its Romanesque bell tower, and a few years later, the entire nave collapsed.

The current bell tower-porch was built with reused stones and its frame is made of wooden planks salvaged from fir trees!

Now, take a close look at its top:

The weather vane depicts a rooster with its plumed tail facing forward. A strange peculiarity, isn't it? The explanation is that this representation mimics the roosters that once sat atop Loire River ships.

Yes, on boats, the wind comes from behind, and the rooster's tail therefore billows forward. **In the end, we can simply say that this rooster is wild!**

Don't hesitate to walk forward to admire the church in its entirety.

~ Just before the roundabout, take the dead-end street on your left. Not far from the end of the street, take the first tiny alley on the right. **Be careful not to miss it!**

When we talk about a half-timbered house, no reference is made to the famous bird of peace. In fact, the word "dove" refers to the Old French term used to describe a wooden beam, derived from the Latin columna. **You can admire many houses of this type while visiting the town of Donzy!**

As for the beautiful building before you, it likely dates back to the 15th century.



9 The COACHING inn

It was at the end of the 16th century that this coaching inn was established at the entrance to the Faubourg Saint-Agnan, on the road leading from Paris to Lyon.

Soon afterward, it was named the "Hostellerie du Lion d'Or" (*a name that should be understood as "in bed one sleeps"*), the place provided peaceful rest for travelers and their horses.

We can even tell you that the famous English philosopher John Locke stayed there in 1678!

~ Go forward a little further and cross the street at the pedestrian crossing. Once on the opposite sidewalk, go down to the left.

10 The NATIONALE 7

You are currently on the old N7. The famous "holiday route" brought glory to the towns and villages along its route, allowing several generations of Parisian vacationers to discover them before heading to the Mediterranean.

Well, taking a step back from the myth, we see that in reality, two-thirds of motorists opted for the Nationale 6 to Lyon... Faced with this unfortunate situation, an association was created with the aim of promoting the Paris-Côte d'Azur route to tourism, avoiding the need to go through Lyon: it's a real success!

The downside is that huge traffic jams quickly appear in the town center of Cosne.



In 1984, a bypass was built before being transformed, around the turn of the millennium, into a motorway...

Much less charming, isn't it?

In any case, the Route Nationale 7, sung about by Charles Trénet, has gone down in history.



Postilions

(responsible for transporting the mail)

crisscrossed the kingdom from post house to post house wearing heavy boots.

As a general rule, a distance of seven leagues separated two post houses.

Thus, the postilions' boots were commonly called...

Seven-League Boots.



~ After passing the large wooden terrace, continue straight ahead and stop after a few steps to admire the view across the sidewalk...



11 THE EDEN Cinema

It's impossible to remain indifferent to such a building! Before telling you about its very unique facade, let me briefly tell you the history of the place.

In the 15th century, the site was occupied by the Hôtel-Dieu de Cosne where the sick and the poor were welcomed by nuns. It has an adjoining cemetery and a chapel dedicated to Saint Lazarus, patron saint of lepers (*a street still bears his name in Cosne*).

Several buildings were then successively constructed before the cinema opened in 1915!

It was in the 1920^s that the Eden truly established itself in Cosne's social scene: it then included a large movie theater, a ballroom, and a café.

However, it wasn't until 1935 and the work of local architect Roger Charton that it took on the unique appearance that characterizes it today!

Yes, I'm talking about its famous Art Deco facade!

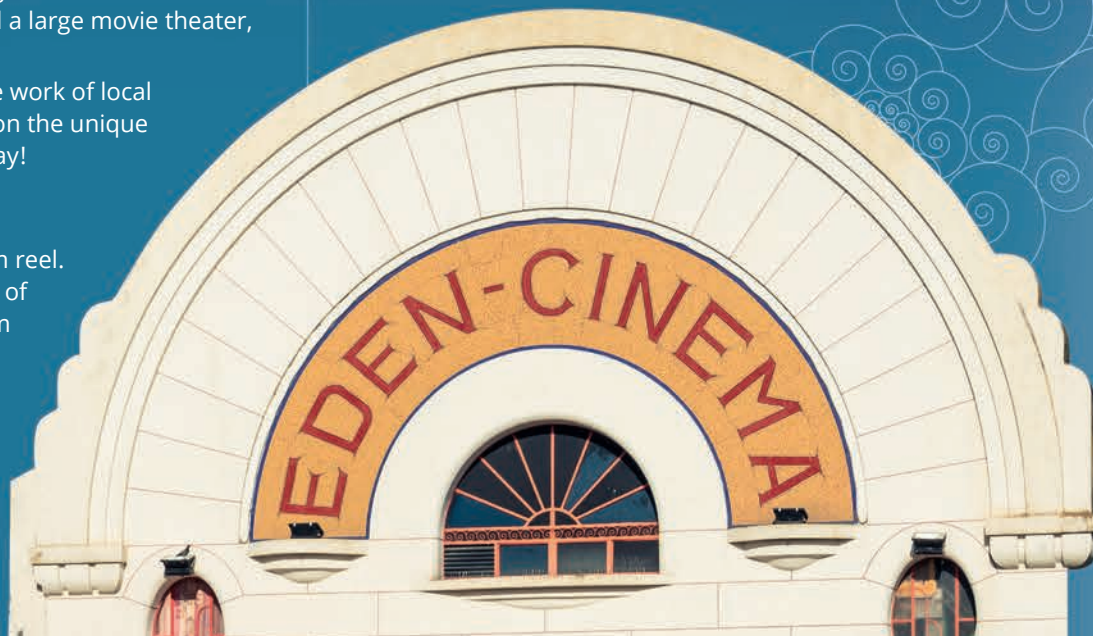
It's rounded and reminiscent of a film reel. You should also know that the name of the cinema is inlaid with enamel from Briare, a town not far from us and famous for its canal bridge!

~ Go down the alleyway that runs along the river (*Passage Saint Firmin*).

A few words about Art Deco now?

The latter is associated with the "Roaring Twenties" and is characterized by spirals, basic geometric shapes, and mosaics.

Although very modern in its choice of key motifs, it also appears traditional since it attempts to break with Art Nouveau, which was intended to be popular and accessible to all: **Art Deco, for its part, is quite openly aimed at the elite.**



12 The BENEDICTINE CONVENT MILL and the NOHAIN River

In operation until the mid-20th century, the "nuns' mill" is today the only building still visible from the convent.

The convent was founded in 1658 by the Bishop of Auxerre, and its religious activity ceased during the French Revolution: the Benedictines were expelled and the convent sold as national property.

Now let's focus on the waterway you are walking alongside. At the beginning of the last century, the driving force of the Nohain River powered 59 mills along its 45 km course between its source and Cosne!

A word of advice: if the Nohain mills have piqued your curiosity, head to Donzy after your visit to Cosne to learn more.

~ At the end of the alley, turn left and then immediately left (*after the second arm of the Nohain*). One meter before the roundabout, cross the "Quai Jules Moineau".

? The famous writer and poet Franc-Nohain decided to pay homage to this river by choosing his pseudonym!



13 The TOWN HALL

The first town hall known to Cosne (in the 1750s) was the Episcopal Palace located on "Place Pasteur". It wasn't until a little over a century later that the current building rose from the ground...

Indeed, the building facing you was constructed during the **Second Empire** (*without a republican motto, of course!*). You may notice that its architecture seems inspired by the town halls of the "Ancien Régime" and that it possesses several characteristics of the classical style, such as its central avant-corps and its triangular pediment.

~ Continue straight on Saint-Jacques' street.

14 SAINT-JACQUES' church

In 1885, work undertaken in the church and the fortunate clumsiness of a worker brought to light a crypt with three walled-up exits...

Is it a remnant of the Romanesque church that stood here between the 11th and 15th centuries, or does it date from the construction in the 1400^s that you can still admire today? In any case, one of the exits probably led to the chaplains' house located nearby. It is also said that the wife of a governor of Cosne who was guillotined during the Revolution hid there for a time to escape the fate reserved for her husband.

Returning to the church itself, you'll notice upon looking up, that the top of the gable ends in a square platform with an openwork balustrade, with access from the bell tower via the staircase.

Here again, there are two hypotheses: some see a watchtower, while others believe that a small bell was located here, used to summon the canons.

The history of Cosne is still full of little mysteries!

15 The boulevard de LA RÉPUBLIQUE (Boulevard of THE REPUBLIC)

This boulevard was once just a wide ditch outside the ramparts.

Once filled in (*and the surrounding walls collapsed*), it became the Place d'Armes (*Armes Square*) where military parades and reviews took place until the 19th century.

Napoléon Bonaparte was even received there!

You may be wondering where this boulevard gets its current name?

It's simple: a monumental statue representing the Republic stood on the square for a long time. Draped in the antique style and holding a branch announcing peace, it became a true emblem of the city before being melted down by the German occupiers in 1942.

The market has been held there since 1793 and still attracts many locals and tourists!

~ At the roundabout, turn left again.

~ At the end of this small street, turn right and cross "Rue du Maréchal Leclerc" at the pedestrian crossing.

~ Once on the opposite sidewalk, turn right. Take the first street on your left (*one-way*) to reach "Place Pasteur" and continue along it, keeping to the left.



A few streets away, a member of the Titanic orchestra was born!

16 The EPISCOPAL Palace

Remember, the town of Cosne came under the authority of the Bishop of Auxerre in the 5th century, but this episcopal control was imperfect since the castle itself remained held as a fief by the Counts of Nevers.

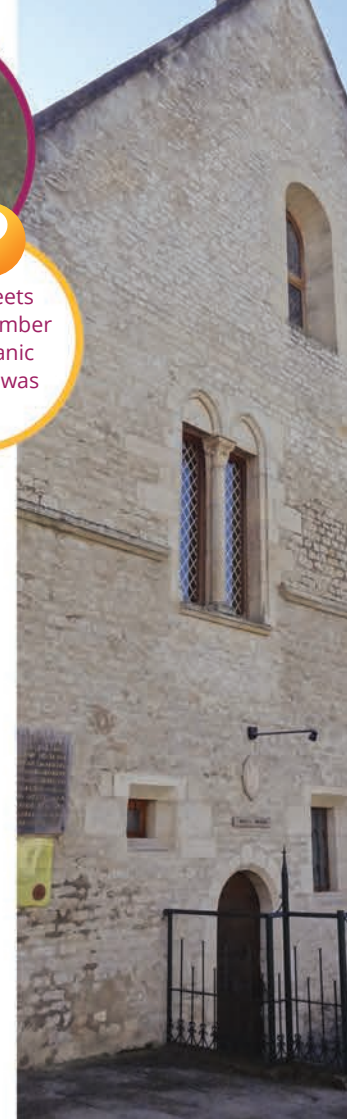
Given this situation, you can easily understand why multiple conflicts arose between the spiritual lords of the city and these military leaders from Nevers. You can also easily understand why the bishop needed to establish his dominance, notably by having this residence built in the 11th century.

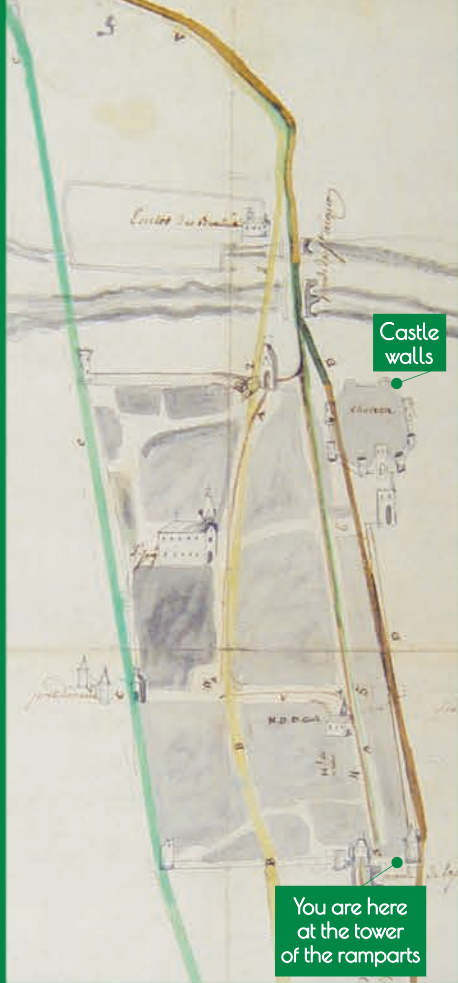
With the Notre-Dame de Galles chapel, a communal oven, and a jail, the bishop thus placed himself at the head of a veritable estate in the heart of the city!

Rebuilt in the 13th century, the palace was abandoned by the prelates in the 17th century before being transformed into an auditorium for justice, a town hall, and a Protestant church in the late 19th century.

Until recently, the building housed exhibitions and events of all kinds, but it had to be closed for security reasons.

~ At the end of the square, turn right until you reach:





Map of Cosne dated 1756
Municipal Archives of Cosne

17 The RAMPARTS' Tower

This tower has marked the northwest corner of the city walls since the 13th century.

Two other round towers stood at the northeast and southeast corners, while the castle enclosed the city walls to the southwest.



~ Retrace your steps a little and continue straight ahead.



18 The remains of the chapel NOTRE-DAME DE GALLES

A first chapel was built in the 9th century at the request of Wala, Bishop of Auxerre. From its reconstruction in 1490, Gothic tracery remains, difficult to discern at first glance.

The chapel lost its religious purpose during the Revolution and became the stables of a nearby hotel. In 1897, the widening of Rue Pasteur led to the destruction of its western facade: it was replaced by a rather unremarkable gable wall, and its stained-glass windows were scattered throughout the surrounding churches.

Today, the building houses a Masonic lodge!

~ Continue straight ahead and take the small alleyway opposite to you ("Rue des Chapelains").



19 The CHAPLAINS' house

This is the former residence of the canons of the collegiate church of Saint-Laurent de Cosne (now the church of Saint-Jacques). Moreover, it is almost certain that an underground gallery connected the church and this main building!

Established in 1212 by Guillaume de Seignelay (Bishop of Auxerre who would later become Bishop of Paris), the chapter house initially had a dozen canons.

In the Middle Ages, this house was surrounded by the shops of artisans and merchants of the city's Jewish community.

Partially rebuilt during the Renaissance, it was largely destroyed in 1711 (the initial construction was much larger!) and sold as national property during the Revolution.

One thing is certain: this picturesque building has managed to blend in perfectly with the city's more modern architecture!

~ Turn right ("rue Duguet").
At the end of the street, turn right and reach Bad Ems Square and the Tourist Office.

YOU FINISHED YOUR WALK!



Just like you,

WE LOVE

our planet.

Bring us back this leaflet
and we will give it

ANOTHER LIFE!



Reception in

Cosne-Cours-sur-Loire

In the Loire's Palace

Rue du Général de Gaulle

Shop, renting electric
bikes, lockers, wifi

Tél. : + 33 (0)3.86.28.11.85

Bourgogne Cœur de Loire Tourisme 

Pouilly-sur-Loire

In La Tour du Pouilly Fumé

30, Rue Waldeck Rousseau

Video cessions around Pouilly's
wines, shop, wifi

 accueil@bourgogne-coeurdeloire.fr

 [bourgognecoeurdeloire](https://www.instagram.com/bourgognecoeurdeloire)

Also visit the area's museums to pick up tourist information.

Did you like this tour?

Two more are available for the towns of Donzy and Pouilly-sur-Loire!



www.bourgogne-coeurdeloire.fr

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