

Museum of costumes, archeology, art and folk traditions

Discover the incredible richness and diversity of the local costumes in the Maurienne valley. Each village had its own that rivaled in terms of splendor and elegance with those of its neighbors. Embroidered shawls, lace head-dresses, high-waisted belts decorated with many chains, gold or silver crosses often worn with a heart... These costumes were more than just clothes. They were an identity code for the different villages, a genuine way of life.

How many hours of work were required to assemble the many “aponsures” of a Fontcouverte dress? How much time did it take to weave the marvelous silk ribbons on the old looms? Do you find that the costumes of neighboring villages look similar? Come and discern the nuances.

And there aren't only the costumes! The Maurienne valley was first inhabited as of 4000 B.C. and our archeology room displays remnants of this presence.

Stone axes, bronze objects, bracelets from the Iron Age, amber pearls, bronze, silver and gold coins, the replica of an Iron Age tomb, an exceptional collection of Gallo-Roman brooches, and a rare statuette of the god Mercury all retrace this distant past.

From the Medieval period, you'll discover the famous “Franc à cheval”, the first franc, a gold coin minted in 1360 that gave its name to the currency before the euro.

The valley, a land of passage and exchange, survived for centuries thanks to an agropastoral economy that drew the best from all of its resources.

The replica of the inside of a typical Maurienne house, the “demeurance” where families lived close to their livestock – their main wealth – will allow you to step into their daily lives.

The farming of wheat, the raising of dairy cows, the production of horseshoes, the weaving of hemp... will hold no more secrets for you!

A room is dedicated to the House of Savoie, whose birthplace is in the Maurienne. Documents tell the story of the dynasty whose first princes are buried under the porch of the cathedral. Its military history is also told through the life of the famous Brigade de Savoie.

Finally, since the museum is located in the ancient palace (listed as a historical monument) of the bishops of Maurienne, what could be more natural than to have dedicated a room to religious art? Statuaries, religious objects, a few excellent specimens of religious garb and costumes, including one that we could propose to the current President of France since, according to a tradition dating back to the 16th century, he is the honorary canon of the Cathedral Chapter.

The museum is open from June 24 to September 16 (except for Sundays and holidays) from 10:00 to 12:00 and 14:00 to 18:00. During other school holidays, from Monday to Friday 14:30 to 17:30. Free entrance with the possibility of making a contribution of your choice.

Guided tours are available all year and every day upon reservation with the Tourist Office (tel. +33 (0)4 79 83 51 51, info@saintjeandemaurienne.com). Price: 2€ per person for a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 25 persons (beyond that it is better to break into 2 groups).