



LES ARCS
Paradiski



**BOURG
SAINT
MAURICE**



HERITAGE

CULTURAL DISCOVERIES





Ski competition in the 50's.

Situated at the heart of the Upper Tarentaise, Bourg Saint Maurice combines tourism with tradition in a way that pleases everyone: Baroque churches and chapels, traditional life in the Alpine pastures, historic and avant-garde architecture... so many opportunities to explore the thousand and one aspects of a little known side of Savoie where culture and rural heritage go side by side.

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TOURS

The fees for the visits as well as the schedule can be found in the programme made available every week at the tourism office of Bourg Saint Maurice / Les Arcs.

Font cover: Arc 1600, the slope and the button lift of "Cachette" Winter 1968-69

THE HISTORY OF BOURG SAINT MAURICE

In the Gallo-Roman period, Bourg Saint Maurice was known as Bergintrum. The town was located on the Roman road running from Vienne (Isère) to Milan (Italy) and close to a stream called Bergenta (nowadays, a quarter in the town has taken the name Bourgeat). In the Middle Ages, the parish was known as the Ecclesia Sancti Mauricii, Saint Maurice being its patron saint. It was not until around the 15th century that the word bourg in the form burg (large village or fortified town) appeared. Thus, Burgum sancti Mauricii became the bourg saint Maurice. In 1794, the revolutionaries renamed it Nargue-Sardes due to the proximity of its border with the States of Savoie. The name Bourg Saint Maurice only appeared at the end of the 19th century.

Bourg Saint Maurice's coat of arms

- In the centre is the Cross of Savoie on which is attached the trefoil cross of Saint Maurice,
- the initials SM for Saint-Maurice,
- the five-pointed shepherd's star, an ear of wheat (arable farming) placed between two bells (livestock farming),
- a ceutron's helmet as a reminder of the valley's first inhabitants,
- a pine tree to evoke the forest.

Saint Maurice

Saint Maurice lived during the Roman period and commanded the Theban Legion, a force made up of around 6,000 Christian soldiers. When crossing the Alps, Emperor Maximilian Hercules wanted to offer a sacrifice to Jupiter, the divinity of the place in order to be able to continue his journey unhindered. The Theban Legion refused to take part in this pagan ritual, preferring to die. Soon afterwards, an Abbey was built on the site of the martyrdom. Saint Maurice was chosen as the patron saint of the House of Savoie and he became an object of worship also in Valais and the Aosta Valley.



"Grande Rue", early 20th Century.



Statue of Saint Maurice, Vulmix Chapel, 16th Century.

HERITAGE TRAIL

OF BOURG SAINT MAURICE

The route designed to discover Bourg Saint Maurice's cultural heritage is an insight to the main village with the help of twelve signs spread out in the entire town.

LENGTH OF TIME 1H30-2H | SEE PLAN PAGE 9.

1 • The Upper Tarentaise Dairy Cooperative

In the 19th century, arable and livestock farming were the main resources of the Upper Tarentaise Valley. In 1888 the tarine breed's Herd-book was established. In 1891 the special cattle show was already being held in Bourg-Saint-Maurice. During the roman period, Pliny used to eulogise over the various cheeses from the Tarentaise and praised the quality of its dairy cattle. In the Middle Ages, vachelin was made from the 18th century grovire. Beaufort only earned its AOC (nowadays AOP) in 1968.



The animal trade fair, beginning of the 20th Century.

In 1894, a fruitière-école (cheese making school) was set up in BourgSaint-Maurice to train people in the art of cheese making. (The term fruitière means: fruit, the product of communal work of a village or hamlet). From 1921, rural gatherings expanded. In every hamlet and in the town, producers got together to create fruitières to make cheese. Economic recession from 1960 to 1964 meant

that agricultural produce did not sell well. From 1964 onwards, some of the village fruitières closed down and the entire town's production was centred on the fruitière in the county town which took the name Coopérative laitière de HauteTarentaise (Upper Tarentaise Dairy Cooperative).

PLACE DE CASTEX | Antoine de Castex was born in 1915. In June 1940, he joined the Resistance with Jean Bulle against the Italian invasion. He was killed on 22 June 1940 at the Col de la Seigne (a col situated on the Italian frontier in the Chapieux valley).

HEAD FOR THE AVENUE ANTOINE BORREL.

AVENUE ANTOINE BORREL | Born in 1878, a journalist and politician. Député (UK=MP) (1908), then Senator for Savoie (1931-1940), President of the Conseil général (departmental authority) of Savoie (1920-1940), Under-Secretary of State. He fought against the depopulation of the countryside and unemployment and favoured the development of tourism. He founded the États Généraux du Tourisme en Savoie (the Savoie Tourist Convention).



The Cheese making School: students and teachers, 1931.

The Rochefort tower, in the 1930s.

2 • The Rochefort Tower

The feudal seat of the lords of Villaraymon, built on a promontory close to the Roman road, was surrounded by ditches, crenelated towers and a keep (now a tower). Between 1579 and 1590, disastrous floods covered this lordly home, occupied at the time by the lord Rochefort-Villaraymon, in mud.

THE LORDSHIP OF VILLARAYMON | In 1270, it belonged to Jacob Villario Aymonis. It then passed to the Bovets of Aime, then to the Gillys (end of the 15th century) and finally following alliances with the Rocheforts, the two titles were combined. In 1640, the lordship passed to the Chapels, then to the Savoiroux.

3 • The Trinity Chapel

In the past, the village of La Trinité was located « beyond the Town, on the plain near the road leading to Sééz (1790 tour) ». Built around 1789, it replaced another chapel dedicated to Sainte-Trinité, which was destroyed in a flood in 1764. **HEAD FOR THE RUE DE LA BOURGEAT.**



The Catholic School, beginning of the 20th Century.



4 • The Bourgeat District

A district "outside the town" and a major thoroughfare, the Charbonnet runs through it. This river, powered an oil and grain mill and later became the town's first electricity provider. The Bourgeat, formerly the town's farming district, was a collection of farms surrounded by orchards where the tarine, the Tarentaise breed of cattle, was partly developed. **HEAD FOR THE RUE DE LA BOURGEAT, THE MONTÉE DES CAPUCINS THEN THE RUE DESSERTEAUX.**

RUE DESSERTEAUX | Captain Desserteaux was born in 1917. He joined the 70th Bataillon Alpin de Forteresse. In 1940, he defended the fort of the Redoute-Ruinée (situated above the resort of la Rosière de Montvalezan). He was killed in Indo-China, where he was a volunteer, on 25 September 1947.



The Capucins Fields, end of the 19th Century.

5 • The Capucins Fields

A monastery or hospice was founded on this site in 1627 through the charity of the local population and the community was limited to 12 monks on the instructions of Pope Urban VIII. The Capucins Fields enclosed the monastery, a chapel, a garden and a large orchard. The estate was sold as National Property under the French Revolution and in 1880 became a school run by the Frères des écoles chrétiennes (brothers of Christian schools). **HEAD FOR THE PLACE MARCEL GAIMARD.**

6 • Hôtel de Ville (Town Hall) and Place Marcel Gaimard

Before Savoie was annexed to France in 1860, this square bore the name of Charles-Albert, ruler of the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia. In 2001, the municipality decided to pay homage to its former Mayor (1971 to 1989), who died in April 2001, by renaming the square Marcel Gaimard. The previous Town Hall built in 1929 and bombed in June 1940, was replaced in 1953 by the current building built by the architect Raymond Pantz. It is listed as a 20th Century Heritage Site.

WHO WAS CHARLES-ALBERT? | Charles-Albert de Savoie-Carignan was born in 1798. First Prince then King of Sardinia from 1831 to 1849, his life was linked to the history of Savoie. A popular king in Tarentaise, in 1836, he gave his name to the present-day town of Albertville. **HEAD FOR THE GRANDE-RUE.**



The town hall, in the 1930s.

THE GRANDE-RUE | Long-time main street and trunk road of Bourg Saint Maurice, the Grande-Rue has retained some interesting architectural features, such as the carved doors, ironwork and old shop windows which can be seen when strolling through the town. In the 18th Century, this street ended between the hospital and the grain market.

Grande-rue – Old doors

N° 21 GRANDE-RUE | A walnut door with two panels one of which has relief fluting. Above the door which dates from the 18th century, can be seen a fanlight and a stone lintel bearing various inscriptions:

- the dates 1651 and 1709 (construction and restoration of the house),
- the initials IHS (Christ's monogram) and those of the house's first owners: B (Blanche) and R (Rullier).

This door lintel has survived various floods of the Arbonne and a fire which ravaged a large part of Bourg Saint Maurice during the French Revolution.



Charles Albert Square, beginning of the 20th Century.



The Alpine troops at the top of the "Grande Rue".



"Maison des Têtes" (House of Heads) at the beginning of the 20th Century.

7 • Maison des Têtes (House of Heads)

N° 92 GRANDE-RUE | This house which dates from the end of the 19th Century used to belong to the Delponti family. Giovanni Delponti was born in Italy in 1820 and studied wood carving for two years at the Varallo school in Val Sesia. It took him 30 years to carve all the sculptures which adorn the facade of this house. The horizontal lines feature relief scrolls in the centre of which are the heads. In the centre of the façade, Giovanni Delponti and his wife (Tarentaise head-dress), below, members of the family and famous figures: Danton, Robespierre, Thiers, Cavour and Marianne. The vertical lines feature medallions representing lions and volutes. The window lintels are decorated with cornucopia and the ledges below the roof are adorned with mythological figures.

N° 121 GRANDE-RUE | Walnut door dating from the 19th century decorated with a carved rosette. **HEAD FOR N° 133.**

N° 133 GRANDE-RUE | Beautiful 19th Century double door decorated with two lions facing each other. Wrought metal gate from 1880. Diamond point decoration. **HEAD FOR N° 170.**

N° 170 GRAND-RUE | Beautiful 19th Century walnut door made up of two carved panels: lozenges and floral decoration, rosettes and diamond point decoration. Wrought iron fanlight. **HEAD FOR N° 196.**

N° 196 GRAND-RUE | One last beautiful 19th Century double door: two carved panels. Wrought iron fanlight. **HEAD FOR THE PLACE DU MONUMENT AUX MORTS.**

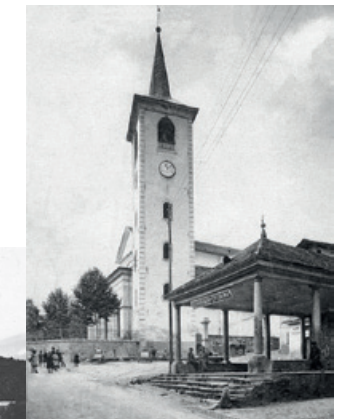


2

- 1 • "Place Grenette" and the church, before 1922.
- 2 • Military and Public Hospital, around 1930.
- 3 • The new hospital, around 1935.

8 • The Upper Part of Town

This part of town, endured several changes. The Memorial built in 1922, where an indoor market (called "Grenette" in French) used to be held was also known as "Place des Clarisses", "Place Napoléon", "Place de la République" and "Place Grenette". Since 2016, part of this upper town is being refurbished. Several buildings have been demolished: the old hospital/old people's home "Saint Michel", and the "Centre Jean-Moulin" (which originally was the military infirmary). Thus, allowing the new constructions to be more functional and will gather several public services in one building: a music school, a library, an old people's home and private accommodation.



3



The Church, at the beginning of the 20th Century.

9 • Church of Saint-Maurice-d'Agaune and its bell-tower

This church became unfit for use and was demolished in 1844 to make way for the new church. Only the belltower was retained. The new church was consecrated in 1852. The king of Sardinia took an active interest in the building of the church which he wanted to be in the neoclassical Sardinian style. Accordingly, the painter Marghinotti executed the two large canvasses of The Baby Jesus' Saint Joseph and

the Baby Jesus' Virgin. The sculptor Giovanni Delponti, established in Bourg-Saint-Maurice was responsible for the pulpit and the baptismal font. The bell tower was razed to the ground in 1794 on the orders of the Albitte Convention and the bells transferred to Moûtiers. It was rebuilt in 1812-1813.

GO BACK UP THE GRANDE RUE, THEN TAKE THE AVENUE DU CENTENAIRE AND GO DOWN THE RUE JEAN MOULIN.



The outline for the Village Hall project Henry Maréchal, 1954.

RUE JEAN-MOULIN | Jean Moulin was born in 1899. He was the sub-prefet in Albertville, then prefet of Chartres. A great «unifier» of the Résistance around General de Gaulle, he was betrayed and died in 1943 having been deported.

10 • Communal wash house and fountain

The wash house was built in 1942 according to the plans of the architect Raymond Pantz (architect of the Town Hall). The fountain trough was used to water livestock. It was in the present-day place du Monument aux morts.

HEAD FOR THE ROUTE DE MONTRIGON.

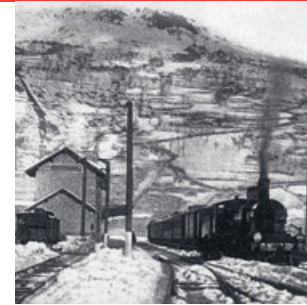
RUE DU CENTENAIRE | This avenue was named to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the attachment of Savoie to France in 1860. One of the principal architects of the attachment was Alexis Billet (1783-1873), from les Chapelles, who became bishop of Maurienne, archbishop of Chambéry, then cardinal.

11 • Cinema and municipal hall complex

After the municipal hall was destroyed in the bombardment of June 1940, it was decided to rebuild it in a complex also housing a cinema, the tax office and the public baths, according to the plans of the architect Henry Maréchal. Opened in 1958, the complex has been listed as a 20th Century heritage site. **HEAD FOR THE AVENUE MARÉCHAL-LECLERC.**



1



1 • The building of the Train Station, around 1913.
2 • "Avenue de la gare", in the 1960s.
3 • The departure of the "Express" in the 1920s.



12 • Railway station

Built in 1913 and opened the following year, it marked the end of the Saint-Pierre d'Albigny–Bourg-Saint-Maurice line. It has contributed to the valley's economic development and was extended at the time of the Winter Olympic Games in 1992 with the addition of a bus station.

- 1986 – Opening of the TGV Atlantique Bourg-Saint-Maurice.
- 1997 – Arrival of the Eurostar from London.
- 1998 – Arrival of the Thalys from Amsterdam-Bruxelles.

AVENUE DE LA GARE | This avenue was only completed in 1933. All the buildings on the right date from the 1960's.

Routes and texts carried out by the association **TRADITIONS AND BOURG SAINT MAURICE'S CULTURAL HERITAGE**, the **ARCHIVES & CULTURAL HERITAGE** unit and the **TOURIST OFFICE OF BOURG SAINT MAURICE**



- 1. Upper Tarentaise Dairy Cooperative
- 2. The Rochefort Tower
- 3. The Trinity Chapel
- 4. The Bourgeat District

- 5. The Capucins Field
- 6. Town Hall and place Marcel Gaimard
- 7. House of Heads
- 8. Haut-Bourg District

- 9. Church of Saint-Maurice-d'Agaune
- 10. Communal wash house and fountain
- 11. Municipal hall and cinema
- 12. Railway station



Medieval ruin



Religious buildings



History



Agriculture and tradition



20th Century Architecture recognition

THE DIALECT

FRANCO-PROVENÇAL

Between the langue d'oïl and the langue d'oc

The franco-provençal zone is situated between the northern part of France (Oïl) and the southern part (Oc), which concerns three countries: **France** with two Savoie departments, the southern Jura (Bugey, pays de Gex, Franche-Comté), Bresse, the Lyonnais and the northern Dauphiné. **Italy** with the Aosta Valley and the Alpine valleys of Piedmont. The French-speaking part of **Switzerland**.

A Roman language enriched by several heritages

The history of the franco-provençal dialect began with the Roman conquest and the Latinization of the Ceutrones that lived in our valleys. Following the invasions, the Burgundians and the Franks left traces in the language that “evolved more, or less, in the same way from community to community, throughout roughly 15 centuries, leading to a diversity of dialects today”.¹



The hamlet of Châtelard, at the beginning of the 20th Century.

Dialect & toponymy

In order to understand the name of a place, often it is necessary to refer to its dialect form. Indeed, with the creation of maps the original names had to be Gallicized for writing and they were often changed, thus losing

their sense. The last pieces of evidence from this era, the name of the places provide us with valuable information concerning its geology, climate, vegetation, any historical events...

Nouhon patòè
Y'é nouhon prèdjé
Y'é nouha linva, bèla, lèvèta
En' plahi d'aplatò lu mòte, le lè fè
danhié su lèz òlè dè la pinché,
Èn' fachin an che bèla mouzeka...
Agouha-la aouè lèz euèlyè
Asseüa son flò pè lè tsaré- du
vladzò, lò flò d'an vya dza ya...

Our dialect
 It's our way of speaking
 It's our beautiful, light language
 Instead of flattening the words, it's as if they dance on the wings of the thought, Making such a beautiful sound...
 Taste it with the ears
 Smell these aromas through the streets of the village, the aromas of a past life...

(In order to read this dialect, take into consideration stressed syllables on the underlined vowel. Otherwise, accentuate the last syllable like in French.)



Our dialect is no longer spoken, however it has survived through these names, which constantly remind us of its existence.

Villages, locations, mountain tops and streams

LE CHÂTELARD (VILLAGE ON THE ROAD TO LES CHAPIEUX)

From the Latin *castellum*, a fortified post, bulwark, populated and fortified place... then *castellarium*. Logically, they built these constructions on the promontories or on the high mounds. Inspired by the dialect, the word was replaced by *tsassèlòr*. “Castellarium which doesn't mean a castle but, a settlement, a village or a town near the castle.”²

TRÈVES (SITUATED BETWEEN BOURG SAINT MAURICE AND SÉEZ)

Vi (from the word *trèviè*) means “path, road” in regional dialect. The word comes from Latin *trivium*: in Roman times, a junction of three roads: the road from Bourg Saint Maurice, the cols pass Iseran and the Petit Saint Bernard.

LE NANTET (A STREAM WHICH GOES THROUGH BOURG SAINT MAURICE)

The word *nan* in regional dialect (spelled *nant* in French) comes from the Celtic meaning a stream or torrent. The word *nantet* is a diminutive.



The mountain “Rognaix” or “Roignaix” (2995 m), in the uplands of Beaufortain.

LE ROGNAIX (SUMMIT THAT RISES ABOVE BOURG SAINT MAURICE)

The word *rònyeyue* means “somebody angry, who grumbles a lot and who is in a bad mood” in regional dialect. The summit which often receives thunderstorms. The name is changed on the map to Roignaix.

LE CLAPEY (THE MOUNTAIN TOP ABOVE SÉEZ)

The word *klapèye* in regional dialect comes from the pre-Romanesque root *klappo*: rocks, stones, linking directly with the verbal root *klapf*: split. This refers a big pile of stones and rocks from a previous rockslide but that is still visible.

LANCEBRANLETTE (THE MAIN SUMMIT OF THE COL DU PETIT SAINT BERNARD)

The word probably comes from *lantsibranlèta* (in regional dialect). The word *lanche* is “a strip of steep and narrow land, but grassy and even. It rises above the ravines, torrents or mountain ridges”³. The word *branlèta* means “the wild chives”.

MALGOVERT (FOREST ON THE SLOPES OF LES ARCS)

The word probably comes from “*mògòvèr*”, which means *poorly governed* in regional dialect. In the Middle-Ages, Bourg Saint-Maurice was part of The Marquisate of Saint Maurice, whereas Séez was part of The County of Val d'Isère. These two domains shared the forest of Malgovert, creating many conflicts. In 1675, in order to resolve these ongoing disputes, the Senate of Savoie decided to engrave a border stone with both of the lords' coat arms. Two border stones can still be seen: one, near the electric power station and the second one near the hamlet of Courbaton.

Anne-Marie Bimet

1. *Découvrir les parlers de Savoie*. G. Tuillon.
2. *Dictionnaire des noms de lieu de la Savoie*. A. Gros.
3. *Lieux en mémoire de l'alpe*. H. Bessat & C. Germi.

In Bourg Saint-Maurice THE GROUP TRADITION ET PATRIMOINE BORAINS of patois speakers LU BARTAVÉ DU BÖRH (The Chatters of Bourg) who work to collect and highlight this precious linguistic heritage that is in danger of being forgotten.



The statue of “Saint-Bernard des Alpes” & the peak of “Lancebranlette” (2936 m) at the Italian border.

THE COSTUMES AND JEWELLERY OF THE UPPER TARENTOISE

There are no less than twenty traditional costumes in Savoie, each one having its own characteristics, head dress, shawls... These days the traditional costume and its head dress known as the "frontière" are no longer worn very much..

**Lace, ribbons,
embroidery, gold thread...**

This three-pointed head dress is indissociable from the *couèche* which is its hairstyle. This is hair plaited in a particular way with a hemp ribbon then covered with a velvet ribbon, which are drawn into a crown at the back of the head and fixed to the head dress with black-headed pins. The *modestie*, a white front made of strips of fluted or flat lace attached to the front of the dress with pins. This shows off the cross and the heart worn on a ribbon or a chain. The v-necked shawl, attached to the ruff, must have two pleats on the shoulders and match up with the modestie. The dress is the base of the costume since all the parts are attached to it by black-headed pins. The members of the Upper Tarentaise folklore group Les Frontières are proud to represent and thus perpetuate this fine tradition.



"Ferrera sa femme..." (Shoeing his wife)

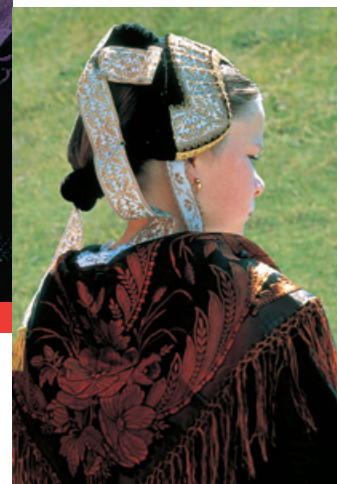
When a young man chose his future spouse, he had to give her a certain number of jewels: cross, heart, earrings, ring... the number and splendour of which depended on the wealth of the family. This custom known as *ferrera sa femme* dates from the Middle Ages; a period when nonnobles could not wear gold jewellery and when the only tradesman able to work in iron was none other than the farrier.

Wealth and diversity

To understand the richness and diversity of the jewellery which formed girls' trousseaus, we have to go back to the cultural and political context of the age. Due to its geographical position, Savoie was subject to influences from the kingdoms of Piedmont-Sardinia, France and Austria. From 1650, evidence can be found of goldsmiths' work in church ornaments, dishes, silver cutlery for the aristocracy and



Traditional wedding outfit, 1920.



gentry. It was not until nearly the end of the 18th Century that jewellery became available to country people (crosses in silver, then gold for the most part small and light). In the 19th Century and particularly from 1820 onwards, jewellery got bigger and followed the evolution of the costume to create sumptuous flowered crosses, bracelets and brooches, all displaying fine workmanship. If Savoyard jewellery is surprising for its richness, it is also surprising for its diversity, each val-

ley (sometimes each village) having different jewellery. These days this jewellery is made in Bourg Saint Maurice in the purest tradition and is using the same techniques as in the 18th and 19th Centuries.

TOUR

ESPACE SAINT ÉLOI

Based in the heart of the village of Seez, an old forge holds three different exhibitions: The work of the ancestral blacksmiths, a jewelry workshop and an introduction to the regional baroque art. Come discover: a unique collection of regional jewelry, more than 200 pieces of Savoyard jewelry (crosses, hearts, brooches...) Regular demonstrations take place to reveal the skills of the blacksmiths.

3, RUE SAINT-PIERRE, SÉEZ
04 79 40 10 38 | 04 79 41 00 15

TRADITIONS AND SKILLS

The home and its function

In every village, the houses were grouped closely together sometimes around a rustic chapel or parish church. Solid, functional and matching, they were suited to the rigours of the mountain climate, using local materials such as stone, stone roofing slabs and timber. The dry stone walls (80 cm to 1 metre thick) were topped with a robust wooden framework to support the stone roof and the considerable weight of the snow in winter. Every family owned several houses from 1000 to over 2000 m. The successive moves between these houses

enabled the livestock and men to settle at different altitudes following the progress of the vegetation. On the ground floor, the livestock wintered in the northern part (uphill side) and the people stayed in the southern part (downhill side). This single room where beasts and people lived together was gradually changed into two distinct rooms, the stable and the kitchen separated by a grill or open-work fence. Upstairs was a bedroom, a loft and barn area. The balconies (galleries) allowed the hay or cereals to dry and housed wood.

Life in the mountains, around 1920.



Colonnaded houses

The colonnaded houses round Bourg Saint Maurice are very often the work of masons from Piedmont in Italy. As wood was scarce, the latter favoured stone to build walls and stone slabs for covering roofs with a flat slope.



Collecting of hay on the slopes of Les Arcs, in the 50s.



The hamlet of Vulmix, at the beginning of the 20th Century.



TOURS

STONES, ROOFING SLABS AND TIMBER

Through sensible adaptation to the landscape, the harshness of the climate and courtesy of the know-how of the inhabitants, the traditional architecture of the mountain villages has retained all its originality. A walk through its lanes.

THE APRIN SPINNING MILL, 200 YEARS OF HISTORY

Founded in 1817, the creation of Arpin's woolen cloth is proof of the textile industry in the Alps since the beginning of the 19th Century. The Arpin Spinning Mill traces back in time the wool industry. The guided tour will allow you to discover the different techniques such as; carding, spinning, weaving... on machines listed as historical monuments.

2, RUE DE LA FILATURE, SÉEZ | 04 79 07 28 79

Although this system was attractive, it was mainly because of its practical side that it was used. Stone-built columns (2 to 6 m high depending on the house) support the heavy overhanging roof thus creating areas sheltered from bad weather, for drying wood or hay... Where the slope is steep, the columns can reach a height of around ten metres.

Hay barrels

Used in the old days to transport hay from the meadow to the barn, the barrels ("trèpon" in patois) took time and know-how. Nowadays, the scythe is often replaced by a motor mower and the mule by the "transporter" but the barrel technique is still used in places where access is difficult.

THE ORCHARDS OF TARENDAISE

Tarentaise apples, a forgotten story

Fruit growing in Tarentaise is an ancient activity: it occupied an important place in traditional agriculture, although this consisted mainly of grazing. References can be found in local 18th Century documents to apple varieties such as Calville and Reinette. An impressive number of orchards reaching an altitude of 1250 metres appeared in the *mappe sarde* (the land registry of the period) of 1730. In 1837, a bet between the Duke of Savoie and the Duke of Genoa put the spotlight on the Tarentaise apple. The bet involved a contest between the finest fruit in their respective Duchies and the Reinette Franche from Villette in Tarentaise defeated the orange entered by the Duke of Genoa! In 1929, in *les Allues*, an agricultural report mentions the existence of 1,500 cider apple trees, 450 other apple trees and

230 walnut trees ; substantial figures which underline the significant place of fruit trees in traditional economy. At that time, the Tarentaise was the principal fruitgrowing area in Savoie (2/3 of cider pears and, 1/2 of dessert apples). After the arrival of the railway in Tarentaise (1914 in Bourg Saint Maurice), wagonloads of Reinette, Calville and Franc-Roseau apples left for Paris and Algeria. However, a law passed in 1943 by the Vichy government banned the marketing of local varieties and as a result these were supplanted by Anglo-Saxon varieties which had arrived in large quantities during the 1930's. Golden Delicious, Starking and Granny Smith soon held 90 % of the market. The production of local fruits returned to being a family affair although, since 1986, certain varieties may be marketed once again.

The meadow-orchard: a unique combination of fruits and the land

Apples and pears were grown close to hamlets where individual parcels with four or five trees in each one were combined to create the pre-orchard landscape where grass and fruit grew side by side. The fruit harvest took place in early October before people came back down from the Alpine pastures and *montagnettes*. So when the cattle came down, they could graze without fear of choking by swallowing a fruit. This system also enabled the ground to be fertilized naturally. For this purpose, the orchards were planted exposed to the wind with their branches high enough to allow the beasts to pass underneath. These trees were grafted from wild apple trees known as *francs*, which were common in the forests or came from the family nursery (the cider residue was buried in the ground and the seeds would germinate). It is difficult to assess the importance of this rural activity as little is yet known about it: production was mainly for family use not



for the market and the varieties were not necessarily identified. However, it can be said that there was a genuine logic to this arboriculture to ensure a varied and continuous production of fruit (10 to 11 months per year!). The main work was the making of cider, the principal drink and this was made from a mixture of wild and sweet apples. However, apples and pears were also eaten fresh and cooked, not to mention used as animal feed. The Tarentaise was therefore a fruit-growing region of the first order. These days, the orchards do not have an impact on the economic life of the valley but they are still of interest in various fields.

An ancestral agroforestry method, yet modern

It can however be said that there was a genuine logic to this arboriculture to ensure a varied and continuous production of fruit (10 to 11 months per year!). The main work was the making of cider, the principal drink and this was made from a mixture of wild and sweet apples. Apples

and pears were also eaten fresh and cooked, not to mention used to also feed the animals. Beyond being nutritive, there's a true collaboration between the grass and the animals. One controls the grass and eats the rotten fruits. The tree will create shade, without interfering with the growth of the grass. In the end, the farmer obtains two kinds of harvest, natural resources (firewood, honey...), the non-use of pesticides, and less work out on the field as the orchards itself do not need much human intervention. We still ask ourselves today why such a hands-on method has been completely ruled out. The fact is that during the 50s and 60s the "Green Revolution" advocated intensive and specialized farming. Though, today, industrial farming reveals certain limits and negative impacts, while everyone is talking about agroforestry, biodiversity... associations, people from the country side, and farmers take great interest and wish to take action

**Rosette Vallat,
Croqueurs de pommes**

The association **CROQUEURS DE POMMES** in Savoie Tarentaise Beaufortain are working on bringing out the good and value of all these different fruits. At present, the project "Renaissance des vergers de Tarentaise" (the return of the orchards of the Tarentaise valley) is taking place as part of a European project led by the advisory council of the Tarentaise. **CONTACT | 04 79 07 18 58**

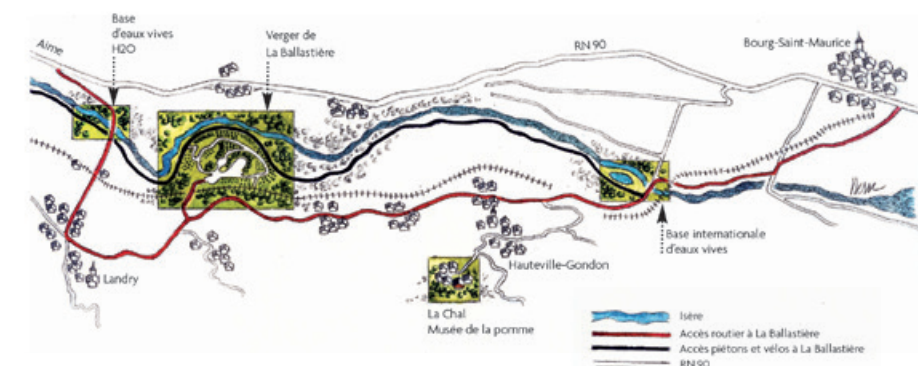
TOURS

LA MAISON DE LA POMME, VILLAGE DE LA CHAL

Not far from Bourg Saint Maurice, you will be able to learn more about this priceless cultural heritage. A free open tour every day except in the winter. The path **SENTIER DES VERGERS** joins the orchard **VERGER DE LA BALLASTIERE** (Landry), designed to stroll to discover, in an wide open area overlooking the *Isère*, at the orchard **VERGER DU SAINT-PANTALÉON**, more traditional, in Grand Gondon leading to the *Village de la Chal* (see map below).



The orchard, Autumn 1952.



ALPINE PASTURES

OF THE UPPER TARENTEISE AND THE BEAUFORTAIN

Man and the mountain

The long history of mountain people is connected with the use of the high-altitude grasslands. After the retreat of the great Wurm glaciations, primitive farmers started to appear between 4000 and 2000 BC. This was also the time of the very first crossings of the major Alpine cols, which led to transalpine dealings with distant populations. Then from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age, metallurgy (due to the presence of copper and iron ores in the Alps), salt extraction and genuine exploitation of the Alpine pastures can be associated with the increased use of the cols to trade with other regions. Thus, everything was in place before the Roman occupation: mineral and salt production and above all produce from the Alpine pastures such as livestock, skins and cheese. With the improvements of the communication routes, a Roman Emperor could eat vaticum cheese produced in our Alps. These early farmers created the routes that 21st Century Man is still using today, obviously at a different rate and by different means.

Uphill to the alpine pasture: follow the grass

The peripatetic way of life in the Alpine pastures, a sort of vertically commuting nomadic life, can still be witnessed today. The agro-pastoral system, combining cereal production and livestock rearing, gave way to the exclusive use of the mountain grasslands for cow's milk production around the time of the Second World War. These moves take place between three well-determined areas at different altitudes:

- from the permanent home (from 700-800 m),
- via the *dameu* lower mountain slopes (1100-1400 m),
- to the top of the Alpine pastures (2200-2400 m).

Going from the bottom to the top and back to the main home could involve eight to fifteen moves ; moves which were made with all the

necessary goods and chattels, dogs, chickens, pigs, workforce and family, as working in the mountains called for lots of hands. In Beaufortain, the length of the season in the Alpine pastures was different from that between Hauteluce and Beaufort: it was longer in Hauteluce as the mountains were not as high. In Beaufort when the clients (smallholders) entrusted their cows to the *montagnard* (high mountain cowherd) for the summer, the verbal contract was worth any number of papers signed in a Notary's office. On 24 June, up to a thousand head of cattle could be seen climbing up and going back down on 12 September. The parade of all the herds converging on Roselend to the sound of hand bells and church bells was an impressive and unforgettable spectacle!



At "Saint-Michel": the troops returning to the valley, in 1958.

"Le fruit commun" and the big mountain

In Beaufortain, only a few high mountain pastures belonged to the villages and the system of communal production so widespread in Tarentaise was unknown. Clients and *montagnards* existed within the structure of a large property owned by a real farming aristocracy. All this helped in the making of the well-known pressed, cooked cheese, Beaufort. Big herds of cows were needed to produce this cheese which is made in very large blocks, enabling the milk produced in summer to be processed, stored and transported hygienically. The majority of these cheeses that were considered luxury goods were not eaten locally but were reserved for a wealthy clientele. Beau-



Life in the mountains, around 1930.

fort cheese still exists and has been an AOC since 1968. It is also eaten locally by holidaymakers. Production practices have developed considerably and efforts have been made to make it less hard for the workforce. Nevertheless, there remains a deep respect for the land and the beast. The vocabulary used to discuss the wealth

produced by the high mountain pastures and this domestication of the cow is the proof. Accordingly, we still say "give the beasts a meal" and "care for a cheese". All the so-called "cultivated" landscape is not natural, but fashioned by generations of mountain people, landscapes we have inherited along with the ancestral *savoir-faire*.

Martine Viallet-Détraz



The first automatic milking machine transported by the male mule on his back

BEAUFORT

THE PRINCE OF GRUYÈRES

Cheese making was already in evidence in the Alps during the Gallo-Roman period. Pliny the Younger informed the Imperial Court in Rome of the presence of vatusium, a cheese made in large blocks.

Land of livestock rearing... cradle of the tarine breed

Land of livestock rearing and particularly the cradle of the tarine (or tarenaise) breed, for centuries Bourg Saint Maurice has been reputed for the quality of its cheese, Beaufort. The immense task of ground clearance undertaken by the

monastic and village communities provided the region with huge areas of high mountain pasture able to accommodate large herds. Although the name Beaufort only appeared in 1865, the savoir-faire that came from the tradition of making vachelin in the Middle Ages and the technique for making gruyères has enabled grovire, a cheese similar to Beaufort, made since the 18th Century. Production enjoyed considerable fame, as the writings of the 18th Century and the requisition order for ten thousand hundredweight from the Committee of Public Safety to feed Paris during the French Revolution bear witness.

Production of Beaufort saw a sharp slow-down around the 1960's. Multiple factors combined to threaten not just the existence of Beaufort but the very survival of mountain agriculture itself. The high cost of labour, the huge exodus from the countryside, compulsory purchases for building hydro-electric dams, the development of winter sports resorts all led to a desertification of the high mountain pastures. Designed to combat the isolation caused by the exodus from the countryside, the cooperative system turned out to be the key structure in the rebirth of Beaufort. Nowadays, the milk is brought to permanent dairies where the cheese is made, marketed and promoted.

The stages of Beaufort production

- 1 kg Beaufort requires 10 litres of milk.
- 1 round of Beaufort weighs about 42 kg.

In both winter and summer, the milk is collected either after each milking or by combining the morning's milk with that of the previous evening. The milk is taken directly to the village chalet or dairy and poured into a copper caldron. The long process of making Beaufort is divided into unchanging stages, whether it is handmade or produced in a mechanised dairy as it is the case in Bourg Saint Maurice at the Coopérative laitière de Haute Tarentaise (Upper Tarentaise Dairy Cooperative).



Inside the Cheese Making School, 1947.



- **Curdling:** The cheese maker begins the production of Beaufort by heating the milk to 32-33° C. At this temperature, the milk curdles (rennet obtained by macerating calves' fourth stomachs and whey by ancestral methods is added to the milk). The curdling period must last about 30 minutes to obtain consistent curds.
- **Draining:** The latter is cut into a grid with a "curd cutter" then mixed to reduce it to the size of grain of rice.
- **Mixing and heating:** The grains are then heated to a temperature of 53-54° C. The mixing which starts slowly is accelerated when this temperature is reached.

- **Decanting and moulding:** When the cheese maker reckons the grain is "ready", he proceeds to the decanting of the curds and wraps it all in a flaxen cloth. He molds the cheese in a standard wooden hoop which gives the cheese its distinctive features.
- **The pressing of the cheese:** The cheese is then pressed for 20 hours before being taken to the cellar. During those 20 hours, the beaufort is turned over and its cover is changed and drained.
- **Salting of the cheese:** Once it has been left to sit for 24 hours, the cheese is then dipped in brine.
- **Maturing of the cheese:** A minimum of 5 months, to about 12 months. Kept below 10 degrees with high humidity, the result of the cheese will depend on the way the cheese merchant takes good care of the cheese. The cheese is salted, rubbed and the whole cheese is turned over twice a week. This is vital in order for the cheese to develop its flavor.



TOURS

A SEASON IN AN ALPINE PASTURE

At an altitude of 1 800 m, in a remarkable location, at the foot of the aiguille des glaciers, mountain agriculture follows the seasons, the grazing of the herds. In a chalet in the Alpine pasture you can learn about the making of Beaufort and Sérac. The tour finishes with a tasting of the various cheeses.

COOPÉRATIVE LAITIÈRE DE HAUTE TARENNAISE (UPPER TARENNAISE DAIRY COOPERATIVE)

To find out about the making of the "prince of Gruyères", come to the Coopérative laitière de Haute Tarentaise. Free unaccompanied tour from Monday to Friday from 9.30 to 11.30am

LES COLOMBIÈRES ZONE ARTISANALE (INDUSTRIAL ESTATE),

BOURG SAINT MAURICE | 04 79 07 08 28

BAROQUE ART

IN THE ALPS

At the dawn of the 17th Century, the Upper Tarentaise cloaked itself in a white mantle of churches with the same frenzy as at the beginning of the Middle Ages, thus wiping out decades of epidemics, scarcity and famine. Parish churches and sanctuaries were built, refurbished and decorated in a style designed to disturb, move and appeal to the souls of the faithful: baroque art.

A profusion of statues

In the high Alpine valleys, artists were to replace the marble of the Italian churches with cembro pine (arolla), a material which enabled them to create daring decorations. Under the chisels of the sculptors, this wood, full of resin that protected it from rot gave rise to curves, counter curves, scrolls and drapes, myriads of cherubs and a profusion of statues... "Such is the illustrated bible of the old Savoyard country folk", Lucien Chavoutier.

Richness and exuberance

The tabernacle formerly lodged in a lateral recess in the choir, is now in the centre of the altar like a temple in miniature. Through the richness and exuberance of its sculptures it draws the eye from the moment that you enter the sanctuary.

Profusion of decoration

Freedom of form, a profusion of decoration, clouds of cherubs, creating a play of light and shadow... the baroque sculptures are the exact opposite of protestant austerity.

THE ASSOCIATION DES AMIS DE L'ÉGLISE DE HAUTEVILLE-GONDON (Friends of the Hauteville-Gondon church) was set up in 2012 and works to protect and restore its heritage.

CONTACT | 04 79 07 03 19



TOURS

A MEDIEVAL CARTOON STRIP

Located on a plateau 3 km from Bourg-Saint- Maurice, the little village of Vulmix huddles against the Saint-Grat chapel where 15th Century frescoes relate like a strip cartoon the legend of its patron saint who set out in search of Saint John the Baptist's head in Palestine.

BAROQUE COLOURS

Discover the village of Hauteville-Gondon through its baroque church, a subtle mix of polychromatic paints and gold leaf, reflections of alpine baroque.



THE FORTIFICATION OF BOURG SAINT MAURICE

From the break of dawn in the first century, the “Maison de Savoie” appeared at the same time as the thriving feudalism and the increase of fortified castles. Following the first dungeons and forts, came an amount of fortifications and fortified manors. These fortifications insured a control of the routes and the Alpine cols.



The tower of Chatelard, at the beginning of the 20th Century. In the background, the village of “Seez”.

From the tower...

The tower of Chatelard, is known to be the oldest fort of Bourg Saint Maurice. It appears to have been built at the end of the 12th Century, which was strategically built on a boulder at the bottom of the “Petit Saint Bernard” col and the route to the Chapieux valley. Like all defensive, medieval structures a door was situated on the first floor with the help of a ladder allowing an easy entrenchment in case of a threat.

Alpine trooper wearing the army outfit.

...to the fort.

During the second battle of Montferrat (1628-1631), Louis XIII and the French troops made a stopover in Bourg Saint Maurice. On June 7th 1630, the king orders the construction of a mud fort on the bank of the Versoyen (presently the marsh) in order to set the front line and to be facing the Savoyard troops of Prince Thomas de Savoie Carignan, who hid at the col “Petit Saint Bernard”. The cardinal Richelieu, managed the construction works. Gradually, this will put off the enemy in “Piémont” and the mud fort will have completely disappeared in the decades to follow.



Rural life at the barracks, the barber.

Shacks and the fort of Vulmix in the 1930s.

The fortifications of “Séré de Rivières”: the Alpine Valley protection

In 1860, once “Savoie” unified with France, Italy represented a real threat. These leads to the creation of the Alpine troops in 1888, as well as a better and more adapted system of protection seeing as weapons were quickly developing and being transported from the Jura to Nice. This is known as the “Séré de Rivière” system. The barricade of Bourg Saint Maurice facing the Petit Saint Bernard was formed with superposition structures adapted to the regions of the mountain. Thereby, from 1890 to 1894, four forts were built, each with a strategic altitude point.

- The banned fort of Vulmix at 1065m above sea level (200m above the town). This was considered to be the most modern fort in the Alps in 1914 with its reinforced concrete bunkers as well as two gun-turrets enclosable GF4 equipped with machine guns,
- The defence fort of Truc at 1550m above sea level,
- The surveillance casemate of Platte at 2000m above sea level,
- The fort of the destroyed redoubt at 2345m above sea level, overlooking the “Petit Saint Bernard” col, built on an old Sardinian redoubt, demolished by the French in 1797.

As of 1910, the strongest location was reinforced with a resistance centre around the dome of Vaugelaz, of Courbaton and the Têtes.

At the beginning of the 20th century, with the new strategy of protecting the borders, railways and barracks were built in the upper valleys. This was the case of Bourg Saint Maurice in 1913, where a train station and barracks were built, which no longer exists today, and served to welcome the seventh battalion of the Alpine Troops until 2012.

Alpine troops skiing, at the beginning of the 20th Century.



Mountain troops facing the “Mont Pourri”.

The structures of Maginot: the rise to war

At the beginning of the 20th century, the use of reinforced concrete helped to the creation of a new kind of fort which strengthened the old structures. At the end of 1930s, the beginning of a new alignment “Maginot” of the Alps, underground and cemented forts at the Italian border:

- The outpost: the structure of Seloges, at the foot of the Seigne col and an alignment of blocks are the cols of Petit Saint Bernard and Mont.
- The defensive position: the “Cave a Canon” at the bottom of the Malgovert forest, the structure of Chatelard at the foot of the medieval tower, the quick anti-tank barricade of Versoyen (today no longer existent).

Barely finished, at the start of the war with Italy in June 1940, they endured an attack during the Battle of the Alps, which took place end of June on the highest uplands at the Beaufortain borders of Tarentaise and Maurienne.

As of 1942, the immense resistance movement was lead by charismatic people, such as, Jean Marie Bulle who lead an efficient group in Beaufortain whilst managing to protect their lives.

At the end of the conflicts, the forts will be used as ammunition storage (fort of Vulmix) or sold by the army (fort of Truc and Platte).

Dominique Vialard



LES ARCS

AN ADVENTURE

The years between 1930 and 1960 saw numerous upheavals in favour of increasing paid holidays as well as improving living standards, which explain the outstanding growth of tourism in France. The demands of winter sports quickly became pressing. Accordingly, at the end of the 1940's architects, developers and project management organisations devoted themselves to analysing and seeking out sites for the creation of new resorts. New resorts such as La Plagne, Les Ménuires, Val Thorens, Flaine, Avoriaz and Les Arcs appeared throughout the 1960's. We speak then of «integrated resorts», those where the planner takes charge of all the main aspects: laying out the ski area, town planning, facilities, real estate and commercial development and overall management.



Les créateurs,
Robert Blanc & Roger Godino.

A major project, “the creation of Les Arcs”

It all began with the defining meeting between Roger Godino, planner of mountain tourist development and Robert Blanc, son of the soil, a ski instructor and high mountain guide. The meeting of minds and skills of these two great professionals was behind the building of les Arcs. Several architects, town planners and engineers gathered around this initial team infusing the project with an innovative and creative spirit around Charlotte Perriand, “the group's soul”.

Objectives of the new concepts

It was a matter of building something that was functional, aesthetically pleasing and which fulfilled the requirements of this new tourist development. Designers had to follow a few basic rules:

- respect for the location and nature
- conservation of the old chalets in the alpine pastures, which modern architecture did not seek to copy but to highlight their authenticity
- use of local materials such as timber: pine, larch, shingles (wooden tiles which carpenters used to fashion in the past).

Where traditional architecture perfectly fulfilled the needs of a rural population, what was invented in les Arcs sought to fulfil the current needs of tourists. Accordingly, residential buildings were integrated into the vegetation so as not to interfere with the quality of the views from each apartment. The choice of sound and natural materials introduced a style that was both welcoming and relaxing in the centre of the resorts where vehicles were excluded for the safety and well-being of holiday-makers.



Pierre Faucheux, Charlotte Perriand and Jean Prouvé on the terrain having a chat.

Jean Prouvé and Guy Rey-Millet.

The residence “Cascade”, Arc 1600.



Opening dates of the resorts

- 1968 - Arc 1600
- 1974 - Arc 1800
- 1979 - Arc 2000
- 2003 - Arc 1950

20th Century Heritage Label

In 1999, the Ministry of Culture and Communication undertook actions promoting 20th Century architectural heritage: protection, awareness, restoration. Accordingly, it set up a “20th Century Heritage” label to highlight important buildings from the last century across the country. Testimony to a modernity which has been able to blend with the mountains, nature and the town, Bourg Saint Maurice/Les Arcs has obtained listing for five sites:

- the Bourg Saint Maurice Town Hall and cinema,
- the town planning and architecture of Arc 1600 and Arc 1800,
- the Aiguille-Rouge cable-car stations in Arc 2000.

As for the interiors, the lifestyle rhymes with simplicity

“Modern decorative art has no decor”, this quotation from Le Corbusier illustrates perfectly the architectural style of the interiors most of which were designed by Charlotte Perriand. Having worked with Le Corbusier, she was able to achieve the ideal balance between simplicity, functionality, comfort and something that is pleasing to the eye. Contact with the outside came from large windows, raised balconies and unimpeded views and open-plan kitchens. All these processes were very innovative in interior design and revealed the coming of a new philosophy of life that at the same time expressed a certain moral development (especially in connection with the image of women). Les Arcs, a fashionable resort where you live well! A modern resort, functional and integrated into the mountain landscape, Les Arcs is also the location of choice for snow-riding sports and numerous renowned international sporting and cultural events.

**Guy Rey-Millet,
Atelier d'Architecture
en Montagne**



The residence “Cachette”, Arc 1600.



TOURS

ARC 1600,

AN ARCHITECTURAL SIGNATURE

A modern and functional resort integrated into the mountain landscape and adapted to the slope. The work of a design team built around Charlotte Perriand and which included, amongst others, the architects Gaston Regairaz, Guy Rey-Millet, Bernard Taillefer, Robert Robutato, Pierre Faucheux... The latter designed la Coupole the laminated roof structure of which is the design base for the les Arcs logo.

ARC 1800,

OVERLOOKING THE RESORT

Between Mont Blanc and the range of the Bellecôte mountains, alongside a golf course, Arc 1800s architecture overlooks the slopes... A different kind of architecture in the 20th Century.



The building of the first
button lift.

Nothing to be seen,
but the first tracks.

The residence “3 Arcs”
and “La Coupole”, autumn 1968





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