

Geneva

Cultural Trails

Museum to Museum

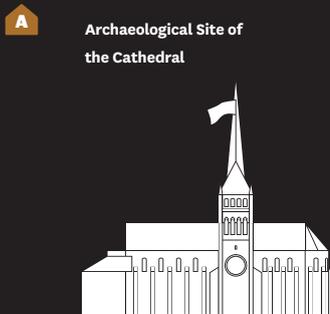
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Vieille-Ville



VILLE DE
GENÈVE



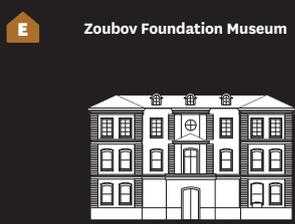
A Archaeological Site of the Cathedral



D Maison de Rousseau et de la Littérature



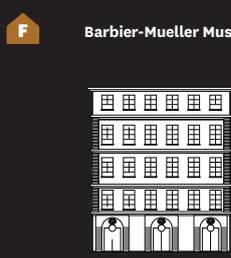
B International Museum of the Reformation



E Zoubov Foundation Museum



C Maison Tavel



F Barbier-Mueller Museum



Max Bill, Twisted column, 1966
City of Geneva Contemporary Art Fund
Place du Bourg-de-Four



Heinz Schwarz, Clémentine, 1974-1975
City of Geneva Contemporary Art Fund
Place du Bourg-de-Four

Public transports
Bus 36, stops Bourg-de-Four, Cathédrale, Hôtel-de-Ville; buses 3 and 5, stop Palais Eynard; bus 7, stops Bel-Air Cité, Molard and Musée d'art et d'histoire; tram 12, buses 2 and 10, stops Bel-Air Cité and Molard
As at Mai 2015
For more information: tpg.ch

Bicycle parking
Bel-Air Cité, Rue Henri-Fazy, Place du Bourg-de-Four
Bicycles are allowed through all the Old Town, but walking is recommended, as the distances are short and the cobbled streets are uncomfortable.

Car parks
Parking Saint-Antoine

Wi-Fi
Place du Bourg-de-Four, cour de Saint-Pierre, Maison Tavel, Hôtel de Ville

Persons with reduced mobility
Full details of access to the buildings can be found on the website accessibilite.ch

Duration
The trail lasts 50 minutes, not including museum visits.

Public holidays (see museum opening times for more information)
25 December, 1 January, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Ascension Day, Whit Monday, 1 August, Jeûne genevois (1st Thursday in September)

Free admission
Admission to most of the museums is free on the 1st Sunday of the month.

An itinerary is suggested, but the trail can be joined at any stage.

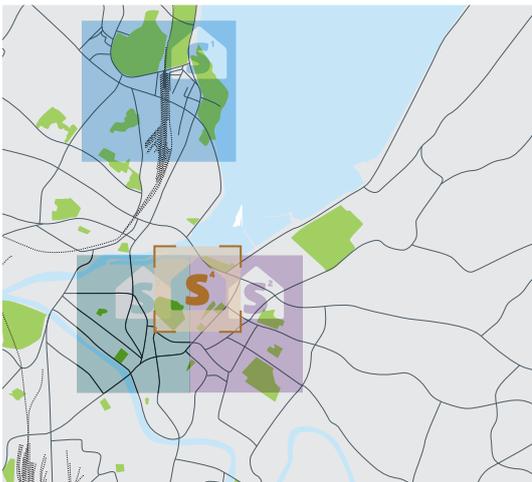
	Musées		Audio-guided tour		Proposed itinerary
	Musées de la Ville de Genève		Wi-Fi		Walking time excluding museum visits
	Parking vélo		WC		
	Parking voiture				



Listen to the trail!
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ville-geneve.ch/cultural-trails



The trail in Geneva





Cour de Saint-Pierre 6

Archaeological Site of the Cathedral

tel. 022 310 29 29

mail clefs.stpierre@bluewin.ch

web site-archeologique.ch

Open daily 10.00 - 17.00

Admission fees:

Adults 8 CHF; youth (7-16s), senior citizens, jobseekers, those receiving a disability allowance, students, apprentices 4 CHF; groups from 15 pers. 4 CHF

Combined ticket «Archaeological site - Cathedral Towers - International Museum of the Reformation»:

adults 16 CHF; groups from 15 pers. 10 CHF; youth (7-16s) 8 CHF, senior citizens, jobseekers, those receiving a disability allowance, students, apprentices 10 CHF



In 1976, large-scale excavations were launched underneath St. Peter's Cathedral and its vicinity. Led by Charles Bonnet, the cantonal archaeologist at the time, the excavations here lasted for almost 30 years and brought to light the remains of churches that predated today's cathedral, as well as traces of pre-Christian occupation.

This internationally renowned archaeological site, which first opened to the public in 1986 and then in its present version in 2006, is one of the most extensive in Europe. Here, you'll discover how the City of Geneva came into being, learn about its history from the Celtic period to the Middle Ages and find out how Christianity became established in the region. Through 3D simulations, interactive terminals, models and drawings retracing key moments in Geneva's history, you can experience the daily life of inhabitants during the time of the Allobroges, the Romans and medieval Christians.

The oldest archaeological remains on the hill (though this area was undoubtedly occupied even earlier), date back to the 2nd century BC and indicate an Allobrogian settlement. These first traces include a square, a temple, an aristocratic house, a potters' workshop and a religious area protected by a palisade. The decision to settle here was no mere coincidence.

The presence of the lake and the Rhone offers a dual benefit: they are not only navigable waterways but also form a natural protection around the hill where St. Peter's Cathedral now stands, hence the construction of the citadel on its summit.

However, it was not until the end of the 4th century AD, with the promulgation of Christianity as a state religion within the Roman Empire, that the city accorded itself an impressive monumental complex. Initially, it comprised a cathedral, a baptistery for conversions and a chapel. Around 400 AD, a second cathedral was erected on the southern side, linked to the first by an atrium

whose galleries facilitated movement between the different edifices. Several meeting rooms, some heated and richly decorated, enabled ecclesiastics to convene and to welcome important visitors. Over the years, all these buildings, together with the Bishop of Geneva's residence and private chapel, were altered, embellished and often extended. A third cathedral was later constructed on the site of the baptistery; it formed the basis of the one built in 1000 AD, which subsequently made way for today's single cathedral in the second half of the 12th century.



Rue du Cloître 4, cour de Saint-Pierre

International Museum of the Reformation

tel. 022 310 24 31

mail info@musee-reforme.ch

web musee-reforme.ch

Open Tuesday to Sunday

10.00 – 17.00

Admission fees: Adults 13 CHF; senior citizens, jobseekers, those receiving a disability allowance, students, apprentices, groups from 15 pers. 8 CHF; youth (7-16s) 6 CHF; free admission for under 7s and disabled persons



The International Museum of the Reformation (MIR) is located right next to the archaeological site of the cathedral. Together with the visit to the cathedral towers, they form an entity known as the “Espace Saint-Pierre” with many synergies that add to the attractiveness of the space. A combined ticket is available. Created in 2005, the MIR showcases the living history of Geneva and the Protestant Reformation. Through many archival documents and a wealth of illustrations, the non-denominational MIR tells in detail the story of the Reformation from its origins to the present day.

It all began in the 16th century. Adopted by vote on 21 May 1536, in St. Peter’s Cloister, on the exact spot where the MIR stands today, the Reformation had a decisive influence on Geneva’s destiny. For, at the same time as carrying out its reforms, Geneva was also carrying out a revolution, breaking away from its legitimate sovereign, the Prince-Bishop of Geneva, to become an independent republic. The man who shaped this

new republic, then under threat from the nearby Kingdom of Savoy, was the 27 year-old Jean Calvin, close to Guillaume Farel, the first to have preached evangelical doctrines in the city. Geneva thus became a centre for western Christianity and a place of refuge for thousands of families persecuted for their faith. These refugees were to make a lasting mark on the city and some street names still reflect their presence: de Candolle, Trembley, Turretini, Micheli and Fatio.

The museum is housed in a 400m² apartment on the ground floor of the Maison Mallet, dating from the 1720s. The decoration of the library, dining room and sitting room have been restored to that of the day. The 18th century was a golden era for Geneva: the threat at its borders disappeared, former refugees prospered and many fine residences were constructed. In order to enhance the cathedral forecourt, the Council of Geneva offered plots of land to individuals for the building of houses there. Gédéon Mallet, a descendant of a

Huguenot family, wool merchant and later banker in Geneva and Paris, commissioned plans from the French architect Jean-François Blondel for a large family house (the couple had nine children). The style adopted is in keeping with that of the “French style” mansions then being erected in the Rue des Granges. On passing through the porch, a surprising facade awaits you, with its curved corners and large bay windows. A three-storied avant-corps is topped by a pediment bearing the Mallet coat of arms. The “garden” facade, which actually overlooks a public square, is characterised by strong horizontal lines. At its centre, superimposed central pilasters support a light pediment. The high quality of the sculpted decoration imparts great elegance to the entire edifice, which fostered debate in Geneva on luxury in architecture.

a Cathedral

St. Peter's Cathedral, long before it became the symbol of the influence of Protestant Rome, was initiated in 1160 by the first Prince-Bishop of Geneva, Arducius de Faucigny, and its construction took over a century to complete. In June 1535, after Catholic mass had been abolished in Geneva, the cathedral became a place of Protestant worship and was renamed St. Peter's Temple. Of modest proportions, it owes its current appearance to additions, modifications and major restoration work in the 18th and 19th centuries. The monumental façade, with its Neoclassical portico inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, dates from the 1750s. Comprising six Corinthian marble columns surmounted by a pediment bearing the coat of arms of Geneva and by a dome, it was the work of Benedetto Alfieri, architect to the Duke of Savoy. The copper spire that gives the cathedral its slender silhouette was added in 1895.

Inside, most of the sacred images and rich decoration of the Middle Ages were lost during the Reformation's iconoclastic movement, leaving behind bare, whitewashed walls of molasse stone. Its extreme sobriety reflects the Calvinist spirit, focused on listening to the Word rather than on images. Only the 300 Roman and Gothic style capitals (the largest set in Switzerland) and the stained glass windows have survived,

together with one panel from Konrad Witz's altarpiece, *The Miraculous Draught of Fishes* (1444). This major artwork, now at the Museum of Art and History (MAH), is the first example in European painting of the depiction of a real landscape (in this case, Lake Geneva and the Mont Blanc mountain chain).

One of the cathedral's gems is found on its south side: the Chapel of the Maccabees. Built between 1400 and 1405 by the Cardinal Jean de Brogny as a family tomb, it was converted during the Reformation into a salt warehouse and later used as an auditorium by the Reformed Academy. Major restoration work in the 19th century gave it back its brilliance and colour and permitted the removal for conservation purposes of Giacomo Jaquerio's fresco painted on the vault of the apse. This celestial concert with twelve angels can also now be seen at the MAH.

Over the centuries, the cathedral has been more than just a place of worship. It is the heart of the city and has notably performed civil functions, even becoming the "Temple of Law" during the Genevan Revolution. Still today, it hosts the swearing-in ceremony for the government of the Republic of Geneva.

b Terrasse Agrippa-d'Aubigné

Walking round the back of the cathedral, you come to a charming terrace on two levels offering a clear view over the Rues-Basses (Low Town) below and the east face of the cathedral. Until 1940, a prison stood here, erected in 1840 on the former site of the residence of the Prince-Bishops of Geneva, which had itself become a place of incarceration with the Reformation. Stones from the bishops' palace prison were used to build the supporting walls of the terrace, which actually conceals one of the city's air raid shelters. This space was recently transformed into L'Abri, a multicultural centre for young talents.

The terrace is named in honour of Agrippa d'Aubigné, a famous French Protestant writer and soldier, who spent the last ten years of his life in Geneva and was buried in 1630 in the cathedral cloister. Ever since childhood, Agrippa d'Aubigné had been deeply affected by the tragedy of wars of religion. He was only eight when his

father, a Protestant and a soldier, showed him the heads of his fellow tortured Reformers. Narrowly escaping the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, d'Aubigné retained a deep-seated grudge against the monarchy; resentment reinforced by a sense of betrayal when Henri IV, his companion in arms, converted to Catholicism. As well as a soldier, d'Aubigné was also a writer and one of the great Baroque authors of France. He wrote many anti-Catholic pamphlets and controversial attacks against former Protestants, as in his most important work *Les Tragiques*. Exiled to Geneva in 1620, he occupied until his death the seat reserved for him in the front row of St. Peter's Cathedral.

c Collège Calvin

Along the medieval fortifications was established the first major public institution in Geneva created after the Reformation: the Collège de Genève. Founded in 1559 by Jean Calvin, it became a listed building in 1921. The Academy, headed by Théodore de Bèze, included an elementary and a secondary school and the University of Geneva, and offered teaching in literature, biblical languages, law and theology based on Calvin's Catechism. The college was free and open to young people from all backgrounds. In the 16th century, it had 1200 students out of a population of 13,000. Sciences were added to the curriculum in the 17th century, and modern foreign languages in the 19th century. The Collège de Genève was renamed Collège Calvin in 1969, when co-education was introduced in schools.

Building work began in January 1558, led by Pernet Desfosses. Under his supervision, it was completed so rapidly that lessons began in

November of the same year. Of its original form, the college has retained its overall layout and its double flight staircase resting on a portico with three semi-circular arches and two unequal round arches. This Renaissance style edifice has cross-ribbed vaulting that is a continuation of the medieval tradition. In 1560, the second building (south wing) was constructed, with proportions practically identical to the first. Accessible via an external staircase, the entrance is enhanced by pilasters and a sculpted pediment bearing the coat of arms of Geneva, as well as two figures of Victory and various Renaissance motifs not found elsewhere in the city. Heightening, additions and extensions were carried out in the 19th century in response to the new requirements of such an establishment, which has taught such famous students as Henry Dunant (founder of the Red Cross), the writer Jorge Luis Borges and the Swiss actor Michel Simon.

d Place du Bourg-de-Four

A favourite with Geneva's residents, the Place du Bourg-de-Four is the oldest square in the city. Its Roman name of forum (hence "four" in French), indicating strong economic activity, became Bourg-de-Four when the square incorporated neighbouring buildings to become a district or "bourg". Set on a slope between the plateau of the Tranchées area and the summit of the hill, it is a true crossroads where roads leading to Geneva converge.

In the 3rd century AD, the city wall built to protect Geneva from possible incursions by Germanic tribes left the Bourg-de-Four isolated outside the ramparts. It was not until the extension of the urban belt in the 9th century and the development of merchants' workshops that new life was breathed into the square, culminating in the 13th century international fairs. These commercial and festive occasions, lasting several days and held each year during religious festivals, attracted crowds

from all regions. Hostelries and inns then stood in the Place du Bourg-de-Four. The creation of market halls in the Place du Molard in 1309, and increasing competition from fairs in Lyon in the following century put an end to this flurry of activity. The new 16th century fortifications closed the gates of the city and turned the Bourg-de-Four into a cul-de-sac. The square was no longer an intersection, but still kept its mercantile function. The fountain in the centre dates from this period, as does much of the heightening of the constructions, the consequence of the influx of Protestant refugees from around Europe.

Listed in 1929, the square retains its function as a crossroads and invites you to take a welcome break halfway up the steep slope leading to the Old Town. Look out for the small statue of the King of the Burgundians, Gundobad (died 516 AD), nestled in the facade of No. 5, a reminder that his castle once stood on the approach to this square.





Clémentine, Heinz Schwarz (1974-1975)

Installed at the turning to the Bourg-de-Four by the City of Geneva Contemporary Art Fund in 1974, *Clementine*, by the Swiss artist Heinz Schwarz, is without doubt Geneva's most popular statue. It has also become a symbol of the struggle against brutality and indifference, in the light of the many flowers, press cuttings and political texts around it. Born in the Canton of Solothurn, lithographer by trade and self-taught sculptor, Heinz Schwarz came to Geneva during the Second World War. His first statues were of classical inspiration, in which the influences of Renoir and Maillol can be seen. He gradually developed his own personal style and cultivated his taste for elongated forms. Distanced from the contemporary art scene, Schwarz drew on his own sensitivities and worked tirelessly on the affirmation of the slender simplicity that the nudity of adolescence, that in-between age, evoked for him. *Clementine*, with her almost diaphanous nudity, discreetly and poetically embellishes the urban landscape. Her barely visible base reinforces the simplicity of her attitude and the candour of the post-childhood period. This sculpture, first made in plaster and then cast in bronze, was created after a model that the artist reworked to give it a timeless and universal character, with forms more slender and larger than in real life. It is to the same artist that we owe *L'Enfant et le cheval (The Child and the Horse)* at the end of the Quai Wilson.



Twisted column, Max Bill (1966)

Two years before *Clementine* and further down the slope, the square became home to a work by Max Bill. Acquired after the retrospective exhibition at the Musée Rath devoted to this Swiss artist of international renown, this twisted granite column measuring 4.2 metres high reinvents the columns of Antiquity by disregarding the most rational geometric calculations. With a circular base and summit, the starting triangle becomes an octagon as it turns and climbs the bole of the column. The change is barely perceptible at first, yet the constant progression of this triangle turned octagon gives dynamism and lightness to this imposing sculpture. Born in Winterthur in 1908, the young Max Bill was impressed by a lecture he attended given by Le Corbusier. At 19, he began architectural studies at the Bauhaus in Dessau and subsequently tried his hand at drawing, painting and sculpture. Also an editor and theorist, his manifesto for Constructive Art published in 1936 made him one of the flag bearers for concrete art, advocating the use of natural sciences and mathematics in the construction of artworks. Composed of pure geometric forms, Max Bill's artistic world is striking for its unity and the constancy of his research spanning sixty years of artistic activity.



e

The Hôtel de Ville and public authorities

This architectural complex, built in several phases between the 15th and 18th centuries, has been the permanent seat of political power in Geneva since the late Middle Ages. Until the 15th century, the local authorities had no meeting room of their own, but convened in the cathedral cloister. Around 1410-20, the Commune purchased a piece of land intended for the first City Hall. Some years later, a large mural tower, known as the Tour Baudet, was built. Rectangular in form and set solidly on the summit of the hill known as the Treille, it was both a defensive structure and used for council sessions. Since the Genevan constitution of 1847, the seven State Councillors have been elected by universal suffrage, and still meet today at the Tour Baudet once a week in a room with richly painted decoration depicting 23 full-length figures dating from the 16th and 17th centuries.

In the 16th century, major extension work was undertaken, notably the construction of the monumental spiral ramp. The only one of its kind and designed by Pernet Defosses, the architect of the Collège Calvin, it forms three complete turns within a square space, with no stairs or intermediate landings. The finely moulded decoration on the Gothic cross-ribbed vaulting is already in the Renaissance style. The street and Treille facades were built between 1616 and 1710, linking the Renaissance and classical styles "in the French manner". They

are aligned with the existing houses in the street, in particular the Turrettini house at No. 8, whose strong horizontal lines and terrace decoration have been copied. The different floor levels are underlined by projecting cornices, while the identical square-shaped windows rest on soberly decorated sills. The inner facades overlook a large courtyard whose galleries have cross-ribbed vaulted ceilings. Dozens of encrusted fossils can be spotted in the pinkish rendering of the courtyard walls. These gastropods, dating from some 150 million years ago are often to be found in Geneva's buildings, encrusted in the limestone blocks of the region, reminding us that in the Mesozoic era the entire Lake Geneva basin was covered by sea.

From the long stone bench on the pavement outside the Hôtel de Ville, judges dispensed justice until 1829. The accused and witnesses were installed on a platform facing the public tribunal. Condemned to death here were Jacques Druet for blasphemy (1547) and Michel Servet for heresy (1553). On this very spot in 1762, *Émile* and *The Social Contract*, two major works by Jean-Jacques Rousseau were condemned and burnt by the court. Due to lack of space, the law court and tribunals left the Hôtel de Ville in 1860 and were transferred to the Bourg-de-Four in the former general hospital.



Rue du Puits-Saint-Pierre 6



Maison Tavel



tel. 022 418 37 00

mail mah@ville-ge.ch

web mah-geneve.ch

Open Tuesday to Sunday

11.00 – 17.00

Admission fees: free admission to permanent collections. Admission fee of 5 CHF to 3 CHF depending on the temporary exhibitions.

Free admission for under 18s and on the first Sunday of the month.

An ExpoPass giving you free access to all MAH exhibitions is also available.

A remarkable example of medieval civil architecture in Switzerland, this exceptional building is also the oldest private Genevan residence. The property of the City of Geneva since 1963, it became a local history museum in 1986. On its six floors you can see engravings, paintings, maps, models, furniture and other objects dating from the Middle Ages to the 19th century that reveal the urban development of the city, as well as different aspects of the lives of its inhabitants in times past. The attic is devoted to the Magnin scale model of the city, named after the Genevan architect Auguste Magnin, who spent almost 20 years of his life in its creation. This 30m² scale model gives us a highly accurate and faithful record of Geneva in 1850, still surrounded by its system of fortifications. The museum also organises temporary thematic exhibitions.

The oldest part of the house, the vast converted cellars in the basement, date from the 11th and 12th centuries. From the late 13th century onwards, the house was owned by the seigniorial Tavel family. In 1334, a huge fire destroyed half the city. Shortly after, the Tavel family rebuilt their home and gave it the appearance of a fortified house by adding two corner towers. This truly palatial city dwelling was considered the most

beautiful residence of its day in Geneva. At this time, in the mid-14th century, the Tavel's political and social roles made them one of the most important families within episcopal Geneva, especially due to their key participation in the struggle for emancipation from the authority of the bishop and for the constitution of the Commune.

Major structural modifications were carried out in the 17th century by the house's new owners, the Calandrini family, rich Italian Protestant refugees who erected a mansion on the Grand-Rue side. To preserve the Tavel's house and incorporate it into their new mansion, a staircase was constructed in the courtyard between the two buildings. Unlike most medieval houses, which were very narrow, the generous proportions and the seigniorial character of the residence permitted transformations in line with the aristocratic and bourgeois housing tastes of subsequent centuries, while retaining the original structure. The main facade, now with only one tower, is dark grey with white pointing, reproducing the 17th century external lime-based paint discovered during restoration work in the 1980s. Many windows were added up until the 18th century, though still respecting the medieval polychrome sculptures of the large first floor windows. This series of ten heads dates from the 14th cen-

tury and very probably tells a story whose meaning is a mystery to us today. On the top row is the bust of a bearded man, the crowned head of a man and the heads of two women, one wearing a diadem and the other a crown. Beneath, two dogs can be seen on either side of the outlandish head of a man and the head of a woman covered with a veil and a bridal crown. Lastly, the bust of a woman is turned towards the remains of what was probably a griffin. Between 1544 and 1555, an inn was housed in the Maison Tavel, known as the "Griffin Inn" in reference to this mythical animal, half eagle, half lion. The originals of these ten sculpted heads, removed in 2006 for their preservation, can be viewed inside the museum.

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The Old Arsenal

Well-known for its old cannons intended to defend the Republic of Geneva against the covetous Kingdom of Savoy and France, the Old Arsenal was originally an open-air market and became a covered market hall in the early 15th century. In the 1630s, a large granary was added above the hall, and a century later weapons replaced the bales of wheat. In 1877, this arsenal was moved to the Plainpalais barracks and the building fell into disuse. It was briefly a “Historical Museum” where old weapons were exhibited, until these were transferred in 1910 to the brand new Museum of Art and History. In 1923, it became a depository for the State Archives and now houses this institution. Its changing functions have not however modified its external appearance, which retains the characteristic architecture of a covered market topped with a granary. The ground floor is open on three sides, with wide arches

resting on square-shaped pillars. The mullioned windows on the first floor take up the decoration of projecting sills of the Hôtel de Ville. Under the cornice, a frieze dating from 1972, which reproduces a painting of 1893 destroyed by fire, illustrates important events in Geneva’s history. The mosaics covering the inner wall of the covered area date from 1949 and are the work of Alexandre Cingria. Originally intended to decorate one of the walls of the Hôtel de Ville, they depict the arrival of Julius Caesar in Geneva in 58 BC, the medieval Geneva Fairs and the arrival of Protestant refugees after the Reformation.



Grand-Rue 40

Maison de Rousseau et de la Littérature

tel. 022 310 10 28

mail info@m-r-l.ch

web m-r-l.ch

Open Tuesday to Sunday

11.00 – 17.30

Admission fees: of 3 CHF to 5 CHF



At 40 Grand-Rue, on 28 June 1712, Jean-Jacques Rousseau was born. This symbolic building is now devoted to contemporary literature and keeps alive the work of this humanist philosopher, writer and musician of the Age of Enlightenment. Set up in 2012, the MRL is a meeting place and a forum for open debate for people from the literary world, the general public and for schools. The first literature centre in Western Switzerland, it organizes regular encounters with writers, readings, round tables and workshops. Each year in October, the festival *Écrire Pour Contre Avec* brings together Swiss and international authors and intellectuals to foster dialogue between contemporary literature and Rousseau’s spirit of citizenship. The story of this exceptional Genevan is presented on the first floor with the aid of an audiovisual guide (available in eight languages and in a children’s version). This

tour is punctuated with extracts from his literary and musical works that bring the multifaceted Rousseau to life.

The son of a watchmaker who inspired his taste for reading, Jean-Jacques Rousseau lost his mother at birth. The house where he was born was not his home for long; he was raised in Saint-Gervais by his aunt and then sent to Bossey to lodge with the minister Lambercier. He returned to Geneva to follow an apprenticeship as an engraver, but left the city again in 1728, at the age of 16, to escape ill treatment from his master. Despite his somewhat troubled relationship with his native city, his work is deeply influenced by Geneva. Indeed, Rousseau called himself a “Citizen of Geneva” and appreciated its political values. In *The Social Contract*, a major essay, the foundations of political soci-

ety are based on the sovereignty of the people and civic equality before the law. This book, which was to inspire pre-revolutionary ideologies, was condemned by the Parliament of Paris, banned in France, the Netherlands, Bern and Geneva, thus driving Rousseau into exile once again.

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Rue des Granges

This street that runs along the crest of the hill of the Old Town is still home to prestigious addresses today. Between the late 17th century and the first decades of the 18th century, Geneva witnessed a period of major urban and architectural development. The Rue des Granges housing development, built in a medieval district where barns and stables formerly stood, is a row of luxury mansions with courtyard and garden that reflects the ambitious modern aesthetic movement of the time. The harmonious architectural ensemble of the first three mansions (Nos. 2, 4 and 6) was a project by the architect Jean-Jacques Dufour, created for Jean Sellon and his brothers-in-law Pierre and

Gaspard Boissier. Constructed between 1720 and 1723 in an identical U-shape, these fine residences were a radical departure from the traditional bourgeois house aligned with the street. Each has a gated entrance, an inner courtyard, a main building and side wings of equal height and a terrace. Like the other even numbered houses in the street, these mansions meet the requirements of 18th century classical aesthetics, with strict proportions and simple, pared down decoration, and resemble those appearing at the same time in major French cities.



Rue des Granges 2

Zoubov Foundation Museum



This aristocratic three-storey residence, known as the “Hôtel de Sellon”, is an excellent opportunity to get an inside and closer look at a luxurious 18th century building, as it is now open to the public by appointment. Classed as a historical monument in 1923, it remained in the Sellon family for over two hundred years until 1955, when it became the property of the State of Geneva. This mansion is now used, in line with the wishes of the Countess Zoubov, its last owner and descendant of the Sellons, for official receptions by the Genevan government and houses a museum that displays the elegance of 18th century apartments.

18th century European art, began to collect historic furniture, drawings, engravings, paintings, artworks and Chinese enamels, thus creating an ensemble of over 500 objects that illustrate the princely splendour of the Age of Enlightenment. When, in 1957, her daughter Tatiana died in a tragic accident, the Countess left Argentina and moved to the Rue des Granges where she founded a museum. Guided tours are available of the “In Memoriam Countess Tatiana Zoubov” Foundation on the ground floor of the Hôtel de Sellon, where visitors can view the collections assembled by the Countess and take a real journey back through time.

Born in 1892 into a very wealthy Prusso-Argentinian family, Julia Schiffner de Larrechea spent part of her childhood and youth in Switzerland, where she met the Russian Count Serge Platonovitch Zoubov, her future husband, who had emigrated to Geneva after the Russian Revolution of 1917. During her many journeys around the world, the now Countess Zoubov, who was passionate about imperial Russian culture and 18th

On the architectural level, the mansion’s courtyard facade is decorated with a triple row of identical windows at the same height on the central building and the wings. In the middle, four pilasters support an entablature and a sculpted pediment that set off the main entrance. The garden facade, wider than those of the other mansions in this street, is broken up by a corner and enhanced by a double staircase resting on the ground floor arcades. Overall, this facade has little ornamentation, apart from the keystones above the windows with mascarons representing the heads of fauns. On the terrace overlooking the Place de Neuve, a kind of obelisk stands against a wall, a tribute to Calvin installed in 1835 according to the wishes of the proprietor of the day, Jean-Jacques de Sellon, humanist and philanthropist.

tel. 022 312 16 97

mail fondation.zoubov@etat.ge.ch

web ge.ch/zoubov/welcome.asp

Guided tours on Monday, Tuesday and Friday, at 14h45 and 15h45

Admission fees: adults 5 CHF;

senior citizens, jobseekers, those

receiving a disability allowance 3 CHF

free admission for under 18s

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Grand-Rue and Maison Pictet

The Grand-Rue owes its name to the fact that it was the city's main thoroughfare in the Middle Ages, used by carriages of all kinds. Although Nos. 6 and 8 are the vestiges of 15th and 16th century medieval houses, the other constructions show the influence of the Renaissance and the Classicism of the two subsequent centuries, when Geneva enjoyed very strong urban growth. Standing at 15 Grand-Rue, the Maison Pictet was built between 1690 and 1693 by the master builder Abraham Calame on behalf of Jacques Pictet, a high-ranking civic official. Pictet was also a general in the artillery from 1686 to 1721, and his coat of arms decorates one of the cannons (known as the "Monkey") that you can see under the vaults of the Old Arsenal.

To build this 17th century masterpiece of a house, Calame combined four narrow medieval plots behind a single facade. The staircase tower, the mullioned windows and the ironwork are all architectural and decorative elements that reflect the owner's social standing. The most remarkable part, and also the most visible as right on the street, is the gated entrance. Flanked by pilasters supporting an entablature, this gateway frames a door whose richly carved decoration admirably illustrates the sophisticated carpentry of this period.



Rue Jean-Calvin 10

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Open daily 11.00 - 17.00

Admission fees: adults 8 CHF;

senior citizens, students, jobseekers,

those receiving a disability

allowance and groups 5 CHF;

free admission for under 12s and for the

members of the ICOM and the AMBM



The small Rue Calvin, with its uniform row of 18th century buildings with walls of exposed molasse stone, owes its name to the fact that the great Reformer lived here until his death in 1564. Opposite a commemorative plaque at No. 10 is a sign bearing the stylised head of a buffalo, marking the entrance to the Barbier-Mueller museum. This private collection of primitive art, begun in 1907 by Josef Mueller and continued by his son-in-law Jean Paul Barbier-Mueller, is the largest in the world. On public display since 1977, three months after the death of Josef Mueller, it now contains almost 7000 artworks, sculptures, masks, textiles, prestige objects and body ornaments from Africa, Oceania, the Americas (pre- and post-Colombian), tribal Asia and Maritime Southeast Asia, as well as pieces that date from ancient periods of the great civilisations of Antiquity.

Josef Mueller was born in 1887 into a bourgeois family in the Canton of Solothurn. Orphaned at the age of 6, he was brought up by a governess and paid frequent visits to the parents of a classmate, both lovers of modern painting, who, in 1906, already owned a painting from Picasso's rose period. Just after the First World War, Josef Mueller moved to Paris, and on the advice of dealers, began his collection of modern canvases. At the time, many modern artists and collectors were interested in early African "fetishes" and the little-known primitive arts. The young Mueller developed a passion for these in his turn and assembled an unrivalled collection of them. In 1957, on his return to Solothurn, he perceived the need to exhibit his tribal treasures in a museum to remedy the lack of consideration given to this art, held in much lower esteem than the paintings of western masters.

It was probably at this point that the idea of a permanent museum of primitive art was born, which saw the light of day 20 years later in Geneva, where his daughter Monique and son-in-law Jean Paul Barbier-Mueller lived. The latter has also built up a collection that complements that of Josef Mueller and has given the museum's holdings additional coherence.

Although the collections cannot be displayed in their entirety due to lack of space, the museum organises two temporary exhibitions each year to spotlight a thematic selection of objects that are shown to the public. It has also set up an image and databank of the ritual practices of peoples without written traditions in the world, and so contributes to the preservation of their history.

History of Streets

The buildings in the Old Town date for the most part from the 18th and 19th centuries, but the street pattern can largely be traced back to the Middle Ages, like the names of the streets themselves. Although today many of them have been renamed in honour of an important figure, several old ones have still survived. This is the case for some of the streets along this Trail: the ones with names like Chaudronniers, Taconnerie, Boulangerie, Pélisserie and Grand-Mézel all speak of trades that were the lifeblood of the city.

The study of historical documents and archaeological excavations sometimes provide answers to the origins of these street names. The present-day Rue des Chaudronniers refers to the coppersmiths who made cauldrons and other cooking pots there. The siting of their shops was strictly controlled due to the noise they generated and the fire risk associated with their work. The Rue de la Boulangerie owes its name to the presence there in the 13th century of the bishop's oven and bakery. The Rue de la Pélisserie (alluding to the market where leather and hides were sold) had a tannery, and the furriers were some of the richest traders in the city at the time.

The Place du Grand-Mézel derives its name from the Latin macellum, meaning butcher's shop. Here, butchers' stalls were to be found, as well as an abattoir and a place for skinning. The name has endured even though the butchers were moved several times from one end to another of the southern side of the High Town because of the insoluble problems of odours and refuse, which brought down property values wherever they were installed. The origin of the name Place de la Taconnerie remains a mystery. After being known as Place de la Fromagerie due to the cheese market located next to St. Peter's Cathedral, and Rue du Marché-au-Blé, after the grain market that once stood there, its current name might date back to the 16th century and refer to "tacon", or the leather used by the shoemakers established there.

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