



## Cézanne's site

Gardanne is associated with Cézanne's year which is celebrated all over the region of Aix-en-Provence. From March 2006 onwards, a lot of cultural events will take place with the collaboration of the media library, and primary and secondary schools. A Cézanne trail is proposed by the Tourist Information Centre. A footpath has been built on the hill "la colline des Frères" (accessible from the boulevard Paul-Cézanne), with some reproductions of Cézanne's paintings facing the old town.

[Read the information about Cézanne's year in Gardanne](#)

Gardanne is the only village painted by Cézanne in his work ; these paintings come from the Barnes Foundation, the Brooklyn Museum and the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

[See the portfolio dedicated to Cézanne](#)

Visitors who wish to round off a Cézanne pilgrimage in Provence can easily find this characteristic site included in the tour of the region of Aix.

The artist stayed there in 1885-1886 at 27 cours Forbin with his companion, Hortense Fiquet and their son Paul who attended the primary school in Gardanne. During that period, he applied himself to painting the old village huddled up on the hillside of "la colline du Cativel". This well structured motif with the terracing of façades and roofs forming a pyramidal composition permitted him to fix different facets of the village.

His friend, Joachim Gasquet wrote : *"From every angle he paints this village of Gardanne rooted in the hillside, the rough bell tower, the russet herd of houses and the burnt roofs, with always a mass of big leaves refreshing it, like a well of green light somewhere in the heat."*

Going along boulevard Paul Cézanne, you can reach "la colline des Frères" and visit the open-air museum where, thanks to the reproductions of paintings from the Brooklyn Museum, the Metropolitan Museum and the Barnes Foundation, you can see how the painter tried to reproduce the pyramidal form of the village and its complex structure.

John Rewald said. *"The period in Gardanne represents a turning point . The composite structure of the town served as a prototype of the structural conception of the painting that Cézanne was developing."*

It is no longer an impressionist approach, but it shows a strong interest in a geometric construction. The overlap of the surfaces and volumes is shown by modulations of colours, so that some critics think that cubism was born in Gardanne (Read [Cézanne in Gardanne](#) by Denis Coutagne).

Beyond the urban landscape, wandering the surrounding countryside, Cézanne took an interest in the two mountains which form the horizon to the east and the south. "Le Pilon du Roi" from the Reinhart collection (Winterthur) is a work of art that he may have painted from the basin of Gardanne. And speaking about the Sainte Victoire, he said to Zola : *"What a beautiful subject"* . He produced original compositions with all the development of the massif and its jagged relief, painting from the hamlet of Payannet, the district of Ribas and further from la Barque and Beaurecueil, before being fascinated by the visible motif of "la colline des Lauves" while settling in Jas de Bouffan.

Office de Tourisme  
**OT**

Accueil et orientation du public, documentation, organisation de manifestations culturelles

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- **Horaires d'ouverture** :

Du mardi au samedi de 9h30 à 12h et de 14h à 18h (de 14h30 à 18h30 en juillet et en août).