The creation of Salin-de-Giraud

At the end of the 19th century Pechiney and Solvay created factories specializing in extracting and commercializing industrial salt, which led to the creation of the town of Salin-de-Giraud. Before that, Cistercian monks had harvested salt here temporarily in the 13th century, but in the middle of the 19th century the company founded by Henri Merle developed 5000 ha of salt flats, and Solvay soon followed. Local workers but also workers from Italy, Armenia and Greece were hired to prepare the land and harvest the salt. Their descendants are still present today and work for the Salins du Midi.

Crossing the Rhone River

The Rhone River has been crossed at Salin-de-Giraud since 1933. The first ferry was powered by a windlass, but was destroyed during WWII. A new diesel ferry was introduced in 1955. In 1957 a railway ferry was added for transporting salt. The fourth Barcarin ferry (Bac de Barcarin) was inaugurated in 1987 and the fifth in 2012. These are the ferries used today to cross the river from one bank to the other.

The Solvay factory village

The Solvay village was built between 1896 and 1902 by the Belgian company Solvay which imported this architectural style, using red bricks, from Belgian mining towns. The buildings reflect the company hierarchy, from the director’s residence to the row houses for the workers. This paternalistic company built a hospital, schools, a post office, a movie theater, a stadium, an arena and a club house (Cercle Solvay).

Along the way

Bar and restaurant
- La Camargue Restaurant – +33 (0)4 42 86 88 52
- Les Saladelles Restaurant – +33 (0)4 42 86 83 87
- Bar des Sports – +33 (0)4 42 86 81 15
- Bar de l’amitié – +33 (0)6 82 70 01 58
- Restaurant Chez Germaine – +33 (0)4 86 63 60 05

Rent a bike
- Restaurant Chez Germaine (Salin-de-Giraud) - +33 (0)4 86 63 60 05
- Bois Sacré Service Station (Salin-de-Giraud) - +33 (0)4 90 58 93 03
- Laurelyne (Salin-de-Giraud) - +33 (0)4 42 86 80 84 or +33(0)6 70 09 68 77

Don’t miss
- The town church
- The Greek Orthodox church
- The Barcarin church
- The Solvay factory-town section
- The Pechiney quarter
- The arena
- The Badin music kiosk

Emergency numbers

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<td>15</td>
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Caution! Consult the weather forecast before starting and avoid the mistral wind.

ARLES TOURISM OFFICE

Downtown Arles Information Center : Bd. des Lices – 33 (0)4 18 41 21 20
Salin-de-Giraud Information Center : Rue Tournaire – 33 (0)4 42 86 89 77
Mailing address : BP 21- 13633 Arles Cedex
E-mail : ot-arles@visitprovence.com
Website : www.arlestourisme.com

Start: Arles
End: Salin-de-Giraud
Distance: 20 km
Duration: 4h for a gentle walk

1h30 à 2h

Take note: No particular difficulties
How to get there

Start from the Tourism Office in Salin-de-Giraude. In the village at the red light go straight ahead then take the first right toward the city center. The Tourism Office is located on rue Tournayre, 150 m before the arena.

Extension to the Barcarin church, the Rhône, a gardian’s hut.

3 km round trip

Leave the silhouette of Carle Naudot and turn right into the Rue de la Victoire. At the stop sign (danger sign), turn left onto the cycling path. At the end of the path (danger sign), cross the road, by the red light and the bus stop. After the canal turn right onto VG142. At the Barcarin church turn right along the foot of the dike. Admire the Rhone River and the last true gardian’s hut left in the village. After the canal turn immediately right and follow the path along the factory wall. Back at the D36 crossroads, head back to the Tourism Office through the Sacred Wood (Bois Sacré) Park opposite or continue along the bike path.