



ACCUEIL BANLIEUES : A NETWORK OF GUESTHOUSES IN SEINE-SAINT-DENIS, FRANCE

Introduction

Through their association Accueil Banlieues, they offer affordable guest room stays in their homes, along with guided visits to explore parts of their department and help break down stereotypes and one-sided judgments on people living in the working-class suburbs.

In all the towns of Seine-Saint-Denis, tourists can plan their stay according to their interests: guided or self-guided tours, bike routes connecting local parks, and a wide range of cultural activities (circus, concerts, exhibitions, performances, arts and crafts).

They'll also have the chance to meet residents from working-class neighborhoods and discover their daily lives.

Guided tours are offered by local tourist offices and the Seine-Saint-Denis Tourism Committee, including nature walks and events around urban farming.

The association follows a social and solidarity-based economic model and promotes local development. By showcasing a new face of the suburbs, it helps break down social and geographic barriers and contributes to restoring a positive image of the area.

Examples of housing and activities proposed by the association :

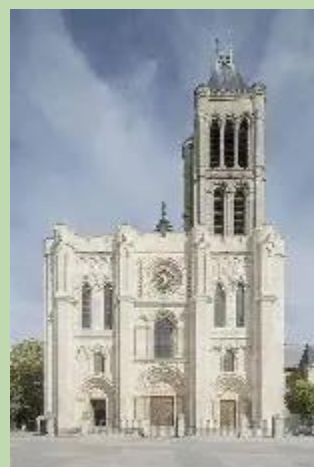
In Épinay-sur-Seine, Marie-Pierre and Mathieu, Claire, Flore, Martine, Anne-Dominique, or Laurence and Gérald welcome you. They offer walks along the banks of the Seine (now part of the Paris–London bike route, also called the “greenway”), introduce you to local shopkeepers, parents, and artists, and show you the area’s architectural and natural heritage (such as the Notre-Dame des Missions church, the Blumenthal garden city, and local green spaces). They also highlight the many development projects shaping this rapidly evolving area.

On Île-Saint-Denis, Marie-Jo and Alejandro, Catherine and Alain, Elisabeth and Michel, Josué, Lorette, Alain, Baba and Mariannick, Annie, Michèle, Séverine, Madeleine and Tamim, or Muriel are your hosts. This small town, bordered by two branches of the Seine, will soon host an eco-neighborhood. You can enjoy the diversity of the landscapes and the traces of the island’s maritime past along its 7-kilometer length and 300-meter width, or visit PHARES — a hub for Ecological and Solidarity-based Hospitality Activities. Elected officials and residents share with you the challenges of urban ecology in working-class environments.



In Pantin, Anne introduces you to a city marked by its renovated former Grands Moulins, located near La Villette and the Ourcq canal. This city boasts a lively cultural life with institutions like the National Dance Center, the Ciné 104 cinema, or the Puppet Arts Biennial. You’ll also meet creative and committed local parents, and several walks will be organized during the final quarter of 2013.

In Saint-Denis, Fiona and Lamyne, Laurent, Raphaële, Virginie, and Laurent will introduce you to local artists, craftspeople, architecture, archaeological excavations, and the city’s historic market — all in a city renowned for centuries thanks to its basilica. Two additional accommodations are currently under discussion. Jean-Jacques and Valérie or Clarisse guide you through La Plaine Saint-Denis, once a market gardening plain for Paris, then transformed into the “French Manchester” during the industrial era. Now located at the foot of the Stade de France and the Saint-Denis canal, this neighborhood is undergoing major redevelopment and has been designated a national “hub of culture and creation,” with new public transport projects that will soon make it one of the most-visited areas in Europe. All this — far from clichés and sensationalism, but without ignoring the real social inequalities that exist.



In Aubervilliers, Sandrine shares her favorite spots in her city: local shops, the market, the bookstore *Les mots passants*, cozy cafés, and the Saint-Denis canal — a path that can take you on foot or by bike in less than 30 minutes either toward Saint-Denis and Épinay-sur-Seine or toward La Villette in the opposite direction.

In La Courmeuve, Florinda invites you to discover this town, known either for the Fête de l’Humanité or for stigmatizing remarks about “cleaning up with a Kärcher” — but which is far more vibrant than the caricatures suggest. You may meet a jewelry designer, see a unique collection of agricultural tools, or visit an independent bookstore. Walks are also organized in partnership with Muse D territoires, a young social innovation group based in the 4,000 district.

In Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, Elisabete will show you the recently established National Archives. The building by Massimiliano Fuksas is visible from afar and stands out right outside the “Saint-Denis Université” metro station. In this town, you can follow in the footsteps of painter Maurice Utrillo or explore the Butte Pinson hill.

In Saint-Ouen, two accommodations will soon be available in this town known for its flea markets and the Red Star football club. The city is undergoing major urban transformation — a quarter of the town is being redeveloped — while preserving remarkable heritage buildings. With access to four metro stations, Saint-Ouen is a culturally and athletically vibrant city.

In the 19th arrondissement of Paris, Aline offers a room in this working-class neighborhood in northern Paris. Her 11-year-old daughter Lucie can welcome a child her age and share the area’s treasures for kids: Cafézoïde, the Buttes-Chaumont park, the Bassin de la Villette... Another accommodation is also available in the 20th arrondissement.

In the 20th arrondissement, Eros will guide you through his neighborhood located between the Père Lachaise cemetery and Porte de Bagnolet. With his photographer’s eye, he’ll help you discover the intertwining streets, modest buildings, and beloved local shops.



References

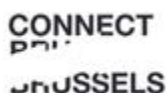
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