

#18 Behind the millstone to the right, you will see one of the few remaining Raccards (or Regat in dialect) that still stands in Vallorcine. This characteristic wooden barn was used as a grain store and every family possessed one.

At the end of the summer, the sheaves of cereals were piled up to be threshed during the winter. Outside, under the sunniest gable, horizontal poles served for drying hemp and flax. These Raccards are built with thick planks and supported by pillars to prevent rodents from gaining access.

The wood from which conifer (which loses its needles in autumn) was used to build these barns?



#20 Continue for another 50 metres, keeping the railway line to your left and you will pass by the Café Comptoir (a popular address) and its charming chalets. On your right, you will come to a large old farmhouse.

What symbol is engraved on the gable of the main façade?

#19 You have now reached Plan de l'Envers, the location of Vallorcine main station. Envers refers to the exposure on the cold side of the valley because it faces north. In contrast, Plan Droit, the locality opposite, occupies the sunny side of the valley, facing south.

Give the example of another site in the Chamonix valley with the term "Envers".



Thank you for taking part in our quiz! We hope you have had an enjoyable time.

To return to Le Buet, you can either take the train from Vallorcine station, or take the path which runs alongside the Eau Noire (left bank). Of course, you can also continue the visit by heading towards the recently restored church and the surrounding hamlets which are delightful. To learn more about the fascinating history of Vallorcine, we recommend a guided visit with Xavier Dunand, heritage guide and mountain leader. If you wish to meet the craftsmen of Vallorcine, renowned for their woodworking skills, visit the Povottes workshop in Le Crot. For further information, the tourist office is just over the road from the station.

**Please do pop into the tourist Offices of Vallorcine, Argentière or Chamonix to get your answers checked.
GOOD LUCK!**

YOUR NOTES :



Conception : Cybergraph Chamonix

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CHAMONIX-MONT-BLANC

NATURE AND HERITAGE QUIZ



**FROM LE BUET TO VALLORCINE
IN THE HEART OF NATURE**

**Take advantage of the historic Mont-Blanc Express to discover
the villages and hidden treasures of the Chamonix Valley!**



For families and friends of all ages
Allow around 1hr 30 but take as long as you like!
All year round,* departing from Le Buet station

*In winter, enquire about snow conditions at the Tourist Office before you set off

SERVOZ - LES HOUCHES - CHAMONIX-MONT-BLANC - ARGENTIÈRE - VALLORCINE

#1 Vallorcine comprises around 20 hamlets which follow the Eau Noire torrent, over a distance of five kilometres, through to the Swiss border. Vallorcine lies at the foot of the Aiguilles Rouges and Berard Nature Reserves, the alpine pastures of Loriaz and the Balme ski area.
Vallorcine was colonised back in the 13th century by the Walsers, a Germanic race which came from the upper Wallis region in Switzerland. For many decades, the Vallorcins depended entirely on their agro-pastoral activities, which included tending their vines in Martigny, Switzerland.
What is the origin of the name Vallorcine? a. “Vallée des ours” - the valley was formerly inhabited by bears
b. From the origins of the Walser people • c. From the French word Vallon, describing a section of land flanked by mountain slopes.

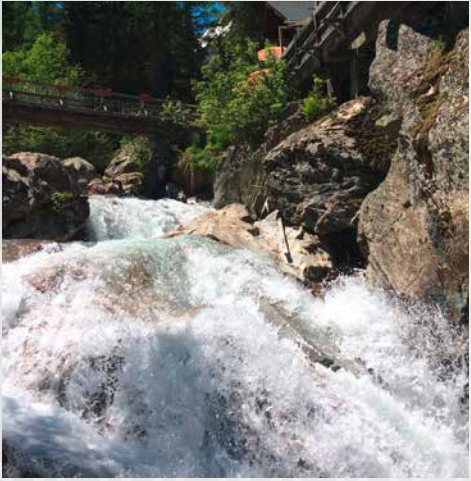


#2 The cart-road that was to finally link Vallorcine with Chamonix (constructed between 1883 and 1886), made Vallorcine an agreeable stop for tourists travelling to and from Chamonix by stagecoach. The Buet hotel was built at the same time and was the ‘inn’ place to break the journey!
It is still owned and run by the Chamel family. Which generation now manages the hotel?

#3 The Buet summit (3096m), which gave its name to the hamlet, lies beyond the hotel but is concealed behind the Mont Oreb.
Climbed for the first time in 1770, this summit is often named the “Mont Blanc des ...” ?



#4 Before heading off towards Vallorcine, we should like you to know that the hamlet of la Poya, the superb Berard waterfall and Farinet’s cave are well worth a detour. The path is to the left of the hotel (allow 1hr return).
Farinet was a 19thC counterfeiter. Why is he often compared to Robin Hood?



#5 Name 3 hikes starting from the hamlet of Le Buet.

#6 When you are facing the station, take the small road to the left. You will soon see a wooden hut, known as a Grenier or Mazot, on your left. In bygone times, these constructions were built near to the homestead, but not too close to protect them in case of fire. Their purpose was to preserve the family’s important possessions.
Find the intruder: a. seed stock
b. salted and smoked dried meats
c. flour
d. Sunday clothes
e. computers
f. house deeds.



#7 Now pass under the bridge on the chemin des Mayens and continue to the intersection. We will be heading left to the Mayens des Montets, but if you wish to make a detour, the hamlet of the Mayens des Biolles is on your right as well as the chapel de Notre Dame des Montets. There are many Mayens in Vallorcine, the pastoral origin of which comes from the month of May.
What was their purpose?

#8 Shortly after you have gone left, you will see an enormous rock sitting beside a chalet on your right-hand side. It is what is called an erratic boulder... look carefully and you will observe many more on the trail. Around Chamonix, these erratic boulders are of granitic origin, but here in Vallorcine you will see much more gneiss, like this one which most probably comes from the Aiguilles Rouges chain.
How did it get here? a. it was transported by flood rains
b. it formed beneath the ground like a truffle
c. it was carried along by a glacier during an ice-age.



#9 Continue straight on along the Chemin des Diligences and take the second bridge beneath the railway line, towards the Hameau des Montets. Before visiting this historic Mayens, take a look at the stone wall (to the left of the Chemin des Ecuries). This embankment was built long ago and formed a dyke to protect the properties from avalanches. It is called a Tourne or Turne in local dialect.
There is another very significant Tourne in Vallorcine. Where is it?



#10 Now take the Chemin des Ecuries. All of these restored buildings once accommodated cows during the interseason, before they were moved up to the alpine pastures. The width of the doors appears surprisingly small for a cow shed, but previously the animals were smaller in size!
What allusion to cattle can you observe on the Ecurie à l’Amandine?

#11 Take time to admire the chimneys, the shingle roofs, the wooden guttering, and the stonework. At the end of the alley, head right, but before you leave the hamlet, look for the Darbounires. The origin of this name derives from an animal with poor eyesight, known in local dialect as a Darbon.
Which animal is it?
a. mole • b. marmot • c. badger.

#12 Just before you reach the bridge that crosses the river, go right up the hill. To your left is the point where the Eau Noire torrent converges with another river beginning with B.
Can you name it?

#13 Continue, with the torrent on your left, through the splendid Montets campsite (only open in summer) and pass, once again, beneath the railway bridge.
All of these tunnels were built at the same time as the railway, to ensure that both farmers and their livestock could easily cross from one side of the valley to the other.
The Mont-Blanc Express will help you to answer the following question: In what year did the train arrive in Vallorcine?

#14 Go left after the bridge and continue alongside the railway track. On your right you will see that the fields are sectioned by longitudinal lines of stones which marked the plots. The area is known as Praz de Lys: a field with stones!
The land was both poor and not particularly easy to cultivate. For this reason, Vallorcine is one of the rare communes that has never used work animals. The crops they grew were: rye, barley, rustic wheat, hemp and flax.
From the 18th century, which tuber vegetable was to become very popular, partly replacing other crops?

#15 You will soon arrive at a place known as La Courzille, the site of an ancient village, the poorest spot in Vallorcine because it had no natural spring. On the cusp of the hill, just before you head down to Vallorcine, you will see two majestic trees standing side-by-side. This tree variety has become scarce in Western Europe due to a micro-fungus transmitted by beetles which sadly eliminates them.
Unscramble this word to find the name of the tree L.E.M.



#16 On your right you will notice the rock-climbing face of Rocher du Saix. The name Saix comes from Saxum which means «rock» in Latin. With 23 superb granite routes, from 10m to 100m high, this site offers an ideal introduction to climbing. On the left side of the face is an equipped descent (metal ladders).
Can you name three items of climbing equipment?

#17 When you arrive in the village, you will see a millstone in a garden on the right. It is a vertical crushing mill, with a heavy upright stone wheel, used for the extraction of oil.
Which oil is extracted from the flax plant?

