



Lafrançaise Walking Tour



The presence of man around Lafrançaise is very ancient. The discovery of **polished stone** by workers in the **19th century** in Saula proves that it goes back to the **neolithic** area (6000 - 1800 B.C.). A **necropolis** from the bronze age (1800-700 B.C.) found in the same region shows this too. The **Gallic** then occupied Saula after around 200 B.C.

The arrival of the **Romans** in 58 B.C. and the Pax Romana imposed throughout Gaul prioritized the development of commercial routes throughout the region. Lafrançaise would therefore be found near the **main trade route between Bordeaux and Castres** which meant that it was a popular site for travelers.

The first traces of written text about Lafrançaise date back to the late 13th century. In fact, it was in 1274, when a deed of donation was passed for the creation of the bastide, called from the start **Villa Francese**. A name chosen with the aim of showing the town's affiliation to the French kingdom.

The name *Villa Francese* was shortened to **La Franceses** in 1602 then **La Française** in 1650 and finally **Lafrançaise** in 1900. Ever since the pre-historic area, the region was often under attack. It was also invaded by the English in 1348 during the 100 Years War. During this war, according to legend, the town was invaded thirteen times and liberated each time by the French, with Aymeric de Rochechouard leading them.

The European Religious Wars in the second half of the 16th century and the start of the 17th century were constant bloodbaths and Lafrançaise was repeatedly pillaged for more than **75 years**. This meant it had great difficulties in developing and modernizing.

It was only until **Escalopier's stewardship** (1740-1756) when the modernization of Lafrançaise began, whereby it was expanded and prettified. He developed **business** and trading, starting with the dog trade fairs of Saint-Georges and Saint Michel. They started from the end of the 13th century and lasted eight days, attracted businessmen who often came from far away. The **Wednesday market** and the numerous fairs and events are important factors for the economic dynamism of the town. Based in a predominantly agricultural region that was very late to adapt to the changes of the Industrial Revolution throughout the 19th century.



1 - Go to the point-of-view

You will find here a table that shows the geographical positioning of Lafrançaise. This will help you to fill in the text below.

Lafrançaise was built on the foothills of Quercy overlooking the plain. The bridge (« pont ») crosses the river in the direction of Castelsarrasin. To your left, at the south-east, you can see the town of , prefecture of the Tarn-et-Garonne. To your right, you can see on the side of the hill the Château des This was the residence of the local lordship, the **Parazols family**, who abandoned it in the 19th century when they moved into Le Château de la Baronnie.

2 - Head towards the Church of Saint-Georges.

Find the fountain in front of the Church.

When does this date back to ?

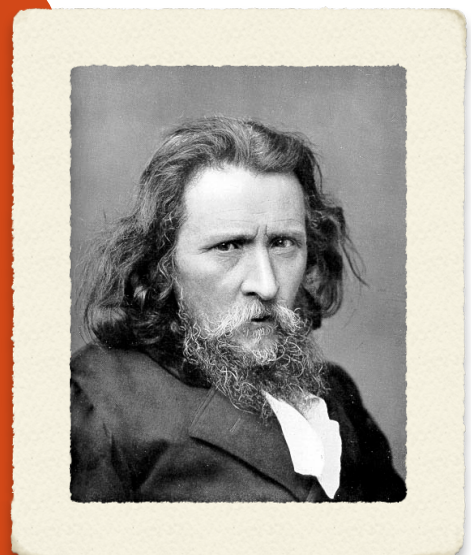
It belonged to a group of fountains that made up the village's water supply in an era when there wasn't any running water.

The square to the right of the Church was where the dog market took place.

Down from the war memorial is the street called *la rue Léon Cladel*.

Léon Alpinien Cladel, was born in Montauban (Tarn-et-Garonne) on the 22nd March 1834 and died in Sèvres (Hauts-de-Seine) on the 21st July 1892. He was a French novelist who lived in Lafrançaise. His father was a saddler based in a mill in Leland on the road to Lauzerte. One of Léon's sons, called Saül-Alpinien, was a student in Rodin, he is also the author of the text written on the war memorial. This statue represents a lady, an allegory of the victorious French Republic, carrying symbols of a defeated Germany, such as a dead eagle and a pointed helmet.

The statue was never finished, but at feet are written the names of several battles : Somme, Verdun, Artois and Meuse.



How many people from the village were killed during the First World War ?

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There is an error with the alphabetical order of the names, write one name that is misplaced :

3 - Go back to the town hall.

The town hall was built between 1896 and 1898 on top of a covered market dating back to the 18th century, thereby replacing the previous town hall which is now the tourist office. For safety reasons, two metallic arches were put in place to support the top floor, which was accessed by a big double outdoor staircase. The ground floor had several purposes, it was the place of worship whilst the Church was being built, as well a space for events, entertainment and markets.

4 - Walk down the street Louis Pernon.



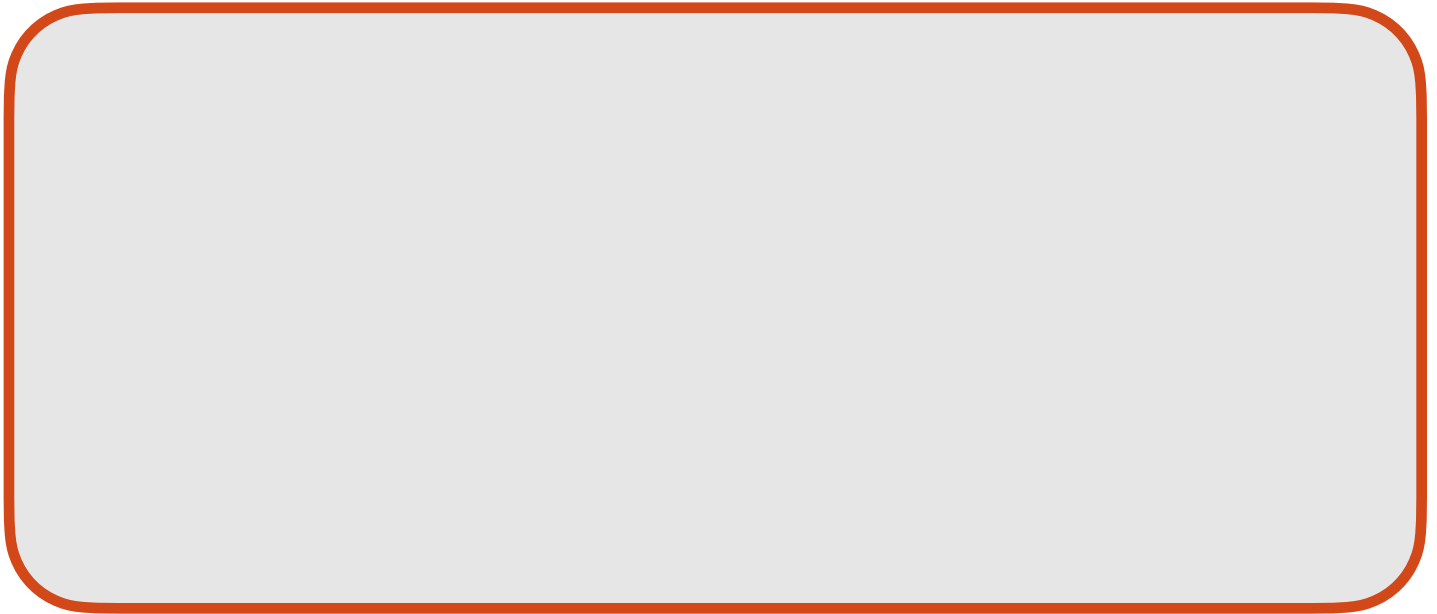
*The Louis Pernon Street
(old Grande Rue, meaning
« Big Street »)*



Stop outside house **number 23**. This bourgeois house from the 19th century belonged to Honoré Constant, the mayor between 1852 and 1865. Above the entrance you will find a cast iron grill.

When is the date written on the grill ?

Try and redraw the design of the emblem in the circle below.



5 - Continue along the Louis Pernon Street until La Place du Centre, the walk a little further until La Place Rémy Cornet

It was here at *la Place Rémy Cornet* where the horse, donkey and mule market took place. The sheep market took place in *La Place du Centre*. The Wednesday market is held here and in the square called *La Place de la Promenade*.

Find the 19th century vehicle nestled in the wall of a building.

What was it for and when does it date back to?
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Head down the side street called *la rue Charlonne*. This will be on your left as you look at the vehicle in the wall.

6 - Turn right down the Mary Lafon street and walk until La Place de la Promenade.

If you look at the postcard below that dates back to the start of the 20th century, you will see how little the buildings have changed. The house on the corner is still just as remarkable and imposing.



La Place de la promenade is the central square of the town. It is a space to take a stroll and relax. Close to the square were ballrooms and cafes, you can imagine a lovely sunny evening where parents are sitting on the benches, watching their children play. In the summer there are many events and concerts that take place in this square.

7 - Head to the sport where this photo was taken.



What has changed since 1903 in *la place de la République* ?

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Annexes.

1) On the left-hand side of la place Remy Cornet, there is la rue de l'Egalité. Continue along to visit the cemetery voiture...

The largest **pyramidal tomb** belonged to the **Parazols family**, descendants of the local lords. They started the local trend of pyramid-shaped tombs at the end of the 19th century, reflecting a « return to Egypt » to honour Antoine de Parazols who had been involved with Bonaparte and his campaign in Egypt in 1798.

You can see a *couronne comtale* above the coat arms that is itself divided into 4 parts :

- The cross of the *Comtes de Toulouse*
- The emblem of the Montratier de Parazols family. Three stripes topped with three stars.
- A cedar tree (Liban).
- Three circles.



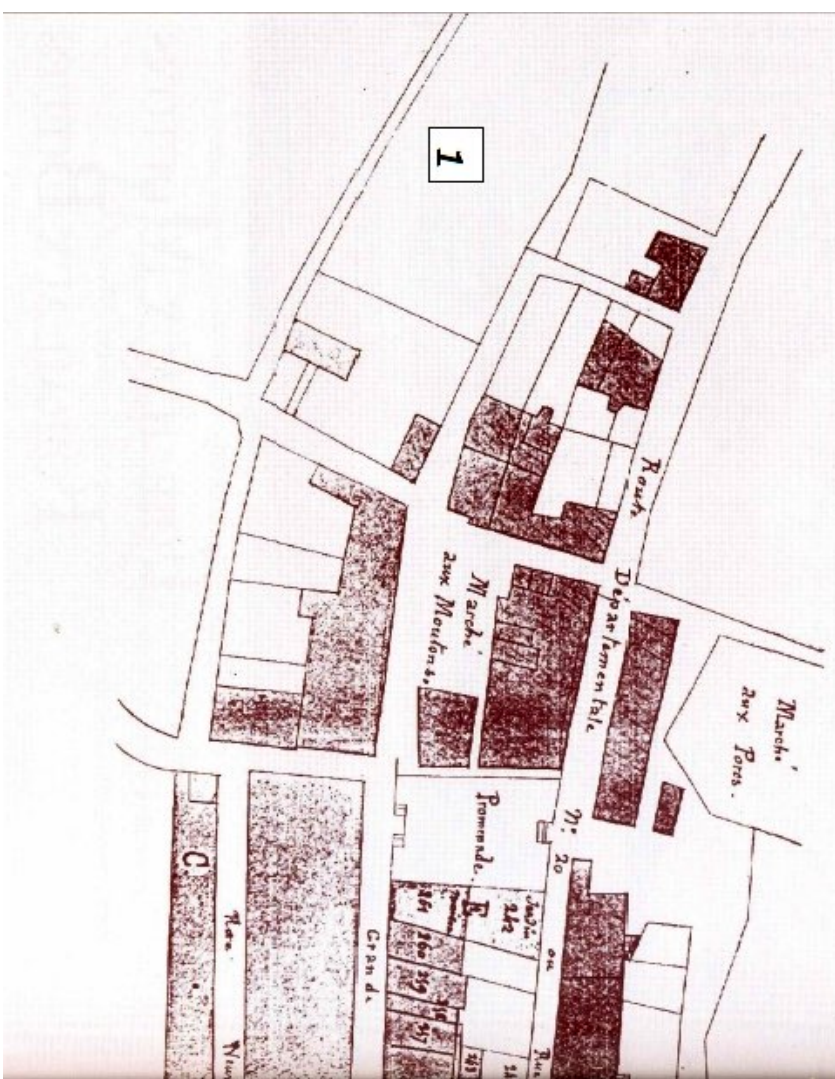
The person entombed here was born on the 22nd August 1772 and died on the 7th October 1843. He is regarded as a benefactor of Lafrançaise for having bequeathed all of his money and possessions in order to help those less fortunate in the town. The municipality built this monument in his honour and named the main street after him (Louis Pernon).

2) Continue down and you will find the Chapelle Notre-Dame-de-Lapeyrouse.

The renovation of the Church began in 1877 and was finished in 1879 led by Defargues, the abbot and priest of Lafrançaise. The design is the work of the architect Befell, with a very unique Roma-Byzantine style to this region. Even though the Church is relatively small-scale, the tower is large, standing twenty meters tall with the bell-tower on top of that. The apse and the chancel were painted by Cazotte in 1891 and the paintings inside represent the Assumption of Mary.



La Française.



- 1.** Marché aux chevaux, ânes et mulets
- 2.** Marché aux oies

de planiers formés
la Section C du
Cadastre - à l'échelle
de 1 à 1850.