

FOCUS

LAND OF WEAVERS

PANISSIÈRES

AND LOCAL REGION



VILLES
& PAYS
D'ART &
D'HISTOIRE

VILLES & PAYS D'ART & D'HISTOIRE

REGION OF ART AND HISTORY, A DESIGNATED STATUS ATTRIBUTED BY THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

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EXPLORE THE FOREZ IN THE COMPANY OF A HERITAGE GUIDE AUTHORIZED BY THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

The guide who welcomes you knows all the aspects of the Forez and will help you to understand the landscapes, traditional activities, and history as you visit the emblematic monuments, towns and villages of the Forez.

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THE STORY OF A MANUFACTURING MOUNTAIN

From the independant hand weavers of the 16th century up until the high quality productions of today, the mountain region of Panissières has always claimed its identity as “land of weavers” inherited from a centuries-old tradition of textile production which we invite you to discover. First of all, a little history...



This 15th century miniature shows work at a horizontal pedal weaving loom, used since the 11th century.



1. Hemp fibre.

2. Panissières, view from the west.

**3. High view point of Saint Jean de Panissières,
Revel Armorial circa 1450 BnF.**





THE ORIGINS OF WEAVING IN THE FOREZ

Weaving had been carried out in the Forez for a long time in order to satisfy local and regional demands. Woollen sheets, linen and hemp cloth were the main productions of the peasant-weavers who worked at home in order to earn a little extra income.

HEMP PRODUCTION

The well-watered plains of the region of Roanne and the Forez had provided an abundant supply of hemp since the Middle Ages. Certain place names originated from the word “Chanvre” (hemp): Villechenève, Chenevotterie, chenevis. The registers of the abbey of Savigny mentioned fields of hemp dispersed throughout the Forez. The small town of Feurs held an important hemp market, close to the salt house. The main use of this natural fibre was to make shirts and sheets and later production increased sufficiently in the Forez to export to the royal marine rope manufacturers. However, it gradually declined owing to the changing market. In 1818, 365 hectares were still used for hemp cultivation in the district of Montbrison. By the beginning of the 20th century, hemp had been practically abandoned.

CLOTH TRADING AT SAINT-JEAN

In 1574, at the request of Claude d’Urfé, lieutenant general of the Forez, king Henri III established a cloth market at Panissières on Mondays, which caused considerable prejudice to the market at Feurs. As a consequence, the cloth industry was extended to Panissières, and products were sold under the name of « Saint-Jean cloth ». In the 17th century, Saint-Jean cloth was used in regions beyond the Forez, in the Beaujolais and the Mâconnais. However, linen was gradually introduced in addition to hemp in the local production and weaving, since this finer fibre improved the comfort and flexibility of the cloth. In 1704, the market at Panissières traded about 4000 pieces of linen cloth, 5000 pieces of « canevert » or unbleached hemp mesh as well as 500 pieces of cotton cloth which was difficult to introduce in the weaving industry in the mounts of the Lyonnais. By the time of the French Revolution, linen was only used mixed with cotton in weaving, to produce a fabric called « métis ». As a result, hemp spinning greatly diminished and only concerned the local markets of Panissières, Jas, Saint-Barthélémy-Lestra and Essertines-en-Donzy.



1. Portrait of King François the First by Jean Clouet, around 1530.
2. War Memorial at Panissières.
Detail of the commemorative plaque paying homage to the weavers who died for France.
3. Commercial signboard of the Bonnassieux house, kept in the Tie and textile museum in Panissières.

INTEGRATION INTO LYON CAPITALIST COMMERCE

From the 16th century onwards, the development of the textile production and the condition of the peasant-weavers were closely linked to initiatives taken by the merchants in Lyon. Cloth from the region of Panissières was exported as far as the Middle East.

THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE AND INFLUENCE OF LYONS UNDER KING FRANÇOIS THE FIRST

Since the 15th century, Lyons had become an important commercial centre owing to the growth of its banks and fairs. Its influence was felt in all the surrounding region. In 1536, King François the First granted the monopoly of silk manufacture and trading to the town of Lyon, in the aim of competing with the Italian fabrics. The foundations of the Lyons and regional textile industry were laid. Over the centuries and as a result of technical advances, textile activities gradually diversified and spread to other sectors: conditioning of silk threads in Lyons, ribbon manufacture in Saint-Etienne, muslin at Tarare.

DEVELOPMENTS INITIATED BY LYON MERCHANTS IN THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

As we have seen, linen and especially hemp, supplied by the neighbouring plains of the Forez and the Saône, interested the Lyons merchants who wished to trade with the countries of the Middle East. Nicolas de Nicolay, great traveller and ambassador of King Henri II to the Great Turk Soliman the Magnificent, wrote in his General description of the town of Lyons in 1573 that in « the countries of Lyonnais, Beaujolais, Forez, Charlieu et Charolais and in certain places in the Dauphiné, there are several good weavers who do a flourishing business in hemp and linen cloth, narrow pieces of clear white cloth, which are traded at the fair in Lyons to be sent to Turkey, Alexandria and Syria, to make turbans for the Turks ». The merchants obtained their supplies mainly at the market at Thizy where cloth manufactured in the area of Panissières was sold.



CUSTOMS REGULATIONS UP UNTIL 1789

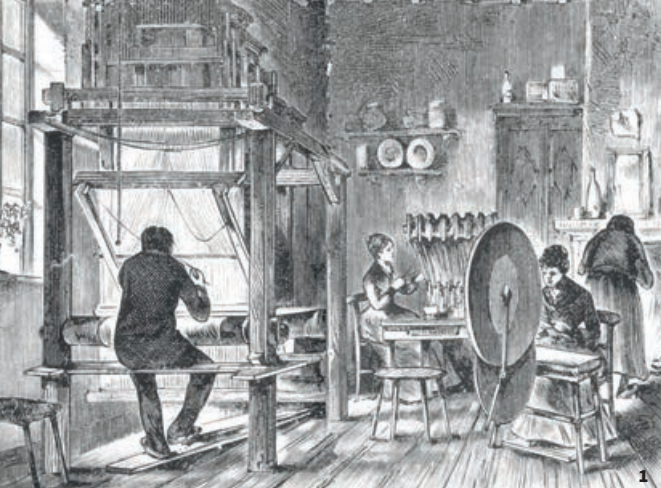
After 1680, cloth manufacture was regulated by Colbert, minister of King Louis XIV, and required among other rules, that the brand should be shown on the cloth, a sign of good quality manufacture, which should be done in a public place. Unbranded cloth, this was the case for the Panissières production – was subject to customs duties, notably on the Lyon market. The same year saw the creation in Lyons of the first manufacturing site of futaines and basins*, based on cotton thread. Skilled workers from the region of Milan and Piémont were recruited to work in the industry which rapidly became successful with nearly 2000 workers in and around Lyons. Two thirds of the production was exported to Spain and Portugal. However, the high taxes imposed on spun cotton, the principal constituent used in the manufacture of futaines and basins*, added to the wage demands of the workers, led to the relocation of cotton weaving to the surrounding country areas and to the Mounts of Lyonnais where labour was cheap but less skilled. Silk, for the same reasons, experienced the same situation two centuries later.

THE CONSTANT PROBLEM OF QUALITY

The need for higher quality textiles to satisfy a more demanding clientele, was always present but difficult to achieve. During the second half of the reign of Louis XIV, the markets of Thizy and Villefranche were taxed by the regulation of 20 January 1680 ruling on both the quality of cloth and the status of the manufacturers. For a very long time, the area of Panissières, far from the offices of the government officials, refused to apply the regulations, arguing that it was practically impossible for unskilled peasants scattered around the countryside and lacking means, to meet the requirements for quality. The region hence relied on the volumes of cheap rough cloth sold rather than on the quality. During the following centuries, demand progressed towards finer and more luxurious fabrics, added to which, the mechanization of the weaving process at the beginning of the 19th century accelerated the rhythm of production. The organization of work and production were fundamentally changed. The region of Panissières, like the other weaving centres, was obliged to adapt to the new conditions.

***Futaine** : crossed fluffy fabric, made from thread and cotton, which was used to make linings, strait-jackets and under shirts.

***Basin** : fabric of cotton thread, sometimes mixed with hemp or linen thread. Similar to futaine but finer and stronger.



1. Silk worker working at home (illustration taken from L. Vignon, *la Soie*, 1890).
2. Mesh fabric weaving loom (Tie and textile museum, Panissières).
3. Old Ducreux factory built in the 1920's, rue Antoine Guerpillon at Panissières.

TRANSFORMATION OF THE ORGANISATION OF WORK

Described as having one hand on the weaving loom and the other on the plough, exposed to multiple crises and famines as the rest of the population, the independent peasant-weaver gradually adapted to simply carrying out orders from commissioners under the Ancien Régime. He later sought to reclaim his independence in the 19th century.

AN INDUSTRY WHICH MAINTAINED AGRICULTURE

Before the Revolution, the large population spread out among the villages and hamlets of the Mounts of Lyons, barely surviving on agriculture, offered a plentiful supply of laborious and docile workers. For a long time, weaving constituted a complementary activity for peasants and their families, particularly during the winter months, without however, improving their existence. During the bad weather, next to his three or four cows and a few plots of land, the peasant could suffer from famine like the other inhabitants. He had to bend his back down in his *boutique** and accept the poor remuneration maintained by the numerous intermediaries, both to purchase the fibre that women and children spun and to sell the cloth on the markets. His production was sold in the small market towns of the mounts of Lyons, where landowners, king's agents, commissioners and merchants resided. In the 18th century, the largest markets near Panissières, were in Amplepuis and Thizy.

MORE AND MORE DEPENDENT DOMESTIC WORK

Up until the 17th century, the majority of rural peasant-weavers were independent craftsmen. They purchased their raw material, mainly linen and hemp, which was spun by the family and woven on the looms which belonged to them. The cloth was finally sold on the markets to merchants from Lyons. In the 18th century, their situation changed. No longer being able to both make and sell their cloth, the weavers had to go through intermediate agents who progressively increased in number. The weavers worked under a piecework contract for the large manufacturers in the region. This triangular organization, including the manufacturer who gave the order, the commissioner who distributed the work and the weaver who carried it out, became firmly established in the following century. This system survived the change to power weaving looms up until the crisis of 1965.

***Boutique** : in the farm, a semi-buried or underground cellar, with a minimum of lighting and ventilation in order to maintain a stable temperature and degree of humidity, and where one or several handlooms were installed.

***Métier Jacquard :** mechanical weaving loom invented in 1801 which combined three existing techniques: the automatic weaving loom, the system of perforated cards enabling the uninterrupted command of the machine and finally, the system of hooks to transmit the highly complex patterns of the perforated cards. The loom, reaching a height of 4 metres, resulted in a radical change to the architecture of the weaving workshops which had to adopt high ceilings and high windows to provide ample lighting. The loom made the well-known noise « bistanclaque pan ! ».

***Ourdissage :** (Warping) primary operation necessary before weaving, which consists of placing the parallel warp threads in the same order as they will appear in the material.



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THE PEASANT-WEAVER FACED WITH TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Working conditions for the handloom weaver were hard, especially since little technological progress was made during the 19th century. All day long, the peasant-weaver in his boutique* had to push the batten of the loom with his left hand and send the shuttle across with his right arm. With his bare foot, he had to raise the foot pedals (up to 32 !) which lifted the warp* (threads held in tension on a loom) on the loom. Introducing new technical progress was not easy in the country areas. Nearly every technological innovation aroused the suspicion and often anger of the handloom weavers. The first spinning machines, or « Spinning Jenny », invented in England in 1779, were destroyed at Thizy. The new machines increased the number of threads spun in one movement from 30 to 1000, thus accelerating production and reducing costs. They were seen to seriously compete with the work done by women and children on spinning wheels at home. Although these small innovations remained limited at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, they were the first steps towards the concentration of the industry. The invention of the Jacquard loom in 1801* furthered this concentration and enabled more diverse and complex weaving patterns to be developed. This was not achieved without social consequences. Not far from the hills of Panissières, the revolt of the Canuts (silk workers) broke out in Lyon on 22 November 1831, caused by the general sentiment that the increasing wealth of the upper classes was due

to the increasing poverty of the working classes. Weaving silk by hand but still living in poverty, the Canuts saw their income reduced by half between 1800 and 1831 despite the continual growth of demand. A large number of silk proprietors refused to apply a minimum rate, using international competition and difficult marketing conditions as an excuse. The violent revolt caused about one hundred deaths. Isolated and dispersed in the country around Panissières, the handloom weavers were forced to accept the law of those who gave the orders.

THE INTRODUCTION OF FACTORIES IN COUNTRY AREAS

Throughout the 19th century, the large manufacturers grouped together the different stages of manufacture of materials in vast workshops, starting from the operation d'ourdissage* of the warp (threads held in tension on a loom), rolling of the cloth pieces and often bleaching and dying. Handlooms were first installed and later, mechanized looms, while home weaving was still maintained. The number of power looms greatly increased between 1870 and the early 1900s. The progressive installation of electricity in the country areas between 1900 and 1940, enabled factories to be set up in small villages without rivers. Hence, at Cottance, five weaving factories were created each containing between twenty and forty looms. Former handloom weavers were employed as foremen. These old factories can still be seen in many villages around Panissières, often standing in the town centre.



THE GOLDEN AGE AND NEW TYPICAL PRODUCTIONS IN THE REGION OF PANISSIÈRES (1800-1880)

Damask table linen, mesh fabric, silk and associated materials reflected the specialization and increasing high quality of the production in a sector which acquired a national reputation.

TABLE LINEN

Joseph Toerk, a businessman from Moravia came to settle in the region around 1813 and introduced the manufacture of table linen to Panissières. Working on damask linen, recognizable by the contrast between the colour of the background cloth and the varied embroidered patterns, transformed the weaver into a true artist. Toerk brought the first Jacquard looms to Panissières in 1818 in order to accelerate production resulting from its tremendous commercial success. National renown was assured. In 1870, damask linen dominated all the other productions and was carried out in 12 establishments which became more and more specialized. One of these, the Bonnassieux firm innovated in the cloth industry by introducing the inscription of initials on table linen, aiming to attract hotel, café and restaurant customers. In 1873, 1600 workers were engaged in this production at Panissières and elsewhere.



THE INTRODUCTION OF SILK IN THE REGION OF PANISSIÈRES...

During the Monarchie de Juillet (1830-1848) and the Second Empire (1852-1870), silk became very popular, owing to the manufacture of an inferior quality of fabric, particularly before 1860, which made it cheaper to buy. Possessing the experience necessary and anticipating a new market which could replace the declining sales of linen and hemp cloth, the peasant weavers launched themselves into this new production. As a result, the regions of Panissières, Bussières and Charlieu went from 5000 handlooms in 1824 to 80.000 in 1872. The first silk weaving power looms appeared much later around 1910.



1. Damask table linen, end of 19th century.
2. Roll of mesh fabric.
3. Different shades of silk used by commercial representatives around 1914.

...AND A BY-PRODUCT, MESH FABRIC

Although silk weaving had become predominant in most of the communes of our region, a particular variation developed around 1870 at Panissières, Montchal, Cottance and Sainte-Agathe-en-Donzy, known as « gaze à bluter » (mesh fabric), a natural silk fabric used for sifting flour. Until then, flour mills had used woollen mesh. The clientele demanded more finely sifted flour and woollen mesh was replaced by silk fabric, which combined thinner strands and more regular mesh. The manufacture of mesh fabric required skilled, experienced hands which were available in the region and for a long time, machines could not replace the skill and intelligence of the hand in making this product. These villages had practically the monopoly of production and supplied the whole of France, since they were cheaper than German competitors and those from Eastern Europe and Russia.

A CONSTANT PREOCCUPATION, TO OPEN UP THE REGION OF PANISSIÈRES

At the end of the 19th century, the geographical isolation of the region of Panissières was becoming more and more evident. Situated far from the main road and rail communication routes, the mountain region remained difficult to reach, and road traffic was restricted. The only hope to make travelling to Panissières easier, was to create a railway connection to Feurs, which was situated on an important junction of communication, Saint-Etienne/Roanne and Lyons/Clermont-Ferrand. Goods arriving at Feurs could then be easily transferred by road or by train towards the large urban centres. From Panissières extensions were planned in the direction of Tarare, Pontcharra-sur-Turdine or L'Arbresle. In 1891 the project of construction of a monorail was adopted but the line, after many delays and technical problems, was never put into service.

The legend of the monorail: the regional and national press related, several years later, that the day of the inauguration of the monorail, the 22 August 1895, ended in a humiliating catastrophe: the railway subsided under the weight of the train in which the officials and accredited persons were seated. The carriages fell down into a field. The officials had to return on foot to the point of departure. In fact, there was never an inauguration ceremony, nor officials, nor a spectacular derailment, nor collapse of the line. It was on a normal return journey between Panissières and Feurs that during a breaking exercise at the entry of a bend and on a slope, about 20 to 25 metres of ballast were torn off the railway and thrown on the side. During the three years of tests, it was shown that the technology was not yet adapted to mountain regions. Meanwhile, the press having considerably exaggerated the nature and the circumstances of the incident, the legend itself was born !





1. Ties displayed in the Tie and textile museum in Panissières.
2. Silk cocoons displayed in the Weaving and silk museum in Bussières.
3. Unrolling, present day factory.

CRISES AND REORIENTATION OF THE TEXTILE PRODUCTION IN THE 20TH CENTURY

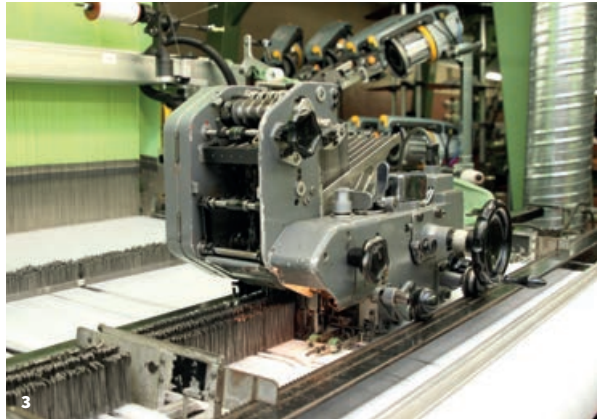
In the early 20th century, at which time rural areas seemed to be ideal places for development, the textile industry experienced a serious crisis due to the stagnation of the market and to the difficulties of reconversion.

BUSINESS SLOWDOWN IN THE CLOTH TRADE

After 1880, the demand for cloth started to slow down and automatically decreased the number of working days and salaries. Attempts were made to export to the colonies and to Corsica, but with short-lived results. Coupled to this, production in the region of Panissières had to face competition from the North. In spite of the introduction – no doubt too late – of the first mechanized looms in 1902 at the Ducreux factory, innovation was delayed. The crisis and the slump in sales were so severe that only 3 manufacturers out of 12 survived. The workers frequently went on strike to demand that salaries be maintained, but to no avail. The First World War nearly definitely ruined the cloth market. Only two firms, Ducreux Père & Fils and Piquet-Loire launched their production again in 1921 following the development of new markets in the large stores in Paris. Production definitely ceased in the 1980s.

SILK, CORSETS AND TIES

The silk sector was doing better since the introduction of mechanized looms around 1914 (only mesh fabric was woven by hand). The manufacturers in the region of Panissières and Bussières had long since expressed the wish to become independent with regard to the Lyons manufacturers. At the same time, around 1920, the first power looms were installed in the workshops of independent weavers and greatly improved their working conditions and their status as weaver-craftsman. Production was diversified: veils for dresses, corsets (1910), furnishing fabrics (1923), ties (1937), scarves, brocades, brocette fabrics, etc... for each speciality the skilled workforce was able to adapt to the required article. Techniques and decoration of the fabrics were improved by research.



THE POST-WAR CRISIS

After the Second world war, the economic recovery in the textile field was difficult. The crisis became worse after 1951, due to the considerable increase in the cost of raw materials, causing a slump in sales resulting from higher prices. Coupled to this, no economic measures were taken in the department to support the textile sector. After 1965, silk weaving also encountered serious problems due particularly to competition from under-developed countries where businesses had engaged in offshoring. The automation of looms meant that a skilled workforce was no longer necessary and textiles could be woven in countries where labour was cheap, but untrained. To overcome the crisis, some of the firms in the region of region of Panissières opted for artificial silk weaving, at a more reasonable price, or turned towards synthetic fibres such as terylene and nylon. Whatever the cause, the crisis and the difficult reconversions led to a decline in the population in most of the communes in the region.

SPECIALIZE, MODERNIZE AND FOCUS ON QUALITY...

...were the aims pursued since the 1980s. The only businesses to survive were those who were audacious enough to invest in more modern machines and to conquer foreign markets themselves with new products and an aggressive commercial policy. Industrial fabrics and other diversified productions were introduced.



1. The Garden of colouring plants at Essertines-en-Donzy.
2. Textile produced by Denis Establishments.
3. Created in 1956 at Montchal by André Denis, the enterprise Denis & Fils is specialized in high quality silk fabrics and in luminous materials based on optic fibre.

VELVET RIBBONS

LE TISSERAND

Le Tisserand is a family workshop built in 1943 and situated at Rozier-en-Donzy. In 2013, Nicolas Compigne took over the workshop. His predecessor made pictures out of woven silk. The workshop has chosen to concentrate mainly on weaving silk ribbons, particularly for the folk costumes of Arles and Poitou. The velvet ribbons are obtained by the technique of sabrage (raised cut-out motifs), a tradition maintained in Arles and also by Tisserand, the last specialized craftsman.

PRESENT DAY SKILLS

TRADITIONAL PRODUCTIONS

Today, in the Montagnes du Matin, about fifteen firms and textile craftsmen still carry out their activity. Most of them are specialized in high quality productions and rare prestigious skills.

ARTISTIC EMBROIDERY

BÉATRICE DESROUSSEAUX

In her small workshop situated at Rozier-en-Donzy, Béatrice Desrousseaux uses ribbons, pearls, silk, leather, velvet, organza and sequins to create unique jewelry and contemporary accessories (bags, hats, belts). Beatrice followed a course in the techniques of Luneville crochet embroidery at the Lesage in Paris and then worked in fashion design before coming to the region and developing these skills which produce brilliant results.

PAINTED SILK SCARVES

DANIEL VIAL

This family business situated at Rozier-en-Donzy is specialized in the creation of painted scarves. Squares, stoles, shawls are painted by hand or printed, all resulting from the creative inspiration of Daniel Vial. Each year, he offers a new collection. This high-quality skill has enabled the workshop to be listed among the « Living heritage businesses » and « Art workshops of France ».



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INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTIONS

Certain local businesses are independent and self-supporting. They create their own collections, weave and sometimes make and sell them. Others work as sub-contractors: The manufacturers create the fabrics and place an order for the weaving or the manufacture. At present, local weaving businesses can be sub-divided into three main categories.

UPHOLSTERY FABRICS

These are fabrics used for interior decoration: curtains, armchairs, wallpapers etc. The Tassinari & Chatel (Panissières) firm weaves contemporary fabrics for the White House or the Elysée and also samples of reconstituted old fabrics for castles and historic houses such as Versailles or the Hermitage Palace in Russia. Sotexpro (Panissières) is specialized in non-inflammable fabrics whereas Linder (Violay) mainly produces net curtains.

CLOTHING FABRICS

Clothing fabrics, the main production in the Montagnes du Matin, are made both out of silk and synthetic fibres. ATCB-Bucol (Bussières), Denis & Fils (Montchal), Dutel (Panissières), Interstiss (Panissières), Tissages Gacon (Rozier-en-Donzy), Tissages Montuy (Rozier-en-Donzy) and Tissage des Roziers (Rozier-en-Donzy) are specialized in silk and Jacquard weaving for high quality fashion, ceremonial costumes, and ready-to-wear clothing. These businesses deal with important firms such as Chanel and Hermès.

TECHNICAL FABRICS

These fabrics possess certain technical qualities which make them appropriate for use in various sectors: industry, transport, medicine, food and agriculture, etc.

Denis & Fils produces fabrics with integrated optical fibres, and Trottet-Grange make snow fences and protective canvases for fruit producers.

The « 48h of creation in the land of weavers »: Created by the enthusiasm of two local museums, this event aims to bring attention to the past and present traditions and skills of the textile industry in the Montagnes du Matin. The event takes place every two years, when a textile market, a creative competition, exhibitions, demonstrations, events in the museums and a fashion show are organized during the weekend. This occasion enables professional people, students, inhabitants and visitors to spend time sharing their common passion: fabrics.





View of the village of Cottance in 1960. The blue spots indicate the presence of home weaving workshops, the red spots show the “weaving factories”. A collective working habitat, called the «barracks», out of the photo, is situated 300 m left of the factories.



Situated at Cottance on the edge of a field outside the village, this long building, known locally as the « barracks » gives a perfect illustration of the type of workers' accommodation at the beginning of the 20th century, a long oblong block. There is a small garden in front of the building which is composed of two fairly narrow levels. The rear of the building, which can be seen in this photo, has windows which overlook cultivated fields. The use of bricks to frame doors and windows is typical of this period.

DISCOVER THE TEXTILE HERITAGE IN THE REGION OF PANISSIÈRES



1

1. The Tie and textile museum, rue Jacquard at Panissières. The street front is inspired by the neoclassical style. Beaujolais yellow stone has been used to frame the windows in order to emphasize their alignment.

2. The old mesh fabric factory, situated rue de l'Egalité at Panissières, was created in 1911. The ornamentation of bricks and stone used to frame the windows, the cornerstones and the roof cornice, emphasize the elegance of the rhythm of the bays and give an open airy appearance to the building.



2



1. House damask linen displayed in the Tie and textile museum at Panissières.
2. The spool rack is the part of the weaving loom where the rolls of thread to transform or assemble are placed. (Weaving and silk museum at Bussières).

THE MUSTS TO VISIT

TIE AND TEXTILE MUSEUM (LE MUSÉE DE LA CRAVATE ET DU TEXTILE) AT PANISSIÈRES

History and organisation of the building

Built in 1856, this factory produced table linen up until 1984. After Etienne Piquet bought the factory in 1890, his name was added to the name of the first owner Denis Loire.

The architecture on the site is composed of three elements:

- the production factory, the main wall of which can be seen from the street, is the most important building. The weaving looms occupied three levels of the building, according to their size and the width of fabric produced: the largest table cloths at the bottom, tea towels and towels on the first floor and preparatory operations (warping, unwinding) on the second floor. The large windows are framed by Beaujolais limestone. Its yellow colour reflected more light, an essential factor when the factory was built since electricity was not installed before the 1920s. In the same way, the building was orientated East-West in order to receive a maximum amount of natural light. On the two floors, relieving arches made out of brick are built above the windows in order to distribute the weight of the wall above. The wall facing the street possesses finer architectural features. The lintels are moulded and those on the ground floor are vaulted.

- the master's house situated at the rear, stands next to a garden with pool for washing hemp. The three-storey house was built in 1866. On the bottom floor, facing the garden, there is the laundry. The mangle room, also on the ground floor, adjoining the factory, was used for preparing the linen (cutting out, hems, embroidery, ironing, preparation of orders, checking the washing, hanging out of the pieces). The first floor was occupied by the lodging of the factory manager and the second was reserved for the workers: (cloakroom, heated room for meals).
- the extension added in 1903 linked the master's house to the factory. It was built to replace the stable and is covered with a saw-tooth roof. This part houses a boiler room (coal furnace above which is placed a tank) which provided steam to power the weaving looms. The fireplace, of which only the lower part remains, stands in the centre of the room.

In 1991, the municipality bought the site, renovated the buildings and entrusted the management and creation of the Tie and Textile Museum there to the Association of the Friends of the museum. It opened in 1995, after considerable restoration work. Former weavers, history enthusiasts, voluntary workers have run this place for over 20 years. The collections are composed of fabrics from the 19th century up to present: damask table linen, mesh fabric and ties.



THE MUSEUM OF WEAVING AND SILK (LE MUSÉE DU TISSAGE ET DE LA SOIERIE) AT BUSSIÈRES

In the heart of a land of weavers, one day in 1977, a former « canut » (silk worker) from Bussières decided to create a museum in the aim to conserve local industrial textile heritage prey to the economic crisis. The Museum of Weaving and Silk was born, thanks to Pierre BERCHOUX and a team of enthusiastic volunteers.

Since its installation in 1998 in the old Braud factory (high quality silk-weaving firm in operation from 1920 to 1970), the museum has conserved this heritage and today bears witness to ancestral skills and traditions still alive in the Montagnes du Matin. The museum is run by an association of about 60 voluntary workers, all from Bussières and surrounding communes.

During the visit, you will discover the history of weaving and the different high quality fabrics still produced in the region (technical fabrics, fabrics for luxury upholstery and for the most important fashion houses) and be able to touch different samples. The first point in the visit: the spinning bassin. The machine dates from the end of the 19th century and was used to unroll the silk worm cocoons. Quite an art ! This is also the occasion to learn more about the life cycle of *Bombyx mori*, this curious butterfly without which silk would not exist. After entering the workshop, you will be shown around by professional textile workers (retired or still working) who will give you insight into the development of weaving looms, from the oldest to the most modern, which are

put into operation. The workshop contains nine machines: handloom, pick-pick, velvet, tie, sponge, brocaded, large width (for weaving curtains), lance looms and air jet looms. The latter two machines are the most recent and still used in modern weaving factories. In 1h30, to the sound of « bistanclaque », you will learn all about the weaving techniques of the finest textile fabrics !

At the end of this journey to the land of silk workers, the museum shop enables you to appreciate the skills of local textile firms and craftsmen but also the dexterity of volunteer seamstresses who themselves make all sorts of textile accessories. A fine example of “made in France” ! To complete the visit, every new season, a new temporary six month exhibition is put on for visitors and reveals other aspects of the textile world.

THE GARDEN OF COLOURING PLANTS (LE JARDIN DES PLANTES À COULEUR)

Established since 2001 on a natural site of 2500 m² at Essertines-en-Donzy, Valérie Métras is dedicated to the cultivation of about a hundred dye plants as well as a collection of old Guillot roses and an organic vegetable garden. Adopting the local textile traditions, Valérie transforms roses, common madder, woad, dyer's chamomile and vegetables into natural colours with which she dyes fabrics, particularly silk. Guided visits from May to September.



1. Weaving workshop adjoining a house (Cottance).
2. Detail of a saw-tooth roof decorated with a erracota antefix in the form of a shell and flap tiles with raised diamond shape in centre.
3. Chimney of the old Fayard factory at Essertines-en-Donzy.



INDUSTRIAL AND TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE IN VILLAGES

THE WORKSHOPS OF THE WEAVER CRAFTSMEN

The introduction of the mechanized loom, followed by the electrification of the country around Panissières in the 1930s, encouraged the increase in home weavers. They could install one or more looms in a workshop which was very different from the old « boutiques » of the peasant weavers. Henceforth, the workshop was no longer buried in a cellar, but located inside the house or in an annex and illuminated by a fairly wide window. The first independent workshops were situated in villages or very close by since the hamlets were not always electrified at the same time as the village centres. The workshops built on as an extension of the house, were made of simple materials: brick, ciment breeze-blocks, and more rarely, clinker, constituted of solid residues mainly coming from the fusion of ferrous minerals and coal combustion.



4. Saw-tooth roof of the old Gustave Couble workshop, rue Bonnassieux at Panissières.

5. Left butt of the roof, decorated with a star motif.

6. At Rozier-en-Donzy, the Mollon factory produced silk until 2005.



FACTORIES

The construction of textile factories in the country was a spectacular revolution to the landscape at the time. The oldest factories are recognizable by their shed or saw-tooth roofs, formed of a succession of roofs with two differently sloping sides, the shortest one usually being a glass window. The expansion of factories with saw-tooth roofs was directly linked to the industrial revolution in the second half of the 19th century. The large surfaces of natural lighting compensated the scarcity of electric lighting. Certain factories have kept their monumental brick chimneys, a true symbol of human effort but also of a technical exploit. Designed in the 19th and 20th centuries to evacuate the smoke produced by the combustion of coal, which produced energy to power the looms, these chimneys had their use until the arrival of electricity.

Many ornamental and practical details become obvious when approaching these factories noticeable for their plain clear outline. The bordering tiles with triangles fulfill the function of both decorating and making the lateral sides of the roof water-proof. Antefixes decorated with stars, shells or flowers add a little fantasy to the extremities of the edges of the roof. Butts or pediments, also made out of baked clay, decorate the ridge of the roof. These ornaments were used on private houses up until a recent period. The proximity of Sainte-Foy (Rhône) where tile and brick-makers have carried out their activity since the middle of the 18th century, explains why these products made out of baked clay were adopted in local architecture.



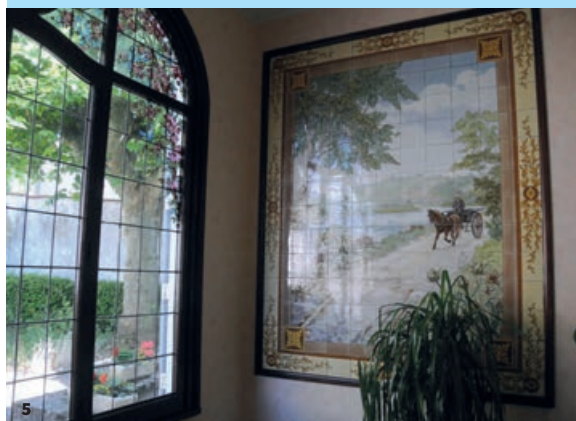


1. Old offices and working habitat of the Coquard-Giroud factory, n° 114 rue de la Quintaine at Rozier-en-Donzy.
2. View of the Guerpillon factory, route de Feurs at Panissières.
3. Guerpillon factory, route de Feurs at Panissières. Detail of the cornice decorated with checkerboard ornamentation.
4. The pavillion of the Ducreux house is decorated with enamelled bricks (route de Tarare at Panissières).
5. Located in an old Master's house, the town hall of Bussières has conserved its historical decoration.
6. Bonnassieux factory, rue de la république at Panissières.
7. The asylum house at Panissières.



MANUFACTORIES

The first manufactories (later called factories) appeared around 1840 and manufactured damask table cloth and linen. As their name indicates, they were places where products were originally made by hand. Sometimes called workshops, certain manufactories resembled large houses or town buildings, similar in style to the plain architecture in Lyons. Only the windows, with their characteristic features, provided decorative elements on the walls: lambrequins (ornamental wooden or sheet metal frieze) designed to conceal the roll mechanism of the blind, made of adjustable wooden strips, simple or ornamental guard rails. Certain businessmen, anxious to give a distinguished aspect to their establishment, sought to use new materials for framing windows, in particular, Beaujolais limestone, bricks and concrete. The walls were often coated with plaster. The ornamental finials gave an aesthetic touch to the roofing. The interior of these early factories was composed of a succession of rooms with high ceilings allowing voluminous machinery to be installed and especially Jacquard looms.



MASTERS' HOUSES

Throughout the 19th century, entrepreneurs installed factories known as « houses » in business circles and sought independence from Lyons manufacturers who up till then, had given orders. As their fortune increased, these new masters of industry constructed residences in keeping with their success, using eclectic styles which were a mix of neo-classical, Renaissance or regional architectural elements. Nevertheless, the most personalized form of decoration was to be found inside the house.

THE ASYLUM HOUSE

At Panissières, rue de l'Egalité, there was an asylum. This term originally referred to a small local structure where young children whose mothers worked, but who could not afford a household maid, were looked after during the day. This nursery had a double function: keeping the children away from the dangers in the street and giving them some rudimentary education. On the main façade, the statue of Saint Anne teaching a small girl to read, reminds us of this function. This building with its courtyard had been given by Mr Guerpillon in 1875 for the creation of the asylum, which was an appropriate addition to the girls' school in the same street. It was transformed into a mixed nursery school and is used today as a music room.



FREEZE- FRAME



Old weaving loom (Musée du Tissage et de la Soie at Bussières).



Optical fibre textile.



A loom today.



Embroidered table linen, at museum of Panissières.



Old postal card showing the Ducreux factory at Panissières at the beginning of the 20th century.



Old Brulas factory, at Reynard hamlet at Cottance.



Pavillon Ducreux. Detail of the exterior ornamentation.



Antefix with an head of Bacchus ornamentation, Martinod house at Panissières.

TOURIST MAP OF FOREZ



Carte Actual, n° d'autorisation 144-42/JMP/12-16.

TOURIST MAP OF THE REGION OF PANISSIÈRES



Former industrial cities

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INFORMATION AND VISITS:

- **guided tour of Panissières**
- **monorail walking guided tour** (flexible distance can be adapted to your request)

THE MONORAIL WALKING PATH

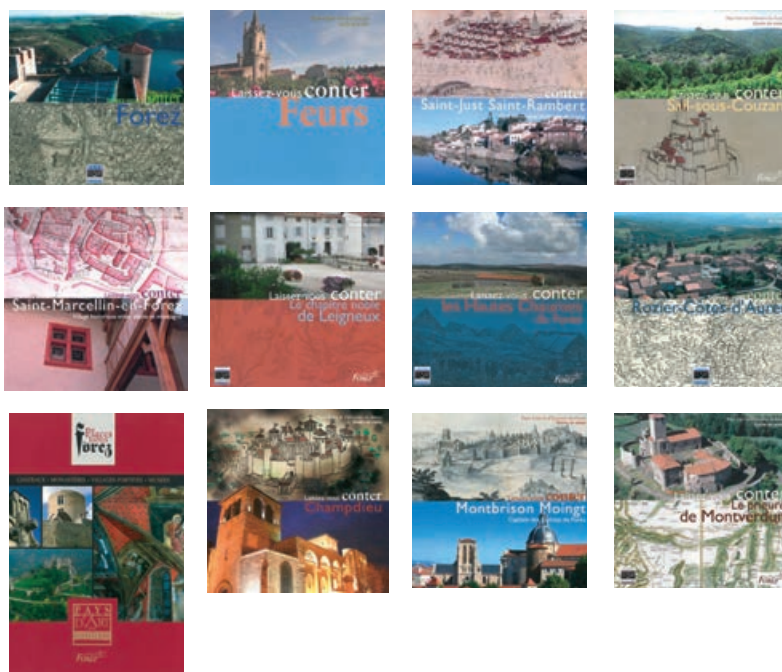
The old monorail rail track was transformed into a walking path at the end of the 1970s. A 25 km long circular path enables you to discover the remains of the bridges over the old rail track and information panels tell the story of this « funny train » which only had a very brief existence...

LAND OF WEAVERS, LAND OF EXCELLENCE

21 communes, including Panissières, because of their textile history, are associated in an operation « Land of weavers, Land of excellence », which has become a visible reality due to the installation of heritage information panels. A walking guide is available at the tourist information office which enables you to discover these panels in each village. A programme of visits to typical traditional places of interest or textile firms is also organised each year by the tourist information office. An annual «textile agenda » also presents all the events linked to weaving in the region.

More information on the website **www.terredetisseurs.com**

VISITOR GUIDES AND BROCHURES EDITED BY THE REGION OF ART AND HISTORY OF FOREZ



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