

Lasting *Impressions*

Photos by René Mattes - Text by Alice White Walker

Petite but impressive, Honfleur creates everlasting memories for all who visit. Discover this little Normandy fishing village that captured both the hearts and paintbrushes of many Impressionists.





A picturesque harbor with rows of colorful buildings and boats reflected in its still waters; behind it, a maze of leafy, cobbled streets and authentic, timber-framed houses — it is no wonder that the fishing village of Honfleur was one of the first places to inspire the French Impressionists.

While neighboring Le Havre is a much larger city, people flock to Honfleur for its quaint charm. Here, there is more than enough for a day of casual sight-seeing and dining, but consider adding on an evening to your trip to see the harbor lights come alive.

Spend the morning exploring the small boutiques that offer independent fashion and gourmand delights (La Maison du Caramel is always a favorite), or — if you encounter some typical Norman showers — the Musée Eugène Boudin makes for an ideal artistic refuge.



The local market in Place Sainte-Catherine is filled with local ambience.

The town's backdrop against the Normandy countryside makes for a beautiful contrast of land and sea.



Around lunchtime, head to the Vieux Bassin. The restaurants that surround the harbor are largely touristy, but it is a beautiful canvas for a simple midday snack or a sunset apéritif. Order a *crêpe* and a *bolée de cidre*, and soak up the jolly ambience.

Fueled and ready to go, walk a little way out of town — passing by the iconic Église Sainte-Catherine, up to Chapelle Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and Mont Joli — for a wonderful panoramic view over Honfleur, the Seine estuary and the Pont de Normandie.

The rest of the afternoon can be spent hopping from one tea salon to the next, visiting the botanical garden or the Jardin des Personnalités — a pretty tribute to the town. Honfleur is also a great base for discovering nearby Étretat and Deauville.

It is easy to see why the Impressionists fell in love with this part of France. And we guarantee, you will too.

Église Sainte-Catherine ►

Place Sainte-Catherine

Classified as a Historic Monument in 1879, this is France's largest wooden church with a separate bell tower. Built just after the Hundred Years' War, its oldest part dates back to the 15th century. To see it at its finest, head to the Place Sainte-Catherine on a Saturday morning; while you're there, you can also take in the weekly market, which is full of local ambience.

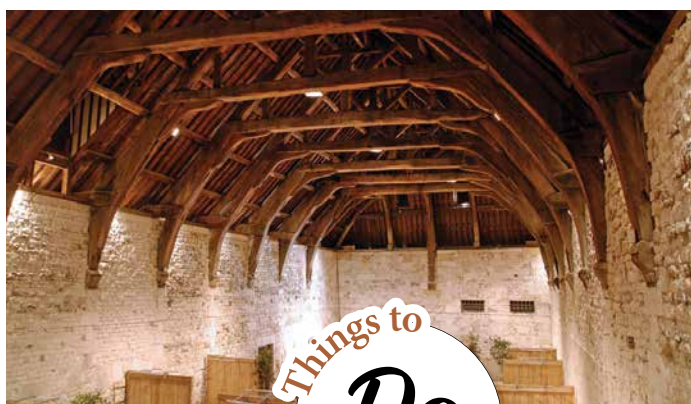


▼ Jardin des Personnalités

Inaugurated in 2004 by Mayor Michel Lamarre, this 25-acre garden offers a walking tour featuring busts of the historical and cultural personalities who have made the town what it is today. These figures include famous names like Claude Monet and Charles Baudelaire, as well as prominent residents who have impacted Honfleur over the years. Jardin des Personnalités is lovingly planted and kept, so each season is as beautiful as the next.



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Things to
Do

▼ Naturospace

Boulevard Charles V
www.naturospace.com

Enter the tropics at Naturospace — an equatorial zoo where rare plants, trees and flowers thrive in a warm, mist-filled environment (between 77 and 83°F), punctuated by colorful birds and butterflies to admire. It is a botanical garden unlike any other!



© Naturospace

◀ Greniers à Sel

9B rue de la Ville

The town built these large fortifications to defend against the English invasion in the 14th century. Miraculously, two out of the three edifices survived and are now known as “the salt granaries” (once storing 10,000 tons of salt destined for cod fishing on the Newfoundland coast).

Today, the unique buildings house numerous cultural events: exhibitions, theatrical performances, concerts and more.



◀ Chapelle Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

14600 Équemauville

With a superb panorama on the Pont de Normandie, the Seine estuary and Le Havre, this little 17th-century chapel is filled with nautical paintings, plaques and models of ships offered by grateful sailors. Time your visit for the *fête des marins* at the end of May, where children dressed as little sailors form a procession from Sainte Catherine up to Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.



▲ La Cidrerie

26 place Hamelin

www.creperie-lacidrerie-honfleur.com

Normandy and *crêpes* go hand in hand, and La Cidrerie is one of the best places to try this delicious *gourmandise*. Hidden just off the main street after the Lieutenant, it serves up both sweet and savory *crêpes* from its open kitchen, so you can watch them being made. Plus, the extensive drink menu — which includes cider, Calvados, apple and pear liqueurs and more — offers a great introduction to local tipples!

▼ Hotel Chaumière

Route du Littoral
www.hotel-chaumiere.fr

With a stunning view over the Baie de Seine, the restaurant of the Hotel Chaumière boasts an unbeatable environment for lunch or dinner. The kitchen is run eco-responsibly, using regional vendors, organic produce and homemade recipes. During the summer season, Chaumière pitches up a UKOO® tent — the ideal way to sample cocktails or nibbles from the Airstream food truck or outdoor barbeque.



▲ Vieux Honfleur

10 rue de la Prison

www.vieuxhonfleur.fr

The oldest dining establishment in town, Vieux Honfleur is an institution. The specialty here is seafood: from *fruits de mer* to lobster to sole meunière, dishes are cooked according to French tradition, with fine, local ingredients. Its picturesque setting near the harbor ensures that every meal is a memorable one, and the heated *terrasse* means you can enjoy the same views in winter, too.

Where to
Eat



◀ Maison Blondel - Cakes et Gourmandises

4 rue des Logettes

www.maisonblondel.fr

Tucked behind the Église Sainte-Catherine, Maison Blondel is a place to treat yourself. This *salon du thé* is best-known for its delicious cakes and desserts, and you'll find everything from cookies to apple strudel to lemon meringue pie. They also specialize in molten hot chocolate served in giant floral teapots — the perfect indulgence after a day of walking. It even serves light bites and menu formulas for savory options.

Le Capucine aux Jardins de Coppélia ▶

478 route du Bois du Breuil

www.jardins-coppelia.com

Set in a 17th-century Norman *manoir*, Le Capucine is a gastronomic eatery in the Jardins de Coppélia hotel. A wonderfully bucolic environment, choose a table inside the luminous restaurant, outside on the terrace or in the lush garden. For a multi-sensory experience, make a selection between a 3, 4 or 5-course menu, all designed by renowned chef Damien Fremont. There is also an adjacent tapas bar for fast and flavorful dining.





◀ Les Maisons de Léa

Place Sainte-Catherine, 14600 Honfleur
www.lesmaisonsdelea.com

Situated right in the town's center — you can practically touch the Église Sainte-Catherine from the rooftop — this hotel is a deluxe place to stay in Honfleur. Four-star comforts with cottage charm, you'll feel instantly *chez toi*. And if you need some extra relaxation, the Nuxe Spa is waiting downstairs.

▼ Le Manoir de la Plage

Route du Littoral Vasouy, 14600 Honfleur
www.lemanoirdelaplage.fr

Set right on the sea, Le Manoir de la Plage is a haven of peace. With a tennis court, gym, a hydro-jet wellness center, a terrace for sunning yourself and a pool (that can be privatized), you can be as active or as relaxed as you like. An ideal location for exploring Honfleur and the surrounding areas.



Maison Plume ▶

1 rue Ernest Binet Villequier,
76490 Rives en Seine
www.lamaisonplume.com

Maison Plume is an ideal home-away-from-home — an idyllic setting located on the River Seine as it trickles out through Normandy, towards Honfleur. Set up by ex-Parisians Jeanne and Simon, this guest house is an ode to simple pleasures. Its five rooms and studio (all of which are impeccably decorated) ensure a cozy and intimate stay.



Le Paquebot ▶

3 rue des Bains,
14113 Villerville
www.lepaquebot.fr

Situated between Honfleur and Deauville, Le Paquebot is an altogether different place to stay. Built almost in the sea, this hotel has boat-like cabins rather than rooms. And, as on a real ship, the views offer endless stretches of ocean.



MFCH's "Best B&Bs in France"

LES 2 CHAUMIÈRES HONFLEUR

alexandra.hazard@hotmail.fr | +33 (0) 6 98 32 57 02 | www.les2chaumieres.com



Offering exceptional panoramic views over the Normandy countryside, Les 2 Chaumières is a bucolic haven just 1h30 from Paris. Sleeping up to 6, this charming, traditional thatched cottage has 3 double bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen, comfortable lounge and dining spaces and is outfitted in elegant yet rustic decor.

The B&B is suited to all seasons with a heated swimming pool (and soon-to-be installed jacuzzi) and a stunning fireplace for cozy evenings.



A blissful retreat from the stresses of life in a magnificent setting, Les 2 Chaumières is an ideal location to discover the Normandy coast, including the neighboring towns of Honfleur, Deauville and Étretat.



Around Honfleur

Étretat ►

These white cliffs need no introduction and offer all you need for a breathtaking vista. Visit early in the morning or at dusk for fewer crowds and gorgeous light. This area has recently enjoyed extra attention, due to the French Netflix series, *Lupin* (as author Maurice Leblanc's hometown). You can visit his house in the center — Le Clos Arsène Lupin. And, of course, garden lovers cannot miss Les Jardins d'Étretat, with its iconic sculpted cloud topiary interlaced with sculptures.



◄ Trouville

Connected to Deauville by the Pont des Belges, Trouville is equally worth a visit. More laid-back than its big sister, this small port town has a lovely stretch of beach for walks, quirky shops and plenty of restaurants for hungry bellies. Head to Le Centrale for fresh fish in a lively atmosphere; Les Étiquettes, an elegant wine bar that does great meals, too; and Pipelettes & Co — the go-to spot for brunch, lunch or tea time in a cozy setting.



Deauville ►

Possibly the chicest seaside town in France, Deauville is home to the American film festival, a prestigious horse racing track and luxury shopping. Known as “the Parisian Riviera” during the 1900s, Deauville continues to be a place for the crème de la crème. Don't miss visiting Vieux Deauville, Hôtel Barrière Le Normandy, Les Planches and the wide, sandy beaches to see the thoroughbreds train. The perfect place to indulge in a little fantasy!

