

K / Fontaine Daniel

49km/51'

Peaceful little village, rich in history and character, home of Toiles de Mayenne (decoration fabrics) since 1806.



At the beginning, there was a Cistercian abbey, founded in the early XIIIth century. Its church, the size of the Le Mans cathedral was destroyed at the time of the French revolution, and the rest of the abbey was sold to a private owner: a couple of Parisian industrialists who saw the potential offered by the vast buildings and the river (for hydraulic power) to start a textile plant.



This was done in 1806 and the business grew quickly, so did the village built for its workers in local stone that is still here today. Each house was allotted a share of a communal garden, and, if you walk up a path between the houses, you may wander around and see how well-tended they still are. You may also walk around the pond, but it is a long walk !

In 1830, the first “Denis” in a long dynasty ran the business, developed it, built more houses... a school was created for the children of the workers, long before they became common elsewhere. The first Denis was succeeded by his son, and today, the Denis family is still managing the business.

The abbey itself is still the site of a working textile factory, open to the public only one Sunday in the middle of September every year. A little further up the road is a factory outlet, where you can see the famous decoration fabrics of Toiles de Mayenne.

<http://www.toiles-de-mayenne.com/>

It is very pleasant, as soon as weather permits, to eat outside at the La Forge restaurant, in the center of the village.