



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bagnoles-de-l'Orne>

Bagnoles de l'Orne (pop. 895) ranks with Tessé-la-Madeleine as the best known spa in western France. Beautifully situated on a little lake in a gorge, it is a good base from which to visit some of the Châteaux in the surrounding area and to explore the "Suisse Normande" ("Norman Switzerland").

Bagnoles offers a special atmosphere, with its luxurious 19th-century villas, its casino and 'Grand Hotel' with its hot spring, specialized in the treatment of rheumatism and veinous problems. Its development coincided with the arrival of the railway, and, with it, of an affluent clientele from Paris. Its "Belle Epoque" character and Art-Deco architecture have been well-preserved, and it has the feel of places like Deauville or Cabourg. Bagnoles also boasts a connection with Lancelot (Lancelot of the Lake...). All in all, Bagnoles is well worth a visit.

There is a beautiful view over the town from the 'Roc au Chien', accessible by tourist train (30 min return, afternoons only) or on foot (45 mins). On foot, start from the church in Tessé-La-Madeleine and walk up the avenue du Chateau into the park; the arboretum houses 150 species including sequoias well over 100 years old. Take the avenue on the right at the chateau to arrive at the Roc and admire the view over Bagnoles.



The Chateau of Bagnoles (now the Hotel de Ville)

This visit could be combined with Carrouges and its chateau (see C), making a comfortable day-trip. You could plan for lunch in Bagnoles which offers a variety of restaurants