



Arles

20 February 1888 – 8 May 1889

Vincent arrived in Arles from Paris on 20 February 1888. He longed for the peace, the bright light and the vibrant colours of the south of France. After staying in two different hotels, he moved into the “Yellow House”, which he had already been using as a studio for several months. Vincent was highly productive during this period and made numerous paintings

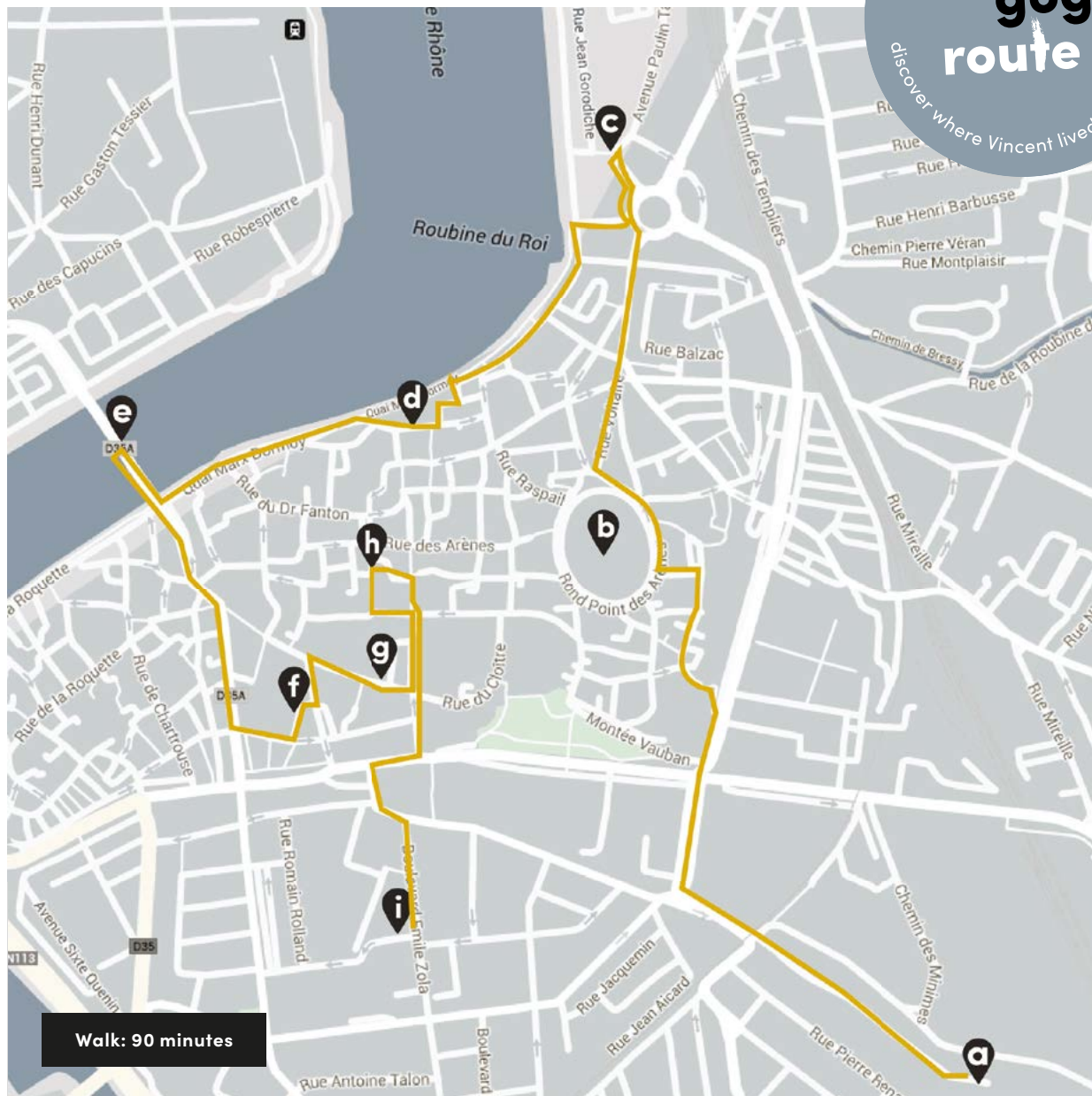
and drawings in and around Arles. He developed an expressive, uniquely individual painting style characterised by bold colours and quick, dynamic brushstrokes. The painter Paul Gauguin joined him in October and they worked together in Arles for two months. Vincent suffered a psychotic episode in late December. He cut off the lower part of his

left ear in a fit of madness and gave it to a prostitute. Vincent was hospitalized until early January. When the attacks recurred, he returned to the hospital and remained there for a longer spell. Vincent left Arles on 8 May 1889 when he voluntarily had himself admitted to the psychiatric hospital in Saint-Rémy de Provence.



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- b** **Arena**
1 rond-point des Arènes
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- Café de la Gare**
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Trinquetaille Bridge
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- St-Trophime**
place de la République
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place du Forum



Alyscamps

Address avenue des Alyscamps

Vincent painted four views of the Alyscamps, a Roman necropolis a few hundred metres from the centre of Arles. He produced the works in late October 1888, during the time that Paul Gauguin stayed with him in the Yellow House. Two canvases with *Les Alyscamps* ('Falling Leaves') hung in his room. Gauguin also made two paintings with the subject.



Arena

Address 1 rond-point des Arènes

Vincent watched several bullfights in the amphitheatre of Arles, which were held every Sunday. On 12 April 1888, he wrote to his friend Émile Bernard: "...the crowd was magnificent, great multicoloured crowds. One on top of the other on 2, 3 tiers, with the effect of sun and shade and the shadow cast by the immense circle." [Letter 596] Later that year, Vincent would depict such a crowd of spectators in *Arena at Arles*.



The 'Yellow House'

Address place Lamartine **Former address** 2 place Lamartine

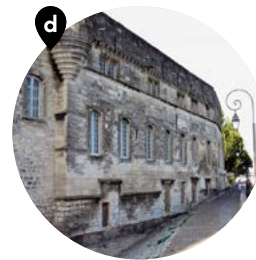
On 1 May 1888 Vincent rented the East wing of a yellow building on place Lamartine at a rate of 15 francs a month. At first he had used it as a studio but he began living there too early September. He called the building the Yellow House and planned to turn the house into a "studio of the south" where artists could work and live together. Vincent had furniture made and painted numerous canvases to decorate the house. The 'Yellow House' was destroyed during a bombing raid in the World War II.



Café de la Gare

Address place Lamartine **Former address** 30 place Lamartine

Vincent lived at the Café de la Gare before moving into the Yellow House. It was located on the same square and it was here that he painted *The Night Café*. In it he aimed to depict "the terrible human passions" using the complementary colours red and green. The work depicts the interior of the café with its owner Joseph Ginoux dressed in white and standing beside the billiard table. Vincent got on well with Ginoux and his wife.



Restaurant Vénissac

Address place Lamartine **Former address** 28 place Lamartine

Next door to Café de la Gare was the Vénissac restaurant, where Vincent had a daily meal for one franc. It must have been a welcome change for Vincent; he had complained about the food in Arles: "...it's dreadful, I've never been able to get even any of the very simple things I've asked those people for. And it's the same everywhere in these little restaurants. Yet it's not hard to boil potatoes. Impossible. And no rice or macaroni either, or else it's ruined with fat or they don't do it, and make the excuse: it's for tomorrow, there's no room on the stove, &c." [Letter 602]



Musée Réattu

Address 10 rue du Grand Prieuré

Vincent mentioned the Musée Réattu in a letter during his first week in Arles. He was clearly not very impressed with the museum: "The women really are beautiful here, it's no joke – on the other hand, the Arles museum is dreadful and a joke." [Letter 578]

Trinquetaille bridge

Address Trinquetaille bridge

Vincent painted three views of the Trinquetaille bridge and used one of the canvases to decorate the Yellow House. The long iron bridge over the water linked the centre of Arles to the suburb of Trinquetaille. The spot must have been appealing to Vincent because of the combination of the long industrial bridge, the water and the quays with people.



Hospital

Address place Félix-Rey (1865-1932)

Vincent was hospitalised in Arles three times. He was first admitted on 23 December 1888 after he cut off part of his ear in a psychotic fit and gave it to a prostitute. At the end of February and once more in March, he returned to the ward. Vincent painted in and around the hospital and he was allowed to go outside during coherent moments. The square is named after the physician who treated him at the Arles hospital: Doctor Félix Rey (1865-1932).



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Musée Lapidaire

Address place de la République

During his first week in Arles, Vincent visited the Musée Lapidaire. The museum of antiquities was best known for its collection of ancient Christian marble sarcophagi from the Alyscamps. It was located in the Église Sainte-Anne at place de la République. This church can still be visited but the museum collection was moved in 1996 to Musée Départemental Arles Antiques (avenue 1ere division France Libre).



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Cathédrale Saint-Trophime

Address place de la République

Vincent was impressed with the entrance of the St. Trophime Cathedral. He wrote to his brother Theo in March 1888: "There's a Gothic porch here that I'm beginning to think is admirable, the porch of St Trophime, but it's so cruel, so monstrous, like a Chinese nightmare, that even this beautiful monument in so grand a style seems to me to belong to another world, to which I'm as glad not to belong as to the glorious world of Nero the Roman." [letter 588]



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Café du Forum

Address place du Forum

In September 1888, Vincent painted the world-famous painting *Café Terrace at Night*. He made the work in the middle of the night on location outside the Café du Forum on the place du Forum. Vincent's nocturnal painting activity drew the attention of the local press. On 30 September 1888, *Le Chronique artistique et musicale* reported: "Mr Vincent, an Impressionist painter, works, we are told, in the evening, by the light of the gas lamps in one of our squares."

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