



**PRESS RELEASE**  
Paris, September 25, 2015

## “Destination Impressionism”: a World-Famous Destination

Impressionism is a way of painting that attempts to seize the ephemeral moment, giving more importance to color than to form. As the painters of light and modernity, the Impressionists revolutionized the art of the nineteenth century. Today, they are the most popular artists in the history of art, and their works have become worldwide cultural references.

This famous artistic movement developed in the wake of English and French landscape artists. These "realist" artists left their studios to work outdoors. They installed themselves at Barbizon in the Fontainebleau forest and met at the seaside resorts on the Côte d'Albâtre and the Côte Fleurie.

Using the new railways or sailing along the Seine, **the Impressionists found new scenes to paint in Paris Region and Normandy.**

This vast area still bears the mark of the greatest artists, including Claude Monet, Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas, Alfred Sisley and Vincent van Gogh...

Their history offers tourists many places to discover and invites them to enjoy the places where these "painters of happiness" so loved to set up their easels:

- Places where the artists lived are now open to the public. Among them are the house and gardens of Claude Monet at Giverny, the House of Van Gogh at Auvers-sur-Oise, the property of Caillebotte at Yerres, the studio of Jean-François Millet at Barbizon as well as other artists' residences in the villages of Giverny, La Bouille, Honfleur, Auvers-sur-Oise and Barbizon.
- Paintings that are famous worldwide can now be seen in museums with exceptional collections. The Musée d'Orsay in Paris, the Musée des Beaux-Arts at Rouen and the Musée d'art moderne André Malraux at Le Havre feature the three most important collections of impressionist paintings in France. The Musée Marmottan Monet in Paris has the world's leading collection of works by Monet, including the famous "Impression, Sunrise". Many other collections are shown in Normandy museums: Vernon, Honfleur, Caen, Dieppe and Cherbourg.
- Prestigious temporary exhibitions at the Musée des Impressionnistes in Giverny, the Musée Marmottan Monet, the Musée d'Orsay in Paris and at the Caillebotte estate in Yerres.
- "Discovery" pathways that are dotted with reproductions of paintings at the sites where the painters set up their easels.
- Art galleries and contemporary artists for whom these places are a continuing source of inspiration.

### **Save the date: Normandy Impressionist Festival, from April 16 to September 26, 2016**

The Normandy Impressionist Festival is held every three years throughout the entire Normandy region. The first two editions, in 2010 and 2013, welcomed nearly 1,5 million visitors to Normandy museums.

The event is open to all and serves as a cultural celebration that provides the opportunity for the public to discover an exceptional heritage and the creative dynamic of the birthplace of the Impressionist movement.

With an exceptional scope, each Festival edition includes a program of over 600 events and activities. The Festival presents Impressionism in all its aspects: painting, contemporary art, music, film, theater, dance, photography, video, literature, sound and light, outdoor picnics, open-air cafés...

The theme of the third edition of the Normandy Festival will be "-Impressionist Portraits-". This theme which focuses on the human being will allow the discovery of another aspect of Impressionism.

[www.normandie-impressionniste.eu](http://www.normandie-impressionniste.eu)

## Destination Impressionism: two regions, one destination

The Tourist Boards for the Paris Region and Normandy aim to make Impressionism one of the emblems of Destination France. Together, the boards have decided to undertake an ambitious development program on this flagship theme.

Because of their history, culture and geographical location, the Paris and Normandy regions are part of the Seine Valley Development Project, which the regions have been working on for several years.

Basing their actions on this history and cohesion, the regions have joined forces to create a shared message that goes beyond administrative borders.

Following a call for projects by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Paris Region and Upper and Lower Normandy were awarded the contract : " Normandy – Paris Region : Destination Impressionism".

This contract unites local public and private players and mobilizes them around the promotion and development of a high-quality offer that will meet the strong demand of all types of visitors, in particular those from far away.

The participation of the two Tourist Boards in the "Best of France" operation in New York on September 26 and 27 under the joint banner of Destination Impressionism demonstrates this commitment.

According to **François Navarro, General Manager of the Paris Region Tourist Board**: "The love story between Impressionism and the Americans has existed for a very long time.'Best of France' is an opportunity for the world's leading tourist destination to fully promote a world-class 'geographical brand' by focusing public and private players on a varied, structured and innovative tourism offer."

**Jean-Louis Laville, Director of the Normandy Tourist Board**, adds: "Impressionism was born under the skies of Normandy and along the Seine, on luminous riverbanks and in the verdant countryside. In 2016, the Normandy Impressionist Festival will provide a wonderful opportunity to encounter Claude Monet and his friends."

**The PARIS REGION TOURIST BOARD**, which is the destination's leading tourism operator, ensures the promotion and development of the Paris Region by backing the tourism sector. It provides resources, tools, support and a network that can be used by Paris Region tourism professionals to develop and distribute a quality, innovative and appropriate offering.

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**The NORMANDY TOURIST BOARD** ensures the touristic promotion of the region in France and internationally. The Board is also in charge of observing touristic activity. It carries out these missions for the Normandy regions in close collaboration with the French State and its operator Atout France, as well as with regional tourist organizations, private companies and associations.

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