

THE FERME DE BEAUVAIS : A FARM MANOR HOUSE IN LE PLAIN

Four centuries of rural and farming history

The history of Beauvais Farm dates back to the beginning of the 17th century. Several wealthy local families have owned it, although few of them lived there all year round. The farming work was carried out by resident farmers.

During the 19th century, farms in Le Plain (Sainte-Mère-Église region) such as this one, mostly devoted to ploughing land for grain cultivation, were converted into pastureland for dairy farming. The very creamy milk produced by the cows was used to make the famous Normandy butter.

Beauvais Farm was inhabited until 1975. One year later, the Manche County Council bought the farm to set up the farm-museum, which opened its doors in 1979.

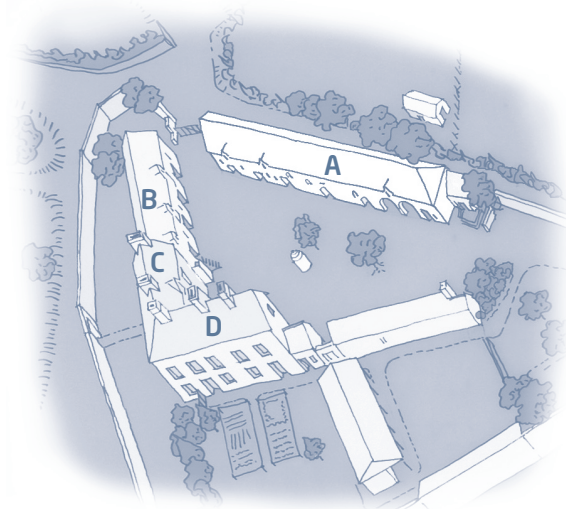
A splendid set of buildings!

The layout of the limestone buildings set around the big courtyard with its surrounding walls recalls the great rural dwellings of the Bessin area around Bayeux in Calvados, a region very similar to Le Plain.

- The agricultural buildings: from the stables to the hen house (A) and from the press room to the dairy (B) (17th century).
- The first residential building (C) with the bedrooms on the upper level (early 18th century).
- The higher "main" wing, built for the owners (D): with a dining room, a library, a drawing room and bedrooms on the upper floor (end 18th century). *Used today as the administrative offices of the museum.*

Points of interest

- The four-step mounting block near the white entrance door: it was used by ladies in riding dress, children and older people for mounting their horses.
- The outside staircase and the well: they come from farms in the Valognes region and were reinstalled here when the museum was created.



The Cotentin Farm-Museum also offers ...

- Digital tours with touchscreen tablets in English: "Visit the Cotentin farm-museum "; "Norman Farmers during the German Occupation (1940-1944)"
- A theme shop: books on rural and farming heritage, farm products, etc.
- Activities for the general public all year round (ask for the programme!)
- Guided visits by reservation for groups of adults
- Guided visits and workshops for schoolchildren and holiday centres.

A code of good conduct

Help us preserve our heritage and environment by obeying a code of good conduct.

- As in all museums, don't touch the objects presented in the rooms even if they are not under glass.
- Don't climb up on or lean against the carts.
- Don't feed the animals: they are well looked after by our teams.
- Don't open the hutches to pat the rabbits.
- Don't go too close to the beehives.
- Don't throw rubbish or cigarette butts on the ground: use the rubbish bins.
- Keep your dog on a leash.

The Cotentin farm-museum is part of a network of departmental sites and museums managed by the Manche County Council.



Ferme-musée du Cotentin

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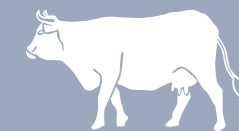
 Patrimoine et musées de la Manche



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Cotentin farm-museum



Sainte-Mère-Église
Manche

Hello and welcome to the farm-museum

Le Plain, the area around Sainte-Mère-Église, has long been associated with cattle-raising, first for meat from the end of the 17th century and later, starting in the 19th century, for dairy farming. Sainte-Mère-Église was well-known throughout the world for its cows, cream and butter long before the Normandy landings of June 1944!

The combined farm and museum bears witness to this rich rural and farming history.

Length of visit: approximately two hours

Life at the farm just as in the olden days

In the old farm manor house of Beauvais, go back 100 years in time and discover the daily life of a cattle-grazing farm during that period. A genuine feast of sensory impressions!

The old barn and its exhibitions

Enjoy an in-depth discovery of Normandy's rural and farming history.

Machines and people

A presentation of machines retraces the technical and social history of the mechanisation and motorisation of agricultural work.

As in the farm

A pleasant stroll through the farm will introduce you to local animal breeds in the barnyard but also the beehives and the vegetable garden.

Visitors' Guide

patrimoine.manche.fr



Recommended

1 - The farmyard

Primarily a functional space whose appearance changes with the passing of the seasons.

2 - The little courtyard

An attractive courtyard embellished by shrubs and flowers carefully tended by the farmer's wife.

3 - The farm kitchen

Used for preparing and eating meals but also for long evenings spent around the fireplace.

4 - The dairy

Where butter is made and perishable foodstuffs preserved.

5 - The wash house

Where the utensils and implements used to make butter are cleaned.

6 - The cellar

Mainly used to store cider, the most common beverage consumed at the farm.

7 - The cider house

Used for making cider, an important once-a-year task at the farm.

8 - The stables

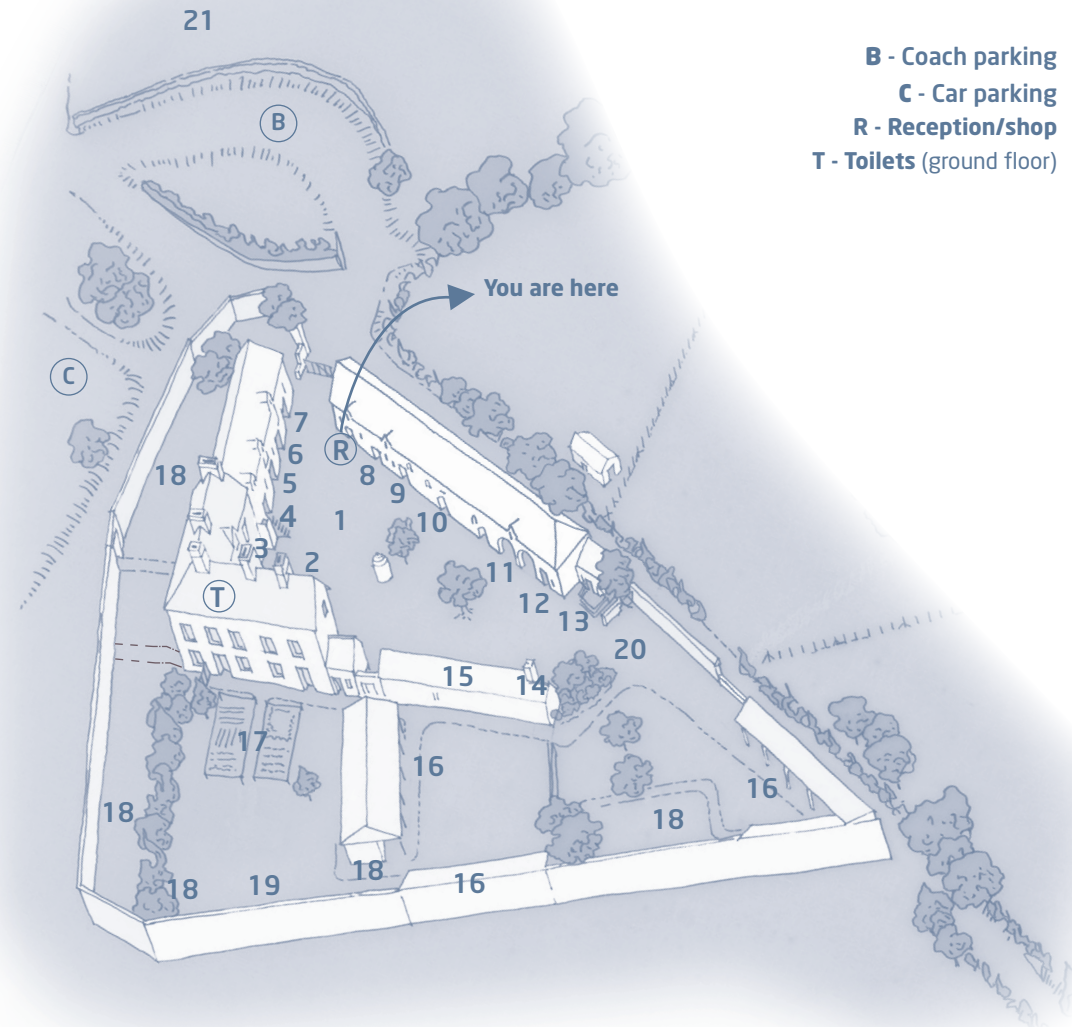
Big enough for four horses, which were essential working animals but also contributed to the prestige of the farm.

9 - The cowshed

Can house up to twelve sick animals or cows ready to calve.

10 - The barn / exhibition room

Originally a one-storey building for storing harvested wheat and hay, the barn now hosts farming exhibitions over two levels.



11 - The big *charreterie* (cart-house)

Used to store large vehicles and farm machinery.

12 - The hen house

Houses primarily hens raised for their meat and eggs.

13 - The *burets* (outbuildings)

Houses pigs reared for fattening and meat.

14 - The bake house

Located away from the other buildings to avoid fires and used to make the week's bread.

15 - The little *charreterie* (cart-house)

Used to store small vehicles and farm machinery.

16 - Agricultural equipment

Don't miss the horse-drawn vehicles that revolutionised the arduous work of haymaking.

17 - The vegetable garden

Where traditional and local vegetable varieties are cultivated.

18 - Farmyard animals (Cotentin hens, Normandy geese, Rouen and Duclair ducks, Normandy and Hotot White rabbits)

19 - The beehives

A beekeeper "boards" some of his bees at the farm-museum and the honey produced is sold in the farm shop. Ask about our "Abeilles et compagnie" (bees and co.) summer activities.

20 - Milking trolley

Used from 70's, this mobile equipment allowed to milk cows in fields.

21 - Cotentin donkeys

To leave the site you must go back to reception.