

DESTINATION
Grand Vézelay

Visit

QUARRÉ
LES
TOMBES



Location

Set between the Cure and the Cousin valleys, Quarré-les-Tombes is situated 20km into the **Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan**, on the top of the **Mont Culan**, 460 meters above sea level. If you are coming from Avallon or Vézelay you will see it stand out from the **Forêt aux Ducs**. The forest covers 4/10ths of the county.

To the West the Cure river runs along the Forêt aux Ducs. It runs via **Vieux-Dun, the Iles Ménéfrier, Montgaudier and la Verdière**. A real treat for anglers keen on trout fishing, but also for nature lovers and canoe and kayak enthusiasts. To the East, **the Trinquelin** runs into the Saint-Agnan lake before running to the **Pierre-qui-Vire** monastery and then from village to village, mill to mill. Further down, The Trinquelin becomes the Cousin river which then becomes the Cure near Blannay.

Coat of arms

LAPIDE ET ROBORE NOTA (well known stones and oaks)

LAPIDE = stone. The 3 squares evoke the tombs hence the name of Quarré

ROBORE = Rouvre oak tree – found in the the forests all around

NOTA = Famous, well-known

Around the middle of the 8th century the area may have been invaded by the arabs and Sarrasins.

For further information : <http://www.memoiresvivantes.org/>



A little history

The name comes from the limestone **merovingian tombs** which surround the church. Some say that there were over one thousand of them, but only 112 remain (66 tops and 46 bases). Their origin remains a mystery to this day...

There are two plausible hypothesis regarding the tombs :

- There may have been a flourishing business of limestone tombs ; in fact most of the ones in Quarré were found empty.
- Quarré-les-Tombes was a sacred place for inhumation.

The natural acidity of the soil could explain why the tombs were found empty, the skeletal remains having been rapidly destroyed by the micro organisms.

Alternatively, repeated pillaging could explain the lack of weapons or other artefacts in the tombs of Quarré.

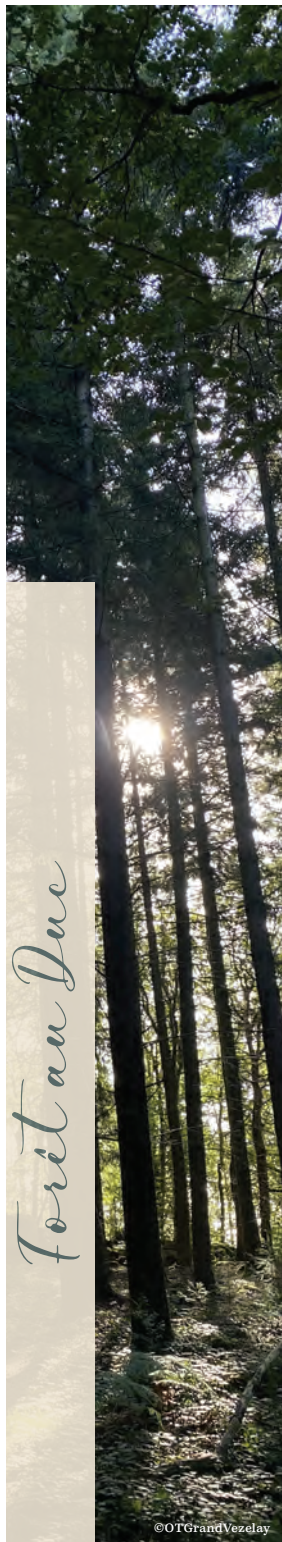
The remains of a roman road on the axis Autun-Auxerre, of which some remnants are still visible, passed nearby. Some traces found in the villages nearby (see the St. Père museum) lead you to think that there had been a Roman settlement here of some importance.

During middle ages, a small number of country squires lived in modest castles. They were subordinate to the lords of **Chastellux** or **Villarnoux** or the **Abbey of Reigny**. There used to be two small castles in the village, of which nothing remains.

In 1550 **Louis de Chatellux** freed Quarré from subordination. The levies due to the lord were very high. The wars of religion affected Quarré heavily.

At the end of the 17 th century, poverty and hardship were commonplace. The intendant Bouchu wrote in his report on Burgundy « 18 pathetic hearths. The inhabitants live on oat bread alone ».

During the 18 th century, Quarré was heavily influenced by father Bégon, who had important work carried out on the church. A reluctant priest, he was denounced and saved only by the downfall of Robespierre.



The local roads were built in the 19th century. It took twenty years to build the road from Quarré to Avallon (1810 – 1830).

The 19th century saw the first migration of inhabitants. At first it was seasonal, (people leaving to find employment elsewhere, such as wet nurses, bull and cart drivers, cattle drivers, sugar beet workers...) and then the depopulation became permanent to the extent that the population diminished by half.

During the 2nd World War there was a strong Resistance presence in the Forêt au Duc. One of the first parachute drops took place in a clearing near the Rocher de la Pérouse. In 1944, the stronghold Verneuil was established at Iles-Ménéfrier. This is where the 4th battalion of the 1st Regiment of the Morvan was established, who then went on to liberate Quarré-les-Tombes on 19th August 1944. Today, Quarré is a bustling village with shops and organisations which run numerous sporting, cultural and entertainment activities throughout the year.

The church

In the 14th century, the church was no more than a little chapel dedicated to **Saint-Georges** : legend has it that he saved Quarré from the Sarrazins. It was rebuilt in the 16th century but only the choir remains from this period. In the 18th century, **Father Blaise Begon** had the nave and the transept enlarged during the rebuilding of the bell tower. It is during the 19th century that Father Henry created the church that we see today. **The Baron of Chastellux** lord of the manor who died in 1617, is buried in the church, alongside his father....

Nearby attractions :

La Roche au Féés
Le Parc a Daims
Etang du Griottier Blanc
Le Rocher de la Pérouse
Lac du Crescent

Rocher de la Pirouze



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Étang du Griottier Blanc





TOURIST OFFICE

- AVALLON : 6 Rue Bocquillot - 89200 Avallon

03 86 34 14 19 - avallon@destinationgrandvezelay.com

- VÉZELAY : 8 Rue Saint Etienne - 89450 Vézelay

03 86 33 23 69 - vezelay@destinationgrandvezelay.com

- NOYERS : 12 Place de l'Hôtel de Ville - 89310 Noyers

03 86 82 66 06 - noyers@destinationgrandvezelay.com

+ OUR SEASONAL TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE :

QUARRÉ-LES-TOMBES - 1 Rue du Grand Puits - 89630 Quarré-les-Tombes
03 86 32 22 20

quarre-les-tombes@destinationgrandvezelay.com

+ OUR TOURIST INFORMATION CENTERS :

MONTREAL - La Maison Hirondelle - 11 Place du Prieuré - 89420 Montréal
09 51 33 63 19

CHÂTEL-CENSOIR - Maison France Services - 1 Place Aristide Briand
89660 Châtel-Censoir
03 86 81 02 79

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