

EXPLORE COURIOT!

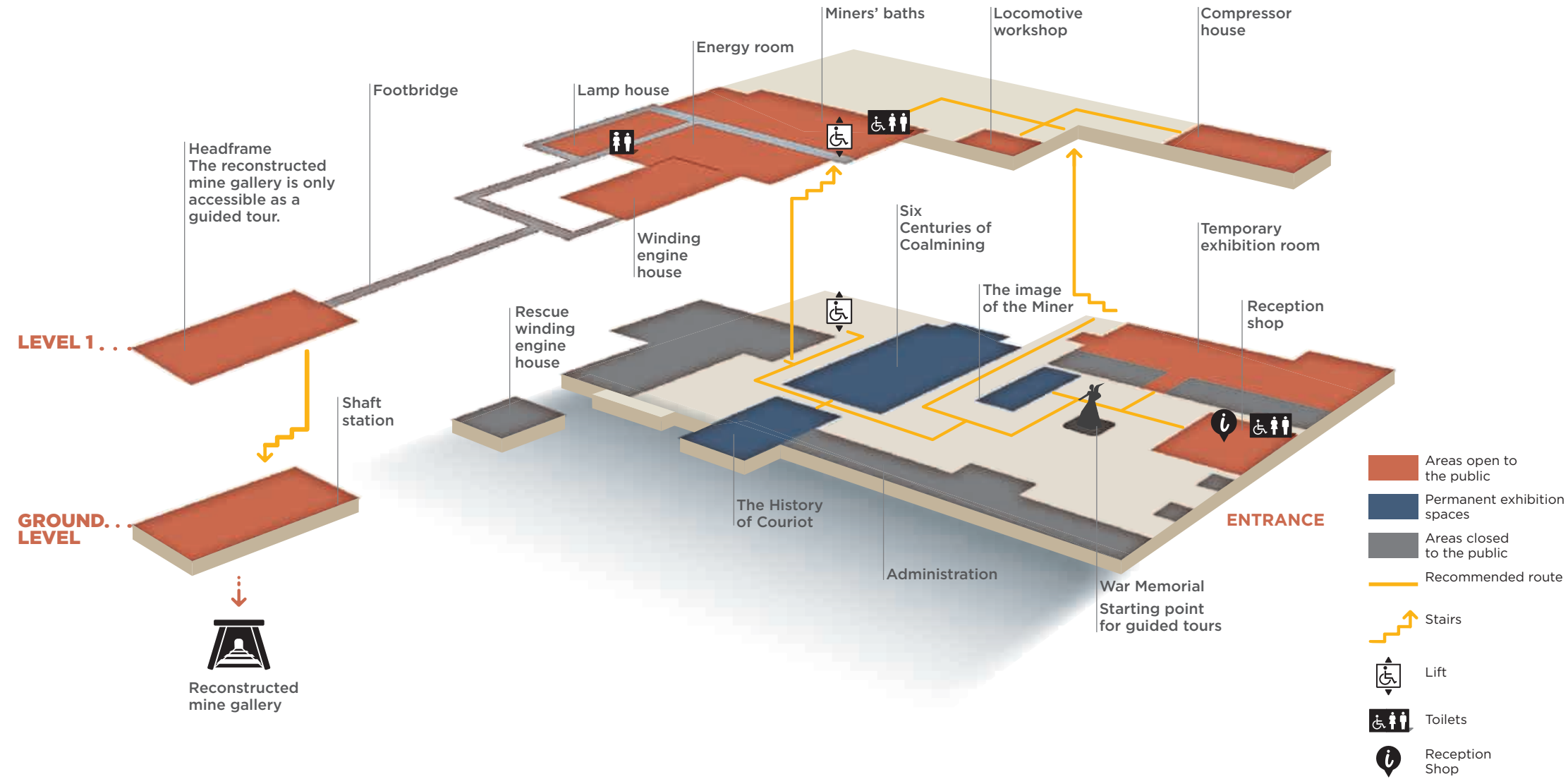
Home to the Musée de la Mine, the Couriot pit is important evidence of Saint-Étienne's coalmining past. Find out about the work of the miners and their everyday lives, the history of the mining basin and its links with Saint-Étienne's wider industrial adventures.

The reconstructed mine gallery can only be visited with a guide. Free entry to areas open to the public and to the permanent and temporary exhibition spaces.

DON'T MISS THE PARC JOSEPH SANGUEDOLCE!

The foot of the headframe was once the site of several hectares of rail track and the pit's washing facilities. Today, the area has been redeveloped as a green space and park just a stone's throw away from the museum and the town. Adults and children alike will enjoy exploring, playing, resting and relaxing below the headframe and slag heaps!

ENJOY YOUR VISIT!



Reconstructed mine gallery



The History of Couriot



Miners' baths



Locomotive workshop



Compressor house

Guided tours leave from the monument in the main courtyard. Please respect your allotted time slot. You will be provided with a hard hat and it is compulsory to wear this.

Guides and safety wardens are available throughout the site to assist you and answer your questions. Photography and filming for private use is permitted.

The Musée de la Mine is open every day, except Monday morning and some public holidays.

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Saint-Étienne
 L'expérience design

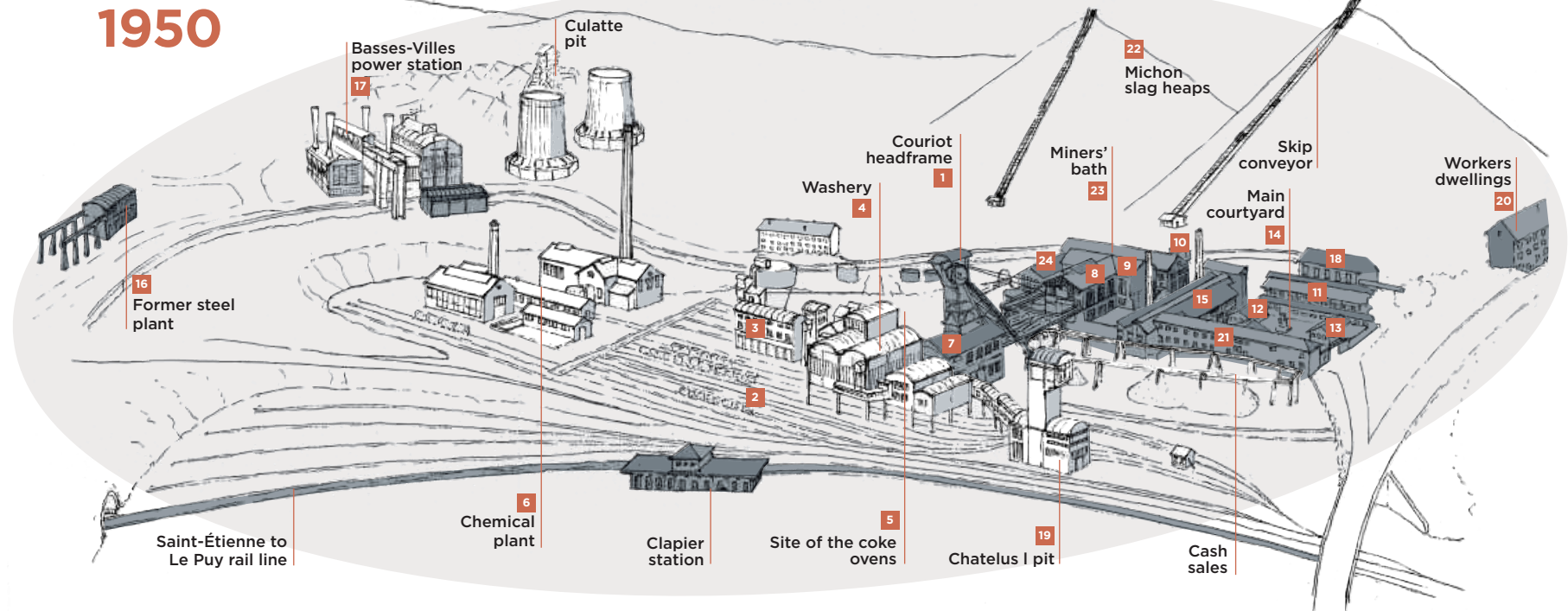
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INTRODUCTION TO COURIOT

In 1907, the Société Anonyme des Mines de la Loire embarked on a project to build a pit, known as Chatelus III, in the middle of an already dense mining area. This pit, re-baptised as Couriot (after the company's engineer and president), was planned to mine deep coal seams and excavation reached a depth of 725 m in 1913. The Great War delayed the project but the pit's facilities were completed in 1919. At this time, Couriot was the most productive mine in the basin with a workforce of more than 1000 miners. In 1937, the company concentrated all its mining operations at the site and Couriot became a vast industrial complex. Every year, 900,000 tonnes of coal were hauled by the headframe, washed, sorted and loaded onto trucks waiting on the rail tracks that served the site. In 1973 the pit was closed, ten years before underground coal mining operations stopped completely in the basin.



THE COURIOT PIT IN AROUND 1950



Layout

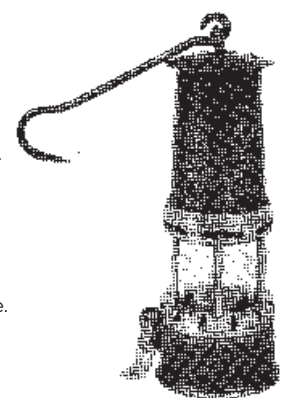
Chatelus pits I and II were built on the site in 1850 and 1870. When Chatelus III was built, the mining site was also redeveloped. Within 15 years, the old buildings were replaced by a modern complex, symbolised by a 35 m high metal headframe **1**. This structure was built in 1914 and designed to haul 300,000 tonnes of coal per year. Couriot, the engineer, developed the pit over three levels. The railway branch line **2** occupied the lower level of the site. Above this, were the washing facilities (**3** and **4**), added later, and a series of workshops (a battery of coke ovens **5** and a chemical plant **6**). Facilities connected with hauling coal were sited ten metres higher. These included the top landing **7**,

where coal laden skips were hauled from the bottom of the pit to join the washeries, and the winding engine **8**. There was also a power station **9**, where the air compressors that supplied the bottom of the pit were stored. Coal extracted from the Loire pit, 1 km to the north, arrived at Couriot via a tunnel **10**. Facilities for employees were built on the intermediate platform. This is where workers accessed the pit and is the entrance to the museum today. The first miners' baths **11** the original lamp house **12** and the wages office and control room **13** were set out around a vast courtyard **14**. Bordering the industrial area was the large building that housed steam boilers **15** for powering machinery.

Successive modernisation

To respond to military demands during the First World War, the company built an electric steel plant **16** immediately outside Couriot and a new battery of Coke ovens 2 km from the pit. Between 1920 and 1924, the company reorganised its underground mining operations by concentrating its sites, developing compressed air technology to cut coal and introducing electric traction. A new power station **17** and a second compressor house **18** were built and the washing and grading facilities were developed. Chatelus I **19** was rebuilt in 1928, with a new generation of washing facilities (**3** and **4**). Immediately outside Couriot, a small group of buildings **20** provided accommodation for qualified workers. In 1937, Couriot became a "concentration pit".

A more powerful electric winding engine was installed to haul 900,000 tonnes of coal per year. As a consequence, the capacity of the washeries trebled, the density of the rail network increased and larger offices **21** were built. At the bottom of the pit, developments in techniques removed the need to backfill the voids left by coal extraction. Waste products from washing no longer had a use and were piled into slag heaps **22**. After the Second World War, the mines were nationalised (1946) and further modernisation took place. A new miners' baths **23** and lamp house **24** were built, this time as close as possible to the headframe. In the 1950s electricity was used much more widely at the bottom of the pit.



A vast complex outside Couriot

The company's facilities extended for several kilometres around Couriot. An extensive battery of coke ovens was built in Montmartre to the south in 1915. From 1911 onwards, and especially between 1925 and 1938, a large housing development for workers was built at Chavassieux in the north. The Loire, Chana and Rambaud pits completed Couriot's facilities. Maintenance workshops were built from here to Montmartre. To have full control of its plans for development, the company acquired several square kilometres of land around Couriot. In this way it was able to stop Saint-Étienne expanding towards the west.

Redevelopment as a mining museum

In the 1950s, mining operations were progressively closed down and the basin's last pit, Pigeot in La Ricamarie, ceased activity in 1983. Couriot, which had been a service pit to Pigeot since the middle of the 1960s was shut permanently in April 1973. Buildings and facilities on the lower platform were dismantled, as was the equipment that carried waste to the slag heaps. Couriot was chosen to pay homage to the basin's mining achievements. Buildings directly connected to coal mining have been conserved to house the mining museum. Nature has almost reclaimed the slag heaps, but their outline still dominates the local landscape, symbolising the region's great industrial heritage.



PUITS COURIOT, PARC-MUSÉE DE LA MINE
SAINT-ÉTIENNE

COURIOT THE MUSEUM

GUIDE AND MAP

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