

ROMONT REGION

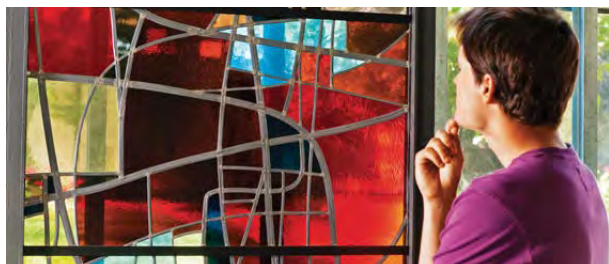
HEARTLAND OF GLASS ART

The small town of Romont, situated 22 kilometres south-west of Fribourg, has preserved much of its mediaeval heritage. Surrounded by impressive town walls, the small town is situated on a hill in the upper Glane Valley. It is a so-called drumlin, an oval mound moulded by the action of the Rhone glacier in the Ice Age. The present-day name Romont originates from Latin (rotundus mons) and means round hill. The architectural treasures of the picturesque town include, besides Romont Castle, the Abbey Church of Notre Dame de l'Assomption, the town fortifications, the Cistercian Abbey of La Fille-Dieu, a former Capuchin monastery and numerous merchants' houses and mansions. Romont has always been an important stage for pilgrims on the Way of St. James. Although it is 2,000 kilometres from the destination in Santiago de Compostela, the small town offers splendid highlights. And in the true sense of the word.

The regional artistic glass work and in particular the Swiss Museum of Stained Glass and Glass Art housed in Romont Castle are a crowd puller. The exhibition includes magnificent glass work from the Middle Ages to the present time. Renowned stained glass artists such as Brian Clark, Marc Chagall and Baldwin & Guggisberg have exhibited their works here. Valuable glass windows from different periods also adorn the churches and other buildings in the region, justifying Romont's reputation as the heartland of glass art. The themed trail "Sentier du Vitrail" combines these sights and can be followed on foot or by bicycle. The delightful countryside, which is characterised by livestock farming, invites visitors to discover it at leisure under their own steam. A trip to the countryside and a visit to the hamlet of Rue or the Wallpaper Museum in Mézières are an ideal combination.
www.romontregion.ch



STAINED GLASS



Light and glass: The Swiss Museum of Stained Glass and Glass Arts is suitably housed in Romont Castle. The courtyard is impressive with a large waterwheel from 1772. The rooms inside the Castle are completely dedicated to glass art. The collection is characterised by sumptuous, fascinating stained glass windows from the Middle Ages to the present day. Temporary exhibitions and workshops enliven the Museum and make it a real highlight. www.vitromusee.ch

BAREFOOT



Natural experience: "Going barefoot heightens the senses. After a ramble in the countryside accompanied by a wealth of anecdotes, your feet feel totally liberated... and your head as well!" says Frédéric Perritaz, the architect of the barefoot trails in Villarimboud near Romont. In the garden of an old mill, "Le Pied Total" thus invites visitors to go on a journey to discover different plant life. Visitors who wish to spend the night in a tree bivouac have also come to the right place here. www.bivouacdanslesarbres.ch

HIKING TRAIL



Way of St. James: The trail from Fribourg to Romont is deemed to be one of the most interesting in the country. After about 30 km and eight hours, this important cultural trail in Switzerland will also have a personal significance. www.jakobsweg.ch

POWER OF THE MONASTERY



Ora et labora: The nuns from the Abbey of La Fille-Dieu in Romont meet seven times a day and once a night to pray. When the nuns are not praying, the active Cistercian community produces, besides consecrated wafers, various kinds of mustard and sells them in its own shop, in stores and via the internet. It also continues its tradition of welcoming visitors. Women as well as men, who seek peace or spiritual assistance, can stay up to eight days here as a guest and enjoy the peace and quiet of the monastery garden. www.fille-dieu.ch

KEY DATES

- 1240 - Construction of the city by Peter II of Savoy
- 1981 - Founding of the Swiss Museum of Stained Glass and Glass Art
- 2006 - Restructuring and expansion of the Swiss Museum of Stained Glass and Glass Art
- 2017 - Wallpaper Museum celebrates its 10-year anniversary

NUMBERS

Population 23,245 inhabitants (region), 5,290 inhabitants (Romont)
Language French
Altitude 780 m above sea level