

Criel-sur-Mer

MESNIL-VAL

The town of **Criel-sur-Mer** is a seaside resort nestled in the cliffs of the Côte d'Albâtre and is known for both its rich natural and historic heritage. The coastal river Yères also flows into the town, resulting in an unusual variety of fish. To make the most of this visit, follow the heritage trail which will take you on a journey back into French history through the iconic figure of 'La Grande Mademoiselle' (Anne Marie Louise d'Orléans) and succumb to the natural charm of the salt meadows which will take you on towards the seaside district and its family-friendly beach. Do not miss the resort of **Mesnil Val** and its sumptuous Belle-Epoque inspired villas.

Saint-Aubin CHURCH



Built in the 14th century, this church was destroyed and remodelled in the 16th century and then restored in the 19th century and again in 1995. Its architecture, constructed using flint, sandstone and white stone, is typical of the region. The 'Chapel of the Saints', with its old stone altarpiece and central portal, still survives from the first church, which was destroyed in 1474. An initial reconstruction started in 1508, but the church was again in ruins in 1573. The second reconstruction took place in 1605, as can be seen by a coat of arms on one of the vaults. In 1819, lightning struck the church and weakened it. Repairs were undertaken, but the vault and choir collapsed and repair work was carried out between 1863 and 1890. Its roof structure in the shape of a ship's hull is also typical of coastal villages. A statue of Saint Leonard serves as a reminder of the existence of Saint-Léonard du Besle, the other parish church in Criel which disappeared in the 18th century. The church has been listed as a historic monument since 14 April 1930.

At the end of the 12th century, the manor belonged to the Briançon family, who gave it their name. At that time, the manor had only two towers and was purchased for 14,000 livres by La Grande Mademoiselle Anne-Marie Louise d'Orléans in 1682. Born from her desire to do charity work, she transformed it into a hospice and set up the village school there. In 1691, she opened an orphanage for young girls run by four nuns. Three wings were added to the manor from 1695 onwards following the death of La Grande Mademoiselle. It was used as a place of sanctuary for the wounded during the two World Wars and closed in 1957. The Criel town hall moved there in 1972.

MANOIR DE Briançon



THE HAMLET OF Mesnil Val



Mesnil Val, located near its beach (Rue de la Mer and adjacent streets), is a fine example of traditional properties constructed using a combination of exposed frameworks, half-timbered walls, bricks and flint decorated with ceramic and glazed pottery façades. Léon Mériot (1863-1936) played an essential role in the development of Mesnil-Val. After starting his career as an architect in the Parisian suburbs, he became the architect for the town of Le Tréport, and a financier and private developer in Mesnil-Val. His creations are part of the upper middle class's infatuation with sea bathing during the Belle Epoque.



Mentioned as early as the 15th century, the château is built of stone and brick. The Marquise de Reynel transformed it in 1776 and built the chapel which is still visible today. On the death of the Marquise in 1791, the château and its estate were not sold as 'Biens Nationaux' (property confiscated by the state during the Revolution) and the local authorities moved in. They were then returned to the heiresses Marie-Stéphanie de Choiseul and Mesdemoiselles Grimaldi de Monaco. The château housed a school for Belgian machine gunners during the Great War and Spanish female refugees from the 1936 civil war. The château was acquired by the Union cooperative association in 1930 and transformed into a holiday centre. Today, it is still a place used for accommodation and is ideal for receptions.