

La Route de l'Opinel, a historical trail

Today, Opinel knives are known worldwide as design objects of the everyday life. But this was not always the case! The story of Opinel is a family adventure that began in the small village Gévoudaz in 1890.

La Route de l'Opinel offers the opportunity to re-trace the Opinel history through historical sites and recent monuments inspired by the Opinel knife.

The next site is the emblematic Opinel Roundabout on route D110. For directions, ask in the museum reception.

Left : the factory that now houses the museum in the 1950s.
Right : The museum as it looked around 2000.



The Opinel museum

First stop on La Route de l'Opinel is the Opinel museum, a historical building that once housed the Opinel factory of Jean Opinel (1877-1943), brother of the Opinel founder, Joseph Opinel.

Jean Opinel learned the cutler craft in his father's workshop in the small village of Gévoudaz. In 1927, he created his own brand of Opinel knives and five years later, in 1932, he had this factory built. Its proximity to the Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne railway eased both the supply and the shipments of products. Here, the activity was passed down from father to son until 1985 when the production was relocated to Chambéry.

In 1989, Jean's grandson, Jacques Opinel (1945), decided to convert the old family factory into a museum. The machines used in the knife production stayed in their original spots. These still constitute the heart of the permanent exhibition re-tracing the history of the Opinel knife and its production !

Get to know the family !



Jacques Opinel (1945) started working as a cutler around 1960 under his father's, Daniel Opinel (1919-1972), guidance. When the production was moved to Chambéry, the old factory was first used as a sales point.

However, Jacques wanted to share the family's history! With his mother's help, he therefore founded the Opinel Museum in 1989.

Jacques remains very active figure in the local community's cultural and sportive life.

