

**“The Opinel cradle” : Gévoudaz**

Welcome to Gévoudaz, the birthplace of the Opinel knife. Here, you can follow in the footsteps of Joseph Opinel and his ancestors and discover the first Opinel workshops, the historical family residences as well as the living conditions of the villagers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

A 1.5 km-long path will take you to the different historical sites (directions are indicated along the way). The trail has an altitude difference of around 50 meters.

**Discover the village and its historical sites on foot**



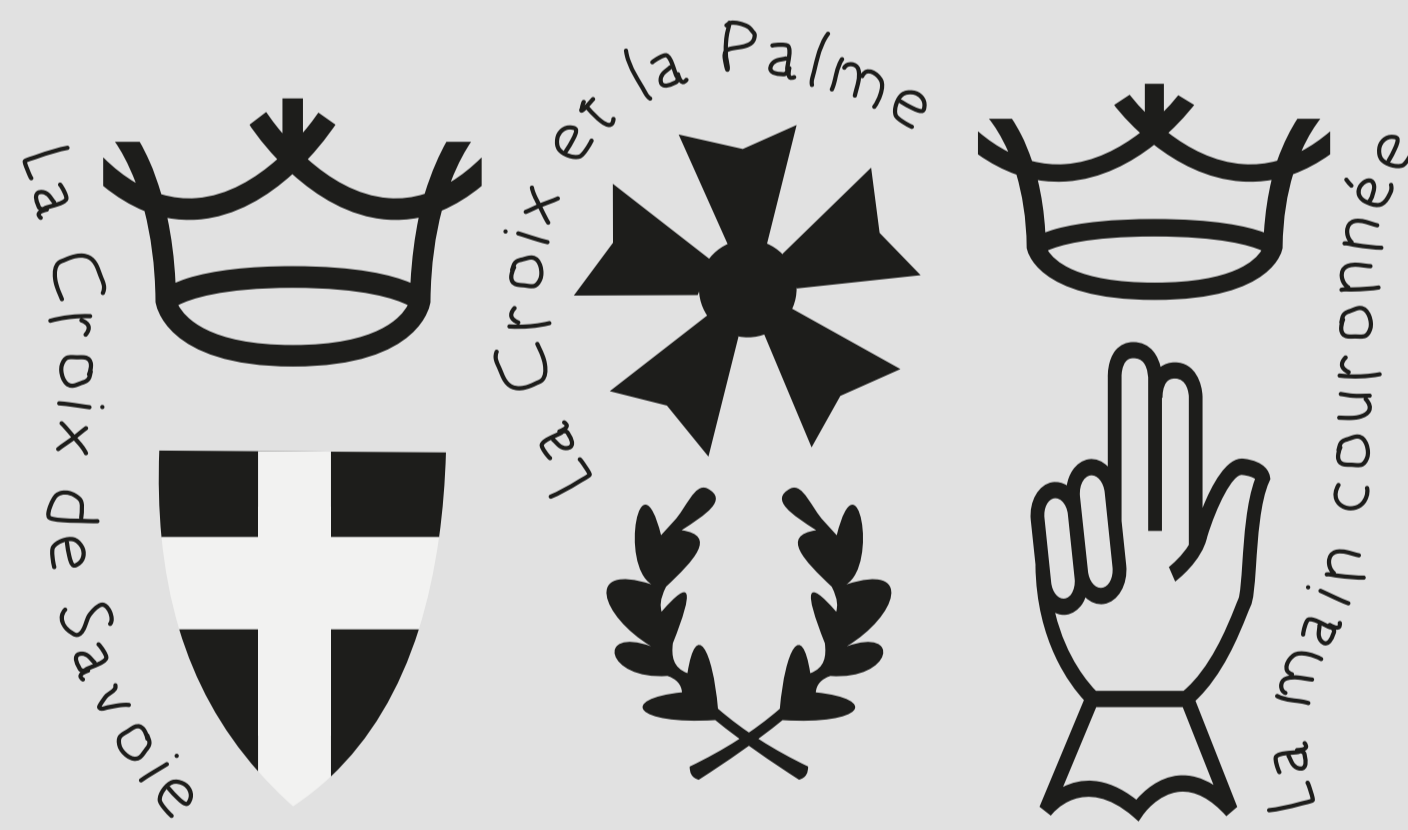
Map designed by Thomas Lemot

**The Arvan-valley : one knife, multiple brands**

Today, there is only one brand of Opinel knives: *La Main Couronnée* (the blessing hand). But until 1974 there were three!

In 1909, the founder of the famous Savoyard knife, Joseph Opinel, registered the trademark *La Main Couronnée*, symbolising the arms of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne and the royal house of Savoy. In 1914, his cousin, Jean-Marie Opinel, chose to produce Opinel knives under the name of *La Croix et La Palme* (the cross and the palm) while his nephew, Daniel Opinel, in 1927 chose the brand *La Croix de Savoie* (the Savoy cross).

Until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the two last brands were produced in the village Le Plan des Rois downstream from Gévoudaz in the direction of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne.



**Get to know the family !**

Maurice Opinel (1927-2016) naturally joined the family business in 1950, working alongside both his father, Marcel, and his uncle, Léon. Maurice was very interested in the industrial and intellectual protection of the brand and filed a number of patents. Following the family tradition, he became president of the Opinel corporation in 1977.

Maurice was passionate about history and very interested in his family’s past. He played a key role in the purchase of the Joseph’s first factory (called «the factory by the bridge»), and in the creation of La Route de l’Opinel.



Maurice Opinel. Photo : Thierry Vallier ©