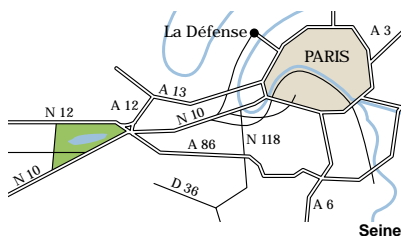




BASE DE LOISIRS

DE ST QUENTIN EN YVELINES



Surface area : 600 hectares
Population : 150 000 residents
Region : Ile-de-France

Organisme gestionnaire: Syndicat Mixte de la Base de Loisirs de l'Étang de Saint Quentin
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Established in 1969, the Leisure Centre occupies 600 hectares in the municipality of St-Quentin-en-Yvelines, 30 Km West of Paris. This strategic location in a major suburb allows it to offer a wide range of open-air leisure activities to the inhabitants of the whole Parisian region. It is best known as the site of the largest lake in Ile de France (120 ha), a classic piece of "natural infrastructure" contributing to the health of the region and acting as a reservoir against flooding and a National Nature Reserve of 90 hectares.

Our aims are broad:

- to offer a large and accessible high quality nature zone: a strolling area, picnic and leisure areas, 8 Km of nature trails;
- to provide sporting and leisure facilities: a nautical centre, an equestrian centre, a wave pool, three golf courses, games and sporting events;
- to protect the environment from urban encroachment and to improve the quality of the lake water;
- to preserve and catalogue the ordinary and extraordinary natural heritage;
- to enable children to discover the natural environment and the rural world through a National Nature Reserve and a teaching farm;

Natural heritage

The lake of St-Quentin en Yvelines is an important landing stage for migrating birds, which is why it is a Special Protection Area. The western end of the lake is also classified as one of only 150 "National Nature Reserves" in France. More than 250 species of birds can be seen here (waders, ducks, marsh warblers, etc.). Eight species of plant are also protected and a special feature is the rare crested triton, a species protected worldwide.

A national man-made heritage

The lake of St-Quentin is the last link in a chain of lakes and streams constructed under the orders of king Louis XIV between 1675 and 1685 to collect and bring rainwater to the fountains in the park around his Château de Versailles. The system relies solely on gravity as the water is transported between artificial lakes closed off by locks, along 34 Km of aqueducts, of which 20 are underground. The majestic stand of pines at the northern end bears witness even nowadays.

An important social role in Ile de France

Two million visitors each year enjoy the park (sports facilities, paddling pool, health course, etc.). They also come for the wave pool, the largest expanse of water in the region (with its sailing school), the three golf courses (2x18 holes + 1 compact 9-holer), the equestrian centre or to fish. Schoolchildren come to the teaching farm, to the nature reserve or to go riding. There is also an accommodation centre (84 beds) and a camping site.

