

GIVERNY

Giverny is a village in France , located on the right bank of the Seine River in Normandy . Giverny is famous for its willows and poplars but is most well known as the site where Monet painted some of his greatest paintings. In addition, tourists can see the American Art Museum of Giverny and the Hôtel Baudy, the original artistic hub of the American colony. The Hôtel Baudy is now a restaurant and museum with period decorations complete with works of art by the former guests, a rose garden, and a turn-of-the-century studio built for visiting artists. When Monet moved to Giverny in 1883, there were only about 300 people in the community. Currently, Monet’s house and gardens are a popular tourist attraction, bringing around half a million visitors to Giverny annually.



The gardens Monet created at his home have two distinct sections. One section is Clos Normand a flower garden in the front of the house. The other is a Japanese inspired water garden on the other side of the road. Clos Normand is divided in to flowerbeds with clumps of flowers of different heights that create volume. Monet combined common and rare varieties of flowers according to their colors and let them grow freely as opposed to organized or constrained gardens. Ten years after Monet’s arrival at Giverny he purchased a piece of land on the other side of the road. This became the water garden where you will find the famous Japanese bridge that is seen in Monet’s paintings. Monet viewed his gardens, along with his paintings, as works of art.

After Monet’s death in 1926, particularly after World War II, the gardens went through a period of decline. In 1977, the undertaking of restoring the gardens to how they appeared during Monet’s life began. It would take ten years to fully restore the gardens and in 1980, the gardens opened to the public.

Today the Terra Foundation for American Art, based in Chicago , owns the Musée d’Art Américain Giverny that opened in 1992. Every year the Terra foundation gives grants for their Artists in Residence program in Giverny. The program provides for the study of studio art or art history focusing on American art or the exchange of American and European art.

Image: Claude Monet, *The Artist’s Garden at Giverny*, 1900.
On loan from the Musée d’Orsay, Paris.