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But the Royallieu site in Compiègne was also the location of the only French internment camp controlled by the German army from the beginning of the WWII. Most of the 45,000 internees only passed through it, before crossing the city to the train station where they were deported to the Nazi camps.

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**COMPIÈGNE**

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**The Memorial was created by the Town of Compiègne in partnership with the French State, the department of the Oise, the region of Picardy, the Fondation du Patrimoine (Heritage Foundation), and under the aegis of the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Déportation (Foundation for the Memory of the Deportation).**

**To visit the Memorial**

The tour is unaccompanied but an audio guide is provided (French, English or German). It is strongly advised to allow at least two hours for it.

**Educational Services**

Special tour for school groups aged over 10 years Free for those aged under 26 years

Reservation and information by phone +33 (0)3 44 96 37 00 Or by email: kimberley.costa@memorial-compiegne.fr

Duration of the tour: 2.5 hours

**Opening hours**

Open every day except Tuesdays throughout the day from 10 am to 6 pm

**Prices**

Full price €5

Half-price €3

Group of adults €1,50/pers. from 5 pers. (advance bookings only)

Free (with proof of entitlement) Card, cheque and cash accepted

**Useful information**

"Accessible Tourism" classified site

**Access**

By car 1 hour from Paris, Motorway A1, exit 9 1.5 hours from Lille, Motorway A1, exit 10 Private parking

By train From Paris-Gare du Nord Free bus line 5 – stop: Memorial St-Come

**Internment and Deportation Memorial Royallieu Camp**
From camp to Memorial
The military barracks of Royallieu, formed in 1913, covered 16 hectares until 2006. In 1939 it served as a hospital and, in June 1940, it was transformed into a camp where the German army kept French and British soldiers as prisoners. In 1941, the "Frontstalag 122" interned political prisoners and detained hostages.

It was on a part of this old camp, of which three out of 25 barracks have been preserved, that the Memorial was created.

INTERNMENT AND DEPORTATION MEMORIAL

Traces of history
The entire site is imbued with history and memory, including the barracks, the garden, the trees and the tunnel. The historic circuit takes place in two of the camp’s old barracks. The story is told on the walls of the 12 rooms, furnished in such a way as to respect and restore the traces of the past. The archival documents presented in the circuit have been obtained from the German and French authorities, as well as internees themselves, and include handwritten letters, administrative documents, photographs, projections and audio testimonies.

Over 45,000 people passed through Compiègne. Royallieu was one of the largest transit camps in France. Interned formed a composite population, both for their highly diverse nationalities and geographical origins (around 30 countries were represented) and for their different reasons for arrest, social origins, political persuasions, etc. Even women were interned before deportation. They were mainly political prisoners and members of the French Resistance, but there were also civilians (Russians, Americans etc.) and Jews.

A history related to the policy of collaboration between Vichy and Nazi Germany
Although some were freed, most internees were deported to the Nazi concentration and extermination camps. In fact, the first convoy from France, which left in March 1942, taking a thousand Jews to Auschwitz-Birkenau, left from Compiègne station. Some thirty other convoys left from the camp from 1942 to 1944, carrying mainly resistance fighters.

The Memorial therefore allows us to understand today how the Nazis moved from a policy of repression, marked by the shootings of hostages, to a policy of deportation, much of which was racially-motivated.

“I managed to miss the last departure and I really hope to miss the next. Here, I am with very good and nice people: communists, Gaullists, royalists, parish priests, nobles, and peasants. It is an extraordinary melting pot.”
Robert Desnos, who died during deportation in June 1945.