

From city to city

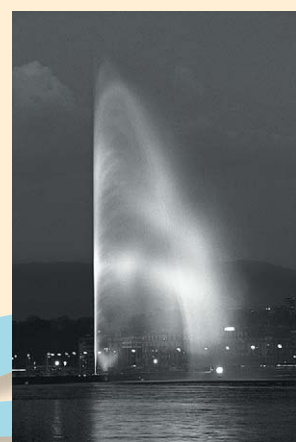
LEGENDE

- Games
- Telephone
- Toilets
- Public Transport
- Train station
- CGN Mouette
- Car park
- Fountain of charm
- Post fountain
- Pumping well
- Steps
- Steep slope

- From 1 to 14, suggested direction for this walk
- - - Detour recommended for an easier walk

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

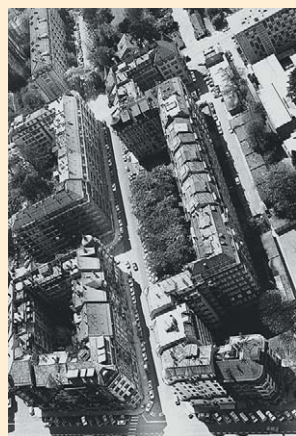
- "Plan piétons" Internet site www.ville-ge.ch/plan-pietons
- Commune of Carouge Internet site www.carouge.ch
- Municipal information point 1, pont de la Machine, Tel. (022) 311 99 70
- Public transportation (TPG) Tel. (022) 308 34 34
- Taxi Tel. (022) 331 41 33
- Cornavin train station Tel. (022) 157 22 22
- Weather conditions Tel. 162



The Geneva Fountain (CP)



The Eaux-Vives (SU/VG)



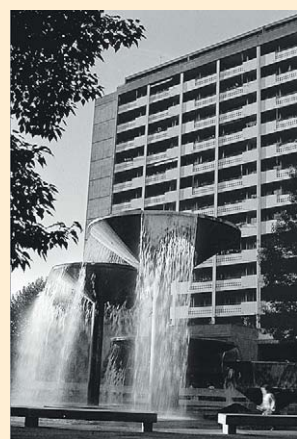
The Henri-Mussard Square (SU/VG)



The Contamines Park (SU/VG)



Champel (SU/VG)



The Carouge Towers (VC)



The Am-Stram-Gram Theater (RR)



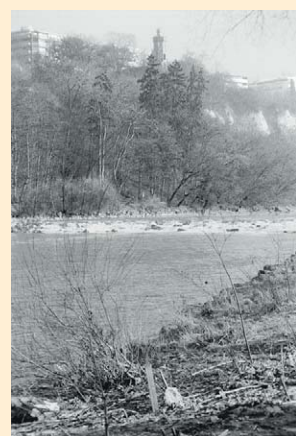
The Clos Belmont (SU/VG)



The Bertrand Park Garden (SU/VG)



The Beau-Séjour Hospital (SU/VG)



The Arve (SU/VG)



The Market Place (PD)

FROM THE LAKE TO THE ARVE

To go from Geneva to Carouge, you just have to take tram line No 12. Otherwise, do like the school children and choose an original itinerary; that's how to take advantage of this walk.

Leaving from Geneva's Fountain, crossing the Eaux-Vives, Malagnou and Champel neighborhoods, one arrives at Carouge and another fountain, less well-known, but also spectacular, this one alongside Avenue Vibert, below the Carouge Towers. On the way, we discover what distinguishes the two cities which are separated by a river: on one side, Geneva, made up of its former suburbs and its "countryside"; on the other, Carouge, a city created entirely at the end of the XVIIIth century.

Going on, we shall take a pleasant walk in the city, noting differences between neighborhoods, architectural form varieties, conceptual planning differences, original itineraries, if possible, far from automobile traffic.

Leaving from the Geneva harbour to reach a fountain, it was natural that we should ask about the presence of water in the city. In front of us at our departure point, it goes underground for part of the itinerary. As for the Arve - little is known about it today - it plays a not negligible role in our local history. At "Champel-Spa" in the XIXth century, its therapeutic value was taken for granted. It furnished Carouge with hydraulic force, which powered workshops and mills.

To walk in today's city is to find yesterday; to question oneself on what remains and what changes; it is to mix visual surprises with dreams of the past. It is to see the city as it is, but also to imagine what it could be.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION...

- Armand Brulhart and Erica Deuber-Pauli, Arts et Monuments: ville et canton de Genève, published by the Société d'histoire de l'art en Suisse, Bern: Benteli editions, 1985; reprint, 1993 (out of print).
- Le Grand Siècle de l'architecture genevoise 1800 - 1914, un guide en douze promenades, published by the Société d'art public, Geneva, Georg editions, 1985.
- Elizabeth Williamson, Le Jet-d'eau de Genève, Geneva, Slatkine editions, 1990.
- Maurice Brailard, pionnier suisse de l'architecture moderne (ouvrage collectif), Geneva, Brailard Architects Foundation, 1993.
- André Corboz, Invention de Carouge 1772 - 1792, Lausanne, Payot editions, 1968.
- Leila El-Wakil et al., Jean-Daniel Blavignac, City of Carouge, 1990.

THE PEDESTRIAN PLAN COLLECTION

This itinerary forms part of the Pedestrian Plan collection of walks conceived by the Planning Office of the City of Geneva.

- Walking in Geneva
- Geneva "by" (on) foot? It's simple and quick
- From estate to estate
- Geneva - Bois-de-la-Bâtie - Jardin Botanique
- From site to museum
- Geneva on foot - in the heart of its heritage
- From quay to runway
- Geneva on foot - between travel and nature
- Walking Downstream
- Geneva on foot - nature and technology
- D'ici et d'ailleurs
- Geneva on foot - entre travail et loisirs

IMPRESSUM

- | | |
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Translation
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• Luc Weibel and Planning Office
• Edgar Johnson
• Ville de Carouge (VC), Service d'urbanisme de la Ville de Genève (SU/VG), Philippe Dumaret (PD), Christian Poite (CP), et Roy Robel (RR)
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Pre press
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0 100 200 300 400 500 m
Scale 1:7'720



WARNING

The itinerary shown on the map sometimes may include some inconveniences about which we would like to inform you, such as a particular street crossing, climbing steps, the slope and the uncomfortable surface of a street or even road work being done.

Therefore, thank you for your comprehension about these difficulties, some of which are, moreover, marked on the itinerary and for which alternatives are shown on the map.

Finally, it is possible that the itinerary sometimes includes paths on private property. When the walker enters on such private property on his own responsibility, he is advised to use appropriate discretion.

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1 A CERTAIN FOUNTAIN

In the winter, the Fountain is not working. It is thus possible to walk on the jetty without worrying about getting wet. One day, I found myself with a small group of young visitors. To impress his fellows, one of them did not hesitate to cross over spiked barriers placed to prevent access. He sat without fuss on the cone-shaped valve covering the outlet of the installation, and had himself photographed thus, posing as a conqueror.

In his way, this visitor from a far away country demonstrated the attraction which has developed over 100 years for the Geneva Fountain. Its unequalled notoriety explains quite well the change which has taken place in the history of our city over time. Seeming previously to ignore the charm of the landscape around it, the city of Calvin discovered it in the XIXth century, influenced by English visitors. Since then, a whole series of hotels have been built, mainly on the right bank of the harbour, with a fantastic view of the Alps and of Mont Blanc, and well-arranged quays.

The mouth of the Rhone, however, has kept the utilitarian character that it had in the past. The construction of the Forces Motrices building (1886 / 1892) channeled the use of water for industrial activities and it was thus that the first Fountain emerged. Originally based on a simple "safety valve", this Fountain blew off at the end of the day, up to 30 meters in height, water under pressure which, the rest of the time, was used to power machines in workshops and factories which developed in the city in the second half of the XIXth century. Sensitive to the elegance of this white plume, Genevans had the idea of making a "liquid monument" which was transferred in 1891 to the harbour, on the Eaux-Vives jetty. The name of this place, which had its origin in numerous streams which it brought together, had acquired a new justification.

■ The Fountain

- Height: 140 m.
- Flow: 500 l/sec.
- Pressure: 16 kg/cm2
- Exit speed: 200 km/h.
- Water weight: about 7 tons
- Operation: Beg. Mar.-mid Oct.



2 THE EAUX-VIVES

An old lakeside suburb

Perpendicular to Quai Gustav-Ador, the streets going inland are parallel, but they do not cross the Rue des Eaux-Vives at right angles; its route is some what winding, that being not the least of its charms. This neighborhood was formerly a suburb, and it has retained certain freedoms. Connoisseurs admire its multiple and varied stores and public institutions, often with, sometimes decorated, old facades. The Rue des Eaux-Vives provides a good example of these.

Coming from the lake, via the Rue du 31 Décembre, I stop at the crossroads to admire an "angle tower". It is certainly its corbel-type supports which strike me, decorated with garlands and ram's heads. But hear the noise of water running near me: a post fountain, like those which one finds in various parts of the city, brings it to my mind. In grey iron, it allows us to quench our thirst at its spout, decorated with a lion's head.

While discovering a variety of facades, I reach the neighborhood school, which displays with good humor its forms inspired by the "Heimatsstil" of the beginning of the XXth century. This part of the neighborhood has kept its village character. While the "Islamic Center" recently painted green the half timbering of a house with a two corner roof, the Rue de l'Avenir preserves a series of small low buildings endowed with small courtyards, housing workshops.

■ Post fountains in the City of Geneva (drinking water)

- Origin: from 1860
- Number: 103 (incl. 82 in iron)
- Flow: about 2 l/min.



3 MONTCHOISY

A modern movement housing scheme

Further along, following the recent red brick courtyard wall and its school, I come out on Rue de Montchoisy, and stumble on a rather astonishing housing scheme: buildings forming spacious squares around geometric gardens, breaking with dense and tormented previous texture. It is the work of the architect Maurice Brailard (1897 - 1965). In 1927, he signed, together with Camille Martin and others, an appeal "For the Great Geneva". At the moment when the city prepared to absorb three suburban towns, including Eaux-Vives, it involved proposing ideas for concerted development of the city, taking inspiration from modernist currents of the period, especially those of Germany and Vienna. Maurice Brailard also joined the Geneva Socialist Party and became a member of the State Council with a socialist majority chaired by Léon Nicole (1933-1936).

The Montchoisy housing scheme is an example of "Great Geneva" about which Brailard dreamed. Notwithstanding the social sensitivity of the architect, the buildings have clearly residential character. Each building has two entries: service entry on the street, main entry on the garden side, distinguished by imposing decoration and gracious female figures. This orientation did not stop Brailard from worrying about relating his buildings to the Rue de Montchoisy: they have lower floors for commercial use.

The Brailard project was very large and included four groups, of which he only built the first block, opposite the Grange Park (1927 to 1929) and the beginning of the second, on the Rue de Montchoisy (1930 - 1931). Afterwards, other architects built the neighboring blocks (up to 1957).

Montchoisy witnessed the dream which was that of a generation: to remodel the image of the city to introduce light and rationality.



4 EQUIPMENT IN GREEN SPACES

At the beginning of the Route de Frontenex, from which there is a quite suprising view of the Fountain in the straightaway along the Rue du 31 Décembre, I discovered a very pastoral landscape. A pedestrian path makes it possible to go from the Route de Frontenex to the Avenue de Chamonix, via the Chemin de la Clairière, crossing a small equipment zone which has maintained its trees and its green spaces.

At the entry of this street, the architects Peter Boecklin and Predrag Petrovic chose to tuck in, in 1993, the children's theater, "Am-Stram-Gram". A lighting shaft illuminates the foyer, but the descent to the scenic area gives the impression of a collection of buried treasure.

Continuing along Chemin de la Clairière, I stop a few moments on the theater roof: from there is an agreeable view of the Neighborhood's House and its composite facade, decorated with ludicrous figures. In the vicinity, children played cowboys. A day nursery is located in a nearby house. One has an impression of being in the kingdom of the seven dwarfs.

A little further on, two majestic cedars remind me of the 1970s. It was planned to cut them down to build low rent housing. A neighborhood association was created and several persons were not afraid to chain themselves to the trees to defend them. The housing has been built and the cedars are still there...



5 THE EAUX-VIVES STATION

A small provincial train station

There are stations where functions and efficiency reign. There are others which, at first, illustrate the idea of a trip. The Eaux-Vives station is, first, an excellent small station, a beautiful place planted with trees, unhappily transformed into a parking lot and a group of small buildings beginning in 1900, by the architect Léon Boyv (1863 - 1950), the executor of the Eaux-Vives City Hall located further down, at the Place de Jargonnant.

Burnt down in 1996, the Buffet de la Gare, reopened in July 2000, rebuilt in a new spirit by architects Carlo Steffen and Gérard Berlie. It is just one of several good establishments in the vicinity: the Café des Voyageurs, lined with mirrors and wooden panelling, and the Café de la Gare.

If the station is so pleasant, why take the train? One day, however, having to go to Saint-Gervais-les-Bains 60 kilometers away, I tried the adventure.Leaving at 8:00 am, I arrived at my goal at 11:00 am... after two or three changes! From this small station in a dead end street, served by the single rail car from Annemasse, do you know that hypothetical underground liaison projects was planned to La Praille and Cornavin, linking the left bank to the right? As proof, a strange small pink building, as if sliced by an ax, found at the end of the esplanade, down below on the other side of the Route de Chêne.

From a small kiosk with a multicolored bird's air, decorated by the "Vaisseau" group of Genevan artists, I see also, above an insuperable wall, the mysterious Clos-Belmont.



6 THE CLOS BELMONT

A private area

To reach this neighborhood, one must cross the obstacle which faces the pedestrian here, the Route de Chêne. Imprudent, I set out to cross the street, fortunately deserted in that moment. But if you value your life, don't imitate me: go up the road to take the crosswalk.

Looking for a way in, I discovered further down, in a recess by a technical building, a secret passage with interminable hidden steps. I took them and reached a magic place, invaded by foliage, where houses had been built here and there, as in an Agatha Christie novel. The Spanish Mission, at 10 Clos Belmont was, in the 1970s, the subject of a memorable attack by anarchists who had brilliant literary careers later. Of Tudor style (1898), it adjoins No. 12, another house with loggias, by the architect Robert Percy.



7 THE RUE HENRI-MUSSARD

A wooded square

To go to the Avenue Théodore Weber is a little like returning to the city. This main street gives the impression of being the outside limit of a more compact neighborhood. It corresponds to what was, in the past, the Jargonnant stream which had its source towards Florissant, where it fed an outdoor skating rink at the corner of Avenue Krieg.

The Avenue wavers between several types of buildings. The beginning of a street of opulent buildings, with turbulent facades (1912 - 1913) is followed by achievements of the Modern Movement (1930 - 1931). At No. 5, I once went to visit the writer Alice Rivaz, who wrote about these places in several of her books. Thereafter, the street is decorated with green spaces and squares, delimited by two buildings from the 1930s.

I go up the Rue Henri-Mussard and find myself at the center of a square of large dimensions. In the spirit of its promoters, this was to be a space of charm planted with trees. Today it is mainly a parking lot. The neighboring buildings date from 1922 to 1948. I try to date them, to appreciate the variety of their texture, their shrewdness and decoration: Nos 11 to 15 retain my attention and I discover that this neighborhood still includes some stores which have not changed since the construction period.



8 THE CONTAMINES PARK

A green casquet for a school

After Malagnou, a pedestrian path leads to a strange park, not very well-known, breathing shade, solitude and silence, which alone bother the gargoyles of a decorative stone fountain. For a long time, I thought it was the result of neglect by the promoters of the buildings along Malagnou, Florissant and Avenue Krieg in the 1950s. In fact, this open space had been programmed in one of the first "extension plans" prepared by the Cantonal Planning Service in 1933, in order to save the beautiful trees in this neighborhood of houses and to build the present school pavillion.

In the XIXth century, at Contamines, the architects Adolphe Reverdin and Alexandre-Adrien Krieg built several "country houses"; today the Joly house (1838) and that of General Guillaume-Henri Dufour (1845) remain. Among former inhabitants of these places were the psychologist Théodore Flournoy, the teacher Adolphe Ferrière and the writer Albert Cohen.

■ Fountains of charm in the City of Geneva

- Origin: begin, from the XIIIth century
- Number: 158 fountains (24 monumental)
- Flow: ca. 50 l/min. (from 4-spout fountain)



9 THE BERTRAND PARK

A large park with a secret garden

If you prefer the sun, gaiety, youth, hurry accross Florissant to reach Bertrand Park. With its large green area, which stretches in the direction of Salève, it provides the citizen, from the very beginning, an open and free feeling. It is also a children's kingdom: large slides are installed there and, when the weather is good, the swings and the wading pool are crowded. Do you want a little quiet? You only need to open a door to arrive in the intimacy of a garden suited for meditation, behind an old stone wall.

The architect, Jacques Vaucher, restored this old vegetable garden, and transformed its main house into a school in 1990.

Facing Avenue Peschier, you come upon the new school built in 2000 by architects Christian and Pierre-Alain Dupraz.

Further on, and close to Avenue Peschier, one discovers a subterranean construction: this is the pumping well of the Geneva Industrial Services (SIG / 1994), going deep into the phreatic layer.

■ SIG pumping wells

- Bertrand Park well
- Flow: 70 l/sec.
- Depth: 86 m.

On Genevan territory

- No. of wells: 10 (4 in Geneva city and 1 in Carouge city)
- Total water consumption: 400 l/day/inhab. (incl. industry)
- Domestic water consumption: 250 l/day/inhab. (1/3 for WCs!)
- Distribution: 80 % from the lake and 20 % from phreatic layer



10 CHAMPEL

A residential neighborhood

In the Middle Ages, the Plateau de Champel was a communal field. It has maintained its central role in the neighborhood with its market, stores and church. Now, it is an important residential neighborhood, with tall apartment buildings replacing yesterday's houses. Near the large Cantonal Hospital buildings below and the Medical Faculty are numerous clinics, and the Bon Secours, famous nursing school established at the beginning of the 20th century by one of the first Genevan woman doctors, Dr. Marguerite Champendal.

Going around the Bon Secours buildings, I reach Chemin Thury, which still has some old houses and beautiful trees, to reach Place Reverdin. There, I remember souvenirs of the "Executioner's field" where Michel Servet, a Spanish doctor, considered a heretic, was burned alive in 1553. For the very curious, did you know that the field was on the hillock of the present Colline Clinic and a monument dedicated to the rebel

was erected at the corner of the Avenue Beau-Séjour and the Avenue de la Roseraie. At the corner of the Place Reverdin, in a curious shack, the "Saigon" Asiatic delicatessan recalls the memory of the grocer's shop that fed the customers of Champel-Spa.

■ Comparisons of annual domestic water consumption of various countries

- Etats Unis 110'000 l/hab.
- Japon 104'000 l/hab.
- Suisse 96'000 l/hab.
- Italie 78'000 l/hab.
- Grèce 40'000 l/hab.
- Algérie 35'000 l/hab.
- Inde 9'000 l/hab.
- Soudan 8'000 l/hab.

(source: "L'Hebdo" magazine, 4 June 1992)



11 BEAU-SÉJOUR

A place for cure and vacation

At Place Reverdin, I notice the romantic Ashbourne Castle, then the elegant silhouette of the Beau-Séjour Hospital. During the XIXth century, it was the center of gravity for "Champel-Spa", the hydrotherapeutic center which attracted a posh clientele of more or less neurotic sick people "taking the cure". Beau-Séjour dominates the Arve, the glacial water, on the average, 10 degrees centigrade, being considered as "tops" for numerous illnesses. The old main house, built in 1780, served as a pension and a building on the bank of the Arve, demolished in the 1980s, housed swimming pools, showers and "Russian" and "Turkish" baths.

To receive the patients, the lawyer, David Moriaud (1833 - 1898), created the site for the Beau-Séjour pavillons, as well as that of the Aubépine.

To the right of the Beau-Séjour Hospital, a charming path goes down steeply to the Arve and arrives at the old Roseraie pension where the Englishman, Joseph Conrad, stayed regularly for his rheumatism. In contrast to the style of this pension is next door the Aubépine Junior High School (1997), a good example of contemporary school equipment by the architect, Pierre-Alain Renaud.



12 THE ARVE

A river which serves as a border

To cross the Arve at the Fontenette Bridge is to change jurisdiction, to change city. In the past, one left the jurisdiction of the Geneva Republic to enter into those of the Duke of Savoy. Today, we pass to the jurisdiction of the City of Carouge.

Upstream from the bridge, the rumbling of the Arve runs into a dam, accentuates the river's torrential character; which is overhung by the neo-Gothic silhouette of the "Champel Tower" (1877). Remaining wild and regularly flooding its right bank, the Arve, the river bank inhabitant's formidable partner, was once partly domesticated. The Fontenette Canal, which had its mouth at the level of Brocher Island, aided the region's industrial activities; this may be witnessed by the names of old Carouge's streets: Rue de la Tannerie (Tannery), Rue de la Filature (Spinning), Clos de la Fonderie (Foundry Enclosure).

On the right, opposite the Jewish cemetery (1801), the community of which was exiled from Genevan soil from 1490 to 1852, I reach the "Noie-tes-puces" (Drown your Fleas) Park, without knowing if the name is official or results from a purely Carouge joke. The site offers a point of reference: the small kiosk which serves as a water pumping station providing water to a SIG well 40 meters deep. Next to it, an old press, offered by the Abbé company, decorates, as a matter of interest, the grass of the small park. Here, one can enter a pedestrian path, next to which stands an elegant black metal milestone with the arms of the city, like those which used to exist in other areas of Carouge. It informs the very curious about what has become known as "the Fontenette canals". Then we arrive at the Orpailleurs Promenade (Gold panners Walk), and recall the time when the Arve attracted gold seekers. From here, one can simply admire the Carouge Bridge, one of the canton's most beautiful, built between 1808 and 1811 by Nicolas Céard, chief engineer of the Léman Department, during a period when Geneva was French.



13 CAROUGE

A sardinian city of the XVIIIth century

Arriving in the area of the bridge, I discover what used to be the entrance into Carouge: the Place de l'Octroi. Recently, it was the subject of a quality conversion (1986) as a result of a competition. It was carried out by the architects, Olivier Archambault and Enrico Prati. Today, open and welcoming with a fan-shaped esplanade which embellishes the front side of the old houses, it formerly controlled passage from one city to the other at the cost of paying a tithe.

The reason why it is called the "Sardinian city" is that Carouge was built as a city and provincial capital by letters patent from Victor Amedeo II, King of Sardinia, in 1786.

Entering the city, you have a choice of three routes: via the Rue Saint-Victor, the Rue Saint-Joseph or the Avenue du Cardinal Mermillod and the Rue Vautier. This last street is recommended to night hawks, who will find to the Marchand de Sable, the Café de la Plage, the Chat Noir or the Café de la Forge, this kind of life which is said to be lacking in the streets of austere Geneva.

Whatever your choice is, you will pass many specialty shops, artisan's workshops and art galleries which make up the charm and tradition of this city, before entering the Place du Marché (Market Place), nerve center of the city. Here one feels that the city was the subject of a plan by Piedmontese architects in the XVIIIth century. This place, planted with plane trees, is the occasion for appointments not to be missed: the markets, held twice a week, and other events; there are also some other remarkable elements, such as the fountain by the architect, Jean-Daniel Blavignac (1817-1876), and the Sainte-Croix church, built in several stages (1777 / 1826 / 1926).

■ Fountains by J.-D. Blavignac in Carouge

- Market Place (1866)
- Rue Jacques Daphin (1867)
- Church Place (1867)
- Rue Ancienne (1867)

(source: SHAS guide)



14 THE CAROUGE TOWERS

A fountain below towers

Leaving the Place du Marché and its church, I arrive at the modern and large Place de Sardaigne, flanked by the Carouge Museum and the unobtrusive Cottier Park, before discovering the new Carouge.

Remarkably contrasting with the old texture, the authorities assigned a new scheme concept, the "Towers of Carouge" (13 and 20 stories) to a Genevan architect group, close to Modern Movement and Le Corbusier theories. This neighborhood, the building of which took place from 1958 to 1963, was intended, on the one hand, to offer housing, workshops, a school and various equipment nearby, and, on the other hand, to make a connection between the industrial zone of La Praille and the checkerboard composition of old Carouge.

It was considered that the organization of rational buildings, the rooms of which would offer light and salubrity, would make it possible to free the Carouge courtyards from some enterprises, thus bringing air and sunshine to old houses.

As for tying together the historical city and the new neighborhood, the old canal in the shadow of old plane trees on the Boulevard des Promenades was chosen as the link. A reminder of the former fortification's moat, today it echos to the modern cascade of the fountain by Slobodan Vassiljevic, whose waterfalls are the joy of children in the summer.

In its way, Carouge replies to the Geneva Fountain. Formerly opponents, the two cities today reply on the basis of liquid falls and pedestrian walks.