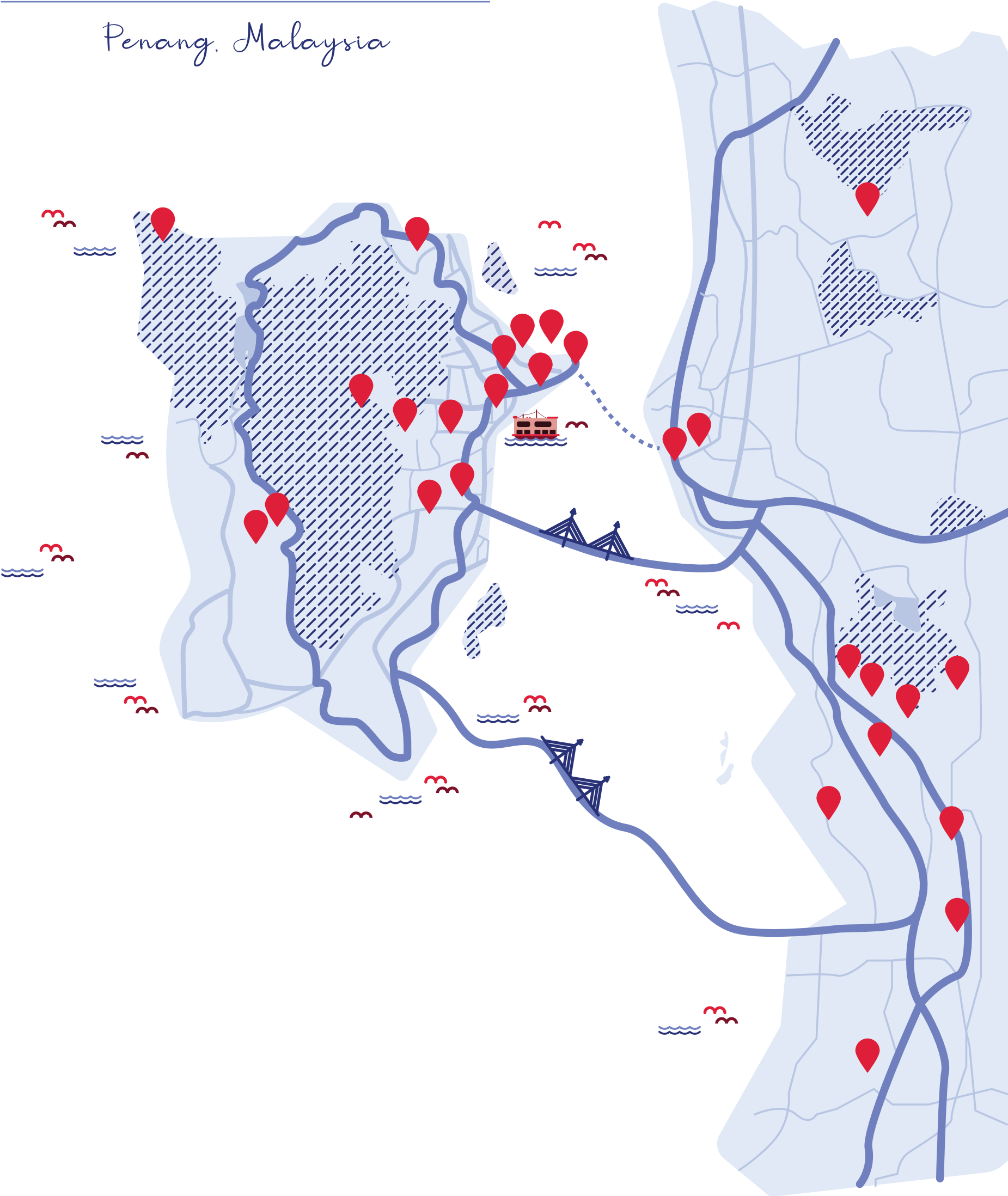


The Embassy of France in Malaysia presents:

.CITY GUIDE.

French Heritage Trail

Penang, Malaysia





A French Heritage Trail in Penang

French people have been present in Penang since the very beginnings of the city. From Church Street and Bishop Street (which owe their names to a French church and a French bishop!), to great schools such as Convent Light Street or the Saint Xavier Institution, and to villages and plantations on the Peninsular side of Penang – Kampung Val d’Or, Kampung Alma or the Malakoff Plantations – there is a lot of French heritage in Penang. Penang was once nicknamed “The Montpellier of the Indies” – a reference to the good climate of Penang, comparable to the city in Southern France!

Penang could even have become a French colony! After the French Revolution of 1789, Rear-Admiral de Sercey had been sent from France with significant forces to impose the abolition of slavery on the then French territory of Ile-de-France (now Mauritius). But he also tried to extend French possessions in the region and, in July 1796, with a strong armada of six frigates, he set sail from Ile-de-France with the intention of seizing Penang from the British. The attempt was short lived, though: having suffered losses in a battle against British ships North of Sumatra on 9 September 1796, Admiral de Sercey decided to abandon his project. Penang did not become French...

Nevertheless, history continues!

In 2018, a “sister cities” agreement was signed between Penang and the French city of Arles - both are listed as UNESCO World Heritage. With this agreement, the two cities now exchange experience on heritage conservation, cultural policy-making, and have launched an artist-in-residence programme. This is one more good reason to dig into our common heritage.

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**So,
follow the guide
along Penang's
French Heritage
Trail!**

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A Bishop, Churches and Mission Schools

Lebuh Gereja (Church Street) and Lebuh Bishop (Bishop Street) are, indeed, very French! In 1786, just a few months after the very foundation of George Town by Francis Light, the first French Catholic priest moved to Penang at the invitation of Light himself. He came from Kuala Kedah, where he had been allowed by the Sultan of Kedah to settle down in 1782, after being expelled from the Kingdom of Siam. Father Garnault came to George Town with a small group of followers, mainly Siamese and Siamese-Portuguese Eurasians. He established a church and later a school, teaching in Malay at the beginning.

Lebuh Gereja is named after that church, and Lebuh Bishop is named after Father Garnault, who was ordained Bishop in 1787. The French church was first built in wood, then rebuilt in bricks in 1802, and then it moved in 1857 to its current location on Lebuh Farquhar. The original church and residence of the Bishop (which have by now disappeared) were situated in the area between Church Street, Bishop Street and Pitt Street (today Lebuh Gereja, Lebuh Bishop and Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling).



The new **Church of the Assumption**, rebuilt in 1857 on Lebuah Farquhar, is well worth visiting. The construction was started by Father Pierre Favre, who also launched the construction of the new Convent School on Light Street. Fr. Favre later became a famous linguist and teacher of Malay in Paris, also author of Malay-French dictionaries in the 1870s. Notice, inside the church, the list of its parish priests since the date of its foundation in 1786, and in the front-yard of the church, the monument in memory of sailors who died on board a French Navy ship in Penang during the First World War. You can also visit the Roman Catholic Diocese Museum, just beside the church.

Talking about Farquhar Street, it is interesting to note another link between Penang and France: Robert Townsend Farquhar, who was Lieutenant-Governor of Penang in 1804-1805, became the Governor of Ile Bonaparte (also called Ile Bourbon, and nowadays Ile de la Réunion, a French territory of the Indian Ocean) in 1810, and then Governor of Mauritius Island for 13 years until 1823 – after both islands were seized by the British from the French.



The Church of the Assumption, on Lebuah Farquhar

CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION (CHURCH STREET: 1786 – 1860)			
MGR. ARNOLD	GARNAULT	1786 – 1792	
FR. MICHEL	RECTENWALD	1792 – 1822	
FR. PIERRE	PECOT	1822 – 1823	
MGR. J. BAPTISTE	BOUCHO	1824 – 1843	
FR. PAUL	BIGANDET	1843 – 1852	
MGR. MICHEL	LE TURDU	1852 – 1855	
MGR. PAUL	BIGANDET	1855 – 1856	
FR. PIERRE	FAVRE	1856 – 1857	
FR. DENIS	JOURDAIN	1857 – 1858	
CATHEDRAL OF THE ASSUMPTION (FARQUHAR STREET: 1860 – 1960)			
FR. CLAUDE	MANISSOL	1858 – 1881	
FR. CHARLES	GRENIER	1881 – 1889	
FR. HENRI	RIVET	1889 – 1892	
MGR. JEAN-MARIE	FEE	1892 – 1893	
FR. JOACHIM	MENEUVRIER	1893 – 1894	
FR. HENRI	RIVET	1894 – 1896	
FR. VICTOR	RENARD	1896 – 1897	
FR. HENRI	RIVET	1897 – 1899	
FR. JOACHIM	MENEUVRIER	1899 – 1912	
FR. LOUIS	DUVELLE	1912 – 1924	
MGR. ADRIEN	DEVALS	1924 – 1933	
FR. J. BAPTISTE	SOUHAIT	1933 – 1947	
FR. GEORGES	AUGUIN	1947 – 1955	
FR. PAUL	DECREIX	1955 –	
FR. ANDREW	LAU	– 1973	
FR. RAPHAEL	KANG	1973 – 1984	
FR. XAVIER	MANIKAM	1984 – 1991	
FR. CLEMENT	PEREIRA	1991 – 1992	
FR. ANTHONY	PILLAI	1992 – 1999	
FR. MICHAEL	THOO	1999 – 2002	
FR. DOMINIC	SANTHIYAGU	2002 – 2010	
		2012 –	

List of parish priests at the Church of the Assumption since 1786



Saint Xavier Institution: in 1825, the small Catholic school initially founded by the French parish priests in 1787 changed its tuition language from Malay to English. In the 1850s, the school management was transferred to the La Salle Brothers - a French Catholic congregation specialized in education, and the school, which was by then called the Catholic Free School, was later renamed St Xavier Institution. It became, over the years, one of the major education institutions in Penang. Not everything was always easy for the Brothers, though.

Up on Penang Hill, on 19 April 1954, the French La Salle Brother and supervisor of secondary classes at Saint Xavier Institution, Brother Symphorien Augustus, aged 63, was shot dead by communist insurgents at the bungalow owned by the Institution on the hill. This took place during the period of the Emergency (1948-1960). The bungalow was originally a hermitage called "Mount Sacred Heart" and built with a chapel above a dormitory. It was extended to become a retreat house, later known as the "Christian Brothers' Bungalow".



Saint Xavier Institution, on Lebuhraya Farquhar



*Christian Brothers' Bungalow
(Photo credit: <http://spunkyexhibits.blogspot.com/>)*

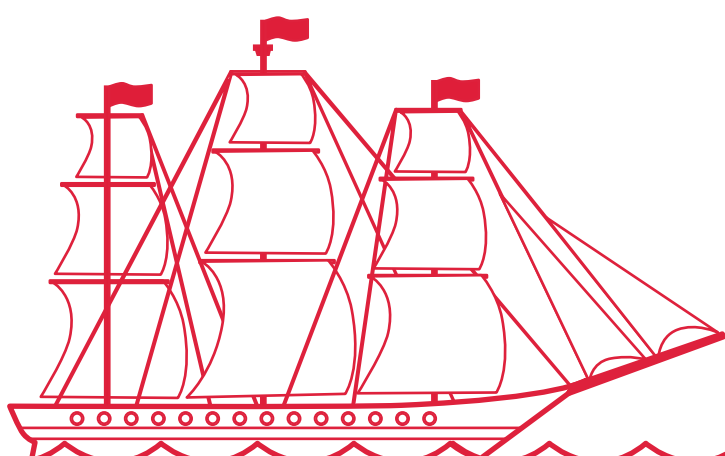


*Christian Brothers' Bungalow
(Photo credit: <http://spunkyexhibits.blogspot.com/>)*

Convent Light Street: in 1852, at the request of the local parish priests, the first French nuns, members of the congregation of the Infant Jesus Sisters, arrived from France and established Convent Light Street School. It had been an adventurous voyage: five nuns had left Paris a few months before, but only three of them arrived in Penang – one had died at sea, as was still frequent at that time, and one had decided to quit the congregation. Convent Light Street (sometimes called Convent St Maur, because the headquarters of the congregation was in Rue St Maur in Paris) was nonetheless founded, and it is one of the oldest girls' schools in Malaysia (if not the oldest), but also in the whole of South-East Asia. This school and the extraordinary French nuns who established and ran it during decades played an essential, pioneering role in the development of girls' education in the country.



From 1852 onwards, with Penang as the main centre of their expansion, schools founded by French missionaries mushroomed all over Malaysia – more than 120 of those are still operating today, including 19 in Penang: Convent Schools Bukit Mertajam, Butterworth, Datuk Keramat, Pulau Tikus, Green Lane, but also St Xavier Institution, St George School, etc... all of them established by French missionaries.



At the Port of Penang: Memories of WWI, of Triangular Trade and of Literature

On 28 October 1914, during the Battle of Penang, French warship *Le Mousquet* and allied Russian cruiser *Zhemtchug* were sunk by a German ship off the port of George Town. The German cruiser *Emden* had sailed surreptitiously, before dawn, into the **port of Penang**, masquerading as a British ship by adding a fake funnel to its three real ones. It first sunk the Russian ship just a mile away from the port, then, as it was chased by the French destroyer, the German ship also sunk her, about 10 miles **North of Muka Head (North-West of the Penang Island, now within the Penang National Park)**. 44 French and Vietnamese sailors died in that battle (Vietnam was, at that time, a French colony), while the rest of the crew – 35 sailors – were rescued from the sea by the German ship.

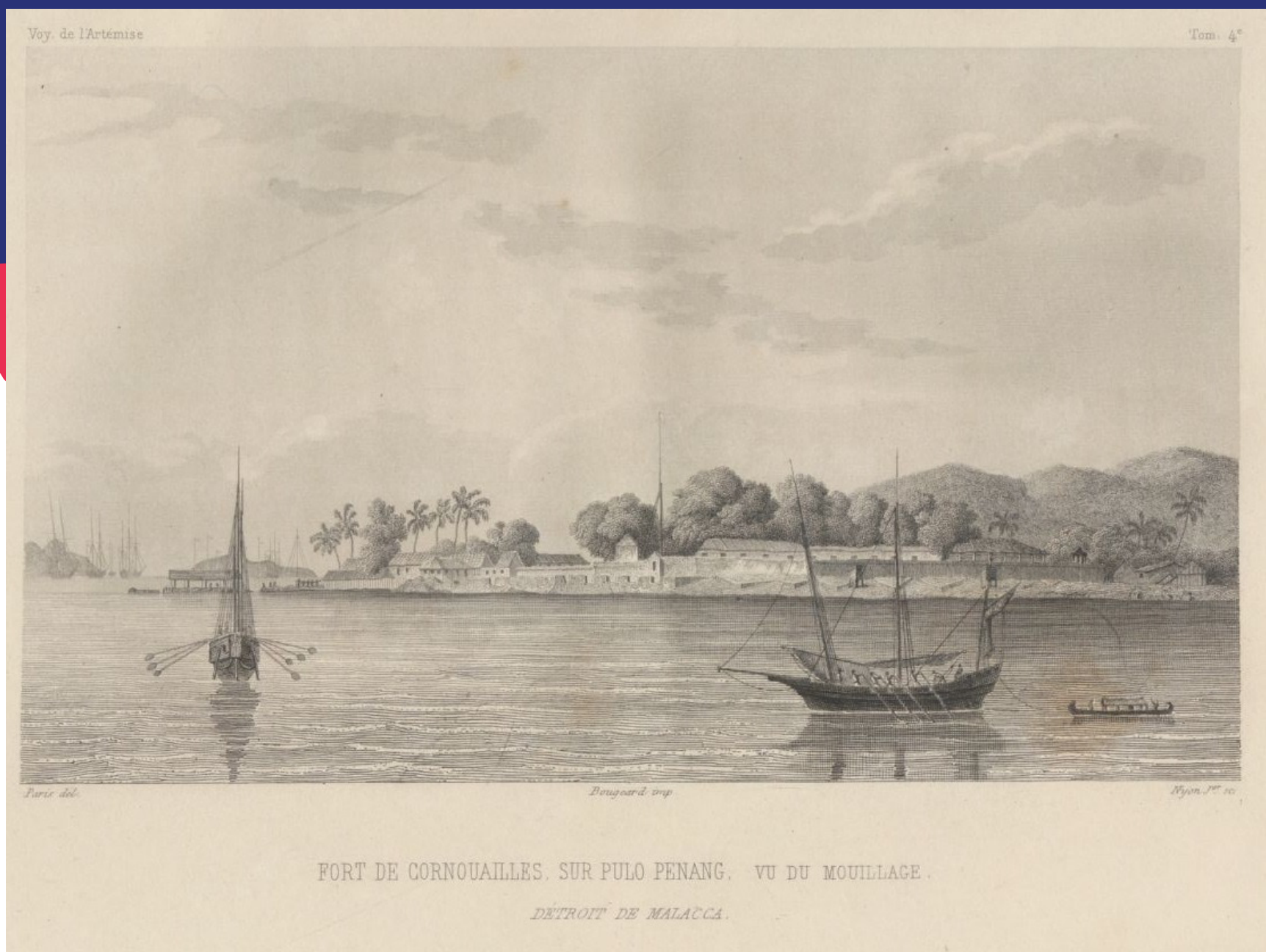
They were taken prisoners and soon released at Sabang, on the small island of Weh (North of Sumatra), while another 4 of them had died on the way. Three other French destroyers which were in Penang remained untouched (*Le Pistolet*, *Le D'Iberville* and *La Fronde*) and they continued thereafter to contribute to the protection of the Malacca Straits.

In 1969, a salvage operation was carried out by a private company on the wreck of *Le Mousquet*. Remains of the sailors found during this operation were brought by a French Navy frigate to New Caledonia in 1970, where a monument to the memory of these sailors was built. Another monument, in the front yard of the **Church of the Assumption on Lebuah Farquhar**, was also built in 2015 to commemorate these tragic losses of World War I. One of the anchors from *Le Mousquet*, brought ashore during the salvage in 1969 is shown at the Penang State Museum.



*The memorial to the French and Vietnamese sailors of *Le Mousquet*, in the front yard of the Church of the Assumption, Lebuah Farquhar*





Fort Cornwallis seen from the moored frigate L'Artémise, in Captain Laplace's book, published 1841

The port of Penang saw regular visits by French merchants and, sometimes, French government ships in the 19th century. Captain Laplace, Commander of Frigate L'Artémise, stopped in Penang in 1837 as he was conducting a round-the-world exploratory mission. His crew was plagued by a severe epidemic of dysentery, and sailors were dying in numbers aboard the frigate.

Nevertheless, he visited Penang for a few days, describing a clean, pleasant and prosperous island. He noted the presence, in the port of Penang, of three French merchant ships who had come from Bourbon Island (nowadays Reunion Island, a French territory in the Indian Ocean) to sell wines, liquors and food, and which would afterwards sail to ports of Burma to fetch wood and rice and bring these back to the French Indian colonies. This gives an idea of the quite active triangular trade relationship which was going on at that time.



Paris-soir 12 - 8 - 36 DERNIÈRE

MON TOUR DU MONDE EN 80 JOURS

"La nuit, Penang est magique"

De notre envoyé spécial
Jean COCTEAU

DIMANCHE. Les banques fermées. Nous sommes sans une roupie. Boutique de change. Les Musulmans en tiennent partout. Le véritable nom paternel de Passepartout arrange les choses. On nous offre des boissons glacées. On avance des chaises, on paye.

Un enterrement passe. Pagodes de papier dentelle sur les épaules de Chinois nus. Un orphéon de patronage, habillé de toile blanche, exécute les premières mesures de la *Marche funèbre* de Chopin, sans cesse reprises. En tête du cortège, des cornemuses violentes, amères, se superposent à la *Marche funèbre*, sans s'oc-

s'évanouissent. La buée dans laquelle on baigne doit former des écrans sur lesquels se projettent des mirages, des prismes. Le sampan, qui a la grossièreté d'un accessoire de théâtre ou de manège à vapeur, saute dans de l'opale



In the 1920s, there used to be a regular boat service between France and the port of Penang, managed by the Compagnies des Messageries Maritimes, transporting the mail, cargo and passengers. In 1936, celebrated poet, playwright and film-maker Jean Cocteau stopped in Penang during his round-of-the-world trip, which he reported about in the newspaper Paris-Soir.

He published two articles about Penang on 12 and 13 August 1936, describing a bustling city, from its restaurants to its opium houses and bars, in the feverish, fictionalized and highly subjective style that suits a poet. He was impressed, though, by the energy of the city and his article was entitled "At Night, Penang is Magical"! Other French writers stopped-over in Penang and were inspired by the city – such as Roland Dorgeles, who wrote a novel "Departure" ("Partir") in 1926, made into a film by Maurice Tourneur in 1931, in which Penang is one of the ports of call; Claude Ollier, who wrote "Mon Double a Malacca" in 1981; or Philippe Collas, who published his novel "The Master of Penang" ("Le Maître de Penang") in 1997.

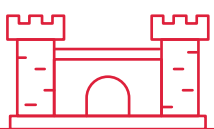
Architecture and Culture: From France to Penang, and Back

In 1929, the new wing of the **Eastern&Oriental** Hotel was built by French construction company Brossard & Mopin, specialized in reinforced concrete. This company also built the Central Market in Kuala Lumpur and the palace of the Sultan of Perak in Kuala Kangsar, among many other architectural projects in 1930s Malaya. A very “concrete” contribution to the development of Penang’s tourism industry!

At the **Syed Alatas Mansion** and at **Fort Cornwallis**, French experts brought their knowledge into the restoration of these major pieces of heritage - in 1993 for the Syed Alatas Mansion (with architect Didier Repellin, Chief Architect of Heritage Buildings in Lyon) and more recently in 2018-2019 at Fort Cornwallis (with architect Gisèle Taxil). The 1993 heritage cooperation project with France was among the seminal acts which formed the basis for the listing of George Town as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2008.

At the **Cheong Fatt Tze House (Blue Mansion)**, a very famous French movie was filmed: *Indochine*, with Catherine Deneuve, released in 1992 and which obtained an Academy Award in Hollywood. Scenes of the film were shot in this beautiful house, others at the former Crag Hotel, up on Penang Hill, others yet in Butterworth, on the Peninsular part of Penang (and also, to the South, in Ipoh). All these Malaysian settings were used to picture Indochina during the French colonial period!

The Alliance Française de Penang, which was established in 1962, is nowadays the beating heart of French language and culture in the city, offering plenty of courses and events to the people all along the year, and even more so during the annual cultural feast “Le French Festival”. With the signing in 2018 of the first-ever sistership between a French and a Malaysian city - namely Penang and Arles - cooperation on heritage conservation and contemporary creation will grow even more strongly in the years to come.



Pulau Tikus: a Catholic Centre for the Whole Asian Region



The College General in 1866

In 1808, the **College General** was established in Penang by the Paris Foreign Missions Society (Missions Etrangères de Paris) to educate Catholic priests from all over Asia. The young people would spend several years studying in Penang before becoming priests and going back to their countries of origin to take care of parishes they were assigned to. In the 19th century alone, the College General trained more than 1000 priests who served parishes across the Asian continent! The College was situated in the Pulau Tikus area, and although it has moved to a new location since 1984, and the original building was torn down and replaced with the Gurney Plaza complex, there are still a lot of visible traces of the French past of this area. You can have a look at the "St Jo's" building within Gurney Paragon: it is the former St Joseph's Novitiate and teachers' training college, built in 1916 by the La Salle Brothers, which has been refurbished and transformed into an event venue. The College General itself moved in 1984 to what used to be its countryside retreat, called Mariophile (Fond of Mary) at Tanjung Bungah, where the Archive building (built in 1880) and the St Joseph Chapel (built in 1884) also belong to the city's French heritage.



Convent School Pulau Tikus

Around Medan Maktab (College Square – precisely in reference to the College General), Secondary School SMK Convent Pulau Tikus was established in 1922 by the French Infant Jesus Sisters (one of the more than 60 “Convent Schools” founded in Malaysia by these French Nuns). Just beside, the very nice Church of the Immaculate Conception was established at the onset by and for the Portuguese Eurasian Catholics who had fled from Phuket in 1810. Then it later served the mainly Chinese community who grew more numerous in the vicinity. Father John Pasqual founded the church in 1811, and thereafter, in 1835, French Fr. Bohet built on the same location a new church in bricks, while the construction of the current building started in 1898 under Fr. Renard. French parish priests remained in charge of this church until 1950.





The Church of the Immaculate Conception

1	1811 - 1823	FATHER JOHN B. PASQUAL - Founder
2	1823 - 1826	FATHER JEAN-LOUIS PUPIER
3	1826 - 1830	FATHER JEAN-PIERRE BARBE
4	1830 - 1833	FATHER JACQUES CHASTAN - SAINT
5	1834 - 1847	FATHER ANTOINE BOHET
6	1847 - 1855	FATHER FRANCIS XAVIER DUCOTEY
7	1855 - 1871	FATHER MICHAEL Le TURDU
8	1871 - 1875	FATHER PIERRE SORIN
9	1875 - 1880	FATHER CHRISTOPHER MAZERY
10	1880 - 1883	FATHER MARIE JEAN ALLARD
11	1883 - 1887	FATHER JEAN DAMAIS
12	1887 - 1897	FATHER CHRISTOPHER MAZERY
13	1898 - 1898	FATHER VICTOR RENARD
14	1898 - 1905	FATHER JEAN DAMAIS
15	1905 - 1920	FATHER PIERRE PERRICHON

List of parish priests at the Church of the Immaculate Conception

Among the parish priests of the **Church of the Immaculate Conception**, Father Jacques Chastan served from 1830 to 1833 before he was sent to China, and then to Korea in 1837. He was condemned to death by the Korean authorities in the midst of persecutions against Catholics and he was beheaded in 1839. He is considered a martyr and was made a Saint by Pope John Paul II in 1984. Saint Laurent Imbert is another priest, who taught at the College General in the 1820s, to have been made a saint after martyrdom in Korea. In the Pulau Tikus area as well, some of the ancient tombstones of the **Catholic Cemetery on Kelawei Road** also testify to the French history of the district. Other French tombs can be found at the **Old Catholic Cemetery** (behind the old Protestant cemetery on Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah – not open to the public) and at the **Western Road Cemetery**.





The old Catholic cemetery (behind the old Protestant cemetery on Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah)

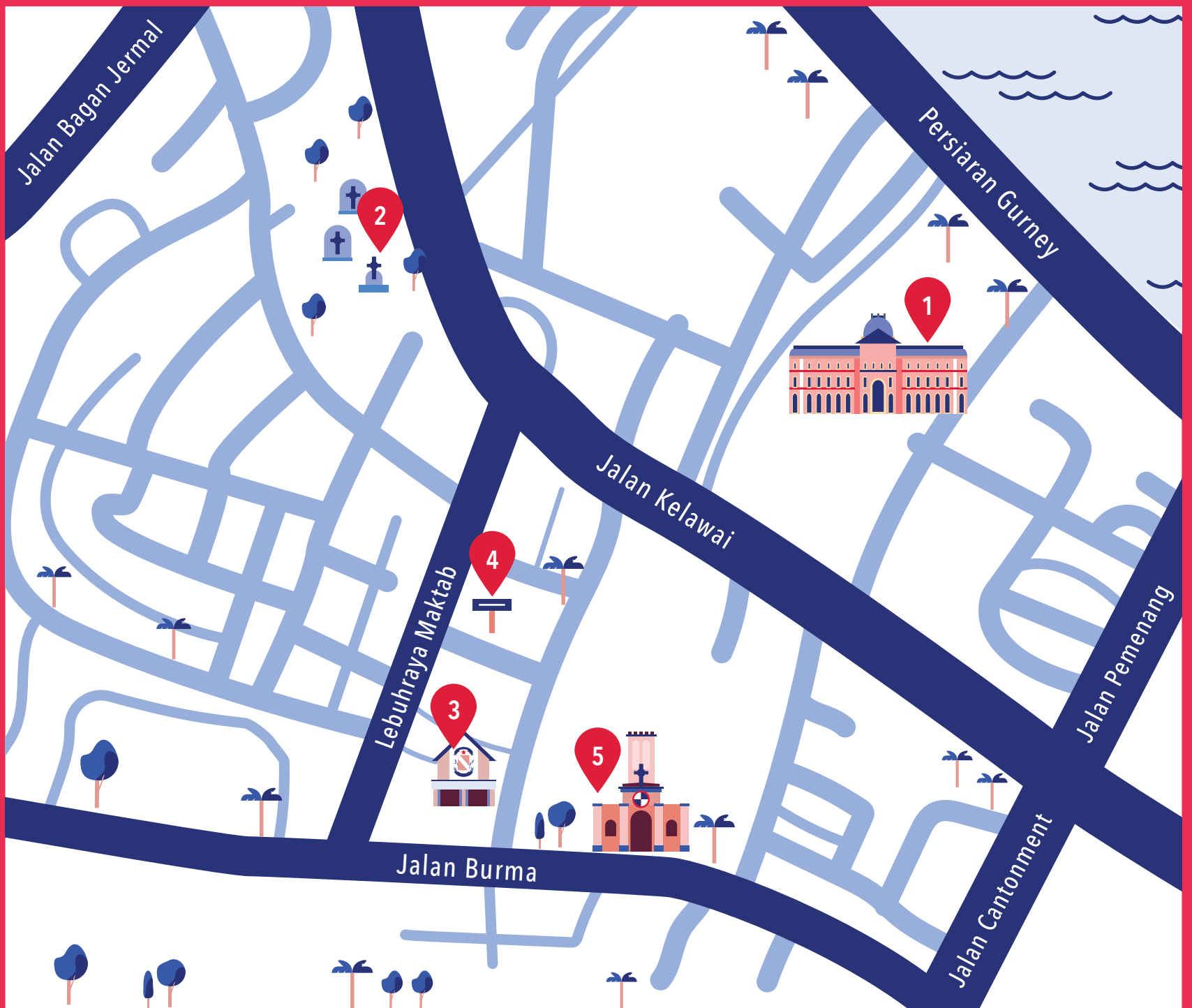


The grave of Louis de Lapeyrie, Baron de Soussignac, at the Old Catholic cemetery (photo courtesy Clement Liang)



Graves of French nuns at the Old Catholic Cemetery (photo courtesy Clement Liang)





Legend:

- 1) St Joseph Novitiate
- 2) Catholic Cemetery Jalan Kelawai
- 3) SMK Convent Pulau Tikus
- 4) Medan Maktab/ College Square
- 5) Church of the Immaculate Conception

**Map not according to scale*

Province Wellesley - From France: Planters, Priests and Professors!

On the peninsular side of Penang - a district called "Province Wellesley" in the 19th Century and called today "Seberang Perai", the first French planters settled down as early as the 1840s. Numbering just a few families, some of them having lived for some time before in the French territories of the Indian Ocean, these pioneers first planted coconut and rice, then sugar cane, tapioca, coffee, tea, tobacco, cotton, pineapple, papaya and even durian! Later in the 19th century, their French descendants, some of them born in Penang, even produced essential oils of patchouli, nutmeg, clove, lemongrass... Some of their estates names are still in use today: Val d'Or Estates (Golden Valley Estates) has given its name to what is now Kampung Val d'Or; Alma Estates to Kampung Alma; and Malakoff Estates gave its name to one of today's largest corporations of Malaysia.

The first French planter in Penang was Joseph Donadieu, who arrived in Penang from Mauritius in 1841. His original intention was to recruit coolies, but he "was amazed by the possibilities of the place, its soil, its climate, its workforce ..." and therefore decided to settle down. He acquired a property, Jawi Estate, to plant sugar in Wellesley Province. Joseph Donadieu did not profit much from his good fortune. In 1850, he was murdered on a river on his way back to his estate.



His plantation, described by British ship captain Henry Keppel in 1843, had been thriving. This is how Captain Keppel recounts his visit, which gives an idea about the life of these pioneer planters:



“Our object was to visit an enterprising Frenchman, who had penetrated miles into the dense jungle and opened up a sugar plantation. We landed from the (small steamer ship) Diana at the mouth of a small creek, up which we had to paddle some eight miles. On landing, an elephant awaited us, fitted with a double howdah. We were received by Monsieur and Madame Donadieu. From the landing place, with the exception of the 12-foot-wide road, was a jungle, where the relations of the Bengal tiger might be concealed within a foot of where we were. We found our hosts’ bungalow prettily situated on rising ground, cleared all round for a quarter of a mile of the dense jungle, and protected by a substantial iron fence. The inside of the building was a perfect bijou; you could fancy yourself within hail of Paris. Our dinner, too, was perfection, including a Malay curry.”

Léopold Chasseriau from Bordeaux, was twenty-five years old when he landed in Penang in 1850. He came “to try his luck” as he said. He first joined Donadieu in Val D’Or Estate (just before Donadieu’s death), then five years later in 1855, he acquired his first property “Ara Rendang Sugar Estate”. He built a factory using machines imported from France. He renamed his plantation “Malakoff” after the French victory against Russia in the Crimean War in 1855. Located too far from the coastal mangrove, the plantation benefited neither from the canals necessary for the transport of the cane, nor from the wood necessary to supply the boilers of the sugar mills. So, Léopold Chasseriau chose the most logical alternative at the time, tapioca. In 1861, he bought a winery in Bordeaux called Chateau de Lisennes, which he is said to have renamed “Pinan” in reference to Penang! He sold his French property again in 1876 and moved to Singapore, developing another successful plantation there. He died in 1891 on-board a ship on his way back to France.

His sons Emile, born in Bordeaux in 1861, and Leopold junior, born in Penang in 1863, continued his trade. In 1900, they acquired the Alma Estate (also named after a French victory in the Crimean war), a considerable plot of land complete with train station. They employed around 1000 workforce and produced tapioca, coconut, paddy, fruit, areca nuts, but also more and more, rubber which was by then already highly in demand. “Malakoff” and “Alma”, by the way, also became household names in France after the victories in the Crimean war: a city in the Southern suburb of Paris is called Malakoff and a bridge in Paris “Pont de l’Alma”!

Among this first generation of pioneer planters from France arrived in the 1840s, apart from Chasseriau and Donadieu, were also Simon, an engineer who built the first industrial sugar factories of the Province, Martin, Hardouin... Charles Aimé Hardouin, born near Paris in 1817, lived most of his life on his **Bukit Tambun Estate** after his arrival in 1846. He died in George Town in 1896, at the age of 79. One of his sons explored Perak for tin together with another famous Frenchman, Jacques de Morgan, in the 1880s, then came back to manage his father's estate. In 1902, he was planting lemongrass and patchouli, and producing essential oils. Another son of Charles Aimé Hardouin became consul of France in Siam, then in Canton. The Chasseriau and Hardouin sons can also be found at different times at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century employed as managers for other estate owners - eg Emile Hardouin was working for planter Chung Thye Yong at his Hearwood Estate near Sungai Siput in 1908.



A French planter in Bukit Tambun (maybe Charles Hardouin?) - Photograph taken in 1891 by Jules Claine

Apart from planters, the French presence in Province Wellesley is also notable for the number of Catholic churches and mission schools established since the 1840s, and all along the 19th and early 20th century. St Anne's Church in Bukit Mertajam is remarkable by its distinguished history, from its humble beginnings as a wooden chapel in 1846 to the old church built in 1888 (and which is still standing) and to the new, extensive building completed in 2002. St Anne has by now been granted the status of basilica and is one of the most important destinations of Catholic pilgrimage in Asia, in particular during its annual feast on 26 July. Another interesting example, the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Pagar Tras (Bukit Mertajam) is now ruined, but remains as a romantic testimony to the history of this area.



Six mission schools (in four locations) are still operating today, in Butterworth and Bukit Mertajam. And four churches are still active, in Butterworth, Bukit Mertajam, Permatang Tinggi and Nibong Tebal, while the ruins of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Pagar Tras (Bukit Mertajam) can be visited. The Batu Kawan mission, started in 1838 and complete with church and school, disappeared entirely in the second half of the 19th century, as the local population left after their nutmeg plantations were destroyed by a pest, and the parish priest was killed by a tiger. This is also a reminder of the difficulties faced by the pioneers of Province Wellesley in the 19th century.

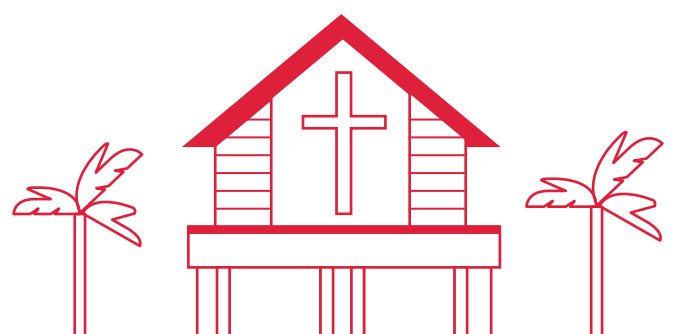


Schools established by French Missionaries in Penang

From 1787 onwards, French Catholic missionaries started to establish schools in many places around Penang. At the beginning, it would be a small parish school, managed directly by the parish priest from the Paris Foreign Missions Society (Missions Etrangères de Paris, or MEP), with a few local helpers and a small number of pupils. Often, there would also be a small orphanage. But the parish priests quickly felt the need to expand the educational activities to the benefit of their communities.

Therefore, in 1852, for the first time, the Catholic priests of Penang started to call for help from large French congregations who were specialized in education – in particular, but not only, the Infant Jesus Sisters, for girls' schools, and the La Salle Brothers, for boys' schools. Their arrival expanded considerably the number of schools established by French missionaries and the scale of these schools, which very soon counted among the best in Penang, educating pupils from all faiths, either in English, Malay, Chinese or Tamil (but not in French!). In the 1970s, the management of most of these schools was transferred to the Ministry of Education, and therefore these schools became Sekolah Kebangsaan – SK (National Schools, ie Public Primary Schools) or Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan – SMK (Public Secondary Schools), but they often kept their original names, recalling their missionary history. Today, 19 schools founded by French missionaries in 11 locations are still in operation in Penang.

In addition to schools, the Saint Joseph Orphanage was founded in 1865 by Father Hab, just by the side of the Church of St Francis Xavier which he had established for the Tamil community, on Jalan Penang. This institution still operates today under the name St Joseph Home, helping underprivileged boys and girls.



Year of Foundation	Name of the School	Congregation	Location
Penang Island			
1787	SK and SMK St Xavier Institution	Parish school then transferred to La Salle Brothers in 1852	Lebuh Farquhar, George Town
1852	SK and SMK Convent Light Street	Infant Jesus Sisters	Lebuh Light, George Town
1878	SK and SMK St George Balik Pulau	Parish school then transferred to La Salle Brothers in 1953	Jalan Besar, Balik Pulau
1922	SK and SMK Convent Pulau Tikus	Infant Jesus Sisters	Lorong Maktab, Pulau Tikus
1935	SJK(C) and SMJK Convent Datuk Keramat	Infant Jesus Sisters	421, Jalan Dato Keramat, Taman Perak, George Town
1955	SK and SMK Convent Green Lane	Infant Jesus Sisters	Jalan Masjid Negeri, Taman Green Lake, George Town
1962	SK Saint Xavier	La Salle Brothers	Jalan Sekolah La Salle, Ayer Itam



Year of Foundation	Name of the School	Congregation	Location
Seberang Perai			
1930	SK (1 and 2) and SMK Convent Butterworth (formerly Convent St Teresa)	Infant Jesus Sisters	Jalan New Ferry, Kampung Bagan Dalam, Butterworth
1931	SK and SMK(M) Convent Bukit Mertajam (formerly St Marguerite's School)	Infant Jesus Sisters	Jalan Kulim, Bukit Mertajam
1933	SK Assumption	La Salle Brothers	Jalan Bagan Dalam, Bagan Dalam, Butterworth
1939	SJK(C) Kim Sen	Established by parish then transferred to The Marist Brothers in 1952	Jalan Kulim, 14000 Bukit Mertajam

SK = Sekolah kebangsaan = Primary school

SMK = Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan = Secondary school

SJK (C) (T) (M) = Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (Cina) (Tamil) (Malay) = Chinese, Tamil or Malay Primary school

SMJK (C) = Chinese Secondary school



Churches built by French Catholic missionaries in Penang

The churches, founded by the French missionaries from the Paris Foreign Missions Society (Missions étrangères de Paris, MEP), have gone through a complex history and were rebuilt several times since their foundation. Some, which started as humble chapels, became impressive buildings – for example the Church of the Holy Spirit, which is now a Cathedral, or St Anne’s Church, now a Basilica. They usually started as wooden structures, covered in atap, and serving multiple functions – a house for the priest, a small chapel, a meeting place for the community and a school, all in the same building! Some of them thrived along the years and have today become important centres for Catholicism in Penang.

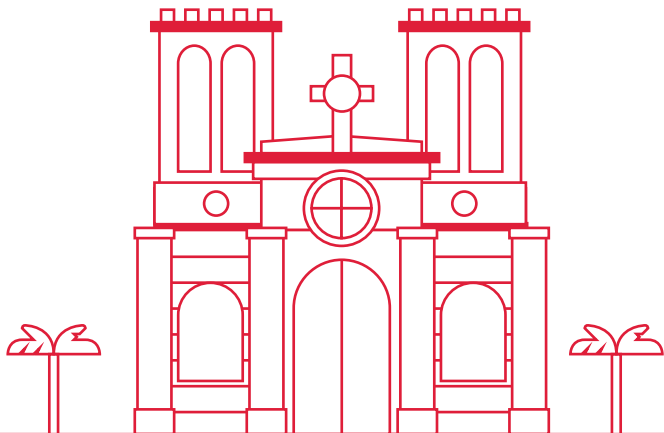
The Church of the Holy Name of Jesus in Balik Pulau is a good example of the evolution of these buildings along the year. It started as a house-chapel in 1855 under Fr. Ducotey. A boys’ school was also established, and then Fr. Le Turdu built part of the current church in 1864 and started a girls’ school. Later additions were made to the building, stain-glasses were built to order in Belgium and the bell was made especially by a foundry in Annecy (France).

Some of the old French churches in Penang are now in ruins, such as the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Pagar Tras (Bukit Mertajam), which was abandoned when the whole village was relocated during the Emergency period in the 1950s.

Some of the churches also disappeared entirely, such as the Church of St John the Baptist in Batu Kawan, which was built in 1838 by the French missionaries, together with a boys’ school and a girls’ school as early as 1844. The community, led by parish priest Fr. Couellan after 1846, was mainly Chinese and its source of economic revenue came from the production of nutmeg. However, a plague destroyed most of the nutmeg trees in the 1850s, forcing the community to migrate to other areas. Fr. Couellan was sadly killed by a tiger in 1859. The Batu Kawan mission was, in the second half of the 19th century, merged into the parish of Matang Tinggi.

While there are no more French missionaries in today’s Malaysia, they have left a deep heritage, which lives on among the Catholic communities around the country, but also much beyond, thanks to the educational activities they started to the benefit of children of all communities and religions.

Year of Foundation	Name of the church	Name of founder	Location
Penang Island			
1786	Church of the Assumption	Bishop Garnault	3, Farquhar Street, George Town (moved to this location in 1857)
1811	Church of the Immaculate Conception	Fr. Pasqual (current building in 1897 by Fr. Renard)	Lorong Maktab, Pulau Tikus
1845	Church of the Holy Name of Jesus	Fr. Ducotey	Jalan Balik Pulau, Balik Pulau
1857	Church of St Francis Xavier	Fr. Hab	Jalan Penang, George Town
1888	Church of Our Lady of Sorrows	Fr. Barillon	Jalan Macalister, George Town
1958	Cathedral of the Holy Spirit	Fr. Surmon	1, Tingkat Besi 1, Island Park, George Town
1968	Risen Christ Catholic Church	Fr. Tavennec	60A, Jalan Air Hitam, Ayer Itam



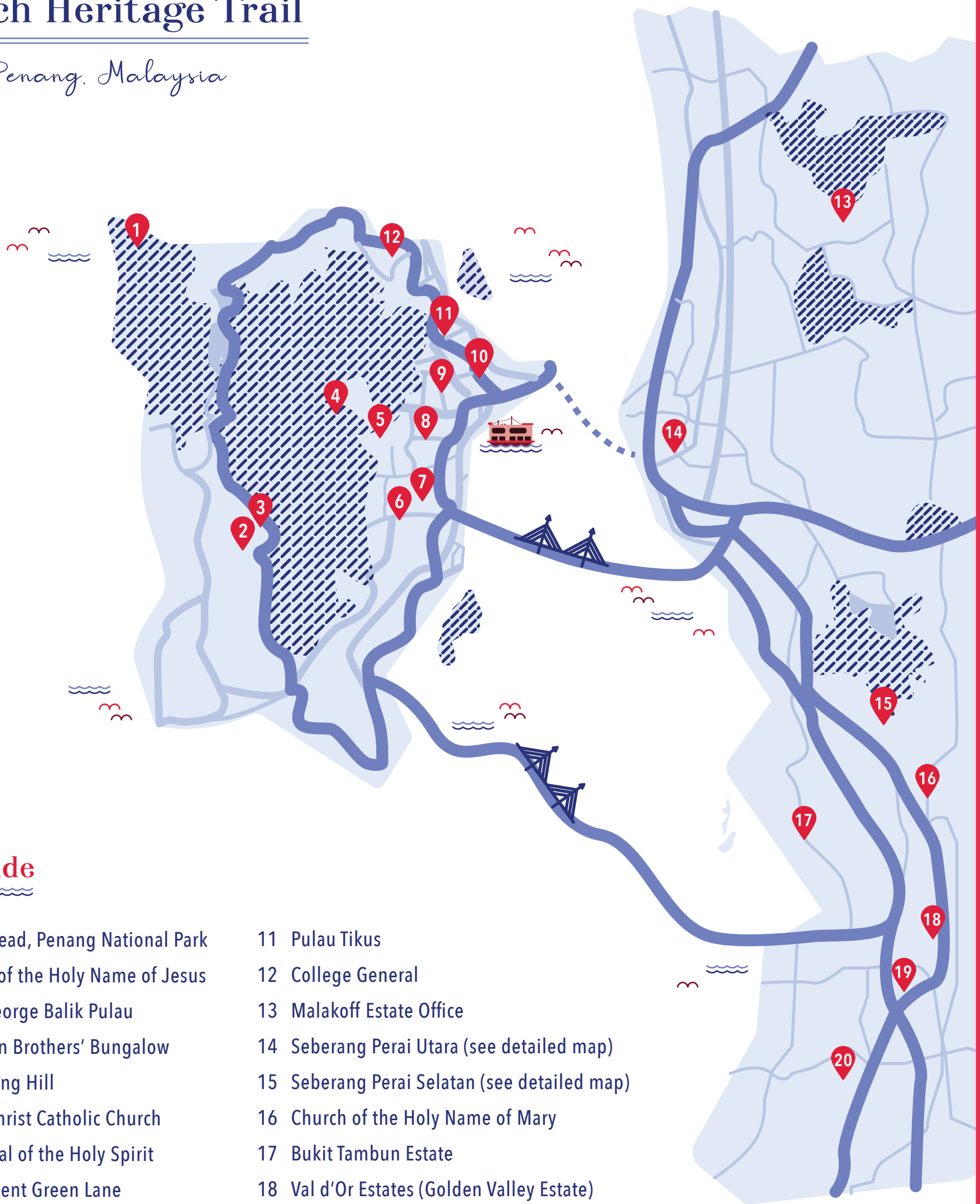
Year of Foundation	Name of the church	Name of founder	Location
Seberang Perai			
1846	St Anne’s Church	Fr. Couellan	Jalan Kulim, Bukit Mertajam
1850	Church of the Holy Name of Mary	Fr. Tisserand	Jalan Besar, Permatang Tinggi, Bukit Mertajam
1872	Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus	Fr. Allard	Pagar Tras, Jalan Sungai Lembu, Bukit Mertajam
1891	Church of St Anthony	Fr. Fée	Jalan Ooi Kar Seng, Nibong Tebal
1935	Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Fr. Souhait	Jalan New Ferry, Kampung Bagan Dalam, Butterworth



.CITY GUIDE.

French Heritage Trail

Penang, Malaysia



Légende

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Muka Head, Penang National Park | 11 Pulau Tikus |
| 2 Church of the Holy Name of Jesus | 12 College General |
| 3 SK St George Balik Pulau | 13 Malakoff Estate Office |
| 4 Christian Brothers' Bungalow on Penang Hill | 14 Seberang Perai Utara (see detailed map) |
| 5 Risen Christ Catholic Church | 15 Seberang Perai Selatan (see detailed map) |
| 6 Cathedral of the Holy Spirit | 16 Church of the Holy Name of Mary |
| 7 SK Convent Green Lane & SMK Convent Green Lane | 17 Bukit Tambun Estate |
| 8 SK Saint Xavier | 18 Val d'Or Estates (Golden Valley Estate) |
| 9 SMJK Convent Dato Keramat | 19 Jawi Estate |
| 10 George Town (see detailed map) | 20 Church of St Anthony |

*Map not to scale



CITY GUIDE

*Map not to scale

French Heritage Trail

George Town

2



Fort Cornwallis
Jalan Tun Syed Sheh Barakbah

5



Convent Light Street School
36, Lebuhs Light

7



St Xavier's Institution
7, Lebuhs Farquhar

8



Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion
14, Lebuhs Leith

9



Eastern and Oriental Hotel
10, Lebuhs Farquhar

12



Alliance Française de Penang
46, Jalan Phuah Hin Leong

- 1

Port of Penang
1, Pesara King Edward
- 2

Fort Cornwallis
Jalan Tun Syed Sheh Barakbah
- 3

Church Street and Bishop Street
- 4

Syed Al-Attas Mansion
128, Lebuhs Armenian
- 5

Convent Light Street School
36, Lebuhs Light
- 6

Church of the Assumption
3, Lebuhs Farquhar
- 7

St Xavier's Institution
7, Lebuhs Farquhar
- 8

Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion
14, Lebuhs Leith
- 9

Eastern and Oriental Hotel
10, Lebuhs Farquhar
- 10

Old Protestant / Catholic Cemetery
Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah
- 11

St Francis Xavier's Church
52-K Jalan Penang
- 12

Alliance Française de Penang
46, Jalan Phuah Hin Leong
- 13

Church of our Lady of Sorrows
33, Jalan Macalister
- 14

SMJK Convent Datuk Keramat
421, Jalan Dato Keramat, Taman Perak





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French Heritage Trail

*Map not to scale

Pulau Tikus

1



St. Joseph's Novitiate

Gurney Paragon Mall,
163-D, Persiaran Gurney

2



Catholic Cemetery
Jalan Kelawai

161, Jalan Kelawai

3



SMK Convent Pulau Tikus

Lorong Maktab

4



Medan Maktab / College Square

Medan Maktab

5



Church of the Immaculate Conception

1, Lorong Maktab



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French Heritage Trail

Seberang Perai Utara

1



Malakoff Estate Office
Tasek Gelugor

2



**Church of the Nativity of
the Blessed Virgin Mary**
3972, Jalan New Ferry,
Butterworth

3



SK Assumption
Jalan Bagan Dalam,
Butterworth

4



**SMK Convent Butterworth
/ Convent St Teresa**
Jalan New Ferry, Butterworth

5



**SMK Convent Bukit
Mertajam**
Jalan Kulim, Bukit Mertajam

6



**SK Convent Bukit
Mertajam**
Jalan Kulim, Bukit Mertajam

7

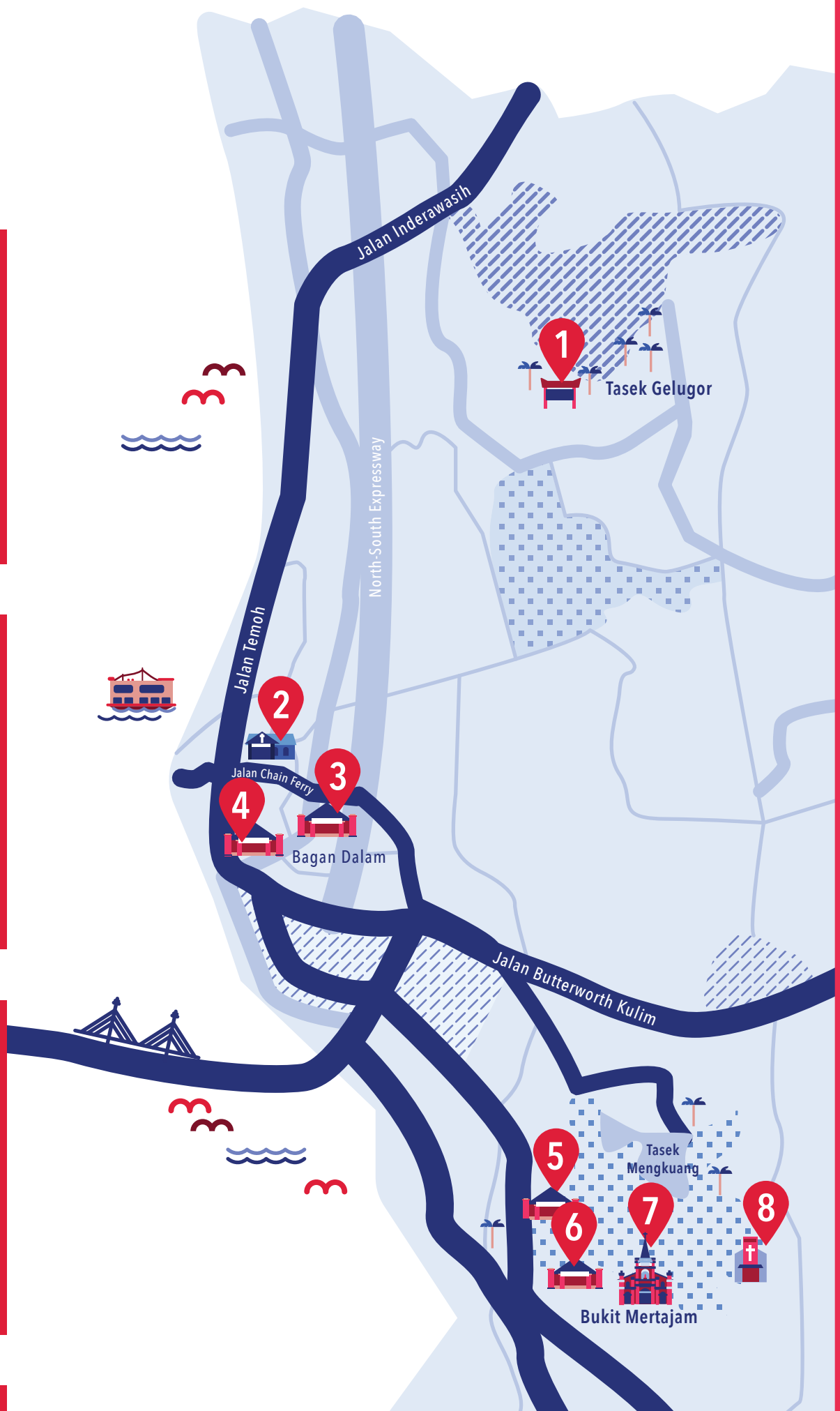


St Anne's Church
Jalan Kulim, Bukit Mertajam

8



**Church of the Sacred
Heart of Jesus**
Pagar Tras, Jalan Sungai
Lembu, Bukit Mertajam



*Map not to scale



CITY GUIDE.

French Heritage Trail

Seberang Perai Selatan

1



Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Pagar Tras, Jalan Sungai Lembu, Bukit Mertajam

2



St Anne's Church

Jalan Kulim, Bukit Mertajam

3



SMK Convent Bukit Mertajam

Jalan Kulim, Bukit Mertajam

4



SK Convent Bukit Mertajam

Jalan Kulim, Bukit Mertajam

5



Alma Rubber Estate

Jalan Alma, Bukit Mertajam

6



Church of the Holy Name of Mary

Jalan Besar, Permatang Tinggi, Bukit Mertajam

7



Bukit Tambun Estate

Jalan Bukit Tambun, Simpang Ampat

8



Val d'Or Estates

Jalan Valdor, Sungai Bakap

9



Jawi Estate

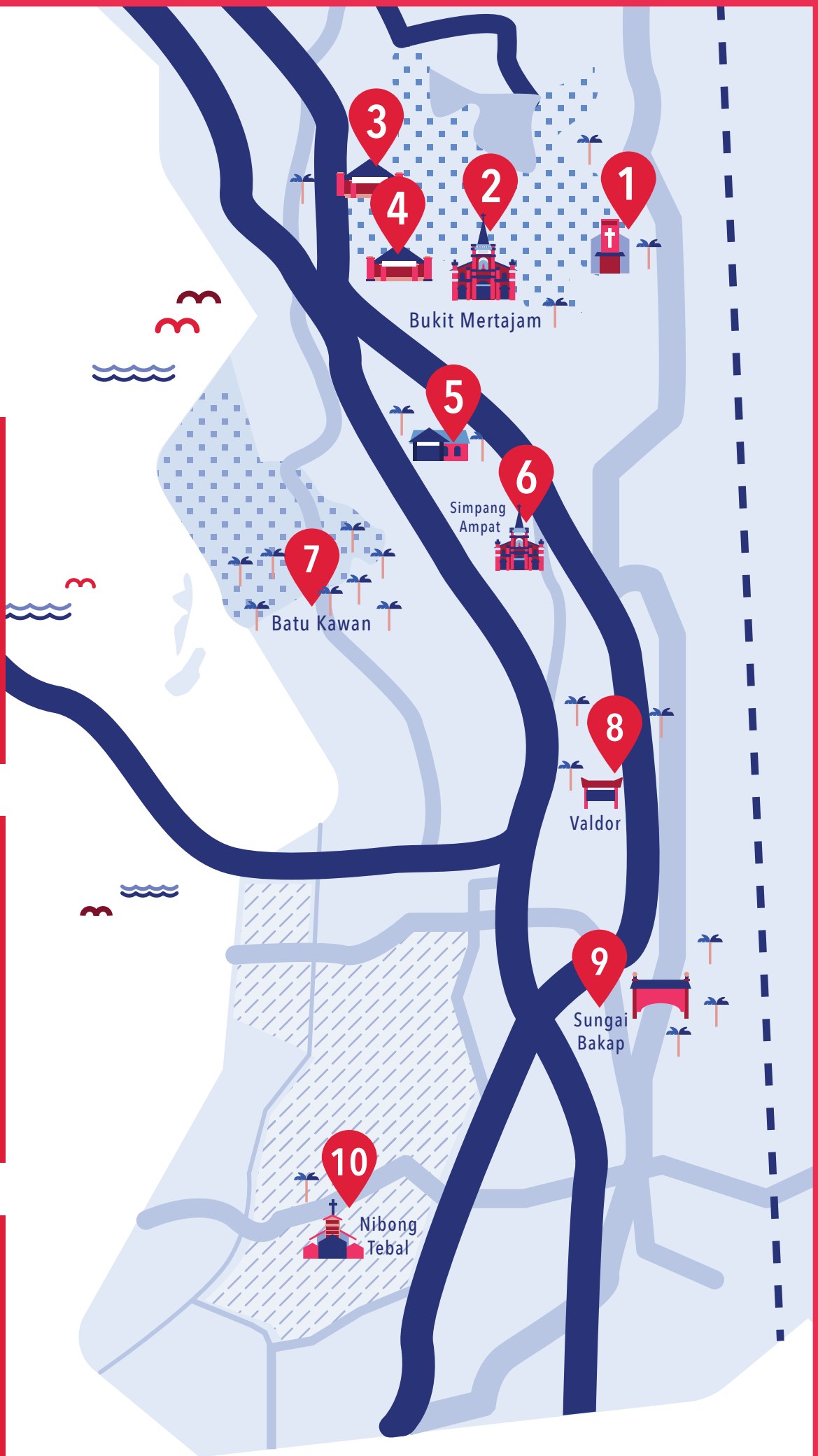
Kampung Jawi, Sungai Jawi

10



Church of St Anthony

Jalan Ooi Kar Seng, Nibong Tebal



*Map not to scale



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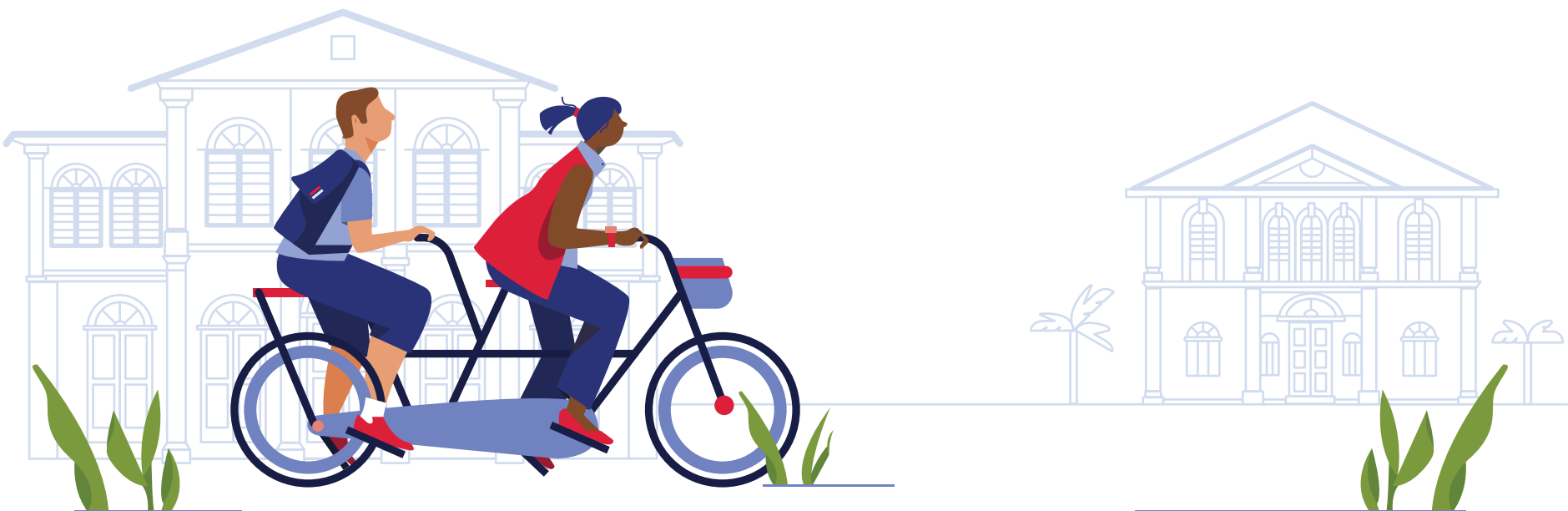


**AMBASSADE
DE FRANCE
EN MALAISIE**

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