

## SEINE RIVER WINTER WALK Wilderness in the City

Welcome to a Routes on the Red self-directed tour of the Red River Valley. These itineraries guide you through the history and the geography of this beautiful and interesting landscape. Several different Routes on the Red, featuring driving, cycling, walking or canoeing/kayaking, lead you on an exploration of four historical and cultural themes: Fur Trading Routes on the Red; Settler Routes on the Red; Natural and First Nations Routes on the Red; and Art and Cultural Routes on the Red.

*The purpose of this route description is to provide information on a self-guided walk. The walking described includes public lands and trails. While you enjoy yourself, please walk carefully as you are responsible to ensure your own safety and that any activity is within your abilities. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate and up to date. However, we are unable to accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury sustained as a result of anyone relying upon this information.*

Step away from the hustle and bustle of the city and into the calm of the Seine River Corridor. As you walk along the frozen river, you will be enveloped by the serenity of this special natural space in an urban setting. The history of life along the river will transport you back to the time of Manitoba's earliest settlers.

*This is either a pleasant stroll of approximately 1.8 km in length, or a longer half day walk of 7.4 km (or more). There are no places to stop for a rest or a bite along the trail; however, there are restaurants and convenience stores along*

The first written reference to the Seine River dates from August 18, 1800. In his journal, a fur trader for the Northwest Company, Alexander Henry, referred to Rivière la Seine as a creek. The name is thought to come from the French translation of the river's Aboriginal name, although some people have assumed it was named for the Seine River in Paris. The original name may have been Tchimâhâgânisipi, since seine is French for drownet, which is Tchimâhâgân in both Cree and Ojibway, two common Aboriginal languages in Manitoba. Sipi means river. Translations of Aboriginal place names used by the earliest French explorers and voyageurs were often a mixture of these two native languages.

The first European settlers along the Seine River arrived at least as early as the start of the 19th century. They were voyageurs and their Métis descendants. Prior to the 1821 merger of the NW Co. and the HBC, voyageurs guided and paddled the canoes of explorers and fur traders, and were the backbone of the fur trade era, working 14 hours a day, paddling 50 strokes a minute, and transporting 180 pounds of goods each over portages. They carried on this backbreaking labour for little pay. Early leaders such as Alexander Mackenzie

*St. Anne's Road, near the intersection of John Bruce Road. This tour starts at the John Bruce pedestrian bridge over the Seine River from which you will walk on the frozen waters of the river north to Bishop Grandin Boulevard. From here you will follow a riverbank path back to the bridge. If you would like, you may then continue your walk on the Seine by heading south. This will give you an even greater chance to experience the serenity and beauty of this wilderness.*

(governor of the HBC) relied on the voyageurs' know-how to open the vast expanses of the continent to trade. Descendants of French voyageurs and native women became known as Métis, "mixed blood", from the Latin word meaning to mix. The early Métis made their living as interpreters, guides, hunters and canoeists. As transportation routes opened up and the Red River Settlement grew, later generations became commercial farmers and successful entrepreneurs in the Red River Valley.

This walking tour begins on the Seine River at the John Bruce Bridge. To reach this location, travel south on St. Anne's Road, past Bishop Grandin Boulevard. In a few blocks, turn left onto John Bruce Road, which is named for the first President of the Provisional Government of 1869-70 – there are no traffic lights at this intersection. Drive the two hundred metres to the footbridge and park your vehicle. Follow the trail down to the river on the right side of the bridge. Begin your walk by turning left to walk north on the river, with St. Anne's Road off to your left and the new housing development on your right.

km to next location	DIRECTIONS	Total km
0.0	Follow the river as it swings left from the John Bruce Bridge.	0.0
0.4	As the river veers to the right, note the high riverbank on your left that appears to continue straight.	0.4

In 1853, Louis Riel Senior (father of the more famous Louis Riel, who played a significant role in the formation of the Province of Manitoba), known as the Miller of the Seine, and his partner Benjamin Lagimodière constructed a water-powered gristmill along the Seine River on the old river lot number 50/51, close to where you are currently standing. The mill, which included a dam, was considered quite an engineering achievement for its time. Riel Senior actually altered the flow of the Seine, to create a longer straight section (the remnant of this diversion is the high straight bank that continued straight when you followed the path of the river as it veered right). This alteration in the course of the river provided a more rapid flow of water, and therefore a strong current with which to power his mill. Additionally, the construction of the dam in association with the mill, ensured that there was water available throughout the year. This is the first documented river alteration on the Seine. The original millstones from Riel and Lagimodière's mill now rest in front of the St-Boniface Museum.

Louis Riel Senior was a farmer and Métis activist, son of a voyageur and a Métis woman. Riel was born in 1817 and schooled in Lower Canada. He played an important role in the Red River community and was regarded as a significant leader in the 1850s. His son, Louis Riel, would come to emulate him, continuing the tradition of Riel leadership in the Métis community.

One of the Seine River corridor's better known French Canadian settlers were the father- and mother-in-law of Louis Riel Senior. In 1806, Jean Baptiste Lagimodière married Marie-Anne Gaboury. A pioneering woman, she travelled 2,000 miles (3,200 km) with her husband in a canoe brigade, becoming the first European woman to settle permanently in the west. Marie-Anne adapted quickly to the Métis way of life,

giving birth to her first child in a wigwam and her second on the open prairie while out riding. The couple's pale-skinned children fascinated the Aboriginal people, and there was even a kidnapping attempt by the wife of a Blackfoot chief. Marie-Anne remained the only woman of European descent in Western Canada until 1812, when the Selkirk settlers arrived.

Lagimodière was born in Lower Canada in 1778 and came west in 1800 as a voyageur. He settled, working as a trapper and hunter. He often supplied provisions to the Hudson's Bay Company, and also worked for the company as a messenger. His most famous trip as a messenger took him from The Forks to Lord Selkirk in Montreal in 1815, a journey of over 1800 miles (2,880 km). He was carrying a message from the colony to Selkirk, seeking help against the hostile NorthWest Company that was determined to destroy the Red River Settlement. In recognition of his epic trek that helped to bring desperately needed supplies and military protection to the isolated Red River settlement, Lord Selkirk granted Lagimodière a large parcel of land at the mouth of the Seine River. Lagimodière and his wife Marie-Anne Gaboury, built their home here at the mouth of the Seine River in 1817.

The Lagimodières' daughter Julie, who married Louis Riel Senior, gave birth to Louis Riel Junior, the Métis leader who is regarded as a father of Manitoba.

*Want to know more about the Métis? Try Rivers West's Métis and the Path to Confederation: self-directed drive & stroll tour.*

<b>0.1</b>	Pass the site of the original house associated with the mill on the left bank.	<b>0.5</b>
<b>0.1</b>	Pass the first of many artificial duck nesting houses on your right.	<b>0.6</b>

The Seine River is a slow flowing, meandering river, as is the Red River into which it flows. While it was not used for water transportation due to its small size, it was a source of beaver, muskrat and other pelts that were crucial to the fur trade. The river is still a beaver habitat and their dams block the Seine today.

Once neglected and used as a garbage dump, the Seine River at last received much needed care and attention when, in 1990, a group of concerned citizens organized volunteer clean-up crews to rescue the ailing natural habitat. Save Our Seine has laboured ever since, its members dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural environment and heritage resource of the Seine River. The duck nesting houses are one example of a caring, concerned community.

A current project of Save Our Seine is the installation of artificial rapids called riffles. The purpose of the riffles is to hold back some of the river's water, slowing its entry into the city, thus reducing erosion and bank instability.

The force of the water naturally creates deep pools near the artificial rapids that add to the quality of aquatic life.

The source of the Seine River is in Sandilands Provincial Forest, southeast of Steinbach. Prior to 1883, the course of the river was interrupted in two places by large marshes as it entered the Red River Valley from the higher uplands. These marshes were located south of the present-day Floodway (one location between Ste. Anne and Dufresne, the other west and north of the parish of Lorette). The river was made continuous in 1883 thanks to channels dug through both the marshes by local farmers and Elzéar Lagimodière, who had been contracted to do the work.

*Want to know more about the natural heritage of the Red River Valley? Try Rivers West's Glaciers to Grasslands: self-directed drive & stroll tour in the summer.*

From the Red River Floodway to the mouth of the Seine at the Red River – there is a straight line distance of 12.8 km (8 miles). However, due to the continuous meandering of the Seine over the very flat terrain that makes up the Red River Valley, the river actually winds over 30.3 km (18.6 miles).

The river has changed significantly over the years, primarily due to settlement of the area. Drainage ditches, bridges, and agricultural and urban development have all played

a role in modifying the river basin and bed. The construction of the Red River Floodway in 1967 brought about the Seine River's most dramatic physical change, channelling the waters of the Seine through a huge inverted siphon underneath the Floodway. Prior to settlement of the area, naturally occurring changes in the river's course produced oxbow lakes when the river took a shortcut and left its meandering loop behind.

0.5

Come to Bishop Grandin Boulevard. Do not go under the bridge. Follow the trails up the bank and turn right, putting Bishop Grandin on your left. In 50 metres, pass through green posts and a sign indicating that this is a Grasslands Naturalization Area. Follow the trail through a small bit of woods and then veer right – putting the houses on your left and the trees on your right.

1.1

The new residential subdivision on your left is called Royalwood.

Bishop Grandin Boulevard is named after Vital-Justin Grandin, a Roman Catholic priest and Bishop, who arrived in St. Boniface in 1854 and was assigned to a mission in Fort Chipewyan the following year. In 1857, he was made a coadjutor bishop of St. Boniface with a residence at Ile-a-la-Crosse, later to become the diocese of St. Albert (Alberta).

The Seine River flows along a greenway, a corridor of open space, where citizens preserve and restore the natural world close to where they live and work. As land is developed, natural space becomes reduced and fragmented, causing habitat diversity to diminish. Greenways such as this protect parts of the natural landscape, offering a range of benefits, from open space and recreation to meeting important ecological needs, providing a habitat and acting as a conduit for wildlife. These corridors also function as a source of water and seed for the surrounding landscape, and as a location

for wildlife viewing, quiet contemplation, recreation and education for the local residents.

The areas alongside rivers and streams, such as the riverbank you're walking along, are called riparian zones. These small areas are important because they provide critical habitat and maintain biodiversity for the bordering areas. Plants and trees growing in the riparian zone help to stabilize the soil and reduce erosion. This vegetation is also important during times of flood, as it soaks up the water and slows the speed of the water flooding its banks. The Seine River habitat supports a wide diversity of plant and animal species, including aquatic, semi-aquatic and upland wildlife. The river plays an important role in the survival of the native animals and plants in a relatively inhospitable urban environment. The vegetation along the edge of the river is home to wildlife such as fish, turtles, frogs, herons, ducks, beavers and muskrats.

0.3

Continue straight as a path from the housing development joins trail from the left. Keep the houses on your left and the trees on your right. Pass the first of many artificial duck nesting houses on your right.

1.4

0.4

Reach the John Bruce Bridge.

1.8

At this point you can return to your car or, if you would like to continue walking along the Seine, go down to the river and turn left (passing beneath the bridge, and heading south – St. Anne's Road will be off to your right and the new housing

development will be on your left).

1.1

Pass under the string of lights spanning the river, used to illuminate a skating area.

2.9

0.2

At what looks like a fork in the river, keep to the left (the right would be a shortcut).

3.1

The section to the right has been dammed to keep the river flowing around the loop. Had the river been left to run its natural course and take the shortcut, the loop you are now

walking would have dried up. In the case of a larger river, this would have led to the creation of an oxbow lake.

0.2

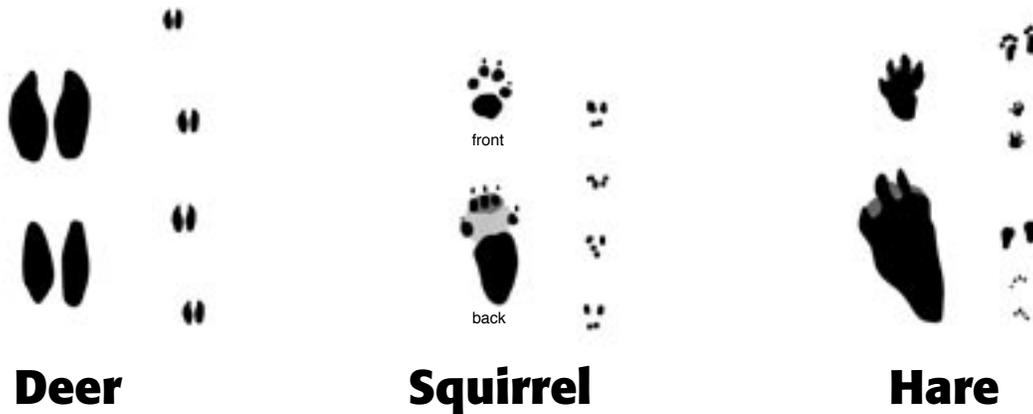
Note colourful birdhouses in trees on your left.

3.3

The Seine is quite sheltered from winter winds because of the trees along the sides. Even in the winter you may enjoy wildlife sightings, such as numerous species of birds, deer and rabbits. Watch for tracks in the snow. This area is actually home to a deer herd of about 20, so it's likely you will have some sightings. The cloven hooves of the deer make distinctive patterns in the snow. Generally, only the two large toes will leave an impression, but if the animal is running or jumping the smaller dew claws in the back will leave a mark.

Rabbit tracks will show four feet, with the two larger hind feet side by side and the two front feet staggered, one behind the other. Squirrels move in a similar way, but the key to differentiating their tracks from those of rabbits is the placement of the front feet, which is side by side.

The following track prints are some examples of what you may see. Keep in mind that the prints are not in scale with one another.



<b>0.2</b>	Pass a number of wooden birdhouses on your right.	<b>3.5</b>
<b>0.4</b>	You are presently passing from St. Vital parish into St. Norbert parish.	<b>3.9</b>

As the area surrounding the Seine River corridor became settled in the 1800s, Roman Catholic parishes were established along its west side, with three parishes between the mouth of the Seine and the spot where it meets the current Red River Floodway. The parishes of Saint-Boniface, Saint-Vital and Saint-Norbert bordered the Seine on the west, and 10,000 acres of land owned by the Roman Catholic Church bordered the river on the east. The 10,000 acres on the east, called "La Seigneurie", were given to the church for its mission by Lord Selkirk, as was the land on the west side by the Red River and The Forks. The land on the west side of the Seine (near the Red River) was named Saint-Boniface, after a Benedictine

missionary, the patron saint of Germany. One of the reasons for the selection of the name Saint-Boniface was as a courtesy to the regiment of Swiss-German mercenaries (de Meurons) who came to the area to help Lord Selkirk restore and maintain the peace between the Scots and Irish settlers and the men of the fur trade. In 1817, the Swiss-German soldiers settled along the Seine River on land given to them by Lord Selkirk. This new community began the first official Seine River corridor settlement and, for a time, the Seine was known as German Creek. After the flood of 1826, many of the soldiers and Red River settlers permanently left the settlement for the United States.

<b>0.3</b>	Pass the Mager House on the right.	<b>4.2</b>
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The Magers were an early prominent family in St. Vital. The house, built in 1914, is now listed as a heritage building by the City of Winnipeg.

<b>0.4</b>	Reach the newly constructed Southglen Bridge.	<b>4.6</b>
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At this point it is possible to continue along the river, as far as you would like. You will encounter much more of the same serenity and peacefulness that has surrounded you on your river walk thus far.

A few hundred metres further on is a 300 to 1,000 year old First Nations encampment site (there is no longer any visible remains – the site has been excavated and returned to its original state). The riverbanks and the surrounding forests

provided an excellent sheltered area for the Aboriginal peoples who lived on this land prior to the arrival of the first European settlers. This site is one of hundreds that dot the riverbanks in the Red River Valley.

To return to your car, turn around and retrace your steps along the river to John Bruce Bridge.

2.8

Reach the John Bruce Bridge. Walk up the bank to reach your car.

7.4

*Thank you for joining River's West's self-directed excursion along the Seine River. We hope that you had an enjoyable trip. We would love to have you discover more of the Red River Valley on our other self-directed itineraries.*

We greatly value your input and comments. If something was not clear, a road sign changed, or if you found a delightful picnic site or visit that you would like to share with future travellers, please let us know. The best way to communicate is to write the changes or new information directly onto the appropriate route description page, and mail or fax it to the Rivers West office. Thank you in advance for your contributions!

Rivers West, officially known as Red River Corridor Inc./L'Association du Corridor Rivière Rouge, is a not-for-profit organization, with the overall objective to develop the Red River Corridor as a destination. Our mandate is to create and implement a long-term tourism and conservation strategy focusing on the development, promotion and management of the natural, tourism, cultural and heritage, and recreational resources of the Red River from Emerson to Lake Winnipeg.

We are pleased to receive financial support from the federal and provincial governments and the participation of rural municipalities, towns and cities along the length of the river. A variety of projects are underway in the Red River region. These include the preservation of special lands for conservation, the designation of the Red River as a heritage river, the construction of river access sites, and the promotion of existing tourism opportunities through self-directed tours.

Contact us for more information at:

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