1. The Augustin Monastery
Founded in 1427 by Louis de Bourbon, count of Vendôme. The cloister archways are surrounded by two stories of timber-frame construction. On the ground floor, a huge building surrounded the refectory. The monks cells were situated on the first floor. After very impressive restoration work completed in 2004, you can see 15th-century frescoes representing St Augustin teaching monks about fruit trees and birds. The church was situated where the road is today.

2. The Marescot quarter
The former Augustin monastery was sold as "National Property" in 1791. In 1804, it became a barracks for a garrison which took the name of General de Marescot, a local man and Inspector General of Military Engineering. In 1921 a military company with pigeons took over. In 1961, the area was finally abandoned by the military after 130 years.

3. Cemetery and Saint Laurent des Varennes Church
The foundation of the parochial St Laurent church, surrounded by the old cemetery, probably dates from the 14th century. Abandoned in 1750, the church was used during the Revolution for meetings of the "popular society". The ruins are a listed building. The remains of the church can be found at the far end of the cemetery on the left.

4. The defensive moat
The trenches were dug during the second half of the 14th century by Jean VI of Montoire. This half circle protected the new town. It is possible to visit the house during the tourist season.

5. Antoine Moreau Hospital
The administration services of the retirement home occupy a 16th-century house which belonged to Abbot Moreau (1625-1702), founder of the sisters of charity community. The town hall was housed here until 1969. The beautiful buildings surrounding the hospital courtyard dating from the 17th century, and the octagonal 16th century tower, are both worth studying in detail, as well as the two sundials on the facades. The windows retain some of their original stained glass and delicate iron balcony rails.

6. Town hall
Since 1669, it was a private house in the 18th century. The arms of Montoire appear for the first time in 1215 on the seal of Jean 1st of Montoire. The arms show a minor branch of the main family.

7. St Laurent church
Several times destroyed and rebuilt, the façade dates from the 15th century. It is the third parochial church after those of St Oustrille and St Laurent des Varennes. The gothic central nave, flanked by two lateral naves as well as the chancel, dates from 1859. The stained glass windows were created between 1898 and 1908. The organ, bought second-hand, dates from 1859. The church, burned down several times, has been rebuilt on each occasion.

8. Bandstand
Place Clemenceau: 150 meters long by 100 meters wide. The bandstand of today was built in 1913 over the original water fountain dating from 1869 which brought water from a source under the medieval castle.

9. Renaissance house
This house also known as "the bailiff's house" is a magnificent manor house dating from the 16th century. It is the oldest house on the main square. The main windows and attic windows are raised on sculpted pediments. For several years, the house belonged to the landscape painter Charles Busson, born in Montoire in 1822. It is possible to visit the house during the tourist season.

10. The house of Gervais Launay
He was born in this house on 22nd November 1804. He was an art teacher in Vendome and joint founder of the Vendome society of archaeology, literature and science.

11. Rue du Boël
Note several fine timber-framed houses; the old hook of the manorial butchery until 1663; the protestant church (the house in carved stone) – then cross the bridge.

12. Le Grenier à sel - literally "the salt loft" (storage for tax purposes)
Originally installed in the Rue Saint-Denis, it was transferred in 1663 to a Protestant building in the Rue du Boël. It was returned to the Rue Saint-Denis in 1758. It was a storage place so that salt could be taxed - a tax created in 1342 which lasted until 1790.

13. St Gilles chapel
This 11th century chapel is dedicated to Saint Gilles, a 7th century Benedictine monk. He lived as a hermit in the forest, feeding on the milk of a tame doe. He is said to cure children's nervous illnesses. During the 16th century, the famous poet Ronsard was head of a priory which owned this chapel. The figures which decorate the chevet are typical of Romanesque architecture. The frescoes to be found in the edifice are masterpieces of French Romanesque painting. They represent three impressive figures of Christ in Majesty. You can obtain the keys and pay to visit at the Café de la Paix in the place Clemenceau (central market place).

14. A view of the Medieval castle
The castle, including the primitive tower which was built on a natural spur during the 11th century, covers an area of 4,500 square metres. Henri IV ordered the dismantling of the castle in 1594 so as to render it indefensible.

15. Castle spring
This spring was the only source of water for the area and the inhabitants of the castle. In 1860, the water was piped across the river and fed into the fountain on the main square.

16. St Oustrille church
The first parish church, it was constructed in the 11th century and extended in the 14th century. Sold as "National Property" during the Revolution, it was saved from destruction in 1950. It is the former parish church of St Oustrille.

17. « Skittle house »
This house, decorated with wood, is known as the "skittle" house and dates from the Renaissance. It has a remarkable chimney with sculptures representing a game of skittles, hence the name. The huge ball that crowned the sculptures fell in 1915.
This tour invites you to discover the ancient heart of Montoire, starting from the Augustin Monastery. At each place you will find an explanatory plaque.

Guided visits are available in season - find the dates on www.vendome-tourisme.fr

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