

CRI[®]LLOS

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Pavés de La Rochelle[®]... a short history

Rue de l'Escale, which runs parallel to **Rue du Palais**, is one of the fascinating sights of the historic centre of La Rochelle. The road is named after Jean de L'Escale, a 17th-century adviser to the King and is famous for its **cobblestones** (known as **pavés** in French), which came from the **ballast of ships** from various countries. When these ships headed to La Rochelle to collect **salt and wine**, they were often too light and it was customary for their holds **to be ballasted with stones** or cobbles from their home country, which they would then leave on the dockside in La Rochelle.

It is said that these cobbles on **Rue de l'Escale** come from a number of sources with dark stone from Quebec (from the banks of the St. Lawrence River), granite from Cornwall, moraine from Scandinavia, and basalt from Senegal in **West Africa**.

La Rochelle traded with these places from as early as the Middle Ages.

The stones can also be found in the curtain walls of the city's ramparts, but it is in **Rue de l'Escale** that they are most visible. In the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, La Rochelle was one of the most prosperous ports in France, thanks to the **beaver and otter pelt trade** with **La Belle Province**, Quebec's nickname... a trade so lucrative that the skins were known as '**brown gold**'!

The cobblestones are a nostalgic reminder of the glory days of La Rochelle's international trade!

The ships leaving for the New World were loaded with men and women, settlers, livestock, weapons, and other goods for the outward journey. For their return, they were ballasted with cobblestones, which were simply left near the harbours where they docked, as is the case with La Rochelle where these stones were piled up along the coast near **La Repentie** and **Chef de Baie**. It was from here that the tradesmen responsible for reinforcing the ramparts and **paving the streets of La Rochelle** were allowed to collect them. In the late 18th and 19th centuries, La Rochelle city council initiated the paving of all the city's streets, in the image of **Rue de l'Escale**... however this road remains the only **perfectly preserved** example!

The **Pavés de La Rochelle®** have been a speciality of CRIOLLOS artisan chocolatier since 2012. They are little squares of hazelnut Gianduia... chocolate with caramelised hazelnuts and a hint of *fleur de sel* from the *Île de Ré*.

They are sold exclusively in CRIOLLOS boutiques.

We hope you enjoy them!



MADE AND PACKAGED BY CRIOLLOS ARTISAN CHOCOLATIER, LA ROCHELLE.

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21 rue Chef de Ville, LA ROCHELLE & 1 rue Newton, AYTRÉ

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