

The threshing barn

You can find barns throughout most of the Valais, along the plains and up to nearly 1900 metres. Built to dry hay, thresh and winnow grain, the barn is an enclosed space. It is primarily used as a threshing floor - a firm, smooth, watertight surface where grain can be flailed without damaging the floor or letting any grain escape through gaps.

The design of the threshing floor and the method of reinforcing the walls are features that tell granaries from one region to another apart. Once threshed, the grains were winnowed and then separated from the chaff.

Threshing would take place during the winter months. As farmers worked in an unheated space, they would go there every other day or every three days, taking breaks to warm up.

Today, some of the barns in Sarreyer have been converted into homes.

"They threshed the wheat in winter. I remember hearing the noise coming from the threshing barn because I lived next door."

— *Marie-Thérèse Pellissier, née Masson in 1941 in Sarreyer*

"The image is inspired by an old painting, *Wheat threshing with a flail*".