

STRASBOURG

PRESS KIT

2024



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DE TOURISME
DE STRASBOURG
ET SA RÉGION



STRASBOURG
GRANDE ÎLE
& NEUSTADT
PATRIMOINE
MONDIAL
WORLD HERITAGE



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KEY FEATURES

Embodying the city's evolution since the Middle Ages, the old town and Neustadt feature a remarkably high-quality group of monuments, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Grande Ile

Enclosed by the boundary of the River Ill, the Grande Ile Island, the historic town centre, is connected to the rest of the city by 21 bridges and footbridges.

It has seen Strasbourg develop, enabling it in **1988 to become the first historic city centre listed in its entirety as a UNESCO World Heritage site**. On the main squares and little pedestrian streets, many buildings are worth a look:

- **The Kammerzell House**

This Renaissance building, the foundations of which date to 1427, is a former merchant's house. Its steep roof, beams sculpted with secular subjects, crown glass windows and stone ground floor inspire admiration. 👁 16 place de la Cathédrale

- **Palais Rohan (Rohan Palace)**

First the place of residence of the four cardinals of Rohan, then city hall and then an imperial and royal palace, it is a testament to the princely art of living of the 18th century. Its classical architecture is inspired by fine Parisian townhouses. It now

houses several museums. 👁 2 place du Château

- **Ancienne Grande Boucherie (former slaughterhouse)**

Built in 1587 to replace the old slaughterhouse that had been in use since the 13th century, this exceptional example of Renaissance architecture has been home since 1919 to the Historical Museum of the City of Strasbourg.

👁 2 rue du Vieux-Marché-aux-Poissons

- **Ancienne Douane**

This building, with its gable roof, located on the banks of the River Ill, was used for centuries for storing and taxing goods transiting on the Rhine. Now it houses a restaurant and a farmer's market. 👁 6 rue de la Douane

- **The Neubau**

Dating to the late 16th century, this remarkable, extremely rigorously symmetrical building was constructed in cut stone, a daring choice at the time because it was in sharp contrast with the local architectural style, which traditionally used half-timbering. 👁 10 place Gutenberg

• The cathedral

The Strasbourg Cathedral stands on a wide cobblestone square as in the Middle Ages. It rests on foundations of an old roman basilica of the Rhine constructed in 1015 by Bishop Wernher, of the Hapsburg family. Destroyed by fire, it was gradually replaced by a new cathedral. Nearly three centuries passed between the reconstruction of the choir in 1176 and the completion of the steeple in 1439. Its height of **142 m.** classified Notre-Dame of Strasbourg as **the tallest edifice in Christendom up until the 19th century.**



A little history about a big construction project

The foundations and a few stones in the crypt are the only remains of the old basilica. Around 1225, the arrival of an architect and craftsmen from Chartres revolutionised the course of the construction.

A project manager whose name remains unknown to us introduced the local artisans to the splendours of Gothic art ignored so far. This anonymous individual left behind unrivalled masterpieces, such as the **Pillar of Angels** and the statues of the

Church and Synagogue.

At the end of the 13th Century, work began on the main façade, the most richly ornate. The tympana of its three portals are dedicated to the **life and Passion of Christ** and to the **Last Judgment**. The famous group of the Tempter, surrounded by **the Wise and Foolish Virgins**, which decorate the right portal, served as a model for the cathedrals of Fribourg and Basle. On the left portal, the **Virtues** are stabbing the **Vices** with their lances.

"A prodigy of the gigantic and of the delicate" (Victor Hugo)

A strikingly delicate double gable crowns the portals. In a frame of stone, delicately ornamented with openwork, blooms a magnificent rose window, attributed to Erwin of Steinbach, in charge of the cathedral project from 1284 to 1318. Above it, two towers connected by the belfry, constructed only at the end of the 14th century, compose the platform. From this height, after having climbed the 329 stairs, one can enjoy a magnificent view of the city and its surroundings. The tower, octagonal in shape and crowned by an ornate steeple credited to John Hültz, is found on the north side of the platform.

On the south side of the Cathedral, the beautiful **Romanesque portal**, the oldest of the building, is flanked by copies of the famous **Church and Synagogue statues** whose originals are preserved at the Œuvre Notre-Dame Museum. The tympanum of the left door is decorated with a magnificent Death of the Virgin, one which filled Delacroix with admiration. On the tympanum of the left door appears the Coronation of the Virgin. The portal on the left side, dating from the end of the 15th century, is dedicated to Saint Lawrence, whose martyrdom -a modern copy- is represented above the door.

The **nave**, whose harmonious proportions fill one with wonder, was inspired by that of St. Denis, and constructed in two stages between 1240 and 1275. Most of its original stained-glass windows, whose golden brilliance is due to the use of lighter colours which the master glassworkers of Strasbourg have always favoured, have been preserved. The **oldest windows** of the nave date back to the beginning of the 13th century and are located on the north side-aisle. They picture the succession of Germanic kings and emperors. The Virgin of the choir is modern. In the nave, the stained-glass windows with the saints which face each other are also impressive.

In the 14th century, the **Chapel of Saint Catherine**, with remarkable windows from the same century featuring Jesus' life, and the **Chapel of Saint Lawrence** whose stained glass windows are those of the old Dominican church, were added to the nave. In the north transept, a Mount of Olives (1498) and baptismal fonts in the late-Gothic style

(1453). The oldest windows of the cathedral originate from the primitive sanctuary and represent the two Saint Johns and the Judgment of Solomon.

At the back of the north transept, the **Chapel of Saint John the Baptist** houses the beautiful 14th century tomb of Bishop Conrad of Lichtenberg and an epitaph (1464) representing a canon in prayer before a moving Virgin with Child attributed to Nicolas Gerhaert de Leyde.

The pulpit, a sound example of the late gothic style

In the nave, the pulpit by Hans Hammer is a superb example of the flamboyant Gothic style. The organ chest, ornamented with interesting automata, also dates from the end of the Middle Ages. Its statues, with their movable joints and endowed with speech, shamelessly ranted at the officiating priest and were a well-appreciated attraction.



The Astronomical Clock and the Pillar of Angels

In the south transept, other figures, also engaged in activity, animate the **Astronomical Clock**. A Renaissance masterpiece, this clock was inherited from the Protestant Reformation. It was constructed around 1547 by a team of Swiss clockmakers. Inoperative since the Revolution of 1789, Jean-Baptiste Schwilgué gave it new life in 1842. Greatly enriched by the detailed movement of a Copernican planetary dial and an ecclesiastical computation, the Astronomical Clock is a particularly well-known attraction thanks to the daily performance given by its

automata at precisely 12.30 p.m., which file out in procession. At this moment, the apostles march in front of Christ. Their procession is punctuated by a cock beating its wings and crowing. Lower down, we see the four ages of life, which, personified by a child, an adolescent, an adult and an old man, pass every quarter of an hour before Death. Since 1987, it has been **listed as a historical monument object**.

Every day, the procession of the apostles can be admired after a film is shown about the astronomical clock. The ticket counter opens at 11:30 am.

In front of the clock stands the striking **Pillar of Angels** which, in a very original fashion, represents in fact a Last Judgment because it groups together Christ the Judge, the four Evangelists and the Angels of Judgment, sounding the trumpet. The **Saint-André Chapel**, dating from the late 12th century, can be found at the end of the south transept.

The Cathedral's platform

Visitors can climb up to the Cathedral's platform and guard-house. The spiral staircase takes them deep into the building and up to the top, where they'll enjoy amazing views. After climbing up the 330 steps, visitors find themselves 66 metres above the square, with a stunning panoramic view of the city and the surrounding area. When the weather is fine, the view goes all the way to the Vosges and the Black Forest (in Germany).

👁 place du Château

📍 oeuvre-notre-dame.org/visiter-cathedrale



KEY FEATURES

The Petite France



The Petite France, formerly the millers' and tanners' district, is **the most picturesque part of the old town**, with its narrow roads and half-timbered houses which can be seen in the reflection of the canals.

Its name derives from a hospital from the 16th century which attended to venereal diseases brought over by Strasbourg mercenaries of the Kings of France from the wars in Italy, hence their name zum Französel ("the little French") used by the residents.

The **Place Benjamin Zix** is located at the heart of la Petite France, where the tanners' "ditch" was situated, and which wasn't covered until the 19th century. It later became the Tanner's ditch Street – "rue du Fossé-des-Tanneurs". Most of the houses date back to the 16th and 17th centuries and are generally all structured in the same way; above the ground floor are two half-timbered floors with large sloping roofs opening out onto lofts where animal hides were once dried. One of the most famous is the "**Maison des Tanneurs**", erected in 1572.

• Les Ponts Couverts (the Covered Bridges)

At the edge of the Petite France district are the "Ponts Couverts" (the Covered Bridges). They have kept this name despite the fact that their roofs disappeared during the 18th century. They are overlooked by four towers dating from the 14th century, **remnants of the town's former ramparts** which once guaranteed the independence of the Strasbourg Republic. Immediately after the incorporation of Strasbourg into France in 1681, a new defensive ring was built around the town by Vauban.

• The Vauban Dam

Just a few metres away from the Ponts Couverts, the "Barrage Vauban" (the Vauban Dam - also known as the Great Lock because it made it possible to flood the entire southern edge of the town when needed) was built around 1690 by **Tarade based on plans drawn up by the military engineer Vauban**. An **attractive panoramic terrace** has been created at the top of the building, from where visitors can enjoy an impressive view over the town and its canals.

The Neustadt District



The Neustadt (new city) district, was built from nothing **between 1871 and 1914** after the Prussian annexation, **tripling Strasbourg's surface area** at the time. The aim of this new quarter was to make the city into a showcase for the Reichsland in Alsace-Lorraine. The Neustadt was inscribed in July 2017 on the World Heritage List.

• An unparalleled urban creation

It is a very interesting urban creation composed of large open squares and broad, tree embellished avenues, and of several sites where the monumental blends skilfully with the landscaping (for example the banks of the Ill river with **St. Paul's Church**). Both public buildings and private homes express that certain taste for historical eclecticism (Italian or German neo-Renaissance, neo-Baroque, etc.), among which some very surprising Art Nouveau constructions can be found such as the "**Egyptian house**".

The new residential quarters all have running water, sewage systems and gas - a very rare situation at the time. All around Place de la République, the new political and administrative centre of the city, is a remarkable collection of monuments, among which, in particular, the **Palais du Rhin** (the former residence of the Emperor) and the **National and University Library**. The square extends out towards two elegant, straight avenues, one stretching towards Avenue de la Paix to the north, and the other towards the **Palais Universitaire**, hence the square's nickname as the "**Axis of Power and Knowledge**".



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

In Strasbourg, there's always something going on. Exciting spots, major events, new hotels or restaurants... Strasbourg will surprise you!
Overview of what's new...

Reach for the stars!

In the *Neustadt* district, at the heart of the historical campus, a **new, futuristic Planetarium** has opened its doors. It is **the only university planetarium in France**, directly involved in scientific research.

In this cone-shaped building forming a spectacular architectural ensemble, visitors can explore planets, nebulae and galaxies, thanks to a dome display measuring 15 metres in diameter, a 360° projection and an astronomic simulator.

A safe and affordable trip through the universe that's guaranteed to delight!

① <https://jardin-sciences.unistra.fr/>

Ten-year anniversary of the Château Vodou Museum

From 17 February 2024 to 2 January 2025

Located in an old water tower, the Château Vodou holds **the largest collection of West African vodou artefacts in the world**, and to celebrate its ten-year anniversary, it is offering an exceptional exhibition that brings together **a selection of its most fascinating pieces**.

Belonging to the intangible, inviolable domain of the sacred, these artefacts conceal vibratory powers, providing a flow of communication between humanity, nature and deities. Their magical power goes beyond simple beauty, and yet they captivate onlookers at a first glance.

Under the heading ***Vodou Treasure. Displaying works at the heart of the sacred African arts***, the exhibition pays tribute to the stunning and surprising aesthetics of these objects. This exhibition offers an intense sensory and emotional experience.

① chateau-vodou.com

A second life for the Strasbourg Tobacco Factory

Once the jewel of local industry until its recent closure, the Strasbourg Tobacco Factory is a wonderful example of 19th century industrial architecture and it has finally been reconverted. Listed among France's historic monuments, the building is now home to various economic, scientific and artistic facilities as well as an excellent youth hostel.

The cooperative **Kooma**, which has just opened its doors, has joined the ecosystem and contributes to making the factory a site that welcomes the city. The cooperative contains a shop selling goods from local producers, a 100% organic grocery and various dining options. These different activities are offered as part of a complementary, short-circuit supply and distribution approach that helps to create a genuine circular economy (local producers and the grocery supply the restaurants with ingredients and produce).

With its future performance hall, the Factory will no doubt become a new animated venue in the Krutenau neighbourhood offering a range of events in the city centre!

> 7 rue de la Krutenau **i** kooma-strasbourg.fr



Brewing treasures

With its centuries-old brewing tradition, Strasbourg is truly the land of brewers. Today, the region is undergoing dramatic change with the development of numerous artisanal microbreweries and many different tours and events that provide insight into this expertise.

Perle... since 1882

Founded in 1882, the brand is one of the flagship Alsatian breweries and continues to develop, particularly since it was taken over in 2009 by Christian Artzner, the founder's great-great-grandson. A new chapter has just been written for this craft brewery with the opening of its new 1,500-square-metre site. It houses the production facilities and also welcomes the general public with a bierstud and biergarten, the perfect place to grab a table on a sunny day. Guided tours with a beer tasting are offered every Saturday and upon request.

i www.biere-perle.com

A brewpub on a historic industrial site

On the historic site of the old Kronenbourg brewery, the 3 Brasseurs opened a brewpub that is also used as a space for brewing experimentation. On an 800-square-metre space, the iconic brand of craft beer offers beers brewed on site, a small restaurant as well as a genuine consumer experience with events, beer tastings and other brewing adventures.

i restaurants.3brasseurs.com/fr/labbb-explorations-brassicoles

New restaurants: gastronomy and reinvented Alsatian cuisine

A new gastronomic restaurant in the centre of the Petite France district

Ondine is a small, unique and intimate restaurant with just fifteen covers that offers a complete gastronomic experience with products sourced from the market, creative dishes with refined presentation and a dining room decorated in French and Nordic style.

i ondine-strasbourg.fr

A tapas bar... with Alsatian flair!

This new bar/restaurant pays tribute to the region's traditional cuisine, offering classics from Alsatian gastronomy (tarte flam-bée in particular) as well as original tapas, revamping local cuisine.

i les-luschtig.fr



THE EVENT OF THE YEAR: STRASBOURG WORLD BOOK CAPITAL

2024 is an exceptional year for Strasbourg. The city has just received the UNESCO “World Book Capital” label. The label is awarded each year to a city that is committed to promoting books and reading in all its forms, and this is the first time that a French city has earned it.

Over the course of an entire year starting on 23 April, Strasbourg will pay tribute to books and reading through a wide range of events and activities under the title “reading our world”.

This award is also the result of Strasbourg’s long history with books, which started with the invention of the movable-type printing press in the 15th century.

A bit of history...

Since the Middle Ages, Strasbourg has been in a central cultural, artistic, economic, scientific and literary influence. As the birthplace of printing (Gutenberg fine-tuned his invention in Strasbourg) and a crossroads for ideas, Strasbourg has always had a powerful connection to books. The city has been a source of inspiration for numerous major writers, captivated by its medieval charm and picturesque character, and has preserved invaluable book treasures, the fruit of its unique history...

An exceptional place in the history of printing

While living in Strasbourg between 1434 and 1444, Gutenberg developed the invention that would revolutionise printing and enable the widespread diffusion of books: the movable-type printing press. Even though the first printed Bible, the result of his innovation, was published in Mainz, in its wake Strasbourg nevertheless became a major printing centre in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The second printer in the world, Jean Mentelin, was from Strasbourg. The first Bible in German came from his presses. Through his efforts, Strasbourg was the second city in Europe to have a printing workshop in the fifteenth century. Less than a century later, Strasbourg had no less than 25 printing workshops and became one of the biggest printing centres in Europe. In the sixteenth century, its presses produced nearly 5,000 books. The Strasbourg workshops were famous far outside of Alsace and even beyond the borders of Europe. (Afterwards, with writers from Voltaire to Rilke, all of Europe would rush to Strasbourg in search of printers.) In the wake of these printers, major illustrators like Hans Baldung Grien, thinkers and famous writers like Sebastian Brant, author of the first best seller *The Ship of Fools*, came to Strasbourg. Strasbourg was at the centre of this extraordinary intellectual upheaval that marked the end of the Middle Ages. The diffusion of books enabled the diffusion of new ideas, particularly humanism and Protestantism, which found in this free city of the empire a fertile base and an extraordinary springboard for their ideas. Strasbourg is also the cradle of print journalism. The oldest newspaper currently recognised in the world, *Relation*, was founded in Strasbourg in 1605 by the printer Johan Carolus. With this newspaper, the Strasbourg and European press was born.

Strasbourg book treasures

As a city bubbling with intellectual energy, Strasbourg has stored genuine treasures throughout the centuries. While valuable writings were lost in a fire in the town library during the Franco-Prussian War (400,000 books, thousands of manuscripts, one of the most magnificent collections in the world of incunabula and books from the 16th century, etc.), the city still holds numerous treasures in its many public and heritage libraries (it has at least 59 of them).

Having been centre stage during the Reformation, Strasbourg has an enormous number of sixteenth-century religious books kept in a secure place on its shelves, beside older manuscripts and incunabula, safely preserved up to the current day.

As a university town for nearly five centuries, Strasbourg also has abundant scientific collections, expanded throughout the centuries. The National University Library of Strasbourg deserves particular mention as the only national library outside of Paris, holding more than three million documents, invaluable Egyptology and papyrology collections and important series of Oriental manuscripts.

Strasbourg, source of inspiration for major writers and illustrators

Over the centuries, a host of thinkers, writers and artists spent time in Strasbourg. Its political, economic and cultural influence as well as its unique charm are the reasons why the city attracted so many prestigious guests.

Among its distinguished visitors: Erasme, Calvin, Voltaire, Rousseau, Stendhal, Musset, Dumas, Balzac, Gautier, Daudet, Saint-Exupéry, and Hemingway to mention just a few. In the 19th century, visiting Strasbourg was a must. The city was a crossroads of French and Germanic cultures and drew visitors with its exoticism and medieval atmosphere that stimulated the imagination. Many of the Strasbourg's great admirers such as Goethe, Gérard de Nerval and Victor Hugo wrote lovely passages about the city and its astounding cathedral and drew inspiration from it.

...and many great events!

Exhibitions in the museums

Strasbourg 1560-1600. Art revival.

Oeuvre Notre-Dame Museum

From 2 February to 19 May 2024



In the late 16th century, Strasbourg had an eminent, vibrant art scene, owing largely to its privileged geographic position at the centre of Europe. The exhibition will examine this last, underexplored stage of the Renaissance, marked by the dissemination throughout all of the art forms of the new ornamental vocabulary inspired by the aesthetic principles of Antiquity, and its adoption by artists and craftsmen of all specialities.

The exhibition will also provide a more general reframing of the period, in order to examine the era's literary output and the vibrancy of the educational and scientific realms, as well as publishing.

The most significant contribution is that of two prominent artists, who were illustrators, engravers and mural painters, and who brought the ornamental motifs of **mannerism** to Strasbourg. **Tobias Stimmer** (1539-1584), a prolific engraver, also painted the decorations on the monumental astronomical clock at the cathedral. His grisaille oil on canvas sketches for the clock sculptures (circa 1571), recently restored, are being presented to the public for the first time.

In a more fantasy-filled realm, the plates of the three volumes of *Architectura* by **Wendel Dietterlin** (1551-1599), also known for the production of many murals, are amazing for their energy, verve and decorative extravagance, remaining influential until the Baroque period.

A remarkable and not-to-be-missed exhibition.

. The constellation Gustave Doré. A journey through illustrated books in the 19th century.

Palais Rohan, Galerie Heitz

From 25 April to 15 July



Born in Strasbourg, Gustave Doré is one of the main contributors to illustrated books in the 19th century and thoroughly refreshed their different genres and practices.

Working with the biggest publishers and printmakers of the time, he created bold books with ambitious formats and subjects, placing himself in the centre of publishing's structure and placing his name in the literary canon (the Bible, Rabelais, Perrault, La Fontaine, Milton, Poe, etc.).

This exhibition takes visitors on a journey through the teeming graphic world of the artist, drawing from sources of popular legends, woodland settings and the architectural backdrop of his childhood in Alsace.

. Illustrated Youth. Alsace and the early stages of the first illustrations for young readers, 19th to 20th century

Tomi Ungerer Museum

From 8 November 2024 to 17 February 2025



Charles Emile Matthis, épreuve d'état de la planche *Fée vérité* - Hector le Fanfaron, 1869, (coll. Bibliothèque Alsatique du Crédit Mutuel)

This exhibition **presents for the first time the singular place of Alsace and Strasbourg in particular in the creation of books intended for a young audience starting in the 19th century.** From this period on, illustrators, publishers and printers from the region contributed to a major publishing endeavour that was to help develop a new market aimed at building a young readership while entertaining them. The energy and visionary talent of artists like Gustave Doré and Théophile Schuler greatly contributed to its success.

. Illustrated Youth. The anti-pedagogy of Tomi Ungerer and contemporary illustrations for young readers

Tomi Ungerer Museum

From 8 November 2024 to 17 February 2025

The exhibition displays the book illustrations for children and adolescents from the second half of the 20th century up to the current day. It starts with the work of Tomi Ungerer and his anti-pedagogic approach to children's books and then branches out to show current illustrations from the vibrant scene found in Strasbourg and the Grand Est region.

Tours with the Tourist Office

The Tourist Office is naturally involved with the "Reading our world" programme so as to better illustrate the close connection between Strasbourg and books.

Starting this spring, the Tourist Office will offer an **"open book" self-guided tour** that retraces the major steps of Strasbourg's history of books with a walking route through the city. The tour covers the cathedral, which itself is a massive stone book, the invention of printing, humanism, the Reformation, major writers, prestigious libraries and more.

It is a passionate tour that everyone should download the moment it comes out!

Available from May on the Tourist Office website.

Find the complete "Strasbourg, World Book Capital" programme at lirenotremonde.strasbourg.eu

THE EVENT OF THE YEAR



© Paul Prim

IN STRASBOURG, AND NOWHERE ELSE

Why choose Strasbourg? Its remarkable heritage was inscribed on the World Heritage List. But the city also has other, unparalleled, advantages.

The first urban area in France listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site

The incalculable richness of Strasbourg's heritage was enshrined by the inscription of the **Grande Île** on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1988. It was the first time that a historic city centre had been designated **in its entirety**. In 2017, this listing was extended to include the Neustadt quarter, representing an incredible recognition of the city's rich, diverse heritage.

The Cathedral: the highest monument in Christendom until the 19th century

The undisputed centuries-old symbol of the city, the Cathedral was the highest monument in Christianity for hundreds of years. One of its many unique features is its magnificent rose window, measuring fourteen metres in diameter. **This amazing feat of technological prowess and marvel of delicacy is still one of the largest rose windows in Europe.**

A Franco-German identity

Strasbourg, a free city for a very long time, was nonetheless influenced early on by both Latin and Germanic cultures, owing to its geographic position at the crossroads between these two worlds. The **trace of both countries** can be found in Strasbourg's incomparable heritage.

From 1870 to 1945, the city changed nationalities four times. Strasbourg has become the **symbol of Franco-German reconciliation**.

A European capital

With New York and Geneva, Strasbourg is one of only three cities in the world to **host international institutions without being a national capital**.

A **pioneer in the construction of Europe**, the Alsatian capital is the seat of the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights and the Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine.

The birthplace of Humanism

It was in Strasbourg that **Gutenberg** designed the movable type printing press, very quickly making the city one of the world's major centres of printing. Enabling the rapid dissemination of ideas, the development of printing fostered the **humanist school** of thought that emerged in Strasbourg, through the voices of Jakob Wimpheling, Geiler von Kaysersberg and Sébastien Brant.

The world's oldest white wine in a cask

There's a wine cellar in **Strasbourg's hospital**. This exceptional cellar helps finance the hospital's medical equipment, and features the world's oldest white wine in a cask, from the **15th century**.

The Marseillaise... is from Strasbourg!

It was in Strasbourg, in 1792, that Rouget de Lisle composed what became **France's national anthem**, known as La Marseillaise.

The Capital of Christmas...

The *Christkindelsmärik*, the **authentic Christmas Market created in 1570 in Strasbourg**, is the oldest in France and one of the oldest in Europe. Every year, the "Strasbourg, Capital of Christmas" event provides enchantment to its visitors, young and old alike.

... and of romance!

Since February 2013, the European capital has been organising a festival offering a rich programme that's open to all. **Poetry, culture, glamour and the unexpected** come together in a perfect storm to reinvent Valentine's Day!

The only national theatre outside of Paris

Strasbourg is the only French city outside of Paris to have a **national theatre**: the National Theatre of Strasbourg (TNS).

The oldest music ensemble in France

Strasbourg has the **oldest professional music ensemble** in France. Les Percussions de Strasbourg has a truly **unique collection of instruments**.

A world-renowned foie gras

For centuries, the Alsatian capital has been a welcoming place for gastronomes. **Foie gras pâté** was invented in Strasbourg around 1780, by the cook of the Marshal of Contades, to please the palates of high society. Its reputation then spread through the whole country and Europe. Today, it is famous all over the world.

The kingdom of gastronomy

The **Au Crocodile restaurant** was dubbed the "best restaurant in the world" by TripAdvisor in 2019 and the "best gastronomic restaurant in the world" in 2018. This year, Strasbourg has **8 Michelin-starred restaurants**: Au Crocodile, 1741, Umami, Les Funambules, le Jardin Secret (La Wantzeanu) and Les Plaisirs gourmands (Schiltigheim).

A cross-border city

Strasbourg's recent urban projects have opened it up to Germany, especially its neighbour city, Kehl. Since 2004, the Jardin des Deux Rives, located on both the French and German sides of the river, has symbolised reconciliation. Visitors can go **from one country to the other on a foot-bridge** designed by architect Marc Mimram. Since 2017, there has also been a **tram** providing service from Strasbourg all the way to the centre of Kehl, Germany.

France's second most bike-friendly city

Boasting **more than 670 kilometres** of bike paths, Strasbourg is France's second most bike-friendly city, with 8% of all journeys being by bike in the urban area and 15% in the city centre.

The biggest tram system in France

The Alsatian capital has developed the largest tram system in France, with **over 70 kilometres of lines**.



© Sophie Balmond

HERITAGE BUILT OVER THE CENTURIES

With its 2000 years of rich history, the European capital is located at a crossroads between the Latin and Germanic cultures and has a unique architectural heritage. Traces of each period, including the Romanesque period, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, can still be seen today.

Since ancient times, every period has left its mark on Strasbourg. These traces, still visible today, are what make the city's heritage so rich.

From the **Roman camp**, two streets remain: Rue du Dôme and Rue des Juifs.

In the **Middle Ages**, this free city of the Holy Roman Empire acquired its narrow, winding little streets, fortifications (the covered bridges or '**Ponts Couverts**') and the former customs building known as the '**Ancienne Douane**'. It took nearly three centuries (from 1176 to 1439) to build the **Cathedral**, which is why it features both Romanesque and Gothic architecture.

During the **Renaissance**, Strasbourg experienced an intense period of intellectual vibrancy. Fine Renaissance houses remain from that time.

In 1681, Strasbourg was annexed to France, becoming a **royal city**. The prestigious **Palais Rohan** as well as numerous **Parisian-style mansions** from the period display through their architectural style the kingdom's expanding influence.

After the 1870 war, Strasbourg reverted to German rule and

tripled its size with the construction of the **Neustadt** district, in an architectural style echoing the historical eclecticism of the late 19th century.

In the **20th century**, Strasbourg became a symbol of the **reconciliation between France and Germany** and of the **construction of Europe**, with numerous ambitious urban and architectural projects.

Did you know?








This **blending of French and German influences** led to the development of this **completely unique urban space** where various buildings constructed during important periods of European history coexist harmoniously.

By listing it as a **world heritage site**, UNESCO acknowledges the **universal value of this truly European urban area**.



Ancient times

Middle Ages A free city of the Holy Roman Empire

| 12 BC | 451 | 496 | 1015 | 1176 | 1230 | 1358 |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Creation of Argentoratum , the Roman military camp that constitutes Strasbourg's original core | Total destruction of the city by Attila | Restoration of the city by the Franks, under the name Strateburgum | Construction of the Romanesque basilica that later serves as the foundation on which the Cathedral is built | Construction of the Cathedral's choir | Construction of Strasbourg's first stone surrounding wall, the Ponts Couverts (covered bridges) | Construction of the Ancienne Douane , a warehouse also used for taxing the merchants travelling on the Rhine |

Renaissance Centre of Humanism and of the Protestant Reformation

| 1434-1444 | 1439 | 1572 | 1574 | 1585 | 1587 | 1589 |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gutenberg stays in Strasbourg. He is believed to have invented the movable type printing press in Strasbourg. | Construction is completed on the Cathedral's spire | Construction of the Maison des Tanneurs . During the same period, the entire district of the fishermen and tanners (Petite France) is built. | Construction of the Astronomical Clock of the Cathedral | Construction is completed on the Neubau (currently the Chamber of Commerce and Industry) | Construction of the slaughterhouse (Grande Boucherie - currently the Historical Museum) | Construction is completed on Kammerzell House |

Late 17th century-18th century A royal city that is prosperous and influential

19th century The industrial revolution

| 1690 | 1728 | 1730 | 1732 | 1764 | 1805 | 1811 |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction of a ring of fortifications by Tarade, according to designs by Vauban | Construction of the Hôtel de Hanau-Lichtenberg (currently City Hall - Joseph Massol) | Construction of the Hôtel de Klinglin (now the Hôtel du Préfet - Jean-Pierre Pflug) | Construction of the Palais Rohan (Robert de Cotte) | Construction of the Aubette | Creation of the Orangerie , in honour of Empress Joséphine (now Orangerie Park) | Building of the Manufacture des tabacs (former tobacco factory) |

Late 19th century – Early 20th century The Imperial Period

| 1871 | 1880 | 1884 | 1888 | 1895 | 1899 | 1910 |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Strasbourg becomes part of the Second Reich | Construction begins on the imperial quarter, known as the Neustadt | Construction of the Palais Universitaire (Otto Warth) | Construction of the Palais du Kaiser (now the Palais du Rhin - Hermann Eggert) | Construction of the Imperial Library (now the National and University Library) | Construction of the Representative Assembly House of Alsace Lorraine (now the National Theatre of Strasbourg) | Launch of the " Grande Percée " urban planning operation |

20th – 21st century A European city

| 1994 | 1995 | 1999 | 2004 | 2007 | 2008 | 2018 |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The tram returns to Strasbourg | Human Rights Building (Richard Rogers) | European Parliament (Architecture Studio) | Passerelle des Deux Rives , a footbridge between France and Germany (Marc Mimram) | Glass canopy of the train station (J.M. Duthilleul et E. Tricaud) | The Zénith (Massimiliano Fuksas) | Elithis Danube tower , the first positive energy housing tower in the world |



STRASBOURG, EUROPE'S BEATING HEART

Right from the end of the Second World War, Strasbourg was chosen as a European capital, to symbolise reconciliation between countries. This unique status added the Alsatian capital to the very short list of cities that are not national capitals but are the seat of an international institution. Europe lives in Strasbourg!

The European District

Located on Strasbourg's north side, close to Orangerie Park and to several arms of the River Ill, the huge European district offers the possibility of discovering the political missions of each **European institution**, as well as admiring a few **showpieces of contemporary architecture**.

The European Parliament

This building, completed in 1999 by **Architecture Studio**, is structured as an alliance between a circle and an ellipsis. It is structured around well-identified volumes: a 60-metre-high tower oriented towards the Cathedral, a wing-shaped building from which the dome of the hemicycle emerges and workspaces and areas for relaxation.

Established by the Treaty of Rome in 1957, signed by Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, France, the Netherlands and Belgium, the Parliament is **the only directly elected European institution**: since 1979 indeed, the representatives have been elected every five years by direct universal suffrage.

Sessions meet in Strasbourg on a monthly basis.

The European Parliament participates in the EU's legislative processes, approves the budget and exercises general control; it contributes to the development of the political and monetary union.

• The Parliamentarium

Tours of the European Parliament include the **hemicycle and the Simone Veil Parliamentarium**. This informative, immersive space is devoted to understanding the Parliament's role: it presents the process of developing EU legislation and explains the role of the MPs. It features interactive exhibits such as touch screens, and a 360-degree cinema.

👁 Allée du Printemps ⓘ www.europarl.europa.eu/visiting

The Pathway of Europe

Take a stroll along this 2.5 km walkway through the heart of the European district, and discover the European institutions through fun, trilingual installations.

The Council of Europe



Created by the Treaty of London on 5 May 1949, it now represents 800 million people from 46 member states. This institution seeks to **protect human rights**, with an emphasis on social, educational, cultural and environmental affairs.

The Council of Europe is established in the Palace of Europe, a vast quadrangle built in 1977 by French architect **Henri Bernard**.

👁 Avenue de l'Europe ⓘ www.coe.int

The European Court of Human Rights



The European Court of Human Rights' function is **enforcing individual citizens' rights in member countries** of the Council of Europe.

It is based in the Human Rights Building, whose two 'metal drums' on pilings, designed by **Richard Rogers** in 1995, symbolise the scales of justice.

👁 Allée des Droits de l'Homme ⓘ www.echr.coe.it

The European Pharmacopoeia

The European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines and Healthcare, which is involved in the **standardisation and quality of medicines and their certification at the European scale**, has been headquartered in Strasbourg since 2007. This building, designed by the **Art & Build** and **Denu & Paradon** architectural firms, features laboratories, offices and meeting rooms.

👁 7 allée Kastner ⓘ www.edqm.eu

The Lieu d'Europe



Opened in 2014 on the edge of the European quarter, the Lieu d'Europe is a place where people can learn about European citizenship. It aims to make citizens more familiar with Europe, its history and its role. This centre, whose motto is "Europe is what we decide to make of it", also offers exhibitions and events year-round, especially in May, which is the month of Europe.

👁 8 rue Boecklin ⓘ www.lieudeurope.strasbourg.eu

ARTE

ARTE, **the European cultural TV channel** launched in 1991, is also internationally oriented. It set up its Alsatian premises on the banks of the River Ill at the centre of the European quarter, in a building designed by architect **Hans Struik** that was completed in 2003.

👁 4 quai du Chanoine-Winterer ⓘ www.arte.tv

The other European institutions in Strasbourg

- The International Institute of Human Rights
- The Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine, which was founded in 1816, is the oldest international organisation. It ensures the prosperity and safety of the navigation crews on the Rhine.
- The European Science Foundation
- The European Youth Centre
- the European Audiovisual Observatory
- The secretariat of the Human Frontier Science Program
- The Assembly of European Regions
- The European Regional Development Centre
- The Eurocorps



STRASBOURG, CITY OF CULTURE

Strasbourg has a world-class cultural scene when it comes to music, theatre, art or literature, with renowned cultural institutions and a wide, abundant variety of festivals.

Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra (OPS)

Founded in 1855, Strasbourg's Philharmonic Orchestra is **one of the oldest symphonic orchestras in Europe**, and the oldest in France. It owes its reputation to the famous conductors who have played here. Composed of **100 musicians**, the OPS is internationally renowned thanks to their many international tours as well as their recordings and television broadcasts. It offers **30 concerts** a year in Strasbourg alone.

① philharmonique.strasbourg.eu

The Opéra National du Rhin

Created from a merger between the opera houses of Strasbourg, Colmar and Mulhouse in 1972, the ONR has a choir of **44 singers** and a ballet company of **33 dancers**. It also has a branch devoted to young singers, called the Opéra Studio, as well as its own scenery and costume workshops. A major institution on the French and international opera scenes, it became a **"National Opera"** in 1997 and was named the **"Opera House of the Year"**

for 2019 by the Opernwelt magazine. Every season, the ONR presents **200 performances**, including operas, ballets, recitals and youth shows, attracting more than 100,000 spectators.

① www.operanationaldurhin.eu/en

Les Percussions de Strasbourg

This is the **oldest professional music ensemble in France**, with a unique format, boasting an exceptionally rich repertoire. Les Percussions de Strasbourg are world-renowned ambassadors, respected for the quality of their performances and their creativity and innovation.

They've given more than 1,700 concerts in 70 countries, created 350 works, built up a **collection of instruments like no other in the world**, released about thirty albums and received multiple awards.

① www.percussionsdestrasbourg.com/en

A sophisticated, diverse musical offering

Strasbourg hosts **more than 8,000 cultural events** a year, including multiple festivals on a wide variety of themes. Some of the more iconic ones include **Musica** (contemporary music), **Jazzdor** (contemporary jazz), **Les Nuits Électroniques de l'Ososphère** (electronic music and the visual arts), the **Printemps des Bretelles** (international accordion festival), **Les Sacrées Journées** (sacred music), **Contre-temps** (electro-groove) and **Stras'Orgues** (Strasbourg organ festival).

The National Theatre of Strasbourg

Theatre is vibrant in Strasbourg, as the city boasts some great stages. These include the National Theatre of Strasbourg, the **only national theatre in France outside of Paris**. Its permanent troupe of actors, trained at an academy of dramatic arts, performs in two theatres, with scenery and costumes made in-house. About **fifteen shows** are presented every season at 170 performances.

① www.tns.fr

The Maillon

The Maillon, Theatre of Strasbourg, a European stage, explores **the most contemporary forms of live performance**. It has an excellent reputation, thanks to its **European focus** and highly diverse programming.

① www.maillon.eu

The TJP – National Centre for Dramatic Arts of Strasbourg

The TJP targets an audience of children, teens and adults. It is a place of creation devoted to **puppetry**, and it has set itself the task of encouraging new playwriting and inventing **a whole multitude of theatrical forms**.

① www.tjp-strasbourg.com

Strasbourg, city of art

Over **25 art galleries**, over **60 contemporary works** on public display and numerous bodies responsible for contemporary art illustrate the richness and diversity of artistic culture in Strasbourg.

The public space in Strasbourg really is a sort of **open-air art gallery**, featuring several artworks by renowned contemporary artists. These artworks can be found along tram lines A and B and at Orangerie Park, the Jardin des Deux Rives and Pourtalès Park.

This vibrant art scene also includes **France's second-largest contemporary art fair, ST-ART**, which is held annually. This show has become a key event for enthusiasts and collectors, attracting about one hundred French and international art galleries.

① www.st-art.com/en

Art can also be seen in the city through the open-air exhibition **L'Industrie Magnifique** ("The Magnificent Industry") on some of the most beautiful squares in Strasbourg, presenting monumental artworks created in partnership with some of the region's industrialists. The next exhibition will be held in 2025.

① industriemagnifique.com

The fact that Strasbourg has its own **High School of Applied Arts** just shows how dynamic the city is. This school, formed through a merger between the School of Decorative Arts of Strasbourg (founded in 1892) and the School of Art of Mulhouse, is one of the best art schools in France.

① www.hear.fr

A city of books

The city in which **Gutenberg** invented the printing press obviously cares a lot about books.

The Strasbourg metropolitan area boasts **33 libraries**, including numerous media libraries and even an art library. Strasbourg is also home to **France's second-largest library**: the National and University Library. In particular, this library houses **one of Europe's first Egyptology collections**.

Finally, book lovers will be delighted by the city's numerous independent bookstores, booksellers and book markets. Numerous literary events are held throughout the year in Strasbourg, such as the **"Bibliothèques Idéales"** (The Perfect Library).

① www.mediatheques.strasbourg.eu

① www.bnu.fr

① bibliotheques-ideales.strasbourg.eu

Strasbourg, 2024 World Book Capital

With its vibrant connection to books that has stimulated the city since the Renaissance, Strasbourg is the **first French city to receive the title of "World Book Capital" from UNESCO**. Well-deserved recognition for the central role it has played in the history of books and printing.



© Philippe de Rexel

EXCEPTIONAL MUSEUMS

Strasbourg boasts a vast network of municipal museums, as well as other public and private facilities, creating a diverse, sophisticated cultural scene that offers something for everyone!

The Decorative Arts Museum



© Mathieu Bertola

On the ground floor of Palais Rohan, the former residence of the prince-bishops, this museum presents the **cardinals' apartments**, as well as **collections of decorative art** from Strasbourg, dating from 1681 to the 19th century.

👁️ 2 place du Château ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Archaeological Museum



© Mathieu Bertola

The Archaeological Museum is **one of the most important in France**, due to the scope of its collections. It covers thousands of years of history, **from 600,000 BC to the year 800**, encompassing the Neolithic Age, the Bronze and Iron Ages, the Gallo-Roman period and then the Merovingian period.

👁️ 2 place du Château ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Museum of Fine Arts



This museum has a **beautiful collection of French, Italian, Spanish, Flemish and Dutch paintings, from the 14th century to 1870**. Featured artists include Giotto, Hans Memling, Botticelli, Raphael, Correggio, Veronese, El Greco, Jusepe de Ribera, Philippe de Champaigne, Simon Vouet, Claude Lorrain, Rubens, Van Dyck, Ruysdael, Pieter de Hooch, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, Canaletto, Nicolas de Largillierre, Watteau, Boucher, Goya, Corot, Delacroix and Courbet.

👁 2 place du Château ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Œuvre Notre-Dame Museum



Located in splendid 14th and 15th century buildings, this museum presents **masterpieces of medieval sculpture from the Cathedral**. It also displays stained-glass windows dating from the 14th to the 16th century and major Rhineland artworks from the 15th century.

👁 3 place du Château ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Alsatian Museum

The Alsatian Museum bears **timeless witness to the folk art and traditional lifestyle of Alsace**. Located in old Strasbourg homes, it presents painted furniture, costumes, ceramics and toys. Some of the rooms present replicas of typical Alsatian interiors.

👁 23-25 quai Saint Nicolas ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Historical Museum



The Historical Museum, located in the Ancienne Grande Boucherie (former slaughterhouse) since 1920, traces the **political, economic and social history of the city** with paintings, engravings, models and other items. There is a **relief map from the year 1727**, reproducing the city on a 1:600 scale. The exhibition is structured into three major periods: Strasbourg, a Free City of the Holy Roman Empire (1262 to 1681), Strasbourg, a Royal City (1681 to 1789) and Strasbourg from 1800 to 1949: from Napoleon to the Creation of the Council of Europe.

👁 2 rue du Vieux-Marché-aux-Poissons

📍 en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Tomi Ungerer Museum

International Centre for Illustration



Inaugurated in 2007, this is the **first French museum to be devoted to an artist during his lifetime**. Featuring a collection donated by Tomi Ungerer himself to his hometown, the museum boasts **11,000 drawings and posters**, advertisements, sculptures, games, toys, family archives and photographs, including 300 artworks for children and others reserved for adults, due to their satirical or erotic content.

👁 2 avenue de la Marseillaise

📍 en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art



Opened in 1998, it stands out as one of the flagship sites in the cultural life of Strasbourg. The architect **Adrien Fainsilber** forcefully communicates his wish to connect with the town with his spectacular glazed nave of 25 metres in height.

The collection presents works by very famous artists such as **Monet, Picasso** and Sarkis, as well as Alsatian artists such as **Gustave Doré** and **Jean Hans Arp**. Many artistic movements are represented, including new realism, new figuration, conceptual art, Fluxus, Jugendstil, and more. Visitors will find pioneers of abstract art (**Kandinsky** and **Kupka**), surrealist masters (**Ernst, Masson** and **Brauner**) and major figures of contemporary art (**Aillaud, Baselitz, Buren, Broodthaers, Filliou, Lavier, Pascali** and **Sechas**).

The museum is also home to a large art library (100 000 volumes) and an auditorium.

👁 1 place Hans-Jean-Arp ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

Aubette 1928



In this building, dating from the 18th century, **Theo Van Doesburg, Jean Hans Arp** and **Sophie Taeuber-Arp** created in 1928 an **avant-garde leisure complex** which included a cinema/dance hall, an events room and a café-bar. The entire complex was designed as a **complete work of art**, with the intention of "placing people within the painting rather than in front of it". Accused of being too forward-thinking, most of the set was al-

tered or destroyed at the end of the 1930's.

Following a restoration campaign organised by the City of Strasbourg, the rooms of the Aubette - a listed Historic Monument - were reopened in 2006, enabling the public to enter the heart of the golden years.

👁 place Kléber ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Print Room

This museum in the shade of the cathedral exhibits a **priceless collection of some 200,000 works covering five centuries** in the most technical and varied of domains: fine arts, decorative arts, architecture, history and folk art.

The collection, dating back to 1890, includes **19th century folk imagery**, documents about Alsace and **very rare drawings of silverware**, ornaments and architecture. Open by reservation only.

👁 5 place du Château ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Zoological Museum



With its wide collection from **Jean Hermann's Gallery of Natural History** (constituted in the 18th century), there is a **large variety of rare or extinct animals**, from a wide variety of ecosystems. This collection illustrates the richness and fragility of our fauna. It is supplemented with annual temporary exhibitions on various scientific topics, such as biology, health or the environment.

Closed for renovation until 2025.

👁 29 boulevard de la Victoire

ⓘ en.musees.strasbourg.eu

The Planetarium



A brand new Planetarium allows visitors to explore planets, nebula and galaxies with a spectacular 360 degrees projection through an astronomic simulator, on a dome display measuring 15 metres in diameter. An experience of a safe and affordable trip through the universe! Breathtaking!

The shows are translated into English.

👁️ 27 boulevard de la Victoire ⓘ jardin-sciences.unistra.fr

Le Vaisseau



This departmental council facility, open since 2005, makes **science a fun discovery** for visitors ages three and up. This museum covers topics as broad as the origin of the planet, the animal world, how our senses work and the principles of physics. Everything can be touched and handled, so visitors learn by playing and having fun.

👁️ 1bis rue Philippe-Dollinger ⓘ www.levaisseau.com/en

The Voodoo Museum

Original and definitely unusual, the Voodoo Museum, located in a former water tower, has the **world's largest private collection of West African voodoo objects**. All of the objects are related to religious practices: ancestor worship, medicine, divination, witchcraft and many events associated with the key stages of life.

👁️ 4 rue de Koenigshoffen ⓘ www.chateau-vodou.com

MM Park



This **World War II military museum** is in La Wantzenau, and features private collections. It is **one of Europe's largest museums on this theme**. It features more than one hundred military vehicles and even a German E-boat.

👁️ 4 rue Gutenberg, La Wantzenau ⓘ www.mmpark.fr

The Schaal Chocolate Museum



Since May 2021, this **chocolate museum** has featured an all-new exhibition design that takes visitors on a poetic journey to explore the secrets of chocolate-making, with various chocolate-tasting stops on the way.

👁️ Rue du Pont au Péage, Geispolsheim

👁️ ⓘ www.musee-du-chocolat.com/en



EXCEPTIONAL MUSEUMS



© Philippe de Rexel

A RICH RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Although Strasbourg Cathedral is the symbol of the city, there are many other places of worship to be discovered: medieval churches, synagogues, mosques and even a Buddhist temple!

As Alsace has historically been a **land of religious diversity**, the religious heritage of Alsace, and of Strasbourg, in particular, is very diverse and rich. In addition to the Cathedral, the city also boasts three especially remarkable medieval churches.

St Thomas' Church: a "Protestant cathedral"

Together with the Cathedral, this is the **oldest religious building in Strasbourg**. A Protestant church since the 16th century, it is a **very fine example of Alsatian Gothic architecture**. It offers a wonderful collection of French baroque funerary sculpture, including the **monumental mausoleum of Marshal Maurice de Saxe**. Another noteworthy feature of this impressive church is its Silbermann organ dating from the 18th century, on which both **Mozart** and **Schweitzer** played.

👁 11 rue Martin Luther ⓘ saint-thomas-strasbourg.fr

Saint-Pierre-le-Jeune Protestant Church: a jewel

In 1031, on the site of a former Merovingian chapel, construction work began on the current church which was consecrated

in 1053 by the Alsatian Pope Leon IX. During the late 12th century, the Gothic church was built, retaining the base of the bell tower-porch, in addition to several walls belonging to the earlier Romanesque building.

This Protestant church is noteworthy for having a **cloister** where small, 11th-century columns survive (thought to be the oldest preserved cloister north of the Alps), together with a **remarkable, rare rood screen** and 14th-century murals. The west wall boasts a replica of the Navicella by Giotto.

👁 3 rue de la Nuée bleue ⓘ saintpierrelejeune.org

Old Saint Peter's Church: a "double" church

This church comprises two perpendicular buildings, **one being used as a place of worship for Roman Catholics, and the other for Protestants**. The Protestant church was built between the 12th and 15th centuries. In 1683, Louis XIV gave the choir to the Catholics, leaving the nave for the Protestants. During the 19th century, a new church was built in the Neo-Gothic style for the Catholic congregation. 👁 Place Saint-Pierre-le-Vieux

Jewish heritage

Judaism is an important part of the **rich multicultural fabric of Alsace**, and, to this day, the Jewish heritage of Alsace remains unique, with numerous key sites.

In Strasbourg, the Jewish ritual bath, or mikveh, on Rue des Charpentiers, is **one of the oldest relics of Jewish architecture in Alsace**. Built around 1200, this historical monument is the only architectural testament to Jewish life in Strasbourg in the Middle Ages.

The **Synagogue de la Paix**, a huge concrete vessel bordering Contades Park, is the work of architect Claude Meyer-Levy. Inaugurated in 1958, it replaced the old synagogue that stood at the current location of the Halles. The earlier synagogue was burned down by the Nazis in 1944.

👁 16 bis avenue de la Paix

In the town of Bischheim, the self-guided **walking tour of Judaism highlights** several places on which Judaism left its mark.

Every year in September, the **European Days of Jewish Culture** showcase Jewish heritage.

📍 www.jecpi-france.com

Other remarkable places of worship

Saint Paul's Church

Located at the tip of Saint Helen's Island, the church forms a remarkable landscape with the Ill and Aar rivers and their banks. Built in the late 19th century as a Protestant place of worship for the German garrison, it is in the **Neo-Gothic style**, and its design was inspired by St. Elizabeth's Church in Marburg, Germany. Part of the **imperial Neustadt district**, its twin 76-metre spires and large rose window, with a diameter of 8 metres, make it very elegant. It has thirteen doors so that the soldiers could enter the church according to their rank.

👁 1 place du Général Eisenhower

📍 www.eglise-saintpaul-strasbourg.com

Saint William's Church

Saint William's Church, built in 1307, originally for boatmen, is truly unique for its **surprisingly lopsided bell tower**. Its intimate interior contains marvels, such as **a rare rood screen** and a beautiful organ designed by André Silbermann. Thanks to the church's great acoustics, it serves as the setting for various types of performances. 👁 1 rue Munch

St Trophimus' Church

Built before the year one thousand, this church is the remaining vestige of a highly renowned abbey, representative of Ottonian and Carolingian architecture. St Trophimus' Church is **one of the finest examples of Romanesque art in the Bas-Rhin area**, particularly thanks to its semi-circular apse with a semi-dome, decorated with blind arcades. Across from the church, a monastic garden features a large number of medicinal plants.

👁 rue de la 1^{ère} Division Blindée, Eschau

All Saints Orthodox Church

Inspired by medieval Russian churches, All Saints Orthodox Church was built between 2014 and 2018 and features three gold domes. It is **one of the finest Orthodox churches in France**. It holds services for the Russian-speaking Orthodox community of Strasbourg and the surrounding areas. The church and the Orthodox culture centre can be visited without a guide during opening hours. Guided tours are also offered on Sunday afternoons.

👁 106 rue du Général Conrad 📍 ruhram.eu/fr

The Great Mosque of Strasbourg

Designed by Italian architect Paolo Portoghesi, this is **the second-largest mosque in France**, after the one in Evry-Courcouronnes. With a capacity for up to 1,500 people, it is open for self-guided tours except during prayer times.

👁 6 rue Avéroès 📍 mosquee-strasbourg.com

The Wat Simoungkhoun

This Buddhist temple, inaugurated in 2008, is situated in a lush landscape, bordered by fields, with the Souffel River running alongside it. Its typical architecture makes for a surprising encounter for people who happen upon it. The Wat Simoungkhoun is currently **one of the few Theravada monasteries and temples completed in Europe**.

👁 1 rue du Ried, Souffelweyersheim



© Sophie Balland

STRASBOURG: A FAMILY DESTINATION

Strasbourg, an ideally sized city, is the perfect family holiday destination. Its historical pedestrian centre, rich history and many kid-friendly activities are popular with young and old alike!

A surprising, fun city

Thanks to its originality, the **heritage of Strasbourg** is fascinating for both kids and adults. Whether you're at the Cathedral admiring the faces on the **gargoyles** or gazing in awe at the **Astronomical Clock**, or wandering down the wide **pedestrian streets** in the city centre, visiting Strasbourg as a family is a pleasure. Don't forget about the **Petite France** quarter, which has its own surprises in store for little explorers. Its little cobblestone streets and must-see half-timbered houses have inspired and featured as backdrops in fairy tales. There's also a **functioning lock** and a **swing bridge**, which are always a big hit with young visitors.

A climb up to the **Cathedral's platform** or to the **panoramic terrace** of the Vauban Dam will also create wonderful memories for the entire family.

① Cathedral's platform: www.oeuvre-notre-dame.org

A visit to Strasbourg is time for fun

To discover the city and its history while keeping it interesting for the little ones, there are several possibilities. **Boat tours** are offered on the River Ill. Special audio commentary, fun for kids, has been created just for them, with dramatic staging and actors. But for visitors who'd rather stay on dry land, two little **sightseeing trains** wind their way through the Grande Île and Neustadt districts, from mid-March to mid-November. Don't miss this!

Athletic visitors will appreciate exploring Strasbourg **by bike**, with rides for everyone to enjoy!

① Batorama : www.batorama.com/en

① Petit train : petit-train-strasbourg.fr

Kid-friendly museums

Lots of museums in Strasbourg are perfect for families, thanks to their theme or format. Please note that all municipal museums in Strasbourg are free for visitors under 18 years of age.

The **Historical Museum** offers a historical adventure, from the Middle Ages to the creation of the European institutions, just for kids. They can even handle objects and interact with the collections. Its 'Little Soldiers of Strasbourg' collection, with 60,000 figures made of paper, delights young visitors.

At the **Alsatian Museum**, everyone can learn about Alsatian folk traditions and admire old-fashioned costumes and toys.

The **Zoological Museum** raises awareness about animals and presents numerous species, including some that are extinct (closed for construction until 2025).

The **Vaisseau**, a museum designed especially for young people between 3 and 15, lets them explore science and technology through play and hands-on discovery.

Budding astronomers will find happiness at the **Planetarium**. This spectacular facility lets visitors discover astronomy and even observe the sky, after nightfall. To discover the science of the stars, in a fun, dynamic way.

For gourmet visitors, the **Schaal Chocolate Museum** offers tours and workshops that are perfect for kids. For example, they can see how a chocolate bar is made.

① See "Exceptional museums"

Playtime in parks and gardens

Lots of parks in Strasbourg feature playgrounds, where kids can run around and play. For example, there's a playground at the **Citadelle**, adapted to different age groups, even featuring a water game area for hot-weather fun.

Orangerie Park, a green oasis in the city, also has great surprises in store, including playgrounds, a mini-farm, an antique car track and flat-bottomed boats for hire from March to October. In summertime, ice cream vendors make kids happy (and their parents too).

The **Jardin des Deux Rives**, located between France and Germany, has several playgrounds, which can be reached by walking or cycling across the footbridge.

Recreational and sports activities

There are plenty of activities, to have fun and let off some steam. The possibilities are endless, from **ice skating** at the Iceberg ice skating rink to **swimming** at the municipal pools in Strasbourg, **go-karting**, **rock climbing** or a high ropes course, the many **escape rooms** or the Stride: the **largest bike park in Europe**.

① Stride : www.stride-indoorbikepark.fr

Familiciti: the guide for visiting the city as a family

The Strasbourg Tourist Office provides families with a visitor's guide: **Familiciti**. It offers a wide variety of recreational activities for the whole family to enjoy.

There's also a city centre discovery trail quiz, called **Familicitirali**. Participants have fun while exploring the Cathedral district, as they answer the six questions. Both are available upon request at the tourist office.

Nearby theme parks for young and old alike

For thrill seekers, several theme parks provide excitement and adventure at a reasonable distance from Strasbourg. These include **Europa Park**, the European and global leader, in Rust, Germany, with its fourteen roller coasters and fifteen theme districts. In 2020, Europa Park added on a gigantic water park, **Rulantica**.

Near Sélestat, **Cigoland** is both a theme park, with about twenty attractions, and an animal park, with 120 storks roaming freely.

① Europa Park : www.europapark.de/en

① Cigoland : cigoland.fr



STRASBOURG, A GREEN CITY

When you're in Strasbourg, you don't need to go far to go green. The city contains 3,200 hectares of nature: with parks, squares, public gardens and woods, there's something for everyone!

Parc de l'Orangerie

This is the largest park in Strasbourg (26 hectares) and is one of the most pleasant; it was classed as a **Historical Monument** in 1989.

The laying-out of the park as a French classical garden began in 1740. A pavilion dedicated to the Empress Josephine (which hosted a reception in her honour in 1809) was built in 1806 to house the collection of orange trees which the state had just presented to the city of Strasbourg. Between 1832 and 1848, a fan-like pattern of the walkways was integrated into an English-style garden. This further evolved with the industrial and artisan exhibition of 1895, when a number of spectacular features - some of a short duration, others lasting a longer period of time - were added. These included the man-made lake with its rocky waterfall and grotto. A half-timbered house, built originally in Molsheim in 1607, was reconstructed piece by piece to create a winery; much later this became a high-end restaurant. The fantastic collection of orange trees which gave the park its name was sadly lost in a fire in 1968. However the people of Strasbourg really appreciate the charms of this place, with its **perfect blend of classicism and romanticism**, of familiarity and exoticism. It is not unusual to come across a stork roaming freely over the park lawns.

👁 Avenue de l'Europe - Free access.

The Botanical Garden

It is **one of the largest botanical gardens in France**. It was developed between 1880 and 1884 by the German authorities as part of the Imperial University. They hoped to make it the Empire's second most impressive botanical garden after Berlin. This 3.5 hectare garden, located on the site of the old ramparts, was provided with attractive metal greenhouses, the last remnant of which is the round glasshouse renamed "de Bary" - after the professor who created the garden. **Listed as a historic monument** in 1993, it houses tropical aquatic plants and a pool 7 meters in length, used from the very beginning for cultivating the giant water lily *Victoria amazonica*.

The mission of the botanical garden is to provide a home for exotic species and to preserve the extraordinary variety of natural plant life by cultivating numerous endangered plant species. Its role is also to raise public awareness of the importance of preserving our botanical heritage.

Featured on the additional list of historic monuments since 1991, this truly living museum provides, in a green oasis in the heart of the city, is a fantastic opportunity to observe more than **6,000 different ancient or rare species** from all five continents.

👁 28 rue Goethe - Free access. Variable hours.

📍 jardin-botanique.unistra.fr

Pourtalès Park

Mélanie de Pourtalès (1836-1914) will always be associated with the castle she is named after. Thanks to the beautiful lady (who was the matron of honour for the Empress Eugénie), the Pourtalès Castle became a meeting point for celebrities of the century: Albert Schweitzer, Maurice Barrès, Jules Massenet, Charles de Foucault...

Belonging since 1976 to the City of Strasbourg, the 24 hectare park has woods that stretch out towards the forest of Robertsau. It features lots of **contemporary sculptures** and is the most rugged of Strasbourg's parks.

👁 161 rue Mélanie - Free access.

Citadelle Park

Partially classed as a historic monument, this park (12,5 ha) was decorated in 1964 as **a remnant of the Citadel designed by Vauban** in 1681 to strengthen the city's fortifications. The park has retained the outline of the fortifications, combining the architectural contours, the water in the moat and the vegetation into a single entity.

👁 Rue de Boston - Free access.

Jardin des Deux Rives

This 50 hectare cross-border park has **straddled the German and French banks of the Rhine** since 2004. A symbol of **Franco-German friendship**, it is the first park to be designed on both sides of a border. A delicate footbridge for pedestrians and cyclists, 387 metres long, was designed by **Marc Mimram**, providing easy access across the river and stunning views of its banks. Considering its symbolism, it is no surprise that the « family photo » of the 2009 NATO summit was taken here.

👁 Rue des Cavaliers - Free access.

Heyritz Park

This new park (2015) of 8.7 hectares, located close to the city centre, was built on a **former industrial site**. Its design preserved a large portion of existing nature (trees and undergrowth), supplemented by native herbaceous plants. A long **floating footbridge** made of acacia creates a smooth interface with the aquatic environment.

👁 Chemin du Heyritz - Free access.

Three national nature reserves

Strasbourg is **the only city in Europe** with alluvial forests in the areas surrounding the city, three of which are protected by the status of "national nature reserve": **Rohrschollen Island** (1997), **Neuhof Forest** (2012) and **Robertsau Forest** (2020). These three areas represent an incomparable natural heritage with remarkable ecological diversity. A wide variety of marked trails and paths can be followed to explore nature while respecting the environment.

Nature in the city: the urban nature park

Taking inspiration from nearby regional nature parks, Strasbourg and its citizens have launched an innovative programme to preserve the city's unique heritage and attractive living conditions. The Urban Nature Park **has brought nature and the city together**, since 2010 for Ill Bruche in the west and since 2015 for Ill Rhine in the north. More than a territory, the Urban Nature Park is a state of mind, a collective approach to bringing nature into the city. It contains exceptional, amazing heritage that can be explored on several different **foot-paths and bike paths**.

Remarkable trees

A recent count of the **67,500 trees** of Strasbourg highlights the presence of **64 remarkable trees** in the city. These include:

- the **4 ginkgo biloba trees** on Place de la République, given by Emperor Meiji of Japan to Emperor William II.
- the highest tree in the city, a **plane tree measuring 45 metres** in Contades Park. Its height is equivalent to the height of a 15-storey building.
- A 31-metre-high London plane tree, right in the centre of the Petite France quarter. It is thought to have been planted in **1667**.

Did you know?

As the **2014 biodiversity capital**, Strasbourg was also listed as **France's 3rd green city** by the Observatoire des Villes Vertes in 2023 (behind Angers and Nantes). It was also one of the three finalists in the running for the **2021 European green capital**.



© Christophe Hamm

STRASBOURG, A VIBRANT CITY

Strasbourg brilliantly manages to preserve and showcase its historical and architectural heritage while continuing to live, grow and move with its times.

A city in transformation

Beyond the numerous urban projects currently underway, which are redesigning the city and opening it up to neighbouring Germany, Strasbourg is making the most of its industrial and port heritage to recreate itself while breathing new life into the relevant buildings and urban areas.

• Presqu'île André Malraux

This formerly abandoned port area has been rehabilitated extensively. The old grain silo and shipyard warehouses have been converted into a media library (Ibos and Vitart architects). This project preserved the soul of the building, particularly by highlighting the existing exposed concrete. The "Paindavoine" cranes were preserved and restored to serve as tangible reminders of the place's past as a port.

• Manufacture des Tabacs

This huge building - some parts of which are listed as historical monuments - has been recently converted with the aim of focusing on continuity by safeguarding its unique identity and connection to the manufacturing industry. This former industrial building now houses a satellite of the University of Strasbourg, a business incubator, youth hostel, a bar-restaurant and a producers' shop.

• The COOP quarter

A real social project with the aim of offering healthy food through a cooperative organisation, the "Société Coopérative de Strasbourg et Environs" set up for business at the Rhine Port in the early 20th century. It remained there until January 2014. This huge industrial site is now a quarter undergoing renewal, both in terms of its architecture and how it is used, while preserving the values of collaboration and sharing in keeping with the site's history. Housing, office space, artists' studios and gardens have been developed here since 2022.

Trendy pop-ups

The latest spots in Strasbourg that are great places to go for a drink are pop-up venues. These **trendy, unique bars** set up for business in unexpected or alternative places, for a limited time. They offer **new vibes** in Strasbourg, often with quite avant-garde cultural programming. Thanks to these pop-up bars, Strasbourg residents and tourists get to discover and explore places that would normally be closed or mostly unheard of. Among the latest pop-up venues in Strasbourg: Le Lavoir, La Grenze and Le Phare Citadelle.

Stunning contemporary art

Strasbourg is very enthusiastic about contemporary art: in addition to being home to the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, the city also displays contemporary art in public spaces and in other special venues.

• Art in the city

In Strasbourg, several works by renowned contemporary artists are displayed in the public space, creating a sort of open-air museum. In particular, these artworks can be found along tram lines A and B, at Orangerie Park, at the Jardin des Deux Rives and at Pourtalès Park.

• ST'ART

Every year, Strasbourg holds France's second-largest contemporary art fair. This show has become a key event for enthusiasts and collectors, attracting about one hundred French and international art galleries.

① www.st-art.com/en

• CEAAC (Centre Européen d'Actions Artistiques Contemporaines)

The goal of CEAAC is to develop contemporary art, both in terms of support for artistic creation and dissemination. With this aim, a wide variety of exhibitions are held on a regular basis (featuring a single artist, collective, on different themes or organised by guest curators), and experimental programmes are organised.

① ceaac.org/en

A growing trend: Street Art



Over the past few years, the walls of Strasbourg have lit up with colour! In collaboration with the municipality, some artists have had an opportunity to express themselves. More than **500 works of street art** can now be seen on the streets of Strasbourg.

These murals, graffiti, tags, collages and other creations are listed on a collaborative, interactive map to help you find the best spots in the city: the Street Art Map: strasbourg.streetart-map.eu

In addition, a street art gallery opened in spring 2019, and a special festival, the **Colors** Festival, is held every year in September.

① www.colors-art.eu

In 2018, the **famous New York artistic collaboration FAILE** created an **ephemeral mural covering 1,000 sq. metres** of the exterior walls of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art.

The street artist **Astro** created a **monumental mural** (30 metres high and 15 metres across) on a facade of the university residence "Les Flamboyants", in the Esplanade quarter.

And the Strasbourg-based graffiti artist **Apaiz!** painted an **impressive mural** measuring 50 metres long and 4 metres high in the Port du Rhin district.

In 2022 the **brazilian** street artist **Alex Senna** created an enormous and ephemeral **mural** (14 metres high and 16 metres across) in the Laiterie district (Artemis).



© Vincent Muller

SLOW LIVING IN STRASBOURG

The size of the Alsatian capital is ideal; it's a city where life is good and time is something to be enjoyed. Strasbourg also offers the pleasure of discovering local gastronomy!

Take your time... getting around town

A pioneering city when it comes to active modes of transport, Strasbourg is best discovered **on foot or by bike**. The historical centre, **almost entirely pedestrianised**, can be explored and enjoyed quietly, in a peaceful atmosphere without engines. Strasbourg also offers other alternatives to cars, thanks to its **tram system**, the largest in France. The Strasbourg tram system has more than 70 km of lines and even crosses the border to go to the neighbouring city of Kehl, Germany.

Take your time... strolling around

In 2019, the south quays of the River Ill were transformed into an area where people can meet up and go for a stroll. Across the water, visitors can admire the marvellous Gothic, Renaissance and classical facades on the opposite riverbank. With a nod to slow living, floating docks have been installed, where you can **daydream and relax**.

Take your time... to eat

Strasbourg is a pleasant place to take your time, enjoy the cityscape, meet up with people and **enjoy a good meal**. The **gastronomy of Strasbourg** has been enriched over the centuries with iconic dishes combining the refinement of French cuisine with the generosity of Germanic cooking.

Take your time... to enjoy a meal at a winstub

Foie gras (which was invented in Strasbourg by the Maréchal de Contades' chef around 1780) and **sauerkraut** (traditional or with fish) are the two centre pieces of Alsatian cuisine, but alongside these two specialities, many other mouth-watering delicacies appear on menus. For example: **baeckeoffe** (a mix of marinated beef, mutton and pork in white wine, slowly cooked with potatoes and onions); the **tarte flambée** (thin crust covered with cream, bacon and onions, slightly singed by the flames of the bread oven); coq au Riesling; boiled or grilled pork

shank; fish stew with spaetzle (a variety of noodle); onion tart; gruyere salad; bibeleskäs (whipped cream cheese with garlic, onion, parsley and chive seasoning, served with fried potatoes); asparagus with three sauces, served in spring... A melt-in-the-mouth **Munster cheese** and a cheese or fruit cake (according to the season) create a lovely finish to a meal. And the kougelhopf and bretzel are greatly appreciated on any occasion. To accompany it all, **beer and wine** co-exist (which is particularly rare) in Alsace, which both impose their quality. As for the colourless spirits, from raspberry or pear to Gewurztraminer marc, they all present a marvellous conclusion to a lavish meal.



The gateway to the Alsace Wine Route

Strasbourg is a great starting point for **exploring the Alsace Wine Route**, which begins just a few kilometres from the Alsatian capital. The region is the only one in France to perpetuate the **tradition of wine varieties**, with seven of them: Sylvaner, Pinot Blanc, Riesling, Muscat, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir and Gewurztraminer. Vines of these seven varieties can even be found on Place des Tripiers Square in Strasbourg. Planted in 2000, these vines bear witness to **Strasbourg's historical links to the vineyards**.

La Cave Historique des Hospices de Strasbourg



This historical link can also be found at the Historic Wine Cellar of Strasbourg Hospital. Founded in 1395, the "Cave Historique des Hospices de Strasbourg" (historical wine cellar) depicts the **hospital's history and prestigious wine production**. It holds fabulous masterpieces of barrel-making, and even a wine dating back to 1472... **the oldest barrelled wine in the world!** This extraordinary heritage has existed since 1995 thanks to the drive of reputable Alsatian wine producers. The best Alsatian vintage wines, carefully selected in accordance with very strict quality standards, matured in oak barrels and aged to be then poured into bottles and labelled "cave des hospices". This cellar is unique as it is situated in a hospital.

👁 1 place de l'Hôpital

📍 vins-des-hospices-de-strasbourg.fr/en

SLOW LIVING IN STRASBOURG



DISCOVERING STRASBOURG

In Strasbourg, there are plenty of ways to explore the city. On foot, by bike, or on the water: anything goes!

Visit Strasbourg with an audio guide

To visit the city at your own pace, when it suits you, audio guides are available at the tourist office.

Tour boat ride

For an original tour of Strasbourg, Batorama offers rides on **tour boats**. It's a great way to get a different perspective of the historical and heritage treasures of the European capital.

👁 Tickets: place de la Cathédrale

Pier: place du Marché aux Poissons

📍 www.batorama.com

Do like the locals and hop on a bike!

With over 670 km of bike paths, Strasbourg is the second most bike-friendly city in France. So it comes as no surprise that 14% of all journeys are by bike! **To experience the city like the locals do, visitors can simply ride a bike.** Lots of companies offer conventional or electrical bike hire (see p. 39).

Tours on the little sightseeing train



A little sightseeing train takes visitors around to see Strasbourg's iconic quarters. **Two guided tours are offered:** one winds its way through the old town and Petite France quarters, while the other explores the German imperial quarter, known as the Neustadt district.. (April to October)

👁 place de la Cathédrale et place du Château

📍 petit-train-strasbourg.fr

Navigating through Strasbourg

To discover the city from the water, completely autonomously, **licence-free electric boats** can be hired to navigate down the River Ill.

Two companies offer several tours, with different themes and variable lengths.

👁 49 quai des Alpes 📍 www.captainbretzel.eu

👁 5 quai du Woerthel 📍 www.marindeaudouce.fr

Unusual tours

There are plenty of other unusual ways to visit the city, for example on Segways, scooters or even in rickshaws, also known as tuk-tuks. And for an even more entertaining approach to exploring the city's heritage, visitors can also make their way around on treasure hunts or theme tours featuring activities such as shopping, beer or food.

The 5^e Lieu



To get a good initial overview of Strasbourg's rich heritage, try heading over to the 5e Lieu. Its permanent exhibition, **"A Journey through Strasbourg"**, is structured as a walk through the city of the past and future, using modern exhibition techniques. It's a very rich source of information about the city's history and development, as well as its heritage and urban planning.

👁 5 place du Château

📍 5elieu.strasbourg.eu



STRASBOURG BY BIKE

What could be more natural than winding through France's second biggest bicycle city on a bicycle? There are many different routes through the city and its surroundings where you can admire the wealth of its heritage and discover lovely, natural areas along the way.

Discovering urban heritage

In the city centre

Thanks to wide pedestrian zones, areas where people can meet up and plenty of cycle paths criss-crossing the city, it's easy to get around on the streets of Strasbourg, by bike. It's a pleasant way to go from the Petite France quarter to the Neustadt district, by way of the Cathedral.

All around Strasbourg

Take the Vélostras 1 bike lane to explore Strasbourg in all its diversity, in a single ride. Start at Place de l'Etoile and enjoy the sights: André Malraux Peninsula, which is a successful conversion of a former industrial site, Citadelle Park, the marina, the Orthodox Church, Orangerie Park, the European institutions, the Exhibition Centre, the new business district known as Wacken, the old ramparts, the Laiterie quarter and the great mosque.

📍 14 k loop

Peaceful rides along the canals

Close to the water, along the canals, you'll find some easy, pleasant routes with a wide variety of landscapes.

The Bruche Canal

To join this charming route, pedal along the Ill River from the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, towards Montagne Verte, west of Strasbourg. In the shade of the tall trees that line the paths, you'll wind your way through the countryside. The route can be followed all the way to Molsheim.

The Rhone-Rhine Canal

Join this pleasant bike path by heading south on EuroVelo 15. The centuries-old plane trees on this cycle route, developed on a former towpath, make it a nice shady greenway, perfect for summer riding. It winds its way through the towns of Illkirch-Graffenstaden, Eschau and Plobsheim before crossing through prairies, woods and farmland.

The Marne-Rhine Canal

This time, you'll be heading north on your bike. Following EuroVelo 5, you'll ride through the towns of Bischheim, Hoenheim, Souffelweyersheim (with its pretty marina), Reichstett, Vendenheim and Eckwersheim. You'll enjoy a pleasant ride, thanks to the peacefulness of the canal and the variety of the landscapes.

Go green in the parks and forests

Cycling is also a great way to get some fresh air. In just a short ride from the city centre, you can get back to nature:

- in Pourtalès Park,
- in Orangerie Park,
- on the greenway to Wantzenau, through the forest of Robertsau,
- in the forest of Neuhof.

A cross-border heritage route

The **Forts Trail** is a [cycle route that crosses the border into Germany](#) as it follows the ring of defensive fortifications built around the city in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. During this 85k ride, you'll pass 19 forts. You'll discover some less well-known heritage sites, but the real treat is being out in nature.

Bicycle touring: a city at the crossroads of 2 EuroVelo routes

2 EuroVelo routes cross paths in Strasbourg: EuroVelo 5 and EuroVelo 15, making Strasbourg the perfect stop for cyclists touring on these routes.

EuroVelo 5, also known as *Via Romea Francigena*, follows the itinerary of pilgrims travelling from England to Rome, crossing through 7 different countries. It arrives in Strasbourg from the northwest, through Saverne, running along the Rhone-Rhine Canal, then leaving it to head southwest to the Alsace wine region.

EuroVelo 15, also called *the Rhine Cycle Route*, connects the source of the Rhine River in Switzerland to the North Sea in the Netherlands. It arrives in Strasbourg from the south, via Basel, Switzerland, and leaves the city to head north to Lauterbourg, running along the river.

Strasbourg features lots of cyclist-friendly accommodations, offering riders the services they need, such as covered, locked bike storage, repair kits, picnic baskets, luggage transfer, and more. These accommodations feature the "**Accueil Vélo**" certification.

A few routes suggested by "Alsace by Bike"



The Deux-Rives Route

This [25k French-German bike route](#) gives you a sense of the region's cross-border identity, while "going green". The route runs through and close to two nature reserves, and alongside the Rhine. In Kehl, it takes you across the Passerelle des Deux Rives (footbridge) to get back to Strasbourg.

Châteaux et Vignobles de la Couronne d'Or

With this [45 km route](#) along the Bruche Canal, you will discover the châteaux and gardens of Kolbsheim and Osthoffen, cycle along the vineyards of the famous Golden Crown and admire the myriad panoramic views of the Plain of Alsace.

Around and about the Ill and Rhine rivers

[This route](#), which is almost 30 kilometres long, has plenty of variety to enjoy, thanks to the wide range of landscapes it crosses. You'll see the Malraux Peninsula, the European institutions and the Neustadt district, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, along with Pourtalès Park, the Robertsau Nature Reserve and the Marne-Rhine Canal. The perfect way to discover Strasbourg, differently!

From the banks of the Ill River to the Bruche Canal

[This ride, which is about 30 kilometres long](#), promises pleasant moments thanks to the tranquillity of the Ill River and the Bruche Canal. Combine that with the charm of the half-timbered houses in the towns on the outer ring of the Eurometropolis, and panoramic views of the Vosges and the Black Forest, and you've found perfection!

Renting a bike in Strasbourg

Lots of bike hire companies offer conventional bikes and e-bikes, such as Vel'hop, One City Bike and L'Increvable. Some companies also offer guided bike tours.



STRASBOURG, CAPITAL OF CHRISTMAS

“Strasbourg, Capital of Christmas” is a time-honoured tradition. With its markets, lights, concerts and solidarity, it captures the magic of Christmas throughout the month of December, all across the city centre.

France’s oldest Christmas market

Strasbourg’s Christmas market is **the oldest one in France and one of the oldest in Europe**. Originally, in **1570**, the *Christkindelsmärik* (Market of the Baby Jesus), was created under the influence of Strasbourg Protestantism, to replace the Saint Nicholas Market (St. Klausenmarkt), one of the so-called extravagant Catholic traditions associated with saints’ names. It was held a few days before Christmas at the foot of the Cathedral.

Since then, the market has continued to grow. In 1830, the market was moved to Place Kléber, and then to Place Broglie in 1870, where it is still held to this day. Nowadays, hundreds of merchants and craftsmen occupy the **300 chalets** set up almost everywhere in the city centre.

An enchanting ambiance

During the Christmas market, the ambiance in Strasbourg is truly unique. It’s especially in the late afternoon, at dusk, that **the magic starts to happen**. The facades and streets are beautifully decorated, the shop windows sparkle, the smells of cinnamon and spices waft through the air, bringing back childhood memories, and Christmas carols ring out from churches. Throughout December, Strasbourg is **one of the most illuminated cities in Europe**. The streets, houses, windows and balconies twinkle with lights and decorations each year more original than the last. This fairy-tale atmosphere enchants every visitor.

“Strasbourg, the Capital of Christmas”

Through its Christmas Market, Strasbourg upholds its centuries-old status as a market town, but it also strives to promote the **city’s humanist values**.

And that is what the concept of “Strasbourg, Capital of Christmas” – created in 1992 – is all about: proposing, in addition to the traditional markets in the city’s streets, hundreds of events aiming to carry on the tradition and a spirit of openness, sharing and generosity.

Objective: getting ready for Christmas

The first objective of the Christmas Market in Alsace is to get ready for Christmas. So market-goers find **original gifts**, unique items to **decorate** their Christmas trees and traditional treats, such as the little Christmas biscuits called **bredele**, and **mulled wine**, to keep them warm!

The great Christmas tree



Strasbourg has boasted its traditional Christmas tree for centuries: a manuscript from **1605** describes decorated fir trees placed in Strasbourg’s guild houses during Advent.

Every year, a **thirty-metre tall Christmas tree** is brought to Place Kléber and decorated with colourful ornaments and shimmering lights. This essential symbol of “Strasbourg, Capital of Christmas” is also the **highest decorated Christmas tree in Europe**.

A rich programme

“Strasbourg, Capital of Christmas” skilfully brings together spiritual, cultural and artistic events. Throughout the month of December, lots of concerts, many of which are free, are offered, including Christmas carols. Many exhibitions are held as well. For example, every year, the Cathedral exhibits in its nave the **17th-century tapestries** that it has had since 1739. These 14 tapestries, which were commissioned by Richelieu, tell the story of the Virgin’s life.

① noel.strasbourg.eu/en

A famous Christmas Market

Users from around the world on the European e-tourism website, “European Best Destinations” have twice voted the Strasbourg Christmas Market as the most beautiful Christmas Market in Europe. In 2018, it was even named the “Best Christmas Market in the World” by CNN Travel.

The Strasbourg Christmas Market takes to the road!

In 2009 and 2010, the Strasbourg Christmas Market went to **Tokyo**, attracting over 1.2 million visitors. In 2012 and 2013, it went to **Moscow**, setting up at the gateway to the famous Red Square, drawing over 750,000 visitors. After **Beijing** in 2015 and **Taipei** in 2016, it was **Seoul**’s turn in 2017: 275,000 Koreans eagerly went to discover Alsatian gastronomy and craftsmanship.

In 2019, it was none other than **New York City** that welcomed the Strasbourg Christmas Market. This was proof, if proof were needed, of the market’s excellent reputation.



“STRASBOURG, CAPITAL OF CHRISTMAS”



STRASBOURG, AT THE HEART OF ALSACE

Ideally situated, Strasbourg is the perfect starting point to explore not only Alsace, but the Black Forest and Switzerland, too. A multitude of activities and destinations are within easy reach.

Less than 30 minutes away

• Kehl

Just over the border from Strasbourg, Kehl can be reached by tram on line D, as well as by bike or on foot using a special footbridge. For visitors, Kehl is a charming city and a unique opportunity to hop over to Germany.

👁 6 km ⓘ marketing.kehl.de

• Marlenheim and the Wine Route

The wine village closest to Strasbourg is Marlenheim. **This is where the Alsace Wine Route begins:** an itinerary that takes visitors to the heart of the magnificent Alsace wine country.

👁 22 km ⓘ www.wineroute.alsace

• Obernai

The main curiosities of this charming, very lively little city are its city hall, belfry, wheat market and ramparts.

👁 28 km ⓘ www.tourisme-obernai.fr/en

Less than one hour away

• Soufflenheim and Betschdorf

Located north of Strasbourg, near Haguenau, Soufflenheim and Betschdorf preserve the **traditional craft of pottery making**. Each village is known for its own technique: for example, in Soufflenheim, the potters are renowned for their kougelhopf moulds and in Betschdorf they're known for their original salt varnish sandstone technique.

👁 42 and 52 km ⓘ www.visithaguenau.alsace/en

• Mont Sainte-Odile

At the spiritual centre of Alsace, Mont Sainte-Odile offers stunning views from its altitude of 753 metres. The area offers lots of hiking trails.

👁 45 km ⓘ www.mont-sainte-odile.com

• La Fabrique à Bretzels

At the Boehli pretzel factory, discover the history and recipe behind the success of the famous Alsatian pretzel maker.

👁 48 km ⓘ www.boehli.fr/lafabriqueabretzels

• The Alsace–Moselle Memorial

The Alsace Moselle Memorial traces the **unique history of the region**, as it changed nationalities 4 times between 1871 and 1945. Visitors interested in **memorial tourism** might also want to visit the nearby European Centre of Deported Resistance Members and the Struthof concentration camp, the only one in France.

👁 48 km ⓘ www.memorial-alsace-moselle.com/en

• Baden–Baden

The pretty German city of Baden–Baden is famous for its **spa**, overhung by Hohenbaden Castle and its casino. It's also popular with culture enthusiasts, with its **music scene** and **Frieder Burda Museum**.

👁 60 km ⓘ baden-baden.com/en

• The Lalique Museum

At the heart of the Northern Vosges Regional Nature Park, visitors find the Lalique Museum, devoted to the **master glassmaker and jeweller René Lalique** and his successors. It's a delight to see exceptional pieces and experience an immersion in the designer's world.

👁 62 km ⓘ www.musee-lalique.com/en

• Haut–Koenigsbourg castle

The Castle of Haut–Koenigsbourg is the **only fully restored medieval castle in Alsace**. It has been overhanging the valley since the 20th century and offers a remarkable vision of what medieval life was like in Alsace.

👁 62 km ⓘ www.haut-koenigsbourg.fr/en

• Alsace's finest villages

Voted the most beautiful villages in France, **Hunspach**, **Mittelbergheim**, **Hunawihl**, **Riquewihl** and **Eguisheim** are all one hour or less away from Strasbourg.

👁 62 km ⓘ www.les-plus-beaux-villages-de-france.org

• Colmar

Not-to-be-missed Colmar, with its canals that have earned it the nickname Little Venice, is about an hour's drive away from Strasbourg. The city features the **Unterlinden Museum**, located in a 13th-century former convent, exhibiting artworks from every period, including the famous Isenheim Altarpiece.

👁 73 km ⓘ www.tourisme-colmar.com/en

Less than an hour and a half away

• Freiburg im Breisgau

Freiburg im Breisgau is a charming medieval city crisscrossed by little alleyways and streams, boasting a castle, a cathedral, and more. And it's known as the sunniest city in Germany!

👁 90 km ⓘ visit.freiburg.de/en

• Alsace Ecomusée

The Alsace Ecomusée is the **largest open-air museum in France**. It presents the **region's rural heritage**, with its arts and traditions. Many aspects of daily life are covered: home life, arts and crafts, cooking, farming and the environment.

👁 110 km ⓘ www.ecomusee.alsace/

• Mulhouse

With its charming historical centre, Mulhouse has plenty to offer. For example, visitors can go to several great museums, such as the Motor Museum, the Train Museum (the largest railway museum in Europe) or the Museum of Printed Textiles.

👁 115km ⓘ www.tourisme-mulhouse.com/en

• The Ballons des Vosges Regional Nature Park

The Ballons des Vosges Regional Nature Park is one of the largest regional nature parks in France. This **remarkable natural area** offers lots of possibilities for hiking.

👁 120 km ⓘ www.parc-ballons-vosges.fr/en

Less than two hours away

• Basel

This metropolis, split in two by the Rhine, is surprising for its perfect combination of old-town charm and modern architectural landmarks. Basel has an incredible number of museums. The most remarkable include the **Kunstmuseum** (Museum of Fine Arts), the **Beyeler Foundation** and the **Jean Tinguely Museum**.

👁 140 km ⓘ www.basel.com/en

The times shown above are estimated driving times. However, each place can also be reached by public transport (Fluo Grand Est 67 coaches or regional express trains).

STRASBOURG IN NUMBERS

Strasbourg is...

... more than **2,000 years of history**

Local area / Demographics

- **33 towns** form the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg
- Strasbourg extends across **78 sq. kilometres** and the Euro-metropolis covers **339 sq. kilometres**
- The **8th-largest city in France** in terms of population, with over **284,000 residents** in Strasbourg and **500,000** in the Eurometropolis

Transport

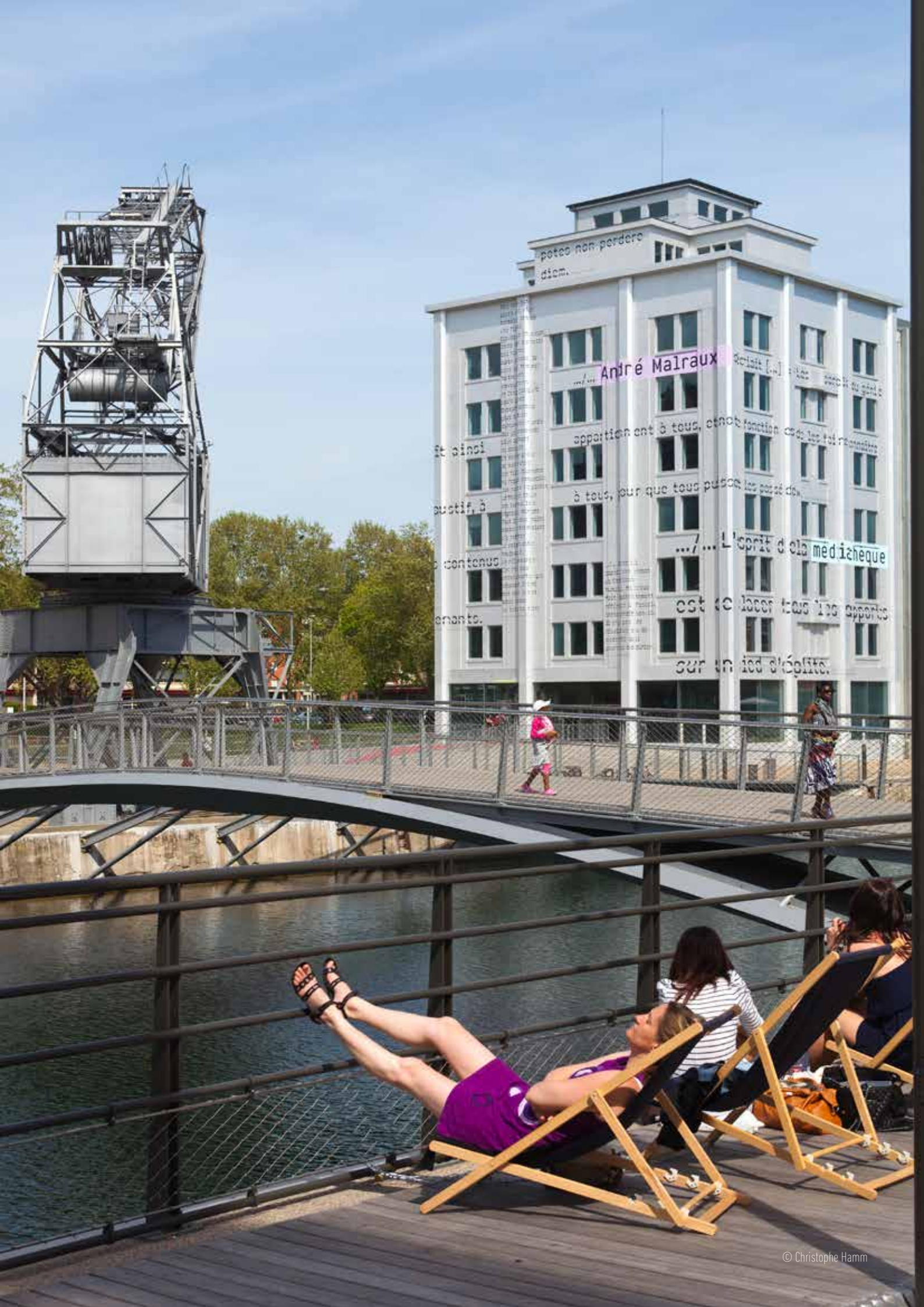
- The biggest tram system in France, with **77 km**
- The **first cross-border tram**
- France's **second most bike-friendly city**, with more than **670 km** of bike paths
- The **2nd largest river port** in France

Tourism

- Over **4 million** tourists welcomed every year
- **2 out of 5 visitors** are from other countries
- About **20 million** travellers use the Strasbourg train station every year
- About **1.3 million** travellers use the Strasbourg Airport every year
- About **588,000** visitors come to the Strasbourg Tourist Office every year
- **240,000** cruise passengers in 2020
- Over **170 hotels** in the Eurometropolis, including 90 in Strasbourg, offering more than **10,000 rooms**

Rankings and distinctions

- 2017: Strasbourg was ranked as the **3rd greenest city in France** by the Green City Observatory (behind Angers and Nantes).
- 2019: Strasbourg was named the **most attractive city in France** by Le Point magazine
- Strasbourg was named **“Best Christmas Market”** twice by European Best Destinations
- Named the **“World’s Best Christmas Market”** by CNN Travel in 2018



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André Malraux

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