Travel Guide:
Strasbourg, France

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# Planning your trip

Use this checklist to plan your trip to Strasbourg. Click on the links for helpful information and travel sites.

## Pre-trip essential information
- General visa information for travel to France
- Health information for travelers to France
- Get a travel insurance

## Getting there and around
- Flights to Strasbourg
- Trains to Strasbourg
- Buses to Strasbourg
- Rental cars
- Bus and tram tickets inside the city
- Rent a bike

## Accommodations
- Real-time hotel deals on Strasbourg
- Neighborhood guide and hotel recommendations
Ready for wine, history, and great food? Buckle up – we’re going to Strasbourg!

Strasbourg is the capital and largest city of the Grand Est region of France, and is the official seat of the European Parliament. Being near the border of Germany, you’ll find an intoxicating mix of Franco-German culture.

Travelers who love exploring cities will bask in everything Strasbourg has to offer – a slew of Michelin-starred restaurants, cafes at every turn, endless shopping choices – all within a network of extensive cycling paths and convenient public transportation.

Even if you’re not a big city person, it’s worth spending a couple of days in Strasbourg. It’s a great base to explore the Bas-Rhin department of the historic region of Alsace, and you’ll find lots of green spaces within.

Whether you’re here for the wine, the history and culture, or just to relax for a little holiday, there’s a lot to love in Strasbourg.
Tourist map: Use this Google map to plan your trip.

What to see and do

Day 1 – Explore Strasbourg’s historic center

The Grand Ile (or Grand Island) is Strasbourg’s historic city center. It was classified as a [World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1988](https://www.unesco.org), the first time a designation was given to an entire city center.

The buildings in the historic center show a mix of French and German influences, with designs dating from the medieval ages and throughout European history. A day of walking around the Grand Ile is the best overview of Strasbourg’s evolution through the ages.

This walking itinerary is only 3 KM long and covers the essential sights in Strasbourg’s historic center. Depending on how much you want to linger in certain areas, you can do this in half a day or stretch it out to two days.
Start at Gare Centrale
This is the city’s main railway station. If you’re coming from outside Strasbourg or its outskirts, most public transportation converge here. You’ll also find plenty of parking spaces around the area. More importantly, you’ll love to see the station’s gorgeous façade.

From the Gare Centrale, walk southeast to the beautiful western district of Petite France.

Get great views at the Barrage Vauban
On the way to the heart of Petite France, you’ll come across the Barrage Vauban, a bridge built in the 17th century that also acted as a weir (a barrier that alters the water flow), and a form of defense. This defensive measure was actually used in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian war – the river Ill’s water level was raised and completely flooded the northern part, making it impassable to the enemies.

In more peaceful times (like now), it serves as a viewing deck where you can see how the channels converge.
**Walk around Petite France**

Continue walking around the Petite France. You’ll see remnants of the historic quarter’s past, when it served as home to the city’s tanners, millers, and fishermen.

Cross the Ponts Couverts, admire the half-timbered houses and buildings, and snap your pictures along the flower-decked bridges.

Not to ruin the romantic mood, though, but here’s a fun little fact about the name “Petite France.” It was called such because in the 16th century, the district housed a hospital where people suffering syphilis – then called Franzosenkrankheit or “French disease” by the Germans, as they believed French troops were the ones responsible for spreading it – were treated. Thus, the name stuck.

If you’re up for some brunch, check out the [La Corde a Linge](#), a café and restaurant by the canal serving great Alsatian and French dishes, with a fine selection of wines. We especially loved the beef tartare and the spätzle.

**Continue your walk to the Krutenau district**

Once you’ve had your fill of Petite France, continue your walk eastward to the Krutenau district.

You’ll pass by the [Musée alsacien](#), a museum depicting daily rural life in Alsace in the 18th and 19th centuries; the Palais Rohan, a masterpiece of French Baroque architecture and home to the museums of decorative art, archaeology, and fine arts; and amazing viewpoints along the quay.

Learn more about Alsace in these museums, or continue your walk to Strasbourg’s architectural gem: the Cathedral.
Visit the Cathedral of our Lady of Strasbourg

The Cathedral of our Lady of Strasbourg is considered to be one of the finest examples of late Gothic architecture.

Built from 1015 to 1439, it was the world’s tallest building from 1647 to 1874 (for 227 years!) and presently the sixth tallest church in the world and the highest existing structure built entirely in the Middle Ages. But enough of the numbers – the moment you see this massive structure, you’ll be in awe.

Take some time to admire the cathedral’s façade and interiors, then escape the crowds and head over to Place Kléber.

Unwind at Place Kleber

Place Kleber is the largest square in Strasbourg’s city center. This is also the city’s commercial area where you’ll find plenty of shopping options.

For non-shoppers, this is a great place to take in more of the city’s vibe. If you’re visiting in December, make sure to hop over to the Christmas market.
Day 2 – Visit the city’s green spaces

On your second day, explore the city’s green spaces. Strasbourg has a great network of cycling paths and you can easily rent a bike for a few hours up to a few days.

This itinerary goes to two beautiful parks in Strasbourg – Jardin des Deux Rives and Parc l’Orangerie. From the Gare Central and back, this route is 16 kilometers. If you prefer to go by public transportation, though, you can take Bus #2 to go to the bus stop Jardin des Deux Rives and the bus stop Tauler, to get to the Parc de l’Orangerie.

Jardin des Deux Rives
Jardin des Deux Rives (or the Two Shores Garden) is located on both banks of the Rhine – in France and in Germany – linked by a beautiful footbridge. This is the concrete expression of Strasbourg’s “internationalism,” a symbol of French-German friendship, and for travelers, a thrill to visit for its cross-border appeal.

Parc de l’Orangerie
The Parc de l’Orangerie is located in the quiet European quarter of Strasbourg. It also houses a zoo, a small farm, and a bowling alley. But best of all, it’s the ideal place to just relax on a bright afternoon.
Where to eat

Alsace’s friendliness permeates all the way into its regional cuisine. If you’re not one for haute cuisine, you’ll be happy to discover that Alsatian gastronomy is genial and generous – think taverns lively with the sound of conversation and cutlery, and large plates and bowls filled with scrumptious fare that’s somewhere between hearty bar food and stylish comfort food.

When in Alsace, you have to try choucroute – the regional version of the German sauerkraut, which is fermented cabbage usually served with chicken, pork, or sausage. You can have this along with many other traditional Alsatian dishes at Maison des Tanneurs, a picture-perfect restaurant in Petite France.

If you’ve worked up a huge appetite and need some carbs, hop over to La Corde a Linge, also in Petite France, and have a huge plate of their spätzle – soft egg noodles that come with a variety of sauces. You may want to try spätzle with munster cheese, a soft cheese that’s made from milk from the Vosges, and an Alsatian specialty.

If you’re more of a pizza and beer kind of person, head to the Academie De La Biere, where you can fill up on beer and tarte flambee (also called flammekueche). They have locations in Petite France and near the Cathedral.

Have wine with your meals, or visit Terres a vin for wine tasting. For a chocolate fix, visit the Jacques Bockel chocolaterie.
Where to stay

Top tips

If you’re only staying for a night or two, stay near the Gare Centrale. This is Strasbourg’s main train station and near the city’s top sights. This is also where you’ll find most of the major rental car companies in Strasbourg, so if you’re planning to drive to the rest of Alsace, this is a good place to stay for a quick trip.

- **Travelers’ Pick: Hotel Graffalgar** – Bright and funky, this hotel offers visitors a glimpse into the local art scene. Each of its rooms and common areas are decorated by local artists, designed to give you a bright and comfortable stay. Twin rooms start at EUR 80.
- **Mercure Strasbourg Centre** – This is a bright and modern hotel perfect for jetsetters. It’s near the train station (so you can go in and out of the city in no time), but also within walking distance of Strasbourg’s charming historical center. Twin rooms start at EUR 80.

If you want to soak up the best of the city, stay near Place Kleber or Petite France. These two areas are Strasbourg’s main tourist districts where you’ll find the best sights, restaurants, and shopping places. It’s the most convenient place in the city as you’ll be in the center of everything. If you plan to visit the Christmas market in December, this is the perfect spot.

- **Travelers’ Pick: Le Moon** – If you’re in France to enjoy life’s fine things, complete the experience by staying at Le Moon. It’s an absolutely fabulous place to stay, with beautiful furnishings, great amenities, and a fantastic location. Studios for two start at EUR 100 while apartments for four start at EUR 170.
- **BOMA Hotel** – This is the perfect base for your shopping sprees. It’s right along the commercial center and you’ll love it for its comfortable rooms and bold design. Double rooms start at EUR 90.
- **Hotel and Spa Le Bouclier d’Or** – Set in the beautiful La Petite France, this hotel has everything for the most relaxing stay in Strasbourg. Beautiful
views, gorgeous rooms, a wine bar, a wellness center, and a buffet breakfast – you will be totally spoiled here. Double rooms start at EUR 155.

- **Cour du Corbeau** – Stay here for the best experience in Strasbourg. This luxurious 4-star hotel gives you the best amenities and a wonderful breakfast. It’s also right in the middle of everything. Twin rooms start at EUR 150.

- **Hotel Les Haras** – This hotel wonderfully complements La Petite France’s charm with its historical building, excellent food, and multilingual staff. Double rooms start at EUR 130.

If you want to stay in a quieter part of the city (away from the tourist crowds), stay in the **European quarter**. While not as hectic as Paris, Strasbourg still gets its share of tourists, especially around December. If you prefer to stay somewhere more peaceful (and for less money!), the European quarter is the best area. It’s also great if you plan to use Strasbourg as your base to explore the surrounding countryside – traffic isn’t as hectic and you’ll find lots of parking spaces.

- **Travelers’ Pick: La Residence de l’Orangerie** – This lovely guesthouse right beside the Parc de l’Orangerie will make you feel right at home in Strasbourg. It’s the perfect place for couples looking to relax and recharged, and it’s equipped with a kitchenette and has a free parking space on site. Studios start at EUR 70.

- **La Residence des Deux Studios** – This is another guesthouse in a quiet area where you’ll have everything you need for a great stay. Studios start at EUR 80.
Essential information

Getting there

**Flying:** Strasbourg has its own international airport in Entzheim, just 16 KM from the Strasbourg city center – check for flights to Strasbourg here. From the airport, you can ride a shuttle train into the city. Other nearby international airports are in Stuttgart and Paris.

**By land:** You can go to Strasbourg by train (check for schedules and fares) or by bus (check for schedules and fares).

Getting around

**Renting a car:** If you’re continuing your holiday into the Alsatian countryside, it’s best to get a rental car once you’re about to leave Strasbourg. Reserve your car in advance and pick it up either at the Strasbourg airport or near Gare Centrale.

We got ours from Avis via the RentalCars booking website. Their pick-up office is near the Gare Centrale – once you exit the station, turn right and walk all the way to the end of the station. The Avis office, along with Sixt and Budget, are across the flags, beside Burger King.

I highly recommend getting your car only when leaving Strasbourg or if you plan to go on day trips outside the city. Compared to driving in the Alsatian countryside, driving within the city can be a pain. There’s occasional heavy traffic and parking is quite difficult to find within the center. If you must drive, though, ask if your hotel can reserve a parking slot for you. Otherwise, you can park at the street parking slots for free from 7 PM to 9 AM the next day.

**By trams and buses:** Strasbourg has a great network of trams and buses. There are many kinds of tickets you can choose from – find more information here. You can get your tickets from a vending machine at major tram and bus stops (like the Gare...
Centrale and the Etoile Bourse, if you’re arriving by bus), or onboard from the driver (slightly more expensive).

If you need to ride the tram or bus just once for the day, get the ALLER SIMPLE ticket (EUR 1.70 from the vending machine). If you want to go around the city in trams and buses for the day, you can get the 24H ticket (EUR 4.30) or if there’s 2-3 of you, the 24H TRIO (EUR 6.80) is a great deal. Validate your tickets before getting onboard trams, and validate them when getting on buses (beside the driver).

By bike: Another great way to see the city is on bike! Strasbourg has a great network of cycling paths and you can easily rent a bike.
Thank you for downloading this guide! I hope you find the information here useful and I wish you happy travels to Strasbourg, France. Feel free to forward to friends!

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If you have more questions about travel in the area, send me an email (hello@littleholidays.net) and I’ll be happy to help you!

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**Strasbourg, France:** itinerary and travel guide