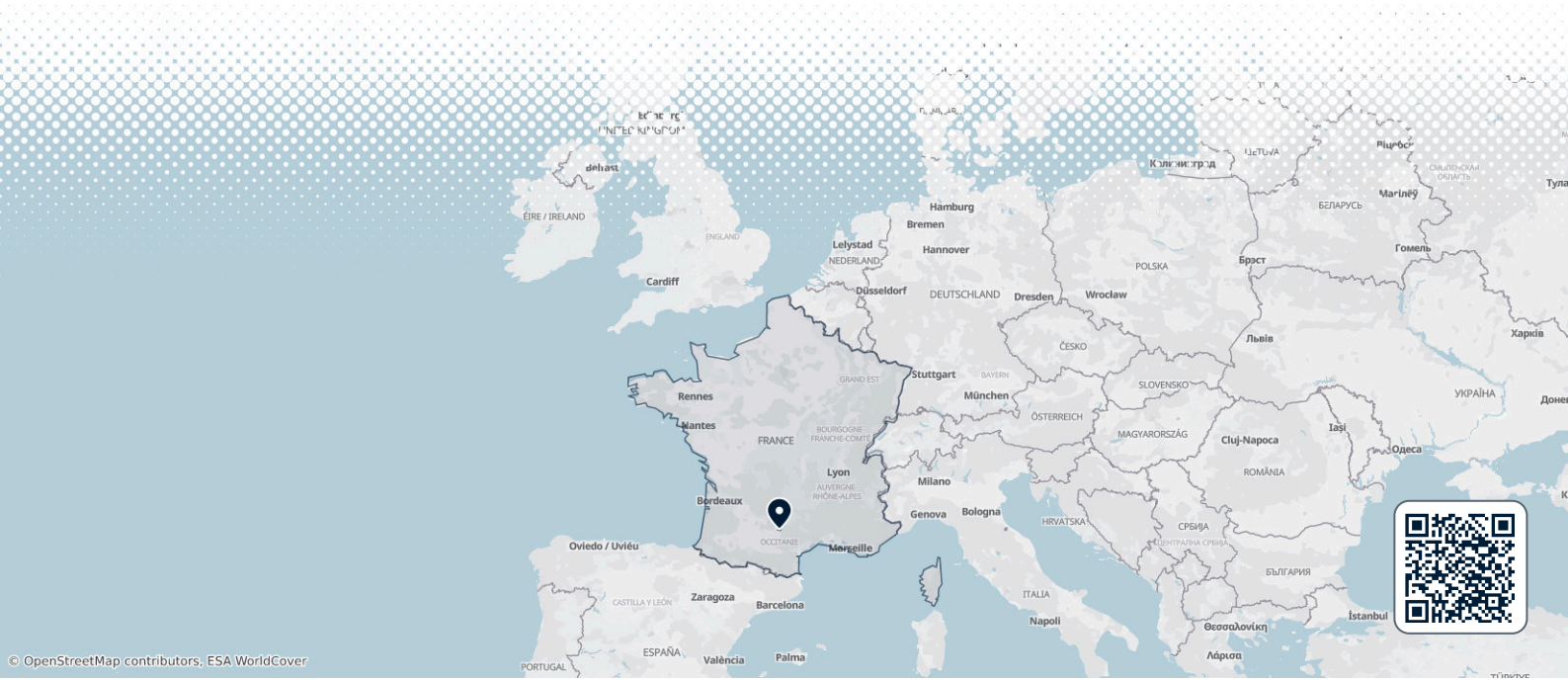


Albi

Tarn · France

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Albi is a small city on the Tarn river in southwest France, about 85 km northeast of Toulouse. Almost everything in the old centre is built of red brick, so the city glows orange and pink in the evening light. Its fortress-like cathedral and the old bishops' district are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Albi suits a calm stay of one or two nights, or a day trip from Toulouse. It is also the birthplace of the painter *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, and it has the largest public collection of his work.

When to visit

May, June, September and October are the best months. The weather is warm, the days are long and the town is not too busy. July and August are hot and sunny, and afternoons can be hard for sightseeing. Winter is cool and damp, with a quiet centre and a Christmas programme in the old town.

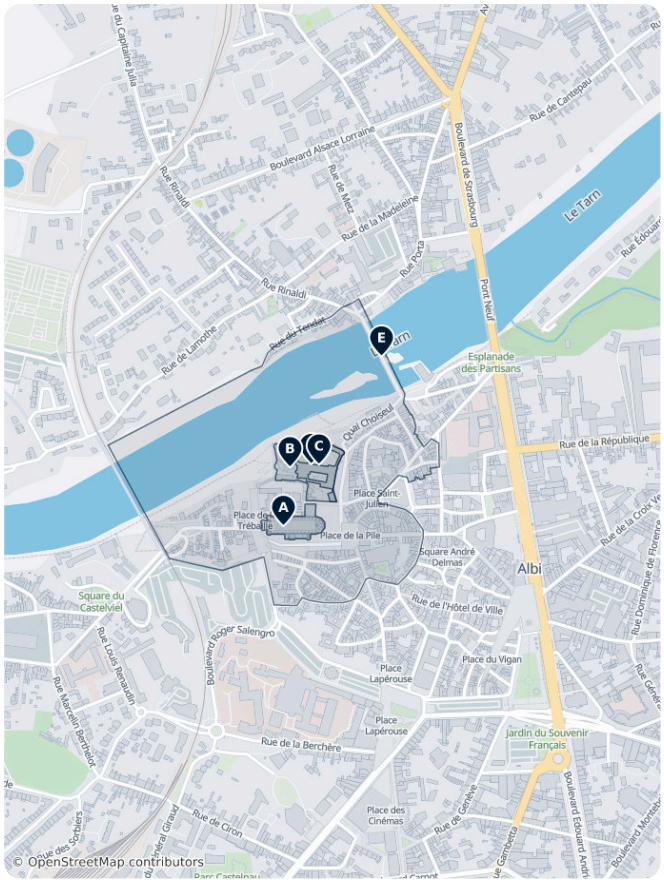
The main event of the year is the Pause Guitare music festival, held in early July. Book rooms early if you visit then.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for hiking	9° / 15° Feels like 5°	2° / -4°	12 rainy days · Dry air
February	Fair Fair for hiking	11° / 17° Feels like 7°	2° / -4°	Dry air
March	Good Good for hiking	15° / 21° Feels like 11°	4° / -2°	Dry air
April	Good Good for hiking	18° / 24° Feels like 14°	7° / 1°	12 rainy days · Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 28°	10° / 5°	13 rainy days · Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	26° / 35°	14° / 9°	
July	Good Good for sightseeing	29° / 37°	16° / 11°	
August	Good Good for sightseeing	30° / 38°	17° / 12°	Up to 5 days above 35°
September	Great Great for sightseeing	26° / 33°	13° / 8°	Dry air
October	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 27°	10° / 3°	Dry air
November	Fair Fair for hiking	14° / 21° Feels like 10°	5° / -2°	14 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for hiking	10° / 16° Feels like 6°	3° / -4°	12 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: May, June, September, October

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Albi Cathedral looks like a fortress. Work began in 1282, and it was consecrated in 1480. The tower is 78 m tall, and the inside has painted vaults, a carved stone screen around the choir and a large Last Judgment painting.
- The whole B Cité épiscopale d'Albi area is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, listed in 2010. It is a rare, well-kept medieval centre built around the cathedral and the bishops' palace.
- C Palais de la Berbie is the former bishops' palace next to the cathedral. It was built mainly in the 13th century, and it looks more like a castle than a home.
- D Musée Toulouse-Lautrec is inside the palace. It holds more than 1,000 works, and it is the largest public collection of work by *Toulouse-Lautrec*, including his posters.
- E Pont Vieux crosses the Tarn on eight arches and is about 150 m long. It was first built in the 11th century and later covered in brick. It gives the classic view of the cathedral and the river.
- The church and cloister of Saint-Salvi are a few minutes' walk from the cathedral. The church is the oldest in Albi. The covered market, Marché Couvert, is nearby and opened in 1905.

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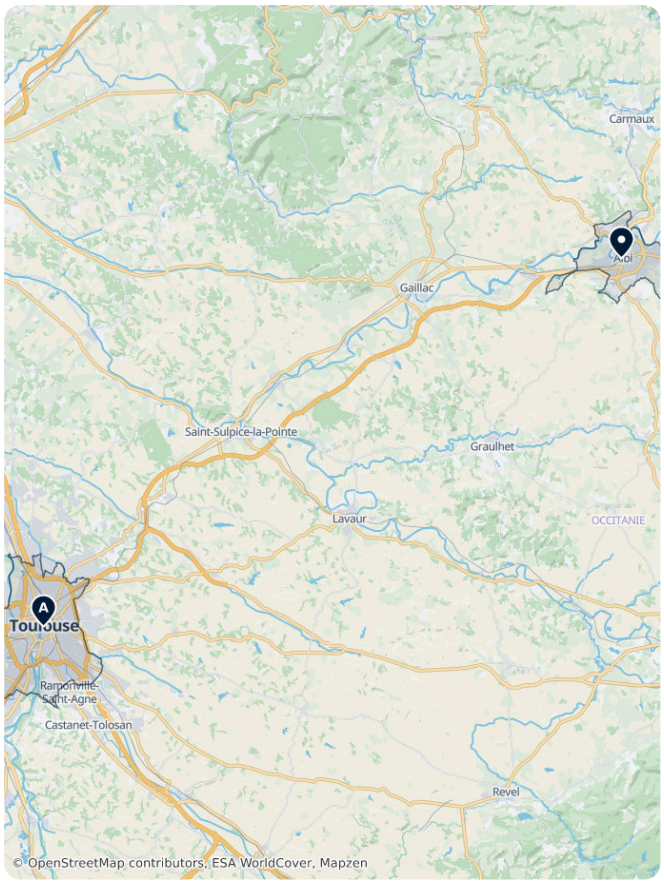
What to experience

Things to do that are special to Albi:

- **Saturday market.** The covered market is busiest on Saturday, when stalls fill the streets around it.
- **Walk the Échappée Verte.** This trail follows part of the GR36 and runs from the Tarn riverbanks into the Jarlard woods.
- **See the bridges at dusk.** From the riverside near the Tarn bridges, the brick cathedral and Pont Vieux glow in the evening light.

Day trips

Albi sits in a quiet countryside of vineyards and old villages. Trips are easiest by car. Some are possible by train or coach.



- Gaillac: about 20 minutes by train. This wine town has made wine for nearly 2,000 years. Visit the old abbey and the wine cellars.
- Cordes-sur-Ciel: about 30 minutes by car. It is a medieval hill town founded in 1222, and it is one of the Most Beautiful Villages of France. A liO coach also runs there a few times a day.
- Castres: about 45 minutes by car, or by liO coach. This town on the Agout river has a museum with Spanish art, including work by *Goya*.
- A Toulouse: about 1 hour by train, with trains almost every hour on weekdays. It is a big city with a lively old centre.
- Rodez: about 1 hour 15 minutes by car. It has a cathedral and a large museum of modern art.

Getting there

- **By air**: The main gateway is Toulouse-Blagnac Airport (TLS), about 85 km away. Take the tram or an airport shuttle into Toulouse, then a train to Albi. Rodez and Carcassonne airports have fewer flights.
- **By train**: Regional TER trains from Toulouse take about 1 hour, and run almost every hour on weekdays. Paris takes about 6 hours, with a change in Toulouse. Albi-Ville station is a 15-minute walk from the centre. Book at SNCF Connect.
- **By bus**: Regional coaches run from the bus station on Place Jean-Jaurès, about 5 minutes from the centre. They serve Castres, Cordes-sur-Ciel and Gaillac. See liO Occitanie.
- **By car**: The A68 motorway links Albi with Toulouse.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old centre is small and flat. You can cross it in under 20 minutes. The cathedral to Pont Vieux is about 10 minutes.
- **Public transit**: Libéa runs the city buses and short shuttle loops that serve the station and the cathedral area. You will only need them for the station or the edge of town. For details see Albi Tourism.
- **Taxi**: Taxis wait at the train station.
- **Hiking trail**: The Échappée Verte, a walking trail, follows the Tarn banks and the Jarlard woods.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old centre is small, flat and easy to cross on foot, and most sights are within 10 to 20 minutes of each other.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The countryside around Albi is good for cycling, but the old centre is best explored on foot.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Not for the town. A car helps for Cordes-sur-Ciel, the wine villages and the countryside.
- **Parking**: Park at a car park on the edge of the centre. It is cheaper than parking near the cathedral. From there, walk or take the bus. Electric car charging points are spread around town.

Food & drink

Albi cooks in the style of southwest France. Look for duck, sausages and slow-cooked bean stews. Wines from nearby Gaillac go well with them.

Good places to eat cluster around Place du Vigan, the covered market and Rue de la Piale. More restaurants stand near the Saint-Salvi cloister. Many close on Sunday, and some on Monday.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Croissant
Buttery, flaky laminated pastry and a classic French breakfast staple.

LUNCH

Ratatouille
A Provençal stewed vegetable dish of eggplant, zucchini, peppers, and tomatoes.

DINNER

Coq au Vin
Chicken braised slowly in red wine with mushrooms, onions, and lardons.

Beef Bourguignon · Bœuf Bourguignon
Beef stewed in red Burgundy wine with carrots, onions, and mushrooms.

Escargot · Escargots de Bourgogne
Snails cooked in garlic and parsley butter, a classic starter.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Baguette
Long, crusty white bread loaf bought fresh daily from the local boulangerie.

Cheese · Fromage
France produces hundreds of cheese varieties, often served as a course before dessert.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Crepes · Crêpes
Thin pancakes served sweet with sugar or jam, or savory as galettes.

Macarons
Delicate almond meringue sandwich cookies in a range of flavors and colors.

DRINKS

Wine · Vin
France's wine regions, including Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Champagne, are among the world's most renowned.

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Safety & health

Albi is a safe, calm city. Petty theft is uncommon, but keep an eye on bags in busy places.

In July and August it can be very hot, so carry water and plan sightseeing for the morning or evening.

History

Albi gave its name to the Albigensian Crusade, a war against the Cathars that began in 1209. After the crusade the bishops of Albi became powerful, and they built a city that looked like a fortress.

Albi Cathedral was begun in 1282, and Palais de la Berbie next to it was begun in 1228, before the cathedral. The cathedral is built of brick, because good building stone was scarce nearby. Pont Vieux is much older. Its first stone bridge dates from the 11th century.

The region later became rich from woad, a plant used to make blue dye. In 1864 the painter *Toulouse-Lautrec* was born in Albi. His art is now shown in Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for France at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



Type C / Type E
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
French

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Albi Essentials

Albi's UNESCO-listed Episcopal City is defined by its distinctive red-brick architecture. This collection features the Cathédrale Sainte-Cécile, the world's largest brick building, and the Palais de la Berbie, which houses the extensive Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec collection. Explore the 11th-century Pont Vieux, the Romanesque-Gothic Saint-Salvy collegiate church, and the 16th-century Maison Enjalbert. From the formal gardens of the Berbie to the 19th-century covered market, these sites showcase the medieval heritage and artistic legacy of the Tarn region's 'Red City.'





A Albi Cathedral

The Cathedral of Saint Cecilia of Albi, also known as Albi Cathedral, is the seat of the Catholic Archbishop of Albi.

2 Rue de la Maîtrise, Albi 81000, France (43.92846, 2.14235)



B Musée Toulouse-Lautrec

The Musée Toulouse-Lautrec is an art museum in Albi, southern France, dedicated mainly to the work of the painter Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec...

4 Rue de la Temporalité, Albi 81000, France (43.92946, 2.14298)

Mo–Su 10:00–18:00

musee-toulouse-lautrec.com, +33 5 63 49 48 70



C Episcopal City of Albi

UNESCO World Heritage site comprising a medieval architectural ensemble, including the cathedral and the Palais de la Berbie, built primarily with local red brick.

4 Rue de la Temporalité, Albi 81000, France (43.92941, 2.14250)

cite-episcopale-albi.fr



D Vieux pont d'Albi

Built around 1040, this medieval masonry bridge is one of the oldest in France. It features multiple arches and offers panoramic views of the city skyline.

Rue Pont-Vieux, Albi 81000, France (43.93121, 2.14456)



E Palais de la Berbie

A 13th-century former bishops' palace and fortress. It is one of the oldest and best-preserved episcopal castles in France, now housing the Toulouse-Lautrec Museum.

13 Place de l'Archevêché, Albi 81000, France (43.92945, 2.14315)

F Jardins de la Berbie

Formal 17th-century French gardens located in the former palace garrison. They feature manicured boxwood hedges and a terrace overlooking the Tarn River.

Albi 81000, France (43.92964, 2.14269)



G Cloître Saint-Salvi

A tranquil Romanesque and Gothic cloister featuring 13th-century carved capitals and a central garden, once part of a larger monastic complex.

5 Passage Saint-Salvi, Albi 81000, France (43.92776, 2.14457)



H Église Saint-Salvi

A collegiate church dedicated to Albi's first bishop. The building reflects a mix of Romanesque stone construction and later Gothic brickwork.

81000 Albi (43.92802, 2.14458)

albi.catholique.fr/notre-diocese/paroisses/albi-sainte-ceci...



I Marché Couvert d'Albi

A triangular Baltard-style covered market built in 1903. It remains a central hub for local Tarn gastronomy and fresh regional produce.

48 Rue Émile Grand, Albi 81000, France (43.92898, 2.14494)

Tu–Su 07:00–14:00

marchecouvert-albi.com



J Maison Enjalbert

A 16th-century half-timbered Renaissance house notable for its 'chemist's shop' wood carvings and distinctive corner windows.

Rue des Pénitents, 81000 Albi, France (43.92797, 2.14660)

K Tarn bridges view

Panoramic viewpoint located on the right bank of the Tarn, providing a clear perspective of the Pont Vieux, the cathedral, and the historic mills.

(43.93247, 2.14553)



L Vermicellerie

Known as the Moulins Albigeois, this former flour mill and pasta factory on the Tarn riverbank is a significant example of Albi's industrial heritage.

2 Rue de la Visitation, Albi 81000, France
(43.93272, 2.14601)

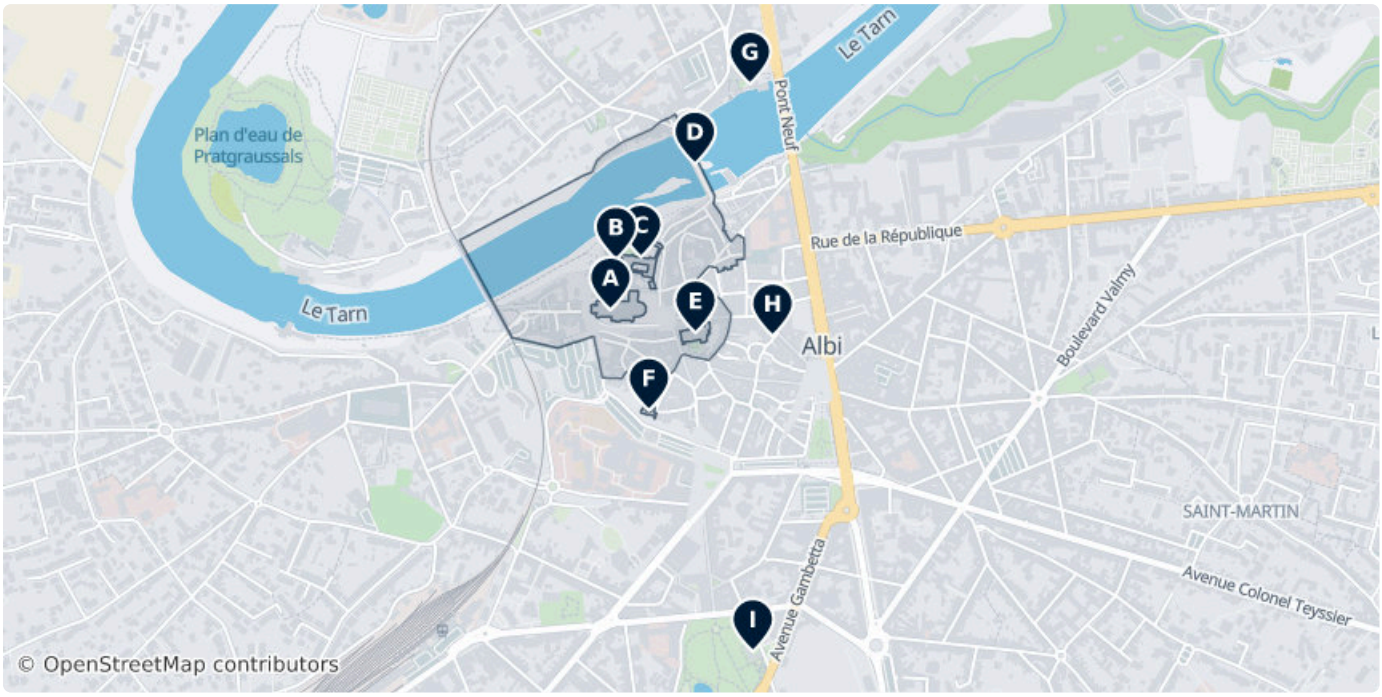
M Maison natale de Toulouse-Lautrec

Also known as the Hôtel du Bosc, this private mansion is the 1864 birthplace of painter Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.

Rue Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 81000 Albi, France
(43.92656, 2.14336)

Heritage of Albi

Albi's UNESCO-listed Episcopal City is defined by its unique Languedoc brick architecture, which earned it the nickname "The Red City." This historic ensemble centers on the massive, fortress-like Cathedral of Saint Cecilia and the Palais de la Berbie, one of the world's oldest bishop's palaces. The district spans the medieval bridge over the Tarn and includes timber-framed Renaissance houses and fortified religious sites dating back to the aftermath of the Albigensian Crusade.





A Albi Cathedral

The Cathedral of Saint Cecilia of Albi, also known as Albi Cathedral, is the seat of the Catholic Archbishop of Albi.

2 Rue de la Maîtrise, Albi 81000, France (43.92846, 2.14235)



B Episcopal City of Albi

A UNESCO World Heritage site comprising a medieval architectural ensemble. It includes the cathedral and bishop's palace, representing the power of the Catholic Church in the 13th century.

4 Rue de la Temporalité, Albi 81000, France (43.92941, 2.14250)

cite-episcopale-albi.fr



C Palais de la Berbie

A 13th-century fortified bishop's palace, now housing the Toulouse-Lautrec Museum. It is one of France's best-preserved episcopal complexes and features formal gardens overlooking the Tarn.

13 Place de l'Archevêché, Albi 81000, France (43.92945, 2.14315)



D Vieux pont d'Albi

A medieval masonry bridge built around 1040. It spans the Tarn river with eight arches and was originally fortified, contributing significantly to the city's commercial development.

Rue Pont-Vieux, Albi 81000, France (43.93121, 2.14456)



E Église Saint-Salvi

A former collegiate church blending Romanesque and Gothic styles. It features a 13th-century cloister and a watchtower that forms part of the city's historic skyline.

81000 Albi (43.92802, 2.14458)

albi.catholique.fr/notre-diocese/paroisses/albi-sainte-ceci...

F Maison natale de Toulouse-Lautrec

A private mansion, also called Hôtel du Bosc, where the painter Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec was born in 1864.

Rue Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 81000 Albi, France (43.92656, 2.14336)



G Vermicellerie

Known as the Moulins Albigeois, this former industrial complex served as a flour mill and later a pasta factory on the banks of the Tarn.

2 Rue de la Visitation, Albi 81000, France (43.93272, 2.14601)



H Maison Enjalbert

A refined 16th-century timber-framed house. It is distinguished by its Renaissance architecture and intricate wood carvings, including the "Little Flayer" figure.

Rue des Pénitents, 81000 Albi, France (43.92797, 2.14660)



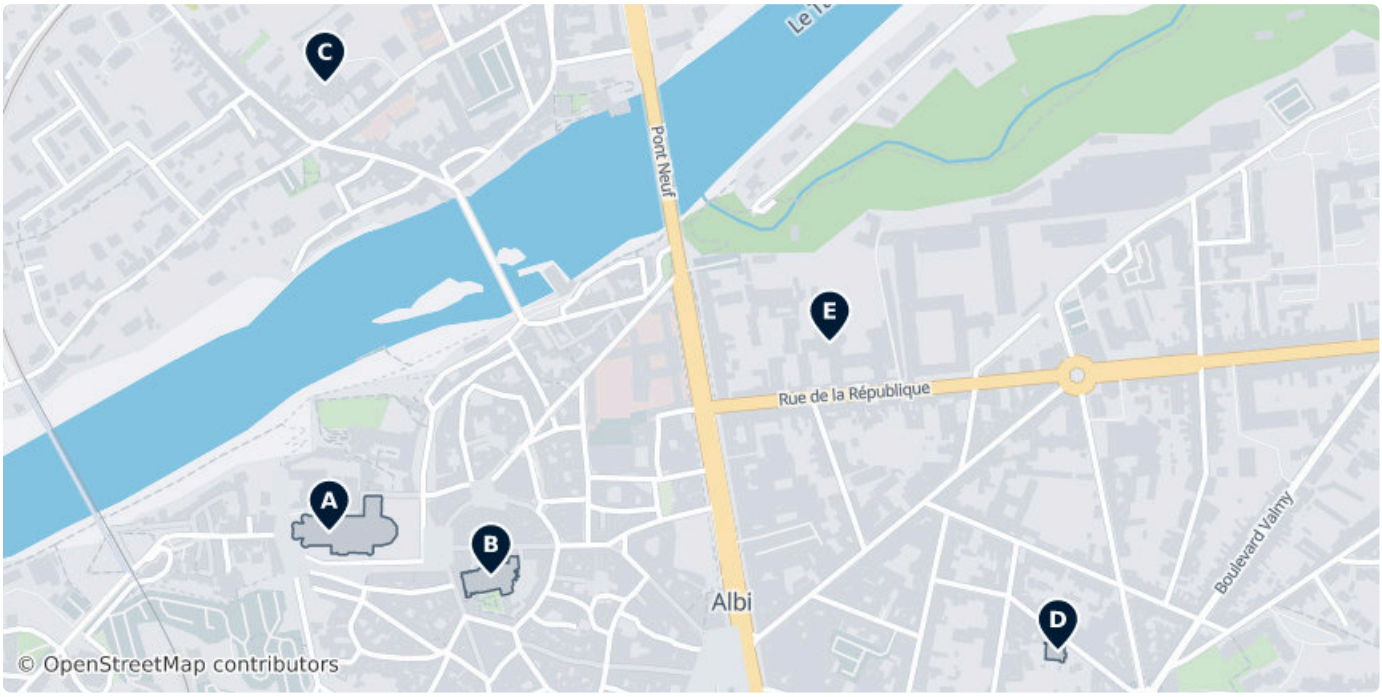
I Hôtel de Rochegude

A 17th-century private mansion set within a large public park. It was the residence of Admiral Rochegude and now serves as a cultural space.

Rue Rochegude, 81000 Albi, France (43.92201, 2.14608)

Religious Sites in Albi

Albi's religious landscape is defined by the UNESCO-listed Sainte-Cécile Cathedral, a masterpiece of Southern Gothic brick architecture. Beyond this monumental landmark, the town preserves a diverse spiritual history, from the Romanesque-Gothic Saint-Salvy Collegiate Church with its 13th-century cloister to the 19th-century Église de la Madeleine. These sites illustrate the town's architectural evolution and its significance as a historic center of French Catholicism and the Reformed tradition.





A Albi Cathedral

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2 Rue de la Maîtrise, Albi 81000, France (43.92846, 2.14235)



B Église Saint-Salvi

One of the oldest churches in Albi, this collegiate church blends Romanesque and Gothic styles. It is notable for its tranquil 13th-century cloister and a distinctive tower constructed from both stone and brick.

81000 Albi (43.92802, 2.14458)

albi.catholique.fr/notre-diocese/paroisses/albi-sainte-ceci...



C Église de la Madeleine

Located on the right bank of the Tarn in the Madeleine district, this 19th-century church was built between 1848 and 1851 to serve the expanding population across the Pont Vieux.

42 Rue de la Madeleine, Albi 81000, France (43.93290, 2.14229)

albi.catholique.fr/notre-diocese/paroisses/albi-sainte-ma...

E Chapelle des Dominicaines

A Roman Catholic chapel associated with the Dominican order, located near the historic center of the city.

47 Rue de la République, Albi 81000, France (43.93033, 2.14924)

D Temple protestant

A place of worship for the United Protestant Church of France, this temple represents Albi's post-medieval religious diversity and is recognized as a site of regional heritage in the Tarn department.

Rue Fonvielhe 20 (43.92728, 2.15239)

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