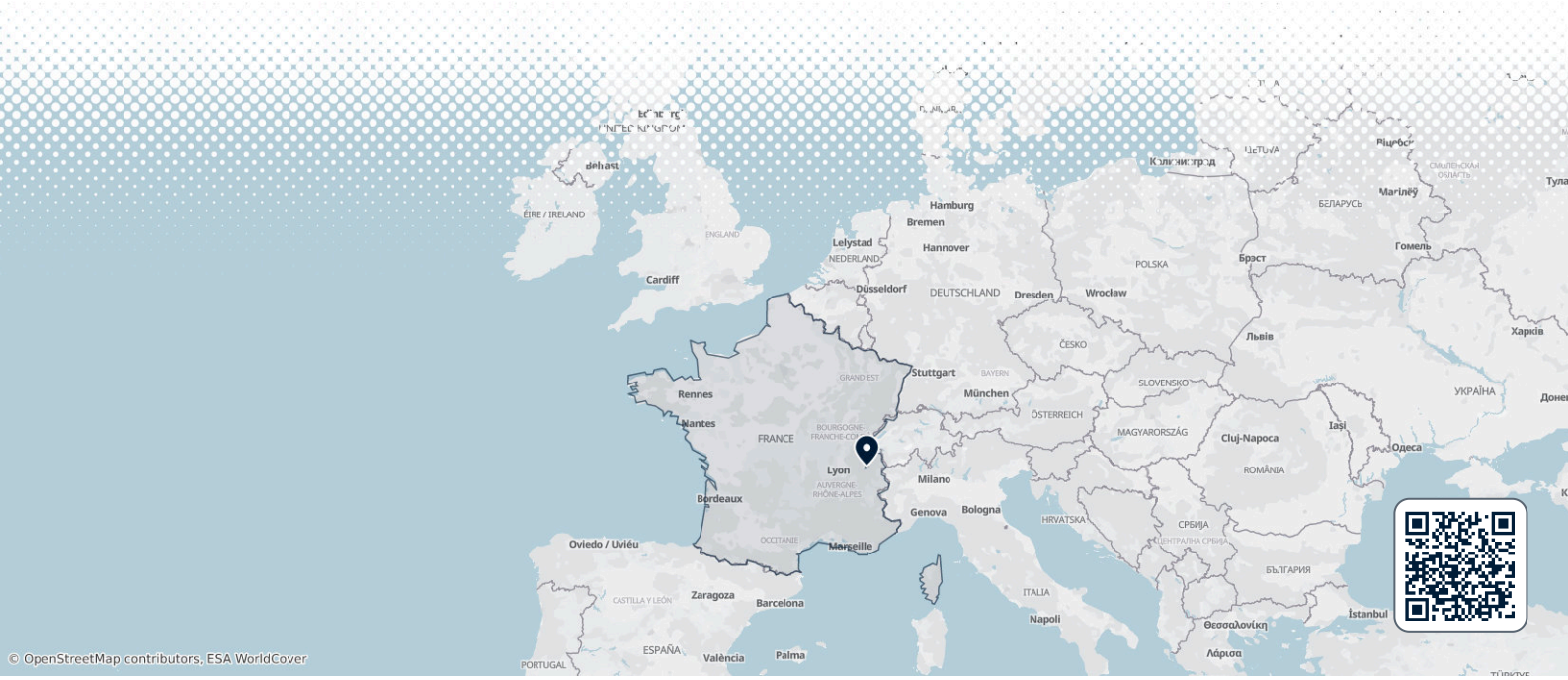


Annecy

Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes · France

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Annecy is a small city in the French Alps, at the northern tip of Lake Annecy. Canals run through its old town, and it is often called the "Venice of the Alps". Mountains rise on all sides of the lake.

The old town is compact, pretty and easy to walk. It suits a stay of two to four nights, with time for the lake, the nearby villages and the hills. Annecy is also known for its animation film festival, held every June.

When to visit

Summer is the main season. It is warm and sunny, and the lake is good for swimming and boat trips. Early September is also pleasant and less busy. Spring and autumn are mild but can be wet. Winter is cold and quiet in town, and snow falls in the hills nearby.

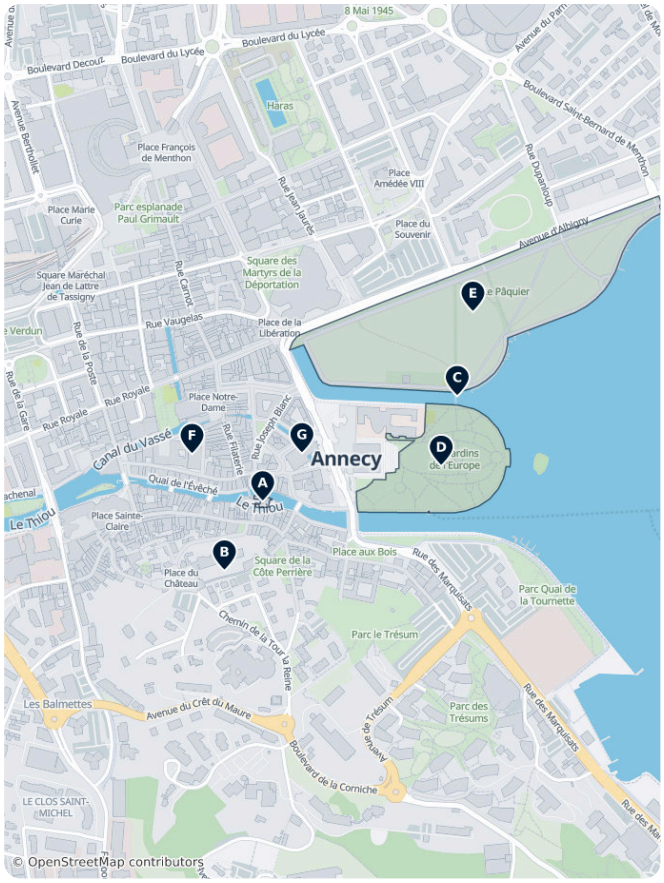
The biggest event is the Fête du Lac, held on the first Saturday of August. A long fireworks show lights up the lake in the evening. Free viewing spots line the shore, and seats in the stands need tickets that sell out early. Book hotels well ahead if you visit then.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for watersports	6° / 12° Feels like 2°	-1° / -8°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Poor Poor for watersports	7° / 15° Feels like 4°	0° / -10°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Fair Fair for cycling	11° / 18° Feels like 8°	3° / -3°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for cycling	15° / 22°	6° / 0°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Good Good for sightseeing	19° / 26°	10° / 5°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Good Good for sightseeing	24° / 31°	15° / 9°	15 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Great Great for sightseeing	26° / 33°	16° / 11°	Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	26° / 34°	16° / 11°	Calm winds
September	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 29°	13° / 7°	Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for cycling	18° / 25°	9° / 3°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for cycling	11° / 19°	4° / -4°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for watersports	7° / 13° Feels like 3°	0° / -8°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: July, September

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

Top sights



- A Palais de l'Isle is the medieval building on a small island in the Thiou canal. It was once a prison and a court, and it is a well-known view of the old town.
- B Château d'Annecy stands above the old town. It was the home of the counts of Geneva and later of the dukes of Genevois-Nemours. Today it is a museum with good views.
- C Pont des Amours is an iron footbridge from 1907. It links the old town side of the lake with the gardens and offers views of the lake and the mountains.
- D Les Jardins de l'Europe is an English-style garden on the lake shore, laid out in the 1860s. Its paths are a calm place to walk with views over the water.
- E Le Pâquier is the large lakeside lawn next to the old town. Locals and visitors come here to walk, picnic and watch the boats.
- F Cathédrale Saint-Pierre d'Annecy is a Gothic church from the 16th century in the old town. It is linked to the bishops who lived in Annecy.
- G Église Saint-Maurice is a 15th-century church in the old town, with a simple interior and a quiet atmosphere.

Annecy – Plan Your Trip

Turn the places from this guide into a real itinerary, with smart routing, time estimates, and everything you need for a perfect trip.

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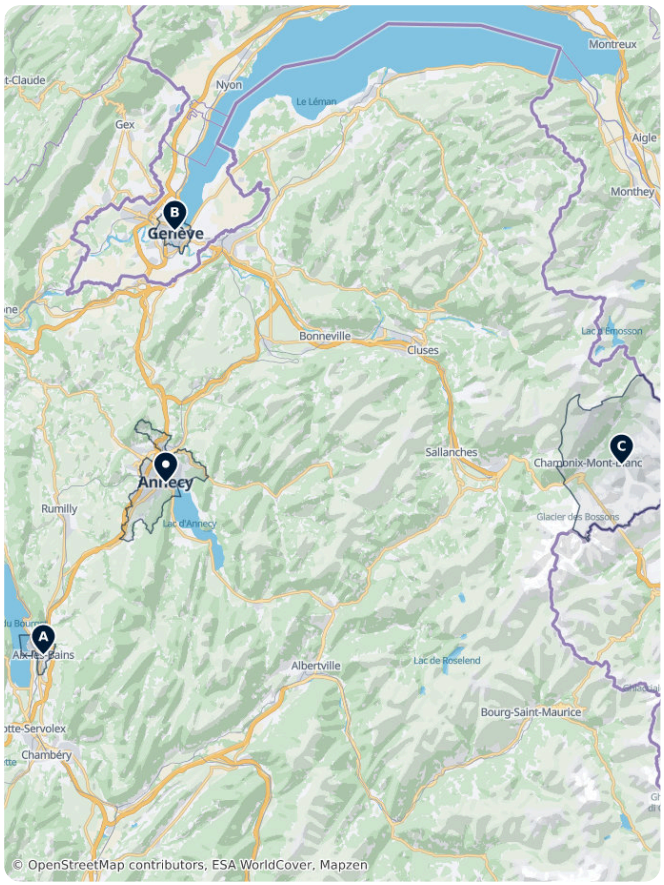
What to experience

Things to do that are special to Annecy:

- **Cruise on the lake.** Boats leave from the old town and stop at lakeside villages. A short cruise is the easiest way to see the mountains from the water.
- **Swim in the lake.** Public beaches are close to the centre, and many visitors swim from late spring to early autumn. Paddleboards, kayaks and canoes can be rented.
- **Cycle along the shore.** Rent a bike and ride on the lakeside path, with stops for a swim or a coffee.
- **Visit the old town market.** It runs on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday mornings in the old town around Rue Sainte-Claire, and it is the main market in the old town.
- **Go up Semnoz.** This mountain above the town has hiking in summer and beginner-friendly skiing in winter.
- **Paragliding.** Tandem flights over the lake start from the hills above Talloires.

Day trips

Annecy has good trips by the lake and into the mountains. Most are best by car. Some are possible by boat, bus or train.



- Gorges du Fier: about 20 minutes by car. A walkway runs through a narrow rock gorge. Entry is paid.
- Menthon-Saint-Bernard: about 20 minutes by car, and boats also stop there. This lakeside village has a castle above the water.
- Talloires: about 25 minutes by car. This village on the eastern shore has a small harbour and views across the lake. It is also the starting point for paragliding from the Col de la Forclaz.
- A Aix-les-Bains: about 40 minutes by train. This spa town sits on Lac du Bourget, a bigger and warmer lake.
- Chambéry: about 45 minutes by car. It is the old capital of Savoy, with a large castle and an old town.
- B Geneva: about 1 hour by direct bus, or about 1.5 hours by train. Bring a passport, because the city is in Switzerland.
- C Chamonix: about 1 hour 15 minutes by car. It is a long day trip, but it gives close views of Mont Blanc.

Where to explore

Other destinations nearby:

- For the lake itself, see Lake Annecy.
- For mountain scenery and Mont Blanc, visit Chamonix.
- For a spa town on a lake, visit Aix-les-Bains.
- For a big city across the border, visit Geneva.

Getting there

- **By air**: The main gateway is Geneva Airport (GVA), about 45 km away. Coaches and shared shuttles take about 1 hour to Annecy. Lyon–Saint-Exupéry (LYS) is a second option, about 2 hours away by coach or train. Annecy's own small airfield has no scheduled flights.
- **By train**: Annecy station is a short walk from the old town. Direct TGV trains from Paris Gare de Lyon take about 3 hours 45 minutes. Trains from Lyon take about 2 hours, and trains from Geneva about 1.5 hours. Book at SNCF Connect.
- **By bus**: The coach station is next to the train station. Long-distance coaches link Annecy with Geneva, Lyon and other cities.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old town, the lakeside gardens and most sights are within walking distance of each other. The old town centre is mostly pedestrian.
- **Public transit**: Sibra runs the city buses. Tickets are sold in the Sibra app and online at Sibra. Most visitors only need a bus for places outside the centre.
- **By bike**: A cycle path follows much of the lake shore, and bikes can be rented in town. The path is flat near Annecy and good for a half-day ride.
- **By boat**: Lake boats link Annecy with villages on the shore. Tickets are sold at the tourist office. See Lake Annecy Tourist Office for information.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town and lakeside gardens are small, flat and mostly pedestrian, so walking is the best way to get around.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

A flat cycle path follows much of the lake shore, and bikes can be rented in town.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Not for the town itself. A car helps for the far side of the lake, the mountains and Chamonix.
- **Parking**: Underground car parks near the old town, such as Bonlieu and Hôtel de Ville, are the easiest option. They fill up in July and August. Roads around the lake are very busy in summer.
- **Restrictions**: Much of the old town is pedestrian, so you cannot drive in.

Food & drink

Annecy cooks in the style of Savoy. Look for cheese dishes such as fondue, raclette and tartiflette, which is a baked dish of potatoes, bacon and Reblochon cheese. Lake fish such as perch is also common. These are hearty dishes, so they suit cool evenings best.

Good places to eat cluster along the canals of the old town and in the streets around Rue Sainte-Claire. For fresh produce, local cheese and bread, go to the old town market on Tuesday, Friday or Sunday morning.

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

Annecy is a safe city for visitors. Petty theft is uncommon, but keep an eye on bags in the busy old town in summer.

The main risks are outdoors. The lake stays cold early in the season, so swim where a lifeguard is on duty and stay close to the shore. Mountain weather can change fast, so check the forecast before a hike.

History

Annecy grew around the counts of Geneva and later became part of Savoy in 1401. Château d'Annecy and Palais de l'Isle are the main reminders of this medieval period.

In 1535 the bishop of Geneva moved to Annecy. *Francis de Sales* was bishop here from 1602 to 1622, and Cathédrale Saint-Pierre d'Annecy is linked to the church life of this time.

Savoy joined France in 1860, and Annecy became the capital of the Haute-Savoie region.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for France at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

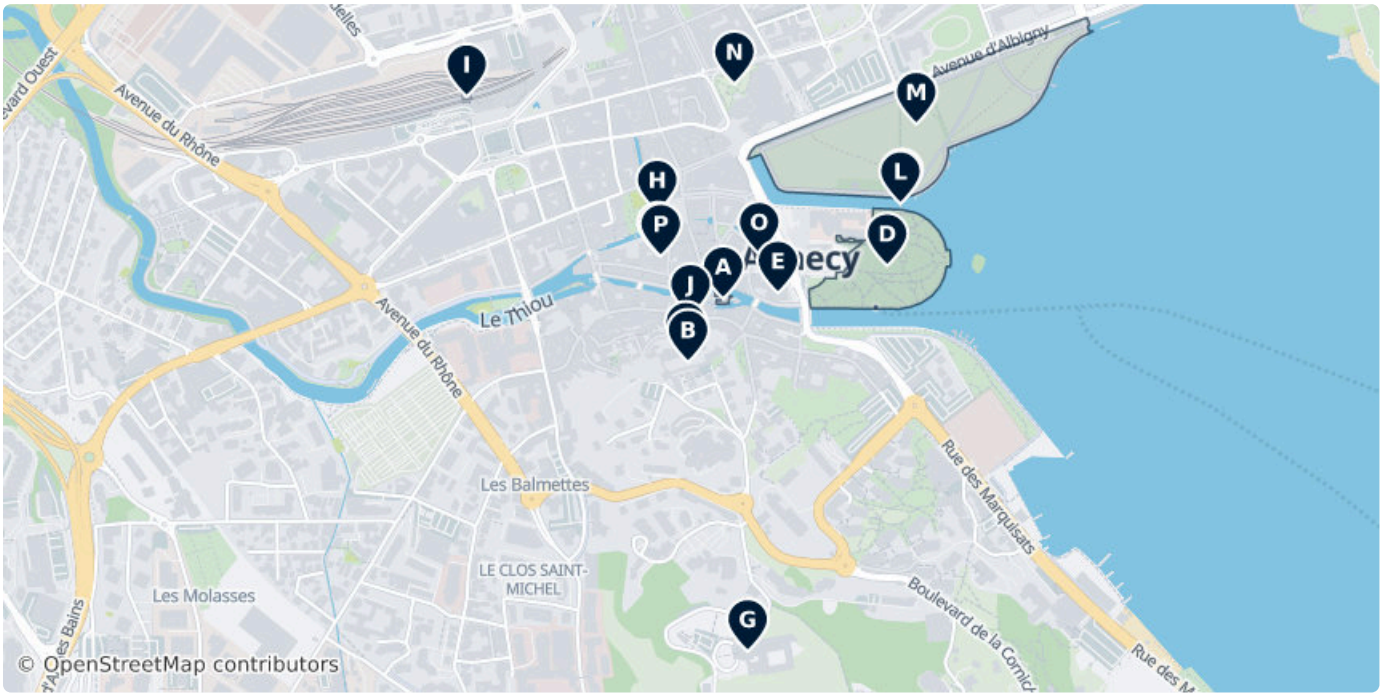
Type C / Type E
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
French

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Annecy's Essential Canals and Alpine Charm

Annecy features a network of 12th-century canals centered around the Palais de l'Isle and the Thiou River. The medieval Vieille Ville is dominated by the Château d'Annecy, once the residence of the Counts of Geneva. Along the shores of Lake Annecy, the Jardins de l'Europe and Le Pâquier offer expansive green spaces. Significant religious landmarks include the 16th-century St. Pierre Cathedral and the Baroque Church of St. Francis, reflecting the city's role as a center of the Counter-Reformation.





A Palais de l'Isle

This 12th-century fortified house sits on a rocky island in the Thiou River. Historically used as a prison and courthouse, it now serves as a local history museum and is one of France's most photographed monuments.

1 Place Saint-François de Sales, 74000 Annecy, France
(45.89858, 6.12701)

musees.annecy.fr/les-3-lieux/palais-de-lile



B Château d'Annecy

The Château d'Annecy is a restored castle which dominates the old French town of Annecy in the Haute-Savoie département.

3 Rue de Charmoisy, Annecy 74000, France
(45.89749, 6.12614)

musees.agglo-annecy.fr/Musee-Chateau, +33 4 50 33 87 34



C Lover's Bridge

An early 20th-century iron footbridge spanning the Canal de Vassé. It connects the Jardins de l'Europe with the Pâquier promenade and offers views of the lake and the surrounding mountains.

Pont des Amours, 74000, France (45.90023, 6.13139)



D Gardens of Europe

A 19th-century English-style park situated on the shores of Lake Annecy. It features over 600 trees, including giant sequoias and ginkgos, providing shaded paths and views of the Alps.

Quai Napoléon III, 74000, France (45.89913, 6.13103)



E Church of St. Francis

A 17th-century Baroque church that served as the original burial site for Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Jane de Chantal. It is known locally as the 'Church of the Italians' due to its historical congregation.

1 Place Saint-François de Sales, Annecy 74000, France (45.89867, 6.12835)



F Annecy Cathedral

Annecy Cathedral is a Roman Catholic church located in Annecy, France. The cathedral is a national monument.

4 Passage de la Cathédrale, Annecy 74000, France (45.89932, 6.12541)



G Basilica of the Visitation

Built in the early 20th century, this basilica features a 72-meter bell tower and houses the silver-gilt reliquaries of Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Jane de Chantal. It overlooks the city from the Crêt du Maure forest.

12 Avenue de la Visitation, Annecy 74000, France
(45.89255, 6.12761)



H Église Notre-Dame-de-Liesse

A mid-19th-century church built in the neoclassical style on the site of a 14th-century sanctuary. It retains a medieval bell tower and features a spacious interior with several dedicated side chapels.

8 Place Notre-Dame, Annecy 74000, France
(45.90005, 6.12539)



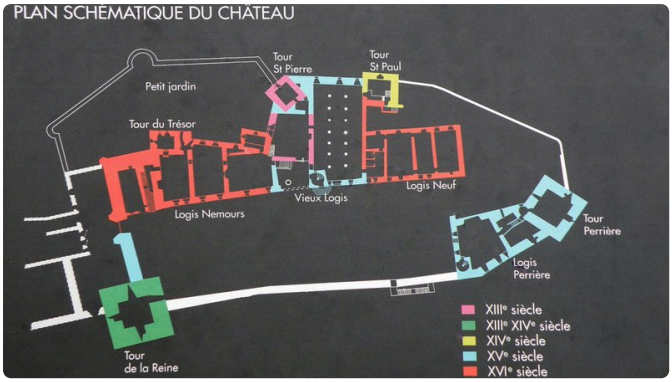
I Annecy station

Annecy is a railway station located in Annecy, Haute-Savoie, south-eastern France.

3 Place de la Gare, Annecy 74000, France
(45.90202, 6.12071)

J Fontaine

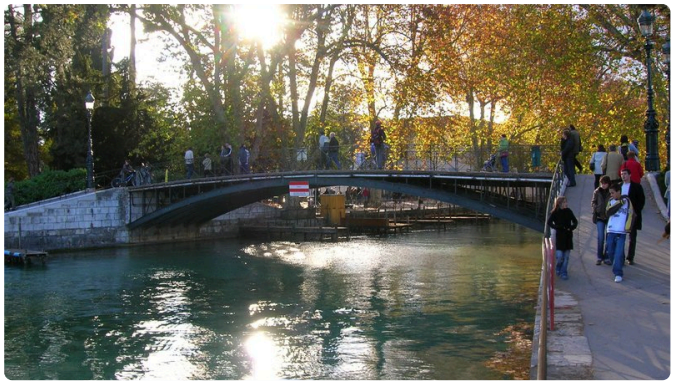
(45.89827, 6.12620)



K Château d'Annecy

The Château d'Annecy is a restored castle which dominates the old French town of Annecy in the Haute-Savoie département.

10 Rampe du Château, Annecy 74000, France (45.89763, 6.12609)



L Pont des Amours

An early 20th-century iron footbridge spanning the Canal de Vassé. It connects the Jardins de l'Europe with the Pâquier promenade and offers views of the lake and the surrounding mountains.

Pont des Amours, 74000, France (45.90020, 6.13136)



M Le Pâquier

A seven-hectare open lawn on the shores of Lake Annecy. Formerly a pasture, it now serves as a central public space for recreation and major annual events like the Fête du Lac fireworks display.

(Unnamed Road), 74000, France (45.90155, 6.13174)

N Square des Martyrs de la Déportation

A public park and memorial space dedicated to those deported during World War II, located near the city center.

(45.90224, 6.12728)



O St. Maurice Church

Église Saint-Maurice is a Roman Catholic church in Annecy, France.

Place Saint Maurice, 74000, Annecy, France
(45.89933, 6.12789)



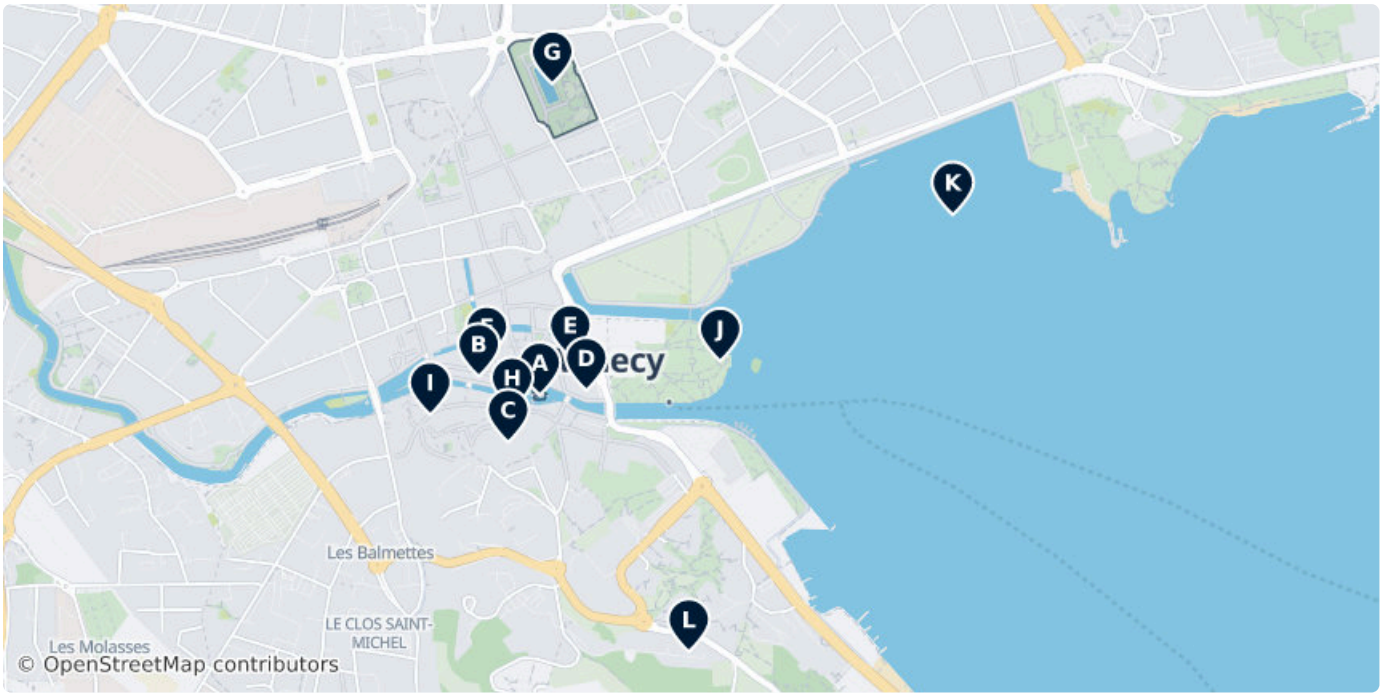
P Annecy Cathedral

Annecy Cathedral is a Roman Catholic church located in Annecy, France. The cathedral is a national monument.

4 Passage de la Cathédrale, Annecy 74000, France
(45.89930, 6.12547)

Annecy Heritage Sites

Annecy's heritage spans from prehistoric lakeside settlements to medieval fortifications. This collection features the 12th-century Palais de l'Isle, the fortified Château d'Annecy, and the 16th-century Saint-Pierre Cathedral. It includes significant religious sites like the Baroque Church of Saint Francis and the Gothic Saint Maurice. Industrial and scientific history is represented by the 19th-century national stud farm and the memorial to chemist Claude Louis Berthollet, alongside UNESCO-listed archaeological remains at Le Pâquier.





A Palais de l'Isle

This 12th-century fortified house sits on a rocky island in the Thiou canal. Throughout its history, it served as a lordly residence, a courthouse, and a prison. It now functions as a museum of local history and architecture.

1 Place Saint-François de Sales, 74000 Annecy, France
(45.89858, 6.12701)

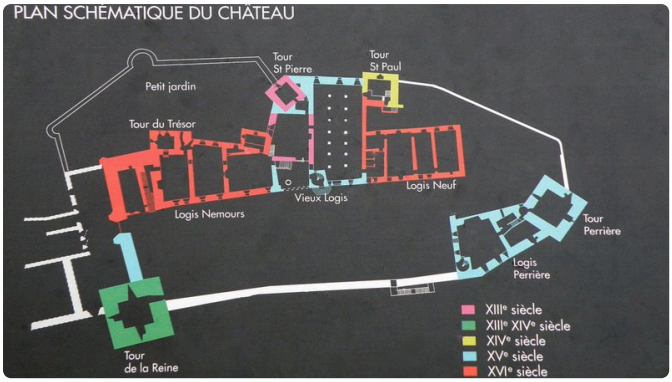
musees.annecy.fr/les-3-lieux/palais-de-lile

B Maison Lambert

A 16th-century Renaissance-style palace located in the historic center. It is one of the city's most well-preserved noble residences from the period, featuring a traditional courtyard and period facade.

Rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 74000 Annecy, France
(45.89895, 6.12524)

annecy.fr/48-les-monuments-anneciens.htm



C Château d'Annecy

The Château d'Annecy is a restored castle which dominates the old French town of Annecy in the Haute-Savoie département.

10 Rampe du Château, Annecy 74000, France
(45.89763, 6.12609)



D Church of St. Francis

Completed in 1642, this Baroque church served the Order of the Visitation. It was the original burial site for Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Jane de Chantal before their remains were moved to the Basilica.

1 Place Saint-François de Sales, Annecy 74000, France
(45.89867, 6.12835)



E St. Maurice Church

Église Saint-Maurice is a Roman Catholic church in Annecy, France.

Place Saint Maurice, 74000, Annecy, France
(45.89933, 6.12789)



F Annecy Cathedral

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4 Passage de la Cathédrale, Annecy 74000, France
(45.89930, 6.12547)



G Haras national d'Annecy

Established in 1880, this former national stud farm was used for horse breeding. The site covers several hectares and includes historic stables, a 19th-century manor house, and landscaped grounds.

19 Rue Guillaume Fichet, Annecy 74000, France
(45.90484, 6.12737)

We–Su 10:00–22:00

H Fontaine

A 17th-century stone fountain located near the entrance of the Château d'Annecy.

(45.89827, 6.12620)

I Fontaine Quiberet

A historic 17th-century stone fountain situated within the old town's pedestrian area.

Rue Sainte-Claire, 74000 Annecy, France
(45.89818, 6.12383)



J Claude Louis Berthollet

A bronze monument honoring the Savoyard chemist who discovered the bleaching properties of chlorine. The statue is located in the Jardins de l'Europe.

Les Jardins de l'Europe, 74000, France (45.89926, 6.13223)

K Site archéologique du Pâquier

Submerged remains of a prehistoric lakeside settlement dating to the Neolithic and Bronze Ages. It is part of the UNESCO World Heritage 'Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps'.

(45.90220, 6.13896)

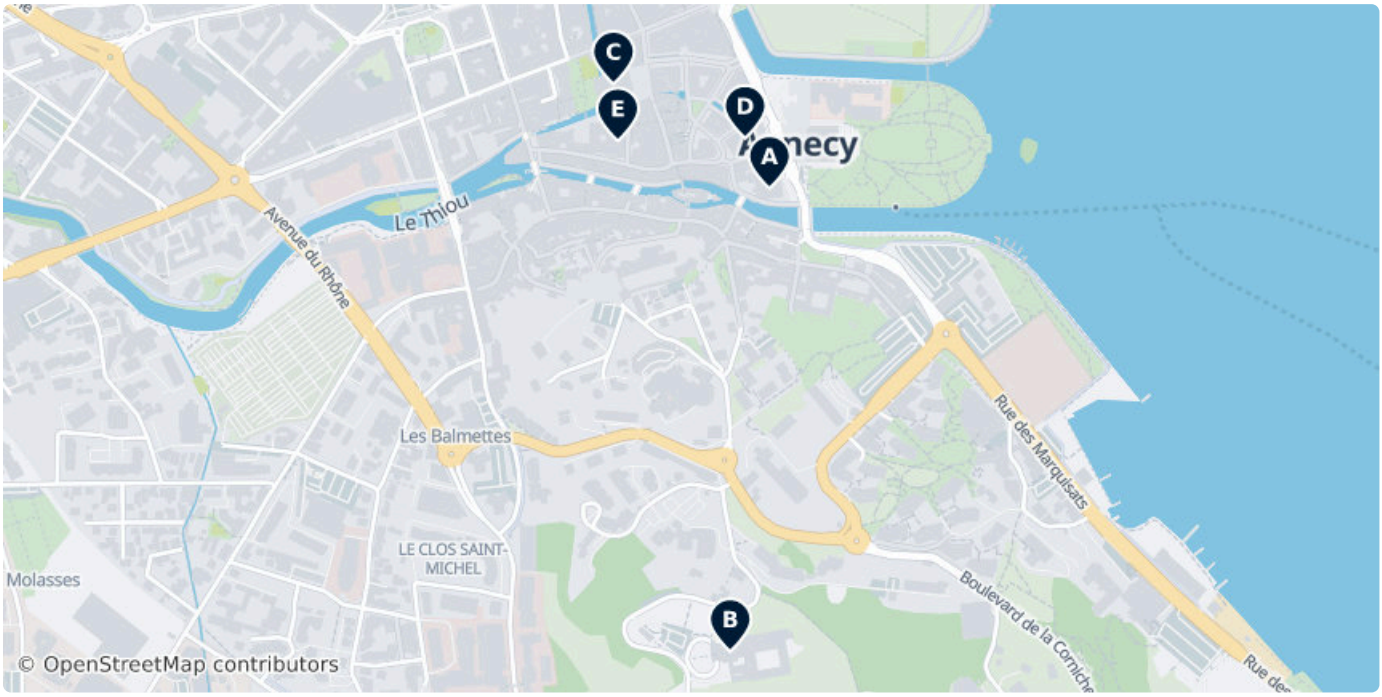
L Château de Trésum

A 17th-century manor house built by Jean-François de Sales. It occupies a prominent position on the slopes of Mount Semnoz, overlooking Lake Annecy.

(45.89341, 6.13132)

Annecy's Religious Heritage

Annecy’s religious landscape is defined by its historic Catholic structures, ranging from the 16th-century Cathedral of Saint-Pierre to the prominent Basilica of the Visitation overlooking the city. These sites showcase diverse architectural styles, including Savoyard Gothic and Baroque influences. Many serve as the final resting places for significant figures like Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Jane de Chantal, reflecting the city's deep-rooted spiritual and historical importance.





A Church of St. Francis

Known as the "Church of the Italians," this 17th-century Baroque building was once the chapel for the first Monastery of the Visitation. It served as the original burial site for Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Jane de Chantal.

1 Place Saint-François de Sales, Annecy 74000, France
(45.89867, 6.12835)



B Basilica of the Visitation

Constructed in the early 20th century, this neo-Romanesque basilica stands on a hill overlooking Annecy. It houses the ornate copper sarcophagi of Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Jane de Chantal, and features a 72-meter-high belfry.

12 Avenue de la Visitation, Annecy 74000, France
(45.89255, 6.12761)



C Église Notre-Dame-de-Liesse

Rebuilt in the mid-19th century on the site of a 14th-century sanctuary, this Neoclassical church features a historic bell tower that survived the French Revolution. It sits prominently in the heart of the old town.

8 Place Notre-Dame, Annecy 74000, France
(45.90005, 6.12539)



D St. Maurice Church

Église Saint-Maurice is a Roman Catholic church in Annecy, France.

Place Saint Maurice, 74000, Annecy, France
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4 Passage de la Cathédrale, Annecy 74000, France
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