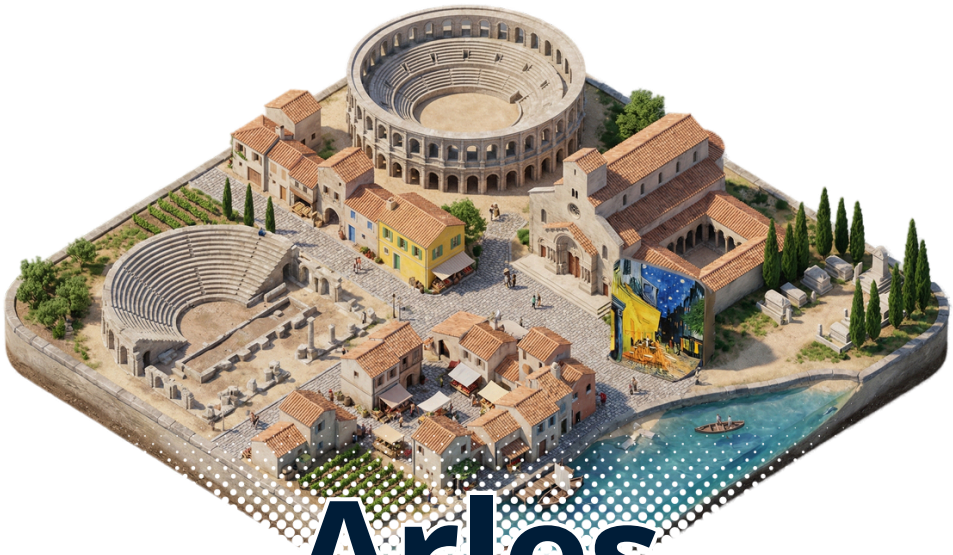
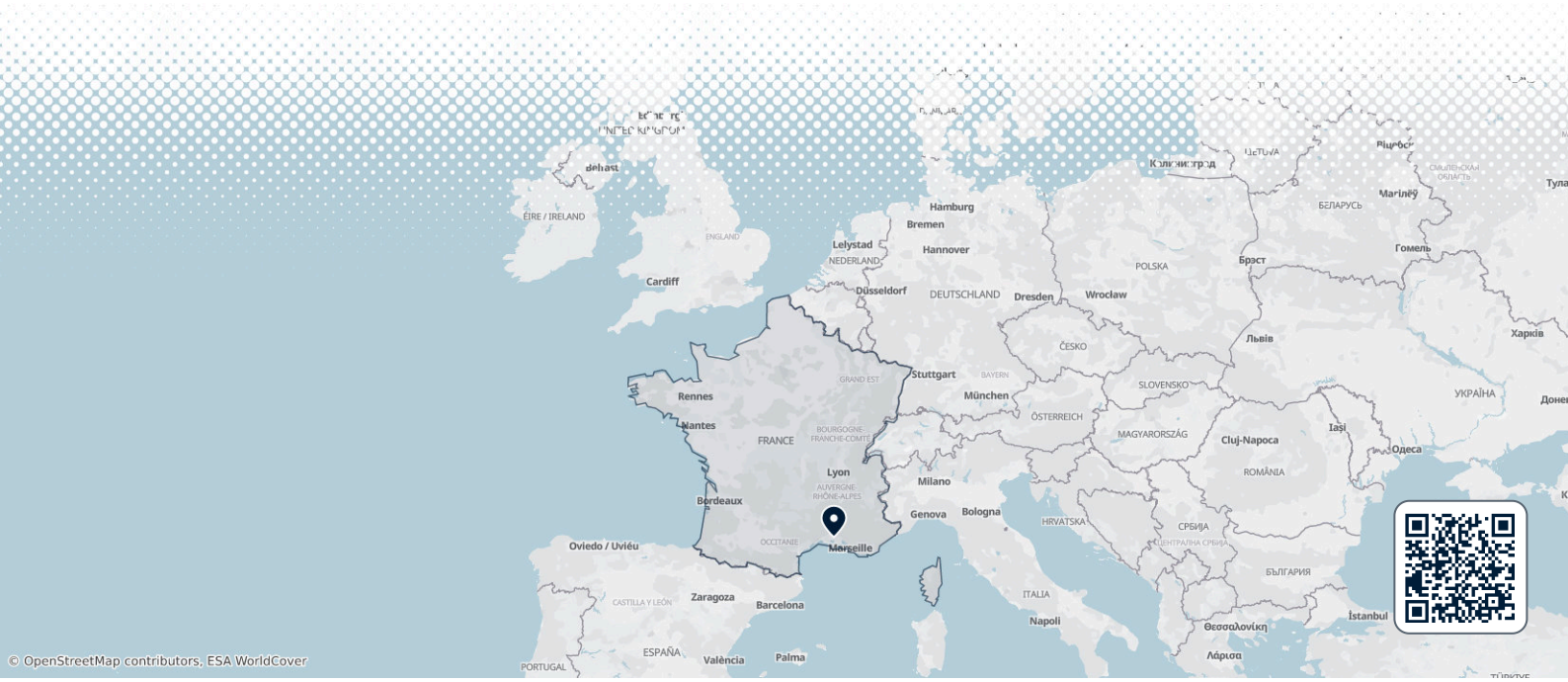


Arles

Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur · France

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Arles is a small city on the Rhône, at the northern edge of the Camargue. It has Roman and Romanesque monuments, a strong Provençal identity and a long link with painters and photographers. *Vincent van Gogh* lived here from 1888 to 1889 and painted many of his best-known works in the city.

It suits a relaxed two-night stay. The centre is compact and easy to walk. Arles also works well as a base for the Camargue wetlands, the Alpilles hills and the cities of Nîmes, Avignon and Marseille.

When to visit

Late spring and early autumn are the most pleasant seasons. Summer is hot and dry, and the mistral wind can blow at any time of year. Winter is mild but quiet, and some sights have shorter hours.

The biggest annual event is the Rencontres d'Arles photography festival. It runs through the summer and fills the city's historic buildings with exhibitions. Book rooms well ahead for July and August.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for cycling	11° / 15° Feels like 5°	5° / 1°	Dry air
February	Good Good for cycling	12° / 16° Feels like 6°	5° / 0°	Dry air
March	Great Great for cycling	15° / 19° Feels like 10°	8° / 3°	Dry air
April	Great Great for cycling	18° / 22° Feels like 13°	10° / 6°	Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 27° Feels like 18°	14° / 10°	Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	26° / 32°	18° / 14°	22 sunny days
July	Great Great for sightseeing	29° / 33°	21° / 17°	25 sunny days · Humid air
August	Great Great for sightseeing	29° / 34°	21° / 17°	23 sunny days · Humid air
September	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 29°	17° / 13°	
October	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 25° Feels like 17°	14° / 9°	Dry air
November	Good Good for cycling	15° / 20° Feels like 10°	9° / 4°	Dry air
December	Fair Fair for cycling	12° / 16° Feels like 6°	6° / 1°	Dry air

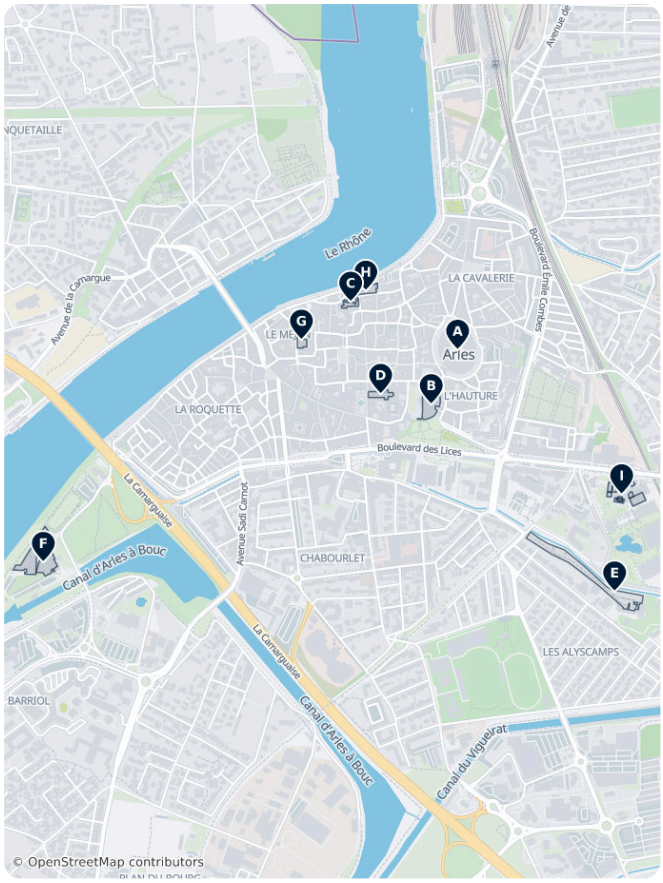
Best months: May, June, July, August, September, October

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

Top sights

Arles has more Roman and Romanesque sites than most cities its size. Many are part of one UNESCO listing.

- A Arènes d'Arles is the Roman amphitheatre from about 90 AD. It later became a fortress with four towers, and three still stand. Bullfights and concerts are held here today.
- B Théâtre antique is a Roman theatre close to the amphitheatre. Two columns of the old stage still stand, and summer shows are held here.
- C Thermes de Constantin are the ruins of Roman baths from the time of Emperor *Constantine*, beside the Rhône.
- D Cathédrale Saint-Trophime d'Arles is the Romanesque cathedral on the main square. Look for its carved west portal and the quiet cloister.
- E Nécropole des Alyscamps is a shaded Roman burial avenue that later became a Christian cemetery. It was a favourite subject for painters.
- F Musée de l'Arles antique is the main archaeology museum, on the edge of the centre. It holds mosaics, statues and a Roman river boat.
- G Fondation Vincent Van-Gogh shows contemporary art in dialogue with works by *Van Gogh*, in an old town house.
- H Musée Réattu is a fine-arts museum on the riverbank, known for its modern art collection.
- I Tour Luma is the metal tower of the Luma arts campus, designed by *Frank Gehry*. The campus and its park lie just east of the old town.



Arles – Plan Your Trip

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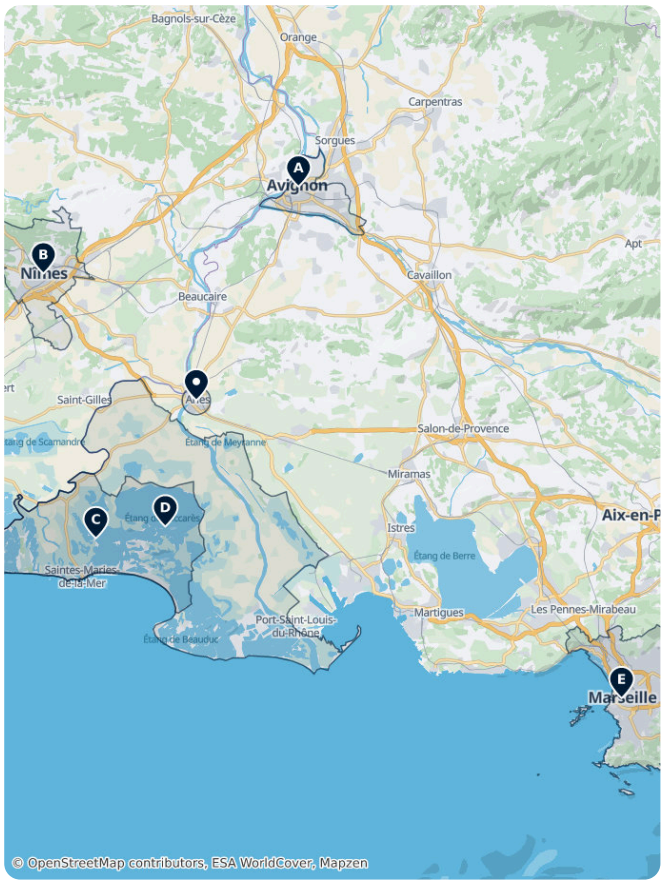
What to experience

These are local rituals and seasonal events that are specific to Arles.

- **Saturday market**: The big weekly market on Boulevard des Lices sells produce, olives, herbs and crafts. A smaller market runs on Wednesday mornings.
- **Bull culture**: Arles is a centre of bull sport. In a *course camarguaise* the bull is not harmed, and young men try to take small ribbons from its horns. Check dates at the Arènes d'Arles.
- **Feria d'Arles**: This festival takes place on the first weekend of September. It brings parades, street music and bullfights. A smaller feria happens at Easter.
- **Rhône at dusk**: Walk the riverbank at sunset. *Van Gogh* painted the night sky here in 1888.
- **Summer evenings**: Concerts and shows take place in the Roman monuments in July. Check the programme before you book.

Day trips

Arles is a good base for day trips. The closest options are the easiest.



- A Avignon: about 20 min by train. It has the Palais des Papes and a walled old town.
- Les Baux-de-Provence: about 25 min by car. A hilltop village with a ruined castle.
- Saint-Rémy-de-Provence: about 25 min by car. A market town near Roman ruins and the asylum where *Van Gogh* stayed in 1889 and 1890.
- B Nîmes: about 30 min by train. It has a very well preserved Roman amphitheatre and the Maison Carrée temple.
- C Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer: about 45 min by car. A beach town in the Camargue, known for its fortified church and its Romani pilgrimage in May.
- D Camargue: wetland with flamingos, white horses and black bulls. Go by car, bike or guided tour.
- E Marseille: about 50 min by train. A large port city with an old harbour.
- Pont du Gard: about 45 min by car. A tall Roman aqueduct bridge.

Getting there

- **By air**: The nearest large airport is Marseille Provence (MRS), about 1 hour away by car. Montpellier (MPL) is a similar distance. Most visitors connect by train or rental car.
- **By train**: Arles station is on the line between Marseille and Nîmes. Direct TGV trains run from Paris, and the journey takes about 4 hours. Regional TER trains reach Avignon in about 20 min, Nîmes in about 30 min and Marseille in about 50 min. Book TGV tickets on SNCF Connect.
- **By bus**: Regional coaches link Arles with nearby towns. A car or train is easier for most routes.
- **By car**: The A54 motorway passes the city. The drive from Marseille or Nîmes takes about 1 hour or less.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old town, the Roman sites and most museums are within a 15-minute walk. Streets are narrow and often paved with cobbles.
- **Local transport**: Electric shuttle buses serve the centre. Details are on the Arles tourist office site.
- **Cycling**: The terrain is flat and bikes are good for the Rhône bank and the edge of the Camargue. Summer heat and the mistral wind can make it hard work.
- **To the Camargue**: Public transport is limited. A car, a bike or a guided tour is the practical choice.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town and the Roman sites are close together and easy to walk.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The terrain is flat and bikes suit the riverbank and the Camargue edge, but heat and the mistral wind can make rides hard.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Not for the town itself. It is useful for the Camargue, the Alpilles and Les Baux, where public transport is limited.
- **Parking**: Most of the old centre is pedestrian or restricted. Use the large paid car parks around the ring boulevards and walk in.
- **Restrictions**: Streets in the historic core are narrow and some are closed to cars.

Food & drink

Look for Provençal and Camargue dishes. Bull stew (*gardiane de taureau*) is the signature dish. Camargue rice, dry sausage made with bull meat and local olive oil are also common.

Eating clusters around Place du Forum, Place de la République and the streets near Boulevard des Lices. Café terraces on Place du Forum are popular, and the market is good for a picnic. Tipping follows the national rule. Service is included, so rounding up is enough.

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

Arles is a safe city for visitors. Pickpocketing is the main risk in busy places such as the market, the amphitheatre and the station.

- Bring sun protection and water in summer. Shade is limited at the Roman sites.
- Mosquitoes are common in the Camargue from late spring. Use repellent.
- The mistral wind can be strong and dry. Hold on to hats and maps.
- In dry summers, access to the Alpilles hills can be restricted on windy days. Check local notices before a hike.

History

Rome took the region in the 2nd century BC. Arles became a colony for veterans under *Julius Caesar*, and it grew into a major port on the Rhône. In the 4th century Emperor *Constantine* favoured the city and built baths here. His son *Constantine II* was born in Arles.

Many Roman buildings remain. The amphitheatre and theatre are still used for shows. Underground galleries called the Cryptoportiques d'Arles lie under the old forum. After the Roman era, the amphitheatre became a walled shelter with houses and four towers. Later centuries added Romanesque churches and a rich medieval town.

Several of these monuments were listed by UNESCO in 1981. In 1888 *Van Gogh* arrived from Paris. He stayed until May 1889 and made more than 300 paintings and drawings. Most of his Arles paintings are in museums abroad, but the places he painted are still easy to find.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for France at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



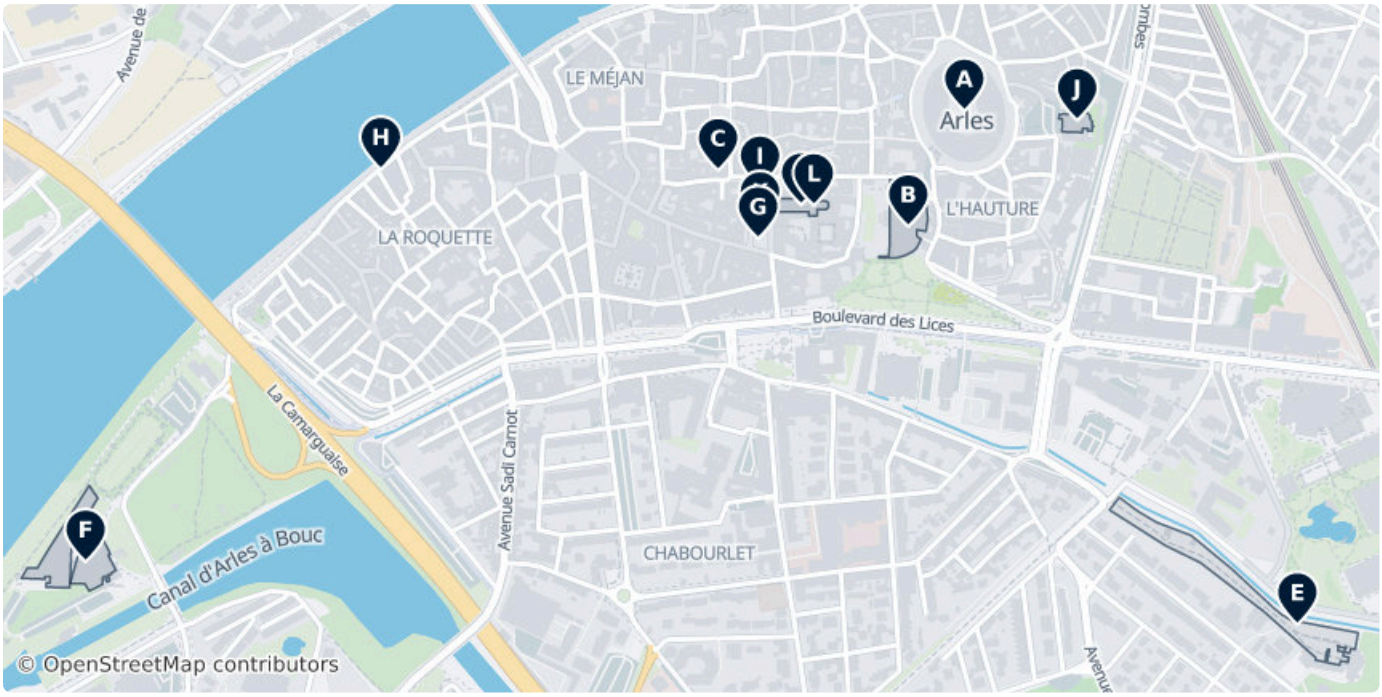
Type C / Type E
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
French

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Arles: Roman & Romanesque Treasures

This collection highlights the UNESCO-listed Roman and Romanesque heritage of Arles. Explore the 1st-century Roman Amphitheatre and the ancient Theatre built under Augustus. Discover the Cryptoporticus, an underground gallery system beneath the forum, and the Alyscamps, a sprawling Roman necropolis later painted by Van Gogh and Gauguin. The Church of St. Trophime stands as a masterpiece of Romanesque sculpture, while the Museum of Ancient Arles houses significant archaeological finds, including the 4th-century obelisk located in the central Republic Square.





Ⓐ Arles Amphitheatre

The Arles Amphitheatre is a Roman amphitheatre in Arles, southern France.

1 Rond-Point des Arènes, 13200 Arles, France
(43.67775, 4.63093)

May-Sep Mo–Su	09:00–19:00
Mar-Apr Mo–Su	09:00–18:00
Nov-Feb Mo–Su	10:30–16:30

youtu.be/4QUuH0IPZ4g, +33 8 91 70 03 70



Ⓑ Arles Roman Theatre

The Roman Theatre of Arles is a 1st-century Roman theatre, built during the reign of Caesar Augustus.

Boulevard des Lices, 13200 Arles, France
(43.67639, 4.63002)

+33 04 90 18 41 20

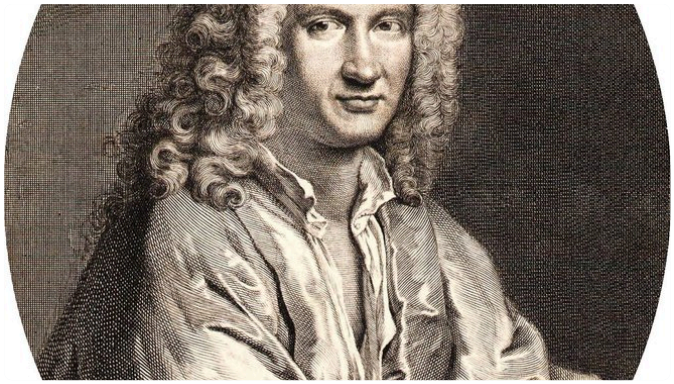


C Cryptoporticus of Arles

In Ancient Roman architecture a cryptoporticus is a covered corridor or passageway. The usual English is "cryptoportico".

20 Place du Forum, Arles 13200, France (43.67705, 4.62692)

patrimoine.ville-arles.fr/ville.cfm



D Church of St. Trophime

The Church of St. Trophime is a Roman Catholic church and former cathedral located in the city of Arles, in the Bouches-du-Rhône Department...

6A Rue du Cloître, Arles 13200, France (43.67665, 4.62827)



E Nécropole des Alyscamps

The Alyscamps is a large Roman necropolis, which is a short distance outside the walls of the old town of Arles, France.

7 Chemin des Muraillettes, Arles 13200, France (43.67171, 4.63635)



F Museum of Ancient Arles and Provence

The Musée de l'Arles antique or Musée départemental Arles antique or Musée de l'Arles et de la Provence antiques is an archeological museum...

Avenue Jean Monnet, 13200 Arles (43.67244, 4.61662)

Mo	09:30–18:00
Tu	Closed
We–Su	09:30–18:00

arles-antique.cg13.fr/mdaa_cg13/root/... , +33 4 13 31 51 03



G Republic Square

The Obélisque d'Arles is a 4th-century Roman obelisk, erected in the center of the Place de la République, in front of the town hall of...

8 Place de la République, Arles 13200, France (43.67625, 4.62757)



H Roquette District

Streets of this picturesque neigborhood are ideal for walking. Marvel at its old houses and stroll down the promenade by the river.

41 Quai de la Roquette, Arles 13200, France (43.67706, 4.62143)

patrimoine.ville-arles.fr/index.php



I City Hall

The mayor of Arles has his office in this splendid 17th-century building. The city hall also features a belltower.

Place de la République (43.67685, 4.62760)

Mo–Fr 08:30–12:00, 13:30–16:30

arles.fr, +33 4 90 49 36 36



J Church of our Lady of the Major

One of the main dominants of Arles dates back to the 12th century but has been rebuilt many times.

20 Place De la Major, 13200 Arles, France (43.67764, 4.63277)

+33 6 43 95 76 32



K Obélisque d'Arles

The Obélisque d'Arles is a 4th-century Roman obelisk, erected in the center of the Place de la République, in front of the town hall of...

6 Place de la République, Arles 13200, France (43.67642, 4.62760)



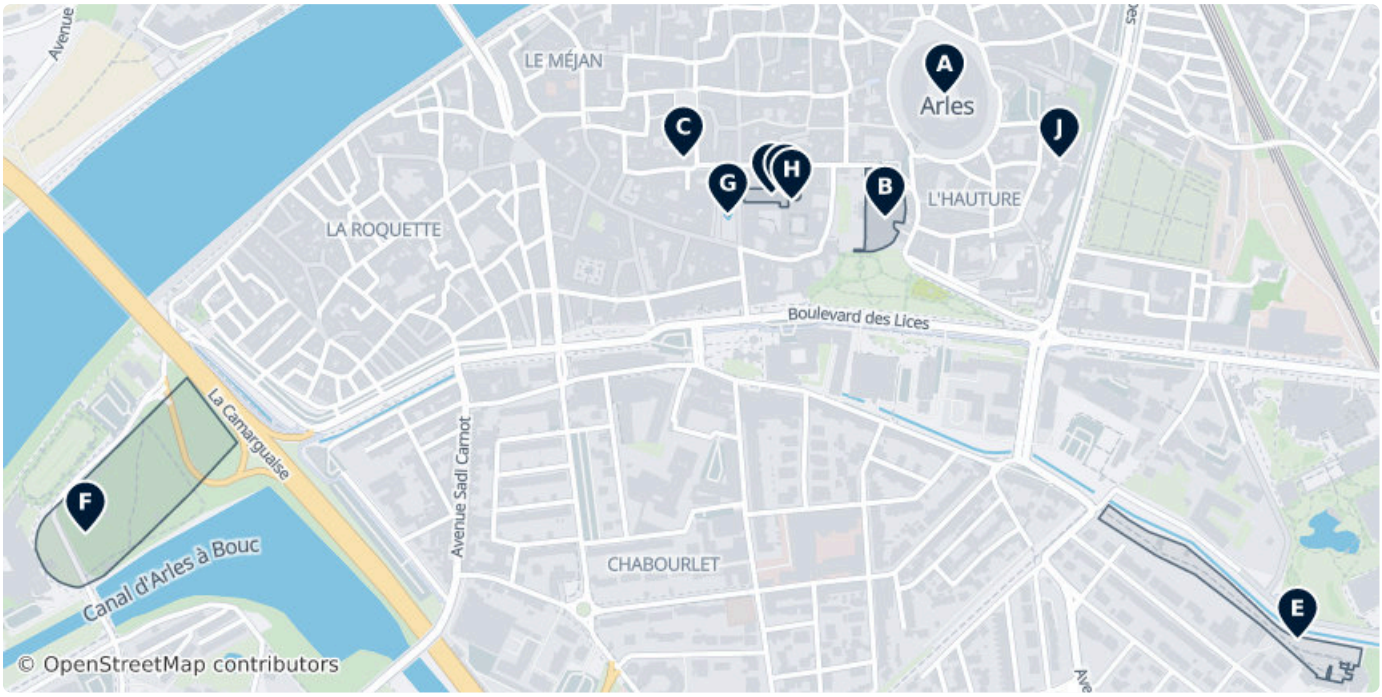
L Arles, Roman and Romanesque Monuments

Arles, Roman and Romanesque Monuments is an area containing a collection of monuments in the city centre of Arles, France, that has been...

6A Rue du Cloître, Arles 13200, France (43.67664, 4.62848)

Roman Heritage of Arles

Arles contains a dense concentration of Roman and Romanesque monuments, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site. This collection includes the 1st-century amphitheatre and theatre, the underground cryptoporticus of the forum, and the Alyscamps necropolis. Medieval additions like the Church of Saint Trophime showcase the city's transition to Romanesque architecture. These sites illustrate the evolution of Arles from a Roman colony under Augustus to a major religious center in the Middle Ages.





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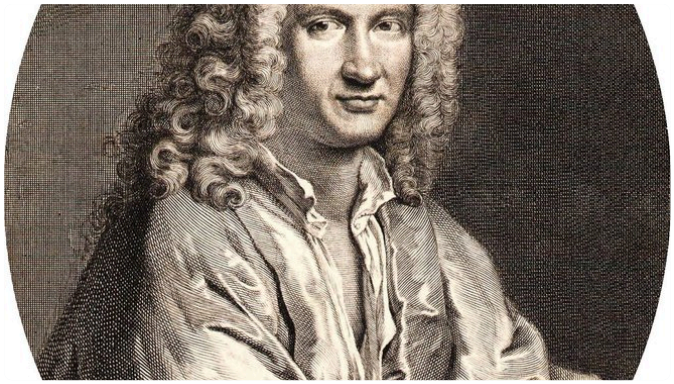


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patrimoine.ville-arles.fr/ville.cfm



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6A Rue du Cloître, Arles 13200, France (43.67665, 4.62827)



E Nécropole des Alyscamps

The Alyscamps is a large Roman necropolis, which is a short distance outside the walls of the old town of Arles, France.

7 Chemin des Muraillettes, Arles 13200, France (43.67171, 4.63635)



F Cirque romain

Built in 149 AD, this chariot-racing track was the largest Roman structure in Arles. Measuring approximately 450 meters in length, it once accommodated up to 20,000 spectators.

1 Cours 5 du Cirque Romain, Arles 13200, France (43.67288, 4.61773)



G Obélisque d'Arles

The Obélisque d'Arles is a 4th-century Roman obelisk, erected in the center of the Place de la République, in front of the town hall of...

6 Place de la République, Arles 13200, France
(43.67642, 4.62760)

H Arles, monuments romains et romans

This UNESCO World Heritage designation encompasses a group of ancient Roman and medieval Romanesque buildings in the city center, protected for their historical and architectural significance.

(43.67658, 4.62858)



I Arles, Roman and Romanesque Monuments

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6A Rue du Cloître, Arles 13200, France (43.67664, 4.62848)

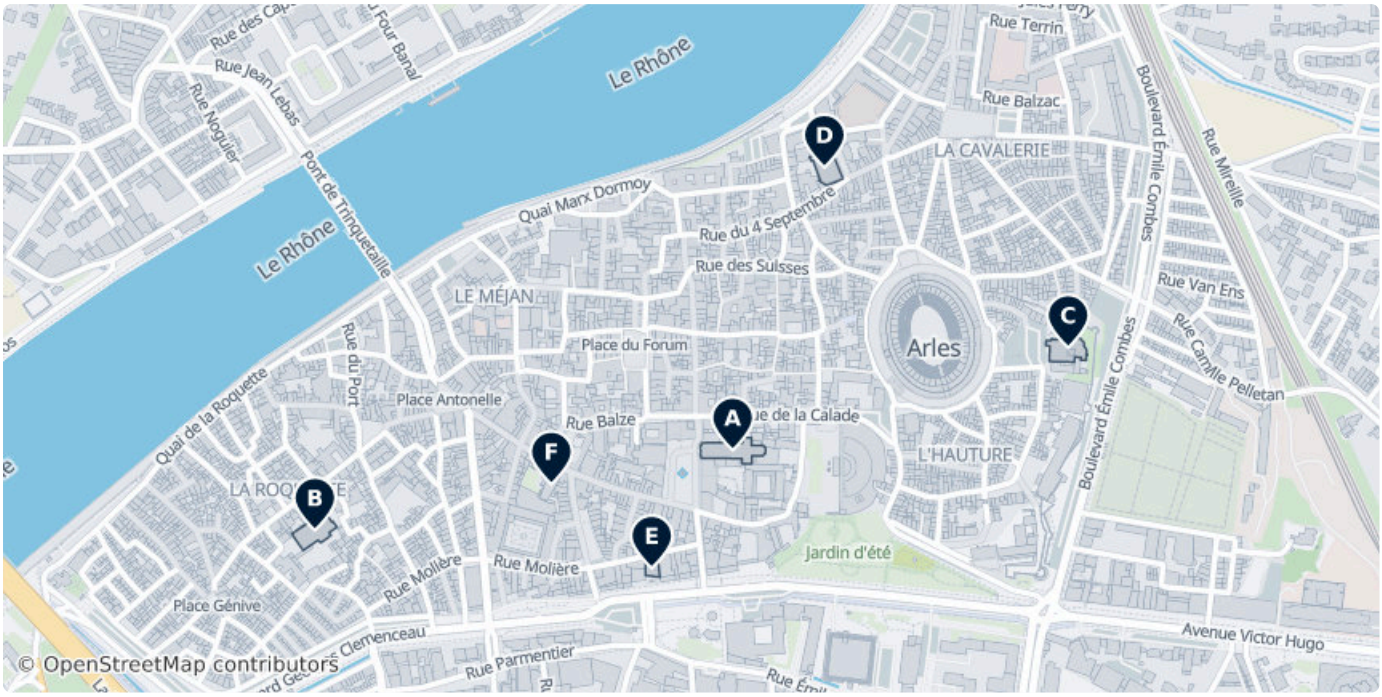
J Remparts du castrum romain

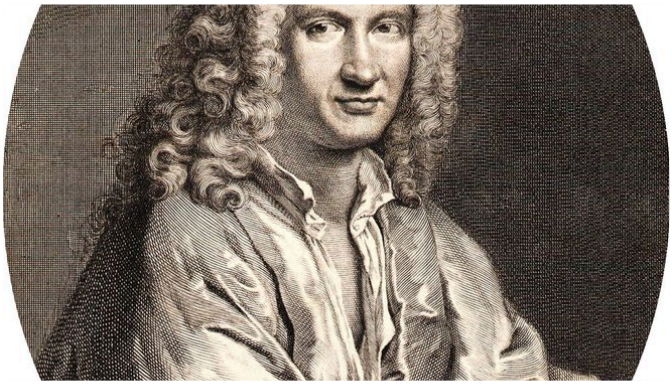
Surviving sections of the original Roman defensive walls that enclosed the fortified settlement, known as the castrum, during the early centuries of the Roman Empire.

17 Rue de la Madeleine, Arles 13200, France
(43.67704, 4.63269)

Historic Churches and Chapels

Arles' religious architecture spans from the 12th-century Romanesque portals of the UNESCO-listed Church of St. Trophime to the Southern Gothic interiors of Saint Césaire. The collection includes the high-perched Church of our Lady of the Major and the stylistically diverse Saint-Julien Church, which blends Gothic and Baroque elements. These sites showcase the evolution of ecclesiastical design in Provence, featuring ancient floor tiles, historic chapels, and the circular 'Rotonde' protestant temple.





A Church of St. Trophime

The Church of St. Trophime is a Roman Catholic church and former cathedral located in the city of Arles, in the Bouches-du-Rhône Department...

6A Rue du Cloître, Arles 13200, France (43.67665, 4.62827)



B Saint Césaire Church

Designed in the Southern Gothic style, this church's interior is famous for its pointed arches and original floor tiles.

Rue St Césaire, 13200 Arles, France (43.67587, 4.62268)



C Church of our Lady of the Major

One of the main dominants of Arles dates back to the 12th century but has been rebuilt many times.

20 Place De la Major, 13200 Arles, France (43.67764, 4.63277)

+33 6 43 95 76 32



D Saint-Julien Church

Built in 1119, this church is one of the important historic monuments of Arles. Its architectural style is mixed - from Gothic to Baroque.

Rue du 4 Septembre, 13200 Arles, France (43.67938, 4.62950)



E Temple protestant d'Arles

Known as 'La Rotonde,' this Protestant Reformed temple features a distinctive circular design. Located on Rue de la Rotonde, it serves as the primary place of worship for the United Protestant Church in the Arles region.

Boulevard des Lices, 13200 Arles (43.67550, 4.62719)

eglise-protestante-unie.fr/pays-d-arles-p60115

F Chapelle des Trinitaires

A historic religious building formerly associated with the Trinitarian order. It is listed as a regional heritage site, representing the smaller-scale ecclesiastical architecture found within the city's historic center.

rue de la République 33 (43.67632, 4.62584)

DATA SOURCES

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