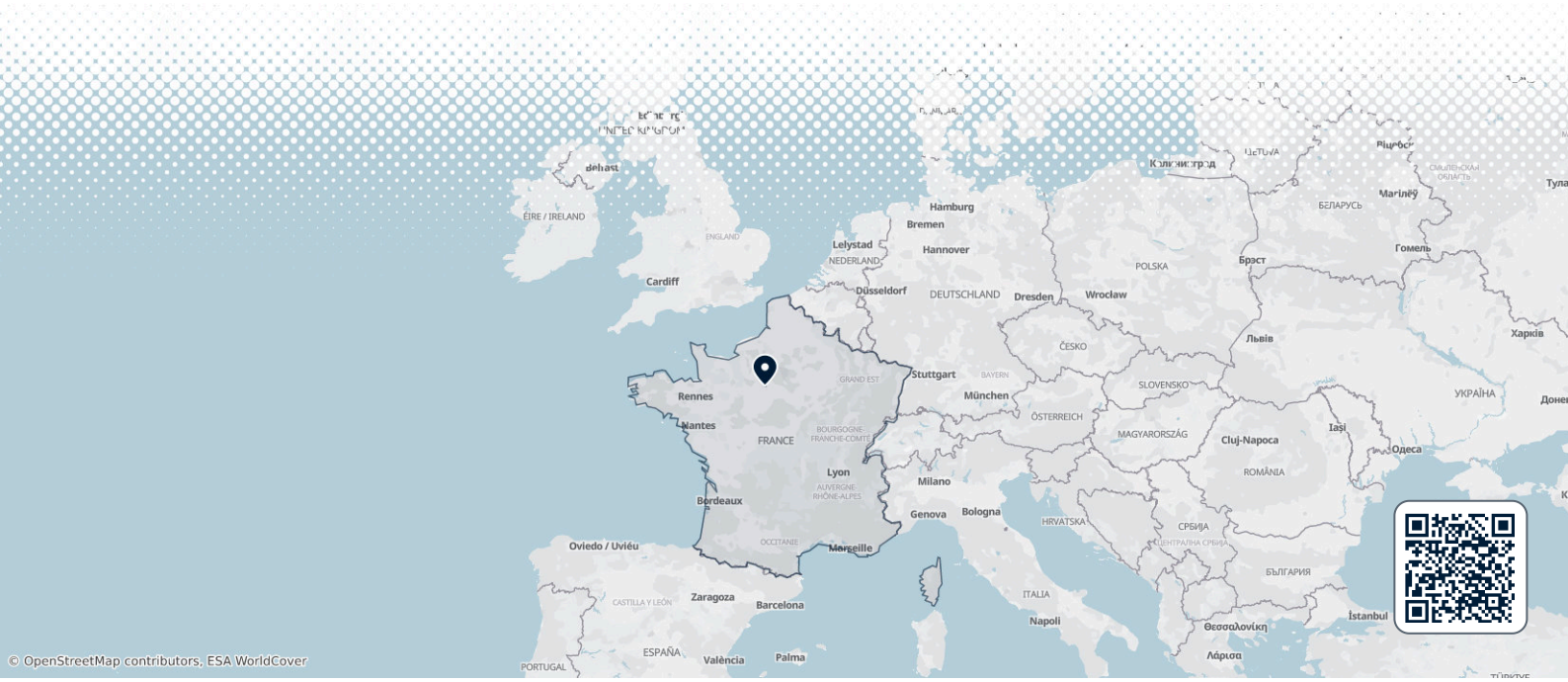


Chartres

Centre-Val de Loire · France

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Chartres is a small cathedral city about 90 km southwest of Paris, on the Eure river. Its Gothic cathedral is one of the best preserved in Europe and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The old town climbs a hill around it, with old houses and quiet streets down by the river.

The city suits a day trip from Paris or a relaxed overnight stay. Staying the night lets you see the cathedral in the evening and the town's light show, which is the best time to be here.

When to visit

Late spring to early autumn is the best time, with mild weather and long days. Winter is cold and grey, and the cathedral is cold inside. Rain can come in any month, so bring a light jacket.

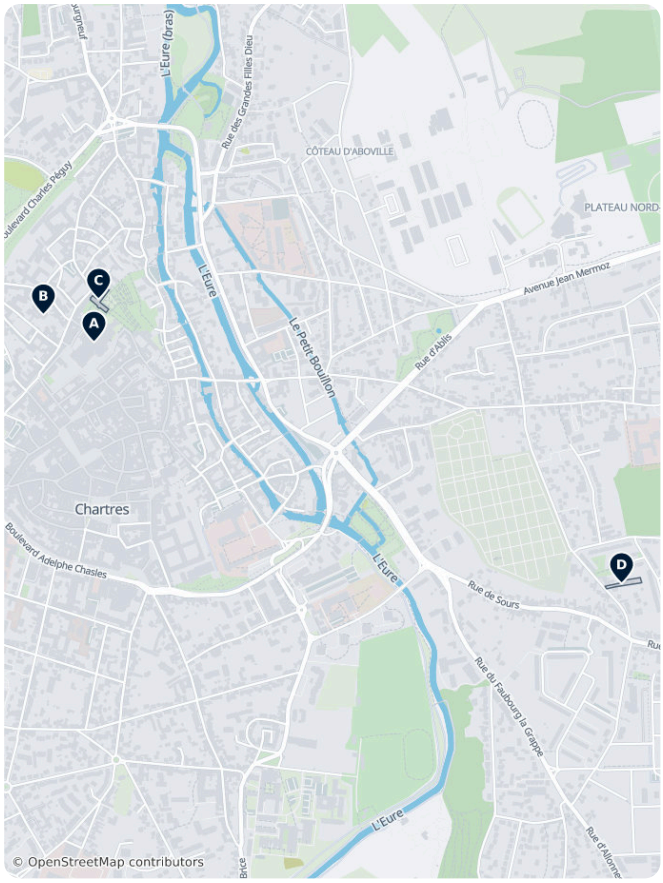
Plan around Chartres en Lumières, a light show that illuminates the cathedral and other buildings every evening after dark. It runs from spring into early January. Summer evenings start late, so the show begins late too.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 12° Feels like 1°	1° / -6°	12 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	8° / 14° Feels like 3°	1° / -5°	Dry air
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	12° / 18° Feels like 7°	3° / -3°	Dry air
April	Fair Fair for sightseeing	15° / 22° Feels like 11°	5° / -1°	Dry air
May	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 24°	8° / 3°	12 rainy days · Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 29°	11° / 7°	Dry air
July	Great Great for sightseeing	24° / 31°	13° / 9°	
August	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 32°	13° / 9°	
September	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 28°	10° / 6°	Dry air
October	Fair Fair for sightseeing	17° / 23° Feels like 13°	8° / 2°	13 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	11° / 16° Feels like 6°	4° / -3°	13 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	7° / 12° Feels like 2°	2° / -5°	13 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: June, July, August, September

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

Top sights



- A Cathédrale Notre-Dame is the reason to come. Most of it was rebuilt quickly after a fire in 1194, so its style is unusually consistent. About 150 medieval stained-glass windows survive, including the deep blue "Blue Virgin" window. A maze-like labyrinth is set in the nave floor, and chairs usually cover it.
- B Centre international du vitrail is a museum of stained glass in a medieval cellar close to the cathedral. It is a good way to learn how the windows are made.
- C Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres is next to the cathedral, in the former bishop's palace. It holds European paintings, sculpture and decorative arts.
- D Maison Picassiette is a small house covered inside and out with mosaics of broken china and glass. *Raymond Isidore* built it over many years. It stands in the east of the city, so plan a short walk or bus ride.
- The Église Saint-Pierre is a former abbey church in the lower town, known for its medieval stained glass. It is less visited than the cathedral.
- The Maison du Saumon is a Renaissance house in the old town with a carved facade. It is worth a look as you walk between the cathedral and the river.

Chartres – 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.
3M+ downloads · 4.6 stars · 15 years of trip planning
App Store · Google Play
Scan to download the app

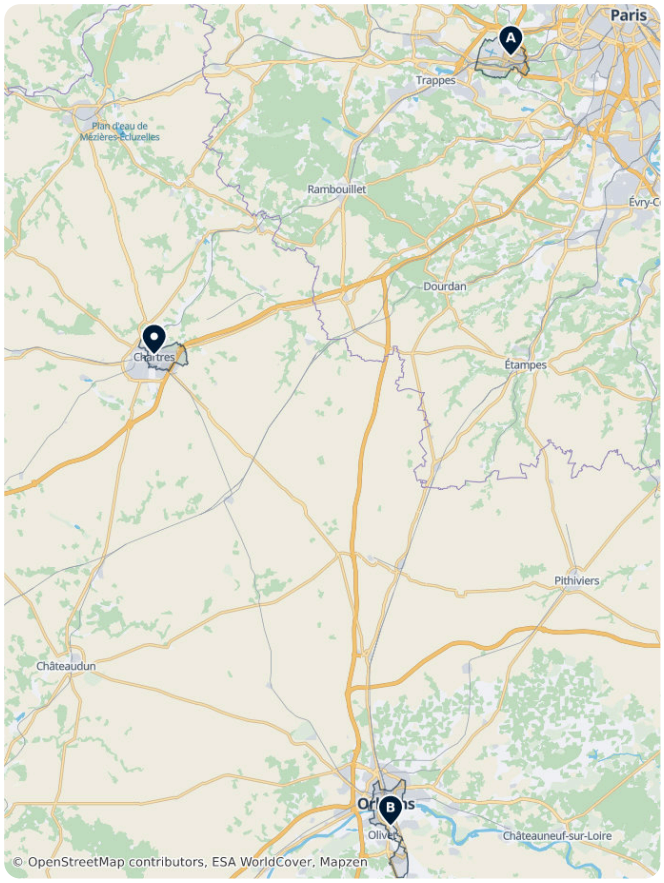
What to experience

Chartres has a few experiences tied to the cathedral and the river.

- **Chartres en Lumières**: After dark, light projections turn the cathedral and many other buildings into a walking route. You can plan your own route through the old town.
- **Walking the labyrinth**: On some days, the chairs are removed from the cathedral nave so visitors can walk the labyrinth. Check the cathedral's schedule before you go.
- **Eure riverside walk**: Paths and bridges follow the Eure through the lower town. It is a quiet walk, especially in the evening.

Day trips

Chartres is close to Paris and to several châteaux. Times are one way from Chartres.



- Maintenon: about 20 minutes by car, or a short train ride on the Paris line. A château once owned by Madame de Maintenon, the second wife of Louis XIV, with gardens designed by *André Le Nôtre*. Part of an unfinished 17th-century aqueduct stands nearby.
- Illiers-Combray: about 35 minutes by car. *Marcel Proust* used this village as "Combray" in his novel. His aunt's house is now a museum.
- Rambouillet: about 40 minutes by car. A château and a large forest. A car is easier than public transport.
- Ⓐ Versailles: about 1 hour by car. The royal palace and gardens are a famous full-day visit.
- Ⓑ Orléans: about 1 hour by car. A river city on the Loire, associated with Joan of Arc. It is also a gateway to the Loire Valley.

Where to explore

Chartres sits between Paris and the Loire Valley. These destinations fit well in the same trip.

- For the capital, go to Paris.
- For the royal palace and gardens, go to Versailles.
- For a Loire river city to the south, go to Orléans.
- For châteaux and wine, see Loire Valley.

Getting there

- **By air**: Chartres has no commercial airport. Fly to Paris (CDG or Orly) and continue by train or car.
- **By train**: Trains run from Paris Montparnasse to Gare de Chartres in about 1 hour. Direct regional trains also run to Le Mans. Book at SNCF Connect.
- **From the station**: The cathedral is about 10 minutes away on foot, slightly uphill. Most visitors arrive from Paris.
- **By bus**: Regional Transbeauce buses link Chartres with towns across the département, but trains are better for most visitors.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old town is compact and most sights are within a 15-minute walk. The streets between the cathedral and the river are steep and often cobbled.
- **Local buses**: The Filibus network serves Chartres and nearby towns. Two free Relais des Portes shuttles circle the centre from Monday to Saturday. Check the MyBus Chartres app for the next bus.
- **Bikes**: The Maison du Vélo near the station rents bicycles.
- **Taxis**: Taxis are available if you need to reach Maison Picassiette or return to your hotel at night.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town is compact, so most sights are a short walk apart. Some streets near the cathedral are steep.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Cycling works in the centre and along the Eure, but the old town has hills and cobbles.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Not for Chartres itself. A car helps for Maintenon, Illiers-Combray and Rambouillet, which have little public transport.
- **Parking**: Use the car parks around the edge of the old town and walk in. Streets near the cathedral are narrow, and some are pedestrian only.

Food & drink

Chartres is in the Beauce, a large grain-growing area. Look for *pâté de Chartres*, a game pie that has been made here for a long time. Local bakeries also sell *mentchikoff*, a meringue sweet.

For eating, go to the streets around the cathedral and the lower town along the Eure. Lunch menus are good value. Many restaurants close on Sunday evening or Monday, so check hours.

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.

Chartres – 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.
3M+ downloads · **4.6 stars** · **15 years of trip planning**
App Store · Google Play
Scan to download the app

Safety & health

Chartres is a safe city for visitors. Petty theft is rare but can happen in crowded places and near the station, so keep bags closed. Tap water is safe to drink, as in the rest of France.

History

Chartres was a Gallo-Roman town called Autricum. The city later became a Christian pilgrimage site, because the cathedral holds a relic said to be the tunic of the Virgin Mary. The relic was given to the cathedral in the 9th century.

A fire in 1194 destroyed most of the old church. The new Cathédrale Notre-Dame was rebuilt in about 30 years. Its stained glass is among the oldest and best preserved in Europe. UNESCO listed it as a World Heritage Site in 1979.

In 1594, Henri IV was crowned king of France here. He was crowned here because Reims was held by his enemies. In August 1944, the city was heavily bombed in the battle of Chartres. It was liberated on 18 August by US forces, and the cathedral was spared.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for France at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

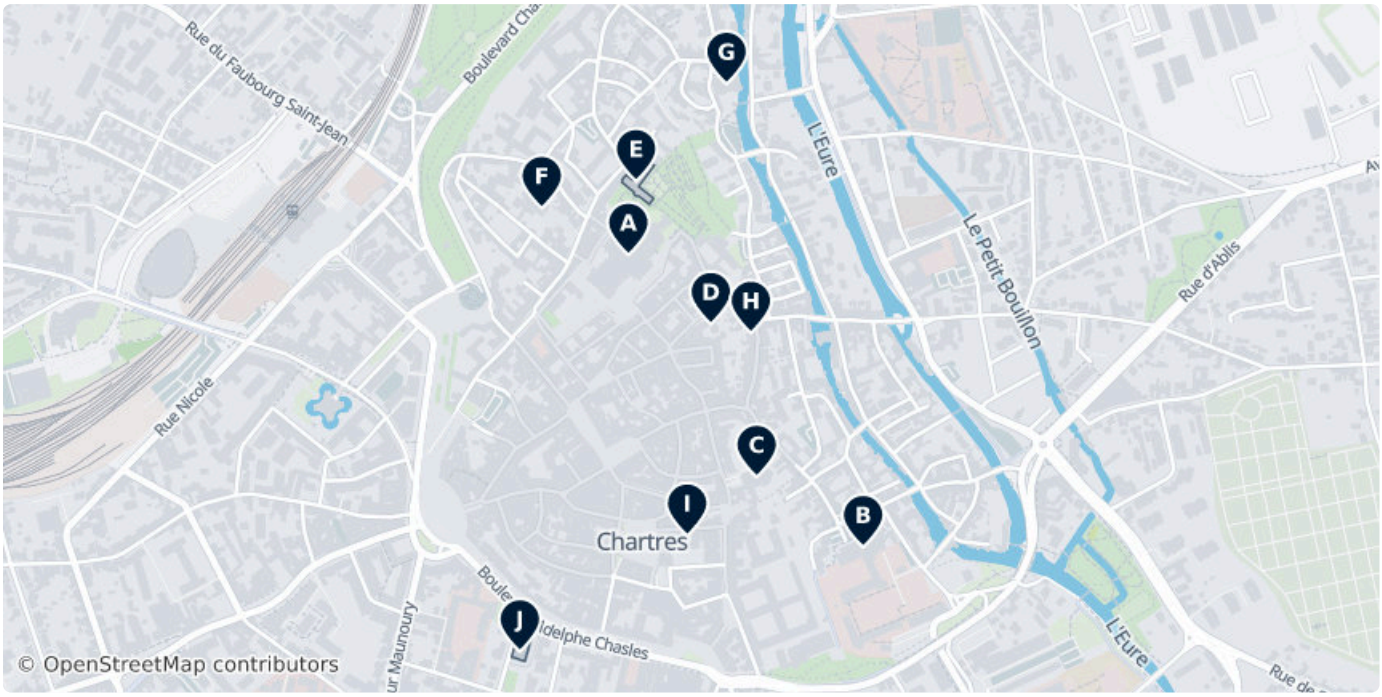
Type C / Type E
230 V · 50 Hz

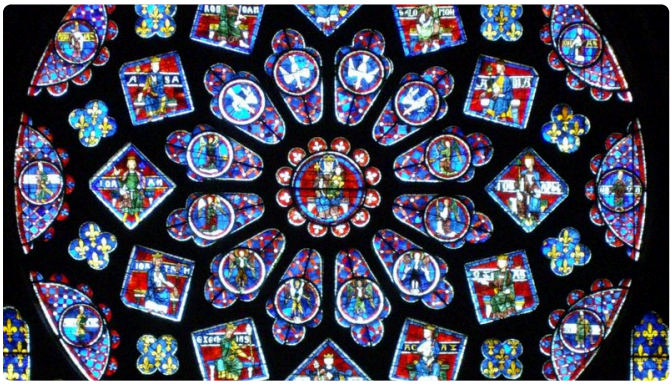
LANGUAGES
French

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Chartres Essentials

Chartres is defined by its UNESCO-listed Gothic cathedral, famous for its blue stained glass and architectural symmetry. Beyond the cathedral, the city preserves a medieval lower town along the Eure River, featuring timber-framed houses like the Maison du Saumon and the Romanesque Église Saint-André. Cultural landmarks include the Musée des Beaux-Arts, housed in the former Episcopal Palace, and the International Stained Glass Centre. This selection highlights the city's religious heritage, Renaissance-era churches, and 17th-century civic architecture.





A Chartres Cathedral

Chartres Cathedral, also known as the Cathedral of Our Lady of Chartres, is a Catholic Cathedral in Chartres, France, about 80 km southwest...

21 Cloître Notre-Dame, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44784, 1.48786)



B Église Saint-Pierre

Former 13th-century abbey church featuring an extensive collection of medieval stained glass and Gothic architecture.

10 Place Saint-Pierre, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44380, 1.49275)



C Église Saint-Aignan

A 16th-century church known for its rare painted wooden barrel vault and Renaissance-era stained glass windows.

1 Tertre Saint-Aignan, Chartres 28000, France (48.44477, 1.49053)



D Maison du Saumon

A 16th-century timber-framed house featuring intricate wood carvings of salmon and other figures. It currently houses the tourist office.

Tertre de la Poissonnerie, 28000 Chartres, France (48.44688, 1.48957)



E Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres

Located in the former 17th-century Episcopal Palace, this museum displays fine arts, 17th-century tapestries, and a collection of Vlaminck paintings.

Cloître Notre-Dame 29, 28000 Chartres (48.44885, 1.48802)

Mo	Closed
Tu–We	10:00–12:30, 14:00–18:00
Th	10:00–12:30, 14:00–20:00
Fr–Sa	10:00–12:30, 14:00–18:00
Su	14:00–18:00

chartres.fr/musee-beaux-arts/horaires... , +33 2 37 90 45 80



F Centre international du vitrail

A museum and workshop dedicated to the art of stained glass, located in a 13th-century Gothic cellar.

Rue du Cardinal Pie 5, 28000 Chartres (48.44848, 1.48605)

Mo–Fr	10:15–12:15, 14:00–17:30
Sa–Su	14:00–17:30

centre-vitrail.org/fr/musee-du-vitrail/, +33 (0)2 37 21 65 72



G Église Saint-André

A 12th-century Romanesque collegiate church situated near the Eure river. It now functions as a venue for art exhibitions.

17 Rue Saint-André, Chartres 28000, France
(48.45020, 1.48990)



H Escalier de la reine Berthe

A 16th-century carved timber-framed spiral staircase tower, a notable example of medieval domestic architecture.

35 Rue des Écuyers, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44676, 1.49041)



I Hôtel Montescot

A 17th-century brick and stone mansion built for a royal advisor, showcasing classic French architectural styles.

9 Rue de la Mairie, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44396, 1.48908)



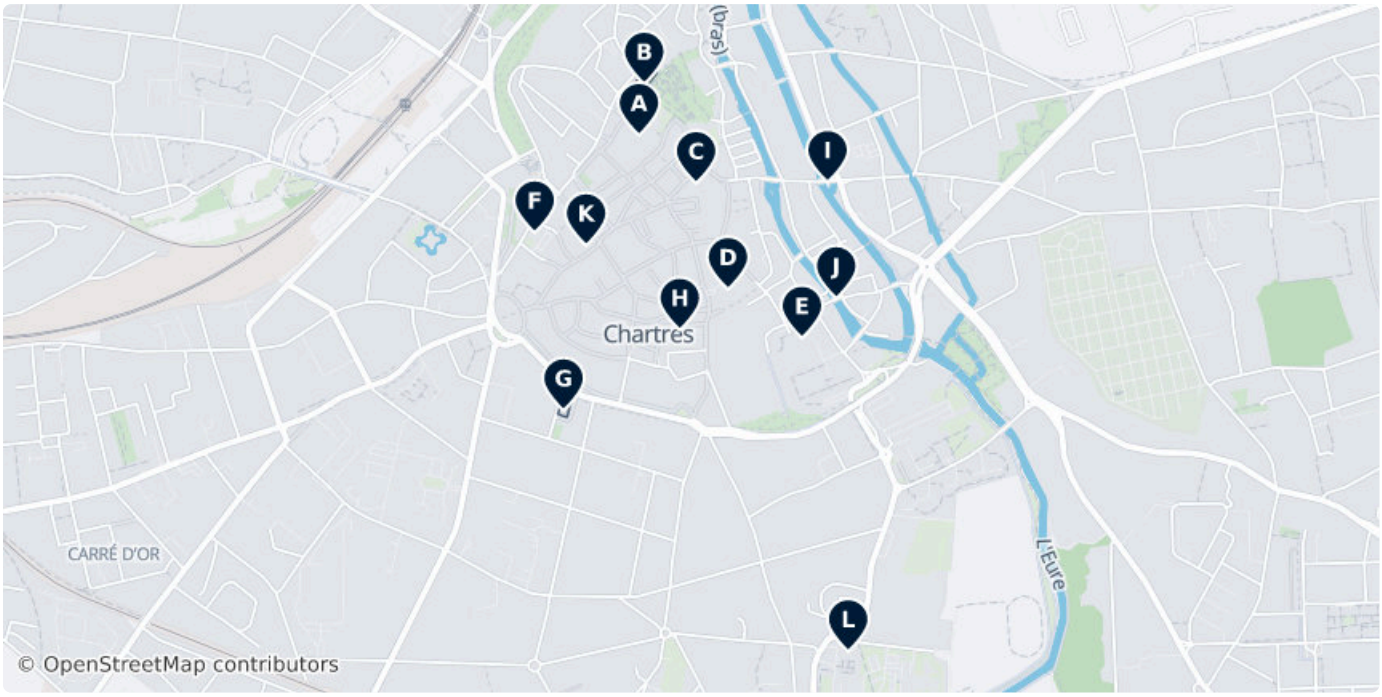
J Théâtre de Chartres

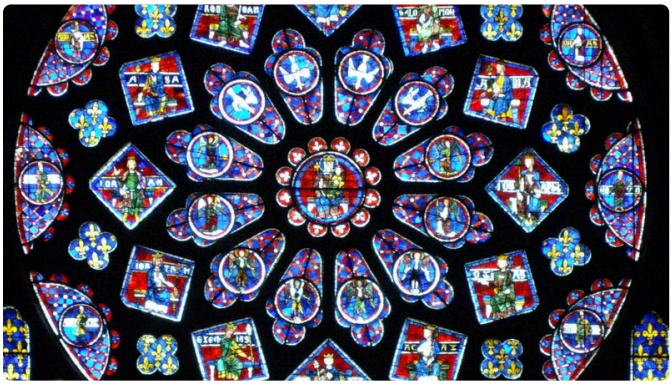
A 19th-century municipal theater featuring an Italian-style auditorium and a regular program of theater, music, and dance.

2 Place de Ravenne, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44236, 1.48560)

Chartres Highlights

Chartres is defined by its UNESCO-listed Gothic cathedral, famous for its 12th and 13th-century stained glass and labyrinth. Beyond the cathedral, the city features the former episcopal palace, now a fine arts museum, and the medieval lower town along the Eure river. This area preserves timber-framed structures like the Maison du Saumon and historic fortifications such as the Porte Guillaume ruins. Notable religious sites include the former abbey church of Saint-Pierre and the Saint-Martin-au-Val church, which houses an early medieval crypt.





A Chartres Cathedral

Chartres Cathedral, also known as the Cathedral of Our Lady of Chartres, is a Catholic Cathedral in Chartres, France, about 80 km southwest...

21 Cloître Notre-Dame, Chartres 28000, France (48.44784, 1.48786)



B Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres

Housed in the former episcopal palace, this museum displays collections of paintings, sculptures, and tapestries from the 16th to 19th centuries, alongside Oceanian art and rare harpsichords.

Cloître Notre-Dame 29, 28000 Chartres (48.44885, 1.48802)

Mo	Closed
Tu–We	10:00–12:30, 14:00–18:00
Th	10:00–12:30, 14:00–20:00
Fr–Sa	10:00–12:30, 14:00–18:00
Su	14:00–18:00

chartres.fr/musee-beaux-arts/horaires... , +33 2 37 90 45 80



C Maison du Saumon

A 16th-century timber-framed house named for its carved salmon decorations. It currently serves as the local tourist office and showcases the city's medieval architectural heritage.

Tertre de la Poissonnerie, 28000 Chartres, France
(48.44688, 1.48957)



D Église Saint-Aignan

Rebuilt in the 16th century, this church features a blend of Renaissance and Gothic architecture, notable for its extensive collection of 16th-century stained glass and painted interior walls.

1 Tertre Saint-Aignan, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44477, 1.49053)



E Église Saint-Pierre

Formerly the church of the Abbey of Saint-Père-en-Vallée, this 13th-century structure is renowned for its well-preserved medieval stained glass windows and its history as a major Benedictine site.

10 Place Saint-Pierre, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44380, 1.49275)



F Église Sainte-Foy

An 11th-century Romanesque church that has been decommissioned. It now serves as a cultural space for exhibitions and events within the city center.

4 Rue Collin d'Harleville, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44590, 1.48473)



G Théâtre de Chartres

An Italian-style municipal theater inaugurated in 1861, featuring a classic 19th-century facade and hosting a variety of performing arts.

2 Place de Ravenne, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44236, 1.48560)



H Hôtel Montescot

Built in the early 17th century, this brick and stone mansion represents the Louis XIII architectural style and currently houses municipal offices.

9 Rue de la Mairie, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44396, 1.48908)

I Vestiges de la porte Guillaume

The ruins of a major 14th-century gate that was part of the city's medieval defensive walls until its destruction in 1944.

25 Rue de la Porte Guillaume, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44690, 1.49352)

J Pont Saint-Hilaire

A historic stone bridge spanning the Eure river, providing access to the lower town and offering views of the surrounding medieval mills.

12 Rue du Pont Saint-Hilaire, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44459, 1.49378)

K Maison dite du Médecin Huvé

A notable Renaissance-style house dating back to the early 16th century, featuring ornate stone carvings on its facade.

7 Rue Noël Ballay, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44564, 1.48627)

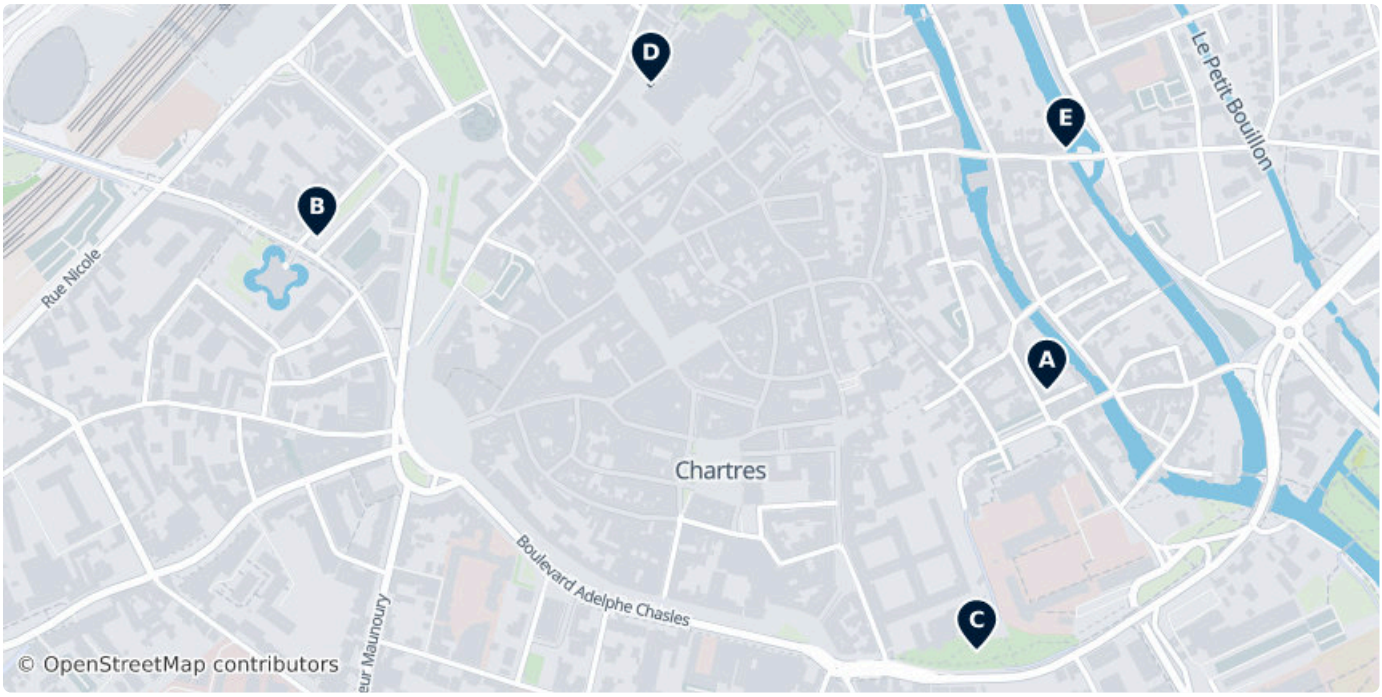
L Église Saint-Martin-au-Val

Located within the Saint-Brice hospital grounds, this church is built over a Merovingian necropolis and features one of the oldest crypts in the region.

3 Place Saint-Brice, Chartres 28000, France
(48.43757, 1.49414)

Hidden Gems

Beyond the world-famous cathedral, Chartres preserves significant layers of civic and scientific history. This collection features the remnants of the city's medieval and Renaissance fortifications, including the 16th-century clock tower and the ruins of the Porte Guillaume. It also highlights monuments dedicated to notable local figures: Louis Pasteur, whose research into anthrax vaccines took place in the surrounding countryside, and Noël Ballay, a prominent 19th-century doctor and colonial governor born in the region.



A Porte du 16e siècle

Renaissance-style stone archway dating back to the 1500s, representing the city's historical defensive architecture.

(48.44464, 1.49294)

B Monument à Pasteur

1903 bronze statue by Paul Richer commemorating the scientist's research on anthrax vaccines conducted in the Eure-et-Loir region.

(48.44613, 1.48222)

C Monument à Noël Ballay

Memorial honoring the 19th-century doctor and colonial governor of French West Africa, featuring allegorical bronze figures and a central statue.

(48.44211, 1.49191)

D Tour de l'Horloge

A 16th-century stone structure originally part of the city’s defensive walls, later adapted to house the municipal clock.

17 Cloître Notre-Dame, Chartres 28000, France
(48.44764, 1.48712)

E Porte Guillaume

Ruins of a 12th-century fortified entrance destroyed in 1944. The site preserves the foundations and lower masonry of what was once the primary eastern gate.

(48.44700, 1.49322)

DATA SOURCES

Map data	© OpenStreetMap contributors, ESA WorldCover, Mapzen
Data	© OpenStreetMap contributors, Wikidata, Wikipedia, Tripomatic, Official websites

IMAGE CREDITS

- Chartres Cathedral — "Cathedrale nd chartres vitraux015" by Harmonia Amanda, cc-by-sa-3.0
- Église Saint-Pierre — "La série des 12 apôtres (2) 5 apôtres Léonard Limosin 1547 Chartres museum" by Le Passant, cc-by-sa-4.0
- Église Saint-Aignan — "France Eure et Loir Chartres en lumieres 2006 Eglise Saint Aignan 01" by GIRAUD Patrick, cc-by-2.5
- Maison du Saumon — "Maison du Saumon la truie qui file place Poissonnerie Chartres" by Le Passant, cc-by-sa-3.0
- Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres — "Charles-Antoine Bridan Le signe donné à Achaz 1786-1789 marbre de Carrare jubé..." by Le Passant, cc-by-sa-4.0
- Centre international du vitrail — "Chartres - cellier de Loëns (01)" by Fab5669, cc-by-sa-4.0
- Église Saint-André — "Chartres, Fontaine Saint-André" by Poulpy, cc-by-sa-3.0
- Escalier de la reine Berthe — "Escalier de la reine Berthe" by Ali Tajik Esmaeili, cc-by-4.0
- Hôtel Montescot — "Chartres, Hôtel Montescot 02 porte sur rue depuis la cour" by Coyau, cc-by-sa-3.0
- Théâtre de Chartres — "Pour et contre" by M. Joliet, cc-by-sa-4.0
- Chartres Cathedral — "Cathedrale nd chartres vitraux015" by Harmonia Amanda, cc-by-sa-3.0
- Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres — "Charles-Antoine Bridan Le signe donné à Achaz 1786-1789 marbre de Carrare jubé..." by Le Passant, cc-by-sa-4.0
- Maison du Saumon — "Maison du Saumon la truie qui file place Poissonnerie Chartres" by Le Passant, cc-by-sa-3.0
- Église Saint-Aignan — "France Eure et Loir Chartres en lumieres 2006 Eglise Saint Aignan 01" by GIRAUD Patrick, cc-by-2.5
- Église Saint-Pierre — "La série des 12 apôtres (2) 5 apôtres Léonard Limosin 1547 Chartres museum" by Le Passant, cc-by-sa-4.0
- Église Sainte-Foy — "Église Sainte-Foy de Chartres, chapiteau du porche 02" by Coyau, cc-by-sa-3.0
- Théâtre de Chartres — "Pour et contre" by M. Joliet, cc-by-sa-4.0
- Hôtel Montescot — "Chartres, Hôtel Montescot 02 porte sur rue depuis la cour" by Coyau, cc-by-sa-3.0

A free travel guide — not for sale. Travel guide generated with AI on November 21, 2026. Text and layout by Tripomatic, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, available under the ODbL. Photos are under their own licences, as credited on this page.