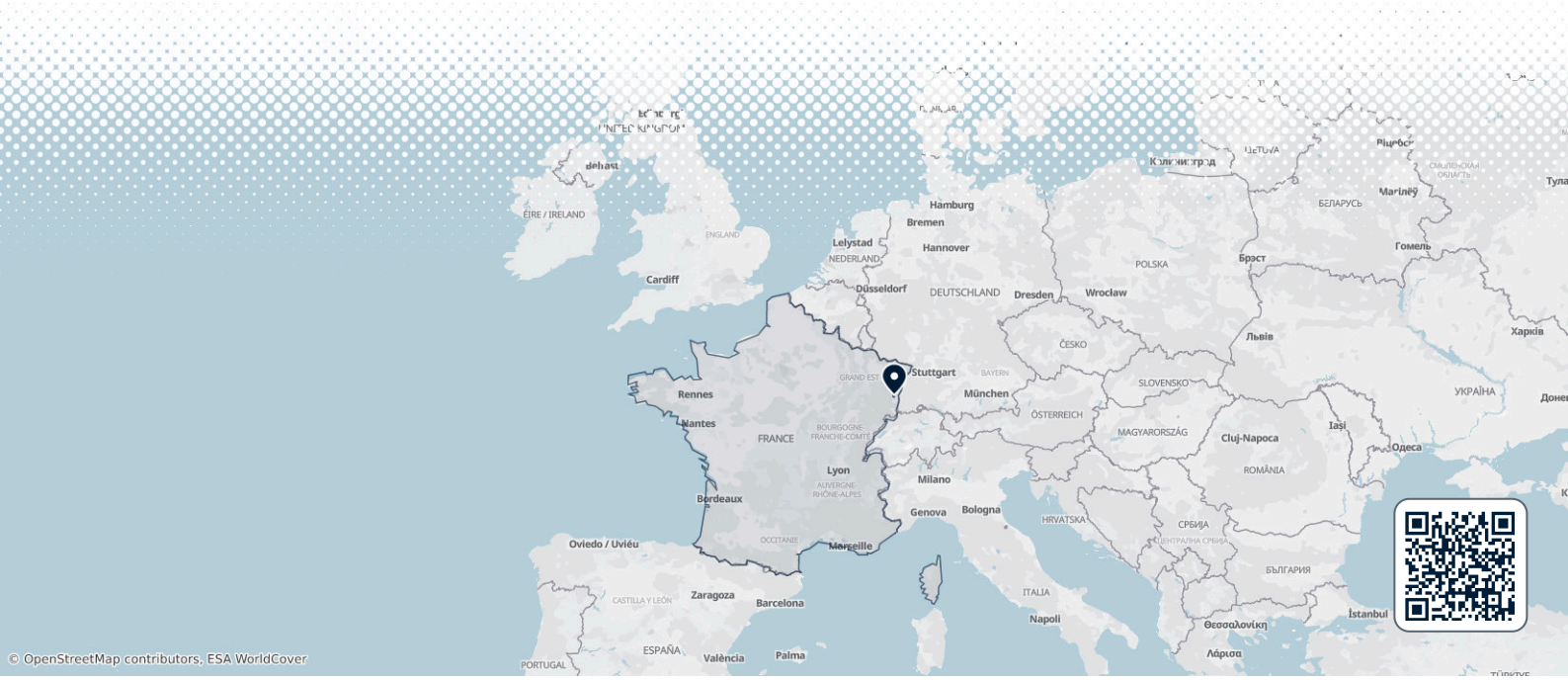


Colmar

Grand Est · France

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Colmar is a small town in Alsace, on the Alsace Wine Route and near the Vosges mountains. The old centre has half-timbered houses, canals and painted facades. French and German styles mix here, as in the rest of Alsace. The sculptor *Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi*, who made the Statue of Liberty, was born here.

The old centre is small and easy to walk, so Colmar suits one or two nights. It is also a good base for wine villages and castles in the hills. It is especially popular in December for its Christmas markets.

When to visit

Late spring to early autumn is warm and good for walking and for visits to the wine villages. September is a pleasant month, when the grape harvest begins. Winter is cold, with frost and some snow, but the town is very festive then.

The biggest event is the **Christmas markets**. They run from late November to late December in several squares of the old centre. Weekends are very crowded, so a weekday is easier. The centre is closed to cars during market hours.

Good Friday and 26 December are public holidays in Alsace, unlike most of France.

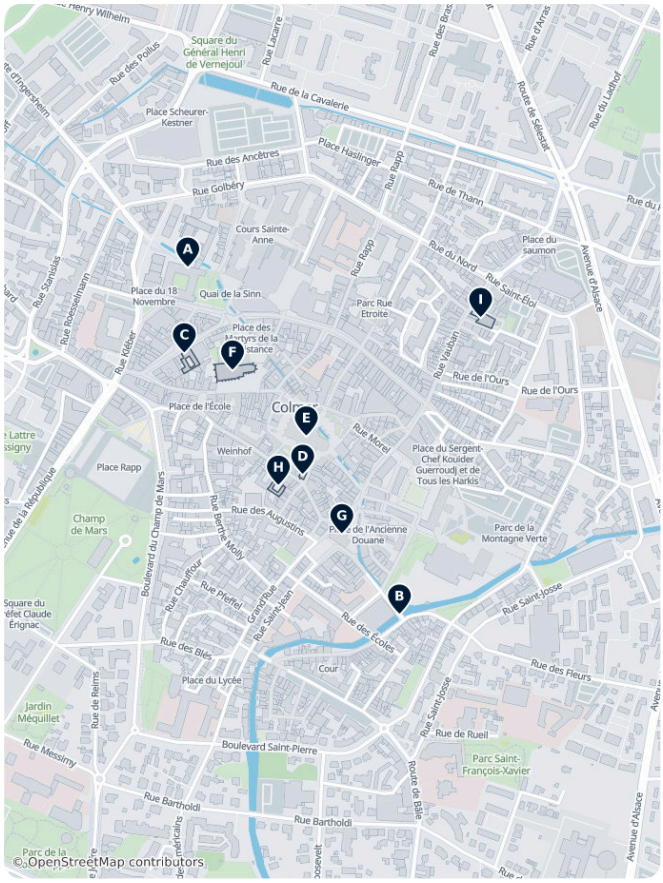
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	5° / 12° Feels like 1°	-2° / -9°	12 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	8° / 15° Feels like 3°	-1° / -9°	Dry air
March	Fair Fair for cycling	12° / 20° Feels like 8°	2° / -4°	12 rainy days · Dry air
April	Good Good for cycling	17° / 24°	5° / -1°	Dry air · Calm winds
May	Good Good for sightseeing	20° / 27°	9° / 4°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 32°	13° / 8°	14 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	26° / 33°	15° / 10°	15 rainy days · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	26° / 34°	15° / 10°	14 rainy days · Calm winds
September	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 29°	11° / 5°	Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for cycling	17° / 24°	7° / 0°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for cycling	10° / 17° Feels like 7°	3° / -4°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 12° Feels like 2°	-1° / -8°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: June, September

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

Top sights

The old centre is small. Most sights are within a 15-minute walk of each other.



- **A** Unterlinden Museum is the main reason many people visit Colmar. It is in a 13th-century Dominican convent. Its best-known work is the Isenheim Altarpiece by *Matthias Grünewald*. The museum is closed on Tuesdays.
- **B** La Petite Venise is the old quarter of butchers, tanners and fishmongers, along the river Lauch. Colourful houses stand right on the water. Small boats run trips on the canal in the warmer months.
- **C** Maison des Têtes is a Renaissance house from 1609. Its facade is covered with carved heads and masks.
- **D** Maison Pfister was built in 1537 for a hat maker. It has a painted facade and a wooden balcony.
- **E** Collégiale Saint-Martin is the largest church in town. It is a Gothic church built mostly in the 13th and 14th centuries.
- **F** Église des Dominicains is a Gothic church with colourful stained glass. It holds the *Martin Schongauer* painting Madonna of the Rose Bower.
- **G** Ancienne douane (Koïffhus) is the old customs house from 1480. It stands in the middle of the old centre.
- **H** Musée Bartholdi is in the house where *Bartholdi* was born in 1834. It shows how the Statue of Liberty was designed.
- **I** Museum of toys is a toy museum. It suits families with children.

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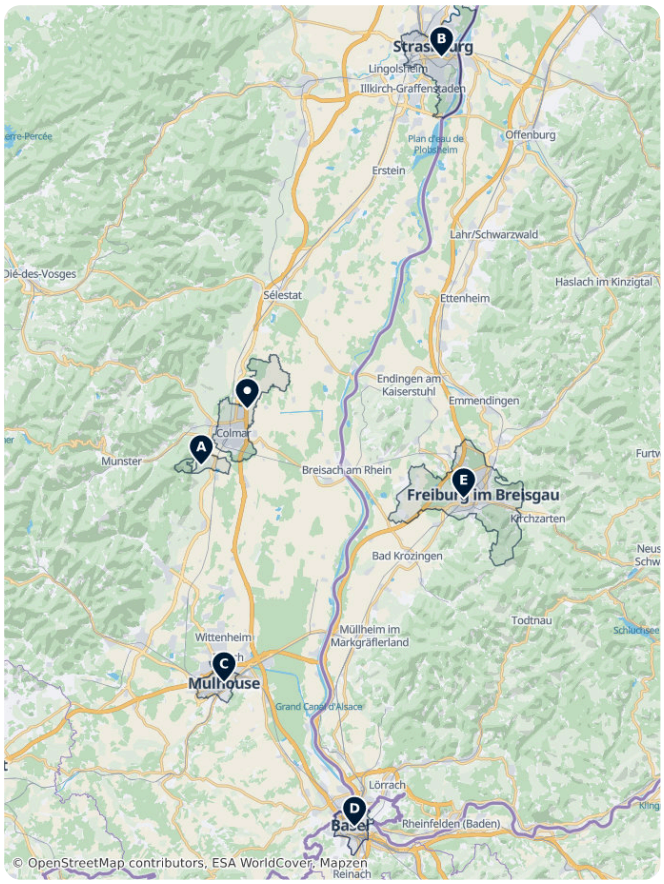
What to experience

- **Take a boat trip on the canal.** Small flat-bottomed boats leave from Petite Venise in the warmer months. The trip is short and passes the colourful houses from the water.
- **Visit the Christmas markets.** From late November, wooden chalets fill several squares. The centre is closed to cars during market hours.
- **Cycle to the vineyards.** Ride a bike along the quiet paths between the vines. A short, flat ride leads to Eguisheim.
- **Go to the Alsace wine fair.** Colmar has held this fair every August since 1947. It has tastings, music and food stands.

Day trips

Alsace has many small towns and wine villages close to Colmar. Times are one way and approximate. A car makes the villages easier, but buses serve some of them.



- Turckheim (about 10 min by car): a small walled wine village with old town gates.
- Ⓐ Eguisheim (about 15 min by car): a round village, with lanes in rings around a small castle.
- Kaysersberg (about 20 min by car): a wine village in a valley, and the birthplace of *Albert Schweitzer*.
- Riquewihr (about 20 min by car): a walled village with very well-kept old houses. It is very busy in summer and in December.
- Ribeauvillé (about 25 min by car): a wine town with ruined castles on the hill above.
- Neuf-Brisach (about 25 min by car): a star-shaped fortress town designed by *Vauban*. It is on the UNESCO World Heritage list.
- Haut-Kœnigsbourg (about 30 min by car): a large hilltop castle, rebuilt in the early 1900s.
- Ⓑ Strasbourg (about 30 min by train): the main city of Alsace, with a famous cathedral and canals.
- Ⓒ Mulhouse (about 25 min by train): known for its car, train and technology museums.
- Ⓓ Basel (about 1 h by train): a Swiss city on the Rhine, with many museums.
- Ⓔ Freiburg im Breisgau (about 1 h by car): a university city in Germany, at the edge of the Black Forest. There is no direct train.

Where to explore

These destinations are near Colmar.

- **Wine villages**: Eguisheim is the closest.
- **Alsace**: Strasbourg and Mulhouse. Strasbourg is the better choice for a day out.
- **Across the border**: Basel in Switzerland and Freiburg im Breisgau in Germany.

Getting there

- **By air**: EuroAirport Basel Mulhouse Freiburg is about 52 km from Colmar. Strasbourg Airport is about 68 km away. From either airport, take a bus or train to Mulhouse or Strasbourg, then a regional train to Colmar. Paris Charles de Gaulle is another option, with a high-speed train to Strasbourg.
- **By train**: A few direct TGV trains run daily from Paris Gare de l'Est. The journey takes about 2 h 30. Regional trains run often from Strasbourg (about 30 min) and Mulhouse. Trains also run to Basel. The station is about 1 km from the old centre, a walk of about 15 minutes. Book on SNCF Connect.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old centre is small and flat, and many streets are pedestrian-only. You can walk to almost everything.
- **Bus**: The Trace network serves the town and its suburbs. You can pay and validate a single ticket on board by tapping a contactless bank card or phone. See the Trace website.
- **Cycling**: The terrain is flat. Bike paths lead out into the vineyards.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old centre is small and flat, and many streets are pedestrian-only. Almost every main sight is within a 15-minute walk.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

The terrain is flat, and bike paths lead from the town into the vineyards.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Not for the town. The old centre is small and mostly pedestrian. A car is useful for the wine villages and the castles.
- **Parking**: Use a car park at the edge of the old centre, such as Rapp near the station. Street parking in the centre is limited.
- **Restrictions**: Parts of the old centre are pedestrian zones. During the Christmas markets, the centre is closed to cars at market hours. Park-and-ride buses run on market weekends.

Food & drink

Alsatian food mixes French and German traditions. Look for *tarte flambée* (a thin tart with cream, bacon and onions), *choucroute* (sauerkraut with pork and sausages) and *baeckeoffe* (a slow-baked meat and potato casserole). Sweet choices include *kougelhopf*. Local white wines include Riesling, Gewürztraminer and Pinot Gris. Sparkling Crémant d'Alsace is also popular.

For a traditional meal, look for a *winstub*, a cosy tavern with regional dishes. They are common in the old centre, around Petite Venise and near the Koïffhus. The covered market near Petite Venise sells cheese, bread and cold cuts. Book ahead on weekends and in December.

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

Colmar is a safe town for visitors. The main risk is pickpocketing in crowded places, such as the Christmas markets. Keep your bag closed there.

In winter, wet cobblestones can be slippery. Wear shoes with good grip.

History

Colmar became a free imperial city in 1226 and joined a league of ten Alsatian towns in 1354. Merchants paid duties at Ancienne douane (Koïffhus), built in 1480. Wine trade made the town rich. The wealth shows in houses such as Maison des Têtes and Maison Pfister. Medieval religious life is visible in Collégiale Saint-Martin and Église des Dominicains.

France took the town in 1673 under *Louis XIV*. Alsace then changed hands several times. Colmar was German from 1871 to 1918. *Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi* was born here in 1834, in the house now used by Musée Bartholdi.

In the Second World War, Germany held the town again from 1940. The Colmar Pocket battle of January and February 1945 ended with the liberation of the town on 2 February 1945.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for France at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

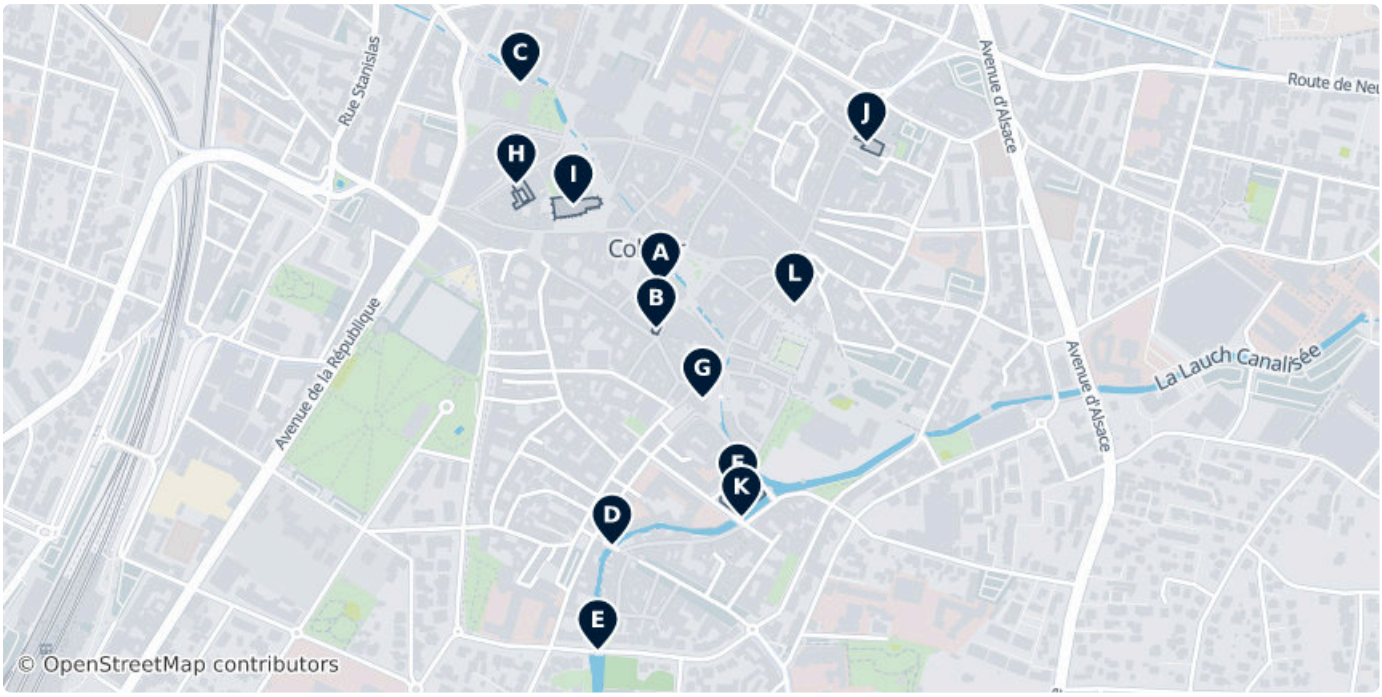
Type C / Type E
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
French

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Colmar's Unmissable Gems

Colmar’s historic center showcases a dense concentration of Alsatian heritage, from the 13th-century Gothic architecture of Saint Martin's Church to the Renaissance ornate detail of the Maison des Têtes. The city is defined by the Lauch river’s canals in the Little Venice district, historic trading hubs like the 15th-century Koïffhus, and specialized collections such as the Unterlinden Museum's Isenheim Altarpiece. This selection highlights the architectural evolution of the Rhine Valley through preserved medieval streets and timber-framed structures.





A St Martin's Church, Colmar

The Église Saint-Martin is a Roman Catholic church located in Colmar, Haut-Rhin, France. It is in the principal Gothic architectural style.

15 Place de la Cathédrale, Colmar 68000, France
(48.07732, 7.35823)



B Maison Pfister

Built in 1537, this Renaissance house features a wrap-around wooden gallery, an octagonal turret, and biblical mural paintings. It represents the architectural transition from medieval to modern styles.

11 Rue des Marchands, Colmar 68000, France
(48.07674, 7.35815)



C Unterlinden Museum

The Unterlinden Museum is located in Colmar, in the Alsace region of France.

Place Unterlinden, 68000 Colmar (48.07986, 7.35556)

Mo–We	10:00–18:00
Th	10:00–20:00
Fr–Su	10:00–18:00

musee-unterlinden.com



D Petite Venice Pont Rue de Turenne

Stone bridge providing a central vantage point over the Lauch river and the flower-lined timber houses of the Krutenau district.

2 Rue de Turenne, Colmar 68000, France (48.07398, 7.35731)



E La petite Venise

Historic riverside district where wine producers and boatmen once lived. The area is characterized by colorful half-timbered houses reflected in the Lauch river canals.

14 Boulevard Saint-Pierre, Colmar 68000, France (48.07264, 7.35703)



F Marché couvert

Designed by architect Louis-Michael Boltz in 1865, this brick and stone hall hosts local vendors selling Alsatian produce, cheeses, and wines.

Rue des Écoles 13, 68000 (48.07463, 7.35970)

Tu–Th	08:00–18:00
Fr	08:00–19:00
Sa	08:00–17:00
Su	10:00–14:00

marche-couvert-colmar.fr, +33 369 995628



G Ancienne douane (Koïffhus)

Completed in 1480, this was Colmar's administrative and economic center. The building features a distinctive tiled roof and served as a warehouse and custom house.

Place de l'Ancienne Douane, 68000 Colmar, France (48.07585, 7.35903)



H The House of Heads

A 1609 Renaissance residence decorated with 106 carved stone heads. The facade is topped by a statue created by Auguste Bartholdi in 1902.

19 Rue des Têtes, Colmar 68000, France (48.07857, 7.35548)



I Église des Dominicains

This 13th-century Gothic church houses Martin Schongauer's 1473 altarpiece, 'The Virgin of the Rose Bush,' and features notable 14th-century stained glass windows.

19 Rue des Serruriers, Colmar 68000, France (48.07831, 7.35657)

Tu	10:00–13:00, 15:00–18:00
We	15:00–18:00
Th	10:00–13:00, 15:00–18:00
Fr–Sa	10:00–18:00
Su	10:00–13:00, 15:00–18:00



J Museum of toys

Located in a former cinema, this museum displays a collection of toys, trains, and games dating from the 19th century to the present.

Rue des Tilleuls, 68000 Colmar, France (48.07910, 7.36216)

Feb-Jun Mo–Su	10:00–17:00
Jul Mo–Su	10:00–18:00

museejouet.com



K Quai de la Poissonerie

The former center of Colmar's fishing industry, this quay is lined with narrow, brightly painted half-timbered houses dating back to the 14th and 15th centuries.

14 Quai de la Poissonnerie, Colmar 68000, France
(48.07434, 7.35977)



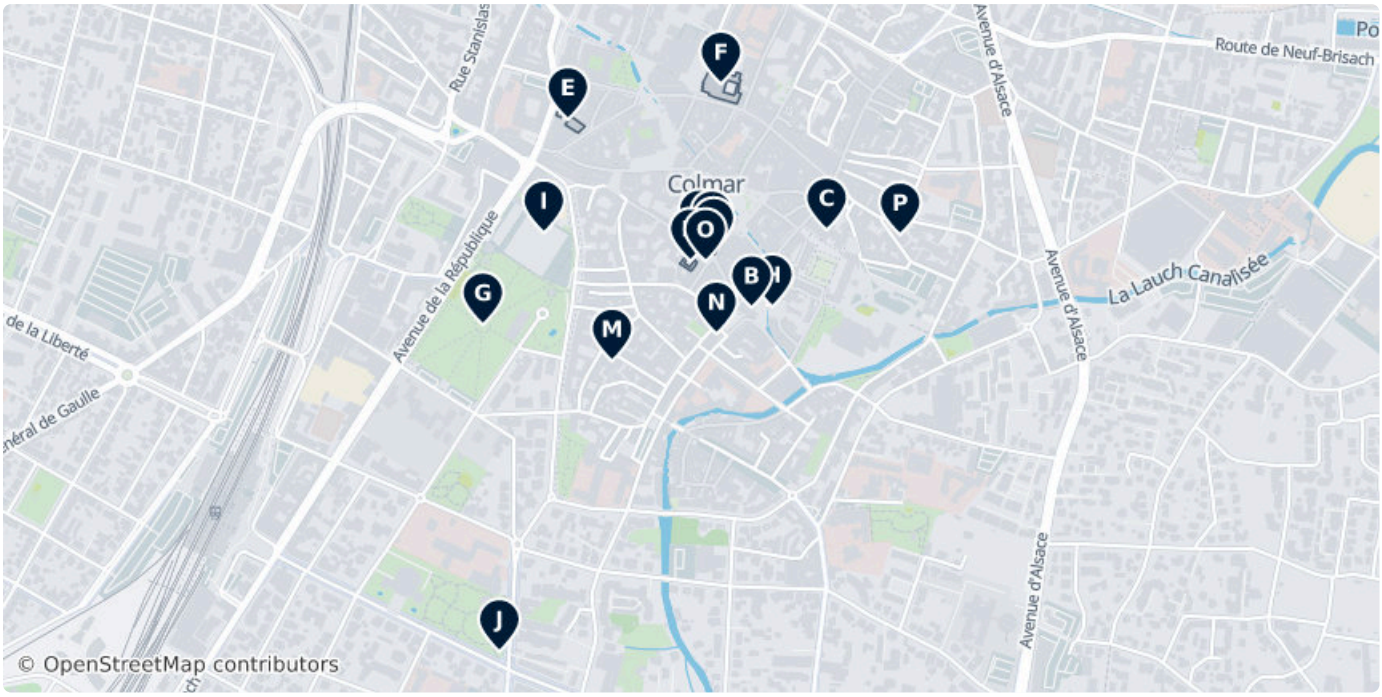
L Église Saint-Matthieu

A former 13th-century Franciscan church that became a Lutheran place of worship in 1575. It is known for its exceptional acoustics and late-Gothic stained glass.

8 Place du 2 Février, Colmar 68000, France
(48.07705, 7.36078)

Colmar Heritage Trail

Half-timbered houses, Renaissance façades, fountains and monuments that tell Colmar's story, all within walking distance in the old town.





A Maison Pfister

A historic landmark located on Rue des Marchands, this heritage building is one of the most prominent architectural sights in Colmar's old town.

11 Rue des Marchands, Colmar 68000, France
(48.07674, 7.35815)



B Ancienne douane (Koïffhus)

This historic public customs building, set on Place de l'Ancienne Douane, stands as a notable heritage monument in the heart of the city.

Place de l'Ancienne Douane, 68000 Colmar, France
(48.07585, 7.35903)



C Église Saint-Matthieu

A historic former abbey church on Place du 2 Février, this heritage site now serves as a Protestant Lutheran parish church.

8 Place du 2 Février, Colmar 68000, France (48.07705, 7.36078)



D Musée Bartholdi

Located on Rue des Marchands, this regional heritage museum offers insight into local culture and history in Colmar's old town.

30 Rue des Marchands, Colmar 68000, France (48.07658, 7.35760)

Tu–Su	10:00–12:00, 14:00–18:00

musee-bartholdi.fr, +33 3 89 41 90 60

E Musée Hansi

A museum on Rue des Têtes offering free admission to explore local cultural exhibitions.

28 Rue des Têtes, Colmar 68000, France (48.07878, 7.35474)

Mo–Fr	10:00–12:30, 13:30–18:00
Sa	10:00–18:00
Su	10:00–12:30, 13:30–18:00

+33 3 89 41 44 20

F Hôtel de Ville de Colmar

Colmar's historic town hall on Rue des Clefs is recognized as a notable regional heritage site.

48 Rue des Clefs, Colmar 68000, France (48.07933, 7.35831)



G Fontaine Bruat

Inaugurated in 1864, this bronze fountain monument to Admiral Bruat was sculpted by Auguste Bartholdi.

2 Avenue de la Marne, Colmar 68000, France (48.07558, 7.35276)



H Fontaine Schwendi

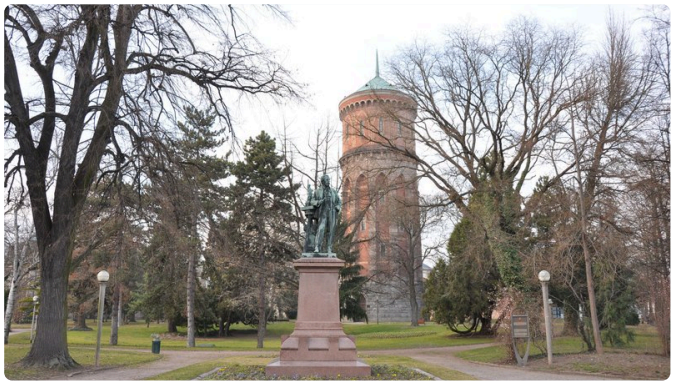
2 Petite Rue des Tanneurs, Colmar 68000, France (48.07586, 7.35951)



I Statue du Général Jean Rapp

A bronze memorial sculpture and heritage artwork situated on Boulevard du Champ de Mars commemorating General Jean Rapp.

9 Boulevard du Champ de Mars, Colmar 68000, France (48.07701, 7.35418)



J Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi

A bronze memorial sculpture honoring Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, the French sculptor and painter best known for designing Liberty Enlightening the World.

28 Avenue Raymond Poincaré, Colmar 68000, France (48.07049, 7.35314)



K Ancien corps de garde

A historic former guardhouse and preserved heritage site located directly on Place de la Cathédrale.

17 Place de la Cathédrale, Colmar 68000, France (48.07687, 7.35781)



L Maison Adolphe

Place de la Cathédrale, 68000 Colmar, France (48.07685, 7.35810)

M Maison Pfeffel

A protected historic monument and regional heritage house situated on Rue Pfeffel.

14 Rue Pfeffel, Colmar 68000, France (48.07502, 7.35577)



N Maison Kern

Place du Marché aux Fruits, 68000 Colmar, France (48.07544, 7.35821)



O Maison Schongauer

Rue Schongauer, 68000 Colmar, France
(48.07657, 7.35795)



P Colmar Synagogue

Inaugurated in September 1843, this heritage house of worship on Rue de la Cigogne represents Colmar's Jewish cultural history.

1 Rue de la Cigogne, Colmar 68000, France
(48.07698, 7.36249)

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