

Fribourg

Canton of Fribourg · Switzerland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Fribourg is a medieval town above a deep bend of the Sarine river. The old town has steep lanes, stone bridges and a large Gothic cathedral. It lies on the border between the French and German parts of Switzerland, and both languages are spoken.

The town is also a university town, so it feels young. It suits a day or a night.

When to visit

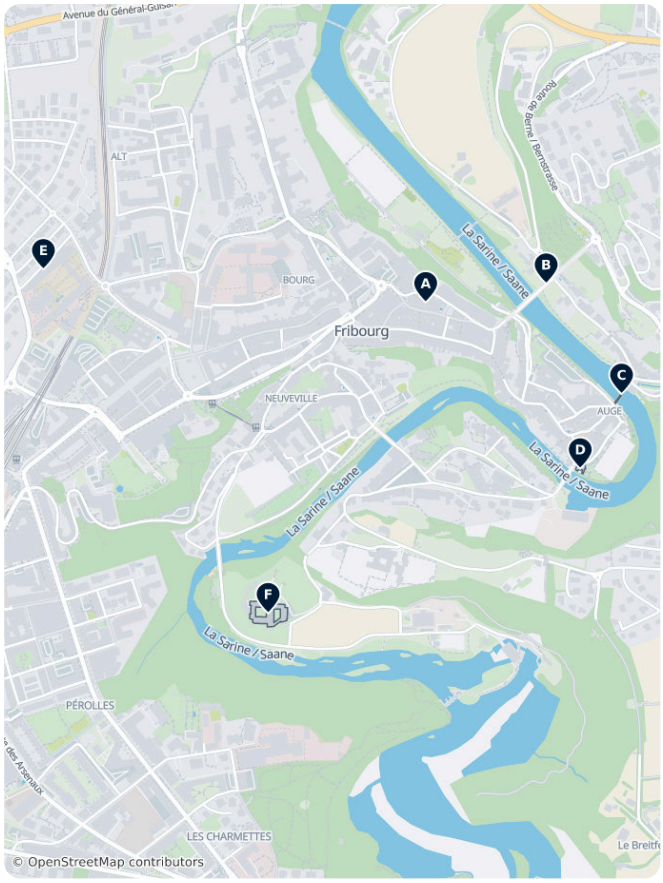
May to September is the best time for walks along the river and for the old town terraces. Summer is warm. Autumn is mild and often foggy in the valley. Winter is cold, and the old town can be icy on the slopes. Rain is common in spring and autumn.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 9° Feels like -1°	-2° / -10°	13 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	5° / 12° Feels like 0°	-2° / -11°	12 rainy days · Dry air
March	Poor Poor for hiking	9° / 17° Feels like 5°	1° / -5°	13 rainy days · Dry air
April	Good Good for hiking	13° / 21° Feels like 10°	4° / -2°	13 rainy days · Dry air
May	Good Good for sightseeing	17° / 24°	9° / 3°	17 rainy days · Dry air
June	Good Good for sightseeing	22° / 28°	13° / 7°	16 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	23° / 30°	14° / 9°	16 rainy days · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	24° / 31°	14° / 9°	14 rainy days · Calm winds
September	Good Good for sightseeing	20° / 26°	11° / 5°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for hiking	15° / 22°	7° / 1°	13 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for hiking	8° / 16° Feels like 5°	2° / -5°	14 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 10° Feels like 0°	-1° / -9°	14 rainy days · Dry air

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

Top sights

- A Cathédrale Saint-Nicolas / Kathedrale Sankt Niklaus has a tall tower and a Gothic nave. You can climb the tower for views over the old town.
- B Pont de Zaehringen is a long suspension bridge over the Sarine valley.
- C Bern Bridge is a covered wooden bridge in the lower town.
- D Musée suisse de la marionnette shows puppets and marionettes from many countries.
- E Musée BIBLE+ORIENT shows objects from the Bible and the ancient Near East.
- F Couvent de la Maigrauge is a convent on the river, below the old town.



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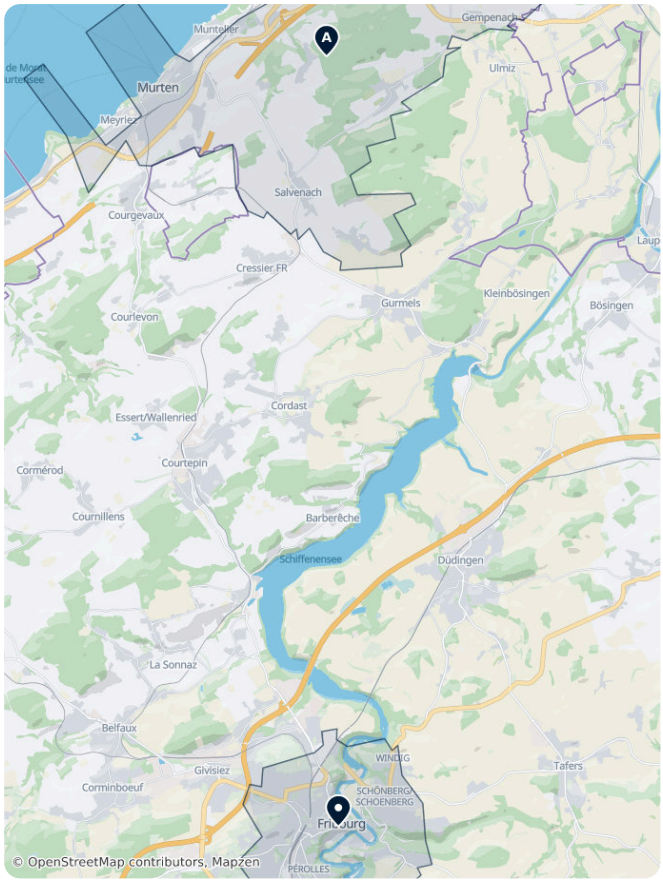
What to experience

- Walk down to the lower town and across the old bridges.
- Climb the cathedral tower for views.
- Walk along the river on the Sarine path.
- Visit the museums for puppets, art and the Bible.
- Stroll the cafés and shops of the old town.

Day trips

- Ⓐ Murten is a small walled town on a lake, about 30 minutes away by train.
- Gruyères is a medieval village known for cheese and a castle. It is about 1 hour away by train and bus.
- Bern is about 20 minutes away by train.



Where to explore

- Murten is the nearest town in the same canton.

Getting there

- By air: Geneva and Zurich are the main airports.
- By train: Fribourg is on the main line between Geneva, Lausanne and Bern. Trains from Bern take about 20 minutes. Check times on SBB.
- The station is in the upper town. The old town is a downhill walk of about 15 minutes.

Getting around

- The old town is small, but it has steep stairs and slopes.
- A funicular links the upper town and the lower town. It is run with water.
- City buses link the station with the districts.
- Wear good shoes. The cobbles are uneven.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The old town sits on a steep river gorge. Steps and slopes link the upper and lower town.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Steep hills and cobbled streets make cycling hard in the old town.

Driving

- A car is not needed in the old town.
- Parking in the centre is limited. Use a car park outside the old town.
- The narrow streets and slopes are hard to drive.

Food & drink

Try cheese fondue made with local Gruyère and Vacherin Fribourgeois. A local dish is a cheese fondue called moitié-moitié, which mixes two cheeses. Meringues with double cream come from the nearby Gruyère area.

Most people speak French in town, and many speak German. English works in most places.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Birchermüesli
A raw-oat, fruit, and yogurt breakfast invented by a Zurich doctor around 1900, now standard on breakfast buffets.

LUNCH

Rösti
A fried, shredded-potato cake, originally a Bernese farmer's breakfast, now a national side dish.

DINNER

Cheese Fondue · Fondue
Melted Gruyère and Vacherin cheese in a shared pot, eaten by dipping bread cubes on long forks.

Raclette
Cheese melted tableside or under a grill and scraped over boiled potatoes, pickles, and onions.

Zürcher Geschnetzeltes
Sliced veal and mushrooms in a creamy white-wine sauce, traditionally served with rösti.

Älplermagronen
Alpine herder's macaroni gratin with potatoes, cheese, and cream, often topped with fried onions and served with apple sauce.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Cervelat
Switzerland's best-known sausage, usually grilled and often called the country's unofficial national dish.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Swiss Chocolate · Schweizer Schokolade
Switzerland pioneered milk chocolate in the 19th century; look for small-batch chocolatiers alongside the big national brands.

Basler Läckerli
A dense, spiced honey-and-candied-fruit biscuit from Basel, traditional around Christmas.

DRINKS

Swiss Wine · Vin Suisse
Mostly consumed domestically rather than exported; Valais and Vaud, along Lake Geneva, produce the best-known Chasselas whites.

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Safety & health

- Fribourg is very safe.
- The old town has steep stairs and slippery cobbles in winter.
- Tap water is safe to drink.
- Mind your step on the bridges in strong wind.

History

Duke Berchtold IV of Zähringen founded Fribourg in 1157 on a rock above the river. The town grew by trade and textiles. It joined the Swiss Confederation in 1481.

The town kept its medieval layout. A university was founded in 1889 and made the town a centre for study in both languages.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Switzerland at a glance:

CURRENCY
CHF CHF

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



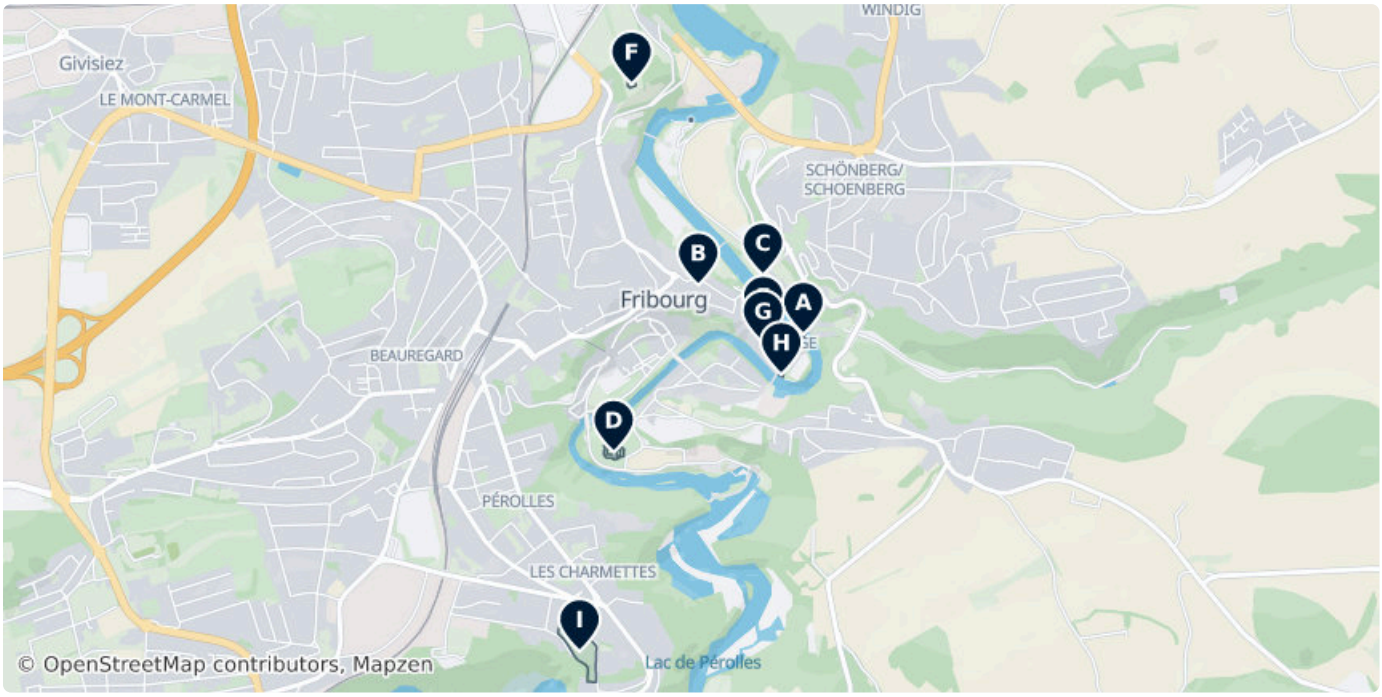
Type C / Type J
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
German, French, Italian, Romansh

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Freiburg im Üechtland Essentials

Fribourg's medieval core is defined by the 13th-century Gothic Cathedral of St. Nicholas and a series of historic bridges crossing the Saane river. The Bern Bridge remains a rare example of a wooden covered structure, while the Zaehringen Bridge offers views over the Sarine valley. The city's religious heritage is preserved in the Cistercian Maigrauge Abbey and the Church of Saint-Maurice. Renaissance fountains and the 17th-century Château de la Poya complement cultural sites like the Swiss Puppet Museum and the University's Botanical Garden.





A Bern Bridge

One of the few remaining wooden bridges so typical for Switzerland. Carefully renovated landmark of the city.

Pont de Berne, 1700 Fribourg, Switzerland
(46.80429, 7.16900)

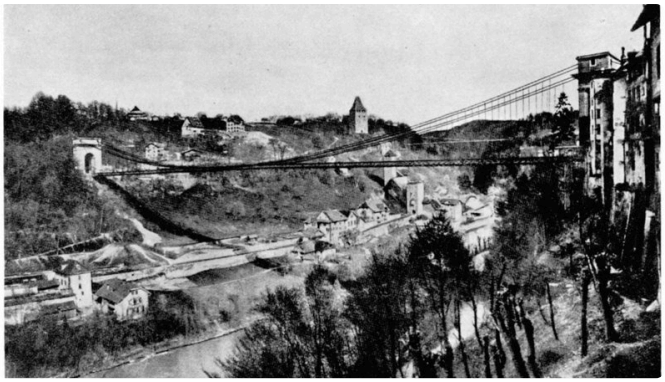


B Cathedral of St Nicholas

Fribourg Cathedral is a Roman Catholic cathedral in Fribourg, Switzerland, built in the Gothic style, on a rocky outcrop 50 metres above...

Rue des Chanoines 3, 1700 Fribourg, Switzerland
(46.80616, 7.16318)

+41 26 347 10 40



C Pont de Zaehringen

A high-level bridge constructed in 1924 to replace the Great Suspension Bridge. It spans the Saane river, connecting the city center with the Schoenberg district and offering panoramic views of the medieval Old Town and the cathedral.

8A Route des Neigles, Fribourg 1700, Switzerland
(46.80654, 7.16676)



D La Maigrauge Abbey

La Maigrauge Abbey or Magerau Abbey is a monastery of Cistercian nuns located in Fribourg, Switzerland, and founded in 1255.

(Unnamed Road), Fribourg 1700, Switzerland
(46.79983, 7.15850)

maigrauge.ch



E Église Saint-Maurice-des-Augustins

Located in the Auge district, this historic church was once part of an Augustinian monastery. It features notable Baroque altars and a 16th-century retable by Peter Spring, reflecting the city's Counter-Reformation religious heritage.

3 Rue des Augustins, Fribourg 1700, Switzerland
(46.80452, 7.16678)

F Château de la Poya

A 17th-century Palladian-style manor house built between 1698 and 1701. Situated on a hill overlooking the city, it is one of the most significant examples of Neoclassical architecture in the region.

46 Rue de Morat, Fribourg 1700, Switzerland
(46.81377, 7.15949)

G Fontaine de la Samaritaine

A Renaissance-style fountain created by sculptor Hans Gieng between 1550 and 1551. It depicts the biblical scene of Christ and the Samaritan woman at the well, serving as one of Fribourg's historic public water sources.

Rue de la Samaritaine, 1722 Fribourg - Freiburg, Switzerland (46.80396, 7.16676)

H Musée suisse de la marionnette

Housed in a 17th-century building, this museum displays a collection of over 3,000 puppets, masks, and theater sets from across the globe. It explores various techniques, including string, glove, and shadow puppetry.

Derrière-les-Jardins 2, 1700 Fribourg, CH (46.80277, 7.16777)

We–Su 11:00–17:00

marionnette.ch, +41 26 322 85 13

I Botanical Garden Fribourg

Managed by the University of Fribourg, this garden features approximately 3,500 plant species. The site includes a tropical greenhouse, an alpine garden, and specialized collections of medicinal and poisonous plants.

Chemin des Verdiers, Fribourg 1700, Switzerland (46.79228, 7.15660)

Mo–Su 08:00–18:00

unifr.ch/jardin-botanique/fr/

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