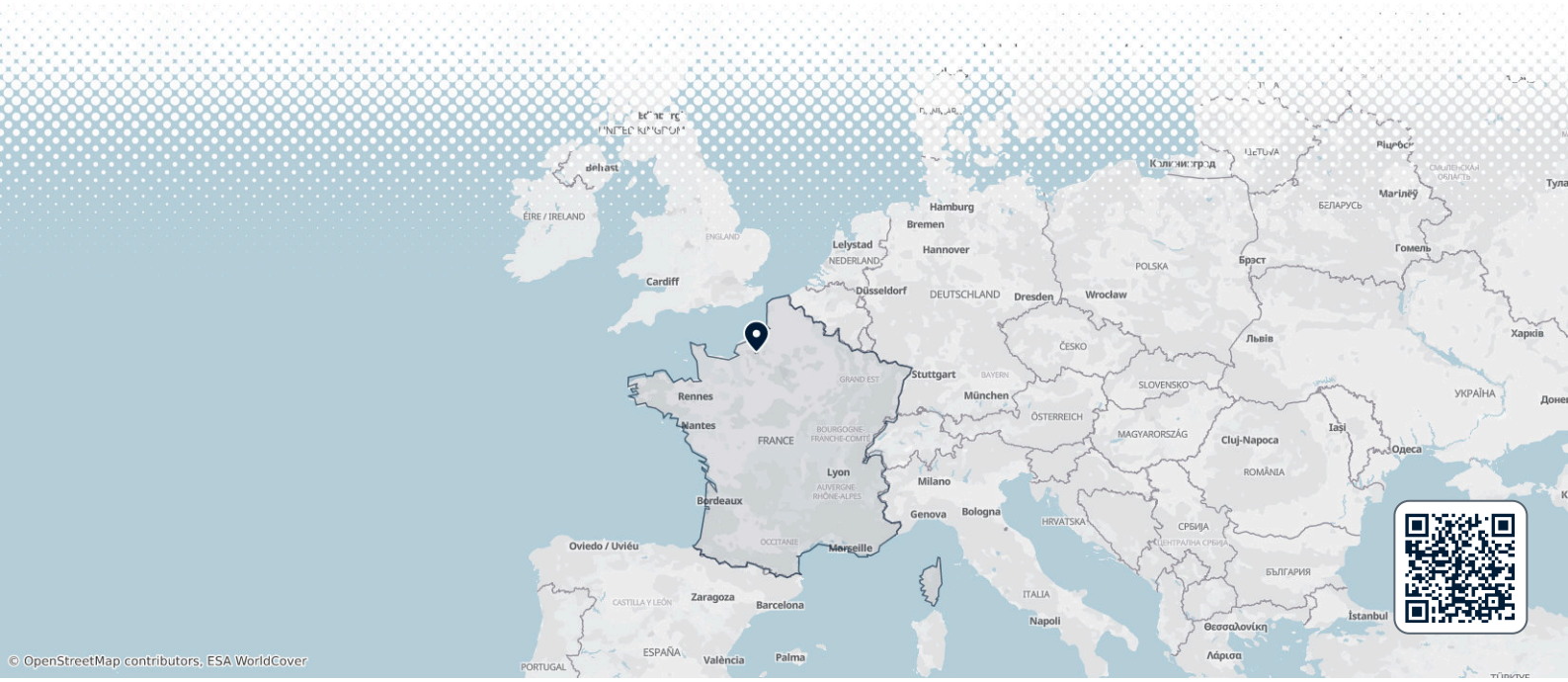


Rouen

Normandy · France

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Rouen is the historic capital of Normandy, on the Seine northwest of Paris. It has a large Gothic cathedral and narrow streets lined with half-timbered houses. Many of its churches and old houses were rebuilt after World War II bombing, and they still define the old centre.

Rouen is best known as the city where *Joan of Arc* was tried and burned in 1431. It is also the city of *Claude Monet*'s cathedral paintings and the home town of the writers *Gustave Flaubert* and *Pierre Corneille*. It suits a weekend of 1 to 2 nights, and it works well as a base for the Seine valley and the Normandy coast.

When to visit

Late spring and summer are the most pleasant seasons, with mild days and long evenings. Rain is frequent all year, so bring a light waterproof jacket. Winter is grey and cool, but the Christmas market and low crowds suit a short city break.

The biggest event is the Armada, a gathering of tall ships along the Seine quays. It takes place every few years, usually in June. Book hotels well ahead if your dates match.

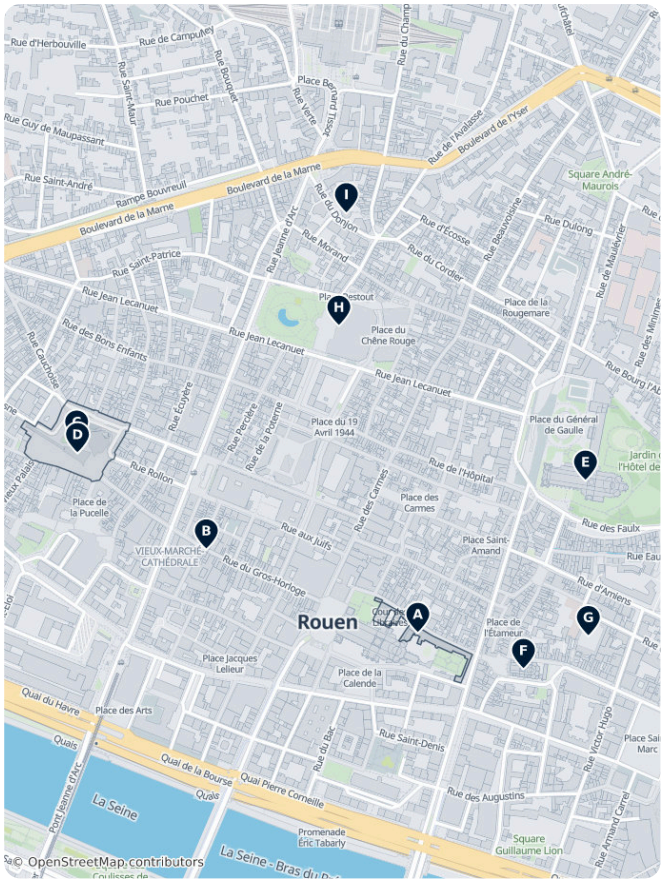
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	7° / 12° Feels like 2°	2° / -5°	14 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for cycling	9° / 14° Feels like 3°	2° / -4°	12 rainy days · Dry air
March	Fair Fair for cycling	12° / 18° Feels like 7°	3° / -3°	12 rainy days · Dry air
April	Good Good for cycling	15° / 22° Feels like 11°	5° / 0°	Dry air
May	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 24°	8° / 4°	13 rainy days · Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 28°	11° / 8°	12 rainy days
July	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 29°	13° / 10°	12 rainy days
August	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 30°	14° / 11°	12 rainy days
September	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 27°	11° / 7°	Dry air
October	Good Good for cycling	17° / 22° Feels like 13°	9° / 3°	15 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for cycling	11° / 16° Feels like 7°	5° / -1°	15 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	8° / 13° Feels like 3°	3° / -4°	15 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: June, July, August, September

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

Top sights

- **A** Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Rouen is the city's great Gothic landmark. Its tall spire is the highest in France, and the west front is the subject of *Monet*'s famous series of paintings.
- **B** Gros-Horloge is a 14th-century clock set in a Renaissance arch over the main pedestrian street. You can climb the belfry for views over the old town.
- **C** Place du Vieux Marché is the square where Joan of Arc was burned in 1431. Today it has a modern church, a market hall and cafés.
- **D** Église Sainte-Jeanne-d'Arc is a modern church on the same square. It reuses fine stained-glass windows from a church destroyed in 1944.
- **E** Abbatiale Saint-Ouen is a large Gothic abbey church. It is quieter than the cathedral and has a bright, airy interior.
- **F** Église Saint-Maclou is a late Gothic church with a richly carved west front. It stands in a lively area of old streets.
- **G** Aître Saint-Maclou is a courtyard with carved half-timbered galleries. It was built in the 16th century as a plague cemetery.
- **H** Musée des Beaux-Arts is the city's main art museum. It shows European paintings from the Renaissance to the 20th century, including works by *Monet*.
- **I** Tour Jeanne d'Arc is the surviving keep of a medieval castle. Joan of Arc was brought here in 1431 and shown the instruments of torture.



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What to experience

- **Armada**: Every few years, usually in June, tall sailing ships from many countries moor along the Seine quays. You can visit some ships and watch the parade on the river.
- **Joan of Arc festival**: Each year in late May, the city marks the anniversary of her death with a medieval-style parade and events around Place du Vieux Marché.
- **Christmas market**: From late November to Christmas, wooden chalets fill the area around the cathedral. It is a good time for hot cider and local crafts.
- **Cycling the Seine**: A signed cycle route follows the river towards Paris and the sea. A flat half-day ride out of the city is pleasant in good weather.

Day trips

Rouen has good rail links, and the Seine valley and Normandy coast are within reach. Times below are one way.



- Jumièges: about 30 minutes by car. The ruins of a large Benedictine abbey stand in a bend of the Seine. Public transport is limited.
- A Giverny: about 1 hour by train to Vernon, then a short shuttle or bike ride. It has *Claude Monet*'s house and gardens, which are usually open from spring to autumn only.
- B Le Havre: about 50 minutes by train. It is a port city with a modern centre rebuilt after the war.
- C Honfleur: about 1 hour by car. It has a picturesque old harbour with tall houses. There is no direct train.
- D Dieppe: about 1 hour 10 minutes by direct train. It is a seaside town with a long pebble beach and a fishing port.
- E Etretat: about 1 hour 15 minutes by car. White chalk cliffs and natural arches run along the shore. Public transport takes longer, with a change at Le Havre.
- F Paris: about 1 hour 30 minutes by direct train from Paris Saint-Lazare. It works as a long day trip.

Getting there

- **By air**: Rouen's own airport has no regular scheduled passenger flights. Most visitors fly into Paris Charles de Gaulle and continue by train via Paris. Allow about 2.5 to 3 hours in total.
- **By train**: Direct trains from Paris Saint-Lazare take roughly 1.5 hours. Trains also run to Le Havre and Dieppe. The main station is Rouen Rive-Droite, a short walk or tram ride from the old town. Book at SNCF Connect.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The historic centre is compact and mostly flat. Most sights are within a 15-minute walk of each other. Streets are cobbled in places.
- **Public transport**: The Astuce network has buses, rapid Teor buses and a tram-metro line. You can tap a contactless bank card on buses, so there is no need to buy a ticket in advance.
- **Taxi**: Taxis wait at Rouen Rive-Droite station. They are useful late in the evening.
- **Cycling**: The Seine river path is good for a flat ride. In the centre, cobbles and pedestrian streets make cycling less practical.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The historic centre is compact and mostly flat, so walking is the best way to see the sights.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The Seine river path is flat and pleasant, but cobbles and pedestrian streets limit cycling in the old centre.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Not for the old town, which is small and has many pedestrian streets. A car is useful for Jumièges, Étretat and the Normandy countryside.
- **Parking**: Use underground car parks near the centre or park-and-ride sites on the edge of the city, then walk or take the tram.
- **Restrictions**: The central streets around the Gros-Horloge are pedestrian-only. Follow signs and avoid driving into the old town.

Food & drink

Rouen food is Normandy food: butter, cream, apples, duck and seafood. Look for *canard à la rouennaise*, a local duck dish, and sole in cream sauce. Normandy cheeses such as camembert and Neufchâtel are easy to find. Cider and calvados, an apple brandy, are the local drinks. Rouen apple sugar is a classic sweet to take home.

Eat in the old centre around Place du Vieux Marché, on Rue Martainville and on Rue Eau-de-Robec. Terraces fill up at lunch and in the evening, so book ahead on weekends. A set lunch menu is usually good value.

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

Rouen is generally safe for visitors. Pickpocketing is the main risk, especially around the station and on crowded pedestrian streets. Keep bags closed and phones out of back pockets.

Use normal city care late at night around the station area. Cobbled streets can be slippery in the rain, so wear shoes with good grip.

History

Rouen was a Roman town and later the capital of the Duchy of Normandy, founded by the Viking leader *Rollo* in the early 10th century. The duchy's rulers later became kings of England, and Rouen grew rich from trade on the Seine. A tomb in Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Rouen holds the heart of *Richard the Lionheart*.

In 1419 the English took the city during the Hundred Years' War. In 1431 *Joan of Arc* was tried here and burned at Place du Vieux Marché. A museum and the remains of Tour Jeanne d'Arc recall her story. The French regained Rouen in 1449.

Allied bombing in 1944 destroyed large parts of the city and damaged the cathedral. Many landmarks, including Gros-Horloge, survived or were carefully restored, and the old centre was rebuilt in the same style.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for France at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



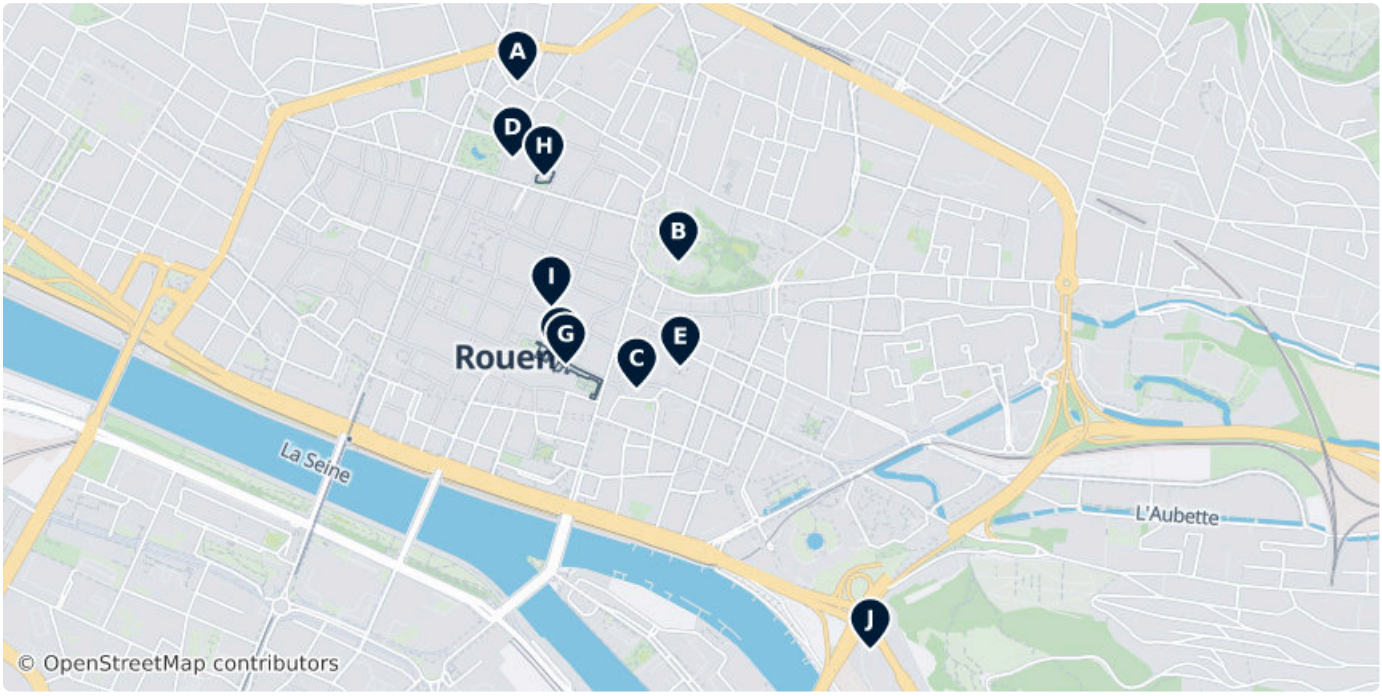
Type C / Type E
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
French

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Rouen's Unmissable Treasures

Rouen, Normandy's historic capital, features a dense concentration of Gothic architecture and medieval heritage. This collection includes the Flamboyant Gothic Church of Saint-Maclou and the massive Saint-Ouen Abbey. The city's history is inextricably tied to Joan of Arc, represented by her prison tower and an immersive museum housed in the Archiepiscopal Palace. Cultural highlights include the Museum of Fine Arts and the unique Musée Le Secq des Tournelles, which displays wrought ironwork inside a deconsecrated church. Traditional half-timbered houses and the rare 16th-century plague cemetery, Aître Saint-Maclou, further showcase the city's architectural evolution.





A Rouen Castle

Rouen Castle was a fortified ducal and royal residence in the city of Rouen, capital of the duchy of Normandy, now in France.

7 Rue du Donjon, Rouen 76000, France (49.44647, 1.09439)



B Saint-Ouen Abbey, Rouen

Saint-Ouen Abbey, is a large Gothic Catholic church and former Benedictine monastic church in Rouen.

3 Place du Général de Gaulle, Rouen 76000, France (49.44254, 1.09978)



C Church of Saint-Maclou

The Church of Saint-Maclou is a Roman Catholic church in Rouen, France, named after the Saint Malo, which is considered one of the best...

194 Rue Martainville, Rouen 76000, France (49.43978, 1.09838)



D Museum of Fine Arts of Rouen

The Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen is an art museum in Rouen, in Normandy in north-western France.

Esplanade Marcel Duchamp, 76000 Rouen (49.44482, 1.09422)

Mo–Su 10:00–18:00

mbarouen.fr/fr, +33 2 35 71 28 40



E Plague cemetery

A 16th-century former mass grave site and ossuary. The timber-framed galleries are decorated with macabre wood carvings of skulls, bones, and gravedigger tools, serving as a rare example of a medieval plague cemetery.

Rue Géricault, 76000 Rouen, France (49.44026, 1.09985)

Mo–Su 09:00–19:00

aitresaintmaclou.fr



F Joan of Arc Historical Exhibition

Located within the Archiepiscopal Palace, this immersive museum uses multimedia technology to recount the trial, condemnation, and posthumous rehabilitation of Joan of Arc on the site where her history was originally written.

7 (49.44046, 1.09583)

Tu–Su 10:00–19:00

historial-jeannedarc.fr, +33 2 35 52 48 00



G Archiepiscopal Palace, Rouen

The Archiepiscopal Palace of Rouen is the official residence of the Metropolitan Archbishop of Rouen, Primate of Normandy.

40 Rue Saint-Romain, Rouen 76000, France
(49.44031, 1.09600)



H Musée Le Secq des Tournelles

Housed in the former Saint-Laurent church, this museum contains the world's largest collection of wrought ironwork, featuring over 14,000 items ranging from signs and locks to jewelry and tools dating from the Gallo-Roman era to the 19th century.

2 (49.44441, 1.09529)

Mo–Su 14:00–18:00

museelesecqdestournelles.fr, +33 2 35 88 42 92

I Maison à pans de bois

A preserved example of Rouen's traditional medieval architecture, featuring the characteristic timber-frame construction and overhanging upper stories that define the city's historic center.

(49.44157, 1.09552)



J Église Saint-Paul

A 19th-century neo-Romanesque church located at the base of Sainte-Catherine hill. It stands near the site of an ancient abbey and features architectural elements inspired by early Romanesque style.

(49.43411, 1.10621)

Rouen's Historical Heritage

Rouen's historical landscape is defined by medieval architecture and significant religious monuments. This collection features the Flamboyant Gothic Church of Saint-Maclou and the Tour Jeanne d'Arc, the last remains of the 13th-century Rouen Castle. The list highlights the city's preserved timber-framed houses, historic private mansions like Hôtel de Senneville, and repurposed sites such as the Chapelle Saint-Louis theater. These landmarks illustrate Rouen's evolution from a ducal capital to a modern cultural hub.





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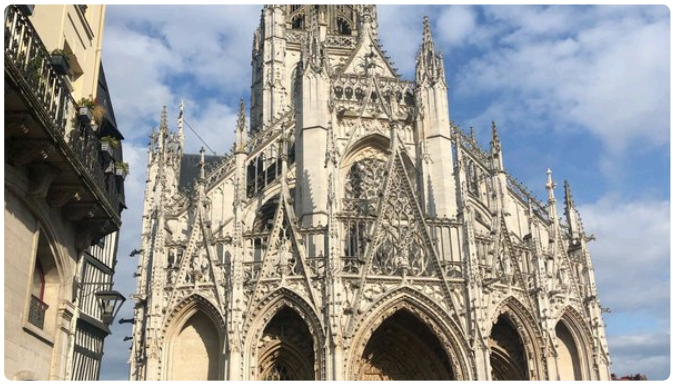

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194 Rue Martainville, Rouen 76000, France (49.43978, 1.09838)

C Église Saint-Nicaise

Catholic church located in the Saint-Marc district, recognized as a site of regional architectural heritage.

5 Rue l'Aître Saint-Nicaise, Rouen 76000, France
(49.44415, 1.10336)

D Chapelle des Franciscaines

A Catholic chapel representing the city's religious heritage and traditional ecclesiastical architecture.

12 Rue de Joyeuse, Rouen 76000, France
(49.44652, 1.10244)

E Maison de bois

A traditional timber-framed building showcasing the medieval domestic architecture characteristic of Rouen's historic center.

(49.44102, 1.09946)

F Hôtel de Senneville

A historic private mansion preserved as a notable example of regional architectural heritage.

(49.44063, 1.09867)

G Maison à pans de bois

A classic Norman timber-framed house, reflecting the traditional construction methods of the region.

(49.44157, 1.09552)

H Hôtel Caillot de Coqueréaumont

A historic private mansion and regional heritage site located in the city center.

(49.44537, 1.09578)



I Église Saint-Godard

Located near the Vieux-Marché, this Catholic church is noted for its historical significance and central location.

2 Place Saint-Godard, Rouen 76000, France
(49.44496, 1.09551)

patrimoine-histoire.fr/Patrimoine/Rouen/Rouen-Saint-Go...

J Chapelle Saint-Louis

Formerly the Saint-Louis-de-la-Rougemare priory, this historic building now serves as a theater.

Place de la Rougemare, 76000 Rouen (49.44521, 1.09894)

K Église Saint-Vivien

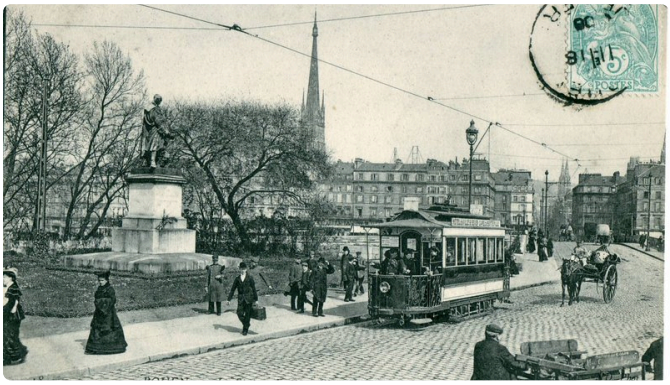
A Roman Catholic church classified as a Monument historique since 1932.

74 Rue Saint-Vivien, Rouen 76000, France
(49.44189, 1.10374)

L Halle aux Toiles

A large historic hall used for public events and trade, reflecting Rouen's commercial history.

5 Rue de la Haute Vieille Tour, Rouen 76000, France
(49.43807, 1.09504)



M Pont Pierre Corneille

A major road bridge spanning the Seine, named after the famous Rouen-born dramatist Pierre Corneille.

Avenue Jacques Chastellain, Rouen 76100, France
(49.43595, 1.09527)

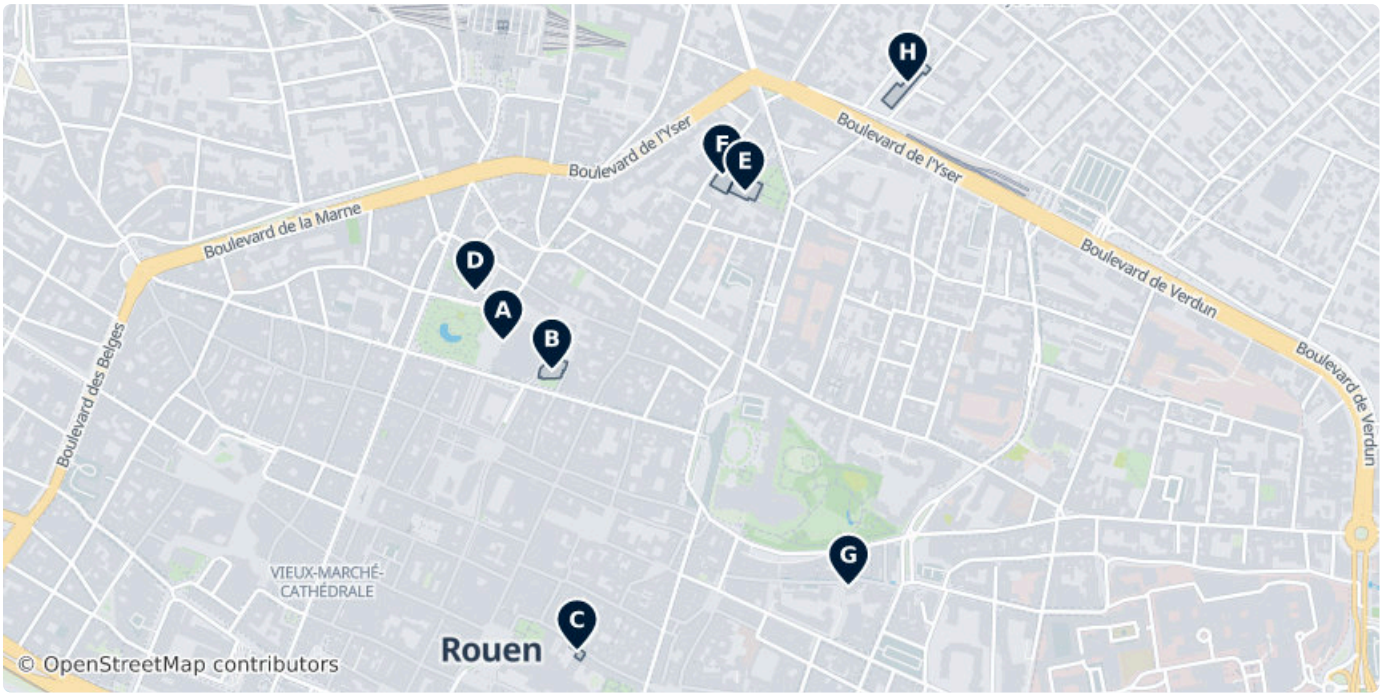
N Croix de Pierre

A historic stone cross monument situated at an ancient crossroads in the city.

55 Rue Louis Ricard, Rouen 76000, France
(49.44706, 1.09999)

Rouen Museums and Galleries

Rouen's cultural landscape features diverse collections ranging from the world-renowned Impressionist works at the Museum of Fine Arts to the unique wrought-iron displays in the former church of Musée Le Secq des Tournelles. The city honors its historical figures at the Joan of Arc Historical Exhibition, housed within the Archbishop's Palace, and preserves regional heritage through the Ceramics Museum's extensive faience collection and the Museum of Antiquities' Gallo-Roman artifacts. The National Museum of Education and the Natural History Museum further broaden the city's scientific and pedagogical offerings.





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mbarouen.fr/fr, +33 2 35 71 28 40



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2 (49.44441, 1.09529)

Mo–Su 14:00–18:00

museelesecqdestournelles.fr, +33 2 35 88 42 92



C Joan of Arc Historical Exhibition

Located in the Archbishop's Palace where Joan of Arc's trial took place, this multimedia museum uses digital projections and immersive technology to recount the life, trial, and legend of France's national heroine.

7 (49.44046, 1.09583)

Tu–Su	10:00–19:00

historial-jeannedarc.fr, +33 2 35 52 48 00

D Musée de la Céramique

Set in the 17th-century Hôtel d'Hocqueville, the museum showcases a comprehensive collection of Rouen faience and European ceramics from the 16th to the 20th century.

1 (49.44551, 1.09362)

Mo	14:00–18:00
Tu	Closed
We–Su	14:00–18:00

museedelaceramique.fr, +33 2 35 07 31 74

E Musée des antiquités de la Seine-Maritime

Occupying a former 17th-century convent, the museum displays regional archaeological finds ranging from the Bronze Age to the Renaissance, including Gallo-Roman mosaics, medieval tapestries, and Egyptian artifacts.

198 (49.44691, 1.09946)

Tu–Sa	13:30–17:30
Su	14:00–18:00

museedesantiquites.fr/fr, +33 2 76 30 39 50



F Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Rouen

The Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Rouen is a museum in Rouen, northern France, founded in 1828 by Félix Archimède Pouchet.

Rue Beauvoisine, 76000 Rouen, France (49.44715, 1.09897)

Tu–Sa	13:30–17:30
Su	14:00–18:00

museumderouen.fr/fr, +33 2 35 71 41 50



G Musée national de l'Éducation

Located in the 15th-century Maison des Quatre Fils Aymon, this museum traces the history of French education from the 16th century through classrooms, school supplies, and educational toys.

185 (49.44137, 1.10170)

Mo–Fr	13:30–18:15
Sa–Su	10:00–12:30, 13:30–18:15

munae.fr, +33 2 35 07 66 61



H Centre de ressources du Munaé

The resource center for the National Museum of Education serves as a documentation hub and storage facility for an extensive collection of pedagogical materials, books, and historical archives.

6 (49.44844, 1.10298)

Mo	09:00–12:00, 13:00–17:00

reseau-canope.fr, +33 2 32 08 71 00

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