

Sion

Canton of Valais · Switzerland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Sion is the capital of the Valais, in the Rhone valley. Two castle hills rise straight above the old town. One carries a fortified church and the other the ruins of a castle.

The town is small and sunny, with vineyards on the slopes. It is a good base for wine, hiking and the Valais ski resorts.

When to visit

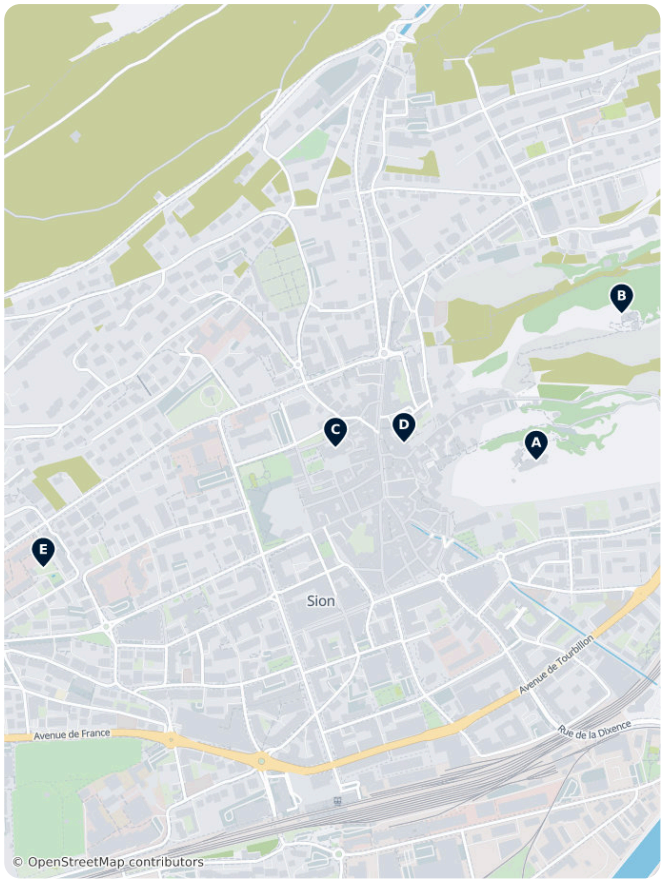
May to October is the best time for the hills and vineyards. Summer is warm and dry. Autumn is the grape harvest and has clear light. Winter is cool and sunny in the valley, and the nearby resorts have snow. The Valais is one of the driest areas of Switzerland.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 11° Feels like 2°	-3° / -9°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	7° / 12° Feels like 3°	-2° / -11°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Fair Fair for cycling	9° / 14° Feels like 6°	1° / -7°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for cycling	14° / 21°	6° / -2°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Good Good for sightseeing	20° / 26°	11° / 5°	19 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Good Good for sightseeing	24° / 30°	15° / 9°	17 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	26° / 30°	16° / 11°	16 rainy days · Humid air · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	26° / 31°	16° / 11°	15 rainy days · Humid air · Calm winds
September	Good Good for sightseeing	22° / 28°	13° / 7°	13 rainy days · Calm winds
October	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 24°	10° / 3°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for cycling	11° / 18°	4° / -6°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	7° / 12° Feels like 3°	-1° / -10°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

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

Top sights

- A Basilique Notre-Dame de Valère is a fortified church on the Valère hill. It has one of the oldest playable organs in the world, from the 14th century.
- B Château de Tourbillon is a ruined castle on the second hill, with views of the valley.
- C Cathédrale de Sion is the main church of the old town.
- D Musée d'art du Valais shows art from the Valais.
- E Nécropole du Petit-Chasseur is a prehistoric burial site with standing stones.



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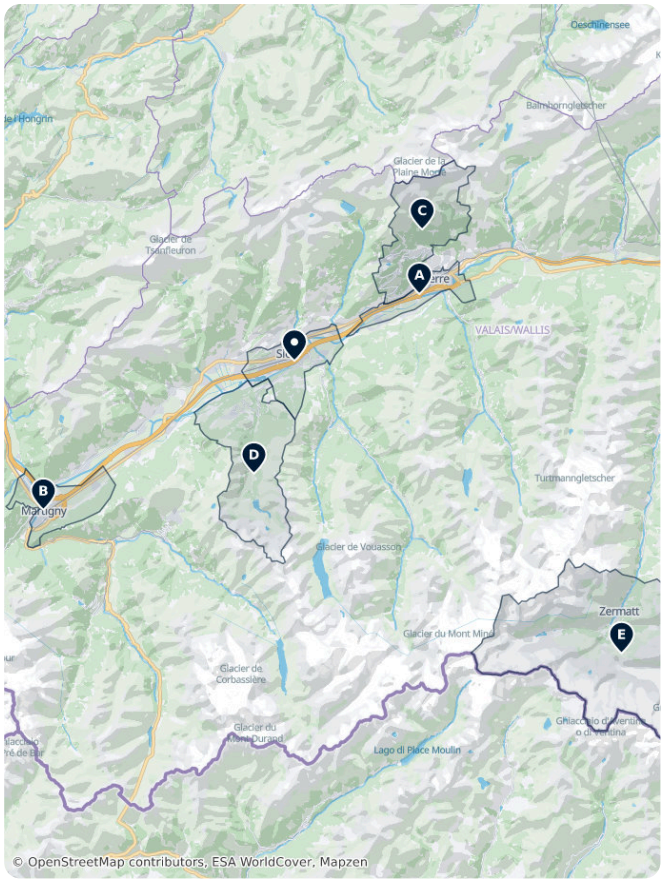
What to experience

- Climb to Valère and Tourbillon for views.
- Walk through the vineyards on the slopes above the town.
- Taste Valais wines such as Fendant and Petite Arvine.
- Visit the old town streets and the town hall.
- Cycle along the Rhone path.

Day trips

- A Siders is a wine town about 10 minutes away by train.
- B Martigny has Roman ruins and a large art museum. It is about 20 minutes away by train.
- C Crans-Montana is a ski and golf resort above the valley.
- D Nendaz is a mountain resort south of the valley.
- E Zermatt is the Matterhorn village. The trip takes about 2 hours with a train change in Visp.



Where to explore

- Siders and Martigny are the nearest towns in the valley.
- Crans-Montana, Nendaz and Zermatt are the nearest mountain resorts.

Getting there

- By air: Geneva is the nearest main airport, about 2 hours away by train.
- By train: Sion is on the main line through the Rhone valley. Check times on SBB.
- Trains from Lausanne take about 1 hour.

Getting around

- The old town is easy to walk.
- The castle hills are a steep climb on foot. A bus also runs to the foot of Valère.
- Local buses link the station with the surrounding villages.
- Postal buses serve the side valleys.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town is compact. The two castle hills have steep paths.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The Rhone valley floor is flat. The slopes above the town are steep.

Driving

- A car is not needed in the old town.
- Use a car park near the centre and walk.
- A car helps for the side valleys and ski resorts. Winter tyres or chains may be needed.

Food & drink

Try raclette, which comes from the Valais. Dried meat and rye bread are local products. The region is Switzerland's largest wine area. Local wines are served in many cafés.

Most people speak French. Many speak some German and English.

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

- Sion is very safe.
- The castle paths are steep and uneven. Wear good shoes.
- Tap water is safe to drink.
- Summer can be hot and dry, so carry water on hill walks.

History

People have lived at Sion for thousands of years. The site had a large prehistoric burial ground. The Romans later held the town. Sion became a bishop's seat in the 6th century.

The bishops ruled the Valais for centuries, and they built Valère and Tourbillon. The ruins of Tourbillon date from a fire in 1788.

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

Sitten Essentials

Sion's skyline is dominated by the twin peaks of Valère and Tourbillon, home to a fortified 13th-century basilica and the ruins of a medieval bishop's castle. The city's history spans from the Neolithic dolmens of Petit-Chasseur to the Renaissance architecture of Maison Supersaxo. This selection covers the core of the medieval old town, including the Gothic cathedral, the historic fortifications of the Wizards' Tower, and the central Place de la Planta.





A Valère Basilica

The Valère Basilica, also called Valère castle, is a fortified church situated in Sion in the canton of Valais in Switzerland.

Rue du Scex 33, 1950 Sion, Switzerland (46.23379, 7.36467)



B Tourbillon Castle

Tourbillon Castle is a castle in Sion in the canton of Valais in Switzerland.

Chemin de la Poudrière 24, 1950 Sion, Switzerland (46.23652, 7.36696)

C Sion Cathedral

Sion Cathedral or the Cathedral of Our Lady of Sion is the Roman Catholic cathedral in Sion, Valais, Switzerland.

1 Place de la Cathédrale, Sion 1950, Switzerland (46.23403, 7.35928)



D Majorie Castle

Majorie Castle is a castle in the municipality of Sion in the Canton of Valais, Switzerland.

9 Rue de la Majorie, Sion 1950, Switzerland (46.23464, 7.36170)



E Le Petit-Chasseur

Le Petit Chasseur is the name of a megalithic site in Sion, Valais, Switzerland.

46 Chemin des Collines, Sion 1950, Switzerland (46.23180, 7.35142)

vs.ch/Navig/navig.asp

F Maison Supersaxo

Built in 1505 by Georges Supersaxo, this Renaissance residence is renowned for its grand hall featuring a richly carved and painted wooden ceiling depicting the Nativity and complex floral motifs.

(46.23320, 7.35992)

sion.ch/particuliers/culture-media/vie-c... , +41 27 324 11 28

G Tour des Sorciers

A surviving remnant of Sion's medieval city walls, this circular tower served as a prison and site of interrogations during the witch trials held between the 15th and 17th centuries.

13 Avenue Ritz, Sion 1950, Switzerland (46.23490, 7.35764)

H Château de Montorge

Ruined 13th-century fortress situated on a rocky outcrop west of the city. Originally built by the House of Savoy, the castle was destroyed in 1417 during the Raron rebellion.

(46.23061, 7.33464)

Place de la Planta

The city's main public square, hosting a traditional market every Friday. It is bordered by the seat of the Valais cantonal government and serves as a central hub for civic gatherings.

(46.23283, 7.35794)

DATA SOURCES

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