

Bordeaux Travel Guide

Bordeaux: World Capital of Wine

France · Generated July 27, 2026 · mycitytravelguide.com/france/bordeaux/

Things to do in Bordeaux

Landmarks & Monuments

Bordeaux boasts exceptional architectural heritage from the 18th century, featuring neoclassical facades and grand public spaces that reflect its golden age as a major trading port.



Must See

Place de la Bourse

1 hour No Booking Needed



Map

Iconic 18th-century square featuring **twin mirrored buildings** with stunning neoclassical architecture. The reflecting water mirror (Miroir d'Eau) at the base creates a magical effect, especially during evening reflections. One of Europe's most photographed squares.



Must See

Book Ahead

Cité du Vin

3 hours Book Ahead



Map

Futuristic wine museum and cultural center shaped like a decanting glass. Interactive exhibitions explore wine culture globally through **immersive displays**, tastings, and panoramic terrace views. A modern architectural marvel blending tradition with innovation.



Must See

Port of the Moon (UNESCO Site)

2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

UNESCO World Heritage waterfront district showcasing **1,800 neoclassical buildings** from the 18th century. The sweeping crescent-shaped quays create an architectural symphony. Perfect for evening strolls with riverside restaurants and cultural venues.



Top Pick

Pey Berland Tower

45 minutes No Booking Needed



Map

15th-century Gothic tower standing 66 meters tall beside the Cathedral. Climb 229 steps for **panoramic city views** stretching to the Garonne River. Offers the best vantage point for understanding Bordeaux's urban layout and architecture.



Tips for Landmarks & Monuments

- Best visited at sunset for magical photography lighting
- Join a guided walking tour to understand architectural details
- Visit the Miroir d'Eau in early morning or evening for crowd-free reflections



Museums & Galleries

Bordeaux's museums showcase diverse collections from classical art to contemporary works, housed in both historic buildings and modern spaces.



Must See

Musée des Beaux-Arts

2-3 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Fine art museum spanning three centuries with works by **Rembrandt, Delacroix, and Matisse**. Located in the elegant Town Hall square. Permanent collections feature European paintings, sculptures, and decorative arts in intimate gallery spaces.



Top Pick

CAPC Contemporary Art Museum

1.5 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Cutting-edge contemporary art in a former 19th-century warehouse. Exhibits **modern installations, videos, and experimental works** from international artists. Raw industrial aesthetics complement avant-garde collections perfectly.



Top Pick

Musée de l'Aquarium

1.5 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Interactive aquarium featuring **5,000 fish species** from Atlantic waters and tropical seas. Themed tanks display marine ecosystems with detailed educational information. Excellent for families and those curious about ocean biodiversity.

Tips for Museums & Galleries

- Most museums closed Mondays—plan accordingly
- Purchase a Bordeaux Museum Pass for reduced rates across multiple venues
- First Sundays of each month offer free entry to many municipal museums



Religious Sites

Bordeaux's religious heritage reflects its long history with impressive Gothic and Romanesque churches showcasing architectural evolution.



Must See

Bordeaux Cathedral

1 hour No Booking Needed



Map

Magnificent **Gothic cathedral** dating to the 11th century with elaborate façade and soaring interior columns. Houses the Pey Berland Tower. The nave features stunning ribbed vaults and stained glass windows depicting religious scenes and historical moments.



Top Pick

Basilica of St. Michael

1 hour No Booking Needed



Map

Flamboyant **15th-century Gothic basilica** with distinctive detached bell tower. The interior features soaring vaults, intricate carvings, and stained glass. Climb the tower for city views and explore the atmospheric crypt beneath the church.



Notable

Basilica of St. Seurin

45 minutes No Booking Needed



Map

Romanesque and **Gothic hybrid structure** with impressive nave columns. Features early Christian crypt with 12th-century remains. The ornate choir and chapels contain religious artifacts spanning centuries of Bordeaux's spiritual history.

Tips for Religious Sites

- Respectful dress required—cover shoulders and knees
- Visit during weekday mornings for peaceful spiritual experience
- Many churches close during lunch hours (12-2 PM)



Squares & Streets

Bordeaux's public squares and pedestrian streets showcase neoclassical grandeur and serve as vibrant social gathering spaces.



Must See

Place Pey-Berland

45 minutes No Booking Needed



Map

Majestic square anchored by the Cathedral and Pey Berland Tower, surrounded by **neoclassical administration buildings**. The UNESCO-protected square serves as Bordeaux's ceremonial center with regular events and gatherings.



Top Pick

Rue Sainte-Catherine

1.5 hours No Booking Needed



Map

One of Europe's longest shopping streets at 1.2 kilometers, featuring **boutiques, cafés, and restaurants**. Pedestrian-only thoroughfare with elegant storefronts and street performers. Connects the Cathedral area to the Port of the Moon district.



Top Pick

Place Gambetta

1 hour No Booking Needed



Map

Charming octagonal square surrounded by **elegant neoclassical mansions** and tree-lined promenades. Cafés and restaurants ring the perimeter with outdoor seating. Former site of historical executions, now a peaceful recreational area.



Top Pick

Quai de la Douane

1 hour No Booking Needed



Map

Historic customs house quay along the Garonne River with **restored 18th-century warehouses** now converted to restaurants, galleries, and shops. Waterfront promenade offers riverside seating and sunset views across the river.

Tips for Squares & Streets

- Rue Sainte-Catherine gets crowded mid-day—visit early morning or evening
- Most shops close on Sundays and bank holidays
- Street musicians perform regularly in major squares—respect them with coins



Parks & Gardens

Bordeaux offers lush green spaces providing respite from urban exploration with landscaped gardens and riverside promenades.



Must See
Miroir d'Eau Promenade
1 hour No Booking Needed



Map

Modern waterfront development at Place de la Bourse featuring **reflecting water installations and green landscaping**. The shallow water mirror creates stunning reflections of surrounding architecture. Popular gathering spot for tourists and locals alike.



Top Pick
Jardin Public
1.5 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Large 25-hectare public garden established in 1746 featuring **classical landscaping, ornamental ponds, and botanical specimens**. Tree-lined paths, open meadows, and a small natural history museum create peaceful retreat. Popular with locals and families.



Top Pick
Parc Bordelais
1.5 hours No Booking Needed



Map

English-style landscaped park spanning 14 hectares with **mature trees, winding paths, and scenic vistas**. Features a small lake, bird sanctuary, and botanical collections. Ideal for picnicking, jogging, and observing local wildlife.

Tips for Parks & Gardens

- Best time to visit parks is late afternoon when light is softest
- Bring a picnic—many cafés and shops nearby sell food
- Parks close at sunset—plan accordingly for evening visits



Tours & Activities

Bordeaux offers diverse experiences from wine tasting to river cruises, allowing deeper exploration of the region's culture and heritage.



Must See Book Ahead

Wine Tours & Tastings

6-8 hours Book Ahead

Guided **vineyard tours and wine tastings** in nearby Médoc and Graves regions. Professional sommeliers explain wine production, terroir, and tasting techniques. Day trips include château visits, cellar tours, and multi-course meals featuring local wines.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Garonne River Cruises

1-2 hours Book Ahead

Scenic boat tours along the Garonne River revealing **historic quays, bridges, and waterfront architecture**. Evening cruises offer aperitif service. Sunset cruises are romantic with panoramic views of illuminated city landmarks.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Walking Food Tours

3 hours Book Ahead

Guided gastronomic walks through old town visiting **markets, specialty shops, and historic restaurants**. Learn about local cuisine, traditional recipes, and regional ingredients. Includes tastings of cheeses, pastries, and regional specialties.



Top Pick

Architectural Walking Tours

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Expert-led tours showcasing **18th-century neoclassical design, UNESCO heritage sites, and hidden architectural gems**. Learn about famous architects, building techniques, and historical context. Tours cover themes like royal history or urban development.

Tips for Tours & Activities

- Book wine tours 2-3 days in advance, especially weekends
- Most walking tours depart from tourist office—arrive 15 minutes early
- Bring comfortable walking shoes and weather-appropriate clothing



Day Trips & Excursions

Bordeaux's location provides easy access to renowned wine regions, coastal towns, and historic sites within 1-2 hours driving.



Must See Book Ahead

Médoc Wine Region

Full day Book Ahead



Map

Left Bank vineyard district home to **prestigious châteaux like Pauillac and Margaux**. Rolling vineyards stretch across countryside. Tour wineries, taste world-class Bordeaux wines, and explore picturesque villages. Many offer en primeur tastings of unreleased vintages.



Must See

Saint-Émilion

Full day No Booking Needed



Map

Medieval hilltop town famous for **Right Bank wines and stunning architecture**. UNESCO World Heritage site featuring narrow cobblestone streets, historic wine estates, and underground limestone quarries. Picturesque setting perfect for photography and leisurely exploration.



Top Pick

Arcachon Bay & Oyster Villages

Full day No Booking Needed



Map

Coastal destination featuring the famous **Dune of Pilat, Europe's highest sand dune**. Charming oyster farming villages offer fresh seafood and maritime atmosphere. Beautiful beaches for swimming and water sports. Approximately 45 minutes from Bordeaux.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Cadillac & Sauternes Wine District

Full day Book Ahead



Map

Right Bank wine region producing **celebrated sweet Sauternes wines**. Charming medieval town of Cadillac with Renaissance château. Smaller production yields boutique experiences. Less crowded than Médoc with equally exceptional wines and intimate tasting rooms.

Tips for Day Trips & Excursions

- Rent a car or book organized tours—public transport limited to wine regions
- Wine tastings can have intoxicating effects—use designated drivers or tour services
- Book vineyard visits in advance, many close Sundays and Mondays



Christmas Market

Bordeaux swaps its wine-country calm for twinkling lights each December, with wooden chalets, an ice rink, and a big wheel filling the historic center. It is not a Strasbourg-scale spectacle, but the compact old town makes the market easy to combine with a stroll past the Place de la Bourse and its famous reflecting pool.



Must See

Marche de Noel de Bordeaux (Cours de l'Intendance and Allee de Tourny)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Bordeaux's main **Christmas market** sets up wooden chalets along Cours de l'Intendance and the Allee de Tourny, just steps from the Grand Theatre. Expect *mulled wine* (*vin chaud*), roasted chestnuts, regional foie gras and oysters, and handmade gifts from local artisans. The market traditionally runs from late November through December, with stalls open into the early evening under strings of lights. It is a compact, walkable market rather than a sprawling one, so it pairs naturally with a wander through the pedestrian shopping streets nearby. In December 2026 expect the market to operate roughly from the last week of November until December 31, closed or shortened on December 25.



Top Pick

Grande Roue (Ferris Wheel) at Esplanade des Quinconces

20-30 minutes No Booking Needed



Map

A large illuminated **Ferris wheel** is typically installed on the Esplanade des Quinconces, one of Europe's largest public squares, for the winter holiday season. Riders get views over the Garonne river, the Monument aux Girondins, and the rooftops of the old town lit up for Christmas. It usually operates alongside the holiday market period, from late November through early January, with extended evening hours in December. It is a favorite quick stop for families and couples looking for a short, memorable activity between market visits. Tickets are sold on-site with no advance booking normally required, though lines can build on weekend evenings.



Notable

Patinoire de Noel (Outdoor Ice Rink), Place Pey-Berland or Place des Quinconces

1 hour No Booking Needed



Map

An open-air **ice skating rink** is set up each winter in central Bordeaux, often near Place Pey-Berland by the cathedral or on the Esplanade des Quinconces, depending on the year's layout. Skate rental is available on-site, and the rink is lit with festive decorations in the evening, making it popular with families and teens during December school holidays. Sessions usually run in timed slots with a modest entry fee. It typically opens in late November and continues through early January, closing briefly on Christmas Day. Bundle up, as riverside Bordeaux winters are damp and breezy even when not freezing.





Optional

Place de la Bourse and Miroir d Eau Winter Lights

30-45 minutes No Booking Needed



Map

Even outside the market itself, Bordeaux's riverfront gets a seasonal glow: the elegant Place de la Bourse and its famous **Miroir d Eau** (water mirror) reflecting pool are dressed with holiday lighting and projections in December. The mirror runs in reduced winter mode but still creates striking reflections of the eighteenth-century facades after dark. It is a free, unticketed stop that works well as an evening bookend to a day at the Christmas market, especially combined with a riverside walk along the Garonne. Photographers should aim for blue hour, just after sunset, for the best light balance.

Tips for Christmas Market

- Bordeaux's market is modest compared to Alsace; combine it with the Ferris wheel and ice rink for a fuller evening out.
- Confirm exact December 2026 dates and hours on the Bordeaux Tourisme site closer to the visit, as chalet locations shift slightly year to year.
- Evenings are best for the lights and Miroir d Eau reflections, but dress warmly as the riverside gets a damp chill.
- Most stalls and rides pause or shorten hours on December 25.



With Kids

Bordeaux may be famous for wine, but it also has plenty to keep younger visitors entertained, from playful science museums to riverside playgrounds and gentle animal encounters. These family-friendly spots are spread across the city and make it easy to build a day that balances sightseeing with time for kids to run, touch, and explore.



Must See

Cap Sciences

2-3 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Housed in a striking modern building on the Garonne riverbank, **Cap Sciences** is an interactive science and technology center designed to spark curiosity in children and teens. Exhibits change regularly and cover themes like space, robotics, the human body, and the environment, almost always with *hands-on stations* that let kids press buttons, run experiments, and test ideas rather than just look at displays. There is a dedicated area for younger children with simpler, tactile activities, while older kids can tackle more challenging puzzles and digital installations. The center often hosts workshops and temporary exhibitions, so it is worth checking what is on before visiting. Its location right along the river makes it easy to combine with a stroll or a stop at a nearby playground. Rainy-day visits are especially popular here since everything is indoors and air-conditioned, offering a comfortable escape while still being educational and fun for the whole family.



Top Pick

Jardin des Lumieres Playground

1 hour No Booking Needed



Map

Tucked within a green pocket of the city, this playground area offers a mix of slides, climbing structures, and swings suited to a range of ages, making it a favorite stop for families looking for a break between museum visits. The open lawns nearby are perfect for a picnic, and the shaded paths give parents a comfortable spot to relax while children burn off energy. Unlike some of the busier tourist sites, this is a place where local families gather too, giving visiting kids a chance to interact with Bordelais children in a relaxed, unstructured setting. Benches ring the play area, and the surrounding paths are stroller-friendly, making it easy for parents with younger children or infants to enjoy the space comfortably. It is a simple but reliable option when children need to move, climb, and shout after a morning of sightseeing, and it costs nothing to enjoy.



Top Pick

Book Ahead

Bassins de Lumieres Family Visit

1-1.5 hours Book Ahead



Map

Set inside a former World War II submarine base, **Bassins de Lumieres** is the world's largest digital art center, projecting enormous, colorful, ever-moving images across its cavernous concrete walls and reflecting pools. While the artistic themes vary, the sheer scale and sensory spectacle of light, sound, and moving imagery tends to captivate children even if they do not grasp the artistic references. Kids often enjoy walking along the reflective water paths and watching how the projections ripple and shift underfoot, turning an art visit into something closer to an immersive play experience. The dark, cool interior offers relief on hot days, and shows typically run in a loop, so families can drop in without worrying about strict start times. It works well as an early-afternoon activity, especially paired with a walk along the nearby docks. Younger children may need short breaks, but the immersive format keeps most kids engaged far longer than a traditional gallery would.





Notable

Le Petit Train de Bordeaux

45 minutes No Booking Needed



Map

A cheerful way to introduce younger children to the city's history without demanding long walks, this **tourist tram-train** winds through the historic center past major landmarks with simple audio commentary in multiple languages. The novelty of riding a train-shaped vehicle through city streets is often enough to delight toddlers and young children on its own, while parents get a relaxed overview of the city and a chance to plan which sights to revisit on foot later. Routes typically cover the riverside, the old town, and several grand squares, giving families a gentle orientation loop early in their trip. Boarding is simple and there is no walking required during the ride itself, which is helpful for families traveling with strollers or very young children who tire quickly. It is best scheduled in the morning before the streets get crowded, and tickets can usually be bought directly at the departure point.

Tips for With Kids

- Combine Cap Sciences or Bassins de Lumieres with a riverside playground stop to balance indoor learning with outdoor play
- Visit indoor attractions like Cap Sciences on rainy days or during the hottest afternoon hours
- Book Bassins de Lumieres tickets online in advance, as timed entry slots can sell out during school holidays
- Pack snacks and water, as options for children can be limited directly around some historic sites



Events Calendar

Bordeaux keeps a lively year-round calendar of wine celebrations, riverside festivals, and seasonal markets that bring the city center and quays to life. From summer concerts along the Garonne to the glowing Christmas market on Place Pey-Berland, these recurring events give visitors a reason to plan around the season. Below is a month-by-month look at the biggest happenings in 2026.



Must See

Bordeaux Fete le Vin

3-4 hours per visit, event spans 4 days No Booking Needed



Map

Held every even-numbered year, **Bordeaux Fete le Vin** returns in **late June 2026**, tentatively *June 25 to June 28*, transforming the Garonne riverfront into an open-air wine festival. Tall ships dock along the quays while dozens of wine pavilions representing Bordeaux appellations offer tastings for a nominal fee. Expect fireworks over the Pont de Pierre, live music stages, and food trucks lining the Miroir d'Eau. The event draws hundreds of thousands of visitors, so arriving early on weekend evenings helps avoid the densest crowds. It is one of the largest wine festivals in the world and a defining showcase of the region's viticultural identity, blending riverside spectacle with serious tasting opportunities for casual visitors and wine enthusiasts alike.



Top Pick

Book Ahead

Bordeaux So Good Food Festival

2-3 hours Book Ahead



Map

Taking place in **early May 2026**, roughly *May 14 to May 17*, this gastronomy festival spreads across several venues in the Chartrons and Bacalan districts. Local chefs, artisan producers, and food trucks gather for tastings, cooking demonstrations, and pairing sessions that highlight southwestern French cuisine alongside Bordeaux wines. The atmosphere is relaxed and family-friendly, with communal picnic tables and live music in the evenings. It is a good complement to the more wine-focused summer festival, giving equal billing to cheese, oysters, and regional pastries. Tickets for specific chef workshops sell out quickly, so checking the program a few weeks ahead is worthwhile for visitors wanting a hands-on tasting slot rather than just browsing stalls.



Top Pick

Bordeaux Christmas Market

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

From **late November through late December 2026**, roughly *November 21 to December 30*, wooden chalets line the Allees de Tourny and Place Pey-Berland selling mulled wine, roasted chestnuts, and handmade crafts. A large Ferris wheel near the Grand Theatre offers views over the illuminated rooftops, and the facade of Bordeaux Cathedral is often lit with seasonal projections. Evenings are the best time to visit, when string lights and the smell of vin chaud create a genuinely festive mood. The market stays open through the holidays, making it an easy stop for anyone visiting the city center in winter. Families with children will find a small carousel and puppet shows on weekends near the Grand Theatre entrance.





Notable

Bordeaux River Nights Summer Concert Series

1-3 hours per concert No Booking Needed



Map

Every **Thursday and Saturday evening from mid-June to late August 2026**, specifically *June 18 to August 29*, free open-air concerts take over the lawns beside the Miroir d'Eau and Jardin Public. Genres rotate between jazz, electro, and regional folk acts, with local bands often opening for better-known touring musicians. The riverside setting means concertgoers can bring a blanket, pick up a crepe or glass of wine from nearby vendors, and watch the sunset over the water reflecting the Place de la Bourse. It is a low-key, no-ticket way to experience Bordeaux's summer nightlife alongside residents rather than only tourists. Arrive by early evening on weekends since the best lawn spots near the water fill up fast once the sun starts setting.



Notable

Bordeaux New Year Riverside Celebration

2-4 hours No Booking Needed



Map

On **December 31, 2026 into January 1, 2027**, the quays around Place de la Bourse and the Miroir d'Eau host Bordeaux's main New Year celebration, with a midnight fireworks display launched from the river. Food and drink stalls stay open late, and the Christmas market chalets often remain up to serve the crowd gathered along the waterfront. Street performers and a countdown light show on the Grand Theatre facade add to the atmosphere in the hours before midnight. Unlike ticketed New Year events in some cities, this is a free, informal gathering, so dressing warmly and claiming a spot along the quay an hour or two early is the main preparation needed. It is a fitting, low-cost way to close out the year in the city center.

Tips for Events Calendar

- Book accommodation well ahead for Fete le Vin (June 2026) and the Christmas market period, as hotel prices spike citywide.
- Most riverside events are free to attend; only specific tastings or workshops require paid tickets.
- Check official event pages close to the date, as exact 2026 dates for annual festivals are typically confirmed only a few months in advance.
- Public transport (tram lines A and B) gets crowded near event venues; consider walking or cycling along the quays instead.



Hidden Gems

Beyond the postcard landmarks, Bordeaux hides a quieter layer of Roman ruins, wartime bunkers turned art spaces, and neighborhoods locals actually shop and drink in. These spots reward travelers willing to wander past the historic center into the Bastide and Chartrons districts.



Must See

Base Sous-Marine

1.5-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

This colossal **WWII German submarine base** on the Garonne's right bank once sheltered U-boats behind eleven feet of reinforced concrete. Today its cathedral-like bunkers host *immersive digital art exhibitions*, techno events, and rotating installations that play with the raw, brutal architecture rather than hiding it. The scale is genuinely disorienting: cavernous, dim, and cool even in summer heat. Few tourists venture across the river to Bacalan to find it, which keeps crowds thin outside blockbuster exhibition openings. Combine a visit with a stroll along the nearby docks, where old warehouses are slowly being reclaimed by galleries and breweries. It is one of the few places in Bordeaux where 20th-century military history and contemporary art collide so directly.



Must See

Marche des Capucins

1-1.5 hours No Booking Needed



Map

While tourists cluster around Rue Sainte-Catherine, Bordeaux locals do their real grocery shopping at the **Marche des Capucins**, a lively covered market dating back to the 19th century. Stalls overflow with oysters, foie gras, regional cheeses, and cheap glasses of Bordeaux wine served standing up at zinc counters from early morning. Saturday is the liveliest day, when families and market regulars turn breakfast oysters and white wine into a genuine social ritual. It is loud, unpolished, and completely unstaged for visitors, which is exactly the appeal. Arrive hungry and expect to eat standing at a counter rather than seated at a table. It offers a far more authentic taste of everyday Bordeaux than the restaurants lining the postcard squares.



Top Pick

Darwin Ecosystem

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

A former army barracks on the Bastide side of the river, **Darwin** has been converted into a sprawling eco-conscious hub of skate ramps, street art, organic cafes, and startup offices. It is unapologetically alternative, covered in murals and reclaimed materials, and feels a world away from the stone facades of central Bordeaux. Locals come for the weekend organic market, the skatepark energy, and a genuinely good vegetarian canteen. There is also a small urban farm and a graffiti-covered courtyard that photographs beautifully without a single tour group in sight. It is a useful counterpoint for visitors who assume Bordeaux is only about wine chateaux and 18th-century elegance. Evenings often bring live music or open-air screenings in warmer months.





Top Pick

Palais Gallien

30-45 minutes No Booking Needed



Map

Tucked into a residential block away from the main sightseeing routes, the **Palais Gallien** is the skeletal ruin of a 3rd-century Roman amphitheater that once seated up to 15,000 spectators. Only fragments of arched brick walls remain, standing incongruously between apartment buildings, but the site is free to view from outside and rarely holds more than a handful of visitors. It is a quiet reminder that Bordeaux, known today as *Burdigala* in Roman times, was a significant provincial city long before its wine-trade fame. There is no ticket booth or gift shop, just an open green space with information panels. Pair it with a walk through the surrounding Saint-Seurin neighborhood for a low-key, unhurried afternoon.



Notable

Chartrons Antique Quarter

1.5-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Once the warehouse district where wine merchants stored and shipped their barrels down the Garonne, **Chartrons** has quietly become Bordeaux's antique and vintage furniture quarter. Rue Notre-Dame is lined with small dealer shops selling everything from Art Deco lamps to old wine-trade ledgers, interspersed with independent coffee roasters and record stores. The neighborhood retains a village-like calm, with fewer chain stores than the center and a strong sense of its merchant-history roots. A small flea market pops up along the street on select Sunday mornings, drawing collectors rather than tourists. It rewards slow, aimless browsing more than a checklist of sights. The nearby Musee du Vin et du Negoce, housed in an original wine cellar, adds context to why this district exists at all.

Tips for Hidden Gems

- The Base Sous-Marine and Darwin Ecosystem are both on the right bank of the Garonne, easily combined in one afternoon via the Bacalan-Bastide tram line or a short ferry ride (Bat3).
- Visit Marche des Capucins early on a Saturday morning for the freshest oysters and the liveliest atmosphere.
- Chartrons antique shops tend to close on Mondays and over lunch, so plan an afternoon visit on a weekday or Saturday.
- Palais Gallien is unstaffed and unlit at night; daytime visits are best for photos and safety.



Nightlife & Entertainment

When the wine cellars close, Bordeaux shifts into a lively after-dark scene spread across the Chartrons district, the Quai des Marques riverfront, and the narrow streets around Saint-Pierre. Expect candlelit wine bars, DJ-driven clubs in converted warehouses, and rooftop terraces with skyline views over the Garonne.



Must See

Saint-Pierre Late-Night Streets

2-4 hours No Booking Needed



Map

The tangle of narrow medieval streets around Place Saint-Pierre transforms after dark into one of Bordeaux's busiest late-night zones, packed with student-friendly bars, tapas spots, and small live-music venues. Unlike the polished Chartrons scene, this district has a scrappier, more spontaneous energy, with outdoor tables spilling onto cobblestones and crowds moving between venues late into the night. Several bars feature local bands or DJ sets in intimate, low-ceilinged rooms that fill up quickly on weekends. It is an easy area to bar-hop on foot, with something for nearly every budget, from cheap pints to craft cocktails. The neighborhood stays lively well past midnight, especially Thursday through Saturday when the university crowd is out in force.



Top Pick

Chartrons Wine Bar Crawl

2-4 hours No Booking Needed



Map

The Chartrons district, once home to Bordeaux's wine merchants, is now the epicenter of the city's evening bar scene. Cobblestone streets around Rue Notre-Dame are lined with **natural wine bars**, cocktail dens, and cozy cellar taverns where local sommeliers pour by the glass. Many venues occupy centuries-old merchant houses with exposed stone and vaulted ceilings, giving the crawl a distinctly historic feel. Evenings typically start around aperitif hour with small plates of charcuterie and cheese, then move later into livelier spots with DJs or acoustic sets. It is *walkable* and low-key compared to the clubbing districts, making it popular with both locals and visitors who want a relaxed, wine-forward night out. Reservations are rarely needed except at the smallest bars on weekends.



Top Pick

Quai des Marques Riverside Bars

2-3 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Along the reconverted docks of the Quai des Marques, a strip of bars and lounges opens directly onto the Garonne, offering some of the best evening river views in the city. The vibe here is more social and buzzing than in the old town, with outdoor terraces that fill up on warm nights and occasional live DJ sets. Several venues are housed in former warehouse buildings, retaining an industrial-chic look with big windows and open floor plans. It is a favorite spot to watch the sunset over the water before the crowd shifts toward late-night drinking and dancing. Expect a young, mixed local and tourist crowd, casual dress, and reasonably priced drinks compared to central Bordeaux. Weekends get busy, so arriving early secures the best riverside tables.





Top Pick Book Ahead

Rooftop Lounges of Bordeaux

1-2 hours Book Ahead



Map

A handful of hotel rooftop bars scattered around the city center offer panoramic views over Bordeaux's limestone rooftops and the Garonne beyond, best enjoyed with a sunset cocktail. These lounges tend to have a more polished, dressed-up atmosphere than the casual riverside bars, with curated cocktail menus and lounge or house music playing softly in the background. Several are perched atop boutique hotels near the historic center, combining skyline views with the city's characteristic honey-colored stone architecture below. They make a good stop for a pre-dinner drink or a quieter nightcap away from the louder club scene. Some rooftops require a reservation or minimum spend on busy weekends, and dress codes tend to be smart-casual rather than strict.



Notable

Iboat Club

3-5 hours Book Ahead



Map

Docked permanently on the Garonne, **Iboat** is a converted barge turned nightclub and cultural venue, known for electronic music nights, live concerts, and a rotating roster of local and touring DJs. The industrial hull interior and open-air deck give it a distinctive setting unlike any land-based club in Bordeaux, with the deck doubling as a summer terrace bar before the music ramps up inside. It draws a young, dance-focused crowd and regularly hosts themed parties, techno nights, and cultural events tied to Bordeaux's independent music scene. Doors typically open late, with the energy building well after midnight. It is one of the few venues in the city with a genuine *club culture* reputation, so checking the schedule ahead of a visit is worthwhile since programming varies night to night.

Tips for Nightlife & Entertainment

- Chartrons and Saint-Pierre are best explored on foot since venues cluster tightly together.
- Iboat's schedule varies night to night, so check listings before planning a visit around a specific genre.
- Rooftop bars fill up fast at sunset in summer, so arrive early or reserve ahead.
- Public transport (tram) stops running around midnight, so plan a taxi or rideshare for late nights.



Food & Dining

Real, highly-rated Restaurants in Bordeaux, sourced from Google Places (rating above 4★).



Must See

La Fine Bouche★★★★★ 4.9 (1,001)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

La Fine Bouche is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.9★ from 1001 reviews. Located at 30 Rue du Hâ, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:30 – 9:00 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:30 – 9:00 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:30 – 9:00 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:30 – 9:00 PM
- Saturday: 7:30 – 9:00 PM
- Sunday: Closed



Must See

Restaurant Son'★★★★★ 4.9 (1,314)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Restaurant Son' is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.9★ from 1314 reviews. Located at 14 Rue Paul Louis Lande, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 7:30 – 9:15 PM
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 1:15 PM, 7:30 – 9:15 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 1:15 PM, 7:30 – 9:15 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 1:15 PM, 7:30 – 9:15 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 1:15 PM, 7:30 – 9:15 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 1:15 PM, 7:30 – 9:15 PM
- Sunday: Closed





Must See

Zéphirine★★★★★ 4.9 (670)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Zéphirine is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.9★ from 670 reviews. Located at 62 Rue Abbé de l'Épée, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 10:00 AM – 9:30 PM
- Wednesday: 10:00 AM – 9:30 PM
- Thursday: 10:00 AM – 9:30 PM
- Friday: 10:00 AM – 9:30 PM
- Saturday: 10:00 AM – 9:30 PM
- Sunday: Closed



Must See

Maison Nouvelle★★★★★ 4.9 (794)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Maison Nouvelle is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.9★ from 794 reviews. Located at 11 Rue Rode, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 12:00 – 4:00 PM, 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 4:00 PM, 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: Closed





Must See

Osteria Palatino★★★★★ 4.9 (26,943)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Osteria Palatino is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.9★ from 26943 reviews. Located at 8 Rue de la Merci, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 6:45 – 10:00 PM
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 6:45 – 10:00 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 6:45 – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 6:30 – 10:30 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 2:15 PM, 6:30 – 10:30 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 3:00 PM, 6:30 – 10:30 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 – 3:00 PM, 6:45 – 10:00 PM



Must See

Lucca★★★★★ 4.9 (242)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Lucca is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.9★ from 242 reviews. Located at 6 Pl. Rodesse, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:30 – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:30 – 10:00 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:30 – 10:00 PM
- Saturday: Closed
- Sunday: Closed





Must See

Restaurant Influences★★★★★ 4.8 (1,255)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Restaurant Influences is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.8★ from 1255 reviews. Located at 36 Rue Saint-Sernin, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 7:00 – 9:45 PM
- Tuesday: Closed
- Wednesday: Closed
- Thursday: 7:00 – 9:45 PM
- Friday: 7:00 – 9:45 PM
- Saturday: 7:00 – 9:45 PM
- Sunday: 7:00 – 9:45 PM



Must See

DEMETER★★★★★ 4.8 (806)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

DEMETER is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.8★ from 806 reviews. Located at 9 Rue Ausone, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 10:00 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 10:00 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 10:00 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 10:00 PM
- Sunday: Closed



Must See

Arcada★★★★★ 4.8 (1,218)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Arcada is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.8★ from 1218 reviews. Located at 13 Rue de la Rousselle, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Sunday: Closed





Must See

Atelier des Faures★★★★★ 4.8 (843)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Atelier des Faures is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.8★ from 843 reviews. Located at 15 Rue des Frères Bonie, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:30 – 9:45 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:30 – 9:45 PM
- Saturday: 7:15 – 9:45 PM
- Sunday: Closed



Must See

L'Escalette★★★★★ 4.8 (595)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

L'Escalette is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.8★ from 595 reviews. Located at 6 Rue de la Boétie, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Saturday: 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM





Must See

De Part & D'Autre★★★★★ 4.8 (422)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

De Part & D'Autre is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.8★ from 422 reviews. Located at 64 Rue Bouffard, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM, 7:30 PM – 1:00 AM
- Wednesday: 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM, 6:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, 6:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Friday: 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, 6:00 PM – 2:00 AM
- Saturday: 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM, 6:00 PM – 2:00 AM
- Sunday: Closed



Must See

Restaurant Le Chicoula★★★★★ 4.8 (389)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Restaurant Le Chicoula is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.8★ from 389 reviews. Located at 22 Rue de Cursol, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: Closed
- Wednesday: 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Thursday: 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Friday: 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 1:15 PM, 7:30 – 9:30 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 – 1:15 PM, 7:30 – 9:30 PM



Must See

Restaurant Madame B★★★★★ 4.8 (310)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Restaurant Madame B is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.8★ from 310 reviews. Located at 115 Rue Georges Bonnac, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 2:00 PM, 7:00 – 9:30 PM
- Sunday: Closed





Must See

Les Drôles BORDEAUX★★★★★ 4.7 (2,407)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed



Map

Les Drôles BORDEAUX is a highly-rated restaurant in Bordeaux, rated 4.7★ from 2407 reviews. Located at 21 Rue Saint-Rémi, 33000 Bordeaux, France.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 7:00 – 10:30 PM
- Tuesday: 7:00 – 10:30 PM
- Wednesday: 7:00 – 10:30 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 2:30 PM, 7:00 – 10:30 PM
- Friday: 12:00 – 2:30 PM, 7:00 – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 2:30 PM, 7:00 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 – 2:30 PM, 7:00 – 10:30 PM

Practical Information

Spring (April-May) offers mild temperatures (15-20°C) with blooming gardens and fewer crowds. **Summer (June-August)** brings warm weather (22-28°C) but peak tourist season with higher prices. **Autumn (September-October)** combines pleasant temperatures (16-22°C) with grape harvest season and wine events. **Winter (November-March)** is cool (5-12°C) with occasional rain but significantly fewer tourists and special holiday markets. Avoid August for lowest prices and April-May or September for ideal weather and manageable crowds.

Getting Around Bordeaux

Tram Network: Three modern tram lines (A, B, C) connect major attractions. Purchase a carnet of 10 tickets or unlimited passes. Single journey costs €2.00, day pass €5.80.

Buses: Comprehensive bus network supplements trams covering areas beyond tram routes. Same ticket system applies.

Cycling: VCub bike-sharing system with 200+ stations offers affordable hourly rentals. Bordeaux is relatively flat and bike-friendly.

Walking: Historic center is highly walkable with compact neighborhoods and pedestrian zones.

Trains: Bordeaux-Saint-Jean railway station offers regional trains to nearby wine regions and national connections.

Taxis: Available at station or phone request. Expect €10-15 for city center journeys.

➔ Airport Transfer

Bordeaux-Mérignac Airport (BOD) to city center:

- **Jet'Bus Line 30:** Direct shuttle to Gare Saint-Jean and city center in about 45 minutes, tickets around 8 to 9.50 euros
- **Taxi:** Around 20 to 30 minutes to the city center, roughly 35 to 45 euros depending on traffic and time of day
- **Private transfer:** Pre-booked car or minivan direct to your hotel in about 25 minutes, typically 45 to 70 euros
- **Rideshare (VTC/Uber):** About 20 to 30 minutes to downtown, generally 25 to 40 euros

Shopping Districts

Rue Sainte-Catherine: Europe's longest shopping street with international brands, fashion boutiques, and department stores.



Rue Fondaudège: Upscale shopping district featuring designer brands and luxury boutiques.

Rue Saint-James: Trendy area with independent boutiques, vintage shops, and contemporary fashion.

Marché des Quais: Sunday morning food market near Port of the Moon offering local produce, cheese, and delicacies.

Antique District: Rue des Remparts and surrounding lanes feature antique shops, galleries, and curiosity stores.

Local Products

Wine: Direct purchases from producers offer better value than retail shops. Many provide air-shipping services.

Canelés: Famous Bordeaux pastry—purchase from established pâtisseries for authentic recipes.

Regional Wines: Affordable Bordeaux wines start at €8-12, premium selections €20-50+

Annual Events

Bordeaux Wine Festival (June): Major international wine celebration featuring tastings, parades, and cultural performances. Largest event drawing 500,000+ visitors.

Fête du Vin (Spring/Summer): Weekend wine and food celebration with open-air tastings and entertainment.

Jazz Festival (May): International jazz performances in historic venues and outdoor spaces.

Électro Latino Festival (September): Electronic and Latin music festival with international DJs and live performances.

Christmas Markets (December): Traditional holiday markets featuring handcrafts, local specialties, and festive decorations.

Marathon de Bordeaux (May): International running event attracting thousands of participants.

5-Day Sample Itinerary

Day 1 - Historic Architecture: Morning at Cathedral and Pey Berland Tower (views). Explore Place de la Bourse and Miroir d'Eau. Afternoon stroll through old town via Rue Sainte-Catherine. Evening aperitif at waterfront café.

Day 2 - Museums & Culture: Morning at Musée des Beaux-Arts. Lunch in historic center. Afternoon at Cité du Vin wine museum. Evening river cruise along Garonne.

Day 3 - Wine Country Day Trip: Organized tour to Médoc châteaux with wine tastings and lunch. Return for evening rest or casual dinner near hotel.

Day 4 - Food & Markets: Morning at Marché des Quais food market. Lunch featuring local specialties (oysters, Canelés). Afternoon at CAPC contemporary art museum. Evening food tour discovering neighborhood gems.

Day 5 - Relaxation & Leisure: Morning at Jardin Public or Parc Bordelais. Leisurely lunch. Optional Saint-Émilion day trip or shopping on Rue Fondaudège. Final evening enjoying wine and sunset at riverside.

Best Photography Locations

Place de la Bourse Miroir d'Eau: Iconic shot capturing perfect architectural reflections. Best **early morning or evening** for soft light and minimal crowds. Water installations activate 2-3 minutes per hour—check schedules.

Pey Berland Tower Viewpoint: Panoramic cityscape with river bend. **Golden hour before sunset** provides warm lighting and dramatic skies.

Quai Louis XVIII at Sunset: Riverside buildings bathed in golden light. Position yourself on opposite bank for direct lighting of facades.



Saint-Michel Basilica: Gothic architecture beautiful in **afternoon light** from Rue Thiers perspective.

Garonne River Bridges: Pont de Pierre (historic stone bridge) offers romantic evening shots with city lights reflecting in water.

Port of the Moon UNESCO District: Narrow street perspectives reveal layered architecture. **Morning soft light** best highlights details.

Electrical Standards

Voltage: France operates at 230 volts, 50 Hz frequency.

Plug Type: European Type C (two round pins) and Type E (two round pins plus grounding contact) are standard.

Converter Information: North American appliances (110V) require step-down transformers. UK appliances (230V) need Type C/E adapters but no transformer.

USB Charging: Most hotels offer USB ports and charging facilities. Universal adapters with USB ports available at pharmacies and electronics shops.

Adapter Purchase: More economical to purchase before travel, but available at Bordeaux airport and city electronics retailers.

Must-Try Dishes

Canelé de Bordeaux: Famous pastry with rum and vanilla filling, caramelized exterior. Seek authentic versions from established pâtisseries.

Huîtres (Oysters): Fresh oysters from Arcachon Bay, typically served raw with lemon. Visit dedicated oyster bars for best quality.

Entrecôte à la Bordelaise: Grilled ribeye steak with red wine, bone marrow, and shallot reduction—iconic regional dish.

Lamprey à la Bordelaise: Traditional eel-like fish preparation with red wine sauce, seasonal specialty (winter).

Cèpes (Wild Mushrooms): Local mushroom varieties prepared grilled or in creamy sauces, autumn specialty.

Foie Gras: Premium duck liver product available fresh or preserved from local producers.

Regional Wines: Explore Bordeaux, Sauternes, and Côtes de Bordeaux wines with meals.

Dining Tips

Lunch: 12-2 PM is standard, many restaurants close between service periods.

Dinner: 7-10 PM typical dining window, reservations recommended for popular establishments.

Café Culture: Sitting on terraces costs more than bar counter—expect €2-4 for coffee.

Tourist Passes

Bordeaux City Pass

Comprehensive pass including public transport (trams, buses), museum entries (Beaux-Arts, CAPC, Aquarium), and architectural tours. Available for 24, 48, or 72 hours at **€25, €38, €48** respectively. Represents significant savings for museum-heavy itineraries.



www.bordeaux-tourisme.com



Tram & Bus Pass

Transportation-only pass for unlimited public transport access. Day pass €5.80, carnet of 10 tickets €14.40. Weekly passes available for longer stays.



www.bordeaux-tourisme.com

Museum Pass Aquitaine

Regional multi-museum pass valid at 50+ museums and attractions across Aquitaine region. Includes major Bordeaux museums plus regional sites. One-week pass provides exceptional value for museum-focused travelers.



www.bordeaux-tourisme.com

Wine Tour Packages

Organized wine experiences ranging from €60-150 per person include transportation, tastings, and meals. Half-day tours (4 hours, €70-90) suit time-limited visitors. Full-day tours (8 hours, €120-150) explore multiple châteaux with meals included.



www.bordeaux-tourisme.com

