

TOURS

Tours is a city in central **France**, the capital of the **Indre-et-Loire department**. It is located on the lower reaches of the river Loire, between **Orléans** and the Atlantic coast. Touraine, the region around Tours, is known for its wines, the alleged perfection (as perceived by some speakers) of its local spoken French, and for the famous Battle of Tours in 732. It is also the site of the cycling race Paris-Tours. Tours is the largest city in the Centre region of France, although it is not the regional capital, which resides in its second-largest city of Orléans.



The city of Tours is called "**Le Jardin de la France**" ("**The Garden of France**"). There are several parks located within the city. Tours is located between two rivers, the Loire to the north and the Cher to the south. The buildings of Tours are white with blue slate (called Ardoise) roofs; this style is common in the north of France, as most buildings in the south of France have terracotta roofs.

Tours is famous for its original medieval district, called **le Vieux Tours**. Unique to the Old City are its preserved half-timbered buildings and la **Place Plumereau**, a square with busy pubs and restaurants, whose open-air tables fill the center of the square. The Boulevard Beranger crosses the Rue Nationale at the Place Jean-Jaures and is the location of weekly markets and fairs.

Near the cathedral, in the garden of the ancient Palais des Archevêques (now Musée des Beaux-Arts), is a huge cedar tree planted by Napoleon.

Tours is home to **François Rabelais University**, the site of one of the most important choral competitions, called Florilège Vocal de Tours International Choir Competition, and is a member city of the European Grand Prix for Choral Singing.

Musée des Beaux Arts (Fine Arts Museum)

Formerly the Archbishop's Palace (17th and 18th c.). Fine pieces of furniture and considerable collection of French and foreign paintings from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. Mantegna (15th c.) (photo J), Rubens, Rembrandt (17th c.), Boucher (18th c.), Delacroix, Degas (19th c.).

Hotel Guin

Touraine Archeological Society collection: prehistory, Gallo-Roman and medieval archeology, medieval, Renaissance, 17th and 18th century arts. The most beautiful example of Renaissance domestic architecture in Tours.

Touraine Wine Museum

History, guilds, feasts, enology, wine-growing and making, wine producers, related activities.

Military Service Corps Museum

Remains of the Abbey of Beaumont; collections of arms, pennants, uniforms, insignia illustrating the history of the Service Corps since its was formed till our days.

Musée du Compagnonnage

This museum is unique in the world. It contains the masterpieces, tools, illustrated and written records of the Tour de France journeymen since 1840.

St Martin Museum

The main events in the life of St Martin. History of the site and the various buildings erected here since the first tomb was laid.

The Botanique Garden

Situated Boulevardd Tonnellé, in front of the Bretonneau hospital, the 'Botanique' garden (5 hectares) the oldest public garden of Tours, was achieved in 1843 on the initiative of the chemist Jean-Anthyme Margueron (1771-1848). Thanks to the General Hospice's and the Chemist preparatory school's creations, the garden was thought up like a medicinal botanical garden.

The "Musée des Beaux-Arts" garden

Situated to the east side of 'square François Sicard', the entrance of the Fine Art Museum's garden is indicated by a bicentenary cedar of Libanon planted in 1804 in the middle of a 17th century year old yard , where Fritz, the stuffed elephant can be seen through a window.. In front of the 17th century façade of the former archbishops palace (current Fine Art Museum), a formal garden was settled. It is composed of a lawn during two rectangular beds of flowers.

TO DO

Specialized markets, all day:

Flower market:

Bd Béranger, Wednesday and Saturday

Antiques & flea market:

Place de la Victoire, Wednesday and Saturday

Craft market :

Place des Halles, Saturday

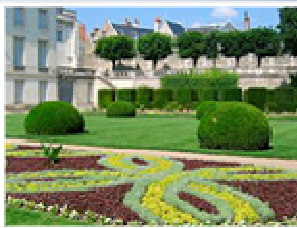
Marché gourmand:

Place de la Résistance, 1st Friday of the month

Antiques market:

Bd Béranger, 4th Sunday of the month

Rue de Bordeaux, 1st & 3rd Fridays of the month

**INFORMATION****Tourism office of Tours**

Office du Tourisme de Tours

78-82 rue Bernard Palissy - BP 4201 - 37042 TOURS Cedex

Tel +33 2 47 70 37 37 Fax +33 2 47 61 14 22