



Loire Valley

TRAVEL GUIDE

Oliver's Travels
— YOUR GREAT ESCAPE —

A region doesn't get to be called "The Garden of France" without being pretty special, and the Loire Valley is just as lush and beautiful as its nickname would suggest. There are countless acres of beautiful forests, vineyards and farmland that produce some of France's revered ingredients and delicacies, and a wealth of history and beautiful architecture that demands and rewards exploration.

LOIRE VALLEY 101

CURRENCY	EURO	TIME ZONE	GMT +1
ELECTRICAL	TWO PIN ROUND	HIGHEST TEMP.	26° C
LANGUAGE	FRENCH	LOWEST TEMP.	5° C
EMERGENCY	112	PEAK SEASON	JUNE - SEPT





TRANSPORT TALK



BY WHEELS

Hiring a car in the Loire Valley is smart thinking. That way, you can give into your whims and stop at any roadside chateau or eatery that takes your fancy.



BY BIKE

Loire is a two-wheeler's dream, thanks in no small part to the signposted 800-kilometre Loire à vélo route, which runs through the valley.



BY TAXI

Taxis are readily available and can be found at taxi ranks in most town centres as well as outside rail stations. You are also able to pre book through local cab companies



BY WATER

With the Loire valley being in a fairly central location there are a variety of ferry crossings available. Options include St Malo port or Cherbourg within a few hours' drive.



BY AIR

You can fly from the UK straight in to the heart of the region to Tours Val de Loire Airport, however the only airline that serves this destination is Ryanair.



BY BUS OR TRAIN

Local bus services are less frequent and – as they are intended to primarily serve school children – can be fairly irregular in summer.

HIDDEN GEMS AND ACTIVITIES

Chateau de Villesavin

This family-owned chateau offers whimsical romance with its cherub-covered chapel roof and quirky wedding museum.

Chateau de Meung sur Loire

With its dungeons, visitors can descend to the cold, murky depths to see the prison cells and medieval torture instruments of yore.



Troo

Known as troglodyte homes, these residences are essentially domesticated cave dwellings, which locals moved into after quarry workers were sourcing stone for the royal chateaux.

La Borne

Most visitors pass through the slumbering little village of La Borne, but those who find time to stay will discover a pottery scene unrivalled in the region.

- ★ Hidden Gems
- ★ Picks for Kids
- ★ Best Activities
- ★ Foodie Delights

TOP PICKS FOR KIDS

See Stuffed Creatures



The Loire Valley is steeped in history and provides loads of interesting things for kids to enjoy. The [Natural History Museum](#) is a great day out, and kids will be fascinated by the live animals on show.



Go Donkey Trekking



One way of exploring the byways and country lanes of the Loire Valley is on a noble steed. Why not try [A Dos D'Ane](#), where you can wander around a forest with a friendly donkey to carry the kids (and your picnic).



Conquer a Castle



The castles and chateaux that dot the Loire Valley's landscape are ripe for exploration. [Forteresse Du Faucon Noir](#) is particularly exciting for kids, featuring costumed actors to help create a medieval atmosphere.



Soar the Skies



If you've got kids who love adventure, give them an experience they'll never forget! See the Loire Valley's beauty from a whole new perspective with [Balloon Revolution](#), who arrange fantastic balloon flights.



Get Your Thrills



This family-friendly theme park is a sure-fire boredom buster for families. For a high-adrenaline experience, test out some of [Papéa Parc's](#) themed rides, or small waterpark area!



Meet the Lions



This Loire Valley zoo is among the best in France. Some 1,200 animals are kept in [La Fleche Zoo](#) enclosures, which replicate their natural environments in the wild. You can even try a feeding session as well!



MAP IT OUT: WHERE TO FIND THE BEST FOR KIDS



Get your thrills ★
Meet the lions ★
Angers ●

★Go Donkey trekking

★See stuffed creatures

● Nantes

Tours ●

★Soar through skies

★Conquer a Castle

● Orléans

CROWD-PLEASERS: BEST GROUP ACTIVITIES

Rent Bikes



Hiring a bike and taking a trip around the Loire Valley's beautiful countryside is well worth doing! Especially if the weather is on your side. [Detours de Loire](#) are a great place to hire bikes from.



Take to the Skies



One particularly unique group activity on offer in the Loire Valley is [AviaSim](#). Found in the city of Tours, it's a flight simulator for your whole group where you can pit your piloting skills against each other.



Go Chateaux Hopping



Taking a tour is a grand way to see the Loire Valley, whether you're off to learn more about the regions history or just where the top-rated vineyards are. Or you could do both, with a tour from [Loire Valley Tours](#).



Find Peace and Quiet



You can find loads of parks and green spaces throughout the Loire Valley that are ripe for exploration! [Parc Oriental de Maulévrier](#) is a Japanese-style garden that's as relaxing as it is beautiful.



Cruise the Loire



The Loire River has a character and a beauty all its own, so there's bound to be something to tempt you onto the water at some point. You could start off with a wonderful riverboat trip from [Naviloire](#).



Sound and Light Show



At [Royal Chateau de Blois](#) you and your group can explore the chateau by day, but the best time to visit to this magnificent estate is during one of the nightly son et lumière (sound and light) shows. Bringing history to light!



MAP IT OUT: WHERE TO FIND THE BEST FOR GROUPS





BEST FOODIE DELIGHTS



Chateau de Petit Thouars.

While you're in the Loire Valley you'll definitely want to investigate the region's wines, [Chateau de Petit Thouars](#) is the perfect place to start! this estate offers a variety of tastings, and even a boat tour!



River Loire



How about taking some of that fine Loire Valley gastronomy back home! [RiverLoire](#) offers culinary masterclasses in a variety of locations. Finish the lesson with enjoying the fruits of your labour!



L 'Orangerie

Head to Chenonceaux to sample the delights of [L'Orangerie](#). It's not only the food that's brilliant- the view over the beautiful chateau grounds will make your meal even more memorable.



Restaurant La Parenthèse



Looking for hearty and traditional French fare? [Restaurant La Parenthèse](#), which is found in Orléans, serves up fine French food without skimping on the portions. Be sure to book in advance!



Dish to try



The Loire Valley's celebrated **Sainte Maure du Touraine** is a firm, aged goat's cheese with a very distinct flavour.

The region's **white asparagus** is rightly prized by gourmands of all stripes.

Restaurant La Maison d'à Côté



[Restaurant La Maison d'à Côté](#) in Montlivault prides itself on the way the seasons are reflected in their menu, which changes so the freshest local produce is utilised in the most delicious way possible.



MAP IT OUT: WHERE TO FIND THE BEST FOR FOODIES





We'd like to think we know travel pretty well. Since we first hatched [Oliver's Travels](#) in 2003 it's been essentially all we've talked about. You could call us obsessed.

Our extensive [blog](#), Oliver's Journal has got tons of information and inspiration on locations across Europe and the Caribbean. It's a one-stop shop for family-friendly holiday fun, the best group activities, foodie finds and a good dose of adventure. If you found this travel guide useful, (we hope you did!), you can find a whole host more on the blog, too!

At Oliver's Travels we don't do ordinary. From family [chateaux in the Loire Valley](#) and [large party houses in the UK](#), to Mediterranean [villas with pools](#) and [Caribbean beach villas](#), we have something for everyone, everywhere.



Oliver

Get in touch

0800 133 7999

Follow Us



www.oliverstravels.com

Oliver's Travels
YOUR GREAT ESCAPE