

# TRAVEL + LEISURE

DESTINATIONS > EUROPE > FRANCE

## This Beautiful French City in Provence Is Known as the City of a Thousand Fountains — and It Has Over 300 Days of Sunshine a Year

Here's how to plan a trip to Aix-en-Provence that's "parfait."

By [Lindsay Cohn](#) | Published on August 10, 2024



PHOTO: XBRCHX/GETTY IMAGES

As a travel writer with a fondness for the South of France, my love of its quaint hilltop villages, lavender fields, glimmering beaches, and under-the-radar islands is well-documented. But this enchanting region has more than just pastoral pleasures in store for visitors. The university city of Aix-en-Provence, or simply Aix (pronounced like the letter X), feels quite cosmopolitan with leafy boulevards, 18th-century mansions, and chic shops that have earned it nicknames like the "21st arrondissement" or the "Paris of Provence." Its grand thoroughfare Cours Mirabeau looks like a film set with leafy trees, historic fountains (Aix is also called "the city of a thousand fountains"), and sidewalk cafés. Art buffs will enjoy the many museums. The large student population imbues a youthful spirit. And the pleasant year-round weather — with over 300 days of sunshine, on average — encourages dining al fresco at the many lovely restaurant terraces.

Here's how to plan the perfect trip to Aix-en-Provence.

# Best Hotels & Resorts



PHOTO: COURTESY OF RELAIS & CHÂTEAUX

## Château de la Gaude

[Château de la Gaude](#), a beautiful 18th-century bastide-turned-high-end Relais & Châteaux hotel, puts an emphasis on the deeply French pleasures of gastronomy, wine, and art. The laid-back pace encourages you to linger over a plate of Cavailon melon and cured ham with a glass of perfectly chilled rosé at the Michelin-rated restaurant before admiring Bernar Venet's work in the garden.