Marseille is one of largest cities in southern France and is also one of the most pleasant for visitors.

**Population**: 1 720 000 inhabitants

**Population Density**: 3535 inhab/ km²

**Name of inhabitants**: the Marseillais

**Arrondissements**: Marseille is one of three French cities (along with Lyon and Paris) to be divided into arrondissements. It is made up of 16 see the arrondissements on a [map](#).

**Region**: Provence-Alpes Côte d’Azur

**Postal code**: from 13001 to 13016

**Maps**: [Google Maps](#)
2/ TRANSPORTS

Marseille is a particularly dynamic city that is constantly expanding. Also, in the past ten years, the public transportation network hasn’t stopped improving and growing.

BY CAR

Marseille being one of the largest French cities, you can easily get there by car. For example, highways A1, A6, and A7 will get you there from Paris or Lille.

Regarding getting around the city, we really recommend leaving the car parked and using public transportation or walking. In fact, parking spots are rare and the traffic is often pretty heavy, especially during rush hours.

Taxis: To get around by taxi, the fare might be a bit high, but, outside rush hours, it will be easier (and quicker) to get around by taxi than with your own car.

A few taxi companies:
http://www.taximarseille.com/
http://www.lestaxismarseillais.com/

BY BUS

The city has a large network of bus lines (119 lines in total) that service numerous stops within the city as well as outside the city. The network is very dense and you’ll easily find a bus to take you wherever you desire. Our advice: because of heavy traffic in the city, we recommend avoiding peak hours for traffic and to be patient. The buses in Marseille rarely go over 12 km/h. If you are in a hurry and/or late, choose another alternative.

Prices:

many preferential prices were created by the RTM (management for transportation in Marseille). For occasional tourists and travelers, the price for a bus ticket is up to 1.50 euros.
The RTM also offers cards worth 10 trips for 13.50 euros.

**Useful information:**


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**BY TUBE**

Marseille has had two metro lines since 2010. These service a total of 30 stations in the city and there are expansions still in progress.

Our advice: although there aren’t many, the metro lines are particularly efficient to get to the city center.

**Prices:**

The price for a metro ticket is the same as for a bus ticket. The same discounts and other preferential pricing apply to it as well.

**Useful information:**

BY TRAMWAY

Two tram lines were opened in 2007. They now service close to 30 stations and this sprawling network is currently under development,

Our advice: just like the metro, the tramway allows you to quickly and easily get around Marseille. Additionally, the tram lines are more extensive than those in the metro and also let you reach the peripheral arrondissements.

Prices:

the price for a tramway ticket is the same as a bus or metro ticket. The same discounts and other preferential pricing apply to it as well.
BY BIKE

Since 2007, the city has installed a bike sharing system. Thanks to “Le vélo”, you can easily rent a bicycle for a limited amount of time to go discover the city. The terminals are open 24/7.

Our advice:

Bicycles are a great alternative in Marseille, especially during a nice day. Thanks to bike paths, you can discover the most beautiful places in the city alone, with a partner, or with the whole family. Additionally, the system is really practical and it takes just two minutes to rent a bike.

Prices:
the first 30 minutes are free. After 30 minutes, you are charged for 0.50 euros per hour.

Informations: [here](#)
BY TRAIN

Thanks to the TGV that services the Marseille Saint-Charles train station, you can connect to Marseille from Paris in just 3 hours by train. By TGV, you can also go to Marseille from northern and western France.

The “Intercité” trains from Marseille allow you to explore the region and other large cities in southern France like Grenoble, Montpellier, Aix-en-Provence, but also Savoy and Switzerland.

Useful information:
http://www.gares-en-mouvement.com/fr/frmsc/accueil/

BY PLANE

The closest airport is the International Marseille Provence Airport, located 25 kilometers north of the city center. Air traffic from the Marseille airport is mostly directed towards Paris, Corsica, and North Africa. There are also connections to Canada and the United States (New York).

There are shuttles that allow you to get from the center of Marseille to the airport.

For more information visit http://www.marseille-airport.com/
Maritime transportation

Marseille opens up to the Mediterranean, so there are numerous connections possible via the sea. In fact, the city is connected to over 120 countries thanks to its maritime transportation. It is also one of the main access points to Corsica.

Useful information:

http://www.marseille-port.fr/en/Accueil/
3/ WHEN TO GO?

Located in Provence and next to the Mediterranean Sea, Marseille enjoys a pleasant climate, very sunny and nice throughout the year. To fully take advantage of the nice weather and the best cultural gatherings, we recommend to go there between April and September, but the region is still very pleasant in winter. Additionally, despite the summer heat, the climate is never stifling thanks to the Mistral wind that blows all summer.

Concerning cultural activities, the summer is undoubtedly the richest and most diversified season. In fact, whether you are a lover of petanque, film, jazz, or contemporary music, you won’t be disappointed by your trip. The season begins early with the Fête du Soleil, a festival that brings together concerts, meetings, and workshops in the Nouailles neighborhood and focuses on the inhabitants’ energy and good feelings. The largest cultural gathering of the summer is still the Festival de Marseille that takes place between mid-June and mid-July. You’ll attend a line-up of musical and theatrical performances as well as film showings that are well awaited and refined. You can also attend the Marseillaise à Pétanque, an international championship of this famous regional sport that brings together the most talented champions in July.

In winter, particularly during the Christmas season, you can discover the Provençal traditions that are highlighted in November and December during the Foire aux Santons, which has survived for more than 200 years and exhibits the most beautiful nativity figurines.

In January, you’ll undoubtedly enjoy the folklore from La Pastorale, a play telling the story of the nativity in song and in Provençal, above all else. A tradition in Marseille that has also lasted for many centuries.

For the more sporty people, there are many events planned in spring. This is the case especially for the SNIM ((International Nautical Week in Marseille), a large regatta that takes place aboard Melges 24 ships during 5 days in April. In May, it is the Massilia Cup that takes the reins for a sailing challenge that many competitors from the Tour de France à la Voile participate in.

4/ INFORMATIONS AND USEFUL ADDRESSES

Useful:
Emergency number: dial number 112
Fire: dial number 18
Ambulance (medical emergency): dial number 15
Police: dial number 17
Missing children: dial number 116
Transportation:
Public transportation: http://www.rtm.fr/en
Le Vélo bike service: http://www.levelo-mpm.fr/
Taxis: http://www.taximarseille.com/
http://www.lestaxismarseillais.com/
Marseille Saint Charles train station: http://www.gares-en-mouvement.com/fr/frmsc/accueil/
Marseille Provence Airport: http://www.marseille-airport.com/
Port de Marseille: http://www.marseille-port.fr/en/Accueil/

Museums and Touristic Sites:
Basilique Notre Dame de la Garde: http://www.notredamedelagarde.com/
La Vieille Charité:
Le Palais Longchamp:
http://www.marseille-tourisme.com/en/discover-marseille/heritage/the-palais-longchamp/?L=0L%252525252525253D0L%252525253D0L%252525252525253D0
Le MuCem: http://www.mucem.org/en
Musée d'Histoire de Marseille:
http://www.marseille-tourisme.com/en/what-to-do/visit-marseille/museums/marseille-history-museum/?L=1L%2525253D1L%25253D1L%252525253D1

5/ BUDGET IN MARSEILLE

Accommodation:
The following prices are indicative. They refer to a one night stay in a standard double bedroom and may be subject to confirmation at the time of booking.

- Good deal: between 20 and 50 euros. For that price, rooms will be functional, but very basic and often in neighborhoods that are out of the way.

- Average price: from 50 to 90 euros. You'll have the chance to discover some lovely unpretentious hotels or Bed & Breakfasts for the family that are located in the city center.

- Classy: from 90 to 120 euros. For that price you can expect a very nice hotel that is well equipped (pools won’t be too rare in the Marseille area) and well located.

- Very classy: 120 and more. Few establishments in Marseille have such high prices (except during large events and in the busy season) but there are still a handful of luxury hotels close to Vieux Port.

Take a look at our website to find a place to stay in Marseille.
Restaurants:

The prices indicated below are given purely for reference and include the price of a meal for one person.

Snacks: between 5 and 15 euros.

To refresh yourself during the summer, we recommend ice cream from Vanille Noire. In a classy and designer décor, you can try the best ice cream in Marseille or have your cone to go and taste it at Vieux Port.

For those who love salty snacks, go to Food Corner, a New York style snack shop that offers bagels, hotdogs, burgers, and other salty treats.

(Vanille Noire, 13 rue Caisserie)
(Food Corner, 1 montée des Accoules)

A bigger meal: from 15 to 35 euros.

For refined and original French cuisine, we recommend O'Bidul and its colorful dishes in a warm family atmosphere. Go ahead and try the chef’s recipes.

For a more typical culinary experience in Marseille, don't hesitate to stop by Cabanon du Cours, an establishment that specializes in Mediterranean cuisine that will let you discover and enjoy the dishes of the French Riviera.

(O'Bidul, 79 rue de la Palud)

Fine dining: between 35 and 90 euros.

If you are searching for a gourmet restaurant, try your luck at the restaurant of the starred chef, Alexandre Mazzia, the AM. His refined cuisine that is full of emotion will delight your taste buds as well as your awestruck eyes!

For a more traditional gourmet adventure, we recommend the restaurant Chez Michel that offers typical dishes for the region.

(AM, 9 rue François Rocca)
(Chez Michel, 6 rue des Catalans)

A very special occasion: between 90 and 130 euros.

For an exceptional evening, we recommend the Restaurant Peron, a magnificent establishment that will serve you a meal (and a view over the Mediterranean) that will take your breath away. However, you should think about making reservations.

(Restaurant Peron, 56 Pro Corniche John Kennedy)
6/ UNMISSABLE VISITS!

La Cannebière: this famous geographical landmark in Marseille is a kilometer-long artery that connects the Réformés neighborhood to the Vieux Port. The street's name actually pays homage to the city’s history since Marseille has been one of the largest trading posts for hemp, which was destined to be made into rigging. It would be impossible to go down this lively street which is now crossed by the tramway's line 1.

Old Marseille: In this historical neighborhood in the city, wander around and discover the surroundings full of charm. In addition to being really authentic, the neighborhood is overflowing with little artisans where you can find a lot of quality souvenirs! Located between the Quai du Port and the Quai de la Tourette, this neighborhood is found in the center of the city, close to the Vieux Port.

The Pharo Palace: Built under Napoleon III, this palace is an emblematic monument for the city. It overlooks the Mediterranean Sea and offers you a magnificent view of the horizon. The palace is used today as a conference hall, but you can still visit it throughout the year for free.

The Cité Radieuse de Marseille: constructed between 1947 and 1952 from an original idea from the great architect, Le Corbusier, this architectural masterpiece is now one of the symbols of the city of Marseille. Today the building is still inhabited, but you can still admire the exterior. The Cité Radieuse is located in the 8th arrondissement, south of the city center, and is free to visit.

Notre Dame de la Garde: The “good mother”, as the people of Marseille call it, looks over the city and has quickly become its emblem. Built between 1858 and 1864, this Roman-byzantine basilica can be visited throughout the year. You can also attend mass, which still takes place under its arches. It is free to visit.

La Vieille Charité: this old general hospital, built during the 17th century, now contains the Museum of Mediterranean Archaeology, the Musée des Arts Africains, Océaniens, Amérindiens as well as the International Poetry Center Marseille, the film library “Le Miroir”, and halls for temporary exhibits. As an excellent cultural center, you will always enjoy its original and eclectic programming, and it’s free to visit.
**The Palais Longchamp**: this building from the 19th century now houses the city’s Natural History Museum as well as the Fine Arts Museum and Marseille’s observatory. You can enjoy a visit to walk among its beautiful French gardens that surround the Palais, and it is all free to visit.

The **Marseille History Museum**: located two steps from Vieux Port and right in the city center, this museum (now completely renovated) retraces the city’s history since prehistory up to modern times. Fall in love with its original and minimalist architecture all while learning more about Marseille.

Prices: 5 euros at full price, 3 euros at reduced price (for those under 26, students, and seniors), and free for anyone under 18.

**The Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations**: this museum was created in 2013 when Marseille was elected the European capital of culture. In homage to its cultural legacy, the city decided to construct a multidisciplinary museum where anthropology, history, archaeology, art history, and contemporary art could come together. Innovating and original, the building welcomes you throughout the year.

Prices: 8 euros at full price and 5 euros at reduced price (for those under 26, students, and seniors).

*This travel guide was published in November 2014, prices may then vary.*