

Poitiers Travel Guide



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1/ GENERAL



Poitiers, located in the Vienne department, is the biggest city in the Poitou-Charentes region, right before La Rochelle, Niort and Angoulême. Nicknamed “La Ville aux cent clochers” [“The City with 100 bell towers”], Poitiers has a huge architectural heritage.

Population: 87 646 inhabitants

Area: 42,11 km²

Population Density: 2081 inhab/ km² (miles square)

Demonym : Pictaviens, Pictaviennes .

Région: Poitou-Charentes

Postcode : 86000

Maps : [Google Maps](#)



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2/ TRANSPORT

BY CAR

Traveling to Poitiers is very easy. If you leave from Paris, take the A10 for 3h30 (340 km). The budget for this travel won't go over €35*.

Once in town, you will have several options as to where you can leave your car

- [Car parks](#)

There are 8 car parks located around the city center. If you plan to leave your car for less than 3 hours, you will pay €0,30* per 15 minutes. If you stay between 3 and 8 hours, each 15 minutes cost €0,20*.

- [Parcobus](#)

This solution is economical, convenient and environmentally-friendly. First, leave your car in one of the three free Parcobus car parks located around the the city center. Second, take a bus that will drop you in the heart of the city. It's as simple as that!

BY TRAIN

Leaving from Paris, you can take a direct TGV to Poitiers. Many trains leave the capital everyday to take you to "La Ville aux cent clochers" in only 1h30. The station is in Poitiers city center. Should you want to visit the Futuroscope, please note that you can take a direct train (TER) that will drop you there in only 10 minutes.

To book tickets, please visit the [SNCF Website](#).

BY PLANE

For those who have decided to travel by plane, please note that the [Poitiers-Biard airport](#) is only 10 minutes away from the city center. Many regular flights can take you to the main French and European cities.



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Getting around town

- By bus

The [Vitalis](#) network counts around 20 bus lines, meaning that you can easily travel around town.

If you don't plan to take the bus that often during your stay, the one-way ticket is what you need: it costs €1,30* and you can use it for an hour. However, if you plan to take the bus more than once a day, we recommend you to take the Ticket Jour Découverte: it costs €4,10* and a group of 4 people can take the bus for an entire day.

As for those who want to go to the Futuroscope without a car, you can take the Line 1 and be there in only 30 minutes.

- By bike

Today, major French cities offer you to rent bikes for just a couple hours or a complete day. Since its creation, this has become a common activity. Unlike Paris' Velib' or Dijon's VéloDi, Poitiers doesn't have bike stations. Nevertheless, there are three [Cap sur le Vélo](#) agencies where you can rent your bike. Please note that there are 250 standard bikes and more than 600 electric bikes. As prices are very attractive, you can make a gesture for the environment without losing your shirt!

- By Otolis

If you don't want to rent a bike, rent a car thanks to Otolis, a car-sharing system made in Poitiers! You need to subscribe a contract, book a car and then, you're free to use it wherever you want for as long as you want. Many people use car-sharing everyday, will you be next?



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- March:

- You like music, culture and partying? [Campus en Festival](#) is the student event you need. Whether you are a student yourself or not, you can attend theme parties, concerts, plays, exhibitions and lectures so that every single participant can have an amazing time there.

- April :

- [The Gamers Assembly](#)

If you're mad about the gaming sphere, this is THE event you need to go to. Created in 2000, The Gamers Assembly takes place at the Palais des Expositions de Poitiers. Whether you're a gamer or just a visitor, you can either participate in the contests or just be a spectator. Tournaments, cosplay, live shows are just a tiny hint of what you will see during those three days

- [Festival A Corps](#)

This festival only lasts one week and puts the Body to the foreground. Many live shows take place in the streets, all performed by students or professional dancers who know how to surprise you. Forget about speech, your body is the real means of communication.

- June :

- [Polychromies at Notre-Dame](#)

The first show took place in 1995. From June to September, marvel at the beautiful colours projected on the cathedral. Thanks to this show, you can discover what this medieval cathedral looked like when there were still kings and knights in Poitiers.

- [Poitiers Éclats d'été](#)

Every year, Poitiers asks you out during the Éclat d'Été. You can attend many different live performances designed for the little ones as well as for adults. This festival has everything in store to make you spend an amazing summer.

- July :



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- [Les Nuits Romanes](#)

This is the perfect opportunity to discover - or re-discover - Poitiers architectural heritage. Artistic, pyrotechnic and musical shows take place in the most beautiful churches in Poitiers. Furthermore, you can discover and taste local products while enjoying the shows.

- [Le Carnaval des Emplumés](#)

Put your costumes on! Even Poitiers colours itself for Mardi Gras. Parades, brass bands and good humour are de rigueur. Each year has a specific theme so that you can always enjoy a wonderful show

- Christmas in Poitiers :

The Christmas market stays in town for 5 weeks.

- Place Leclerc

You have no idea of what to offer for Christmas? Listen to the wise advice of the stallholders. They all have original and tasty products in store, you just need to choose!

- Parc de Blossac

If you wish to spend some time in a joyful atmosphere, go to the funfair. Located in the Parc de Blossac, the merry-go-rounds and cash machines are waiting for you!

- Square de la République

Love birds and romantic travelers will be delighted to get around town in a carriage.

At Christmas time, several street shows take place every day to enthrall children as well as their parents.



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4/ INFORMATION AND USEFUL ADDRESSES

Traveller information :

Tourist information center : <http://uk.poitiers-tourism.com/>

Emergency number: dial 112 (European number)

Fire brigade: dial 18

Ambulance / Paramedics: dial 15

Police: dial 17

Missing children: dial 116000

National center for emergency calls for people with hearing problems: dial 114

Museums and touristic sites :

The Church of Notre-Dame-la-Grande:

<http://www.tourisme-vienne.com/en/activite/248/eglise-notre-dame-la-grand>

Saint John's Baptistery:

<http://www.tourisme-vienne.com/en/activite/244/baptistere-saint-jean>

Saint Peter's Cathedral:

<http://www.tourisme-vienne.com/en/activite/247/cathedrale-saint-pierre>

The Church of Saint-Hilaire-le-Grand:

<http://www.tourisme-vienne.com/en/activite/249/eglise-saint-hilaire-le-grand>

The Church of Saint-Radegonde:

<http://www.tourisme-vienne.com/en/activite/251/eglise-sainte-radegonde>

The Former Palace of the Earls of Poitou, Dukes of Aquitaine:

<http://www.tourisme-vienne.com/en/activite/254/ancien-palais-des-comtes-du-poitou-ducs-d-aquitaine-la-salle-des-pas-perdus>

Futuroscope :

<http://en.futuroscope.com/>

Treasure Hunts:

<http://uk.poitiers-tourism.com/home/discover/culture/treasurehunt.aspx>



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5/ BUDGET IN POITIERS



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.

- **Economical accommodation (between 30 and 50 euros)** : You will stay in comfortable and cosy hotels, some even having 2 or 3 stars. However, those hotels are a bit far from the city center.
- **Average price (between 50 and 100 euros)** : : You can stay at 2, 3 and even 4-star hotels. Most of them are in the city center and close to the train station.

Should you need further information, please visit France Hotel Guide [website](#).

Restaurants :

Les prix indiqués ci-dessous sont purement indicatifs et concernent le prix d'un plat ou menu pour une personne.

From 2 to 18 euros : To have a break in an out of time place, the [Jasmin Citronnelle](#) is the place to be. The Victorian atmosphere of this tea house sounds very promising. Whether you want to eat a sweet or salty treat, dig in to have a taste of happiness. Scones, whipped cream, pies and a steamy pot of tea instantly become synonyms of temptation.

If you'd rather spend some time in a genuine american atmosphere, go to the [What's Up Coffee](#). You will instantly melt for the zingy range of colours on the walls and the sweet treats. This café has everything in store, from the traditional Muffin to the exquisite Bagel: what's your favourite one ?

(Jasmin Citronnelle, 32 rue Gambetta)
(What's Up Coffe, 28 rue Sadi Carnot)

From 10 to 30 euros : The bistrot français [Le Toqué !](#) is located close to the Church of



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Notre-Dame-la-Grance. The Chef only presents generous and tasty recipes using local products. To experience something always different and new, the menu constantly changes according to the seasons.

Just a few steps from the hotel, [le Café Gourmand](#) is another typical bistrot. The courses are generous and colourful: in one word, they taste like heaven.

(Toqué!, 44 rue de la Cathédrale)

(Le Café Gourmand, 1 rue Régratterie)

From 25 to 70 euros : To spend an amazing time in an amazing place, [Les Archives](#) is the place to do so. Before this magnificent gastronomic restaurant, there were the nave and choir of a church. Today, Les Archives perfectly combines elegance, originality and deliciousness.

(Les Archives, 14 rue Edouard Grimaux)

Culinary Specialities

- [Le Chabichou](#)

This cheese is the emblem of the Poitou. Made from goat milk, it first appeared during the 8th century. After the Battle of Poitiers, some Saracen families decided to settle in the region, bringing their goats with them. If you want to savour its taste properly, you can have some Chabichou cheese with an excellent white wine (in moderation of course!)

- [Le farci poitevin](#)

Made with green vegetables like cabbage, Swiss chard, spinach and sorrel, the farci poitevin is a typical regional dish. As for the recipe: chisel the vegetables, mix them with pork cubes and put the mixture in the cabbage leaves. Finally, place the leaves in a pot with water and herbs. À table !



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6/ UNIMISSABLE VISITS !



Poitiers definitely deserves its nickname. The main sites you have to see are all religious buildings.

[The Church of Notre-Dame-la-Grande](#) : Registered as Historic Monument in 1840, the sumptuous façade of this Roman church is unanimously recognized as an architectural chef-d'oeuvre. The numerous scenes carved into the front piece are scenes taken from the Bible. During the [Polychromies](#), this once colourful

[Saint Peter's Cathedral](#) : This site is less known than Notre-Dame-la-Grande. Nevertheless, this cathedral has nothing to be ashamed of. The construction of this Gothic Angevin building was conducted by Aliénor d'Aquitaine and Henri II Plantagenêt. Registered as Historic Monument in 1875, this cathedral is the biggest religious building in Poitiers.

[Saint John's Baptistery](#) : The central part's foundations date back to the 360's. This architectural edifice never stopped being improved. Today, it is considered as one of the oldest Christian monuments in Europe.

[The Church of Saint-Hilaire-le-Grand](#) : The construction started during the 11th century. Around 1562, during the Wars of Religion, the church was sacked by the Protestants and its bell tower was seriously damaged. Several renovation campaigns succeeded to restore its splendour.

[The Church of Sainte-Radegonde](#) : This Gothic Angevin church dates back to the 6th century. Just like the church of Saint-Hilaire-le-Grand, Sainte-Radegonde was renovated many times. Queen Radegonde's sarcophagus is concealed in the crypt. She was the wife of Chlothar I, the sanctified Frankish king.

[The Former Palace of the Earls of Poitou, Dukes of Aquitaine](#) : This is a true architectural jewel. After the French Revolution, the palace became a court hall. The construction of the famous *Salle des Pas Perdus* was once again conducted by Aliénor d'Aquitaine. At that time, the dimensions of this room were very impressive.



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[The Futuroscope](#) : This leisure park is totally different from what you know. The attractions explore the themes of new technologies, science and science-fiction. There has to be one for you! There's one rule: those attractions have to be enlightening. You can embark upon playful and sensorial rides and improve your knowledge at the same time. The Futuroscope is the second most visited leisure park in France, right behind Disneyland and before the Parc Astérix.

[Treasure Hunts](#) : Adults are children at heart. If you want an unconventional tour of Poitiers, try the treasure hunts and find the famous "Women of the past". You can download the app for free on the AppStore and Google Play. Each clue enables you to unblock a descriptive note about Poitiers. Let's start the game!

*This travel guide was published in April 2015, prices may then vary.