

7 Loire Chateaux

from

L A B A U D O N N I E R E

I N T R O D U C T I O N

BE SPONTANEOUS

Welcome to La Baudonnière in Pays de la Loire, France. We offer camping, Bed and Breakfast, and self-catering cottage accommodations in the lovely Vendée area.

In addition to our guest facilities with swimming pool, playground, and games room, the Vendee has quite a wide variety of suitable activities for our guests but... we do live near de Loire Valley where castles of all types add an air of mystery and romance to the landscape, and claim their spot of history.

We'd like to introduce you to a few chateaux that are more than worth a visit and your time. The selection we made will satisfy history buffs, those who enjoy beauty and architecture, as well as travelers with a thirst for adventure.

We wish you safe travels. Above all: have a cracking good time!

The Bannigans

Photo La Baudonnière by Brenda Valcke



THE FAIRY TALE

Château d'Ussé

This wonderful castle has inspired many. It is said that Château d'Ussé and its romantic architecture was the inspiration for Sleeping Beauty. Which is why this is a great place to bring your children or grandchildren. The fairy tale has been beautifully depicted in the self-guided chateau tour.

Only half is open to visitors, as the chateau is still a family home and inhabited. But there is plenty to see including attics (intriguing!), children's rooms, winery, chapel, stables, gorgeous interior etc.

Nearby: the city of *Chinon* which also has a chateau and is a medieval treasure. *Thouars* is also worth a stop but along the route, there are many more châteaux and ancient chapels to make the 2hr drive worth every second. [Directions](#) [Website](#) (125km, 1hr58)

- A couple of restaurants in the village
- Small outdoor snack shack across from the castle
- Picnic spots
- Free parking
- Wear walking shoes
- Any age but climbing stairs is involved
- Dogs allowed!



T H E T A L L E S T

Château Brissac

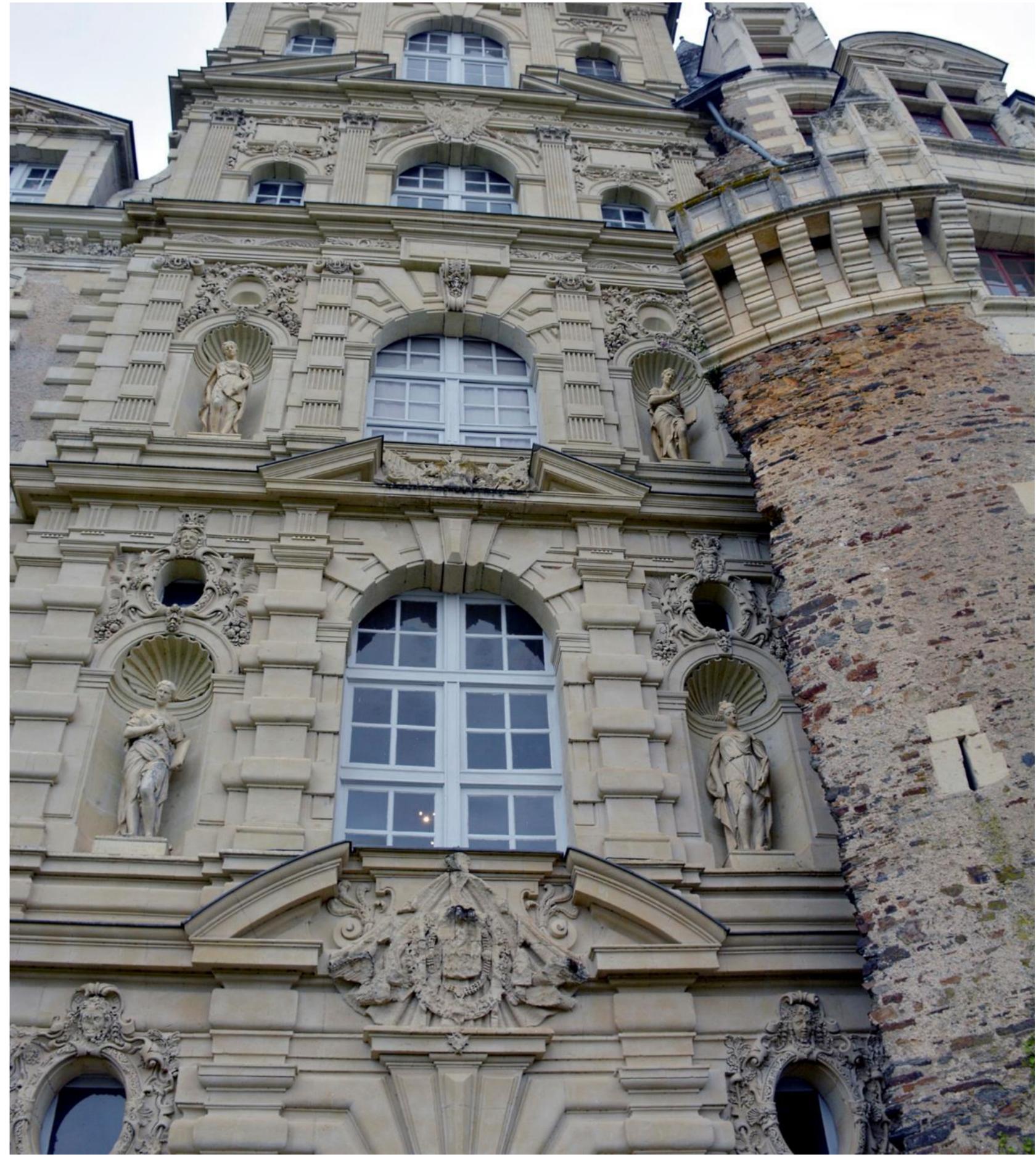
Château Brissac is the tallest castle in France and the family who owns it-and lives in it- take conservation and restauration very seriously. Upon entering for the guided tour, it is immediately apparent that it is a home.

Only some floors are open to visitors, but everything you'll see represents unsurpassed craftsmanship. Pay particular attention to the handcrafted ceilings, the newly restored theater (still used), the underground corridors, and the truly remarkable bedchamber of King Louis XIII. [Directions Website](#) (240km, 3hrs15)

Wine (rosé) tasting and opportunity to purchase at the end of the tour.

- A couple of restaurants nearby
- Tearoom by the entrance
- Picnic spots
- Free parking in the village
- Wear walking shoes
- Lovely garden
- There is an elevator in the château
- Tip the guide

Photo Brenda Valcke



A D V E N T U R E

Château de Brézé

Château de Breze is truly a surprise for those of us who love history and have an adventurous spirit. Strangely, it is not the castle you can see that is the best feature here. There is only a small portion of the château to see, of which the most interesting are the servants and servants of servants quarters, and the bishop's bedchamber.

What is truly spectacular here, is the original castle which is located underground, the deepest dry mote in Europe which surrounds the "new" castle, and the dwellings more recently discovered within the rocks.

A visit to this chateau will send your adventurous spirit (and that of your children) into imagination overdrive.

Absolutely not to miss! [Directions](#) [Website](#)
(99km, 1hrs35)

- Warning signs posted for people with heart/mobility issues
- Not ideal for people who suffer severe claustrophobia
- Picnic spots
- Free parking by the chateau
- Wear walking shoes
- Wine country
- Tour (bring a flashlight/ torch to shine a light in all the nooks and crannies)

Photo Brenda Valcke

Also COVER PHOTO Chateau de Breze by Brenda Valcke



I M P R E S S I V E

Chambord

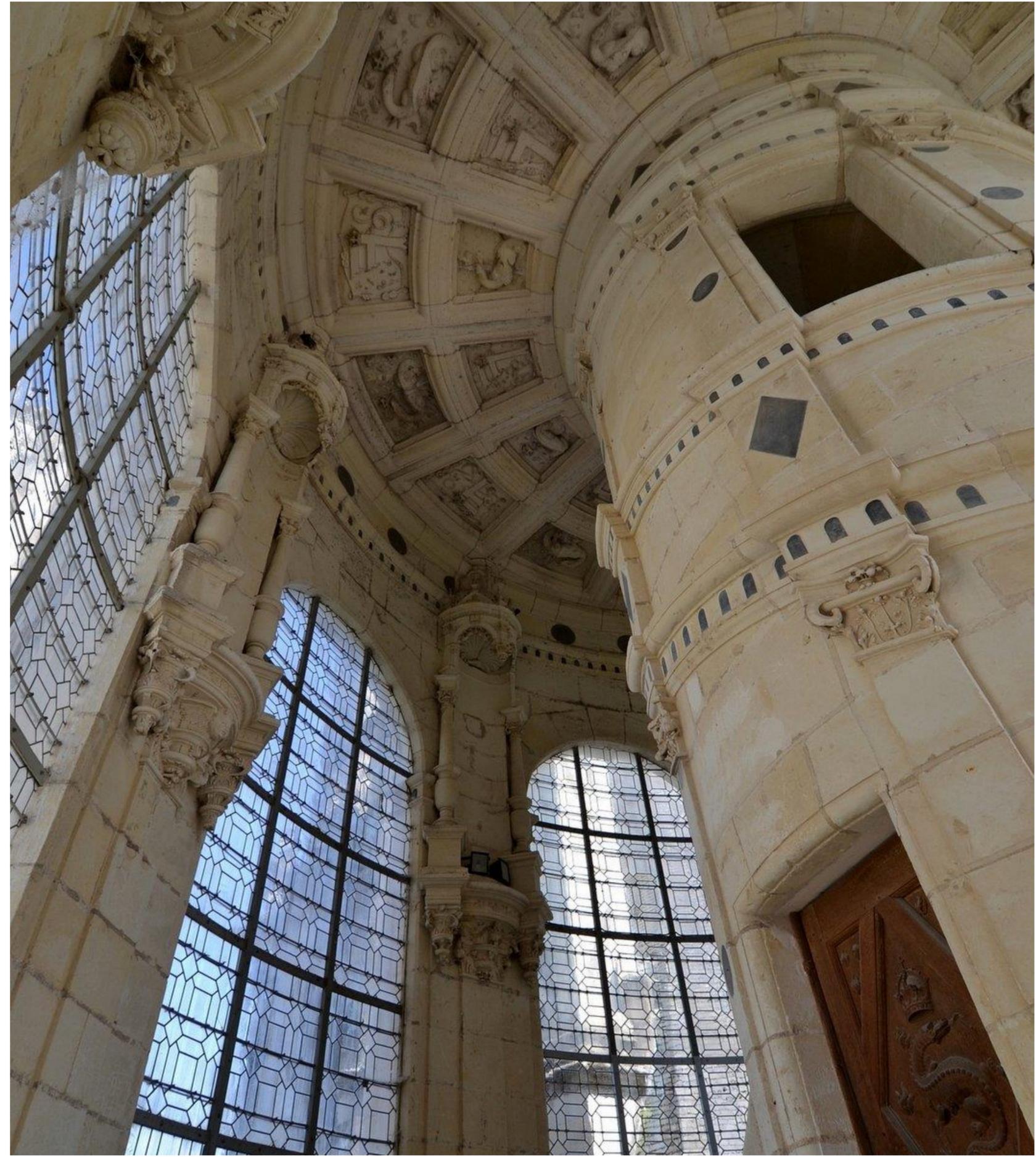
Without question the most stunning château in the Loire Valley and not surprisingly, another stunning vision by King Louis XIV and his brilliant architects. Just the vision of the numerous towers and chimneys as you arrive at the car park, is breathtaking, so be prepared to be bowled over by your first full view of the château. Like the Château de Versailles, photographs can by no means do it justice.

Despite the longer drive from La Baudonnière, this is a marvel not to be missed and because of their close proximity, you might loop this visit in with a tour of Château de Chenonceau. A day of splendor for adventurers, history connoisseurs, castle lovers, photography enthusiasts, and dreamers.

[Directions](#) [Website](#) (240km, 3hrs15)

- Lovely park for walking
- Boating on the lake
- Tours or self-guided
- ** Hotel right next to the château
- Excellent dining opportunities
- Walking shoes
- Picnic spots
- Paid parking

Photo Pixabay.com



E L E G A N C E

Chenonceau

The home of Catherine de Medici is not only whimsical and romantic, it is beautiful especially when the gardens are in full bloom. They are strict about indoor photography here, but you're guaranteed an entirely furnished chateau in a stunning setting. This is the stuff little girl's dreams are made of! The castle was envisioned, furnished, protected and preserved almost entirely by women throughout its history.

One of the most fascinating things to see here are the entirely preserved kitchens located in the piers which span the château across the river; as well as de Medici's bedchamber where she withdrew after the death of her husband.

[Website](#) [Directions](#) (188km, 2hrs30)

- Misc. restaurants on the estate
- Picnic spots
- Maze and preserved gardens
- Free parking
- Knee deep in Loire vintages here – plenty of wine tasting en route!
- Photography enthusiasts (flowers!)

Photo Pixabay.com



M I L I T A R Y

Saumur

Right on the banks of the Loire River, and overlooking the city of Saumur sits this beautiful château which was built for military and defensive purposes. Remarkable here is the vast exhibition of centuries old china and pottery, the beautiful floors, tapestries, and furniture. Restauration is ongoing. A little train departs from the chateau grounds for a wine tour.

The route included here from La Baudonnière takes you right by many other châteaux (follow the signs on a whim) as well as a couple of *Petites Cités de Caractère® de France*, one of which is **Montreuil-Bellay**, also worth a stop with yet another chateau and wine tasting. [Directions Website](#) (104km, 1hr40)

- Guided and solo tours
- A terrific restaurant on site
- Free parking
- Train tour/ wine tasting

Montreuil-Bellay

- Chateau and church
- Walled city with ruins below the chateau near the river
- There are terrific dining options here but for a wonderful meal on a budget, consider the restaurant at ****[Camping Les Nobis d'Anjou](#).

Photo Brenda Valcke



Nantes

The beautiful cosmopolitan city of Nantes has a lot to offer, from shopping, to English language cinema, bookstores, and of course, everything historic including the very large the Château des ducs de Bretagne. The Château boasts a dry/wet moat, 500 meters of embattlements and 7 towers and consists of multiple-era building styles.

Meander the city for a lovely day and add a visit to the château along your route.

[Website](#) [Directions](#) (80km, 1hr07)

- Fabulous dining options in Nantes
- Metropolitan and hip
- Make it a day out!
- Family fun for all ages
- Picnic spots in the moat by the château
- Parking nearby (paid)
- Extra note about parking: avoid the underground parking garages, they are wicked narrow and you might not re-emerge without car damage. There are outdoor car parks which are much easier to navigate and just as convenient to reach.

Photo credit Brenda Valcke



Enjoy your stay!

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We'll respond within 24 hrs.



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