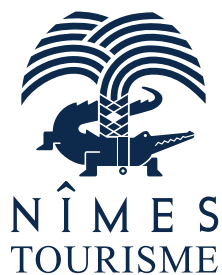


Press
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2021-2022



Office
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Bureau
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Nîmes
over the centuries

Proud of its past and an exceptionally well-conserved ancient heritage, festive when its Ferias arrive, gourmet with regard to its cuisine with perfumes of garrigue, famous all over the world thanks to the bubbles at the nearby Perrier spring, Nîmes has an art of living.

A city of art and history and the origin of the famous denim cloth exported to the United States for making jeans, Nîmes has been and still is a place to stay much loved by writers and artists.

The extensive urban development operations and the opening in 2018 of a large Musée de la Romanité designed by Elizabeth de Portzamparc, the 'French Rome' continues to be embellished.

> 500 BC

The date of the true founding of Nîmes with the settling of a Celtic tribe, the Volcae Arecomici, around the spring. The god Nemausus was worshipped. The Volcae consecrated the spring and made a sanctuary.

> 218 BC

Hannibal came through Nîmes with his elephants.

> 120 BC

With Roman colonisation the Volcae became Gallo-Roman.

> 118 BC

The building of the **Via Domitia** that linked Italy and Spain.

> 1st century AD

Nîmes was at its peak and became an important city of the Roman Empire.

The Romans, having conquered Gaul, wanted to increase the city's splendour and prestige. They allowed the multiplication of thermal baths, fountains and began construction of an aqueduct, circa 50 A.D., from 50 kms, including the imposing Pont du Gard, to supply the city in water.

During the Gallo-Roman period, Nîmes became a colony of Latin law and adorned itself with sumptuous monuments.

At that time, people were minting coins in Nîmes to celebrate the victory of the armies of Octavian on those of Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C.

This currency will be at the origin of the city's coat of arms, the crocodile and the palm tree.

> 3rd century AD

Evangelised by Saint Baudilus, Nîmes had to face the **barbarian invasions** that slowed its growth.

> 673

The **Visigoths** dominated the South of France. They turned the amphitheatre into a fortress and built a castle inside it, seat of power and a Cathedral, the seat of the feudal power of the Church. Trade developed thanks to the vine, olive and livestock.

> 731

Septimania, of which Nîmes formed part, was sacked by Charles Martel's army and the city was set on fire in 737.

> 892

Nîmes was under the authority of the Counts of Toulouse.

> 1207

Four consuls exercised power in Nîmes.

➤ 1226

The Languedoc (in which Nîmes is located) became part of the Kingdom of France. Nîmes was subject to King Louis VIII who was thus master of the Languedoc. Aigues-Mortes became the only access to the Mediterranean.

➤ 1248 et 1270

Louis IX sailed from Aigues-Mortes for the Holy Land.

➤ 1278

Italian merchants, Lombards and Tuscany previously established in Montpellier, set up in Nîmes and trade prospered.

➤ Early 15th Century

Epidemics, famine and war resulted in the loss of more than half of the population.

➤ 1535

François 1 gave his approval for the new arms of Nîmes featuring a crocodile and a palm tree.

➤ 1559

The Reformation resulted in Nîmes having one of the largest Protestant communities. It was initially headed by Guillaume Mauget.

➤ 1567

The Michelade massacre in which Catholics were killed by Protestant rioters.

➤ 1598

The Edict of Nantes assured religious understanding.

➤ 17th Century

Cloth was exported everywhere in Europe and to the Spanish Indies. The town became rich and fine looking.

Many private mansions still show the prosperity of this period. The Royal Academy of Nîmes was founded in 1682.

➤ 1685

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV made Protestants become clandestine. This was the start of the long period referred to as 'The Desert'. Persecution increased.

➤ 1702-1710

The War of the Camisards.

➤ 18th century

Great economic boom of Nîmes, the city regained its wealth through the industry of silk and wine production.

In the Age of Enlightenment, the architect engineer to King Louis XV, Jacques Philippe Mareschal, laid out in 1745, the Jardins de la Fontaine encompassing the ancient sanctuary discovered on the outskirts of the source.

The fabric manufacturers appeared. The production of silk exported well. It was the golden age of the textile industry, whose pieces of cloth or serge will be at the origin of **denim**.

➤ 1842

The arrival of the railway in Nîmes brought a new period of prosperity.

The railway station, with a fine view of the Tour Magne was built in 1842, together with substantial edifices like the Law Courts in 1846, churches, Galerie Jules Salles and cafés and banks gave the town an air of modernity.

> 1850s

Magnificent private mansions were built and the major boulevards were laid out.

> 1884

Construction of the covered market (**Les Halles**) in Nîmes.

> End of the 19th century

Napoléon III launched a major operation for the renovation of the monuments in Nîmes.

This was when Camargue, Cévennes, Provençal and Spanish cultures met.

> Early 20th century

The wine-growing crisis was particularly severe in the region.

> 1912

Jean Jaurès held a public meeting in the Arena.

> 1942

The Germans occupied Nîmes.

> 1944

Nîmes was bombarded by the Allies.

> 1952

The theatre burned down and the first Féria de Nîmes was held.

> 1961

Inauguration of the naval airbase at Nîmes-Garons.

> 1980s

The mayor promoted tourism and shows and developed major urban projects.

> 1988

The year of the terrible floods. The city was submerged and suffered serious loss of life and material damage.

> 1990s

Local districts were rehabilitated and architectural projects were entrusted to leading creators.

In 1993, Nîmes combined contemporary art with treasures from the past with Carré d'Art Jean Bousquet, designed by the architect Lord Norman Foster. A mixture of audacious styles was illustrated in the works of Philippe Starck, Jean-Michel Wilmotte, Martial Raysse, Jean Nouvel and Takis.

> Today

Nîmes is still developing and the population is more than 150,000.

A major development plan shows off the Amphitheatre, the Esplanade and Avenue Feuchères in order to expand the historic centre and create a true **urban area**.

Allées Jean Jaurès have become an urban promenade with the Jardins de la Fontaine and Tour Magne marking the horizon.

The 'trambus' system has become an essential means of transport.

The **Musée de la Romanité**, a large archaeological museum opposite the Roman arena, was inaugurated in 2018.

Projects are continuing with, in particular, a large Congress Centre scheduled in the coming years and the people of Nîmes are waiting impatiently for **Unesco World Heritage** status for the city.



History
of the arms of Nîmes

The palm tree and the crocodile

To understand the origins of the coat of arms of the city, we must travel to Egypt.

In 31 BC, Octavian defeated the fleet of Antony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium (in Greece) and took over the control of the Roman Empire.

Then Octavian received the title of Caesar Augustus. A coin was struck in Nîmes to celebrate the victory. One side shows the profile of the Emperor and his adopted son Agrippa and **the other a crocodile tied to a palm tree surmounted by a laurel branch, symbolising the conquest over Egypt.**



The inscription of Col Nem, meaning the Colony of Nîmes, suggests that the victorious Roman legions received land near Nîmes. In fact, Nîmes was simply the place where the coins were minted.

In 1535, François 1st is asked to use the palm tree and the crocodile as coat of arms.

Redesigned in 1986 by Philippe Starck, they are found everywhere in Nîmes, even on the paving stone studs in the historic centre.



© Ville de Nîmes

Four naturalised crocodiles adorn the main staircase of the City Hall since 1853, referring to the coat of arms of Nîmes. Their history is known through the caption below the belly of each one, constituting a sort of birth certificate. Deciphering these captions enables us to trace the origins, dates and names of the consuls who approved them: 1597, 1671, 1692 and 1703. These four crocodiles are protected and are listed as Historic Monuments.



Roman
monuments

THE AMPHITHÉÂTRE

The Antiquity

Built at the end of the 1st century A.D., the amphithéâtre of Nîmes is one of the largest and best preserved in the Roman world. This elliptical building measuring 133 m. by 101 m. and 21 m. high on two levels, has also fulfilled a festive function.

To understand its architecture, we must return to the history of the events that took place there, because it was designed for the combats of gladiators and animals.

The amphithéâtre of Nîmes was built shortly after the Colosseum of Rome, with stone from two quarries near Nîmes. It incorporates the characteristics of the Flavian period: a façade with two levels of arcades, an attic, pilasters and Tuscan-style half-columns. It is the only amphitheatre which has preserved its attic.

At its top pierced stones were placed for poles on which were hung the velum, canvas canopies designed to provide shade from the sun. The fore-body parts of bulls surmount the arcade, certainly reserved for the magistrates and the Emperor, because they provided access to the best seats.

On another decoration, facing the Courthouse, is a sculpture of a wolf suckling two children, Romulus and Remus, the mythical founders of Rome.

Inside 24,000 spectators divided according to their social class occupied the stone stands.

An ingenious system of corridors, stairs and «voimitoires» (corridors leading to the stands) allowed people to share the amphithéâtre.

A residential area in the Middle Ages

The Arènes owe their exceptional state of conservation to their continued use throughout the centuries. In the Middle Ages, they played the role of a fortress, the seat of feudal power embodied by the Viscount of Nîmes and the Knights of the Arena. From the 14th century, they became a residential area (houses, warehouses, churches and château were built there). At the beginning of the 18th century, 700 people still lived there. Cleared of these constructions at the beginning of 19th century, they found again their vocation as buildings for public events and the bull races held there contributed largely to the art of bullfighting. The first Camargue bull race took place in 1839 and the first bullfight in 1853.

www.arenes-webdoc.nimes.fr/en/

At the top of the amphitheatre, perforated stones were used to receive the masts on which the velum was hung to protect the spectators from the sun.



An exceptional performance stage

Today, the amphithéâtre, the most visited monument of the city, is a magnificent setting for outdoor shows: historical re-enactments, concerts, performances, bullfights, Camargue bull races...

www.arenes-nimes.com

www.festivaldenimes.com

Ambitious restoration

One of the best conserved in the Roman world but made very fragile by passing time, the Nîmes amphitheatre required a very large-scale restoration programme.

This ambitious project was started in 2009 and is now in the third phase with the renovation of spans 53 to 57.

The programme should be completed in 2034.

Cost of the whole of the works: 54 million euros, excluding tax.

www.nimes.fr/projets/restauration-des-arenes.html

www.fondationdefrance.org/fr/fondation/fondation-internationale-pour-les-monuments-romains-de-nimes

The basement of the amphithéâtre was equipped with trap doors and hoists to move scenery, fighters or animals in the ring. Today, two galleries with a cruciform layout still remain under the ring.

THE MAISON CARRÉE

An imperial temple

This Roman temple of the imperial cult was built in the 1st century of our era, in honour of the adopted grandchildren of the Emperor Augustus, Caius and Lucius Caesar, “Princes of Youth”, as evidenced by an inscription on the pediment, deciphered in 1758 by the Nîmes scholar Jean-François Séguier.

The Maison Carrée, surrounded by porticoes and enhanced with a platform, faced another building (probably the curia).

The entire complex constituted the forum, the economic, political, social and administrative heart of the ancient city.

It was one of those so-called “pseudoperipteral” imperial temples, of which there were many in the Roman world. Located in the heart of the ancient Forum, enhanced by its Corinthian capitals and surrounded by a portico of which there are still some traces left, this building, measuring 26 meters long by 15 meters wide and 17 meters high, was originally dedicated to the cult of the Emperor.

The ceiling of the pronaos (vestibule) dates from the beginning of the 19th century; the present door was built in 1824 by two Compagnons du Devoir.

From temple to museum

The Maison Carrée owes its exceptional state of preservation to continuous use since the 11th century: alternately a private mansion, a stable, a convent ... But it is to Colbert that we owe the ridiculous proposal of dismantling it and rebuilding it in Paris!

After the French Revolution, it became the headquarters of the first Prefecture of Gard and the Departmental Archives before becoming the first museum of Nîmes in 1823.

www.maisoncarree.eu/en/



Built in the first century AD, the Maison Carrée has had this name since the 16th century. In fact, in old French, any rectangle with 4 right-angles was described as ‘carré’ or ‘square’.



The new forum

The square was re-designed in 1993 by Norman Foster, the architect of Carré d'Art Jean Bousquet, in order to create a spatial unit between the two buildings. Between 2006 and 2010, it underwent major restoration work that focused on the façades deteriorated by pollution. The aim has been to respect the spirit of the construction through the use of ancient materials and innovative techniques for a discreet and efficient restoration.

In 1785, Thomas Jefferson (who would become President of the United States in 1801), then the American Ambassador in Paris, received a letter from the Directors of the Virginia Public Buildings asking him to provide them with plans for the construction of the Virginia Capitol. Jefferson immediately chose the Maison Carrée as a model, entrusted the plans to a French architect, Charles Louis Clérisséau. For Jefferson, the Maison Carrée was the most beautiful architectural model left by Antiquity. Oddly enough, Thomas Jefferson knew the Maison Carrée only through a few drawings and only really contemplated it in 1787 during a trip to Nîmes and in the South of France.

THE JARDINS DE LA FONTAINE

City's cradle

Laid out around the spring, the cradle of the Roman city, the Jardins de la Fontaine are among the leading public gardens in Europe. The layout was arranged in the 18th century, under Louis XV, on the ancient site.

These «French» gardens of 15 ha are adorned with statues, balusters, benches and vases made of marble or white stone from Lens. In the lower part of the gardens, the lime trees reign, while in the upper part (Mount Cavalier), dominated by the imposing Tour Magne built in the 19th century, mediterranean species dominate the whole year. The creation of these gardens began in 1745, at the request of the King of France, Louis XV. Jacques Philippe Mareschal (the King's Engineer and Director of the fortifications of the provinces of Languedoc) was the designer. Pierre Dardailhon, supervised the site. Mareschal's ambition was to highlight the spring and the ancient ruins in a composition inspired by French gardens.

In the early 19th century, Augustin Cavalier, Mayor of Nîmes, implemented the plan for the hill and gave it its name. The vegetation is composed of different species, such as Aleppo pines, Holm oaks, cypresses, olive trees, arbutus trees, Judas trees... These trees have foliage all year round, clothing the hill in multiple and subtle tones of green.



An air of the scrubland

Walkways were made, enabling strollers to discover, among other things, the "grotto", created in 1890, "the rock garden", a clever mix of rocks and mediterranean plants typical of the mid-19th century, and the "mazet garden" with its cypresses, its arbour and lawn bowling green, characteristic of the way of life in the scrublands of the early 20th century. Paths were laid out through the laurel undergrowth that was neatly trimmed to form masses of greenery under the trees. This «Remarkable Garden» certified by the Ministry of Culture is a peaceful haven in which to wander in all seasons.

In the upper part of the gardens, in the cedar clearing, there is an azerole hawthorn tree that Louis XIV particularly liked for its jelly and which he had planted in the King's kitchen garden at Versailles.



Highlighting

In 2018, the city of Nîmes received the 2nd prize in the 30th edition of the Lumières competition thanks to the enhancement of the site of the Jardins de la Fontaine through its lighting. This luminous setting allows to rediscover the ancient remains that are housed in the gardens and aims to improve the wanderings by creating a friendly atmosphere.



THE TEMPLE DE DIANE

This is the most romantic monument but also the most enigmatic of Nîmes. Definitely associated with the imperial cult, we do not know its exact function. This building is one of the only preserved monuments of the ancient sanctuary, along with the spring basin, the Nymphaea and the Tour Magne.

It probably had two functions: that of a library and a hall for worship related to the celebrations of the imperial cult. Admire the large vault above, the rhythm of the niches along the walls and the finesse of some of the sculpted panels at the back of the hall.

From the 10th to the 16th century, this "Temple of the Fountain" was a chapel for a congregation of Benedictine monks who then abandoned it during the Wars of Religion.

THE TOUR MAGNE



The only remaining tower of the Roman walls, it was the tallest and most beautiful tower in the ancient city.

The big tower

Visible for miles, it signalled the presence of the city and the sanctuary of the imperial cult located at the foot of the hill, around the spring.

Indeed, Nîmes had one of the largest enclosures in Roman Gaul; its perimeter 7 km long enclosed an area of 220 ha. Provided with 10 gates and protected by 80 towers, the rampart had a dual purpose of defence and prestige.

It would seem, however, that the Tour Magne is older than the ramparts. Roman tower integrated into the Augustan rampart, it included a pre-existing tower built by the Gauls and dismantled in the 16th century to look for a treasure.

Today, the upper floor has disappeared and at 32 meters, it dominates the Jardins de la Fontaine. From the top, the view of Nîmes is remarkable.

Near the Tour Magne, the pines are bent over by the force of the Mistral wind from the North and oaks and pines make up most of the vegetation on the hill, giving it the air of an Italian garden.



In 1601, Michel de Notre-Dame, known as Nostradamus, predicted that a gardener would one day find a treasure in the Tour Magne. Learning this, François Traucat, a gardener in Nîmes, sent a letter to King Henry IV to request the right to search the tower. The King accepted on condition that the gardener finance the work and give him part of the treasure. The gardener dug out the tower and searched for the treasure but found nothing. Thus weakened, the top section of the Tour Magne then crumbled.

© Vincent Chambon

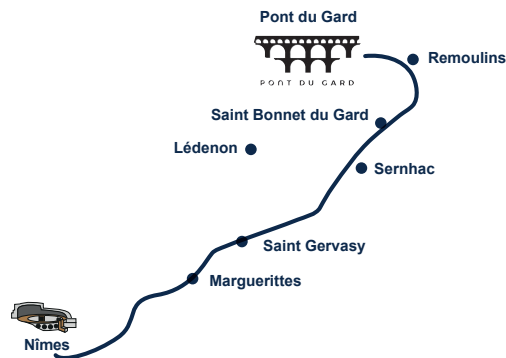
THE PONT DU GARD, THE ROMAN AQUEDUCT OF NÎMES

Built in the first century AD, the pont du gard is undoubtedly the most spectacular engineering structure in the aqueduct, listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. To cross the Gardon Valley, the Roman builders built a bridge of exceptional size: 275 metres long, 48 metres high (the highest in the Roman world) composed of three levels of superposed arcades.

«The lighting» of the Pont du Gard

From June to August, a lighting system dresses the millennial monument as soon as night falls to offer the public a magnificent moment of contemplation. A work all in perspectives of light and color, where graphic or symbolic images come to answer each other, collide, overlap and tell each other.

www.pontdugard.fr/en



THE CASTELLUM



The Castellum Aquae (water basin) was the terminal for the aqueduct in Nîmes. Indeed, the Romans were able to bring to Nîmes water from the source of the River Eure, near Uzès, owing to a 50-km aqueduct, of which the Pont du Gard remains the major work that is universally admired. Water thus emptied into the Castellum and from this circular reservoir (5.90 m in diame-

ter and 1.40 m deep) carved in the stone, pipes brought water to monuments and public fountains and supplied the different neighbourhoods of the city. It is a rare example of a Roman water basin that is still intact and, with the Castellum of Pompeii in Italy, one of the last remaining examples of this type still preserved in the world.



Private

mansions



An antique inspiration

The façades of many mansions of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries have preserved the Roman pillars and Corinthian capitals, as well as the triangular and circular pediments inspired by the Temple de Diane, the little romantic temple located in the Jardins de la Fontaine. You just have to look up to see the gargoyles and monster heads in the city-centre that seem to come from another era.

In this historic centre are located the ancient monuments as well as 59 remarkable buildings and private mansions protected as Historic Monuments.

Push the door open

Among the many private mansions ('hôtels particuliers') where you can admire the inner courtyards during guided visit organised by the Tourist Office, we can mention:

Hôtel Fontfroide, 14 rue de l'Aspic. Built in the 16th century, it was modernised in 1660 by its owner Pierre de Fontfroide. The monumental staircase designed by the Nîmes architect Jacques Cubizol, dates back to the end of the 17th century. The staircase has been listed in the Inventaire Supplémentaire des Monuments Historiques since 1949.

Hôtel de Bernis, 5 rue de Bernis. In 1619, this 15th-century mansion became the property of the Pierre de Bernis family that has owned a large part of the domain Seigneurie de Bernis since the 12th century. It still belongs to descendants of the same family today. The entire building—street and courtyard façades and the roofs has been listed in the Inventaire Supplémentaire des Monuments Historiques since 1999.

www.nimes-tourisme.com



In the heart of the remarkable heritage site

A real policy of safeguarding and enhancing the ancient centre of Nîmes and its cultural and historical heritage has now been put in place. Thus, the creation and delimitation of a Protected Area (Remarkable Heritage Site) for the historic heart of the city was made official by Ministerial Decree in March 1985. On an area of 41 ha, it covers the old city surrounded by its boulevards, known as the "Ecusson".

The aim was to revitalise the old city-centre through renovation and rehabilitation.

Soon the Remarkable Heritage Site should expand from 41 ha to 109 ha, including the Jardins de la Fontaine.

Jean Nicot was born in Nîmes in 1530, probably in his father's house on the site of the Pharmacy at the Place de l'Horloge. He left Nîmes for Paris, where he worked as an archivist for the King and, in 1559, Henry II sent him to Lisbon as the Ambassador for France. It was in Portugal that he learned about the seeds of the petun, a plant from America, later known as tobacco. It is said that when he returned to France he presented it to the Queen. Transformed into powder, it was used to treat migraines. On her advice, Catherine de Medici used it to treat her son, Francis II. It was in these circumstances that tobacco was given the name "d'Herbe à la Reine" ("Queen's herb"). The botanists of the Court gave it the scientific name *nicotiana tabacum*, and nicotine became the learned name of one of its components.



Protestant

Nîmes

"This city, which some people like to call French Rome because of the beauty of its ancient monuments, is also, like Geneva, a Protestant Rome, a metropolis of Huguenot spirituality," declared André CHAMSON of the French Academy.

In the 16th century

Nîmes is a city deeply marked by the Protestant footprint and a look at its past explains it. This past still remains in the habits and practices that permeate the daily life of part of the population.

In 1561, on Calvin's instructions, Pastor Mauget, who had come from Geneva, set up the Reformed Christian Church in Nîmes.

Henry IV, by signing the Edict of Nantes, thus opened an era of peace, but his assassination called everything into question. The Catholic authorities reacted and, in September 1562, the troops of the Governor of Provence were driven into the Rhone River.

This victory was followed by the infamous St. Michael's Day in 1567, known as Michelade, during which many notable Catholics and clergymen were massacred, thus assuring the Protestants the monopoly of power over the city. During the French Wars of Religion, an agreement was drawn up between the Catholics and the Protestants, which was maintained in spite of the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572.

The edict of Nantes

In 1598, the Edict of Nantes put an end to the Wars of Religion, granted freedom of conscience and worship to the Reformed Church, but also imposed the restoration of Catholic worship. This agreement, which lasted twenty years, allowed Nîmes to develop its wool industry and its silk industry.

In July 1629, Louis XIII entered Nîmes and published the "Alès Edict of Grace": a new series of civil wars followed and the Jesuits were granted half of the chairs of the college that until then were fully occupied by the Protestants.

One century of resilience

From 1679, measures of exclusion began: public offices, certain professions and trades were prohibited to Protestants. The Edict of Fontainebleau, in October 1685, revoked the Edict of Nantes: Protestantism



no longer existed legally, their churches were destroyed, no trace of the Protestant heritage from the 16th to the 18th century remains.

They can only be restored from memory !

For over a century, from 1685 to 1787, Protestants lived in hiding, a period marked by the rebellion of the Camisards, then by the so-called Resistance of the Desert (the Assembly of the Desert is still held every year in Mialet, in the Cevennes mountains and the nearby Musée du Désert is a witness to the history of Protestantism).

For the members of the Resistance, punishment was terrible: men were sent to the galleys, women to prison (Marie Durand remained a prisoner in the Tower of Constance in Aigues-Mortes for 38 years).

The Declaration of Human Rights

The Declaration of Human Rights, in August 1789, brought religious freedom. A pastor's son, Rabaut Saint-Etienne, actively participated in drafting it and it is indeed to him that we owe Article X of the Declaration concerning the freedom of worship and opinion.

Elected representative to the Estates General (he took part in the famous oath of the Jeu de Paume) in March 1789, Rabaut made a superb speech on the theme of tolerance and was immortalised by the painter David.



Cultural
Nîmes

MUSEUMS

MUSÉE DE LA ROMANITÉ

An important complex for Roman culture an innovative museum, an archaeological garden and a living space the Musée de la Romanité is one of the largest contemporary architectural and cultural projects in France.

A showcase for 5000 works

Opposite the 2000-year-old Roman arena, this internationally famed museum designed by Elizabeth de Portzamparc displays to the public heritage items of exceptional archaeological and artistic value.

With 9,200 square metres of floor area, this museum designed around a demanding scientific and cultural plan serves to explain the ancient heritage of the town. Exhibition spaces are reserved for the presentation of each site and monument in today's landscape and also the sites and monuments that have disappeared, such as the sanctuary at La Fontaine, the theatre, the baths, etc. A chronological sequence runs in large periods: pre-Roman, Roman and post-Roman.

Of the 25,000 items in the archaeological reserves of Nîmes, 5,000 are displayed, including the Achilles and Pentheus mosaics discovered during excavations in Allées Jean Jaurès in 2006-2007.



Innovative museography

The displaying of the collections has been designed using new technologies to show Roman remains in their ancient context. The museographic approach use means that enable visitors can set objects, architecture and town planning in their spatio-temporal setting.

www.museedelaromanite.fr/en/

The building is set around an inner street that follows the alignment of the ancient Augustan rampart, crossing the archaeological garden.



The panoramic view of Nîmes is splendid from the roof terrace and the view from the restaurant 'La table du 2' of the 2-star chef Franck Putelat, overlooks the Arena.

CARRÉ D'ART JEAN BOUSQUET

Facing the temple of ancient art and designed by the renowned British architect Norman Foster, the Carré d'Art Jean Bousquet is a temple of contemporary art.

With its sober glass façade, this superb building features a library of several thousand books and the Museum of Contemporary Art of the city since 1993.

An echo to antiquity

An imposing contemporary signature in the city-centre similar to the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, it rises harmoniously in the area around the Maison Carrée, formerly the centre of the Roman Forum.

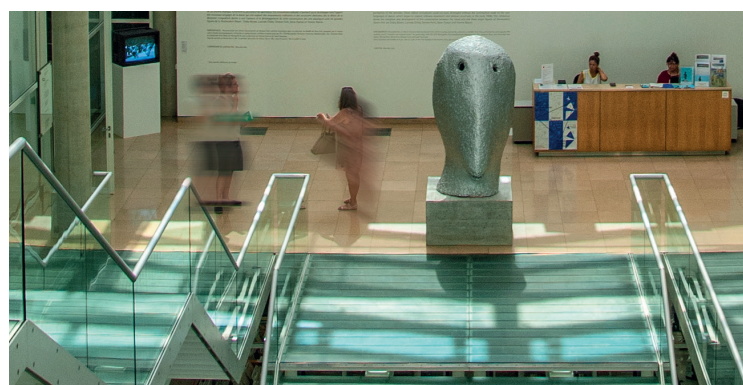
It is presented as a large rectangular glass parallelepiped with perfectly pure lines and whose main characteristic lies in its transparency.

A central atrium, which evokes the interior courtyards of Nîmes houses is topped by a glass roof allowing light to penetrate widely into the building.

It has 9 levels, 4 of which are located above the street. The 2 upper levels constitute the museum's presentation spaces and offer a surface area of nearly 2000 m².

Today, Carré d'Art is adapting to the requirements of the 21st century in the respect of its architectural identity. It was redesigned for new uses with a preserved architecture and heritage: an improved reception, optimised services, a building adapted to new digital uses, high energy performance and increased accessibility....

www.carreartmusee.com/en/



On the roof terrace, the restaurant Le Ciel de Nîmes offers lunch with a view of the square House and the roofs of Nîmes.

AND ALSO...



Traditions

Established in the former episcopal palace of the 17th century, **the Musée du Vieux Nîmes** tells the story of life in Nîmes since the end of the Middle Ages through everyday objects and bourgeois interiors. A blue room is dedicated to the star of Nîmes, the famous « Denim ».

www.nimes.fr

Located a stone's throw from the Arena, **the Claude and Henriette Viallat Museum of Bullfighting Cultures** is unique in France. Works of art and everyday objects evoke here the Camargue race and bullfighting, the bullfighting traditions both regional and international. It offers the public the opportunity to discover how the relationship with the bull and the land of the Camargue has become inseparable from the identity of Nîmes.

www.nimes.fr



Fine arts

The second collection in Languedoc-Roussillon, the Fine Arts Museum presents French, Flemish, Dutch and Italian paintings. Among its 3600 works, one will note a collection of Italian art from the 16th and 17th centuries and a very beautiful collection of French art from the 19th century. On the ground floor, a large Roman mosaic «Les noces d'Admete» occupies the central part of the atrium.

www.nimes.fr

Sciences



The natural history museum presents temporary exhibitions and numerous scientific workshops. Inaugurated in 1895, the Nîmes museum, the first museum in Languedoc-Roussillon, ranks sixth nationally for the richness of its collections.

www.nîmes.fr

The planetarium of Nîmes offers you the opportunity to follow the fascinating spectacle of the Universe: A fabulous journey through space and time, a great moment of relaxation, poetry and education.

www.nîmes.fr

URBAN WALKWAY

The Place d'Assas, temple neighbour

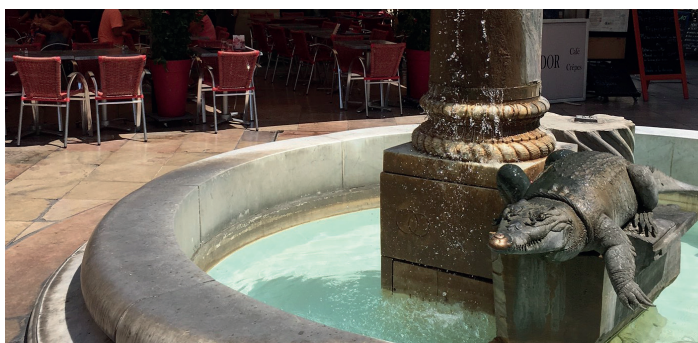
Formerly the location of the laundry, supplied with water from the Fountain, it was in 1824 that it was named the Place d'Assas. At the end of the eighties, the City of Nîmes entrusted the visual artist Martial Raysse with the task of restructuring this place by highlighting the water running from one end to the other between two monumental human heads representing Nemausa, the spring that gave its name to Nîmes, and Nemausus, the god of this source. In the middle, from a circular central basin, emerge four columns and two hieratic statues. This is a place where sun, water, plants and minerals are perfectly blended and where it's pleasant to roam on its terraces on summer evenings.

The Place du Marché, at the heart of the city

Famous for its palm tree and crocodile fountain, created in 1987 by the visual artist Martial Raysse, who thus featured the coat of arms of the City (the conquest of Egypt by the troops of Caesar in 31 BC, during the battle of Actium), restaurants and cafes have flourished around this pretty square and its many terraces enable you to enjoy the art of living in Nîmes.

The Place du Chapitre, by the Cathedral

In the heart of the historic centre, nestled against the old Bishopric, the Provost and the Fine Arts School, a stone's throw from the Cathedral, the Place du Chapitre is organised around a monumental staircase fountain. The square regained its splendour in June 2007 owing to the work of the architects Dominique Pierre and Philippe Ghezzi.



Large trees have been preserved on the lower part of the paved square. Built-in ground lighting casts a special colour at night on this setting where people like to dance the tango on summer evenings

The Allées Jaurès

Measuring over 60 meters wide over a length of 1.5 km, the Allées Jaurès, considered by some as the Champs-Élysées of Nîmes, are a grand city entrance, with the Jardins de la Fontaine and the Tour Magne in the forefront. Completed in 2013, the metamorphosis of this major thoroughfare was entrusted to Jean-Michel Wilmotte. Inspired by the Ramblas of Barcelona, it is an urban walkway and a new tourist attraction for the city. The mall down the centre is composed of three sections, each centred around a main function.

- North: green areas, fountains, canals and shaded benches that encourage strolling.
- Middle: squares, pergolas, gazebos and facilities. And markets!

- South: children's playgrounds, bowling greens and areas for leisure and relaxation.

With a cycle path, car parks, cafes, restaurants and shops. This vital artery of the city has become a real living centre and a distinctive district.



AEF - Arènes Esplanade Feuchères

The entire AEF project was carried out by the urban architect Alain Marguerit and the landscape architects of the «Atelier des Paysages». The goal was to transform the area for pedestrians, improve the living environment and enhance the urban landscape to make it more welcoming for visitors and people from Nîmes. The first part of the project, inaugurated in 2007, featured the 2000-year-old amphithéâtre. This urban development based on materials of mineral origin was followed by two other greener phases:

The Esplanade, inaugurated in 2012, includes an urban garden of nearly 1 ha in the heart of the city where the people of Nîmes, tourists and travellers intersect. Café terraces, benches and large lawns have flourished in this historic public garden.

Over 24,000 species of plants and 70 trees, shrubs and grasses were planted here, faithfully reflecting the species found in the countryside around Nîmes and nearly 3,000 feet of bamboo cane were arranged on the pergolas and kiosk walls.

Avenue Feuchères remains an important artery for public transport, between the station and the heart of the city. Inaugurated in 2013, more user-friendly and functional for pedestrians, it has expanded the historic centre by creating an urban area of 8 hectares, which offers a modernised living environment and a new entrance to the city worthy of the jewel of heritage that awaits the visitor a few meters away. At night, the Avenue and the Esplanade light up, showcasing the Roman amphithéâtre.

The Bus Shelter / Starck

This modern version of the bus shelter was created by Philippe Starck in 1987. Made of dark marble, it sits at the beginning of Avenue Carnot and represents the emblem of the City of Nîmes, a crocodile and a palm tree, the crocodile symbolised by a series of aligned cubes.

Nemausus

Designed by the architect Jean Nouvel, who wanted to redefine social housing, this futuristic complex consists of 2 imposing vessels of aluminium, sheet metal, iron and glass.

The two buildings aligned in parallel were designed to maximize space, comfort and light in each of the 114 social housing units that make up the building.

In 2008, this building received the «20th Century Heritage» label and Jean Nouvel's career was rewarded with the Pritzker Prize in March 2008.





Nîmes,
a history of jeans

The origins of the Denim fabric

Did the serge cloth that Levi Strauss used to make jeans in the 19th century originate in Nîmes? Do the trousers dear to the American pioneers have a link with Nîmes?

We know that strong and inexpensive cloth was used in the Middle Ages to make sails for ships, awnings and canvas covers for carts transporting goods. It was cotton cloth with serge weave and spun in Nîmes, whence its name 'denim'.

The cloth was used in the 16th century to make sails and sailors' trousers in Genoa in Italy. It then became known as 'jean', a deformation of 'Genoa' the port from which it was exported and was also used to make clothes.

In the 18th century, cotton duck and serge were purchased near Nîmes and bleached and dyed in the city. The most valuable cloth was made entirely in Nîmes, where the textile industry had been the main source of income for more than three centuries.

Nîmes was a major centre for dyeing at the time. The low cost explains the large quantities of this blue cloth.

Many years later, this strong fabric seemed ideal for making clothes for workers in the adventure of the American West: gold prospectors, loggers, miners, etc.

In San Francisco, the young Levis Strauss set up as a cloth merchant in 1853. And then he started to make working trousers and protective overalls from the cloth used for making tents for gold prospectors. When he had exhausted his first stock of brown tarpaulin or sailcloth he replaced it with denim and thus spread the popular chain of blue all over the world.

Perhaps the serge he used for cutting the first pair of blue jeans came from a batch of goods shipped by merchants in Nîmes along with shawls and silk?

www.nimes.fr

www.ateliersdenimes.com/en/



On the occasion of Buffalo Bill's tour of Europe at the beginning of the 20th century, Marquis de Baroncelli, a writer and cattle farmer who was a disciple of Frédéric Mistral and considered as the 'inventor' of the Camargue, hosted Sioux chiefs in the Camargue, held an abrivado (the release of bulls in the streets) for them in Gallargues and a bull branding ceremony in the country at Le Cailar near Nîmes. These were the first America-Europe contacts in the region.

The history of jeans has thus been linked with that of Camargue bulls ever since.



The American story

In San Francisco in 1870, the tailor Jacob Davis, who also had a spinning business, listened to a request by a customer for her woodcutter husband and had the idea of riveting the pockets of working trousers for him.

The trousers were very successful and, to prevent copying, in 1872 he asked Levi Strauss, who supplied the cloth, to share the marketing of his invention in exchange for payment of the sum needed to patent it. The letter he wrote to Levi Strauss offering this was accompanied by two pairs of trousers that he had made, one of which was in denim. Once the patent had been awarded, Davis supervised manufacture at Levi Strauss & Co.

The denim models made the reputation of the brand and ensured success for the two associates.

Chronology

> 1860

For making jeans, ordinary cloth was abandoned in favour of blue denim.

> 1885

A pair of Levis cost \$1.25.

> 1890

Release of the mythical 'Levis 501'. With their straight cut, they are still known all over the world and by both men and women. They represent the freedom and rebellious attitude of the West Coast of America.

> 1920

American farmers wore jeans.

> 1922

Jeans started to be made with belt loops.

> 1926

The company Lee sold the first jeans with zips.

> 1929

In the face of the depression, jeans became a uniform that was a symbol of courage.

> 1930s

Jeans were no longer considered to be working clothes but became ready-to-wear trousers for students, artists and women.

> 1933

Wanting to boost the American economy, Roosevelt gave tens of thousands of denim overalls to the poor.

> 1940

Jeans arrived in Europe with the GIs.

> 1950

Women neatly wore dark jeans with high waists, like shortened trousers, with a blouse and flat shoes. Among men, jeans symbolised the rebellion of young people. They were in the spirit of black leather jackets and Harley Davidson motorbikes and were even forbidden in schools in the United States. Marilyn Monroe wore them, as did James Dean and Marlon Brando.

> 1960

Jeans became universal garments worn by all social classes and all age groups.

> 1969

Thousands of people attended the Woodstock festival that was doubtless the largest gathering of wearers of jeans in the world.

> 1970

Jeans became the cool symbol of the hippie movement. Flared jeans appeared. They were given customised finishes, embroidered, had illustrations sewn on to them and the bottoms of the legs became longer.

> 1973

With the oil crisis, jeans became items of mass consumption. The market developed. The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York displayed a selection of jeans for two months, attracting thousand of visitors.

> 1981

The French market expanded strongly, with 40 million garments in denim, cotton duck and velvet selling each year.

Jeans were the leading trousers for all generations and became a little more wild. They were made paler by mechanical stonewashing.

> Today

Jeans have become an essential feature of male and female wardrobes and slim cut models have been very successful.



© Dominique Marck



Nîmes
and nature



Nîmes has a natural forest heritage of more than 1000 hectares in six parts. The quality of these places and their accessibility make them great attractions for walking and sport.

Charter of the Garrigue

Varied developments make it possible to know the Nîmes garrigue areas better and a charter was drawn up. Garrigue vegetation displays a variety of plants that contribute extraordinary variety of flora and fauna. The area also features a heritage of dry stone buildings, remaining from former agricultural activity based on sheep farming and olive growing. The 'Garrigue Charter' conserves and shows off the natural and built aspects of the area. Its aim is to make the garrigue area known, respect and to highlight its heritage, to control planning, to adapt the way of life and to conserve natural areas. The three main garrigue areas are Bois des Espeisses, Domaine d'Escattes and Clos Gaillard.

Nature in the town

Nîmes has 365 hectares of 'green' areas ranging from the historical Jardin de la Fontaine to Domaine de la Bastide and the squares in the town. In 2014 it was awarded a 4th star in the 'Towns and Villages with Flowers' label as a reward for the progress made in recent years, and in particular the transformations of the Esplanade and Allées Jean Jaurès. The town has laid emphasis on the development, maintenance and showing off of green areas.

The numerous plants grown in the municipal nurseries contribute flowers and decoration. The protection and maintenance of trees in the town is also a priority with, in particular, a 'Tree Charter', given the number of trees in the city. Some hundred species can be found, with plane trees and southern nettle trees being dominant.

In 2009, Nîmes was awarded the Prix National de l'Arbre (National Tree Prize) rewarding tree management and the care given to new plantings.

It is now forbidden to smoke in 56 green areas in the city, with parks and playgrounds full of signs saying «Tobacco-free area».



© Dominique Marck



Gourmet
Nîmes

Nîmes grew among the scents of the garrigue, the olive trees, the vineyards and chestnut trees. So naturally, cooking has taken its accent from Provence and the strength of Cevennes, enhanced, of course, by a pinch of Camargue salt.

Made famous by the chef Durand, cod-fish **«Brandade»** remains the most famous dish from Nîmes. Cod poached in milk and then made in olive oil turns into a white, creamy purée that can be enjoyed cold or hot.

«Le Petit Pâté Nîmois» have a nice, golden crust that conceals a veal and pork stuffing to savour warm or hot. The secret recipe of **«Croquant Villaret»** has not changed since 1775. The most surprising thing about this delightful long golden biscuit is not its mysterious taste but its crunchy consistency. Caladon, which is softer, is made with almonds and honey. The early ripening of the **PGI Nîmes Strawberry** makes it the only strawberry in France grown in the ground under shelter.



The former President of the French Republic, Gaston Doumergue (1921-1931), who was born near Nîmes, said that when eating brandade he could hear the cicadas singing in the pines of the Magne Tower.

Olives

Olives have grown in the Gard since the Tertiary era. The Greeks started to domesticate them in the 6th century BC. Olive oil from Nîmes is greatly appreciated for its fruity taste and fine colour and Picholine olives, which originated in the Gard, are much sought-after by gourmets. The fruits are long with narrow stones and firm flesh. The variety is said to have originated in Collias near the Pont du Gard! The leading Protected Denomination of Origin (PDO) for oil in Languedoc-Roussillon, AOP Huile d'Olive de Nîmes is the result of rigorous work. The oil must contain at least 70% Picholine.

Costières de Nîmes

A kingdom of river pebbles left by the Rhône and the Durance, Costières de Nîmes includes the largest of the high stony terraces above the Rhône. Between the Mediterranean and the Cévennes, at the junction between Provence and Languedoc and in the Camargue, the vineyards stretch over plateaux and hills dotted with farmhouses and châteaux open for wine tasting.

In the heart of an exceptional region for tourism, the 25,000 hectares of vineyards are spread over 24 communes. Sunshine is dominant and the northerly Mistral wind contributes to the maturity and balance of the wines.

Appreciated by the Greeks and then by the Romans, Costières de Nîmes wines from one of the oldest winegrowing areas in Europe are closely linked to numerous historical vestiges in Nîmes and the region. Present at the Palace of the Avignon popes, they were very famous and exported in the 16th century.

Costières du Gard gained AOC status in 1986 and took the name 'Costières de Nîmes' in 1989, joining the Rhône Valley interprofessional organisation in 1990.

Perrier

No introduction is needed for this spring that is known all over the world. In less than a century, its history, personality and creativeness have given Perrier legendary status.

This Gallic spring just a few kilometres from Nîmes was known to the Romans, owes its name to a doctor and its fame to an Englishman.

From its underground origin to bottling today, the Perrier spring has always assembled the four elements—earth, air fire and water—in the same place.



Starred Restaurants

Alexandre**

In Garons, between Nîmes and Arles, at the edge of the Camargue, Michel Kayser** has fashioned a unique venue in his own image ... Excellence, authenticity, sharing and enthusiasm are the features of Chef Michel Kayser's cuisine. High-quality ingredients from the Gard are essential conditions and magnified by his talent and technical skill.

Skab**

A cosy, contemporary setting, a quiet and shady patio close to the Roman arena and opposite the Musée de la Romanité. The chef Damien Sanchez* runs this gastronomic restaurant with the accent on fresh cuisine and 'everything prepared in our kitchen'.

Duende**

In the fine Maison Albar Hôtel Imperator, the chef Pierre Gagnaire*** serves creative, unusual and gourmet cuisine with emphasis on contrasts of flavours. He signs the menus for three venues: the Duende gastronomic restaurant, the brasserie L'Impé and the Bar Hemingway.

Jérôme Nutile*

The setting is a superb Provencal 'mas' (farmhouse), the 4-star Mas de Boudan Hotel, a brasserie called Le Bistr'AU and the Restaurant Jérôme Nutile* run by the Chef Jérôme Nutile, winner of a 'Best Craftsman in France' distinction in 2011. The food has a contemporary gourmet approach.





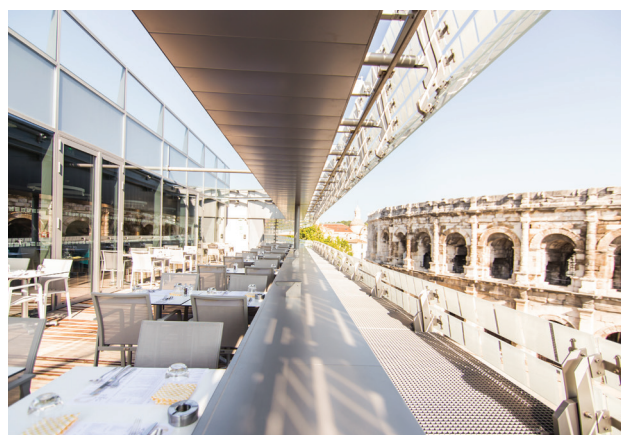
Signatures

Vincent Croizard

A quiet, elegant and friendly establishment away from the bustle of the city. The chef Vincent Croizard reworks local dishes in unusual cuisine displaying curiosity, adventure and discoveries in tastes. High-quality local produce is combined with unexpected flavours.

La Table du 2

What a position! La Table du 2 is tucked into the second floor of the Musée de la Romanité, eye to eye with the 2000-year-old Roman amphitheatre with a magnificent terrace for lunch and dinner facing the monument. The chef Franck Putelat** serves a menu with new versions of the dishes that are classic in French brasserie food.



Gourmet Food

Aux Plaisirs des Halles

Generous and tasty 'market' cuisine accompanied by regional wines and just a few steps from the 'Halles de Nîmes' (the covered market). And it has a charming patio for the summer !

Le Lisita

In the heart of Nîmes opposite the Arena, the gastronomic restaurant Le Lisita prepares inventive cuisine with respect for the know-how of French gastronomy and the local traditions of the South of France.

La Pie qui Couette

In Les Halles (the covered market), La Pie qui Couette gives a friendly welcome to its customers, who sit on tall chairs at the counter that runs along the bar. The dishes are straightforward and sincere, using produce from the surrounding market stalls. The hamburgers made with beef supplied by the neighbouring butcher are perfect !

La Marmite

Close to the covered market, a restaurant that is both secretive and popular serves a single lunch menu and a larger meal in the evening. This is market-based cooking, local food and fresh produce depending on how the chef feels. It has a café atmosphere in which the cook is always accessible. No fuss !





Festive
Nîmes

LES GRANDS ÉVÈNEMENTS



The Feria

The proof is in these impromptu festivals that spring up throughout the city! One of the main events, the Feria, accentuates all kinds of emotions and leads to a kind of collective folly. The first Feria was held in 1952 in true Spanish style, and even today combines bullfights, Camargue races, concerts, bull running in the streets and many other events. Renowned throughout Europe, it is the most well-known popular event.

Twice a year, thousands of people fill the streets of the city. However, they are not all bull «aficionados». Everyone loves the excitement and the atmosphere that fills the city and brings together music and dance.

Dozens of bodegas (improvised bars) mushroom throughout the city and people gather there to celebrate. The Feria is six days at Pentecost (Whitsun) and three days in September. The festivities roll out in succession, to please all audiences and tastes! You can watch bullfighting in the Arena, abridados and bandidos (bull running in the streets), see the peñas (bands) wandering, dance the Sevillanas late into the night in the bodegas, eat paella on the boulevards, participate in activities, attend concerts, watch the jousting on the Fountain canal, listen to the mass in Provençal language in the Cathedral or attend the Pégoulade, the opening parade of Pentecost Festival...



The Roman Week

All history enthusiasts meet in the Arena in Nîmes to watch the largest ancient historical reconstitution in Europe.

More than 500 people bring to life the legendary ludi (games) as the people of Nîmes would have seen them 2000 years ago: processions of Roman legionaries, horse races, the famous gladiators combats and a great show !

www.arenas-nimes.com



The Festival of Nîmes

The majestic setting of the Nîmes Arena where famous guests perform.

National and international stars, groups and musicians that you have to see ! From pop to electro, from hard rock to variety, from Radiohead to Elton John, from Depeche Mode to Muse, from David Guetta to Lenny Kravitz, from Rammstein to Scorpions... Much-awaited concerts, a very large public and Festival atmosphere !

www.festivaldenimes.com/

Thursdays in Nîmes

The town is full of activity very Thursday evening in July and August: craftsmen, painters, second-hand dealers, collectors, local producers, etc. welcome visitors in the many squares and streets of the historic centre of the city. Without forgetting activities for children and the JeuDivin, tastings of wine and local products at the foot of the Cathedral, with a festival atmosphere ensured.

These markets are dotted with much music: jazz, blues, flamenco, swing, classical music, tango, world music, country music, varieties, etc.

www.nimes.fr/

Flamenco Festival

This Festival, organised by the Theatre in Nîmes welcomes great Spanish artistes and reveals great talents in singing, guitar and dancing—perpetuating the tradition of this Andalusian tradition in the South of France.

As emphasised by the director of the Theatre, Flamenco is more than ever a living and vibrant art that keeps on evolving and gaining strength and nobody can predict its future.

Nîmes Festival continues with respect and admiration its avid exploration of present-day Flamenco. Present-day Flamenco that will set out the extraordinary variety of its landscapes. No hierarchy, no judgement, no truth but a single certainty: Flamenco has a firm appointment with the public of the Festival of Nîmes.

<https://theatredenimes.com/>

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

The Great Modern Music Scene

The Paloma 'Scène de Musiques Actuelles', an imposing 5,000 sq. m building, is a link between cultural universes and is equipped with the latest digital technology. In addition to being a room for shows, it has studios, sound units and accommodation for artists in residence. Paloma has a strong programme featuring national and international artists.

Cinemas

'Multiplexe CGR' 7,000 sq. m, opened at the end of 2017 in the new 'Triangle de la Gare' district behind the station. It has ten auditoriums, a bar and a restaurant.

'Le Sémaphore', an independent cinema in the city centre, has six auditoriums and a cafeteria. A friendly, family atmosphere.

'Multiplexe Kinépolis' has twelve auditoriums and shows spectacular films in particular and also filmed retransmission such as the opening of the Cannes Film Festival, mythical concerts and sports events. Around Kinépolis there are bars, a bowling alley and restaurants for before or after the show.

Cafés and evenings out

In addition to its Ferias, Nîmes, a Mediterranean city, has a strong taste for having a good time. This is shown by the warm atmosphere in the various bars at apéritif time.

The historic centre is full of small tapas bars, cafés and terraces where it is nice to have a drink and then dance later in the evening!

Rue Fresque is very busy, especially with the **Cave d'Arthur**, the bistro restaurant **L'Estanco** and **le 421**, an unusual Nîmes bar that is a must. You can try the production of small local farmers at **La Tchatche**, a nearby wine and tapas bar, unless you prefer Camargue delicatessen and local beers at **La Bonne Mousse**. Not far from there, you can stop at the terrace cafés in Place de la Maison Carrée or at **Le Napoléon**, a historic café. Young people and students crowd the bars on Boulevard Victor Hugo, such as **Le Victor** and **Le bar Joe**. A few metres from there,



La Noche a fashionable tapas bar welcomes night people. Then, going up towards the Jardins de la Fontaine, you have to make a quick stop at **La Bo-deguita** in Place d'Assas, where the atmosphere is festive and friendly. Nearby is **L'Instant T** where local wines can be tasted at exhibition openings and other cultural events. And it's nice to profit from a pause for a drink or for dinner at la cour du **9**, close to the Arena, in a more intimate and sometimes jazzy setting.



Sports
in Nîmes

Golf courses

Golf Club de Nîmes-Campagne is one of the finest private clubs in France—with 5-star classification by the magazine *Golf Européen*. The course at **Golf de Nîmes Vacquerolles** is modern and demanding, set in the heart of the Nîmes garrigue area.

Swimming pools

Among the many pools, the **Aquatropic** aquatic complex provides many activities and the water is 28°C all the year round. **The Stade nautique Nemausa** has the only Olympic pool in the Gard department.

Skating

The Skate Parc is in a forested area behind the Bou-lodrome de l'Estanque. It totals 4200 sq. m and the street park section is 1155 sq. m.

The Ice Skating Rink (La Patinoire) opened in December 2017 in the same place as the previous rink to meet expectations from clubs involved in ice hockey, figure skating and also from schoolchildren and families.

Virtual leisure activities

Discover virtual reality for all with escape games on simulators, are real scale escape game or games for reflection.

Nîmes Olympique - Football

Nîmes Olympique plays in Second League. The matches are played at the Costières Stadium (Stade des Costières) in a tremendous atmosphere with indefatigable supporters ('Gladiators'). Designed in 1989 by the architects Vittorio Gregotti and Marc Chausse, the stadium has capacity for 20,000 people and includes subsidiary sports facilities in its four covered angles. A project for a new stadium is being examined.

www.nimes-olympique.com/

USAM - Handball

The 'Union Sportive des Anciens du Mont Duplan' was founded in 1960 by former pupils at Mont Duplan school who were great handball enthusiasts. The team was very soon Champion of the Gard Department and then of the Languedoc. USAM Nîmes Gard goes beyond the regional framework, with access to the Championnat de France Prologue. They play each match at the 'Parnasse'.

www.usam-nimesgard.fr/

Rugby Club Nîmois (RCN)

Now the leading rugby club in the Gard department, it was founded in 1963, by the efforts of Nicolas Kaufmann who became President of the club—the stadium was named after him. RCN plays in 'Fédérale 1' today.

www.rcnimois.com/



Where it is
and how to get here



In Southeast France, Nîmes is the capital of the Department of Gard and is part of the Occitan Region. It has a privileged position between the Mediterranean Sea, Camargue, Provence and Cévennes, in the scrubland landscape, between the popular cities of Avignon, Arles, Marseille, Montpellier and a few kilometres from the famous Pont du Gard.

Geographic coordinates:

43°49'59"N 4°21'00"E.

Maximum northern elevation: 215 meters (116 meters in urban areas) and minimum altitude: 21 meters in the plain of the River Vistre.

Nîmes has beautiful sunshine throughout the year but often faces the northern Mistral wind with gusts exceeding 100 km/hour. Its location deep in the hills of the scrublands explains its mild climate and relaxed lifestyle.

With over 154,000 inhabitants, Nîmes is the 18th largest city in France. Since 2017, the Urban Community of Metropolitan Nîmes includes 39 municipalities.



Nîmes by motorway:

- A9 and A54
- 2.5 hrs from Lyon
- 1.5 hrs from Marseille
- 40 mins from Montpellier
- 3 hours from Nice and Toulouse

Nîmes by train:

- 2.5 hours from Paris
- 1.3 hours from Lyon
- 1 hour from Marseille

Nîmes by air:

Nîmes-Alès-Camargue-Cévennes Airport.
Via the Ryanair Company, regular services to London, Brussels (Charleroi), Fez and Marrakech.
Connections to Liverpool, Dublin and Edimbourg.
3 other airports around Nîmes:
Marseille Provence,
Montpellier Méditerranée,
Avignon Provence.



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