



Press kit

Pays de Montbéliard

WHERE HISTORY
INSPIRES THE
PRESENT



PAYS DE
MONTBÉLIARD
TOURISME

PAYS DE MONTBÉLIARD

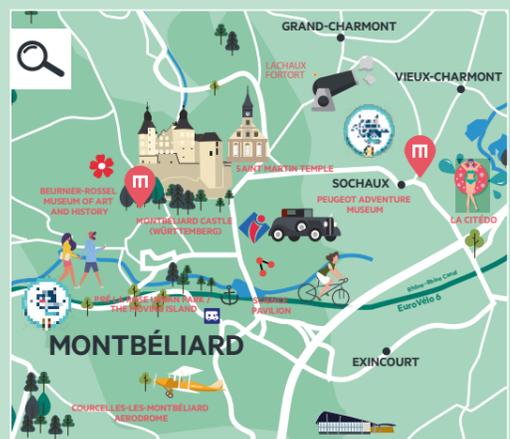
TOURIST MAP



PAYS DE MONTBÉLIARD

A land steeped in history and culture, this destination is a fascinating patchwork of princely adventures, architectural innovations and spiritual fervor.

The experiences described in this press kit invite you to embark on a journey through the ages, thanks to the one of a kind testimony of a living heritage. The ancient theatre of Mandeuve, Montbéliard Wurtemberg Castle, the Peugeot Adventure Museum... invite you to discover the pioneering spirits of the Pays de Montbéliard who have slipped into both minor stories and major sagas. Not to mention the star of the fields: the Montbéliarde cow, and the king of taste buds: Comté cheese... products of a unique history that are part of the distinctive identity of this small region.



MAP KEY

- PRESENCE OF COMTOIS BELL TOWERS
- VIEWPOINTS / LOOKOUTS
- TOWN OF CHARACTER
- MUSEUMS
- MILITARY HERITAGE
- "4-FLOWER" TOWN
- EUROVELO 6 NANTES-BUDAPEST
- WELCOME TOWN WITH VINTAGE VEHICLES
- RHÔNE-RHINE CANAL
- RIVERS AND WATER BODIES
- ROADS
- MARINA
- GR5 HOLLAND-MEDITERRANEAN (LONG-DISTANCE TRAIL)
- GREAT JURA CROSSING
- JURA MOUNTAIN AREA
- MOTORHOME AREAS
- REGIONAL TRAIN STATIONS (TER)
- TOURIST OFFICE



CHRONICLES FROM THE princes' city



Strolling through Montbéliard means feasting your eyes on mansions and colourful façades, shop arcades and half-timbered houses, protestant churches and castle, spiral staircases), "gossottes" (narrow alleys), "tchâfas" (attic windows), and other curiosities...

With its unique history, Montbéliard stands out for its town center, which retains traces from traditions of the **Protestant bourgeoisie**, austere but industrious and well-travelled. The City of Princes also reveals magnificent evidence of what the **Renaissance period** under the reign of the **Wurtemberg**.

REVELATIONS AT the castle

The historical tour of Montbéliard Castle has been given a makeover!



During an **immersive visit**, we encounter noble lords from across the Rhine and admirable ladies, not to mention a **famous bear**... Three hundred restored works and **intelligent multimedia** displays act as guides through the twists and turns of history. The redesigned scenography unfolds across the **15 rooms** of the new tour, located in the two towers known as **Henriette and Frédéric**.

Exploring the architecture and secret **corners of the castle**, visitors stroll among the colourful rock gardens of the south terrace, cross the courtyard of Frederick I's bear, pass through the music room, the science and technology cabinet, and come across the bakery oven. The fascinating story of this **iconic monument** began with Countess Henriette, who, in 1407, married a German lord, bringing him the Pays de Montbéliard as her dowry. For four centuries, the castle remained a residence of the **Wurtemberg dynasty**, leaving a lasting mark on the town and its surroundings.



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF the prince's architect Heinrich Schickhardt

The sober geometry of the **Lutheran university**, the slender elegance of the **Frederick Tower**, the limestone pilasters of **St. Martin's Church**.

And the characteristic **'viorbe'** of the **Souaberie farm**: for those who know how to look, Heinrich Schickhardt's architectural **genius is everywhere**. Nicknamed the **'Leonardo da Vinci of Swabia'**, he shaped the face of Montbéliard during **the Renaissance** under Prince Frederick I of Wurtemberg, transforming the small medieval capital into a **princely city**.

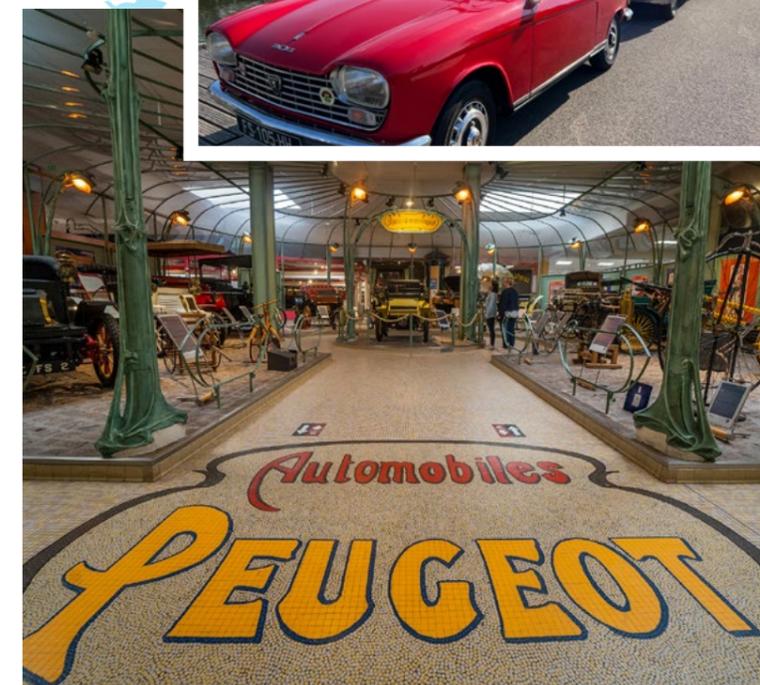
We roam **the historic heart** of the city in the footsteps of the architect and engineer, spotting **the Italian influences** that guided his work and admiring the ingenuity of some of his technical achievements. This urban trail is part of the Heinrich Schickhardt **European Cultural Itinerary**, stretching from Montbéliard to Backnang in **Germany architecture** in an inspiring stroll.

HIT THE ROAD IN Peugeot territory

A two-century industrial and family saga under the sign of the Lion!

Located in Sochaux, **the Peugeot Adventure Museum** is rooted in the historic stronghold of Peugeot production. From saw blades to **modern and futuristic vehicles, bicycles and coffee grinders**...the story is as lively as it is exciting. To continue the adventure, take a **ride in a vintage car driven by chauffeurs from the Club des Vieux Volants Frانس-Comtois**. The legendary Peugeot 302, Renault Prairie, Simca Aronde and other venerable automobiles take visitors on a tour of the destination's roads. Accompanied by commentary and anecdotes, you will discover gems along the way, such as the Peugeot Adventure Museum, the Rhône-Rhine Canal and the Mont-Bart fort.

Availability : March to October - Duration : 1.5 to 2 hours - Cost : €110 per car (max. 3 passengers) + €15 booking fee - aperitif or snack optional (at extra cost).



FRESH AIR AND WIDE open spaces



DELICATE SETTING: Crêt des Roches Regional Nature Reserve

Explore the labyrinthine corridors of a remarkable 19th-century military fort before taking in the natural beauty at the summit!

Overlooking the **Doubs Valley**, Crêt des Roches is a nature reserve with rolling green hills. Once the centrepiece of the **Lomont defensive wall**, it features barracks built for nearly 250 men at an altitude of 615 metres. Crêt des Roches is a prime **migratory corridor** for birds, including the Red Kite. This limestone ledge, dating back to the Jurassic era, is a **major botanical site** where delicate rock candytufts (ibéris) and Alpine erinus grow side by side.

Bright colours all year round... Snow white, mint green, red and gold, chlorophyll and rosy cheeks, always! At the gates of Montbéliard, the Jura mountains gently rise.

More than **350 hectares** of unspoiled nature offer a life-size playground to be explored **on foot, on horseback, or by mountain bike**.

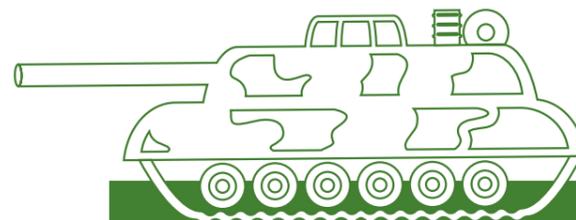


EPOMANDUODURUM, magnum spectaculum

The Romans had a flair for spectacle. Built at the same time as Rome's Colosseum, with a diameter of **142 metres**, the theatre in Mandeure could seat up to **20,000 spectators!**

Long before the religious quarrels of later centuries, the town of Epomanduodurum flourished in **the 2nd century BCE** between the Alsace plain, the Vosges and the Jura.

The **extremely well-preserved** remains of the ancient theatre have made it possible to estimate that the cult area included several **important buildings**, as well as infrastructure designed to accommodate pilgrims. The well-preserved remains allow visitors **to imagine** the clamor of ancient crowds, a site as majestic as Bribracte or Autun.



HIGH AND STRONG: expedition to Mont-Bart fort

Dominating the Allan and Doubs valleys, this military defence structure stands at an altitude of nearly **500 metres** and is simply named after the mountain on which it was built between **1874 and 1877**.

Mont-Bart Fort is part of the Belfort defence belt: restored but never modernised, it is a valuable example of 19th-century '**Séré de Rivières**' military architecture. Visitors will be impressed by the **old covered 'inner street'**, moved by the simplicity of the soldiers' rooms, and amazed by the ingenuity of the optical posts... But the main attraction of the site remains the incredible **360° panorama** of the Pays de Montbéliard, the Vosges and the Jura, while the surrounding forest trails and picnic areas appeal to lovers of greenery. During **the Bread Festival** (May) and the European Heritage Days (September), the historic Lespinasse oven is fired up to bake fresh bread for visitors : enjoy the crispy crust !





LEGENDARY routes

The Pays de Montbéliard is the perfect place for hiking and cycling enthusiasts of all kinds.

Among the hundreds of kilometres of marked trails, there are some big names such as the **Grande Traversée du Jura (GTJ), GR5 and EuroVélo 6**. Breathe in the endless greenery and beyond!



GRANDE TRAVERSÉE DU JURA the adventure starts here!

Did you know that the famous **Grande Traversée du Jura** trails start in... Mandeure, in the heart of the Pays de Montbéliard?

From the pretty Gallo-Roman town and its Belvédère des Roches viewpoint, **the Grandes Traversées du Jura** offer more than **120 km of marked trails for cycling and hiking** across the region. Adventurous souls, seasoned sports enthusiasts and contemplative types have found their **playground!**



GET BACK ON THE SADDLE with EuroVélo6

This cycle route connects the Atlantic to the Black Sea, crossing the Pays de Montbéliard for 32 km on a safe, flat path.

As we ride along, the **city of princes, pretty villages and remarkable structures** (drawbridges, canal bridges, locks, etc.) offer welcome stops for both the eyes and the taste buds. A safe, dedicated route with no hills, **suitable for everyone!**



EASY ON THE DOUBS RIVER AND on the Rhône-Rhine canal

In the Montbéliard region, river travel meanders between calm waters, locks and rivers.

Navigable for 230 km, the Rhône-Rhine Canal flows peacefully through the Doubs Valley. The canal offers a charming marina in Montbéliard near the **Près-la-Rose science park**.



REACHING milestones

The signposting of the new GR de Pays 'Forts et bornes du Pays de Montbéliard' takes intrepid walkers through bucolic landscapes to picturesque villages and valleys with panoramic views, discovering curious engraved steles along the way...

You may recognise the antlers **of the Wurtemberg-Montbéliard stag**, the bear of the canton of Bern, and the fleurs-de-lis of the King of France: dating from the 15th to the 18th century, these are just some of **the 230 boundary stones** marking the former limits of the Principality that can be seen along the route. No less exceptional is the fortified belt of Montbéliard, which is marked along this **GR by three 19th-century military structures in Bavans, Grand-Charmont and Pont-de-Roide**, offering breathtaking panoramas and moving testimonies to local history.



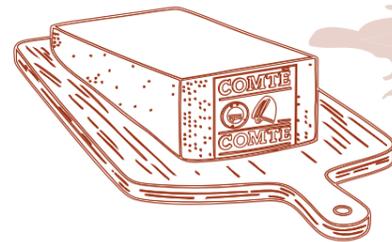
INSIDER delights

THE « MASCOT OF THE REGION » the montbéliarde Cow

The history of this famous dairy breed dates back to the early 18th century when Mennonite farmers arrived from Switzerland.

Welcomed by Prince Leopold Eberhardt, who 'smelled a good deal', the Mennonites were skilled farmers and breeders.

Thanks to methodical selection, the Montbéliarde dairy breed was born more than a century later on the farm of Joseph Graber, an experienced breeder and descendant of Mennonites. Today, the Montbéliarde accounts for 95% of the dairy herd in Franche-Comté. Visitors can tour Les Fruitières du Lomont to see the production of Comté AOP cheese, guided by the passionate cheesemaker.



AVE CAESAR, the montbéliarde sausage salutes you

What comes only in a tasty duo, offering gourmets its amber colour, delicately smoky aromas and original taste, protected by a PGI since 2013? It's the Montbéliard sausage!

A direct descendant of the cured meats of the Sequane region, praised by Julius Caesar between two military conquests, it continues to delight gourmets of all ages in recipes that vary with the seasons. Made since the 14th century by farmers in the Montbéliard region, Montbéliard sausage combines lean and fatty pork seasoned with garlic and caraway, then spends a long time in a chimney, where the smoke from coniferous trees gives it its inimitable aroma. Lentils and cancoillotte cheese are its traditional accompaniments, but it adapts naturally to all styles of cuisine!



CRISTEL, cookware that make noise

In 1826, the visionary Japy brothers built a factory in Feschés-le-Châtel, producing the first pressed tinplate saucepan.

The innovation was praised by King Louis Philippe himself. Nearly three centuries, a few setbacks and an extraordinary human adventure later, today, CRISTEL is France's leading manufacturer of high-end stainless steel cookware and is recognized as a Living Heritage Company (Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant).





SPARKLING Montbéliard

TANTE AIRIE, a living legend

According to legend, Tante Airie (or Arie) is the reincarnation of the benefactor Countess Henriette of Montbéliard (1387-1444).

A benevolent fairy dressed as a peasant, she travels with her donkey to deliver presents to children, much like Father Christmas. She remains the beloved symbol of the Montbéliard Christmas market. Legend also has it that she listens to children's dreams by pressing her ear against the wall of her cave. Today, children and their parents look forward to seeing her every year at the Montbéliard Christmas market.

LES LUMIÈRES DE NOËL

At nightfall, Montbéliard's dazzling illuminations light up the eyes and hearts of its many visitors.

Streets and buildings are lit up by some **115,000 bulbs**, creating a **truly unique illuminated trail**. Here, shining arches wind their way through the city; there, a ceiling of fireflies creates a **cosy atmosphere**. **The magic is in the air**, and light is everywhere. Sparkling arches and "**ceilings of fireflies**" create an enchanting atmosphere **in the city of the Dukes of Württemberg**.



THE BRIGHT AUTHENTICITY AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

The Christmas Market is held at the foot of the oldest Lutheran church in France, the Saint-Martin church (1601).

With **180 artisans**, it maintains the **Germanic traditions of the region**, offering mulled wine, biscuits, and **authentic handmade gifts**. In the aisles, visitors can enjoy a glass of mulled wine or indulge in some Christmas biscuits and other treats. **The market is typical of the Germanic tradition** to which the Pays de Montbéliard is very attached. **Authentic, it offers products imbued** with the spirit of Christmas and celebration!



AN ILLUMINATED HIKE



To spice up the experience, organised by the Randonnée Hérimoncourtoise association, the **Lumières de Noël hike** is the largest gathering of walkers in eastern France.

It is a guided and signposted urban walk with two routes to discover the Christmas lights of the city of Montbéliard and its Christmas market.

This major event welcomes more than **3,500 walkers** every year, who bring their own cups to warm up with a hot drink.





We can host you for a press visit tailored to your themes and availability.

Get in touch with us !



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