



Alamy

INSPIRATION

## Loire Valley: uncover the best of France's increasingly exciting region

*Find out what's drawing new attention to this exceptionally scenic pocket of France – from where to stay and eat to what to do*

BY LAUREN JADE HILL

18 June 2023

The Loire Valley has long captured many travellers' attention. A bounty of palatial châteaux (more than 300, in fact) sits at prime points of this verdant landscape stretching almost 300km from Orleans to Nantes in the Loire River basin. The Loire River and its winding tributaries course through great swathes of hundred-year-old vines, ancient forest, the Renaissance gardens that accompany this region's castles, and **picture-postcard towns and villages** – many with their own château – dating back hundreds of years along these riverbanks and tucked amid the woodland and vineyards.

In this idyllic landscape known for its rich history, arts, gastronomy and wine, tradition now meets a wave of new energy that's come into the region. Exciting new, both recently opened and forthcoming, hotels (including a future Six Senses hotel, which is to open as a part of Les Bordes Estate) pair the region's unique heritage and landscape with contemporary style and top chefs, bringing on-trend culinary concepts to the table. Young winemakers are coming in with their reinterpretation of each appellation's grapes, and the contemporary art scene thrives with art events happening throughout the year.

With this renewal comes a broader demographic of domestic and international travellers wanting to uncover what's new to the exceptionally idyllic area. Reminders of the rich history that's given this region the nickname of **France's** Valley of Kings – like 2023 marking the 600th anniversary of the birth of King Louis XI – heighten the global attention being brought to the area. Read on to discover what to uncover in the beguiling region and where to find the most exciting places to eat and stay.

## Where to stay in the Loire Valley



Hotel Château du Grand-Lucé Michael Spengler

## Hotel Château du Grand-Lucé

A neoclassical landmark built by Baron Jacques Pineau de Viennay in the 1700s to host royalty and philosophers of the Age of the Enlightenment, the palatial property now acting as a chic hotel in the village of Le Grand-Lucé takes cues from its illustrious past, pairing the original architecture and design features of the château with a stylish contemporary design – expect to see limestone floors and original boiserie alongside antique sconces and chandeliers, Persian rugs, custom fabrics from Pierre Frey and Nobilis, Christian Lacroix and Jean-Paul Gaultier, and fine art that connects you to the site. This lavishly finished house looks out over eight acres of woodland and gardens, from the manicured French gardens it faces onto to the vegetable and herb garden beyond and wilder meadows that are backed by historic white oak forest. Within the château, 17 individually designed rooms and suites are joined by Le Lucé [restaurant](#), offering dishes providing a modern take on farm-to-table dining in a garden-side salon and the bar Jack Pine's (a playful nod to Jacques Pineau), which now occupies the former chapel. The outdoor pool and picnic baskets can enjoy the cocktails and the bistro menu of this bar can also be made up. Bicycles are provided for exploration of the estate, and massages are offered in a serene spa area.

**Address:** [Hotel Château du Grand-Lucé](#), 7 Place du Château, 72150 Le Grand-Lucé, France