

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2017 – NEWS FROM FRANCE

What's new for 2018? New transport routes, accommodation, museums, shopping outlets, sporting events and facilities, tourism initiatives and anniversaries will set the tone for France in the coming year

TOURISM FIGURES

In 2016, France welcomed 11.9 million British visitors and 611,000 Irish visitors with a continued positive trend. France experienced a growth of 5% from the UK in 2017 for the first 6 months of the year. The UK remained the main source market for inbound travellers to France in 2016, representing 15% of total foreign visitors to the country. There has been an increase in tourist expenditure this year, up 12% year on year. According to the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, France expects to have welcomed between 88 and 89 million international tourists in 2017, with the objective of reaching 100 million by 2020. (Sources: INSEE, CSO, ONS)

NEW TRANSPORT ROUTES

Getting to France is already easy, but plenty of new routes and increased flights are making travel better still:

Air Corsica

London Stansted - Ajaccio (*between two and four times a week from 3 May to 4 November*)

London Stansted - Bastia (*between two and four times a week from 3 May to 4 November*)

London Stansted – Figari (*between once and twice a week from 3 May to 4 November*)

British Airways

London Heathrow - Grenoble (*Saturdays from 2 December*)

London Heathrow - Turin (for the French Alps) (*Saturdays and Sundays from 26 November*)

Manchester - Chambéry (*Saturdays from 16 December*)

London City - Paris Orly (previously from London Heathrow) (*16 weekly flights from October*)

Jet2

London Stansted - Geneva (for the French Alps) (*at least once a week from 22 December*)

Birmingham - Turin (for the French Alps) (*weekends from 21 December*)

Birmingham - Grenoble (*Sundays from 24 December*)

A second TGV station is also set to open in Montpellier, Occitanie in summer 2018. Located in the innovative Cambacérès district close to its start-ups, educational institutions and natural spaces, the 'Montpellier-Sud de France' TGV station will save time on journeys to and from Spain and Belgium, as well as Paris and Lyon.

NEW MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

FONDATION LUMA

Arles, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

Opening: 2018

Set to be a hub of contemporary art and culture, this centre will host some of the world's largest international exhibitions beneath a 56-metre-high tower designed by architect Frank Gehry. The opening of the main building is scheduled for 2018, while an artistic programme is already put on each summer in the renovated former railway warehouses. The Fondation LUMA was launched in 2013 by the illustrious Maja Hoffmann.

www.luma-arles.org

MUSEE DE LA FONDATION CARMIGNAC

Île de Porquerolles, Hyères, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

Opening: March 2018

This new foundation places artistic creation at the heart of nature, designed as a focal point to unite the various movements in contemporary art in France and abroad, this exceptional site will become increasingly vibrant and open to the world as the paintings and sculptures created in harmony with their unique surroundings are added.

www.fondation-carmignac.com/porquerolles-site/

'CALVADOS EXPERIENCE' MUSEUM

Pont-l'Évêque, Normandy

Opening: April 2018

Learn the history of the famous apple brandy at this brand new 2,500-square-metre space, which incorporates sensory exhibits and tasting sessions to create a truly pleasurable educational experience.

www.calvados-tourisme.co.uk

MUSEE ARCHEOLOGIQUE

Nîmes, Occitanie

Opening: 2 June 2018

Facing the Roman arenas in Nîmes, this new museum will honour the town's remarkable archeological collection, explaining its antique heritage and displaying as many as 25,000 individual exhibits. It has been one of France's most important contemporary architectural projects, with a remarkably light framework and transparent, undulating façade.

www.ot-nimes.fr

MUSEE DE LA MER ET DE LA MARINE

Bordeaux, Nouvelle Aquitaine

Opening: 16 June 2018

With the first stone laid in April 2016, this long-anticipated maritime museum will open in the Bassins à Flot area of Bordeaux, with 40 paintings by Monet exhibited for the occasion.

www.museedelamerbordeaux.fr

NAUSICAA EXTENSION

Boulogne-sur-Mer, Nord-Pas-de-Calais

Opening: July 2018

The doors will open in few months' time on a massive new extension at Nausicaa, the French National Sea Centre in Boulogne-sur-Mer, France. This new building will contain one of the World's largest aquariums in Europe and will be ready for visitors at the beginning of the Summer next year. With this increase in size, NAUSICAA, which is a major tourist attraction in the Hauts-de-France region, is beginning a new chapter in its history. Nearly 60,000 creatures will be on display in the 15,000 m² of exhibition space. A further 22,000 creatures will be added to the iconic species that are already there.

www.nausicaa.co.uk

CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY AT GALERIES LAFAYETTE

Paris

Opening: End of 2018

The Galeries Lafayette Foundation will take over all five storeys of an old industrial building in the Marais – one of Paris' oldest neighbourhoods – just east of the Centre Pompidou. It will encompass sculpture, ceramics, fashion, design and performing arts, with a focus on creation, innovation and research.

<https://lafayetteanticipation1.squarespace.com/>

SPORTING EVENTS AND NEW FACILITIES

GARDEN GOLF DE BORDEAUX VILLENAVE D'ORNON

Bordeaux, Nouvelle Aquitaine

Opening: October 2017

On the banks of the Gironde river outside Bordeaux, this new 18-hole course was conceived by architect Michel Niedbala and supported by UGOLF (formerly NGF).

<http://jouer.golf/villeneuve-dornon>

A NEW GOLF COURSE ON THE ALABASTER COAST

Dieppe, Normandy

Opening: 2018

Situated on the picturesque Alabaster Coast between Dieppe and Fécamp, this brand new course offers nine- and 18-hole options, plus an on-site restaurant affording great views.

www.golfnormandie-albatre.com (French only)

LONGCHAMP RACECOURSE REOPENING

Paris

Opening: April 2018

After a long renovation and extension by architect Dominique Perrault, the famous racecourse will reopen with new brasseries and seminar spaces, a restaurant with panoramic views, and a hanging garden in time for the summer.

<http://www.nouveaulongchamp.com/en/>

FRENCH GRAND PRIX

Var, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

24 June 2018

The French Grand Prix will return to the Formula One calendar in 2018 after an absence of 10 years, with the race held at the newly reopening Circuit Paul Ricard – also known as Le Castellet – which last staged the event in 1990. Over 66,000 spectators are expected for the race and in the region.

<https://www.grandprixevents.com/f1-races/french-grand-prix>

THE 2018 RYDER CUP

Le Golf National, Paris, Île-de-France

25-30 September 2018

The 42nd Ryder Cup tournament is the greatest in world golf and will be held for the first time in France, and for the first time on the fringe of a capital city, in 2018. This is only the second time the Ryder Cup will be staged in continental Europe. Over 50,000 visitors are expected per day and estimated 500 million television viewers from 200 countries. The 2018 Junior Ryder Cup will take place at Disneyland Paris (Marne-la-Vallée) on 24 – 25 September.

<http://www.rydercup.com/news-media/europe/2018-ryder-cup>

NEW SHOPPING OUTLETS

THE VILLAGE

Villefontaine, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

Opening: April 2018

Just 25 minutes from Lyon, new designer shopping outlet 'The Village' will open in a 22,000m² space with 90 shops and restaurants – and with a lake and free childrens' play areas, it will also be a great place to meet family and friends.

LA SAMARITAINE

Paris

Opening: 2018

Since closing for safety reasons in 2005, La Samaritaine is finally unveiling the results of its large-scale renovation project, conceived by the LVMH group. Several activities will be grouped together within the buildings, spread over two blocks between the Quai du Louvre

and the Rue de Rivoli: a department store, a five-star Cheval Blanc hotel with 72 rooms, 96 social housing units, offices and a crèche.

www.lvmh.com/houses/other-activities/samaritaine/

NEW TOURISM INITIATIVES

GOURMET TOURS OF PARIS AND VERSAILLES

Paris and Île-de-France

2018 (Paris tours from March onwards)

A new, fully immersive food tour is launching in the French capital, incorporating the best regional specialities, meetings with producers and a delicious lunch at an award-winning wine bar, paired with top-class wines. Also get the best from a visit to iconic Versailles by skipping the queues, being shown around the chateau by a passionate guide and finishing with a fabulous Alain Ducasse lunch on site.

www.memories-france.travel/en/activity

ANNIVERSARIES

CENTENARY OF THE END OF THE GREAT WAR

November 2018

A wealth of events, research projects and commemorative ceremonies have taken place over the last four years to mark the 100th anniversary of the First World War – and it's only appropriate that they are rounded off in 2018 with a final programme, with contributions from all four corners of France.

<http://centenaire.org/en>

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF AÉROPOSTALE'S FIRST FLIGHT

Toulouse, Occitanie

25 December 2018

Founded in Toulouse in 1918, the Aéropostale (originally named 'Lignes Aériennes Latécoère') was a pioneering aviation company which operated until 1933. It offered the first air route connecting France with its colonies in Africa and South America. Aviation legends Jean Mermoz and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry were pilots with the company. To mark the anniversary and in remembrance of Aéropostale, Toulouse is opening 'La Piste des

Géants' on the old runway – this will incorporate a museum, a building dedicated to François Delarozière's artistic project 'La Machine', and gardens conceived as a journey through the different atmospheres of the countries flown to by the company.

NEW HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

FOUR SEASONS HOTEL

Megève, French Alps

Opening: 15 December 2017

The only hotel situated directly on the Mont d'Arbois slopes, Megève's new Four Seasons (and the first Four Seasons mountain establishment in Europe) is set to offer chic, contemporary style in 55 spacious rooms including 14 suites, most with a fireplace and balcony. Indoor and outdoor dining options include the two-Michelin-starred Le 1920 restaurant – and there are plenty of facilities for children as well as the region's largest spa.

www.fourseasons.com/fr/megeve

FOUR NEW CHALETS BY GUERLAIN CHICHERIT

Tignes, French Alps

Opening: December 2017

Former freeride world champion Chicherit is continuing his luxury chalet revolution following his success in the Alpine hamlet of Les Brevières. The additions in Tignes are Chalet Banksy, including three originals by the artist; Chalet Ubud, inspired by Balinese art; Chalet Babylon, stacked with cutting-edge design and technology; and Chalet Raven, channelling 1930s style.

<http://www.gc-kollection.com/chalet-babylon-and-chalet-ubud>

LE RELAIS DE CHAMBORD

Chambord, Loire Valley

Opening: December 2017

Facing the mighty Chateau de Chambord, this new luxury hotel results from the renovation of the former two-star Hotel du Grand St-Michel.

<http://relaisdechambord.com/> (French only)

TOKYO INN

Marseille, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

Opening: Late 2017

The iconic Japanese hotel chain is set to open its first European establishment in central Marseille between the train station and Joliette quarter, offering a total of 231 rooms.

www.tokyo-inn.com

CLUB MED GRAND MASSIF

Samoëns-Morillon, French Alps

Opening: Winter 2018

The 423-room, four-trident Club Med in Samoëns boasts a panoramic view of the mountains and has been designed to blend seamlessly with the surrounding nature. In addition to an art studio and a vast range of family activities, the resort features two pools and a spa by Carita, Paris.

www.clubmed.co.uk/r/Grand-Massif-Samoëns-Morillon/s

HOTEL FAUCHON

Paris

Opening: Early 2018

Paris' first Fauchon hotel will open on Place de la Madeleine with 60 rooms and access to the Café Fauchon on the ground floor.

<https://www.fauchon.com/en/>

HOTEL D'ARLATAN

Arles, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

Opening: Spring 2018

Reopening after a year's refurbishment, this charming hotel in the historic centre of Arles – partly dating to the 12th century – is a stone's throw from the River Rhône and features beautiful wooden beams, stone walls, mullioned windows and antique furniture.

www.hotel-arlatan.fr

HOTEL COSTES

Montpellier, Occitanie

Opening: Spring 2018

Following the launch of their private beach 'La Paillotte des Lézards' this summer, the Costes brothers are set to open a new hotel overlooking the sea in Montpellier, offering top-quality facilities including a balneotherapy centre.

<https://hotelcostes.com/> (Awaiting website for Montpellier hotel)

L'ARBRE BLANC

Montpellier, Occitanie

Opening: September 2018

Designed by architects Sou Fujimoto, Nicolas Laisné and Manal Rachdi, this innovative residential building in the shape of a tree is taking root in Montpellier's contemporary Port Marianne district.

<http://larbreblanc.net/> (French only)

MAMA SHELTER

Toulouse, Occitanie

Opening: November 2018

This brand of trendy, affordable urban hotels will open an establishment in the centre of Toulouse, housed in the former Belle-Époque cinema 'Les Nouveautés' – where Joséphine Baker and Maurice Chevalier performed – and will offer 120 quirky rooms, a bar and restaurant, a patio and a rooftop space, plus a cinema room-cum-performance hall.

www.mamashelter.com/en

LE KROSS

Paris

Opening: end of 2018

This new five-star addition to Paris' hotel scene is part of the Evok Hotels Collection, with design by Philippe Starck – and will open on Rue de la Pompe in the 16th arrondissement.

<http://evokhotels.com/>

PIERRE ET VACANCES HOLIDAY VILLAGE

Deauville, Normandy

Opening: 2018

Situated on the marina of the glamorous seaside resort of Deauville – renowned for its annual film festival and fashionable boutiques and casino – this five-star holiday village boasts 134 apartments, two pools, a fitness room and a luxury spa.

www.pierreetvacances.com

HOTEL LE CHEVAL BLANC

Paris

Opening: 2018

This five-star hotel on the site of the former Samaritaine department store will boast 72 rooms and suites with views of the Seine, a cultural space, a restaurant with terrace and boutiques and design by Japanese architects Sejima and Nishizawo.

<https://www.lvmh.com/houses/other-activities/samaritaine/>

A NEW RESTAURANT BY PHIL HOWARD

Montalbert, La Plagne, French Alps

Winter 2017

Two-Michelin-starred British chef Howard (The Square, Mayfair and Elystan Street, Chelsea) is opening an intimate, 35-cover restaurant in La Plagne, with an ambition to elevate it to the best restaurant in the Paradiski area through simple, seasonal dishes.

2019 AND BEYOND

YEAR OF GASTRONOMY

Bouches-du-Rhône, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

'Gastronomy Year' will kick off in 2019 in celebration of Provence's rich and varied food scene, local produce and traditional savoir-faire. Details of the mouthwatering programme to follow.

CITÉ INTERNATIONALE DE LA GASTRONOMIE

Lyon, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

Lyon's iconic Grand Hotel-Dieu will be the renovated setting for this event in 2019, occupying almost 4,000m² dedicated to permanent and temporary exhibitions, workshops, a research laboratory and a wealth of gourmet shops and restaurants.

CITE INTERNATIONALE DE LA GASTRONOMIE ET DU VIN (CIGV)

Dijon, Burgundy

This vast cultural project is due to open in 2019. New additions include the prestigious École Ferrandi with a 100-student capacity, a new four-star hotel, and an eco-district with two cinemas and a large shopping area as well as 1,700m² of exhibition space.

ENDS

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About Atout France

Atout France - France Tourism Development Agency, is responsible for promoting the development of the tourism industry, the country's largest economic sector. Atout France's primary mission is to monitor and analyse the supply and demand in the tourist market. Atout France is also committed to promoting destinations and tourism partners in and from France. This is achieved through marketing campaigns, online promotion, PR and working closely with the travel trade sector. Atout France is represented in the UK and Ireland from its office in London.