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JULY 2024

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Agia Paraskevi,
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54

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Greece

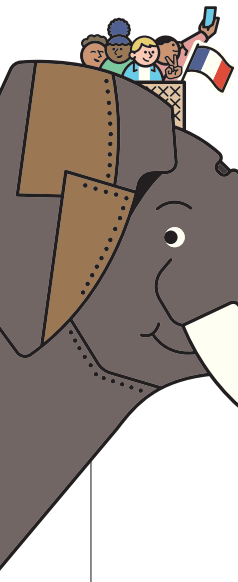


**ALL
ARE
WELCOME**

How **Malta**
became
an LGBTQIA+
hotspot

ABOVE &
beyond

easyJet cabin crew
Chelsea Chapman on
the joy of Crete



NANTES LETS ITS FREAK FLAG FLY

Nantes has gained a reputation as one of France's most important artistic and cultural centres. Here's how best to enjoy it

Words: MARIE LE CONTE





If you want to understand the past and the present of Nantes, you need to walk through the doors of Le Lieu Unique. Formerly a biscuit factory, the art deco building was abandoned in the 1980s, then eventually taken over by artists and other creatives. It is now home to a bar, a café, a club, an exhibition space, a bookshop, a restaurant and a hammam sauna. There is nowhere else like it.

That is what Nantes likes to do: once a proud city of industry, it has now reinvented itself as a place where just about anything can happen, as long as it's fun and culturally stimulating. For a long time, a giant mechanical elephant, the brainchild of creatives at Les Machines de l'île, marched

Clockwise from left: A steampunk spider; cruising the River Loire estuary; seafront artwork Le pied, le pull-over et le système digestif; messing about by the river



HOLIDAY IN... NANTES

Soak up the history of Nantes at the Oceania Hotel de France Nantes. easyJet.com/holidays



'Anything can happen, as long as it's fun'



across town with 50 passengers on board, diverting buses in the process. Le Voyage à Nantes is the city's tourism initiative, which organises events every year. They once added a slide to the 15th-century ramparts of the castle of the Dukes of Brittany. On another occasion, they crashed a ship into a fountain; on a third, they filled the Place Royale with hundreds of statues. Why? Why not! That's the spirit Nantes embraces today.

No matter the time of year, there is always something strikingly different, from Les Rendez-vous de l'Erdre, a jazz festival along the river taking place in August, to classical music festival La Folle Journée happening every January. Once nicknamed the Venice of the West for its many canals, it is now more famous for its beautiful, slanting buildings, pitched up on uneven ground. If you get bored of the city, the sandy beaches of La Baule and Pornichet are only 80km away and the Lac de Grand-Lieu, one of the largest lakes in France, is also nearby. Finally, being on Brittany's doorstep means that Nantes is the place if, really, all you want is to fill yourself with crêpes, galettes and Breton cider. Go on, we won't tell! levoyageanantes.fr

Nantes: Need to Know



TRENTEMOULT

An enchanting former fishing village on the river: take the boat across the Loire from the centre of town and walk the tiny streets lined with colourful houses.



LE PASSAGE POMMERAYE

Browse luxury stores – including Le Tanneur for leather goods and books at Durance – then gaze at the ornate decorations of this grand 19th-century shopping arcade, which featured in several Jacques Demy movies.



MUSÉE D'ARTS DE NANTES

Opened by Napoleon Bonaparte, the fine arts museum is one of the largest in the region. It is home to an awe-inspiring permanent collection, and always has great temporary exhibitions. This summer, there's a major show by local artist Pierrick Sorin.