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PORT EXPLORER



BORDEAUX

FRANCE

Bordeaux is the capital of the French Region of Aquitaine that stretches south along the west coast all the way to the Pyrenees Mountains. Over the centuries the city has expanded along the banks of the Garonne River that connects Bordeaux with the Atlantic Ocean. The river was Bordeaux's most important trade route and enabled the city to grow in wealth and prestige.

The people of Bordeaux are justifiably proud of the fact that in 2007 UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) designated the city as a World Heritage Site due to its beautifully preserved architectural heritage. Though Bordeaux has been pillaged and plundered many times over the past two millennia the city was very fortunate in the twentieth century. During World War I, due to simple geography, the city was spared the ravages of that horrible conflict. Again in World War II, with its lack of strategic value, Bordeaux was again spared the devastation visited upon so many other European cities, town and villages.

Bordeaux's international claim to fame, of course, is wine. The Bordeaux region, with nearly one quarter million acres under grape cultivation, arguably produces some of the finest wines in the world.

The people of Bordeaux refer to the different districts of their city as "Quartiers" and each has its own name and distinctive feel. The Saint Pierre Quarter, for instance, is the old historic heart of the city with beautiful classic architecture, churches and dramatic fountains. The Chartrons Quarter lines the banks of the Garonne River and was the old trade and commercial center of the city. Today many wonderful antique shops can be found in this Quarter. The Saint Michel Quarter is known for its young and energetic feel and diverse cultures.

Bordeaux is an exciting and dynamic metropolis that has, at no small expense, taken great care to preserve its stunningly classic 18th century charm. In fact, the city fathers of Paris petitioned Emperor Louis Napoleon III to rebuild rather provincial looking Paris into a more elegant city ... like beautiful Bordeaux.



HISTORY

The earliest traces of habitation in the area of Bordeaux were discovered in 1881 and date back to the Upper Paleolithic Age ... close to 40,000 years.

Bordeaux was founded by Celtic tribes 300-400 BC as a fishing village just inland from the Atlantic Ocean along the banks of the Garonne River. By 60 BC the Roman Empire had conquered much of Gaul. Though grapes had been grown in the region previously the Romans introduced their own superior vines and advanced methods of cultivation and wine production. Bordeaux soon became the prosperous capital of the Roman province of Aquitaine. As the Roman Empire slowly went into decline, Bordeaux and much of southwest Europe was caught up in the struggles and ensuing destruction brought by the invading East Germanic Vandals. The Vandals were soon followed by the East Germanic Visigoths and later by the Western Germanic Franks.

In 732 Bordeaux and much of Aquitaine was again savagely destroyed and brutally laid waste by the invading Islamic armies of Abdul Rahman Al Ghafiqi. Leaving thoroughly pillaged, plundered and smoldering Bordeaux in his wake Abdul Rahman Al Ghafiqi and his Muslim army met their death and defeat north of Bordeaux in the historically decisive Battle of Tours.

The rise of Bordeaux to wealth and prominence began when Eleanor, Duchess of Aquitaine married young Henry, Duke of Normandy. Soon afterward the Duke was crowned Henry II, King of England.

As a result of the royal marriage Aquitaine and Bordeaux became part of England and would remain so for the next 300 years. King Henry, seeking to gain the favor of the citizens of Bordeaux decreed that their wine could be exported to the British Isles tax-free. As Bordeaux wine was now the cheapest in all of England it quickly became the favorite. Bordeaux greatly prospered until 1453 when,

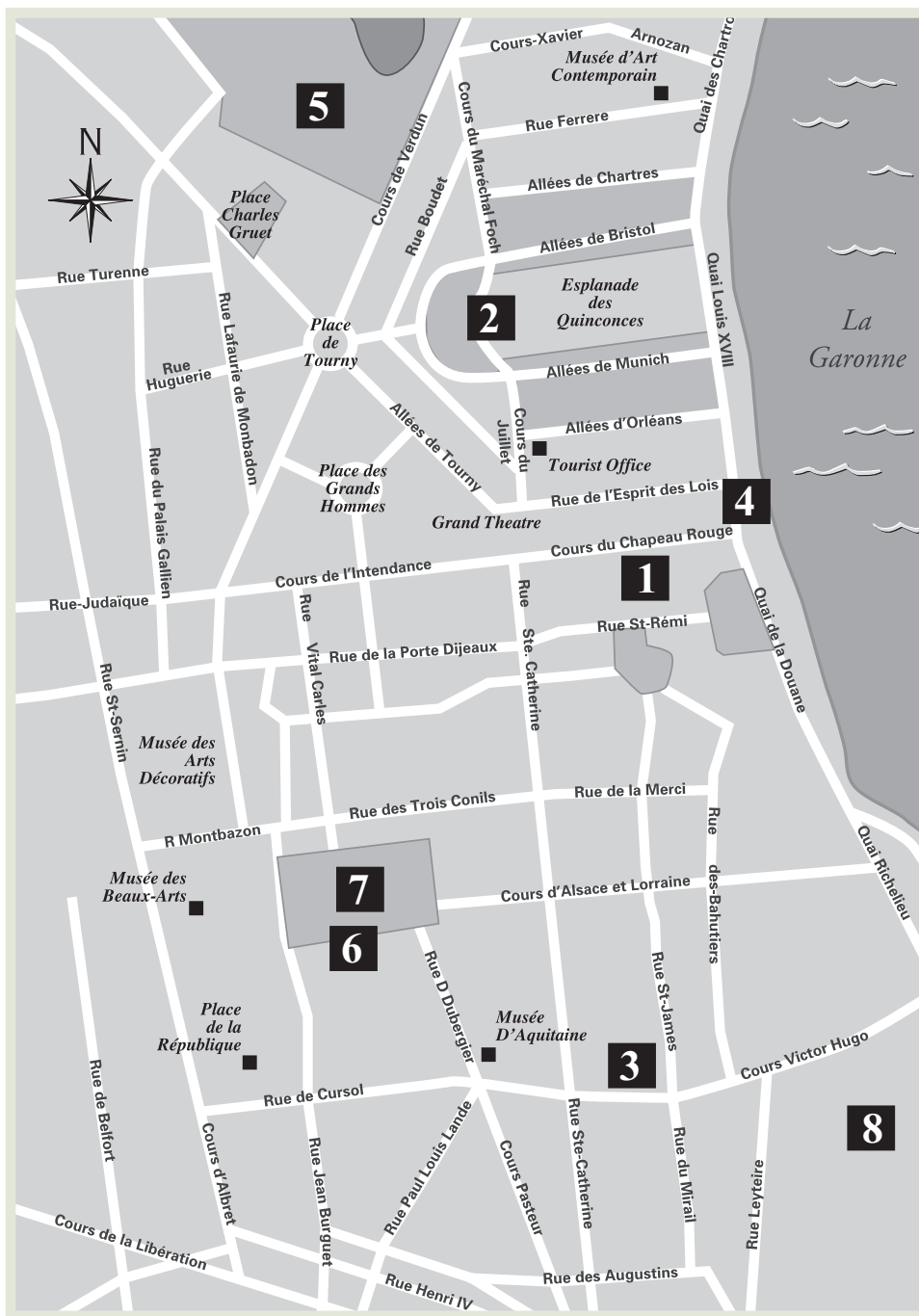
at the Battle of Castillon, the victorious French drove the English out of Bordeaux, Aquitaine and the rest of France. With the city's wine exports cut off to the profitable English market, Bordeaux fell upon hard times. The difficulties would last up until the mid 1600s.

Though at first reluctant, when greatly encouraged by King Louis XIV and his powerful Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Bordeaux and her nearly 200 shipping merchants would eventually gain untold fortune in the "Traite des Noirs" between Africa and the West Indies. This would last for two centuries from the mid 1600s to the mid 1800s.

With Bordeaux's new found wealth, thousands of beautiful buildings and mansions were constructed in the city, many along the riverfront that connected the city to the Atlantic. This was the "Golden Age" of Bordeaux. From the late 19th Century through the mid 20th Century each time the French capital was about to

fall to the invading German Army, the government in Paris fled to Bordeaux. This happened three times within a span of 70 years; in 1871 during the Franco-Prussian War, again in 1914 in World War I and with the 1940 German invasion of World War II.

During the Second World War, there were many incredibly brave members of the French Résistance, men and women, whose self-sacrifice in support of the Allies and the liberation of Europe will never be forgotten. At the risk of their own lives, the Resistance smuggled young Brits and Yanks across France, over the Pyrenees Mountains through Spain, on to British held Gibraltar and back to England. The next time you have a glass of Bordeaux wine and find yourself at a loss as to whom you might toast ... consider raising your glass to the men and women of the Résistance and Allied forces that during the darkest days of World War II sacrificed so much for freedom.



BORDEAUX PLACES OF INTEREST

1 Place du Parlement (Parliament Square) is in the center of the city. Built in 1754, this square is just one example of the beautiful 18th century architecture that is found throughout Bordeaux.

2 Monument aux Girondins is a large, stunning fountain in the middle of Quinconces Square. The statue, built between 1894 and 1902, honors victims in the moderate Girondins political party who perished during the period of the French Revolution known as the Reign of Terror.

3 The St. Eloi Gate was built as part of the city's fortifications in the 1400s. Not long after completion a giant bell was added. A "new" bell was put in place in 1759 weighing in at over 16,000 lbs. The gate and bell are part of Bordeaux's official symbol.

4 Place de la Bourse (Bourse Square) is another majestic area in Bordeaux, this time looking out upon the Garonne River. Built in the 1700s there are refreshing fountains and elegant statues surrounded by stately 18th Century buildings.

5 Jardin Public (The Public Garden) was designed and built in the mid 1700s. One hundred years later it was redesigned in the English Style. Covering an area close to 25 acres in the heart of the city the garden is filled with lush plants, tree lined path and ponds that provide a home to many swans and ducks. Located in the garden is Bordeaux's Museum of Natural History.

6 The Jean Moulin Museum is named in honor of the leader of the French Résistance during World War II. The museum tells the history of the deportation of the Jews and the struggle of the French Underground during Nazi occupation.

7 The Saint Andre Cathedral rivals Notre Dame in size and as such is the largest church in Bordeaux. It is located in the southern part of the Old City. Construction was first begun in the 1100s. Various changes and renovations have taken place over the centuries. It was in this cathedral in 1137 that Eleanor, Duchess of Aquitaine, married Prince Louis. Not long afterwards the Prince was crowned Louis VII, King of France.

8 The Basilique & Fleche Saint Michel (Church & Steeple of Saint Michel) was begun in the late 1400s and has seen many repairs and refurbishing over the centuries. The free-standing, Gothic Style tower rises over 370 feet. The tower is one of the most cherished and recognizable landmarks of Bordeaux

Beyond Bordeaux

Saint Emilion is a few miles west of Bordeaux. Built around its monasteries, this wonderfully preserved medieval town was a pilgrimage destination in centuries past. There are interesting examples of architecture and ancient ruins. From the village a visitor has a wonderful view of the entire Dordogne Valley.

The **Caves of Lascaux** are west of Bordeaux. These Paleolithic caves are home to some of the world's most beautiful prehistoric art. The main cave complex was closed to the public in 1963 to preserve the paintings from fading due to the emission of carbon dioxide from visitors. A highly detailed replica of the caves and their art has been faithfully and painstakingly recreated for visitors to explore.

SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Bordeaux and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of the organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult azamarclubcruises.com or contact the onboard Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, guests are advised to take with them only the items they need and to secure any valuables.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

Bargaining: Is not a way of life in France.

Tipping: Cafes and restaurants add an automatic 15% service charge. It is customary to tip a couple extra euros however. A 10% tip for a taxi is customary.

LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

The 22 regions of France are well known for their different styles of cuisine. Most recipes in the Bordeaux region are wine based. Some of the popular dishes from Bordeaux include: Entrecote a la Bordelaise, a grilled rib steak with a sauce made with red wine (cabernet sauvignon), onions and meat juices. Gigot d'Agneau, is roasted leg of lamb with thyme, parsley, garlic and olive oil. Cuit au Four Cotelette de Porc, baked pork chops in a sauce of red wine, brown sugar, cloves, nutmeg and apples. Lamproie a la Bordelaise is eel cooked in red wine. Cannele is a small cinnamon cake that is a very popular desert.

There are over 9,000 separate wine growing chateaus in the Bordeaux region. They produce a wide variety that range from "simply superb" to "indescribably phenomenal" ... from common table wines to the most expensive vintages in the world. The elite of Bordeaux and the wine making world are: Chateau Margaux: The most expensive bottle ever paid for (but never sold) was a 1787 Chateau Margaux originally owned by US President (and wine connoisseur) Thomas Jefferson. In 1989, while being shown in a New York restaurant to prospective buyers with the asking price of \$500,000, the bottle was accidentally knocked to the floor by a waiter. The 200 year old bottle shattered. Though the bottle was insured for \$250,000 there is no information as to whether a tip was left at the end of the evening ... but the waiter has not been heard from since. Chateau Lafite-Rothschild: The most expensive bottle ever sold was a 1787 Chateau Lafite that had also once belonged to Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson bought a great deal of fine wine for shipment back to the US when he was the Ambassador to France. His initials are clearly etched into this bottle. It was bought at auction in 1985 for the price of \$180,000. The story is told that one bidder nearly fainted and was close to cardiac arrest when he realized that he had raised his hand as the bidding reached \$100,000. It seems the gentleman slowly recovered when another bidder eventually increased the offer. Chateau Haut-Brion: This vintage was the very first French wine imported to the United States. It is not surprising that the importer of record was, once again, Thomas Jefferson. Chateau Latour: Most of their production is Cabernet Sauvignon. Their 'Grand Vin de Chateau Latour' is famous throughout the wine loving world. Chateau Mouton-Rothschild: In 1993 bottles with their original labels were denied entry into the United States. A sketch on

