

# Weekends and vacations in France

(a variety of destinations with short descriptions)

Looking for some ideas for long weekends or vacations in France? Browse through to discover places that have been recommended by Upper School students for their particular attractions.



This project is a joint PFA-Modern Language Department-CAS students project that will eventually develop into a page on Poodle.

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## Perpignan

**Location:** Perpignan is situated in the Languedoc-Roussillon region in the Pyrénées-Orientales department located at the very south of France.

**Best season to go:** May-September because of the Catalan traditions which mostly occur during the summer, although it is not necessarily restricted to this season since it has a Mediterranean climate.

**Attractions:** museums, gardens, parks, cathedral of St. John Baptist, castles of ancient kings, among other monuments, the Festa Major (June 22-23).

**You should go if:**

- ✓ If you like to visit historical places and want to learn about them
- ✓ You like to visit museums
- ✓ You like to visit monuments
- ✓ If you like a place that shows the blend between cultures.
- ✓ If you like to try different food

**Situation and Access:**

- Easy access by plane (Paris Orly-Perpignan Rivesaltes)
- You can also access by car, train, or bus

[www.perpignantourisme.com](http://www.perpignantourisme.com)

## Strasbourg

**Location:** Strasbourg is located in Northeastern France on the banks of the Rhine River on the border of Germany.

**Best season to go:** The best time to go would be during July and August, when the weather is the warmest. The temperature during these months ranges from 15°C-23°C (57°F-70°F).

**Attractions:** Cathedral, Synagogue, museums, Palace of Europe (home of the European Parliament), International Music Festival (June), shops, Christmas market, racecar track, parks, operas, libraries (including the National and University library containing more than 3 million works), cinemas, ice-skating rink, skate park.

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You enjoy history
- ✓ You enjoy music
- ✓ You enjoy festivals
- ✓ You enjoy art and architecture

**Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay recommended: between 3-5 days.
- Located 303 miles SE of Paris and 135 miles SW of Frankfurt
- The Strasbourg-Entzheim airport receives daily flights from most European centers (including Paris and Frankfurt)
- By train: nineteen trains per day arrive from Paris (trip time on the TGV as of June 10, 2007: 2hrs)
- By car



**Website:** [www.strasbourg.fr/strasbourgfr/GB](http://www.strasbourg.fr/strasbourgfr/GB)

## Vichy

*Vichy is an excellent vacation spot which is particularly renowned as a beautiful spa and resort town. However, as well as being home to several particularly impressive natural spas, Vichy is home to various leisure activities such as a recently renovated opera house, several golf courses, various sporting facilities, and other tourist activities.*

**Location:** Vichy is located on the Allier River next to the Massif Central Mountain range in the center of France.

**Best season to go:** Snowfall can be heavy in the winter, but other than high precipitation, the climate is fairly accommodating throughout most of the year.

**Attractions:** Several golf courses, an opera house, several spas and resorts, a large pedestrian zone in the city center, various sporting facilities, campsites

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You are looking for a relaxing weekend in a relaxing spa town
- ✓ You're looking for an outdoors or camping weekend
- ✓ You enjoy cultural experiences such as opera, and fine architecture
- ✓ You enjoy visiting historical sites and activities
- ✓ You are looking for an enjoyable and peaceful golfing vacation

**Situation and Access:**

- Any of Vichy's attractions can be enjoyed in a weekend, and access makes this feasible, however Vichy has enough to fill up a longer stay.
- Located 406 km away from Paris.
- Approximately four hours by car, one and a half hours by train.
- Recommended access to Vichy is by train from the Gare du Nord or by car.

Website: [www.vichy-tourisme.com](http://www.vichy-tourisme.com)

## Megève

Megève is an enchanting town from the middle ages nestled in the Haute-Savoie region of the Alps.

**Location:** Megève is in the French Alps, approximately 600 kilometers from Paris.

**Best Season to go:** Either in the winter season, December-March for skiing; or, the summer season, June-August for visiting the town and hiking.

**Attractions:** skiing, snowboarding, ice skating, swimming, sledging, hiking, biking, rock climbing, fishing, ballooning, eating out, shopping, spas.



**You should go if:**

- ✓ You like skiing in a cultured resort
- ✓ You enjoy hiking and summer sports
- ✓ You are looking for a ski resort that offers a variety of other activities as well

**Situation and access:**

- Duration of stay is recommended between one and two weeks
- Access by car (approx 6 hours from Paris)
- Access by train to Annecy
- Access to Geneva International airport

**Website:** [www.megeve.com](http://www.megeve.com)

## Chamonix

*Chamonix is the type of town you would want to go to if you like skiing or snowboarding or the mountains in the summer time. It is the perfect location if you want to spend a week during the winter breaks or for a little more than ten days during the summer.*

**Location:** Chamonix a town next to the Mt. Blanc Mountain which is north-west part of the Alps. It is only 15 km from the Swiss border and 15 km from Italy if you take the Mont-Blanc tunnel.

**Best season to go:** If you want to go for the skiing the best times are in December-March as the temperature ranges from  $-7^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $7^{\circ}\text{C}$ . If you prefer the mountains in the summer it is best to go June-August as the temperature ranges from  $7^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $24^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

**Attractions:**

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You enjoy skiing or snowboarding
- ✓ You enjoy sporty activities such as hiking, mountain climbing, white water sports

## Saint Rémy De Provence

**Location:** Saint Remy is located in the region of Provence. It is approximately an 18km drive from Avignon TGV train station.

**Best Season to go:** All year round. It can get pretty chilly in the winter, and pretty hot in the summer. The best seasons are summer and spring, when the nature is at its peak.

**Attractions:** art galleries, cinemas, beautiful town squares, close drive to other provincial towns, open markets, vineyards, roman ruins and the home of artist Van Gogh.

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You enjoy provincial nature
- ✓ You enjoy art galleries and antiques
- ✓ You want a laid back atmosphere for your vacation
- ✓ You enjoy French food and French wine

**Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay is recommended between a week and a month
- Recommended access is through TGV train to Avignon TGV.
- Car rental is recommended to get into Saint Remy and to travel around the Alpilles area.

**Website:** <http://www.saintremy-de-provence.com/st-remy/anglais/ssomm.htm>

## **Biarritz**

*Biarritz is the city you want to go to if you are a person who enjoys that holidays combine physical activities and culture during the day and enjoy going out at night. It's the perfect location for a long weekend or even for a little more than ten days, as there's always something to do or somewhere to go.*

**Location:** Biarritz is situated on the Bay of Biscay which is on the Atlantic coast in south western France.

**Best season to go:** June-August as the temperature ranges from 19C-25°C or 66°F-99°F, even though any other season is just as agreeable as it is considered as a country with a Mediterranean climate.

**Attractions:** a golf course, a cathedral, the Biarritz surf festival (starts mid July) cinemas, beaches, shops, museums (including a chocolate museum), the lighthouse, linguistic school of French for foreigners.

### **You should go if:**

- ✓ You like beaches and surfing
- ✓ You enjoy sporty activities such as golf
- ✓ You enjoy festivals and exhibitions
- ✓ You are looking for a place where your children will have fun as well (nightlife, beach, shops, cinemas etc) but keeping in mind the culture
- ✓ You are searching for a change of scenery from Paris, but

### **Situation and Access:**



- Duration of stay is recommended between 4-6 days
- Located 789 km away from Paris
- Recommended access to Marseille by plane (Aéroport de Biarritz-Anglet-Bayonne), train (Gare SNCF de Biarritz), or by car

**Website** [www.biarritz.fr](http://www.biarritz.fr) (site also available in English)

# Cannes

**Location:** Cannes is located in the south of France the region Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur.

**Best season to go:** anytime of the year, however it is recommended to go from April-September especially during the film festival.

**Things to do:** take a walk along boulevard de la Croisette, check out the view over Cannes from the Musee de la Castre, go the Palais Front and Place General de Gaulle to check out the handprints of French and international stars who have attended one of the film festivals, take a stroll at the Palais des Festival and des Congres to see its tropical gardens and plants. And don't forget the beaches of course!

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You want to go the festival de Cannes
- ✓ You enjoy to the beach during the summer
- ✓ You are looking to find a lively place including shopping, cultural/historical visits as well as the beach.
- ✓ You are interested in sports (water sports, tennis, alpinism, martial arts, aviation, horse riding, boxing, basketball, canyoning, American football etc.)

**Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay is recommended between a long weekend to ten days/two weeks
- Located 810 km away from Paris
- Recommended access to Cannes by plane (l'Aéroport Cannes Mandelieu) or train ( Gare SNCF Cannes-Grasse)



**Website:** [www.cannes-on-line.com](http://www.cannes-on-line.com)

# Ajaccio

**Location:** Ajaccio is located in the Mediterranean Sea, on the west coast of the island of Corsica, roughly 1300km or 634.765 miles away from Paris.

**Best season to go:** May-September as the temperature ranges from 20-30°C or 68°F-86°F, even though any other season is just as agreeable as it is considered as a country with a Mediterranean climate.

**Attractions:** art galleries, cinemas, a cabaret, discotheques, piano bars, open markets, many wine cellars, canoeing centers

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You like beaches and/or water sports (esp. canoeing)
- ✓ You enjoy going to locations which have culture (ie: museum)
- ✓ You enjoy islands
- ✓ You are looking for a place where your children will have fun as well (nightlife, beach, shops, cinemas etc) but keeping in mind the culture
- ✓ You are searching for a long holiday break destination, still easily accessible from Paris by plane

**Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay is recommended between 10 -20 days
- Recommended access to Ajaccio by plane (Aéroport International Ajaccio Campo dell'Oro)
- (Note: can be done by train and then by boat if wished, but not recommended unless part of the aim of your holiday is the trip towards your destination)



# La Plagne

**Location:** La Plagne is the largest ski resort in Europe and is situated in Savoie, in la Vallée de la Tarentaise.

**Best season to go:** During the winter or anytime during the ski season or ski holidays

**Attractions:** apart from the great ski slopes there are activities such as the official Olympic bob sled runs for the 1992 games, heated pools, ice rinks

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You enjoy winter sports
- ✓ You are looking for a ski resort that does not simply limit itself to ski slopes but to other activities and a certain night life
- ✓ You are looking for a range of different ski schools and crèches for your children if it's their first time skiing or a place that will occupy your children if they are too young leaving you a day of skiing!

**Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay recommended is very subjective as it the purpose of this location is not cultural but about skiing/snowboarding so its up to the person to decide how long it is they want to ski for.
- Located approximately 576 km away
- Recommended access to La Plagne by Car



**Website:** <http://skisnowboarderurope.com/laplagne/getting.html> (site also available in English)

# Lille

**Location:** Lille is located in the north of France, forty minutes away from Brussels

**Best season to go:** anytime of the year.

**Attractions:** a zoological park, “le musee des beaux arts’, a theater, an opera, various palaces, the old part of Lille also known as la “Vieille Ville” known for its narrow streets and old Flemish houses, a commercial center, a cathedral named “Notre Dame de la Treille”, “Porte de Paris”, the Wazemmes flea market and of course the “Maison natale de Charles de Gaulle”.

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You enjoy flea markets
- ✓ You are interested in artistic culture
- ✓ You like walking in parks and natural reservations
- ✓ You are looking for a place where your children will have fun as well (nightlife, shops, cinemas etc) but keeping in mind the culture
- ✓ You are interested in seeing another part of France without however going to go ski or to the beach.

**Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay is recommended between 2-4 days
- Located 220 km away from Paris
- Recommended access to Lille by train (Gare SNCF Lille Flandres), or by car



**Website:** [www.lilletourism.com](http://www.lilletourism.com) (site also available in English)

## Marseille

*Marseille is the second largest city of France and is an ideal location of vacation for any family as it does not only have a well known night life, a beautiful scenery and provides animation for all ages but it also is a city that is rich in it's history as it is the most ancient city in France.*

**Location:** Marseille is located in the former providence of Provence and on the Mediterranean Sea.

**Best season to go:** June-September as the temperature ranges from 15C-28°C or 61°F-84°F, even though any other season is just as agreeable as it is considered as a country with a Mediterranean climate.

**Attractions:** an opera, cinemas, recognized sports facilities, theaters, a conservatoire, 12 different museums, libraries, a dome, parks, public gardens, beaches, circus's, a port etc.

### **You should go if:**

- ✓ You like beaches and/or water sports
- ✓ You enjoy going to locations which have culture (ie: museum)
- ✓ You enjoy festivals
- ✓ You are looking for a place where your children will have fun as well (nightlife, beach, shops, cinemas etc) but keeping in mind the culture
- ✓ You are searching for a change of scenery from Paris, but that does not require too much preparation in advance

### **Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay is recommended between 4-6 days
- Located 790 km away from Paris
- Recommended access to Marseille by plane (Aéroport Marseille-Provence), train (Gare SNCF Marseilles-Saint-Charles), or by car



**Website:** <http://www.marseille-tourisme.com> (site also available in English)

## Deauville

**Location:** Deauville is a “station balneaire” located in la Basse-Normandie.

**Best season to go:** any time between April and October

**Attractions:** a casino, the beach, l’hippodrome, the town where you can find restaurants, numerous boutiques, and luxury stores. The Cabriolet car, art and Asian film festival in May.

**You should go if:**

- ✓ You like beaches
- ✓ You are looking for a location that is really not far away where you can even spend just a day
- ✓ You enjoy festivals
- ✓ You are interested in horses and polo matches (the jumping international festival occurs in late June)

**Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay is recommended between one and five days.
- Located two hours by train from the Gare Saint Lazare in Paris
- Recommended access to Deauville by train at the SNCF station "Trouville-Deauville"



**Website:** <http://www.deauville-france.com/> (site also available in English)

## Saint-Tropez

Saint-Tropez is a great place to go for a weekend or a few days. It is surrounded by nature and there is always something you can do or go see.

**Location:** Saint-Tropez is situated in the Southern France, located on the French Riviera, the coast of the Mediterranean.

**Best Season to Go:** November ~ April

The weather is wonderful during those months and would be the best time to enjoy the landscape, history, traditions of Saint-Tropez.

**Attractions:** Hiking, Markets (La Halle aux Poissons, Les Greniers du Golfe, Les Antiquaires du Marché), Beaches, Vineyards, Parks, Gardens, Museums, Monuments, Artists, Provencal Cuisine, Tennis, Golf, Scuba Diving.

**You Should Go If:**

- You like beaches.
- You enjoy looking at gardens and museums.
- You enjoy activities such as hiking.

**Situation and Access:**

- Duration of stay recommended is a weekend or a few days.
- Located near Toulon.
- Recommended access to Saint-Tropez by plane(Aéroport International de Toulon-Hyères), train (Gare SNCF de Saint-Raphaël)

