



montpellier  
méditerranée  
Tourisme & Congrès

Press kit 2020

CREATIVE, VIBRANT, CAPTIVATING

Let  
Montpellier  
Méditerranée  
embrace you!

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Since day one, Montpellier has always cherished beauty. With some 70 sumptuous private mansions, the Triumphal Arch and Place Royale du Peyrou, built to the glory of Louis XIV, delightful medieval alleys for strolling around, and a medical school, set to celebrate its 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020... Heritage lovers will find their fill in Montpellier... the city where aesthetics are written in the past, present and future! With fountains in the four corners of the city, including the famous Trois Grâces, the "Ecusson" or pedestrian city centre, colourful tramways designed by top name artists, including French designer Christian Lacroix who created lines 3 and 4, statues and street art works, not to mention jewels of contemporary architecture, which make Montpellier an international reference in the field...

Here,  art is everywhere.  
Art calls out and jostles for attention!





**A** resolutely cultural destination, Montpellier Méditerranée has something for everyone... whatever one's taste or budget! With just one priority: To be bold! And, to be excellent, over and over again! Fine art, with some 900 works on display in the Fabre Museum, photography at the Pavillon Populaire, one of only two photographic art venues in France entirely dedicated to original exhibitions by some of the world's greatest photographers, not to mention the MOCO, a brand new, city-centre contemporary art hub which opened its doors in June, 2019. Montpellier is a city in perpetual movement, and is a place of passion, confluence and sharing. Here, people come from all over the world to live to the rhythm of festivals: extreme sports, Montpellier Dance Festival, Architectures Vives festival, performing arts, city-centre illuminations festival... Events designed by and for enthusiasts... always a smart combination of performance and aesthetics.

Wholeheartedly Mediterranean, Montpellier shines bright and radiates: set in an ideal geographical location, just 10km from the seaside, surrounded by endless vineyards and lush countryside. Local hidden jewels, Villeneuve-lès-Maguelone and its Romanesque cathedral standing proud between vineyards and lagoons, charming fishermen's huts in Pérols, the nearby Camargue countryside... Exceptional playgrounds for nature-lovers and fans of "slow tourism"...

***Generous and accessible, precious and welcoming, unquestionably unique, for one and all.***

***Montpellier DESTINATION PLEASURE!  
To be seen and experienced!***

# Montpellier, destination pleasure!





# Summary

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## 1 ENJOY A DRINK ON THE FAMOUS PLACE DE LA COMÉDIE

Located in the heart of Montpellier, the Place de la Comédie is THE place to be! Formerly known as the “egg” (Place de l’œuf) due to its oval shape, and dominated by the Comédie opera house, this is one of Europe’s most extensive pedestrian areas. In the centre of the square, the “3 Graces” fountain, created in 1773, reigns supreme. A great place to soak up the city’s vibes!



# TOP 10 tips for a successful stay

## 2 A CAR-FREE EXPERIENCE

A pedestrian-friendly destination, enjoy discovering Montpellier on foot, bicycle or tram. Leave stress and noise behind. Here, cars are not welcome in the city-centre. Upon arrival at St Roch station, visitors are immediately immersed in a vast pedestrian area. The thrill of discovery is all the more intense, with street artists and buzzing café terraces from which to watch the permanent ballet of the 4 colourful tram lines serving the city.

## 3 TAKE A DEEP BREATH OF FRESH ART

A preference for fine art or contemporary art...? Not to be missed: the Fabre Museum, considered as one of Europe’s most beautiful Fine Arts museums, with European works from the Renaissance to the present day, and a full wing dedicated to contemporary artist, Pierre Soulages. And the MOCO, a brand new contemporary art centre that opened its doors in June 2019, showing temporary exhibitions

from international collectors. Lovers of urban culture must not miss the Halle Tropisme, newly installed in the Creative City which has taken up residence in a series of former army warehouses.



## 4 STROLLING IN MEDIEVAL STREETS

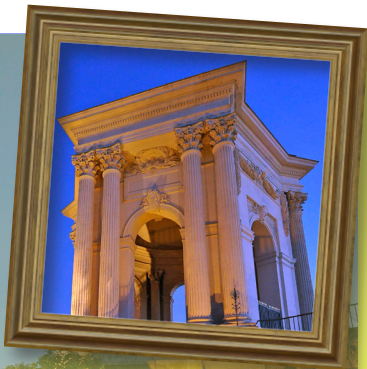
The ancient city-centre of Montpellier is packed with winding, medieval streets, a symbol of its proud past. Rue de la Valfère, rue du Bras de Fer, rue de la Argenterie all offer visitors a taste of bygone times.

The very best way to discover them? Leave the map behind, and just enjoy discovering the aura of these narrow streets. On the agenda, a fun shopping spree in boutiques with vaulted ceilings, which alone are worth the visit and a trip back in time, where designers, antique dealers, tea rooms and galleries abound!

## 5 TAKE IN THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE

Montpellier Méditerranée offers a kaleidoscope of colour and atmospheres. The landscape around the central city of Montpellier is a genuine ode to nature: vineyards, hiking trails, sandy beaches, the nearby Pic Saint Loup, all less than an hour away, along with picturesque Languedoc villages... The best place to discover the panorama of landscapes? From the top of the triumphal arch or water tower.





## GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL ON AN ARCHITECTURAL JOURNEY

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Visitors to Montpellier are immediately struck by its vibrant diversity. Each district of the city is unique and distinct, illustrating the city's 1,000-year old history. A clever mix of ancient and contemporary architecture, from medieval alleys to architectural masterpieces by top international architects, including Jean Nouvel, Zaha Hadid, Massimiliano Fuksas, and many more! Starck's latest creation is also a must-see: Le Nuage, also l'Arbre Blanc by Sou Fujimoto or the Folie Divine by London architect, Farshid Moussavi.

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## GOOD VIBES



Throughout the year, anytime, anywhere! Vibrant, effervescent, the heart of Montpellier Méditerranée beats to the rhythm of its major events: Montpellier International Dance Festival, Radio France Festival, the International Extreme Sports Festival, sports competitions with French and international elite teams... but also an ode to tradition with the bull sports trophy, the sea festival and so much more... Choose a visit-event combo, the very best way to experience and share the delights of Montpellier Méditerranée!

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## TAKE A CYCLE TRIP TO THE SEA ALL YEAR ROUND, AND ENJOY THE PRIVATE BEACHES ON SUNNY DAYS

With the Mediterranean just 11km away, the seaside is an integral part of the Montpellier experience. Enjoy an invigorating getaway to Villeneuve les Maguelone... not to be missed! Discover Maguelone cathedral, a Romanesque jewel in an enchanting setting between vineyards and the sea. From April to September, beach cafés open their doors; pop-up restaurants and event/concert spots abound, all very popular with Montpellier's residents and tourists. A tip? Take a bike ride out to the beach, through the Port Marianne district, then along the fully-secured Mediterranean trail... Enjoy feeling the wind in your hair!

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## LET YOUR TASTE BUDS DO THE WALKING

A visit to Montpellier Méditerranée is not complete without a tasty gourmet break! Not to be missed? A tasting-producer discovery combo: local wines direct from neighbouring vineyards, oysters straight from the Thau lagoon just 20 minutes from Montpellier, olives and oils from their producers... But also, directly from the shopkeepers in the culinary markets of Laissac, Castellane, in the heart of the city, Jacques Cœur and Marché du Lez on the outskirts... without forgetting, the Estivales summer festival, organised in many local towns and villages, for fun, gourmet festivity!

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Escape

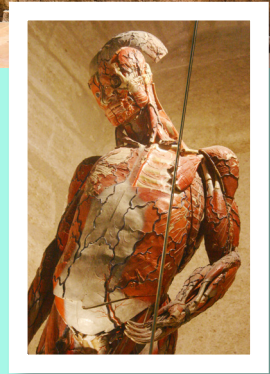


**2020, more than ever before, will see  
Montpellier Méditerranée become  
THE must-see destination  
for aesthetes!**

**Between cultural vibrancy,  
lifestyle and slow life, just one  
priority... ENJOY!**

## **800<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE**

Throughout 2020, the City of Montpellier will celebrate the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Faculty of Medicine, whose statutes were written in 1220, making it the oldest medical school in the Western world still operating today. Many events are planned to celebrate the occasion: exhibitions, visits, conferences, publications. This anniversary has been included in the list of national commemorations for 2020.



# Our 2020 favourites

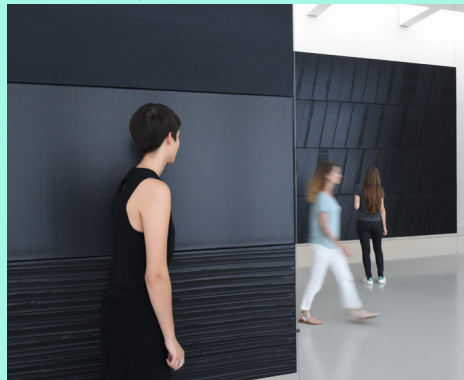
## **PIERRE SOULAGES, 100 years young!**

On December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Pierre Soulages will celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. For this occasion, the Fabre Museum, which houses one of the most important collections of this immense artist's work in a public collection, is planning a string of events (projections, exhibitions, conferences...).



## **2020 ESCALE A SETE**

A land-sea combo between Montpellier and Sète  
From 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> April  
2020, Montpellier and Sète will be set to the rhythm of maritime tradition. At just 20 minutes from Montpellier, with 120 historic vessels, parades at sea, naval battles, shows and nautical competitions... A tip? Combine accommodation in Montpellier with a day trip to Sète, for optimal enjoyment.







## LE JARDIN DES SENS

### Renaissance of a Montpellier institution

The mythical "Jardin des Sens" (3\* in the Michelin guide) created by famous chefs the POURCEL brothers, is set to reopen its doors in spring 2020, at Place de la Canourgue, within the former Montpellier Town Hall, named Hôtel Richer de Belleval, a 17<sup>th</sup> century historical building. This Relais & Châteaux luxury establishment will include 18 rooms, a gourmet restaurant, bistro, champagne bar, reception facility (in the former wedding hall) and outdoor terrace. A contemporary art gallery will also be part of the ensemble.



# Gastronomy & Audacity

## L'ARBRE BLANC

Architecture brings a glow to gastronomy



Opened in June 2019 on the banks of the river Lez, the Arbre Blanc, designed by architects Sou Fujimoto, Nicolas Laisné and Manal Rachdi, makes a bold statement on Montpellier's architectural audacity. Much-loved by gourmets and architecture-buffs, the ground and first floor of the building hosts a brand new chefs brasserie by Charles FONTES (La Réserve Rimbaud) and Eric CELLIER (La Maison de la Lozère). An art gallery and tapas bar on one of the 17<sup>th</sup> floor panoramic terraces, complete the experience.



## LE MARCHE DU LEZ

### Trendy & Tasty!

Dynamic Montpellier hosts a village within the city. A creative hot spot, brimming with boutiques, flea markets, farmers' markets, restaurants, food trucks, startups, entertainment and events, exhibitions, the Marché du Lez is located on former industrial and agricultural premises: a printworks, farmhouse and warehouses located on the banks of the river Lez. A compendium of creative initiatives, inviting visitors to discover a new, contemporary lifestyle

which is responsible, local and innovative. Indulge yourself in this unique place: nourish body and mind, relax in the sun, share memorable moments with family and friends, and simply take the time to live... In the wake of the gourmet food hall, which opened to the public in July, 2019, the rooftop is scheduled to open in spring, 2020!

## AWARD WINNERS

### Montpellier youth in the spotlight at Gault et Millau!

Gault & Millau has delivered its latest list of award winners, rated the best tables and showcased fresh, new talent. Montpellier and its region is proud to host France's sommelier of the year and one of the most promising young chefs in the country:

- The head sommelier of the Arbre Blanc, Julien Meurillon, best sommelier of France, 2020.

- Chef Laurent Cherchi, from Le Reflet d'Obione, Young Talent 2020 with a promising 13.5/20

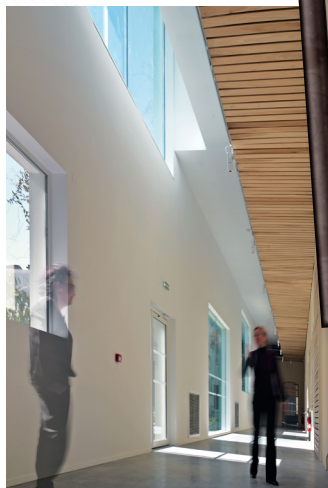
**Both are just 33 years old!**





## LE MOCO Montpellier Contemporary

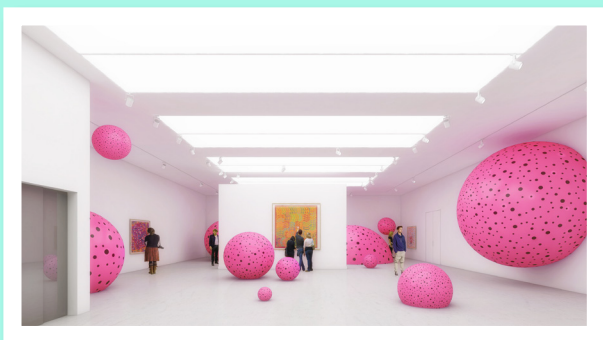
MOCO Montpellier Contemporary is an artistic ecosystem, with two exhibition centres and an art school: the Hôtel des collections, with exhibitions of international collections (public or private), La Panacée, contemporary art centre, and the ESBA (Montpellier Superior Fine Arts School).



MOCO Hôtel des collections is Montpellier Contemporary's main, centrally located hub. The cultural platform was inaugurated in June 2019 in the former

tion: that of a foundation, a private collector, a company, a museum, or even an artist. Most of the collections shown here have never been seen by the general public before. More than just an exhibition centre, MOCO Hôtel des Collections is a bright, buzzing hub. Ideally set in a garden with plant life from five continents, open to the general public, the MOCO also has its own bar and boutique.

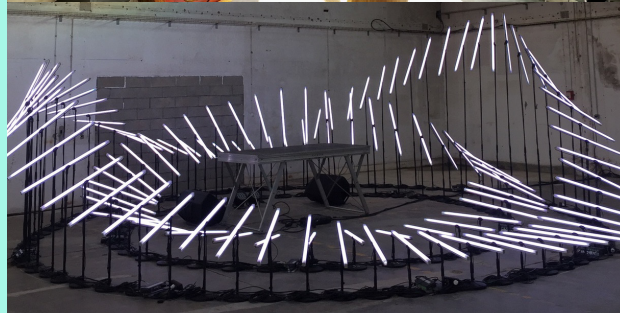
Hôtel Montcalm. The centre does not host a permanent collection, but exhibits public or private collections from all over the world. Whether collective, individual, topical or historical, each exhibition showcases a specific collec-



## Artistic vibrancy

### LA HALLE TROPISME A creative city in former army warehouses

The Creative City is a new 4,000m<sup>2</sup> hall, dedicated to cultural and creative industries, and set to bloom and grow in the coming years. The 1913 building, home to the army's mechanical workshops, is now a centre for entrepreneurship and the arts, hosting daily events for the general public who meet for a drink in the cosy, welcoming Café Tropisme. This ecosystem brings together all those involved in Montpellier's art scene, and more broadly the Cultural and Creative Industries. Connected, combined, creative, inspiring...





# Slow life

## THE MEDITERRANEAN BY BIKE

### A fun, family bike ride from Montpellier!

The cycling route begins in the centre of Montpellier, heading out towards the neoclassical district of Antigone, then Port Marianne from where to discover the architectural prowess of some of the greatest architects of the moment. Once you reach the Jean Nouvel designed town hall, then follow the cycle path along the river Lez, between vineyards and lagoons.

At the end of the ten-kilometre cycle path is the Mediterranean Sea cycle trail... flat, secured and ideal for family getaways! From the trail, on the Palavas-Sète section, make a detour to Maguelone Cathedral. Discover a natural, sea-side haven! Visit Maguelone Cathedral and enjoy wine-tasting on the estate in an idyllic setting. Complete the day with a fun, family dip in the sea.

**Useful information: the Tourist Office, on the Place de la Comédie, is Cycle-Friendly certified.**



**NEW!** Montpellier Méditerranée, the first metropolitan area to be awarded the Land and City of Art and History Label! (December 2019)







## FISE

Europe's top extreme sports event.  
May 20-24



## ARCHITECTURES VIVES FESTIVAL

An unusual architectural tour of discovery of courtyards in private mansions.  
June 9-14



## MONTPELLIER INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL

The annual meeting point for the greatest international choreographers.  
June 21-July 5



## THE RADIO FRANCE MONTPELLIER OCCITANIE FESTIVAL

More than 200 events every year for 30 years.  
July

# Some highlights



## ESTIVALES

Friday evenings dedicated to discovery of wines and local products.  
July-August



## CINEMED

Mediterranean Cinema Festival  
Mid-October



## CITY-CENTRE ILLUMINATIONS FESTIVAL

Sound and light projections in the heart of the city!  
End of November



## LES HIVERNALES

Christmas market, ice rink, etc.  
December

Full programme available on [montpellier-tourisme.fr](http://montpellier-tourisme.fr)



# Location- Access

## MONTPELLIER MEDITERRANEE At the heart of the Mediterranean Arc

Ideally located at just 1h15 by plane from Paris, 3h from Barcelona, 11km from the Mediterranean, in the heart of the Occitanie region and close to Provence, Montpellier Méditerranée is an ideal destination for exploring an historic city, a multifaceted hinterland and some of the most prestigious sites in world heritage.

### By air



Montpellier is easily accessible by plane with many direct flights: 1h10 from Paris, 1h15 from Basel, 1h45 from London and 1h55 from Amsterdam. The airport is only 8km from the city centre and offers direct flights to 8 French cities.

Montpellier is served by 17 airlines: including AirFrance, Air Arabia, KLM, British Airways, Royal Air Maroc, Easyjet, Transavia, Volotea...

Coming in 2020: in April 2020, Transavia is setting up a permanent hub in Montpellier with direct access to 20 mediterranean destinations.

Further information: [www.montpellier.aeroport.fr](http://www.montpellier.aeroport.fr)



### By rail

Montpellier has two stations: Montpellier Saint-Roch station, located in the city-centre, 200 metres from the Place de la Comédie and Montpellier Sud de France station, and the TGV train station (20 minutes from the city-centre, accessible by tramway and shuttle bus).

Many direct connections to Paris-Gare de Lyon station or Charles de Gaulle airport (3h15), Lille (4h45), Barcelona or Brussels (5h40).

Further information: [www.sncf.com](http://www.sncf.com)



### By road

Just 1h30 from Marseille - 2h30 from Toulouse - 3h from Lyon - 3h30 from Barcelona - 3h15 from Nice, Montpellier is served by the A9/ A709 and A75 motorways, the Montpellier Méditerranée International Airport, located 8km from the city centre and Montpellier Saint-Roch station in the city-centre, just 200 metres from the Place de la Comédie.



Montpellier,  
mes petites  
escapades  
à une heure...



# Key figures

Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole

5,100,000 visitors per year

Congress city in France (ICCA 2018 ranking)

8<sup>th</sup> city in France

Demographic growth

1<sup>st</sup> city in France

Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole

31 towns

Number of inhabitants

7<sup>th</sup> largest city in France

Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole

457,839 inhabitants

Accommodation Hotels

1,552,245 overnight stays

Montpellier

282,143 inhabitants

French language courses

2<sup>nd</sup> largest city in France

The most beautiful tramways in France

Survey: "20 minutes", 2018



## Fact sheets

### ASK FOR OUR FACT SHEETS

Culture, luxury, gastronomy, friendly, business, architecture...

Montpellier Méditerranée is a land of plenty!

[caroline.berland@ot-montpellier.fr](mailto:caroline.berland@ot-montpellier.fr)

Heritage - Street-art - Terroirs - TV series: Un si Grand Soleil - Festivals - Kiddy-friendly Montpellier - Culture - Contemporary heritage - Luxury and well-being - Golf - Wellness - Culture - History - Montpellier's squares - Heritage health - Slow-tourism - Traditions - Sport capital - My family choice - Wine tourism - Gourmet Montpellier - Markets and Halls - Must-try eateries - arts and Crafts - Spiritual visit - Place to do business: Montpellier Congress city - Mini Budget - Tourism disability - Gay friendly - Products of the Tourist Office - Discovering the area, etc.



# 100% pleasure destination

Located at just 1h15 by plane from Paris, 2h50 by train from Barcelona, 11km from the beaches of the Mediterranean, Montpellier Méditerranée is an ideal destination. Discover a city with remarkable historical heritage, a multi-faceted hinterland and some of the most prestigious world heritage sites.

## AN HISTORIC CITY CENTRE

The Western World's oldest university of Medicine still operating today, medieval alleys, squares and terraces, private mansions with courtyards... 1,000 years of vibrant history. A picturesque trip through the largest pedestrian area in France.

## A MAJOR CULTURAL DESTINATION

Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole Fabre Museum hosts one of the most prestigious collections of Fine Arts in Europe, National Opera, international festivals and abundant arts and crafts... Montpellier, destination pleasure!

An urban destination and state-of-the-art city, Montpellier combines urban facilities with Mediterranean charm; scented markets, vast pedestrian squares, lively terraces, beaches that can be reached by bicycle, not to mention 300 days of sunshine per year!

## A REGION BRIMMING WITH SIGHTSEEING OPPORTUNITIES

There are no fewer than 6 UNESCO World Heritage sites less than 2 hours away from Montpellier: the City of Carcassonne, the Pont du Gard, the Canal du Midi, the Saint James Way, the Vauban fortresses of the Pyrenees, the Causses and Cévennes...

## A GOURMET BREAK IN THE VINEYARDS

In the heart of France's largest vineyard, Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole offers sun-drenched cuisine, on terroirs between land and sea. Starred chefs, Languedoc AOC wines including the famous Grés de Montpellier, follies, wineries and prestigious estates... taste buds will just love it here!

## BOLD ARCHITECTURE

Jean Nouvel, Zaha Hadid, Massimiliano Fuksas, Philippe Starck and Ricardo Bofill... to name but a few! For fans of high-flying architecture and contemporary prowess, Montpellier is just for you!

## NATURAL HERITAGE

Maguelone Cathedral, a jewel of Romanesque art, standing proudly on a peninsula between sea and lagoon, Méjean nature reserve, nearby Camargue, golf practices just 15 minutes from the city-centre... Enhance a stay in Montpellier by stepping outside of the city to revel in the glories of nature.



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