



REIMS (France)

The city of Reims is situated in the northern region of Champagne-Ardenne, Department of Marne. It counts about 188.000 inhabitants. It is a city rich in arts and ancient traditions while at the same time being modern and dynamic, thanks to its geographical position at the crossroad of pleasant European touristic routes.

The city was founded around 80 b.C. as the capital of the tribe of Remi, one of the most powerful Belgian peoples of ancient Gauls and allies of the Roman Empire during the [conquest of Gaul](#). Their fidelity to Rome granted them protection and allow the city to begin its economic and commercial growth. Reims also had a important role in the French monarchy, since in its cathedral all the French kings were crowned starting starting from 987 a.C. up to 1825. During the World War I Reims was heavily bombed and many buildings were severely damaged although restored immediately after. Thus several urban styles coexist harmonically together in town: many façades show elegant art-déco decorations and gothic and renaissance style buildings can also be appreciated.

Reims has a rich artistic, historical and cultural heritage and four of its sites have been listed UNESCO World heritage, like the gothic cathedral [Notre-Dame de Reims](#), formerly the place of coronation of the [kings of France](#) which dates back to 13 century and is situated in the centre of the city; the [Palace of Tau](#), the archiepiscopal palace, built between 1498 and 1509, the residence of the kings of France on the occasion of their coronations; the [Saint Remi Basilica](#) and [Museum](#), where bishop Saint Remi's relics and important collections relating to the history of Reims are kept. Reims is well-known for its high-level champagne production exported all over the world. The wine culture and grape-growing introduced by the Romans led in the 17th century to the development of this product of excellence, a symbol of the French spirit. The department of Marne is a big champagne producer area and many champagne houses as well as caves are open to tourists for tasting and tours. It is noteworthy that there are almost 250 km (155 miles) of underground cellars and Gallo-Roman chalk galleries ("crayères"). The countryside surrounding Reims is cultivated with cereals (corn, barley) and fruit trees, vegetables, grazing fields and woods. Beside the wine production, Reims is also a centre of an active textile industry and one of the most important gastronomic destination in France.

Reims offers to the tourists a rich calendar of historical and cultural events throughout the year. In summer season we mention the "[Flâneries Musicales d'Été](#)" de Reims (summer promenade concerts), with plenty of free concerts (anything from classical music to jazz); the spectacle of multi-colored lights and colors that takes place annually in Reims, "[Rêve de couleurs](#)", on the facade of the Cathedral Notre-Dame de Reims, in the period from June to September. Worthy of note are also the "[Fetes johanniques](#)", celebrations and performances, with people wearing medieval costumes, which take place every year in June and celebrate the French heroine Joan of Arc.

Useful links :

<http://www.ville-reims.fr> <http://www.reims-tourisme.com>

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