Get to Know Rennes

Rennes is a multi-faceted city located in the Brittany region of northwestern France. Known for its rich history, vibrant culture, and dynamic student population, Rennes offers a blend of old-world charm and modern amenities.

Rennes, a dynamic city with a strong Breton character

With a population of approximately 450,000 (and over 700,000 when taking into account the larger metropolitan area), Rennes is the 11th largest city in France. More than 73,000 of its inhabitants are students who enjoy all the city has to offer: an excellent higher education offer, festivals throughout the year, an economic vitality that comes with being located in the region's capital, a natural proximity to the coast and more.

The city of Rennes has been designated as city of 'Art and History' and offers a number of major cultural sites (opera, theaters, symphony orchestras, the Parliament, museums, libraries, etc.). The cultural programming of the city is diverse and constantly changing thanks to its dynamic population whose ideas help to keep it vibrant and original.

Over the last decade, the city has heavily invested in urban revitalisation of the city-centre and the surrounding infrastructure. These ambitious plans, combined with the rich cultural and social offering of the city, has produced substantial results. For a number of years, the city of Rennes has been steadily climbing the ranks of the most desirable cities for quality of life in French surveys.

Every year, the magazine *l'Etudiant* ranks the most student-friendly French cities.

In 2026, the magazine named Rennes as the 2nd most enjoyable city for students in France (out of a ranking of 50 French cities), noting in particular: the diversity of quality higher education institutions, living conditions, public transportation services, the range of cultural activities, and the proximity to coastal landscapes as some of the main advantages. Criteria such as air quality, the presence of night transportation and the proportion of international students were also taken into account.

Read also: 36 Hours in Rennes and St.-Malo (*The New York Times, 2019)*

Rennes is also now easily accessible by a high-speed train which connects it to Paris in less than 90 minutes.



Brittany, a region to discover

While Rennes may be the urban centre of the region, it’s far from being the only place with interesting things to do in Brittany. The region’s cities and ports have put tourism and culture at the top of the agenda. They’re jam-packed with interesting things to do. Brittany has an exceptional number of charming cathedral cities, what the French call cités de caractère, perfect for carefree weekend getaways.

Brittany has also preserved a fair amount of its natural country heritage, notably its small characteristic farms, courtyards, tidal mills and windmills. With nearby destinations like:

- **the Mont-Saint Michel**
- **Saint Malo**
- **the Emerald Coast**



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- Find out more information about things to do on or off-campus!
- Destination Rennes Tourist Office

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