

INSIDE GUIDE

DIJON

BURGUNDY'S WINE-SOAKED MEDIEVAL CAPITAL HAS LONG BEEN A CRADLE OF INVENTION, ART AND GASTRONOMY

There are many reasons to visit the capital of France's Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region — not least its setting amid the Burgundy vineyards, its gastronomic legacy and its wealth of history and art. Once part of the Roman Empire and capital of the Duchy of Burgundy from the 10th to 15th century, Dijon has a pedestrianised, UNESCO-listed historic heart with many medieval townhouses, Renaissance-style mansions and romanesque and gothic landmarks. Several of its museums have started offering free entry in recent years, while contemporary art has been integrated into outdoor public areas. In 2022, the opening of Dijon's Cité Internationale de la Gastronomie et du Vin — a wine education, retail and leisure complex — also brought new energy to the city.

Several centuries of the city's past are represented across the **Palace of the Dukes of Burgundy** complex. Climb the 316 ancient stone steps to the top of its 150ft-high **Tour Philippe le Bon** for panoramic views over the city. Afterwards, explore the palace's **Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon**, whose walls are covered with medieval masterpieces and contemporary art. Founded in 1787, it reopened in 2019 after a 10-year renovation. beaux-arts.dijon.fr

From here, stroll to the 13th-century **Church of Notre-Dame of Dijon** to marvel at the automaton clock atop its south tower and search for the famous owl — a small medieval carving that's regarded as a good luck charm and symbol of the city. Join the locals and tourists who gather here to make a wish while rubbing it with their left hand.

Rue de la Chouette (Owl Street) is on the north side of the church and it's here you'll find boutique-atelier **La Moutarderie FalLOT**, which makes its legendary Dijon mustard using a grindstone. Tastings of the original are offered alongside newer creations that introduce flavours such as blackcurrant. Further along the street is **Maison Millière**, a 1483 former merchant house that's now a

restaurant, wine bar and tea room. It served as a backdrop for the 1990 Gérard Depardieu film *Cyrano de Bergerac*. falot.com maison-milliere.fr

To sample more of Dijon's celebrated products, head to the **Les Clos Vivants** wine shop. It hosts daily tastings of Burgundy wines along with another French favourite, the blackcurrant liqueur crème de cassis, which originates from Dijon. Also don't miss **Les Halles Market**, where local producers sell cheeses, snails and all manner of baked goods in a cavernous wrought-iron structure designed by Dijon-born engineer Gustave Eiffel. lesclosvivants.fr

Walk down the main shopping street Rue de la Liberté, lined with 15th-century buildings and home to a satellite branch of Paris's high-end **Galeries Lafayette** department store. The thoroughfare leads to Dijon's first public garden, the 19th-century **Jardin Darcy**, a verdant pocket of ponds and waterfalls that's worth a stroll. You can get park snacks from nearby **Mulot & Petitjean**, a heritage store specialising in gingerbread that's made according to a traditional recipe — Dijon's cake-like gingerbread is famed across France. galerieslafayette.com mulotpetitjean.com

It's a 20-minute walk south to Dijon's newest cultural and gastronomic hub, **Cité Internationale de la Gastronomie et du Vin**. Ten years in the making and partially housed in a grand former hospital, it offers interactive exhibits on French gastronomy and wine, tasting experiences and workshops plus a wealth of shops, restaurants and bars to hop between. tdb-cdn.com/citedelagastronomie-dijon.fr

For a place to stay, try **Mama Shelter** on the edge of the historic centre, which opened its Dijon branch in 2023. Stylish rooms and an in-house cinema and bar-restaurant are complemented by painted ceiling murals that take inspiration from local attractions such as Burgundy's vineyards. mamashelter.com/dijon **LAUREN JADE HILL**

LIKE A LOCAL
Adrien Tirelli's guide to Dijon for wine lovers

Adrien is maître caviste (wine merchant) of Les Clos Vivants wine shop in Dijon



CAVEAU DE SAULX
This wine bar near Place de la République hosts blind tastings and also pairs wines with food, all in an atmospheric 16th-century cellar. Old vintages are the bar's speciality. lecaveaudesaulx.fr

BRUNO
Bruno has one of the best and most eclectic cellars in the city. It has a very French, local ambience — to meet owner Bruno Crouzat-Reynes is to meet one of Dijon's true characters. zelif.com/bruno

LA CAVE SE REBIFFE
This tiny wine bar has bottles from Burgundy and beyond and serves small bites such as charcuterie and cheese, along with cocktails. instagram.com/lacaveserebiffe21



An XXL room with views of the city at Mama Shelter. Clockwise from left: Gingerbread cake from Mulot & Petitjean; Dijon's historic core is UNESCO-listed; Burgundy's wines can be sampled at local cellar doors and city wine bars

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