

Five Best Day Trips from Charente

Charente has a lot to offer, from vibrant cities, peaceful countryside, and a river providing a world of fun activities for the adventurous. However, the surrounding part of the South of France has some spectacular spots for a day trip.

1. Bordeaux

Thanks to the marriage of King Henry II to Eleanor of Aquitaine (and the English taste for French wine), Bordeaux is now world-famous for its red wines, termed “claret” back in Blighty. However, as one of France’s most dynamic cities, Bordeaux has more to offer. Half (half!) of the city is UNESCO listed, making it the world’s largest urban World Heritage Site, and the *mélange* of newly-restored neoclassical architecture and striking new buildings cannot fail to impress.

How to get there?

*From Angouleme: 1h40 by car, or 40m by train**

*From Cognac: 1h40 by car, or 2h by train**

2. Limoges

Porcelain connoisseurs will be familiar with the name of Limoges, the capital of the Haute-Vienne department. Fine examples of the city’s famous china can be found in the [Musée Adrien-Dubouché](#), whose impressive collection holds over 55,000 pieces. However, there is also charm to be found in the small but attractive city centre, the 13th Century [St-Etienne Cathedral](#), and for those visitors arriving by train, the city’s Art Deco train station is sure to impress!

How to get there?

*From Angouleme: 1h30 by car, 2h15 by train**

*From Cognac: 1h50 by car, 3h by train**

3. La Rochelle

Often called “*la Ville Blanche*” because of its limestone facades, the port city of La Rochelle is the epitome of charming. The main focus of the town is of course the *Vieux Port*, but the rue du Palais, the city’s main shopping street, where a mixture of half-timbered and grey-stone 18th Century houses line the street, is also worth a visit. And of course, lovers of seafood cannot fail to be delighted by La Rochelle’s rich offerings!

How to get there?

*From Angouleme: 2h by car, or 2h30 by train**

*From Cognac: 1h30 by car, or 1h20 by train**

4. Saintes

Less than an hour from Cognac and located in the neighbouring department of Charente-Maritime, Saintes is a charming market-town, founded by the Romans in about 20BC. The [Arch of Saint Germanicus](#) is a Roman Arch, built around 18 or 19BC. Visitors can also delight in the 3rd Century city fortifications and a first century Roman Baths and aqueduct, as well as learning more about the city's Roman past in the [Musée Archéologique](#). However, the highlight is a huge [Roman amphitheatre](#), located in a small valley on the left bank of the river, large enough to hold almost 20,000 spectators!

How to get there?

*From Angouleme: 1h10 by car, or 1h30 by train**

*From Cognac: 35m by car, or 1h by train**

5. Poitiers

A small city with a long and influential history (thanks to its being the seat of the Duke of Aquitaine), there's more to Poitiers than meets the eye. Notable for its Romanesque churches, Poitiers also has one of the oldest universities in France, and 25% of its population is made up of students, making it a lively place. However, the main attraction is situated some 8km North of the city: [Futuroscope](#) is probably the most high-tech theme park you'll ever visit. Not for the fainthearted, the film-themed park puts visitors right into the action of the movie, with over 25 different rides and virtual reality experiences which are enough to keep you entertained all day!

How to get there?

*From Angouleme: 1h30 by car, or 40m by train**

*From Cognac: 2h by car, or 1h30 by train**

It's impossible to get bored in Charente, a beautiful region of France which just keeps on giving. However, if you're in need of a change of scene, you can't go far wrong with one of these day trips!

**N.B. Train times given are for the fastest service, which varies depending on time of day, route and operator.*