

## 5 Reasons to Visit Charente

*With its charming landscapes, quaint villages and vibrant cities, the Charente region in South-Western France has plenty to offer the tourist or holidaymaker. Whether you're a thrill-seeking adventurer, a cognac connoisseur, or a lover of history, this diverse region won't disappoint. Here are five reasons to holiday in Charente:*

### 1. To indulge in a cognac tasting session or tour the vineyards

One can hardly talk about Charente without mentioning its main export. The history of Cognac in Charente begins in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century when Dutch tradesmen needed to stop their wine going bad on their return home: thus, the birth of *Brandwijn*, which would later become "brandy". As the only region allowed to call its product "cognac", the eponymous town and its surrounding area naturally has some great brandy-based experiences: there are plenty of distilleries which offer [guided tours](#) and tastings. However, if you're not a fan of brandy, you can still enjoy visiting the vineyards, which cover almost 80,000 hectares.

### 2. To channel your Inner Sailor on the Charente River

The department of Charente is named after its principal river, named the "most beautiful river in the kingdom" by Francis I of France (a native of Cognac!). Once an important trade route, the Charente is now a haven for adventure-seekers (hire a kayak or canoe for the day, or a houseboat for a whole week of exploring). Beaches run alongside much of the river, so if an afternoon's sunning yourself and splashing in the water is more your style, Charente has you covered too.

### 3. To soak up some comic culture in Angoulême

For more than 40 years, Angoulême has played an important role in French *Bande Dessinée*, and there's no better place in France for a comic-lover's holiday. Today, you can visit the [Musée de la Bande Dessinée](#), which boasts the largest collection of original comic strips in Europe. If you don't feel like going to a museum, you can get your fix by wandering the streets of Angoulême, where the Painted Wall Trail will take you to some 20 comic-strip murals.

### 4. To go back in time wandering through medieval villages

If charming villages are your thing, Charente won't disappoint. Highlights include touring the [chateau](#) in Verteuil-sur-Charente, which is still inhabited by the locally important family who built it in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century (so much for the Revolution!). The 12<sup>th</sup> Century ruins of [Saint-Germain de Confolens](#) also make for a fascinating trip back in time.

### 5. To get lost walking or cycling in the countryside

With relatively low visitor numbers compared to the rest of France, much of Charente's picturesque countryside remains unspoiled, so what better place for a walk or bicycle ride? Whether you're a seasoned hiker or just fancy a stroll, this beautiful region won't let you down. Committed to cycling, the region has implemented almost 390km of cycle tracks or low-traffic roads, so pop your baguette in your pannier, grab a map and go exploring! Didn't bring your bike on holiday? There are plenty of places you can hire them too.

*Do you feel like lazily strolling through picturesque villages and countryside, or getting active on the river? Whether you'd prefer a museum or a cognac-tasting, the Charente region has something for everyone. Tourists, visitors and locals alike agree on one thing about this beautiful region of France: you won't be short of things to do!*