

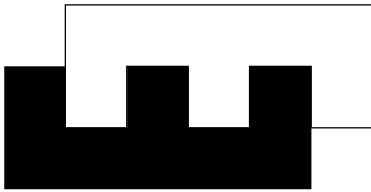


**ROYAL
FORTRESS
OF CHINON**

**GROUPS AND
PROFESSIONALS
2025**

STRONGER THAN A CASTLE





FORTERESSE ROYALE DE CHINON

CONTENTS

Located on the rocky outcrop at the edge of Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou, the Royal Fortress of Chinon is a reflection of the height of prestige in the Middle Ages.

This thousand-year-old construction was the last refuge of Henry II of England. It also hosted Eleanor of Aquitaine, Charles VII, and Joan of Arc during major turning points in French history.

Today, the “three castles” that make up the Loire Valley Medieval royal fortress reveal their secrets to visitors through reconstitutions and a variety of events and activities.

To visit the Royal Fortress of Chinon is to walk in the footsteps of Joan of Arc, understand the workings of a war engine, step back in time to the Middle Ages on an immersive tour, and admire amazing panoramic views of the Loire Valley.

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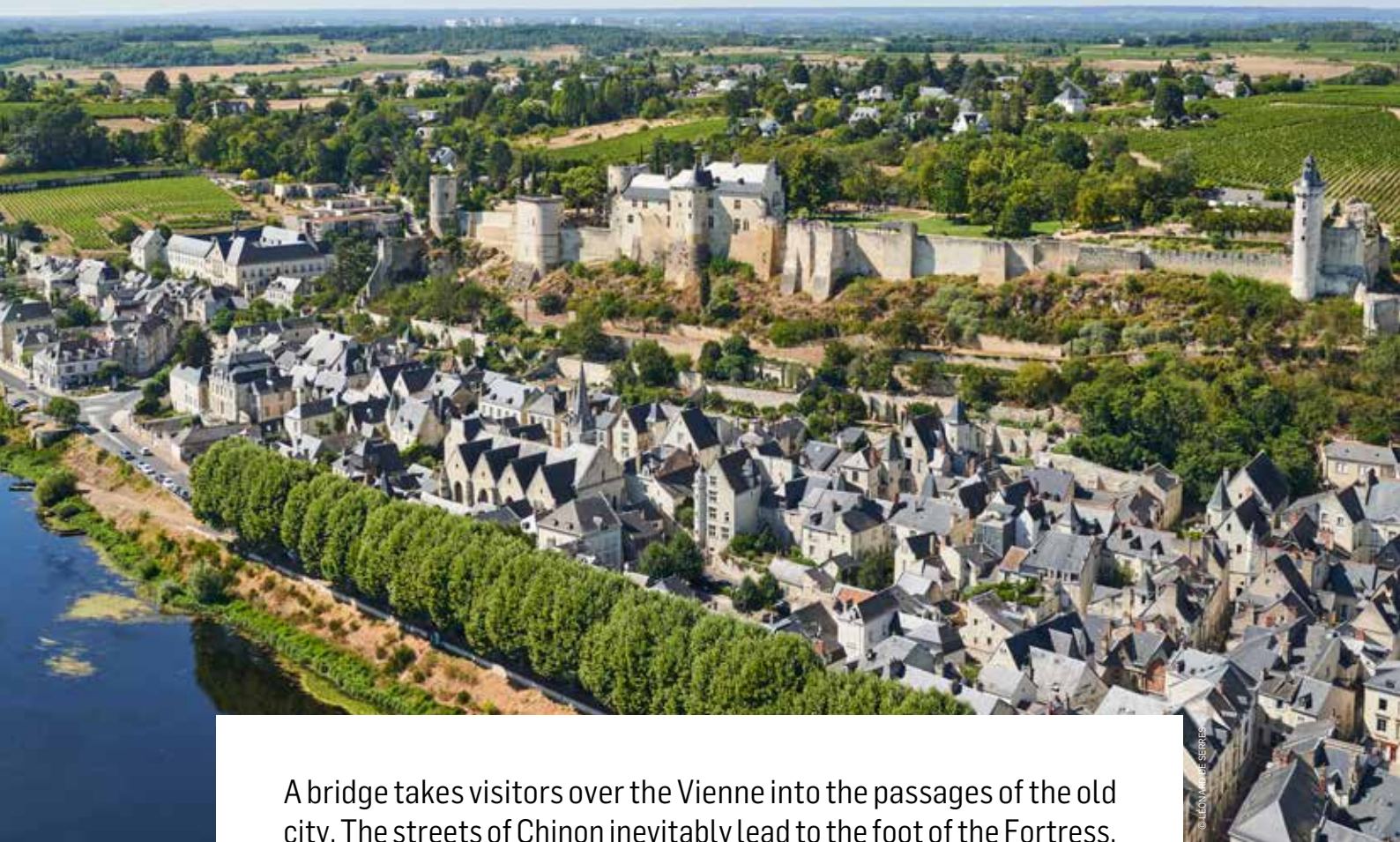


NOT TO BE MISSED

- Guided Tour
- Immersive tours with HistoPad
- New reconstitutions and furnished rooms
- Discovery through play: Monument Game
- Activities

FEATURES

- Rare medieval site in the Loire Valley
- Royal residence in the 12th and 15th centuries
- Stunning panoramic views of vineyards and the medieval city
- A landmark in French history
- Located in a UNESCO World Heritage Site area



A bridge takes visitors over the Vienne into the passages of the old city. The streets of Chinon inevitably lead to the foot of the Fortress, beckoning visitors to discover this charming thousand-year-old site and its views of the Loire Valley. The Fortress is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

An Exceptional Site

A view of Chinon and the Loire Valley

On a rocky outcrop, the Fortress's high towers overlook the Medieval city, the Vienne River, and the valley's green landscape.

The medieval city bears traces of its noble past.

In the north, a panoramic view of the plateau invites visitors to enjoy another Chinon treasure: its vineyards, which once drew the praises of Rabelais.

Benefiting from an exceptional environment, many activities are available near the Fortress: visits to wine cellars, boat trips on the Vienne river, hiking or biking in the heart of the vineyards.

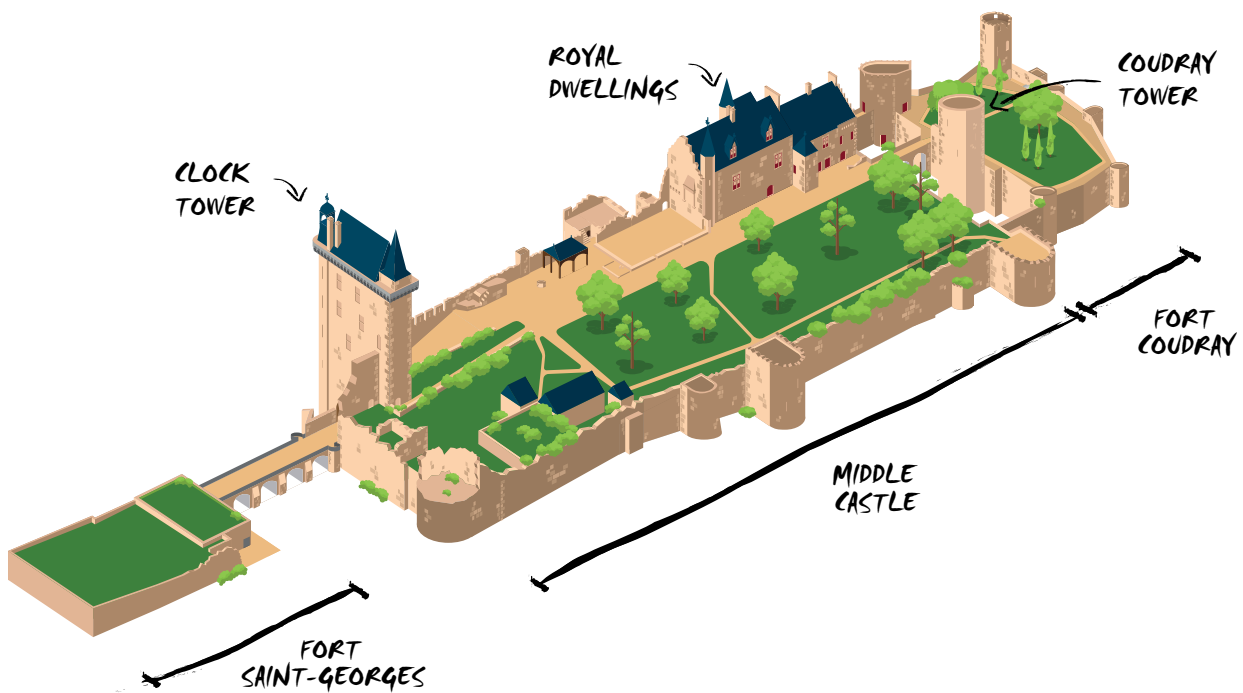
The Fortress's "Three Castles"

There are many towers illustrating the changes in defensive architecture from the 12th to the 15th centuries: full or hollow round towers, with an Angevin slope, in a horseshoe, a keep that was once a prison for Templars...

Within the walls, the space is divided into three distinct parts which the kings called their three castles: Fort du Coudray, the Middle Castle (Château du Milieu), and the Fort Saint George.

The Middle Castle occupies the centre of the fortress. Its gate-tower, now known as the Clock Tower, has housed one of the four oldest bells in Touraine and its monumental clock mechanism since the end of the 14th century.

The royal apartments of Charles VII and Marie of Anjou were built against the southern rampart of the Middle Castle. Restored in 2010, this elegant stone dwelling, punctuated with turrets and mullioned windows, is crowned with a slate roof. Its rooms house the furnished re-creations and collections of the site.



The Royal Fortress of Chinon is one of the largest medieval historic monuments in France. The remarkable medieval fortress was once occupied by the kings of England and France and provides unique insights into life at court during the Plantagenet and Charles VII era.

A medieval fortress with a royal destiny

Ancient origins

The site of the Fortress has been occupied for three thousand years. At the end of the Gallic period, a soldier in Caesar's army set up home there. In the royal residence, his sword is displayed with its scabbard. It was not until the end of the Roman Empire that the rocky promontory was fortified.

From the Counts of Blois to the Counts of Anjou (10th century)

The strategic nature of the site was confirmed from the 10th century onwards, when the Counts of Blois, then the Counts of Anjou, used it as a defensive position to control the Loire Valley. A few generations later, the Counts of Anjou gave rise to the prestigious Plantagenet dynasty, consecrating Chinon's royal destiny.

**The only
Plantagenet
royal fortress
in the Loire
Valley**

The fortified square of Henry II Plantagenet (12th century)

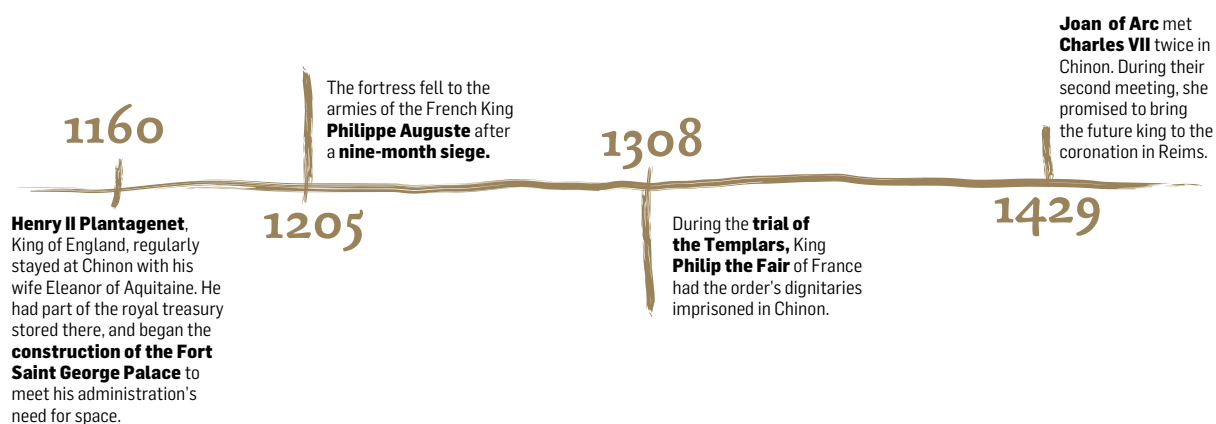
After becoming King of England, Henry II Plantagenet made Chinon one of his capitals on the Continent. He expanded the Fortress with a new palace on Fort Saint George. He journeyed regularly to the Fortress, hosting sumptuous banquets for his barons.

Henry II died in the Royal Fortress of Chinon in 1189.

His wife Eleanor of Aquitaine was a woman of character and power, with an exceptional destiny.



Key Dates



Repossession by the King of France, Philippe Auguste (13th century)

In 1205, the King of France took back possession of the fortress after a gruelling siege, preserving the strategic site located at the gates of Anjou (still ruled by the Plantagenets). Philippe Auguste made his mark by building an imposing keep, the Coudray Tower, enabling him to reactivate the site's defensive capacity, which had been compromised by the nine-month siege.

Templar Prison (14th century)

In the spring of 1308, the dignitaries of the Order of the Temple, including Grand Master Jacques de Molay, were imprisoned at the Royal Fortress of Chinon as part of the Templar trial. They left a remarkable collection of religious graffiti on the Coudray Tower.

The meeting of Joan of Arc and Dauphin Charles (1429)

In the 15th century, the Fortress was the scene of an encounter that would change the course of history and accelerate the end of the Hundred Years' War: Joan of Arc was introduced to the young dauphin and managed to convince him that she could deliver him France's throne.

This famous episode from the Joan of Arc epic is generally described as a mythical and miraculous scene: **The Recognition!** Two meetings actually took place in Chinon. The 1st took place in late February 1429. After an 11-day journey on horseback across France, Joan was granted a private meeting in the king's chamber. The second meeting took place a month later. This was an official presentation of Joan of Arc at the court, confirming her role as the standard bearer of the king's armies.





© LÉONARD DE SERRES

Rich and Varied Collections

Archaeological Collections

The objects on display come from archaeological digs carried out on the site. The tomb of a Gaulish warrior, a relief of Saint George slaying the dragon, and a Plantagenet dice are some of the items that evoke the life of the site over the centuries.

The furnished re-creation of the private chamber of Charles VII

Thanks to the skills of researchers and craftspeople, this iconic room of the royal apartments has been brought back to life. A quilt with golden embroidery and a sumptuous canopy, both custom-made for the king's bed, are the key pieces in this reconstitution.

The Joan of Arc Collections

The emphasis is on representations of Joan of Arc from the 16th to 20th centuries. In the prints room, discover Joan of Arc in pictures: romantic portraits, war posters, Épinal prints... In the room dedicated to statuary, the many statues of Joan appear alongside the Recognition Tapestry (17th-century Aubusson tapestry).



Private chamber of Charles VII - © LÉONARD DE SERRES



Private chamber of Charles VII - © STEVENS RÉMONT



Joan of Arc Collections - © STEVENS RÉMONT



The Plantagenet areas, Eleanor of Aquitaine's chamber.

The chamber includes a bed, sumptuous bedding, two chairs, two chests, and a table. The objects placed on the table (toilettries, chess set etc.), complete the effect of a space still inhabited. The needlepoint fabric has been recreated from an 11th/12th-century fragment, known as the Cope of Saint Mexme, in the collection of the Le Carroi Museum in Chinon.

Work carried out by skilled craftspeople

The furniture was made by **Tancoigne cabinetmakers**, based on a study by Cécile Lagane, a doctor of medieval archaeology and a specialist in the study of medieval material culture and furniture.

The silks are decorated with stylised animals and plants, faithfully recreated and woven by the workshops of the **Roze silk factory**, a certified Living Heritage Company based in Tours.

The painted decor, inspired by the 12th century, was created by the restorers at **Atelier Moulinier**, a company specialising in the conservation and restoration of protected heritage (Loir-et-Cher).

Arms room

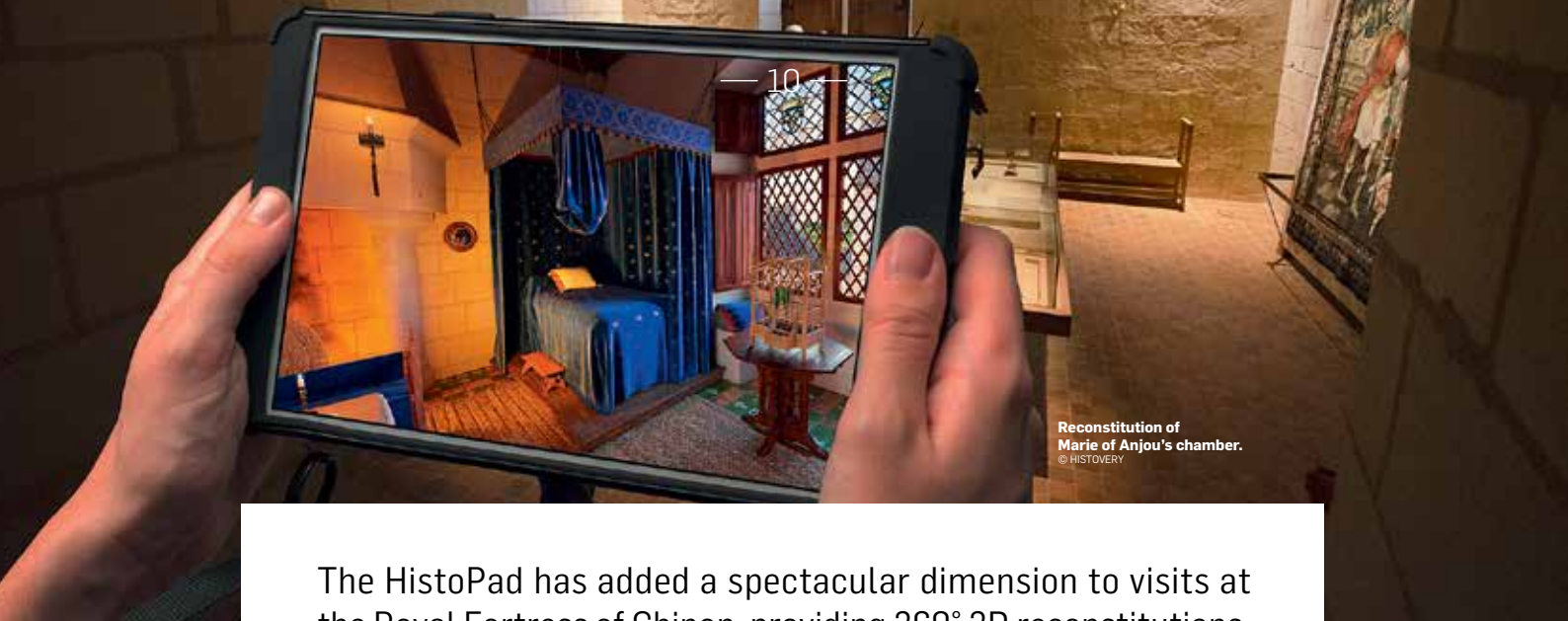
The collections on display come from military equipment used during the Hundred Years' War: rare armets or burgonets (helmets), chain mail, authentic ballistas and crossbows, reproductions of pole arms. The reproduction of a Milanese suit of armour from the beginning of the 15th century is the most spectacular piece in this room.

Bombards and veuglaires

Two bombards and two veuglaires are on display in the park of the Fortress. These stubby guns are made of wrought iron. They are characteristic of the beginnings of gunpowder artillery in the 15th century.

The monumental clock

The Clock Tower owes its name to the monumental clock that it has housed since 1399. It is one of the four oldest bells in Touraine. The gear system still visible today can be dated to the 17th or the 18th century. The mechanism is enhanced by the presence of a zoetrope, an original optical illusion device.



Reconstitution of Marie of Anjou's chamber.
© HISTOVERY

The HistoPad has added a spectacular dimension to visits at the Royal Fortress of Chinon, providing 360° 3D reconstitutions. Dive into the Middle Ages!

An Immersive Experience with the HistoPad

An Immersive Visit

Virtual reconstitutions offer a spectacular immersive experience that brings to life a number of rooms that either no longer exist or have been transformed. This panoramic presentation introduces visitors to life in the 12th, 14th, and 15th centuries. For instance, the HistoPad lets visitors experience Christmas with Henry II Plantagenet in the great hall of his palace; attend the scene of the Recognition with Joan of Arc; visit the kitchens of Queen Marie of Anjou; or watch the preparations for her departure in the castle courtyard.

3D Learning

Since 2023, an additional area has been dedicated to the siege of 1204-1205. Thanks to the latest technologies developed by Histovery (including AI), visitors can relive the siege of Chinon from the point of view of the besieged troops of the English King John Lackland. The entire early 13th-century Fortress has been reconstituted in 3D, highlighting the successive phases of the siege through dynamic sequences that accentuate the dramatic effect (ramparts collapsing under fire from siege engines, roofs on fire, virtual shooting with a trebuchet and mounted crossbows).

The experience is accessible from the Treasury Tower, an area that has been opened to visitors for this occasion.

To fully understand the impact of artillery on siege techniques, visitors can operate the 3D reconstitution of “La Hire”, a 15th-century bombard named after a companion of Joan of Arc.

A treasure hunt

Valuable objects have been hidden in the 3D scenery. Children can collect them during their visit on a kind of treasure hunt. Treasure hunters will receive a prize by email. Bigger kids can take Medieval selfies in virtual costumes suggested by the HistoPad.



© STEVENS FREMONT

Feature included in the Fortress entrance
feat no extra cost, available in 9 languages





© STEVENS FREMONT

Choose your Chinon experience from a range of different tours for all ages and interests. The team at the Royal Fortress of Chinon is here to help you find the best experience for you.

Programmes and Visiting Experiences



YOUTH

The Fortress is committed to providing children and families with a fun and age-appropriate experience as part of the Mom'art happy museum scheme.

- **Children's "Visiting with Bertille" route**



With challenges and games in iconic places.

Map provided at the entrance for ages 5-10, included in the entrance fee.

- **Activities and events during the school holidays**
- **Treasure hunt with HistoPad**

INDIVIDUALS

- **Free and immersive HistoPad tour**

Immersive visit with augmented reality using HistoPad, available in 9 languages



Recommended Duration: 2 hours

Included in the monument entrance fee.

- **Guided Tour**

Visit with a monument guide

Duration: Guided tour 1 hour + 1 hour to discover the site on your own.

Included in the monument entrance fee.

- **Medieval and Family Events and Activities**

War machines in action, life in the Middle Ages.

Activities every day in July and August.

SCHOOLS

A complete file is available to help teachers prepare for their visit and include the history of Chinon in their curriculum. Outreach officers can provide guided tours with commentary in addition to the activities and workshops.

Programme available from pre-school to secondary school.

Visit / Workshop. **View all our educational and cultural activities in the discovery catalogue or on the fortress website at www.forteressechinon.fr.**

GROUPS

Available for all services with advance booking

Groups of 15-50 people

• Free and immersive HistoPad tour

Immersive visit with augmented reality using HistoPad, available in 9 languages.



Recommended Duration: 1.5 hours

Included in the monument entrance fee.

• Guided Tour

Visit (at ground level).

Duration: Guided tour 1 hour + 1 hour to discover the site on your own.

Included in the monument entrance fee.

• Thematic guided tours

- The Plantagenets in Chinon.
- The Plantagenet Arsenal.
- The Plantagenet Administration.

Duration: 1 hour Additional fee.

• Express Tour

Duration: 30 minutes at no additional fee.

• War engine demonstrations

Duration: 30 minutes. Additional fee.

• VIP "Monument Game & Tasting" visit

Groups of 15-30 people.

• Monument Game with new puzzle

See description below.

• Wine cellar visit and tasting

Continue your adventure in the heart of the medieval city of Chinon under the Fortress!

In his cave cellar, Marc Plouzeau reveals the secrets of the AOC Chinon winemakers. Round off your visit with a tasting of some emblematic vintages.

Duration of the complete visit: at least 2h30. Additional fee.

Bonus features:

- Guided tour included in the entrance fee.
- Up to 50 people Bigger groups can be split into two tour groups.
- The Fortress can provide cane/folding chair devices.
- A gourmet moment, with local and seasonal products at the entrance to the Fortress from April to August.
- Restaurants and accommodation are available near the Fortress.
- Free parking is available for coaches.
- Bicycles: located 5km from a cycling route, with facilities for cyclists: a secure bike shelter, repair kits.
- Free for the driver and group guide (for 15 paid entrance fees).

Monument Game The guardians of time

New puzzle



DISCOVERY THROUGH PLAY

5 Escape Game areas throughout the fortress.

From 3 to 30 players, depending on the number of participants, several teams are formed.

Cooperation and reflection will be the keys to your success.

Available all year round in French and English.

Online ticket purchase required.

Duration: 1.5 hours Game suitable for ages 9 and up

Additional fee.





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2025 Calendar

“Treasures” exhibition

May - November

“Treasure(s)” is a word with multiple meanings. It can mean a monetary reserve; an accumulation of precious objects; the object of a legendary quest; an item of property to which someone is deeply attached... But in all cases, it refers to something priceless and precious. This exhibition focuses on the treasures of kings, of princes and the powerful, which are generally made up of jewels (precious stones), gold and silver tableware, books, tapestries, and pieces of armour.

Meeting in the Gardens

Saturday 7 June and Sunday 8 June

Special tours of the Fortress Park.

Medieval Events and Activities

Every day in July and August

Daily activities including shooting the engines.

Chinon Medieval Days

Sunday 3 August to Tuesday 5 August

Three days of medieval activities and shows.

Wine Thursdays.

July/August

Meet with Chinon AOC winemakers and taste their wines.

Christmas in the Land of Castles

December

Christmas exhibition and activities.



© J.C. COUTANT

The Fortress in Lights

Every day at nightfall



© STEVEN PRÉMONT



Practical information

The Royal Fortress of Chinon has been awarded the Quality Tourism designation and offers all the facilities and services needed to make your visit an enjoyable one.

Opening days and times

Open year-round, every day
(except 1 January and 25 December)

- Jan., Feb., Dec.: 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- March, April, Sept., Oct.: 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- 1 May-31 August: 9:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Last ticket sold 30 minutes before closing.

Visit the website www.forteressechinon.fr

Rates applicable from 1 February 2025

- Full price: €12.50
- Reduced rate (young people from 7 to 18 years old, groups from 15 people): €10.50
- Free of charge: 0 to 7 years old.
- Professional tourism rate: €9.50

Group activities for 15 people or more

- Workshops/themed tours/activities €13.
- Monument Game €20.
- Special tours €35.
- School groups: from €1.50 per student
- School workshops: from €4 per student.

Services

- Free parking.
- Outdoor catering: gourmet food area open from April to September.
- Several restaurants in the city.

Venue Rentals

- Indoor space for 15 to 80 people seated / 120 standing + 1 outdoor space 500 people.
- Prices start at €900
(please contact us for a quote.)

Buy tickets online, it's easy

For your ticket purchases

> Log on to the monument's website

www.forteressechinon.fr: create your professional account and place your order.

Tickets valid for 1 year.

No minimum purchase.

Online payment by credit card.

Vouchers are no longer accepted for individual leisure customers.



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Nearby

- Castle of Azay-Le-Rideau.
- Balzac Museum / Château de Saché.
- Château de Villandry.
- Castle of Langeais.
- Rabelais Museum: La Devinière.
- Château du Rivau.
- Royal Abbey of Fontevraud.
- Winegrowers of AOC Chinon, etc.

Plan your visit:

www.azay-chinon-valde Loire.com
www.touraineloirevalley.com

Find us on social media

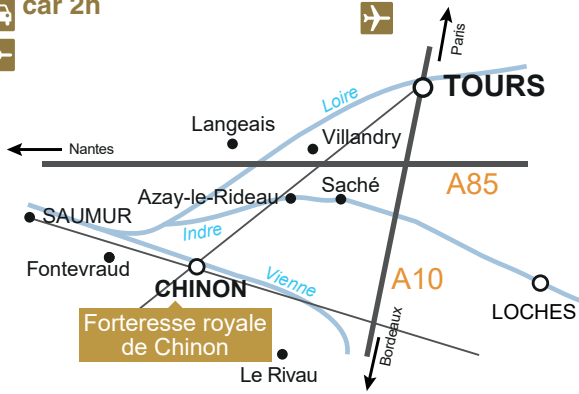
@forteressechinon





NANTES
 train 3h20
 car 2h

PARIS
 train 3h
 car 3h



BORDEAUX
 train 4h
 car 3h30

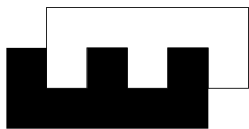
Stop on the Loire
 by Bike cycling tour.

SALES CONTACT

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BOOKINGS

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