

Discover Europe's Crown Jewels and Hidden Gems

# World Heritage

— JOURNEYS —

# EUROPE



**ANCIENT**



**ROMANTIC**



**ROYAL**



**UNDERGROUND**







**European culture** has had a profound impact on human history. Its rich heritage has shaped the modern world in countless ways, and much of it is preserved for everyone to see and experience.

In addition to thousands of national and local heritage sites, over 400 cultural sites across the European Union have been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List—from pre-historic cave paintings and ancient amphitheatres to glorious cathedrals and centuries-old agricultural, industrial, and urban landscapes that are still thriving today.

Europe's World Heritage sites tell epic stories of the past and bolster present-day economies and identities. Strong efforts to conserve these treasures have helped Europe become the world's most popular global tourism destination. But with tourism growing, it's important for visitors and locals to use these places sustainably, enjoying their rich cultural heritage without damaging what makes them special.



Co-funded by the European Union



**World Heritage Journeys Europe** highlights 34 UNESCO sites across the European Union, some iconic and others less known. These places tell stories of European history and culture through the lens of four heritage themes, or *Journeys* that illuminate different sides of Europe's heritage, from the **Ancient** to the **Romantic** and the **Royal** to the **Underground** world beneath our feet.





# Ancient Europe

A modern-day journey to these gems of ancient Europe can feel like taking a trip back through time. From the temples at the heart of the first Olympic Games to the birthplace of modern medicine, these remnants of bygone empires scattered across the continent stand as testaments to the incredible ingenuity of the ancient world. They also connect us to the remarkable creations that define our lives today and let us bask in the rich culture that has grown up around these icons, appreciating the present-day heritage that brings them to life.



AQUILEIA

**AQUILEIA, ITALY** | Though less known than nearby Venice, this city was once one of the most important hubs of the Roman Empire. Today it's a small, charming town that's also an artistic and historical treasure trove. Most of its ancient wonders lie underfoot, unexcavated, making it one of the greatest archaeological reserves of its kind.



EPIDAUROS

**EPIDAUROS, GREECE** | Considered the birthplace of modern medicine, the archaeological ensemble of Epidaurus is a tribute to ancient healing cults and practices across the Greco-Roman world. Dedicated to Asclepius, the Greek god of medicine, it was a sacred place used for ceremonial medical practices as far back as the 2nd millennium B.C.

**NESSEBAR, BULGARIA** | Originally a Thracian settlement, Nessebar became a Greek colony and trading city at the beginning of the 6th century B.C. It was one of the first places in the world to start minting coins. Today, you'll find the preserved remains of Roman and medieval walls, Byzantine and Bulgarian churches, and 18th century houses.



NESSEBAR

**OLYMPIA, GREECE** | Birthplace of the Olympic Games, Olympia paid homage to the finest athletes beginning in 776 B.C. But Olympia was not just used every four years to laud mortals. It was also a place where remarkable works of art were created to worship Zeus, father of the Olympian gods and his sister-wife, Hera, goddess of marriage and birth.

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OLYMPIA



TARRAGONA



PONT DU GARD

**PONT DU GARD, FRANCE** | A triumph in Roman aqueduct construction, Pont du Gard is the tallest, and among the best-preserved aqueducts today. Nearly 50 metres high and consisting of three levels, the longest measuring 275 metres, it's a technical and artistic masterpiece set against the rocky forested backdrop of the Garrigues.

**STARI GRAD, CROATIA** | Colonized by Ionian Greeks in the 4th century B.C., this landscape on Hvar Island has remained practically intact ever since. Stone houses and chapels framed by the Adriatic Sea are nestled in rolling hills of vineyards and olive groves, which are divided into plots constructed by Greek settlers more than 2,400 years ago.



TARRAGONA

**TARRAGONA, SPAIN** | Ancient Tarraco was a monumental architectural achievement. Established in the 3rd century B.C, it was the oldest Roman settlement on the Iberian Peninsula. South of Barcelona and surrounded by white-sand beaches and coves that remain virtually unaltered since ancient times, a visit here will immerse you in the ancient world.

**TRIER, GERMANY** | Germany's oldest city, two millennia ago Trier became a capital of the Western Roman Empire, and the largest urban center north of the Alps. Emperor Constantine used it as a base as he spread Christianity across Europe, and testaments to his faith make up some of the most important buildings in Trier today.



TRIER

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# Romantic Europe

The beauty of Europe has always inspired love. Whether in the hearts of lovers or famous works of art, romance abounds across the continent. It was the birthplace of Romanticism, a movement beginning in the late 18th century that embraced emotion, imagination, and Nature, influencing literature, music, art, and architecture across the world. These sites showcase a range of architectural styles and eras, from ancient to more modern, but they all are filled with a spirit of romance that echoes in their cobblestone streets, soaring towers, and verdant valleys.



BRUGES

**BRUGES, BELGIUM** | Bruges's golden age may have been from the 12th to 15th century when it was a busy trading port, but this medieval city has remained one of the world's most picturesque culture hubs. Laden with Gothic architecture, magnificent art, winding canals, and romantic strolls, this city has captured hearts for centuries.



LEDNICE-VALTICE

**LEDNICE-VALTICE, CZECHIA** | From the 17th to 20th centuries the Dukes of Liechtenstein transformed their estates here into a huge park, creating one of the largest artificial landscapes in Europe. Just 2.5 hours from Prague, the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape features a lovely village, extensive gardens, and two romantic castles to explore.

**MONT-SAINT-MICHEL, FRANCE** | With its jaw-dropping natural surroundings and exceptional architecture, Mont-Saint-Michel and its Bay was one of France's first properties to be listed as World Heritage. To travel here and be greeted by a magical island topped by a gravity-defying medieval monastery is a truly awe-inspiring experience.



MONT-SAINT-MICHEL

**PAFOS, CYPRUS** | The ancient Greeks believed Cyprus to be the Birthplace of Aphrodite, Goddess of Love. During the Roman era, Pafos was a crucial stop on the trading route between Alexandria and Rome, where wealthy citizens built a city full of grand villas with remarkable mosaics that remain a highlight of any visit.

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PAFOS



SAN GIMIGNANO



ROMANTIC RHINE

**RHINE VALLEY, GERMANY** | The Upper Middle Rhine valley was the heart of the medieval Holy Roman Empire and a magnet for great artistry, ingenuity, and craftsmanship. One of the most important trading areas in Europe, it also inspired Romantic fairy tales, fables, poetry, paintings, drama, and music, including Wagner's "Ring" operas.

**SAN GIMIGNANO, ITALY** | Discover rolling Tuscan hills covered with rows of grapevines, terra cotta roofs, and fortified towers from the 11th and 13th centuries. An important resting point for pilgrims in the Middle Ages, its well-preserved feudal atmosphere, from cobble streets to soaring towers, never fails to leave visitors spellbound.



VILNIUS

**VILNIUS, LITHUANIA** | The Grand Duchy of Lithuania was the largest country in 15th century Europe. Its capital grew with influences from many cultures, religions, and languages, attracting great architects, artists and thinkers from near and far, as is evident in its vibrant culture and stunning collection of Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical buildings.

**WACHAU, AUSTRIA** | The Wachau is a stretch of the Danube Valley between Melk and Krems—a remarkably preserved medieval landscape that has inspired romantic legends for centuries. Explore Wachau's natural paradise through its riverside villages and discover a land of castles, majestic abbeys, hiking trails, and gorgeous wineries.



WACHAU

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# Royal Europe

For the royalty of Europe, power was displayed in many ways. They showed their wealth in grand palaces and their strength in imposing castles, but they also demonstrated their sophistication and prestige through luxurious parks and gardens. Kings and queens hired the world's most talented botanists and architects to design sprawling parks as royal refuges, and explorers were sent on missions to exotic lands to find new plant species to fill them. The rivalry between monarchs started a wave of royal gardens across Europe, each attempting to be bigger and better than the last.



ARANJUEZ

**ARANJUEZ, SPAIN** | For centuries, Spanish royals spent their spring months here, creating fabulous palaces and gardens that became Europe's most important collection of cultivated trees. They incubated ideas about humanism and political centralization, landscape design, urban lifestyle, and the sciences during the Age of Enlightenment.



CASERTA

**CASERTA, ITALY** | Combining the influences of Versailles, Rome and Tuscany, Caserta Royal Palace and Park is one of the last great European gardens. Designed by Luigi Vanvitelli, one of the greatest Italian architects of the 18th century, this Italian masterpiece took the successes of previous designs and created a world unlike anywhere else.

**DROTNINGHOLM, SWEDEN** | Built in the 1600s, this magnificent homage to Swedish history and prosperity is a European treasure and one of the best-preserved royal residences in Sweden. The island palace and its historic theatre and gardens are close to the center of Stockholm, but the overwhelming sense here is of serenity and seclusion.

**KEW, UNITED KINGDOM** | Founded by Princess Augusta in 1759, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew showcases the world's largest collection of living plants. Its gardens and glasshouses on the site of the former summer residence of King George III give visitors access to Britain's most intimate royal palace and a glorious place to discover history, art, and science.



DROTNINGHOLM

**KROMĚŘÍŽ, CZECHIA** | The Archbishop's palace and gardens are an outstanding example of a Baroque residential complex. A crowning work of 17th century European landscape art, the manicured gardens represent a groundbreaking stage of development between the Italian Renaissance and the French Baroque and Classicist artistry.



KEW



PAR FORCE



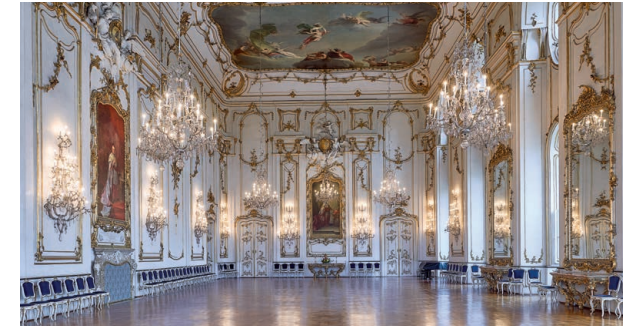
POTSDAM



SINTRA



VERSAILLES



KROMERIZ

**PAR FORCE LANDSCAPE, DENMARK** | Beyond their palace gardens, Danish kings tamed the forests of North Sealand with manicured dirt lanes, laid out in star and grid patterns based on the latest discoveries in mathematics and geometry. Today, this setting for grand theatrical hunts is ideal for exploration on bike, foot, and horseback.

**POTSDAM, GERMANY** | From 1730 to 1916, Prussian rulers transformed Potsdam into one of the world's finest collections of palaces and gardens. Within its many elements, the work of Germany's greatest sculptors, painters, craftsmen, builders, and gardeners has been beautifully preserved, making it a highlight of any visit to Berlin.

**SINTRA, PORTUGAL** | Blending the fantastical with the palatial, this cultural landscape in the hills near Lisbon feels like stepping through the pages of a Portuguese fairytale. The hills are filled with many remarkable monuments and parks, which made it the summer destination of choice for the nobility and bourgeois from the 15th to 20th century.

**VERSAILLES, FRANCE** | As the epicenter of French royal power from 1682 until the Revolution in 1789, 'Sun King' Louis XIV's massive estate outside Paris became the blueprint for excellence across Europe. It pushed royal palaces and gardens to new levels of grandeur, and remains one of the greatest achievements of French 17th-century art.

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# Underground Europe

As the grandeur of Europe grew, generations of workers flocked to towns that sprang up around mines and toiled underground to power the unstoppable pace of development. From the gold that decorated the Middle Ages to the wine used to toast revolutions and the coal that fueled the modern era, Europe as we know it would not exist without the tough and dangerous work deep below the surface. These marvelous tunnels, caverns, mines, and cellars now wait for the curious visitor, full of fascinating stories about the lives and cultures of Europe's underground heroes.



BANSKA STIAVNICA

**BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA, SLOVAKIA** | In the Middle Ages, this charming town was the main producer of silver and gold for the Kingdom of Hungary, and later for the Habsburg monarchy. Its wealth built Budapest and Vienna, and is still evident in the elegant castles and palaces that fill the town's center and the forested hills and valleys that surround it.

**CHAMPAGNE, FRANCE** | Just an hour from Paris lies the Champagne region—a world of vineyards, rolling hills, quaint villages, and a vast network of underground cellars. Visiting the region offers the unique chance to see the whole production process—which has been developed and refined from 17th century—and to fully experience this iconic beverage.

**FALUN, SWEDEN** | Falun Mine dates back over a thousand years. At its peak in the 17th century it accounted for 70% of the Western world's copper production, giving Sweden great influence on the technological, economic, social, and political development of Europe. Tour the historic mine and well-preserved town to experience this deep and rich history.

**GOSLAR AND UPPER HARZ, GERMANY** | The Rammelsberg Mines and their water management system in the Harz Mountains were a model for innovative mining practices for a millennium. Starting in the 11th century, the mine's wealth shaped the charming and beautifully-preserved town of Goslar, the residence of German kings until 1253.

**NORD-PAS DE CALAIS, FRANCE** | This historic mining basin was a nexus for the exchange of ideas and influences in coal mining, worker housing, urban planning, and the international human migration that empowered Europe's industrialization. The region's unique museums, mine tours, and spoil heaps provide fascinating views into this rich history.



CHAMPAGNE



FALUN



GOSLAR & UPPER HARZ



TOKAJ



WALLONIA MINES



WIELICZKA



ZOLLVEREIN



NORD-PAS-DE CALAIS

**TOKAJ, HUNGARY** | This wine region, designated the world's first appellation in 1757, is spread over a romantic landscape of vineyards, slopes, and wine cellars. Produced for over 1,000 years, Tokaj was served at Versailles and was a favorite of French King Louis XV who called it "Vinum Regum, Rex Vinorum": the Wine of Kings, King of Wines.

**WALLONIA MINES, BELGIUM** | The four mines in this coal basin—Blegny, Bois du Cazier, Bois-du-Luc, and Grand Hornu—are emblematic of the industrial revolution that changed the face of Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. Their fascinating museums and mine tours pay homage to the generations of miners who built Europe.

**WIELICZKA AND BOCHNIA, POLAND** | These Royal Salt Mines were worked continuously from the 13th to late 20th century, and constitute one of the earliest and most important European industrial operations. Full of historical machines, tools, and salt sculptures, they form a unique and authentic record of mining techniques and culture.

**ZOLLVEREIN, GERMANY** | One of the world's largest and most modern coal-mining facilities, this complex in Essen exemplifies the development of heavy industry in Europe. Coal was mined and processed here for 135 years, until 1986. Today, its Bauhaus-influenced design is a triumph of modern industrial architecture and a centre for art and culture.

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# Travel Differently, Travel Deeper

## World Heritage

**Journeys Europe** is an initiative by UNESCO and the European Union (EU), in collaboration with National Geographic and local heritage and tourism managers, to showcase World Heritage destinations across the EU and help travellers experience these places in ways that highlight and sustain their outstanding values and benefit local communities.



**WEBSITE** | Dive into these amazing places at [VisitEUWorldHeritage.com](https://www.visitEUWorldHeritage.com). You'll find in-depth guides to each UNESCO site, includ-



ing its history and significance, top attractions, and insider tips on how to best experience its outstanding universal value. Save your favorite sites, attractions, and experiences to your personal itinerary map to plan your epic journey.

**MOBILE APP** | Explore the sites offline on a 3D globe with the World Heritage Journeys mobile app. It includes content from the website, plus immersive 3D experiences, along with basic profiles for all UNESCO sites in Europe and around the world. Just search for 'World Heritage Journeys' on the app stores to download the app.

**VIDEO SERIES** | For short overviews of each site, check out the video series at [YouTube.com/WorldHeritageJourneys](https://www.youtube.com/WorldHeritageJourneys) and on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.

**BOOKAZINE** | Get a copy of the *World Heritage Journeys Europe* bookazine by National Geographic. The glossy 116 page special publication is a printed guide to the four journeys and 34 featured destinations, with stunning photos and illustrations, expert travel tips, and beautiful maps of Europe's 400+ UNESCO sites. Learn more at [VisitEUWorldHeritage.com/Bookazines](https://www.visitEUWorldHeritage.com/Bookazines).



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