

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE CHANDIGARH

LA PLUME

ENGLISH VERSION

Merville-Franceville, Normandy, France

July - September 2025

INTERVIEW WITH
OUR DIRECTOR

EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS FROM
OUR EVENTS

INTERVIEW WITH
STUDENTS

BEST PLACES TO DISCOVER
NORMANDY

ÉTRETAT, NORMANDY, FRANCE



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MAP OF FRANCE AND IT'S REGIONAL FOOD



DISCOVER FRANCE

NORMANDY

Between land and sea, Normandy is a French region distinguished by its quality of life and mild climate. Neither too hot in summer nor too wet in winter, the gentle Normandy landscapes are a true paradise of greenery.

When it comes to gastronomy, Normandy is not to be outdone, thanks to the richness of its cuisine. The region is known as one of the most famous in France for its cheeses and dairy products. Also known for its apples, this fruit is used in all sorts of ways, including in desserts and regional drinks.

This region has a rich history dating back many centuries. Situated between France and England, Normandy is a land of trade between the two shores of the English Channel, the sea that separates the two countries.

Normandy is well known as a major tourist destination in France, for both international and domestic travelers. The Region also boasts the closest beaches to Paris, and easy access by rail and road.

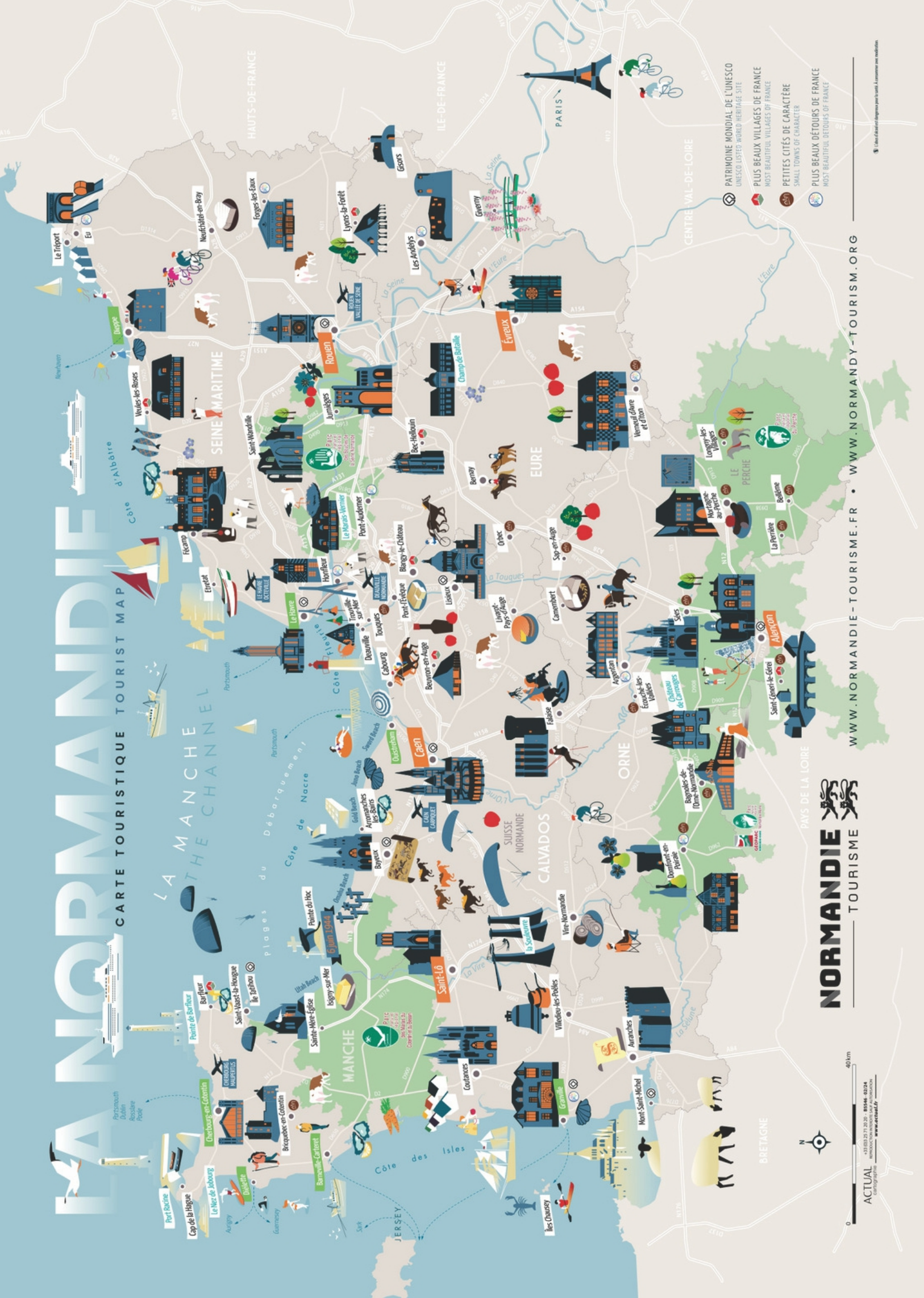
A trip to Normandy is the perfect balance for lovers of land, sea and gastronomy.



LA NORMANDIE

CARTE TOURISTIQUE TOURIST MAP

LA MANCHE
THE CHANNEL



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Normandie Tourisme

1000TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF CAEN



2025 is an anniversary year for Normandy. The city of Caen, capital of the region - shared with the city of Rouen - is celebrating the millennium of its foundation. With a focus on the city's history, heritage, people and artists, celebrates an historic it's anniversary. Festivities of all kinds will take place from March to December 2025.



The castle of Caen is a main monument and a symbol of the city of Caen. The castle has not been inhabited for a long time but is rather used as a social meeting place. Indeed, today, almost 1000 years after its construction, the only remains left are it's fortifications. The interior of the castle courtyard has been landscaped with parks, playgrounds and museums, to combine the social, green and historical aspects.

During the opening ceremony of the millennium festivities, a phenomenal sound and light performance has been held on the fortifications of the castle, topped off by a fireworks display in the skies above the castle of Caen. This event attracted a large number of citizens who were very proud of their city and wanted to celebrate its anniversary.



Caen's millennium is the most important event of 2025 in Normandy, and one that will leave its mark on people's minds for a long time to come. With this in mind, the French postal service decided to issue a stamp commemorating the event.



DISCOVERING CÔTE FLEURIE... ON HORSEBACK



Horses play a very important role in Normandy and its culture. You can often see horses running (with their riders) on its beaches, as well as on its little countryside roads. Along with cows, they are the two most common animals in the region.



Many people in Normandy love to ride horses for leisure. There are many riding schools and stud farms in the area.

If you're visiting the region, a horseback ride, preferably during sunset, could be the perfect way to round off a day of discovery. To do this, you'll have to get in touch with the nearest tourist office (they're everywhere) beforehand to make sure it happens.



The coasts of the Calvados department are the most famous for this type of walk, because their sand is fine and access to the beaches is easier, as there are no cliffs.



The amazing experience of doing horse riding between sea and land will offer you an ultimate connection with both nature and sea and provide you unforgettable memories.

DISCOVERING SUISSE NORMANDE ... BY BICYCLE



Although Normandy boasts a wide variety of landscapes, its topography is relatively flat and low-lying. However, it is possible to gain a little height by visiting Suisse Normande.

Located just half an hour's drive from Caen, the landscape here is very different from the rest of the region. In fact, the Suisse Normande is a collection of small, low-lying mountains, creating a real contrast.

The area is highly appreciated for its proximity to nature, making it ideal for outdoor activities such as hiking, cycling and paragliding. The spirit here is very different from that of the coast, but the feeling of being in the middle of wide-open spaces is still very much present.

The river “Orne” flows through the mountains, bringing a certain coolness in summer and making the area even more bucolic. Birdsongs and the sound of the river accompany the traveller.

A 40-kilometers trail, half cycling, half walking, linking Caen to Suisse Normande has been built in recent years. This follows a local policy to build more outdoor infrastructures such as walking zones and cycle paths or airstrips. The trail is becoming increasingly popular with locals and visitors alike.

On foot or by bike, you'll pass through many small villages, many of which have a bakery where you can buy a croissant, or a restaurant where you can recharge your batteries while sampling local specialities. A truly French experience!

DISCOVERING CÔTE D'ALBÂTRE ... BY FOOT OR BY BICYCLE



Côte d'Albâtre is distinguished by its towering cliffs and pebble beaches. It covers the northern part of the region, stretching over 130 km from Le Havre to as far as neighboring region of Picardy.

The cliffs of the Côte d'Albâtre are among the most famous and spectacular in France. Facing the sea, they rise to impressive heights and are often interspersed with small valleys and pebble beaches.

Between the 30 to 120 m-high cliffs (the most famous of which are those at Étretat and the highest at Le Tréport), valleys, or hanging valleys of small coastal rivers, have formed, along with a few exceptional areas of sand, clay and pebble accumulation.

Sections of the cliffs collapse regularly, and their base is exposed to high tide twice a day. The flint, fallen or torn away, is then polished by waves and wind. And that's the reason for the pebble beaches on this coast.

Discovering this coastline on foot thanks to its paths or by bike (like our chef Govinda) is a great way to discover another side of Normandy.





Tarte aux pommes

Normandy is a region well known in France for its apples. When traveling around the region, you'll be able to see apple trees everywhere as they're fully part of the very green landscape.

Tarte aux pommes is the most famous and popular dessert of Normandy. You'll be able to find that amazing cake in every bakery. This cake is also popular in the rest of France. Made of a short crust pastry with an apple mousse on top and thin slices of apple passed over to cover the tart, this tarte will give you a sweet break.



For the quick puff pastry

- 3/4 cup (110g) flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 ounces (115g) unsalted butter, cubed and well-chilled
- 3 tablespoons ice water

For the apples and glaze

- 1 1/2 pounds (700g) apples, about 4 medium apples
- 1 1/2 to 2 tablespoons melted butter
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- apple jelly, apricot jam, or red currant jelly, thinned with just enough hot water until brushable



Tarte aux pommes is an easy dish to make. If you want to make it at home to surprise your guests or family, you can follow the recipe attached.

And the most important thing: Bon appétit !



The Famous “la mère Poulard” Omelette

La mère Poulard is the most famous restaurant on Mont St Michel and probably of Normandy. Their place is renowned for its famous omelette and its singular history. People are travelling from all around the world to try the unique taste of their Omelette. It's the kind of place that you need to book well in advance if you want to secure a seat. Even though the exact recipe remains a well-kept secret, one key element is the unique way the eggs are beaten — incorporating plenty of air to achieve the signature lightness and structure. If you're ever planning a visit to Mont Saint-Michel, stopping by La Mère Poulard is an experience you simply can't miss

Here are a few elements of the famous recipe to try making it at home:

- Separate the egg whites from the yolks
- Whisk the yolks in a large bowl.
- Add the cream, salt and pepper. Whisk again.
- Gently fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites.
- Heat the butter in a frying pan, pour in the mixture and cook over medium heat, stirring and lifting the edges with a spatula.
- When the omelet is golden-brown, fold over and serve immediately.



APPLE BASED BEVERAGES

One of the biggest characteristic of the Normandy countryside are greens landscapes with cows and apple trees. Understandably, the large quantity of apples available did not remain untouched for long and started to be used to make not only dishes or desserts, but also drinks. Apple-based drinks come in a variety of forms, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, this to satisfy as many people as possible. Although, it is possible to distinguish four main types of different apple based beverages from Normandy.

Apple juice is renowned for its quality, which is often considered as being exceptional. This do not contain alcohol and can be enjoyed by everyone.

Cider is a sparkling beverage with an alcohol content of 2% to 8%, obtained from the fermentation of apple juice.

Pommeau is made from freshly pressed apples and aged for at least 18 months in oak barrels and a mistelle-type aperitif spirit made by blending unfermented apple juice and brandy.

Calvados is a cider or perry brandy. It is obtained by distilling cider, and sometimes perry, and aged in oak barrels. Calvados matures over time and some bottles can be best enjoyed for several decades.

Consume Alcohol is dangerous for your health. Drink in moderation.



CAMEMBERT CHEESE

Normandy's most famous signature products. While there's no single "most popular" cheese in France, Camembert remains among the most consumed and beloved cheeses.



Although cheese are mainly made from cow's milk in France, many are also made from sheep's, goat's and buffalo's milk. Those ones are also greatly appreciated.

Did you know that cheeses are often named after the town or village where they were invented? The origins of Camembert cheese go back to the end of the 18th century, when it was first made in the small village of Camembert, in the middle of the Normandy countryside.

Although you can find local cheeses at every corner of France, Normandy is one of the key state in the production of cheeses. It's rare to find such a high concentration of cheeses on the scale of a French region.



For many french people living abroad, a slice of cheese is a guilty pleasure that reminds of home. Our chef Govinda can only relate !

"How do you expect to govern a country where there are 258 varieties of cheese? "

Charles de Gaulle - Former french president (1958-1969)

The main reason behind Normandy producing such a big amount of cheeses is probably its large green fields accommodating a variety of animals, including cows, combined with soft, moist vegetation, allowing the animals to thrive in the best possible conditions to produce the best quality of milk.

Behind every cheese, there are cheesemakers and who are passionate about their work. Sometimes, they also need some help to keep up with demand. So when students in the south of France will do the harvest during their summer breaks to earn some money to pay off their studies, in Normandy when they're not working in restaurants or tourism, they'll work in a cheese (most-likely Camembert) factory.

After being made and proportionate, the camembert are stored for a minimum ripening time of 21 days before being packed and sold everywhere around the world.

To qualify for the Camembert label, the milk used must come from Normandy. In addition, there are other mandatory criteria and regulations. For example, Camembert de Normandie is shaped like a cylinder, 10.5 to 11 cm in diameter, and weighs a minimum of 250 g, net weight when packed. Or that it must be sold in a wooden box. It takes 2.2 l of milk to make one Camembert de Normandie.

Camembert is the living symbol of Normandy Know-how and probably its best ambassador. We can say that cheese is big In France.



INDO FRENCH CULTURAL CENTRE

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Alliance Française
Chandigarh

OUR EVENTS

more pictures on our Instagram
[@alliancefrancaisechandigarh](https://www.instagram.com/alliancefrancaisechandigarh)

Join our WhatsApp group to stay
informed about our events.



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STUDYING IN FRANCE WITH CAMPUS FRANCE





UNIVERISTY OF LE HAVRE



UNIVERSITY OF CAEN



UNIVERSITY OF ROUEN

WHAT IS CAMPUS FRANCE?

Campus France is a government agency that operates under the French Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of higher Education and Research. In India the Campus France network is a part of the cooperation service of the French Embassy in India. Campus France provide personalised counselling sessions and organize various workshops throughout the year for students looking to pursue education in France. These sessions help students acquire relevant and necessary information about the programs offered by different French institutions. We organise events like Choose France Tour with French Institutions representatives, Tech Fair, other international fairs, Pre-departure sessions.

Ms. Nidhi Chopra is the local Campus France officer in Chandigarh. She's also in Charge of neighbouring regions of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand and partially Haryana

In the light of her over 20 years' experience working at Campus France, Ms. Nidhi gets a great sense of advice and kindness. Her tasks are mainly to inform students about the different study options in France and to build bridges between students and French universities, as well as helping with visa.

Her office is located inside the Alliance Française Chandigarh.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact her on email at: chandigarh@india-campusfrance.org and book a counseling slot for yourself for free of charge..



**STILL ON THE FENCE ABOUT STUDYING IN FRANCE?
READ THESE INTERVIEWS WITH STUDENTS WHO ARE ALREADY IN FRANCE!**



INTERVIEW WITH

SARAH KANT

INSTITUT
FRANÇAIS

Inde

SARAH IS 20 YEARS OLD AND ORIGINALLY FROM CHANDIGARH. SHE COMPLETED HER SCHOOLING AT CARMEL CONVENT SCHOOL, WHERE SHE STUDIED HUMANITIES WITH BUSINESS STUDIES, SHE BEGAN LEARNING FRENCH AT AN EARLY AGE THROUGH SUMMER COURSES AT ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE, EVENTUALLY REACHING THE B1 LEVEL. AFTER MOVING TO FRANCE, SHE FURTHER DEVELOPED HER LANGUAGE SKILLS

DID YOU STUDY AT THE ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE CHANDIGARH BEFORE MOVING TO FRANCE?

Yes, I did and I credit them for laying a strong foundation in French for me. I've always valued intercultural experiences, which is why I was drawn to their summer programs and introductory courses early on. These classes were filled with people sharing their dreams of going to France and becoming fluent in the language, something that deeply inspired me. I also made some wonderful friends there, friendships I still cherish today.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE FRANCE ? WHY THIS UNIVERSITY PROGRAM IN PARTICULAR?

France stood out to me for its rich culture, strong academic reputation and its global responsibility. I chose this university program because it allowed me to blend business studies with intercultural learning, sustainability, and hands-on projects. I wanted an education that challenged me both intellectually and personally, and I found that here.

WHY THIS CITY AND THIS BACHELOR'S/MASTER'S PROGRAM IN PARTICULAR?

I chose Grenoble because it's a city that balances nature with innovation. It's known for being student-friendly, diverse, and surrounded by breathtaking mountains that bring a sense of peace and grounding. My program combines international business with sustainability and entrepreneurship, which aligned perfectly with my goals of launching an ethical startup one day.

WHAT SUPPORT DID THE INSTITUT FRANÇAIS AND NIDHI PROVIDE IN YOUR PROJECT ?

The Institut Français and Ms. Nidhi were truly instrumental in my journey. They offered not just guidance, but also emotional support when decisions felt overwhelming. From helping me understand the French academic system to clarifying visa processes and making me feel confident about this life-changing step, they were there throughout. I'm grateful beyond words.





HOW WAS YOUR ARRIVAL IN FRANCE?

Coming from Chandigarh, a city thoughtfully designed by a French architect. I didn't experience much of a culture shock upon arriving in Grenoble. In fact, I found the two cities surprisingly similar. I still get to enjoy a serene lake surrounded by mountains, and everything is just a short walk away, just like back home.

HOW WAS YOUR ARRIVAL AT THE FRENCH UNIVERSITY? DID YOU STUDY IN FRENCH OR ENGLISH?

My university offered courses in English, which helped initially. However, I made it a point to speak French with classmates, neighbors, and locals to improve. The staff and students were incredibly welcoming, and I never felt alone.

HOW HAS YOUR TIME IN FRANCE BEEN SO FAR?

My time in France has been transformative. I've made friends from around the world, French, Spanish, American, Russian, and more. I've also become part of associations and programs that focus on sustainability, health, and entrepreneurship. Each connection has added richness to my experience, and I now feel truly at home here.

WHAT DO YOU TAKE AWAY FROM YOUR FRENCH EXPERIENCE? WHERE ARE YOU IN LIFE NOW?

France has taught me resilience, independence, and the beauty of balance. I've grown not just as a student but as a person. Living and studying in France pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me become more confident, adaptable, and open-minded. I'll always cherish the friendships I made, the diversity, experienced, and the way everyday life became a lesson in itself. Right now, I'm in my final year and about to pursue MSc in Project Management ESCP Business School. My experience in France inspired me to think beyond borders.

WOULD YOU ADVISE OTHER STUDENTS TO STUDY IN FRANCE WITH THE FRENCH INSTITUTE?

Be brave. Learning a new culture and system is not always easy, but it's incredibly rewarding. Say "yes" to new experiences, ask for help when needed, and immerse yourself in the language. Most importantly, remember that you're not just here to study, you're here to grow.

If there's one thing I've learned, it's that sometimes the best experiences are the ones you never fully plan for. I didn't have all the answers when I came to France, and honestly, I still don't, but that's the fun of it. Exploring new places, getting lost (more than once), trying weird food, and figuring things out as I went... I may not know exactly what's next, but I know how to keep moving, stay curious, and enjoy the ride.



INTERVIEW WITH

PARIYAT SINGH

PARIYAT IS 17 YEARS OLD AND LIVE IN MOHALI. SHE COMPLETED HER SENIOR SECONDARY THIS YEAR IN HUMANITIES. THROUGHOUT HER SCHOOLING, SHE WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN SUBJECTS LIKE POLITICAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, AND LEGAL STUDIES, WHICH LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR HER DECISION TO PURSUE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN LAW. SHE'S GOING TO BE STUDYING A BACHELORS DEGREE IN LAW AND POLITICAL SCIENCE AT SORBONNE UNIVERSITY IN PARIS.

Why did you choose France ?

I chose France because of its renowned education system and vibrant culture. I have always been fascinated with French culture and saw this as the perfect opportunity for international exposure. This program at Sorbonne aligns perfectly with my career goals in international law and Sorbonne has been my dream school for as far back as I can remember. I studied French at the Alliance Française in Chandigarh for 6 months and reached level A2. I gave the B2 DELF exam in september 2024 and passed it. France combines excellent legal education with rich culture and affordable fees compared to other countries. I am positive it will improve my language skills in french and give me exposure.

Why did you picked-up this program in particular ?

I chose a Bachelor's degree in Law to build a strong foundation for my legal career. Paris is the ideal city because it's a hub for international law and offers many cultural and professional opportunities. It gives me the opportunity to study French law and relate it with Indian law. I am very interested to study the workings of the different political systems and the interrelation of French and Indian government systems.



What support did the Institut Français and Ms. Nidhi provide in your project ?

The French Institute and Nidhi helped me a lot. I am very thankful for all the help and information they provided me. They supported me at every step and made the decision easier. I am extremely grateful for the assistance of Nidhi and the efforts she made to clear every inquiry I had. The support was very smooth and professional. All of my doubts and questions were answered patiently and were cleared immediately. I found it extremely reliable and of great help. I am very thankful to Alliance Française as they gave me the opportunity to hone my French skills and educate me about French culture as well, which cemented my desire to study in France. Beyond language learning, they introduced me to French culture, customs and events, which gave me a great head start in adapting to life and studies in France.

How are you feeling with going to France for your studies soon ?

I am very excited to have this opportunity to study law in France, and I am eager for the journey ahead! I am eager to learn, grow, and make the most of this experience, both academically and personally. Studying abroad is a big step, but I believe it will open many doors for me in the future.

Do you have any wish or hope for your time in France ?

My main hope is to gain a deep understanding of law from an international perspective and to become fluent in French. I also look forward to meeting new people, experiencing different cultures, and building a professional network that will support my ambitions in the legal field. Ultimately, I want to contribute positively to legal systems and studying in France is a crucial step toward that goal.





interview with

MANMEET KAUR



MANMEET IS 24 YEARS OLD AND COMING FROM MOHALI, IN PUNJAB. SHE HAS DONE BACHELOR'S IN PHARMACY AT PANJAB UNIVERSITY IN CHANDIGARH BEFORE. SHE'S ALSO AN AUTHOR, AS SHE HAD WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED TWO BOOKS SO FAR.. CURRENTLY, I AM STUDYING FRENCH AT THE B1 LEVEL. FROM SEPTEMBER 2025, I'LL BE STUDYING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GRENOBLE.

Why did you pick up France ?

I've never studied at Alliance française I always wanted to study abroad, especially in Europe. So, one day, I randomly registered for the Campus France Tour that was to be held in Chandigarh and attended it and that changed everything. Unfortunately I never attended classes at Alliance française. I got to know the various options I had for my master's, that too in public universities. Then, I started applying through Campus France. Alongside, I also started learning French and in the process, I fell in love with the French language, culture and the cuisine. This motivated me further to choose France for my higher education. Apart from this, I chose France due to the high quality education, affordable tuition fees, strong research opportunities and rich cultural experience.

Why did you pick-up that program ?

I chose the Master in Biohealth Engineering at Université Grenoble Alpes because it offers a strong interdisciplinary program with access to cutting-edge research, international collaborations, and a vibrant academic environment in one of Europe's top science hubs. Also, according to CWUR Ranking 2025, Université Grenoble Alpes is among the top 0.8% of universities worldwide in research and education. Grenoble is a beautiful city surrounded by three mountain ranges all over and as a lover of mountains, the possibility of doing a randonnée on a random Tuesday really excites me. I always wanted to stay close to nature and living in Grenoble will give me the perfect opportunity to do so!



What help did Campus France and Ms. Nidhi provided you ?

Starting from the first step of applying on the campus france website to the interview and then to my queries regarding accommodation, Nidhi mam was always there to guide me at each step. She even motivated me to apply for the France Excellence Charpak Master's scholarship 2025-2026. She believed in my potential. Thanks to her, I applied for it and eventually, I received this prestigious scholarship. Apart from it, I also received another scholarship covering the two years of my stay in Grenoble by my host university along with a tuition fee waiver. Eventually, I chose the latter but I feel truly honored to have received both of these scholarships. I am really thankful to Campus France and Nidhi mam for supporting me throughout the whole journey. Now I can't wait to discover Grenoble.



That's the two books I wrote: the first one is- "You Are Enough. Period!" (2023) and the second is- "This is not how your story ends" (2024).

I hope to grow- not just academically but also as a person—having new experiences, discovering a beautiful culture and learning to see the world differently. I wish to create meaningful connections, improve my French, and carry memories that will stay with me for life.

I can't wait to discover France. I'm pretty sure that this experience will change my life





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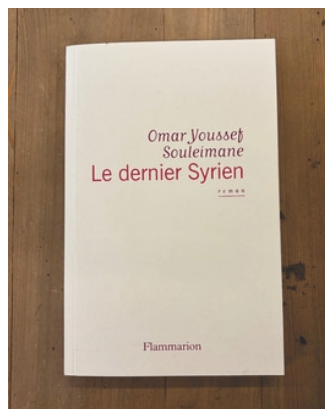
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What's new ? At Alliance Française Chandigarh



IN OUR MEDIA-LIBRARY

NEW BOOKS FOR ALL LEVELS



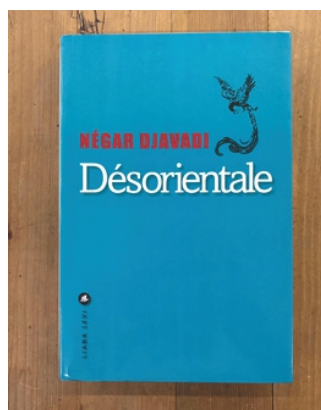
from C1 level



from B1+/B2 level



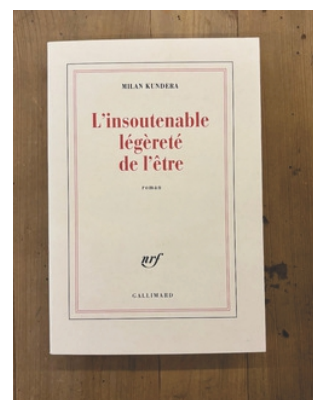
from B2+ level



from B1+/B2 level



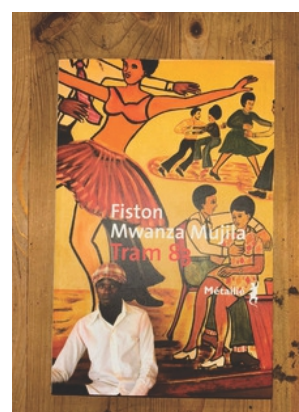
from B2+ level



from C1 level



from B2+ level



from C1 level

You can borrow books at the Alliance Française Chandigarh!
For more information, please contact Ms. Fanny at the library.



Alliance Française Chandigarh is proud and committed to support LGBTQ+ community and to celebrate pride month together.

In order to show our support to the community, to make it more visible and to improve living together, we've decided to hang a rainbow flag at the most visible place of our Alliance: our cafeteria. This place is the heart of our Alliance and where most people pass through everyday and meet socially.

During the pride month, we're happy to screen a LGBTQ+ movie followed by a convivial get-together over drinks and snacks.

At Alliance Française Chandigarh everyone is welcomed and treated equally regardless of gender, sexual orientation and race. We're an inclusive place and we believe in "Love is love".



Over the last few weeks, our french chef Govinda has been preparing Galettes every Wednesday



Every first sunday of the month, we hosted a ciné-brunch. People were able to enjoy a typical brunch elaborated by our chef Govinda while watching a French movie.



Hanna and Amy came to sing in our library to sit together with peace, harmony, and shared grief after recent events.



Over the past few weeks we hosted a picnic to make people get together and in the meantime practice their French



Olympe, an artist from Bangalore had an exhibition and a work workshop



Words came alive as our students took the mic for the Read Aloud 2025 competition!



On Europa day, we organized a quiz about Europe. Students were able to practice their knowledge and to learn new stuff.



Due to extreme weather conditions this year, we moved temporally our café to the Art Gallery



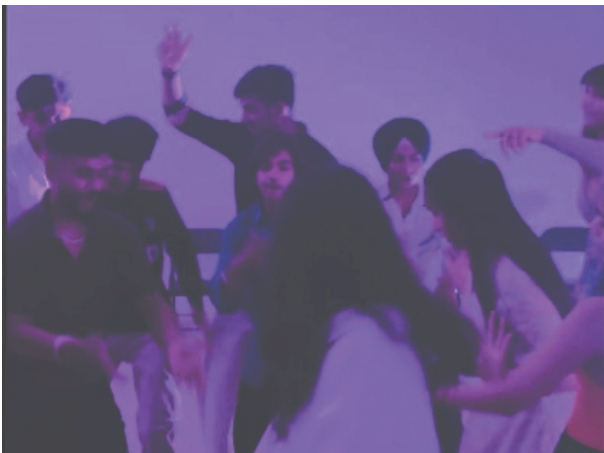
In collaboration with Mr. Arunanshu, a tasting of French wines and cheeses has been organized.



Martin Dubois and his team performed a concert in our library



To celebrate the end of term and exams, our gallery was transformed into a dance floor for the evening.



To celebrate Fête de la Musique, David Walters, a French artist came to give a concert in cooperation with the Alliance.





GOOD BYE OPHÉLIE !

FAREWELL INTERVIEW OF OUR DIRECTOR

Ophélie has been the director of Alliance Française Chandigarh for the last 5 years. She started traveling at an early age, spending the first year of her life in Morocco. From mainland France, she moved with her parents to the French overseas territory of La Reunion at a very young age. La Reunion is a tropical, nature-oriented island located on the eastern coast of Africa, located 10,000 km away from the mainland. She began her higher education on the Island and then moved to mainland France to specialize, where she studied culture and communication and then French as a foreign language. She often lived abroad, such as in countries like Madagascar, Nepal, Mauritius and now India.

What's your role as director of the Alliance ?

As director, my role is to have an overview of all the departments and to understand both what works well and what can cause problems. It's essential to master the inner workings of the structure, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each member of staff, so as to be able to make the necessary adjustments. In the Alliances Françaises network, it is often said that a director is like a Swiss Army knife: he or she must possess a wide range of skills and be able to get involved in all areas. Each Alliance Française operates in a unique context, which makes the job both demanding and exciting. As a language and cultural center, our mission goes far beyond administration: the director, often a French citizen, embodies the living link with France. My day-to-day tasks are varied, but mainly administrative, involving the management of our various projects, as well as the human and financial follow-up of the structure.



How did the Alliance Française Chandigarh changed during your time in office ?

I arrived in September 2020, right in the middle of the covid crisis, so my 2 first years at the Alliance was under lockdown. This wasn't the ideal conditions to start in a new country as it was very difficult to meet anyone for a long time. But I got through it. When you move abroad regularly, you need to develop a certain sense of adaptation.

Among our most notable achievements, several are linked to the modernization of our services and the improvement of our facilities. We have, for example, installed a professional Wi-Fi solution, set up course management software, equipped all our classrooms with interactive digital screens, and opened a genuine French-style cafeteria. We've also redesigned the reception and social areas to make them more pleasant. On the cultural front, I've had the opportunity to coordinate festivals and artist tours on a national scale, for the benefit of the entire network of Alliances Françaises in India. Of course, these advances are not the fruit of individual efforts: they are the result of a concerted effort.



What do you like the most about this Alliance ?

is that it owns its buildings ! So it's possible to really improve the space and make it a great place to socialize. What's more, its location is ideal, next to the Hibiscus Garden, ensuring peace and quiet.

There have been a number of cultural events in recent years, but I think the most significant was that we were the first to resume a cultural program after the covid. I remember the first concert during the “Bonjour India” festival in 2022: young people were dancing like crazy in front of the stage, something that rarely happened afterwards. I think there was a real need to let loose after 2 years of being cooped up at home.

What will you keep with you of your stay in India ?

I was already familiar with Indian culture before moving to India, as coming from the Indian Ocean islands brings you into close contact with Tamil culture. So in the end, I was mostly familiar with the culture of southern India, which of course has nothing in common with that of northern India. It was a real eye-opener for me, discovering the fascinating history of Punjab, Sikhism and Partition. What I'll take back in my luggage from India and Chandigarh: lots of friendships, Kerala cuisine (sorry Punjab, too much ghee gravy for me), block print and patience. I've obviously traveled a lot, but I still have a lot to discover. Here are my top 3 destinations to return to for a relaxing vacation: Ladakh, Goa and Pondicherry, the most memorable destination being Ladakh and its unique Himalayan landscapes.

What is your favorite place in Chandigarh ?

My favorite places in Chandigarh are Sukhna Lake, outside peak weekend hours, and the forest behind the lake. I also like Sector 10, with its museums and restaurants. I think it's a very pleasant area with a lot of interesting activities.

What are you planning to do next ?

After that, I'll be heading to Reunion Island, where I've got my ties, to take some time for myself. After that, it's the unknown! We'll see what comes up, both professionally and personally.

I wish the entire team, as well as the teachers, continued success in their work, innovation and the development of this fine institution. They can be proud of what they accomplish every day: their commitment is the strength of this Alliance.



WELCOME LUCILE



Hello everyone !
I'm Lucile, but you can call me Lu.
I'm here to help as a social media manager and to organize cultural events.
You'll often see me
with a camera in hand, clicking.

Traveling has been my dream for years, but I never really took the leap. After studying audiovisual production and communication, I worked for several companies... I needed more. I needed to see the world. So this year, I decided to go. To fully step out of my comfort zone. This is my very first time outside Europe.

I am here for a year and I plan to make the most of it by combining my three passions: travel, photography, and storytelling. Images can tell powerful stories, and I'm convinced India has so many to share. I chose India because it's a country that has always sparked my curiosity... even though I know very little about it. And that's exactly what I love : the unknown. There's everything to learn, to discover, to experience.

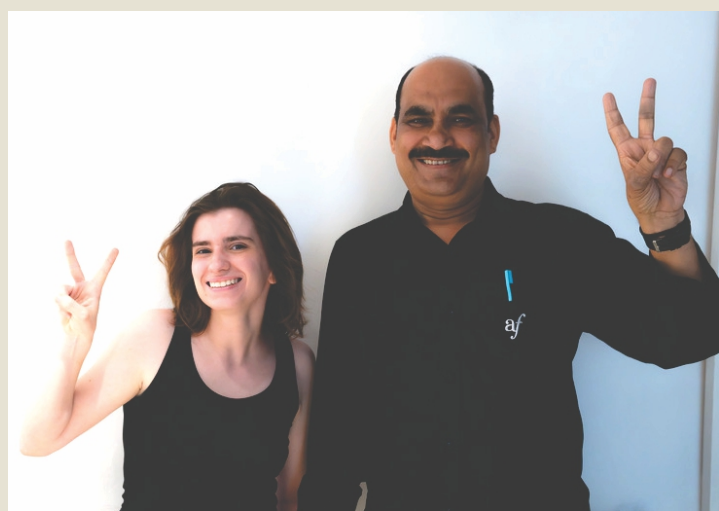
My biggest dream for my time in India would be to be able to see some snow leopard.

What do you like about Chandigarh?

It's the feeling of balance. It's the biggest city I've ever lived in, yet it still feels human-sized. After spending a few days in Delhi, I truly realized how good it feels to live in Chandigarh. It's a city where you can breathe, where it's easy to find your way around, and that's something I really value. I also love the unique way the city is organized, each sector has its own kind of specialty. It reminds me of a video game map: each sector is like a new level, with new places to explore and new adventures to live. There's always something to do, but if you need peace and quiet, you can find that too. That calm diversity, that's what I love.

I landed in India on the morning of the first mock drill. This was a very weird atmosphere for me, as i've never experienced that before...

luckily, Rambaksh greets me with some dinner and a big smile. This was the best welcome i could every dream of.





The Terrasse bleue team is ready to welcome you with freshly baked croissants, delicious coffees and much more.

Come and visit us !



UPCOMING EVENTS

06 July 2025 - Alliance Française Chandigarh
Thematic brunch with movie

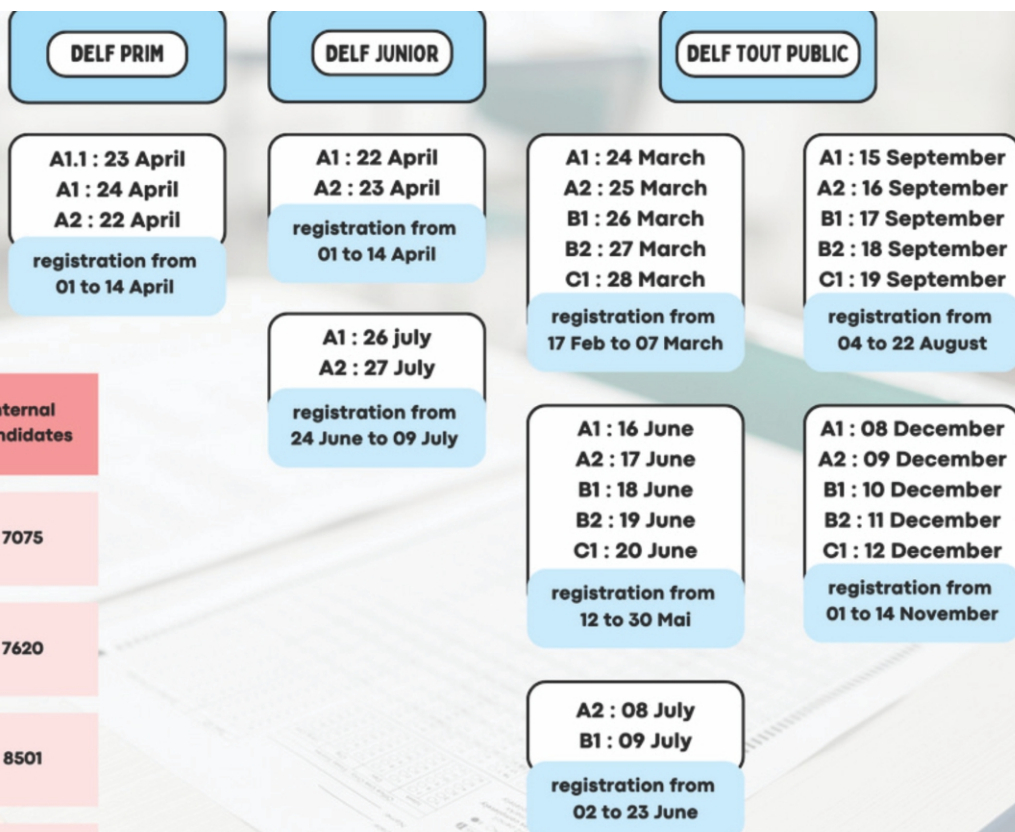
19 - 26 July 2025 - Alliance Française Chandigarh
Calligraphy workshop and exhibition

03 August 2025 - Alliance Française Chandigarh
Thematic brunch with movie

CALENDAR DELF - DALF 2025

DELF / DALF RATES IN 2025 (18% GST INCLUDED)

Diplomas	External candidates	Internal candidates
DELF A1	10884	7075
DELF A2	10884	7620
DELF B1 & B2	12879	8501
DELF C1	14268	9418





Next to Hibiscus Garden Sector 36-A, Chandigarh

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RECEPTION OPEN

WEEK DAYS

9 AM to 1 PM - 3 PM to 6 PM

SATURDAY

9 AM to 1 PM

HOLIDAYS

1st January (New year)

26th January (Republic Day)

14th March (Holi)

13rd April (Baisakhi)

1st May (Labour Day)

14th July (French Republic Day)

15th August (Independence Day)

2nd October (Gandhi Jayanti/Dussehra)

20-22 October (Diwali)

25th - 31st December (Christmas Break)



ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE CHANDIGARH

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