

## Romancing Troyes Ten centuries of love and romanticism





Introduction	p.3
Did you know?	p.4-5
Romantic people and events in Troyes: • Passionate personalities • Amorous acts	p.6-9 p.10-11
Rondeau en l'honneur de la ville de Troyes	p.12-13
Romantic places, sites and monuments:	
<ul> <li>Placestodeclareyourlove, take anoath, make a wish, swearyour loyalty, seal your destiny or make a lifelong commitment p. 14-18</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Places to take a stroll, court your loved one, steal a kiss or w souls entwined</li> </ul>	alk hand-in-hand, p . 19-21
Мар	p.22-23
Declaring your Love	p.24-25





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## "Troyes: the city of romance", a stroll through a passionate city

With its multi-coloured rows of timber-framed houses huddled closely together, its maze of narrow streets, alley ways and hidden passages perfect for stealing a kiss, its history which lives on today on every street corner, its chain of Romanesque and Gothic churches, its public parks and gardens with their old-worldly charm, its medieval-style shops, its old city centre shaped like a champagne cork, it's long-lost canal and its twisting, turning river, Troyes is a city bursting at the seams with romanticism. It's the perfect place for the pure of heart and the sensitive of spirit to come and experience for themselves... and, of course, to fall in love with. Although this guide hardly touches the surface in terms of what the city offers, we hope it will help to seal this loving bond.

#### **Romanticism for everyone!**

Does it really matter whether angels are male or female? Whatever gender they are, they are angels just the same...

Troyes is a place where romanticism is accessible to everyone.

The city makes no distinction based on personal preferences or inclinations.

It's a city where Love is written with a capital L, where all of the colours of the rainbow come together. It is a place where every lover will feel at home, and a place that should find a home in every lover's heart.

Troyes is an inclusive, open and welcoming place to all followers and devotees of love, with a heart big enough to carry the emotions of all its children.



## マク Did you know? マ

## 

#### The wedding ring

The tradition of wearing the wedding ring on the left ring finger dates back to the third century, when Greek doctors believed that the "love vein" ran directly from this finger to the heart. Wearing the ring on this finger was therefore the ideal way to symbolise the union of marriage.



#### An unusual custom...

Why does the bride always stand to the left of the groom?

Marriage has not always been about love... in fact, quite the opposite was once true...

In the past, a man often had to use his sword to protect what was rightfully his! He would therefore hold his chosen bride with his left hand, keeping his right hand free to defend himself against potential attacks from family membersorother suitors...

#### The French are in love!

According to a survey by French market research company TNs Sofres, two thirds of French people are in love... and men are more passionate than women!

Some 71 % of men claimed that they were in love, compared with 64 % of women. The French also believe in finding "the one", and most of them claim to have found him or her. The results of the same survey suggest that 80 % of people believe that they found the love of their life.

France's reputation as the country of love therefore seems to be well-founded!





# Romantic people $\nabla^2$ and events

#### **Passionate personalities**

#### • Chrétien de Troyes

Chrétien de Troyes is widely accepted as the father of the modern novel. While his male heroes (Lancelot, Yvain, Perceval) may eclipse his heroines (Queen Guenièvre, Laudine, Enide), the most famous author of the Middle Ages is also known for his stories of love and burning passion. His stories tell of uncompromising, absolute, all-embracing love, love at first sight, individuals struck down by an all-consuming passion as soon as they lay eyes on the object of their affections. The relationships he describes are also faithful, legitimate partnerships which often lead to marriage. In general, he steers clear of adultery and infidelity. As Fénice, the young, beautiful heroine of his tale Cligès says: "Qui possède le cœur possède aussi le corps, à l'exclusion de tous les autres hommes [Whoever owns the heart shall also own the body, to the exclusion of all other men]." Many of the pairings he describes begin as platonic relationships, yet develop into sexual unions once the obstacles to this transition have been overcome: "femme qui accorde sa bouche accorde sans peine le surplus [A woman who surrenders her lips shall not have difficulty in surrendering the rest]." (Perceval, the story of the Grail).

In the male-dominated world of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, which forms the backdrop to Chrétien de Troyes' fictional universe, the heroes struggle to reconcile their love lives and their military duties. Yet a true knight must also be a servant. As such, he is faced with a conflict between love and duty. This is the case in the famous scene where Lancelot, on a quest to find his queen who is imprisoned in a distant castle, comes across a pillory cart transporting condemned criminals. The cart driver agrees to give Lancelot the information he needs on condition that he agree to ride on the cart. Lancelot hesitates for a few seconds, his knightly honour under threat, but eventually agrees to climb aboard the cart to get the information. The queen hears of his brief hesitation and she holds this against him for a while. In the end, though, she pardons her lover and welcomes him into her bed...

#### In Troyes, there is a street and a college named after Chrétien de Troyes (both with the spelling "Chrestien-de-Troyes"). There is also a Rue du Chevalier-au-Lion (named after one of his five novels).



#### •Thibaut IV of Champagne: A man of the quill and the sword

The Middle Ages was a time when many kings were as adept with the quill as they were with the sword. Thibaut IV of champagne, known as the "chansonnier", was one such ruler. He was both a crusader and a "trouvère"\*. He was the last independent count of champagne, who came to the throne in 1222 and became King of Navarre in 1234. He was both a knight and a poet, and it is said that some of his best-known love poems were inspired by Queen Blanche of Castille (although this analysis remains disputed).

"Tant chante le rossignol Qu'il tombe du haut de l'arbre ? Nul ne vit si belle mort, si douce ni si agréable. De même je meurs en chantant, à grands cris, Puisque je ne puis être entendu de ma dame et qu'elle ne daigne pas avoir pitié de moi." (excerpt from Tant chante le rossignol)

Unfortunately, there are no physical traces of the Counts of Champagne . Their palace was demolished in 1806. It stood on the site of the modern-day Bassin de la Préfecture lake and Place du Préau.



## • Heloise and Abelard: separated in life, united in death

The history of love is filled with many famous couples, both real and fictional. These include Romeo and Juliet, Paul and Virginia and Tristan and Iseult... and a real-life couple: Heloise and Abelard. This unfortunate pair have become one of the most famous examples of cursed love, and their name remains forever associated with the Aube department.

Heloise and Abelard is the story of a teacher who seduces his young student, has a child with her, and marries her. The girl's uncle, who first introduced the couple, seeks vengeance by castrating the unfortunate Abelard. The lovers were forcibly separated, entering a monastery and convent respectively, but remained deeply in love, exchanging a series of letters which would go on to become famous across the globe (also see Julie, or the New Heloise by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, which is inspired by their story). Abelard founded the oratory of the Paraclete, a convent near Nogent-sur-seine in the Aube department. Heloise was the convent's first abbess. It was here that Heloise brought her husband's body in 1142, and where she herself was subsequently buried in 1164. Legend has it that Abelard was buried with his arms outstretched, and that he embraced his wife when she joined him at his side. The couple would then spend the next 650 lying together at the Paraclete. Their mausoleum now stands in Père-Lachaise cemetery in Paris. The romantic memory of these tragic lovers continues to haunt the places where Abelard himself once stood. Troyes library houses the oldest surviving copy of the lovers' letters.

« Que ta nuit soit claire, qu'il ne te manque rien sinon moi. et quand, ma belle, je te manque, pense manquer de tout. Aperçois-moi dans ton sommeil, quand tu veilles pense à moi. et comme je suis le tien, sois pour moi mon esprit. » (Letter from Abélard à Heloise)

\* A minstrel from northern france, who wrote in the oïl language, unlike troubadours, who came from southern france and wrote in occitan.





#### **Amorous acts**

#### RoyalweddingsinTroyes

These days, people choose to marry in Venice (for a touch of style) or Las Vegas (for a bit of fun). In the past, Troyes was the destination of choice for royal couples. The capital of champagne was the top wedding spot for these "celebrities" of yesteryear.

King Louis X, a member of the Capetian dynasty, was the first royal to choose Troyes as the location for his nuptials. Louis the Quarreller, son of Philip IV (Philip the fair), married Clementia of Hungary, daughter of Charles Martel of Anjou, on 1 August 1315 at Saint-Lyé near Troyes. Accounts suggest that a few coins were thrown as alms as the guests left Mass, triggering a mass fight between the poverty-stricken recipients. This was a gruesome premonition: the king died two months later at the age of 26 and his son, born after his death, also passed away just a few days old.

on 2 June 1420, henry V of England, son of henry IV, married Catherine of Valois, daughter of Charles VI of France (known as Charles the Mad) and Isabeau of Bavaria, at Saint-Jean-au-Marché church

shortly afterwards, on 13 May 1423, Troyes hosted the marriage of Anne of Burgundy, daughter of John the fearless, Duke of Burgundy and Margaret of Bavaria, to John of Lancaster, Duke of Bedford, son of henry IV of England.



#### • The«CourtofLove»inTroyes:

Where matters of the heart were heard Is love really possible between spouses? Marie de France had an uncompromising answer to this somewhat absurd question: no. "This judgement of ours, published after much guidance and supported by the advice of numerous other ladies, must be accepted by you as beyond doubt and abidingly true. Giveninthe year 1174 on the 1st of May, on the 7th of the Indiction."

Marie, countess of champagne, wife of henry I of champagne, known as henry the Liberal, and daughter of Louis VII of France, known as Louis the young, and Eleanor of Aquitaine, made this proclamation as chair of Troyes' Court of Love. only a select few cities in France were privileged enough to host these unusual court sessions, chaired by one of the leading ladies of the kingdom. They exclusively heard matters of the heart, from disputes between lovers to issues of morality. The "sentences" handed down were strictly moral in nature. These courts had no power to inflict corporal or financial punishment. They were governed by one code - the code of courtly love. This was a set of rules and principles to which all respectable knights and ladies were expected to adhere. Courtly love, also known at the time as "fine love" or "perfect love", demanded that a suitor show total and complete devotion to the object of his desires. Yet he was still expected to fulfil his duties to his comrades.

Was Mary, countess of champagne, an enlightened lady, in fact the patron of none other than Chrétien de Troyes? Indeed, was it she who commissioned his novel Lancelot, the Knight of the cart?

Less romantic souls will claim that these "courts of Love" never existed and that, in fact, they were a product of the imagination of Andreas Capellanus. If this is true, then hats off to Andreas Capellanus!

### • Andreas Capellanus' «The Art of Courtly Love»: a code of good conduct

De Amore (commonly known in English as "The Art of courtly Love"), was probably written in Troyes at the request of Mary, countess of champagne, towards the end of the 12th century. It is a treatise on courtly love, which sets out a number of rules and is based on 21 judgements passed by the "courts of Love" - the senior authority on sensitive matters of the heart. It contains one precept which embodies all of the others: "Being obedient in all things to the commands of ladies, thou shalt ever strive to ally thyself to the service of Love."

Below are the thirteen "precepts of love" handed down to us by Andreas Capellanus:

- 1. Thou shalt avoid avarice like the plague and embrace its opposite, generosity.
- 2. Thou shalt never lie.
- 3. Thou shalt not speak ill of others.
- 4. Thou shalt not disclose the secrets of lovers.
- 5. Thou shalt not confide thy love to more than one person.
- 6. Thou shalt keep thyself for thy lover.
- 7. Thoushalt not knowingly misappropriate the lover of another man.
- 8. Thou shalt not seek to a love a women whom it would be a dishonour to marry.
- 9. Thou shalt be obedient in all things to the commands of ladies.
- 10. Thou shalt ever strive to ally thyself to the service of Love.
- 11. Thou shalt be polite and courteous in all matters.
- 12. In practising the solaces of love, thou shalt not exceed the desires of thy lover.
- 13. In receiving or giving the solaces of love, thou shalt remain modest.



#### Rondeau

En l'honneur de la ville de Troyes (October 1385) by Eustache Deschamps

Adieu m'amour, adieu Troyeen champaigne, Adieu plaisant et très douce cité ! De mon départ faut que je me complaigne : Adieu m'amour, adieu Troye en champaigne. en france n'a, n'en<sup>(1)</sup> royaume d'espaigne Ville que soit de tel auttorité : Adieu m'amour, adieu Troye en champaigne.

Noble cité, ville très-amoureuse<sup>(2)</sup>, Adieu te dy, jusques à mon retour : De champaigne es comtesse vertueuse Noble cité, ville très-amoureuse Troie as nom ; à tous es gracieuse, Bon cytoyens, dames de bel atour Noblecité, ville très-amoureuse.

Troie est biaux noms, plaisant et gracieux, où l'on sçet bien gens d'onour<sup>(3)</sup> festoyer : De raison doit li lieux estre amoureux. Troyes est biaux noms, plaisant et gracieux. Preuver le puis par hélène et par ceulx Que de Grèce vouldrent la ostoyer Troye est biaux noms, plaisant et gracieux.

(1) Ni en. (2) Digne d'être aimée. (3) D'honneur.



# 

Places to declare your love, take an oath, make a wish, swear your loyalty, seal your destiny or make a lifelong commitment.

• Hôtel du Lion Noir<sup>®</sup>: atestament to the past

Ancient cities are places where human life is little more than transient. With each period of history, people and come and go, adding their own stamp to the city, living to their own habits and their own pace of life. Yet these ancient cities also harbour hidden corners of the past, where forgotten periods of history continueto echotoday.

Ancient cities always retain a memory of what has passed. You just have to know where to look.

At 111 Rue Emile-Zola... hidden from view, stands a little corner of history. Behind an innocuous-looking intercom button next to a deceptive modern shoplies a real miracle...but the magic only works at certain times of day.

You press the button, the door clicks. Your journey takes you through the corridors of time, via a paved, covered gallery. You begin to feel dizzy as you speed through the centuries. The Hôtel du Lion Noir is like a mirage of 16thCentury Troyes. The second Italian Renaissance has left its mark on this sculpted facade with its open galleries, spiral staircase and winered timber frames. It is a place where elegance and sobriety are the watch-words, where the past demonstrates the full force of its finesse and style.

This open-air cocoon is the perfect place for an intimate chat, close to the hustle and bustle of the streets outside, yet somehow far removed. It's the ideal location to whisper sweet nothings, declare your love or share a tender kiss.

But not too loud! This is not a museum, people live here! And you might be interrupted by other people coming through the front door. The ephemeral nature of the place is a small price to pay.

Rue Emile-Zola is the city's main road and busiest shopping street .



#### Place de la Libération Kidnapped in broad daylight

The square has been known as Place de la Libération since 1944, and the reason is obvious. But it would be nice to think that the local councillors of the time also wanted to pay homage to the sculpture in the Jardin de la Préfecture. The sculpture depicts a kidnap scene, in stunning bright white that reflects the burning desire of the protagonist. It shows a man kidnapping a woman, both nude. Le rapt depicts a merman abducting a naiad. In other words, it symbolises a marine god carrying a nymph away to his watery kingdom. This daring iconography can be interpreted as an allegory of passion, an ode to the all-encompassing power of love, or even a challenge to accepted convention. Beneath the marble shell of the statue beats a heart filled with emotion. It now takes pride of place in the middle of its own little lake in a fully redesigned garden. The two stone lions that stand behind the golden gates of the Préfecture building continue to hide their master and mistress from prying eyes, as they remain forever locked in the fervour of their irrepressible passion.





• AdamandEve-inmore than one place at the same time

Lovers who want to express their love under the gaze of humanity's first couple, Adam and eve, can do so at the corner of Rue de la Monnaie and Rue Jaillant-Deschaînets? The lovers are depicted here as two statuettes carved into the wood.

The founders of humanity (if you believe the legend) can also be found elsewhere in the city. To see them again, head for the Museum of Modern Art Its typical French garden houses eight modern sculptures, including a golden bronze depiction of the famous couple. Adam has one hand on Eve's shoulder, with the other on her stomach. Eve's hand, meanwhile, is slipped around Adam's waist. This symbol of eroticism stands in the middle of a garden with no flowers, other than the flowers that bloom inside the viewer's heart.

 Two appearances by the Virgin Mary Whether you have taken an oath of chastity or you want to bless your union with a symbol of fertility, you'll find a Virgin Mary with child at 18 Rue de la Madeleine 🥨 She makes a second appearance at 17 Place Jean-Jaurès, next to a depiction of St Pantaléon, sadly decapitated through carelessness.

#### Housesinlove

It's not only humans that feel love for one another; houses can also display their reciprocal passion. This mutual love is perfectly encapsulated in Troyes. you may be surprised to see some grand old buildings demonstrating their attraction to each other, forged over the ages, on the corner of Rue des chats and Rue champeaux . You'll find vet more amorous architecture on Rue Larive v, where one house tries to embrace another across a narrow cobbled alley. The lovers form an unusual shelterfromtheelements.





#### Places to take a stroll, court your loved one, steal a kiss or walk hand-in-hand, souls entwined.

• Le jardin de la Vallée suisse • : an oasis beneath the boulevard

Every so often, you come across a city with a dream.

Some cities are destined to be commoners, others to be royalty.

Once upon a time, Troyes had a dream: "I want to be a place where people can breathe clean air, where serenity, charm and pleasure abound." or, in the words of Charles Baudelaire in his poem "L'Invitation au voyage" [Invitation to travel]: "Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté, luxe, calme et volupté [There all is order, naught amiss / comfort and beauty, calm and bliss]."

From this dream rose the Jardin de la Vallée suisse, at a time when Switzerland embodied the ideal of perfection. In 1860, the city was mourning the passing of its defunct fortifications. However, the decision-makers at the time had the foresight to preserve part of the ancient moat and create a series of four public gardens, which the locals came to call their "little gardens".

The Jardin de la Vallée suisse is a place where all nationalities are welcome, where people can come to stimulate the senses and express their feelings. Is there any place where the heart beats stronger than here? Intertwined on the wooden walkway that crosses the trickle of water which runs gently alongside a lawned embankment, beneath the protective foliage of majestic ancient trees? Sat shoulder-to-shoulder on a bench overlooking the waterfall, with its constant murmur speaking an infinite language to your soul? Or walking hand-in-hand along the undulating footpaths, at a slow pace to match the pace of life in this rural oasis? Marvel at the way in which the buildings around the gardens tower over you, until you realise you're walking below the level of the street above...

The Jardin de la Vallée suisse is located behind the Madeleine theatre, near the train station. The Jardin du Rocher, with its artificial cave, its decorative lake and its bandstand is also a truly romantic place.



#### • Troyes, acity with a heart!

Until now, Troyes was known for its "head" and its "body", as marked by the characteristic champagne cork shape of the old city centre.

But now, the city also has a heart<sup>(1)</sup>. This sculpture, by a local artist, sits on the renovated quays along the old canal. This disused waterway marks the boundary between the city centre's "head" and "body".

This pierced heart, which beats with light at night-time, is also the heart of the city itself, both physically and metaphorically.

You're either romantic or you're not!

#### • A fairytalecity

Troyes wouldn't be Troyes without its maze of picturesque streets and alleyways. There are far too many to list here, but the pedestrian district is the perfect place for couples who want to get away from it all and enter a parallel universe. It's a place where you'll find the Hôtel Juvénal des Ursins, with its bright white facade like something out of a fairytale, or a tower or a natural spring straight out of the Middle Ages or the Renaissance. The city has built its own army of timber-framed houses, whose sumptuous uniforms are the brightly-coloured jewels of old Troyes.

#### The Vauluisant district is still standing

The saint-Pantaléon (or Vauluisant) district is just a short walk past awe-inspiring facades rising like cliff faces from the street below, under the watchful eye of menacing gargoyles. The two stone benches beneath the trees opposite the main entrance to the church are the perfect place for a well-earned rest after this short journey. you can also reach this ancient district through the improbable Cour Doué (a secret sheltered passage) or via the adorable Rue François-Gentil, one of the real gems of Troyes, which looks at its stunning best as you walk downhill.

#### • Andmanymorebesides...

#### > Hôtel de Chapelaine

This hotel was built in 1536 and is said to have included several monarchs among its esteemed guests, including Louis XIII of France in 1629, Frederick William II of Prussia, Tsar Alexander I of Russia and Francis II, holy Roman emperor in 1814. Indeed, Francis II is believed to have engraved a word on one of the hotel's windows using a diamond he subsequently gave to his hostess to show his gratitude for her hospitality...

#### > Sainte Madeleine church

Of all the admirable churches in Troyes, Sainte-Madeleine is perhaps the oldest and certainly one of the most beautiful.

Sainte-Madeleineisremarkableforitsfamousrood screen and the apse's stained glass windows, a masterpiece of exceptional finesse that all visitors admire.

Jean Gailde, a designer and sculptor who created the famous rood screen, is buried beneath his creation - a true testament to his love for his work.

#### > Square des Trois-Godet

This square owes its name to the former Hôtel des Trois-Godets. Locals relax below the beautiful trees and admire the apse of the cathedral and the halftimbered whitewashed houses that date from the 17th century.

#### > Take a seat next to "Lili"

Come and stroll along the Quais de seine, just a short walk from the city centre! While you're there, don't forget to visit «Lili», the lady in the hat. Who knows, you might fall in love...!

You can find "Lili" sitting on a bench between Quai Dampierre and Quai des Comtes-de champagne, by Place de la Libération. She's the lady reading a book about the counts of champagne. She's more than happy for passers-by to take a seat beside her. This original bronze statue, standing at 1.25 metres tall, is the work of artist András Lapis.







# Declaring your love



#### The Tree of Love

In the past, people used to engrave their names in a heart. These days, we attach a padlock as a symbol of our love.

The padlock is a symbol of enduring, passionate, infinite love used across the globe!

close your eyes, embrace your loved one, make a wish and come and attach your own symbol of love to our tree (or on one of our walkways).

• Tree of Love: Place du Préau

- Walkway at Quai Dampierre
- onthe"bulwarkoftheprow"near"Lili" 술

#### > Padlock for sale at the Tourist office



Heloise and Abelard: centuries on, we still remember their passionate love, the castration of Abelard, their forced reclusion and their letters.

While Abelard's work is long forgotten, his love for Heloise has endured through the ages. And Heloise's letters are still read today.

Whether you're mourning a lost loved one, intending to declare your love or simply want to express your happiness, you can write your own letter! Postyour "Lettres à Héloïse" in the love letter box at the Troyes Tourist office. These letters will be published on our website, with a prize

awarded to the top five letters each year!

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# Symbol of Love!

#### Love is the first lesson to be learned in life.

This "symbol of Love" is a charm that symbolises the union between two people and their future together.

It is a creative "symbol of Love" that reflects the beauty, harmony and unity of love itself.

an Bierre Beissennet scenter of dreams, dreuw

Jean-Pierre Boissonnet, creator of dreams, drew his inspiration from his observations at the St Urbain Basilica in Troyes.

The result was a stone window, known as a "quatrefoil oculus", comprising four fleurs-de-lys symbolising the four races of humanity that live on

earth, and a four-leaf clover – the universal lucky charm.

At the centre burns the flame of Love itself, the emotion which lies at the very core of this beautiful jewel.

It is a piece that, like Love itself, will last for eternity.



For sale at the Tourist office and to "Boissonnet design"

#### Vow renewal ceremonies

<sup>7</sup> Are you married and want to renew your vows? We understand that marriage is more than just about signing a piece of paper. Here at the Tourist office of Troyes, we can help you to organise a special stay in our city. Take full advantage of this special day and renew your vows of love. We'll take care of the details!





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