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THE KINGS' ROAD

*The châteaux of the Loire, from Sully
to Angers*

9 stops · ~340 km · by campervan

BEAUCÉ

• Le Mans

Orléans

Beaugency

SULLY

BLOIS

CHAMBORD

SOLOGNE

ANGERS

VILLANDRY

AMBOISE

Tours

CHENONCEAU

Azay-le-Rideau

SAUMUR

CHINON TOURAINE

ANJOU

Bourges •

BERRY

• Poitiers

FRANCE

LEGEND

--- the campervan route

○ stage stop

• town on the way

— river

SCALE — KILOMETRES

0 20 40 60

1

SULLY-SUR-LOIRE

Loiret — the fortress with water-filled moats

THE CHÂTEAU A medieval fortress from the end of the 14th century, with moats still full of water. It belonged to only three families until it passed, in 1962, to the département of Loiret. Joan of Arc was held here, Maximilien de Béthune, Duke of Sully and minister to Henri IV, lived here, and later Louis XIV and Voltaire took refuge in it. Inside, the medieval oak roof frame is the best reason to go in.

BY CAMPERVAN Municipal motorhome area (aire) on Chemin de la Salle Verte, right behind the château: about 35 places, with water and waste emptying, no electricity. The entrance is narrow, and in the front section, by the river, vehicles are limited to ~7.5 m. The published coordinates differ by almost 400 m: look for the area by name and address, not by GPS.

TO THE CHÂTEAU The château is a few hundred metres away, through the park that begins at the foot of the aire; the town centre is less than a kilometre away. A paved cycle path runs along the Loire: 11.5 km to the Romanesque basilica of Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, from the 11th century.

| Sully → Chambord, ~80 km west: the longest leg of the route · ~2 h by camper. Start in the morning, to reach Chambord before evening.

2

CHAMBORD

Loir-et-Cher — the château in the middle of the forest

THE CHÂTEAU The largest of the Loire châteaux, begun in 1519 by Francis I. It does not stand on the riverbank but in the middle of a forest, in a 5,500-hectare park, in a spot chosen for hunting. It has been on the UNESCO list since 1981, before the valley as a whole. At night the château is lit.

BY CAMPERVAN The château's car park P2, 750 m away, allows overnight stays, but it is not a service area: it is a paid car park, with dry toilets at the end, no water and no emptying. Another source describes a dedicated camper area on Route de la Commission, with water and electricity for a fee. At the entrance to the estate you find out which is open.

TO THE CHÂTEAU The château is 750 m from P2, on foot. The best view is in the evening, with the château lit, once the coaches have left.

| Chambord → Blois, ~17 km: the shortest leg of the route. You have time for both a château and a town.

3

BLOIS

Loir-et-Cher — three eras around one courtyard

THE CHÂTEAU A royal château with wings from three eras — Gothic, Renaissance and Classical — gathered around a single courtyard. From April to November, in the evening, the château has a sound and light show. In town, the Maison de la Magie Robert-Houdin, a museum of illusion.

BY CAMPERVAN Municipal aire on Avenue Wilson, by the Parc des Expositions: 20 places, run through the tourist office, with water and emptying. It is not at the foot of the château: a free shuttle takes you to the centre every 13–20 minutes (according to the posted timetable). It is sometimes occupied. If you cannot get a place, Camping-Car Park Chailles is 7 km from Blois, also with 20 places, and from there you can cycle into town in about half an hour. Here the place to sleep is the farthest from the château of all the stops.

TO THE CHÂTEAU The shuttle drops you in the centre, and from there the château is a few steps away. If you stay for the sound and light show (in season, around 10 p.m.), check the shuttle's last run beforehand.

OFFICIAL DATA Camping-Car Park Chailles · 384 Le Carroir, 41120 Chailles. · read on 6 October 2026

| Blois → Amboise, ~35 km along the Loire · ~45 min by camper. Halfway is Chaumont-sur-Loire, with its château and the international garden festival: a stop of a few hours.

4

AMBOISE

Indre-et-Loire — the town of Leonardo

THE CHÂTEAU A royal château above the Loire, in the town where Leonardo da Vinci spent his last years: Clos Lucé, his last home, is a few hundred metres from the château.

BY CAMPERVAN Camping-Car Park on the Île d'Or, between the two arms of the Loire, opposite the château: pitches on grass, with electricity. You enter through the Camping-Car Park network, with an access card or the app; the official data are below. Alternative: the municipal campsite on the same island, open only from spring to autumn.

TO THE CHÂTEAU From the aire on the Île d'Or you walk, in less than a kilometre, to the centre, Clos Lucé, Château Gaillard and the Ambacia cellars. The château is visible across the water.

OFFICIAL DATA Camping-Car Park Amboise · Allée de la Chapelle Saint Jean, 37400 Amboise. · read on 6 October 2026

Amboise → Chenonceau, ~20 km · ~30 min by camper. Cycle route no. 47, “La voie royale”, links the two towns, for anyone who wants to leave the camper where it is.

5

CHENONCEAU

Indre-et-Loire — the château on the Cher

THE CHÂTEAU The Ladies' Château: built over the river Cher, with a gallery stretched on arches above the water. In the gallery there was a hospital in the First World War and a demarcation line between the free and the occupied zone in the Second. The gardens are as renowned as the château itself.

BY CAMPERVAN The château's car park for campers is for daytime only: at night, between 9 p.m. and 9 a.m., you cannot sleep there. The closest you can sleep is Camping-Car Park Chenonceaux, on Rue de la Font aux Près: 25 places, 800 m from the château; camper listings give a limit of 8 m and a maximum stay of 72 hours. Mind the name: the commune is spelled Chenonceaux, the château Chenonceau; in your navigation, search for Chenonceaux. By the railway line there is also a “tolerated” car park for 10–12 campers, which belongs to the château; it is not one to count on.

TO THE CHÂTEAU The château is 800 m from the Camping-Car Park area, on foot, through the village. Route no. 47, “La voie royale”, heads for Amboise, and the banks of the Cher are good for a walk.

OFFICIAL DATA Camping-Car Park Chenonceaux · 1 Rue de la Font aux Près, 37150 Chenonceaux. · read on 6 October 2026

Chenonceau → Villandry, ~55 km west, through the Tours area · ~1 h by camper. It is the day you drive the most between two châteaux.

6

VILLANDRY

Indre-et-Loire — the gardens

THE CHÂTEAU You come here for the gardens: they are regarded as the symbol of French Renaissance gardens, and the château can be seen from the middle of them.

BY CAMPERVAN Camping-Car Park at 14 rue Principale: 50 places, with 6 A sockets. The operator puts it a few metres from the château; its coordinates give ~550 m in a straight line. The grocery, the bakery and the restaurants are 400 m away.

TO THE CHÂTEAU You walk from the aire to the château. On the Loire à Vélo you can cycle, without moving the camper, to Tours, Savonnières, Langeais or Azay-le-Rideau.

OFFICIAL DATA Camping-Car Park Villandry · 14 rue Principale, 37510 Villandry. · read on 6 October 2026

Villandry → Chinon, ~33 km · ~45 min by camper. If you have a day to spare, Azay-le-Rideau is on the way: a château built on an island in the middle of the Indre, with a camper area a few steps away.

7

CHINON*Indre-et-Loire — Joan of Arc's fortress*

THE CHÂTEAU A medieval royal fortress above the old town, on a bend of the river Vienne; Joan of Arc was received here. Around it lies the Chinon vineyard, on cabernet franc, and at the table come rillons and rillettes from Touraine, Sainte-Maure goat cheese and filled fouée.

BY CAMPERVAN Camping-Car Park Chinon, at 2 route de Pontille, is on the bank of the Vienne, face to face with the fortress: 49 places, on the Loire à Vélo route. Alternative: the intercommunal campsite Île Auger, on Quai Danton, also on the bank of the Vienne, which takes passing campers and is open from about April to October. And a car park without services, with about 12 places, on Avenue François Mitterrand, 1 km from the fortress. Mind the name: Château-Chinon is in another département, in Nièvre.

TO THE CHÂTEAU From the aire the fortress is seen across the Vienne. The Loire à Vélo goes through Chinon.

OFFICIAL DATA Camping-Car Park Chinon · 2 Route de Pontille, 37500 Chinon. · read on 6 October 2026

| Chinon → Saumur, ~32 km, past the place where the Vienne flows into the Loire · ~45 min by camper.

8

SAUMUR*Maine-et-Loire — the château and the sparkling wine*

THE CHÂTEAU The château stands above the Loire, in the middle of a medieval town, and was at one time a prison. Saumur is also the town of Loire sparkling wine, with many cellars to visit.

BY CAMPERVAN Camping-Car Park Île d'Offard, on Rue de Verden: 35 shaded places, with 6 A sockets, on the bank of the Loire, with a view of the château. Next to it, Flower Camping L'Île d'Offard, with a view of the château. If it is full, Camping-Car Park Villebernier, Le Port Roux, in the neighbouring commune, has 56 places.

TO THE CHÂTEAU It is 15 minutes on foot to the centre; the operator puts the château at 2 km. The Loire cycle path runs along the bank beside the aire.

OFFICIAL DATA Camping-Car Park Saumur · Rue de Verden, 49400 Saumur. · read on 6 October 2026

| Saumur → Angers, ~66 km: the last leg · ~1 h by camper. If you have a day to spare, Château de Brézé, 10 km from Saumur, has whole dwellings dug out beneath the château.

9

ANGERS*Maine-et-Loire — the Apocalypse Tapestry*

THE CHÂTEAU A 13th-century fortress with 17 towers of slate and limestone, 30 m high, built above the river Maine. Inside is the Apocalypse Tapestry, almost 100 m long, woven between 1377 and 1382: a masterpiece of medieval art.

BY CAMPERVAN The municipal aire at 6 boulevard Olivier-Couffon is 5 minutes on foot from the château, but it is described as noisy, beside an expressway. The shaded La Rochefoucault car park, close to the centre, is closed in November. For quiet, the campsite on Lac de Maine, part of the Huttopia network, has a bus to the centre.

TO THE CHÂTEAU From the aire, the château is 5 minutes on foot. On the fortress walls, on the chemin de ronde, you see the whole town from above.

| End of the route. The UNESCO valley continues a few kilometres, as far as Chalonnes-sur-Loire; from there the Loire descends to the Atlantic.

THE ROUTE IN BRIEF

Distance	~340 km, from Sully to Angers
Driving time	~7 h in all, without stops
Recommended length	5–7 days
Stops	9
Countries	FR
Terrain	valley, no mountain passes
Direction	east to west, with the flow of the Loire
Best months	May–Jun · Sep

GOOD TO KNOW BEFORE YOU LEAVE

At Chenonceau, the château's camper car park is for daytime only: between 21:00 and 09:00 you cannot sleep there.

At Sully, on the side facing the river, vehicles are limited to ~7.5 m.

The campsites at Chinon and Amboise are open only from spring to autumn; the Camping-Car Park areas and the municipal ones run all year.

A WEEK ON THE ROUTE

Day 1: Sully, then ~80 km to Chambord; in the evening, the château lit up.

Day 2: Chambord in the morning, Blois in the afternoon.

Day 3: Amboise and Clos Lucé.

Day 4: Chenonceau in the morning, Villandry in the evening.

Day 5: Chinon.

Days 6–7: Saumur, then Angers.

In 5 days: Chambord with Blois and Amboise with Chenonceau, two in a day.

WHEN TO GO

Ideal: May, June and September.

Possible: March, April, July, August, October and November. In summer, Chambord and Chenonceau are the most crowded.

To avoid: December to February. The campsites at Chinon and Amboise are open only from spring to autumn; the Camping-Car Park areas and the municipal ones run all year.

FRANCE

Motorways: the A10 and A85 are tolled; between stops you can use the departmental roads along the Loire.

Emission zones: several French cities have low-emission zones and require the Crit'Air sticker, even with a foreign plate; you order it only from the French state's official site, certificat-air.gouv.fr. Check each city's website before you leave to see whether you enter a zone.

The Camping-Car Park network: five of the nine places are Camping-Car Park areas (Amboise, Chenonceau, Villandry, Chinon, Saumur). You enter with an access card or from the app. Current rates are on the Camping-Car Park website, on each area's page: you pay per 24 hours, plus tourist tax, and there is a 5-hour option with services. At Chinon the rules require a booking beyond three days.

BY BIKE

Loire à Vélo: a signposted route of ~900 km; the areas at Sully, Villandry, Chinon and Saumur are beside it.

Chenonceau – Amboise: route no. 47, “La voie royale”.

Can I do the route in the opposite direction?

Yes. The places to sleep do not depend on direction. If you start from Angers, the last leg is the longest: Chambord → Sully, ~80 km.

What if the aire is full?

At four of the stops it is worth having an alternative ready: Blois (Camping-Car Park Chailles, 7 km away), Chenonceau (you cannot sleep at the château, so Camping-Car Park is the only option), Saumur (Camping-Car Park Villebernier, in the neighbouring commune) and Angers (the campsite on Lac de Maine).

Can I sleep in the château's own car park?

At Chambord, yes, in car park P2, if you pay. At Chenonceau, no: it is forbidden at night. At Sully and Villandry there are areas right beside the château.

Is cycling worth it?

Yes, if you have bikes: the Loire à Vélo is a signposted route of ~900 km, and the areas at Sully, Villandry, Chinon and Saumur are beside it.

Is it a good route with children?

Yes: the paths along the Loire are mostly paved, the châteaux have parks and gardens, and at Angers there is Terra Botanica, a theme park devoted to plants.

How current are the details?

The addresses, GPS, pitches and rates of Camping-Car Park were read on their official site on 6 October 2026, dated beside them. The rest comes from documentary sources: guides, regional tourist boards, regulations. The rates are dynamic, and pitches, hours and conditions change: check them before you leave.

THE RULE OF THE ROAD

*“One château an evening, not five a day.
Sleep beside it and you see it when the coaches leave —
the Loire belongs to those who are in no hurry.”*

Documentary check: October 2026. Places, hours and conditions change — check them before you leave.