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Marseille is the second-largest city of France. The main city of the historical province of Provence, it is the prefecture of the department of Bouches-du-Rhône and region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. It is located on French Riviera coast near the mouth of the Rhône. The city covers an area of 241 km2 (93 sq mi) and had a population of 852,516 in 2012. Its metropolitan area, which extends over 3,173 km2 (1,225 sq mi) is the third-largest in France after Paris and Lyon, with a population of 1,831,500 as of 2010.

Known to the ancient Greeks and Romans as Massalia (Greek: Μασσαλία, Massalía) [1], Marseille was an important European trading center and remains the main commercial port of the French Republic. Marseille is now France's largest city on the Mediterranean coast and the largest port for commerce, freight and cruise ships. The city was European Capital of Culture in 2013 and European Capital of Sport in 2017; it hosted matches at the 1998 World Cup and Euro 2016. It is home to Aix-Marseille University, see Fig.1.

Marseille is the second-largest city in France after Paris and the centre of the third-largest metropolitan area in France after Paris and Lyon. To the east, starting in the small fishing village of Callelongue on the outskirts of Marseille and stretching as far as Cassis, are the Calanques, a rugged coastal area interspersed with small fjord-like inlets. Farther east still are the Sainte-Baume (a 1,147 m (3,763 ft) mountain ridge rising from a forest of deciduous trees), the city of Toulon and the French Riviera. To the north of Marseille, beyond the low Garlaban and Etoile mountain ranges, is the 1,011 m (3,317 ft) Mont Sainte Victoire. To the west of Marseille is the former artists' colony of l'Estaque; farther west are the Côte Bleue, the Gulf of Lion and the Camargue region in the Rhône delta. The airport lies to the north west of the city at Marignane on the Étang de Berre [2]

The city's main thoroughfare (the wide boulevard called the Canebière) stretches eastward from the Old Port to the Réformés quarter. Two large forts flank the entrance to the Old Port—Fort Saint-Nicolas on the south side and Fort Saint-Jean on the north. Farther out in the Bay of Marseille is the Frioul archipelago which comprises four islands, one of which, If, is the location of Château d'If, made famous by the Dumas novel The Count of Monte Cristo. The main commercial centre of the city intersects with the Canebière at Rue St Ferréol and the Centre Bourse (one of the city's main shopping malls). The centre of Marseille has several pedestrianised zones, most notably Rue St Ferréol, Cours Julien near the Music Conservatory, the Cours Honoré-d'Estienne-d'Orves off the Old Port and the area around the Hôtel de Ville. To the south east of central Marseille in the 6th arrondissement are the Prefecture and the monumental fountain of Place Castellane, an important bus and metro interchange. To the south west are the hills of the 7th and 8th arrondissements, dominated by the basilica of Notre-Dame de la Garde. Marseille's main railway station—Gare de Marseille Saint-Charles—is north of the Centre Bourse in the 1st arrondissement; it is linked by the Boulevard d'Athènes to the Canebière [2].

The city has a hot-summer Mediterranean climate (Köppen: Csa) with mild, humid winters and warm to hot, mostly dry summers [3]. December, January, and February are the coldest months, averaging temperatures of around 12 °C (54 °F) during the day and 4 °C (39 °F) at night. July and August are the hottest months, averaging temperatures of around 28–30 °C (82–86 °F) during the day and 19 °C (66 °F) at night in the Marignane airport (35 km (22 mi) from Marseille) but in the city near the sea the average high temperature is 27 °C (81 °F) in July.

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**Figure 1:** Aix Marseille University, Pharo Palace

The port is also an important arrival base for millions of people each year, with 2.4 million including 890,100 from cruise ships. With its beaches, history, architecture and culture (24 museums and 42 theatres), Marseille is one of the most visited cities in France, with 4.1 million visitors in 2012. Marseille is ranked 86th in the world for business tourism and events, advancing from the 150th spot one year before. The number of congress days hosted on its territory increased from 109,000 in 1996 to almost 300,000 in 2011.

Welcome to Marseille

**References**

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**2.** Michelin Guide to Provence, ISBN 2-06-137503-0

**3.** Marseille, France Köppen Climate Classification (Weatherbase). Weatherbase. Retrieved 8 February 2019.