

STRASBOURG  
MON AMOUR

# Love is All

8 TO 17 FEBRUARY 2019

PRESS KIT



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STRASBOURG  
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TIMIST

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STRASBOURG-MONAMOUR.EU

ORGANISATION : OFFICE DE TOURISME DE STRASBOURG ET SA RÉGION



**ROMANTIC STRASBOURG**  
IS REINVENTING THE LOVERS' CELEBRATION



**With its extraordinary heritage, half-timbered houses, picturesque alleyways and small squares, canals and bridges, Strasbourg is undoubtedly one of the most romantic cities in France.**

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Throughout the ages, it has attracted countless visitors, and has been the backdrop to the romances of several famous people, including Victor Hugo, Honoré de Balzac, Goethe...

For the **seventh year in a row**, the European capital will put on a festival to celebrate lovers with a programme that is simultaneously **poetic, cultural, glamorous, and slightly quirky!**

Among the highlights of the ten-day event: festive, delightfully retro evenings; exclusive concerts; unusual visits; unexpected encounters... and much more.

(Re)experience the city as never before, and **let the magic begin!**

## A FESTIVAL THAT HAS IT ALL

Offering lovers from all walks of life the chance to **soak in the city's romance and extraordinarily rich heritage**: that's the spirit of "Strasbourg Mon Amour". The festival combines culture, heritage and tourism, and this perfect storm creates many **exciting opportunities**, making it such a unique celebration.

Original and sophisticated, the festival is adored as much by Alsatians – who give it rave reviews every year – as by visitors looking for a romantic stay. And there are more and more visitors falling under the spell: drawn by the **vibrant atmosphere** of Strasbourg during the festival, they delight in soaking up the **sweetness of life and beauty of the city**.

Open to all, offering lots of freebies and low entry fees, "Strasbourg Mon Amour" brings love into everyone's life, across all generations, through a wide variety of events ranging from intimate to festive, from glamorous to offbeat...

**Whether you're in love with your sweetheart or it's culture, heritage, fine dining, art or music that you love, you'll find happiness and experience intense moments, full of emotion.**



# SEDUCTION



**Romantic ambiances, offbeat events and impromptu encounters in unusual locations** are all on the programme of this year's festival, with a special **focus on culture.**

Once again, "Strasbourg Mon Amour" promises to surprise, amaze and, without a doubt, seduce lovers who are looking for a romantic experience.



# MUST-SEE EVENTS, OR WHEN LOVE IS FAITHFUL



## THE MAGIC MIRROR “CAFÉ DES AMOURS”

PLACE KLÉBER

FROM 8 TO 17 FEBRUARY

No entry fee except special events.

The Magic Mirror tent will be the festival’s focal point once again, anchoring it at the centre of the city. For ten days straight, love and romance will be celebrated with daily concerts and shows. On the programme: ten theme nights, musical lunches with performances by the students of the Conservatory of Strasbourg and non-stop events on the weekend.

## BABY BOOM

CAFÉ DES AMOURS

PLACE KLÉBER

SUNDAY 10 FEBRUARY

Up to age 11. No entry fee.

Dancing toddlers and kids are cordially invited for an unforgettable afternoon in the Magic Mirror tent. Every year, hundreds of children attend the Sunday Kid Fever event, where the only thing louder than their shrieks of happiness is the music!

## RFM MUSIC LIVE

« STRASBOURG

MON AMOUR »

CAFÉ DES AMOURS

PLACE KLÉBER

WEDNESDAY 13 FEBRUARY

Free concert, by invitation only

Once again this year, the RFM radio station, a long-time festival partner, will be featuring a star-studded lineup sure to attract lots of fans.





## SLOW DANCE

CAFÉ DES AMOURS  
AND CITY HALL

THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY

No entry fee (drinks not included)

A deliciously retro event that's appreciated every year, the Slow Dance Party is being thrown again under the tent of the Magic Mirror, but also at **a legendary, highly symbolic venue: the wedding room at City Hall**, which will be hosting this type of event for the first time ever.

Dancing, entwined, on Valentine's evening, under the benevolent gaze of the Goddess of Liberty, Marianne, who presides over weddings, might give some people some ideas...

Watch this space!







## THE MARRIAGE OF HERITAGE AND CULTURE

“Strasbourg Mon Amour” is a festival like no other, because the events are embedded into the very fabric of the city - its history, rich heritage and driving forces.

Renowned for its culture, Strasbourg is a **creative city**, boasting numerous cultural institutions of international renown. For this year’s festival, **special emphasis will be given to music.**

On the programme: Baroque, Classical and Romantic music, opera, recitals and more, performed with brio by talented musicians and singers. The musical offerings will be presented in **prestigious venues**, some of which are **usually closed to the general public.**

Here’s a list of these moments during which “Strasbourg Mon Amour” will celebrate the marriage of heritage and culture...



© Vincent Muller photographies

## LYRICAL COCKTAILS

OPÉRA NATIONAL DU RHIN, BASTIDE HALL

SATURDAY 9 FEBRUARY

An eagerly anticipated event every year, the lyrical cocktail evening is a delicious opportunity to mingle with exceptional singers in the warmly wood-panelled Bastide Hall.

**An intimate, vibrant experience that you won't forget soon.**

*With the Opera Studio of the Opéra National du Rhin.*

## OPERETTA LOVE STORIES

THE "CAFÉ DES AMOURS"

SUNDAY 10 FEBRUARY

In the retro setting of the Café des Amours, an exceptional evening dedicated to the operetta, featuring musicians from the Philharmonic Orchestra of Strasbourg and talented singers.

On the programme: **two one-act operettas by the brilliant Jacques Offenbach:**

"Lischen et Fritzchen" (an "Alsatian" operetta by the composer) and "Monsieur Choufleuri restera chez lui" (the lyrics of which are worthy of the great Italian operas). An evening full of freshness, where lyricism, love and humour harmonize joyfully.

*With the Brin de Folie Association.*

*Conducted by: Aurélie Becuwe.*

*Music performed by: Thomas Gautier and Serge Sakharov (violins), Angèle Pateau (alto), Oliver Garban (cello) and Gilles Venot (double bass).*

*Singers: Lorraine Vinet, Alexandre Sigrist, Valentine Durupt, Gilbert Kuhn, Jean Arnold.*





© Frantisek Zvardon

## A GARDEN OF LOVE

**PALAIS ROHAN, SALLE DU SYNODE**  
TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY

A place and an instrument, both symbolising a refined era of intense artistic activity...

**A magnificent residence** built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century for prince-bishops, Palais Rohan will host **a concert of exquisite delicacy** by young harpsichordist Louise Acabo, 19 years old, the winner of the Normandy International Baroque Music Competition (Concours Corneille). The concert will take you on a journey through enchanted gardens, resonating with magnificent music from Germany, France and Italy.

## NOTES OF LOVE

**PALAIS DU RHIN**  
THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY

CHAMBER MUSIC /  
COCKTAIL CONCERT

After opening the Municipal Baths to the public last year for a very retro night-time swimming experience, this year, “Strasbourg Mon Amour” is celebrating the recent addition of the Neustadt District to the UNESCO World Heritage list, by opening up **the prestigious Palais du Rhin, the former imperial palace, which is usually closed to the public**. What a beautiful way to start off your Valentine’s evening: with an exquisite musical hour, in the company of talented musicians performing **romantic works by the greatest composers** - Tchaikovsky, Massenet and Fauré - but also by Glenn Miller, Edith Piaf, Boris Vian and Leonard Bernstein!

*With the Centre Musical de la Krutenau. Nathalie Gaudefroy (soprano), Mario Montalbano (tenor), singers from the Opéra National du Rhin, Elizabeth Vinciguerra, pianist at the Conservatory of Strasbourg, and Anne-Catherine Dupraz, cellist, cello professor and coordinator of the Centre Musical de la Krutenau.*

## TRANSPORTED BY LOVE

**GREAT HALL OF THE AUBETTE**  
FRIDAY 15 FEBRUARY

Under the **Neo-Gothic arches** of the Great Hall of the Aubette, two women: an actress and a soprano singer. Two eras intersect: modern times and the Baroque period. Although separated by three centuries, these women meet and talk. **A complex portrait of love** emerges from this conversation. Combining **music, literature and theatre**; melding vocal, instrumental and physical expression, this **intense performance** examines the universality of love, in a vision that is both feminist and feminine.

*With La Chapelle Rhénane. Salomé Haller (soprano), Eva Gruber (actress), Sébastien Wonner (harpsichordist) Lionel Parlier (director).*





# GLAMOROUS STRASBOURG

## STRASBOURG BURLESQUE FESTIVAL

ESPACE K

FROM 14 TO 17 FEBRUARY

BURLESQUE SHOW,  
DEBUTANTE BALL AND  
WORKSHOPS

An ode to love and sensuality, **this festival, a first in Strasbourg, highlights burlesque striptease.**

Neo-burlesque, or the art of stripping in a chic, glamorous or acrobatic fashion, pays tribute to two periods: the late 19th century, when sequin-studded cabaret shows emerged in Paris, and the 40s and 50s, with the beginnings of Rock 'n' Roll and the Pin-Up style.

For this first edition of the festival, artists (amateurs and professionals) from all around the world will perform on stage. The shows will involve plenty of sequins, feathers, acrobatics, socially engaged numbers, stage expression classes, and always the right balance between **glamour and humour**, making for a **richly textured, colourful festival full of sensuality.**



## AND THERE'S MORE...

Loads of other activities will be offered: concerts, encounters, themed visits of the Voodoo Museum, Sunday brunches, gallery exhibitions, “Off” events in bars, musical lunches with performances by the students of the Conservatory of Strasbourg, tasting sessions...

### THE LOVE MAP

Love at first sight, disappointments, outrageous, incredible love stories... This interactive map will tell you tales of love in Strasbourg. Lovers (whether they're Alsatian or visitors passing through) are welcome to tell their love stories on it, so the whole world will know that Strasbourg is the city of love! There are already 550 love stories listed on it!

[lovemap.strasbourg-monamour.eu](http://lovemap.strasbourg-monamour.eu)

### THE GOURMET PASS

In order to offer visitors a high quality, personalised experience, this year, the Tourist Office is launching a special gourmet pass for “Strasbourg Mon Amour”. **It will include opportunities to taste local specialities such as wine, beer, gingerbread, biscuits, and more, from partner artisans and shopkeepers. The pass will be offered as part of all-new hotel packages.**



### TICKETS GO ON SALE MID-JANUARY

From Monday to Saturday, from 9 am to 6 pm at the Tourist Office, and by phone at the following number +33 (0)3 88 52 28 22 – or 24 hours a day on the website [strasbourg-monamour.eu](http://strasbourg-monamour.eu)



# A BIT OF HISTORY



## ROMANTIC STRASBOURG

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“A sensuality of a touching fragility mixes itself in the air we breathe...”

(PIERRE MAC ORLAN, *RUES SECRÈTES*, 1934).

**Strasbourg has always exerted a strong power of attraction on visitors and aroused countless accounts and tales, most often enthusiastic.**

The Rhineland city was considered the most attractive and the most exotic during the Romantic period between the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and 1870, the date of the Franco-Prussian War.

Indeed, **all the big Romantics came to Strasbourg**: the drawings and paintings of **Gustave Courbet** and **Eugène Delacroix**, as well as tales from the best known writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century have formed **a splendid ode to the city.**

At first, visitors were surprised at the well-preserved architecture from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. They were astounded to discover the medieval fortifications, the timber-framed houses topped by sloped roofs with dormer windows, and they were **enchanted by how picturesque the narrow streets were, by the numerous bridges and footbridges dotting the banks of the river.**

And of course, all the visitors marvelled at **the mind-blowing beauty of the cathedral**, which has inspired magnificent writings. Depending on the time of day and the seasons of the year, certain people were taken by its grace, while others were won over by its impressiveness.

Most of them, from the most anonymous to the most famous, climbed the monument as if it was a mountain and etch their names in the pink sandstone.  $\ll$  would not have cared to miss

the highest spire in the world... It is an admirable thing to go inside this huge heap of stones fully penetrated by air and light, hollowed out like a toy from Dieppe, a light and a pyramid, which resonates and throbs with every breath of wind». (Victor Hugo, *Le Rhin*, 1842).

Other visitors came after 1870 to admire the Rhineland city, which had been profoundly transformed and modernised. Thanks to **Strasbourg's exceptional heritage**, which has been preserved despite wars, the entire city centre was **the first in France to be classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO** in 1988. Hence the fascination that the city continues to command in all seasons.

It's so pleasant to stroll along the banks of the river Ill, to wander the cathedral district in every direction with its lacing and winding alleyways, to immerse yourself in the extravagant charm of the Petite France district, whatever the weather.

Furthermore, it is enough to see starry eyes in the crowds of walkers attracted by the Christmas Markets in December, admiring the façades and streets glorified by the illuminations, to be convinced, if need be, that magic always works and that **Strasbourg is indeed one of the most beautiful and most romantic cities in Europe.**



## LOVE STORIES IN STRASBOURG

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**From the Middle Ages to today, Strasbourg has seen beautiful romances bloom, witnessed fleeting affairs and welcomed sumptuous weddings.**

Some of the protagonists are famous, others less so, yet each individual story will be remembered for life.

The cathedral, the most symbolic edifice of Strasbourg, was the splendid setting for the marriage by proxy of **the future Queen of France, Marie Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV.**

In our city, encounters have taken place which led to other weddings: **Calvin**, a young man in his thirties, met Idelette de Bure there and had a very happy union with her. Love at first sight for the young professor Louis Pasteur, who, just a few months

after meeting her, proposed to Marie Laurent, daughter of the President of the Academy. As for the loving friendship which slowly blossomed between Albert Schweitzer and Hélène Bresslau: eleven years after they met, they ended up getting married, just before they left for Africa. Three model marriages!

Other brief romances were established, the outcome of which was not as favourable. **Gutenberg**, who worked in Strasbourg on his invention, had promised to marry a young lady, but he did not keep his promise, and got sued as a result. Young **Goethe**, a student in Strasbourg for more than a year, reported that he fell under the charm of young Frédérique Brion, the daughter of Sessenheim's pastor, but he left her once he pocketed his diploma.

Our city has also hosted the stays, long or short, of unmarried couples. **Honoré de Balzac** waited at the Auberge de la Fleur for Eve Hanska to come and meet him

there; they may have even gotten engaged in a chapel of the city. **Victor Hugo**, who went travelling every summer with his mistress Juliette Drouet, sent letters and pictures to his wife and children from the hotel Maison Rouge where they stayed briefly. As for **Voltaire**, in his sixties, he waited impatiently but alas in vain in Alsace for his mistress Madame Denis - who was none other than his niece, a 36-year old widow - to come and join him.

One of the most lovesick people before God rests forever at St. Thomas Church, even though he never in his life stayed in Strasbourg: we are talking about **Maréchal Maurice de Saxe**. One of his (many) mistresses, Adrienne Lecouvreur, whom he loved madly and yet also betrayed, made her début as an actress in Strasbourg.

Passionate love and filial love: **Gustav Doré**, born and raised in Strasbourg until he was 11, absolutely adored his mother.

Though he never married, he was (among others) Sarah Bernhardt's lover; she performed at the municipal theatre years later.

Finally, other extremely well known people must also be mentioned. **Napoleon**, for example, who on two occasions stayed at the Palais Rohan accompanied by Joséphine. It is also undeniably moving to see the simple statue of a jeweller's wife on the corner of their house façade, an everlasting tribute he wished to pay after she was killed during the 1944 bombing.

## MAGICAL MOMENTS





**STRASBOURG-MONAMOUR.EU**



# PRESS CONTACT

**Géraldine AMAR**

03 88 52 28 25

[presse@otstrasbourg.fr](mailto:presse@otstrasbourg.fr)



**GREATER  
STRASBOURG  
TOURIST  
OFFICE**

17, place de la Cathédrale

B.P. 70020

67082 STRASBOURG CEDEX

03 88 52 28 28 – [info@otstrasbourg.fr](mailto:info@otstrasbourg.fr)

[www.otstrasbourg.fr](http://www.otstrasbourg.fr)

 **StrasbourgTourisme**