



As a kid, your [travel4seniors.com](https://www.travel4seniors.com) editor spent ten years in an orphanage founded by a French immigrant who got rich in 19th Century America. We frequently started musical sessions by singing *La Marseillaise*, the French national anthem. The lyrics were based on fighting in the Mediterranean port during the French Revolution of the 1790s.

Marseille is the oldest city in France and the country's second largest, after Paris. The port was first an ancient Greek and then Roman outpost, founded over 2,500 years ago.

It presents a wonderful contrast to touristy Paris. High-speed train service from Paris takes about three hours. Marseille has over 300 days of sunshine a year and features the Mediterranean climate and sunlight that has been attracting visitors and famous artists for centuries.

The city has a large airport (MRS), but many international flights go into Nice (NCE), about a three-hour drive. Marseille is also a big destination for Mediterranean cruises. The city is also easily reached by high-speed train from Paris in three hours.

Overlooking the Vieux Port, the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM)

offers art, culture, history and more. It's a group of museums celebrating the culture of the area, both past and present.

Explore the Le Panier neighborhood on a hill behind the Quai du Port. It's a tourist zone featuring boats, shops and fishsellers. The preserved Greek and Roman ruins are especially fascinating.

The Hotel Dieu InterContinental was originally a hospital, dating from 1753. It features a spa with an indoor musical pool with underwater speakers. Rates are from around \$350 per night.

The Hotel Dieu's Alcyone has a well-deserved Michelin star. The city's Mediterranean location and access to fresh seafood combine to make seaside restaurant one of the most popular in France.