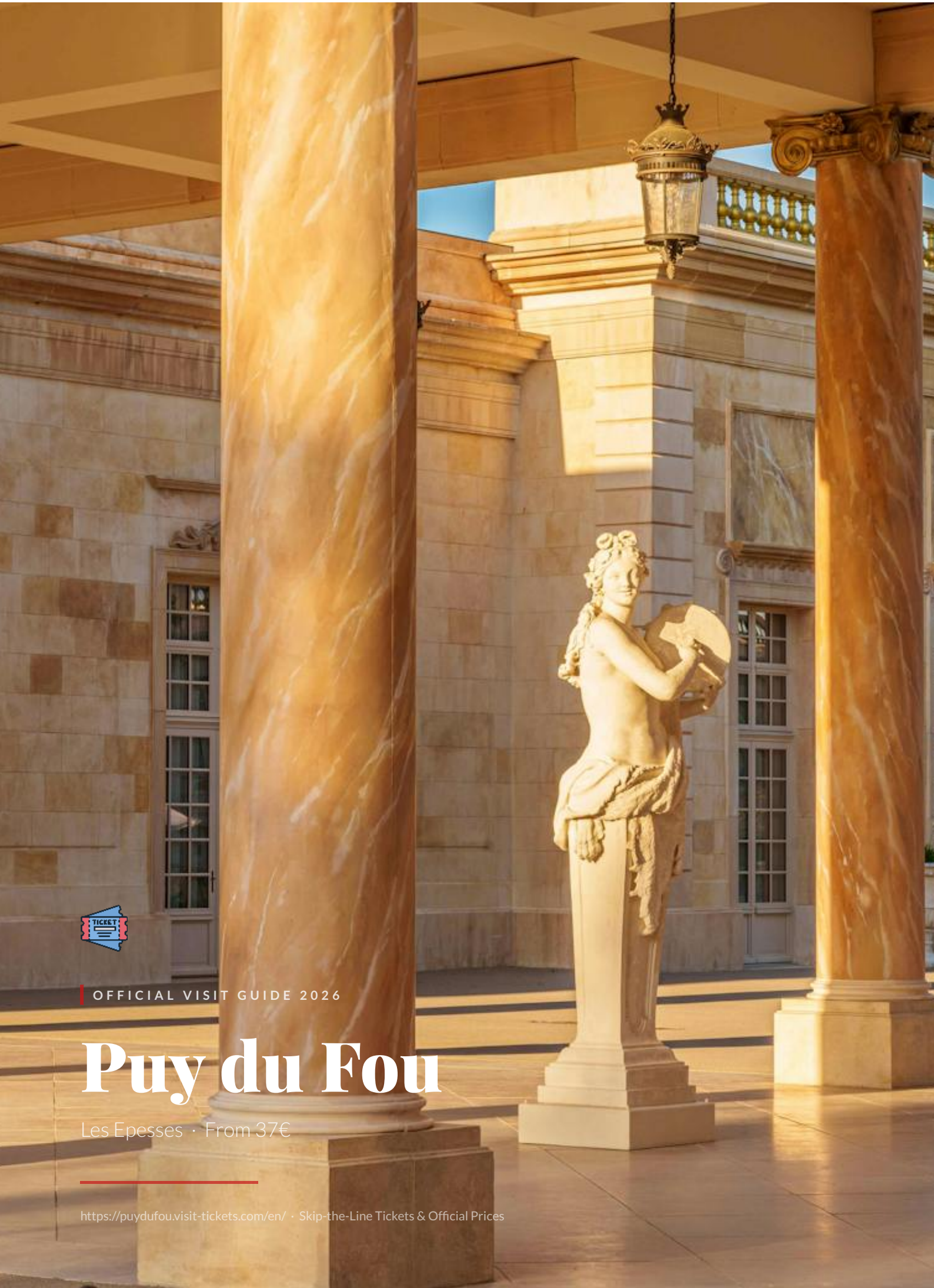


OFFICIAL VISIT GUIDE 2026

Puy du Fou

Les Epesses · From 37€

https://puydufou.visit-tickets.com/en/ · Skip-the-Line Tickets & Official Prices



History & Experience

ORIGIN & HISTORY

From Poem to Epic Spectacle

GOOGLE 4.8 ★★★★★ 101 975 reviews

TIQETS 4.71 ★★★★★ 321 reviews

The story of **Puy du Fou** begins not with a blueprint, but with a poem. In 1977, Philippe de Villiers, a civil servant and passionate local historian, wandered through the ruins of the medieval castle atop a beech-covered hill. Moved by the silence and the weight of centuries, he wrote verses that would ignite a vision: to breathe life into the forgotten history of the Vendée region. This poetic inspiration led directly to the creation of **La Cinéscénie**, an ambitious nighttime spectacle launched in June 1978. Unlike commercial theme parks, this initial project relied entirely on the dedication of hundreds of local volunteers who brought their ancestral heritage to life under the stars.

From these humble beginnings, the park evolved into a cultural phenomenon. While La Cinéscénie remained the spiritual heart, performed annually by unpaid enthusiasts tracing the lineage of the Maupillier family from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, a daytime park opened its gates in 1989. Initially called the Grand Parcours, it expanded rapidly, transforming the surrounding forests into immersive arenas. The park's philosophy was distinct: rather than focusing on mechanical thrills, it prioritized **living history**. Actors replaced animatronics, and real horses, birds of prey, and pyrotechnics created visceral experiences that blurred the line between theater and reality.

Today, Puy du Fou stands as a testament to this unique approach. It has grown to become the **second most visited theme park in France**, trailing only Disneyland Paris, a remarkable achievement for a site located outside the major metropolitan hubs. Its success lies in its ability to dramatize complex historical periods, including the controversial War of Vendée, presenting them through a lens of epic storytelling rather than dry academia. Figures like General Charette are honored not just as military leaders, but as symbols of regional identity, allowing visitors to connect emotionally with the past.

The park's artistic excellence has garnered international recognition, earning prestigious awards such as the **Thea Classic Award** in 2012 and an Applause Award in 2014. These distinctions validate its status among the world's premier themed entertainment destinations. Yet, despite its global acclaim, Puy du Fou remains deeply rooted in its local soil. The name itself, derived from the Latin 'podium' (height) and 'fagus' (beech), literally means 'Beech Hill,' perfectly describing the natural amphitheater where these spectacular stories unfold. It is a place where history is not just observed, but felt.

THE EXPERIENCE

Stepping through the gates of Puy du Fou feels less like entering a theme park and more like crossing a threshold into another era. The air is thick with the scent of pine and woodsmoke, while the distant sounds of blacksmiths hammering and lute music drift through the trees. There are no neon signs or plastic queues; instead, you are greeted by meticulously reconstructed villages, each representing a different epoch of French history. The architecture is authentic, the costumes richly detailed, and the atmosphere charged with a sense of **timeless immersion**. You are not a spectator here; you are a witness to history unfolding before your eyes.

As you move from one arena to another, the scale of the production becomes breathtaking. Whether watching knights joust amidst thunderous cheers or witnessing a Viking raid complete with fire and water effects, the sensory impact is overwhelming. The lighting design transforms day into night seamlessly, guiding you toward the iconic **La Cinéscénie** finale. Here, under the open sky, thousands of performers create a living tapestry of light and shadow. It is an emotional journey that resonates long after the final curtain falls, leaving you with a profound appreciation for the resilience and spirit of the Vendée people.



PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT

Practical Information

ADDRESS

Municipality of Epesses (85590). Main access via the D25 road from Nantes or Angers. No direct public transport.

OPENING HOURS

Main season from April to October. Hours vary depending on demand. Check exact time slots on the official website before purchasing.

PRICES

Free entry for children based on age (check variants). Progressive pricing based on date. Book early to secure your time slot.

VISIT DURATION

Allow 6 to 8 hours minimum for a complete visit. A half-day allows you to see the highlights but requires drastic choices between shows.

PHOTOS

Photography is allowed and encouraged. Beware of changing weather conditions. Bring a power bank as intensive use of the official app quickly drains your batter

AUDIENCE

Suitable for families from ages 3-4 for certain shows. Some shows are intense (noise, smoke). Ideal for history buffs and live performance enthusiasts.

HOW TO GET THERE

Access & Transportation

🚌 **Bus**

: (bus) — 1 min à pied

Les Epesses Station (20 min) · Les Herbiers Station (35 min)

🚗 **Car**

Les Epesses Station (13 min) · Les Herbiers Station (25 min)

🚲 **Bike**

Les Epesses Station (16 min) · Les Herbiers Station (33 min)

🚶 **On foot**

Les Epesses Station (37 min)

LOCALISATION

Où se trouve Puy du Fou ?



📍 Les Epesses

🌐 46°53.554′ N, 0°55.945′ O



ORGANIZATION

Navigating the Arenas

Village Medieval & Viking Arena

Start your journey in the reconstructed medieval village, where artisans demonstrate traditional crafts. Nearby, the Viking Arena hosts high-energy raids featuring water effects and fire, setting the tone for the park's dynamic storytelling.

Main Arenas & Historical Zones

The heart of the park features large-scale theaters for shows like 'The Knights of the Round Table' and 'Robin Hood'. These zones are designed for optimal viewing, with tiered seating ensuring clear sightlines for thousands of spectators.

La Cinéscénie Amphitheater

The grand finale takes place in the massive outdoor amphitheater surrounding the castle ruins. This vast space accommodates tens of thousands of viewers, creating a communal experience under the night sky.

ACCESSIBILITY

♿ **Accessibility for people with reduced mobility**

Wheelchair access possible but terrain is uneven; check for suitable seating on the official website

👨‍👩‍👧 **Families**

Ideal for families, with child-friendly shows and stroller facilities.

🎧 **Audio guide**

French, English, Spanish



Must-sees

SELECTION

Unmissable Historical Performances

01 PHILIPPE DE VILLIERS (CREATOR) Amphitheater

La Cinéscénie

The crown jewel of the park, this **nighttime spectacle** uses thousands of volunteers to reenact the history of Vendée. From the Middle Ages to WWII, the story of the Maupillier family unfolds against the backdrop of the castle ruins, using fire, light, and sound to create a magical atmosphere.

> 💡 It has been performed by **volunteers** since 1978, making it one of the largest volunteer-driven productions in the world.

02 PUY DU FOU TROUPE Arthurian Arena

Les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde

Experience the legend of King Arthur in this thrilling equestrian show. Knights perform daring stunts, including jumping over walls and charging through smoke, all while maintaining historical accuracy in their armor and weaponry. It is a **masterpiece of choreography** that leaves audiences breathless.

> 💡 The horses are trained specifically for these complex maneuvers, requiring months of preparation for each season.

03 PUY DU FOU TROUPE Sherwood Arena

L'Aventure de Robin des Bois

A high-octane adventure set in Sherwood Forest, featuring archery contests, acrobatics, and a dramatic battle against the Sheriff's men. The use of **real arrows** fired at close range adds a palpable tension that distinguishes it from typical theme park shows.

> 💡 The archers are elite marksmen who practice daily to ensure safety while delivering maximum visual impact.

04 PUY DU FOU TROUPE Viking Arena

Les Vikings

Witness the fury of Norse invaders in this explosive show. Longships crash onto the shore, and warriors engage in fierce combat amidst flames and water effects. It is a raw depiction of **medieval warfare** that highlights the park's commitment to visceral storytelling.

> 💡 The water effects are so realistic that guests often feel the spray, adding to the immersive experience.

05 PUY DU FOU TROUPE Roman Arena

Le Signe du Triomphe

A tribute to Roman engineering and military might, this show features chariot races, gladiator battles, and impressive architectural illusions. It showcases the **grandeur of the Empire** with precision and scale, offering a glimpse into ancient Rome's power.

> 💡 The chariots are built to withstand high-speed turns, requiring specialized drivers for safe operation.

06 PUY DU FOU TROUPE Fire Arena

Les Noces de Feu

A new addition to the repertoire, this show explores the transformative power of fire through dance and drama. It combines contemporary artistry with traditional elements, creating a **visual symphony** that captivates modern audiences.

> 💡 The choreography involves precise timing with live fire effects, demanding exceptional skill from the performers.

07 PUY DU FOU TROUPE Arthurian Arena

Excalibur

Another chapter in the Arthurian saga, focusing on the quest for the legendary sword. This performance emphasizes the mystical aspects of the legend, using lighting and sound to create an otherworldly atmosphere. It complements the knightly action with **mythical depth**.

> 💡 The sword prop is a replica crafted by master smiths within the park's workshops.

08 N/A Park-wide

Le Grand Tour

Not a single show, but the recommended route to experience the park's diversity. By following the official app's suggestions, you can navigate between eras efficiently, ensuring you catch the best seats for each major performance without wasting time in transit.

> 💡 Using the app reduces average wait times between shows by up to 30%.

TIPS

Mastering Your Visit Strategy

TIMING

Arrive exactly at your booked time slot. Arriving too early may leave you waiting outside, while being late risks missing your first scheduled show.

BILLET

Book tickets well in advance, especially for summer dates. Time slots are limited and fill up quickly due to high demand.

PARCOURS

Prioritize the main arenas early in the day when seats are plentiful and views are unobstructed. Save smaller shows for later.

PHOTO

Bring a power bank. Intensive use of the official app and photography will drain your battery quickly, especially in cooler weather.

PAUSE

Eat off-peak: lunch before 11:30 AM or after 2:30 PM to avoid long restaurant queues and maximize show time.

ENFANTS

Strollers are allowed, but some seating areas are difficult to access. Plan to carry young children to the best spots for optimal visibility.

AUDIOGUIDE

Download the official app instead of relying on audio guides. It provides real-time schedules and spectator positions, essential for managing downtime.

CONFORT

Wear comfortable shoes. The park is huge with uneven terrain. Avoid heels or open sandals if you fear dirtying your feet.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ

Do I need to book Puy du Fou tickets in advance?

Yes, absolutely. Time slots are limited and fill up quickly, especially in summer. The ticket is named and linked to a specific entry time, which guarantees your access without queuing at the ticket office.

What is the difference between the park and La Cinéscénie?

The park offers daytime shows scheduled throughout the day. La Cinéscénie is a specific nighttime show, often sold separately or in combined packages to check during purchase.

Does the ticket grant access to everything?

The standard ticket grants access to the day's shows but not necessarily to La Cinéscénie, which is often a separate ticket or included in specific packages that need to be verified.

Can I change my time slot after purchase?

This depends on the conditions of the ticket purchased. Generally, a modification is possible subject to availability via your customer account, but check the cancellation rules before changing dates.

How long does it take to visit Puy du Fou?

Allow a full day (approximately 6 to 8 hours) to see all the shows. A half-day allows you to see the must-sees but requires making choices and strictly managing schedules.

DID YOU KNOW?

Anecdotes & curiosities

The Volunteer Legacy

La Cinéscénie is unique because it relies on **local volunteers**. Since 1978, hundreds of residents have dedicated their time to perform, preserving the oral history of the Vendée through generations.

Poetic Origins

The entire park was born from a **poem written in 1977**. Philippe de Villiers' literary inspiration transformed a hilltop ruin into a global cultural landmark.

International Acclaim

Puy du Fou won the **Thea Classic Award** in 2012, placing it alongside the world's finest themed entertainment venues recognized by industry experts.

Etymology of the Name

The name 'Puy du Fou' comes from Latin words meaning **'Beech Hill'**. This accurately describes the natural site where the spectacular arenas now stand.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

Beyond the park gates, the Vendée region offers rich complementary experiences. Just a short drive away, the **Château de Brissac** awaits, known as the 'Castle of a Hundred Chimeras' and the largest inhabited castle in France. Its Renaissance architecture provides a stunning contrast to the medieval themes of Puy du Fou. For nature lovers, the **Mervent-Vouvant Forest** offers a serene escape for a picnic or hike, providing cool shade and tranquility after a day of intense spectacles. If you wish to extend your culinary adventure, consider dining at **Restaurant Le Puy Fou**, a local gastronomic spot serving authentic Vendée specialties without the crowds of the park. For those seeking deeper historical context, the Memorial of the War in Vendée in Cholet offers a sober counterpoint to the park's romanticized narratives.



Puy du Fou is more than a destination; it is a pilgrimage to the soul of history. To visit is to surrender to the power of storytelling, where every flame lit and every sword drawn serves a greater narrative. Do not just watch the shows—feel them. Let the echoes of the past remind you of the enduring strength of community and memory. This is where history breathes, and where you will find not just entertainment, but **inspiration**.