

TOWN OF VERSAILLES

For a less expensive and more laid-back alternative to Paris, the town of Versailles can be a good overnight stop, especially for drivers. Park in the palace's main lot while looking for a hotel, or leave your car there overnight (see page 191). Get a map of Versailles at your hotel or at the TI.

Sleeping in Versailles: **\$\$ Hôtel de France**^{***} is in a 17th-century townhouse a peasant's toss from the palace. It offers Old World class, mostly air-conditioned, traditional rooms with thick tapestries and rugs, a pleasant courtyard, a bar, and a restaurant (Db-€130, bigger bathroom Db-€170, Tb-€220, continental breakfast-€13, just off parking lot across from Château at 5 Rue Colbert, tel. 01 30 83 92 23, www.hotel-france-versailles.com, hotel-de-france-versailles@wanadoo.fr).

\$ Hôtel le Cheval Rouge^{***}, built in 1676 as Louis XIV's stables, now boards tourists. Tucked into a corner of Place du Marché, this modest hotel has a big courtyard with free parking and sufficiently comfortable rooms connected by long halls (Db-€99-108, Tb/Qb-€138, free breakfast for Rick Steves readers, no air-con, all rooms one floor up, no elevator, 18 Rue André Chénier, tel. 01 39 50 03 03, www.chevalrougeversailles.fr, chevalrouge@sfr.fr).

Sleep Code

Abbreviations (€1=about \$1.10, country code: 33)

S=Single, **D**=Double/Twin, **T**=Triple, **Q**=Quad, **b**=bathroom,

*=French hotel rating system (0-5 stars)

Price Rankings

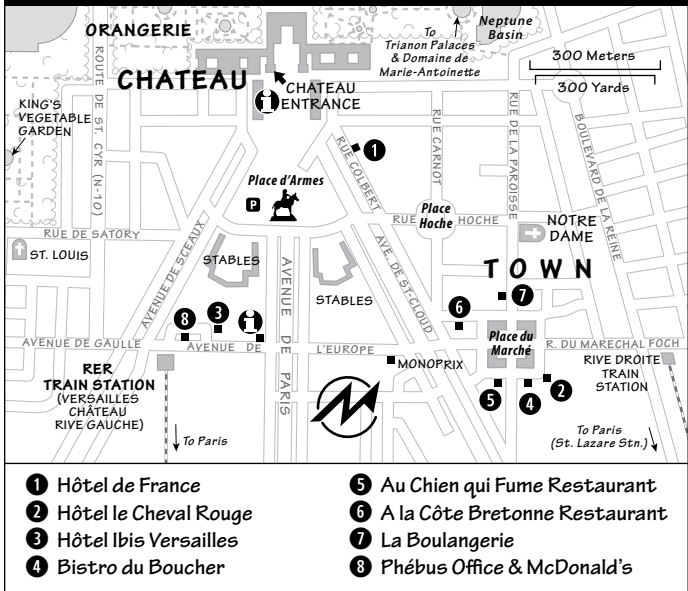
\$\$ Higher Priced—Most rooms more than €110

\$ Lower Priced—Most rooms €110 or less

\$ Hôtel Ibis Versailles^{***} offers a good weekend value and modern comfort, with 85 air-conditioned rooms (Mon-Thu Db-€120-145, Fri-Sun Db-€80-100, extra bed for kids-€10, breakfast-€ 10.50, parking-€13, across from RER station at 4 Avenue du Général de Gaulle, tel. 01 39 53 03 30, www.ibishotel.com, h1409@accor.com).

Eating in Versailles: In the pleasant town center, around Place du Marché Notre-Dame, you'll find a thriving open market (food market Sun, Tue, and Fri mornings until 13:00; clothing market all day Wed-Thu and Sat), four covered market halls with food stalls (Tue-Sat 7:30-13:00 & 15:30-19:00, Sun 7:30-13:00, closed Mon), a variety of reasonably priced restaurants, cafés, and a few cobbled lanes. The square—a 15-minute walk from the Château (veer left as you leave the Château)—is lined with colorful and inexpensive eateries with good seating inside and out. Troll the various options or try one of these:

Versailles Town Hotels & Restaurants



Bistrot du Boucher reeks with fun character inside and has good seating out. They like their meat dishes best here, though you'll find a full menu of choices (€32 for three courses, €21 for two, daily, 12 Rue André Chénier, tel. 01 39 02 12 15).

Au Chien qui Fume is a good choice, with cozy seating inside and out, a playful staff, and reliable, traditional cuisine (€27-36 menu, €19 plats, closed Sun, 72 Rue de la Paroisse, tel. 01 39 53 14 56).

A la Côte Bretonne is a great bet for crêpes in a friendly, cozy setting. Fluent in English, Yann-Alan and his family have served up the cuisine of their native Brittany region since 1951 (€4- 10 crêpes from a fun and creative menu, Tue-Sun 12:00-14:00 & 19:00-22:30, closed Mon, fine indoor and outdoor seating, a few steps off the square on traffic-free Rue des Deux Portes at #12, tel. 01 39 51 18 24).

La Boulangerie has mouthwatering sandwiches, salads, quiches, and more (Tue-Sat until 20:00, Sun until 13:30, closed Mon, 60 Rue de la Paroisse).

Supermarket: A big **Monoprix** is centrally located between the Versailles Château Rive Gauche train station and Place du Marché Notre-Dame (entrances from Avenue de l'Europe and at 5 Rue Georges Clemenceau, Mon-Sat 8:30-21:00, closed Sun).