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HOTEL REVIEW: CHÂTEAU DE CANDIE, FRANCE

 THE WORDROBE

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 NO COMMENTS



Within these historic 14th century walls, guests can clamber into their very own French fairytale adventure and immerse themselves in a world of truly refined relaxation. Unique and charming, book this four-star stay next time you're seeking some serious storybook enchantment of your own. Editor Sophie Ritchie shares more:

There are weekends that call for a jam-packed city break, where one's itinerary can provoke eye-watering from simply scanning the long list of museums and sights to tick off before lunchtime, and then, there are the trips that demand nothing but the simple art of relaxation.

For escapes such as this, the ivy-swathed Château de Candie in Chambéry ticks all the boxes. A majestic 14th century castle that still boasts many original fortifications, here awaits a few days (or longer, depending on your stress levels) of alpine-led calm. At this charming four-star hotel, run by

villa specialists [Purple Summer](#), emails, traffic and dreaded deadline anxiety are replaced with sun-soaked lounging, heavy-laden cheeseboards and naturally enchanting surroundings courtesy of the surrounding grounds.



Within these historic 14th century walls, guests can clamber into their very own French fairytale adventure as they climb the winding stone spiral staircase, peer out of windows across the hundred-year-old forest, wander through the estate's very own vineyard and simply peruse the hotel's authentic selection of freshly-baked breakfast buffet pastries.

Responsibilities are left at the front entrance much like a discarded umbrella, replaced instead with local mountain hikes, poolside reclining accompanied by a captivating book and of course, indulging in as much authentic French cuisine as possible. The friendly Purple Summer team takes care of all the main details once you're over the threshold, leaving you with the tough choices such as: "*What time shall we have breakfast?*".

The Room



Ideal for fans of something with a boutique feel, the historic château offers a handful of just 25 individually decorated rooms and suites, found dotted around the property in both the main castle and another separate building.

Each abode is bookable by room or on an exclusive-hire basis, each brimming with antiques and unique period features that evoke an *"ooh"* or two each time a new guest opens the door.

As well as the more intriguing furnishings, mod cons come as standard – think fans, mini fridges, coffee machines, plasma TVs and full-sized L'occitane Citrus Verbena toiletries awaiting in the regal bathrooms.



No two are the same, which means each room comes with its own flair and personality – as well as an enormous Gulliver’s Travels–like metal key. My own historical habitat, located on the third floor, feels like the cream of the crop with a vast two–bedroom duplex suite split across two levels.

With pops of light blue that compliment the intricately–patterned wallpaper, the master bedroom is fit for an (over–packed) princess thanks to its sheer size, seating area, dual closets and enormous bed. Even a mid–afternoon power nap feels quite luxurious when lounging around these classically elegant interiors.

The Food & Drink



Open throughout the year (even when the chateau bids adieu to guests for the off-season) on-site restaurant La Cantine provides a refined backdrop for an evening of fine dining, whether that be within its grand wallpaper-patterned walls or sitting al fresco on the picturesque terrace.

Dishes incorporate plenty of local produce, with a menu brimming with classical French gastronomy that incorporates modern twists courtesy of Head Chef Badara Gueye. Think gorgeously-presented steaks, salads, soups and fresh fish – followed by the true holiday essential – dessert. Beautiful creations steal the show, incorporating fresh fruits, creamy French classics and seasonal ingredients to conjure platefuls that somehow magically disappear within seconds.

It's impossible not to notice the dishes' creative flair courtesy of Gueye, the 40-year-old Senegalese multi-talented chef and painter. His dual identity as both a chef and a painter sets him apart: when he isn't delighting guests with inventive cuisine, he's selling his evocative artwork in Annecy and Switzerland. Visit on the right day, and you might just spot a painting or three located in a nearby room when dining here too.



Breakfast at Château de Candie meanwhile, is served each morning in a more modern farmhouse-inspired space on the other side of the property. Guests line up to devour the DIY selection of hot breakfast classics, cereals, juices and Nespresso coffee, as well as a mini pancake machine for added fun. Of course, 'butter' not miss out on the French essential during a stay – trays of flakey croissants and golden pain au chocolat, baked fresh by the time you've pulled up a chair. Eggs can also be ordered a la carte, for those who prefer a poachier start to the day.



For something extra special, the castle has also recently launched an idyllic new picnic offering for the warmer months, available for both lunch and dinner. Served adjacent to the property's beautiful vineyard, foodies can enjoy a basket of exceptional wines and chilled champagne, plus a selection of cold meats, cheeses, quiches and summer salads served with crusty French bread, with local jams and home-made cakes for dessert. Gourmet salads can also be swapped in for the pescatarians and veggies. Surrounded by views of the Chartreuse mountain range and beautiful vines with every mouthful, this experience is nothing short of enchanting – and of course, incredibly romantic.

Things To Try



The hotel's proximity to the nearby mountains makes it an excellent base for a day of alpine adventures, but there's plenty waiting beyond a hiking boot too:

1 Lunch at The Lido

Pack your swimsuit – a short ten-minute drive away awaits Lac du Bourget, [France's](#) biggest natural glacier lake. The shimmering clear waters aren't this lake's only gem; there's also the fantastic Lido restaurant, nestled directly beside the water with its own direct access, bookable VIP area and pier. Spend the afternoon here and 'dive' into a menu that utilises plenty of locally-caught fish, plus other delicious bites. With a cocktail in one hand and a fork in the other, the hours will soon slip away – but not before joining the locals for a dip in the glimmering lake itself, which feels surprisingly balmy on a hot summer's day. lido-lacdubourget.com

2 Trip to Chambéry

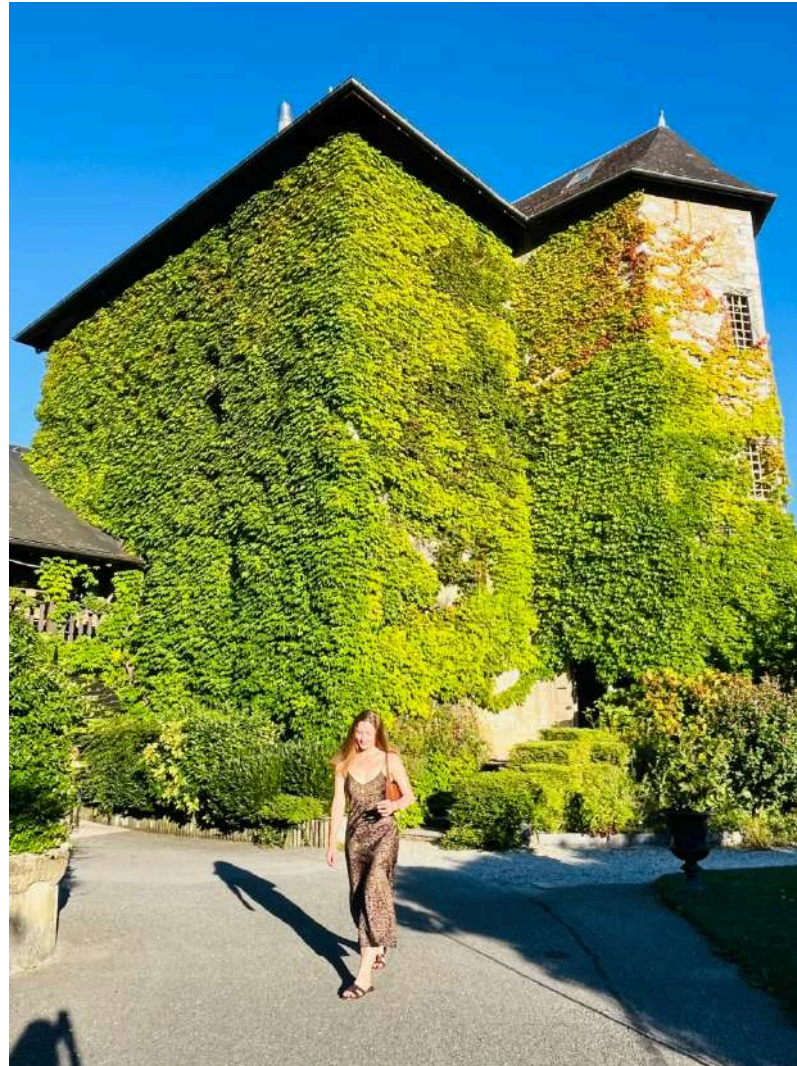
The nearby town of Chambéry is perfect for a few hours of pottering, especially if you're a history or art fan. The most famous landmark within these streets is the striking Fontaine des Éléphants (nicknamed the "Elephants Fountain") with its intricate facade and intriguing design – but the local museums, art galleries and of course, patisseries are all well-worth a pitstop. Whilst the Old Town brims with stories, the newer part of the town offers oodles of shopping opportunities from both the big brands and independents – the gleaming glass windows showcasing various beauty products, fashion, homeware, vintage finds and more are as hard to resist as the castle's pastries.

3 Further afield: trip to Geneva for Choco Pass

For those traveling via Geneva airport (a mere hour's transfer away from the castle), we highly recommend setting an extra afternoon aside to explore this Swiss city and get a taste of its world-famous [chocolate](#). A destination known across the globe for its chocolatiers, foodies can now

indulge in an array of world-famous chocolate creations and experiences thanks to Geneva Tourism's 'Choco Pass'. Explorers can purchase the special pass to take a taste drive of Geneva's rich history in chocolate-making, which dates back hundreds of years and taste test their way around Geneva with a variety of chocolatiers, including a selection of specialities to try at each participating chocolate maker. Tick off as many as you can before it's time to re-board the plane – talk about 'Sweetzerland'. geneve.com

The Wordrobe Verdict



There are weekends that call for a jam-packed city break, and then, there are the trips that demand nothing but the simple art of switching off. For laidback escapes such as this, the ivy-swathed Château de Candie in Chambéry ticks all the boxes.

Within these historic 14th century walls, guests can clamber into their very own French fairytale adventure and immerse themselves in a world of truly refined relaxation. Unique and charming, book this four-star stay next time you're seeking some serious storybook enchantment of your own.

Start the adventure

Getting there: Both Lyon and Geneva airports are within an hour's drive of the property. Private transfers can be arranged upon request.

How: For more information and to make a booking, please visit [purplesummer.com](https://www.purplesummer.com)

Wallet: Nightly rates at Château de Candie start from €200 per room on a Bed and Breakfast basis.

The property is available on an exclusive hire basis from €15,000.

Words by Sophie Ritchie, editor

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