

Top-Five Countdown

Most Fairy Tale-Like Castles in France

Stone Soup is a French folktale. Many interesting folktales and fairy tales come from France. Maybe that is because much of France looks like it came straight out of a fairy tale. France has beautiful countryside. It has historic villages. It has hundreds of castles. Here is a countdown of the top five French castles that look like they came out of a fairy tale.

#5 Cité de Carcassonne (*SIT-ay de Car-ca-SUN*)



By Jondul11 (Own work) via Wikimedia Commons

This castle is in Carcassonne, France. It is near the border of Spain. People have lived in this city for 2,500 years. Romans first built the castle in the year 333. Rulers have added to it over the years. The castle was fortified. That means it was made to be strong. It was made to protect the town. It had high walls. It had as many as 40 towers. No one knows how many princesses were kept in the towers over the years. (Just kidding.) French kings used the castle for 350 years. But by 1659, it wasn't useful anymore. No one used it or lived in it. Over time, the castle began to fall apart.

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#4 Château de Haut-Koenigsbourg

(shah-TOW deh HOTE KONE-igs-burg)



By Wriahya (Own work) via Wikimedia Commons

This castle was built in the 1100s on a mountaintop. It was a fortified castle. It was the perfect place for knights in shining armor. It was built out of pink sandstone, which gives it a reddish glow. More than half of a million people visit this castle every year. It is located in the Alsace region of France near the Black Forest. Alsace is on the border of France and Germany.

#3 Château de Bonaguil

(shah-TOW deh bone-ah-GILL)



By offi (Own work) via Wikimedia Commons

This fairy tale castle was the last fortified castle built in France. That means it was the last castle built to keep out invaders. The castle was built in the 1200s and is located on a steep cliff between two rivers in southern France. The castle covers nearly 81,000 square feet of land. It has a deep moat and a drawbridge. It has thick walls to keep out enemy fire as well as fire-breathing dragons.

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#2 Mont Saint-Michel (*MONE SUN mee-SHELL*)



By Andrés Nieto Porras via Flickr.com/ ShareAlike 2.0 Generic (CC BY-SA 2.0)

This castle was built on a small island in northwest France. This region of France is known as Normandy. The castle was built at the mouth of a river that flows into the English Channel. Monks built it in the 700s. Later, it became a fortress for French kings. During low tide, you can walk along the wet sand to get to the castle. During high tide, you cannot. In fact, enemy forces never defeated the castle. The castle is naturally difficult to break into or out of. France's king turned the castle into a prison in the 1400s. This castle is one of the most popular in France. More than three million people visit it every year.

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#1 Versailles (*vare-SIGH*)



By Estelita (Own work) via Wikimedia Commons

Versailles is one of the best-known castles in France. It is located near Paris. It was not built to keep out invaders. It was built as a palace. It was meant to be a place where the king could live. Versailles is luxurious. It is beautiful both inside and out. King Louis XIV made this palace the center of his kingdom in 1682. The palace has 2,300 rooms. It spreads over nearly 40 square miles of land. This includes its many gardens, fountains, and various buildings. Today the castle is a museum. About five million people visit the castle every year. Between eight to ten million people visit the castle's gardens each year. This makes it the most visited castle in all of France.

By Panoramas4u (Own work) via Wikimedia Commons



A garden at Versailles



By Myrabela via Wikimedia Commons

**Inside Versailles:
the Hall of Mirrors**