

# Stade de France Stadium In St Denis France

Contributed by Martyn Davis  
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The Stade de France Stadium was built to host the 1998 FIFA world cup and has seen many other events since, including Celine Dion record breaking concerts.

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Saint Denis is a suburb around 10km from the centre of Paris along the river Seine and has specific claims to fame.

{bot\_wrgoogle}The first is that the area was named after Saint Denis who became known as the Patron Saint of France, where St Genevieve had a small chapel erected over his tomb for pilgrims to visit.

The second is that it is known for the Saint Denis Basilica where a vast majority of French Kings are also entombed here and this was rebuilt on the site of the chapel.

The third is for The Stade de France, which is the new stadium that was built to host the 1998 FIFA world cup and has seen many other events since.

If you have time whilst you are on holiday in the Paris area, taking a trip out to St Denis is a very worthwhile and enjoyable experience for all the family. And although it used to be more of a working class industrial area, it is again now a thriving community since the stadium has been built.

The stadium was a major feat of engineering with a very clever design that allows it to be changed from a football or rugby stadium, through to a running track, through to holding rock and pop concerts. This was all achieved by a cushion of air that allows the lower stands to slide out in approximately 72 hours, dependant upon the different configurations needed. And for the last few years has played host to some very major sporting events including the FIFA World Cup and the World Championships in Athletics.

Although the stadium is designed to hold 80,000 people, Celine Dion broke the records with 2 nights of an attendance of 90,000 fans for each night at her concerts! But rather than going to the stadium for an event, you can take a tour of this fantastic place and walk the paths of stars. But always check to ensure it is open for tours prior to getting excited, as it will be closed on specific dates due to functions and other major events going on.

But while in the area do take a stroll round Saint Denis itself, as it has a well-known market, which is also one of the largest in the Ile de France region and it plays host to numerous events every year. Instead of just thinking about the Stade de France that holds sporting events and concerts, festivals such as the festival of Saint Denis for classical music and the Banlieues Bleues Festival for jazz music amongst others are held in this area every year.

Yet if you are not into lively entertainment, perhaps you would be more at home visiting the Basilique de Saint Denis, which even has life size figures of the past monarchs that are entombed in it. And it is steeped in history from when the basilica we see today was first begun in the Gothic style way back in 1136 even though it was never finished to the 13th Century. But you can trace the history right through to the last king that was interred here, who was King Louis XVIII and is comparable with Westminster Abbey in England where people still go and worship.

The architecture and the beautiful stained glass windows that were restored to their former glory, make for an impressive building and today it remains the largest museum of funerary sculpture in France, containing the tombs and recumbent statues of over 70 kings and queens. Plus you will be pleased to know that it is open every day of the year for people to go and visit.

There is something fascinating for everyone in St Denis and it is well worth a short trip out if you have the time whilst you are on holiday in this incredible area of France.

About the Author:

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Martyn Davis European Traveller, Author, Photographer and Business Development Manager, For all your French holiday needs and travel guide to France, with tourist information, landmarks and attractions - The Stade de France Stadium