

# Green living in Lyon



Lyon is a pioneer in terms of sustainable practices — especially when it comes to meetings. Last year, the UNESCO World Heritage city — and second-busiest convention city in France — was awarded the coveted title of “European Capital of Smart Tourism,” a worthy achievement since Lyon regularly ranks among the most sustainable cities on the globe.

One of the best examples of Lyon’s strength as a green city: last year, it joined the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS), a performance improvement program that measures and benchmarks the sustainability strategy and performance of meetings cities. Lyon became the highest-rated French city with a score of 55%.

The ranking isn’t a surprise if you look at the sustainable initiatives and projects Lyon has taken on in recent years. The airport has been carbon-neutral since 2017, and many hotels in town hold a sustainability certificate from a recognized label. The Radisson Blu Hotel Lyon, for instance, is both Green Key and EarthCheck certified, the two labels clearly recognizing the hotel’s excellence in the field of

environmental responsibility and sustainable operations.

As for conference venues, the Lyon Convention Centre has obtained the ISO 20121 certification, an international standard for sustainable event management that promotes responsible consumption and offers guidelines to curb the social, environmental and economic impact of events. The Renzo Piano-designed La Cité Internationale’s green credentials are just as impressive: its centralized watering system allows for the recovery of rainwater to maintain its 2,000 sqm of gardens; heating and the cooling is done through underground seepage water; and 96 sqm of solar panels generate 15,000 kWh of electricity, which totals an environmental gain of 1.4T per year of CO<sub>2</sub>.

In fact, the emphasis on eco-responsibility runs across the entire supply chain. The city promotes environmentally friendly and responsible transport, from bike rentals and e-scooters to a car-sharing system and the Vaporetto hybrid river shuttle, which saves 40 percent on diesel. Landscaping the banks of the Rhône and Saône

rivers alone has been a huge selling factor both for Lyon’s inhabitants and visitors.

Lyon is now gaining the attention it deserves for its sustainable measures as a green city. Just look at the Quartier de la Confluence, an inspiring example of urban planning for a large-scale, low-carbon district, which won the Sustainable District Grand Prize at the Green Solutions Awards last year. As Valérie Ducaud, manager of Lyon Convention Bureau, puts it: *“Lyon’s many initiatives in the smart and sustainable realms – which would be too long to list here – are testament to the city’s efforts to be a leader in the field. The good thing about sustainability is that nothing is ever granted – there is always room for improvement. We constantly have to show our dedication to make our city a great place to live and to visit – and this is a challenge we’re gladly taking on.”*

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