

MUSÉE UNTER LINDEN



**TRAVEL AND TOURISM PROFESSIONALS
AND ASSOCIATIONS**

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DISCOVER THE MUSEE UNTERLINDEN

PRESENTATION



The Musée Unterlinden offers visitors the opportunity to explore rich and varied collections covering nearly 7,000 years of history, from the prehistoric era to 20th century art, with more than 3,500 works on display. Visitors will be able to admire numerous art forms, such as painting, sculpture, printmaking and more. The museum reveals the face of Colmar in centuries past and showcases the virtuoso skills demonstrated by its artists and craftsmen (furniture, textiles, ceramics, glassware, etc.).

A bit of history

As they explore the collections, visitors will discover the successive stages of over 150 years of the museum's history. The walls and the artworks bear witness to the dynamic work of the Société Schongauer, the association that runs the Musée Unterlinden.

The museum was established in 1853 in the former Dominican convent of Unterlinden. At that point, it was restricted to the chapel, in which most of the collections were displayed. Space soon began to run out, and the works ended up gradually occupying the whole of the building from the second half of the 20th century.

At the dawn of the 21st century, the museum was still in need of more space. The closure of the nearby municipal baths in 2003 and their transfer to the museum made it possible to envisage an ambitious extension and complete reinstatement of the collections. In 2009, the Basel-based architectural practice Herzog and De Meuron was chosen to undertake the works, leading to the opening of the new Unterlinden in December 2015.

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

The Isenheim Altarpiece and its restoration

What is the Isenheim Altarpiece?

History

The Isenheim Altarpiece is one of the world's most famous artworks.

The altarpiece, which has become the flagship of the Musée Unterlinden's collections, was made for the Alsatian village of Isenheim, from which it takes its name.

The monumental polyptych* (3.30 metres by 5.90 metres) was painted between 1512 and 1516 by Grünewald (c. 1475, 1480-1528) and sculpted by Niclaus of Haguenau (active in Strasbourg from 1485 to 1526) to adorn the high altar of the Antonite monastic hospital complex of Isenheim, which was established to care for sufferers of the disease known as St Anthony's fire.

The disease was a genuine plague in the Middle Ages, caused by the ingestion of rye infected with ergot fungus. This cereal parasite found in poor-quality bread caused hallucinations, often verging on insanity, as well as necrosis of the body's extremities. Sufferers came to receive care at the monastic complex, which was also known for amputations carried out by lay surgeons.

*polyptych: a set of interlinked panel paintings or sculpted reliefs, often consisting of side leaves that could be folded over a central section.

Why is it regarded as a masterpiece?

Dating from the 16th century, the altarpiece was regarded as a masterpiece from the outset, and has been protected and venerated down the centuries for its artistic brilliance, the richness of its colours and the expressiveness of the scenes and figures created by the two artists.

Grünewald was the first artist to paint Christ's suffering in such a radical manner, which must have enabled the sick to identify with him and compare themselves with Christ in his dying agony.

From Picasso to Bacon by way of Matisse and Dix, countless artists have been deeply moved by this masterpiece, which is genuinely one of the most extraordinary and enigmatic creations in the history of Western art.



Why the restoration?

The altarpiece is over 500 years old and has been well-preserved overall. In spite of this, the sculptures had become very fragile and the panel paintings obscured.

A complete study conducted by the Research Centre of the Musées de France (C2RMF) in 2013-2014 made it possible to determine the state of the work and establish the protocol for its restoration (12 painted panels and 13 sculptures).

During the restoration of the Isenheim Altarpiece, Grünewald's masterpiece will remain on display!

In 2019, the painting restorers were observed directly by the public as they worked for several weeks: since the beginning of April 2019, visitors to the Musée Unterlinden can admire the newly revealed colours and depth thanks to the thinning of the varnish on the panels depicting the Concert of Angels and the Nativity, St Anthony Tormented by Demons and the Visit of St Anthony to St Paul.

In parallel, the sculpture restorers are operating in the restoration workshop of the Musées de France Research and Restoration Centre in Paris. The restorers are at work cleaning the original polychrome decoration. This restoration will restore the harmony of colours to the entire altarpiece, which is a rare and exceptional example given the strong coherence between the paintings and sculptures.



New restoration campaign in March, and from mid-April to mid-May 2020!

The exciting project to restore the *Isenheim Altarpiece* continues in the exhibition room housing the masterpiece, allowing the museum's visitors to observe the work.

In March, the frames for the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Annunciation will be restored.

From mid-April to mid-May, these same panels will be laid flat so that the restoration can continue.

On your next visit, take the opportunity to watch the restorers at work.

Archaeology

From January 24th 2020 : NEW Archeology room

As an encyclopaedic museum, the Musée Unterlinden conserves and displays collections charting the cultural and artistic heritage of Alsace from the prehistoric period to the present day.

The re-opening of the section devoted to prehistoric and protohistoric archaeology (the Bronze Age and Iron Age) will enable the public to rediscover rare objects such as the large Neolithic Linear Band Ware vases or the gold jewellery from the princely tomb of Ensisheim.

In conjunction with the complete renovation of the former cellar of the Dominican convent of Unterlinden, the archaeological collections will be reinstalled in a more modern display, with an educational approach that will be accessible to all sections of the public.

The chronological presentation will enable visitors to discover the evolution of the different aspects of human habitation in Alsace: agriculture, crafts, habitat, domestic life, funerary practices, etc. The section is due to re-open on 23 January 2020, a date symbolically chosen to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the inauguration of the “New Unterlinden” on 23 January 2016.



The museum exhibits its “Large Formats”

The modern and contemporary art collection has been rehung in the gallery, exceptionally occupying all three floors of the Ackerhof building, to allow for an unprecedented presentation of the “Large Format” works that have previously been kept in the Musée Unterlinden’s stores.

The monumental works by Olivier Debré, Joe Downing, Karl-Jean Longuet, Georges Mathieu, Alicia Penalba and Agnès Thurnauer invade the exhibition space. Some of them had never been put on public display (Karl-Jean Longuet’s *The Gates of Night* and Alicia Penalba’s *Fountain*), whilst for others, like Jean Lurçat’s tapestry *The Flame and the Ocean*, this is the first time they have left our stores for 30 years.

By Hands and Eyes – Michel Paysant

07 February to 22 June 2020

The artist Michel Paysant has a passion for classical and experimental drawing. Based on his observation of the Musée Unterlinden's masterpieces, the *Isenheim Altarpiece* and the *Guernica* tapestry, he produced a series of drawings using the ground-breaking new technology of eye-tracking.

In a unique intersection between art and science, the ability to record eye movements enabled him to capture the dynamics of visual attention. So the works were literally drawn by the artist's eyes, their trajectories and movements acting like a pencil: directed by his gaze, Michel Paysant's eyes, rather than his hands, traced the lines, forms and figures in the works.

By consciously using the potential of this technology to recreate the work that his eyes were exploring, the artist made a record of his gaze travelling across Grünewald's creation or the tapestry inspired by Picasso's *Guernica*: a "copy" of the work created directly by his eye movements.

Drawings by Lucas Cranach the Younger (1515-1586), Portraits

22 October 2020 to 18 January 2021

An exceptional loan of 13 drawings from the collections of the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Reims, which is closed for renovations until 2023. The exhibition will highlight the unusual story of these drawings and their changing usage, from Cranach's workshop in the German town of Wittenberg to the school of drawing in Reims, up to the point they became part of the city's collections.

Auguste Rodin and The Gates of Hell

September to December 2020

The Musée Unterlinden will present a group of Auguste Rodin's sculptures drawn from *The Gates of Hell* during the period when the *Guernica* tapestry is on loan to the Musée Rodin in Paris for its "Picasso-Rodin" exhibition.

The sculptures will be presented in dialogue with the sculpted figures within the modern art collection and will echo Karl-Jean Longuet's work *The Gates of Night*, a plaster original inspired a century later by Rodin's famous gates.

ORGANISE YOUR GROUP VISIT TO THE MUSEUM

Which visit to choose

GUIDED VISIT

- Accompanied by a member of the museum's interpretation staff/guide, chose your preferred option:

Discover the museum

A chronological exploration of our rich and varied collections. Admire the Musée Unterlinden's masterpieces (Isenheim Altarpiece, Monet, Picasso...).

Focus on a theme

Base your visit around a specific theme, such as the Isenheim Altarpiece, its restoration, the modern and contemporary art collection or archaeology (from 2020).

- Accompanied by your own guide or someone approved to provide commentaries on our works
On presentation of their professional licence or document proving accreditation.
- Visit suggested in English, French or German (*for other languages: please contact us*)
Price for 1 hour: 90 € (*only for focus on a theme*)
Price for 1 hour and a half: 130 €
Price for 2 hours: 150 €
- Group is met in the Musée Unterlinden's reception hall
- Availability of the desired visiting slots communicated when booking
- The cost of the guide or member of our interpretation staff is supplementary to the admission tickets

Please note:

Audio equipment (microphone and headphones) is obligatory for any guided visit and made available free of charge subject to reservation.

The maximum number of participants per guided visit is 25; above that, the group must be split.

Compulsory reservation granted according to availability.

INDEPENDENT VISIT

WITH OR WITHOUT AUDIOGUIDES

Would you like to make your own way around the museum at your own pace?

Follow our "masterpieces" tour thanks to the visitor assistance materials you will find as you make your way through the museum: expanded labels, room information sheets, multimedia terminals...

Or

Equip yourself with the audioguide available in several languages: English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Korean and Mandarin.

Commentaries can be downloaded onto a smartphone at the museum, at the counter in the museum reception hall.

- Cost: €2 per audioguide, in addition to the admission ticket – subject to booking.
- Availability of the desired visiting slots is communicated when booking

How to book

To improve the visitor experience and the distribution of groups through the day, please follow our recommendations:

- Bookings can be made:
 - o Using the online booking form on our website www.musee-unterlinden.com, under *Professionals – Travel and Tourism Professionals and Associations*
This will allow you to specify the duration, theme and type of visit you require (with a member of the interpretation team/guide – independent visit with or without audioguides). You will be send a confirmation of receipt of your request by email.
 - o By telephone on +33 (0)3 89 20 22 79
 - o By email to reservations@musee-unterlinden.com
- Bookings are obligatory for groups of 15 or more people
For smaller groups, you may buy your tickets directly from the ticket office, on arrival, or on our website www.musee-unterlinden.com under *Online Tickets*.
- For any guided visit, the maximum number of participants is 25 people per group. Beyond that, more than one group will be formed.
- Audio equipment (microphone and headphones) is compulsory and made available free of charge. Booking is essential.
- Authorisation to act as a guide is free for outside guides (on presentation of their professional ID)

Once the booking is made, the MUSEE UNTERLINDEN will send a summary email accompanied by a booking confirmation to the address supplied by the Customer.

The booking confirmation constitutes a commitment and an irrevocable acceptance which can only be challenged under circumstances limited to those set out in these general conditions in the article entitled “Alterations, delays, cancellation and reimbursement”.

The booking confirmation must be returned with a signature, stating “Signed and agreed” within two weeks of the booking. If the MUSEE UNTERLINDEN does not receive this signed confirmation within that time, the booking will automatically be cancelled.

Please note:

*Guided visits begin strictly at the time indicated on the booking confirmation.
Any lateness will result in a reduction of the length of the visit.*

For any GROUP VISIT to be booked, the following information is required:

- **Name of the group**
- **Date and Time of arrival**
- **Length of visit + choice of area to visit** (11th-18th century art and Isenheim Altarpiece, Modern and contemporary art, Regional history, Archaeology from 2020 or Discovery of the whole museum with a specified starting point).
- **Number of participants**
- **Surname and first name of person in charge**
- **Contact details for person in charge** (postal address, mobile phone number)

Practical information

MUSEUM OPENING HOURS

Last admission: 30 minutes before closing.

Wednesday to Monday: 9 am – 6 pm

Evening opening: first Thursday of each month: 9 am – 8 pm

December 24 and 31: 9 am – 4 pm (apart from Tuesdays, which remain the weekly closing day)

Closed:

- on Tuesdays
- on the following public holidays: 1 January, 1 May, 1 November, 25 December.

PRICES FOR 2020

- **€13:** full price (fewer than 15 people)
- **€11:** group price (15 or more people) and senior citizens
- **€5:** basic welfare recipients and jobseekers, disabled visitors, either civilian or injured in service
Only on presentation of written proof.
- Prices for professionals: please contact us
1 free entrance for every 25 paying visitors
- **€8:** school groups and young people aged 12 to 17 years old, Students under 30
1 free accompanying adult for every 10 students
- Free entrance for children under 12, school groups from the Strasbourg and Baden-Württemberg regional education authorities
- **Methods of payment:**
 - **Bank transfer**, prior to visit or on receipt of our invoice
Please state your reference number and date of visit
No reimbursements will be made for any participants who withdraw after payment has been made in advance.
 - **Cash or bank card** (VISA, MASTERCARD or AMERICAN EXPRESS), on the day of your visit
 - **Voucher / purchase order** supplied on the day of your visit

FOR YOUR INFORMATION



- **To ensure your visiting experience goes smoothly**

We recommend you do not bring large bags or suitcases to the museum.

You will find gauges corresponding to the permitted size (40cm x 30cm x 20cm) in the reception hall; only bags not exceeding this maximum size are permitted within the museum (reception area, exhibition rooms, shop and café-restaurant).

Any visitor with bags exceeding the maximum sizes will not be able to access these spaces.

The lockers/cloakrooms are no longer accessible.

Everyone must go through the security and admission ticket checks.

The Musée Unterlinden would like to thank its visitors in advance for their understanding over the delays caused by our entrance checks.

- **Visitors with reduced mobility**

The rooms housing the permanent collections and temporary exhibitions are accessible to visitors with reduced mobility. A wheelchair is available for visitors with reduced mobility from the ticket office counter, subject to reservation:

- By telephone on 0033 (0)3 89 20 15 58
- By email at billetterie@musee-unterlinden.com

An ID document is requested in exchange and will be returned when the wheelchair is handed back at the end of the visit.