Nantes is a city in western France, located on the Loire River, 50km from the Atlantic coast. Nantes is the capital city of the Pays de la Loire region and was one of the major cities of the historic province of Brittany. Though officially separated from Brittany over 60 years ago, Nantes is culturally Breton and still widely regarded as its capital.

In 2004, Time described Nantes as ‘the most liveable city in Europe’. As of 2013, Nantes holds the title of European Green Capital for its efforts to reduce air pollution and CO2 emissions, for its high quality and well managed public transports and for its biodiversity.

With its position on the Loire River, the city developed into one of France’s major ports. While maritime and naval activity have now moved downstream to Saint-Nazaire, the entire estuary has joined forces and turned Nantes-Atlantique into the metropolitan centre for the west of France. Every industry within the service sector is established here, which makes Nantes the second most important French city for the service industry. The estuary itself, the fourth most important industrial region in France, is home to an array of specialist engineering companies as well as the food and timber industries. A network of world-class training and research centres all contribute to Nantes’ considerable reputation. Every year a thousand engineers graduate from the various tertiary industry institutions in the area.

From one of the most famous pirates, Jacques Cassard, to the famous writer, Jules Verne, Nantes is a city rich in history, adventure and industrial technology. With exceptional architectural heritage and renowned gastronomy, Nantes is distinguished by its quality of life and its physical environment.

The local football team is FC Nantes, and the club holds several records in the history of French professional football. Nantes is also a centre for football and watersports training. The city stadia have hosted both the 1998 FIFA World Cup and the 2007 Rugby World Cup.