

# HEAD<sup>Q</sup>UARTERS

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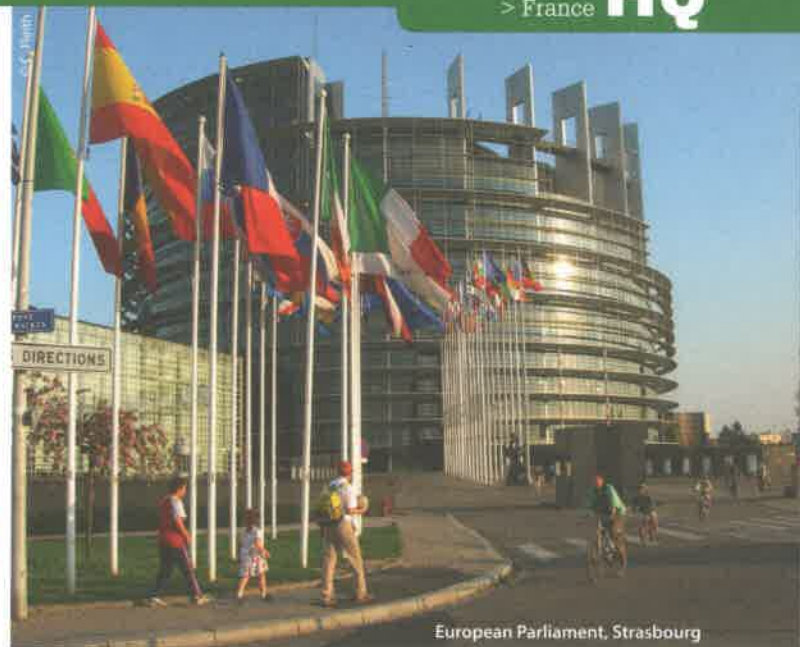
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## LOOKING BACK AT THE THIRD FRANCE MEETING HUB

### Alsace is the place

In the meetings industry today, it's mandatory to remain competitive as a destination. France has clearly understood this and organised, for the third consecutive year, France Meetings Hub, but this time in Alsace. At the invitation of Atout France, about 120 hosted buyers from more than 30 countries met, conversed and networked with French professionals for a few days in October. The aim? To promote the French regions among international business tourism professionals and give them a taste of Alsace!

Report Rémi Dévé

#### INCENTIVES AND WORKSHOPS

Organised by Atout France in partnership with Air France-KLM and the official support of Access Alsace, France Meeting Hub was all about educational tours, incentives and workshops. If the general focus was on Alsace and its many attractions, meeting planners could also meet with a few other suppliers coming from all over France, from Cannes to Calvados, from Paris to Lille, both casually and formally, at **Strasbourg Convention & Exhibition Centre**, currently undergoing a massive refurbishment/extension.

What made France Meeting Hub unique for participants was the chance to discover three different MICE destinations from Alsace: **Mulhouse**, the creative, **Colmar**, along the famous wine road, and **Strasbourg**, the European gem. Highlights of the trip included the gala dinner at the **Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art** in Strasbourg, a visit of the **Council of Europe**, and some fun incentives at the

**Château de Pourtalès** (perfect for this kind of activities for up to 450 people). All in all, there were many opportunities for exhibitors and meeting planners to get together in a relaxed but professional atmosphere.

Isabel Pelletier, from Madrid-based EventsME, put it like this: *"The format of the event is really ideal. Opportunities to network are legion, and if you want a more focused perspective, the workshops work quite well. Besides, the whole trip is really well organised and personally I had no idea that Alsace was so beautiful. The cruise on the Ill river in Strasbourg was just breathtaking!"*

#### OBJECT OF ATTENTIONS

Alsace, as a whole, was understandably the object of many attentions from the part of the organisers. Pre-tours were organised in **Colmar**, **Mulhouse** and **Ribeauvillé** to make guests discover what the region has up its sleeves. Participants particularly enjoyed a private dinner at the **Cité du Train** in Mulhouse, a unique museum retracing

European rail history and future, and the **Museum Unterlinden** in Colmar, which will re-open in December after a top-to-bottom refurbishment. I personally enjoyed two new, very different venues in Strasbourg: **Shadok**, a digital factory which addresses the issues raised by the digital revolution and which can also serve as a venue for a dinner or a trendy cocktail, and **Villa Quai Sturm**, a beautifully renovated mansion complete with high ceilings and stucco friezes which was once a German casino!

This overall operation aims to strengthen the position of France in the professional meetings and events sectors. With regard to the feedback I heard from participants altogether, this was clearly a success and the France Meeting and Convention Board of Atout France can be proud of their efforts.

**More info on France as a business events destination**

[www.rendezvousenfrance.com](http://www.rendezvousenfrance.com)  
[www.atout-france.fr](http://www.atout-france.fr)