



## One hotel, one story

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# Mercure Poitiers Centre : a chapel become hotel

A new Mercure establishment opened in the French town of Poitiers last June 1. Located in the town center, close to the station and the Théâtre Auditorium, in a unusual and unique building ... In fact, the hotel is in a former Jesuit chapel.

### Long ago, there was ... La chapelle du Gesù\*

Built in 1852 by the French architect, Magloire Tournesac, the Jesuit "chapel" was consecrated by Monseigneur Pie, bishop of Poitiers, in the name of Jesus and Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours (Our Lady of Good Help) on June 20, 1854. With its tall, imposing spire, this landmark of Poitiers can be admired for miles around. In its early days, it housed a school then many different congregations, such as the Adoration Nocturne (Nocturnal Adoration), the Enfants de Marie (Children of Mary), the Demoiselles de Magasins (shop girls), the Ouvrières (women workers) and the Pères de Famille (fathers' group).

In 1870, it was no longer used for religious purposes.

In 1950, it was acquired by the Vienne region with the aim of using it to hold the archives previously stored at the Prefecture. The alteration work was overseen by the architect Boudoin. For 50 years, it would be known as the place where the region's archives were kept and stored.

In 2010, the chapelle du Gesù was facing a new destiny: to become a truly exceptional hotel. Due to the complex nature of this building and the technical considerations involved, it would take two years of relentless work to complete this remarkable project.

In 2012, the dream becomes a reality. The challenge has been met. The chapelle du Gesù is ready to receive its guests in a unique and incomparable setting. It became a hotel.

### From place of worship to hotel: a bold and ambitious project

Nothing can compare with the unique charm of this hotel. Rich in history, it has a soul about it that is quite unusual and exquisitely engaging. This is not just a place to stop off. It is a place that takes you on a journey to the past with a breath of modernity. It is an escape to the heart of the chapelle du Gesù, a gem of modern architecture that goes back to the 19th century. You can stay here for a meal or for a night. And if you fall in love with it, you can stay even longer...

Ideally located in the town centre, close to the train station and just a few steps away from the Théâtre Auditorium de Poitiers, the Hôtel\*\*\*\* Mercure Poitiers Centre is a place like no other.

This monumental project – to create a hotel within a church – was taken on by the architect François Pin. This grand design is one of the most spectacular ever to have taken shape in the heart of Poitiers, coinciding with the complete revamping of the town itself. It will become, without a doubt, a place forever associated with this town.

François Pin chose a soft approach, opting for an elegant white concrete for most of the structures. Pure and immaculate, it is perfectly in keeping with the soul of this place and gives a calm and dreamy ambiance, a human warmth and serenity.

By combining a hotel and restaurant, he was able to alternate atmospheres, creating a perfectly balanced contrast between the huge public areas and the smaller, private rooms.



### Bedrooms with an original charm

There are 50 bedrooms in this hotel, all of them unique. Each one was conceived by architect François Pin and decorated by design consultants Design By O. Light and soft shades give the rooms luminosity, warmth and a distinctive refinement. Some rooms enjoy an unobstructed view over Poitiers.

For extra comfort, all rooms are equipped with a telephone, a free Wi-Fi Internet connection, cable and satellite TV, and a minibar.

Some rooms have additional amenities, such as an espresso machine or a selection of welcome products: body lotion, bathrobe, slippers,

etc.

Different rooms have different styles, with a choice to suit all tastes and desires: "standard" rooms, with a more modern, classic design and "privilege" rooms, steeped in history, with a striking originality.

The rooms can be accessed by a lift or, even better, by a more evocative route: the white concrete staircase, like something out of a fairy tale. A true work of art. A journey beyond time...

**The "Les Archives" restaurant: beautiful in the past, breathtaking in the present**

The restaurant is located in the lower part of the nave and chancel of the former Chapelle du Gesù. It opens onto the Rue Edouard Grimaux, also recently renovated, and catches its brightness and vitality.

The space is based around new structures: six slender pillars, light and absolutely unique, which support the hotel bedrooms above.

Both classic and inventive, modern and romantic, the spirit of the restaurant extends into the kitchens themselves: the ground-floor kitchen, which opens onto the main restaurant area, and the upper-floor kitchen, where the pastries are made, opening onto the old galleries, which form a balcony over the ground floor.

These kitchens are run by two young chefs: Gil Elad and Ayako Ota. This is more than just a restaurant... It is also a tea room, a bar, a smoking room and a place for music.

Located near the town centre and the Théâtre Auditorium de Poitiers, "Les Archives" is a refined setting with a true softness and warmth. A place that feels beautifully alive.



A place of exception to discover!

\* *Gesù is Italian for Jesus*

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