



ESCAPES CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMÉLIE WITH OVER 100 FREE CINEMA SCREENINGS ACROSS THE UK



Audrey Tautou in Amélie, photo credit: Curzon

Escapes brings free screenings of beloved French classic to independent cinemas nationwide this March for **National Lottery Open Week**

[Images](#)

[Film Trailer](#)

Escapes, a nationwide initiative supported by the **BFI** awarding National Lottery funding, will mark the 25th anniversary of Amélie with more than 100 free screenings at independent cinemas across the UK from 9 - 10 March 2026 as part of **National Lottery Open Week**.

AMÉLIE tells the story of Amélie Poulain (Audrey Tautou), a shy and quirky waitress who decides to change the lives of those around her for the better while dealing with her own isolation.

First released in 2001 and directed by Jean-Pierre Jéneut, **the film became a break-out global phenomenon**, defying all expectations for a French-language romantic comedy to become an international box office hit, grossing \$174.4 million.

Its reputation since has only grown. In recent years, **The New York Times hailed AMÉLIE as one of the best movies of the 21st century**. American Cinematographer named it the best shot film of the decade. **BBC Culture asked 'is Amélie the most stylish film ever made?'**

Audrey Tautou's performance as Amélie brought her international recognition overnight. The film received **5 Oscar nominations**, and **2 BAFTA wins**. Irresistibly iconic and beautifully crafted, the romantic comedy's surreal Parisian world still inspires today.

These free screenings come ahead of Curzon re-releasing Amélie in cinemas nationwide on 3 April.

National Lottery Open Week (7 - 15 March), sees hundreds of National Lottery-funded venues offer free or discounted entry and special offers as a thank you to players for raising over £32 million a week for good causes.

Escapes is designed to make the big screen more accessible, celebrate independent cinemas and drive new audiences to local venues. From Hackney to Haverfordwest, this National Lottery Open Week, Escapes will bring free cinema to communities across the UK.

Ben Luxford, Director of UK-wide audiences at the British Film Institute (BFI) said: *"25 years on, audiences continue to fall in love with Amélie. It is bold, joyful, and as wonderful to watch as ever. Thanks to National Lottery funding, Escapes is giving audiences the chance to see Amélie on the big screen - completely free - while celebrating the independent cinemas that keep film culture alive. We are excited for a new generation to see Amélie in cinemas for the first time and for film fans to revisit this classic on the big screen."*

PRESS INFORMATION | IMAGES

Ned Mansfield

press@cinematik.app | +44 7927 574720

escapetothecinema.co.uk | [@cinema_escapes](https://www.instagram.com/cinema_escapes)

Notes to editors

About Escapes

Escapes is a nationwide initiative supported by the BFI awarding National Lottery funding, on a mission to bring cinema to all. Through free screenings at over 150 independent cinemas across the UK, Escapes provides an opportunity for new and returning audiences to discover the magic of cinema. Whether it's a blockbuster, an indie gem, or a cult classic like *Point Break*, Escapes is committed to engaging local communities and breaking down barriers to cinema-going.

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About the BFI

We are a cultural charity, a National Lottery distributor, and the UK's lead organisation for film and the moving image.

Our mission is:

To support creativity and actively seek out the next generation of UK storytellers

To grow and care for the BFI National Archive, the world's largest film and television archive

To offer the widest range of UK and international moving image culture through our programmes and festivals - delivered online and in venue

To use our knowledge to educate and deepen public appreciation and understanding

To work with Government and industry to ensure the continued growth of the UK's screen industries

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Jay Hunt OBE.

[bfi.org.uk](https://www.bfi.org.uk) | [@britishfilminstitute](https://twitter.com/britishfilminstitute)

About National Lottery Open Week

National Lottery Open Week will be back from 7 - 15 March 2026.

To say thank you for the £32 million raised for good causes every week by players, National Lottery funded venues are offering free entry, discounts and special offers throughout National Lottery Open Week.

With hundreds of venues to choose from across the UK, there are plenty of free and low-cost days out to look forward to, including the chance to:

Delve into the past at historical houses, castles and museums

Embrace nature in all its glory at lots of wonderful wildlife hotspots

Relive iconic moments at famous sports venues

Find out more about local community projects

Enjoy a culture fix at art galleries and theatres across the UK

[NationalLotteryOpenWeek.com](https://www.NationalLotteryOpenWeek.com)

About The National Lottery

The National Lottery® raises vital funds that help communities thrive across the UK. Every ticket makes a difference - from grassroots sport and local arts to heritage and community initiatives. Distribution of funds is managed by independent bodies.

Players of The National Lottery raise around £32 million every week for National Lottery-funded projects. Since its launch in 1994, more than £52 billion has been raised, funding over 670,000 Good Cause projects in every part of the UK. In every postcode district, most people will have benefited from a National Lottery-funded project at some point.

The National Lottery has awarded players over £102 billion in prize money, creating more than 7,700 millionaires.

Learn more about The National Lottery at www.national-lottery.co.uk and explore projects funded in your area at www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk.

Players must be 18 or over. Please play responsibly.

Links:

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