



Paris, Normandy, Brittany and the Loire Valley

10 days

Tour Description

Start your explorations in Paris visiting the city's iconic sites including the Eiffel Tower, the Arch de Triomphe and Notre Dame Cathedral. Continue to Normandy, a region associated with art, food and WWII. Imagine yourself as a member of the French aristocracy as you visit the Loire Valley dotted with magnificent chateaux. Return to Paris to explore fabulous Versailles and have a free day to explore the boutiques, boulangeries and patisseries.

Highlights

- ❖ **Tour of Paris highlights**
- ❖ **Experience Giverny, the beautiful home of artist Claude Monet**
- ❖ **Walking tour of medieval Rouen, site where Joan of Arc burned at the stake**
- ❖ **Explore the harbor town of Honfleur, inspiration for many impressionist painters**
- ❖ **View the famous tapestry of Bayeux**
- ❖ **Honor D-Day by visiting the beaches, the Invasion Museum and the American Memorial**
- ❖ **Visit atmospheric Mont St. Michel**
- ❖ **Visit the chateaux of the Loire Valley**
- ❖ **Explore the magnificent Palace of Versailles**

Sample Tour Itinerary

Paris – 2 nights

Day 1: Arrive Paris

Upon arrival in Paris, meet your guide who will take you on a panoramic tour of the “City of Lights.” This tour highlights the famed sites of Paris including the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, the sweeping banks of the Seine River, and Notre Dame Cathedral. In the afternoon, check into your hotel and enjoy the remainder of the day at your leisure.

Day 2:

Today enjoy a full day tour of Paris city. Visit the Eiffel Tower and travel to the 2nd floor where you will enjoy stunning views of the city. Continue on to visit the enchanting Notre Dame Cathedral, located in the heart of the city. After free time for lunch continue on your tour of Paris seeing many of the famous sights of Paris and conclude your day with a cruise on the Seine River. Dinner is on your own this evening.

Normandy – 2 nights

Day 3: Arrive Normandy

After breakfast, board your motor coach. Your first stop will allow you to step into the world of Claude Monet. A visit to the gardens and home that inspired his impressionist art will be sure to stay with you. You then continue on to the 2000 year-old medieval city of Rouen. You will take a walking tour through the Gothic and half-timbered wonders, beginning at Jeanne d’Arc church



where 19 year-old Jeanne was burned at the stake in 1431. You will also see the flamboyant Gothic Cathedral Notre Dame that inspired Monet's exploration of light and color in his paintings. Later, your coach will wind its way along the Normandy coast, stopping in the cozy harbor town of Honfleur to enjoy its half-timbered houses and art galleries. Once a thriving seaport, it became a favorite of the 19th-century impressionist painters.

Day 4:

Travel to the city of Bayeux for an opportunity to see the 900 year old tapestry depicting the Battle of Hastings. Next, continue to Côte Fleurie with its historic "D-Day" landing beaches, the Invasion Museum and the American Memorial at Omaha Beach.

Loire Valley – 2 nights

Day 5: Arrive Loire Valley

Today the group continues by coach to unforgettable Mont St. Michel, the island village dominated by its Benedictine Abbey. You will have time to wander the beautiful cobblestone streets and browse the village shops. After your visit of Mont St. Michel, you will drive south to the medieval walled town of Fougères and then on to Angers, the gateway to the Loire Valley.

Day 6:

Experience an excursion through the Chateaux region of the Loire Valley, including the Saumur Castle and the stunning "Sleeping Beauty Castle" of Usse. Continue on to Chinon Castle where Charles VII received Joan of Arc during the 100 year war and was persuaded to rise up and liberate France. The afternoon is at leisure to explore Angers.

Paris – 3 nights

Day 7: Arrive Paris

This morning you travel through the Loire Valley to the town of Chartres, noted for the famous Cathedral Notre-Dame de Chartres. Built in the 4th and 13th centuries, Rodin once called this the French Acropolis. You'll marvel at the stained glass window spanning 3000 square yards, unmatched anywhere in the world and then stroll the gardens for another view. You continue into Paris and check in to your hotel. Dinner is on your own this evening.

Day 8:

This morning enjoy a visit to Versailles which was the official residence of the Kings of France from 1682 until 1790. It was originally a hunting lodge, built in 1624, by Louis XIII. He used it as a secret refuge for his amorous trysts with Louise de la Valliere and built a fairy tale park around it. It is here from which the king radiated his power and where the destiny of Europe was decided over a century. The French classical architecture was complemented by extensive gardens. The afternoon is free for you to explore Paris. Dinner this evening is on your own.

Day 9:

After breakfast, enjoy the entire day at your leisure to explore Paris. Tonight we will gather for a farewell dinner.

Day 10:

After breakfast you will transfer to the airport for your flight home.



INCLUSIONS

- Accommodations: Paris 2 nights, Normandy 2 nights, Loire Valley 2 nights, Paris 3 nights
- Meals: Continental breakfast daily, lunch and dinner as noted in itinerary
- Ground transportation via air conditioned luxury coach
- English speaking assistants and guides
- Admission tickets as outlined in the itinerary