



Tour:

Vive La France!

Destination:

Paris, Normandy & the Loire Valley, France

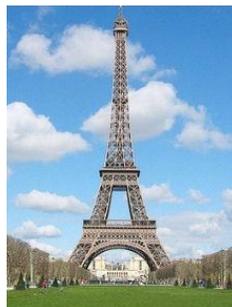
Specialization:

General Education & Culture

Itinerary:

9-days / 8-nights total trip

Vive La France!					
Day	Morning	Afternoon		Evening	
1	Overnight travel to Paris France				
2	Arrive Paris, clear customs & immigrations	Paris Panoramic City Tour	Check into Hotel	Welcome & Safety Meeting	Hotel Dinner
3	The Louvre - Guided Tour	The Eiffel Tower	Flyview 360 - Paris by Drone - Personal 3D Experience	Refresh	Local Dinner
4	Palace of Versailles with AudioGuide	Rouen Visit & Exploration	Transfer to Bayeux	Hotel Check-In & Free Time	Hotel Dinner
5	Local Bayeux School Visit for Cultural Exchange	Guided Tour of Normandy Landing Beaches + Wreath Laying Ceremony at the American Cemetery in Omaha Beach		Return to Bayeux	Local Dinner
6	Mont Saint Michel + Guided Abbey Tour	Transfer to Blois & the Loire Valley		Check into Hotel	Hotel Dinner
7	Guided Tour of the Loire Valley + Château de Chambord visit + Le Clos Lucé in Amboise (Leonardo da Vinci's last residence)			Dinner & free time	
8	Return transfer to Paris	Free time to explore Paris		Farewell Local Dinner & Evening River Cruise	
9	Transfer to Airport; return flight home				



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



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Day 1 – Travel to Paris, France

Meals in flight; overnight flight

Take an overnight flight to Paris, France. Dependent upon your airline, meals will generally be served in flight. Bring your headphones and a good book, snuggle in and get ready to wake up in Paris!

Day 2 – Arrive Paris!

Breakfast in flight; lunch on own, dinner included

Welcome to Paris! After arriving at Charles de Gaulle International Airport, you'll be greeted by your bilingual guide and escorted to your motorcoach. First stop – viewing this spectacular city!

Paris Panoramic Tour – The best way to arrive in Paris is by seeing the great sights and getting a flavor of the city. Packed with wonderful and interesting neighborhoods, glorious museums and unbelievable world renown sites, get a taste of the city and start feeling Paris come alive in your soul. Some sites not to miss include **The Eiffel Tower, The Champs de Mars, The Trocadero, The Arch of Triumph, The Champs-Elysees, Concorde Square, Madeleine Church, The Opera Garnier, Vendome Square, The Louvre Palace, Notre-Dame Cathedral, Orsay Museum, The Invalides** and more. Sit back, relax and enjoy!



After our city tour, we'll head for the hotel. After checking in, we'll have our Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meeting, free time to get acclimated to our new time zone, and dinner at the hotel. The links below are our standard hotels used, however specific lodging will be confirmed after your tour is fully booked as it may vary based on availability. Please let us know of any special concerns or requests and we will be happy to include your preferences!

Sample Hotels used in France

[Paris B&B IBIS Tour Eiffel](#)

[Bayeux B&B La Reine Mathilde](#)

[Blois B&B IBIS Centre Château Hotel](#)

Paris Fun Facts

- ✓ Paris was founded in the 3rd century BC and was previously called Lutetia. According to some, Lutetia was located in present-day Nanterre. The residents called themselves "Parisii" and therefore gave the name "Paris" to Lutetia.
- ✓ There are 1,803 monuments and 173 museums in Paris. There are also 450 parks and gardens in the city, spread out across more than 1,200 acres.



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- ✓ There are more than 400 movie screens in Paris, a hundred of which are operated by France's government art program, Art et Essai.
- ✓ There are on average 10 film or commercial shoots in the streets of Paris each day. Filming in Paris is free except for scenes shot in a garden, museum or swimming pool. In this case, the film crew must pay a fee to the city.
- ✓ The motto of Paris is "Fluctuat Ner Mergitur", which means "Tossed but not sunk" in Latin, referring to a ship.
- ✓ There are dozens of pianos in the train stations of Paris. Initiated by the SNCF, the project "Play me I'm yours", is in numerous cities across the world.
- ✓ The statues all around the Place de la Concorde represent eight large cities of France: Lille, Strasbourg, Marseille, Nantes, Lyon, Brest, Bordeaux, and Rouen.
- ✓ There are ten Statues of Liberty in France, five of which are in Paris. Moreover, you can find the Flame of Liberty next to the Pont de l'Alma. It was offered to the French people in 1987 by the International Herald Tribune to symbolize the friendship between the French and the Americans. It has become a memorial site for Princess Diana.
- ✓ Paris is #1 in the world when it comes to the number of libraries; it has 830 of them!
- ✓ The French army is the only one in Europe that still has carrier pigeons in its ranks. Kept at the Mont Valérien close to Paris, these pigeons can be used to carry out transmissions in case of a major catastrophe.
- ✓ The most-visited monument in Paris is the Notre-Dame cathedral with more than 14 million visitors annually.

Day 3 – Paris

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Today we'll get to know the heart of Paris. After breakfast at your hotel, board your coach and set off for some amazing sites!

The Louvre Museum + Guided Tour - The Musée du Louvre is one of the world's largest museums, the most visited art museum in the world and a historic monument. A central landmark of Paris, it is located on the right bank of the Seine. Nearly 35,000 objects from prehistory to the 19th century are exhibited over an area of 60,600 square meters (652,300 square feet).



The museum is housed in the Louvre Palace (Palais du Louvre) which began as a fortress built in the late 12th century under Philip II. Remnants of the fortress are visible in the basement of the museum. The building was extended many times to form the present Louvre Palace. In 1682, Louis XIV chose the Palace of Versailles for his household, leaving the Louvre primarily as a place to display the royal collection. In 1692, the building was occupied by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres and the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, which in 1699 held the first of a series of salons. The Académie remained at the Louvre for 100 years.

During the French Revolution, the Nation Assembly decreed that the Louvre should be used as a museum, to display the nation's masterpieces.

The museum opened on 10 August 1793 with an exhibition of 537 paintings, the majority of the works being royal and confiscated church property. The size of the collection increased under Napoleon and the museum was renamed the Musée Napoléon. After the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, many works seized by his armies were returned to their original owners. The collection was further increased during the reigns of Louis XVIII and Charles X, and during the Second French Empire the museum gained 20,000 pieces. Holdings have grown steadily through donations and gifts since the Third Republic. As of 2008, the collection is divided among eight curatorial departments: Egyptian Antiquities; Near Eastern Antiquities; Greek, Etruscan, and Roman Antiquities; Islamic Art; Sculpture; Decorative Arts; Paintings; Prints and Drawings. www.louvre.fr/en

The Eiffel Tower – As soon as you take that first step, you'll see for yourself how the scenery seems to expand around you. The roofs of Paris start to appear, and the monuments step out of the shadows.

The Eiffel Tower was built by Gustave Eiffel for the 1889 Exposition Universelle to celebrate the 100th year anniversary of the French Revolution. Its construction in 2 years, 2 months and 5 days was a veritable technical and architectural achievement. "Utopia achieved", a symbol of technological prowess at the end of the 19th Century, it was a demonstration of French engineering personified by Gustave Eiffel and a defining moment of the industrial era.

Over the decades, the Eiffel Tower has seen remarkable achievements, extraordinary light shows, and prestigious visitors. A mythical and audacious site, it has always inspired artists. As France's symbol in the world and the showcase of Paris, today it welcomes almost 7 million visitors a year, making it the most visited paid monument in the world.



Groups will enjoy access to the 2nd floor of the tower, accessible by elevator.



Flyview 360: Paris by Drone - Discover the spectacular FlyView experience — a thrilling jetpack flight over Paris in **fully-immersive virtual reality**. Starting from our launch area in the middle of downtown Paris, strap on your jetpack and take flight over the most beautiful city in the world. See Paris landscapes, filmed from the capital sky using drones on latest generation VR headset with a 360-degree vision. [LINK](#)

In the evening, we'll get refreshed and head out on the town for a local dinner.

Day 4 – Versailles & transfer to Bayeux

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Good morning Paris! We'll start the day discovering one of the most amazing palaces in the world!

The Château de Versailles (Palace of Versailles) - Out of a marshy forest and an old feudal chateau, Louis XIV, in fifty years' reign and thanks to the genius of the greatest of French, Dutch and Italian artistes of his time, made one of the largest and finest chateaus in the world. Symbol of the magnificence and splendors of absolute

power, Versailles offers you its grand apartments, its opera, a marvel of luxury and refinement, its royal chapel, a masterpiece of sacred art. Complete your visit of this exceptional site by taking a walk through the admirable gardens designed by Le Nôtre. [LINK](#)



We'll travel on to Rouen for lunch and a break before heading on to Bayeux.

Rouen, France - Rouen, capital of the northern French region of Normandy, is a port city on the river Seine. Important in the Roman era and Middle Ages, it has Gothic churches, such as Saint-Maclou and Saint-Ouen, and a cobblestoned pedestrian center with medieval half-timbered houses. The skyline is dominated by the spires of Cathédrale Notre-Dame, much-painted by Impressionist Claude Monet. Make sure to check-out the restaurant where Julia Child had her epiphany eating sole meunière and tarte tatin!



We'll continue our transfer down to Bayeux in the afternoon, checking into our lodging near the amazing Cathedral. We'll have a hotel dinner tonight. Save some time for an evening walk around town!

Day 5 – Bayeux & Normandy

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Hello Bayeux! We'll start the day with an amazing cultural immersion!

Lycée de Bayeux – Meet students from the local Bayeux school for a cultural exchange. Get involved with a bilingual quiz game, participating in small teams, followed by refreshments for all. Make new friends and get to know some pretty awesome French students.



In the afternoon, it's time to get serious as we visit Normandy.



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Normandy Landing Beaches: Guided Tour - The windswept coast of Normandy was the setting for some of the most significant events of World War II, from the D-Day landings to the Battle of Normandy. To learn about the heroic Allied soldiers, delve into the turbulent past of the region with a knowledgeable guide and visit the renowned D-Day battlefield sites situated on Normandy's picturesque coastline.



The American Cemetery in Colleville-Omaha Beach - Pay tribute to fallen soldiers at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial and browse the exhibitions in the informative visitor center to learn about the bravery, sacrifice and achievements of the Allied forces. Feel emotionally stirred as you stroll around Europe's largest American cemetery while enriching your knowledge of the region's history. Browse exhibits that speak eloquently of the events that took place on Omaha Beach - listen to personal stories, narrative texts and interactive displays and appreciate the insightful nature of the museum. [LINK](#)

Our groups will also participate in a **Wreath Laying Ceremony** at the cemetery.

After our full and touching day, in the late afternoon we'll return to Bayeux and have dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 6 – Bayeux to the Loire Valley

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Good morning Bayeux! Today we're in for a great day of casual travel as we depart Bayeux for the Loire Valley with a stop at Mont Saint Michel in route!

Mont Saint Michel & Guided Abbey Tour - Discover Mont Saint Michel and its abbey, one of the first UNESCO World Heritage sites. The long history of Mont-Saint-Michel began in 708, when Bishop Aubert erected a first sanctuary on Mont Tomb in honor of the Archangel. In 966, Benedictine monks settled there on request from the Duke of Normandy, Richard I. These monks, under the authority of the Abbot, followed the Order of Saint Benedict, and were responsible for the growth of the new monastery. The Abbey very quickly became a major place of pilgrimage in the Christian West, but also one of the centers of medieval culture where a large number of manuscripts were produced and stored. Mont-Saint-Michel was given the nickname "**City of the Books**". At a political and intellectual crossroads, the Abbey was visited by a large number of pilgrims over the centuries, including several Kings of France and England. [LINK](#)



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Positioned on the border between Normandy and Brittany, Mont-Saint-Michel was both a place of passage and a fortress for the Duchy of Normandy. From the 14th century onwards, the successive conflicts of the Hundred Years War between France and England required new, powerful fortifications to be erected. The Mount, defended by a few knights loyal to the King of France and protected by a wall flanked by several defensive towers, managed to resist attacks by the English army for nearly 30 years. In 1421, during a terrifying siege, the Romanesque chancel of the church collapsed, and was not completely rebuilt until 100 years later, in a flamboyant Gothic style. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Mount, deserted by its administrator abbots, lost its importance in both military and religious terms.

In 1622, the reform of the Congregation of Saint-Maur established a new religious order at the Abbey. They redeveloped the site and attempted to revive the monastic life and the pilgrimages. These monks also had to cope with the arrival of prisoners sentenced to imprisonment without trial, as the Abbey became a kind of "Bastille on the Sea".

In the afternoon we'll continue on to Blois in the Loire Valley. After a late afternoon check-in, we'll enjoy dinner in our hotel and an early evening.

Day 7 – The Loire Valley

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Good morning Loire Valley! Today, we'll have a personal guided tour of this incredible area!



The Loire Valley - Spanning 280 kilometers, the Loire Valley is located in the middle stretch of the Loire River in central France, in both the administrative regions Pays de la Loire and Centre-Val de Loire. The area of the Loire Valley comprises about 800 square kilometers. Every chateau in the Loire Valley tells its own story: of Sleeping Beauty at Ussé, of Leonardo da Vinci at Amboise and Clos-Lucé. Take in the phenomenal Apocalypse Tapestry in Angers before heading on to Nantes with its wacky Machines de l'île, featuring a giant ride-on elephant. Come nightfall, see the Anneaux de Buren in their illuminated glory. [LINK](#)

"If it's French splendor, style and gastronomy you seek, the Loire Valley will exceed your expectations, no matter how great. Poised on the crucial frontier between northern and southern France, and just a short ride from Paris, the region was once of immense strategic importance. Kings, queens, dukes and nobles came here to establish feudal castles and, later, sumptuous pleasure palaces – that's why this fertile river valley is sprinkled with hundreds of France's most opulent aristocratic estates. With crenellated towers, soaring cupolas and glittering banquet halls, the region's châteaux, and the villages and vineyards that surround them, attest to over a thousand years of rich architectural and artistic creativity. The Loire Valley is also known for its outstanding wines and lively, sophisticated cities, including Orléans, Blois, Tours and Angers – yet more reasons why the entire area is an enormous UNESCO World Heritage Site."

- Lonely Planet



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There's so much to see, do and explore here, the world is literally your oyster! From chateaus to gardens, nature trails to boat rides, we'll get first-hand knowledge of just how wonderful this region is. Our trek will take us to visit the **Château de Chambord** and also **Leonardo da Vinci's last residence, le Clos Lucé in Amboise**.

Day 8 – Loire Valley to Paris

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Hello France! Today we'll enjoy a leisurely morning before heading off, back to Paris. We'll settle into our hotel and then have some final time to explore Paris. This evening, we'll have dinner in a local restaurant and then finish up our grand tour with a river cruise, starting at the foot of the Eiffel Tower.

Les Bateaux Parisiens River Cruise – Discover Paris as you've never seen it. Gliding under one bridge to another with a view of the finest monuments, enjoy an hour's relaxation in the heart of bustling Paris. Your journey begins at the foot of the Eiffel Tower enjoying an all-glass boat with an open-air observation decks for exceptional views.



Day 9 – Return flight

Breakfast, based on flight times

This morning, after breakfast and dependent upon flight times, we'll pack and start to say goodbye to incredible France, taking memories with us that will last forever!

Au revoir!



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Vive La France!

Minimum Booking Numbers: 20 students

What's Included:

- Roundtrip flights to/from Paris, France
- 7-nights' accommodation: 3-nights Paris, 2-nights Bayeux, 2-nights Blois
- Airport transfers in Paris plus deluxe motorcoach group transportation for noted activities
- Breakfasts & dinners daily starting with dinner on your night of arrival and ending with breakfast on your day of departure
- Musée du Louvre
- The Eiffel Tower with 2nd floor access
- Musée d' Histoire Naturelle
- Flyview 360 - Paris by Drone - Personal 3D Experience
- Palace of Versailles excursion
- Abbey du Mont Saint Michel excursion
- Château de Chambord excursion
- Le Clos Lucé excursion
- Les Bateaux Parisians River Cruise
- Private Guides included for Panoramic City Tour of Paris, Musée du Louvre, the Normandy Landing Beaches, The Mont Saint Michel & The Loire Valley
- Personal Tour Ambassador
- Fund-a-Forest: A tree is planted in the name of each guest
- Dollar\$ For Scholars: \$2 donation in the name of each guest
- 24-hour emergency cover

What's Not Included:

- Airport transfers in your home area
- Lunches, snacks, plus meals on travel days other than dinner on arrival and breakfast on departure
- Fully comprehensive insurance (mandatory)
- Transportation not indicated in itinerary
- Cost of visas, full or collective passports
- Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
- Additional sightseeing & entertainment options
- Hotel incidental bills – meals, recreation charges, purchases billed to room, etc
- Personal expenditures
- Any gratuities – coach drivers, hotel services, tour ambassadors, specialty guides
- Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or service charges levied by the governments or our suppliers
- Luggage handling

As always, our staff are always available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming. If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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