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From
€9,585 EUR

Single Room
€11,509 EUR

Twin Room
€9,585 EUR

Prices valid until
30th December 2024

23 days
Duration

France
Destination

Level 2 - Moderate
Activity

Normandy and Brittany escorted history tours for small mature grups

May 02 2024 to May 24 2024

Normandy and Brittany escorted history tour.

Odyssey offers easy, convenient, and relaxed escorted small group tours across Western Europe and beyond. We explore France's fairy-tale natural beauty, its ancient Roman, and Imperial heritage, its World Heritage Sites, and world famous cities, all with some truly spectacular scenery along the way. This and more is all waiting to be explored on

one of Odyssey's small group tours of France, designed for the senior traveller, and led by experienced, and enthusiastic like minded people.

Our Normandy and Brittany escorted history tours for small mature groups are a 22-day journey through Northern France. It will appeal to the active senior looking to get beyond the usual 'big cities' destinations and enjoy unique experiences. The Normandy and Brittany Small Group Tour is suitable for both solo travellers and couples. This is a region linked by history, a dramatic coastline and some of France's great gastronomic experiences.

Itinerary

Our tour travels into the historic regions of Normandy, where the peaceful verdant landscape belies a turbulent past. After 10 nights in Normandy, we travel on to visit Brittany, where a strongly separate Celtic culture is still evident in this long-time independent Duchy. Here, we experience Poitou, famous for its rich farmlands and historic ports. We also visit the Loire Valley, replete with royal chateaux. The program starts and concludes in Paris.

Normandy

After a night in Paris, our guided small group tour begins with a visit to Rouen, the capital of Normandy. While here, we visit the "Monet Cathedral," the subject of many of his paintings. At each location we visit, a local tour guide will join us to share their deep knowledge. While in Rouen, we also see the strikingly modern Joan of Arc Church in the old market square.

Normandy is regarded as a typically French region of apple orchards, contented cows, cider, and pungent cheeses. Its peaceful pastoral landscape belies its historic conquests and devastating experiences during World War II. While in Normandy, we also explore the adjacent regions of Picardy and the World War I sites of the Valley of the

Somme.

Afterwards, the Normandy and Brittany small group tour heads west, before turning south we spend 4 nights in Bayeux. From here, we explore the regional hub of Caen, including learning about the city's medieval past. In Bayeux, our guides provide an understanding of this regional town and of course the famous Bayeux Tapestry. This unique work, which is actually embroidery rather than tapestry, tells the story of the Conquest of England by William the Conqueror from the Norman point of view. It also gives a fascinating insight into life in Norman France during the 11th century.

The Normandy and Brittany small group tour also visits the Normandy beaches. While here, we make time to see any memorials that members of the group may wish to visit.

Brittany

In the second part of the Normandy and Brittany small group tour, we head south. Continuing to explore the coast, we visit Mont St Michel, basing ourselves in the small seaside hamlet of Tregastel. In Brittany, we learn from its guides about the Celtic influence on this region of France. Afterwards, we visit Carnac. The standing stone monument consists of more than 3,000 granite menhirs, arranged in rows between 3300 BC and 1500 BC. Each stone block weighs a minimum of three tonnes was carved and transported for miles.

The Normandy and Brittany small group tour then moves inland into the Loire valley, viewing castles (chateaux) whilst spending 4 nights in Tours. The city's long history includes Gallic-Roman settlements and a role as the 15th-century French capital and seat of kings. It was heavily bombed in World War II, and its atmospheric centre is now surrounded with modern towers.

Our journeys from Tours includes time in Amboise a town in central France's Loire Valley. Amboise is famous for the Château d'Amboise, a grand 15th-century residence for King Charles VIII. The château includes the tomb of Leonardo da Vinci. We also visit Château du Clos

Lucé, Leonardo's former home, where he lived until his death in 1519.

Normandy and Brittany escorted history tours for small mature groups is a 22-day tour of Northwest France. The culture and history of this part of France is very rich. The tour is designed for the mature couple or solo traveller this escorted tour is the best for those seeking an in depth tour of this fascinating region. This program is just one of some 20 escorted tours Odyssey offers in France each year.

Head over to our blog for travel tips and a guide to touring France!

(This tour Normandy and Brittany escorted history tour for small mature groups was previously known as "French Tapestry.")
For more details, click the 'Top 5' or 'Itinerary' buttons above! If you're keen to experience this tour, please call or send an email. Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right hand side of this page.

Tour Notes

- Please note that, although contents will not vary, the order of days may be changed if local conditions demand.

Highlights

1. See Brittany, where a strongly separate Celtic culture is still evident in this long-time independent Duchy.
2. Visit Poitou, famous for its rich farmlands and historic ports.
3. Stand on the revered Normandy beaches where the Allied Forces bravely landed on D Day in 1944.
4. Trace the rich history of France through the opulent chateaux of the Loire.
5. Explore Normandy, where the peaceful verdant landscape belies a turbulent past.

Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: Paris

Overview:

Upon arrival in Paris, we will come individually to the hotel. There will be time to relax and freshen up before our welcome meeting and dinner, with a chance to meet each other.

Accommodation:

1 night at Le Magellan Hotel or similar.

Day 2

Locations: Paris - Giverny - Rouen - Bayeux

Overview:

We will stop at Giverny as well as Rouen, which is the capital of Normandy. There we can visit the “Monet Cathedral,” the subject of many of his paintings. We can also see the modern, striking Joan of Arc Church in the old market square. It has been said of Rouen that the city has enough venerable buildings of all descriptions to quench even the greatest historical thirst. We pause here for a brief time to explore. Our arrival in Bayeux will be in the late afternoon.

Normandy is regarded as a typically French region of apple orchards, contented cows, cider, and pungent cheeses. Normandy’s peaceful pastoral landscape belies its historic conquests and devastating experiences during World War II. From Normandy we also explore the adjacent regions of Picardy and the World War I sites of the Valley of the Somme.

Accommodation:

4 nights at Churchill Hotel or similar.

Day 3

Locations: Bayeux - Caen - Bayeux

Overview:

This morning we will have a sightseeing tour of Bayeux which, needless to say, includes the Bayeux Tapestry. This unique work, which is actually embroidery rather than tapestry, tells the story of the Conquest of England by William the Conqueror from the Norman point of view, and gives an amazing insight into life in Norman France during the 11th century.

On our field trip to Caen we will visit the impressive Memorial Museum. We will also have the chance to explore some other historic sites in Caen, more linked to the city's medieval past.

Accommodation:

Churchill Hotel or similar.

Day 4

Locations: Bayeux - Camembert - Honfleur - Bayeux

Overview:

This morning we sample some of the local regional produce with a tasting of Camembert cheese. We will also visit the typically picturesque Norman fishing port of Honfleur.

Accommodation:

Churchill Hotel or similar.

Day 5

Locations: Bayeux - Courseulles-Sur-Mer - Arromanches - Pointe du hoc - Sainte-Mere-Eglise - Bayeux

Overview:

Today we will tour the Landing Beaches of D Day, the Pegasus Bridge, Juno Beach Centre, and Musee du Debarqueement. We will view the Mulbery Harbour, visit the American Cemetery and Memorial, and Sainte-Mere-Eglise, the milestone zero in front of the town hall (symbol

and starting point of liberty). Dinner tonight will again be at a local restaurant with more local dishes.

Accommodation:

Churchill Hotel or similar.

Day 6

Locations: Bayeux - Mont Saint-Michel - Tregastel

Overview:

Today we will have an early start as we head west towards Brittany. We will explore the island of Mont-St-Michel, crossing by the causeway which links it to the mainland, and briefly visit the fortified port of St. Malo before arriving at our hotel at Tregastel.

With rugged shores washed by the Atlantic, Brittany has a strong Celtic heritage. It is a wild seafaring peninsula dotted with mysterious standing stones, dolmens, and cromlechs. Bretons have their own language and cuisine; the kingdom of Brittany did not become part of France until the 15th century. The gentle scenery of the southern Breton coastline contrasts with the rugged grandeur of the north and in order for us to experience both aspects, we stay at Tregastel in the north and Lorient in the south.

Accommodation:

2 nights at Park Hotel Bellevue Hotel or similar.

Day 7

Locations: Tregastel

Overview:

We have a full day field trip that explores the village of Tregastel, with its ancient church and “pink granite” aquarium as well as the dramatic Pink Granite coastline with its typical Breton fishing villages and quintessential Breton architecture.

Accommodation:

Park Hotel Bellevue Hotel or similar.

Day 8

Locations: Tregastel - Quimper - Lorient

Overview:

Today we leave the North Breton coast as we travel through some of the towns and villages of the region's interior en route to the southern city ot Lorient. We will seek out an example of a typical Breton Parish Close with an elaborate crucifixion scene and visit the ancient cathedral city of Quimper. We arrive in time for dinner.

Accommodation:

4 nights at Mercure Lorient Centre or similar.

Day 9

Locations: Lorient - Concarneau - Port Aven - Lorient

Overview:

Today's field trip will take us to the fortified city of Concarneau and the artists village of Pont Aven. We will have a wine tasting experience and sample some of the region's typical local produce such as succulent oysters, buttery cakes, and fermented apple cider!

Accommodation:

Mercure Lorient Centre or similar.

Day 10

Locations: Lorient - Rennes - Lorient

Overview:

A full day field trip takes us to the Breton capital, Rennes, where we will visit the parliament building, the Parc du Thabor. There will be time to explore the city individually.

Accommodation:

Mercure Lorient Centre or similar.

Day 11

Locations: Lorient - Quibern - Carnac - Lorient

Overview:

We will explore the dramatic coastal scenery of the Quiberon Peninsula. Later on we explore the more mysterious Neolithic age, as evidenced by the world famous standing stones of Carnac.

Accommodation:

Mercure Lorient Centre or similar.

Day 12

Locations: Lorient - Josellin - Vannes - Noirmoutier

Overview:

Before leaving Brittany, we explore the impressive and historic Chateau of Josselin as well as the city of Vannes, Breton capital since Roman times which still boasts impressive walls and city gates. We then continue our journey south into Poitou-Charentes and the island of Noirmoutier.

The Poitou region is renowned for its fiercely independent nature. Richelieu took La Rochelle by siege in 1628 during the Religious Wars and La Vendee rebelled against Paris during the Revolution. We stay close to the mouth of the Loire, on the island of Noirmoutier as our base to explore this green and historic region. We use this base to explore the countryside and historic cities of Poitou, La Vendee, and the Lower Loire Valley. We will experience the verdant canals of Venise Verte (Green Venice), historic Nantes, and the Island of Noirmoutier with its tiny capital and market.

Accommodation:

4 nights at Hotel Fleur de Sel or similar.

Day 13

Locations: Noirmoutier - Nantes - Noirmoutier

Overview:

We will pause in Nantes, the former seat of the Dukes of Brittany. We will see the main sights, the cathedral, and Les Machines de I'lle de Nantes.

Accommodation:

Hotel Fleur de Sel or similar.

Day 14

Locations: Noirmoutier

Overview:

Today we will explore the island of Noirmoutier and see its saltpans, submersible causeway, and tiny historic capital.

Accommodation:

Hotel Fleur de Sel or similar.

Day 15

Locations: Noirmoutier

Overview:

The Marais Poitevin (Poitou Marshlands) are the destination for today's full day field trip as we take a canal ride through the canals of the Venise Verte and visit the ruined Benedictine abbey of Maillezais.

Accommodation:

Hotel Fleur de Sel or similar.

Day 16

Locations: Noirmoutier - Angers - Saumur - Tours

Overview:

Our journey to Tours takes us along the Western stretches of the Loire Valley. The Loire Valley has long been the hunting region and playground of the French aristocracy with many fine castles along the River Loire and its tributaries. We will travel through historic Angers and medieval Saumur before arriving in Tours.

From here we learn about the golden age of the Loire Valley as we experience some of the magnificent towns, royal residences, and chateaux which make this one of France's most visited regions. We also sample some of the local produce of this wine region.

Accommodation:

4 nights at Best Western L'Artiste or similar.

Day 17

Locations: Tours - Amboise - Tours

Overview:

We start our exploration of Tours and its main sights today. First we will visit Amboise Royal Chateau. This emblematic monument and its landscaped gardens offer one of the most remarkable panoramas of the Loire Valley, and are registered as a World Heritage Site by Unesco. The site carries political and artistic importance within Europe in the Renaissance.

We also visit Chateau de Clos Luce. The spirit of Leonardo da Vinci remains in the Château du Clos Lucé, mingling with the memory of all the famous guests who contributed to the richest times enjoyed by the building.

Accommodation:

Best Western L'Artiste or similar.

Day 18

Locations: Tours - Blois - Valencay - Tours

Overview:

We start our day with a visit to the Chateu de Blois. The Royal Chateau offers a true panoramic survey of art and history of the chateaux of the Loire Valley. The residence of 7 kings and 10 queens of France, the Royal Chateau of Blois is a site reminiscent of the power and daily life at court in the Renaissance, as are the royal apartments, furnished and embellished with magnificent polychromatic decors. This afternoon we discover the classical Renaissance Chateau of Valencay as well.

Accommodation:

Best Western L'Artiste or similar.

Day 19

Locations: Tours - Chambord - Chenonceau - Tours

Overview:

We start our exploration of Chateau de Chambord and the petite French Renaissance style Chenonceau spanning the River Cher.

Accommodation:

Best Western L'Artiste or similar.

Day 20

Locations: Tours - Chartres - Paris

Overview:

This morning we pause in the cathedral city of Chartres before arriving in Paris. Entrance to the Louvre included today.

Accommodation:

2 nights at Le Magellan Hotel or similar.

Day 21

Locations: Paris

Overview:

We will have a full day city tour, including a visit to the Notre Dame Cathedral, entrance to Sainte Chapelle, and Les Invalides, Napoleon's tomb. Tonight we enjoy our farewell dinner.

Accommodation:

Le Magellan Hotel or similar.

Day 22

Locations: Paris

Overview:

Our tour concludes in Paris.

Paris Extensions
For those staying on in Paris, there is plenty of time to enjoy the city's many great historical sights, museums and galleries.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 21 nights of accommodation.
- 21 local-style breakfasts and 12 dinners.
- Transport, lectures, and field trips as indicated.
- Applicable entry fees and services of local guides.
- Services of a Tour Leader.
- Service charges and gratuities.
- Detailed tour information booklet.

What's not included in our Tour

- International and domestic airfares.

- Comprehensive International Travel Insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as telephone calls and laundry.

Level 2 - Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, be in good health, mobile and able to participate in 3-5 hours of physical activity per day, the equivalent of walking/hiking up to 8 kilometres on uneven ground.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.