






## 18 Breathtaking Days Paris to Paris Northern France - Normandy, Brittany, Loire Valley & Chantilly

### Extraordinary Sights, Remarkable Visits, and Fabulous Food!

From Brittany's rugged far west coast with cliff clinging castles and timeless villages to evocative châteaux and Normandy's beaches, cheeses and calvados

Such a different itinerary. In the Loire Valley, a region famed for its Renaissance palaces, manicured gardens and rich royal heritage, you will stay in a 5-star Châteaux. Wander through masterpieces like Chambord, Chenonceau and Villandry, enjoy a vineyard picnic beneath a shady tree. In far west Brittany, discover ancient standing stones older than the pyramids, medieval walled towns, island fortresses, cliff-top sculptures and take a scenic cruise around a glittering bay dotted with rugged islands. Josselin and Locronan will astound you, and from Quimper to Concarneau, Saint-Malo to Mont Saint-Michel, everyday blends cultural gems with local flavours and relaxed "My Time" moments. In Normandy, the moving D-Day sites bring to life stories of courage that shaped modern Europe. Your final days are steeped in artistry and elegance—from Monet's blooming gardens at Giverny to the opulence of Chantilly's château, museum and legendary stables. With hand-picked experiences, a leisurely pace and multiple three night stays in extraordinary châteaux and specially selected hotels, this is France at its most beautiful, authentic and unforgettable.

-  Travel in a first-class air-conditioned touring coach
-  Welcome drink on Day 1  
28 meals including breakfast daily (B), 1 lunches (L) and 10 evening meals (D)  
A complimentary glass of wine, beer or soft drink with all included dinners
-  Hotel portorage of 1 bag per person (where available)  
17 nights specially selected hotel accommodation  
Free WiFi at most hotels (where available)
-  Personal audio system whilst on tour (where available)  
Fully escorted by our experienced Tour Manager  
ALL tips for your Tour Manager, Driver and Local Guides  
Local guides as described in the itinerary
-  Hand Selected Albatross Inclusions : Private picnic lunch at a Loire Valley chateau vineyard, a traditional horse-and-cart ride through the Brière marshes , exploring the prehistoric Carnac standing stones , a scenic cruise of the island-studded Gulf of Morbihan , tasting world-famous oysters in Cancale , uncovering the history of the Bayeux Tapestry , a sophisticated Calvados tasting at Château du Breuil , and witnessing a grand equestrian demonstration at the Great Stables of Chantilly  
ALL excursions, scenic drives, sightseeing and entrances as described



## Welcome to Paris!

Day 1



Crowne Plaza Paris - Republique



D

Your tour commences this evening in Paris. Join us for a welcome drink before dinner. This is an ideal chance to meet, and get to know, your Tour Manager and fellow travellers.

## Paris to Loire Valley and Chambord Château

Day 2



Château d'Artigny, Montbazou



B,D

We board our coach and make our way south-west to the verdant Loire Valley where, during the 15th and 16th centuries, the Kings of France and their courtiers created their grand holiday palaces. What better way to be introduced to the wonderful Loire Valley than our afternoon stop at Chambord where we enjoy a guided tour through the magnificent château. This enormous château was created by King Francois I as a hunting lodge within the surrounding grounds, which consisted of over 5,000 wooded hectares. Easily the biggest château in the Loire Valley, the white marble, double helix spiral staircase you walk 'inside' which was designed by da Vinci, is truly remarkable, and the view from the chateau's rooftop walkways is fabulous. Continuing to Montbazou we reach our superb 5 star 'grand' chateauu hotel – Château d'Artigny, where we stay the next three nights. There are château hotels, and there are château hotels, and then, with its opulent interior and elegance... there is d'Artigny!

## Château Villandry, Azay-le-Rideau and a vineyard picnic

Day 3



Château d'Artigny, Montbazou



B,L

Every château is so different! This morning, we visit the pretty little town of Azay-le-Rideau to visit the spectacular château. Acknowledged as the finest example of early Renaissance French architecture, it sits on its own little lake, surrounded by romantic grounds, with weeping willows and giant Lebanese Cedar trees. Take time to enjoy a leisurely walk around the lake and through the château. Inside is fascinating as each floor is furnished from a different historical era. Afterwards at nearby Château de l'Aulee we have a short tour of the wine cellars before enjoying a delightful picnic lunch and wine tasting in the Château's gardens, beside the vineyards, under a shady tree.

This afternoon we will explore at leisure the wonderful terraces and gardens of Château Villandry. These terraced gardens are vast! Inspired by the classic gardens of the 16th and 18th century, different levels of the gardens include ponds, topiary, ornamental hedges and an extraordinary kitchen garden covering 12,500 square metres. Time to wander at your own pace or take a seat and literally smell the roses!

After time to relax and freshen up back in 'your' 5-star Château, we will take you into the nearby city of Tours for an evening at leisure in the old town, with its brightly coloured, half-timbered houses. Time to discover your own provincial bistro for dinner amongst the cobbled streets around Place Plumereau.

## Château Chenonceau, Amboise and da Vinci

Day 4



Château d'Artigny, Montbazou



B,D

This morning we enjoy a visit to the magnificent Château Chenonceau, spanning the River Cher on a series of graceful arches. Possibly one of the most photographed of the Loire châteaux this was the former home of Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de Medici and is nicknamed the 'Ladies' Château. Time to stroll in the stunning gardens and visit the interior of the château. Later we stop to explore the charming riverside town of Amboise, on the banks of the River Loire, with its Royal Palace, where Leonardo da Vinci once lived as a guest of King Francois I. We have included a visit to da Vinci's residence – Château du Clos Lucé. Here in the underground rooms, you will see displayed forty machines designed by this amazing inventor. Dinner this evening is again included in your gorgeous, grand 5-star Château hotel.

## Nantes, Brittany and Château la Bretesche

Day 5



Domaine de la Bretesche Golf & Spa, Missillac

9Ψ B,D

Tracing the River Loire to its source we enjoy a long leisurely lunch stop in the capital of the Loire-Atlantique department – Nantes. Here you will find the medieval Château des Ducs de Bretagne, where the Dukes of Brittany once lived. With a rich maritime history, Nantes is a big city, the 6th largest in France, and between the Château and the Opera Square, and beyond, you will find huge pedestrian boulevards, lined with excellent shops and fabulous al fresco restaurants and bars. Such an easy place for you to relax and explore. Fabulous! Mid-afternoon we cross into Brittany and soon reach Missillac where we stay three nights in the 5-star Domaine de la Bretesche Golf & Spa. Surrounded by 200 hectares of spectacular countryside, the park is dominated by the lakeside Château. The Domaine is set around a courtyard, dominated by a huge shady tree, and beside it is a superb 18-hole golf course (and yes you have time to play a game if you wish – you are with Albatross and our pace is always more leisurely!) Here you will also find a superb Spa and Wellness centre. Dinner tonight is in the hotel bistro.

## 'My Time', horse and cart ride, thatched cottages and Guérande

Day 6



Domaine de la Bretesche Golf & Spa, Missillac

9Ψ B

Your morning is totally free, 'My Time' to explore the 200-hectare parklands, take photos of the striking château, maybe play golf, or relax in the Spa and Wellness centre, or maybe... just do nothing!

This afternoon, we drive into the Parc Naturel Régional de la Brière (France's second largest wetland area after the Camargue). At the Port de Bréca we board some Caleches (horse and carts) for a 'clip clop' tour through the heart of the Briéron marshes. Afterwards, there is time for you to take a short stroll into the peaceful street of the tiny old town. This is a photographer's delight as you walk past tiny, thatched cottages with twee gardens, bursting with flowers and colour. Absolute picture postcard stuff! Next... the showpiece hamlet of Kerhinet near Saint-Lyphard, with its single street fringed by thatched cottages housing craft businesses and displays. Time to amble amongst the cottages, do a little shopping, or maybe sit in the cafe to enjoy... something refreshing! Later we take a scenic drive and island hop on the back roads through the Marais salants de Guérande (salt pans set in the estuary).

Our destination and final stop for the day is in the iconic walled city of Guérande where you will enjoy free time to walk around the maze of characterful streets. Fortunately, the shops stay open late and there are heaps of traditional Brittany restaurants and bistros where you can find dinner.

## Carnac's standing stones, Vannes and Gulf of Morbihan Cruise

Day 7



Domaine de la Bretesche Golf & Spa, Missillac

9Ψ B,D

What a day we have in store for you! Our first stop of the day will be in Carnac where you will be staggered by the enormous fields of prehistoric menhirs - granite standing stones. Imagine a football field in length. This is how wide the aligned stones stretch, and lengthwise they stretch in the distance – perfectly aligned for 4 kms. Erected by pre-Celtic people in a period between 3,300 and 4,500 years BC – that's 6,000 years ago – they are older than Stonehenge or the Pyramids. The largest gathering of standing stones in the world, they are soon to be UNESCO Heritage listed. During our visit we board an open top bus for a fascinating guided tour through these amazing menhirs.

Later we will enjoy lunchtime in the historic medieval centre of Vannes. Filled with delightful, half-timbered houses, Vannes is a wonderful place to explore and enjoy lunch. Nearby is the Gulf of Morbihan - the pearl of southern Brittany. Called 'one of the most beautiful bays in the world, "Morbihan" is Breton for 'little sea', and here we enjoy an afternoon cruise around the bay – littered with rugged little islands, pretty coastal cottages, fishing harbours and oyster farms.

Dinner tonight is back at our fabulous Domaine Hotel. What a day!

## La Gacilly, Josselin and the Riverside Château

Day 8



Best Western Plus Hôtel Kregenn, Quimper



B,D

Heading inland across Brittany's rolling hills we reach the lush Aff valley, and the flower-decorated streets of La Gacilly. Best known as the birthplace of origin of the cosmetics company Yves Rocher, craftspeople have opened shops in the narrow streets. The highlight of your visit will be the unique Photo Festival held each year in summer. Europe's largest open-air photography festival, huge photographs – some a dozen metres high, adorn the streets, sides of buildings, and throughout gardens and alleys of La Gacilly. Free to walk around, there are 20 or so open-air galleries, and the theme changes each year. Here also, by the river, you will find the museum Maison Yves Rocher and the open-air photo gallery continues with massive pictures scattered through the woods and gardens next door.

Next stop, the incredibly pretty, perfectly preserved village of Josselin, along with its majestic castle lording above the River Oust. We are on the Route des Ducs, and so we have included a visit inside the castle, gardens and the unique Doll Museum. Time also to explore the Sainte-Croix district, the medieval quarter restored in 2006, which is as old as the castle. Built around the charming chapel with the same name, it contains many fine examples of beautifully painted, colourful half-timbered houses. You will also have time to stroll down to the river for the incredibly scenic view of the castle, beside the old town, reflecting in the pretty river Oust.

Later we head back to the far west of Brittany and the historic town of Quimper, where we stay for the next two nights. Our hotel for the next two nights is wonderfully located. Close to the river and an easy walk to the delightful Old Town with its massive twin-spired cathedral. Quimper makes a perfect base for us to explore the best part of Brittany! This evening we enjoy dinner in a local Breton restaurant.

## The island fortress of Concarneau and oh so pretty Locronan

Day 9



Best Western Plus Hôtel Kregenn, Quimper



B

Two fabulous visits today. This morning we drive South to visit the nearby walled city of Concarneau. Set on an island in the pretty old port you can only access the town via a broad stone bridge and over a drawbridge. Inside is a delightful maze of cobbled streets, alleys, shops and restaurants. Later we travel north to visit the impossibly pretty village of Locronan. Awarded the status of one of the "Most Beautiful Villages in France" with good reason. Its wealth came from the weaving industry and during its peak in the mid-18th century was when the majority of Loughnane's architecture was built. Cars are not allowed on its cobbled streets which are lined with elegant stone houses, dormer windows which lead to a delightful central square, Place de l'Eglise. Gargoyles hang off the small church and all shops must only bear traditional signs. So pretty, so genuine, over 30 major films have used this town as a backdrop. With so few tourists, this is the far west of Brittany at its best! Your evening is free back in nearby Quimper.

## Fort La Latte, Rugged Seas, Dinan and Saint-Malo

Day 10



Hotel & Spa Oceania, Saint-Malo



B

Heading across to the northeast of Brittany we do a little sidetrack to visit the gloriously preserved Fort La Latte. Also known as the Château de Roche Goyon, it is one of Brittany's most famous castles. It's very "Game of Thrones" with a fabulous location set high over the rugged cliffs, with sheer drops down to the waves crashing on the rocks far below. Dramatically perched, a huge number of classic films have been made here, most famous being the film The Vikings starring Kirk Douglas and Tony Curtis. Lunchtime will be enjoyed in the 'time capsule' medieval city of Dinan. The upper town is full of classic half-timbered buildings and for those that like a steep walk down there are some great riverside restaurants. Saint-Malo is nearby and we stay the next three nights in an excellent hotel just 200 metres from Porte Saint Vincent and the massive walls of the old town.

Later your Tour Manager will escort you on the short walk into town. Just inside the walls are literally dozens and dozens of restaurants, most with seafood as a specialty. Your evening is at leisure in Saint-Malo.

## 'My Time' in Saint-Malo, Cancale, Cliff Carved Sculptures and dinner above the cliffs

Day 11



Hotel & Spa Oceania, Saint-Malo



B,D

Most of your day is completely free. 'My Time' to explore Saint-Malo and walk along the historic promenade. Maybe enjoy a long leisurely lunch sampling the local cuisine including savory crêpes, scallops or moules marinière et frites? But leave space for this evening! Mid-afternoon we drive east to the little seaside port of Cancale, which is famous for its succulent oysters. You will have time to find your own quayside cafe and sample some of the local produce, fresh as it comes.

Later we visit Rothéneuf to visit the Les Rochers Sculptés. Translated this means 'Sculptured Rocks' and this is such a unique experience. Between 1894 and 1907 a local priest, one who suffered a paralyzing stroke, used simple hand tools to carve hundreds of lifelike and exotic figures and creatures into a granite cliff face suspended above the sea. As you walk around and amongst them you discover a new figure at every turn. It is mesmerizing to think of this ageing priest, alone on these windy cliffs, chipping and sanding smooth these amazing, and weird, rock carvings, over some 13 years.

Hungry? On top of these cliffs is a fabulous gourmet restaurant with a terrace, and a view! *Madame et Monsieur... Dinner is served!*

## Mont Saint-Michel – Monastery and Old Town

Day 12



Hotel & Spa Oceania, Saint-Malo



B

Today is dedicated to the fabulous Mont Saint-Michel. Driving east, we arrive and then board a transfer bus which takes us across the huge causeway and over the marshes and sandy mud flats to the island. At the end of the causeway, the view is spectacular! Looming over the entire island is the majestic Monastery, complete with wide stone terraces with massive views across the sand flats at low tide, archways and courtyards and massive walls. Below is a busy little town, essentially one cobbled street, lined with shops and cafes, which winds up and up to the monastery gates. We have included entrance to the Monastery complex, and ample time for you to explore and enjoy this amazing site. Your evening is at leisure in Saint-Malo.

## Normandy, D-Day Landing Museum, Pegasus Bridge

Day 13



Hôtel Barrière Le Normandy, Deauville



B,D

Heading into Normandy we arrive at Arromanches-les-Bains, which figured so heavily in the June 1944 D-Day Landings. The beach in front was codenamed Gold Beach and in the shallow water offshore you can still see the remnants of the Phoenix caissons that constructed the Mulberry B Harbour. During our visit the engaging story of the Landing will unfold. We have also included entrance to the fascinating Musée du Débarquement (D-Day Museum).

Crossing Normandy we make a special visit to Pegasus Bridge. This is the spot where 180 men landed in Horsa gliders just metres from the bridge which spans the Caen Canal. It is quite surreal to stand on the actual place the gliders landed and realize you are standing on the exact spot where the Liberation of France and Europe started. And the world changed direction. Nearby is the Pegasus Memorial Museum, utterly fascinating, rich in memorabilia and stories, and of course we have included entrance!

We are now in the Calvados region of France, and we stay the next three nights in historic Deauville. Our iconic hotel in the heart of Deauville and a stone's throw from the sea and iconic boardwalk, truly reflects the grand époque style reminiscent of the 'Halcyon Days' of Deauville, where the ladies and gentlemen of London and Paris would be socialites throughout each summer.

## Deauville Food Markets and Pretty Honfleur Harbour

Day 14



Hôtel Barrière Le Normandy, Deauville

42 B

This morning your Tour Manager will walk you into the main square of town and the large open-air food and produce markets. The lines of stalls selling cheese, cheese, more cheese, cured meats, delicacies, olives and tapenades, pickled food stuffs, and... did I mention cheese like Camembert, Pont-l'Évêque, Livarot, and Neufchâtel.

Here you enjoy a series of easy-going tastings (including some cheese!).

After free time to explore and shop we visit nearby Honfleur for lunchtime and the afternoon. This is the penultimate 'paint by numbers' harbour scene. Little, colourful boats bob in the water by stone jetties, the wharf sides are lined with restaurants, little winding cobbled streets and a unique wooden church in the middle... a perfect place for you to spend an absorbing afternoon.

Your evening is at leisure in Deauville.

## Stunning Saint-Germain-de-Livet castle, Lisieux and Château Calvados tasting

Day 15



Hôtel Barrière Le Normandy, Deauville

42 B

After a very leisurely start we drive south, deep into the Normandy countryside. Here we stop and visit what must be the prettiest château you can ever see. Being called "One of the most beautiful castles in Normandy" is an understatement. Nicknamed "The Wonder of the Pays d'Auge", Saint-Germain-de-Livet Castle is an architectural masterpiece nestled in the foothills of a valley. We have included a guided tour through the gardens, where we will hear the history of the château, surrounded by the moated water and weeping willows. Next to the château, beside the moated water is a lovely antique style tearoom cafe, and we have included coffee and rhubarb or apple crumble. Delightful. Lunchtime will be spent in nearby Lisieux, and later we will visit the huge Basilica of Sainte-Thérèse of Lisieux. The second most visited pilgrimage site in France, the Basilica dominates the skyline.

As a finale we will stop in La Spiriterie Française - Château du Breuil - for a Calvados tasting. Our guided tour will take us through the incredibly pretty grounds around the Château which dates back to the 15th century, however some parts are only about 200 years old! You will walk on a woodland pathway under huge trees, including giant Lebanese cedars, into the storage and distilling area, and later in the tasting room you will sample some excellent AOC Calvados brandy!

## Rouen and Giverny – Monet's Gardens

Day 16



Auberge du Jeu de Paume, Chantilly

42 B,D

A full day, but very special. First stop will be Rouen, where Joan of Arc was burned at the stake in 1430. We take a walk through the historic, beautiful old town, under the famous clock tower to the Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Rouen where we have included a locally guided visit. Later we can also visit the beautifully designed Church of Saint Joan of Arc. After lunchtime in Rouen's quaint squares and streets, we stop at Giverny where we have included entrance to Monet's House and fabulous gardens. So pretty, lines and lines of flowers and climbing vines, and in the Water Garden you can see the lily pond that inspired his most famous works of art.

Later we continue to Chantilly where we spend our last two nights, staying somewhere absolutely special. Winding through the forests of Chantilly, and then between the enormous stables and the Château, we pass under a massive stone arch to find our stunning 5-star hotel, the Auberge du Jeu de Paume. With 18th-century French-style décor, littered with original works of art and 'Louis furniture', the Auberge will be a hotel you will always remember. An extraordinary experience! Tonight we have included dinner nearby in the pretty village of Chantilly.

## Chantilly Château, Museum, Gardens and World-Famous Stables

Day 17



Auberge du Jeu de Paume, Chantilly



B,D

Our hotel is perfectly located in the gardens between the Château and the Giant Stables, so exploring from our hotel will be so easy! After a leisurely start we visit the Château de Chantilly, one of the finest jewels in the crown of France's cultural heritage. Prince Henri d'Orléans, Duke of Aumale, built the château to showcase his countless masterpieces and precious manuscripts. Here you will discover the second largest collection of antique paintings in France, after the Louvre Museum. The 19th century library is a joy, and on the first floor of the château you will wander through reception rooms with the grandeur and opulence of the time of the Princes of Condé.

Set in 115 hectares, behind the château are the large French-style landscaped gardens designed by André Le Nôtre, and the Anglo-Chinese gardens and English gardens. Opposite the château you will find the famous Great Stables and beside it the Chantilly Racecourse. Built over 300 years ago, these stables are utterly enormous. A veritable 'Palace for Horses' they are an architectural masterpiece and the largest princely stables in Europe. Inside you will find the Living Museum of the Horse, which is a museum of everything to do with horses. Your ticket also includes entrance to the Dome of the Great Stables where, twice daily, the Equestrian Troop of the Château de Chantilly put on equestrian demonstrations.

This evening, we dine in... our hotel of course! Auberge du Jeu de Paume, with its historic restaurant decorated with artworks and antique furniture, will be a perfect venue to enjoy a memorable farewell dinner!

A fabulous day to complete an incredible tour!

## Paris – the 'City of Light'

Day 18



B

After a leisurely breakfast your tour will end with a group transfer to drop off at Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport, and later, a final drop off in Paris city centre at Gare du Nord station. We recommend you book flights departing Paris CDG after 1pm and trains departing central Paris after midday.

## Hand Selected Inclusions

These are just a few of the very special hand selected inclusions that will really make your touring experience exceptional and unique, and don't forget, with Albatross they are always included.



**Loire Valley  
Châteaux**  
4 very special visits



**Amboise  
Da Vinci's Residence**



**Château picnic  
lunch**  
A picnic in the Loire  
vineyards under a  
shady tree



**Château Villandry  
Magnificent Gardens**



**Carnac Menhirs**  
The largest gathering  
of standing stones in  
the world



**Domaine de la Bretesche Golf & Spa, Missillac**  
Elegant 15th-century Relais & Châteaux estate



**Thatched cottages, horse and carts**  
Traditional carriage rides and flower-filled cottages



**Morbihan Cruise**  
One of the most beautiful bays in the world



**Beautiful Josselin**  
Josselyn Chateau beside the River Oust



**Lovely Locronan**  
Western Brittany's absolute jewel



**14th century Concernau**  
A 700 year old island fortress



**Fort La Latte**  
Brittany's dramatic cliff top castle



**Cliff top dinner**  
Hand carved rock sculptures



**Mont Saint-Michel**  
The 'Wonder of the West'



**Normandy Beaches**  
D-Day Landing Museum and the Mémorial Pegasus Museum



**Saint-Germain-de-Livet**  
Exquisite Chateau gardens and Chateau Calvados tasting



**Monet's Gardens**  
Impressionist art – Impressionist's Gardens



**Chantilly Chateau**  
One of the finest jewels in the crown of France's cultural heritage

## Dates and Prices

Correct as of 06:39 on 11th June 2026

Start Date	End Date	Twin Price	Solo Price	
25 May 2027	11 Jun 2027	NZD\$21,109	NZD\$28,234	Space Available
31 Aug 2027	17 Sep 2027	NZD\$21,109	NZD\$28,234	Space Available
14 Sep 2027	01 Oct 2027	NZD\$21,109	NZD\$28,234	Space Available

\*The itinerary, inclusions and hotels featured are based on 2027 tour departures and may be subject to change. Any questions, please contact our European Tour Specialists for further details.

## Tour Suitability

**Due to the nature of the niche places we visit on this tour, to explore all of the beautiful towns and sites a level of mobility is required.**

- ✦ Fort La Latte. Also known as the Chateau de Roche Goyon, is set high over the rugged cliffs, with sheer drops down to the waves crashing on the rocks far below. To access it there is an 800 metres gentle walk down a roadway to the castle entrance. That means there is an 800 metres gentle uphill walk back up! This is an iconic defensive castle however, access and moving throughout the castle is very easy. (The only exception is, and only if you want to as it is not necessary for your castle visit – a climb up about 10 steps on the outside of the very top section of the stone turret. When you see it, you'll know if you can do it!)
- ✦ Les Rochers Sculptes. These 'Sculptured Rocks' with hundreds of lifelike and exotic figures and creatures are carved into a sloping granite cliff face suspended above the sea. There are no real, established pathways, instead it is more about walking on uneven footpaths between carved stones. If you have a poor sense of balance you should consider whether or not to descend below the top section. If it has been raining, stones can of course get slippery. Please refer to our Tour Suitability section for more information.

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## Terms & Conditions

- Information provided is true and correct at time of issue. Airfares not included. For further details please contact your consultant or full terms and conditions may be found at [www.albatrosstours.com.au/booking-conditions](http://www.albatrosstours.com.au/booking-conditions). Albatross Tours ABN 45 010 585 143. ATIA Accreditation No: A11341. CATO Accreditation No. 69562707