



# Normandy-Loire 2017

■ May 21-June 2 • Group capped at 16

- Comfortable hotels and charming inns – all with private bath
- The gardens, studio and home of Claude Monet in Giverny
- Old Bayeux, and its most famous sight, the Bayeux Tapestry
- Van transportation • Outstanding cuisine and fine wines
- D-Day beaches & monuments • Magnificent Chartres Cathedral
- Belle Epoque resorts of Deauville and Trouville • Outdoor markets
- Fresh seafood – some of the best in France • Stunning coastal scenery
- Abbey of Mont St. Michel • local cheeses, cider & calvados
- Magnificent Loire châteaux – Chenonceaux, Amboise, Chambord
- Cathedrals, markets, cafés, art, museums, natural wonders

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Tour cost – \$3,995\* per person sharing for land arrangements (airfare not included) • Singles add \$550

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## Day 1 – Sunday, May 21

Our tour begins at 9 a.m. at the **Novotel Paris CDG Terminal Hotel, Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris**. After a 90-minute drive, we arrive at our first destination – the fabled house and garden of **Claude Monet** at **Giverny**. Following a tour of this living museum, including the studio of the artist who invented **Impressionism**, we have **LUNCH** at an inn in the village. Later, we continue to beautiful **Honfleur**, our home for the next three nights. Near day's end, a walking tour orients us to the narrow, winding streets of the Old Town and the Old Port, followed by a **WELCOME COCKTAIL**. **OVERNIGHT – HONFLEUR**

## Day 2 – Monday, May 22

Today we visit the fascinating city of **Rouen**, capital of Normandy, exploring the lively Old City, bristling with spires and bell towers, and adorned with hundreds of half-timbered houses. See the square where **Joan of Arc** was martyred. Late in the day we return to Honfleur for free time. **OVERNIGHT – HONFLEUR**

## Day 3 – Tuesday, May 23

We travel to two of France's most famous *Belle Epoque* resorts, **Deauville** and **Trouville**, to experience life along the *planches* – wooden boardwalks facing the sea. For **LUNCH**, we enjoy super-fresh seafood at the Art Deco **Brasserie les Vapeurs**. As we head back to Honfleur, there will be time to swing by one of the many farms selling fresh cider and *calvados* (apple brandy). **OVERNIGHT – HONFLEUR**

## Day 4 – Wednesday, May 24

Through the green landscape of Normandy we arrive in old **Caen** and visit its medieval **château** in the old city. By about 1 p.m. we are in **Villedieu-les-Poêles**, where we stop for lunch and to tour one of the town's foundries, manufacturer of church bells that ring the world over. Then, via **Avranches**, the launching point for the July 1944 offensive by troops under **Gen. George Patton**, a decisive event in World War II, we head to our hotel, located on the mainland overlooking the monastery village of **Mont St.-Michel**. **DINNER. OVERNIGHT – MONT ST. MICHEL**

## Day 5 – Thursday, May 25

We spend much of the day on **Mont St. Michel**, a magical place. This morning we visit its **Abbey**, one of the world's wonders. Climb to the crown of the rock that supports the abbey, then wander through the vaulted rooms of this atmospheric basilica-fortress-palace. After **LUNCH**, you may enjoy free time, or if you wish come along on an optional visit to the pretty town of **St. Malo**, surrounded by imposing walls. **OVERNIGHT – MONT ST. MICHEL**

## Day 6 – Friday, May 26

Leaving **Mont St. Michel**, we soon enter **D-Day** country and visit **Ste. Mère Eglise** and **Utah Beach**, both associated with the landings of **June 6, 1944**. Later, we arrive in **Bayeux**, where we view the tapestry woven to commemorate the victory of **William the Conqueror** over England in 1066. After checking into our comfortable, *centre-ville* hotel, we enjoy free time, then **DINNER** in town. **OVERNIGHT – BAYEUX**

## Day 7 – Saturday, May 27

Our visits today encompass the **D-Day** region, very close to Bayeux. We will do as many as time allows, including museum visits; **Omaha Beach**, where American troops landed on D-Day; the **American Cemetery**, final resting place for more than 9,300 U.S. soldiers; the moving monument to the **Fifth Engineers Special Brigade**; the nearby **German cemetery**, a somber place in stark contrast to the cemeteries of the Allies; and other monuments to the day that changed the world. **OVERNIGHT – BAYEUX**

## Day 8 – Sunday, May 28

Leaving **Bayeux**, we drive south, to the **Loire Valley**. Arriving near mid-day at the pretty medieval town of **Amboise**, we explore the attractive center and have lunch. In the afternoon, come along to visit the **Château d'Amboise**, an imposing fortress overlooking the town and river. Here, you'll be dazzled by the sumptuous rooms, expansive views and the tiny chapel that holds the remains of **Leonardo da Vinci**. Late in the day, after checking into our comfortable hotel, we enjoy free time. **OVERNIGHT – AMBOISE**

## Day 9 – Monday, May 29

This morning we visit the last home of Leonardo da Vinci, **Clos Lucé**. The artist's masterpiece, the **Mona Lisa**, arrived in France in a saddlebag when Leonardo moved to Amboise from Italy in 1516. After a picnic lunch, we visit **Chambord**, the Loire Valley's most impressive château – 440 rooms and 365 chimneys set in a vast meadow surrounded by the ancient forest of Chambord, hunting preserve of kings. Following our visit, we travel a short distance to the old town of **Blois**. Here we can view the **Château of Blois**, part of which was designed by Leonardo. **DINNER** tonight. **OVERNIGHT – AMBOISE**

## Day 10 – Tuesday, May 30

From Amboise, we visit the former Royal Abbey of **Fontvraud**, an amazing complex of medieval buildings whose church shelters stunning funerary monuments to **King Henry II** of England, his wife **Eleanor of Aquitaine** and their son **Richard Lionheart**. Following a lunch break in the pretty town of **Chinon**, we arrive at one the most beautiful *châteaux* of the Loire – **Azay-le-Rideau**, surrounded by water. **OVERNIGHT – AMBOISE**

## Day 11 – Wednesday, May 31

Another beautiful *château* is on our itinerary today – **Chenonceau** castle, stretching across the **Cher River**. It's called the **Château of the**

**Ladies** because it was fought over by two women romantically involved with France's **King Henri II**. (After Henri's death in 1599, his queen, **Catherine de' Medici**, seized the castle and ousted her rival, **Diane de Poitiers**.) Our **LUNCH** today is a very special meal at the Michelin-starred **Auberge du XII Siecle**, in **Saché**. Late in the day we come to our final castle, **Villandry**. Here we marvel at the vast ornamental and vegetable gardens, renowned throughout the world. Returning to Amboise, there is free time to prepare for our return to the Paris area tomorrow. **OVERNIGHT – AMBOISE**

## Day 12 – Thursday, June 1

From the Loire Valley we journey back toward **Paris**, but there's still one adventure along the way – medieval **Chartres**, boasting perhaps France's most beautiful gothic cathedral. Following a visit to this magnificent church, and a ramble around the old, half-timbered heart of Chartres, we continue toward the rolling countryside north of Paris. Here, near day's end, we check into the comfortable **Relais d'Aumale**, a former hunting lodge on the edge of the forest of **Chantilly**, and gather for a festive **AU REVOIR DINNER**. **OVERNIGHT – AUMAILE**

## Getaway day – Friday, June 2

This morning we make the short drive to **Charles de Gaulle Airport** for your flight home.

### Notes

**PRICE** – \$3,995\* per person sharing a room. Single supplement of \$550.

**MEALS** – All tours include breakfast daily and eight other meals (lunches and dinners), as indicated in **BOLD CAPS** in the itinerary.

### OUR LODGINGS

**Hôtel l'Ecrin**, Honfleur  
**Hôtel Lion d'Or**, Bayeux  
**Hôtel Mercure**, Mont-St.-Michel  
**Hôtel Vinci**, Amboise  
**Relais d'Aumale**, Chantilly

**HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS** – Subject to change according to availability.

\* **TOUR PRICE** – Price of \$3,995 is based on a "benchmark" U.S. dollar/euro exchange rate that existed pre-tour and could change if there are significant exchange rate fluctuations. Call us for details - (800) 676-1247. Price quoted is for land arrangements only and does not include airfare.