



Northern France Delights

SATURDAY 27 MAY TO THURSDAY 13 JUNE 2017



Our Travel Philosophy

I have never been a great fan of the classic group tour mentality, and as a result strive to put together a programme which is very personable, and most of all fun! I think it is important that people see less, but see it better. I want people to meet locals and experience their lifestyles, as well as experiencing their history. I also want people to have time out, and the opportunity to relax as well - there's no point if you need a holiday at the end of the trip!! Don't be surprised if I get you out walking in the hills, cycling in the vines, or tasting food in a chef's kitchen. To think that you can do all this, as well as being looked after by a knowledgeable and personable guide! I am passionate about giving you the time of your life. It is not so much a case of making sure you see the tourist destinations as detailed by tour books, but encouraging you to open your eyes to see, sense and understand the world around you. Sometimes I even change the itinerary so that we can include things that might specifically interest you! This is an eye-opening tour of wine, Chateaux and rugged coastlines from Champagne to Burgundy, then passing through the Loire Valley to the Brittany and Normandy coastlines.



Paris, France

Saturday 27 May to Tuesday 30 May 2017

We will start our tour this afternoon meeting at our hotel in the heart of the St Germain district, only a few steps from the Seine River. We are going to have two full days here. "But I've been to Paris many time before" you say. Here is my opportunity to show you a side of Paris that tourists rarely see – we're going to be locals and by foot make exciting discoveries into forgotten gardens, ancient bakeries, tread in the footprints of men and women from 2000 years ago. Before we arrive in Paris I will discuss with each of our travellers their interests and past experiences here so that I can personalise this and ensure that the Paris experience is like nothing else!

Epernay, Champagne

Tuesday 30 May to Thursday 1 June 2017

Today we are leaving Paris to drive the short distance to the heart of Epernay. Bubbles! That's what the next two days are all about. As well as visiting some of the grandest and best-known Champagne houses, we also will experience the wonderful history of Champagne and Dom Perignon, along with learning of the magnificence of the powerful families and women of this region – women such as Mme Clicquot and Mme Lanson.

We will drive around the region, particularly the Montagne de Reims, with its charming villages, before visiting Reims and its magnificent Cathedral – a Cathedral made so famous by another woman, Jeanne d'Arc. A very moving visit.



Beaune, Burgundy

Thursday 1 June to Monday 5 June 2017

Today we are going to drive through to the centre of the Burgundy wine growing region where we will be based in Beaune, one of the most picturesque towns in Europe.

During our four nights here you will be entertained to one of the richest and most picturesque regions of France – rich in history, rich in food and wine, and rich in beauty!

You will be introduced to the complications and history of the wine appellations of Burgundy, whilst at the same time have your taste buds tested to the limits! Drinking wine will never be the same again! We pass through and explore villages with wonderful names and prestige like Puligny Montrachet, Clos Vougeot, Romanée Conti, Gevrey Chambertin, and Chambolle Musigny, to name a few. We are going to be invited into the private world of medieval Chateaux and imagine living our lives as Dukes and Duchesses. We will enjoy the lovely Beaune as well as visit the impressive Abbey of Fontenay. For me the whole region is like your favourite wine – colourful and rich with a most satisfying taste!



Amboise, Loire Valley

Monday 5 June to Thursday 8 June 2017

It is a three hour drive this morning through to the heart of the Loire Valley. We will be staying for the next three days in the beautiful village of Amboise, sitting on the banks of the Loire Valley. Over the next three days you will have your eyes opened to some of the most extravagant architecture and history of our time seeing Chateaux Chambord, Cheverny, Chenonceau. We will also visit the outrageously spectacular gardens of the Chateau de Villandry. Your time here will be a tour through Renaissance France where you will hear stories of passion, love and murder. This is grand France!



St Malo, Brittany

Thursday 8 June to Sunday 11 June 2017

Today we are driving through to Brittany. Although we've only driven about three hours to get to St Malo, it will be as if we arrived in another country. The Breton people are kind, gentle and accommodating. While here we will experience such a mixture of sights, from the grand and impressive Mont St Michel, to the remains from the Second World War in places like Avranches, to the unforgettably picturesque coastline, to the oyster tastings in Cancale. St Malo will impress as it sits comfortably within its fortified walls perched on the edge of the Atlantic Coast – this is a town that has lived through so much and which only 75 years ago was almost totally destroyed by enthusiastic Allied Forces, but luckily restored to its former glory.

Bayeux, Normandy

Sunday 11 June to Tuesday 13 June 2017

Now we will drive through to Normandy. This is a destination everyone needs to visit at some time in their lives, to give us the opportunity to remember the sacrifices made during the Second World War. Strangely enough we have the chance to learn and imagine about the other invasion in the other direction some 900 years earlier

lead by William the Conqueror, which is so perfectly captured in the Bayeux Tapestry which we will visit in the town of that name. We will spend time at Arromanches les Bain which is where you will learn about the events of D-Day in June 1944 – you can still see and almost touch the remaining floating (Mulberry) harbours resting as if yesterday in the low tide zone, half buried in sand. We will remember the troops from both sides by viewing their cemeteries. We've mostly heard of all the sights we will see like Omaha, Utah and Juno beaches, but only a few people make the journey here from Paris, only two hours to the east.



Tuesday 13 June 2017

Today our tour will end by driving back to Paris. From here you will be free to continue with your own travel arrangements either by staying longer in Paris or by train or flying to any parts of the world.

Costings

The price for this tour will be 6,610 Euro per person (approx. \$NZ10,100) for this 18 day holiday. There will be a supplement of 1,400€ (approx. \$NZ2,100) for a single supplement (i.e. you wish to have a room to yourself). My prices include all transportation, guiding, accommodation (a selection of charming three and four star hotels), visits, and many special meals are included (one dinner in each hotel location (including wine). There is the possibility for those interested to go on a two hour guided cycling tour through the Burgundy vineyards, and this will be an option and paid for separately (i.e. not included in this price). Not included in the price are airport transfers at the beginning or end of the tour – the exact drop-off point will depend on each travellers' plans, but we will coordinate one central point.

Deposits

To confirm a place on this tour a deposit of 1,000€ is required (approx. \$1,500). The final payment is due 8 weeks before the start of the tour.

Reading List

I will provide a comprehensive reading list for those travellers who join me on this tour. The end of October 2016, at which stage a deposit will be asked for.

Please contact me if you have any questions or queries:

John Reese, France-The French Way

Email: john@france.co.nz

Tel: 03 3555590 or 0210 384299