



## Normandy, Mont St.-Michel, Loire Valley, & Lascaux prehistoric cave paintings PRE-TRIP September 12-19, 2020

Join your friends from New England Church on a tour of France's beautiful countryside prior to our river cruise in Bordeaux. From Paris we drive to the Normandy Beaches to see the American cemetery and the interpretive center. From there we go to the stunning Mont Saint-Michel and the Loire Valley with its beautiful castles. Our final stop will be in Sarlat, Les Eyzies at the Lascaux and Font de Gaume prehistoric cave paintings. It promises to be an exciting, beautiful, and informative adventure on a deluxe coach, staying in 5-star hotels en route.

## Saturday, September 12—Chicago

Leave Chicago for Paris.

## Sunday, September 13—Paris/Giverny/Honfleur

Arrive Charles De Gaulle Airport, Paris, where our private motor coach will be waiting. Our route follows the River Seine to the home and gardens of Claude Monet. Our lunch will be at the La Capucine, Giverny, followed by a visit to the home and gardens of the renowned Impressionistic artist with its little pond, Japanese bridge, and water lilies that inspired his most famous works. At Rouen we'll visit the 12th century gothic Notre Dame Cathedral with its 13th century stained glass. Dinner and overnight accommodations at Le Balcon du Port in the heart of this charming waterfront town.



## Monday, September 14—Deauville/Normandy Beaches/Mont San Michel/Saint-Malo



Although the history of Deauville can be traced to 1060, it is better known today as the Riviera of the North with its resorts overlooking the long windswept ocean beaches. We will tour the historic locations of World War II with D-Day sites and the Memorial de Caen Museum. We'll see Omaha Beach, Pointe du Hoc and other important D-Day sites.

The Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, located in Colleville-sur-Mer, was established by the U.S. First Army on June 8, 1944, as the first American cemetery on European soil in WW II. The cemetery site contains the graves of 9,380 of our military dead, most of whom lost their lives in the D-Day landings and ensuing operations. On the "Walls of the Missing" are inscribed 1,557 names. Rosettes mark the names of those since recovered and identified.



The memorial consists of a semicircular colonnade containing large maps and narratives of the military operation, "Spirit of American Youth Rising from the Waves." An orientation table overlooking the beach depicts the landings in Normandy. Facing west at the memorial, we see in the foreground the reflecting pool; beyond is the burial area with a circular chapel and, at the far end, granite statues representing the United States and France. The center is sited in a wooded area of the cemetery east of the Garden of the Missing. In addition to exhibits, the center includes three visitor films: *Letters*, *On Their Shoulders*, and *Ok, Let's Go*.

with a loggia at each end containing large maps and narratives of the military operation; at the center is the bronze statue, "Spirit of American Youth Rising from the Waves." An orientation table overlooking the beach depicts the landings in Normandy.

Mont Saint Michel is an island rising up out of the flat salty marshlands of the bay, crowned by its medieval abbey, and its streets thronged since the 11<sup>th</sup> century with merchants and sightseers. The island has held strategic fortifications since ancient times and since the 8th century has been the seat of a monastery. The structural composition of the town exemplifies the feudal society that constructed it: on top: God, the abbey and monastery; below: the great halls; then stores and housing; and at the bottom, outside the walls: houses for fishermen and farmers. The commune's position on an island made it accessible at low tide to the many pilgrims to its abbey, but defensible as an incoming tide stranded would-be assailants. We arrive at Saint-Malo for dinner and overnight accommodations at the Grand Hotel des Thermes.



## Tuesday, September 15—Saint-Malo



The morning is at leisure in Saint-Malo, the port city of Brittany. Tall granite walls surround the old town, which was once a stronghold for privateers (pirates approved by the king). The Saint-Malo Cathedral, in the center of the old town, is built in Romanesque and Gothic styles and features stained-glass windows depicting city history. Nearby is La Demeure de Corsaire, an 18th-century privateer's house and museum. Our local guide will lead us through the most interesting sites. Dinner and overnight accommodations at the Grand Hotel des Thermes

### Wednesday, September 16– Cognac/Sarlat



Today we travel via the Capital of Brittany, Renne, known for its medieval half-timbered houses and grand Rennes Cathedral. South of the Vilaine River is the famous Musée des Beaux-arts. We will drive across the picturesque countryside and through Le Mans (site of 24 Hour Race) on our way to Tours, a university town that was once a Gallic-Roman settlement; today it's a university town and a traditional gateway for exploring the chateaux of the Loire Valley region.

We will visit the Chateau de Chenonceau spanning the River Cher, in the Loire Valley. It is the best-known of the châteaux of the Loire Valley. Dinner and overnight accommodations at Hotel Chaise Monnet in Cognac.



### Thursday, September 17—Lascaux Cave

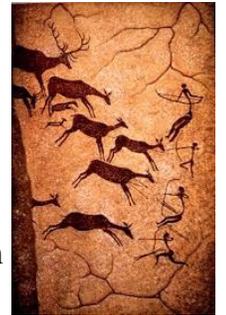


We arrive at Sarlat-la-Caneda midmorning to begin our adventure of this wonderous area. A guided tour takes us into an exact replica of the cave, which has been closed to the public for many years. Dinner and overnight at the Hotel Le Cro-Magnon.



### Friday, September 18—Font de Gaume Cave

Dinner and overnight at the Hotel Le Cro-Magnon.



**Saturday September 19–** Travel to Bordeaux to board our ship for our Viking cruise through the Dordogne and Aquitaine areas of France.

#### Cost

15 people: \$2,250

25 people: \$1,750

#### Included:

- Private motor coach
- Superior hotel accommodations as listed
- All breakfasts and dinners
- Entrance fees to museums
- Professional guides at various locations
- Flight deviation fee from Viking
- Transportation to O'Hare from Aurora.

# HOTELS

## Honfleur

Mercure Hotel



## Saint Malo

Grand Hotel des

Thermes



## Cognac

Hotel Chais

Monnet



HÔTEL CHAIS MONNET  
COGNAC



## Sarlat - Les Eyzies

Hotel Le Cro-Magnon

