

SCHOOL TOUR TO FRANCE
BATTLEFIELDS IN FRANCE (& BELGIUM) OF TWO WORLD WARS
A history and culture tour through some of the great sites of Remembrance
Prelude in Paris

A SUGGESTED ITINERARY FOR NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLS

Day 1

Arrival at CDG airport

Transfer by coach to Hostel situated in a superbly restored mansion in the historical centre of Paris. (You need to confirm reservation dates at least 10 months in advance to be sure of getting places here. Otherwise you will be directed to other hostel accommodation, still good but not as splendid!)

Walking discovery of *Montmartre*.

Mid-afternoon : by metro to the *Eiffel tower* - up to 3rd floor (top) (Must be pre-booked)

Dinner and night in hostel

Day 2

Pre-booked entry for visit to the *Louvre*

Afternoon : Pre-booked entries to the *Sainte Chapelle* and the *Conciergerie*.

Walk to *Notre Dame* : time to visit the cathedral, then climb up the towers to admire the view.

Dinner and night in hostel.

Day 3

Pre-booked entry for visit to *Orsay Museum* (National Impressionist Museum)

Afternoon pre-booked reservation to visit the *Catacombes*.

By metro to Charles de Gaulle Etoile, then to the top of the *Arc de Triomphe* for the view.

Dinner and night in Hostel.

Day 4

To *Versailles* for the whole day.

Visit the magnificent Hall of Mirrors which has just been restored to all its 17th century magnificence and all the other superb royal apartments.

Visit the gardens, walking over to Marie-Antoinette's domain including the hamlet.

Late afternoon or early evening : cruise on the Seine.

Dinner and night in hostel.

Day 5

Morning : Visit (pre-booked) : les *Invalides* and the *Musée de l'Armée*.

Early afternoon : departure by coach for **Verdun**

Dinner and night in Verdun youth hostel.

Day 6

All day in Verdun with guide : visiting all the main monuments and sites.

Dinner and night in hostel.

Day 7

Leave Verdun for excursion along part of the ***Maginot line***.
Visit the huge *Fort de Fermont* and its underground railway .
Then on to **Reims** to visit a Champagne cellar (and of course the World Heritage cathedral for those who so wish : generally considered the most perfect of the Gothic cathedrals).
Dinner and night in Reims youth hostel.

Day 8

Early departure to **Peronne**, to visit the ***Historial de la Grande Guerre***.
Then an excursion through the Somme battlefields :*Albert, Delville, Thiepval, Beaumont Hamel, Colincamps*, arriving in the early evening in the town of **Le Quesnoy**. Twinned with the town of Cambridge in New Zealand, Le Quesnoy was liberated by New Zealander troops, and has retained very close ties with New Zealand..
Night in the Le Quesnoy gîte.
Dinner in Le Quesnoy

Day 9

Whole day excursion with guide into Belgium, to **Ypres**
Guided visit of the ***Museum Flanders Fields***.
Organized lunch.
Afternoon : guided visit of the battlefields.
Organized evening meal in Ypres in order to be able to attend the ***Last Post Ceremony*** at the Menin Gate.
Return to Le Quesnoy after the ceremony

Day 10

Organised “Welcome Morning” in Le Quesnoy.
Various possibilities, including sports match with the College and Lycée.
Visit of the town and Remembrance Ceremony at the New Zealand Memorial.
After lunch : drive to **Arras** to visit the Wellington tunnels used during the First World War by the New Zealanders.
Dinner and night in Le Quesnoy.

Day 11

Departure in the direction of **Rouen**.
Early afternoon : visit Monet’s famous garden in **Giverny**.
Dinner and night in Rouen new youth hostel.

Day 12

Morning : free visit of Rouen
Afternoon : to **Caen** to visit the *Peace Memorial*.
Night and dinner in **Bayeux** youth hostel.

Day 13

Whole day with guide devoted to the ***Normandy Landing***.
Arromanches (site of the *Mulberry port*). *Batterie de Longue-sur-mer*.
Gold Beach, Omaha Beach, the great cemetery (one of the largest, most moving, and beautiful parks of Remembrance in Europe), and the *Pointe du Hoc*.
Dinner and night in Bayeux hostel

Day 14

Morning pre-booked visit to **Mont St Michel** with audioguides.
Return to Bayeux to visit the famous **Bayeux Tapestry** believed to have been made by William the conqueror's wife, Queen Mathilde.
Dinner and night in Bayeux hostel.

Day15

Return direct to CDG airport for departure.

SUGGESTED PROLONGATION FO THIS TOUR TO 18 DAYS

For this suggested prolongation, Days 1 – 13 remain as in the above basic itinerary

Replace the Day 14 above by the following :

Day 14

Morning visit of the **Mont St Michel** with audioguides.
Drive to **Saint Malo**.
Boat trip round the bay then free to wander round and discover the town.
Dinner and night in St Malo Youth Hostel

Day 15

Morning drive to **Saumur** to visit the *National Tank Museum* (and mushroom cellars if so wished). Continue along the Loire Valley, choosing stopping points as interested)
Dinner and night in **Amboise** youth hostel.

Day 16

Morning pre-booked visit of the Château of **Chenonceau**.
Afternoon : Visit the *Château d'Amboise* and the *Clos Lucé*, Leonardo Da Vinci's last home where you can discover all his inventions.
Dinner and night in Amboise hostel.

Day 17

Morning : guided visit of a *troglodyte village*, very much now just as it was in the Middle Ages
Early afternoon : visit of the marvellous gardens of **Villandry**
Time to visit the town of **Tours** (or another château in the region)
Dinner and night in Amboise hostel.

Day 18

Return direct to CDG airport for departure
(Depending on departure time, places of interest can be programmed for short visits during the return to Paris, eg the Chateau of Cheverny, and/or Chambord)...)

YOU CAN WASTE AN IMMENSE AMOUNT OF TIME IF YOU DO NOT ARRANGE PRE-BOOKED ENTRIES FOR ALL THE MAIN MUSEUMS, MONUMENTS AND SITES

WHATEVER YOUR IDEAS FOR A SCHOOL TOUR OF FRANCE, PLEASE SHARE THEM WITH US SO THAT WE CAN DISCUSS THEM TOGETHER!

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