

American Celebration of Music in France

Standard Tour #2 (7 nights / 9 days)

Day 1

Departure via scheduled airline service to Paris, France

Day 2

Paris / Tours

(D)

Arrive in Paris

Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to the awaiting motorcoach for transfer to Tours

Time permitting, stop en route at Chartres for a tour of the magnificent cathedral. Pilgrims have now been coming for almost eight centuries to admire the 175 representations of the Virgin Mary. The 25,000 square feet of stained glass (mostly from the 12th century) depicting 5,000 figures is considered the greatest achievement of this art form in the world. A guided tour by Malcolm Miller, a British scholar who has devoted his life to the study of this cathedral is a highlight

Continue to Tours for a Welcome Dinner and overnight

Tours was an important center of trade and administration under the Romans, but is presently most famous for its location in the heart of the Chateaux Country of France — also known as the "garden of France." Kings and courtiers and magnates built famous Renaissance chateaux such as Blois, Chambord, Chenonceaux, Azay-le-Rideau in this gentle valley

Day 3

Tours (Loire Valley)

(B,D)

Enjoy a guided tour of the Loire Valley, including entrance to one of the most famous Chateaux

Chateau Chenonceau is perhaps the finest of all of the castles in the region. It straddles a river and was constructed in the 1520's, once the home of Diane de Poitiers, Catherine de Medici and other luminaries

Performance as part of the American Celebration of Music in France

Day 4

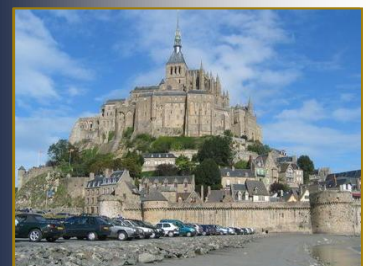
Mont St-Michael

(B,D)

Morning transfer to Mont St-Michael

Half-day sight-seeing includes entrance to the Abbey, La Merveille (the incredible grouping of buildings on the north side of the Mount), the Abbey Gardens and the Refectory

Mont St-Michel is one of the most striking sights that France has to offer. Perched on its rocky islet and surrounded by walls and bastions, this old abbey has the appearance of a fortified castle. At this point in the English Channel the tides have a very considerable rise and fall (up to 14 m/45ft); at low tide it is possible to walk round the island, while at high tide the waves surge up to its very walls and may even wash over the parking lot at the foot of the hill. It is a particularly impressive sight at the spring tides (three days after the new moon or full moon)



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Day 5**Coleville / Caen****(B,D)**

Transfer to Caen via Coleville (*perform a short memorial recital and participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at the American Cemetery at Omaha Beach*)

Performance in the Caen area as part of the American Celebration of Music in France

Caen is the capitol of Lower Normandy. Known as "The City of the Normans", the architectural heritage reveals the affection for the city felt by William the Conqueror and his Queen Mathilda. Many of the city's medieval buildings are constructed of "Caen stone," a light creamy-yellow limestone also used extensively in England. Caen was the center of some of the fiercest fighting in the Liberation of 1944. The peace memorial is unquestionably the greatest museum of World War II, a "must-see" for anyone who visits the city

**Day 6****Caen / Paris****(B,D)**

Morning guided tour of Caen, including a visit to the Peace Memorial. The Memorial, to the northwest of the town center, is a modern Peace Museum, built of light-colored sandstone in the form of a square block (architect Jacques Millet). Its themes are the two world wars and the means of ensuring and preserving peace. Also pass the Abbaye-aux-Hommes, built by William the Conqueror and containing his grave
Afternoon transfer to Paris

They've all come to Paris. The Gauls, the Romans, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Pablo Picasso, Dwight Eisenhower, the Czar of Russia, Lenin, the Queen of England, Benjamin Franklin and George Gershwin. Some have even tried to capture the city. And now everyone wants to come to Paris -- millions of tourists each year, motivated by the desire to see the most beautiful city in the world. But Paris is more than a city. It is a place that breathes history and legend, a combination of the modern and the ancient

**Day 7****Paris****(B,D)**

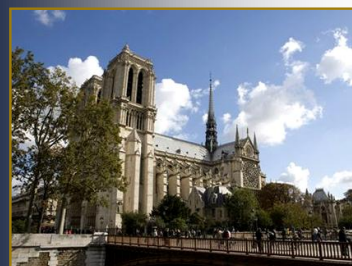
Half-day guided tour of *Paris historique*, including Notre-Dame Cathedral, Arc de Triomphe, Eiffel Tower, Champs Elysees, Place de la Concorde, Luxembourg Palace and Gardens, Latin Quarter, Place de la Bastille, and other highlights

Performance as part of the American Celebration of Music in France

**Day 8****Paris****(B,D)**

For choirs only: Late morning performance in Notre Dame Cathedral

Enjoy an afternoon tour of *Paris artistique*, including entrance to the Louvre, the largest and greatest art museum in the world
Evening Farewell Dinner

**Day 9****Depart for home****(B)**

Transfer to one of Paris's airports for return flight
Arrive home in the evening of the same day

This is a very flexible itinerary. Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.

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