

CIRCA



TOURS

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Mont St Michel - Normandy

Photos by Circa Tours

France at a Glance

Paris - Versailles - Loire Valley - Normandy
(8 days - 6 nights)

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SAMPLE ITINERARY

This is an example of a possible itinerary. It can be resized, reorganized and customized to fit your interests, budget and schedule. It can also be combined with other tours.

HIGHLIGHTS (8 days - 6 nights)

DAY	ACTIVITIES	NIGHT
1	Leave U.S.	
2	Arrive in Paris . Airport transfer. Afternoon at leisure	Paris
3	Full-day panoramic tour with lunch on a River Seine cruise	Paris
4	Day trip to Versailles (palace, gardens and Marie-Antoinette's hamlet)	Paris
5	Day trip to Loire Valley castles (Amboise, Clos Luce and Chenonceau)	Paris
6	Day trip to Mont St Michel , Normandy	Paris
7	Day at leisure. Dinner show at the Moulin Rouge	Paris
8	Airport transfer. Return to U.S.	

ITINERARY (for more options, see our "France Highlights")

Day 1: Leave the U.S.

Day 2: Arrive in Paris. After your private chauffeur picks you up at the airport, settle into your hotel and relax after your international flight or start exploring the city on your own.

Day 3: The best way to start your exploration of Paris is with a full-day panoramic tour including a River Seine cruise with lunch. First, enjoy a guided visit of the Louvre Museum, which will concentrate on three world-famous masterpieces: the Venus of Milo, the Victory of Samothrace and Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

This will be followed by the lunch cruise with a choice of four starters, four main courses and four desserts, plus a glass of wine, while being serenaded by a singer and a musician. After lunch, visit Notre Dame Cathedral. Then relax for a panoramic tour of Paris and feast your eyes on the Arc de Triomphe, the Champs Elysées, Place de la Concorde, the Eiffel Tower and Saint Germain des Prés on the Left Bank. Final stop at Montmartre with some free time to visit the Sacré Coeur basilica and artsy Place du Tertre on your own.

Day 4: Versailles is a "must-see" of course. So, today you're off to see the world-famous palace, where you will admire the splendor and opulence of French royalty with a guided visit of the State Apartments (Hall of Mirrors, King's and Queen's Bedroom) and the formal gardens outside.



Enjoy a leisurely lunch at "La Petite Venise" restaurant near the Grand Canal. Typical menu: Salad served with Parmesan cheese, chicken supreme and potato purée with olive oil, chocolate cake and a glass of red wine, plus coffee. After lunch, stroll over to the Petit and Grand Trianons royal residences for a guided visit, followed by Queen Marie-Antoinette's Hamlet, complete with a farm, a fishing pond and a grotto. Roam around the grounds and immerse yourself in the idyllic world the famous queen lived in.

Day 5: The Renaissance castles of France are as plentiful as they are beautiful and the Loire Valley, where they abound, is but a short trip from Paris. Start this "Renaissance day" with a tour of the royal castle of **Amboise**, which was the preferred residence of the royal court during the 15th century. Then, about a mile away, visit the **Clos Lucé**, where Leonardo da Vinci lived until his death in 1519. Models of machines he designed are on display inside the castle and on the grounds.



This enchanting morning is followed by lunch at the restaurant "L'Orangerie" at the Chenonceau castle. Typical menu of assorted market products: chicken with crawfish sauce, cheese, baked Alaska "Chenonceau" and wine from the surrounding Touraine region. Afternoon visit of flamboyant **Chenonceau** castle built over the scenic River Cher in pure traditional Renaissance style. On the way back to Paris, stop in **Chambord** for a panoramic view of the castle.



Day 6: After the Eiffel Tower, the **Mont St Michel**, with its iconic Gothic architecture, is one of France's most recognized landmarks and a World Heritage Site. This small rocky island, accessible on foot at low tide, is akin to a cathedral floating on water. Ever since the Middle Ages, it has been one of the most famous pilgrimage destinations in Europe. Savor a typical lunch at the Relais Saint Michel with traditional omelet, fresh fish with rice and vegetables and blanc-mange with fruit, plus Normandy apple cider, water and coffee or tea. Learn about the history of this stunning monument during the guided visit and browse on your own this afternoon before the 4:30 pm return to Paris.

Day 7: Today, you are free to explore the forever alluring City of Light on your own and, perhaps do some shopping or go to a museum or two. Tonight, for a grand finale, spend the night on the town, have fun and celebrate. Enjoy the tantalizing, world-famous show "Féerie" at the legendary **Moulin Rouge**, home of French Cancan dancing for over a century.

Day 8: Your tour concludes with a private transfer to the airport.

Hello, my name is **Pierre Mainguené**. I personally handcrafted this itinerary.



I am the co-founder and president of Circa Tours. I was born and raised in Brittany, France so, as a native European, I love everything about the "old country" especially France, Spain and Portugal, the three countries we specialize in. I love their history (and there is lots of it), their art (same thing), their cuisine (especially in France, Catalonia and the Basque Country), their wine (everywhere), their lifestyle and the endless diversity of the local cultures.

In dozens of trips I have taken to Europe, I have traveled to nearly every corner of those countries, and I continue my journey of discovery every year. I am a Travel-Institute certified France and Spain Specialist, and I am also recognized by the Tourist Office of Portugal as a certified Portugal Specialist.

My goal is to create the best possible trip for you. I am always ready to listen to your wishes (however creative) and feedback, and I will always enjoy sharing my experiences with you.

That's me, by the way, in front of a Joaquin Sorolla painting in Madrid. And, the following are some comments made by a few of our clients:

- "Our trip was fantastic! We had such a wonderful time! All went well including getting our train tickets to Seville changed the day of the strike. Our guides were nothing less than phenomenal! We can't thank you and your staff enough for putting together a trip that was worthy of our 30th anniversary celebration!" M.B., Massachusetts
- "Pierre. Thank you for your services. I really enjoyed dealing with you. You are so knowledgeable, pleasant and professional. I certainly will recommend you to friends." J.L., Colorado

- “It was not a good trip - it was a GREAT trip! Truly everything was fabulous, ran smoothly, and worked well. The guides were excellent, the itinerary perfect. We enjoyed Spain very much and will ask you for assistance on our next journey to southern Europe!” J.K., California
- “Circa Tours did a good job. They worked very closely with us in putting the program together. We were very pleased with how efficient everything ran. The information we received from Circa Tours was done up very well, which allowed us to just pull the appropriate paperwork and be on our way. The tours were very well done. The guides we had with the local travel providers did a very good job of explaining the areas we toured. Pierre at Circa Tours made sure we saw a bit of everything.” D.T., Florida
- “We are all home, safe and sound - very tired, but in a hazy daze of love for France. Thank you and Carolyn SO much for arranging such an amazing trip for all of us. Throughout the trip, my sisters, mom and myself could be heard saying such things as, “THANK YOU, PIERRE”...or, “thank goodness for Pierre!!!” Martine was an excellent guide, by the way...very good, nice, thorough and professional. We wouldn't have been able to do HALF of what we did (and certainly not with nearly as much carefree enjoyment) with out her. Thank you and Carolyn for all of you expertise and care in helping us and doing all of the hard work for us! Thank you! Thank you!!!!” K.B., Iowa