

# ROME, FLORENCE, PARIS, NORMANDY & BERLIN

(Note: This is only a sample tour)

**Day 1:** Depart for Rome.

**Day 2:** Arrive **Rome**. After quick check-in coach will drop you in the heart of the city. See the Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain, the Pantheon. Spend some time in Piazza Navona originally built as a stadium for athletic contests and chariot races. Now it is lined with luxurious cafes and is the home to three lavish Baroque fountains.

**Day 3:** Morning guided visit to **Vatican**. The Vatican is a city unto itself with its own postal service, radio station, newspaper and army. Visit St. Peter's Basilica and Square, the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel. After lunch your guide will escort you to other major archaeological monuments. See the Colosseum, the Forum, Capitol Hill, Victor Emmanuel Monument and Piazza Venezia. Time permitting enjoy some shopping in Piazza del Popolo, Via del Corso and the Via Condotti.



**Day 4:** Depart for **Florence**. Enroute, stop in **Siena**, a medieval city that boasts majestic Gothic style buildings, numerous churches and museums that hold a tremendous concentration of art works. During the 12th century, the city was wealthy and powerful and was at its peak. Many of the fine buildings were constructed during this time and the Sienese school of painting had its beginnings. Alternatively, stop in **San Gimignano** a spectacular medieval city that has the feel of a museum. From a distance, the towers of this 13th century town that were symbols of power and wealth of the city's medieval families, dominate the lush landscape of wheat fields, olive groves and vineyards.

**Day 5:** Ciao Florence. Founded by Julius Caesar, Florence is a small compact city. A visit to Florence is a visit to the living museum of Italian Renaissance. This place has more sights to visit within one square kilometer than any other city in Europe. Meet guide for a guided orientation walking tour. See the gorgeous Duomo, the Bell Tower, Pont Vecchio the medieval district, and a central bustling food market. It is also a shopper's paradise - countless shops laden with jewelry of Florentine gold and silver, exquisite leather goods, chic fashion houses, and also of course, the straw market.. The remainder of the afternoon is free to shop in San Lorenzo Market or visit the Santa Croce area where Galileo, Michelangelo and Dante have their monuments. Spend time on Pont Vecchio, Piazza Vecchio, Piazza della Signoria, and Mercato Nuovo. Alternatively to shopping, optional visit Uffizi or Academia Museums.



**Day 6:** Morning transfer to **Paris**. Meet your guide for an orientation city walking tour. Later, your guide will leave you in the Latin Quarter. At one time only Latin was spoken here! Today it is brimming with cafes, restaurants, little bookstores, and tourist shops. After your tour see the famous cabaret, **Moulin Rouge**. Walk the Boulevard Clichy to Montmartre, one of the most picturesque and lively quarters of the city. Climb or take the funicular up to Sacre Coeur, a beautiful white basilica, magnetically towering from the highest point in Montmartre. Tonight a Seine Cruise

**Day 7:** Today a guided visit to the **Louvre**. Then see Place de la Concorde, Place Vendome and Palais Royale. Walk the Champs Elysee, Ave de Montaigne, Rue du Faubourg, and Saint Honore, widely cited as the most fashionable streets in the world. See the Arc de Triomphe. Early this evening visit Paris's grands magasins (department stores) Galeries Lafayette and Printemps department stores. Later tonight the **Eiffel Tower**.



**Day 8:** Visit **Versailles**. See the Grand Apartments, Hall of Mirrors, King's and Queen's suites, and other sights. Have a quick lunch on your own before reboarding your coach for Pontorson. Enroute, stop in Dreux to visit its castle, Chappelle Royale Saint Louis. Arrive Pontorson.

**Day 9:** Morning visit to **Mont St Michel**, a humble 8th century oratory that grew to a massive Benedictine Monastery of great influence in the 12th and 13th centuries. The Mont is an impressive site – a soaring ensemble of buildings surrounded by a jumble of buildings that house the few people who live there. Depart for **Normandy**. The D day landings were the largest military operation in history and were followed by the Battle of Normandy which would lead to the liberation of Europe from Nazi occupation. The most brutal fighting took place along Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword Beaches. Today visit Arromanche and the remains of the artificial Mulberry Harbor Visit the **Juno Beach Centre**. The Centre recognizes Canada's military and civilian contributions during WWII. Overnight Honfleur.

**Day 10:** Depart for **Vimy Ridge**. During WWI, a long series of battles are known as the Battle of Arras in which a series of medieval tunnels beneath the city, unknown to the Germans, became a decisive factor in the forces holding the city. In 1922 the government of France gave Canada the 250 acres of Vimy Ridge in perpetuity. The Vimy Ridge Monument has names of Canadians listed as missing and presumed dead in France during WW I. On to Flanders Fields Museum which is dedicated to Ypres contribution to WW1. Each visitor can track the fate of a single person (a soldier, a nurse, a child or a local) as it actually unfolded in the war years in Ypres. Along the way are displays of artifacts that survived the war - from medals to gas masks. Enroute to Brussels, see the impressive Canadian St. Julien Memorial which stands over those who died during the first gas attacks of WWI. Evening flight to Berlin.

**Day 11: Berlin**, a city that was almost bombed into rubble during WWII but has reawakened into a dynamic bustling city and tourist draw. Full day of sightseeing in what was East Berlin. Half day with guide. Begin at Karl Liebknecht Strasse, what was the governments ideal of a modern socialist city. It connects to the wide and fashionable Unter den Linden. See Alexanderplatz, Berliner dom, Neue Wache, Bebelplatz site of the notorious book burning, Gendarmenmarkt, Friedrichstrasse, S Bahn Ghost Station, Brandenburg Gate. Visit the Reichstag. Take a side trip to the Jewish Holocaust Memorial. Visit Checkpoint Charlie, and the Topography of Terror. See Prinz Albert Strasse, headquarters of the SS and Gestapo head, the most frightening address in Berlin.

**Day 12:** Today is West Berlin. The main drag is Kurfurstendamm, once considered the Champs Elysees of Berlin. The ruins of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedachtniskirche is a symbolic landmark with only its broken west tower still standing after the British bombed it. See the German Resistance Memorial. The Bendlerblock was a military headquarters where an ill-fated attempt to assassinate Hitler was plotted. Stauffenberg and his co-conspirators were shot here in the courtyard. The "Times Square" of Berlin, Potsdamer Platz was cut in 2 by the wall and left deserted for 40 years. The New Potsdamer Platz today it is an immense commercial, residential and entertainment center.

**Day 13:** Transfer to **Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp** an important administrative center for all concentration camps as well as the location for training the SS (Schutzstaffel) officers who would oversee other concentration camps. Then on to Wannsee House. In January 1942, 15 high ranking Nazi officials met to draw up "The Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe". The house reopened to the public in 1992, 50 years to the day of the date of the infamous conference. Overnight in Potsdam, a popular holiday retreat for Berliners.

**Day 14:** Transfer to airport for flight home.

## **TOUR INCLUSIONS**

- Return airfare to Rome return from Berlin
- One way flight Florence to Paris
- One way flight Brussels to Berlin
- Coach transfers
  - o Rome airport transfers
  - o Coach transfer Rome to Florence with stop in San Gimignano or Siena
  - o Coach transfer to Florence airport
  - o Paris airport transfer
  - o 3 days coach Paris to Brussels with stops according to itinerary
  - o Berlin return airport transfers
  - o 1 day coach tour Berlin to Potsdam with stops according to itinerary
  - o 4 day coach tour depart Brussels arrive Paris with stops as per itinerary
- Assistance upon arrival in Rome and Berlin
- 12 nights accommodation with private facilities
- 12 breakfasts
- 6 dinners
- Guided tours
  - o Rome city walking tour with Vatican
  - o Florence city tour
  - o Paris city tour
  - o Berlin East Berlin tour
- 2 day Metropass in Paris

### • Entrances

- o Vatican
- o Flanders Fields Museum
- o Mont St Michel
- o Juno Beach Center
- o Dreux Castle
- o Guided visit to the Louvre
- o Seine River Cruise
- o Eiffel Tower
- o Versailles with audio guides
- o Reichstag
- o Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp
- o Wannsee House

