



Education First

Educational Tours

France, Switzerland and Germany

15 days | Summer 2023





Educational Tours

France, Switzerland and Germany

Included on tour



Round-trip flights on major carriers; full-time Tour Director; weShare, EF's personalized learning experience; hotels with private bathrooms; breakfast and dinner daily;

Sightseeing: Paris; Versailles; St. Malo; Munich; Salzburg; Heidelberg

Entrances: Eiffel Tower; Versailles Palace & gardens; Caen Memorial; American Cemetery at Colleville; Normandy beaches; Pointe du Hoc; Mont-St-Michel Abbey; Chartres Cathedral; Louvre; Boat to Mount Pilatus; Mount Pilatus cable car; Neuschwanstein Castle; Mike's Bike tour, Munich; Mozart's Birthplace; Night Watchman tour; Heidelberg Castle & wine barrel

Overnight stays:

- Paris (2)
- Normandy region (1)
- St. Malo (2)
- Paris (1)
- Lucerne region (2)
- Munich (3)
- Rothenburg region (1)
- Heidelberg region (1)



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Your itinerary

Day 1: Fly overnight to France

Board your overnight flight to Paris!

Day 2: Paris

Arrive in Paris

Welcome to Paris, cosmopolitan City of Light. Over the centuries, Paris has grown to become the undisputed center of France, and one of the world's most important cities both culturally and politically. Equally famed for its high fashion, awe-inspiring museums and elegant cuisine, Paris has also been a center of theater, literature and philosophy throughout the ages.

Walking tour of Paris

Join our walking tour of the chic Opéra district and the haute couture boutiques of Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré. Stroll through Place de la Concorde, the city's largest public square, built to honor Louis XV. The next Louis was not so lucky--he was beheaded here during the Revolution, along with Marie Antoinette. Continue through the geometric gardens of the Tuileries as you make your way to Place Vendôme, a vast square wrapped in 17th-century façades. Pass the Ritz hotel at no. 15, a favorite haunt of Ernest Hemingway. *(The exact walking route may vary depending on your hotel location and other activities.)*

See Notre Dame Cathedral

Built between 1163 and 1361 over the remains of an ancient Roman temple, it was here that Napoleon crowned himself emperor in 1804. Victor Hugo once described the sculptured façade of Notre Dame as "a vast symphony in stone." However, had it not been for the creation of his famous hunchback, Quasimodo, the cathedral might never have returned to its former glory. Hugo's novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* helped inspire a 23-year restoration of the cathedral that began in 1841. Step inside to admire the stained-glass rose window and seemingly weightless vaulted ceilings.

Day 3: Paris

Guided sightseeing of Paris

Discover the city on the Seine during your bus tour. Learn about Paris' origins as a Roman settlement as you pass through the Île de la Cité, where you will also see Notre Dame Cathedral. Pass by the imposing Arc de Triomphe, and the Place de la Concorde, dedicated to King Louis XV and the site where Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were executed during the French Revolution. Continue down the elegant Champs-Élysées to the École Militaire, where a promising young Napoleon launched his rise to power. Then, head through the Latin Quarter where you will see the world-renowned Sorbonne University. Drive along the Seine for wonderful views of the Musée D'Orsay, the Louvre, and the Pont de Neuf, or "new bridge," which is ironically Paris' oldest. Finally, make a photo stop at the iconic Eiffel Tower, built for the 1889 World's Fair. Learn why this impressive, yet controversial symbol of Paris was spared the wrecking ball in 1909.

Exploration time in Paris

Enjoy time for your own explorations of Paris. You might wish to visit the Musée d'Orsay, the Rodin Museum, or the futuristic exhibits of the Centre Pompidou. Alternatively, take a stroll through the Latin Quarter or take part in the timeless Parisian tradition of people-watching over a cup of café au lait at a sidewalk café. Last but not least, for the fashion conscious traveler, a visit to the Rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré is a must and don't forget to drop by and explore the famous Galeries Lafayette which have made fashion come alive for more than a century.

Ascend the Eiffel Tower

Built in 1889 for the World's Fair, the tower is now one of the world's most recognizable monuments and a symbol of Paris. Standing over 300 meters high, with a viewing balcony on each of its three levels, a visit to this historical landmark is one of the must-do events in any visit to the city *(pending availability due to limited group reservations)*.

Day 4: Paris | Normandy region

Guided excursion to Versailles

Take an expertly guided tour of Versailles. Nobody does decadence like Louis XIV, and there's no better testament to this than Versailles. Under the direction of the Sun King, the château that began as a modest hunting lodge exploded into one of the largest palaces on Earth. On your excursion to this lavish estate, explore the state apartments of the king and queen and the magnificent Hall of Mirrors. Walk through the meticulously landscaped gardens and marvel at dozens of ornate fountains. Discover why Versailles was more than just a vacation home: Louis XIV hosted his royal court here to rein in their power and prevent their political rise. *(Because of the extreme popularity of Versailles, guided visits of the interior cannot be guaranteed during peak seasons. In this case, your group will hear a presentation from your guide before entering the palace.)*

Transfer to Normandy

Transfer to Normandy, the location of many of the battles that turned the course of World War II. Despite its connection with major military events, Normandy is also a region of scenic beauty with elegant landscapes and patchwork fields as well as the majesty of its two major towns-Caen and Rouen.

Day 5: Normandy region | St. Malo

Visit the Caen Memorial: Museum of Peace

Pay tribute to WWII troops who fought on the beaches of Normandy as you visit the Caen Memorial. You'll see a short film about the D-Day invasion, followed by a slide show on WWII. A third audio-visual presentation recounts the wars in Korea, Afghanistan, and Vietnam, as well as the continuing quest for world peace. Afterwards, tour the museum and see displays that depict pre-WWII Europe and trace the events that eventually led to the outbreak of war. Take time to walk through the Nobel Peace Prizewinners' Gallery, a gallery that highlights the accomplishments of the men and women who struggled for peace.

Visit the American Cemetery

Visit the final resting place of 9,386 American military dead, most of whom gave their lives during the landings and ensuing operations of World War II. The site also includes a memorial commemorating the soldiers and a chapel bearing the poignant words: "These endured all and gave all that justice among nations might prevail and that mankind might enjoy freedom and inherit peace."

Visit the Normandy beaches

At daybreak on June 6, 1944, the Allies' D-Day landings took place, sparking the largest sea-borne invasion in military history and one of the bravest acts of World War II. As you walk on the same shores that witnessed so much courage and sacrifice over half a century ago, you can still see shelled out craters on the rocky cliffs alongside the occasional remains of German bunkers.

See La Pointe du Hoc

The Pointe du Hoc was a vital position on the Atlantic Wall because it contained guns capable of firing on Omaha and Utah Beaches. It was one of the strongholds in the German fortifications. Colonel Rudder's "Rangers" battled the German observation-post on the edge of the Point and the monument commemorates their courage on the morning of June 6th.

Travel to St. Malo

Travel along the coastal region of Brittany to St. Malo. It was from here that Jacques Cartier set sail in 1534 to explore Canada's St. Lawrence River Valley. Today the city acts as both a popular tourist destination as well as one of the channel's busiest ports.

Day 6: St. Malo

Guided sightseeing of St. Malo

Pirates once set sail from this rocky Atlantic island. Learn how the town's seamen fought Barbary pirates and plundered English, Dutch and Spanish merchants. Take in the narrow streets, tall granite homes and medieval ramparts on your guided tour. Your tour also includes a visit to Saint Vincent's Cathedral, the former seat of the Bishop of St. Malo.

Visit Mont St. Michel

Pirates once set sail from this rocky Atlantic island. Learn how the town's seamen fought Barbary pirates and plundered English, Dutch, and Spanish merchants. Take in the narrow streets, tall granite homes, and medieval ramparts as you explore the town with your Tour Director. Tour the breathtaking islet monastery of MontSt.Michel, one of the wonders of the Western world. Perched high on a granite rock, this 8th-century abbey is surrounded by water at high tide and quicksand at low tide. See too the picturesque medieval houses within the town's surrounding fortifications.

Day 7: St. Malo | Paris

Return to Paris via Chartres Cathedral

Dominating the skyline of this town is the 13th-century cathedral, one of the most amazing achievements in Western architecture. With its two towers, one Gothic and the other Romanesque, this is a truly unique experience. Take time to enjoy the picturesque gardens that surround the cathedral.

Visit the Louvre Museum

The Palais du Louvre, built to defend the city in the 13th century, now safeguards one of the world's greatest art collections. Enter the museum through world-renowned architect I.M. Pei's 1989 modernist glass pyramid. Inside, discover priceless antiquities from Egypt, Greece, Italy and Asia such as the statues of *Venus de Milo* and *Nike of Samothrace*, better known as *Winged Victory*. You'll also see some of the Louvre's most prized paintings by Renaissance and European masters, including Leonardo da Vinci's painting of the mysterious *Mona Lisa*.

Day 8: Paris | Lucerne region

Take the train to Zurich and travel to the Lucerne region

Recall the legends of folk hero William Tell (and his fortunate aim) as you transfer to the Vierwaldstättersee (Lake Lucerne) region.

Exploration time in Lucerne

Enjoy free time to shop in the center of town. Famed for its Rolexes and Swiss army knives, which you can have engraved, Lucerne also offers some of the finest chocolate anywhere. Alternatively, climb to the city limits and walk by part of the defensive fortification for spectacular views of the city and lake below.

Day 9: Lucerne region

Walking tour of Lucerne

The majestic Alps provide a stunning backdrop to your tour of Lucerne, where composer Richard Wagner wrote several of his major works. You'll view the Löwendenkmal (Lion Monument), a sandstone statue commemorating the Swiss Guards slain in the 1792 Paris storming of the Tuileries. According to Mark Twain, it is "the saddest and most compassionate piece of rock on earth." Stroll down narrow, winding streets and across the Kapellbrücke, a covered bridge whose history dates back to medieval days-the murals lining its walls are nearly identical to those painted in the 14th century.

Excursion to Mount Pilatus

Begin this breathtaking journey with a cruise around Lake Lucerne. You will then ascend the mountain by way of the world's steepest cogwheel railway- a marvel of Swiss ingenuity and design. At the summit you will have stunning views across the country before you begin your cable car descent over the serene forests of Kriens.

Day 10: Lucerne region | Munich

Transfer to Munich via Neuschwanstein

Visit "Mad" King Ludwig's fairy-tale castle of Neuschwanstein, the real-life model for the Disney World castles. Ponder the young king's mysterious death as you learn the story of one of Europe's most eccentric rulers. King Ludwig so preferred dreams over reality that his servants could address him only from behind a screen. In fact, the original plans for the castle were drawn up by a theater set designer, not an architect.

Arrive in Munich

Welcome to Munich! This center of culture boasts over 45 museums, 10 university buildings and two opera houses. The city is also home to the Olympic center with full facilities and more than the occasional beer-hall.

Day 11: Munich

Guided sightseeing of Munich

Your guided tour takes you past the Olympic Stadium, the headquarters of BMW, and the fashionable Schwabing district. You'll also pass the Residenz (once home to the Wittelsbach dukes of Bavaria), the Deutsches Museum, the university, and the Alte Pinakothek. Your tour concludes at Marienplatz, Munich's medieval heart, where you'll see the city's famed Glockenspiel. "Munich" derives from the city's German name, München (little monk), so named because the original settlement bordered a monastery.

Mike's Bikes tour

Experience the city of Munich from a different perspective as you ride through the city by bike.

Dinner at the Hofbrauhaus

Drop in at the world famous Hofbrauhaus. The original Hofbrauhaus was built in the 16th-century by the Bavarian Duke, Wilhelm V. The Duke realized that he was spending too much money having beer delivered in to the city, so, his solution was to have a brewery built next to the court. His plan was a success, and 5 centuries later the beer continues to flow. Enjoy the traditional Bavarian music as a dirndl-wearing waitress serves you your dinner. *(Please note: If the Hofbrauhaus is unavailable, your group will enjoy dinner at another local brewery.)*

Day 12: Munich

Excursion to Salzburg

Guided sightseeing of Salzburg

Begin your tour near the ornate gardens of the Schloss Mirabell before crossing to the west bank of the city. Here you will visit Mozart's birthplace before venturing into the heart of the city, much of which was designed during the 16th century by the Italian, Scamozzi. You will see the imposing and beautiful Domplatz as well as striking examples of Gothic churches, most notably the Franziskanerkirche.

Exploration time in Salzburg

Enjoy time to fully explore the baroque wonder of Salzburg. You might wish to visit the acclaimed Natural History museum or the Residenz gallery which features works from the 16th to 19th centuries. Salzburg is also a wonderful place to indulge in some shopping or just people-watching from one of its many cafes.

Dinner in Salzburg

Enjoy dinner in Salzburg before returning to Munich.

Day 13: Munich | Rothenburg

Transfer to Rothenburg

Continue on to Rothenburg. Situated along the Romantic Road, Rothenburg is one of a string of unspoiled medieval villages and towns between Fussen in the south and the Bavarian Alps in the North. One of the best-preserved medieval cities in Europe, Rothenburg was first mentioned in written records in 804 as a settlement north of the Tauber River.

Exploration time in Rothenburg

Enjoy free time today to explore this charming medieval town. You may ascend the Gothic tower of the Town Hall for a panoramic view of the city and the countryside beyond or visit the historical museum located in a 13th-century abbey.

Night Watchman tour

This evening, you will have a tour led by the Night Watchman of Rothenburg. Until 1920, this position was held by a man in the city who would each night wander the streets to deter thieves and drunkards. In a time before fire hydrants, his key responsibility was to warn the sleeping residents of fire and other dangers.

Day 14: Rothenburg | Heidelberg

Transfer to Heidelberg

Arrive in Heidelberg, one of Germany's most beautiful towns, standing proudly on the River Neckar. While its castle dominates the skyline, the town also has wonderful shopping and a vibrant nightlife due to its large university population.

Guided sightseeing of Heidelberg

Become acquainted with Germany's oldest university city (the university dates back to 1386). See Heidelberg's 700-year-old Schloß (palace) and its famous Faß (wine barrel), the world's largest. From the castle's rose-colored walls and historic battlements, enjoy a stunning view of the Neckar Valley, where Homo heidelbergensis roamed 500,000 years ago. You'll also see the town's medieval streets and Marktplatz, where witches were once burned at the stake. Writers as diverse as Mark Twain (who once floated down the Neckar on a raft) and Goethe (who was inspired by the view from the Schloß) have long praised Heidelberg's enduring beauty.

Exploration time in Heidelberg

Take the rest of the day to further explore the quaint German city of Heidelberg on your own.

Day 15: Depart for home

Transfer to the airport for your return flight

Your Tour Director assists with your transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.

Itinerary is subject to change

For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions at www.eftours.com/bc.

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“My daughter has gained such an amazing view of the world and history from this experience. She has not stopped talking since I picked her up at the airport. Thank you for all the organization, helpful hints, flexible payment plan, and knowledgeable tour guides.”

–**CHARLOTTE, PARENT**

