

Jeanne Mills Tours

The Pleasures of Paris & the French Countryside

May 10 - 23, 2010

Limited to 14 participants

Cost of the tour is \$4100 (twin occupancy)

For our 2010 tour to France we will indulge ourselves the pleasures to be found in and around Paris. We are taking a slightly different tangent this year, one I've been anxious to explore myself. We are, as the French would say, going to "leche vitrines" or window shop (literally "lick the windows"), "tasting" the sights, sounds and flavors of the things the French are famous for: their sweets - chocolates, ice cream, pastries-- , their regional wines, their beautiful outdoor markets, their fashionable boutiques, their diverse people.

In addition to Paris, we will spend a day in the Champagne region, visiting the Cathedral in Reims where kings of France were crowned and sampling some bubbly in one of the city's wine cellars. Later, we'll take a longer break to see some sights in Brittany and Normandy.

We are limiting our group to 14 participants this year to make possible our off-the-beaten-track visit to Paris and environs.

Since each day will include many photo opportunities, we will meet early on with American fine art photographer Meredith Mullins, author of *In a Paris Moment*. Meredith, who lives in Paris, will give us tips for enhanced picture taking, as she takes us out along the quays and bridges of Paris.

With our upgraded photo-taking skills, we will visit the markets of Paris--flower, food, bird and antique. We'll stroll in a garden and along the quays with cameras in hand. To inspire our creativity, we'll visit boutiques specializing in ribbons, buttons and threads, we'll note colors, shapes, architectural features and city life and, depending upon current exhibits, may take in a small museum or two. As we walk the streets of Paris, we'll be tempted to stop by a tea shop for a something to indulge ourselves: a pastry, piece of chocolate or delicious sorbet and drink so we can continue our daily excursions well-refreshed.

We will join American ex-pat Richard Nahem, who writes an insiders' guide to Paris, *Eye Prefer Paris*, and who will lead us on a gourmet and chocolate walk, visiting his favorite hideaways in the Marais, discovering Paris delicacies and irresistible treats. I'm sure we'll be tempted to taste a few. An optional cooking class, which will broaden your skills and delight your senses, will be offered for the first 8 who sign up (supplemental charge is 160 Euros).

Mid-tour we take a 3-day break, traveling west from Paris by TGV (high speed train), splitting our stay between Saint Malo in Brittany and Bayeux in Normandy. Saint-Malo is an old port city on the emerald coast. Its Old Town, destroyed during World War II, was rebuilt with its old skyline of towers, ramparts and buildings, restored in beautiful granite.

A short distance from Saint Malo is Mont Saint-Michel, a rocky cone-shaped islet connected to the mainland by a causeway. Here we find a castle, Benedictine abbey church, and at the base, a small village, all built of granite. We'll visit the 11th-15th century Gothic abbey and monastic buildings at the top of the mount, and then enjoy the small houses and shops at the bottom. We promise you will find Mont Saint-Michel marvelous and memorable.

After our visit to Mont-Saint-Michel, we will continue to our hotel in Bayeux. Once there we will walk the length of the Bayeux Tapestry, all 230 feet, to marvel at the embroidered details famously chronicling the events leading up to and the invasion of England by William the Conqueror in 1066. On another day, we'll go by private bus on a poignant journey to the Peace Memorial Museum in Caen, the Normandy landing beaches and the American Cemetery.

After our Normandy sojourn, we will return to Paris for our final opportunity to visit the must-see shops and boutiques.

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Daily Itinerary for May 2010 Tour to France

Sunday, May 9

From the airport closest to your home, this is the day to take your overnight flight to Paris.

Monday, May 10 - Day 1

Our group meets at our hotel in Paris. We will take time to stretch our legs, check out the "neighborhood", and get a bite to eat and a good night's sleep.

Tuesday, May 11 - Day 2

With cameras at the ready, we make our first stop at the apartment of Meredith Mullins, an American ex-pat and internationally known photographer, who will give us valuable tips on using our cameras and taking memorable photos. Meredith has been living on the Ile-Saint-Louis the past few years and she will share with us some of her favorite places to take photos along the bridges and quays of Paris.



Wednesday, May 12 - Day 3

Built in the 19th century, covered shopping arcades, the more elegant called "galleries", the less elegant, called "passages, flourished. Many have both interesting architecture, decoration and interesting shops. We go exploring on the Right Bank today, visiting the Galérié Colbert, Vivienne and the Passage Jouffroy.

Thursday, May 13 - Day 4

Keeping our cameras close at hand and looking for surprises in the city, we explore some less visited sights in the area of Montmartre, as we browse in the neighborhood of Amélie, (rent the DVD and enjoy the film again) and have a café at the Café des Deux Moulins. We'll search for the decorated tiles by Francisque Poulbot, as well as hidden gardens, interesting signage and surprising little gems. The afternoon begins at the Viaduc des Arts, an area of craft studios. We'll browse, checking out a variety of studios. Of special interest will be a workshop which hand makes beautiful flowers.

Friday, May 14 - Day 5

Today we hop on the TGV, the high-speed train, for the 45 minute ride to Reims, the capital of Champagne country. Of architectural and historical interest is the cathedral of Reims. Built in the 13th century, this "high Gothic" cathedral is where the kings of France were crowned. The facade is the finest portion of the building and one of the most perfect masterpieces of the Middle Ages. The cathedral has a profusion of sculpture, stained glass, tapestries, paintings and carved woodwork. We also visit the cellars of Tattinger, one of Reims' several houses of Champagne and return to Paris at the end of the afternoon.

Saturday, May 15 - Day 6

The Vanves flea market is this morning's destination. It's a small, manageable Saturday market at the southwestern edge of Paris. Here you may find a special little treasure to take home. In addition to the "Button Man" and his stand of old buttons there will be lots of photo ops. After we've taken pictures and maybe made a purchase or two, we spend more time in the 6th arrondissement, finding little boutiques (yes, Les Olivades and Soulieado, printers of Provençal fabric, both have shops in this neighborhood) and looking at "haute couture" in the Art Deco department store, le Bon Marché. Their *mercerie* department with threads, ribbons, needlework and yarns is on an upper floor. You will be amazed at the variety of gourmet foods available at their Food Court, La Grande Epicerie, across the street.



Sunday, May 16 - Day 7

It's another market day. With an early start, we can visit two markets this morning. First we peek at the Sunday morning bird market on the Ile de la Cité -just for looking and photographing, we can't take any cute little live birds home. Afterwards we are off to the Richard Lenoir Market which begins at the Place de la Bastille. Sunday morning brings out the locals who are shopping for their Sunday dinner. You'll be tempted to pick up some food as well, either for a picnic lunch, snacking or to take home. We've also purchased hats, jewelry and other interesting items in this market. The ambience is warm and friendly as we mingle with the Sunday morning shoppers. Like many Parisians, we will spend a lazy afternoon walking in the Tuileries Gardens or along the quays of the Seine, having ice cream or pastry or heading for a small museum.

Monday, May 17 - Day 8

Richard Nahem, another American ex-pat (blog Eye Prefer Paris), leads us on a gourmet walking tour this morning. He promises us some wonderful tasting and off-the-beaten track sightseeing, as we visit some special places he frequents. Staying in the Marais, we have more wonderful boutiques, selling ribbons, buttons and other remarkable goods, to visit. Each day we will end up with wonderful photo memories.



Tuesday, May 18 - Day 9

Pack your bag! We are taking a few days outside of Paris to visit Brittany and Normandy. A TGV train from the Gare Montparnasse takes us to the walled port city of Saint Malo, on France's Emerald Coast. Saint Malo's center was almost completely destroyed in the bombing of the Second World War. The inner city, with its ramparts, towers and old buildings, was rebuilt in granite, keeping the old prewar plan and design. We will stay inside the city walls for one night, giving us adequate time to enjoy walking on the ramparts and visiting the "old" city center.

Wednesday, May 19 - Day 10

Another important architectural site on the border between Normandy and Brittany is Mont Saint Michel, a UNESCO World Heritage site and an important place of medieval pilgrimage. At the foot of the abbey is the fortified village of Mont Saint Michel. The abbey is built around the granite apex of the Mount and includes Romanesque crypts and the nave with its Flamboyant Gothic choir. We will have plenty of time to enjoy the abbey and the village, taking photos in town and out toward the sea. In the afternoon we continue to Bayeux a town of about 16,000. We'll enjoy the town and see the Bayeux Tapestry (actually an embroidery, which measures 20 inches high by 230 feet long and records the events leading up to and the Battle of Hastings, on October 14, 1066. It is beautifully displayed, allowing one to get up close and personal. We'll have audioguides to narrate the story of the tapestry for us. Bayeux is also known for lace making.

Thursday, May 20 - Day 11

We move to the 20th century today and concentrate on the D-Day Landings and the beginning of the end of World War II. We start in the city of Caen at the Mémorial de Caen (Peace Museum), which is regarded as the best World War II museum in France. The Caen Memorial focuses on the events leading up to and after D-Day. We walk through a five-part presentation: the lead-up to World War II, the Battle of Normandy, two video presentations, the Cold War and the ongoing movement for peace. In the afternoon our coach will take us to the American Cemetery, situated on a bluff above Omaha Beach. The 9387 white marble crosses and stars of David are a moving tribute to the Americans who lost their lives on the beaches.



Note: *This day has been planned to be of general interest with visits to the all-encompassing Peace Museum in Caen, Omaha Beach, and the American cemetery, contrasting it with a brief stop at the German cemetery. Depending upon your level of interest, you may want to engage in a strenuous full day tour which includes walking battlefields and exploring lesser known sites. We have one person definitely interested in the latter, but she feels she may be in the minority. We would like to know whether there are others interested in the more strenuous tour to see whether it's feasible to offer that as an option.*

Friday, May 21 - Day 12

It's back to Paris today; back to our hotel and an afternoon at leisure. It's too early to learn about exhibit and gallery shows, but certainly when the time comes, we'll have lots of suggestions of what to do either as a group or individually.

Saturday, May 22 - Day 13

We leave the day free for your suggestions or for your individual plans.

Sunday, May 23 - Day 14

It's time to pack your bags, and gather up your memories and souvenirs and head back home.



May 2010 French Trip Details and Registration

The price of the tour includes the following:

- 13 nights in three star hotels
- All breakfasts, 2 lunches & 2 dinners
- All ground transportation connected with the described itinerary
- Photography walk & visit with Meredith Mullins
- Gourmet walk with Richard Nahem
- Guided visit of Mont Saint Michel
- Admissions to museums on itinerary
- Guide and driver gratuities
- Extensive pre-trip preparation

Not included in the cost of the tour are:

- Air fare and transfers to and from airports
- Beverages for included meals
- Optional activities, entries & transportation
- Travel and cancellation insurance
- Personal expenses

Cost of the tour, per person, in a twin room is \$4100.

A minimum of 12 participants is needed to proceed with the tour. Your deposit will be fully refunded if we do not meet our minimum. By the end of the year I must notify the hotels that we have a minimum of 12 tour registrants. Please contact [us](#) if you contemplate registering for the tour. The maximum number of participants is 14.

Single rooms are available. Please contact [Jeanne](#) for details. Approximate cost is \$825.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

Notice of cancellation must be in writing.

- Deposit is non-refundable.
- If you contact us by February 1, 2010, we will refund 100% of your tour payments less non-refundable deposit.
- If you contact us by February 28, 2010, we will refund 50% of your tour payments less non-refundable deposit.
- Between March 1, 2010 and May 9, 2010, the date we fly to France, there is no refund.

Trip cancellation insurance and health insurance is strongly advised, so that you will be protected if you find it necessary to cancel the tour or return home early. We will mail you an insurance brochure so you can be informed.

We cannot be responsible for changes in the itinerary that result from actions taken by our suppliers. In good faith we will make the best alternative plans possible.

Please note: The cost of the tour is subject to a small increase should the dollar become weaker resulting in an increase in land costs.

Tour details are subject to change based on size of group.



We have planned the itinerary to include broad artistic and cultural interests. Travel between Paris and Normandy and Brittany will be by train. Our excursions outside of cities will be by private coach and public transportation. And we walk and walk and walk. Please note: You will be lifting and carrying your own suitcase and hand luggage during the tour, especially on and off the trains. Luggage (one checked bag and one carry-on bag) and "packing light" will be discussed in one of the newsletters. Participants need to be in good physical condition to fully enjoy this moderately strenuous tour. There will be steps and cobblestone streets to navigate. Please check with your doctor if you have specific health concerns, and contact me if you would like further information regarding the pace of the excursion. The rooms in our Paris hotel are all non-smoking.

Starting in January I will send you monthly newsletters filled with descriptions of the cities, towns and villages, as well as museums, monuments and places of interest on our itinerary. Included will be suggestions for packing and pre-trip reading. Before the tour begins the group will be invited to meet in Pacific Grove for an introduction to each other, and an overview of the tour's destinations and activities. This is a chance to have your questions answered and to share your ideas and specific interests. I am always available to chat by phone or email, and I encourage you to contact [me](#) with your questions.

The size of the group will not exceed 14 participants. We welcome those who want to come with a friend or family member and, if possible, I will match up singles (non-smoking only) wanting a roommate. In addition to planned activities, there will be time to browse in the shops, search for fabric, discover a treasure, visit a museum, find the right moment for a photo, make a sketch, and spend time with other quilters on the tour. And again we remind you that this excursion involves daily walking and stair climbing. Except for lunch and tea breaks, it is not unusual to be on your feet most of the day.

Payment Schedule

- Due with registration.....\$300
 - January 1, 2010.....\$1900
 - March 1, 2010\$1900
 - March 1, 2010 (single supplement approx.).....\$825
- I am unable to accept credit card payments.

Our quilter/travel agent friend Suzanne Cox will be happy to help you with your flights.

707-864-1385

SuzanneFrank1@aol.com



Registration form

If you would like to be a participant on this tour, print out this page, fill out the registration form below and send it to Jeanne with your non-refundable deposit of \$300. You may also download the Word or PDF versions of the registration form.

Sign me up for the May 10-23, 2010 tour to Paris, Brittany and Normandy.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

I will be sharing a room with: _____

I would like a single supplement.

I would like a roommate, but I am willing to pay the single supplement if one cannot be found.

Any disabilities or health problems we should be aware of? _____

Name and phone number of person to contact in case of emergency:

Please send this registration form with a check for \$300 (your non-refundable deposit), payable to Jeanne Mills and mail to:
Jeanne Mills Tours
P.O. Box 51143
Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Sorry, we are unable to accept credit cards.