

Royal Normandy

4 Night Tour - Bed & Breakfast

Your itinerary

The following pages contain general information about your car or motorcycle tour and the locations where you will stay. The order in which they appear may not be the order your hotels have been confirmed for you - for your individual itinerary please refer to your holiday documentation.





Advance planning
To decide on places to see and plan your route it's useful to refer to some of the tourist office and travel websites such as Google maps, viamichelin.com* or theaa.co.uk.

*Motorway tolls, if applicable, are indicated on this site.

Hotel directions With your travel documents is an information sheet for each hotel giving directions together with some further details.

Arrival Unless stated, you will be expected to arrive at each of the hotels pre-booked for you by 6pm each day. This should allow time for a fairly leisurely drive between overnight stops but if you find you will be arriving later than this please ring the hotel so your room is held for you.

This tour is on a bed and breakfast basis.

Inspired by the cultural and architectural wealth of this region, the tour brings to life the colourful history of the kings of Normandy (and subsequently England), William the Conqueror and Richard the Lionheart.

Bayeux is mostly associated with the incredible tapestry but it's also a charming small city with a 950 year old cathedral. The middle 2 nights are spent in Caen, a great city to explore with plenty to see and do within walking distance of your hotel. And Louviers, a typically Norman, pretty town with half timbered buildings, is half an hour from the majestic ruins of Château Gaillard, designed and built by Richard (the Lionheart) de Bouillon, in a strategic position overlooking the river Seine.

It may be worth checking the website of individual attractions, monuments and museums for opening dates and times in advance to avoid disappointment, particularly if you will be there at quieter times of year.

Bayeux



Bayeux cathedral

This appealing small city is most famous for its tapestry, a UNESCO Memory of the World, depicting the events of 1066 and the conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy. A visit to the Tapisserie de Bayeux museum is recommended to appreciate the scale and intricate detail of this treasured piece of history.

Bayeux was the first town to be liberated after the D-Day Landings in June 1944 and the Musée Mémorial covers the period of the Battle of Normandy.



Amazingly unscathed by the devastation during WW2, the cathedral of Notre Dame is awe inspiring and was consecrated in 1077 in the presence of William the Conqueror. It was subsequently enlarged centuries later in a Gothic style.

Caen



Château de Caen

This vibrant city is a good place to visit at any time of year, with its fascinating history and numerous museums, galleries and architectural treasures to discover. Your hotel is within walking distance of the restored castle and the Vaugueux district, a charming pedestrian area filled with restaurants and shops, which managed to escape the destruction suffered by a large proportion of Caen during the war. The city also has good public transport including a new tramway system opened in July 2019.

Places to visit include the twin abbeys, Abbaye aux Hommes and Abbaye aux Dames as well as the huge medieval castle founded by William the Conqueror and his wife, Queen Mathilde around 1060. The superb Abbaye aux Hommes (where William's tomb is found) encompasses Romanesque, Gothic and Classical styles and Caen Town Hall is within the adjoining monastic buildings. The Abbaye aux Dames houses the tomb of Queen Mathilde and a guided tour of this jewel of Norman heritage makes a fascinating visit.

From Caen it's not too much of a detour to visit Falaise (around 40 minutes away), William's birthplace and the site of another imposing castle. Born the illegitimate son of Duke Robert I of Normandy, and Herleve (also known as Arlette), daughter of a tanner in Falaise this future, very powerful king was originally known as 'William the Bastard'.



Château de Falaise



Caen

Louviers

En route from Caen and depending on the road you choose, you may like to stop at Pont l'Evêque, famous for its cheese, and where there is a good place to find out all about the local apple brandy at 'Calvados Experience Immersive Tour' - or Pont Audemer, a charming medieval town on the river Risle, sometimes referred to as the Venice of the north.

The quiet, pretty town of Louviers has typical Norman half timbered buildings, a traditional weekly market and a Gothic cathedral.

Half an hour from here overlooking the river Seine at Les Andelys is Château Gaillard. This is where the ruined remains of the castle can be seen which was designed and commissioned by Richard de Bouillon ['Boiling Richard'] who was better known as Richard the Lionheart. He earned this nickname for his bravery in the crusades and was also the Duke of Normandy and crowned King Richard 1 of England.

The once magnificent castle was built very quickly over the course of less than 2 years in the 12th century to fill a gap in the defences of Normandy, to protect the region including the nearby city of Rouen, from King Philippe Auguste of France.



A view of Les Andelys from Château Gaillard