



Gardens, Art, Villages & Châteaux of Normandy and Brittany 2025

8 JUN – 25 JUN 2025

Code: 22520

Tour Leaders **Stephen Ryan, Craig Lidgerwood**

Physical Ratings 

Led by Stephen Ryan, this tour celebrates the lovely gardens, delicious local produce, great monuments, exquisite half-timbered villages and Impressionist landscape paintings of Normandy and Brittany.

Overview

Led by [Stephen Ryan](#), with the assistance of [Craig Lidgerwood](#), this tour explores the gardens, art, villages, towns and great monuments of two of France's most beautiful and historic regions: Normandy and Brittany.

- Visit private gardens, several designated 'Jardin Remarquable' and many hosted by their owners, including the [Château de Miromesnil](#), birthplace of Guy de Maupassant.
- Against the backdrop of Normandy's stunning coastline, discover [Le Bois des Moutiers](#), a masterpiece of the Arts and Crafts movement, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll. Nestled nearby is Le Jardin du Vastérival, residence of the late Princess Sturdza, which features one of the finest plant collections in France.
- Visionary landscape designer Pascal Cribier created [Le Bois de Morville](#) in 1982; enjoy a special tour of this garden, Cribier's most personal project and the laboratory in which he tested his ideas throughout his career.
- The pristine northern coast of Brittany benefits from an exceptional climate due to the Gulf Stream. Visit two horticultural treasures - the Jardins de Kerdalo, celebrated for its rich and diverse collection of plants, and the private manor house garden Le Jardin du Pelinec.
- Journey in the footsteps of the Impressionists, from the coast Monet painted at Belle Île to the port town of Honfleur and Le Havre's Musée d'Art Moderne André Malraux, which houses one of France's most extensive Impressionist art collections.
- Tour significant landmarks such as the Abbey of St-Georges de Boscherville, as well as the Romanesque and Gothic Cathedrals of Notre-Dame in Rouen and St-Étienne in Caen.
- At Carnac on the south coast of Brittany, examine the largest Neolithic alignment in the world (3500-3000 BC).
- In the picturesque town of Bayeux, view the remarkable 11th-century tapestry that vividly chronicles the Norman conquest of England.
- Explore villages designated as 'Les Plus Beaux Villages de France,' including Lyons-la-Forêt and Tréguier with their picturesque half-timbered houses, and the fortified cities of Saint-Malo and Vannes with their well-preserved ramparts, cobbled streets and old stone buildings.
- Visit lively local markets and dine in fine restaurants; enjoy the flavours of Normandy's Livarot and Pont l'Évêque cheeses and *calvados*; and Brittany's crêpes and famous *Far Breton*.

Overnight Rouen (5 nights) • Honfleur (2 nights) • Bayeux (3 nights) • Vannes (1 night) • Belle-Ile-en-Mer (2 nights) • Perros-Guirec (2 nights) • Saint-Malo (2 nights)

Testimonials

This tour certainly exceeded our expectations. The mix of history and wonderful (often private) gardens made for a memorable tour. David & Chris, QLD.

Three French Collectors Gardens presented by Stephen Ryan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GaVTSM8bsQ>

Leaders



Stephen Ryan

Horticulturalist, nurseryman, collector, prolific writer and award-winning broadcaster. Stephen brings his profound knowledge to ASA garden tours in France, Morocco, Madagascar, Spain, Chile, New Zealand and Western Australia.

Stephen Ryan, horticulturalist, author and broadcaster, started working in his father's nursery at the age of ten and at the same time joined the Mt. Macedon Horticultural Society. By the age of 19 he was the president and still is to this day. After completing a Gardening and Turf Management apprenticeship, and achieving an *Award of Merit* as the top Victorian apprentice he subsequently was awarded two scholarships, one in the United Kingdom and the other in New Zealand. On Stephen's return to Australia he ran his family nursery until he started his own nationally recognised nursery Dicksonia Rare Plants a few years later in 1980 and has been a passionate plant collector ever since.

Having started with writing articles for magazines and newspapers, Stephen's media presence has developed to the stage where he does a regular radio slot with Melbourne's 3CR station. In 2002 Stephen was awarded a *Radio Laurel* by the Horticultural Media Association for his segments on ABC Radio 774 3LO. Stephen has often appeared on a variety of television programs, however he is best known for his role for three years as host on ABC Television's *Gardening Australia*.

Stephen lectures and holds seminars both in Australia as well as overseas which have included a lecture that was translated into Spanish as he spoke to an audience in Argentina. As a plant hunter and traveller he has travelled to many places in the world such as Namibia, India, Oregon, England, Ireland, South Africa, Peru, New Guinea and France as well as the aforementioned Argentina. He has also led tours into Madagascar and North West France.

He has published three books on rare plants that have received rave reviews and his manual contains over 2000 plant entries of rare plants available in temperate Australia. He also contributed to the two large tomes produced in Australia *Botanica* and more recently *Flora*. Stephen's garden and nursery hold three national plant collections, *Cornus*, *Sambucus* and *Acanthus*, for the Garden Plants Conservation Association of Australia. In 2001 the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria recognised Stephen with a John Pascoe Fawcner Gold Medal for "Distinguished Service to Horticulture".

Since departing *Gardening Australia*, Stephen is now writing for a New Zealand magazine *Weekend Gardener*, and has started writing another book, which will be on the development of his own garden, 'Tugurium'.

Stephen first joined ASA as a lecturer in 2009.



Craig Lidgerwood

Accomplished Botanical artist who exhibits widely, Craig leads garden tours with Stephen Ryan, whose 'Dicksonia Rare Plants Manual' he illustrated and also with horticulturalist, Sabrina Hahn. Craig joined ASA in 2009 and co-leads tours to France, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, New Zealand and Madagascar.

Craig's working life began in the arts but moved to the travel industry 24 years ago. He has since travelled extensively recording, photographing and drawing plants in their natural habitat.

In the late 1980s Craig studied drawing and watercolour at the Council of Adult Education, Melbourne, and art classes in the Macedon Ranges. From 2006 to 2011 Craig attended botanic art classes with renowned artist Anita Barley and attended various botanic art workshops through the Mt Macedon Horticultural Society with established botanic artists. In 2008 he illustrated Stephen Ryan's book, the *Dicksonia Rare Plants Manual* and in 2010 Craig and his artwork were featured on ABC television's Sunday arts program, *Art Nation*.

Exhibitions include *The Art of Botanical Illustration 2010 & 2012*, Melbourne Botanic Gardens, *Botanica 2012 & 2013*, Sydney Botanic Gardens, *Capturing Flora: 300 years of Australian botanical art*, a major retrospective at the Ballarat Art Gallery (2012), and also in 2012 Craig's first solo exhibition, *An Inquisitive Eye: the Botanical Art of Craig Lidgerwood* was held at the Sofitel Hotel, Collins Street, Melbourne.

Craig's passion for travel has seen him visit parts of Eastern Europe, South America, South and Eastern Africa, Madagascar, India, North Western USA, Ireland and the United Kingdom. Craig is an adventurous traveller, trekking in Eastern Nepal, Kilimanjaro, the Andes and the Inca Trail, Darjeeling and Sikkim. Craig has also spent three months walking in southwest France, the French Pyrénées and Corsica.

Combine this tour with

Natural Landscapes, Art and Gardens of the Côte d'Azur, Provence and the Cévennes 2025

7 MAY – 24 MAY 2025

Natural Landscapes & Gardens of Madeira & the Azores 2025

17 MAY – 4 JUN 2025

Cultural Landscapes and Gardens of the Channel Islands: Jersey, Guernsey, Herm & Sark 2025

23 MAY – 5 JUN 2025



Itinerary

The following itinerary describes a range of museums and gardens which we plan to visit. Many are accessible to the public, but others require special permission which may only be confirmed closer to the tour's departure. The daily activities described in this itinerary may change or be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate alterations in opening hours, flight schedules and confirmation of private visits. Participants will receive a final itinerary together with their tour documents prior to departure. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches & dinners indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=dinner.

Rouen - 5 nights

Day 1: Sunday 8 June, Paris CDG – Lyons-la-Forêt – Rouen

- Tour commences at in Paris at 10am (meeting point to be confirmed)
- Lunch in Lyons-la-Forêt village
- Introductory Meeting

Meeting Point: To be confirmed. Please meet your group leaders in Paris at 10am.

This morning we drive from Paris to the historic city of Rouen, where we begin our exploration of the gardens, landscapes, great houses, villages and historic monuments of Northern France.

We stop en route for lunch in Lyons-la-Forêt, one of France's most picturesque villages, renowned for its exceptionally well-preserved 17th- and 18th-century half-timbered houses. Henry I of England, son of William the Conqueror, built a castle here to exploit the magnificent hunting grounds in the nearby beech forest. The village has served as the backdrop for two film adaptations of Gustave Flaubert's masterpiece *Madame Bovary* and has been painted by several artists including Yolande Ardissonne and Paul-Émile Pissarro, the youngest son of Camille Pissarro and godson of Claude Monet. Lyons-la-Fôret has a beautiful 18th-century timber-framed covered market and we shall also pass the house where composer Maurice

Ravel lived.

We arrive in Rouen mid-afternoon and the rest of the day is at leisure. (Overnight Rouen) L

Day 2: Monday 9 June, Rouen – Buchy – Bosc-Roger-sur-Buchy – Montmain – Rouen

- Buchy village market
- Le Jardin de Valérianes, Bosc-Roger-sur-Buchy
- Les Jardins d'Angélique, Montmain
- Welcome dinner

Our day begins with a visit to the Monday market in the small village of Buchy to purchase ingredients for our lunch. Buchy's picturesque farmer's market showcases the regional products of the Pays de Bray like the cheese of *Neufchatel*, known for its characteristic heart shape, as well as live poultry. The medieval covered market hall has fixed wooden tables that were originally butchers' blocks.

Located nearby is Le Jardin de Valérianes, created by Michel and Maryline Tissait. The garden is a testament to their commitment to preserving and showcasing a wide variety of plant species and visitors are invited to wander the paths of this lovely English-style garden that harmoniously blends perennials, roses, trees and bushes.

We next visit the Jardins d'Angélique at Montmain, comprising two wonderful gardens. South of the manor house is an Italianate formal garden with walkways and clipped hedges, box-edged beds of perennials and ornamental grasses, yew topiary and a central fountain. It provides marvellous panoramas of the surrounding countryside. To the north is a flowing romantic 'English-style' garden with grassy paths winding between shrubs, plants and trees.

This evening we enjoy a welcome dinner at one of Rouen's fine restaurants. (Overnight Rouen) BD

Day 3: Tuesday 10 June, Rouen – Saint-Martin-de-Boscherville – Rouen

- Romanesque Abbey of St Georges-de-Boscherville
- Guided tour of Rouen
- Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen

This morning we visit the remarkable Abbey St Georges-de-Boscherville, located in a meander of the Seine. In the 7th century, a chapel dedicated to St George was built here over an earlier Celtic shrine. Then in the 11th century, the great chamberlain Raoul de Tancarville founded a collegiate for canons, which was in turn succeeded by a Benedictine monastery. We shall visit the abbey with its fine Romanesque carvings and and explore its garden, where the monks cultivated plants believed to possess healing properties for the soul.

We return to Rouen for an orientation walking tour. Once an important city of Roman Gaul, Rouen became an ecclesiastical centre from the 3rd century and over time became an integral part of the Norman kingdom, until it was ceded to the French crown by King John in 1204. It changed hands during the tumultuous Hundred Years' War and by the conclusion of the 15th century, had blossomed into a flourishing hub of the French Renaissance.

The city has some of France's finest Gothic architecture. Its cathedral façade fascinated Monet, who painted it at different times of the day. Other churches include 15th-century St Ouen and St Maclou (1437), two notable examples of French flamboyant Gothic architecture. The Renaissance Gros-Horloge pavilion contains a 15th-century clock, and the Tour Jeanne d'Arc is where the saint was imprisoned before her execution. The Hôtel de Bourgheroulde (1501-37) is the best example of the city's fine medieval domestic architecture.

We also visit Rouen's Musée des Beaux-Arts, established in 1801 by Napoléon and housing one of the largest art collections in France. Its Impressionist collection is particularly impressive. Géricault was a native of Rouen, and we see some of his works there, along with those of Fragonard, Boucher, Monet, David, Degas, Renoir and Sisley. A highlight is one of Monet's images of Rouen Cathedral. (Overnight Rouen) B

Day 4: Wednesday 11 June, Rouen – Varengeville-sur-Mer – Tourville-sur-Arques – Rouen

- Le Bois des Moutiers, Varengeville-sur-Mer
- Church & Sailor's cemetery, Varengeville-sur-Mer
- [Le Bois de Morville](#), Varengeville-sur-Mer
- Château de Miromesnil, Tourville-sur-Arques: birthplace of Guy de Maupassant

Today we head north to the coastal village of Varengeville-sur-Mer where we explore two remarkable gardens. Our first visit is to Le Bois des Moutiers, a notable historic property that has been in the same family's possession since 1898. At that time, a young English architect, Edwin Luytens, who was to become famous for his houses and for the layout and architecture of imperial New Delhi, was asked to modify both the residence and the garden. Luytens designed Munstead Wood for Gertrude Jekyll, and the influence of both of these great English designers is evident in the gardens of Le Bois des Moutiers. Gertrude Jekyll's distinctive style and emphasis on vibrant colours, harmonious plant compositions, and structured layouts is seen everywhere, including in the front garden, which slopes toward the sea.

We stop for a picnic lunch near the Varengeville-sur-Mer Church and sailors' cemetery. Perched atop white limestone cliffs, Varengeville attracted many artists, including Monet, and is famous for its church featuring stained-glass windows by Georges Braque. From its sailors' cemetery where Georges Braque is buried, there is a superb view of Dieppe and the cliffs towards Le Tréport.

Our next visit is Le Bois de Morville, created in 1982 by landscape architect Pascal Cribier, who was not only one of the most important French landscape gardeners of his generation, but also one of the most influential. It has the distinction of being a "botanical, aesthetic and scientific laboratory garden". The complex consists of multiple intimate gardens or great landscapes: the rhododendron valley, the orange gardens, the holly labyrinth, the flowered meadow, the large cut oak that thrones in the middle of an amphitheatre, the wild trail, rare species trees, and incredible views of the sea.

In the late afternoon we continue to the Château de Miromesnil at Tourville-sur-Arques, a splendid 17th-century (Louis XIII) château, where Guy de Maupassant was born. Located in a large plantation dominated by two 200-year-old cedars of Lebanon, it contains a very fine kitchen garden with vegetable plots surrounded by a bewildering variety of flowers. The park, enclosed by old brick walls, features fruit trees,

rose trees, magnolias, arborescent peonies and a magnificent variety of clematis. We enjoy dinner at the Château de Miromesnil before returning to Rouen. (Overnight Rouen) BLD

Day 5: Thursday 12 June, Rouen – Auzouville-sur-Ry – Rouen

- Le Jardin Plume, Auzouville-sur-Ry
- Afternoon at leisure in Rouen

This morning we drive to Auzouville-sur-Ry to visit Le Jardin Plume, where owners Sylvie and Patrick Quibel have converted an orchard and much flat space, formerly occupied by sheep, into a vast parterre with long grass marking the divisions. Le Jardin Plume, or Feather Garden, was named after the effect of vertical grasses around the garden. There is also a spring garden, summer garden and autumn garden. The summer garden is a modern knot garden with a formal layout of clipped box. Within the parterre of boxwood, however, the plants run riot, in a limited but not quiet palette of red, yellow, orange, and gold.

We return to Rouen arriving around lunchtime. The rest of the day will be at leisure for you to explore the 'city of a hundred bell towers'. (Overnight Rouen) B

Honfleur - 2 nights

Day 6: Friday 13 June, Rouen – Varengeville-sur-Mer – Sainte-Marguerite-sur-Mer – Honfleur

- L'Étang de Launay, Varengeville-sur-Mer
- Le Jardin du Vastérival, Ste Marguerite-sur-Mer

We depart Rouen for the port of Honfleur. Our first stop is L'Étang de Launay, the meticulously tended private garden of Jean-Louis Dantec. With its highly-pruned specimen trees leading to a lake and ponds, vibrant flower beds, and one of Europe's finest woodland plantings beyond, the garden stands as a reflection of Dantec's commitment to preserving the beauty of nature and sharing it with visitors who seek to indulge in the serenity of the French countryside.

After lunch, we continue to Marguerite-sur-Mer to visit the gardens of Vastérival, residence of the late Princess Sturdza, which showcases one of France's finest plant collections. Cleverly designed paths wander through this 'informal' garden, passing rich under plantings of the woodlands, into lovely glades. The garden is famed for its collections of rhododendrons, hydrangeas, maples, birches, viburnums and camellias.

We then make our way to the old trading and fishing port of Honfleur, situated at the mouth of the Seine, where we shall spend two nights. (Overnight Honfleur) BL

Day 7: Saturday 14 June, Honfleur – Étretat – Le Havre – Honfleur

- The Cliffs of Étretat
- Les Jardins d'Étretat
- Musée d'Art Moderne André Malraux, Le Havre
- Dinner at *Le Manoir des Impressionistes*, Honfleur

Étretat's beach is familiar to anyone who loves French art. Its chalk cliffs painted by Eugène Boudin, Charles Daubigny, Gustave Courbet and Claude Monet form three natural arches and a pointed formation called The Needle (this area is called the Alabaster Coast). Guy de Maupassant spent most of his childhood at

Étretat and wrote the short story *The Englishman at Étretat*.

Here we visit the Jardins d'Étretat created in 1905 by French actress Madame Thébault. Inspired by her friend Claude Monet, she decided to create a garden at the top of the Amont cliff with emblematic views of La Manche (The Channel) and the cliffs that inspired famous painters such as Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot, Eugène Delacroix, Edouard Manet and Vasily Polenov. A century later, in 2017, landscape architect Alexandre Grivko revived and expanded the garden, drawing from the methodology of André Le Nôtre. The space of Les Jardins d'Étretat is arranged with the help of impressively scaled plant compositions, the shapes of which are evocative of the landscapes and natural features of Normandy. Alexandre has set about creating an experimental, avant-garde garden integrating contemporary art installations.

Next we drive south to Le Havre, located at the mouth of the Seine River, to visit the André Malraux Modern Art Museum, which contains the second most extensive collection of Impressionist paintings in France. There are paintings by Claude Monet and other artists who worked in Normandy including Camille Corot, Eugène Boudin, Eugène Delacroix, Gustave Courbet, Edgar Degas, Édouard Manet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Paul Gauguin, Alfred Sisley, Camille Pissarro, Paul Sérusier and Édouard Vuillard. Modern art is well represented with works by Henri Matisse, Albert Marquet, Raoul Dufy, Kees van Dongen, Fernand Léger, Alexej von Jawlensky and Nicolas de Staël.

We return to Honfleur and the late afternoon is at leisure to explore its old, picturesque port painted by artists like Gustave Courbet, Eugène Boudin and Claude Monet. Honfleur is also famous for its lovely Sainte Catherine church, the largest timber church in France.

Our day ends with dinner at *Le Manoir des Impressionistes*, a converted 18th century Norman manor overlooking the estuary of the river Seine. The restaurant offers panoramic views of the sea and surrounding park and a refined gastronomic menu crafted from locally sourced, fresh market produce. (Overnight Honfleur) BD

Bayeux - 3 nights

Day 8: Sunday 15 June, Honfleur – Ouilly-le-Vicomte – Mézidon-Canon – Bayeux

- Château de Boutemont, Ouilly-le-Vicomte
- Château de Canon, Mézidon-Canon

On our way to Bayeux, we make a stop at the Château de Boutemont. Dating back to the 12th century, it is today surrounded by an 11-hectare park. Achille Duchène's early 20th century French gardens have since been augmented by landscape architect Georges Hayat's Renaissance Italian garden, rose trees-decorated arches and small 'scent garden'. Lunch will be served in the Château's tearoom.

We next visit the gardens of the Château de Canon, an 18th-century house created by Jean-Baptiste-Jacques Elie de Beaumont, a prominent figure of the Age of Enlightenment, and his wife Anne-Louise. The family has owned this property since the Middle Ages. The present splendid two-storey Neo Classical structure is surrounded by contemporary gardens and a park that showcase a harmonious blend of French formal and English landscape styles.

In the late afternoon we continue our drive to Bayeux, our next base in Normandy, which is famous above all for its tapestry. (Overnight Bayeux) BL

Day 9: Monday 16 June, Bayeux – Castillon – Bayeux

- Cathedral Notre-Dame & historic centre of Bayeux
- Bayeux Tapestry Museum
- Les Jardins de Castillon-Plantbessin, Castillon

We begin today with a walking tour of Bayeux's historic centre and the fine Cathedral of Notre-Dame (1077), a gem of Norman architecture. We then visit the special museum dedicated to the Bayeux Tapestry, which chronicles the Norman invasion of England. This Anglo-Saxon work, presented by Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, to Bishop Odo in c.1080, chronicles events from Harold Godwin's promise to bequeath his kingdom to William to his death on the field at Hastings; it is fascinating for its detailed depictions of arms and the 11th-century methods and machinery of warfare.

After lunch at leisure, we drive to the Jardins de Castillon-Plantbessin, created by Colette Sainte Beuve as a water garden to complement her plant nursery. This botanical haven seamlessly integrates elements of Japanese gardening traditions and includes beautiful samples of Japanese plants as well as herbs and heather. (Overnight Bayeux) B

Day 10: Tuesday 17 June, Bayeux – Caen – Brécy – Bayeux

- Fine Arts Museum, Caen
- Abbaye-aux-Hommes & its abbatial church St Étienne, Caen
- Château de Brécy, St-Gabriel-Brécy

This morning we visit Caen's excellent small art museum built within the ruined walls of William the Conqueror's castle. Among its treasures are works by Van der Weyden, Perugino, Poussin and Veronese.

After lunch at The Mancel restaurant nestled within the castle grounds, we explore Caen's Abbaye-aux-Hommes and its church, St Étienne. This masterpiece of Romanesque church architecture was begun by William the Conqueror as his mausoleum. One reason for the finesse of this building, which influenced many later Romanesque churches, was this region's abundance of good building stone.

We make our way back to Bayeux passing through the Château de Brécy, owned by M. and Mme Didier Wirth, to visit its wonderful formal French garden. The house dates from the 17th century, and bears many hallmarks of the great François Mansart's architecture. The garden immediately behind the house consists of five terraces, fine stone work, elegant parterres, pools, topiary and beautiful wrought-iron gates. (Overnight Bayeux) BL

Vannes – 1 night

Day 11: Wednesday 18 June: Bayeux – Bazouges-la-Pérouse – Vannes

- Château de la Ballue, Bazouges-la-Pérouse
- Guided tour of the walled town of Vannes incl. Saint-Pierre Cathedral

We depart Bayeux and drive south towards the Château de la Ballue, located between Normandy and Brittany. This 17th-century château, once visited by writers like Balzac and Victor Hugo, is surrounded by dramatic theatrical gardens. The original Italian-style gardens were abandoned and in the 1970s, visionary architects François Hebert Stevens & Paul Maymont used imaginative topiary and Yin Yang inspirations to create a side garden in the purest mannerist style. Former owners Marie-France Barrière and Alain Schrotter also later redesigned and reinterpreted the gardens with a modern twist. There are neat traditional geometric terraces, a lush fernery and scented groves.

Following lunch, we drive to the south coast of Brittany. Nestled in the Gulf of Morbihan in one of the world's most beautiful bays, Vannes is a fortified town with a 2,000-year history. Here you can sample two of the region's famous specialities. *Far Breton* is a traditional custard cake with prunes, while *Kouign-Amann* is made with flaky, buttery, caramelised pastry.

A guided tour will lead us through Vannes' remarkable old quarter to impressive Saint-Pierre Cathedral and along the town's ramparts. These 13th-century fortifications, regularly remodelled until the 17th century, provide wonderful views of the town's formal gardens and its cathedral. (Overnight Vannes) BL

Belle-Île-en-Mer – 2 nights

Day 12: Thursday 19 June, Vannes – Carnac – Belle-Île-en-Mer

- Guided tour of Carnac: stone alignments and circles
- Lunch in Quiberon
- Ferry crossing from Quiberon to Belle-Île-en-Mer

Today we drive to the south coast of Brittany. At Carnac, we explore the largest Neolithic alignment in the world (3500-3000 BC), with almost 3,000 upright stones arranged in 11 almost parallel lines over several kilometres.

We continue along the rugged coast of the Quiberon Peninsula where we will have lunch in a local restaurant. From Quiberon, a ferry will take us to the island of Belle-Île-en-Mer, disembarking in Le Palais, Belle Île's largest town. We then head to our hotel on the dramatic south coast where the rest of the afternoon will be at leisure. Tonight we dine together at the hotel restaurant. (Overnight Belle-Île-en-Mer) BLD

Day 13: Friday 20 June: Belle-Île-en-Mer

- In the footsteps of Claude Monet: walk along the Côte Sauvage and Aiguilles de Port-Coton
- Musée Sarah Bernhardt at Pointe des Poulains
- Village of Sauzon
- Vauban Citadel in Le Palais
- Jardin la Boulaye, Le Grand Cosquet

Belle-Île-en-Mer has been a popular location for many artists including Claude Monet who painted the jagged cliffs and rough seas during the 1880s, Australian expatriate artist John Russell and French stage actress Sarah Bernhardt. In September 1886 Claude Monet travelled from Giverny to the island of Belle Île. The first motifs to capture Monet's attention following his arrival were a group of fantastic rock formations at

Port-Coton, a harbour not far from his lodgings in the tiny village of Kervilahouen. He painted six canvases that depict a cluster of tall, pointed boulders emerging from the sea there (the Needles or Pyramids of Port-Coton). This morning we enjoy a walk in the footsteps of Claude Monet to view the Aiguilles de Port-Coton.

Sarah Bernhardt discovered Belle Île when she accompanied her friend, the painter Georges Clairin, to the island in 1893. She fell in love with the island and purchased an abandoned fort at Pointe des Poulains which became her summer home. This is now a museum which we visit. We travel to the fishing village of Sauzon located at the northern end of the island where we will have lunch. At the foot of the breakwater stood the Hotel du Phare (Lighthouse Hotel). It was on the quay, in front of the hotel, that Bernhardt and her entourage of friends would disembark from the steamboat.

Our next stop is the town of Le Palais where we will visit the imposing citadel. Construction started in 1549 but its star-shaped structure bears the mark of Vauban (1633-1707), generally considered the greatest engineer of his time, and one of the most important in European military history.

We end the day with a guided walk through the [Jardin de La Boulaye](#). "Terraces decked with roses and agapanthus, santolina and boxwood, stone and iron sculptures, pathways adorned with heathers and asphodels, hydrangea borders, ponds and waterfalls, former walls and quarries, old willow trees – fallen and covered with moss and lichen, gorse labyrinths in seven concentric circles, apple orchards near an age-old wash house, a rockrose-bordered stairway... all now punctuate this meandering poetic maze". (Overnight Belle-Ile-en-Mer) BLD

Perros-Guirec – 2 nights

Day 14: Saturday 21 June, Belle-Île-en-Mer – Pont-Aven – Perros-Guirec

- Pont-Aven Museum
- Late afternoon at leisure in Perros-Guirec

Returning to the mainland by ferry, we make our way to Pont-Aven, a small, picturesque Breton village which owes its fame to the Pont-Aven School of artists of whom the most famous was Paul Gauguin. We will have time at leisure to explore the village, walk along the River Aven and sample the town's *galettes* – butter biscuits. After lunch, we visit the gallery devoted to the work of the Pont-Aven School with paintings by Paul Gauguin and his fellow artists.

In the afternoon we continue to our hotel located on the outskirts of Perros-Guirec, a seaside resort nestled in the heart of the 'Pink Granite Coast' in northern Brittany. The region's combination of pink rocks, blue sea and a few islands on the horizon gives it a picturesque beauty. From Perros-Guirec we visit a number of private gardens as we journey through the area's rocky coastline, deep-cut inlets and inland wooded valleys. (Overnight Perros-Guirec) BD

Day 15: Sunday 22 June, Perros-Guirec – Penvénan – Tréguier – Trédarzec – Perros-Guirec

- Jardins de Pellinec, Penvénan
- Port town of Tréguier
- Les Jardins de Kerdalo, Trédarzec

This morning we explore Le Jardin de Pellinec, a private manor house garden nestled at the bottom of the bay of Pellinec on excellent soils and a particular microclimate that has enabled passionate gardener Gérard Jean to grow a huge diversity of plants. The 4 hectares are organised according to themes: the exotic,

Japanese water iris, Australian and English gardens, the Himalayan alley and the lily pond. The view is ever changing and at high tide the sea laps at the garden's edges, a spectacular sight.

We continue to the port town of Tréguier dominated by the 14th-century Cathedral of Saint-Tugdual and dotted with half-timbered houses dating from the 15th century.

Following time at leisure for lunch and to explore this charming town, we visit the gardens of Kerdalo in a valley near the Brittany coast. The gardens were the subject of a book by its former owner-designer, Prince Peter Wolkonsky: *Kerdalo: Un Jardin d'Exception* (Paris, 1995). Originally a manor farm with natural springs, the formal garden merges into a wooded valley with a lake, pools and grotto and a rich collection of trees and shrubs. (Overnight Perros-Guirec) B

Saint-Malo - 2 nights

Day 16: Monday 23 June, Perros-Guirec – Ploëzal – Guingamp – Gouarec – Saint-Malo

- Château de la Roche-Jagu, Ploëzal
- Lunch at leisure in Guingamp
- Un Jardin en Ville, Gouarec

This morning we visit Le Château de La Roche-Jagu, a 15th-century fortress located on a wooded promontory with panoramic views of the Trieux estuary. Dating back to the Middle Ages, it is the only survivor of some 10 fortresses that once guarded the traffic on the Trieux River to the river port of Pontrioux. It features a re-created medieval kitchen garden, a medicinal garden, and a flower garden. There are wonderful walks in the woodlands where you can find areas of palms and camellias and water features.

Following some time at leisure for lunch in the market town of Guingamp, we continue our journey to Gouarec to visit Un Jardin en Ville, the garden of Marylin Le Moign, located at the junction of two rivers, the Dore and the Blavet. In the early 19th century, ambitious planning resulted in the construction of the Nantes–Brest canal. Owing to the very real possibility of flooding, the living quarters of the family home begin on the first floor. During the 1990s, garden designer Michel Gesret took this into consideration and created a garden that could be enjoyed from this level. The 8,000 square meters of gardens is made up of structuring elements: walls, terraces, a pond, yews, and arbors. They divide the space into themed gardens: the French garden, the natural garden which runs along the river, the Japanese garden, and various flowerbeds reminiscent of English gardens.

In the late afternoon we continue to the port city of Saint-Malo, encircled by its strong granite ramparts. (Overnight Saint-Malo) B

Day 17: Tuesday 24 June, Saint-Malo – Plévenon – Saint-Malo

- Les Jardins de Ker Louis, Plévenon
- Time at leisure in Saint-Malo
- Farewell Dinner

The English garden of Ker Louis near Cap Fréhel was started by Louis Tranchant in 1980 (*Ker* meaning home in Breton dialect), and the decision was made to make the most of the slope of the land, with an optimised view from the house. Each curve brings a new perspective and the garden blends into the environment in complete harmony. Following the gardening principles laid down by Gertrude Jekyll, the garden is centered around roses, acid-loving plants, and beds of perennials in pastel shades structured with

warm hues. Ker Louis includes a Zen garden and a lake forming the centrepiece of the garden. Enthusiasts can discover 300 rhododendrons, 250 camellias, 100 roses, hydrangeas, 60 magnolias, several dozen *araliaceae*, trees with patterned bark – snakebark acer, *prunus serrula*, *prunus maackii*, *acer griseum*, *betulas* – oaks and ash trees, and many varieties of maple.

After this visit we return to St Malo where the afternoon is at leisure to explore the walled city and its ramparts. In the evening we enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. (Overnight Saint-Malo) BD

Day 18: Wednesday 25 June, Saint-Malo – Paris. Tour Ends.

- Transfer to Paris CDG airport

Our tour ends today with a coach transfer from Saint-Malo to Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport. On our way, we stop in Chartres, where there is time at leisure for lunch and to visit Chartres Cathedral (1194). We are scheduled to arrive at Charles de Gaulle Airport at 5.30pm where the tour officially concludes. B

Accommodation

ASA has selected 3- to 5-star hotels that are themselves historical buildings and/or are located in historical centres. All hotels provide rooms with en suite bathroom. Double/twin rooms for single occupancy may be requested – and are subject to availability and payment of the Double (as Single) Supplement. A hotel list will be given to all participants prior to departure.

- Rouen (5 nights): 4-star Mercure Rouen Centre Cathedral Hotel – a modern hotel close to the stunning Rouen Cathedral in the town's medieval centre. www.mercure.com
- Honfleur (2 nights): 3-star Hotel Best Western Le Cheval Blanc – located at the fishing harbour, this 3-star hotel offers 34 renovated rooms with a view of the Port of Honfleur. www.hotel-honfleur.com
- Vannes (1 night): Hotel to be confirmed
- Bayeux (3 nights): 4-star Grand Hôtel du Luxembourg – located in a 17th century heritage-listed building 700m from the famous Tapestry Museum and the Cathedral. www.grand-hotel-luxembourg.com
- Belle-Ile-en-Mer (2 nights): 4-star Castel Clara Thalasso & Spa – 4-star modern hotel offering views of the sea and the rugged coastline. It features an indoor heated seawater pool and a thalassotherapy spa centre as well as gastronomic and regional cuisine. <https://www.castel-clara.com>
- Perros-Guirec (2 nights): 5-star L'Agapa Hôtel-Spa – set in a 1930s art deco-style building overlooking the Rose Coast of Brittany, offering panoramic sea views. www.lagapa.com
- Saint-Malo (2 night): 4-star Hotel Oceania – a modern hotel overlooking the sea, located on the Chaussée du Sillon (Sillon Causeway) within walking distance from the the walled city. www.oceaniahotels.com

Note: Hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.

Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double (or twin) room for single occupancy throughout the tour. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

Tour Map



Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 31 March 2024

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only

AUD \$TBA Single Supplement

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in 3-5 star hotels
- Meals as indicated in the tour itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=dinner
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may not have drinks included
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach
- Airport-hotel transfers according to the times as outlined in the tour itinerary
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels (not at airports)
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Entrance fees
- Tour Notes
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Paris, Paris-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance
- Visas (if applicable)



Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 18-day tour of Normandy & Brittany involves:

- A moderate amount of walking mainly during outdoor site visits, often up and down hills and/or flights of stairs, along cobbled streets and uneven terrain. You therefore need to be a good walker and be prepared to stand for some time in front of buildings and artworks.
- Extensive coach travel - often on minor roads.
- The daily schedule generally involves an early-morning departure (between 8.00-8.30am), concluding in the late afternoon (between 5.30-6.30pm).
- 3- to 5-star hotels with six hotel changes.
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portage only includes 1 piece of luggage per person.

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

Please note: it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the ASA Reservation Application Form.

Prior to departure, tour members will receive practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: www.smartraveller.gov.au

Booking Conditions

Making a Tentative Reservation before the tour price has been published

ASA INTENTION TO TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD \$200.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD \$800.00 per person. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your deposit of AUD \$1000.00 is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

Or

- CANCEL your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD \$200.00 per person deposit, less a \$66.00 service fee (including GST).

Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. ASA's ability to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs, your health and safety and the health and safety of other tour members, is of paramount importance to us. For this reason the ASA Reservation Application includes a Medical Information section. As a general guideline, you must be able to accomplish each of these activities without assistance or support:-

- walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions
- walk confidently on and over uneven surfaces
- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15-20 minutes
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- follow and remember tour instructions

- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication.

Covid-19 Vaccination Certificate

Commencing from November 2021 it will be a condition of travel that all group leaders and ASA travellers are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. All participants must send ASA a copy of their vaccination certificate at the time of submitting their Reservation Application Form. For information on how to obtain either a Covid-19 digital certificate or a certificate in PDF format please view the [Australian Government Services Australia "What types of proof there are"](#) web page.



Intention to Travel Application

TOUR NAME _____

TOUR DATES _____

Booking before the tour price is available

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD\$200.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD\$800.00 per person applicable for International tours OR AUD\$300.00 per person applicable for Australian tours. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your full deposit is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

OR

- Cancel your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD\$200.00 per person deposit, less a \$66.00 service fee (including GST).

Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐ Miss ☐ Dr ☐ Other _____

FIRST NAME _____ Preferred FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____ SURNAME _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTCODE _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

Date of birth ____ / ____ / ____ GENDER Male ☐ Female ☐

Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: ☐ a twin-bedded room ☐ a double-bedded room ☐ a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling: ☐ on my own ☐ with a friend/family member Travel Companion _____

Meals

☐ I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

☐ fish ☐ poultry ☐ red meat ☐ dairy products

☐ eggs ☐ pork ☐ nuts

☐ Other _____

Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence ☐ Postal Mail ☐ Email Address _____

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- walk confidently on and over uneven surfaces
- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1 km every 15 - 20 minutes
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- follow and remember tour instructions
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication.

Applicant's Signature _____

Dated _____

Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1 _____

Name of Traveller 2 _____

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ _____ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

Payment by (please indicate): ☐ Cheque ☐ Direct Debit (see below) ☐ Credit Card (see below)

International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic
Swift Code ANZBAU3M
BSB 013-423
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. _____

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

Date Money Transferred _____

Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard, Visa & American Express 2%

Please debit my: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number _____

Expiry Date _____

Security Code (CVC) _____

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ) _____

Cardholders Name _____

Cardholders Billing Address _____

Postcode _____

State _____

Country _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Cardholders Signature _____

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