

**TRAVEL BY DESIGN in association with BOSTON LANGUAGE HUB**

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## **PARIS & THE LOIRE VALLEY 2023**

**An Itinerary created especially for BLH French Language students**

**Departure Date: June 10, 2023**

**Return Date: June 18, 2023**

**Departure City: Boston**

**Program Length: 9 Days/ 7 nights**

**PROGRAM PRICE: \$4499 per person in double-room accommodation based on 10 payees**



## DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY FOR

# PARIS & THE LOIRE VALLEY

**DAYS 1 & 2: JUNE 10 & 11: Sat. & Sun. DEPARTURE. ARRIVE PARIS.** Your French adventure begins when you board your overnight flight in Boston and head for Paris. Morning landing in Paris finds your bilingual **TRAVEL BY DESIGN (TBD)** courier on hand to greet you and accompany you to your hotel. The balance of the day is free for unpacking and orientation: why not take your first ride on the Paris Métro? Enjoy your first taste of “cuisine française” this evening in a local French restaurant. [Breakfast/ Dinner]

**DAY 3: JUNE 12: Mon. PARIS: Half-day Guided Citysightseeing Tour.** The elegant Right and bohemian Left Banks are viewed on this morning’s **included sightseeing tour of Paris with a local guide.** Travel down the Champs Elysées, around the Arc de Triomphe, past the Tuileries Gardens, across the Seine. A special highlight is an **included entrance** (self-guided visit) to the **LOUVRE**, Europe’s oldest, largest, and most celebrated museum. Following the Louvre, another special attraction is an outside view of Paris’ greatest treasure, the Gothic cathedral of **NOTRE DAME** (which unfortunately suffered partial damage due to a tragic fire in April of 2019 and has been closed during restorations).

The remainder of the afternoon is free. Perhaps you’d like to head for the Latin Quarter for a walking tour of this bustling area where you’ll find the Sorbonne -- one of the most famous institutions in the world. Rabelais called this sector the *Quartier Latin* because of the students and professors who spoke Latin in the classrooms and the streets. Make your way into the St. Germain-des-Près neighborhood which was once a preferred arrondissement of artists, painters and writers. The Eglise St. Germain-des-Près stages some of the most wonderful concerts on the Left Bank, featuring fantastic acoustics and a marvelous medieval atmosphere. The church was built to accommodate an age without microphones, so the sound effects will thrill you.

Later this evening board an included **Bateaux Mouches** cruise of the Seine River for another perspective of this romantic city. [Breakfast/ Dinner]

**DAY 4: JUNE 13: Tue.** Morning at leisure. This afternoon you may wish to visit to another of Paris’ world-class museums: **the Musée d’Orsay.** Opened in 1986, the Musée d’Orsay occupies what was once the main hall of a train station on the Left Bank that went up at the height of the Belle Epoque era, in 1900. It came about as a consequence of a decision in the 1970’s, when the administration of President Giscard d’Estaing, bowing to public outcry, scrapped plans to demolish the edifice, and instead, earmarked the station as the site of a museum of 19<sup>th</sup> century art. The splendid Impressionist canvases that had been jammed into the miniscule Jeu de Paume, plus paintings and sculptural works from the Louvre and other museums, were reunited in a boldly redesigned interior. The Orsay’s collections span the fertile period from 1848 to 1914. The main attraction, besides Manet’s *Olympe* on the ground floor, is the skylit Impressionists’ gallery on the upper floor, filled with enough masterpieces by Pissarro, Monet, Renoir, Degas and Van Gogh to make a millionaire envious! [Breakfast]



**DAY 5: JUNE 14: Wed. PARIS – Free Day or Optional GIVERNY EXCURSION.** Today is a free day and Paris is yours to explore. Your TBD courier will have many suggestions for you. For instance, les Invalides is a must-see for French history buffs. Located on the Seine's left bank, the Invalides is made up of several sites including the Musée de l'Armée, the largest museum of military history in the world. Les Invalides is Louis XIV's most majestic achievement – its Dome is crowned with 550,000 sheets of gold leaf. It houses the tomb of Emperor Napoleon I. Some of you may wish to check out next year's fashions in *Au Printemps* and *Galleries Lafayette* or look for that perfect souvenir to purchase

Otherwise you might opt for an optional **excursion** to the tiny village of **GIVERNY**, where the Impressionist painter, Claude Monet, lived from 1883 until his death in 1926. Travel by train and bus. You may visit his studio as well as the gardens that inspired so much of his work, especially the Water Garden, whose weeping willows and pink-blossomed lilies became the subject matter of his best-loved paintings. Return to Paris in the afternoon. Perhaps you'd like to head for the Latin Quarter for a walking tour of this bustling area where you'll find the Sorbonne -- one of the most famous institutions in the world. Rabelais called this sector the *Quartier Latin* because of the students and professors who spoke Latin in the classrooms and the streets. Make your way into the St. Germain-des-Près neighborhood which was once a preferred arrondissement of artists, painters and writers. By the way, the Eglise St. Germain-des-Près stages some of the most wonderful concerts on the Left Bank, featuring fantastic acoustics and a marvelous medieval atmosphere. The church was built to accommodate an age without microphones, so the sound effects will thrill you. [Breakfast]

**DAY 6: JUNE 15: Thurs. PARIS -- CHATEAU DE CHENONCEAU - VOUVRAY - TOURS.** This morning step out of Paris and into a fairytale, traveling in air-conditioned comfort to the beautiful Loire Valley. Today offers the perfect overview of French history from medieval times to the Renaissance. First head to the elegant **CHATEAU DE CHENONCEAU** (ent & audio guide included), built on a bridge across the River Cher and considered by many to be the most beautiful of the châteaux. Erected in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, it belonged to six women in succession, including Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de Medici. Allow time for a walk in the gardens and along the river for a splendid view of the castle reflected in the water below its arches.

Later you will discover the vineyards of Vouvray, one of the great wines of France. **Visit a Vouvray wine cave (including a tour and a tasting)** and tonight experience the hearty tastes of the Loire Valley at dinner. Overnight in Tours. [Breakfast/ Dinner]

**DAY 7: JUNE 16. Friday. LOIRE VALLEY: AZAY-LE-RIDEAU – CHINON – AMBOISE- TOURS.** Continue explore the beautiful châteaux, gardens and towns of the Loire Valley today. Admire the Gothic-style pepper-pot towers of **AZAY-LE-RIDEAU** (ent included), with its fairy-tale proportions and innate sense of beauty. **Next time for a visit and tasting of Chinon wines at Couly-Douthail.**

In close proximity lies the **CHATEAU D'AMBOISE** (ent & histopad included), birthplace of both Louis XI and Charles VIII. Rightly considered the most royal of the Loire Châteaux, it was Charles who was responsible for beautifying Amboise, importing Italian architects, sculptors, decorators, and gardeners to embellish the château. François I came to Amboise as a child and later gathered about him a court of artists and scholars. He was a patron of Leonardo da Vinci, who spent his last years here and was buried in the Gothic chapel of St. Hebert. No visitor to Amboise should miss a tour of nearby CLOS LUCÉ (ent included), the delightful Renaissance manor house where Leonardo spent the last 4 years of his life. In the house's basement is an extraordinary collection of models of Leonardo's inventions, painstakingly reconstructed from the drawings of the great Renaissance genius. Return to Tours for dinner and overnight. [Breakfast/ Dinner]



Château de Chenonceau

**DAY 8: JUNE 17. Saturday. LOIRE VALLEY – PARIS.** Traveling through the vast field of the Beauce region, **CHARTRES CATHEDRAL**, nicknamed the “Acropolis of France” by Auguste Rodin, looms large on the horizon. Stop in Chartres to marvel at the beautiful stained-glass rose window, which floods the cathedral with color and light. From here, you return to Paris for the final overnight.

**DAY 9: JUNE 18: SUN. PARIS - AIRPORT DEPARTURE.** Your TBD courier accompanies you on the coach to Paris’ Charles de Gaulle airport. Bid farewell to France as you prepare to board your flight home. You’ll have vivid memories of many French experiences as your plane heads to Boston.

**BON VOYAGE AND WELCOME HOME!**

**SUMMARY OF OVERNIGHT STAYS**

**PARIS - 4 NIGHTS**

**TOURS – 2 NIGHTS**

**PARIS – 1 NIGHT**

**PROGRAM FEE INCLUDES:**

Roundtrip transatlantic air transportation from Boston on scheduled flights.

All breakfasts and 4 dinners. (in Paris and in Tours).

DOUBLE-ROOM accommodation with private baths at a very good 3-star hotel. Hôtel de l’Arcade in Paris or similar (5 nights) and 2 nights in Tours (hotel to be determined).

All sightseeing and entertainment as described in the following itinerary.

Exclusive services of a full-time **TRAVEL BY DESIGN** group tour director, who meets the group on arrival and escorts it up until the train departure from Paris.

All transfers and intercity transportation (as per program itinerary). All ground transportation by luxury motorcoach with a professional driver.

Entrance fees to selected attractions as specified.

U.S. Airport Departure Tax, Security and Federal Inspection Fee.

**PROGRAM FEE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

Beverages (with meals) and lunches (unless otherwise specified).

Optional Field trips and excursions.

Local transportation to TBD walking tours and free time activities.

Reimbursement for overnight lodgings, meals, transportation, or missed travel services due to last-minute airline rescheduling, misconnections, or delays.

The Optional Tour Cancellation/ Interruption Plan, Medical Insurance and Baggage Insurance available through TBD and Travel Guard.

Gratuities to TBD tour director and long-distance driver.

Passport and visa fees. **PLEASE NOTE:** Non- U.S. citizens should contact the embassy or consulate of their destination countries as soon as possible for specific entry requirements. Any participant who is unable to arrange the appropriate documentation prior to departure will be subject to TBD’s standard cancellation policy.

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**TRAVEL BY DESIGN REFUND POLICY:**

Refunds will be calculated based on the participant’s date of withdrawal from the trip. The date of withdrawal is determined by the U.S. Post Office postmark date on the letter of withdrawal. All requests for refunds must be directed in writing to **TRAVEL BY DESIGN**.

**DATE OF WITHDRAWAL:**

PRIOR TO 90 DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE  
89 - 60 DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE  
59 - 30 DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE  
LESS THAN 29 DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE

**AMOUNT TO BE REFUNDED:**

FULL AMOUNT LESS \$500  
FULL REFUND LESS \$900  
FULL REFUND LESS 50% OF PROGRAM FEE  
NO REFUND WILL BE MADE

**N.B. IF AN AIRLINE TICKET HAS BEEN ISSUED, IT MUST BE RETURNED TO TBD BEFORE A REFUND CAN BE PROCESSED.**