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Paris & Loire Valley Family Vacation

Upon your arrival at Paris airport your driver will meet you and transfer you to your hotel, the Napoleon.

The Napoleon Paris hotel is located just a short walk to the Arc de Triomphe and the Champs-Elysees. The hotel is located in the 8th arrondissement.

The property offers individually designed rooms with modern comforts. Rooms and suites overlook the quiet Avenue de Friedland or the hotel's green interior courtyard. They come fully equipped with LCD flat screen TV, air conditioning, and tasteful furniture. The modern marble bathrooms have bathtubs, magnifying mirrors and bathrobes.

The Napoleon's well-known restaurant, the Bivouac Café, offers gourmet cuisine and the bar has a sheltered terrace with a fountain.



2.00 PM Meet your driver and guide in the lobby of your hôtel for your half day Paris city tour of the Left Bank of Paris.

Some of the highlights on the Left Bank you will see are the Eiffel Tower, Les Invalides, Saint-Germain-des-Pres, the Luxembourg Gardens, the Panthéon, the Sorbonne and stroll around the Île Saint-Louis.

Why not enjoy one of the ice creams at the famous ice cream parlour, Berthillon?

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Half Day Paris Highlights Tour (Right Bank - 4 hours)

9:30 AM Meet your driver and guide in the lobby of your hôtel for your full day Paris city tour.

Some of the highlights on the Right Bank you will see are the Arc de Triomphe, the Champs Élysées, the Place de la Concorde, the Tuileries Garden, the garden of the Palais-Royal, the Opera Garnier, Notre Dame Cathedral, City Hall, the Place de la Bastille with its modern Opera and stroll around Montmartre.

Why not have your portrait painted in Place du Tertre?



The remainder of the afternoon is at your leisure

Half day - Private Pastry Class (2 hours) & Eiffel Tower tour (2 hours)

You will make your own way to the Cooking school for your morning baking class. If you and your children have a sweet tooth, you will love this hands-on experience. This is your one and only chance to learn the secrets of how to make typical french pastries such as choux, éclairs and other delicious treats.

The pastry class is held in a privatized cooking school right beside the Seine River, and just a stone's throw away from Notre Dame Cathedral. There your chef will introduce you to the world of pastries !

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During 2 hours, you will prepare your very own pastries in both a fun and educational way and with any luck, you will easily be able to do these recipes again when you get home. After kneading the dough, adding fillings and toppings and waiting for them to bake, it's time to eat your tasty creations.



After lunch you will make your own way to the Eiffel Tower for your guided tour. You will climb the Eiffel Tower, Paris' most iconic monument, with your private, certified guide and witness the amazing views from the top floor !

On a first visit to Paris, it is absolutely necessary to climb up the Eiffel Tower. After all, it is Paris' most iconic monument, and also the tallest.

After meeting your private guide you will start to make your way up the tower. There are 3 floors, each one of them has great features that you will learn about.

The first floor is where you will find curiosities such as the swaying observatory and a fragment of the old staircase linking the second floor to the top floor back when there were no elevators. And for those of you who are not afraid of heights, will you be brave enough to stand on the glass floor?

The second floor offers the best views of Paris. It's also the last stop before taking a smaller elevator to the top floor, the Summit. While waiting for the elevator your guide will tell you all about the fun facts and historical features that makes the Eiffel Tower so special. And once on the third and top floor, you'll even get to see Mr. Gustave Eiffel's small apartment.

Please Note : * Even though you will have a priority access ticket to avoid the long lines, there will still be security check lines which are unfortunately unavoidable. * Tickets are included.

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Half day Louvre Museum (2 hours) & Chocolate Walking tour (2 hours)

This morning you will head to the Louvre Museum to meet your guide at a designated place for your 2 hour tour of the main highlights of the Louvre Museum, including a fun-filled and educational treasure hunt for the children. **Entry tickets are included**

This is one museum visit that your children will always remember. The Louvre Museum is the largest and most famous fine-arts museum in the world. Your guide will take you to all the most famous artworks of the Louvre's collection, including the 3 women of the museum: the Mona Lisa, the Venus de Milo and the Winged Victory (Nike) of Samothrace. The treasure hunt will also let you and your family discover masterpieces of the Middle Ages, the Italian Renaissance and objects even dating as far back as Ancient Egypt. The sight of a real Egyptian sphinx is always a treat for children..

With clues, puzzles and riddles, your children will have a great time hunting the hidden treasure and navigating through the museum.



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For lunch we recommend the Café Marly located next to the Louvre, a stone's throw from the Carrousel and the Jardin des Tuileries. The restaurant's Napoleon III-style interiors by the designer Olivier Gagnère provide a stylish setting, with both modern and classical decor features. There is a wonderful terrace seating area looking onto the Louvre's iconic glass pyramid.

After lunch you will make your own way to meet your guide at Metro Louvre-Rivoli for your chocolate walking tour, literally around the corner. Find out about the history of chocolate, and how Paris is the capital of dark chocolate. You will visit a variety of superb *chocolatiers* (master chocolate makers), on this enjoyable walk which mixes history and anecdotes with chocolate tastings. Learn to select, taste and appreciate quality chocolate.



Full day - Canal Cruise (2.5 hours) & Parc de la Villette/Cité de Science

09.45 AM For something a little different, you'll embark close to the Musée d'Orsay on the Seine River for an incredible 2 ½ hours along the secret canals of Paris.

You will pass by the Tuileries' Garden, the Musée du Louvre, the Arts' footbridge, the Institute of France, Ile de la Cité, Notre Dame Cathedral and Ile St Louis. Here your adventure will begin with the first lock and the entrance to the canal Saint-Martin. The boat then enters the dark 1.24 miles of darkness inside a mysterious underneath vault perforated by light holes... A real hidden secret of Paris. Once you come out from the tunnel, you'll discover the canal Saint-Martin filled with poetry, beauty and a surprising



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aquatic path surrounded by romantic footbridges which are bordered by chestnut trees. Stopping and seeing the boat move along each lock, getting higher and higher is really amazing ! The boat then passes by the Bassin de la Villette, before reaching the Parc de la Villette, the final stop of your cruise.



Spend the rest of the afternoon at this fascinating place. In 1974, the Villette abattoirs shut down for the last time. In 1979, a public project was launched for the rehabilitation and development of 55 hectares of industrial wasteland with three goals:

- * the construction of a major architectural complex devoted solely to music
- * the establishment of a national museum of science and technology
- * the creation of an urban park dedicated to culture and open to all

Today, this unique complex offers a blend of nature and architecture, of leisure activities and culture. The arts and the sciences rub shoulders in buildings whose architecture is nothing short of spectacular. The Villette Complex is distinctive in being the major venue for culture, art, science and music combined.

For children, the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie is not to be missed , one of Europe's greatest science museums, plays host to numerous exhibitions and talks aimed at both professional scientists and the general public, especially to children.

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At the end of the day you will make your own way back to your hotel.

Half day - Vaux le Vicomte Castle (4 hours)

09.30 AM Your driver will meet you in the lobby of your hotel for your transfer and half day tour to the Chateau de Vault le Vicomte. **Entry tickets are included.**

Vaux-le-Vicomte is a baroque French chateau located in Maincy, near Melun. It was built from 1658 to 1661 for Nicolas Fouquet, Marquis de Belle-Isle (Belle-Ile-en-Mer), Viscount of Melun and Vaux, and the superintendent of finances of Louis XIV.



Vaux-le-Vicomte was in many ways the most influential work built in Europe in the mid-17th century, the finest house in France built after the Château de Maisons. Here, the architect Louis Le Vau, the landscape architect André le Nôtre, and the painter-decorator Charles Le Brun

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worked together on a large-scale project for the first time. Their collaboration marked the beginning of a new order: the magnificent manner that is associated with the "Louis XIV style" involving a system of collective work, which could be applied to the structure, its interiors and works of art and the creation of an entire landscape. Vaux-le-Vicomte is one of Europe's finest constructions of its kind.

Upon arrival you will be met by your expert guide for a private 1 ½ hour visit of the castle and for the children a special surprise, the children will be in costume! Your guide will show you the different rooms of the castle, and explain how the children lived in the 17th century. The boys will also learn to do the "reverence", some basic fencing lessons.

Please Note : As the tour will be more geared for the children, audio guides will be available for the parents to follow.



Departure transfer to Loire Valley

8.45 AM After breakfast and checking out, meet your driver in the lobby of your hotel for your transfer to the train station and your 1st class train to St Pierre des Corps departing at 10.19 AM where you will be picked up upon arrival at 11.21 AM and transferred to your hotel, the Domaine de la Tortiniere.

This 19th-century chateau is located in a large park with an outdoor swimming pool and tennis courts. Each guest room and suite at the Domaine De La Tortinière is equipped with antique furniture and has a private bathroom. La Tortinière's restaurant serves cuisine in the dining room, overlooking the river and the pool, or on the outdoor terrace.

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2.30 PM Mid afternoon your driver will meet you in the lobby to transfer you to the Fortress of Montbazon (situated not far from the hotel) where you will meet an expert guide to discover the famous dungeon and much more !



Full day - Clos Lucé, Chateau de Cheverny and Hot Air Balloon

The Loire Valley lies to the South West of Paris and makes up the "Centre" region of France. The Loire, France's longest river (1,020 km) runs from the Massif Central to the Atlantic Coast, and provides what many regard as a north-south climatic divide. The region was once France's royal and intellectual capital, and is extremely rich in both history and architecture. Picturesque villages alternate with towns rich in art and history, while Romanesque and Gothic styles dominate in the façades and decoration of the religious monuments. The Loire is lined with magnificent Châteaux which combine with the luxuriant landscape and fine food and wine to make the region one of the most attractive destinations in France.

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9.15 AM Meet your driver-guide in the lobby of your hotel for your full day tour. You will first visit the Manor Clos Lucé, the last residence of Leonardo da Vinci which contains an unusual display of his creations and designs giving the visitor some idea of the man's genius.



Lunch included will be at the famous "patisserie" at the foot of the Castle of Amboise. [SEP]

After lunch you will visit the Chateau de Cheverny which is without doubt the most magnificently furnished of all the Loire Renaissance Castles, and is known to have inspired the Château Moulinsart in Hergé's famous Tintin comics. The highlight of this visit is to see the obedience of the hundred hunting dogs that live in Cheverny! [SEP]



You will finish your first day with a hot air balloon ride over the Loire Valley. You will be transferred to the take-off place, firstly to help with inflating the balloon and participating in the preparation. Then you will enjoy a beautiful ride over some of the finest castles in the Valley. After landing and packing up enjoy a glass of local sparkling wine.

At the end of the evening you will be transferred back to your hotel.

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Please Note : Flights can be arranged for early in the morning or late at the evening (around 6:00 AM or 7:30 PM) in order to have the best weather conditions i.e. clear sky with not too much wind.^[L] However the balloon rides are subject to the weather conditions and can be cancelled at any time in which case it will be rescheduled or fully reimbursed, which is why we try and include it in the itinerary as early as possible to avoid disappointment.



Boat Trip, Chateau de Chenonceau , Bike ride & Wine tasting

09.30 AM Meet your driver-guide in the lobby of your hotel for your full day tour.

The bargeman and the captain will welcome you aboard a privatized traditional boat. You will discover the manual locks and the houses where the lock keepers live. You will have the opportunity to pass under the arches of prestigious Castle of Chenonceau. A picnic lunch will be offered onboard with local products and local fine wines.^[SEP]



You will love the two lovely beautiful gardens, designed by Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de Medici, and the maze in the park, specially designed for children.^[L]

After lunch enjoy a beautiful bike ride next to the Cher River. A biking guide will accompany you to show you the little pathways. You will be equipped with 2 double bikes so that the 2 children can easily ride with the parents.^[L]

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After the bike ride you will take a short drive to visit a spectacular "troglodyte" wine cellar. Once a stone quarry, the site has been converted into a magnificent wine cellar where you will learn the method of the sparkling wine production. You will of course taste some of the top rated fine wines of the area.

Full day - Tours & Villages

09.15 AM Meet your driver-guide in the lobby of your hotel for your full day tour.

You will first drive to Crissay sur Manse where there are plenty of beautiful areas and quaint little villages to stop and discover. The village of Crissay sur Manse has been recognised as one of the nicest villages of France.

After lunch (*included*) you will head to Tours to stroll through the narrow streets with your guide of the Vieux Ville (« old town»), and [SEP]discover its half-timbered houses more than 1,000 years old. and many chic boutiques and cafés. [SEP]

Tours is the regional capital of the Touraine region, city of Art and History. Tours is the original home of the French language and “art de vivre” and is a land of harmony and proportion. Rich with history and a well preserved heritage, Tours is a city of captivating charm.

Departure Transfer

After breakfast and checking out, your driver will meet you in the lobby to transfer you to Paris CDG airport.

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