

FRANCE – NORMANDY HISTORIC BEACHES BATTLES & TAPESTRY 8-days / 7-nights GUIDED inn-to-inn cycling from Caen (Falaise) to Bayeux & Carentan



This Normandy cycling tour begins in Falaise, birthplace of William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, who invaded England in 1066 to claim the English throne from Harold. In Caen we see William's castle and some of the beautiful abbeys that survived intense bombing during WWII, and in Bayeux we visit the Gothic cathedral and of course see the famous Bayeux tapestry. And we also reflect on more recent history, visiting the beaches and memorials of the Canada Centre, British and American cemeteries and the museums dedicated to the Normandy beach landings of June 1944.

We cycle through lush, rolling farmland where cows graze, their milk used for the rich cheeses of Normandy, including buttery Camembert, creamy Neufchatel, strong Livarot and the washed-rind Pont l'Eveque. The apple orchards dotted about the countryside are used to produce cider and Calvados (apple brandy), and of course the proximity to the sea means that fish and other seafood are a feature of the local cuisine.

Visit one of the most beautiful parts of France, with an experienced guide leading the way. Your baggage is carried from hotel to hotel, leaving you free simply to enjoy each day's cycling and sightseeing. Food is more than just fuel – each evening the restaurants we choose highlight the region's cuisine and satisfy the terrific appetite that each day's cycling generates. The cycling is easy to moderate, over mostly flat or gently rolling terrain with just a few hills to challenge us, and manageable daily distances, leaving plenty of time to explore. We cycle on quiet back roads and cycle paths through peaceful rural landscapes, often with sea views. All-in-all, an unforgettable Norman idyll.

Cost from: \$2815 per person, twin-share.

Single room supplement from \$700

Departs: Ask for details

Grading: Easy to moderate - 30 to 60km daily distances over flat to gently undulating terrain, a few hills.

Includes: 7 nights' accommodation in carefully selected 2- and 3-star hotels (all rooms with private bathrooms), breakfast and dinner daily, wine-tasting at vineyards, route notes, luggage transfers, cycle tour guide, hire of quality multi-gear hybrid touring bicycle with helmet, lock, panniers and water bottle, transfers from/to nearby train stations at the start/end of the tour

Not included: Lunches, drinks, entrance fees at local attractions, personal expenses.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Suggested itinerary – *please note weather and road conditions, group interests and the decision of the tour guide will influence the final route taken each day:*

Day 1: Arrive Falaise

Make your own way to the first hotel of the tour at Falaise, or join the late-afternoon transfer from Caen station.

Day 2: Falaise to Vimoutiers

cycling @ 50km

A gentle entrée into the Pays d’Auge. We pass through Camembert on our way to Vimoutiers, home of the Camembert Museum (shaped like the cheese, naturally). We stay in a relaxed, informal 2-star hotel set in a delightful 25-acre nature park, and we eat nearby at a lakeside restaurant.

Day 3: Vimoutiers to Pont l’Eveque

cycling @ 60km

We follow a new cycle path for the first part of our day to Livarot, where we visit a cheese factory making Pont-l’Eveque, Camembert and Livarot. Back roads take us into Lisieux, where we visit the enormous Basilica of St Thérèse who died of tuberculosis in 1897 aged 24 and was canonised. Her story and her writings are incredibly moving and so is the Basilica devoted to her. We follow the river valley from Lisieux to the village of Coquainvilliers, where we visit a renowned Calvados distillery. We finish our day at the pretty town of Pont-l’Eveque, where we stay in a spa hotel in a former coaching inn.

Day 4: Pont l’Eveque to Benouville

cycling @ 50km

We cycle through rolling farmland and the villages of Beaumont-en-Auge and Beuvron-en-Auge, past half-timbered houses, apple orchards and traditional Norman cows. We join a cycle path near Troarn and cross the River Orne on our way to Bénouville, visiting the Pegasus Bridge museum on the way. We also visit the Commonwealth cemetery in Ranville, where many of the early casualties of the Battle of Normandy are buried. In Bénouville we stay 2 nights in a lovely little 2-star hotel.

Day 5: Circular ride to Caen

cycling @ 30km

A short ride along a designated cycle path all the way into the centre of Caen. We visit William and Matilda’s Abbey-aux-Hommes and Abbey-aux-Dames, as well as the enormous castle at the centre of Caen and the famous Caen Mémorial, perhaps the best of all the museums dedicated to the Normandy Landings.

Day 6: Benouville to Bayeux

cycling @ 45km

We follow our cycle path downstream to the port of Ouistreham at the mouth of the Orme and the Caen Canal. We visit a British cemetery and the Canada Centre at Juno Beach, but the highlights of our day will be the amazing Mulberry Harbour at Arromanches and the Bayeux tapestry. We stay tonight in a characterful 3-star hotel in an 18th Century coach house in Bayeux.

Day 7: Bayeux to Carentan

cycling @ 60km

Today is about balance. First we visit the immaculately maintained American cemetery at Coleville-sur-Mer with its reflecting pool, then after lunch we visit the enormous German cemetery at La Cambe, sombre, stark but still moving. We cycle onwards to Carentan, passing through Isigny (famous for its caramels, for those who have a sweet tooth). Our final night is in Carentan at a cosy auberge renowned for its cooking.

Day 8: Departure day.

Tour arrangements end after breakfast in Carentan. There is an optional morning transfer to Carentan train station if required. Train to Paris from Carentan takes about 3 hours, via Caen.



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Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details and reservations

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