



Champagne Itinerary 2011

■ Sept. 18 - 30 • Group size limited to 16

- Comfortable hotels and charming inns – all with private bath
- Transportation in comfortable van or mini-bus • Outstanding cuisine
- Magnificent **Reims**, the heart of France's fabled Champagne country
- Tours of **Champagne** cellars and tastings of the king of French wines
- The **Reims** cathedral, where for 800 years French kings were crowned
- Pretty **Verdun**, today peaceful but a center of conflict in World War I
- The lovely **Meuse Valley**, with its villages and meandering river
- Stately **Nancy**, the center of France's **Art Nouveau** heritage
- Old **Troyes**, with a densely packed district of Tudor-style buildings

Tour cost – \$3,895* per person sharing for land arrangements (airfare not included) • Singles add \$450

TOUR SUMMARY	FLY FROM U.S. – Leave Sept. 16, arrive Sept. 17 (overnight, Hotel Novotel , Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris)
Tour begins & ends at de Gaulle Airport, Paris	TOUR BEGINS – 9:30 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 18, in the lobby, Hotel Novotel , Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris
	TOUR ENDS – Sept. 30, in the morning, at de Gaulle Airport (you will fly home today)
	12 NIGHTS • TOUR MEALS – Breakfast daily + eight other meals (lunches & dinners)

■ Day 1 (Sunday, September 18)

From the **Hotel Novotel Roissy Aeroport Charles de Gaulle**, we head southeast, first stopping at walled **Provins**, boasting half-timbered houses and the immense **Tour César**, a tower-castle from the 1100s. In early afternoon we arrive in the lovely town of **Troyes** and check into our chic hotel in the heart of town. Later, join us for a stroll around the half-timbered heart of Troyes, followed by a **WELCOME DRINK** at a café and **DINNER**. **OVERNIGHT – TROYES**

■ Day 2 (Monday, September 19)

This morning, after an orientation to the history and culture of Champagne, we find out why **Troyes** is known for its museums. What's it to be – modern art? Tools and the working class? Hosiery? The history of Champagne and Troyes? Fine arts and archaeology? Troyes has museums dedicated to each of these subjects. At noon we stop for **LUNCH** at a historic brasserie in the old town. **OVERNIGHT – TROYES**

■ Day 3 (Tuesday, September 20)

We make a day trip into the Champagne vineyards today, visiting a top producer of this famed sparkling wine for a tour and tasting. Later, we wind our way back toward Troyes, enjoying the vineyard scenery and stopping at the village of **Chaource**, famed both for a delicious, creamy cheese and for a remarkable carved wood-

en **Entombment** from 1515 in the village church. Enjoy late-day and evening free time in the pretty heart of Troyes. **OVERNIGHT – TROYES**

■ Day 4 (Wednesday, September 21)

We leave Troyes this morning for **Nancy**, stopping along the way at the village of **Domrémy** to visit the house where **Joan of Arc** was born and grew up. From here, we proceed to **Toul**, which boasts a magnificent cathedral in flamboyant gothic style. After lunch and free time, we arrive in **Nancy** and settle into our hotel immediately adjacent to the town's enormous cathedral. Late in the day, a walking tour orients us to the center of the old town. **DINNER** in the heart of Nancy. **OVERNIGHT – NANCY**

■ Day 5 (Thursday, September 22)

The center of France's **Art Nouveau** movement (similar to **Art Deco**) beckons today: **Nancy**, an elegant, harmonious, 18th century city of 300,000. Our hotel lies a few blocks from **Place Stanislas**, whose buildings boast lovely wrought-iron railings and other accents. Art Nouveau flourished here between 1885 and 1914, taking its themes from motifs found in nature. Nowhere in France are there better examples than in the **Museum of the School of Nancy** – an opulent residence crammed with furniture, posters, drawings, glassware, ceramics and stained glass. After **LUNCH** we visit the **Museum of Fine Arts**, fea-

turing paintings, sculpture and graphic arts from the 14th century to the present. The Modern Art collection is particularly strong – works by **Manet, Monet, Utrillo, Modigliani** and others. **OVERNIGHT – NANCY**

■ Day 6 (Friday, September 23)

This morning we make a day trip into the nearby countryside to visit **Lunéville**, whose imposing château was built around 1700 to mimic **Versailles** near Paris. In the afternoon, we return to Nancy to explore the old town, with its **Ducal Palace**, 14th century fortifications and medieval architecture. **OVERNIGHT – NANCY**

■ Day 7 (Saturday, September 24)

We depart Nancy today, arriving in late morning in the pretty old town of **Metz**. Here, our group joins a guided, English-language walking tour of the old center and of the magnificent cathedral, **St.-Etienne**, one of France's finest gothic churches. After **LUNCH** in a typical regional restaurant, there will be a guided tour of the **Centre Pompidou-Metz**, a satellite of the **Pompidou** museum in Paris, featuring modern and contemporary art in an amazing building. Late in the day we return to **Verdun** for **DINNER**. **OVERNIGHT – VERDUN**

■ Day 8 (Sunday, September 25)

Today we learn that World War I was far more devastating to France than World War II was. In Verdun, a compact town rising above the **Meuse River**, we visit the **Underground Citadelle**, used as a rest area for troops from the nearby trenches in 1916-17. After **LUNCH** in town, we go into the country, where the **Battle of Verdun** was fought. We visit the sprawling battlefield, where nearly 800,000 French, German and American troops lost their lives. Memorials, monuments and military cemeteries allow us to envision the battles that were a key turning point in World War I. **OVERNIGHT – VERDUN**

■ Day 9 (Monday, September 26)

Departing **Verdun** this morning, we follow the beautiful valley of the **Meuse River** to the pretty town of **Mouzon**, then on to **Bouillon**, across the border in **Belgium**. Through the hills and forests of the **Ardennes**, we come to **Monthermé**, nestled in a bend of the river. Late in the day we arrive in **Reims**, the heart of **Champagne** country. After settling into our hotel, join us for a walking tour of the pedestrian streets of **Reims**. **OVERNIGHT – REIMS**

■ Day 10 (Tuesday, September 27)

This morning we visit **Ruinart**, one of the

most prestigious producers of Champagne, “the king of wines and the wine of kings.” You'll be impressed by the underground cellars as well as the tour and tasting. Following **LUNCH** we visit the magnificent **Reims Cathedral**, where for 800 years French kings were coronated. **OVERNIGHT – REIMS**

■ Day 11 (Wednesday, September 28)

On a day trip from **Reims**, we head into the nearby countryside to visit the **Montagne de Reims**, a hilly area of prosperous villages, woods and Champagne vineyards. Later we come to stately **Châlons-en-Champagne**, which enjoys a splendid riverside site. Returning to Reims, we enjoy free time, followed by **DINNER**. **OVERNIGHT – REIMS**

■ Day 12 (Thursday, September 29)

We return to the **Paris** region today, arriving around noon in the glamorous town of **Chantilly**. Here we visit the famous château, a sumptuous palace sheltering a magnificent art collection, a beautiful chapel, lavishly furnished apartments and a splendid library. Late in the day we arrive at our comfortable hotel, a former hunting lodge convenient for tomorrow's departures from **de Gaulle Airport**. In the evening we enjoy a festive **FAREWELL DINNER**. **OVERNIGHT – AUMAILE**

■ Getaway day (Friday, Sept. 30)

It's time to say goodbye to France as you fly home from **Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris**.

Notes

MEALS – Tour includes breakfast every day, as well as eight other meals (lunches and dinners), as indicated in **BOLD CAPS** on the itinerary.

OUR HOTELS

Hôtel Continental, Reims
Hôtel Coque Hardi, Verdun
Hôtel des Prélats, Nancy
Relais St.-Jean, Troyes
Relais d'Aumale, Chantilly

HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS – Subject to change according to availability.

ITINERARY – Details of this preliminary itinerary could change.

* **TOUR PRICE** – Price of \$3,895 is an estimate only as fluctuations in foreign currency rates may make a surcharge necessary. Call us for details – (800) 676-1247. Price quoted is for land arrangements only – airfare not included.