

France 2022 Itinerary

Overview: The French Trip. France, with Luxembourg and Belgium – all French speaking countries. Great ideas: [RS France](#), [DreamBigTravelFar](#), RS Switzerland, [KimKim France](#), [Occitanie](#), [RS Belgium](#)

Apr 20 – Apr 21: Flight to Europe 1N (Wed-Thurs)

Apr 21 – Apr 25: Lyon 4N (Thurs-Monday). Explore sights and food in Lyon

Apr 25 – Apr 28: Beaune 3N (Monday - Thursday). Burgundy and Beaujolais wineries and light biking.

Apr 28 – April 30: Reims 2N (Thursday - Saturday). Champaign!

April 30 – May 3: Luxembourg 3N (Saturday - Tuesday). Old City and hiking

May 3 – May 6: Brussels 3N (Tues - Friday). Old City, EU & NATO HQ, Zinneke Parade? Daytrip to Antwerp?

May 6 – May 9: Bruges 3N (Friday - Monday). Canals, old town, daytrip to Flanders Fields, bike to Damme **P**

May 9 – May 11: Rouen 2N (Monday - Wednesday). Old town, cathedral, Joan of Arc

May 11 – May 14: Honfleur 3N (Wednesday - Saturday). Old Harbor, Giverny, Calvados, Etretat, Le havre

May 14 – May 16: Bayeaux 2N (Saturday - Monday). Caen WW2 Museum, D-Day beaches, Tapestry

May 16 – May 17: Mont St. Michel 1N (Monday - Tuesday). Medieval island monestary/fortress **P**

May 17 – May 23: Amboise/Loire Valley 6N (Tuesday – Monday). Chateaus, bikes and balloon ride. And cook!

May 23 – May 28: Dordogne 5N (Monday - Saturday). More time if we have it here! Cave Tours

May 28 – June 1: Bordeaux 4N (Saturday - Wednesday) Wine and chill!

June 1 – June 3: Ciboure 2N (Wednesday - Friday). See Biarritz and surfers nearby, then swim.

June 3 – June 4: Andorra 1N (Friday - Saturday). Just because!

June 4 – June 7: Collioure (Port Vendres) 3N (Saturday - Tuesday). Beach and relax

June 7 – June 8: Carcassone 1N (Tuesday - Wednesday). See the Medieval fortress, bike Canal du Midi

June 8 – June 15: Aix-en-Provence 7N (Wednesday – Wednesday). Provence life, swim & hike at Cassis, Marseille

June 15 – June 19: Annecy 3N (Wednesday - Sunday). Venice of the Alps. Wander, hike, lake

June 19 – June 22: Chamonix 3N (Sunday - Wednesday). Aiguille du Midi and hike

June 22 – July 12: The Swiss Trip 19N. Hiking the Alps, with cheese!

July 12 – July 15: Paris 3N (Tuesday - Friday). Sacre Coeur, Moulin Rouge, Bastille Day

July 15 – July 15: Flight Paris to Split, ferry to Hvar (book along with ferry ticket while in Aix)

CURRENT			Schengen*	France	Swiss	Belg/Lux	Other	Car	checksum	
			86	55	19	9	1	81	84	Total includes +1 for final Schengen day flying out
		Months	2.8	1.8	0.6	0.3	0.0	2.7	2.8	Car: April 25 - July 13 (80 days discount)
Start	Fom	To	Days	City	Country	Car?	Drive	Notes		
Thursday	21-Apr	24-Apr	4	Lyon	France	0	0	Food and Culture		
Monday	25-Apr	27-Apr	3	Beaune	France	3	2	Burgundy, Boujolais, Hiking, bike to vinyards, new castle?		
Thursday	28-Apr	29-Apr	2	Reims	France	2	3.5	Enroute -Guedelon (adds 2hr) or hiking, Champagne, Surrender Museum		
Saturday	30-Apr	2-May	3	Luxembourg	Bel-Lux	3	3	See Verdun enroute (4-6 hours). Old City, Hiking, Castles		
Tuesday	3-May	5-May	3	Brussels	Bel-Lux	3	3	See Bourschied Castle enroute. Jazz? Architecture, beer, mussels, frites, beer		
Friday	6-May	8-May	3	Bruges	Bel-Lux	3	2.5	Canals, see enroute Antwerp and Ghent		
Monday	9-May	10-May	2	Rouen	France	2	6	Bell Towers, Joan of Arc , Astro clock, day trip to Giverny/Monet		
Wednesday	11-May	13-May	3	Honfleur	France	3	3	Harbor and old town, walk cliffs at Etretat, Le Havre art deco architecture		
Saturday	14-May	15-May	2	Bayeaux	France	2	1.5	See Caen Museum enroute, tapestries & market, D-Day sites		
Monday	16-May	16-May	1	Mt. St. Michel	France	1	3.5	See Dinan, St. Malo or D-Day sites enroute, overnight to see MSM early/late		
Tuesday	17-May	22-May	6	Amboise	France	6	3.5	Loire valley - Chateaux, biking, wines. Could combine into one hotel.		
Monday	23-May	27-May	5	Sarlat	France	5	5.5	Stop Oradour-sur-Glane enroute. Or stay La Roque-Gageac. Canoe, petroglyphs,		
Saturday	28-May	31-May	4	Bordeaux	France	4	3	Visit St. Emile enroute (or stay there instead). Wine, architecture, and relax		
Wednesday	1-Jun	2-Jun	2	Ciboure	France	2	4	Drive the Atlantic coast, watch surfers, and a beach day in Biarritz		
Friday	3-Jun	3-Jun	1	Andorra	Other	1	5	Stop at Lourdes and Prehistoric Park enroute. 1 night to say we did Andorra		
Saturday	4-Jun	6-Jun	3	Collioure	France	3	3.5	Beach and chill - no		
Tuesday	7-Jun	7-Jun	1	Carcassone	France	1	2	Massive Medieval Fortifications, stay 1 night to see no crowds late/early		
Wednesday	8-Jun	14-Jun	7	Aix-en-Provence	France	7	2	Nime enroute? Day trip Marseille & Canal du Midi & hike Verdon Food, art.		
Wednesday	15-Jun	18-Jun	4	Annecy	France	4	4.5	Enjoy the lake!		
Sunday	19-Jun	21-Jun	3	Chamonix	France	3	2	Just wow		
Tuesday	12-Jul	14-Jul	3	Paris	France	3	6	Bastille Day 14th. Sacre-Coeur, Moulin Rouge, catacombs, Julia Childs. Fly to Split		
<i>What days are things closed?</i>										

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ETIAS

It doesn't appear to be required during our visit, per this [article](#). The European Travel Information and Authorization System or ETIAS visa waiver will be a travel requirement to visit Europe starting from the **end of 2022**. U.S. citizens who wish to travel to and around Europe will have to apply online for an ETIAS visa waiver. Check details at [ETIAS.US](#), and also [InterExchange](#) and [EU Site](#).

VPN

A VPN would be helpful for the trip for better ticket pricing, watching movies, etc. Check out SurfShark, CNET

COVID and France Travel

France has a color-coding system for countries, with differing rules. As March 17, 2022, the USA is **GREEN**.

Fully vaccinated travelers coming from the United States no longer require a covid test to enter France, and may enter with proof of vaccination (the CDC card is sufficient for entry) and a sworn statement they do not have symptoms of COVID-19 nor contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19. See EU-PLF below.

"Fully vaccinated": includes both doses of Pfizer/Moderna, and a booster if it has been 9 months since the second dose. One week is required after the *first* booster to qualify (we will have 10 days after 2nd, so are ok.)

There are no testing or isolation requirements. Proof of vaccination is no longer required to access bars, restaurants, stadiums, theatres, and other large events. Additionally, **the obligation to wear a face mask has been removed**.

The **EU-PLF form** is still compulsory for travelers who wish to enter France. You must present a sworn declaration to stating that you have no symptoms of COVID-19 infection and have not been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the 14 days prior, and that you are willing to test if required. [Download the declaration template here](#)

Vaccine Pass/Health Pass (Pass Vaccinal/Sanitaire): France suspended the vaccine pass requirement on March 14. If requirement is re-imposed, a vaccine pass can be obtained from designated pharmacies for a fee of ~ 36 Euros. The map of designated pharmacies: <https://www.sante.fr/obtenir-un-passe-sanitaire-en-cas-de-vaccination-letranger>.

Travelers should download the application [TousAntiCovid](#) and continue to strictly respect protective measures

Check the [U.S. Embassy in France](#) for updates. French "[Coming to France?](#)" site and [Dept of Interior](#) are better.

France 2022 Itinerary

Apr 20 – Apr 21: Flight to Europe 1N (Wed-Thurs).

Apr 21 – Apr 25: Lyon 4N (Thurs-Monday). Explore sights and food in Lyon

Lyon: pronounced “Lee-onne” with even syllables. known as the Gastronomic capital of France, with great wine from nearby Burgundy and Beaujolais regions. Near the Alps and Cote d’Azur.

Ideas from [Kim-Kim](#), [Rick Steves](#), [offthetouristtreadmill](#).

Weather: April-May 60-70F / 40-50 F with 8-10 days of rain

Hotel – Une nuit au second

Vaccine Pass – “Super Green”. Get at Pharmacies w/ CDC card (see covid notes above), required some sites.

Car Rental – call at +33 6 72 22 62 65 to confirm rental and arrange for pickup in a few days.

Lyon City Card? covers 23 museums plus buses, trams, funiculars, the Métro, and river shuttle Le Vaporetto.

Day -----

Start with the UNESCO-listed **Presque’île**. **Presque’île** is the land surrounded by the two rivers of Saône and Rhône. It has the opera house, cafes, beautiful architecture, and shopping at Rue de la République.

Traditional Cuisine at what are called *bouchons*, the best are awarded the label *Authentique Bouchon Lyonnais*, especially around Presqu’île. Try all the local specialities, like Cervelle de Canut (French cheese with herbs, shallots, oil and salt) or Gateau de Volaille (chicken liver cake).

Dinner with Beaujolais or Burgundy wine of the region ([Wine Folly Map](#)).

Watch evening light show from Pont Bonaparte

Day -----

Run in **Parc de la Tête d’Or**, France’s largest urban park with winding lanes.

Explore the narrow-cobbled passages of **Vieux Lyon** (Old Lyon) and its 500 *traboules* – hidden passages leading to the Saône used by silk traders (Canuts). A free map of these passageways can be picked up at the Tourist Office on Place Bellecour. Most of them are hidden; don’t be afraid to try and open a door, you may discover a Traboule. See churches St. George, St. Jean (with its astronomical clock), and Notre Dame de Fourviere Basilica for views over the city.

Later explore the historic right bank of the Saône where wealthy merchants once built beautiful homes in a range of architectural styles, particularly in the districts of Saint-Jean, Saint Georges, and Saint Paules.

Lyon is famous for its murals; get a map at the TI and look for them as we explore

Day -----

In the morning, visit **Les Halles de Lyon Paul Bocuse** food market and stock-up for picnics (closed for lunch).

Visit the **Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon**, France’s largest fine art museum after Le Louvre. Situated in a former abbey from the 17th century, it includes works from Degas, van Gogh, Renoir, Cézanne, El Greco, and Picasso, and in the garden, Rodin. See also the ancient Egyptian collection.

Check out the markets near Passerelle du Palais de Justice bridge and Boulevard de la Croix-Rousse. Sunday is the biggest/best day.

Day -----

See also: the resistance museum, Lumiere Institute, architecture at confluence, and Restaurant Paul Bocuse. The zoo and botanical garden are free.

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Rent a bike Rent (e.g. Velo'V) and go to the Croix Rousse via the Tunnel Modes Doux (multi-media tunnel for bikes and pedestrians only). It runs from the bank of the Rhône (Quai Andrée Lassagne) to the Croix Rousse.

Walk or cycle along the two rivers, and find a few *Péniche* bars (bars on boats used to transport goods).

Runs: Run-see 6m - <https://greatruns.com/lyon-france-lyon-tour-and-fourviere/>
Rhone - <https://greatruns.com/lyon-france-rhone-river-run/> (combine with Parc... D'or)
D'Or Parc - <https://www.mapmyrun.com/routes/fullscreen/1825658864/> (combine Rhone)
Saone - <https://greatruns.com/lyon-france-saone-river-run/>

Apr 25 – Apr 28: Burgundy and Beaujolais 3N (Monday - Thursday). Wineries and light biking.

Beaune: pronounced "Boh-ne" with even syllables. This village, Burgundy (Bourgogne), is a major wine center for France. Bourgogne Rouge is 100% Pinot Noir, but named by terroir. Similarly, Bourgogne Blanc is 100% Chardonnay. Chablis is in the very northern part, and known for lean, unoaked Chardonnay. Ideas: [VinePair](#), [Wine Folly](#), [Hotel Guru](#), and [Beaune Tourism](#) (great local walks and bike routes).

Weather: April-May 60-70F / 40-50 F with 8-10 days of rain

Car – April 25 noon at Lyon Saint Exupery Airport to July 13 noon at CDG Paris. \$2053.59 on Sapphire. [AutoEurope](#) Lease # US5882125-5. 07, Fr3nchC@r? Citroen C3 Aircross Diesel with GPS
NOTE: 80-days = \$900 cheaper than 79! I may return a day early or park in Paris one day.

Hotel – Chez Charles Centre

Park – free parking onsite, no reservation needed

Enroute -----

Beaujolais: Visit wineries enroute to Beaune from Lyon. Nearly all Beaujolais is red, made of Gamay. Bright with acid and bursting with cherry and strawberry tastes, unburdened by big tannins. Good Value.

In the Beaujolais region, Château de Montmelas is known as the Sleeping Beauty castle. The same noble family has lived in it for centuries. Tours first Saturday of the month at 11am. Château de la Chaize has beautiful grounds and wine tasting. Likewise Château de Corcelles. From [The Good Life France](#)

Free evening light show where historic buildings are illuminated with very pretty, whimsical and colorful 'slide' shows. Creative and about an hour to see them all. Try local foods - "Pochouse" (fish stew), oeufs en Meurette, eggs poached in Wine and of course Snails

Day -----

Run in Parc de la Bouzaise. Rent a bike ring road and Cote d'Or vineyards - 4 chateaux 10min apart.

See the [Hotel-Dieu Hospices de Beaune](#) – the courtyard is breathtaking. Visit Musee du Vin. Also the old city hall that shows different "flavors" in wine with big sniffers in a lobby (closed during lunch hour). Visit [Fallot](#), producers of famous Dijon Mustard.

Visit Abbaye de la Bussière and Châteauneuf-en-Auxois for history.

Abby of Cluny and Fontenay. Chateau de la Rochepot

Day -----

Wednesday Market is small but very nice, at Les Halles and spilling into the streets. Fresh veggies and fruits, local cheeses like Epoisses and Florentin, organic meat, eggs and chicken, breads and pastries, jams and honey. Prep for picnic or hike in Morvan with the supplies.

Hike in [Morvan Regional Park](#) and stay in a [hobbit house](#), or hike [Foret National Park](#) nearby.

Run: Veloroute La Voie des Vignes 3-7mi - <https://greatruns.com/burgundy-tour-de-bourgogne-a-velo/>

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Apr 28 – April 30: Reims 2N (Thursday - Saturday). Champagne!

Reims: pronounced “[rance](#)” with even syllables. Champaign is the star, but see also the cathedral and the WW2 German Surrender museum. Ideas: [RS](#), [VoyageTips](#)

Weather: April-May 60-65F / 40-45 F with 10-14 days of rain

Hotel – Campanile Reims Centre

Park – parking onsite, confirmed Feb 26 via booking message, 14E/24hr

Enroute -----

Hautvillers: the home of Moet e Chandon and Dom Perignon’s tomb at Église Saint-Sindulphe de l’Abbaye Saint-Pierre d’Hautvillers (on map)

Day -----

Reims Notre Dame Cathedral was started in 1211 and finished just 60 years later, and is remarkable for its harmonious design. It was the coronation site for France, similar to Westminster in England. Free, 25-minute sound-and-light show on most summer evenings.

Visit the Museum of the Surrender (Musée de la Reddition), where the Germans surrendered in WW2 (what became V-E Day). This is where Eisenhower managed Allied operations — and where the European part of the war ended. While the town was undamaged by WW2, WW1 destroyed 2/3 of the city. It was rebuilt in the 1920s with stylized features of Art Deco – it is the most important Art Deco city in France.

Champaign was invented here by Dom Perignon in about 1700. He ran through the abby saying "Brothers, come quickly...I'm drinking stars!" [Martel](#) offers the most personal and best value tour; while [Taittinger](#) and [Mumm](#) have the most impressive cellars (Mumm is also close to the city center, and offers one of the best *cave* tours). [Veuve Clicquot](#) fills up weeks ahead, so make a reservation. Walk Avenue De Champaign.

See other UNESCO sights – Palace of Tau (archbishop residence) and Basilique Saint-Remi

April 30 – May 3: Luxembourg 3N (Saturday - Tuesday). Old City and hiking

Luxembourg: is only 51 miles long by 35 miles wide, and mostly rural outside of Luxembourg City with forests, gorges, river valleys, and over 100 castles. The city is very wealthy. Ideas: [TheDiscoveriesOf](#)

Weather: April-May 60-65F / 40-45 F with 10-12 days of rain

Hotel – Hotel Parc Plaza

Park – onsite, reservation not possible 25E/24hr

Enroute -----

Verdun: pronounced “[vehr-duh](#)” with even syllables. Horrible, bloody battle from WW1, with >300,000 killed. Ideas: [WineTraveler](#), [Wikipedia](#). Visit the [Verdun Memorial and Museum](#), the [Douaumont Ossuary](#), [Trench of Bayonets](#), the nine destroyed villages and American Cemeteries. Details on the [WineTraveler](#) site.

Day -----

The Grund (old city) is a UNESCO Heritage site. See the Bock Casements, Chemin de la Corniche, Notre Dame Cathedral, Grand Ducal Palace, Abbaye de Neumunster (art), The Musée National d’Histoire et d’Art. Walk along the Alzette River. Do a bicycle tour. Run the parks surrounding the city. MUDAM has the views.

Day -----

Hike - Hohllay Cave, Mullerthal Trail/Echternach, or Schiessentumel, all ~30-45min drive to the east

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Runs: Several here 3-7m (combine park runs) - <https://greatruns.com/location/luxembourg/>
Run-see 6.5m - <https://greatruns.com/luxembourg-runseeing-tour/>

May 3 – May 6: Brussels 3N (Tues - Friday). Old City, EU & NATO HQ, Zinneke Parade? Daytrip to Antwerp?

Brussels: is the EU (and NATO) headquarters, Ideas: [WhereWouldYouGo](#), [RoadAffair](#), and [ThePortableWife](#). The later has a very good walking tour outlined on her blog.

Weather: April-May 55-65F / 40-50 F with ~10 days of rain

Hotel – Central and Cozy in Brussels

Park – *Interparking Monnaie* located next to the apartment

Enroute -----
Visit castle at Bourscheid, then continue through the Adrenne Forest.

Day -----
Brussels Jazz Weekend: Scheduled May 27-28-29 for the [Spring Edition](#).

Zinneke Parade: Held on even-numbered years in May, the Zinneke Parade is a multicultural celebration of Brussels' people and includes performances by city locals.

Ommegang: This June festival is straight out of the Renaissance, with jugglers, folk games, and puppets

Villo! is a self-service bike rental in Brussels. Biking in the city is an extremely popular and a great way to see the city. Villo! is a self-service rental; download the map and the list of stations [online](#).

Day -----
Walk Boulevard Anspach and view the Brussels Stock Exchange, built in 1873. See the Royal Museum of Fine Start at the Grand Place, a beautiful square, with it's Gothic town hall, Maison du Roi and [Musée de la Ville de Bruxelles](#). Here you won't miss the [Manneken Pis](#), the city's urinating mascot. Next: the [Atomium](#).

Arts, Moeder Lambic for craft beer, and Boulevard de Waterloo for shopping and people watching. Walk the Meise Botanical Gardens as well. Walk Place de St. Catherine which used to be the fish market. Les Galleries Saint Hubert is a covered arcade (oldest in Europe). Visit the [Belgian Comic Strip Center](#).

Finally, stop at Delirium Café for a Tremens or any of 3000+ types of beer.

Day -----
Mont des Arts Place du Petit Sablon are beautiful parks offering city views. Visit the Royal Palace (still with royals). The Parc du Cinquenaire is big 19th century park, worth the walk. It has a massive Triumphal Arch, the Art and History Museum and the Autoworld car museum.

In the neighborhood of Koekelberg lies the hilltop National Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Completed in 1969, this Catholic basilica features an unusual Art Deco design, although it pays homage to the Basilique du Sacré-Coeur in Paris. It is the fifth largest church in the world! From the gallery, you can see the entire city.

Ok – a weird one. Visit [Mini-Europe](#). Scale models of iconic places in Europe.

Runs: **Run-see 3-10m** - <https://greatruns.com/brussels-running-tour-2/>
Three Parks 4-5m - <https://greatruns.com/brussels-cinquenaire-parc-de-bruxelles/>
Bois de Cambre 3-10m - <https://greatruns.com/brussels-bois-de-cambre-2/>

May 6 – May 9: Bruges 3N (Friday - Monday). Canals, old town, daytrip to Flanders Fields, bike to Damme **P**

Bruges: known for its canals ("Venice of the North"). Ideas: [FullSuitcase](#) has tips and a good walking route.

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Weather: April-May 55-60F / 40-50 F with ~9 days of rain

Hotel – House of Bruges

Day -----

Start at the Market Square (Markt) for architecture and food. There has been a weekly market there since the year 985! Weekly market is on Wednesday 8am-1pm. See the Provincial Palace, the Belfry Tower and Cloth Hall, and visit the Historium. Nearby is Burg Square with City Hall and the Basilica of the Holy Blood.

Take a 30-minute boat tour through the canals. Look for “Bruges Photo Point on Google Maps, with best light early morning or evening. Also visit St. Boniface Bridge for photos.

The Church of our Lady contain’s Michalangelo’s famous marble “Madonna and Child”. The Groeninge Museum has Flemish art over 6 centuries.

The Huidenvettersplein and nearby Vismarkt (fish market) are interesting. Fish only early W/F morning.

Minnewater (Lake of Love) would be great walk or place to run. The Windmills are a 20-minute walk from Markt or use a bike or e-scooter. Or, bike/escoot to nearby Damme.

Runs: To Damme 7-8m - <https://greatruns.com/bruges-run-to-damme/>
Outer Canal 6-7m - <https://greatruns.com/bruges-outer-canal-loop/>
Inner Canal 3m (if add spurs on cross canals) - <https://greatruns.com/inner-canal-route/>

May 9 – May 11: Rouen 2N (Monday - Wednesday). Old town, cathedral, Joan of Arc P

Rouen: pronounced “woo-ahn” but almost as one syllable. The “city of 100 bell towers” (Hugo) is on the River Seine, and is where Joan of Arc was martyred at 19. Beautiful architecture. Ideas: [Normandy Tourism](#), [TheCultureTrip](#)

Weather: April-May 60-65F / 40-45 F with 8-10 days of rain

Hotel – Le secret de Léa

Park – Private onsite, reservation needed (requested Feb 24), 15E/24hr. April 5 agreed pay cash on arrival.

Enroute -----

Dunkirk: see the Museum Dunkerque 1940 Operation Dynamo enroute from Bruges (1 hr) to Normandy.

Day -----

Rouen: Cathedral, astronomical clock, church of St. Joan of Arc and half-timbered houses.

Run: <https://greatruns.com/normandy-france-rouen-seine-river-paths/>

May 11 – May 14: Honfleur 3N (Wednesday - Saturday). Old Harbor, Giverny, Calvados, Etretat, Le Havre

Honfleur: pronounced “[on-flur](#)”, the town is known for its medieval harbor that inspired impressionist painters. The Seine empties into the English Channel here, so seafood is the highlight. Try the 3 C’s: camembert, calvados, and cider. Ideas: [Normandy Tourism](#), [VoyageTips](#)

Weather: May 65F / 48F with ~9 days of rain

Hotel – Les Gîtes de Claire

Park – Private parking nearby, reservation confirmed Feb 26 via booking message, 7E/24hr

Enroute -----

Day trip to Giverny, where Monet painted Water Lilies, enroute to Honfleur.

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Afternoon -----

Honfleur: Arrive from Rouen/Giverny in late afternoon and walk the harbor. Have mussels (“moules”)

Day -----

Honfleur: Morning harbor run (maybe across the Normandy Bridge). Then spend a day walking and exploring the city, including the La Vieux Bassin (harbor), St. Catherine’s cathedral (all wood, dating from 1400’s), Notre Dame de Grace, St. Leonard’s, half-timbered houses, and cobbled streets lined with shops. Visit the Satie (composer) and Boudin (impressionist painter) museums. Sample Calvados (apple whiskey) at Compagnie des Calvados de la Cave Honfleuraise or La Cave Normande.

Day -----

Etretat: Day trip to Etretat to walk the its dramatic white cliffs over the sea. Then stop in **Le Havre** (“[luh-avruh](#)”), a UNESCO heritage site, for post-war architecture. Back in Honfleur for more seafood at dinner!

Runs: **Honfleur** - <https://greatruns.com/normandy-france-honfleur-waterfront-marina-parks/>

Le Havre - <https://greatruns.com/normandy-france-le-havre-runseeing-tour/>

Etretat - <https://greatruns.com/normandy-france-cliffs-of-etretat/>

May 14 – May 16: Bayeaux 2N (Saturday - Monday). Caen WW2 Museum, D-Day beaches, Tapestry

Bayeaux: pronounced “[bai-oo](#)”, again with even syllables. The town is very close to the D-Day Beaches, American cemetery, and other WW2 sites. The town is also known for its tapestries dating from 1066. Ideas: [ClairsFootsteps](#)

Weather: May 59F / 48F with ~9 days of rain

Hotel – Au Loup Historic Apartments

Park – free public parking nearby, no reservation needed

Enroute -----

Drive to Caen from Honfleur (30 min) and see the Caen WW2 museum. Then drive 30m more to Bayeaux.

Afternoon -----

Run the old city. Then visit the tapestry museum, from 1066 celebrating the Battle of Hastings. Notre Dame, and the market as we walk old-town. Then drive on to Mont St. Michel

Day -----

D-Day sights: Arromanches (landing), Pointe du Hoc (rangers scaling cliffs), and the American Cemetery with white stones above Omaha beach. Utah Beach Landing Museum is new and very good. A guide (though expensive) will be worth it for the history.

Runs: Normandy Beach

May 16 – May 17: Mont St. Michel 1N (Monday - Tuesday). Medieval island monestary/fortress P

Mont St. Michel: historic abbey and surrounding city on a peninsula/island, depending on the tides. Beautiful and historic, and a huge tourist draw. Don’t expect great service on the island (no competition). Visit is best early and late to avoid crowds, so stay on site anyway if possible. Otherwise, free parking is about 1.5 miles away with shuttle. Avoid walking the bay – quicksand/tides/sewage. Ideas: [CultureTrip](#)

Weather: May 65F / 48F with ~9 days of rain

Hotel – La Vieille Auberge

Park – Park in P3 public car park. **Call or email hotel for parking code up to 24 hr ahead of time.**

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Tides – www.ot-montsaintmichel.com/en/timetable-tides/mont-saint-michel.htm

Enroute -----

If departing early, stop in Dinan (Medieval city), or drive to St. Malo along the coast (beautiful Brittany)

Afternoon -----

Arrive mid-day/afternoon (“arrive after 5”) from Bayeaux, maybe seeing more WW2 enroute. To hotel and walk ramparts in the evening. See the Abbey then, or early the next morning before departing.

Run: <https://greatruns.com/normandy-mont-saint-michel-spectacular/>

May 17 – May 23: Amboise/Loire Valley 6N (Tuesday – Monday). Chateaus, bikes and balloon ride. And cook!

Loire Valley: the “Garden of France”, with over 1000 of Chateaus and Castles. Key cities are Orleans, **Amboise (1), Blois, Tours, Angers, Nantes.** Very easy to bike, especially East-West. Known for goat cheese and trout. Ideas: [RoadAffair](#), [RS Loire Summary](#), [RS Detail](#) (best), and [LoireValley](#).

Weather: May 67F / 48F with ~9 days of rain

Hotel – La Petite Vigne Historical Amboise

Park – free street parking

Day -----

Visit 2-3 Chateau / day from the list. Bike the Loire. Hot air balloon ride?

Châteaux East of Tours (per Rick Steves Guidebook)

- ▲▲▲ **Chenonceau** (grandest) For sheer elegance arching over the Cher River, and for its lovely gardens.
- ▲▲▲ **Chambord** (King’s) for its epic grandeur (440 rooms), fun rooftop views, and evocative forest setting
- ▲▲ Blois For its urban setting, beautiful courtyard, and fun sound-and-light show.
- ▲▲ **Cheverny** (family still lives here), intimate, lavishly furnished, and daily feeding of the hunting dogs.
- ▲▲ Chaumont-sur-Loire For its imposing setting over the Loire River, historic connections to America
- ▲ **Amboise** For terrific views over Amboise and Leonardo da Vinci memories.
- ▲ **Clos-Lucé** (in Amboise) For a chance to see Leonardo da Vinci’s final home with models of his creations

Châteaux West of Tours

- ▲▲ **Azay-le-Rideau** For its fairy-tale façade, romantic reflecting pond, and for its beautiful furnishings.
- ▲▲ **Villandry** For the best gardens in the Loire Valley — and possibly all of France.
- ▲ **Château d’Ussé** supposedly inspired “Sleeping Beauty”

Runs: **Run-see 5m** - <https://greatruns.com/loire-valley-amboise-runseeing-tour/>

Woods and Wine 6-7m - <https://greatruns.com/loire-valley-amboise-views-wood-path-winery-run/>

May 23 – May 28: Sarlat-de-Caneda (Dordogne) 5N (Monday - Saturday). More time if we have it here!

Dordogne: Ancient Cave Paintings of Lascaux, La Roque St. Christophe, Pech Merle and Rouffignac are all nearby. Beautiful hiking and canoeing also. Known for walnuts, truffles, foie gras, tobacco, and sunflowers. Sarlat is almost all pedestrian only, market Wed & Sat. Other interesting towns Beynac and La Roque Gageac
Ideas: [RS Blog](#), [TouristEar](#), [HandLuggageOnly](#), [ETB](#), [RS Video](#)

Weather: May 70F / 50F with ~11 days of rain

Hotel – Le Grenier du Chapitre

Park – On your arrival, you can park around the medieval city, the first hour of parking is free

Enroute -----

France 2022 Itinerary

Stop by Oradour-sur-Glane enroute from the Loire. Nazis razed the village on June 9, 1944, killing all 600+ inhabitants, machine-gunned down in the church. The allies came in June 10, and left the village as-is.

Day -----

Book these early. Prehistoric cave paintings.

- Lascaux - May 25 11:10am in English booked Order #: 2209672842800400498. And the best, of course, **Lascaux IV**, replica of the “Sistine Chapel of the Pre-Historic World”. Pre-read RS Guide.
- [Perch Merle](#) – May 26 noon. See actual cave paintings, about 29k years old. 80min drive. File reference #00152806.
- [Rouffignac Cave](#) – pick a day and go early. Original carvings and paintings via electric train through the caverns. No reservations possible; tickets on sale at 9am, tour at 10am.
- [Les Eyzies](#), with it’s Abric of Cap Blanc and **Font-de-Gaume** (best and hardest to get into). Online tix only and **I was unable to book. Try when in France.** Museum of Pre-History in Les Eyzies, and RS.

Day -----

Explore Sarlat with its Episcopal Palace, the Cathedral of Saint-Sacerdos, the Lantern of the Dead, the Présidial, the Town Hall, the Church of Sainte-Marie, and its imposing gates, the Hotel de Gisson. Canoe down the river (with a ride back).

Day -----

Explore local towns. Hanging Gardens of Marqueyssac for a view over the Dordogne, La Roque Gageac with pretty stone houses along the river, Castelnaud la Chapelle on a hill (museum to 100-Years-War), Baynet Castle for views, the panoramic gardens at Limeuil, and many more charming Medieval towns.

Day -----

Go hiking!

May 28 – June 1: Bordeaux 4N (Saturday - Wednesday) Wine and chill!

Bordeaux: Wine and Chill. Stop at St. Emillion enroute. Ideas: [KimKim](#), [SavoredJourneys](#),

Weather: May-June 70-75F / 50-55F with ~10 days of rain

Hotel – Charmant et spacieux studio

Park – public pay lot nearby

Enroute -----

St. Emillion – wine and UNESCO old town.

Afternoon -----

Walk the city, with Le Cite du Vin museum and Miroir d’Eau at Place de la Bourse.

Day -----

Morning run along the waterfront called Quais de Bordeaux on the left bank of the Garonne. Check out the beautiful arches of Pont de Pierre, as well as the Pont Jacques Chaban-Delmas. Stroll and picnic in the Jardin Publique de Bordeaux. Around the park is Les Chartrons, ‘hood with lively bistros, wine bars, and boutiques.

Day -----

Day Trip to Wineries on Left and Right Banks. Add in Cognac/Hennessy? Wine tour so no driving? Bordeaux Cathedral and the Pey-Berland Tower. Walk the Medieval walls to gates La Grosse Cloche and Porte Cailhau

Day -----

Run. Visit Marché des Capucins, a covered food market also known as “the belly of Bordeaux”. Drive on

Runs: **Run-see-1 4-7m** (if add river) - <https://greatruns.com/bordeaux-runseeing-tour/>

France 2022 Itinerary

Run-see-2 3-7m (if add river) - <https://greatruns.com/bordeaux-runseeing-tour-alternatives/>
Garrone River 5m <https://greatruns.com/bordeaux-quai-des-queyries/>
Parks 5mi - <https://www.mapmyrun.com/routes/fullscreen/2378032801/>

June 1 – June 3: Ciboure 2N (Wednesday - Friday). See Biarritz and surfers nearby, then swim.

Ciboure: Just go to the beach for a day to watch surfers and swim. Ideas: N/A

Weather: May-June 68-73F / 55-60F with ~11 days of rain

Hotel – Belarra

Park – free parking onsite, no reservation needed

Day -----
Swim, watch surfers, chill

June 3 – June 4: Andorra 1N (Friday - Saturday). Just because!

Andorra: Shopping and tax haven in the mountains. See Lourdes and Prehistoric Park enroute.

Weather: May-June 60-65F / 50-55F with ~16 days of rain

Hotel – Hotel Pyrénées in Andorra la Vella

Park – parking onsite, no reservation needed, 15E/24hr

Enroute -----
Lourdes to stop to see shrine. Drive to Prehistoric Park in **Tarascon-sur-Ariege**.

Afternoon -----
Then up into the mountains to Andorra for one night. Visit the Casino and walk.

June 4 – June 7: Collioure (Port Vendres) 3N (Saturday - Tuesday). Beach and relax

Collioure: relaxing beach town with some history. Known for anchovies, Catalan culture, and beach. For us, a place to recharge a bit with no agenda or sights to go see. Ideas: [RS Blog](#), [TravelInspires](#)

Weather: June 80F / 65F with ~3 days of rain

Hotel – Appartement La Méditerranée vue sur la Mer

Park – free public parking nearby, no reservation required

Day -----
Swim, cook, run, relax. Plage-St. Vincent is nice pebble beach with Medieval architecture behind. Walk the “Fauvism” art path, the Wine Cellar of the Dominicans. Market Sunday/Wednesday. Climb Fort St. Elme.

June 7 – June 8: Carcassone 1N (Tuesday - Wednesday). See the Medieval fortress, bike Canal du Midi

Carcassone: massive and impregnable Medieval fortress, restored in the 1800s, and a UNESCO site since 1997. Crowded with tourists, we will plan to arrive mid-afternoon and enjoy it in the evening, with nighttime photos. Early morning before moving on. Ideas: [GeographicalCure](#), [TravelAwaits](#)

Weather: June 80F / 60F with ~3 days of rain

Hotel – Best Western Plus Le Donjon

France 2022 Itinerary

Park – onsite parking, no reservation required, 20E/24hr

Day -----

Market Saturday/Thursday. Walk the walls, visit Place Carnot, Felice Varini art Installation, and the Château Comtal (a fortress within a fortress). Walk Pont Vieux. Run or walk early the next day also and move on.

June 8 – June 15: Aix-en-Provence 7N (Wednesday – Wednesday). Provence life, swim & hike at Cassis, Marseille

Aix-en-Provence: Known as “The City of Counts” and “The City of Fountains”. A pedestrian center and very close to busy Marseille. Ideas: [LeLongWeekend](#), [RS Blog](#), [CultureTrip](#), [KimKim](#),

Weather: June 80F / 55F with ~3 days of rain

Hotel – Les Suites du Cours & Spa

Park – public parking nearby at 25E/24hr, no reservation required. **Call ahead for longer-term rate?**

Enroute -----

Depart Carcassonne and stop to bike **Canal du Midi** before leaving the area. Perhaps stop at **Nime** enroute.

Afternoon -----

Get to hotel late afternoon and, check in, and walk a through Town Hall Place and along Cours Mirabeau.

Day -----

Run Parc de la Torse. Explore the [City Markets](#). The Farmers Market (daily 8-1pm) is situated in Place Richelme near Town Hall. [Tours](#) available. Tues/Thurs/Sat it expands to “everything”. The Flower Market is at Place de l’Hôtel de Ville every day except 1st Sundays, when it’s books. [Farinoman](#) (translated as flour man) is like the San Fran focaccia lady – the best bread, only a few types each day, with a long line.

Day -----

Go hiking in Verdon NP, about 90 minutes away, or alternatively, Luberon to the North. Another option is Mont Sainte-Victoire, the subject of many of Cézanne paintings. Hikes TBD :-)

Day -----

Daytrip into Marseille. Ideas: [OneDayItinerary](#). Start early at the Port Vieux, walking along Quai des Belges and you’ll see the bustling fish market. Have bouillabaisse in La Panier Quarter (oldest, founded by Greeks 600 BC). Then visit Visit Notre-Dame de la Garde – it looks stunning. Visit Palais Longchamp.

Day -----

Enjoy the City, looking at fountains and architecture. Follow the Cezanne Trail. Walk the gardens at Hôtel de Caumont. Cathedral of course, Old Aix, north of Mirabeau.

Explore Cassis (on the sea) and hike or boat Calanques National Park

Runs: **Aix-1** - <https://greatruns.com/provence-france-bouches-du-rhone/> (ok but make up own in centre)
Masailles - <https://greatruns.com/location/marseille-france/>

June 15 – June 19: Annecy 3N (Wednesday - Sunday). Venice of the Alps. Wander, hike, lake

Annecy: “The Venice of the Alps”, with pastel wood timbered building, flowerboxes, and arched bridges over the canals. The lake is great for paddling or swimming or biking around, with hiking nearby. Ideas: [RS](#), [TravelFranceBucketList](#), [TheCrazyTourist](#), [VoyageTips](#)

Weather: June 75F / 50F with ~9 days of rain

Hotel – LE TRESUM

Park – free parking onsite, no reservation needed

France 2022 Itinerary

Day -----

Arrive afternoon, walk the parks: Gardens of Europe, Le Paquier, Plage des Marquisats, Plage de l'Imperial.

Day -----

Morning run in a park. Rent a boat or bike along the lake. The eastern shore path runs 22 miles to Marlens. Or... [tandem paragliding](#)? See a film at the [Film Animation Festival](#)?

Day -----

Hike Nearby – Lac Blanc is an option. Gorges du Fier is on the edge of town. Here's a few lookouts to climb: Le Taillefer, the Semnoz Plateau, the Laudon Circuit, the Oratory in Entrevernes and the La Frasse Pass. See also nature trail <https://greatruns.com/annecy-france-reserve-naturelle-marais-du-bout-du-lac-dannecy/>

Runs: Lake Front 3-7m - <https://greatruns.com/annecy-france-lac-dannecy-north-waterfront/>

Le Thiou 3m - <https://greatruns.com/annecy-france-le-thiou-promenades/>

Rail Trail 3-10m - <https://greatruns.com/annecy-france-voie-verte/>

June 19 – June 22: Chamonix 3N (Sunday - Wednesday). Aiguille du Midi and hike

Chamonix: Ski resort at the base of Mt. Blanc, the highest peak in Europe. This is the global center of mountaineering. Ideas: [AlpenWild](#),

Weather: June 65F / 55F with ~16 days of rain

Hotel – Mont Blanc 43

Park – free parking onsite, reservation not required

Day -----

Ride Aiguille du Midi Cable Car (2nd only to Eiffel in France attractions) for great views of Blanc and on a clear day Matterhorn. Get [tickets](#) early to avoid an hours-long wait. Can hike part (or all) the way down. [Brevent](#) Cable Car and hike is another option for Mt Blanc views.

Day -----

Take [Montenvers Train](#) to [Mer de Glace](#) ("Sea of Ice", largest glacier in the Alps). Ice Cave, restaurant

Day -----

Best hike: Lac Blanc, which reflects Mt Blanc. Go early (crowded later), and possibly take Flegere Cable car to cut out most of the ascent. Other options: Aiguille Rouge National Park, or walk in [Merlet Animal Park](#).

June 22 – July 12: The Swiss Trip. Hiking the Alps, with cheese!

For the Switzerland portion of the trip, [RS Blog 1](#) and [RS Blog 2](#) are excellent. Read more after researching places

July 12 – July 15: Paris 3N (Tuesday - Friday). Sacre Coeur, Moulin Rouge, Catacombs, Sadowskis

Paris: New sights and enjoy Bastille Day.

Weather: June-July 75-80F / 55-60F with ~7 days of rain

Hotel – loft VEDA

Park – n/a, return the car

Day -----

Bastille Day 14th. Sacre-Coeur

Runs: several - <https://greatruns.com/location/paris-france/>