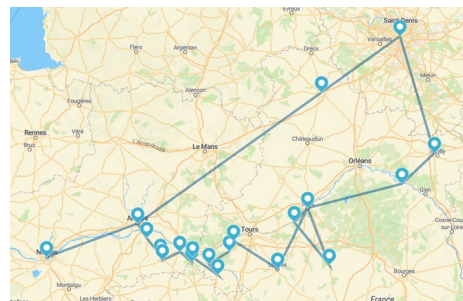




France, 9 Days · Tailor-made by car

Route around the Royal Châteaux of the Loire Valley II

The wonderful French Loire Valley, declared World Heritage by UNESCO, encloses one of the most attractive routes of the Old Continent among its natural dream landscapes. Discover at the wheel all the secrets of this legendary land forged in the shadow of great kings and important battles, thanks to the flexibility that your rental car provides. The charismatic Loire Valley welcomes the traveler with an unusual natural and historical richness. Discover its secular culture, famous gastronomy and the excellent local wines of one of the most beautiful Galician corners. Feel like royalty touring its magnificent castles and splendid gardens. A gift for all your senses! You will see castles to suit all tastes, from impregnable medieval fortresses to lush and pompous royal palaces. Some are divined among leafy forests and aristocratic gardens; Others rise in the heart of historic cities or on top of a hill ... The "Route for the Royal Castles of the Loire Valley II" will allow you to discover unique architectural constructions in the world, emerging in the Renaissance splendor and that introduce the traveler to a surprising universe of palatial intrigues, royal festivals and dream gardens. Follow the trail left by important personalities that changed the future of European history! Travel to the Loire Valley and discover the most splendid châteaux collection in France. You'll never want to go home!



Departure date: Departures from June 2026 till June 2027

From: Cork, Shannon, Dublin

Travel details

● DAY 1 · CITY OF ORIGIN - PARIS

Flight departure from the city of origin to Paris and rental car pick-up. Your adventure on French soil begins here! One of the most visited destinations in the world, the "city of light" will surprise even the most experienced traveller. Venue of several universal exhibitions and considered one of the worldwide epicentres of art, design and good taste, the French capital embraces the traveller in a magical atmosphere. Feel the "bon vivant" spirit and enjoy the simple pleasures of life, sat at the table of its charming cafes, typical bistros, or chic world-renowned restaurants... The "Route around the Royal Châteaux of the Loire Valley II" is also an emotional, scenic, culinary and wine-tasting tour that introduces visitors to a symphony of flavours, textures and colours. Paris has a lot to offer. With 137 museums, 8,000 pavement cafes and 300 kilometres of catacombs, the city bowls travellers over with a vast cultural and leisure agenda that suits all tastes and budgets. Head up the Eiffel Tower and pinch the sky with your hands! And at nightfall, discover why it's known worldwide as the "City of Love". Overnight stay in Paris.

DAY 2 · PARIS - CHARTRES - ANGERS

In the morning, we'll head to one of the city's charmingly decorated Parisian cafés to savour the smell of freshly ground coffee accompanied by delicious croissants and freshly made baguettes. After enjoying the atmosphere of the French capital and its innumerable icons and emblematic places, we head off on our route. After driving about 90 kilometers, we arrive at the city of Chartres. Do not miss its imposing Cathedral, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and considered one of the best examples of a classic Gothic cathedral that exists in the world. The gigantic temple, one of the largest in Christendom, is famous for its stained glass windows, portals and the chapel guarding the Voile de la Vierge (Our Lady's Veil). We continue our journey onto the historical and artistic city of Angers, located about 2 hours away. Gateway to the Loire Valley, the route connecting the two cities is dotted with beautiful scenery and charming villages. Angers seduces travellers with its perfect harmony between past, present and future. Surrounded by excellent vineyards and located on the shores of the Maine, this World Heritage city will enchant you with its old town and the amazing castle of Angers (XII century), a portent of defensive architecture of the Middle Ages, with walls more than a kilometer long and 17 towers that house the magnificent tapestry of the "Apocalypse". We continue exploring the city by visiting the Gothic Cathedral of Saint Maurice, the Gallery of David d'Angers, the beautiful recreational park of Lake... Discover one of the most beautiful corners of Europe at your own pace! Discover the city's history at the Museum of Fine Arts; sail down the Loire and its tributaries aboard a typical riverboat to explore the stylish wine bars and tea houses that dot the city centre, and savour delicious local dishes such as skewered pike in white butter sauce, Anjou cream or plum pate... Get ready to enjoy an authentic gourmet experience! Overnight stay in Angers.

DAY 3 · ANGERS - NANTES - ANGERS

We continue to enjoy the complete "Route around the Royal Châteaux of the Loire Valley II".

After fully exploring Angers, savouring its haute cuisine accompanied by excellent wines from the Loire, and experiencing its rich heritage and quality of life, we'll set off towards our next stop of Nantes. You'll be surprised by its vibrant atmosphere and attractive entertainment options! Since the nineties, this city has constantly been reinventing itself, becoming one of the most creative and artistic cities in the whole of France. The ancient capital of Brittany is a city full of contrasts. Hometown of Jules Verne and the 2013 European Green Capital, Nantes provides the traveller with treasures such as the magnificent Castle of the Dukes of Brittany, an exceptional residence in the middle of the city.

This grandiose building of granite and white tuff, is the last castle located on the banks of the Loire. To visit it is to embark on a true journey into the heart of history. Witness to the tale of Nantes and Britain, the castle is considered a Historic Monument since 1862. Do not forget to stroll through charming squares like those of Graslin, Royale and du Commerce; look for the perfect souvenir in commercial areas like the Passage Pommeraye; visit unique places such as the islands of Feydeau and Versailles ... With art as a backdrop, the cultural landscape of the city covers all kinds of creations: from gigantic machines (the famous elephant that will not stop strolling), to revamped old buildings adapted to contemporary needs. Anything can happen in Nantes. Just a leisurely stroll will let you discover interesting galleries and amazing samples of urban art.

Return and overnight stay in Angers.

● DAY 4 · ANGERS - BRISSAC - ROCHEMENIER - DOUÉ-LA-FONTAINE - SAUMUR

We leave Angers to continue discovering the incredible castles of the Loire. Our first stop will be the imposing Castle of Brissac, 1.5 kilometers from Brissac-Quincé. You are in front of the highest castle in France that is made up of seven floors and more than 200 rooms. Built by the Duke of Brissac in 1502, you will be surprised by its luxurious interior and its beautiful exteriors, including 19th century stables and a splendid vineyard that produces wines with its own Denomination of Origin. (Note: You can take a guided tour of the vineyards and take part in wine tasting. Activity not included). We continue our journey to discover places as charming as the village-museum of Rochemenier and the town of Doué-la-Fontaine. Near to this locality, are "Les Perrières", a network of nineteenth-century quarries popularly known as the "cathedral-caves" because of its high walls. We finish this historic Route in Saumur, where we are surprised by its spectacular fairytale castle built in the 13th century. During its long history, the castle of Saumur was a fortress, a resting residence, a palace for the governors of the town, jail and a weapons and ammunition depot. Today, this castle that dominates the city and the majestic Loire, houses an interesting municipal museum within its walls. Another important site in this place is the famous École Nationale d'Équitation, famous National Riding School in Saumur where Cadre Noir and the national Olympic team are trained. (Note: Twice a month, an equestrian show is held, open to the public. Check dates before starting the trip). We end the day enjoying the elegant town, considered one of the main gastronomic temples and wineries of the Loire Valley. We recommend you try the typical "soupe saumuroise", a delicious local aperitif. Overnight stay in Saumur.

● DAY 5 · SAUMUR - CADRE NOIR DE SAUMUR - BRÉZÉ - FONTEVRAUD ABBAYE - MONTSOREAU - LE RIVAU/LÉMERÉ - CHINON

Before leaving Saumur behind to continue on this magnificent Royal Route, we recommend visiting the famous École Nationale d'Équitation, the famous National Riding School in Saumur, where Cadre Noir and the national Olympic team are trained. (Note: Twice a month, an equestrian show is held, open to the public. Check dates before starting the trip). After about 25 minutes in the car, the magnificent Brézé castle appears, built between the 6th and 7th century and stands tall on a gigantic network of subterranean passages. An underground and mineral universe that is connected to one of the deepest dry moats in Europe, reaching a depth of 18 meters. (Note: You can join an audioguided tour to visit the elegant inhabited residence, the troglodyte drawbridge, the stately cellars and an extraordinary subterranean enclosure dotted with tunnels and rock dwellings. After this visit, that's not included in the price, you can participate in local wine tasting). Back on the road. Just 14 kilometers away is another of the monumental jewels of the Route: Fontevraud Abbey, an ecclesiastical complex that dates back to the 12th century and is considered one of the largest monastic sites in Europe. Inside you can see the poly-chrome tombs of the Plantagenet dynasty. And get your camera charged up! During the visit, you will be especially struck by the proportions and the original architecture of this enclave. In addition, you will learn about its incredible history. (Note: In 1804, Napoleon transformed the famous abbey into a prison. The last prisoners were transferred to another penitentiary in 1985. Today, Fontevraud is a Cultural and Meeting Center that depends on the Ministry of Culture and Communication).

Back on the road northwards and after just five kilometres you'll reach the Montsoreau Castle, the only one built on the Loire riverbed, making it a truly unique attraction. Constructed in the 1450s, its elegant forms captivated artists such as Rabelais, Flaubert, Rodin, Turner and Alexander Dumas, who immortalised it in his novel *The Lady of Montsoreau*. Today, it's also a Museum of Contemporary Art, housing in its sumptuous rooms the world's largest collection of works by the Art & Language collective, creators of Conceptual Art. (Note: The castle also has a rooftop restaurant known as La Plage). In Lémeré, about twenty-five kilometres southeast of Montsoreau, you'll feel as though you've been transported back to magical time, full of fantasy, when you visit the magnificent Riveau castle. This medieval fortress gives travellers a glimpse into a fairytale world, where the footsteps of noble knights, fair ladies and elegant steeds still echo.

We end today in the beautiful town of Chinon, a strategic point occupied and coveted since ancient times. If Chinon is known for something, it's for its magnificent royal fort, built by the counts of Anjou and, in particular, by the Plantagenets. The magnificent castle reminds the traveler of a historical era in which France and England were closely related. During the visit, you will discover all its secrets and unique places like the great hall in the main building where, in 1429, the important meeting between Joan of Arc and Charles VII took place. We end the day enjoying the genuine atmosphere of the medieval neighborhood of Chinon, where you can dine in its excellent restaurants and taste the local wines.

Overnight stay in Chinon.

DAY 6 · CHINON - AZAY-LE-RIDEAU - VILLANDRY - LOCHES - BLOIS

We leave Chinon behind to continue this beautiful tour of the "Route around the Royal Châteaux of the Loire Valley II". At the wheel, following the course of the famous River Loire, you'll discover beautiful landscapes, royal intrigues, magnificent châteaux surrounded by dreamlike gardens, lush forests, flower beds full of colours that change with the seasons... This is the land of fine wine and exquisite cuisine where architecture and nature mark out one of the most beautiful regions of Europe. Our first stop will be the village of Azay-le-Rideau, with its charming mill on the bridge and its romantic castle. The magnificent fortress, built on an island in the middle of the Indre river, was conceived according to the tastes and preferences of its owner, the wealthy financier Gilles Berthelot. The castle that was built during the reign of Francisco I, managed to combine the afrancesado style of construction of the time with the latest innovations arrived from the artistic Italy in the same space. Today the castle, classified as a Historical Monument, offers travellers the most exquisite example of the French Renaissance.

We continue on this Royal Route and, in about 15 minutes by car, another treasure in this itinerary appears: Villandry, where its fabulous castle stands next to one of the most emblematic gardens of the valley. Do not miss the tranquil garden of water and the interesting castle garden! We continue our Castle Route visiting the incredible and ancient Ciudadela Real of Loches, a historical enclave in which Joan of Arc convinced Carlos VII to rise against the Reims and reclaim the French Crown. Agnès Sorel and Anne of Brittany were also illustrious guests in this magnificent castle, considered one of the most beautiful fortified enclosures of France. Its imposing Tower, about 36 meters high, was one of the most impressive of its time. (Note: During the visit, you will be able to discover hidden treasures such as the governor's residence, the medieval garden with its pergola, the former family home of the painter Emmanuel Lansyer, among others). Today's stage concludes in Blois, a place designed for daydreaming and enjoyment of the senses.

Overnight stay in Blois.

DAY 7 · BLOIS - VALENÇAY - CHAUMONT-SUR-LOIRE - BLOIS

We continue exploring the beautiful region of Blois. Its old quarter has a medieval layout and steep mansion-lined streets which lead up to the magnificent château. Several French kings left their mark here. Its four wings offer visitors an in-depth view of the architectural styles that abound in this photogenic valley. Your visit will allow you to learn about the power and details of the Court's daily life in the Renaissance. The visit, full of historic sites and unusual corners, also offers a journey through the country's history and art since the royal installations guard over 35,000 works of art of incalculable value.

(Note: At nightfall, the royal castle of Blois turns into a theatre delivering unforgettable experiences. Sound effects and giant projections on the grandiose architecture of the courtyard bring France's history to life, depicting the love affairs, dramas and secrets that were so prevalent in the lives of French monarchs. Every night from April to September, with audio guide in English. Check opening hours).

A definite must-see!

Opposite the big building is "La Maison de la Magie", an interesting museum that lets you delve into the history of magic. Have a go at performing some tricks! We continue our route onto the magnificent castle of Valençay that Talleyrand bought in 1803 on the request of Napoleon, to be able to pleasantly welcome all the European dignitaries. Located approximately 1 hour from Blois, the castle built in a Renaissance and classical style is luxuriously furnished and surrounded by magnificent gardens and a park with English airs. (Note: Since 2012, the castle can be visited privately on Sunday mornings and accompanied by a guide). On our way back to Blois, we will stop at Chaumont-sur-Loireque Castle, which extends over 30 hectares and welcomes more than 385,000 visitors a year. Do not miss the stables and the landscaped park designed by Henri Duchêne! (Note: If you travel in late April or mid-October, you cannot miss the International Garden Festival held inside the walls.

Since 2007, the Regional Domaine has been a Centre for Arts and Nature and has hosted outstanding exhibitions by great photographers and contemporary artists who have created giant installations).

After 20 minutes on the road, we arrive at Blois, where we can continue enjoying this beautiful locality gala.

Overnight stay in Blois.

DAY 8 · BLOIS - LA FERTÉ-SAINT-AUBIN - SULLY-SUR-LOIRE - MONTARGIS - PARIS

Another day touring the breathtaking Loire Valley! Today's journey follows an attractive Route from Blois to the French capital. On the way to the magnificent castle of Sully-sur-Loire, located about 114 kilometers away, we recommend stopping at the castle of La Ferté-Saint-Aubin, situated in the heart of Sologne. Next to it, a beautiful 40 hectares park invites you to stretch your legs and enjoy the nature. We continue on Route to reach the Castle of Sully-sur-Loire. The imposing castle, built at the end of the 14th century and situated on the edge of the Loire, is one of the most interesting tourist attractions of the Valley. To this day, the motives of its construction remain a mystery. The medieval fortress, classified as a Historical Monument, offers the traveler a striking image that transports them to the past, with its large moats, its gigantic tower and watchtowers. The rooms of the Duke of Sully and his wife will bring you closer to the French grandeur of that glorious time. If you join a guided tour, you will see places as interesting as the Sala de la Sepultura, where the duke and his wife used to sit, the two original rooms that date from the fourth century, the staircase of honor, the Royal Chamber with its magnificent tapestries and pictures, the tower of Angillon... (Note: Sully was one of the ministers of Henry IV). From the castle, we have a journey of about 2 hours to reach the French capital. Before arriving in Paris, we recommend a brief stop in Montargis. Known as the Venice of Gâtinais by its 131 bridges and walkways, the town invites the traveler to contemplate its beautiful landscapes and beautiful houses located on the border of the water. (Note: If you have time, we recommend a brief stop in Chambord Park and in some of the charming towns of Dhuizon, Chaumont-sur-Tharonne, Vouzon or Souvigny). And in Paris we say adieu to this unforgettable journey by soaking up one of the liveliest nightlife scenes in Europe. Overnight stay in Paris.

DAY 9 · PARIS - CITY OF ORIGIN

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin.

Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

Your trip includes

Your trip includes

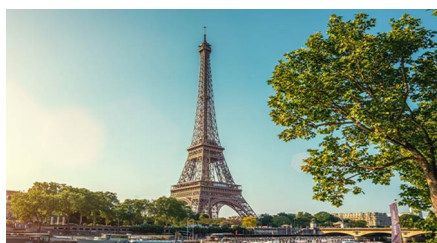
- ✓ Return flight.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Paris.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Paris.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Angers.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Angers.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Saumur.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Saumur.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Blois.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Blois.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Chinon.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Chinon.
- ✓ Rent-a-car.

Your trip doesn't include

- ✗ Accommodation taxes in France direct payment in facility.
- ✗ Possible toll charges.
- ✗ Insolvency protection.

Destinations Visited

Paris



Chartres



Angers





Nantes



Brissac - Quincé



Louresse - Rochemenier



Doue La Fontaine



Saumur



Fontevraud



Montsoreau



Lémeré



Chinon



Azay Le Rideau



Villandry



Loches



Blois



Valençay



Chaumont-sur-Loire





Sully-sur-Loire



Montargis



Important remarks

- Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far as possible.
- Check-in time at the hotel on the day of arrival depends on each establishment, but in no case will it be before 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.
- The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs.
- A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels.
- Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult.
- To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle.
- Consult the necessary documentation to enter the destinations visited and for transit in the countries where air stopovers are made.
- This itinerary has been developed in collaboration with Atout France, Tourism Development Agency of France, the Loire Castles and Val de Loire through the regional tourism organisations of Pays de la Loire and Center-Val de Loire.