



London, Paris & D-Day

THE VIKING SAVINGS EVENT

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Day 1 — London, England

Arrive and check in to your hotel. After the fall of France, Hitler turned his eyes toward the invasion of England and the capture of its capital city, London. From July to October 1940, the “Battle of Britain” raged in the skies over the British Isles as numerous skirmishes were fought between the British RAF and the German Luftwaffe. While many cities—including London—suffered heavily from the bombing raids, the Luftwaffe never achieved air superiority; their mounting losses led to the cancellation of Germany’s invasion plans, and Britain’s victory is considered a major turning point in the war.

Day 2 — London, England

Much of the “Battle of Britain” was fought over southeastern England. During “The Blitz,” Portsmouth, an important naval base, was subjected to repeated attacks, while Southampton suffered two devastating raids that leveled the city. By the late stages of the war, the entirety of the southeast had become the base of operations for launching the massive Allied invasion of Normandy. On the evening of June 5, 1944, more than 86,000 troops left Portsmouth and Plymouth alone for French shores to start Operation Overlord. Its goal: the liberation of Europe from Nazi control.

Day 3 — London, England

The dark years of World War II were a time of major upheaval for England’s civilian population. Subjected to “The Blitz,” as well as flying bomb and rocket attacks, more than 60,000 civilians were killed and another 86,000 injured. In London, residents were forced to take shelter nightly in the underground subway system. More than 1 million people were evacuated from the cities to the countryside in an effort to escape the bombings. Shortages of essential items were widespread and continued during the postwar period, having a lasting impact on the lives of everyone.

Day 4 — London, England

“The Blitz” began on September 7, 1940, with the German Luftwaffe focusing its nightly raids on London and other major cities. The sustained air campaign lasted from September 1940 to May 1941, during which 43,500 civilians were killed. At one point, London suffered through 57 consecutive nights of bombings; the resulting destruction required some areas of the city to be completely rebuilt after the war. Iconic London landmarks like the Houses of Parliament were also heavily damaged, while others—such as Buckingham Palace and 10 Downing Street—escaped unscathed.

Day 5 — Paris, France

After breakfast, check out of your hotel and begin your journey to your embarkation city. Long a hub of French culture and cuisine, Paris is one of the most romantic destinations in the world. Over the centuries, Parisian culture has been built on the wings of inspiration. Music, film, architecture, literature, dance and the visual arts all have their brilliant place in the museums, theaters, bookstores and remarkably preserved buildings of this magnificent city. At the center of it all is the Champs-Élysées. With its inviting riverside promenade, graceful bridges and splendid views of all things Parisian, from the Eiffel Tower to the Louvre Museum.

Day 6 — Paris, France

One of the most pleasurable activities in Paris is whiling away the time in one of the city’s outdoor cafés. Whether you are sipping a café au lait or a kir royal, there is no better way to feel like a Parisian. The hub of social and culinary life, cafés have been part of the city’s fabric since the 1600s. During the 20th century, literary and artistic figures—such as Ernest Hemingway, Colette and Pablo Picasso—famously met over drinks to share their works and ideas. Today, thousands of cafés line the pavements and squares to connect with France’s culture and history.

Day 7 — Vernon, France

Vernon is a charming provincial town. Its cobblestone streets are reminiscent of the Middle Ages, and some of its half-timbered houses feature magnificent wooden carvings. The town was founded by the Viking Rollo in the 9th century, where an island in the Seine made for easy crossings. Because of its importance as a transit point between Paris and Rouen, the town was well fortified and frequently besieged. Ruins of its old medieval bridge still linger on the Seine's right bank. The remains of La Château des Tourelles are the last surviving witness to that era.

Day 8 — Rouen, France

Founded by Romans, Rouen is situated amid chalk cliffs along the Seine. The Norman capital boasts many pleasures, from the 700 charming half-timbered houses of the Old Town to the glorious Rouen Cathedral, which so captivated Claude Monet that he painted it many times in varying light. Until the 17th century, Rouen was the second-largest city in France. Today, it is the country's fourth-largest port. The city is perhaps best known as the site of Joan of Arc's last stand; the patron saint of France was tried and condemned here for heresy and burned at the stake in 1431.

Day 9 — Rouen, France

Rouen's medieval center is pedestrian friendly and best explored on foot. Gothic architecture meets picturesque market squares, and winding narrow streets house historic gems, such as the 14th-century Gros-Horloge Astronomical Clock. The Rouennais take pride in their culinary delights, inspired by the four 'Cs' of Normandy cuisine. Crème, camembert, cider and calvados are common ingredients resulting in traditional dishes that are deliciously rich and buttery.

Day 10 — Les Andelys, France

Les Andelys is best known for its imposing castle overlooking the city, the Château Gaillard. Built in 1196 by Richard the Lionheart, the castle and the village's strategic location bolstered the importance of Les Andelys throughout the Middle Ages. The town also gained notice for its Sainte Clotilde Miraculous Spring, where the wife of the first Frankish king, Clovis, turned well water into wine to serve the builders of her Benedictine monastery. Europe's devout, upon hearing of the act, flocked here on pilgrimages until the end of the 19th century.

Day 11 — Paris (Le Pecq), France

The origins of Paris can be traced back to a Gallic settlement founded during the 3rd century BC. By the time Napoleon III established the Second Empire during the mid-19th century, it had expanded into a large city and was in need of a major transformation. What transpired was a division of Paris into 20 *arrondissements*, starting at the Île de la Cité and spiraling out in a consecutive numerical order—the city's present design. From the lively jazz bars of the Latin Quarter to the steep, ivy-clad streets of Montmartre, these charming districts are a delight to explore.

Day 12 — Paris, France

Life in Paris revolves around the Seine River, with 37 bridges crossing the river, each telling a story. Perhaps none are so extravagant as the Pont Alexandre III, a graceful span named for the Russian tsar who signed the Franco-Russian Alliance in 1892. Downriver, the five-arched Pont d'Iéna is beloved for its scenic location linking the Eiffel Tower to the Trocadéro district. The Pont des Arts, set between the Louvre and the Institut de France, was famed for its thousands of padlocks, attached by couples to the railing grate as a sign of their devotion to each other. Bid farewell to your fellow guests and journey home. Or spend more time exploring, perhaps joining one of our extensions.

** One shore excursion included per port; all others available at an extra charge.*