

Tour  
Information



# William the Conqueror and Medieval Normandy





**Travel**

## Passports

Please ensure your 10 year British Passport is not out of date and is valid for a full three months beyond the duration of your visit. EU, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino or Switzerland valid national identification cards are also acceptable for travel to France.

## Visas

British and EU passport holders are not required to have a visa.

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

French consulate: PO Box 57, 6A Cromwell Place, London SW7 2EW; Tel (020) 7838 2000/1. Information Service: Tel (0891) 887 733, Fax: (020) 7838 2046. Opening hours: 0900-1130 (and 1600-1630 for visa collection only) Mon-Fri (except British and French national holidays).

## Travel Arrangements

The quickest and most convenient way to get to this area of Normandy is by modern, executive coach and Eurotunnel.

Departure from London Victoria will be at 07:30 with a further pick up made at Maidstone Services in good time for a scheduled Eurotunnel departure of 08:45. The Eurotunnel crossing operates up to 4 times per hour and takes just 35 minutes to Calais. The driving time from Calais to Bayeux is approximately 4 hours.

## Pick up points

Victoria Coach Station, 164 Buckingham Palace Road SW1W 9TP (please look out for "Travel Eds Normandy" on the display screen for details of the departure bay). Victoria station (on the Victoria, District and Circle lines) is 300m from the coach station or Maidstone Services (meet in front of building entrance).



## Labels

Please use the luggage labels provided. It is useful to have your home address located inside your suitcase should the label go astray.

## Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.



## Accommodation

### Hotel Le Lion d'Or, Bayeux

The three-star Le Lion d'Or Hotel is located in the heart of the lovely and historic town of Bayeux. With just 31 rooms, it is small and friendly with a bar, restaurant and cosy, well-appointed rooms with all modern facilities. Bedrooms have a private bathroom with bath/shower, TV, free wi-fi and hairdryer. Please note the hotel is laid out over three floors and does not have a lift. There are rooms located on the first floor which can be reached by approximately 20 steps.

For more information visit the hotel's website:

<http://www.liondor-bayeux.fr/en/>



## Food

General de Gaulle once asked, with a certain amount of pride, how it was possible to rule a country which produced 365 different kinds of cheese; with one of France's most impressive cheese-boards, Normandy makes an important contribution to this selection, with the excellent *Neufchâtel*, *Pont-L'Évêque*, *Livarot*, and, of course, *Camembert*.

In addition to being famous for its dairy products, Normandy is also renowned for its apple orchards and seafood. Shellfish, oysters, scallops, mussels, *Coquilles St Jacques* and cool water fish will feature on most menus, often combined with another regional speciality, such as a *sauce à la crème* or *au Camembert*.

The main dish will generally be meat-based and rich – *Canard à la Rouennaise* (duck), veal or pork in a cream or cider sauce, *Agneau pré sale* (roasted lamb raised on salty marshlands), or another Normandy speciality, *tripe* (*Tripes à la mode de Caen* or tripe stew).

Many of Normandy's sweet dishes are based on apples – the most widely spread being *Tarte aux pommes* (apple tart). Other specialities include *Teurgoule* (milky rice pudding with cinnamon), *pavé normand* (butter biscuits), and *Crêpes à la Bénédicte*.

*Calvados* with apple ice cream (*trou normand*) is a traditionally taken to clear the palate between courses.

Coffee is served after the meal and will be black, in small cups, unless a *café au lait* (or *crème*) is requested.

Almost all restaurants offer two types of meals: *a la carte* (extensive choice for each course, generally more expensive) and *le menu* (a set meal at a fixed price). The bill (*l'addition*) will not be presented until it is asked for, even if clients sit and talk for half an hour after finishing their meal. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, and no further tipping is required.

Generally speaking, mealtimes in France are strictly observed. Lunch is as a rule served from noon to 1330, dinner usually from 2000-2130, but the larger the city, the later the dining hour.



## Drink

The abundance of apples also influences the region's beverage production, which includes cider (*brut* or *doux*), *pommeau* (sweet, light and refreshing as an *apéritif*), *Calvados* (brandy distilled from apple cider), and of course, apple juice.

Beer is also popular in the region; local favourites are *Lugus Ale*, *Loup Garou brune*, *Viking Wolf* and *Cervoise Guedelon*.

*Bénédictine*, with ice before a meal, or on its own as a digestive, is another popular liqueur of the region.

Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

**Breakfast** – daily

**Dinner** is included on two nights



## Destination

Medieval Normandy is our first tour abroad to be led by historian Julian Humphrys, who has led many of our UK tours over the past half a dozen year. It looks at the early life of William of Normandy and the subsequent invasion of England in 1066 and his rule as the first Norman king of England until his death in 1087. This wonderful new tour visits key locations associated with his life as well as the incomparable Bayeux Tapestry that tells the story of the invasion in a unique pictorial style.

### Details of places of interest included in your tour:

#### Caen Castle

Caen Castle is one of the largest medieval enclosures in Europe. It was built of Caen stone around 1060. It stood first and foremost as a place of power, where the Dukes of Normandy and Kings of England regularly held their major assemblies.

A royal fortress in the Middle Ages, an English stronghold during the Hundred Years' War, it was later to become the barracks of a major infantry regiment. Today this cradle of Caen's heritage is home to the Normandy Museum and the Fine Arts Museum.

The castle has kept the traces of each of the periods of its history, like a trail of clues left by the passing of time. The wall which dominates the city was drawn as early as William's time ; the towers, which have yet to reveal all of their secrets, have existed since William's son, Henri Beauclerc's time, although they also have traces of the Plantagenet sovereigns in the 12th Century and of the King of France's engineers after 1204.

#### Abbaye aux Dames

Built between 1060 and 1080, the abbey church is a masterpiece of Norman Romanesque art. In the chancel, the body of Queen Matilda rests under a Tournai black marble slab bearing an epitaph which praises her lineage and her immense piety.

Admire the richness of the sculptures in the half-domed apse (early 12th century) where the column capitals are adorned with fantastic animals taken from the bestiary and treasures brought back from the first crusade. The painting on the half-dome arch represents the Virgin Mary's Assumption (early 18th century).

The crypt, probably added in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century

in order to support the apse and compensate for the unevenness of the soil surface, presents a "forest of columns". At the entrance, a scenic relief capital represents the Last Judgment, with Saint Michael the Archangel welcoming the dead coming out of their tombs. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, two absidioles in the south transept were replaced by a magnificent Gothic chapel. Greatly restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the church was cleaned in the early 1990s.

#### Abbaye aux Hommes

It was in an act of redemption for the irregularity of his marriage to Matilda of Flanders, his distant cousin, that William, Duke of Normandy and future Conqueror of England, founded the Men's Abbey in 1063. Work began on the building in 1066, under the direction of Lanfranc de Pavie, who was to become the first abbot of this prestigious Benedictine abbey dedicated to St. Stephen.

The abbey church, a chef d'oeuvre of Norman Romanesque architecture, influenced the construction of abbeys in England, in particular with its three levels of elevation and its harmonic façade. The chancel, altered during the 13th Century in a Gothic style, which is in perfect harmony with the nave, has, since 1087, sheltered William's tomb.

The convent buildings, in which the monks lived and part of which were reserved to hosting guests, were rebuilt in the 18th Century. Spared during the French Revolution and the Allied bombings of June and July 1944, they today still boast remarkable woodwork, paintings and ironwork as well as a magnificent Tuscan style cloister.

#### Bayeux Cathedral

Gem of the Norman architecture, situated in the heart of the conservation area, the Bayeux Cathedral was consecrated on 14th July 1077, by Bishop Odo of Conteville, in the presence of his illustrious brother, William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy and king of England. It is believed that Odo commissioned the Bayeux Tapestry. The masterpiece from the Middle Ages was probably intended to be hung in the cathedral nave.

#### Bayeux Tapestry

The Bayeux Tapestry gives information of a historical nature that no other source has provided. It begins with the description of Harold's eventful

journey to Normandy (landing in Ponthieu, meeting with the Duke William, expedition in Brittany and oath on the sacred relics of Bayeux). It then depicts Harold's return to England and his coronation after the death of King Edward the Confessor. Finally it describes the preparation for William's expedition, the crossing of the Channel, and the Battle of Hastings.

The story, as described in the Bayeux Tapestry is broadly in keeping with the account made by authors of the 11th century : William of Jumièges, William of Poitiers and Orderic Vitalis. William Caillou, a monk at the abbey of Jumièges, wrote in 1060-1070 a history of the Dukes of Normandy, which ends with an account of the conquest of England. William of Poitiers, one of the Duke's knights, who then became his chaplain, wrote around 1070-1075 a biography of William, which ends just after the conquest. As for Orderic Vitalis, he was born in England in 1075, of an English mother and a French father who fought in Hastings. He arrived in Normandy in 1085, became a monk at the monastery of Saint-Evroult (Orne) and spent much of his life compiling a voluminous History of the Normans, an important part of which is devoted to William the Conqueror. One should also mention the poem written by Guy of Amiens, chaplain of Queen Mathilda, which is an epic account of the different phases of the Battle of Hastings.

Compared to these written sources, the Bayeux Tapestry offers original information, found nowhere else, particularly with regards to civil and military architecture, weapons, navigation and elements of everyday life.

## Chateau de Falaise

Born in Falaise in 1027, William accomplished his very first feat of arms within this castle. He was fifteen years old. His victory was the first act to seal his power over Normandy. His epic adventure was to guide his path as far as England, where he was crowned king. The keeps of Falaise Castle bear witness to his conquest that was to profoundly modify the course of European history. These palace-keeps, which served equally as defensive refuges and seigniorial residencies, left a lasting mark on this new territory. The model was developed until the year 1204, later to be replaced by a new form of architecture that symbolised the power asserted by the King of France, the territory's new and unquestionable master.

## Jumièges Abbey

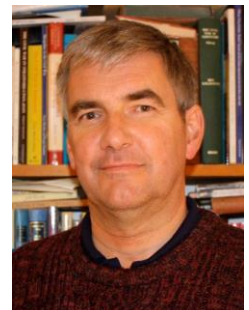
The ruins of Jumièges Abbey impress by their scale, and by their setting, in a beautiful meander in the Seine. The remnants are medieval, but an earlier, Dark Ages abbey had gone up here in the mid 7th century. At that time, the greatly influential bishop of Rouen, Ouen, encouraged the building of a string of monasteries along the Seine.

William the Conqueror, came as both Duke of Normandy and newly crowned King of England to the consecration of Jumièges Abbey's church in 1067. Jumièges established itself as a great centre of medieval learning. William of Jumièges, a contemporary of William the Conqueror, wrote a significant history of the Norman dukes. The abbey church was given a Gothic choir end in the 13th century, when it was at the height of its power. Although clearly a very rich religious institution, signalled by its immense grandeur, it was renowned for its care for the poor.

From the 16th century French Wars of Religion, Jumièges went into rapid decline. The monks ran from fanatical Protestants who looted the place, wreaking devastation. After a small-scale revival, at the Revolution, large amounts of stone were sold off. The ruins that remain to this day recall the abbey's greatness.

## Your lecturer / guide

Julian, who read history at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, has worked at historical sites both in Britain and overseas and is now Development Officer at the Battlefields Trust. He has a very infectious enthusiasm for history and has published numerous books on castles and battles.



## Enjoy two lectures during your tour:

*Rise of the Conqueror: The early life of William of Normandy.*

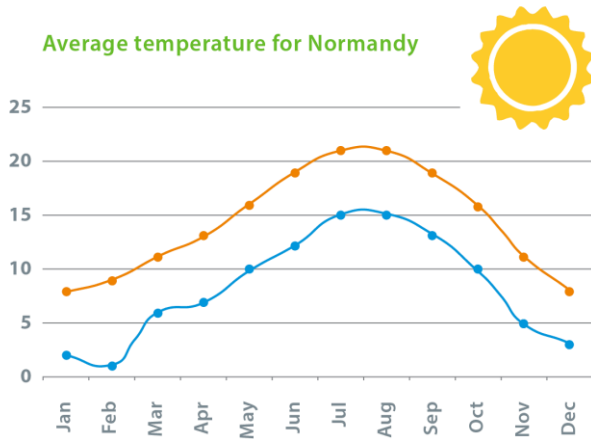
*Triumph of the Conqueror. William of Normandy and the invasion of England.*

## Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.

# The Basics

**Climate** – The weather in Normandy at this time of year is likely to be similar to the UK in spring – unpredictable and the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.



**Time** – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

**Language** – French.

**Religion** – Roman Catholic.

**National holidays** – New Year's day (01 Jan); Easter Monday; Labour day (01 May); Victory in Europe day (08 May); Ascension day; Whit Sunday; Whit Monday; National day (14 Jul); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); All Saints' day (01 Nov); Armistice day (11 Nov); Christmas day (25 Dec).

**Currency** – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

**Banks** – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

**Credit cards** – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable

form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

**Electricity** – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

**Drinking water** – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

**Shops and museums** – Department stores are open 0900-1830 Monday to Saturday. Most shops are closed between 1200-1430. Some food shops (particularly bakers) are open Sunday mornings, in which case they will probably close Monday. Many shops close all day or half-day Monday. Please note that most museums are closed on Mondays.

**Clothes & shoes** – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended.

**Camera** – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

**Bath plugs** – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

**Telephones/mobiles** – You should be able to use your mobile phone in France, depending on your operator and contract.

**Tipping** – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



## Health

### Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**



### Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**

### General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

### Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



## Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

### European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

The EHIC replaced the old E111 in 2006. Valid in all EEA countries, the card lets you get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. It will cover you for treatment that is needed to allow you to continue your stay until your planned return. It also covers the treatment of pre-existing medical conditions.

Please note that the EHIC **is not** an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs such as being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. Therefore, it is important to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy. It is also important to note that each country's healthcare system is slightly different, so the EHIC might not cover everything that would be generally free on the NHS.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For more information about the EHIC please visit:

<https://www.ehic.org.uk>

 **Emergencies**

**Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:**

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 20 7431 8201 or

00 44 7899 796542 or

00 44 7831 133079 or

00 44 1235 850720

**PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.**

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

Consular services Paris

16 rue d'Anjou

75008 Paris

France

Tel: +33 (0)1 44 51 31 00

Fax: +33 (0)1 44 51 31 27

Open Mon-Fri 0930-1230. Outside these hours a consular Emergency Service is in operation and can be contacted on +33 (0)1 44 51 31 00.

**Travel Editions**

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Tel: 02072510045

Email: [tours@traveleditions.co.uk](mailto:tours@traveleditions.co.uk) [www.traveleditions.co.uk](http://www.traveleditions.co.uk)

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