

France: the Knights Templar, the Cathars & the Lost Treasure Tour October 2-13 2024

Price based on double occupancy

**Includes: Several upscale meals, admission to all sites, all breakfasts,
transportation, your guides, and all hotel accommodations.**

Not included: Most meals, airfare

Day 1- *Arrive at hotel in Paris, the Idol Hotel. Check in is at 3 pm! We will meet for dinner at 7 and head to and then have a fabulous welcome dinner at La Luna including wine, on us! Get a good night's sleep!*

Day 2- *In the morning at about 9:30 AM, we will depart the hotel. We will first go visit the Cathedral of Saint Sulpice, made famous by the movie the Da Vinci Code. This is the cathedral that has an interesting astronomical alignment and of course built and engineered by the Knights Templar. Next we go to visit the original Temple of the Knights Templar in Paris. Not much remains, but the entire area is a hidden gem within a beautiful garden. This is also the place where the last grand master, Jaques de Molay, was slow roasted over a fire by King Philip the Fair in 1314. After exploring the area, we will have lunch at Le Sancerre. After a nice lunch we will visit the creepy Catacombs of Paris- unrelated to the Templars but still a must see, housing the remains of over 6 million skeletons. Then onto Notre Dame Cathedral, built by the Templars to honor Mary Magdalene. In Druidic times, it was the Mars Oracle. After this we will head back to the hotel.*

Day 3- *We will meet in the lobby and check out at 9. We will drive to Reims and visit the Basilica St. Remi where there lies a beautiful statue of a very pregnant Magdalene, then visit a local champagne house (GH Mumms) where we will have lunch with champagne pairings (included). Now onto Troyes where we will visit the Museum of Fine Arts and Archeology Museum. Troyes Cathedral where the charter of the Knights Templar was written.*

Day 4- *Troyes Cathedral where the charter of the Knights Templar was written. Get on the road and head to the megalithic site of d'Arnac. We will drive an hour and a half to the Templar Cathedral of Chartres. We will walk down to a local restaurant for lunch. Then we will have a 3.5 hour drive to the major Templar Port town, La Rochelle. This is where the mysterious missing fleet of Templar ships disappeared*

from! We will spend two nights at Maisons du Monde Hotel & Suites.. Afternoon to rest after arriving, then we will gather for dinner later in the evening.

Day 5- Meet in the lobby at 10 AM. We will go and visit the tower remains at their ancient port. The port where 18 Templar ships fled the night before the unforeseen arrests of the Knights Templar in 1307, and were never to be seen again. Did these ships go to Scotland? Portugal, or even North America? Did they smuggle out the Paris Temple Treasure from this port? Decide for yourself. Now we will move on to Tour Saint Nicolas which was built and completed in 1376- used as a royal residence and as a fortress. We will have a fantastic seafood lunch at Bar Andre! After lunch visit Porte des Deux Moulins. We will make our last stop at the original Templar Preceptory, or what is left of it on Rue de Templiers and their cathedral built in 1152, Saint Savior of La Rochelle. Then head back to the hotel so we can freshen up and meet for dinner.

Day 6- We will depart the hotel at about 9 am. Bring snacks and/or breakfast on the bus! There is a two hour drive to Bordeaux where we will enjoy a wine tasting along with lunch at the beautiful Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey (included)! Drive 3.5 hours to a town called Couiza where we will spend two nights at Chateau des ducs de Joyeuse. Dinner in town.

Day 7- Up and at em! We will leave at 9:30 am. We will drive an hour and a half to the Cathar stronghold known as Montsegur. Allegedly, while the fort was under siege, three Cathars climbed down the side of the cliff at night allegedly with the Grail. They met supposed Knights Templar at the bottom of the fort and handed off the treasure to be protected by the Knights who became the treasure's guardians from that point on. Those that wish to make the trek with me to the top, you are brave! We will have lunch at a nice little restaurant with lovely local cuisine. We will visit the museum here then move on to the Puivert Castle, a castle of courtly love and romance, which is only a 40 minute drive away. After visiting the castle, we will make our way to Rennes-Le-Chateau! This is the famed place where Beringer Saugnier found documents in a church pillar. He became mysteriously wealthy and built a chapel in dedication to Mary Magdalene. He is closely related to Grail mysteries. We will visit the chapel, visit some gift shops. Dinner at the Chateau (Included)

Day 8– We will get up for another full day! Leave at 9 AM. We visit the home of an old Templar Commandery and is in great shape in Campagne-Sur-Aude. Nearby is a sacred spring said to have healing powers nicknamed the “Yoni Spring.” Short drive over to the town of Rennes-Les-Bains where Romans made a village here as early as 45 BC. There are famous thermal baths here built by the Romans also said to be magical. We will eat lunch here at the Au Pere Tranquile restaurant outside. We will visit these baths, and an ancient stone circle known as Trembling Rocks. There is also a cave known as Source of the Magdalene, which we will visit. Wear your walking shoes! After our day time adventures, we will head back to the Chateau for some time to relax. Take a nap or maybe take a swim in the pool! Later in the evening we will regroup for a dinner in town.

Day 9– We will leisurely check out and visit a Cistercian abbey called Abbey de la Grasse. It is the oldest Cistercian monastery in France and was founded by Charlemagne in 779. We will eat lunch in the village here at L’Entrepotés. We will be on our way up towards the medieval fortified city of Carcassonne where over 20,000 people were killed in medieval times for being Cathar Christians and not Catholic. Other than that it really is a romantic city! Depending on availability we will either stay at a hotel within the fortified city’s walls, Hotel de la Cite.

Day 10– The next day will mostly be a free day to use our hotels pool, spa, or explore the medieval city of Carcassonne on your own. We will regroup for an early dinner that evening! Enjoy!

Day 11– After a nice day to take it easy we get back on the road heading north again. We will leave at 6:30 AM. Feel free to bring drinks and snacks on the bus as we have a four hour drive up to a small town called Sergeac. We will stop to eat lunch after we visit the location. There is an old Knights Templar Commanderie we will visit and then perhaps the local museum. There is also the famous prison tower the Templars were imprisoned in from 1307–1318 here that we will get to see, along with Templar carvings inside. After this one last excursion, we are back on the bus until we reach our hotel at the airport in Paris, the Pullman Paris Roissy, CDG airport. This is a 5.5 hour drive. Once we get checked into the hotel, we have our final farewell dinner at our hotel!

Day 12– Head our separate ways. Until next time!