

# Tour of France, Switzerland and Lakes of Northern Italy

**17 days/16 nights**

**Price includes:**

- Selected 4 star hotels
- Meals as specified
- Air-conditioned coach
- Transfers to/from airport

**Price excludes:**

- Air fare and taxes
- Passport and visa fees
- Optional tours
- Meals if not specified
- Entrance fees to castles and museums

## Highlights

### Paris

A stroll down the Champs-Elysees, a shared glass of wine at a cozy café, a lingering moment at a Van Gogh in the Musee d'Orsay or a leisurely cruise down the River Seine. This city of lights offers a wealth of breathtaking moments. Visit the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame, or the Louvre.

### Lucerne

Situated on the northwest of Lake Lucerne with its stunning views of the mountains, Lucerne is one of Europe's charming cities. Once a simple fishermen's village, Lucerne is believed to be the 'true' Switzerland.

### Lake Como

Lake Como is a jewel-like oasis of tranquility, a magical combination of lush mediterranean foliage and snowy alpine peaks. It is renowned for its exquisite villas and grand hotels. On the southern shore is Bellagio, 'the pearl of the lake', one of the most beautiful towns in all of Europe.

### Day 1 – Paris

Independent arrival at Paris airport, coach transfer to your hotel in Paris. Welcome group dinner and overnight stay. (D)

### Day 2 – Paris

After breakfast, depart for a half day sightseeing tour of Paris. See the major monuments of Paris, such as the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe and the Ile de la Cité with Notre Dame. Afternoon at your leisure to explore more of this magnificent city. Overnight stay in Paris. (B)

### Day 3 – Paris – Louvre – Paris

After breakfasts depart for a guided tour of the Louvre, the world-renown art gallery where you can admire the Mona Lisa, the Venus de Milo and many other world-famous masterpieces. Afternoon at your leisure. Overnight stay in Paris. (B)

### Day 4 – Paris – Versailles – Paris

After breakfast depart for Versailles for a guided tour of the Palace and the grounds of the Sun King of Versailles. Visit the Grand Apartments and the beautiful 'Galerie des Glaces', also known as the Hall of Mirrors. Explore the exquisitely

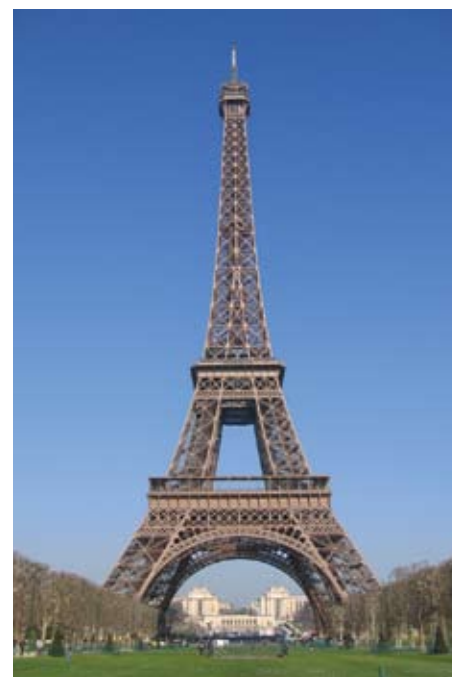
landscaped grounds with their many fountains. In the afternoon, return to Paris with free time to shop or relax. In the evening, cruise the River Seine for a unique view of Paris by night. Overnight stay in Paris. (B)

### Day 5 – Paris – Fontainebleau – Tours

After breakfast depart for Fontainebleau. Visit the castle inhabited by all sovereigns since the Middle Ages; Kings, Queens, Emperors and Empresses cherished this place and left traces of their passage. Today, Fontainebleau offers visitors a glimpse of its architectural treasures, décor, paintings and thousands of fascinating and precious objects that have been preserved over the years. Continue to Tours for an overnight stay. (B)

### Day 6 – Tours – Chambord – Blois – Amboise – Tours

After breakfast depart for a full day in the Loire Valley. In the morning visit Chambord, the Royal Chateau on three thousand acres of estate. Built in 1519 by Francois Ier, this architectural masterpiece combines the tradition of French master masons with the lightness of Italian Renaissance buildings. Attributed



to Leonardo da Vinci, its design is distinguished by its magnificent “double spiral” staircase. Its imposing dimensions defy the imagination, a façade 156 metres long and a height of 56 metres, the Chateau was completed by Louis XIV in 1685. In the afternoon, continue to Blois for a guided visit of the Royal Chateau. This castle combines four distinct wings around a single courtyard, each corresponding to a different period and style, forming a unique panorama of French architecture. The 19th and 20th century restorations complete the architectural history of the chateau. The final stop is Amboise to visit the castle which was built in the 15th and 16th centuries. This authentic royal chateau is famous for introducing the Italian style to the Loire Valley. It boasts an exceptional collection of Gothic and Renaissance furniture, beautiful gardens and St. Hubert’s Chapel. Return to Tours for overnight stay. (B)

#### **Day 7 – Tours – Bourges – Lyon**

After breakfast depart by private coach for Lyon. On the way stop in Bourges, described by Julius Caesar as “one of the most beautiful cities in all of Gaule”. Bourges has continued to delight and inspire visitors down through the ages. The Gothic cathedral, sculpted mansions, stately palaces and bustling medieval

quarter are all reminders of its rich historic past. After the guided tour we continue to Lyon for an overnight stay. (B)

#### **Day 8 – Lyon**

After breakfast depart for a 2-hour guided tour of Lyon. Lyon boasts a particularly diverse architectural heritage dating from Gallo-Roman remains to stylish modern buildings. It is a magnificent Renaissance city with 27 museums and a multitude of shops specialising in silk to antiques to marionettes. Overnight stay in Lyon. (B)

#### **Day 9 – Avignon**

After breakfast depart for Avignon. Afternoon guided tour of Avignon. Visit the Palace of the Popes, the old walls from the XIV century, Place de L’Horloge, Notre Dame des Doms, the Petit Palais and Palais due Roure. Dinner and overnight stay in Avignon. (B & D)

#### **Day 10 – Avignon – Arles – Saintes Marie de la Mer – Avignon**

After breakfast depart for a guided tour of the city of Arles, noted for the wealth of its Roman and Romanesque heritage. In 1981, the Roman Amphitheatre (the Arena), the Cryptoportico (foundations of the Roman Forum), the Roman Baths of Constantine, the remains of the Roman Circus, the Cloister and Portal of

St. Trophime’s were all listed as UNESCO World Heritage Monuments. Continue on to the village of Saintes Marie de la Mer, a place of tradition and pilgrimage. Enjoy a boat trip on the Rhone River to admire the beauty and wildlife of Camargue. Return to Avignon for an overnight stay. (B)

#### **Day 11 – Avignon – Geneva**

After breakfast depart for Geneva, Switzerland. In the afternoon meet with our local guide for a city tour. Visit Geneva’s sparkling harbour, the old town and the modern city with the office buildings of the United Nations. Overnight stay in Geneva. (B)

#### **Day 12 – Geneva – Berne – Lucerne**

After breakfast depart for Lucerne with a brief stop in Berne, the capital of Switzerland. Founded in 1191 on the River Aare, Berne is an impressive medieval town with sandstone buildings, historical towers and magnificent fountains. Continue on to Lucerne, ideally situated in the historic and scenic heart of what many believe to be the ‘true’ Switzerland. Starting from the old city squares to the famous chapel bridge, stunning lakeside and mountain sceneries, you will find this a truly enchanting city. Dinner and overnight stay in Lucerne. (B & D)



### Day 13 – Lucerne – Zurich – Lucerne

After breakfast depart for Zurich, a modern city best known for the Fraumuenster Abbey, founded in 853 by King Louis. This beautiful church boasts a breathtaking series of stained glass windows by Marc Chagall. Visit Lindenhof Square, the oldest part of Zurich, and enjoy the beautiful panorama over the rooftops on both sides of the river. In the afternoon return to Lucerne for some time at leisure. Overnight stay. (B)

### Day 14 – Lucerne – Como – Lake Como

After breakfast depart for Lake Como. Stop on the way for a city tour of Como; the Cathedral, Piazza Cavour, Piazza San Fedele and Piazza Verdi. Continue on to Cadenabbia on Lake Como for dinner and overnight stay. (B & D)

### Day 15 – Lake Como

After breakfasts take a cruise on Lake Como to view some of the most exquisite villas and picturesque towns on the lake. Stop in Bellagio, the lake's "pearl", where you will find century-old buildings, attractive cobbled laneways filled with shops displaying the finest Italian wares. Some of the most beautiful

sights of Bellagio are Villa Serbelloni with its splendid garden and Villa Melzi D'Eril. Return to your hotel for overnight stay. (B)

### Day 16 – Lake Como

After breakfast depart for Tremezzo to visit Villa Carlotta, a place of rare beauty surrounded by over 70,000 square metres of gardens. This beautiful villa was built at the end of 17th century by the Milanese Marquis Giorgio Clerici. A perfect combination of luxurious interiors, beautiful stuccos, frescoes and a great art collection with luxurious exteriors. It also boasts a garden decorated with sculptures, stairs and fountains with over 500 species of plants, trees and shrubs from all over the world. Overnight stay in Lake Como. (B)

### Day 17 – Lake Como – Milan

After breakfast depart for Milan. Enjoy a guided sightseeing tour of this cosmopolitan city, also known as the fashion capital of Italy. Visit the Duomo, the Vittorio Emanuele Gallery and Corso Vittorio Emanuele. Afternoon at leisure for shopping in the fashion district or visit the world-famous 'Last Supper'. In the evening, farewell dinner. Overnight stay in Milan. (B & D)

### Day 18 – Milan

After breakfast transfer to the airport for your return flight.

*End of Tour*



*It is art that makes life,  
makes interest, makes importance . . .  
and I know of no substitute whatever  
for the force and beauty of its process.*

Henry James

