



THE GARDEN OF FRANCE

EXPLORING THE LOIRE VALLEY

JUNE 6TH - 15TH 2019

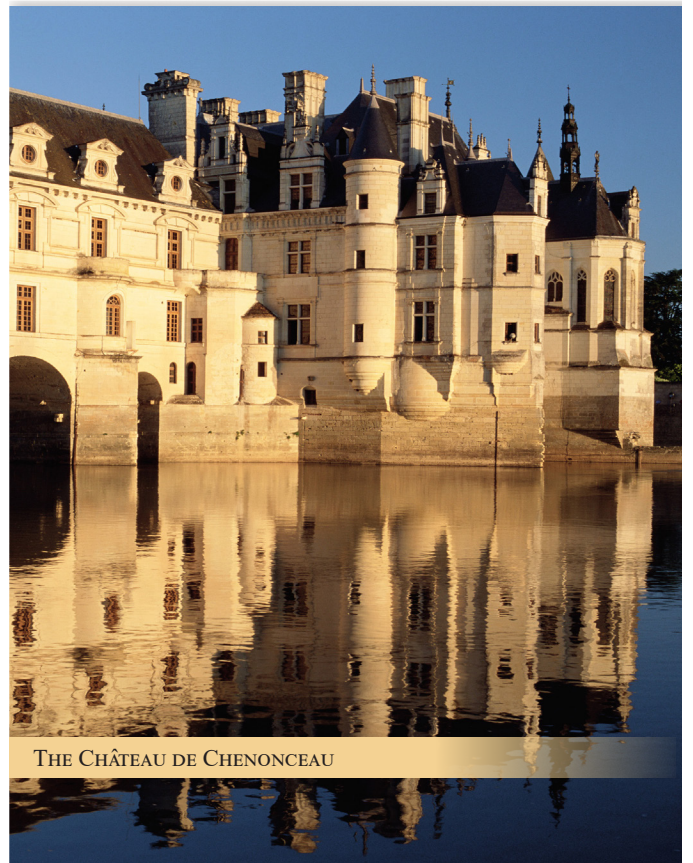
The Valley of the River Loire runs from east to west across northern France and is known as the *Garden of France*. The warm moist prevailing winds blow in from the Atlantic, creating a microclimate that complements the natural fertile soils of the river valley. The fabulous wines that come from this region are the proof!

It was probably the climate and the wine, combined with the noxious conditions in the capital, that persuaded the aristocracy to build their fabulous palaces and castles along the river and its tributaries. The Renaissance really came to France when Francois I brought Leonardo da Vinci to Amboise from Italy.

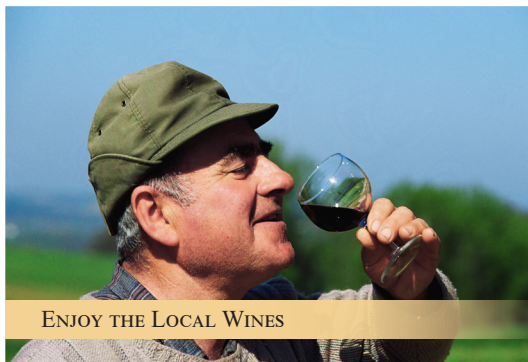
Bypassing Paris, we'll rest up from the overnight flight in a château surrounded by beautiful parkland just to the north of the city. From here, we'll spend a day with the Impressionists - we'll visit Monet's Giverny, lunch at the riverside restaurant made famous by Renoir, and tour the local Museum of Impressionism.

Continuing on to the Loire Valley, we'll sample a selection of stunning medieval and Renaissance châteaux, scattered around the countryside. From the romance of Chenonceau arching across the Cher River, to the staggering grandeur of Chambord, a Renaissance masterpiece, all set in the staggering beauty of the "Garden of France" – the Loire Valley.

We end our tour at the epitome of luxurious opulence – Versailles. This spring, when the "Garden of France" is in full bloom, join Discover Europe on a truly memorable adventure in northern France.



THE CHÂTEAU DE CHENONCEAU



ENJOY THE LOCAL WINES

THE COST OF THIS ITINERARY, PER PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY IS:

LAND ONLY (NO AIRFARE INCLUDED):	\$4680
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:	\$ 950

Airfares are available from many U.S. cities. Please call for details.

THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE INCLUDED:

HOTELS: 8 nights' accommodation in first-class hotels and châteaux, including all hotel taxes and service charges

COACHING: All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary

MEALS: Breakfast daily, 2 lunches, 5 dinners

GUIDES: DISCOVER EUROPE tour guide throughout

EXPENSES: Portage of one large suitcase per person

ENTRANCES: Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour. Insurance information will be mailed on receipt of deposit.

DISCOVER EUROPE LTD.
95 Adams Street
Keene, NH 03431
USA



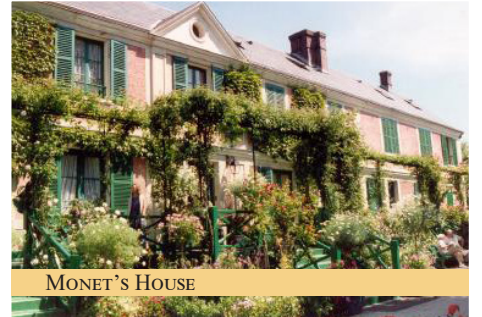
e -info@discovereuropeltd.com
w - www.discovereuropeltd.com
t - (toll free) 866-563-7077
f - (fax) 603-563-7137



THURSDAY, JUNE 6TH - Departure from your chosen US gateway city. **OVERNIGHT: PLANE**

FRIDAY, JUNE 7TH - Your arrival at Paris, Charles de Gaulle Airport, will be met for the transfer to our country hotel set in the “Parc Naturel Régional de Vexin Français,” just north of the city. After checking in, there will be time to unpack, and begin enjoying your surroundings. We’ll gather for a welcome dinner this evening. **(D) OVERNIGHT: VEXIN**

SATURDAY, JUNE 8TH - It’s a short drive this morning from our hotel to Giverny, where we’ll experience Monet’s garden paradise - his home for 43 years. Water gardens, bridges, roses—all create breathtakingly gorgeous tableaux recognizable in some of the most famous paintings in the world. After time to visit the gardens and house, we follow the course of the river Seine southeast to the Île des Impressionistes in Chatou. We’ll have a late lunch in the very restaurant (La Maison Fournaise) used in Renoir’s famous painting *Déjeuner des Canotiers* (Luncheon of the Boating Party). Our final stop of the day is at the Château d’Auvers-sur-Oise, where we’ll visit the fabulous “Impressionist Vision” exhibition – an immersive, sensory experience that plunges the visitor into the world of impressionist painting. We’ll return to our hotel for a free evening. **(B, L) OVERNIGHT: VEXIN**



SUNDAY, JUNE 9TH - Today we head south to the Loire Valley - the Garden of France. We’ll stop first for the ultimate Gothic experience—Chartres Cathedral. Here, the transcendent beauty of medieval stained glass combines with soaring archways to create one of the great mystical experiences of the middle ages. We’ll have time for lunch and to explore the town before we continue over the plain of Beauce to our hotel in Amboise. The rest of the afternoon is free to explore this delightful town before we meet again for dinner. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: AMBOISE**

MONDAY, JUNE 10TH - With its delicate, light and mild climate, the Loire Valley is often considered the most quintessentially French of all regions. Medieval and Renaissance châteaux are scattered across the countryside, and we begin our day with a visit to the jewel of Amboise, the 15th-century Chapelle St. Hubert, that allegedly contains the tomb where Leonardo da Vinci is buried. From here, we’ll tour the nearby Château du Clos Lucé, where Leonardo lived for the last three years of his life. The rest of the day is free to sit back and enjoy this charming town on the banks of the Loire and to find a suitable restaurant for dinner. **(B) OVERNIGHT: AMBOISE**

TUESDAY, JUNE 11TH - This morning, we’ll visit the Château de Chenonceau, arguably the most romantic château in France. Built by women for women, this gem of Renaissance architecture spans the Cher River on a series of graceful arches. In the afternoon, we visit the largest and most dramatic of the Loire châteaux, Chambord is a Renaissance masterpiece on a grand scale—440 rooms, a fireplace for every day of the year, intertwined staircases, and a project that demanded the labor of almost 2,000 workmen. We return to our hotel in Amboise and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: AMBOISE**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12TH - Today's excursion takes us west along the river to the chateau de Villandry. Villandry boasts probably the finest example of a French formal garden to be found anywhere in the country. We continue on to the town of Chinon, beside the river Vienne. We'll have lunch here (included) and the visit the chateau. Chinon has been the site of many important events in French history, perhaps most memorable as the site of the meeting between Joan of Arc and the young Charles VII, when she persuaded him that the English could be defeated. We'll return to Amboise for a free evening. **(B, L) OVERNIGHT: AMBOISE**



THURSDAY, JUNE 13TH - This morning we take an excursion east along the river. Our first stop will be the Chaumont, just upriver from Amboise. Each year Chaumont hosts an International Garden Festival in the grounds of the Chateau. Each year top designers are given a theme to work with and you can see both this year's contenders and some of the best results preserved from previous years. From here we'll stop in nearby Blois to visit the chateau and have time for lunch. This afternoon we will visit a local vineyard for a tour and tasting of the excellent local wines, for which the valley is justly famous. We return to our hotel in Amboise and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: AMBOISE**

FRIDAY, JUNE 14TH - Heading back towards Paris, we’ll pass by the city of Orleans and arrive at our hotel in Versailles in time to check in and find lunch in the town. This afternoon we'll visit the palace and it's magnificent gardens. This evening we gather for a farewell dinner. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: VERSAILLES**

SATURDAY, JUNE 15TH - Morning transfers to Paris, Charles de Gaulle Airport for returning flights to the U.S. **(B) OVERNIGHT: HOME**

Key to included meals: **B** - breakfast, **L** - lunch, **D** - dinner